

CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

**Volume 1:
Africa**

**Cumulative Index
Volumes 1-4**



CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

CITIES OF THE WORLD

A Compilation of Current Information
on Cultural, Geographic, and
Political Conditions in the Countries
and Cities of Six Continents, Based on
the Department of State's
"Post Reports"

In Four Volumes

**Volume 1:
Africa**

Cumulative Index Volumes 1-4



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CITIES OF THE WORLD SIXTH EDITION

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PREFACE

Cities of the World represents a compilation of government reports and original research on the social, cultural, political, and industrial aspects of the nations and cities of the world. Most of the country profiles included here are based on official personnel briefings issued as *Post Reports* by the U.S. Department of State. The *Post Reports* are designed to acquaint embassy personnel with life in the host country. Consequently, the reports concentrate on cities in which the U.S. government has embassies or consulates. To increase coverage of other important cities, the editors have added information on a large number of cities—31 of which are new to this edition—not reported on by the Department of State.

Since the fifth edition of *Cities of the World*, the Department of State has issued 62 new or revised *Post Reports*, all of which have been incorporated into this sixth edition. Selected data in *Post Reports* not revised by the Department of State since the last edition of *Cities of the World* have been updated by the editors with revised statistics acquired through independent research. In addition, articles have been written on thirty-three countries for which no *Post Report* exists.

Readers familiar with the fourth edition of this publication will notice that with the fifth edition the page size was enlarged to accommodate more information. This sixth edition includes new photographs selected by the Gale editors. The photographs depict scenes found in a city and countryside and, in many cases, reveal the cultural flavor of the area as well. As in the prior edition, many chapters feature a map of that country's capital or major city, with a superimposed locator map indicating the nation's geographic location in relation to its regional neighbors.

Volumes in This Series

This series includes four volumes:

- Volume 1: Africa;
- Volume 2: The Western Hemisphere (exclusive of the United States);
- Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East;
- Volume 4: Asia, the Pacific, and the Asiatic Middle East.

In all, this set provides coverage of over 2,000 cities in 193 countries.

Format and Arrangement of Entries

Cities of the World is arranged alphabetically by country name. Its chapters are divided into two basic sections, Major Cities and Country Profile, each of these with several subdivisions. A Major City listing might comprise information on Education, Recreation, and Entertainment. Other Cities, smaller cities and towns which are designated as other than major, are discussed in brief paragraphs at the end of the Major City section. Country Profile sections are subdivided into: Geography and Climate; Population; Government; Arts, Science, Education; Commerce and Industry; Transportation; Communications; Health; Clothing and Services; Local Holidays; Recommended Reading; and Notes for Travelers. Thus, *Cities of the World* presents not only basic information, but also comprehensive data on local customs, political conditions, community services, and educational and commercial facilities.

Contents and Index

The Contents and Index in each volume provide easy access to these reports. Listed under each country in the Contents are the cities that appear in its Major Cities section, as well as listings for the Other Cities and Country Profile sections. A Cumulative Index, combining the four individual volumes is found at the end of each volume. The Index is arranged alphabetically by city name, including listings for both major and minor cities that are mentioned in each volume; as well as by country name with names of cities indented below.

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to thank the U.S. Department of State for providing copies of *Post Reports* to aid in the compilation of these volumes. The editors would also like to thank Adam A. Gall and Marlon C. Tussel for their editorial assistance.

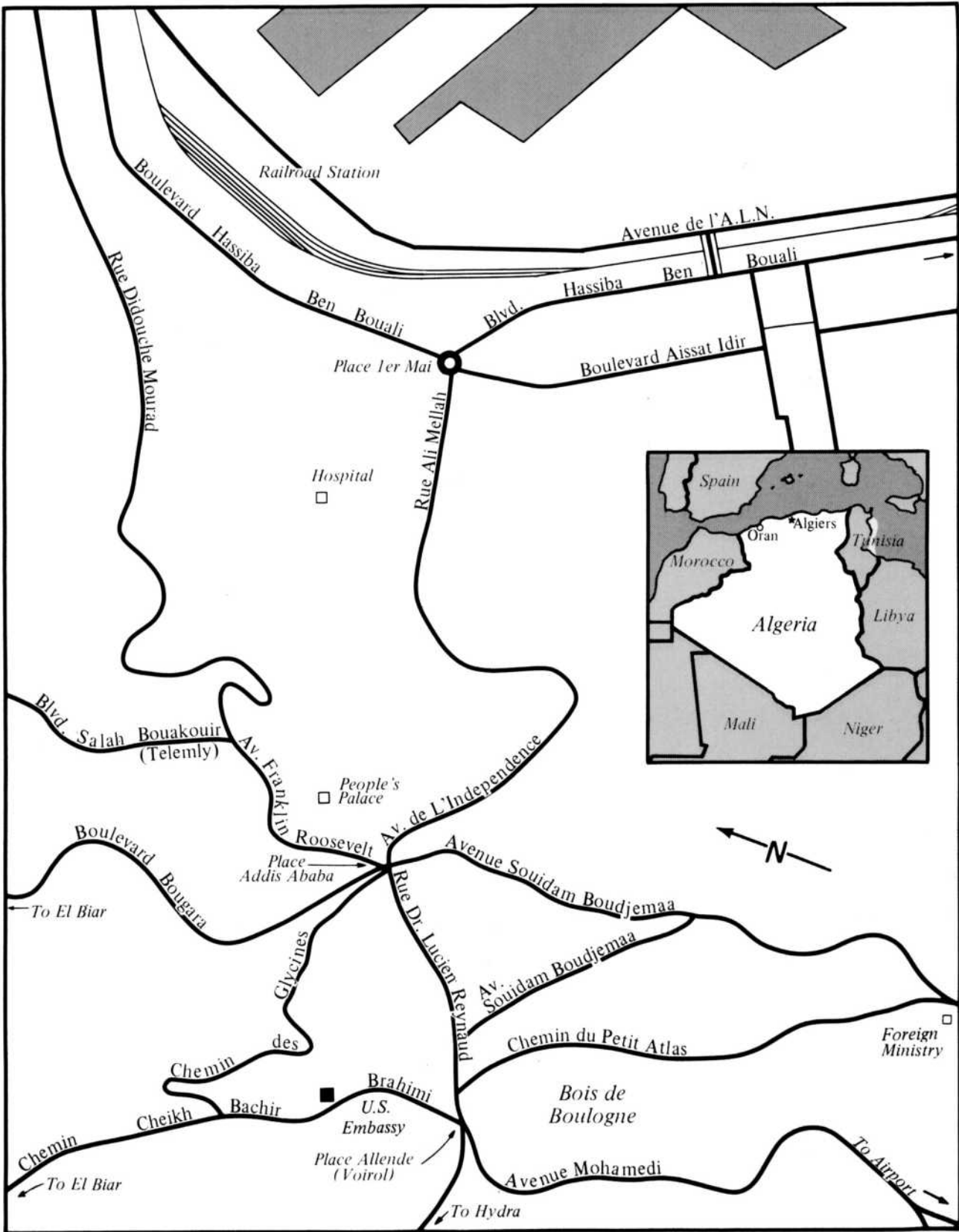
Suggestions Welcome

The editors invite comments and suggestions concerning *Cities of the World*. Please write to: Editors, *Cities of the World*, The Gale Group, Inc., 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535; fax (248) 699-8074; or call toll-free (800) 877-4253.

CITIES OF THE WORLD

Volume 1:

Africa



Algiers, Algeria

ALGERIA

Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

Major Cities:

Algiers, Oran, Annaba, Constantine

Other Cities:

Batna, Béchar, Bejaia, Biskra, Blida, Djelfa, I-n-Salah, Médéa, Ouargla, Saïda, Sétif, Sidi-Bel-Abbes, Skikda, Tamanrasset, Tiaret, Tindouf, Tlemcen, Touggourt

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Algeria. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

ALGERIA, whose acknowledged history reaches back beyond 200 B.C., is the largest of the countries in northwest Africa which embody the Mahgreb, the area between the sea and the Sahara. Known to the ancient Romans as Numidia, it has been host to successive Mediterranean and African cultures, for which visible remains abound, from a Roman aqueduct in the capital city of Algiers, to the Phoenician ruins and Maurentian tomb just one hour's drive to the west. In recent times, it nurtured the first independence movement on the African continent, negotiated the release of American hostages from Iran, and has been a leader in regional diplomatic initiatives.

Algeria has produced cultural pathfinders, from St. Augustine to Albert Camus. It is a country of the traditional and the modern—one sister will wear the concealing *haik*, while another ventures out in jeans; a family returns to its digital television set after having sacrificed a lamb for tomorrow's feast.

This is a country of contrasts and contradictions. Arabic and French intermingle in language and traditions. The Tauregs of the desert, although Muslim, use the Maltese cross as their sign. Spectacular coastlines are in geographic counterpoint with the great desert expanses, and the inviting Kabylia foothills give way to the foreboding Atlas highlands.

MAJOR CITIES

Algiers

Algiers, capital of Algeria, is one of Africa's largest urban areas. Originally constructed for 750,000 people, its metropolitan area now teems with over four million inhabitants. It is situated on the Mediterranean coast of Africa, about midway between Tangier and Tunis and opposite the island of Majorca,

at latitude 36°36'N and longitude 3°04'E.

Algiers was founded by the Phoenicians as one of their numerous North African colonies. The town was also visited by the Carthaginians and Romans and later destroyed by the Vandals in the 5th century A.D. It was revived under a Berber dynasty in the 10th century as a commerce center. Algiers became a haven in the 16th century for Moors escaping persecution in Spain. Many of these settlers resorted to piracy against Spanish cargo vessels. These pirate attacks continued until roughly 1830, when the French captured the city. Algiers became a military and administrative headquarters for France's colonial empire in North and West Africa. During World War II, Algiers became the headquarters of Allied forces in North Africa. The city played a major role in Algeria's uprising against French rule. In 1962, after the country gained its independence, Algiers became the nation's capital.

From the sea, Algiers is a spectacular sight. The city rises sharply from the port area and business district to the residential areas along tree-covered hills. In sunlight, the white buildings of "Algér la Blanche" gleam against the blue Mediterranean.

nean below, and the green of pines and parks above.

Architecturally, the city is European with a strong Mediterranean flavor. The famous Casbah, an interesting Arab quarter in the heart of the city, contains most of what remains of the Turkish city of the 16th to 18th centuries, but falls short of the romantic image created by the movies. More characteristic of modern Algiers are the many apartment buildings and grand villas with their views of the city and the sea. Among the multitude of mosques are a few dating from the 17th century, and others that once were constructed as churches by the French. Traffic, especially during morning, midday, and evening rush hours, is very heavy and often frustrating.

The Mediterranean climate reminds Americans of southern California. Compared to Washington, DC, the summer (May to October) is longer and more moderate, except when the hot *sirocco* (desert wind) blows in from the Sahara. Heat and humidity can combine to make a summer day uncomfortable, but there are many more days of excellent weather. Throughout this warm season, the sandy beaches and the waters of the Mediterranean provide relief and recreation. The cooler heights of the nearby mountains at Chrea and Tala Guilef are also pleasant at this time. Despite its warm summers, Algiers has what is often described as a "cold climate with a hot sun." Winter temperatures rarely fall below freezing. Cool to cold weather generally begins in November and lasts into April, but the "rainy season" lasts about five months.

Fewer than 500 Americans reside throughout Algeria, and are principally employed in the hydrocarbon sector, working in central and southern Algeria.

Food

Staples can be purchased locally, but prices are higher than in the U.S. Frequent shortages occur and the quality is often inferior to American varieties. Fresh fruit and vege-

tables of good quality are plentiful in season. Markets carry beef, chicken, lamb, fish and shrimp, but all are expensive. Eggs are always available, but butter is occasionally hard to find. Pork products are not available.

Clothing

Apparel for all seasons is required in Algeria—from bathing suits to warm coats. Rainwear and umbrellas are advisable for all members of the family. A Washington, D.C. wardrobe is suitable for an extended stay. Although winters are not as cold in Algiers, strong winds and less effective heating/insulation in buildings can make the climate seem quite uncomfortable.

Some clothing suitable to Western tastes is available, but is much more expensive than in the U.S. Shoes are not usually of good quality, nor do they conform to American preference.

Because dry cleaning is unpredictable in quality and availability, men find that wash-and-wear clothes of medium weight are useful for office wear, with some lightweight suits for really hot days. Winter clothes can be worn from November to April, and an additional sweater or vest is welcome in winter. A topcoat is sometimes useful.

Women dress for professional or office jobs as they would in Washington, DC; others tend to dress informally, wearing skirts and sweaters in winter and cotton dresses in summer. Conservative dress minimizes embarrassment; shorts should not be worn in public. Street-length dinner and cocktail dresses are appropriate in the evening although, occasionally, a long dress is needed for a formal event. Shawls and sweaters are advisable at night, even in summer.

Neither men or women should wear sports clothes that reveal shoulders, arms, or legs, especially when touring religious sites.

Children have the same clothing needs in Algiers as they would in

Washington, DC. Good quality clothing for children is not always available.

Supplies and Services

Services available in Algiers, but not up to U.S. standards, include tailoring; dressmaking; shoe repair; and radio, TV, and other electrical appliance repair. Dry cleaning is fair. Barber and beauty service is available, but many women prefer to have haircuts, permanents, etc., done on trips abroad.

Items difficult to locate in Algiers include linens, plastic ware, shower curtains, coat hangers, Scotch tape, adhesive tape, glue, paper napkins, toys, books, records, and special occasion gifts and cards. Few toiletries are available locally.

Religious Activities

The predominant religion in Algeria is Islam, but other faiths are respected. In Algiers, there are several Catholic churches that offer masses in French and Italian, and sometimes in English. English-speaking priests will hear confessions for Americans. One Jewish synagogue continues to hold services. The British Protestant Church is nondenominational and has services each Friday, plus Sunday school for children. In Oran, places of worship include one Protestant and two Catholic churches, both with French-language rituals. A weekly, informal, nondenominational service is conducted in various private homes.

Domestic Help

Competent and adequately trained domestic help is difficult to find, but it is possible to employ people for cleaning, laundering, shopping, and child care. Part-time gardeners are available. A good cook is rare, and wages quite high. Social-security payments are required, but the rate varies depending on the work schedule. Algerian law requires all household staff to have 1.5 paid vacation days each month, plus a free day each week. Employers usually recognize Islamic holidays with a cash gift. Many expatriates have hired foreign household help, from such



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Aerial view of Algiers, Algeria

countries as the Philippines, to work in their homes

Education

The American School of Algiers, the only English-language school, offers coeducational instruction from pre-kindergarten through grade nine. It is located in El Biar, one mile from downtown Algiers. In 1991, the staff included an American principal, 14 full-time and three part-time teachers, a secretary, and classroom aides. Classes are held from September to June. The standard U.S. curriculum is followed and adapted to accommodate children of many countries, with emphasis on local educational opportunities such as field trips and excursions. Science, music, art, and physical education are also offered. Extracurricular activities include computers, yearbook, school newspaper, and a literary magazine. The school's library has 8,000 volumes and a variety of multimedia materials. The three-

acre campus consists of eight buildings with 14 classrooms, a science lab, computer lab, and two playing fields. French is taught in grades four through eight. The school has a capacity for 215 students. Many nationalities are represented among the student body. Students are required to speak and understand English well enough to follow courses. Parents of children with special needs should contact the school directly before moving to Algiers; the address is: 5 Chemin Cheikh Bechir Brahimi, El Biar, Algiers, Algeria.

An English-language secondary school is not available, but there is a French *lycée*, equivalent to U.S. high school. American students are admitted if space is available and if the student has adequate French-language ability. The French system is also available below the *lycée* level. In addition, German, Japa-

nese, Egyptian, and Italian schools are in operation in Algiers.

Some parents have found local private nursery schools satisfactory for pre-kindergarten children. One English-language play school is available for children three to five years old. The French kindergarten will accept children at age four.

Most families send children of high school age to international schools abroad.

Recreation

The Algerian national passion is soccer; it is played in the streets, in stadiums, and in schoolyards. Algerian women rarely attend sports events and European women never go unescorted; even with an escort, they usually feel conspicuous.

Tennis is one of the most popular sports in Algiers, and can be played year round. Golf also is available at

an 18-hole golf course, Route de Chérage, on the heights of Algiers. Algiers' outdoor swimming and water sports season is from May through September. Several public beaches are a 30 to 60 minute drive, although those closest to Algiers are very crowded on weekends and may be polluted. Better beaches are located an hour from Algiers. Because no facilities are available, beach umbrellas, mats, barbecue grills, and ice chests are a must. Unescorted women should not visit beaches.

Algiers Bay and nearby coastal waters provide possibilities for boating, wind surfing, and spearfishing. Caution and experience are necessary on the water, as currents and winds can be treacherous.

Several riding clubs in the vicinity of Algiers offer adequate facilities (including jumps) at reasonable rates. In winter, limited skiing on difficult slopes is available in the Algerian mountains.

Wild boar and waterfowl hunting is difficult, but possible. A government hunting license is required. The importation of firearms is restricted to sporting weapons, and special permission must be obtained beforehand. Hunting can be organized through ONAT, the national tourist agency, which provides, as part of its hunting service, facilities for acquiring authorization to carry arms. These tours are extremely expensive.

Algeria offers many opportunities for pleasant day, weekend, and longer outings to points of scenic beauty and historic interest. However, because roads can be rough and acceptable tourist facilities (including restrooms) are rarely available, every trip can be an adventure.

In and around Algiers itself, one finds the Casbah, museums, the Forest of Bainem (a good hiking and picnicking area), the beautiful flowers and greenery of the Jardin d'Essai, and many beaches.

Easily arranged one-day trips include: the mountain resort of Chrea; Tizi-Ouzou, "capital of the Kabyle"; and the ancient Roman seaport of Cherchell (Caesarea). The extensive Roman ruins of Tipasa, about 50 miles from Algiers, overlook the azure waters of the Mediterranean, forming a scene of unmatched beauty.

Farther away, for weekend trips, are Annaba (the ancient Hippo Regius); Bou Saada, gateway to the Sahara; and many beach and mountain resorts east and west of the capital. The government travel organization has established an extensive network of lodgings and spas at regional capitals, mineral springs, skiing sites, and other appropriate points. Modestly appointed, and usually with restaurants, they vary in quality from barely acceptable to good. The staffs occasionally speak English. Some adequate private hotels and inns also can be found. Because reservations are often difficult to confirm, and accommodations may not be properly cleaned, lighted, or heated, many travelers provide their own camping equipment and sleeping bags. Water can be a problem, and it is always advisable to take along enough for drinking and washing. Finally, because acceptable restaurants may not exist en route, most people carry food for breakfasts and lunches.

On a long weekend driving tour, the visitor can see such attractions as Timgad—possibly the most extensive Roman ruins anywhere, and certainly unmatched outside Pompeii; El-Oued, an oasis town of considerable charm; Oran and Western Algeria, a region very different from the Algerois; Hass R'mel and Hassi Messaoud, hydrocarbon production centers; and Tunis, Tunisia, or Fez, Morocco.

The actual Sahara is a longer trip, but well worth it. For travel in the Hoggar-Tassili and Saharan areas, one can fly to Tamanrasset or Djinet and hire a Land Rover or join a tour there. The trip is long—it is about as far from Algiers to Taman-

rasset as from Algiers to Edinburgh, Scotland.

Entertainment

Movies, some in French, most in Arabic, are the principal commercial entertainment in Algiers. Cinemas are crowded and rarely attended by women. Live theater has a limited season, with emphasis on Arabic productions.

Algiers has a number of museums devoted to art, history, and anthropology. A major amusement park complex and a zoo in the suburb of Ben Aknoun offer entertainment opportunities.

Algiers has many restaurants which serve French and/or Algerian dishes, and a few serving Chinese/Vietnamese food. Some restaurants feature folkloric entertainment. However, because most restaurants (even the smaller ones) are state-owned, quality and availability of food and service at even the best can vary dramatically. That, combined with endemic parking problems, makes dining out in Algiers something of an adventure.

For those interested in photography, Algiers' unusual architecture and magnificent views offer many subjects for pictures. Photographic supplies should be brought from home as local supplies are limited and expensive. Discretion must be used in photographing individuals and mosques; military and strategic installations should never be photographed.

A good shortwave radio, phonograph, or cassette player are desirable. Records and music cassettes can be purchased locally, but prices are very high.

Algiers has no American-sponsored fraternal organizations, and most mixing of the American official and private communities is through entertaining in the home. An informal English-speaking women's coffee group meets each month in a member's home.



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Typical street in an Algerian city in the Sahara

Social activities for American children consist of privately sponsored gatherings, such as birthday parties for young children, camping trips, and beach parties. The American School and the British Church arrange a number of activities, including occasional weekend trips.

Algeria's political and cultural orientation limits opportunities for meeting host-country nationals, although relationships are possible; it is generally easier to become acquainted with nationals of other countries.

The French, Italian, and German Cultural Centers have film showings, exhibits, concerts, and language classes for those interested.

Oran

Oran, Algeria's second largest city and most modern port, is the economic and cultural capital of a

region rich in history and natural beauty. Situated on a high plateau that overlooks the Mediterranean, it is flanked on the west by the Djebel Murdjadjo which rises 1,500 feet; on the crest of this mountain are an historic fort, an abandoned cathedral, and the hermitage-like home of the *marabout* (dervish) Sidi Abdelkader El Djilali. Another picturesque site is Lion Mountain which stretches east, 10 miles along the coast. Situated between the Mediterranean coast and miles of vineyards, it is impressive in its graceful plunge to the sea.

Archaeological remains show that Oran has been inhabited since pre-historic times. The first known residents of the area were Berber herdsmen and the Berber culture dominated despite successive visits by the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, and the Germanic Vandals. In the Middle Ages the Berber kingdom of Tahert, near the mod-

ern-day city of Tiaret, made the area well-known for scholars and commerce.

Berber dynasties like the Almoravids fought off the encroaching Arabs for almost three centuries, but slowly the Arab culture took hold and gave the region its present Arab-Berber mix. Europeans reappeared in the region when, in the 16th century, the Spanish occupied the city-state of Oran and neighboring Mers El Kebir. The Ottoman Turks drove out the Spanish from most of their Algerian enclaves, but the Spaniards clung to Oran for 300 years and built forts that still dominate the port and the town.

After the French invasion of Algiers in 1830, the Oran region was a center of resistance to French rule. Emir Abdel Kader waged a 15-year struggle against the French before being defeated and deported.

French and Spanish settlers arrived and Oran, surrounded by fertile countryside, became the main port for the Algerian wine industry.

Oran was occupied briefly by the U.S. Army during World War II as Algeria was used as a staging area for the invasion of Sicily. During the late 1950s, Oran was the scene of civil strife between French underground terrorists and Algerian nationalists. The violence prompted the mass exodus of the French. The city's fortunes declined for a time, but began to revive some years after Algerian independence was gained in 1962. The hydrocarbon and construction industries have breathed new life into the region's economy. In the Arzew Industrial Zone, built along a bay 25 miles east of Oran, two immense natural gas liquefaction plants are among the most important petrochemical installations in Algeria. Their enormous gas flares dominate the landscape and, on a clear night, are visible all the way to Oran.

South of Oran lies a region of rich agricultural land planted in vineyards, wheat fields, olive trees, and orange groves. Farther south are rugged mountains with wheat and olives, a high plateau of grazing land, and rocky wastelands extending more than 100 miles from the coast.

The industrial part of Oran, in the outlying south-southeastern districts, contains hundreds of small food-processing and diversified manufacturing plants and a small iron and steel mill. Principal exports are wine, cereals, vegetables, and fruits.

Oran is an international port that is connected by rail to Algiers, Béchar, and Morocco. Oran-Es Senia International Airport is located approximately six miles (ten kilometers) from the city.

Oran's Mediterranean climate and physical beauty are striking and resembles parts of California and northern Florida. Winters bring rainy winds and cool weather, with

daytime temperatures in the 50s. Summer lasts from May to October, with fine, sunny weather and a constant breeze off the sea. This is the time to enjoy the beaches.

Close to one million people live in urban Oran, including an English-speaking community concentrated around Arzew. The French community in Oran numbers several thousand and includes teachers and technical assistance personnel. The city is mostly Muslim, and nearly all of the French-built churches have been converted into mosques. The culture is a distinct mix of Arabic and Western. There are mosques in every neighborhood and the five-times daily prayer call rises from minarets all over the city. In the streets, veiled women walk alongside those dressed in the latest fashions from France. Although Algeria has many women doctors, lawyers, and other professionals, segregation of the sexes remains the custom. Women rarely go out alone and are seldom seen in the city's cafes.

Consulates in Oran, other than that of the U.S., represent France, Spain, Italy, and Morocco.

Education

Education at public schools in Oran is conducted in Arabic and French. The Lycée Pasteur, operated by the French Government, offers kindergarten through high school for dependents of French functionaries and other non-Algerian students. All instruction is in French, and the curriculum is more rigorous than that of the typical American high school.

French- or classical Arabic-language instruction from private tutors is available. Group classes in either language or in computer basics are sponsored by the French Cultural Center. The Catholic church offers lessons in modern, standard Arabic.

Instruction in the arts is offered by the Oran Municipal Conservatory, which conducts classes in a variety of musical instruments, harmony,

dance, and dramatic arts. Courses in tennis, judo, skin diving, and karate may be arranged at clubs.

Recreation and Entertainment

In Oran, soccer is the most popular spectator sport, and weekly matches are held in the city's stadium. Women rarely attend. The Oran area has fine beaches and windsurfing is growing in popularity. The American community has a full program of recreational sports, including softball and a tennis club. Several aerobic exercise groups have formed. Other activities in and around the city include excellent saltwater fishing, sailing, and scuba diving, although it is difficult to charter a boat. Wild boar and small game hunting is also available.

Within the district are many points of scenic interest, beach resorts, towns, and wooded mountainsides. Although not so rich in Roman ruins as the eastern and central parts of the country, opportunities do exist for archaeological and historical study. Principal historic sites in Oran include the 16th century Santa Cruz Fortress and the Mosque of the Pasha of Sidi El Houari dates from the 18th century.

Algeria is a beautiful country with a surprising variety of environments. Deep forests of cork and pine, mountains, windy steppes, and desert sands are all only a few hours drive from Oran. Opportunities for hiking and picnicking are excellent.

Organized tours outside of Oran are available. The Moroccan border, with good sight-seeing and shopping opportunities, is only two hours away by car. The Spanish enclave of Melilla, with its fascinating history and well-stocked duty-free shops, is less than a six-hour drive away. Ferries go regularly from Oran to Marseille and to Alicante.

Entertainment opportunities in Oran are not particularly good. A number of movie theaters show films in French and Arabic. Occasional French-language or Arabic

plays are performed in the Opéra Municipal (Municipal Opera House), and concerts by visiting artists are presented at the Oran Municipal Conservatory about twice a year.

The French Cultural Center sponsors a busy program of films, lectures, and concerts. It also maintains a library and a "filmothèque."

Oran is a quiet, easy-going provincial city. Patience and initiative reap ample rewards. The American community in Oran is extremely small. However, expatriates and their families often join in sports, barbecues, films, and other social activities with the American community in Arzew. Most Algerian social life revolves around the family and most Algerians do not entertain. However, younger Algerians are often attracted to American films or music, or seek opportunities to practice their English.

Annaba

Annaba, a Mediterranean port in northeastern Algeria, was called Bône until the country achieved its independence from France. In the early centuries A.D., under the Romans, it had been known as the port city of Hippo Regius. Later it became the see of St. Augustine, and a center of Christianity. Augustine, recognized as the founder of Christian theology, was born in the year 354 at Tagaste, about 40 miles south of Hippo, and served the district as bishop. He died in 430, during the time that the Vandals were besieging Hippo.

Annaba was founded by the Carthaginians, and once was a residence of ancient Numidian kings. After its many centuries of Roman and Vandal occupation, it came under Arab rule in the seventh century, and was held during the Middle Ages by Algerines, Italians, and Spaniards. In the 17th and 18th centuries, it was a center for European trade. The French captured Annaba in 1832.

Now a modern city of close to one million people, Annaba is surrounded by wheat farms, forests, and mines. It is a main trading and fishing port and Algeria's chief exporter of iron ore and phosphates. Annaba is connected by railway and roads to Algiers and other major cities in northeastern Algeria. The city is known for its chemical plants, iron and steel factories, automobile and railroad workshops, and fertilizer plant.

There are few English-speaking people in the area, but some Europeans and Americans with a knowledge of French visit or conduct business here.

Constantine

Constantine (Qacentina), the ancient city of Cirta, lies on rocky heights above a river valley in the northeastern part of Algeria. Its port is Skikda, which was known as Philippeville under the French. Constantine has a population of roughly one million. Suburbs have developed to the southwest and east of the city.

In the second century B.C., Constantine (then Cirta) was the capital and commercial center of Numidia. After being destroyed by wars, it was rebuilt in the year 311 by the Roman emperor, Constantine the Great, and he gave it his name. The city was a provincial capital under the Turks in the 16th century, and was taken by French forces in 1837. It was occupied in 1942 during World War II by U.S. troops.

Constantine rests on a rocky, diamond-shaped plateau and, since Roman times, has been entirely surrounded by a wall. The city is a study in contrasts. The Rue Didouche Moutad divides the city into two parts. Western sections of the city, with its wide squares and straight streets, exhibits a strong French influence. The Souk el-Ghezal mosque, which was converted into the Notre-Dame des Sept-Douleurs Cathedral by the French, and the Casbah are major attractions. Eastern and southeastern

areas of Constantine, however, exhibits strong examples of Islamic architecture such as the Salah Bey and Sidi Lakhdar mosques. Many skilled trades are represented in the eastern sector and entire streets are devoted to one craft. Throughout the city, there are ruins of Roman fortifications and many medieval walls and gates.

The city has several public institutions. These include the municipal library, the museum of Cirta, and the University of Constantine, which was founded in 1969. Also Constantine-Ain-el Bey International Airport is located roughly six miles (ten kilometers) outside of Constantine.

OTHER CITIES

BATNA is a city in northeastern Algeria. Originally established as a French military outpost in 1844, Batna is currently a trading center for forest and agricultural products. Roman ruins at Tazault-Lambese (Lambessa) seven miles (11 kilometers) to the southeast and Timgrad (Thamugadi) 17 miles (27 kilometers) to the east-southeast attract many tourists. Batna has an estimated population of 185,000.

BÉCHAR, formerly known as Colomb-Béchar, was just a village before coal was found here in 1907. It thrived on the activity of the coal mines until petroleum production seized the market. Located in the northwestern region of Algeria roughly 36 miles (58 kilometers) south of the Moroccan border, Béchar has an estimated population of 107,000. The city is noted for its leatherwork and jewelry. Dates, vegetables, figs, cereals, and almonds are produced near Béchar. Bituminous coal reserves in the region are not exploited to their greatest potential because of high transportation costs. The city was once the site of a French Foreign Legion post.

Before 1962, **BEJAIA** was named Bougie. Since the discovery of oil in

Algeria, this Arab city has been a major port for oil and trade. Situated in the northeastern part of Algeria, 115 miles east of Algiers, the city is divided into a coastal, industrial section and a residential section 500 feet higher. Bejaia is a busy market town and exports iron ore, phosphates, olive oil, wine, and cork. The population is estimated over 125,000.

With January temperatures averaging 52°F, **BISKRA** is a common vacation spot in winter. Located in northeastern Algeria on the northern edge of the Sahara Desert, Biskra has a population of about 130,000. The area surrounding Biskra is very arid and most of the population live in oases. Dates, figs, pomegranates, and apricots are grown near Biskra. Biskra's major exports are dates and olives.

After devastating earthquakes in 1825 and 1867, **BLIDA**, which lies in northern Algeria, 25 miles southwest of the capital, was rebuilt into a commercially active center. This city is known for its beautiful orange groves and rose gardens that cover miles of landscape. Several light manufacturing industries are located in areas surrounding Blida. Crops grown near Blida include barley, citrus fruits, wheat, tobacco, olives, and vegetables. In 2000, Blida's population was estimated at 165,000.

DJELFA is located in north-central Algeria. The town, founded in 1852 as a French military post, is a meeting place for the Ouled Naïl. The Ouled Naïl are a semi-nomadic people who live in black-and-red striped tents and claim they are direct descendants of the Prophet Mohammed. The area surrounding Djelfa is notable for its abundance of Neolithic rock carvings dating from 7,000 to 5,000 B.C. Djelfa is primarily a trading center for goats, sheep, and other livestock. The population of Djelfa is over 85,000.

The oasis town of **I-N-SALAH** is situated in central Algeria and has a population of roughly over 21,000. Visited primarily by the nomadic

Tuareg people, I-n-Salah is a transportation center for the export of dates. At one time, I-n-Salah was located on the ancient trans-Saharan caravan routes and served as a major trade link between north and central Africa. The town's importance has declined considerably due to the exodus of workers to developing gas fields 60 miles (110 kilometers) southwest of I-n-Salah and prohibitive transportation costs. I-n-Salah is composed of four walled villages or *ksars*. The *ksars* are surrounded by fruit and vegetable gardens and palm groves. Also, they are irrigated by artesian wells and surrounded by hedges that protect against the Saharan desert's corrosive sand.

MÉDÉA, located in north-central Algeria, is roughly 56 miles (90 kilometers) south of Algiers. The present-day city is situated on the site of an ancient Roman military post and has a history dating back to the 10th century. The town is French in character, with a rectangular city plan, red tile-roofed buildings, and beautiful public gardens. The hills surrounding Médéa are covered with vineyards, orchards, and farms that yield abundant grain. Médéa's chief products are wines, irrigation equipment, and various handicrafts. The city has an estimated population of over 85,000.

OUARGLA, situated in east-central Algeria, was originally settled by the Berbers and Black Africans. The town is walled with six gates and dominated by a large mosque. Irrigated date palm groves and vegetable gardens surround the town. Ouargla is a trading center, especially for woolen carpets, basketry, and livestock. Oil and natural gas wells to the southwest and east-southeast of town have increased Ouargla's population and local economy. The town is also home to the Saharan museum.

The town of **SAÏDA** was established as a French military outpost and once housed a regiment of the French Foreign Legion. Situated in northwestern Algeria, Saïda is noted for its fine leatherwork and

mineral waters, which are bottled and sold throughout Algeria. Areas to the north of Saïda are fertile and supply abundant crops of grapes, olives, and wheat. Saïda is also a trading center for sheep and wool.

An ancient northeastern city dating back to the first century, **SÉTIF** is now a local medium for trade and communications. It is known for carpets and flour. Sétif, laid out in a grid pattern of wide streets, is one of Algeria's highest places at an altitude of 36,000 feet. The University of Sétif was founded in 1978. Remains of an ancient Byzantine fortress are located north of the city. In 1959, a Roman cemetery was found near the center of town. Located in a cereal-growing area, it is one of the most populated cities in Algeria, with a resident count estimated over 185,000.

Although it was completely surrounded by a wall until the 1930s, **SIDI-BEL-ABBES** now has a modern look with wide boulevards and squares. South of Oran, in the northwestern region of the country, this commercially vibrant city's infrastructure is comprised of factories, highways, and railroads. Industry includes a farm-machine manufacturing complex. The surrounding area, once swampy, now produces barley, wheat, and grapes. Once France's Foreign Legion headquarters, Sidi-Bel-Abbes is now a trade center with an estimated population over 150,000.

SKIKDA, situated on the Mediterranean Sea, 40 miles northeast of Constantine, is rich in history, with its Roman background still evident in a cemetery and the largest Roman theater in Algeria. A local museum houses many Roman artifacts. Skikda is an industrial city of roughly 129,000, whose major exports are fish, olive oil, and fruits. A natural-gas pipeline from Hassi R'Mel to Skikda became operational in 1970, leading to the development of petrochemical industries and oil refineries. Skikda also exports large quantities of marble, iron, lead, and iron ore. Many city residents of Italian and Portuguese origin left the

city after Algerian independence in 1962. Today, the population is predominantly Muslim. Before Algeria's independence, this French city was known as Philippeville.

TAMANRASSET, also called Tamenghest (after 1981) and located in extreme southern Algeria, was originally established as a military outpost to guard the trans-Saharan trade routes. Surrounded by the barren Sahara Desert, some of the world's highest known temperatures have been recorded here. Tamanrasset is located at an oasis where, despite the difficult climate, citrus fruits, apricots, dates, almonds, cereals, corn, and figs are grown. The Tuareg people are the town's main inhabitants. Their red houses and the area's magnificent, rugged scenery make Tamanrasset a popular tourist attraction during the cooler months. Visitors are also drawn to the Museum of the Hoggar, which offers many exhibits depicting Tuareg life and culture. The town has an estimated population of 38,000.

Throughout history, the northern town of **TIARET** has been occupied at various times by the Berbers, Arabs, Turks, and French. Today, Tiaret is an agricultural center specializing in cereal production and livestock raising. The town is also noted for its purebred Arabian horses.

TINDOUF is situated in extreme western Algeria. The town has a large population of Regeibat nomads and, due to its location near the borders of Mauritania, Morocco, and Western Sahara, is of strategic importance. Rich deposits of iron ore are at Gara Djebilet 93 miles (150 kilometers) to the southeast.

TLEMCEN, close to Morocco in the northwestern part of Algeria, is rich in tradition and history. Its famous mosque of Sidi Bou Medine dates back to the 14th century. The city is sharply divided between the Hadars (the middle class descended from the Moors), the Koulouglis (descendants of Turks and Arab women), and the traditional Jewish commu-

nity. Each group lives within its own sector of town. Tlemcen's winding, narrow, arched streets are crowded with shops, cafes, and mosques. The city has a pleasant climate. It is located sufficiently inland to avoid the stifling humidity of the Mediterranean coast, but is near enough to cool sea breezes in the summer. Known for its crafts, Tlemcen produces handmade leather goods, copperware, silk tapestries, and carpets. The town supports a bustling trade in agricultural products. It is also known for furniture and food processing. The railroad connects Tlemcen to other cities, including Beni-Saf.

TOUGGOURT, located in northeastern Algeria, is an oasis town where cereals, date palms, and vegetables are grown. Inhabited by the Rouarha, a people of Berber origin, and Jewish converts to Islam (Medjaia), Touggourt is a typical Saharan town of dried mud or claystone buildings and winding streets. Located at the junction of ancient trans-Saharan caravan routes, Touggourt is a trading center for livestock, woven cloth, and carpets. The estimated population is over 75,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Algeria, the second largest Arab/African country, after the Sudan, is almost one-third the size of the continental United States. With an area of 918,497 square miles, Algeria is more than three times the size of Texas.

Its geography is a contrast between the mountainous, fertile terrain of the north and the great expanse of arid desert in the south. Nearly 90 percent of the population lives on the productive coastal strip. The major cities of Algiers, Oran, and Annaba are located in this area, within a quadrilateral that extends

about 50 miles inland from the coast, and stretches some 950 miles from Morocco on the west to Tunisia on the east.

South of this coastal plain rise the beautifully rugged hills and mountains of the Kabylie and the Aurès. Behind the mountains lies the high plateau, a semi-arid rangeland. Beyond that, some 200 miles inland, is the vast Sahara Desert, which comprises 90 percent of the country.

The climate varies. Coastal areas, including Algiers, have a pleasant, mild climate which becomes hot in summer, and chilly and rainy for several months in winter. Alistair Horne, in *Savage War of Peace*, describes it thus: "The summer in Algiers is long and torrid, and by the end of it, the Europeans tend to feel like fruits that have ripened too long in the sun. . . . Through much of the year—winters that sparkle and springs that warm—the climate, like the architecture, is that of the northern Mediterranean."

Inland mountain regions between the coast and the desert have cooler weather, with temperatures below freezing for long periods in winter. Spring and fall in the Tell (that part of northern Algeria that receives an average annual rainfall of 16 inches or more and is, therefore, usable for agriculture), are mild and enjoyable. The Tell and the Sahara both have climatic extremes, although in different ways. The Tell is very cold in winter and very hot in summer. The Sahara's extremes are between daytime (warm in winter, intensely hot in late spring, summer, and early fall) and nighttime (extremely cold year round).

Population

Algeria's population, a mixture of Arab, Berber, Turkish, and West African (in the Sahara) in origin, numbers nearly 31.8 million and is 99% Moslem. The principal languages are French and Arabic, although several Berber dialects are spoken and remain the mother tongue in many rural areas. A strong program of Arabization is

underway; French is still widely used for official purposes, although this is expected to cease soon. Few people speak English.

Algeria has one of the world's highest population growth rates (2.3% in 2000). At least 70% of the population is under age 30. The traditional Moslem male-dominated culture is very much in evidence. Although women are participating more in Algerian society, the pace of change is slow. Many Algerian women still wear the traditional veil and "haik" a white wrap-around silk or nylon cover robe. Others, however, wear jeans and Western clothes, particularly in cities. After dark, women are rarely seen in public places. Relationships between Americans and Algerians proceed more formally and slowly than those to which Americans are accustomed due to the restraints placed upon women and the reserve in most Algerians' attitudes toward strangers.

Public Institutions

The Algerian Parliament is made up of a directly elected lower house, the National Popular Assembly, and an indirectly (and partially appointed) upper house. The government's executive departments are headed by ministers.

After gaining independence in 1961, Algeria had a single-party state dominated by the country's army and supported by the bureaucracy and the National Liberation Front (FLN). The FLN's rule ended in 1988 following wide-spread rioting. Under the 1989 Constitution, there was to be a transition to a pluralist republic with a strong president. The democratization process was suspended in 1992 when the Army forced the President to resign, canceled the second round of parliamentary elections which the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win, and installed a ruling five-man High State Committee, which banned the FIS and jailed more of its leaders. The cancellation of the elections in 1992 escalated fighting between the security forces and

armed Islamist groups seeking to overthrow the government and impose an Islamic state.

President Liamine Zeroual, a former general, was elected in November 1995 to a 5-year term. Zeroual had previously served as president of a transition government established by the Army in 1994. The President controls defense and foreign policy, appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and cabinet ministers, and may dissolve the legislature. The presidential election was competitive. Three opposition candidates had some access to state-controlled television and radio and also received heavy coverage in the independent press. Zeroual received 61% of the votes according to government figures; losing candidates claimed that there were instances of fraud, but did not contest the Zeroual's victory. In June 1997 Algeria held the first legislative elections since January 1992.

In May 1996 the President began reviewing with legal opposition parties a memorandum containing his ideas on how to develop a political system. These included amending the Constitution to define acceptable political practices and to establish a second parliamentary chamber (a senate). The President also insisted the electoral and political party laws be changed. In September, several important opposition political parties joined with the President to sign a national charter encompassing these ideas. In November the government obtained approval of proposed changes to the Constitution, including provision of a second parliamentary chamber and greater presidential authority, in a flawed popular referendum.

The government's security apparatus is composed of the Army, Air Force, Navy, the national gendarmerie, the national police, communal guards (a local police), and local self-defense forces. All of these elements are involved in counter-insurgency and counterterrorism operations. The security forces were

responsible for numerous serious human rights abuses.

The economy is slowly developing from a centrally planned system to a more market-oriented system, in the wake of stabilization policies and structural reforms undertaken in 1994 and 1995. The pace of structural reform slowed in 1996.

Noncompetitive and unprofitable state enterprises constituted the bulk of the industrial sector. The state-owned petroleum sector's output represented about a quarter of national income and about 95% of export earnings in 1996. Algeria is a middle-income country whose annual per capita income is about \$1,700. Unemployment continued to rise in 1996, hitting young people especially hard. About 70% of persons under the age of 30 could not find adequate employment. Some made a living from petty smuggling or street peddling.

Although the government's human rights performance improved somewhat, there were continued serious human rights abuses. The security forces carried out extrajudicial killings, were responsible for numerous cases of disappearance, routinely tortured or otherwise abused detainees, and arbitrarily arrested and held incommunicado many of those suspected of involvement with armed Islamist groups. Poor prison conditions, lengthy trial delays, illegal searches, and infringement on citizens' privacy rights also remained problems. The government heavily censored news about security incidents and the armed groups. The government also continued to restrict freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and movement. The Family Code limited women's civil rights, while domestic violence against women remained a serious problem.

Armed groups and terrorists also committed numerous serious abuses, killing thousands of civilians. Armed Islamists have conducted a widespread insurgency since elections were canceled in January 1992. Although some areas

of the country saw less conflict in 1996 than heretofore, acts of terrorism were still numerous. Islamist groups targeted government officials and families of security service members. They also assassinated political and religious figures, businessmen, teachers, journalists, state enterprise workers, farmers, and children. Armed Islamists targeted women especially; there were repeated instances of kidnaping and rape. Bombs left in cars, cafes, and markets killed and maimed people indiscriminately. By the end of 1996, most commonly accepted casualty estimates were that 60,000 people had been killed during five years of turmoil.

Since diplomatic relations were restored in 1974, Algerian-U.S. relations have gradually improved. This is due to Algeria's role in the Iran hostage crisis in 1981 and to increased commercial ties. Algerian-French relations have gone through periodic ups and downs. Ties with France cover an extremely broad spectrum. France is Algeria's leading exporter. Approximately 800,000 Algerians live and work in France. About 50 countries maintain resident diplomatic missions in Algiers.

Political Environment

After the cancellation of parliamentary elections in January 1992, which the Islamist opposition party, the Islamic Salvation Front (in French, FIS) was poised to win, a building confrontation between the military-backed government and Islamist armed groups quickly expanded. The armed groups' operations included attacks on the security services, and they also targeted schools, public buildings, security service members, and a variety of noncombatants, including journalists, intellectuals, government officials, women, and even children. Unofficial estimates of the dead range from 30,000 - 60,000 during nearly five years of fighting. In addition, over 120 foreigners have been murdered since December

1993. The Armed Islamic Group, thought responsible for those murders, also threatened foreigners and Algerians working in the hydrocarbons sector specifically. Although many Algerians perceive the violence is receding somewhat, fighting and terrorist incidents erupt regularly; no prompt military solution to the conflict seems possible.

The flag of Algeria consists of two equal vertical bands of green (hoist side) and white with a red five-pointed star within a red crescent; the crescent, star, and the color green are traditional symbols of Islam.

Arts, Science, Education

Before independence, a predominantly foreign scientific and artistic community thrived in Algeria. It was well-supported by the French Government and was intended mainly for the European community. From this community developed the University of Algiers, two libraries (each with more than a half-million books), important research in solar energy and anthropology, and a small but highly regarded group of writers and painters—Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus among them.

Since the revolution, Algerians have maintained many of these French foundations and traditions. At the same time, they are developing institutions and customs more typical of their own character and needs.

Although it is small, the Algerian artistic community is active and well-supported by the government and news media. Several painters have achieved local and international reputations and often present exhibitions of their works.

The country has a long tradition of handicrafts, especially in rural areas. Although modernization is eradicating many of these, among the crafts found here are hand-woven textiles, including flat-weave

rugs and strips of tenting; traditional garments; pottery; basketry; coppercraft; brasswork; and leatherwork. The most notable is the Kabylie style of engraved silver jewelry decorated with coral and enamel inlays. Also notable are the intricate and colorful tiles which have for centuries decorated the courtyards and doorways of Algeria.

Expenditure on education has grown steadily since independence. Emphasis is now being placed on secondary and higher education. The University of Algiers (founded in 1909), its affiliated institutes, and other regional universities provide a varied program of instruction that stresses development-related subjects. Many technical colleges also are in operation as well.

In the mid-1990s, less than half of Algeria's population was literate.

Commerce and Industry

Despite Algeria's ongoing security difficulties, the Algerian economy is steadily growing. The engines of this growth are the hydrocarbons and agriculture sectors. Other sectors of the economy, especially industry, are suffering. The government, in conjunction with programs backed by the IMF and World Bank, is working to develop the economy from one centrally planned to one which is market oriented. In addition, the government is seeking to modernize Algeria's financial markets by working to establish secondary credit markets and attract private investment into commercial banking. These financial reforms should help spur investment, which so far has been minimal outside the food processing sector. Sustained economic growth in northern Algeria will likely await a resolution of Algeria's political turmoil, which so far has scared off many investors.

Algeria, whose territory is one-third the size of the U.S., has devoted significant resources to expanding and modernizing the transport and telecommunications sectors since the

1970s. Today, Algeria has a relatively well-developed infrastructure as a result. Unfortunately, armed groups fighting the government have often targeted the power and telecommunications networks as well as rail and road transport lines.

The Chambre de Commerce d'Alger is located at 6, boulevard Anatole France, Algiers; the other Chambers of Commerce are in Oran, at 8, boulevard de la Soumman; and in Constantine, at Palais Consulaire, rue Seguy-Villevalaix.

Transportation

Regional

Frequent flights link Algiers' main airport, Dar-el-Béïda, to all major European cities. Flights are available to Paris, a two hour trip. Flying time to Marseille is one hour; Madrid, two hours; London, three hours; and Palma de Mallorca, a lovely vacation spot in the Balears province of Spain, 45 minutes. Air service is available to Tunis and Casablanca. Tickets are expensive. During summer months, flights are heavily booked and obtaining reservations can be complicated. Ticket restrictions complicate arrangements for connecting flights.

Travel facilities in the Oran area are much the same, with daily heavily booked flights to Algiers, Marseille, and Paris.

Domestic commercial air service is provided by the national airline, Air Algérie, and serves all major interior and coastal cities. Because a policy of decentralization has increased emphasis on the development of interior cities, service to the Sahara is frequent. Fares are reasonable; but unannounced schedule changes also are frequent. Decentralization has created extreme crowding, and travelers often face a lengthy wait at airports for subsequent flights.

Algeria has international air facilities at Constantine, Annaba, and Tlemcen as well as at Algiers and Oran. Many other airports, smaller

in size, and a number of airstrips are in operation throughout the country.

Shipping from Algiers is primarily cargo, but some passenger ships call at the port. A ferry service runs daily between Algiers and Marseille; twice weekly between Oran and Spanish ports.

Local

Algeria has a good network of roads which are kept passable; but local travel can be an adventure. Although most Algerian drivers are extremely courteous, defensive driving is a must; the highway fatality rate is very high. "Fender-benders" are almost unavoidable, even for especially cautious drivers. Extremely heavy traffic should be expected in the cities, and particularly on weekend outings. It is not uncommon for a 30-mile beach trip to take six hours.

Algeria has over 3,000 miles (4,700 kilometers) of railway that connect all the major cities and towns in Algeria. However, trains are often overcrowded, unclean, and frequently late.

Public bus service in Algiers is not generally used by Americans because of overcrowding and erratic schedules. Intercity bus service is more dependable; most official Americans do not use the service, however, because of the crowding and unacceptable bus stations. The national tourist agency, offers bus tours to oases and other points of interest.

Taxis are very difficult to find except at the airport and major hotels. Drivers do not cruise, but wait at widely scattered stands throughout the city. Little service is available after hours and holidays. Taxis are metered and fares are not exceptionally high. Surcharges are often collected after dark. A tip of 10 percent is customary.

Automobiles

A private car is a necessity in Algiers. Walking in Algiers is very difficult because of the narrow, hilly,

winding streets, which often do not have sidewalks. These same streets make driving conditions difficult at best—worse during rush hours. Parking can be time consuming and frustrating. A small car is most practical for city driving, although cars should have sufficient space to make long trips comfortable. To see the many sights scattered in diverse areas of Algeria requires extensive travel. Reliable repair and maintenance facilities for American cars are not widespread, but there are adequate facilities for small foreign cars such as Renault, Volkswagen, Peugeot, or Fiat. Japanese-made vehicles are seen with increasing frequency. Cars with left-hand drive are standard, but right-hand drive vehicles are not prohibited. Algerian safety laws require yellow headlights and the use of seat belts outside the city limits. Additional seat belts may be needed to secure a child's car seat. Emission control devices on U.S. models should be removed and cars adapted to receive local gasoline.

Third-party liability insurance is mandatory and must be purchased from Caisse Algérienne d'Assurance et de Réassurance (CAAR), a national company. It is relatively expensive. Insurance in Algeria is valid only within the borders of Algeria. When outside the country, coverage applicable to the visited countries must be purchased at the border.

Members of the official communities representing other countries do not need Algerian drivers' licenses if they hold valid permits issued elsewhere.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and international telephone service is generally adequate, but it is sometimes difficult to get calls through to the U.S. Although international calls are expensive (about \$1.65 per minute to the U.S.), direct dialing is available to most countries, including the U.S.

Mail

International airmail from the U.S. takes 712 days. Surface letters take a month. Parcel post service is irregular because the U.S. does not have a parcel agreement with Algeria. Once a parcel is received, lengthy customs delays may be experienced.

Radio and TV

Medium-wave and long-wave radios can receive French language programs from RadioTelevisionAlgerienne, Radio Diffusion Francaise, Europe No. 1, Monte Carlo, the Voice of America (evenings only), the BBC, and Moroccan-based Medi 1.

Reception of foreign shortwave broadcasts varies with the season, but BBC can be received clearly, as can Armed Forces Radio and Television Service broadcasts. Algerian television broadcasts between 7 a.m. and 1 a.m. daily. Many movies and the late-night newscasts are in French. Arabic programming (sometimes dubbed American films) is the general rule. Algerian television uses the PAL system, so U.S. receivers will not work in Algeria.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Three Arabic dailies are available in Algeria, and seven daily papers are published in French.

Few foreign publications are available locally. Magazines are usually subscribed to by individuals as they cannot be found in local newsstands.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Algiers and the other major cities have several large nationalized hospitals and clinics. These facilities, however, are considered to be below U.S. standards. For the most part, noncritical obstetrical, surgical, and emergency patients are sent to London (medevac point) or the U.S. (in the case of official Americans, to the nearest U.S. military facility). In critical emergencies, an Algerian

military hospital will care for patients through special arrangement.

No American doctors currently practice in the country, but some foreign-trained local physicians and specialists are available. A number of these maintain private practices.

Community Health

Public sanitation standards are lower here than in Western Europe or the U.S., although (in Algiers) garbage is collected almost daily. Feral cats and various vermin abound. While sewage systems are adequate during the dry season, they often overflow during and after rains, and sometimes there are almost daily water interruptions.

High year-round humidity makes this area inadvisable for persons with serious respiratory ailments and sinus trouble. Children seem particularly susceptible to colds and respiratory infections.

Preventive Measures

Rabies is endemic in Algeria. The three-inoculation anti-rabies series should be considered before entering the country.

Mosquitoes are a definite nuisance in the residential areas of Algiers, and are found in some areas year round. In certain parts of the country, malaria is prevalent. Therefore, malaria prophylaxis should be taken.

During periods of drought, water supply from the city is sporadic, oftentimes no more than once every three days.

All water used for drinking and ice cubes should be boiled. Bottled water is generally available. Typhoid and gamma globulin immunizations are recommended. Local milk should be boiled before consumption. Doctors recommend "long conservation" milk (boiled under pressure) for infants and small children; it can be kept unopened without refrigeration for a reasonably lengthy period. Both

evaporated and powdered milk are usually available.

Fresh fruits and vegetables should be washed and soaked in a disinfectant, and rinsed in boiled water.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

No American passenger ships serve the Mediterranean. The best air connections for Algiers are from Paris, with direct flights available daily. It is also possible to fly from Madrid, Zurich, Rome, Frankfurt, or London. Daily flights go from Paris to Oran, and four to five flights a day are scheduled between Oran and Algiers.

Passports and visas are required for U.S. citizens traveling to Algeria. For more information concerning entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria at 2137 Wyoming Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 265-2800 or go to <http://www.algeria-us.org/> on the Internet.

Smallpox vaccinations are required. Yellow fever and/or cholera vaccination certificates are required for travelers arriving from infected areas. Inoculations which should be kept current include the complete polio series, diphtheria and tetanus, typhoid, cholera, and gamma globulin.

Americans living in or visiting Algeria are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Algeria and obtain updated information on travel and security within Algeria. The U.S. Embassy is located at 4 Chemin Cheikh Bachir El-Ibrahimi, B.P. 549 (Alger-gare) 16000, in the capital city of Algiers. The telephone number is [213] (21) 691-425/255/186. The fax number for the U.S. Embassy is [213] (21) 69-39-79. The U.S. Embassy workweek is Sunday

through Thursday. The former U.S. Consulate in Oran is closed.

Pets

There are no restrictions on importing or exporting pets. Rabies, however, is common in Algeria. Pets must have certificates of inoculation and good health, and proof that rabies vaccination has been given within the last three months. Many hotels in Algeria will not accept pets, especially the SONATOUR (or national) hotels. Some will accept small pets more readily. None have kennels.

Firearms and Ammunition

The importation of firearms and ammunition is discouraged; handguns are strictly prohibited by Algerian law.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The Algerian unit of currency is the *dinar* (DA). It is divided into hundredths which, in popular usage, are called *francs*. Algerian currency notes may not be exported or imported.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Officially a Muslim Arab country, Algeria still follows the Gregorian calendar for most purposes, and Friday is the day of rest.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.	New Year's Day
Mar. 8.	Women's Day
May 1.	Labor Day
June 19	Revolution Recovery Day
July 5.	Independence Day
Nov. 1.	Revolution Day
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Ashura*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Alf, Andrew Heggton. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Algeria*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 1972.

Algeria. Les Guides Bleus: Hachett, Paris, 1974.

Algeria. Nagel: Geneva, 1971.

Area Handbook for Algeria. Foreign Area Studies, American University. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1979.

Horne, Alistair. *Savage War of Peace*. MacMillan Ltd: Great Britain, 1977. Viking Press: New York, 1978. Penguin Books, Ltd.: United Kingdom and New York, 1979. (This book is the best introduction.)

Humbaraci, Arslan. *Algeria: A Revolution That Failed*. Pall Mall Press, Ltd: London, 1966.

Kraft, Joseph. *Struggle for Algeria*. Doubleday: New York, 1961.

M'rabet, Fadila. *Las Femme Algerienne*. Maspero, 1964.

Ouandt, William. *Revolution & Political Leadership. Algeria 1954-1968*, M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, MA, 1969.

ANGOLA

People's Republic of Angola

Major Cities:

Luanda, Huambo, Lobito, Benguela

Other Cities:

Cabinda, Namibe

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Angola. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The name "Angola" comes from the Mbundu word for "king"- *ngola*. Few African countries have seen their natural and human potential as underutilized and thoroughly ravaged by violence as Angola.

In precolonial southern Africa, the area was home to some of the continent's richest kingdoms, which welcomed European merchants and missionaries in the 15th century, only to be corrupted and ultimately destroyed by the transatlantic slave trade in the 16th century. The abolition of the trade-a politically and economically destabilizing event-was followed by the repressive taxation and forced labor regimes of Portuguese colonialism. Although much

of the rest of the continent underwent rapid decolonization in the 1960s, the armed struggle for independence in Angola took nearly 15 years and perpetuated internal divisions that turned into a decades-long, ongoing civil war.

Small groups of hunter-gatherers were the first to inhabit the region of present-day Angola, but late in the first millennium Bantu-speaking people migrated to the area from the north. They brought with them iron-smelting skills, agricultural practices, and cattle, all of which they used to establish some of the largest and most centralized kingdoms in Central Africa. In the mid-13th or 14th century, Congo kings organized agricultural settlements surrounding the mouth of the Congo River into provinces, collected taxes, and established an official currency of shells.

Portuguese explorer Diogo Cão sailed into the mouth of the Congo River in 1482. The Portuguese initially maintained peaceful relations with the Congo, trading goods in exchange for slaves. But the slave-traders became more intrusive and violent. When they began to meet resistance, the Portuguese monarchy sent troops to Angola.

Slavery existed in some form in most of Angola's kingdoms. It is

estimated that between the late 16th century and 1836, when Portugal officially abolished slave trafficking, 4 million people from the region were captured for the slave trade. Slave trading agents, or *pombeiros*-some Portuguese, most African, or Afro Portuguese (*metiços*)-bought slaves from local chiefs in exchange for cloth, guns, and other European goods.

Throughout the 19th century and until the military campaigns ended in 1930, many sectors of Angolan society resisted domination by the Portuguese monarchy. Kings, especially the well educated leaders of the Congo, invoked historical treaties to resist Portuguese dictates.

The country has been engulfed in war and civil strife since its independence from Portugal in 1975. A peace accord, signed in 1994, brought a temporary halt to the civil war, but war erupted again in 1998.

However, despite these grave difficulties, Angola is not without its share of intrigues. Numerous beautiful beaches surrounding Luanda-such as the *Palmeirinhas*, *Ilha*, and *Ramiro*s-are popular places for water sports enthusiasts. Three museums include a Museum of Anthropology, with an excellent collection of African arts, and several

discos and clubs are dotted throughout the city. Angolans are also known for their hospitality; it is not uncommon for visitors to be invited into their homes for a traditional meal.

MAJOR CITIES

Luanda

Luanda, Angola's capital and largest city, lies less than 9 degrees south of the equator. It was established in 1576, and by 1627, the city had become the headquarters for the Portuguese colonial administration and the main outlet for slave traffic to Brazil. Luanda experienced a dramatic population increase after 1940 as thousands of Portuguese immigrants and rural Angolans flocked to the city. This population explosion ceased shortly after Angola's independence from Portugal in 1975, when Portuguese nationals returned en masse to Portugal. By 1976, Luanda's large white population had dwindled from 150,000 to 30,000. The city's population increased again during the Angolan civil war as an influx of Cuban soldiers and civilians settled in Luanda. Luanda has an estimated population of 3 million.

Today, Luanda is a city of contrasts. The lower part of the city serves as Luanda's commercial and industrial center. Skyscrapers and wide avenues give the city a modern appearance. However, vast poverty-ridden shanty-towns are prevalent in other parts of the city. These neighborhoods are filled with sun-dried, mud brick shacks known as "musseques."

Luanda is the site of the University of Luanda, the seat of the Roman Catholic archdiocese, and the location of 4 de Fevereiro, Angola's international airport. Luanda is a busy international port. Coffee, cotton, iron, salt, and diamonds are chief exports. Products are also transported by rail link to Malanje, a city located 200 miles east of Luanda.

Utilities

Running water is available throughout much of the city, though outages do occur. Electricity is 220 volts, 50-cycle electrical power. Power outlets are the standard European two round prong. Persons planning to bring sensitive electronic equipment should also bring a voltage regulator, UPS, and/or surge protector, as voltage may fluctuate as much as 10%. It is also advisable to bring only battery-operated clocks.

Food

Most basic items (dairy products, eggs, butter, bread, sugar, flour, beans, rice, fresh and frozen meats, and limited amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables) can be purchased locally in open-air markets and supermarkets (Jumbo, Afri-Belg, and Intermarket) or in hard currency stores (ES-KO and Cantina Palanca Items in the hard-currency stores are expensive compared to Washington, D.C. prices, but not prohibitive).

Fresh fruits and vegetables are grown locally or imported from South Africa with a moderate amount of variety (tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, onions, lettuce, apples, oranges, mangos, papayas, bananas, etc.). Items purchased in the open-air markets are sold "as is." Care must be taken with these items, especially in the proper cleaning of all fresh produce. Fresh local fish is also abundant and reasonable. Alcoholic beverages are also found in a wide variety, such as wines from South Africa and Europe, beers from Angola, South Africa, Namibia, and hard liquors. Food stuffs, including perishables, can also be ordered on a bimonthly basis from South Africa. Due to the cost of air shipment, prices are high.

Clothing

Locally available clothing is unacceptable by American standards. Size, selection, and availability are extremely limited. It is advisable to bring all clothing items and shoes with you. There are no local taboos regarding clothing, and the majority of people in Luanda dress in the

"Western" style. As Luanda has a tropical climate, any type of washable cotton/linen tropical wear would be well suited for day and nighttime use. Replenishment of clothing items is done most often by catalog purchase through the pouch system. Clothes can also be bought in South Africa at reasonable prices and are of good quality.

Luanda's year-round climate is generally sunny, hot, and humid. Washable 100% cotton clothing is recommended, as dry cleaning facilities are unreliable. Comfortable, durable walking shoes are also recommended. Life, in general, and social functions, in particular, tend to be casual in the expatriate community. Angolans, on the other hand, always dress well for functions.

Supplies and Services

Luanda has one drycleaner shop that is considered adequate, plus a few well regarded, reasonably priced barbershops and beauty salons. There are auto repair shops in town that have received mixed reviews and are not inexpensive.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is readily available at reasonable rates, usually payable in U.S. dollars. However, those employed who have not worked before for Americans may need training, and most speak only Portuguese. Currently, there is no requirement for pension, social security, or retirement payments for domestic help. All household help should have a medical exam and routine security background check prior to beginning work.

Religious Activities

There are missionaries of all faiths living in Angola. Although their principal role is humanitarian assistance, many do hold religious services for their individual faiths. There is a large number of Catholic, Baptist, and Methodist churches in Luanda. The Catholic church has a resident cardinal, and the Methodist church has a resident bishop. Church facilities are simple; most



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View of Luanda, Angola

services are conducted in Portuguese, and attendance by Angolans is normally high. An English non-denominational church group meets every Sunday morning and is open to everyone.

Education

The International School of Luanda (LIS) instructs in English as a first language and has a preschool and kindergarten, as well as grades 1-8. It is a member of the Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) and is listed in the worldwide International Education Handbook. The school is working in conjunction with the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) and their Primary Years Program and is also seeking US. accreditation. There are also French and Portuguese schools in Luanda.

Sports

The national sports of Angola are soccer and basketball. Local games are held regularly. Angola also

sponsors tennis, European handball, basketball, and field hockey teams. Dance, aerobics, karate, and "capoeira" lessons are available, located at several different fitness gyms and at reasonable prices. Runners can participate in the Hash House Harriers, a weekly "Fun Run" sponsored by the British Embassy, and more informal events.

The city has a tennis club; court rental is \$10 per hour for nonmembers. Bring shoes, rackets, and balls sufficient to last a tour. Reasonably priced tennis lessons are available through private arrangement.

Entertainment

Entertainment in Luanda is limited. Alliance Française and the Portuguese Cultural Center will have special cultural programs to which all are invited. There is a small theater with local groups performing. Most people dine out for entertainment. Nightclubs, jazz clubs, and many relatively good res-

taurants serve Angolan, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Cuban cuisine. Restaurants in Angola are expensive by U. S. standards.

Special Information

The security situation in Luanda requires caution. Civil war, banditry and landmines make travel throughout Angola unsafe. Street crime, sometimes violent, is common in Luanda and in other urban centers. Police, who often carry automatic weapons, patrol city streets. They are unpredictable, and their authority should not be challenged. Travel in many parts of Luanda is relatively safe by day, but doors must be locked, windows rolled up, and packages stored out of sight. Police checkpoints contribute to unsafe travel on roads leading out of the city. Visitors are strongly advised to avoid unnecessary travel after dark. All visitors are required at the earliest opportu-

nity to contact the U.S. Embassy security officer for a briefing.

Huambo

Located in west-central Angola, Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa) was founded in 1912 and quickly became a major transportation center. The city is built on Angola's main railway, the Benguela Railway. The railway, which extends from Lobito on Angola's Atlantic coast to Zaire, was used extensively to transport coffee, wheat, and corn grown near Huambo. As a result of this activity, Huambo became a very prosperous city. Huambo's fortunes plummeted during the civil war when the Benguela Railway was severely damaged. The city itself has suffered severe damage. Most of Huambo's residents fled and the city was looted. Huambo faces hardship and years of rebuilding. The city's estimated population in 2000 was 400,000.

Lobito

Lobito is Angola's third largest city and was founded in 1843. The completion of the Benguela Railway served as a stimulus for Lobito's growth into a major city. Lobito is Angola's largest and busiest port. Because of its extensive rail links with Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and South Africa, Lobito was once a leading transport center for Southern Africa's mineral wealth. However, damage to the Benguela Railway has severely disrupted Lobito's trade with other African countries. Several industries are located in the city, among them food processing, shipbuilding, and metalworking. The French built a new textile complex at Lobito in 1979 and a second textile mill is planned for the future. Grains, fruits, sisal, coconuts, and peanuts are grown near the city. Plans to rehabilitate Lobito and the surrounding area were in progress in mid-1991. Lobito's population is roughly 75,000.

Benguela

The city of Benguela is an historic trading, fishing, and administrative center. Benguela was founded in 1617 by Portuguese traders seeking to open new ports and trade markets in Angola. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Benguela served as a major transport point for Portugal's lucrative slave trade. The city currently serves as a trading center for the coffee, corn, tobacco, sugarcane, and sisal grown near Benguela. Industry in the city consists of fish processing, sugar milling, and soap manufacturing. Manganese deposits have been discovered south of the city, but were not developed extensively because of Angola's civil war. Benguela has an estimated population of over 50,000.

OTHER CITIES

The port city of **CABINDA**, situated in the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, was once a transportation point for West African slaves. Today, Cabinda province contains rich crude oil deposits and the city is a major port of Angolan oil exports. Timber, cocoa, coffee, phosphates, and potassium are also transported through Cabinda. Manganese and gold deposits have been discovered near the city, but have not been fully exploited. Cabinda has been able to escape damage during the civil war because it is geographically separated from Angola. Cabinda's status as a free port has made it attractive to foreign businesses and investors.

Cabinda is a small city located 200 miles east of Luanda. It developed in the mid-19th century as an important open-air market. Today, the city is the center of an important cotton- and coffee-growing area. The prosperity of the town was hampered by the exodus of skilled Portuguese workers following Angola's independence. In addition, the city was partially destroyed during the civil war. Malanje is linked by rail

and road with Luanda. Several interesting attractions are located near the city. These attractions include the Luando Game Reserve, Milando Animal Reserve, and the 350-ft. high Duque de Breganca Falls. The city's population is estimated at 31,600.

The port of **NAMIBE** (formerly Moçamedes) was founded by Brazilians in the mid-19th century. Namibe is a city of small houses and administrative buildings crowded together along a low inland cliff with commercial buildings nestled along the Atlantic coast. The city was solely dependent on fishing until the discovery of iron ore near Namibe. A lucrative iron ore mine was opened at Cassinga, but operations were disrupted during the civil war. Fishing remains an important activity for Namibe's residents. Namibe has an estimated population of 77,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Angola is located on the western coast of central/southern Africa. It is bordered by Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) on the north and northeast, Zambia on the east, Namibia on the south and by the Atlantic Ocean on the west. Its coastline extends from the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda (north of the mouth of the Zaire River) to the northern border of Namibia, a distance of nearly 1,000 miles. Angola comprises a total area of approximately 481,354 square miles, larger than Texas and California combined.

The Atlantic coast of Angola is narrow and flat. Most of the country is comprised of a vast plateau elevated 3,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level. Northern and western portions of Angola have mountains, thick vegetation and fertile soil. The majority of Angolans live in the north and

west. Many of the country's rivers originate in central Angola. However, only the Cuanza River is navigable. The eastern half of Angola consists of relatively flat, open plateau and sandy soil. Angola's southern areas are dominated by the Namib Desert. Population in southern and eastern regions is very sparse. The Cabinda province is covered by tropical rain forest.

Angola has a tropical climate. The hot season runs from January to April, with high temperatures and high humidity. There are light rains in November and December with rains falling in March & April.

Population

With only about 12 million people, Angola is lightly populated. As a result for three decades of conflict, an estimated 80% of the population is now concentrated in 20% of the national territory closest to the coast, and nearly 30% of the total population now resides in the capital, Luanda. The rest of the population is spread over the central highlands.

Angolans are mostly of Bantu ethnic heritage. About 75% of Angola's people are members of Angola's four largest ethnic groups. The Ovimbundu, normally resident in the central highlands and southeastern parts of Angola, are the largest group, comprising about 37% of the population. The Ovimbundu were traditionally farmers and traders.

The Kimbundu, approximately 25% of Angola's population, live in and around Luanda and to the east. Prolonged contact with Portuguese colonial rulers has given the Kimbundu the highest proportion of Angolans assimilated into European culture.

The Bakongo, usually concentrated in the northwest, and areas adjacent to the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cabinda Province, constitute 13% of the population. The Bakongo at one time formed a loose federation known as

the Kingdom of the Kongo with whom the Europeans made initial contact in the 15th century when the Portuguese first landed at the mouth of the Congo River.

The Lunda and Chokwe occupy the northeastern sector of Angola, with branches also in Democratic Republic of Congo, and make up 10% of the population. These two ethnic groups once comprised a great kingdom in the Angolan interior and were barely touched by Portuguese influence.

Other relatively minor ethnic groups include the Nganguela in the southeast and the Ovambo and Herero in the southwest (about 7%). The Ovambo and Herero are migratory cattle herders, who maintain close ties to kinsmen in Namibia, and regularly migrate across the Angolan-Namibian border. The rest of the population is made up of mulatto or mestizo (mixed European and African, 2%), Europeans (1%), and others (5%).

Before the 1975 civil war, approximately 750,000 non-Africans, primarily Portuguese citizens, lived in Angola. About 500,000 fled to Portugal because of the war. Today, about 40,000 Portuguese live in Angola, constituting the largest foreign population. The mulatto/mestizo are influential politically and economically beyond their numbers.

The diverse ethnic backgrounds of the population suggest the wide range of languages spoken. No one African language is widely used beyond its ethnic area. Portuguese is Angola's official language and is used by the government, in schools, and by people throughout the country.

The last official Angolan census was taken in 1970. Since then, because the war has made accurate demography impossible, population figures have only been given as estimates. The Angolan Government estimated the 1988 population at almost 9.5 million. Today's best estimate is about 12 million inhabit-

ants, with about 3 million of those residing in Luanda.

History

Modern-day Angola was first discovered in 1483 by the Portuguese explorer Diego Cao. Although the Portuguese government sent a small group of settlers to Angola in 1491, the establishment of large permanent settlements was not their primary objective. Rather, Angola was to serve as an ample source of slave labor for Portugal's profitable coffee plantations in Brazil. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Portuguese had established a lucrative slave trade in Angola. It is estimated that nearly three million Angolans were eventually sent to South America as slaves. More Portuguese flocked to Angola as the slave trade grew. In 1575, the Portuguese established their first permanent settlement at Luanda.

Angola's lucrative slave trade quickly captured the attention of Portugal's colonial rivals. In 1641, the Dutch invaded and occupied Luanda. For seven years, Portugal's Angolan slave trade was controlled by the Dutch. The Portuguese eventually wrested control of Angola from the Dutch in 1648.

Angola's boundaries were formally established by the Berlin West Africa Congress in 1884–1885 in which France, Germany and Portugal won international recognition of the borders of their African colonies. During the early 20th century, Angola was wracked by a series of tribal uprisings against Portuguese rule. All of these uprisings were ruthlessly crushed. By 1922, the Portuguese government claimed that all resistance against colonial rule in Angola had been silenced.

The years following World War II brought an influx of new Portuguese settlers. Beginning in 1950, the Portuguese government initiated a campaign to entice new settlers to Angola with a promise of free farmland. The plan was highly successful. By the end of 1950, there were

80,000 Portuguese living in Angola, compared with fewer than 10,000 in 1900. The Portuguese promises of free land created a series of hardships for native Angolans, however. Most of the free farmland was confiscated from traditional African farming areas. Many African farmers, displaced from their land, were forced to take menial jobs in Angola or work outside the country. The Portuguese settlement practices, coupled with harsh repression of dissent, led to deep bitterness and discontent among the Angolan people. The seeds of violent revolution had been sown.

In 1961, Angola was shaken by two separate uprisings. The first revolt was conducted by a political group known as the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Shortly thereafter, the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) launched their own military campaign. Initially, both uprisings made impressive gains against Portuguese troops. However, the Portuguese eventually gained the upper hand and crushed the revolts. Members of the MPLA and FNLA were forced to flee to remote parts of the country. In 1966, after a series of disagreements, several members of the FNLA left the party and formed the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). UNITA began its own revolt against the Portuguese in late 1966. It was quickly defeated. Eventually, tribal rivalries, personality conflicts and ideological differences erupted between members of the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA. Relations between the three groups became so hostile at one point that they began murdering and imprisoning each others officials. Although the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA were equally committed to driving the Portuguese from Angolan soil, the bitter rivalries and hostilities between them and within their own parties severely hampered these efforts.

In 1974, the Portuguese government at home was overthrown. Weary of Portugal's prolonged involvement in Angola, the new gov-

ernment decided to grant independence. Representatives of the Portuguese government and the three opposition parties met in January 1975 to plan an orderly transition from colonial rule. At this meeting, the MPLA, UNITA and FNLA agreed to form a transitional government and to hold free elections. All Portuguese troops were to be removed from Angola. Complete independence was scheduled for 1975. Unfortunately, Angola's journey to independence would be marred by warfare and hardship.

Within a matter of months, the shaky coalition government collapsed. By mid-1975, the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA were engaged in open civil warfare.

On November 11, 1975, Portugal declared Angola independent. Because Luanda was in MPLA hands at the time of independence, the Portuguese handed control of the government to the MPLA.

Although the MPLA controlled Angola, they were faced with a host of internal and external problems. Years of civil warfare had decimated Angola's economy. Many Portuguese settlers fled the country after 1975, taking with them the expertise needed to rebuild the economy. Although substantially weakened, UNITA and the FNLA still posed a major threat to the MPLA. Foreign powers, such as South Africa, wanted to destroy the MPLA. Finally, the MPLA suffered from dissent within its own ranks.

In 1991, the MPLA and UNITA signed a formal peace agreement, effectively ending 16 years of civil war. However, the peace lasted only until October 1992, when the civil war resumed. The Lusaka Protocol of 1994, supported by armed UN peacekeepers, promised peace by guaranteeing UNITA a voice in the government. In spite of recurrent episodes of violence, some 100,000 troops had been demobilized by 1996.

Public Institutions

Angola changed from a one-party Marxist/Leninist system ruled by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) to a multiparty democracy following the September 1992 elections. Since then, political power is increasingly concentrated in the Presidency. The political power of the MPLA Central Committee Political Bureau has diminished. Currently, the MPLA and eight other political parties are represented in the National Assembly, including the largest opposition party, UNITA, made up of former fighters who have abandoned the armed struggle.

In late 1999, a major Government offensive succeeded in destroying Jonas Savimbi's conventional military capacity and driving him to guerrilla tactics. Currently, the Government controls 90%-95% of the national territory, and a similar share of the population, with Savimbi's forces reduced to scattered, but sometimes effective, raids against civilian as often as military targets. As the UNITA military threat abated, the Government has slowly allowed for greater public dissent, a freer press, considerable leverage for opposition parties, and a proposal to hold national elections in 2002. Some of this public debate has increased and strengthened civil society, in the process helping to make the country a more dynamic and interesting place to work in international affairs.

The executive branch of the government is composed of the Chief of State, President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, Prime Minister (a position which, since the early 1999 government reorganization, is also held by the President), and the Council of Ministers.

The Constitution establishes the broad outlines of the government structure and delineates the rights and duties of citizens. The legal system is based on the Portuguese civil and customary law system. It was recently modified to accommodate a multi-party political system and

increased use of free-market concepts and is again under revision in the National Assembly. The legal voting age for Angolans is 18.

Military and civilian courts exist, but the judicial system is precarious. There have been reports of prolonged detention without trial, unfair trials, and arbitrary executions.

The country is divided into 18 provinces, each with its own provincial government, but the governors are appointed by and under direct authority of the central government.

Angola has been ravaged by warfare since initiation of the struggle for independence from the Portuguese in 1961. An estimated 450,000 people have been killed; 100,000 maimed; and 3.7 million people were orphaned or forced from their homes since the wars began. The war has severely damaged the country's social institutions and infrastructure. The millions of dislocated people, orphaned children, and the lack of communications and transport between cities and the interior have all taken their toll. Daily conditions within the country, and in the capital city, Luanda, are difficult for most Angolans. Hospitals are without medicines or basic equipment; schools are without books; and public servants often lack the basic supplies for their day-to-day work.

An ally of the Socialist Block during the Cold War, Angola has increasingly drawn closer to Western nations, including the U.S. Angola's vast petroleum resources and its role as a regional power give it high importance.

The flag of Angola consists of two equal horizontal bands of red (top) and black with a centered yellow emblem consisting of a five-pointed star within half a cogwheel crossed by a machete

Arts, Science, Education

The arts and crafts market may not be as prolific in Angola as in some African countries, but there are beautiful artifacts. There is a trade in antique masks and fabrics. Ivory engraving is said to be the most intricate and detailed work found in Angola. Some craftsmen in Luanda market in woodcarvings for the expatriate community, and there are a few good painters as well, painting from traditional landscape and portrait to abstract art.

Angola is predominantly Roman Catholic (60%). Protestants (15%) and various indigenous beliefs that may also be nominally Christian (25%) fill out the pattern of religious affiliation. Catholic churches are found in most towns, and their religious workers have played an important role in keeping education and food distribution programs going in the war-torn country.

The Portuguese brought the Catholic religion with them, and toward the end of the 19th century Protestant missionaries arrived from the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. Catholic and Protestant missionaries have played a significant role in Angola education. At the time of independence the leaders of Angola's three major liberation movements had been educated a Protestant missions. Literacy, less than 10% at independence, has increased, despite the onset of the civil war, and is estimated at 45% of the total population. Currently, only 40% of Angolan children attend school for the first three grades, after which attendance declines severely. Also, the quality of education is poor, and most of the children of parents with money are sent overseas to Portugal or other countries.

Commerce and Industry

The continuing civil war has devastated Angola's postindependence economy and has created wide-ranging humanitarian and social

problems and diverted resources that otherwise might have been used for the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure. The war has caused serious disruptions in the transportation of people and goods, and in agricultural production.

Angola is resources-rich, with abundant offshore oil reserves, high-quality diamond deposits, numerous other minerals, rich agricultural lands, and many rivers, which serve as a source of water and power supply. Prior to independence Angola was a net food exporter, and one of the largest coffee and cotton producer in the world. Other main crops included bananas, sugarcane, sisal, corn, manioc, tobacco, forest products, fish, and livestock. Now Angola buys almost all of its food, as well as most consumer products. Coca-Cola invested \$35 million in a bottling plant located 60 kilometers outside of Luanda. The plant opened in early 2000 and added a second production line in November 2000. Coca-Cola's investment is the largest single non-mineral investment in Angola's history.

The oil sector dominates the economy. Petroleum exports account for about 90% of total exports annually, and oil revenue makes up almost half of the country's Gross Domestic Product, which reached \$5.6 billion in 1999. This strong reliance on a single commodity makes Angola very vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices. Weak oil prices in 1998 and part of 1999, combined with increased arms purchases in response to an escalation of hostilities, led to a heavy external debt burden. Angola's external debt amounted to almost \$10 billion at the end of 1999, and \$4.4 billion of this amount was in arrears. Higher oil prices in late 1999 and 2000 and the intake of signing bonuses for new oil concessions helped to keep the debt from growing further.

Angola is the third largest trading partner of the U.S. in sub-Saharan Africa, mainly because of significant petroleum exports. Between 1997-99, Angolan crude oil accounted for

about 5% of U.S. total imports of crude. The U.S. imported \$2.4 billion of crude oil from Angola in 1999 and exported \$252 million of goods to Angola, primarily machinery and transport equipment, manufactured goods, and food products.

After 1975, Angola's Soviet-influenced economy was highly centralized and state-dominated. The Government has very slowly introduced reforms and liberalizations since the early 1990s. The government enacted its most significant reforms to date in 1999, when it unified official and parallel market exchange rates and liberalized interest rates. In April 2000, the Government reached an agreement with the International Monetary Fund on a Staff-Monitored Program (a precursor to receiving loans from the IMF and other concessionary lenders). Progress on economic reforms, such as privatization and improved accountability and transparency, continues-but at a slow pace.

Transportation

Automobiles

A 2000 law requiring that all cars brought into the country be no more than 3 years of age has been informally relaxed for non-commercial users. The only safe means of traveling in the city is by automobile. As with all other types of infrastructure in Angola, roads have been poorly or infrequently maintained in the past 20 years. Potholes are typically deep and numerous. High-clearance, heavy duty suspension vehicles are recommended. Cars brought into Angola by nonresidents are considered in transit, and no taxes are levied. Only leaded fuel is available, and although the lines are long at peak hours, there is no widespread shortage of fuel. Fuel prices have risen considerably over the last year. Rental vehicles are available, but are very costly.

There are no vehicle inspections required for registration or licensing purposes. Vehicle traffic moves on the right as in the U.S. A valid

U.S. driver's license is needed to apply for an Angolan driver's license, but recently the Angolan Government has been slow in issuing licenses despite charging a fee. Local third party insurance is available and required by law. Full coverage purchased locally is expensive and not reliable when paying for damages. Vehicle owners may wish to obtain hard-currency insurance from outside Angola.

There are repair facilities in the city for GM, Dodge, Jeep, Ford, Toyota, and Nissan vehicles. However, it is helpful to bring basic items such as air and oil filters, fan belts, spark plugs, etc., with you. A heavy-duty battery is required, and air conditioning is a must year round. The poor road conditions also cause suspension systems and tires to wear rapidly. Any vehicle shipped to Angola should have heavy-duty suspension, radial tires, and undercoating. Carburetors should be adjusted to low-octane leaded gas and catalytic converters removed, since locally available gasoline is of poor quality. Because of the extremely high rate of pilferage from the Luanda port, do not ship car radios, stereos, or other removable items with the vehicle. Shipping time for vehicles averages about 4 months with some time in port. It will take about a month to receive plates before the vehicle can be driven.

Local

Local public transportation is limited and deemed unsafe. The public buses and collective taxis (minibuses or "candongueiros") are not safe; no individual taxi service exists. Reliable railroad transportation is not available. Roads to the interior are not deemed safe for general travel. The best method of reaching other areas is by air. Air transport to major interior cities is available on the Angolan national airline TAAG; however, security conditions and equipment problems regularly interrupt service.

Regional

The following airlines provide service to/from Europe on a weekly or

more frequent basis: Sabena (Belgium), Air France, TAP (Portugal), and TAAG (Angola). Air Namibia, Air Zimbabwe, Air Ethiopia, Air Gabon, and South African Airlines offer regional service.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Angola's telephone system is poor. Local and international telephone connections can be difficult to make and can be extremely frustrating and expensive. Luanda's cellular telephone system is estimated to be 400% oversubscribed, and connections, particularly during business hours, are difficult to make. The telephone system is slowly being changed to digital but problems are still rampant.

Radio and TV

Luanda's local radio stations broadcast on AM, FM, and SW Programs concentrate on popular music and local news, with programs from 6 am until midnight daily. Shortwave broadcasts from Europe, North America, and Africa are the best source for international news and can be received without much difficulty.

Angolan television (TPA) transmits daily in color, with programming consisting of news, sports, cartoons, soap operas, cultural programs, and movies from the U.S., Europe, and Brazil. International programs are usually telecast in original languages with Portuguese subtitles. A multi-system 120/220v television, video, or stereo system is required; local television transmissions are in PAL-1.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Almost all publications in Angola are in Portuguese; a few French books are also available. The main local newspaper, the state-run *Journal de Angola*, is published daily. Several independent newspapers (also in Portuguese) are published weekly or biweekly. English-language publications are difficult to obtain in Angola. It is advisable to

receive magazines, newspapers, and books by pouch mail or subscribe to an internet service.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The government-run hospitals are substandard by Western criteria and lack such basics as medicines, supplies, or trained staff, and are often without water, electricity, and sanitary facilities. There is one dental office.

Community Health

Because of the poor living and health conditions within the capital city's neighborhoods, disease, illness, and malnutrition are commonplace among the majority of Luanda's population. Warm weather and standing water from rains create a rampant breeding area for mosquitoes, and malaria is a common and dangerous threat to the population throughout Angola. Dust is also a continuous problem, and many people suffer from allergies and sinus trouble.

Recently a beautification project called Urbana 2000 was begun to try to beautify and clean up the city's image. Though Luanda's garbage collection system operates regularly, garbage and trash still ends up in the streets. Air pollution from dust, automobile exhaust, and burning garbage is heavy. City water is badly contaminated by raw sewage, human waste, and other toxic substances. Because of the poor living conditions, the average life expectancy for local citizens is only 45 years.

Preventive Measures

Luanda is afflicted with virtually every disease known to mankind. There are incidents of the following illnesses: hepatitis types A, B, C, measles, typhoid fever, polio, leprosy, amoebic infestations (whipworm, roundworm, amebiasis, and giardia lamblia), cholera, yellow fever; filaria, tetanus, meningitis, trypanosomiasis, rabies, tuberculo-

sis, syphilis, and varieties of AIDS. HIV and hepatitis contaminate the local blood supply. HIV/AIDS precautions are strongly recommended. Malaria is a serious continuing health risk because of the warm climate and a lack of community programs to combat it. Luanda is normally dry and dusty for 9 months of the year; as a result, some individuals are troubled with sinus, allergy, and respiratory problems.

It is recommended that vaccinations, including yellow fever, typhoid, rabies; hepatitis A, B, C, and meningitis, be updated prior to coming.

Antimalarial precautions are a must, with Mefloquine Doxycycline being the prophylaxis of choice. It is recommended that malaria prophylaxis begin a week prior to arrival.

Drinking local tap water is very hazardous. Care must be taken when dining out, as food poisoning is common, although not necessarily in restaurants frequented by expatriates. All locally grown produce should be soaked in iodine or bleach solution before consuming, and care should be taken with the purchase and cooking of local meats and fish.

In sum, Angola, and Luanda in particular, is a place for the relatively healthy who are free of any major or continuing health problems.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport and visa, which must be obtained in advance, and an International Certificate of Vaccination, are required. Persons arriving without visas are subject to possible arrest and/or deportation. Travelers whose international immunization cards do not show inoculations against yellow fever and cholera may be subject to involuntary vaccinations and/or heavy fines. Visitors remaining in Angola beyond their

authorized visa duration are subject to fines and possible arrest. Current information on entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of Angola at 1615 M Street, N.W., Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20036, tel. (202) 785-1156, fax (202) 785-1258.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with and obtain updated information on travel and security from the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Luanda located at the Casa Inglesa Complex, Rua Major Kanhangula No. 132/135, tel. 244-2-396-727; fax 244-2-390-515. The Embassy is located on Rua Houari Boumedienne in the Miramar area of Luanda, P.O. Box 6468, tel. 244-2-447-028/(445-481)/(446-224); (24-hour duty officer tel. 244-9-501-343); fax 244-2-446-924. The Consulate may be contacted by e-mail at amembassyluanda@netangola.com.

Pets

Quarantine is not required for pets brought to Angola. Dogs and cats must have rabies shots within 6 months, but not less than 30 days prior to arrival. Heartworm medication is also advised. Limited pet food is available locally, and what is available is very expensive. The mange parasite is prevalent in Angola; infection may occur if a pet comes in contact with infected animals. There are several private practice veterinarians in Luanda. No kennel facilities are available.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Government of Angola prohibits the importation of any type of personal firearms or ammunition.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Angola's currency is the kwanza. The exchange rate is market-determined. U.S. paper currency (no coins) is widely accepted in Angola. Angolan kwanzas are not convertible outside of Angola. U.S. dollars can be converted to local currency at exchange houses authorized by the Angolan government. Rapid fluctuations in the value of the Angolan Kwanza and shortages of U.S. dol-

lars are widespread. Currency conversions on the parallel market are illegal, and participants are subject to arrest. In general, only the newer series 100 (US) dollar bills are accepted due to widespread counterfeiting of the older style.

Banking practices are unreliable. It is advisable to use your stateside bank, with direct deposit for all payroll or voucher transactions. Traveler checks are not generally accepted outside the Mission. Credit cards are accepted at major hotels and by a few businesses that cater to the expatriate communities. Otherwise, credit cards are not accepted.

Angola uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 4	Commencement of the Armed Struggle
Feb/Mar.	Carnival*
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar. 27	Victory Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Apr. 14	Youth Day
May 1	Labor Day
June 1	Children's Day
Aug. 1	Armed Forces Day
Sept. 17.	Heroes' Day
Nov. 2	Remembrance Day
Nov. 11	Independence Day
Dec. 1	Pioneer's Day
Dec. 10	Worker's Party Foundation Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 25	Family Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Web Sites

Angolan Embassy in Washington, D.C. <http://209.183.193.172>

Angola's Official Web Site <http://www.angola.org>

Angola Business and Economics <http://www.angola.org/business>
Angola Press

<http://www.angolapress-angop.ao>
UNITA's Homepage <http://www.kwacha.org>

Radio Ecclksia-Catholic Emissary in Angola

<http://ecclesia.snet.co.ao> Lusofone Web Site-gossip (chat room), information, and other links. <http://www.portugalnet.pt>

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Minter, William. *Apartheid's Contras: An Inquiry into the Roots of War in Angola and Mozambique*. 1994. Okuma, Thomas. *Angola in Ferment*. 1974.

Sean Sheehan, *Angola: Cultures of the World*. 18 Marshall Cavendish Corporation. 1999.

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- Spikes, Daniel. *Angola and the Politics of Intervention*.
- Tvedten, Inge, et al. *Angola: Struggle for Peace and Reconstruction* (Nations of the Modern World. Africa). 1997.
- Van der Winden, Bob, ed. *A Family of the Musseque*. Oxford, England: World View Publishing, 1996.
- Warner, Rachel. *Refugees*. Hove, England: Wayland Ltd., 1996.
- Watson, James. *No Surrender: A Story of Angola*. London: Lions Tracks, 1992.
- Wilson, T. Ernest. *Angola Beloved*. 1998.
- Wright, George. *The Destruction of a Nation: United States Policy Toward Angola Since 1945*. 1997.

BENIN

The Republic of Benin

Major Cities:

Cotonou, Porto Novo

Other Cities:

Abomey, Ouidah, Parakou

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **BENIN**, one of the smallest and most densely populated nations in Africa, was once a colonial possession of France. It later functioned as an autonomous member of the French Community for 22 years before achieving independence in 1960. Benin was known as Dahomey until 1975 when, with the espousal of a socialist orientation, its name was changed to the People's Republic of Benin. In 1990 a national conference repudiated Marxism in favor of multiparty democracy and adopted the country's present name. The word "Benin" is derived from the name of an African kingdom that had flourished near the Gulf of Guinea in the seventeenth century.

When Benin's official capital, Porto Novo, was founded as a trading post by Portuguese explorers in the 17th century, the country was actually an agglomeration of small principalities, most of them tributary to the Kingdom of Abomey, which had dominated the Yorubas and other coastal tribes. The king of Porto Novo requested protection from France, with whom there was a commercial treaty; with the help of the French military, all of what is now Benin was organized as a protectorate in 1894. It was administered through Paris under territorial governors and governors general until it achieved its status as an autonomous state.

MAJOR CITIES

Cotonou

Cotonou is, by virtue of its economic predominance, the administrative capital and major city of Benin. It is where most ministries, all diplomatic missions, and the president's residence are located. Situated on the Gulf of Guinea, it was founded in 1851 as a French trading post, and now has an estimated population of 750,000.

Cotonou's port is the transit point for many goods destined for Niger and Nigeria. The World Bank is financing an extension of the port which, upon completion, will give it a freight-handling capacity of more than a million tons of cargo annually.

Cotonou is a sprawling town with tree-lined streets. Architecture varies according to the locale, from concrete bungalows to old French colonial buildings, to Beninese thatched-roof dwellings. The sandy streets, dusty yards, and rundown buildings give parts of the town a shabby look, although there have been recent efforts to clean up these areas. A paved boulevard parallels the ocean front, and the beach extends east and west to Nigeria and Ghana. North of Cotonou, a lagoon extends eastward to Porto Novo, and is connected by a navigable waterway with Lagos, Nigeria. Cotonou is a growing city. Although the commercial center is small, residential areas are large. Most expatriates reside in neighborhoods of European-style dwellings. Cotonou is separated from its eastern residential quarter, Akpakpa, by a lagoon linking Lake Nokoue with the Atlantic. A new bridge, financed by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), connects the city's two sections.

Schools for Foreigners

The Nigerian Community School, which opened in 1982, offers English-language instruction from the nursery level through sixth grade.

The curriculum follows the British system. The school year extends from October 1 to June 30, and is divided into four semesters. Nigerian and Beninese holidays are observed.

Another school in the city, École Montaigne, offers a French curriculum; all classes are conducted in that language. Under the auspices of the French Embassy, École Montaigne is one of nine members of the federation of French schools south of the Sahara. It is accredited by the French National Ministry of Education. The school offers three levels of nursery school and kindergarten through high school. The school year is divided into trimesters running from the end of September through June. French and local holidays are observed.

The Brilliant Stars International School was established in 1986 as a private, nondenominational school and offers an American curriculum. It offers pre-K through grade 6. The school is not accredited at this time. Classes are taught in English, and French is taught at all levels.

Cotonou has no facilities for English-speaking students with learning disabilities or other handicaps.

Recreation

The entire coast of Benin is a long, sandy beach. It is ideal for horseback riding, but walking alone is not recommended. The treacherous undertow and strong currents make swimming and surfing dangerous. However, a few miles east of the city is one of West Africa's best beaches, La Crique, where swimming is safe.

Four hotel swimming pools in Cotonou are open to the public (admission charged), and there are tennis courts at the Sheraton Hotel, the

French Yacht Club, and the Benin Club.

Benin has no golf courses. The closest are in Lagos, Nigeria, a two-and-a-half-hour drive, or in Lomé, Togo, two hours away. Benin's favorite spectator sport is soccer, and matches are frequently played at the two stadiums in Cotonou. Basketball also is played.

Many weekend excursions can be made from Cotonou. The most popular is to Lomé, a two-hour drive to the west. Shopping and fine restaurants are popular attractions. To the east is Lagos, a large, bustling city. It has bookstores with extensive English-language selections, an interesting museum of Yoruba and other tribal art, and a busy social life within the large diplomatic and expatriate communities. Other points in Nigeria within weekend reach of Cotonou are Ibadan, Nigeria's most populous city, and Ife, which has a museum displaying many excellent 15th- and 16th-century bronze and terra cotta busts and effigies.

Abomey and Ouidah, north and west of Cotonou, respectively, are interesting towns for day trips.

For the activity of African marketplaces, a rotating schedule of large markets is available in Cotonou, Porto Novo, and Adjara, just north of Porto Novo. An adventuresome trader can buy *gri-gri* charms, colorful enamelware from China, and interesting fabrics.

Travel to northern Benin offers self-help projects, where a visitor is welcomed into a village and enjoys a greeting by the entire community.

There is an excellent hotel in Natitingou, the center of the Ditamari culture. Farther north, the region is rich in wild game and the scenic beauty of mountains and waterfalls.

Entertainment

Cotonou has five cinemas, one of which is a modern, air-conditioned theater. All offer current Western films; soundtracks are in French.

Visiting foreign artists also occasionally perform in the city.

Saturday night is disco night in Cotonou, with entertainment establishments open until 2 or 3 a.m. Nightclubs are crowded and lively with African and European music and atmosphere. Some Cotonou residents go to either Lagos or Lomé for weekend social life.

Despite the small size of the city's American community, there are many opportunities for social contacts. The several diplomatic missions resident in the city include the French, Egyptian, Ghanaian, German, Chinese, Nigerian, Nigerien, North Korean, Russian, Zairian, Cuban, Libyan, Bulgarian, Chadian, and Algerian embassies. Several other Western and Eastern countries have honorary consuls or trade representatives in Cotonou. A large United Nations staff and many French Canadians also are in residence. Among American expatriates, small informal get-togethers are popular. Also, volleyball games draw people from the international community. Acquaintances are easily made and informal get-togethers are frequent.

Contacts with the Beninese are possible and encouraged. The population is friendly and receptive. Many Beninese are educated, but most do not speak English. French is necessary for maintaining social relationships with them.

Porto Novo

Porto Novo is the official capital of Benin. Situated on a lagoon in the southeast part of the country, it is a commercial center and rail terminus from the interior. Historians believe that it was founded in the 16th century as the seat of a native kingdom, but it was named by the Portuguese who built a post there and settled the city as a center for slave trade.

Porto Novo passed to the French late in the 19th century under the protest of the King of Abomey, who attacked the town in 1891 with an

army which included 2,000 female warriors. He was defeated by the French, and the town was incorporated into the colony of Dahomey, becoming its capital in 1900. Dahomey was consolidated into French West Africa in 1895.

The city is the administrative capital of the Beninese Government. Porto Novo is connected by road and rail to Cotonou and by road to Lagos, Nigeria. The city has been bypassed for commercial and industrial development since the building of a railway to the interior and the improvement of deep water harbor facilities in Cotonou. There are several African artisans and guilds in Porto Novo.

French is spoken throughout the city, and the visitor needs a good working knowledge of that language to conduct business or to find their way through the shops or places of interest. There is a small museum here, tracing the history of the kings of Porto Novo, as well as a fine collection of masks and statues.

The population of Porto Novo in 2000 was approximately 194,000.

OTHER CITIES

ABOMEY, about two hours west by road from Cotonou, was the capital of the Dahomean Empire until the late 19th century. The Royal Palace, the tombs of the kings, and a historical museum are maintained in Abomey. Many artifacts from the royal period are on display in the palace. Weavers are at work in the palace courtyard, and their products, as well as carvings and bronzes, are on sale. Abomey was once a slave-trading center. The city is located in an area where palm nuts and peanuts are grown. Abomey has a population of approximately 80,000.

OUIDAH, 20 miles west of Cotonou, was the main port of the Kingdom of Abomey in the 18th and 19th centuries. Ouidah also became an important trading center for several

European nations. Remnants of Portuguese, French, Dutch, Danish, and British trading posts can be found here. Ouidah offers a Portuguese castle and a temple displaying sacred pythons. Coffee and coconuts are grown in the area. Ouidah is known for its orange and citron trees. Ouidah's population is estimated at 60,000.

Located in the center of the country, **PARAKOU** is 200 miles north of Porto Novo. The estimated population is over 65,000. It is the link that extends the transport route of the Niger River; railways pass northward from Cotonou to the Gulf of Guinea to Parakou, then goods are finally received in Niger.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Benin, a narrow, north-south strip of land in West Africa, is bounded by Nigeria on the east, Togo on the west, Niger on the north, and Burkina Faso on the northwest. Its total area of 43,484 square miles (112,622 square kilometers) extends inland from the Gulf of Guinea to the Niger River.

The country has two rainy and two dry seasons. Annual rainfall in the coastal area averages 14 inches (36 centimeters), not particularly high for this part of West Africa. The principal rainy season is from April to late July, with a shorter, less intense, rainy period from late September to November. The main dry season is from December to April, with a short, cooler dry season from late July to early September.

Temperatures and humidity are high along the tropical coast. In Cotonou, the average maximum temperature is 89°F (31°C), and the minimum is 75°F (24°C). Variations in temperature increase when moving north through a savanna and plateau toward the Sahel.

Population

Benin has an estimated population of 6.5 million people. Two-thirds of the population live in the south. The population is young, with over half being under twenty years old. Several tribal groups include the Yoruba in the southeast, Fon (south central), Mina (southwest), Bariba (northeast), Dendi (north central), and Somba (northwest). French is the official language, but is spoken more in urban areas than in rural sections. Fon and Yoruba languages are common vernaculars in the south, with at least six major tribal languages spoken in the north.

The Fon and Yoruba of the south are more Westernized than the northern peoples. During the colonial period, their opportunities were expanded by their prominence in the administration of French West Africa.

Government

After achieving independence in 1960, Benin (then Dahomey) passed through a succession of governments which ended in 1972 with a military takeover. Marxism-Leninism was declared the official ideology in 1974, and a single political party, which came to dominate all aspects of Beninese public life, was established. Major businesses, including banks, were nationalized. East bloc countries became the focus of Benin's foreign policy.

The collapse of all state-owned banks and an increasing economic crisis led to the convening of a national conference in 1990. That conference repudiated Marxism and paved the way for a new constitution creating a multi-party democracy. In 1991 Benin became the first African country to replace a military leader through the power of the ballot box. Benin's president is elected by popular vote for a five-year term, and there is a directly elected National Assembly.

The country is divided into six provinces which are subdivided into 86 districts and 510 communes. Local



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Market street scene in Benin

administration is assigned to elected provincial district, town, and village councils.

The flag of Benin consists of two equal horizontal bands of yellow (top) and red with a vertical green band on the hoist side.

Arts, Science, Education

The museums in Porto Novo, Abomey, and Ouidah offer a view of Beninese culture and history. Porto Novo's small museum displays artifacts and brief historical summaries of the kings of Porto Novo, as well as the best collection of masks and statues to be found in the area. At Abomey, the capital of the former Dahomean Kingdom, it is possible to explore the restored royal palace grounds. Within them is a courtyard where artisans weave or forge and sell their crafts. In Ouidah, a

museum has been established in a former Portuguese fort. Exhibits focus on the slave trade and Benin's links with Brazil and the Caribbean.

Contemporary artists specialize in stylized bronze figurines and appliqué wall hangings. They are relatively inexpensive, and of good quality. African art objects are sold at several more Office National du Tourisme et Hôtellerie (ONATHO) shops in Cotonou.

The French Cultural Center in Cotonou offers French-language instruction and nightly movies, also in French. The American Cultural Center has a small library with books in both English and French. The National University of Benin, a 20-minute drive north of Cotonou, has not yet developed an artistic or cultural focus.

The literacy rate in Benin is extremely low at 37.5 percent.

Commerce and Industry

Benin's economy is based on agriculture and transit trade. Products include cotton, sugar, peanuts, palm oil, and cashews for export. Various tubers and corn are grown for local subsistence. A modest fishing fleet provides fish and shrimp for export to Europe. Major commercial activities, formerly government-owned, are being privatized. The former state-run brewery was acquired by a French brewer, and petroleum distribution will soon be privatized as well. Smaller businesses are privately owned by Beninese citizens, but some firms, primarily French and Lebanese, are foreign-owned. The private commercial and agricultural sectors remain the principal contributors to growth. Benin began

producing a modest quantity of oil in 1982, and exploration and exploitation are continuing.

Chambre de Commerce, d'Agriculture et d'Industrie de la République Populaire du Bénin (CCIB) is located at avenue Général de Gaulle, B.P. 31, Cotonou.

Transportation

A railroad line connects Cotonou with Parakou, a large city in the north. Bush taxis ply the roads throughout the country, but most Americans living here drive their own vehicles when traveling in the countryside.

Domestic air service between Cotonou, Parakou, Natitingou, Kandi, and Abomey is provided by the government airline.

Roads between Cotonou, Lagos (Nigeria), and Lomé (Togo) are good. Many roads in Benin are in poor condition and, in the north, are often impassable during the rainy season. Travel via Togo is preferable, as the major north-south road is paved and in good repair. The main streets of Cotonou are paved, but side streets are deeply potholed or sandy. Surface repair is sporadic. Cotonou has no public transportation system, and therefore, most Beninese rely on private cars, taxis, mopeds, and motorbikes.

American cars are not recommended here. Spare parts and repair services for most French automobiles are available. Both Honda and Toyota have dealerships in Cotonou, although models may differ from U.S. models. The color black is reserved for Benin Government vehicles only.

Communications

Telephone service interruptions are frequent during the rainy seasons, when water often seeps into underground lines and switching equipment. Service to other francophone West African countries is good; additional international links, if

calls can be routed through Paris, also are good. Telephone service to Nigeria and Ghana is rare. Telephone service from Cotonou to the U.S. is good, but expensive. Cotonou is six hours ahead of eastern standard time. The local telegraph and telex service is adequate. Telex facilities in Cotonou are available at post offices and good hotels.

International mail service is unpredictable. Official Americans stationed in Cotonou are authorized to use the twice-weekly air pouches, through which first-class mail arrives within three to five days. Letters, magazines, newspapers, and packages are sent via the surface-to-air pouch; transit time is approximately one week.

Benin's Office de Radiodiffusion et du Télévision du Bénin broadcasts radio programs in French, English, and 8 local languages.

Benin has one TV station that is owned by the national government. Broadcasting daily, it offers a wide variety of programming, some locally produced and some originating in France.

Shortwave reception in Cotonou is good, and foreigners can rely on Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and other foreign transmissions.

International editions of European and American newspapers and magazines are available, although expensive. *La Nation*, formerly *Ehuzu*, is a government daily published in Cotonou; other government publications include *Bénin-Magazine*, a monthly publication dealing with cultural, social, and economic affairs; and a government weekly, *Bénin-Press Information*. Other publications include the Catholic newsletter, *La Croix du Bénin*. A privately owned bimonthly, *La Gazette du Golfe* began publication in 1988. While many new publications were launched in 1990 following the end of government censorship, several have since disappeared due to financial difficulties.

Health

English-speaking doctors are hard to find. Emergency care for serious injuries or illness is available from various French and Beninese specialists working in private clinics or at the government hospital in Cotonou. Local facilities are suitable for emergency treatment, but are not recommended for inpatient care. Medical information can be obtained from the U.S. Embassy's health unit or the Peace Corps office.

Emergency dental care is also available in Cotonou, but more competent dentists practice in Lomé, Togo; Lagos, Nigeria; and Accra, Ghana. Any routine dental care should be done before coming to Cotonou.

Local patent medicines are usually of French manufacture and are in limited quantity. Medical supplies are variable; even the most basic products, such as rubbing alcohol, are expensive and of uncertain age.

Precautionary measures and common sense are sufficient for maintaining good health in Benin. One of the greatest health hazards in Cotonou is contaminated water. Although most houses in the more modern residential quarters have septic tanks, many neighborhoods have no sanitation facilities at all. Cotonou has a running water system, which occasionally goes dry, but the water is not safe for Westerners to drink without boiling and filtering. Most cooks are trained in water sterilization and filtration techniques; periodic reminders help to insure their continued compliance. Locally purchased fresh vegetables and fruits should be soaked in a solution of potassium permanganate or chlorine, and rinsed in boiled, filtered water. Thoroughly cook all locally purchased meats.

Precaution against sun exposure is advised, since Cotonou is at latitude 6°N of the equator. Because of the high temperatures and humidity, extra precautions are required during outdoor exercise in order to avoid sunstroke or heat exhaustion.

Some people tire easily and need more rest at night. High humidity and the *harmattan*, a dust-laden wind which blows in November, December, and January, can exacerbate respiratory problems and cause irritations and infections, such as conjunctivitis.

Ants, cockroaches, and termites are the most prevalent household pests, but they can be controlled by regular use of insecticides, a clean house, and a tidy garden. Keeping the lush, tropical foliage cut back usually prevents rodent problems. Snakes, including some poisonous varieties (green mambas and black cobras) occasionally are found in residential areas, but they are not a significant hazard. Some rabies cases have occurred, making it advisable to avoid stray animals.

Visitors arriving in Benin should have valid vaccinations for cholera, typhoid, polio, smallpox, and yellow fever. The U.S. Department of State also recommends gamma globulin injections, as hepatitis is a significant health hazard. Since malaria is endemic, suppressants should be started two weeks before arrival and continued for at least six weeks after departure.

Clothing and Services

Benin's hot, humid climate requires lightweight, washable clothing, and summer footwear. However, shorts are not generally worn on the streets. Local shops carry a limited selection of European ready-made clothes, but sizes vary and prices are high. Dress and suit material can be purchased, and local tailors and dressmakers can produce certain styles with some success. Many expatriates order clothing through mail-order catalogs.

Office wear is casual for men. Sport shirts or short-sleeved dress shirts are suitable for most evening gatherings, although suit and tie, or safari suits, are worn at formal functions.

For evening social occasions, many Western women find the African *booboo* both attractive and comfortable. Cotton dresses, or skirts and blouses, are suitable for the office. Simply styled, washable dresses are comfortable for wear around town.

Children's clothing is expensive in Cotonou. Blue jeans, T-shirts, tennis shoes, and sandals are acceptable for everyday wear. The local school for English-speaking children does not require uniforms; dress tends to correspond to American trends.

Most household products are available, although prices are much higher than in the U.S. Toiletries, cosmetics, suntan lotions, medicines, cleaning supplies, and household gadgets are almost all imported from France.

Pineapples, oranges, bananas, tangerines, lemons, limes, papaya, grapefruit, tomatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, lettuce, radishes, green peppers, squash, leeks, parsnips, onions, eggplant, string beans, and carrots are available year round at seasonally variable prices. Mangoes, guavas, melons, and avocados are plentiful and inexpensive in season. Celery and cauliflower are expensive. All locally grown vegetables must be treated before eating.

Local meats, beef, veal, lamb, and pork, of varying quality, can be purchased at the market or butcher shops. Good-quality chicken, duck, and rabbit are available.

Cotonou stores carry imported canned goods, sterilized milk (safe for drinking), butter, cheese, cereals, and baby foods, and often stock imported fruits and vegetables such as Valencia oranges, pears, apples, artichokes, lettuce, and celery. Imported high-quality meat can also be bought, but prices are high. Good French-style bakeries sell fresh bread, pastries, and ice cream.

Basic repairs can be done on French automobiles, but work involving

electrical systems, wheel balancing, and alignment is not always predictable. Spare parts for French cars are also available. American parts are unavailable, making it necessary to keep a supply of filters, belts, points, sparkplugs, condensers, bulbs, and other common replacement items. Initial vehicle inspection requires yellow headlights (sealed yellow lamps or yellow plastic covers).

Small appliance and radio repair is available, but quality is poor and prices vary.

Domestic Help

Most expatriates engage at least one domestic—either cook, cook/domestic, nanny, or gardener. Cooks, who are especially valuable for bargaining in the markets, generally specialize in French cuisine; they can, however, learn to prepare whatever meals the employer prefers.

Cleanliness, especially in the kitchen, must be maintained with strict supervision. A part-time gardener is useful, as tropical flora requires constant care.

Domestic staffs do not live in. The average monthly salary of a domestic employee is based on work category and experience. The annual cost of employing a domestic is raised somewhat by mandatory payment of social security contributions and fringe benefits. Most employers provide white uniforms for those who serve at the table.

An English translation of the local labor code is available from the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May 1 Labor Day
 May/June Ascension Day*

May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 1	Independence Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Oct. 26	Armed Forces Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

International air service to Benin is via Abidjan, Paris, and Brussels. UTA, Air Afrique, Sabena, Nigerian Airlines, Ghana Airways, Aeroflot, Air Burkina, Air Zaire, and Air Ivoire serve Cotonou. Most flights arrive at Cotonou-Cadjehoun International Airport, which is approximately 3 miles (5 kilometers) from Cotonou. Air connections to Europe also can be made through Lomé and Lagos.

A passport and visa are required. Travelers should obtain the latest information from the Embassy of the Republic of Benin, 2737 Cathedral Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 232-6656. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Beninese Embassy or Consulate. Travelers who intend to visit Nigeria should obtain Nigerian visas prior to arriving in Benin as the Nigerian Embassy in Cotonou may decline to consider applications for visas by U.S. citizens not resident in Benin.

As of 1994, dogs and cats entering the country must have a record of rabies vaccination and a veterinary health certificate issued no more than 10 days before arrival.

As of 1994, only the following non-automatic firearms and ammunition may be taken to Benin: rifle or shotgun, one per adult family member, plus 1,000 rounds of ammunition. Further information on export regulations are available at the Office of Export Control, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC.

Travelers in possession of prescription drugs should carry proof of their prescriptions, such as labeled containers. Police have been known to arrest foreigners carrying unlabeled pills. For a complete list of prohibited items, contact the nearest Benin Embassy or Consulate.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Benin are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou at Rue Caporal Anani Bernard. Updated information on travel and security in Benin may be obtained from the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy's mailing address is B.P. 2012, Cotonou, Benin. The telephone numbers are (229) 30-06-50, 30-05-13, and 30-17-92. The fax numbers are (229) 30-14-39 and 30-19-74.

Cotonou has several Catholic churches, including a cathedral in the heart of the city. There are also Assembly of God, Baptist, and Methodist churches, and mosques. Services are either in French or Fon. American missionaries are present in Benin; several monasteries are worth visiting.

The time in Benin is Greenwich Mean Time plus one.

The official unit of currency is the CFA (Communaute Financière Africaine) *franc*. Supported by the French *franc*, it is also legal tender in several other West African countries.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Allen, Chris and Michael Radu. *Benin & the Congo*. Marxist Regimes Series. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1989.

Allen, Chris. *Benin, Congo, and Burkina Faso: Politics, Economics and Society*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988.

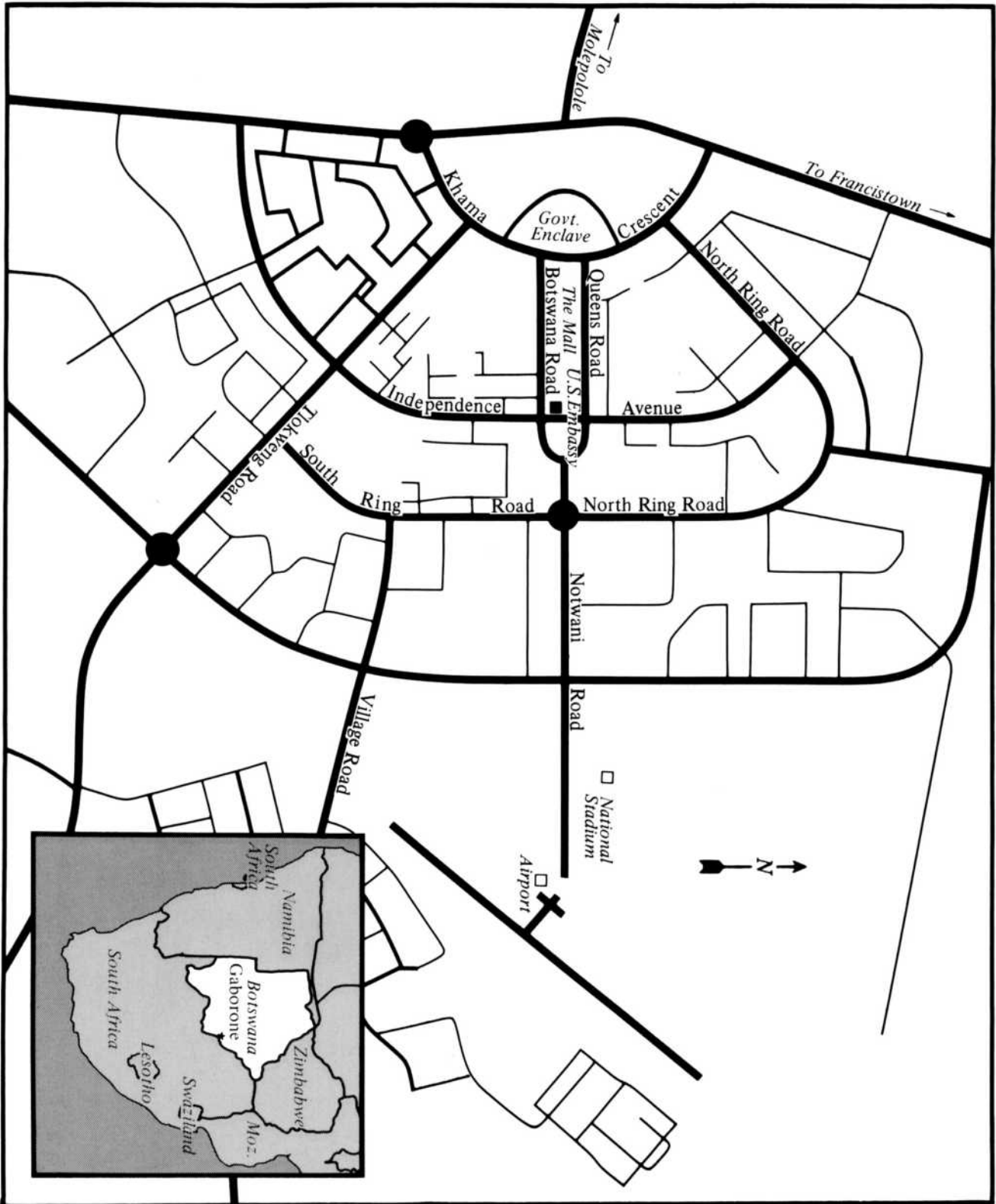
Benin. Let's Visit Places & Peoples of the World Series. New York: Chelsea House, 1989.

Decalo, Samuel. *Historical Dictionary of Benin*. 2nd ed. African Historical Dictionaries Series, no. 7. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987.

Igue, O. John. *Benin Etat-Entrepot*. Paris: Karthala, 1992.

Pilya, Jean. *Histoire de Mon Pays. La République du Benin*. CNPMS, 1992.

Polyani, Karl and Abraham Rotsfein. *Dahomey & the Slave Trade*. New York: AMS Press, 1988.



Gaborone, Botswana

BOTSWANA

Republic of Botswana

Major Cities:

Gaborone, Selebi-Phikwe

Other Cities:

Francistown, Kanye, Lobatse, Mahalapye, Serowe

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Botswana, which has been independent for more than two decades, is a nonracial, multi-party democracy which serves as a model of harmonious social development in a turbulent region. For most of its years as a republic, it has enjoyed excellent relations with fellow black African nations and with many other countries across the political spectrum. Botswana hosted the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in August 1990. The conference noted that a future democratic South Africa was expected to join the organization and to enhance regional efforts at arresting economic decline.

Tucked into the center of the south African plateau, Botswana was, from 1886 until 1966, the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland. The country was first inhabited by nomadic Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, and later by Bantus. In the north are the ecologically unique Okavango Delta and the world-famous Chobe Game Reserve.

MAJOR CITIES

Gaborone

Gaborone is a rapidly expanding city of 182,000, located in southeastern Botswana, 12 miles from the South African border and on the main rail line from Mafeking to Bulawayo. A new city built since independence, Gaborone was selected as the site for the new capital of Botswana in 1962. One key factor influencing the choice was a suitable dam site on the nearby Notwane River, which offered a potential water supply capable of supporting a city. The administrative headquarters of the then Bechuanaland protectorate was outside the country at Mafeking, South Africa. The first government buildings and houses were ready for occupation in February 1965, and the shift from Mafeking was com-

pleted by 1969. The city is named after a 19th century Batlokwa chief from a nearby village, Gaborone-a-Matlapeng.

Gaborone has expanded under the guidance of an existing town plan between two already established areas—the railroad station and Gaborone village. The city is built out from a central pedestrian mall which features shops, a cinema, and the older President Hotel. A newer, larger shopping area is located in Broadhurst, with smaller shopping centers scattered around the residential areas. A modern cinema is located in the village.

Food

Shopping can be time consuming in Gaborone. Local supermarkets carry a wide variety of foods. Unfortunately, they will frequently run out of the most popular items until they receive the next shipment from South Africa. Shoppers find they must visit two or three shops if their list is at all extensive. In addition, beer, wine and liquor are only sold in "bottle stores."

Botswana beef is lean, tender and quite inexpensive compared to the U.S. Pork and lamb are usually available. Chicken is expensive by U.S. standards, as is turkey. Ham slices, lunch meats and sausages are all found locally. Supermarkets



Jason Laure. Reproduced by permission.

Crafts for sale in Gaborone, Botswana

sell a variety of frozen, packaged fish.

Dairy products are also widely available, though milk spoils quickly. Long life milk is a solution. With a certain amount of tenacious searching, you can find cream, mozzarella, yogurt, foreign cheeses, even fresh Parmesan cheese.

Basically, anything that is widely available in the U.S. is available in Gaborone—fresh and frozen vegetables, baby food, spices, prepared foods, fruit juice, instant cake and bread mixes, even taco sauce. Any imported food item is considerably more expensive than in the U.S., but a South African equivalent may be just as good at half the price.

Clothing

Bring clothes for all the four seasons. September and October weather is warm and pleasant, so

“Spring-like” lightweight attire will suffice. But Gaborone summers are extremely hot (November–February), so bring a plentiful supply of light, cotton shirts and skirts/trousers, shorts, sundresses, etc. Expatriates dress casually when going out shopping or doing errands and both men and women can wear shorts publicly. Gaborone’s winter should not be underestimated. Houses are not insulated, do not have central heat, and let a lot of air leak in through doors and windows. Temperatures can drop to freezing at night. Bring moderately-heavy, washable clothing such as sweaters, shawls, lined raincoats, and light parkas. Heavy overcoats are not necessary. Children will need heavy, washable trousers and woolen sweaters for outdoor play during winter.

There is clothing available in Gaborone, but styles are different from

what most Americans prefer, and variety is still limited.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Pharmacies and supermarkets stock a good variety of shampoos, soaps and toiletries, though rarely American brand names. Cosmetics are also widely available, though quite expensive. Prescription and non-prescription medicines may be obtained from local pharmacies, non-prescription at a higher price than in the U.S., but prescription generally cheaper. Tobacco products are widely available and cheaper than in the U.S. Basic sewing notions and a fair selection of cotton and synthetic fabrics are available.

You can find almost anything in Botswana—CD players, televisions, microwaves, tennis rackets, golf clubs, toys—but prices are double, sometimes triple American prices.

Expensive and exclusive household items like bone china and crystal are sometimes difficult to find. Bring supplies of decorative paper napkins, birthday cards, and wrapping paper as the selection is not as wide as the U.S.

It should be noted that whatever is not available in Botswana is generally available in South Africa's major cities. Items made in South Africa are of variable quality and are frequently less expensive than American products. Imported products are often double or triple U.S. prices.

Basic Services: Dressmakers and tailors are available, though not any cheaper than in the U.S. Simple shoe repairs and leather work can be done. Dry-cleaning is available, reasonable and quite safe. Several good hairdressing salons are spread around the city which serve both men and women. Haircuts cost less than \$15.

Adequacy and availability of radio and appliance repair varies from fair to poor. Do not bring 60 Hz or U.S. standard appliances expecting to have them converted. Household repair services (plumbing, electrical, plastering) are acceptable. Hardware stores have a good assortment of home repair items and power tools for the do-it-yourselfer.

The quality of auto repair varies. Wheel balancing and alignment and computer diagnostics are available. Skilled mechanics are rare, and although tools and parts may be available, workmanship is often poor, and expensive. Common consumable spares, such as plugs, belts, tires, and filters are readily available for Japanese and European cars, and even most American cars. Counterfeit parts from Taiwan are the norm.

Religious Activities

Gaborone's churches are filled Sunday mornings as worshipers attend Sunday school and religious services. A great number of Christian denominations are represented, including Anglican, Catholic, Meth-

odist, Mennonite, Quaker, African Methodist, Lutheran, Assemblies of God, Seventh-day Adventist, Baptist, and others. The small Jewish and Mormon communities are not active. The Moslem communities are very active.

Congregations are made up of both Batswana and expatriates. Services are available in both English and Setswana. The interdenominational Trinity Church offers services in English on Sunday evenings led by ministers from various churches.

Education

Dependent Education: All schools in Botswana begin the school year in late January and end in early December. Thirty-day breaks occur in April/May and August/September and a 6-week break from early December to mid-January. Schools require uniforms which may be purchased locally.

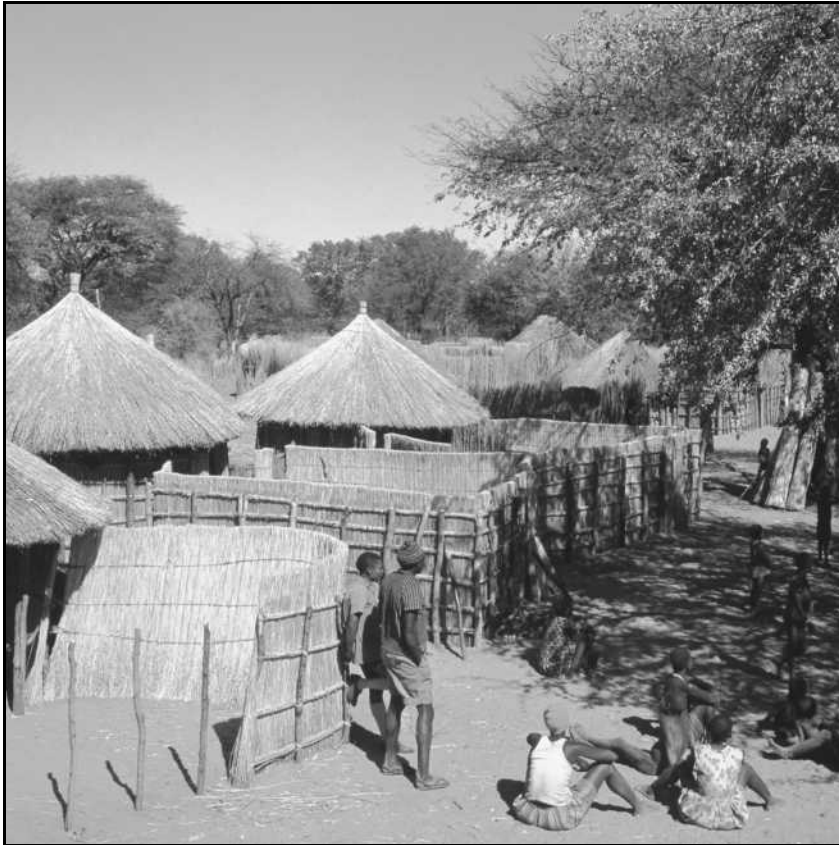
The school day begins at 7:30 am for primary schools and ends at 12:30 or 1 pm. Secondary school students attend classes from 7:10 am or 7:15 am until 12:30 or 1 pm, depending on the individual schools. On certain days at Westwood International School, classes are extended until 3 pm for secondary students. Extracurricular programs draw students for supervised activity in the afternoons. Swimming pools offer recreation and swimming lessons. Children also have their pick of soccer, softball, cricket, choir and glee club, working on the school yearbook, arts and crafts, or tennis. Students may also participate in gymnastics, cooking classes, stamp club, marimba club or chess club. Since public transportation is not available, parents deliver and pick up their children if they live beyond walking distance from school. Carpooling is common. Few students ride their bicycles due to the high incidence of traffic accidents.

Gaborone has four private English primary schools; these schools are Broadhurst Primary School, Thornhill Primary School, Northside Primary School, and Westwood International School. Schools are

designed to accommodate expatriate students and approximately 1/3 of the students are Batswana. There is currently no waiting list for the English language primary schools in Gaborone. Primary school consists of classes ranging from Kindergarten (called Reception) through Grade 7 (called Standard 7). Children are accepted from ages 5 to 12 in primary schools. Broadhurst, Thornhill, and Northside Primary schools operate under the Botswana teaching curriculum, modified to meet the needs of the school's international enrollments. The Botswana system is closely modeled on the British system. The fourth school, Westwood International, was founded by the British and American Embassies and has a curriculum designed to meet the needs of children transferring to or from the U.S., British, or other international school system. Teaching staffs are recruited from Britain, the U.S., and southern African nations.

Gaborone has three secondary schools. The Gaborone Secondary School, a local government operated co-educational school with a student body composed of approximately 10 percent expatriates and the rest Batswana. This school follows the Botswana curriculum designed to prepare students to take the Junior Certificate examination at the equivalent of the American ninth (9th) grade level. About one-third of the students then are allowed to study for a Cambridge O-Level examination which follows 2 more years of study. According to the headmaster, an American student would need at least two years at the school in order to take the J.C. examination.

Maru-a-Pula Secondary School, a private co-educational boarding and day-school, has approximately 550 students coming from nearly 20 countries (the majority are Batswana). The teaching staff is varied and in recent years has included several Americans. Maru-a-Pula offers educational programs from grades 8 to 13 (known as Form 1 to Form 6). The school basically fol-



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View of a village in Botswana

lows a British curriculum. Course work concentrates on preparation for O-Level examinations followed 2 years later by A-levels. It is a heavily exam-oriented curriculum. Students study a blend of subjects including English language and literature, French, history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and art. The O-level examination is administered in November at the end of the fourth term (grade 11). A number of students have been admitted to U.S. universities after completing O-levels and producing satisfactory SAT scores.

Maru-a-Pula also offers a 2-year program beyond O-levels, leading to the A-level examination. Here, the student studies the equivalent of a 12th and 13th year, concentrating on 3 subjects from among advanced mathematics, English, history, biology, chemistry, or physics. The A-level examination is given in June and sent to the U.K. for grading, with results available in August. A

number of American universities give students advanced placement on the basis of their performance at A-Level. Educational Test Service exams such as the PSAT and SAT may be taken in Southern Africa, but you should come with full particulars about which exam you need.

Although a fairly active sports and recreational program meets in the afternoon for students at Maru-a-Pula, no inter-school athletic competition of the type accustomed to in the U.S. is offered. An active tennis program, however, utilizes the school's two hard courts. Other extracurricular activities are limited and students are normally asked to choose one, rather than being allowed to participate in several.

American students who have attended Maru-a-Pula over the years have had mixed results. Highly motivated students have

done well; less talented or less enthusiastic students have not. Maru-a-Pula has a policy of discouraging the admission of academically gifted or handicapped children. No facilities are available for gifted and talented or remedial study. Admission to Form 1 (grade 8) in Maru-a-Pula is decided by an Admissions Committee on the basis of an Entrance Exam which includes a personal interview. All those who have applied by May of the year preceding their proposed entry to the school are tested. Maru-a-Pula has no tied places and admission to Form 1 is based solely on merit. Admission to other years prior to O-level is made by selection from the waiting list of applicants as and when vacancies arise. Entry to A-level is decided on the applicant's performance at O-level or in other exams of a comparable standard.

Some older American children attend Westwood International School. Founded by the American Embassy, the British High Commission, and several local business firms, the school opened in May 1988. Westwood is a combined primary and at present junior secondary school. A private co-educational English medium school, it is located in the south-western part of the city. Its modern campus includes 27 air-conditioned classrooms, a school resource center that houses the library and a computer center, a sports field and swimming pool, and a creative and performing arts hall. Westwood provides an international standard of education. School programs focus on preparing the children to re-enter their home country school systems or a third educational system in another part of the world. Westwood currently has over 500 pupils from ages 5 to 15 in an instructional offering that includes: one year of pre-school (Reception) six years of primary education (Standard 1 through 6), and recently established 3 year Junior Secondary Programs (Years 7, 8 & 9). In January 1996, a study group/pilot group was established as a year-10 program. The core subjects of the curriculum of the Junior Sec-

ondary Program include math, English, social studies, biology, general science, information technology, French/Setswana, art, music, physical education, agriculture, drama, and the pursuit of the Westwood Award. The Junior Secondary Program culminates with the preparation of the National Junior Certificate Examination (Year 9).

During the 1995 year, the school council undertook to continue the development of the secondary program by extending it upward through a senior secondary program and finish it with a pre-University program. The program for the preparation for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) will be introduced at the completion of the junior Certificate Year (after Year 9). (The IGCSE is an internationally valid examination administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate). The international Baccalaureate (I.B.) program will follow the IGCSE years: a full 2-year program of preparation of the University (years 12 and 13) will be offered starting January 1999. The headmaster plans on having the first graduating class with the I.B. in the Year 2000. The International Baccalaureate is acclaimed worldwide as one of the best preparations available for university and is accepted by most universities in the world.

Several private Pre-Schools, including one Montessori, provide half-day care for ages 2 1/2 (or potty trained) and up. The curriculum focuses on play rather than academics. These facilities are acceptable but not quite up to U.S. standards.

The cultural environment in Gaborone for teenagers is extremely limited. With virtually no part-time work opportunities, many find they have a lot of free time. Avid readers, self-starters who take an interest in Botswana and the Setswana language, or enthusiastic tennis players or golfers intent on developing their game can be happy. But some American youth find life here dull.

Movies and private parties on weekends are popular.

Special Education Opportunities

The University of Botswana is a degree-granting university offering a variety of courses in the arts and sciences. A limited number of foreign nationals are accepted for coursework. With sufficient advance notice, it is possible that some arrangement can be worked out with the university. Syllabi of individual courses should be checked with the U.S. institution where credits would be transferred prior to enrolling in a specific course. Many U.S. institutions, however, do accept work completed at the University of Botswana every year.

Two other local institutions also offer training. The Institute of Development Management (IDM) offers courses in accounting and finance, communications, development management, educational administration, electronic data processing, health services management, retail management, marketing, and public administration. The Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce (BIAC) offers courses in Accounting and Business Studies, Public Administration and Management Studies, Computer Studies, Language and Communication Skills, and Secretarial Studies, all at both the Certificate and Diploma levels. The Institute also runs seminars and workshops on request covering the above-mentioned subjects. Most students at the Institute come from the Botswana Civil Service. There are a limited number of spaces available for expatriates.

There are several good private business schools in Gaborone which can arrange specially designed courses tailored to one's individual needs. The Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry, and Manpower (Boccim) and the Association of Training and Development Officers (ATDO) are good sources of

information on local training and business schools.

Sports

Gaborone is a good place for outdoor sports. The sunny weather allows tennis enthusiasts to get plenty of practice at the American court, or the Notwane or Gaborone Club courts. Clubs are easy to join and fees are reasonable (under \$100/yr.). The Notwane club is better organized and has social evenings, ladies evenings and junior times. The Gaborone Club is a tennis, rugby, bowls and swim club, so offers more variety and greater breadth of contacts.

An excellent 18 hole golf course with grass fairways and greens is centrally located, five minutes from virtually every residence in town. Club fees include an initiation fee (approximately \$400) and then yearly dues (approximately \$250). The club charges the same fees whether for Botswana resident or diplomat. The golf club membership is active and well-organized and has competitions for both men and women once a week.

Squash is another popular game in Gaborone. There is a squash club next to the Notwane Tennis Club. The Grand Palm Hotel and Gaborone Sun both have tennis and squash courts, which members of their recreation associations can use. Club membership also offers use of the weight room, sauna and pool at the hotels. There is also a fitness center in a local mall, which many prefer to join as it offers regular exercise classes as well as a large variety of equipment.

A small yacht club is located at the Gaborone Dam, where sailing and windsurfing are available. Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) is a problem on the other side of the reservoir, but yacht club members uphold it is safe to swim on their side. Horseback riding is available just outside of town and riding instruction can be arranged. For those who prefer spectator sports, soccer games are

held regularly at the National Stadium and on other fields.

The Kalahari Hash House Harriers meet every week and serious marathoners can compete in a full season of events, including an international 72 km ultra-marathon. Two triathlons are held each year.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Hunters, photographers and fishing enthusiasts will enjoy Botswana's rich game and wildlife areas. Over 15 percent of the country is dedicated to national park areas, including immense expanses of wildlife sanctuaries, such as Chobe National Park, Moremi Game Reserve, Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. To the northwest, the huge Okavango Delta region receives its annual inflow of water from the Angolan Highlands. Thousands of square miles are the home of waterfowl, exotic varieties of bird life, antelope, lion, elephant, and other wild animals, and the fighting tiger fish, a sportsman's dream. Light aircraft are available to take travelers into this wilderness area, though charters are expensive and so are the camps set up in the bush to accommodate those on safari. There are cheaper ways to do this, though not as luxurious. The hardy and adventurous drive to Maun on the paved roads and hire a local company to drive them into the Delta (sand roads). Done this way, and using one's own camping equipment, seeing the Delta is not quite so prohibitively expensive. Another Game Reserve, Kutse, in the Kalahari about a four hour drive from Gaborone (half on sand roads) is a fascinating experience for those who don't mind fairly primitive camping. You may camp next to the wardens' houses and use their water and toilets, or camp inside the park in glorious isolation. Prospective campers should outfit themselves before leaving the U.S. with sturdy (animal-proof) tents and equipment of good quality. Local and South Afri-

can camping equipment is very expensive. Four wheel drives are a must inside and en route to Botswana Game Parks.

Entertainment

Gaborone has three movie theaters, which run the range from fairly recent quality films to Kung-fu. Video outlets provide an overnight checkout service. These videos cannot be played on VHS sets, so you will need either a multi-system or a local PAL-1 VCR. Active bridge clubs meet regularly. An enthusiastic musical society presents occasional concerts and sponsors intermediate level chamber music get-togethers. A thriving amateur theater group puts on about four productions a year. The Botswana Society and The Kalahari Conservation Society present lectures, slide presentations, and/or exhibits on a regular basis, at Gaborone's surprisingly good National Museum. A bird club and photographic society are also very active.

The Maitisong Center, opened in 1987 (on the campus of Maru-a-Pula Secondary School) has become the center for cultural activities in Gaborone. They bring in performers from the Southern African region, and occasionally from other areas.

Gaborone supports Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, German, and Italian restaurants and several steak houses.

The Gaborone Sun and Grand Palm offer professional entertainment occasionally—comedy shows, dancing, and floor-shows. The Sun also has a casino and the Grand Palm is currently building a casino, due to open mid-1996. Other venues occasionally sponsor sessions with well-known foreign singers or performers. Johannesburg attracts some of the best names in the business.

Much of the entertainment in Gaborone consists of informal outdoor braais (barbecues) in people's homes. Daytime patio entertaining is possible year round; however, during the winter months (July,

August) it may be too cool to sit outside in the evenings.

Social Activities

Among Americans: There is quite a large American population in Gaborone. The American Women's International Association (AWIA) holds regular meetings and activities. About half its members are American. The other nationalities taking part in its activities give it an international flavor.

International Contacts:

Botswana, relations between black and white are not characterized by the tension found in some other countries in southern Africa. People mix freely and easily. Botswana appreciate the contributions being made to the country's development by the international donor community and work side-by-side with expatriates harmoniously and effectively. As English is one of the two official languages, there is no language problem. Fluency in English is generally dependent upon education levels and frequency of opportunity to use the language. The farther one travels from the cities, the less English is spoken.

Several thousand additional expatriates from the U.K., South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Scandinavian countries live and work in Botswana. Some have chosen to become citizens. A number of Americans, many of them ex-Peace Corps volunteers, have chosen to remain in Botswana working in one capacity or another.

Selebi-Phikwe

Selebi-Phikwe is located in the central eastern area of Botswana. About 250 miles northeast of Gaborone, it is connected by asphalt road and a freight carrying branch railway line to the main Gaborone-Francistown road and railway line 35 miles to the west. Selebi-Phikwe has an airport but there are no scheduled flights.

The region is part of a vast semiarid plateau with a mean elevation of 3,000 feet above sea level. The terrain is essentially flat with scattered small, rocky hills. The vegetation is characteristic of the savanna, with thick brush and hardy trees prevalent.

Selebi-Phikwe, the third largest town in Botswana, has grown since 1967 from an agricultural village to a community of nearly 50,000 people with the development of a larger copper-nickel mining operation (BCL). The expatriate population numbers about 200. The town is laid out around a central park and shopping area, near a modern hotel. A second hotel is located near the edge of town.

Selebi-Phikwe's commercial and shopping center, the mall, provides a variety of shops and services including the post office, two banks, two pharmacies, several hardware, appliance, book, clothing, supermarkets and several shops offering meat and groceries. Surrounding the center are the residential areas. On the outskirts of the town are the mines, the smelter plant, the electrical generating plant, water purifying plant and industrial site.

Located approximately 26 kilometers west of Selebi-Phikwe is a short wave transmitter site and one and one half kilometers farther west is a medium wave transmitter site operated by the USIA's "VOA," Botswana Relay Station. The short wave site has four 100 kilowatt short wave transmitters for long distance broadcasting. The medium wave site has one 500 kilowatt transmitter that broadcasts VOA English programs to listeners in Southern Africa. The international mailing address is Private Bag 38, Selebi-Phikwe; telephone 810-932.

Education

Selebi-Phikwe has nine government primary schools, three private English medium primary schools, four junior secondary schools and one senior secondary school. The

English-medium Morula Primary School accepts children ages 5 to 12 or 13 years. Three school terms are held yearly and tuition is 1,590 pula per term plus levy fees of about 1,000 pula for first entry in school. Private secondary schools are not available in Selebi-Phikwe.

Health

The town has two hospitals, a government hospital with 70 beds and four clinics, and a 25 bed private hospital. The latter is operated by the BCL Mining Company. There are several private medical practitioners and a dentist available two days of the week in Selebi-Phikwe. Health conditions in Selebi-Phikwe are generally favorable. The town maintains adequate sanitation procedures and safe tap water. However, because of occasional dust conditions and smoke emissions from the smelter operation, persons with severe respiratory problems may experience difficulty.

Recreation

Recreational facilities include an 18-hole golf course and two sports and social clubs, which provide facilities for tennis, squash, swimming, field sports, amateur theater, and other activities. A local television association relays South African TV programs to the local community.

OTHER CITIES

FRANCISTOWN, with a population of almost 66,000, is located northeast of the capital near Zimbabwe. It is the second largest city in the country; flights connect it with South Africa and Zambia. Francistown was the site of the first mine discovery in southern Africa in the 1880s. Reminders of its past are still present in mine dumps, pit heads, and old shafts. Today, it is an administrative and commercial center and the site of the Dumela industrial complex.

Located in southern Botswana 50 miles west of the capital, **KANYE** is

the traditional homeland of the Bangwaketse people. A mission hospital, schools, banks, and an airfield can be found in the city. The population is approximately 26,000.

As Botswana's meat industry center, **LOBATSE** exports livestock and livestock products to nearby countries. It is located about 45 miles southwest of Gaborone. In fact, the city once was considered for capital status. The town has a tannery, canning factory, and a soap factory. Lobatse is also the seat of the High Court of Botswana and the headquarters of the Department of Geological Survey. The population is estimated to be over 26,000.

MAHALAPYE is situated on a plateau, which makes it ideal for farming. The city is 93 miles northeast of Gaborone. The economy is based on cattle raising and the farming of sorghum, corn, and beans. Its industries include textiles and tool manufacturing. A National Library branch, health center and a meteorological station are found in Mahalapye. The population is roughly 104,000.

Home of the Bamangwato tribe, **SEROWE** is a traditional city composed of clusters of round, traditional African homes surrounded by extensive compounds and gardens. Located in the central district, this city is 150 miles north of the capital. It has an airfield and a major hospital. The population is roughly 95,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Botswana occupies the center of the southern African plateau and has an elevation of approximately 3,300 feet. The country is flat, with frequent outcroppings of rocky hills (koppies) in the east. The 224,710 square miles encompass three broad

ecological areas: the Northwest, dominated by the Okavango Delta; the East, where most of the population lives, characterized by generally arable land and communications links with neighboring countries; and the Central-to-Southwestern belt, dominated by the grass and thorn bush of the Kalahari Desert.

About the size of Texas, Botswana is a landlocked country bounded by the Republic of South Africa on the south and east, Zimbabwe on the northeast, Zambia (at a point where the Chobe and Zambezi Rivers meet) to the north, and Namibia on the north and west.

The eastern and northern parts of the country receive around 21 inches of rain yearly, but in western areas, rainfall can be as little as 10 inches. The rainfall pattern is erratic; some areas may receive sufficient rains, while others receive none. A succession of dry years produces drought conditions and inflicts misery on the dispersed rural population. November to March is the rainy season.

Temperatures during the hottest month, January, average 91°F (33°C), and 62°F (22°C) during the coldest month, June. During the summer, temperatures may climb into the 100°F levels with slight cooling at night. During winter, temperatures may fall to freezing level at night, but rise to comfortable 70°F levels at mid-day in the constantly sunny weather.

The air is dry virtually all year round (although humidity increases during the rainy season) and dust may prove an irritation to eyes and the upper respiratory tract for some. August is the month of dust storms.

Population

Botswana is the name of the country, the national home of the Tswana people. The names for its people are Motswana (singular) or

Batswana (plural). The language is Setswana.

Botswana's population is approximately 1.5 million, 46 percent of which lives in urban areas. At any given time perhaps 50,000 Batswana may be absent working in South Africa. Well over ten thousand expatriates reside in Botswana, many in Gaborone. South African and Indian citizens can be found in large numbers, often dominating certain businesses. Smaller numbers of expatriate British, Africans, Europeans, Canadians, South Asians and Americans are employed by the Botswana Government, international organizations, and private companies. Large numbers of Zimbabwean citizens, many of them in the country illegally, are employed as laborers and domestics.

Most Batswana speak Setswana and are members of eight closely related tribes. Unlike many African countries, tribalism is not a major factor. English and Setswana are the official languages. The literacy rate, approximately 69.8 percent, is high by African standards. More than half the population is at least nominally Christian. A variety of mainline denominations are represented, but many Batswana Christians are affiliated with independent churches.

Botswana's four major incorporated towns, all located along the eastern edge of the country, are Gaborone (182,000), Francistown (66,000), Selebi-Phikwe (50,000), and Lobatse (26,000). Additionally, several important "villages" have large populations, most notably Mochudi in Kgatleng District with approximately 60,000. Other towns with over 20,000 residents are Serowe in the Central District, Kanye in the Southern District, Molepolole in the Kwenange District, and Maun in the Ngamiland District.

Public Institutions

Botswana, the former Bechuanaland Protectorate, received its independence from Great Britain in 1966 and is a democratic, multi-party state. All national elections since the gaining of independence have been freely and fairly contested. The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has held a majority in the unicameral National Assembly since independence. There are 40 elected and 4 appointed seats in the National Assembly, although that number is updated with every census (ten years).

Executive power is vested in the President (chief of state and head of government), chosen in a national election for a term not to exceed 5 years. The President selects a Cabinet from among the Members of Parliament, consisting of the Vice President, who acts as government leader in the National Assembly, and an unspecified number of ministers. Voting for members of the National Assembly is based on universal adult suffrage (minimum age 21).

The Constitution also provides for a House of Chiefs that serves as a tribal-based advisory body to the government. Chiefs of the eight principal ethnic groups are ex-officio members of the House with additional members representing other smaller tribes. Since independence, the government has gradually moved toward transferring traditional powers of the chiefs to itself or to local elected bodies. For example, mineral rights in tribal lands are now vested in the national government, and the chiefs no longer control the schools.

Local government is carried out by nine district councils and five town councils. Executive authority is vested in the district commissioner appointed by the central government. The district commissioner is assisted by the members of the district/town councils and development committees, some of whom are appointed and some elected.

Botswana's constitution contains a code of fundamental human rights which is enforced by the courts. Judges, many of whom came from the British Commonwealth judiciary services, are appointed by the President and may be removed only for cause and after a hearing. Cases may be taken to the High Court and then to the court of Appeals if necessary. In a parallel, traditional system, chiefs and headmen preside over local courts constituted according to local customs and enforce traditional tribal laws.

The Botswana civil service, established on the British system, is headed by permanent secretaries of each of the ministries who, along with their civil servants, carry out the daily affairs of their respective ministries.

Arts, Science, and Education

Cultural activities in Gaborone can be limited. Only a handful of internationally recognized performers will visit the country in any given year. Local artistic performances can be rewarding, but the country and city's small population mean that the depth of the artistic community and the frequency of performances are limited.

The indigenous handicrafts industry is best known for its basketry, complemented by unique hide and skin products and an imported weaving tradition. Baskets are made primarily in the far northwest of the country but are available in abundance in Gaborone. The Herero design attractive dolls featuring their own unique, Victorian style of dress. The Basarwa (popularly known as the "Bushmen") produce ostrich eggshell necklaces, thumb pianos, hunting gear and other items.

Traditional culture is not strongly evident in Botswana's urban centers. Setswana, Herero, Basarwa and other tribal cultures can be experienced in rural areas. The cap-

ital does offer a museum/art gallery complex which features a good, permanent exhibit on Botswana's history, environment and culture. The National Art gallery occasionally sponsors art exhibits from Botswana and other countries.

The Botswana Society was formed in 1968 to study the cultural, historical, developmental and other aspects of Botswana. The Society sponsors lectures and readings and publishes *Botswana Notes and Records*, a scholarly journal on Botswana.

The University of Botswana, founded in 1972 as part of the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, but now a separate university, offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in a number of fields. The university library (with a reported 200,000 volumes) is available to the public along with the National Library (400,000 nationwide), the USIS library (5,000), and the National Archives (7,500).

Commerce and Industry

The economic foundations of modern Botswana were laid when diamonds were discovered and exploited in the 1970's. The largest component of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and government revenues comes from three mines—Jwaneng, Orapa, and Lethlekane. Diamond mining is carried out by the Debswana Corporation, a joint venture between the Government of Botswana and the DeBeers Corporation of South Africa. A U.S. firm, Lazare Kaplan, operates a diamond cutting and polishing facility in Molepolole.

In 2000, Botswana boasted an average per capita GDP of almost \$6600 per person. The country's balance of payments has been consistently positive year after year, with reported surpluses in the last 12 of 13 years. The minerals sector—largely diamonds but including copper, nickel, soda ash, and coal—

accounted for one-third of government revenues and generated approximately three-quarters of export earnings. Beef shipped to the European Union under the Lome Convention and assembled vehicles are the principal non-mineral exports.

Economic growth in Botswana was 6 percent in 2000. The rate is modest in comparison with the double-digit growth rates Botswana achieved in the 1980s.

The government of Botswana has sought to diversify its economy to lessen the dependence on minerals. Through the government's semi-autonomous investment arm, the Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), as well as through direct government investments, Botswana has sought to transform diamond wealth into economically productive, job-generating ventures. While the government continues to actively pursue this "social investment" role, it has also sought to privatize a number of profitable enterprises.

Botswana recognizes that the private sector must be the key to renewed, robust growth, and it has created one of the most attractive environments for investment in Africa. Bolstered by the country's substantial foreign currency reserves, the Pula is a markedly stable currency and is fully convertible. The country maintains the most liberal foreign exchange regulations in the region, and repatriation of profits for foreign direct investors is a routine process. The corporate and manufacturing tax rates, 25 and 15 percent respectively, are among the lowest in Africa.

Despite these efforts by government, Botswana continues to face structural economic challenges. Over half of the country's people—predominantly rural dwellers—are outside of the formal economy. Subsistence agriculture, particularly livestock, forms the basis of family income in the countryside, aug-

mented by government subsidies during and after periods of drought. Unemployment is estimated at 21 percent, and the population is increasing faster than the rate of job creation. Rural poverty remains a serious problem, while overall the country presents some of the worst figures for income disparity in the world.

Bearing in mind these challenges, however, Botswana's success remains striking. The country came to independence in 1966 as one of the poorest countries in the world. The government's immediate and consistent embrace of free enterprise, its prudent fiscal management, and, of course, diamonds, have led it to three decades of phenomenal development. Botswana's good road infrastructure, its modern, reliable (and expensive) telephone system, and dependable electricity supply have all been developed from scratch. An ambitious program of school and clinic building has successfully provided basic health care and education throughout the country.

Commercially, Botswana's membership in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), made up of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland, has traditionally been the most significant barrier to American products. SACU has featured extremely high tariff barriers to agricultural and manufactured goods (well over 100 percent until recently on vehicles). Gradual reductions in those tariff rates, brought about in part by GATT Uruguay Round requirements, are making U.S. goods more competitive.

Statistics on foreign direct investment in Botswana are unavailable, but major U.S. investors include Owens Corning (Owens-Corning Pipe Botswana), H.J. Heinz (Kgala-gadi Soap Industries), Lazare Kaplan, Interkiln Corporation of Houston (Lobatse Clay Works), The St. Paul Companies of Minnesota (Botswana Insurance), and Fredkin

Adventures (Ker and Downey Botswana). There are various agents, direct distributors, affiliates and franchises representing U.S. goods and services in Botswana: distributors of Apple and Compaq computers and of Caterpillar and Euclid machinery; direct outlets of IBM and Xerox; accounting affiliates such as Coopers and Lybrand and Deloitte and Touche; and franchises such as Avis and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Transportation

Local

Taxis, mostly mini-buses, are not plentiful but may be found in Gaborone and Francistown. Although not expensive, taxis accept passengers until they are completely full; so traveling from point to point can be an adventure. An intercity bus system links the major population centers, however, many Americans avoid them because of overcrowding and frequent mechanical breakdowns.

Regional

Air Botswana is the country's national airline and handling agent for ground traffic at the three main airports of Gaborone, Francistown, and Maun. From Gaborone an average of two flights depart daily for Johannesburg and three flights weekly for Harare, Zimbabwe. Regular connections are made with other regional population centers, as well as twice weekly direct flights to London (British Airways). Within Botswana, regular flights leave Gaborone for Francistown, Maun and Kasane. Several companies provide charter services into and out of Gaborone; the northern tourist areas can only be reached by charter aircraft, either from Gaborone or Maun.

The main rail line from Cape Town to Bulawayo runs through Botswana for about 400 miles, serving the main towns in the eastern part of the country. This line connects with Pretoria and Johannesburg in South Africa. Trains are

slow but comfortable, and rates are moderate compared to those in the U.S. In 1984, the last link in a paved highway connecting South Africa in the south with Zambia at the Kazangula Ferry crossing on the Chobe River in the north was completed. One can travel on paved roads west to Serowe in the central district, to Jwaneng from Lobatse in the south, and from Nata to Maun in the Okavango Delta.

Most find conventional two-wheel-drive cars more than adequate for use in Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Extensive travel off the main north/south highway corridor requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle set up for long-range sand operations. Kalahari sand roads are such that heavy duty cooling systems, long-range fuel tanks, and off-road tires will all be stressed to the maximum. Four-wheel-drive vehicles can be rented locally, but they are extremely expensive.

The accident rate in Botswana is high and rising for several reasons:

- Rising incomes and the proliferation of low cost auto purchase schemes have created many first-time drivers who lack training and experience.
- Paved roads have 75 MPH speed limits, heavy traffic, and no shoulders. Most drivers exceed the speed limit on the open road.
- Cattle tend to wander onto the highways anywhere outside the towns, including the Gaborone airport road, especially at night in cool weather. Night driving out of town is extremely dangerous.
- Gravel, dirt, and sand roads have their own hazards that are not fully appreciated, even by drivers who drive them regularly. Head-on collisions and roll-overs are common on the outskirts of Gaborone and rural roads.

Communications

Telephone and Fax

Botswana joined International Direct Dial in 1987 and telephone service is considered quite good. The country code is 267. Rural areas are gradually being joined to the national system and calls to the U.S. can be made without difficulty. A call or fax to the U.S. costs approximately 6.70 pula (\$2.25) per minute.

Radio and TV

Radio Botswana broadcasts in FM, medium- and short-wave, in Setswana mostly, but also some English. The Voice of America operates a medium wave retransmitting facility in Selebi-Phikwe, 250 miles north of Gaborone. VOA programs are retransmitted between 6 and 7:30 am and after 7:30 pm. Reception is generally good in fair weather. Bring a good shortwave receiver to pick up VOA and BBC broadcasts. Radios and all electronic equipment are much more expensive locally than in the U.S.

There is no Government of Botswana television service. Signals from South Africa are retransmitted in UHF from a repeater station on top of Kgale Hill. GBC (Gaborone TV) began broadcasting in 1988, and offers a modest evening schedule of programs and news primarily in English.

All South African channels carry U.S. sitcoms, variety shows, and some other American programs as well as South African, British, Australian, and Canadian programs. Programming is in English, Afrikaans, Setswana, Xhosa and Zulu.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

A wide range of publications, mainly South African, but also U.K. and other European magazines, may be found in local bookshops. Popular American magazines available a week late include *Time* and *Newsweek*. Many beautiful but expensive "coffee table" books on Botswana and southern Africa are

available. The USIS library subscribes to 60 U.S. periodicals.

Besides the USIS library, a British Council library and a public library at the Town Hall are located in downtown Gaborone. Paperbacks may be purchased at bookstores or at the American Women's International Club thrift shop.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The Gaborone Private Hospital offers consultant care for most specialty areas and those specialists who are not resident visit on a regular basis. The Private Hospital also has an emergency room which is open 24 hours a day. Medical Rescue International provides ambulance transfers (by land and air) by qualified paramedic staff.

Pharmacies (Drug Stores) are well supplied with prescription medicines; however, persons on long term medication may wish to bring their own products. A variety of over-the-counter medications are available, including some American brands and South African equivalents.

Community Health

Traveler's diarrhea is common and easily treated. Water purification in major towns is up to U.S. standards and water is considered safe to drink. Water is fluorinated in the larger towns only.

Bilharzia and tick bite are seasonal and prevail throughout the country. It is imperative not to swim in the rivers at all (there are plenty of pools around). The end of a long drought has brought the return of Tumbo fly (making it necessary to iron or machine dry all laundry) and malaria. Malaria is present north of Mahalapye and in the Limpopo valley all year round. It is of the chloroquine resistant strain, therefore mefloquine is the recommended drug of choice for prophylaxis.

Those who are unable to take mefloquine may take chloroquine and proguanil but see your doctor or nurse for up-to-date advice before travel.

Sleeping sickness carried by the tsetse fly can be a possible health hazard in the northern game parks. Wearing protective clothing at night can help you avoid these bites.

Allergies can be a problem as flowers and grasses are in bloom all year round. Upper respiratory infections and sore throats are caused by the dry dusty atmosphere during the dry season. Adequate humidifying of living areas of residences can reduce this problem considerably. Contact lens wearers can experience irritation in the dry season; it is therefore important for them to bring extra reading glasses with an up-to-date prescription.

AIDS remains a growing problem in the country. An aggressive educational program has been initiated by the Botswana Ministry of Health. Testing for HIV is done at all the hospitals and all blood donors are screened.

Preventive Measures

No vaccinations are required for Botswana; however travelers to other countries on the African Continent are advised to maintain up-to-date shots for yellow fever; typhoid; measles; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A (Havrix); hepatitis B (Engerix). All children should have their vaccination program kept up-to-date.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Gaborone is most easily reached by air on one of the twice weekly British Airways flights out of London's Heathrow Airport. These routes avoid long layovers at Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg, but each

makes one stop en route. The alternative is a non-stop overnight flight from Europe to Johannesburg, and then on to Gaborone (an hour by air from Johannesburg). Multiple daily flights from Johannesburg to Gaborone via Air Botswana and Comm Air are available. Gaborone can also be reached via Air Zimbabwe from Harare three times weekly. There is also a code-shared flight from New York to Johannesburg on South African Airways.

A passport is required. U.S. citizens are permitted stays up to 90 days without a visa. For additional information on entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Republic of Botswana, 1531 - 1533 New Hampshire Ave, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 244-4990/1, fax (202) 244-4164 or the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, 103 E. 37th St., New York, NY, telephone (212) 889-2277, fax (212) 725-5061. There are also honorary consuls in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Houston. Overseas inquiries should be made to the nearest Botswanan Embassy or Consulate.

Americans living in or visiting Botswana are encouraged to register at the Consular section of the U.S. Embassy Botswana and obtain updated information on travel and security within Botswana. The U.S. Embassy is located in Gaborone on Embassy Drive, Government Enclave. The mailing address is P.O. Box 90, Gaborone, telephone (267) 353-982; fax (267) 356-947, and the after-hours emergency telephone (267) 357-111.

Pets

To enter Botswana, all pets and animals need a certificate issued by the Botswana Director of Veterinary Services. Shipment costs can be high as British Airways will not accept pets as baggage and applies a 200 percent surcharge on live animals carried as cargo.

In all cases, a valid rabies vaccination certificate and a certificate no older than 2 weeks from a veterinarian stating that the animal is in good health should also accompany the pet.

If the pet is to transit South Africa, a South African transit permit is required. If possible, the pet should transit directly without an overnight stop; no facilities for animals are provided at the Johannesburg airport.

Animal Travel Agency, a South African firm (PO Box 1478, Rivonia 2128, Transvaal, R.S.A.), can be retained to obtain necessary documents, meet, walk, water, and feed the animal at the airport, or keep it overnight and place it on the next plane.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Government of Botswana strictly controls the importation and local acquisition of firearms. Personally-owned handguns are prohibited by local law.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The local currency is called the Pula, which means rain. As of January 2001, the exchange rate was P5.5 to the U.S. Dollar. The rate of exchange fluctuates on the open market (the Pula is a hard currency), but has remained fairly stable over the last several years.

Barclays, Standard Chartered, First National (Barclays South Africa) and Stanbic (Standard South Africa) Banks offer modern and dependable banking facilities, including international transfers and travelers checks.

The standard official units of weight, length and capacity are kilogram, meter and liter, respectively.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 2	Public Holiday
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Saturday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
July (1st Mon).	Sir Seretse Khama Day*
July (3rd Mon & Tues)	President's Day*
Sept. 30.	Botswana Day
Oct. 1	Public Holiday
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Several National Geographic Specials have been produced on Botswana's unique wildlife and habitats. Strongly recommended are films by the Jouberts. In addition, specials have been produced on the Basarwa people of the Kalahari.

BURKINA FASO

Major Cities:

Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso

Other Cities:

Koudougou, Ouahigouya

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The West African country of **BURKINA FASO**, formerly Upper Volta, gained its independence in 1960 after 64 years of French control. Marking the first anniversary of its third military coup in three years, it was officially renamed on August 4, 1984, as part of an effort to Africanize the country and sever its ties to the colonial past. The name Burkina Faso translates as "the country of upright men," in the language of the dominant Mossi tribe.

Burkina Faso, controlled by the French from 1896 to 1960, traces its history through a thousand years of domination by the Empire of the Mossi, powerful warriors who are

believed to have emigrated from East Africa in the 11th century. The Mossi still forcefully affect the political and economic life of the country.

MAJOR CITIES

Ouagadougou

Ouagadougou (pronounced Wah-gah-doo-goo), the capital city, is in central Burkina Faso, 500 miles north of the Ghanaian coastline. It has a long history as the center of the Mossi Empire, having been founded in the 11th century. The population numbers roughly one million, including 3,500 Europeans, mostly French. The city has tree-lined streets and much European and "African colonial" architecture. It is laid out compactly and simply.

The city has several modern public buildings sprinkled amid traditional residential neighborhoods. Ouagadougou is home to the country's national museum, a market, and a craft center. The city is connected by rail to the Atlantic port of Abidjan, capital of Cote d'Ivoire. This rail line provides landlocked Burkina Faso's primary link to the sea.

Several products are manufactured in Ouagadougou. These include textiles, soft drinks, matches, and footwear.

The national university of Burkina Faso, the University of Ouagadougou, is located here. It was formed from the Center for Higher Studies in 1974.

Education

Most American children in Burkina Faso attend the coeducational International School of Ouagadougou (ISO), which follows an American curriculum from the preschool (ages three and up) through the eighth grade. French-language classes are held daily, in addition to courses in biology, algebra, literature, art, environmental education, physical education, and computer instruction. Extracurricular activities are available in art, music, dance, sports, yearbook, computers, and drama. The school, which serves the needs of the American community and children of other diplomatic representatives from 15 nations, was founded in 1977. A new campus was completed in 1992.

Ouagadougou has three *lycées* (high schools) which are Burkinabe and follow a modification of the French system. Teachers are French and Burkinabe. No American children of



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A village scene in Burkina Faso

high school age have attended in recent years.

École Saint-Exupéry, supervised by the French Embassy, now extends from kindergarten to *lycée* (high school). Classes consist of about 25 students. Entry is based on space available, with registration more limited in kindergarten and first grade. When applying for entry, students should bring samples of previous work in addition to report cards, especially in math, to indicate grade level.

Recreation

The most popular sports among Burkinabes are soccer, boxing, and bicycle racing. Soccer matches are held often at the stadium, and game announcements appear in the local newspaper.

Golf and tennis are popular with the American and European population, although facilities are limited. Some of the hotels have swimming pools, and these, along with privately-owned pools (e.g., the American Embassy Recreation Association), are the only safe places to swim. Visitors are warned not to wade or swim in ponds, rivers, or reservoirs.

Squash facilities are available at the International Squash Association of Ouagadougou. A yearly fee is

charged. Visitors and expatriates are advised to bring their own racquet and balls, because equipment is not available locally.

An 18-hole laterite (red clay) golf course is located eight miles from Ouagadougou. The greens are rolled sand, slightly oiled. A membership fee is charged. Membership is limited and a waiting period of up to one year is not unusual.

Club de l'Étrier, a riding club, charges a membership fee plus monthly dues. Stallions with tack can be rented. Also, horses can be boarded. Riders should bring their own hat, crop, and boots.

Ouagadougou's Aero Club is open to membership and, since English is the international flight language, applicants need not speak French to join. Flying lessons are available. Another flight club is active in Bobo-Dioulasso.

Hunting is permitted only in special non-prohibited areas and during certain seasons.

One of the most interesting places to visit in Burkina Faso is the game reserve at Arly which connects with the Pendjari Reserve in Benin. It may be reached by car or by air. On the thousands of acres at Arly/Pendjari, the visitor can see several types

of antelope, baboon, wild boar, water buffalo, and hippopotamus in two of the lakes. Wild boar, lion, elephant, and buffalo can be hunted at times in the non-prohibited areas.

Game reserves have two types of rooms available in the November-March season: regular air-conditioned rooms, or *campements*. *Campements* are hotels whose rooms are round, thatch-roofed huts with modern bathrooms and electricity. Reservations must be made in advance. Good food and cold drinks are served in the central dining room. *Campements* are linked with one another, and with Ouagadougou, by radio telephone. The reserve and hunting areas are 8–12 hours by car from the capital. Another important reserve, the "W" park, is in the area where the Niger, Benin, and Burkina Faso borders meet. A small park at Po, only a two-hour drive from Ouagadougou, is a convenient spot for an outing and for viewing elephants.

Americans and others enjoy an occasional weekend at Bobo-Dioulasso, the center for Burkina Faso's limited industry.

Banfora, a rich agricultural region, has interesting scenery, with two splendid waterfalls and fascinating native dancers. At Loropeni, between Banfora and Gaoua to the east, is an interesting ruin resembling a medieval city. The walls, about two stories high, are estimated to be several centuries old. The origin of the city and other lesser ruins nearby remains unknown.

The far north and east of the country are semi-desert areas. Places of interest include a weekly camel market in Markoye, the Dori Social Center, and the sand dunes and marshlands in the Oursi and Gorom-Gorom area. In the north, the nomadic and semi-nomadic Peuhl (Fulani), Bella, and Tuareg tribesmen wear attractive costumes and are of considerable ethnographic interest.

Other "bush trips" can be very interesting if the traveler knows someone at the other end (missionary, Peace Corps volunteer, or local) who can show him around the area.

Outside Burkina Faso, places such as Mopti, Timbuktu, and the Dogon cliff dwellings near Bandiagara in Mali make a fascinating trip. People normally drive to Bandiagara and Mopti, and then take the plane to Timbuktu. A boat travels between Mopti and Timbuktu in the December and January flood season on the Niger River, but it is usually booked well in advance. The coast offers more of a change. Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, is accessible by plane, train, or car. The shopping, good restaurants, and varied amusements of this prosperous, semi-French city are refreshing, but expensive.

The drive over paved roads to Lomé, Togo makes a pleasant trip. Lama Kara is a good place to stop overnight. The shopping, good restaurants, and nice hotels on the beach make Lomé a pleasant experience. Flights to Lomé are also available.

The climate changes little within the country or the surrounding areas, but there is a change of scenery. Traveling is usually done during the cool, dry season. Trips anywhere within the country are reasonable in cost, but those to the coast are more expensive.

Entertainment

An air-conditioned theater and two open-air cinemas show French films. Sometimes a recent film is shown.

The Franco-Burkinabe Cultural Center has an active program of films, amateur theater, musical events, and many other cultural activities. Children's film and story telling sessions are sometimes featured. The American Cultural Center has a large library of videotapes ranging from serious political and economic discussions to music and cultural programs. It also has a large library, although many of the titles are in French. Sunday editions of the *New York Times* and

Washington Post and 25 American magazines are available.

Several restaurants offer a variety of cuisines including French, Continental, North African, and Franco-Italian. Prices in Ouagadougou are comparable to Washington, D.C. Bars and discotheques provide other sources of entertainment. There is usually no cover charge, but drink prices are expensive in the nicer discotheques. Another type of night life includes live bands playing local music.

Tribal and religious ceremonies, folk dancing, and other national cultural activities are held throughout the year. Activities vary from district to district. Some Moslem religious festivals are well worth attending, especially large ceremonies at the central square in Ouagadougou.

A permit is required to do any photography. Visitors will find willing subjects for photography among most men. However, many women will object to being photographed and will cover their faces and hide their children. Some Orthodox Moslems, especially from remote areas, do not wish to have their pictures taken. It is always wise and courteous to ask permission. Polaroid cameras are popular. Everyone appearing in a print will probably want a copy. Film is available locally but is expensive. Burkinabe law forbids the photographing of the airport, government buildings and installations, the water treatment plant, military installations, and military personnel. This law is enforced.

Bobo-Dioulasso

Bobo-Dioulasso is the country's second largest city, and the center of Burkina Faso's limited industry. A number of small factories produce cooking oils, soap, cigarettes, matches, bicycles, shoes, inner tubes, and plastic bags. The population is approximately 450,000.

The Medical Entomology Center and the Muraz Medical Center in

Bobo-Dioulasso conduct research on tropical diseases. One of the most important tropical disease centers in all of West Africa is also headquartered in the city—L'Organisation de Coordination and Coopération pour la Lutte Contre les Grandes Endémies (OCCGE), which was organized in 1968 by eight African states and France. France provides a large part of the budget.

Bobo-Dioulasso is an interesting city. It has a central market where many ivory, bronze, and iron handicrafts are available for sale, among them native masks and curios. Fruits and vegetables are also sold here. The colonial architecture and tree-lined streets are reminiscent of the days when Bobo-Dioulasso was the capital of Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta) and a French West Africa garrison town.

Bobo-Dioulasso is one of Burkina Faso's main transportation centers. It is located on the central rail line between the capital of Cote d'Ivoire, Abidjan, and Ouagadougou. To the west of the city lies Borgo International Airport.

The city is a center for Islamic culture and worship. Also, it is the home of a major college, the West African Center for Economic and Social Studies, and the seat of several government research institutes.

A working knowledge of French is necessary to live and conduct business in this southwestern Burkinabe city. Currently, there are no educational facilities for English-speaking children.

OTHER CITIES

KOUDOUGOU, the third largest city in Burkina Faso with a population of over 100,000, is located approximately 55 miles west of Ouagadougou. In 1970, a textile plant, the first significant industrial facility in the country, began operation here. Using local supplies of cotton, the plant produces both yarn



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Market area in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

and woven material. Finished products are sold only within the country. There is also some peanut and tobacco production in the area.

OUAHIGOUYA, the country's next largest city, with a population of over 40,000, is about 100 miles northwest of Ouagadougou. Ouahigouya was one of the kingdoms of the former Mossi empire. From here, the Mossi warriors of Yatenga defeated the Mandingo emperor's troops and sacked Timbuktu in 1333. A beautiful mosque at Ramatoulaye, near Ouahigouya, permits women to enter. Women should not, however, offer to shake hands here, as it is against religious custom.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Burkina Faso lies landlocked between the Sahara Desert and the Gulf of Guinea in the loop of the Niger River. It is bounded by Niger to the east; Mali to the north and west; and Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, and Benin to the south. It comprises 105,900 square miles (about the size of Colorado) on a

savanna plateau, 500 to 747 meters above sea level. Most of the country lies beyond the humid rain belt, or rain forest, which extends about 400 miles northward from the sea. The land to the south is green with forests and fruit trees. Desert-like sandy areas lie to the north.

The country's main rivers are unnavigable and flow south toward the Gulf of Guinea. Several small streams in the east drain into the Niger River; most contain water only part of the year. Low hills separate the Black, Red, and White Volta River Basin from the Niger River Basin.

The climate is tropical with distinct seasons—warm and dry from November to March, hot and dry from March to May, and warm and wet during the rainy season from June to October. During cool weather (December to February), daily maximum temperatures average about 85°F, with almost no humidity. Temperatures drop sharply after sundown to a pleasant 60°F. The extreme dry heat of March, April, and May is uncomfortable. Daytime temperatures can reach well over 100°F. Homes and offices are air-conditioned.

Harmattan conditions (hot, dust-laden winds during the dry

season) obscure visibility. Early summer rains break the extreme heat, but high winds bring dust clouds just before the rain. Annual rainfall is about 40 inches in the south; it is less than 10 inches in the extreme north and northeast, where a hot desert wind accentuates the aridity.

The number of mosquitoes, flies, and other insects varies with the season. Poisonous snakes exist, but are not often found in the city. Mildew is not a problem.

Natural hazards, such as earthquakes and floods, are no danger. Droughts cause great hardship in the northern part of the country among farmers and herdsman.

Population

Burkina Faso's population of approximately 11.9 million comprises 50 distinct tribal groups. The powerful Mossi, constituting about one half of the ethnic population, dominate political and economic life. They are descendants of warriors who founded a thousand-year-long empire in the area. The emperor of the Mossi still holds court in Ouagadougou. Other important tribes are the Gourounsi, the Bobos, the Lobi, the Senufo, the Mande, and the Peuhls. A few thousand Tuaregs inhabit the northern regions. Few Burkinabes are of non-African descent.

Most people live in southern and central Burkina Faso. Population density in the Mossi Plateau can exceed 125 persons per square mile. Overpopulation causes thousands of Burkinabes to migrate yearly to the Cote d'Ivoire for seasonal agricultural work and long-term employment.

French is the official government language and is taught in schools. However, each ethnic group has its own principal language and many Burkinabe often speak several dialects. People in the Ouagadougou market and in the countryside often speak only their tribal language, but Moré, the language of the Mossi,

has become a lingua franca for half of the country. Dioula (Bambara) dominates the western third.

Approximately 40 percent of the people are strongly attached to fetishism and animism. About 50 percent are converts to Islam and 10 percent are Christians—mostly Roman Catholics, with a small number of Protestants. Since many of the Burkinabe elite have been educated in Catholic schools, Catholicism has a significant influence in the country.

Most Burkinabes are too concerned with the struggle for existence to become involved in issues that do not involve them directly. Subsistence agriculture is the standard means of livelihood.

Traditional society in Burkina Faso is based on the extended family. The senior male, as family head, determines matters of descent and inheritance, controls the use of resources, and settles family disputes. Burkinabe women are considered inferior to men in many respects.

Only 10 percent of the population live in the modern environment of larger towns and cities. The new elite has adopted Western ways of living without abandoning its African heritage. Many of these were trained in the educational system established by the French, and follow cultural standards of both Africa and Europe, especially France.

Government

Burkina Faso was under French control from 1896 until December 1958, when it became an autonomous state of the French community. The country achieved full independence on August 5, 1960, loosening its French political and economic orbit, and elected Maurice Yaméogo its first president. However, it maintained close associations with the Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Benin, and Togo (other members of the "Council of the Entente"). The 1960 constitution provided for election by universal suffrage of a presi-

dent and a National Assembly for five-year terms.

Yaméogo was reelected in 1965, but was overthrown in a military coup in January of the following year.

In June 1970, Burkinabes ratified a new constitution establishing military-civilian rule for four years. A unicameral National Assembly was also elected, but was dissolved in 1974. After 1974, an appointed National Consultative Assembly was established to serve as Parliament. Free legislative elections were held in 1978. In November 1980, a bloodless *coup d'état* deposed the Third Republic, dissolved the National Assembly, and suspended the constitution. A government consisting of a mix of military officers and civilians was formed; that government was removed from power in another military coup in November 1982 by the People's Salvation Council (CSP). Still another coup, led by Capt. Thomas Sankara on August 4, 1982, replaced the CSP with the National Revolutionary Council (CNR).

On October 15, 1987, Sankara was killed in a coup attempt led by his second-in-command, Capt. Blaise Compaoré. Following the execution of several former government officials, Compaoré announced the formation of a new Popular Front (Front Populaire—FP) government. This government, created in March 1988, consists of a 288-member Coordinating Committee composed of national delegates, provincial coordinators, political and trade unionists, and a 25-member Executive Committee. All other political parties were banned. Compaoré was named Chief of State and Head of Government, a position he maintains to date.

In August 1990, the ban on political opposition parties was lifted. In 1991, a new constitution was drafted that called for a democratically elected president, who would appoint a prime minister answerable to a multi-party legislature. The president is elected by popular

vote for a seven-year term and may serve unlimited terms. The prime minister is appointed by the president with the consent of the legislature.

The legislative branch is bicameral. It consists of a National Assembly (111 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms); and the purely consultative Chamber of Representations (178 seats; members are appointed to serve three-year terms).

Administratively, the country is divided into 30 provinces, which are subdivided into departments, arrondissements, and villages. A new electoral code was approved by the National Assembly in January 1997, in which the number of administrative provinces was increased from 30 to 45, however, this change has not yet been confirmed by the US Board on Geographic Names.

Burkina Faso has received international censure for human rights abuses and military intervention in Liberia.

Burkina Faso is a member of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Common Organization of African and Malagasy States (OCAM), and various West African regional organizations, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic Community (CEAO).

The following nations have resident missions in Ouagadougou: Algeria, Germany, Egypt, France, the People's Republic of China, Ghana, Libya, The Netherlands, Nigeria, North Korea, the U.S., and the former U.S.S.R. Honorary consuls of Denmark, Belgium, Austria, Senegal, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom also have offices in the country. Canada and Switzerland have established offices in Burkina Faso to administer economic aid programs. Economic assistance is a prime consideration in the country's foreign relations.

The flag of Burkina Faso is composed of two equal horizontal bands of red (top) and green with a yellow five-pointed star in the center.

Arts, Science, Education

Burkinabe art is centered on music, dancing, wood and metal sculpture and weaving. The small National Museum in Ouagadougou displays indigenous artistic works and representative items from the daily life of the country's ethnic groups. Local artists exhibit Western-style painting, sculpture, and print-making. Carved wooden masks and figures are available for purchase by collectors, but antique pieces are rare and expensive.

The scientific world is small in Burkina Faso, but several specialized research centers exist. Several agricultural research and extension services are sponsored by the French Government, semiprivate organizations, and the Burkinabe Government. One of the most important tropical disease research centers in West Africa has its headquarters at Bobo-Dioulasso, the country's second largest city. It operates jointly with the Medical Entomology Center and the Muraz Medical Center to perform research on tropical diseases. France provides a large part of the annual budget, and the U.S. has provided a staff member. Several institutes in Ouagadougou carry on social science studies.

The University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's national university, evolved from the former Center for Higher Studies in April 1974. The university includes colleges of letters, law, science, economics, film, and engineering, and a technical training institute. A medical school has been constructed. The university has three- and five-year courses leading to the level of bachelor of arts degree. The student population is nearly all Burkinabe. A number of students also pursue university-level studies abroad.

Primary and secondary education is provided at government expense. However, it was estimated that only 22 percent of primary school-age children attended primary school. Moreover, secondary school enrollment was equivalent to only 6 percent of eligible children. Despite government support for education, Burkina Faso has one of the world's lowest literacy rates. As of 1995, literacy is 19.2 percent.

Commerce and Industry

Burkina Faso is predominantly agricultural. About 90 percent of its people make a living from subsistence farming and nomadic stock-raising. Primary food crops include sorghum, millet, rice, corn, yams, and beans. Cotton is the main cash crop, along with peanuts, sesame, and shea nuts (*karité*). There are plans to mechanize farming and open up new areas for development. Burkina Faso's agricultural growth is hampered by severe drought, poor soil conditions, and infrequent rainfall.

The government is placing great emphasis on the commercialization and development of the country's mineral resources. It opened the Poura gold mine, which is located 112 miles west of Ouagadougou, in 1985. Manganese deposits have been discovered at Tambao, along with reserves of limestone, lead, bauxite, phosphates, and nickel. A railway link from Ouagadougou to Tambao is under construction. However, progress has been slowed by a lack of funding.

Industry is vastly underdeveloped. Small factories are located primarily in Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouagadougou, Banfora, and Koudougou. Manufacturing is limited to flour milling, sugar refining, textile manufacturing, and the production of footwear, moped/bicycle assembly, soap, cigarettes, and beer.

Burkina Faso, with an estimated per capita GDP of \$1000 (as of 2000), is one of the poorest and least

industrialized nations of Africa. The country has been plagued by trade deficits. These deficits are balanced somewhat by borrowing, foreign aid, and money sent home by Burkinabe working in other countries. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administers approximately 15 million annually in bilateral and regional assistance programs. Projects are ongoing in rural development, agricultural research, agricultural education, reforestation, health/nutrition planning, and population and family planning. USAID also sponsors a supplemental feeding program for schools, maternity centers, and food-for-work projects. The U.S. Embassy also supports small-scale development projects throughout the country.

Burkina Faso's primary export is cotton, followed by livestock, shea nuts, hides and skins, rubber products, and sesame seeds. Imports include vehicles, petroleum products, grain, dairy products, and machinery. The most important trading partners are France and Cote d'Ivoire.

The *Chambre de Commerce, d'Industrie et d'Artisanat du Burkina* is located in Ouagadougou, with a branch in Bobo-Dioulasso. The mailing address is B.P. 502, Ouagadougou.

Transportation

Burkina Faso has international airports at Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. The national airline, *Air Burkina*, serves Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso, and other major cities in the country. *Air Burkina* also offers flights to Niamey, Bamako, Lomé, Cotonou, and Abidjan. Ouagadougou's international airport is served by several weekly flights from Paris, Abidjan, Niamey, Bamako, Dakar, Algiers, Moscow, and Tripoli.

Trains operate twice daily between Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, and to Abidjan, 440 miles away on the coast, once a day. The 23-hour trip to Abidjan is an interesting one;

comfortable first-class, air-conditioned accommodations include sleeping compartments with sinks. Other compartments are fan-cooled, but hot and dusty. Americans usually take along a prepared snack, but a good-quality lunch and dinner are served on board.

Burkina Faso has city buses, but they are seldom used by Americans. Taxis in Ouagadougou are limited and often unavailable in residential areas. Although hailing a cab is difficult, cabs are usually available in the downtown area or at hotels. Fares are based on distance, with higher rates at night. Tipping is not customary.

Most roads throughout the country are unpaved, but are adequate during the dry season. The June-to-September rains make many roads impassable, and repairs often take several months. Paved roads are found in the main towns; from Ouagadougou to Bamako, Mali; from Ouagadougou to the Ghanaian border; and to Lomé, Togo.

Auto air-conditioning, in addition to its obvious benefits, also keeps out the red laterite dust during the dry season. Garages repair and service most air conditioners, including U.S. units. Every car should have an oil-bath air filter to prevent dust from damaging the engine.

Peugeot, Toyota, Renault, and Mazda are popular in Burkina Faso, and parts and service are readily available. Volkswagen, Nissan, and Honda are also found here, but Ouagadougou has no regular dealerships for these makes. Reliable repair service for Volkswagens is difficult to locate. Japanese motorcycles and motorbikes, used extensively in the cities, can be purchased locally.

It is advisable to have an international driver's license, as local licenses sometimes take many months to obtain. Third-party insurance is compulsory for all private vehicles.

Those planning camping and touring trips should equip a car with a heavy-duty radiator and shock absorbers. A supply of spare parts is advisable for American cars, as local garages do not stock them. Garages, which do good body work, can repair French-made cars with little trouble.

Communications

The local telephone dial system works well, but service is sometimes interrupted during the rainy season. Occasionally, long-distance calls are hard to place (and connections can be poor) within the country and to certain other African countries. Local telephone operator service is available 24 hours daily. Commercial telegraph service is expensive and inaccurate. Priority rate is double the cost. Telegrams in French are likely to be sent and received more accurately. International telex facilities are available at main hotels.

International airmail to and from the U.S. takes five to ten days for delivery.

Both Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso have AM and FM radio stations. Most broadcasts are in French; the rest are in various vernacular languages. Several hours of Western popular and semiclassical music are programmed each day. Shortwave broadcasts such as Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) can also be received.

Télévision Nationale du Burkina provides transmissions seven days a week to Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, Koudougou, and Ouahigouya, in French and African languages. French programs feature educational films, news, and movies. American sets are not compatible with the locally used French SECAM system, but can be used with transformers for American video and TV games.

Few English-language books, magazines, or newspapers are sold in

Ouagadougou. Several bookstores in the capital carry French paperbacks and airmail editions of *Paris Match*, *Jours de France*, and *Elle*.

Some expatriates have personal subscriptions to the international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*. These publications usually arrive by air within 2–3 days of issue.

The U.S. Information Service (USIS) library has a limited selection of books in English, but few are best-sellers or mysteries. There is a larger stock of French books, which may be borrowed. The American Embassy Recreation Association has about 500 paperbacks contributed by personnel.

The only newspapers published in Burkina Faso are a government daily, *Sidwaya*; a government monthly, *Carrefour Africain*; a government daily news leaflet, *Bulletin Quotidien d'Information*; a government daily, *Dunia*; and a government weekly, *Journal Officiel du Burkina*. A new government daily, *Jamaa*, began publication in 1988. All of these publications are in French and depend on Agence France-Press for most of their international news.

Health

A 600-bed hospital in the capital is staffed by French and Burkinabe doctors, but it is rarely used by Americans. Most laboratory work is done at a local pharmacy or sent to the U.S. Americans needing special medical treatment or hospitalization are sent to France or Germany. A German dentist with a private practice does regular dental work in Ouagadougou.

Local pharmacies carry drugs and medicines, and a nurse or attending doctor can ensure that French prescriptions are suitable substitutes for American products. Prices are usually higher than in the U.S.

Temperature and humidity changes make colds, coughs, and sore throats a common, but not serious, problem. The hot, dust-laden wind

during the dry season aggravates asthma or sinus problems.

Mosquitoes carry malaria as well as numerous viral diseases and are a major health hazard. Under the rabies control program, the Burkinabe Government's veterinary services will inoculate dogs and cats for a nominal fee if the vaccine is provided. Dogs must be inoculated and tagged.

City water is filtered and chemically treated, but should be filtered and boiled for drinking and cooking. It is necessary to treat leafy vegetables with an antiseptic solution, and to cook all food thoroughly.

To prevent exposure to animal and waterborne diseases, all food, and particularly water, should be properly treated. A large supply of safe drinking water must be carried on trips. It is not safe to swim in lakes or streams, as water is a principal source of the parasites that carry dysentery, hepatitis, and bilharzia. Despite good intentions and precautions, dysentery may be contracted occasionally, but the necessary palliatives are available.

Rigid international controls and inoculations have reduced the danger of yellow fever, but inoculations are still required. These can be obtained more conveniently before traveling to Burkina Faso. Malaria, for the most part, is preventable by using approved suppressants. Suppressants should be started two weeks before arrival and continued eight weeks after departure. Insect repellent and spray are helpful in controlling mosquitoes and other insects.

At times the heat is enervating, and even dangerous, if one is overexposed to the sun. Various forms of fatigue are associated with water depletion. Particularly during the hot season, everyone should wear a hat when out in the sun (especially children at play), drink plenty of water, and wear sunglasses to protect against the bright sun. A well-balanced diet, adequate rest, lightweight clothing, and moderate

exercise are the basic recommendations for helping to adjust to the climate.

Clothing and Services

Some ready-made clothing is available in Burkina Faso, but not in U.S. styles or sizes. Items for men, women, and children can be made by a tailor, with materials bought here or in nearby countries. It is advisable to bring sewing notions from home.

Cotton is much cooler than wash-and-wear fabrics. Women usually are more comfortable in dresses and skirts than in slacks, unless the slacks are of lightweight material.

Shoes can be bought, but the fit is different, and cost far exceeds quality. The most appropriate footwear items are tennis shoes for sports, open shoes for cool comfort, and durable closed-toe styles for walking. The majority of American women avoid wearing hosiery because of the heat.

Many of the supplies and basic services available in Burkina Faso are either too expensive or difficult to obtain. American-made brands are unavailable. There are some good hairdressers and barbers, and a few excellent tailors, although most tailors are not familiar with Western-style apparel. Shoe-repair service is scarce and the work is only mediocre. Sandals can be adequately mended.

Drugs and toiletries cost two or three times the U.S. price. Cosmetics available locally are limited and U.S. brands are unavailable. Games and playing cards are not available. American household gadgets are either rare or expensive. Typical French household equipment is available, but also expensive.

Local meats, such as beef, lamb, mutton, and pork) are of good quality and reasonably priced. The public market, grocery stores, and several butcher shops sell meat.

Butchers make their own fresh sausages and pates. Bacon, ham, seafood, and veal are imported and expensive. Local poultry tends to be tough. Some fish from nearby reservoirs is sold. However, most seafood is imported and always available.

Local vegetables are good, when available, but the season is short. Vegetables include potatoes, green beans, lettuce, green peppers, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, squash, radishes, cauliflower, and turnips. Local fruits include oranges, limes, avocados, papayas, guavas, pineapples, bananas, grapefruit, mangoes, melons, and strawberries. Apples, peaches, plums, and cherries are imported and they are expensive.

Fresh milk is not produced locally but powdered whole milk and French sterilized milk (similar to U.S. canned milk) is available. Imported butter, margarine, yogurt, fresh cream, and some excellent French cheeses are available. Local yogurt is inexpensive and usually good. Several bakeries provide a variety of pastries, made-to-order cakes, ice creams, breads, rolls, and candy.

A good selection of French wines is available. An inexpensive table wine imported by the case and bottled here is adequate for cooking. Coca-Cola, Sprite, orange soda, beer, tonic, and soda are bottled locally. Perrier, Evian, Pepsi, 7-Up, and some brands of tonic are imported.

Domestic Help

Domestic employees, usually men, are readily available. Most are Mossi and are good workers, but they have little training and must be well supervised. Domestic employees rarely speak or understand English, and few can read or write. Women domestics are rare, but girls work as children's nannies.

Burkinabe domestic employees tend to be indulgent with children. English-speaking domestics who have lived in Ghana and other

Anglophone countries are sometimes available, but they must speak some French and Moré to work in Burkina Faso.

A typical staff for a family with children consists of a houseboy/cook and a gardener/guard. A small family or single person requires less. Wages are low. Domestic employees do not live in. The employer provides uniforms.

Once domestic employees are hired unconditionally for a period longer than a month, they can be dismissed only with one month's notice, or the equivalent in salary. Many people hire domestic employees initially for a short trial period. Employers often become financially involved when major expenditures occur in their employees' families (weddings, births, illnesses, or funerals). Social security payments are 18.5 percent of the employee's salary for the employer, and 4.5 percent for the employee. Employees expect a month's bonus on New Year's Day.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The easiest route to Burkina Faso from the U.S. is via Paris. There are two direct flights a week between Ouagadougou and Paris. Burkina Faso has international airports at Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. Several American airlines offer connections between New York and Paris. Direct flights are also available to Algiers, Bamako, Niamey, Abidjan, Lomé, and Dakar.

A passport and visa are required. Travelers should obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of Burkina Faso, 2340 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 332-5577. There are honorary consuls for Burkina Faso in Decatur (Georgia), Los Angeles and New Orleans. Overseas inquiries should be made at the nearest Burkina Faso embassy or consulate.No

restrictions exist on the importation of dogs, cats, or other animals, although certification of rabies and distemper inoculations must be provided. A Burkinabe veterinarian operates an adequate animal hospital in Ouagadougou.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ouagadougou on Avenue John F. Kennedy, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Burkina Faso. The mailing address is 01 B.P. 35, Ouagadougou. The telephone numbers are (226) 30-67-23/24/25; the fax number is (226) 31-23-68.

Permits must be obtained from the Burkinabe Government to import firearms or ammunition. Requests should include specific information regarding the type of firearm, caliber or gauge, and the quantity of ammunition.

Catholic churches, missions, and a few Protestant congregations are found throughout the country. Ouagadougou has five Catholic congregations (masses in French and Moré, and occasionally in English), 25 Assembly of God churches, six Baptist missions, and one Seventh-Day Adventist mission. The English-language International Church, located in the Zone du Bois in the capital, includes both Catholics and Protestants in its congregation. Jehovah's Witnesses sponsor three missions in the country.

When traveling in Burkina Faso, it is advisable to inform friends and/or business associates of your travel plans. Travel with someone and only during the day since roads and lighting are poor. First-aid kits are available for travel outside of Ouagadougou.

Burkina Faso is a member of the Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA), which gives its name to the local currency. The CFA *franc* is supported by the French *franc*, convertible at the ratio of 50 CFA to 1 FF.

The metric system of weights and measures is used. The time in Burkina Faso is Greenwich Mean Time.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 3 Revolution Day
- Mar. 8 Women's Day
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- May 1 Labor Day
- May/June Ascension Day*
- Aug. 5 Independence Day
- Aug. 15 Assumption Day
- Oct. 15 Rectification Day
- Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
- Dec. 11 Proclamation of Independence
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- Id al-Adah*

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Allen, C. *Benin, Congo, and Burkina Faso: Politics, Economics and Society*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988.

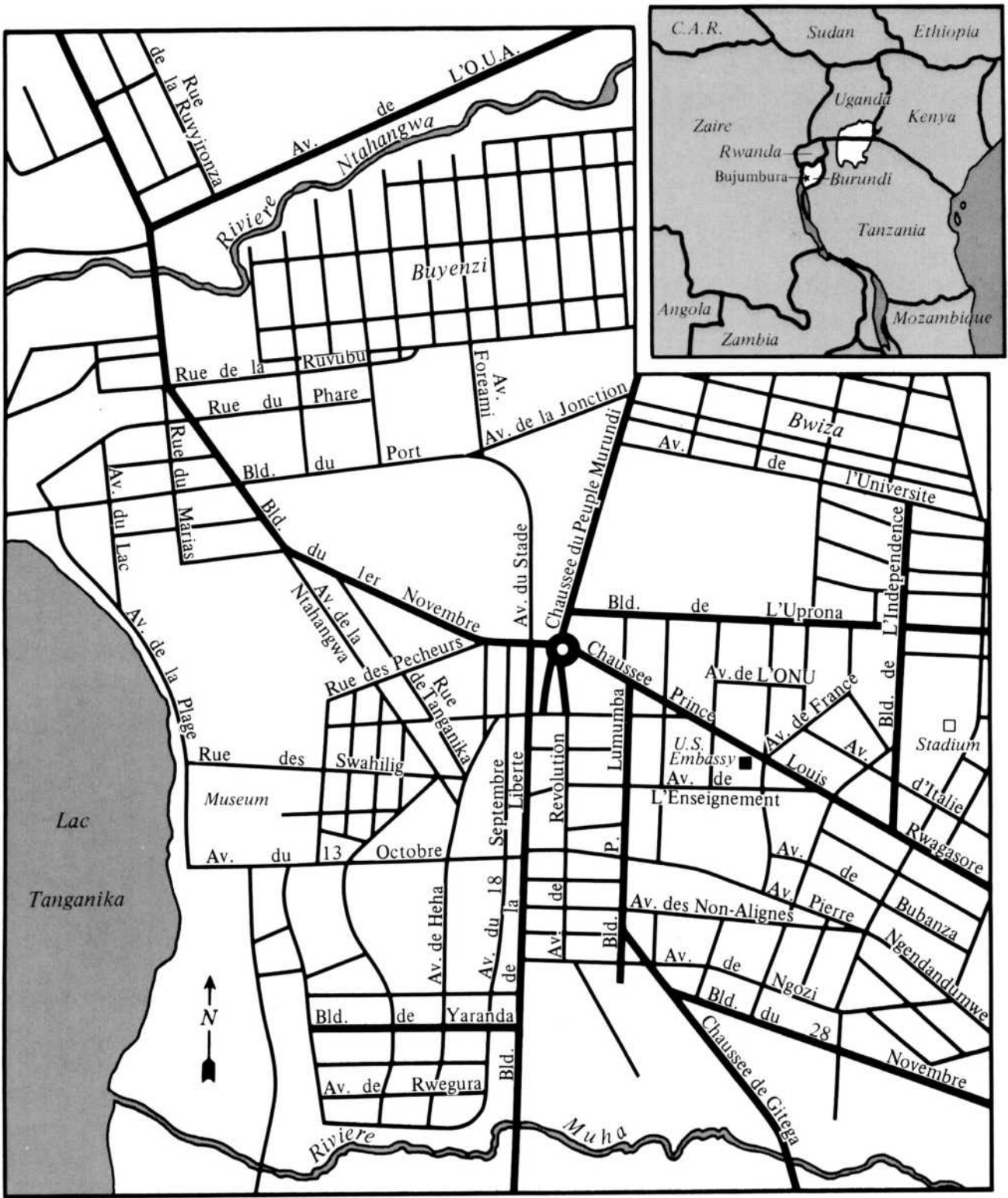
Countries of the World and Their Leaders Yearbook 1993. Detroit: Gale Research, 1993.

Cruise, O'Brien, Donal, et al., eds. *Contemporary West African States*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990.

Lear, Aaron. *Burkina Faso*. New York: Chelsea House, 1986.

Naylor, Kim. *West Africa*. 2nd ed. Edited by M. Haag. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1989.

West Africa. 7th ed. Traveller's Guides Series. Edison, NJ: Hunter Publishing, 1988.



Bujumbura, Burundi

BURUNDI

Republic of Burundi

Major City:

Bujumbura

Other Cities:

Bururi, Gitega, Ngozi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **BURUNDI** is a landlocked country in a mountainous, isolated region of central Africa. Once a German East African possession, it later was administered by Belgium as part of Ruanda-Urundi, first under a League of Nations mandate, and later as a United Nations trust territory. It became a constitutional monarchy in 1962 and a republic in 1966.

An unusual aspect of Burundi is the scarcity of towns and villages—its traditional social structure is based on scattered farmsteads. Life centers around hillside hut compounds, called *rugos*, where about 95 percent of the population lives, engaging

primarily in subsistence agriculture. A few coffee trees or tea bushes also provide cash income. The lyre-horned cattle, seen throughout the countryside, form another important part of Burundi's traditional rural life.

MAJOR CITY

Bujumbura

Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, is a small city in beautiful surroundings, with an agreeable year-round tropical climate. Its population is about 278,000. Downtown Bujumbura stretches along the flat northeastern edge of Lake Tanganyika, the second deepest lake in the world (after Lake Baikal in southern Siberia), and once thought to be the source of the Nile. The wealthier residential area slowly has been climbing the hillsides east of the city, and some of the villa-like homes have magnificent views of the lake, the Ruzizi River plain, and the beautiful mountains of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), just 15 miles away across the lake.

Bujumbura is a small but colorful city, which can be traversed by car in a matter of minutes. Many of the

main streets are paved, and traffic is rarely a problem, except during commuter hours. Streets throughout much of the residential area are not paved but remain passable, even during the rainy season. Flowering trees in Bujumbura include flamboyants, acacia, jacaranda, and frangipani. Tropical ornamental plants thrive here, and flowers are plentiful in any season.

In the downtown commercial area, the streets are lined with small shops, usually owned by Greeks, Belgians, or Asians. Among these are various food businesses, general dry goods shops, sales and service establishments, shoe stores, some European gift shops, pharmacies, and a flower shop. Street vendors sell fresh fruits and vegetables. A large open-air market thrives in the mornings, selling basketry, foods, charcoal, used clothing (much of it from the U.S.), cloth, and small items for African consumers.

Three hotels in Bujumbura, the Source du Nil, Novotel, and the Club des Vacances provide international rooms and service. Other hotels are available at much lower cost, but are not normally used by Americans.

Bujumbura's lakefront is dominated by a port area which is visited weekly by two steamers transport-

ing goods and passengers up and down the 400-mile lake under the Tanzanian flag. Just south of the port is a scenic beach area, where residents like to drive in the evenings to view the sunset and look for hippopotami who live in the reeds and waters along the beach.

The residents of Bujumbura live in and around the city in various "quarters" and suburbs which have developed according to ethnic origin and economic status. Large foreign groups include Zairians, Belgians, Indians, Ismaili Muslims, French, and a few Arabs. Although Kirundi and French are the official languages in Burundi, many of these foreign groups use Swahili for commerce. At least some knowledge of French is necessary for shopping and social life, as little English is spoken here.

The American community is limited to the U.S. diplomatic staff and a few business people and missionaries. There is little tourism in Burundi.

Food

Fresh tropical fruits (such as bananas, papayas, pineapples, mangoes, lemons, avocados, tangerines, strawberries, and oranges) and vegetables (including cucumbers, green beans, cabbage, tomatoes, artichokes, carrots, cauliflower, beets, lettuce, potatoes, turnips, onions, peas, leeks, green onions, green peppers, and parsley) are available at reasonable prices, although some are seasonal.

Lake Tanganyika provides Bujumbura with succulent whitefish, such as capitaine, sangala, and bangabanga, which are mild flavored and of varying size. An indigenous freshwater sardine that makes a tasty cocktail snack when deep fried can be found.

Local beef and poultry are expensive, and quality varies. Local pork and lamb are quite good. Three local European butcher shops make a variety of sausages and bacon and

several types of ham and lunch meat. Other sausages, ham, special meats, and shellfish imported from Kenya and Europe are expensive.

Local milk is not considered safe; yogurt and butter are good but not always available. Cheeses, when available, are good. European cheeses, ice cream, poultry, temperate zone fruit, and other special foods are available in food stores that cater to Europeans or can be special ordered from Europe, but prices are high because of air freight costs.

Bakeries in town produce a variety of European-type breads and some pastries. Bread always seems to be available locally, but flour shortages do occur.

Burundi's locally grown and processed arabica coffee is excellent. Good locally produced tea is also available. The local brewery makes fine light and dark beers in addition to bottling cola, orange and lemon sodas, tonic, and a good soda water. Brief shortages of these beverages sometimes occur.

Some stores carry a large selection of canned goods and other European and Kenyan food and household products, but prices are high.

Clothing

Summer clothes are worn throughout the year in Burundi. Little ready-made clothing is sold locally. Tailors are available, but the selection of yard goods is small, and any high-quality wash-and-wear fabric is expensive. All clothing should be washable, as dry cleaning is of questionable quality.

Lightweight suits, similar to those worn in summer in Washington, D.C., are appropriate year-round. Short-sleeved shirts are acceptable at work, but a coat and tie are preferred for special business visits. Men also wear safari suits, made to order in Bujumbura or in Nairobi. For most evening social occasions, a sport shirt without tie and coat is

worn. A dinner jacket is rarely needed. For trips into the mountains, a light jacket or sweater is useful. A variety of footwear is recommended.

Women find that summer dresses, slacks, or pantsuits are worn to the office or around town. Hosiery is unnecessary. A good supply of shoes is needed; open styles are best for this tropical climate, along with tennis or hiking shoes for outdoor activities. For most evening occasions, the dress is *tenue relaxe*, which for women usually means long dresses or evening pants outfits that range from casual to dressy, depending on the occasion and the host. One or two long dresses will serve for more formal occasions. A stole is useful for cooler evenings, and mountain trips call for a light jacket or sweater. Some find raincoats too hot in the tropics, but umbrellas are necessary.

A generous supply of washable children's clothing as well as shoes are needed for any extended stay. Jeans and T-shirts are as popular in Burundi as elsewhere. Boys of all ages wear shorts as well as long pants. Smaller children wear rubber boots during the rainy season. Sweaters are needed occasionally in the evening.

All family members should bring appropriate gear for swimming, boating, tennis, golf, horseback riding, or other sports in which they plan to participate.

Supplies & Services

There is a lack of some services and products in Bujumbura. Most basic hygiene items, such as soap, toothpaste, deodorant, and feminine hygiene products are available, but at high prices. Limited supplies of play materials and household products are also expensive, as are gift wrap and party favors (which are depleted rapidly during holiday seasons). Local pharmacies stock basic needs, but do not often have special items. Photographic supplies must be ordered from abroad.



Street in Bujumbura, Burundi

© Howard Davies/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Bujumbura has no reliable dry cleaning service. Some tailors are available, and best results can be obtained through personal recommendations. Four beauty shops and two barbershops operate in Bujumbura, and the beauty shops serve both men and women.

Some skilled European electricians work in the capital, but labor and materials are expensive.

Religious Activities

In Bujumbura, Catholic Sunday services are held in Kirundi or French at the Cathedral Regina Mundi. Protestant services are offered in Kirundi or French in various churches around town. In addition, a number of English-speaking missionaries in rotation conduct Protestant Fellowship services often featuring visiting speakers from all over the world. A children's English

Sunday School is held during the fellowship service.

Domestic Help

Reliable household help is available. Most households employ a combination houseboy/cook, who does the cooking, cleaning, and laundry. The employer is responsible for the medical care of the servant and his family. The employer may also provide work clothing and give an additional month's pay for a New Year's bonus.

Larger families often hire servants who specialize in particular functions, such as laundry, cooking, and child care. Servants generally are male, and speak French.

Education

Bujumbura has no English-language schools. However, American children at nursery, elementary, and secondary levels are successfully

pursuing their studies in French at the French School of Bujumbura, which is a member of the French overseas school system, and partially supported by the Government of France. Some American students also enroll in the Belgian School of Bujumbura, which is also highly regarded.

Because studies are conducted in a language other than English, supplemental tutoring in French is provided, as is additional course work to help students maintain their U.S.-system grade level. Tutors are also available for supplemental English classes to help school-aged children attain appropriate levels of reading, writing, grammar, and spelling in English. Some expatriate children attend school in Europe or return to the U.S. In addition, there are English-language boarding schools in Kenya, but matriculation is sometimes difficult.

Special educational opportunities are limited, or nonexistent, depending on the availability of qualified instructors which varies from year to year. Official Americans and their families are eligible for French and Swahili lessons, following the guidelines of the Foreign Service Institute program. Kurundi lessons are available from private tutors. Adult and child education in art, music, or dancing is available.

Recreation

Soccer is Burundi's national sport, and matches usually are played on Sunday afternoons. The various sporting clubs sponsor occasional competitions or tournaments but, otherwise, spectator sports are infrequent. Basketball and volleyball are played in the schools.

The few organized activities that take place center around private clubs, where dues are reasonable and where no special clothing is required, except for tennis whites. The clubs include:

Entente Sportive, a social and sports club with a large outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts, playgrounds, a nine-hole golf course, outdoor basketball, and a club house with an excellent restaurant that is the center of social activities in the city.

Cercle Hippique, a riding club where rates are reasonable and formal riding attire is not required. Lessons are available for adults and children.

Cercle Nautique, a small yacht club on the shore of Lake Tanganyika, with mooring for sailboats and power boats. Water-skiing is common here, and fishing from the pier is popular on weekend afternoons, although catches are marginal. Cercle Nautique is a gathering spot for drinks and snacks in the early evenings and on weekends. A good bar that serves light lunches on weekends is also available.

In addition to the club facilities in Bujumbura, there is a popular swimming beach located at the Club des Vacances Hotel. The hotel is situated on the northern shore of Lake Tanganyika, approximately four miles from Bujumbura. The Castle, near Rumonge, a 45- to 60-minute drive south from Bujumbura, features an uncrowded, pleasant, sandy beach and crystal-clear water, making it another popular spot. Bring any beach equipment, such as chairs and umbrella. Such items here, if available, are expensive.

All along the shores of Lake Tanganyika, some danger exists from crocodiles and hippopotami, as well as from bilharzia, a waterborne disease spread by a tiny snail that breeds near reeds in still water. Swimming from a boat in the middle of the lake is considered safe from these dangers. No restrictions on beach attire exist.

Hunting permits are difficult to obtain, and importation of firearms, even for use in a neighboring country, should not be done without consulting authorities.

Burundi has no proper campsites, but camping opportunities are extensive in neighboring Tanzania, as well as in Kenya. Campers should bring all necessary gear, including tents, air mattresses, sleeping bags, lanterns, camp stoves, and eating and cooking utensils. Tents can be rented at some campsites. Several attractive picnic areas are within a short drive from Bujumbura.

Burundi is a birdwatcher's paradise, with a region in the north noted for its various species. Bujumbura is full of colorful birdlife, as is the Ruzuzi River plain.

The mountainous interior of Burundi is beautiful. Except for the few paved truck roads, traveling is difficult. Hotels and restaurants are found only in three or four towns.

A 40-minute drive (21 miles) along the paved road to Bugarama leads to the over 6,000-foot crest between the Nile and Zaire River basins. The area offers many picnic sites, including the beautiful tea plantation at Teza.

Road trips outside the country are feasible to eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) and to Rwanda. Travel by car from Bujumbura north to Kigali, Rwanda, takes five hours. From Kigali, it is possible to reach the Akagera Game Park in northeastern Rwanda. The park has abundant wildlife, and its flora has not been damaged by elephants and giraffes, as is sometimes the case in East Africa. Rwanda also has the highly scenic volcano region in the northwest, around Lake Kivu, where gorillas can be seen. The nearby twin towns of Gisenye (Rwanda) and Goma (DRC) offer pleasant hotel accommodations.

The same Lake Kivu area can be reached by going from Bujumbura to Bukavu, DRC, (about 90 miles) and from Bukavu to Goma (about 150 miles) along the western shore of Lake Kivu. The Bukavu-Goma road is twisting, rough, and slippery during the rainy season, but the magnificent scenery is worth the effort. In the Goma vicinity, there are opportunities for hiking up to volcanos, some of which are still active. Two-and-a-half hours north of Goma is lovely Virunga Game Park, with a good hotel. The park is known for its hippos, elephants, lions, and Cob antelope. Bukavu has a park with a mountain gorilla group, just 24 miles from town. The sometimes exhausting hike through the thick forest to find and observe the gorillas is a unique experience.

The closest modern rest spot is Nairobi, Kenya, which is 500 air miles and 960 land miles from Bujumbura—much of it over difficult roads in Uganda. (Currently, travelers are discouraged from making this trip by land because of Ugandan political conditions.)

Many people take advantage of the proximity to Tanzania, which contains some of the best game parks in Africa. Travel by road, while sometimes difficult, provides an enjoyable and memorable experience.

Entertainment

Entertainment is limited in Bujumbura. Movies at the three cinemas are always in French. Several excellent restaurants are patronized by the American community; the menus are somewhat varied, and the cuisine is generally French, Greek, or Belgian. Prices range from moderate to expensive. Musée Vivant, a small museum with a botanical garden, reptile house, aviary, and crafts village is an interesting spot.

Private social activity is informal and frequent, usually revolving around home entertainment such as barbecues, poker nights, or dinner and a movie. There is some entertaining in private clubs or restaurants, but this is expensive. Two nightclubs in town have recorded or taped music. Bujumbura also has several discotheques, but private clubs offer the best opportunity for meeting new people.

Much of the American community is organized around the Bujumbura American Recreation Association (BARA). It operates the Torchlight Club, a nightclub-like place for parties and movies. BARA also has a video club with over 300 films.

Lions Club International, Rotary Club, and Round Table are represented in Bujumbura, and these groups also serve in forming international contacts.

Burundians value courtesy and good manners. At the same time, they do not necessarily follow Western conventions of social conduct. Personal contact generally plays a much greater role here. Burundians seem to enjoy the relaxed, informal style of entertaining favored by many Americans.

OTHER CITIES

Located in the southwestern section of the country, **BURURI** has sites of interest including mosques and Roman Catholic churches. The tropical climate allows the growth of various fruits, corn, and rice. Fishing on nearby Lake Tanganyika makes the production of smoked fish a major industry here.

Burundi's only community of appreciable size (other than the capital) is the small city of **GITEGA** in the central part of the country. Gitega is located approximately 40 miles (65 kilometers) east of Bujumbura and is connected to the capital by a major road. It is a center for education and religion. Several primary, secondary, and technical schools are located here along with places of worship for Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims. Crops such as sorghum, bananas, cassava, sweet potatoes, beans, and corn are grown in areas surrounding Gitega. Industrial enterprises in Gitega are limited to peat exploitation and a small tannery. It is the location of the National Museum, opened in 1955, with its well-displayed historical and folk exhibits, as well as the site of a library. A Catholic mission here operates an art school that sells some native carvings, bas-reliefs, and ceramic work. There also are a few hotels and restaurants in the city. Gitega's population is approximately 27,000.

NGOZI is a small town located in north-central Burundi. A government hospital is located here along with several churches and mosques. Cassava, sweet potatoes, beans, coffee, bananas, and tea are grown near the town. In recent years, tin mining has become a growing industry near Ngozi. Ngozi has a population of roughly 15,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Burundi, measuring 10,747 square miles, is about the size of Maryland. It is located in the heart of central Africa, along the northeastern shore of Lake Tanganyika. To the north is Rwanda, a country of about equal size, with the same local language and many of the same customs. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) is to the west, across the shared Ruzizi River and Lake Tanganyika, both forming a part of the western section of the Great Rift Valley. To the south and east lies Tanzania.

Mountains rise steeply from the Tanganyika shore to almost 9,000 feet along the Zaire-Nile watershed divide to the east of Bujumbura, which itself is situated at an altitude of 2,600 feet. Green valleys and hillsides—intensively cultivated in wheat, peas, corn, and tea—typify the rest of the countryside on the divide. East of the divide, the central plateau (3,500 to 6,000 feet) gradually becomes more open and rolling, with predominating crops of bananas, corn, beans, and coffee. Toward the Tanzanian border, the altitude drops sharply at some eastern points into largely uninhabited valleys, such as the Mosso in southeastern Burundi.

The Bujumbura area has a distinct dry season and two rainy seasons. The short rainy interval extends from October to December. The long rainy period begins in February and continues through mid-May. Average annual rainfall in Bujumbura measures about 31 inches, but twice that amount occurs in the mountains. During the long, dry, summer season (mid-May to early October), a haze often obscures the mountains and even much of the lake view, but a brisk breeze around midday helps to freshen the air.

Temperatures in Bujumbura generally range from about 72°F at night to between 85°F–91°F during the day. However, temperatures may be hotter at midday during the dry season or cooler (below 80°F) on cloudy days during the rainy period. The equatorial sun at Bujumbura's altitude can be intense and very hot, with attendant sunburn problems. Humidity during the rainy season is not as severe or oppressive as in coastal African towns. Cool evenings may require a light sweater or stole, particularly after acclimatization brings sensitivity to minor temperature changes.

Much cooler temperatures are recorded in the mountains of the interior, where there are occasional night frosts in June and July. Hailstorms sometimes occur during the rainy season. Daytime temperatures in the shade are usually in the upper 60s or low 70s along the crest, and nighttime lows are about 50°F. However, midday exposure of unprotected skin to strong sun—even for brief periods—at altitudes greater than 6,000 feet can result in severe burns.

Population

Burundi's population is estimated at 5.9 million. With a population density of approximately 600 people per square mile, Burundi is one of the most densely inhabited countries in Africa. Three ethnic groups comprise the indigenous population: Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, all of whom speak Kirundi as their native tongue.

The official languages of Burundi are French and Kirundi, although Swahili is spoken in Bujumbura and a few other commercial sectors. Because Kirundi is a difficult tonal language that requires a long learning process, most Westerners rely on French to communicate with Burundians. In recent years, the government has stressed English in schools, and some Burundian officials now have a good knowledge of English.

Government

Burundi, formerly known as Urundi, came under the German East African Administration at the close of the 19th century. In 1919, the area called Ruanda-Urundi (now Rwanda and Burundi) was ceded to Belgium under a League of Nations mandate, which in turn became a United Nations trusteeship after World War II. Burundi was granted independence July 1, 1962 as a constitutional monarchy.

A military coup d'état in November 1966 overthrew the king (*mwami*), and established a republic under the leadership of Capt. (eventually Lt. Gen.) Michel Micombero. A second military coup 10 years later ousted Micombero on charges of corrupt and inefficient government, and brought to power Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, who had received university-level military training in Belgium. Bagaza was elected by direct suffrage in 1984. However, Bagaza's regime became increasingly repressive and unpopular. In September 1987, Bagaza was overthrown in a military coup. His replacement, Major Pierre Buyoya, suspended Burundi's constitution and named a 31-member Military Committee for National Salvation (CMSN) to govern the country. The CMSN remained the primary governmental authority until mid-1990, when it was replaced by a civilian-led National Security Council. A new constitution adopted in 1991 provided for a directly elected president, a prime minister, and an 81-seat National Assembly. It was supplanted on 6 June 1998 by a Transitional Constitution which enlarged the National Assembly to 121 seats and created two vice presidents.

Two national, mainstream governing parties are the Unity for National Progress or UPRONA; and the Burundi Democratic Front or FRODEBU. A multiparty system was introduced after 1998.

Burundi is divided into 16 provinces, each headed by a governor.

Provinces are subdivided into communes, communal subsectors called zones, and groups of hills and individual hills (*collines*) which traditionally organize along family lines.

The Burundi flag consists of a white diagonal cross on green and red quarters, with three red stars (for unity, work, and progress) on a central circle.

Arts, Science, Education

There is no compulsory education in Burundi. The country's literacy rate in 1995 was about 35 percent.

The University of Burundi, including the semi-autonomous Teachers College (ENS) in Bujumbura, has an estimated 3,300 students. Its law, arts and letters, economics, and agricultural departments, as well as the ENS, offer four years of study leading to a degree. The University of Burundi has a medical school. A large number of French, Belgian, Swiss, Russian, and other foreign professors teach at the university.

Five schools in Bujumbura operate for foreign students, offering classes from kindergarten through high school.

Four private kindergartens operate for preschool children aged three to five.

Commerce and Industry

Burundi's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture. Over 90 percent of Burundi's people are engaged in subsistence farming. Burundi's principal product is arabica coffee, most of which is sold to the European Community (EC). Coffee provides up to 80 percent of Burundi's export earnings. Other cash crops include tea, cotton, tobacco, and palm oil.

The manufacturing sector in Burundi is small and centered pri-

marily in Bujumbura. The city has a few light industries producing beer, soft drinks, soap, metal parts, insecticides, textiles, cigarettes, and paint.

High-grade nickel deposits and other minerals were discovered in the 1980s, providing new resource potential. The government, international organizations, and several firms are studying techniques for exploiting these minerals. In 1985, Amoco began a major oil exploration program in Burundi.

Wood is Burundi's main source of energy. The Mugere hydroelectric dam, constructed by the Chinese, was opened in 1986 and supplies part of the electrical power consumed in Bujumbura.

EC countries such as Germany, France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Belgium are Burundi's main trading partners.

Burundi is extremely dependent on foreign aid. The EC nations, China, the United States, World Bank, and the United Nations have all contributed substantial amounts of economic assistance.

The Chambre de Commerce et de l'Industrie du Burundi has an office in Bujumbura. The postal address is B.P. 313.

Transportation

No domestic transportation system is acceptable except weekly Air Burundi flights to Gitega. A World War I era German navy steamer transports passengers and cargo around Lake Tanganyika. Bujumbura International Airport is located approximately 10 miles (15 kilometers) from Bujumbura. Direct air service exists between Bujumbura and Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), Uganda, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Russia, and Belgium. Participating airlines are Air France, Aeroflot, Air Tanzania, Air Zaire, Kenya Airlines, Cam-

eroon Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines, and Sabena.

Although all-weather roads provide access to the game parks in Zaire and Rwanda, as well as overland travel to Uganda and Kenya, political conditions may discourage such travel. Travelers can reach the game parks in Tanzania by car, but distances are great, and roads may be impassable.

Taxis are available within Bujumbura. Fares are negotiated at the beginning of a trip. A vehicle with a driver may be rented, but rates are high. Tips (always less than 10 percent) are welcome, but not mandatory.

The country's rudimentary public transportation system makes a dependable, personally owned automobile a necessity. Burundi, and its most easily reached neighbors, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), use left-hand drive, but right-hand-drive cars are permitted. A valid operator's license is the only requirement for obtaining a permit to drive in Burundi.

Most roads outside the city of Bujumbura are unpaved. However, there is a good, all-weather highway to Kigali, Rwanda; a fair road connects the city to Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire); and, within the country, roads to the cities of Rumonge, Gihofi, Nyanza Lac, Muyinga, and Gitega are paved. Generally rough roads dictate the need for a car with adequate ground clearance.

The Americans living in Burundi own an equal mix of American and foreign-made cars. Outside the U.S. community, predominant makes include Toyota, Nissan, Peugeot, Renault, Mercedes, Volkswagen, and Land or Range Rovers. Smaller cars prevail because of the extremely high cost of gasoline. Local dealers and service are available for the above makes, but there

is no guarantee of parts availability. Cars built for the American market have different specifications from those built for Burundi. Ideally, vehicles should be equipped with heavy-duty suspension, cooling systems, heavy-duty batteries, and tube-type tires.

Air conditioning is a welcome feature, but not essential. It is advisable to keep an extra supply of oil, gas, and air filters; spark plugs; oil, brake, and transmission fluid; fan belts; windshield wipers; and various bulbs and fuses to simplify maintenance and reduce costs.

Communications

Bujumbura has a relatively dependable local telephone service, although it is subject to interruptions. Service within the country is fairly good. Delays are often encountered when placing international calls, but a ground-satellite relay station usually produces clear connections.

Commercial cable service is available, but extremely expensive. The rate system is complex.

International airmail service to and from Burundi is generally good. Letters to Europe take about five days for delivery, and to the U.S., about 10 days. Surface mail is in transit four to eight months to or from the U.S. Packages are subject to customs problems, and service is often unreliable.

The one radio station in Burundi is the government-controlled La Voix de la Révolution. It broadcasts on several FM frequencies in French, Kirundi, Swahili, and English.

A shortwave radio is a must for international and sports news. A good receiver can pick up British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), as well as non-English broadcasts.

Burundi's television service, Télévision Nationale du Burundi broadcasts from a station in Bujumbura. Programs are in Kirundi or consist of French-language news and films. Also, Zaire television can be seen on a set capable of receiving SECAM standard broadcasts for color or, CCIR standard for black-and-white. Many expatriates have American standard (NTSC) television and VCRs and order commercially or privately made tapes from the U.S.

The only local Western-language newspaper is *Le Renouveau du Burundi*, an eight-page, daily, French-language paper published by the Burundi Ministry of Information. It often features good and accurate international news, but generally arrives one day late. The most widely read English-language newspaper is the *International Herald Tribune*, which arrives from The Hague one to five days late. Editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The Economist*, or Sunday editions of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* can be ordered by mail, but these subscriptions often are three to four weeks in arriving.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

General medical practitioners, both European and Burundian, can be consulted in Bujumbura. Local optometrical and ophthalmological care is not recommended, but good care is available in Nairobi. Burundi's hospitals do not meet Western standards and, except in emergencies, most Western expatriates use facilities in Kenya or South Africa.

Routine dental care is unavailable in Bujumbura. However, Nairobi, Kenya has good dental facilities. Orthodontic work cannot be done in Bujumbura. Western Europe or South Africa offer the nearest acceptable facilities.

Community Health

Malaria, viral infections, colds, insect bites, and easily infected cuts

are the most common ailments in Bujumbura. Those suffering from asthma or allergies also may have problems, particularly during the dusty dry season.

The level of public sanitation compares favorably with other developing countries, but falls below U.S. standards. Open drains, lack of a sewage system, garbage piles, open field burning, and other unsanitary practices are still common.

Preventive Measures

Malaria prophylaxis should be initiated at least one week before arriving in Burundi. Mefloquine is recommended because the mosquitoes are chloroquine resistant. The list of inoculations recommended by the U.S. Department of State for its employees includes those for yellow fever, smallpox, tetanus, typhoid, and polio; gamma globulin shots also are on the list. Yellow fever and cholera immunizations are required for entry into the country.

AIDS is a major problem, especially among prostitutes. In Africa, AIDS is primarily a heterosexual disease and extreme caution is urged.

Although the water supply in Bujumbura is considered safe, boiling and filtering is recommended because of the doubtful condition of pipes, particularly in the older downtown areas. In restaurants, locally bottled beverages are readily available (cola, soda water, tonic, orange and lemon-lime soft drinks, and an excellent beer). Scrupulous care must be taken in the preparation of food. Vegetables should be washed and all household staff members who handle food should receive periodic physical examinations.

The risk of bilharzia exists along much of the Lake Tanganyika shoreline, although some beaches and mid-lake areas are less dangerous.

Persons with pets should bring flea and tick collars, spray, or powder.

Competent veterinary care is available, but it is often necessary to purchase veterinary medicines and vaccines from Nairobi, Europe, or the U.S.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 5	Unity Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
July 1	Independence Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day*
Oct. 13.	Prince Louis Rwagasore Day
Oct. 21.	President Ndadaye's Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
	*Variable

NOTE FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Burundi is nearly always by air, although it is possible to cross the border by road or ferry. Travelers generally transit Paris, Brussels, or Nairobi, Kenya. Most flights go through Nairobi, and provide an opportunity for last-minute shopping.

A passport, visa, and evidence of immunization against yellow fever and meningococcal meningitis are required. Only those travelers resident in countries where there is no Burundian Embassy are eligible for entry stamps, without a visa, at the airport upon arrival. These entry stamps are not a substitute for a visa, which must be obtained from the Burundi Immigration Service within 24 hours of arrival. Travelers without a visa are not permitted to leave the country. Travelers should obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of the

Republic of Burundi, Suite 212, 2233 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20007; telephone (202) 342-2574 or the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations in New York. Overseas inquiries may be made at the nearest Burundian embassy or consulate.

Travelers who wish to travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with visas and/or entry/exit stamps from Burundi, Rwanda or Uganda may experience difficulties at DRC airports or other ports of entry. Some travelers with those visas or exit/entry stamps have been detained for questioning in DRC.

Americans living in or visiting Burundi are encouraged to register at the Consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Burundi and obtain updated information on travel and security within Burundi. The U.S. Embassy is located on the Avenue des Etats-Unis. The mailing address is B.P. 34, 1720 Bujumbura,

Burundi. The telephone number is (257) 223-454, fax (257) 222-926.

Pets

All pets entering Burundi must have accredited rabies and health certificates. The rabies vaccination should be given 30 to 60 days before arrival, and the health certificate should be dated within 48 hours of the start of the pet's travel. Quarantine is not required for arriving animals.

Pet food is available, but extremely expensive and often past the date of expiration on the label. Most expatriates prepare pet food from meat products that are locally available.

The time in Burundi is Greenwich Mean Time plus two.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The official currency is the Burundi franc (BFr), linked directly to the U.S. dollar. Currency importation is not restricted, but must be declared.

No U.S. banks have affiliated offices in Bujumbura.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Africa South of the Sahara 1992. London: Europa Publications, 1991.

Kay, Reginald. *Burundi Since the Genocide.* London: Minority Rights Group, 1987.

Powzyk, J.A. *Tracking Wild Chimpanzees in Kibira National Park.* New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1988.

Wolbers, Marion T. *Burundi. Places & Peoples of the World Series.* New York: Chelsea House, 1989.



Yaounde, Cameroon

CAMEROON

Republic of Cameroon

Major Cities:

Yaounde, Douala

Other Cities:

Bafoussam, Bertoua, Buea, Dschang, Ebolowa, Edéa, Foumban, Garoua, Kumba, Maroua, Ngaoundéré, Nkongsamba

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Cameroon. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

An Africa in miniature, the Republic of Cameroon contains examples of all the geography and people south of the Sahara: steamy equatorial jungles inhabited by pygmy hunters and the great apes; vast plains alive with African wildlife; white sand beaches; and Mount Cameroon, a still active volcano, rising 13,428 feet above sea level.

Each region is characterized by distinct societies: from the Muslim traders and pastoralists in the north; to the farmers and craft-makers of the west; to the forest peoples of the south. A cultural mosaic containing over 200 ethnic groups speaking 24 major African languages and three world languages:

English, French, and Arabic. Cameroon's only common feature appears to be its variety.

Cameroon's two major cities are Douala and Yaounde. Douala, the most densely populated, is a major port of call along the coast of West Africa and is acknowledged to be Cameroon's commercial center. Yaounde, situated in a lush hilly region in the interior, is the political capital and seat of government.

While not considered a tourist destination, Cameroon offers the determined traveler a broad spectrum of African sights and insights into the sub-Saharan region.

MAJOR CITIES

Yaounde

Yaounde, the capital, is in central south Cameroon, 168 road miles inland, east of Douala. Yaounde is 4 degrees north of the Equator at an altitude of 2,500 feet and has a relatively mild climate. Daily temperatures can vary as much as 20 degrees Fahrenheit—from a high of 85-90 degrees Fahrenheit, to a low of 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit. Yaounde is situated amidst forested hills. The city stretches for 5 miles,

over seven hills, in an area of lush vegetation. While Yaounde has modern buildings and services, a lack of maintenance, especially on roads, and infrequent garbage pickup degrade the quality of urban life. An excellent highway system connects Yaounde with the other major cities of Douala, Bafoussam, and Bamenda, as well as the beaches at Kribi and Limbe.

Yaounde's population is about 1,446,000. The number of foreigners has steadily declined since Cameroon's mid 1980s economic downturn. Neither tourism nor business opportunities abound in Yaounde to attract significant numbers of visitors.

Food

Local produce (fresh fruits and vegetables) is plentiful and reasonably priced.

Most other foodstuffs are available locally, but generally are imported and more costly than in the U.S. Fresh milk is not available—only dried and sterilized (UHT) long-life milk. Locally produced coffee, tea, soft drinks, and beer are plentiful. Specialty or ethnic food items are not available locally.

Butcher shops, grocery stores, and the local open-air markets provide fresh meat, fish and shrimp, canned

goods, tropical fruits, and vegetables. Frozen meat from Europe is also available. Meats bought at the local market will need to be cleaned, trimmed, and cured before cooking. All fresh fruits and vegetables must be washed and properly soaked in an iodine or Clorox solution before being stored, peeled, or eaten.

General food items are priced higher, and certain items are unavailable.

Clothing

Bring an ample supply of all types of clothing for each family member. Although the climate is mild for the Tropics, with no real change of season, 100% cotton or cotton/polyester fabrics are recommended. A light jacket, wrap or sweater is useful on cool evenings. Drycleaning is expensive, and the service is poor. Umbrellas are a necessity. Local shoes are unreasonably expensive, of poor quality and durability, and selection is limited.

Women: Dresses, skirts, pantsuits, and slacks can be worn for office or everyday wear. Sometimes women wearing pantsuits are denied entry into Cameroonian Government buildings. At "American" casual gatherings, slacks, jeans, or informal dresses are typical. Americans are the casual dressers; Cameroonians rarely are! Shorts are appropriate only at the American School of Yaounde Recreation Center or for sports. Evening wear consists of long, casual-to-semiformal dresses, as well as short cocktail dresses. Long-sleeved dresses and blouses can be worn in the evenings. Shawls and sweaters are also useful for cool nights. Stockings may be worn, but they are neither necessary nor practical.

Supplies and Services

Most essential nonfood items, such as cosmetics, toiletries, drugstore supplies (excluding prescriptions), sports equipment, pet supplies, and sewing materials and notions are sold locally. However, few American brands are available, costs are normally higher than in the U.S., the quality of the goods is often ques-

tionable, and availability is always uncertain. For these reasons and to meet personal preferences, ship a 2-year supply or order these items periodically from the U.S. Bring an initial supply of photographic film and plan to reorder later as local film is expensive and may have been on the shelf in non-airconditioned stores for some time. Insect repellent is not available locally and it is advisable to bring products that contain at least 31.5% DEFT. Hardware stores are well stocked with French-made goods.

Ship sports equipment for golf, tennis, and swimming, i.e., balls, racquets, clothing, shoes, etc., with your household goods. Sports equipment or supplies may also be reordered from several U.S. companies. For children, consider bringing several swimsuits, masks, goggles, flippers, inflatable armbands and rings.

Repair of minor camera, radio, and stereo equipment is available, but the quality is questionable. Parts for most U.S.-made products are unavailable. Many local photo shops offer 25-minute developing of color film; quality varies from mediocre to very good, with prices around \$7.50-\$10 per 24-exposure roll.

Hairdressers with Western-style standards of cleanliness are available but limited in number and of middling quality. Pricing is comparable to a smaller U.S. city. Several barbers are available at reasonable prices. Shoe repair services are acceptable.

Yaounde has many tailors and dressmakers. In general, dressmakers charge reasonable prices, but tailors of Western-style clothing charge more. Local fabrics are reasonably priced and many people have African-style shirts, pants, dresses, and casual clothes made to supplement their wardrobes. Drycleaning shops are expensive with inconsistent results.

Domestic Help

Due to the additional and complicated procedures necessary

in food preparation, shopping, entertaining, gardening, and the extraordinary demands of house cleaning and laundry, domestic help is desirable. Most U.S. households employ at least one steward who may perform a combination of kitchen and household cleaning responsibilities. Depending on personal needs, one can also hire cooks, nursemaids, launderers, gardeners, and part-time help.

Both English-speaking and French-speaking domestics are available. Salaries for domestics range from approximately US \$50 to US \$150 monthly depending on qualifications, duties, and hours worked. Employers are responsible for payment into the Cameroonian equivalent of social security, CNPS (Casse Nationale de Prevoyance Sociale) at a rate of 12.95% of the salary paid to the domestic. A 54-hour week, with 1 day off, is the official Cameroonian workweek. Few domestics live-in.

Religious Activities

The Yaounde region is primarily Christian. Roman Catholic masses are held in French or a local language. English-language mass is held once a week at Mt. Febe monastery. Weekly English-language services are available at the Bastos Presbyterian Church, and Etoug-Ebe and Faith Baptist Churches. The Greek Orthodox Church conducts early masses in French followed by Greek masses. The American Jewish and Israeli communities jointly sponsor ad hoc Jewish holiday observances. The International Christian Fellowship (interdenominational) holds its services at the Hilton Hotel on Sunday mornings. A branch of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints holds Sunday morning services in French with English Sunday school classes.

Education

The American School of Yaounde is an independent coeducational school founded in 1964. It offers an educational program from prekindergarten through grade 12 for English-speaking students of all

nationalities. Grades 11 and 12 are supplemented by correspondence study from the University of Nebraska. The school year is made up of four terms extending from late August to late October, early November to late January, early February to mid-April, and mid-April to mid-June with 180 days of instruction.

The school is governed by an eight-member School Board elected for 2-year terms by the School Association. Half of the Board members are elected at each October meeting. The U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon also appoints a representative to the Board. Parents or guardians of children enrolled in the school are automatically Association members.

The curriculum is that of traditional U.S. public schools with the use of modern materials including micro-computers and up-to-date teaching techniques in all subject areas. All instruction is in English, with French being taught at all levels. English as a Second Language (ESL) support is offered through grade 10 to students whose English is not fluent. The school is accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. Currently, the school has no learning specialist on staff; so, students with moderate to severe learning problems may not be admitted if it is determined that our program is not appropriate for them.

There are 23 full-time and 1 part-time faculty members in the 1999-2000 school year, including 12 U.S. citizens, 3 host-country nationals, and 8 third-country nationals. All staff members are fully certified and registered with their respective country's educational department, and most of the teachers are U.S. certified and trained.

Enrollment at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year is 148. Of the total, 34% are U.S. citizens, 17.5% Cameroonian, and 49% are children of 20 other nationalities.

The school has 13 classrooms, 2 computer rooms, a second language center with 2 rooms, a library for student use with separate primary and secondary sections, a swimming pool, a volleyball/basketball court, and 4 tennis courts, a restaurant, and a large covered assembly area. The playground is divided into an area for the smaller children with modern BigToys playground equipment and an abbreviated soccer field. The school is located on property owned by the U.S. Embassy.

In the 1999-2000 school year, about 95% of the school's income is derived from tuition. The annual tuition rates are: Early Childhood: \$2,020; PreK: \$2,500; Kindergarten: \$6,780; Grades 1 to 5: \$8,850; Grades 6 to 8: \$9,090; Grades 9 to 12: \$9,260; and, ESL supplement: \$1,000. Transportation by school bus (optional) is \$1,250 per year per child. (All fees quoted in U.S. dollars). Rain Forest International School (RFIS) is a Christian high school (grades 9 to 12), associated with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), a large missionary group specializing in Bible translations. RFIS, which started in the 1991-92 school year, offers an international curriculum taught in English. Middle States Association of Colleges and the Association of Christian Schools International accredit RFIS. Current enrollment is 56 and RFIS has added 10 students in the past 5 years and is expected to continue to grow at that rate. Tuition charges for 2000 are US \$7,300. Separately managed hostels provide residences for boarding students.

Ecole Internationale Le Flamboyant is a private preschool and elementary school started in 1986. Accreditation is by MINEDUC of Cameroon and A E F E of France. Instruction is in French and tuition is \$1,900-\$3,300 for 2000.

Local schools, whether public or private, use the French language and teaching system. All local schools have large classes, minimizing individual attention. They are appropriate only for children who have a

firm knowledge of French and are accustomed to the French educational system. A French elementary school and high school have very high standards and admission is very difficult. A private nursery school and two technical schools also provide instruction in French.

The University of Yaounde provides a French-style education with instruction in both French and English.

Sports

The most popular sporting activities are tennis, golf, and swimming. Expatriates sometimes organize softball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball games.

American School of Yaounde Recreation Center (ASOY) has a membership that is open to the international and Cameroonian community to take advantage of the school's sports, restaurant and recreational facilities. Facilities include: a swimming pool and toddler's pool supervised by lifeguards; four tennis courts, two of which are lighted; a combination volleyball and basketball court; a Ping-pong table; Video Club (NTSC cassettes); The Parrot's Club Canteen, a bar and full-service restaurant; and, a multipurpose hall, which may be rented for private parties. Swimming lessons and TaeKwonDo are available. The Recreation Center is open 6 days a week, from 9 am to 6 pm except Mondays and holidays. The Club hosts special functions such as tennis tournaments and bazaars and will cater for private parties. The school's soccer field and playground are available outside of school hours. Membership fees vary according to family size. The 2000 annual fees for ASOY are about 70,000 CFA (US\$110) per adult & 35,000 CFA (US\$55) each per first 2 children, and 95,000 CFA (US\$150) for singles. ASOY students are automatically members of the Recreation Center.

Hilton Health Club is located in the basement of the Hilton Hotel. Their facilities include a sauna, jacuzzi, weight room, pool, and tennis

courts. They also offer a variety of exercise/fitness classes. Membership is based on family size, and can be arranged monthly or annually.

Tennis Club of Yaounde has four lighted tennis courts and a bar. Racquets can be strung here. Membership is usually full. The Club offers several good tennis exhibition matches every year and also sponsors various tournaments.

Club Noah has a serene hilltop location 10 minutes from Bastos, the primary residential area for most Americans and expatriates. It has three lighted tennis courts, a large swimming pool with poolside cabana offering snacks, and a squash court. Members are usually French speaking.

AMT, The French Military Club, offers three lighted tennis courts and a clubhouse. Judo lessons are given, and there is a boliche area.

Club Hippique offers stables and riding lessons for the beginner to the advanced rider. There are also competitive riding and jumping events.

Yaounde Golf Club, located at the foot of Mont Febe, has one of the most spectacular courses in West Africa. The Club offers an 18-hole course with sand greens, a practice range, and a clubhouse. Daily and weekend rates as well as annual memberships are available.

Par Cours Vita, located near the Mont Febe Hotel, is a one-kilometer outdoor course that offers various exercise spots along a scenic walkway.

Mont Febe Club, located in the Mont Febe Hotel, offers a swimming pool, two tennis courts, indoor and outdoor restaurants and a bar. Daily, monthly, or annual fees may include either tennis or swimming, or both.

Club France offers a wide range of facilities. The four tennis courts (three lighted), two squash courts, volleyball, basketball, semi-Olympic sized pool, kiddie pool, are only a

small portion of activities available. There is also a multipurpose gym, library, poolroom, bridge room, skateboard course, TV room (satellite dish), petanque, and a bar and restaurant.

Hotel Des Deputes offers two tennis courts and a swimming pool. Daily, monthly, or annual fees are available.

Bird and small-game hunting spots exist in the Yaounde area. Big-game hunting is possible in other parts of the country, although permits are expensive. While ammunition is available locally, it is expensive, limited in supply, and not the best quality. Bring all hunting equipment and ammunition from the U.S. The importation of firearms and ammunition requires the Ambassador's written approval in advance (see *Firearms and Ammunition*).

An abundance of colorful African birds in and around Yaounde affords frequent opportunities to bird watch. Bring a pair of binoculars. West African and sometimes South African bird books are used for personal reference in identifying birds as there is no Central African book in print. The Bird Club of Cameroon, which is a member of the American Birding Association, organizes birding walks and trips within the area.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Activities such as a visit to the Yaounde zoo, a piroque (dug-out canoe); ride on the Nyong River, swimming a Luna Park in Obala or viewing nearby Nachtigal Falls, guided tours of the Sanaga tobacco plantation in Batchenga and touring the Mbalmayo Art Institute are good diversions near Yaounde.

Long weekends to the beaches at Kribi and Limbe, trips to the mountains of the West and Northwest or the northern plains and Waza provide changes of atmosphere and climate. Good roads exist between most major cities, but once off of the main roads, the secondary roads are in poor shape. Four wheel drive is a

necessity on most secondary roads. Limited air transportation is available to all major cities.

Douala is 3 hours away by road and 30 minutes by plane. It is the biggest city in Cameroon- and because of its large expatriate population, Douala offers many good restaurants with various cuisines. Shopping is better than in Yaounde because of greater selection and slightly more reasonable prices.

Limbe, an oceanside town formerly called Victoria, is located less than 1-1/2 hours from Douala. Limbe is known for its wide, flat, black volcanic sand beaches; but white sand beaches also exist not far from the major hotels. Pleasant accommodations can be found at an oceanside hotel, which provides both fresh and saltwater pools and a tennis court. Another hotel about 6 miles out of town offers a quiet oceanside getaway near the site of the lava flow from when Mt. Cameroon erupted in early 1999. Several of the beaches in the area are tidal and do not exist at high tide.

Buea is a mountainside village located about 30 minutes from Douala. Situated at the foot of Mt. Cameroon, it offers a charming setting, cool climate, and adequate accommodations. This is the starting point for climbing Mt. Cameroon.

Mt. Cameroon, at 13,428 feet, is the loftiest peak in sub-Saharan West Africa and provides a challenging, yet not technically difficult (by alpine standards), hiking experience. The climb normally takes 2 days. You must have camping gear (i.e., sleeping bags, portable stove, hiking shoes, etc.), warm clothing, and be prepared to spend the night on the mountain in a primitive hut. Many Americans have made this climb during their tour and found it to be an exhilarating experience. The American School of Yaounde organizes an annual Mt. Cameroon expedition in February each year and adults from the American community are welcome to join this group.

Kribi is a beach resort, about a 3-to 4-hour drive from Yaounde. The white sand beaches are wide and virtually deserted for much of the year. Hotel accommodations are numerous but fill up quickly on weekends during the dry season months of December and January. Some families enjoy camping on campsites along the beach.

The West and Northwest Provinces are located in a mountainous and cool region about a 5-hour drive from Yaounde. This area is the home of the interesting Bamileke and Bamoun cultures. African art and handicrafts of the region are among its attractions, with handicraft centers in Bamenda and Foumban. Older precolonial European style hotels in Dschang, Bali, Bafoussam, and Bamenda offer limited accommodations of uneven quality.

A trip to northern Cameroon offers by far the most striking change of scenery, climate, and culture. Its sparsely vegetated savanna terrain, scorching temperatures, Moslem culture, and primitive ambiance contrast starkly with the more developed southern parts of the country. Among several game reserves, Waza is considered one of the best in West Africa. During the dry season, many varieties of wild game are easily viewed as the animals congregate at the few remaining waterholes. Although a journey to the north is long and expensive and the climate hot and dusty, these factors should not deter those interested in a unique African experience. About 12 days are needed if traveling entirely by road. Another option, which is more expensive but saves time, is to travel from Yaounde to Ngaoundere by train, which will also transport your car, and drive north from there on a good paved road. Even more expensive air package tours include accommodations and meals. Rental ground transport is available in the extreme North but quite expensive.

Entertainment

One modern, air-conditioned movie theater in Yaounde shows European

and American films—all dubbed into French. Although recent high-quality American films are shown occasionally, first-run European films are shown more often.

Yaounde has several discotheques that are loud, dark, crowded, smoke filled, and expensive, but provide good Western and African music for both dancing and listening. Several clubs provide live African music.

Major Cameroonian holidays provide colorful parades with native dancing and music.

The American, French, and German cultural centers and the British Council offer occasional concerts, films, and lectures. Some well-known entertainers of international fame come to Yaounde at least once a year.

Yaounde has numerous restaurants: Russian, Italian, Greek, Vietnamese, Chinese, Lebanese, and many others that serve standard French cuisine. Hilton Hotel and Hotel Mount Febe also have good restaurants at more expensive prices. A few restaurants offer take-out service and a couple of restaurants recently began pizza delivery services. Prices at most restaurants are comparable to the U.S., for example, a two-course meal usually costs between \$8 and \$15 each, excluding drinks, dessert, and tip. The tipping rate for service is much less than in the U.S. Don't miss the opportunity to try numerous African restaurants serving traditional Cameroonian dishes. "Chicken" or "fish" houses abound, serving chicken, fish, plantains, and/or fries. Most are good, some excellent, more reasonably priced than full-service restaurants.

Social Activities

Most entertaining is done casually in the home. Aside from representational entertaining, most get-togethers are informal dinners, luncheons, barbecues, and cocktail parties. Tennis, swimming, golf, board games, and charades are among the most popular activities here. Both Boy and Girl Scouts have programs

here. The American School of Yaounde (ASOY) has an excellent afterschool activity program as well.

Americans mingle freely with both the Cameroonian and European communities. Since the vast majority of both these groups are French speaking, knowledge of that language is essential for easy socializing.

Broadening your contacts within the diplomatic and local community greatly enhances your tour and provides further social activities as well.

Douala

Douala is a 3-hour drive west of Yaounde and is about four degrees north of the Equator at an altitude of roughly 40 feet. It is 12 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean on the Wouri River. The surrounding terrain is flat or gently rolling and crisscrossed with numerous creeks. A tropical rain forest begins at the edge of town and extends inland.

High heat and humidity characterize the climate. Temperatures fluctuate between the mid-70s and the low 90s. Relative humidity averages in the mid-80s. Dust can be a problem during the dry season for those with allergies.

Douala is a sprawling city of wide avenues crowded with cars and motor scooters during rush hour. Modern houses and buildings appear beside the prewar examples of traditional colonial architecture (with verandas, louvered shutters, and thick walls). A pleasant, cosmopolitan city, Douala is Cameroon's largest urban center, with a population estimated at 2,800,000. It has a sizable foreign community, with particularly large Nigerian and French populations. About 200 Americans live in the Douala area, many of who are employed in the petroleum sector. The consular corps includes the Consulate General of France; Consulates of Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and China; and honorary consuls for Zaire, the Netherlands, Belgium, Togo, the



Joss College in Douala, Cameroon

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Central African Republic, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Italy, and Tunisia.

Douala is Cameroon's economic capital and its gateway to the world. The port handles some 4 million tons of cargo annually for both Cameroon and the inland countries of central Africa. Its airport serves as a major regional air hub. Douala is the terminal point for Cameroon's railroad lines. The city has considerable light industry located primarily in industrial zones on either end of the city, producing a variety of goods such as plastics, soap, perfume, household appliances, bags,

cigarettes, cement, chocolate, and cocoa powder for the national and regional markets.

An American Business Association and an International Women's Club hold monthly luncheon meetings.

Food

A wide variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and fish are readily available and are moderately more expensive than in Washington, DC. A trip to the local fish market will reveal very fresh fish of several species, including capitán, flounder, barr, world-class shrimp, and others. Local paper products, cos-

metics, toiletries, and baby and pet food are limited in supply, of quality significantly less than you may be familiar with, and expensive.

Clothing

In Douala, there is little change in temperature and lightweight clothing is advisable due to the heat and humidity. Men usually wear a suit or jacket, shirt, tie, and slacks at the office. Women usually wear a lightweight suit or dress at the office. Cameroonians dress more formally in daily wear and do not normally wear shorts except when playing sports. Drycleaning services are plentiful and generally of good qual-

ity but more expensive than in Washington, D.C. Bring enough shoes to last an entire tour (or plan to mail order) because size, selection, and quality are limited. Umbrellas are necessary and available locally but raincoats are seldom worn due to the humidity.

Supplies and Services

Some items either not available or of limited availability are: cosmetics, paper products, contact lens supplies, common contraceptives, shower curtains, and fragrances. Prearrange delivery from the U.S. of prescription drugs to assure a continuous supply.

Douala has one recommended private medical clinic-Polyclinic Bonanjo. It is acceptable for general health care, but specialized treatment must be sought outside the country.

Competent tailors and dressmakers can be found and can copy existing clothing or make it from pictures you supply. Bring sewing notions (buttons, zippers, elastic, and favorite patterns) with you from the U.S. Colorful, locally produced cotton material is inexpensive; other materials are imported and costly. African-style dresses and caftans embellished with embroidery or batik are plentiful.

Shoe repair services are available and satisfactory. Barbershops and beauty shops in town are good, although expensive. Repair work on radios, videos, and electronic equipment is reasonably well done in Douala. Camera repairs are not generally done locally. Film is plentiful and local film development is good but expensive. Watch repair is limited to battery changes.

Although Douala has some specialty stores, sports equipment stores, and bookstores, bring sports and hobby equipment and supplies to avoid limited availability and high local prices. English-language books, records, and children's games are best brought or ordered from the U.S.

Automobile servicing is satisfactory for most Japanese and European cars. Service and parts for most U.S. vehicles are minimal at local Cameroonian dealers. Local mechanics are innovative and can usually be relied upon to keep your car, whatever make, running. Bargaining in advance and ability to pay determine the cost.

Taxis are readily available and inexpensive but due to increased criminal activity should be used with caution. Taxis cannot be summoned by telephone. There are some car rental agencies located in Douala.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is recommended and readily available. Male domestics are plentiful; female domestics are harder to find. It is a good idea to request recommendations from your predecessor. Salaries are paid in CFA at the equivalent of US\$75-\$100 a month for a house domestic and up to US\$150 for a cook/house domestic. They commonly work six 9-hour days a week. After serving a year they are entitled to 3-week's paid vacation.

Religious Activities

Catholic, Anglican, and Moslem services are normally conducted in French. Douala also has a large Baha'i community.

Education

The American School of Douala (ASD) provides an American-style curriculum for prekindergarten through grade 8. High-school students must plan to attend schools in Europe or the U.S. Present enrollment is about 100 students. The other private school attended by expatriate children is the French-run Ecole Dominique Savio, which provides a traditional French education for nursery through the Baccalaureate. Aside from admission of 2- to 4-year olds to the nursery school, Ecole Dominique Savio only enrolls students with a firm knowledge of French.

Sports

Outdoor sports activities are somewhat curtailed during the heavy rainy season from June through October. Many people jog or swim throughout the year

single joggers should use caution. There is a weekly Hash House Harriers run and a Scottish dancing group. There are several active tennis clubs and Tiko has a 9-hole golf course nearby. The local marina has water ski and wind surf areas. In addition, there are riding clubs as well as several modern exercise/dance studios offering aerobic, circuit training, and other activities.

Entertainment

Perhaps the chief form of entertainment in the city is dining out in Douala's fine restaurants, which offer French, Chinese, Southeast Asian, Lebanese, Indian, Russian, Italian, and Cameroonian cuisine. Douala also has three modern air-conditioned movie theaters that show movies in French.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Three nearby towns (1 to 1-1/2 hours drive from Douala) offer quiet diversions from the bustle of the city. Buea is charmingly situated at the base of Mt. Cameroon, West Africa's highest mountain, and is the starting point for hikes to the summit. The Mountain Hotel has a swimming pool and good food. Limbe is a quaint oceanside town with black volcanic sand beaches and a botanical garden. Several hotels are available and have swimming pools. Kribi has sparkling white sand beaches and is the beach most frequented by expatriates. There are many hotels available. A good highway connects Yaounde and Douala in about 3 hours. Distant drives can also be made to Foumban, Bamenda, and Dschang in the western, mountainous sections of the country.

Social Activities

Much of social activity revolves around informal at-home entertaining and slackens as people vacation

during summer. The International Women's Club of Douala organizes weekly and monthly activities for members including French, English, and Spanish lessons, bridge, badminton, gourmet club, sewing, exercise classes, and Bible study. It raises funds during the year for charitable endeavors. Spouses are invited to participate in some activities.

OTHER CITIES

BAFOUSSAM, with a population estimated at 113,000 in 2000, is located in the western part of the country, north-northeast of Douala. Bafoussam is a major trading area for the Bamiléké peoples. Trades include coffee (growing and processing), kola nuts, tea, and tobacco. The town has a hospital, wood and construction industries, a trade school, an airfield, and coffee processing plants.

BERTOUA is located in the southeastern section of Cameroon. Its airport, opened in 1976, has allowed the city to communicate with the rest of the country. Under major development, Bertoua now has better roads and a peanut oil factory. The population is over 20,000.

Near Limbe on the coastal region of western Cameroon, **BUEA** has points of interest for the history enthusiast. A former capital of German Kamerun between 1884 and 1919, historic sites of that period have been preserved. Such sights include the Prime Minister's Lodge, the Old Secretariat, the Bismarck Fountain, the Native Authority School, and the German Burial Ground. Buea served as the seat of the British commissioner for Southern Cameroons in 1922. Today, it is an administrative and trading center. Industries include textile, wood, and construction. Buea has an estimated population of over 30,000.

DSCHANG is located on a forested plateau in northwestern Cameroon. With its high altitude and airfield, Dschang is a tourist spot attracting

both the traveler and the health seeker. This city has ample rainfall and a rough landscape. Dschang is a local trade center for agricultural products and livestock. There is a brick-making industry in town and bauxite deposits nearby. Tea processing is a relatively new project. The town has an agricultural college, hospital, and an airfield. The population is roughly over 22,000.

EBOLOWA, situated in the southwest, is roughly 70 miles (112 kilometers) south-southwest of Yaoundé. Ebolowa is a major producer of ivory and cocoa. This city has an airport, hospital, and a museum. Local sawmills prepare timber for export to the coastal town of Kribi. There were about 22,000 residents in 1981.

EDÉA, a city of almost 80,000 people in 1991, is an aluminum industry headquarters. Aluminum ingots, household products, and sheet metal are produced in Edéa. Surrounding the city are several cocoa and rubber plantations, stone quarries, and palm oil factories. Industries in and around Edéa are powered by an electrical power dam on the Sanaga River. Located near the far western border, it is linked by rail with Douala to the north and Yaoundé to the east.

FOUMBAN, a historic city, was once the capital of the Bamum kingdom. Located approximately 140 miles north-northwest of the capital, Foumban has an estimated population of over 45,000. A palace dating back to the 18th century now houses the Foumban Museum of Bamum Art, containing examples of wood carving, bamboo and raffia furniture collections, and copper and terrá-cotta masks. This city is a center for art and artists. The local crafts are known for their quality throughout Cameroon. Foumban holds coffee, tobacco, and cocoa to be sent on to Douala for export. The town has a hospital, airfield, and customs station.

Located in the northern part of the country, **GAROUA** had an estimated population of 142,000 in

2000. Services available in the city include an airfield, banks, a hospital, insurance companies, and a junior college. Garoua is near the Benue River, which makes it a good spot for fishing. Other industries include textile, cotton, peanut, and leather. Tourism is an important industry due to Garoua's close proximity to the Bénoué, Bouba Ndjida, and Faro game reserves.

KUMBA is a transportation hub that connects the city with Douala, Buea, Mamfe, and Bafang. It is located in the west and is known for its waterfalls and the nearby picturesque Lake Barombi Mbo. Industries include cocoa (Kumba's major export), bananas, oil palms, rubber, tea, and plantains. Forests and farms near Kumba supply resources for the town's lumber, construction, and food processing industries. Kumba has over 60,000 residents.

MAROUA is not as modern as some of Cameroon's southern cities, but it still serves as a major trade center. This calm and peaceful city is situated in the northern part of Cameroon, just below the Mandara Mountains and near the Kaliao River. Mud houses abound on the shaded streets of the neighborhoods, in contrast to the center of town where there are hotels, restaurants, and entertainment. The city's museum houses artifacts from the 10th century as well as new exhibits. Maroua's artisans are noted for their pottery, jewelry, metalwork, leatherwork, and embroidery. The town has a hospital, several mosques, a Protestant church, and a veterinary hospital. The Waza National Park is located several miles to the north. Maroua had about 123,000 residents in 2000.

NGAOUNDÉ is located in the north-central Cameroon on the Adamawa Plateau. Large game reserves to the northeast (Bouba Ndjida National Park) and northwest (Benoue National Park) make this city a fairly popular tourist attraction. The main industries include perfume manufacturing, animal husbandry, dairying, hide preparation, and cotton ginning.

Ngaoundéré, a traditional capital of the Fulani people, is equipped with an airport, a hospital, and a customs station. Formerly part of the Adamawa kingdom, Ngaoundéré has about 61,000 residents..

Near the western coast and north of the capital, **NKONGSAMBA** is the final destination for the railroad coming north from Douala. Exports include tobacco and coffee, which are sent by rail to Douala. The city is a commercial hub, the home of large banana, coffee, and palm oil plantations. Nkongsamba is serviced by a hospital, banks, airfield, sawmill, insurance companies, and food processing plants. Situated at the foot of Mount Manengouba, the city has an estimated population of over 125,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

The Republic of Cameroon covers an area (184,000 square miles) slightly larger than the size of California and is located just north of the Equator at the hinge of the West African coastline. Shaped like an irregular triangle, Cameroon extends north-eastward from the Gulf of Guinea to Lake Chad, and borders six coastal and inland countries: Nigeria to the northwest; Chad and the Central African Republic to the north and northeast; and the Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea to the south.

Cameroon has four distinct topographical regions. The low coastal plains in the south are blanketed with equatorial rain forests extending to the Sanaga River. In central Cameroon, the rain forest yields to the Adamaoua Plateau—a vast, sparsely vegetated region. Stretching northward from the foot of this plateau to Lake Chad are the great northern plains, where savannas contrast starkly with unusual rock formations in the Mandara Mountains. To the west and northwest are rolling hills and volcanic mountains cloaked in lush vegetation. Here lies Mt. Cameroon, the highest

peak (13,428 feet) in sub-Saharan West Africa.

Cameroon's climate is as varied as its geography. High humidity and temperatures with little seasonal variations characterize the coast and southern lowlands. In the Douala area, these conditions may cause household goods to rust, mold, or mildew. In the north, extremely high temperatures and little or no humidity are normal, although seasonal fluctuations occur.

In Yaounde, humidity and temperatures are lower, but fluctuate daily. Two rainy seasons are interspersed with two relatively dry periods. April and May bring the “mango rains.” These moderately heavy rains average 8 inches monthly, then taper off into the drier months of June and July. Rainfall then increases to more than 12 inches monthly for August through November and recedes to as little as 2 inches monthly during the dry season of December through March. During the dry season temperatures may peak above 100°F and dust is a serious problem. This causes discomfort and health problems, especially for people that suffer with hay fever, allergies, and asthma and results in higher than normal incidences of respiratory infections, coughs, and colds. High humidity, temperature fluctuations, rust, mold, or mildew may damage household goods and personal effects such as stereo equipment, paintings, and books.

Population

As of 2000, the population totaled about 15.9 million, with a growth rate officially estimated at 2.79% annually. However, the urban population in the two major cities has grown at a faster rate due to migration from rural areas. Nearly one-third of the populace resides in Littoral and Central Provinces—the location of the two largest cities in the country, Yaounde and Douala. Cameroon's population is young with 46% ages 14 and under. Life expectancy of the total population is

short—only 51 years (males 49 and females 52).

About 11,000 Europeans (predominantly French) and 1,250 Americans live in Cameroon, including some 150 Peace Corps volunteers stationed throughout the country. There are also large immigrant populations of Chadians, Congolese, Senegalese, and Nigerians.

Cameroon and its neighbors have received countless human migrations. Cameroon's western highlands are widely thought to be where the Bantu migrations originated some 2,000 years ago. In the 18th and 19th centuries further migratory movements resulted from Islamic holy wars waged by the Fulani. As a result, Cameroon has become a meeting place of important cultural groups: Puelis from the coast of Guinea; Fulani and Arab people from western Sudan; and Bantus from the Congo.

Because of the intermixture and absorption of these peoples, Cameroon has more than 200 identifiable ethnic tribes. In the north, one finds Moslem Fulani and Hausa groups as well as animist, Christian, or Moslem “Kirdis,” the name given to the peoples who inhabited the region before the Fulani conquests. The western highlands are the home of the Bamileke and Bamoun peoples, among many others. The south is inhabited by the Beti, of which the Eton, Ewondo, Bulu, and Fang are the most important subgroups. The Bassa and Douala groups inhabit the coastal plains. The pygmies, the earliest inhabitants of the southern forests, still survive in that area.

Cameroon is unique among African nations because it is bilingual—French and English are the official languages. The elite generally speaks French in 8 of Cameroon's 10 provinces. English, most commonly pidgin, is predominant only in the Northwest and Southwest Provinces. Fulant is widely spoken in the three northern Provinces. Throughout the country, 24 African lan-

guages plus assorted dialects are spoken.

Christianity and Islam are practiced in Cameroon. Christians are estimated to constitute 33% of the population and Moslems approximately 16%; the balance (51%) practice animist or traditional beliefs.

Public Institutions

Cameroon became independent January 1, 1960, when East Cameroon (formerly French) became the Republic of Cameroon. On October 1, 1961, West Cameroon (formerly British) joined with East Cameroon to form the Federated Republic of Cameroon. With adoption of the constitution of May 20, 1972, the East and West formed a unitary republic. In January 1984, the National Assembly officially changed the country's name by dropping the word "United" before the Republic of Cameroon. The 1972 constitution was amended in 1996.

The President can name and dismiss Cabinet members and judges, negotiate and ratify treaties, accredit ambassadors, commute sentences, grant pardons, lead the armed forces, declare states of national emergency, and be invested with special powers. If the President dies or is permanently incapacitated, the speaker of the National Assembly becomes Acting President for up to 40 days until elections are held.

In the National Assembly, laws are adopted by majority vote of members present, except for cases where the President calls for a second reading. Adoption then requires approval by a majority of the Assembly's total membership. Only the President may ask the Supreme Court to review a law's constitutionality.

Each of the 10 provinces has a governor and an administrative staff appointed by the President, and each province's divisions and subdivisions have chief officers also appointed by the President. This internal administrative system is

under the Ministry of Territorial Administration. Other ministries may have representatives at each level.

The legal system in eight provinces formerly under the French mandate is based on the French civil law system. The President, the Minister of Justice, and the President's judicial advisers (Supreme Court) top the judicial hierarchy. Next are the provincial appeals courts, chief judges for the divisions, and local magistrates. Traditional courts still play a major role in domestic, property, and probate law. Tribal laws and customs are honored in the formal court system when not in conflict with national law. Traditional kingdoms and organizations also exercise other functions of government. Traditional rulers are treated as administrative adjuncts and receive a government allowance.

Under pressure from the opposition, the government introduced several reforms in the 1990s to liberalize public institutions. These reforms provided for the creation of a bicameral legislature and the establishment of Provincial Assemblies. They also permitted formation of opposition political parties, independent newspapers, nongovernmental civic associations and ended censorship. While the government continues to occasionally impose restrictions on those with dissenting views, open public debate has increased greatly. Cameroon last held multiparty parliamentary elections on May 17, 1997. The former single party, the Cameroon Peoples' Democratic Movement (CPDM), which once held all 180 seats in the National Assembly, won 116 seats in the multiparty election with six other parties accounting for the remainder. In October 1997, Cameroon held the second multiparty presidential election in its history. According to official results, President Biya was reelected with about 93% of the vote, while major opposition parties boycotted the election. Credible local and international observers found flaws due to irregular campaign practices and vote tabulations. The Government has been

singled out by domestic and international human rights monitors for serious abuses, including unlawful detention, torture, and occasional extrajudicial killing by security forces.

Arts, Science, and Education

Cameroon's art reflects the ethnic diversity of its people. Although ancestral traditions form the basis for most art forms, certain crafts, such as carving and painting calabashes, bas relief sculpture, engraving abba stones, weaving baskets, and embroidering cloth and traditional batik works illustrate the presence of art in the daily lives of Cameroonians. Traditional art forms consist mainly of wood sculpture. Objects such as carved masks, statues; various ethnic groups thus translate decorative panels, beds, chairs, and doors into a multitude of expressions in wood. Two other interesting art forms are brasswork/bronzework and wood sculpture embroidered with glass beads by the peoples of the western highlands. In the northern provinces, local specialties include cloth weaving, leather goods, and decorative traditional arms made of brass. Copies of traditional art and native handicrafts are being encouraged by the Government to promote the country's development efforts.

The Government wishes to combine the British and French educational systems into an integrated national education program, but the French system still prevails in most of the country. A comprehensive English program has been incorporated into the national curriculum to enhance Cameroon's official bilingual policy. The educational structure consists of primary, secondary, postsecondary professional, and university levels. Education in public primary schools is technically free and widely available, but expenses are incurred for books, materials, and uniforms. Primary education is compulsory for ages 6 to 14 and the enrollment rate is one of the highest in Africa. However, regional dispar-

ities exist with enrollment in the center and south higher than in the north. Further, enrollment drops off dramatically at the secondary level.

Most Cameroonians consider a university degree as a prerequisite for social and professional advancement, and education is highly valued. The government dedicates a large portion of the national budget to education, though universities are still woefully underfunded.

Cameroon has six national universities. The universities are officially bilingual though French is the dominant language at all of them except at Buea, which is the country's sole "Anglo-Saxon" university and is modeled on the British system. The six institutions are Yaounde I University, Yaounde II

University, the University of Douala, the University of Dschang, the University of Ngaoundere, and the University of Buea. There are also several highly regarded special institutions, the Grandes Ecoles. Two are affiliated with Yaounde I University: the Ecole Nationale d'Administration et de Magistature (which trains much of the ruling elite and the senior technocrats), the Ecole Normale Supérieure (which trains educators and administrators). Three of the institutes are affiliated with Yaounde II: the Institut des Relations Internationales du Cameroon (which trains all of the country's diplomats, as well as diplomats from 10 other African countries), the Ecole Supérieure Polytechnique (which specializes in engineering and information technology), and the Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication (which trains journalists). Douala University houses the Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique (which specializes in business management and economics), while Buea University is the home of the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters.

The Catholic University of Central Africa is the country's sole accred-

ited private university. Established in 1994, it is well funded and managed and aims to have regional importance. Other private universities have been established in recent years, but the Government does not recognize degrees from these universities. The most important of them are the Bamenda University for Science and Technology and the Ndi Samba Private University of Yaounde.

Commerce and Industry

Cameroon has abundant natural resources, but it is a poor country whose estimated per capita income in 1999 was about \$590. Cameroon is in the African Financial Community along with six central African and eight west-African countries and France. Through special arrangement, these African countries have as their currency, the African Franc, which provides for unlimited convertibility into the French Franc at a fixed rate (currently, 1 French Franc equals 100 African Francs). Cameroon is the largest economy in central Africa, and Yaounde hosts the regional central bank for the six central African countries that use the African Franc.

The government, in cooperation with the IMF and World Bank, has pursued since 1997 an economic reform program to reduce government control over the economy and stimulate more private-sector investment and growth. Between 1997 and 1999, Cameroon's economy grew annually at a 4%-5% annual rate, while at the same time the government more strictly controlled its own spending and allowed government employee salaries to decline relative to inflation. Cameroon's economy depends on agriculture, and Cameroon is a major exporter of bananas, coffee, cocoa, cotton, and rubber. Low world prices for cocoa and coffee in 1999 hurt Cameroonian farmers, while banana exporters faced stiff competition from Latin American producers. In some areas, farmers found

export prices so low that they began to uproot cash crop acreage to produce food. Cameroon is generally self-sufficient in terms of food production. Cameroon exports a relatively small quantity of oil and its petroleum sector accounts for about one-fourth of export earnings and one-fifth of the government's budget. Cameroon's existing oil fields are nearing depletion, and the government adopted a new petroleum code in December 1999 to attract new foreign exploration of potential commercial fields in the Gulf of Guinea and in Cameroon's far north.

The government has been privatizing large state-owned companies such as banks, utilities, and food processing firms. Cameroon had suffered a major banking sector crisis in the middle of the 1990s, but by the end of the decade insolvent banks had been closed and the government privatized all state-owned banks. Today, Cameroon has nine banks, most of which are owned by foreign banking companies. The telecommunications infrastructure is overburdened and there are long delays for customers trying to establish phone service. The hope is to attract buyers for the state-owned telephone company to upgrade equipment throughout the country. Cameroon also has two new mobile telephone service companies. Internet service is relatively new, and the connections are very slow by Western standards.

Almost half of the country is covered by forest, but an inadequate transport system impedes the development of the agricultural sector because farmers cannot access larger markets. The rail network, totaling some 700 miles nationwide, is the most important element of the transport infrastructure. The main rail line links Douala Port to Ngaoundere in central Cameroon. Douala also serves as a landing point for much cargo ultimately destined for Chad and the Central African Republic.

Cameroon trades mostly with Europe and Asia; the U.S. accounts

for only about 10% of Cameroon's foreign trade. Most of Cameroon's \$73 million in exports to the U.S. in 1999 were crude oil, while the U.S. sold Cameroon about \$38 million in goods in 1999, including machinery, cereals, and chemicals. U.S. firms operating in Cameroon include Del Monte, Dole, Mobil, Texaco, Citibank, and DHL. The government in 2000 is working with international donors on a national strategy to reduce poverty with special emphasis on education and health programs and rural infrastructure. Cameroon is also seeking foreign debt relief as part of its poverty reduction program.

Transportation

Automobiles

An automobile is essential for Americans in Cameroon. Cars with high clearance are good for within the city driving given the numerous deep potholes and unpaved streets. Many people prefer 4-wheel-drive vehicles for out of town driving especially during the rainy season. High-end vehicles such as Land Rovers or Toyota Land Cruisers are not recommended because they have been specifically targeted by carjackers. Standard shift cars can be easier to repair.

Several European and Japanese automobile companies have sales and service facilities in Cameroon (Renault, Peugeot, Mercedes, Toyota, Nissan, Mitsubishi, Hyundai). Spare parts for American cars are rarely available locally but can be shipped through the pouch subject to restrictions, weight, and size limitations. Spare parts for standard European models and some Japanese models, when available, are priced substantially higher than in the U.S. For these reasons, bring spark plugs, points and condensers, oil filters, windshield wipers, fan belts, water hoses, extra tubes for tires, etc., for your vehicle.

Gasoline costs about US\$2.75 per gallon (US\$.75 per liter). High-octane gas is equivalent to low-octane gas in the U.S. Both leaded

gas and diesel fuel are readily available throughout Cameroon. Automobiles equipped with narrow fuel tank filler necks and catalytic converters will require modification. The narrow filler neck can easily be replaced by requesting a regular one from the car manufacturer, or a neck filler adapter can be purchased locally. If the car is to be shipped back to the U.S., an Environmental Protection Agency waiver must be obtained before a U.S. garage can modify the equipment. If you operate the vehicle without first removing the catalytic converter, the leaded gas will damage it, and it will have to be replaced before the car can again be operated legally in the U.S. The cost for replacement is reimbursable, if done after returning to the U.S.

Local

Yaounde has no bus transportation. Local taxi service is available in most cities and towns at reasonable rates. However, because of overcrowding, lack of safety precautions in taxis, indirect routes, frequent accidents, and increased criminal activity travelers are advised not to use the local taxi. If it is necessary to use a taxi for personal errands, it is possible to arrange for a taxi through known, reputable, persons for an hourly rate for sole use only.

Regional

Air service between the Cameroonian cities of Yaounde, Douala, Ngaoundere, Garoua, and Maroua is provided by Cameroon Airlines. A new airline service, National Airways Cameroon, began offering flights to some of the same cities in early 2000. IntraCameroon flights may be delayed or canceled. Most flights to other African destinations depart and arrive from the Douala airport. All fares are generally high with flights often delayed.

Trains run twice daily between Douala and Yaounde, and once daily to Ngaoundere. Each trip takes between 6 and 12 hours. "Bush taxis" or small vans provide intra-country travel between cities; however, they are usually overcrowded and should be used only as a last

resort. Foreign and Cameroonian freighters sail frequently between the major European ports and Douala. American freighters sail between the U.S. and various West African ports, including Douala, but due to lack of cargo, stops in Douala are infrequent. Several French and American freighters accept passengers.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

An automatic dialing system exists between Yaounde, Douala, and most large towns. Local telephone service is poor because existing lines cannot handle the demand. Cameroon and the U.S. have a direct telephone link via satellite. Telephones and telephone lines are difficult to obtain.

Direct calls to the U.S. are about \$7 a minute. Long distance charges can be minimized by the use of a "callback" service. Direct calls are also possible to other African and European countries. Internet access costs about \$60 for 20 hours usage per month or unlimited access for approximately \$150 per month. Internet connections are slow and unreliable by Western standards.

Mail

International airmail letters take from 8 to 15 days to arrive from Europe or the U.S. International surface mail takes from 3 to 6 months, because of Customs complication, pilferage, and unreliable service.

Radio and TV

A shortwave radio is necessary for reception of BBC, VOA, and European stations. The three local stations (two AM, one FM) provide mostly domestic news and recorded music. Broadcasting is primarily in French, with three English newscasts daily. Cameroon television was inaugurated in March 1985 on the German PAL system, which is incompatible with the American NTSC system. The American School of Yaounde operates a tape video club of over 1,000 selections in VHS, NTSC format. Many Americans

have VHS video machines in American NTSC format and bring videos or have family and friends mail videos. To enjoy both Cameroon television and American videos, two separate systems or a multisystem (with PAL and NTSC) TV (monitor-receiver) are necessary. Such equipment can be ordered from major European duty-free stores or purchased from base exchanges at U.S. military installations in Europe.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The International Herald Tribune (published in Paris) is available by subscription or may be purchased in Yaounde and Douala through local bookstores. Although subscriptions cost much less than issues purchased locally (US\$630 for 14 months versus US\$2.50 per issue), delivery time is slower and more sporadic (7-14 days versus 3-5 days after publication). Several French newspapers and selected British journals are available. The government-run Cameroon Tribune is published 5 days a week mostly in French but with some English content. Some private Cameroonian newspapers are published weekly or bimonthly in French and English.

Bookstores and street vendors sell the international editions of Time and Newsweek. Several French and British magazines are available. Cameroon does not have any public lending libraries, but some English-language books, newspapers, and magazines are sold at local bookshops, newsstands, and hotels. The French Cultural Centers in Douala, Yaounde, Buea, Bamenda, Ngaoundere, and Garoua have a wide selection of French-language materials, which are also available in the cities' larger bookstores. The American Cultural Center in Yaounde has a good selection of English-language books, as does the British Council. The American School library is also well stocked with classics and contemporary materials of interest. It is open to the American Community.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

You are advised to bring an adequate supply of over-the-counter medications and updated prescriptions with at least a 90-day supply for all long-term medications. Prescriptions for maintenance medications can be ordered through Merck-Medco with most insurance plans. It is important to review your health policy and bring the necessary forms with you. Many well-stocked French pharmacies are located in Yaounde.

Hospital and medical services available locally are well below accepted U.S. standards. U Hopital General de Yaounde, is used for emergency intervention and stabilization. The hospital has a 24-hour on-call service, with medical and surgical specialists with U.S. and European training. The hospital suffers from inconsistent funding and inadequate medical supplies. Etoudi Clinic is a clean, fairly well equipped, private hospital that is primarily used for ophthalmology consultations. Good quality radiology services are available at Cabinet de la Cathedral. Women are strongly encouraged to have all necessary mammography screening completed before leaving the U.S.

We are fortunate to have a U.S. - trained dentist in Yaounde who provides standard American dental services in a completely modern U.S. equipped clinic. There are several French-trained dentists in Yaounde and an excellent Belgian dentist in Douala.

Community Health

The following tropical diseases pose a threat to those living in Cameroon: chloroquine-resistant malaria, amebic and other forms of dysentery, hepatitis, meningitis, filariasis, and fungal infections. HIV infections are increasing in Cameroon. All individuals relocating to Cameroon are strongly advised to begin antimalarial medicine prior to arrival. Individuals are encouraged to wear shoes at all times due to the

increased risk for contracting parasitic or fungal infections.

During the dry season (December-March) there is an increased incidence of respiratory allergies, coughs, and colds. Individuals with allergies or asthma may be more likely to experience illness during the dry season. Normal childhood illnesses occur, but unusual problems among American children have been minimal.

Community sanitation in both Yaounde and Douala is comparable to that found in other West African cities, but is well below U.S. and European standards. Both Yaounde and Douala lack a central sewage system and garbage collection is inconsistent. The city water supply has been plagued by multiple problems and is not considered safe to drink. Although the water is chemically treated, the poor condition of water transport pipes and sporadic interruptions in service provide sources of contamination. A distiller and a source for filtered water are provided in each home. Bottled water is locally available for purchase.

Two Western-style grocery stores that have adequate refrigeration facilities and acceptable sanitation and health controls. Fresh milk is unavailable, but long-life sterilized milk, or powdered milk can be purchased locally. Local fruits and vegetables are abundant and generally excellent. They must be washed thoroughly with soap and water, and soaked in a Clorox or iodine solution before storing, peeling, or eating. All meats should be thoroughly cooked.

Preventive Measures

Yellow fever immunization is required for entrance into Cameroon. In addition, immunizations against polio, tetanus, typhoid, Hepatitis A and B, and meningitis are recommended before arrival. Antimalarial medications should be started 1 week before arrival.

First-aid supplies, aspirin, vitamins, insect repellent, sunscreen,

Q-tips, and cotton balls may be unavailable locally.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Travelers from the U.S. or Europe fly directly to Yaounde Nsimalen Airport from Paris, Brussels or Zurich. Travelers around Africa must frequently go via Douala and sometimes an overnight stay in Douala is required. Travelers flying via West Africa should avoid Lagos as a transfer or stopover point if at all possible. International carriers serve Douala with direct air service from Brussels, Paris, Frankfurt, Rome, Zurich and Geneva on Sabena, Air France, Air Afrique, and Swiss air. Yaounde Nsimalen Airport has weekly direct flights from Zurich on Swissair, from Paris on Air France and Cameroon Airlines, and from Brussels on Sabena.

All airfreight should be well packed, waterproofed, and banded to protect against rough handling and tropical weather conditions. Good packaging also discourages pilferage. Airfreight shipments take 2-6 weeks to reach Cameroon from Europe or the U.S.

A valid passport and visa are required. Travelers should obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of the Republic of Cameroon, 2349 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 265-8790/94. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Cameroonian embassy or consulate

While photography is not officially forbidden, security officials are sensitive about photographs taken of government buildings, military installations, and other public facilities, many of which are unmarked. Photography of these subjects may result in seizure of photographic equipment by authorities. Due to the threat of harassment and the lack of signs designating sites pro-

hibited for photography, photography is best practiced in private homes and among friends.

Cameroonian customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Cameroon of items such as large quantities of medicine; customs restrict the importation of ivory. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Cameroon in Washington or one of Cameroon's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Yaounde or with the Embassy Office in Douala, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Cameroon. The Embassy is located on Rue Nachtigal in Yaounde. The mailing address is B.P. 817, Yaounde, Cameroon, telephone: (237) 23-40-14, fax (237) 23-07-53. The Embassy Office in Douala can be contacted at (237) 42-53-31; fax is (237) 42-77-90.

Pets

Cats and dogs must have current certificates of good health and rabies vaccination. There is no quarantine imposed upon entry. To ensure speedy processing, animal should, if possible, be brought in a; accompanied baggage. African Gray parrots can be imported into Cameroon but must be accompanied by a CITES certificate and a health certificate. Yaounde has a few veterinarians with varying degrees of equipment, supplies, and training. Heartworm medication is recommended for dogs as a precaution. Bring medication with you from the U.S. Fleas and ticks can be a problem for dogs during certain times of the year.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Cameroon's currency is the CFA (Communaute Financiere Africaine) Franc. One hundred (100) CFA Francs equals one French Franc. The CFA is linked directly to the French Franc and is thus a fairly convertible currency. As a

result there is no problem with artificial exchange rates in Cameroon.

Credit cards and checks are rarely accepted. Cash, in local currency, is usually the only form of payment accepted throughout the country. Credit card cash advances are not available and most banks do not cash personal or traveler's checks. Two banks in Douala, Societe Generale des Banques du Cameroun, telephone (237) 43-00-02 and Cofinest, telephone (237) 43-10-53, have wire transfer services through Western Union.

No limitations exist on travelers checks, dollars, or other currency you bring or import after arriving. Dollars and other currencies are exchanged freely. The Cameroonian Government does not prevent export of currency previously declared or of amounts normally carried for travel expenses. Exportation of CFA Francs beyond moderate limits requires the permission of the Ministry of Finance.

The metric system of weights and measures is used exclusively in Yaounde and Douala and is the official system in Cameroon. Unofficial use of English measures is still encountered in parts of West (formerly British) Cameroon.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 11 Youth Day
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- May 1 Labor Day
- May 20 National Day
- May/June Ascension Day*
- Aug. 15 Assumption Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- Id al-Adah*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on Cameroon.

Barley, Nigel. *Innocent Anthropologist: Notes from a Mud Hut. and A Plague of Caterpillars*. Penguin Publishers.

Beti, Mongo. *Mission to Kala. The Poor Christ of Bomba. King Lazarus*. Heinemann Publishers.

Bjornson, Richard. *The African Quest for Freedom and Identity: Cameroonian Writing and the*

National Experience. Indiana University Press, 1991.

DeLaney, Mark W. *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*. Westview Press, 1989.

DeLaney, Mark W and Mokeba, H. Mbella. *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Cameroon* (2nd Ed). Scarecrow Press, 1990.

Denis, Alain. *Beyond Legends: West Cameroon. Beyond Sight: Cameroon*. Editions du Damalisque.

Durrell, Gerald. *Bafut Beagles*. Available in English and American paperback editions, 1954.

Etienne-Nugue, Jocelyne. *Crafts and the Art of Living in the Cam-*

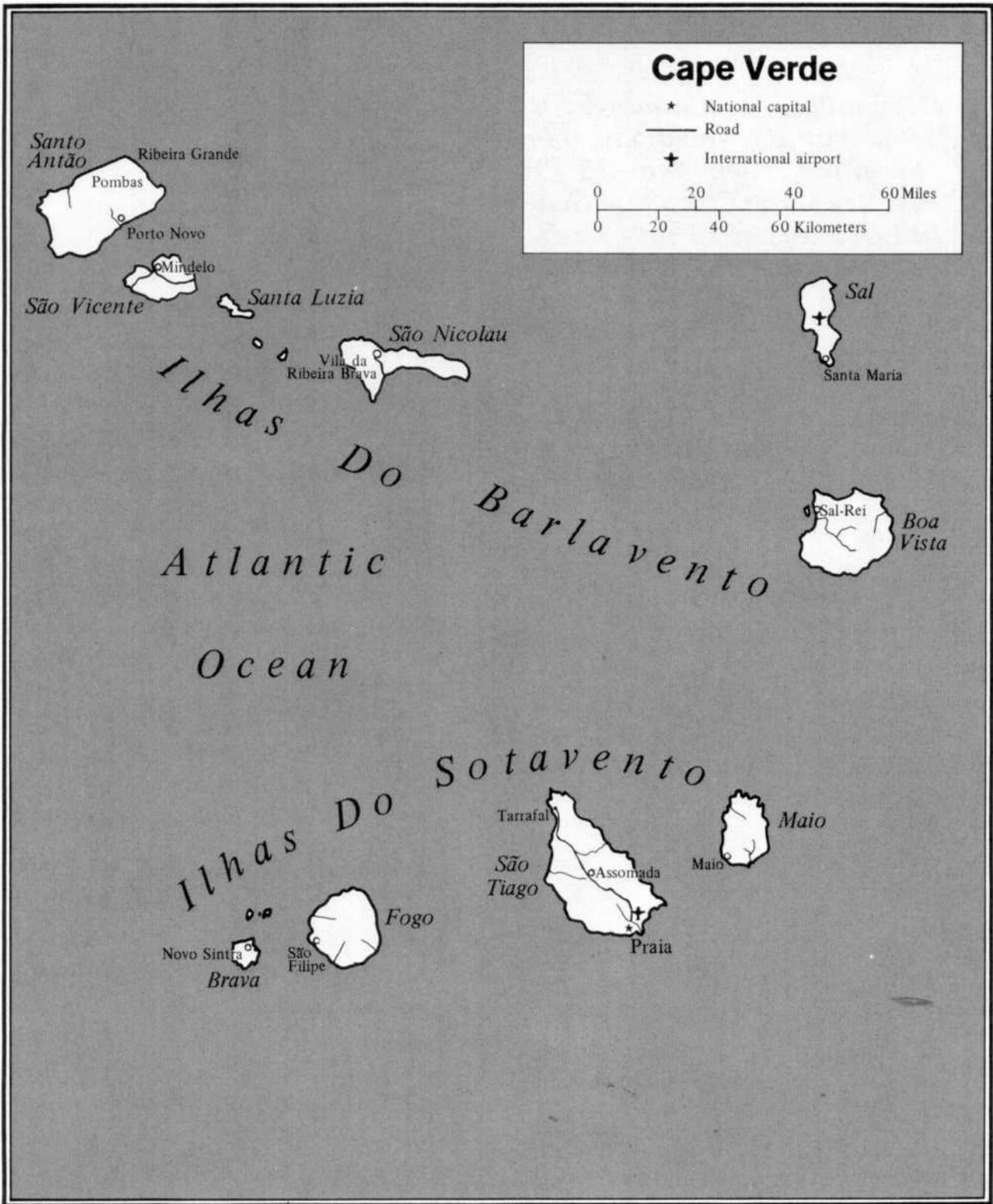
eroon. Louisiana State University Press, 1982.

LeVine, Victor T. *The Cameroons From Mandate to Independence*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

LeVine, Victor T. *The Cameroon Federal Republic*. Cornell University Press: New York, 1971.

Nelson, Harold, et al. *Area Handbook for the United Republic of Cameroon*. Government Printing Office: Washington, D. C., 1974.

Northern, Tamara. *Expressions of Cameroon Art*. The Franklin Collection. Rembrandt Press, 1986.



Praia, Cape Verde

CAPE VERDE

Republic of Cape Verde

Major Cities:

Praia, Mindelo

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Cape Verde. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

CAPE VERDE, in the central Atlantic Ocean off the west coast of Africa, is one of that continent's youngest republics, having gained its independence from Portugal only in 1975. It is a small, archipelagic nation of few natural resources, struggling to develop its 10 disparate islands. A transitional society with a unique heritage, Cape Verde is a blending of African traditions with a culture which reflects a long history as part of the Portuguese colonial empire.

Portuguese navigators discovered the uninhabited archipelago in the mid-15th century. They established plantations and founded Ribeira

Grande (*Cidade Velha*) in 1462, the earliest European city in the tropics. The area prospered from transatlantic slave trade during the next century, but the settlements were subject to occasional pirate attacks. Sir Francis Drake sacked Ribeira Grande in 1585. After a French attack in 1712, the community declined in importance.

MAJOR CITIES

Praia

Praia, a city of approximately 68,000 on the island of São Tiago, has been the capital of Cape Verde since 1770. It is the largest town on the islands and also serves as São Tiago's port. The principal employer in Praia is the Cape Verdean government.

The charm of Praia lies in its unique character; it is neither fully African nor European. It retains some of the atmosphere of a small, 19th-century town in southern Europe, combined with the people, foods, and traditions of West Africa. While far from a modern city, Praia is growing rapidly. There are noticeable positive gains in both the public works and private sectors. Businesses are

attempting to modernize and new housing is going up, although the housing shortage remains acute.

Clothing

Dress in Cape Verde follows general Western patterns and is less formal than in Washington, DC. In general, clothing suitable for tropical or subtropical climates is appropriate, but warm sweaters and jackets are sometimes necessary in the cool season. Simple clothing can be made inexpensively by local tailors.

Praia has no dry cleaning facilities, so do not bring dry-clean-only clothes. Wash-and-wear items are the easiest to maintain. Dust and dirt make frequent washing necessary. Some travelers use garment bags to protect their clothing.

The usual dress for men is slacks and sport shirts; coats and ties are worn on more formal occasions. Cotton bush shirts and wash-and-wear suits are popular for work and social events. A dark suit is used for formal wear (dinner jackets or tuxedos are never needed). Lightweight fabrics, such as cotton or a mixture of cotton and synthetic fibers, are preferred.

For women, lightweight slacks, skirts, blouses, or sundresses are comfortable for everyday wear. The constant sun and wind necessitates



Street in Faja d'Agua, Brava, Cape Verde

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

some sort of hat or head scarf, and many women find culottes more practical than wraparound skirts. Short cocktail dresses are suitable for more formal occasions; long dresses are rarely worn.

American-style clothing (jeans and T-shirts) is both appropriate and

popular with the island youth. Lightweight, washable fabrics are the most practical. Sports clothing, including a good supply of beachwear, tennis clothes, and hiking shoes, is recommended. Praia's picturesque cobblestone streets and sidewalks are slippery, making it advisable to include crepe-soled

shoes in every wardrobe. Most shoes tend to wear out quickly. Shoes are expensive locally, selection is limited, and sizes vary. High heels are not recommended.

Some ready-made clothing is available in downtown stores, both in

Praia and Mindelo. Materials for sewing can be purchased in Dakar.

Supplies and Services

A limited selection of European toiletries, cosmetics, and other sundries can be bought locally, but American brands are not stocked. Patent medicines are rarely found. Prescription drugs often are in short supply. Household products (soap powder, dishwashing detergent, etc.) are not always available.

Travelers and expatriates are advised to bring sports clothing, including a good supply of beachwear (bathing suits, beach shoes, goggles, fins, masks, beach towels, etc.), tennis clothes and shoes, and hiking clothes and shoes. Sports clothes and equipment are expensive locally, and selection is limited.

Those planning an extended stay in Cape Verde should be prepared to be more self-reliant than would be necessary in a more developed country. There are shoe repair, barber, and basic beauty services. Radio and auto repair is not reliable. Many services and products, unavailable in the islands, can be found in Dakar, which is readily accessible.

Religious Activities

Cape Verde is predominantly Roman Catholic, and Catholic churches abound in most towns. Some Protestant groups, such as Seventh-Day Adventist and Church of the Nazarene, are represented on all islands. All services are in Portuguese or Crioulo.

Domestic Help

As in most West African countries, it is customary to hire domestic help. Most expatriate families have a full-time maid or cook, and some hire a driver. Wages are quite reasonable. Government regulations set minimum pay scales and require two months' severance pay upon termination of employment. There are no pension or social security requirements. All household ser-

vants should have medical examinations, including chest X-rays.

Education

There are no international or American schools in the country. The Cape Verdean educational system has primary and secondary schools only; post-secondary training is not offered, except in religion. Both the primary and secondary schools are crowded, and operate three shifts each day to accommodate the number of students. Instruction is in Portuguese. No athletic facilities are available. In short, local education is not suitable for most American dependents.

The school calendar runs from October to June. Overall facilities are limited in comparison to schools in the U.S.

A number of European children in Praia study via correspondence courses from France; Americans could consider a similar course of study through the Calvert School (Tuscany Road, Baltimore, MD 21210), which is designed to teach children at home. It offers a complete curriculum for kindergarten through grade eight. Each level comes with all necessary books and supplies. A detailed guide is provided for the home tutor, and a teacher-advisory service is available. The Division of Continuing Studies of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln (Lincoln, NE 68583) offers a similar correspondence course for secondary students. The success of home study depends greatly on the motivation of the student and the quality of the tutor.

Some expatriate parents find it necessary to send their children to boarding school in Europe or the U.S. Direct air connections to Lisbon, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, and Boston from Sal Island allow convenient travel for the students.

Dakar, Senegal has two English-language schools, but neither offers

boarding facilities. Boarding must be arranged privately.

Praia has no colleges or universities. Most adult education programs are limited to adult literacy courses. Private English-language tutoring is hard to find. No special schooling exists for handicapped persons.

Recreation and Entertainment

Cape Verde offers a wide variety of water sports, such as fishing, sailing, boating, diving, wind surfing, and snorkeling. São Tiago Island has some attractive beaches near Praia and at Tarrafal, as well as at other locations. Cape Verde's volcanic mountains, valleys, and beaches are ideal for exploring, hiking, and picnicking. The national sport of Cape Verde is soccer, and matches are held regularly. Inter-island competitions and an occasional international match are also held. Cape Verde also sponsors tennis, handball, and basketball teams. Praia has an active tennis and golf club, where membership cost is minimal. There is no grass on the golf course, and the constant wind adds a challenging dimension to tennis matches. The hotel in the Prainha section of town, where most Americans live, also has a tennis court; lessons are available and inexpensive. Cricket is played at Mindelo.

Travel between the islands provides a change of pace and scenery from Praia. The national airline, TACV, serves the major islands at reasonable prices. The island of Fogo offers interesting landscapes dominated by its volcano. Boa Vista has Cape Verde's most beautiful beaches. Brava, the smallest of the inhabited islands, lies in the southwest of the archipelago. Each island is unique, and provides fine photographic opportunities.

Travel to Dakar offers a different climate and culture. Shopping is excellent in that city, but prices are high. Dakar also has many museums and cultural attractions, as well as good beaches and restaurants.

Entertainment in Praia is limited. The city has two cinemas (one outdoor) which often show English-language films with Portuguese subtitles. Brazilian or European films also are screened. The French Cultural Center in Praia offers a weekly French movie.

The major hotels have adequate restaurants with varied menus. Small local restaurants tempt the more adventurous and are becoming more sanitary and modern. Several discotheques of varying quality are also located in Praia.

Local competition in music (vocal and instrumental) and dance are popular. State functions are rare.

Fast becoming the most popular form of entertainment is the home video recorder (mostly VHS systems). The American Community Video Club, open to all Americans, has an ever-increasing library of VHS tapes. A multi-system receiver allows a mutual exchange of tapes with European expatriates.

The international community in Praia is small. Fewer than 12 comprise the official U.S. representation. There is the American Embassy and a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) office. Other countries diplomatically represented here are France, Portugal, China, the former Soviet Union, Cuba, Brazil, and Senegal. Additional multi-national aid experts number more than two dozen. Language fluency in Portuguese, French, or Spanish is an asset in mixing with the international community.

Social life is quite active. Dinners and lunches are common, and picnics and beach outings are popular. The Cape Verdeans themselves often have limited resources for entertaining, but clearly like to be invited to private homes. Many opportunities exist to become acquainted with the people, customs, and culture of the host country.

Mindelo

Mindelo is the second largest city in Cape Verde, and the only other center of appreciable size. It is located in the northwestern part of São Vicente and, although its population (about 47,000) is smaller than Praia's, the city is busier and more cosmopolitan.

Mindelo is a commercial center, mostly because of its excellent harbor. The city's deep-water harbor on Porto Grande Bay is an important refueling point for transatlantic freighters. A new shipyard, financed by a loan from the European Investment Bank, was completed in Mindelo in the early 1980s. Mindelo has shops, restaurants, some hotels, a small newspaper, and facilities for sports. There is no resident American community here, nor are there opportunities for English-language education.

Carnaval, the pre-Lenten festival and one of Cape Verde's major events, takes place in Mindelo.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Cape Verde Islands lie in the Atlantic Ocean 385 miles (620 kilometers) off the African coast, directly west of Senegal. The archipelago consists of 10 islands and five islets, which are divided into windward (*barlavento*) and leeward (*sotavento*) groups. The six islands of the windward group are Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal (Sal Rei), and Boa Vista. The four leeward islands are São Tiago, Maio, Fogo, and Brava. Of the 10 islands, only Santa Luzia is uninhabited. The capital city, Praia, is on São Tiago.

Although the islands are volcanic in origin, the only active crater is on Fogo. Fogo is the site of the most

recent eruption, which occurred there in 1951. In March 1981, the crater showed activity, and seismic tremors occurred on the nearby island of Brava.

Three islands—Sal, Boa Vista, and Maio—are flat, and lack natural water supplies. Mountains higher than 4,200 feet (1,280 meters) are found on São Tiago, Fogo, Santo Antão, and São Nicolau.

Temperatures and humidity vary with altitude, but the climate is warm, dry, and windy. The average temperature in Praia is 75°F (24.4°C). The hottest month, September, has an average temperature of 79°F (26°C); the coolest month, February, averages 72°F (22°C). The ocean has a major stabilizing effect on temperatures.

All of the islands, especially the windward, have been eroded by sand carried by high winds. On several of the mountainous islands, sheer, jagged cliffs rise from the sea. The uplands and coasts have no natural vegetation: most vegetation is in the interior valleys.

In the islands, there are only two seasons—the dry season, November to July, and the rainy, August to October. Insufficient rainfall has led to drought conditions for more than 17 years, but rainfall has been more plentiful in the last few years. In Praia, the average annual precipitation is only about 9.5 inches. The dry season is marked by gusty winds; dust, originating in the distant Sahara Desert, reduces visibility, damages eyes and respiratory passages. The dry climate discourages mosquitoes and most insect pests, but some thrive despite drought and wind.

Population

Cape Verdeans are of mixed African and Portuguese origin; vestiges of African culture, the legacy of the slaves brought to the islands to work on the settlers' plantations, are most pronounced on São Tiago.

Because of the limited land area and lack of natural resources, emigration has been traditional. There are sizable Cape Verdean communities in the United States (mainly Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island), and in Senegal, The Netherlands, Portugal, Argentina, Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, and Angola.

Although the official language is Portuguese, most Cape Verdeans speak Crioulo, a mixture of Portuguese and African. The predominant religion is Roman Catholicism, but the Church of the Nazarene and the Seventh-Day Adventists also are represented.

The 2000 population estimate for the islands was 411,500. Annual population growth is about three percent, and density is approximately 111 people per square mile. Praia, the capital and largest urban area, had approximately 68,000 residents in 2000. The commercial center, Mindelo, on São Vicente, with roughly 47,000 inhabitants, is second in size. Nearly half of the total population lives on São Tiago—the remainder, on Santo Antão, São Vicente, and Fogo.

The islands have experienced recurrent drought and famine since the end of the 18th century, and the fragile prosperity slowly vanished with the declining slave trade. The worst drought in Cape Verdean history hit the islands in 1968, crippling the economy and making Cape Verde heavily dependent on foreign, principally Western, aid for survival.

The archipelago's position astride Atlantic shipping lanes made Cape Verde an ideal location for resupplying ships in the early days, and Mindelo's excellent harbor became an important commercial center. In the first half of the 19th century, it was the headquarters of the U.S. Navy Africa Squadron. As early as 1810, U.S. whaling ships recruited crews from Brava and Fogo to hunt the whales abundant in Cape Verdean waters.

The first American consulate in Cape Verde was established in 1816, and consular representation continued throughout the 19th century. A submarine cable station was established at Mindelo in 1875, but later was moved to Sal Island.

Government

In 1951, Cape Verde's status was changed from that of Portuguese colony to overseas province. Five years later, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (Partido Africano da Independência do Guiné e Cabo Verde, or PAIGC) was organized in Bissau under the leadership of Amílcar Cabral. It sought to make demands on Portuguese authorities to improve economic, social, and political conditions in Cape Verde and what was then Portuguese Guinea.

The PAIGC's armed struggle against Portugal began in 1961 with acts of sabotage, and eventually grew into a war in Portuguese Guinea that pitted 10,000 PAIGC soldiers, supported by the Soviet bloc, against 35,000 Portuguese and African troops fighting for Portugal. The PAIGC had a clandestine organization in Cape Verde, it did not attempt to disrupt Portuguese control of the archipelago. It became an overt political movement there after the Portuguese revolution of April 1974.

In December of that year, an agreement was signed in Lisbon providing for a transitional government to prepare Cape Verde for independence. On June 30, 1975, Cape Verdeans elected a National Assembly and gained independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975.

After a political coup in Guinea-Bissau in November 1980, Cape Verde abandoned its hope for unity with that country, and formed a separate party, PAICV. Since then, the two countries' relations have been as one sovereign state to another.

From 1980 to 1990, the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) was the country's only legal political party. All legislative authority was held by the PAICV-dominated National People's Assembly, which elected the president of the Republic to a five-year term. However, in April 1990, substantial political changes were announced. President Aristides Pereira called for the abandonment of Cape Verde's one-party system. Also, in September 1990, the PAICV's National Council declared that future presidents would be elected by universal suffrage and that opposition parties would be allowed to participate in elections to the National People's Assembly.

In January 1991, Cape Verde held its first multi-party elections for the 79-member National People's Assembly. An opposition party, the Movement for Democracy (MPD), won 56 seats while the PAICV captured only 23 seats. One month later, Cape Verde held its first free presidential elections. The new constitution came into force on September 25, 1992, and it underwent a major revision in November 1995, substantially increasing the powers of the president. The president is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. The prime minister is nominated by the National Assembly and appointed by the president. In the National Assembly there are currently 72 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms.

The judicial system is composed of a high court, Supremo Tribunal de Justica, and separate courts which hear civil and criminal cases.

Cape Verde is divided into 14 districts (*conselhos*); in each district a government delegate (*delegado*) is responsible for local administration and operation.

The Cape Verdean flag is comprised of three horizontal bands of light blue (top, double width), white (with a horizontal red stripe in the middle third), and light blue; a circle of 10

yellow five-pointed stars is centered on the hoist end of the red stripe and extends into the upper and lower blue bands.

Arts, Science, Education

Since the discovery and settlement of the islands, the intellectual, technological, and artistic trends have often followed those of Portugal.

The country's educational system consists of various tiers: a semi-autonomous kindergarten network exists for children from four to six years of age; elementary education is organized in two cycles, for those aged seven to nine, and others 11 and 12; and secondary education is available in high schools in Praia, Assomada, and Mindelo, or in programs for technical and commercial studies.

The adult literacy rate in 1995 was approximately 70 percent. Cape Verde's education system is plagued by overcrowding and inadequate instruction, although significant improvements have been achieved. As there is no university in the islands, students have traditionally gone abroad to pursue technical and advanced studies.

Cape Verde has a rich tradition in the arts. It is particularly famous for its poets, and for the hauntingly melancholic musical compositions known as *mornas*. The poets of Cape Verde write in both Portuguese and Crioulo.

A national artisan center in Mindelo is attempting to reintroduce native crafts, including weaving and pottery making. A small ethnological museum also is located there.

Panos, hand-woven fabrics famous during the slave-trading days and used as a form of money, are still made by few artisans, and are worn by women as waistbands.

Commerce and Industry

The majority of the work force of Cape Verde is employed in the rural sector.

The dearth of material resources, aggravated by a long period of drought, has resulted in agricultural production consistently falling far below consumer needs. Mineral resources are salt, pozzolana (a volcanic rock used in cement production), limestone, and kaolin (a fine clay used as a filler).

Subsistence crops—bananas, corn, beans, sweet potatoes, and manioc—occupy most of the arable land. During drought and normal conditions, Cape Verde produces only a small proportion of its dietary staple, corn. In years of adequate rainfall, small quantities of bananas, sugarcane, and Arabica coffee are exported. Livestock production includes goats, chickens, pigs and, in fewer numbers, beef cattle. Goats are especially adapted to the rocky terrain and provide a vitally needed source of protein.

The plentiful fish and shellfish in the archipelago's seas provide local consumption, small quantities for export. There are cold storage and freezing facilities at Mindelo and Praia, and on Sal Island. The government is examining ways to further develop its fishing industry.

Cape Verde's strategic location at the crossroads of central Atlantic air and sea lanes has been enhanced by a new harbor in Praia, improvements at Mindelo's harbor (Porto Grande), and at Sal's Amílcar Cabral International Airport. In addition, ship repair facilities were opened at Mindelo in 1983.

The islands' location, climate, mountain scenery, and extensive beaches offer possibilities for the development of tourism. The basic infrastructure for this sector was improved in 1983 with the completion of the U.S.-financed desalination and power plant.

Because of the archipelago's meager resources, many Cape Verdeans seek work abroad.

In June 1985, Cape Verde signed an Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) agreement with the United States. It also has economic accords with Portugal, the European Community (EC), the Arab Development Bank, Sweden, The Netherlands, and the African Development Bank. Since Cape Verde's independence, the U.S. has provided grant aid for food, technical assistance, soil and water conservation, agricultural research, rural development, school construction, and training and desalination facilities. In 1988, bilateral agreements between the U.S. and Cape Verde established a Peace Corps program and military training for Cape Verdeans at U.S. military schools.

Retail trade within the islands is handled by numerous shopkeepers and market traders. Food is the largest imported item and, with few exceptions, all consumer items are imported.

The National Union of Cape Verdean Workers (União Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Cabo Verde, or UNTC) is comprised of the membership of six trade unions. While these are guaranteed the right to strike, they do not do so. UNTC has only a few thousand members.

Cape Verde's commercial office, Associação Commercial Barlavento, is in Mindelo, São Vicente, at P.O. Box 62; telephone: 31-22-81.

Transportation

The larger islands of São Tiago, Sal, São Vicente, Boa Vista, São Nicolau, Santo Antão, Maio, and Fogo are served by Transportes Aéreos de Cabo Verde (TACV), the national airline. TACV flies small Hawker-Siddeley and Twin Otter aircraft several times weekly (except Sundays) between the major islands at reasonable prices. Intercontinental flights also exist weekly or bimonthly on various national

and international aircraft between Cape Verde and Lisbon, Amsterdam, Paris, Frankfurt, Moscow, Dakar, Banjul, Bissau, Johannesburg, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, and Boston. Small, regularly scheduled shipping vessels link Brava, the only inhabited island without an airport, to Fogo and São Tiago. Ferry boats also travel regularly between São Vicente and Santo Antão. There are no railroads. All islands have similar cobblestone road systems.

Public transportation in Praia is inadequate. A few taxis (black and green) are available, but not at all hours. Bus service is available and set schedules exist, but are not always followed.

Public transport to the interior towns of São Tiago is by bus and small passenger trucks or "alugueres." All of the major towns are connected by cobblestone roads; dirt roads and paths connect the rest.

Automobile traffic in Cape Verde moves on the right. Narrow roads, people on foot, and wandering livestock make driving somewhat hazardous.

A car brought into Cape Verde by a nonresident is considered in transit, and no taxes are levied; a second car, however, is subject to all duties.

Small European and Japanese automobiles, such as Fiat, Volkswagen, Renault, Leyland, Nissan, Volvo, Peugeot, and Toyota, are the vehicles most commonly used. American cars are seldom seen, as servicing is difficult. Those importing cars are advised to bring a supply of spare parts such as spark plugs, points, condensers, fan belts, and the like. A heavy-duty battery is essential and air-conditioning is useful in warmer months.

Rough cobblestone roads cause tires and suspension systems to wear rapidly. Rust is a severe problem because of ocean breezes. Therefore, any vehicle shipped to Cape Verde should have heavy-duty suspension,

radial tires, and undercoating. Carburetors should be for low-octane leaded gas, since locally available gasoline is of lower octane than American brands. It is unwise to ship car radios and stereos with any vehicle.

The national tourist agency, Secretaria de Estado de Comércio e Turismo is at C.P. 105, Praia, São Tiago; telephone: 573; telex: 6058.

Communications

Telephone & Telegraph

Cape Verde's internal telephone and telegraph system is limited, but improving. Local telephone calls in Praia are inexpensive and connections are good. Inter-island connections are less reliable, and lengthy service outages occur periodically. Telegrams can be sent from Praia to any other island.

External communication links are good. A new communication satellite system with added lines and modern switchboard equipment in Praia and Mindelo has improved all communication services. Direct dial from the U.S. to Cape Verde began in 1988.

International telegraph service is carried by submarine cable. All mail is by air.

Radio & TV

Cape Verde's has two radio transmitters—in Praia and on São Vicente. Praia's local station broadcasts on FM only, from 6:30 am to midnight. Programs concentrate on popular music and local news; international news coverage is incomplete, but shortwave broadcasts can be received from Europe, North America, and Africa.

Cape Verdean television (TEVC) is in color, transmitting every evening, except Monday, from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Programming consists of news, sports, cartoons, cultural programs, and weekly movies (subtitled in Portuguese) from the U.S., Europe, and the former Soviet Union.

The television system is not compatible with American sets but, with some sacrifice in quality of reception, U.S. sets can be converted. A booster and a large antenna make reception possible from Dakar (Senegal) and Morocco.

Newspapers, Magazines and Technical Journals

Cape Verde is served by a government-run newspaper, *Voz do Povo* (Voice of the People), which is published weekly. Newspapers and magazines from Europe or the U.S. are rarely available. Subscriptions to English-language periodicals are good supplements to the limited reading material available in the country. There is a small library at the U.S. Embassy.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

General medical services are available at the government-operated central hospital in Praia, but this 300-bed facility falls far below U.S. standards. In addition to the Cape Verdean staff, there are medical personnel here from France, Brazil, Cuba, the former Soviet Union, and China. A 140-bed hospital is located in Mindelo.

Some specialists practice in Praia, but they are hindered by inadequate facilities and training, and lack of supplies. A priority of the Cape Verdean Government is to increase the quality of health care, but it remains inadequate by U.S. standards.

Americans (U.S. Government employees, tourists, merchant seamen, etc.) have been treated successfully here on an emergency basis, but more complex medical situations are handled in Dakar, Lisbon or, in some cases, the U.S.

Community Health

Community health in Praia is relatively good compared to other West African countries, but is well below American standards. Praia has

weekly garbage collection. The city water is obtained from springs and is filtered. Many local residents use tap water for drinking but, as a safeguard against waterborne diseases, all drinking water should be boiled and filtered. Fruits and vegetables should be soaked in iodine solution if they cannot be peeled before eating raw. Meat (especially pork) needs thorough cooking.

There is no city sewage system, although one is being planned and developed; septic tanks are the alternative. During drought conditions, flies and cockroaches flourish.

Preventive Measures

A good supply of strong sun block, skin creams of all kinds, eye drops, sunglasses, and common first-aid medications is needed. These precautions are especially important, as the sun is intense six months of the year, and the sandstorms blowing from the Sahara can cause eye and throat irritations. Visitors are strongly advised to bring extra pairs of eyeglasses and contact lenses, and a generous supply of contact lens soaking and cleaning solutions. Neither eyeglasses nor contact lenses are made in Cape Verde.

Americans traveling to Praia must have inoculations against typhoid, yellow fever, typhus, hepatitis, and tetanus. Gamma globulin injections should be kept current. Malaria suppressants are recommended after the rainy season and for those who travel often to Senegal and other West African countries.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

There are three air routes to Cape Verde's capital: New York/Lisbon/Sal/Praia; Boston/Sal/Praia (direct via TACV); and New York/Dakar/Praia. It is best to avoid the latter, as the Dakar/Praia flight is difficult and luggage is strictly limited to 40.4 lbs. (20 kilos) per person. Cape

Verde's international airport is on Sal Island, a one-hour flight on TACV, the domestic carrier, from Praia. TACV does not fly on Sunday, and a wait of eight hours is common during the week. Two good hotels are located in Santa Maria, approximately 11 miles (17 kilometers) from the airport, where the wait is more pleasant.

A passport and visa are required. Travelers should obtain further information from the Embassy of the Republic of Cape Verde, 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington D.C. 20007, telephone (202) 965-6820, or the Consulate General of Cape Verde in Boston. Overseas, inquiries should be made to the nearest Cape Verdean embassy or consulate.

Airport police and customs officials routinely inspect incoming and outgoing luggage. Travelers in possession of prescription drugs should carry proof of their prescriptions, such as labeled containers. Police have been known to arrest foreigners carrying unlabeled pills. For a complete list of prohibited items, please contact the nearest Cape Verdean embassy or consulate.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy at Rua Abilio M. Macedo 81, C.P. 201, Praia, telephone (238) 61-56-16 or 17, fax (238) 61-13-55, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Cape Verde.

Pets

Quarantine is not required for pets imported to Cape Verde. Dogs and cats should be inoculated against rabies within six months prior to arrival. There are several veterinarians in Praia, but no kennels. Pet food is not available locally.

Firearms & Ammunition

Importation of firearms and ammunition is prohibited; only occasionally is an exception made.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The Cape Verdean currency is the *escudo*, which is not convertible outside the country. Praia is the main banking center; the head office is Banco de Cabo Verde.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan. 23	.....	National Heroes' Day
Feb/Mar.	.....	Carnival*
Mar/Apr.	.....	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	.....	Easter*
May 1	.....	Labor Day
May 19	.....	Municipal Day
July 5	.....	Independence Day
Aug. 15	.....	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	.....	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	.....	Christmas Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

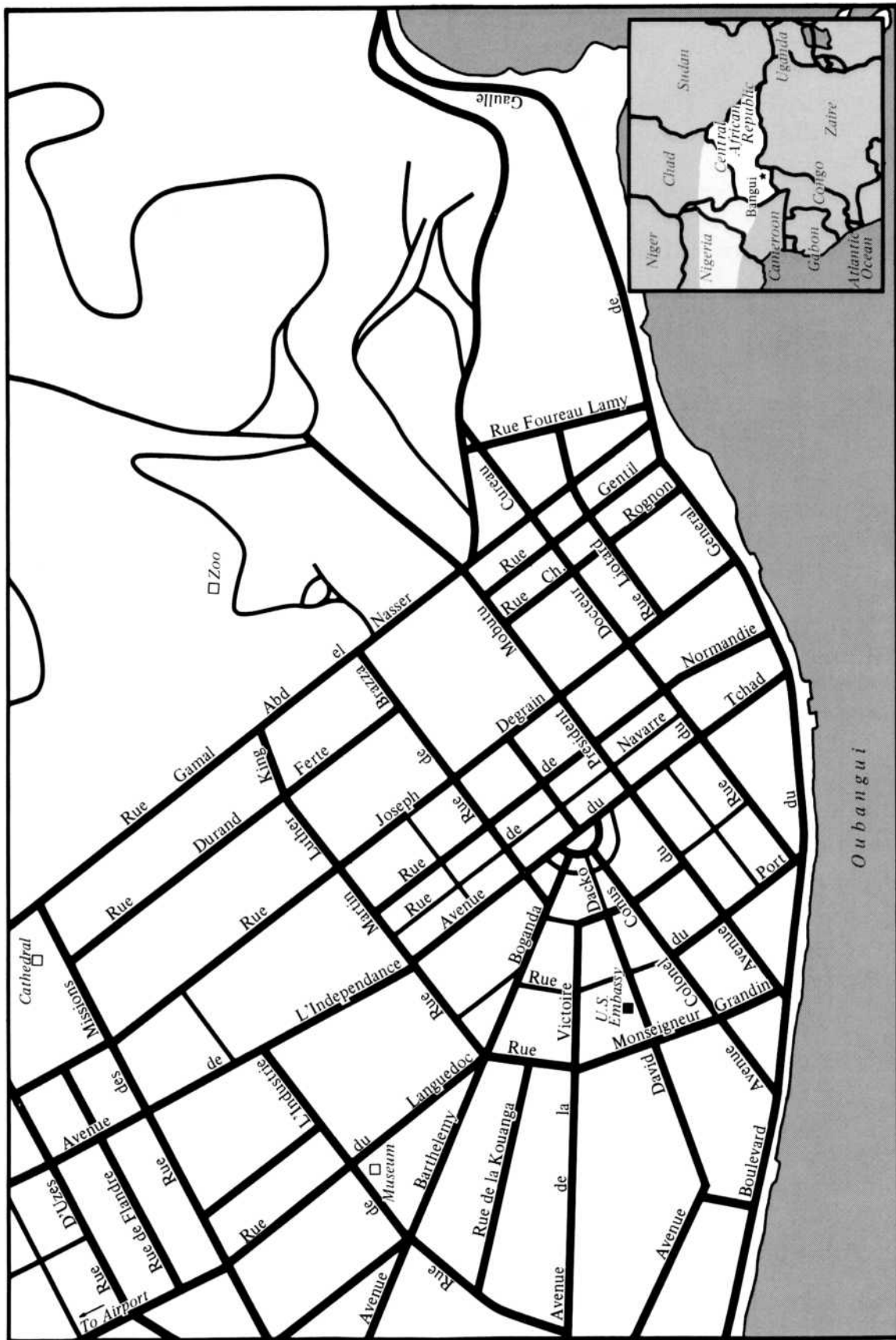
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Bangui, Central African Republic

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Major City:

Bangui

Other Cities:

Bambari, Bangassou, Bouar, Bria

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated November 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**, once known as the Territory of Ubangi-Chari, was one of the four provinces of French Equatorial Africa. It became an autonomous republic within the newly established French Community in December 1958, and became a fully independent nation two years later.

On December 4, 1976 President Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who seized power in a 1965 military coup, proclaimed himself "emperor" and renamed the country the Central African Empire. Gross abuses of power, corruption, and human rights violations characterized his rule. In September 1979, Bokassa was overthrown and replaced by his

cousin David Dacko. Dacko had previously served as President from 1960 to 1965. The country's name was changed back to the Central African Republic. Dacko remained in power until 1981, when he was ousted by military authorities during a period of severe economic crisis.

A military government, headed by General André Dieudonne Kolingba, took power. Early in 1985, a new constitution was drafted and ratified which promised the introduction of civilians into the military government.

In 1990, several violent demonstrations broke out in the country in support of a return to a civilian, multi-party government. Gen. Kolingba appointed a new prime minister in 1991, but expressed the view that a multi-party government would bring chaos and civil war to the country.

The Central African Republic is a young and struggling country, trying to create a nation out of a multitude of tribes, and to raise the level of economic development in an isolated and poorly endowed land. Against a background of colonial heritage, it seeks to form institutions and procedures appropriate to a modern, independent state.

MAJOR CITY

Bangui

Bangui, the C.A.R.'s only major city, is the country's economic and industrial center and has the only major river port and airport. It is located in a picturesque setting on the north bank of the Oubangui River, about 1,100 miles upstream from the Atlantic Ocean.

Founded in 1889 as a French military post, the city takes its name from a native word meaning "the rapids." It nestles beneath low-lying hills at the water's edge near rapids that prevent all but small boats and very shallow barges from plying the river further upstream.

The city is surrounded by a vast savanna of high grass and thickets of low trees spread over rolling hills to the north and west. Little villages are strung along the roads like beads. The nearest heavy equatorial rain forest lies about two hours (60 miles) to the southwest. To the south, across the Oubangui River from Bangui, lies Zaire.

Since Bangui is situated 4 degrees north of the Equator and 1,300 feet above sea level, its climate is humid and unchanging except during the

brief, violent thunderstorms of the rainy season.

The average high temperature for March, in the dry season, is 92.5° F; the low is 67° F. Average rainfall is 5 inches in January and 6.5 inches in July; August has the greatest average rainfall at 13 inches.

Most of Bangui's population of about 533,000 live in agglomerations of huts dispersed over a wide area several miles from the city's modern core. The core consists of European style residential districts; the downtown shopping, banking, and office area; government offices; and river port installations.

The city has a pleasant and colorful appearance. Many main avenues are lined with huge overhanging mango trees, which bear fruit in the spring, or the somewhat smaller but exotic "flame" trees with brilliant red blossoms in season. Most of Bangui's foreign population is French, principally business representatives or those connected with the government in advisory or technical capacities, or military personnel. Other foreign nationals include Portuguese, Greeks, Chadians, Cameroonians, Congolese, Ivoirians, Nigerians, Sudanese, Togolese, Zairians, Lebanese, and Syrians.

Food

Local vegetables and fruit are fresh, reasonably priced and good, but seasonally limited. Produce must be carefully washed, soaked, and cooked. Carrots, green onions, cabbage, string beans, eggplant, lettuce, tomatoes, squash and lima beans are sold in season. Cassava (manioc) is always available. Locally grown potatoes are available, but are somewhat costly. Local fruit, some of it seasonal, includes bananas, pineapples, papayas, mangoes, avocados, oranges, grapefruit, guavas, passion fruit, and custard apples. Home gardening is popular and African seeds are available.

Some stores carry imported goods from France and South Africa, such as canned fruit and vegetables, flour, salt, sugar, dried beans, noodles, packaged cookies and candies,

paper goods, soap, and cleaning products and toiletries. There are occasional shortages and prices can be breath-taking.

Pasteurized fresh milk is not available. Sterilized cream and whole and low fat milk in paper cartons or bottles are imported but are only irregularly available. Powdered and evaporated milk, fresh eggs, butter, and cheese are also available.

Beef, pork, lamb, smoked meats, and a good selection of cold cuts are carried in the supermarket. The best local fish is the capitaine, a large (and expensive) river fish with firm white flesh. Fish, shrimp, lobsters, oysters, and other seafood arrive once a week from France and the African coast. Also included in the weekly 'arrivage' are fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables at very high prices.

The most widely available fresh bread is of the French "baguette" type. Croissants, pastries, and some sandwich-type bread may be purchased at a price, and an Arab bakery offers pita bread which is quite good.

Wines, liquor, imported beer, and soft drinks are sold locally. Beer, soda, water, and soft drinks, including Coca-Cola, are bottled locally.

Clothing

Bring only enough winter clothing for travel to colder climates. Winter clothing mildews easily in Bangui. Since bedrooms are air-conditioned, bring appropriate sleepwear.

Men: Lightweight summer clothing is worn year round. A set of woolen clothing is useful for traveling or for very occasional chilly weather. Men wear long- or short-sleeved shirts, ties, or sports shirts. Wash-and-wear clothing is most practical. Dry cleaning is available but very expensive, slow, and of dubious quality. Daytime wear is usually in darker rather than lighter shades. Dark blue or gray suits are worn in the evenings. Loose fitting, open-neck sports shirts are practical but should be in conservative prints or color for evening wear. European-

style men's clothing is available but expensive.

Women: Light, informal washable dresses, skirts, and blouses are worn year round. Dressy cottons, informal dresses, and pants are often worn at informal functions. Attractive but expensive women's clothing in limited variety is sold locally and dresses can be made locally from attractive local fabrics. Bring a few sweaters and long-sleeved dresses and blouses for cool weather. Coats are needed only for traveling in colder climates. Bring a light-weight, non-plastic raincoat if you have one, but an umbrella is usually sufficient. Hats are needed for sun wear. Slacks and shorts are quite acceptable for sports. Bring some khaki shirts, skirts, or pants for bush trips and a good supply of shoes. Sandals with or without heels and regular summer footwear are worn most of the time.

Children: Children's clothes are expensive and quantities limited. Each child should have a few sweaters, a large number of T-shirts, and some flannel pajamas. School-age boys wear cotton shorts or blue jeans and shirts; girls wear simple cotton dresses and shorts. Sandals and sneakers are sold locally at about U.S. prices but are only fair quality, and sizes are limited. Children dress as they would in the U.S. No school uniforms are worn.

Special Clothing: Bring all sports clothing and footwear, as none are available in Bangui. Day trips and travel into the bush are popular activities in the Central African Republic, for which sturdy walking shoes and/or tennis shoes, khaki shirts, and skirts or pants are recommended.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Some cosmetics and toilet articles, facial tissue, toilet paper, and feminine hygiene supplies are sold in Bangui at double or more U.S. prices. If you have favorite brands, bring a supply. European cigarettes and a few American brands are sold but are expensive.



Street in Bangui, Central African Republic

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Pipe tobacco can be found, but it is generally not packed for the tropics and suffers accordingly.

Basic Services: There is one European-style beauty shop, expensive by U.S. standards. Shoe repair work is often slow, expensive, and poor. Americans have used the services of local dressmakers but with varying results.

Religious Activities

Catholic and Protestant churches in Bangui hold services in French and Sangho. American missionaries (Baptist and Grace Brethren) have informal services in English once a week.

Education

No English-language primary or secondary education is available in Bangui. American children attend Charles de Gaulle Primary school which follows the French curriculum, is accredited by the French Government, and supervised by the French Embassy in Bangui. A preschool program is offered as well as the primary grades K-6. Other students are European and African. Teachers are French, mostly spouses of French aid personnel. The cost is about US\$250 per trimester.

On the same compound is the Lycee (high school) Andre Malraux, with grades 7 through baccalaureate (graduation). The school is open to Central Africans and other foreigners. All classes are in French, with English taught as a foreign language. The system is geared to prepare students for entry into higher educational institutions in France. The cost is higher, but again all covered by the education allowance. If your child does not speak or understand French well, it will be necessary to hire a tutor at first.

The school year runs from October through mid-June. School is held 6 days weekly, Monday-Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to noon. The quality of education in both schools is good and comparable to schools in metropolitan France, but many subjects normally available in American schools are not offered. American children with no previous French have successfully adjusted in the early grades of primary school.

Another preschool offers a morning program for children 2 to 6 years old for \$200 per trimester, with a \$40 registration fee.

The College Preparatoire International (CPI) offers an English program for grades K-12, in addition to their regular French curriculum.

Sport

Tennis, swimming, squash, boating, horseback riding, golf, and water skiing are available. Soccer is played locally.

The Rock Club, on the Oubangui River, has a clubhouse with lounge and snack bars, tennis and squash courts, table tennis, large swimming pool, small boat marina, and classes in ballet, gymnastics, judo, etc., for adults and children. Videotape recordings and bridge games are also scheduled. Monthly dues are about US\$40, with an initiation fee of US\$350.00.

A private tennis club has courts which are well maintained and lit. Tennis lessons can be arranged at about US\$15 per hour, for members only. Annual dues are about \$375, with an initiation fee of US\$175.

The country's only golf course, amidst rolling hills, is about six miles from the city center, and has 18 holes with rough grass fairways and sand greens. Cost to join is about US\$186. Monthly dues are US\$40 per person.

Boating is almost exclusively outboard-motorboating, since the hills near the river, the swift current, and many whirlpools make sailing impossible and canoeing hazardous. Water skiing is possible, but river water sports carry the risk of exposure to bilharzia.

Spectator sports are soccer and basketball matches, bicycle racing, tennis tournaments, horse shows, and occasional boat racing.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

One-day trips can be made by car to the falls at Boali, 62 miles northwest of Bangui along a good, paved road (except for the last three miles). Pygmy villages 1-2 hours southwest of Bangui, via a paved road, can also be visited. Since air travel is the only feasible mode of transportation for a comfortable trip of any distance from Bangui, frequent changes of scene and relief from climate are not economical.

Entertainment

Public entertainment is limited. Several restaurants offer fair to good French cuisine at high prices. Several restaurants specialize in African food, and one in Lebanese dishes. No local legitimate theater exists, but infrequent theatrical performances by visiting French or local Central African troupes can be seen. Concerts are very rarely given, so music lovers should bring a good collection of records, tapes or CDs; they are unavailable in Bangui. The two movie theaters show French or French-dubbed films, some current, some older. Admission prices, as well as quality of sound, vary.

Three European-style discotheques operate in Bangui. In non-European quarters, several nightclubs offer open-air dancing, sometimes with live bands.

Good but expensive European photo equipment is sold locally. Camera enthusiasts should bring a good supply of film, flash bulbs, and batteries.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Most entertaining is in the home. Informal dinners, buffets, and cocktail parties are frequent.

International Contacts: Social activity in the Central African and European Community occurs, consisting mainly of receptions and small dinner parties at home. It is necessary to speak French. Social affairs are generally informal, with only a few more formal functions annually.

Hotels have facilities that can be rented for large receptions and dinner parties. Catering services are also available but expensive. The Rotary and Lions Clubs are active. Most recreational clubs occasionally sponsor special social events for members and guests.

Special Information

No particular hazards to travelers exist other than those connected with bush trips in any country with-

out a system of paved highways. When taking photographs, exercise discretion. Local authorities are often sensitive about photos being taken which they believe would compromise the country's security or reflect unfavorably on the country. Avoid these subjects: the Palace, private residences owned by the government, airports and military installations, as well as beggars, physically deformed people, convicts (who are often seen performing outdoor labor tasks), and bare-breasted women.

OTHER CITIES

Located approximately 150 miles northeast of the capital, **BAMBARI** is representative of cities in the central region of Africa. It was once a thriving community that has now fallen victim to its environment. The city does, however, boast of green hills, picturesque scenery, and the Ouaka River. Fishing, coffee, and other crops support the city's 87,500 (2000 est.) residents.

BANGASSOU is the home of the beautiful Kembe Falls on the Kotto River. Swimming is not advised here, but the view is awesome. The city is located in the southern section of the Central African Republic very near to Zaire. The population is estimated at 36,000.

Located near the western border, north of the capital, **BOUAR** is rich in history. The stone monuments that appear to be thousands of years old have mystified archaeologists with their similarity to monuments found in Egypt and western Europe. In Bouar's not so ancient past, it was a French headquarters and a German outpost. Ivory and wood are used for handicrafts here, and are sold in the markets. Trade items include food, cotton, and animals. Bouar has about 95,200 residents (2000).

The diamond-mining city of **BRIA** is located approximately 250 miles northeast of the capital. Along with diamonds, Bria produces cotton, sesame, gold, and coffee. It is easily

accessible by road and air. The population is estimated to be over 25,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Central African Republic, formerly known as the territory of Oubangui-Chari, was one of four territories of French Equatorial Africa. It became an autonomous republic within the newly established French Community on December 1, 1958 and was renamed the Central African Republic two years later. It transformed itself into the Central African Empire on December 4, 1976, and again became a republic (Republique Centrafricaine) on September 20, 1979.

The Central African Republic is a landlocked country on a broad plateau in the heart of the African continent. With an area of 238,000 square miles, it is slightly smaller than Texas. It is bounded on the north by Chad, on the east by Sudan, on the south by Zaire and Congo, and on the west by Cameroon. Most of the country is between 1,300 and 3,600 feet above sea level, with an average altitude of about 2,000 feet.

The country is a watershed for the Lake Chad/Chari River basin to the north and the Congo River basin to the south. Although rivers are numerous, they are small and do not lend themselves to heavy commerce. The Oubangui River is commercially navigable year round only south of Bangui.

Vegetation varies from tropical rain forest in the extreme southwest to semi-desert in the northeast. The bulk of the country is wooded savanna.

Average monthly temperatures range from a low of around 66° to a high of as much as 93°. Most of the country's precipitation, usually characterized by short, violent

thunderstorms, occurs in two seasons: April-May and August-November. Although it rains hard at times, the sun shines almost every day. Dust, generally sunny skies, and warm weather are the forecast for the major dry season (December-March) and the short, dry season (June-July).

Year-round daylight hours are 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The country is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. Daylight saving time is not observed.

Population

The estimated population is 3.5 million. Almost two-thirds of these people inhabit the western region, which includes Bangui, and most of the remaining population live in the central region. The eastern region has a density of less than one person per square mile. The country's overall density is 6-8 persons per square mile.

More than 80 percent of the people live in rural areas. Bangui, with about 553,000 people, is the only large city. Five other towns have populations exceeding 20,000; all are in the western or central regions.

Although many different ethnic groups exist, two main groups (the Baya-Mandjia, who inhabit the western and northern part of the country, and the Banda, who inhabit the center of the country) account for two-thirds of the population. A third group (riverine group of M'Bakas, Mbatis, Yakomas, and Sangos, located in the Bangui area and in several areas along the Oubangui River) comprises about 15 percent of the population but supplied the first four Chiefs of State. Pygmies, the country's original inhabitants, live in the forests of the southwest.

Each ethnic group has its own language, but Sangho, the language of a small riverine group along the Oubangui, is the lingua franca of the country and the "national" language. Only a small minority of the population has more than an ele-

mentary knowledge of French, the country's "official" language. Catholic and Protestant missionaries have been active since the late 19th century, and both churches are well established. According to church attendance records, about 50 percent of the population is Christian (roughly half Catholic and half Protestant). Moslems constitute about 15-20 percent and are important to the trade of the country. The balance of the population adheres to traditional religious beliefs.

Significant foreign communities in the country include the Chadian, Cameroonian, Zairian, and Nigerian colonies in the Bangui area. Most of the country's 4,000 non-African residents are French citizens living in Bangui; of the remainder, about 400 are Americans, mostly Peace Corps Volunteers or missionaries in the interior.

Public Institutions

The Central African Republic is a constitutional democracy. The constitution was passed by referendum on December 29, 1994 and was adopted on January 7, 1995. The president is elected by popular vote for a six-year term, and the prime minister is appointed by the president. There is a unicameral National Assembly with 109 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms (note - there were 85 seats in the National Assembly before the 1998 election).

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 14 prefectures, which in turn are divided into two or more sub-prefectures. Officials of these units (prefects and sub-prefects) report directly to the Ministry of the Interior. The army, the gendarmerie and the national police maintain public order.

There is universal suffrage for those aged 21.

Arts, Science, and Education

Cultural and intellectual life is developing. Institutions of higher

education include the University of Bangui, the National School of Administration and Magistrature, and the National Teachers Training College.

Local culture reflects outside influences to some degree, particularly from neighboring countries. Native dancing is gaining recognition as an integral part of the culture. The Boganda Museum in Bangui houses a collection of items of cultural interest, including ethnic artifacts.

Commerce and Industry

The economy is predominantly subsistence agriculture. Manioc, millet, and sorghum are the leading food crops. A number of light industries located in the Bangui area include plants for processing agricultural products; cigar and cigarette factories; a tee shirt factory; a brewery; and a diamond-cutting facility. The country has no heavy industry. Leading exports are diamonds, coffee, timber, and cotton. Uranium deposits exist, but they are located in a remote area and are not regarded as exploitable in the near future. Petroleum exploration has resulted in no exploitable discoveries. French and Lebanese businesses control much of the commercial activity of the country, and France is responsible for about 40 percent of the C.A.R.'s foreign trade.

As a former French colony and an associate member of the EC, the Central African Republic receives substantial foreign aid from France and the EC's European Development Fund. In addition, Germany, Japan, Taiwan and the U.S. provide more modest levels of technical and project assistance. The World Bank, the UNDP, and other UN agencies have important development projects here.

Transportation

Local

Bangui has no public bus service, but intercity minibuses, which are infrequent and dangerous, connect

principal towns. Buses are invariably crowded. Taxis operate primarily on fixed routes on a share-the-cab system.

Regional

Air transport is expensive, but generally reliable. Bangui airport handles scheduled passenger and cargo flights. Air Afrique and Air France operate between Paris and Bangui, with flights also stopping in N'Djamena, Chad or Douala, Cameroon. Air Afrique operates scheduled passenger and cargo flights from Libreville, Gabon and Douala, Cameroon, to Bangui. Air Afrique also operates a weekly flight to Lagos/Lome/Abidjan/Niamey/Dakar and once a week also to Lome.

Irregularly scheduled internal air service and small charter planes are available.

The water transport route from the Atlantic Ocean to Bangui begins with a long railroad trip from Pointe Noire, Congo, to Brazzaville where cargo is transshipped on barges up the Congo and Oubangui Rivers to Bangui. Above Bangui the Oubangui is navigable only by shallow draft barges in the rainy season. Motorized "pirogues" (African dug-out canoes) and a vehicle ferry cross the Oubangui River at Bangui to the town of Zongo, Zaire, to connect with the Zaire road system, such as it is.

The principal land transport route from the Atlantic to Bangui goes from Douala and Yaounde, Cameroon. Roads also connect to neighboring Chad and Sudan. Except for roads connecting Bangui with Yaloke (148 miles), Bangui with Sibut (68 miles), and Bangui with M'Baiki (64 miles), all roads outside Bangui are unpaved. Even Bangui has many unpaved streets. Road surfaces deteriorate in the rainy season, so a four-wheel-drive vehicle with high road clearance is a distinct advantage.

Most freight for Bangui is shipped by truck from Douala, Cameroon. A small amount of trans-Saharan road traffic, mostly overland tourists,

pass through Bangui on travels further south or east.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Bangui has dependable dial telephone system with a capacity of 5,000 lines. Overseas direct dialing is available. Basic monthly charges for a telephone are about US\$12. Subscribers are billed about US\$0.33 for each local call. Bills run months late.

Calls to the U.S. of usually good quality are routed through Paris. A long-distance call costs about US\$28 for 3 minutes. Commercial telegrams are available to the U.S. and are routed via Paris.

Radio and TV

The Government radio station, Radio Centrafrique, broadcasts music, news, and announcements on mediumwave and FM from Bangui in French and Sangho. News in French is broadcast four times per day. Radio Afrique Numero Un broadcasts music and news in French on the FM band.

Voice of America, BBC and other international services can be received on shortwave bands.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Several French language newspapers are published irregularly in Bangui.

A few English-language publications are sold locally. *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Economist* and the *International Herald Tribune* are available every week. A large number of French newspapers, magazines, and books are sold locally.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Bangui has two large government hospitals, staffed primarily by French and Central African doctors; most speak only French. Although the specialists at the hospital are often consulted, the in-patient facil-

ities are not used because of the questionable sanitary conditions and nursing care.

While there are specialists in ophthalmology, orthopedics, OB/GYN, general surgery, pediatrics, and ear, nose and throat problems, they are rarely used by Americans.

Competent emergency dental work is available, but all dental work should be done before arrival, if possible.

Two local pharmacies are fairly well stocked with French medicines. Eyeglasses can be ordered from one of the pharmacies but are very expensive and entail substantial delay. It is advisable to bring a spare pair of glasses.

Preventive Measures

Tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, schistosomiasis and intestinal parasites are prevalent, but foreigners rarely contract such endemic diseases if they observe simple preventative measures. Dysentery (Amoebic and bacillary), skin infections, malaria, and hepatitis are a constant risk. Viral ailments such as colds and flu are common. Those with respiratory, skin, or sinus problems may find these conditions aggravated.

Local authorities require yellow fever immunizations for entry into the country. The Department of State advises hepatitis A and B, tetanus, typhoid, polio, and rabies shots.

Chloroquine-resistant malaria has become a problem during the last few years. Thus, careful prevention of exposure to mosquitoes and malaria suppression is essential. A new anti-malarial, Mefloquin, is recommended. A weekly dose of Chloroquine in addition to daily doses of Paludrine is also used by some people. Malaria suppression should be started two weeks before your arrival.

It takes most people some time to adjust to the climate. Children generally adapt well, but heat rash and childhood diseases can occur. Mod-

erate physical exercise and active social interests help maintain good health. Avoid too much sun.

Snakes, scorpions, tarantulas and other spiders, ants, and mosquitoes make it necessary to take precautions when walking outdoors, including wearing shoes and using insect repellent, particularly at night.

Bangui's water is purified in a modern plant, but because of the condition of the city pipelines, water must be boiled and filtered before drinking or using for ice cubes.

Local vegetables, particularly leafy ones, should be washed in a detergent or bleach ("javel" in French) solution, or should be peeled or cooked before eating. Local meats should be cooked thoroughly to avoid parasites such as trichina or tapeworms.

Fruits and vegetables imported from Europe should be treated for possible contamination in transit. They need not be peeled. Fresh milk is not available, although long-life milk is frequently stocked in one or two food stores.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A valid passport and visa are required. Current information on entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of the Central African Republic, 1618 22nd Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 483-7800/7801, fax (202) 332-9893. Overseas, inquiries should be made to the nearest Central African Republic embassy or consulate.

To enter into the country, travelers must have the standard international certificate of vaccination or its equivalent and yellow fever and occasionally cholera immunization certificates. (Note that the yellow fever immunization does not become effective until ten days after injection.)

Americans living in or visiting CAR are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bangui at Avenue David Dacko, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within the CAR. The mailing address for the U.S. Embassy in Bangui is American Embassy Bangui, Avenue David Dacko, B.P. 924, telephone (236) 61-02-00; fax (236) 61-44-94; after-hours telephone for U.S. citizens (236) 61-34-56 or 61-69-14.

No quarantine requirements exist for pets. They must have a rabies vaccination certificate and a certificate of good health. Pets must be shipped as accompanying baggage, and are normally cleared and delivered to the owners immediately upon arrival of the plane carrying them. Limited veterinary service is available.

The unit of currency is the CFA (Communaute Financiere Africaine, African Financial Community) franc issued by the Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale et du Cameroun (Central Bank of Central Africa and Cameroon). France guarantees unlimited convertibility of the CFA franc into metrofrancs at the rate of 100 francs CFA to 1 French franc. The rate of exchange in January 2001 was 669 francs CFA=US\$1.

Following the French Government's enactment of exchange controls in 1968, the CAR adopted similar restrictions. Under present regulations, an unlimited amount of foreign currency and travelers checks can be imported or exported, but no more than the equivalent of 50,000 CFA francs per person in currency.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar. 29 Boganda Day
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May 1 Labor Day

May/June. Ascension Day*
 May/June. Whitsunday*
 May/June. Whitmonday*
 June 30 National Day of Prayer
 Aug. 13. Republic Day
 Aug. 15. Assumption Day
 Nov. 1. All Saints' Day
 Dec. 1. Proclamation Day
 Dec. 25. Christmas Day
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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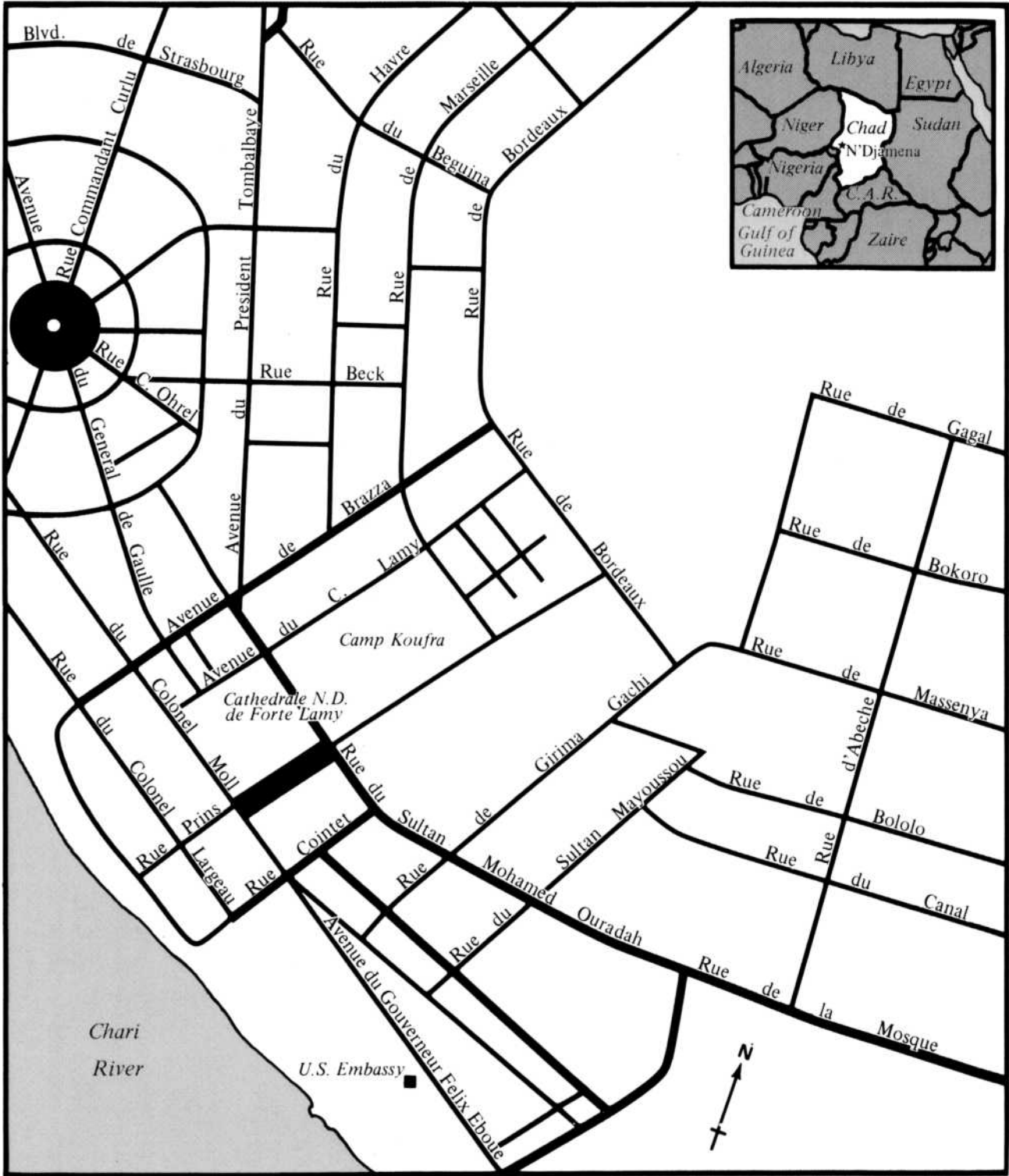
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Weinstien, Brian. *Eboue*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1972.

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N'Djamena, Chad

CHAD

Republic of Chad

Major City:

N'Djamena

Other Cities:

Abéché, Bongor, Faya, Moundou, Sarh

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

CHAD, the largest of the countries to develop from former French Equatorial Africa, has an ancient history that tells of well-developed societies dwelling around Lake Chad as long ago as a thousand years. Arab elements probably migrated from the north, across the Libyan desert, in the eighth century, but it was not until the French arrived in the middle of the 19th century that Europeans settled the region. With what are now Gabon, Central African Republic, and the Republic of the Congo, Chad had French colonial status until 1958. It became independent two years later.

The nation has been battered by several civil wars, invasions from Libya, political instability, and famine for nearly three decades. In November 1990, a variety of anti-government forces calling themselves the Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS) launched a military attack on the government of President Hissein Habré. The MPS, led by Colonel Idriss Déby, quickly overwhelmed troops loyal to Habré. On December 2, 1990, Déby and the MPS marched into N'Djamena. Habré and other government officials fled to Cameroon.

Prior to the overthrow of the Habré regime, Chad's sole legal political party was the National Union for Independence and Revolution (UNIR). In May 1991, President Déby stated that he would favor the creation of a multi-party democracy in Chad. After several years of delays, Chad's first multiparty democratic elections were held in 1996, and President Déby was reelected.

Chad (in French, Tchad) offers broad geographic variety: desert, savanna and forest, mountains, rivers and plains, as well as the mystique of its location in the heart of Africa. Its people, as varied and interesting as its topography, include nomads, herdsman, fishermen and farmers, Muslims, animists, and Christians.

MAJOR CITY

N'Djamena

Chad's capital city, N'Djamena, formerly Fort Lamy, is located at the confluence of the Chari and Logone rivers. It lies nearly 1,000 feet above sea level on a 300-mile-wide arid savanna belt that stretches across the country. This strip separates the Sahara Desert in the north from the subtropical areas of the south. N'Djamena is the center of Chadian government, commerce, banking, communications, and foreign trade. The city was largely destroyed during the 1979–82 civil war. Many buildings still standing are bombed-out shells, although rebuilding is underway and much reconstruction has been completed. N'Djamena has a population of approximately 1,044,000.

Physically and architecturally, N'Djamena is two cities in one: French colonial and Chadian. The European portion of town is characterized by wide, tree-lined streets and white cement homes set in ample gardens. Here are found also most of the government buildings, embassies, and larger stores. This section fills in the area along the river from the city center to the airport.



Marketplace in N'Djamena, Chad

© Paul Almasy/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

The Chadian section, which is much larger, stretches to the south and east and is characterized by narrow, busy, unpaved streets and one-story mud houses, some with corrugated tin doors and roofs.

The large, sprawling city market is probably one of the most varied and interesting in the African Sahelian zone. Not only does it offer a wide variety of foods and spices from all parts of Chad, but it also houses an extensive, if rudimentary, manufacturing activity. Visitors can see basket weaving, blacksmithing, rug and mat making, pottery decorating, cloth dyeing, and peanut grinding, all within the market enclosure. The colors, sounds, and smells of the market are unforgettable. While the market does not have the plenitude of goods evident in earlier days, it remains the center of N'Djamena's commerce.

One landmark that has been rebuilt is the architecturally striking Cathedral of Notre Dame. Another

is the Eboué Monument at Place Eboué, opposite City Hall, honoring Félix Eboué, Governor of Chad from 1938–40 and Governor General of French Equatorial Africa from 1940–44.

Aside from the U.S. Embassy staff and their dependents, there are roughly 180 Americans in Chad. Most of these Americans are from private voluntary organizations, the U.N., missions, or employees of two U.S. oil exploration firms.

Schools for Foreigners

The American International School of N'Djamena (AISN) is a coeducational school offering an American-style curriculum for students from kindergarten through grade 8. Extracurricular activities include art, music, school newspaper, soccer, volleyball, and swimming.

École Montaigne is a private school following a French curriculum. Staffed by French cooperants and other qualified expatriate teachers,

it has children from the international community at large as well as French children and some Chadians. With the AISN, it is the only other accredited school in Chad.

Other local primary/elementary schools are not considered suitable because of massive overcrowding in most classes and lack of materials and qualified instructors.

After passing the government exams in grade six, Chadian primary pupils go on to "college" (junior high school) or "lycée" (junior and senior high school). The best of these is College Sacre Coeur, a public school closely supervised by the teaching order of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. This carries students to a grade 10 equivalent; following graduation, students attend one of three lycees (high schools).

Recreation

Spectator sports in N'Djamena are limited to occasional local soccer matches, horse races, volleyball games, softball games, and tennis matches. The extreme heat and absence of suitable facilities makes participation in sports rather difficult in the hot season. A swimming pool at the U.S. Chancery is sometimes open to visitors.

The International Club of N'Djamena offers four well-kept clay tennis courts, one of which is adequately lighted for evening play. Other activities offered include Ping-Pong, karate, volleyball, riding stables, a swimming pool, and an outdoor bar with tables and chairs.

A private horse club, the Equestrians of Chagoua provides horses for riding enthusiasts. The AERO Club provides flying lessons and dining facilities.

Abundant game and wide open spaces once made Chad attractive to European hunters as a safari site. Populations of larger game animals have been greatly reduced, though duck hunting remains good. Douguia is a resort north of N'Djamena on the Chari River which still has something to offer. Driving time in

the dry season is about two hours one way from N'Djamena. A hotel and a restaurant are located at the resort. You can try your luck at fishing or water skiing or just take a walk through the village. By traveling roughly 20 miles (30 kilometers) further to Lake Chad, you can go for a tour in a motorboat.

The Nadjer of Khamiss Rock formations, or Elephant Rocks, with small caves are located near the village of Karal, about three hours north of N'Djamena, and are worth a trip.

N'Djamena's fascinating, sprawling open market is well worth a visit. Spices, a wide variety of foods from all parts of Chad, carpets, clothing, brightly patterned African materials, kitchenware, and other items are available.

Some African art and handiwork can be purchased at the Centre Artisanal, at the Catholic Mission, and close to major hotels. Also, vendors are located in front of the food stores, the Post Office, and other major buildings. Bargaining is a way of life, and consequently, the first price quoted is highly inflated. Visitors can buy ready-made jewelry in gold, silver, filigree, or ivory, or have them made to order in several *bijouteries* (jewelry stores) around town. Some jewelry is imported from Saudi Arabia.

A number of short excursions can be taken from N'Djamena. They do not offer much of a change of landscape or climate, but are interesting. Among them are:

- Kale Maloue/Maroua, a small park inhabited by deer, elephants, monkeys, wild pigs, and a variety of birds. It is approximately eight miles from Kousseri, Cameroon, across from N'Djamena on the Logone River. Guided tours are available during the dry season.

- Waza, a large game park in North Cameroon with elephants, giraffes, lions, and a great variety of antelopes, gazelles, and birds. After crossing the Chari River by ferry or bridge, the park can be reached

over a reasonably good road in about two and one-half hours. A small, but adequate hotel and restaurant, consisting of a series of air-conditioned *boucarrous* (round adobe cottages with thatched roofs) is available.

- Logone Birni, the ancient capital of the Sao sultanate, and an hour's trip to the south on the Cameroonian side of the Logone River. Some mud fortifications are still intact here.

- Logone Gana, sister city of Logone Birni, on the Chadian side of the river. This is an ancient, but thriving, town of fishermen about a one-and-a-half-hour drive to the south.

- Goulfey, a Kotoko village of fishermen and farmers down-river toward Lake Chad, and best reached by boat. Some of the mud walls and houses are more than 400 years old.

- Maroua, a pleasant town with two excellent hotels is located in northern Cameroon, about four hours from N'Djamena. It has a trading center noted for hand-embroidered tablecloths and items of clothing.

- Ourdjila, a mountaintop village an hour south of Maroua, also in northern Cameroon. Tourists visit the chief's *sare* and the quarters of his 40 wives.

- Rhumsiki, where spectacular rock formations can be seen in the hills along the Cameroonian-Nigerian border. There is a small hotel here.

Entertainment

N'Djamena has two popular movie theaters, the Normandie and the VOG. Both theaters occasionally show fairly good but older movies in French, along with Kung-Fu and Hindi epics. Theaters are outdoors, so insect repellent is recommended.

N'Djamena has several amateur theatrical groups: Chadian Anglophone Theatrical Society (C.A.T.S.)

began performing in 1985 with three plays. Most of the members are Americans and Canadians. Les GANTS (Groupe Amateur N'Djamena Theatre et Spectacles) perform in French at the French Cultural Center several times a year. Plays and cabaret shows are offered. Its performances are predominantly by and for expatriates. Baba Moustapha Theatre Vivant gives several performances in French annually, often by Chadian authors. Smaller groups also give plays in French and occasionally in local languages.

The Chadian National Ballet performs dances representative of Chad's different regions. In addition, several smaller dance bands play; the best known are "Chari Jazz" and "Africa Melody".

Le Centre Cultural Francais, supported by the French Embassy, offers annual memberships at very reasonable rates. It has a good library (fiction, nonfiction, reference) in French, offers monthly educational expositions regarding aspects of life in Chad, has a good stage for occasional concerts or plays or other visiting performers, a video club, a bridge club, chess, game nights, and movie nights for children and adults.

N'Djamena has several good French-style restaurants, a restaurant specializing in Oriental cuisine, and several small places that serve good Chadian food. Also, two discotheque night clubs offer a variety of African, French, disco, and rock music.

Photography is not allowed without a permit.

A good deal of casual entertaining is done among Americans in this growing community. Small dinner parties are common. Other activities include luncheons, dinners, cocktail parties, sports, and watching video films. Parties are sponsored for children and/or adults for the Fourth of July, Halloween, Christmas, Easter, and various other occasions. Chad's expatriate

community also holds a Thanksgiving Day service.

N'Djamena is an informal city where friendships are easily formed. Official and social contacts, participation in sports, religious activities, and other social functions all contribute. Professional contacts frequently lead to social invitations for cocktails or dinners. Any contact outside the American community usually requires a working knowledge of French.

OTHER CITIES

ABÉCHÉ, located 350 miles northeast of the capital, is large and desert-like. There are several mosques and old markets. Abéché was once the capital of the Ouaddai empire. The palace and the sultan's tombs are still standing. Abéché is surrounded by a savanna-type terrain that is conducive to cattle-raising. However, the development of a substantial cattle industry has been hampered by Abéché's distance from suitable markets. Abéché's craftsmen are known for their famous camel-hair blankets. The town has a secondary school, the Lycée Franco-Arabe, as well as a hospital and small airport. The population in 2000 was roughly 95,800.

BONGOR is located at the far southwestern border of Chad. It is situated in a cotton-growing region where recent attempts have been made to produce rice in the Logone floodplain. During the dry season, Bongor's wells and pools attract nomads from north of Lake Chad. There is an airport, and other community services are available. The city has an estimated population of over 195,000.

FAYA, formerly known as Largeau, is a major oasis town in the Borkou region of northern Chad. It is located roughly 490 miles northeast of N'Djamena. Originally called Faya, the town was renamed Largeau in 1913 in honor of a French army officer who captured the Borkou region. The original

name was restored in the 1970s when Faya became a center for date palm production. The town has a small electric plant and a hospital.

MOUNDOU is a major city located on the Logone River in southeastern Chad. The city's warm, seasonally wet climate makes it one of Chad's major cotton-producing centers. Moundou is also the site of one of Chad's largest commercial enterprises, a brewery established in 1964. The city has a hospital, local air service, and a secondary-school branch. Moundou's estimated population in 2000 was 117,500.

SARH is located in the southeastern region of Chad. It takes its name from the ethnic group, the Sara. The city has a bustling marketplace offering cotton, fish, and textile products.

Sarh has an airport, schools, and a hospital. On the Chari River, the climate of Sarh is wet and warm. The population was approximately 129,600 in 2000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Covering an area of 496,000 square miles, landlocked Chad is twice as large as Texas. With an estimated population of nearly five million in such a large area, it has one of the world's lowest population densities. The country, situated in the heart of the widest part of Africa, is over 900 miles long, and is 450 miles wide at the latitude of N'Djamena.

Chad has roughly two climatic zones separated by a wide transitional belt; wooded, humid river valleys in the south, and the desert climate of the barren Sahara in the north. N'Djamena lies in a sub-Saharan savanna region of grasslands and scrublands, with dry and rainy seasons, between the forest and the desert. Chad's topogra-

phy is generally flat, except for a range of hills along the eastern border and relatively high, barren mountains in the far northwest.

Most of the country's drainage system flows into Lake Chad, which lacks an outlet. Geologists say that the lake, the world's 12th largest when full, once covered a substantial portion of what is now the Sahara, and that the climate was then one of high humidity and lush tropical growth. Although the lake's salinity is increasing, it still contains large numbers of freshwater fish. As a result of a Sahelian drought beginning in 1971, the water level declined further until the lake was split into two shallow basins in 1973. Another severe drought, which assaulted much of central Africa in 1984, caused Lake Chad to shrink to one-third of its normal size, but heavy rainfall the following year contributed to re-establishing the water level.

N'Djamena has three seasons. The July to October rainy season is characterized by some humidity, periodic heavy rains, tall green grass, and by a great variety and number of insects which arrive in September and do not depart until early November. Although rains are heavy, they do not fall every day, and most storms do not last more than an hour. Rains are usually preceded by high winds with much dust and sand. At either end of the rainy season, July and October, maximum temperatures are about 98°F, but drop to 89°F in mid-season. Minimums are 72°F to 74°F throughout this period. From mid-July until mid-October or early November, rains may close roads outside of town and make unpaved city streets all but impassable to anything other than four-wheel-drive vehicles.

From November to February, the weather is dry and pleasant, with daytime temperatures seldom over 90°F. Nighttime temperatures often drop to 60°F or below, and blankets are needed. The pleasantness of this season is marred only by occasional *harmattans*, dust storms off the

Sahara that settle over the city like a London fog.

During the hot season, from the end of February to early June, average noon temperatures reach 110°F to 120°F in the shade. Direct sunlight is extremely strong, plants die, and the earth dries up. Nighttime temperatures seldom drop below 90°F, or possibly 80°F during early morning.

Population

Chad's population is divided among a large number of tribes and racial types. The country's total population in 2000 was estimated at 7,760,000. The north and center are inhabited primarily by Muslims, many of them nomadic or seminomadic. The more densely populated south and southwest are inhabited by sedentary farmers, animists, and Christian farmers. Arabic is the language of the north and Sara is the most common tongue in the south. Eight other indigenous languages are spoken in Chad. Rudimentary French is fairly well understood in the towns, and remains the official language of Chad.

Islam is the predominant religion. Strife and tension between Arab north and non-Moslem south, going back to the time when slavery existed in this part of Africa, has left a legacy of problems.

Outside the country's main cities and towns, the Chadians live principally *en brousse* (in the bush). Depending on their location, they pursue agricultural village life, herding, or a nomadic existence. Millet, sorghum, beef, mutton, and fish constitute the main diet. Great variety in clothing can be seen, and Chad's markets are particularly colorful. As throughout Africa, families are usually large. The Chadians also observe the extended-family concept and refer to the most distant cousin as "brother" or "sister." Often, only one or two breadwinners in an extended family will be supporting a large number of people.

Government

In 1988, former President Habré commissioned a new constitution. This constitution called for a strong presidency and an elected National Assembly. It was adopted by referendum in December 1989. On July 8, 1990, a 123-member unicameral National Assembly was elected to a five-year term.

On December 3, 1990, one day after the overthrow of President Habré, Colonel Déby suspended the 1989 constitution and dissolved the National Assembly. In its place, Déby proclaimed a National Charter on February 28, 1991, that confirmed his status as president and established an advisory Council of the Republic. After lengthy delays, a new constitution was adopted in 1996, and Chad held its first democratic multiparty elections since becoming an independent nation. The last presidential election was held on May 20, 2001, and the next is to be held in 2006. General Déby was reelected president in 2001 with 63% of the vote.

The president is elected by popular vote to serve a five-year term; if no candidate receives at least 50% of the total vote, the two candidates receiving the most votes must stand for a second round of voting. The prime minister is appointed by the president.

The legislative branch consists of a unicameral National Assembly with 125 seats. Members are elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms.

The Chadian flag consists of vertical bands of dark blue, yellow, and red.

Arts, Science, Education

The educational system was severely affected by the 1979–82 civil war. Elementary and secondary schools throughout the country are still overcrowded, understaffed, and poorly equipped. The one institution of higher learning has lim-

ited facilities and mostly part-time professors.

An examination given at the end of the equivalent of grade 10 determines entrance into specialized schools: the *École Nationale des Travaux Publics* (public works), the *École Nationale des Infirmiers*, and *Sages Femmes et Assistantes Sociales* (nurses, midwives, and social workers), both in N'Djamena, and the *École Nationale des Télécommunications* in Sarh. That examination also allows entrance to one of Chad's five normal schools, which train elementary school teachers in Abéché, N'Djamena, Moundou, Sarh, and Bongor.

Students completing high school (13 years), take the baccalaureate examination, a national test similar to the ones given in France and other francophone countries. Those who pass (known as "bacheliers") are eligible for admission to the University of Chad, which offers courses in humanities, arts, sciences, social sciences, and law. Bacheliers may also take very competitive entrance examinations for admission to the *École Nationale d'Administration* or the *École Normale Supérieure*, which train high school teachers. All three institutions are in N'Djamena.

"Les Centres Artisanals" were created to help Chad rebuild its tourist industry and preserve native craftsmanship. Craftsmen produce animal sculptures, pots, and jewelry made from brass, silver, leather, and wood.

Commerce and Industry

Confronted with a long drought, Libyan aggression, and civil strife, Chad is one of the world's poorest nations. The country has fewer than 200 miles (300 kilometers) of paved roads, no rail system, and only two airfields capable of handling modern commercial jet aircraft. The 1985 opening of a bridge across the Logone River provided the Chadian

capital with its first land link to neighboring Cameroon.

A major effort is underway to improve Chad's road system. Several donors, including the World Bank, France, Italy, and the U.S. are engaged in road repair and improvement projects. According to World Bank estimates at least 300 million dollars was needed to fund urgent road repairs in the 1990s, involving over 1,100 miles of roadway.

Chad's commercial truck fleet is woefully inadequate, consisting of approximately 400 vehicles. The fleet transports its cotton crop to the port of Douala or the railhead at N'Gaoundere (both in Cameroon), and provides for the internal movement of goods and passengers. Additional trucks belonging to Nigerian and Cameroonian transporters are allowed to operate in Chad after paying a fee to the Chadian Transporters Cooperative (CTT).

Chad's industrial sector consists mainly of seven companies, five of which are joint ventures between the Government of Chad and private investors. COTONTCHAD, the national cotton company; SONASUT, the national sugar company; Societe Textile du Chad (STT), a textile company; Manufacture des Cigarettes du Tchad (MCT), a tobacco firm; and Societe Industrielle de Materiel Agricole (SIMAT), an agricultural equipment firm, are joint ventures. A brewery, Brasseries du Logone (BDL), and a soft drink firm, Boissons Gazeuses du Tchad (BGT), are under private ownership.

Chad's principal traditional exports are cotton, cattle, textiles, and fish. The country imports petroleum products, foodstuffs, light machinery and transport equipment, and a limited number of consumer goods.

Chad relies heavily on massive amounts of foreign aid for food and other necessities. Although some irrigation systems have been constructed in Chad, most agricultural production continues to be rain-fed.

The industrial sector is making moderate gains in production. However, it is still extremely underdeveloped.

Local and expatriate merchants are again investing in the retail and service sectors. Many war-damaged buildings have been rebuilt in N'Djamena's main commercial areas. Although the modern sector has not fully recovered from the war period, more is now Chadian-owned rather than French-owned as was the earlier case.

The Chadian economy depends upon the agricultural sector, which accounts for 40% of the estimated Gross National Product and almost 100 percent of export earnings. Eighty-five percent of the labor force is engaged in agricultural production. The most productive farmland is in the five southernmost prefectures. Cotton is the principal cash crop and accounted for 40 percent of Chad's export earnings in 1999. However, the world market price for cotton has fallen sharply in recent years. As a result, export earnings have fallen drastically to less than one-third of their previous level. Animal husbandry is the traditional domain of the nomads who populate northern Chad, and cattle exportation is Chad's second largest source of export earnings.

Most of Chad's cotton exports flow to Germany, Portugal, Spain, and France. Other Chadian products such as cattle, hides, and small quantities of beer are exported to the neighboring states of Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, Zaire, and the Central African Republic. Nigerian and Cameroonian fuel is Chad's largest import. Building materials, light machinery, spare parts, and foodstuffs are also imported from Cameroon and Nigeria.

Partnerships in COTONTCHAD, SONASUT, and STT make France the largest foreign investor in Chad. Three oil companies—Mobil, Shell, and Total—operate a joint facility in N'Djamena for the storage and distribution of refined petroleum products. The Esso consortium (Exxon,

Chevron, and Shell) and its subcontractors are currently engaged in exploration activity in southern Chad. Future plans call for the construction of a mini-refinery in N'Djamena that will use Chadian petroleum to satisfy much of the country's domestic needs.

An oil extraction project underway in southern Chad is hoped to reduce energy costs and attract additional trade and investment to the country. In October 2000, the Doba Basin Oil Project began its construction phase. Between 2000 and 2003, an American-led consortium will invest \$3.7 billion into the project. The consortium plans to produce between 150,000 to 250,000 barrels of oil a day from three fields in southern Chad by 2003-2004. This will reduce Chad's dependence upon foreign oil.

The Chad Chamber of Commerce can be reached at P.O. Box 458, N'Djamena.

Transportation

N'Djamena's only scheduled airline services are by Air Afrique, UTA, Sudanese Airways, Ethiopian Airlines, and Air Tchad.

Three flights per week come from Paris via Air Afrique and Air France. Air Afrique flies between Paris and N'Djamena twice a week, and Air France flies once a week.

During the dry season, trucks and "bush taxis" ply Chad's dirt roads hauling goods and people. In the rainy season, most roads out of town are impassable. The country has no rail service, and the Trans-Cameroonian railroad from Douala does not reach Chad. The closest railheads to N'Djamena are Maiduguri, Nigeria, and N'Gaoundere, Cameroon.

Some commercial river traffic exists on the Chari River when the water is high enough to float a barge. Bridges across the Chari and Logone rivers now provide N'Djamena with a land link to neighboring Cameroon.

Taxis in N'Djamena are plentiful, but fares must be negotiated in advance. The aggressive drivers try to fit as many passengers as possible into a single taxi. Private autos, motorbikes, bicycles, two-wheel push carts, donkeys, and walking are the main forms of transport for local residents. Travel between towns is usually done by catching a ride on a passing truck, "bush taxi," bus, or aircraft.

The basic need for private transportation is in the city. There are few places to drive outside of town. For those interested in exploring, an off-the-road vehicle, such as a Chevrolet Blazer, Ford Bronco, or Jeep Wagoneer is a necessity for travel outside of N'Djamena. City driving requires only a simple and sturdy car. Small models, especially French Peugeot 504s and Japanese models predominate. Color restrictions for vehicles do not exist, but light colors that reflect heat should be selected. Driving is on the right.

If an American automobile is shipped to N'Djamena, it should be equipped with all available hot-weather and heavy-duty options. French-type yellow headlights are required. Air conditioning is recommended, but no local repair or recharging facilities exist. Since unleaded gas is not sold, the deactivation of catalytic emission control systems becomes necessary.

Cars must carry liability insurance that is available only from "La Star Nationale" in N'Djamena, but at a reasonable cost. A certificate from previous insurance stating no liability automobile claims within a specified period may help one secure a lower rate. Some persons find it worthwhile to insure against loss to their own vehicle; this is available from some firms in the U.S.

Gasoline stations outside the capital are few and far between. Occasionally, some sections of Chad are without auto fuel. Two jerry cans, one for fuel and one for water, should be carried on any trip outside of town.

A Chadian drivers license will be issued to anyone holding a valid U.S. drivers license. Some people drive in Chad with an international drivers permit. International permits can be obtained locally to use in neighboring countries, but are expensive. They should be acquired prior to arrival from the American Automobile Association, or through a travel agency.

Although the main streets of N'Djamena are paved, potholes are common. Secondary dirt surfaces are smoothed out once a year by a road grader after the rainy season. They deteriorate rapidly and become quagmires during the next rainy period.

Communications

Local and international telephone service has improved somewhat since late 1987. Most expatriate homes are equipped with a telephone. Telex facilities are available at Office des Postes et Télécommunications, N'Djamena and other main post offices in Moundou, Abéché, and Sarh.

Telegraph service is available at the Poste, Telegraphie, et Telephone (P.T.T.) office. International airmail is generally fair for letters, taking about 10 days from Washington, D.C. to N'Djamena. During the holiday season, service is slow. Packages sent by international mail must go through Chadian customs; loss or pilferage is highly probable.

One local radio station, Radiodiffusion Nationale Tchadienne (RNT) broadcasts the news in French three times daily. RNT also broadcasts news and other programs in Chadian, Arabic, and several local languages. Radio stations are also located in Abéché, Moundou, and Sarh. A shortwave radio is required to receive in English from Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) and other distant stations.

There is one television station, Tele-Tchad, which transmits from N'Dja-

mena. Coverage is limited, with only a few hours of broadcasting daily in French and Arabic. A multi-system television is necessary in order to receive Chadian and Cameroonian television programs. Cameroonian programming is much more extensive.

Info-Tchad, a daily news bulletin in French, primarily covers Chadian and African events. It is possible to purchase some French newspapers in local bookstores or at some hotels. *Al Watan*, a government publication featuring political and socioeconomic information about Chad, is available in French and Arabic. Many resident Americans subscribe to the *International Herald Tribune* from Paris and the European airmail editions of *Time* or *Newsweek*. All are expensive.

Health

A general hospital in N'Djamena is staffed by Chadian and foreign doctors. However, the standard of care in the hospital is low: poor funding, training, and lack of equipment and facilities contribute to levels of care well below Western standards. An emergency office located next to the hospital is staffed 24 hours daily by doctors. A list of doctors in N'Djamena includes those practicing in general medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, ophthalmology, and dentistry. Also, a Peace Corps doctor stationed in Niamey, Niger makes quarterly visits and will see patients by appointment when in N'Djamena. A French dentist also has an office in the city. Local pharmacies stock mainly French medicines at high prices, and the selection is limited. Those planning to stay in N'Djamena should have an ample supply of household remedies and first-aid items.

Chad is a reasonably healthy place to live in comparison with coastal African countries and, if a few basic precautions are taken, it is not difficult to stay well. Up-to-date immunizations, cleanliness, insect control, prompt attention to scrapes and cuts, balanced diet, increased

consumption of liquids, adequate rest, and avoidance of overexertion in the extreme heat are wise precautions.

Apart from sporadic outbreaks of cholera, only two diseases have occurred in epidemic proportions in the last few years—measles and meningitis. Cholera, while always serious, is less of a threat to those living near adequate medical facilities.

No sewage treatment plant exists, but houses occupied by Europeans and Americans have septic tanks. Garbage can be deposited in large metal containers positioned throughout the city. These containers are sometimes missing or not very visible. Regrettably, much of the population finds it easier to use the ditches along the side of the street.

N'Djamena draws its water supply from three enormous wells that have never failed the city, even during the drought, although the pressure is sometimes very low. Water is not potable without boiling and filtering. This includes water used for ice cubes and the preparation of food. Bottled water may be purchased locally, but is rather expensive.

Animals are slaughtered under primitive, although supervised, conditions. Meat is sold at the local central market, where hygiene is poor. Therefore, all meat should be cooked thoroughly. Raw fruits and vegetables, especially cabbage and lettuce, are particularly difficult to free from contamination. Fruits and vegetables should be soaked in a bleach solution for roughly twenty minutes before eating. Avoid salads in restaurants.

Infections of the gastro-intestinal tract are the most common ailments found here. Eye diseases, leprosy, malaria, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, dysentery, tropical ulcers, pneumonia, bilharzia, influenza, measles, cholera, polio, hepatitis, and fungal infection are suffered in varying degrees by the local popu-

lace. Aside from a few cases of stomach ailments, Americans here generally have been spared these diseases because of adequate hygiene measures. Occasional light attacks of malaria and diarrhea, head colds, and sore throats (caused by dustborne germs and aggravated by the extreme dryness) may occur.

Malaria is another prevalent disease that should not affect foreigners if suppressants are taken regularly. Prophylaxis should be started two weeks before arrival in Chad and continue for four weeks after departure.

Gamma globulin shots are given at four to five-month intervals to guard against hepatitis.

Clothing and Services

Because of the strength of the equatorial sun and the local laundry methods, the life span of clothing is short in Chad. Washable fabrics are essential, as no dry cleaning is available. Enough lightweight clothing to last the length of a stay should be in every wardrobe. Cottons and cotton blends are recommended for coolness. Both men and women should bring lightweight sweaters for the cooler, dry season and umbrellas for the rainy season. Hats are also useful, especially if one is sensitive to the sun. Bring a good supply of socks, underwear, shoes, and sandals. Good shoes are hard to find in N'Djamena and the gravelly, dusty streets can cause rapid deterioration.

For men, safari suits, short-sleeved sport shirts and slacks, and similar dress is suitable for both the office and social events. However, business suits are needed in some instances. Women wear smart, casual clothes. Stockings are seldom worn.

Children's clothing should also be washable and lightweight but, occasionally, warmer clothing is useful, depending on travel. Some lightweight sweaters should be on hand

for the cooler, dry season. Clothing styles for children are generally very casual. However, older children should have dressier outfits for school and special occasions.

Few items are available locally, and it is necessary to keep a good supply of household and toilet articles, home medicines, writing materials and greeting cards, insect repellent, and the like. An adequate choice of basic drugs imported from Europe can be found in several pharmacies around town. Also, a small "perfumerie" in N'Djamena sells expensive perfumes and cosmetics. It is recommended that one have a flashlight and candles in case of power failure.

Basic hand-tailored clothing such as safari suits, shirts, and African dresses, are available in N'Djamena. Dry cleaning and commercial laundry services are not available. Three hairdressers are located in N'Djamena. Services offered include men's and women's haircuts, shampoo, set, and manicure. Rudimentary shoe repair is also available.

Local beef, pork, and mutton are relatively good, somewhat expensive, and available in ample supply. Some meats are currently imported into N'Djamena. Only French and European-style cuts are offered. Local chickens tend to be small and somewhat tough if bought at the market. A farm operating from a small village near N'Djamena offers better quality poultry. Large Nile perch, known locally as "capitaine," and other high-quality freshwater fish from the Chari River are available in season but are somewhat expensive. Two of the food stores sell imported pates, salami, sausages, frozen fish, and shellfish, and a good selection of imported French cheeses, butter, ice cream, and a few other frozen foods. All are expensive. Eggs can be bought in some of the food stores.

The food stores in N'Djamena (two general food stores and two mini supermarkets) offer an adequate range of merchandise imported from Europe (mostly France), Cameroon, and Nigeria. In addition to

meats and frozen foods, one can find milk, yogurt, canned fruit drinks, canned vegetables, jams, pasta, coffee, tea, cookies, candies, chocolate, potato chips, and other items. All are expensive.

The “supermarkets” and one of the general stores offer a small selection of wine and liquor, as do several specialty shops. Gala beer, brewed in southern Chad, is outstanding. It is sold by the case (12 one-liter bottles) at several places in N'Djamena that also sell a selection of soft drinks: bottled Coke, Sprite, Fanta Orange, soda water, and tonic.

A selection of locally grown vegetables, such as lettuce, tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, carrots, green beans, squash, zucchini, onions, and radishes, is available. Pineapples, melons, grapefruit, oranges, mangoes, papayas, avocados, lemons, limes, and bananas are sold in season. The “supermarkets” offer a very limited quantity of expensive imported vegetables (lettuce, artichokes, tomatoes) and fruits (apples, tangerines, pears, strawberries, and grapes).

Bread, including French “baguettes” is sold fresh several times during the day in little kiosks or stalls at street corners all over N'Djamena. A pastry shop offers crescent rolls, apple turnovers, raisin buns, and French-style pies and cakes. Some American and foreign brands of cigarettes are available from street vendors.

Domestic Help

Good servants, particularly cooks, are hard to find. Usually they are willing but untrained, and must be carefully supervised to insure that hygienic measures are followed; they are not accustomed to American standards of cleanliness. Most domestics are honest but, naturally, should not be unduly tempted.

Houseboys and laundry boys are available for hire. Nannies can be found. Gardeners can be hired part-time. A family will probably need a cook and a houseboy.

Servants may work eight hours daily, six days a week. Food and lodging are not provided, but most expatriate houses have shower and toilet facilities for employees. Generally, servants speak basic French, although a few English-speaking Nigerians may be found. Wages are paid bimonthly. The employer must buy accident insurance and contribute to a social security-type fund; conditions of domestic employment are regulated by a labor code. All servants should be given a medical examination upon first employment and at regular intervals thereafter.

made at the nearest Chadian embassy or consulate.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Chad are urged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Chad immediately upon arrival. The Embassy can provide updated information on travel and security in Chad, and strongly recommends that travelers contact the Embassy prior to travel outside N'Djamena. The U.S. Embassy is located in N'Djamena on Avenue Felix Eboue; mailing address is B.P. 413; telephone (235) 51-62-11, 51-70-09, 51-77-59, 51-90-52, 51-92-18 and 51-92-33, fax (235) 51-56-54.

Pets may be brought into Chad if accompanied by a veterinarian's health certificate and proof of anti-rabies vaccination dated at least one month before arrival. Quarantine is not imposed. Bring adequate supplies of such things as kitty litter, flea collars, treats, etc., for the animal's health and contentment.

Firearms can be legally imported after they have been registered and a *permis de port d'armes* has been issued. Hunting licenses may be obtained for small or big game hunting. The fees vary depending on the type and size of the animal.

A Catholic Mass is held every Sunday morning at the Cathedral. Saturday evening Mass is held there every two weeks. The Catholic Mission in the Kabalai neighborhood celebrates Mass Saturday evenings in the Mission House and Sunday mornings in the large church. In the Chagoua neighborhood, an outdoor service is celebrated on Sunday mornings. Services are in French, but a Mass in English is said once each month at the Sacred Heart School.

The Assemblée Chretienne and the Foyer Fraternal both offer Protestant services on Sunday mornings in French. The Mennonite Central Committee offers Bible study to the English-speaking one evening a week. Eglise Evangelique has services on Sunday in local dialects, depending on the week.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1 New Year's Day
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- Apr. 13 National Day
- May 1 Labor Day
- May 25 Africa Day
- Aug.11 Independence Day
- Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
- Nov. 28 Proclamation of the Republic
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Id al-Adah*
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- Mawlid an Nabi*

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The only air connection to Chad from the United States is via Paris on Air Afrique.

A valid passport and visa are required, as is evidence of a yellow fever vaccination. Visitors must check in with the National Police and obtain a registration stamp within 72 hours of arrival. Further entry information may be obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Chad, 2002 R St. N.W., Washington D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 462-4009. Overseas, inquiries should be

Members of the Baha'i community hold weekly prayer meetings in French in the Baha'i Center. Muslim services are held in the Grand Mosque and other local mosques. There are no Jewish religious facilities.

The time in Chad is Greenwich Mean Time plus one.

The official currency unit is the *Communauté Financière Africaine franc*, called and written *CFA franc*. It is issued by the Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale, and used interchangeably by the former French Equatorial African countries, as well as by Cameroon. Former French West African countries (except Guinea) use the *franc*

CFA of a different issue, but of the same value.

Chad uses the metric system of weights and measures.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Azevedo, Mario, ed. *Cameroon & Chad in Historical & Contemporary Settings*. African Studies, vol. 10. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989.

Chad. Let's Visit Places & Peoples of the World Series. New York: Chelsea House, 1989.

Collelo, Thomas, ed. *Chad: A Country Study*. 2nd ed. Area Handbook Series. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990.

Decalo, Samuel. *Historical Dictionary of Chad*. 2nd ed. African Historical Dictionary Series, no. 13. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987.

Kelley, Michael P. *State in Disarray: Conditions of Chad's Survival*. Special Studies on Africa. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986.

Wright, John L. *Libya, Chad & the Central Sahara*. Savage, MD: Barnes & Noble Bks.-Imports, 1989.

THE COMOROS

Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros

Major City:
Moroni

Other City:
Mutsamudu

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Islamic Republic of the **COMOROS** is one of the world's poorest nations. Comprised of four islands, the country is burdened with a poor transportation network, a young and rapidly increasing population, and few natural resources. The Comoran labor force is poorly educated, resulting in a low level of economic activity, high unemployment, and a heavy dependence on foreign grants and technical assistance.

In November 1975, the Comoros became the 143d member of the United Nations. The country is a member of the Organization of African Unity, the European Development Fund, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the African Development Bank.

MAJOR CITY

Moroni

Moroni, the capital of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, is on the western side of Grande Comore island. In 2000, Moroni's estimated population was 36,000. The central part of Moroni consists

of the old town, in which construction was started about 500 years ago. The buildings are of volcanic rock, and the old town, still vibrant, reminds one of the "casbahs" of northern Africa.

Moroni was declared the capital of the Comoros in 1975. Despite extensive residential construction in recent years, Moroni remains a small, slow-paced capital beautifully situated between Mt. Kartala and the ocean. The city has several small industries, most of which manufacture soft drinks, processed and distilled oils, metal and wood products, or cement. Moroni also serves as the Comoros' main port from which vanilla, coffee, and cacao are exported. An airport, Iconi International Airport, is located in southern Moroni.

Schools for Foreigners

American children can either attend the Franco-Comorien school in Moroni, go away to boarding school, or follow a home-study course. The Franco-Comorien school operates under the auspices of the French Government. All classes are in French and a French-style curriculum is followed. The school accepts children between the ages of five and 17.

Recreation

Water sports and tennis predominate. The Comoros offer wonderful opportunities for snorkeling and scuba diving. Lessons in scuba diving and international certification are available. Swimming is safe for children at most accessible sandy beaches. Tennis is available at the French tennis club, which has five courts that are well-maintained. Because of the rocky terrain, facilities for badminton and croquet are not readily available. Organized sports opportunities such as soccer and basketball are limited. Deep-sea fishing is available.

Photographers, hikers, fishermen, and those interested in water sports will enjoy the Comoros' topography. The lushness and variety of tropical vegetation, the undeveloped nature of the interior of Grand Comore, and the steep slopes of Mt. Kartala combine to please hikers, campers, and photographers. Since many Comorans are uncomfortable being photographed, be sure to ask permission before proceeding. Photography at government installations, including port and airport facilities, is forbidden.

Travel to the other islands is possible by charter boat or charter aircraft and commercial flights. Each of the islands has a different ambience, and each has a comfortable

small hotel for pleasant weekend stays. Air travel, however, is expensive, and boats must be chartered well in advance of the planned holiday.

The geographic location of the Comoros makes possible trips to Kenya, South Africa, Madagascar, and Mauritius, all of which are easily reached by air. Although such trips are costly, the variety of activities and shopping facilities available provide a pleasant break from routine.

Entertainment

Entertainment opportunities in Moroni are very limited. The local cinema shows mostly Indian films, with French films shown on occasion. A program of cultural offerings, including films, is available at the Alliance Franco-Comoriane. The Belgian Consulate has a library whose extensive collection of comic books is appreciated by children.

Each of the three small hotels in Moroni has a restaurant serving French food. In addition, some good Comoran restaurants and one Indian restaurant are available. Most entertaining is done in private homes, usually in the form of dinners, bridge, or cocktails. Because the American expatriate community is small, all entertaining involves frequent association with expatriate and Comoran nationals. In order to communicate effectively, knowledge of French is essential. Because of religious customs, it is unwise to serve any pork products to Comorans.

OTHER CITY

MUTSAMUDU is the capital and port of Anjouan island (also called Ndzunai). The island features beautiful forests, rivers and waterfalls, coral reefs and white sandy beaches, and fields of plants such as ylang-ylang, jasmine, cassis, basilic, palmarosa and orange flower, all used for exotic essential oils. The island is also home to the rare king size bat

and the Living Stone's flying fox, as well as occasional whales in the bay.

Mutsamudu is built in 17th century Swahili-Shirazi style. The houses have carved doors, and the twisting, mazelike alleyways and lanes lead around shops, mosques and a citadel. Worthy of note is the Mosquée du Vendredi, the Sultan's palace. Within walking distance of the city is the Dziancoundré Waterfall.

While you're on the island, you will want to visit Domoni as well. This ancient capital contains the Hari ya Moudji, or old town, which includes the old palaces built by the sultans of the 16th to 18th centuries. Some of the palaces are still occupied by descendants of the sultans.

Mutsamudu is about 102 miles from Moroni and can be reached by plane or by boat.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Comoros are a group of four separate islands. They are located in the Indian Ocean, roughly 416 miles southeast of Tanzania and 200 miles northwest of Madagascar. Three of the islands, Njazidja, Nzwani and Mwali, form the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros. The fourth island, Mayotte, is governed separately by the French. Together, the four islands comprise an area of approximately 982 square miles.

All of the Comoro islands are volcanic in origin. Njazidja, the largest island, has an area of 443 square miles and has an active volcano at Mt. Kartala. Approximately 37 miles south of Njazidja lies the smallest island, Mwali. It is only 83 square miles wide and is covered with low hills and fertile valleys. The island of Nzwani is located 40 miles east of Mwali. It has an area of 164 square miles. Mt. Nyingui is

its highest point. The island of Mayotte is situated 124 miles southwest of Njazidja. It is surrounded by a large coral reef which forms a well-protected lagoon around the island. Mayotte has an area of approximately 144 square miles and is covered with deep ravines and volcanic peaks.

The Comoros exhibit a tropical climate. Coastal areas are extremely hot and humid, although interior regions of the islands are somewhat cooler. The rainy season occurs from November to April. Severe cyclones are possible during this period. May through October is generally dry and pleasant. Average annual rainfall in the Comoros is 113 inches.

Population

In 2000 the four Comoro islands had a combined population of 580,000. Roughly 286,000 people reside on Njazidja. Nzwani, the second largest island, had approximately 220,000 people. Mayotte has a population of about 100,000, while Mwali has roughly 28,000 inhabitants. Comorans are a mixture of Malagasy, Arab, Malay and African peoples. They speak Shaafi Islam, which is a dialect of Swahili. French, Arabic and Malagasy are also spoken. Very few residents speak English.

Islam is the predominant religion. Approximately 98 percent of the population are Sunni Muslims. A very small number of Comorans (2%) practice Roman Catholicism. The majority of Catholics live on Mayotte.

Estimated life expectancy at birth in 2001 was 58 years for males, and 63 years for females.

History

Over the centuries, the Comoros have been inhabited by various racial groups. Peoples of Malayo-



View of Grand Comore, Comoros Islands

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

Polynesian origin settled in the islands during the 6th century A.D. Between the 10th and 15th centuries, the Comoros became home to the Shirazis. The Shirazis were Arabs who fled religious persecution in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf regions. They divided the islands into twelve regions, each governed by a sultan, and introduced their Islamic faith.

In 1841, Sultan Sakalva Andriantsoulou sold the island of Mayotte to the French. Having established a foothold in Mayotte, the French sought to gain control of the other three islands. Between 1886 and 1909, the other three islands were captured and became French protectorates. In 1912, the Comoros were officially declared French colonies.

The French ruled the islands with an iron fist. Opposition political parties and a free press were not

allowed. The Comoran people voiced their displeasure by refusing to pay taxes, staging peasant revolts and occupying French-controlled farmland. All of these actions were crushed by French troops. The French granted the Comorans limited self-government in 1961. An elected chamber of deputies and a council of government was established. In 1968, secondary school students organized a strike. It was brutally crushed by French troops and police. Many students were killed or wounded. The Comoran people were enraged and staged massive demonstrations and revolts calling for an end to French rule. Seeking to quell the unrest, the French decided to allow the formation of political opposition parties. Six opposition parties were created. Prince Said Muhammad Jaffar led the Reassemblement Democratique du Peuple Comorien (RDPC) while a group of intellectuals and peasants formed the Parti Socialiste

Comorien (PASOCO). Other groups included the Union Democratique des Comores (UDC) led by Ahmed Abdallah, the Umma Mranda Party (UMMA) led by Ali Solih and Prince Said Ibrahim and the Parti pour l'Evolution des Comores (PEC). All five of these groups supported independence from France. The sixth party, the Mouvement Populaire Mahorais (MPM), advocated retaining strong ties with France and was led by Marcel Henry. Despite France's decision to allow the existence of opposition parties, the political situation in the Comoros remained volatile.

In 1972, the RDPC, PEC and the UDC formed a pro-independence alliance and pressured the French to grant Comoran independence. Residents on Njazidja, Nzwani and Mwali staunchly supported the alliance. General elections for a new council of government were held in December 1972. Candidates of the

RDPC, PEC and the UDC alliance captured 34 seats, while the pro-French MPM group claimed only five seats. On Mayotte, however, the election results were quite different. 80 percent of the vote was cast in favor of MPM candidates. Ahmed Abdallah, leader of the UDC, was elected President of the new council of government.

Shortly after the election, the council of government and French representatives met to discuss the possibilities for Comoran independence. After lengthy negotiations, an agreement was signed in Paris on July 15, 1973. This document stated that France would provide Comoran independence after a period of five years. Also, a referendum favoring independence would have to be passed on an island-by-island basis. This referendum was held in December 1974. The referendum passed by an overwhelming majority (94.6%) on Njazidja, Nzwani and Mwali. However, nearly 64 percent of the populace on Mayotte voted against the referendum. In June 1975, the French Parliament agreed to grant Comoran independence with the provision that a new constitution be drawn up that would be agreeable to all parties, including the citizens on Mayotte. Also, the French insisted that the constitution must be approved separately by each island before independence would be granted. Before this process could take place, the Comoran chamber of deputies approved a unilateral declaration of independence on July 6, 1975 and elected Ahmed Abdallah as president. Residents of Mayotte, fearful that they would be forcibly incorporated into this new state, petitioned the French for assistance. The French agreed to protect Mayotte and administer it as a French territory.

On August 3, 1976, nearly one month after becoming president of the Comoros, Abdallah was toppled from power by Ali Solih. Abdallah fled to Nzwani, but was arrested and eventually allowed to go into exile. Solih pursued a conciliatory approach toward Mayotte in the

hope that they would agree to become part of the new Comoran state. In November 1975, he sent a delegation to Mayotte to meet with MPM officials. The people of Mayotte greeted the delegation with hostile demonstrations and forced it to return home. On February 8, 1976, a referendum was held on Mayotte. Nearly 82 percent of the populace voted. 99 percent of the votes cast favored French administration of the island. In December 1976, Mayotte was officially declared a "territorial community" of France.

Throughout 1976, Ali Solih consolidated his control of the other three islands. The freely-elected Council of Deputies was abolished and replaced by a Revolutionary Council of State that was filled with loyal Solih supporters. All political opposition parties were banned. Anti-government politicians were terrorized or arrested by the army and youth factions known as the Revolutionary Youth. Solih also sought to radically alter Comoran traditions by encouraging the liberation of women and young people. His decree that women did not need to cover their faces with veils offended the sensibilities of many conservative Muslims. Also, the voting age was lowered to 14 so that young people could take part in the political process. Solih criticized Islam as a "false religion" and severely curtailed religious practice. Many foreign nations were displeased with Solih's regime and cut off economic aid, severely weakening the shaky Comoran economy. By 1978, Solih ruled the Comoros with an iron hand. However, his political repression and controversial social reforms made him extremely unpopular both at home and abroad.

On May 13, 1978, Ali Solih was overthrown in a coup led by a mercenary, Bob Denard. Solih was placed under house arrest and was gunned down after an alleged escape attempt. Ahmed Abdallah returned triumphantly from exile and was named President. The country's official name was changed

to the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros. Also, a new constitution was drawn up and ratified which stated that if one island decided to secede from the Federal Republic, it was free to do so without government interference. Abdallah also reinstated traditional Islamic principles in the islands and sought to end the Comoros international isolation. France resumed diplomatic relations and increased its level of economic aid. Presidential elections, with Ahmed Abdallah as the sole candidate, were held on October 22, 1978. Fifty of the mercenaries who helped topple Ali Solih were formed into an elite Presidential Guard. This Guard, led by Bob Denard, served to protect Abdallah and to intimidate his political rivals.

Abdallah actively pursued the integration of Mayotte with the Comoros. French President Francois Mitterrand and President Abdallah met in October 1981 to discuss this issue. Abdallah was confident that Mitterrand would be sympathetic to the integration of Mayotte, since Mitterrand vigorously opposed the detachment of the island with the rest of the archipelago in 1975. However, the meeting ended without any formal agreement on the issue. Mitterrand only promised that he would review Mayotte's status every five years.

In December 1983, a plot by British mercenaries to overthrow the Comoran government was discovered. The plan called for the removal of President Abdallah in favor of a former Comoran diplomat, Said Ali Kemal. Kemal wanted to establish a government that would be on friendly terms with the West in order to gain more economic assistance for the Comoros. The plan was foiled, however, when the mercenary leaders were arrested in Australia.

A presidential election was held in September 1984 with Abdallah serving as the only candidate. According to the government, 99.4 percent of the voters were in favor of Abdallah and he was granted

another six-year term. In January 1985, he further consolidated his power by amending the constitution and abolishing the office of prime minister. As a result, all important governmental powers were in Abdallah's control.

In March 1985, a group of Presidential Guardsmen tried to overthrow Abdallah while he was on a state visit to France. The coup attempt failed. Abdallah unleashed a wave of political repression and arrests. Eventually, 17 people were sentenced to life in prison at hard labor while 50 others received shorter prison sentences for their part in the coup attempt. However, by late 1985, some of the prisoners were granted presidential pardons and released.

Another coup attempt by disgruntled members of the Presidential Guard was made in November 1987 while Abdallah was out of the country. This coup was smashed by Bob Denard and other mercenaries. On November 27, 1989, President Abdallah was assassinated by his Presidential Guard on the orders of Bob Denard. Although Denard denied any involvement in Abdallah's assassination, he voluntarily left the islands for exile in South Africa. Said Mohamed Djohar, the president of the Comoran supreme court, took the post of interim president until the holding of free elections.

Free elections were held on March 11, 1990 between Djohar and Mohamed Taki Abdulkarim. Djohar won a majority of the votes and began serving a six-year term as the Comoros' first democratically elected president. In June 1990, the Comoros and the United States established formal diplomatic relations.

Djohar was ousted by French mercenaries in a brief coup in 1995, and an interim government ruled until the March 1996 elections, in which Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim was chosen as president. An interim government of President Tajiddine Ben Said Massoude which had

assumed power in November 1998 upon the death of President Mohamed Taki Abdulkarim, was overthrown in a bloodless coup on April 30, 1999 headed by military chief Colonel Azali Assoumani.

Colonel Azali claimed a one-year presidential term at the time of the coup. In May 1999, Azali decreed a constitution that gave him both executive and legislative powers. In December 2000, Azali named a new civilian prime minister, and formed a new civilian cabinet. When Azali first took power he also pledged to step down in April 2000 and relinquish control to a democratically elected president, a pledge which he has yet to fulfill.

In 1997, the islands of Nzwani and Mwali declared their independence from Comoros. Colonel Azali pledged to resolve the secessionist crisis. In August 2000, an accord was signed that would reunite the islands. A subsequent agreement, signed in February 2001, provided for a commission composed of representatives from all three islands to develop a new constitution.

Government

On October 1, 1978, a new constitution was approved that united the islands of Njazidja, Nzwani and Mwali into one Federal Islamic Republic. Mayotte is currently governed by France, although it has the option of joining the Federal Islamic Republic at a later date.

The Comoran government is headed by the President of the Republic. The president is elected by the citizens to a six-year term and cannot serve more than three consecutive terms. In 1984, the constitution was amended so that President Abdallah could serve an unlimited number of terms. However, since his assassination, this amendment was repealed.

Since Colonel Azali seized power and declared a constitution that granted him executive and legislative powers, democratic institutions have been suspended in the Comoros.

Prior to the coup, however, legislative authority was held by the 43-member Federal Assembly. The Federal Assembly was dissolved following the coup of April 30, 1999. Representatives to the Federal Assembly were elected for five-year terms. The Assembly met for no more than 45 days at a time, but was allowed to convene more often during national emergencies.

A new constitution was adopted in June 1992, providing for a 15-member Senate to be selected by an electoral college for terms of six years.

The flag of the Comoros consists of a white crescent moon encircling inwardly four white stars on a green field. The four stars represent the islands of Njazidja, Nzwani, Mwali and Mayotte. Green is the traditional color of Islam.

On Mayotte, the flag of France is used.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is officially compulsory for Comoran children ages seven-15 years of age. Primary education begins at age six and lasts for six years. At 12 years of age, a student begins secondary school for an additional seven years. Comorans must travel abroad to receive a college education.

Most teachers in the Comoros are from foreign countries, particularly Tunisia, Senegal and Belgium. Despite improvements, the literacy rate of the Comoros in 1995 was only about 57 percent. Fewer than half of all school-age children are enrolled in primary school.

The educational system on Mayotte receives teachers and financial assistance from France.

Commerce and Industry

The Comoros is one of the world's poorest and least-developed coun-

tries. Agriculture is the main occupation of 80 percent of the population. Sweet potatoes, cassava, coconuts and bananas are the main food crops.

Much of the choice farmland is in the hands of foreign-owned companies, with only about 40 percent of the land cultivated by Comoran farmers. Most of the soil is of poor quality, and many Comorans must resort to subsistence farming. The majority of the country's food requirements must be imported. Rice, one of the main staples, accounts for 90 percent of Comoran imports. In addition to rice, the Comoros import large amounts of petroleum products, cement and vehicles.

The Comoros are the world's largest producer of *ylang-ylang*, which is used to make perfumes. Also, the Comoros is the second largest producer of vanilla in the world. *Ylang-ylang* and vanilla are the Comoros primary cash exports. Small amounts of cloves, coffee and copra are also important exports.

The islands have a wealth of fishing resources, particularly tuna. However, most of these resources remain unexploited because the Comoros lack a viable fishing fleet.

The Comoran industrial sector is extremely small. Much of the industrial activity is limited to vanilla processing and the production of woodworks, plastics and soft drinks.

The unit of currency is the Comoran franc (KMF).

Like its Comoran counterparts, Mayotte must import large quantities of food. The territory's survival is heavily dependent on financial assistance from France. *Ylang-ylang* and vanilla are Mayotte's primary exports. The great majority of Mayotte's exports go to France. Building materials, rice, clothing, flour and transportation equipment are imported, with France serving as the major supplier.

The *French franc* is Mayotte's unit of currency.

Transportation

The roadway system in the Comoros is extremely underdeveloped. Although the islands of Njazidja and Nzwani have some paved roads, most of the roads are extremely rugged. During the rainy season, many of the islands' roads are virtually impassable. Also, many villages in the Comoros are not linked to the main cities by suitable roads. Travel between villages and cities can be extremely hazardous. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is highly recommended, especially on Mwali. Most of the roads on this island are unpaved and treacherous.

The national airline of the Comoros is Air Comores. Air Comores offers international service twice-weekly to Madagascar, Tanzania and Kenya. Domestic flights between Moroni and the island of Nzwani are offered on a daily basis. Flights between Moroni and Mwali offered 5 times per week. The international airport for the Comoros is located near Moroni. Each of the other islands has a small airfield.

Most ports in the Comoros are unable to accommodate large ocean-going vessels. Therefore, most large vessels are forced to anchor off the coast of Moroni, Mutsamudu, and Fomboni and be unloaded by smaller cargo ships. During the rainy season, heavy seas make this unloading process extremely hazardous. Consequently, most ships do not dock near the Comoros from November to April.

Mayotte has very few paved roads. Most are composed of rugged tracks that become washed out during the rainy season. There is a small airport near the city of Dzaoudzi. Commercial flights to the Comoros are offered twice-weekly while service to the island of Reunion is offered four-times weekly.

Communications

The islands' main radio station is the government-owned Radio-Comoros. Domestic broadcasts are available in Comoran and French. Foreign broadcasts are available on shortwave frequencies in French, Swahili and Arabic. The country's first independent radio station, Radio Tropiques FM, was closed down in April 1991 after one week of broadcasting. There is no television station in the Comoros.

Two weekly newspapers are available. The first is a government owned publication, *Al Watwany*. The other, *L'Archipel*, is an independent newspaper. The government news agency, Agence Comoros Presse (ACP) is located in Moroni.

Long-distance telephone and telegraph services are available in Moroni, although the quality of transmissions are often poor.

The main radio station on Mayotte is the Societe Nationale de Radio-Television Francaise d'Outre-mer (RFO)-Mayotte. It is located in Dzaoudzi and offers daily broadcasts in Mahorian and French. A television service was begun in 1986.

Le Journal de Mayotte is the island's main newspaper. It is a weekly publication and has a circulation of 12,000.

Clothing and Services

Clothing styles in Moroni are very casual. For men, office and casual wear consists of sports shirts and slacks. Casual cotton dresses and skirts with sandals are worn during the day by women. Sundresses and pants are acceptable for women, although short skirts are not appropriate. Slacks and shorts are acceptable for wear around the house, to the beach, and for other outdoor activities. Stockings are rarely worn. Shoes wear out quickly, and high heels are dangerous because of rocky terrain. Children's clothing should be casual and made of cot-

ton. Short pants and colored short-sleeved shirts for boys and sleeveless shifts, shorts, and slacks for girls are the most common apparel. Children wear leather or composition sandals or tennis shoes to school.

Swimsuits and beachwear are essential for all members of the family, since recreation focuses on water sports. Bikinis are acceptable. Sunbathers should bring beach hats and clothing for protection from the sun. Umbrellas are essential during the rainy season. For trips into mountainous regions, slacks and dungarees, heavy sweaters, sturdy shoes, and a rain hat are necessary.

Dressmakers and tailors are available in Moroni. However, clothes are often poorly made and very expensive. Locally available fabrics are limited and most clothing is made from synthetic fibers, which are too hot for the Comoran climate. Cobblers make only simple repairs using recycled materials. The results are often unsatisfactory. A beauty shop is available, but patrons should supply their own beauty and hair care needs.

Availability of fresh foods depends upon the season and the amounts brought in from South Africa by local merchants. Few vegetables are available, although tropical fruits are plentiful in season. Most foods, except fish, are imported and shortages of essential commodities (rice, flour, sugar, salt, cooking oil) are common. No fresh meat is available. Meats available are frozen, or have been frozen and then thawed. No pork is available for purchase, but sheep, lamb, chicken, and beef are found. All meat is expensive. Fresh fish and lobster are available and are less expensive.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport and onward/return ticket are required. A three-week entry visa, which may be extended, may be obtained upon arrival at the airport. Travelers should obtain the latest details from the Mission of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, 420 East 50th Street, New York, NY 10022; telephone (212) 972-8010, fax (212) 983-4712.

The United States has no embassy in Comoros, but has a liaison representative in Moroni, who can be contacted at Quartier Oasis, POB 720, Moroni, telephone (269) 73-00-11, fax (269) 73-00-12. U.S. citizens in Comoros are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Port Louis, Mauritius. Registration information and forms are collected at the liaison office in Moroni and forwarded to the U.S. Embassy, Consular Section, Rogers house, fourth floor, John F. Kennedy Street, Port Louis, Mauritius; telephone numbers (230) 202-4400 and 208-2347; fax (230) 202-4401 and 208-9534. The U.S. Embassy home page is located at <http://www.usembassy-mauritius.mu>; e-mail: usembass@intnet.mu.

There are limited first-class hotel accommodations on Njazidja, Nzwani and Mayotte. It is recommended that reservations be made in advance.

Roman Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Moslem denominations maintain places of worship. All services are in French. Catholic religion classes in French are available for children.

Diligent water purification and food preparation methods must be exercised when visiting the Comoros. Immunizations for polio and

typhoid are recommended. Visitors are advised to take anti-malaria pills because the risk of infection exists throughout the country.

The tourism industry in the Comoros is vastly underdeveloped. Fewer than 2,000 tourists visit the islands every year. The primary tourist attractions include mountain climbing, scuba diving and fishing. It is recommended that tourists seek advice and exercise caution when using beaches.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

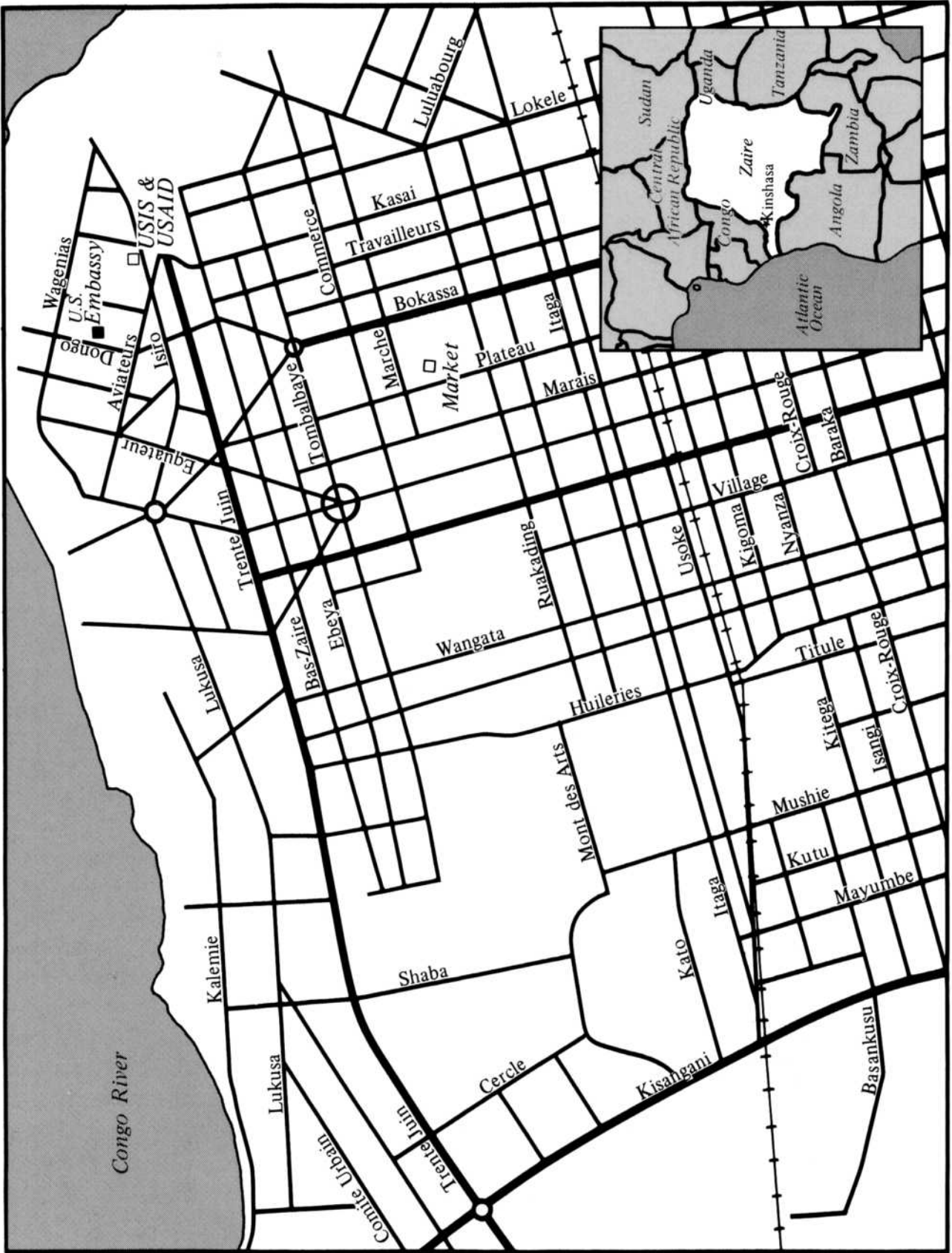
- Jan 1 New Year's Day
- Mar. 8. 27th Djoumadi II
- Mar. 18. Anniversary of Death of Said (Mohammed Cheikh)
- May 1. Labor Day
- May 13. Comoran Liberation Day
- July 6. National Day
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- Mawlid an Nabi*

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Gould, Dennis. *Comores (Comoro Islands)*. Let's Visit Places and Peoples of the World Series. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.
- Willox, Robert. *Madagascar & the Comoros: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1989.



Kinshasa, Congo

CONGO

Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire)

Major Cities:

Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Bukavu,

Other Cities:

Boma, Kananga, Kisangani, Kolwezi, Mbandaka, Mbuji-Mayi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1996. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was known as Zaire from 1971 until 1997, when its name was changed back to the one it had during 1960–70. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC), which occupies the greater part of the Congo River basin, is a giant nation, one-third the size of the United States. It is a land of great contrasts—an Africa in miniature. It is, at once, a country of wild animals, active volcanoes, and thick rain forests, and one also of villages, small towns, and a capital city that is home to some 4–5 million people. Western culture coexists here with African tradition. Despite its tremendous assets and potential, DRC remains a country where economic hardship,

political turmoil, civil unrest, and rampant inflation abound.

DRC has been known as Zaire (until 1997), and before that the Belgian Congo, but its earlier history goes back many centuries to the powerful Kongo Kingdom of the south-central part of the African continent. It was dominated by the Portuguese for about 400 years and, late in the 19th century, came under the rule of King Leopold II of Belgium. The nation that is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo became a Belgian colony in 1908, and achieved its independence in June 1960.

MAJOR CITY

Kinshasa

Kinshasa (formerly Léopoldville) is a city of contrasts and resembles two cities coexisting under one name. The “ville” is comprised of modern (though sadly neglected) office buildings, apartment high-rises, and an area of run-down but attractive formerly residential sections. The other is the African “cites” where most of the city's inhabitants live. In some parts of the cites, you find some modern buildings and shops; most cites, however, are like large contiguous

villages, crowded, often unlighted, with dirt roads and concrete huts, bustling with life and activity.

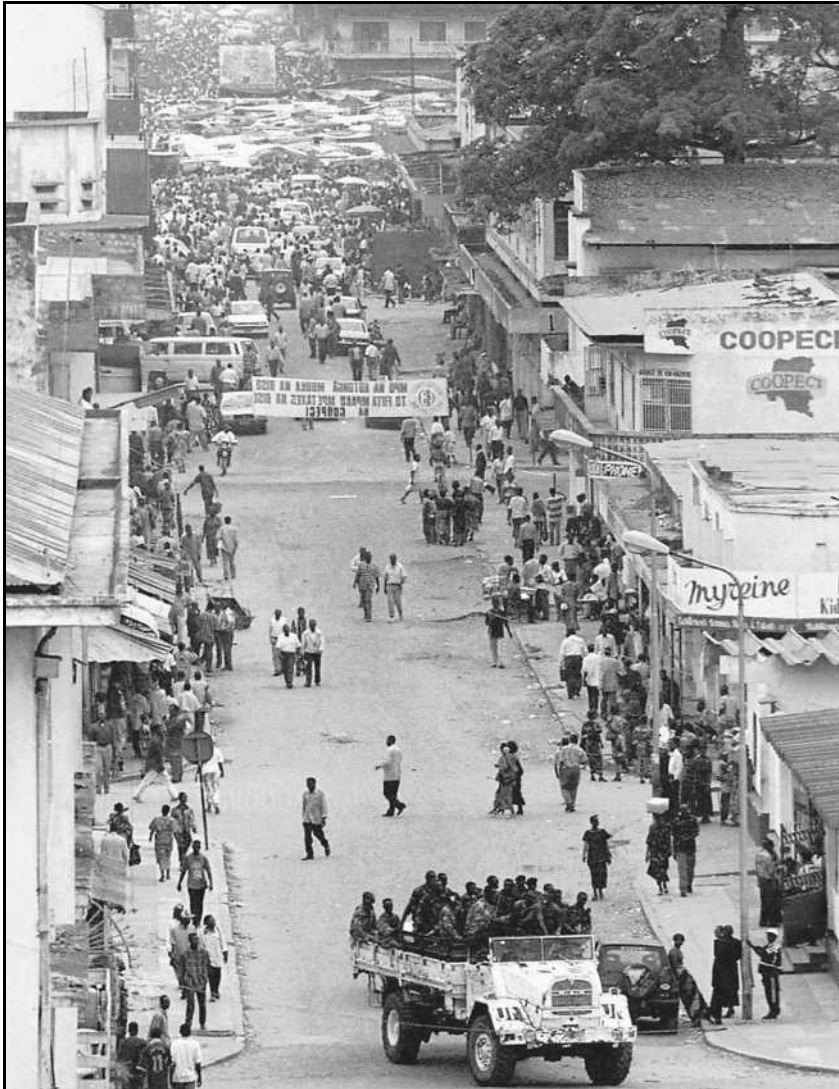
Food

Local grocery stores carry a variety of items. Lunch meats, cheeses, meats, produce, and dairy items are generally available. Purchasing six items may require a trip to more than one store. A selection of canned goods, packaged goods, and some household items is available. Also prices can fluctuate almost daily due to the unstable exchange rate and inflation. Local bread from bakeries is of excellent quality. Some grocery stores carry a varied seasonal supply of vegetables and fresh fruits, such as avocados, eggplant, bananas, pineapples, papayas, and mangoes.

Items such as cereals, chocolate chips, canned milk, coffee, powdered milk, peanut butter, jams, jellies, canned vegetables, and paper cups are not only expensive on the local market, but are often unavailable.

Local Dining

Kinshasa has several restaurants. Though they are all expensive, they offer a variety of cuisines including Chinese, Italian, French, and continental. There are also several nice restaurants that serve a good lunch. Several bakeries offer excellent



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Street in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

fresh bread, baguettes, French pastries, etc.

Clothing

Kinshasa's climate is warm and typically tropical, with a dry and rainy season. During the dry season, when the weather is cooler, long-sleeved clothing is sometimes needed. Also a sweater or wrap is convenient in air-conditioned homes, offices, and public buildings.

Dress in Kinshasa is generally casual. Most of the time social functions are either jacket and tie or more casual.

There is very little local clothing available, although fabric is plenti-

ful; but there are local tailors and seamstresses who are good at copying a garment directly or from a photograph and are reasonable in cost. The brightly patterned African fabric can be used to create attractive clothing for men, women and children.

During the rainy season, an umbrella and light raincoat are very useful. Bring appropriate gear for your favorite sports such as tennis or golf. There is one good 18-hole golf course centrally located in Gombe with membership easy to obtain but somewhat expensive.

Men generally wear lightweight suits to the office and dark business

suits for evening occasions. Because of security/safety reasons, night life consists generally of domestic entertaining (dinners, cocktails, video showings, etc., in private homes). Many men wear casual American sport shirts or African-style shirts made from cotton cloth manufactured in DRC.

Women wear summer dresses and slacks during the day. Long and short dresses, often made from African cotton prints, long skirts and blouses, cocktail dresses or dressy slacks outfits are worn to evening functions. Sandals, comfortable walking shoes, and canvas sport shoes are all useful. Also bring sweaters, umbrellas, and windbreakers. A sunhat is useful.

Fabric and sewing supplies are available, but the selection is scanty and prices are not in line.

Children's clothing should be summer weight and washable. Cottons and cotton blends are recommended. Girls usually wear jeans, shorts, and long- and short-sleeved shirts. Boys wear shorts, jeans, cutoffs and T-shirts. Don't forget raincoats.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Non-American brand cosmetics and toiletries are generally available in Kinshasa, but are expensive.

Local cigarette brands are milder than most European brands.

Basic Services: Tailoring, dressmaking, and beauty services are available. Prices range from reasonable to expensive. Dry cleaning service is available as well as other services such as catering, eyeglass repair, printing, and watch repair. Veterinarians are available. Most of the service provided is good, but rates are much higher than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Protestant, Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, Kimbanguist, Greek Orthodox,

and Muslim services are held in Kinshasa.

There is an International Catholic Church where the Parish Priest speaks English, and Mass is said in English frequently by a native English speaker. Instruction and preparation for the sacraments can be arranged.

The International Interdenominational church is in Gombe. Ministers from the local missionary community, some of them Americans, take turns holding the Sunday English services.

There is a synagogue in town and an active Jewish community.

Episcopal Holy Communion services are held the last Sunday of each month at the International Church. Lay Bible groups from the Anglican church meet in homes around the city on weekdays in the evenings.

St. Luke's Catholic Church has weekly Sunday Mass in English at 9:45 AM. When the congregation was larger, Catechism classes for children were held after mass. These were administered by the parents and, depending on the ages of the children attending St. Luke's, the activities included First Communion and Confession classes, Bible study classes, confirmation classes, and teenage religion classes. At present, a "Coffee Sunday" is held after mass the last Sunday of every month. St. Luke's also has a Lingala mass at 8:00 AM Sunday and French Mass Saturday and Sunday. Various other Catholic churches throughout the city also offer mass in French and Lingala.

The Jewish community of Kinshasa now numbers about 85 families and is becoming more active in the community due to normalized relations between Israel and DRC. Friday services are held at the Rabbi's residence on the Boulevard 30 Juin. The High Holidays are celebrated at the Hotel Intercontinental. A Jewish Center is used on Sunday for recreation and education. It has a sports

field and swimming pool and is the center of many activities. An active ladies group meets once a month, and Hebrew lessons and outings are frequent.

Education

Dependent Education: The American School of Kinshasa (TASOK) was established in 1961 to provide an American curriculum for grades 1-12. Student enrollment is approximately 125. Besides children from the official American community, there are children from American business representatives and American missionaries, and there are many from the general international community.

TASOK is located on Matadi Road and is comprised of a large, tropical, 42-acre fenced campus. Classes are small, thereby enabling students to receive individual attention. In the past, TASOK students who took college board exams have generally been accepted in the college of their choice.

Facilities include a complex of classrooms, an administration building and a well-stocked, up-to-date library. Recreation facilities include a full-length football and soccer field, two volleyball courts, and a student store/snack bar area. In addition, the physical education department has two locker rooms. Other facilities include staff housing, maintenance shop, American Community Library, elementary student store, and the Scout Hut.

The school does not have facilities or personnel to deal with students who have severe disabilities/handicaps. A Learning Resource Center contains library books, resource books and periodicals, plus audio-visual software.

The high school Learning Resource Center is an air-conditioned, fully carpeted facility that has books, reference materials, weekly and monthly periodicals and newspapers, a paperback collection for pleasure reading, and an audio-visual section.

The high school sports program includes varsity basketball, swimming, track and field, volleyball, soccer and softball. Intramural sports include basketball, volleyball, swimming and tennis. Drama club, band, newspaper, yearbook (the annual "TASOL", the title left over from the days when Kinshasa was Léopoldville, is a yearly project giving students the opportunity to write, copy, edit, and photograph), student council, national honor society, as well as activity programs which can range from chess to drama are offered. In the arts, ceramics, calligraphy and photography are offered. TASOK has acquired computers to introduce students to computer sciences. Activities after school and on weekends are numerous and varied, satisfying the interests of most students. TASOK occasionally holds evening adult workshops in subjects such as calligraphy, ceramics, and computer use.

The school's calendar is essentially the same as for U.S. schools except for a slightly earlier starting date.

Most of the TASOK faculty are Americans, recruited directly from the U.S. Some are local-hire spouses and dependents. New teaching staff is usually recruited in the U.S. during February and March. Dependents who are interested in either a teaching position or a teacher's aid position should contact the school as soon as possible. In the past, opportunities have arisen to substitute or tutor students on a private basis.

The school operates on the usual Monday through Friday school week.

The local public and religious schools are in French and based on Belgian school curriculum. The curriculum of the French schools (Cous Decartes) is comparable to the programs of the French "lycees" and runs 6 mornings a week. The Belgian system (Ecole Prince de Liege) teaches in French and Flemish, starting at age 6, and has elementary and secondary schools.

There are several excellent, privately owned, English-speaking nursery schools in Kinshasa:

- TASOK has a pre-K as well as Kindergarten. It takes children from age 4.
- Les Oisillons adheres to the Belgian system of education. It is for children 15 months to 6 years, taught in French, 6 mornings a week from 7 AM until noon;
- Le Club, another French-speaking kindergarten, accepts children 2-6 years old and runs from September to June, 7:15 AM to noon, 6 days a week;
- Tom Pouce is a nursery school for children ages 2-6, which teaches in French from September to June with 2 weeks for Christmas and spring break. It runs 7 AM to noon, 6 days a week;
- La Source, another French-speaking school, operates year round for children ages 2-5. Its curriculum is pseudo-Montessori style;
- Further Portuguese, Greek, and Italian schools plus several small correspondence-tutorial schools are operated for the diplomatic dependents of other countries.

Special Educational Opportunities

L'Ecole des Beaux Arts sometimes offers courses in various art forms including batik, drawing and painting. "La Source" offers arts and crafts afternoon sessions; activities include ceramics, basketry, puppet-making, cooking, etc.

Classes in yoga, martial arts, and general exercise classes are offered as well.

Sports

Various sports activities are available: tennis, golf, swimming, horseback riding, volleyball, basketball, jogging, softball, darts, etc. Some sporting equipment is available locally but cost is prohibitive.

The Intercontinental Hotel, located near the center of town, has a swimming pool/health club which you can join on a yearly membership basis, although it is expensive.

The Cercle Sportif du Kinshasa has a private 18-hole golf course with a mixture of "browns" (sand) and greens and reasonable fairways. Initial membership and annual dues are expensive.

A riding club is located in the suburbs. Neat, casual dress is worn, but English-style boots and hat are required. Instruction is available by a riding master.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Unfortunately, due to the decline of the infrastructure of DRC, it is generally not feasible to travel outside the city of Kinshasa. Roads are impossible to traverse without 4-wheel-drive vehicles and even then are treacherous. However, there are a couple of scenic spots that are accessible with great difficulty.

The Black River, upstream from Kinshasa, affords swimming, camping, and picnicking for a pleasant day trip. Zongo Falls, 65 miles south of Kinshasa, has a high waterfall and is the sight of a major hydroelectric dam. It is a pretty sight to visit and a pleasant place to picnic, but access is extremely difficult and generally takes 3-4 hours difficult driving each way.

Brazzaville, just across the river by ferry, may be visited after you obtain a visa and "laissez-passer" for the Republic of Congo. There you can enjoy the atmosphere and the French cuisine of the Congolese capital city.

Entertainment

Kinshasa is considered to be a center for African-style music and a number of nightclubs range from imitations of American bars to lively and colorful African outdoor bars. Several discotheques and a number of good restaurants exist. However, costs are often prohibitive; and the danger of street crime

is an effective deterrent to most night life outside of domestic entertaining.

Kinshasa does have several casinos with black jack, roulette, and slot machines as the most popular games.

Social Activities

Social life is limited but active and informal, consisting mostly of dinners, small parties, cocktail events. The American Employees Recreation and Welfare Association (AERWA) has become the hub of social activity not only among Americans but among much of the expatriate community. AERWA is a pleasant, interesting, fun "hot spot" in the social life of ex-pats in DRC.

Common forms of home entertainment are buffet dinners, bridge parties, and video screenings. The International Women's Club of Kinshasa invites all women of Kinshasa to join. It is an English-speaking club which meets monthly. The club sponsors tours and special interest groups for cooking, bridge, French conversation groups, etc. Monthly get-acquainted coffees are held, and the club sponsors an annual Christmas Bazaar in which goods made by the women are sold, the proceeds of which go to local charities.

Lubumbashi

Lubumbashi (formerly Elisabethville) is a small, pleasant city in the high plateau country near DRC's southeastern tip. In its time it was the capital of the Belgian Congo's richest province, the seat of an unrecognized independent country and now, once again, a provincial capital. Lubumbashi was originally created as the headquarters of Katanga (formerly Shaba) Province's highly developed mining industry. Despite some diversification, it remains today a city closely identified with mining, particularly with the large copper and cobalt company GECAMINES (La Générale des Carrières et des Mines, formerly Union Minière du Haut-Katanga). Other industries in

Lubumbashi include printing, brewing, flour milling, and the production of confectionery, cigarettes, brick, and soap.

The climate in Lubumbashi is temperate, similar to that of southern California. September through November is warm; May through August is cool. The weather is rainy from November to April, and dry the rest of the year. Lubumbashi's high temperatures rarely approach those of Washington, DC, and the humidity is generally low. Daily temperatures vary considerably, especially during the cool season when nighttime readings drop to near freezing and daytime temperatures of 75°F are not uncommon. Dust is a nuisance on roads outside the city during the dry season.

Lubumbashi has a population of approximately 967,000.

Schools for Foreigners

Two schools in Lubumbashi are considered suitable for the education of Western children at the primary and secondary levels. They are supported, respectively, by the French and Belgian Governments, and classes are conducted in French at both schools. The education at each institution is based on the respective national systems. The French school is open to all nationalities, and tuition is paid in DRC currency. The Belgian school is open only to expatriates, with tuition paid in hard currency.

Some children attend the American School of Kinshasa, which is two hours away by plane. Boarding facilities are available at three missionary-run hostels for students in sixth grade and above. Enrollment is from the American official, business, and missionary communities, plus a large international community. Bus transportation within the city is provided.

Both Zambia and Kenya have boarding schools; however, Zambian schools are accessible only by a three-to-four hour car trip over rather rough roads. Kenya has many English-language schools,

two of which follow the American syllabus. Rosslyn Academy, a non-denominational Mennonite- and Baptist-operated school, offers grades one through nine, with boarding facilities.

Ample opportunities exist in Lubumbashi for learning French and Swahili.

Recreation

Golf, tennis, basketball, horseback riding, and boating are available in Lubumbashi. Golf is particularly enjoyable, as the 18-hole course here is excellent and uncrowded. There are tennis clubs (private and municipal), swimming pools, and several riding clubs.

Each social and national club has its own soccer and/or volleyball team. The Club Nautique on the artificial lake near the new luxury hotel, Karavia, is a small, informal boating club where one may swim or picnic.

The most popular sport in DRC is soccer. Lubumbashi has a number of teams whose matches draw thousands of spectators.

Despite poor roads in the vicinity of the city, there are numerous lakes and rivers where camping is a unique experience. With a four-wheel-drive vehicle and extra jerry cans of gas, the tourist can reach the Luapula River to the east (much traveled in years past by the famed Dr. David Livingstone), and Lake Moero for a few days by the shore.

Nearer to Lubumbashi, a number of abandoned open-pit mines have become deep lakes. Copper salts have killed off disease-carrying snails, making it safe to swim in these waters. Swimming in most other lakes and rivers is not recommended because of the prevalence of bilharzia.

A three-day trip is possible during the dry season to Lofoi Falls, the highest in Africa, where a variety of wild game can be seen. Additionally, Victoria Falls (Zambia) is a five-day

round-trip journey from Lubumbashi.

Lubumbashi has a zoo, where lions and other native animals are on view, as well as specimens from other continents. For wild-game viewing, visitors may charter a light airplane and fly over a game reserve about 150 miles north of Lubumbashi. Boating and (for those heedless of bilharzia) waterskiing are possible. Fishing is popular all year.

Entertainment

The city has five or six quite good restaurants, and a few movie houses which show rather old films. There are some good (by Central African standards) nightclubs. Concerts, recitals, art exhibitions, and ballets are infrequent.

Lubumbashi's social life is usually informal; various occupational and ethnic groups ordinarily do not include others in their activities. One influential group is composed of the managerial personnel of the predominately Belgian industrial, commercial, and banking organizations. Personal, social, and informal contacts with local citizens are not difficult in Lubumbashi, and the established missions and handful of Belgian social projects also provide an organized framework within which expatriates can mingle. Teaching English is a popular activity for Americans, and a good way to meet others in the community. Several social clubs exist for foreign residents, among them Greek and Italian organizations. Social life is determined largely by one's facility with conversational French. Lubumbashi has no unusual social customs or dress standards.

Bukavu

Bukavu is the capital of Kivu, DRC's most scenic province. Although the region varies greatly in topography and vegetation, it is often referred to as the "Switzerland of Africa" because of the volcanically active Ruwenzori Mountains. The Ruwenzoris are the fabled "Mountains of the Moon," reaching alti-

tudes as high as 16,000 feet and forming one of the important divides of Central Africa. This chain of mountains is broken by three of the continent's most scenic lakes: Lakes Edward (Idi Amin), Kivu, and Tanganyika.

Bukavu, at almost 5,000 feet, is located at the southern end of Lake Kivu, on five peninsulas. It is near the middle of DRC's eastern frontier, about 1,000 air miles from Kinshasa, and is opposite Cyangugu, Rwanda, which lies across the border formed by the Ruzizi River.

The nearest volcanos are about 60 miles away, near Goma at the northern end of Lake Kivu. The last recorded volcanic eruption occurred in 1984, north of Goma. Mild earth tremors occur periodically, and the last earthquake causing damage in Bukavu was in April 1965.

Rains fall at least nine months of the year. Daily downpours last from one to two hours and are at their worst during November. Bukavu's dry season begins in June and runs through August.

Bukavu, called Costermansville until the mid-1950s, is largely a product of the Belgian colonial era. Founded about 1925, it became and still is the administrative center for the province of Kivu. The region is divided into three large subregions: North and South Kivu, and the Maniema, each of which is further subdivided into zones.

The city proper is made up of three zones or communes: Ibanda, the commercial, banking, and industrial center, where most of the European population lives; and Kadutu and Bagiri, built to house the African population. Prior to independence, Bukavu's population was about 35,000, including 6,000 Europeans. The current population numbers close to 210,000, including some 700 Europeans. The major ethnic group of the Bukavu hinterland is the Bashi, comprised of three related groups—the Ngweshe, Kabare, and Katana—each with its own *mwami* (chief). While predomi-

nantly Bashi, Bukavu also has a large number of Warega, Bahavu, and Tutsi.

Bukavu is a commercial and industrial center. The city has a school of social studies, a teacher-training college, and a scientific research institute. It also has a brewery, printing plant, and the Mururu hydroelectric plant.

The Roman Catholic Church is an important feature of life in Bukavu, and there are a cathedral and an archbishop here. Most Europeans attend mass at the college because the service is in French rather than in Swahili.

Many sports and recreational activities are available in the Bukavu area, but entertainment facilities are limited. There are two movie theaters, showing three-to-four-year old films. Soccer matches and bicycle races are held frequently. Tennis, basketball, swimming, and water skiing are popular, except that there is some suspicion about the safety of swimming in parts of Lake Kivu because of the presence of bilharzia. Hiking, picnics, and car trips also are popular in the magnificent mountain areas around Bukavu.

OTHER CITIES

One of DRC's oldest cities, **BOMA** was founded in the 16th century as a slave market. Situated 200 miles southwest of Accra on the Congo River, it is the terminus of a rail line to Tshela. The city serves as the outlet for timber, bananas, and palm oil from the rich forest area of Mayumbe to the north. The 1994 population was about 135,000.

KANANGA (formerly called Lulua-bourg), located 475 miles southeast of Kinshasa in south-central DRC, is one of the largest cities in the country and capital of the West Kasai region. It is a prominent commercial area with a hinterland that produces cotton, coffee, palm oil, rice, livestock, and timber. Local

industries include brewing and printing. Kananga is the site of a national museum and a teacher-training college. The population of metropolitan Kananga is approximately 601,000.

KISANGANI (formerly Stanleyville) is a river port on the Congo River, 750 miles northeast of Kinshasa. It has an active central market. Villagers fish with nets at the Wagenia Falls. A hydroelectric dam at the falls provide electricity to the city. Kisangani has a teacher-training school, an agricultural school, and research institute. An international airport was opened here in 1974. Kisangani has a university, founded in 1963, and a population nearing 418,000.

KOLWEZI is near the Zilo Gorges of the Lualaba River in southeastern Zaire. Residents here have used area mineral deposits since before the arrival of the Belgians in the 1800s. Industrialization began about 1901. The city became a copper-mining center after the development of the mining company, Union Minière du Haut Katanga (now GECAMINES), in 1906. Shaba rebels based in Angola attacked Kolwezi and its airfield in 1978, flooding the mines. The population here was estimated at close to 418,000 in 2000.

MBANDAKA is a river port of about 175,000 people, 435 miles northeast of Kinshasa in northwestern DRC. The city is a busy river port situated at the junction of the Congo and Ruki Rivers midway on Kinshasa-Kisangani shipping route. Besides shipping, the economy depends on agriculture and forestry. Industries in Mbandaka] include a printing plant and brewery. The city is a cultural center with a national museum, teacher-training college, and botanical garden.

MBUJI-MAYI is on the Mbuji-Mayi River in south-central DRC. The area is one of the world's major diamond production centers, providing about 75 percent, in weight, of all industrial diamonds. Tremendous

dous immigration from nearby areas has increased the city's 1960 population of 30,000 to over 806,000 (1994 est.). Mbuji-Mayi has a teacher-training college. Links to other cities are by road and air.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Democratic Republic of the Congo straddles the Equator in the heart of Central Africa and shares a common border with the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Angola. DRC has access to the Atlantic Ocean on the west through a strip of territory which narrows to 13 miles in width at the coast. Its area includes the greater part of the Congo River Basin. DRC covers almost 1,465,553 square miles—about the area of the U.S. east of the Mississippi River. It is the third largest nation in Africa.

DRC is most remarkable for its river, formerly called the Zaire, and for its abundance and diversity of natural resources. The Congo River is 2,900 miles long and is the second largest in the world in terms of area drained, flow, and navigable length. With its tributaries, it provides DRC with about 9,000 miles of navigable waterways, and its force affords DRC 13 percent of the world's hydroelectric power potential.

With its abundance of natural resources, including copper, cobalt, zinc, industrial and gem-quality diamonds, manganese, tin, crude oil and gold, it is potentially one of the richest countries in the world. DRC is one of the world's largest producers of industrial diamonds, and when the mines were functioning properly, copper and cobalt provided 57 percent of its export earnings.

The geographical features of this giant African nation are handsome and varied. The huge Congo Basin, a low-lying, bowl-shaped plateau sloping toward the west, is covered by lush, tropical rain forests. Surrounding the basin are mountainous terraces on the west, plateaus merging into savannas to the south and southeast, and dense grasslands toward the northwest. The high, picturesque Ruwenzori Mountains bound the basin to the east. Although Kinshasa is only 4 degrees south of the Equator, temperatures are generally moderate. In January, the average daily high is 86 degrees F and the low is 70 degrees F. In July, this range is from 80 degrees F to 59 degrees F. The rainy season for Kinshasa and for the two-thirds of the country which lie below the equator, lasts from October to May. Despite its dreary sound, the rainy season is not unpleasant. Except for perhaps one rainstorm every few days, lasting anywhere from 1 to 2 hours, the skies are usually blue and sunny. In contrast, the dry season, though not yielding any rain, is characterized by overcast, but cooler, days.

Population

The earliest inhabitants of DRC may have been the Pygmies, followed by Bantus coming from the north and west and Nilotic tribes from the north and east. The large Bantu Bakongo Kingdom ruled much of present-day DRC and Angola when Portuguese explorers first visited in the 15th century.

The great majority of the population are descendants of the Bantu, who are thought to have begun migrating around 100 B.C. from the region that is now Cameroon and eastern Nigeria. The balance of the African population consists of Sudanic peoples, living along DRC's northern border with the Central African Republic and Sudan; Nilotic peoples, concentrated in the rugged and scenic eastern highlands neighboring Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi; and a small number of Pygmies, numbering about 80,000. The Pygmies, a celebrated people preserving

all their mysteries, are sheltered by the Ituri Forest in Northeastern DRC. Like many African countries, DRC is an ethnic mosaic.

Most of this large country is sparsely populated—about 21 inhabitants per square mile. Concentrations are near the rich mineral deposits, along the main communication routes (railroads and rivers), and in the highlands. Forty percent of DRC's people live in the urban areas. The literacy rate is about 77 percent. Life expectancy is 49 years, and GDP per capita is \$600.

DRC's total population is an estimated 52 million, including some 15,200 Europeans. Kinshasa has grown considerably since independence and now has approximately 5 million residents. The American community numbers about 350 in Kinshasa and 1,000 countrywide.

French, the official and only common language, was introduced by the Belgians and is spoken countrywide by the educated. About 250 languages and dialects are also spoken. The four major languages are Lingala, the commercial language commonly used in Kinshasa and along the rivers as well as the language of the army and of popular music; Kingwana or Kiswahili, spoken in the northeast, east and north; Kikongo, spoken west of Kinshasa; and Tshiluba, spoken in south-central DRC.

About 70 percent of the population is Christian, two-thirds of which is Roman Catholic, and a third Protestant, with the rest members of independent churches, the largest of which is the Kimbanguist Church. Somewhere around 10 percent of the population, mostly in the northeast, is Muslim. Much of the population practices aspects of traditional religions, especially animism, a belief in ancestral spirits and the power of sorcery and witchcraft.

Public Institutions

DRC's "Second Republic" (when the country was Zaire), which lasted

from President Mobutu Sese Seko's seizure of power in 1965 until 1990, permitted only one political party, the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR). As MPR President, Mobutu was automatically President of Zaire, and all citizens were automatically party members. On April 24, 1990, Mobutu announced the end of the Second Republic and the beginning of the country's transition to democracy. Political pluralism was allowed, and soon over 200 new parties had registered. Many independent civic associations also emerged during this time. A Sovereign National Conference (CNS), consisting of representatives of political parties and civic associations, drew up a transition constitution, and elected opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi as transition Prime Minister. CNS membership was incorporated into a new, single Chamber parliament, the High Council of the Republic (HCR).

By 1995, however, Zaire still had not yet held multi-party elections, and its transition to democracy remained incomplete. Mobutu interfered in the transition process. The civil war in neighboring Rwanda in 1994 and 1995 disrupted Zaire's stability, as thousands of refugees fled into North and South Kivu. In 1996, a series of repressive measures against Zairian citizens in the east sparked a rebellion against Mobutu's government. By November the major eastern cities were under rebel control, led by local warlord Laurent Désiré Kabila. By May 1997, Kabila's rebels had overthrown Mobutu's forces. Kabila became the country's leader and reverted its name back to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as it had been known from 1960 until 1970. Kabila promised to restore democracy, but began structuring his administration under his personal authority. In January 2001, Kabila was assassinated. The government placed his son, Major-General Joseph Kabila, in charge.

DRC is divided for administrative purposes into eleven regions: Kinshasa, Bas Congo, Bandundu, Equateur, Haut Congo, North Kivu,

South Kivu, Maniema, Katanga (formerly Shaba), Kasai Oriental and Kasai Occidental.

In foreign policy, DRC has tended to seek closer ties with other Third World nations and regional leadership role in Africa. DRC has also sought strong economic and political links with Western Europe and the United States. Since independence in 1960, the U. S. has maintained generally friendly relations with DRC (then Zaire). However, following the military mutinies and pillaging in September 1991, the U.S. reduced diplomatic representation drastically, going from one of the largest embassies in the Foreign Service to one with fewer than 40 direct-hire positions. Staffing has been maintained at approximately this level since.

Arts, Science, and Education

Kinshasa is the intellectual center of DRC by virtue of a centralized political system, its news and information media, its educational institutions, its cultural and entertainment facilities, and its location at one of the crossroads of Africa. Education is neither free nor compulsory and in principle is largely subsidized by the government. In reality, government-paid salaries are in arrears and school costs, including maintenance, are funded primarily by parents. About 80 percent of the students in the 1960s were in government-subsidized mission schools. In 1974, the former mission schools were nationalized to form a state educational system. This has proved to be an unworkable arrangement and a number of schools have reverted to the direction of the churches. In 1971, the government created one national university from the former Catholic, Protestant and lay universities with campuses in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani. In 1982, as a further reform measure, the Central Committee recommended a return to the previous arrangement with three independent universities and an Institute of

Agronomy (IFA) located at Yangambi, near Kisangani. In 1989, the Government announced the end of its monopoly on higher education and approved a number of such institutions. Among them, the following five, all Kinshasa-based, seem to be the best organized and have enrollments of under 1,000; ISIPA (Institute of Computer Sciences), ISPL (Higher Institute of Philosophy and Literature), ETS (Higher School of Technology) and the College Universitaire du Zaire.

Current enrollment figures on all levels formerly supplied by the education ministry are not available. University of Kinshasa published 1992-93 enrollment at 11,372 for its ten facilities.

Several private universities continue to grow throughout the country: University Libre de Kinshasa (ULK), founded in 1985, estimates enrollment at 2000; the University of Bas Zaire (UNIBAZ) also estimates 2000 students; and two universities recently created by the late Cardinal Malula: University of Mbuji-Mayi and University of Equateur. In 1992, the International Christian University of Zaire opened in Kinshasa, run by American Protestants offering bilingual instruction.

Following the 1991 reports of a student massacre at the University of Lubumbashi, all public universities and most institutions of higher education were closed. Students throughout the country stopped attending classes in a show of solidarity. Financial difficulties caused by the military uprising in September 1991 continued the closure of most of these institutions for two years. Many universities re-opened in the fall of 1992, but sessions have been sporadic since then.

The continual deterioration in the economy coupled with school closures have taken a heavy toll on the quality, availability, and accessibility of education in Zaire. Teachers' salaries even at the university level rarely exceed the equivalent of US \$5 a month, and often are unpaid

for four or five months. Strikes at UNIKIN in 1994 centered on professors' demands for direct foreign currency tuition payments. Most schools lack basic supplies; libraries have empty shelves; and students must pay tuition at both public and private institutions.

The Academie des Beaux Arts displays fine examples of Zairian paintings and sculpture. Many Americans go there seeking new pieces of art. The Ivory Market in the city's center also offers a complete array of African sculpture in wood, tin, bronze, copper, and ivory. It offers ivory and malachite jewelry, as well as antique African fetishes (figures which have a mystic or religious significance), funerary sculpture, ceremonial masks, etc. St. Ann's gift shop, near the American Embassy, also offers similar African pieces. The outdoor stands on Matadi Road are another source of African wares. The availability of exciting and varied forms of African art work is truly a challenge to any collector.

Commerce and Industry

Following independence in 1960, the DRC experienced a period of economic and political turmoil. The return of internal stability and the increase in the world price for copper led to a period of rapid economic growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s, although the country's social and physical infrastructure gradually deteriorated. The pace of economic degradation slowed as the government made serious attempts to implement economic reform programs. However, by the end of the decade, these efforts had either failed or were abandoned well short of success.

After President Mobutu's April 1990 announcement ending one-party rule and promising movement toward democratization, political uncertainty and instability provoked social upheaval and greatly exacerbated the country's chronic economic degradation. The econ-

omy, as measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), lost more than a third of its value in real terms by the mid-1990s. Most of the decline occurred in commerce and industry, traditionally the mainstays of the "formal sector" of the economy. The paralysis of the formal economy and the absence of strong central authority left a void filled by an expansion of a parallel economy, which increasingly provides the means of survival for the country's large number of unemployed. However, the advent of a new government of national unity in July 1994, committed to economic reform, implemented some reforms in an effort to promote economic growth before the collapse of the Mobutu government came in late 1996.

The acute state of decline of the economy is due to several factors, including misguided government policies and uncontrolled deficit spending, which have fueled runaway inflation, incapacitated the industrial sector, permitted a severe deterioration of the country's infrastructure and crippled the public sector. An already low per capita income declined sharply, to below one hundred dollars by 1994, according to some estimates. Generalized uncertainty and insecurity are a fact of life and were further exacerbated by successive military mutinies in 1991, 1992 and 1993. These mutinies resulted in widespread destruction to the country's industrial and commercial sectors, and led to the cessation of major foreign assistance projects and a pull-out of foreign investment.

The government under Laurent Kabila instituted a tight fiscal policy that initially curbed inflation and currency depreciation, but these small gains were quickly reversed when the foreign-backed rebellion in the eastern part of the country began in August 1998. The war has dramatically reduced national output and government revenue and has increased external debt. Foreign businesses have curtailed operations due to uncertainty about the outcome of the conflict

and because of increased government harassment and restrictions. The war has intensified the impact of such basic problems as an uncertain legal framework, corruption, raging inflation, and lack of openness in government economic policy and financial operations. A number of IMF and World Bank missions have met with the government to help it develop a coherent economic plan but associated reforms are on hold.

Depreciation of the currency and massive unemployment have crushed purchasing power, pricing basic goods beyond the reach of most people. The vast majority have experienced an accelerated and sharp decline in living standards, and the collapse of the public sector has severely limited the average citizen's access to even minimal health, education and social services. Most people now live from day to day, supplementing their meager incomes with small-scale commerce, part-time farming and petty corruption when the opportunity presents itself.

Chronically high inflation, which in 2000 reached 540 percent, and periodic liquidity shortages, have led the country's commercial sector increasingly to rely either directly or indirectly on hard currencies, particularly the US dollar or Belgian franc, as the preferred medium of exchange. Further, fiscal mismanagement and the chronic shortage of local currency within traditional banking channels have distorted the country's banking system, severely limiting its role in financial intermediation.

Private foreign investment is welcomed by the government, but continuing economic difficulties have tended to discourage prospective investors.

In many respects, DRC is similar to other developing African countries. The interior is neglected; a large part of the formal economy is operated or controlled by foreigners or foreign advisors, skilled manpower is scarce, savings and investment

are low, and credit is often hard to obtain. High transportation costs, a high inflation rate and the high import content of most goods and services, place DRC among the more expensive countries in Africa.

Transportation

Local

Driving is on the right, and international road symbols are used. Defensive driving—always a good idea—is a necessity in Kinshasa, due to the adverse road conditions, careless pedestrians, erratic drivers and overcrowded arteries.

Kinshasa's main intersections are manned by gendarmes during rush hours. The policeman's baton or arm directly raised signals caution and corresponds to a yellow light. If the gendarme is facing you, or his back is toward you, it means stop; when the policeman's arms are spread parallel with the flow of traffic, this means go, corresponding to a green light.

Regional

Outside Kinshasa, roads are either in terrible condition or they are gravel or dirt-surfaced.

Public transportation facilities are overcrowded, unreliable, unsafe, and therefore not used by American personnel or their dependents.

Travel within DRC is usually by air. Most principal towns are served by a variety of local air companies of varying reliability. Jet flights between Kinshasa, Kisangani and Goma operate several days a week as do flights between Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. Flights between Kinshasa and a number of other points, however, are quite irregular. Internal flights frequently depart late and are sometimes canceled without notice.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Communication from DRC is extremely difficult. The international telegraph service is unreli-

able and is frequently disrupted. Phone calls to the U.S. can be made but are often delayed. Cellular phone service has been generally reliable but occasionally erratic due to microwave interference.

Radio and TV

Radio reception in Kinshasa is fair to good. OZRT (Zairian Office of Radio and Television) is the government-controlled broadcast network in Zaire and its primary FM station is Voice of Zaire (VOZ). These broadcasts are in French and local languages. Also available on FM as of 1994 is RFI from Brazzaville and Africa Number One from Libreville. Listeners can also benefit from international shortwave radio broadcasts (specifically VOA, BBC, and Canal Afrique from South Africa); however, the signal is often weak and the audibility poor. Shortwave no longer functions, and Kinshasa radio is no longer picked up directly in the provinces.

Local TV reception is consistently poor and at times inaudible because of lack of upkeep of equipment. TV stations in the DRC's network are government-owned and operated, but remain an important source of information on official happenings in DRC. Broadcasts are also in French and local languages, mostly news, features and film documentaries. In Kinshasa, viewers can also watch Tele Congo, (Brazzaville government TV), and sporadically a German sports station (DSF), private French stations and locally owned Canal Z, which shows first-run American films in French. In some areas, Antenne A, a privately owned station in DRC, can be seen which carries English teaching lessons and other information "canned shows." Antenne A also sells a decoder which provides subscribers with other channels as well (French TV-5, a European movie channel, Arabsat and CNN).

Newspapers and Magazines

Time, *Newsweek*, and *Jeune Afrique* and other western magazines are sold on the streets and sometimes by vendors in restaurants. These magazines and the International

Herald Tribune can be purchased at the Intercontinental Hotel as well.

The Agence Zairoise de Press (AZAP) is the official government press service, which formerly published a daily bulletin in French. It too has fallen on hard times, and after almost a year hiatus, began republishing in 1994 every other day but periodically drops out of circulation.

The independent press which blossomed following the April 1990 announcement of the country's transition to a multi-party system has seen dozens of papers come and go in Kinshasa. The local press is free but many characterize the writing as irresponsible, often biased, and rarely accurate. Many publish strongly worded criticism of the President, government officials and other politicians. Many "dailies" publish twice a week and others publish only when newsprint and ink are available. ELIMA, UMOJA, Le SOFT, L'Analyst, SALONGO, LA REFERENCE PLUS, and LA NATION EN CHANTIER are published almost daily. Currently the newspaper availability in the interior is almost nil.

There are very few books available in Kinshasa and those for sale in English are outrageously expensive. For a fee, you may also join the Library Club of Kinshasa, located on the TASOK campus, which stocks a varied selection of fiction, nonfiction and children's books in English. The USIS library collection of 5000 volumes (English and French) are primarily for the Zairian patrons, but others frequently use the periodicals, English teaching materials, and novels.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local hospitals do not meet American standards. Although some have modern equipment and well-trained local physicians, they lack well-trained nursing and support staffs and frequently lack necessary medi-

cal supplies and medications. There are two private clinics which can provide emergency care.

There are several competent local expatriate physicians available for consultations and emergency care.

Prescription eyeglasses are made by several local optometrists, but selection of frames is usually limited and delivery can be slow. Some lenses can or must be ordered from Europe, but costs are high.

There are some capable expatriate and local dentists, but dental care can be expensive. All dental care should be completed prior to coming to the DRC.

Community Health

Sanitation at most American residences in Kinshasa is good, but it is still prudent to take precautions. The water is not potable and must be filtered and boiled or otherwise rendered potable before consumption or use. Residences are provided with filters and boilers. Garbage collection is not always adequate and sanitation throughout the city is poor.

Preventive Measures

With prudent care, individuals can generally maintain good health. Cases of intestinal disorders do occur as do cases of malaria and hepatitis. The general advice contained in *Health Hints for the Tropics* published by the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (available through the Department of State Medical Division) should be followed. Take malaria suppressants regularly starting 1–2 weeks before arrival.

Locally purchased raw fruits and vegetables should be peeled or treated before eating. A clorox purification is recommended for raw fruits and vegetables. If the above measures are taken, you should enjoy a healthful stay in the DRC.

Immunization against yellow fever, tetanus, poliomyelitis, hepatitis, and the usual children’s diseases are recommended before arrival.

Bring long-term personal medication. You should bring a good supply of aspirins, vitamins, and band-aids. The most prevalent medical problems are malaria, intestinal parasites, and upper respiratory diseases. External skin worms are also a problem, but can be identified in the beginning stages of growth and are easily removed. Sand fleas (also called chiggers) which embed themselves in the skin are also common and can be treated by medical personnel. The AIDS situation is more serious here than in the U.S. since heterosexual transmission is common. The outbreak of the Ebola virus in Bandundu province in May 1995 has not impacted on the health of expatriates in Kinshasa.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year’s Day
- Jan. 4 Day of the Martyrs for Independence
- May 1 Labor Day
- June 24 Constitution Day
- June 30 Independence Day
- Aug. 1 Parents’ Day
- Oct. 14 Founder’s Day
- Oct. 14 Youth Day
- Oct. 27 Three Z Day
- Nov 17 Armed Forces Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Since no American carriers operate directly between the U.S. and the DRC, one must travel by a combination of American and foreign carriers. Paris, Brussels, Lisbon, and Zurich or Geneva are interchange points which provide connections to Kinshasa via Air France, Sabena, TAP, and SwissAir.

Foreign currencies in any amount may be brought into the DRC, but the passenger must declare the

amounts at the time of arrival. A currency declaration form is issued at the airport and must be carefully retained by the passenger since it must be surrendered at the airport when leaving the DRC.

Visas should be obtained from an Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo prior to arrival. Individuals who experience difficulty entering DRC with a visa issued overseas are asked to contact the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa. Travelers entering the DRC with visas and/or entry/exit stamps from Rwanda, Uganda or Burundi may experience difficulties at the airport or other ports of entry. Some travelers with those visas or exit/entry stamps have been detained for questioning. Additional information about visas may be obtained from the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1800 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009 at (202) 234-7690 or 234-7691, or the DRC’s permanent mission to the U.N. at 2 Henry Avenue, North Caldwell, New Jersey 07006, telephone (201) 812-1636. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest DRC Embassy or Consulate.

U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa upon their arrival and to obtain updated information on travel and security within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The U.S. Embassy is located at 310 Avenue des Aviateurs, tel. 243-88-43608. The Consular section of the Embassy may also be reached at 243-88-43608, extension 2164/2376 or 243-88-46859 or 44609, fax 243-88-00228, 43467 or 03276. Cellular phones are the norm, as other telephone service is often unreliable.

All travellers must have an international certificate showing that they have been vaccinated against yellow fever.

No difficulty exists in importing a dog or cat as long as the pet is accompanied by proof of rabies inoculation and a certificate of good health. Veterinary facilities are

available and are usually adequate. Bring a good general medical handbook for the species of pet you are importing. Since it can be expensive to ship a dog (especially large dogs) on airlines, call different carriers and compare prices.

The official currency is the Congolese franc (CDF).

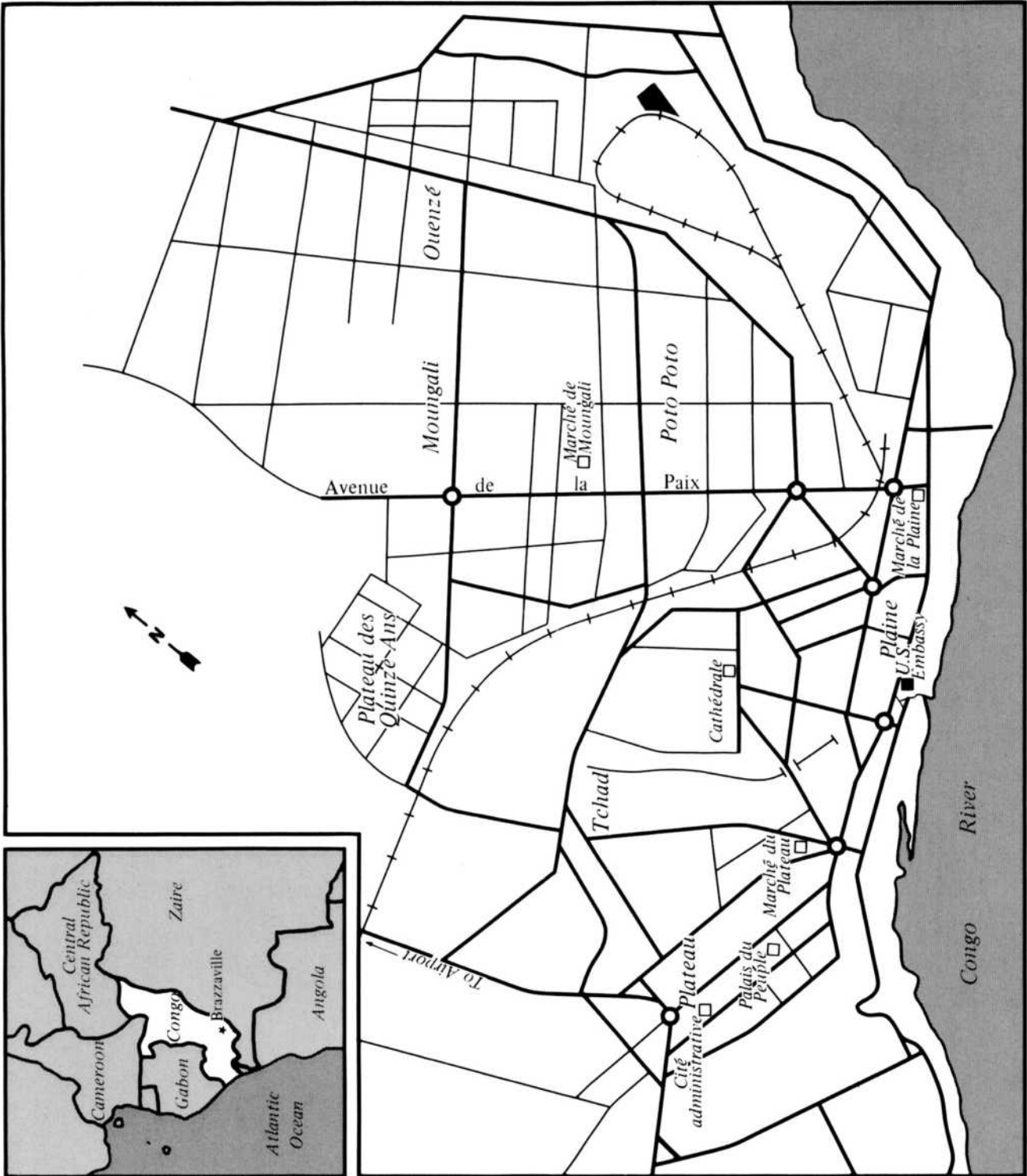
DRC follows the metric system for all weights and measures.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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- Mahoney, Richard D. *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. Similar to the Kalb book, but the Congo is only one of three case studies covered by Mahoney, and thus is treated in less detail than by Kalb.
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- Young, Crawford. *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1965. As the subtitle indicates, Young traces the disintegration of Belgian colonial rule as well as the subsequent political disintegration of 1960-63. A thorough analysis, it has become the "Bible" for students seeking a useful introduction to Zaire's contemporary history.
- Young, Crawford and Turner, Thomas. *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985. Undoubtedly destined to be a classic as well, although based on somewhat dated and second-hand research.
- Zaire: Repression as Policy*. New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1990.



Brazzaville, Congo

CONGO (Brazzaville)

Republic of the Congo

Major Cities:

Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire

Other Cities:

Loubomo, Nkayi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated November 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of the CONGO is a country in the midst of a political transition. Traditionally a one-party Marxist state, Congolese President Gen. Denis Sassou-Nguesso agreed to implement a multi-party system after a general strike paralyzed the country in 1990; however, after elections held in 1992 brought Pascal Lissouba to power, Sassou-Nguesso took power by force in 1997 and replaced the 1992 constitution with a new Fundamental Act, establishing a strong presidential system of government unhampered by legislative controls.

This west-central African nation, which played an important part in Free French activities during World

War II, has an interesting history of tribal domains dating back to the fourth century. Three powerful kingdoms—the Kongo, the Loango, and the Teke—ruled for hundreds of years, until a treaty was signed with France and the area became known as Middle Congo. It was absorbed into French Equatorial Africa and, in the late 1950s, assumed a measure of self-government with the constitutional referendum which created the French Community in Africa. The Congo attained full independence on August 15, 1960.

MAJOR CITY

Brazzaville

Brazzaville, the capital of the Republic of the Congo, is located on the north bank of the Congo River, directly across from Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire. In 2000, Brazzaville had an estimated metropolitan population of 1,234,000.

Its colonial history begins in September 1881 when Makoko Ilo, a Teke Chief, ceded parcels of his land to Savorgnan de Brazza, an Italian-born explorer in the service of his adopted France. On October 30,

1880, Brazza signed a second accord which gave France claim to much of the land now part of Brazzaville. By 1902, Brazzaville had taken the place of Libreville as the capital of French Equatorial Africa. Its regional importance continued to grow with completion of the Congo-Ocean railroad in 1934. During World War II, General de Gaulle made Brazzaville the center of the French resistance movement in Africa.

Brazzaville has become overcrowded in recent years as more and more people leave the rural areas to seek employment in the city. Paved roads are dotted with potholes and many roads are unpaved. The vegetation is lush and streets are bordered by mango, palm, and flame trees which blossom in November (Brazzaville's spring time).

Most of the city's Congolese population live in two large sections: Poto-Poto and the Bacongo area, where most of the Congolese from the Pool region (the southern part of the country) live.

Countries with diplomatic missions here include: Algeria, Germany, Belgium, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Egypt, France, Gabon, Italy, Nigeria, Russia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), Angola and

Vatican. The following countries have Honorary Consuls: Cuba, Great Britain Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Greece. and Mauritania. World Bank, FAO, UNESCO, UNIC, and African Union of Post and Telecommunications. A number of other countries are represented by their embassies in Kinshasa.

Although a few Europeans and some Congolese speak English, French is essential for social and daily activities. In 1997, fewer than 200 Americans resided in the Congo. The flow of business representatives traveling to Brazzaville has risen steadily in recent years, especially with the arrival in Pointe Noire of several American oil companies.

Food

Canned goods, imported mostly from Europe, are available in Brazzaville at much higher prices than in the U.S. Supplies are unreliable, and shopping requires several stops.

Local fresh vegetables and fruits are seasonal, expensive, and limited in both variety and quality. Vegetables include lettuce, potatoes, green beans, carrots, cabbage, beets, cucumbers, onions, spring onions, spinach, squash, radishes, tomatoes, and eggplant. Local fruit includes oranges, grapefruit, papaya, pineapple, mangoes, avocados, guavas, bananas, and lemons. Wash unpeeled vegetables and fruit in a solution of potassium permanganate or detergent before eating raw. Imported oranges, grapes, apples, kiwi, and pears, and vegetables such as carrots, endive, cauliflower, and mushrooms are often available in local supermarkets at high prices.

Sterilized long-life milk, whole and low fat, from France is available. Powdered milk from the Netherlands and Denmark is plentiful. Evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk, and long-life cream and ice cream are available. Sweet butter and margarine are imported from Europe, as are a variety of

excellent cheeses. Fresh eggs are available locally. All are expensive.

A few butchers sell high quality meat. Fresh beef, veal, lamb, and sausages are imported. Some fresh pork is imported or comes from local sources, as does poultry which varies in quality and is expensive. Fresh or smoked hams are unknown except the imported/pressed varieties. All fresh meats are inspected and safe to eat so long as they are purchased from reputable butchers. Fish from Pointe Noire arrives regularly and is good, but expensive. Local seafood shops carry sole, bar, capitaine (Nile perch), oysters, shrimp, lobster and, on occasion, frog's legs.

Supermarkets carry spaghetti, macaroni, noodles, dried beans, packaged and canned soups, coffee (local and imported), and many standard food items available in the U.S. Fresh baked French bread and American-style loafs are available daily.

American favorites that are rare or nonexistent include canned sweet potatoes, canned corn, U.S. ground coffee, fruit juice, canned tomatoes, meats and prepared hams, popcorn, cocktail snacks, nuts for baking (although local peanuts are readily available), as well as holiday needs such as canned pumpkin, cranberry sauce or jelly, fruit pie fillings, and candied fruits. Other specialty items difficult to find are pie crust mixes, cake mixes, brown and confectioners sugars, shortening, corn syrup, molasses, baking powder, American-Style mustard, horseradish, soft drink and ice cream mixes, and American chili sauce and powder. Bring your favorite snacks, ethnic foods, baking needs, condiments, and holiday requirements, as they are rare or nonexistent. Also bring your favorite spices, vanilla extract, flavored and unflavored gelatin, peanut butter, maraschino cherries, cake decorations, cornmeal and cornstarch.

Locally produced beer, tonic, soda, and soft drinks are available at reasonable cost. One tax-free liquor

store offers good French, Italian, and German wines, beer and hard liquor at prices comparable with major U.S. cities, although the supply is erratic.

Clothing

Bring clothing similar to that worn in the mid-Atlantic area in summer. Although dry-cleaning services are available, bring washable clothing. A limited selection of ready-made European clothes are available at astronomical prices.

Because of possibilities for travel to colder climates, bring enough warm clothing for visits to these areas. Other winter and wool clothing should be stored.

The tumbu fly is a minor menace that lays its eggs on laundry hung on a line to dry or clothing damp from perspiration. If eggs deposited on clothing are not destroyed with a hot iron, the larvae in garments worn next to the body will penetrate the skin, producing a boil-like lesion. All clothing should be well dried and ironed before wearing.

Clothes deteriorate rapidly with frequent washings and ironing. In selecting a wardrobe, emphasize variety and comfort, as well as elegance and current styles.

Short and long sleeved cotton dresses, blouses, and skirts, or slacks and a sweater or stole are useful during evenings in the cooler season.

Coats are not normally needed, but a lightweight raincoat or jacket and umbrella are recommended for the rainy season.

Bring loose-fitting cottons for the warmer, more humid seasons. Short sleeved or sleeveless light weight cotton dresses or blouses and skirts are a must. Because of the heat stockings are rarely worn.

Bring plenty of shoes. Select a loose fitting pair, feet tend to swell in hot, humid climates. European footwear dark blue, black, or gray suits for evening rarely fits Americans and is



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Natives of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

very expensive. Due to dampness and occasionally wet walking surfaces, shoes tend to wear out quickly. Expensive leather or suede footwear is not recommended.

Light, casual summer clothing is worn year round.

Bring plenty of light-colored and lightweight shirts, undergarments, socks, and shoes. Sport shirts are worn during off-duty hours. Cottons are, by far, the most comfortable. A combination of cotton/dacron is comfortable. Light weight raincoats and umbrellas are extremely useful during the rainy season. Shoes should be lightweight and comfortable. Expensive leathers and suede are discouraged because of dampness and wet surface conditions outside the office.

Women: Casual cotton, washable dresses, skirts, and blouses are worn year round. Although French and African women often wear formal dresses of lame, taffeta, and lace, American women find washable cottons, rayon, dark silks, and linens far more useful.

Children: A large supply of clothing for children is necessary. Many play areas are unpaved and often muddy, requiring frequent laundering. Girls will require cotton

dresses, skirts, blouses, shorts, play suits, and T-shirts. Boys wear ordinary shorts, shirts, and T-shirts. Bring a good supply of casual cotton clothing for younger children.

Most necessities are available, but prices are high for often inferior products. Bring shoes, particularly sneakers and sandals; local choices are extremely limited.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Toiletries and cosmetics are available in limited quantities and at high prices. Local pharmacies are well supplied and drug prices are reasonable, but it is often difficult to obtain exact equivalents of U.S. products.

Duty-free American cigarettes can be purchased locally for about \$20 per carton. European and local brand cigarettes are also available; pipe tobacco is difficult to obtain.

Dry cleaning services are available in Brazzaville but are expensive.

Automobile repair service for Japanese and European-made cars are adequate; however, repair work can take weeks to complete due to shortage of skilled labor and parts. Automobile repair service for American made vehicles is inadequate.

Because of the humidity and intensity of the sun in the tropics, bring a good supply of sun products. Sun-tan/sunblock lotions, sunburn relief medications or sprays, hats and/or sun visors, and sunglasses are all recommended.

Basic Services: Dressmakers are available and are reasonably priced. Often, if requested to do so, they will come directly to your home for necessary fitting and tailoring. A variety of fabrics, both local and European, is available.

Shoe repair services are available and work is reasonable; prices vary according to quality of repair.

French and Congolese beauty salons and barbershops are available at prices comparable to major U.S. or European cities. A styled haircut costs between \$30 and \$50. Men's haircuts cost approximately \$14.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholicism is predominant. Several Roman Catholic churches are located throughout Brazzaville. Services are generally in French. A Protestant service in English is held once a month at the Evangelical Mission. An interdenominational service is held on the other Sundays at 9:30 am at the World Health Organization Chapel. Brazzaville also has an active Salvation Army, and the Swedish Mission occasionally sponsors religious services in English. American missionaries are active in Impfondo (on the northern border of the Congo). Baha'i meetings are bilingual.

Education

International School: There is an international school that offers an academic program for grades Kindergarten through 8th grade. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the American and British educational systems. However, the school is not U.S. accredited. Grades 9-12 are taught through the University of Nebraska's correspondence program for high school. There are

approximately three full time teachers and 30 students, around 10 of whom are Americans. All classes are conducted in English. Children receive some language instruction in French. The school year runs from the beginning of September to the end of May and the hours are from 0730 to 1330. There are no extracurricular activities such as sports.

French School: The French school also offers an academic program for grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. There are approximately 50 teachers and 700 students. All class are taught in French; English is introduced to the students starting in the 6th grade. In addition, German and Spanish are also taught starting in the 8th grade. The school has many extracurricular activities such as sports, theater, bridge or music. There is a nominal fee for most after school activities.

The school year runs from early September to the end of June, with a two week break for Christmas, a two week break for Easter, a one week break in November and a one week break in February. The school day is from 8 am to 12:30 pm and 3 to 5 pm for grades K-5 and 7:30 am to 12:30 pm and 3 to 5:30 pm for grades 6-12.

Sports

Local facilities include a tennis club with lighted courts, a rugby team, a 9-hole golf course (with sand greens), Aero Club, and the Club Nautique (for boating and water sports). If you enjoy outdoor sports, bring equipment that you may need, such as picnic supplies, golf equipment, and sports attire. All equipment available locally is expensive. Photographic equipment and facilities are also available at double U.S. prices. The following clubs are open to paying memberships (approximately \$1,000 each):

Tennis Club. Facilities include 10 clay courts with lights, a squash court, swimming pool, and a large bar. Balls are supplied free.

Brazzaville Golf Club. The club has a well kept, 9-hole course (that by clever use of tees converts into an 18-hole course) with sand greens. It is on the grounds of the regional headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO), 20 minutes from Brazzaville, and has a spectacular view of the Congo River and the rapids. Many tournaments are organized during the course of the year.

Villa Washington. This small, U.S. Government-owned club, open to all Americans, features a swimming pool, volleyball net, kids playground, basketball court and snack bar.

Aero Club. Located at Maya Maya Airport, this club has one remodeled Cessna 152 aircraft. Flying lessons are available at approximately triple U.S. instruction fees. A bar, swimming pool, three tennis courts, and petanque are available for use by members.

The Meridien Sofitel and Cosmos Hotels offer monthly subscriptions for their tennis courts and pools. Subscription fees are high by U.S. standards.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring is difficult due to poor quality of roads, and lack of accommodations. Trips can be made to Foulakari Falls, Lac Bleu, and the Pine Forest—all within a 2-4 hour drive of Brazzaville—with a four-wheel-drive vehicle. These areas are well worth the trip, but not recommended for small children. Travel by road to two or three other scenic spots is possible, provided you have a four-wheel-drive vehicle and the necessary camping equipment. All camping and picnicking equipment should be brought; local supplies are scarce and very expensive.

Excellent deep-sea fishing is available off the coast at Pointe Noire.

Firearms may not be imported into the Congo.

The Congo River with its islands and beaches provides opportunities

for motorboating, water-skiing, fishing, picnicking, and swimming. The current is swift and dangerous; therefore, it is imperative to wear a life jacket when participating in water sports.

Brazzaville is isolated, no resort areas are close-by, and travel is time consuming and expensive. Pointe Noire, Congo's seaport, may be reached from Brazzaville in about an one hour by plane. Pointe Noire offers limited night life and cultural opportunities, but it has good beaches for swimming and sunbathing, good fishing, several excellent seafood restaurants, and comfortable hotels. Round-trip air travel costs about \$200. Big game parks and resorts in Central African Republic, DRC, South Africa, and Kenya offer variety in vacations spots, but high costs of air travel on the African continent limit their appeal.

Just outside Brazzaville are the buildings and staff residences of the World Health Organization's African Regional headquarters—a pleasant place to walk. Other spots of interest are the famous Stanley Pool, nearby rapids of the Congo River, and the colorful bluffs on the Congo River known as the "Cliffs of Dover" or "White Cliffs".

Entertainment

Restaurants. There are a few good restaurants in Brazzaville. The more expensive (but still reasonable) restaurants offer indoor/air conditioned seating. However, the more popular restaurants are the ones that are located outside. Both lunch and dinner are served at all the restaurants. Breakfast is available at a select few. The Meridian Hotel offers a breakfast buffet on the weekends.

Night Life. There are very few night clubs available. Be prepared to spend lots of money as drinks are very expensive. In addition to night-clubs there are also a couple casinos available.

Pointe-Noire

Located 315 miles southwest of Brazzaville on the Atlantic Coast, is a commercial center and the country's major port and railhead for the Congo-Ocean Railway. The city was founded in 1883 and, from 1950 to 1958, was the capital of Middle Congo. It had gained importance after the construction in the 1930s of its artificial harbor.

Pointe-Noire is the best port on the African west coast between Luanda, Angola and Lagos, Nigeria, and continues to serve as the major seaport for the former French Equatorial states. Almost all goods moving in and out of the country pass through Pointe-Noire. The city handles product embarkation of the important manganese mining activity carried on in Gabon by the U.S.-French company, COMILOG (Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooué). The bulk of Gabonese timber is also shipped from here.

An international airport is located south of the city. In the 1970s, petroleum drilled offshore near Pointe-Noire and processed at a refinery in town became a major national export.

The population of Pointe-Noire in 2000 was estimated at 476,000. While neither exciting nightlife nor cultural activities are offered, the city is known for its excellent sport fishing and fine beaches. There are good restaurants, specializing in seafood, and comfortable hotels. Taxis, car hire, and banking facilities are available.

As in Brazzaville, a knowledge of French is a necessity in Pointe-Noire.

OTHER CITIES

West of Brazzaville, the southern city of **LOUBOMO** is an important transportation center. Its highways and railroads link the western part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and southern Gabon with cit-

ies in the Congo. It is a gold and lead mining center. Loubomo also has markets for leather, sisal, and cattle. The town has several small industries which produce sawed lumber, wood veneer, and carbonated beverages. An airport is located in Loubomo. The population in 2000 was approximately 62,000.

NKAYI is west of the capital, in the southern region of the Congo. It is the major sugar-producing center in the Nkayi Valley agricultural region. Other industries in Nkayi include a sawmill, a flour mill, and plants for peanut oil and cattle feed production. The population in 2000 was estimated at 40,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Congo, which has a total area of 342,000 sq. km. (132,000 sq. miles), is located near the Equator in West-Central Africa. It extends more than 1,280 kilometers (800 miles) inland from the Atlantic Ocean and is bordered by Gabon, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Zaire and the Angolan enclave of Cabinda.

The country has four topographical regions: a coastal plain extending inland about 64 kilometers (40 miles) to the foothills of the Mayombe Mountains; the alluvial soils of the fertile Niari Valley in the south-central area; the Central Bateke Plateau separating the basins of the Ogooué and the Congo Rivers; and the Congo River Basin in the north, composed of mainly impassable flood plains in the lower portion and dry savanna in the upper portion. Much of the Congo is densely forested.

In December of 1993 nearly a million acres of land in the north became Nouabale-Ndoki National Park - one of the most significant tropical forest preserves in the world.

The climate is tropical; with the rainy season lasting from October to April and the dry season from June to September. Humidity is high during the rainy season and temperatures can climb to 31 centigrade. Humidity and temperatures are lower during the dry season, ranging from 25 to 28 centigrade.

Brazzaville, a city of over 1.2 million people, lies on the north bank of the Congo River, 315 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean and 4.25 degrees south of the Equator. Surrounded by a vast savanna of high grasslands and dark green thickets of low trees spread over rolling hills, the town is fairly level, with an altitude of 1,043 feet.

Violent rapids make the Congo River unnavigable from Brazzaville to the Atlantic. To the east the river widens into Stanley Pool - 15 miles wide and dotted with many small islands (during dry season). From Brazzaville inland, the river becomes navigable for 1,000 miles. Goods arriving at the Atlantic seaport of Pointe Noire are shipped by the Congo Ocean Railway (CFCO) to Brazzaville which, due to its position above the rapids, is a transit point for commercial and passenger traffic.

The city of Pointe Noire, with over 400,000 people, is one of the best ports on the African west coast between Luanda, Angola and Lagos, Nigeria. Almost all goods moving into and out of the Congo pass through Pointe Noire.

Population

Over 2.8 million Congolese reside in over 133,538 square miles of land, an average density of less than seven persons per square mile. Most live in Brazzaville, Pointe Noire, and along the connecting rail line. Few people live in the northern sections which are covered by savanna, swamp and rain forest.

Outside the main towns, the Congolese are divided into small communities. Among 75 distinct subdivisions, the Kongo, the Teke,

and the Sangha are the three principal ethnic groups.

Two million Kongo are found on both sides of the Congo River, about one-fourth in the Congo, the rest in Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Lari and related groups live around Brazzaville, and the Vili, a coastal group, predominate in the Pointe Noire area. The Sangha inhabits the northern part of the country along with the M'Bochi group. However, many of the M'Bochi group have migrated to Brazzaville.

The Teke group is spread over a large area north and northeast of Brazzaville. They are the most traditional of the ethnic groups, engaging in hunting and fishing. Animistic worship is still predominant, although most of the urban population is Christian. In rural areas, the Congolese live in small communities having little outside contact. The European community in the Congo number over 8,000, principally French nationals.

History

First inhabited by pygmies, Congo was later settled by Bantu groups who also occupied parts of present-day Angola, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Several Bantu kingdoms, notably those of the Kongo, the Loango, and the Teke, built trade links along the Congo river basin. The first European contacts came in the late fourth century, and commercial relationships were quickly established with the kingdoms, trading for slaves captured in the interior. The coastal area was a major source for the transatlantic slave trade, and when that commerce ended in the early 19th century, the power of the Bantu kingdoms eroded.

The area came under French sovereignty in the 1880s. Pierre Savignion de Brazza, a French empire builder, competed with agents of Belgian King Leopold's International Congo Association (later Zaire) for control of the Congo River basin. Between 1882 and 1891,

treaties were secured with all the main local rulers on the river's right bank, placing their lands under French protection. In 1908, France organized French Equatorial African (AEF), comprising its colonies of Middle Congo (modern Congo), Gabon, Chad, and Oubangui-Chari (modern Central African Republic). Brazzaville was selected as the federal capital.

Economic development during the first 50 years of colonial rule in Congo centered on natural resource extraction by private companies. In 1924-34, the Congo-Ocean Railway (CFCO) was built at a considerable human and financial cost, opening the way for growth of the ocean port of Pointe-Noire and towns along its route.

During World War II, the AEF administration sided with Charles DeGaulle, and Brazzaville became the symbolic capital of Free France during 1940-1943. The Brazzaville Conference of 1944 heralded a period of major reform in French colonial policy, including the abolition of forced labor, granting of French citizenship to colonial subjects, decentralization of certain powers, and election of local advisory assemblies. Congo benefited from the postwar expansion of colonial administrative and infrastructure spending as a result of its central geographic location within AEF and the federal capital at Brazzaville. The Loi Cadre (framework law) of 1956 ended dual voting roles and provided for partial self-government for the individual overseas territories. Ethnic rivalries then produced sharp struggles among the emerging Congolese political parties and sparked severe riots in Brazzaville in 1959. After the September 1958 referendum approving the new French constitution, AEF was dissolved. Its four territories became autonomous members of the French Community, and Middle Congo was renamed the Congo Republic. Formal independence was granted in August 1960.

Congo's first president was Fulbert Youlou, a former Catholic priest

from the southeast region. He rose to political prominence after 1956, and was narrowly elected president by the National Assembly at independence. Youlou's three years in power were marked by ethnic tensions and political rivalry. In August 1963, Youlou was overthrown in a three-day popular uprising (Les Trois Glorieuses) led by labor elements and joined by rival political parties. All members of the Youlou government were arrested or removed from office. The Congolese military took charge of the country briefly and installed a civilian provisional government headed by Alphonse Massamba-Debat. Under the 1963 constitution, Massamba-Debat was elected President for a five-year term and named the current President, Pascal Lissouba to serve as Prime Minister. However, President Massamba-Debat's term ended abruptly in August 1968, when Captain Marien Ngouabi and other army officers toppled the government in a coup. After a period of consolidation under the newly-formed National Revolutionary Council, Major Ngouabi assumed the presidency on December 31, 1968. One year later President Ngouabi proclaimed Congo to be Africa's first "people's republic" and announced the decision of the National Revolutionary Movement to change its name to the Congolese Labor Party (PCT).

On March 16, 1977, President Ngouabi was assassinated and, less than one week later, Archbishop Biayenda was also killed. Although the persons accused of shooting Ngouabi and Biayenda were tried and some of them executed, the motivation behind the assassinations is still not clear. An 11-member Military Committee of the Party (CMP) was named to head an interim government with Colonel (later General) Joachim Yhomby-Opango to serve as President of the Republic. Accused of corruption and deviation from party directives, Yhomby-Opango was removed from office on February 5, 1979, by the Central Committee of the PCT, which then simultaneously designated Vice President and Defense

Minister Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso as interim President. The Central Committee directed Sassou-Nguesso to take charge of preparations for the Third Extraordinary Congress of the PCT, which proceeded to elect him President of the Republic. Under a congressional resolution, Yhomby-Opango was stripped of all powers, rank, and possessions and placed under arrest to await trial for high treason. He was released from house arrest in late 1984 and ordered back to his native village of Owando.

After decades of turbulent politics belabored by Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, and with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Congolese gradually moderated their economic and political views to the point that in 1992 Congo completed a transition to multi-party democracy. Ending a long history of one-party Marxist rule, a specific agenda for this transition was laid out during Congo's national conference of 1991 and culminated in August 1992 with multi-party presidential elections. Sassou-Nguesso conceded defeat and Congo's new president, Professor Pascal Lissouba, was inaugurated on August 31, 1992.

Congolese democracy experienced severe trials in 1993 and early 1994. The President dissolved the National Assembly in November 1992, and called for new elections in May 1993. The results of those elections were disputed, touching off violent civil unrest in June and again in November.

With the help of Angolan troops and other forces, Sassou-Nguesso, a northerner, defeated the forces of Lissouba, a southerner, in 1997. President Sassou-Nguesso's Government replaced the country's 1992 Constitution with a new Fundamental Act, which established a strong and highly centralized presidential system of government. The President appoints all members of the Government, all senior military officers, and all subnational government officials, serves as commander in chief of the armed forces, and specifically is mandated to direct the

general policy of the Government and to exercise regulatory powers. Legislative authority is vested in the 75-member National Transition Council (Conseil National de Transition, or CNT). The judiciary is overburdened and subject to political interference. Renewed civil conflict broke out in August 1998 and continued throughout the south until the end of 1999 between forces supporting Sassou, which included Angolan allies, Rwandan Hutu militiamen, and irregular fighters of Chadian and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) nationality, and southern rebel groups supporting Lissouba. In 1999 the Government reestablished effective control over most of the south through military offensives, offers of amnesty, negotiations, and efforts to broaden the Government's political base. In November and December 1999, the Government signed cease-fire and reconciliation accords with rebel groups.

In the presidential election held in March 2002, Sassou-Nguesso won with 74.7% of the vote. In May 2002, parliamentary elections were held for the 137-member National Assembly, the first vote since the civil wars ended in 1999.

Arts, Science, and Education

Designated by the French during the colonial era to be the civil servants of Equatorial Africa, the Congolese have traditionally taken great pride in their French-oriented educational system. With the exception of Senegal, no country in Africa had a more developed educational system at the time of independence than the Congo. The literacy rate is still among the highest in Africa, and professors and teachers are held in high regard.

While the glory days of the Congolese educational system are long gone, all school-age children (6-19) are entitled to free education. School attendance is, in principle, compulsory until age 16. Almost all school-age children in urban areas

attend classes, though enrollment drops off in the countryside. Brazzaville's Marien Ngouabi University is the sole institution of higher learning in the country. Founded in 1961, it has an average enrollment of approximately 16,500 students.

The Congo is widely known throughout Africa as a center of francophone literature, and several Congolese writers have worldwide reputations. The American Cultural Center welcomes these authors and often provides a forum for lectures and discussions. The French Cultural Center, known locally as the Espace Andre malraux, opened its doors in 1991 and is one of France's finest centers in sub-Saharan Africa. It regularly offers plays, concerts, exhibitions, and film shows.

The Poto-Poto Art School was founded by Pierre Lods in 1951 and is accessible to the general public throughout the week. Works by Congolese painters and sculptors can also be found in their workshops throughout the city. Traditional handicrafts are not as prevalent as they were in the past, though there are some fine craftsmen working in the production of pottery, baskets, rattan and wood furniture, and textiles.

As the regional headquarters of the World Health Organization and as a base for the Food and Agricultural Organization, Brazzaville remains an important center of scientific research.

Commerce and Industry

Debt continues to be one of the largest impediments for development of the Congo. During the petroleum boom years, the Congo mortgaged its oil revenues and became one of the most heavily indebted countries per capita in the world. When the price of oil fell, the Congo found its economy paralyzed by the debt burden and its over dependence on this one industry.

In recent years, the Government has engaged in considerable structural adjustment efforts and made some progress in diversifying the economy. Agricultural production in manioc, peanuts, bananas, rice, coffee, and cocoa has increased. The Congo also has tropical hardwoods and eucalyptus trees under cultivation. Finally the Congo has increased regional economic cooperation, most notably with South Africa.

Structural reform efforts include: civil service downsizing, customs/tax reforms and measures to promote private sector development. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a \$14 million credit in November 2000 to aid post-conflict reconstruction.

A signatory to the Lome Convention, the Congo conducts most of its external trade with members of the European Community, particularly with France. Due to increasing purchases of Congolese petroleum, the U.S. is currently the Congo's leading overall trading partner. The Congo is also a member of the UDEAC (Union Douaniere et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale), composed of the former territories of French Equatorial Africa, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea, and the CEEAC (Communaute Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale).

Transportation

Local

Local buses are not used by Europeans and Americans because of overcrowding and unsafe driving. Taxi service is adequate and prices are reasonable. However, taxis are not recommended at night due to security concerns.

Regional

Many roads in Brazzaville are paved; however, there are numerous pot holes. South of Brazzaville there is a road once paved but now in poor condition which leads to Kinkala (about 75 km). The road continues unpaved to Pointe Noire. There is a paved road north of Brazzaville that

leads to Owando (about 500 km). Many roads, paved or unpaved, are almost impossible to travel without a four-wheel-drive vehicle, particularly during the rainy season.

Driving is on the right. French traffic rules prevail; the vehicle on the right has the right-of-way. Since main roads are crowded with pedestrians, motorbikes, and speeding taxis, driving can be dangerous.

Large boats with modest accommodations make river trips possible up the Congo and Oubangui Rivers to Bangui, capital of Central African Republic. A distance of about 600 miles, the trip takes 11 days upriver and 7 days down. River travel, however, is unpredictable due to water levels and is often difficult to arrange.

There is a 315-mile railway that connects Brazzaville with Pointe Noire. However, because of frequent derailments and track reparations, long delays are not uncommon.

Air

Sabena, Air France, Air Afrique, Air Portugal, Swissair and Aeroflot fly to Brazzaville from Europe; Air Afrique, Ethiopian Airlines, Angolan Airlines, Cameroon Airlines, Air France, Air Gabon serve Africa. Lina Congo, Aeroservice and Trans Air Congo serve Pointe-Noire. The Brazzaville airport, Maya-Maya, is 6 kilometers from downtown.

Communications

Telephone and Fax

Local telephone, cable and wireless communications are adequate, although delays can be common.

Radio and TV

Congolese radio broadcasts on short-wave, medium wave, and FM from 6:00 a.m. until late evening. Broadcasts are in French and local languages, with one English-language program per week. RFI, BBC, African Number 1, and Canal Afrique are also received locally. With a short-wave receiver, individ-

uals can listen to VOA, BBC, and European broadcasts.

Tele Congo Broadcasts afternoon and evenings in French and local languages, with a weekly English news program on Sundays. Individuals can also receive Zairian television, CFI (Canal France International), RFO (Regie France Outre-Mer), Canal Zaire, DSF (Deutsches Sportfernshen), and sometimes CNN. Local television broadcasts on the SECAM system.

Newspaper, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Since the transition to democracy in 1991-92, there has been a developing free press in Congo and more than a dozen Congolese weeklies and monthlies are available. French magazines and newspapers, other European magazines, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the International Herald-Tribune are available in Brazzaville, though at high prices. All papers and periodicals are several days old.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The local hospitals and clinics are not up to U.S. standards.

Kinshasa has a few facilities for obstetric and gynecological patients, but many American women living in the country travel to Europe or the U.S. for medical attention and to give birth.

A reputable dentist practices in Brazzaville and another in Kinshasa, DRC, but all preventive dental work should be done prior to arriving.

Preventive Measures

Malaria is endemic to the Congo region. Mefloquine, Chloroquine/Paludrine and other antimalaria pills must be taken regularly. Begin taking malaria pills 2 weeks before arrival and continue for 4 weeks after departure.

Proof of small pox vaccination is not longer required in the Congo, but typhoid and yellow fever immunizations are still required by the State Department. Tetanus and polio immunizations should be completed prior to arrival. Also highly recommended, are rabies vaccines, hepatitis A and B vaccines and gamma globulin injections.

Up-to-date cholera stamps are recommended for all travelers to the Congo in order to minimize problems with quarantine officials when entering the country. These cholera stamps are required for travel to DRC.

Diarrhea diseases, skin infections, hepatitis, and intestinal parasites are also common. General respiratory ailments take longer to cure than in more temperate climates. For some, the heat and humidity are the most unpleasant medical aspects of life here. The climate aggravates respiratory, sinus, and low blood pressure problems. Fluoride tablets are recommended for children's teeth. Supplementary vitamins in the daily diet may be helpful.

Brazzaville has a water purification plant; however, the questionable quality of the water, water distribution facilities, and climate dictate that drinking water be boiled and filtered. Vegetables and fruits should be washed thoroughly. If these items are to be eaten raw, outer skins should be removed. In preparing lettuce for salads, wash each leaf at least twice in cooled, boiled water.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport and a visa are required. Information on entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Congo, 4891 Colorado Ave., N.W., Washington D.C. 20011, telephone (202) 726-0825, or

from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Congo to the United Nations, 14 E. 65th St., New York, NY, 10021, telephone (212) 744-7840. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Congolese embassy or consulate. Information on vaccinations and other health precautions may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via CDC's Internet site at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

As of 1997, there were no quarantine or restrictions on pets.

Firearms may not be imported into the Congo.

The official currency unit is the XAF (Communaute Financiere Africaine) franc and is pegged to the French franc at the rate of 100/1. The exchange rate fluctuates. In January 2001, the rate was 699 XAF = US \$1. From January 1, 1999, the XAF is pegged to the euro at a rate of 655 XAF per euro.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Feb. 5 President's Day
 Feb. 8 Youth Day
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar. 8 Women's Day
 Mar. 18 Marien
 Nguabi Day
 May 1 Labor Day
 June 22 Foundation of
 the National
 People's Army
 July 31 Upswing of the
 Revolution
 Congo
 Aug. 12 Revolution
 Anniversary
 Aug. 15 Assumption
 Aug. 15 Independence
 Day

Nov. 1 All Saint's Day
 Nov. 17 Army Day
 Dec. 25 Children's Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas
 Dec. 31 Foundation of
 the Congolese
 Labor Party
 Dec. 31 Republic Day
 * variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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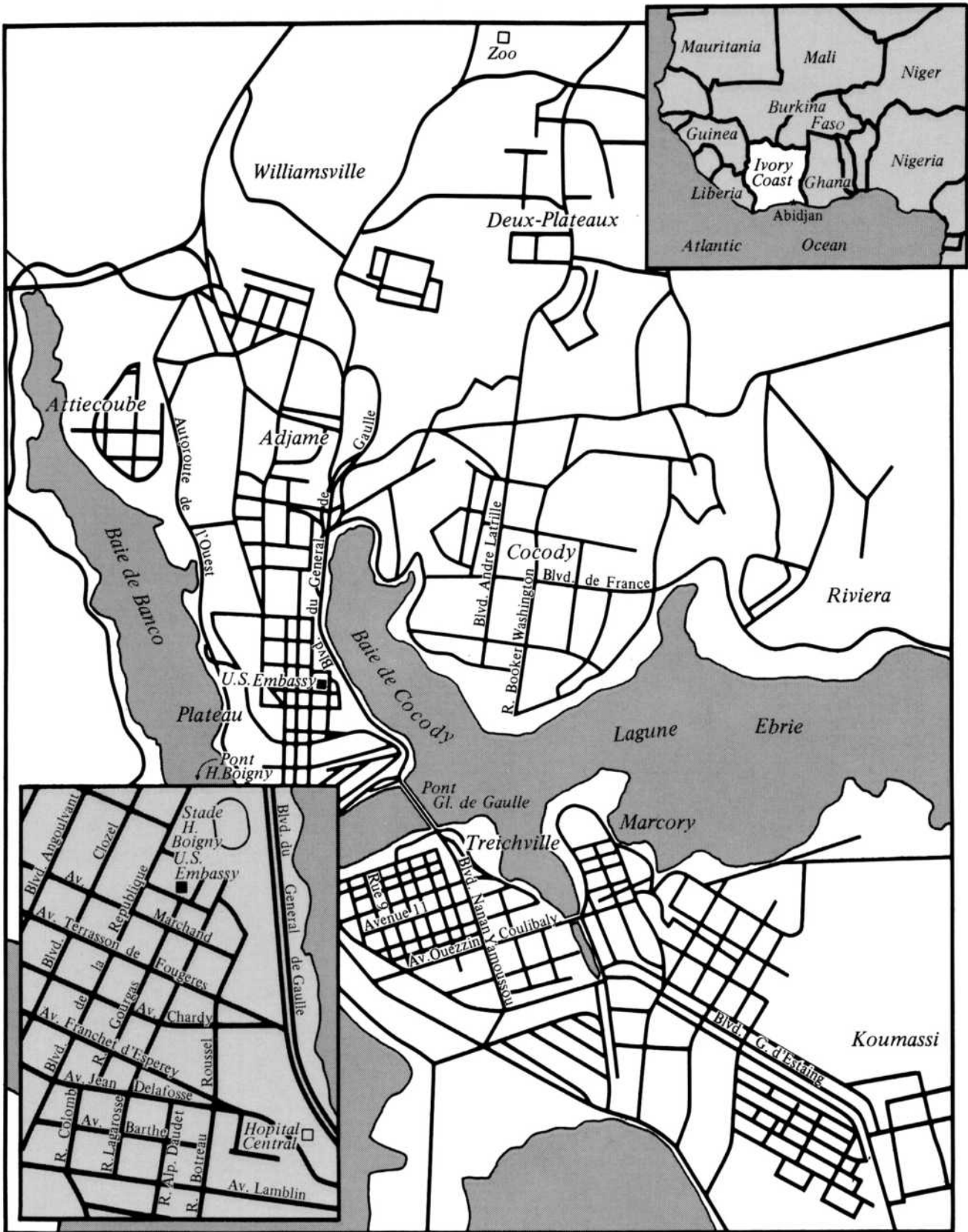
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Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

CÔTE D'IVOIRE (Ivory Coast)

Republic of the Ivory Coast

Major Cities:

Abidjan, Bouaké, Yamoussoukro

Other Cities:

Aboisso, Agboville, Assinie, Assouinde, Bingerville, Bondoukou, Comoe, Ferkessedougou, Grand Bassam, Grand Lahou, Jacquerville, Korhogo, Man, San Pedro, Sassandra

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Cote d'Ivoire. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

France made Côte d'Ivoire a protectorate in 1842, but did not actively occupy the territory until 1882. The country became a French colony in 1893. Côte d'Ivoire became an autonomous republic within the French Community in 1958 and achieved full independence on August 7, 1960. In October 1985, the United Nations approved a request from the Ivorian government to change the country's official name from Ivory Coast to Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire maintains close ties with France, but also seeks to expand its contacts with other nations. It is Africa's largest exporter of coffee and cocoa, and

also one of the largest exporters of timber and other tropical products.

MAJOR CITIES

Abidjan

Abidjan, with a population of approximately 2 million, is 4.8 kilometers inland from the Gulf of Guinea, but its suburbs stretch to the sea. Abidjan is often called the "Paris of West Africa," and much of its beauty derives from its setting on the rim of a lagoon at the edge of the ocean. The ever-present contrast between traditional African clothing, markets, and ways of life and the most modern public and commercial establishments gives the city a special charm and character.

Food

Abidjan has the only mall in West Africa. The supermarket of the mall is open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Local shops are generally open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon and 3 p.m. until 6 p.m.; on Sundays most shops are closed except for supermarkets, which are open in the morning.

A wide variety of food is available in Abidjan's many local markets and

supermarkets. The bakeries offer a delicious variety of breads and pastries. Tropical fruits and locally grown vegetables are plentiful and reasonable but the selection is limited. The supermarkets carry a complete selection of imported European fresh fruit and vegetables at much higher prices. The choice of all types of food and household items in supermarkets is excellent and shortages are rare. Both local and imported meat is available; meat is sold in continental cuts and local meat should be well cooked for health reasons. Local poultry, fresh fish, and shellfish is plentiful and reasonably priced.

A limited variety of frozen foods is available. All dairy products are imported and sterilized-pasteurized long-life milk is sold. Butter and cheeses are excellent. Plain and flavored yogurts are good. All dairy products have an expiration date.

Beverages available include bottled soft drinks, American colas, and European and South American imported wine. Côte d'Ivoire cocoa and chocolate are superb; the coffee is distinctive.

Clothing

Abidjan's year-round climate resembles summer weather in Washington, DC. During the rainy summer months, the weather is somewhat



Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

Building in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

cooler, and long-sleeved clothing is comfortable. Rainwear and umbrellas are necessary items. Men find that either business suits (light-weight) or locally tailored bush suits are appropriate for most occasions. However, those whose work does not entail contact with the host government or the public normally wear slacks with either short- or long-sleeved shirts, and no tie. Sports clothes and casual wear are recommended for leisure activities.

Most women wear summer dresses or blouse and skirt combinations, supplemented by sweaters for air-conditioned buildings. Neither shorts nor very short dresses are worn in the downtown area or while traveling in the country. Washable fabrics are preferable, since local dry cleaning is expensive; in Abidjan's hot, humid climate, wrinkle-resistant fabrics that breathe are desirable. Hosiery usually is

worn only for special occasions, and gloves and hats (with the exception of sun hats) are seldom seen. Sandals, comfortable walking shoes, and sports footwear are all useful.

Abidjanais are fashion conscious, and the latest styles from Paris often are available at extremely high prices in local boutiques. Contemporary African fashions are popular with both Ivorian and foreign women. Local batiks, tie-dyes, and wax prints, sometimes enhanced with elaborate embroidery, are made up into attractive dresses, skirts, and pants outfits. Prices range from moderate to expensive.

Children need a good supply of cotton or washable synthetic clothing. Girls wear everything from dresses to shorts and jeans. Boys wear jeans, slacks, and shorts with jerseys; sneakers and sandals are pop-

ular. Replacement items ordinarily are purchased from U.S. mail-order outlets, since children's clothes on the local market are quite costly. Uniforms are not worn at the International School of Abidjan, but those attending private French schools wear locally-made uniforms.

Swimming is a year-round activity, thus swimsuits and swimming goggles for each family member are essential.

Supplies and Services

The skills and fees of tailors and dressmakers in Abidjan vary widely. Minor shoe repairs can be done adequately. Dry cleaning facilities are satisfactory for everyday items, but not for delicate clothes; most laundry is done at home. Beauty and barber shops offer a complete line of services, but are expensive. Estheticians, masseurs,

and sauna bath facilities are available at health and exercise clubs.

Radio, phonograph, video, and television shops service European and Japanese models successfully, and American models with varying degrees of skill. A good selection of cassettes and CDs is available at somewhat higher than U.S. prices. Several companies, including Westinghouse, Singer, Frigidaire, and General Electric, have local representatives who stock limited supplies of spare parts for small appliances. Service technicians, however, are unfamiliar with American equipment. Local jewelers can repair most clocks and watches. Several local printers do moderate quality work, but no engraving, and prices are high. Catering service is available from several hotels, restaurants, and bakeries.

Pet shops and supermarkets carry a limited variety of basic pet supplies. An Ivorian Government veterinary clinic offers shots and minor treatment for pets. Several qualified veterinarians have clinics in Abidjan.

Domestic Help

Americans in Abidjan find domestic workers to be a very pleasant and affordable aspect of life. Domestic workers are usually men who come from other West African countries. Women also do domestic work and many are employed as nannies.

In most households, an experienced steward who does all types of housework, laundry, and simple cooking is sufficient. If additional help is needed, less-skilled servants and full-fledged cooks are available. A qualified cook usually will do marketing and kitchen chores, but no housework. General-category stewards normally do all other tasks. Small families sometimes share the services of one servant for general housework and laundry on a part-time basis. Generally, servants do not live in.

Hours and minimum wages are fixed by law. Servants work a maxi-

mum of ten hours daily, with one full day or two half-days off each week, and one month's paid holiday per year. On local holidays, servants receive full pay and are not required to work. If uniforms are worn, they are provided at the employer's expense. When employment is terminated, servants are entitled either to notice or notice payment, settlement for any unused leave, termination pay, and a certificate of previous employment. In addition, employers must pay social security contributions amounting to about 11 percent of salary and a transportation allowance.

Almost all servants speak French, and some also can read that language. A few speak English. All domestics must be trained to individual preferences and supervised carefully to assure satisfactory performance. Night guardians are available for the protection of residences; many of these will care for gardens and lawns for an agreed-upon extra monthly stipend

Religious Activities

Regularly scheduled Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim worship services and activities are conducted in French throughout the Abidjan area. Affiliated schools, activities, and services are readily available to the French speaker. Kosher meat can sometimes be obtained locally. English-speaking Christian congregations include: The International Fellowship of Christians, an interdenominational, evangelical congregation meeting in Deux Plateaux for two Sunday worship services, classes for children and adults, and a variety of study groups and other activities during the week; the Protestant Church of the Plateau, an interdenominational, liturgical congregation, holding its Sunday worship service, classes and activities in a Methodist church near the U.S. Embassy; and a Roman Catholic church in Deux Plateaux holding mass, confessions, and confraternity of Christian doctrine classes for children on Saturday.

Education

The International Community School of Abidjan (ICSA), founded in 1972, is the only English-language school in Abidjan. It is an independent, coeducational day school, offering an American educational program from kindergarten through grade 12. A solid academic program is offered. The school is accredited from kindergarten through grade 12 by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Upper School is also accredited by the European Council of International Schools (ECIS). The Upper School presents a developmental program with the express purpose of preparing students for entry into U.S. colleges and universities. French, the official language of Côte d'Ivoire, is required at all grade levels. English as a Second Language (ESL) is required of non-English speakers until they reach a certain level of proficiency. Even after they are mainstreamed, ESL students receive continuing support. The school is not equipped to handle children with learning disabilities, physical handicaps, or emotional or behavioral problems. Qualified high school students may enroll in advance placement courses in English, French, European History, American History, Computer Science, Biology, and Calculus. A new school was constructed in 1990-91 in the residential section of Riviera III, with new sports facilities, including a basketball/volleyball court, track, soccer field, softball field, and shower facility.

The school is sponsored by the U.S. Government and governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, two of whom are appointed by the U.S. Ambassador. Membership in the Association, the school's official parent body, which oversees the whole school, is automatically conferred on the parents or guardians of children enrolled in the school.

The full-time faculty is composed of qualified teachers recruited both from abroad (about 40%) and from the English-speaking community in



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Skyline of Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

Abidjan (60%). The Director is contracted from the United States. Enrollment in 1997-98 was about 440 students, some 35% American. The school receives regular support and assistance from the Office of Overseas Schools in the Department of State.

The school sponsors interscholastic soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming for boys and girls, intramural sports, a yearbook, drama, Girl Scouts, Brownies, Boy Scouts, and Cub Scouts. Other extracurricular activities are offered but may change from year to year based upon the availability of instructors. There is also a strong community service program.

Annual tuition fees are set in dollars. Fees for the 1998-99 school year are as follows: kindergarten-\$9,000; grades 1 through 5-\$9,450; grades 6 through 8\$11,260 and grades 9 through 12\$11,530. The

capital development fee of \$3,570 is charged only once per family. A school registration fee of approximately \$540 is charged annually for all children enrolled.

Many families arrange car pools for transporting children to and from school, since school-sponsored bus transportation is not available. There is no school uniform required. Students dress casually, in consideration of the tropical climate.

School hours are 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The school year begins in late August and ends in mid June. Students have a 2-week Christmas vacation and one week at Easter; some U.S. national and all local holidays are observed by the school. ICOSA sponsors a 5-week summer program during the months of July and August, depending on demand.

Further information about the school or about early registration can be obtained by writing to: Director, International Community School of Abidjan c/o Administrative Officer (ICSA) Am Embassy-Abidjan, Department of State Washington, D.C. 20521-2010 Email: icsa@compuserve.com Website: <http://urworld.com-puserve.com/homepaaees/ICSA>

The school asks that families register their children as soon as their plans are made, and preferably well in advance of their arrival

Local public and private schools follow French methods of instruction and curriculum, and make no provision for introductory language instruction for non-French-speaking children. Classes in the French system are divided as follows:

(1) "maternelle" or nursery school, ages 3 and 4.

(2) "jardin d'enfants" or kindergarten, ages 5 and 6.

(3) "ecole primaire" (1eme through 7eme), which corresponds to American grades 1 through 5. At the end of the 7eme, all children must pass a national exam to gain admittance to the "Lycee"

(4) ecole secondaire (lycee or college) which corresponds to grades 6 through 12 in American schools. At the end of the last year (grade 13), exams are taken for the baccalaureate.

Public schools no longer enroll non-Ivorian students who did not enter the school system in the first grade. Some very good private primary schools admit non-French-speaking children but generally only in the early elementary grades. Children must have sufficient French fluency to pass exams and survive in the secondary grades. In all cases, enrollment in the better local schools is competitive and should be accomplished as early in the spring as possible for the following school year.

The local school year runs from October to mid-July and is divided into trimesters ending in December, March, and June. Christmas and Easter vacations are at least one week each. Classes meet 5 days a week, Monday through Friday, in the upper grades; in the primary grades students have Wednesday off. Hours vary somewhat in different schools, but morning classes usually run from 7 a.m. to noon and from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

School uniforms, required for attendance at local schools, are not reimbursable. Transportation costs are reimbursable within the limits of total tuition and other school related costs. Limited summer school programs are offered for young children.

Special Educational Opportunities

Private instruction is available for languages, musical instruments, judo and karate, riding, tennis, swimming, and horseback riding. Additional academic tutoring for school children can also be obtained.

Some eligible family members enroll in an intensive French program at the University of Abidjan. Since French is so important for everyday living and social contacts, it is strongly encouraged that you participate in some French-language training program.

Sports

Sports are an integral part of recreational life in the Côte d'Ivoire. For Ivorians, soccer is the most popular sport, followed by basketball and boxing. You can pursue a wide variety of sports activities in Abidjan: aerobics, pool swimming, fishing, bowling, tennis, horseback riding, ice skating, pool and billiards, golf, volleyball, basketball, softball, soccer, and martial arts. Softball is played almost every weekend at the International school. Many of the players participate in U.S. Embassy-sponsored West African competitions. In addition to weekend activities, the Marines offer volleyball at their residence. Sports equipment is available on the local market but the cost is high.

Salt and freshwater pools at major hotels in and around Abidjan are open to the public on a reasonable daily fee basis; a few offer pool memberships. Use of tennis courts can be arranged at local hotels, and memberships and instruction are available at several clubs and hotels. An excellent 18-hole golf course is located at the Golf Club in the Riviera section of Abidjan. Golfers can play there by paying a greens fee or an individual club membership. There is also a 9-hole public course with reasonable fees.

The beaches near Abidjan tend to be dangerous, with extremely treacherous surf. Riptides and heavy

undertow make ocean swimming dangerous. Swimming is not recommended in these waters. You must use extreme caution in supervising young children at the beach. Despite these drawbacks, many families in Abidjan rent small beach lots at Grand Bassam or Assinie with a changing but and shaded picnic table. There are a number of small hotel-restaurants in Grand Bassam where you can spend the day for the cost of lunch. The beach is a close, pleasant weekend escape.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Abidjan is an attractive city, laced with lagoons and close to the ocean, with many hills and lush tropical flora. In and around Abidjan, you can visit the beautiful Cathedral of Abidjan, perched on a hill overlooking the city; the zoo, modest but still enjoyable for children; the Parc du Banco, a virgin rain forest; and the large open-air markets in Cocody, Treichville, and other suburbs. A lagoon boat tour offers an impressive view of Abidjan's skyline.

There are many options for trips outside of Abidjan. It is possible to go north to Korhogo or Comoe Game Park on a 3-day weekend, and there are many pleasant day trips.

Social Activities

A good knowledge of French is essential for developing contacts among Ivorians and Europeans. The Professional Women's Network meets on a monthly basis and features guest speakers of various topics. An international playgroup has been developed for pre-schoolers and toddlers. The American Chamber of Commerce meets monthly and draws its membership from representatives of American businesses operating in Côte d'Ivoire. The "Hash House Harriers" are a group of motivated individuals who meet each weekend and go on excursion runs/walks within and sometimes outside of Abidjan.

Entertainment

Several modern, air-conditioned theaters in Abidjan show European and American films in French. Children's matinees are screened frequently during holiday periods. A cinema club at the French Cultural Center features French film classics.

African theatrical and folkloric presentations are given periodically at various theaters in Abidjan. Most traditional rites are limited to family and village circles, but folk dancing is often the featured entertainment at local hotels. Parades and festivals organized on certain national holidays also feature dancers from all regions of the country. Touring groups, including some well-known French and international performers, offer live theater several times a year at the Hôtel Ivoire, Theatre de la Cite, and the French Cultural Center. Occasionally, foreign embassies sponsor concerts and recitals with visiting and local guest artists.

A variety of restaurants offer French, Italian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Lebanese, Korean, African, and other cuisines. Restaurants range from moderately to extremely expensive, but some *prix fixe* menus are available on certain evenings at several hotels and restaurants. Discotheques and nightclubs around town open after 10 p.m.; the cost of a drink at most nightclubs in 1990 was \$10 (U.S.). A casino is located at Hôtel Ivoire.

Fashion shows featuring French *haute couture* and Ivorian styles are presented several times a year at Hôtel Ivoire for a small admission fee. Exhibits are frequently held by European and African artists in hotels and small gatherings.

Photographers find many worthwhile subjects in Côte d'Ivoire. Local people are often pleased to have their pictures taken, but it is best to ask first and be prepared to pay for the favor. Most types of film are available locally at high cost, and processing is adequate,

although the majority of Americans send their film to the U.S. for developing.

Shopping at the Treichville, Adjame, Plateau, and Cocody markets can be a pleasant leisure-time activity. The animated bargaining that goes into making a good purchase is something of an art form in itself. A good rule of thumb when bargaining for an item is to cut the asking price at least in half, and then move upward slowly to a mutually agreeable price. Traders are appreciative of those who drive hard bargains, and everyone comes away satisfied from such a negotiation. It should be noted, however, that bargaining is not acceptable in artisan shops and outlets where prices are fixed as marked.

Dinners, bridge sessions, cocktails, picnics, and barbecues at the beach are a common form of entertainment in Abidjan, but a good knowledge of French is needed to develop contacts among Ivorians and Europeans.

The Professional Women's Network meets on a monthly basis and features guest speakers on various topics. The American Chamber of Commerce meets monthly and draws its membership from representatives of American businesses operating in Cote d'Ivoire.

Bouaké

Bouaké, north of Abidjan and in the heart of the country, is the second largest city in Côte d'Ivoire. It is on the main road and rail lines from Abidjan to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and is the commercial and transportation center for the interior. Cotton, rice, and tobacco are the chief products of the region. The city has many factories, among them the oldest textile mill in the nation. Bouaké (alternatively spelled Bwake) is the center for Côte d'Ivoire's educational television programming. There is a government hospital in the city, as well as an American mission, and a Benedictine monastery constructed

of interesting local materials. Bouaké also has several mosques. Notable native weavers work in nearby villages. Many visitors make special trips to Katiola, north of the city, where a factory outlet sells distinctive pottery.

Several good hotels and a large *marché* (market) are among the popular spots in Bouaké. A major tourist attraction is the sacred forest of Foro-Foro, several miles outside the city.

Yamoussoukro

The official capital of Côte d'Ivoire has a large hotel, The President, which is normally occupied by tourists. Several splendid buildings can be visited, notably the Basilica, known as the largest cathedral in Christianity. It was built by the former President, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, as his dedication to the city. This is a must-see attraction. In an attractive hilly region nearby is the Kossou Dam, the source of electrical power for Abidjan.

OTHER CITIES

ABOISSO, on the Ghana border, about 90 miles east of Abidjan, is an interesting town with a pleasant restaurant. A short distance away is Ayame, where two dams provide electric power to Abidjan.

AGBOVILLE, two hours from Abidjan, is a provincial inland town which features a colorful market and French-run hotels.

The small villages of **ASSINIE** and **ASSOINDE** lie between the lagoon and the sea, about fifty miles from Abidjan by car and boat. Two large resort hotel complexes are located along the beautiful beaches. Assinie features a Club Med that caters mainly to adults; weekend reservations can sometimes be arranged for a night with full board. The resort village of Assouinde is run by an Italian company and caters to large tour groups from for-

foreign countries. Reservations at Assouinde are for a night's accommodation with full board.

BINGERVILLE, the former capital, is 11 miles from Abidjan. It is surrounded by coffee and cocoa plantations, and enjoys an unusually picturesque setting on a hill overlooking the rim of the lagoon. It is also an educational center, and has a large botanical garden and a school of African art where artisans can be seen plying their crafts. A national boy's orphanage is now housed in what was formerly the colonial governor's mansion.

BONDOUKOU, on the eastern border, is one of Côte d'Ivoire's oldest cities. Founded at least 500 years ago, it grew as the caravan trade increased. Bondoukou became a prosperous agricultural plantation area after the French introduced cocoa in 1914. It is at the center of the Agni kingdom.

COMOE In Comoe Game Park one can find hippopotamus, lions, panthers, elephants, buffalo, warthogs, monkeys, and many kinds of antelope, notably the hartebeest. While the larger animals are rarely seen, it is still a popular trip. A pleasant small hotel in the park organizes full or half-day safaris by Land Rover. By road Comoe is an all-day trip.

FERKESSDÓUGOU, 100 miles north of Bouaké, is a major center of new agricultural development projects. It is predominantly Muslim, as evidenced by the market and mosque.

GRAND BASSAM Located on the seacoast about 20 miles east of Abidjan, Bassam is a favorite weekend escape because of its close proximity to Abidjan, pleasant beaches and hotels, and its interesting shopping. There is a cooperative of craftsmen in the center of town selling masks, brass work, wood carvings, and batik work. A mile-long strip of shops located outside the town of Bassam sells African carvings, carved chests, leather goods,

furniture, jewelry, and tie-dye and wax print fabric. All sorts of African art and paraphernalia can be found in this central area.

GRAND LAHOU A lagoon town three miles to the west. It offers picturesque old buildings, a rustic hotel-restaurant, and both ocean and lagoon swimming. You will experience a nice drive through the rubber and palm oil plantations.

JACQUEVILLE, roughly one-and-a-half hours from Abidjan, with a car ferry ride included, this lagoon town on the beach has a nice hotel-restaurant.

KORHOGO is a bustling city near the Mali and Burkina Faso borders. A seven to nine-hour drive from the capital and a center of Senoufo culture, it has some interesting markets and artisans' quarters with woodcarvers, weavers, and bronze casters using the ancient lost wax technique. Surrounding villages are centers of distinctive cloth painting and strip weaving activities.

The town of **MAN** is a 10-hour drive from Abidjan. It has a somewhat drier and cooler climate, since it lies in the western hills fairly close to the Liberian border. The area is noted for its Yacouba dancers, featuring the "stilt men," as well as its unusual carvings and masks. A nice hotel is in operation here. Somewhat north of town, in the village of Guessesso, is another pleasant tourist hotel.

SAN PEDRO, a new port on the seacoast 300 miles west of Abidjan, has fine sandy beaches, sea fishing, and softwood reforestation plantations.

SASSANDRA, also on the coast, and a five-and-a-half hour drive from the capital, is a town with simple hotels and campsites for those who come to enjoy the lovely beaches.

Travel arrangements can be made to visit any of these towns. Hotels

are comfortable and have good food. Air Ivoire links the country's major regions and provides regular flights to Korhogo, Man, Yamoussoukro, San Pedro, Sassandra, and Bouaké. The railroad passes through Bouaké and Ferkessedougou on the route north to Ouagadougou; this train trip is one of the more interesting travel bargains in the country.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Côte d'Ivoire rests on the Gulf of Guinea, covers 124,500 square miles, and is about the size of New Mexico. It is bounded on the west by Liberia and Guinea, on the north by Mali and Burkina Faso, on the east by Ghana, and on the south by 340 miles of Atlantic coastline.

The southern third of the country is covered by tropical rain forest. A network of interconnecting lagoons parallels the coast from the Ghanaian border 200 miles westward. Important cash crops are grown in the forest belt, but to the north lies a savanna area of lathyratic soil where vegetation becomes more sparse. In the northwest, the Man Mountains (4,800 feet) break the rolling inland plain which rises from the sea to about 1,000 feet in the north. Four rivers—the Cavally, Sassandra, Bandama, and Komoe—flow from north to south.

Temperatures vary in the north, where there is only one rainy season, averaging 51 inches of annual rainfall and 71 percent humidity.

The tropical climate of the south keeps temperatures between 75°F and 90°F, with humidity averaging 85 percent. Two rainy seasons, April to July and September to December, are separated by a short dry season in August. Over half of the annual precipitation (82 inches in Abidjan)

falls in May, June, and July but even then the sun often shines.

Population

Côte d'Ivoire's population, estimated at approximately 15 million, is growing at about 3.8% each year. It includes more than 5 million non-Ivorian Africans, approximately 25,000 French and 10,000 other Europeans, and a community of Lebanese estimated at more than 100,000. All West African states have expatriate communities in Côte d'Ivoire, but by far the largest communities are from Burkina Faso (2,853,000), Mali (1,299,000), Guinea (412,000), and Ghana (305,000) (1996 estimates). Some 150,000-200,000 Liberian refugees reside in western Côte d'Ivoire.

Approximately 50% of Côte d'Ivoire's population is urban, with more than 20% residing in the country's two largest cities, Abidjan and Bouake. The next three largest towns, Daloa, Gagnoa, and Korhogo, each have over 300,000 inhabitants.

The approximately 60 separate ethnic groups in Côte d'Ivoire, each with its own language or dialect, may be grouped into five or six major ethnic categories. Of these, the Akan group includes the largest Ivorian tribe, the influential Baoule who inhabit the center of the country, and the Agni who reside in the east. The north is populated by the Voltaic group - the Senoufo, Koulango, and Lobi. The Mande are divided into northern and southern groups, the more recently established northern Mande, including the Malinke in the northwest and the Dioula who reside around Kong in the northeast. The southern Mande include the Yacouba, Toura, and Gouro, who inhabit the center west of the country. The Krou group consists of 15 tribes, the most prominent being the Bete, who inhabit the center-west and southwest of the country. In addition, there are numerous small tribal groups living along the lagoons on the southern coast of the country, collectively referred to as the Lagoon peoples,

that include the Ebrie, the original indigenous population of Abidjan. With the exception of the southern Mande, established since ancient times, and the Senoufo, residents are the descendants of relatively recent immigrants. The Baoule and Agni, for example, are closely related to the Ashanti of Ghana and immigrated from that region in the 1700s.

Although most recent government statistics indicate that 38% of the population is Muslim and 26% is Christian (most of whom are Catholic), more realistic estimates place the Muslim population between 55% and 65%. Many of these are resident aliens from the Sahel countries. Official government estimates place traditional animist religions at 17% of the population. Some 13% are considered "without religion." Both Muslim and Christian holidays are celebrated nationally. Muslim and Christian populations continue to grow at the expense of the traditional religions. In recent years there has been a large increase in the number of Protestant missionary groups operating in the country, leading to an increase in the Protestant portion of the Christian population. The most significant religious trend, however, is the increasing number of conversions to Islam over the past decade. The Muslim proportion of the population has also been growing from immigration.

Since 1964, polygamy has been illegal. However, it is still widely practiced throughout Côte d'Ivoire through traditional weddings. The courts and other civil institutions do not recognize such marriages. At the same time, monogamy is prevalent among urban and educated groups. The 1964 civil code also bans child betrothal and bride price, and it promulgates rules on civil registry, marriage, separation and divorce, paternity and adoption, succession, and wills. The civil code is designed to provide uniformity for a country with diverse traditional practices. It is also an attempt to

modernize Ivorian society by fostering monogamy, nuclear families, and patrilineal, instead of matrilineal, descent rules. As of 1998, a bill before the National Assembly would also strengthen the legal protections of women's rights.

Public Institutions

The constitution provides for a system of government with a strong executive branch, a single legislative chamber, and a separate judiciary. The executive branch is headed by the President, elected for a five-year term, who is assisted by a Cabinet of appointed ministers.

Constitutional changes passed by the National Assembly in July 1998, creating a Senate, lengthening the presidential term to seven years, and allowing the President to postpone elections, were under discussion with the opposition as of late 1998.

The National Assembly, the legislative body, has 175 members elected by direct universal suffrage for 5-year terms. The Supreme Court is composed of four chambers: constitutional, judicial, administrative, and auditing.

The Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) has been the dominant force in Ivorian politics since its formation in the pre-independence period. A major political development occurred in 1990 when the country held its first multiparty elections. With the December 1993 death of President Felix Houphouët-Boigny, National Assembly President and constitutional successor Henri Konan Bedie became President.

Côte d'Ivoire became a U.N. member in 1960. Maintaining ties with its Francophone neighbors, it is a member of Conseil de l'Entente (a group including Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Togo). Other memberships include the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the West African Economic and Monetary Union

(WAEMU or UEMOA), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS or, in French, CEDEAO).

Arts, Science, and Education

Since independence, Côte d'Ivoire has spent a significant portion of its budget on education. Currently, 43% of the operational budget goes toward education, which Ivorians view as essential for personal advancement and for the overall development of the country. Public school enrollment for 1993-94 was estimated at 2.6 million in elementary schools, 580,000 in secondary schools, and at least 50,000 in higher education.

Academics are respected members of society and, unlike some other Francophone countries in the region, academic institutions are a prime labor pool for ministerial and senior-level government appointments.

The Ministry of National Education administers primary, secondary, pre-university professional, and technical education for the entire country. Professional and technical education is becoming increasingly important as competition for space in the higher education system becomes greater and as the university produces more graduates than there are jobs.

Another ministry, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, responsible for post-secondary general, professional, and technical education, directs all research efforts in the country and works closely with Ivorian students abroad. Agreements for educational exchanges, Fulbright programs, training programs, and other bilateral and multilateral educational programs are all arranged through this ministry.

Until the beginning of the 1992-93 academic year, Côte d'Ivoire had only one university, the National University of Côte d'Ivoire, which

was established in Abidjan in 1963. The initial student capacity of the National University was 7,000. For more than a decade, a large number of Ivorians enrolled there before they pursued graduate studies in France or elsewhere.

However, the steady growth in the number of students entering higher education in Côte d'Ivoire has outstripped the ability of the Government to provide adequate facilities. This has resulted in the university having to accommodate up to 28,000 students per year in facilities planned initially for only 7,000 students. During the 1993-94 academic year, the National University added two other affiliated campuses in Adjame-Abobo (an Abidjan suburb) and Bouake, the second largest city located in the center of the country.

Apart from the National University, there are other institutions of higher learning. As Ivorians at the National University begin to look beyond the French educational models, closer ties have been established between Ivorian research institutions and American institutes, such as the Ivorian Center for Social and Economic Research (CIRES) and the Center for Audiovisual Teaching and Research (CERCOM), have a large number of U.S. graduates on their staff and, consequently, are receptive to American innovations in education. Supplemental to the National University are Côte d'Ivoire's five grandes écoles, modeled on the French system, which are prestigious institutes of higher learning designed to train Ivorians in specialized technical fields which used to be dominated by French expatriates in the country. Three institutes (ENSTP, INSET, and ENSA), specializing in civil engineering, management and business, and agriculture, respectively, are located in the first president's hometown of Yamoussoukro, a 2 1/2-hour drive north of Abidjan. Admission into the three schools is more difficult than to the National University (which is open to all who have a baccalauré-

ate or high school diploma); applicants must pass rigorous written and oral tests to be accepted. Also, unlike the university, students graduating from these institutes have a better chance of securing employment. In fact, until the recent economic crisis, many of the students went directly from schools into slotted positions in the government and private sector.

The other two grandes écoles, in public administration (ENA, modeled after its French counterpart) and teacher training (ENS), are located in Abidjan. They supply a steady stream of civil servants and teachers for the government. ENA also has training courses for junior and mid-level government cadres. The best and brightest technocrats study at the grandes écoles.

Côte d'Ivoire has approximately 90 government and 100 private high schools, the graduates of which are all eligible to attend the National University. Approximately 2,000 Ivorians teach English in these schools.

Various research institutes study coffee, cocoa, rubber, cotton, oils and oleaginous plants, forestry, and marine life to determine the best strains, growing conditions, control of natural enemies, efficient production, and processing techniques. African and U.S. institutions maintain close contact regarding research in these fields of research.

The National Museum, with a small but excellent collection of local art and artifacts, was renovated in 1988. Artisan training centers are located in Bingerville, Grand-Bassam, Daloa, Korhogo, and other places upcountry.

Because of Côte d'Ivoire's reputation for stability, the spending power of its elite, and the active nature of Abidjan's French Cultural Center, many African and European artists and entertainers appear here on a regular basis.

For art and objets d'art collectors, Abidjan has several small but well stocked private art and sculpture galleries which are frequented by both expatriates and elite Ivoirians.

Writers and filmmakers are also viewed as important in defining a national ethos. Their views on society, as expressed in their works and in press interviews, are featured in the cultural sections of the newspapers and on television and radio.

Commerce and Industry

Since the colonial period, Côte d'Ivoire's economy has been based on the production and export of tropical products. Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries account for over one-third of GDP and two-thirds of exports. Côte d'Ivoire produces 35 to 40 percent of the world's cocoa crop every year and is a major exporter of bananas, coffee, cotton, palm oil, pineapples, rubber, tropical wood products, and tuna. The January 1994 devaluation of the CFA Franc and accompanying structural adjustment measures generally favored the agricultural sector by increasing competitiveness. However, reliance on raw cocoa and coffee exports, which account for 39 percent of total exports, exposes the economy to sharp price swings on world markets for these commodities. The government encourages export diversification and intermediate processing of cocoa beans to reduce this exposure. This policy has yielded results, processed cocoa exports were up 35 percent in 1997, with new processing plants coming on stream. Electricity exports to neighboring countries are also up sharply, and Côte d'Ivoire's oil refinery will soon expand its capacity to process (mostly Nigerian) crude oil for re-export.

By 1998, Côte d'Ivoire succeeded in straightening out its daunting debt problem, a legacy of its economic problems of the 1980s. Though Côte d'Ivoire got back on track with its official creditors, both bilateral

(Paris Club) and multilateral (IMF and World Bank), resolution of its outstanding commercial bank debt was not completed until 1998, when Côte d'Ivoire signed a new 3-year IMF program. This IMF program allowed not only the commercial bank deal (London Club) to go forward, but also opened the door to the Paris Club rescheduling and Côte d'Ivoire's inclusion in the IMF/World Bank debt forgiveness initiative for highly-indebted poor countries (the HIPC initiative). All of these events, particularly the London Club deal, have reduced Côte d'Ivoire's public sector external debt from USD 16.2 billion at year-end 1997 to about USD 12.0 billion at year-end 1998. If Côte d'Ivoire adheres to the ambitious reforms required by the new IMF program, the HIPC initiative will provide additional debt forgiveness in 2001 by the Paris Club and, for the first time, the World Bank and IMF, thereby reducing the country's debt burden to about USD 9.1 billion.

Côte d'Ivoire's economic performance was impressive over the 1995-97 period. Real GDP growth was 7.1 percent in 1995, 6.8 percent in 1996 and 7.0 percent in 1997. The country has been meeting its IMF targets for growth, inflation, government finance, and balance of payments. Traditional commodity exports were boosted both by the devaluation and by higher world prices for cocoa and coffee (though improved prices in local currency terms were only partially passed through to farmers). At the same time, the devaluation and the generally favorable business environment produced growth in non-traditional crops, local processing of commodities and expansion of the service sector. In 1996, according to government statistics, inflation fell to only 3.5 percent, as the government continued to keep a tight lid both on salary increases and on the size of the public sector work force. In 1997, the consumer price index edged up to 5.2 percent.

Public sector finances are another bright spot: government revenues

are on a strong upward trend since 1993, rising from 847 billion CFA in 1994 to 1,348 billion CFA in 1997. The stronger revenue picture, when combined with restraint on the spending side, has resulted in four years of primary surpluses (i.e., receipts minus expenditure, excluding borrowing and debt service). Following a concerted government repayment effort, domestic arrears had been virtually eliminated by the end of 1996. But lapses in controls on spending during 1997 caused delays in IMF approval of the new three-year plan (ESAF) until February-March 1998.

The outlook for the near and medium term in Côte d'Ivoire remains positive. The government hopes to attain double-digit real GDP growth. This goal appears achievable only in a best-case scenario, including continued or enhanced investment flows, additional oil or mineral production, and no drop in world commodity prices. Short of this optimistic scenario, a continuation of 6-7 percent growth for 1999 and 2000 appears likely. Absent a sharp drop in cocoa or coffee prices, there are no looming threats to the country's current boom.

It is important to bear in mind when considering these positive trends that Côte d'Ivoire remains a country confronted by a vast array of developmental problems and challenges: environmental, medical, demographic, educational and economic. Progress on all these fronts will depend on Côte d'Ivoire staying the course on its adjustment policies.

Transportation

Trains run daily between major cities in Côte d'Ivoire.

Air Ivoire serves the country's principal cities. Airfares are very expensive. Tour rates are available for travel to points of interest within the country, and small planes are available for charter. Air travel to neighboring countries is expensive,

heavily booked, and subject to numerous delays. Daily flights can be booked to many European capitals on European or African carriers. Air Afrique has the only direct flight to New York (with a stop in Dakar), twice a week, and offers special fares. Special group fares, between Abidjan and New York are available.

Taxis are plentiful in Abidjan, and metered by law. Fares are moderate, but double after midnight. An extensive bus and "bush-taxi" network operates in and around Abidjan. Buses, which tend to be crowded, are rarely used by Americans, except for some new air-conditioned express buses operating between hotels and the city.

Car rentals can be arranged easily on a daily or weekly basis, but they are fairly expensive.

A personal vehicle is necessary for those on extended assignment in Abidjan. Foreign cars can be shipped to Côte d'Ivoire, but customs clearance procedures should be initiated early. Practically all foreign cars can be purchased locally at favorable prices. Compact cars are preferable because of the high cost of gasoline. Third-party liability insurance, registration, and drivers' licenses are mandatory. Insurance is available locally from the American International Assurance Company, an affiliate of American International Insurance Underwriters, or Les Assurances Conseils.

Automobile makes sold and serviced locally include Fiat, all Japanese, all French and most German cars. American spare parts must be ordered from the U.S., and parts for European cars may have to be ordered from Paris. It is advisable to ship a supply from home before moving to Côte d'Ivoire.

Driving is on the right. The custom of yielding to the car on the right (*priorité à droite*) prevails in the absence of traffic lights or posted stop signs. The high accident rate makes defensive driving necessary.

A national law requires that passengers wear seat belts and that children under 12 yrs. of age ride in the back seat.

Most roads in Abidjan are paved, and macadam roads lead to major towns throughout the Côte d'Ivoire. Secondary roads are laterite and become corrugated after heavy use. Other roads are little more than dirt paths, sometimes heavily rutted and dusty during the dry season, and slippery and treacherous during the rainy season. Occasional floods and washouts on roads outside Abidjan interrupt traffic for several days at a time. Heavy-duty vehicles are essential for trips into the more isolated areas.

Communications

Local telephone service is generally adequate. Direct-dial to most countries is available from home phones but is not recommended due to constant billing errors. It is recommended that travelers obtain an AT&T or MCI calling card since these are the only American calling card plans currently available in Côte d'Ivoire. Internet access is available through local service providers.

Airmail to or from the U.S. takes from one to two weeks. Packages can be sent and received by international mail, but it is time-consuming and involves considerable negotiation and completion of forms in French at the Post Office.

Radio and TV

Despite the increasing availability of satellite television, radio is still the most important medium in Côte d'Ivoire. Government-owned Radio Côte d'Ivoire broadcasts in French and several national languages on two FM frequencies. It also broadcasts a one-hour evening news program in English. The second station, *Frequence II*, plans to broadcast outside of Abidjan its mix of music and talk shows geared to a younger audience.

Radio Nostalgie, affiliated with a French network of the same name, broadcasts a 24-hour stereo mix of music on FM in Abidjan, with regular news headlines in French during the day. It is the most popular station in Abidjan. Radio France Internationale (RFI), which until recently was confined to short-wave, now relays its program of French news and features via a FM transmitter in Abidjan. The British Broadcasting Service (BBC) transmits on FM in Abidjan a mix of its London-based African service in French, some locally produced French language programming and selected world news and focus on Africa programs in English. Libreville, Gabon-based Africa Number 1 heretofore transmitted on short-wave now also transmits its popular French language programming on FM to Abidjan.

Short-wave remains the best vehicle for receiving international news in English. Most of the major international services, including the VOA and BBC, are heard clearly in Abidjan. A multiband set is advised. A 110v radio will require a transformer.

Ivorian television operates on two channels in Abidjan, one of which is seen in many interior towns. The program day generally begins at noon on the main channel, with continuing broadcasts on the weekends and some weekdays. Both channels operate each evening until around 11 pm. Programming consists mainly of news and special events, with reruns of old French and American TV programs and movies (dubbed in French), as well as some local programming and both foreign and domestic cultural programs. In addition, there is a private subscription television service, Canal Horizon, that features sports, current movies, and other programming in French 21 hours a day, as well as TV5, an international consortium that broadcasts programs produced in Francophone countries and regions worldwide. Local videos in both French and (some) English are also available for rent, mostly in the

SECAM and PAL TV formats. To receive local TV broadcasts, as well as to view the wide range of videos available locally and within the American community (or sent from home), a multisystem TV set and VCR are recommended.

Satellite dish receivers are growing in popularity in Côte d'Ivoire, with hundreds installed on houses, apartment buildings, and businesses throughout Abidjan. Many signals, both coded and uncoded, are available in the skies overhead, including two French channels, CNN, BBC, Bop TV, and Worldnet/C-span, and M-NET.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Nine daily and a half-dozen principal newspapers are among the several dozen local French language publications produced in Abidjan. Focusing primarily on local news, most of them represent the views of a political party or party faction, although a few are independent. The dailies draw mainly from the wire services for their international news stories, mostly from Agence France Presse. The largest daily, the government controlled *Fraternite Matin*, offers the full range of news, sports, commentary, and human interest features, plus comic strips. The opposition daily *Notre Voie* offers similar, though more limited, coverage. Independent daily *Le Jour* offers the most balanced political reportage. A number of specialty newspapers and magazines cover fashion, sports, entertainment and the arts, restaurants and what's happening about town.

Several current American and British newspapers and news and specialty magazines, including the *International Herald Tribune*, the international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, and *The Economist* are available in Abidjan from bookstores, street kiosks, and from itinerant vendors. All of the major French newspapers and magazines are also available, as are other African and some Spanish, German, Italian, and Lebanese publications.

Subscriptions to U.S. magazines and newspapers arrive by pouch 2-3 weeks after their publication date.

Recently, an English language bookstore, *The Book Shop*, opened carrying a variety of periodicals, children's books, school supplies and various other items and selections that are comparable to U.S. prices. Bring a supply of books or join a book club to receive new books regularly. Book clubs should be notified that you are an overseas member with slow mail service.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Abidjan has the best medical facilities in West Africa. The *Polyclinique Internationale de Ste. Anne Marie (PISAM)*, the hospital used most frequently by the American community, has a 24-hour emergency room, intensive care unit, dialysis, five surgical suites, x-ray and CT scan facilities. Most physicians have trained in France as well as Côte d'Ivoire. The hospital staff includes nearly all the major medical and surgical specialties.

Routine dental care can be found in Abidjan. Dental offices are modern and equipment sterile. There are several orthodontists. However, it is recommended that more elaborate dental work be done prior to arrival.

Eyeglasses and contact lenses are very expensive in Abidjan. It is advisable to bring at least two pairs of glasses and extra contacts and know the source from which more can be ordered.

There are modern pharmacies in Abidjan, but they carry chiefly French brand names. Persons taking medicines chronically should bring sufficient quantities from the U.S. When necessary, prescriptions can be sent to the U.S., but delivery through the mail is often slow. The Health Unit stocks essential medicines for treatment of acute ill-

nesses, emergencies, and some tropical diseases.

Mental health needs are met by the regional psychiatrist. Counseling is available and is confidential. Medications are in limited supply at the Health Unit. Medications taken on a regular basis should be obtained from your psychiatrist/ MD in the U.S.

Preventive Measures

Sub-Saharan Africa has 90% of the world's AIDS cases, 90% of the world's deaths from malaria, and a large portion of the world's deaths from dysentery. However, these problems can be avoided during a prolonged stay in the region. AIDS is contracted only by sexual contact and blood products, not by casual contact, preparing food, or courtesy kissing.

To prevent malaria, which has increased dramatically in the region during the past five years, prophylactic medications are taken routinely. Mefloquine (*Lariam*) taken weekly or doxycycline taken daily are extremely effective in preventing malarial illness. Doxycycline cannot be taken by pregnant women or children under nine years of age. Chloroquine with paludrine provides only about 65% protection and therefore cannot be recommended as a first choice. Mefloquine is started one week (two doses) before arrival and doxycycline is begun one day before arrival. Anti-malarials should be taken for four weeks after leaving the area, along with primaquine (if normal G6PD) to eradicate latent liver forms. Mosquito repellents containing greater than 17% DEET are recommended when outdoors.

All the infectious diarrheas can be avoided by proper food cleansing and water purification. Fresh vegetables must be washed in chlorinated water (one tablespoon 5% Clorox in one gallon of water) or cooked. Abidjan is a very modern city by West African standards, with adequate water and plumbing. Bottled water is also safe to drink.

Because of arising incidence of active tuberculosis, it is recommended that a skin test for tuberculosis (the PPD) be done annually for PPD-negative Americans stationed in Côte d'Ivoire. Persons who convert to a positive PPD, which indicates new tuberculosis infection, are treated with isoniazid for six to nine months. This treatment markedly reduces the risk of developing illness.

Most of the fresh water in Côte d'Ivoire contains schistosomiasis, a parasite which causes insidious problems in bowel and urinary function. For this reason, visitors should never swim in fresh water. The water in the many lagoons along the coast is sufficiently salinated to prevent schistosomiasis.

All West African countries require a yellow fever vaccination. Therefore, it is mandatory to have this vaccination before traveling to the region. In addition, vaccination against meningococcal meningitis, typhoid, hepatitis A and B, as well as the routine childhood vaccinations are recommended. The routine childhood vaccinations are available for the children of families assigned to Abidjan.

Roads in Côte d'Ivoire are some of the best in West Africa. But, as might be expected, good roads bring high speed driving, rush hour congestion, and accidents. It is important to bring car seats for children.

Abidjan is in the tropics. Sunblock should be brought and used liberally. The beaches are beautiful, but surf conditions demand constant vigilance of children. Rip tides and undertows make ocean swimming perilous, and drownings are distressingly common.

Abidjan is an enjoyable city. In spite of the health risks, good health can be maintained while living in Abidjan.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Vaccination against yellow fever is required to enter Côte d'Ivoire. Ivorian officials generally verify that appropriate inoculations have been obtained before issuing the initial entry visa. No rules cover the entry of cameras, perfume, tobacco, and liquor in accompanying baggage, but only reasonable amounts will be passed without question.

Travel within Côte d'Ivoire is unrestricted. However, the Ivorian Foreign Ministry requests notification whenever official travel of officers on the diplomatic list is contemplated upcountry. Travel to neighboring West African countries invariably requires a visa.

A passport is required. U.S. citizens traveling to Cote d'Ivoire for business or tourism do not require visas for stays of 90 days or less. For longer stays a visa or "carte de sejour" is required (NB: "cartes de sejour" are not issued to children under the age of 16; they are covered under their parents' "carte de sejour"). Travelers may obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, 2424 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 797-0300. There are honorary consulates for Cote d'Ivoire in San Francisco and Detroit. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Cote d'Ivoire embassy or consulate

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Cote d'Ivoire are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire and obtain updated information on travel and security within Cote d'Ivoire. The U.S. Embassy is located in Abidjan at 5 Rue Jesse Owens, mailing address 01 B.P. 1712, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, telephone (225) 20-21-09-79, consular

fax (225) 20-22-45-23, central fax (225) 20-22-32-59.

Special Note: Outside the American community in Abidjan, little English is spoken. A knowledge of French is essential for shopping, sight-seeing, and conducting business.

Pets

No quarantine or restriction on the importation of pets exists, but a veterinarian's certificate of rabies vaccination dated within 1 year of arrival and a recent certificate of good health should accompany the pet.

Do not schedule the arrival of unaccompanied pets on weekends, holidays, or after 7 pm, as the customs and transit agencies close at 8 pm. Pets arriving after normal working hours remain in the customs cargo shed until the next workday.

Côte d'Ivoire requires the payment of a 10% customs fee, and a 20% added value tax (TVA) on all pets under 6 months old. Taxes are determined by the Côte d'Ivoire Government, based on the value of the pet, or on the bill of sale for the animal.

Firearms and Ammunition

Ivorian regulations on the importation of firearms and ammunition have been undergoing revision for some time.

Indications are that one would be allowed to import firearms and ammunition, but that the paperwork could outweigh any benefits. Ranges and hunting clubs are virtually non-existent.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Côte d'Ivoire is part of the franc zone. The CFA franc, the official currency of Côte d'Ivoire, is the currency of the Communauté Financière Africaine, a financial grouping of the Francophone African countries. The CFA franc is fully convertible with the French franc at the

rate of 100 CFA francs to 1 French franc. The average exchange rate in December 1999 was about 68 CFA to US \$1.

The metric system is used for all weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Pentecost Monday*
Nov. 15	National Peace Day
Dec. 7	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Tabaski (Id al-Adah)*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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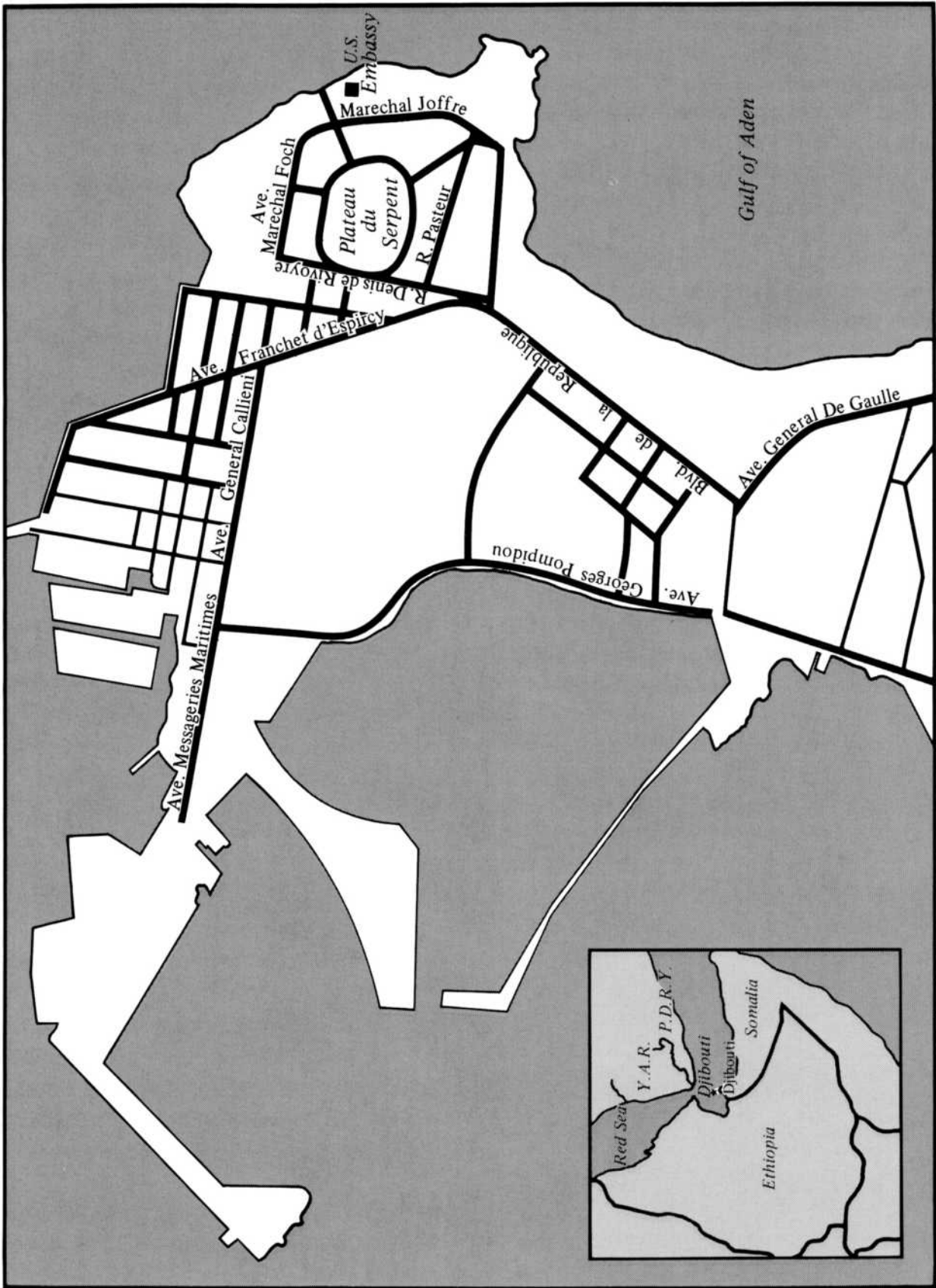
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Djibouti, Djibouti

DJIBOUTI

Republic of Djibouti

Major City:

Djibouti

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated December 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

DJIBOUTI, a tiny city-state tucked between Ethiopia and Somalia, has been one of Africa's most stable and secure nations since gaining its independence from France in 1977. It was known for nearly a century as French Somaliland, and briefly as the French Territory of the Afars and Issas. A large percentage of its population of 560,000 is nomadic, herding in the country's harsh, stony desert and low, barren hills.

Djibouti is a nation with an open society—a crossroads where Africa, the Middle East and, in many ways, Europe meet. Its Afro-Arab culture is spiced with post-colonial French influence. It has been said that Djibouti is “the set from *Casablanca*,

the geography of Death Valley, the cast of *Beau Geste*, and the spirit of a Graham Greene or Joseph Conrad novel.”

MAJOR CITY

Djibouti

The city of Djibouti, capital of the republic and largest city in the country, is built on three coral islands, joined by filled-in causeways, on the Gulf of Aden. The influence is more Arab and Muslim than African, but the people are a mixture of races from Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

Djibouti's town population is about 493,000. A large French colony exists here, and many stores are owned and operated by European merchants. Sizable numbers of Arabs and Yemenis, and some Indians, also have similar businesses in the capital.

The local markets are colorful, but neither large nor clean. Since Djibouti is a port city, almost anything can be found in the stores or markets. Items are imported from India, Thailand, Burma, Taiwan, the People's Republic of China, Eastern and

Western Europe, and the United States.

The architecture is old-style French colonial/tropical, and the spacious, older houses are built for hot weather, with excellent cross ventilation. The newer homes are smaller and many have air conditioning.

Westerners find that living in Djibouti can be comfortable, however quiet the pace. In addition to the United States, other countries are represented in the capital, including the People's Republic of China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Iraq, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen.

Education

French-speaking education is available in French- or Djiboutian-run schools from kindergarten through high school. All curricula follow the French system, and no English-language schools exist. No special educational opportunities, such as universities and museums, are available.

A knowledge of French is essential in Djibouti. Those who speak Arabic or Amharic are able to use those languages in most non-European situations.



Street in Djibouti, Djibouti

© Wolfgang Kaehler/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Recreation

The life-style in Djibouti is gentle and informal, although social life can be busy. Activities tend to revolve around home and family, plus boating, beach outings, or safaris to the interior. Some culture shock may be experienced upon arrival, but usually this is temporary. The torrid climate also necessitates a period of adjustment.

The majority of Americans live an outdoor life of tennis, swimming, and snorkeling; some are members of the Cercle Hippique (riding club).

Djibouti has only a few pools, but beaches are plentiful, fairly clean (outside the city proper), and enjoyable. Diving and snorkeling are popular sports; the coral and fish are spectacular. It is important to provide one's own equipment for these activities; a small air compressor for divers is useful, as local ones do not always function properly.

Deep-sea and surf fishing, water-skiing, and wind surfing also are possible. The use of small sailboats is limited to the October-through-May season.

The Club des Cheminots provides judo, karate, and gymnastic classes. The Club Hippique in Ambouli

offers horseback riding, but all equipment should be brought from home as it is expensive locally. Jodhpurs should be washable and lightweight.

Djibouti's landscape offers excellent photography subjects. Permission to photograph people must be obtained beforehand, and this usually requires a monetary payment. Cameras and film are available, but processing must be done in Europe or the U.S.

Bird-watchers find the limited species interesting. From August through May, water birds can be seen on their southward and northward migrations.

Weekend trips can be arranged to the Forest of Day, Lake Assal, Lake Abbe, and Ardoukoba (the volcano which erupted in 1978).

Entertainment

The French Cultural Center sponsors monthly concerts, legitimate theater, dance (ballet and modern), and has an extensive French book and film library. Several open-air cinemas show French-language films.

Almost all entertaining is done at home. Several good restaurants in

the city serve French and Chinese food.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Djibouti is situated in the Horn of Africa on the continent's east coast. It encompasses 8,400 square miles (21,883 square kilometers), and is about the size of Massachusetts. It is bordered on the north and west by Ethiopia, on the south by Somalia, and on the east by the Gulf of Aden. Djibouti shares with Ethiopia and the Republic of Yemen direct access to the strategic strait of Bab el Mandab ("Gate of Tears"), which controls the southern approach to the Red Sea.

The capital city of Djibouti is a verdant oasis in an area of dry watersheds composed of low hills and rough, torrid desert. To the north of the Gulf of Tadjoura, the terrain is more varied, with a large desert region rising to Mount Mousa Ali, at 3,600 feet the highest point in the country. Also to the north is the Forest of Day, a national park on Mount Goda. In the last vestige of the forest which once covered the area, several rare species of plants, trees, and birds may be found. About 80 miles west of the capital is Lake Assal, a unique natural phenomenon over 500 feet below sea level. This salt lake is the lowest point on the African continent, and the second lowest point on earth (after the Dead Sea, which is 1,296 feet below sea level).

In addition to the city of Djibouti, the country has four provincial capitals: **OBOCK**, **TADJOURA**, **DIKHIL**, and **ALI SABIEH**. These centers provide the focal points for the nomads who herd in the country's barren interior.

Because of its peculiar geographical location between the Ethiopian and Yemeni escarpments, Djibouti gets

little precipitation. Occasional rains occur mostly in the hills of the interior, but the average rainfall is only five to 10 inches; some years are rainless.

Djibouti sits astride the East Africa, Red Sea, and Gulf of Aden rift systems, providing a singular environment for studying movements of these three tectonic plates. The location also provides an abundance of earthquake, volcanic, and geothermal activity. More than 600 tremors are recorded every year, but few are strong enough to be felt.

Djibouti's hot season is from May through September, when temperatures range from 100°F to over 120°F. During this period come the hot, sandy winds of the northeastern *Kahm Sin*. The cooler season lasts from October through April, providing refreshing breezes and temperatures that dip into the 80's. Humidity is high throughout the year.

Population

Djibouti has an estimated population of 455,000. Of these, two-thirds live in or around the capital. Unlike most other African countries, the nation is inhabited by only two major cultural groups, the Somali Issas and the Afars. Arabs comprise less than five percent of the population.

Little is known about the area's original inhabitants. Archaeological investigations in the west and north confirm settlement of this zone by Oromo and other Cushitic peoples now dwelling in Ethiopia. The Oromo are thought to have been known to early Greek and Egyptian voyagers in the Red Sea area about the time of Christ. The development of Islamic communities in the lowlands of Cape Horn is well documented, and this area probably provided troops to the many conflicts between the Islamic lowlands and the Christian highlands of Ethiopia.

Nearly all of the geographical names in Djibouti are of Afar origin, suggesting their longtime presence

in the region. Somali ethnic expansion into the Horn has been the subject of many studies, but there is scanty information about the confrontation between the Afars and the Somali groups spreading north into the territory around Djibouti. Historians are certain that the arrival of foreigners (Turks, Egyptians, British, French, and Italians) caused greater population movements in the interior.

Djiboutians are heir to a strong tradition of individuality, independence, and hospitality. They are known for their friendliness to Westerners in their midst. Djibouti City is one of the less crime-prone capitals of Africa.

Government

On May 8, 1977, the people of the French Territory of the Afars and Issas voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence; seven weeks later, on June 27, the Republic of Djibouti was born.

The National Assembly has 65 elected members and, with few exceptions, ministers are chosen from these elected representatives.

A new 1992 constitution provided for multiparty politics. In 1999, Ismail Omar Guellah was elected to a 6 year term as president.

As a result of a defense agreement made with France during the transition from territory to republic, Djibouti hosts some 3,200 French military personnel, including the Foreign Legion. The French also have assumed responsibility for creating a national army. Djibouti's navy and air force are small, but efficient.

The flag of Djibouti consists of blue and green horizontal bands with a white triangle enclosing a red star at the upper left.

Commerce and Industry

Most of the country's commerce centers around the maritime and commercial activities of the Port of Djibouti; the international airport, Djibouti-d'Amboulie; and the railroad, Compagnie du Chemin de Fer Djibouti-Ethiopian, which is the only line serving central and southeastern Ethiopia. The railroad did not function during the Ethiopia-Somalia War of 1977-78, but has since reopened. This line handles a significant portion of Ethiopia's import and export trade.

Services and commerce, mainly because of the substantial French military presence in Djibouti, account for most of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The greatest part of the country is desert, with virtually no arable land. Only about 200 acres are under cultivation. Agriculture accounts for only three percent of GDP. Crop production is limited to mostly fruits and vegetables. Djibouti's industrial capacity is limited to a few small-scale enterprises, such as dairy products and mineral-water bottling. Mineral deposits are extremely limited. However, considerable potential exists for using geothermal energy. The country is heavily dependent on foreign aid to finance projects.

The Chambre Internationale de Commerce et d'Industrie is located at place Lagarde, B.P. 84, Djibouti; telephone: 351070.

Transportation

Djibouti is linked to Europe by several Air France flights per week to Paris. Flights are also available to Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa (Ethiopia), Jeddah, Sanaa, Taiz (Yemen), Reunion, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Dubai, and Cairo.

Slow but inexpensive rail travel is available between Djibouti and Addis Ababa. Rail travel suffers from overcrowding, lack of travel

support infrastructure en route, and the potential for banditry.

Most Americans in the area have private vehicles, which can be imported duty free. Registration is standard, and a driving permit easy to arrange. Traffic moves on the right. The best service facilities are for Toyota, Daihatsu, Isuzu, Peugeot, Renault, and Suzuki. It is advisable to choose a light-colored car (to reflect sunlight) with air-conditioning and complete rustproofing. Local laws require yellow headlights. Standard-drive autos are adequate for city driving; four-wheel-drive vehicles are used only for cross-country trekking. It is an advantage to use diesel fuel because of the high price of gasoline in the country.

In the capital, inexpensive bus and taxi services are available, but are often in poor condition and driven erratically. Taxi fares are controlled, and rates are posted in the vehicles.

Communications

The telephone system in Djibouti City functions reasonably well and is reliable. Long-distance calls are via a satellite system to France. Direct-dial service to the U.S. has recently been made available, although rates are about three times as high as for calls initiated in the U.S. Outside of Djibouti City, there are few telephones. An international radio telephone service connects Djibouti with Europe.

Domestic and international telegraph service usually is dependable. All airmail letters should be sent through U.S. Department of State facilities. Letters from the U.S. can take up to two weeks or longer to reach Djibouti; mail from Djibouti to the U.S. requires about six days for delivery.

Television and radio programs are broadcast by the government station, Radiodiffusion-Télévision de Djibouti (RTD). There are 24 hours of radio and seven hours of television daily; TV news is given in French, Afar, Somali, and Arabic,

and usually is followed by a feature film, nature program, documentary, or sports program. Many expatriates have VCR's. The U.S. Embassy has a video club which purchases current films and keeps a well-stocked library in both VHS and Beta format.

Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) can be received on shortwave radio. A set that operates on both AC and batteries is useful.

Time, *Newsweek*, and the *International Herald Tribune* arrive from Europe. French newspapers, magazines, and books are readily available.

Health

Djibouti has no major infectious diseases. Routine immunizations currently are required for cholera and yellow fever for persons arriving from affected areas. Endemic diseases in the country include extensive polio, tuberculosis, and hepatitis A, but these maladies are due to diet and social circumstances and present little danger to Americans.

Because the tap water is brackish in Djibouti, Americans and Europeans use bottled mineral water for drinking, ice cubes, coffee, and tea. Unpeelable fruits and vegetables should be soaked in a chlorine solution.

Persons arriving here from a temperate climate require adjustment to the intense heat. More rest, fluids, and salt intake are needed; copious amounts of water prevent kidney stones and other medical problems.

Once infected, any wound heals slowly. Bites, scratches, or other skin penetrations require prompt treatment to prevent infection.

Prescription drugs and personal medical supplies for which there is no substitution should be brought to

Djibouti; French pharmacies are adequate, but their supplies differ from those in the U.S. Prescription glasses should be brought in pairs. Strong sunglasses are essential for everyone.

Clothing and Services

Washable, lightweight clothing is the only practical attire for Djibouti. Adequate dry cleaning is available, but expensive. Clothing wears out quickly from frequent washing; shoes also have a short life in the hot climate. A few articles of warmer clothing (sweaters or shawls, a cotton jacket, a tropical suit) are useful for the cooler season or for travel; neighboring Arta, for instance, is cool at an altitude of 1,200 feet. French-made clothing can be bought in the city at high prices.

Informality is the rule in Djibouti. Suits are seldom worn, even for formal evening functions; slacks and sport shirts are standard for men, and cotton dresses and sandals for women. Women find that both long and short style dresses are popular for special functions. Nylon hosiery is never worn. Every family member needs sports clothes and bathing attire, and a hat (either straw or cloth) for protection from the sun.

Djibouti Muslims do not practice widely the custom of *purdah*. The severe restrictions on women's dress and employment opportunities, evident elsewhere in the Arab world, are not observed here. Common sense and good taste are, however, in order.

Children's clothing should be lightweight. Bring a generous supply of underclothes, jeans, long- and short-sleeved polo shirts, and a few sweaters. Small children wear a minimum of clothing during the hottest months, often only shorts. Several pairs of sandals are needed; sneakers or jellies (rubber sandals) are used for swimming and for walking across hot sand. Shoes can be found locally, but are expensive.

Despite all these admonitions, the climate in Djibouti is reasonably comfortable for most of the year (October through May).

Most services are available, although they can be either expensive or rudimentary. In Djibouti City, there are several beauty and barber shops. The best European salon provides good service, but prices are high. Appointments are required.

Tailoring and dressmaking is fair. Dry cleaning is available, but expensive.

Domestic Help

Domestics are not highly trained and their salaries are high by African standards. Night guards will also water gardens while they are on duty.

It is advisable, if possible, to hire a domestic who has worked for other Americans. Frequent supervision in the kitchen and throughout the house is necessary, and personal cleanliness should be stressed. Some families provide towels and soap for their domestics for use before starting the day's work and before serving food.

In addition to salaries, the employer provides the necessary uniforms (white) and pays into the local social security system which includes medical care. All employees are entitled to one month's paid vacation each year. Depending on length of service, either notice or severance pay is required before termination of employment. A fifteen-day trial period is imposed, during which time there is no obligation on the part of the employer or employee.

Domestics should sign for all money received and employers should keep receipts in order to avoid disputes.

All domestics should have medical examinations prior to employment to screen out the possibility of tuberculosis.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

European air connections for Djibouti can be made in Paris, Marseilles, and Nice.

Visas are required. Proof of yellow fever and cholera immunization must be submitted by persons arriving from infected areas.

Pets are not quarantined, but must have valid health certificates and documentation of rabies inoculation. Veterinarian care in Djibouti is intermittent and of varying quality. Dogs are considered filthy by Muslims. It should be well noted that Djiboutians will not touch dogs; few dogs are seen, and no rabies exists in the country.

In the capital, masses in French are conducted at the Roman Catholic Cathedral on Saturday and Sunday evenings (Sunday is a regular workday). English-language Catholic mass is celebrated on alternate Fridays. A French-language Protestant church has Sunday evening services. The Red Sea Mission conducts ecumenical services in English on Sunday mornings. There is no provision for Jewish worship.

The time in Djibouti is Greenwich Mean Time plus three.

The official currency is the Djibouti franc (DF). Among the capital's several banks, all providing good facilities, are: Banque de l'Indochine et de Suez, Mer Rouge; Banque pour le Commerce et l'Industrie, Mer Rouge; the British Bank of the Middle East; Commercial and Savings Bank of Somalia; Bank of Credit and Commerce International; and Commercial Bank of Ethiopia.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

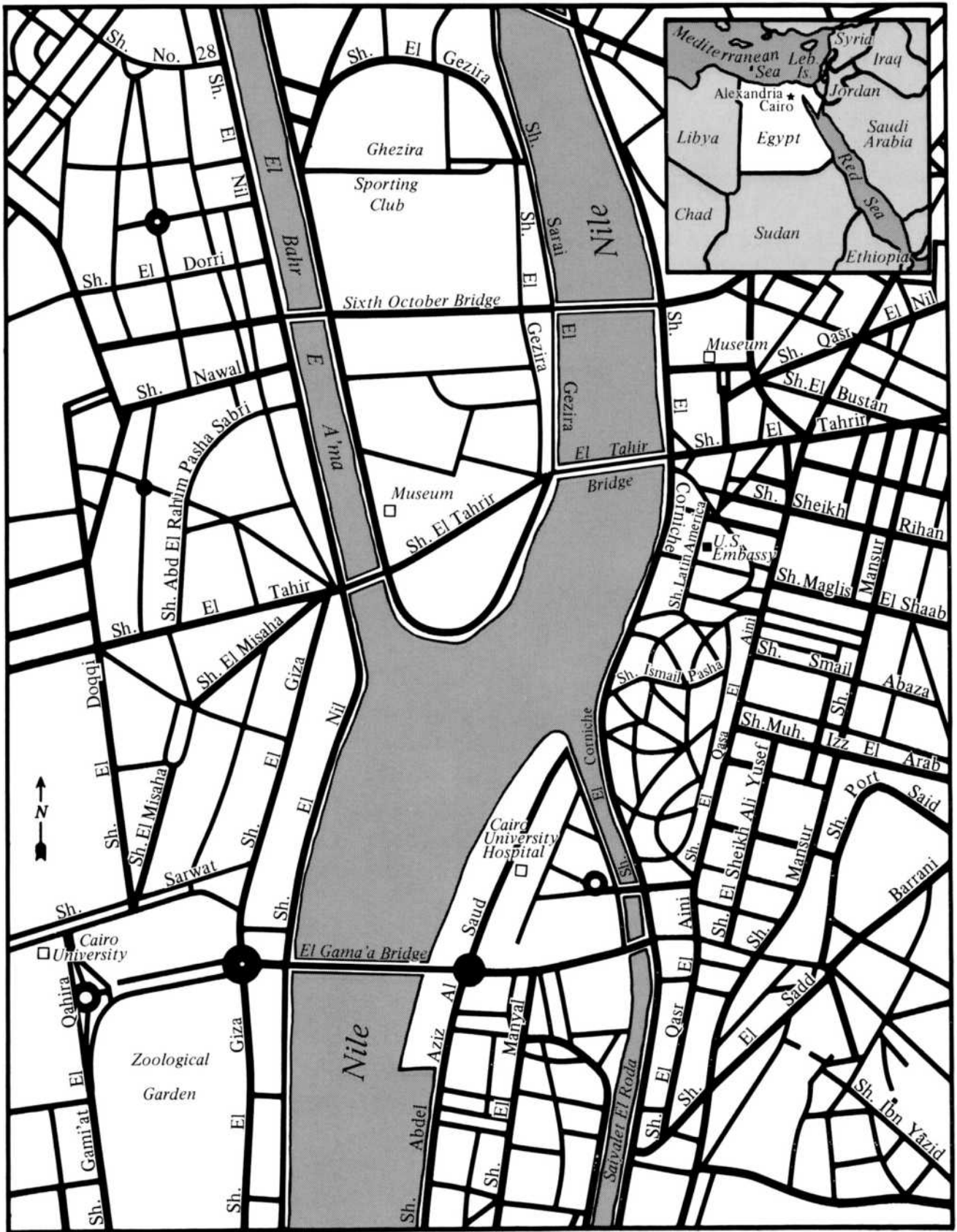
LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1New Year's Day
 - May 1Labor Day
 - June 27 & 28Independence Day
 - Dec. 25Christmas
 -Id al-Adha*
 -Hijra New Year*
 -Mawlid an Nabi*
 -Lailat al-Miraj (Ascension of the Prophet Mohamed)*
 -Ramadan*
 -Id al-Fitr*
- *variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Countries of the World 1993.*
Detroit: Gale Research, 1993.
- Africa South of the Sahara 1992.*
London: Europa Publications, 1991.
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Cairo, Egypt

EGYPT

Arab Republic of Egypt

Major Cities:

Cairo, Alexandria, Aswan

Other Cities:

Abu-simbel, Akhmim, Asyût, Beni Suef, Giza, Idfu, Ismailia, Luxor, Port Said, Suez, Tanta, Zagazig

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Located at the crossroads of the Middle East and Africa, EGYPT has fascinated travelers for thousands of years. Its stone monuments are scaled to giants. Of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Giza pyramids alone endure. Superlatives continue to the present: Egypt has the highest dam, the largest textile mill, and the oldest university. Nowhere else are the masterpieces of Islamic art and architecture to be seen as in Cairo, the city of a thousand minarets, great "Mother of the World."

Egypt is the land of motion within the stillness of centuries. The silent white wing of a felucca sail on the ancient Nile co-exists with the

cacophony of the street traffic's seemingly random chaos. The pounding noise of construction, the cries of street vendors, the braying of donkeys, the rhythm of an ever-expanding city is absorbed by the eternal quiet of the desert. The brooding figures there have seen 5,000 years of foreigners come and go, while Egypt remains Egypt. Egypt is a new land built upon layers of history—Pharaonic, Coptic, and Islamic. It is a country with an ancient past that first began to govern itself in 1952. It is a people struggling to merge heritage, tradition, and contemporary life.

Egypt is a country that does not give up its secrets easily. It is an explorer's land, a place to find treasures, whether in spices, jewels, or copper in the bazaar; a restored 17th-century house in Old Cairo; or flowers blooming in the desert after a rain. Rewards for the traveler are rich. For those who stay to "drink the water of the Nile," the rewards are magnificent.

MAJOR CITIES

Cairo

In 2000, Cairo had an estimated population of 10,772,000. The urban

area stretches from Shubra in the north to Helwan in the south; from the Moqattam Hills in the east to Giza in the west. This megalopolis legally encompasses all of the Cairo governorate, most of the Giza governorate, and a small part of the Qalyubia governorate in the north.

Near two of the newest suburbs archeologists have found some of the area's oldest remains. West and south of Maadi, Neolithic communities flourished about 4000 B.C. Heliopolis was once home to an important religious and intellectual center. One of a pair of 22-meters high, pink granite obelisks, dating from the 12th Dynasty reign of Senusert I, circa 1950 B.C., remains. Another pair of obelisks, dating from the reign of Tuthmosis III, of the 18th Dynasty, circa 1450 B.C., were later exported. One now stands in London, the other in Central Park in New York City.

From its seventh century origin, Cairo flourished as the "victorious city" under a series of Moslem rulers. Just one of its masterpieces of Islamic architecture would be the pride of a city, but Cairo has hundreds of outstanding mosques, madrassas (schools), and palaces. Inside the medieval walls, the Khan el-Khalili bazaar flourishes.

The foreign contingent of the population lives and works in many neighborhoods. Garden City, on the east bank of the Nile, where the Embassy is located, borders the modern downtown section, with shops, squares, hotels and markets. The island of Gezira has both Embassy-owned and leased housing in its Zamalek residential area. This island was once restricted to foreigners only, who lived and played by the fields of the Gezira Club.

On the west bank, Mohandessin, Agouza, Dokki and the Giza areas all have Mission residents. These downtown neighborhoods offer the excitement of big city living, with museums, shops and restaurants nearby, as well as proximity to the Embassy.

South, about 8 miles, is the suburb of Maadi, home of Cairo American College, the international school most American children attend. Its shaded streets and local shopping area contrast with Cairo's bustling atmosphere.

Food

Egyptian cuisine features vegetables, fruits, grains and pastas. Locally grown vegetables include potatoes, onions, garlic, lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, celery, green beans, beets, carrots, green and red cabbage, spinach, okra, radishes, turnips, eggplant, parsley, dill and mint. Local fruits include bananas, apples, citrus, mangoes, melons, dates, figs, grapes, papayas, strawberries, pears, coconuts, persimmons and pomegranates.

In the more traditional shops, poultry and seafood are sold every day of the week, but red meats are sold only on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. For religious reasons, pork and products containing pork are sold only in special shops. But these customs are not observed in the newer supermarkets and neighborhoods with large foreign populations.



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Ancient district, "sayedna el-hussin," Cairo, Egypt

Popular beverages are hot tea, sweetened and often served in a glass, Turkish coffee and carbonated drinks. Local and imported bottled water, both still and sparkling, is available, as are locally produced wine and beer.

Clothing

Men: Slacks and a short-sleeved shirt with tie is common dress during the summer months. Office attire is generally more relaxed than in Washington D.C. A dark suit is commonly worn for dinner parties or other evening functions.

Summer entertaining is frequently outdoors, and casual dress for summer evenings is common. Egyptians do not wear shorts in public. Clothes can be made to order at very reasonable cost. Tailors often stock their own fabrics but will also make clothes from fabric you supply. Several fine shirtmakers are available.

Women: Since Egypt is a Moslem country, discretion should be observed in clothing. Sleeveless and low-cut blouses and dresses, mini-skirts, tank tops and shorts will give offense to most Egyptians and should not be worn in public. You will feel more comfortable in below-the-knee skirts or slacks or pant-

suits and find flat walking shoes more comfortable and safer.

Office clothing is the same as is worn in Washington D.C. Seasonal dresses are appropriate for teas, luncheons, and other daytime functions. Egyptians may wear far more ornate clothes than Americans.

Since the transitional seasons are not clearly defined, warm-weather clothing is suitable from April through October. Cottons and drip-dries are most popular during summer months for comfort. Wools, sweaters and light jackets are worn in winter. Warm dresses, suits, long-sleeved blouses and sweaters are all useful in Cairo. In winter, light-to-medium-weight coats are useful.

Sun hats and caps are worn on the beach and on desert outings. Although locally made handbags are attractive in design and price, shoes, whether readymade or made-to-order, are generally less satisfactory. Open-toe shoes are not advised.

Several boutiques carry ready-made clothing matching U.S. taste and quality expectations, but at expensive prices. Dress-makers are available, but quality varies. The many fine fabric stores in Cairo stock a

good variety of Egyptian cotton and silk.

Children: Cairo American College's dress code for grades 6 to 12 expects students to wear what's appropriate both for a learning institution and the local culture: modest and neat. Specifically prohibited are: cut-offs, torn clothes, shorts shorter than 3" above the bend of the knee, shirts and blouses not covering the shoulders, tank tops and midriffs. Wearing hats and caps in class requires the classroom teacher's approval. Shoes or sandals should be worn at all times and clothing worn in P.E. classes should not be worn in other classes. Final judgment on acceptable appearances is reserved by the College's administration.

Locally manufactured sandals are available and inexpensive.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Although the availability of supplies is improving greatly, selections are still limited, and imported items are expensive. But most things can be found after a persistent search.

Basic Services: Dry-cleaners, tailors, barbers, hairdressers and shoe repair services are easily found locally while the E-mart offers both laundry and drycleaning. Clothing repairs and reweaving are Cairene specialties.

Religious Activities

Five times a day, from thousands of minarets, muezzins call Moslems to prayer at the mosques, to reaffirm their faith in Islam. But non-Moslems must not enter a mosque during prayer time and should respect the sensitivity to their dress and behavior at all other times. Unless you are specifically invited to enter a neighborhood mosque, only the designated Tourist Sites are accessible to non-Muslims.

Cairo also offers a range of places of worship. The monthly magazine *Egypt Today* lists churches holding services in English.

Education

Cairo American College (CAC), founded in 1945, is a private, co-educational day school serving students from 56 countries in kindergarten through 12th grade in a general, college-prep curriculum.

The address for official correspondence is: Superintendent, Cairo American College, Unit 64900 Box 21, APO AE 09839-4900.

On a campus of 11 acres in the Maadi Digla suburb, kindergarten through 2nd grade classes are housed in low buildings; 3rd, 4th and 5th grades are in a three-story building; grades 6 through 8 are together in a separate structure. Grades 9 through 12 are in the secondary school complex, which includes six science labs, the media center and rooms for computer and business education.

The industrial and the fine arts departments occupy separate buildings.

There is a 600-seat theater, a gymnasium, swimming pool, 400-meter track, soccer field, weight-training area and tennis, volleyball and basketball courts.

The school year runs from mid or late August to early June and includes 175 school days in two semesters and four quarters. Classes are held Sunday through Thursday.

To be eligible for a CAC high school diploma, students must complete 23 units, spending a minimum of four years in high school and their entire senior year at CAC. All the graduation requirements must be satisfied before their 20th birthday.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is offered. Students may participate by undertaking the full IB Diploma, taking a package of IB certificates or enrolling in IB courses without the external examinations.

Secondary school students enroll in seven classes daily. The curriculum

includes English, social studies, science, math, physical education, foreign language (Arabic, French, Spanish) and English as a 2nd Language for grades 9 and 10. Electives include music, drama, art, computers, business and industrial arts courses.

Middle school (grades 6, 7 & 8) students enroll in eight classes daily, including English, social studies, science, math, physical education and elective courses in applied, fine and performing arts and foreign languages. English as a 2nd language is also offered.

Elementary school includes kindergarten through 5th grades. The program includes reading and language arts, science, math, social studies, physical education, music art and Arab culture. Foreign languages (Spanish, French or Arabic) are available to grades 3-5 and English as a 2nd language to grades 1-5.

The school buzzes with student activities including language clubs, concerts, plays, art exhibits, a model UN and athletic events. At the high school level, students involved in these various activities make trips to Europe and the Middle East for competitions.

Bus service is available to CAC from most areas of Cairo. Many children living in Maadi ride bicycles to the school but the roads are rough and a heavy-duty model is needed.

CAC requests you have the last school the child attended send transcripts and school records directly to the Office of the Registrar. For seniors, three years of records are required; two, for other grades. You may want to bring an extra copy of these transcripts if you'll be arriving near the beginning of the school year.

Three CAC medical forms also must be completed before admission, including a full report of a physical examination made no more than four months earlier.



Pyramids outside Cairo, Egypt

Courtesy of Arlene Kevonian

Families with children having learning disabilities should carefully weigh the acceptance of an assignment in Cairo. CAC has a limited program for resource-room support but no self-contained classroom services. The school offers a maximum of one period for resource assistance per child per school day. You must confirm directly that they will be able to accept the child, given the learning disability and CAC's facilities. Before deciding, parents should write to the superintendent at the school's address given above and discuss their options with the Office of Overseas Schools in the Department of State.

CAC reserves the right to refuse admittance to any child not meeting its academic standards. Kindergarten students must be 5 years old prior to September 30.

Most textbooks are from U.S. publishers and are furnished by the school. Students must supply notebooks, paper and pencils, available at the school store. Lunch is not provided. A small cafeteria sells snacks and light lunches.

In addition to CAC, there is the U.S.-accredited American International School in Nasr City and other schools organized by French, Ger-

man and British educators. Space availability fluctuates constantly, parents should seek current detailed information. There are often lengthy waiting lists for entrance to the non-American schools, particularly the British School in Zamalek.

Special Educational Opportunities

College Level Courses: The American University in Cairo (AUC) has undergraduate and graduate courses to audit or take for credit. Courses in Islamic Art and Egyptology are popular, as is the master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language. About 1,000 undergraduates pursue degrees in Arabic studies, English and comparative literature, political science/sociology and other fields. Master's degrees include economics, management and sociology/anthropology.

The AUC Center for Adult and Continuing Education has part-time courses for working professionals in computer science, engineering, travel and hotel service, translation and interpretation. A catalog is available from the public relations office in Ewart Hall or AUC's office at 866 United Nations Plaza, New York City, NY 10017. (Enclose \$2.) The University of Maryland's Euro-

pean Division has been offering lower and upper level undergraduate courses since 1989. Five eight-week terms are scheduled per year and credits are transferable. The CLO has up-to-date information and catalogs.

Community Courses: In Maadi, the Community Services Association (CSA) offers a variety of daytime and evening classes and special programs on such subjects as Egyptology, personal development, various hobbies and other interests.

Instruction in art, music and dance is available. Pianos may be rented or purchased but it takes patience to find a good one.

Membership in the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) is tax-deductible and permits you to join their Archaeology Club, which sponsors at least one lecture and tour a month.

The Egyptian Exploration Society, sponsored by the British Council, has bimonthly lectures on ancient Egypt.

Sports

Sports activities include golf, tennis, softball, volleyball, soccer, swimming, horseback riding, squash, jogging, fishing, diving and hunting. For downtown residents there are private clubs. Membership is usually open to foreign residents and waivers and discounts on their annual fees are offered, but they are still relatively expensive.

The Gezira Club in Zamalek has two swimming pools, basketball, tennis and squash courts, a golf course, croquet lawn, a race course and a running track. Next door is a riding club while the Shooting Club in Dokki attracts skeet-shooters.

Several commercial riding stables are located near the Giza pyramids and used by many Embassy employees.

The yacht clubs may arrange for boating adventures but are restau-

rants, primarily. Feluccas can be hired, casually, at many places along the river, for as long as you want. A picnic or sunset cruise for six or eight people is a typical summer activity, with the north wind providing motion and coolness.

Soccer is the national sport with well-attended matches being played every weekend around the city.

The Cairo Divers meet once a month and organize trips to the Red Sea, one of the world's finest diving locations. Instruction in diving is offered through several sources.

Other energetic local groups are the Cairo Rugby Club and the Hash House Harriers, a non-competitive group holding pre-sundown fun runs on Fridays, which are for walkers, too. The Cairo Classic is an annual running and cycling event. *Egypt Today* magazine carries contact numbers in its listings.

Cairo American College has a 25-meter long pool and an active and varied swimming program for all ages, which runs throughout the year. This pool is open to the immediate family of students, at selected hours, for a fee.

CAC has two large playing fields and a children's play-ground. A circular 1/4 mile track is a popular site for jogging after hours and on weekends. Children's activities held on weekends include soccer and Little League baseball for ages 6-13.

The Maadi Club, a private organization, has two pools, croquet, tennis courts, stables and big crowds on weekends.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

In Egypt, one lives in the shadow of the pharaohs, the sultans, the caliphs and the emirs. The legacy they left can be seen today in the great monuments and buildings. A trip gives a unique opportunity to visit some of the outstanding sites of world history. You can go alone, with a guidebook, map and a few words of Arabic or join a group. Without

leaving metropolitan Cairo, you can visit the walls of the citadel Saladin built to withstand the assault of the Crusaders, see medieval houses with harem windows, private gardens, mausoleums, mosques and palaces. You can wander down streets full of tent and saddlemakers or other traditional craftsmen, still at work.

In solitude the visitor can see the petrified forest just outside Maadi or, amidst crowds, spend time at the Zoo or the pyramids and the Sphinx at nearby Giza.

Many archeological sites are within a day's drive: Saqqara, Memphis, Maydoun and Hawara. Two villages, Harania and Kerdassa, are known for their fabrics, rugs and weaving.

With a few restrictions because of security considerations, many areas are accessible by car: Alexandria and other cities in the Delta; the Mediterranean beaches; the Suez Canal cities, Port Said and Ismailia and the Red Sea resort of Hurghada; Fayoum, the "land of roses" and other cities along the River Road to Aswan as well as much of the Sinai.

There are nine oases in the Western Desert. Since 1958 a project for agricultural development has been underway in these natural depression areas. Some are below sea level, all have artesian wells. Already they provide many economic benefits.

Siwa, isolated in the northwest, is famous for its Berber culture, bird migrations, dates, olives, Cleopatra's bath and Alexander's pilgrimage in 331 B.C., when he sought certification of his hereditary relationships with Zeus and Amun, the ram-headed god.

Mediterranean, Sinai and Red Sea resorts are also served by combined flights and bus tours. Luxury boat trips in Upper Egypt between Aswan and Luxor include such famed archaeological sites as Kom

Ombo, Esna, Edfu and Abydos. Abu Simbel is accessible by air and road.

Local travel agents can plan and confirm trips. As prices vary with the seasons and the number of tourists, it is best to plan in advance and keep in touch for last minute changes. All flights must be reconfirmed before the return departure. Hotel reservations and boat charters need to be monitored but not paid in full in advance of your arrival.

Entertainment

Ballets, concerts, plays and dance troupes schedule performances all year. Theatrical productions are held at the Howard Theater, the New Theater and the Children's Theater at AUC. The Cairo Opera House has a year 'round program including touring ballet companies, musical programs, plays and exhibitions at reasonable prices. The Maadi Community Players, the Cairo Players and the Greek Theater Group at AUC all produce plays.

The Government of Egypt's Center for International Cultural Cooperation and the French, Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish and U.S. Cultural Centers all present readings, lectures, concerts, plays, films and exhibits.

Feature films are shown at the American Cultural Center, Ewart Hall of AUC, the Maadi Club and at Maadi House.

A film festival brings a selection of foreign films to local screens each fall. Shown with Arabic subtitles, English-language films dominate the offerings, although many are not new releases.

Clubs throughout the city and at major hotels feature Nubian and Egyptian performers. The shows usually start around 11 p.m.

Cairo has a large number of restaurants, ranging from small, inexpensive, noisy neighborhood places serving local specialties through fast food franchises doing chicken

and hamburgers, frozen yogurt, pizza and doughnuts to the luxury halls with European and Middle Eastern menus. The big hotels contain restaurants with a variety of price levels. River barges offer food with entertainment.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The Maadi House Recreational Center has activities for all ages in a homelike atmosphere. For tots, play groups under the super-vision of volunteers, are available. The garden is a pleasant social center with tennis courts and lawns for quiet repose by the pool. Karaoke nights, videos, exhibits and other events are organized by the manager.

The Women's Association and the Maadi Women's Guild have educational, philanthropic and social programs. The Petroleum Wives Group is open to the community and involved in activities. Cub Scout, Brownie and Girl and Boy Scouts are active.

Special interest groups include: bridge, yoga, the Choral Society and the CAC Parent Teacher Organization. Summer Circus and Awesome Adventures are summer vacation time programs of activities sponsored by CSA for children aged three to 13.

International Contacts: Some groups that meet are the CAC Women's International Club; the American Chamber of Commerce, which has a monthly luncheon; the All Nations Women's Group and the Baladi Association for the Preservation of Nature. The sports-minded can meet members of the international community at clubs and tournaments.

Alexandria

Alexandria (El Iskandariyah), with a population of 3,995,000 in 2000, is the second largest city in the country. It was founded in 331 B.C. by Alexander the Great and, for more than 1,000 years, was the capital of Egypt and a center of Hellenic cul-

ture rivaling even Athens. It was the site of the Pharos Lighthouse, one of the "Seven Wonders of the World", and of the magnificent Library of Alexandria, which housed the greatest collection of ancient times. Founded by Ptolemy I, the library was burned during Julius Caesar's invasion in 48 B.C. St. Mark introduced Christianity into Egypt early in the Christian era, and was martyred in Alexandria in the year 62.

In contrast to Cairo, Alexandria has a more outward looking and cosmopolitan air. It is a leading commercial center, the home of nearly half of Egypt's industry, and its chief port. Industries in Alexandria produce cotton textiles, paper, chocolate, processed foods, asphalt, and oil.

The city is built along 20 miles of low sand dunes between the Mediterranean and Lake Mareotis (Maryut). Its principal commercial area is close to the busy port, and stretches along the eastern harbor. Most Europeans and wealthy Egyptians live east of downtown, within a few blocks on either side of the main boulevard, Avenue Horreya.

With its mild climate and sandy beaches, Alexandria is a favorite summer resort for more than a million visitors each year, the bulk of whom are from within Egypt or the Arabian Peninsula. The weather at that time is pleasant and, although humidity is often high, there is normally a cooling breeze. In winter, homes are cold, but days are frequently sunny and bright. Alexandria receives about eight inches of rain a year, as well as some storms accompanied by strong gales. Flooding and power outages often occur.

Education

The Schutz American School in Alexandria, which attracts students from many parts of the Middle East, provides classes from preschool through grade 12. Founded in 1924 as a Presbyterian school for children of missionaries in the Middle East, it has grown into an independent institution governed by a board

of American and Egyptian directors, and supervised by an American headmaster.

The Schutz faculty and administration is composed mostly of Americans. The school has a capacity of 250 students. In addition to Americans, Schutz accepts foreign students from a variety of diplomatic and foreign business families.

Schutz's two campuses span a total of three acres. There are 20 classrooms, an auditorium/gymnasium, cafeteria, two infirmaries, a 20,000-volume library, tennis court, playing field, two science labs, a computer lab, and swimming pool.

The curriculum offers courses in science, math, English, social studies, and Middle Eastern cultural studies. Courses in Arabic and French are also taught at Schutz. Extracurricular activities include art, music, crafts, sewing, cooking, typing, photography, computer instruction, dance, drama, gymnastics, and various field trips. Schutz has an excellent record on college admissions. The academic year runs from September to June. The school is coeducational. Information on entrance requirements can be obtained by writing to Schutz School, P.O. Box 1000, Alexandria.

Alexandria also has two English-language nursery schools, an English Girls' College, Sacred Heart School, Nasr Boys' School, Victoria College, St. Marc (French), and a German Girl's School, offering primary and secondary education in Arabic and other languages. Few American children are enrolled in these establishments.

Recreation and Entertainment

Alexandria's weather and location on the Mediterranean provide opportunity for a varied sports life for the adventurous and the versatile. The coast around the city is good for rod and reel fishing. During winter, duck shooting is possible on Lakes Mareotis and Edko, and a variety of migratory game birds, quail, turtle dove, sand grouse, and

bustard are found within easy reach of the city, on the fringes of the desert. Snorkeling and swimming are popular. Scuba diving is prevalent, mostly along the Sinai and Red Sea coasts.

Of the several recreational and social clubs in the city, the Alexandria Sporting Club, with almost 30,000 members, is the largest. Here are offered a large swimming pool, golf course, lawn croquet, bowling green, basketball and tennis courts, a gymnasium, physical therapy department, a race course, and a riding school. Another sports club, Smouha, has a golf course and a riding school. The Egyptian Yacht Club provides opportunities for sailing, rowing, swimming, and diving. Water skiing is possible, but rental skis are not available.

The Hunting and Shooting Club at Qait Bay has trap, skeet, and box pigeon shooting several times a week, and will help make arrangements for interested hunters and for its members on the lakes. The Alexandria Club is a popular, private downtown luncheon and supper club. Monthly dinner meetings by the Egyptian-American Friendship Association are held at this site. Membership in all organizations is composed of foreign residents and Egyptians, and annual fees are reasonable, varying slightly among the clubs.

As everywhere in Egypt, Alexandria has antiquities well worth visiting: Pompey's Pillar, a Roman amphitheater at Kom El Dekka, catacombs of Kom al-Shqafa, Al-Shatby Necropolis, the Tombs of Al-Anfushi, the Tombs of Mustafa Kamel, and the exhibits at the excellent Graeco-Roman Museum. A jewelry museum, large antique *souk* (bazaar), an Islamic fortress, historic mosques, and a wide variety of attractive urban architecture contribute to Alexandria's unique Mediterranean flavor.

The fortress of Qait Bay, overlooking the harbor, features an aquarium and a naval museum.

Alexandria also has an attractive zoo and botanical garden.

Memorials of the World War II battle at El Alamein, including cemeteries of the British, German, and Italian troops, are 65 miles west of Alexandria on the coast road. A war museum, with battlefield relics, maps, uniforms, and medals of the combatants, is also there. A well-attended commemoration is held each October.

Alexandria is widely known as a seaside resort. Many Egyptians and foreigners rent houses, apartments, or cabanas in the city, west in Agami and Sidi Abdel Rahman, or east in Montazah and Maamoura.

A number of social and cultural events are held here in winter. Several national cultural centers give language lessons and sponsor art exhibits, film showings, concerts, and guest performances. Every two years, the Fine Arts Museum presents the *Biennale*, a special display of art from Mediterranean countries. The city has some good film theaters. The American Cultural Center also screens and offers programs of interest to Egyptians and Americans.

Summer beach parties are popular among members of the foreign community in Alexandria. Informal dinners, cocktail parties, bridge parties, and other impromptu entertainment are common.

Aswan

Aswan is located in southern Egypt on the right bank of the Nile, about 10 miles north of Lake Nasser. Its 2000 population was estimated at 219,000. Aswan is a popular winter health resort, an administrative and commercial center, and has a huge, fascinating bazaar. There are several industries in Aswan. These include a cement plant, a sugar refinery, a steel plant, and marble quarries.

In ancient times, the city was called Syene or Seveneh, and described in the Bible as the southern limit of

Egypt. It is the site of the ruins of a temple built by Ptolemy Euergetes. Aswan has become an important industrial center since production of hydroelectricity began here in 1960. A chemical fertilizer plant is the largest of the new industries.

The creation of Lake Nasser and the construction of the Aswan High Dam (built 1960-1970, dedicated 1971) required the relocation of 90,000 people and many archaeological treasures. Under the auspices of United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization UNESCO, the Nubian Temples at Abu-Simbel were moved (1963-1968) to a cliff above the old site. In return for financial assistance, the United States was given the Roman Temple of Dendur. It was disassembled, shipped to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and reconstructed.

Elephantine Island is a small piece of land, less than a mile long and a third of a mile at its widest point, situated in the Nile River within viewing distance of Aswan. It is a quiet spot, away from the big-city atmosphere of Cairo, and the perfect place for relaxation, especially from October through April when the weather is excellent. Passage to Elephantine Island is via a free, three-minute trip on one of two hotel ferries shaped like the ancient reed boats used by the pharaohs. The only hotel on the island is the Aswan Oberoi, considered one of the best in Egypt. All 150 rooms have balconies and excellent views, and are comparatively reasonable in price, even in the peak season. There are no cars on the island. The only motorized vehicles are the two vans used by the hotel to transport visitors from the ferry. Nightlife on Elephantine Island is practically nonexistent, although there is a belly dancer at the nightclub. During the day, a *felucca* (lateen-sailed boat) can be rented for a nominal fee to sail as far as the Nile's First Cataract. The island has ruins of temples built in the second century B.C., as well as a small museum which exhibits some of the local antiquities.

OTHER CITIES

The village of **ABU-SIMBEL**, or Ipsambul, is located on the Nile about 20 miles from southern Egypt's border. It is the site of two temples hewn from rock cliffs, and of colossal statues of Ramses II, built during his reign, about 1250 B.C. The temples were raised 200 feet in 1966 to escape the advancing waters of Lake Nasser, which rose with the construction of the Aswan High Dam. UNESCO solicited funds from 52 nations to salvage the treasures. The statues of Ramses II and the temples were cut into 950 blocks, raised, and reassembled farther inland.

On the east bank of the Nile River, **AKHMIM** is almost 250 miles south of Cairo. Once an ancient Theban city, Akhmim now produces silk, sugar, and pottery. The city serves as a center for date, cotton, sugarcane, and cereal processing. Industries such as clothing, brick, and textile manufacturing are represented here. Akhmim has a substantial number of Coptic Christians. The population estimated is over 70,000.

ASYÛT, located on the Nile, about 250 miles south of Cairo, is the largest commercial center in central Egypt. There are several ancient sites in the city, including the remains of a culture dating to 4500 B.C. Today, Asyût is known for its ivory carvings, pottery, and rugs. In addition, there are modern textile mills and a fertilizer plant. A teachers college and a university are located in Asyût. In 1996, the population was approaching 334,000.

BENI SUEF is 68 miles south of Cairo on the Nile River. The city has a marketplace for trading cereals, sugarcane, and cotton. Beni Suef's industries include cotton ginning, textile manufacturing, and flour milling. It is on the main rail line along the Nile. The population was estimated at 172,000 in 1996.

GIZA, also known as El-Giza or Al-Jizah, is a suburb of Cairo, situated

on the left bank of the Nile. With a population of about 2,156,000 in 2000, it is a well-known resort that is also the center of Egypt's motion picture industry. Giza is an agricultural trade and manufacturing hub, producing cotton textiles, cigarettes, and footwear. Other industries produce iron products, wood products, cement, automobile parts, textiles, beer, and footwear. The University of Cairo and a center for research on schistosomiasis are located here. Other educational institutions in Giza include an ophthalmic research center, the Higher School of Applied Arts, and the Academy of the Arabic Language. Giza is best known, however, for the Pyramids and the Great Sphinx, which are located five miles west of the city. Ten miles to the south, a visitor can spend an entire day exploring the Step Pyramid (the first-built before 2000 B.C.) and necropolis in Saqqara (Sakkara). Between Giza and Saqqara lie the ruins of the Fifth Dynasty pyramids of Abu Sir. These can be seen on a three-hour safari by camel or Arabian horse, easily arranged by any hotel or travel agent in the Giza area.

IDFU lies on the west bank of the Nile in the southeastern region, 60 miles north of Aswan. The city is best known for the Temple of Horus, the sky god. Preserved intact, the temple was begun by Ptolemy III Euergetes in 237 B.C. and completed in 57 B.C. Idfu trades dates, cotton, and grain with nearby communities. It is linked to the Cairo-Aswan railway by a bridge across the Nile River.

ISMAILIA (in Arabic, Al Ismā'īlyah is a halfway point on the Suez Canal, 65 miles northeast of Cairo. It is the seat of the Suez Canal administration. Ferdinand de Lesseps, the chief engineer for the construction of the canal, founded the city in 1863 and used it as a base of operations. Part of the population had to be evacuated and resettled elsewhere in Egypt during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, when Israeli forces shelled the city. Today, Ismailia, with a burgeoning population of 254,000 (1996 est.), is an

important commercial and rail center.

LUXOR, whose population was estimated at 1360,500 in 1996, lies on the Nile in central Egypt, about 110 miles north of Aswan and 310 miles south of Cairo. It is situated on part of the site of ancient Thebes. The greatest monument of antiquity in the city is the temple to Amon, built during the reign of Amenhotep III. The temple was altered by succeeding pharaohs, especially by Ramses II, who built many statues to himself on the grounds. The temple was converted to a church in early Christian times; later, a shrine to a revered Muslim was constructed in the great hall. Beginning in 1883, the temple was restored. Other temples and burial grounds are also in the vicinity, including the Valley of the Kings and the famed Tomb of Tutankhamen (King Tut). Luxor is home to numerous churches and mosques. There is also an airport, railway station, and a ferry service. In recent years, a new museum and modern tourist facilities have been constructed.

PORT SAID, or Bur Sa'id, is a Mediterranean port at the entrance of the Suez Canal, just over 100 miles northeast of Cairo. The city was founded in 1859 by the builders of the canal. It is connected to Cairo by a railroad that was completed in 1904. During the Sinai War of 1956, the city was severely damaged by air attacks and invasion by French and British troops. During the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1967 and 1973, Port Said came under Israeli attack, and the harbor was closed to shipping for six years. Major industries include textiles, glass, automobile batteries and tires, watches, china, cosmetics, fishing and salt, which is produced by the commercial evaporation of sea water. Port Said is the fueling point for ships using the Suez Canal. The estimated population was 461,000 in 2000.

The city of **SUEZ** lies at the southern tip of the Suez Canal, about 80 miles east of Cairo. It was a small village throughout most of its history, becoming a major port only

after the completion of the canal in 1869. The economy of the city suffered when the canal was closed during the Arab-Israeli Wars. Heavy damage was incurred in the 1973 war, and Israeli forces occupied parts of the city. Suez (or Al-Suweis), with an approximate population of 417,600 (1996), is a center for restoring and refining oil and for manufacturing petroleum products, paper, and fertilizers. A railroad links the city with Cairo and Ismailia. Suez is a departure point for pilgrims traveling to Mecca.

TANTA is in northern Egypt, in the Nile River Delta about 60 miles north of Cairo. This city of approximately 371,000 (1996 est.) is a cotton-ginning center as well as the main rail hub of the delta. Three annual festivals are held in Tanta in honor of Ahmad al-Badawi, a 13th century Muslim figure, who is buried here in a mosque. Traditionally a center for Arab learning, a branch of Al-Azhar University is located in the city. Tanta University opened in 1972 and another college opened in the early 1980s. Several industries are located in the city. These include cottonseed oil extracting, wool spinning, flour milling, petroleum refining, and the production of pasta and tobacco products.

The city of **ZAGAZIG** is 47 miles north of Cairo on the Nile Delta and the Ismailia Canal. The city, an important road and railway junction, has markets for cotton and grain. It is linked by rail or canal with Nile Delta cities. Zagazig is two miles southeast of the ruins of Bubastis, an ancient city (also called Tell Basta). The population was about 267,300 in 1996.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Arab Republic of Egypt is located in northeast Africa and, with the Sinai Peninsula, extends



Cityscape of Port Suez, Egypt

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

into southwest Asia. It consists of 1,002,000 square kilometers of land. There are three land borders: Israel, Libya, and the Sudan, as well as four water barriers: the Mediterranean Sea, Gulf of Suez, Gulf of Aqaba, and the Red Sea. Most of the country is part of the band of desert stretching from the Atlantic coast of Africa to the Middle East.

Geological changes have produced four distinct physical regions: the Nile River's Valley and Delta, where 95 percent of the population live; the Western Desert, with two-thirds of the country's total land area in barren limestone plateaus and depressions; the Eastern Desert, scored by gullies in rugged hills; and the Sinai Peninsula, geographically a barren part of the Asian Continent, separating slowly from Africa.

Only the Nile Valley and Delta and a few desert oases can support productive agriculture. The date palm is the most prevalent indigenous tree, though frequently seen are: eucalyptus, acacia, sycamore, juniper, jacaranda, and tamarind. Papyrus, once prevalent throughout Egypt, exists now only in botanical gardens.

According to reports written in the first century A.D., seven branches of the Nile ran through the Delta to

the Mediterranean. Since then, nature and man have closed all but two outlets—the Damietta and the Rosetta. These channels are now supplemented by a network of canals, salt marshes, and lakes.

Lower Egypt is the area north of the 30th parallel of latitude, which passes through Cairo and Suez. Upper Egypt is everything south. The highest point in the country, Jebel Katrinah (Mount St. Catherine), is 8,600 feet above sea level—a part of the red-colored Sinai terrain that gave the Red Sea its name. Nearby is Jebel Musa, the legendary site where Moses received the Ten Commandments.

The lowest point, the Qattarah Depression in the Western Desert, drops at places to 132 meters below sea level and covers an area the size of New Jersey.

What rainfall there is falls mostly in Alexandria, where 19 centimeters (about 7½ inches) is the yearly average. Two centimeters. (about ¾ inch) is the usual annual total in Cairo. There are seven regularly scheduled storms, supposedly. A northeasterly, named al-Muknisa, is expected to begin the season on November 20. The others are: al-Kassem, Ras al-Sana, al-Fayda, al-Kabira, al-Ghotas, and al-Karam,

which ends it with 6 days of northwesterly wind and rains beginning on January 27.

From November to April, temperatures range in Cairo from 40° to 65°F and during the hot period, May to October, from 70° to 110°F. The Mediterranean coast is usually 10° cooler, while Upper Egypt is 10° to 20° warmer. Extreme temperatures during both seasons are moderated by the prevailing northerly winds. The exception is the hot, dry southerly Khamsin, named for the number 50 because it lasts about that many days, from April to June. With winds up to 90 miles an hour some years, the resulting sandstorms close down airports and roads.

Population

Egypt's population was probably 2–3 million at the time Napoleon arrived in 1798. In 2000, Egypt's estimated population was 68,494,600. Within its limited habitable areas, more than 3,250 people per square mile make the Nile Valley one of the world's densest populated areas.

Although more than half still live in rural areas, this proportion is decreasing as jobs lure people to the urban centers. Cairo is now the largest city in Africa and the Arab World. The disparity between national resources and this ever-growing population is an obstacle facing the government's drive to raise living standards.

Because of its location, a heterogeneous population, blended from Hamitic-Armenoid and Arab stock, has developed. Today the majority are considered a single people, sharing a common ancestry and culture. Arabic is their common language. Colloquial Cairene is expressive and rich in words of Coptic, European, and Turkish origins. The written language differs from the spoken. Modern standard Arabic, based on the language of the Koran, is heard on radio and TV and in formal speeches. About 94 percent of Egyptians are Moslem, and Islam is the state religion. Most others are

Christian, either Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Anglican Protestants. Indigenous minorities include 4–6 million Copts, Nubians, and Bedouin, and a small Jewish community. Coptic has remained the liturgical language of the Coptic Church. Dialects of Arabic include the Bedouin and some Sudanese-Hamitic, spoken in Upper Egypt, and a Berber language.

Public Institutions

In 1952, a group of Egyptian "Free Officers" overthrew the monarchy and exiled King Farouk, who had inherited the throne in 1935 from his father, King Fuad. A republic was established under a Revolutionary Command Council.

The revolution established the first purely Egyptian leadership since Pharaonic times. From the time of Alexander the Great, Egypt had been continuously under various foreign rulers. The "Free Officers" divested their military connections and sought to raise the standard of living while developing both military and economic strength.

In 1958, Egypt merged with Syria and formed the "United Arab Republic." In 1961, Syria separated from this union, but Egypt kept the name until 1971, when it was formally designated the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The Egyptian Constitution provides for a strong executive. Authority is vested in a President elected by the People's Assembly and confirmed by a popular referendum. The President appoints the Prime Minister and Cabinet and may appoint a Vice President. President Hosni Mubarak was re-elected and confirmed for a third 6-year term in 1993.

The legislature is bicameral. The more active house, the People's Assembly, has 448 elected members and 10 appointed by the President. The 210 members of the National Consultative or "Shura" Council are known as the "Upper House." Seventy are appointed, 140 are elected.

The Council's functions are advisory rather than legislative. The governing National Democratic Party was established by President Anwar Sadat in 1978. There are five legal opposition parties, three of which are represented in the Assembly and the Consultative Council.

Egypt's judicial system is based on a combination of French and Islamic legal concepts and methods. The Supreme Court, with presidentially appointed judges, is the highest. Under President Mubarak, the judiciary has strongly maintained its independence from executive intervention. The principles of due process and judicial review are generally observed.

Politically, the government aims to preserve stability by gradually expanding and liberalizing democratic processes while attempting to improve the standard of living and quality of life.

Following the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979, most Arab States broke relations with Egypt. The value of the peace treaty was demonstrated by Egypt's regaining full control of the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 and by the freeing of its resources for development.

The Amman Arab Summit Conference in November 1987 paved the way for other Arab states to restore relations with Egypt and most have now done so. In spring 1989, Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League. Founded in 1948, it has 22 member nations, and covers 14 million square kilometers.

President Mubarak has maintained the peace treaty's commitments to Israel and worked to broaden the overall Arab-Israeli peace process in the Middle East.

Many international organizations maintain headquarters or field offices in Cairo, including CARE, FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, Project Hope, Catholic Relief Services, American Field Service International, American Friends of the Middle East, the Ford Founda-

tion, and the Fulbright Commission.

Arts, Science, and Education

Of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, only the pyramids remain, still subject to speculation as to their purpose. The latest theory suggests a correlation between seven of them and the constellation Orion, with the Nile cast as the Milky Way.

Temples such as Karnak, Luxor, Philae and Abu Simbel span 5,000 years of history, beginning with the Pharaonic period 3,000–341 B.C., the Greek period 332–30 B.C. and the Roman and Byzantine period 30 B.C. - A.D. 638, which saw the rise of the Coptic Church. Then the Arab conquest introduced Islam and the Omayyads from Damascus, who remained until A.D. 750, when the Abbasids from Baghdad brought both violent change and their slaves, the Turkish Mamelukes, who would become the rulers and remain until Napoleon invaded in July 1798.

In September 1801, British and Ottoman forces drove the French out, only to come up against Mohammad Ali, an Albanian soldier serving in the Turkish Army. Leading his regiment in a rebellion over their lack of pay, subsequent conquests in Greece, Syria, Sudan, and on the Arabian peninsula led to his eventual control of the entire Ottoman Empire. This was passed on to his son and to his grandson, who sponsored the building of Egypt's railways and the Suez Canal. After them came the Pasha Ismail, who would open the Canal in 1869 and declare independence in 1873, but lose it all in 1879, a victim of foreign debts and international events. The British took control again and remained until 1952 while establishing a constitutional monarchy with an elected king, Fuad I, in 1922.

Each period brought new monuments and changes to the old.

Because of the preserving climate of Egypt and its unchanging nature, these ruins are world renowned. The most famous of all the extant treasures came from the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamen, who had reigned for only 9 years, 1361–1352 B.C. Discovered in A.D. 1922, virtually undisturbed in the Valley of the Kings, these tributes are now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

The cultural capital of the Arab world, Cairo has two dozen museums. The Egyptian, Coptic and Islamic Arts Museums each present an array of masterpieces. More esoteric collections include the geologic, railway and post office, and agricultural, military and carriage museums. Fine art exhibitions are sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and many private organizations. In addition to four art museums, the Ministry administers four historic buildings, in which artists and artisans have studios.

The Cairo Opera House is a part of a \$30 million cultural complex which includes the Museum of Modern Arts. It was opened in 1988 on Gezira Island, 17 years after a fire had destroyed its predecessor in the downtown Opera Square. Egyptian ballet, choir, dance, opera, and symphony performances in the three theaters alternate with offerings by touring companies and a puppet show. The latest season drew about 150,000 people to 462 performances.

The Academy of the Arabic Language and l'Institute d'Egypte, the latter established by the French administration in 1798, are both located in Cairo, as are newer research institutes and specialized libraries spanning all fields.

Egypt has over a dozen state-run universities. Five are in the Cairo area. The oldest university in the world, Al-Azhar, was founded in A.D. 970 in a mosque being built near the then-new eastern wall. It is still the center of Moslem theology.

Ayn Shams University was founded in 1950 in the Zafaran Palace in the Abbasiyya area. It took over a space

vacated by the Egyptian University, which became Cairo University after it was reconstituted with 11 faculties in the Giza area.

The American University in Cairo is a private enterprise, close by the Embassy, on the east side of al-Tahrir Square.

The University of Maryland has an extension program offering a few evening courses in 8-week-long terms and a few shorter term seminars on Egyptian subjects.

Cairo American College, a private, co-educational day school in Maadi, serves students from kindergarten through grade 12 and is covered in detail in the Education section.

Commerce and Industry

The Government of Egypt is in the midst of a major economic reform program, contending with the legacy of a socialist past, when the state controlled internal and external trade and industry. Reforms initially began in the mid-1970's with President Anwar Sadat's "Open Door" policies. The pace of reform quickened in mid-1991 when, by agreements with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the donor nations, Egypt began implementing a comprehensive economic reform and structural adjustment program.

Significant progress in stabilizing the economy and encouraging private initiative has been made. The program is predicated on dismantling the inefficient public sector, with support in the form of international debt relief from the Paris Club donor community as well as substantial financial assistance.

By the end of 1993, the program showed striking results. Foreign reserves (which had been minimal) exceeded \$16 billion, the equivalent of 1½ years of imports. Controlled government spending and new revenue measures reduced the budget deficit from double digits to 4 per-

cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Inflation dropped to 11 percent at the consumer level, and interest rates drifted downward. In recent years the country has seen inflation as low as 3 percent and has experienced annual growth near 5 percent.

Potentially Egypt is a large consumer market. Job creation is minimal for the half-million annual entrants to the labor market and is growing even less rapidly with problems such as material shortages, restrictive labor laws, and insufficient legal protection.

With good resources, a low-cost labor force and an ever-improving infrastructure of communication, transportation, and education, the Government of Egypt has begun to concentrate on such structural reform issues as privatization, deregulation coupled with the imposition of new, free enterprise-oriented regulations and trade/tariff liberalization.

About 29 percent of the labor force works in agriculture, 22 percent in industry and commerce, and 49 percent in services.

While one of the world's leading producers of high-quality, long-staple cotton, Egypt imports cotton for domestic purposes. Other important crops are rice, wheat, corn, cane and beet sugar, citrus fruits, and vegetables of all kinds. Also important are dairy and beef cattle, sheep, and a fishing industry.

Domestic industry ranges from food processing and textiles and light industry, which includes vehicle assembly, to heavy industry, including aluminum and steel. Phosphates, salt, iron, sulfur, gold, manganese and limestone are other natural resources.

Private-sector factories, particularly those in textiles, wearing apparel, foods and other consumer goods, are becoming increasingly important, both domestically and as exporters. The traditional pillars of foreign-exchange revenue have

remained the same for decades: remittances from the 2.5 million Egyptians working abroad, Suez Canal fees, petroleum exports and tourism, which was the top source of foreign exchange until the sector was affected by global economic problems and terrorism.

The remittance from each overseas worker is estimated to amount to 2,000 LE (\$600) annually.

The Suez Canal was opened in 1869, but only since 1957 has it been controlled by Egypt. Ships in transit paid \$1.7 billion in fees in 2001.

In 1913, oil was discovered. The Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation now controls the industry through 200 concession and revenue-sharing agreements covering 125,000 square kilometers. Crude oil reserves are estimated by the Ministry of Petroleum at 4.5 billion barrels. In 1993, the value of petroleum exports reached \$1.8 billion, a 12.5 percent annualized growth rate over 1992.

Natural gas production is increasing as it becomes more widely used. Proven reserves are 15 trillion cubic feet with an equivalent amount estimated to be available. A developing a gas export market aids in current and future economic growth.

Tourists have come to Egypt for eons and the country is well served now by airlines and hotels. An extensive industry has developed to service both the energetic traveller, wanting sun, scuba dives and camel rides and the lethargic, settling for a floating hotel decorated in neo-Victorian fashion, considering Neolithic sites between Sybaritic meals.

Banking reforms now encourage foreign investments and further the goal of privatization.

Egypt is committed to economic cooperation with the U.S. and over 50 U.S. joint venture factories already exist. Others are planned. More than 200 U.S. firms have offices and at least 1,800 others

have agents and distributors. "Free Zones" have been created in Nasr City, Port Said, Suez, Ismailia, Safaga, and Alexandria.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, established in 1983, has become the largest business interest group in the Middle East. It is a branch of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Imports from the U.S. were worth about \$1.2 billion in 2000, down from \$3 billion in 1992.

Egypt's exports to the U.S. were worth \$608 million in 2000, up from recent years.

At the annual Cairo International Fair, the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service sponsors a Pavilion. It also offers the specialized "Gold Key" appointment/market consultation service and programs to introduce U.S. suppliers to potential customers and representatives.

Major USAID projects have modernized the telephone and power generation sectors, installed water and waste water systems in cities and developed agriculture and villages.

A current project concerns the Aswan High Dam, which has controlled the annual flood of the Nile since 1972 and reclaimed over 1 million acres of land. With 12 turbines, it can produce 2,100 megawatts of electricity a year and perennial irrigation. But it also restricts the downstream passage of crocodiles and the rich soil, which had been distributed to the delta area.

Transportation

Local

Using Cairo's black-and-white taxis effectively requires some basic Arabic phrases and practice as well as a fatalistic attitude. If going to an area you do not know well, a map may help both you and the driver, who won't have one.

During rush hours, a taxi may be shared, reducing an individual's fare. Negotiating the fare is best done before the trip. Although taxis have meters, the official rate is so low, the obligation to pay something realistic is clear. Other variables are your familiarity with the city, the driver's demeanor and the taxi's physical attributes. Its age and size count. While newer, larger taxis command higher fares, the cost is very reasonable, much less than in the U.S.

Persons under 18 years of age are not allowed to drive cars or motorcycles. Accidents involving unlicensed motorcyclists have caused problems in the past and strained relations. Bicycles can be used in the suburbs and may be shipped with household effects. The most practical and safest is a heavy-duty model with a horn, light, and reflectors.

The Cairo Metro is a light rail system, partly underground. One line is now running from al-Marg in the north through the center of the city to Maadi and on to Helwan. Future lines will cross the Nile to Giza and Imbaba and connect Shubra al-Kheima in the north with Salah Salim in the east. Although the Metro may be used between Maadi residences and the offices near el-Tahrir Square and outside of rush hours is perhaps the most relaxing way to get north or south, it has done little to ease traffic congestion. Though the traffic police are becoming more stern with both pedestrians and drivers, the streets remain chaotic. Getting across or along one becomes a test of nerve, wit and patience. Flocks of sheep, donkey carts, broken-down vehicles and horn-blasting buses, trucks, taxis and private cars are just some of the usual obstacles facing drivers and pedestrians. Broken or missing sidewalks encourage most people to walk in the streets. Other difficulties are nonexistent signs or signs written only in Arabic, confusing traffic patterns and undisciplined driving techniques.



Feluccas in the Nile River, Aswan, Egypt

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Regional

Alexandria and Cairo are connected by both the Western Desert Highway, a high-speed toll road and the busier Delta Road. Buses take 31/2 hours, with a rest stop. A non-stop *Turbino* train takes just over 2 hours but the required seat reservations can only be made for the outbound trip. The return trip must be booked at the destination.

Travel by ship from Alexandria to Crete and Athens, Bari, and Venice by Adriatica liners was suspended in spring 1994, when advance bookings failed to materialize. This luxury passenger and car ferry service is expected to resume in more prosperous times.

Air Sinai, Egypt Air and ZAS Airlines serve these domestic destinations: Abu Simbel, Alexandria, Aswan, Hurghada, Luxor, the New Valley development at Kharga Oasis, and Sharm el Sheikh.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

With new equipment going into service, completing local calls is becoming more routine. But in many areas pulse-style telephones are still required and TouchTone signals ignored.

Most large hotels have business centers open to the public. The country code for direct dialing Egypt is 20. The city code for Cairo is 2, for Alexandria, 3.

Radio and TV

The Voice of America and the BBC's World Service programming are carried periodically on a variety of radio frequencies while CNN International, MTV and NBC's Super Channel programming are available 24 hours daily with cable service, available at prices comparable to U.S. rates.

Cairo has three government-controlled TV channels, which operate in color at varying times during the day and evening. Although most programs are in Arabic, newscasts are presented daily in English and French. A satellite ground station transmits live coverage of events from around the world. Some American TV series and old movies are shown in English, with Arabic subtitles.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The E-Mart sells the *Stars and Stripes*, *Federal Times*, and *USA Today* newspapers and a variety of periodicals, ranging from comic books to Foreign Affairs journals, plus paperbacks and travel guides.

The *International Herald Tribune* is available at local outlets 1–4 days after its publication date.

Local newsletters include the *Maadi Messenger*; Cairo American College's monthly, *Cairo-Glyphics* and the *HelioScope*.

Publications in English and other languages are sold at hotels and from street kiosks. *Egypt Today* is a glossy monthly magazine, whose articles, ads and listings may be useful. The bookstores of the American University in Cairo (AUC) carry English-language fiction and non-fiction titles and put them on sale twice a year, including photo books. But prices are high, more like Europe than the U.S. To save money, you may wish to subscribe to magazines and order books via clubs or through a publisher's mail order service.

Many of the books published in the Arab world come from Egypt's major publishing houses. The AUC Press represents Naguib Mahfouz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988. Born in Cairo in 1911, he was cited for his "Arabic narrative art."

Cairo has four major Arabic-language daily newspapers and two in English: *The Egyptian Mail* and *The Egyptian Gazette*. *The AlAhram Weekly*, an English language offshoot of a major Arabic daily, appears every Thursday.

Libraries

The American Cultural Center at 4 Ahmed Ragheb Street in the Garden City area is a U.S. Information Service facility. The library and the film and video programs are intended to help foreign nationals plan trips to the U.S.

The Development Information Center Library is located at Cairo Center, on the sixth floor of the building where USAID has its offices. Managed by the Program Project Support Directorate, there are more than 9,000 documents in hard copy format and over 80,000 microfiched

works, emphasizing development activities.

The American Research Center's (ARCE) library is close by, at 2 Midan Qasr el-Dubaraji (also known as Simon Bolivar Square). The library of the American University in Cairo has over 100,000 volumes, but not for circulation.

The British Council's library is at 192 Sharia el-Nil, on the west bank of the river, in Agouza. Since economics forced the focus to change from cultural activities to technology tutoring at a fee, public access, acquisitions, and services have been curtailed, and this traditional resource in foreign capitals seems headed for extinction.

Maadi residents may use the libraries of the Cairo American College and the Community Services Association, closer to home.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Emergency and some elective cases can be handled locally. The As-Salam International Hospital on the Corniche el-Nil, between downtown and Maadi, is recommended for emergencies.

While there are many physicians, surgeons, dentists and a variety of medical specialists in Cairo, the quality of care provided varies greatly.

Community Health

Standards of health and cleanliness in Cairo are well below those in the U.S. Tuberculosis, rabies and such waterborne diseases as bacillary dysentery, hepatitis A, and schistosomiasis are prevalent.

Preventive Measures

Staying healthy means taking precautions and considering preventive measures. Cairo's high level of dust and air pollution, worsened by the continuing use of leaded gas, can play havoc with an individual's bronchial system. Persons prone to

asthmatic and respiratory diseases, animal and dust allergies, and hay fever may experience difficulties. Bring medications which work for you and consider getting an air purifier.

The high concentration of airborne particles may lead to eye irritation for those who wear contact lenses. It is prudent to bring a backup pair of regular eye glasses and an extra pair as the opticians are expensive. Limited supplies of contact lens treatments are available.

Flies, mosquitoes, fleas, and other insects are prevalent, but controllable with screened windows and insect repellent. Garbage and trash, often uncollected, attract numerous flies. This fact, combined with inadequate refrigeration, requires careful preparation of meals in the home and discretion in selecting restaurants.

Cairo's water supply is considered safe *only* when it first leaves filtration plants. The distribution system is antiquated and many possibilities for contamination exist. To avoid possible infection, all water should be boiled and filtered, including that used for ice cubes. Water filters are provided in government-owned and -leased housing.

Locally bottled water is generally safe but fresh dairy products are not, because pasteurization is not a uniform process locally. Long-life and powdered milks are sold at some local stores.

All immunizations recommended by the Department of State should be taken prior to arrival. These include typhoid, polio, gamma globulin, tetanus-diphtheria, hepatitis B, yellow fever and the usual childhood vaccinations: measles, mumps and rubella. In addition, the pre-exposure rabies vaccination series (diploid cell immunization) should be taken, if possible, before arrival at post. Meningococcal meningitis vaccine is also recommended.

If you have a medical problem requiring special or long-term medications, bring your own supply.

Traffic accidents are probably the biggest danger you face. Violent crimes are rare but pickpockets, working at the tourist attractions, including the mosques, can cause injuries. Sports-related accidents also happen. Baseball games and horseback riding on rock-strewn trails have produced some serious ones.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Each traveler must have a valid diplomatic or official passport, Egyptian visa and international immunization certificate. Everyone must show evidence of a valid cholera immunization at least five days, but not more than six months, before arrival. Travelers from yellow fever areas must have had yellow fever shots at least eight days before arrival. These rules are enforced and anyone arriving without proper immunization records may be quarantined.

Egypt has no quarantine restrictions for pets. Dogs and cats entering the country must have proof of a valid rabies shot given within the year and a certificate of good health authorized by a licensed veterinarian within the two weeks before arrival. These documents should accompany the pet which, ideally, accompanies you. Ask about preferential airline rates for accompanied pets.

The currency denomination is the Egyptian Pound (marked L.E.), which is comprised of 100 piasters (PT). A piaster contains 10 millemes, which are rarely quoted and physically extinct. The dollar was worth about L.E. 3.84 in January 2001.

Five and ten-piasters coins are in use although change in those amounts is not always given. An old

20-piasters coin is occasionally seen. A new coin, with a distinctive hole in the middle, is beginning to replace the short-lived 25-piaster banknotes. Coins are replacing the 50-piaster and the one-pound banknotes. New fifty and hundred L.E. banknotes have been introduced to accompany the fives, tens and twenties.

In Egypt the metric system of weights and measures is used. Land is measured by the feddan, which is 1.038 acres or 45,215.28 sq. ft. or .4152 hectares. The Nile flows from south to north across 1030 kilometers or 640 miles.

Egypt is in the Greenwich Mean Time +2 hours zone, seven hours ahead of the U.S. Eastern Standard Time zone. Summer time, GMT+3, is observed from May 1st until October 1st.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 7	Christmas (Coptic)
Mar. 8	Revolution of Mar. 8
Apr/May	Easter*
Apr/May	Sham al Nessim(first day of Spring/ Easter Monday)*
Apr. 26	Sinai Liberation Day
May 1	Labor Day
June 18	Evacuation Day
July 23	National Revolution Day
Aug.	Wafa'a el Nil (the flooding of the Nile)*
Sept. 11/12	Coptic New Year*
Oct. 6	Armed Forces Day
Oct. 24	Popular Resistance Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Muharram*
.	Mawlid al Nabi*
.	Waqf al-Arafa*
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as an indication of the range of material recently published on Egypt. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Republic of Equatorial Guinea

Major City:
Malabo

INTRODUCTION

EQUATORIAL GUINEA is a small West-Central African country divided into a mainland region and an island region. People of Equatorial Guinea are warm and friendly. The country has a variety of landscapes from pristine white sand beaches to Vermont-like hills on the continent. Equatorial Guinea is a new country and inhabitants are striving to build a stable nation.

MAJOR CITY

Malabo

The capital of Malabo is a picturesque, small city of 30,000 inhabitants. Spanish architecture predominates, with a lovely view of the ocean from many of the houses. It is a quiet city, with little traffic, and streets which are nearly deserted during the afternoon.

The pace of life is slow, and people seem to have the luxury of being unhurried and able to relax. Malabo is in the process of reconstruction and renovation. Many new houses are under construction but many old houses are falling apart.

A feeling of isolation exists in this small city as well as the inconvenience of not being able to procure many usual and essential commodities. These inconveniences can be overcome with trips to nearby Douala, Cameroon, to make necessary purchases and to enjoy a more varied social life.

Recreation

Swimming may be enjoyed at any of the several scenic beaches along the coast between Malabo and Luba. A good four-wheel-drive vehicle is needed to get to the better beaches. Snorkeling, boating, and fishing are also common pastimes. The continent also has lovely beaches. The water temperature is always pleasant. Soccer is the most popular local sport. Hunters will not find big game on the island.

Mount Malabo National Park affords a panoramic view of the island and Gulf of Guinea on a clear day. A road goes to the top of the mountain, but permission to go there must be granted by the Government. This can take several weeks. The road along the northern half of Bioko Island is also interesting. It goes by many cocoa plantations, small villages, a large palm plantation, a suspension bridge, and many scenic views of the ocean. The town of Moka is high in the mountains of Bioko Island, and has an

Alpine atmosphere. During the growing season, vegetables are available there and local guides can be found for hikes to the volcanic crater lakes. The beaches are the most popular places for foreigners during the weekend. All are within a one-hour drive from Malabo. Insects may make the beaches unpleasant.

It is not possible to take organized tours of the Continental region. The only hotel is in Bata, but the people in the interior have been hospitable to those traveling through. For the more adventuresome, the national ship and private ships make trips to the small island of Annobon. It is a three-day voyage, round trip, with a stay of five to six days on the island. The island is very much a culture in itself, as no currency is used there. There are no hotels, but the people are hospitable and welcome such items as soap, batteries, or garden seeds in exchange for lodging.

It is also possible to tour parts of Cameroon and Gabon while living in Equatorial Guinea.

Entertainment

The Spanish-Guinean Cultural Center in Malabo has art exhibits, movies, programs, and free language instruction for the public. A local movie theater operates and, on special occasions, the theater may

be used for other programs. Malabo has some very lively discos and late evening restaurants. Traditional Guinean dancers often perform on local holidays.

Life in Malabo is informal. The small size of the foreign community makes it easy to get acquainted. Spanish is normally spoken at social events with Guineans and Europeans. Social activities usually include private parties or viewing videotaped movies. A person's social life can be active or quiet, depending on personal preference.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is located in west central Africa and consists of two distinct provinces. The first province is Bioko Island. It is situated in the Atlantic Ocean, about 20 miles west of Cameroon. Rio Muni is a province on the African mainland and is bordered on the north by Cameroon, on the east and south by Gabon, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean. The provinces of Equatorial Guinea comprise a combined area of 10,832 square miles, slightly larger than Maryland. Bioko Island is a boot-shaped island formed from three extinct volcanoes. Southern parts of the island are steep, rocky and generally undeveloped. In the north, the terrain is less rugged and very fertile due to the presence of volcanic soil deposits. The topography of Rio Muni consists mostly of jungle with a coastal plain rising steeply toward the Gabon border. Interior portions of Rio Muni exhibit a series of valleys separated by low hills. The province is virtually cut in half by the Mbini River. Except for a 12-mile section, the Mbini is unnavigable.

Equatorial Guinea exhibits a tropical climate. Rainfall is very heavy,

especially on Bioko. February through March, however, is usually dry. Humidity and temperatures are high throughout the year, although Rio Muni tends to be drier and cooler than Bioko. Equatorial Guinea periodically experiences violent windstorms.

Population

The estimated population of Equatorial Guinea was approximately 477,800 in 2000. Most Equatorial Guineans are of Bantu origin. The mainland province of Rio Muni has 75 percent of the population. Approximately 90 percent of the province's inhabitants are from the Fang tribe, which is comprised of about 67 clans. Small tribes of Bujebas, Balengues, Ndowes, and Bengas live in coastal areas of Rio Muni.

Nearly 60 percent of Bioko Island's population are from the Bubi ethnic group. Small groups of Fang and Fernandinos, a small Creole community, reside on Bioko.

Prior to 1968, Equatorial Guinea had a large contingent of foreign residents. Many foreigners fled during the brutal Macias regime and did not return. Today, less than 1,000 Europeans and a few hundred other foreigners live and work in Equatorial Guinea. Most Europeans are from Spain, but other foreigners are from Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, and Gabon.

Spanish is the country's official language, although Fang and Bubi dialects are also spoken. The vast majority of the population are Roman Catholic. Traditional native religions are also practiced.

In 2001, estimated life expectancy at birth was 53 years for males, 56 years for females.

History

Until the mid-20th century, the provinces of Bioko and Rio Muni had separate histories. Bioko was discovered by the Portuguese

explorer, Fernando Po. The Portuguese maintained control of Bioko Island, formerly known as Fernando Po, until 1778. In that year, Portugal ceded Bioko and Rio Muni to Spain in exchange for Spanish territory in South America.

During the early 1900s, Bioko Island was used by the Spaniards as a trading center and a transfer point for slaves to North and South America. Also, the Spanish established several profitable cocoa plantations. From 1827–1843, Great Britain maintained a naval base on the island. France also established a base there. However, by the late 1800s, the British and French abandoned their positions on Bioko for bases on the African mainland. The Spaniards became the island's primary European inhabitants.

The mainland province of Rio Muni was virtually unexplored until the early 1920s. The Spaniards had expended most of their time and energy developing cocoa plantations and settlements on Bioko. From the 1920s to the 1940s, attempts were made to develop coffee, cocoa, and palm oil plantations in Rio Muni. Also the Spanish government sought to improve health conditions and educational opportunities in the territory.

On July 30, 1959, Spain united the provinces of Bioko and Rio Muni into one colony known as the "Territories of the Gulf of Guinea." Native inhabitants of Rio Muni and Bioko were not pleased and demanded complete independence from Spain. Two political parties, Monalige (Movimiento Nacional de Liberacion de Guinea Ecuatorial) and Idea Popular de Guinea Ecuatorial (IPGE), were created and went into exile in neighboring Cameroon and Gabon. In 1962, representatives of Monalige and the IPGE appeared before the United Nations and presented a series of grievances against Spain's colonial rule. The Spaniards denounced the two groups as communist agitators. However, in an attempt to obtain international sup-

port, Spain enacted the Basic Law in December 1963. The Basic Law granted limited self-government to non-European persons in Bioko and Rio Muni. Also, the country's official name was changed to Equatorial Guinea. Despite these changes, Spain's colonial rule of Equatorial Guinea was nearing its end.

In March 1968, after intense pressure from Monalige, IPGE and the United Nations, Spain announced that it would grant independence to Equatorial Guinea. A convention was held with representatives from the Spanish government and the two opposition parties attending. The delegates, after a series of lengthy negotiations, drafted and approved a constitution. The constitution stated that Equatorial Guinea would be an independent and democratic republic. Presidential elections were held in September 1968. Francisco Macias Nguema defeated Bonofacio Ondo Edu and three other candidates. On October 12, 1968, Equatorial Guinea was granted complete independence from Spain.

Equatorial Guinea's experiment with democracy proved to be short-lived. Shortly after independence, President Macias began to dismantle the country's democratic constitution and instituted a brutal dictatorship. In 1970, Monalige, IPGE and other political parties were banned. In their place, Macias created the Partido Unico Nacional de los Trabajadores (PUNT). PUNT became the country's only legal party and all members were fanatically loyal to Macias. To enforce his policies, Macias established a vicious paramilitary organization. This group, the Juventad en Marcha con Macias, hunted down and executed all suspected political opponents and quelled public dissent. In 1972, Macias named himself President-for-Life. The democratic constitution was formally abolished in 1973 and a new authoritarian constitution enacted. Equatorial Guinea had been plunged into a period of terror and bloodshed.

From 1969–79, the Macias dictatorship was one of the most brutal in the world. Intellectuals, political opponents and their families were ruthlessly hunted down, tortured and executed. Macias suppressed all religious freedom and education was abolished. Up to one-third of the country's 300,000 people were murdered or fled into exile. As skilled citizens and foreigners were killed or left Equatorial Guinea, the country's transportation, health, sanitation, electrical and water systems were devastated by neglect and mismanagement. Macias' reign of terror was finally ended after he was overthrown in a military coup by his nephew, Lt. Col. Obiang Nguema, in August 1979. Macias was captured and executed after a trial supervised by international observers.

Upon coming to power in 1979, Obiang Nguema sought to repair some of the damaged caused by the Macias regime. He released political prisoners and reinstated the freedom of religion and education. He also reestablished diplomatic and economic ties with the outside world, especially Spain. The Spaniards responded by sending massive amounts of financial aid to help rebuild Equatorial Guinea's shattered economy. Obiang Nguema transferred broad governmental powers to a group of military officers who called themselves the Supreme Military Council. Obiang Nguema was named president. Much to the dismay of Equatorial Guineans, political opposition parties were not allowed. In April 1981, an attempt to overthrow the government was unsuccessful. Obiang Nguema responded by arresting 150 civilians, including 30 top army officers. Following the coup attempt, Obiang Nguema decided to draft a new constitution with the help of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. This constitution, which took effect August 15, 1982, provided for the return of a civilian government after a period of seven years. Obiang Nguema was

appointed president for seven more years.

Despite this new constitution, Equatorial Guinea continued to experience political upheaval and repression. Two other military coups were foiled in May 1983 and January 1986. In August 1987, Obiang Nguema authorized the creation of a single government-controlled party, the Democratic Party for Equatorial Guinea (PDGE). This move ended a nine-year ban on political parties and raised the hopes of many that multi-party democracy would be granted soon. In June 1989, the first presidential elections since 1968 were held. Obiang Nguema, running as the sole candidate, received 99 percent of the vote.

To date, Equatorial Guinea remains under the grip of a one-party dictatorship. Although more flexible and less brutal than his predecessor, Obiang Nguema continues to delay the return of true multi-party democracy. In 1990 Amnesty International alleged that prisoners are still being tortured in Equatorial Guinea. Although opposition parties are nominally recognized, they boycotted the November 1993 legislative elections, in which only 20 percent of the electorate voted. Boycotts occurred again in the 1999 legislative elections.

Government

Equatorial Guinea's government is comprised of an executive branch, State Council, and a House of Representatives. The executive branch consists of a president and a prime minister. The president wields tremendous powers. He is granted the ability to create and decree laws, negotiate and ratify treaties, command all military forces, call for elections, and dissolve the House of Representatives. Prime ministers are responsible for all governmental activities apart from foreign affairs and military defense.

The State Council is an 11-member committee which has the power to approve or reject any presidential candidate. Also, the State Council is authorized to control all presidential powers should the president die or become incapacitated.

In 1983, a House of Representatives was created. This 41-member body is elected for a five-year term and convenes twice a year for two-month periods. The House of Representatives serves as an advisor to the State Council and the executive branch.

The flag of Equatorial Guinea consists of three horizontal bands of green (top), white, and red with a blue isosceles triangle on the staff side. In the center of the white band is the country's national emblem. The emblem has six yellow six-pointed stars above a gray shield. Under the shield are the words Unity, Peace, Justice.

Arts, Science, Education

Equatorial Guinea's educational system was nearly destroyed during the Macias dictatorship. The 1982 constitution stated that education must be the country's top priority. All children between the ages of six and 14 are entitled to receive eight years of education at government expense. Primary education begins at age six and lasts for six years. At the age of twelve, students enter another six year period of secondary education. Since 1979, Spain has provided teachers and financial assistance to its former colony.

In 1995, an estimated 79 percent of the population age 15 and over could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

Years of brutal dictatorship, international isolation, and mismanagement virtually destroyed Equatorial Guinea's economy. The country is

dependent on economic aid from other countries, especially Spain. Industry has grown in recent years, due primarily to the discovery of significant oil reserves. Equatorial Guinea has deposits of iron ore, manganese, uranium and titanium. However, most of these deposits lie undeveloped. American, French, and Spanish companies are engaged in oil exploration.

Equatorial Guinea's economy is heavily based on agriculture. Coffee and timber are harvested in Rio Muni, while Bioko has several profitable cocoa plantations. Most of the country's coffee, timber, and cocoa are exported to Spain, Italy, Germany, France, and the Netherlands. Although Equatorial Guinea produces cassava, yams, rice, bananas and palm nuts, foodstuffs must be imported to meet the country's needs. In addition to food, clothing, transport vehicles, machinery and petroleum products are imported from Spain, Italy, France, Cameroon, and the Netherlands.

Transportation

Bioko has a surfaced road that links Malabo, to the western seaport of Luba and the town of Batete. Malabo is also connected by a surfaced road to Bacake Grande in the east. In Rio Muni, a surfaced road links the seaport towns of Bata and Mbini. Another road connects Bata to the eastern town of Ebebiyin and continues into Gabon. Most other roads are in extremely poor condition and are not considered safe for travel. Few taxis are available, although Bioko has a bus service between the cities of Malabo, Luba, and Riaba.

An international airport is located at Malabo. Equatorial Guinea's national airline went out of business in 1990. Since April 1990, Air Afrique Affaires, a privately owned airline, has taken over the country's international and domestic flights indefinitely. Air Afrique Affaires operates a domestic flight between Bata and Malabo. Weekly flights

are available to Nigeria, Gabon, and Cameroon.

There is no rail transportation in Equatorial Guinea, although a weekly boat service between Bata and Malabo is available. The country's deep-water ports are located at Malabo, Luba, and Bata.

Communications

Equatorial Guinea has three radio stations, all of which are government-owned. Africa 2000 broadcasts sports and cultural programs in Spanish. Radio Ecuatorial Bata is a commercial station that broadcasts in Spanish and French. Radio Malabo broadcasts programs in Spanish, French, and local African languages. There is a small television station in Malabo, although service is extremely limited.

Two newspapers are published in Equatorial Guinea. *Poto Poto* is printed in Spanish and Fang. *Ebano* is published in Spanish. Both of these newspapers are available on a regular basis.

Telephone communications are very unreliable and of poor sound quality. The country has limited telex facilities in Malabo and Bata which also serve as an international telegram service. Telegraph rates are very costly.

Clothing and Services

Some fresh tropical fruits (mangoes, pineapple, bananas, papayas), vegetables (tomatoes, lettuce, beans, potatoes, garlic, carrots, greens, onions, cabbage, eggplant, squash), and fresh fish may be purchased in Malabo. Produce is seasonal and is not always available. Many kinds of Western foods are available, but expensive, in Douala, Cameroon, and may be brought back to Malabo. Food in Malabo is often twice as expensive as in either Douala or the U.S. There is little variety and virtu-

ally no selection of brands in Equatorial Guinea.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Equatorial Guinea experienced many years of international isolation, especially during the Macias dictatorship. Consequently, tourism is very undeveloped and most accommodations are rather primitive. Limited hotel space is available in Malabo and Bata. Reservations must be made before arriving in the country. Food is rarely available at the Bata Hotel and, in Malabo, only some of the rooms at the Apartotel Impala are air-conditioned. It is not unusual for electrical service to be interrupted. Therefore, a flashlight, candles and matches are recommended.

Visas must be obtained before entering the country. Two photographs must be submitted to authorities upon arrival. It is important for the traveler to bring extra photographs.

Medical facilities are primitive and there are no dentists or opticians in the country. Cholera and malaria vaccinations are essential while inoculations for typhoid and yellow fever are highly recommended. Malaria suppressants must be taken regularly and travelers should bring a supply of basic medications because Western consumer goods are in short supply. Mold and dampness may exacerbate allergies during the rainy season. Excessive dust in the air during the dry season can aggravate throat or respiratory ailments.

The water in Equatorial Guinea is not safe to drink. Travelers should filter and boil water before drinking, using it for cooking, or making ice. Many travelers bring their own bottled water. All vegetables must be peeled and placed in a disinfecting solution before eating.

Insects abound in Equatorial Guinea. The mosquito is ever present, and 90 percent of the population has malaria. In addition to mosquitoes, there are black flies, house flies, tsetse flies, and "no-seems" (small, almost invisible biting insects). Cockroaches and rodents frequently appear in houses. Small brownish-green lizards live in the houses and yards and are useful in eating flying insects. There is a fly which lays eggs in wet clothing. The eggs hatch and the worm burrows into a person's skin while the clothing is being worn. All clothing and linens must be thoroughly ironed or dried in dryers after washing.

Diseases endemic to Equatorial Guinea include malaria, measles, tuberculosis, and parasitic diseases. Walking barefoot is not wise as infections and worms are easily contracted. Rabies is present and there is a real danger of measles. American expatriates and travelers have maintained good health by drinking ample amounts of liquids, getting plenty of rest, and eating a well-balanced diet, as well as keeping immunizations up to date.

Western dress predominates. Some clothing is available locally, but quality varies and items sold in stores are not always new. Most American expatriates buy clothes on trips or from mail order catalogs. Dust in the dry season and mud in the rainy season necessitate washable clothing, as there are no dry cleaning facilities available. American men usually wear dress shirts and slacks. Long sleeves may be worn to prevent insect bites. Women need washable dresses, skirts, slacks, and blouses. Girls usually wear dresses. Boys wear shirts and shorts in the city. Long-sleeved shirts and pants are recommended for both boys and girls outside Malabo to prevent insect bites. Many children wear rubber thongs, which are readily available.

The Roman Catholic Church is predominant. In Malabo, the Baptist Church has Sunday services and

Sunday school. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has worship in Spanish in Malabo. A Bahai mission is located in Malabo, and a Presbyterian mission on the continent.

The unit of currency is the Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA) franc.

The U.S. Embassy in Equatorial Guinea is located at Calle de Los Ministros, Apdo. 597, Malabo; telephone: 24-06.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1.	Labor Day
May 25.	OAU Day
May/June.	Corpus Christi*
June 5	President Obiang's Birthday
Aug. 3.	Armed Forces Day
Aug. 15.	Constitution Day
Oct.12	Independence Day
Nov. 17.	Feast of Santa Isabel
Dec. 8.	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 10.	Human rights Day
Dec. 25.	Christmas Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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ERITREA

Major City:

Asmara

Other City:

Keren

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Eritrea. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Eritrea is Africa's newest country, having achieved its de facto independence in 1991 following a 30-year war with neighboring Ethiopia. Its origins are ancient, as evidenced by its many prehistoric archaeological sites and the ruins of Adulis, a port city believed to have been founded by the Greeks in 600 B.C.

From the 1880s to 1991, Eritrea was successively under Italian, British, and Ethiopian rule. The country was federated with Ethiopia in 1952. Over the next 10 years Ethiopia gradually eroded the institu-

tions that gave Eritrea a degree of autonomy, and finally, in 1962 abolished the federation altogether and made Eritrea an Ethiopian province.

These actions led to the three-decade war for independence, in which the Eritrean forces challenged one of Africa's largest armies. The war ended in 1991 when Eritrean forces captured Asmara and the socialist dictatorship of Haile Mariam Mengistu in Addis Ababa collapsed. In 1993, Eritreans overwhelmingly voted for independence in a UN-supervised referendum.

Under a transitional government headed by the former liberation movement, the EPLF, the Eritreans made an impressive start in rebuilding the economy, institutions and infrastructure in 1991. The EPLF formally ended its existence and became the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), Eritrea's only political party. The PFDJ drafted a constitution and issued proclamations pending parliamentary and presidential elections. Plans for a transition to a full democracy have been indefinitely delayed as a result of a border conflict that began in May 1998, which led to renewed fighting with Ethiopia. Tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides have been killed or

wounded, and hundreds of thousands of Eritreans have been internally displaced. In addition, 75,000 Eritreans have been forcibly expelled from Ethiopia. Finally, through an OAU-led mediation effort that included the participation of the U.S. and the E.U., a cessation of hostilities agreement was signed in June 2000. This was followed by the signing of a peace agreement in December 2000.

The 30-year war both helped form and continues to define the Eritrean character. They are a proud, resourceful and determined people, filled with a spirit of self-help and independence. During the independence struggle, fighters (about one-third of them women) taught villagers and one another to read and write, and formed cultural troupes to teach villages about the diverse cultural, religious and ethnic traditions to be found within Eritrea. Indeed, one of Eritrea's greatest achievements has been the creation of a cohesive and tolerant society from such diversity. Eritrea can also boast a government virtually free of corruption, and safe cities where citizens are not afraid to walk the streets at night. Despite their long ordeal, Eritreans have retained a sense of humor and are a remarkably friendly and welcoming people.

MAJOR CITY

Asmara

Clean, safe, unpolluted, a near-perfect climate, interesting architecture and friendly people—all describe Eritrea's capital of Asmara. It is located on a high rocky plateau two miles from a breathtaking escarpment.

The city has a small-town atmosphere where people walk anywhere day or night without fear of harassment. The downtown shopping district along the palm tree-lined main boulevard comes alive at night, when the inevitable cool evening breezes draw residents out for a stroll. There are many small cafes offering cappuccino, fruit juices, snacks, ice cream or beer. A series of traditional markets winds behind the main avenue offering foodstuffs, spices, handmade baskets, furniture, jewelry, religious artifacts and other items for sale.

Asmara escaped serious damage during the war but it suffered from very limited maintenance or expansion of needed infrastructure during the 30-year struggle. Thus, Asmara's charming architecture—essentially unique in Africa though badly deteriorated, survived intact. Asmara is a marvel of modern Italian architecture, reflecting Italy's long colonial and post-colonial presence in the country and in some areas, the city appears like a postcard from 50 years in the past. One particularly fine example is an art deco style gas station in the shape of an airplane.

Food

There is a plenitude of little corner stores in Asmara packed with everything from foodstuffs to batteries to bottled water, cigarettes and beer. In addition, there are large open-air covered markets for vegetables, grains and spices. There are also a number of very good bakeries in town, offering bread,

baguettes, rolls and pita bread, as well as pastries, including chocolate donuts. Homemade ice cream is available in a few restaurants but is not as rich as American ice cream. Brown and whole-grain breads can be ordered and purchased at the Intercontinental Hotel though the bread is extremely expensive by Eritrean standards.

Local fresh produce is inexpensive and easily obtained from corner stores and the downtown markets. Some of the produce is seasonal, however, and there are occasional absences of some items. Almost always available are: onions, potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, hot peppers, lettuce, chard, garlic and parsley. More seasonal are green beans, eggplant, celery, artichokes, fennel, leeks, radishes, green peppers and cauliflower. Cucumbers are scarce, though the supply is improving. Corn, though seasonally available, is of poor quality. Herbs, other than parsley, are almost never seen on the market. Familiar spices are pretty much limited to chili powder or paste, dried coriander seeds, curry powder, and cumin. Dried ginger is readily available, but fresh ginger is rare.

Bananas, oranges and limes are available throughout the year, but other fresh fruits are seasonal, including tangerines, lemons, grapes, mangoes, papayas, watermelon, cantaloupe, peaches, apples, grapefruit, and various others native to the region, including a delicious cactus fruit high in oxalic acid. Fresh berries are almost never found on the market. Several times a year, one market imports grapes, pears, apples and kiwis. Locally made pasteurized milk, butter, yogurt and cheeses (parmesan, mozzarella) are of good quality and readily available but there can be seasonal shortages. Beef is inexpensive, lean and very good, as are pork, lamb and goat. A wide variety of fresh fish is brought up in refrigerated trucks from the coast several times a week and is available daily from a downtown market

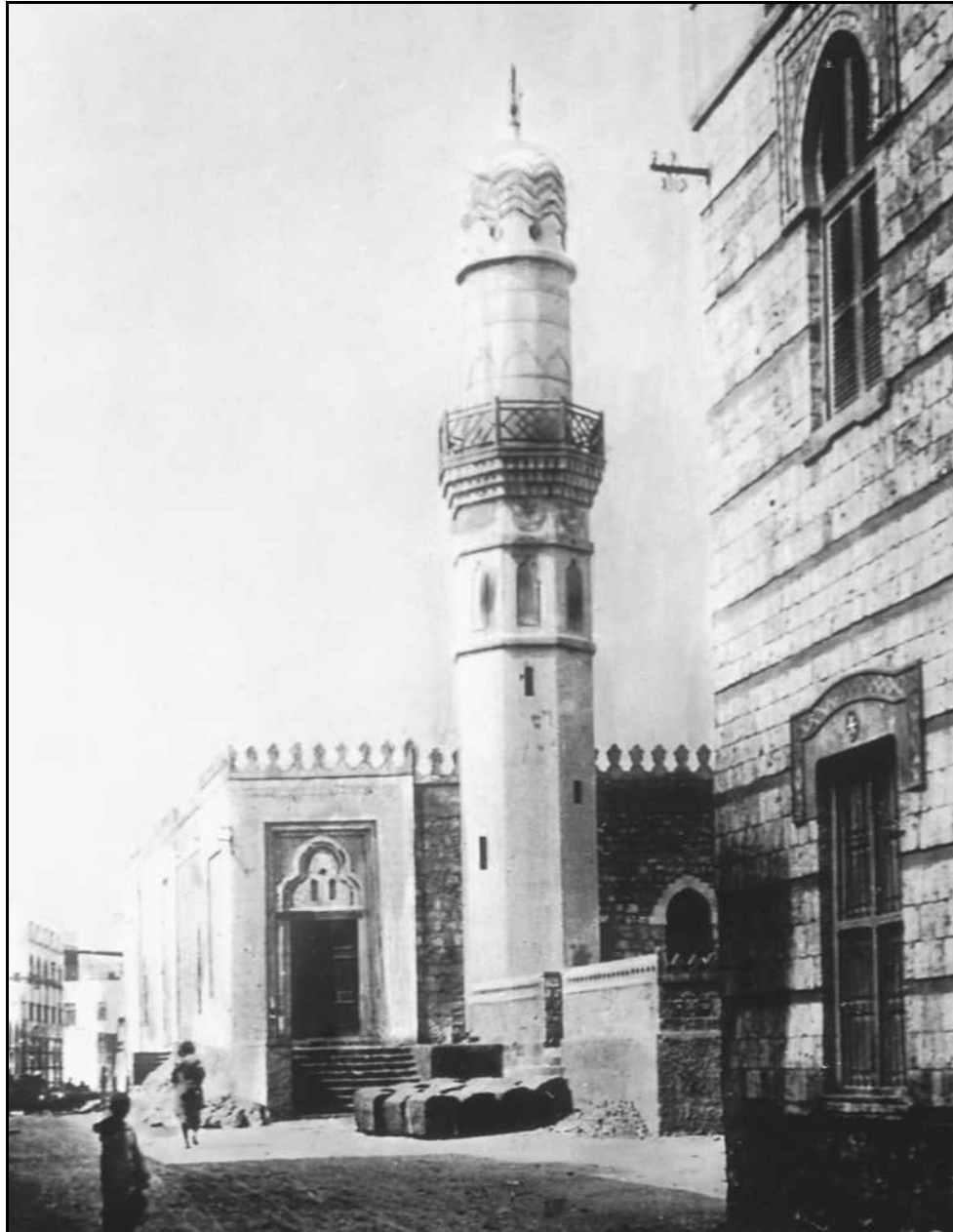
and directly from a facility run by the Ministry of Marine Resources. Locally grown chicken can always be found but is almost always tough. Imported frozen chicken is sold at several downtown stores.

Staples such as flour (white only), rice (several varieties including basmati), sugar (granulated only), salt/pepper, and vegetable and peanut oils are always on the shelves. So too are products reflecting Eritrea's long Italian colonial influence, including olive oil, balsamic vinegar, various prepared pastas, tomato sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise, canned tomatoes, peas, capers, anchovies, tuna, and sardines. Locally produced peanuts and cookies are good and inexpensive, and Italian-packaged cookies and candies are also available. Powdered milk and long-life milk are often found, but there can be shortages. A box of corn flakes, the only cereal presently sold here, is expensive.

Spending time browsing through the various small grocery stores can often be rewarded with surprises such as canned coconut milk, Thai green curry paste, or fresh chestnuts, but supplies of specialty items cannot be counted on.

Coffee beans, ground or whole, are plentiful, as is tea. A local factory produces Coke (classic only), Fanta and tonic water. The local brewery produces a good Western-style lager beer as well as an excellent bottled carbonated water. Plain bottled water is also available. Imported liquor and wine can be bought at a duty-free shop, and a number of stores sell good and relatively inexpensive South African wines. There are two home-brewed alcoholic beverages: meas, a wine made from honey, and suwa, a weak, slightly sour version of beer.

Paper products, cleaning and personal hygiene items are imported and of varying quality, not always available and usually very expensive.



Mosque in Asmara, Eritrea

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Clothing

The climate alone is worth a tour in Asmara. The city's temperature typically ranges from 55°F at night to 75 °F during the day, (a little hotter in the summer and a little cooler at night), and is usually extremely dry. During the day, the weather can feel quite hot in the sun and relatively cool in the shade. In this climate, most people opt for layered clothing. At night, jackets and warm sweaters are often needed. During the

July/August rainy season, rain tends to fall an hour or two a day, usually in the afternoons. Raincoats aren't really necessary, but umbrellas are useful.

Asmara is not considered a particularly formal city in terms of dress. Most invitations are marked "informal." Men usually wear suits or sports jackets at the office and for receptions and dinner, though more casual attire is also often seen.

Women wear dresses or pants for the office, but nicer dresses or pantsuits with heels and stockings are appropriate or more formal events.

For recreation, running errands or just walking around the town, jeans, T-shirts and jogging shoes are just fine. Swimsuits and shorts are needed for trips to the coast. Hats and plenty of sunscreen are recommended for protection against the

powerful sun anywhere in the country.

Children need a good supply of clothes for both warm and cool weather, including pants, long-sleeved shirts, sweaters, sweat-shirts, jackets, sturdy shoes, shorts, socks, warm pajamas, t-shirts, hats, etc.

Try to bring all the clothing necessary for a complete tour, recognizing that supplementary items can be ordered through catalogs. Clothing, fabric and tailors can be found in town, but all tend to be of poor quality. Some shops will custom-make sweaters, vests, shirts and suits, but quality is often a problem. Relatively inexpensive leather items, of varying quality, can be custom made, including shoes, purses, jackets, coats, pants, skirts and backpacks.

Supplies and Services

Most services in Asmara are quite basic, but include bicycle and car repair, quite good dry-cleaning and laundry, film developing, shoe repair and small mending jobs of all types. Hair salons and barbers are extremely basic, though the new Inter-Continental Hotel is planning to open a hair salon soon. In the meantime, "easy care" hairstyles are strongly recommended.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available to assist with house cleaning, clothes washing and ironing, as well as a range of other duties that can include food shopping, errand running and cooking; these jobs are usually filled by Eritrean women. Most people also hire a full- or part-time gardener. Duties and working hours are negotiated individually with the employee. Salaries are not expensive, about \$90 to \$100 a month for full-time help.

Fine cuisine was not a priority during the 30-year war; cooks thus lack training and are unfamiliar with most spices-as a result, most cooks can produce only basic meals. Since

most domestic help speak and read some English, it would be helpful to bring simple cookbooks containing recipes and pictures of meals that you like.

Religious Activities

Churches found in Eritrea are Orthodox Christian, Moslem, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Greek Orthodox. There is a very beautiful small synagogue maintained by the last Jewish family in Asmara, but there is no rabbi. Some churches offer weekly services in English.

Education

There is a small Asmara International Community School (AICS) offering instruction in English for grades K-7 and a half-day preschool.

There is also an Italian school for preschool through high school students. All instruction is in Italian though English courses are offered. Anyone interested in placing a child in the school should contact the school directly to determine what is necessary for placement, including documents and health records. The elementary school address is: Michelangelo Buonarotti, PO Box 5230, Asmara, Eritrea. Telephone: (291 1) 12-57-98. For the high school, write to Alessandro Volta and Guglielmo Marconi, PO Box 5554, Asmara, Eritrea. Telephone: 291 1 12 05 05.

Special Educational Opportunities

Other educational opportunities in Asmara are limited. It is the University of Asmara's policy not to admit foreigners at this time. The Alliance Française offers classes in French and Tigrinya. The Italian Embassy sponsors Italian classes, and private tutors in Tigrinya can be found.

Sports

Eritreans are quite enthusiastic cyclists and hold periodic bicycle races. The more adventurous challenge themselves on strenuous trips to nearby towns or the spectacular

120 km five-hour bike trip down the escarpment to the port of Massawa. Be sure to bring along extra tire tubes or repair kits.

Hiking in the countryside outside Asmara is a popular activity and a good way to get some exercise while seeing some very beautiful landscapes. One exceptional hike is a zig-zag dirt trail straight up a very tall mountain, on the top of which is a monastery (sorry, only men allowed). No matter where the hike, however, it is absolutely necessary to keep to well-established trails used by people and animals. Though Eritrea has made a start on demining, much of the countryside is still mined. Jogging is not a particularly popular sport with Eritreans, but male and female joggers can run anywhere in town without fear of harassment. Soccer is the most popular team sport. There are a few playgrounds with swings and slides.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The coral reefs around the 350 or so islands off the port of Massawa offer superb snorkeling and scuba diving. Many of the sites are totally unexplored and others haven't been seen for 30 years or more. Since there is only one basic hotel on one of the islands, most of these snorkeling/diving trips involve camping out for several days. Fishing is also excellent, including tuna, kingfish, jackfish, and grouper.

Travel by road is steadily improving, although there are still many unpaved roads. Exploring the countryside requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle, and in some areas it might be necessary to take along extra food, plenty of water, gasoline and spare parts. Given the many winding roads, anyone prone to motion sickness should take preventive medication. As with hiking, it is necessary to use common sense, especially in more remote areas. Guides who speak Tigrinya are useful, especially in finding obscure or remote sites. Any traveler should, at a minimum consult with local

inhabitants in advance on the conditions of the roads and about the potential existence of mines.

The port of Massawa, badly damaged by heavy fighting during the war, is rapidly being repaired. The old town's architecture reflects its Arab and Turkish influence. The city's hotels, both in town and on the coast north of town, are basic, but improvements are in the works. The beach, with very shallow water, can be a disappointment. Massawa's Salaam restaurant, in the old city, is extremely popular with Americans. Its specialties, in fact the only things on the menu, are fish and bread, which are cooked, Yemeni style, by throwing them into a hole in a very hot clay oven. The fish exterior is blackened but inside it is moist, succulent, and tasty. The bread, a cross between pita and pan, is equally good. All of this is eaten at rustic tables in the dirt street outside the restaurant. Assab, Eritrea's other port, is a 1-hour flight from Asmara or a difficult 2-day drive south of Massawa, although part of the road has been paved, almost to the ruins of the port of Adulis, believed to have been established by the Greeks in 600 BC. It later became the seaport of the ancient Axumite kingdom although today the sea is several kilometers distant. Though it is easy to see that this was once a major city, only a small portion of the site has been excavated.

Keren is a very beautiful 2-hour drive north of Asmara. It has long been a crossroads between the Christian highlands and the Moslem lowlands. There are pleasant outdoor cafes, and the local market is a good place to buy gold and silver jewelry at better prices than in Asmara.

North of Keren is the small town of Afabet, famous as the site of a battle that was one of the turning points of the war. Near here, an outnumbered Eritrean force in one battle captured 70 Ethiopian tanks and killed or captured thousands of Ethiopian

soldiers. The road along here is still littered with burned-out tanks, trucks and jeeps.

Further north still is the town of Nakfa, dear to all Eritreans as the redoubt for the EPLF in the bleakest years of the war. In the mountains around Nakfa are a hospital, schools and other buildings constructed deep inside mountains and many miles of deep trenches. Completely destroyed during the war, the town is being rebuilt, including a new hotel. In recognition of the area's importance to the struggle, the Eritrean currency is named the Nakfa.

Among other places of interest are Fil Fil, a mountainous, green, and forested area 2 hours northeast of Asmara, which offers a nice contrast to the dry landscapes of most of Eritrea; and Adi Keyih, about 2 hours southeast of Asmara, the site of a 2000-year-old Axumite dam, and an Axumite city dating from the 6th to the 9th century A.D.

The border town of Axum is a political and religious site that dates as far back as the first century A.D. Among its attractions are tall obelisks, one, at 76 feet, still standing; a stone throne; a reservoir carved in rock; an underground tomb; and an ancient Orthodox Church. Many Orthodox Christians believe Axum to be the final resting place of the Ark of the Covenant.

Entertainment

There are only two cinemas in Asmara, for the most part showing films several years old or more. For movie entertainment, most families rely on their VCR, making use of the videotape stores in town, two of which carry surprisingly up-to-date English-language selections. Other cultural activities are offered by the Alliance Française, the Italian Club and the British Council. The Alliance Française and the British Council also have an excellent collection of films and television shows on videotape for borrowing.

The restaurant scene has recently shown vast improvement. Just a few years ago, other than a good Chinese restaurant, the China Star, the only options were places with limited menus of Eritrean cuisine, simple grilled meats and fishes, and substandard versions of Italian dishes such as pizza or spaghetti. The Chinese restaurant remains open, but has been supplemented by restaurants serving everything from European to Middle Eastern food. The Inter-Continental Hotel offers a pastry/sandwich shop and two restaurants, including an excellent Italian restaurant, as well as an Irish pub. The Irish Pub and a couple of restaurants also offer disco music and dancing, but the places usually don't start jumping until around midnight. People also frequently entertain with dinners and parties at home.

Social Activities

The Eritrean arts scene is slowly rebuilding after the war. There are occasional exhibits of work by Eritrean artists, but most painting, perhaps understandably, has war-related themes. There are also quite good artisans, making pottery, basketry, and gold and silver jewelry. Eritrean traditional music, akin to Arabic music, is most often heard at weddings and ceremonial occasions. There are more modern musicians popular with young Eritreans, but concerts are rare. This music, as well as Western music, is heard in Asmara's discos.

OTHER CITY

The town of **KEREN** is the regional capital of the Anseba Region and one of the major agricultural centers of Eritrea, particularly for fruits and vegetables. Banana plantations are nearby and many dairy herds supply the town's cheese factory. In the town market, you can purchase fresh milk, butter and cream. There are also a wood market and, once a week, a livestock

market where sheep, goats, camels and donkeys are sold.

The majority of the 60,000 residents are Muslim, but the town also contains many examples of its Italian and Ethiopian heritage in the architecture of public buildings and churches. The name Keren means highland, which reflects the town's location on a plateau surrounded by mountains. Tigu, an Ethiopian fort, sits on a rise to the northeast of town. A British War Cemetery and the Italian Cemetery serve as a WWII memorial, since the town was the site of heavy fighting between the British and the Italians.

Near the town market is the shrine of St Maryam Dearit, an ancient baobab tree that locals believe has powers for fertility. Traditionally, women will brew coffee in the shade of the tree, and if a passing traveler accepts a cup, they will be blessed with children.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

About the size of Pennsylvania, Eritrea is a country of stark and dramatic landscapes from its 630-mile Red Sea coastline to its high craggy mountains to the desolate Danakil Depression. To the north and west is the Sudan, with Ethiopia and Djibouti to the south. The capital of Asmara, at 7,600 feet above sea level, is located on a high plateau in the center of the country. The descent from Asmara to the port of Massawa is one of the most spectacular drives in the world, taking nearly three hours over hairpin curves to cover the 65 miles to the coast. Off the coast are some 350 islands, most of them uninhabited and little explored. The coral reefs which surround many of the islands were left undisturbed by tourism and over-fishing during the long war, and are among the healthiest

in the world. The country's lowest point is minus 75 meters, near Dalul in the Danakil Depression; its highest is Mount Soira at 3,018 meters. Only about 12% of the land is arable.

The climate in the central highlands, including Asmara, is near perfection, usually in the 70s or 80s during the day, cooling off to the 50s at night. There is little humidity and it seldom rains except during the July/August rainy season when daily afternoon showers are the norm. Asmara receives about 21 inches of rain each year. April, May and June are the warmest months on the plateau, with the cooler season stretching from November to March.

Temperatures in the lowlands can be scorchingly hot, typically ranging from 105°F to 120°F, sometimes more, in August. Along the coast, including in the port cities of Massawa and Assab, high humidity often accompanies the heat. Winter highs here are around 90, with evening temperatures in the '70s.

The country has been sadly deforested by the war, and by the need for heating and cooking fuel, and feed for livestock. Some attempts have been made to reforest but with varying success. Almost any kind of flower seems to do well in the highlands, but much of the lowlands is limited to various acacias, scrub and cactus plants. Wildlife includes an impressive array of birds, including raptors and water birds, some of which are migrants and some of which are unique only to Eritrea and little documented. Wild animals include baboons, monkeys, ostriches, hyenas, and gazelles. The hope was that the end of the liberation struggle would see traditional wildlife return to the region, but the renewed fighting is a deterrent. There is the occasional report of a leopard sighting, and elephants have been sighted recently in the west of the country.

Population

Eritrea's population is estimated at close to 3,500,000, the numbers swollen recently with some 75,000 people expelled from Ethiopia following the renewal of hostilities. In addition, the UNHCR has registered 150,000 Eritrean refugees in Sudan for voluntary repatriation following the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries in January 2000. However, more than one million Eritreans were displaced as a result of the war with Ethiopia and of drought. Approximately 400,000 people live in the capital; the next largest cities are: Keren (75,000), Massawa (24,000), and Assab (21,000).

The people are composed of nine major tribal and ethnic groups: Tigrinya (50%), Tigre and Kunama (40%), Afar (4%), Saho (3%), and the remaining 3% are made up of Begia, Bilen, Nara, and Rashaida. Each has its own language, mode of dress and cultural traditions. About half the country is Moslem, living primarily in the lowlands. The other half, mostly highlanders, is Christian, primarily Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic, although there are small Protestant communities.

The government's official working languages are Tigrinya and Arabic, though most officials speak English, and a great deal of diplomatic and commercial business is conducted in English. English is also the language of instruction in public schools from the 6th grade onward, including at the University of Asmara. Ge'ez, an ancestor of Tigrinya, Amharic, and Tigre, survives as the liturgical language of the Orthodox Church. Western dress predominates in the capital, especially for men and young people. Women can often be seen in the traditional dress of white cotton with a colorful border. The traditional dress for men, also white, is seldom used in Asmara except for ceremonial occasions.

The cuisine will be familiar to anyone who has eaten at an Ethiopian

or Eritrean restaurant. The staple is zigny, a highly spiced stew containing mutton, beef, goat, or sometimes chicken.

The stew is ladled into the center of a large flat fermented bread called injera. Diners then use their hands to break off pieces of the bread and scoop up bite-size pieces of the zigny. Italian dishes, particularly pastas and pizza, are also readily available. Many Orthodox Christians, as well as Moslems, do not eat pork. Orthodox Church members abstain from meat and animal products two days a week, as well as for long periods leading up to Christmas and Easter.

There are no family names in Eritrea. A child is given a "first" name, and then takes the name of his father as a "last" name. Women do not change their names after marriage, but they do change their title from Woizerit (Miss) to Woizero (Mrs.). Men are addressed as Ato (Mr.).

Although the Western calendar is used for business and official purposes, it co-exists with both the Moslem and traditional Orthodox calendars. The latter runs eight years behind the Western calendar and the year begins on September 11; it has twelve 30-day months, plus an extra "month" of 5 or 6 days. Days of the week are identical to Western usage.

Public Institutions

Eritrea began statehood in 1993 under a provisional government, which created the Constituent Assembly, charged with drafting a constitution and laws. After the successful referendum for independence in 1993, the Provisional Government gave way to the Government of the State of Eritrea. After ratification of the Constitution in 1997, the Constituent Assembly gave way to a National Assembly, with members either appointed or elected; it was established as one of three independent

branches of government and its initial tasks were to create an election code to be followed by Parliamentary and Presidential elections. However, due to the conflict with Ethiopia, elections have been postponed indefinitely, as has full implementation of the Constitution.

The legislative branch of the transitional government, called the National Assembly, is the highest legislative authority in Ethiopia. The National Assembly has met only sporadically since being created but, when fully established, it will be responsible for national policies, enactment of laws and their implementation, as well as approving the budget. It chose Isaias Afwerki as its President with 95% of the vote. The Assembly is a unicameral body, its 150 members include:

- 75 representatives appointed from the People's Front for Democracy and Justice. The PFDJ is the political party that succeeded the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which waged the successful struggle for independence;
- 60 elected members of the constituent assembly; and
- 15 people chosen from the Eritrean Diaspora.

The President serves as both chief of state and head of government under the transitional government. As such, he is head of both the National Assembly and the State Council, a collective executive authority akin to a Cabinet. The President is responsible for nominating people to head the various Ministries and Commissions and Agencies, which make up the Executive Branch, subject to the approval of the National Assembly. President Isaias is also Chairman of the PFDJ-the only political party recognized by the Government, though other interests groups do exist.

When the Constitution is fully implemented, the Judicial Branch will operate independently of both

the legislative and executive branches of government; there is already in place a court system extending from the village through the district, provincial and national levels. The justice system consists of a Supreme Court, 10 provincial courts and 29 district courts.

Arts, Science, and Education

The Eritrean education system, having suffered a severe decline during the war, was given a top priority by the new Eritrean Government. School attendance is compulsory and free through grade seven. At the primary and secondary school levels, 331 new schools were constructed between 1991 and 1998, and another 356 were rehabilitated. The number of teachers increased by 33%. Despite this achievement, as of 1997, only 29% of elementary-age children, 8% of junior high school, and 10% of high school students were attending school. The overall literacy rate is only about 30% for men and 15% for women.

University-level education began in Eritrea with the 1958 establishment of the Santa Famiglia, a small private Catholic school administered and largely staffed by Italian Sisters. In 1967, the school was renamed as the University of Asmara, but it remained privately funded and never resembled a national university. In 1990, Ethiopia moved the university (students, staff and materials) to Ethiopia.

Thus, at liberation, Eritrea had no university in any real sense of the word. The University of Asmara now enrolls about 4,350 students and is crucial to the economic development of the country. As such, its priorities are training to produce secondary school teachers, government and economic development workers, and academics to eventually fill the university's faculty needs. Another goal is expansion of the university to include advanced degree programs.

Commerce and Industry

Considerable remittances from Eritreans living abroad mask the fact that Eritrea is one of the world's poorest countries. Its economy is largely based on subsistence agriculture with nearly 80% of the population involved in farming and herding. Per capita income is \$240 a year (1999 estimate). The population growth rate is over three per cent.

At independence, Eritrea faced the problems of being a small, desperately poor African country with few natural resources; a workforce trained for little other than warfare and traditional agriculture; outmoded light industries; poor infrastructure, with roads, communications and whole towns destroyed by the war.

Eritrea began to tackle these problems with all the determination it had exhibited in winning its independence. Though the 1998 resumption of hostilities with Ethiopia forced Eritrea to put many of its plans on hold-and will create new ones-it had made an impressive start toward rebuilding. Roads, despite the heavy beating they took during the struggle, are now in better shape than in most other African countries and the railroad between Asmara and the Massawa port has been partially rebuilt. A major electric power generating project is underway but the site was bombed in May 2000, which will lead to a lengthy setback. Domestic and international telephone services have improved markedly, although the country still does not have cellular services. Internet service became available in November 2000. Eritrea's first international-class hotel, the Asmara Palace, opened in 1999 and is managed by the Inter-Continental chain.

To attract investors, a top priority, the government created one of the most liberal investment climates in Africa. The investment code pro-

vides a number of incentives for investors, including no taxes on exports and items brought in for re-export; a reduced tax rate over several years; and free movement of any amount of capital in and out of the country for both Eritrean and foreign investors.

Apart from infrastructure improvements, the government has privatized more than two-thirds of the 42 state-owned enterprises nationalized by the former Ethiopian Government, including a brewery and milk, soap, textile, furniture, cigarette, leather, oil, metal, machinery and candy factories. It has plans to modernize the textile, glass and leather industries, and is also in the process of developing a fisheries industry. Other potential opportunities for American businesses can be found in energy (oil, natural gas, and thermal), agriculture, food processing, construction, mining (including gold), telecommunications, tourism and general consumer goods. The American petroleum company, Anadarko, found offshore oil in 1999 but not in commercially recoverable quantities. At present, no energy companies are exploring for petroleum or gas.

Transportation

One of the delights of Asmara is that nothing is more than a 5- or 10-minute drive, or a 15- to 30-minute bike ride, from anything else. The city is small enough for most people to traverse the central area on foot in not much more than an hour.

Asmara traffic is light even in rush hour, but newcomers should be warned that Eritreans are inattentive drivers and pedestrians, paying little attention to traffic around them, and frequently walk or enter into traffic without a glance at what might be coming. Fortunately, the normal speed for Eritrean drivers in Asmara is only 15 to 20 mph, so serious accidents in the capital are rare. The road to Massawa is another matter. It is necessary to

pay close attention on the winding, steep descent because Eritrean truckers and other drivers often drive either in the middle of the road or, when swinging around curves, take the oncoming lane. One mistake risks a drop of a thousand feet or more in the upper parts of the road, and there are few guardrails.

For trips out of town, travelers can rent cars, with or without drivers, at about the same prices as in the U.S.

Cars are scarce at present and very expensive. Also, no vehicle more than 10 years old may be imported into Eritrea. A standard economy car is adequate for Asmara and main paved roads. Any real exploration of the countryside, however, requires a four-wheel-drive with good clearance. Air-conditioning is not needed in Asmara, but is important for lowland travel. European and Japanese cars prevail; repair services exist, but the right spare parts cannot always be found. Diesel fuel and regular gasoline are available, but there is no high-octane or unleaded gasoline in the country.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The quality and service are generally good, but calls to and from Eritrea are among the most expensive in the world (currently about \$3.00 a minute). Residential call-back service is also readily available. Fax machines are in some places in town. Several companies offer e-mail only services for personal home use and the monthly fee is expensive by U.S. standards. Web access is due in August 2000.

Mail

International mail takes 2 to 3 weeks. The local post office, unlike in many third world countries, is reliable, though any private packages must be cleared through customs.

Radio and TV

Eritrea has one television station that broadcasts a half-hour of English news nightly and an occasional film in English, but most programs are in Tigrinya and Arabic. Additional television programming is available by satellite, including CNN, two movie channels with fairly recent offerings, two BBC channels, one with news the other with sitcoms and specials, cartoon channels, MTV style programming, the Discovery, Hallmark and Travel channels, several sports channels and one channel offering nothing but cooking programs. This TV service also has programming in Chinese, Italian, Portuguese and Greek as well as international radio stations (VOA, BBC 1 and 2, RFI and very wide range of non-commercial music stations). Subscription to the satellite service is expensive by American standards, and it is necessary to purchase a satellite dish locally.

Both local and satellite TV operate on the European PAL system; videotapes available locally are made for the same system. To enjoy programming and videotapes available in Ethiopia, as well as American videotapes, it is absolutely necessary to have a multi-system TVNCR that can handle both PAL and the U.S. NTSC systems. In purchasing the equipment, make certain that it uses the same system as found in Eritrea.

There are two local radio stations, one AM and one FM. The VOA and the BBC broadcast in English to Eritrea but the quality of reception can vary greatly.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There are ten Eritrean newspapers, including one, The Eritrean Profile, in English. Some Western magazines, including Time, Newsweek, and The Economist, are available locally. Very few books in English are available.

The Eritrean media consists of one government-owned television station, three official newspapers, one magazine, and two radio stations. There are seven independent newspapers. Freedom of the press is guaranteed under the Constitution, which has been ratified but not implemented. Though there is no official censorship, government reaction to some criticism by the media has at times been harsh, including the jailing of reporters and editors. As a result, the independent media exercise a form of self-censorship.

Health and Medicine

The first medical challenge for newcomers is acclimatization to Asmara's 7,400 feet elevation. Since the air is thinner at that height, some people may initially experience shortness of breath, fatigue, headaches and difficulty sleeping. The dry climate can cause dehydration, irritate the eyes of contact lens wearers, and exacerbate respiratory diseases and allergies. Given the altitude and Eritrea's proximity to the equator, it is necessary to take extra precautions against sun damage.

The most common illnesses found in Eritrea are upper respiratory and gastrointestinal, malaria and measles. Communicable diseases of concern include tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and meningitis.

Mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever are not a problem in the highlands, but are found in the lowlands. Malaria suppressants are thus not necessary in Asmara and other highland areas, but are recommended for the lowlands. Insect repellents, while rarely needed in Asmara, are essential for the lowlands, particularly on the coast.

All water for consumption should be boiled and filtered. In a rare case of a long power interruption, keep in mind that the boiling temperature

of water is lower at higher altitudes. Local mineral water is safe. All fruits and vegetables must be peeled, cooked or disinfected by soaking in a solution of bleach (available locally) and water.

Medical, dental, diagnostic, and hospital facilities in Eritrea do not meet Western standards. They are, in general, overcrowded, have a limited stock of medicines, and are poorly maintained; limited laboratory tests and x-ray services are available. A new clinic has opened that is better equipped than most, but patients requiring medical assistance other than basic services are evacuated to London or the U.S. There is one western-standard dental facility, but others are not recommended for routine use.

The supply of prescription and non-prescription medicines in local pharmacies is limited and unreliable. Bring all needed prescription and non-prescription medicines and supplies for both routine and chronic medical conditions. This includes items such as aspirins, bandages, adult and baby acetaminophen, vitamins, cough syrups, and any other medicines needed for routine home-treatable conditions. Other useful items recommended are: a thermometer, mosquito repellent, Dramamine against motion sickness on winding roads, tampons, sun block, hand and body creams, and contact lens supplies, as well as an extra pair of glasses and the prescriptions for both.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

At present, no American carriers serve Asmara directly. Transfers to a foreign carrier for direct service to Asmara are available at London, Rome, Frankfurt, and Cairo at the time of this writing. It is not necessary to transit Addis Ababa.

A passport and visa, which must be obtained in advance, are required. There is an airport departure tax, and residents of Eritrea generally must obtain an exit visa from Eritrean Immigration in advance of their departure. Entry information (and information on the departure tax) may be obtained from the Embassy of Eritrea, 1708 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009; telephone (202) 319-1991; fax (202) 319-1304. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Eritrean embassy or consulate.

Persons arriving in Eritrea from a yellow-fever endemic area must have proof of a current yellow fever vaccine.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Asmara and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Eritrea. The U.S. Embassy address is: Franklin Roosevelt Street, P.O. Box 211 Asmara, telephone (291-1)12-00-04; fax (291-1)12-75-84.

Pets

There are no quarantine restrictions, but all pets must have an up-to-date health certificate, including evidence of a rabies shot for warm-blooded pets, especially dogs and cats. Tick fever and intestinal parasites have been reported as problems for pets here. There are many diseases among the local chickens, a fact that could pose a problem for pet birds. Only the most basic veterinarian services (for dogs and cats, not birds) are available in Asmara, so before coming to the country, have your pet examined and given all of its needed shots and vaccinations. Bring all pet supplies, including food and medicine, with you. A rabies vaccine is available. Make sure before you leave for Eritrea that you have the necessary paperwork to bring pets, particularly parrots and other birds protected by the CITES treaty, back with you to the United States. For more information on the CITES treaty, contact

the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Firearms and Ammunition

The importation of personal firearms is forbidden by the Eritrean Government. The Eritrean Government also prohibits the possession of personal firearms in the country.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Eritrean currency is the nakfa, which is available in denominations of 100, 50, 20, 10, 5, and 1 bills. The current exchange rate is approximately US\$1=nakfa 10. Credit cards are rarely accepted in Eritrea except by airlines, the new Intercontinental Hotel, and a few car-hire companies. Foreigners must pay for their airline tickets and hotel bills in U.S. currency (dollar bills, travelers checks, or credit cards). Major hotels, banks, and the airport will exchange dollars for local currency.

Local time is Greenwich Mean Time plus 3 hours. Eritrea is thus 7 hours ahead of Washington, D.C. during U.S. daylight savings months, and 8 hours ahead for the rest of the year. Eritrea does not adopt daylight savings. The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 7	Christmas (Orthodox)
Jan. 19	Timket (Epiphany/ Orthodox)
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Apr./May	Good Friday*
Apr./May	Easter*
May 24	Liberation Day
June 20	Martyrs' Day
Sep. 1	Start of the Armed Struggle
.	Id al Adha*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
*variable	

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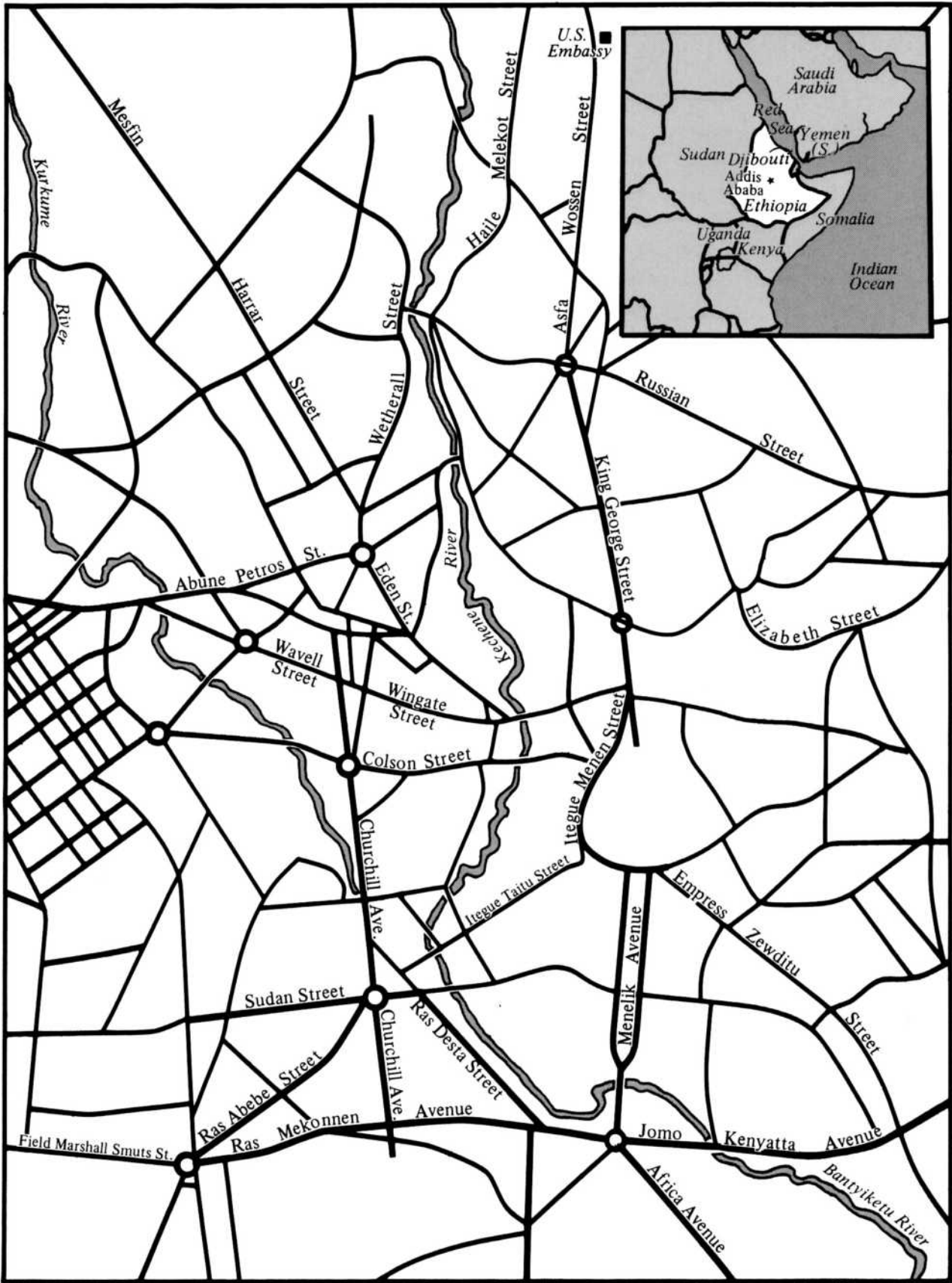
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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ETHIOPIA

Major City:

Addis Ababa

Other Cities:

Asmara, Axum, Dire Dawa, Gondar, Harar, Jima, Mekele, Nazret

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Ethiopia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

An assignment to Ethiopia offers an opportunity to live and work in a country with a rich and diverse culture and a heritage and history of independence among the longest and proudest on the African continent.

The seventeen years of revolution under the cruel, dictatorial Mengistu regime ended in 1991. Since then the Transitional Government has been working toward the creation of a democratically-based government and a free market economy. Much progress remains to be made, infrastructures created, and habits changed. Western donors, including the United States, are encouraging the Transitional

Government through assistance programs directed toward food security, democracy and governance, and extensive privatization.

Ethiopia is a very poor country which suffers from recurring droughts and famines. The international community attempts to assist the government to alleviate and, increasingly, to prevent these natural and human disasters. The U.S. remains one of the largest donors in this effort.

MAJOR CITY

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa, or "new flower", with an estimated population of over 3 million, spreads over a large hilly area in the mountains of the central highlands. The climate is temperate and pleasant most of the year. This high mountain settlement, a relatively new city, became Ethiopia's capital in 1890.

Its architecture is a confusion of older buildings in the Italian style, modern offices and apartments, Western-style villas, and mud-walled, tin-roofed dwellings. There are slum areas scattered about the

city, as there are attractive and well-groomed villas.

Only a few of the main streets have names that are generally known or used. Street signs are rare, and although businesses and residences have house numbers, these appear to be in random order and difficult to locate. The main streets are paved, but many side streets are rocky and, in the rainy season, very muddy. All streets suffer from neglect and large pot holes. Traffic is impaired not only by road conditions, but also by unruly drivers, animals and pedestrians walking on the roadway, and very poor street lighting. Road accident rates in Addis Ababa are very high, fatalities frequent, and medical care very poor.

Addis Ababa is often called the "Capital of Africa" because the Organization of African Unity (OAU) makes the city its headquarters. In addition, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA) was established here in 1958, and many international conferences are held in its very impressive Africa Hall.

Food

Vegetables, such as potatoes, onions, garlic, leeks, carrots, cauliflower, zucchini, tomatoes, cucumbers, leaf lettuce, spinach, beets,

artichokes, and avocados are abundant all year on the local economy, though the quality varies with the season. Fresh fruits, such as bananas, oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruits, papayas, melons, mangoes, pineapples, plums, and strawberries are usually good and plentiful. A variety of meats (beef, lamb, veal, fish, pork, fish, and chicken) is available, but the quality is uneven. The variety and availability of locally-available food has been improving over the past several years.

Fresh milk and dairy products are sold locally, but the milk must be boiled before use. Full-fat powdered milk is available at local shops. Bread can be purchased locally. European-style grocery stores are opening throughout Addis Ababa, with an increasingly wide variety of products, mostly imported from Italy. Availability is quite good and prices are very high.

A cookbook with recipes for high altitude cooking is useful, and several are included in the Recommended Reading.

Clothing

Addis Ababa has some reliable local dressmakers, but fabric quality is not to U.S. standards. Local tailors are available, but the workmanship tends to be poor.

You will need two or three pairs of sturdy walking shoes since side-walks are few, and roadways are general unpared. "Shoesaver" or a similar water repellent helps to protect shoes during the rainy season. The secret of dealing with the often wide-range of daily temperatures is clothes layering.

Men: Spring- and fall-weight woolen business suits, sport coats, and slacks will fulfill your needs in Addis Ababa. Summer suits are also comfortable during daytime much of the year. Jackets, sweaters, and raincoats are advisable. Sun hats and warm weather clothes are needed if you plan to spend time outdoors during the dry season or to travel in lower, warmer areas.

Women: Light fall or spring wool suits and dresses combined with a limited number of wool skirts and sweaters will provide a basic wardrobe. Cotton or silk can be worn midday. Layered dressing such as sweaters or vests over blouses or dresses are often worn since homes and offices are cool. Both wool and cotton slacks can be worn here. Shorts are acceptable for tennis or jogging. A light daytime jacket and wool shawls are useful on occasion. A coat, jacket, or shawl is always needed at night. Raincoats, umbrellas, and rainboots are essential.

Children: Children need a good supply of pants, long-sleeved shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, light jackets, sturdy shoes, socks, raincoats, rainboots, warm pajamas, and bathrobes; include warm clothing. Bring cotton sunhats or caps as they are not available and sunburn is frequent at this altitude. Jeans are acceptable for school and particularly suitable for play clothes since weather permits outdoor play much of the year. Shorts and T-shirts are worn during warm weather.

Supplies and Services

While it is becoming easier to find many of the desired supplies in Addis Ababa, the quality is uneven and the prices very high. Some European products are appearing in the newer grocery stores.

Tailors are adequate for minor repairs and fittings. Seamstresses can reproduce a dress from a picture, pattern, or sketch to your measurements; however, the result may not be exactly what you want.

Men's and women's shoe repair is adequate and inexpensive. Dry cleaning and laundry service is satisfactory. Beauty shop prices are reasonable; however, the quality of service is not always good. Many barbershops are clean, and haircutting techniques are acceptable.

Education

Children's Education: The International Community School (ICS—formerly the American Community School) opened in Fall 1966. It

became the International Community School in May 1980. Classes are offered from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. ICS offers the International Baccalaureate Program (IB) and the Advanced Placement Program (AP). Enrollment was 320 students in the spring 2000, including Ethiopian and third-country nationals from some 50 different countries.

Bingham Academy is a nondenominational missionary-sponsored American school, which admits international students who can pass an English proficiency test. Bingham operates an American curriculum from kindergarten through grade 8.

The Sandford English Community School, which follows a British curriculum, offers instruction in English, and has begun to offer the IB program. Other national groups—German, Italian, French, and Swedish—also maintain good schools.

None of the schools have cafeterias, so children must bring their own lunches.

Several nursery schools in Addis Ababa accept children from age 3.

Special Educational Opportunities

Classes at Addis Ababa University are taught in English. Various cultural centers offers courses in French, Italian, German, Russian, and other languages.

Recreation and Social Life

Among the most difficult adjustments to Addis Ababa is its isolation, high altitude, lack of amenities, and socio-cultural complexity. You must often rely on your own resources to find necessary stimuli for a full and satisfying tour.

Sports

Weekend picnics, horseback riding, camping, hunting, and fishing are possible. Volleyball, softball, and basketball are popular sports activities in Addis Ababa.



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Downtown Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Riding enthusiasts who prefer Western saddles should bring their own, since only English saddles are available here. A riding horse can be purchased and boarded. Horses can only be leased on an hourly basis from stables.

The Hilton Hotel has a sports club with a naturally heated outdoor pool, tennis courts, miniature golf, and a sauna. The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Zebu Club has tennis courts, squash courts, swimming pool, restaurant, and bar. Some fees may apply.

The five-star Sheraton Addis opened in 1998. It has all the amenities that a five-star hotel has to offer. There are five restaurants and a 24-hour business center. Its Health Club has a swimming pool, tennis and squash courts, steam bath, and sauna. Annual membership fees are expensive and vary

based on facilities used. Daily fees are available.

A private, small 6-hole golf course is operated on the British Embassy compound. The season runs from October to June, and you have to apply in advance for membership. Bring clubs, balls and tees. There also is a public course used by many expatriate players.

Addis Ababa also has two bowling alleys. Local equipment is satisfactory.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Gardening is popular because results are almost immediate, and the growing season is year round. Flower and vegetable seeds are available on the local market although sometimes past their expiration date.

Overland travel in Ethiopia is difficult, due to the poor condition of roads and the questionable quality of many of the rest stops. In addition, roadside banditry occurs with some regularity in various parts of the country, and sensible precautions need to be taken.

The Grand Hotel (or Ras Hora) in Debre Zeit, 30 miles southeast of Addis Ababa, is perched on a hill overlooking a lovely crater lake. It has several in-door dining areas with European cooking. Its Sunday afternoon buffets are popular and prices are moderate. Campsites can be rented for a small fee. Some people water ski and swim in the lake, but this is not recommended as the bilharzia snail has been found in the water.

The Adama Ras Hotel in Nazareth, about 2 hours from Addis Ababa, has a swimming pool and is a good place to spend a weekend. A Sunday

buffet emphasizes Italian specialties.

Sodere, about 2-hours from Addis Ababa, has hot mineral springs. Two swimming pools (one olympic size), a small restaurant, bungalows, and camping facilities make Sodere a pleasant weekend resort or day trip.

A 4-hour drive northwest of Addis Ababa takes you to the Blue Nile Gorge and to some of the most spectacular scenery in Ethiopia. Debre Libanos, a historic monastery, is located on the rim of a tributary canyon along the route. Nearby is a 400-year-old Portuguese bridge, where a spectacular view of the canyon can be seen, as well as baboons and monkeys.

The Ras Hotel at Ambo (2-hour drive) is 78 miles west of Addis Ababa on a good road that passes through beautiful countryside and the Menagesha Forest Preserve. It has a large outdoor pool filled by a warm mineral-water spring. Camping sites are available for a modest fee near the pool.

Ghion, also called Welisso, is a small resort town 71 miles (2-hour drive) southwest of Addis Ababa. The Ras Hotel at Ghion has water from hot mineral springs piped into large sunken baths in the hotel rooms. In addition, hot indoor and outdoor swimming pools are filled by warm mineral springs.

The Awash Game Park, about 140 miles from Addis Ababa, is another interesting point to visit. It offers an excellent opportunity for lucky camera buffs to photograph game of the Awash River valley. Overnight trailer accommodations are available in the heart of the park near the Awash River Falls. Fees are high and conditions are poor. However, the camping enthusiast can enjoy roughing it at a campsite for only a few dollars a night. White-water rafting trips, organized by expatriate guides, are offered from July to September on the Awash river. Cost for such weekend outings is about \$150 per person.

Favorite spots for Ethiopians and foreigners alike are the chain of lakes in the Great Rift Valley. Lake Awassa is a 4-hour drive from Addis Ababa. It abounds with fish (catfish and tilapia) and is an excellent spot for relaxation. Three motel-type hotels with cafes are located here. Lake Chamo at Arba Minch offers the thrill of fishing for Blue Nile perch and watching crocodiles move about. The fish is outstanding for eating and weighs up to 200 pounds. Excellent camping is offered on virtually all of the lakes.

A favorite weekend spots is Lake Langano (the only bilharzia-free lake for swimming), which is a 3-hour drive from Addis Ababa. Fishing for catfish and tilapia, using light tackle and baited small hooks instead of artificial bait, is excellent. Two hotels with restaurants are also found at Lake Langano for those who prefer not to camp. Nearby is a game reserve where ostriches and other bird life is abundant.

If you are interested in ancient civilizations, you should visit the towns of the "historic route", comprised of Gonder, Bahir Dar, Axum, and Lalibela. Gonder was the seat of government in the 16th and 17th centuries and has several interesting castles. Near Bahir Dar, on the Blue Nile river, is located the spectacular Tis-Esat falls. Lalibela is the site of the fabulous below ground monolithic stone churches hewn out of solid stone during the 12th and 13th centuries.

Dire Dawa and Harar are two interesting cities east of Addis Ababa and may be reached by car (10 hours), rail (10 hours), or air (35 minutes). Harar, a walled city, is the birthplace of the former Emperor and the site of the Harar Military Academy. It is considered by many to be the fourth most holy city in Islam. Road travel in this area can be hazardous.

Entertainment

Americans patronize several restaurants and the dining rooms of main hotels. Foreign cuisine

includes Chinese, Italian, Greek, Indian, Middle Eastern, French, and Armenian. A number of restaurants serve Ethiopian food. The number, variety and quality of restaurants has increased markedly over the past year or two, yet usual precautions must be exercised to avoid intestinal difficulties.

Several embassies have cultural centers offering a variety of programs, from music and dance to art exhibitions and films.

The ethnological and archaeological museums are interesting. Various special interest groups are active, including drama and music groups and a wildlife club.

Social Activities

Rotary and Lions have chapters in Addis Ababa. The International Women's Club is a social and charitable organization for foreign and Ethiopian women. It is not limited to the diplomatic community, but provides contact with the foreign business community as well.

Many churches have their own denominational clubs, and numerous opportunities exist for extracurricular activities.

OTHER CITIES

AXUM (or Aksum) is a small city in the northern highlands, and capital of the old Axumite Kingdom which, before and during the early part of the Christian era, extended over parts of present-day Sudan and Ethiopia. Mysterious stelae are all that remain of Axum's days of glory. The city's cathedral, the Church of St. Mary of Zion, is the repository of many of the crowns of Ethiopian emperors. Legend says that the Ark of the Covenant was brought to this spot from Jerusalem (after the fall of the city in 586 B.C.) by a descendant of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Today, Axum is a tourist town noted for its antiquities. Tall granite obelisks, 126 in all, stand or lie broken in the central square. One measuring 110 feet,



Courtesy of United Nations

Ethiopian marketplace in Harar, Ethiopia

now fallen, is said to be the tallest obelisk ever built. A museum in town has a rich display of crosses, jewels, vestments, and ceremonial swords.

DIRE DAWA, with a population over 150,000, is a commercial center second in importance to the capital. Located east of Addis Ababa, the city is a traditional caravan center situated at the intersection of roads leading to Addis Ababa, Harar, and the Republic of Djibouti. Soil in the

area is extremely poor, thus food must be shipped in. The city has textile and cement factories, and coffee- and meat-canning plants. Caves decorated with prehistoric drawings are located near Dire Dawa.

Dire Dawa is really two towns: new and old. New Dire Dawa is a wide-avenued, tree-lined settlement with its jacarandas and flamboyance. Here there are numerous small marketplaces, busy with vendors in

colorful dress with their spices, fruits, baskets, and silverware laid out before them. Old Dire Dawa is a place of narrow, meandering streets and square buildings which is the site of the traditional Afetissa market. Well-stocked with a variety of goods, Afetissa is a melting pot for all the peoples of the region.

The city population is composed mainly of Somalis, Oromos, Afars, and Arabs.

GONDAR, in northwestern Ethiopia, was the seat of government in the 16th and 17th centuries. The ruins of its castles and royal buildings show evidence of Portuguese and Arabian influence. Gondar is inhabited by Christians, Muslims, Falashas (Ethiopian Jews). The city's economy is based on subsistence agriculture, although textiles, jewelry, leatherwork, and copperware are produced here. Gondar (including Azeso) is a city of about 166,000 (1994), and is capital of the Begemdir and Simen province, which is home to 2.2 million people.

HARAR, a medieval walled city, is the gateway to the Ogaden Desert and the birthplace of the former emperor Haile Selassie. The modern citizens of Harar live almost entirely within the walls that have encircled this city for more than 300 years, maintaining their own language, customs, and crafts. Harar is famed for its basket weaving and the work of its silversmiths who craft beautiful anklets, necklaces, arm bands, silver chains, bangles, and earrings out of the precious metal. The city is also known for the excellent coffee grown in the surrounding mountains.

Harar has many ancient monuments dominated by the 16th century Grand Mosque with elegant twin towers and slender minaret. Other points of interest include the palace of the city's 1890s governor, Ras Makonnen; stained glass windows by Ethiopia's greatest living artist, Afewerk Tekle, in the Harar Military Academy; the city's cathedral Medkane Alem ("Redeemer of the World"), which houses a gallery with traditional religious art works; the tomb of Abu Said, an early Muslim ruler; and the colorful Shoa Gate Market. One of the city's most unique attractions is its Hyena Men, who make their living by collecting garbage and bones which they feed to the wild hyenas that live in the surrounding hills. Answering to a name, they dart forward to snatch their supper from the hands of the Hyena Men. There's a small charge for those who wish to see this spectacle. The city's

population is composed of Hareri, Amharas, Oromos, and Somalis. Harar's 1986 population was approximately 68,000.

JIMA (also spelled Jimma and Gimma) is the capital and largest town of Kefa province, 220 miles (353 kilometers) southwest of Addis Ababa. It is in a heavily-wooded area known for coffee production. The name of the province may be the origin of the term coffee. Jima is a regional commercial zone with an agricultural school and nearby airport. Potassium and sodium nitrates are mined to the northeast. It has a population of over 120,000 (1994).

In the north-central area is **MEKELE** (also spelled Makalle), capital of Tigre province. It has a population of about 115,000 (1994). The city is noted for the ancient castle of Emperor Yohannes IV; a similar building has been converted to a hotel. Expeditions to area rock churches are arranged from Mekele. Mekele is the principal center of Ethiopia's inland salt trade. Newer industries include the production of incense and resin.

Situated 62 miles southeast of Addis Ababa, **NAZRET** is a growing agricultural and commercial center. It has a rapidly expanding population of 150,000 (1994). Rail lines and roads converge on the town, making it an excellent transport hub. Near Nazret, a huge sugar plantation and factory provide jobs. One of Ethiopia's chief exporters of oil cakes, oil seeds, and pulses has its headquarters in Nazret. Hot springs are also in the vicinity.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Ethiopia, part of the Horn of Africa, borders Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, and Djibouti and has an area of 1,127,127 square kilometers,

slightly less than twice the size of Texas. Only 12 percent of the total land area is arable land, with about 85 percent of the people dependent on agriculture or animal husbandry for subsistence.

The terrain consists of high plateau, mountains, and dry lowland plains. Ethiopia has some of the world's most rugged and beautiful scenery. Changes in foliage and terrain offer striking differences and are readily apparent when travelling in any direction from Addis Ababa. Fertile farmland, high mountains with crater lakes, deep canyons and abysses, low-lying savannas, and desert are some of the many aspects of Ethiopia's topography.

The climate is temperate to cool in the highlands and hot in the lowlands. Addis Ababa's altitude is above 8,000 feet. So three weeks or more are required to acclimate. Addis Ababa has two primary seasons: a dry season from October to February, and for the rest of the year, a rainy season, divided into "small rains" and "big rains." The small rains, February through April, are generally intermittent showers. The big rains, June through September or longer, usually bring daily precipitation. The big rains are rarely continuous, and sunny mornings or afternoons can be expected on many days. Average annual rainfall in Addis Ababa is 50 inches (while by comparison, Washington DC has 41 inches).

Daytime temperatures are fairly constant throughout the year. The dry season has bright sunny days with moderate to cool temperatures; nights are chilly. The average daily temperature in Addis Ababa is 62.9°F. Daytime temperatures are rarely over 80°F. Sharp drops in temperature occur in late afternoon, sometimes making outside entertainment uncomfortable after 5 pm. Night temperatures drop to the low forties from November to January, and are warmer in the period from February to May.

Population

Ethiopia's population of about 61 million is growing by more than 2% annually. Per capita income is roughly \$120 a year, one of the world's lowest. Major ethnic groups include Oromo (40%), Amhara (20%), Tigrayan (12%), and Sidama (9%). Other groups include Shankella, Gurage, Welaita, Somali, and Afar.

The official language is Amharic. English is spoken by the educated elite and trades people, and some older people also speak Italian. Other languages spoken are Tigri-gna, Oromiffa, Afara, Somali, Arabic, and French.

The eye-catching dress of the Amhara men, which, nowadays is seen only on festive occasions, consists of jodhpur-type trousers worn with a white cotton "shamma" (toga) thrown over the shoulders. Western style suits are worn for business. Women wear a loose, flowing shamma over a long, white, full-skirted dress, usually with colorful embroidered borders on both the dress and shamma.

The main food of the highland people is a spicy dish called "wot," which is eaten with "injera," a thin, large, flat, spongy bread, made from a grass-like grain called "teff," and having a somewhat sour taste. (Teff is a range grass known in the U.S. as lovegrass.) Wot is a highly spiced stew prepared with meat, fish, poultry, lentils, chickpeas, vegetables, or a combination, and is eaten by hand spooning with pieces of injera. The local beverages include "tedj" (mead) made from a honey base, and "tella" (beer). Both are intoxicating. Ethiopian coffee, an intense brew, is served as a drink of hospitality and after every meal.

Ethiopian custom is to name persons to emphasize their individuality. Family names and groups are identified by their surnames through only one generation. A child receives a given name from its parents and adopts the first name of the father as a second or surname.

When a woman marries, she does not change her name to that of her husband. Her title changes from "Woizerit" (Miss) to "Woizero" (Mrs.). Persons are universally addressed by their first name rather than their surname, with "Ato," (Mr.) Woizero or Woizerit preceding the name.

The Ethiopian calendar varies from the Gregorian in that it has 12 months of 30 days and a 13th month of 5 days (or 6 in leap year). The new year begins on Meskerem 1 (September 11). The Ethiopian 24-hour day begins at sunrise (6 a.m.). Therefore, 7 a.m. by the Western standard is called 1 o'clock. However, business is usually conducted by European time and calendar.

Major religions are: Ethiopian Orthodox 45%, Muslim 45%, and the remainder divided among animists, Protestants, and Roman Catholics. Many Ethiopians are deeply religious and observe fasting and feasts throughout the year, but Easter is by far the most important holiday for the Orthodox. The gayest and most spectacular festivals are Timket or Epiphany (in January) and Meskel (in September), the latter commemorating the finding of the True Cross by St. Helena.

Christianity came to Ethiopia in the fourth century. The established Ethiopian Orthodox Church, formerly linked administratively to the Egyptian Coptic Church headquartered in Alexandria, became autonomous in 1948. The Orthodox faith, traditionally associated with the Ethiopian (Abyssinian) culture of the highlands, was, until the overthrow of the Emperor, the official state religion. Ethiopia is now a secular state.

Islam first came to Ethiopia around 622 in Aksum in the far north of the country, when the Prophet Mohammed's disciples sought refuge. An Islamic military conquest of most areas of Ethiopia occurred in the mid-16th century, and it was only under Menelik II that religious freedom was restored in the late 19th century.

Public Institutions

Under its Constitution, adopted in 1994, Ethiopia has a parliamentary form of government, headed by a Prime Minister. The bicameral parliament, comprised of the 545-member House of Peoples Representatives (elected) and the 11-member House of Federation (appointed by the regional state councils), is made up largely of members of the ruling political coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Some opposition and private candidates were elected in May 2000. The EPRDF includes a large number of primarily ethnically based component parties, the most influential of which by far is the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), led by a politburo of which the Prime Minister and his most trusted advisers are members. Ethiopia's government is structured as a federalist system, ethnically based. The 1994 Constitution redrew regional borders along ethnic lines, to the extent possible, and on paper devolved significant authority to regional governments. Ethnic federalism remains an experiment to date, but the regions do have some autonomy in areas of governance.

The EPRDF swept to power in 1991 by overthrowing the totalitarian Communist regime, known as the Derg, of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. The Derg, which seized power in 1974 from Emperor Haile Selassie, was marked by brutality, especially during the "Red Terror" of the late 1970s, and massive militarization largely funded by the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Derg's strength was undermined by droughts and famine in the mid-1980s, but its collapse was hastened by several internal insurgent groups, including the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which sought Eritrea's independence from Ethiopia, and the TPLE. As the struggle against the Derg continued, the TPLF allied itself with other ethnically based insurgent groups, forming the EPRDF.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Building in Ethiopia

Following the fall of the Derg, the EPRDF, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF-the Oromo are Ethiopia's largest ethnic group) and others formed a transitional government, which governed until national elections in 1995. During that period, the OLF left the government, and members of some other political groupings were expelled. Eritreans, including many resident in Ethiopia, voted in favor of independence in a 1993 referendum, and Eritrea became a sovereign state. The May 1995 elections were boycotted by most groups in opposition to the EPRDF, and were marred by allegations of fraud and misconduct; nonetheless, they were found to be generally free and fair by international observers. General elections were held again in May 2000 and opposition parties scored great success.

Following his overthrow in 1991, Derg dictator Mengistu went into exile in Zimbabwe, where he remains. Some 2,500 other Derg officials also took refuge outside Ethiopia. The current government established a Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) in 1991, to investigate and try cases of Derg extrajudicial killing, torture, detention without charge and other forms of brutality. As of the end of 1999, charges had been brought against over 5,000 persons, about half of whom were in detention.

Ethiopia has diplomatic relations with more than 90 countries, some 75 of which maintain missions in Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian capital is the home of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Numerous other international organizations are also represented here.

Arts, Science, and Education

One of the goals of Ethiopia's transitional government was to broaden access to education. Results of these efforts are yet to show obvious results, but overall there has been a significant increase of budgetary allocations in the educational system throughout the country.

The government, many donor countries and organizations have committed enormous resources to upgrading educational standards in Ethiopia. USAID has a major program to improve the quality and equity of primary schooling as the system expands. Efforts are underway to accommodate demand for schooling at all levels. Despite the overwhelming problems educational opportunities are expanding, but unfortunately not enough to keep abreast of population growth.

The Peace Corps began an active teacher-training program in fall 1995, but withdrew from the country in 1999.

Expansion efforts have been targeted at sectors of the population traditionally deprived of access to education, primarily girls, the rural and less sedentary populations. Current policy aims at universal primary education, although it will take decades to achieve this. As of 1999, more than 5.8 million children attended primary (grades 1-8) school. Instruction for primary students is in the local or regional language, but changes to English at grade 7. Participation rates for primary schools have dramatically increased since 1994, from 24% to 45.8%. Government policies strongly favor female participation in primary education, but girls lag boys in attendance significantly in many areas of the country. Junior and secondary schooling share many problems with primary, but the largest present concern is with issues of access, quality, and relevance of education.

The Ethiopian Government has encouraged community participation in the expansion of education. The Ministry of Education faces monumental problems in trying to provide education for all Ethiopians, particularly given severe budgetary constraints and its efforts to install a decentralized system of education. Expansion needs to accelerate, and the challenge will be to ensure that quality is not to be sacrificed for quantity.

Opportunity for higher education also has expanded in Ethiopia, but entrance into institutions has become extremely competitive. The number of high school graduates far exceeds the number of places available in the institutes of higher learning, which now include six public universities, 11 specialized colleges, and a number of teacher training colleges and institutes, offering 2-, 3-, and 4-year programs. The Addis Ababa University celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2000.

Many students go abroad each year to study in the West and India.

The Ethiopian artistic community is small but active. Many artists derive their inspiration from the ancient Ethiopian Christian paintings that decorate churches and monasteries. A substantial effort is underway to collect and preserve valuable paintings and manuscripts gathered from Ethiopian Orthodox churches. The Institute of Ethiopian Studies at Addis Ababa University has a recently renovated museum that includes a wide-ranging collection of Ethiopian church paintings and manuscripts. Ethiopia is also famous for its unique crosses, some of which are quite old. The National Museum has an interesting archeological collection, including the famous fossilized "Lucy," the oldest primate skeleton; and also a collection of imperial objects taken from the various palaces following the revolution.

Ethiopia has a rich musical heritage; encompassing a wide variety of styles derived from the country's many ethnic groups. Ethiopians are very proud of their traditional music and dance, and most theaters have regular cultural shows. Popular musicians and singers also perform in small bars throughout Addis Ababa and have an enthusiastic following among young and old. Western classical music is not especially popular among Ethiopians, and is generally performed only for foreign audiences, yet is part of the basic curriculum at the country's major music school.

Commerce and Industry

After the downfall of the Marxist Derg regime in 1991, Ethiopia began moving away from central planning for the economy and implementing open market policies. The government passed legislation to allow private banking and insurance companies, established incentives to attract foreign investment, and reduced bureaucratic hurdles

and delays in registering businesses. The government also has opened up the power and telecommunications sectors to permit foreign investment. The exchange rate is determined by a weekly auction. Over the 12 months ending in May 2000, the value of the birr fell from 7.65 to the dollar to 8.20 to the dollar.

The macroeconomic picture for Ethiopia in mid-2000 after eight years of steady growth is uncertain because of border hostilities with Eritrea and drought. Business has slowed enormously since May 1998 and inflation exceeds 10%. A significant amount of government expenditure goes to support the military, reducing the amount of funds available for other projects.

Ethiopia's infrastructure is one of the most underdeveloped in all Africa, which has hampered economic growth. However, this situation is beginning to change. The World Bank is providing \$350 million to upgrade Ethiopia's road network as part of the government's Road Sector Improvement program. Ethiopia's lone railway, stretching from Addis Ababa to the port of Djibouti, is also undergoing renovation. Ethiopia is committed to increasing the number of telephone lines by 700,000 over the next decade and has awarded contracts for the development of cellular telephone services. The national air carrier, Ethiopian Airlines, provides quality service to 37 domestic and 42 international destinations throughout Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and North America utilizing primarily Boeing aircraft.

Agriculture is Ethiopia's most promising sector, contributing half of the country's GNP, more than 80% of its exports, and three-fourths of the country's employment. The country has a strong potential for self-sufficiency and even export development in grains, livestock, vegetables and fruits. This sector, however, is plagued by periodic drought, soil degradation caused by overgrazing, deforestation, and high population density,

and a poor road network that makes it difficult for farmers to get their goods to market. The major export crop is coffee, which generates over 60% of Ethiopia's foreign exchange earnings. Other traditional agricultural exports are hides and skins, textiles, fruits and vegetables, flowers, honey and beeswax, pulses, oilseeds and "khat," a leafy shrub with mild narcotic qualities when chewed.

Gold, marble, limestone and tantalum are mined in Ethiopia. Other resources with potential for commercial development include potash, natural gas, iron ore, coal, and possibly oil and geothermal energy. Ethiopia has vast hydroelectric potential that remains untapped. At present, however, Ethiopia is totally dependent on imports of oil for its manufacturing industries, vehicles and other petroleum needs. New hydroelectric projects are expected to triple the country's power generation by 2005. A landlocked country, Ethiopia uses the port of Djibouti for international trade.

Transportation

Local

Taxi and bus service is inadequate and considered dangerous due to the high frequency of accidents, many of them serious or fatal.

Regional

Ethiopian Airlines connects with the major cities in the country and along with other regional airlines, serves Nairobi, Djibouti, and other African cities regularly.

International

International flights are currently available from Addis Ababa to Europe on Ethiopian Airlines (Rome, Athens, Frankfurt, London), and Lufthansa (Frankfurt). In addition, flights are available to a variety of locations in Africa and the Middle East, as well as Bombay, Bangkok, Beijing and the U.S.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Although telephone service is affected by the heavy rains, it is dependable most of the time. Long-distance telephone calls to the U.S. are via satellite and can be dialed directly. The cost is about \$3 per minute and reception is usually good. It is less expensive to place a collect call from Addis Ababa to the U.S.; the least expensive method is direct dial from the U.S.

Internet service is poor and limited, but there are plans to expand service providers beyond the current state monopoly sometime in the future. Currently, those wanting internet service must spend months on a waiting list.

Radio and TV

A short wave radio is useful in Ethiopia, and reception is fair for the Voice of America and BBC.

The Voice of Ethiopia Radio, which broadcasts on AM, FM, and short-wave stations, carries daily 1-hour broadcasts in English. Programming is good and includes news and various magazine-style shows.

Ethiopian Television broadcasts 4 hours daily, including a 1 hour news program in English. Telecasts are in the 625 PAL format, which is used throughout most of Europe and Africa. Programming is about 50 percent in local languages, the remainder being films and documentaries. An increasing amount of programming is being received from the U.S. and the West, but the majority is locally produced.

Well-stocked video stores have opened in Addis Ababa, and cassettes are generally VHS or PAL; bring a VCR, preferably a multisystem multivoltage one.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Personal subscriptions to the *International Herald Tribune* and overseas editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* can be ordered, and occasionally may be purchased locally. The Tri-

bune arrives regularly, usually 10 to 12 days later than its publication date. Delivery of U.S. magazines generally takes about 2 weeks.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Have all routine and necessary dental work done before arrival. Orthodontia, root canal treatments, prostheses, etc., are not available, and local procedures are not advisable. Prescription glasses are rarely available. Acute eye conditions can be treated, but chronic diseases should be taken care of before arrival. If you need continued medication, bring a supply.

Community Health

Common diseases in Ethiopia include malaria, trachoma, tuberculosis, hepatitis, schistosomiasis, venereal diseases (including HIV/AIDS), influenza and common colds, parasitic and bacillary dysentery, and eye, ear, and skin infections. However, the Addis Ababa area is free of malaria-bearing mosquitoes. Domestic animals face a serious problem of tick fever for dogs and distemper for cats.

Preventive Measures

The 8,300-foot altitude in Addis Ababa can cause dizziness, insomnia, fatigue, and shortness of breath. The symptoms usually subside after a few weeks.

When traveling to lower altitudes, take malaria suppressants weekly to improve prophylaxis. Note: Too many people think that these pills are 100 percent effective—they are not. Even if taken, they need to be supplemented by mosquito netting, insecticides, repellents, etc.

Incidence of infectious hepatitis among Americans has been small, but it is widespread in the local community. Alternatives such as vaccination for hepatitis A & B can be obtained.

To minimize the risk of amoebic and bacillary dysentery, you must

demand scrupulous cleanliness and proper food care, hard to do when eating out. Domestic help who handle food should have periodic stool examinations. In restaurants, order well-cooked food and avoid salads, milk products, and ice cubes. Always order bottled water.

Tap water is unsafe and must be boiled and filtered before drinking. Powdered or canned milk is recommended over fresh milk or milk products, although milk can be boiled and filtered as well. Long-life sterilized milk is often available in local stores.

Fruits and vegetables must be cooked or peeled before eating. Leafy vegetables must be treated by soaking with bleach or an equivalent to kill bacteria. All local meats must be cooked thoroughly to avoid tapeworm.

The danger of severe sunburn cannot be overlooked. The high altitude of Addis and most surrounding areas make exposure to the sun more dangerous than at lower altitudes. Use of sun screen and sun hats is strongly recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

The most direct air route from the U.S. to Addis Ababa is on U.S. flag carriers to Frankfurt, London, or Rome, connecting with Ethiopian Airlines and Lufthansa.

A passport and a valid Ethiopian visa are required to enter or transit Ethiopia. Due to animosity stemming from the recent border conflict with Eritrea, U.S. citizens of Eritrean origin who travel to Ethiopia may experience delays in the processing of their visa applications because all such applications must be cleared through the main Ethiopian immigration office in Addis Ababa. Laptop computers must be declared upon arrival and departure. Tape recorders require special

customs permits. Individuals intending prolonged stays should check, prior to travel, with the Ethiopian Embassy, 3506 International Dr., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; telephone (202) 364-1200; fax (202) 686-9857; web site <http://www.ethiopianembassy.org>. Inquiries overseas may be made at the nearest Ethiopian embassy or consulate.

Current yellow fever immunizations are needed for entry into Ethiopia and must be recorded on the vaccination certificates with the vaccination date, signature of the medical officer administering the vaccination, and an official seal. The record for yellow fever inoculations must also have the name of the serum manufacturer and the batch number. Yellow fever shots are not valid until 10 days after date of initial vaccination.

Quarantine authorities in Ethiopia are exacting in these matters, and people have been subjected to long delays and embarrassment when certificates have not been filled out. Polio (oral), tetanus-diphtheria, and typhoid immunizations are strongly recommended.

Tick fever and intestinal parasites are a special problem with pets, and rabies is common in Ethiopia. Bring a good supply of flea and tick collars and shampoos. African tick fever has killed several American-owned dogs. Rabies and puppy vaccines are available only sporadically. There are American and European veterinarians working in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopian law strictly prohibits the photographing of military installations, police/military personnel, industrial facilities, government buildings and infrastructure (roads, bridges, dams, airfields, etc.). Such sites are rarely clearly marked. Travel guides, police, and Ethiopian officials can advise if a particular site may be photographed. Photographing prohibited sites may result in the confiscation of film and camera.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy and to

obtain updated information on travel and security in Ethiopia. The U.S. Embassy is located at Entoto Avenue, P.O. Box 1014, in Addis Ababa, tel. [251] (1) 550-666, extension 316/336; emergency after-hours tel. [251] (1) 552-558; consular fax [251] (1) 551-094; web site: <http://www.telecom.net.et/~usemb-et>.

Pets

Authorization from the Ministry of Agriculture is required in advance of the arrival of pets. A certificate of good health showing valid rabies vaccination and freedom from communicable diseases is required when bringing pets into Ethiopia. No quarantine period is imposed provided these health certificates are in order.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The present official currency unit is the Ethiopian birr. There are 100 cents to the birr, with coins of 50, 25, 10, 5 and 1 cent. Bills are in the denominations of birr 100, 50, 10, 5, and 1.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Visitors must declare foreign currency upon arrival and may be required to present this declaration when applying for an exit visa. Official and black market exchange rates are nearly the same. Penalties for exchanging money on the black market range from fines to imprisonment. Credit cards are not accepted at most hotels, restaurants, shops, or other local facilities, although they are accepted at the Hilton and Sheraton Hotels in Addis Ababa. Foreigners are generally required to pay for hotel and car rental in foreign currency.

Disaster Preparedness

There is a high risk of earthquakes in Ethiopia. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 7	Christmas (Coptic)
Jan. 19	Timkety (Epiphany)
Mar. 2	Victory of Adwa
Apr/May	Good Friday*
Apr/May	Easter*
May 1	May Day
Apr/May	Patriot's Victory Day*
May 28	Downfall of the Dergue
Sept. 11	Coptic New Year
Sept. 27	True Cross Day Id al-Adha* Ramadan* Id al-Fitr* Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

- Beckwith and Fischer, Angela. *African Ark*. Harry A. Abrahams: New York, 1990.
- Buxton, David. *The Abyssinians*. Thames & Hudson: London, 1970. A good concise historical overview through 1970.
- Clapham, Christopher. *Transformation and Continuity In Revolutionary Ethiopia*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1988.
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- Henze, Paul B. *Ethiopian Journeys, Travels in Ethiopia 1969-72*. Ernest Berm Ltd.: London, 1977. A good source of ideas for in-country trips.
- Kane, Thomas L. *Ethiopian Literature in Amharic*. Otto Harassowitz: Wiesbaden, 1975. A comprehensive review of what is written in Amharic.
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- Levine, Donald H. *Wax and Gold*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1968. Culture and a social structure with a historic perspective, the "classic" about Amhara culture, a must-read.
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- Ottoway, Marina. *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa*. Praeger: New York, 1982. An analysis of superpower rivalry and policies.
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- Pankhurst, Richard. *A Social History of Ethiopia*. Red Sea Press: Trenton, NJ, 1992.
- Parfitt, Tudor. *Operation Moses*. Werdenfeld and Nicolson: London, 1985.
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- Tessema, Mammo, Richard Pankhurst, and S. Chojnacki. *Religious Art of Ethiopia*. Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen: Stuttgart, 1973. Many pictures in color.
- U.S. Government, Department of the Army. *Ethiopia - A Country Study*. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1993.

Williams, J. G. *A Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa*. Collins: London, 1980. A must for birdwatchers.

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Wolde-Mariam, Mesfin. *Ethiopia's Vulnerability to Drought*. Vikas Publishing House: New Delhi, 1984. A geographer's analysis of

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Zewdie, Bahru. *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1974*. Ohio University Press: Athens, 1991.

Cookbooks for High Altitude Cooking

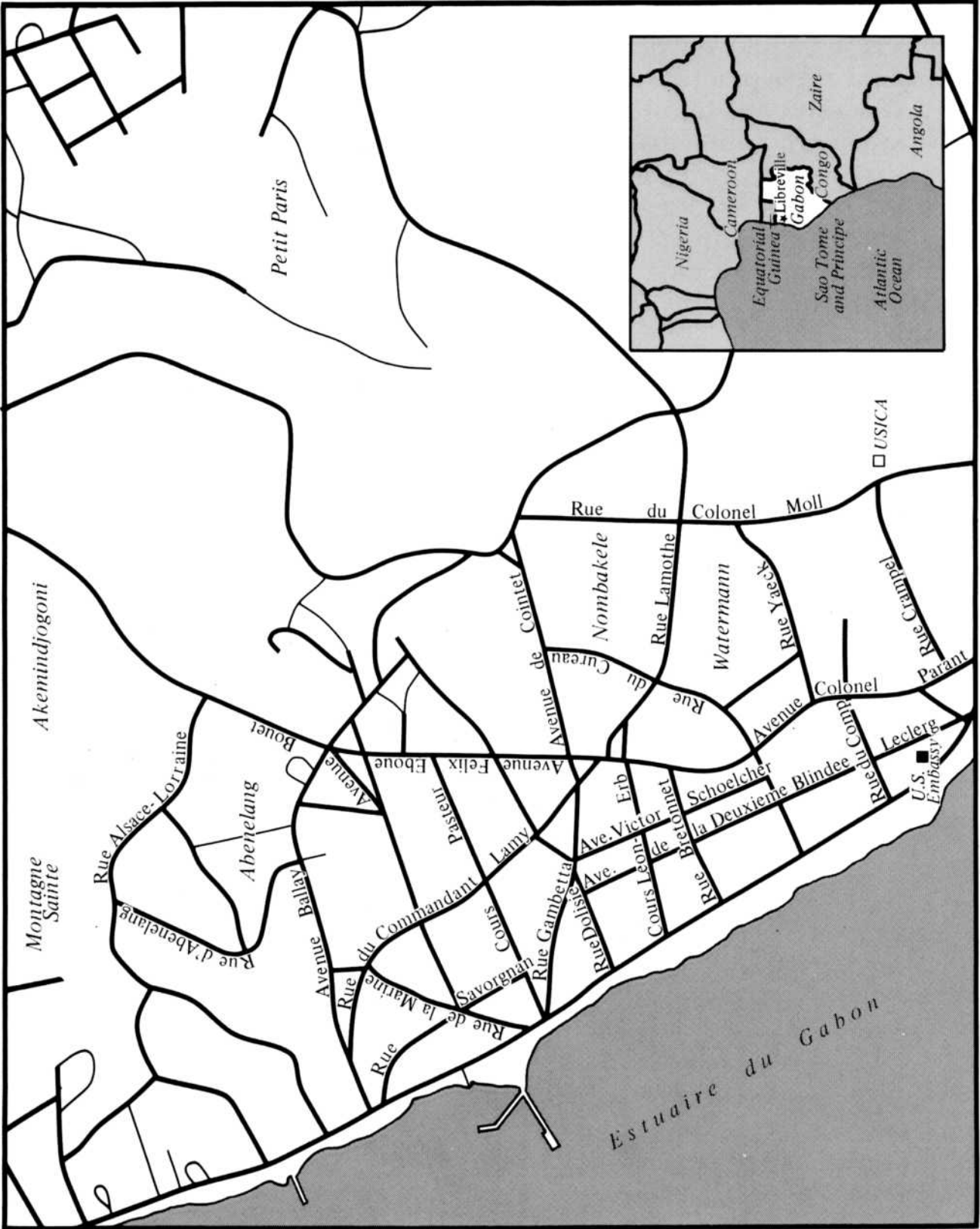
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Libreville, Gabon

GABON

Gabonese Republic

Major City:

Libreville

Other Cities:

Franceville, Lambaréné, Mouanda, Oyem, Port-Gentil, Tchibanga

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

GABON, the first part of French Equatorial Africa to be settled in the middle of the 19th century, has enjoyed a remarkably stable relationship with its former colonial power. From 1968 to 1990, Gabon was a one-party state dominated by the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG). In February 1990, amid widespread social, political, and economic discontent, the Gabonese president declared that the PDG's monopoly of power would be dissolved, a new constitution written, and all opposition parties legalized. The first multiparty elections took place in 1993.

Gabon became a republic within the French Community in 1958, and

two years later achieved full independence. Léon M'Ba, who formed Gabon's first political party (the Mouvement Mixte Gabonais) in 1946, became the country's first president. M'Ba was overthrown by a military coup in 1964, but was restored by French troops. M'Ba died in 1967. He was replaced by his vice-president, now known as El Hadj Omar Bongo in 1967. Bongo remains in power to date. Gabon's major strides in economic development, principally stimulated by vast oil resources, have made it a country of increasing economic importance in Central Africa.

MAJOR CITY

Libreville

Libreville, the capital, is an attractive, modern city, which has been transformed in the past decade from a sleepy town reminiscent of the colonial era into a metropolis of about 419,000. Included in this number is a predominantly French expatriate community.

The entire city has undergone extensive modernization. For years, dozens of huge cranes have shared the skyline with newly completed high-rise office and apartment

structures. The downtown core of Libreville is surrounded by residential districts where modern apartment buildings and houses are erected next to African huts with palm-leaf roofs. One side of the city is bounded by broad expanses of palm-lined, sandy beaches which are excellent for swimming or sunning; on the other side, new construction continues to push back the dense equatorial rain forest that covers nearly 75 percent of Gabon's land area. The high annual rainfall and ample sunshine encourage the growth of lush tropical vegetation, creating a charming overall impression.

For visitors, the city offers several luxury hotels—the Okoumé Palace Inter-Continental, Rapontchombo-Novotel, Dowe-Novotel, Sheraton, Monts de Cristal, and the Gamba. Libreville is one of the most expensive cities in the world, with scant accommodations available in all but the luxury class. However, due to overbuilding, hotel rates have dropped slightly in recent years.

For its permanent or expatriate residents, it boasts one of Africa's largest supermarkets and a number of interesting small shops and markets. Because nearly all goods are imported, usually from Europe, prices are extremely high. However, almost everything is available

locally to those willing to pay the price.

Education

The American International School, in residential Quartier Louis, was opened in 1975, and offers a full curriculum from kindergarten through grade eight. A curriculum similar to American schools is offered with English as the language of instruction. French is taught as a foreign language.

Several public and parochial schools in Libreville provide instruction (in French) through the equivalent level of high school. The curriculum is satisfactory and includes athletics; however, teaching standards, particularly in the upper grades, are low and classrooms tend to be seriously overcrowded.

In the city of Port-Gentil, the American School of Port-Gentil was opened in 1985. Sponsored by the Amoco Gabon Exploration Company, the school is located in a large, refurbished villa near the city's airport. The curriculum from kindergarten through eighth grade is similar to American schools; however, classes are taught in French. Sports such as tennis, soccer, swimming, and softball are offered. Art, music, drama, computer instruction, yearbook, and the school newspaper are popular extracurricular activities.

Recreation

The ocean provides the city's main recreation. At the edge of town are long, palm-lined beaches where swimming and sun bathing are possible year-round. Many fishing and water-skiing enthusiasts maintain motorboats in the area. The deeper waters offshore abound in many types of game fish—tarpon, barracuda, sailfish, marlin, sea bass, and occasional sharks. Protected waters closer to the coast allow for skin diving. Sailing and wind surfing are extremely popular.

The largest of Libreville's sports clubs is the Mindoube Club, which offers tennis, riding, a swimming pool, and a small bar and restau-

rant for its members. There are five lighted tennis courts, and stables where horses may be boarded or rented. Membership is easily arranged, but fees are relatively high.

The Golf Club de l'Estuaire offers a challenging 18-hole course. The fairways and sand greens are moderately well maintained, but the rough is dense during the rainy season.

Several other sports and hobbies are represented by clubs in Libreville. An *aéroclub* offers flying instruction and the opportunity for licensed pilots to use light aircraft, at rates well below those charged by charter operators. There also is a club for parachutists, and several for the martial arts. Bridge, chess, and philately groups welcome new members.

Governmental controls on firearms and hunting privileges have made sport hunting increasingly difficult, to the point where outings might be arranged only through personal intercession with a few expatriates or Gabonese who still have access to preserves.

Touring in Gabon is a popular form of recreation. The internationally renowned hospital founded by the late Dr. Albert Schweitzer, 160 miles from the capital in the town of Lambaréné, offers a pleasant week-end excursion. It can be reached by air, or by a four to five-hour drive through an attractive forested landscape. New roads are now providing shorter alternate routes. With suitable advance notice, adequate accommodations (including meals) can be obtained at Sofitel Ogooué Palace, a small hotel in town. The hospital staff extends a warm welcome to visitors and provides guided tours of the facilities, including both old and new hospital buildings and a small museum devoted to Dr. Schweitzer's life and work. Either the hospital staff or the hotel can also arrange a trip by motorized *pirogue* (dugout canoe) on the Ogooué River and into a series of adjacent lakes. Such a trip, which can last from one

hour to an entire day, offers an opportunity to see hippopotami, crocodiles, monkeys, and colorful birds.

All parts of Gabon can be reached by air, but plane fares are expensive. Travel by road continues to be made easier with the building of new arteries, although many places still can be reached only by four-wheel-drive vehicles during the rainy season. The Transgabon Railway, begun in 1974 and the largest civil engineering project in Black Africa not financed by international aid, has opened new passenger-rail possibilities that were previously unavailable.

Most provincial capitals now have adequate hotel facilities, and several private companies in the interior will offer hospitality to visitors if given prior notice. This increased availability of accommodations, combined with an active program of road construction, is making travel by car more practicable than ever before, but such trips will continue to require a pioneering spirit for several years to come. For those willing to make the effort, however, the country is extremely attractive and varied. Highlights include extensive mining operations in the southeast; open savanna country in the southwest (with herds of buffalo and, occasionally, elephant); mountain ranges stretching across the central part of the country; agricultural areas in the north; and miles and miles of unbroken forest nearly everywhere in Gabon.

Entertainment

Entertainment outside the home is limited, although possibilities have increased as the city has grown. A number of good, but usually expensive, restaurants offer Gabonese, French, Italian, Vietnamese, and North African specialties. Several expensive nightclubs offer dancing to recorded and live music.

Movies are available at the relatively new Komo cinema and Bowlingstore, which is comparable to a first-run theater in the U.S. All films are in French and often are of



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Street in Lambarene, Gabon

mediocre quality; films of American or British origin are dubbed. The U.S. Army and Air Force Motion Picture Service (AAFMPs), West African circuit, provides movies for government personnel and their families and guests. There are frequent film showings at the French Cultural Center.

Only occasionally is live theater or musical entertainment found in Libreville. Special shows or visiting entertainers appear on an irregular basis at the Komo or one of the hotels, and the French Cultural Center sponsors a number of lectures and theatrical presentations. The U.S. Information Service (USIS) Cultural Center has a library which lends books and records.

The American community in Libreville consists of embassy personnel, Peace Corps volunteers, missionaries, business people, and their families. The American Business

Association is composed of diplomatic officers and people involved with U.S. commercial enterprises in Gabon.

There are many foreign embassies here, including the U.S. Embassy in the heart of town, overlooking the sea. The number of diplomatic missions is constantly increasing. Social interaction between the expatriate business and professional community and Gabonese government officials and private individuals is part of the life of the international community.

OTHER CITIES

FRANCEVILLE, in Gabon's southeastern corner, lies on a tributary of the Ogooué River. It is an active trading center in the midst of a mining region. Gold is mined southwest of the town and coffee is one of the

area's main cash crops. Franceville has a population of over 75,000.

Albert Schweitzer founded his world-famous mission hospital in **LAMBARÉNÉ** in 1926. Expanded and modernized, it continues today. The town is on the Ogooué River, about 100 miles southeast of Libreville. Because the town is on an island, access is limited. The hospital, on the north bank, can be reached by boat or, in dry season, by foot. Lambaréné is a lumbering and trading center and is the home of a large palm oil factory. Palm oil products and lumber are usually exported down the Ogooué River to Port-Gentil, 100 miles to the west. Lambaréné has an estimated population of over 50,000.

In the southeast, **MOUANDA** (also spelled Moanda) attracts workers to its sophisticated manganese mining operations. A U.S.-French consortium has built schools, two hospitals, roads, and airfields in

Mouanda and the surrounding area. The consortium has also constructed facilities for the training of chemists and draftsmen. Mouanda has an estimated population of 45,500.

OYEM is a provincial capital 175 miles northeast of Libreville. Cash crops, such as coffee and cocoa, are grown on surrounding farms, and the city is also a major agricultural transport point to the Cameroonian ports of Kribi and Douala. Rubber and potatoes are also cultivated here. Oyem's population is roughly 89,600.

PORT-GENTIL, with its estimated population of 164,000, is on the delta of the Ogooué River, about 100 miles southwest of Libreville. The discovery of offshore oil deposits in 1956 stimulated Port-Gentil's commercial and industrial growth. It is considered the industrial capital of Gabon, since it is the center of the petroleum and plywood industries and the country's busiest port. Port-Gentil is also the site of a construction company, a chemical plant, a brewery, and processing plants for fish, rice, palm oil, and whale oil.

TCHIBANGA is a small town located near the Nyanga River in southwestern Gabon. With a population of approximately 54,000, Tchibanga is Gabon's major rice producing center. Cassava and peanuts are also grown here. A lumber industry and marble processing plant are also important. Recently discovered iron-ore deposits near Tchibanga raise hopes for a lucrative mining operation in the future.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Gabon straddles the equator on the west coast of Central Africa and borders on Equatorial Guinea and the Republic of Cameroon on the north, and the Republic of the Congo on

the east and south. Spreading across an approximate 102,300 square miles, it is roughly the size of Colorado and considerably larger than either the United Kingdom or the Federal Republic of Germany.

Heavy equatorial rain forests comprise nearly 75 percent of Gabon, with savanna areas in the southeastern and southwestern sections of the country covering an additional 15 percent. The remaining area is composed of swamps and water bodies, towns, villages, and roads. The Ogooué, the largest river in West Africa between the Niger and the Congo, drains most of Gabon. Winding in a broad arc from southeastern Gabon to the country's Atlantic coast, the Ogooué cuts through three major geographical regions: the coastal lowlands, the plateau region, and the mountains.

The lowlands lie along the Atlantic Ocean and extend up into the river valleys which slice through the broad interior plateau. They are lined with beaches and lagoons fringed with mangrove swamps; the forest extends from the banks of the broad, slow-moving rivers and covers most of the lowland areas. Inland, the terrain mounts to the plateau, and then to the mountains which rise as high as 5,000 feet. The highest point in Gabon is Mt. Iboundji (5,167 ft.). The land has considerable variety and the interior is often beautiful with its mountains, rolling hills, forests, and scattered grassland clearings.

Gabon's climate is typically equatorial—hot and humid during most of the year. Temperatures range from 65°F to 77°F in the dry season, and from 86°F to 93°F during the rainy season. There are four distinguishable seasons, although they vary somewhat each year: the long, dry period from late May until mid-September; the short, rainy season from mid-September until mid-December; the short, dry period from then through January; and the long, rainy interval from February until late May. Rainfall at Libreville is about 100 inches a year (the U.S. average is approximately 40

inches), with heaviest amounts falling in October, November, March, April, and May. Humidity is always high, between 80 and 87 percent. Because of seasonal ocean currents and a high cloud cover, the long, dry season is the coolest time of the year.

Population

Gabon has an estimated population of 1.2 million. Gabon has one of the smallest populations in Africa; the density (an average of four persons per square mile) is also the lowest of any on the continent. The people are concentrated along the rivers and roads, while large areas of the interior lie empty. During much of the past century, there was an actual decline in population because of disease and related factors, but increased medical care and social services have halted this trend. However, population growth is still slow. As a consequence, economic development is hampered by a labor shortage.

Almost all Gabonese are members of the Bantu language group. The more than 40 tribes have separate languages or dialects and different cultures. The largest tribe is the Fang. The other major groups are the Bapounou, Eschira, M'Bete, Bandjabi, Bakota, and Myene. The remainder of the population is divided among more than 30 other tribes, including some 2,000 Pygmies. The official language of Gabon is French. Since English is rarely spoken here, it is essential to have a working knowledge of French. Fang is the most widely used popular language. Bapounou, Myene, and other Bantu dialects are also spoken.

55 to 75 percent of Gabon's population are Christians, mainly adherents of the Roman Catholic Church. The remainder of the population practice animist beliefs or are Moslems.

Outside the major towns and cities, the people are grouped in small or moderate-size villages and live in square, wooden, or mud wattle houses surrounded by small plots of

manioc and stands of banana trees. European-style dress is worn by both Gabonese men and women throughout the country.

History

Pygmies are believed to have inhabited the Gabon estuary in early times, but it was the Mpongwe who occupied both banks when the Portuguese, the first explorers in that region, arrived in 1470. Many place names are Portuguese in origin: Cape Lopez, Cape Estérias, and even Gabon itself, derived from *gaboia*, meaning a sailor's hooded cloak, similar to the shape of the estuary. The Portuguese, however, never established any permanent settlements. Dutch, French, and other ships continued to visit the coast, but no attempt to penetrate the country was made until the 19th century.

Although the Congress of Vienna outlawed the slave trade in 1815, for many years afterward local chiefs continued to gather slaves from the interior and sell them to British, Dutch, French, and Portuguese traders on the coast. The coast of Gabon came under French protection after 1839, when the French naval captain Bouet Willaumez concluded a treaty of friendship and protection with King Rapontchombo (Denis), one of several African chiefs commanding both sides of the estuary. In the next few years, most of the other chiefs accepted similar treaties with the French.

Comodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, commanding the American West Africa Squadron, first entered the estuary in 1843. In 1846, the French captured the slave ship *Eliza*, and most of the Congolese aboard perished before they could be hospitalized in Dakar. Fifty-two who survived were freed and sent to Gabon in 1849, and there they received from the French, plots of land on both sides of what is today called rue du Gouverneur Ballay. This village, named Libreville by the French, later became the capital of the Gabonese Republic.

The first American missionaries arrived in 1842. Their initial post was at Baraka in the Glass area, but their work later extended up the Como and the Ogooué to Lambaréné and beyond. At Bakara, the Americans began the first Western-type school in Equatorial Africa. Between 1890 and 1913, the American missionaries were replaced by others from the Paris Mission Society and, in 1961, this Protestant effort emerged as the independent Gabon Evangelical Church. In 1934, another group of American missionaries established work in southern Gabon, where they still labor in cooperation with that church.

A Monseigneur Barron of Philadelphia was sent by the Vatican in 1843 to explore the possibilities of a Roman Catholic mission in the estuary. The following year, Monseigneur Jean Remy Bessieux, a Frenchman, began the pioneer work for the Holy Heart of Mary order, which later became attached to the Fathers of the Holy Spirit. The Roman Catholic Church in Gabon has also come under the direction of African leaders.

During the 19th century, English and American trade dominated the estuary, especially from commercial centers such as Glass. Nevertheless, from 1845 on, the estuary was firmly under French control, and it was during this period that Gabon was gradually explored. Between 1855 and 1865, Paul du Chaillu explored the mountains in central Gabon which now bear his name.

American missionaries, du Chaillu, and French naval captains were the first Westerners to come into contact with the Gabonese of the interior regions. The Ogooué River was initially explored in 1854, when two American missionaries (whose surnames were Walker and Preston) ascended about half the distance to Lambaréné. Savorgnan de Brazza made the most thorough explorations between 1875 and 1883. Between 1888 and 1910, Crampel, Cureau, and Cottés explored the Woleu N'Tem region of northern Gabon. The famed Dr. Albert Sch-

weitzer arrived in Lambaréné, opening his jungle hospital in 1923 on the banks of the Ogooué, only a few hundred yards from the former trading house of the renowned merchant, Trader Horn.

In the late 1880s, when Africa was partitioned, Gabon fell under French rule, and, in 1886, its administrative history developed. Gabon was first a part of the French Congo administered from Dakar. It became a distinct administrative region in 1903 and, in 1910, was organized as Gabon, one of the territories of French Equatorial Africa, along with the Middle Congo, Ubangichari, and Chad. The federation of these four territories was dissolved in 1959 when Gabon refused political union, and the next year they became the four independent states of Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Central African Republic, and Chad. These states, together with Cameroon, have cooperated in several regional organizations. In 1966, they formed the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC) to harmonize tariffs and to coordinate economic development. Chad resigned from the group in 1968.

Government

Gabon's constitution calls for the election by universal suffrage of a president to a seven-year term. The president appoints a prime minister, who serves as head of government, and a Council of Ministers.

Legislative policy is conducted by the National Assembly. This unicameral body consists of 120 members serving five-year terms. A new constitution approved in July 1996 provided for the creation of a 91-member Senate. El Hadj Omar Bongo first became president in 1967, and has been reelected every election since. In 1999, he appointed Jean-Francois Ntoutoume-Emane as prime minister.

Gabon has a judiciary system comprised of a Supreme Court, a High Court of Justice, a Court of Appeal, a Superior Council of Magistracy

headed by the president, and a number of lesser courts. All Supreme Court justices are appointed by the president.

Administratively, the country is divided into nine provinces headed by governors, and further subdivided into 36 prefectures. Both governors and prefects are appointed by the president. The cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil are governed by elected mayors and Municipal Councils.

The flag of Gabon consists of green, yellow, and blue horizontal bands.

Arts, Science, Education

Gabon's intellectual, technological, and artistic life closely follows French development, although the beginnings of a resurgence in bringing a Gabonese perspective to these areas is seen. The National University, *Université Omar Bongo* (founded in 1970 and renamed eight years later), offers the *licence* to students in faculties of letters and humanities, sciences, economics and law, and engineering. Other post-secondary institutions include l'École Normale Supérieure, l'École Nationale des Eaux et Forêts, l'École des Cadres Ruraux, l'École Nationale d'Administration, Centre Universitaire des Sciences de la Santé, and l'École Normale d'Enseignement Technique. In addition, l'École Nationale d'Art et de Manufacture offers secondary-school level training in various arts and crafts. The *Université des Sciences et des Techniques de Masuku* was opened in 1987. Many students go to France for university and technical training. The Gabonese government launched an adult literacy campaign in recent years.

Traditional Gabonese art (mainly Fang, Bakota, and Bapounou) is among the finest in Africa. Gabonese craftsmen produce excellent wood and stone carvings, weapons, musical instruments, and tools.

Fang masks are especially popular among tourists. Most Gabonese art can be purchased from stalls, shops, and street vendors in Libreville and other large towns or at the Centre Artisanal near Libreville's Léon M'Ba Airport.

Until recently, Gabonese cultural traditions have been dwarfed by a decidedly European orientation on the part of the Gabonese elite. But in 1974, the first National Cultural Festival was organized in an attempt to preserve and encourage the development of Gabonese folklore.

Commerce and Industry

Gabon, with its abundant natural resources and small population, is one of the wealthiest nations in Africa, with a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that is four times greater than that of most Sub-Saharan nations. The country is rich in oil. Nearly 40 oil companies operate in Gabon, and oil accounts for 50% of GDP. The offshore oil fields at Oguendo, Gamba, Mandji, and Lucina are the main producing areas. In January 1989, production began at the billion barrel Rabi-Kounga field in west-central Gabon, an area that promises to boost Gabon's petroleum output by 50 percent.

Gabon has been plagued in recent years by a burgeoning national debt and falling world oil prices. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) implemented a number of austerity programs that have stabilized Gabon's economy.

Mining is another of Gabon's economic resources. The country has rich supplies of manganese ore and uranium. Most of these minerals are exported to Western Europe. Other mineral resources include lead, iron ore, diamonds, gold, phosphates, barite, copper, and zinc. Gabon's mineral output will likely increase with the scheduled completion of the Transgabon Railway.

60 percent of Gabon's population is involved in subsistence agriculture. However, it contributed only a meager ten percent to GDP in 1988. As a result, Gabon must import 70 percent of its food requirements.

Gabon's manufacturing sector is very small and is plagued by high production costs and a shortage of skilled workers. Primary industries include wood processing, foodstuff production, chemicals, ship repair, textiles, and metalworking.

Traditionally, France has been Gabon's major trading partner. However, in recent years, Gabon has pursued stronger economic ties with Japan, Canada, the United States, and Western Europe.

The address of the Gabonese *Chambre de Commerce, d'Agriculture, d'Industrie, et des Mines du Gabon* is B.P. 2234, Libreville; telephone: 72-20-64; telex: 5554.

Transportation

In addition to daily service between Libreville and Paris, provided by UTA (Union de Transport Aériens, a French carrier) and Air Gabon, Libreville is connected directly to such other European cities as Brussels, Madrid, Geneva, Rome, Zurich, London, and Frankfurt. Service to capitals in central and West Africa is provided by Air Gabon and regional airlines (Air Afrique, Air Zaire, Nigerian Airways, and Cameroon Airways), and by stops on flights to and from Europe. Flights are available to such nearby points as Douala (Cameroon), Lagos (Nigeria), and Kinshasa (Zaire). The international airport at Libreville, Léon M'Ba, is seven miles from the city proper.

No passenger ships call at Libreville, but accommodations can, at times, be arranged on cargo vessels traveling north or south along the coast. This requires advance booking and considerable flexibility in travel.

The national airline (Air Gabon) or air charter companies are the carriers most used for travel within Gabon; rates in either case are high. Passenger train service is available on the Transgabon Railway, which covers 403 miles between Libreville and Franceville. Service is good and accommodations, especially in first-class, are quite comfortable.

Taxis abound, but are unsatisfactory as a means of transportation; drivers pick up anyone going in their general direction, and the result is often an extensive, crowded tour of the city before one's destination is reached. Taxi drivers seldom know the names of streets. Passengers should be prepared to give directions in terms of well-known landmarks (embassies, hotels, etc.) Tipping taxi drivers is not customary.

A private car is a necessity for an extended stay. Local licenses normally are issued without tests upon presentation of a valid license from another country. Third-party liability insurance is mandatory and must be obtained locally. Collision insurance is extremely expensive in Gabon, making it advisable to purchase from U.S. companies if possible.

Although Gabon has roughly 4,800 miles of roadway, less than 400 miles are paved. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are highly recommended, especially during the rainy seasons when most roads are virtually impassable.

There is a predominance of Volkswagens, French-made cars (Renault and Peugeot), Fiats, Hondas, and Toyotas, assuring these of the most complete servicing facilities. Parts supply and the quality of service are, however, erratic for all makes of vehicles. American cars are not sold in Gabon. Thus, parts and service for American models is generally unavailable.

Communications

Gabon has one of the most advanced telecommunications systems in Africa. Local and long-distance telephone service is available 24 hours a day. Long-distance service from Libreville and other large towns is excellent, but expensive. Telegraph connections usually can be made to most parts of the world during normal working hours and until noon on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Fax service is available in the business center of the Hotel Okoumé Palace-Intercontinental and in other major hotels. There is regular air and sea mail service between Libreville and the U.S., with air transit time averaging about five to seven days. Whenever possible, post office box numbers rather than street addresses should be used when sending letters to Gabon.

The national radio network, La Voix de la Rénovation, and a provincial network broadcast 24 hours a day in French and local languages. Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and other services can be received on a multi-band shortwave radio; equipment is expensive locally.

Gabon's state-controlled television service is Radio diffusion-Télévision Gabonaise. It broadcasts approximately five or six hours a day and only in French. Daily news programs cover local and international events, and full-length films are shown frequently. Two color channels are in operation, but no foreign transmission is provided. American-made sets are not compatible with Gabonese television.

L'Union, a multi-page printed newspaper, is published daily with a modicum of international news. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and a few other English-language magazines are available at local bookstores, which also are well stocked with French newspapers, such as *Le Monde*, and periodicals.

The International Herald Tribune and *Le Monde* can be obtained by subscription, arriving within one to five days after publication.

Health

Libreville offers generally satisfactory medical facilities for ordinary problems (except nursing care). In addition to a large public hospital, there are several private clinics staffed by expatriate (largely French) physicians. In all, these various facilities include among their medical personnel a number of specialists (in such areas as obstetrics/gynecology and pediatrics) as well as general practitioners, and can cope with a wide variety of routine medical problems.

Several dentists are in practice in Libreville. Their work is of good quality, but expensive.

The level of community sanitation in Libreville is low compared to that in the U.S., but an effort is being made to raise standards as the city develops. Garbage, for example, is picked up six times weekly throughout the city, and there are periodic cleanup campaigns. Snakes are commonly seen in the city, and a local pest-control service provides effective treatment against occasional rodents. Insects are an irritating problem and can never be completely eliminated, but screening and judicious use of insecticides is helpful.

Gabon has most of the diseases common to tropical Africa: malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, and sleeping sickness. Bilharzia, caused by water snails, is endemic here. Avoid bathing in ponds, slow-moving streams, or lakes. It is important to be inoculated against yellow fever, tetanus, cholera, smallpox, typhoid, and polio prior to arrival. Malaria suppressants should also be taken—two to three weeks before arrival, and regularly thereafter.

While Gabon has somewhat lower rates for AIDS (SIDA in French) than other African countries, it is

definitely a major problem, especially among prostitutes. In West and Central Africa, AIDS is primarily a heterosexual disease. Extreme precautions should be taken to ensure one's safety.

The climate itself has a tiring effect, making adequate rest and intake of fluids essential. Respiratory, intestinal, or dermatological ailments are often aggravated by the hot, humid climate and lack of specialized medical attention. In order to prevent skin worms, all laundry dried outdoors should be pressed on both sides with a very hot iron.

Although local French technicians and other residents contend that the water supply is safe, Americans often boil and filter their water as an additional safety precaution. Raw fruits should be peeled before eating, and raw vegetables should be treated with a chlorine solution. Cook all meat well. Fresh milk should be avoided in favor of powdered or canned evaporated milk.

Clothing and Services

Lightweight cotton or linen clothing is worn year round but, occasionally, a sweater or light jacket is useful for evenings during the dry season. Clothing sold locally is of mediocre quality and extremely expensive. Homemade articles afford a considerable savings over ready-made, but the patterns available in Libreville are printed in French, and differ from American-type patterns in design and format (e.g., there are no seam allowances). A few Gabonese and West African tailors make interesting shifts and shirts from native cloth, including some with machine-made embroidery; the shirts are suitable for casual wear for men, while the women's shifts are often appropriate for more formal evening occasions.

As a rule, extended-stay requirements for men include five or six washable summer suits (including one or two in dark colors for special

occasions), a tuxedo with black jacket (to conform to local practice), and a supply of slacks and sports shirts. Women find that long dresses, caftans, or dressy pants outfits are popular for most evening events; loose fitting dresses and shifts are worn during the day. Both men and women should avoid wearing shorts or sleeveless shirts and tops when travelling in the countryside. Shirtsleeves for men and summer dresses for women are fine for informal gatherings.

Dry cleaning facilities are limited and expensive, making washable clothes the most practical choice. Hats are not worn except as protection from the sun. Whites and tennis shoes are standard for the courts.

Shoe sizes and quality are limited, and prices are high. Swimming attire should include three or four swim suits for each member of the family. An ample supply of underwear is needed, as frequent laundering tends to disintegrate both fabric and elastic.

Lightweight raincoats are useful during the heavy rains, but some people find them unbearable in the heat and humidity, and prefer umbrellas. Tennis shoes and thongs sometimes are substituted for boots for the same reason.

Basic supplies and medicines are available, but many items must be ordered from abroad and often take two months to arrive. Some products, such as hypoallergenic cosmetics, either are not carried locally, or are of questionable quality and exorbitantly priced. Prescription eyeglasses are usually unavailable. Bring extra pairs of eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Domestic Help

Although household help is desirable, well-trained domestics are difficult to find. Most are, at best, moderately skilled, and are expensive in comparison with services rendered. Domestics who will

assume multiple responsibilities are rare, so it is necessary to hire a separate person for cleaning, cooking, gardening, laundry, etc. Most servants do not live in. Servants should have regular medical examinations, as there is a wide incidence of disease.

Local law requires that insurance be carried on domestics. Medical treatment is provided by the Gabonese Government through the social security program, as is a basic list of medications.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Mar/12	Renovation Day
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Whitsunday"
	Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Aug. 17	Independence Day
Nov.1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 2	Christmas Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Gabon can be reached by daily air service from Paris, and by frequent flights from other cities in Europe.

A valid passport and an entry visa are required for travel to Gabon. Entry visas can be obtained from the Gabonese Embassy in Washington. All persons entering Gabon are also required to have yellow fever shots.

Health regulations for animals are not enforced, and no quarantine is

imposed. However, visitors are advised to follow formal regulations. Be prepared to present a veterinarian's certificate of health indicating that the animal has been inoculated against rabies (not less than three weeks nor more than six months prior to arrival) or has been in a rabies-free area for the past two months. Gabon itself is not a rabies-free area and the climate makes life uncomfortable for most pets.

Gabonese law permits only the entry of rifles, shotguns (nonautomatic), and 100 rounds of ammunition. Pistols are not permitted. Prior customs approval is required. All weapons are inspected and registered by the Gabonese government.

Several Roman Catholic churches, and two Protestant churches of l'Église Evangélique du Gabon (akin to French Protestant or U.S. Presbyterian) are in the capital city. One of these Protestant churches was built by American missionaries in 1848. All services are in French.

The time in Gabon is Greenwich Mean Time plus one.

Gabon forms a monetary union with other members of the Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa (UDEAC). The common currency is the Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA) *franc*, issued by a central institution, Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale.

Seven commercial banks with international affiliations maintain offices in Gabon: Banque Internationale pour le Gabon (BIPG), a subsidiary of Banque Internationale pour l'Afrique Occidentale (BIAO); Union Gabonaise de Banque (UGB), an affiliate of Crédit Lyonnais; Pay-Bas Gabon (Paribas); Banque Internationale pour le Commerce et l'Industrie du Gabon (BICIG); Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI); Barclay's and Citibank.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Gabon.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

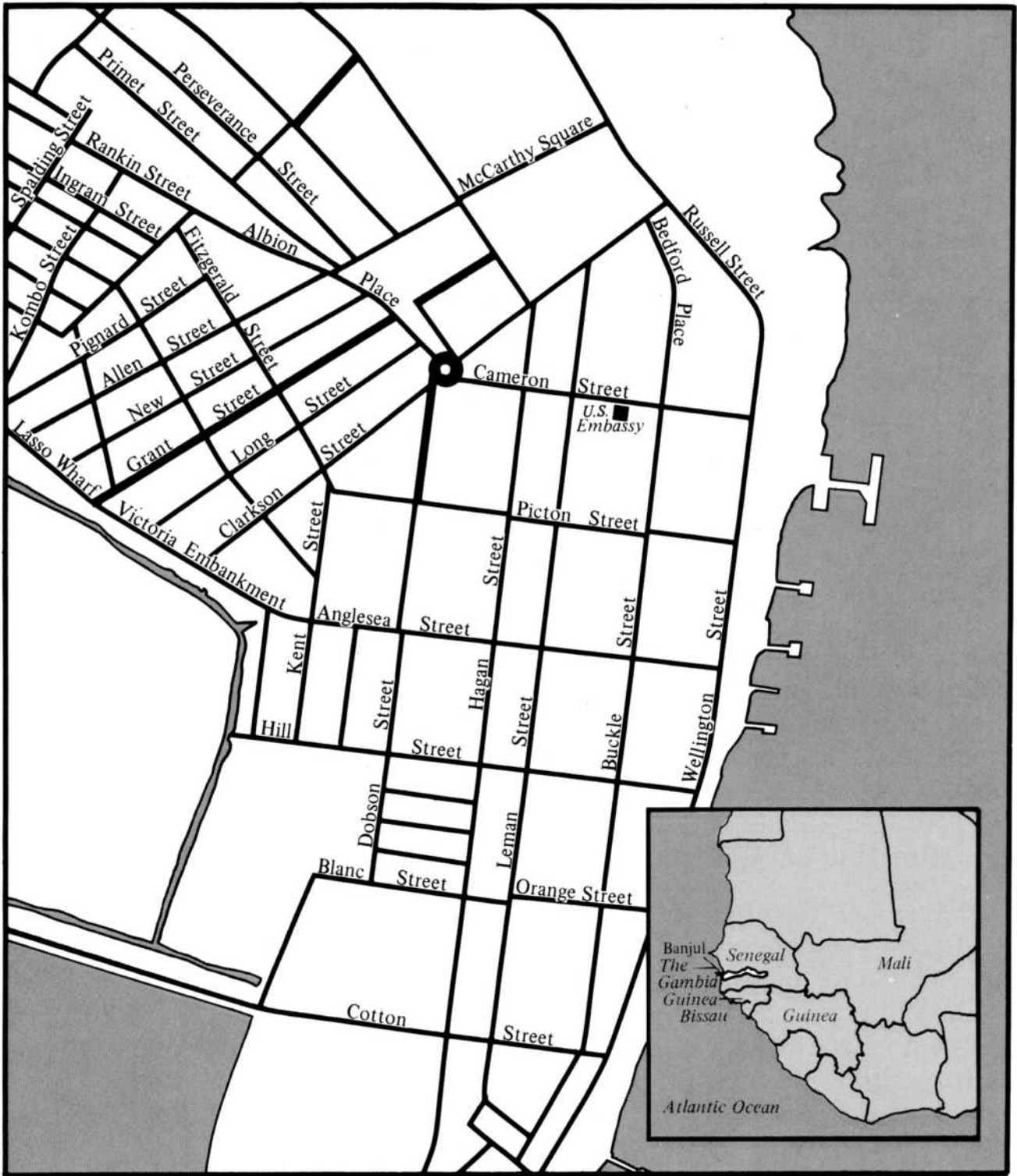
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Banjul, Gambia

THE GAMBIA

Republic of The Gambia

Major City:

Banjul

Other City:

Juffureh, Tanji

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

THE GAMBIA is part of the Sahel region of Africa which, in 1588, became Great Britain's first possession on that continent. It had once belonged to the Empire of Ghana and the Kingdom of the Songhais. When Portuguese navigators arrived at the mouth of the Gambia River in 1455, this little enclave on the bulge of Africa's western region was an integral part of the Kingdom of Mali, the medieval empire acclaimed as a seat of culture and learning.

During the ensuing centuries of exploration and settlement, Great Britain and France struggled for supremacy in the region until British claims were recognized in 1783.

The Gambia was twice placed under the government of Sierra Leone in the 19th century, and finally a boundary agreement was reached in 1889, when the little country became a British crown colony. The Gambia gained independence February 18, 1965, and has been a republic since 1970.

MAJOR CITY

Banjul

Banjul, the capital city and main trading center of The Gambia, is situated on the Island of St. Mary near the mouth of the Gambia River. The British had established a garrison here early in the 19th century in an effort to abolish the slave trade, and the small, sandy strip of land, called Banjul, was renamed Bathurst (Banjul) after a colonial administrator. The original name was restored to the city in 1973.

Banjul has an estimated population of 186,000 (2000 est.). Included are Gambians, some Americans, several hundred Europeans, Middle Easterners, and other Africans. The Lebanese and Mauritians are often shopkeepers and up-river traders. Relations among the ethnic groups are harmonious.

A sizable number of Gambians commute daily to Banjul from the growing urban center of Serrekunda.

Education

Most children in kindergarten through eighth grade attend the Banjul American Embassy School (BAES) founded in 1984. The school is open to English-speaking students of all nationalities. A U.S. curriculum is followed with French taught as a foreign language. Social studies include the social and cultural history of Gambia, supplemented by local field trips. Extracurricular activities such as field trips, yearbook, and sports are offered.

The Marina International School is located on the outskirts of Banjul. Its curriculum is similar to that of British primary schools. This school is rarely attended by American students. French-speaking education is available from the Ecole Francais. Both the Ecole Francais and the BAES offer pre-kindergarten programs which have been used by Americans.

American children above grade eight usually attend high school in the U.S. or in Europe. There is, however, an American School run by the Methodist missionaries in Dakar, and Ziguinchor has a boarding



Courtesy of Kenneth Estell

Tree-lined street in Banjul, The Gambia

school for English-speaking students.

Recreation

Recreation in this capital city revolves around the ocean, the beaches, the river, and the home. Attractive beaches line the entire Gambian coast. It should be noted, however, that the surf is rough and dangerous in places, and no one should swim alone. Care should also be taken on beaches to guard against theft or personal assault.

Surf fishing is popular and, in season, it is possible to make catches of many varieties. The quantity and quality of fish are excellent. Local fishermen use nets cast from the shore or set from large *pirogues* (dugout canoes). Fishing tackle and gear can be purchased in Banjul, but are expensive.

The water near Banjul is too cloudy for skin diving and spearfishing, but suitable places can be found down the coast. An experienced local fisherman should be hired as a guide to point out where the currents are strongest.

Privately owned dinghies and *pirogues* may be rented. A boat club here sponsors monthly sailboat races, and small sail- and power-

boats are occasionally for sale. Two larger sailing yachts in the area offer opportunities for longer cruises up-river and in ocean tributaries.

The Gambia is a bird-watcher's paradise where more than 400 species can be sighted. The Gambia Ornithological Society is active in sponsoring walks, lectures, and slide presentations for its members, who pay a small membership fee. Those interested in gardening will find that flowers, tropical trees, and a variety of vegetables will grow with some effort and care in The Gambia.

Abuko Nature Reserve, about 15 miles from Banjul, is a small fenced-in park where the visitor may walk through dense bush and open veld country. Monkeys, small antelope, reptiles, and birds can be seen in their native habitat. A few hyenas, a lion, and some chimpanzees are kept in natural enclosures in a zoo "orphanage" at the center of the area. The best time for seeing animals is early morning or late afternoon.

Hunting is popular, and game includes wild boar, guinea fowl, duck, pigeon, and sand grouse. Hunting is not permitted everywhere, so make arrangements to

hunt with someone who is familiar with legal hunting areas.

Near the U.S. ambassador's residence at Fajara, a private international club with open membership is in operation. It maintains a golf course, a swimming pool, two tennis courts, squash and badminton courts, and facilities for Ping-Pong and snookers (a form of pool). There are also a bar and restaurant. A number of Gambians, including the president, play golf frequently. Several other tennis courts are to be found in Banjul and Bakau.

Hotels in the Banjul area charge a small fee for nonresident use of their swimming pools.

The Gambia has several interesting historical sites, including two former colonial forts. Fort Bullen at Barra, across the river from Banjul, was built in 1826 to guard what was then Bathurst from possible invasion; the fort on James Island, about 20 miles up-river, dates back to 1651. After changing hands many times between the French and British, the James Island fort served for 125 years as the seat of British influence in the region. Juffreh, a hamlet near the fishing village of Albreda across from James Island, was made famous as the ancestral home of the late Alex Haley, author of *Roots*, a book which symbolizes the African ancestry of black Americans.

Scattered along the north bank of the river are the "stone circles," believed to be ceremonial sites dating back as far as 100 years B.C. The circles, which appear to contain sacrificial burials, consist of 10 to 24 cylinder-shaped megaliths cut from laterite of varying heights. About 20 of these sites are found between Kaur and Georgetown; the most interesting are at Wassau and Ker Batch.

Other notable historical sites include the Kataba Fort, a stronghold for local chiefs during the 19th-century Muslim holy wars, and the obelisk near Karantaba on the north bank, erected in honor of



Mosque in Banjul, The Gambia

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the great West African explorer, Mungo Park. It is claimed that he began his memorable journeys at this point in search of the Niger River.

Other possible excursions in The Gambia are visits to the Gunjar and Tanji fishing villages along the southern coast; Tendaba Camp half-way up-river, where there are bungalows, a swimming pool, a few caged animals, and a restaurant on the river; Georgetown and Basse, larger towns and former important river trading centers; Kartong, the southernmost town along the coast, with its crocodile pools; and Berending (several miles east of Barra on

the north bank) and Katchikally in Bakau.

Excursions in Senegal

Dakar, the capital of Senegal, is roughly 190 miles from Banjul—a five-hour drive. It offers modern theaters (French films), good French food, museums, art galleries, a university, and other metropolitan services. Ziguinchor, the capital of the Casamance region in southern Senegal, is approximately 95 miles south of Banjul, and can be reached by car in three hours. It is a former Portuguese settlement on the Casamance River, and has a good crafts market and several good French restaurants. *Pirogues* may

be rented for bird-watching along the river.

It is also possible to make several interesting excursions from Ziguinchor, including trips to Cap Skirring on the coast; Basse-Casamance Park; and the old Jola impluvium houses, which provided for the collection of rainwater through the roof directly into atrium receptacles. Other places to visit in Senegal are Djoudi Bird Refuge in the northern part of the country; St. Louis—former French West African capital on an island at the mouth of the Senegal River; Kafountine, Misirah, and Toubacoutta, all coastal tourist spots providing accommodations and French cuisine; Kaolack's municipal market; Touba, the religious capital of one of Senegal's leading Muslim sects, and the site of the largest mosque in sub-Saharan Africa; a tapestry museum at Thies; and Niokolo Koba Park in eastern Senegal, which has a number of lions, elephants, hippos, antelope, and other small animals.

Entertainment

Entertainment in The Gambia is limited. In Banjul, the Fajara Club offers sports facilities, a bar/restaurant, library services, and social activities for both adults and children. This open-membership club is mainly patronized by resident expatriates and senior government officials. The American Mission Cooperative Association organizes group activities at Easter, the Fourth of July, and Christmas, and also shows weekly films for staff members and guests at the American Embassy. Other active groups include the Caledonian Society (Scottish dancing); the Ornithological Society; the Tuesday Group, an international women's club; and the Banjul Music Society, which presents two major performances a year. The Alliance Francaise offers French classes and screens weekly French films.

Banjul has an indoor cinema which occasionally shows American films. Open-air theaters are located in the capital and in the towns of Bakau, Serrakunda, Lamin, Brikama, and

other places up-river. These cinemas feature mainly Indian, Kung-Fu, and Arabic films.

Major hotels have dance floors or discos, the most popular being those at the Senegambia and Novotel. The Tropicana Night Club has a more local flavor. During the tourist season, hotels stage Gambian cultural shows including dancing. The African Experience produces an excellent show twice weekly during the season. The evening consists of a series of local dances with authentic Gambian cuisine served between dances.

Several formal dinner dances are organized by various groups during the year. Occasionally, visiting foreign performers appear in The Gambia; most performances take place at the Independence Stadium. Local artists also perform at the Stadium, and from December to April, soccer games are staged there on weekends. The Gambia's National Museum features exhibits in arts and crafts, history, and ethnography. It is located on Independence Drive in Banjul.

The American community in The Gambia consists of U.S. Government personnel and contract employees, Peace Corps volunteers, and others not directly connected to official staffs. Social life is relaxed and informal and revolves around small dinner and cocktail parties, picnics, beach parties, and occasional events sponsored by the American Mission Cooperative Association.

International organizations represented in The Gambia include the United Nations Development Program, the European Community, World Health Organization, Food and Agricultural Organization, and World Food Program. In addition, over a dozen countries are represented by honorary consuls. Most other diplomats officially accredited to The Gambia are resident in Dakar.

OTHER CITIES

JUFFUREH, a small village 20 miles from Banjul, was the home of Kunta Kinte, claimed to be late author Alex Haley's great, great-grandfather. Haley's best-seller, *Roots*, is based on Kunta Kinte's life.

The small village of **TANJI**, on the Atlantic Coast, is a must see for those interested in Gambian culture. The Tanji Village Museum is a small open-air museum built as a model village of Gambian homes as they existed about a hundred years ago. Visitors can go inside a number of huts to see exhibits on village history and artifacts of village life. The museum's garden contains plants such as Wolof, Mandinka, Serer and Jola, which have medicinal use. The gardens are part of the ongoing research of the museum into the uses of plants in medicine, textile dyes and in traditional beliefs. Nature trails around the museum and the village are offered with guided or self-guided tours. The museum also often offers presentations of traditional music, dance and rituals. An artisan area displays traditional handicrafts and a small restaurant serves a sampling of traditional foods.

Visitors may want to stay at the Paradise Inn Lodge, located on the banks of the Tanji River. Mountain bikes and kayaks can be rented as well as jeeps for those looking for a safari. The inn offers workshops and presentations on drum and dance, African cooking and batik making, and boasts of a beautiful tropical garden.

About 2 miles north of the village is the Tanji Bird Reserve. Truly a bird watchers paradise, the area contains dunes, lagoons, dry woodland, coastal scrub, mangrove patches and the reefs and islets of Bijol Island. Nearly 300 species of bird have been sighted here, both indigenous species and European migrants.

Creek fishing on the Tanji River is a relaxing way to spend an afternoon, as is a visit to the unspoiled Tanji beaches.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Situated on the western coast of Africa, between the equator and the Tropic of Cancer, the Republic of The Gambia forms a long, narrow strip on either side of the Gambia River. Except for the seacoast, it is surrounded by the Republic of Senegal and extends inland for 200 miles (320 kilometers). The country is 30 miles (48 kilometers) wide along the coast, narrowing to 15 miles (24 kilometers) at its eastern border. From sea level, interior elevations rise to 112 feet.

The Gambia River rises in the Fouta Jallon (Djallon) mountains of Guinea and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Twelve miles wide at the mouth, near Cape St. Mary, it narrows to three miles at Banjul, The Gambia's capital city. It is fringed with mangrove swamps for the first 170 miles inland, followed by open savanna and, in places, by red ironstone cliffs. The river is tidal throughout most of the country, and the intrusion of salt water ranges from 90 miles in the wet season to nearly 160 miles in the dry period. Ships up to 3,000 tons, with a maximum draft of 17 feet, are able to navigate 150 miles up-river to the trading port of Kaur. Banjul has a well-equipped port with two berths, spacious anchorages, large customs clearing warehouses, and a 25-ton capacity crane. Smaller fishing and pleasure boats are anchored in Oyster Creek, two miles from Banjul.

The Gambia is vulnerable to periodic drought because it is part of the arid Sahel zone between the Sahara desert and the coastal rain forest. Its vegetation is comprised of savanna woodlands, grass, and

shrubs which grow in low-nutrient soils. Palm trees are found in the coastal area and along the riverbanks, and baobab and kapok trees are common throughout the country. The subtropical climate has a rainy season from June to October, and a dry transitional period from October to December. The dry season then begins, and extends through May. The onset and end of the rains are marked by high temperatures and humidity, whereas the dry season is noted for the dust-laden *harmattan*, winds which blow in from the central Sahara. Temperatures range from a low of 48°F (9°C) in January to a high of 110°F (43°C) in October. Rainfall ranges from an annual mean of 48 inches in the west to 34 inches up-river.

Because of the humid climate and the salt air along the coast, metal rusts rapidly. Books and leather goods often mildew or are attacked by silverfish and other insects, especially in the rainy season. Houses near the sea are affected by the corrosive salt air and spray. Termites abound year round in soils and woodwork. During the dry season, the winds blow in a fine dust which quickly gathers everywhere. However, the moderate temperatures during this interval of sunny days and cool nights give The Gambia one of West Africa's more pleasant climates, particularly in the narrow coastal region.

Population

The Gambia's estimated population is 1.4 million people. About 80 percent live in rural areas outside the urban communities of Bakau, Serrekunda, and the capital city of Banjul. Population density for the country is about 120 persons per square kilometer, making The Gambia one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. Of the major ethnic groups, Mandinkas predominate with 42 percent of the population, followed by Fula (18%) and Wolof (16%). Other substantial ethnic groups include Jola (10%), Serahuli (9%), Serer (2%), Manjago (2%), and Aku (1%). Just over one

percent of the population comes from other African countries with non-Africans accounting for fewer than one percent (mostly Europeans and Lebanese). Although each ethnic group has its own particular traditions, language, and background, the people of The Gambia share many cultural patterns due to historical connections, the small size of the country, generations of intermarriage, and the unifying force of Islam. Gambians also share much of their cultural heritage with the people of Senegal and other West African countries.

English is the official language in schools and government, but local tongues are widely spoken. While Wolof is commonly used in the urban areas, Mandinka predominates in rural sections. Other local languages are often heard.

The population growth rate is estimated at 3.14 percent. The birth rate is 42 per thousand, and life expectancy is about 54 years. Approximately 90 percent of the population is Muslim, with nine percent Christian and, to a lesser extent, followers of traditional animist beliefs and practices. Freedom of religion is recognized, and religious institutions are autonomous.

Government

A member of the British Commonwealth, The Gambia became independent in 1965. A new constitution, adopted in 1970, established a democratic system of government based on universal adult suffrage, a multi-party electoral system, and respect for basic human and political rights. Three independent branches were established: executive, legislative, and judicial, with presidential and parliamentary elections every five years.

The executive branch is headed by a president, who is elected for a five-year term. The president then appoints a vice president and a cabinet from members of parliament. The judiciary consists of a supreme court, court of appeals, and various

subordinate courts. The legal system is based on a composite of English common law, Koranic law, and customary law.

The 1970 constitution was suspended after a military junta in 1994, but presidential elections were held two years later and a new 53-member National Assembly was formed, with four members appointed by the president and the rest elected. At the time Yahya Alphonse Jamus Jebulai Jammeh was elected president. He was reelected in 2001.

For administrative purposes, The Gambia is divided into five divisions, each headed by a regional commissioner (i.e., Western, North Bank, Lower River, MacCarthy Island, and Upper River divisions). Further divisions are the districts, which are headed by chiefs who are elected by village heads. The district chiefs retain traditional power of customary law. Local government consists of six rural councils and two urban councils which have their own treasuries but are responsible to the Ministry of Local Government and Lands.

The Gambian flag consists of red and green horizontal bands and a central white, blue, and white horizontal stripe symbolizing a river flowing through fertile land at sunset.

Arts, Science, Education

The government of The Gambia is encouraging a revival of its artistic and cultural traditions. It sponsors the Gambia National Troupe, a musical and theatrical company which performs extensively in the Banjul area. Members of the troupe have traveled widely in Europe, the former Soviet Union, and in other African countries. An annual cultural festival of traditional Mandinka music and dance was inaugurated in 1983 at Georgetown. The Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture also sponsors performances of traditional dance,

as well as instruction in the music of the *griot*. More than just a musician, the *griot* in Gambian society embodies much of the country's national heritage through the historical narratives and family genealogies that *griot* families have passed on for generations. The songs of both *kora* and *balafon* musicians trace the history of the region and its founding families back to the 13th century. While the *kora* is a stringed instrument, the *balafon* is much like a xylophone. Individual and ensemble performances with these instruments may be heard in Banjul and surrounding areas at hotels and public functions. Several good recordings of this music, and also of traditional drumming, are available.

Local handicrafts, tie-dyeing, batik, wood carving, and the making of gold and silver jewelry are expanding as a result of increasing tourism. The Gambia National Museum features exhibits on traditional arts and crafts, and on history and ethnography. It also has a tape collection of oral histories of the region and videotapes on aspects of Gambian culture.

Scientific research is underway in several fields important to tropical and developing countries. Medical study of tropical diseases has been conducted by the British Medical Research Council since 1947; and the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) has actively sponsored a major research program of agricultural research and diversification.

The Gambia's education and training policies continue to focus on primary education, literacy, and qualitative improvements in curriculum and teacher instruction. A National Vocational Training Directorate, established in 1979, coordinates the country's technical training. Its current priorities are to upgrade the skills of those already employed. The Gambia Technical Training Institute opened in 1983, and a Management Development Institute for instruction in mid-level management and accounting proce-

dures opened in 1984. The country has no university, but one may be established from the Schools of Education and Agriculture at Yundum.

The Gambia's literacy rate is very low. Only 48 percent of adults age 15 and over can read and write.

Commerce and Industry

The Gambia, with a per capita income of \$1100 in 2001, is one of the world's poorest countries. It is confronted with the deep-rooted problems of a high population density, limited land space, a serious rate of infant mortality, high illiteracy, a dearth of natural resources, a single-crop economy, and periodic drought. The country depends heavily on agriculture, with groundnuts accounting for the majority of export earnings. Fish, cotton lint, and palm kernels are also exported. Millet, sorghum, and rice are the staple food crops. Because emphasis is on groundnut cultivation, production has been diverted from staple crops, and food must be imported. Other imports include raw materials, fuel, machinery, and transport equipment. The country is currently pursuing policies to diversify its economy and become self-sufficient. Current emphasis is on increasing cotton, rice, livestock, and fish production and irrigating swamp areas along the River Gambia. The Gambia receives financial and technical assistance from a number of international donor agencies.

The Gambia's industrial sector is very small. Groundnut oil milling is the major source of industrial activity, although the tourist and fishing industries are growing in importance. There has been substantial investment in shrimp farming and the poultry industry. The Banjul suburb of Kanifing is developing an industrial park which already includes such industries as a brewery and soft-drink factory, shoe manufacturing, cement and brick production, lime juice production, a metalworking factory, a soap and plastics works, and several other

smaller enterprises. The Gambia Produce Marketing Board, a parastatal agency, controls groundnut exports, while a number of large trading houses dominate the import sector.

Because of a rapidly expanding tourist industry, additional hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops are being built in the Fajara beach area. The tourist season is from October to May. The 1991–1992 tourist season attracted nearly 113,000 tourists, but tourism declined significantly in 1999 and 2000. Most of the tourists are Scandinavian, German, British, and French. A number of American tourists have been drawn to The Gambia, largely in response to *Roots*, the story built around Alex Haley's homeland.

The address of The Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry is P.O. Box 33, Banjul.

Transportation

Banjul is 25 minutes by air from Dakar's Yoff airport, where numerous international connections can be made. Twice-daily service to Dakar is available via Gambia Air Shuttle and other carriers fly there several times during the week. British Airways has nonstop service between London and Banjul twice weekly and, during the tourist season, various charter flights arrive from Europe. Also during the tourist season, there are weekly flights to the Canary Islands.

Banjul International Airport at Yundum is 17 miles from the capital. The runway is one of the finest in West Africa. The airport is limited in marginal weather due to a lack of instrument landing aids.

Occasionally, passenger accommodations can be booked to Banjul on cargo ships sailing from European ports. Cruise ships call at Banjul on their way to other West African ports from the Canary Islands.

In Banjul, taxis are available at designated taxi parks and hotels. Like taxis in other areas of Africa south

of the Sahara, however, the vehicles are often run down and in short supply during the tourist season. Fares go up during the tourist season. An exact fare should be agreed on in advance between driver and passenger.

Gambians drive on the right side of the road. The country's major asphalt road runs from Banjul along the south bank of the river to Basse. The north bank road from Barra to Georgetown is a wide laterite all-weather surface. Feeder roads linking remote settlements with these two main roads have been developed throughout the country. During the rains, though, many of the secondary surfaces become impassable.

The Trans-Gambia Highway linking Dakar with Ziguinchor in the Casamance area of southern Senegal crosses the north- and south-bank roads at Farafenni, where a ferry service operates. The crossing normally takes 25 minutes, but frequent delays of up to an hour or more are encountered. Other ferries operate at Basse, Bansang, Georgetown, Kaur, Kuntaur, Kerevan, and Barra. The Barra/Banjul crossing is the most dependable, and takes about 30 minutes. The first ferry is scheduled to leave Banjul every day after 8 a.m., but does not operate when the tide is low.

A privately owned car, preferably a compact, is essential for any extended stay in The Gambia. Vehicles with high road clearance are the most practical. Nissans, Toyotas, Renaults, Suzukis, Peugeotts, and Mercedes can be bought in Banjul. American cars are risky choices, as repair facilities and spare parts are virtually unobtainable. Expatriates who decide to ship an American car to The Gambia should have an ample supply of spare parts on hand. Gasoline and oil can be purchased locally, but it is more expensive than in the U.S.

Although a valid U.S. or international driver's license will be temporarily recognized in The Gambia, a local license is required if residency

is planned. Local third-party liability car insurance is mandatory as well.

Communications

The Gambia telecommunications company (GAMTEL) installed a new digital switching telephone system in November 1986. Service on this system has been very reliable, and calls to Banjul and its surrounding area can be made with the least amount of difficulty. Calls up-country are more problematic because of the old microwave equipment and frequent power outages occurring in these areas.

Direct international dialing (including to the U.S.) is available for a small deposit fee. International calls cannot be made from a telephone without this capacity. Subscribers who have not paid the deposit have to make international calls at the GAMTEL booth in Banjul. Although international calls are expensive, monthly service charges and local calls are quite reasonable. Subscribers can obtain monthly printouts of all calls for a small fee. Telegrams and telexes can be sent from GAMTEL headquarters in Banjul. Telex charges are reasonable.

Mail service is adequate, but slow. International delivery from the U.S. takes a week to 15 days; surface mail, several months. All mail should be carefully imprinted in capital letters.

The Gambia is served by a few radio stations. Radio Gambia, a government broadcasting service, operates daily with over 100 hours of broadcasts a week in seven languages, including English. Its coverage is countrywide, although reception is poor in the eastern section. Radio Syd, a privately owned commercial station, broadcasts entertainment programs—mostly music—for 140 hours a week. It also simulcasts Radio Gambia's news programs. Radio Syd's signal reaches primarily the Western Division, but can be heard up to Mansakonko. Radio One is an FM music station.

A good shortwave radio is required to receive the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), and other international transmissions.

The Gambia has one government owned TV station and, with a good antenna, television programs can be received from Senegal. Videotape recorders are growing in popularity in the international community; an informal exchange service is available, but U.S. and European systems differ from one another. Most Americans use VHS format cassettes. A multi-system television and VCR are recommended.

Banjul has several newspapers that comment on local affairs. *The Gambia Weekly* (formerly *Gambia News Bulletin*), is published three times a week by the Ministry of Information. *The Gambia Onward* is published three times weekly. *The Nation* and *The Gambian Times*, which is published by the People's Progressive Party, appear fortnightly. All are published in English.

British papers can be purchased occasionally in Banjul, but supply is irregular. *The International Herald Tribune* also comes by air, but is irregular and often a week old upon arrival. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and European and African magazines also are available locally, usually with some delay.

Several bookstores in the capital carry paperbacks, stationery supplies, and children's books, but the supply is severely limited and would not meet the needs of a family. The Gambia National Library has a limited selection of books and periodicals and the Fajara Club maintains a small lending library. The U.S. Embassy has a small reading room with American periodicals, reference materials, and school catalogues; it also shows CBS weekly newscasts on videotape. Only a few technical journals are available in Banjul.

Health

Health facilities in The Gambia do not meet U.S. standards. The government runs two hospitals (the Royal Victoria in Banjul and a smaller hospital in Bansang) and operates a network of health centers and dispensaries throughout the country. The expatriate community makes use of private hospital clinics including the Westfield Clinic and the British Medical Research Council in Fajara. Fully qualified doctors, trained in the U.K., are on staff at each of these clinics, but they are not always immediately available. In addition, the American community has access to several private physicians. Obstetric cases and medical evacuations are sent to Europe or the U.S.

Several dentists have private practices in Banjul, but they are not equipped to do major dental work.

Amoebic dysentery and many gastro-intestinal parasitic infections are common in The Gambia. Malaria, hepatitis, meningitis, and rabies are endemic. Other diseases such as tuberculosis, schistosomiasis, and upper respiratory infections (influenza) are common. Skin infections such as athlete's foot, heat rash, and boils can be problems, especially in the rainy season.

Personal hygiene is extremely important under tropical conditions. The Gambia's water supply is one of the cleanest in West Africa, yet its bacterial content differs significantly from U.S. water supplies. Filtering and boiling is necessary, at least until the body becomes acclimated to the new conditions. Vegetables should be soaked or washed in an iodine or chlorine solution, and local meats should be frozen for ten days before being cooked, or otherwise cooked until well done. A good supply of bottled water is needed for field trips.

Malarial suppressants *must* be taken regularly, and repellents and mosquito nets should be used as needed. It is advisable to attend to small cuts or infections immedi-

ately. Rabies is endemic, and all contact with stray animals should be avoided. Antirabies vaccine is available in case of an accident.

Clothing and Services

Informal lightweight clothing is the standard for office attire and for most social occasions. Men find that heavier suits, long-sleeved shirts, and sweaters are needed in the cooler weather during the winter months.

Loose cotton dresses are recommended as daily wear for women. Either long or short dresses are suitable for dinner and cocktail parties. Slacks and jeans are worn in urban areas, but shorts are not appropriate in public. Sandals, open shoes, and pumps are worn but it is wise to remember that high heels are difficult to wear on the sandy roads of The Gambia, and that the few walks that are cemented are very rough. Wear-and-tear on shoes is excessive.

Children rarely dress up here. Frequent changes and washing in the hot and humid season cause a great deal of wear and tear on their clothing; an extra supply should be kept on hand, as well as extra pairs of shoes.

Adults and children alike need casual clothing (cotton is recommended over synthetic fabrics), beach wear, sportswear, and sturdy shoes. Warmer clothing is needed for trips to cooler climates. Clothes mildew rapidly in the humid climate, and should be kept in closets with mildew preventative.

Gambians are very dress conscious and quite fashionable. Men and women wear beautiful caftans and long flowing gowns. A number of good tailors in Banjul work with a variety of imported cloth and colorful tie-dyes and batiks. The wide range of competence among dressmakers and tailors makes careful selection necessary. Prolonged delays should be expected.

Dry cleaning service is not recommended; laundry is done at home. Shoe repairs can be done in the Banjul market with varying degrees of success. There are several good hair stylists for men and women.

British-made household articles can be repaired after a fashion, but American equipment rarely can be adequately serviced. Stereo and videotape equipment can be repaired in Dakar.

Several shops in Banjul offer a small selection of toilet articles and cosmetics, mostly French and English brands, but all are expensive.

Domestic Help

The Gambian Government has issued guidelines regarding wages, work hours, vacations, salary increases, and termination of services but, in many instances, these are left to negotiation. Domestic workers are now eligible for enrollment in the national social security system.

As a rule, men fill cook, houseboy, gardener, and driver positions; women care for children and do housework and laundry. In addition, it is customary for guards to be employed around the clock to deter theft and vandalism. English- and French-speaking servants of varying ability are available but, because most can neither read nor understand English well, considerable care is required to ensure that instructions are understood. Employers are not obliged to provide meals or uniforms.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Persons traveling from the U.S. to Banjul may transit via London or Dakar, Senegal. British Airways has two nonstop flights a week to Banjul from London. Air Afrique flies from New York to Dakar. Also, there are numerous connections to

Dakar from Europe. Twice-daily shuttle flights by the Gambia Air Shuttle connect Dakar and Banjul.

A visa is required for entry, as is a current international immunization card. (A Senegalese visa is not needed for U.S. citizens needed if transit is through Senegal.) Cholera is spot-checked as visitors enter The Gambia, particularly if they are in transit from known endemic locations. The U.S. Government advises inoculations against typhus-typhoid, polio, and hepatitis, as well as yellow fever and cholera.

No quarantine is imposed for the importation of pets. However, since rabies is hyperendemic in the country, vaccination is a stringent requirement, not only for the protection of pets, but also for that of the humans around them. Rabies shots should be renewed annually. Airlines will provide shipping details.

Weapons and a limited amount of ammunition may be imported. The Gambian Government requires a carrying permit as well as an annually renewable game license for hunting. Registration should be made with U.S. Customs before departure.

The Gambia is predominantly a Muslim country. Muslims do not eat pork or drink alcohol. Orthodox believers observe prayer periods five times each day. Calls to prayer can be heard from mosques, sometimes on loudspeakers. While men usually will be seen in mosques and at special prayer grounds, women generally pray in the privacy of

their homes. Friday is a special day, when Muslim men dress in their best clothes and gather in mosques for afternoon prayer; this is also the day when beggars congregate nearby to receive alms.

Besides several mosques, Banjul and surrounding communities have Anglican, Methodist, and Roman Catholic churches, but no synagogues. The American Church of Christ, Seventh-Day Adventists, Baha'i, American Baptist, and the Worldwide Evangelical Crusade have small missions in The Gambia. Complete religious freedom exists, with no overt animosity between religious groups.

The Gambia's time is Greenwich Mean Time.

The currency is the *dalasi*, which is divided into 100 *bututs*.

Imperial weights and measures are in common use. Most shopkeepers and traders are familiar with the metric system, to which the country is gradually converting. Road distances are marked in kilometers.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1 New Year's Day
 Feb. 18 Independence Day
 Mar.
 (2nd Mon) Commonwealth Day*
 Mar/Apr Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr Easter*
 Mar/Apr Easter Monday*

May 1 Labor Day
 June/July Roots Festival*
 Aug. 15 Assumption
 Dec. 25 Christmas
 Ashura*
 Mawlid an Nabi*
 Ramadan*
 Id al-Fitr*
 Id al-Adah*
 *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Gailey, Harry A. *Historical Dictionary of the Gambia*. 2nd ed. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987.

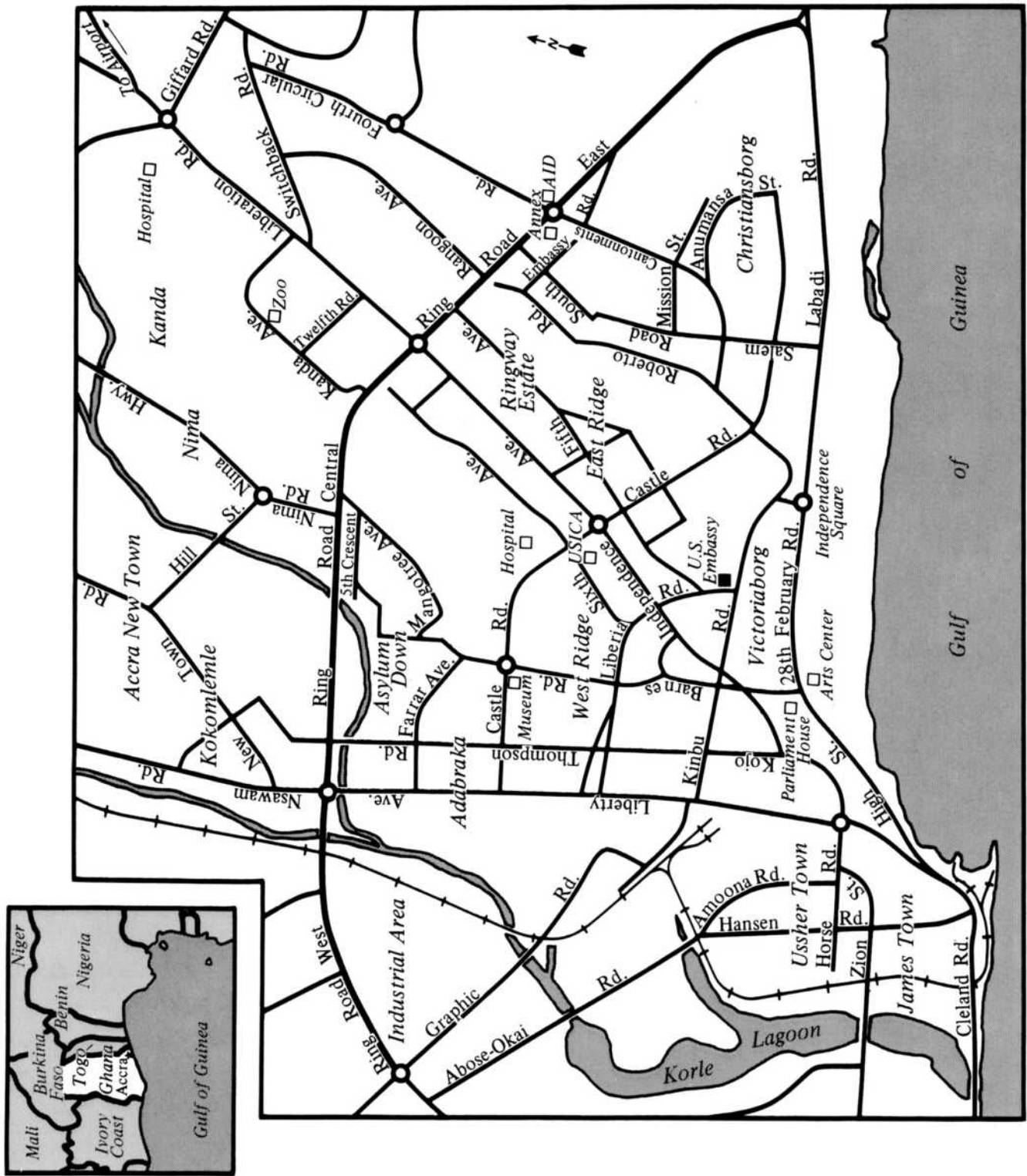
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Sallah, Tijan M. *Kora Land*. Washington, DC: Three Continents Press, 1988.

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Accra, Ghana

GHANA

Republic of Ghana

Major City:

Accra

Other Cities:

Bolgatanga, Cape Coast, Ho, Kumasi, Obuasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Tamale, Tema

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Ghana. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

On March 6, 1957, the former Gold Coast—a British colony—became the Republic of Ghana and the first African state south of the Sahara to win its independence. At the time, Ghana was economically strong and was believed to have a bright future under the leadership of its founding father and first president, Kwame Nkrumah. However, chronic political instability and financial mismanagement during the 1960s and 1970s left the country with a crumbling infrastructure and a largely bankrupt economy.

Over the past 10 years, Ghana has experienced something of a renaissance. Under a vigorous reform program, the economy has grown

rapidly, the infrastructure is being repaired, the markets are full, and Accra once again has the appearance of a bustling coastal city.

Ghanaians are warm, hospitable, and polite, and have a strong traditional culture that they enjoy sharing with foreigners. Through shared history and a natural affinity, they are especially open to Americans.

Americans assigned here will enjoy the professional challenge of working in a developing country with a future. Those who make the effort will learn that a tour in Ghana is also a special opportunity to “discover” and experience an African culture and society.

MAJOR CITY

Accra

With a population of 3.8 million, Accra is Ghana's capital and largest city. It has developed into the Greater Accra/Tema area and embraces several towns along the coast. Accra is Ghana's major commercial, education and transportation center. Formerly a fishing village, it became the capital of the Gold Coast in 1877 and remained

the capital after Ghana's independence in 1957.

Some 3,000 Americans live in Ghana, including U.S. Government employees, business people, retirees, and missionaries and their families.

Food

Most people rely on the local market for their fresh produce, seafood, poultry and eggs, meat, and a few other staples. Familiar American brands are scarce, but with some patience comparable items can be found for substitution. With some exceptions (such as some vegetables), prices are generally higher than U.S. prices. Common vegetables are cabbage, carrot, cucumber, eggplant, garlic, green pepper, lettuce, okra, onion, potato, squash, string beans, and tomatoes. Plantain, yams, potatoes, and several varieties of starchy tubers are on the market year round. Some excellent fruits are available year round or seasonally: avocado, banana, grapefruit, lemon, mango, orange, papaya, pineapple, and watermelon.

Certain seeds are available locally (e.g., cabbage, eggplant, okra, onion, hot pepper, and tomato), and some imported American seeds do well in Accra (e.g., lettuce, field peas, tomatoes, watermelon, lima beans, green

peppers, and herbs such as basil, dill, parsley, thyme, and rosemary).

Local beer is good, and popular drinks such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, and Sprite are available locally.

Clothing

Lightweight summer clothing is appropriate year round. Bring a good supply for all family members; underwear, clothes, and shoes wear out quickly and good quality clothing is unavailable in Ghana. Cottons and cotton blends are recommended; fabrics that must be drycleaned are not. For the occasional cool evening, a light jacket, sweater, or shawl will suffice. An umbrella is essential during the rainy seasons. A few people find light raincoats useful, but they are not necessary. Swimsuits are a must and sun hats are useful. Local tailors and dressmakers can make everyday clothes reasonably well and at good prices. Western-style fabric selections are fair, but African-style prints are plentiful. Many Americans shop by mail order.

Wearing any military apparel, such as camouflage jackets or trousers, or any clothing or items which may appear military in nature, is strictly prohibited

Men: In the office and at informal events, men wear business suits, "safari suits," or short-sleeved dress shirts. All types of shoes and sandals are worn. Hats are rarely worn except at the beach, on the golf course, and on the baseball field.

A lightweight dinner jacket (for white or black tie) and trousers with cummerbund are the only formal evening clothes required for officers.

Women: In the office and at most social events, women wear dresses, blouses and skirts, or lightweight suits. At informal evening functions, women sometimes wear dresses or skirts, or tunics over slacks, though short dresses are acceptable. All sleeve lengths are acceptable. For other women, one or two dressy gowns will suffice. Most women prefer low, open footwear.

Stockings are worn by few American women in Accra and are not considered necessary even at formal functions.

Supplies and Services

Some items are harder to get here and should be brought. These include hobby supplies, sports equipment, beach and camping gear (ice chests and barbecue grills are particularly useful), shower curtains, dehumidifiers, anti-mildew preparations, lightweight blankets for air-conditioned bedrooms, baby supplies (diapers, clothing, food, and medications), toys, school supplies, and special-sized batteries, such as camera batteries.

Local tailoring and dressmaking are reasonably priced, but the quality of workmanship varies. Drycleaning is available at moderate to high prices, but outlets are inconvenient and results may not be satisfactory, except for one hotel, where results are excellent but prices are double those in Washington, D.C. Shoe repair facilities are inadequate. Film and developing and printing facilities are available in Accra. Barber and beauty shop prices are less than those in the U.S. and facilities are adequate. A full range of beauty treatments (i.e., pedicure, manicure, massage, sauna, etc.) is available at reasonable prices.

Some stereos, radios, TVs and computers can be repaired locally. However, spare parts are scarce and expensive. Parts are generally ordered from abroad. Computer supplies are available, but quality varies and prices are high.

The availability of a range of books is increasing. However, costs are high. The book shop at the University of Ghana at Legon (just outside Accra) has an extensive selection of pocketbooks, especially African fiction, at prices equivalent to or lower than those in the U.S. The British Council has a library that anyone can join. Some people join one or more book clubs in the U.S. or order through the Internet. Because the mail system is slow, do not join a club that requires you to give

prompt notice if you do not want its selection.

Religious Activities

Christians have no difficulty finding places of worship here. Churches in Accra include Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Christian Science, Baptist, Presbyterian, Seventh-Day Adventist, Assembly of God, and Lutheran. No synagogue is available. Mosques are numerous.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is readily available. Many expatriates employ at least one servant. Those with representational responsibilities or children usually employ two or more. Those living in houses may also hire a gardener.

The following types of domestics are available: cook/steward or housemaid (performs all household duties), cooks, stewards, nannies, gardeners, guards and drivers. The salary range is \$75-\$90 per month for a 5- or 6-day week, less for part-time work. Unfurnished servants' quarters are located in the homes. Employers usually provide at least one or two uniforms per tour, and many pay medical expenses. A bonus of 1 month's salary is normally given at Christmas. A "dash" (tip) is usually paid on special occasions and for extra duty.

Education

The Lincoln Community School is a Department of State-supported school. The Director is American, and all teachers are certified to teach in the U.S. Roughly 20% of the students are American, less than 25% are Ghanaians, and more than half are citizens of other countries. Classes are offered from kindergarten through grade 12, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm.

The curriculum matches U.S. standard public elementary, junior high, and high schools using American textbooks and teaching materials. The school is housed in a 13-year-old facility with classrooms surrounding a central library, which has 8,000 volumes. There is a new open-air multipurpose building



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Crowded marketplace in Accra, Ghana

with a basketball court and stage. Playground space includes two grassy play areas and a large field. There is no cafeteria facility so lunch boxes or small coolers and water bottles are necessary; however, a lunch is offered each day, prepared through a local restaurant. Each classroom has a refrigerator to keep students' lunches cool. Extracurricular activities include PM Academy, offered through the school each marking period. Students sign up for various activities offered that term. Additionally, basketball, soccer, and taekwondo are available.

The Ghana International School (GIS) offers a British curriculum from the nursery level (3 years) through grade 12 and beyond, for

those interested in studying for the British "A"-level exams. GIS offers an extensive extracurricular after-school program for the upper form (high school). Activities include a computer club, aerobics, swimming, a yearbook, a school newspaper, drama club, wilderness club, and art club. Libraries are small. Graduates from GIS have achieved good SAT scores and have been accepted at competitive American universities.

Sports

Ghanaians like sports and play most of the above. Commercial recreational facilities around Accra include an 18-hole golf course at Achimota (on the outskirts of town); a 9-hole course at Tema (30-minute drive from Accra); several tennis

courts and a polo club. Horses can be boarded at the Accra Polo Club and at Burma Camp.

Many lovely beaches can be found around the city and along the coast, but the undertow can be dangerous. It is not wise to swim alone. Boating and sailing are practical only at Ada, a 90-minute drive east of Accra, at the mouth of the Volta River. Swimming in any freshwater area is unsafe due to the presence of schistosomiasis (bilharzia), a serious parasitic disease.

Bush fowl are hunted a few kilometers from Accra. Bigger game, such as antelope and bush buck, are found in the northern region 500 kilometers away and in neighboring Burkina Faso. Hunting licenses

must be purchased each year for the season (December to August). Surf and boat fishing are possible along the coast and Ada. No license is required for fishing.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Places of interest in Accra include Independence Square, which is used for ceremonial events; the National Museum, which houses a collection of Ghanaian and African cultural and historical artifacts; and the Makola Market, where hundreds of merchants carry on traditional commerce. Accra also has a small zoo and several parks, but they are in poor shape.

Several enjoyable day trips can be made in the Accra area. The beaches are popular, as is the 19th-century botanical garden in the Aburi hills, a 40-minute drive from Accra. Just 110 kilometers northeast of Accra is Akosombo Dam on the Volta River. Tours of the dam can be easily arranged. The many colonial forts and castles along the coast are not to be missed. One of the best is Elmina Castle, 2 hours west of Accra, where guided tours are held daily.

Trips farther afield are possible, but require some planning because roads are rough and tourist facilities are limited and usually of poor quality. Pack food, water, and sanitary supplies, and take a good first-aid kit, a spare tire, and even emergency spare parts for your car. You may also want to take sheets and towels.

Kumasi, capital of the Ashanti region, is a 3-1/2-hour drive northwest of Accra. It is the site of the National Cultural Center, where artisans make traditional Ghanaian cloth, woodcarvings, and brass weights. On Saturdays, the Center schedules music and dance performances.

Ho, about 3 hours from Accra in the Volta region, has a large market. Not far from Ho are the Wli Falls.

The adventurous may want to travel farther afield. Tourist facilities are less than satisfactory outside the main cities, but you will see a different way of life and find that Ghanaians are friendly and hospitable. Overland travel is rough and slow. It is possible to go to a few larger towns (Kumasi, Cape Coast, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Tamale) and rent a car with driver once you arrive.

Lome, the capital of neighboring Togo, is a 2-1/2-hour drive from Accra. It has good hotels and restaurants, and is popular for weekend trips. Côte d'Ivoire's capital city, Abidjan, is an 8-hour drive from Accra. Abidjan has good facilities and shops.

Photography buffs will find a wealth of interesting subject matter here. Ghanaians are generally happy to have their pictures taken, but ask permission first. You are not allowed to take any photographs of government buildings or castles. Be cautious when taking photographs in Accra.

Entertainment

Americans rarely go to local movie theaters. (They are rundown and tend to show kung fu adventures, B-grade Indian love stories, and 1-2-year old American movies.) The Marine House shows movies once or twice a month. Public Affairs and the British and German cultural centers occasionally show films. VHS tapes can also be rented from local video centers. (Bring multisystem [PAL/NTSC], multispeed equipment—see Radio and TV).

Music, drama, and dance performances are scheduled frequently by the Cultural Center, the University of Ghana, several other Ghanaian organizations, and a few foreign missions. Several popular clubs feature traditional music or dance groups as well as Western-style bands.

Restaurants are numerous in and around the Accra area. You will find a variety of Chinese, Lebanese, Italian, French, Thai, Vietnamese,

Korean, Indian, German, Mexican, and Ghanaian restaurants to choose from. Prices range from moderate to expensive. Several hotels and restaurants have casinos.

Food servers in the casual drinking bars or "chop bars" (which serve Ghanaian dishes) don't expect tips, but they appreciate them. Some restaurants add a service charge of 15% to the bill, which most Ghanaians consider an adequate tip. Few published sources of general information exist, so most people rely heavily on word-of-mouth for news on everything from where to shop to where to stay when traveling outside Accra.

Many traditional festivals are held during the year with colorful parades, dancing, and drumming. The festivals sometimes are built around a "durbar" in which the paramount chief sits in state to receive his chiefs, distinguished guests, and the homage of his people. Visitors are welcome on these occasions. Picture taking is welcome, but request permission first.

Social Activities

Accra is an informal city where friendships are formed easily. A good deal of casual entertaining is done within the American community as well as among Ghanaians, and people of other nationalities. Dinner parties are common. Other activities include cocktail parties, luncheons, beach picnics, and dart leagues.

The North American Women's Association of Accra is open to American and Canadian women and women married to Americans and Canadians. The Ghana International Women's Club is open to all nationalities, but membership is limited. Both clubs hold monthly meetings and sponsor social, cultural, and fund raising activities throughout the year.



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Street in Kumasi, Ghana

OTHER CITIES

BOLGATANGA is located in extreme northern Ghana. It is a town where agriculture and livestock raising are the chief occupations. The town is noted for its colorful basketry.

Several forts surrounding the city of **CAPE COAST** are stark reminders of colonial domination by the English and Dutch. Noted for a castle dating to the 1600s, the city, 75 miles southwest of Accra, is the heart of Ghana's educational system. Excellent secondary schools and a university are in Cape Coast. Several industries are located in Cape Coast. These include the production of soap, textiles, tobacco products, sugar, bricks and tiles, cocoa products, chemicals, and salt.

Located in southeastern Ghana, **HO** is a major commercial center. It is connected to Ghana's southern ports by the modern Volta Bridge. Cottons, cocoa, and palm oil are produced here. It lies on a main road from the coast leading northeastward to Togo.

KUMASI is a commercial center and market city about 115 miles northwest of Accra. The "Garden City of West Africa" is carefully planned, boasting one of the biggest central markets in West Africa. Originally the capital of the Ashanti Kingdom, Kumasi was taken by the British in 1874. It is now a highly developed modern city, with paved streets, parks, gardens, a modern hospital, schools, and colleges. Handicrafts, such as traditional *kente* cloth, are significant sources of income. The approximately 450,000 people (1995 est.) who live

in Kumasi enjoy a museum, zoo, and a regional library.

OBUASI is a major mining center. The Obuasi gold mine is one of the world's richest gold mines in terms of yield per ton of ore. Some cocoa production also takes place on land surrounding the city. The population is estimated at 70,000.

SEKONDI-TAKORADI, 110 miles southwest of Accra, is a seaport formed from the merger of two cities in 1963. It became a main Gold Coast port after the British assumed control in the 1870s. It is well connected to other regions in Ghana by rail, road, and air. The city also has light industrial, agricultural, and fishing enterprises. The population has climbed to approximately 200,000.

In the north-central part of the country, **TAMALE** serves as the

regional capital and educational center. Many training institutes, colleges, and secondary schools implement the government's mass literacy campaigns. Tamale is currently undergoing sanitation and road improvements; industry is being developed. The city is a focus for agricultural trade and has cotton-milling and shea nuts enterprises. The city has a population of about 151,000.

TEMA, located 20 miles east of Accra, represents one of Africa's most ambitious development projects. With the largest man-made harbor on the continent, the city is a bustling port and industrial center. Tema's population of about 250,000 is divided between the planned "New Town" of the 1960s and the Ashiaman shantytowns containing large slums.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Ghana is situated on West Africa's Gulf of Guinea, and its capital, Accra, is 4 degrees north of the Equator. Ghana covers 238,540 square kilometers and is about the size of Oregon. Half of the country lies less than 152 meters above sea level and the highest point is 883 meters. The 537-kilometer coastline is mostly a low, sandy shore backed by a narrow coastal plain with scrub brush, and intersected by rivers and streams, navigable only by canoe. A tropical rain forest belt, broken by heavily forested hills and many streams and rivers, extends northward from the shore near the border with Côte d'Ivoire. This area, traditionally known as Ashanti, but now divided into several administrative regions, produces most of Ghana's cocoa, minerals, and timber. North of this belt the country varies from 91 to 396 meters above sea level and is covered by low bush, savanna, and grassy plains.

Ghana is bordered on the west by Côte d'Ivoire, on the north by Burkina Faso, and on the east by Togo. A major feature of the country's geography is the Volta Lake,

the world's largest man-made lake (8,900 square kilometers), which extends from the Akosombo Dam (completed in 1966) in southeastern Ghana to the town of Yapei, 520 kilometers to the north. The dam generates electricity for all of Ghana as well as some exports to neighboring countries. The lake also serves as an inland waterway and is a potentially valuable resource for irrigation and fish farming.

Ghana's climate is tropical with temperatures between 21°C and 32°C (70°F and 90°F). Rainy seasons extend from April to July (heavy rains) and from September to November (light rains). Annual rainfall exceeds 200 centimeters on the coast, decreasing inland. Accra's annual rainfall averages about 76 centimeters, low for coastal West Africa. The southern part of the country is humid most of the year, but the north can be very dry.

It is coolest from May until October. In December the harmattan, a dry dusty wind from the Sahara, covers the country, and lasts through February. The desert wind reduces humidity, and early mornings and nights are relatively cool. Visibility during the harmattan can be poor, as the air is filled with fine dust.

Population

Ghana's population numbers 18.8 million (est. 1999), with an annual growth rate of over 2.05%. Accra is the largest city with some 3.8 million inhabitants. Other major cities include Kumasi (1.3 million est.), Tema (250,000 est.), Sekondi/Takoradi (200,000 est.), and Tamale (105,000).

The majority of Ghanaians belong to one of four broad ethnic groups: Akan (44%), Mole-Dagbani (16%), Ewe (13%), and Ga-Adangbe (8%). Subgroups exist within each of these, along with many other smaller ethnic groups. A large number of Ghana's inhabitants have roots in neighboring countries or are citizens of those countries. A few communities of foreigners come from outside West Africa, including

Lebanese, Syrian, Indian, and Chinese. English is the official language, but about 100 other languages and dialects are common. Most urban Ghanaians speak some English, and many Ghanaians speak Twi (an Akan language), an unofficial second language. Ga is also widely spoken in Accra.

All religious beliefs are accepted in Ghana. Approximately 24% of the population are Christians, and Christian holidays are celebrated nationally. Roughly 38% are traditional animists and 30% are Muslims. People in the south have been influenced by Western education and Christianity, and those in the north by Islam, but members of the three major religious groups are found throughout the country.

Even where Christianity and Islam have the greatest influence, traditional social structures and customs remain important. Ethnic identification and kinship, traced paternally among some peoples and maternally among others, are the basic building blocks of Ghanaian society. However, their impact has been reduced by internal migrations, contact with Western cultures, and urbanization. Since independence, the authority of traditional rulers has declined, but local and regional chiefs continue to play an extremely important role in day-to-day life, especially in rural areas. Traditional annual festivals are popular, and basic rituals—such as naming ceremonies for newborns, customary marriage and divorce rites, and elaborate funerals—are still performed.

The existence of many different ethnic traditions makes generalizing about Ghanaian cultural values and practices difficult. However, most Ghanaians consider their responsibilities to their extended families a guiding principle in their lives. This can create a heavy burden for those who have good, salaried jobs in the cities. Education is universally recognized as the key to economic and social advancement. Even the poorest families do all they can to educate their children and prosper-

ous relatives often “adopt” young relatives, housing them and paying their school fees. Polygamy is rare among the educated elite, but is still practiced in much of the country, even by Christians. Economic pressures and official policies are discouraging it.

Public Institutions

Europeans first came into contact with the area known today as Ghana when Portuguese and Dutch merchants and slave traders landed on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea in the late 15th century. The British took control of the area, then called the Gold Coast, in the early 1800s. When the Gold Coast became the first sub-Saharan African colony to gain its independence in 1957, the name was changed to Ghana, after an ancient African empire (700-1200 B.C.E.) along the Niger River.

Under Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People's Party (CPP), which had led the country to independence, Ghana began as a parliamentary democracy, but gradually evolved into a single party, socialist state. Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966 in a military coup, and the National Liberation Council ruled by decree until 1969, when a new constitution took effect and K.A. Busia was elected as President of the Second Republic. The Busia government compiled a reasonably good record in the human rights field but failed to solve Ghana's mounting economic problems. The government was overthrown in January 1972 by a military coup led by Army Colonel I.K. Acheampong.

Under Acheampong's National Redemption Council, the economy continued to decline and corruption flourished. Efforts to establish a nonparty “Union Government” created a backlash, which led to a takeover by Lt. General Frederick Akuffo on July 5, 1978. Akuffo moved to restore constitutional rule, naming a constituent assembly and restoring political rights and activity. However, his regime failed to reduce corruption or improve the economy. On June 4, 1979, Flight

Lt. Jerry John Rawlings led a group of junior officers and enlisted men, called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), in a successful coup against the Akuffo government.

The AFRC executed eight senior military officers, including several former heads of state, for corruption and abuse of power. The Council established “People's Courts” and other tribunals, where dozens of former government officials and others were sentenced to long prison terms and their property confiscated. It also permitted the previously scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections to take place in June and July of 1979. The People's National Party (PNP), the new name for Nkrumah's CPP, won both the Presidency and 71 of the 140 seats in parliament. A new constitution took effect in September 1979, and Dr. Hilla Limann became President. The Limann government had little success in solving Ghana's economic problems or in reducing corruption. It came to an early end when Flight Lt. Rawlings led a second coup on December 31, 1981, and established the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC).

At the outset, the PNDC took a radical direction, banning all political activities, confiscating property, placing the country under curfew for 2 years and imprisoning or even executing citizens for political or economic crimes. Gradually, the PNDC took a more pragmatic line, both economically and politically, although some of the radical rhetoric remains. Since 1983, Ghana has been implementing a successful IMF-sponsored Economic Recovery Program (ERP). Annual economic growth has averaged 5-6% since the inception of the plan, with the exception of 1990, when bad rains resulted in a growth of only 3%. In 1989, with the election of nonpartisan District Assemblies, the PNDC began a slow process of returning Ghana to constitutional rule.

In 1992, the voters in a nationwide referendum accepted a new constitution, and elections for President

and Parliament late that same year ushered in Ghana's Fourth Republic. Jerry John Rawlings was elected President with nearly two-thirds of the vote, and was reelected in 1996. The major opposition party boycotted the 1992 Parliamentary elections, but took part in 1996; the present Parliament is made up of roughly two-thirds ruling party members and one-third opposition members. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in December 2000.

Arts, Science, and Education

Ghana has a long tradition of formal education, dating back to the “Castle Schools” of the early 17th century. During the colonial period schools were established by both the British Government and missionary groups. The government at all levels has traditionally provided tuition. However, parents find themselves paying fees for a wide range of services, depending on the level of school. These can include annual fees for services and activities such as the use of textbooks, sports, arts and culture, electricity and water, and board and lodging. A student loan scheme has been introduced at Ghanaian universities and other institutions for tertiary education under which students are able to finance a substantial portion of the cost of tertiary education. Such loans are repaid when the students have graduated and are employed. Meals and some other on-campus services have been commercialized. University-level user fees for accommodations, electricity and water were started in 1997. The degree to which students should contribute to their own university education continues to be a very lively debate. Graduates from Ghana's universities and other institutions of higher education are required to complete a period of National Service ranging from 1 to 2 years.

A reform program was initiated in 1987 to help reduce the educational system's emphasis on academic sub-

jects and university preparation. Under the reform program, the pre-university schooling period has been shortened from a maximum 17 years to 12 years (6 years primary, 3 years junior secondary, and 3 years senior secondary, vocational and technical). The reform program has introduced vocational and technical education at the junior secondary school level and seeks to make basic education more widely available.

In 1996, the government launched a major initiative in Basic Education (grades 1-9) called FCUBE (Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education). Donor assistance to this effort has been massive. The medium of instruction is a local language through primary grade 3 and English from primary 4 through university.

Ghana has five state-run universities. The University of Ghana at Legon (near Accra), the University of Cape Coast in the Central Region, and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi are well-established and have broad, comprehensive curricula (though UCC emphasizes training secondary teachers and KNUST emphasizes science and technical education). In addition, two new institutions of higher education were recently established in Ghana. The multi-campus University for Development Studies in the Northern Regions emphasizes agriculture and development of technology, and has a medical school. The University College of Education at Winneba (about midway between Accra and Cape Coast) is exclusively a teacher training institution, and also offers distance learning programs. Many faculty members have earned advanced degrees from abroad, including the U.S. Academic exchanges of lecturers, researchers, and students are increasingly common. All five universities currently operate on a semester system.

In the past few years, several private "universities" have been established. They are mostly affiliated with one or another Christian

denomination and their general focuses are business and religious studies.

Salaries in Ghana have been severely eroded through a decade of economic reforms, which limited public expenditures. In addition to poor pay and working conditions for lecturers, other frequently cited challenges facing Ghanaian universities include pressures to provide residential accommodations for increased numbers of students; the need for more books, professional journals, computers, and scientific equipment despite rising costs; and the problems of maintaining the universities' generally attractive but deteriorating buildings, grounds, and equipment.

Commerce and Industry

Independent Ghana's economy, rich in natural and human resources, was among the most advanced and prosperous in West Africa. By 1982-83, two decades of instability and mismanagement had led to virtual economic collapse. A bloated public sector, neglected infrastructures and agriculture, and grossly overvalued currency spurred production declines. The slide, accelerated in the early 1980s by drought, bush fires, and the forced repatriation of about 1 million Ghanaians from Nigeria, left the country with virtually no foreign exchange and severe food shortages.

The Economic Recovery Program, adopted in 1983, drastically devalued the Ghanaian cedi, stabilized prices, improved fiscal and monetary discipline and public sector rationalization, reduced foreign debt arrears, and began the task of rehabilitating Ghana's infrastructure. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, the U.S., and other Western multilateral and bilateral donors have lent strong support. From 1993-1996, Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an annual rate of 5%.

Inflation in 1999 was at an annual rate of about 13%. The cedi, which in 1983 traded at the rate of 2.75=US \$1, by March 2001 had an exchange rate of about 7,195=US\$1. Private foreign exchange bureaus operate throughout the country buying and selling cedis at free market rates. Agriculture dominates the economy, accounting for almost 60% of the workforce and 37% of the GDP. Cocoa, the main cash crop, generates about 34% of export earnings and substantial tax revenues. Ghana is no longer the world's major cocoa producer, but its output has recovered after sliding to less than one-third of its peak. Other major crops, consumed internally, include cassavas, yams, cocoa, plantains, oil palms, and cereals (maize, millet, and rice). The Ashanti region around Kumasi is a center of cocoa, tobacco, and timber production.

The semiarid savanna of the north (covering nearly half the country) is the main livestock and cereal growing area. The southwest's humid forests produce timber, rubber, and plantains, while the drier southeast produces livestock, poultry, citrus fruits, and vegetables. The government is offering farmers greater incentives to diversify output in order to reduce heavy dependence on imported foodstuffs and provide domestic inputs for the nation's industry. Ghana has rich mineral resources, notably gold, manganese, diamonds, and bauxite. While its gold reserves are among the world's largest, output has been far below former and potential levels. Since the mid-80s, major foreign investments in the mining sector have resulted in large increases in gold production. Ghana's Ashanti Goldfields Company is the only African corporation listed in the New York Stock Exchange.

Ghana currently imports all its crude oil. The Akosombo Dam on the Volta River and the smaller Kpong Dam downstream supply virtually all the country's electricity, though a new thermal plant in Takoradi came on line in early 1998 to supplement the supply. In recent

years, the power grid has gradually been extended to the northern two-thirds of the country.

Ghana has the natural resources, industrial capacity, skilled labor, and relatively inexpensive power necessary to be a successful producer of goods for both domestic consumption and export. While the situation has been improving, industry still is hampered by dilapidated plants and machinery, a high dependence on scarce imported replacement parts and raw materials, slowness in developing domestic supply sources, and rundown infrastructure.

Given the importance of agriculture, the economy remains dependent upon the variable rainfall patterns. These patterns are affected by significant environmental deterioration.

One of the largest foreign investments in Ghana (and Africa's largest aluminum smelter) is the Volta Aluminum Company (VALCO), owned by the U.S. companies Kaiser (90%) and Reynolds (10%). It processes imported bauxite into aluminum ingots, primarily for export. A U.S. company is majority owner of Ghana's second national telephone service provider. Other U.S. firms have invested in Ghana's information technology and communications sectors. Other significant U.S. investments involve tuna fishing and processing (Star-Kist), small-scale manufacture of pharmaceuticals and household products (Johnson Wax and Phyto-River), petroleum products distribution (Mobil), public accountancy (Deloitte & Touche and Price WaterhouseCoopers), electronics products distribution and service (IBM, NCR, Motorola), and wood treatment (KIC International). Many more U.S. firms have active local agents and distributors.

Transportation

Automobiles

Many find it advantageous to import a vehicle, although new and

used vehicles may be obtained locally. Public transportation is unreliable, overcrowded, and generally inadequate. As in the U.S., driving is on the right side of the road. Importation of right-hand-drive vehicles into Ghana is not permitted. Street conditions are fair but strewn with potholes. Higher ground-clearance vehicles, while preferable, are not necessary, unless you plan to make excursions outside of Accra "off the beaten track." There are no safety, color, or emission restrictions related to imported vehicles. Vehicles over 10 years of age on the date of importation cannot be brought into Ghana.

All gasoline sold in Ghana is now unleaded. The catalytic converter need not be removed, but removal is recommended if traveling to other countries. Air-conditioning is strongly recommended, as are first-aid kits and car seats for small children.

Parts and service for most American-made cars are not readily available. Mitsubishi, Nissan, Toyota (both sedan and 4x4 types), Honda, Peugeot, or the European or South African versions of General Motors or Ford products are popular and the easiest to maintain. Duty-paid vehicles are widely available in all price ranges.

Unleaded gasoline and diesel fuel is available locally. The Government of Ghana sets the price. As of February 2000 it is about \$1.25 per U.S. gallon. Fuel prices are expected to rise dramatically over the next few months due to the increase in crude oil prices that has occurred since late 1999.

CB radios are not permitted. Several private FM stations broadcast in Accra with AM stations broadcasting to their parts of the country, although coverage is not complete.

Americans patronize several repair facilities. Though the quality of work is mixed, labor costs are low with used parts common for vehicles widely available and reasonably

priced. Dealer installed new parts and labor is high.

Driver expertise in Accra and outside Accra leaves much to be desired. Defensive driving techniques must be employed at all times. Driving outside of Accra after dark must be absolutely avoided. Plan any trip outside of Accra during daylight hours only. In addition to the almost total absence of any roadside lighting, many drivers drive at night without using headlights under the mistaken impression that they are saving electric power. Over-the-road heavy-duty truck drivers often drive at night in a totally sleep-deprived condition. Driving at night outside Accra is an open invitation to disaster. Most Americans killed in Ghana die by virtue of nighttime auto accidents.

Local

Ghana has about 9,000 kilometers of hard surface roads, in varying degrees of upkeep. While the construction of improved laterite roads has been a major priority for several years, some roads are still not passable during the rainy seasons, especially in rural areas. It is possible to drive east to Lome, west to Abidjan, and north to Kumasi and Tamale. Once you leave the major routes, road conditions can become very rough. Many streets in Accra are narrow and bordered by hazardous open culverts without curbs.

Buses and "tro-tros" are always overcrowded, poorly maintained, odoriferous, and driven by incompetent, reckless and inattentive drivers. Taxis are abundant and cheap in Accra and generally available in other major cities. One must, however, negotiate the cost before entering the taxi. Most taxi drivers speak some English but it is wise to know where you are going before getting in the taxi. Addresses mean little in Accra with most taxi drivers operating by landmarks. Drivers tend to be reckless and do not obey traffic laws since the enforcement of traffic laws is almost nonexistent. Taxis can be hired for an entire day or for a long duration trip. Hiring a taxi

for a trip out of town, however, is not recommended. Rental cars are available but tend to be expensive. It is not possible to rent a car without a driver.

Regional

Ghana Airways and Air Link, a domestic carrier operated by the Ghana Air force, fly between Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale. Ghana Airways and a number of international airlines provide service outside Ghana. At present no American carrier operates in Ghana. At the present time, official travelers are routed between the U.S. and Ghana via Amsterdam on Northwest or KLM under a "code share" agreement. However, a recently signed "open skies" agreement will likely result in code shares with other U.S. carriers.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The local Post and Ghana Telecommunications Office, Ghana Telecom (GT) and Westel (a U.S. majority-owned firm) provide local telephone service. The average monthly rental for a telephone is about \$1.00 and this must be paid regardless of whether the telephone is working. Local calls cost approximately \$0.10 for 3 minutes for Accra, \$0.15 for 3 minutes to Tema, and \$0.20 for 3 minutes for other regions. As of January 1998 there are cellular phone companies that offer mobile phone services (Celltel, Spacefon, and Mobitel).

Calls between the U.S. and Accra can be made easily using AT&T "USA Direct" service. You must obtain an AT&T international credit card before arrival as there is no direct-dialing service from your home phone unless you pay an additional fee of approximately \$100. "USA Direct" connections are of excellent quality and you receive an AT&T itemized bill. Several companies offer a "call back" system, making phone calls to the U.S. more affordable.

It is possible to obtain Internet service in your home. There are a few local companies to choose from with prices ranging from approximately \$25 to \$35 a month. It is advisable to ship voltage regulators and an uninterruptible power source (UPS) along with quality power strips with surge protection.

Mail

Express, deliveries, Federal Express, DHL, and UPS are available. Services are reliable and expensive.

Radio and TV

Accra enjoys a variety of FM radio stations. The government-owned GAR and university-run Radio Unvers aside, all are privately owned. Broadcasts are dominated by music, and more and more by lively public affairs programming, including popular call-in shows. GAR (95.7) is the first source for those eager for the government's take on current events. Radio GOLD (90.5) is the Voice of America (VOA) affiliate in Accra, and rebroadcasts several VOA news and other programming several times during the day. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Radio France Internationale (RFI) both broadcast their Africa-oriented programming full-time on FM rebroadcast stations in Accra (101.3 and 89.5, respectively).

The government-owned GTV dominates television in Ghana. A typical transmission day begins with some CNN news. From 10:00 am to 3:00 p.m. each weekday GTV broadcasts the U.S. Government's WorldNet programs, including "The Newshour with Jim Lehrer," which appears at 10:00 am.

Competing with GTV in Accra are two private TV broadcasters, METRO TV, which is primarily entertainment programs, and TV3, which screens news, entertainment, documentaries, and sports programs. Many affluent Ghanaians subscribe to cable television, the most popular of which is Multi-choice, which offers a number of

channels, including CNN and BBC World as well as cartoon, movie, and sports channels.

Ghana TV uses the European (625) PAL system, which is incompatible with American receivers. In order to pick up Ghana TV and watch videocassettes, you will need a multi-system, dual-voltage TV and VCR (NTSC, PAL-B, and PAL-G). Be sure your TV and recorder is the same type.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

During your first days in Ghana you will discover the Ghanaian media-government-owned and independent, print and electronic. To prepare you for the encounter, may we offer the following brief introduction to Accra's media scene:

You will find four government-owned newspapers on Accra's streets: The Daily Graphic, a Monday through Saturday tabloid. The Ghanaian Times, also published Monday through Saturday. The Mirror, a weekender published on Saturday by the Graphic. The Spectator, a weekender published on Saturday by the Times.

Accra also supports a lively collection of independent newspapers, which appear weekly, biweekly, or tri-weekly. Among them are The Business & Financial Times, a commercial weekly; The Free Press, an anti-government biweekly; The Ghana Palaver, a pro NDC biweekly; The Ghanaian Chronicle, an independent weekly; The Ghanaian Democrat, a pro-NDC weekly; The Guide and The Crusading Guide, both left-of-center biweeklies; The High Street Journal and The Financial Post, both commercial weeklies; The Independent, an independent weekly; and The Statesman, a pro-NPP biweekly.

The newest media sign of the current constitutional era is the flowering of electronic media. As of September 1999, there were a dozen FM radio stations broadcasting in Accra (only one of them govern-

ment-owned), with another three dozen spread out throughout the country, and roughly a dozen TV stations (some on-air, and some cable) serving the three largest regional markets of Accra, Kumasi, and Takoradi.

Health and Medicine

Community Health

Communicable diseases found in tropical developing countries are endemic to Ghana. Take proper preventive measures to avoid serious diseases such as malaria, TB, typhoid, cholera, hepatitis, HIV, endemic fevers, and parasitic diseases. Malaria, including dangerous chloroquine-resistant cerebral malaria, is an ever-present threat throughout Ghana, including Accra. Malaria suppressants must be taken regularly. The recommended regime is weekly Mefloquine, now deemed safe for children under thirty pounds and pregnant women.

Strict cleanliness in food and water preparation is important. All drinking water must be filtered and boiled. All government housing is equipped with water distillers. Vegetables and fruits must be peeled or scrubbed and soaked in an iodine or bleach solution if they are to be eaten raw. All food must be cooked thoroughly. Household help should undergo health examinations before hiring and periodically throughout employment.

Due to the warm, moist climate, skin infections are common. These can be avoided by scrupulous cleansing of even a minor injury. It is unsafe to swim in fresh water streams or lagoons. Schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease transmitted through the skin, is prevalent.

Rabies is prevalent in many animals in Ghana. If you decide to import a pet, make sure it is inoculated against rabies. Veterinary services are available and vaccine is periodically available.

HIV, the virus causing AIDS, is widespread. Transmission, as in the U.S., occurs through sexual contact, contaminated needles, or blood transfusion. Abstinence from new sexual contacts, use of latex condoms, and HIV testing of any blood used for transfusion remain the most reliable means of preventing HIV infection.

Preventive Measures

All travelers should have typhoid, tetanus, meningitis, rabies, hepatitis A and B vaccinations before coming. Yellow fever vaccination is required to enter Ghana. You will not be allowed to enter the country without proof of vaccination.

Bring a good supply of first-aid items, insect repellent, sunscreen, oral thermometer, and basic non-prescription medicines. If you use prescription drugs, bring several months' supply and a written prescription for ordering refills from the U.S. Only a very limited number of American and European drugs are available locally and are extremely costly.

Carry eyeglass and/or contact lens prescriptions with you in case you need to order replacements. Some expatriates have had eyeglasses reliably replaced in Accra.

Poor emergency facilities make seat belts and child/infant seats essential.

Minimal supplies of equipment and medications limit specialty care in Ghana. All of these factors may make diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of a chronic problem difficult or impossible.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Ghana Airways is the only carrier offering direct flights to and from the U.S. U.S. carriers across the north Atlantic connect with 12

flights a week to Accra from London, Amsterdam, Zurich, or Geneva.

A passport and visa are required, as is evidence of a yellow fever vaccination, to enter Ghana. Travelers should obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of Ghana, 3512 International Drive, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 686-4520, or via the Internet at <http://www.ghana-embassy.org>, or the Ghanaian Consulate General at 19 East 47th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017, telephone (212) 832-1300. Overseas, inquiries should be made to the nearest Ghanaian embassy or consulate.

A Ghanaian drivers license is mandatory for operating a motor vehicle in Ghana. An international drivers license is recommended for anyone who intends to travel outside of Ghana. You may also obtain an international drivers license through AAA. If you have a valid international drivers license that was obtained outside Ghana, it can be used temporarily while your Ghanaian license is being processed.

Locally procured third-party liability insurance is required by law and covers only damage to a second party's car and its occupants. This coverage is good only in Ghana and payment is limited; the present minimum is 2,000,000 cedis and costs approximately \$45 per year at 2000 exchange rates. Higher coverage can be obtained on request. Driving conditions are hazardous due to poorly maintained roads and vehicles.

Visitors entering or departing Ghana with more than 5,000 dollars (US) cash are required to declare the amount upon entry into Ghana. Currency exchange is available at most banks and at licensed foreign exchange bureaus. Currency transactions with private citizens are illegal.

Strict customs regulations govern temporary importation into or

export from Ghana of items such as gold, diamonds and precious natural resources. Only agents licensed by the Precious Metals and Mining Commission, telephone (233)(21) 664-635 or 664-579, may handle import-export transactions of these natural resources. Any transaction lacking this Commission's endorsement is illegal and/or fraudulent. Attempts to evade regulations are punishable by imprisonment. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Ghana in Washington, DC or one of Ghana's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

In rare instances, visitors arriving in Ghana with sophisticated electronic equipment (video cameras and laptop computers) may have to deposit 17.5 per cent of the item's value with the Customs and Excise office at the airport. To get the deposit refunded, visitors must apply to the Customs and Excise Office in central Accra 48 hours before departure.

Americans living in or visiting Ghana are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ghana and obtain updated information on travel and security within Ghana. The U.S. Embassy is located on Ring Road East, P.O. Box 194, Accra, telephone (233-21) 775-347 or 48; fax number (233-21) 701-1813. The Embassy maintains a home page on the Internet at <http://usembassy.state.gov/ghana/>.

Pets

Pets must have a recent certificate of vaccination against rabies and a certificate of good health signed by a veterinarian not more than 10 days before arrival. If the certificate does not have a block that can be checked to clear the pet for international travel, the words "international health certificate" must be typed onto the form itself. Except under the most unusual conditions, your pets should arrive with you on the same flight and be checked baggage. Should the pets be shipped by air-freight, they must be processed

through customs and animal control at a remote location of the airport where clearance procedures are much more stringent and very time-consuming. When planning to bring along pets, avoid a stop or transfer in London, as Great Britain has very strict regulations regarding transit passage of animals.

Several veterinarians practice in Accra. Rabies is prevalent in Ghana: however, the local vets can administer the vaccine.

Firearms and Ammunition

Ghanaian law specifies that only single shot firearms, manually cycled repeating firearms (revolvers, bolt or pump action) and semi-automatic firearms can be imported. Fully automatic firearms are strictly prohibited.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency used in Ghana is the cedi. Currency notes are available in denominations of 5,000, 2,000, and 1,000. Also available are 200, 100, 50, 20, and 10 cedi coins.

The exchange rate as of March 2001 was 7,195=US\$1. Travelers' checks are not widely accepted, but can be cashed at the USDO bank or at a foreign exchange bureau for a reduced rate.

Credit cards are not widely accepted, except at some major hotels and restaurants. Only one bank currently offers cash advances on VISA cards only, both over the counter and via automated teller machines.

Limits are set on the exportation of Ghanaian currency, but none on the importation of dollars, whether in currency or travelers checks.

Ghana changed to the metric system officially in 1975, but it is not in universal use. Many items continue to be measured in the British customary system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar. 6	Independence Day
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
July 1	Republic Day
Dec. 6	Farmers Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec. 31	Revolution Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adah*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The standard history of Ghana is W. E. F. Ward's *A History of the Gold Coast*. Those interested in Ashanti history and customs may refer to works by K. A. Busia, R. S. Rattray, and Eva E. R. Mayerowitz. Perhaps the best account of more recent political events is *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960*, by Dennis Austin. A book dealing with the same general period is David Apter's *Ghana in Transition. Forts and Castles of Ghana*, by Albert van Dantzig, is an interesting description of castles built by European colonial powers along the Gold Coast. Peggy Appiah, Efuia Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo and Ayi Kwei Armah are Ghanaian novelists of repute. *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, by Ayi Kwei Armah, is a novel which gives a vivid picture of present day urban life in Ghana.

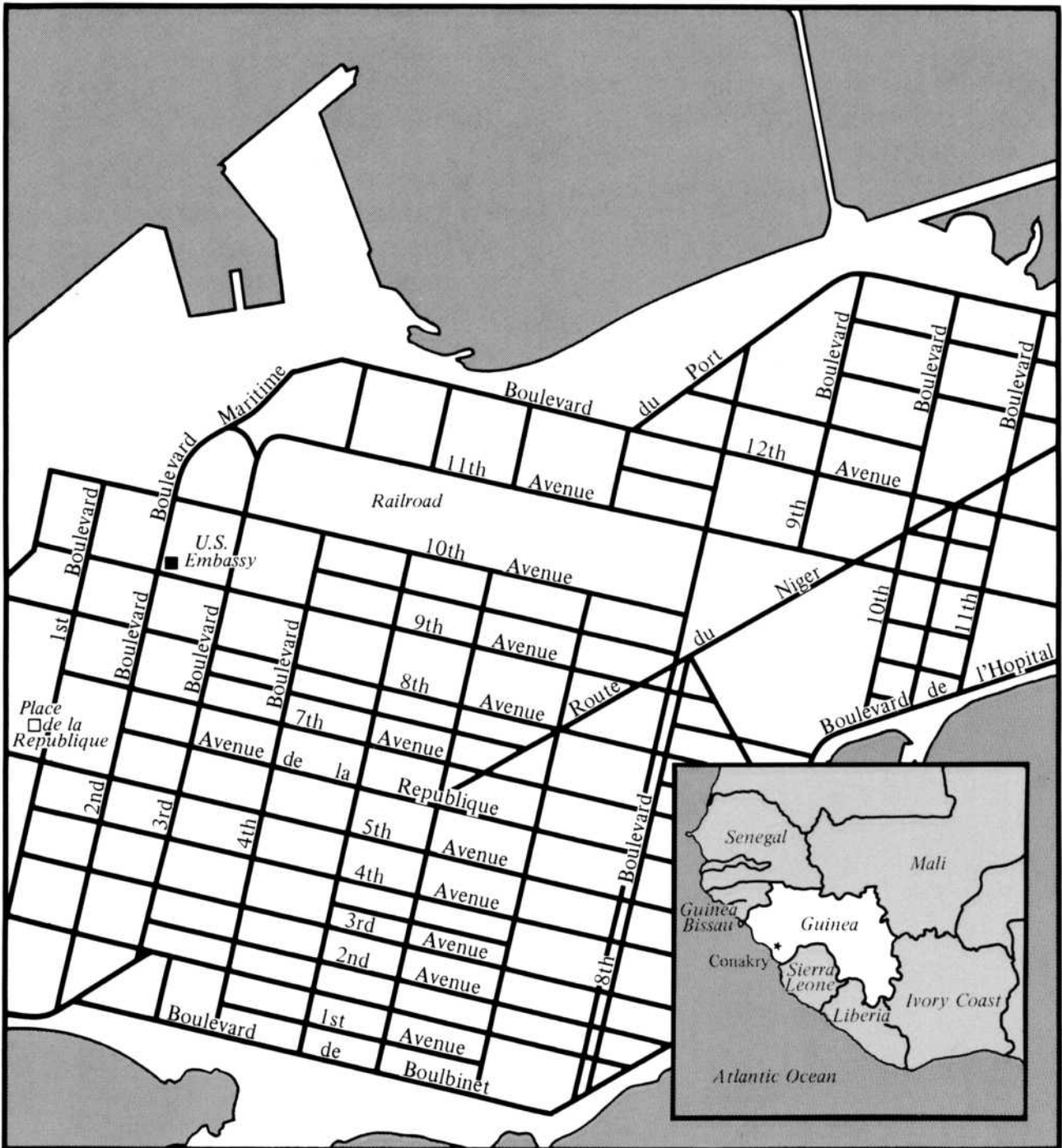
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Barker, Peter. *Operation Cold Chop*.

- Bouret, F.M. Ghana, *The Road to Independence 1919-1957*.
- Bretton, Henry. *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: A Study of Personal Rule in Africa*.
- Crowder, Michael. *West Africa, An Introduction to Its History*.
- Fitch, Robert and Mary Oppenheimer. *Ghana, End of an Illusion*.
- Lystad, Robert A. *The Ashanti: A Proud People*.
- Mahoney, Richard D. *J.F.K.: Ordeal in Africa*.
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- McLeod, David. *The Ashanti*.
- Moxon, James. *Volta, Man's Greatest Lake*.
- Nugent, Paul. *Big Man, Small Boys, and Politics in Ghana*.
- Opoku, A.A. *Festivals of Ghana*.
- Page, John D. *Ghana: A Historical Interpretation*.
- Ray, Donald. *Ghana's Politics, Economics, and Society*.
- Thompson, W. Scott. *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966* (a standard work).



Conakry, Guinea

GUINEA

Republic of Guinea

Major City:

Conakry

Other Cities:

Boké, Fria, Kankan, Kindia, Labé, Macenta

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Most of what is now the Republic of GUINEA was included in the rich and powerful Kingdom of Mali from the 11th through the 16th centuries. From 1810 to 1840, a large section of the country was nominally subject to the Islamic Foulah Empire, which was centered in the Fouta Djallon Mountains.

French penetration along the Atlantic coast began during the 1860s, and most of the country was occupied by the French between 1890 and 1910. The Los Islands (Îles de Loos), a few miles off the coast, were British-controlled from 1815 until 1904. Under France, the country formed the Territory of French Guinea within French West Africa.

Status as a separate entity had been realized in 1946, but a majority vote for total independence came abruptly and dramatically September 28, 1958 when membership in a community of French overseas territories was rejected. Guinea proclaimed itself a sovereign republic four days later.

MAJOR CITY

Conakry

Conakry, with a population of approximately 1.9 million, is the capital of the Republic of Guinea. It lies on the bulge of Africa, some 450 miles southeast of Dakar (Senegal) and 600 miles north of the equator. The central part of the city, Conakry I, is on Tumbo, formerly an island but now connected to the mainland residential Kaloum Peninsula (Conakry II).

French settlement of Conakry (also written Konakri or Konakry) began in 1855, when it was a tiny fishing village. The present form of the city was laid out in 1905 in rectangular blocks. The broad main streets are lined with magnificent mango and kapok (*fromager*) trees, and fine botanical gardens grace the landscape. A few of the buildings were

constructed shortly before independence, but most of the architecture is either old French colonial or African.

In the residential suburbs of Kaloum, modern houses occupied by foreigners or Guinean government officials are on or near the sea, interspersed among traditional African structures. The main streets of the city and suburbs are paved, although poorly maintained. Some residences can be reached only by dirt roads.

Education

The International School of Conakry, a small English-language school with a capacity of 50 students, includes kindergarten through grade eight and follows an American curriculum. The school operates a preschool program for three- and four-year olds. French is taught as a foreign language. Extracurricular activities include art and computer instruction. Owing to a small number of students, instruction is highly individualized.

Some resident Americans prefer to enroll their children in the city's French-language school. Following the French system, it comprises kindergarten through high school, and awards the equivalent of an American high school diploma.



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Wall of Heroes in Conakry, Guinea

The public schools in the capital conduct classes from first grade through high school, and follow the French system of education. Classes are seriously overcrowded; standards of teaching are low, and equipment is old and in short supply. Tuition and supplies (when available) are free. There are no private schools.

No facilities are available for handicapped students.

Recreation

Opportunities in various individual, group, and spectator sports are limited. Soccer and basketball are the most popular among Guineans, and the international community enjoys volleyball during the dry season (October to May). The nearest golf course is in Freetown, Sierra Leone. There are no golf courses, sports clubs, or health spas in Guinea. Outdoor and indoor games such as badminton, ping-pong, darts, horseshoes, croquet, volleyball, softball, and organized events are popular among expatriates. A farm is located outside Conakry where horses can be rented.

Americans do not swim in the ocean around Conakry, as the waters are badly polluted and are filled with large rocks. No sand beaches are located in Conakry proper. However,

during the dry season, swimming is possible at undeveloped beaches located on the Island of Los, just offshore from Conakry. Local boats can be rented for day trips to the islands, although some American expatriates have purchased their own boats.

Except during the height of the rainy season, which extends from May to October, trips are possible to most interior regions of Guinea. The loveliest area for such travel is the Fouta Djallon, where the mountain scenery is magnificent and the climate cooler and less humid than in Conakry. Waterfalls are found near the towns of Kindia (a two-hour drive from Conakry) and Labé (a seven-hour drive). It is possible to camp in these areas, and many Americans do so, but any camping gear must be shipped from home. Another town of interest is Dalaba, which offers a modest hotel and beautiful physical surroundings.

The truly adventurous may travel into the savanna and forest regions, but roads are poor and require four-wheel-drive vehicles, such as Land Rovers. Accommodations are very rustic and must be arranged far in advance of any trip.

The closest major city outside Guinea is Freetown, Sierra Leone,

which provides a distinct change of scenery and has shopping facilities superior to those found in Conakry. The six-hour road trip is possible in the dry season, and sometimes during the rainy interval.

Many Westerners in Guinea take advantage of its geographic location to visit Monrovia (Liberia), Dakar (Senegal), Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Accra (Ghana), Algiers (Algeria), Bamako (Mali), Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, or the cities of Morocco. All of these are easily reached by air and, although the trips are costly, shopping facilities and excellent hotel accommodations provide a pleasant break from routine.

Entertainment

Almost all entertainment among expatriates in Conakry is in private homes, usually in the form of dinner, bridge, or cocktail parties. Many local theaters feature French and French-dubbed American, Chinese, Indian, and East European movies. Two are air-conditioned and patronized by expatriates.

Expatriates patronize several of the discotheques and nightclubs where modern African and European music is played. Several restaurants in the city specialize in French, Chinese, Lebanese, and Vietnamese cuisine. Some are excellent and range in price from moderate to expensive.

Many international contacts in Guinea are with Western Europeans; most are French-speaking, but often have a limited command of the English language. It is useful to speak German as well as French, since there is a sizable German community in the capital.

It should be noted that Guineans, although friendly and courteous, seldom accept private social invitations. Invitations to official functions should be cleared by the Guinean Ministry of External Affairs, but this is done promptly. Americans are rarely guests in Guinean homes.

OTHER CITIES

BOKÉ is a port town in western Guinea. Located 110 miles northwest of Conakry, Boké is a market center where fish, cattle, rice, oranges, and palm oil are traded. The Boké area is home to various ethnic groups, including the Landuma, Nalu, Fulani, Mikifore, and Baga peoples.

The western town of **FRIA** is 55 miles south of Conakry and the center of Guinea's bauxite mining region. Guinea's largest industrial enterprise and one of Africa's first alumina-processing plants, the Fria Company, is located near here.

KANKAN is the terminus of a rail center from Conakry, a port on the Milo River (tributary of the Niger), and a highway junction in the eastern part of the country. Situated about 300 miles east of Conakry, Kankan is Guinea's second largest town and the commercial center for the surrounding farming region. It is also the chief trading center of the Malinke and Diula peoples. Crops grown in the area include pineapples, oranges, mangoes, tomatoes, rice, maize, and sesame. There is light industry in Kankan; bricks and fruit juices are made there and there is also a sawmill and a tomato canning factory. Diamonds are mined in the area and Kankan is the site of Guinea's national diamond exchange. It is believed that the city dates back to the 18th century when it was a trade center linking the Atlantic coast and forest belt with the Sudan region. The Muslim religious leader Samory (1835-1900) initiated his military activities in the Kankan area and took the city in 1873. In 1891, Kankan was occupied by the French. Today, Kankan has a polytechnic institute, a national police school, a research center for rice cultivation, and an estimated population of 70,000.

KINDIA is on the rail line, 60 miles northeast of the capital. With an estimated population of 56,000, Kindia is a trade center in a farming

region where fruits, vegetables, manioc, and rice are grown; bauxite is also mined in the area. In Kindia, soap is manufactured and tonic water is bottled. Wood is processed there for use in Conakry's furniture factories. The National School of Agriculture is also located in Kindia. The area surrounding Kindia has a large population of Fulani and Susu peoples.

LABÉ is in the west-central area, about 170 miles northeast of Conakry. It is a market center for the surrounding farm region. Cattle is raised, and citrus fruit, bananas, vegetables, and rice are grown. The city became part of the Mali empire early in the 13th century. Following the decline of Mali, Labé became politically and commercially important, serving as a center of Islam from the 16th to 18th centuries. When the Fulani settled there late in the 18th century, the original inhabitants were displaced. Today, Labé is a major collecting point for oranges, which are trucked to Dakar, Senegal. Lemons and jasmine oil, which is used for making perfume and soap, are also exported from Labé. Labé is Guinea's chief town of Islam and has a population of approximately 273,000.

The town of **MACENTA**, located in a forested region of southeastern Guinea, is home to the Loma and Malinke peoples. Macenta is in the midst of a rich agricultural area and trading center for coffee, rice, tea, cassava, kola nuts, and palm oil.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Guinea, with an area of 95,000 square miles, is about the size of Oregon. Roughly kidney-shaped, the country is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Mali, the Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. It is divided into four distinct geographi-

cal regions: the lower Guinea coastal strip, about 50 miles wide; the Fouta Djallon mountain region, averaging 1,000 feet above sea level, but with some 6,000-foot peaks; the upper Guinea savanna country; and the tropical rain forest of the southeast.

The climate in Conakry is tropical, with dry and rainy seasons. The long dry interval (October to May) is warm, sunny, and humid; when the rains arrive in the months between May and October, the weather is slightly cooler. During the changes of seasons, sunny weather alternates with violent thunderstorms. Temperatures are fairly uniform, rarely rising above 90°F or falling below the mid-70s. March is the hottest month; August, the coolest. Humidity ranges from 70 to 100 percent, and the annual rainfall averages 160–180 inches.

Americans living in Guinea generally find the climate pleasant, but the prolonged downpours during the rainy season can be monotonous and enervating. Cockroaches, termites, mosquitoes, and a variety of other insects are nuisances in most buildings. Because of the high humidity, mildew is a year-round problem. Take precautions to protect clothing, books, food supplies, and other articles.

Population

Guinea's estimated population of 7.6 million consists of four major ethnic groups—the Soussous along the coast, the Peuls (Fulani) in the Fouta Djallon mountains, the Malinke (Mandingo) in the savanna region, and the forestial tribes located in the woodland areas and on the coast. An estimated 85 percent of the population is Muslim; 8 percent, Christian; and 7 percent, animist.

French is used for all government business and in the schools. It is also spoken by all officials in larger towns. In ordinary conversation, people use the language of their ethnic groups. Those working or resid-

ing in Guinea should have a working knowledge of French.

Guinea's international community is small, but has been growing rapidly since the change of government in 1984. Among the diplomatic missions currently maintained are those of France, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, India, the former U.S.S.R., Switzerland, the United States, the United Nations, and several international organizations. Most Eastern European nations also are represented, as well as China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba. Additionally, many African and Middle Eastern nations have missions in the country. Other members of the foreign community include a few Christian missionaries and experts of many nationalities working on bilateral and multilateral assistance programs.

Some Americans and Canadians are employed by *Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée* (CBG), an international mining consortium at Kamsar, a self-sufficient community a day's drive from Conakry. Many French nationals work at Fria, another bauxite mining camp, about a half-day's drive from the capital. There are also British and other Europeans at a diamond mine in Gbenko. Few Americans have contacts with personnel at these places because of the distances involved.

Government

From 1958 until April 3, 1984, Guinea was a one-party socialist state with a single president. During that time, every aspect of life in the country was state-controlled.

When the Military Committee for National Redressment (CMRN) seized power in a bloodless coup April 3, 1984, it abolished the ruling political body, the *Parti démocratique de Guinée* (PDG), suspended the constitution, and established the second republic. Control was assumed three days after the funeral of longtime President Ahmed Sékou Touré, who had died in Cleveland, Ohio, following heart surgery. Gen. Lansana Conté was

named as the country's new president.

Conté's early months in power were marked by tremendous upheaval and instability. In July 1985, elements of the Guinean military launched a coup against the government while Conté was out of the country. The coup attempt was quickly defeated by troops loyal to Conté.

In October 1989, Conté announced that his government was prepared to institute a truly democratic government and embarked on a transition to multiparty democracy. A new constitution, calling for a democratically elected president and an elected unicameral parliament was drafted and approved by referendum on December 23, 1990. In January 1991, the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN), which had governed Guinea since the April 1984 coup, dissolved itself and was replaced by the Transitional Committee for National Regeneration (CTRN). Political parties were legalized in 1992, and legislative elections were held in June 1995. In 1999, President Conté was reelected for another 5 year term.

Guinea is divided into four geographic sections: Maritime, Middle, Upper, and Forest Guinea. These sections are subdivided into 29 administrative regions.

The flag of Guinea consists of three vertical bands of red, yellow, and green.

Arts, Science, Education

A small collection of traditional African arts and sculpture is available for public viewing at the National Museum in the capital. Cultural attractions from other countries appear in Conakry occasionally. Guinea's excellent national dance troupes tour foreign countries, including the U.S., and also perform frequently in Conakry.

Local crafts include delicate leather work such as belts, sandals, coasters, and handbags. Woven and coil-type baskets and other decorative pieces also are available. Tie-dyeing is a Guinean specialty, and lovely pieces of such fabrics can be purchased, as can pottery and handcrafted musical instruments. Small wood sculptures, primarily from up-country sculptors, are often well done.

A scientific research institute is located in Kindia, a small city near Conakry. There, human and animal vaccines are produced, and snake venom is milked for export to European laboratories for conversion into serum. A horticultural research operation and university campus are located nearby at Foulayah. Prominent on the northern horizon of the capital, in Rogbane, is the Oceanographic and Heliophysical Institute (CERESCOR), constructed by the former U.S.S.R., which engages in oceanographic and atmospheric studies there.

Several secondary schools are located in Conakry, the two largest of which are the Lycée Technique and L'École National des Arts et Métiers. The National University, also in the capital, has programs of study which include humanities, agronomy, agriculture, engineering, basic sciences, architecture, and medicine. Other major university campuses are at Kankan, also the seat of a national vocational secondary school, and at Foulayah and Faranah. Public school education is compulsory at the elementary level, with French the language of instruction. Education at every level is provided at government expense. Guinea's literacy rate is very low. Only 36 percent of the population age 15 and over could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

Although possessing many natural resources and considerable potential for agricultural development, Guinea is one of the poorest coun-

tries in the world with a per capita income of \$1300 in 2000. Following a change in government, sweeping economic reforms were launched in 1985, as Guinea left behind 26 years of state control and attempted to establish a system of private enterprise. Collective farms were abolished, state-owned enterprises were liquidated, food prices were decontrolled, and foreign investment was sought in a variety of economic sectors.

In spite of the substantial success of these programs, Guinea's infrastructure remains underdeveloped, hampering further economic progress.

Subsistence agriculture employs roughly 80 percent of the population. Currently, only three percent of Guinea's land is arable. The main food crops are rice, corn, vegetables, and cassava. Bananas, coffee, pineapples, cotton, and palm kernels are grown for export. Guinea's agricultural output has been hampered by poor transport facilities and lack of mechanization.

Guinea has a small industrial sector, accounting for approximately 35 percent of GDP. Aluminum smelting, food processing, textiles, and plywood manufacturing are the main industries. Shortages of skilled labor has prevented Guinean industries from reaching their full potential.

Minerals and mining represent the economy's most dynamic sector, providing 25 percent of GDP. Guinea possesses over 30 percent of the world's bauxite reserves. American firms have interests in two joint venture bauxite mines, *Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée* (CBG) and *Friguia*, which processes bauxite into alumina. Diamonds are the only minerals being mined and exported on a large scale. Australian, British, and Swiss firms are joint venture partners with the government in *AREDOR*, a large scale diamond mining company. *AREDOR* began production in mid-1984 and is mining diamonds that are 90 percent gem quality. Small-

scale gold mining is also pursued by the joint venture gold mine *Aurifere de Guinée*, which is run by the *Union Miniere of Belgium*. Deposits of copper, manganese, titanium, and uranium have been found but have not been exploited.

Guinea's exports consist mainly of alumina, bauxite, diamonds, coffee, bananas, pineapples, and palm kernels. These exports are sent to the United States, European Community (EC) countries, the former U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, and Canada. Petroleum products, transport equipment, machinery, food, and textiles are Guinea's principal imports. These products are provided by the United States, France, and Brazil.

The address of Guinea's Chamber of Commerce is B.P. 609, Conakry.

Transportation

Air Guinée offers domestic flights to several up-country towns. It also operates international routes with Boeing 737 planes. All aircraft are occasionally used for official government trips, which may temporarily disrupt *Air Guinée* flight schedules. Several other international airlines also fly into Conakry's airport.

The Guinean national railway, *Chemin de Fer de Guinée*, no longer operates in the interior. Up-country journeys are made by road or by scheduled *Air Guinée* service to regional centers. Travel by road sometimes requires a four-by-four vehicle, particularly during the rainy season, but major up-country centers are usually accessible with regular cars having a high clearance. Other points in Africa can be reached by air and, occasionally, by freighter.

Conakry has a modern municipal bus system, but it is overcrowded. Point-to-point taxis are available, but not recommended. Jitney-like taxis that follow regular routes are overcrowded and mechanically unreliable.

Drivers' licenses are issued without tests to those having valid U.S. or other foreign licenses. Driving is on the left-hand side in Guinea.

Communications

The telephone system in Conakry and throughout Guinea is being improved, but is still antiquated and overloaded. Telephone service is limited to offices, embassies, and some businesses. Direct-dial service exists between the U.S. and Europe, but is very expensive. Telegraph service is available through the Post and Telegraph Office (PTT). However, telegraph service is costly and often delayed. Guinea is five time zones ahead of eastern standard time.

Airmail from the U.S. is delivered within two weeks, but surface mail usually is two to four months in transit.

Guinea has one radio and television service, state-operated *Radiodiffusion-Télévision Guinée*. It broadcasts on FM and medium- and shortwave bands in French, English, Portuguese, Arabic and the three major national languages. English-language programming is limited to about forty-five minutes per week. Mediumwave radios also can pick up broadcasts in English from Sierra Leone, in French from Dakar, and in Spanish from Las Palmas. Most Americans in Conakry have shortwave radios that receive Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and other foreign stations. Shortwave radios should be of good quality, battery-powered, tropicalized, and multiband. VCRs (VHS) are widely used among expatriates.

Guinean television programming is limited. No programming is available in English. Occasionally, it is possible to receive programs from Freetown. Sets brought from home must be adjusted for use in Africa.

Few local publications are available. French-language newspapers and magazines sometimes can be found at the major hotels.

Apart from the government-owned, occasionally printed newspaper *Horoya*, few publications are available locally. French-language publications and occasional copies of the *International Herald Tribune* and *Newsweek* are available at various outlets. The U.S. Embassy in Conakry maintains a paperback library of donated books for its personnel. Expensive books brought from home must be carefully protected against high humidity and insect damage.

Health

Government hospitals in the capital are staffed by Guineans and some foreign (largely East European and Chinese) doctors. Lack of equipment, inadequate nursing care, and poor sanitation make these hospitals unsuitable for Americans. Although a few dentists maintain private practices in the city, Westerners needing dental care usually go to Dakar, or Europe. Guinea has no optical testing facilities but these, although expensive, can be found in Dakar.

Guinean public health controls are limited to elementary sanitation and to vaccinations against yellow fever.

City water is treated, but tap water is unsafe to drink. Conakry has an underground sewage system; streets are cleaned and garbage is collected in the city, but not regularly in the suburbs.

Malaria, schistosomiasis, tuberculosis, yaws, leprosy, venereal diseases, and intestinal parasites are all endemic among the Guinean population. With proper precautions, these diseases pose minimal risks to Americans.

Malaria suppressants must be taken regularly, beginning two weeks before arrival in the country and continuing for six weeks after departure. Water for both drinking and cooking must be boiled and filtered, and it is also necessary to soak fruits and vegetables in an iodine solution before consumption. Because of the lack of proper health

facilities, it is imperative that anyone planning to live in Guinea have thorough prior medical, dental, and optical examinations, and that all corrective treatment be completed before arrival.

Rabies is prevalent throughout the country; pets should be given a reliable vaccine, preferably the three-day live virus type. Revaccinations are available through a local veterinarian.

Clothing and Services

Casual clothing is usually the dress mode in Conakry, even for office wear and social functions. The occasional formal event calls for dark wash-and-wear business suits or long, cruise-type dresses. Men's daily wear consists primarily of safari suits (with a high percentage of cotton content), or open-necked, short-sleeved shirts, and slacks. Women wear casual dresses or skirts and sandals. Cotton is the preferred fabric because it is cool and easy to maintain. It is important to have an adequate wardrobe, as daily washing is hard on clothes; there are no dry cleaning facilities. Slacks and shorts are acceptable for house wear, the beach, and other outdoor activities.

Conakry is built on old volcanic outpourings. Thus, the ground is rough and shoes wear out quickly. It is advisable to have a supply of sandals for daytime wear, and rubber thongs for the beach or for use during the rainy season. Leather shoes and bags must be carefully protected from mildew.

Swimsuits and beachwear are essential. Bikinis are acceptable, and swimsuit cover-ups are useful.

Most people find raincoats too hot in this tropical climate; however, some people use rubberized ponchos during the rainy season. Heavy-duty umbrellas are required as the rain is heavy. Heavy clothing is rarely needed in Conakry, but it can get cool up-country. A sweater or jacket

should be included in one's wardrobe.

Children's clothing should be simple in style and easy to care for. The most common apparel consists of short pants with colored short-sleeved shirts for boys, and sleeveless shifts (or blouses with shorts or slacks) for girls. Children wear leather or composition sandals or tennis shoes to school.

Almost no equipment, supplies, or repair facilities are available in Conakry. Repairmen are scarce and poorly trained. Cobblers make only simple repairs, using recycled materials; the results are often unsatisfactory. Local tailors make virtually all types of clothing, but quality is erratic. A wide selection of fabrics is available but expensive. Any electrical or mechanical equipment brought to Guinea should be simple, durable, and accompanied by spare parts, as there are no radio or household repairs available. Plumbers, electricians, and radio repairmen are scarce and poorly trained. Some basic services are provided at the U.S. Embassy for its own personnel.

There are barber and beauty shops of varying quality. A good supply of beauty and hair needs, such as permanent kits, cream rinses, tints and colors, hair spray, and cosmetics, should be brought from home.

Domestic Help

Domestic help, a necessity (and nearly always male), is usually hired on the recommendation of other Americans or Europeans. Most are trained in French housekeeping methods and are unfamiliar with American foods or elaborate household equipment. Well-trained servants are not easily found, and all require supervision. The majority speak only a little French and are illiterate. English-speaking servants are rare.

Ordinarily, a houseperson/domestic is employed to do the cleaning, laundry, and shopping. Guards are hired to watch the house at night. Some

houses, with large gardens, require the services of a gardener.

Servants rarely live in, and are expected to provide their own food. Uniforms, if desired, are furnished by the employer and must be tailored locally. Most servants expect their employers to provide them with raincoats.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Conakry is served by several international airlines. These include flights from Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Rome, Casablanca, Dakar, Abidjan, Freetown, Bissau, Banjul, Accra, Bamako, and Lagos, with connecting flights to other locations. The most reliable flights are KLM from Amsterdam, SABENA from Brussels, and UTA from Paris. Passenger ships generally do not stop at Conakry ports.

A valid passport and visa (exit and reentry) are required. Travelers stopping overnight in other African cities (such as Dakar, Abidjan, or Freetown) should also obtain visas for those countries. Health records must include documentation of vaccination against smallpox, yellow fever, and cholera, and of other appropriate inoculations (see Health section).

No quarantine is imposed on pets. Generally, they can be cleared through customs without difficulty. Rabies vaccinations and certificates of general health (dated within two

months of arrival) must be presented. Dogs and cats are easily obtainable in Conakry.

The following denominations maintain places of worship in Conakry: Roman Catholic (services in French and English), Anglican (services in French, English, and one local language), French Reformed (French and English), and Muslim. There are four American-sponsored Protestant missions: Baptist, Evangelical, Bible Way, and Assemblies of God.

The time in Guinea is Greenwich Mean Time.

The country's currency is the Guinean *franc*. Those departing from Guinea are allowed to have no more than 5,000 Guinean *francs* in their possession. Guinean currency is generally not convertible on the world market. All payments within Guinea must be made in Guinean *francs*. All money or money instruments brought into the country must be declared at the airport upon arrival. Currency can only be exchanged at government-approved sites, generally banks or the international hotels.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Special Note: Care should be exercised in taking photographs in Guinea, as officials and other individuals sometimes object even when a permit is presented. Nevertheless, it is wise to have a camera on hand for those infrequent occasions, such as public ceremonies and celebra-

tions, when taking photos is no problem.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Apr. 3	Declaration 2nd Republic
May 1	Labor Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Aug. 27	Anniversary of Women's Revolt
Sept. 28	Referendum Day
Oct. 2	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

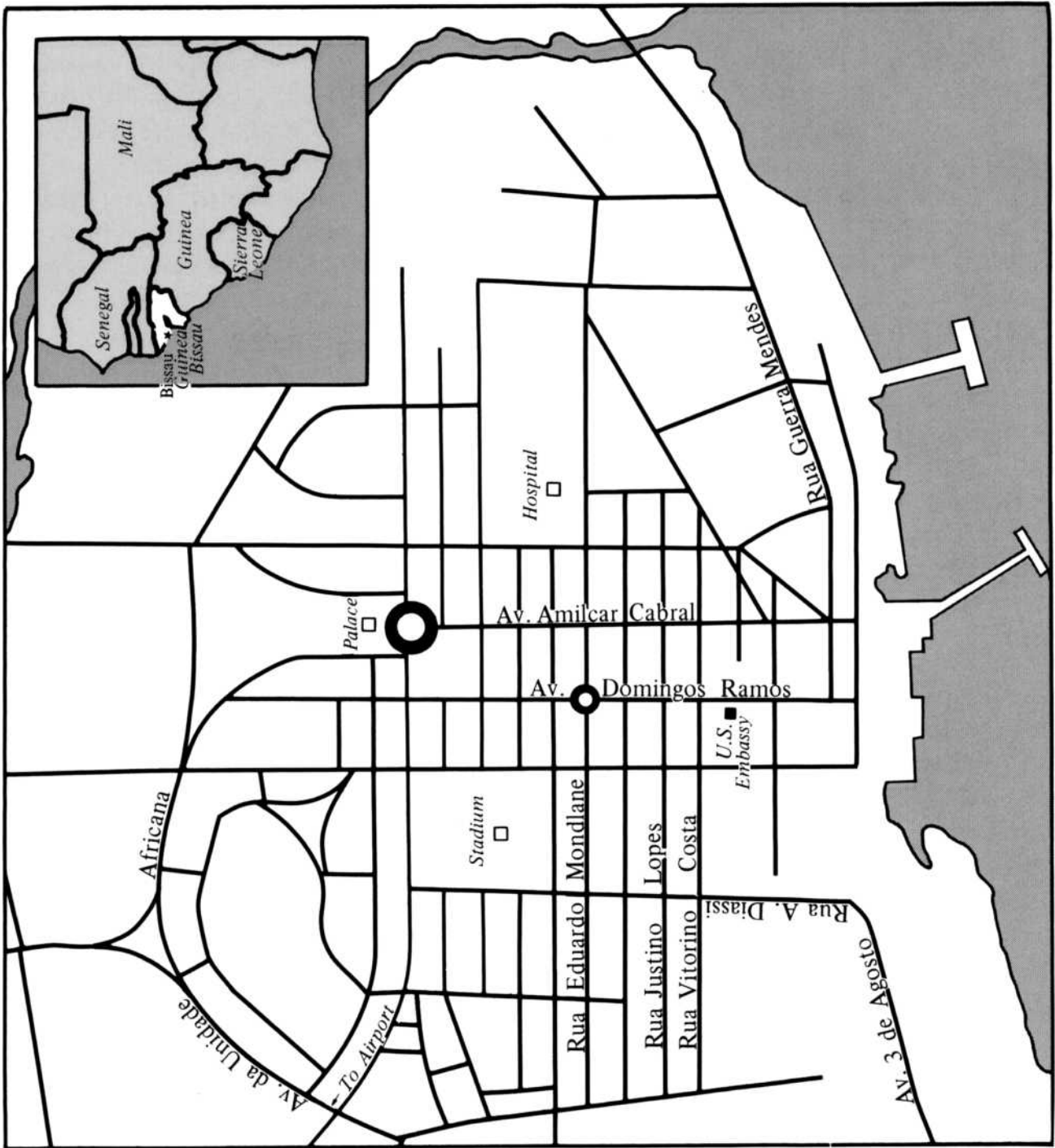
*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Africa South of the Sahara 1992. London: Europa Publications, 1991.

O'Toole, Thomas E. *Historical Dictionary of Guinea (Republic of Guinea/Conakry)*. 2nd ed. African Historical Dictionaries Series, no. 16. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1988.



Bissau, Guinea-Bissau

GUINEA-BISSAU

Guinea-Bissau

Major City:

Bissau

Other Cities:

Bafata, Bolama, Cacheu, Farim, Gabú, Mansôa

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **GUINEA-BISSAU**, an enclave between Senegal in the north and northwest of Africa, and Guinea in the southeast, is an independent state once known as Portuguese Guinea. This small overseas province, discovered in 1446, was a center for slave trade in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Guinea-Bissau's remarkably successful struggle for autonomy, twenty years in the making, was achieved in 1974 when its former colonial power recognized it as a republic. That year, it became a member of the United Nations. Representatives of Guinea-Bissau serve as members of several of the special-

ized agencies within that international body.

MAJOR CITY

Bissau

Bissau, the capital of Guinea-Bissau, was founded in 1692. Its population is approximately 233,000. The city, located on the Geba River where it meets the South Atlantic Ocean, is 400 miles south of Dakar, Senegal, and 200 miles south of Banjul, The Gambia. Bissau has low, Portuguese-style buildings and mango tree-lined streets.

Food

In recent years the food situation has improved dramatically in Bissau. Frozen and fresh fish and shrimp of good quality are generally available year round. Oysters can be found in season. Seafood is not expensive by international standards. Frozen, imported meat arrives monthly. Fresh vegetables, eggs, and fruits are available in the local markets. Normally, one may purchase green beans, lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, okra, kale, green and red peppers, and a variety of other vegetables. Flour, sugar, and dried whole milk are almost always available. Several stores

offer a variety of imported cheese, processed meats, canned goods, and bottled products. Local butcher shops sell cuts of beef, pork, and lamb. Soft drinks, beer, wines, selected liquors, soap products, and other household items are always available, at prices considerably higher than for similar products purchased in Europe or the U.S. In season, tropical fruits, such as mango, papaya, bananas, oranges, grapefruit, limes, and pineapple are available on the local market.

Clothing

For men, suits and ties are worn on special occasions. For women, such occasions generally require Western- or African-style dresses. Gloves are not worn. Guineans dress informally in open, short-sleeved shirts and slacks during the normal business day. Safari suits are also very popular. Women generally wear informal cotton dresses or skirt/slacks and blouse to the office. People tend to stick to cotton fabrics as the humid, hot conditions make polyester materials uncomfortable. Also, cotton does not require dry-cleaning, which is nonexistent. Some local tailoring is available and reasonably priced, but quality is uneven. Those having something made usually supply the material and pattern. Ready-made items, although available, generally are

not suitable for most American tastes.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Local sundries are unreliable.

Basic Services: Dry-cleaning does not exist. Shoe repair is not very satisfactory. Bissau has a few barbers and hairdressers.

Religious Activities

Bissau has three Catholic churches where Mass is held on Sundays: the venerable Bissau Cathedral in the downtown area (in Portuguese), the newer church on the airport road (also in Portuguese), and another Catholic church in one of the town's suburbs (in Crioulo). Bissau has several mosques, but no synagogues.

Education

Bissau offers no educational facilities with English as the language of instruction. Almost all primary and secondary education is in Portuguese and Crioulo. Two French schools also operate in the primary grades, with monitors supervising study lessons, which are forwarded to France for correction and comments.

The Portuguese Embassy and the Brazilian Cultural Center sponsor Portuguese language classes; the Alliance Francaise offers French-language lessons.

Sports

Guineans love soccer. Games are scheduled at one of the two major stadiums virtually every weekend and are well attended.

Guineans and a number of foreigners play tennis at a variety of skill levels on the other five tennis courts in Bissau. Tennis lessons can be arranged with one of several keen Guinean players at a reasonable cost. A number of foreign volunteers and Guineans play volleyball during the weekend, usually later in the afternoon when the heat abates. Local play and travel to the annual softball tournament in Dakar are

possibilities. Many people in Bissau spend their weekends traveling to favorite fishing spots to cast for a variety of saltwater species of fish. For those who like to get close to nature, there are bird-watching opportunities outside Bissau.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Island of Bubaque is the most well developed within the archipelago off the coast, with an airstrip and paved road linking a hotel with a lovely beach, 10 kilometers away. Weekend packages can be arranged, covering lodging, meals, and transportation to and from the beach. Erratic schedules of water transport to and from the island and irregular flights are constraints to further development of tourism on other islands. One of the country's best mainland beaches is Varela, in the northwesternmost corner of the country, just south of the Senegalese border. The trip from Bissau takes about 4 hours, and a high-clearance vehicle is recommended for the trip because of the ferry crossings. The pristine beach is not developed and there is only one rudimentary hotel. Campers must take all their own food and equipment, including drinking water. A number of Guineans and foreigners make the trip to Varela to enjoy long weekends or holidays.

Nearer Bissau is a small beach called Biombo, offering fishing and swimming; the road is paved until the last few miles. Just 20 minutes from Bissau is Quinhamel, a pleasant spot for swimming, picnicking, or fishing; a small restaurant offers tasty food at reasonable prices.

Driving into Guinea-Bissau's interior, one can find primitive camping and swimming at Saltinho and Cuselinta, both river rapids areas approximately a 2-hour drive from Bissau on paved roads. A new tourist camp near Saltinho has good food and comfortable lodging.

The trip by road to Ziguinchor in southern Senegal takes 4–5 hours. This principal town in the Casamance Region of the country has a

number of good hotels and restaurants. From Ziguinchor, 1 hour's drive west, is the coastal resort of Cap Skirring, which boasts an excellent beach and many fine hotels, including a huge Club Mediterranean with an array of facilities.

From October to May the "Africa Queen," a French-registered ship, which sleeps 35, offers 3–7 day cruises from Bissau in the Bijagos Archipelago. The trips are popular with both visiting French tourists and the local international community.

Entertainment

The French Cultural Center offers a wide range of activities, including concerts, art exhibits, film showings, and lectures, all at reasonable cost; the center also has a lending library.

The Hotti Hotel offers outdoor dinner and dancing next to its swimming pool on weekends during the dry season. In recent years a number of new restaurants which offer a variety of cuisine—French, Cape Verdean, Italian, Lebanese, and Portuguese, have sprung up.

Discos are popular with the younger crowd and usually come to life after 11 pm. The most popular of them are Cabana, Tropicana, O Rio, and Ponto Neto.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The small American community consists primarily of official U.S. Government personnel and their dependents, plus Peace Corps volunteers. A number of American citizen contractors and consultants also come through Bissau, either associated with A.I.D. activities or with other donor organization projects.

Informal contact among Americans is frequent.

International Contacts: Guineans are among the friendliest people in Africa. A growing number have been educated in the U.S. and bring back warm memories of their time

there, as well as fluency in English. A larger number know French, in addition to Portuguese.

The international community consists of members of a dozen foreign embassies plus the various international organizations. Social activities generally depend on the preference of the host. Luncheons, small sit-down dinners, buffets, and larger cocktail receptions are common.

OTHER CITIES

Located in the east-central part of the country, **BAFATA** lies along the Geba River and is an important trading center. The growing of peanuts and livestock raising are the main economic pursuits in the town and surrounding area.

BOLAMA is a port town and capital of Guinea until 1941. Situated on the southeast side of the Ilha de Bolama, between the mainland and the Bijagós Islands, the town has been declining in importance since the 1940s. The opening of a footwear factory in the early 1980s was a major economic boost to Bolama.

CACHEU has flourished and declined with the West African slave trade. Situated in the northwestern part of the country on the south bank of the Rio Cacheu, it gained prominence in the 17th and 18th centuries. When the slave trade dwindled in the early 19th century and Bolama became Guinea-Bissau's capital, Cacheu's importance diminished. In the late 1970s, phosphate deposits were found nearby, spurring hopes of growth. Today it is a small port town, as well as a market center where local farmers sell coconuts, palm oil, and rice. Subsistence crops such as millet, corn, and sorghum are grown near Cacheu.

The northern town of **FARIM** is a marketing center for peanuts and livestock. Significant phosphate deposits have been located near Farim, but have yet to be exploited.

GABÚ in eastern Guinea-Bissau, is home to the Fulani people. Situated along the Colufe River, Gabú is an agricultural center. Peanuts are the principal crop of the region.

MANSÔA is a town situated in central Guinea-Bissau. Areas surrounding Mansôa are known for their forests and rice production. Attempts have been made to develop sugar plantations near Mansôa.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau is a small nation on the African West Coast bounded on the north by Senegal, and to the south and east by the Republic of Guinea (Conakry). Its 36,000-square-kilometer area rises from a low coastal plain in the south to forested plains in the center of the nation and a low plateau in the northwest. Guinea-Bissau also extends through the Bijagos Archipelago, a series of scenic islands off the west coast.

The country is cut by many rivers and the sea encroaches deeply into the interior. Major rivers are the Corubal, Cacheu, Mansoa, Geba, and the Rio Grande de Buba.

Guinea-Bissau is a tropical country with only two seasons. The wet season extends from June to October and the dry season from November to May.

Average annual rainfall is 1,000–2,000 mm (49–80 inches). Usual temperatures range from 75°F to 90°F.

Population

The population of Guinea-Bissau was estimated at 1.3 million in 2000. Bissau, the capital, is estimated to have a population of 233,000. Other population centers

of Bafata, Gabu, and Canchungo have 10–20,000 inhabitants. The majority of the people live in small villages. Ethnic groups include the Balanta, Fula, Manjaco, Mandinga, and Papel.

Portuguese is the official language; Crioulo, a mixture of Portuguese and various African languages, is the lingua franca. Each ethnic group also retains its own language, customs, and social life in rural areas.

50 percent of the people are animists and follow traditional African religions. Moslems comprise about 45 percent and are concentrated in the Fula and Mandinga areas in the northeast. Some 5 percent of the population is Christian, with Roman Catholic the largest denomination. Several Protestant churches are also represented.

Public Institutions

The rivers of Guinea and the islands of Cape Verde were among the first areas in Africa explored by the Portuguese in the 15th century. Although the nominal rulers of Guinea-Bissau for 500 years, the Portuguese did not have a major impact on the country beyond giving it its official language. Even today, most of Guinea-Bissau's inhabitants live in traditional African societies, almost untouched by the outside world.

The independence movement was born in 1956 with the formation of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), the country's current ruling party. The PAIGC moved its headquarters to neighboring Conakry in 1960 and initiated armed rebellion in 1963. Despite the presence of more than 35,000 Portuguese troops, the PAIGC had gained control over much of the country by 1972 and unilaterally declared independence on September 24, 1973. Hostilities in Guinea-Bissau ended in 1974, following the April revolution in Portugal. Guinea-Bissau gained formal independence in September 1974.

Amilcar Cabral, the founder of the independence movement and its widely respected leader throughout "The Struggle," was assassinated under mysterious circumstances in Conakry in 1973. Today, his picture is displayed in every government office in Guinea-Bissau, his birthday is a national holiday, and the country's leadership is still dominated by his disciples.

At independence, the new government adopted an essentially Marxist philosophy, emphasizing government control of the economy. By 1980, the economy had failed to improve and complaints against the Cape Verdean-dominated government were widespread. A successful coup d'état with support from the armed forces, ousted President Luis Cabral in November 1980. The leader of the coup, Prime Minister Joao Bernardo Vieira, was awarded the Presidency and has ruled Guinea-Bissau ever since.

In 1984 a new Constitution, which continued the tradition of a single legal political party, was approved by the one-party legislature. By the mid-1980s the paralysis of the statist economic system led to broad economic reforms; in 1989 the ruling PAIGC under the direction of President Vieira began to outline a political liberalization program which the legislature approved in 1991. Under the revised constitution, multiple political parties were legalized, freedom of the press was recognized, and independent trade unions given the right to strike. There are 13 recognized political parties.

Guinea-Bissau's first multi-party elections were held in July and August 1994 and were judged free and fair by all international observers. Elections were once again held in 1999, when Koumba Yala of the Social Renewal Party (PRS) won the presidency and his party gained a majority in the legislature. The term for President is 5 years and for members of the legislature, 4 years.

The President selects, with the advice of the various political parties, a Prime Minister, who heads the government and presides over the Cabinet (currently 26 ministers and Secretaries of State). The President currently appoints judges, but under the revised Constitution the independence of the judiciary should be enhanced through judicial selections made by a panel of senior judges with Presidential concurrence.

The President appoints mayors, called presidents of the council, for the major urban areas. The country is divided into eight regions, plus the capital area.

Arts, Science, and Education

Except for local artisans working in traditional modes, such as weaving lengths of fabric called "panos," arts and sciences are extremely limited. A few local outlets, including a church-run artisans' workshop, sell African arts and crafts, which are mostly wood carvings and masks.

Education is primarily a function of the central government and remains one of the country's major problem areas. In a country where the great majority of the population live in dispersed rural settlements, schools compete with the agricultural industry to attract students. There are shortages of educational facilities, teachers and supplies. The suitability of Portuguese as the initial language of instruction, instead of Crioulo or indigenous languages, has long been debated without resolution. An estimated 70 percent of the population remains illiterate in any language.

Beyond secondary school, there is a law faculty affiliated with Lisbon University, a 3-year secondary teacher training college; a medical faculty relying on Cuban doctors and curriculum, nurses' and medical technicians' training facilities (these three health facilities are to be merged in the near future), and a

3-year accounting/public administration course granting a technical mid-level degree. The Catholic Church also runs a seminary.

Commerce and Industry

Guinea-Bissau is one of the twenty the 20 poorest countries in the world, with a per capita GDP of about \$850. Over 60 percent of economic activity is informal and is not reflected in statistics. The economy is dominated by subsistence farming. Commercial farming includes cashews, peanuts and palm kernels. USAID projects include local processing of cashew nuts and improving mango production for export. Guinea-Bissau is the world's sixth largest cashew producing country. Cashews comprise 70 percent of product exports, generating over \$20 million in 1994, double the revenue earned from fishing licenses. Some fishing license agreements are being renegotiated to reduce over-fishing and provide more revenue. Although rice production has increased, imports of this staple remain high. Crops for domestic consumption include rice, millet, maize, sorghum, beans, cassava, manioc, and vegetables, as well as bananas and other fruits.

The nation is completing the transition to a market economy. The state no longer dominates either the productive or service sectors, having abolished state marketing boards, privatized some companies, ended price controls (except on petroleum), passed a new investment law, and adopted laws and procedures to facilitate private economic activity. Transport, commerce, and service sector responses to these changes have been very positive.

The most successful aspects of Guinea-Bissau's structural adjustment program have been in trade reform and price liberalization. A military conflict between the government and a military junta in 1998 and 1999 caused a major decline in economic activity. The

GDP has begun to recover since, and the country saw 7.6 percent growth in 2000. Guinea-Bissau has one of the heaviest debt burdens in the world. External debt is over US\$600 million; a debt to GDP ratio of 300 percent. A Paris Club rescheduling of bilateral debt in February 1995 reduced debt service payments and improved the economic climate.

Transportation

Local

Traffic outside the capital in Guinea-Bissau is light, though one must be watchful for people, cattle, pigs, goats, or chickens suddenly crossing the road. Within Bissau, as the economic reform program has begun to take effect, commercial activity and traffic have increased. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that there is only one main road into town from the airport.

Throughout Guinea-Bissau and especially in the capital, defensive driving is a must! Pedestrians wander at will, without regard for vehicular traffic. Most local drivers are first-generation, with little experience. Motorists must be prepared for all kinds of unpredictable behavior, from stopping suddenly in the middle of the road to pick someone up, to dangerous maneuvers at excessive speeds which cause many accidents in the country. A related problem is caused by failure to impose effective motor vehicle inspection standards. Many cars and trucks simply are not road worthy, lacking rearview mirrors, lights, or windshields. The presence of these unsafe vehicles on the roads and highways of the country offers an additional challenge to the motorist in Guinea-Bissau.

Although inexpensive, buses are usually crowded and not reliable in terms of a regular schedule. Taxis are generally available, except late in the evening or in the predawn morning hours. They are "communal" in the sense drivers pick up passengers until the car's capacity is reached, dropping customers off

along the way while proceeding in the general direction you want to go.

Regional

Guinea-Bissau has no railroads. Travel between towns is normally by "bush taxi," the ubiquitous enclosed trucks which have equipped the rear end with benches. People are squeezed in like sardines and transported to where they want to get off. Bush taxis are cheap, but only the hardy wishing to gain intimate contact with the sights, sounds, and smells of the country choose this mode of transportation.

Most major roads are paved and one can easily travel overland to Senegal and The Gambia. Roads in Guinea-Conakry are poor, but the trip from Bissau to Conakry can be made in the dry season. Many secondary roads in Guinea-Bissau are impassable during the rainy season.

Travelers must have valid entry visas for The Gambia and Guinea-Conakry.

Air service to and from Bissau is available from Europe and neighboring countries. T.A.P. (Air Portugal) operates a weekly flight from Lisbon. Air Bissau and Air Afrique jointly operate a weekly flight from Paris via Bamako. Flights are available 4 days a week to and from Dakar on Air Senegal or Air Bissau. Other flights are scheduled during the week which link Conakry, Banjul, and Praia with Bissau.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is not up to U.S. standards. Individuals can expect their telephones to be out of service for several days per year. It is not always easy to telephone from the capital to other parts of the country.

However, international service is reliable, and it is easy to call Europe or the U.S. from Bissau. International direct dial was instituted in the country a few years ago. The

costs are high, but connections are quick and usually very good. However, not all countries can dial direct into Guinea-Bissau. Telephone calls to Bissau from Europe and other African countries can be difficult.

Telegraphic links also are adequate.

Radio and TV

Guinea-Bissau's TV station began broadcasting in 1989 and now broadcasts up to 8 hours daily. Most TV programs are in Portuguese, though often U.S. films are aired in English, with Portuguese subtitles.

Local TV operates using the European system (PAL).

A shortwave radio receiver is another item travelers cannot do without. VOA, BBC, and other international broadcasters beam strong signals into Guinea-Bissau in the morning and evening hours.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Guinea-Bissau's Government-owned newspaper, *No Pintcha*, and several independent papers appear irregularly. Some foreign publications, including the *International Herald Tribune* and the *Economist*, can be purchased at the local book shop and arrive within a week of publication. A number of Portuguese and Brazilian newspapers can be found on a regular basis.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Guinea-Bissau has one of the poorest medical systems in the world. Local medical providers are, in most cases, competent, but due to limited facilities and supplies are unable to manage problems at a Western level of care. Only the most basic diagnostic tests can be done in country. Therefore, the need for medical evacuation to more appropriate medical facilities is frequent.

Community Health

Travelers are encouraged to receive all immunizations recommended by Medical Services prior to arriving in Bissau.

Malaria is a constant threat in Guinea-Bissau, and everyone should take steps to prevent it. Primary prevention (how not to get bit by mosquitoes) is at the forefront of the malaria battle. Keeping screens in good shape and using bed nets is also encouraged. Bring plenty of insect repellent (DEET based). In addition, individuals should start malaria prophylaxis prior to arriving in Bissau. The most effective malarial prophylaxis is mefloquine.

Preventive Measures

All water in Guinea-Bissau must be boiled or chemically treated prior to consumption. Bottled water and drinks are readily available in restaurants and markets. All fruits and vegetables must be cooked or chemically treated prior to eating. Meats, seafood, and poultry need to be well cooked. Fresh milk is difficult to find and requires boiling, but powdered and heat-treated milk are available.

Although some over-the-counter medications and supplies are available in Bissau, the brand selection, compared to the U.S. is limited, costly, and unfamiliar. Those coming to Guinea-Bissau should ship or bring most items normally found in their medicine cabinets. As Guinea-Bissau's water is deficient in fluoride, parents should bring fluoride supplements for their children.

You should have a prescription for refills, either in hand or on record at your pharmacy.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The U.S. Department of State warns American citizens against travel to Bissau. Although the civil war has ended, the political situation is unstable and potentially dangerous.

There are still landmines located throughout the country, and any travelers should exercise extreme caution at all times.

Those traveling to Bissau usually fly an American carrier to Lisbon or Paris, and then take the weekly Air Portugal (T.A.P.) or Air Afrique flights to Bissau. Alternatively, one can fly to Europe and transfer to a plane bound either for Banjul or Dakar, then fly into Bissau. A final possibility is to catch the thrice weekly New York/Dakar flight of Air Afrique and then make the Bissau connection.

You must secure a visa before entering Bissau. Visas can be obtained from the Guinea-Bissau Embassy in Washington, D.C. the Guinea-Bissau Mission to the U.N. in New York, or Guinea-Bissau's Embassies in Lisbon or Dakar. Allow 2 weeks to get the visa.

Pets may be brought into the country if a valid official veterinarian's certificate of health is presented. Check the pet regulations in the Lisbon Post Report if transiting Lisbon with a pet. Inoculate pets every 6–12 months against rabies and other diseases as advised by the veterinarian.

A veterinarian at the government veterinary facility in Bissau will treat private cases. The Peace Corps medical officer has only rabies vaccine on hand.

Few houses have sufficient outside exercise space, and ticks, fleas, and other pests abound.

The unit of currency is the CFA franc. In January 2001, the exchange rate was U.S. \$1 equals 699 CFA francs. Money can be exchanged at the International Bank of Guinea-Bissau.

For emergency travel, bring travelers checks, as they cannot be purchased in Bissau. Credit cards are accepted only at the Hotti Hotel and at some, but not all, of the airlines in Bissau. Senegalese resorts accept VISA cards more often than others.

Guinea Bissau uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan.	Heroes' Day*
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
Aug. 3	Martyrs of Colonialism Day
Sept. 24.	Independence Day
Nov.14	Readjustment Movement Day
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25 & 26	Christmas Ramadan*
. . . . .	. . . . . Id al-Fitr*
. . . . .	. . . . . Id al-Adha*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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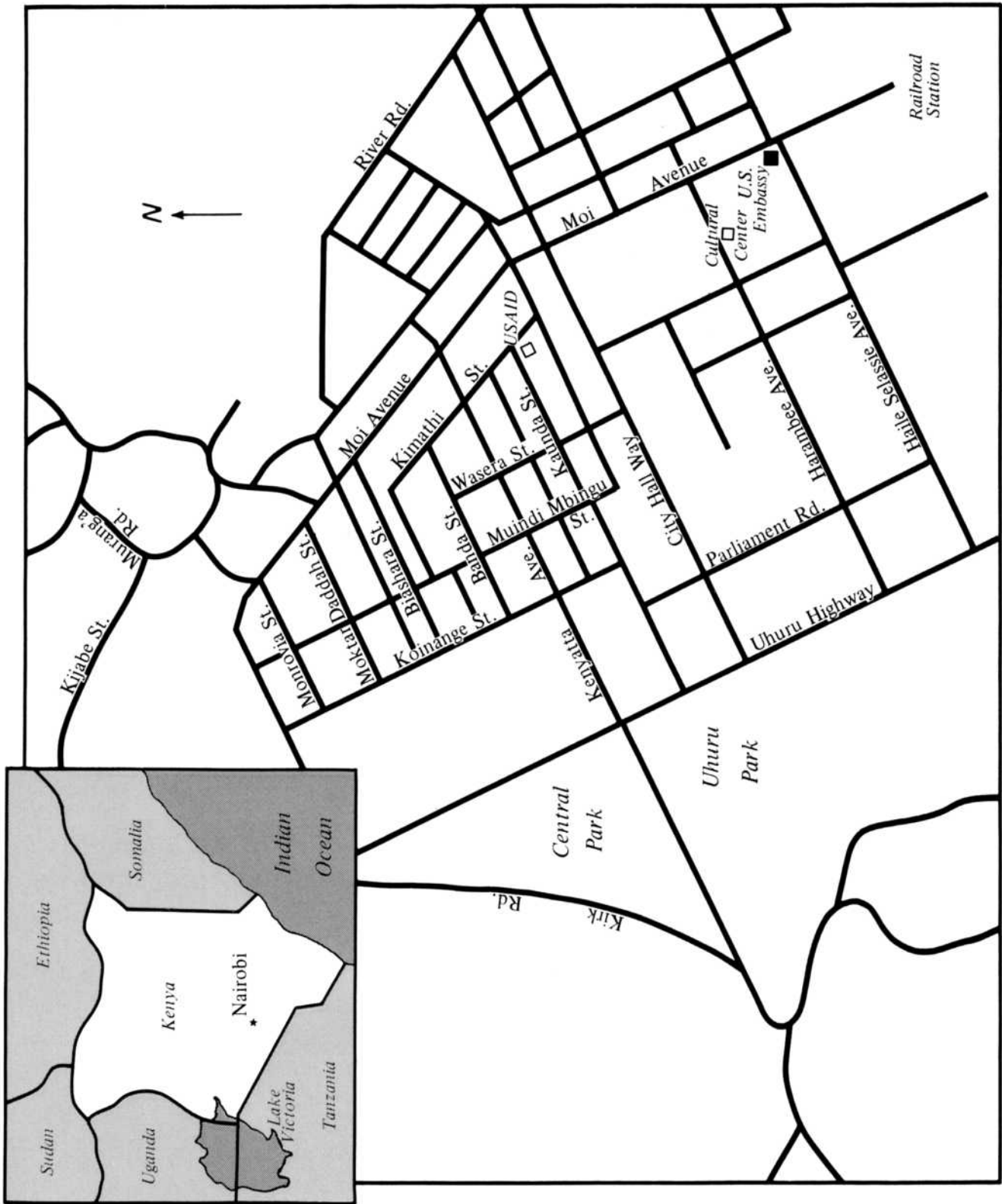
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Nairobi, Kenya

KENYA

Republic of Kenya

Major Cities:

Nairobi, Mombasa

Other Cities:

Eldoret, Garissa, Kisumu, Lamu, Malindi, Nakuru, Nanyuki, Nyeri, Thika

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Kenya offers an interesting political and economic situation, a modern capital by African standards, an enjoyable climate, varied sports facilities, good schools, and year-round availability of fresh meats and produce.

Wild animals can be found minutes from downtown Nairobi, and lodges and game parks abound. Along with elephants, lions, zebras, and rhinoceroses, Kenya has more species of exotic, colorful birds than are known in most other countries. Driving in Kenya gives access to the parks and lakes, as well as to a fascinating variety of local cultures. Some 60,000 American tourists come here for vacations each year.

Archeologists believe human existence began here perhaps 2.9 million years ago. The famous Leakey family of paleontologists continues to work at various sites throughout Kenya to learn more about man's origin and ancestors.

Kenya has a great deal to offer Americans who are willing to take advantage of it.

MAJOR CITIES

Nairobi

With a population of about 2,320,000, Nairobi has a modern downtown with an assortment of hotels, international restaurants, shops of all kinds, tree-lined streets, lovely flowering plants year round, and handsome residential areas.

The city is a mixture of Europe, Asia, and Africa, with the latter becoming increasingly prominent economically due, in part, to the government's systematic program of business "indigenization."

Nairobi is a busy financial center as well as a jumping-off place for safaris in search of game animals. Hunting is prohibited, but photographic safaris are popular. Tourists come

through Nairobi by the thousands en route Kenya's many national parks and preserves. About 50,000 American tourists visit Kenya each year.

Traffic is congested during business hours and hazardous at all times. The downtown section can be covered by foot. Residential areas are spread out over the city with driving time to offices varying from 10 to 45 minutes. Downtown parking is inadequate during business hours.

Nairobi has changed dramatically since independence. Many modern office buildings and hotels including the Kenyatta Conference Center mark the changing skyline. This 26-story structure contains offices and conference facilities. The downtown area has an elevation of 5,400 feet, but some residential areas are located at over 6,000 feet. Nairobi is 87 miles south of the Equator and some 300 miles west of the Indian Ocean.

Food

Food in Nairobi, in general, is fairly expensive. Fresh fruits and vegetables are plentiful year round, including such items as strawberries, mushrooms, ginger root, asparagus, and avocados. The growing season is year round, and some people grow many of their own vegeta-



David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

Street in Nairobi, Kenya

bles. Tropical fruits such as mangoes, pawpaws, and pineapples are available in season. Temperate Zone fruits such as apples, peaches, pears, and grapes are grown here as well as imported.

A few frozen items are available, but only in the larger stores. Fish, beef, mutton, and lamb are usually available. Chicken, turkey, and pork are available, but are more expensive than in the U.S.

Butter, cream, eggs, and pasteurized milk in sealed containers are of good quality. Kenyan yogurt, sour cream, and cheese differ significantly in taste from their American equivalents.

Because of the liberalization of import restrictions, you can purchase almost anything you need locally. Most of these imported items are, however, very expensive. Many products imported from South Africa are quite good and reasonably priced. There are occasionally shortages of maize (corn) meal, butter, milk, and sugar.

Soy milk or formula is not usually available for babies with allergies. Some infant formulas can be bought in powdered form but, are scarce and often outdated. Strained and

pureed foods are almost never available. Families with young babies may want to make their own baby food with a blender or a hand grinder.

Clothing

Clothing is expensive in Kenya and often inferior in quality. Bring a fairly complete wardrobe for warm weather and the cooler season. Local shoes are sold in Nairobi, but to be sure of good quality and fit, bring shoes from the U.S. Bring shoes with closed toes as well as sandals. People with narrow feet find it impossible to buy shoes that fit. Shirts, socks, and underwear are of inferior quality, very expensive, or both. Hats to protect against the sun are a must.

Nights in Nairobi are chilly, but you will not need a winter coat. The lowest temperature recorded in 25 years was about 40° F, but the mean minimum for the coldest month, July, is 52° F. You will need some summer clothes as the days become quite warm—the daily maximum in the warmest months is about 82° F—and a trip to the coast and to other parts of Kenya at lower altitude will require summer clothing. A ski jacket or some warm clothing is a good idea for going on safari to places at high altitudes.

Men: American light- and medium-weight suits or sports coats are worn most of the year. Heavy wool suits and overcoats are not needed, but sweaters and a lightweight raincoat come in handy. For the warm season, tropical worsted and washable suits are useful. Light informal cotton clothing is suggested for the coast.

Men's summer suits and suiting are available in a limited range. Suit styles made by local tailors are different and tailoring questionable. Safari suits can be purchased ready-made or can be made by a local tailor at a reasonable price. They are used for informal occasions as well as for travel.

Women: Lightweight wools, cottons, polyesters, silks, and knits are worn in Nairobi. Evenings are cool, furs are not normally worn, and Nairobi has no fur storage facilities.

In general, informal fabrics and styling are more suitable than elegant clothing, and colorful prints are worn. For evening, long and short casual cottons and jerseys as well as pantsuits are used for dinners, receptions, and at-home entertaining. Some women have a few dresses made in an African print by a local tailor. These are attractive and relatively inexpensive. Ready-made clothing is generally costly.

For daytime, slacks, jacket and skirt, and dress and sweater are most suitable. The weather can change during the day from very cool in the morning to hot at noon, to cool again, so sweaters and lightweight suits are useful. The wide range of casual and sports clothes available in the U.S. cannot be found.

Riding is popular, but riding clothes and boots are costly. Tennis dresses and bathing suits are also expensive. Lingerie and panty hose are of poor quality and expensive.

A lightweight raincoat is useful during the rainy seasons. Local rubber boots are available.

Children: Children's clothes are available, but are limited in variety, inferior in quality, and much more expensive than American brands. Some American styles in jeans and shirts are available at double the U.S. price. Underwear and socks purchased locally are of poor quality and do not wear well. Children's dress clothes are seldom worn.

Since nights are cold, warm sleepers for infants are advised. Heavy-weight blanket sleepers for babies and young children are not sold in Nairobi. Boots can be purchased here.

Mediumweight clothing and sweaters are essential for Nairobi's cooler seasons. Sunsuits are useful for small children during the warm seasons and holidays at the coast.

Cloth diapers available in Nairobi are made of terry toweling and are not as good as American brands. Disposable diapers are available, but are very expensive.

Local Bata (brand) tennis shoes are available, but quality is poor. Special shoes for soccer and other sports are expensive.

Supplies and Services

Basic Services: Most basic services are available. Barbers and beauticians compare to those in the U.S. Among Nairobi's tailors and dressmakers, you will find some who do good work. Drycleaning is fair but not always dependable. Kid and suede cannot be cleaned here.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Dutch Reformed, Church of Scotland (Presbyterian), Church of the Province of Kenya (Episcopalian), Lutheran, Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptist, Church of Christ, United (Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican), Christian Scientist, Jewish, Quaker, Pentecostal, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Hindi, Islamic, and Sikh places of worship can be found in Nairobi.



Kenyatta Avenue, Nairobi, Kenya

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Education

The Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges accredits the secondary, middle, and elementary schools of the International School of Kenya.

The Kenyan school system is composed of Standards I-VIII equivalent to American grades 1-8, and Forms I-VI, roughly equivalent to American high school. This Kenyan system prepares students for a series of standard government examinations: The Certificate of Primary Education examination at the end of Standard VIII; and the high school certificate at the end of Form IV.

The International School of Kenya (ISK), PO Box 14103, Nairobi, is a coed school for prekindergarten through grade 12, located about 8 miles (out Peponi Road) from the city center on 45 acres of a coffee plantation.

The elementary (prekindergarten through grade 5) core curriculum includes language, arts, science, social studies, and mathematics. This is supplemented by a special program offering art, music, swimming (girls must wear one-piece swimsuits), physical education, computers, French and Spanish for

grades 1-5, and an elective activity program once a week. The middle school (6-8) continues this program and provides preparation for high school.

The high school's program is primarily college preparatory with both required and elective courses in English, social studies, mathematics, the sciences, and physical education.

Language offerings include French and Spanish, with German at the more advanced levels. Elective courses in fine arts, art, drama, typing, business, and computers, and an International Baccalaureate/Honors program are also available. Of special note is an extensive field trip program available to students through ISK's Intercultural Program as well as the east African history class and extracurricular activities. ISK has science laboratories and a library, well stocked with books, current publications, and an AV system including a video system. The school also provides specialized services through its counselor, the learning resource center, and English as a Second Language Program. Extracurricular activities are many, examples being the National Honor Society, three school publications, an annual school musical, and

an extensive intramural sports program.

To enter kindergarten, a child must be 5 years of age by September 15. Bus transportation is optional, serving the greater part of Nairobi. A snackbar on campus sells lunches, snacks, and drinks.

Testing programs include ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) given to elementary and middle scholars every year, PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test), SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), SAT Achievement Tests, and ACT (American College Testing Program) exams are given regularly through the American Cultural Center. Achievements, ACT (American College Testing Program), and IB exams are made available to college-bound upperclassmen.

The ISK was jointly purchased under the auspices of the U.S. and Canadian Governments in 1976 and is incorporated under Kenyan law. Seven diplomatic officers of the American Embassy and the Canadian High Commission form the school's Board of Governors, which has delegated responsibility for determining school policy to a 9-member Board of Directors, 6 of whom are elected by the parents and 3 appointed by the Board of Governors. The superintendent is the executive officer of the Board and is responsible for the organization, operation, and administration of the total school program. The superintendent is aided by the principals of the three schools, a counselor, and a professional staff of 50 full-time and 10 part-time teachers. Faculty members must be certified and experienced teachers; most are American or British trained.

Rift Valley Academy, Kijabe, Kenya, a boarding school, is located on the slopes of the Great Rift Valley, 50 kilometers from Nairobi off the Nakuru Road. It was founded in 1906 for missionaries' children, and still caters to these, but accepts other foreign students when space is available. It follows the American program of studies from grades 1 to

12. The secondary department is fully accredited by the Middle States Accreditation Association of the U.S. The principal emphasis of the academic program is on college preparatory courses. Additional classes are offered, however, in graphic arts, home economics, typing, mechanical drawing, industrial arts, and music. Three choirs, a band, and a number of smaller musical groups provide opportunity for many students to develop their talents in music. Private instruction is also offered on individual instruments. Nonmissionary enrollment is limited, and the final decisions are made on or about June 15 for September admission.

Other Schools Available in Nairobi include:

- Banda School, P.O. Box 24772, Nairobi, Kenya; Tel. 891220/891689, on the Magadi Road off Langata Road. Coed, primary 5-13 years of age. British syllabus. UK Common Entrance at 11, 12, and 13. Waiting list.

- Braeburn House, PO Box 45112, Tel. 566350, Gitanga Road. Coed, primary 5-13 years. CPE and Common Entrance syllabus.

- Cavina School, PO Box 43090, Tel. 566011, Argwings Kodhek Road Boys primary 6-13 years. Common Entrance syllabus. Basically Christian outlook.

- Consolata School, PO Box 14538, Tel. 43537, Chiromo Road. Coed primary, CPE syllabus.

- Greenacres School, PO Box 46919, Tel. Redhill 254, Limuru Road. Coed primary. British syllabus. Girls only secondary, boarding and day. GCE London O levels.

- Hillcrest School, PO Box 30365, about 8 miles from city center. Coed elementary. Pupils are prepared for Common Entrance Examination and for Hillcrest Secondary School. School year begins in January.

- Hillcrest Secondary School, PO Box 24819, on Langata Road in Karen. Coed, high school. British

syllabus. School year begins in January.

- Kestral Manor School, PO Box 14489, Nairobi, is located on Ring Road in the Westlands area of Nairobi. It is coed for children ages 3 to 9 and offers British education methods in an open classroom environment. The school is very child centered with many British, American, and Australian students.

- Kenton College, PO Box 30017, Tel. 560260. Boys' and girls' preparatory school. Ages 6-14. Follows multinational British syllabus. Boarding and day pupils.

- Nairobi Academy, PO Box 24817, Tel. 891281, Langata Road. Coed, primary and secondary. CPE and Common Entrance Syllabus.

- Rosslyn Academy, P.O. Box 14146, Coed, grades 1 to 7. Run by Mennonite and Baptist Missions, but is nondenominational. Boarding through grade 6. School year follows American schedule.

- St. Mary's School, PO Box 40580, Coed elementary. British syllabus. Day school. School year begins in January.

- Strathmore College, PO Box 25095, boys' high school. British syllabus. Day school. School year begins in January.

Nursery Schools: Nursery schools in most neighborhoods take children from age 2-3 and often continue through grades 1 or 2. These schools operate primarily in the mornings, but some will also care for children in the afternoons. In addition, informal play groups, organized by mothers of small children, meet one morning each week with all the mothers sharing responsibility for planning and implementing a program that provides a positive experience for the children.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Church of the Province of Kenya Language School, located on

Bishops Road, offers Swahili courses with several options for time and meeting, including evenings.

Alliance Francaise and the French Cultural Center, both located at Loita/ Monrovia Streets, offer courses in French at varying levels of proficiency.

The Italian Cultural Institute in the Prudential Assurance Building, on Wabera Street, offers conversational courses and intensive elementary courses.

International University-Africa, PO Box 14634, Nairobi, is affiliated with the U.S. International University in San Diego, California. Located about 20 minutes from downtown Nairobi, it specializes in business administration and human behavior and is fully accredited. Students attending the Nairobi campus can earn an Associate of Arts (AA, 2-year course) in business or general studies. Courses are also offered leading to bachelor's degrees in business administration, human behavior, or international relations. Students who are accepted by the University in Nairobi may transfer to any campus of the University to continue their studies. Other campuses are located in San Diego, London, and Mexico City. In addition to undergraduate courses, a graduate program leading to a Master of Science in management and organizational development is offered in Nairobi. New students are accepted each term. You should apply as early as possible before the term in which you wish to attend, preferably 6 months. For additional information, write to the International University-Africa, PO Box 14634, Nairobi, Kenya, or U.S. International University, 10455 Pomerado Road, San Diego, Calif. 92131.

The University of Nairobi, PO Box 30197, Nairobi, has formal arrangements with some universities in the U.S. for a 1-year exchange program. Schools currently participating in the program are the University of California system, Kalamazoo Col-

lege, and Pennsylvania State University. The University has no openings for foreigners at undergraduate levels due to the great demand for places by Kenyans. No auditing is allowed because of space limitations. Postgraduates who have a special need to do work in Kenya because of their area of study can attend the University as an "occasional student" for 1 year.

Institute of Adult Studies in the Extra-Mural Division of the University of Nairobi, PO Box 30197, Nairobi, offers evening courses with enrollment open to non-Kenyans as well as Kenyans. Courses offered include accounting, computer programming, business administration, commerce, economics, mathematics, statistics (related to CPA), marketing, history, geography, French, Kiswahili, German, Arabic, car maintenance, and personnel management. Classes are offered three terms during the year, beginning in January, May, and September.

The Goethe Institute, Makioki, and UNEP offer language classes.

Sports

A wide variety of outdoor sports is available in Kenya. Nairobi clubs offer swimming, tennis, squash, golf (very good 18-hole courses), and other sports. Some membership fees are expensive. Fishing and mountain climbing are popular upcountry, and the coast provides some excellent swimming, water skiing, sailing, wind surfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, and deep-sea fishing. Facilities for badminton, hockey, polo, soccer, rugby, cricket, bowling-on-the-green, judo, water polo, fencing, and gocarting are available. Many children and adults ride horses or take riding lessons. Informal softball leagues and football games are held in the dry seasons. Hunting other than birds is banned in Kenya. Sports equipment can be expensive and one should bring an adequate supply.

Planes may be rented at slightly higher than American prices and an FAA private pilot's license may be

converted to a Kenyan license with little difficulty. Pilots should bring their FAA license, log books, and FCC radio license. CAA certified instructors and examiners are available and FAA medical and biennial reviews can be obtained.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Kenya is famed as a tourist paradise, and most Americans take advantage of the wildlife industry. The scenery and wildlife are magnificent. You can drive yourself; go on a totally organized safari; or fly to many places. Almost all the country's game parks and reserves are within reasonable driving distance from Nairobi.

Accommodations at the parks and reserves are designed to meet the tastes of almost everyone. If a visitor likes to "rough it," campsites and self-service bandas (cabins) are available. For those who consider comfort more important, lodges and tented camps provide a touch of luxury.

Equipment is available in Nairobi to purchase or rent—but prices are high, and the availability of certain items is limited. A local fuel, white gas, is currently available for American-brand camp stoves. A different type of camp stove using gas canisters is sold here. Paper plates and cups are sometimes available in the local stores.

Fishing enthusiasts should bring their gear. Lake Naivasha, just 55 miles from Nairobi, offers great widemouth bass fishing. You can rent bungalows on the lake, and a hotel is also available. Stream fishing (fly only) for trout is available in the high country near Mount Kenya and in the Aberdare Nyandarua Range. Fishing flies are available locally.

Reasonably priced bandas located at several parks in Kenya can be reserved, far in advance, from tourist offices in Nairobi. The bandas contain beds (you may bring your own linens or rent them there for a small fee) and simply equipped

kitchens. Again, your own cooler would be handy. Some bandas have cooking utensils and dishes.

For a beach holiday on Kenya's coast, 300 miles from Nairobi, there is a choice of luxury beach hotels, family-type hotels, rented beach houses, or tent sites on the beach. Most beach hotels offer discounts during the off season. Many beach houses are also available to rent from private individuals for short holidays at reasonable prices.

As might be expected, Kenya is a photographer's paradise. If you have a specific camera in mind, purchase it in the U.S. as availability in Kenya is limited. Cameras, telephoto lenses, filters, tripods, and projectors can also be rented. Prices vary from shop to shop. Both black-and-white and color film are available, but prices are high compared to those in the U.S.

Entertainment

While Nairobi has several movie theaters, they are not generally frequented by Americans. Concerts and theater productions are presented at the National Theater and the French Cultural Center. The Phoenix Players in the Professional Center. has a fine repertory company and a number of amateur groups offer surprisingly good productions. Restaurants, casinos, large hotels with dinner-dancing, and numerous small nightclubs are available.

Social Activities

Many opportunities to meet Kenyans and nationals of other countries are afforded through official contact, sports clubs, service groups, and other associations. The USIS American Cultural Center, besides its 7,000-volume library, has an exhibit hall which offers lectures by visiting Americans, seminars, and other activities. The American Women's Association, through its service activities, offers many such opportunities, as do the National Christian Council of Kenya, Rotary International, East Africa Women's League, the local Consumers Organization, the National Museum



Street in Mombasa, Kenya

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Society, church and school groups, and many other such organizations. There is a Boy Scouts of America troop associated with ISK.

Mombasa

With a population of 465,000, Mombasa is Kenya's other large and cosmopolitan city, and the country's chief port. Its harbor, Kilindini, on the Indian Ocean, is one of Africa's best. For several centuries, the city was a center for slave and ivory trade.

One of Kenya's oldest settlements, Mombasa was settled by Arabs in the 11th century and, in 1498, was visited by the Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, during his first voyage to India. Portugal held control until late in the 17th century, when the city was regained by Arabs; it later became part of the Sultanate of Zanzibar. Mombasa passed to Great Britain as a protectorate in 1887 and, for two decades, was headquarters of the British Administration of Kenya.

The city retains much of the flavor of bygone eras. Massive Fort Jesus, built by the Portuguese in 1593, broods over the old harbor where *dhow*s from Arabia still drop anchor. The oldest section of the

city, where streets are too narrow for cars, blends the bazaars and mosques of the east with the mystery of Africa. Old Mombasa melds into a plethora of small shops, houses, and apartment buildings that constitute most of the present-day city. Here, the principal thoroughfares host a number of modern stores, as well as the stalls of hundreds of souvenir hawkers.

Mombasa is a multi-racial city. Most of its citizens are Swahili—clearly African, but of mixed ancestry. Up country Kenyans have come in large numbers to work in government, industry, and on the docks. There are a dozen distinct Asian and Arab communities, whose members are mostly in business. A substantial resident European community and a smaller expatriate community completes the census.

The city is a thriving commercial port serving all of East Africa. It is also a liberty port for U.S. Navy ships in the Indian Ocean. American sailors, along with thousands of tourists from Europe, enjoy the amenities of Kenya's luxurious beach hotels and the safaris to nearby national parks and reserves.

Traffic in Mombasa is congested during rush hours, and driving

standards are poor. The downtown section can be covered on foot, but since most Americans live in Nyali, which is about 20 minutes from Mombasa, a car is necessary.

Mombasa's temperature is fairly constant—hot and humid. The average daily temperature is about 85°F and the humidity rarely drops below 77 percent.

Education

No American-curriculum school operates in Mombasa. Two British-oriented schools are used by most expatriate students, but neither has a complete secondary department.

Mombasa Academy, in the American residential area of Nyali, is a private, coeducational institution with a multi-racial student body of several hundred. The challenging secondary curriculum is geared toward the London General Certificate of Education (GCE), and the faculty is principally British. Sports, swimming, music, and theater are offered. About 20 children comprise each class.

Coast Academy is a private school located on the island of Mombasa. It is slightly smaller than Mombasa Academy, but has a similar academic program. Many American children from the American missionary community living in Mombasa have attended the Coast Academy.

Recreation and Entertainment

The sea provides opportunities for sailing, windsurfing, deep-sea fishing, scuba diving, snorkeling, and other water sports. Several sports clubs in the city offer golf, squash, cricket, and tennis. Mombasa's hot (average, 85°F) and humid climate limits the hours of strenuous exercise to early morning and late afternoon. Mombasa has a well-organized yacht club.

Several excellent restaurants in Mombasa's many hotels on the coast, and a wide variety of others, cater to the tourist trade. Hotels organize discos and other entertain-

ment for guests and are open to the public.

Mombasa's moderately clean movie theaters show recent American films. A local theater club stages several dramatic productions each year. Social life is relaxed and informal.

OTHER CITIES

ELDORET lies on the Uasin Gishu Plateau, about 200 miles northwest of Nairobi. Located in an agricultural area of western Kenya, Eldoret was a haven for Europeans in colonial times. Its temperate climate makes the city a leading agricultural and cattle raising area. Local industries include flour-milling and food-processing plants. The railroad to Uganda stops in Eldoret. Eldoret's population in 2000 was approximately 105,000.

Located 215 miles (350 km) east of Nairobi, **GARISSA** is a market town on the Tana River. Primary industries include food processing, beverages, plastics, and tobacco products.

KISUMU, in Kenya's western region, is a major inland port, industrial, commercial, and transportation center, and Kenya's third largest city. It is situated on the shores of Victoria Nyanza, the world's third largest lake (after the Caspian Sea—an inland salt lake—and Lake Superior in North America). Kisumu, whose population was estimated at 185,000 in 2000, was called Port Florence in earlier times. Asians once comprised more than a quarter of the population, but that number has declined since 1963.

The ancient island town of **LAMU** ranks as one of Africa's most unique. Located about 150 miles northeast of Mombasa in the Indian Ocean, the town has retained its 18th century atmosphere. Today, Lamu serves as a port and district capital, with tourism as an important industry. The town was the base of the legendary Sinbad the

Sailor. In the 19th century, Lamu was an important trading center for gold, spices, and slaves. Steeped in the Swahili culture and a major center of Islamic learning, there are 22 mosques in the city. The Lamu Museum displays items from the varied cultures of the island.

MALINDI is a beach resort town and marine reserve on the east coast, 60 miles north of Mombasa. Its resident population is swelled each autumn by the thousands of tourists who come to take part in Kenya's popular November Sea Festival. Swahili influence is strong in this area.

NAKURU, in west-central Kenya 95 miles (153 kilometers) northwest of Nairobi, is the capital of Rift Valley Province. The city is a busy commercial and transport center. It is the home of Egerton College and the headquarters of the Kenya Farmers Association. The fascinating Lake Nakuru Game Park lies just beyond the city limits. Nakuru has a population of 163,000 (2000 est.).

At the foot of Mount Kenya, in the safari country of the central area, is **NANYUKI**. This farming town is near the Mount Kenya Safari Club and Game Ranch, Mountain Lodge, and Secret Valley. Rhino, buffalo, occasional leopard and elephant sightings make Nanyuki a tourist favorite.

NYERI is a resort town and agricultural center in the highlands. It lies close to Mount Kenya and Aberdare National Parks. Nearby is the renowned Treetops Hotel where, in comfort and safety, guests can view wild and rare game. In 2000, Nyeri's population was roughly 89,000.

Pineapples and other fruits are the mainstays of **THIKA**, which is about 25 miles northeast of Nairobi in south-central Kenya. Kenya's High Level Sisal Research Station is in the town, studying the problems of growing sisal, a durable fiber used to make twine. Industries such as textiles, matches, and can production are located in Thika.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Kenya is bounded on the north by Ethiopia and Sudan, on the west by Uganda, on the south by Tanzania, and on the east by Somalia and the Indian Ocean. It has an area of 224,960 square miles, about the size of Oregon. The northern and eastern three-fifths of the country is arid. The southern two-fifths, where most of the population and nearly all the economic production is centered, is low-lying coastal area and a plateau varying in altitude from 3,000 to 10,000 feet. Although only about 20 percent of the land is suitable for cultivation, agriculture is the most important economic activity.

The Nairobi area offers the contrasts of green rolling uplands, thorn scrub of the famous game plains, coffee and tea estates, and entry to the Great Rift Valley. Farther afield are the forests and snows of Mount Kenya, the dairy and farm country of the highlands, the tropical beaches of the coastal strip, and the deserts of the northeast.

Nairobi has four seasons, but overall temperature changes are moderate: Mid-December through March—mainly sunny and warm by day, cool at night, generally dry; April and May—principal rainy season with lower day temperatures; June through September—mainly dry, but often cloudy and cool, with cool nights; and October and November—short rainy season, long sunny periods, warm days and cool nights.

Daily temperature range is great. It can be quite warm at midday in February and March, yet cool in the evening. In July and August, days are cool and nights are cold.

Average annual rainfall in Nairobi is about 1,030.4 millimeters (39

inches), but the actual amount varies widely in any year.

Population

Kenya's population in 2000 was about 29.3 million, of whom approximately 300,000 were non-Africans, principally people from South Asia. About 88 percent of the population live in rural areas. The urban population is centered mainly in greater Nairobi, which has about 2.3 million people, and in Mombasa, which has over 465,000. The standard of living in major urban centers is among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, and the people are proud of their country's development. The largest ethnic groups are Kikuyu (22%), Luo (13%) and Abaluhya (14%).

About 66 percent of Kenya's population is Christian, with a heavy concentration in Nairobi. Another 26 percent or so is animist, and the population of the coastal area is predominantly Moslem, comprising about 7 percent.

Kiswahili and English are the official languages, and English is used in most schools beyond the lower grades. Kiswahili is the more important lingua franca.

Public Institutions

Multi-partyism returned to Kenya in 1991, and in December 1992, multi-party elections were held. The President, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, was reelected and his Kenya African National Union (KANU) won the majority of parliamentary seats. Elections were again held in 1997, when the president was reelected for another 5 year term and KANU still held the majority in the National Assembly.

The unicameral National Assembly consists of 210 elected representatives, 12 members appointed by the President, and 2 ex officio members. Although local government is under central government control, district and municipal councils retain some responsibilities.

The U.N. and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) maintain important offices in Nairobi. The U.N. Environment Program (UNEP) and the U.N. Center for Human Settlements (HABITAT) have been headquartered in Nairobi since their creation, respectively in 1972 and 1976. Other U.N. bodies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, the U.N. Information Center, and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) maintain regional headquarters in Nairobi. The Red Cross, International Lions, and other philanthropic organizations are similarly represented. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have regional headquarters in Nairobi. Many international conferences are held in Nairobi, where the facilities of the Kenyatta Conference Center are available.

Arts, Science, and Education

Nairobi offers a range of cultural institutions and activities. Several organizations offer classes for adults and children in painting, ballet, voice, and instrumental music. French, German, and Italian lessons are available from the Alliance Francaise and the French Cultural Center, the Goethe Institute, and the Italian Cultural Center. Libraries in Nairobi include the National Library and those of the University of Nairobi, the British Council, U.S. Information Service (USIS), the French Cultural Center, the Goethe Institute, and the Nairobi City Council (the MacMillan Library).

Repertory theater is offered by the Phoenix Players and the Kenya National Theater. The University Players and amateur groups present European- and African-oriented plays throughout the year. Nairobi's several movie theaters show mostly Indian and older American and British films. Due to the condition of the theaters and the equipment, most Mission personnel do not frequent them.

The National Museum sponsors the Kenya Museum Society. This society

and the East African Natural History Society sponsor lectures and films and organize activities and trips to places of natural and historical interest. Specialized groups, such as the East African Wildlife Society, the Nairobi Photographic Society, and the Nairobi Music Society also exist.

The Kenyan educational system follows the American calendar or 8-4-4 system with a British style system of external examiners. The school year runs from mid-January-mid-December with breaks in April and August. All work leads toward passing the Kenyan primary and secondary examinations. Numerous government, private, and parochial primary and secondary schools can be found here.

The standard American curriculum is offered by the International School of Kenya (grades kindergarten through grade 12), which is well attended. The U.S. International University of San Diego has a campus in Nairobi and offers courses at both the undergraduate and graduate university levels.

The University of Nairobi is strong in many areas. Its curriculum includes arts and sciences, commerce, architecture, and engineering. Kenyatta University focuses on education but offers a university-level curriculum. Two other universities, Moi and Egerton, offer degrees in a variety of subjects. Several private business and commercial colleges in Nairobi offer courses equivalent to American college freshman level. More and more private businesses and commercial colleges are offering computer science courses, some leading to degrees with examinations conducted by British institutions.

Commerce and Industry

Kenya enjoyed rapid and impressive economic growth after gaining independence in 1963. In recent years, real growth in gross domestic product slowed to less than 1 per-

cent per year. Economic reforms since 1999, however, have brightened the economic picture for the future. These combined with a rebound in both tea and coffee prices, Kenya's two largest exports, have helped reduce chronic balance-of-payments deficits. Increases in nontraditional exports such as horticulture have compensated for largely stagnant earnings from Kenya's other important foreign exchange earner, tourism. The debt situation, however, is still problematic. Until the government can meet the conditions of the multilateral financial institutions, Kenya's ability to repay existing debt and receive new development assistance will be compromised.

Domestically, Kenya's economic fortunes have only recently begun to recover. Kenya's 2000 population was about 29.3 million. The average Kenyan woman has eight children during her lifetime. By the 1980s the high population growth rate meant lower overall economic growth and stagnation in per capita income for the first time since independence. Rapid population growth also translates into high unemployment, which was estimated at 50% in 2000. The government has acknowledged the need to create millions of new jobs.

The manufacturing sector produces 13 percent of the country's gross national product; the remainder is in agricultural production, roughly 25 percent, and services, 62 percent. Manufactured or assembled products include automobiles, tires, dry cell batteries, and a range of consumer goods. Kenya's limited mineral resources include soda ash and fluorspar. Kenya lacks any significant natural resources other than fertile soil, a hard-working population, and its scenery and wildlife. Nairobi continues to experience rapid expansion in construction, primarily large office buildings, which have produced a world-class skyline.

Although Kenya has encountered new economic hurdles in recent years, it remains something of an

economic success story in Africa, especially in comparison to its immediate neighbors. It is largely committed to many of the same economic principles as the U.S.; i.e., a market system with limited government interference in the private sector. Despite its difficulties, Kenya remains the linchpin of the East African economy.

Transportation

Local

Buses, including informal minibuses called "matatus," serve most areas of Nairobi, but are rarely used by travelers due to extreme overcrowding and poor mechanical condition. Taxis are difficult to obtain except around the larger tourist hotels. Fares are expensive and should always be negotiated in advance. "Kenatco" company taxis are cleaner and better maintained than ordinary taxis, but their fares are normally higher. Avis, Hertz, and other car rental agencies operate in Nairobi. Daily and monthly rates are considerably higher than those in the U.S.

Regional

Nairobi is an international air center. Frequent flights are available for practically any place in the world, as well as regular air service throughout east Africa.

Kenya Railways provides overnight train service from Nairobi to Mombasa and from Nairobi to Kisumu and Kampala, Uganda.

The main road, Mombasa-Nairobi-Kisumu, and other primary roads are paved, but potholes exist on many stretches. The Mombasa-Nairobi road was closed for several days in 1994 due to mud-covered rough sections. Other roads vary in quality. Many are fairly good all-weather dirt roads, others can only be negotiated in four-wheel-drive vehicles. Road accidents are common and are a serious threat to life and limb.

At night, street lights rarely function. The lack of painted center lines

or curbs contributes to difficult night driving even in Nairobi. Use extreme caution; defensive driving is essential both in the cities and the countryside. Be sure your car has good seatbelts installed.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Nairobi's telephone service is adequate; however, there are occasional breakdowns. International toll call services to the U.S. are available through AT&T, MCI, SPRINT calling card systems, and the local PT&T. International calls to other countries can be made through the local PT&T. FAX and TELEX services are available commercially.

Radio and TV

The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts in both English and Kiswahili but carries little international news. Either the new model shortwave radio with digital read-out or the older shortwave radio models with at least six bands is desirable. The Voice of America (VOA) reception is fairly good in the early morning hours and in the evening. VOA broadcasts programs directed to Africa in English called "African Panorama" and "African Safari," as well as programs designed for a worldwide audience. Many other international broadcasts are also received here, particularly, the BBC World Service.

The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) provides daytime and evening TV on one VHF channel in both English and Kiswahili. BBC news is carried every evening. A few American sitcoms and entertainment programs are telecast but usually are quite dated. Some British and German entertainment programs and sports are also telecast. KBC has introduced a pay-cable station featuring South African programming but a start-up fee to receive the channel comes to several hundred dollars.

Channel 62, a UHF station owned by the Kenya Times Media Trust, began broadcasting in 1990. It

broadcasts CNN and local news. Older U.S. reruns are common with some current TV programs, films, and sports. Although UHF antennas are available, they are somewhat costly and of inferior quality. The one available VHF station primarily broadcasts local programs.

The Kenyan TV system is PAL (VHF/UHF).

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Kenya's English-language daily newspapers—*The Standard*, *Kenya Times (KANU)* and the *Nation* and a few others—provide some coverage of international affairs, mainly through Reuters, AP, and Agency France Presse.

The *International Herald Tribune* arrives 1–2 days after publication. British Sunday newspapers are available late the same day. The Sunday *New York Times* and *Washington Post* are available by subscription.

Magazines available include the *Weekly Review* which carries weekly news commentary, *Economic Review*, and *Finance Magazine*. Many technical journals are available, especially in trade and agriculture. European editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, as well as other European magazines, are available.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The Nairobi Hospital is the local hospital most commonly used for inpatient care. Patients are referred to local labs and radiology facilities for diagnostic tests at the patient's expense. A mammography facility approved by the Department of State's Office of Medical Services is here. Since complete medical care is limited, medical evacuations to London or Pretoria are occasionally necessary. The list of local physicians includes surgeons, internists, general practitioners, obstetricians, pediatricians, and ophthalmologists. General dentistry is available.

Orthodontic care is limited to maintenance, but not initiation of treatment. Ophthalmologists and opticians are available in Nairobi and eyeglasses can be fitted locally. Solutions for soft contact lenses are not available. Pharmacies with many prescription medicines are available, often under trade names different than those in the U.S.

If you are taking a prescription medicine, bring an adequate supply.

Community Health

Some houses have distillers; but, otherwise filter and then boil drinking water. Vegetables to be eaten raw should be well cleansed. Fluoride supplements for children are recommended in most locations.

Preventive Measures

The altitude is similar to that of Denver, but Nairobi is located close to the Equator. Strenuous physical activity should be limited for the first few weeks after arrival. Because of the altitude and equatorial location, the effects of sunlight on the skin are markedly enhanced. Bring sun blocking lotions or creams and exercise caution to avoid overexposure to the sun.

Malaria is not a significant risk in Nairobi or in certain other areas nearby. Many parts of Kenya, including the much visited coastal resort areas and the game parks, however, present the risk of chloroquine-resistant malaria. Those who travel to any of the areas where malaria is endemic must take malaria prophylactics while in the malaria zone and for 4 weeks after leaving the area. The recommended malaria prophylactic is mefloquine weekly, or doxycycline daily. An alternative is weekly chloroquine plus daily proguanil (Paludrine). One of these regimens will be recommended depending on your age and medical history, and whether or not you are pregnant.

In addition to all routine childhood immunizations, people coming to Kenya should be immunized against yellow fever, meningococcal meningitis, typhoid, Hepatitis B,

Hepatitis A, and rabies. Proof of vaccination against yellow fever, is required for entry into Kenya and many other countries in Africa, and should be obtained in the U.S. It is recommended that people receive a cholera vaccine stamp in their immunization booklets for entry into certain countries, although the vaccine itself is no longer recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Most travelers fly to Kenya via Europe, stopping en route in London, Paris, Frankfurt, or Amsterdam. There are frequent flights to Nairobi from these cities. Travelers should make sure their travel is in compliance with the Fly America Act.

All those entering Kenya must have a valid Kenyan visa in their passports and must have up-to-date health certificates. Visas are required; they may be obtained at any Kenyan Embassy or consulate, or at the port of entry. Yellow fever immunizations is required for entry into Kenya.

If you are bringing a pet to Kenya, obtain all the documents described below. Any animal arriving in the country without the proper certificates will be kept in quarantine at the owner's expense for up to 6 months. Pets which do not arrive on the same flight as the owner will be cleared by a forwarding company. Their fee is a personal expense of the owner.

If coming from the U.S., obtain an import permit from the Kenyan Embassy in Washington, D.C., in person, if possible, since long delays have been experienced in applying for these forms by mail. This permit will have name and address of owner and a description of the pet, and it should accompany the animal on its trip to Kenya. Americans who have recently brought in pets have been advised



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Central Park, Nyayo Monument in Nairobi, Kenya

to send a copy of the permit with the animal and to bring the original when they claim the animal at Nairobi Airport. After the permit form is completed and you have obtained the certificates described below from a veterinarian, all papers must be returned to the Kenyan Embassy where the permit will be signed.

Certificate of Vaccination Against Rabies. The certificate signed by a veterinarian must state:

- Type, manufacture, and batch number of the vaccine.
- The apparent age of the animal at time of vaccination;
- Date of vaccination.

Living avianized vaccine (Flury or Kelev strain) has the following validity: Canines, 1 month to 36 months post vaccination; felines, 1 month to 12 months post vaccination. Animals vaccinated against rabies less than 6 months before arrival must have a certificate signed by a government veterinary officer of the country of origin stating that there has been no rabies within 30 miles of the place of origin in the last 6 months.

Rabies vaccination of cats is required, and cats must have a certificate from a government veterinarian stating that they have not been within 30 miles of a rabies outbreak during the previous 6 months, and have been vaccinated for rabies.

Certificate of Health. The animal must have a veterinarian's certificate stating that it is free from any contagious or infectious disease. It must be signed not more than 5 days before the animal's date of departure.

Certificate of Isolation. If an animal enters by ship, it must have a certificate from the ship's master stating that it did not leave the ship and was isolated from other animals while on board. Animals arriving by air must have a certificate stating that transport was in crates effectively isolating them from other animals, and that they remained aboard the plane from point of embarkation until arrival in Kenya.

If stopping on your way to Kenya, you can arrange for a kennel to keep your pet and take it to the airport after your departure. Also, if you must stay in a hotel in Kenya before moving into a house, you can keep your pet in a Nairobi kennel.

The unit of currency is the Kenya Shilling (KShs.) and values under a shilling follow the decimal system in cents. The exchange rate early 1997 was roughly US\$1 = 79 shillings; Coins are in denominations of .50, 1, 5, and 10 shillings; bills are in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 and 1,000 shillings. It is illegal to destroy Kenyan currency, regardless of the amount. Violations often result in an arrest and fine.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon).	Commonwealth Day*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
June 1	Madaraka Day
Oct. 10	Moi Day
Oct. 20	Kenyatta Day
Dec. 12	Jamhuri Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id-al-Fitr*

*variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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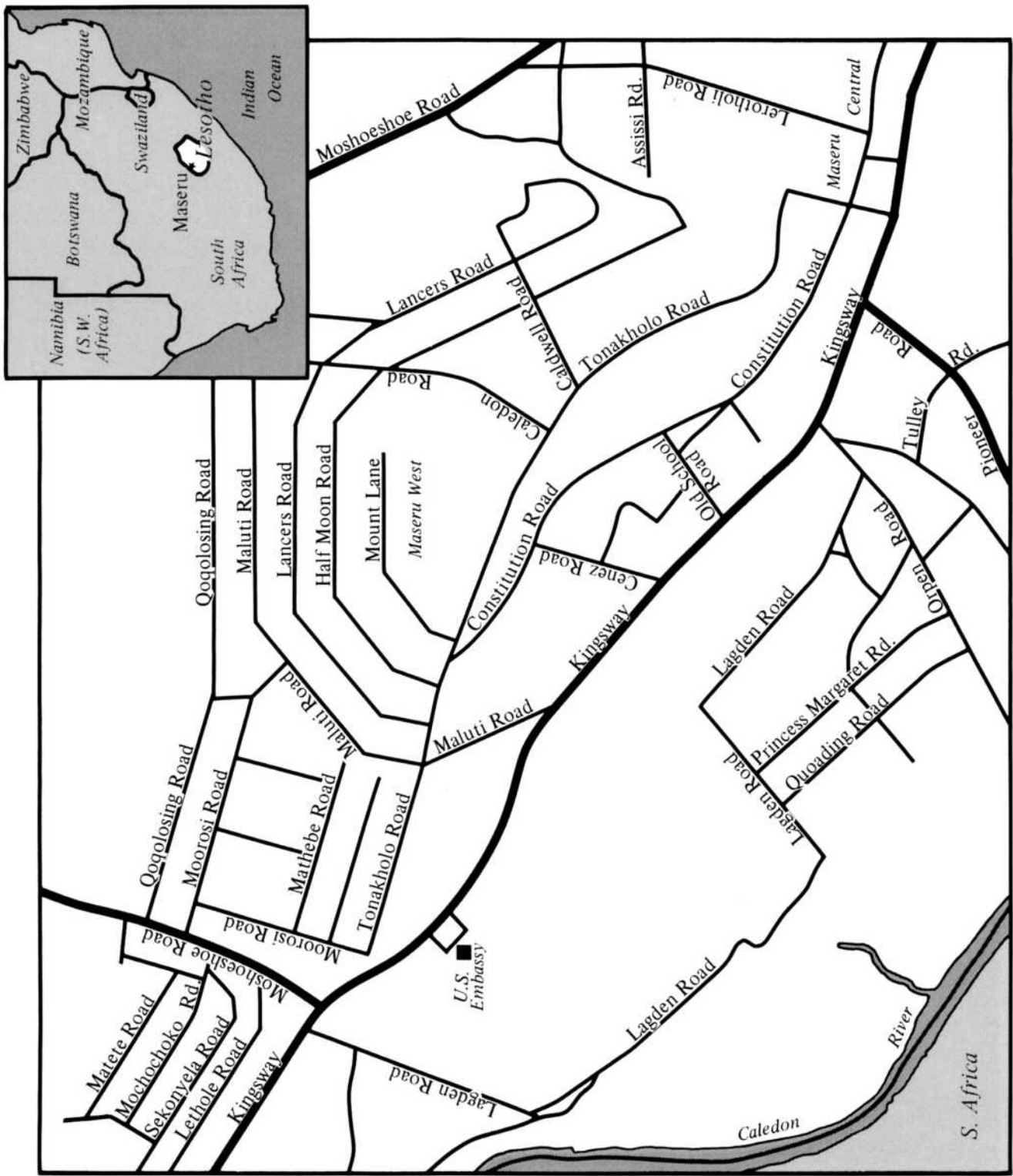
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Maseru, Lesotho

LESOTHO

Kingdom of Lesotho

Major City:

Maseru

Other Cities:

Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Mafeteng, Maputsoe, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Lesotho. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Lesotho has dramatic snow-clad mountain ranges, high waterfalls plunging into deep basalt gorges, neat villages of thatched houses linked by only a bridle path to the outside world, small market towns where blanketed horsemen outnumber cars, and a unique capital, Maseru, where people from five continents work together to solve the nation's problems.

These are but glimpses of a small and remarkable country whose survival as an enclave is testimony to an enduring national spirit; a country created by the wisdom and diplomacy of Moshoeshe the Great; and a country which, in 1966, after 98 years under the British flag, again

took its place among the family of nations.

In Lesotho today, all are equal under the law, and all those who come in this spirit are welcome. Lesotho prizes its friendship with foreign countries and gratefully acknowledges their interest in its national development.

Although Lesotho may seem small on the map of Africa, it is possible to travel for many days and not exhaust its scenic delights. Map makers have as yet recorded few of its 10,000 villages; few persons have climbed more than a score of its thousand mountain peaks; and archaeologists have as yet probed only a handful of its hundreds of rock shelters.

MAJOR CITY

Maseru

Maseru, the capital of the "mile high" kingdom of Lesotho, is a small, bustling city largely dependent on South Africa for its support. After its foundation as a police camp in 1869, Maseru grew slowly at first. Its population, still less than 1,000 in 1906, increased slowly to only 14,000 by 1966, and is now

about 150,000. In 1966, the only paved road in the country was one small, tarred road through the center of town, together with a small spur road to the railway station. Now there are large four-lane divided boulevards in town, street lights in most areas, and paving on the roads to most of the larger towns up-country.

Food

A substantial variety of food is available in the local market in Maseru. There is one large modern supermarket in Maseru, the OK/ShopRite. Most shop for food in Ladybrand, which has a Spar and a ShopRite (not your U.S. Shop-Rite), or in Bloemfontein, which has many supermarkets, some of which sell fine gourmet fruits, vegetables, dairy goods and groceries at reasonable prices. Local butchers supply high quality meat cut to order and will deliver to a Maseru residence. Packaged meat is available in the supermarkets. Food quality is at least as high as in the U.S. at prices which are noticeably lower than in the U.S. High-quality South African wines are available in great variety at low prices. Several bakeries provide a good choice of bread, rolls and cakes. Several kinds of frozen fish are available. There is no need to bring food to Maseru, except perhaps for a few comfort items like American condiments, sweet break-

fast cereals Crisco chocolate chips, and marinated artichoke hearts, (a particular favorite of the U.S. Ambassador).

Clothing

Although there is a good selection of clothing available in the shops in Ladybrand and Bloemfontein, the styles are not really to American taste. Clothing selection is more limited in Maseru. In better clothing stores prices are similar to those in the U.S. or a little lower. It is difficult to find women's shoes made to American standards. In South African women's shoe sizing, the narrowest shoes are in a B width.

Children's clothing comes in a wide variety of styles and colors. Children's shoes are quite inexpensive. Many Maseru residents shop at the mall stores in Bloemfontein. If a family member must have a certain type of jeans or other clothing item, bring extra ones from the U.S.

An alternative to local shopping for clothing is to order from catalogs or order on-line. Goods ordered from the U.S. take about 3 weeks to arrive.

Civil servants in Maseru generally wear suits and ties to work. Black-tie occasions seldom arise. Cocktail and dinner parties are most common, for which men and women wear business suits. Many social occasions call for "smart casual" attire.

It is essential to have heavy clothing for winter. In Maseru, winter temperatures are typically brisk and often go below freezing at night. Up-country, sudden snowstorms are common and travel is hazardous. In summer, temperatures occasionally reach the high eighties and lightweight clothing is most comfortable.

Basotho women generally dress quite conservatively, with skirts below the knees. Only modern young local women in Maseru will wear slacks, jeans, or short skirts. Although South African men and

women often wear shorts out in public, it would be more culturally sensitive to dress more conservatively.

Supplies and Services

Basic toiletries, over-the-counter drugs and common household items are available in Maseru and in South Africa. Many are familiar U.S. name brands manufactured in South Africa. Prices are generally lower than in the U.S. Certain American brands of cosmetics are available, but they are significantly more expensive than in the U.S. It is advisable to bring cosmetics with you. If you sew, fabric is available but notions and patterns are in limited variety. This would be another mail order item.

A wide variety of cigarette brands, including American brands manufactured in South Africa, can be purchased at reasonable prices. Excellent South African beer and wine is available in Maseru.

There are several hairdressing salons for men and women in Maseru. Most men and women prefer to go to Ladybrand or Bloemfontein for hairdressing and other personal services. Drycleaning is available in Maseru and Ladybrand but there is some risk to the clothes in sending them for drycleaning. Tailoring and dressmaking services of good quality are available. Shoe repair services are available.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is readily available - full or part time, live in or out. Skill levels and English proficiency vary, as does ability to cook. The going wage for a domestic is quite low. Gardeners are available to help one take advantage of the soil and the climate here. Large flower and vegetable gardens are common.

Religious Activities

According to the most recent survey (1996), 49% of the population is Roman Catholic; 39% belongs to the Lesotho Evangelical Church (the independent daughter church of the

French Protestant Mission); 8% are Anglicans; 2% are other.

Education

The school year is divided into three terms beginning in August and ending in late June. A number of pre-schools are available that enroll children from age two years. No nursery care for younger expatriate children is available publicly; usually a nanny is hired for the home. The Maseru Preparatory School is the largest English medium primary school in Maseru. It has an enrollment of over 300 students of 37 different nationalities. Generally, the Ginn (British) system of instruction and examination is used, with supplemental materials supplied by other governments. The school offers the equivalent of U.S. grades kindergarten through grade 5, with class sizes of 20-25 children. Afternoon school for grades 3, 4, and 5 consists of study, clubs, and sports activities. A uniform is required and is available locally.

The American International School of Lesotho opened in September 1991. An American system of instruction is used, and currently there is a staff of 5 teachers and several teacher assistants, with an enrollment of 63 students. Some grades are combined and the structure is not rigid between grade levels. The school currently offers kindergarten through grade 7, with class size limited to 15. No uniform is required.

Machabeng College (high school) offers the equivalent of American junior high and high school (grades 6-12) as well as an International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The British system of instruction and examination is followed and the standards of the school are high. A uniform is required and is available at the school.

Sports

Tennis, squash, soccer, cricket and golf are the most widely played sports in Maseru. Occasionally, golf, tennis and squash tournaments and

cricket or soccer matches are held in season. There is a challenging 9-hole golf course (with 18 tee boxes) next door to the U.S. Embassy. Rental horses and riding lessons are available at stables near Ladybrand.

Memberships are available at local hotels: tennis, swimming and children's playgrounds are available, but recently the Maseru Sun Cabanas has restricted pool memberships to adults over 18. At the Lesotho Sun, only Interclub or Sun Friends members and their children may use the swimming pool. There is no public swimming pool in Maseru. The Maseru Club offers tennis and squash, and has an Italian restaurant. There are several public tennis courts in Maseru that are available on a pay-per-use basis or by joining the club.

A limited amount of sporting goods are available in Maseru; a much wider selection can be found in Bloemfontein. American sports equipment can be located with some effort, but it would be better to bring equipment from the U.S. Some possibilities for snow skiing exist in the mountains of Lesotho, but no formal facilities are developed, and snow is rarely adequate. Water sports are popular in South Africa. Dams for sailing are within an hour's drive of Maseru. The lake behind Katse Dam is quite large, but is not yet developed from a water sports standpoint.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Lesotho is famous for pony-trekking. There are a number of resorts at which ponies and guides can be hired; trips can range from 2 hours to 5 days. Pony treks provide fabulous views of the mountains as well as views of some of the prehistoric cave paintings.

Another popular Lesotho activity is fishing. Lesotho has trout in many of its mountain streams. Several fishing spots in the mountains offer permanent, though basic, accommo-

modation and are accessible by car, light plane or horseback. Hiking and camping are available in some of the most spectacular African mountain scenery. One example is Semonkong, where a magnificent 600-foot waterfall cascades over the edge of a cliff. It is one of the longest free falls of water in the world. There is a hotel within walking distance of the falls.

The mountains of Lesotho provide ample opportunity for sightseeing and outdoor recreation. Bushman paintings and prehistoric dinosaur footprints can be found in many parts of Lesotho, some only a short drive from Maseru. With a four-wheel drive vehicle, one can drive out to Mokhotlong and on through the Sani Pass, which is very near to Thabana-Ntlenyana, the highest peak in Southern Africa.

Swaziland, with its rolling hills and green countryside, is a seven-hour drive from Maseru. Wildlife parks, curios and casinos are among the attractions that draw visitors there. The Ezulwini Valley has one of the best handicraft markets in southern Africa.

Botswana is an eight-hour drive from Maseru. The Okavango Delta is still the least-developed wildlife reserve in southern Africa. Camps can be reached by four-wheel drive, plane or native canoe. Tourist firms operate from Gaborone and Maim.

Zimbabwe offers many game reserves, some of which are quite inexpensive. Victoria Falls, Lake Karibu and the Great Zimbabwe ruins (an archaeological site in the southern part of the country) are popular attractions. One needs to get an update on the current security situation before proceeding to Zimbabwe.

South Africa offers a multitude of tourist possibilities from beaches to mountains to cities. Cape Town is fourteen hours south and west of Maseru; Johannesburg is five hours away to the north; and Durban is six

hours southeast of Maseru. Bloemfontein (90 minutes away) provides good weekend outings to the zoo, museums, and the occasional play or ballet.

Kruger National Park in South Africa on the Mozambique border is still the most visited game park in all of Southern Africa. It offers 12 camps for visitors and the best chance to spot thousands of animals even on a weekend trip. Kruger is also the home of a multitude of species of birds. Bring your binoculars and bird book. The park is about 10 hours from Maseru.

Entertainment

All the hotels offer occasional entertainment sponsored by various organizations in Maseru. The Lesotho Sun Hotel has regular live music in its a la carte restaurant. The hotel also offers a variety of films, usually within one-to-two years after release in the U.S. The British Council and the Alliance Francaise offer videos and cultural presentations. Various social clubs, such as Rotary and Lions, have chapters with regular meetings and community projects. There are a number of daytime social groups and charity organizations to get involved with if one is not working outside the home. There is a chapter of the Hash House Harriers in Maseru. Members meet to run on Sunday mornings or Monday afternoons, depending on the time of year.

Organized entertainment for children is limited. Little League softball is sometimes available. Music, art and sports lessons are offered, depending on who in the community is available to teach.

Social Activities

Americans will have some social contact with Basotho, but the majority of socializing in Maseru will be with other expatriates. The United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, European Union,

United Nations and the People's Republic of China have Missions in Lesotho. Generally, social life is what each individual makes it. You have to make your own fun.

OTHER CITIES

BUTHA-BUTHE is 60 miles northeast of Maseru on the Roof of Africa road. It has a hotel, craft center, and modern mosque.

LERIBE is a village in northwestern Lesotho, about 45 miles from Maseru. The farm-based community grows corn, wheat, and sorghum, and sells livestock hides for export. A ruined fort, built by the Cape Colony in the late 1870s, gives mute testimony to the subjugation of the people of Lesotho.

MAFETENG is a commercial and communications center 40 miles south of Maseru. The town is linked to the capital by a tarred road and is considered a good base point for touring the area. The population of Mafeteng is over 15,000.

Located 52 miles north of Maseru, **MAPUTSOE** is an expanding industrial center. Many new factories are in the town, strategically situated one mile from South Africa's railhead at Ficksburg.

MOHALE'S HOEK is a small village located in southwestern Lesotho. The area is predominantly agricultural with livestock serving as the main source of income. Wool and mohair are processed here for export.

QUTHING (also called Moyeni) lies near the Senqu (Orange) River in the south. The Abathembu and Baphuthi people live in the city; they have unique language, dress, and customs. Nearby, an unusual cave dwelling from the 1860s and fossil footprints may be viewed. Quthing boasts a new hotel complex.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Lesotho (Leh-SOO-too) is a landlocked country in the east-central part of the Republic of South Africa. It is bounded on the north and west by the Free State of South Africa; on the south by the Eastern Cape Province; and on the east by KwaZulu Natal Province.

Slightly larger than Maryland and slightly smaller than Belgium, Lesotho covers an area of 11,116 square miles. It is roughly in the form of a circle, 125 miles across. The western one-quarter of Lesotho is lowlands where the altitude varies from 5,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level. This is the country's main agricultural zone and contains most of the population. The rest of the country is composed of highlands that rise to 11,400 feet in the Drakensburg Range, which forms the eastern boundary with KwaZulu Natal. Thabana-Ntlenyana, the highest peak in Southern Africa at 11,424 feet, is just inside Lesotho's eastern border near the Sani Pass.

Maseru (Muh-SEH-roo), the capital, has an estimated population of 150,000. It is located 5,000 feet above sea level on the Caledon River, which forms the western boundary between Lesotho and the Free State in South Africa. Surrounded by scenic bluffs and mesas, Maseru has a small central business district and several neighborhoods with good housing. Beyond that, the city sprawls for miles with collections of small tin-roofed houses and roadside businesses. The surrounding countryside is severely affected by soil erosion, and despite sufficient water, the lowlands have little natural vegetation for much of the year. The landscape, mountainous, bare, dotted with picturesque villages, is starkly beautiful.

The climate is temperate year round. Rainfall, occurring mostly from October to April, ranges from 24 inches a year over most of the lowlands to over 40 inches a year in the mountains. A windy season dur-

ing August and September occasionally brings dust storms.

Average daytime temperatures are in the high 80°F in summer and can reach 100°F in Maseru. In winter, daytime temperatures average in the mid 60°F and at night sometimes drop to the teens in Maseru. Wide variations occur between daytime and nighttime temperatures. Temperatures in the mountains are even more extreme with snowfalls common in winter. The humidity year round is quite low.

Population

The country of Lesotho is inhabited by the Basotho (Bah-SOO-too) people. The singular of Basotho is Mosotho (Muh-SOO-too). The language they speak is Sesotho (Seh-SOO-too).

The Basotho combine a respect for tradition, symbolized by the hereditary Head of State, with a keen interest in their modern institutions. Their history as a nation is a source of considerable pride. Since the days of their national founder, Moshoeshoe I (Muh-SCHWAY schway) who ruled from 1824 to 1870, the Basotho have maintained their territorial integrity, and since 1966, their national sovereignty.

The population in Lesotho is now slightly over 2.1 million. Another three million ethnic Basotho live in South Africa. English is Lesotho's second language and is widely spoken, especially in the lowlands. The average citizen has a relatively low standard of living: the average annual per capita income is about \$430. There are small communities of North Americans, Europeans, South Asians and Chinese in the country.

Public Institutions

Lesotho, the former British Protectorate of Basutoland (1868-1966), became independent as a constitutional monarchy on October 4, 1966. Unfortunately, the democratic elections of 1965 were not repeated, and



Street in Maseru, Lesotho

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Liboa Jonathan dissolved the Parliament and seized power in 1970. He was overthrown by a military coup in 1986. A second ruling military council ceded power to an elected civilian government on April 2, 1993, marking the return of democratic rule to Lesotho. King Letsie III is the constitutional monarch of Lesotho, but the Prime Minister and his Cabinet hold executive power.

In September 1998, there was a civil disturbance in Maseru and other western towns. Substantial portions of the downtown Maseru business area were burned. Troops from (SADC) intervened and restored order. As this is written (early 2001), businesses are being rebuilt and the city center is coming back to life. In addition, the main thoroughfare between the South African border and the center of town is being upgraded to a four lane divided boulevard.

The hereditary chieftanship is an important traditional institution to which many Basotho look for leadership and guidance. The king is paramount chief. The principal chiefs of Lesotho act as the king's agents in some local and community government matters and oversee the allocation and leasing of land. All land is owned by the king and may only be leased.

The Christian churches (Lesotho Evangelical, Catholic, Anglican, African Methodist Episcopal and Assemblies of God) are significant institutions in Lesotho and play a prominent role in the national educational system. There is an international interdenominational church active in Maseru. The Islamic and Bahai faiths also play significant roles in the religious affairs of the country.

Various charitable and development assistance organizations are active

and include Save the Children Fund, the Red Cross Society, CARE and Caritas. The UN Development Program provides about 200 technical assistance experts. The European Union, Ireland Aid, and the UK (DIFD) also have large development assistance programs.

Arts, Science, and Education

The town of Morija, located about 25 miles outside of Maseru, boasts an exceptional museum - the Morija Museum and Archives is a treasure house of Lesotho history. It has a wonderful collection of fossilized remains of prehistoric reptiles, including dinosaurs. Traditional shields and spears adorn the walls, and two examples of the Khau, the Basotho equivalent of the Victoria Cross, are on display. Jewelry, worn in the 19th century by wealthy people, particularly those of Nguni ori-

gin, is also on display. The museum abounds with traditional clothing and implements.

The Basotho have long valued education. The National University of Lesotho (NUL), formerly shared by Botswana and Swaziland, was nationalized in 1975. NUL provides for Lesotho's higher education needs in humanities, physical sciences, law, economics and social sciences. Programs are also developing in agriculture and technical education. NUL is located in Roma, 20 miles from Maseru.

Commerce and Industry

Because of its location, Lesotho is heavily dependent on the Republic of South Africa for trade and employment opportunities. A significant portion of Lesotho's income comes from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), of which Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa are members. Most private commercial enterprises are small. Attractive wall hangings, rugs, pottery and other handicrafts are produced locally.

The mines of South Africa still provide employment to Basotho males, but not nearly as much as in the recent past. The garment and construction industries have experienced important growth in recent years, but the agricultural sector livestock and subsistence farming - remains the largest domestic source of employment. Lesotho will benefit from AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, since it will eliminate tariffs on goods already competitively produced in Lesotho for export to the U.S. The bottom line is that Lesotho has a serious unemployment/under-employment problem that is not susceptible to easy solutions.

Lesotho and South Africa are now engaged in a massive public works project to capture and pump Lesotho water to the Johannesburg area. Katse Dam was completed in

1998 along with a tunnel to transfer water north to Gauteng Province. A second dam, Mohale, is under construction now together with a tunnel to transfer water from behind this dam over to the Katse Reservoir. Scheduled to last through 2030, the Lesotho Highlands Development Project (LHDP) will absorb over \$5 billion of capital investment. In 1998 the country began receiving royalties for water transferred through LHDP tunnels and pipelines to Gauteng.

Transportation

Automobiles

Americans have no special problems licensing and registering their vehicles in Lesotho. Leaded and unleaded gasoline are available in Lesotho and South Africa. A wide range of family and four wheel-drive vehicles is available locally.

Although new vehicles are slightly more expensive than in the U.S., used vehicles are available at prices comparable to or better than those in the U.S. When imported vehicles are sold to individuals without duty-free privileges, a 50% duty is charged if the vehicle has been in the country for less than 2 years. Since left hand-drive cars are no longer allowed to be imported into South Africa, the prospective market for sale of a left-hand drive vehicle is limited to Lesotho. In all of southern Africa, traffic moves on the left side of the road. All things considered, a prospective resident of Lesotho would be better off with a right-hand drive car as it is easier to see past the car in front when overtaking. Nevertheless, left-hand-drive cars may be safely driven here.

Most German and Japanese and some American cars can be serviced in Maseru. However, standards of service vary from good to poor, depending on the particular vehicle and on the particular mechanic. Frequently, parts for American cars must be ordered from the U.S., and extended waits for repairs are commonplace. Some prefer to take

their vehicles to South Africa for servicing (Ladybrand is 12 miles and Bloemfontein is 85 miles away). Dealer service for the most popular makes and models is available, but bear in mind that a car built for the U.S. market will be quite different from the same car built for the South African market. Toyota, Nissan, Honda, Mazda, Isuzu, Mercedes Benz, BMW, VW and Opel are all popular in the South African market.

Third-party liability insurance is unnecessary in southern Africa because it is provided automatically through a tax on gasoline purchases. However, third party property insurance must be purchased locally. By American standards, it is inexpensive. Collision and comprehensive insurance should be purchased through one of the U.S. firms that specializes in overseas automobile insurance (e.g., Harry Jannette or Clements).

It is a good idea to bring an international drivers license with you (purchase at AAA in the U.S.) to obtain a Lesotho license. Drivers will otherwise have to submit their American license to be kept until they surrender their Lesotho license at departure.

Local

About 1,000 miles of Lesotho's roads are paved, including the major north-south road and the road to Mokhotlong in the east. A few main rural highways compare to U.S. two-lane rural roads, but lane markings, signs, shoulders, and guardrails are not to U.S. standards. Unfenced livestock poses a particular danger. Other roads are rough, and mountain travel outside of the dry season requires a four wheel-drive vehicle. Traffic in Lesotho as well as in the rest of southern Africa keeps to the left. Public transportation consists of government-owned buses and private taxis (actually minivans). Intercity travel at night is not recommended.

Regional

There is only rail freight service into Lesotho from South Africa. Bloem-

fontein (85 miles from Maseru) is the nearest place to board a passenger train. Moshoeshe I International Airport is 12 miles outside of Maseru. The only air service is provided by South African Airlink between Maseru and Johannesburg International Airport. SA Airlink flies Citation 41 turboprop planes into Maseru. These flights are often overbooked and connecting travelers are advised to reconfirm their onward flight to Maseru as soon as possible after arrival in Johannesburg. Travelers may also fly to Bloemfontein and arrange road transportation on to Maseru.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Acceptable telephone and cellular service is available in the larger population centers, but much of the interior can only be reached by radio operated by the police or missionary organizations. Cellular coverage for many parts of the country is spotty. Good international telephone and fax service is available in all of the larger towns.

Radio and TV

In Maseru, 10 FM stations and 4 AM stations can be heard. The BBC transmits on FM 24 hours a day. Other stations have programming in English, Sesotho, and Afrikaans. Some of the South African stations have programming very similar to easy listening stations in the U.S. With the decline in the value of the rand/maloti relative to the dollar over the last 2 years, prices for electronic equipment and recorded music and video will seem quite low compared to U.S. prices. The videotapes that are available locally are formatted in the British PAL system. A multisystem TV, which can be purchased in South Africa more cheaply than in the U.S., would be quite useful in that it will receive local and cable TV as well as play local and U.S. videos. Since the nearest full-size cinema is located 85 miles from Maseru, a TV VCR player has the potential to provide considerable entertainment. Lesotho has no TV station of its

own, but rebroadcasts news for 1 1/2 hours each evening through a South African pay-TV station. South African TV (SABC 1 and SABC 2) is multi-lingual and is received on British PAL system frequencies. An inexpensive outside TV antenna is required in Maseru. Programs in English and Afrikaans alternate throughout the day and are interspersed with programs in native languages. Shows are usually South African, British or American in origin. Also available is satellite TV service (DSTV) from South Africa. About 40 channels are available including CNN, BBC, SkyNews, CNBC, ESPN, local sports and entertainment (National Geographic, Discovery, BBC Prime, movies, food and fashion). The DSTV costs \$400 for a dish and setup, with subscription cost at approximately \$50 per month.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

One government-sponsored and four independent English-language newspapers are published weekly in Maseru. South African dailies are available, but their coverage of international news is spotty. The South African Weekly Mail and Guardian has been internationally acclaimed for its excellent reporting.

Many popular South African, British and American magazines are available locally. Magazines published/printed in South Africa are quite inexpensive, while imported publications usually sell for more than the price printed on the cover. Local bookstores and variety shops have a good selection of magazines. Paperback and hard cover books are available at several bookstores in Bloemfontein; they are, in general, more expensive than in the U.S. Amazon.com is a good alternative.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Physician care is available in Ladybrand, South Africa (15 minutes drive).

Specialist care and hospitalization require travel to Bloemfontein (90 minutes drive). Bloemfontein has several hospitals and the standard of medical services provided is very high. The Government-operated hospital in Maseru is not recommended.

Community Health

Most of the central part of Maseru is connected to a central sewage system. Garbage is collected once a week in most of the capital and is disposed of in landfills. Maseru's tap water is generally potable.

Lesotho's various public health problems are most serious in the rural areas. During the rainy season, heavy runoff will contaminate drinking water supplies and cause outbreaks of intestinal diseases. There is no malaria in Lesotho. Disease incidence in Maseru is low. The most serious public health concerns are HIV/AIDS, road accidents and tuberculosis, which is highly contagious at a certain stage.

Preventive Measures

There are no required immunizations for entry into Lesotho. However, the State Department recommends that visitors be immunized for Hepatitis A and B, typhoid fever, tetanus and diphtheria. Although yellow fever is not endemic in Lesotho, proof of vaccination for that illness may be required for those entering from countries in which yellow fever does exist (other parts of sub-Saharan Africa and certain Latin American countries).

Some poisonous snakes and scorpions are found in Lesotho, especially in the warmer months. Common-sense precautions should be taken. Children should be warned periodically about the possibility of encountering these critters in the garden.

It may take the new arrival a few weeks to adjust to Lesotho's altitude - just over 5,000 feet. Some people experience headaches, dizziness and a general lethargy, but these symptoms soon pass. Although houses in Maseru have no central

heat, some residences have fireplaces, electric radiators and split A/Cheating units. The humidity is quite low, especially in the winter. Depending on your preference, electric blankets or down comforters will be good items to have during the winter.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

There are daily flights to Maseru and Bloemfontein from Johannesburg International Airport. Travelers with an overnight layover in Johannesburg en route to Maseru should book a room well in advance at the Holiday Inn at the airport. There is regular minivan service between the airport and the hotel. There is also a transit hotel inside the terminal building. Service is very basic but economical and convenient if one is making a direct connection outside of South Africa. It is a Protea Hotel and can be booked through a travel agent.

A passport is required, but no visa is needed for visits of 30 days or less. For more information concerning entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Kingdom of Lesotho, 2511 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 797-5533. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Lesotho.

Residential permits for Lesotho can be obtained after your arrival. Most travel to and from Lesotho requires transit passage through South Africa. Tourist (blue) passport holders do not need a South African visa.

Americans living in or visiting Lesotho are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security within Lesotho. The U.S. Embassy is located at 254 Kingsway, Maseru West; the mailing address is P.O.

Box 333, Maseru 100, Lesotho. The telephone number is 266-312-666.

Pets

Because of frequent delays in air-freight arrivals, pets should travel with you on the plane. Check the quarantine laws in countries in which you plan to stop. (Britain, for example, has very strict laws regarding animal quarantine.) It is best not to layover anywhere when traveling with pets. Animals arriving in Lesotho must be accompanied by a certificate of good health issued within the six months previous to arrival and a current rabies vaccination, given within 30 days prior to arrival. A Lesotho import permit can be obtained after arrival. An import permit for South Africa will be issued 6 to 8 weeks prior to travel by: Veterinary Services Private Bag X138 Pretoria 001 R.S.A.

Additionally, all pets entering South Africa must travel as manifested air cargo, not as unaccompanied air baggage. If your pet arrives without the proper documentation or as unaccompanied baggage, it will be denied entry. You may want to employ the services of a pet expediter: Animal Travel Agency (Pty) Ltd. PO. Box 1478, Greenpark Bldg., Corner 11th Ave & Wessel Rd. Rivonia, R.S.A. Tel: (011) 803-1883.

The agency can obtain the necessary airport permit for South Africa, can meet the pets at the airport, can handle the formalities, and can arrange for kennel facilities, if necessary.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The maloti (M), Lesotho's currency, is pegged one-to-one to the South African rand. The rand is accepted in Lesotho, while the maloti is not accepted in South Africa, except in a few border towns. The commercial banks in Maseru (Standard Bank, Nedbank, and Lesotho Bank) offer the same services available in the U.S., but charges fees for almost every transaction. Foreign exchange transactions are possible through the Standard Bank. Banks through-

out South Africa have ATMs which will accept American ATM cards and provide rand. Security concerns must be taken into account when using ATM machines as there is the possibility of a thief grabbing the money as it comes out of the machine.

A General Sales Tax (GST) is presently in effect in Lesotho; there are plans to institute a Value Added Tax (VAT) in the near future.

Lesotho uses the Metric system of weights and measures i.e., kilometers, liters, kilograms, meters and degrees Celsius.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar. 12	Moshoeshoe's Day
Mar. 21	National Tree Planting Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 2	King's Birthday
May/June	Ascension Day*
July 4	Family Day
Oct. 4	Independence Day
Oct. 7	National Sports Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Bardell, John E. and James H. Cobbe. *Lesotho: Dilemmas of Dependence in Southern Africa*. Westview Press: Boulder, Colorado.

Becker, Peter. *Hill of Destiny: The Life and Times of Moshesh, Ruler of the Basotho*. Penguin Books.

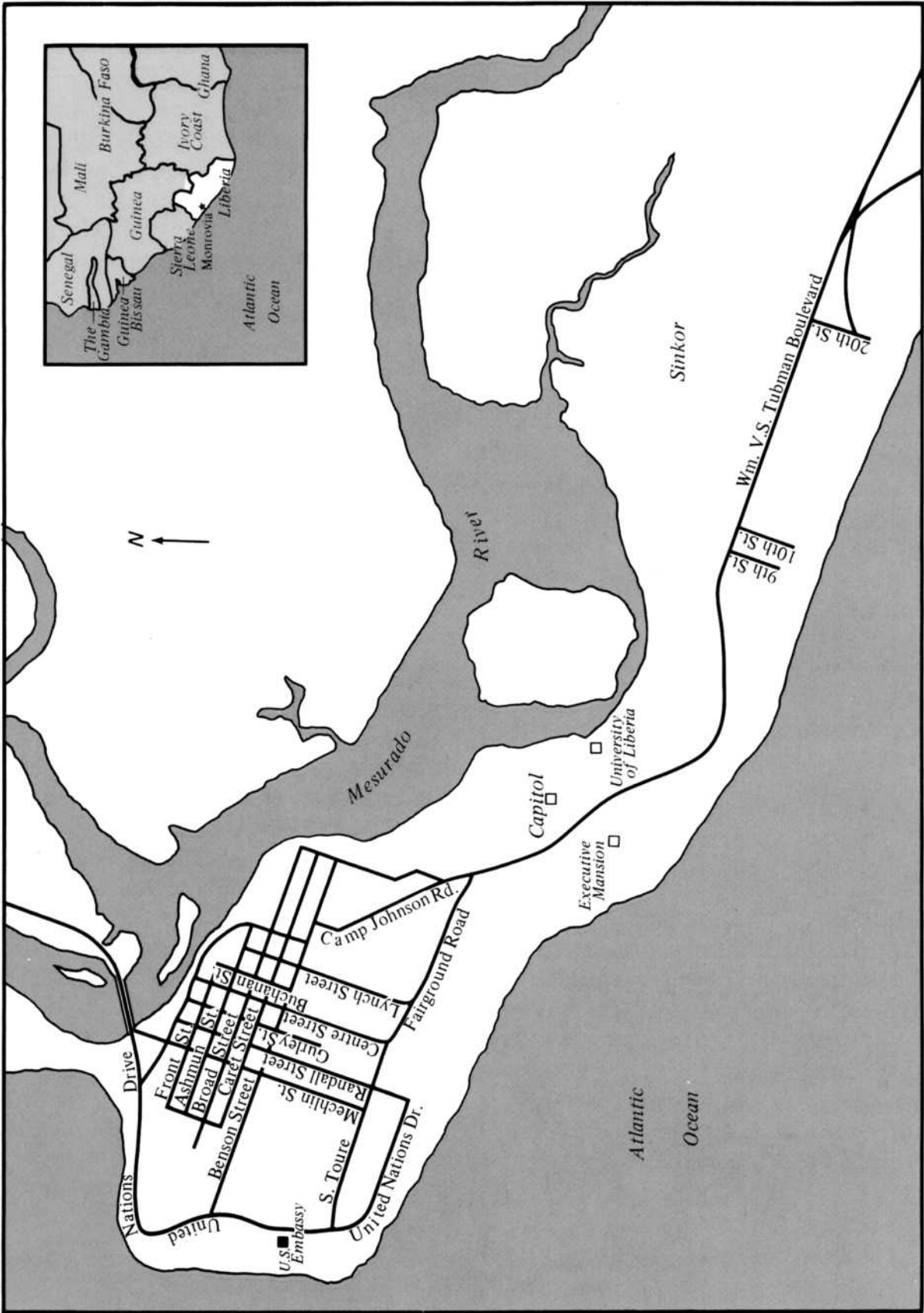
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Haliburton, Gordon. *Historical Dictionary of Lesotho*. Scarecrow Press, Inc: Metuchen, New Jersey, 1977.

Murray, Calvin. *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labor in*

Lesotho. Cambridge University Press.

Thompson, Leonard. *Survival in Two Worlds: Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, 1786-1870*. Clarendon Press: Oxford, England, 1975.



Monrovia, Liberia

LIBERIA

Republic of Liberia

Major City:
Monrovia

Other Cities:
Buchanan, Gbarnga, Greenville, Harbel, Harper,
Robertsport, Sanniquellie, Voinjama

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Liberia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Editor's Note: Liberia experienced a devastating civil war in the 1990s. The capital, Monrovia, and other parts of the country were heavily damaged. Some parts of this entry are based on conditions in Liberia prior to this war.

The name **LIBERIA**, from the Latin *liber*, meaning "free," was chosen to signify the intent of the republic's founding on the west Guinean coast. The present-day history of Liberia began in 1822, when the American Colonization Society was chartered by Congress to sponsor in Africa a colony of freed slaves from the United States. Several thousand emancipated blacks, who had been held in servitude on Brit-

ish and American naval vessels, joined the settlement and, in 1847, Liberia became the first independent republic in sub-Saharan Africa. In the ensuing years, the young nation struggled for survival against a hostile geographical environment, financial uncertainty, and the threatened encroachment of European colonialism.

Although there are many political, social, and economic links with the U.S., Liberia has a rich culture of its own. It shares a multitude of problems with other developing nations in striving toward economic self-reliance, and in using its natural and human resources. Liberia is a country in transition, attempting to redefine its national identity and aims.

MAJOR CITY

Monrovia

Monrovia is situated on a long narrow cape, with one side facing a vast expanse of mangrove swamps drained by the Mesurado River and the other facing the Atlantic Ocean.

Founded in 1822 with the arrival of the first settlers, many localities are still identified by the names of orig-

inal villages, settler communities, and the ethnic tribal districts that grew up around them, all becoming incorporated into the city of Monrovia as it expanded. Originally named Christopolis, it was renamed after one of the settlement's most prominent sponsors, U.S. President James Monroe.

Downtown Monrovia, with its markets, stores, offices, and apartment buildings, occupies the tip of Cape Mesurado, rising to the promontory of Mamba Point. The narrow body of the Cape is taken up by the mostly residential Sinkor area. Beyond Sinkor, a number of suburbs extend towards the base of the Cape, and along fingers of land jutting out into the mangroves. Between the downtown and Sinkor areas is Capitol Hill, where the Executive Mansion, government office buildings, and the University of Liberia campus are located.

Two bridges cross the Mesurado River from the downtown area to Bushrod Island—the industrial section of the city, with many factories, the refinery, the Freeport of Monrovia, and many low, overcrowded buildings. Another bridge at the far end of the island crosses the wide St. Paul River.

Monrovia's population, estimated at 15,000 in 1950, is currently

1,413,000. Growing at twice the national average, the population is exerting great stresses on the city's health, sanitation, and transport services. Modern apartments and government buildings are often surrounded by squatter settlements.

Monrovia's business community includes many Americans and Europeans. Lebanese and Indian nationals operate most of the large stores and commercial enterprises. A sizable group of non-Liberian Africans (mostly Sierra Leoneans, Ghanaians, Guineans, and Nigerians) also live in the city. In addition, tourists and business persons visit the capital.

Education

Most dependents attend the American Cooperative School (ACS) in the Congotown area of Monrovia. This private, coeducational school offers a U.S. style education from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for students of all nationalities. A seven-member board of directors, elected for two-year terms by the membership of the American Cooperative Education Association, governs the school. Associate membership is automatically conferred on parents and guardians of all children enrolled in the school.

The curriculum resembles that of U.S. public schools. French, Spanish, art, typing, computer science, journalism, photography, African cultural studies, chess, drama, choir, yearbook, sports, and other electives are offered in grades nine through 12. Personal computers are maintained for class use. Numerous field trips and study opportunities to local industries as well as various cross-cultural experiences are provided. Proximity to the ocean allows for practical instruction in marine biology. The school year runs from late August to early June, and usually includes a two-week break at Christmas. All Liberian holidays and U.S. Thanksgiving Day are observed.

ACS, accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges, is one of only three American high

schools in Africa so accredited. The major effect of accreditation is to ensure the acceptance of school credits when students transfer or present transcripts for college entrance. The school is housed in an air-conditioned building with 22 classrooms, an administrative office, gymnasium, library, counselor's office, and teacher's lounge. There are two athletic playing fields. An American superintendent directs the school, assisted by an American principal. All teachers have U.S. teaching credentials. Bus service is provided.

Recreation

The national sport in Liberia is soccer, the leading teams having large and enthusiastic followings. Matches are played either at the Antoinette Tubman Stadium in Monrovia, or at a modern sports complex located five miles beyond the Sinkor area. Soccer enthusiasts have praised the performance of West African teams. Basketball is a growing sport.

There is ample opportunity for participation in a wide variety of sporting activities in Liberia, and especially around Monrovia. Local recreation associations and other expatriate organizations provide a great number of activities in a variety of settings.

The Monrovia Sporting Club, located in the modern Hotel Africa complex, offers a large swimming pool, a private beach and lagoon, windsurfing, tennis, horseback riding, and other activities.

The Voice of America (VOA) complex has a nine-hole golf course, swimming pool, and tennis courts, available through membership.

Golf is very popular. There are courses at VOA, Firestone, and Bong Mines—all within two hours of Monrovia—and at several other locations as well.

The Liberia Squash Club in Monrovia offers low rates for an increasingly popular sport among both Americans and Liberians. The

YMCA, the first on the continent, offers a number of programs and facilities, including an active Tae Kwon Doe karate club.

The American community and other expatriate organizations often join in intramural activities. During the dry season softball leagues are often organized, while the less conventional "Hash House Harrier" runs are fast becoming an institution. Leagues often grow up around a single individual with organizational abilities and enthusiasm. Even when formal facilities do not exist or special equipment is required, one will often hear of an individual or group that has outfitted itself as necessary. For example, scuba diving, ultra-lite flying clubs, weight training, and other groups have been organized.

All sports equipment must be brought to Liberia. While some equipment can be borrowed, practically none is available in town.

Outdoor activities abound in Liberia, with water sports being the most accessible. A number of beautiful local beaches have their own distinct attractions, depending upon the mixture of those who frequent them, the facilities, and relative isolation. One beach may have a popular restaurant and bar, another may have nothing but isolated beaches and beautiful lagoons. Robertsport, a few hours from Monrovia, offers pristine beaches and a small hotel near Liberia's largest lake. Fish and other seafood can be bought from local fishermen as they land their canoes.

Harper, an hour's flight down the coast, was the center of the Maryland Colonization Society's settlements, and is a small attractive town out of the last century. Buchanan, a two-hour drive southeast of Monrovia, has isolated beaches and lagoons.

In all locations, care must be exercised when swimming because of strong currents and undertow. Children should always be supervised, and should preferably stay in the



View of Monrovia, Liberia

EPD Photos. Reproduced by permission.

lagoons. Snorkeling, spear fishing, and scuba diving are all practicable, but one must establish connections with small local groups that can service equipment. Boating and fishing, centered on the St. Paul River area, are popular. A number of boats owned by members of the expatriate communities are used for deep sea, surf, and river fishing.

The Bong Mining Company, in the Bong Mountains about two hours north of Monrovia, has extensive recreational facilities, including a golf course, two German and one Italian restaurant, and aircraft and shooting clubs. Weapons must be borrowed locally. A large swimming pool, soccer fields, tennis courts, weight facilities, and a guest house make the area a pleasant weekend stay. The LAMCO mining community in northeastern Liberia, about eight hours from Monrovia, similarly offers modern facilities in a mountain setting.

In contrast to these resort type areas, Liberia's interior offers a vastly different and rich experience. Liberia has the largest remaining areas of intact tropical rain forests in West Africa, with an incredible diversity of birds, plants, and wildlife. Over 500 species of birds are listed for the country and many more remain to be discovered. Elephants, leopards, chimpanzees, and pygmy hippos still live in the interior regions. The privately owned Monrovia Zoo offers a glimpse of some of this natural wealth. Gardening and bird watching are enjoyed near Monrovia. Regionally, the Sahel zone of Africa to the north holds the escarpment dwellings of Mali and the European-influenced cities of Banjul, Dakar, and Abidjan. Morocco and the Canary Islands also offer changes of scenery and culture.

Entertainment

Evening entertainment in Monrovia centers around the home, where a casual atmosphere prevails. Activities include barbecues, cocktail parties, and televised sports events. Although there are several movie theaters in town, most Americans frequent only one, the Relda in the Sinkor area, which shows American and European films. Local dramatic groups occasionally present amateur theater productions—the most active of these is the Monrovia Players, but activity depends on the interest, efforts, and talents of city residents. Productions are staged at the Ducor Hotel, with buffet dinners preceding the performances.

Monrovia's several good restaurants offer a variety of international cuisines (Lebanese, German, Liberian, French, Italian, Spanish, Oriental, and Indian). The food is generally good, but service is sometimes slow.

Prices are comparable to those in U.S. cities. Nightclubs range from the popular disco at Hotel Africa to a number of clubs in town. Movie houses usually play Indian and karate movies, but some have begun to introduce a few African films.

Cultural exhibitions take place on Providence Island, the original landing place of the settlers, while African musicians frequently perform in town.

The American Women in Liberia is an organization which provides interesting activities and fellowship for U.S. expatriates; it encourages associate memberships for non-Americans. The U.S. Mission Women's Club and the teen club also sponsor a variety of activities. Since many other countries have diplomatic missions in Liberia, international social contacts are numerous.

Most Monrovia have an up-country hometown. One of the richest local experiences is being introduced to up-country life by Liberian friends, either at small town church socials outside of Monrovia, or at "coming out" feasts for bush schools. Initiative and friendliness can open many doors. Generally speaking, Liberians are friendly and open people. The pace in this country is easier than many places, and patience, courtesy, and a sense of humor are necessary traits.

OTHER CITIES

BUCHANAN, formerly called Grand Bassa, is the largest of Liberia's other cities, although it only has a population of about 25,000. It is located in Grand Bassa County, about 70 miles southeast of the capital, and is the port from which Mount Nimba's iron ore is exported. Africa's first iron-ore washing and pelletizing plant was opened here in 1968. The city was founded in 1835 by a black group, the Quakers of the Young Men's Colonization Society.

GBARNGA (also spelled Gbanga and Gbanka), with a population of about 10,860, is located northeast of the capital near the Guinean border. Poultry farming and a rubber factory dominate its commercial activities. There are also secondary schools, churches, and a mosque in Gbarnga.

Nestled on the Atlantic coast, **GREENVILLE** is a port city approximately 150 miles south of Monrovia. It was established by freed American slaves in 1838 and was once known as Sino (also spelled Sinoe). Its main exports include lumber, rubber, and agricultural products. Linked to the capital and to Tchien in the north, Greenville has a population of about 9,000.

Home of the Firestone rubber plantation, **HARBEL** is less than 50 miles northeast of Monrovia. Harbel plays a crucial role in the exportation of liquid latex and crepe rubber. Firestone maintains the city's hospital, power plant, radio service, as well as roads, housing, schools, and a literacy program. The Liberian Institute of Tropical Medicine and Roberts International Airport are two miles southeast of the city. Roughly 11,500 people live in Harbel.

In the extreme southeast, near the border of Cote d'Ivoire, is the town of **HARPER**, a commercial seaport for the vast rubber plantations of the interior. Named for Robert Goodloe Harper of the American Colonization Society, the town is the site of Maryland College of Our Lady of Fatima, the William V.S. Tubman College of Technology, the J.J. Dossen Memorial Hospital, a public library and several churches. A sugar refinery was opened here in 1978.

ROBERTSPORT, also a seaport, is in Grand Cape Mount County. It is named for Joseph Jenkins Roberts, Liberia's first president. It is connected to Monrovia by air and by road. The town experiences heavy rainfall, roughly 205 inches annually. Inhabitants engaged in fishing

and rice farming. It is noted for such tourist attractions as picturesque Lake Piso and Massating Island, which is rich with wildlife and small fishing villages.

SANNIQUELLIE is the northern trading center at the foot of Mount Nimba, and **VOINJAMA**, Liberia's most northern city, is above the Wologisi Range, where a national park is being created.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Liberia, about the size of Ohio, lies on the west coast of Africa, some 150 miles north of the equator. It shares borders with Sierra Leone and Guinea on the north and northwest, with Cote d'Ivoire on the east, and courses the Atlantic Ocean on the south. Largely covered by rain forests, it has a sea-level coastal area that gradually rises to a low plateau and ends in the low-lying mountains (4,000 feet) on the Guinea-Cote d'Ivoire border. Liberia has a relatively long coastline of 350 miles and no point is further than 170 miles inland.

Because of its proximity to the ocean and the equator, and its low altitude, Liberia's climate is tropical. The only variation is a six-month rainy season from May through November, marked by frequent, long-lasting, and often torrential rainfalls. Occasional sunny days break up this long rainy interval, and some areas are refreshed by sea breezes.

Liberia receives very heavy rainfall, with roughly 200 inches a year in Monrovia. Temperatures average 81°F.

The dry season (December through April), sometimes characterized by a dust-laden atmosphere, is the hottest period. However, the country maintains its green look throughout

the year. Liberia's temperatures are less noticeable than its oppressive humidity—one of the world's highest. Averaging between 70 and 80 percent, the humidity deteriorates vehicles, furnishings, and clothing, and encourages household pests. Constant precautions must be taken to avoid mildew and rust.

Population

Liberia's population is estimated at 3.1 million, a figure that does not count the refugees who fled the country during the civil war (more than half Liberia's population at the time). Monrovia's population is approximately 1.4 million. Liberians are either members of indigenous ethnic groups, 95 percent, descendants of black Americans who began settling in the area in 1822, or, increasingly, a mixture of both. Influences of American settlers are reflected in both family and Christian names, as well as in the designations of towns, cities, and counties. The current trend, however, is to recover or adopt African names. In a relationship unique in Africa, Liberia has maintained strong cultural, social, familial, and business ties with Americans.

The 16 major ethnic groups are the Kru, Kpelle, Mandingo, Gola, Loma, Krahn, Bassa, Grebo, Vai, Mano, Mendi, Dey, Gise, Gio, Belle, and Gbande. Many tribal customs are still practiced; others have disappeared or changed over the years. The increasing educational level, economic modernization, migration toward urban centers, and the spread of both Christianity and Islam have exerted strong pressures on traditional culture.

English is Liberia's official language, but tribal dialects are widely spoken. Most Liberians with whom Americans come in contact, either socially or in business, speak fluent English. Many government officials have been educated in the U.S. or Europe. The less educated, on the other hand, speak a "Liberian English" with distinctive idioms and pronunciation.

Government

In 1847, Liberia became the first African republic with the declaration of its independence from the founding American societies and adoption of a constitution based on the U.S. model. The dominant True Whig Party ruled virtually uncontested until 1980, when the government was overthrown by a group of noncommissioned officers led by Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe.

In 1984, a new constitution guaranteeing personal and political freedoms was ratified by referendum, an Interim National Assembly was appointed, and the ban on political activities was lifted. Multi-party elections were held in 1985 and, amidst much controversy, Samuel K. Doe was declared the winner. Throughout 1988 and 1989, the Doe government cracked down on all political opposition.

In January 1990, a small group of rebels led by Charles Taylor launched a series of attacks against Doe's government troops. The skirmishes quickly degenerated into a bloody civil war, with fighting along tribal lines. The rebels called themselves the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia (NPFL). A second rebel group, calling itself the Independent NPFL and opposed to Taylor's group, formed with Prince Johnson as its leader. The government, which was now forced to fight against two rebel groups simultaneously, lost control of Monrovia to Prince Johnson's rebels in July 1990. Doe and remnants of his army retreated to the heavily fortified Presidential Palace.

In August 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent a 4,000-man peace-keeping force (ECOMOG) to Monrovia in an attempt to end the fighting. However, President Doe was captured, tortured, and executed by Prince Johnson's rebels in September 1990. Despite three peace agreements, fighting continued into the 1990s.

On May 8, 1996 Liberia's rival factions approved a peace plan requiring an immediate cease-fire. Charles Taylor was elected president in mid-1997 and took office in August. Liberia's civil war cost as many as 200,000 lives and displaced about 700,000 people from their homes.

The flag of Liberia consists of six red and five white horizontal stripes. In the upper corner, near the staff, is a dark blue square with a white star. Liberia's flag is very similar to the American flag.

Arts, Science, Education

The isolation of the interior until recent times has left much of the traditional culture intact. The main socializing forces have been the age grades of Eastern Liberia and the "secret" initiation societies, such as the men's *Poro* and women's *Sande* societies of the western and central portions of the country.

Traditionally, village children attend a society's "bush school" for a period of years, while those attending modern schools participate only for shorter periods between semesters. In the society bush school, they are taught the skills and traditions needed for life, forge the bonds of society membership, and pass together into adulthood.

In addition, much traditional knowledge reposes in special societies that incorporate, or have developed around, particular special skills and needs, such as the use of herbal medicines, blacksmithing, and bridge building.

Traditional arts still thrive in Liberia. Dancing, story-telling, brass-casting, and carving are widely practiced. The endless variety of masked and costumed "devils" serves not only to delight and entertain, but also to teach traditional values and judge litigations in traditional life; some are viewed as the embodiment of forest spirits and are powerful agents of social control.

Statues, masks, and other carvings are not only great aesthetic works; they serve as links to the spiritual world. The carvings of one group in particular, the Dan of northeast Liberia, are world renowned. Many of these arts are performed or displayed as vital components of public occasions. Efforts are being made to record the oral histories, knowledge of plant medicines, and the manufacture of items characteristic of traditional life. The National Museum in the capital is expected to play a leadership role in this effort.

The University of Liberia in Monrovia and Cuttington University College in the interior were founded in the mid- and late 1800s. The Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) is working to increase the fertility of Liberia's weathered soils, and to develop alternatives to the destructive slash-and-burn agriculture practiced by most farmers. The Liberian Institute for Biomedical Research, working with chimpanzees captured in the interior, was instrumental in developing a vaccine for Hepatitis B, a disease that affects more than 200 million people worldwide. Research into other major tropical diseases continues.

The formation of technical institutes and public foundations, such as the Tubman Institute of Technology, the Liberian Association of Writers, and the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, has resulted in a growing awareness of the benefits of technology, as well as its possible threat to traditional culture and the environment. As with many African countries, Liberia is struggling to realize the promise of its resources and cultural wealth, under increasingly unfavorable circumstances.

Commerce and Industry

Civil war during the 1990s destroyed much of Liberia's economy, especially the infrastructure in and around Monrovia. Expatriate businessmen fled the country, tak-

ing capital and expertise with them. There is concern that many of them will not return. Richly endowed with water, mineral resources, forests, and a climate favorable to agriculture, Liberia had been a producer and exporter of basic products, while local manufacturing, mainly foreign owned, has been small in scope. Currently, economic priorities include restoring infrastructure and developing sound fiscal policies to spur growth.

Prior to the civil war, agriculture was the most important sector of the economy. In 1989, it contributed nearly 40 percent to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employed nearly 70 percent of the work force. Principal cash crops were coffee, cocoa, rubber, and timber. Rice, cassava, and vegetables were the main food crops.

Liberia's industrial capacity is extremely small and contributes only a small percentage of GDP, currently 10 percent. Industries included rubber processing, palm oil processing, food processing, furniture, and construction materials.

Prior to the civil war, Liberia was one of the world's major producers and exporters of iron ore. However, the fighting has severely damaged the mining sector. In the past, diamonds and gold were also mined in small quantities. Liberia has deposits of bauxite, manganese, barite, and uranium, but these have not been exploited.

Iron ore, rubber, timber, and coffee were Liberia's primary exports. Most of these products were destined for the United States, countries of the European Community, and the Netherlands. Liberia imported chemicals, machinery, transport equipment, and foodstuffs from the United States, Japan, China, the Netherlands, and its West African neighbors.

Liberia maintains a Chamber of Commerce at Capitol Hill, P.O. Box 92, Monrovia; telephone: 223738; telex: 44211.

Transportation

Public transportation in Monrovia consists mainly of taxis and buses. Vans or buses from central "parking stations" serve the country, any point being reachable by changing vehicles at appropriate stations along the way. Overcrowding and a high rate of accidents discourage most Americans from using this system, but vehicles can be chartered at a negotiable price. Small aircraft charter service is available to Monrovia to all towns which have airfields. Roberts International Airport, 36 miles from Monrovia, is serviced daily by a number of African and European airlines.

Since taxi service partly substitutes for public transportation, it is operated as such. Passengers constantly enter and leave taxis, and frequently numerous stops are made before the individual destination is reached. If the driver is requested not to make stops, a negotiable and higher fare must be paid. Drivers generally know the way to familiar landmarks or major street intersections, but often they must be directed to less well-known locations. Although the accident rate among taxis is high, many expatriate Americans who own private cars choose taxis for going downtown, rather than having to look for parking spaces on the crowded streets. It should be noted that all taxis in Monrovia are yellow.

Liberia has about 400 miles of paved roads, including those in the capital. The rest are laterite dirt. During the rainy season, laterite roads are made difficult or impassable by erosion and mud. In the dry season, long drives can be uncomfortably dusty. Personal cars should be undercoated and equipped with heavy-duty springs and shock absorbers. Air conditioning is advantageous, as it not only provides relief from the heat and humidity, but also from the dust. The humid climate has a dramatic effect on vehicles; rust is the most serious problem, but car interiors also eventually develop mildew odors.

Unleaded gasoline is not available in Liberia. Catalytic convertors must be removed from cars shipped to the country.

Small cars are the most convenient on narrow, crowded city streets. Nonfuel-injection engines should be specified for any cars being shipped to Liberia because of the lack of repair facilities and spare parts for fuel-injection models. All locally purchased auto parts are costly, and certain items must be ordered from abroad. The following spare parts are useful to have on hand: alternator or generator, fan belts for car and air conditioner, wiper blades, heavy-duty shock absorbers, extra set of points, battery, muffler, exhaust pipe, and tires.

Chevrolet is represented in Monrovia by dealers who have repair facilities. Honda, Nissan, Mazda, Toyota, Peugeot, Renault, Mercedes, BMW, and Volkswagen are also among models sold and serviced in the capital.

A Liberian driver's license (including vision test) is required, and third-party liability insurance is mandatory. Insurance costs vary according to the car's value, age, and engine. Full coverage for personal liability and collision insurance are additional. The Liberian Government requires annual vehicle inspections.

Communications

Telephone and postal services are in short supply in Monrovia, having been severely disrupted during the civil war. Prior to the war, these services were generally inadequate.

The government-controlled Liberian Broadcasting Corporation, which oversees all broadcasting, operates commercial radio and commercial television stations. There were approximately 790,000 radios and 70,000 television sets prior to the fighting in Monrovia in mid-1990.

Many of the English-language newspapers and magazines pub-

lished during the Doe regime ceased publication during late 1990. In 1991, a number of new papers had been launched. The titles include *The Inquirer*, *New Times*, and *The Patriot*.

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, many resident Americans received copies of the *International Herald Tribune* and international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*. The magazine *Africa Now* appeared sporadically.

Health

Major medical and surgical cases among expatriates are always referred to either European or American hospitals. Missionary hospitals operate in Liberia, but facilities for treating complicated conditions which require specialized equipment or in-patient care are not available locally.

Community health and sanitation in Liberia are far below American and European standards. Even in Monrovia, garbage collection is sporadic. Frequent breaks in water lines and lack of adherence to plumbing codes necessitate the boiling and filtering of all drinking water. Food inspection is inadequate. All locally purchased meat must be thoroughly cooked before consumption, and vegetables should be well cleaned and soaked in chlorine solution.

Malaria is endemic throughout the country, as are schistosomiasis and several other parasitic diseases. Poisonous snakes, although present, are not a health hazard.

Diarrhea and general fatigue are common ailments experienced by Americans living in Liberia. For protection from the more serious preventable diseases prevalent in the country, several recommendations are made: boiling and filtering of all drinking water; regular use of malaria suppressants (initiated two weeks before arrival, and continued for six weeks after departure); eating only fruits and vegetables that have been treated with chlorine;

staying out of fresh water, particularly up-country, where the water is infested with schistosomes; and keeping all immunizations current (yellow fever, typhoid, polio, cholera, tetanus, and gamma globulin). It is imperative that yellow fever inoculations are current for entry into Liberia. Currently, AIDS is a minimal risk in Liberia. Health conditions throughout Liberia have deteriorated greatly as a result of the civil war.

Clothing and Services

Because of the hot, humid climate and the poor quality of dry cleaning, loose-fitting, washable clothing is recommended. It is acceptable for all occasions. With year-round wear and frequent laundering, clothes rarely last long; an initial good supply is needed for an extended stay. Local markets sell a limited selection of ready-made (usually inferior) clothing at high prices. Dressmakers do satisfactory work and, in addition to making African-style, loose-fitting dresses, they will copy simple catalogue styles or favorite garments reasonably well. Tailors make good quality leisure and dress suits, shirts, and women's dresses from lappa cloth, tie-dyed material, or imported fabrics. African styles are popular for work or casual parties for both men and women.

A wide selection of European shoes is available, but many Americans find that the fit is quite different. An adequate supply of footwear is a must, since moisture, mud, and dust play havoc with shoes. Local shoe repair is mediocre.

Raincoats are not often worn because of the heat, but it is wise to have one for the occasional torrential downpours. An umbrella—preferably large—is essential for each member of the family during the rainy season, and galoshes are needed for small children.

Most people wear only cotton clothing outdoors. Although synthetic fabrics are attractive, wash easily,

and pack well, items made of these materials become uncomfortable in Liberia's extreme heat. Swimsuits and beachwear are hard to find locally; each family member will need at least two swimsuits, as well as sunglasses and some sort of head protection. One special recommendation is a beach umbrella for relief from the intense heat and sunlight.

Business wear is more relaxed than in the U.S. In offices, men wear wash-and-wear suits (often without ties) or locally made slacks and short-sleeved jackets; these correspond to the usual coat and tie worn elsewhere. Working women wear either dresses or skirts and blouses and, since all offices are air conditioned, many also find hosiery and light sweaters comfortable. Otherwise, warm-weather clothing is suitable everywhere. Long cotton skirts or African dresses (usually beautifully embroidered) are as popular for parties as are short dresses. Women are much less influenced by fashion trends than in the U.S. The dress code is relaxed and informal. However, shorts and halter tops should never be worn in town.

Children's clothing is locally available in limited supply and at high prices. Children's wear is much the same as at home, but in the lightest-weight materials possible. Jeans and T-shirts with sneakers or sandals are popular. Preschool children wear play clothes most of the time. Infant clothing is available, but at prices higher than in the U.S.; all baby equipment is expensive.

In general, almost anything can be bought in Monrovia if one is willing to search for it and to pay inflated prices. However, the "buy it if you see it—tomorrow it may be gone" approach should be followed, as stocks are often small and selections poor compared to those in Western countries. Items usually found in American supermarkets can also be found in Monrovia, but favorite brands of toiletries, patent medicines, and cleaning and repair supplies should be included in one's household shipment if substitutes are unacceptable. Many people

planning extended stays ship artificial Christmas trees and decorations.

Dry cleaning is fair. Shoe repair is adequate. Commercial laundry service is available, but servants usually do the work at home. Several beauty shops in Monrovia are known for good work; they use mostly European and American products.

Automobile repair is adequate, although some jobs may take more than one trip to the mechanic. Repair of electrical appliances is scarce and poor.

Domestic Help

Household in Liberia traditionally employ domestic help of some kind. Most Americans hire domestic servants, the number and type depending on individual preferences and requirements. Most Americans hire housekeepers, at least on a part-time basis. Others hire cooks and nannies. Some households employ gardeners and launderers. Employers provide uniforms and pay for recommended medical examinations. If meals are not provided, employers provide a food allowance. Domestic workers require supervision to ensure personal cleanliness and suitable performance. Many domestic employees are not literate.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

As of February 2002, the U.S. Department of State reaffirms its warning to U.S. citizens against travel to Monrovia. Liberia's declaration of a state of emergency marks a further deterioration in security. Travel outside of Monrovia is difficult and dangerous due to an absence of central authority and inadequate living conditions. Many Liberians and foreign nationals, including some Americans, have been detained in rebel-controlled territory, or have been prohibited from traveling freely between rebel-

controlled territory and other areas. Only limited air service exists between Freetown, Sierra Leone, Conakry, Guinea, or Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire and Monrovia and no overland routes to the capital are open. All Americans who decide to travel to Liberia should register with the U.S. Embassy immediately upon arrival.

Regardless of the type of passport, and of any information to the contrary, all Americans must have visas to enter Liberia. This requirement cannot be overemphasized. Both official and nonofficial persons without proper documentation have been detained at the airport. Yellow fever and cholera inoculations are required.

Pets must be fully immunized before arrival, and accompanied by a veterinarian's certificate containing the date of rabies inoculation (neither more than 120 days, nor less than 30 days, before entry). The certificate must be plainly identifiable, authenticated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and stamped with the Liberian Government seal. If a pet is imported from a country without a Liberian diplomatic post, U.S. authorities will advise about policy. Failure to comply with these instructions may require the pet to be quarantined in Liberia. Some areas of Monrovia are infested with tsetse fly, and dogs in these areas are subject to contracting canine sleeping sickness. There is no risk to humans. While this illness in dogs is readily treatable by a veterinarian, there are reoccurrences and some animals have died.

Importation of individual firearms is prohibited.

Religious denominations conducting services in Monrovia include: Episcopal, Assembly of God, Roman Catholic, Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Presbyterian, Baptist, Baha'i, Lutheran, Methodist, Seventh-Day Adventist, and Pentecostal. The capital city has Muslim mosques, but no Jewish synagogues or temples; occasionally Jewish laymen hold services in their homes.

The time in Liberia is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

The currency used in Liberia is the Liberian *dollar*. Bills up to and including \$20 denominations are readily acceptable. No limit is placed on the amount of currency taken into the country. Chase Manhattan, Citibank, and International Bank of Washington have branches or affiliates in Monrovia. ATMs are not available and credit cards are not generally accepted. Traveler's checks can be cashed, but transactions are subject to fees.

The English system of weights and measures is used.

The U.S. Embassy in Liberia is located at 111 United Nations Drive, Mamba Point, P.O. Box 10-0098, Monrovia; telephone: (231) 22291/4; FAX: (231) 223710.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 11 Armed Forces Day
- Feb. 14 Literacy Day
- Mar. Decoration Day*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar. 15 J.J. Robert's Birthday

- Apr. National Day of Fasting & Prayer*
 - Apr. 12 Redemption Day
 - May 14 Unification Day
 - May 25 Africa Day
 - July 26 Independence Day
 - Aug. 24 Flag Day
 - Oct. 29 Youth Day
 - Nov. Thanksgiving Day*
 - Nov. 29 William V.S.Tubman's Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *Variable

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The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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LIBYA

Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Major Cities:

Tripoli, Benghazi, Misratah

Other Cities:

Darnah, Ghadamis, Marsa-el Brega, Tobruk

INTRODUCTION

The north African nation of **LIBYA** was created from the former Turkish and Italian colonial provinces of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan. Libya was a poor nation until the discovery of oil in the late 1950s brought new wealth and prosperity. Since the ascension to power of Col. Muammar Qadhafi in 1969, Libya has adopted a foreign policy that stresses a strong commitment to Arab unity, a willingness to use oil as a political weapon, and warfare with Israel. Moreover, the Libyans have been accused of sponsoring and offering training facilities for international terrorist groups. Because of its radical policies, Libya has been labeled a renegade nation and treated as an outcast by most of the world community.

MAJOR CITIES

Tripoli

Tripoli is Libya's capital, largest city, and primary seaport. Situated in an oasis between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert, Tripoli is a clean city divided into old and new quarters. The old city consists of narrow streets with

small houses of Turkish-Arab design. Wide avenues lined with modern multi-story apartments, villas, and office buildings characterize conditions in the new city. The center of the town consists of a large square, Maidan Ashukada, from which Tripoli's main thoroughfares fan out in all directions. In the last few decades, Tripoli has grown from a sleepy Arab town into a major urban metropolis. In 2000, Tripoli had an estimated population of 2.4 million.

Because Tripoli is located in an oasis, agriculture is possible. Olives, citrus fruit, tobacco, vegetables, and grains are grown near Tripoli. The city is also home to several industries, among them a tanning factory, oil depot, and a gas-bottling plant. Tripoli has an international airport and is linked by road to the Libyan city of Benghazi and Cairo in Egypt.

Education

The Martyrs School (formerly Oil Companies School) is located three miles west of Tripoli. The school was originally designed to meet the educational needs of the major oil companies in Tripoli. However, in recent years, the school has been opened to expatriates not affiliated with the oil industry. The school was founded in 1958 and offers an American-style, coeducational education from pre-kindergarten to tenth grade.

Arabic and French are taught as foreign languages.

Situated on a five-acre campus, the Martyrs School consists of 11 buildings, 47 classrooms, a 14,000 volume library, 2 science labs, a computer lab, auditorium, infirmary, gymnasium, and tennis courts. Students are grouped according to their abilities, with an accelerated study program available for gifted students. The school year lasts from September to June.

In addition to its traditional curriculum, the Martyrs School offers an extracurricular program that includes gymnastics, computers, yearbook, school newspaper, field trips, drama, student council, soccer, tennis, floor hockey, basketball, softball, volleyball, and numerous social clubs. The school's mailing address is P.O. Box 860, Tripoli, S.P.L.A.J. (Libya).

Entertainment

Viewing popular dances and shopping for traditional handicrafts are among the entertainment opportunities available in Tripoli. The National Folklore Group and the Libyan Arab Folklore Group often perform traditional dances in Tripoli. Tripoli is the home of the Islamic Artistic and Professional School, where artisans learn and perfect their craft. The school's loca-



City square in central Tripoli, Libya

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

tion in Tripoli ensures that visitors have ample opportunities to view and purchase handmade carpets, pottery and ceramics, textiles, metal and leather handicrafts, and products fashioned from palm tree fibers.

Recreation

Tripoli has several mosques, museums, and monuments that are often toured by visitors. The Karamanli Mosque (also known as Jama' Ahmed Pasha) is situated in the old quarter of Tripoli. It exhibits a Moorish-style architecture with a line of columns supporting arches, and a roof of domes from which springs a minaret commanding a view of Tripoli. The entrances to the mosque are carved with Arabic inscriptions which praise the mosque's founder, Ahmed Pasha Karamanli. The interior walls of the mosque are covered with blue, green, and yellow Arabic tiles arranged in geometric designs. Scripture writings also adorn the walls. Members of the Karamanli

family are buried in the mosque's courtyard.

The Gurgi Mosque is considered one of the most beautiful buildings in Tripoli. Built in 1833 by a Tripoli merchant, the mosque is situated on a hill overlooking the old city. The mosque has two balconies and one of the highest minarets in Tripoli, which offers spectacular views of the city. The Mosque of the An-Naga is one of the oldest in Tripoli. Destroyed by fire in 1510, it was rebuilt in 1611. Although the building is simple and without adornments, it is worth visiting.

Tripoli has several interesting monuments, among them the Arch of Marcus Aurelius. Erected in 164 A.D., this monument has been used for various purposes throughout history. Its ornaments and inscriptions are beautiful and well-preserved. The most outstanding monument in Tripoli is the Castle. It has witnessed all the historical events of Tripoli during the last five

hundred years. Heavily damaged during a Turkish invasion in 1551, the Turks captured and rebuilt it. For centuries, the Castle served as the seat of Turkish colonial government. In the 18th century, the building served as the residence and seat of government of the ruling Karamanli family. Several previously unknown areas of the Castle were unearthed in recent years during an excavation. Beautiful gardens, courtyards, and marble fountains make the Castle a favorite stop for visitors. The Castle currently houses the Museums of Ethnography and Natural History.

The Libyan Museum of Natural History provides visitors with a picture of the country's natural history resources. Three halls contain the bird collection, with sea and wading birds displayed in their natural habitats. The Sea Life Hall offers excellent examples of the sponges and coral found off Libya's Mediterranean coast. A Reptile and Amphibian Hall contains examples

of turtles, lizards, and snakes indigenous to Libya. An impressive relief map illustrating the geological structure of the country is located in the Geology Hall. Visitors are also welcome at the Archaeological Museum. This museum contains a wide collection of antiquities from ancient times to the present day. It is divided into various sections, according to the ages of antiquity. Among the noteworthy exhibits are a collection of tomb plates dating from the 9th and 10th centuries.

Benghazi

Libya's second largest city, Benghazi, is located on the northeastern coast. Benghazi is built near the site of the ancient city of Hesperides, which was founded by the Greeks around 500 B.C. In 247 B.C., the city was inhabited by the Egyptians and renamed Berenice in honor of Pharaoh Ptolemy III. Around the 3rd century A.D., the Vandals destroyed the city. Benghazi was rebuilt but remained a small town until it was extensively developed by the Italians. During World War II, the city sustained heavy damage after a series of battles were fought for control of Benghazi. The city was finally captured and controlled by the British in late 1942.

Today, Benghazi is a bustling administrative, commercial, and educational center of 1.5 million people (2000 estimate). Like Tripoli, the city consists of two distinct districts. The old city is comprised of clusters of small homes divided by narrow, winding streets. In contrast, new parts of the city offer modern buildings, wide thoroughfares, and public gardens. Benghazi is home to several government ministries. The city's major industries are salt processing, food processing, tanning, brewing, and oil refining. Among Benghazi's major educational centers are the Ghar Younis University and the Benghazi Institute, which serves as a major training center for technicians working in the medical field. Transportation to Benghazi is possible via Benina International Airport, located 20 miles (32 kilometers) east of the



View of Benghazi, Libya

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

city, or by a modern highway system linking Benghazi with other cities along the Libyan coast.

Recreation

Recreational activities in Benghazi are somewhat limited. Many visitors enjoy the city's beautiful bathing beaches, especially those in the Guliana section of Benghazi. Shopping is also possible on Omar Mukhtar Street, the city's main shopping district, or at Suk ad Dalam, a picturesque oriental gallery-market. Handmade wool carpets with beautiful mosaic designs are a popular item among shoppers. Visitors often tour the Roman Catholic cathedral, one of Benghazi's most impressive buildings.

Misratah

Located in northwestern Libya, Misratah (Misurata) is a bustling commercial and administrative center. Like Tripoli and Benghazi, Misratah has two distinct sections. Old Misratah consists of small houses and narrow, arched streets while new areas of the city exhibit modern buildings, tree-lined avenues, and public gardens. Misratah is home to several industries, among them are textiles, hardware, oil refineries, and steel works. A new steel plant was opened in the city in 1990. Due

to irrigation, dates, citrus fruits, wheat, and barley are grown near Misratah. A coastal highway links Misratah with Libya's other major cities and Misratah Airport is an important hub for domestic flights. Misratah is served by modern hospitals, colleges, and teaching institutes. The city has an estimated population of 300,000.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **DARNAH** (also spelled **DERNA**) is located east of Benghazi. Founded in the 15th century on the site of an ancient Greek colony, Darnah today is a modern city of whitewashed homes and palm gardens. It has a small manufacturing base with a garment factory serving as an important employer. Several varieties of fruits and vegetables are grown in oases located near the city. These products are exported through Darnah's small port, which is in the process of being reconstructed. The city is a popular winter resort with an estimated population of 37,000.

GHADAMIS is a city situated in northwestern Libya near the Algerian and Tunisian borders. The city, with its covered streets and whitewashed houses, is in an oasis sur-

rounded by a large wall. Within these walls, various ethnic groups are represented. Fruits, vegetables, grains, and dates are grown in Ghadamis and are an important source of income. The city, known for the warm hospitality of its people, is often visited by tourists. Visitors flock to the city's *souk* or market to buy local products and a comfortable hotel provides tourists with pleasant accommodations. Ghadamis is accessible by air, through organized excursions, or by a paved road.

The small city of **MARSA-EL BREGA** is the site of Libya's first oil pipeline, which opened in 1961. A refinery and natural-gas liquification plant are also located here. Marsa el-Brega is Libya's major petrochemical center. In 1977, an ammonia-processing plant was opened in the city.

TOBRUK is a very important city because it is Libya's only natural harbor and port. Tobruk was occupied by the Italians during the early twentieth century, where they created a powerful military and air base. During World War II, the city was the scene of several major battles and was virtually destroyed. Tobruk was rebuilt after the war and became the site of a major oil terminal, Marsa el-Hariga. This terminal is linked by pipeline with a large oil field 320 miles (515 kilometers) south of Tobruk. The city's population is estimated at 34,200.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Libya is a large country situated on the Mediterranean coast of North Africa. It occupies an area of approximately 679,359 square miles, slightly larger than Alaska. Libya is bordered on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, on the south by Chad and Niger, on the east by Egypt and Sudan, and on

the west by Algeria and Tunisia. Approximately 92 percent of the country consists of barren desert. The narrow strip of land along Libya's Mediterranean coast is more fertile, however. The coastal region has a temperate climate, with mild winters and hot, dry summers. Almost all of Libya's major cities are located along the Mediterranean seacoast.

Because there are no rivers and rainfall is very scarce, Libya suffers from severe water shortages. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, the Libyan government has embarked on a massive irrigation project. This project, called the "Great Man-made River", involves the construction of a series of pipelines that will carry water from huge underground wells in southern Libya to major coastal cities. When completed, it is designed to irrigate approximately 185,000 acres of land and would be the largest irrigation system in the world. The project was started in 1984 and is scheduled to be completed in several years.

Population

The estimated population of Libya is over five million. Approximately 97 percent of the population are Berbers and Arabs. Small minorities of Greeks, Italians, Egyptians, Turks, Maltese, Tunisians, Indians and Pakistanis also live in Libya. Two-thirds of the population live in coastal regions with half of these residing in the city of Tripoli.

A vast majority of Libyans speak Arabic. However, Italian, French, Berber and English are also spoken.

Islam is the official religion of Libya. Roughly 97 percent of the population are Sunni Muslims. The Coptic Orthodox, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches are also represented. The Libyan constitution guarantees the freedom of religion.

History

Throughout its history, Libya has been conquered and settled by various foreign powers. Phoenician sailors visited Libya around 1000 B.C. to trade with native African peoples. They eventually established permanent trading centers, Carthage and Tripoli, on the western coast of Libya. By 517 B.C., Carthage had become a large, prosperous city. This prosperity continued for several centuries until the Phoenicians fought a series of wars with the Romans. The Romans eventually invaded and destroyed Carthage and conquered Libya's western coast.

The eastern coast of Libya was colonized by the ancient Greeks. They founded the city of Cyrene around 630 B.C. and, over time, it became a powerful and wealthy city. In 323 B.C., Cyrene and all of eastern Libya was conquered by the Ptolemies. The Ptolemies, an Egyptian tribe, governed eastern Libya until 96 B.C. In that year Apion, the last Ptolemaic ruler, surrendered control of eastern Libya to the Romans.

Libya enjoyed several centuries of prosperity under Roman rule. By the middle of the fourth century A.D., however, the Roman Empire was rapidly deteriorating. Libya again became a tempting target for foreign invaders. In 431 A.D., a Germanic tribe known as the Vandals invaded Libya and drove out the Romans. The Vandals controlled Libya until 642 A.D., when Arab armies overran the country. The Arab conquest had profound and lasting effects on Libya. Libyans embraced the Arab's culture and Muslim faith. From 642 A.D. to 1517, the Arabs maintained control of Libya.

In 1517, Libya entered a new period of turmoil. The Ottoman Turks invaded Libya, defeated the Arabs, and seized control of the country. The Turks ruled Libya until 1911, and the entire period was marked by oppression, corruption, and bloody revolts. On September 29, 1911, Italy declared war on Turkey

after a series of disputes between the two countries. Italy attacked and invaded Libya. After a brief but bloody war, the Turks surrendered and withdrew from Libya in 1912.

Beginning in the early 1920's, Italy embarked on several programs to develop Libya. The Italian government encouraged many of its citizens to emigrate to Libya and establish permanent settlements. They enlarged and modernized Libya's coastal cities, planted trees, dug wells, and created an extensive roadway system. In 1939, Italy formally incorporated Libya as its colony.

During World War II, Libya was the scene of several battles between Britain and a combined force of Italian and German troops. In early 1943, the Italians and Germans were defeated and driven from Libya. The country was divided into three occupation zones. Britain controlled the western and eastern provinces of Libya. The French were allowed to administer Libya's southern provinces. Following the completion of World War II, Italy signed a peace treaty in which it relinquished all claims to Libya.

In 1949, the United Nations passed a resolution stating that Libya should become an independent nation. After a series of lengthy negotiations, the Kingdom of Libya was declared on December 24, 1951. King Idris I, a man who led Libyan resistance to Italian occupation, was selected as the new leader. In 1959, significant oil deposits were discovered. Libya began exporting oil in 1961. The discovery of oil was a significant event in Libyan history. Money from petroleum sales helped to bring economic prosperity to what had been one of the world's poorest nations.

On September 1, 1969, King Idris was overthrown by a group of military officers. This group, led by Col. Muammar Qadhafi, established the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The RCC banned the monarchy and ordered all Italian citizens in Libya to leave the country. The

government ordered all foreign-run libraries and cultural centers to close, citing that they promoted anti-Islamic ideals.

During the 1970's, Col. Qadhafi's government pursued a radical foreign policy that promoted violent revolution. Libya provided weapons to revolutionary groups in neighboring Egypt and Sudan and supported terrorist organizations throughout the world. In July 1977, Libya and Egypt fought a short land and air war along their common border. Libya's southern neighbor, Chad, was invaded by Libyan forces in 1979. The Libyans seized the Aouzou Strip, an area of mineral-rich land that both countries claimed as their own. Libyan troops eventually withdrew from Chad in November 1981, but returned a few years later. They were finally driven out by Chadian troops in 1987.

Relations between Col. Qadhafi and the United States government are extremely tense and hostile. The United States has repeatedly accused Libya of masterminding international terrorist attacks, a charge the Libyans have vigorously denied. In 1981, Libya and the United States broke diplomatic relations. On August 2nd of that year, two Libyan jets were shot down over the Gulf of Sidra by U.S. Navy planes. The U.S. Navy was conducting exercises in the Gulf of Sidra which Libya has claimed as its territory.

In early 1986, the United States ordered all Americans living in Libya to leave the country and imposed economic sanctions. In April 1986, the U.S. accused Libya of supporting a series of worldwide terrorist bombings. American warplanes attacked several terrorist-related targets in Tripoli and Benghazi.

Qadhafi did not support Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Instead, Libya joined other Arab nations in an attempt to resolve the conflict peacefully.

In 1993 the UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Libya following Qadhafi's refusal to surrender two men suspected of involvement in the 1988 terrorist bombing of a Pan American passenger jet over Lockerbie, Scotland. UN sanctions were suspended in 1999, but U.S. sanctions remain in place.

Government

From 1969 to 1977, Libya was governed by the Revolutionary Command Council under the leadership of Col. Qadhafi. In March 1977, the Revolutionary Command Council disbanded. Before doing this, they instituted a new form of government known as the "Jamahiriya" (state of the masses) and changed the country's official name to the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The Jamahiriya is designed so that every adult citizen can help shape government policy. Citizens submit suggestions and ideas to the Basic People's Congress of which there are some 2,000 throughout Libya. All provincial and urban affairs are handled by Municipal People's Congresses. Members of these two Congresses appoint Popular Committees to execute policy. Officials of these congresses and committees form the General People's Congress.

The General People's Congress is the highest policy-making body in Libya. It meets each year for one week. The General People's Congress appoints its own General Secretariat and the General People's Committee, whose members head 13 government departments which implement national and international policy.

Although the General People's Congress exercises great political power, Col. Qadhafi still has supreme authority. He holds the honorary title "Leader of the Revolution" and heavily influences all government decisions.

The flag of Libya is solid green. Green is the traditional color of Islam.

Arts, Science, Education

The Libyan government requires all children between the ages of six and fifteen to attend school. Primary education begins at age six and lasts for six years. At twelve years of age, a student enters secondary education. Secondary education lasts for six years and is comprised of two cycles of three years each.

The University of Libya opened in Benghazi in 1958. In 1973, the university was divided into two separate schools. One is Al-Fatah University and is located in Tripoli. The other university is Ghar Younis University in Benghazi. A third university, the University of Technology, is located in the town of Marsa-el Brega.

In 1995, an estimated 76 percent of Libyans age 15 and over could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

Only five percent of Libya's land area is suitable for farming. Most fertile land is located along Libya's northern coast, especially around the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi.

Although most of Libya's land consists of barren desert, there are several oases that have fertile soil. The most important oases are Ghadames, Ghat, Socna, Sebha, and Brak. Libya's main crops are barley, dates, wheat, oats, almonds, tomatoes, potatoes, olives and citrus fruits. The country used to have adequate supplies of fruits, vegetables and dairy products to feed its population, but now Libya must import about 75 percent of its food. Approximately 17 percent of Libya's work force is involved in agriculture.

Libya's most important industry is crude oil production, which accounts for 25 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product and nearly all the country's export earnings. Libya is the second largest oil producer in Africa after Nigeria. Primary oil refineries are located in the cities of Misratah, Ras Lanuf, Brega, and Zawia.

Libya has many rich mineral deposits, especially iron ore, magnesium, sulphur, potassium and gypsum. Many of these deposits remain untapped, however, because mining costs are extremely high.

Since coming to power in 1969, Col. Qadhafi has tried to develop Libya's industrial base. Nearly 30 percent of the country's work force is involved in non-oil related industries. These industries include the manufacturing of building materials, textiles and footwear, and food processing. The continued growth of Libyan industries was hampered by the steady decline in world oil prices. With less oil revenue coming into the country, many new industrial projects were delayed or cancelled. However, oil prices rose again in 1999 and 2000, stimulating the economy.

Nearly all of Libya's exports consist of crude oil or refined petroleum products. Other exports include peanuts, olive oil, and hides. Most Libyan exports are purchased by Italy, Germany, Spain, France, Belgium, Turkey and Romania.

Libya's primary imports include machinery, transport equipment, manufactured goods, foodstuffs and chemicals. Italy, Germany, France, Great Britain, Japan and South Korea provide the bulk of Libyan imports.

The unit of currency is the *Libyan dinar*.

Transportation

All major cities, towns, and desert oases in Libya are accessible by car. The most important road in Libya extends across northern Libya

between the borders of Tunisia and Egypt. It passes through the major cities of Tripoli and Benghazi and provides excellent access to the towns of Sebha, Ghat, Ajdabiyah and Kufra. Other roads link Libya's cities to the country's borders with Algeria, Chad and Niger.

It is possible to obtain bus services between Libya's major cities. Local buses also operate in Tripoli and Benghazi. However, buses in Libya are often crowded and unreliable.

Libya's national airline is the Jamahiriya Libyan Arab Airlines. Domestic flights are available between Libya's main cities. The cities of Benghazi and Tripoli are linked by Libyan Arab Airlines and other international airlines to Athens, Rome, Madrid, Malta, Moscow, Paris, Amsterdam and Frankfurt. Libya's main airport is Tripoli International Airport, located 21 miles southwest of Tripoli at Ben Gashir. Travelers to eastern Libya are serviced by Benina Airport near Benghazi.

Because of its location on the Mediterranean Sea, Libya has several excellent deep-water ports. These ports are located at Benghazi, Tripoli, Marsa-el Brega and Misratah.

To date, no commercial railway system is available in Libya.

Communications

Libya's main radio station is the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya Broadcasting Corporation. Arabic and English programs are broadcast daily from stations in Tripoli and Benghazi.

In December 1968, a national television service was created. The majority of programs are broadcast in Arabic, although some English, French, and Italian-language programs are shown periodically.

Newspapers and magazines are published by the Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA). The main newspapers are *Arraid* and *El Balaq*.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passports and visas are required. On December 11, 1981, U.S. passports ceased to be valid for travel to, in or through Libya and may not be used for that purpose without a special validation. Passport validation requests for Libya can be forwarded in writing to the following address:

Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Passport Services
U.S. Department of State
1111 19th St., NW, Suite 260
Washington, DC 20522-1705
Attn.: Office of Passport Policy
and Advisory Services
Telephone: (202) 955-0231 or
955-0232
Fax: (202) 955-0230

Without the requisite validation, use of a U.S. passport for travel to, in or through Libya may constitute a violation of 18 U.S.C. 1544, and may be punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

Persons contemplating travel to Libya should be aware that there is no U.S. mission in Libya and that our interests are being protected and represented by the government of Belgium. This protecting power can provide only limited emergency services, and the normal protection of U.S. diplomatic and consular representatives cannot be provided to Americans traveling in Libya.

On January 7, 1986, the United States imposed economic sanctions against Libya which broadly prohibit U.S. persons from engaging in unauthorized financial transactions involving Libya, including, in part, the following: the exportation to Libya of all goods, services, or technology; the importation of goods or services of Libyan origin; engaging in the performance of a contract in support of an industrial, commer-

cial, or governmental project in Libya; or dealing in any property in which the Government of Libya has any interest. The economic sanctions, in part, prohibit U.S. persons from working in Libya.

These restrictions also prohibit U.S. persons from engaging in unauthorized travel-related transactions to and within Libya. Please note, however, that transactions relating to travel for journalistic activity by persons regularly employed in such capacity by a news gathering organization is exempt from the prohibition. Please note as well that U.S. persons may engage in travel-related transactions for the sole purpose of visiting immediate family members in Libya, provided that the U.S. persons seeking to travel register with the Office of Foreign Assets Control or the Embassy of Belgium in Tripoli.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

March 3	Declaration of Authority's Power
March 28	Evacuation Day (British)
June 11	National Day
July 23	Egyptian Revolution Day
September 1	Revolution Day
October 7	Evacuation Day (Italian)
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

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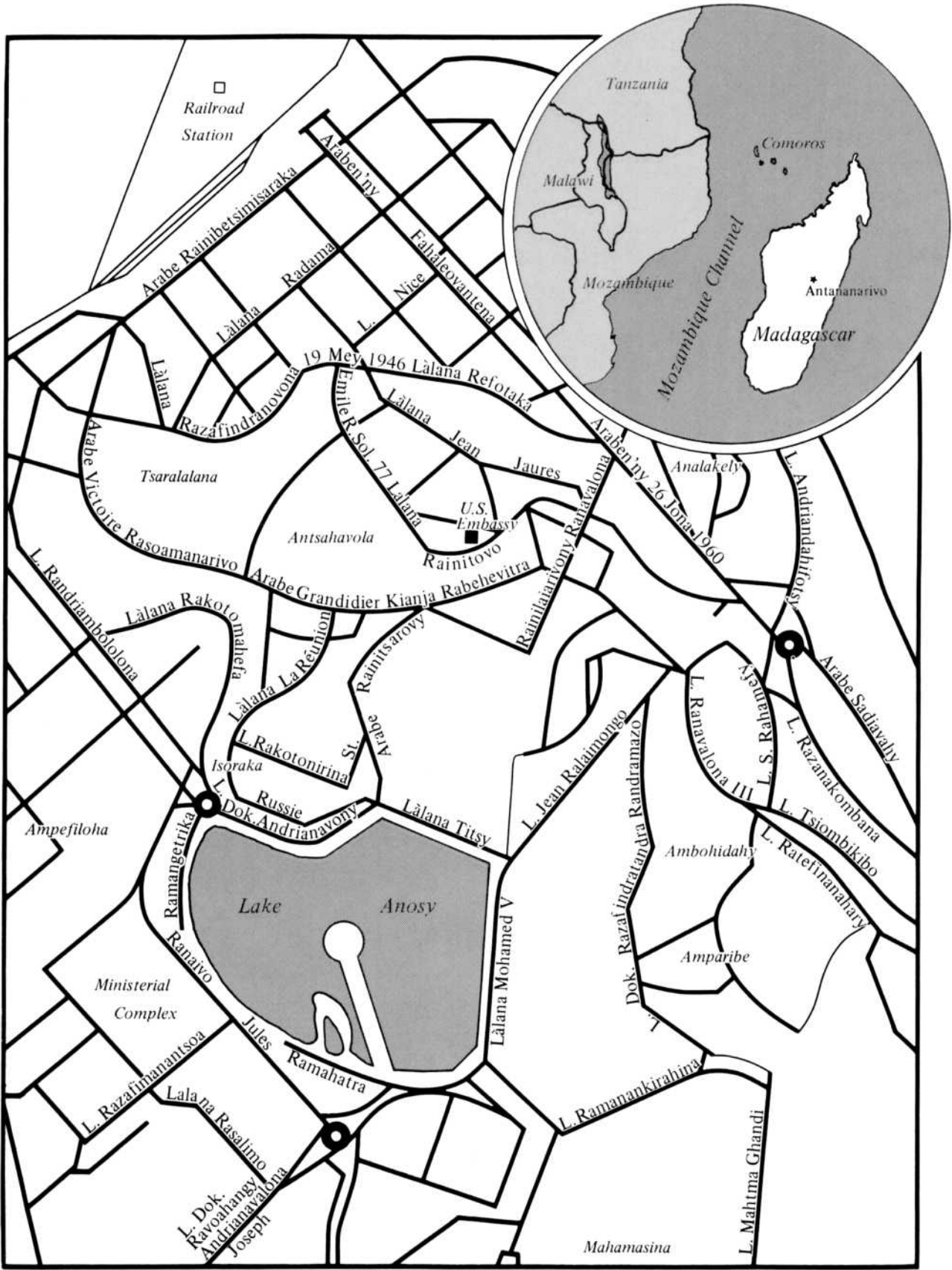
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Antananarivo, Madagascar

MADAGASCAR

Democratic Republic of Madagascar

Major City:

Antananarivo

Other Cities:

Antsirabé, Antsiranana, Fiananrantsoa, Mahajanga, Mananjary, Taolanaro, Toamasina, Toliary

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Madagascar is a fascinating island. The people, whose origins are a combination of Malay-Polynesian, African, and Middle Eastern, have developed their own culture and traditions that reflect that diversity as well as some unifying aspects, including a common Malagasy language.

Madagascar's long history as an isolated area has contributed to the development of a Malagasy psychology. Although politically associated with the African states, Madagascar is not African; it is not Asian; and in spite of more than 50 years of French colonization, it is not European.

It is thought that the island, as part of Gondwanaland, may have broken from the African Continent some 100 million years ago. Its isolation has led to the development of flora and fauna not found anywhere else in the world, making Madagascar a naturalist's dream.

Antananarivo, the picturesque capital of Madagascar, has proven to be a very special assignment for many Americans, although not an easy one. Americans must be resourceful to adjust to the isolated environment, the language and cultural barriers, and the difficulties of life in a developing country whose economy is severely strained. But the pleasant climate, the abundant fresh food, the flowers, the friendly and unique people, and the uniqueness of all aspects of Malagasy life make a visit here a fondly remembered experience.

The name of the country is the Democratic Republic of Madagascar. The word "Malagasy" is used as a noun only when referring to the people of Madagascar or the language they speak; e.g., the Malagasy speak Malagasy. All other uses of the word "Malagasy" are as adjectives; e.g., "The Malagasy community."

MAJOR CITY

Antananarivo

Antananarivo is the capital city and principal population center (about 2,000,000) of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar.

Centered geographically in Madagascar's central highlands, it has successively been a tribal, monarchical, colonial, and national capital since 1794. Known as Tananarive during the period of French colonization, the city's name was restored to its Malagasy spelling in 1975. For those who know it well, the city is fondly referred to as Tana.

European and traditional Malagasy elements mingle intimately in the streets. On a relief map, the city looks roughly like an enormous letter Y made up of steep, granite hills. Between these hills is the lower town (central district) with its European architecture and wide avenues. The heights are reached by webs of narrow streets or steep stairways and feature balconied, brick buildings clinging precariously to the steep slopes. Rice fields, marshes, lakes, and growing suburbs flood the vast and fertile plains surrounding the city.



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Downtown street scene in Antananarivo, Madagascar

Madagascar achieved independence from the French in 1960. Since that time, many of the buildings (in fact, much of the infrastructure) has not been changed or improved. Although new roads have been built, the majority of the old ones have not been repaired or upgraded. Since the capital's population has burgeoned, many of those who work and live on the streets lack housing. Public facilities are inadequate; walk gingerly, especially women climbing the many staircases.

Food

Madagascar is almost exclusively an agricultural country. Antananarivo abounds with fresh, locally grown vegetables including potatoes, lettuce, cabbage, onions, cucumbers, cauliflower, beets, beans, carrots, avocados, and tomatoes. Madagascar's varied climate permits the growing of tropical fruits including papaya, mangoes, lychees, guava, and passion fruit, as

well as temperate climate fruits such as apples, peaches, plums, and strawberries. Most fresh produce is seasonal and may not be available year round.

Beef is plentiful, but leaner than American prime. Fresh pork, chicken, duck, lamb, and veal are available. The quality is not uniform. Fresh fish, lobster, carp, oysters, and shrimp are available in the early morning at the downtown fish market.

Luncheon meat, sausage, ham, and bacon are available at a high price, but are not necessarily to American taste. Live turkeys can be bought, but require a great deal of fattening before they resemble the North American version.

Imported processed food, mainly from France, can be found on the local market. Also available are locally processed products including

meat, vegetables, pineapple and passion fruit juice, flour, sugar, and spices. Three main supermarkets offer a varying supply of goods. Three or four varieties of cheese are made in Madagascar. Bread, long-life milk, pasteurized milk, and eggs are available. Canned beer, juice, candy bars, and chocolate from South Africa are sold in supermarkets. The local wine is quite good but varies considerably in quality and taste. There are about six varieties of Malagasy wine. French wine can be found on the market but is expensive (about \$10 a bottle). Good quality beer, soft drinks, and soda and tonic water are bottled locally, but are not always available. Local liquor prices are high.

To obtain the best value for your dollar, experienced members of the community suggest shipping or ordering from mail-order houses the following foods and supplies: syrup; molasses; nuts; raisins; spices; bak-

ing powder and bicarbonate of soda; canned ham; tuna; canned bacon; shortening; cake mixes; peanut butter; flour; pasta products; powdered milk. cranberry sauce; olives; hors d'oeuvre needs such as crackers, toothpicks, and nuts; bartending supplies such as maraschino cherries, cocktail onions, bitters, and drink mixes; all paper products such as toilet paper, facial tissues, napkins, and paper towels; aluminium foil and plastic wrap; insecticides; American-style mustard and catsup; instant coffee; cleaning supplies such as soaps, silver polish, and sponges. Bring preferred brands of all personal needs such as razor blades, shampoos, deodorants, toothpaste, sanitary napkins, and tampons.

Clothing

Cotton and other washable materials are suitable for summer clothing. A lightweight raincoat and umbrella are needed during the rainy season. Since homes in Antananarivo do not have central heating and are quite drafty, bring wool sweaters, long pants, and warm socks to ensure indoor warmth, and medium-weight jackets for outdoor wear. Fur coats are not worn. Evening wear is not formal in Antananarivo, and weekend clothing is casual.

Ready made blouses, skirts, and dresses are available, both in stores and in the marketplace. Prices are quite reasonable in the marketplace, where you always bargain. Tailors and dressmakers can make anything and good imported material can be found in the market. You can also order clothes by mail-order through the pouch. The rough cobblestone streets are hard on shoes, so bring a generous supply, particularly if you or your dependents cannot wear European-sized shoes.

Men: Wool suits are appropriate for winter; a sweater can be added when necessary. A dark suit is appropriate for evening occasions. If you have a dinner jacket, bring it for the occasional gala event. Formal wear cannot be rented; tails are never worn.

Women: Sweaters, skirts, or warm dresses with closed shoes are worn in winter. Evening wear varies and includes suits, tailored dresses, dinner dresses of rich fabrics, and long or short skirts. Long dresses are usually worn at the occasional dinner dance. Hats and gloves are rarely seen. Shorts are not worn in town during summer, but slacks are fine.

Children: Children's wear is much the same as in the U.S., but short pants are popular for boys. Remember to bring warm pajamas, bathrobes, and slippers for winter evenings.

Supplies and Services

The rule of thumb on personal and household products is to bring what you know, trust, like, and would miss if you lacked it! Bring a supply of toiletries; when available, the few products found in stores are expensive. Insect repellent is useful and recommended, especially around coastal areas. Bring stationery supplies, gift wrapping paper, ribbon, glue, tape, greeting cards, playing cards, shelf paper, nails, clothespins, small hardware items, kitchen utensils, flashlight batteries, coat hangers, car-care needs, household linens, gardening supplies, picnic equipment, and home repair tools. Local floor wax, scouring powder, and other cleaning supplies are available, but not of the highest quality. Cleaning products imported from France are expensive. To avoid the problems of dry cleaning, bring spot remover.

Bring a good supply of over-the-counter medications and prescription medicines, as they are difficult to obtain here.

Infant furniture, baby bottles, and other supplies are expensive and of poor quality; most families import these items. Toys are expensive, and you may want to order items from the U.S. well in advance of Christmas and birthdays.

Most laundry is done in the home by servants. Dry cleaning is of marginal quality, expensive, and unreli-

able. Barbershop services are satisfactory; beauty shops may not always have hair-coloring products, so it's best to bring your own supply.

Repair services are scarce to nonexistent. Spare parts are usually not available and must be ordered from the U.S. or South Africa. Tailors and dressmakers are available at reasonable prices, but bring a supply of material and notions. Shoe repair is available but of poor quality and workmanship. Reupholstering of furniture is quite good if you provide the fabric. Local products are of poor quality. Imported items are expensive.

Religious Activities

The Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Congregational, Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, and Greek Orthodox denominations are represented in Antananarivo. Most services are in the Malagasy language. There are also several mosques. French language services are available at three Catholic parishes and at the International Protestant parish of Andohalo. The Anglican Cathedral has monthly communion and a monthly vesper service in English. American missionaries (Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic) are available for counseling.

Domestic Help

While it is not a necessity, it is helpful to hire domestics. Some families employ two domestics: someone to do the cooking and grocery shopping and a second person to do the housework, washing, and ironing.

Domestics usually work a 5½-day workweek and get 30 days paid vacation after being with an employer one year. It is customary to give a bonus at Christmas and/or presents. Salaries are usually less than \$100 per month, and employers provide lunch, bus fare, and uniforms. Some servants will live in, but most do not because of the importance of family life in the Malagasy culture. All servants must be covered by work-accident insurance and social security. Annual physical examinations, including x-rays and

tuberculosis testing, are recommended for all servants.

Extra help for cocktail or dinner parties can usually be arranged without difficulty.

Education

Madagascar's school system, formerly based on the French system, is Malagasized, and would not be useful to American children.

The American School of Antananarivo was founded in 1969 as an independent coeducational school. It offers an American education from Kindergarten through grade 9. Music, art, French, and physical education are offered to all students. The grade school program is recognized and supported by the Office of Overseas Schools of the Department of State.

The academic year, which is divided into four quarters, is from early September through mid-June. The school day runs from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm. Children do not go home for lunch, but bring a snack and pack a lunch for school. Uniforms are not worn. Children wear the same clothes as they would in the U.S. All books and school supplies are provided by the school. Transportation is the responsibility of the family.

The school is located in the suburb of Ivandry, four miles away from Antananarivo. It has seven classrooms, a library/computer center/video center, an assembly/activities room, a large playground, and a playing field. The American School is accredited through the Middle State Association.

Several private primary and secondary schools are available with French instruction; some are Catholic supervised and provide Catholic religious instruction. Non-religious schools include the Ecoles Primaires Francaises for grades 1 to 5, and the French Government Lycee for older children.

It may be difficult for older children not fluent in French to transfer into the French system, and it takes

time to learn the intricacies of French grammar and mathematics. Tutoring is available for about \$8 an hour. American children find the French system more rigid, with more homework and less emphasis on sports and extracurricular activities.

Some parents send their older children to school in the U.S. or to boarding schools in other countries. Others employ a correspondence school system and teach their children at home.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Alliance Francaise offers a French language instruction program. Malagasy language instruction is also available. Lessons in music and ballet can be arranged. Swimming, tennis, horseback riding, and golf lessons are also available through one of the private sports clubs.

Sports

Most sports facilities are available only through membership in a private club. A Golf Club, about 15 miles from the city, has a good 18-hole course and a competent instructor who speaks English. Lunch and dinner are served in the clubhouse, and one large swimming pool is used from September to May.

The Association Culturelle et Sportive d'Ambohidaha (ACSA) in the city's center is a popular spot for lunch. The club offers tennis, squash, swimming, billiards, and bridge.

Club Olympique, about 5 miles from the city, offers good tennis courts, swimming, and excellent horseback riding instruction (in French).

The Hilton Hotel has a swimming pool with a nominal entrance fee.

Coastal waters of Madagascar offer snorkeling and scuba diving opportunities, but care must be taken to avoid sharks. The waters near Nosy-Be and Toliara (formerly Tulear) are considered safe. However, an airplane is required to get

to the island of Nosy-Be. If you decide to drive to Toliara instead of flying, a four-wheel-drive vehicle is needed.

Registration and licenses for firearms and hunting are relatively simple formalities. Madagascar offers a variety of game, including duck, guinea fowl, partridge, quail, and pheasant. Wild boar and crocodile are hunted in remote places with rifle and shotgun.

Fishing is a common pastime in and around Antananarivo. Black bass and tilapia (a small, perch-like fish) are the usual catches, as is trout.

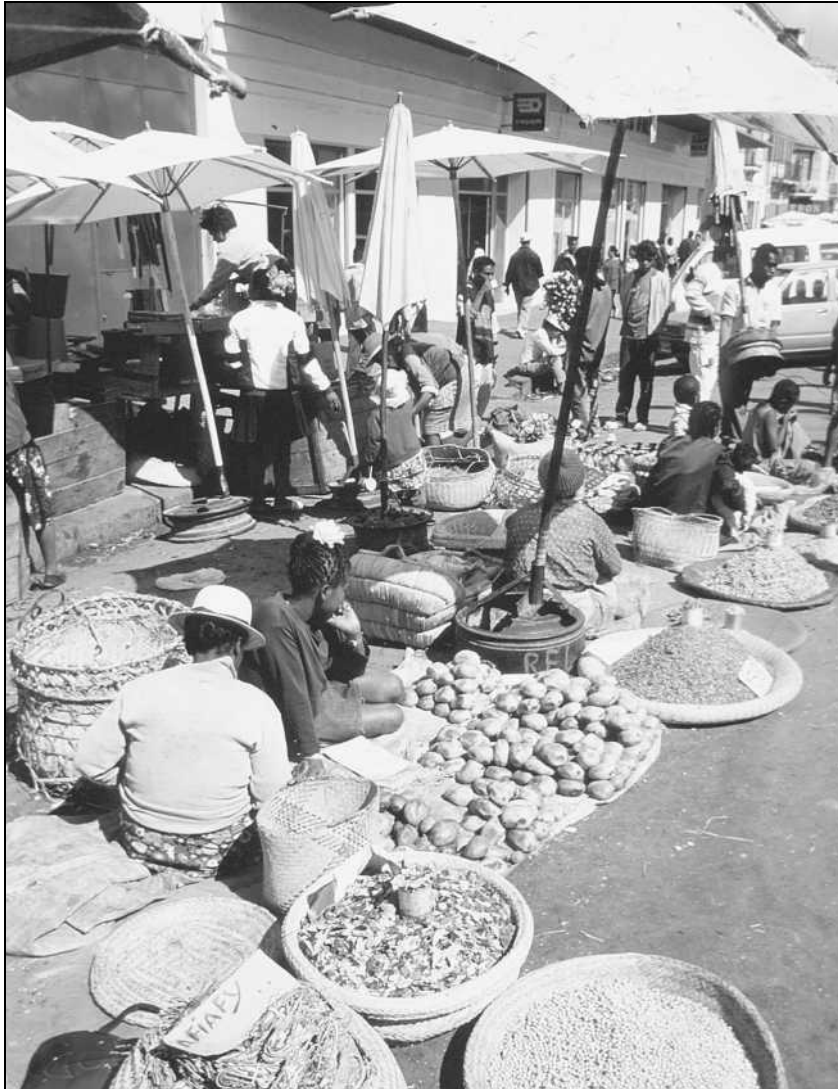
A number of interesting camping, hiking and picnic spots in the immediate area of Antananarivo are made more inviting by the lack of poisonous snakes and dangerous animals.

Bring all sporting equipment with you since it is scarce and extremely expensive here. Whites are generally worn on tennis courts, and are required at some clubs.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The variety of climate, scenery, and vegetation found on Madagascar is fascinating and a constant challenge to photographers and nature lovers in search of orchids, animals, minerals, or scenery that is not found anywhere else on earth. Some treks require a four-wheel-drive vehicle, but a number of interesting spots can be seen within the 120-mile radius of paved highways near Antananarivo, or along the 350-mile hard surfaced road from the capital to Fianarantsoa.

A breathtaking but arduous 4-day trip can be made during the dry season to Toliara and Taolanaro (formerly Fort Dauphin) in the south. Both cities have beautiful beaches and shark-free swimming. Cottages may sometimes be rented from American missionaries in Taolanaro; adequate hotels are also available.



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Zoma market scene in Antananarivo, Madagascar

The coastal city of Toamainsa (formerly Tamatave) is now a 6-hour drive from Antananarivo on a Chinese-built highway. Other cities—Antseranana (formerly Diego Suarez) and Majunga—offer a change in altitude, climate, vegetation, and pace from the activities of Antananarivo.

Nosy-Be, a beautiful island to the north-west of Madagascar, has good vacation facilities.

Mauritius, Nairobi, Reunion, and the Seychelles are the nearest vacation spots off the island and are serviced by Air Madagascar, Air France, and Air Mauritius. Mauri-

tius and Reunion are served by Aix Madagascar and Air France.

Entertainment

Among the restaurants in Antananarivo, one can choose Malagasy, French, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian, and Italian food.

Several nightclubs are in and around Antananarivo; several casinos are also available.

Soccer matches are played at the large stadium in Antananarivo on Saturday and Sunday afternoons during winter. Horse racing also takes place at the stadium on Sundays.

Dinner and a video show is a popular form of entertainment among the Americans.

The city has a small zoo featuring lemurs, birds, crocodiles, and tortoises indigenous to Madagascar, and a small anthropology museum is located within the zoo's perimeters. The Queen's Palace is now under renovation after a fire in November 1995.

The quality of the light, the hazeless skies, and wealth of subject matter make Antananarivo a delight to the photographer. Bring a good supply of all photographic needs. Film can be processed here; however, there are times when the paper and chemicals needed for developing film are not available. Some staff members prefer to send their film back to the U.S. via pouch for processing.

OTHER CITIES

ANTSIRABÉ, population around 220,000, is situated in the Ankaratra Mountains, in the central part of the country. Thermal springs are located in the area. Industries in the city include spinning and weaving, cigarette making, and food processing. An American Lutheran missionary school, founded in 1916, is in operation here.

ANTSIRANANA, once called Diégo-Suarez, is a harbor town at the northern tip of Madagascar. The deep-water port was a tactical asset to the Western allies in World War II, when they occupied the country. The city's main industries are ship construction and repair. Other industries include soap and salt manufacturing, chemical production, and food processing. Today, the population is about 220,000. Antsirana exports coffee and peanuts.

FIANANRANTSOA, with a population of nearly 300,000, is located in the rich agricultural region of southeastern Madagascar. The main crop is rice. Beans, peanuts, corn, cassava, potatoes, yams are

also grown. Cattle herding is also important. It is about 200 miles south of Antananarivo on the island's main north-south road.

MAHAJANGA, once called Majunga, is a seaport town of nearly 200,000 in the northwest corner of Madagascar, on Bombetoka Bay. It is an important transshipment port, and was the base for the French expeditionary force in 1895. Like Toamasina, Mahajanga offers a different atmosphere from that found in Antananarivo, but lacks the hotel or recreation facilities to make it a vacation resort. Mahajanga is accessible by air, or by a one-day drive over difficult roads. Mahajanga's industries include the processing of agricultural products, meat canning, and soap, sugar, and cement manufacturing.

Situated near the Mananjary River about 150 miles southeast of the capital, **MANANJARY** has close to 15,200 residents. As a port city on the Indian Ocean, it directs shipments of olives, coffee, cacao, rice, and vanilla.

TAOLANARO, formerly Fort-Dauphin, is located at the southeast tip of the island on the Indian Ocean. It is a small town that offers attractive beaches, shark-free swimming, and a quiet holiday atmosphere. Taolanaro can be reached by air in two hours, or by car during the dry season in three days. The drive is a scenic but arduous trip. Cottages may be rented from American missionaries in Taolanaro.

TOAMASINA, formerly Tamatave, located on the east coast of Madagascar, is the principal seaport for the country. Founded by the Portuguese in the 17th century, Toamasina has a population of approximately 130,000. As the terminus of the railroad from Antananarivo, it ships coffee, pepper, cloves, and vanilla from its port to other parts of the world. Its industries include sugar refining, rum distilling, food processing, and meat packing. Graphite, quartz, and chromites are mined nearby. Toamasina was rebuilt after being

destroyed by a hurricane in 1927. While it offers a change in altitude, climate, flora, and pace from the activities of the capital, Toamasina has little else in the way of recreational activities. The city can be reached in one hour by air or in 12 hours by train. There is no ocean bathing here because of sharks, but there are good beaches and modest hotel facilities at Foulpointe and Ambila, 30 and 60 miles, respectively, along the coast in opposite directions from the city.

TOLIARY (formerly called Tuléar) is a shipping center for marine products and the agricultural products of the interior. The city is located in the southeast on the Mozambique Channel. There are deposits of coal, mica, copper, and gold near Toliary. The estimated 50,000 residents enjoy year-round sunshine and white sand beaches.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Madagascar, the world's fourth-largest island, is situated in the Indian Ocean 250 miles across the Mozambique Channel from the southeast coast of Africa. Covering 230,500 square miles, it is 995 miles long and 360 miles across at its widest point. If it were transposed onto a map of the U.S., it would occupy the area from South Carolina north to New York and from the Atlantic Ocean west to the Appalachian Mountains.

A range of mountains that runs north to south the length of the island creates a distinct geographical division. Cliffs that lead sharply down through dense forests to narrow coastal plains lie to the east. The coastal climate is hot and tropical, with periodic cyclones that cause considerable damage. The descent from the central highlands is more gradual to the west, creating large plains and sweeping

savannahs that gently end in a coastline of many inlets. In the south and southwest, these plains become semi-desert where the main vegetation is thorny scrubs and magnificent baobab trees. In the far north, the Tsaratanana Mountain massif (rising 9,468 feet) creates a wet, tropical climate, and separates Diego Suarez, one of the world's greatest natural harbors, from the rest of the island. Along the crest of this ridge lies a high plateau region with rice-growing valleys nestled among barren hills. Here, the crust of red laterite that covers much of the island has been exposed by erosion, showing why the country is known as "the Great Red Island."

Antananarivo lies at the center of the high plateau. It was built on and around steep hills that are surrounded by mountains averaging 6,000 feet in altitude. The city ranges in altitude from 4,046 feet in

the newer part of the city to 4,770 feet in the older sections. Antananarivo enjoys a temperate climate and has two main seasons for which there are more exceptions than rules. Winter is from May to early September, when temperatures average 69°F during the day and 35°F at night. Little rain falls at this time, but abrupt drizzles are frequent. Winter days have warm sunshine at midday, but mornings are brisk and evenings are quite chilly. Summer, from December to February, comprises the rainy season. Daily thunderstorms occur in late afternoon and occasionally in the morning. Cyclones along the coastal areas do not reach the capital, but can bring week-long periods of constant rain. Summer temperatures average 79°F during the day with hot midday sun and 59°F at night. Umbrellas are more useful in this climate than raincoats.

Population

When the first immigrants to Madagascar arrived is uncertain, but it is assumed they came from Indonesia in the first century A.D. by way of southern India and east Africa. Immigrants landed on the eastern



Taxi service in Madagascar

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

coast and spread throughout the island, resulting in the extinction of an aboriginal population. Successive immigrations occurred from Polynesia and the Arabian Peninsula in pre-Islamic times. The Islamic strain arrived later, bringing slaves from continental Africa, followed during the 16th century by Europeans, particularly pirates. The 20th century brought an influx of Chinese, Indo-Pakistani, and a large number of French colonialists. Present-day Malagasy are descendants of a truly mixed race, and the variety of their physical appearance mirrors the variety of their ethnic origins. Asian features predominate in the groups inhabiting the central highlands, whereas the coastal people show more evidence of African origin. As with many aspects of Madagascar, exceptions abound, and it is best not to generalize except to note that the Malagasy are a handsome people.

About 50% of the Malagasy are Christian, divided almost evenly between Roman Catholic and Protestant. An historical rivalry existed between the coastal people, Cotiers, considered to be underprivileged, and the Merina of the high plateau region who are still predominant in the civil service, business, and the professions. The announced goal of the government is that nationalism should overcome ethnic rivalries.

Most people (including Christians) practice a form of traditional religion combined with ancestor worship. They believe death is but a passage to another life from which the ancestors can advise and protect the living. This spiritual communion is celebrated on the high plateau by funeral rites during which tombs are opened for a day and the dead are exhumed so that the tomb may be cleaned, the shroud replaced, and the ancestor joyfully reunited with his family. Although the timing of

exhumations varies across the island, the majority of Malagasy try to have the ceremony at least once every five years, funds permitting. These are very important and expensive occasions, since it falls to the family whose tomb is being opened to entertain all guests with food and drink; there is also the expense of new shrouds.

The principal language of the island is Malagasy, a soft, pleasant-sounding language grammatically akin to Indonesian. It is written in the Roman alphabet, using 21 letters. Regional dialects exist but are more a matter of vocabulary and accent than basic linguistic differences. This uniformity of language has been a major factor in creating a national sense of unity among people of diverse cultural characteristics. The Malagasy have had a greater difficulty in switching their thinking and speaking when saying numbers than nonmetric system

users have had in attempting to adapt to the metric system. In the Malagasy language, 4,342 is said with the last, i.e., smallest valued, number first.

Many people speak French fluently in the larger towns, but official publications are frequently in both languages, as are the daily newspapers of Antananarivo. The influence of British missionaries during the 19th century resulted in a greater percentage of English speakers found in Madagascar than in former French colonies.

The population of 13 million, currently growing at 2.8% annually, comprises about 8,000 French nationals and sizable Indian and Chinese communities. More than 47% of the population is under the age of 14 years. More than 82% of all Malagasy live in rural areas, and agriculture comprises 41% of the gross domestic product. The country is 99% self-sufficient in agricultural food production. The average Malagasy has an annual per capita income of \$223.

Public Institutions

Based on the 1992 Constitution, the executive branch of the Republic of Madagascar is composed of the Presidency and the Government. The President selects the Prime Minister from a list of names presented by the National Assembly; day to day management of government is performed by the Prime Minister and a 29-member Cabinet. The Senate and the National Assembly compose the Legislative Branch, which approves appropriations and bills proposed by the government; however, only the National Assembly with its 138 members is in place to date. The Judicial Branch is not fully implemented. The last presidential election was held in December 1996. Admiral Didier Ratsiraka was elected president, he nominated one Prime Minister and three Vice Prime Ministers. Elections of the National Assembly members and part of local government councils will soon take place.

Arts, Science, and Education

Like most developing countries, educational, scientific, and cultural activities in the Western sense are in a formative stage. The University of Madagascar is decentralized with different disciplines taught in the six provincial capitals, including Antananarivo. Public education, once based on the French system, has been Malagasized. Church-related primary and secondary schools are an important part of education, as they have been for over 150 years. Unfortunately, all levels of Malagasy schools suffer from a shortage of books and supplies. Although education is highly valued and most Malagasy remain in school for only 4-5 years, the overall literacy rate is estimated at 78%. Antananarivo has French-sponsored schools as well as an American-sponsored school.

Malagasy culture is ancient, rich, and varied. It plays a prominent and now reemphasized role in the life of the country. Several organizations, with the active support of the Government Ministry of Art and Culture, are working to preserve traditional music and dance and to record the popular history of the island.

Antananarivo has small museums of national history and anthropology, a tiny but popular zoo, and a botanical park. For more contemporary recreation, Antananarivo has a large sports complex. The French Cultural Center hosts interesting performing events each year. In conjunction with the National Library, the American Cultural Center holds occasional exhibits, forums, and lectures with visiting scholars.

Commerce and Industry

Agriculture forms the basis of the Malagasy economy. Including fisheries and forests, the agriculture sector employs 88% of the population and earns 80% of the country's export receipts. Rice is the most

important staple food, with some 70% of the population involved in its cultivation. In recent years, Madagascar has had to import substantial quantities of rice, putting a serious dent in its limited foreign exchange earnings. The most important export crops are coffee, vanilla, and cloves.

Fish and seafood rival vanilla as Madagascar's second most important export earner. Principal production is dominated by food processing, textile, and apparel industries, and accounts for less than 15% of the gross domestic product. Principal mineral exports are chromite, graphite, and mica. Local stones and gems, from aquamarines to tourmalines, are often breathtaking.

The government has backed away from its socialist policies of the 1970s and 80s and has embraced structural adjustment and free market economics. Recent enactment of a strong investment code and export processing zone legislation has positioned Madagascar to receive foreign investment, notably from France, Mauritius, South Africa, and southeast Asia.

Since 1996, the reform of the business and investment environments tackled the regulatory tax constraints impeding private sector development, particularly for small and medium sized local enterprises and foreign investors. It introduces a more transparent, security-enhancing legal framework and eliminates public enterprise monopolies.

The U.S. is the second-largest importer of Malagasy products after France and consumes most of the country's vanilla exports.

Transportation

Automobiles

In Madagascar, one drives on the right side of the road, yielding the right of way to vehicles coming in from the left. Most major intersections and traffic circles have police

directing traffic. If the policeman has his back to you at an intersection, you are required to stop. Seat belts, child safety seats, and motorcycle helmets are not required in Madagascar. If you are caught driving under the influence of alcohol, your car will be impounded for a few days, and you will have to pay a fine. If you are involved in an accident involving injuries and/or deaths, there is a mandatory court case. The losing party of the court case must then pay all costs.

Except for Antananarivo's main streets and a few well-maintained routes to outlying cities, most roads are in disrepair. For those traveling by road between cities, travel at night is not recommended. Roads tend to be narrow and winding with many one-lane bridges and blind curves. Most vehicles tend to drive in the center of the road unless another vehicle is present. Local practice is to blow the horn before going around a curve, to let others know of one's presence. Few pedestrian crosswalks or working traffic signals exist.

Travel within Antananarivo can be difficult with poor road signage and an abundance of one-way streets. Taxis are plentiful, and they are generally reasonably priced. Expect to bargain for the fare prior to getting into the vehicle. Most accidents are pedestrian-related, due to narrow roads and lack of sidewalks on many streets.

Rental cars generally come with a driver who is responsible for maintaining the vehicle and sometimes acts as a tour guide. Public transportation is unreliable, and the vehicles are poorly maintained. Rail services are very limited and undependable. The Malagasy presidential election in 2001-2002 has led to large demonstrations and a slowdown in the transportation system. However, arrangements can be made for a private train to travel to certain destinations.

Repair facilities exist for all French makes, most Japanese makes (Toyota, Mitsubishi, Isuzu), Chevrolet,

Ford, Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz, and BMW. However, the vehicles shipped to developing countries are sometimes different from the models sold in the U.S. or elsewhere. There are no American automobile representatives here. Bring extra tires, spark plugs, fan belts, oil filters, fuel and air filters, oil, automatic transmission fluid, power steering fluid, brake fluid, etc., since these are usually unavailable and exorbitantly expensive, even if available. Two or three jerry cans and a funnel may also prove useful. A battery charger and a 12-volt air pump are useful, as gasoline stations do not charge batteries or provide air. Small, economical vehicles are preferred since gasoline (leaded only, regular or premium) is expensive. Diesel fuel is much less expensive than gasoline but is sometimes difficult to find.

Avoid bringing in vehicles with fuel injection engines, or computerized/digital controls, as repairs on such features are sketchy at best. Rule of thumb: If the feature is modern by American standards, service will be difficult or impossible to find.

International drivers licenses are recognized, but are only valid for one year and cannot be renewed for use in Madagascar.

Third-party auto insurance is obligatory and must be obtained from a company operating in Madagascar. It is not expensive. Driving in and around Antananarivo is hazardous. Great caution is required to avoid accidents, especially involving pedestrians, small children, and livestock. Drive with caution as you circumnavigate potholes, ox-carts, and pedestrians. City streets and several highways are paved, but are often in very poor condition.

Many suburban streets and country roads are unpaved, deeply rutted, and rocky. Consider installing heavy-duty shock absorbers and steel-belted radials on your car. Antananarivo's narrow, winding streets make maneuvering large cars difficult. The best vehicle for Tana's winding streets is a small,

front-wheel-drive car with a relatively high clearance. Low-slung sporty models would ride too close to many of the local streets, inviting oil pan punctures, etc.

Some purchase four-wheel-drive vehicles; although not necessary for driving to and from work, they are essential for exploring some parts of the island.

Local

Public transportation is inadequate and unsafe. Buses are crowded and rarely used by Americans.

Taxis are plentiful in Antananarivo and inexpensive - \$1 or \$2 for a ride within the main part of the city during the day. Taxis will take you from the city to the suburbs, but are difficult to find in suburban areas and in the evening.

Regional

Madagascar has three railway lines: Antananarivo to Antsirabe, Antananarivo to Toamasina, and Fianarantsoa to Manakara. Railway cars are spartan and usually crowded and subject to frequent cancellations.

Air Madagascar has almost daily flights to most provincial capitals.

For the adventurous, a network of taxibrousse (private cars in which you can rent a space) links Antananarivo to most towns.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local phone service is fair. Residential bills, average \$12 per month plus any long-distance charges. Worldwide telephone communication is available 24 hours daily from home phones through the international operator. A 3-minute call to the U.S. costs about US\$26, with each additional minute costing about US\$9, if you use the local system. Telephone access changes on a daily basis with more and better companies offering a myriad of services.

Mail

Weekly international airmail deliveries are scheduled to and from Europe and the U.S. International mail to and from Europe takes about 5 days, and averages from 10 days to 3 weeks to and from the U.S.

Radio and TV

Antananarivo has ten radio stations. Malagasy is the major language broadcast but many have some news programs in French and English including VOA.

A shortwave radio is needed for other overseas broadcasts.

National Television, TVM, can be watched in most parts of the country. Reception difficulties may occur, however, because of weather and topography. Malagasy is the main language, but French and English are used for news broadcasts. Entertainment programs are often in French. Madagascar Television, MA-TV, is broadcast in UHF in the Antananarivo area. News is in French and Malagasy. A cable network, Televisioma Fialam-boly, TVF, broadcasts CNN, TNT, and two French stations. The signal is SECAM D K. In addition, two other stations have recently started.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Virtually no English-language magazines or newspapers are sold in Madagascar. Some current French periodicals are available. European airmail subscriptions to Time, Newsweek, the International Herald Tribune, etc., arrive within 2-3 days of publication, but are expensive.

Several major independent newspapers are published in French and Malagasy daily except Sunday. At least one page is devoted to international news, usually articles taken from Agence France Presse or Novosti and from foreign government press services, including USIS.

The Malagasy Government Ministry of Information prepares a daily

mimeographed news bulletin in French. A French language sampler of stories from the Malagasy press is published weekly. Other small Malagasy-language papers present local and international news from various political or religious points of view. Coverage of international events has improved in the past year.

The American Cultural Center library has about 4,000 books in the circulating collection, and 1,500 books and 60 periodicals in the reference room.

Madagascar University's Department of Modern Languages has several hundred volumes in English, but they are for student and faculty use. The National Library has 75,000 books, but few in English.

No English-language books are sold in Antananarivo. Major bookstores have stocks of French classics and paperbacks at high prices. Several Washington and New York bookstores accept mail orders for delivery by package pouch.

Health and Medicine

Health Concerns

Malaria, hepatitis, schistosomiasis, rabies, typhoid, intestinal parasites, cysticercosis, poison shark meat, and plague. Automobile accidents are common and local facilities poorly equipped. AIDS has been documented in low but growing numbers.

Medical Facilities

The Military Hospital has one French physician per Department, but no coverage during leave. Serious medical problems are evacuated to either South Africa or Reunion. Basic dental services are available. Have any dental work done prior to arrival.

Preventive Measures and Community Health

Yellow Fever immunization is required for transit through Africa -

no YF here. Recommended are Hep A&B, Rabies, DT, Polio, Typhoid.

Malaria Prophylaxis Mephloquine (appropriate dose for age) given weekly or Doxycycline daily is recommended for longer stays. Although there are infrequent outbreaks of Malaria in the capital, there are cases. Insect repellent for adults (33%) available in the HU but 10% for children should be brought with you.

Fluoride Supplementation to prevent tooth decay is recommended for children.

No blood bank facilities are recommended in the country.

Fruit and vegetables should be soaked in chlorine for 15 minutes. Avoid wading in fresh water to prevent schistosomiasis. Avoid strawberries grown in pig manure to prevent cysticercosis. Bring flea control for pets to avoid plague fleas. Avoid ingesting any shark meat to prevent ciguatera poisoning. Avoid undercooked foods or cold foods eaten in restaurants.

Bring adequate supply prescription drugs plus forms to order more from your insurance plan, extra pair of glasses, lens prescription and sufficient contact lens supplies for tour. Sunscreen, insect repellent. Most over-the-counter medications are available from French companies.

The Clinique des Soeurs hospital has a fairly high standard of cleanliness, but suffers from a shortage of supplies and inadequate services.

Most problems requiring sophisticated diagnostic procedures or surgery are evacuated to Pretoria or Nairobi where regional medical officers are posted. South Africa offers excellent medical and hospital facilities, as does Kenya and the nearby island of Reunion.

Madagascar is suffering from a chronic shortage of pharmaceuticals. Bring any medications prescribed for you and your dependents.

Dentistry standards in Madagascar are not equivalent to U.S. standards, but some Americans have received adequate dental treatment here. Bring an extra pair of eye-glasses or contact lenses and leave your prescription on file in the U.S., should you need to replace them.

Antananarivo's temperate climate is subject to sudden changes and contributes to a high incidence of respiratory infections. Fluctuating temperatures linked with the high altitude and sudden rainstorms create a climate French physicians term "pleasantly unhealthful." Upon arrival, a brief period of sleeplessness may occur, but this should pass in a couple of days.

Antananarivo's water supply is from impounded surface water. The distribution system is quite ancient, and the possibility of illness from contaminated water is serious, especially during the rainy season. The sewage system is poor. Boil all water before using or use your distiller.

Infectious hepatitis is quite common, especially among the foreign population, and is usually transmitted by improper food preparation. It is advised to receive gamma globulin injections regularly at 6-month intervals. Bilharzia (schistosomiasis of both the mansoni and otobium types) exists in fresh water around Antananarivo. It is transmitted through a snail-borne fluke that enters the body through the skin. Therefore, you should stay out of still waters.

Long-life shelf milk in rectangular cartons is available and imported from France. All fruits and vegetables must be carefully washed and treated, as hygiene standards are poor. Fresh meat should be washed and thoroughly cooked to avoid contracting parasites.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

As there is no direct commercial air service by local carriers at present, nor economic authority to operate such service between the United States and Madagascar, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not assessed Madagascar's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with international aviation safety standards.

For further information, travelers may contact the Department of Transportation within the United States at telephone 1-800-322-7873, or visit the FAA's Internet web site at <http://www.faa.gov/avr/iasa/>. The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) separately assesses some foreign air carriers for suitability as official providers of air services. For information regarding the DOD policy on specific carriers, travelers may contact DOD at telephone (618) 229-4801.

Domestic and international air services operate regularly, but they are subject to delays and occasional breakdowns. Air Madagascar often changes in-country flight schedules, based on how full the flight is, with little or no prior warning to passengers. Overbooking is also common.

A passport and visa are required. Visas should be obtained in advance, although airport visas are available in Antananarivo, which is the only city with an international airport. Travelers who opt to obtain an airport visa should expect delays upon arrival. Evidence of yellow fever immunization is required for all travelers who have been in an infected zone within six months of their arrival in Madagascar.

Travelers may obtain the latest information and details on entry requirements from the Embassy of the Republic of Madagascar, 2374 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; telephone (202) 265-5525/6; web site: <http://www.embassy.org/madagascar>; or

the Malagasy Consulate in New York City, telephone (212) 986-9491. Honorary consuls are located in Philadelphia, San Diego and Houston. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Malagasy embassy or consulate.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo, where they may obtain updated information on travel and security in Madagascar. The U.S. Embassy is located at 14 and 16 Laiana Rainitovo, Antsahavola, Antananarivo. The mailing address is B.P. 620, 101 Antananarivo, Madagascar. The telephone number is (261) 22-200-89; the fax number is (261-20) 22-345-39.

Pets

Quarantine requirements differ according to the type of animal. A health certificate, issued within three days of arrival in Madagascar, from a veterinarian in the country in which the animal was located, must be provided. Dogs must have a valid rabies vaccination within the past six months.

Firearms and Ammunition

Importation of firearms or ammunition is strictly controlled by the Malagasy Government. Hunting firearms can be carried only in open season with possession of a hunting permit. For additional information, refer to 6 FAM 168.5.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency unit is the Malagasy franc (FMG). The rate of conversion, is about 5,400 FMG=US\$1.

No limit exists on the amount of foreign currency you may bring into the country. However, customs officials usually require declarations of all monies brought in, diplomatic personnel excluded. Conversion of all currencies is strictly controlled; Malagasy currency is not convertible. If any trips outside Madagascar are anticipated, you will find some dollars useful.

Madagascar uses the metric system of weights and measures.

Disaster Preparedness

Madagascar is prone to tropical storms. Storm season is generally January through the end of February. Storms primarily affect the eastern coast, although large storms may reach the capital of Antananarivo. Storms which affect the shipping ports may limit fuel and food supplies elsewhere in the country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

Security

The Ministry of Public Works (tel. [261] (20) 22-318-02) is Madagascar's authority responsible for road safety. During an emergency, visitors to Antananarivo can contact local police by telephoning 17, by dialing 22-227-35, or by dialing 030-23-801-40 (cellular). American citizens can also call the U.S. Embassy at telephone 22-212-57/58/59 if assistance is needed in communicating with law enforcement officials. Ambulance services are available in Antananarivo only with Espace Medical at telephone 22-625-66 or 22-219-72.

The major concerns for visitors to Antananarivo are street crime and theft from residences and vehicles. Although not generally violent, incidents involving violence by assailants, particularly when the victim resists, are on the rise. Walking at night, whether alone or in a group, is not considered safe in urban areas, including in the vicinity of Western-standard hotels. Organized gangs of bandits are known to patrol areas where foreigners who are perceived to be wealthy congregate. Wearing expensive jewelry or carrying expensive items such as cameras while on foot or while using public transportation is strongly discouraged. Valuable items should never be left in an unattended vehicle. Although crimes such as burglary do occur in areas outside the capital, the threat of confronta-

tional crime is less common in rural areas. Night travel in private or public conveyances outside Antananarivo is discouraged due to poor lighting and road conditions.

The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to local police and to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. The pamphlets, *A Safe Trip Abroad and Tips for Travelers to Sub-Saharan Africa*, provide useful information on protecting personal security while traveling abroad and on travel in the region in general. Both are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, via the Internet at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs, or via the Bureau of Consular Affairs home page at <http://travel.state.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Mar. 29 Martyrs' Day
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May/June Ascension Day*
 - May 25 African Liberation Day
 - May/June Pentecost*
 - May/June Pentecost Monday*
 - June 26 Independence Day
 - Aug. 15 Assumption
 - Sept. 27 St. Vincent de Pauls Day
 - Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 - Dec. 30 Republic Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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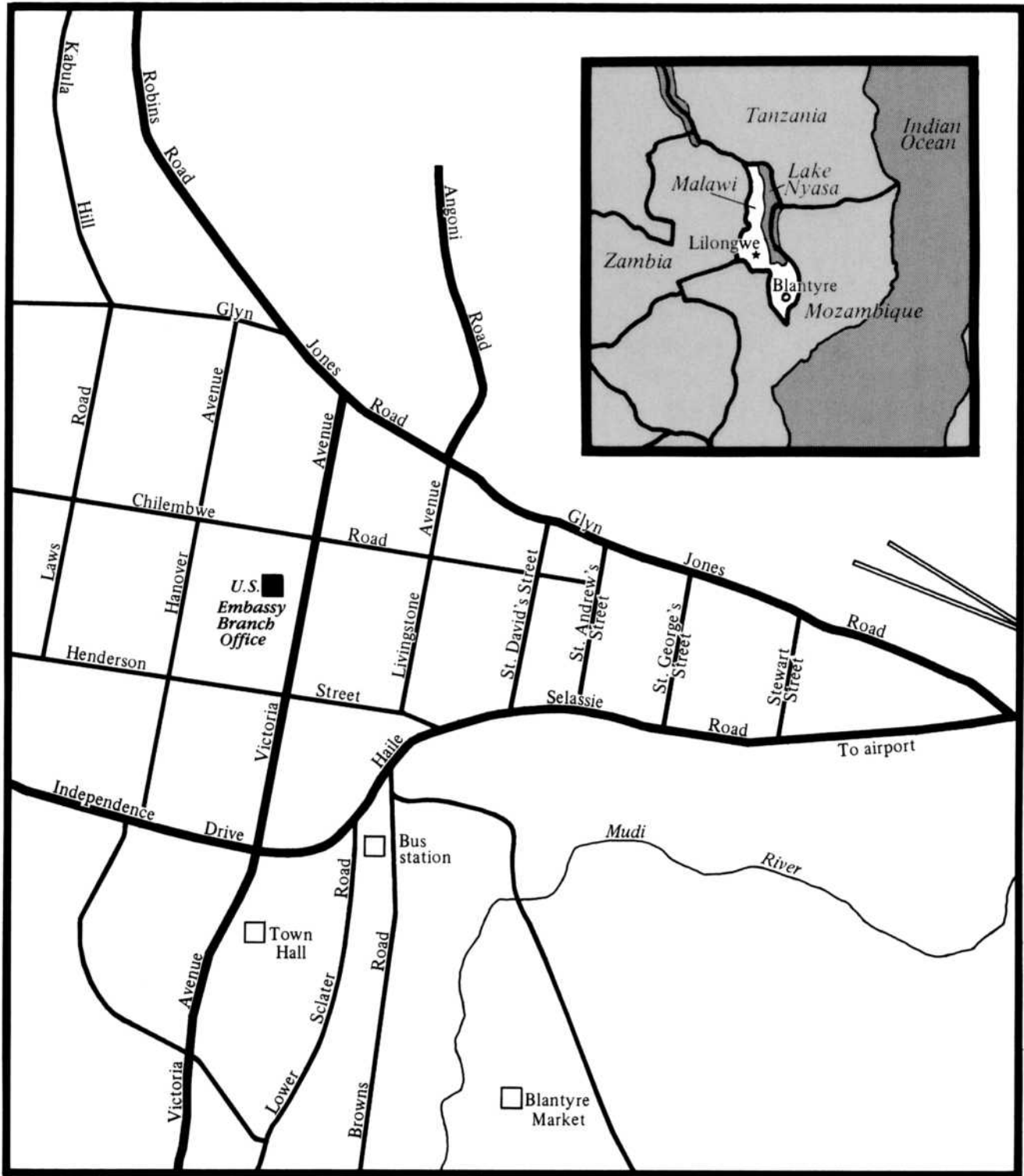
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Blantyre, Malawi

MALAWI

Republic of Malawi

Major Cities:

Lilongwe, Blantyre

Other Cities:

Dedza, Karonga, Mzuzu, Nkhotakota, Nsanje, Zomba

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **MALAWI**, once part of the Federation of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland, achieved its independence in July 1964, and was organized into its present political entity two years later. In the middle of the last century, the area that is now Malawi came into the sphere of British influence through the antislavery zeal of David Livingstone, Scottish missionary and explorer in Africa. It was established as the Protectorate of Nyasaland. Its present name, assumed at the time of independence, is derived from the Maravi, a Bantu tribe who crossed Zambia from the southern Congo and entered the territory approximately five centuries ago.

MAJOR CITIES

Lilongwe

The Embassy, USIS, and USAID are located in Lilongwe, which became the capital on January 1, 1975. The original town of Lilongwe was a modest trading center with a population of 4,000 in 1970. Planning for the new capital began in the late 1960s in response to a long-standing wish of the president to move the capital to a more central area, shifting northward the development pattern, which had previously heavily favored the southern Blantyre-Zomba region. The relocation also placed the capital in the home area of the predominant Chewa tribe.

The new capital site is located about 5 miles from Lilongwe "Old Town" and was literally carved out of the bush. Even with a population of 437,000, the atmosphere in Lilongwe is one of a small, isolated settlement in the middle of a rolling savanna.

Lilongwe has an expatriate colony, mostly of U.K. origin, of approximately 2,000. Many work for the Government of Malawi; others are connected with diplomatic missions, the construction business, or missionaries. The American community

in Lilongwe includes Embassy personnel, Peace Corps volunteers, a few professors, UN personnel, consultants, and missionaries.

Food

Locally grown vegetables and fruits are plentiful and inexpensive, but availability varies seasonally. Most people augment their supply with vegetable gardens. A good selection of vegetable and flower seeds is available locally, although many people prefer to bring seeds or order them from the U.S. Canning and freezing supplies are not available.

Food prices in general have increased steadily in the last few years. The cost of fresh meat, including beef, chicken, pork and lamb, or mutton, is generally lower than in the U.S. for comparable cuts, but periodic shortages occur. Canned or imported meat is much more expensive. Good quality fish from Lake Malawi, including a delicious type of tilapia called chambo, is available most of the year at reasonable costs.

Staples such as flour, sugar, salt, and oil are available locally, but are inferior in quality. Canned goods, like other processed foods, are much more expensive than in the U.S. Most are imported from the U.K. or South Africa. Laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, and paper prod-

ucts such as tissues, paper towels, napkins, and toilet paper are of poor quality and are priced very high. Baby products and convenience foods (cake mixes, prepared foods, etc.) are limited in availability and selection.

The local bakeries sell a variety of white and wheat breads. Pasteurized reconstituted milk is available and safe to drink. Eggs, butter, yogurt, cottage cheese, mild cheddar cheese, and other dairy products are available, but periodic shortages occur. People stock up on standard items to tide them through the frequent shortage periods.

Two supermarkets and numerous branch "superettes" carry a limited selection of canned and bottled goods, dairy products, meats, some fresh fruits, and vegetables. The Lilongwe open market sells all seasonal fruits and vegetables, as well as rice, flour, salt, peanuts, fish, meats, and other miscellaneous goods. Local Asian stores also sell a variety of canned and bottled goods, as well as spices, dried fish, and some specialty items.

Clothing

General: Clothing is expensive, often of poor quality, and very limited in selection. Bring sufficient clothing for all family members or order it from the U.S. Simple, practical clothing is best suited to Lilongwe life. Washable fabrics are suitable for all but the most formal occasions. Summer clothing is worn from September to April. Most winter days (from May to August) are cool with evening temperatures dipping to 40°F. Because houses and offices become chilly during this period, bring plenty of sweaters, sweatshirts, and light jackets. A light-weight raincoat or umbrella is essential during the rainy season.

Although dry-cleaning facilities are available, work varies from poor to adequate. The dry-cleaners refuse to clean some items, such as silk dresses, and do not give guarantees on larger items such as bedspreads. Some people do their own dry-cleaning with locally purchased benzine.

Others take their dry-cleaning with them on trips to more developed countries.

The choice of shoes is also very limited, but ladies sandals and children's shoes are usually available.

Lilongwe has a few dressmakers and tailors, but the quality of their work varies.

Men: Due to unreliable local dry-cleaning facilities, wash-and-wear suits are more practical, but other light-weight suits are also worn. Dress is conservative in Malawi; coats and ties are the rule in government offices, most business meetings, and some restaurants for dinner. Some businessmen wear safari-type suits, but they are not generally regarded as adequate alternatives to coats and ties, as is the case in some other African countries.

Women: Women will find cotton dresses and skirts suitable for most occasions, including work. Synthetics can be worn comfortably on all but a few of the hottest days. Sweaters and woolen dresses or suits are useful for the cooler months. Women may find light-weight coats or warm shawls necessary for some evenings. Very few occasions call for long dresses and elaborate hostess gowns are not needed. Cotton lingerie is more comfortable in the hot season than nylon.

Children: Children need both warm and cool weather clothing for the varying temperatures throughout the year. Bring a good supply of shorts, pants, short- and long-sleeved shirts, sweatshirts, light jackets, sturdy shoes, socks, summer and winter pajamas, slippers, raincoats, and umbrellas. Although girls can wear shorts or pants in their own homes and in the homes of other Americans, be sure to bring an adequate supply of skirts or dresses that cover the knee for trips to the stores or other public areas. The school requires a very specific uniform that can be purchased locally at a reasonable cost. However, you should bring with you the

required black or brown leather-type shoes that all students must wear, plus sports shoes for physical education.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: European and South African cosmetics and pharmaceuticals are usually available; however, selection is limited, and prices are high. Bring personal items, including favorite brands, with you. Many common nonprescription drugs and medicines are available (aspirin, vitamins), but again, high prices, shortages, and limited selection are constraining factors. Plan to have special prescriptions filled from the U.S.

Locally made cigarettes are inexpensive. Pipe tobacco and cigars are expensive, and selection is limited. Locally produced beer and gin are good and reasonably priced; most other liquors are expensive.

Basic Services: Most basic services are available, although quality of work varies. Several beauty shops offer haircuts for both men and women. Shoe repair is not good, but reasonable tailors can be found for alterations and dressmaking. Dry-cleaners are available, but unreliable.

Religious Activities

The Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Roman Catholic churches conduct English-language services in Lilongwe. Other denominations, including the Church of Christ, Church of the Nazarene, Seventh-day Adventist, and Southern Baptist are represented. Islamic and Hindu places of worship are also located in Lilongwe.

Education

Expatriate children can attend only "designated schools" which are run by the Government of Malawi. In Lilongwe, most children of American families attend the Bishop Mackenzie School (BMS), which offers coeducational instruction for Reception (age 4) through Form 5 (equivalent to 10th grade). The curriculum is designed according to the

British system, and the teaching staff is predominantly British. The school year consists of three terms extending from September to mid-December, mid-January to early April, and mid-April to early July. There are 40 classrooms plus a library on 25 acres of land that also includes three sports fields, two tennis courts, a playground, a swimming pool, and a large, newly constructed school hall.

Uniforms are required and can be purchased locally at reasonable cost.

Private kindergartens are also available for 2–5 year olds in Lilongwe. There are waiting lists, however, and it is best to write in advance to secure a place for your preschooler.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Malawi at Zomba offers extension courses in languages, anthropology, literature, and history. The French Cultural Center in Lilongwe offers French-language courses.

Sports

Malawi's good weather and facilities combine to make a wide variety of sports available in Lilongwe. The Lilongwe Golf Club offers an 18-hole golf course, squash, swimming, tennis, and other sports facilities. The Capital Hotel also has swimming and squash facilities.

Volleyball, basketball, and softball games are organized weekly on an informal basis at various locations in Lilongwe. The Hash House Harriers running group can be seen each week running/walking throughout the neighborhoods of Lilongwe and are always seeking new members. Horseback riding is also possible for those interested.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

You can swim, dive, sail, boat, and fish on Lake Malawi. The Livingstonia Hotel, near Salima, offers a swimming pool plus private

beach for hotel residents with free use of its facilities and maritime equipment, including sailboats, paddleboats, kayaks, wind surfboards, scuba, and snorkeling equipment. Further south on the lake are Cape Maclear and Monkey Bay with excellent beach-front hotels nearby. The Lake Malawi National Park, a maritime park, is located at Cape Maclear. Here the most beautiful, crystal-clear water with over 400 different species of freshwater tropical fish creates a snorkeling paradise. In addition to a wide variety of maritime recreation, there are also nature trails for hiking in an area where birdlife is prolific.

Malawi Railways operates several lake steamers, and one, the Ilala, features limited cabin accommodations. Trips on the Ilala can be made for up to 7 days. In addition, the boat can load one car on board, although reservations must be made far in advance.

Malawi has several game parks and reserves, and although the facilities are not greatly developed, most parks do offer beautiful landscape and good game viewing. Kasungu National Park is about a 3-hour drive from Lilongwe on good roads, although roads inside the park are unpaved. You will see a wide variety of game, and accommodations, inclusive of meals, are comfortable. Lengwe Park in the southern region (Lower Shire) offers game viewing and modest accommodations; a cook is available, but you must provide your own food. Nyika Park is located in the northern region on a high plateau and offers spectacular scenery and many different types of game. It is, however, the most remote of the parks and is difficult to reach; accommodations are pleasant. The country has other game reserves, but these do not offer facilities for overnight accommodations. Reservations for all parks and reserves are handled through the central Forestry Office in Lilongwe.

Tiger fishing is possible on the Lower Shire River, and hunting is popular in the Central Region,

where good opportunities for guinea fowl, francolin, and duck shooting are found.

The town of Zomba is about 4 hours south of Lilongwe, and Zomba Plateau is a popular area for outings. It offers a mountain atmosphere with evergreen forests and is considered an excellent spot for hiking. In addition, within the area are several spots for trout fly fishing. The KuChawe Inn, a small hotel, is located nearby.

A trip to Blantyre, which is 191 miles from Lilongwe and a 4-hour drive, offers a welcome change. Blantyre is the country's main commercial and industrial center with an urban population of some 400,000. Set in the hilly country of the Shire highlands, Blantyre hosts a broader selection of good restaurants and shops than can be found in Lilongwe.

It is possible to travel by road to Zambia and on to Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa, although current visa and transit policy should be checked in advance. Lusaka is a 1-day drive from Lilongwe, and Harare or Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe can be reached in another day. These roads are paved but are generally in fair-to-poor condition, with potholes and/or deteriorated surfaces in some sections. Malawi is also linked by air to neighboring countries and South Africa, and excursion fares and package holidays are sometimes available at a reduced price.

Entertainment

The Lilongwe Golf Club, and to some extent the Capital Hotel, serve as social centers. Lilongwe service clubs, such as Lions, Rotary, Round Table, and several women's associations frequently sponsor special events, including casino nights, dinners, and discos. Local amateur groups present productions throughout the year. Many other clubs, such as a music society, garden club, and wildlife society, are also active.

There are no cinemas currently operating in Lilongwe. However, the Defense Attache's Office shows a weekly videotaped movie at the USIS Center open to Americans and their guests free of charge.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Most entertaining and social relationships among Americans consist of small informal lunches or dinners and cocktail parties. Given the relative lack of variety of social centers in town, a great deal of home entertaining takes place, ranging from relatively formal receptions to very casual barbecue-type lunches.

International Contacts: Good opportunities exist to develop contacts with both the resident expatriate community and Malawians, primarily through home entertaining. In addition, service clubs and other associations provide settings for international contacts. The resident diplomatic community is small, but a good deal of contact and entertaining exist within it. Business and government groups are more differentiated, but it is also possible to develop good contacts on a social level, as well as a professional level with these groups.

Blantyre

Blantyre remains both the largest city and the major commercial center of Malawi, with an urban population estimated at 402,000. Situated in the Shire Highlands at an elevation of 3,500 feet above sea level, it is the oldest township in the country. The city grew from the establishment in 1876 of the Church of Scotland's mission on that site, and is named for the Scottish birthplace of Dr. David Livingstone. It became a municipality in 1885. Later, the town of Limbe developed about five miles away, around the headquarters of the Malawi Railways and the Imperial Tobacco Company, and was declared a township in 1909. As the two townships grew, most of the in-between area was built up and a single municipality was formed in



Marketplace in Blantyre, Malawi

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March 1956. A charter was granted to the combined unit as the City of Blantyre in 1966. Sister-city relations have been established with Independence, Missouri, U.S.A.; Hanover, Germany; and Ndola, Zambia.

Blantyre, covering an area of about 77.5 square miles (129 square kilometers), retains the greatest share of industrial activity in the country. Establishments in the city's Chichiri and Chirimba areas, designated for industrial development, include firms manufacturing textiles, fertilizers, shoes, matches, and drinks. Modern service roads, water pipes, and sewage systems have been installed.

The aesthetics of the community are maintained in the many landscaped parks and gardens, and a horticultural school (open to the public) is operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Education

As in Lilongwe, expatriate children attend only "designated," privately-run schools. St. Andrews in Blantyre is one of these, and offers a British-based curriculum in a primary school through the seventh grade, and a secondary-school pro-

gram for Forms I-V, roughly corresponding to grades eight-12. This latter program is designed to lead to the "O" level examination of the General Certificate of Education. St. Andrews has a boarding facility, and most children who live outside the Blantyre area attend the school here.

A three-term schedule is followed, from September to mid-December, mid-January to early April, and the end of April to the end of June. Uniforms are required, and can be obtained locally at reasonable cost. Many parents choose to supply supplementary aids, texts, and reference material from home.

Situated on 35 acres of picturesque African countryside overlooking Mulanje Mountain, St. Andrews offers weekend trips to nearby forests, rivers, and game parks. The school also has an extensive sports program featuring swimming, basketball, golf, squash, and many other sports. Music and art are also offered as extracurricular activities.

Admission to St. Andrews is tightly controlled, and will not be made unless a vacancy exists; a waiting list is frequently encountered, making early application advisable. Contact with the school can be made by writing to St. Andrews Primary

School, Box 593, or to St. Andrews Secondary School, Box 221, both in Blantyre, Malawi.

Blantyre has several private nursery schools, usually crowded, but generally considered adequate.

The University of Malawi at Zomba offers extension courses in languages, anthropology, literature, and history.

Recreation

Blantyre and Limbe have clubs with 18- and 12-hole golf courses, respectively. Other sports offered in the area include rugby, soccer, cricket, tennis, swimming, squash, badminton, flying, fishing, and boating. Schools provide opportunities for children to participate in numerous games and sporting activities.

Swimming, sailing, boating, and fishing are possible on Lake Malawi. In the Mangochi area, about a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Blantyre, recreational facilities can be found at Nkopola Lodge and at Club Makokola. Tiger fishing is possible on the lower Shire River, and trout fishing (fly rods only) on the Zomba Plateau, about an hour away from Blantyre.

General information about game parks, reserves, and touring activities is included in the section on Lilongwe.

Entertainment

Active organizations and clubs in or near Blantyre include the Blantyre Sports Club, Limbe Country Club, Council of Social Services, Mulanje Mountain Club, Sailing Club, Rotary and Lions clubs, Camera Club, Round Table, Jaycees, and Malawi Society. The latter group organizes lectures on Malawi's history and other related subjects; among its achievements is the creation of the Malawi Museum. The Board of Hotels and Tourism sponsors a Malawi arts and crafts center.

Blantyre and Limbe have several cinemas which frequently show recent popular films, generally in English. A number of private clubs

in the area provide dining facilities and bars and lounges.

Amateur dramatic and music societies give occasional public performances and exhibitions. Dances are sometimes held in the hotels or clubs, and some social activities are sponsored by service clubs, such as Rotary and Lions.

The American community in Blantyre is small, thus making its own activities somewhat limited. There is, however, a sizable expatriate community, and frequent occasions arise (usually dinners or parties) to meet other foreign residents, as well as Malawian business and government leaders. Most social events tend to be informal, normally calling for business apparel for men, and the required below-the-knee dress for women. Black-tie/formal gown events are rare.

Volunteer activities also provide an opportunity for international contact through a variety of organizations, including the Red Cross and the service clubs.

OTHER CITIES

At the foot of Dedza Mountain, the city of **DEDZA** is located in the central region of Malawi, on the country's western border with Mozambique. Less than 50 miles from Lilongwe, its cool climate and mountain water make Dedza ideal for growing rice and potatoes. Forestry is an important industry because of the plentiful softwood on Dedza Mountain. There are sawmills and a forestry training school nearby. Dedza was sparsely inhabited until the 1920s and 1930s. Tourism is minimal in this city of about 5,500 residents.

KARONGA, a trading port with a population of 13,000, is situated at the northern end of Lake Nyasa in the Great Rift Valley. The economy, based on the cotton and rice production along the lake and on coffee and livestock in the west, is augmented by subsistence fishing. It was used

as military headquarters during World War I.

MZUZU was founded in 1949, and is the chief urban center of the Northern Region. It is approximately 200 miles north of Lilongwe. The city was once an administrative center and is now attracting industries such as grain factories and bakeries. A tung oil extraction plant is also located here. Mzuzu has a population of just over 40,000.

NKHOTAKOTA (formerly called Kota Kota) is an administrative center in the central region of Malawi, about 75 miles north of the capital on the shores of Lake Nyasa. Once a place where Arab slave traders worked, Nkhotakota is Malawi's largest traditional African city. Nkhotakota trades corn, cotton, fish, and rice. Tourist spots include a rest house and hot springs.

NSANJE (formerly called Port Herald) is located in the southernmost part of Malawi, near the Mozambique border. It is a trade and transportation center. Major products produced in Nsanje include tobacco, rice, corn, and cotton. The population is estimated to be 6,400.

ZOMBA is located in southern Malawi's Shire Highlands, 70 miles south of Lake Nyasa and about 40 miles north of Blantyre. For many years it has been a popular summer resort. The city, founded by European cotton planters in 1880, was the capital of what is now Malawi during the early days of the former British administration. When Lilongwe became the capital on January 1, 1975, Zomba developed into a university town. Zomba is also a commercial center where farmers from the surrounding area sell their tobacco and dairy products. The town also trades rice, corn, fish, and softwoods. The main campus of the University of Malawi is located here. Zomba's population is 43,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Completely landlocked in southeast Africa, Malawi borders Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique. Malawi's southern tip lies 130 miles inland from the sea. Altitude varies from less than 200 feet above sea level at Nsanje in the south to almost 10,000 feet at the peak of Mount Mulanje. Malawi's topography consists of high, well-watered plateaus broken by large hills.

Malawi covers 46,066 square miles and is about the size of Pennsylvania. A deep depression, its chief physical feature, runs through the center and forms part of the Great Rift Valley. In this depression are Lake Malawi and the Shire Valley. Lake Malawi, about 1,500 feet above sea level and 380 miles long, is Africa's third largest lake and Malawi's major tourist attraction. In Malawi's north and central areas are the Nyika, Vipya, and Dedza uplands, rising from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level. In the south, the Shire Highlands plateau averages 3,000–4,000 feet, with occasional peaks such as Zomba (7,000 feet) and Mulanje (10,000 feet). Malawi has wet and dry seasons. The wet season is from November to April; the heaviest rainfall occurs between December and March. The dry season begins in May and lasts until November. It is hottest just before rainfalls begin.

The capital, Lilongwe (altitude 3,400 feet) is in a high, central plateau area. The average daily temperature in Lilongwe during October is 84.6°F. June, July, and August are the coolest months, and nights can be quite chilly when temperatures drop to between 41°F and 57°F. Frost occasionally occurs in Lilongwe. During the dry season, particularly September and October, high winds and some dust occur. The annual mean temperature in Lilongwe is 67.4°F, and the annual

rainfall is 31.9 inches. Nights are generally cool and pleasant in Lilongwe, even during the hottest weather. Dry season days are generally sunny and warm; rains during the wet season are brief. The Blantyre area is more mountainous, and its weather more humid.

Population

Malawi, with an estimated population of 10.1 million (2000), is one of Africa's most densely populated countries. The population includes over 9.5 million Africans, 5,000 Europeans, and 7,000 Asians. Most Europeans are of British stock from the U.K., South Africa, or Zimbabwe, and many are involved in missionary work, business, or farming. In addition, since 1987, Malawi has hosted large numbers of Mozambicans fleeing that country's civil war. Mozambican refugees in Malawi totaled more than 1 million in late 1992, and in some areas of the country, Mozambican refugees outnumber native Malawians. Americans living in Malawi include missionaries, U.S. Government officials, engineers, construction workers, and Peace Corps volunteers.

The African population includes six principal tribes. Although language and customs are still distinct, tribalism is not as evident here as in other African countries. English is one of the official languages; all educated Africans speak it. More than 50 percent of the people speak Chichewa, the other official language, and almost everyone understands it. The second most important African language, Tumbuka, is spoken in the north.

In the past, many Malawians worked abroad, but fewer South African mine labor contracts have decreased this number greatly. Sizeable numbers of Malawians still reside and work in Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Malawian customs and mores have grown out of a tradition of individual worth combined with a spirit of community. The gentle arts of courtesy and cooperation are valued,

and Americans will find little trouble relating to the basic warmth and politeness of Malawians. The traditional Malawian extends both hands to receive or give a gift, kneels to address a superior, and waits for permission before leaving. These expressions of politeness are still common in certain situations. Extended hand-holding is a common sign of friendship.

Public Institutions

Malawi came under British influence through the antislavery missionary zeal of David Livingstone. Missionaries and traders followed, and later a British consul was appointed. Under British consul Harry Johnston, military attempts to end the slave trade took place during the late 19th century. However, slave traffic did not end until 1895 with the capture and execution of the Arab slavers at Karonga, Nkhotakota, and Jumbe.

The former Protectorate of Nyasaland became a part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in September 1953, and seceded in December 1962. It gained full independence on July 6, 1964, under the name of Malawi and became a Republic on July 6, 1966.

After nearly 30 years of single-party rule, Malawi held multi-party elections in 1994 resulting in the election of businessman Bakili Muluzi as president to a five year term. He was reelected in 1999. The National Assembly has 193 Members. A new constitution was approved in May 1994.

The judicial system comprises a high court and magistrate courts patterned after the British system and African traditional courts. In 1993, the role of the traditional courts was greatly diminished.

Arts, Science, and Education

Artistic attractions are principally tribal dancing, arts and crafts, and a small museum in Blantyre. A

French-Canadian Catholic priest, resident in Malawi for 25 years, has an extensive collection of decorative masks worn by Malawians during their various tribal dances. He is building a museum near his mission in southern Malawi to house these artifacts. Diplomatic missions occasionally sponsor concerts by visiting musicians or shows by visiting artists. "Disco" has become quite popular among Malawians, and hotels usually have a live band for dancers. Chancellor College, the liberal arts branch of the University of Malawi, is located in Zomba. Bunda College of Agriculture and the Kamuzu College of Nursing are in Lilongwe, and Blantyre hosts the Polytechnic College; each is a branch of the University of Malawi.

Commerce and Industry

Malawi's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which accounts for 37 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 85 percent of export earnings. Important exports that earn the bulk of Malawi's foreign exchange are tobacco, tea, coffee, peanuts, cotton, legumes, and sugar.

Malawi's few manufacturing industries are concentrated around Blantyre. These include manufacturers of soap, agricultural tools, edible oils and fats, breads, candy, beer, bricks, shoes, hair oils, cigarettes, gin, clothing, furniture, fishing nets, nails, automobile batteries, blankets, rugs, light metal work, textiles, farm trailers, bus and truck bodies, tankers, coaches, low-loaders, leather, ceramics, and wood carvings.

Inflation is very high, at 29.5 percent as of 2001. Malawi is heavily dependent on economic assistance from donor organizations and countries. The country currently faces the challenges of developing a true market economy, improving its educational facilities, and dealing with the ever growing problem of HIV and AIDS.

Transportation

Local

Local bus service in the Lilongwe area will not meet daily needs for getting to work, shopping, or recreation. Taxi service is limited in the new Capital City section of Lilongwe. Rental cars are available in both Blantyre and Lilongwe, although choice of model is limited. Rental rates are comparable to those in many parts of the U.S.

Regional

The international airport in Malawi is Kamuzu International Airport located approximately 16 miles from the Capital City section of Lilongwe. Blantyre is served by domestic flights only; flying time from Lilongwe is about 50 minutes. Limited international flights link Lilongwe with neighboring countries, South Africa and Kenya. Direct European service is currently limited to a Saturday flight to London (British Airways), a Tuesday flight to Paris (Air France), and Thursday and Sunday flights to Amsterdam (KLM). Connections to other international locations can be made in Nairobi, Johannesburg, Lusaka, and Harare.

A two-lane paved highway connects the major population centers of Lilongwe, Zomba, and Blantyre. Driving time from Lilongwe to Blantyre or Zomba is approximately 4 hours. The road is good but narrow, and drivers must be cautious as cattle and other farm animals wander onto the road. Good quality, two-lane roads also connect Lilongwe with the Zambia border and Mzuzu and Karonga in the north of the country. Travel from Lilongwe to Lake Malawi at Salima is being improved; a new two-lane asphalt highway should be completed this year. Most of the other roads in the country vary in quality from rough tarmac roads to dirt and gravel. Some of the lesser traveled roads may be impassable in the rainy season. Although Malawi is connected by road to South Africa via Mozambique, as well as through Zambia and Zimbabwe, surface travel through Mozambique should not be

attempted. Lusaka can be reached in 1 day of driving over tarmac roads, although care must be taken to avoid potholes and rough sections of the road. From Lusaka, it is possible to continue on tarmac road to Victoria Falls, or to South Africa via Harare.

Malawi Railways has about 560 miles of track, primarily intended for freight haulage. Some passenger services are offered, but trains are slow and accommodations are frequently restricted to third class.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Malawi is generally satisfactory. Calls can usually be completed between urban centers within the country with a minimum of delay, although occasional outages do occur, particularly in residential areas. Many international call destinations may be reached by direct dial, including the U.S., and service is good. It is more expensive, however, to call the U.S. from Malawi than vice versa. Telegraph service to all areas is adequate.

Radio and TV

Malawi has its own government radio station, and one TV station. Most programs are in the Chichewa language and include few cultural presentations. A good shortwave radio is useful, especially for receiving international news on BBC or VOA.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The *Daily Times* newspaper is published in English on weekdays with a special edition, the *Malawi News*, on Saturday; it concentrates on local news. The international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available locally. All publications sold in Malawi are subject to local censorship.

Although both Lilongwe and Blantyre have some bookshops, selection is limited, and prices are very high by U.S. standards. A branch of the Malawi National Library is located

in Lilongwe; USIS and the British Council also operate small libraries; again, selection is limited.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical facilities in Lilongwe are inadequate. There are a few qualified physicians and specialists practicing in Malawi who may be consulted if necessary, but hospitals are not up to U.S. standards.

Local pharmacies carry primarily European or South African drugs, and their supplies are unreliable. Therefore, bring an adequate supply of specifically needed drugs with you. Try to make arrangements through a U.S. physician or pharmacist for replenishing prescriptions.

There is a Seventh-day Adventist clinic in Lilongwe currently staffed by an American dentist and an American optometrist. Their supplies are limited, so bring an extra pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses and lens care products.

Community Health

Sanitation in Lilongwe, Zomba, and Blantyre is generally good. Food handling in the international hotels and large restaurants appears to be satisfactory. However, foods obtained from the local open markets and supermarkets require special attention to ensure that all edible items are safe for consumption. Water from the Lilongwe water system is treated, but it is recommended that all water used for consumption be filtered and then boiled for 5 minutes.

Preventive Measures

Malaria is endemic to Malawi, and prophylaxis is advised. The Department of State recommends Mefloquine as the first choice for malaria prophylaxis for those persons able to take it. The second choice of prophylaxis is daily Paludrine (proguanil) with weekly Chloroquine. Because no anti-malarial drug prophylaxis can offer total protection, other measures to protect against

mosquito bites and the acquisition of malaria are advised. Some of those measures include: remaining in well-screened areas, especially in the evening and at night, use of mosquito nets enclosing the bed while sleeping, and use of insect repellents containing at least 35 percent DEET.

Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) contaminates most freshwater lakes and rivers in Malawi and is contracted by swimming or wading.

Diarrhea is a common symptom, but most cases are noninfectious, self-limiting, and arise from changes in food or water combined with fatigue and the emotional stresses of travel. Cholera rarely occurs in Malawi, except in areas of severe overcrowding and poor sanitation. Typhoid is endemic to Malawi, but epidemics rarely occur. Hepatitis A is also endemic to Malawi and occurs all too frequently in the expatriate community. Although boiling and filtering of water and cleansing of fruit and vegetables decrease the risk of hepatitis A, the most effective method of prevention continues to be gamma globulin injections every 4–6 months.

Insect pests include flies, mosquitoes, ticks (including a "tickbite fever" carrier), termites, moths, cockroaches, ants, and silverfish. Throughout Malawi putze flies lay their eggs in textiles, which can transfer to the skin of the wearer. To avoid skin sores, use a dryer or iron all line-dried linen and clothing.

The following immunizations are recommended for Malawi:

Yellow Fever—every 10 years

Typhoid—every 3 years

Tetanus-Diphtheria—every 10 years

Polio—one booster as an adult

Gamma Globulin—every 4–6 months

T.B. testing—every 1 year

Rabies—optional, advised for small children, series of 3

Hepatitis B—initial series of 3

Meningitis A+C—every 3 years

TRAVEL NOTES

All international flights to and from Malawi operate from Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe. Weekly flights are available from Paris, London, and Amsterdam, as well as regional air links with Botswana, Tanzania, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia, and Kenya. The most frequent flights are from Johannesburg and Harare. There are no direct flights from the U.S. to Malawi. However, American Airlines has joined South Africa Airlines in offering three flights a week from the JFK Airport in New York to Johannesburg. This flight complies with the Fly America regulations, as do flights on American carriers from the U.S. with transfers in Europe and South America to foreign-flag carriers that serve Malawi and southern Africa.

Persons entering Malawi must have a valid passport or travel document. Malawi visas are not required for U.S. citizens prior to arrival in Malawi. Those wishing to stay over 90 days must apply for a temporary resident permit. Travelers should, of course, have any required visas for countries they will transit.

An import permit, required for dogs and cats, must be obtained in advance by advising the Embassy of the breed, sex, age, description (color, etc.) and country of export of the pet. A certificate of good health from a veterinarian and a certificate of rabies vaccination should accompany the animal. The dog or cat must be imported directly from the country of origin and not be exposed to infection en route.

Malawi introduced its own decimal currency in February 1971. The units are kwacha and tambala, with one kwacha equaling 100 tambala. The Malawi kwacha (MK) is linked to a "basket" of international currencies to determine base value. As of December 2000, the rate of exchange was about MK 80.09 to US\$1. No limitation exists on bringing foreign currency or travelers checks into the country. Malawi has

strict currency laws limiting the amount of Malawi currency that may be taken out of the country, although travelers may re-export all currency declared on arrival.

Coins currently in circulation include denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 tambala, and a one kwacha coin. Older coins in circulation may carry the marking "one shilling" or "one florin," equal to 10 tambala, and 20 tambala. Notes currently in circulation are in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, and 50 kwacha.

Credit cards, such as American Express, Mastercard, and Visa are accepted at a few restaurants and hotels, but they are not widely recognized.

Malawi uses the metric system of weights and measures, although many individuals may still quote measures in the older British system (i.e., miles, pounds, etc.).

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 15.	John Chilembwe Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar. 3	Martyr's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1.	Labor Day
May 1.	Kamuzu Day
July 6-8	Republic Day

Oct.	
(2nd Mon)	Mother's Day*
Dec.	Tree Planting Holiday*
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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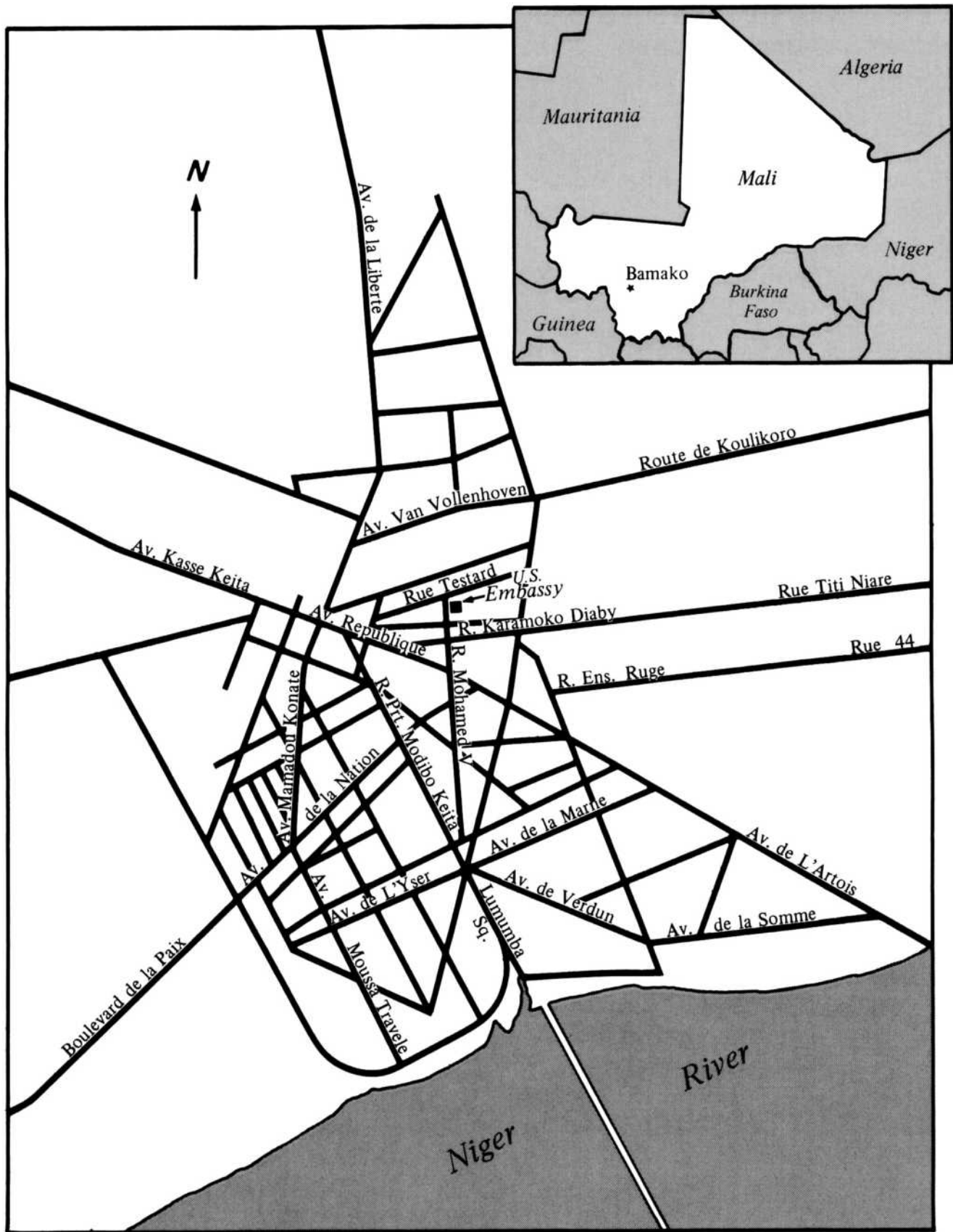
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Bamako, Mali

MALI

Republic of Mali

Major City:
Bamako

Other Cities:
Djenné, Gao, Kayes, Koulikoro, Mopti, Ségou, Sikasso, Tombouctou

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Mali. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Mali is not the country to visit for safaris, wild animals, or natural forests. What it does have is surreal landscapes, beautiful artwork, castellated mosques made entirely of mud, pink sandstone villages carved into cliff faces, and undulating desert that looks like a scene from Lawrence of Arabia.

Landlocked Mali is approximately the size of Texas and California combined. It is a country old enough to have rock paintings that date back to a time when the Sahara was a blossoming paradise.

The first known empire in the region was the Empire of Ghana. This was destroyed in the 11th cen-

tury by Muslim Berbers from Mauritania and Morocco. By the middle of the 13th century, the empire had converted to Islam and had taken out a monopoly on the gold and salt trade. Under the influence of several progressive mansas (lords), Djenne and Timbuktu became the commercial Shangri-La's of West Africa.

Of the numerous ethnic groups in Mali, the largest is the Bambara (80% of the population speak Bambara, though French is the official language). The Bambara occupy many of the civil servant positions, but it is the Dogons and the Tuareg, or "blue men of the desert" (named for their indigo robes and turbans) who practice a more traditional way of life.

Drought and government policy are threatening their traditional way of life, but Tuaregs and their camel-caravans still appear unexpectedly on the horizon before melting into the desert again. The Dogons are incredibly industrious farmers living on the edges of a long narrow escarpment in the inland delta. They are also famous for their artistic abilities and elaborate masks.

Much of Mali's economic woes in the 1980s were due to a devastating drought that brought widespread famine in its wake. People and livestock died, wells dried up, villages

disappeared beneath the sand. When it did rain, it rained so violently that cattle, topsoil, and vegetation were washed away. Mali has never fully recovered from these devastations, although recent discoveries of deposits of gold may help lift the country from its economic doldrums.

The climate varies from semitropical to arid, with a rainy season from mid May to mid-September.

Mali has a rich and diverse artistic heritage that is expressed in arts, drama, and music. Through dynamic tourist agencies, tourism is increasing, and trips to many parts of Mali are now available. Although some of these trips are for the adventurous and hardy, the picturesque rewards can be great.

MAJOR CITY

Bamako

Bamako, the capital of Mali and its largest city, has a population of approximately 1,160,000. The city, situated on the banks of the Niger, is expanding rapidly along both sides of the river. Three bridges cross the Niger, one a submersible

bridge not passable during the rainy season.

Most of the houses in Bamako are low, mud-walled compounds built along unpaved streets. Increasingly, however, more modern, cement-walled “villas” with small gardens are being built. Malian government officials, prosperous merchants, and most members of the small foreign community live in quiet residential neighborhoods, some near the river and others in outlying areas of the city.

The cliffs of Koulouba, a short distance away, overlook the city and river below. Above, on the Koulouba Plateau, are located the Presidential Palace, several government ministries, and the Point G Hospital.

Unlike many of the coastal cities of West Africa, Bamako is truly African. It has in fact been called “the most African of all African cities.” It is a bustling city—traffic is congested and the streets are filled with cars, mobylettes, *bâchées* (vans or passenger pick-ups), street vendors, herds of animals, pushcarts and pedestrians.

The Grand Marché, formerly the greatest concentration of artisans and merchants in Bamako, burned to the ground in 1993. A temporary open-air market housing many of the Grand Marché’s former merchants has evolved along the Koulouba Road. Handicrafts available in Bamako’s shops and *marchés* include batik, tie-dye and mudcloth fabrics, patchwork cloth, woven blankets, bronze figures, African trade beads, amber, wood carvings, gold and silver jewelry sold by the gram and many other items.

Government buildings, many in the French-developed Sudanic style similar to Mali’s mosques, line Bamako’s shady streets. Two landmarks in the city are the 17-story Hotel de l’Amitié, built by the Egyptian Government, and the Grand Mosquée, whose minarets can be seen from a distance. The Grand Hotel and the Grand Salam Hotel are the only two international standard hotels. The

Hotel de l’Amitié is in a rather dilapidated state of repair but has a wonderful view, overlooking the river. It is the scene of several large parties and balls. Also overlooking the river and the city’s newest and tallest building is the Central Bank of West African CFA Zone, (B.C.E.A.O.). Other points of interest in and around Bamako include the Palace of Culture (a large auditorium) across the river, the newly-constructed Artisanat, where local artisans make and sell gold and silver jewelry, ebony carvings, and leatherwork; the National Museum, a small ethnographic museum; a botanical garden and zoo.

Food

Shopping for food in Bamako is not “one stop” shopping but requires going to several locations for the items on a list. There are open-air markets, several small grocery stores, tiny neighborhood “boutiques,” good bakeries, and butchers. There are vendors who sell fish, pork, and vegetables from door-to-door. A good variety of food can be found in Bamako, and the list is constantly expanding. Stores and “boutiques” generally have fixed prices. Boutiques are open between 0900 and 1300 hours, and again between 1600 and 2000. Most other shops are open daily from 0800 to 1700. Except Sundays, most places are either closed or only open in the mornings. The market is bustling at almost any time of the day. There are no fixed prices; bargaining is in order.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are sold in open-air markets or by vendors who come to the door. A variety of fruits and vegetables are grown, although availability, quality, and price depend upon the season. Vegetables are generally available year round. Potatoes, onions, leeks, garlic, parsley, celery (very small stalks, mostly leaves but adequate for cooking), lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, radishes, green peppers, hot peppers, green beans, eggplant, and okra. Available for short periods of time, in season, are beets, broccoli, cauliflower, squash, spinach, corn (field corn), turnips,

green and red cabbage, peas, green onions and sweet potatoes. Fruits available in season are mangoes, papayas, bananas, guavas, coconut, pineapples, oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, tangerines, strawberries, watermelon, melon, and avocados. Fresh fruits and vegetables are generally reasonable in price, often less expensive than in the U.S. Imported apples are generally available most of the year. On occasion, other fruits and vegetables such as artichokes, asparagus, endives, mushrooms, Pascal celery, peaches, cherries, pears, grapes, nectarines, and apricots can be found in the grocery stores; they are imported from France and are extremely expensive.

Peanuts are available year round in the market; almonds, hazelnuts, and pistachio nuts are available in the stores at high prices. Herbs and spices are also found in the market: mint, fresh ginger, basil, piment, caraway seeds, bay leaves, nutmeg, lemon grass (*citronella*), peppercorns, salt, curry, bouillon cubes, and many local spices, such as ground baobab leaves. Other spices, imported, are available at very high prices in the grocery stores.

Mali is also West Africa’s leading nation in livestock. Very good beef, pork, and mutton is raised here and sold in the market and in several small butcher shops. Beef and mutton purchased in the open market are freshly butchered and should be frozen before use. Beef is quite flavorful, but very lean and often tough. Meat tenderizers and marinades are useful to bring. The French style of cut is available, though some butchers can do the U.S. cuts. Fresh meat is not expensive by U.S. standards; filet sells for about \$2.50 a pound. Chicken is seasonal due to the intense heat in the spring. There are poultry farms with excellent chickens in the winter months only; all other time of the year, chickens are skinny and tough. Imported bacon, ham, sausages, and *pâtés* are available in the grocery stores and butcher shops but are quite expensive.

Chicken, turkey, pigeon, guinea hen, and rabbit are also sold in the market. Excellent river fish (Nile perch or capitaine) and carp are also sold. Both poultry and fresh fish are expensive by U.S. standards. Frozen shrimp is sold in the grocery stores at very high prices. Canned seafood and fish (tuna, salmon, etc.) are also available.

Eggs are available in the market, stores, and from door-to-door salesmen. They are usually small and not always fresh. Fresh milk can be found but must be boiled before use. UHT (ultra-high temperature) long-life milk is sold both in whole, 2%, and skimmed forms; this milk does need refrigeration until opened. Excellent powdered whole milk (full cream) is also available and not expensive. Butter (salted and unsalted) and margarine is available, as is long-life cream. Many European cheeses are available (Roquefort, Camembert, Brie, Gruyere, Chevre, Gouda, Edam) and are quite expensive. Cheddar cheese, cottage cheese, mozzarella, and cream cheese are found in the shops occasionally, but American-type cheeses are not available. Imported “creme fraiche” (cultured cream), whipping cream, yogurt, and ice cream are available, but very expensive. Mali Lait, the local milk producer, has passed U.S. Embassy Health Unit tests on its milk, yogurt, and ice cream. Infrequent shortages of staples such as butter, eggs, milk, and sugar do occur.

Several grocery stores and neighborhood shops offer a variety of packaged goods and canned items such as fruits, juices, vegetables, soups, fish, and meat. The quality of some canned goods is not as high as equivalent American items. Paper products, dairy products, sausages, ham, and cold cuts are available. Also found are liquors, wines (mostly French), beer, soft drinks, and fruit juices; cookies and crackers; jams and honey; soaps, detergents, and cleaning products; coffee and tea; limited pasta products and couscous; oils, vinegar, sauces, and condiments; cocoa and spices; even some specialty items for Chinese

and Vietnamese cooking. Most of the items stocked in the stores are imported from Europe; there are many Price-Leader brand products. U.S. products are being introduced to Europe and are ending up on the local shelves. All imported items are expensive; i.e., 5 kg of laundry soap at \$32.00, 1 liter of cream for \$16.00, 1 kg of cheese at \$22.75. Store items are not always in stock; items available one week may not be available again for months.

Jars of baby food and baby cereal are sold in the stores; however, there is not much variety; they are expensive and items are often out of stock. Excellent quality European baby formulas are usually available in the pharmacies and are less expensive than American brands.

Local bakeries carry French-style bread (baguettes), pastries, and “pain de mie,” loaf-style breads similar to, but heavier than, American bread. Whole wheat and white flour is available, though most people either bring their own or buy from the commissary. Cake and cookie decorating items and food colorings are available in limited variety at some of the Lebanese shops.

Canned pet food is sold in the grocery stores. Most pet owners prefer to have pet food prepared at home, using rice and meat and vegetable scraps. Pet products such as flea collars, worm medicines, heartworm medication, shampoos, rawhide chew bones, and toys are not available.

Malian, French, and some American brands of cigarettes can be found. Pipe tobaccos are not available.

Clothing

Clothing among Malians is predominantly African in style, although young men often wear Western styles for everyday. Styles for men include the “zerebou,” a long tunic over pants, or for dressier wear, a “grand boubou”—a long, large embroidered robe worn over a short tunic and pants. Only a small number of women wear Western clothing. For everyday, women wear a “pagne,” a length of cloth wrapped

into a type of skirt, and a blouse. For dressy wear, women wear a boubou—a long flowing robe over a pagne. Women have elaborately braided hairstyles and often wear a scarf wound around their heads.

Among the foreign community, Western-style clothing is worn: slacks, shirts, skirts, dresses, blouses, etc. Casual, lightweight, loose, summery styles are worn most of the time. Cotton and cotton-blend fabrics are preferable because of the heat. Clothing should be washable; it is very dusty during the dry season and muddy during the rainy season. Fairly reliable dry-cleaning is available. Clothing wears out quickly because it must be washed frequently due to the climate.

Western-style clothing is available in some boutiques but prices are generally high and quality is not good. Many local tailors can copy a garment from a picture or sample, although the quality is usually marginal. A good selection of fabrics is available, both imported and local. African tie-dyed and batik fabrics are colorful, brightly patterned, and make nice casual clothing. Patterns are not available and the supply of sewing notions—thread, buttons, zippers and trims—is limited.

Shoes should be low-heeled, sturdy, and comfortable. There are very few sidewalks so shoes wear out quickly from the dirt and rubble. Sandals can be worn most of the year and are practical because of the heat. Shoes can be found in local boutiques, but the selection of styles and sizes is minimal and the quality varies from fair to poor. Hand-crafted leather shoes, sandals, and purses can be made to order at the Artisanat. Plastic sandals and flip-flops for adults and children are sold in the market.

Lightweight jackets or sweaters are needed occasionally during the cool season. An umbrella is useful during the rainy season. Bring lightweight hats for protection against the sun. Some warm, winter-type clothing is necessary in case travel to cooler climates is required. Nylon

stockings are uncomfortable because of the heat and are rarely worn.

Business dress is informal and more casual than in the U.S.: short-sleeved shirts worn without a tie, sports shirts and pants for men; lightweight casual dresses, suits, and skirts and blouses for women. Dress at informal evening functions is generally casual: sports shirts, short or long dresses, skirts, pants, etc.

For children, be sure to bring a generous supply of summer clothing. Heat and dust often necessitate several changes a day. Playwear should include shorts, pants, jeans, sundresses, t-shirts, swimsuits, sandals, sneakers, and sun hats. Dress for school is informal. Other items to bring for children are cotton underwear, socks, pajamas, a lightweight jacket, several sweaters, some winter wear and a coat for travel to cooler climates. For infants, bring a large supply of cloth and disposable diapers, diaper pins, and rubber pants. Disposable diapers are available on the local economy but are very expensive. American-style rubber pants are not available. Some baby clothes are available but the variety is small and the quality is poor. Cotton undershirts, cotton pajamas and summer-weight infant wear should be brought. Plastic sandals for children are available in the market. Also bring baby towels, washcloths, crib sheets and cotton baby blankets.

Supplies and Services

Most basic everyday needs are found in Bamako, however, items that must be imported are generally very expensive. The majority of brands are European with some American products. If you do not want substitutes for favorite items and brands, then bring these items with you. The following are suggested items for shipment to Bamako:

Laundry detergent, fabric softeners, and stain removers are available, but are expensive. Pre-soaks and

starch are not available at all. Clothespins, general-purpose liquid soaps for housecleaning and dishwashing, scouring powders, hand soaps, steel wool, and plastic scrub pads are available at reasonable prices. Flashlights are available, and size D batteries are produced locally; other sizes, except AA, are usually not found. Also, bring any specialized batteries your camera and clocks/watches may require. Spray insecticides are sold, but bring fly swatters. An outdoor thermometer, which registers temperature in both Fahrenheit and Celsius degrees, is useful to have.

Basic office and paper supplies can be found locally, but standard sizes of many items such as envelopes, are different than equivalent American items. Bring a supply of American postage stamps. Printed address labels are very handy. A good French-English dictionary is also important to have.

Most basic toiletries can be found in Bamako. They are generally imported from Europe and are therefore expensive and not the same quality as American brands. European-brand shampoos, deodorants, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, suntan lotions, sunscreens, moisturizers, and feminine hygiene products are available but expensive. Razor blades to fit American razors, hair conditioners and home permanent, dental floss, and disposable "Wash 'n Dri"-type towelettes are not available. Bring lots of insect repellent; the locally available insect repellent is oily and heavily perfumed. Some cosmetics and nail care products are available, though the selection of colors and types is limited. You should bring your favorite brands of cosmetics and toiletries.

Bring a supply of usual household medicine chest items such as aspirin, Band-Aids, and standard first-aid supplies, birth control items, diarrhea medication, products for insect bites, heat rash and sunburn, vitamin and mineral supplements, and baby needs such as diaper rash

ointment, etc. Also, bring a thermometer, heating pad, ice bag, and vaporizer. Bring at least two extra pairs of prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses. The local French optician can grind lenses, but it is expensive. Also, bring contact lens solutions and cleaning items—they are not available here. Before leaving the U.S., arrange for a regular supply of any known needs for prescription medications. Several worldwide web pharmacies will mail order health, drug, and sundry items.

A limited variety of toys can be found here, but the prices are incredibly high. Also, bring activity supplies such as crayons, coloring books, chalk, construction paper, paints, brushes, and paste. Most of these items are not available. Ordinary school supplies such as pencils, pens, tablets and paper are all available and reasonably priced. For younger children and infants, bring booster chairs, car seats, bed guards, potty seats, food grinder, baby bottles, etc.

Many families in Bamako have video equipment. You may want to arrange for someone in the U.S. to record special programs for you. Also, bring a stereo system, CD and/or cassette player, tapes, and CDs. Street vendors sell inexpensive audiocassette tapes. Bring camera equipment, film, batteries, etc. Don't forget film mailers; film can be developed here, but the quality of print is not always good and is very expensive. Because of frequent power fluctuations, bring a voltage regulator/ stabilizer to protect your electrical equipment. They are expensive but along with a surge suppressor, they will afford the best protection for your investment. Voltage regulators should be sized according to the power consumption of your equipment. Remember that laser printers draw a lot of wattage.

The following computer equipment is available: Full representation of IBM, Compac, Apple, Dell, and the French make, Zenith. Bring a good UPS with a built-in stabilizer and runs on 220v (50hz). Computer with

modem-56K is recommended, and printer and ink cartridges. There is reliable technical service for repairs and upgrades from in-house staff, and some Mission spouses are computer wizards. The brands listed above have good repair technicians.

Bring tennis racquet and balls, softball gloves and bat, golf clubs, camping equipment (tent, sleeping bags, lanterns, coolers, etc.), lawn games such as badminton and croquet, indoor games, playing cards, score-cards, fishing equipment, tack if you ride, and pool toys and games. Bird watching is excellent; if interested bring binoculars and the Field Guide to West African Birds (see Recommended Reading).

Bring musical instruments and sheet music. Needlework, sewing and craft supplies are difficult to find here; a list of mail-order sources for craft and hobby supplies is very useful.

Many tailors in Bamako will make simple clothing, do piecework such as buttonholes, sew slipcovers and curtains, and do mending. Tailors make all types of clothing for women, both Western and African styles; safari-type suits, pants and shirts are the most common items for men. The work is generally reasonably priced and quality is usually fair.

Simple shoe, leather, purse, and watchband repairs can be done at the Artisanat. The work is done by hand, but is adequate and inexpensive.

Laundry is done at home as government-furnished housing is supplied with a washer and dryer. Some people employ a domestic to do the washing and ironing. Drycleaning services have improved, however, not to U.S. standards.

Bamako has a limited number of unisex hair salons that offer standard services at moderate to high prices. Quality varies.

Bamako has radio repair shops, but parts for U.S. equipment are rare. The quality of work is improving.

Repair service for other types of U.S.-manufactured equipment, machines, and appliances are not generally available in the city; however, local technicians with the proper parts are capable to do repairs. Parts are not available locally and must be ordered from the U.S.

Domestic Help

Most American families employ domestic help. Household help is readily available at reasonable wages. Servants can be male or female, although women are usually hired to care for children. The average family employs a housekeeper/cook and a gardener; families with small children often have a nanny. Many families employ a full-time cook in addition to a housekeeper. Servants rarely live in, although they can be asked to work in the evenings, and/or weekends; they are usually paid extra for these occasions. English-speaking domestics are rare; many will speak some French, although fluency varies, but most domestics do not know how to read or write.

Most domestics seeking employment have "attestations," letters of recommendation, which you should read. Servants should have a physical examination and chest X-ray before employment, and annually thereafter.

The workweek is generally 6 days a week, 10 hours a day. Salaries, paid in CFA Francs, range from \$60 to \$160 monthly, depending on the employees' responsibilities and experience. Food or an allowance for one meal per day and a transportation allowance should be provided. Some employers also provide coffee, tea and sugar as well as clothing money to buy uniforms. Although the employer is not obliged to give the employee bonuses for holidays, it is customary to give something at Ramadan and at Tabaski, the two major Muslim holidays in Mali, or at Christmas. Employees are entitled to a month's vacation each year, although extra pay may be given in lieu of vacation if mutually acceptable.

Unlike many countries, Mali has established a work code for household help that stipulates working hours, overtime pay requirements, probationary periods, vacation and sick leave policies, meal and uniform policies, salary increases, and regulations for termination of employees.

A contribution is required for every 3-month period to the Malian social security system for each employee even during the trial period. This protects both employer and employee in case of accident or illness and provides hospitalization, a monthly stipend for each child of the employee, a pregnancy stipend, and retirement benefits to the employee.

Religious Activities

Islam is the predominant religion in Mali. A large mosque is located in the center of Bamako, and many small neighborhood mosques are situated around the city. Both Catholic and Protestant churches are in Bamako as well. Mass in French and Bambara are regularly given at the large, centrally located Roman Catholic Cathedral. Protestant services in French and Bambara are held at the International Protestant Church run by the Gospel Missionary Union, and worship services in English take place on Sunday evenings at the Protestant Mission compound. There is also a Bahai and Jehovah's Witness Community in Mali. There is no synagogue. Protestant Sunday school classes taught by Gospel Missionary Union staff is held at the American School on Sunday mornings during the school year. An Adult Bible Study group meets Sunday mornings at the American school.

Education

The American International School of Bamako (AISB) was established in January 1977 to provide an American curriculum for children from nursery to pre-kindergarten (from age 2) through 8th grade. AISB is a private, non-profit institution governed by a school board, of seven elected members and the Ambassador's Representative. They are responsible for governing policy

and financial management of the school. The school is 95% funded by day school tuition and fees. The school also receives grant monies from the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools. Accreditation is by the Commission on Elementary Schools of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Admission to AISB is open to children from the official American community, American business and missionary groups, and from other diplomatic and international organizations. School enrollment during the 1999-2000 school year included 86 students. A third of the student body is from the U.S.; 18 other nationalities are represented.

In school year 99-00, the faculty consisted of five overseas hired homeroom teachers plus locally hired French language, art, music, library, and PE teachers. Course work is based on a standard U.S. curriculum and testing program. Placement tests in mathematics, vocabulary, and reading comprehension are given to all new students. Admission is based on previous school achievement, age, the placement tests, and a personal interview. In addition to regular courses, classes are given in art, music, French, physical education, and computer science. English as a second language (ESL) classes are provided to AISB students who are not fluent in English; an additional fee is charged for this. There is also an after-school activities program for sports, games, and handicrafts. Classes are small, with a student-teacher ratio of less than 10 to 1. Only students with mild learning disabilities or physical handicaps that meet all other admission requirements will be accepted. The school buildings were constructed in 1982 and are located on a pleasant site facing the Niger River. There are 10 classrooms, a library, and a principal's office. All classrooms are air-conditioned. Grounds for outdoor activities and physical education classes are located on campus. The school is equipped with a well-stocked library, playground equip-

ment, and all of the necessary texts and school materials. Two houses have also been acquired to serve as School Office and the Early Learning Center. There is a computer room using Macintosh computers for instruction and computer literacy classes.

School is in session Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 1:30 pm. There is a mid-morning break for snacks and recess. The academic year, which starts in late August and ends in mid June, is divided into semesters and totals 180 school days. Classes commence in late August and run through mid-January; the second semester runs from mid-January through mid-June. There is a 3-week winter holiday vacation in December-January.

The local school system includes a French-language school, Lycee Francais Liberte A, for French citizens and other French-speaking foreign children. Liberte A provides primary classes from the 1st through 5th grades, and secondary grades equivalent to American grades 6 through 12. Secondary studies are preparatory to the French baccalaureate degree. Liberte A will not allow non-French speaking children into its program. Only if the children have already attended a French school, will they be permitted admittance. Generally, students attend Liberte A from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday, though higher grades do have some afternoon classes from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., supplemented with French, PE, Drama and other coursework. Thirty-seven nationalities are represented, including French, American, German, Malian, Russian, and others. The school year starts at the beginning of September and runs to the middle of June. Tel: 223-22- 41-23. Fax: 22322-06-66, Email: Lberte@liberte.edu.ml or www.libertebko.org

Bamako has several French-language pre-schools. Rose et Blue is not equivalent to an American daycare center; however, it does provide childcare and play activities for children between the ages of 1 and 6

years. It is open all year. Les Lutins offers a pre-school program, which is a preparatory for entrance to Liberte As elementary classes. Les Lutins is open from the beginning of October through the middle of June. There is generally a waiting list for admission, so enrollment plans should be made early. E-mail Mr. Coulibaly, Director, PTA, at: aoua@cefib.com

The American International School has an Early Learning Center. The nursery program provides daycare service for 2-year-olds within a safe and caring environment. The emphasis is on sensory-motor skills and simple symbolic play. The pre-kindergarten concentrates on social and emotional development. An individual approach is used to meet the needs of each child and to encourage growth from their current developmental level in a stimulating and nurturing atmosphere. The child must be 3 and 4 years of age. The kindergarten program emphasizes pre-readiness skills utilizing an individual "play-based" approach. Each child is given the opportunity to develop at his/her own rate in a child-centered environment. The child must be the age of 5 by the first day of school.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are no formal, English-language training or educational facilities for handicapped children in Bamako. On occasion, there have been teachers at AISB who have had training or experience in special education, but the school does not have a formal program.

The new American Cultural Center will be opening soon and once again will sponsor lectures, movies, and other presentations. The French Cultural Center offers movie and concert series, plays, lectures, and exhibits. It also has a large lending library.

Individual or group lessons in English, French, and Bambara are available at the OMBEVI language training school sponsored by the Malian Ministry of Rural Develop-

ment. Many local private tutors are also available to teach various foreign languages.

Afternoon music, craft and sports classes are available for children at the French Cultural Center and American School. Several local teachers are available to give lessons for piano, flute, and other musical instruments.

Swimming lessons are offered at the Amitié Hotel. Informal exercise groups have been organized in several neighborhoods. Tennis lessons are available at various clubs.

French-language classes, using FSI course methods or "French in Action," are available locally. Beginning Bambara lessons are also available.

Other types of classes are taught and various interest groups are established at different times, depending upon the skills and interests of individual members of the community.

Sports

Americans in Bamako spend a lot of time out-of-doors, swimming, golfing, playing tennis, and enjoying other outdoor sports and activities.

Swimming is a year-round pastime in Bamako and a good way to "beat the heat." All government-owned and -leased houses have swimming pools. The Hotel de UAmitie, the Grand Hotel, Hotel Salam, and the Mandé Hotel offer swimming pool memberships. UAmitié has a very large pool, a children's wading

pool, an outdoor restaurant and bar, two tennis courts, a 9-hole golf course, and gardens with peacocks and other birds and animals wandering about.

Small boat owners may join the Bamako Canoe Club, which provides docking and storage facilities. During the July-November season, the Niger is high enough for a boat to travel upriver from Bamako to the Guinea border. When the river level is low (December to June), the river is not navigable for larger craft

(10 hp and above), but smaller boats can still be used in some places.

The biggest spectator sport in Mali is soccer. Mali has several good national teams, whose games in the Omnisport Stadium are enthusiastically attended. Every neighborhood has a soccer field and as many as 10-15 neighborhood teams. Games are played on Sundays and any other day that teams can get together to arrange a game. Basketball is also popular and there are several national teams.

Adult and children's softball games are played on weekends. Some equipment, i.e., bases, bats, and balls are available; however, you should bring your own glove. Bamako has fielded teams to participate in the various West African softball tournaments, including the West African Invitational Softball Tournament (WAIST), usually held in February in Dakar.

The Marine House hosts a number of unofficial functions open to the American community, including family day twice a month on Sunday afternoons and Friday night movies. Volleyball, swimming, badminton, and table games are available most weekends at the Marine House. There is also exercise/aerobic equipment for the Direct Hire American Community located on the premises. The Marines occasionally plan social/holiday activities for general community participation.

The Hash House Harriers run every Saturday.

The Bamako Tennis Club has three tennis courts for members and one court rented out at hourly rates for nonmembers. This club is very popular and has a waiting list of about 1-year for membership; outstanding players and chiefs of mission are exempted from the waiting list. Temporary summer memberships are available for the months of July, August, and September. Four major tennis tournaments are held each year at the club.

The Club Hippique de Bamako (riding club) offers English-style riding

and jumping lessons. Members may board horses at the club for CFA 100,000 per month. Non-members may rent horses, with tack provided, at hourly rates. The Gendarmerie in the Dar es Salaam neighborhood will also rent horses on an hourly basis. If you bring your own tack, remember that local horses are small Arabian horses, 1.5 to 1.6 meters at the shoulder.

Bamako has a lovely, green, rather short, nine-hole golf course and clubhouse, located behind the UAmitie Hotel in central Bamako. Membership is equivalent to approximately \$550 per year (2000) plus a \$250 joining fee per person. The course is scheduled for relocation out of town in 2002-2003.

Horse races are held on Sundays in season at the local Hippodrome. African ballet, judo, karate and other martial arts are taught at several clubs in Bamako.

Jogging is popular; early morning is the best time for running due to high temperatures later in the day.

Fishing is good on the Niger River during the dry season and large capitaine (Nile perch), carp, and catfish are common catches. Hunting is officially prohibited in Mali.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Government of Mali is making an effort to encourage tourism. A number of private travel agencies have offices in Bamako and in other cities of interest to tourists. Tours can be arranged through local travel agents or the hotels. Be sure to bring photography equipment and film. Photo opportunities are limitless and varied in Mali. A photo permit is not required, but photography of airports, bridges, and military installations is forbidden.

The best time to see the country is during the cool dry season from November to February. Travel is sometimes difficult in Mali, but always interesting. Many Malian towns can be reached by paved road. Beyond the paved network, roads

are laterite and dirt and vary from fair to nearly impassable. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are necessary off the main roads.

Bring camping equipment such as tents, lightweight cots, sleeping bags, canteens, cooking equipment, camping foods, coolers, etc. Hotels are found only in the larger cities and towns. In other areas of Mali, simple overnight lodging and cooking facilities are available only at primitive "campements."

Several interesting places are close enough to Bamako for day or weekend trips. Kati, a pleasant little town about 30 minutes from Bamako, has a colorful market on Sunday mornings. A drive down the Guinea Road affords views of waterfalls and various picnic spots. The Sibi market on Saturdays is also worth a visit. The drive along the canal to Baguineda is also very picturesque and great for picnics.

The Selingue Dam, a 2-hour drive south of Bamako, is an interesting site to spend a day or a weekend. Although accommodations are not up to Western standards, there are furnished villas available for rent, a large swimming pool, a restaurant, and a tennis court nearby in the small "company town," which once housed employees of the firm who built the dam. Reservations for food and lodging must be made in advance.

Segou, a pleasant 3-hour drive from Bamako, is located on the right bank of the Niger River near the spot where the explorer Mungo Park first saw the river. The city is notable for its red-colored mud brick walls and the government buildings, built in the Sudanic architectural style. Hand-knotted wool rugs with Malian-inspired designs are made at the Nieleni rug cooperative located in Segou. The cooperative is open to tourists and it is interesting to watch as the women card, spin, dye the wool, and knot the rugs on their looms. Segou also has a large and colorful market on Mondays.

Mopti, an 8-hour drive from Bamako on a paved road, is located at

the point where the Niger and Bani Rivers meet. It is an important fishing port, which becomes a city of islands during the rainy season. The harbor is usually crowded with large pirogues that ply the river carrying passengers and goods up and down river. It is an area of many different ethnic groups including Bambara, Peuhl, Tuareg, and others. Mopti has a large mosque and a lively market, with a section reserved for Malian handicrafts including the distinctive Mopti wool blankets, Peuhl wedding blankets, hats, earrings, trade beads, Tuareg jewelry, leatherwork, and carvings. The Kanaga hotel in Mopti, modeled after the mud-walled styles of the region's mosques, is modern and comfortable.

Djenne, 2 hours southwest of Mopti, is famous for its imposing mud-brick mosque, a major religious center, and its Monday market. Three kilometers away are the excavations at Jenne-Jeno ("ancient Djenne"), an important Iron Age site and the oldest known city in Africa south of the Sahara.

Several hours' drive from Mopti is the town of Sangha in the heart of Dogon country, along the Bandiagara cliffs. The rock and mud-cliff dwellings of the Dogon people and the distinctive round granaries with their conical straw roofs dot the steep, rocky walls of the Bandiagara escarpment. Clustered into small groups decreed by tradition, the dwellings blend into the landscape, making them almost invisible from a distance. The animist Dogon are culturally distinct from other tribes in Mali. They adhere to their own ancient traditions and beliefs based on a complex system of myths, which explain and create order in their universe. They are renowned for their art, and for their dances, which they will occasionally perform for tourists for a fee.

Timbuktu (Tombouctou), the fabled city of gold, legendary for its camel caravans and renowned in the 15th century as a city of wealth and Moslem scholarship, was once the crossroads between the Arab world to the

north and black Africa to the south. Now a sleepy, sandy town on the edge of the Sahara Desert, Timbuktu is still worth the visit. The ancient mosques of Djingueriber and Sankore, as well as the rooming houses of some of the famous explorers Barth, Caille, and Laing, can still be seen. Stoned walls line the quiet streets and mud-brick houses with latticed windows and carved wooden doors decorated with metal studs. Tuareg nomads, the fierce "Blue Men" of the desert, can be found in camps outside the city. The difficult 2-day drive to Timbuktu has been discouraged due to the banditry in the area. A travel ban on overland travel to Timbuktu was reinstated in June 2000.

Three riverboats (the Tombouctou, the General Soumare, and the Kankan Moussa) leave from Koulikoro (an hour north of Bamako) and go to Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao. Riverboats generally operate between early September and mid-December, depending on the depth of the river. The trip is 5 days, one way to Gao, and 7 days (against the current) on return. Many people travel one-way down river on the boat and return to Bamako by road. Others board the boat in Mopti after visiting Djenne and Dogon country. The riverboats are austere even in deluxe or first class. All meals are provided, although it is a good idea to bring drinking water, fruit and snacks. The cost for a one-way trip to Gao ranges from CFA 418,757 (\$782) for deluxe class for two persons, and CFA 272,283 (\$508) first class for one person. The trip is quite an experience, the life of the fishing people and herders along the riverbanks is fascinating, and you may even see hippopotami swimming in the river. With current restrictions on travel, it is best to check with the U.S. Embassy before traveling by river to points north of Mopti (e.g., Timbuktu, Gao). Travelers should read the relevant section of the Consular Information Sheet before traveling in Mali.

Road trips may be driven through Côte d'Ivoire, where there are several interesting towns and a game

park. You can also drive to Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso, to Niamey, capital of Niger, and on from these cities to other African countries. The rocky track to Dakar is not recommended, but the hardy may want to go there overland by train. The road between Bouake, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Malian border has had recent carjackings.

Entertainment

Several local theatrical groups present plays in French regularly at the French Cultural Center. The French Cultural Center also sponsors numerous cultural presentations annually, including popular and classical music.

Several local theaters show French, American, Indian, Italian, and Chinese movies. Two large theaters in town, one at the Amitié Hotel and the other at the Palace of Culture, show current French films or American films dubbed in French.

The French Cultural Center presents film series and regular children's matinees. A travel film and lecture series in French is presented each year at the Hotel de l'Amitié. Popular American movies are also shown weekly at the Marine House.

You will have plenty of time to listen to music and to enjoy reading. Bring along a good collection of CD's, tapes, and books. Both the American and French Cultural Centers have lending libraries.

Bamako has a number of restaurants that serve African, French, Mexican, Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian, Italian, and Lebanese specialties. There are a few fast-food restaurants and several local bakeries where sandwiches are served. The Grand Hotel, Hotel Salam, and the Mandé Hotel offer a Sunday buffet brunch. Restaurants generally open at 7 p.m. for the evening and reservations are rarely required.

A number of nightclubs and discotheques offer either live or recorded dance music.

Social Activities

Social activities among the American community in Bamako are relaxed and informal. Cocktail parties, buffets, informal dinners, and barbecues around the pool are popular ways to entertain. Rotary and Lions Clubs hold regular meetings in Bamako. An International Women's Club meets bi-monthly. Every Thursday is a "Play Group" for children ages 1 to 4 years.

Different groups such as the Rotary and Lions Club give several formal charity balls each year. These affairs are generally open to all.

An international duplicate bridge club meets twice a week in the evenings at the Hotel de l'Amitié. The club is registered by European Bridge organizations, and master's points can be awarded. Games are played in French.

OTHER CITIES

DJENNÉ is a small town about 50 miles south of Mopti in southern Mali. It is situated on the flood lands of the Niger and Beni rivers southwest of Tombouctou. Djenné is famous for its mosque built in unique Sudanic style. It is also known for traditional handicrafts in wood, textiles, and terra-cotta.

GAO is situated on the Niger River at the southern edge of the Sahara in eastern Mali. It is best known as the capital of the Songhai empire which rose to power in the late 15th century. Today, Gao is the point of departure for trans-Saharan expeditions. The mosque of Askia Mohammad, a Songhai ruler, is here. The region around Gao is irrigated and permits the growing of rice, wheat, and sorghum.

KAYES is situated in southwest Mali, about 250 miles west of Bamako. With a population of about 48,000, Kayes is a stop on the railroad between Dakar, Senegal, and Bamako. Peanuts are grown here and livestock is also raised.

KOULIKORO is the capital city of the Koulikoro region in southwestern Mali. Established in 1977, the city is about 35 miles from Bamako and had a population of almost 20,000 in 1987. Koulikoro is a transportation and industrial center, producing soap, cottonseed oil, and peanut oil.

MOPTI is a chaotic port and marketplace located on the Bani River, one of the fingers of the Niger, 275 miles northeast of Bamako in eastern Mali. With a population of about 75,000, Mopti is sometimes called "the Venice of Africa"; the comparison, however, does not do the city justice. Its appeal lies in the fact that it is thoroughly African, not quasi-European. It does not have the high-rise hotels and game parks of Kenya, nor the sophistication of Dakar (Senegal), nor the commercial and architectural appeal of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire. Rather, Mopti's appeal lies in its rich history as a crossroads of trade and crafts. Some of the sights in Mopti include the gaily painted, hand-poled dugouts that travel up and down the river; fish being bartered at the water's edge; and the central marketplace, which is alive and bustling. The city's mosque is a commanding sight on the horizon. Major crops grown in the surrounding area are rice, millet, onions, cassava, and peanuts. Fishing and livestock raising are significant. Mopti's market and rest camp are both tourist stops.

SÉGOU is located on the Niger River, about 120 miles northeast of Bamako. It has a population of about 90,000. It is the headquarters of the Office du Niger, an extensive irrigation system begun in 1932. A textile factory at Ségou, built by the Chinese, has proved to be one of Mali's most successful industrial undertakings.

SIKASSO is about 190 miles southeast of Bamako, near the Cote d'Ivoire border. It has a population of about 73,000. Once the capital of the Kingdom of Kéné Dougou in the late 19th century, Sikasso is currently a center for cotton ginning

and textile manufacturing. A main road links the city with Bamako.

TOMBOUCTOU is fascinating and mysterious only in that it is indeed the Tombouctou (Timbuktu) of legendary salt caravans, traffic in slaves and gold, and trade in spices and cloth. Although the city has inspired many tales of the French Foreign Legion, riches, and adventure, it is now just a sleepy, sandy town on the edge of the Sahara, about 425 miles northeast of Bamako. If one has the time and the spirit, he can rent a camel and join the Tuaregs in having “tea on the dunes,” which consists of three tiny cups of strong mint tea and the ghosts of explorers long gone. Tombouctou has a population close to 20,000; it reached its height of prosperity as a Muslim commercial and cultural center under Songhai rule about 1500, when its population was estimated to be one million.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Mali is located in the interior of West Africa, north of the Equator, reaching to the Tropic of Cancer. The country covers 478,764 square miles, an area about the size of Texas and California combined. It is landlocked, sharing borders with seven other African nations: Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta), Niger and Algeria. Situated in the same time zone as Greenwich, Mali is five hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. The capital city of Bamako lies at an elevation between 950 and 1,000 feet.

Mali stretches across three different climatic regions. To the south is tropical Sudanese savanna, wooded grasslands broken occasionally by cliffs and rock formations, watered by the Niger and Senegal Rivers and their tributaries. In the middle are the semi-arid steppe-lands of



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View of Tombouctou, Mali

the Sahel. This transitional zone between the savanna and the desert to the north is characterized by dry, sandy plains dotted with sparse trees and bushes and a vast plateau broken by isolated rocky masses. Among the latter are the Bandiagara escarpment, famous as the home of the Dogon people, and the spectacular rock buttes of Hombori. The desert zone in the north covers the largest area of Mali and is a hot, barren plain whose terrain is contoured by sand dunes and rocky outcroppings with little vegetation other than occasional patches of thorn bush.

The dry season and the rainy season are the two primary seasons in West Africa. The dry period can be further divided into two distinct seasons, mild and hot, particularly in the savanna and Sahelian regions of Mali. The rainy season usually begins in June and continues into October. Almost all of the annual rainfall occurs during this season. As much as 60-80 inches of rain may fall in the southern savanna. The amount of rainfall decreases, however, as one proceeds north. The air is warm, from 70 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and humid. The more pleasant cool season lasts from December to mid-February. The dry, moderate temperatures range from 60 degrees Fahrenheit at night to the mid-80's during the day. The hot

season starts in mid-February and goes through July. The air is dry, dusty, and very hot; temperatures often reach over 100 degrees and clouds of dust hang in the air. This is the season of the Harmattan, the dry, dusty wind that blows south from the Sahara.

Mali has two large river systems, the Senegal and the Niger. The Senegal River crosses into Mali from Guinea in the south and follows a northwest course into Senegal. The Niger River flows across the heart of Mali and serves as its most important waterway. The river courses 2,600 miles, the third longest in Africa, and played a large role in European exploration of Africa. The Niger flows northeast to the edge of the Sahara at Tombouctou (Timbuktu) where it turns east and then south, passing the town of Gao before entering Niger. The Niger is navigable from Koulikoro to Gao by large riverboats from September to November and by smaller craft for most of the rest of the year. Just beyond the Mali-Niger border rapids prevent the riverboats from going further downstream into Niger.

Population

The population of Mali in 2000 was estimated to be around 9.3 million. The annual population growth rate

for Mali is calculated at 3.2 percent, and life expectancy is probably 48-50 years. Most of the country is sparsely populated; the average population density is 18.0 inhabitants per square mile, ranging from 65 persons per square mile in the savanna and Sahelian regions, to less than one person per square mile in the less hospitable desert regions of the north. Approximately 20 percent of Mali's people live in Bamako and towns of more than 5,000 inhabitants. The rest live in villages or travel as nomads. Bamako, the capital of Mali and its largest city, has a population of approximately 1,020,000 people. The major towns include Segou (90,900), Mopti (79,800), Sikasso (113,800), Kayes (67,000), Gao (54,900) and Timbuktu (28,500).

French is Mali's official language. Bambara, the most widely spoken local language, is used by 80 percent of the population, although all ethnic groups have their own language. Mali is officially a secular state, but 90% of the population is Muslim. Only a small percentage (4%) is Christian. There are animists among the Dogon, Bambara and other ethnic groups. The intermingling of these ethnic groups, facilitated by the Niger River and a common understanding of Bambara, have given Mali an impressive legacy of harmony rare among African states.

Bambara is a written language, as is Tamashek, the Berber dialect spoken by the Tuaregs. Most other tribal languages do not have this advantage. The literacy rate in Mali is approximately 31%.

Ethnic groups in West Africa can be distinguished not only by language and physical characteristics, but also by the occupations to which each group is traditionally tied. Mali's cultural diversity includes desert nomads, cliff-dwelling cultivators, river fishermen, and the farmers of the savanna, placing it among the most interesting countries in Africa. Within each ethnic group are the hereditary castes: nobles and farmers, artisans, black-

smiths and griots, the entertainers and "keepers" of the oral history preserved through their songs.

The three geographic zones of Mali serve as rough boundaries for the delineation of the various ethnic groups. Among the groups found in the savanna zone are the Manding or Mandé. They occupy most of the southern half of the country and are the largest cultural group in Mali, representing nearly 50 percent of the population. The Manding speak dialects of Bambara and trace their origins to a small area located where the present-day borders of Mali and Guinea meet. This Manding heartland formed the center of the vast Mali Empire, which dominated West Africa from the 12th to the 17th centuries. The Manding are divided into several groups, among them the Bambara, the Malinke and the Dioula. Also found in the south of Mali, along the borders of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso are Voltaic groups: the Minianka, Senufo, Mossi and Bobo, primarily subsistence farmers. The Voltaic peoples represent about 12 percent of Mali's population.

Among the groups found in the Sahelian zone are the Sarakole, the Peulh, Bozo, Dogon and Songhai. The Sarakole (or Soninke) are primarily merchants, who have historically migrated to other parts of the continent and who can be found in most of the important market places of West and Central Africa.

The Peulh or Fulani are found throughout Mali except in the true desert areas north of the Niger in the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth regions. Primarily cattle herders, many Peulh move with the changing of the seasons in search of grazing lands for their cattle. During the wet season they take advantage of the marginal lands away from the Niger—in the dry season they must move toward the more permanent watering places of the great inland delta of the Niger. The Peulh represent 17 percent of Mali's population. The Bozo, semi-nomadic fishermen, also move up and down the Niger and Bani Rivers following the

Niger's flood and the seasonal migrations of the fish.

The Dogon occupy the rocky cliffs of the Bandiagara plateau east of Mopti. They have resisted outside influence throughout their history and have maintained much of their traditional way of life, their animist faith, and their art forms, which have been the subject of study by numerous anthropologists and art historians. The Dogon are renowned as industrious farmers, cultivating the rocky areas of the plateau and the sandy Senou plain to its southeast. The banks of the Niger near Gao are peopled by the Songhai (or Sonrhai), heirs to the great Songhai empire of the 14th through 16th centuries. The Songhai, who make up 6 percent of Mali's population, are primarily subsistence farmers. They also make up the majority of the population of the fabled city of Timbuktu.

The Saharan desert zone is populated by two nomadic groups of Berber origin, the Tuaregs or Tamashek, who also are found in Algeria and Niger; and the Moors (Mauris) in the northwest, who live on both sides of the Mali-Mauritania border. These two groups represent five percent of Mali's population. The harshness of the desert climate shapes their way of life. They are nomadic herdsmen who are forced to move from place to place in search of water and forage for their herds of camels, cattle, sheep and goats. The Tuareg are the fabled "Blue Men of the Desert," often pictured swathed in indigo turbans, and remembered for their battles to control the deserts' caravan routes.

Public Institutions

French colonial penetration into the Soudan, the area covered by present-day Mali, began around 1880. A French civilian governor was appointed in 1893, but serious resistance to French control was not eliminated until 1898 when the Malinke warrior Samory Toure was defeated. The Soudan was then administered with other French



Aerial view of Bamako, Mali

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colonial territories as the Federation of French West Africa.

In 1957, France's "Loi Cadre" (Basic Law) granted extensive powers to a Territorial Assembly. A French constitutional referendum in 1958 accorded complete internal autonomy. The following year, representatives from Mali, Senegal, Dahomey (now Bénin), and Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), met to draft a constitution founding the Federation of Mali. When the constitution was presented in January of 1959, only Mali and Senegal voted to join the Federation, which became fully independent within the French Community on June 20, 1960. The Federation collapsed in August when Senegal seceded. On September 22, 1960, Soudan proclaimed itself the Republic of Mali and withdrew from the French Community. President Modibo Keita, whose Union Soudanaise party had dominated pre-independence politics, declared a single-party state. Keita's government pursued a socialist policy based on extensive nationalization.

Deterioration of the economy led to mounting discontent within the country. In November 1968, a group of young military officers staged a bloodless coup and set up the 14-member Military Committee for National Liberation (CMLN) with

Lieutenant Moussa Traore as President. The military leaders renounced socialism and attempted to pursue economic reforms despite several years of debilitating internal political struggles and the disastrous Sahelian drought. The first move toward a return to civilian rule occurred in 1974 when a new constitution was approved by referendum. The military government remained in power for the five-year transition period until elections were held in June 1979. General Moussa Traore, former leader of the military government, was voted into power as the first President under the new constitution.

The single party Democratic Union of the Malian People (UDPM) governed the country with the support of the military until 1991. Increasing demands for multi-party democracy in the late 1980's - early 90s culminated in several days of violent street demonstrations which left around 120 people dead. On March 26, 1991, a group of officers led by Lt. Col. Amadou Toumani Toure (ATT) overthrew the government, arresting the President and a number of his followers. A "Transitional Committee for the Salvation of the People" (CTSP) was established and appointed a Prime Minister, who in turn appointed a transition government which governed for 14 months. In a series of

six direct elections between January and April 1992, Malians ratified a new constitution, elected municipal councilors, National Assembly deputies, and, finally a president. Twenty-one political parties nationwide participated in elections, judged by international observers to be free and fair. Alpha Oumar Konare was elected to a five-year term in the second round of the presidential elections and was inaugurated on June 8, 1992.

The President, who is the head of State, appoints a Prime Minister as head of the Government. The National Assembly is a unicameral body with 117 members elected from Mali's eight regional districts. Twelve political parties are represented in the National Assembly, with the "Alliance for Malian Democracy - African Party for Solidarity and Justice" (ADEMA) holding the majority. Mali's legal system is largely based on codes inherited at independence from France. The judicial branch is mostly independent but depends on the Ministry of Justice for its budget. The highest court within the judicial system is the Supreme Court. There is a Constitutional Court and Administrative and Commercial Courts as well. The Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, assembly, association and religion. There are nearly 50 independent newspapers and journals in Mali—published with varying regularity—as well as over sixty independent radio stations in Bamako and others serving Mali's regional capitals.

Administratively, Mali is divided into eight regions and the capital district of Bamako, each under the authority of an appointed governor. Each region has from five to nine districts, or "cercles," administered by commandants. Cercles are divided into arrondissements, and arrondissements into villages. In the North, a National Pact was signed in 1992, ostensibly to end the Tuareg and Maur rebellion against the Bamako government. The northern part of the country continued to be the scene of occasional clashes between rebels and govern-

ment troops until 1994, when the Government of Mali and a majority of rebel movements agreed on a peace settlement. In March 1996 more than 3,000 firearms were burned in a symbolic “flame of peace” ceremony. During 1996 there has been a steady stream of Malian Tuareg and Maur refugees returning from Mauritania, Algeria and Burkina Faso.

Arts, Science and Education

The richness and diversity of Mali’s artistic heritage is evident throughout the country. Not only do craftsmen continue to work in towns and villages, but also in Bamako where the Institut National des Arts (INA) offers instruction to traditional artists. Courses are taught in the carving of masks and other wooden objects, in music, dance and weaving, in iron-working, and the manufacture of silver and gold jewelry. Malian craftsmen also use traditional designs to create objects in bronze and leather, as well as to fashion baskets and pottery. Craftsmen trained at the INA often work in small shops in the Artisanat, a center for handicrafts.

Mali has a small but impressive National Museum whose collection consists of Malian carvings, masks, textiles, items from everyday village life, and historical artifacts. The museum also presents special exhibitions on a regular basis.

The National Institute of Arts, the French Cultural Center, and the National Museum also hold frequent exhibitions of contemporary art. Modern interpretations of traditional designs, works in nontraditional media, traveling exhibits from other countries, and the works of individual artists, both African and Western, are presented.

Traditional music, song, dance and drama are encouraged by the government through radio and television broadcasts, a national dance troupe, and frequent arts festivals. At every important occasion—baptisms, marriages, circumcision cere-

monies—dances are organized, and the sound of the tamtams and the singing of the griot storytellers can be heard in even the most urban of areas. Traditional instruments—the balafon, a type of gourd xylophone, stringed gourd instruments such as the kora and dossongoni, tamtams (drums), and reed flutes—are still played.

Several international medical research and treatment facilities are based in Mali. The Institut Ophthalmologique Tropical d’Afrique (IOTA) specializes in the prevention and treatment of eye diseases. The Institut Marchoux, established in 1934, is a well-known leprosarium that conducts research into the prevention of leprosy and other skin diseases.

The Malaria Research and Training Center, funded in part by the National Institute of Health (U.S.), is on the campus of Mali’s National School of Medicine. A malaria vaccine is in the testing/trial stages from the work of this research.

The research division of Comité Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Secheresse au Sahel (CILSS), the Sahel Institute, is based in Bamako. Made up of representatives from the drought-stricken Sahelian countries, the institute is seeking ways to counter desertification and promote economic development.

In principle, primary education is free and compulsory, however, parents must pay registration fees and purchase books and supplies. These costs make it difficult for most families to keep children in school for long. School attendance is 42 percent at the primary level (34 percent for girls), and 10 percent at the secondary level (two percent for girls). Primary education is divided into two cycles, the first lasting six years and the second, three years. Secondary education lasts for three years and consists of either technical training or general secondary instruction leading to the baccalauréat degree. For the more than 12,000 existing communities in Mali (villages, towns and cities), there are 2,200 schools, which

means that children must frequently walk long distances to get to the nearest school.

In 1996 several “grandes ecoles” united to form the University of Mali. This institution grants degrees equivalent to the BA and BS. Malian students pursue their further studies in universities abroad (primarily France, Canada, and the United States). The “grandes ecoles,” each now a “Faculté” of the University, exist for specialized training: a teacher’s college, schools of engineering, medicine and pharmacy, administration, and others. These colleges grant BA or BS equivalent diplomas.

Commerce and Industry

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income under \$250 and a GDP of approximately \$1.3 billion. An estimated 85 percent of the labor force engages in farming, livestock production or fishing, most at the subsistence level. About 100,000 work in the formal sector.

The most important food crops are millet, sorghum, rice, field corn and peanuts. Sugar cane, tobacco and tea are also grown for local manufacture and consumption. Cotton is Mali’s most important export crop and chief foreign exchange earner.

Livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) is raised for both domestic and export markets. Already Mali’s second most important export, livestock has great potential for further development—thanks to the January 1994 CFA devaluation. It is relatively free of diseases which inhibit animal husbandry in the coastal areas to the south. Fish from the Niger, Bani and Senegal Rivers supplement Malians’ diets and provide an additional source of income.

Periodic drought has resulted in decreased agricultural production and serious food shortages. The disastrous Sahelian droughts of 1973-74 and 1983-84 caused much suffering and dislocation and forced

the Government of Mali to request emergency food aid in large quantities. Above average rainfall in 1988 and 1989 produced a cereal surplus; 1990 saw less favorable rains and led to renewed requests for food aid. Food output has increased since then—1994 and 1995 registered record harvests for most major crops.

Mali's industrial sector is small. Most factories are concentrated in or near Bamako and Segou. Firms engage in food processing and the manufacture of low technology consumer items, agricultural tools and construction materials. Many state enterprises have been privatized in recent years, including textile, cement and ceramic plants and a tannery and tea plantation. The government still owns a match and tobacco plant, slaughterhouse and other units but is committed to further privatization. Private businesses produce soap, candy, vinegar, bleach, plastic goods, flour, noodles, construction materials, beverages, etc. Local enterprises vary from the large cotton ginning monopoly to mid-size transport and trading houses to sidewalk merchants. Local markets offer a wide variety of traditional and modern goods. Many companies are wholly or partially French-owned.

With assistance from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and bilateral donors including the U.S., the government continues to make major steps to encourage development of the private sector, to increase agricultural productivity and improve health, education and family planning in Mali.

France is Mali's leading source of imports with ties going back to the colonial era. France, West Germany, Côte d'Ivoire, Italy, the Netherlands, the U.S., the United Kingdom, China, Senegal, Belgium and Japan provide Mali with imports of food, equipment and spare parts, vehicles, petroleum products, textiles, chemicals and pharmaceutical, and other manufactured goods. Imports cost \$740 million. Exports of Mali are \$556 million (1998),

going primarily to the major markets of France, Switzerland, Italy, Thailand, Cote d'Ivoire and Algeria. Mali sells cattle and sheep mainly to Cote d'Ivoire. Gold, Mali's third leading export, is exported to Europe. Mali imports \$773 million worth of goods (1998), including over \$29 million from the U.S. (1999) for items such as tobacco and cigarettes, equipment and spare parts, food and used clothing, and plastics.

Deposits of gold, marble, iron ore, bauxite, manganese, uranium, phosphate, kaolin, salt and limestone are found in Mali, but only gold is exploited on a major scale. Deficient infrastructure and capitalization costs have prevented exploitation of other minerals. The only major gold mine, operated by BHP International, an Australian firm, began production in January 1990. Additional gold mining projects are at various stages of exploration and development. Limited petroleum exploration has yielded disappointing results.

Mali belongs to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA), the Organization to Develop the Upper Senegal Valley (OMVS) and is an associate member of the European Economic Community.

Transportation

Automobiles

Vehicles purchased on the local economy take longer to register due to extensive title searches designed to curb cross border vehicle theft.

There is a Chrysler/Jeep dealership and distributor for Chrysler parts located in Bamako, as well as Mitsubishi and European dealerships. However, in terms of overall service and availability of parts, Peugeot, Renault, Toyota, and Nissan remain the most practical cars to have in Mali. Malian mechanics are most familiar with the French-made Peu-

geots and Renaults, although some can work on Japanese, German and other types of cars; mechanics are not trained to work on American cars. Spare parts are readily available for French-made autos and often available for Toyota, Nissan, and Mercedes. Spare parts for American cars and some foreign makes are not immediately available; they must be ordered from the U.S. or shipped with your household effects. Consider bringing spare parts such as spark plugs, air and oil filters, fan belts, water hoses, and wiper blade replacements. A repair manual for your auto is very useful. Jerry cans for gasoline are also useful for traveling out in the bush where there are no gas stations.

If you are purchasing a new car, air conditioning is advisable. If you have a choice, select heavy-duty options, such as heavy springs and shock absorbers. Avoid dark colors because of the high temperatures.

Most major streets in Bamako are paved but are in disrepair. Most residential streets are unpaved, rutted, and filled with potholes; they become dusty during the dry season and muddy during the rainy season. Roads to some tourist areas such as Dogon Country are difficult and, depending on the season, can be impassable for most cars, except those with four-wheel drive. You may wish to consider purchasing a four-wheel-drive vehicle if you intend to do a lot of traveling out of Bamako. A diesel engine works well in Bamako and is more economical than a gas engine.

Catalytic converters should be removed from vehicles before shipment, if possible. A letter from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required for this work to be done in the U.S. (This letter can be obtained through the Office of Transportation, Department of State.) Catalytic converters must be replaced if you intend to return the vehicle to the U.S. at the end of your tour.

Vehicles shipped from the U.S. do not transit Antwerp, but still can take about 6-10 weeks to arrive in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where clearance procedures can take up to 4 weeks. Cars are normally left in the 20-foot containers and trucked to Bamako. Due to the recent escalation of car thefts in Côte d'Ivoire all cars are trucked to Bamako in containers. For the most recent guidance on shipping instructions, please refer to your welcome cable.

To minimize chances of theft, remove small items such as cigarette lighters, mirrors, antennas, hubcaps, windshield wiper blades and arms, radios, cassette players, and clocks. Lock them inside the trunk or ship them with your household effects. Do not store other items in the car for shipment. Private insurance is recommended for shipment of vehicles.

Autos purchased in the U.S. and France, such as the Peugeots ordered through diplomatic sales programs, are shipped directly to Abidjan.

You are not allowed to drive a vehicle in Mali without proper registration documents (Carte Grise), which must be kept in the vehicle at all times.

Third-party liability insurance is compulsory in Mali. Insurance policies can be easily obtained from several agencies in town.

A valid driver's license is required to drive in Mali; an U.S. or international driver's license is acceptable. Vehicles may be rented through several local agencies, but discouraged. It is quite expensive to rent a car and often the agency requires that you pay an agency chauffeur to do the driving.

Local

The regional security officer does not recommend the use of local transportation, due to the poor quality of vehicles and unqualified drivers.

Local transportation in Bamako is provided by taxis, buses called

bâchées vans, and small pick-up trucks with benches and a canvas top in the back. Public transportation is hot, crowded, and often unreliable, as vehicles frequently break down.

Taxis are usually easy to find in the city. Fares range from about CFA 250, if a taxi is shared with others, to about CFA 1,000 if there is only one passenger. Taxis do not have set routes; they can be used to go to the surrounding countryside, however, since it is difficult to find one to return to the city, it is advisable to hire one by the hour for out-of-town trips.

Bâchées carry 16-18 closely packed passengers, as well as chickens, goats, and all kinds of parcels bound to and from market. Bâchées have regular routes within town and are inexpensive, starting at about CFA 150, depending upon the distance traveled.

Small "mini-buses" operate around the city for about CFA 150 a trip. They carry 18-20 seated passengers and as many "standees" as possible. A few large buses have been imported and are being put into use for travel between major cities. Some are air-conditioned.

Peugeot station-wagon "bush taxis" provide transportation from town to town. Fares depend upon the destination. They are generally very crowded and often slowed down by delays and breakdowns. Bâchées are usually painted green. Taxis are usually yellow and have "taxi" signs on top. A commercial service, "Tababus," provides bus service on set routes in Bamako and to some major cities. The Bamako fare is about 250 CFA per trip. All legal taxis, buses, and vans are marked by the red license plate.

Regional

Mali has one primary system of paved roads totaling approximately 1,700 miles. This network connects Bamako with Côte d'Ivoire in the south via Bougouni and Sikasso, and with Burkina Faso in the southeast via Segou and Koutiala. The road continues to the north, from

Segou, connecting Bamako with Mopti and Gao. There are approximately 5,000 miles of permanent dirt roads and an additional 3,700 miles of seasonal tracks, usable only during the dry season. The European Union has begun surveying a future road connecting Bamako with the Senegalese border.

Travel by car off paved roads is often difficult, except with four-wheel-drive vehicles. Traveling by vehicle, outside city limits at night can be inherently dangerous and as such is not advised. Any travel in Mali should be coordinated after reading the most recent travel advisory in Mali's Consular Information Sheet.

The sole railway system in Mali connects Bamako with Dakar (Senegal) via Kayes. The scheduled 36-hour trip to Dakar is difficult and recommended only for the hardy traveler. Couchettes and first-class service are available, but electric lights and toilets often do not work. Air-conditioning is inoperative. Travelers should bring their own food and drinks.

International flights to several points in Europe and West Africa, as well as a few internal flights to cities within Mali, are available from the Bamako-Segou airport, located about 9 miles south of the city.

Airlines serving Bamako are Air Afrique, Air France, Sabena, Air Algerie, Ethiopian Air Lines, Air Ivoire, Air Gabon, Air Burkina, Ghana Airways, Royal Air Maroc, Air Guinee, Air Mauratania, and Air Mali. You can fly from Bamako to most of the major cities in neighboring West African countries. Direct flights also serve Paris daily and Brussels several times a week. Code share flights are being introduced with American carriers. A weekly flight exists to Mopti, Timbuktu, and Gao via Air Mali, but expect delays and cancellations.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Direct-dial long-distance telephone service is available to most countries and to the U.S. The quality of the connection is usually good. Within Mali telephone service has improved since 2000 when eight new Bamako exchanges were added to the two existing ones. Cellular phone service has been available in Bamako since 1996. Long-distance calls to the U.S. are expensive. The cost for a 3-minute call to the east coast of the U.S. is about \$21. Call-back services are now available in Mali at reduced costs (about \$1 a minute). Commercial telegrams cost approximately 18 cents per word to the east coast of the U.S.

Internet was introduced to Mali in 1998, and there are currently five Internet service providers in Bamako.

Local postal facilities are generally reliable for airmail letter services. International airmail for letters to and from the U.S. may take 10 days to 2 weeks. Packages sent from the U.S. by airmail arrive in 3 to 4 weeks. International airmail for packages sent to the U.S. is quite expensive and not always reliable. Surface mail is even less reliable and not recommended. Packages sent to or from the U.S. by surface mail may take three months to a year or more to arrive. Service and customs fees of 60% of the value of the package are charged for receipt of packages for nondiplomatic persons.

U.S. postage stamps can be purchased from the American Community Services Association (ACSAM); however, they do not always have them in stock, so you should bring your own supply with you. U.S. postage stamps can also be ordered online directly from the U.S. Postal Service.

Radio and TV

Radio Mali is the government radio station in Mali. Programs include government published newscasts, local and Western music, and special features. Broadcasts are gener-

ally in French and Bambara, with some programming in other local languages and English. Radio programs are broadcast from 6:00 a.m. to midnight. Radio in Mali is an important means of communication for public announcements and local community news. There are many private FM stations (currently around 15) in Bamako as well, which play mostly popular African music and present public discussion programs in French and Bambara.

For international programs, a strong short-wave radio is useful. BBC, VOA, France International, Radio Paris, Christian Science Monitor, and Deutsche Welle are some of the stations that can be received. Quality of reception is erratic. An outside antenna often improves reception. Radio France International and Africa No. 1 broadcast on FM in Bamako. VOA news in French is available every evening on Radio K1édu, the local VOA affiliate. There are about 100 FM radio stations outside of Bamako, most broadcasting local community news, announcements, and music.

Television broadcasting in Mali was inaugurated in mid-1984. One television station exists and is operated by the Malian Government. Programs are broadcast in color from 7:00 p.m. to about 11:00 p.m. On weekends programming runs between 10:00 a.m. and midnight. Nightly broadcasts include a news program, a children's program, and cultural and entertainment programs or movies. Programs are broadcast in French and Bambara, and in other local languages.

Most people subscribe to one of two cable services offered locally, Multi-Canal and TV KLEDU. A special antenna and decoder can be purchased locally for approximately \$350. The cable companies offer special programming packages ranging from \$20 to \$35 for a month's subscription. Channels currently available are two movie channels, daytime Kid TV, Super Sport, CNN International, ESPN2, which are all broadcast in English. There are also French- and Arabic-lan-

guage channels. The local ORTM/Mali TV is included on the cable systems. More channels will be added in the future.

There is no digital mini-dish, direct-from-satellite services here that cover Mali. The problem is that the satellites that cover Europe and southern Africa have a "footprint" that does not reach West Africa. You can get an older-type large dish (about 2.5 meters in diameter), but these are very expensive (up to \$4,000) and will not pick up encrypted signals.

Mali uses PAL/SECAM transmission systems, which are not compatible with U.S. TV's. If you plan to purchase a TV or video equipment, consider buying a multi-system TV and multi-system, multi-speed video equipment. Black-and-white and color TV's are available locally, but generally very expensive.

Newspaper, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There are more than 15 French-language daily newspapers published in Mali: L'Essor les Echos, and Nouvel Horizon are examples. L'Essor, the official government newspaper, is the oldest and perhaps most influential in Mali. It contains local news and a limited amount of international news. A weekly edition, L'Essor Hebdo, centers primarily on social issues. Les Echos is published by a private company that also publishes novels, books, and news on tapes; it is generally supportive of the ruling party. Nouvel Horizon generally opposes the government.

In addition to the three daily newspapers, there are about 30 weekly publications: Aurore, la Roue, Le Tambour, l'Observateur le Democrate, le Malien, and le Republicain. All of these deal primarily with local news. Specialized publications such as le Scorpion and la Cigale Muselee (satire) or Kabako and l'Inspecteur (crime) appear biweekly.

Foreign newspapers and magazines, in English and in French, can be purchased locally at bookstores and hotels. The international editions of

Newsweek and Time cost from \$5 to \$7 per issue; the International Herald Tribune costs about \$2. These publications are somewhat less expensive by subscription; they are delivered by airmail several days after issue. Subscriptions from the U.S. through the pouch can take up to a month or more to arrive.

Books in English can be borrowed from the American Cultural Center lending libraries. Children's books in English can be borrowed from the American International School library. The French Cultural Center has a large library of books and periodicals in French and a small collection of books in English.

Local shops carry a small selection of books in French, and occasionally a few books in English. Technical books and dictionaries are not available.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Dental care in Bamako is very limited. Although simple or temporary work can be handled in Bamako, complicated work such as crowns, inlays, and partials must be done outside. Be sure to have a thorough dental checkup and complete all dental work before departing for Mali.

A local optician is available who can grind prescription lenses; the selection of frames is limited and very expensive. Bring several extra pairs of prescriptions glasses. Contact lenses are not available.

Local pharmacies are not well stocked; supplies of even simple remedies and common drugs are limited or nonexistent at times. Medications available are generally French and European brands; familiar American medications are not stocked.

Hospital care in Bamako is inadequate. Hospitals do not meet minimum standards for sanitation and lack services, trained personnel,

basic supplies, and equipment. Two public hospitals are located in Bamako: Point G and Gabriel Touré.

Community Health

Standards of community sanitation and public cleanliness in Bamako are poor. Local health and sanitation control measures to protect the public health are inadequate.

Bamako's garbage collection system is erratic and not adequate for the size of the city. Only a small area of Bamako is served by a sewage system, and open sewers exist even in the better city sections. Most American homes have their own septic tanks.

Local water supplies are not safe. Bamako's public water supply is chlorinated, and water is potable when it leaves the filtration plant, but the distribution system is inadequate and contamination often occurs.

During the rainy season particularly, and also at other times of the year, the city is infested with flies, mosquitoes, and other insects. Individuals are advised to bring a large supply of mosquito repellents.

Good household insecticides are available but are more expensive than in the U.S. and are often strongly scented.

Locally (commercially) bottled beverages and processed foods are generally of satisfactory quality. Fresh milk is not safe to drink unless you pasteurize it, but you can buy imported UHT-treated, long-life milk in sterile packages. Fresh meats and poultry are available in groceries where refrigeration is generally available.

Preventive Measures

Sanitation and disease prevention and treatment practices in Mali are not fully developed. The typical diseases associated with poor, underdeveloped countries are found here. Among endemic diseases in Mali, malaria is one of the most serious. It

affects nearly all the population and is a major cause of infant mortality. Also endemic are schistosomiasis (bilharzia) which causes liver and intestinal damage, trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), onchocerciasis (river blindness), tuberculosis, and rabies. Other diseases present in Mali are meningitis, yellow fever, and cholera. Intestinal diseases such as amoebic and bacterial dysentery are common.

For Americans in Bamako, the risk of disease is lessened considerably by following recommended disease prevention practices, keeping up with immunizations and booster shots, and by using malaria prophylaxis. Most illnesses suffered by Americans could be encountered anywhere; diarrhea and minor intestinal problems, colds and respiratory infections, and skin irritations periodically spread through the community. You will probably need a time of physical adjustment to tropical heat. More rest, more fluids, and more salt intake are essential, but you will soon learn to judge your own needs.

Before leaving, have necessary immunizations, start malaria suppressants, and take care of needed dental work. Start immunizations early. More than one injection is required for several of the immunizations, and a specified time must lapse between them.

Malarial suppressants must be taken throughout your entire tour in Bamako. Mefloquine is the recommended suppressant for this area. Mefloquine should be started one (1) week before arrival and continued for four (4) weeks after departure. Other alternatives to mefloquine are doxycycline, and chloroquine with paludrine.

Other precautions against malaria include keeping your house well screened, using mosquito netting around beds, and using insect repellent on exposed areas of skin.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and visa are required. All travelers must have international vaccination cards with a current yellow fever immunization. Travelers should obtain the latest information from the Embassy of the Republic of Mali, 2130 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 332-2249. Internet: <http://www.maliembassy-usa.org/>. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Malian embassy or consulate.

Mali is signatory to the Treaty on Cultural Property that restricts exportation of certain Malian archeological objects, in particular those from the Niger River Valley. Visitors seeking to export any such property are required by Malian law to obtain an export authorization from the National Museum in Bamako.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Mali are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Bamako at the intersection of Rue Rochester NY and Rue Mohamed V, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Mali. The Embassy's mailing address is B.P. 34, Bamako, Mali. The telephone number is (223) 22-38-33. The fax number is (223) 22-37-12.

Pets

Mali has no quarantine restrictions for pets, however, they must be accompanied by proof of rabies vaccination and a current certificate of good health. Dogs and cats are required to have yearly rabies shots. Veterinary services and routine immunizations are available through several private veterinarians and the local veterinary school.

Firearms & Ammunition

Malian Government procedures for clearance of arms and ammunition are, at best, complicated and drawn out, and there is no assurance that permission will be granted for importation.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Mali is a part of the West African Monetary Union, whose members use the CFA Franc, a convertible currency tied to the French franc at a fixed rate of exchange (100:1). Mali withdrew from the Zone in 1962, establishing its own currency, the Mali franc, and its own issuing bank. After a 22-year hiatus, Mali reentered the West African Monetary Union (UMOA) in mid 1984, and returned to the CFA franc as its official currency on September 1, 1984. The current average daily exchange rate is 695 CFA = \$1.

The CFA (Communaute Financiere Africaine) group of countries includes Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The CFA community has its own central issuing bank; however, the monetary reserves of the CFA countries are held on deposit in the French Treasury in French francs. French francs are readily accepted by most local shops.

Banking services such as checking accounts are available through several local banks, but procedures are cumbersome and slow, so they are seldom used by Americans. Payments for local purchases are generally made in cash, except in the larger stores where checks for CFA francs are accepted.

Travelers checks are accepted by banks, airlines, and hotels; however, they are not accepted in local shops. American dollar or French franc travelers checks may be purchased at several banks in Bamako; however, it is easier to bring a supply from home and less expensive.

Credit cards are not accepted in local stores. The larger hotels will take American Express, Visa and Diner's Club. International airlines such as UTA and Air Afrique accept several credit cards including American Express and Diners Club, but only up to certain limited amounts.

The metric system is used as the standard system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan. 20	.....	Army Day
Mar. 26	.....	Day of Democracy
May. 1	.....	Labor Day
May 25	.....	Africa Day
Sept. 22	.....	Independence Day
Nov. 19	.....	Liberation Day
Dec. 25	.....	Christmas
	.....	Id al-Adah*
	.....	Ramadan*
	.....	Id al-Fitr*
	.....	Mawlid na Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Africa South of the Sahara 2000. Europa Publications: Bernan Associates. October 1999. (In print.)

Auster, Paul. *Timbuktu*. St. Martin's Press. April 2000.

Conde, Maryse, Barbara Bray (Translator). *Segou*. Penguin USA. September 1998. A best-selling novel based on the history of a Malian family from the last great pre-colonial kingdom. (In print)

Cornell, Christine. *The Dogon of West Africa*. Rosen Publications Group: August 2000.

Courlander, Harold and Ousmane Seko. *The Heart of the Ngoni: Heroes of the African Kingdom of Segou*. University of Massachusetts Press: September 1994. Traditional history from the kingdom of Segou.

Imperato, Pascal James. *A Wind in Africa: A Story of Modern Medicine in Mali*. Warren H. Green: St. Louis, January 1975. Memoirs of the author's 5 years as a USAID epidemiologist in Mali.

Imperato, now a professor of public health at SUNY Brooklyn, became an expert and prolific writer on Malian history, medicine, art history, and much more. A fascinating introduction to modern Mali, still available from the publisher.

Imperato, Pascal James. *Historical Dictionary of Mali*. Africa Historical Dictionaries, No. 11. 2nd ed. Scarecrow Press: Metuchen, N.J., January 1996. Up-to-date reference work on Malian history, geography, and personalities, also with a comprehensive bibliography. (In print.)

Joris, Lieve. *Mali Blues*. Lonely Planet Publications: 1998. A colorful novel observing the life of a Malian musician.

History

Bovill, E.W. *The Golden Trade of the Moors*. Markus Wiener, publisher. November 1994. Classic account of early trans-Saharan trade.

Chu, Daniel and Elliott Skinner. *A Glorious Age in Africa: The Story of Three Great African Empires*. Africa World Press: September 1996.

de Gramont, Sanche. *The Strong Brown God*. Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston, 1976. History of Niger River exploration, in highly readable form. (Out of print, but possible to find in book stores.)

Miner, Horace. *The Primitive City of Timbuktoo*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, N.J. 1953. What the famous old city was really like just after World War II as observed by an anthropologist. (Out of print.)

Perimbam, B. Marie, Shula Marks (editor). *Family Identity and the State in the Bamako Kafu c. 1800-1900*. Westview Press. April 2000.

Language

Imperato, Pascal James. *Buffoons, Queens and Wooden Horsemen: The Dyo and Gouan Societies of the Bambara of Mali*. Kilima House: January 1983.

Ouattara, Mouhamadou. *Essential Bambara: For English-Speaking*

Travelers. Osborne Communications: September 1992.

Religion

Brenner, Louis. *West African Sufi*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 1984. Historical study of Islam in Mali by a leading scholar of the subject. (In print)

Griaule, Marcel. *Conversations with Ogotemmel: An Introduction to Dogon Religious Ideas*. Oxford University Press: London, September 1990. One of many works on the Dogon by a famous French scholar. (Out of print, but can buy through the book.com stores.)

Art/Architecture

Ezra, Kate. *Art of the Dogon*. Selections from the Lester Wunderman Collection. Yale University Press: January 1998.

Lawal, Ibrinke O. (Editor). *Metalworking in Africa South of the Sahara*. Greenwood Publications Group Inc.: January 1995.

O'Toole, Thomas (Editor). *Mali in Pictures*. Lerner Publications. February 1990.

Political/Development

Gann, Lewis H., Duignan, Peter, *Africa South of the Sahara: The Challenge to Western Security*. Hoover Institution Press, January 1981. (In print.)

Coquery-Vidrovitch, Catherine, David Maisel (translator). *Africa: Endurance and Change South of the Sahara*. University of California Press. May 1992. (In print.)

Bingen, R.J., Robinson, D., Staatz, J. *Democracy and Development in Mali*. Michigan State University Press: October 2000

Lucke, Lewis. *Waiting for Rain: Life and Development In Mali, West Africa*. Christopher Publishing House: August 1999.

Miscellaneous

Brooks, Larry, Ray Webb (illustrator). *Daily Life in Ancient and Modern Timbuktu*. Learner Publishing Group. April 1999.

Jackson, Elizabeth, Paul Quinn (illustrator). *South of the Sahara: Traditional Cooking from the*

Lands of West Africa. Fantail: July 1999.

McIntosh, Susan and Roderick. "Finding West Africa's Oldest City." *National Geographic Magazine*. Vol. 162, No. 3 (September 1982), pp. 396-418. Article for the general reader on Mali's most significant archeological site.

van Maydell, H.J. *Trees and Shrubs of the Sahel*. Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ): Eschsborn, Germany, 1986. A guide to "the bush" published by the West German AID program. Along with the Serle and Morel bird book, this is a useful reference for those working in Mali's rural areas.

Serle, William and Gerard J. Morel. *A Field Guide to the Birds of West Africa*. Collins: London, 1977. First-rate field guide to Mali's diverse bird life. (In print)

Note: The best location for many of the Mali-related books are found in any of the Book-Dot-Com internet sites. Otherwise, these books are available only from a good library or (if still in print) direct from the publisher. Consult Books in Print at your local library for publisher's addresses.

World Wide Web Sites on Mali

<http://www.wash.afp.com/ext/francais/coope/mali/>
<http://www.mysteriousplaces.com/mali/mali9.html>
<http://www.afribone.net/ml/>
<http://www.afribone.net/ml/en>
<http://www.maliembassy-usa.org/index.html>
<http://www.tourisme.gov.ml/index.html>
<http://callisto.si.usherb.ca/malinet/>
<http://flani.malinet.ml/anais/investiture/index.html>
http://www.malinet.ml/palabre/Presse/les_echos/index.html <http://www.malinet.ml/>
<http://www.anais.org/Fr/pays/mali/index.html>
<http://www.ccfbko.org/ml/>
<http://www.liberte.edu.ml/>
<http://www.banivoyages.com/>

MAURITANIA

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Major City:

Nouakchott

Other Cities:

Atar, Boutilimit, Chinguetti, Kaédi, Nouadhibou, Ouadane, Rosso, Zouérate

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Republic of **MAURITANIA** has been a recognized political entity with defined borders for just over 30 years. From the beginning of this century until independence was achieved in 1960, it was a part of the larger region known as French West Africa; prior to that time, portions of the present-day republic were included in political systems based in northwest Africa and in the Niger Basin.

One of the few truly exotic places left in the world, Mauritania is the traditional homeland of the Moors, nomadic herdsmen and warriors who, for centuries, roamed the desert and semi-desert areas of Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco,

and the Western Sahara. The country is distinct from the ancient African province of Mauritania, which existed in Roman times.

MAJOR CITY

Nouakchott

Nouakchott was a small village of mud brick houses on the edge of the Sahara in 1957. It was selected that year as the future site of the capital of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania over larger, historically more important towns because of its relatively moderate climate and central, coastal location. Nouakchott's name derives from the Berber expression "place of the winds."

After rapid and unplanned growth, some 694,000 people now live in Nouakchott and its surrounding tent and shanty suburbs. Most of this growth is the result of prolonged drought, which has forced masses of nomadic people to abandon their way of life and move to the city for food and the slim hope of finding work.

The city, covering some 10 square miles, is bounded on three sides by desert, and on the fourth by the Atlantic coastline, approximately 3 miles from town. Maximum daytime

temperatures average in the low 90's (F), with average minimum temperatures in the high 60's (F). Precipitation in Nouakchott is less than three inches annually. The city's water supply is piped some 40 miles from the nearest reliable aquifer.

The airport is located near the older section of town, known as Ksar.

Food

Many of the food products that Americans are accustomed to are expensive on the local market. Almost all such food is imported, including fresh fruits and vegetables such as apples, oranges, and potatoes. Availability, quality, and variety fluctuate widely. Locally produced, good quality, vegetables are always available in winter. During the summer, fresh produce is scarce, and even meat, butter, and cheese can be in short supply due to fewer imports as foreign residents depart. Nouakchott is blessed with delicious fresh, locally caught fish, shrimp, and rock lobster in season at reasonable prices. Beef and lamb, chickens, eggs, and a few vegetables (lettuce, tomatoes, tubers, mint, and parsley) are produced locally at costs about 30 to 50 percent higher than U.S. prices. There are many imported fruit juices available at about twice the price of comparable U.S.-made products. Items such as

lunch meat, cheese, ice cream, and turkey are imported either from neighboring countries or Europe and are correspondingly expensive.

Supermarkets, butcher shops, numerous smaller shops, several open-air markets, several bakeries producing good baguettes, door-to-door vendors, and the fish market are the local sources of supply for groceries in Nouakchott. Shopping frequently, stocking up on sometimes scarce items, scouring the vegetable stands for fresh items, advance planning (but flexibility in menu planning), and befriending certain vendors enables foreign residents of Nouakchott to live adequately, albeit expensively, on the local market.

Clothing

The weather in Nouakchott ranges from cool to very hot, so warm weather clothing is needed. Cotton clothing is best. Some cool-weather clothing such as sweaters and long-sleeved shirts are needed during the winter, when evening and nighttime temperatures can drop as low as 45 °F. Sweatshirts or light windbreakers are useful for the beach in the evening. Bring washable clothing, since there is only one quality dry-cleaning establishment in Nouakchott.

Men: Normal office attire for men includes slacks, short-sleeved shirt, with or without tie, and occasionally, a sports jacket or blazer. Men who like lightweight, short-sleeved safari suits or jackets find these comfortable for day and evening. Jeans and shorts are worn on the beach and for recreational activities.

Women: Office attire for women is a simple cotton dress or blouse and skirt. Out of respect for Islamic custom, skirt length is conservative, and shorts are not worn on the street. Bare arms and sundresses are acceptable for foreign women. Local tailors can make dresses and skirts from local tie-dyed or batik fabric. A long-sleeved dress and shawl or dressy jacket are useful for outdoor receptions on chilly eve-

nings. Stockings are rarely worn outside the cool season.

Children: Boys and girls wear shorts or jeans and shirts to school. For the few occasions when they must dress up, boys need a nice polo shirt and cotton pants and girls need a simple dress. Children wear tennis or running shoes, best brought, and "flip-flops," which may be purchased here. The local selection of shoes for children is extremely limited and expensive.

Men and women use sandals for casual wear, and women wear them to the office. All shoes wear out quickly in Mauritania's sandy streets and yards. Bring all sports shoes. Tennis shoes wear out quickly on hard-surfaced courts. Softball cleats may not be necessary in sand, but cleats help rugby and soccer players.

Comfortable clothing for any type of sport or recreational activity in Nouakchott should be brought in quantity. Swimwear, tennis, jogging, basketball, soccer, rugby, and aerobics clothing all wear out much more quickly here from excessive perspiration and dust, and consequent tough washing. Hats and caps are necessary for any outdoor activity. Sweatbands and plenty of cotton socks are helpful.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Few American products are sold on the local market. Some French products are available, but the prices are high, and the selection is limited. Among French products are some toiletries, patent medicines and drugs, common household items, insect sprays, paper products, hardware, and some cleaning equipment.

Basic Services: Most shops are open from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, and 4 pm to 7 pm, Saturday through Thursday. Services including basic tailoring and dressmaking, and simple electrical and automotive repairs are also available, but the quality of workmanship varies. Most Americans patronize two unisex hairdressers. Massages, facials,

manicures, or haircuts are available as home services. Specialty shops carrying items such as pet supplies and English-language books or magazines do not exist. Private veterinarians are available to attend to the needs of American pets. (Ticks and fleas can plague animals during certain seasons and are difficult to control.)

Religious Activities

Islam is the state religion in Mauritania. Non-Mauritanians may attend the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Joseph. Mass is in French. Protestant services (in English) are held on Fridays in the Parish Hall on the Cathedral compound.

Education

The American International School of Nouakchott (AISN) is an accredited, nonprofit, private, coeducational school, which provides an American educational program for pre-kindergarten through grade 8, depending on enrollment. The school was founded in 1978 and moved into a new facility in 1981. Current American texts are used. The school year runs from Labor Day until mid-June. Classes are held from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm, Sunday through Thursday. Preschool is offered for 3- and 4-year-olds if there is sufficient enrollment. In addition, ninth grade can sometimes be offered by using correspondence courses.

All kindergarten through grade 8 teachers are certified, either in the U.S. or another country. The school is accredited in the U.S. through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Students in grades kindergarten through grade 8 are grouped as follows: K-1, 2-3, 4-5-6, and 7-8.

Sports

Outdoor recreation centers around the Atlantic beaches and the softball/soccer/rugby fields (in season). The unspoiled beaches are the greatest benefit to Nouakchott. The white sand beach is 3 miles from town by paved road.

With four-wheel-drive vehicles, many Americans drive up the beach at low tide or cross dunes to reach private spots north or south of town for fishing, camping, and picnics. The Atlantic often has high surf, strong currents, and undertows, so vigilance and caution when swimming are necessary. Jogging, shell collecting, motorcycling, and surf fishing are also popular.

Mauritania enjoys good surf fishing year round, along the entire coast. Among the fish in these rich waters are tuna, sea bass, sole, parrot fish, squid, and lobster. Surf fishing rod, reel, tackle, and line all should be brought, as when available; they are expensive, and a fair amount of tackle may be lost to rocks and tenacious fish. Fishing licenses are not required, but a permit is required to fish from a commercial wharf.

The community softball team is organized loosely according to season and interest, and all participation is eagerly welcomed. The team sometimes travels to other capitals of the Sahel for tournaments.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Travel outside of Nouakchott is interesting and enriching but requires thorough preparation and proper equipment. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are necessary in any direction outside the city. A good selection of spare parts, tools, sand ladders, extra fuel, water, and food must be carried for travel off the main roads.

Camping is possible both on the beach and in the desert. One popular trip involves driving up the beach at low tide along the water's edge toward Cap Timiris. Others enjoy camping in the desert or along ancient caravan routes, searching for archaeological artifacts and exploring ancient towns.

Accommodations for travelers in the interior of the country are rudimentary, if available. Travelers to all but a few cities usually take camping gear or stay with Mauritanian families. Most regional capitals have



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Mosque in Nouakchott, Mauritania

government rest houses (“gites d’etapes”) and a few have tourist hotels. Travel and accommodations require considerable advance planning.

In this country of vast open space, the population is as sparse as the vegetation. Wherever one camps, there are few signs of people. You can enjoy sleeping in the open during favorable seasons, but a tent is useful as protection against wind and sandstorms and as a sunscreen.

The following cities and towns of Mauritania make interesting destinations:

Akjoujt, 3 hours from Nouakchott, is the site of a former copper mining industry.

Atar, 4 hours beyond Akjoujt, was one of the ancient capitals of the Almoravid Kingdom and a caravan base for the trans-Saharan salt trade.

Chinguetti, the seventh holy city of Islam, lies some 72 miles east of Atar. Some of the houses and mosques in its fascinating stone-built quarter date back to the 13th century.

Nouadhibou, accessible from Nouakchott by air or a 2-day drive up the beach at low tide, is a fishing

and commercial port, and the terminus of the railroad from the Zouerate iron mines. Air Afrique operates a fishing camp nearby.

Boutilimit, some 2 hours by paved road from Nouakchott, is one of the religious centers of the country and the site of an Islamic institute. The ruins of a French military post are visible atop a dune near town.

Kiffa is 10 hours east of Nouakchott, and an important regional trading center and crossroads. The oases and escarpments around Kiffa offer an interesting change of scenery.

Aioun is 3 hours east of Kiffa, with houses of beautiful blocks of local stone. The interesting rock formations to the south are reminiscent of the American southwest.

Oulata, located in the southeast near the Malian border, was a famous religious center, and is known for its unique style of decorated houses and courtyards. UNESCO is interested in undertaking historical preservation programs in Oulata, Tichitt, Chinguetti, and Oquadane.

Rosso is a border town on the Senegalese River, reflecting the ambience of Senegal, some 3 hours from Nouakchott.

Keur-Massene is a hunting and fishing camp operated by Air Afrique 60 kilometers west of Rosso, in the delta area of the Senegal River, near the Banc de Diawling National Park, a large bird refuge on the Atlantic coast.

The Banc D'Arguin National Park, a 4–5 hour drive north of Nouakchott along the beach at low tide, is large natural estuary rich in bird and animal life. The park is reputed to be one of Africa's best for watching migratory birds.

Other places of interest easily accessible from Nouakchott include the Canary Islands, several different islands, each with its own character. The largest of these resort islands, Gran Canaria, is only a short flight from Nouakchott and features duty-free shopping, international resorts, and Spanish culture. The other islands can be reached by local Spanish airlines or boat.

Senegal offers alluring destinations for residents of Mauritania, including:

Saint Louis, the administrative capital for Mauritania during the colonial period, is a 4–5 drive from Nouakchott. This picturesque island town was one of the earliest French settlements in Africa. The former slave trading port near the mouth of the Senegal River today offers comfortable hotels and good dining.

Dakar, the capital of Senegal and former capital of French West Africa, is a cosmopolitan city with good shopping, beaches, hotels, restaurants, and night life. Frequent 1-hour flights or an 8-hour drive make this seaport city a popular destination from Nouakchott.

Entertainment

Few commercial forms of entertainment are found in Nouakchott. The French cultural center offers occasional live productions, exhibitions, and films all in French. A few but growing number of local restaurants offer varying quality in food and service. A large sports stadium, built by the Chinese Government,

hosts sports events featuring Mauritanian, African, and European sports teams. Occasional art shows or musical concerts take place and are widely attended.

Social Activities

The American community in Nouakchott includes personnel of the U.S. Mission, Peace Corps volunteers, and other resident Americans, most of whom are affiliated with religious or international organizations. AERAN is the focal point for many American community activities, with dining service and bar and grill. Social life is relaxed and usually casual, centered around dinners at the Club, and an occasional tennis or volleyball tournament.

Many opportunities exist to develop friendships with members of the international and Mauritanian communities, but French proficiency is essential. The French Racing Club offers evening dinners and dancing as well as tennis tournaments. Entertaining in the international community is similar in style to the American community.

OTHER CITIES

ATAR, one of the ancient capitals of the Almoravid Kingdom about 300 miles northeast of Nouakchott, was a caravan base for the trans-Saharan salt trade. The town is an oasis that produces dates and grains and supports cattle, sheep, and goat grazing. Atar is also known for its rugs.

BOUTILIMIT is the religious capital of the country and the site of an Islamic Institute. It is about 100 miles southeast of Nouakchott.

CHINGUETTI, in west central Mauritania, is the seventh holy city of Islam, and has houses and mosques dating back to the 13th century.

KAÉDI, capital city of the Gorgol administrative region, is situated on the Senegal River in southern Mauritania. The city exports the

skins and hides of cattle, goats, and sheep. Its population is about 21,000.

NOUADHIBOU (formerly called Port-Étienne) is a seaport town in the northwest corner of Mauritania, 225 miles north of Nouakchott. Warm currents make this area an ideal breeding zone for valuable fish species. About a dozen fishing companies operate here. However, Nouadhibou lacks the infrastructure to enable it to compete with other fishing ports in the area. Nouadhibou is the site of Mauritania's largest international airport.

OUADANE, just northeast of Chinguetti, is an old caravan center, and the site of several oases.

ROSSO, with a population of about 16,500, lies on the Senegal River in southwestern Mauritania, 110 miles south of Nouakchott. The city produces melons, beans, corn, millet, gum arabic and livestock.

ZOUÉRATE (also spelled Zouîrât) is located in north central Mauritania. As the country's iron-mining center, the city accounts for most of Mauritania's export income. Zouérate is linked by rail to the port city of Nouadhibou and has a population of over 25,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania is situated on the Atlantic Ocean in northwest Africa. It is bounded on the northeast by Algeria, on the east by Mali, and on the south by Senegal. Mauritania shares its long northern border with the former Spanish Sahara. Spain relinquished control of this area in 1975, but its political status is still unresolved. A UN-sponsored mandate to decide whether residents prefer independence or annexation by Morocco is still being negotiated.

Mauritania has three distinct geographic regions in its surface area of 419,000 square miles. The riverine zone, a narrow belt of rich, well-watered alluvial soil stretching along the Senegal River Valley in the south, is the sole center of settled agriculture. Rainfall averages 10–25 inches annually.

The Sahelian Zone is a broader east-west band that extends from the riverine zone to just north of Nouakchott. Until recently, annual rainfall has averaged some 4–18 inches, enough to support savannah grasslands suitable for nomadic cattle and sheep herding. However, diminished rainfall, in recent years, has resulted in scantier vegetation, forcing many inhabitants to move south or migrate to larger towns. What rain there is occurs mainly in heavy, localized thunderstorms. Nouakchott, at the northern extreme of this zone, experiences such storms several times each year.

The Saharan Zone comprises the northern two-thirds of Mauritania. This vast, sparsely populated region is characterized by beautiful shifting dunes, rock outcroppings, and rugged mountain plateaus with elevations higher than 1,500 feet. Irregular, scant rainfall permits little vegetation, although date palms are cultivated around larger oases and on some of the higher plateaus in the east. Herds of camels, goats, and sheep, which formerly ranged in this area were depleted during successive droughts in the 1970s and 1980s. With only a brief respite, pre-drought conditions have returned in the mid-1990s.

Modifying these conditions is the Atlantic coastal area, which includes Nouakchott. The ocean breezes provide periodic relief from the heat, although desert winds may bring flies, locusts, and sandstorms with consequent discomfort and annoyance. The Sahara is a young, growing desert. The severe droughts of the Sahel in the 1970s–80s have accelerated desertification. Thus, the southern edges of the Saharan and Sahelian Zones creep inexorably southward.

Mauritania's climate is hot and arid, except in the far south, which has higher humidity. In Nouakchott, daytime temperatures reach 85°F in the winter, although at night sweaters and blankets are needed. Summer temperatures regularly reach over 100°F during the day, but because it is a dry heat, they are more bearable than the same temperatures at high humidity. Summer evenings can be considerably cooler.

The area's fine sand makes beachgoing one of the highlights of a tour in Nouakchott; however, winds can also stir this sand into enervating sandstorms that last from a few hours to several days. These sandstorms can occur throughout the year, although they are less frequent during the summer and fall.

Population

Mauritania's population of some 2.7 million is unevenly distributed. It ranges from an average of 91 persons per square mile in certain sections of the Senegal River Valley to an average of 19 persons per square mile in the Sahelian Zone and less than one person for every 4 square miles in the Saharan Zone.

Although Mauritania is a country of cultural and ethnic diversity, its many ethnic groups have co-existed essentially peacefully for centuries. Arabic-speaking Moors comprise the largest group, about 70 percent of the population. Among Moors there are two major subgroups, the Bidan, or White Moors, who are mainly Arab-Berber herders, traders, and oasis farmers and the Haratin, mainly descendants of tributary (slave) black groups who practice extensive dryland agriculture and herding. As a result of centuries of intermarriage, the terms black and white Moor now indicate patrilineal ancestry rather than racial characteristics. The Moors have been traditionally nomadic, roaming the deserts of Mali, Algeria, Morocco, western Sahara, and Senegal. Today, the majority live in sedentary agricultural communities or in larger towns and cities. They remain highly mobile, with more

than 20 percent of the adult male population away from their settlements at any given time either trading or herding.

The remaining 30 percent of the population live primarily as sedentary farmers and herders in the Senegal River Valley, though their numbers are rising in urban areas. Their major ethnic groups include the Haalpulaar, the largest; the Soninke (Sarakolle); the Peulh (Fulbe, Fula, Fulani); and the Wolof. The French are the largest foreign national group, numbering more than 2,000. Most of the Americans who reside in Nouakchott work for the U.S. Government or for relief and development organizations.

Arabic is the official language for government and, with French, is a working language for commerce. Hassaniya, the local Arabic dialect, is spoken to some degree by 75 percent of the population; however, each ethnic group speaks its own language. The national literacy rate is about 47 percent but rising, now that 80 percent of the school-age population receives a basic primary school education.

Mauritanians are Muslim. Dietary restrictions common to Muslims, such as prohibitions against consumption of alcoholic beverages and pork, are observed strictly. No alcohol is sold in Mauritania; however, imported pork is occasionally available at local shops. Social restrictions, particularly for women, are less noticeable here than in the most conservative of Arab countries, e.g., Saudi Arabia. Mauritanian women cover their hair but rarely their faces in public, and many are active in business and some in government.

Mauritania has been a recognized political entity with defined borders since independence in 1960. From early in this century until independence, it was part of the larger region known as French West Africa. Prior to that, some of present-day Mauritania was included in political systems based in northwest Africa and in the Niger River basin.

The southward migration of the Senhadja Berber confederation of tribes first brought the Islamic faith to what is now Mauritania in the seventh century. By the 11th century, indigenous black African people had been driven south to the Senegal River or enslaved by the nomadic Senhadja. Southern Mauritania was overrun in about 1040 by Islamic warrior monks (Almoravid or Al Murabitun) who, subsequently extended their empire northward into Morocco and into much of southern Spain.

As the Almoravid Empire eroded, the Arabs overcame fierce Berber resistance to dominate Mauritania. Several groups of Yemeni Bedouin Arabs occupied north Africa and spread into what is today Mauritania. Their disruption of trans-Saharan caravan trade caused an eastward shift in the routes, resulting in a decline of Mauritanian trading towns. By the end of the 17th century, the Beni Hassan group dominated much of what is now Mauritania. The last effort by native Berbers to oust the Arab invaders was the unsuccessful Mauritanian Thirty Year War (1644–74).

The social structure established as a result of that war has been maintained intact to the present day. The descendants of the Beni Hassan warriors became the upper stratum of Moorish society, and Arabic gradually replaced Berber dialects. Many of the Berber groups, however, remained social equals, even as they became political vassals. They turned to clericalism and produced most of the region's Marabouts: the men who serve as repositories and teachers of Islamic tradition. At the bottom of the social hierarchy were the Zenaga (the poor Moor tributaries), the Haratin, often called Black Moors, and the Abid (slaves).

The country's other ethnic groups do not share the tribal structure of the Moors, but are organized as clans, extended families, or villages. Their traditional hierarchical structure, however, is very similar.

Under French colonial rule the population was obliged to give up slave trading and warfare, although armed clashes between French soldiers and Beni Hassan warriors continued through the 1930s. Also during the colonial period, sedentary black African peoples began to trickle back into southern Mauritania from which they had been expelled in earlier years by aggressive Moorish nomads.

This influx of non-Arabic-speaking black peoples from the south has caused a major modification of the social structure in this century. Many Haalpulaar, Soninke, and Wolof moved into the area north of the Senegal River at the time of independence. Educated in the French language and customs, large numbers became clerks, soldiers, and administrators in the new state.

Moors reacted to this change by increasing pressure to Arabize many aspects of Mauritanian life (law, language, etc.). A schism resulted between those who consider Mauritania to be an Arab country (mainly Moors) and those who seek a dominant role for the ethnic sub-Saharan peoples. The tension between these two visions remains a feature of the political dialogue. A significant number from both groups, however, seek a more diverse, pluralistic society. The discord between these two conflicting visions of Mauritanian society was evident in language disputes of the 1960s and during the intercommunal violence that broke out in April 1989.

Public Institutions

Mauritania became self-governing as the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in November 1958, and shortly thereafter began the process of transferring its administrative services from St. Louis, Senegal to the new capital at Nouakchott. Mauritania became independent on November 28, 1960. The constitution, adopted in 1961, replaced the former parliamentary type of government with a presidential system. Moktar ould Daddah, elected the

first President in 1961, was reelected in 1966, 1971, and 1976.

On July 10, 1978, ould Daddah was overthrown in a bloodless coup d'état; power was then assumed by the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN). For the next 2 years, power shifted among various members of the military group, culminating in January 1980 with the newly formed Military Committee of National Salvation (CMSN). In December 1980, a civilian prime minister, who formed a government of civilian ministers, was appointed, but the military committee retained policy oversight. This government was dissolved in April 1981 when the military reestablished itself as the sole ruling body of the nation.

In 1984, Colonel Maaouiya ould Sid'ahmed Taya led a successful, bloodless coup and declared himself Chief of State. He soon called for gradual movement toward a democratic system. A constitution was approved in a general plebiscite in 1991, and presidential elections were held in 1992. Taya was elected to office for a 6-year term, then reelected in 1998.

Mauritania is divided into 12 regions and the district of Nouakchott, each administered by a governor responsible to the president. Municipal elections were first held in 1986–88. Second municipal elections in 1994 were the first that saw multi-party participation in races for municipal councils and mayors. In 1995, the government, with support from international and bilateral donors, began seeking to decentralize authority by giving more responsibility to municipalities.

Although the constitution provides for the independence of the judiciary, the executive branch exercises significant pressure on the courts through its ability to appoint and to influence judges. The system includes lower, middle, and upper level courts, each with its own jurisdiction. A dual system of courts, one based on modern law and one based on Shari'a, has been replaced by a

single system as the country moves to a modernized legal system that is in conformity with the principles of the Shari'a.

Arts, Science, and Education

Mauritania, a nomadic society until independence, lacked large market centers or sedentary populations that help generate traditional arts and crafts. Limited basic raw materials and restraints on possessions associated with mobility contributed to only a limited crafts tradition focused on utilitarian goods such as decorated leather pillows, woven leather and straw mats, and silver jewelry (which doubled as a portable savings account).

In recent decades, woven rugs, gold and inlaid jewelry, and decorated teapots (so ubiquitous as to be nearly a national symbol), have been developed as crafts. Workmanship varies and vigorous bargaining is necessary to attain a reasonable price. Two types of rugs are available: the "Boutilimit rug," made of camel, goat, and sheep hair, adapted from traditional wool tent weaving methods; and new, tight, hand-knotted carpets with traditional motifs. Both are made at the Artisanat de Mauritanie in Nouakchott.

Nomadic life is not conducive to the establishment of institutions of higher education and science. From ancient times, however, traditional Koranic schools were founded in special encampments as well as religious caravan centers such as Chinguetti, Tichit, and Oualata. In addition to religion and language, these schools taught rhetoric, law, mathematics, and medicine. Curriculum was based largely on Greco-Roman scholarship. Some traditional schools still exist, but that system now coexists with public schools, including the University of Nouakchott with its faculties of letters, law, economics, and science.

Research facilities and programs remain in a formative stage. The Mauritanian Institute of Scientific Research in Nouakchott is a gather-

ing place for a limited number of scholars interested in history, poetry, or archeology. It supervises the National Museum which has two large public rooms, including a small standing exhibit of traditional life in Mauritania, displays of archeological materials found in the country, and some interesting visiting shows. The National Health Center, the National Center for Agricultural Research and Development, and the National Center for Livestock and Veterinary Research perform limited studies, all generally dependent on foreign support.

Commerce and Industry

Many Mauritians are engaged in subsistence farming or nomadic herding. Settled agriculture is confined mainly to the Senegal River Valley, where millet, sorghum, and smaller quantities of other cereals and rice are the main crops. Some 13,000 tons of dates are produced annually from date palms cultivated in the mountainous regions of Adrar, Tagant, and Assaba, and at the larger desert oases. Most agricultural produce is consumed locally, and Mauritania is a net importer of foodstuffs.

The most important sector of the economy is based on the rich fishing waters that lie off the Atlantic coast. The government levies fees on foreign fleets that fish in Mauritanian waters and requires that a percentage of the catch be processed in Nouadhibou. In 1994, the country exported more than 306,000 metric tons of frozen and canned seafood products worth about \$223 million. Fishing by foreign companies, however, threatens this important source of income.

Mauritania's other major income-producing sector is mining. High-grade iron ore is found in the Zouerate region in the northwest. Iron ore exports in 1994 totaled over 10 million metric tons with a value of approximately \$160 million. In recent years, however, a decline in demand has led to production cutbacks. The slag heaps of mined cop-

per near Akjoujt, about 135 miles northeast of Nouakchott were reprocessed to extract remaining gold in the early 1990s.

The Societ  Nationale Industrielle et Mini re (SNIM), a parastatal corporation established in 1972 when the French mining company was nationalized, controls the country's iron mines (copper and gold mining are private sector efforts). The government also oversees gypsum mining and the administration of the industrial explosives factory at Nouadhibou. More recently, SNIM has been studying the feasibility of sulphur and phosphate exploitation.

Other income sources for Mauritania include traditional exports of salt and gum arabic, still often carried over ancient camel caravan routes into Morocco, Algeria, and Mali. There is no current ongoing exploration for oil in the country, although such sources may exist. Exploration has begun in the diamond and petroleum markets.

Mauritania has been a member of the U.N. since 1961 and of the League of Arab States since 1973. In 1972, Mauritania, Senegal, and Mali formed the joint Senegal River Development Organization (OMVS) to develop the agricultural and hydroelectric potential of the Senegal River and to foster economic cooperation among the three countries. Mauritania also belonged to the 16-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) until the country withdrew in 2000. Mauritania is a signatory of the Lome Convention. In 1989, Mauritania joined Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Morocco to form the Arab Maghreb Union.

Transportation

Local

Limited bus service is available in Nouakchott and local point-to-point taxis are plentiful, but the vehicles are dilapidated, overcrowded, and rarely used by Americans. Irregular, long-distance taxi service, "taxibrousse," is available between Nouakchott and many regional cap-

itals. This is a colorful, if slow, way to experience the local scene.

Regional

Travel within Mauritania is via a small network of roads, air, or over the beach at low tide to coastal destinations. The only railroad, from the port of Nouadhibou to Zouerate, is used primarily to transport iron ore to the coast. Travel by boat along the Senegal River is possible during the rainy season. No passenger service by ship exists along the Atlantic coast.

Mauritania's road network includes the main north-south trunk line, which passes from Bir Moghrein through Atar and Akjoujt, and then south through Nouakchott to Rosso, on the Senegal border.

Another paved road extends east from Nouakchott to Nema, close to the Malian border, but large sections of the roadway have badly deteriorated. Other paved roads go into Boghe and Kaedi along the river. The rest of Mauritania's roads are unpaved. Because of deep, drifting sand, interior roads (both paved and unpaved) are only regularly passable in four-wheel-drive vehicles. Even paved roads may be in such poor condition that four-wheel-drive vehicles forge parallel tracks over the desert. Many roads in the south along the Senegal River are flooded during the July-September rainy season, when normally dry watercourses, called marigots, often flood and impede travel. No road connects Nouakchott with Mauritania's business capital and port, Nouadhibou, but four-wheel-drive vehicles and heavy trucks ply the beach between the two cities during low tide.

Vehicular border crossings to Senegal can be made via the ferry at Rosso and by land over the Diama Dam to St. Louis, Senegal. Other crossing points at N'Diogo, Diana, Jerd El Mohguen, Tekane, Lekseiba, Boghe, M'Bagne, Kaedi, Tifounde Cive, Maghama, and Goraye are made in pirogues, small boats plying the river, but not capable of taking cars. During the rainy

season, the dam is not recommended, as heavy mud makes the road impassable.

The government-owned airline, Air Mauritania, provides weekly service to most regional capitals; twice daily service to Nouadhibou; twice weekly flights to Dakar; and weekly flights to Las Palmas, Grand Canaries, and Casablanca. Air Afrique, Air France, and Sabena Airlines fly direct between Paris or Brussels and Nouakchott four times weekly, and Nouakchott usually has frequent direct flights to Dakar, only 1 hour away. Air Afrique has direct flights five times weekly from Dakar to New York. During sandstorms, the Nouakchott airport occasionally closes, and certain airlines decline to land.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service exists between Nouakchott and most regional capitals, and Nouakchott has direct-dial international long-distance service. However, it is not possible to contact the international access numbers for commercial operators such as AT&T, Sprint, or MCI. It is also not possible to dial 800 numbers directly from Mauritania. It is less expensive to call Nouakchott from the U.S. than vice-versa. Telephone and telex facilities operate 24 hours daily.

Radio and TV

The radio station in Nouakchott broadcasts music, news, and commentary, mostly in Arabic, but also in French, and several African languages. Separate government-run radio stations exist in Boghe and Nouadhibou. Radio France International (RFI) broadcasts 24 hours a day and is available on the FM band. Shortwave reception is usually good.

Mauritanian TV service is limited to evening hours and includes news in French and Arabic, a few imported TV series dubbed in Arabic and French, as well as some Arabic music programs. On clear nights, Senegalese TV can be picked up in Nouakchott. Both Senegal and

Mauritania use the SECAM (European) system, which is incompatible with U.S. system sets.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Government of Mauritania publishes a daily newspaper in French and Arabic editions. French paperbacks, newspapers, and periodicals are available from vendors and in shops. There are about a dozen independent weekly Mauritanian papers published in French and Arabic.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local medical facilities are limited. The single government-run hospital in Nouakchott, staffed by Mauritanian and expatriate physicians, is used only in the case of life-threatening emergencies. Nursing care and hygiene do not meet U.S. standards. A few Mauritanian and expatriate physicians have private practices or clinics.

Bring prescription medicines taken regularly (such as those for high blood pressure, skin problems, hormone replacement, etc.). Although many pharmacies stock French drugs, supplies are not reliable, and exact duplicates of American prescriptions are unobtainable.

Home pharmaceutical items such as cold remedies, home first-aid kit items, digestive aids, eye washes, sunscreens, and insect repellents should be brought in ample supply.

A local ophthalmologist has modern equipment, and an optician is available, but bring extra pairs of prescription glasses. Many people have trouble with contact lenses in Nouakchott because of dust and the dry climate. Several pairs of sunglasses are also recommended.

Dental facilities are limited. Expatriates rarely use a local dentist, and the most exceptional cases are referred to Dakar or Europe. However, a very well-trained dentist just opened a practice in Nouakchott

and has been judged reliable and safe. Complete all routine dental work before arrival. Orthodontia is available in Dakar, but the French system used by orthodontists there is not compatible with U.S. practices.

Community Health

Public health measures in Nouakchott are limited. Personal hygienic standards are low, and household trash often is thrown in the streets and vacant lots. Most illnesses are related to bacteria spread by Mauritania's prodigious fly population, contaminated tap-water, or improper food handling. The desert climate of Nouakchott is healthier than that of tropical regions, but polio, typhoid fever, hepatitis, tuberculosis, malaria, meningitis, and a variety of parasitic illnesses are endemic.

Preventive Measures

Because medical facilities are limited, those assigned to Nouakchott must place a high priority on the prevention of illness and maintenance of good health. Health promotion measures include keeping immunizations current; proper treatment of food, water, and personal environment; maintaining good nutrition; and paying close attention to your need for exercise, rest, and relaxation.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

An entry visa is required for all Americans traveling to Mauritania. Proof of current vaccination, or a stamp in your World Health Organization (WHO) card, for cholera and yellow fever also are needed. Arriving travelers not holding diplomatic passports should fill out a currency declaration form at the entry port and retain this form until time of departure in order to facilitate exit formalities.

Rabies is prevalent in Mauritania. All dogs and cats must have a valid

health certificate showing current rabies inoculation.

The local currency is the ouguiya (UM), valued in December 2000 at about 251=\$1.00. Mauritania uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May 25 Africa Day
 - Nov. 28 Mauritanian Independence Day
 - Hijra New Year*
 - Id al-Adah/Tabaski*
 - Ramadan*
 - Id al-Fitr/Korite*
 - Mawlid an Nabi*
 - Lailat al Kadr*
- *variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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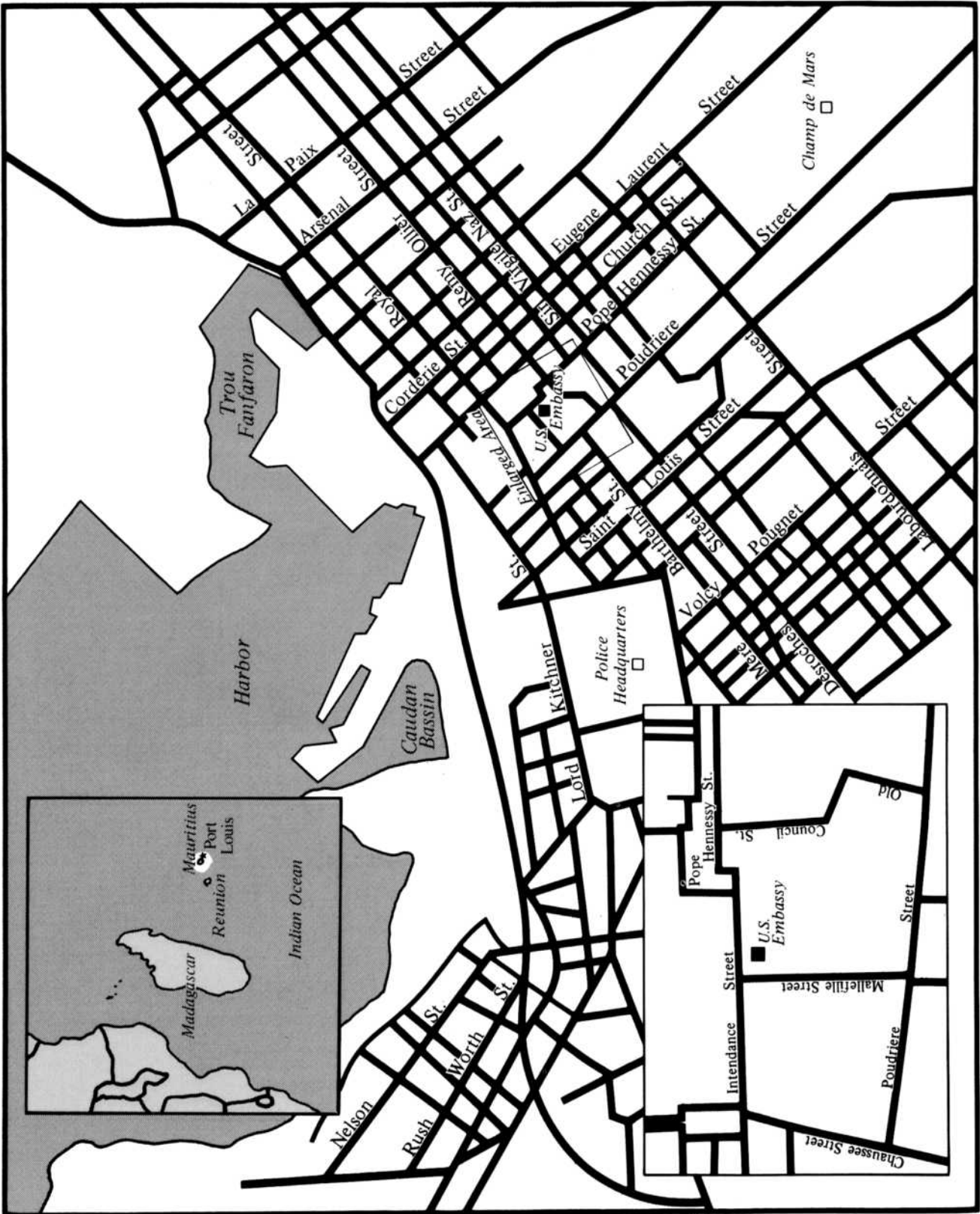
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Port Louis, Mauritius

MAURITIUS

Major City:

Port Louis, Curepipe

Other Cities:

Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, Mahébourg, Pamplemousses, Quatre Bornes, Vacoas-Phoenix

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Although comparable to the neighboring island of Madagascar, the country of **MAURITIUS** defies precise classification. It is not African, although it lies close to that continent and seeks regional ties with it—nor can the island be considered Asian, notwithstanding the obvious Indian and Chinese influence. And, despite more than 300 years of European colonial domination, Mauritius is definitely not European.

When Portuguese navigators first visited Mauritius in the 15th century, they found the island completely uninhabited. The Dutch came during the 17th century and named it for Prince Maurice of Nas-

sau. The French renamed the island Île de France after settling here in 1715, and it became an important stop on the way to India. The French also introduced sugarcane cultivation, importing African slaves to work on the plantations. After the British captured the island in 1810, its Dutch name was restored, and laborers were brought from India.

Unlike Madagascar, no ethnic group is indigenous to the island. The ancestors of the present inhabitants, therefore, considered themselves to be Franco-, Indo-, Anglo-, or Sino-Mauritians. Today Mauritius remains a unique blend of many cultures.

MAJOR CITIES

Port Louis

Port Louis, capital of Mauritius and its largest city, lies at sea level on the northwestern coast, within a semicircle of mountains. It is one of the oldest towns on the island, and the center of industry and trade.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the French, Dutch, and British vied for Mauritius as a port of call. After the French East India Company

took possession in 1715, a settlement was established at Port Louis, which was named for the French king, Louis XIV. It served as an important naval base for French operations against the British.

Since the 18th century, Port Louis harbor has been the center of commercial activity. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, however, considerably reduced the importance of Mauritius' position on the trade route around the Cape of Good Hope. When the Suez Canal was closed between 1967 and 1975, the harbor of Port Louis was again heavily used. In 1974, more than 1,200 ships were loaded and unloaded in Port Louis, compared to an average of 700 a year before the canal was closed. Since World War II, Mauritius has become a communications center on the air route between Australia and South Africa.

About 165,000 people live in Port Louis. In the late 1860s, malaria hit the low-lying areas and was responsible for the town's decline and the exodus of its wealthier inhabitants to the uplands. Although malaria has now been eradicated, Europeans and foreigners continue to live in the residential areas surrounding the Curepipe Plateau.

Port Louis has a new Legislative Assembly building and a government center flanking its stately 18th-century Government House. A university, founded in 1965, is also located here in the capital.

Education

Almost all Mauritian educational institutions follow British lines, except for the French Government-supported Labourdonnais Lycée and Colleges. Primary education (grades one through six, or up to age 11 or 12) and secondary education (to completion of exams) are distinctly divided.

Pupils earn ordinary-level (equivalent to the U.S. high school diploma) and advanced-level (college preparatory) Cambridge School certificates. The official language of instruction is English, and most textbooks are printed in the United Kingdom. In actuality, however, a large part of classroom instruction and explanation is in French/Creole, the common language of most Mauritians.

For primary-school children, the Catholic-run Loreto Convent Schools, located at various places on the island, are popular and offer primarily English-language instruction. The small, nondenominational Alexandra House School in Vacoas more closely resembles an English grammar school; resident Americans have used Alexandra House frequently, and have found that the small classes and lack of spoken Creole allow an easier environment in which U.S. children can adjust.

Boys of secondary-school age attend Royal College (Curepipe and Port Louis), St. Esprit in Quatre Bornes, and St. Joseph's in Curepipe, all of which have good academic reputations. St. Esprit is Catholic, and Royal College is Mauritian administered. For girls, several Loreto Convent Schools and Queen Elizabeth College in Rose Hill are available; all have good standards and are considered the best of their type on the island.

Facilities at these schools are adequate, but not modern. Books and materials are either available at the schools or can be purchased locally. Uniforms, required at all except the French school, are available locally at reasonable prices. Physical education and other special interest classes are available. Few, if any, schools on the island have buses or lunchrooms.

Generally, U.S. children with experience in only English-language environments have been able to adjust to the Mauritian system of education. The fact that French and Creole are widely spoken in the schools requires a period of adjustment, but also presents an excellent opportunity to experience new languages.

Examination results on the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Cambridge exams among the island's school population are low (50 percent with passing scores). This may be attributed to overcrowding and a lack of well-trained teachers. Although the standard of education in Mauritius has declined in recent years, it is still sufficiently high to allow equivalent transfers to most other school systems. To compensate for deficiencies, students can easily arrange for private tutoring for a nominal fee. The Cambridge and baccalaureate certificates are recognized worldwide.

Recreation

Few places in the world offer more beautiful beaches or better opportunities for swimming. There is no danger from sharks in most areas, since the island is largely surrounded by a coral reef which encloses lagoons of brilliant, clear blue water. Mauritius is known as a skin diver's paradise; the variety of its underwater life is unparalleled. The sea is exceptionally rich in fauna and in historic shipwrecks. Collectors will discover many rare species of seashells found only in Mauritius. Surfing is popular at Tamarin Bay on the west coast, where Indian Ocean swells break on one of the island's most beautiful sandy beaches. Facilities for water-

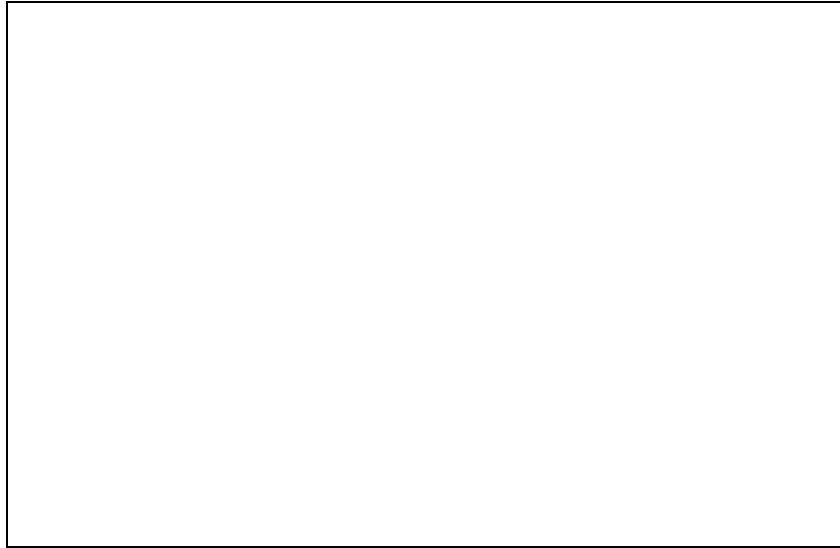
skiing are available at reasonable prices at all resort hotels on the bay. Many people own their own boats and equipment. Good swimming and sports activities are offered by beach hotels, including La Pirogue, St. Geran, and the Touessrok, which has its own private island.

It is possible to fish with a rod and line almost anywhere on the island. Every coastal village has fishermen whose picturesque *pirogues* can be hired with motor or sail for a small fee. Several world records are held in Mauritius, and deep-sea boats based at Morne Brabant Hotel offer big-game fishing at reasonable prices. The private Morne Anglers' Club has its headquarters at Black River on the southwest side of the island. The Grand Baie Yacht Club and the Morne Anglers' Club organize class sailing races. The visitor may rent dinghies at Le Morne and Le Chaland hotels. Both places have ample water and good sea breezes. *Pirogues* can be built inexpensively, and sailing craft are sometimes sold.

Mauritius has beautiful mountains and forests, perfect for hiking. The cliffs on the south coast of the island are magnificent, and offer seemingly endless opportunities for walking and picnicking.

There is an 18-hole golf course at the Gymkhana Club, the former British naval station, at Vacoas. Le Morne, St. Geran, and Trou-aux-Biches hotels also have courses in delightful settings close to the ocean. Tennis is played almost all year, and includes lawn tennis and hard-court championships. A squash court, swimming, and a clubhouse with bar and dining room are available at the Gymkhana Club.

The horse racing season lasts from May to October. The Mauritius Turf Club, founded in 1812, is the oldest racing club south of the equator. Local race horses have been imported from the U.K., France, Australia, and South Africa; stables are reinforced by new arrivals every year.



Riding instruction (in French) is available at Club Hippique d'Île Maurice in Floreal. Jumping events are held here several times a year. Riding dress requires jodhpurs or breeches, except that children ordinarily ride in jeans or slacks and a hunt cap. Le Chaland Hotel gives private riding lessons with English instruction.

Association football (soccer) is the national sport. Basketball, tennis, hockey, and volleyball are played in the schools and at various sports clubs on the island.

The island has many beautiful gardens with statues of Mauritians renowned for their political and literary achievements. Some of the most spectacular scenery is on the southern coast. It is pleasant to drive along the coastal road and stop to dine or swim at either Le Morne Hotel on the southwest coast or Le Chaland on the southeast. At La Nicoliere reservoir, on the far side of Long Mountain, there is a view of the entire north and east coastline and its many small, picturesque fishing villages. Europe, Australia, or Africa are only hours away by regularly scheduled flights, but fares are expensive.

The Mauritius Institute Museum is located just behind the docks in Port

Louis. It has a small collection on natural history which describes the zoology and geology of the region, including the dodo bird, last seen alive on the island in 1681. The Sugar Institute, where important world sugar research is conducted, is just outside of the capital, as is the Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Hindu culture, an endowment of the Indian Government.

Lists of hotels and their rates may be obtained through the Mauritius Government Tourist Office, Cerné House, La Chaussée, Port Louis, Mauritius. Arrangements for visits to sugar plantations and mills, and information on museums are available here.

Other possibilities for exploring the island include visits to Casela Bird Park, in the southwest, with its 142 species of birds and its lovely scenery; the aquarium in the north, near the Trou-aux-Biches Hotel; and the volcano at Trou aux Cerfs on the central plateau.

Mauritius has a few good restaurants and nightclubs. The resort hotels have bars and bands, and there is dancing at least once a week. Hotels show old English-language movies on a rotating schedule, and a few movie theaters show French-language films, although

these rarely are dubbed in English. The Gymkhana Club, however, does have English or American films from time to time. Several amateur theater clubs offer occasional productions, and dances and balls for charitable purposes are held frequently. Curepipe and a number of the resort hotels have casinos.

For the most part, social entertaining is done in the home. The few organized activities center around private clubs, where membership can be obtained without difficulty. Dues are reasonable, and no particular dress restrictions are imposed, except that whites are preferred for tennis and English saddles and attire are used for riding.

Curepipe

Curepipe is a commercial town and health resort, about 15 miles up the central plateau from Port Louis. Among its many attractions are the municipal gardens; several interesting colonial buildings; casinos; and an extinct volcano at Trou aux Cerfs, just outside of town. The current population of Curepipe is close to 74,200.

The Hotel Continental, rising above a street-level arcade of shops, is spacious and quiet, and one of the popular spots for foreigners in the city. Most social activity, however, centers around private clubs or the home. Minibus tours of the countryside can be arranged in Curepipe; a 50-mile trip southward through Souillac and Rose Hill, with side trips on foot and by taxi, is quite inexpensive.

Education

The Lycée Labourdonnais, a French Government-supported primary school (kindergarten through grade five), follows the French educational system. All instruction is in that language. Labourdonnais maintains high standards and is an excellent school for children who either speak, or wish to learn, French.



Street scene in Curepipe, Mauritius

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

Labourdonnais College is the secondary division of the French school, and offers the baccalaureate certificate, which is equivalent to, or higher than, a high school diploma. The school is coeducational, of high standard, and all classes and books are in French.

St. Joseph's College and Royal College are boys' schools for secondary-level students. St. Joseph's is administered by the Catholic Brothers of Ireland, who also run schools in the U.S. under the name of Christian Brothers. Teaching standards at both institutions are good.

OTHER CITIES

BEAU BASSIN-ROSE HILL, with a population of approximately 94,000, is the second largest settlement in Mauritius. Beau Bassin and Rose Hill were once separate communities, but merged several years ago. The town is a marketing and shopping center and is the home of the British Council Library.

MAHÉBOURG (population approximately 14,000) lies on the southeast coast of the island, diametrically across from Port Louis. Once the main port, Mahébourg is of interest to those who enjoy sailing

ships. The Historical Museum, housed in an old mansion, is also located here; visits are free, but donations are requested.

PAMPLEMOUSSES is a town 20 miles northeast of Port Louis, known for its beautiful Royal Botanical Gardens. The gardens were founded in 1768 by Pierre Poivre, a pirate, who brought spice trees such as cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg to the island from the East Indies. There are also several varieties of palms and water lilies—500 woody plant species in all—and animals such as deer and tortoise.

QUATRE BORNES, with a population of about 71,000 (2000 estimate) is an independently administered city in the western highlands of Mauritius, nine miles from the capital. The city's French name, meaning Four Boundaries, comes from the stones that once marked the limits of four sugar estates in the area. Sugarcane is still a major crop here. A middle-class, fast-growing, urban city, Quatre Bornes has a large hospital and surfaced roads. Its municipal infrastructure includes a town council.

Located roughly 10 miles south of Port Louis, **VACOAS-PHOENIX** were two separate villages until

they merged in 1963. The town has several small industries such as vegetable canning, beer brewing, and garment manufacturing. Sugarcane and vegetables are grown in areas surrounding Vacoas-Phoenix and are often sold here. A major highway links Vacoas-Phoenix and Port Louis. The estimated population in 2000 was approximately 91,200.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The beautiful island of Mauritius, almost completely surrounded by coral reefs, lies in the southwest Indian Ocean just within the Tropic of Capricorn, about 1,250 miles from the African coast. Of volcanic origin, it is about 40 miles long and 30 miles wide, with an area of 720 square miles. In the center, an extensive plateau rises to a level of some 1,900 feet. Three mountain ranges border the central tableland.

Mauritius has a maritime climate, with a slight difference between tropical summer and subtropical winter. In contrast, the coastal areas are warm and dry, while cool and rainy weather prevails inland. Humidity is high, and the annual rainfall along the western slopes of the central plateau totals nearly 200 inches. The rainy and dry seasons are not well-defined, and the vegetation remains green throughout the year. Mildew is a year-round problem, particularly in summer. Cyclones threaten between November and April.

Population

The island's population is estimated at slightly more than one million. It is one of the most densely populated agricultural areas in the world, with 1,597 persons per square mile (2000 estimate). The population growth rate of about three percent a year in the early 1960s has declined, and

was 0.88 percent in 2001. 26 percent of the total population is under 15. The labor force was approximately 514,000. With some encouragement from the government, emigration from Mauritius is increasing. Job opportunities in Arab countries also are attracting more Mauritian workers each year.

The ethnic composition of Mauritius resulted from the historical needs of the sugar industry, which dominates the local economy. Some 27 percent of the people are Creole—descendants of Europeans and African slaves who were the first to exploit the island’s potential. The Creoles are mainly clerical, commercial, and professional workers, and are usually urban or coastal dwellers. Indo-Mauritians now comprise 68 percent of the population; they are the descendants of indentured Indian labor brought to Mauritius to work in the sugar fields after slavery was abolished in 1833. They live mostly in the countryside and are still the main labor source in the sugar industry. Most Muslim Indians have become traders and industrial workers. About three percent of the population are Chinese, a group primarily engaged in retail trade. The 20,000 whites, nearly all Franco-Mauritian, are the elite. They own most of the sugar estates and many of the large commercial firms. Despite these various cultural backgrounds, the island retains a distinctly French cultural flavor, reflecting 18th-century French rule.

Government

After 158 years as a crown colony, Mauritius became an independent country within the Commonwealth on March 12, 1968.

The cabinet system was adopted in 1957, and universal adult suffrage was introduced two years later. For electoral purposes, the country is divided into 21 constituencies which elect a total of 62 members to the National Assembly (plus up to eight “best losers” to help maintain the communal balance). The Council of Ministers, presided over by the

prime minister, is the supreme policy-making body and is responsible to the Assembly. In 19992, Mauritius became a republic. Acting president is Ariranga Govidasamy Pillay and Anerood Jugnauth is the prime minister.

Mauritius is a member of the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations. It maintains diplomatic relations with 57 countries, including the following which maintain resident embassies in or near Port Louis: Australia, the People’s Republic of China, Egypt, France, India, Korea, Madagascar, Pakistan, the U.K., the U.S., and the former U.S.S.R.

The flag of Mauritius consists of red, blue, yellow, and green horizontal divisions.

Arts, Science, Education

An interest in arts and letters has existed in Mauritius since the 18th century. The island has produced talented poets and novelists, and the work of one historian is recognized as authoritative throughout the world. As early as the 18th century, actors from France performed plays in Port Louis. Today, although overseas theater and opera troupes come here infrequently, many islanders attend high-standard performances given by local amateur drama groups. Lectures, art exhibits, and concerts of varying quality are other activities which give Mauritius a unique flavor of both Eastern and Western culture in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

Representative and abstract painting flourishes; local authorities provide art courses to initiate interested young people. The island has a musical society and several active historical societies. The Mauritius Archives is one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. The Mauritius Institute, founded in 1880, comprises a natural history museum, public library, small art gallery, and historical museum at Mahébourg.

Mauritius’ efficient Sugar Industry Research Institute is a world-acclaimed organization providing improved varieties of cane. It also pursues research on fertilizers, herbicides, pest and disease control, irrigation practices, and sugar technology.

Demands are high for widespread, free primary and secondary education. Literacy was estimated at approximately 94 percent and, although education is not compulsory, about 95 percent of children of primary school age attended schools. Mauritius maintains an Industrial Trade Training Centre; the College of Education, which trains primary school teachers; and the Institute of Education, which prepares teachers for secondary schools. The University of Mauritius is concerned with agriculture, technology, education, and administration, and currently is developing its curriculum and student body. Most Mauritians obtain their university degrees in the United Kingdom, France, India, or the United States.

Commerce and Industry

The Mauritian economy depends heavily on the sugar industry. Sugar grows on 90 percent of the arable land and accounts for about 25 percent of export earnings. The island produces from 500,000 to 700,000 tons of sugar annually. As an associate member of the European Community (EC), Mauritius has an annual export quota of about 500,000 metric tons to the EC countries at a guaranteed price.

Because of the island’s vulnerability to cyclones, nonsugar agriculture (vegetables and fruit) is small; the country imports most of its daily food requirements. However, the government has a determined policy of diversifying agriculture to reverse traditional dependence on exported sugar and imported food.

To diversify the economy and create jobs, Mauritius launched, in the

early 1970s, the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) scheme for firms manufacturing exclusively for export. With the establishment of the EPZ, the manufacturing sector (excluding sugar milling) has greatly increased its economic importance. About 29 percent of recorded employment is in the manufacturing establishments. EPZ firms concentrate on textile products, especially knitwear; Mauritius is currently the world's third largest exporter of knitwear.

Tourism also developed rapidly during the 1970s to become the island's third-largest source of foreign exchange earnings by the end of the decade, drawing almost half of its visitors from Europe. More than 250,000 tourists visit Mauritius each year.

The bulk of Mauritian imports consists of food, petroleum products, machinery and transport equipment, chemicals and fertilizers, cement, iron and steel, and crude vegetable oil. The imports come mainly from EC countries, South Africa, the U.K., and the U.S., except petroleum products, which are brought from Bahrain and Kuwait.

The economy suffered in the 1980's because of low world sugar prices. The economy has experienced high growth, averaging 6 percent, since.

The Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry is located at 3 Royal St., Port Louis; telephone: 2083301; telex: 4277; FAX: 2080076.

Transportation

Regular flights operate to and from Europe, eastern and southern Africa, India, and Australia. Schedules change frequently, however, and airline offices should be consulted for current information. Occasional passenger ships stop at Mauritius on cruises, and some cargo ships carry passengers to Africa and Australia.

The island has neither railroads nor streetcars, and buses are crowded

and slow. Local taxi service is generally safe and adequate. Taxis are not metered, but fares are supposedly based on mileage, using the odometer as a gauge. Overcharges can be avoided by agreeing on a price beforehand.

The roads in Mauritius are usually paved, but not well maintained. In 1989, the World Bank approved a loan of \$30 million for the resurfacing of 110 miles (175 kilometers) of roadway. Driving can be hazardous because of pedestrians, carts, and animals moving along the sides of narrow roads, and the recklessness of many drivers. Local driver's licenses will be issued to those with valid foreign permits. Liability insurance is required by law, and a discount is given with proof of a safe-driving record.

Communications

Telephone service is poor for most of the island. The beach resort hotels have telephones, and outlying police stations will deliver urgent messages. The international circuit is open on a 24-hour basis, but calls often take 15 to 30 minutes to place. Connections are good, and all calls are automatically person-to-person. Collect calls cannot be made or received.

Reliable worldwide telegraph service is available. International airmail between Mauritius and the U.S. takes five to 10 days, depending on destination, and the mail is neither restricted nor censored.

The Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) operates on medium-wave radio and one television band. It broadcasts in French, English, Hindi, and Chinese. English-language news is broadcast daily by TV and radio. Some English, American, and French TV films are aired, with many of the former two dubbed in French. TV sets can be purchased or rented inexpensively. Sets properly equipped with boosters or good antennas (available locally) can receive telecasts from the French overseas channel, RFO, on Réunion Island in the Indian Ocean; RFO

provides daily news coverage from Paris.

International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available at local newsstands within a few days of publication. No local press is written exclusively in English. The chief French-language dailies print mostly local news and advertising; they do, however, cover some international news, and a few articles are in English. Reuters and Agence France Press news bulletins are received by the U.S. Embassy in Port Louis.

Health

Private medical facilities in Mauritius are generally adequate for routine cases, although they do not measure up to U.S. standards of efficiency, organization, or sophistication of equipment. Doctors and surgeons are capable of coping with emergencies; unfortunately, however, inadequate nursing care and staff sometimes make the system uncertain.

The three large, government-owned and -operated hospitals have satisfactory equipment and personnel, but are unpopular because of overcrowding (medical care is free for all Mauritians). Although the Ramgoolam Hospital, a government facility in the northern part of the island, has a basic intensive-care unit, it is considered too far from most American residences in the Floreal/Vacoas plateau region.

Most physicians have been trained in Europe and India. Many are government doctors with private practices in their specialties. In general, local physicians are well trained, but their efficiency is often hampered by inadequately trained support personnel, unavailable strategic equipment and supplies, heavy patient loads, and lack of in-country instruction to stay abreast of medical advances and technology. Cultural dissimilarities also account for differing attitudes toward patient care, devotion to duty, and other Hippocratic-oath

standards normally expected by Americans.

Dental service is somewhat expensive. As in the case of physicians, some dentists may be out of touch with modern equipment and dental practices, and their care is not up to U.S. standards. They should be selected with discrimination. Although Mauritius itself has no orthodontist, a good one is in practice on Réunion Island. Long delays often are experienced in trying to arrange dental appointments.

Pharmacies are numerous and fairly well stocked. However, most brands of medicines are European-manufactured and may be unfamiliar to Americans. Prices are reasonable. All main towns have several pharmacies; a few are open on Sundays and local holidays.

Mauritius has no serious endemic diseases or health hazards. Except for an occasional bout of dysentery or influenza, most resident Americans find the island healthful. The constant high humidity may, however, affect persons with arthritic conditions. Malaria suppressants are recommended for all residents, especially those who live near the coast. Hay fever and sinusitis sufferers are affected during July and August when the sugarcane is in flower.

Parasites and dysentery are common, but usually can be prevented by careful preparation and storage of food, the boiling of drinking water, and the use of patent medicines. Gamma globulin and tetanus inoculations are recommended before arrival. While infectious hepatitis, poliomyelitis, and typhoid and paratyphoid fever occur intermittently, they can be countered by immunizations at regular intervals.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Travel to Mauritius from the U.S. is by two basic alternate routes. The

first is via Europe, the other via the South Atlantic and South Africa. Planes arrive daily. The ocean port of entry is Port Louis.

American citizens do not need visas to enter Mauritius, but valid immunization certificates are required. In countries where Mauritius does not maintain an embassy, visas may be obtained through British consular offices.

Pets are allowed to enter Mauritius only if accompanied by import permits; applications are to be made beforehand to the Veterinary Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Le Réduit. Dogs and cats are required to undergo six months' quarantine in government kennels from the date of their arrival, and all expenses are charged to the owner. During this period, only adult owners may check on their animals, and at fixed hours. The quarantine kennels, at Le Réduit, about seven miles from downtown Port Louis, are clean and modern, and have a government veterinarian in daily attendance.

The time in Mauritius is Greenwich Mean Time plus four.

The unit of currency is the Mauritian *rupee* (Re, plural Rs), which is divided into 100 cents. Branches of Citibank N.A. and Barclays Bank International are located in Port Louis.

Mauritius uses the English system of weights and measures. Gasoline is sold by the imperial gallon.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 & 2 New Year's Day
- Jan/Feb. Chinese New Year & Spring Festival*
- Jan/Feb. Thaipoozam Cavadee*
- Feb/Mar. Maha Shivaratree*
- Mar. 12 Independence Day
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*

- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Ougadi*
- May 1 Labor Day
- Aug/Sept. Ganesh Chaturthi*
- Sept 9. Father Leval Day
- Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
- Oct/Nov. Divali*
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Id al-Adha*
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Bowman, Larry W. *Mauritius: Democracy and Development in the Indian Ocean*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991.
- Chandrasekhar, S. *The Population of Mauritius*. La Jolla, CA: Population Review Books, 1990.
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- Selvon, Sydney. *Historical Dictionary of Mauritius*. 2nd ed. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991.
- Willcox, Robert. *Mauritius, Reunion & the Seychelles: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1989.



Rabat, Morocco

MOROCCO

Kingdom of Morocco

Major Cities:

Rabat, Casablanca, Tangier, Marrakech, Fez, Meknès, Oujda

Other Cities:

Agadir, Ceuta, El Jadida, Kenitra, Safi, Tétouan

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Morocco. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Morocco has been called "a cold country with a hot sun." The mild, semitropical climate on the northern and western coastal areas is separated by mountain ranges from a desert climate to the east and south. Most people live west of the mountain chains which protect them from the Sahara Desert. In the harsher south the population is sparse, concentrated in scattered oases along the Draa and Souss Rivers.

Africa's closest approach to Europe, Morocco lies some 20 miles away across the Strait of Gibraltar. Twice, it was the stage for invasions of Europe—the Moorish assault on Spain in the eighth century and the

Allied assault on the continent in World War II. Today, jet airliners fly over plodding camel trains and farmers tilling with implements unchanged since Romans occupied and governed the land. Cities offer traditional medinas with narrow, cobblestone streets; the neighborhood mosques with their distinctive minarets; as well as modern skyscrapers, shopping malls and tree-lined boulevards. Morocco's industrious people produce not only some of the world's most ingenious handicrafts—from handwoven woolen carpets to ornate metalwork, from leathercraft to inlaid wooden objects, from hand-painted ceramics to gold and silver jewelry—they also are heavily involved in intensive agriculture and harvesting fish and other seafood from its offshore waters. Morocco's trees produce olives and cork. The country's largest export, however, is phosphates from the world's largest known deposit of this resource.

MAJOR CITIES

Rabat

Rabat, on the Atlantic coast of northern Africa, is about 280 feet above sea level. It rests on a bluff overlooking a small river, the Bou

Regreg. Sale, its sister city, lies opposite Rabat on the north side of the river. Rabat is located 172 miles south of Tangier, the gateway to Europe, and 60 miles north of Casablanca, the country's largest city, principal seaport, and industrial center. Rabat has two main seasons—short, rainy winter and a long, dry summer—separated by brief transitional seasons. Temperatures range from an average minimum of 46°F in January to an average maximum of 81.5°F in August. Annual rainfall averages 21 inches. Rabat's climate is more moderate than that of Washington, D.C.

Rabat reflects the diversity of cultures that characterizes Morocco. All corners of the country are represented in its population which, including Sale, stretching from Tangier to the Sahara Desert. Contrasts of Arabic and Western (especially French) culture are sharply reflected in the Moroccan capital. European-style villas, shops, apartments, and tree-lined boulevards extend over much of the city. On the avenues of the new section of the city, the latest fashions parade beside flowing robes, hoods, and veils of the Islamic tradition. The historic core of the city is its walled "medina" (old city), whose narrow, bustling cobblestone streets have changed little over the past century. Forests, beaches, mountain resorts,

and legendary medieval cities with rich historical cultures, such as Fez and Marrakech, are all within easy distance of Rabat.

Many Rabatis speak Arabic and French well, and some are fluent in Spanish or other Western languages. For the leisure-time student of languages or cultural patterns, many opportunities for study exist. Learning French is worth the investment. The English-speaking community and facilities are simply too limited to be relied on for entertainment and recreational purposes.

Food

Nearly all fresh vegetables and fruits found in the U.S. are available in season in Rabat local markets. Moroccan shops sell imported canned goods at higher than U.S. prices. Domestic and imported goods such as dairy products, flour, rice, couscous olives and spices can be found in local supermarkets and markets. Local bakeries make excellent breads, pastries, cakes and other sweets. A wide variety of fresh fish is sold daily in the fish markets. Good quality beef, veal, chicken, rabbit and pork are available. Moroccan lamb, particularly is of excellent quality.

Some families occasionally drive to Ceuta or Melilla, the two Spanish enclaves on the northern coast, for shopping at several well-stocked supermarkets which carry a large selection of Spanish and other European products. As these territories offer duty-free prices, good values can be found there. Gasoline is approximately 2/3 the cost in Morocco, for example. Moreover, Spanish specialty items such as wines, fruit juices, cheeses, ham and pork products, certain vegetables unavailable in Morocco, and other items make the trip worthwhile. Ceuta is approximately 3-1/2 hour's drive from Rabat, or 1-1/2 hour's drive from Tangier.

Clothing

The type of clothing worn in Rabat and Casablanca is as in Washington, D.C. The Moroccan public dress

is much closer to European than to Middle Eastern customs but females dress more conservatively in public places. A "cold country with a hot sun," Moroccan temperatures drop sharply at night, both during summer and winter. Summer days are cooler than in Washington, D.C. Clothing can be ordered from the U.S. without difficulty from catalogs. Local tailors have been used with varying results, and varying prices. Some Mission staffers have located dressmakers which they recommend, individuals who can work with or without patterns. It is recommended, however, that dress fabrics be brought with you, since good locally available fabrics are imported and are either expensive or not to American tastes. Some residents have located suitable clothes and fabrics during visits to Europe.

American women, and families with teen-age daughters, should be aware that Morocco is an Islamic country where the position of women in society is very different from that in the U.S. In Morocco, women appearing in public outside the confines of the home must expect that they will attract attention of the country's males. Moroccan females learn to deal with this early in life and dress accordingly, in many cases by using the djellaba with its long sleeves and robe extending to the ankles. Moroccan women also arrange, whenever possible, to walk the city's streets accompanied by a friend rather than alone. They also learn to develop a thick skin to ignore the unsolicited male comments and suggestions that are inevitable in public.

Expatriate females who reside in Morocco, the young and even not-so-young, often are singled out even more for this uninvited attention. Comments or approaches usually are made in French. In the majority of cases, there is no danger or evil intent, but foreign women residing in Morocco often are made uncomfortable by this behavior. In recognizing this simple fact of life, American women choose their

clothes with a view to avoiding any apparel which might seem potentially provocative or enticing. But regardless of choice of clothing, harassment of foreign females generally is unavoidable in Morocco. American female residents should do their best to ignore public comments and avoid reacting in any way.

Men: Prices of men's clothes are higher locally than in the U.S. and there is not as much variety. Generally, it is recommended that clothing and shoes be acquired in the U.S. prior to arrival; ordering from a catalogue can fill needs as they arise.

It is recommended that men purchase a belt designed to carry money and passport which fits out of sight under the shirt or pants. These belts safeguard valuables during the inevitable visits to medinas and souks where crowded conditions favor the activities of pickpockets and petty thieves.

Women: In the evenings, women need a light wrap such as a woolen shawl or sweater, as Moroccan houses tend to remain chilly during winter months. Bring a good supply of sweaters, warm slippers, and bathrobes for the entire family. Long-sleeved dresses are also useful. Many women wear wool afternoon and cocktail dresses during winter. Bring a lightweight wool coat, a raincoat (with detachable liner), and umbrellas. Morocco produces many qualities of women's shoes, but styles and sizes may not fit American tastes. Imported shoes available on the local market are expensive. Women need cocktail, dinner, and evening apparel. Halter-type, sleeveless, or decollete women's fashions are no longer a curiosity (when worn indoors, not on public streets). Ready-made clothing (including children's clothes), women's lingerie, and many accessories can be bought locally. Selection is limited to European styles and prices are high by U.S. standards.

Children: Good quality American-style children's clothing is expensive if purchased locally.

Supplies and Services

Local pharmacies and stores stock a large assortment of locally produced and imported drugs and cosmetics at higher than U.S. prices.

Many hairdressers and barbershops in Rabat offer satisfactory service at prices lower than in the U.S. Manicure, pedicure and masseuse services are available at reasonable prices. Shoe repair is competent and cheap by U.S. standards. Drycleaning service is uneven; avoid purchasing items which must be drycleaned in favor of wash-and-wear fabrics. Repairs for French, Italian, Japanese, and German cars are more satisfactory, and cheaper than for American cars due to spare parts availability.

Domestic Help

Individual requirements vary depending on representational responsibilities, family size and ages of children. Another variable is whether staff are expected to live in, or work only during the day and commute from home. Not all people seeking employment as household staff speak French, and with the exception of the few who have worked for U.S. families before, few know English. Wages for household staff vary according to responsibilities and hours worked during the week. In 1999, a couple or small family hiring a cook/housekeeper could expect to pay DH 500-600 per 5-day work week, with overtime paid for duties after normal hours. Some single personnel hire maid service for 1 or 2 days per week.

Most residences with yards require at least part-time gardeners to assure the plants and lawn are well tended. Such part time help is easily obtainable. A gardener was earning DH 80-100 per day in 1999. Some families able to offer live-in facilities hire a man to be a combination gardener and night watchman. The employer is expected to furnish food and uniforms for household help. As the employer is legally liable for

medical bills incurred by employees due to accidents sustained on the job or going to and from work, it is recommended that liability insurance be purchased to cover such contingencies. The rate for this type of policy averages 1.5% -2% of the employee's annual wage.

Religious Activities

Religious services in Rabat are regularly celebrated at Protestant, Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish places of worship, as well as at the numerous Moslem mosques which dot the city. With the exception of the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca, entry to Moroccan mosques is prohibited to non-Moslems, but such visitors are welcome to stroll around outside these often ornate and beautiful structures to admire their architecture. Catholic services in local churches are held in French and Spanish, Protestant services in French and English. Jewish services are in Hebrew. In addition, an English-language non-denominational Protestant service is conducted each Sunday. The English-speaking Protestant community also conducts a Sunday school for children. An English-speaking Catholic priest hears confessions occasionally and says Mass in English every other Sunday. Catechism classes are conducted for elementary school students 1 hour a week.

Education

The Rabat American School Association operates the Rabat American School (RAS), a nonprofit organization, which is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and has received permission to offer the International Baccalaureate curriculum in grades 10-12. Located on an attractive campus covering several acres in the Agdal district and surrounded by a high wall, the school consists of several classroom blocks, administrative offices, science labs, a computer science center, an auditorium, cafeteria, athletic field, gymnasium, gymnastics room, locker rooms and swimming pool. RAS offers classes from nursery through grade 12.

For nursery school, a child must be 3 years of age by September 31 and toilet trained. Rabat also has an English language, parent-run, parent-sponsored nursery coop for 3 and 4-year olds, as well as a number of French language nursery schools.

The RAS curriculum for kindergarten through grade 12 is that of a quality, private school offering university preparatory coursework. Kindergarten, for example, is an academic program covering the full day where children are taught to read. French-language instruction is provided for each student; Arabic language is optional for other than Moroccan students for whom it is compulsory. Spanish also is offered as a foreign language.

Throughout the curriculum there is emphasis placed on learning about the geography, history, culture, religion and accomplishments of the host country. This is presented through special school programs, community service, athletic events and field trips to a variety of sites in Morocco.

Computer instruction is mandatory from grades 1-12. Four separate computer labs are available, the school has its own leased line and every student has access to e-mail. The school has a 14,000-volume library. Transportation by school vehicles is provided to and from school. In 1998, enrollment averaged 450 students, with an average class size of 16. American enrollment averaged 27%, Moroccan enrollment 32%, and 45 other nationalities made up the balance. The faculty of full and part time teachers consisted during the 97-98 school year of 26 U.S. citizens, 3 host country nationals and 26 individuals of other nationalities. Parent-teacher conferences are held regularly, and quarterly progress reports are issued for students above nursery through grade 12.

After school athletic activities, scouting, and other extracurricular offerings such as aerobics, Tae-kwan-do, ballet, choir, drama, computer club, or arts & crafts are

available, with late bus transportation provided. The school sponsors boy's and girl's basketball, soccer, volleyball, track and swim teams.

The school year begins the last week in August and ends in mid-June. The secondary education curriculum is based on the rigorous International Baccalaureate program, with heavy emphasis on mathematics, science and English. Students transferring into RAS, particularly at the secondary level, may find the adjustment difficult unless they have a solid grounding in academic subjects previously. The school will test such prospective students for placement and make recommendations if there are any deficiencies which need to be addressed.

In recent years, graduates of RAS have gained admission to superior North American universities such as Dartmouth, Yale, Harvard, Princeton, M.I.T., Duke and McGill (Canada). For further information, see the Department of Overseas Schools Summary School Information.

The French Cultural Mission operates a number of schools in Rabat at the elementary and secondary levels. Lycee Descartes, a large (3,500 students) coeducational institution, partly housed in a modern building and in several annexes throughout the city, has a solid reputation. Instruction is of high quality but all in French. English is taught as a foreign language. Admission requirements are fluency in French and/or having been enrolled previously in a French language school.

Special Educational Opportunities

Various cultural missions also offer language training, including the French Cultural Mission. All courses are offered at a moderate cost.

Sports

Spectator sports include soccer and polo. Morocco's principal cities host soccer games almost every weekend. Those who play golf or tennis

will find courses and courts in cities and towns throughout the country, and Morocco's pleasant climate allows play virtually the year around. In Rabat, many golfers avail themselves of the Royal Golf Dar-es-Salaam complex, with two 18-hole courses and one 9-hole course. Greens fees are DH 400 for 9 or 18 holes; caddy fees are DH 70 for 18 holes and DH 40 for 9 holes. You may rent golf carts for DH 300. Admission costs DH 400 (deducted from greens fees when playing golf). The golf club hosts a yearly Pro-Am golf tournament in the fall to which many professionals and ranking amateurs are invited. Royal Golf Dar-es-Salaam also offers tennis, a heated, Olympic-sized swimming pool, sauna bath, pro-shop, and clubhouse. Yearly membership costs DH 9,700 (single) or DH 12,000 (couple) for the first year; then DH 8,100 (single) and DH 10,400 (couple) a year; a child's membership costs DH 1,900 annually. Club members are exempt from entrance or golf fees. Daily nonmember fees for golf are DH 400. Mission personnel may pay for 6 months at a time.

One popular private club, the Riad Club, offers tennis, swimming, a playground for children, and a clubhouse with bar and restaurant. Rabat's yacht club offers an Olympic-sized pool, restaurant, bar, bathhouses, and tennis courts. Membership in the latter club is limited and mostly French, however, The Hilton Hotel offers memberships enabling families to use facilities which include: two swimming pools (one for children, one for adults), four clay tennis courts, a golf practice range, and an exercise room. Monthly dues, however, are steep at DH 1,500 for singles, DH 2,000 for couples, and DH 4,000 for family memberships.

Most of the Atlantic coast beaches have rough surf and strong, often dangerous currents. Moreover, in recent years water samples taken from beach areas near Rabat, Casablanca and Tangier indicate unsafe pollution levels. During hot summer weekends, hordes of local residents flock to the beaches such as Temara,

just south of Rabat, or Plage des Nations, a lovely beach just north of Sale. But regretfully, Moroccans have yet to recognize the need to protect their beautiful beach areas by not littering them with plastic bags and other cast-offs from their picnicking. Except in rare instances, trash receptacles are not to be found. Expatriate residents soon learn that driving a few extra miles to Skhirat, Bouznika or Mohammedia, all less populated areas located between Rabat and Casablanca, is worth the effort to enjoy a day at the beach. Other excellent beaches are available up and down the Atlantic coast or north to the shores of the Mediterranean.

Morocco is one of the few countries on the African continent which offers skiing during the winter months. Depending upon snowfall, the ski season may begin as early as December and run through the end of March. Closest to Rabat near Ifrane, approximately 3 hour's drive, are the ski areas of Michliffen and Djebel Hebri at an altitude of 6,500 feet. Michliffen is located on the slope of a mountain. Djebel Hebri includes a steep hill about 10 minutes beyond Michliffen. The Poma lift (300 yards) and baby Poma lift charges are very reasonable by U.S. standards. Djebel Hebri also has an easy hill for learning. Sleds may be rented and a snack bar is available.

The other area offering skiing is Oukaimeden, which is a 90-minute drive from Marrakech, and is reputed to have the best skiing in Morocco. Its facilities include a chair lift to 10,637 feet and intermediate and beginner slopes with T-Bars and Poma lifts. Ski equipment may be rented near the slopes, though quality of such equipment may not be up to U.S. standards.

Several private clubs and the Royal Golf Dar-es-Salaam offer private and group instruction in horseback riding at considerably less cost than in the U.S. Trout fishing can be found in many lakes and streams, but the nearest spot is about 60 miles from Rabat. A reservoir 15

miles from Rabat has provided some excellent fishing for large-mouth bass. (Fishing licenses are required for all inland fishing.) Fishermen also may try their luck at deep sea fishing or surf casting from the beach at many spots along the Atlantic or Mediterranean coasts; no license is required for ocean fishing. The reservoir mentioned above also attracts windsurfers. Devotees of this sport also will wish to visit Essaouira, five hours' drive south of Rabat, whose nearly constant onshore wind provides ideal conditions for windsurfing.

Hunters will find ample opportunity to hunt for game such as duck, partridge, quail, goose and dove. Hunts for wild boar, deer, and mountain goats can be arranged. Hunting licenses are required for all types of hunting. All shotguns must be registered. (See Firearms and Ammunition).

In recent years, a number of local tour companies have begun to offer group activities such as mountain bike tours, whitewater rafting in the Atlas Mountains, mountain climbing, hiking, and camel trekking in desert areas.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Rabat has a number of interesting cultural and historical sites which attract tourists from around the world. The Chellah, a former Roman settlement, stands on a bluff overlooking the Bou Regreg River below, and marks the site of the first population center in the Rabat-Sale area. There are traces that the Phoenicians may have settled this site as early as the 8th century B.C. Remains of the Roman forum can still be seen. Out towards the mouth of the Bou Regreg River where it meets the Atlantic stands a tiny fortress and what remains of the Kasbah of the Oudaia, founded around A.D.788. Its principal gateway, the Bab el Kasbah, is the most beautiful surviving in the Moorish world, and within its walls is a perfect Andalusian garden. The site houses a museum of Moroccan clothing, jew-

elry, and furniture, and an open-air tea room overlooking the river.

The Mausoleum and Mosque of Mohammed V provide a modern contrast to the columns of the uncompleted minaret of the Tour Hassan. The latter was begun in the 12th century by the Almohad ruler, Yacoub El Mansour. The Archeological Museum contains fascinating objects from prehistoric and Roman times. The medina (old city) itself is worth several hours, poking around the many shops selling everything from leather items from Fez, bronze chandeliers from Marrakech, or Berber jewelry from the south.

Within a day's drive of Rabat, you can wander through the ancient Roman ruins of Volubilis, or visit the casino and beaches of Mohammedia. A scenic drive into the foothills of the Atlas, lunch at Rommani, or a picnic in the Mamora cork forest along the Meknes road are pleasant diversions. Fez, about 110 miles from Rabat, offers a labyrinthine "souk," where metalworkers and pottery makers turn out handicrafts the same way that they have been doing it for five centuries. This famous city also is the site of the Karaouiyine University and Mosque, the latter originally founded in the 9th Century.

Visit Casablanca, a 1-hour drive, to take in the splendor of the Hassan II Mosque with the tallest minaret in the world; to sample the big city's Parisian boutiques, Italian, Lebanese, and other European grocery stores and patisseries; or to patronize one of the excellent seafood restaurants along the Corniche (seafront). View the Swiss village architecture of Ifrane, high in the Middle Atlas mountains, and spend some time in neighboring Azrou for both summer and winter sports. Marrakesh, less than five hours' drive from Rabat, is famous for the pinkish color of its buildings, its palm trees set against the backdrop of the High Atlas mountains looming up behind the city, its wonderful climate, and the infinite variety of handicrafts for sale in its famous

souk. Marrakech is also a good starting-off point for visits to the beginning of the Sahara Desert, trekking into the High Atlas Mountains, viewing the Berber settlements along oases and gorges of the south, or travelling west to the beach towns of Agadir and Essaouira.

The north of Morocco - where the strong Spanish influence continues to be felt - is also worth touring, whether it be to Tangier's medina, to Asilah for its beaches and seafood, to the Lixus Roman ruins near Larache, to Chaouen for a stay in a medieval style mountain village, to Tetaoun for its souk, or to the two Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, which offer a taste of Spain without leaving the continent.

Entertainment

Public entertainment is in French, Arabic, or Berber. The Very Little Theatre Group (an informal, English-speaking community organization) performs several times per year. French troupes occasionally present classical French plays, modern French dramas and comedies. Folklore attractions are presented from time to time. Cultural missions often sponsor concerts featuring touring artists and ballet and dance groups. Rabat's largest theater, the Mohammed V, offers occasional concerts, shows, performances or art exhibitions. In addition to several neighborhood theaters, many theaters show films in the central business district. Virtually all films, whether American, British or Italian, have French dialog dubbed in. Two theaters in the medina feature Arabic films, mostly Egyptian.

Rabat features many excellent restaurants, including a number offering international cuisine such as Japanese (Restaurant Fuji), Vietnamese (Le Mandarin, La Pagode), Italian (Pizzeria Reggio, La Mama), TexMex (El Rancho), and scores of Moroccan establishments where fresh seafood and French or Moroccan cuisine are specialties. U.S. franchise establishments such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut and Dairy



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Ornate arched entranceway to mosque, Casablanca, Morocco

Queen also are located in and around Rabat.

Social Activities

The American Women's Association of Rabat holds monthly meetings and sponsors a wide variety of activities, including an annual fund-raising event to benefit local charities and scholarships.

Along with the Moroccans, you may contribute your effort, skills and personal enthusiasm. Members of the royal family are occupied with and sponsor many of these charities, including the Union des Femmes, organized to promote women in the business world.

In 1998, Rabat had an active Boy Scout troop of about 10 members, ages 1 to 15. The troop included boys of several nationalities, but adhered to U.S. standards. The Rabat American School is the charter institution. Troop No. 241 was awarded the International Boy Scout Crest for exemplifying an "International Experience." In 1998, there were Cub Scout and Webelo groups, Brownies, Daisies and Junior Girl Scout programs as well. Of course, these groups are dependent upon sufficient adult support to organize and oversee activities.

In recent years, a co-ed slow-pitch softball league involving teams

made up of Americans, Moroccans, Japanese and other baseball enthusiasts has been organized for weekend play in Rabat. Typically, teams are drawn from the Marines, Embassy, USAID, Peace Corps, RAS, Hash House Harriers, diplomats and business representatives from Japan, and Moroccans who have taken an active interest in the game. For the younger set, a Little League baseball group organizes practices and games.

RAS is the site of regular volleyball games which mix local Moroccan players, Americans and other expatriates, as well.

Virtually every week, the Hash House Harriers stage their celebrated "race". People young and old of every nationality take part in this regular outdoor activity which gives participants an up-close look at Rabat and its hinterland, before gathering for the social hour which follows. Occasionally, the Harriers organize family travel to another part of Morocco for a weekend together which includes their usual run.

Casablanca

Casablanca is Morocco's economic, financial, industrial and demographic capital (population about 6 million) and the country's most important seaport. It is also a significant airline crossroads from the U.S., Europe, the Middle East and other African countries. Casablanca's broad boulevards, multi-story office buildings, bustling business districts, and relatively small medina (the ancient, walled old city) contrast sharply with the traditional imperial cities of Rabat, Fez, Meknes and Marrakech. Though Casablanca begins at sea level, several of its suburbs are considerably higher. Temperatures range between 46°F and 65°F in the rainy winter and between 65°F and 90°F in the humid summer. Humidity averages 75%. Rainfall averages 15-20 inches a year.

The modern city of Casablanca originates from the ancient Berber

hamlet called Anfa. The present city center was largely built during the French Protectorate in the first half of the 20th century, while extensive outlying areas have been constructed since independence in 1956. The most visible new landmark on the Casablanca skyline is the Hassan II Mosque, located on a promontory overlooking the Atlantic with its 200-meter-high minaret towering above the city. This magnificent building took 13 years to complete, with several thousand artisans working on it around the clock. Plans include building a conference center, library and other buildings to house businesses in this redeveloped area of the city.

Food

Markets and grocery stores abound in Casablanca; the Central Market and the Maarif offer the best quality and selection. Although the markets are open only in the morning, the grocery stores remain open well into the evening; in addition, several large American-style supermarkets and buyers' clubs are located in the city.

All fresh fruits and vegetables found in the U.S. are available seasonally. Most personnel buy poultry, meat and fish locally. Cuts of meat differ slightly from those in the U.S., but quality and variety are good. Pork, chicken, and beef are available at prices somewhat higher than in the U.S. Alcoholic beverages are available, although expensive when purchased on the local market. Moroccan wines, however, are plentiful and vary in quality from table wine to quite good vintages. Prices are reasonable by U.S. standards. Casablanca has an excellent selection of French pastry shops and Belgian chocolate shops; Moroccan breads and pastries are of good quality.

Clothing

Most purchase clothing either directly from the U.S. via catalog or while on vacation in Europe or the U.S. However, Casablanca has an increasing number of boutiques with adequate to very good apparel

and footwear, some of it imported. Casablanca currently has Morocco's only department store, Alpha 55, which has a clothing department. Clothes may also be purchased at the large supermarkets or price clubs mentioned above.

Casablanca's medina and Habbous district offer an excellent selection of Moroccan arts and handicrafts, everything from bronze metalwork to Berber carpets, to decorated ceramics and pottery. (Other major handicraft centers within the consular district are Marrakech, Safi, Essaouira and Ouarzazate.)

Many expatriates living in Casablanca take advantage of its antique shops, fairs and flea markets to hunt for that special Moroccan or European decorative item.

Transportation

In Casablanca, automobile service and repair facilities are more numerous than in other Moroccan cities. Buses and taxis are plentiful and inexpensive. There are numerous car rental agencies in Casablanca. Rates are more expensive and rental cars generally are older and less well maintained than those for hire in the U.S. or Europe.

Supplies and Services

Casablanca has many excellent hair stylists, beauty shops and shoe repair shops. Drycleaners are not of American or European standards; wash-and-wear is preferable to items requiring drycleaning. Local film processing using the latest technology to produce fast service is reliable and comparable in price with the U.S. Some employees, however, prefer to send film to the U.S. for processing. (For additional information on Clothing and Supplies and Services, see Rabat.)

Religious Activities

English-language services are available at the Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist, located near the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Casablanca, and weekly Catholic Mass alternates between the Cathedral and Maison St. Dominique. Several Catholic and Protes-

tant churches hold services in French and Spanish. Other places of worship include synagogues and Greek Orthodox Churches. Non-Moslems generally are not permitted to enter mosques in Morocco. An exception is the

Hassan II Mosque where visitors can view the magnificent ornate interior on guided tours for DH 100.

Education

Parents of pre-school age youngsters may enroll their children in the Casablanca American School (CAS), which offers nursery and kindergarten classes on a half day basis, or else choose one of a number of French language pre-schools in Casablanca. A third option is the George Washington Academy (GWA), inaugurated in 1998. The latter offers an American curriculum taught in a trilingual setting (40-45% English, 40-45% French and 10-20% Arabic). GWA offers pre-kindergarten through 8th grade education, with plans to expand to 12th grade in the future.

Tuition at the French language pre-schools generally has been less expensive than that charged by CAS; parents must pay this tuition charge themselves.

Other American children attend either CAS or one of the French Mission schools. CAS, which opened its impressive new campus in a suburb named "California" in September 1989 but which has been in operation since 1973, provides English-language, international education from nursery school through grade 12. Interested parents representing the corporate sector and the General founded the school, and it has been well-supported by the entire English-speaking community, as well as permanent residents of Morocco in Casablanca. The school year begins in early September/late August and runs through mid-June. Its walled campus contains a pre-school with 6 classrooms, administration building, large classroom building, two-level library, gymnasium, cafeteria and dining area, and sports field. Con-

struction is planned to begin in 2000 to provide another auditorium, an additional gymnasium, and more classroom space.

All local holidays and some American holidays are observed. The school is supported in part by a grant from the Department of State, and uses modern teaching methods and materials, maintaining high academic standards. It compares favorably to better American public and private schools. The International Baccalaureate program as well as an American high school diploma are offered. In 1999, enrollment stood at 478 students, representing over 30 nationalities. American students made up 9%, Moroccan students were 59%, and 32% came from other nations. Space limitations, particularly in the lowest grades, have meant that early applications for nondiplomatic families are highly recommended.

The school attempts to limit class size to 18 students per class, though CAS responds positively to requests that additional students be accepted from the corporate or diplomatic sectors. French language instruction is provided to all students; Arabic is optional except for Moroccan students for whom it is a compulsory subject. Computer instruction is introduced at an early age. Students can access e-mail through the school's computer lab.

The CAS faculty includes 64 full-time and 8 part-time staff members, including 34 from the U.S. Teachers are assisted by instructional aides in the lower grades as well as by several teaching interns.

CAS integrates the study of Morocco into its curriculum at all levels in order to build a better understanding of the host country. There are academic and athletic exchange programs with Moroccan counterparts; moreover, field trips and visitations promote an appreciation and understanding of the geography, history, language, religion and accomplishments of Morocco.

As the rigorous International Baccalaureate curriculum, beginning in middle school and continuing through high school, places heavy emphasis on mathematics, science and English, students transferring into CAS at the secondary level may find adjustment difficult without a solid grounding in previous academic work. The school will test all such prospective students for placement and make recommendations if there are any deficiencies which need to be addressed. Extremely limited resources are available for students with special needs. All students are mainstreamed into the normal academic programs if admitted to CAS. Parents of high-school-age students should consult with A/OS in the Department of State.

CAS graduates in recent years have gained admission to superior North American and European universities such as Duke, Penn, Stanford, Yale, Harvard, M.I.T., Cal Tech, Vassar, Williams, McGill (Canada), International School of Economics, (Rotterdam), London School of Economics, etc. Depending on the institution and IB examination results, some graduates may be given advanced standing or awarded credits at universities based on their IB degree.

After-school activities include a full range of sports for both boys and girls including volleyball, track and field, basketball, soccer, swimming and softball. Other extracurricular offerings are drama, art, choir, debate and yearbook clubs. Student councils are elected at both the lower school and upper school levels. A charity committee focuses CAS efforts at outreach into needy communities in Casablanca and its environs. On the academic side, the school regularly places students from grade 5 upwards, based on Scholastic Achievement Test results, to special summer programs for the academically gifted at Johns Hopkins, Duke University, Amherst and other U.S. higher institutions.

The French Mission system, another educational option, traditionally has many more applicants than places and therefore gives preference to students who have already studied in the French system. French-language fluency is essential. French school hours are longer (including some Saturday sessions) and discipline may be different for those accustomed to U.S. public schools. Class size could well be substantially larger than that at CAS. Graduates of the Lycee Lyautey in Casablanca possess the equivalent of a high school education plus 1 year of college credit, and may continue their education at French universities.

American college degrees or certificates cannot be obtained in Morocco, though Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane offers coursework in English according to a U.S.-based curriculum leading to undergraduate or graduate degrees.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Department-sponsored FSI language program teaches French and Arabic, depending on funding and community interest. The French Cultural Center also offers reasonably priced French or Arabic lessons. The American Language Center, an independent educational institution, is located in the downtown building which formerly housed the Consulate General. The center offers classes in English, French and Arabic. It also houses the American Bookstore which contains a modest assortment of English-language books.

Sports

The two golf clubs in the Casablanca area have a combined but limited membership for use of their facilities. One 9-hole course is located in the Anfa residential area of Casablanca near the principal officer's home; it also offers a restaurant, swimming pool, sauna, and tennis courts. The other, which has an 18-hole course, is about 20 miles from Casablanca, in Mohammedia. Casablanca has many tennis clubs.

(See Rabat Sports section on beaches, skiing, hiking, hunting, fishing, etc.) A long strip of clean beaches can be found a half hour's drive south of Casablanca in Dan Bonazza, including several private beaches which offer dining, shower and bathroom facilities. Many people enjoy saltwater fishing, and two yacht clubs offer boating and sailing. Surfing and windsurfing are available, but are not recommended for beginners. Recreation for children is limited, but small public parks, a zoo, two small amusement parks, and an aquarium are located in the city. Horses can be rented and excellent instruction is available for children at reasonable rates.

Long distance running is becoming increasingly popular. Employees from Rabat and Casablanca participate in the annual Marrakech International Marathon, as well as in many shorter races. Spectator events in Casablanca are held in the Mohammed V Stadium; weekend soccer matches are popular and draw huge crowds and considerable traffic congestion. The local newspapers offer coverage of sporting events.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Casablanca's consular district offers a wide variety of sights of both natural beauty and cultural importance. Marrakech, with lovely monuments and excellent restaurants, has a booming tourist industry, as does Agadir with its beautiful Atlantic beaches. Safi and Essaouira offer attractive ceramics and handicrafts as well as a less hurried pace, while Ouarzazate is the gateway to the Draa and Dades Valleys, and Zagora lies at the edge of the Sahara. Within a few hours' drive from Casablanca, one can admire beaches, forests, mountains, waterfalls and deserts. The major cities of Rabat, Fez, Meknes, Marrakech, and Tangier are all linked to Casablanca by excellent and inexpensive bus and rail service.

Entertainment

Casablanca offers a wealth of excellent restaurants, many of them

French. They can be found both in the major downtown hotel area and out on the Corniche overlooking the water, where diners take advantage of both the beautiful sight and an abundance of fresh seafood. Although there are creditable Moroccan restaurants as well, the best Moroccan cooking in Casablanca remains in private homes. Casablanca has many Lebanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Kosher, Italian, and Spanish restaurants.

In recent years, U.S. franchise establishments have entered the Moroccan market. Casablanca now boasts numerous well-known outlets such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Subway, Dairy Queen, Dunkin Donuts, Domino's Pizza and even a Schlotzky's Deli. Additionally, Casablanca offers innumerable cafes and ice cream parlors. Personnel at the Consulate General also travel frequently up and down the coast to enjoy the numerous fish and seafood restaurants in such towns as Mohammedia, El Jadida, and Oualidia. The latter is particularly well known for its cultivation of oysters.

Casablanca has a number of night clubs, jazz clubs and discotheques that typically attract the late night crowd. These are generally found along the city's Corniche waterfront area.

Cultural events are limited, but the foreign cultural centers, particularly the French and Italian, as well as the neighborhood cultural centers of Anfa, Maarif, and Ben M'sik, offer frequent concerts, lectures, painting exhibitions, and other cultural events. The Goethe Institute and the Spanish Cultural Center also offer a variety of programs. Casablanca's dozen cinemas offer mostly American films dubbed into French. Three or four showings are featured daily. The foreign cultural centers also show films in the original language with French subtitles. Teenagers participate in social events with their counterparts from the various high schools. The common language is French.

Few festivities take place in Casablanca proper, but there are occasional "moussems" and "fantasias" (colorful simulated charges by horsemen in full regalia, brandishing and firing weapons), and there are native folk dances in the Atlas Mountains. A National Museum and National Library are planned for the redevelopment area surrounding the Hassan II Mosque.

Newsstands carry primarily French and Arabic periodicals, but the International Herald Tribune, the European editions of Time and Newsweek, and The Economist are found readily. Several excellent French bookstores, some of which carry English language titles, are also available.

Shortwave reception is good. A quality shortwave set receives VOA, BBC, or other European broadcasts. Local radio and TV broadcasts are in French and Arabic. A multisystem TV is required for viewing these broadcasts. (See The Host Country, Radio and TV, for information regarding satellite TV)

Social Activities

The Churchill Club, located in the suburb of Ain Diab off the Corniche, stipulates that its members speak English on the premises. Membership is primarily English and American, with some French and Moroccans who wish to exercise their knowledge of English and socialize with native speakers. This club provides a means of getting acquainted with other members of the English-speaking community. The club offers dinner every Tuesday night, luncheons on Sundays, and limited food service during the week. Members are permitted to bring out-of-town visitors. Facilities include a bar, library, small wading pool, table tennis, and billiards. The club also sponsors dances, ethnic dinners and bridge tournaments. Both the American and British consuls general are ex officio members of the governing board.

The Casablanca Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS) presents several full length plays annually, as well as

numerous readings using the Churchill Club's facilities, but remaining a separate group. Casablanca's American International Women's Club membership is mostly non-American, although the club president must be a U.S. citizen. Working closely with many hospitals and schools, this group has an effective charity and development program which provides for the needy, and sponsors one annual fund raising event—the pre-Christmas bazaar. Besides monthly business meetings, the club sponsors afternoon bridge sessions and occasional outings. Many social clubs offer tennis, yachting, riding, and swimming. These clubs and the Royal Golf d'Anfa and Mohammedia provide good opportunities for meeting the local community of all nationalities.

Tangier

Strategically located facing the Strait of Gibraltar, Tangier is one of the oldest urban settlements in Morocco. It likely was founded as a trading post by the Phoenicians around 1100 B.C. and later was settled by Carthaginians and Romans before Arabs arrived in the 7th century A.D. Later, Tangier was fought over by Portuguese, Spanish and the English. From 1906 until Morocco's independence, Tangier existed apart from the rest of Morocco as an international port governed by European countries. It was during these five decades that the city gained a reputation for smuggling, intrigue and espionage. Various artists, writers, poets and eccentric expatriates were attracted to its pleasant climate and checked history. While the Moroccan government's successful efforts to clean Tangier of its most unsavory elements have altered the character of the city, its proximity to Europe and regular flow of tourists, its somewhat run-down 1930s architecture, its mixture of Berber, Arabic and European influences, and its still active cultural community, combine to make it a highly individual and interesting place.

With a population of nearly 800,000, Tangier is built around a sandy beach and extends up into the foothills of the Rif Mountains. The general topography is hilly and craggy, with scant vegetation in the summer dry season, and with a profusion of flowers and greenery in winter and spring. Average temperature in August, the hottest month, is 86°F. Particularly during the summer months, tourists descend upon the city, both from Morocco and the European continent, swelling the city's population and filling its many restaurants, hotels, apartments and cafes.

Tangier's winters, November to April, resemble those of San Francisco, chilly and rainy. January average temperature is around 63°F. Periods of rain can last for several days, however, and the resultant dampness coupled with barely adequate heating facilities in many homes require families to have on hand a good supply of warm clothing.

History

It is said that when the doves from Noah's Ark carried back leaves from Tangier signifying that the flood had receded, Noah exclaimed "Et T'heneja!" (the land has come), pronounced in *darija* Arabic, "Tanja."

The recorded history of Tangier begins with the arrival of the Phoenicians, whose lonely stone tombs still look out upon the sea that brought them here. Following a short epoch of Carthaginian occupation, the Romans took Tangier in the third century. By the eighth century, the Muslims had taken back the city which, with nearby Ksar Es-Seghir, became the base for their invasion of Iberia. The waning power of the Andalusian Muslims brought Portugal to the scene in 1471. Portugal ruled Tangier until the British received it in 1662, along with Bombay, as part of the dowry of the new wife of King Charles II, Catherine of Braganza, the Infanta of Portugal.

The British in Tangier were first led by Lord Sandwich. Morocco was, at

that time, ruled by one of its fiercest sultans, Moulay Ismail. His unending harassment of the British colony of Tangier, coupled with political and financial problems at home, caused the withdrawal of the British in 1681. They blew up much of the city as they left.

The first American official contacts with Morocco began in 1777, when the Sultan of Morocco accorded recognition to the maritime commerce of the fledgling United States. Thus, Morocco became the first nation to recognize the U.S. as an independent nation.

In 1856, Tangier became the diplomatic capital of Morocco. The Franco-Moroccan Treaty of Protectorate was signed in 1912, and Tangier was placed under a special international regime. In June 1940, the forces of the Khalifian Army of the Spanish Zone entered the city, and the next year Tangier was incorporated into the Spanish Zone of Morocco. At that time, Vichy, France, which was dominated by Germany, controlled Morocco.

In August 1946, as a result of the negotiations among France, the U.S., the United Kingdom, and the U.S.S.R., the International Statute was reestablished. Morocco became independent in November 1956, and the Tangier International Zone was reabsorbed into the kingdom the following year.

The oldest official U.S. building in the world, outside the United States, is located in Tangier. The former American Legation was a gift to the U.S. in 1821, and was used by official American representatives until new offices were constructed in 1962. In 1981, the old legation building was registered by the Department of the Interior as a national historic site, the first such designation of a property outside the country.

Food

Tangier does not have supermarkets offering the range of food products found in the large shopping centers in Rabat and Casablanca.

But fresh seafood, meat and poultry products, and vegetables and fruit can be purchased in the daily souk market or in smaller convenience stores sprinkled throughout the city. Availability of individual vegetables and fruits may depend on the season. Families residing in Tangier recognize that lack of proper sanitation and clean water in surrounding rural areas, as well as use of fertilizer of uncertain origin, require them to wash thoroughly all vegetable and fruit products purchased on the local market.

Tangier's reputation as a place where one can obtain hard-to-find items is still alive and well. Most expatriate families rely on occasional visits to Ceuta - the Spanish enclave an 1-1/2 hour's drive away - to take advantage of reasonable prices, European brand names, and greater variety of vegetables and other individual products.

Clothing

While most of the information pertaining to Rabat and Casablanca applies to Tangier, it should be noted that, despite the city's historic reputation as a more open city, there is a strong underlying strain of conservatism and strictness concerning Islamic morals and values. This manifests itself in a more conservative dress code for women, for example. Use of the djellaba by women is the rule, with fewer Moroccan females dressed in Western attire in public.

As elsewhere in Morocco, but perhaps even more so in a city that attracts a steady flow of European tourists, foreign women attract the attention of the male population. Expatriate female residents claim this uninvited attention can be more persistent in Tangier than elsewhere, at least until the newcomer is recognized as a resident and not a tourist. American women generally adhere to the rule that sleeves should extend to the elbow and skirts to the knee when they are shopping or otherwise in public.

Supplies and Services

Tangier has many competent hair stylists, beauty shops and shoe-repair shops. Drycleaning is more problematical; wash-and-wear should be selected over clothes which require drycleaning.

Religious Activities

Protestant services in English are offered by the Anglicans at St. Andrew's Church. A group of expatriates also meet regularly at the Tangier International Church for Sunday services. Regular Catholic mass in Spanish, or once monthly in French, also are available in the community.

Education

The American School of Tangier (AST), founded in 1950 to serve the needs of the American community, was established as a coeducational, non-sectarian institution open to children of all religious and racial backgrounds. Over the years, as the American community has dwindled, the composition of the student body has evolved so that today the overwhelming number of children attending AST are Moroccan, with a sprinkling of U.S. students and other nationalities. Nevertheless, its American headmaster of more than 25 years and his faculty of 45 teachers, seven of whom are Americans, have managed to continue the school's tradition of providing an English language, American-style education, and to place its graduates in institutions of higher education throughout the world.

The school has been assisted by grants from the Department of State. Together with grant moneys and donated funds, land was purchased and an academic complex was constructed beginning in 1962. The complex includes a modern building housing 20 classrooms, a large library, administrative offices and a fully equipped science and language laboratory. Later, a dormitory was opened to accommodate boarding students from outside the Tangier area.

AST is incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware as a pri-

vate, nonprofit educational institution and is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees, over half of whom must be U.S. citizens. While the school is not officially accredited with any of the various accrediting organizations which exist in the U.S. or Europe, AST has compiled a noteworthy record of turning out graduates who gain entrance to some of the best American, European or Moroccan universities.

AST follows an American curriculum from kindergarten through the 12th grade. While teachers represent various nationalities, textbooks are nearly universally American. Elementary school covers the fundamentals of reading, number concepts and writing. Students are taught the importance of accuracy, close observation and logical thought. Instruction in French begins in the fifth grade. Arabic is an elective except for Moroccan students for whom it is a compulsory subject. Spanish also is offered, along with art and music. The school produces twice a year a school magazine containing stories, essays and poems by students from all grades. AST's Archaeological and Historical Club meets regularly and takes field trips to historical places of interest around Tangier and elsewhere.

In 1998, the student body from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade numbered 340, with 9 Americans among them. Twenty-one other nationalities were represented among the student body. Secondary education is rigorous and designed to prepare the student for college, with heavy emphasis on English, history, mathematics and the applied sciences. A full range of athletic activities is offered, including track and field, swimming, soccer, volleyball, basketball, table tennis and tennis. But perhaps in the extracurricular field, AST is most well known for its dramatic productions which for over 30 years have earned a reputation for excellence and innovative techniques. Typically, these works involve virtually the whole secondary student

body who work up to three months to rehearse and stage the productions, with immense contributions from professional members of the artistic community who donate their time and talents to areas of particular expertise such as direction, set design, costume design, make-up or music.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are opportunities for language study in Tangier - French at the Alliance Francaise; Spanish and Arabic at various institutes.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

To the west of Tangier, less than 30 minute's drive, is Cap Spartel with first-class accommodations and restaurant at La Mirage. To the east, one can stop virtually anywhere on the scenic coastal route drive to Ceuta for great sea views and a meal at one of the many restaurants along the way. Ceuta itself has a number of hotels and a completely different atmosphere for those wishing to get away for a weekend. South of Ceuta, along the Mediterranean coast there are any number of resorts - including Club Med and several hotel complexes patterned after it - where bungalows or rooms may be rented. Farther east there is the beach town of Al Hoceima. Other smaller beach towns are located along the Mediterranean coast until you reach Melilla, the second Spanish enclave.

Traveling south of Tangier, Tetouan is worth a visit, if only to spend some time in its souk. Tetouan does not attract many foreign tourists; which makes the negotiating easier, and the city's stylized carpets are well known throughout Morocco. An hour and one-half farther south is the medieval mountain village of Chaouen. This fascinating town was founded by returning refugees from Iberia in the 15th century and remains surprisingly unfazed by modernity. It is a great weekend getaway spot.

Tangier does have the advantage of frequent ferry service to Spain, which opens up touring possibilities in Spain and Portugal. The overnight ferry to Sete, France also permits discovering the pleasures of that country.

(See Rabat and Casablanca sections of this article for descriptions of other Moroccan places to visit. Rabat can be reached in just over 3 hour's drive, most of which is tolled freeway.)

Entertainment

Tangier offers a number of good restaurants, from simple sawdust-on-the-floor, cheap cafes in the medina where fresh seafood is the house specialty, to more upmarket establishments which are licensed to serve alcohol. Many restaurants offer menus with an emphasis on Spanish-style cooking. There are several restaurants featuring Chinese or Vietnamese cuisine, as well.

The medina itself is a labyrinth of small shops and stalls selling every manner of Moroccan artifact. Prices, however, always start very high because of the constant tourist flow, so negotiating a fair price can be a challenge. One stop not to be missed is the site within the medina of the original American Ambassador's residence, now called "the American Legation." It was given to the new U.S. Government in 1777 by the Sultan Moulay Slimane and is considered an American Historic Landmark. The building now houses a museum.

Despite Tangier having fallen on hard times in recent years, the area still has a lively schedule of cultural offerings - from concerts, to film showings, to art exhibitions. The problem for Americans is that most of these cultural activities require French or Spanish in order to be appreciated, for they are sponsored by the Alliance Francaise, the Spanish Institute, the Italian Cultural Center or the German Goethe Institute. One would do well soon after arrival to pay a visit to these respective centers and get one's name on the mailing list.

Aside from the cultural activities listed above, people assigned to Tangier often have to make their own entertainment. Some choose to take mountain bike excursions; some drive up into the surrounding Rif Mountains for hiking; some arrange tennis games or golf outings. All make use of satellite TV systems to receive U.S. and European programming.

Because of language barriers and the fact that Moroccans are accustomed to spending spare time with their own extended families, invitations are not extended to Americans very often. Of course, when they are received, one can expect extraordinary Moroccan hospitality and a sumptuous meal. The best Moroccan cooking is always found in the home.

For cultural reasons mentioned previously, it is not always pleasant for the American woman to venture out in public alone. Local society is conservative and often not accessible.

Marrakech

Marrakech, the fascinating, walled, oasis city of Morocco in the foothills of the western end of the Grand Atlas, was twice the capital of the country. During the Middle Ages, it was one of the great cities of Islam, and a prospering commercial center. Today, this famed gateway city to the Sahara is still alive with color and confusion in the *souks*, in the bustling Djemma-el-fna Square, in the narrow streets, in the magnificent Saadian tombs and the gardens, and around the Koutoubya mosque with its 220-foot-high minaret. The 1989 population of greater Marrakech was 1,958,000, a figure that is swelled considerably by tourists throughout the year, but especially during the resort season from December through April.

Marrakech (also spelled Marrakesh) dates back to 1062 when, as the encampment of Yusef ibn-Tashfin, it marked the founding of the African capital of the Almoravides dynasty. The city was captured in 1147 by the Almohades, a Berber



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Old town souk, Marrakech, Morocco

Muslim sect who ruled Spain and Morocco in the 12th and 13th centuries. Marrakech was the capital of Morocco until 1259, and again from 1550 until 1660. It was founded as a modern European town in 1913.

The city still evokes thoughts of mystery and espionage, and of desert caravans (it was, in fact, once a starting point for slave caravans to the Sahara and Timbuktu). It draws thousands of tourists who are fascinated by the fabulous 12th-century gardens and beautiful marble palaces, and, mostly, by the minaret which has dominated the landscape since its completion in 1190.

The opportunities for sports, shopping, and sight-seeing are many. Tennis and golf are readily available. The hotels and restaurants are numerous, and information about these can be had at the centrally-located National Tourist Office. Many of the better restaurants

serve excellent French and Moroccan dishes.

Marrakech has several points of interest. The Koutoubia mosque, constructed in the 12th century, is the city's most-famous monument. The Koutoubia's minaret is a noticeable landmark. Also, the museum of Dar Si Said offers examples of art from southern regions of Morocco. Displays include weaponry, tribal costumes, silver jewelry, mosaics, lamps, chandeliers, and pottery.

The heart of Marrakech consists of the *medina*, with its myriad of kiosks and stalls, and the Djemmal-fna, which is a huge town square where drummers, dancers, acrobats, snake charmers, storytellers, and folklore groups gather during the late afternoon to entertain passersby.

The skiing season lasts from the end of December to the end of April. Ski-

ing is available at Oukaimeden and in the Ifrane area. Oukaimeden is about an 80- to 90-minute ride from the city and, at an altitude of 8,530 feet, it overlooks the plain of Marrakech. In the Ifrane area, Michliffen and Djebel Hebri offer skiing at a lower altitude of 6,500 feet. Michliffen is open only for a short season because of minimal snowfall. A restaurant and bar are located on the slope. Djebel Hebri has a very steep hill about 10 minutes beyond Michliffen. Hotels, country cottages, and camp sites offer accommodations for skiers during the winter and hikers throughout the rest of the year.

Fez

Fez (also spelled Fès) is the oldest city in Morocco. It was founded early in the ninth century by the Muslim ruler, Idriss II, and is still a religious and cultural center. It is, as one of the most sacred places in

the country, a city of ornate mosques and ancient tombs. The Qarawiyn University of Fez is the oldest university in the world and houses a library containing one of the finest collections anywhere of Islamic manuscripts. The ninth-century Karaouyne Mosque is the oldest institute of higher learning in the world.

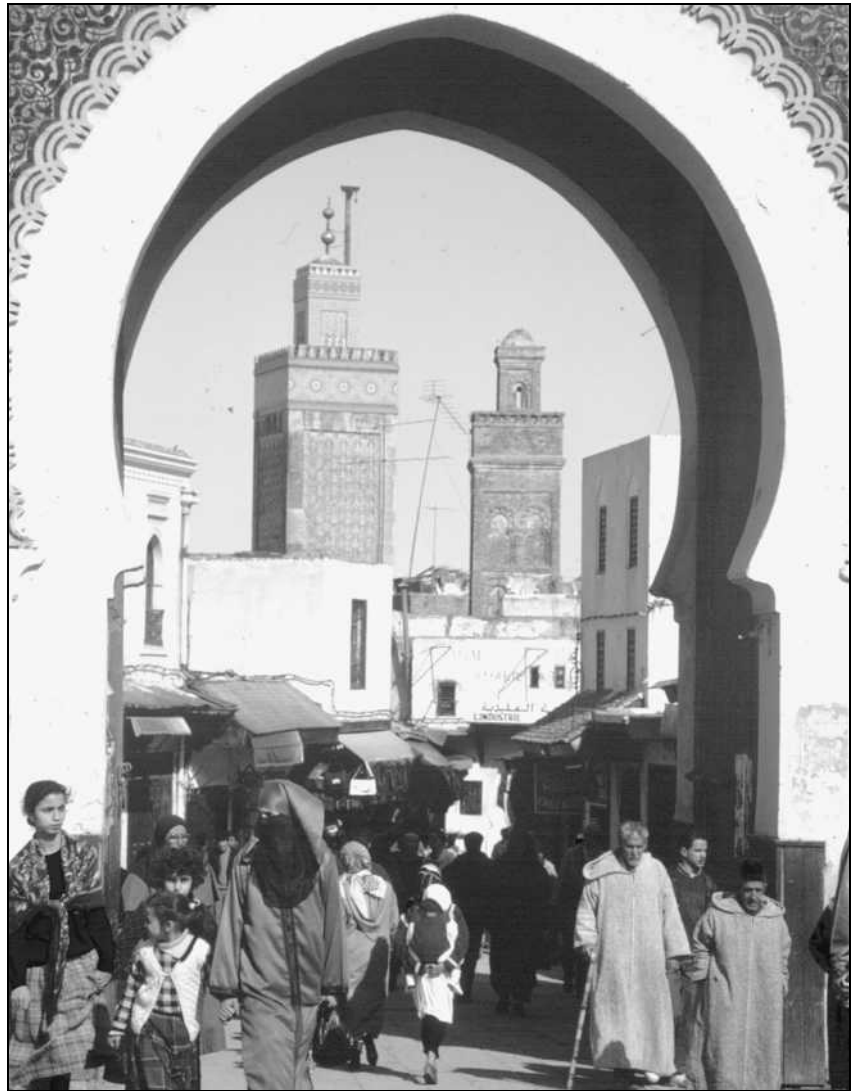
The *souks* and the *medina* provide many interesting hours of sight-seeing, as do the Neijarine Square, the Medrassa Bou Inania, and countless other examples of Moroccan architecture. From the hills, the beauty of the city is memorable, particularly toward evening, when the setting sun casts a glow over the tiled roofs and the labyrinth of narrow streets.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, several *madrassas*, or religious schools, were founded and these are open to the public. The best known are the Attarine and the Bou Inania, whose caretakers guide visitors through marble courts, under arches dripping with stucco stalactites, into rooms with carved cedar ceilings and intricate walls of tile. In the floors above, ornamentation is absent from the tiny rooms where students lived and studied. In appearance and atmosphere, these cells are strongly reminiscent of French and Italian monasteries of the Middle Ages.

Modern Fez offers good hotels and restaurants, several sports clubs, and many places to shop. It is noted for its Moroccan rugs and handicrafts, and is the city which lent its name to the brimless hats worn by Muslims in the Middle East.

Several crops are grown in the area surrounding Fez. These include wheat, beans, olives and grapes; sheep, goats, and cattle are also raised.

Good air, rail, and bus transportation make Fez easily accessible. Many visitors drive here from the capital, or from Casablanca or Tangier. The city has an international airport.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Part of the ancient city of Fez, Morocco

The present population of Fez is close to 1,105,000.

Meknès

Meknès is another large northern Moroccan city, 117 miles northeast of Casablanca. It is also a major tourist center. Each May 7, the birth of Mohammed is commemorated with a majestic display of lights and folkloric presentations, called the Feast of Mouloud. Meknès is an old city, founded in the 10th century. During the Middle Ages, it was an Almohades citadel.

Actually, as in other ancient cities and towns in Morocco, there are two

cities—the walled *medina* and the modern center. European influence began in Meknès in the mid-19th century, and the desire for colonization almost led to war between France and Germany. Protectorates had been established by France and Spain by 1912.

The sultan's residence, which was built in the 17th century, consists of gardens, gateways, palatial buildings, and parks covering miles in area. It took more than 50 years to complete, and is referred to as the "Versailles of Morocco."

Meknès has several interesting sites. The main gateway of Bab

Mansour is among the most imposing relics in Morocco. Its construction was started by Sultan Moulay Ismail and completed by his son Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah. Another point of interest is the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail. It is one of the few Moroccan shrines which can be visited by non-Muslims.

Situated in the heart of the *medina* is the Grand Mosque. This is one of the oldest and largest mosques in Meknès. Outside the walls of the *medina* is the Palace of Par Jamai with its art museum which includes examples of pottery and carpets from the Atlas Mountains, as well as embroidery, jewels, weapons, and dressing objects.

Meknès is a main railroad center, and is a source of textiles, vegetable oils, canned foods, and cement. There are several hotels and restaurants, and a National Tourist Office, where information and guides are available. One of the newer points of interest is the Museum of Moroccan Arts.

No schools for English-speaking children have been established in either Meknès or Fez, but the American School at Tangier provides satisfactory boarding facilities.

Oujda

Oujda is a commercial center in northeast Morocco, near the Algerian border. A city of 260,000 residents, it is an important rail junction serving the extensive surrounding agricultural area. The city is a tourist center, has an international airport, and owes some growth to the coal, zinc, and lead mines to the south. Although Oujda has remnants of ancient walls, it is a modern city in appearance.

Oujda was founded in 944 and, in the ensuing centuries, often came under colonial rule. It became part of Morocco in 1797, but was claimed by the French for two different periods in the mid-19th century, and again in 1907.

The city's name is sometimes spelled Oudjda or, in Arabic, Udja.

OTHER CITIES

AGADIR, in southwest Morocco, is one of the country's three chief seaports (the others are Tangier and Casablanca). It was founded by the Portuguese in the early 16th century. Historically, Agadir is known as the site of an international incident which took place in 1911, during the establishment of a French protectorate. A German gunboat, intent on invasion, entered the harbor, and war was narrowly averted when France offered Germany a considerable part of its territory in what is now the Congo. Agadir, one of several Moroccan landing spots for Allied Forces in World War II, was nearly leveled by a series of earthquakes in the winter of 1960. It has been rebuilt and, in addition to its port activity, is also a seaside resort. With its date palm shaded bay, golf course, tennis courts and water sports clubs, Agadir offers the visitor a wide range of entertainment. The city continues to attract an increasing number of tourists. The city's modern market sells meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, flowers, carpets, caftans, ceramics, and handicrafts. A new road from Agadir leads to Marrakech. The population was estimated at 525,000 in 1994. A more recent population figure is unavailable.

CEUTA is a seaport and Spanish enclave and military outpost about 62 miles from Tangier, in northern Morocco. It is a duty-free area, and some Americans make occasional visits to shop. Its Jebel Musa (Mount Hacho), one of two opposite promontories at the entrance to the Mediterranean, commands an impressive view of the Straits of Gibraltar. It faces the other headland (the Rock of Gibraltar) in Spain and, together, they are referred to as the Pillars of Hercules. According to fable, they were one mountain range until Hercules tore them apart in his effort to reach Cádiz. Ceuta, whose current popu-

lation is over 70,000, has been administered by Spain since 1580. Before that time, it had been first an Arab trading town, and later was held by Portugal.

EL (or AL) JADIDA, a port city of over 120,000 residents on the Atlantic, is located 60 miles southwest of Casablanca. It ships agricultural products. El Jadida was founded by the Portuguese in 1502, and held by them for 217 years. It once was called Mazagan. The city is a favorite beach resort for Moroccans from the big cities. One attraction of note in El Jadida is the subterranean water cistern built by the Portuguese.

KENITRA, a city of about 144,000, is a port on the Sebou (Sebu) River in northwest Morocco, about eight miles from the Atlantic Ocean. It was built by the French to serve the surrounding fertile valley, and once was called Port Lyautey. Allied forces landed at Kenitra in late 1942, during World War II. Its population is about 293,000 (1994 est.).

SAFI (also spelled Saffi) is an Atlantic port and fishing center southwest of Casablanca. It is also an industrial city, and the site of a large chemical complex. The city is an important port for the export of phosphates. Safi is the site of a small 16th century Portuguese fortress, Chateau de la Mer (Sea Castle.) Its current population is 262,000 (2000 est.). Safi was another of the Allied landing sites in Morocco in World War II.

TÉTOUAN, set among picturesque mountains, is 37 miles from Tangier, and has one of the most interesting and attractive *medinas* in Morocco. Among its principal cultural attractions is the Orchestre du Conservatoire, which specializes in presentations of Andalusian music. Tétouan was the capital of former Spanish Morocco until 1956. It was founded in the 14th century and, in its early years was a pirate base. The city contains many monuments: a fort, walls with well preserved fences, a number of mosques, fountains, and an old imperial palace. The palace was built in the 17th

century, but was renovated and restored in 1948. Tétouan has two museums, a college of Fine Arts, and a school of Moroccan Art.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Situated in the northwest corner of Africa, the Kingdom of Morocco covers nearly 200,000 square miles. In size and variability of climate, it is comparable to California. Because of its geographical location, Morocco is known in Arabic as *El Maghreb el Aqsa*—the extreme west of the Arab world. Between Morocco's western coast and the mountains lies a wide plain, the Gharb, which produces most of the country's agricultural products. The High Atlas, the Middle Atlas, and the Anti-Atlas mountain ranges traverse the country from northeast to southwest. The summits of the High Atlas Mountains climb to 13,664 feet (Toubkal) and 12,300 feet (Ayachi). This range collects moisture from the Atlantic Ocean and distributes it over the western part of Morocco. Because this region lies between the Atlantic and the mountains, it enjoys a temperate climate. The Atlas range cannot, however, shut out an occasional "shergui" (hot easterly wind) from the desert. The eastern slopes of the High Atlas have a semi-desert aspect and a rigorous pre-Saharan climate.

In the north, and independent of the Atlas, the Rif Mountains loom up sharply and follow the curving line of the Mediterranean shore. Here, also, a mild climate prevails, which permits Mediterranean-type agriculture.

Population

Morocco's nearly 30 million people (excluding approximately 1.5 million Moroccans living and working abroad) are principally Berber and Arab, but also include several thou-

sand Jewish Moroccans. Some 50,000 French and a smaller number of Spanish and other nationalities reside in the country.

Islam is the state religion in Morocco. As such, Islam is an integral part of daily life and profoundly influences manners and personal conduct. Arabic is the official and principal language; however, Moroccan Arabic is distinctive, with some differences in pronunciation and vocabulary from classical Arabic. French predominates as a second language and much of the country's business is conducted in French. In the north, Spanish is widely understood and spoken. In rural areas, any one of the three Berber vernaculars that are not mutually intelligible may be used. Many Berbers speak Arabic as well as their own dialect of the Berber language. English is not widely spoken in Morocco, although in recent years increasing attention is being given to learning it. Among young Moroccans, English is the language most people study, after Arabic and French.

Recent statistics give the literacy rate for males to be 57% and 31% for females. An estimated 68% of primary school-age boys and 48% of primary school-age girls had attended primary school for at least some period, while 44% of males and 33% of females had attended secondary school.

In Morocco, food and its preparation are very important. People are proud of Moroccan cuisine, which is both imaginative and unusual, blending and combining various kinds of vegetables, fruits and meat or seafood with spices and condiments. "Couscous," a staple made of semolina and served with chicken, lamb, or beef and numerous vegetables, is the national dish. Another traditional Moroccan dish is "tajine," a spicy stew with as many variations as there are cooks; usually tajines have a meat or poultry base. Other Moroccan delicacies include roasted lamb (*mechoui*), flaky pigeon pie (*pastilla*), and a hearty soup (*harira*) of chick peas,

meat and vegetables. Green tea, with fresh mint and sugar, is the national drink.

In terms of apparel, both men and women often wear the "djellaba" in public. This resembles the long, hooded robe worn by Franciscan monks. In years past, Arab women avoided revealing their faces in public. Even today, in some rural areas and among some of the older generation living in cities, women wear veils when outside the home. But the younger generation of city-dwelling Moroccans appears to prefer Western-style clothes, except on holidays and ceremonial occasions. Likewise, in metropolitan centers men wear suits and neckties and women generally wear Western attire to their workplaces.

At certain social functions, Moroccan women sometimes wear caftans, beautifully designed and trimmed robes worn with exquisite gold belts. Men living in the hot and dry southern region of Morocco may wear robes in beautiful blue hues and black headdresses worn for protection from the desert sun.

Public Institutions

Morocco became independent in 1956 with the abrogation of French and Spanish protectorate agreements. Tangier, formerly administered as an international zone, was restored to Morocco two years later and Ifni, a small enclave in the south, was handed back by Spain in 1969. The Spanish departed from the Western Sahara, the disputed territory directly south of Morocco, in 1975. A UN-sponsored referendum to determine whether Morocco's claim to the Western Sahara would be upheld is scheduled to be conducted in the territory in July 2000. Two small enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, both located on Morocco's northern coast, remain under Spanish control.

In 1962, a popular referendum approved Morocco's first constitution. It provided for a two-chamber parliament, prefectural and provincial assemblies, rural and municipal

councils, and local professional chambers. A second constitution, approved by popular referendum in July, 1970, provided for a unicameral parliament composed of 240 representatives. Ninety of these representatives would be elected directly; the rest would be elected by local and professional assemblies. In early 1972, a popular referendum approved a third constitution. It increased the number of representatives in Parliament to be directly elected by two-thirds. A fourth and somewhat more liberal constitution was adopted by referendum in September, 1992.

Morocco is a monarchy with a constitution; the King is considered to be both the spiritual and temporal leader of the country. King Mohammed VI, who has ruled Morocco since July 1999, is the son of King Mohammed V, a national hero who led the movement for independence from France, and is the latest in the line of the Alaouite dynasty which has ruled Morocco continuously since the 17th century. The Alaouite monarchs trace their descent to the prophet Mohamed, and King Mohammed VI thus bears the title "Commander of the Faithful."

Although dominated by the monarchy, the Moroccan political system since independence has been characterized by political pluralism. The principal political parties include the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), which in 1999 controlled the largest number of seats in the Parliament. The USFP, a member of the "Kutla" (or Democratic Bloc) of parties, which served for many years as the Government's main opposition, represents urban intellectuals and workers. The Kutla also includes the Istiqlal (Independence) party, a nationalist party that has been active since independence, as well as other former socialist and communist groups. The coalition government which took over in 1998, headed by Prime Minister Abderrahman Youssofi (USFP), includes parties of the Kutla as well as centrist parties, such as the National Grouping

of Independents (RNI) and the National Popular Movement (MNP). The traditional pro-regime parties include the Constitutional Union (UC) party founded in 1983, and the Popular Movement (MP), which represents largely rural and Berber interests. A small conservative Islamist-dominated party also is represented in Parliament.

A referendum in 1996 created a bicameral legislature, composed of the directly elected 325-seat Chamber of Deputies and the indirectly elected 220-seat Chamber of Counselors. The current Parliament was elected in 1997 for terms varying from five to nine years.

Other potential political forces include Morocco's major labor federation, the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT). The UMT claims 200,000 members, most in the modern economic sector. The Confederation Democratique du Travail (CDT), which claims about 150,000 members, is allied with the USFP, and the Union Generale du Travail Marocaine (UGTM), a third union, is affiliated with the Istiqlal. Moroccan political institutions are based on Islamic tradition, Moroccan history, French precedent, and modern evolution.

According to the constitution, the King-chief of state and commander-in-Chief of the armed forces-shares legislative authority with Parliament. But the King retains exclusive regulatory power and may issue royal decrees ("dahirs") having the force of law. He also is the supreme judicial authority with final appellate functions. All justice is administered in his name. The King appoints his ministers, and a wide range of other officials, including provincial governors and local administrators.

The Supreme Court in Rabat acts as the final appellate court and is charged with defining law. It is empowered only to interpret the law and cannot rule on its constitutionality. Under the Supreme Court are three Courts of Appeal at Casablanca, Fez, and Marrakech,

respectively. Although based on a mixture of French and Moslem judicial philosophy, Morocco's legal system also includes elements of Morocco's Berber, Spanish, and Jewish heritages.

Morocco's foreign policy, although officially attached to Arab, Islamic, and nonalignment groups, is generally friendly toward the U.S. and the West. Morocco is an active participant in the U.N., Arab League, Islamic Conference and the Non-aligned Movement. Morocco has been a player in varying degrees in the Middle East peace process over the years. Arab leaders and others frequently call on the

King for consultations. Morocco withdrew from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in a dispute over Polisario membership in 1984.

Morocco's military is nonaligned but is heavily influenced by the French - and to some degree by the U.S. Because of budgetary realities, U.S. military aid to Morocco ceased in 1994, but the U.S. continues to give the Kingdom excess defense articles as well as some education and training for limited numbers of Morocco's military.

Arts, Science, and Education

Morocco's rich cultural and artistic history combines both Moorish and Berber influences, visible in Moroccan music, dance, art, architecture, and literature. Since the early 20th century, traditional art has been supplemented by Western (mostly French) influences introduced and adopted in urban centers. In present-day Morocco, traditional and Western-oriented artistic and cultural systems exist side by side. Several exposition halls showing works of Moroccan and international artists are located in Casablanca, Fez, Tangier and Rabat. Many Moroccan painters trained in Europe have adopted Western techniques, but have retained an interest in traditional subjects as well.

Morocco is rich in traditional crafts such as rugmaking, pottery, leather goods, and metalwork. The country's most noted handicraft centers are Fez, Sale, Marrakech, Safi and Essaouira.

Both Moroccan and touring European theatrical and orchestral companies perform in the larger cities. In August the coastal town of Asilah, just south of Tangier, hosts a cultural festival to which artists are invited from various countries as well as from Morocco. Rabat stages a similar event in June. Fez hosts a sacred music festival nearly every year, usually in May. The coastal town of Essaouira hosts an international music festival, also in May. Andalusian Arabic music is popular and is often presented on TV, radio and in local night spots, but public concerts are rare.

Morocco's most important university, Mohammed V, established in 1957, is in Rabat. Its 36,000 students from Morocco, other areas of Africa, and the Middle East, study medicine, law, liberal arts, and the sciences. Other universities have been established at Casablanca, Oujda, Marrakech, Fez, Tetouan, Meknes, Agadir, El Jadida, Mohammedia, Kenitra and Ifrane. The Mohammedia School of Engineers, the Hassan II Agronomic Institute, and the National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (INSEA), respectively, are the three most important Moroccan institutions of higher education in their respective fields. In Fez, Morocco's religious capital, Moslem students from around the world study Islamic law and theology at the 1,000-year-old Karaouiyine University. There also are schools for judicial studies, information sciences, post and telecommunications, communications and information (journalism), a school for architecture, another for mineral studies, and finally, a National School of Administration.

A new private university, Al Akhawayn in Ifrane, was founded in 1993 and offers instruction in English according to a curriculum patterned

after the U.S. model. Many faculty members are either Americans or else U.S.-trained in their respective fields. Both undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered.

At the secondary school level, many Moroccan and French lycees (high schools) offer choices of English, Spanish, or German as a third language. University education, as well as elementary and secondary education undertaken in public institutions, is free. At the university level, most students receive scholarships for expenses relating to books, room and board. During the past few years, technical schools have been opening for those who are not university bound.

Commerce and Industry

Morocco's economy is based largely on agriculture, industry, mining and tourism. More than half of the population continues to depend on agriculture for employment, but agriculture's share of total GDP varies between only 12% and 20% depending on rainfall. Agricultural products - mainly citrus, fresh vegetables, dried peas, beans, olives and wine - comprise about 30% of Moroccan exports each year. Although cereal crops (wheat, barley, corn, and oats) occupy more than 80% of the planted crop land, Morocco must import cereals to cover its food needs. Morocco also is working to improve the exploitation of rich fishing grounds along the Atlantic coast. It already is the world's largest producer and exporter of sardines.

Morocco also leads the world in export of phosphates, with the country holding about 75% of all proven phosphate reserves. The country's most important export, both in tonnage and value, phosphates and derivative products totaled an estimated \$1.4 billion, or 38% of total exports in 1997. Other important mineral exports include manganese, lead, zinc, cobalt, barite and iron.

The economy's industrial sector continues to build on the base created during the protectorate period. The Office Cherifien des Phosphate's chemical complex at Safi and Jorf Lasfar turn raw phosphates into phosphoric acid, diammonium phosphate, and triple super phosphates. Two oil refineries process most of the country's needs for gasoline, industrial fuel oil, bottled gas, and kerosene from Middle East crude oil. Morocco is dependent on imported energy for 80% of its energy needs. A U.S. firm is involved in a \$1.5 billion Independent Power Project in Jorf Lasfar.

Other industries, most of which are found in the axis between Casablanca and Rabat, include tire factories, textile and thread mills, automobile and truck assembly plants, sugar mills and refineries, cement plants, food processing operations, and other light industries and handicraft enterprises.

Some 75 U.S. companies have manufacturing or service operations in Morocco, and many others have regional sales offices. With direct investment totaling \$352 million, the United States was Morocco's second largest foreign investor in 1997. Morocco's ongoing privatization process has resulted in the privatization of 52 firms for a total of \$1.5 billion since 1993.

Historically, most foreign trade has been with France. In 1996, France bought 28% of Morocco's exports and furnished 21% of its imports. Spain, Japan, India and Italy are Morocco's next most important clients, while France, Spain, the U.S., Italy, Germany and Saudi Arabia are the most important exporters to Morocco. The U.S. fluctuates from third to fifth place among suppliers, depending on the year. American exports consist primarily of grain (especially wheat), as well as mining and heavy equipment products. Morocco's exports to the U.S. are rising steadily; these exports consist primarily of phosphates and derivatives, textiles, barites and canned foods.

About 1.5 million Moroccan workers and merchants live abroad, nearly 700,000 of them in France. Their remittances (\$1.9 billion in 1998 versus \$1.2 billion for phosphate exports) provide an important positive contribution to Morocco's balance of payments, as does tourism.

Transportation

Automobiles

Plan to bring personally owned vehicles. The importation, sale, or export of personal property - including U.S. employee cars - must be in accordance with the laws, regulations, and conventions of the Kingdom of Morocco. Personal property which is imported by U.S. employees must be for their bona fide personal use or that of their dependents. The importation of a vehicle must not be for the purpose of sale, rent or transfer.

And the automobile should be shipped with its keys and current license plates. Bring with you the invoice or other proof of ownership if the vehicle is new, or the existing registration document under which it has been registered previously. These documents are mandatory for customs clearance and local registration. Also, bring an owner's manual for descriptive details to help with registration of your car.

Approval is not required for a vehicle to enter Morocco, provided it has temporary registration and is insured. A duty-free import request (*bon de franchise*) must be approved by the MFA and the vehicle registered locally within 1 month following importation.

As noted above, the original title and registration card are required by the Ministry of Transport before a vehicle can be registered. Vehicles imported to Morocco duty-free must be re-exported, sold to another person having duty-free privileges, or if sold to persons without duty-free privileges, customs duty must be paid.

Mandatory third-party insurance costs from approximately DH 1,800 to DH 3,400 (DH = Moroccan dirham), depending upon the size of the vehicle, horsepower of the engine, and intended usage. (A T VA tax of 15.3% is added to the insurance cost if the vehicle is registered in the PAT series.)

All types and makes of left-hand drive cars are driven in Morocco. European cars (locally assembled) are sold in Casablanca, Rabat and Tangier. Repair work on American cars costs less than in Washington, D.C., but spare parts are expensive and often unavailable. Local repair men are more skilled and experienced with manual transmissions than automatic transmissions. Repair work on European cars is cheaper and satisfactory; spare parts are more readily available. However, most spare parts unavailable in Morocco usually can be ordered from mail-order firms in the U.S. In recent years, Japanese and Korean manufactured vehicles have become quite popular in Morocco. Dealerships selling these automobiles generally have spare parts and service departments with trained staff.

Gasoline costs about \$3.50 a gallon on the local market. Diesel fuel is available throughout Morocco and is less expensive than gasoline. In 1998, unleaded fuel was available at many gas stations throughout the country.

A valid U.S., foreign, or international driver's license obtained outside of Morocco can be used temporarily. However, local law requires a Moroccan driver's license be obtained within a reasonable time after arrival. Eighteen is the minimum age to obtain a driver's license as of 1998.

Local

Use of public transportation is difficult without a working knowledge of French or Arabic. Very few ticket agents, information clerks, or other public utility employees can understand or speak English. Public transportation in Rabat, Casa-

blanca and Tangier consists of buses and taxis. Bus service is limited. Taxi service consists of more expensive "grand taxis" (Mercedes, or similar) and the cheaper "petit taxis" (Fiats or similar). The latter only operate within city limits and are generally inexpensive if the meter is in working order and used. In recent years, some taxi firms have begun operating radio-equipped taxis which are on call but these are rare. In some parts of Rabat, Casablanca and Tangier, particularly in residential areas, it is virtually impossible to hail a taxi.

The lack of adequate local public transportation can be a problem for employees without personally owned vehicles.

Regional

Adequate public transportation is available to and from the principal cities of Morocco with rail and bus fares less expensive than in the U.S. Morocco's major roads are generally well maintained and directions are clearly marked, especially on more traveled routes. Plane service links the cities of Agadir, Casablanca, Fez, Marrakech, Rabat, Tangier, Oujda, Al Houceima, Essaouira, Safi and Tetouan, with Casablanca the main airport - as the hub.

The rail system links Tangier to Rabat and Casablanca, with connections to Meknes, Fez, Marrakech, and other towns. Some trains are air-conditioned. Train travel time from Tangier to Rabat is about 5 hours. Daily air connections are available to Paris from Rabat airport. More regular international air travel, including direct flights to the U.S. and Canada, is out of Casablanca, the country's biggest international airport.

Auto ferry service runs between Tangier and Algeciras or Malaga, Spain; from Tangier to Sete, France; from Ceuta, the Spanish enclave, to Algeciras; and in the summer from Melilla, the other Spanish enclave, to Malaga. The auto ferry crossing takes 2-3 hours from Tangier to Algeciras, and 5 hours from Tangier to Malaga. Tangier to France

involves a voyage lasting 3 8 hours aboard the ferry. Weather permitting, faster hydrofoil service is available between Tangier and Algeciras or Tarifa, Spain, or between Ceuta and Algeciras.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and international telephone and telegraph service is available. Weekday calls to Washington, D.C. using the Moroccan telephone system cost DH 12 a minute. Substantial discount rates have been offered for international calls placed on Saturday, or on other days of the week between midnight and 7:00 a.m. local time. AT&T and MCI telephone calling cards also may be used in Morocco, but their charges are costly. Morocco is five hours ahead of E.S.T.

A full-rate telegram costs about DH 4 a word. Charges for use of the FAX machine are about DH 24 per page to the U.S.

Internet

Internet access is available in Morocco, and the national connection is generally reliable and fast. Arrangements can be made for a connection at home with any one of dozens of Internet service providers in Rabat and Casablanca. The price of Internet access is higher than that found in the U.S. Residents who make moderate use of the Internet for web access and e-mail at home report costs of \$50-\$75 per month.

Numerous Moroccan businesses, media outlets, government offices and other organizations maintain web sites which can provide much useful information about Morocco. Below are some of the more interesting sites:

U.S. Embassy in Morocco: www.usembassy-morocco.org.ma
 Al-Akawayn University: www.alakawayn.ma (This web site contains one of the best collections of Morocco-related links.)
 Marocnet: www.maroc.net.ma

Moroccan Ministry of Communications:

www.mincom.gov.ma
 Maghreb Arab Press Agency (MAP): www.map.co.ma
 Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs www.wiam.net.ma
 Moroccan Trade and Development Services (MTDS): www.mtlds.com (Rabat-based Internet service provider)
 Maghrebnet: www.maghrebnet.com
 ACDIM: www.acdim.co.ma (Internet service provider and cyber cafe)

Mail

Moroccan mail service to and from Western Europe generally is reliable. Fast courier services, FEDEX and UPS, operate in Morocco. Packages sent through one of these services from the U.S. ordinarily take at least 48 hours and must pass through Moroccan Customs.

Radio and TV

A good, shortwave set receives VOA, BBC or other international broadcasts. Local stations broadcast in Arabic, French, Spanish, and Berber dialects on AM and FM. One English-language program is broadcast daily. Local radio programs are broadcast 22 hours a day. Music programming is mostly Arab and pop/rock. Morocco radio offers classical music only occasionally. Before leaving the U.S., convert record players and tape recorders to 50 cycles. Two Moroccan TV networks broadcast using the 625 line, 25-picture-per-second system used in much of Europe; American TV's must be adapted for sound. The picture requires no adjustment. Parts for American-made sets are not available, and solid state systems are beyond the capability of local repair shops. TV's for sale on the local market are more expensive than in the U.S. TV programs are scheduled through midnight. Programming is about 60% Arabic and 40% in French. Most of the programs are in color. Two Spanish TV channels can be received in Tangier.

In recent years, satellite dishes enabling viewers to access a wide range of broadcasts have sprouted up all over Morocco as the prices for

such equipment have become more affordable. Such systems generally cost from several hundred dollars upward - depending on size of dish - to purchase and install. Viewers thus may tune in to CNN, BBC, NBC, TNT, the Cartoon Network or EUROSPORT for free, and also purchase decoding chips which enable them to receive additional movie or sports channels by paying a monthly fee.

When purchasing videotape equipment, remember that the electrical system is 220v 50 cycles locally. The VHS system is used.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

American publications and magazines can be received through the pouch or through international mail. The International Herald Tribune (available on newsstands late the day it is published) or USA Today can be subscribed to for local delivery. Many newsstands carry Time, Newsweek, daily newspapers from France and England, as well as Spanish, Arabic and German newspapers.

The American Women's Association maintains a small, popular, up-to-date lending library at its site in the Agdal district of Rabat. Library hours change seasonally. Volunteers from the American Women's Association staff the library. Membership in the American Women's Association Library requires a nominal fee. The American Language Center bookstores each offer a modest stock of English language bestsellers, classics, cookbooks, children's books and other popular paperbacks, all sold at prices somewhat higher than in the U.S.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Morocco has several adequate physicians and dentists. Rabat and Casablanca both have U.S. trained dentists. The doctors are trained in the French system; however a few speak English. Reputable oculists,

with comparable fees to the U.S., are also prevalent in Casablanca and Rabat. Medical and dental care is more of a problem in Tangier.

Some small clinics are used for medical, surgical, orthopedic, and obstetric care. Morocco has a modern cardiac center at the medical school hospital. Few nurses speak English. Patients requiring major surgery or the care of a specialist are evacuated to London which is the designated emergency evacuation site.

Diagnostic laboratory facilities are available in all major cities. Make arrangements to have ongoing prescriptions sent regularly from the U.S. Over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin, kapectate, cough syrup, etc., for self-care of minor illnesses are available on the local market. To avoid communication problems and differences in diagnostic and treatment procedures, attempt to complete all medical and dental treatment in the U.S.

Community Health

Public health standards in the cities are steadily improving. The Ministry of Health sponsors disease control programs for tuberculosis and other communicable diseases and has introduced mass immunization programs.

Preventive Measures

Tuberculosis, eye ailments, hepatitis, and diarrheal illness are common among local residents. Servants should be medically cleared before employment and have regular physical examinations during employment, especially if children are in your household.

Morocco has had no epidemics in recent years. There have been outbreaks of infectious diseases, but usually in poor sections of the country and localized. There have been few cases of hepatitis among Americans in recent years. Shellfish should be chosen with great care and preferably eaten cooked. Pets must be immunized against rabies before arrival, and children should be trained to avoid contact with

stray animals. There have been numerous cases of rabies reported in urban areas. The climate can prove difficult for people with sinus problems, allergies, and arthritis due to dampness and high mold and pollen counts during certain seasons.

In larger cities, milk on the local market is pasteurized, dated and refrigerated. Long-life milk (UHT) is widely available. Local markets sell excellent European dairy products. Meat is government inspected and stamped accordingly. Locally purchased meat should be cooked thoroughly. Fresh fish is plentiful. For Americans coming to Morocco, the change in diet frequently results in minor diarrhea. Soak all fruits and vegetables that will not be peeled or cooked in a chlorine solution for 15 minutes, then rinse them.

Quarterly tests on water samples taken in the U.S. Embassy and various residential areas in Rabat and Casablanca show no contamination. A number of families, however, have invested in a water filter of the type found in the U.S. This filter device strains out any particles which might be in the system where rusty pipes exist; moreover, users claim the filter actually improves the taste of tap water. In Tangier, station families all have been provided with a water distiller in their USG-leased quarters. Bottled water is widely available and not expensive, and is used when travelling away from home or in restaurants. Fluoride content is low in local water, but fluoride supplements are recommended.

Perhaps the major threat to continuing good health in Morocco is pervasive dangerous driving practices. The first few days of encountering, either as a pedestrian or driver, local driving habits can be traumatic for the uninitiated. Most local drivers, even within cities, drive with excessive speed and follow too closely behind the vehicle ahead of them. It is not uncommon for drivers to run red lights, come to a line of stopped cars at a traffic

light and forge into the oncoming lane to pass to the head of the line, squeeze three or four cars into space designed for two, or suddenly and without signaling, make a turn to the right from the left hand lane. Meanwhile, all manner of traffic may be encountered within cities and towns, from buses and heavy trucks, to underpowered motorcycles, to bicycles, to the occasional cart drawn by a horse. Pedestrians will cross the street anywhere they like, and at corners people cross without heeding a red light.

When driving in rural areas, one may expect to find tractors, farm machinery and donkey carts also sharing major roads. The latter lack either rear lights or reflectors. Motorists will attempt to overtake on curves or before hills, endangering both you and oncoming traffic. At night, drivers of oncoming vehicles refuse to dim their high-beam lights, which can be temporarily blinding. Be warned that the accident and fatality rates are high, traveling at night in rural areas on all but the major freeways should be avoided, and defensive driving practices are a must!

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Casablanca can be reached daily from New York via London, Amsterdam, Madrid, or Paris. Direct daily flights are also available via Paris to Rabat. Tangier is accessible from various European airports such as London, Madrid, Amsterdam or Barcelona, and flights are more frequent during the summer tourist season.

The Mohammed V Airport is located about 18 miles from Casablanca, and 70 miles from Rabat; the Rabat-Sale Airport is about 5 miles outside Rabat. The Tangier airport is about 9 miles outside Tangier.

Travelers to Morocco must bear a valid passport. Visas are not required for American tourists trav-

eling in Morocco for less than 90 days. For visits of more than 90 days, Americans are required to obtain a residence permit and return visa should they wish to return to Morocco for extended periods. A residence permit and return visa may be obtained from immigration (Service d'Etranger) at the central police station of the district of residence. For additional information concerning entry requirements for Morocco, travelers may contact the Embassy of Morocco at 1601 21st St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 462-7979 to 82. The Moroccan Consulate General is located at 10 E. 40th Street, New York, NY 10016, telephone (212) 758-2625.

Moroccan customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Morocco of items such as firearms, religious materials, antiquities, business equipment, and large quantities of currency. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Morocco in Washington, D.C. or the Moroccan Consulate General in New York for specific information concerning customs requirements.

Fees are charged for vehicle registration, license plates, drivers' licenses, etc.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Morocco are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Consulate General in Casablanca and obtain updated information on travel and security within Morocco.

The U.S. Embassy is located at 2 Avenue de Marrakech in the capital city of Rabat, telephone (212)(37) 76-2265. The American Consulate General in Casablanca is located at 8 Boulevard Moulay Youssef, telephone (212)(22) 26-45-50. Please note that all consular matters are handled at the U.S. Consulate General in Casablanca. The Consular Section's American Citizens Services hotline is (212)(22) 43-05-78. The fax number is (212)(22) 20-41-27. The Internet web site is <http://www.usembassy-morocco.org.ma/>.

Pets

To bring a cat or dog into Morocco, submit a certificate of good health signed no more than 3 days before departure. A registered veterinarian must state that the animal is free from infections and contagious diseases, particularly rabies. A rabies certificate neither older than 6 months nor more recent than 2 months before the animal's departure is also required. The certificate must completely describe the animal (size, color, etc.), name the owner, and state the time of animal's departure from port of embarkation. It must include a statement that the animal has not bitten anyone within 14 days before departure.

If at all possible, pets should accompany their owners rather than arrive either before or after arrival of owners. Additionally, flights with pets aboard should be scheduled so that arrival occurs during week days when veterinarians normally are on duty to examine documentation and permit entry. There have been cases when pets arrived at odd-hours and were forced to wait until the next business day to be freed from a holding area at the airport. In cases of weekends or during frequent religious or national holidays, delays are common.

Birds with parrot's beaks must be accompanied by a statement signed by the owner and countersigned by a registered veterinarian stating that the bird has been the owner's personal property for at least 6 months before date of departure, that it will not be sold or used for any commercial purposes, and will remain the owner's personal property. A registered veterinarian must also sign a certificate, dated no less than 3 days before departure, stating the bird is free from any visible symptoms of psittacosis (parrot disease) and ornithosis.

For other birds, a signed certificate by a registered veterinarian must be submitted, and dated no less than 3 days before departure, certifying the bird free from contagious or parasitic diseases that can be

transmitted to humans or other animals; that the bird is free from ornithosis, plague, and Newcastle disease; and the bird does not come from an area where such diseases are prevalent.

For other animals (turtles, reptiles, etc.) bring a health certificate signed by a registered veterinarian stating that the animal is free from any disease peculiar to its species, and free from any contagious or parasitic disease transmittable to humans or other animals. Importation of rodents, guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits is prohibited.

Firearms and Ammunition

Only the following non-automatic firearms and ammunition may be brought to Morocco:

Shotguns, 3 (gauge 20,16 and 12)
Ammunition, 1000 rounds.

Firearms must be registered with Moroccan police authorities on arrival. A hunting permit and hunting insurance is required (about \$100 a year). Any ammunition purchase must be noted by the seller on the hunting permit. A hunting permit will cost approximately \$100 a year. Except as listed above, no other types of firearms or ammunition are permitted in Morocco; i.e., no rifled weapons are licensed for private individuals.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency is the Moroccan dirham (DH). In 1999 the exchange rate was about DH 10 to US\$1.00. Morocco prohibits import or export of dirhams. Other currencies may be brought into Morocco, and visitors should be prepared to declare funds in their possession on arrival.

Travelers' checks and credit cards are accepted at some establishments in Morocco, mainly in urban areas. Travelers' checks may be cashed at most banks, although some require the bearer to present both the check and the receipt. ATM machines are available in Casablanca and Rabat, and some Ameri-

can bankcards may be used to withdraw local currency from an account in the United States. Current Moroccan customs procedures do not provide for the accurate or reliable registration of large quantities of American dollars brought into the country by tourists or other visitors. As a result, travelers encounter difficulties when they attempt to depart with the money. In particular, American citizens with dual Moroccan nationality have been asked to provide proof of the source of the funds and have incurred heavy fines. Moroccan currency cannot be converted back into U.S. dollars prior to departure

Local weights and measures follow the European metric scale.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1.	New Year's Day
Jan. 11.	Independence Manifesto Day
May 1.	Labor Day
May 23.	National Day
Aug. 14.	Oued Ed-Dahab Day
Aug. 20	The King & People's Revolution Day
Nov. 6.	Anniversary of the Green March
Nov. 18.	Independence Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Hijra New Year*

*variable

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Maputo, Mozambique

MOZAMBIQUE

Republic of Mozambique

Major City:

Maputo

Other Cities:

Beira, Moçambique, Nampula, Quelimane, Tete

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The area of what is now **MOZAMBIQUE** has been inhabited for 6,000 years. Historic and picturesque, it is the site of the original settlement by Portuguese explorers in their quest for a trade route to India in the 15th century. Its boundaries were determined in 1894, and it became an official colony in 1907. Eleven years of guerrilla operations finally forced negotiations with the Portuguese Government, and independence was achieved in June 1975. Until 1990, Mozambique remained a socialist, one-party state shrouded by an ongoing civil war. Its first multi-party democratic elections were held in 1994.

MAJOR CITY

Maputo

Maputo is an attractive, modern city with wide, tree-lined avenues, high-rise buildings, and one of the best harbors on the continent of Africa. It still reflects the characteristics of a former Portuguese city: pastel houses with graceful balconies, sidewalk cafes, parks, and bustling vehicular traffic.

In the outskirts, however, the visitor feels that he is truly in Africa in passing through the Caniço—a heavily populated area with self-made houses surrounded by high cane fences, outdoor markets, small cultivated plots, public water fountains, and numerous winding dirt roads.

The city of Maputo is on the western shore of Delagoa Bay, formed by the confluence of five rivers, in the extreme southern part of the country. Its climate is subtropical, with an average rainfall of 31 inches, most of that coming during the October-to-April summer. Daytime temperatures in Maputo often reach the upper 90s, and rise even higher during occasional short periods of hot north winds.

As Lourenço Marques, Maputo superseded the city of Moçambique as Portuguese East Africa's capital city in 1907. The estimated population of the Maputo area is over 3 million.

Education

Most English-speaking children of school age have been privately instructed by their parents via correspondence courses. The American International School of Mozambique offers American curriculum education from kindergarten through grade eight. Correspondence courses are available for grades nine through twelve. An International School operates in Maputo, but it is government-supervised, and the standards are low. The beginning classes, however, are improving and many people enroll their children. Some foreign diplomatic missions have their own schools, but instruction is in their particular languages, and non-nationals are discouraged from enrolling.

South African, English-language secondary schools have comparatively high scholastic standards. They differ, however, from the better American public high or preparatory schools, in that they are based on the British system. American students often find it difficult to adjust to the differences in curricu-



Jason Laure. Reproduced by permission.

Maputo train station in Mozambique

lum, discipline, and general atmosphere.

Waterford-Kamhlaba School in Mbabane, Swaziland, is a multiracial, coeducational, secondary school based on the British O-level/A-level system. A number of American diplomats and missionaries in southern Africa have found the school satisfactory for their children, both scholastically and socially.

Recreation and Entertainment

The principal sports in Mozambique are fishing, boating, golf, tennis, and swimming. There are excellent beaches north of Maputo, but those in the bay area of the city are polluted. Swimming at unprotected beaches is discouraged because of sharks. No hunting is permitted anywhere in the country.

The Gorongosa Game Park, about two-and-a-half hours by car from the seaport city of Beira, is one of the most pleasant and best-stocked game reserves in Africa. Occasional tours are organized to the park. The Maputo game reserve is about a three-hour drive from the capital. It is considerably smaller and more limited in variety, but has elephants, hippos, and white rhinos. Roads in both parks are unpaved

and require four-wheel-drive vehicles. Small parks with children's playgrounds can be found throughout Maputo.

The city has several movie theaters which show some American, British, French, Italian, Russian, and Indian films with Portuguese subtitles. Most films are "B" class and several years old.

There are several good restaurants, many of which specialize in the grilled prawns and *piri-piri* (hot spiced) chicken, which have become strong favorites of foreigners. Others feature Portuguese, Italian, and Chinese cooking. Some have orchestras, but dancing is discouraged in Maputo. Bars usually serve only beer.

The capital city's Hotel Polama is considered the most elegant in East Africa. Built in the 1920s, it retains an unmistakable style in spite of Mozambique's strained economy.

OTHER CITIES

There are several other cities in Mozambique, but most of them are small and do not usually attract English-speaking business people or travelers. Some diplomatic mis-

sions are in operation throughout the country.

BEIRA, which is capital of the Manica and Sofala districts on the southeastern coast of the country, is a principal port for central Mozambique, and for the landlocked nations of Zimbabwe and Zambia. Principal exports passing through Beira are ores, tobacco, food products, cotton, hides, and skins. Canneries and processing plants opened at Beira in the early 1980s. Because of its position on the Indian Ocean, and its broad and beautiful beaches, it has become a popular resort. Beira's metropolitan area population is close to 300,000.

The city of **MOÇAMBIQUE**, in the north, is on a small channel island in the Indian Ocean. It once was the capital of Portuguese East Africa. Moçambique is an important commercial center and has good harbor facilities.

NAMPULA, also in the northern part of the country, is situated on rail and road routes, and is the center of a greater area with a population of more than 200,000.

QUELIMANE is a seaport town of about 11,000 on the Quelimane River in Zambezia Province. Founded in 1544, it is one of the oldest cities in the country. It was established as a Portuguese trading station and later became a slave market during the 1800s. Sisal plantations were organized by German planters in the beginning of the 20th century. The major industry for the city is fishing, but corn, sugar, and tea are also exported. One of the world's largest coconut plantations is located here.

TETE, the capital of the western province of Tete, is situated on the Zambezi River, 50 miles from the Zimbabwe border and 270 miles northwest of Beira. The city was founded in 1531 by the Portuguese and was long a headquarters for traders, gold prospectors, and slave raiders. The climate and soils of the surrounding Angonia Highlands favor some cattle raising and the

cultivation of cassava and sorghum. Today, Tete is a trade center with coal mines located nearby at Vila Moatize. There are deposits of bauxite, gold, manganese, and titanium in the area. Of note in the city is the cathedral, built in 1563. It has a population of about 105,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Mozambique has an area of 303,769 square miles, almost twice the size of California. It is bounded on the north by Tanzania; on the west by Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe; on the south by the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland; and on the east by the Indian Ocean. Its 1,737-mile coastline stretches along the Indian Ocean from the mouth of the Rovuma River in the north to Ponta de Ouro in the south.

Topographically, Mozambique is made up mainly of flat coastal lowlands, rising in the west to a plateau 800 to 2,000 feet above sea level, and on the western border to a higher plateau (6,000 to 8,000 feet). Mountains in the north reach heights of over 8,000 feet. Africa's fourth longest river, the Zambezi, divides Mozambique in half. Many varieties of game are found in the interior, among them lion, elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, leopard, baboon, and gazelle.

The climate in the plains and along the coast is generally warm and humid; the mountainous areas tend to be cooler and drier. The hot rainy season lasts from October-November to April-May. The rest of the year is comparatively moderate, except for the decidedly cool winter months of June and July, particularly in the south and the higher altitudes. The rainfall is uneven and unpredictable; periodic droughts and floods occur.

Population

Mozambique's population of about 20 million is mainly Bantu-speaking and is divided into 10 ethnic groupings. The Ronga, Changane, and Chope tribes inhabit the south; the numerous and widespread Macua are in the north and center; the Maconde are in the northeast along the Tanzanian border; and the Ajaua (Yoa) and Nyanja live along Lake Niassa. About 15,000 to 20,000 Portuguese citizens still reside in the country, as well as smaller numbers of descendants of immigrants from other European countries and the subcontinent of Asia.

Portuguese is the official language and the only language of instruction and information. African Mozambicans have mastery of a number of indigenous tongues, and many have learned English while working in Zimbabwe and South Africa or while in exile with FRELIMO in Tanzania and Zambia. In the northern coastal area, which has experienced considerable Arab influence, Swahili is widely spoken.

Although most Africans continue to practice traditional religions, there are many Muslims (especially in the north) and Christians (both Catholic and Protestant). Christian missionaries have been active throughout the country; many of the latter were affiliated with English and American churches. Freedom of worship is assured under the constitution.

History

Historically, Mozambique lies at the southern edge of Arab influence along the East African coast; the Arabized town of Sofala was the southernmost port from which the annual monsoon permitted an easy return by sail. First visited in the late 1480s by the intrepid Portuguese traveler, Pero da Covilhã, Mozambique entered modern history when Vasco da Gama ventured here on his historic voyage to India in 1498.

Sofala, the first Portuguese settlement, dates from 1505, but the administrative and commercial capital of the area was soon established on the fortress island of Mozambique. Besides being an important way station on the route to India, Mozambique was also a source of gold (real as well as legendary). Trading posts, fortresses, and precarious settlements soon were established up the Zambezi River (at Sena and Tete), along what was hoped would become a secure trading route to the fabled African kingdom of Monomotapa. During its early history, Mozambique was also a source of slaves at various times, although never to the extent of other Portuguese possessions in West Africa.

Maputo, the capital, developed slowly as a minor trading post after the mid-1700s. At the end of the 19th century, it attained economic and strategic importance as the rail outlet to the mining area of the Transvaal in what is now the Republic of South Africa. After 1875, Maputo developed rapidly as a port, railhead, and commercial center.

In 1890, the Portuguese abandoned claims to the hinterland between Mozambique and Angola, which in effect established the boundaries of present-day Mozambique. A series of military campaigns effectively secured Portuguese occupation of the territory, previously limited to a few coastal forts and trading stations. During much of the early 20th century, the central and northern parts of the territory were administered by chartered companies. In 1907, the capital was moved from Mozambique Island to Lourenço Marques (renamed Maputo after independence in 1975).

Mozambique's pre-independence status was varied. For many centuries, it was a dependency of the Portuguese viceroy in India, and later it was considered an integral part of Portugal. In 1961, full Portuguese citizenship rights were extended to all Mozambicans. In 1964, the Mozambique Liberation Front

(FRELIMO) launched a guerrilla campaign aimed at forcing the Portuguese Government to grant independence and majority rule to Mozambique. From 1964 to 1974, FRELIMO soldiers carried out military operations in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Sofala, and Manica. FRELIMO was supported politically and materially by several neighboring independent African states and by the Organization of American States.

Shortly after the April 1974 coup in Lisbon, FRELIMO ended its military campaign against Portugal. A transition government was established in September 1974, following negotiations in Lusaka (Zambia) between FRELIMO and the Portuguese Government. Mozambique became an independent country on June 25, 1975.

Government

Following independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique adopted a one-party Marxist political system with FRELIMO serving as the sole legal party. Samora Moises Machel was selected as the country's first president. As president of the FRELIMO party, Machel served as chief of the armed forces and was given authority to annul the decisions of provincial, district, and local assemblies. In October 1986, Machel was killed in a plane crash and succeeded by Joaquim Alberto Chissano.

Under Chissano's leadership, Mozambique has experienced dramatic political changes. In July 1989, FRELIMO abandoned its commitment to Marxism-Leninism. Also, a new constitution was adopted in November 1990. This document abolished FRELIMO's status as sole legal party, authorized the creation of opposition political parties, and introduced a Bill of Rights including the right to strike, freedom of the press, and the right to a fair trial. Since 1990, opposition political parties such as the Liberal Democratic Party of Mozambique (PALMO), the Mozambique National Union (UNAMO),

and the Mozambique National Movement (MONAMO) have been created.

Mozambique's legislative branch consists of the 250-member Assembly of the Republic. Members are elected by universal suffrage to five-year terms. The president is also elected by universal suffrage to a five-year term, and may only be reelected to two more consecutive terms.

The country is divided into ten administrative provinces, with the city of Maputo under the administrative direction of a city council chairman.

The flag of Mozambique consists of three equal horizontal bands of green (top), black, and yellow with a red isosceles triangle based on the hoist side; the black band is edged in white; centered in the triangle is a yellow five-pointed star bearing a crossed AK47 rifle and hoe in black superimposed on an open white book.

Arts, Science, Education

Mozambique has an adult literacy rate of about 42 percent. Theoretically, schools were integrated under the Portuguese administration, although in practice it was difficult for Africans to get more than a rudimentary education. This was particularly true outside the cities where few secondary educational facilities existed.

After independence, the Mozambique Government nationalized all schools in the country and banned the system of private tutors. About half of the country's primary schools were destroyed during the civil war. In 1990, private schooling was reintroduced. The educational ladder remains basically the same as under the Portuguese, with five years of primary education followed by two years of *preparatoria*, then a secondary, a commercial or industrial course (three years) or a *lyceu*, the five-year traditional college pre-

paratory course. The government is seeking to expand educational opportunities for all Mozambicans.

The Eduardo Mondlane University (called University of Lourenço Marques until independence) was established in 1967. The university, located in a residential neighborhood on the outskirts of the city, offers courses in agronomy, economics, engineering, liberal arts, medicine, science, and veterinary medicine.

Mozambique possesses considerable talent in its poets, novelists, artists, and sculptors. Many of their works depict political themes. Periodic exhibitions of local and foreign artists are sponsored by the government, and art objects are available for hard currency only in government-supervised stores.

Several foreign embassies have brought native dance troupes to Mozambique as part of their cultural programs. Traditional art, mostly African masks, rough leather goods, tourist items, beads, metal trinkets, and wood carvings are hawked in the cities, as are some excellent black wood sculpture produced by the Makonde in Mozambique's northern areas.

A Museum of Natural History, a Money Museum, and a Museum of the Revolution exist in Mozambique. The National Library in Maputo is open and houses an extensive collection. The National Gallery of Art has a limited collection of sculpture, artifacts, and paintings. Mozambique also has a school of photography that holds occasional exhibits, a National Institute of Cinema that produces mostly political documentaries, and a National Dance Company that gives regular performances.

Commerce and Industry

Mozambique is underdeveloped and has a largely agricultural economy. A major source of income is derived from its ports and railroads.

Maputo, a busy regional port, is a natural transit point for the South African Transvaal and Swaziland. Beira is an important outlet for Zimbabwe and Zambia, and the port of Nacala in the north serves Malawi and other central African countries.

Major economic problems face the country. About one-third of Mozambique's land is suitable for agriculture, but only some 4 percent is under cultivation at any one time. Most of the rural population is engaged in subsistence farming; corn and manioc are the principal crops. Livestock is found primarily in the south and far north where the tsetse fly is not prevalent. Mozambique, the principal cashew producer of the world, exports about \$65 million worth of that crop annually. Other important products are copra, cotton, sugar, tea, sisal, timber, and vegetable oil. Since independence, agricultural production has dropped precipitately, affecting export earnings and domestic food supplies. Civil war and recurrent droughts have seriously affected the economy.

Although Mozambique is famous for its shrimp (prawns), the fishing industry remains small and undeveloped, and much of the catch is taken by foreign ships fishing outside territorial waters.

Local industrial production is mainly confined to processing agricultural products. Some industries exist, including assembly plants for transistor radios, railroad cars, and truck bodies; and manufacturing plants for furniture, plastic goods, metal containers, shoes, cosmetics, soap, cigarettes, and beer. Mozambique also has large cement and textile factories. Manufacturing is centered in Maputo and Beira.

Various parts of Mozambique are believed to be rich in a number of minerals, but production thus far has been small. Coal, gold and gemstones are all important mineral commodities. Other products are colombo-tantalite, copper, fluorite, microlite, and bentonite. A natural

gas field has been discovered at Pande, south of the Save River. All mineral rights in Mozambique belong to the government, which issues concessions for prospecting and mining.

There is a considerable amount of unofficial trade along the borders as well as unreported fish exports to Asia. In the mid-1990s, an estimated \$50 million in gold and \$50 million in gemstones were being smuggled out of the country annually. In 1997, the Mozambican government contracted a private British firm to take responsibility for the regulation of foreign trade in order to reduce smuggling and corruption.

Mozambique's Chamber of Commerce, *Camara de Comercio de Moçambique*, is located at Rua Mateus Sansão Mutemba 452, CP 1836, Maputo; telephone: 491970; telex: 6498.

Transportation

Roads and railroads in Mozambique have historically concentrated on linking the coastline with bordering countries—Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe. The major rail connections are from Maputo to Swaziland and South Africa, from Beira to Zimbabwe, and from Nacala to Malawi and Zambia.

Roads in general are in poor condition. Paved roads from Maputo to Beira and from Chimoio to Tete and Cahora Bassa have been completed, and a new program to connect Beira by paved roads to Quelimane and Nampula and places farther north is underway. Mozambique has over 4,700 kilometers (2,900 miles) of paved roads and 27,000 kilometers (17,000 miles) of dirt and gravel roads, but many of the latter are impassable during the rainy season.

Efforts are being made to improve north-south road connections and to construct rural feeder road systems. Overland rail or road travel to or from Mozambique or within the country is discouraged due to poor

conditions. Travel at night outside of major cities is hazardous.

The Mozambican airline, LAM, provides domestic service to Beira, Lichinga, Nampula, Pemba, Quelimane, and Tete.

Bus service exists between many of the main population centers throughout the country, but bus trips can be long, hot, and crowded. Bus schedules are very erratic.

Local bus service in Maputo is poor and buses are usually overcrowded. Taxis are extremely scarce, but are sometimes available at stands near the major hotels and in downtown areas. They are impossible to obtain during rush hours, and no taxis serve the international airport of Maputo. Fares are metered and are lower than in the U.S.; special hourly sight-seeing rates can be negotiated. Tipping is permitted and is usually 10 percent of the fare.

For those employed by foreign firms, or on official government duty in Mozambique, a private car is a necessity, since car rental service is limited. New Japanese and French automobiles are now appearing on the streets of Maputo. Small, used, foreign vehicles can be bought at varying prices (expensive by U.S. standards).

Since traffic moves on the left throughout southern Africa, right-hand-drive vehicles are generally used.

Communications

Long-distance telephone connections within Mozambique, to nearby countries, and worldwide are fair; service is sometimes slow. Maputo's automatic dial system usually works reasonably well but, sometimes, lines are overloaded during business hours. Satisfactory teletype service is available to all points, although extremely expensive.

International airmail service is usually reliable, but slow. Letters take



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Aerial view of Maputo, Mozambique

from two to three weeks to reach the U.S. east coast.

Maputo has a few radio stations; all broadcast in Portuguese. One is FM, (operating from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.) and presents mainly local news, classical, and light musical programs. Reception of Voice of America (VOA) and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) news is usually good on shortwave, as are stations from South Africa and nearby countries.

Television service, on a limited basis, served some 68,000 receivers in 1995. It is also possible to receive TV broadcasts from Swaziland and South Africa. All use the PAL system.

Maputo has two daily newspapers, a Sunday paper, and one weekly magazine (Portuguese). There are a few other magazines and periodicals. All papers report primarily domestic news. International news reflects Mozambique's foreign policy

preferences. One daily newspaper, also in Portuguese, is published in Beira.

Time and *Newsweek* are not available from local bookstores. Practically no English-language books can be obtained locally, except for those of a technical or scientific nature.

Health

Shortly after assuming power in 1975, the FRELIMO government nationalized all medical practice, facilities, and services. This action led to a serious deterioration of the country's limited medical care and facilities, including the exodus of the vast majority of its qualified medical personnel.

Hospitals in urban areas, primarily in Maputo and Beira, are seriously overcrowded, doctors and medical staff are overworked and often minimally trained, emergency cases frequently do not receive prompt attention, and sanitary conditions

are often substandard. Beyond the two major urban centers, medical facilities and care decrease in quality or are nonexistent. Dental and eye care in all areas are deficient.

Obtaining even the most routine medical assistance is generally time-consuming. Application for services is highly bureaucratized, and long waiting lines are the norm.

Hospital equipment is often inoperative because of the lack of maintenance and/or spare parts. In some cases, there are no trained medical technicians to operate the equipment. Pharmaceutical supplies and drugs are constantly in short supply, and even the most common medications often are unavailable. Routine laboratory work can be done, but is often of low quality and dubious validity. Emergency ambulance services are theoretically available, but are unreliable because of a severe shortage of vehicles.

In all but the most routine medical cases, American diplomatic personnel or businessmen and their families seek medical attention outside of Mozambique, generally in South Africa or Swaziland. Both of these neighboring countries' facilities are about four hours away by car. The facilities offered in Nelspruit, South Africa, approximate care most likely to be found in a small American city. However, Johannesburg/Pretoria, the largest metropolitan area in South Africa, is about eight hours by car from Maputo or a one-hour flight (flights are scheduled only twice weekly). Both have a full range of quality medical services and facilities. Medical care in Swaziland is fair.

Mozambique has the usual variety of tropical diseases such as malaria, filariasis, typhoid fever, bilharzia, tick fever, and infectious hepatitis; nevertheless, Maputo is a clean city and is relatively free of such illnesses. Flies, ticks, mosquitoes, ants, cockroaches, and parasitic worms are present, but well-controlled, in the better residential areas. Living in Maputo should present no real threat, provided immunizations are complete and up-to-date and prudence is exercised.

The water in Maputo (and in a number of the northern cities) is unsafe to drink; boiling and filtering are recommended. Most buildings in the city's center are connected to a central sewage system, but some outlying districts still use septic tanks.

Garbage is collected regularly, efficiently, and noisily at night in residential areas.

Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) is widespread throughout the country; it is extremely dangerous to wade, swim, and wash in fresh lakes, ponds, puddles, or streams.

Cholera is endemic in practically all areas of Mozambique and has been most severe in the central and northern provinces. A serious outbreak occurred in Maputo in 1980,

killing at least 12 persons. The epidemic was contained, however, and no additional fatalities from cholera in the Maputo area have been reported. Nonetheless, the disease remains a potential threat, even in the capital area. Visiting Americans should take the following precautions: drink only bottled or boiled and filtered water; treat locally purchased fruit and vegetables (including purchases from South Africa and Swaziland where cholera is also prevalent) in a permanganate solution before consumption; observe the strictest sanitary practices; and avoid designated, unsafe, local beach areas.

Persons subject to hay fever, asthma, rheumatism, and arthritis may find the climate uncomfortable and should follow appropriate treatment. Respiratory ailments such as colds, bronchitis, and influenza are common. Inoculations against typhoid, yellow fever, polio, and hepatitis are essential, and anti-malarial medication should be started before leaving for Mozambique.

Clothing and Services

Americans find that suitable clothing is not available in Maputo. However, South Africa and Swaziland have a fairly good selection for all. Light cotton clothing is needed for the hot, humid summer; medium-weight garments are required for the cool, relatively dry winter.

Women need a reasonable number of dresses in Maputo, as sun and frequent laundering are hard on clothes. Slacks and pantsuits are frequently worn. A medium-heavy coat is handy for travel to South Africa and Swaziland during winter, when temperatures drop below freezing in the higher altitudes. Cardigan sweaters and shawls are useful on chilly mornings and evenings, even those days with surprisingly hot mid-days.

Sportswear is generally conservative, although bikinis are seen at

the beach and around swimming pools. White dresses are worn for tennis, and slacks or Bermuda shorts for golf.

Men's clothing is usually simple. Suits and ties are not always required for business, and often bush jackets or leisure suits are worn in offices. Official calls require coat and tie. Shorts and sport shirts are worn for informal occasions.

A fair selection of children's clothing is available in South Africa, and prices are reasonable. Styles and sizes of shoes, however, are limited. Boys under 12 usually wear shorts.

Most basic services are available in Maputo, and are of fair to good quality. Tailors are quite skilled for repair work. There have been serious shortages of food items, with supplies erratic and unpredictable, and Westerners on extended stays often travel to Swaziland and South Africa for groceries. Tourists, of course, encounter no difficulties, as they use the services of restaurants and hotel dining rooms.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Most Americans enter Mozambique by air from Johannesburg, Lisbon, or Paris. Direct connections are also available to Mbabane, Harare, Dar-es-Salaam, Berlin, Luanda, Lusaka, Rome, and Moscow.

Visas can be obtained through the Mozambican Embassy in Washington, its Mission in New York or by applying directly by cable with pre-paid response to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Maputo at least six weeks in advance. A valid passport is also required.

Pets can be imported only if there are accompanying health and vaccination certificates. The veterinary record must state that there have been no cases of rabies within a radius of 50 miles from where pets have resided for the previous year.

In Maputo, religious services in English are conducted only at the Anglican Church. Other places of worship include Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, a Jewish synagogue (Portuguese and Orthodox rites), Buddhist and Hindu temples, and a mosque for two Muslim sects.

The time in Mozambique is Greenwich Mean Time minus two hours.

The Mozambique unit of exchange is the metical, which is divided into 100 centavos. No foreign currency may legally be imported into the country.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Feb. 3 Heroes' Day
 Mar.
 (2nd Mon). Commonwealth
 Day

Apr. 7 Women's Day
 May 1 Worker's Day
 June 25 Independence
 Day
 Sept. 7 Lusaka
 Agreement/
 Victory Day
 Sept. 25 Armed Forces
 Day
 Nov. 10 Maputo City
 Day
 Dec. 25 Family Day

RECOMMENDED READING

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NAMIBIA

Republic of Namibia

Major Cities:

Windhoek, Swakopmund, Walvis Bay, Luderitz

Other Cities:

Grootfontein, Keetmanshoop, Mariental, Tsumeb

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Namibia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

NAMIBIA is a recently independent, multicultural country still grappling with the implications of its colonial and apartheid past. Namibia offers a clean, modern capital city, highly developed infrastructure, striking desert landscapes, abundant wildlife, charming coastal towns, and endless opportunities for recreation and adventure. Pleasant housing, good schools, English-speaking environment, and diverse recreational and social options help ensure that everyone in the family enjoys their stay.

MAJOR CITIES

Windhoek

Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, is built on and among hills rising above a large plateau, and has an altitude of 5,600 feet. Windhoek is a small and sometimes sleepy city, but with well-developed infrastructure, services, and amenities.

Windhoek came into existence because of its springs. In 1849, Jan Jonker Afrikaner, a leader of the Orlam Namas, settled at the largest spring in what is now the residential area of Klein Windhoek. Reportedly, Afrikaner named the city after the Winterhoek Mountains in the Cape of Good Hope, where he was born. In time, Winterhoek was corrupted to Winduk in German and Windhoek in Afrikaans. It translates from the Afrikaans as "Windy Corner." In those days, Windhoek was the site of fierce struggles between the warring southern Namas led by Jonker Afrikaner and the northern Hereros. The wars largely destroyed the then-prospering Windhoek by the 1870s.

When South West Africa was declared a German colony in 1884, Major Curt von Francois stationed his garrison in Windhoek. The site was chosen both because it was stra-

tegically situated as a buffer between the Namas and the Hereros, and because the 12 strong springs provided sufficient water for drinking and the cultivation of food.

The present Windhoek was founded on October 18, 1890, when von Francois laid the foundation stone of the fortress that is now known as the Alte Feste (Old Fort) and serves as a museum. Today, Windhoek is a trim, clean, and attractive city, with remnants of German inspired architecture creating a charming downtown district.

Utilities

Public utilities in Windhoek function well, and telephone, water and electricity outages are rare.

Food

Food supplies in Windhoek are plentiful, easy to obtain, and generally inexpensive by U.S. standards.

In general, the quality of food available in Namibia is high, and extra safety precautions are not required during food preparation. Windhoek has good, quality supermarkets that carry mostly South African and Namibian products, with some European items as well. Supermarkets stock most products sold in standard U.S. supermarkets, including occasionally some Mexican foods (e.g., taco shells and sauces, salsa);



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Tintenpalast or government building in Windhoek, Namibia

however, shoppers find very few U.S. brand names on the shelves.

A wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, mostly imported from South Africa, is available in good supply, but availability is seasonal. In addition to supermarkets, a number of stores specialize in fruits and vegetables. Produce typically available includes apples, melons, grapes (including seedless), plums, peaches, nectarines, oranges, tangerines, bananas, tomatoes, celery, potatoes, yams, a variety of lettuces, spinach, corn (on the cob), beets, and green beans. A shop specializing in fresh fruit juice offers a wide selection, including mango, orange, apple, and mixed varieties.

Local meat, including lamb, beef, poultry, and pork, is of high quality and leaner than meat in the U.S. A variety of game meat, including ostrich, oryx, and kudu, is available from supermarkets and butchers and is generally very mild, tender, and lean. Frozen turkeys are imported and available around the holidays. Chicken is available (whole or in parts, including boneless breasts), but because some farmers use a combination of grain and fish meal, the meat may sometimes have a fishy taste. Sausages are also widely sold and delicious, but may be unfamiliar in taste and

texture to most Americans. Hamburger can sometimes be too lean to fry. Most supermarkets have deli counters similar to their U.S. counterparts, as well as pre-packaged high quality deli meats. Deli counters also sell marinated, uncooked meats and kabobs for grilling. Bacon and hotdog-type sausages are available at most supermarkets.

Dairy products pose no health hazards and are generally stored chilled and pasteurized when appropriate. Fresh whole and low-fat milk is generally available, and one store has recently begun to stock skim milk, as well. Long-life milk (whole, low-fat, and skim) is readily available. A range of cheeses (including cottage and cream cheese), yogurt, and butter is consistently available. Brown shelled eggs from grain-fed chickens are available in small, medium, and large sizes and are excellent.

Good-quality bakeries and supermarkets throughout Windhoek make white and grain loaf breads; slicing machines yield sliced rectangular loaves familiar to the American sandwich consumer. Heavier loaves, including rye, pumpnickel, and seed breads, are always available, as are German-style "broetchen" bread rolls—a breakfast

favorite. European-style cakes and pastries are also available. A wide variety of breakfast cereals is available, some sold under well-known U.S. brand names. In some cases, however, the actual products differ in flavor or texture from their U.S. counterparts.

Supermarkets are stocked with limited but adequate selections of frozen foods, including meat, vegetables, fruits, ice cream, and ready-to-eat dishes, but consumers in Namibia will find far fewer microwave-ready products than in the U.S. Some supermarkets have recently expanded their ranges of ready-to-eat convenience foods sold from deli counters, and options ranging from full-course dinners to sushi are available.

A wide range of baby foods and other baby products is available, including formulas (milk or soy), baby cereals, jarred foods, disposable diapers, and wipes. Some U.S. consumers may prefer familiar brands to local brands.

Food prices are generally less than in the U.S.; however, some imported items (e.g., cheeses) can be significantly higher.

South African wines of excellent quality and reasonable prices are available locally. Namibia also produces a variety of good-quality and inexpensive beers. Namibian breweries adhere to German purity laws; local beer has no chemical additives.

Clothing

Western clothing and footwear including clothing suitable for office, recreation, safari, workout, and casual, weekend wear, are available in Windhoek, but selection can be limited. Reasonably priced clothing is not of high quality, and high-quality clothing may cost more than in the U.S. or South Africa. Name brand athletic shoes are available at sporting goods stores, but dress and casual shoes are limited in selection and quality. Unusual shoe sizes are generally not available.

Casual children's clothing and shoes are readily available, reasonably well designed, and moderately priced, although generally not as high in quality as comparable items from the U.S.

For those who sew, equipment, patterns, fabrics and notions are readily available in Windhoek. All-cotton fabric, however, is difficult to find and very limited in selection.

Office attire is comparable to that worn in the U.S. Men wear a suit or blazer and tie; women wear suits, dresses, or skirts/pants and blouses. Cotton dresses or suits made from non-synthetic materials or cotton-synthetic blends are best during warmer months (October-February). During hot summer days, most men and women shed their coats and blazers, unless engaging in a meeting where the more formal suit coat is a necessity. In winter, (March-September), sweaters and heavier-weight suit coats and blazers are good for cold mornings and evenings, although less essential during the warm afternoons. Very few social functions require formal attire, and a dark suit or cocktail dress is generally a suitable substitute for most formal occasions. Representational and non-representational social functions generally take one of three forms - sit-down dinner, cocktail or catered buffet, or braai (outdoor barbecue); corresponding dress ranges from business attire to "smart casual" (coat, no tie for men; slacks, blouse for women) to "weekend casual" (polo shirt, khakis).

Supplies and Services

Pharmacies, supermarkets, department stores, and specialty stores are well stocked, with many U.S. brands (although South African-made) of personal products or easily recognizable equivalents available. A broad range of women's cosmetics (Revlon, Max Factor, Clinique, Lancome, etc.) and hygiene products are available at reasonable prices. Men's toiletries are also readily available. All common drugstore items are found in Windhoek, including some American products.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Street in Swakopmund, Namibia

Non-prescription and prescription drugs are available, but brands may differ from those sold in the U.S. Depending on the item, cost of medicine can be substantially less than, or more than, U.S. equivalents. Some over-the-counter medications in Namibia would require a prescription in the U.S., so caution should be used when purchasing any over-the-counter medication.

Maintenance, household repair, and housekeeping supplies are readily available and reasonably priced. A wide selection of hardware, plus manual and power tools, is available. Cleaning supplies comparable to U.S. products are available at reasonable cost.

Entertainment items, such as china, glassware, candles, and serving pieces, are available although selection is limited and prices for imported items are higher than for comparable items purchased in the U.S.

Basic paper products, such as toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, and paper plates, are available, as are food wraps and trash bags. Quality is generally lower than U.S. equivalents, and paper products suitable for entertaining (i.e., sturdy or decorative paper plates) are generally

not available or very limited in selection.

A wide variety of cigarette brands, including American brands manufactured in South Africa (but which differ in taste from their American counterparts), are sold in Namibia.

Windhoek has a wide selection of good, quality haircutting establishments (men's, women's, unisex), as well as a small number of day spas offering facials, manicures, pedicures, massages, etc. Costs are comparable to U.S. prices.

Numerous professional dry-cleaning and laundry facilities exist; dry-cleaning prices are generally comparable to those in the U.S., but laundry prices are higher. "Express" same-day service is available at added cost. Basic tailoring services are available and affordable, although high skill dressmaking or tailoring is not readily available. It is unusual to have clothing made in Namibia. Shoe repair services are comparable in quality and price to U.S. establishments.

Repairs for electrical appliances are of reasonable quality and price, although service can be quite slow and all parts are not readily on hand.

Veterinary services in Namibia are comparable to those in the U.S., and offer the full range of vaccinations and “veterinarian” pet foods (i.e., lams, Science Diet). Pet foods and other pet items are also available in grocery stores and pet stores. The SPCA and private kennels offer boarding services. The SPCA is also a good source for inexpensive pets, although private breeders exist as well.

Domestic Help

Competent maids and garden cleaners are available in Windhoek, but it requires a little effort to find the right one. Most are able to speak and understand a little English, although fluency and literacy are harder to find. Maids are generally competent at housekeeping, laundry, and ironing. Garden cleaners are able to sweep leaves, water plants, and cut grass, but are rarely skilled gardeners. Commercial gardening services are available for about US\$15 per day. Cooks are rare; some employees use private, good quality caterers for representational entertaining. Good, experienced nannies are available, although more difficult to find than maids. It is extremely unusual to hire a driver in Windhoek, although qualified drivers can be found for this purpose, if needed.

Salaries for domestics who do basic housecleaning and laundry vary from US\$80 to US\$150 per month, full-time on average, varying with experience and additional responsibilities; gardeners receive about US\$8 to US\$10 a day and are usually only needed 1 or 2 days a week. In addition, some employers provide food or a food allowance, and/or a transportation allowance.

Most domestic help is not live-in, although live-in help can be found, if needed. Full-time domestic employees must be enrolled in local social security at the employer's expense and granted at least 24 days of paid leave per year. A year-end bonus is traditionally given to employees, sometimes equal to one-month's pay, but this is not required.

Religious Activities

Services are available for most faiths commonly practiced in the U.S., although facilities and English-language services are limited in some cases. Christian denominations include Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Dutch Reformed, Roman Catholic, and the Church of the Latter-Day Saints. Windhoek has a small Jewish community that hosts a Hebrew Association, a Bahai community, and a mosque and Islamic Center.

Education

The Windhoek International School (WIS): A State Department-supported school covering grades prekindergarten through grade 12. It is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. WIS has an enrollment of approximately 450 students, with a diverse mix of Namibian and expatriate students and faculty. WIS offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in both primary and secondary schools. Enrollment in the IB program facilitates the academic integration of students as they move from WIS to other international schools or to IB magnet schools in the Washington area. In addition, WIS offers the Southern African IGCSE and HIGSCE examinations. WIS's school year runs on an approximately American schedule - from mid-August to late June, with breaks in October, December, and March. WIS's curriculum is designed to address the needs of local and other international students, as well as American students; the curriculum does not fully correspond to all U.S. curriculums and new students, especially those in secondary grades, may find themselves behind or ahead of their peers in certain subjects. WIS does not require school uniforms.

St. George's Diocesan School (Anglican): Covers grades pre-kindergarten through grade 7. It has an enrollment of approximately 450 students, predominantly Namibian, but with a mix of expatriate stu-

dents as well. The St. George's school year runs from January to December, and the school requires uniforms.

St. Paul's College (Catholic) offers classes from grades 5 to 13, with an enrollment of approximately 375. Students from St. George's typically feed into St. Paul's for their secondary education. St. Paul's offers the IGCSE and HIGCSE examinations, which are geared for students intending to attend southern African universities. The St. Paul's school year runs from January to December. St. Paul's requires uniforms.

Deutsche Hohere Privatschule (DHPS): The most prominent of several private German schools, covering grades kindergarten through 13 with an enrollment of 1,000 students. Instruction from grade five to 12 is in English, and instruction in the lower grades is a mix of German and English. The 13th grade, which is taught in German, is intended to prepare students to attend university in Germany or Austria. The DHPS school year runs from January to December, with classes from Monday to Friday, plus every other Saturday. The DHPS requires uniforms.

Windhoek offers a variety of pre-school options. The Windhoek International School has the most comprehensive and the most expensive at US\$3,350 per year. Windhoek's Montessori pre-school costs approximately US\$1,000 per year. Other preschools are run mostly from private homes. These typically cost US\$500 per year, and also are available short-term or for as little as 1 day per week. Pre-school hours typically run from 7:30 am to 1:00 pm.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Windhoek International School is the only school of international standard in Windhoek with some resources for children with special learning needs. Its resources are limited, however, and parents of children with special requirements



Street scene in Luderitz, Namibia

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

should contact WIS before accepting an assignment to Windhoek to determine whether the school can accommodate their children's needs.

Sports

Windhoek has excellent facilities for a wide range of sports. A number of stores sell most of the sports equipment and clothing needed.

The city of Windhoek has an excellent 8-lane, 50-meter outdoor pool, with separate diving pool. Admission fees and seasonal passes are very inexpensive. One private health club has an indoor 25-meter lap pool. Swimming instruction for adults and children is readily available and affordable.

Several tennis clubs are available with outdoor hard surface courts. Some courts are lighted for night play. Memberships are very inex-

pensive. Instruction is available and affordable.

Windhoek has an excellent grass 18-hole golf course set in a scenic desert landscape. Single membership costs about US\$250, plus an annual fee of about US\$200. Greens fees are about US\$5 for members and US\$10 for non-members. Instruction, caddies, and equipment rental are available and inexpensive by U.S. standards. The coastal resort of Swakopmund, about 3 to 4 hours from Windhoek, also has a nice 18-hole course.

Windhoek has a number of health clubs. The largest of these is equivalent to a high-end U.S. facility and costs about US\$240 per person, per year. It has free weights, circuit training, aerobics, bikes, treadmills, stair machines, rowing machines, squash courts, and a 25-meter indoor pool. Personal training and

diet planning are available and relatively inexpensive.

Windhoek has clubs and/or facilities for basketball, soccer, baseball/softball, volleyball, and cricket. Bicycling is very popular, with several road races organized throughout the year. Motor sports are also very popular among the Namibian population, with facilities in or near Windhoek ranging from go-karts to motocross to a race track for occasional car races.

Horseback riding is available from private stables, with well-kept horses, equipment, and facilities. Registration fees are nominal and lessons cost less than \$10 an hour, but there is often a waiting list. Guided trail tours and horseback game viewing are available at several lodges, and multi-day horseback trips to the coast are offered periodically.



Aerial view of Luderitz, Namibia

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

The coastal towns of Swakopmund and Walvis Bay offer opportunities for sea sports including surfing, sea kayaking, and deep-sea fishing, with boat charters, equipment, and instruction available and affordable. Surf fishing, possible along 450 kilometers of coastline from Sandwich Harbor in the south to Terrace Bay in the north, is reputed to be among the best in the world. Also centered on the coast and the adjacent Namib Desert are facilities for adventure sports, such as quad biking, sand surfing, para-sailing, skydiving, hang-gliding, and micro-light flying.

Licensed hunting is permitted both on privately owned game farms and on communal lands. Numerous professional hunters offer their services to newcomers. Bird watching is another popular pastime in Namibia, home to a wide variety of southern Africa's vast and valued bird life.

Windhoek offers high-quality, inexpensive instruction in a variety of sports for children and/or adults, including aerobics, yoga, martial arts, horseback-riding, ballet, gymnastics, and tennis. Soccer, rugby, and cricket are the most popular spectator sports, and national and international matches can be viewed at Independence Stadium or on television.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Namibia is a paradise for tourists and outdoor enthusiasts. Namibia was the first country to include environmental conservation in its constitution. To protect the country's wildlife and scenic natural beauty, several national parks and conservation areas were created, covering 14% of the country's surface area. The Department of Nature Conservation operates rest camps at 22 locations, offering a range of camping and lodging

options, including reasonably priced hotels, kitchen-equipped bungalows, developed camp grounds, and undeveloped wilderness camping. These locations provide comfortable bases from which to explore Namibia's wildlife and breathtaking landscapes. Many privately run hotels, guest and game farms, and lodges are also available, and offer excellent rooms and service.

The largest game reserve, Etosha National Park, is about a 5-hour drive from Windhoek. It offers a range of overnight accommodations at spot lit watering holes, and has some of the world's best game viewing: abundant elephants, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, many types of gazelles and antelopes, lions, cheetahs, leopards, hyenas, warthogs, and more. Many other reserves and game lodges offer accommodations ranging from basic to luxurious, all with excellent game-viewing possibilities. The closest reserves and

lodges are within 20 minutes of Windhoek. The very expensive Skelton Coast Park in the far northwest of Namibia offers the chance to see extremely rare desert-adapted elephants and rhinos.

Namibia offers excellent hiking and camping in a variety of stunning landscapes. Camping facilities range from basic and remote to luxury, with potable water, electrical outlets, and kitchen/toilet facilities. The Fish River Canyon - second in size only to the Grand Canyon - can be hiked in 4 to 5 days. The Orange River, along Namibia's southern border offers rafting and canoeing, as well as camping.

Soothing hot springs at the Gross Barmen resort and Rehoboth are less than an hour away from Windhoek. The hot springs of Ai-Ais, in southern Namibia, provide respite to hikers of the Fish River Canyon. The Namib-Naukluft Park and the Skeleton Coast give windows on the beauty of the Namib, the world's oldest desert. The Namib is also home to the world's tallest sand dunes, many easily accessible from the road for climbing. In contrast to these examples of untamed nature are the coastal towns of Luderitz and Swakopmund, quiet resort areas carved from the desert landscape that lines Namibia's coast. These towns offer quaint German architecture and comfortable lodging and restaurants. Swakopmund is also a center for "recreational" shopping. Luderitz is adjacent to fascinating ghost towns being reclaimed by the desert, as well as to Namibia's diamond region where access is strictly regulated.

A common activity for seeing many of Namibia's sights is a camping safari. Several safari companies in Windhoek offer "drive-in" or "fly-in" guided tours of Namibia's beauty and wildlife. At night, tourists sleep under a brilliant night sky untroubled by pollution or city lights.

Other popular excursions include visits to Namibia's numerous prehistoric rock paintings, a trip to a petrified forest, excursions to see

the rare welwitschia, a desert plant that lives for thousands of years, and trips to various regions and festivals to experience Namibia's fascinating indigenous cultures.

Namibia offers a handful of small, but good museums of history and culture. Museum subjects include history, traditional tribal cultures, geology and gems, railroads and transportation, and art.

Entertainment

Windhoek sometimes seems like a sleepy little town, but it does have nightspots and entertainment features. The National Theatre of Namibia has a variety of presentations, from musical groups to film festivals to plays. Namibia boasts an amateur, but good symphony orchestra made up of members of the community, and an opera group that sponsors a handful of sold-out performances each year. The Warehouse Theatre is a popular venue for live jazz and other performances suitable to the small stage. There are also a small number of nightspots that feature dancing and live or recorded music. The College for the Arts features frequent recitals and offers inexpensive art and music lessons for both children and adults. A three screen movie theater shows recent U.S. movies (about 3 months after their U.S. release). There are numerous video rental outlets (PAL system) with good selections of VHS tapes; many rent DVD videodiscs and electronic game cartridges. Saturday mornings find most of Windhoek strolling through downtown, shopping, sitting in outdoor cafes and restaurants, or browsing the handicraft vendors along the Post Street Mall shopping area. Sidewalks roll up promptly at 1 pm when the stores close and everyone leaves for home or the country, although Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning store hours are gradually becoming more common.

Windhoek has a good number of restaurants that are good and inexpensive. Many restaurants are steak houses or otherwise meat-oriented, and there is a limited range of inter-

national cuisine beyond Italian and Chinese. Restaurant meals generally cost less than \$10 per person. Some restaurants include standard German cuisine on their menus, while others offer more exotic game entrees (e.g., ostrich, kudu, oryx, springbok). A gourmet restaurant situated in an early 1900s castle is reputed to be the best, and is certainly the most expensive, in town. Kentucky Fried Chicken is the only American fast food franchise operating in Windhoek, although several South African fast food chains are present as well.

Social Activities

Windhoek, for all its amenities, is a quiet town, and social life is what each individual makes of it.

Americans have the possibility of a great deal of social contact with both Namibians and other nationalities. There is a large anglophone international community, with more than 50 countries and international organizations represented in Windhoek.

Contacts with the local and international community are facilitated by a Rotary Club and Roundtable, which provide business networking opportunities. Namibia has a small, but active, Scientific Society, that sponsors occasional seminars and publishes papers, reports, and books on subjects related to Namibia - commonly wildlife, biology, and geology. Parents and children in schools with international enrollments have opportunities to meet and befriend people from other countries at various school activities held throughout the year. The Association of Diplomatic Spouses has a very active calendar, sponsoring several fund-raising events each year in support of grassroots charities offering aid to women and children in Namibia. There are also any number of non-governmental organizations who welcome people willing to volunteer their time and skills supporting programs that help nature conservation and wildlife, the poor, battered women and children, orphans, HIV/AIDS victims, and the victims of landmines.

Security

Windhoek is rated high for crime by the Department of State. The most common crimes are non-violent crimes such as residential break-ins, pick-pocketing, purse snatching, vehicle theft, and vehicle break-in. Common sense measures, such as using residential locks and alarms, not leaving valuables in parked cars, safeguarding purses, keeping wallets in front pockets, and being alert to one's surroundings, are the best deterrents against crime.

Due to unrest caused by the civil war in neighboring Angola, as well as to the lingering effects of a secessionist effort in the Caprivi Strip, the northern regions of Kavango and Caprivi are not considered safe.

Swakopmund

Located in northwestern Namibia, Swakopmund was once Namibia's most important port. Today, it is the country's primary resort destination. Its temperate climate and beautiful beaches make it a popular spot for sunbathers, surfers, anglers, and water sports enthusiasts. The city was founded in the 1890s as a German colonial town. A very strong German influence remains today. The city attracts many German tourists and many German-speaking Namibians have homes and beachfront cottages here. Swakopmund is clean and attractive, with palm trees lining the streets and seaside promenades.

In addition to tourism, Swakopmund is the site of the Rössing mine. This mine, which is the largest opencast uranium mine in the world, forms the backbone of the city's economy and infrastructure. Swakopmund had a population of approximately 15,500.

Recreation

Many visitors to Swakopmund enjoy viewing the city's German colonial architecture. One of the most prominent is the Woermann Haus, which was constructed in 1905. It has been restored to its

original grandeur and declared a national monument. Today, it serves as a library. The tower of Woermann Haus offers visitors an excellent view of the city.

Swakopmund has a good museum, which is located on the site of an old harbor warehouse. The museum offers exhibits detailing the history and ethnology of Namibia and displays relating to the plant life which surrounds the city.

Other recreational activities near Swakopmund include tours of the Rössing Mine and visits to a camel farm. Camel rides are offered in the afternoon.

Swakopmund has a number of shops and art galleries which specialize in prints and paintings of the area, from modern classic watercolors to modern surrealist African art. A tannery in town offers tremendously low prices for handbags, belts, sandals, and "Swakopmunders" (durable kudu leather shoes). Swakopmund also offers souvenir and curio shops featuring African crafts. Many tourists also shop at the city's jewelry stores. Jewelry is made from semiprecious stones and local gems. It is often quite expensive.

Entertainment

Most entertainment centers around eating and drinking. Swakopmund offers all types of restaurants, from exquisite dining to fast-food restaurants. The city's cafes and pubs also serve food and tend to be rather informal.

Aside from restaurants, entertainment is limited. Films or other events are occasionally scheduled at the city museum.

Walvis Bay

Walvis Bay is situated on the coast of Namibia, midway between the northern and southern borders. For over one-hundred and fifty years, Walvis Bay has served as Namibia's main port. Today, the town has modern harbor facilities and is linked to

Namibia's mines, farming regions, and towns by road, rail, and air links. The city was once the home to a sizeable fishing industry. However, severe overfishing during the mid-1970s has caused a drastic decline in fishing and a subsequent rise in unemployment. Many of the fisheries and canneries remain empty today.

Aside from fishing, Walvis Bay's economy is sustained by small-scale engineering and ship repair businesses. Between 1978 and 1994, South Africa directly governed Walvis Bay and used the city's deep-water harbor as a strategic base and training facility for its naval forces. Walvis Bay and twelve offshore islands were formally transferred from South Africa to Namibia on March 1, 1994, after three years of negotiations. The population of Walvis Bay was estimated at 21,000.

Luderitz

Luderitz is located on one of the last natural harbors along the Namibian coast. The site of the present day city was visited in 1487 by Portuguese navigator Bartholomew Diaz, who named the harbor Angra Pequena (Little Bay). The city gained importance as the first German settlement in southwest Africa. Founded as a trading post by a German merchant, Adolf Luderitz, the territory was placed under German protection in 1884. The discovery of diamonds in 1908 transformed Luderitz into a booming mining town. Eventually, the diamond boom faded and many parts of the city were largely abandoned. Today, Luderitz's diamond mines are owned and operated by the Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM). Certain areas near the mines are cordoned off and heavily guarded. These areas cannot be entered without a permit.

In addition to diamond mining, rock-lobster fishing and processing is a major industry. New industries include seaweed and seagrass harvesting.

Recreation

Luderitz offers many fine examples of German colonial architecture. Among them are the Railway Station, Old Post Office, Magistrate's House, and Concert & Ball Hall. Many of these buildings are open to the public.

Many visitors enjoy touring the remains of Kolmanskop, a small mining town located a few miles south of Luderitz. Kolmanskop was once a booming mining town. However, a sharp decline in diamond sales after World War I and the discovery of more profitable diamond areas elsewhere caused the town to decline. By 1956, Kolmanskop was virtually abandoned. A few buildings have been restored, but the ghost town atmosphere remains.

It is possible to travel to the spot where Bartholomew Diaz landed in 1487. This spot, Diaz Point, is located approximately 15 miles outside of Luderitz. Diaz Point offers wonderful opportunities to view cormorants, flamingos, a wide range of wading birds, dolphins, and seal colonies. Visitors should bring a warm jacket when visiting Diaz Point because of extreme wind and cold.

Shopping opportunities are limited in Luderitz. Luderitz is known for its beautiful rugs. They are very well made and woven in desert colors with local flora and fauna as favorite designs. A fine selection of newspapers, books, and jewelry can be found at the Luderitz Boekwinkel bookstore.

Entertainment

Entertainment opportunities are extremely limited. Two fine restaurants are located in Luderitz. The first, the Bay View, is located at the top of a converted colonial building. Spectacular views enhance the dining experience. Specialties include crayfish, local oysters, and kingklip. The Oyster Bar, a restaurant located near the Old Post Office, features a wide variety of light meals and snacks.

OTHER CITIES

GROOTFONTEIN is a small city situated in northeastern Namibia. The area was settled in the mid-1880s by Boers, who called the settlement *Grootfontein* or "Great Spring." The discovery of copper in the late 1890s led to the development of productive mines near the city. Grootfontein is currently Namibia's major cattle farming center and is renowned for its jacaranda and other flamboyant trees. The city is also a shipping point for the timber products from Namibia's northeastern region. Local industries produce dairy products, meat, and leather goods. Grootfontein has an estimated population near 15,000.

Situated in southeastern Namibia, **KEETMANSHOOP** was founded in 1860 by the Rhenish Mission Society. It became a town in 1895 after the Germans stationed a military garrison there. Today, Keetmanshoop is a main transit point for visitors and freight from Windhoek, Luderitz, and the South African cities of Upington and Cape Town. Keetmanshoop is located in an area where karakul sheep abound and the city is a major processor of karakul skins. Other major industries include the manufacturing of leather goods and processed foods. Although Keetmanshoop has several fine examples of German colonial architecture, the city does not have many attractions or entertainment opportunities for visitors. Keetmanshoop has a population of roughly 15,000.

Located in south-central Namibia, **MARIENTAL** is situated 170 miles southeast of Windhoek. Mariental was founded in 1912 as a railway stop between Windhoek and Keetmanshoop. This city of 6,500 is mainly an administrative and commercial center. Processing and transport of animal skins serves as the main economic activity. Although there are not many points of interest in Mariental itself, there are several attractions nearby. The Hardap Dam, located 14 miles

northwest of Mariental, has a man-made lake and recreational area that is popular with campers and fishermen. The Hardap Game Reserve allows visitors to view over 260 bird species, kudus, springboks, ostriches, gemsboks, and mountain zebras. These wildlife areas are accessible by car or walking trails.

TSUMEB is a mining town whose prosperity is based on the presence of copper ore, lead, germanium, silver, and cadmium. Located in north-central Namibia, Tsumeb became a center for colonial mining activities during the 1890s. Today, more than 200 varieties of minerals are mined near Tsumeb. Many examples of these minerals are found in museum collections throughout the world. A small museum in Tsumeb chronicles the history of the town and is worth a visit. Several shops offer crafts, carvings, and jewelry made from locally produced minerals. Tsumeb has a population of approximately 16,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Namibia is an arid country covering more than 320,000 square miles, or about twice the size of California. It is bordered to the west by the Atlantic Ocean, to the north by Angola, to the south by South Africa, and to the east by Botswana; the Caprivi Strip juts out to the northeast to touch both Zimbabwe and Zambia. Namibia has four distinct geographic regions. The Namib Desert forms a 50- to 70-mile wide belt along the entire coastline. A semi-arid and mountainous plateau, varying in altitude from 3,000 to 6,000 feet, covers the central part of the interior and includes Windhoek, the capital city. The low-lying eastern and southeastern plains are extensions of the dry Kalahari Region of Botswana and South Africa. The northern, bush-covered plains include the relatively high

rainfall areas of the Kavango and the eastern Caprivi.

Windhoek, the capital, is at an altitude of 5,600 feet. This altitude and the extreme dryness of the air can initially make newcomers uncomfortable. Dryness and dust may persistently bother those who wear contact lenses, exacerbate or provoke allergies or respiratory problems, and cause extreme dryness of the skin.

The city itself is hilly and surrounded by sparsely vegetated mountains, creating a landscape that calls to mind Arizona or New Mexico. Indeed, with its bustling downtown commercial section, good-quality roads and public services, and trim residential areas, Windhoek proper could easily pass for a small, southwestern, American city.

Namibia's climate is typical of a semi-desert and high plateau country, with hot days and cool nights. In midsummer (December-February), daytime temperatures can exceed 100°F in lower elevations. In Windhoek, January average high temperatures are in the 90s. Winter (May-September) sees daytime highs of about 70°F; nights can be cold, dipping below freezing.

Windhoek enjoys about 300 sunny days a year. Rains usually come from December through March, peaking in February, for a yearly average rainfall of 12-16 inches in Windhoek. The unrelenting dryness of the rest of the year makes the rains refreshing, welcome, and eagerly anticipated, turning the mountains surrounding Windhoek green for the brief summer months.

Population

With a total population of 1.7 million people, Namibia has one of the world's lowest population densities. The population growth rate is high, at about 3%, although the United Nations estimates that population growth will turn negative in 2005, due to the HIV epidemic. Some two thirds of the population live in the

north of the country, in Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshana, Otjikoto, Kavango, and the Caprivi Region. Nearly 160,000 people live in Windhoek. The Ovambos (55%) are the largest single ethnic-linguistic group among the black population, which also includes Kavangos, Hereros, Damaras, Namas, Caprivians, San (or Bushmen), and Tswanas. Whites, mainly of Afrikaner (South African Dutch), German, or English descent, comprise 6% of the population. Afrikaans-speaking, mixed-race peoples, such as the "Coloureds" and the Rehoboth Basters, make up 7%.

English is Namibia's official language, but is very few Namibians' first tongue. Indigenous ethnic languages are the first language of 90% of the population. Afrikaans is widely spoken; German is also used extensively. The main indigenous languages are Oshiwambo, spoken by the Ovambo; Kwangali, spoken by the Kavango; Otjiherero, spoken by the Herero; Nama-Damara, a "click" language spoken by both the Nama and Damara; Lozi spoken by Caprivians; and Setswana, spoken by the Tswana.

Eighty to 90% of the population is Christian. Lutheran is the predominant Christian faith. Ten to 20% of the population practices indigenous beliefs.

Standards of living vary markedly among the population, largely along racial lines—a vestige of the apartheid policies of Namibia's colonial past. Annual per capita income in Namibia exceeds US\$1,500, but the per capita income for many blacks is less than US\$200. In Windhoek, these imbalances are readily apparent when crossing from the city's well-to-do and predominantly white neighborhoods into the black and mixed race former township areas of Katutura and Khomasdal.

Namibia's independence brought a substantial international community to Windhoek; more than 30 nations and international organizations are represented.

History

The area of present-day Namibia was first inhabited by Bushmen (or San). They were followed by the Nama and Damara peoples. During the 16th and 17th centuries, two Bantu-speaking peoples moved into Namibia. Northern portions of Namibia were settled by the Ovambo while the Herero inhabited northwestern and central Namibia. The early inhabitants of Namibia lived a nomadic existence and survived through a process of hunting and gathering.

The peoples of Namibia remained isolated from the outside world until the late 1700s when the first Europeans began exploring the coast and limited inland areas. They were soon followed by groups of traders, hunters and missionaries. By the mid-1800s Europeans, particularly the Germans and British, began vying for control of Namibia (then known as South West Africa). In 1878, the British annexed the coastal enclave of Walvis Bay and made it a part of South Africa. A dispute arose between Germany and Great Britain in the 1880s regarding who would control South West Africa's rich coastal regions. After a series of intense negotiations, the Germans were allowed to control all of the coastal regions with the exception of Walvis Bay. Also, on July 1, 1890, Great Britain and Germany signed an agreement granting Germany control of the Caprivi Strip. Great Britain was given the island of Zanzibar in return for its concessions in South West Africa. Germany administered South West Africa until World War I. In 1915, with Germany preoccupied with the war in Europe, South African troops marched north and occupied South West Africa. Following Germany's defeat in World War I, South Africa was granted permission in 1920 by the League of Nations to administer South West Africa. The League required that South Africa must strive to promote the moral, material and social well-being of the people.

South Africa's treatment of the people in South West Africa was extremely harsh, however. All opposition to South African rule was ruthlessly crushed. In 1933, South Africa petitioned the League of Nations for formal permission to incorporate South West Africa as its own colony. However, member nations were very displeased with South Africa's repressive methods and refused the request.

At the end of World War II, the League of Nations was dissolved and replaced by the United Nations. In 1946, South Africa asked the United Nations General Assembly for permission to formally annex South West Africa. The United Nations refused, citing South Africa's brutal treatment of people in the territory. South Africa challenged the UN's decision on the grounds that only the League of Nations had the right to question the manner in which South Africa governed South West Africa. Because the League was defunct, they held, any restrictions imposed by the League on South Africa's administration of South West Africa were null and void. In the 1950s, the United Nations petitioned the assistance of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to help resolve the dispute. After reviewing the case, the ICJ decided that South Africa should be required to relinquish control of South West Africa to the United Nations. Despite this ruling, South Africa refused to leave the territory.

Within South West Africa, resistance to South African rule was becoming increasingly organized. On April 19, 1960, a national liberation movement known as the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) was formed. SWAPO adopted a policy of armed resistance against South African rule and sent many of its fighters abroad for guerrilla warfare training. The United Nations General Assembly, weary of South Africa's uncooperative attitude, issued a declaration on October 27, 1966. This declaration stated that South Africa's presence in South West Africa was illegal and

that all South African forces should be withdrawn from the territory. Buoyed by the UN resolution, SWAPO launched a guerrilla campaign against South African troops after infiltrating South West Africa from secret bases in Zambia. On May 19, 1967, the United Nations established a special council to administer South West Africa, draft a constitution, hold free elections and create an independent government. Despite the UN declarations and SWAPO military campaign, South Africa refused to leave the territory. The UN's special council was denied entry into South West Africa on the grounds that the United Nations resolutions were invalid. On December 16, 1968, the United Nations General Assembly voted to change the territory's name to "Namibia."

In 1971, the International Court of Justice supported the UN's contention that South African occupation of Namibia was illegal. The ICJ ruling touched off a series of strikes and demonstrations against South African rule. These activities were brutally suppressed. Also, South African authorities launched a crackdown on SWAPO during late 1973. Leaders of SWAPO were arrested and imprisoned while suspected SWAPO activists and supporters were publicly flogged. In May 1975, Prime Minister Vorster of South Africa stated that although South Africa would be willing to discuss future Namibian independence with the UN, it would not negotiate with or recognize SWAPO as a legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

On May 17, 1977, a referendum was held on a new constitution that called for equal representation of Namibia's eleven major ethnic and racial groups. The constitution was enthusiastically endorsed by 95 percent of Namibia's white voters. However, SWAPO rejected the plan and called for a constitution that would guarantee black majority rule. In late 1977, UN Security Council representatives from England, Germany, France, Canada and the United States traveled to

Namibia in an attempt to broker a peaceful solution to the Namibian conflict. After a series of negotiations with South African and SWAPO officials, the representatives presented a proposal to the United Nations in April 1978. This proposal, approved by the United Nations as Security Council Resolution 435, called for the ending of armed conflict between South African troops and SWAPO guerrillas and the holding of free elections under UN supervision. Both sides agreed to the plan. However, South African officials stressed that they would not give up their claims to Walvis Bay or several islands off the Namibian coast.

The hopes for a peaceful resolution to the Namibian problem were shattered in December 1978 when South Africa held unilateral elections in Namibia without UN approval or supervision. SWAPO angrily boycotted the elections and denounced the results as null and void. The South African action led to a resumption of intense fighting between SWAPO and South Africa. In May 1979, South African troops crossed into Angola and Zambia and attacked suspected SWAPO bases. During 1980 and 1981, several UN attempts to bring South African and SWAPO officials to the bargaining table failed. Heavy fighting continued in 1981 and 1982 as South African troops and paramilitary police launched a series of raids into Angola. On December 8, 1982, representatives from Angola and South Africa met in Cape Verde to discuss a possible cease-fire and Namibian independence. South Africa stated that it would not withdraw its troops from Namibia until Cuban troops were removed from Angola. The Angolans countered by declaring that South Africa must stop its attacks on Angola and drastically reduce the number of South African troops in Namibia before the Cubans would be withdrawn. The talks ended in February 1983 without an agreement being reached.

On June 17, 1985, the South Africans installed a new "Transitional Government of National Unity"

(TGNU) in Namibia. This new government was composed of a 62-member National Assembly and a cabinet of eight ministers. However, this government was rejected as illegal by SWAPO officials and a vast majority of Namibians. In addition, the TGNU failed to gain the recognition of the international community.

In early 1986 the president of South Africa, P.W. Botha, announced that South Africa would abide by the UN Security Council Resolution 435 on the condition that all Cuban troops were withdrawn immediately from Angola. This proposal was rejected by SWAPO. Also, more violence erupted in Namibia during 1986. On November 30, a SWAPO rally in Katatura was broken up by police. One person was killed and 21 seriously wounded.

Hopes for a peaceful settlement in Namibia gained momentum in 1988. In May and June, the United States and the United Nations mediated a series of negotiations between South Africa, Angola and Cuba. All sides eventually agreed that all Cuban troops should be withdrawn from Angola and South African troops from Namibia by April 1, 1989. Also, the South African-installed Transitional Government of National Unity agreed to resign on February 28 to make way for a new government. United Nations peacekeeping troops and civilian advisors were sent to Namibia to monitor troop withdrawals and to ensure the holding of free elections. An election was held in November 1989 with SWAPO winning a majority of seats in a new National Assembly. Once in place, the National Assembly drafted and ratified a new constitution on February 9, 1990. Also, one week later, the assembly elected SWAPO's Sam Nujoma as Namibia's first president. Namibia became officially independent on March 21, 1990.

In 1994, South Africa transferred to Namibia control of the deep-water port, Walvis Bay, along with twelve offshore islands. The peaceful resolution of this territorial dispute,

which dated back to 1878, followed three years of bilateral negotiations.

Public Institutions

Namibia's constitution established the new nation as a multiparty democracy, with an elected President and bicameral legislature. President Sam Nujoma was elected by the constituent assembly in 1989 to his first 5-year term, and was reelected by popular vote in Namibia's first post-independence general election in 1994. The constitution was changed to allow Nujoma - as Namibia's first President - to run for a third term in the 1999 general election, and he was reelected by an overwhelming margin. Barring another constitutional amendment, he will serve until 2004.

The Prime Minister is appointed by the President, and serves as head of the Cabinet and Civil Service. Namibia has more than 40 Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial positions, as well as other officials with Cabinet rank. All Ministers and Deputy Ministers must be either voting or non-voting members of Parliament. One result is that there are very few "backbenchers," or ruling party parliamentarians without Cabinet responsibility. The Ombudsman's Office and the Directorate of Elections are independent entities.

The more powerful legislative house is the National Assembly. It is comprised of 72 members elected on the basis of proportional representation from among countrywide party slates and 6 nonvoting members appointed by the President. Members are elected for 5-year terms and their election is contemporaneous with the presidential election. The National Assembly has primary responsibility for drafting and passing legislation. In the 1999 general election, the ruling South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) won 55 of the 72 voting seats, and thus, has the two-thirds majority needed to pass constitutional amendments. Two opposition parties, the Congress of Democrats (COD) and the Democratic Turn-

halle Alliance (TA), won some 10% of the national vote and seven seats each. The United Democratic Front won two seats and the Monitor Action Group secured one seat. With support from the UDF, the DTA holds the position of "Leader of the Opposition."

The other legislative house is the National Council, comprising 26 members, two each chosen by regional councilors to represent each of Namibia's 13 regions. The regional councilors themselves are directly elected by popular vote, so the National Council was designed to be more reflective of popular sentiment at the local and regional level. The National Council was formed in 1992 and members are elected for 6-year terms, so those members elected in 1998 will stand for reelection in 2004. The National Council cannot vote down legislation, but can return bills to the National Assembly for review.

The judiciary is independent and has full authority to review laws for constitutionality. The Supreme Court hears constitutional cases and is an ad hoc panel of two High Court judges and the Chief Justice. The next highest judicial body, the High Court, is the primary appellate body. Generally, citizens have initial contact with the judicial branch through lower courts chaired by magistrates or, in communal land areas, the traditional courts headed by traditional authorities.

Arts, Science, and Education

With a culture combining German antecedents and deep African roots, Windhoek offers its residents a diverse variety of cultural experiences. The National Theater of Namibia presents concerts, plays, film festivals, and various special events. The National Symphony performs periodically as do other local groups, with occasional visits from performing artists from the southern African region and beyond. The Windhoek Youth Choir

performs several times a year, giving residents the opportunity to hear Western music in indigenous African rhythms. The Warehouse Theater provides informal and experimental entertainment in a coffeehouse setting.

Local private galleries feature exhibits by local and regional artists. The State Museum focuses on the natural sciences (stones and fossils) and indigenous cultures. The National Art Gallery, next to the National Theater in downtown Windhoek, frequently features special exhibits by local artists in addition to its permanent collection of Namibian art. The Namibian Crafts Center and adjoining Omba Gallery sell and exhibit Namibian handicrafts and artwork. The Alte Feste (or Old Fort) Museum, Windhoek's oldest building, was formerly the garrison for the first contingent of German colonial troops sent to Windhoek; it now houses a collection of historical artifacts and photographs.

In addition to the Alte Feste, several other German colonial buildings dating to the early 1900s add to the architectural interest of downtown Windhoek. The historic seat of government, known as the Tintenpalast [Ink Palace] now houses Namibia's Parliament. The historic Christuskirche church dominates a traffic circle in front of the Alte Feste.

Namibia's unique natural environment, featuring significant populations of endangered species (such as cheetah and black rhino) and the world's oldest desert, the Namib, engenders many interesting research initiatives. Several private American citizens are at the forefront of these research efforts, particularly in animal conservation and at an institute for study of the Namib Desert. The Cheetah Conservation Fund, also run by an American, has received international acclaim for its efforts to preserve Namibia's cheetah population.

Windhoek's adult educational opportunities are extensive and relatively inexpensive. The University of Namibia, established in 1992, offers degree and non-degree instruction in English in law, economics, management, arts, science, education, health sciences, and Namibian languages. The Polytechnic of Namibia focuses more on vocational and career based training, although it too is slated to become a degree-granting institution in the future. The College for the Arts offers instruction in art, music, dance, and performance for adults and children, as well as occasional student and faculty recitals. The Franco-Namibian Cultural Center offers instruction in French.

Upgrading the availability and quality of education for the non-white population is a priority of Namibia's Government. Qualified teachers, particularly those competent in English, are in extremely short supply. Schools, particularly in rural areas and the black townships, are overcrowded and lack instructional materials. In January 2001, children in the north of Namibia, as well as in some poorer areas of Windhoek, were turned away from schools because of a shortage of teachers.

Education is a major thrust of U.S. assistance to Namibia; the U.S. Peace Corps provides teachers and teacher trainers. Education is one of four focuses of USAID's program in Namibia. The Humanitarian Assistance Program of the DOD provides both financial and in-kind assistance for the improvement of primary and secondary education facilities in underprivileged population areas. USAID is helping the Ministry of Basic Education upgrade its staff capabilities and implement its policy reform agenda. Program achievements to date include the training of nearly 2,500 teachers in the use of new instructional and assessment materials and production of these materials in five local languages. USAID is now shifting its focus to improving the quality of educational systems and services provided to primary schools

and to fostering stronger community and parental involvement in the schools. USAID's education program is targeted at the northern areas of the country.

Commerce and Industry

Namibia's economy depends heavily on a few primary commodity exports, such as diamonds, uranium, copper, lead, zinc, grapes, livestock, and fish. A budding tourist sector has also emerged, capitalizing on Namibia's vast natural attractions. The economy remains highly integrated with the Republic of South Africa, with more than two-thirds of its imports coming from there. In addition, well developed telecommunications, power, and transport infrastructures link the two countries.

Namibia has a strikingly dual economy, with the modern market sector producing most of its wealth, but involving a small minority of the population, and a traditional subsistence sector that barely supports most of the population. Government economic policy is geared primarily toward creating jobs in value added manufacturing, to lessen the economy's dependence on resource extraction, and to address chronic unemployment. Government priorities focus on fisheries, mining, oil and gas, and export processing zone development. Another focus of the Government is development of the Port of Walvis Bay as the gateway to the region, exploiting the port's geographical advantage and the superior transport network linking it to the industrial regions of South Africa and the landlocked countries of southern Africa.

Namibia is a member of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the region's primary regional integration organization. SADC has initiated a process to establish a free trade zone throughout southern Africa. Namibia also belongs to the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), along with

South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland. South Africa collects the customs and excise duties for all members, and then distributes a share of the total customs collections, determined by an established formula, to other members. Namibia is a member of the Rand Common Monetary Area (CMA), along with South Africa, Lesotho, and Swaziland, and as such, the South African rand is legal tender throughout Namibia. The Namibian dollar, which is equal in value to the rand, is accepted only in Namibia.

Transportation

Automobiles

U.S. driver's licenses are valid in Namibia, and no other licenses (such as the AAA international driver's license) are needed. Unleaded and leaded gasoline and diesel fuel are always available in Windhoek. Unleaded gasoline is not available in some, remote areas of Namibia.

Roads in Windhoek are paved and kept in excellent condition. Main roads linking cities and towns are generally paved, undivided roads with one lane in each direction. Rural roads are largely gravel, although well maintained. Four wheel drive is not needed for most driving in Namibia, but the more adventurous may find it helpful for some rural driving conditions. Certain roads in Windhoek and elsewhere in Namibia flood briefly during the rainy season, which can make high ground clearance a useful feature.

Traffic moves on the left (non-American) side of the road, so cars made for local conditions are right-hand drive (steering wheels on the right side of the car). A variety of new and used right-hand-drive vehicles are available locally and from South Africa, Japan, or Europe. Toyota, Isuzu, Mazda, Nissan, Honda, Volkswagen, Chrysler, Mercedes, BMW, Audi, Ford, and Chevrolet have dealerships in Namibia. Many vehicles, such as most sport-utility vehicles, are more expensive than

comparable models in the U.S. Some vehicles, such as Mercedes and BMW, can be less expensive than U.S. models. Local vehicles are not built to U.S. specifications and are not suitable for bringing to the U.S.

Repair and maintenance services are roughly equivalent to those in the U.S. for vehicles purchased locally or from Europe and Japan. Authorized dealers are generally willing and able to perform maintenance and repair on corresponding U.S.-purchased models, although exceptions and problems sometimes occur. For U.S.-purchased models that do not have local dealer representatives, it may be necessary to provide garages with repair manuals and/or parts.

Third-party-liability insurance (covering the cost of repairs to the other vehicle if you are responsible for causing an accident) is required and available locally for about US\$120 per year. More comprehensive coverage is available from local or U.S.-based insurers.

Rental cars are readily available, but rather expensive compared to the U.S.

Local

Public transportation consists of municipal buses, private buses, and taxis. Municipal and private buses link the city with the Katutura and Khomasdal townships and run limited routes through Windhoek. Taxis can be hired at the various taxi stands throughout Windhoek, but some are of questionable road-worthiness and sometimes occupied by thieves in cahoots with the taxi driver. "Radio" taxis ordered by phone are safer than those hired on the street. Passengers must be sure to ask the rate when calling for the taxi and to confirm the price with the driver prior to entering the taxi.

Namibia has over 26,710 miles in the national road network, of which some 3,381 are paved. Roads are generally undivided and straight, open, and monotonous, with one lane in each direction and little shoulder. Four-wheel drive is not

necessary for most of Namibia's roads, but is helpful for exploring the bush, the desert, and the mountains.

Main roads from Windhoek to the principal towns are paved, as are the roads linking Windhoek with the South Africa, Angola, and Botswana borders. Secondary roads are gravel, but generally well graded and well maintained. Gravel roads can become rough or corrugated, especially toward the end of the rainy season. The coast has "salt" roads - a foundation of gypsum, which is soaked with brine and compacted to form a surface as hard and smooth as tarmac, but extremely slippery when moistened by the frequent coastal fogs.

Driving outside of Windhoek requires caution and prudence. The narrowness of roads and the lack of shoulders cause many head-on and rollover accidents. Gravel roads can be deceptively smooth, causing drivers to exceed safe speeds and resulting in loss of control of the vehicle. Curves on gravel roads should be approached and negotiated at reduced speeds, even in the absence of warning signs. Rental car rates in Namibia are high, in large part due to the frequency with which drivers severely damage rental vehicles on gravel roads. Animals (wildlife and livestock) are a serious danger on open roads, especially when curves or high grass limit visibility. Either hitting or swerving to avoid animals can cause serious accidents, so reduce speed to provide for a reasonable response time. Driving at night is strongly discouraged, as darkness compounds the hazards of driving in Namibia - few roads are lit, other vehicles often lack working lights, and animals become more active.

Regional

Namibia has 1,400 miles of rail lines; the main lines link Windhoek to Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, and Gobabis, Otavi to Grootfontein, Otjiwarango to Outjo, and Keetmanshoop to Luderitz. Few passenger trains operate, but poor quality passenger cars are often attached to

freight trains that move between these towns. A luxury train service runs between Windhoek and Swakopmund; it is a 24-hour trip each way with several tourist excursions en route. Buses and trucks serve centers that do not have rail links, but are unsafe and operate unreliably. Inexpensive and safe bus service operates between Windhoek and the Namibian coast, Cape Town, and Johannesburg.

Windhoek has two airports: Eros Airport is a small municipal airport on the south side of town offering commercial and charter service to various cities and towns in Namibia, as well as commuter service to Johannesburg, South Africa. Hosea Kutako International Airport is about 30 minutes east of Windhoek, and offers service to Frankfurt and Munich, Germany; London, England; Luanda, Angola; Gaborone and Maun, Botswana; Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe; Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa and various destinations within Namibia. Several airlines have daily flights to Johannesburg and Cape Town. From Johannesburg there are frequent flights to the U.S., Europe, Asia, South America, and other African countries. Lost baggage and baggage theft are recurring problems in Johannesburg, so travelers are advised to pack and safeguard their luggage accordingly. Cape Town offers service to a smaller number of international destinations. South African Airways has a code share agreement with Delta Airlines and has daily flights connecting Johannesburg to New York and Atlanta. Delta code share flights from Cape Town to Ft. Lauderdale and Atlanta are available, but less frequent. Lufthansa Airways has a code share agreement with United Airlines to fly daily from Johannesburg to New York and Washington, D.C. via Frankfurt, Germany.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Windhoek is generally reliable, although prob-

lems with service and billing are not infrequent. The telephone structure within Windhoek is in flux, with new technology, such as fiber optic lines and Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), existing with old copper wiring, which fails in the rainy season due to deteriorating insulation. There is a substantial push to replace the aging lines with the newest technology, which gives hope for more a more reliable telecommunications infrastructure in the future.

Namibian phone service is compatible with U.S.-based callback services, which can substantially reduce the cost of calls to the U.S. or other international locations. Typical callback rates are currently around 75 cents per minute.

Cellular phones are widely available in Namibia, with coverage in all of the most important cities and tourist locations, although often not on the roads or in the towns in between. Cellular phones are in much more evident use in Namibia than in the US. and, in many instances serve as the primary means of communication. Cellular service is reliable and is complete with options for Callmail, International Roaming, Call Forwarding, Short Message Service, Call Barring, Call Wait/Call Hold, FAX Mail, and Call Line Identity, just to name a few.

The cost of cellular phone instruments - chiefly Motorola, Nokia, and Siemens - ranges from under \$100 to more than \$400 depending on features. Fees include a one-time connection fee of about US\$30 and monthly subscription fees of US\$15. A pay-as-you-go option, called Tango, does not require a connection fee or subscription service. Cell to cell calling charges are about 15 cents per minute, and there is no charge for receiving calls. Local cellular service covers 52 countries in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, but not the U.S. The instruments themselves also work in much of Europe, but require a separate service subscription. Instru-

ments purchased in the U.S. will generally not work in Namibia.

Windhoek has five Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to choose from for residential access. Users can dial into the ISPs using a standard analogue modem with a maximum speed of 56Kbps (average is around 36Kbps) or via an ISDN Basic Rate Access (BRA) line at 64Kbps. All ISPs provide Internet access, as well as e-mail services. For analogue ISP service, the monthly service charge is about US\$14, and the cost of a local call to the ISP is about two cents per minute. For ISDN service, the monthly service charge from the ISP is about US\$52, the monthly charge from the phone company for the ISDN line is approximately US\$25, and the one-time installation fee is about US\$40.

Mail

The local international mail service is reasonably effective and affordable, although delays and pilferage are recurring complaints. The average transit time for a letter from Namibia to the US. via local mail is one to two weeks.

Windhoek offers two express mail services: DHL and Federal Express, which have proven to be reliable and safe, although costly. For documents or parcels weighing less than one kilogram, the cost of sending items from Namibia to the US. is about US\$26. The cost for a one kilogram package is about US\$46, and the cost of larger packages goes up from there depending on weight.

Radio and TV

The Namibian Broadcasting Corporation ("NBC," although unaffiliated with the U.S. network with the same initials) broadcasts radio programs in all of Namibia's major languages, with a combination of news and music during the day and evenings, and mostly music at night. South African Radio, the BBC and VOA can be received with a shortwave radio and via satellite TV subscription.

NBC also runs the TV station, broadcasting English-language programs from 5:30 in the evening until 11 or 12 at night. A 45-minute news program features local news, sports and weather, and limited coverage of international events every day. Programming includes some popular British and American series, a few Australian and Canadian shows, and sports events. NBC broadcasts on the PAL system. A second commercial station, focusing on sports and entertainment and with some local content, is expected to begin broadcasting shortly.

To supplement free commercial broadcasting, a company called MNET provides several menus of cable TV programming, as well as Digital Satellite TV (DSTV) with some 40 channels. These channels include CNN, ESPN, MTV, VH1, Discovery Channel, National Geographic Channel, BBC Prime, BBC World, Sky News, Super Sport, Cartoon Network, and several movie channels. DSTV also offers numerous audio music and news channel received via television sets. The cost of obtaining DSTV is about US\$410 for equipment purchase and installation, plus monthly fees of about US\$40.

There are several video rental stores in town, as well as a limited selection of videos for sale. Videos are in PAL format, requiring a PAL or multi-system, video cassette player, and TV DVD disks are also available at many video outlets.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Namibian (issued five times per week), the New Era (twice weekly), and the Observer (weekly), are English-language newspapers, with local coverage, as well as some regional and international coverage. Daily newspapers are also published in German and Afrikaans. English-language newspapers from South Africa and the U.K. are available at some larger bookstores, as are dated copies of the International Herald Tribune. Time, Newsweek, and The Economist are available on

local newsstands, as well as several other popular American, British, and South African magazines.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Windhoek has a small number of good private medical hospitals/clinics capable of providing emergency care and performing many routine procedures. In general, medical facilities in Windhoek are comparable in quality and breadth to those of a mid-size American city.

Doctors, both general practitioners and specialists, as well as dentists, generally have training and facilities that match U.S. standards. Medical care in Namibia often costs less than it does in the U.S., and doctors seldom impose the long waits in waiting rooms that are the norm with their American counterparts. Windhoek's small number of specialists cover a wide range of specialties, including dermatology, ENT, obstetrics/gynecology, internal medicine, ophthalmology, orthopedics, neurology, neurosurgery, psychiatry, pediatrics, plastic surgery, radiology, and dentistry.

Patients requiring more sophisticated care than that available in Windhoek are generally evacuated to South Africa. If warranted by the patient's condition, Windhoek-based "medevac" companies are available to evacuate patients by air, accompanied by appropriate doctors and equipment, on short notice.

Pharmacies in Windhoek are well stocked and professionally run. Some pharmacies are open 24 hours a day. Depending on the particular medication, costs may be more or less than in the U.S.

Community Health

Windhoek poses few health hazards to Americans. Sanitation is excellent, and tap water is potable in Windhoek and throughout most of Namibia. Windhoek is connected to

a central sewage system. A high-tech wastewater-treatment facility purifies water for residential use. Garbage is collected by municipal trash trucks once a week and disposed of in landfills. Milk, dairy products, meat, and produce are safe when purchased from reputable retailers. Industrial and automobile pollution is not a problem in Windhoek. The main residential pests are ants. Some areas of Windhoek have large numbers of mosquitoes during the rainy season, but as Windhoek is in a non-malarial zone, they are a nuisance more than a health hazard.

Preventive Measures

The chief ailments afflicting Americans in Windhoek are allergies and respiratory problems. Pollen and dust, some largely unique to Namibia, can cause problems even for those who have not experienced allergies or respiratory problems elsewhere.

Namibia's high altitude can cause fatigue, especially for newcomers. Namibia's extreme dryness can cause uncomfortably dry skin and chapped lips. Frequent applications of skin lotions and lip balm help. Windhoek's windy climate kicks up dust storms that can complicate medical conditions and make contact lenses uncomfortable. Lens-wearers often find they use more lubricating fluids in Namibia, and some find short-term disposable lenses to be most comfortable.

Namibia has one of the world's highest rates of HIV infection and AIDS. Most segments of the rural and disadvantaged urban population suffer from a lack of adequate sanitation and public health facilities. Incidences of tuberculosis, enteric diseases, and hepatitis are high among this group. Although HIV/AIDS testing of prospective employees is prohibited by Namibian law, it is prudent to screen prospective domestic employees for other health problems.

Namibia's strong sun, high altitude, and clear skies have given it one of

the world's highest incidences of skin cancer. If spending any time outdoors, it is essential to use common-sense precautions, such as sun block (SPF 15 or higher), hats, and skin-covering clothing. In reflection of the seriousness of this risk, the Windhoek International School does not allow children to play outside unless they are wearing broad-brimmed hats.

Namibia has a variety of venomous snakes, scorpions, and spiders, but bites or stings from these are rare. Namibia also has rabies, but the risk of contracting rabies is low if one avoids undue contact with wild animals. Occasionally, tourists are injured or killed in game reserves by wild animals. It is essential that visitors to game reserves remain in their vehicles at all times, and avoid coming too close to or aggravating the wildlife.

Food items purchased from reputable stores require no special precautions or handling. Those susceptible to stomach ailments should thoroughly clean and disinfect unpeeled produce.

Although malaria does not exist in Windhoek, it does in many northern and northeastern areas of Namibia, including the Etosha National Park. Visitors to those areas should begin taking antimalarial medication at least 1 week prior to travel and should take sensible precautions against mosquito bites, such as using insect repellent, skin-covering clothing, and mosquito netting.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport and visa are normally required. Bearers of U.S. passports who plan to visit Namibia for tourism for less than ninety (90) days can obtain visas at the port of entry and do not need visas prior to entering the country. Travelers coming for work, whether paid or voluntary,

must obtain their visas prior to entering Namibia. Travelers should obtain the latest information from the Embassy of Namibia at 1605 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 986-0540, or from the Permanent Mission of Namibia to the U.N. at 135 W. 36th St., New York, NY 10016, telephone (212) 685-2003, fax (212) 685-1561. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest Namibian embassy.

Air Namibia and LTU Airlines have direct flights to Windhoek from several European cities. Most flights from South Africa to Windhoek arrive at Hosea Kutako International Airport, approximately 30 minutes outside of Windhoek. Some flights, on smaller commuter planes, land at Eros Airport, located on the outskirts of the city. While Eros is a more convenient airport, the size of the planes may limit how much luggage can accompany the traveler.

Baggage theft and pilferage is a recurring problem at Johannesburg International Airport, so travelers should pack valuables and necessities in their carry-on luggage and safeguard their checked luggage as much as possible.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Namibia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Windhoek and obtain updated information on travel and security within Namibia. The U.S. Embassy is located at 14 Lossen Street, Ausspannplatz, Windhoek, telephone (264-61) 22-1061, fax (264-61) 22-9792. The mailing address is Private Bag 12029, Windhoek, Namibia.

Pets

Importation permits are required for all animals entering Namibia. Cats and dogs with valid rabies shots are not subject to quarantine. Birds are subject to a 30-day quarantine. The application process for importation permits requires sending documents back and forth between the pet owner and the

Namibian Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development's State Veterinarian office, so it is recommended that you start the process at least 2 months ahead of arrival. The State Veterinarian office issues a permit form, which must be filled out by the pet's own veterinarian. A current rabies shot is required, and must have been administered not less than 30 days and not more than 1 year prior to the pet's arrival in Namibia. Once completed by your veterinarian, the permit is returned for final processing and the permit is then issued and returned to the pet owner. The permit must accompany the pet during shipment. Certain animals, especially certain bird species, require an additional permit, so please allow 2 additional weeks if bringing a bird to Namibia. After arrival, dogs and cats will be immediately released to the custody of the owner on the understanding that the pet will be brought to the State Veterinarian in town for final health approval. The State Veterinarian requires notification of arrival of incoming animals.

Firearms and Ammunition

Importation of ammunition and firearms, except handguns, for sporting purposes is possible with the Government of Namibia licensing. Licensing of the item must be obtained from the Namibian Police. Namibia prohibits the importation of handguns. Age 18 is the legal hunting age in Namibia.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Namibia's currency is the Namibia dollar. It is based on the decimal system, with 100 cents equaling 1 dollar. The currency is tied to the South African rand, which has a floating rate of exchange, and as of January 2001 the exchange rate was N\$7.90 = US\$1. The Namibia dollar is equal in value to the South African rand. The rand is legal tender in Namibia, but Namibian dollars are valid only in Namibia and are not accepted in South Africa.

Travelers to Namibia may wish to obtain a small amount of rand prior to their departure for Namibia or when transiting South Africa, as rand is easier to obtain internationally and accepted throughout Namibia. Upon arrival in Windhoek, U.S. dollars can be converted at airport currency exchange counters at reasonable exchange rates.

Namibia recently introduced a Value Added Tax. Third-party-liability insurance is required for all motor vehicles. This insurance is available locally for approximately US\$120 per year.

Traveler's checks can be used at hotels and banks, and major credit cards are accepted at most commercial establishments. Many ATM machines in Namibia accept U.S. ATM cards that are members of international syndicates (Cirrus, Plus, Honor, Interlink), issuing Namibian dollars at a reasonable exchange rate. The daily ATM maximum withdrawal is currently N\$1,500 (approximately US\$200) at most machines.

Namibia uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar. 21	Independence Day
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar/Apr	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr	Easter*
Mar/Apr	Easter Monday*
May 1	Worker's Day
May 4	Cassingda Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May 25	Africa Day
Aug. 26	Heroes' Day
Dec. 10	Human Rights Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Family Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

.These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on Namibia. In addition to the titles listed, a variety of travel guides on Namibia and neighboring countries is available at most bookstores and online booksellers.

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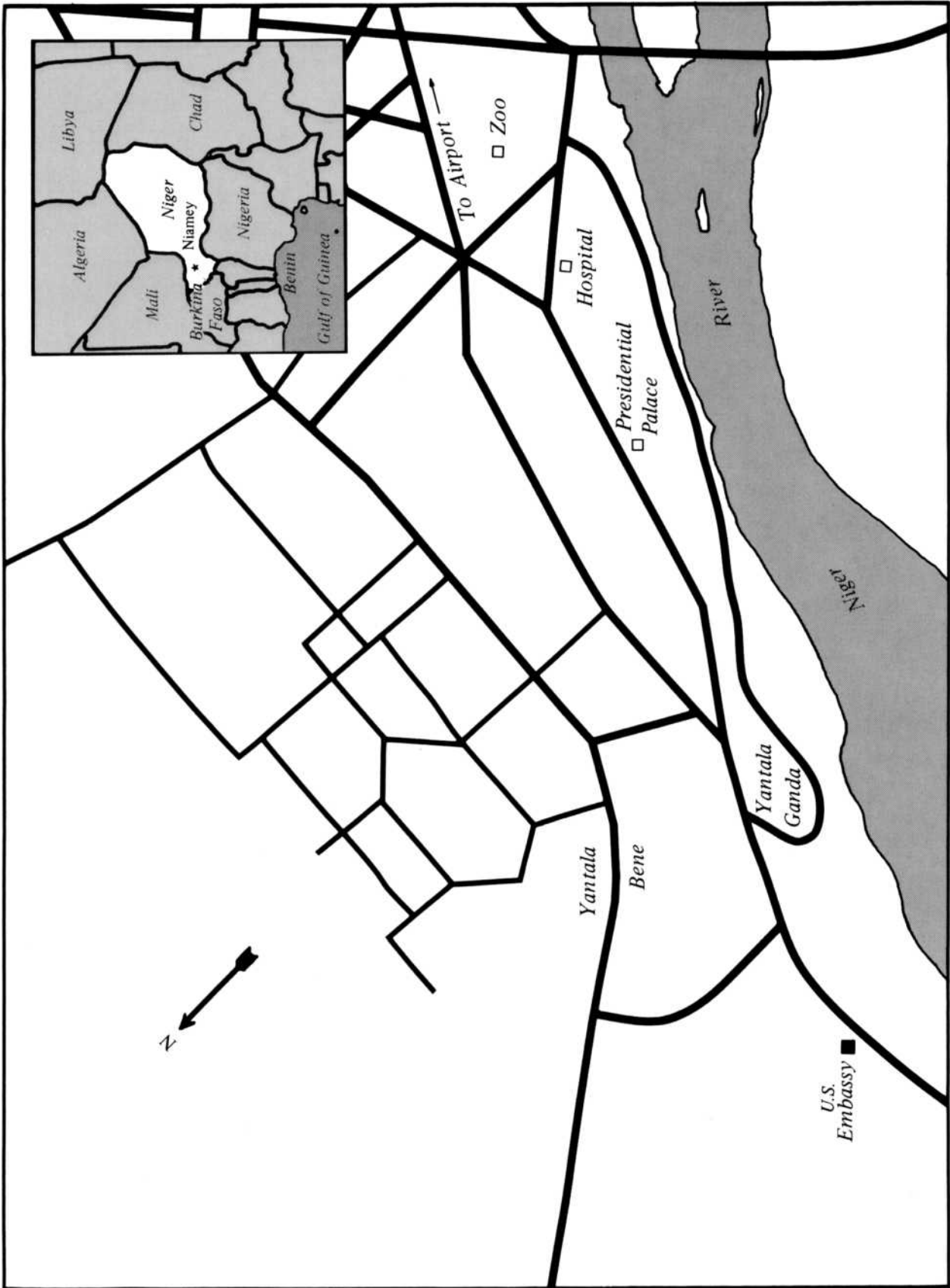
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Niamey, Niger

NIGER

Republic of Niger

Major City:

Niamey

Other Cities:

Agadez, Maradi, Tahoua, Zinder

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Bienvenue à Niamey! You'll soon see that Niamey is one of the most exotic capitals in Africa. Camels are spotted daily, carrying a jaunty rider, bundles of firewood, or piles of straw matting. The inhabitants are diverse—coastal West Africans, Tuaregs (the famed blue men of the desert), Arab traders, Hausa, Djerma, Songhai and Peuls—and all can be seen as you drive a short distance. Around town, traffic is light by West African standards. Most newcomers are surprised by how green the city and countryside can become in the rainy season. In the evening, you can pull up a seat on the terrace of the Grand Hotel overlooking the river, sip a cool drink,

and watch the sun sink colorfully below the horizon. Getting out of the city is easy too, and there are ample opportunities for day trips: picnicking along the Niger River; looking for giraffes just outside of town; playing on the sand dunes; or camping at the wildlife preserve—home to elephants, lions, buffalo, antelope, and exotic birds—less than three hours away.

MAJOR CITY

Niamey

Niamey, the capital and principal city of Niger, is in the southwest corner of the country on the banks of the Niger River. Since its selection as capital in 1925, its population has grown from 8,000 to about 587,000. The city's 4,000 Europeans, mostly French, are almost all involved in providing some kind of development assistance. Niamey covers 15.5 square kilometers (six square miles) and forms a triangle that borders the river. An abundance of trees gives the city a greenness that contrasts with the general aridity of the surrounding countryside.

Food

Local markets and grocery stores offer a good variety of seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables and imported canned goods and dairy products. Some fresh fruits and vegetables are imported, but most are grown locally, and prices for all imported goods are generally high. Beer, Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Youki (tonic), and Bulvit (soda water) are bottled locally, and availability is consistent.

Local beef, veal, pork, and lamb are plentiful; chickens, although tougher than those sold in the U.S., are tastier. A local white fish called "capitaine", a variety of Nile perch found in the Niger River, is plentiful and delicious. Bakeries sell French-style baguettes, delicious croissants, and some pastries, although the variety is limited and quality varies.

Clothing

Bring an ample supply of clothing to Niamey, as frequent washing and strong sunlight take a heavy toll. Shoes and sneakers tend to wear out quickly. Clothing selections should be made bearing in mind the informal dress standards of the community, the hot climate, and seasonal variations. Although dry cleaning is available, the quality of

service and the high cost limit its use, therefore, washable fabrics are preferable. Cotton is a good choice, as it will keep you cooler than synthetics. Despite fairly high daytime temperatures, during the cool season (November-February) evening temperatures sometimes drop low enough to require sweaters or lightweight jackets. Bring all sports clothes and gear with you, since the local supply is limited and expensive.

Women: A supply of washable summer clothing is recommended as is a good sun hat. Stockings are rarely worn, even during the cool season. Because sand is found virtually everywhere, closed shoes are highly recommended, however, sandals are frequently worn by both women and men. Shorts, jeans, and slacks are worn frequently by American and European women when socializing in the community. More modest attire (e.g., skirts or dresses that cover the knee, loose-fitting slacks, shirts that aren't too bare or form-fitting) is more culturally-appropriate and, therefore, recommended for around town.

Local tailors do satisfactory work on simple dresses, men's shirts, and safari-type suits as well as exceptional decorative embroidery. A variety of imported and local fabric is available, the latter being particularly popular for casual clothing.

Children: A generous supply of summer clothing is suggested. Smaller children may require several changes of clothing each day because of heat and dirt. Young boys tend to wear shorts rather than long pants most of the year, but jeans are popular as well. Plastic sandals are sold at reasonable prices, and small children wear them often.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: A few American-brand cosmetics and hair preparations are available locally but are expensive. Bring a supply of favorite soaps,

shampoos, toiletries, sunscreen, vitamins, and dry skin lotions which are highly-recommended.

Religious Activities

Most Nigeriens are Muslims, but there is a Roman Catholic church that holds services in French. In addition, there is an International Christian Fellowship, and English Protestant, English/French International Protestant, and French Assemblies of God worships. There are no scheduled Jewish services.

Education

Established in 1982, the American School of Niamey (ASN) is an independent coeducational day school offering a pre-kindergarten through ninth grade program. Correspondence study courses for high-school students have been made available from the U.S. upon request. The school year consists of two semesters that begin in late August and end in early June. The school is governed by a seven-member board of directors, six being elected by the ASN Association for one-year terms, and the seventh appointed by the U.S. Ambassador. Membership in the ASN Association is automatically given to the parents and guardians of students.

The curriculum is similar to those of U.S. public schools. Instruction is in English, but all grades receive significant French language instruction. In addition to language arts, reading, math, science, and social studies, the curriculum includes music, art, physical education, computers, and Nigerien studies. English as a second language is provided to students who are not already proficient. Standardized achievement tests are administered annually. ASN is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and maintains membership in the Association of International Schools in Africa. Most of the teachers are Americans, but there are British, Dutch, German, French, Canadian and Senegalese teachers as well.

The ASN facilities are some of the best in Africa. In September 1985, ASN moved into its new buildings located on U.S. government-owned property. The facility consists of two single-story, air-conditioned buildings with six classrooms, a science lab, and a multi-purpose room. An administration building houses the offices, a library, and a computer lab. Another building houses a music/art room, a storage room, and large rooms for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. The playground area includes softball and soccer fields, basketball and volleyball courts, and a swimming pool.

Parents of children wishing to enroll in the ASN should contact the school in advance. You may call the school at the following numbers: phone (227) 72-39-42, fax (227) 72-34-57.

The French lycée, *La Fontaine*, is subsidized by the French Ministry of Cooperation and staffed by competent French teachers. Some American students attend but no special provisions are made for non-French speakers. Several French language day care facilities are available for pre-school aged children.

Numerous extra-curricular activities such as, piano, modern ballet, judo, folk dancing, scouting, swimming, and French classes are available for children. Classes in horseback riding and jumping for beginners as well as advanced riders are held at local riding clubs. Private tennis lessons are also available.

Sports

Softball is very popular, and weekly games are held every Saturday afternoon. American Embassies throughout West Africa host several tournaments during the year. These tournaments provide great pleasure for players and supporters alike, giving them the opportunity to travel to another country taking advantage of group refires. Pickup basketball games are also scheduled



Camel carrying woven millet in Niamey, Niger

Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

twice a week. Both men and women participate in all sports.

People seriously interested in horseback riding might want to consider purchasing a horse locally; prices are usually reasonable. The riding style is European, and riders must provide their own tack. Other sporting opportunities include the Niamey golf club at Rio Bravo which has an 18-hole course and sand "browns"; the "Hash House Harriers" which is a weekly international running club and; a health and fitness club at the Stadium where regular aerobics classes are held.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Though no real change of climate and scenery can be found within a day's drive of Niamey, some interesting excursions can be made by car or plane. Docile and magnificent, the last herd of giraffes in West Africa

can be found just outside of Niamey, about a 45-minute drive away. Since they roam a vast area, it is recommended that you hire one of the inexpensive registered guides to help you locate them. This trip is one of the most popular ways to spend a weekend morning.

Park "W" is a wildlife preserve located in the extreme southwest part of Niger, flanked by Burkina Faso and Benin. At the edge of the park is a good hotel open all year, or if you prefer to camp, sleeping bags and blankets are available. The best time to visit Park "W" is during the cooler season (from November to March) when elephants, gazelles, baboons, water buck, an occasional lion, and other animals visit the water holes along the river. The preserve can be reached by car in about two hours, but most people stay overnight to be at the water holes by early light. At nearby Arly and Penjari Parks are camps which provide

sleeping accommodations and meals if prior arrangements are made in Niamey.

The Niamey Museum is considered one of the best in West Africa. Original and attractive in conception, it combines traditional exhibits with village reproductions of the major Nigerien ethnic groups. There are working artisans on the grounds whose products can be bought in the Museum gift shop. A small zoo, housing animals native to Niger, is also located at the Museum.

Fishing is possible in the Niger River, but the danger of many serious diseases prevents most people from swimming and water skiing. For more than half of the year, the Niger River is high enough for boating and there is enough wind for sailing. Some families rent a "concession" along the river for a weekend getaway and change of scenery. Bird-watching is also a popular



Minaret in Agadez, Niger

Courtesy of United Nations

activity in Niamey. Hunting is banned in Niger, but is permitted in Burkina Faso.

Entertainment

Air-conditioned and open-air movie theaters show European (mainly French), American, and Indian

films. Non-French films are dubbed in French.

The Franco-Nigerien Cultural Center has several activities a week, including films and art exhibits as well as occasional folk music, dancing, and performances by traveling theater troupes. The USIS Cultural

Center occasionally sponsors programs of interest to the American community.

Niamey has restaurants serving West African, French, Italian, Vietnamese, Russian, Chinese, and Lebanese cuisine as well as some snack bars specializing in brochettes or

hamburgers and fries. Pizza is available, although a bit different than the familiar American-style. Niamey has several lively discotheques featuring a variety of danceable music.

Social Activities

Among travelers, social life is informal and relaxed. Although Niger is a Muslim country, there are no special limitations for the foreign community regarding food or drink. As for dress, although not strictly enforced, women are expected to dress modestly. Opportunities in Niamey to meet and associate with diverse people are limited only by the interest and initiative of the individual and, in many cases, by the ability and willingness to speak French.

Apart from those already mentioned, a variety of clubs and activities are also available, including the American Women's Club of Niamey (which welcomes members of all nationalities) and sponsors a variety of events throughout the year and; the Rotary International and Lion's Club which are active in Niamey and open to both men and women of all nationalities (bring a letter of introduction from your home club) and; there is an international chorus and ensemble that rehearses and performs regularly.

OTHER CITIES

AGADEZ (also spelled Agadès) is situated in the central region of Niger, 460 miles northeast of the capital. Agadez is an ancient city, dating to the 15th century. It has a limited tourist trade but offers magnificent sights. It also is a marketplace for livestock, vegetables, and grain. The population is estimated to be 50,200, although it rises during the cool, dry season.

MARADI is a city of approximately 113,000 located in south Niger, near the border with Nigeria. The city was destroyed by floods in 1945, but

rebuilt on higher ground. It is on the main road connecting Niamey with Zinder. A major road also connects it with Kano, Nigeria. Maradi is the administrative and commercial center for an agricultural region specializing in peanut growing and goat raising. Peanut and cotton-processing are the primary industries. The city has a technical college and a center for research on poultry and goat breeding.

TAHOUA, a largely traditional town of about 51,600 (2000 est.), is about 225 miles northeast of Niamey. It is a farming community and trade center frequented by tribes of Tuareg and Fulani nomads. The Tuareg number about 300,000, and are unique because men are veiled and women are unveiled. Descent and inheritance are gained through the female line. Gypsum and phosphate are mined near Tahoua, and a teaching training school is located in the city.

ZINDER is located in southwest Niger, near the border of Nigeria. The city is an administrative center and Niger's second largest city. It is situated on the old trans-Saharan caravan route that connected northern Nigeria with the African coast as early as the 11th century. Zinder's history dates back to the 16th century, when the walled town was the capital of the Muslim state ruled by the Bornu, and remained that way until it was conquered by the French in 1899. The town grew rapidly after 1920 when nomads settled in the area, and served as the capital of the French Niger Colony from 1922 to 1926. Parts of the old walled city and the 19th-century palace of the ruler of Zinder still stand. Today, Zinder is a trade center for agriculture; grains and peanuts are grown and cattle and sheep are raised. It also manufactures millet, flour, beverages, and tanned goods. The population is approximately 120,900.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Niger covers 1,268,550 square kilometers (490,000 square miles) and is larger than Texas and California combined. Landlocked, it is bordered by seven countries—Algeria and Libya to the north, Chad to the east, Nigeria and Benin to the south, Burkina Faso to the southwest, and Mali to the west. Niger is in the heart of the Sahel, the transitional zone between the tropical West African coast and the Sahara Desert. Northern Niger is part of the Sahara, with vast expanses of rocky and sandy wilderness broken only by occasional oases. "Sahel" actually means border in Arabic. From north-central Niger to its northeast corner are the Air and Djado mountains with peaks rising to 1,850 meters (6,000 feet) while partially arable savannah is found south of the 15th parallel. Niger's capital city, Niamey, sits next to the Niger River, the 12th longest in the world and the third largest river in Africa, which flows through much of West Africa.

Niamey's climate varies with distinct seasons. April and May are the hottest months, with noontime temperatures often rising above 48°C (118°F) in the shade. Direct sunlight is intense during this period, and at night temperatures remain above 20°C (80°F). In June, the first rains come to the usually parched landscape and with them the planting of millet and sorghum, the major food crops. Niamey gets on average 55.8 centimeters (22 inches) of rainfall between May and September, normally in short torrential downpours preceded by high winds and dust or sandstorms. At this time, the surrounding countryside takes on a verdant hue as the crops and the native grasses begin to grow. The rainy season is followed by a short period of hot, humid

weather during October during which temperatures range between 15°C (60°F) and 45°C (112°F).

From November to March, the weather is dry and pleasant. During this season, clear days are interspersed with hazy, overcast skies caused by the *harmattan*—a hot, dry wind carrying dust from the Sahara. Normally, the winds stay at high altitudes, creating slightly overcast skies; the *harmattan*, however, occasionally causes localized dust storms.

Population

An estimated 10.3 million people live in Niger. The Hausa, whose territory extends into northern Nigeria, predominate in the central portion of the country and are about 56 percent of Niger's population. They are mainly traders and farmers. The Djerma, who are approximately 22 percent of the population, are traditionally farmers. They are an ethnic subgroup of the Songhai people, whose great kingdom in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries embraced what is now eastern Mali and western Niger. Because Niger's capital city is in their homeland, the Djerma influence has been strong in the central government, especially since independence. The Fulanis (called Peuls in French) and Tuar-egs, who are typically nomadic or semi-nomadic herdsmen, and the Beri-Beri (also known as Kanouri) who are found in the Lake Chad region, are the next largest population groups.

About 90 percent of Nigeriens live within 161 kilometers (100 miles) of the country's southern border. Most live in rural areas away from good roads and more than 75 percent are subsistence farmers who grow millet and sorghum for food and peanuts, cotton, and cowpeas as cash crops.

Although French is the official and administrative language, Hausa is more widely spoken throughout the country. English is a required language in secondary schools, and

some Nigeriens speak English functionally well. However, French is necessary for shopping, social life, and most professional contacts and Djerma, even the most basic of greetings, goes a long way in the Niamey markets.

The majority of Nigeriens are Muslim and religion is a dominant force in their daily lives. A sense of tradition, fatalism, strong family connections, consideration, and tolerance for others characterize the typical Nigerien's approach to the world. Polygamy is widely practiced and families are generally large. Niger's population is growing at about 3 percent a year.

Government

After adoption of a new constitution, which established the Third Republic in December 1992, Niger conducted its first multiparty presidential and legislative elections in 1993. A coalition of eight parties joined to elect Mahamane Ousmane as President. International observers judged both elections to be free and fair. There are two major coalitions, each composed of several parties, which share executive and legislative power.

In January 1996, Colonel Ibrahim Bare Mainassara overthrew the government in a bloodless coup. Within six months, his regime drafted a new constitution that provided for a stronger presidency. It was approved in a national referendum in May 1996.

In 1999, Niger returned to a democratic government. Mamadou Tandja was elected president. His prime minister is Hama Amadou.

The Government maintains and promotes an open economic system and has a free-trade policy. Niger welcomes foreign investment. Several industrial enterprises are parastatals wholly- or partially-owned by the government. The government has made some headway in restruc-

turing but would like to move much further toward privatization.

One of the most important roles of the Government is to attract investment to help stimulate economic growth. While donor organizations have provided most of the capital budget in the past, today, private sector financing is increasingly sought, especially in the mining sector.

There are numerous development projects funded by multilateral and bilateral donors, including the World Bank and The African Development Bank, all the United Nations agencies, such as UNDP and UNICEF, as well as foreign assistance from the U.S., France, the European Economic Community (EEC), Germany, and other countries. This money was suspended, however, following a coup in 1999. A loan for \$35 million was approved in 2000 by the World Bank to aid economic reforms.

Commerce and Industry

Niger's industrial sector is a small component of the national economy. An enclave uranium industry generates substantial employment and revenue for the government, but it has few linkages with the rest of the economy. Modern production facilities are concentrated in Niamey and in Arlit, the uranium-producing area. State-owned or recently privatized manufacturing companies produce cloth, dairy products, soaps, perfumes, biscuits, and beer. The largest industrial entity is the electric power supply public utility. Talented artisans produce mats, baskets, pottery goods, furniture, farm tools, leather goods, and are especially known for their silver jewelry. Artisanal production takes place throughout the country.

Trade, especially long-distance trade, is the traditional route to wealth in Niger. Trading opportunities today are in the importation of manufactured goods from Nigeria,

Ivory Coast, Europe, and Asia and in the exportation of cloth, unprocessed agricultural products, and livestock to neighboring countries. Uranium is purchased by foreign corporations, especially French, participating in the mining operation.

Retail trade in Niamey is concentrated in two public markets, private shops in the central section of town, and shops in the residential areas. Fresh food products are sold at retail at a public, open-air market called the *Petit Marché* (Little Market). Other consumer goods are sold at an enclosed market, the *Grand Marché* (Big Market), where private traders rent stalls or shops. A wide variety of products, from television sets to matches, are sold under the shade trees in central Niamey. Markets outside Niamey are generally held weekly and are places where local agricultural products and livestock products are exchanged for food, clothing, household supplies, and cash.

About 90 percent of Niger's population earns its living in agricultural pursuits. Productivity and incomes are low, even by African standards, and most households can afford only basic needs. The market for more expensive consumer goods is limited to the higher-salaried civil servants, a small class of Nigerien entrepreneurs, and the foreign community residents concentrated in Niamey. The high prices of most imported consumer goods, reflecting high transportation costs and import duties, put them out of reach for most Nigerien households.

Transportation

Local

Private taxis in Niamey are numerous and inexpensive. There is also a long-distance bus system that services main routes which is only used by a few Americans.

Regional

International flights are available to capitals of neighboring francophone countries and to Europe. Niamey is a six-hour flight from Paris. Currently, the major foreign flag airlines servicing Niamey are Air Afrique, Air France, Royal Air Maroc, and Ethiopian Airlines. Air travel is expensive in Africa—a ticket from Niamey to Paris costs about 50 percent more than a ticket from Paris to New York. There is currently no scheduled local air service to Niger's major cities.

Niger's road network, totaling approximately 10,000 kilometers, is still rudimentary and the country has about 2,500 kilometers of paved inter-urban roads. A paved road extends west-east from Tillabéri through Niamey to Nguigmi, near Lake Chad. A second major paved road links Niamey through Agadez to the uranium mining region of Arlit. Stretches of washboard surfaces alternate with drifted sand and dirt, and some sections are inaccessible during part of the rainy season. Niamey itself has paved roads linking sections of the city, although, most houses are serviced by dirt roads.

Communications

Telephone, Fax, and Telegraph

Niamey has adequate telephone, telegraph, and fax facilities. Direct-dial is possible from Niamey to Europe, the U.S., and other parts of Africa (excluding 800 numbers and collect calls), but is very expensive. A direct-dial call from the U.S. to Niger is less than half the cost of a call the other way around. Individuals coming to Niamey should explore U.S. dial-back telephone services.

Radio and TV

Radio Niger (ORTN) broadcasts in French and in local languages (primarily Hausa and Djerma) from morning to night on medium and shortwave channels. Voice of Amer-

ica (VOA) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reception is also good. There are private stations and Radio France International (RFI) on FM that broadcast in French. Battery-operated radios may be used, but others must be able to operate on 220v current or have a step-down transformer.

The Nigerien Government operates a single-channel national TV network seven evenings a week. Most of the programs are educational and are broadcast in the various languages of the country. Each day's programming normally includes one film or sports event of French origin. U.S.-manufactured TV sets will not receive broadcasts from the Niger TV station. Niger's color TV system is SECAM D/K. (Note: It is **not** the SECAM L system which is the system used in France).

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The government publishes a daily newspaper, *Le Sahel*, in French, which covers selected local, African, and international news. There are also six additional private newspapers, some published daily and others weekly. Most well-known international periodicals can be bought in Niamey, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Le Monde*, *Le Point*, *Jeune Afrique*, *The Economist*, and the *International Herald Tribune*.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

A small French clinic, the Gamkalle Clinic, is used for emergency care, hospitalizations, consultation and x-rays. Specialists in Niamey are used occasionally.

Dental care in Niamey is minimal. Basic, uncomplicated care is available from a dentist at the Gamkalle Clinic (who is usually a French citizen performing the service in lieu of military duty and transfers every 15 months) or from a private

dental office. Have a thorough dental exam and any necessary work completed prior to arrival.

Community Health

Infectious diseases pose serious health hazards in Niger, malaria being one of the most threatening. Chloroquine-resistant malaria prevails, and you must always be on the preventive alert. Current recommended chemical prophylaxis calls for weekly doses of Mefloquine, weekly doses of Chloroquine (Aralen) combined with daily doses of Paludrine, or daily doses of Doxycycline. Paludrine, although currently not available in the U.S., is available at post. Meningitis is seasonally reported and vaccination is recommended every three years.

Poor hygiene detrimentally impacts health as intestinal parasites (amoeba and giardia) abound. Meticulous treatment of water and fresh produce is required to avoid intestinal diseases. Respiratory infections, allergies, skin infections, and fatigue are common problems. Niger has a harsh environment and good health requires, at the very minimum, a conscientious effort and commitment on everyone's part.

Preventive Measures

The following immunizations are required before leaving for Niamey: yellow fever, typhoid, polio, meningitis, and hepatitis A and B. You should also have annual tuberculin skin tests. Malaria suppressants are a necessity and should be started at least two weeks before you arrive, continued for the duration of your tour, during any travel, and for four weeks after final departure. Bring a good first-aid kit as well as over-the-counter drug supplies, sun screen, insect repellent, and an ample supply of prescription drugs. Mosquito netting for beds is recommended.

Niamey has a water treatment plant, but it is ineffective. Water should be filtered first and then boiled for five minutes. Soak

unpeelable raw fruits and vegetables in a bleach solution and then rinse with potable water before eating. All local meats should be well-cooked (*bien cuit* in French).

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A visa is required. Travelers should obtain the latest information on customs and entry requirements from the Embassy of the Republic of Niger, 2204 R Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 483-4224. Overseas inquiries should be made at the nearest Nigerien embassy or consulate.

Travel in the northern and far eastern areas of Niger is dangerous and should only be undertaken by air or protected convoy. Despite the peace agreement between the government of Niger and the Tuareg rebel groups, there is a continuing threat of sporadic armed conflict and violent banditry. U.S. Government personnel and contractors wishing to travel above a line connecting (West to East) the communities of Tera, Tillaberi, Ouallam, Filingue, Tahoua, Keita, Bouza, Dakoro, Tanout, and Nguigmi must receive permission from the U.S. Ambassador through the Embassy's Regional Security Office. Areas in Niger's far east are also prone to sporadic violence.

Tourists are free to take pictures anywhere in Niger, except near military installations, radio and television stations, the Presidency Building, and the airport.

Pets should have a valid rabies certificate (within one year, but before 30 days, of departure for post) and a certificate of good health dated within 15 days of arrival. Be sure to check with the airline you are using since rules may vary.

The local currency is the CFA (Communauté Financière Africaine) franc,

which is pegged to the euro at the rate of 655.957:1. The same currency is used throughout Francophone West Africa. Banks with local branches in Niamey include the Bank of Africa (BAO) and the International Bank of West Africa (BIAO).

Weights and measures in Niger are based on the metric system. Temperatures are reported in Celsius. Niamey is six standard time zones ahead of E.S.T. (G.M.T. plus one).

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Niamey on Rue Des Ambassades, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Niger. The mailing address is B.P. 11201. The telephone numbers are (227) 72-26-61 through 72-26-64. The fax number is (227) 73-31-67.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
Aug. 3	Independence Day
Dec. 18	Republic Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following books and films are recommended for anyone wishing to get a taste of Niger.

Africa South of the Sahara 1992.
London: Europa Publications Limited, 1991.

Charlick, Robert B. *Niger: Personal Rule and Survival in the Sahel*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991.

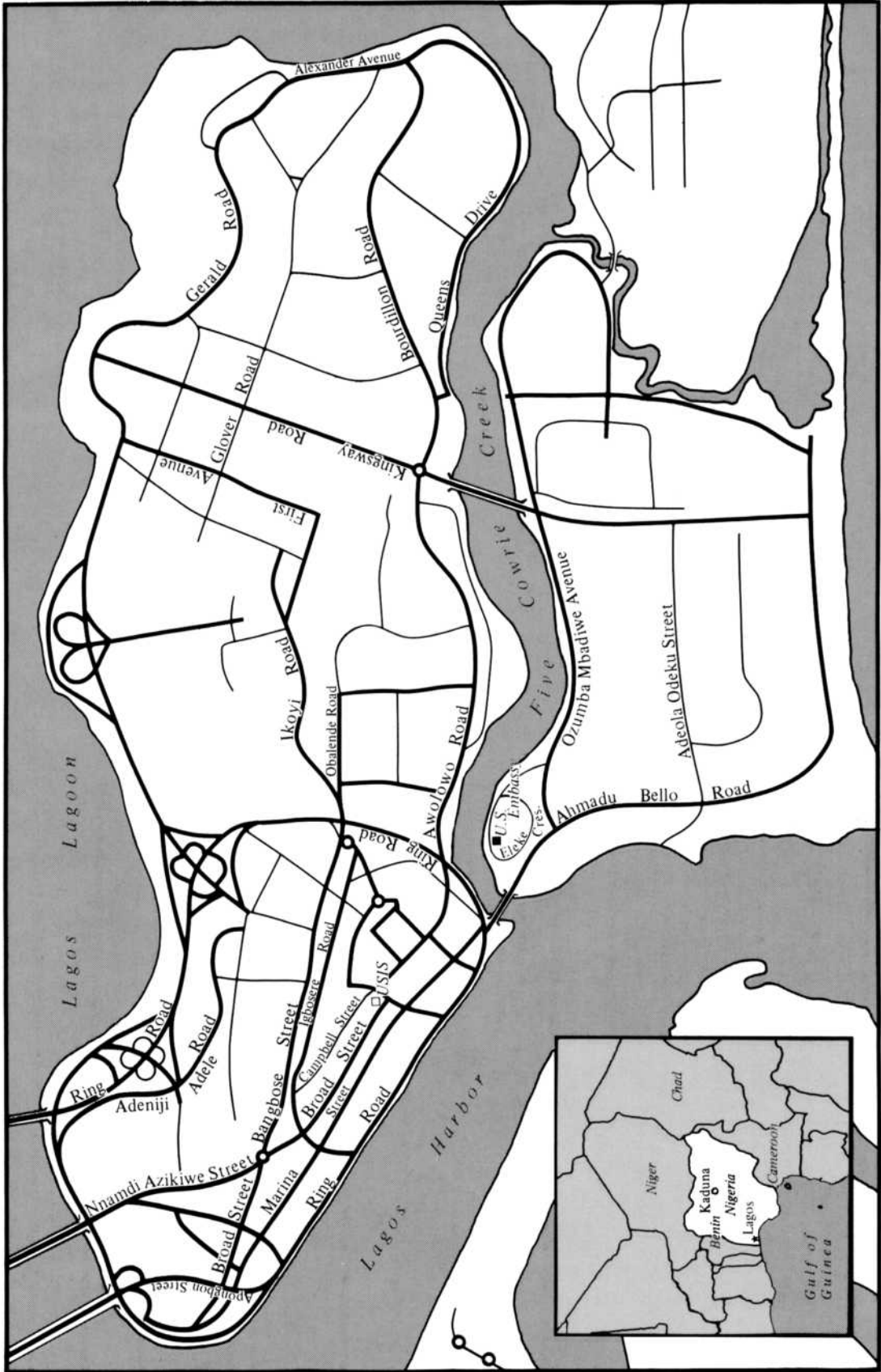
Decalo, Samuel. *Historical*

Dictionary of Niger. 2nd ed. African Historical Dictionaries, no. 20. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1989.

Discovery Guide to West Africa by

Kim Naylor and Michael Haag.

Fuglestad, Finn. *A History of Niger, 1850–1960*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.



Lagos, Nigeria

NIGERIA

Federal Republic of Nigeria

Major Cities:

Lagos, Abuja, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano, Enugu

Other Cities:

Aba, Abeokuta, Ado, Benin City, Bonny, Calabar, Ede, Ife, Ilesha, Ilorin, Iseyin, Iwo, Katsina, Maiduguri, Ogbomoso, Onitsha, Oshogbo, Oyo, Port Harcourt, Zaria

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a large and energetic country, striving to revive an economy that has been battered by a slump in oil prices and a lack of political unity. About the size of Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi combined, its population of 122 million is the highest in Africa, and the tenth largest in the world. Nigeria's status and influence in West Africa and throughout the continent remain strong, as does its global voice. This international position is derived from its size, its prospect for economic stability, and its determined pursuit of an autonomous political course.

Since becoming an independent nation in 1960 with aspirations of a

democratic society, Nigeria has experienced the same evolutionary problems as did the United States in its early history. Regional rivalries, economic and ethnic differences, secessionist movements, civil war, and periodic unrest have all occurred. Since gaining independence from Great Britain, Nigeria has experienced many shifts between civilian and military government rule. Nigeria's evolving institutions are endeavoring to cope with the strains of a still-emerging nation.

MAJOR CITIES

Lagos

Nigeria is a federation containing some 250 linguistic groups and nearly as many tribes. The large variety of customs, languages, and traditions continues to give the country a rich diversity.

In the 17th through 19th centuries, European traders established coastal ports for the increasing traffic in slaves destined for the Americas. Commodity trade, especially in palm oil and timber, replaced slave trade in the 19th century.

Following the Napoleonic wars, the British expanded their trade with the Nigerian interior. In 1885, British claims to a sphere of influence in that area received international recognition, and in the following year, the royal Niger Company was chartered. In 1900, the company's territory came under the control of the British Government, and in 1914, the area was formally united as the "Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria."

After World War II, in response to the growth of Nigerian nationalism and demands for independence, the British Government moved Nigeria toward self-government on a representative, increasingly Federal, basis. It was granted full independence in October 1960.

Since 1960, the government has changed many times, but only two civilians have ruled during the 35 years of independence, for a total of about 10 years. In 1993, Nigeria held presidential elections, which most observers deemed to be the fairest in its history. Election results were annulled by the military ruler, who then turned over power to a non-partisan technocrat to rule until new elections in February 1994. In November 1993, the military took over again with promises of handing over to a civilian. After successfully consolidating

power, the military government later announced that a “constitutional conference” would examine and recommend the best way to restore democracy in Nigeria. The process of restoring democracy has been slow and continues to be a source of concern to the international community.

The most populous country in Africa, and one of the most richly-endowed with natural resources in the world, Nigeria accounts for one-quarter of sub-Saharan Africa’s people. The economy has declined precipitously in recent years, down from the oil boom of the 1970’s, subjecting most Nigerians to increasing hardships.

Lagos, situated on Nigeria’s southwest coast, is a sprawling metropolitan area with an estimated population of 13.5 million (2000 est.). The bustling, noisy, and congested city covers four major islands—Lagos, Iddo, Victoria, and Ikoyi—and several mainland towns, including Apapa, Yaba, Surulere, and Ikeja. Apapa is the location of Africa’s busiest port; Lagos Island is the center of business activity and government offices; and Victoria Island is the location of many embassies, including the American Embassy.

Food

Most families may find that they miss some food items available at home but there are several stores on the islands which specialize in American food products. The availability of items, however, is affected by factors such as accommodation exchange fluctuations, transportation or customs clearance. Prices of imports from other countries vary according to item and country of origin, but most are within reasonable limits for the average American budget. These imported items come from a variety of countries including several in Europe and Asia and include canned, bottled and occasionally frozen goods. Prices tend to change from day to day.

Most locally-produced goods, such as cookies, are somewhat cheaper

than U.S.-made products. Locally-bottled soft drinks (Coke, 7-Up, Pepsi, Sprite, orange soda, Bitter Lemon) and beer are less expensive although the soft drinks are sweeter than they are in the U.S. Many Americans shop in local grocery stores or butcher shops for meats, soft drinks, and some imported household products. While some food products are of good quality, many locally-produced processed goods (fruit, juice, coffee, canned goods, margarine, and yogurt) are not up to U.S. standards. Good bread and rolls, while somewhat more expensive, may be found in bakeries catering to foreigners and in some grocery stores.

Outdoor markets or vegetable stalls are the main source of fresh eggs, fruits, vegetables, and fish. The variety of products available in these local markets fluctuates. Some individuals venture a 20-minute drive across the bridge to Apapa on the mainland to obtain lower prices and fresher fish, as well as meat, fruits, and vegetables. However, fruit and vegetable stands abound on both Ikoyi and Victoria Islands. All prices in the markets and stalls are subject to bargaining. Eggs are always available in open markets and are usually fresh, but all eggs should be checked before use. Grocery store eggs are usually not fresh and should not be bought unless they have been refrigerated.

Quality and availability of fruits and vegetables vary according to season. Bananas, pineapples, pawpaw (papaya), and citrus fruits are almost always available and of good quality. Mangoes and guavas are available when in season. The lettuce grown locally is very good as are the tomatoes. Other local vegetables found in season are cucumbers, carrots, green beans, avocados, eggplants, onions, potatoes, parsley, peppers, spinach, cabbage, bread fruit, and cauliflower. A large variety of beans are also available locally.

Beef, chicken, mutton, pork, and goat meat are available locally, although some items, particularly

beef, may be tough. Some local products (e.g., baby food) may be suspect.

Some dairy products are available in local food stores, such as reconstituted long-life (UHT) milk, powdered milk, butter, margarine and cheese. American ice cream products such as Carnation brand can be found in a number of food stores which cater to expatriate tastes. Supplies of imported products such as New Zealand lamb, butter, long-life milk, and European margarine and cheese are also available. Fresh milk is sometimes available locally, but should not be consumed.

Clothing

Clothing worn in the Mid-Atlantic in the summer is suitable for Lagos. The weather is hot and humid year round, and some places are not air-conditioned. Bring a large wardrobe of washable summer wear, preferably cotton, which is more comfortable than most synthetic materials. Bring some warm clothing for trips to colder climates. Shoes are available locally and some Americans find them satisfactory. Nigerians are generally well-dressed for social and business functions so a good supply of dressy clothing may be useful.

Local fabric is plentiful, and some imported material can be found. High-quality imported fabrics for clothing, drapery and upholstery are available. Some local designers do beautiful work in fabric they dye themselves. Local tailors are readily available and do some very creative work in designing clothes or copying designs from pictures in magazines or catalogs. Ready-made clothing is available, but the variety and supply are very limited and often more expensive than buying from U.S. sources.

Hats, though not worn with street dress, are needed for protection from the sun at sports and at other outdoor events. Nigerian women wear hats to most local church services and also to local weddings, christenings, and other social functions. Hats are available locally but

there is only a small selection and they are very expensive. Gloves are seldom worn at social functions by foreign women. Some people use selected local dry-cleaning facilities, but the service is uneven and a few have experienced damaged clothing. Washable clothes are preferred.

A washable lightweight raincoat, rain hat, boots, and umbrella are very useful in the rainy season.

Men: Shorts are worn for outdoor activities. Washable suits (especially those with two pairs of trousers) are practical. White suits are seldom worn. Local tailors can make native-style shirts and trousers.

Women: For daytime outdoor wear most women prefer light cotton dresses. Seasonal change is slight, but wear and tear is considerable. Cottons are appropriate for office and daytime social activities, and dressier dresses, sun dresses, or long caftans are worn for evening events. Nigerians wear beautiful native dress to most social events and to important occasions such as weddings and christenings. Summer-weight slacks are worn for informal gatherings. Shorts are usually worn only at expatriate functions. Women's shoes are available locally but require a visit to the open market and may not be up to American standards. Rubber beach thongs and tennis shoes are available locally.

Children: Children need a good supply of washable clothing. Bring a good supply of children's shoes, especially sneakers and sandals. Local supplies are not adequate.

The American International School does not require uniforms. Girls' clothing ranges from dresses to shorts and jeans, with sneakers or sandals. Boys may wear T-shirts with shorts, jeans or slacks, sandals, and sneakers, which are needed for gym class. Shorts are worn most of the time, but long pants are worn on occasion. Bring a few dressy items for children. Junior high students often have dances which require dresses for girls and slacks for boys.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Imported supplies on the local market are often limited, unreliable, and usually very difficult to find when needed. The sun is intense so a good supply of sun screening location should be brought with you.

Basic Services: Tailoring and shoe repair services are available but the final products are not commensurate with America standards. Dry cleaning services are available but the quality is not good. Hairdressers and barbershops offer basic services but it is best if you have your own hair care products for them to use. There are a number of beauty and hair salons that have recently opened up on the islands.

Religious Activities

The following churches conduct service in English: Anglican (weekly), Baptist (weekly), Lutheran (weekly), and Catholic (daily at several churches). A nondenominational service is currently being held weekly at a local restaurant on Victoria Island and a daytime bible study group meets weekly. Lagos has no synagogues or orthodox churches, but does have few mosques that serves the community in English. Dates and times of all services can be obtained from the CLO.

Education

The American International School of Lagos (AISL) is located on Victoria Island. AISL is a co-educational school for students in Kindergarten through Grade 9. It follows an American curriculum and has been affiliated with the Tacoma, Washington School District since 1965. The majority of the teachers at AISL are on leave of absence from Tacoma, although a number of other Americans, or American-trained teachers of other nationalities, with permanent residence in Nigeria, are also on the professional teaching staff at AISL. AISL has also established a secondary school-to-school partnership with the Klein School District in Houston, Texas. Recently the Office of Overseas Schools and

the Allowances Staff has determined that an away-from-post allowance can be provided for Grade 9. Parents have the option to send their child to boarding school for Grade 9 or enrolling them in AISL. Students of high-school age (grades 10-12) have the option remain in Lagos and study by correspondence courses, but most go away to school.

The school year extends from late August to early June with a 3-week break at Christmas and a 10-day break at Easter. The school day is 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 and continues to 2:10 p.m. for students in Grades 7 to 9. AERA is currently providing transportation for children of all American employees. Each child entering AISL for the first time is charged a one-time building fund assessment. Advance registration is advisable. *AISL does not have the facilities for gifted students or students with special educational needs.* For more information on AISL, admission policies and requirements, and curriculum and course descriptions, please contact the school. You may write to:

Superintendent, American International School Lagos,
U.S. Department of State, Lagos
Washington, D.C. 20521-8300
Telephone (234) (1) 262-0775,
261-7793
Fax (234) (1) 261-7794

AISL has a good library with over 20,500 volumes and two science laboratories. Its resources include audiovisual equipment and related teaching aids. The school is equipped with computers. All children from Kindergarten through Grade 9 are given computer instruction. The regular daily physical education program is supplemented by an after-school activities program, run by parent volunteers and the teaching faculty. The school also has a gymnasium which seats over 700 people and a 25-meter, six-lane pool. The school employs a full-time nurse. Testing, placement, and counseling services are provided, and U.S.-recognized standardized tests are given.

Other elementary schools (e.g., French, British) in Lagos and on the mainland are open to American children, if space is available.

Several day nurseries or pre-schools are available for small children. AISL offers a pre-school program for four-year olds, but usually has a waiting list. Early enrollment is recommended. The fees at AISL are higher than in the other pre-schools in Lagos.

A pre-school called the American Parents Cooperative Playcenter offers an American enrichment program for 2-1/2 to 4 year olds several mornings per week. The Playcenter also has a waiting list for new students. It was originally co-founded as a cooperative of parents in 1986 by expatriates from the U.S. Embassy and Gulf Oil Company.

Special Educational Opportunities

Very few formal educational opportunities are available in Lagos for adults or children. Universities are often closed with striking teachers. Private instruction is available in several fields, especially in foreign languages. Courses are available in French at the Alliance Francaise, in German at the Goethe Institute, and in Italian at the Italian Cultural Center. Some private institutions will teach local languages and culture. Instruction in tennis, swimming, music, and exercise is offered either by individuals or through AISL if qualified teachers are available. The American Women's Club has several groups that pursue and develop hobbies, interests and skills. The National Museum offers seminars in local art, language and culture at times.

There are no schools or facilities in Lagos which offer educational opportunities for mentally or physically handicapped children, for those with learning disabilities or for children who require a gifted program.

Sports

Many sports are available in Lagos. Sporting activities constitute an



Courtesy of Kenneth Decker

One of many mosques in Abuja, Nigeria

important part of life in the Tropics. Softball, volleyball, soccer, golf, squash, ping-pong, swimming, and tennis are all popular in Lagos. Sports equipment, when available, is expensive in Nigeria.

Swimming is a year-round activity. Lagos has several beaches, but few are safe for swimming.

The nearby ocean, creeks, and lagoons afford many opportunities for deep-sea fishing, sailing and motorboating. It is possible to buy used boats, but motors are often a problem. Sailing is also popular.

Bicycling opportunities are limited. Bicycles are expensive in Nigeria.

An International running group, the Hash House Harriers, sponsors weekly runs and is a means for social get-togethers. Some people jog around the islands after work. As is common in this part of the world, soccer (or "football," as it is called in Nigeria) is a popular spectator sport. Tennis and polo matches are held frequently.

Private clubs offer a variety of sports and social contacts. A waiting list for membership is common. The Ikoyi Club has mainly expatriate members and offers a variety of sports, including golf, tennis, ping-

pong, badminton and squash. Two large swimming pools and a children's pool provide opportunity for swimming. The club also has a restaurant and bar.

The Polo Club affords its members the chance to ride as well as board horses. Riders are always needed to exercise the numerous horses boarded at the club. The restaurant and bar offer opportunities for social contacts within the Nigerian business community. You don't have to ride to be a member. There is also a Saddle Club in Ikeja for those interested in ordinary riding. They often sponsor several hour-long rides in the area.

The Lagos Lawn and Tennis Club offers tennis and squash; most members are Nigerian. Serious tennis players tend to prefer this club. Color tennis outfits are acceptable.

Two boat clubs are the Lagos Yacht Club, where members are required to sail on a regular basis, and the Lagos Motorboat Club, where the waiting list for membership is long.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring within Nigeria is for the adventurous. The traffic is heavy, the roads poor, and overnight and rest facilities very limited. Travel-

ers should always carry water, food and a first aid kit with them. Overnight stops require advance arrangements for food and lodging, a task that is very difficult to accomplish with the present telecommunication system. Travel to the north in Nigeria offers a change of scenery, climate and culture and some major cities do have adequate accommodations.

Lagos has no playgrounds or parks as we know them. The University of Ibadan has a small zoo and a botanical garden, but the animals are in very poor physical condition. The National Museum in Lagos has an adequate and well-arranged collection of antiquities from all parts of Nigeria, an interesting depiction of Nigeria's political history since independence, and a crafts center.

The Nigerian Field Society, an excursion group mainly for expatriates, has a low membership fee and is open to anyone. This Society, in existence for many years, offers field trips lasting from one day to one week to places within Nigeria. It also organizes seminars to educate members about the African environment.

Outside Lagos, interesting places include:

- *Badagry.* About 50 miles west of Lagos on the inland waterway in Nigeria, this port flourished in slave-trading days. You still can see remnants of the barracoons where slaves were held before transport to the New World. Market Day, held once a week, is quite colorful.
- *Porto Novo and Cotonou, Benin.* Porto Novo and Cotonou, Benin's capital, are 2 to 3 hours' drive from Lagos. Good restaurants, a Sheraton Hotel, a new Novotel Hotel and shopping are available in Cotonou, as are tours to game parks and to Ganvie, a fishing village on stilts, known as the Venice of Africa.
- *Lome, Togo.* Two hours' drive beyond Cotonou, Lome has several good hotels with sports facilities and French restaurants. Like Coto-

nou, Lome provides a change of pace from Lagos.

Entertainment

There has recently been an increase in the variety of plays, art shows and other productions, especially those being sponsored by foreign embassies or women's groups. Local movie theaters generally have very little to offer. A number of small African repertory theater groups perform under the sponsorship of a number of Nigeria's very large banks. Those who have attended have enjoyed the presentations.

The Musical Society of Nigeria, MUSON, offers a good variety of musical shows, plays and ensembles at reasonable prices. Most of MUSON's events are co-sponsored by one of the many diplomatic missions resident in Lagos.

Lagos has some nightclubs and there are a number of restaurants in the metropolitan area. There are several Lebanese, Chinese, Indian and Italian restaurants.

On occasion films, lectures, plays, and art exhibits are provided by the Alliance Francaise, the Italian Cultural Center, the British Council, and the Goethe Institute. The Nigerian Institute for International Affairs (NIIA) holds a number of events on a regular basis at which lectures are given on a variety of subjects.

While enjoying the various forms of entertainment, it is important to remember that cameras arouse concern among Nigerians. Limit your picture-taking and avoid photographing people, bridges, airports, military installations, the harbor, and some public buildings. Cameras may be freely used for family pictures.

Within the expatriate community are singing, theater, and reading groups. A women's book group concentrating on West African, especially Nigerian, novels has recently been formed. Members find that the novels offer insights into West African culture and that the group pro-

vides introductions to both Nigerian and other expatriate women. The waiting list for membership is long.

Home entertaining is popular. Buffet dinners, receptions, and informal coffee and dessert evenings are frequent. Many center an evening's entertainment on a VCR movie.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The American Women's Club (AWC) of Lagos, founded in February 1971, sponsors a monthly general membership meeting, as well as a wide variety of welfare and social activities.

Many informal groups meet for bridge and various card games, sports, and other activities. An international bazaar is held in December.

International Contacts: The international community is friendly and informal. Social clubs and churches offer good opportunities for developing rewarding friendships. The International Women's Society, which has a small but international membership, is mainly involved in volunteer activities for charity. Information about the society is available through the United Nations Development Fund Office in Ikoyi. The Nigerian American Women's Forum was created to encourage interaction between Nigerian and American professional women. The members are interested in information exchange and targeted action regarding issues that affect women and their welfare.

Special Information

Temporary duty (TDY) and visiting travelers must obtain a Nigerian visa and have confirmed hotel reservations before coming to Nigeria. Hotel accommodations are extremely difficult to obtain; make reservations well in advance. All travelers should notify the Mission well in advance of their arrival, giving the duration of the visit and any special requirements. Bring all the clothes you will need and do not rely on unaccompanied baggage shipments. Such shipments are allowed

into the country duty free but often take 4-6 weeks to process through customs.

Visitors who are staying in an hotel should be prepared to pay for your room and all meals when registering; a refund for meals not taken is made at checkout time. The Sheraton Hotel near the International Airport is recommended for those proceeding to Abuja or Kaduna within a day of their arrival. Do not pay for hotel, restaurant meals or any other service with credit cards and do not give out any financial information or account numbers to anyone. Personal financial information should never be left in the hotel room or in the home.

Crime and personal security is an issue on Ikoyi and Victoria Islands, but the risks are even greater in the rest of Lagos. Vigilance and caution should be a part of the daily routine. All houses have guards, and many people have watch dogs. In spite of this attention to security, most Americans have an active social and professional life without undue restrictions.

Abuja

Abuja was created in 1976 and was officially declared the new Federal Capital on December 12, 1991. The move was to promote a sense of national unity by creating a capital in a more central location not identified with any particular ethnic group and to escape the overcrowded conditions in Lagos. Since then the Federal Government has transferred some of its offices, including the Presidency and the Foreign Ministry to Abuja.

Abuja has a sub-tropical climate. The hot, dry season is from March through April, the rainy season is from May to September, then the dry, cool season runs from October to February. The harmattan, a north wind carrying fine dust from the Sahara, will start during this period and end about the time the rains begin. The fine dust settles everywhere and can cause sinus

infections and asthma attacks for those with respiratory problems.

Food

It is necessary to stock up on basic items, as well as special food items, baby food, baby formula, diapers, toiletries, etc. Although some items can be found in Abuja, supplies tend to be erratic and quality questionable. There are a few small general stores that sell a limited variety of imported, canned food, frozen food and cleaning products. The varieties and quantities tend to be limited, and are quite expensive. Certain items may be unavailable for weeks at a time. U.S.-produced items are rare; most imported items come from Europe or the Middle East. The quality of frozen food is often doubtful because of the power fluctuations. Fruits and vegetables can usually be found in local open-air markets though they need thorough cleaning and sterilizing. Eggs are available year-round, though quality is often poor. Local beef and chicken are also available but are quite tough. The only commonly-available fresh fish is Niger perch. Frozen seafood of acceptable quality is occasionally available. It is usually preferable to purchase local meats and seafood directly from vendors rather than from local stores.

Acceptable restaurants in Abuja are limited. Most Americans eat only at a few local restaurants, including Talk of the Town (Indian/Chinese) and McDowals (Lebanese), and those at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel (theme buffets and Italian) and the Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel (themed buffets and Chinese). Other local restaurants are not recommended. Even though eating in these restaurants is generally considered safe, it is critical to eat only properly cooked food, to avoid uncooked vegetables and to drink only bottled beverages.

Clothing

Men: There are no clothing stores in Abuja. Dry cleaning is available through a Kaduna-based firm, but turnaround time is several days. Local dry cleaning services are not

recommended. Bring enough sports clothes and shoes because both are unavailable locally.

Women: Lightweight cotton dresses are suggested for daytime wear. Tailoring services are available and fabric can be purchased in the local market. Dry cleaning service is limited, so bring washable items. Bring a good supply of shoes as there are no shoe stores and limited shoe repair services available.

Children: Bring a good supply of washable clothing and shoes, especially sneakers and sandals. The American International School does not require a uniform.

Supplies and Services

There are dry cleaning services at the Hilton and the Sheraton Hotels, but the services are not up to American standards. Better quality service is available in Lagos and Kaduna. Barbers and hairdressers are also available at each hotel but, again, the services are often unsatisfactory. Bookstores in Abuja have extremely limited selections.

Religious Activities

There are local Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Evangelical churches in Abuja. Most of the services are in English but the times and lengths are irregular. There is also the non-denominational International Church, Abuja that offers a more Western-style service in English. For Muslims, there are a number of mosques.

Education

The American International School, sponsored by the State Department, was started in 1993. It offers pre-school through 8th grade; 9th and 10th grades are available through an independent-study, correspondence program. The school year is from early September to mid-June and is divided into three terms. School hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for grade school children (K-8) and 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for pre-school. The school presently follows the Calvert curriculum. For more information, please contact

the school principal at (234) (9) 523-5464.

Special Education Opportunities

Special educational opportunities are not available.

Sports

Golf is one of the most popular sports among visitors. The Ibrahim Golf Course offers a beautiful, well-maintained 18-hole golf course. You can also join the Hilton Club or the Sheraton Club. Both clubs feature facilities including tennis courts, swimming pools, squash courts and fitness centers.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

On Muslim holidays and special occasions in older cities such as Kano, Katsina and Zaria, *durbars* (colorful parades of mounted warriors, clowns, jugglers and dancers) provide a medieval flavor not seen elsewhere in the country. Hotels are available in all major cities but quality and service rarely meet the standards of even budget-priced motels in the U.S.

Travel in the North as well as in the South to Enugu and Lagos is possible by road. Roads are generally adequate between major northern cities. Road accidents are frequent and banditry on the open road is a common problem. Traveling to the South by road is particularly dangerous due to the prevalence of road bandits.

Several local airlines also offer daily flights to and from Lagos and to some other cities. Air schedules, however, are unreliable, and long delays are common.

The areas listed below are points of interest in or near Abuja:

Aso Rock: The largest granite rock in the vicinity of Abuja, its appearance has an imposing and impressive effect on first-time visitors to Abuja.

Table Rock: Accessible by car, with a picnic area and barbecues, it offers a panoramic view of Abuja.

Gurara Falls: On the Gurara River about 100 kilometers from Abuja, it is quite a spectacular scene during the rainy season; no facilities for tourists have been developed.

Zuma Rock: An enormous granite rock that stands out of the countryside on the way to Gurara Falls and Kaduna.

Usuma Dam and Jabi Dam: Man-made reservoirs supplying drinking water as well as irrigation water for Abuja and the surrounding agricultural land, both dams provide beautiful scenery and are good spots for fishing.

Pottery Centers: Abuja is well known for its traditional African pottery. There are several pottery centers in Abuja. Ladi Kwali Pottery Center is the most famous; Ushafa Pottery Center at Ushafa Village offers modern pottery and ceramics as well as traditional; Giri Pottery Center, near Kwali in Gwagwalada Area Council, has the largest selection of pottery.

Other interesting attractions in the North include:

Kano: The commercial center and largest city in northern Nigeria, Kano is approximately 5 hours by car from Abuja. Relatively good accommodations are available at the Prince Hotel. With a large foreign business community and an international airport, the city has several good restaurants and the largest market in the North.

Jos: The city of Jos, on a 4,000 foot plateau, is about 3-1/2 hours by road from Abuja, and offers a change of scenery and a cooler climate. The city is host to the largest American community in northern Nigeria and is home to Hillcrest School, an American curriculum school catering to the missionary community.

Sokoto: About 8 hours away, Sokoto is the center of the emirate system

and the seat of the Sultan of Sokoto; major points of interest are the Sultan's Palace, two recently-built mosques and the tomb of first sultan Usman Dan Fodio, whose Fulani warriors conquered most of northern Nigeria early in the 19th century.

Yankari Game Preserve: Another 3 hours beyond Jos is the Yankari Game Preserve, a sanctuary with some tourist facilities. Accommodations are quite reasonable. Game can be seen during the dry season but do not expect either the number or variety of game seen in other parts of Africa. The preserve features a year-round natural hot spring.

Entertainment

There are two western standard nightclubs in Abuja—Dazzle, at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel, and Safari, at the Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel. There are neither cinemas nor performing arts theaters nor professional sports in Abuja. Diplomatic missions and cultural institutions occasionally sponsor drama or musical presentations. The Sheraton and the Agura Hotels have video clubs which stock PAL tapes pirated from subscription satellites and other sources. They are often of poor quality.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Since the American community is very small, social activities tend to be very informal and center around tennis courts, swimming pools and the golf course.

Kaduna

Kaduna was created in 1917 by the British Governor, Lord Lugard, as the administrative center of northern Nigeria. Several textile mills, a petroleum refinery, an auto assembly plant, a brewery and bottling plant, and other industries have been established. The city has retained the atmosphere of a government center, so it lacks the special character of older, walled cities

such as Kano and Zaria. Kaduna's population is estimated at 800,000.

Beyond Kaduna lie the thirteen states of northern Nigeria. The area contains roughly half of Nigeria's population. Islam predominates in the North, and the Hausa-Fulani, one of Nigeria's three major ethnic/cultural groups, are concentrated there.

Kaduna lies at an altitude of about 2,000 feet. The weather is not as extreme as in other parts of the country, but from November through February, the air, heavy with harmattan dust, irritates eyes and nasal and bronchial passages and affects allergy sufferers, often severely. The dust also permeates every nook and cranny, making house cleaning tedious.

Food

Kaduna has general stores and numerous specialty shops that sell a variety of imported canned and frozen foods, including chicken, beef, lamb and fish. However, inventories are erratic, and the quality, especially of meats, is unpredictable.

Imported, perishable items are expensive and often suffer a considerable loss of quality through improper handling and storage. Vegetables, such as green beans, carrots, yams, spinach, squash, potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, cauliflower and cabbage, are grown locally and are of fairly good quality. Because Kaduna is north of the citrus belt, however, grapefruit and oranges, as well as pineapples, do not compare in quality with the fruit that is available in the South.

Clothing

A two-year wardrobe similar to that required for the spring and summer seasons in the Mid-Atlantic should be brought. A few sweaters, long-sleeved clothes, etc., for the cool season should also be included.

Children: Uniforms are required by the Aisha Mohammed International School. Girls wear navy blue culottes with blue and white gingham blouses or blue and white gingham

drop-waist dresses. Material for girls' dresses is available locally. Boys wear navy blue shorts (long trousers in cool weather) and blue and white gingham shirts. Children in Grades 2-6 also need special clothes for physical education. Boys and girls need navy blue shorts, white T-shirts or polo shirts, white socks and sneakers (preferably white). All children need lunch boxes and school bags or backpacks.

Religious Activities

Major Christian denominations, both Catholic and Protestant, are present in Kaduna, and English-language services are offered at least once a week. Kaduna has several mosques but there is no synagogue.

Education

The Aisha Mohammed International School was established in 1985 as a nonprofit organization with no religious affiliation. The school year is from September to July and is divided into three terms. School hours are from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. for primary school children and 8 a.m. to 12 noon for children in the nursery.

Private nursery schools and play groups are available in Kaduna at reasonable rates.

Special Educational Opportunities

No special formal educational opportunities are available in the area.

Sports

However, membership at one or more of the many private clubs in Kaduna offering golf, polo, rugby and soccer can also be enjoyable.

Bring all sports equipment, especially golf, tennis and equestrian. All clubs require membership fees.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Travel in the North is possible by road and, to some destinations, by air. Air schedules are unreliable, and long delays are common. Roads

are generally good in the North, although accidents and other mishaps are all too frequent. For security purposes no one should drive on the highway after nightfall.

Republics of Niger and Cameroon. Longer car trips may be made during the dry season to Niger and Cameroon. The roads are rough, and four-wheel drive is sometimes useful. An ice chest and a large Thermos are necessary for long trips, especially if traveling with children.

On holidays and other special occasions in older cities such as Kano, Katsina and Zaria, colorful parades of clowns, dancers, jugglers and mounted warriors provide a flavor not seen elsewhere in the country.

Entertainment

The National Museum has a small, interesting collection of traditional art in bronze, carvings, pottery, cloth, and leather. A crafts center located at the Museum sells good quality artifacts, which you can watch local artisans create. The Northern Historical Society offers lecture meetings in Kaduna on natural history and ethnographic topics.

The Kaduna Music and Drama Society meets regularly and offers one or two public performances each year. The Nigerian Field Society offers field trips and lectures.

A very limited selection of hardback and paperback books is available in the general trading stores and book shops. Books and periodicals are available for borrowing at the USIS library.

Kaduna has a few good restaurants that offer a variety of foods at reasonable prices. The most popular among these include the Arewa Chinese Restaurant, an Indian restaurant, and the Jacaranda In Town, which offers continental cuisine and local dishes in a picturesque and relaxing setting.

A few channels of television are available locally, and CNN and

other international signals are available via cable subscription. Short-wave reception in Kaduna is strong.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Kaduna's American community is very small. However, Americans have little trouble meeting host country nationals through work and many educated Nigerians accept invitations to American homes and attend functions with their spouses.

International Contacts: The International Women's Club (IWC) is a voluntary organization that offers many opportunities for charity work and for meeting people of all nationalities. There are local chapters of the Lions Club, Rotary and June Wheel Clubs.

Ibadan

Ibadan is the capital of Oyo State. It is the center of a rich agricultural area where most of Nigeria's cacao crop is produced. The city is built on a series of low hills, 750 feet above sea level and about 90 miles northeast of Lagos. Its estimated population of 1,739,000 is exceeded only by Lagos among cities south of the Sahara.

Ibadan was founded in the 1830s as a military camp during the Yoruba civil wars, and then developed into the most powerful Yoruba city-state. It came under British protection in 1893. Today, it is one of the major commercial and industrial centers in Nigeria.

Ibadan has been a center of agricultural development for many years, as is reflected in the name of the 27-story Cocoa House, one of West Africa's tallest buildings. Recently, one of the oldest research institutions in Nigeria, Moor Plantation on the Abeokuta Road, was incorporated into a system of 16 federal research centers throughout the country. Now called National Cereals Research Institute, Moor Plantation focuses on research and



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View of the rooftops on Ibadan, Nigeria

extension programs in grain cereals.

A long-established School of Forestry and Research Center is in the Jericho area of Ibadan. A sister institute for horticultural research was inaugurated in 1976, also on the west side of the city. About ten miles north of Ibadan, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) employs 55 scientists from various countries. IITA is one of six such institutes throughout the world, and is internationally funded, with the U.S. share coming from United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. About a dozen American scientists and their families are assigned to IITA.

Ibadan is developing major industrial parks. Several steel construction plants, a tire processing company, wire and cable plants, a battery factory, soft drink (including

Pepsi-Cola and Coca-Cola) plants, cashew processing plants, three major breweries, a canning factory, and the National Tobacco Company are among Ibadan's industries.

The commercial area—with department stores, shops, banks, and other businesses, as well as a large market—is in the city's center.

Most Americans reside along with the British, Lebanese, Israelis, Germans, and Nigerians in outlying residential areas. Some live at the Institute of Tropical Agriculture or at the University of Ibadan.

Education

The International School, a university-owned secondary school for grades seven through 12, adjoins the University of Ibadan campus. Applicants for the school should send recent school transcripts and registration forms (obtainable from the school). Written tests determine eligibility and placement. However,

students with satisfactory records from American, international, or British Commonwealth schools rarely are refused. Students prepare for the London University Overseas Advanced Level Examinations and the American College Board Examinations.

The school follows British lines, but a flexible curriculum caters to the needs of both Nigerian/British- and American-education systems. The school year has three 12-week terms beginning in mid-September. Elective courses and activities are held after classes.

The nearby International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) operates a Calvert-system school, with local teachers in grades one through six. Several children of American expatriates have attended the school and found the instruction inadequate. The main constraint of the IITA school is that classes end with grade six.

Ibadan public schools are not considered adequate for U.S. children; teaching quality is subject to change. Inquiries should be made in advance. Many parents now feel that because of overcrowding, the International School is unable to provide quality instruction. Parents now send their children either to boarding schools abroad or to the American missionary school in Jos.

The University of Ibadan bases its curriculum on the British system, adapted to Nigerian needs. Admission requirements for degree courses are rigid, but special courses are offered with flexible admission requirements. Courses can also be taken on a non-degree basis.

Recreation

Soccer is the national sport in Nigeria, and in Ibadan it has an enthusiastic following. Liberty Stadium, built during the 1960 independence celebrations, holds more than 30,000 people. It is the site of many sports events and festivals, as well as major soccer games. Good swimming, golf, and tennis facilities also

are available in Ibadan, and some sight-seeing trips attract the adventurous. Fishing is good at certain times of the year.

About 125 miles east of Ibadan, on the main road, the agricultural center of Akure has been designated capital of Ondo State. About 15 miles from Akure is the village of Idanre, a well-fortified town that can be approached only by a long series of hillside steps. Idanre is a famous traditional center of Yoruba culture and religion.

Located on the Niger River outside New Bussa, about 200 miles north of Ibadan in Kwara State, is Kainji, a modern hydroelectric dam which attracts interested tourists from all over the world. Many large species of African game may be seen at the nearby Borgu Game Reserve. The natives in this area are relatively untouched by modern civilization.

Entertainment

Films, lectures, concerts, and exhibits are part of the social life in Ibadan. There are many Western-educated Nigerians, and the city has an international character. The Ibadan Rotary Club, one of several service clubs, meets regularly at the Premier Hotel. Membership includes men of several nationalities representing the city's various industries. The Men's Dining Club, with 25 Nigerian and 25 foreign members, meets weekly at the same hotel, as does its sister organization, the Ladies' Dining Club. Local branches of Girl Guides, Red Cross, YMCA, YWCA, University Women, and the National Council of Women's Societies are active here. Opportunities to do volunteer work for handicapped children and adults vary each year with the creation of new facilities and the amalgamation of existing institutions.

Public cinemas show mostly Indian and kung-fu films, and are neither clean nor comfortable. There are, however, a number of reasonably good dining facilities in the city, among them the Cabin, the Coco-Dome, and the Premier Chinese

Restaurant, which offer good food and pleasant atmosphere.

Several active amateur theatrical groups usually play to packed houses. Both Nigerians and foreigners participate. Music devotees join the Operatic Society, Music Circle, Music Society, or Madrigal Society, as well as the choral group of All Saints Church.

Photographers enjoy Ibadan and the surrounding area. These areas afford many interesting pictures, but local sensitivities limit photo opportunities. The prices here for equipment and film are very high. Permission should always be asked before photographing local people, as some may be greatly offended; others may expect money for posing.

Kano

Kano is the largest city in northern Nigeria, and the third largest in the country. For centuries, it was the center of caravan routes, and has served as a link between the Islamic north and West Africa. The walled Old City retains its ancient character.

As one of the seven original Hausa emirates, Kano keeps many links with its past while growing rapidly and trying to meet modern challenges. Situated in the savanna at the edge of the Sahara, it has long been an important trading and commercial center. Its international airport links it with London, Paris, Rome, Brussels, Amsterdam, Cairo, Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), Khartoum (Sudan), Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Lomé (Togo), and other cities. The airport runways are also crowded with private jets belonging to local business representatives.

Kano's written history can be traced back to 999, when it was already several hundred years old. At that time it was a cultural, handicraft, and commercial center, trading with other parts of western and northern Africa. Kano figured prominently in the Negro wars of the 15th and 16th centuries and, for a short time around 1600, the city converted to

Islam. In 1809, it was conquered by the Fulani; in 1903, it was captured by Frederick Lugard and became British.

The climate, similar to that of the American southwest, is milder than Lagos' climate. Although extremely hot from March to June, with temperatures sometimes exceeding 100°F, the dryness makes the heat more bearable. The rainy season lasts from June through September, with an average rainfall of only 28 inches. From November through March, the *harmattan* brings dust from the Sahara. At this time, the midday sun is obscured, and everything is covered with a fine, white powder. Cooler temperatures prevail during *harmattan*; at night, the temperature sometimes drops to 55°F.

Kano, with a population estimated over one million in 2000, is the capital of Kano State, the most populous in Nigeria. The traditional homeland of the Hausa and the Fulani, it is now home to Nigerians from all over the country. Sizable British and Lebanese communities exist in the city; Chinese, South Asians, and other nationalities are also represented in large numbers. The approximately 50 Americans in Kano are mostly at Bayero University, or at the church-sponsored eye hospital and mission. A host of other educational institutions are located here.

People here march to a less-frenzied pace than those in some other cities in Nigeria. Traffic flows more smoothly, people are friendlier, and movement in and out of town is easier and safer.

Kano is the trade and shipping center for an agricultural region whose chief crops are cotton, groundnuts, and cattle. It is also the major industrial center of northern Nigeria, where peanut flour and oil, cotton textiles, steel furniture, processed meat, canned food, soft drinks, beer, concrete blocks, shoes, and soap are manufactured. Heavy industries manufacture asbestos, bicycles, automobiles, trucks, and

chemicals. Kano is also well-known for its leather work. The Kano traditional city, with its extensive market, is one of the north's most interesting tourist attractions.

Education

Although Kano has some national groups (Lebanese, French, Poles, and Belgians) which operate their own schools, most local educational institutions do not meet appropriate standards. Many British nationals send their older children to boarding schools in England.

The Corona Society has established a school for kindergarten and first grade students, which accepts American children. Teachers are British, with U.K. teaching credentials. Trustees are trying to procure funds for expansion.

Kano Capital and St. Louis Private are schools for children aged six to 13. Upper-level schools include St. Thomas Secondary and St. Louis Secondary, both in Kano, for ages 14 to 16.

Recreation

Within and surrounding Kano are many sites worth visiting, including the city's old Furmi market and its ancient dye pits. The towns of Dambatta, Katsina, Rano, Wudil, Kazare, and Jibiya have interesting markets on designated days.

The Niger border is only two hours away. Niamey, capital of the Niger Republic, is a 14-hour drive; the Nigerian consulate in Kano issues visas overnight.

Yankari Game Park in Bauchi State is a pleasant day's drive. Longer trips include Sokoto (six hours by car, 45 minutes by air), where the Argungu Fishing Festival is held each February or March; Maiduguri (five hours driving, one hour flying); and northern Cameroon, which takes about eight hours to the border and another two to the Waza Game Park; visas for Cameroon must be obtained in Lagos. Closer at hand is Bagauda Lake, formed by Tiga Dam, where there is a sailing club and a resort hotel. Zaria is

about 90 minutes from Kano by car; Kaduna is another hour down a dangerous road.

In town, the Kano Club offers tennis, golf, swimming, squash, and snooker (a variation of pool). It also has a restaurant. The Lebanon Club maintains dining facilities, tennis, billiards, and a new swimming pool. Dancing is offered here on weekends, and also at the French Club (Le Circle), which has an excellent, although not French, menu. There is dancing on Saturday evenings at the Peking Chinese Restaurant. Kano has several other good dining spots.

As a rule, men wear safari or bush suits for business, and casual attire for social evenings; suits and ties are worn for some functions. Women dress conservatively here so as not to offend local Muslim sensitivities, but sundresses are considered appropriate. Expatriates congregate at the bar in the Central Hotel.

Enugu

Enugu, with a population of 280,000 (1991 estimate), is situated in southeastern Nigeria, about 275 miles east of Lagos and 100 miles north of Port Harcourt. Enugu developed as an important town after the discovery of coal in 1909, but coal mining today has been sharply curtailed because of petroleum production.

Enugu served as capital of Nigeria's Southern Region from 1929 to 1939, of the Eastern Region from 1939 to 1967, and of the short-lived secessionist state of Biafra from 1967 to 1970. The campus of the University of Nigeria that includes an economic development institute is located here. The city is the site of a Mercedes plant, which produces Mercedes Benz cars as well as heavy trucks. Two breweries opened in Enugu in 1983. French firms have built a major hospital in the area. Enugu is served by several hospitals, including the Teaching Hospital of the University of Nigeria and an orthopedic hospital.

OTHER CITIES

ABA is situated in southeastern Nigeria, about 40 miles northeast of Port Harcourt and 275 miles south-east of Lagos. Originally a small Ibo village developed by the British as an administrative center early in the 20th century, Aba had a population of 264,000 in 1991. It is a regional market and manufacturing center for textiles, shoes, plastics, soap, beer, pharmaceuticals, and palm oil. Aba has a school of arts and sciences, secondary schools, a teaching college, and several technical and trade institutes.

ABEOKUTA, the capital of Ogun State, is located in southwest Nigeria, about 60 miles north of Lagos. It was established about 1830 as a refuge from slave hunters of the Yoruba civil wars and was the chief town of the Egbas, who made a treaty with the British in 1893. Abeokuta is the site of the famous Olumo Rock, where the city was originally founded. It is also known for its educational and medical institutions. Of particular interest is the Aro Hospital for Nervous Diseases, which sometimes can be visited by prior arrangement with the director. A campus of the University of Lagos was established in Abeokuta in 1984. The city is an exporting point for cocoa, palm products, kola nuts, and fruit. Industrial capacity is small-scale, with an emphasis on sawmills, fruit-canning plants, and a plastics factory. Abeokuta's population is approximately 377,000.

ADO, sometimes known as Ado-Ekiti, is 35 miles west of Lagos, and has a population over 300,000. Located in a region where rice is grown, Ado has rice mills, and manufactures textiles, bricks, tile, shoes, and pottery. Yams, cassava, corn, okra, fruits, and pumpkins are marketed locally. The city was founded in the 15th century as the capital of the Yoruba Ekiti state. It alternated between independence and occupation by Benin until the British gained control in 1894.

BENIN CITY is situated in southern Nigeria on the west delta of the Niger River, about 150 miles east of Lagos. With a population of 203,000 (1991 estimate), the city is the processing area for rubber, palm nuts, and timber produced nearby. It also manufactures furniture, soft drinks, and carpets. Benin City was the capital of a black African kingdom that probably was founded in the 13th century, and which flourished from the 14th to 17th century. Benin traded slaves, along with ivory, pepper, and cloth to Europe. The kingdom declined after 1700, but revived in the 19th century with the development of palm products and increased commercial activity with Europe. The British conquered and burned Benin City in 1898. Iron work, carved ivory, and bronze busts made as early as the 13th century rank with the finest art in Africa, and can be seen displayed in museums throughout the city. Benin City has Anglican, Roman Catholic, Muslim, government, and private secondary schools and is the site of the University of Benin, which was founded in 1970. Several hospitals serve Benin City and the surrounding area.

The city of **BONNY** is in southeastern Nigeria on the Niger River delta, just south of Port Harcourt. During the 18th and 19th centuries, it was the center of a powerful trading state and became the leading exporter of palm oil. Bonny served as the administrative center of the British Oil River Protectorate from 1885 until 1894. It declined in the 20th century, but enjoyed a revival after 1961, when the port was modernized and used as an export point for petroleum refined at Port Harcourt. The town has an Anglican cathedral and a government health center.

CALABAR is located in a beautiful hilly area near the Calabar River. It is a port city on the southeastern border of Nigeria near Cameroon. Calabar has approximately 154,000 (1991 est.) residents. Formerly called Old Calabar, it was established in the early 17th century by the Efik branch of the Ibibio people.

The city has been influenced by the Portuguese and British. Rubber, food, and palm oil processing plants are located in Calabar, along with a sawmill and cement factory. The town's artisans sculpt ebony artifacts for the tourist market in Lagos. Educational opportunities are not lacking in Calabar, where there is a university and two colleges.

Located in the southwestern part of Nigeria, 112 miles north of Lagos, **EDE** is the old town of the Yoruba people. Since a railway was built from Lagos in 1906, Ede is a major exporting center for palm oil and cacao. Local trading includes yams, okra, pumpkins, kola nuts, and corn. The population was estimated at 271,000 in 1991.

The historical and spiritual center of Yorubaland is **IFE**, located 54 miles east of Ibadan in southwestern Nigeria. Founded about 1300, Ife is the oldest Yoruba town and the most powerful tribal kingdom until the late 17th century. Sometimes called Ile-Ife, the city is an important center for marketing and shipping cacao. It is famous for its museum adjoining the palace of the *Oni of Ife* (traditional ruler). The museum houses beautiful Ife bronzes and terra-cotta treasures. These sculptures, made in the area as early as the 12th century, are considered the finest among west African art. The Oranyan Staff, about a half mile from the palace, is an important Yoruba monument. The nearby Obafemi Awolowo University (formerly University of Ife), established in 1961, has a spacious modern campus. An exhibit of African art at the Institute of African Studies, an experimental farm, and an art and cultural center (Ori Olokun) are also located here. Cocoa, cotton, palm oil and kernels, yams, cassava, and kola nuts are traded in the city. Ife has a population of about 262,000 (1991 estimate).

ILESHA, with a population of about 334,000, is located in southwestern Nigeria, 15 miles southeast of Oshogbo. It served as the capital

of the Yoruba Ilesha kingdom of Oyo until it collapsed and became part of Ibadan in the early 19th century. Ilesha was taken by the British in 1893. The city was formerly a hub for caravan trade, and is now an agricultural and commercial center. Cacao, kola nuts, and yams are shipped from Ilesha. The city has several industries, particularly nail and carpet manufacturing. Ilesha is the home of the Oyo State College of Education and numerous teaching colleges.

ILORIN, the capital of Kwara State, is about 100 miles north of Ibadan and 170 miles northeast of Lagos. It has a population of 420,000 (1991 estimate). This mud-walled city became the capital of the Yoruba kingdom about 1800. Its territory was extended through warfare against Oyo and Ibadan late in the 19th century, but it was conquered by Royal Niger Company British troops in 1897. Today, Ilorin is an industrial center, producing cigarettes, matches, soap, soft drinks, and sugar, as well as an agricultural market for cattle, poultry, palm products, and yams. It is also a center for traditional artisans who make woven and leather goods, tin products, wood carvings, and pottery. Several U.S. missionaries work in and around Ilorin. Health services in Ilorin include a number of government, private, and religious hospitals and a nursing home for the elderly.

ISEYIN is located in the southwest, near Benin. It is about 100 miles from Lagos. Traditionally, Iseyin has been a cotton marketplace known for its dyes. The dyes are exported along with teak and tobacco. Iseyin was once a mining town, but now relies on imported metals. The town has several Christian-sponsored secondary schools and a hospital. The population is over 200,000.

IWO, whose population numbers 320,000, is in southwestern Nigeria, on the rail route just northeast of Ibadan. It is a trade center for the nearby farming region which specializes in cacao. The city was

founded in the 17th century as the capital of a Yoruba kingdom, and grew during the 19th century by sheltering refugees from the Yoruba civil wars. Yams, corn, cassava, and palm kernels are grown north of town.

KATSINA is in the northern tip of Nigeria near the Niger border. The city was founded around 1100 and was named for the wife of a Durbawa king, Kacinna. Katsina was a vital center of the Hausa states from the late 16th century until the late 18th century. There is a palace in the city and its treasures include a 13th century sword called *Gajere*. Katsina is a holding place for peanuts and hides that are sent on to Kano for export. Traditional crafts of the town's predominantly Hausa population include cotton weaving and dyeing, leather and metalworking, and the designing of embroidery and pottery. Several industries were brought to Katsina in the 1970s. The most important are vegetable oil and steel processing mills. The city is an educational center for the region; it houses several colleges including the Kaduna State College of Legal Studies. Katsina's population was about 182,000 in 1991.

MAIDUGURI, in the Lake Chad region some 300 miles east of Kano, was founded in 1907 as a British military post. Its population has grown to more than 282,000 (1991 estimate). Maiduguri is the rail, road, and air transportation center for northeast Nigeria, Niger, and Chad. Leather goods made from hides of crocodiles caught in Lake Chad are the city's leading product. Cattle hides, skins, dried fish, peanuts, and gum arabic are the city's exports. The city has several important industries. These include the manufacturing of leather goods, aluminum, cement, and furniture. Maiduguri is a hub for the main railway line linking northeastern Nigeria to Port Harcourt. An international airport is located five miles west of the city. Maiduguri is situated along the historic route that Muslims traveled from Senegal to Mecca.

OGBOMOSHO, with a steadily increasing population already higher than 650,000, is one of Nigeria's many large and growing cities. It is situated in Western State, 50 miles north-northeast of Ibadan. Ogbomosho was founded in the mid-17th century as a military camp, and became the focal point of resistance to Fulani invasions in the early 19th century. The city grew by absorbing refugees from towns destroyed by the Fulani. At one time, there was a sizable American missionary settlement here, caring for victims of Hansen's disease (leprosy). Today, Ogbomosho is a trade center in a farming region, shipping foodstuffs, tobacco, and livestock. A teachers' college is located here. A prominent landmark in Ogbomosho is a large square tower on the city's central mosque. Ogbomosho has other mosques and several churches and is the headquarters of the American Baptist Church of Nigeria and its theological seminary. Several schools and a teacher's college are located in the city.

ONITSHA is a port city located on the Niger River, about 135 miles from its mouth, and 225 miles east of Lagos. With a population of more than 350,000, Onitsha is a commercial and market center whose local industries include canoe building, saw-milling, printing, fishing, and beverage manufacturing. Situated at the northern limit of year-round navigation on the river, the city is an important port linking the Niger delta with the upper Niger and Benue Rivers, as well as with a wide region of eastern Nigeria. A road bridge built across the river at Onitsha in 1965 is a principal link between east and west Nigeria. A large textile plant is located near the bridge.

OSHOGBO, situated at a road and rail junction on the Oshun River, is about 50 miles northeast of Ibadan. In 1839, the city was the site of the decisive battle in which the Yoruba city-state, Ibadan, defeated the expansionist Fulani state, Ilorin, halting the latter's southward advance. An influx of refugees helped to increase Oshogbo's popu-

lation; today it is more than 400,000. Oshogbo is a center for local artists, and interesting shrines to various Yoruba deities also can be seen here. The annual Oshogbo festival draws close to 10,000 visitors every August. Cotton ginning and weaving and tobacco growing are local occupations. Food processing and steel milling are local industries. Oshogbo is the home of a small teaching college, vocational school, and secondary schools. The city is also serviced by several hospitals.

OYO, located in southwestern Nigeria about 32 miles north of Ibadan, has a population of over 226,000. It was founded in the early 19th century as a replacement for Old Oyo, the capital of the eponymous Yoruba empire destroyed in earlier civil wars. Oyo came under British protection in 1893. Today, it is a farming town that produces tobacco, cotton, and yams. Resident artisans make leather goods and carve utensils from gourds. The town has secondary schools, a government vocational center, and several hospitals. Oyo is a hub for local roads serving the state.

PORT HARCOURT is a deep water port on the Bonny River, about 40 miles from the sea. Located in southern Nigeria the city, with a population of roughly 362,000, was first laid out in 1912, and named for Viscount Lewis Harcourt, the secretary of state for the colonies between 1910 and 1915. Port Harcourt is the operational headquarters for the Nigerian petroleum industry; it refines the oil, then pipes it to Bonny for export. Its industries include steel, aluminum products, pressed concrete, glass, tires, paint, footwear, furniture, cigarettes, plastics, paints, and enamelware. Port Harcourt is the center of the state radio and television broadcasting services.

ZARIA, population 335,000 (1991 estimate), is located in northern Nigeria on a major north-south highway about 87 miles southwest of Kano. First known as Zazzau, the city was founded about 1000 as one of the seven Hausa city-states.

Zaria was captured by the Fulani in 1805 and by the British, under Frederick Lugard, in 1901. It is the home of Ahmadu Bello University, built in 1962. The old part of the city is walled and presents an interesting contrast to the modern structures. Zaria has many inhabitants from the Hausa and Gbari tribes for whom leather tanning and cotton weaving are primary occupations. Peanuts, cotton, and shea nuts are processed in town and shipped by rail to Lagos for export. Several significant industries are located in Zaria, among them basket weaving, bicycle assembly, publishing, cigarette and cosmetic manufacturing, and furniture making. The city has several hospitals, colleges, and research institutes.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Nigeria's 356,669 square miles, roughly equal to the area of California, Nevada, and Utah combined, cover four climatic regions of West Africa: a narrow coastal belt of mangrove swamp; a somewhat wider section of rolling hills and tropical rain forest in the south; a still larger dry central plateau, with much open woodland and savanna and a strip of semi-desert on the fringes of the Sahel in the north. Nigeria is bounded by Benin on the west, by Niger on the north, by Chad at its northeast corner, by Cameroon on the east, and by the Gulf of Guinea on the south.

The country's major geographical features are the Niger and Benue Rivers. The two rivers form the upper arms of a somewhat flattened letter "Y," come together in the south-central part of the country, and from there proceed due south (as the Niger) to the Gulf of Guinea, fanning out into a large and intricate river delta as the waters reach the open sea. Most of the country's oil deposits are found in the delta

area. The highest elevations in Nigeria are in the eastern highlands along the border with Cameroon, with peaks up to 7,936 feet. The most extensive upland area is the Jos Plateau in east-central Nigeria: 2,000 to 4,000 feet above sea level, with peaks up to 5,841 feet.

The temperature is high year round. Temperatures range from the low 90's F to the mid-70's F on the coast and well over 100°F to 60°F in the north. The hottest period is February-April in the south and March-June in the north. The coolest period throughout Nigeria is July and August, though minimum night temperatures in the north are lowest in December and January when the harmattan, a dry north-easterly wind, carries fine sand from the Sahara all the way south to the coast, occasionally closing down airports with a dusty haze. Rainfall is heaviest in the south along the coast, averaging 70 inches a year in the west, increasing to 170 inches in the east. The rainfall decreases fairly sharply inland, averaging 50 inches over most of central Nigeria and 20 inches a year in the far north. The dry and rainy seasons are fairly distinct. The rainy season is May-October (June-September in the far north). In the southwest, including Lagos, there is a principal rainy season in May-July and a secondary rainy season from the second half of September through October. Near the coast, the humidity is high throughout the year, though it abates occasionally during the harmattan from mid-December to mid-February. Northward from the coast, the humidity decreases steadily and varies abruptly with the seasons. Mildew can be a problem under the more humid conditions, but it is controllable with air conditioning.

Population

Nigeria's population in 2000 was estimated at 117,170,948, approximately one-fourth of the total for all Africa. The population is distributed among more than 250 tribal or ethno-linguistic groups. The country's three major groups—Hausa-



Street in Lagos, Nigeria

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission..

Fulani in the north (29%), Yoruba in the west (21%), and Ibo in the east (18%)—constitute some two-thirds of the total population. Numerous remaining groups range in size from several million members to fewer than 50,000. English is the official language, although it is less common in the north, where Hausa is widely spoken. A pidgin English, difficult for the American ear to distinguish, is also common.

About 50 percent of the population is Muslim, and about 40 percent is Christian—Protestant, Roman

Catholic, or a variety of independent African churches. About 10 percent of the population follows some form of traditional religion. Many Christians and Muslims in Nigeria have incorporated into their faith indigenous beliefs or rituals of worship. Muslims are predominant in the north, where historically they have been less influenced by Western education and institutions. Christians are predominant in the southeast. The Ibos of this region quickly adapted to Western education and commerce. The southwest is divided between Christian and

Moslem. The Yorubas predominate in this region. Ethnic and religious diversities in Nigeria present a constant potential for antagonisms, which succeeding federal governments have sought to defuse by fostering the ideal of national unity.

Most Nigerians, from traditional farmers in the villages to business executives in the cities, observe a complex pattern of familial obligations and relationships. The term “extended family” only hints at the ties that link educated and cosmopolitan Lagos urbanites to family

members throughout the country. When a person speaks of his “brother,” for example, he may have in mind a sibling, a cousin, or a good friend from a neighboring village.

Few Nigerians can be neatly labeled “traditional” or “modern,” and the educated Nigerian of the 1990s is a vital bridge between these two ways of life. Aspects of modernity have reached the most remote village, while patterns of traditional life still exist among the most highly educated people. In addition to styles of dress and food preferences, Nigerian tradition is evident in such attitudes as a respect for elders, often to the point of semi-veneration; a hesitancy to criticize the acknowledged leader directly, even in the course of partisan politics; and a preference to seek consensus in most deliberative bodies and focus disagreements on procedural rather than substantive matters.

Public Institutions

Nigeria gained its independence from the United Kingdom on October 1, 1960, inheriting a parliamentary representative government from the British. The military came to power in a coup d'état in 1966 and suspended the constitution until civilian rule was restored in 1979. Nigeria's 1979 Constitution called for a government closely resembling that of the U.S., with a president and vice president elected every 4 years, a bicameral legislature, and an independent judiciary.

The military returned to power in 1983 and suspended all sections of the 1979 Constitution relating to electoral and legislative procedures at both the federal and state level. Ruling by decree, the military government announced in 1987 a program for Nigeria's transition back to civilian rule. The regime conducted local government, state government, and national assembly elections, and civilians took over the positions.

On June 12, 1993, Nigerians went to the polls to elect a civilian president and complete the last leg of the

military's carefully orchestrated transition program. Though most observers described the election as the fairest in Nigeria's history, the regime quickly annulled the poll, provoking a protracted political crisis that continues today. To try to address growing political turmoil, the regime stepped down and turned over power to a civilian-led Interim National Government (ING). The ING proved unable to tackle Nigeria's continuing political and economic problems, and the military took over again on November 17, 1993.

The new military regime quickly consolidated power, dissolved all democratic institutions, and replaced civilian governors with military officers. Under the military rule, the main decision making organ is the military provisional ruling council (PRC), which rules by decrees that have the force of law. The PRC oversees the 32-member Federal Executive Council composed of military officers and civilians, including several prominent politicians. After conducting an election for delegates in May 1994, the PRC convened a constitutional conference mandated to examine the best way to restore democracy and recommend a new constitution. The regime pledged to announce a more specific transition program after reviewing the conference's draft constitution. Though the conference delegates were unable to meet a January 1995 deadline, the conference completed deliberations in April 1995 and presented its report and draft Constitution to the military government.

Elections in 1999 brought Matthew Olusegun Fajinmi Aremu Obasanjo into the presidency.

Arts, Science, and Education

A new arrival in Nigeria should visit the National Museum in Lagos to see “2000 Years of Nigerian Art,” the definitive collection of Nigeria's cultural past, which toured the U.S. and Europe in the late 1970s. The

collection begins with the terracotta figures of the Nok Culture, which flourished in the Jos region before A.D. 800. The delicate lost-wax castings recovered in a chief's tomb in Igbo-Ukwu, shed a new light on the history of Eastern Nigeria a thousand years ago. Excavations at Ife and Oyo yielded busts of the Yoruba kings, who ruled in the 14th century. And finally, the Museum offers the bronze castings and ivory carvings of the Benin Kingdom, among the finest artistic achievements of African civilization.

Nigerian artistic achievement is not only in the distant past. The Igbo spirit masks and the Yoruba carved figures of twins called “ibeji” are only two examples of Nigerian art that will be familiar to anyone with even a casual knowledge of African culture, and these are still made and used today. Artisans still cast and carve in the traditional manner, and their products, readily available in markets and galleries, range from the merely decorative to striking copies of traditional masterpieces. Woven fabrics, embroidery, dyed fabrics, jewelry, decorated calabashes, leather-works, pottery, and baskets abound in markets in every Nigerian city.

Contemporary Nigerian art has been undergoing a “boom” in recent years, and openings of art exhibitions are a feature of the Lagos cultural/social landscape. The first generation of Nigerian painters and sculptors is still active—Ben Ewonwu, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Jimoh Buraimoh, Yusuf Grillo, Nike Davies, Lamidi Fakeye, and Twin Seven-Seven are among the best known. Their students—Kolade Osinowo, Obiora Udechukwu, Emmanuel Anatsui, and others—exhibit regularly in Nigeria, and a younger generation of artists is already filling galleries and museums. Among the latter are Chika Okeke, Victor Ekpuk, and Chinedu Agbodike.

Pageantry is still characteristic of Nigerian life, and towns and villages perform impressive exhibi-

tions of music and dance to welcome important visitors. Benin City is still enveloped in the Igue Festival in December and you can catch a glimpse of the traditional Egungun and Eyo masquerades even in Lagos.

Nightclubs have made a comeback in Lagos, and local jazz, "juju," and "high life" music can be heard on weekends, in clubs, and at weddings and other celebrations. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, King Sunny Ade, Charley Boy, Aiyende Marshal (Quam I), and Ebenezer Obey are international stars. Shina Peters has captured the Nigerian market with his juju/pop fusion. Although foreign movies have been eclipsed by the video shops that proliferate in Nigeria, the local movie industry produces 10 - 15 video tape films each year for the enthusiastic domestic market, most of them in Yoruba (and few with subtitles). Nigeria's best known authors are Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe. A host of other playwrights, novelists, and poets have made their name, including Steve Rhodes, Ken Saro Wiwa, John Pepper Clarke, Ola Rotimi, Cyprian Ekwensi, Festus Iyayi, Flora Nwapa, and Chukwuemeka Ike, Ben Okri, Femi Osofisan, Bode Sowande and their works can be found at university bookstores, hotels, and airports.

The Federal Government has mandated an emphasis on scientific and technical education at the tertiary level. While the country trains its own doctors, dentists, technicians, and scientific personnel, there is little in the way of a "culture of science." The country's efforts have not as yet produced much original research, although they have produced a number of first-rate scientists.

Nigerians have evinced enthusiasm for education that has far outstripped the government's resources. Primary education is free and compulsory; there is considerable debate about its quality and availability, but at present most Nigerian children receive at least

some primary education. In Lagos, it is rare to find people without some reading and writing ability in English, although in the rural areas they predominate.

There are a number of federal universities and state universities, though higher education has been paralyzed in recent years by strikes and non-payment of staff. The Federal Government also funds more than 250 teachers training colleges and 130 polytechnics. An increasing population, a growing number of secondary school graduates and the traditional enthusiasm for education have led to severe overcrowding in all of these institutions and, as with the primary schools, there is considerable concern about the quality of tertiary education. There are no private tertiary institutions in Nigeria but private technical schools abound.

Commerce and Industry

Despite the economic advantages of a low-cost labor pool, abundant natural resources and the largest domestic market in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria's economic performance remains wedded to the fortunes of its petroleum sector. In recent years, oil accounted for roughly 20 percent of Nigeria's GDP, over 95 percent of its export earnings, and over 65 percent of the Government's fiscal revenue.

Through much of Nigeria's history, misguided economic policies and political instability have held back development. The Nigerian Government used much of the revenues from the oil boom of the 1970s to finance a high level of consumption, and some ill-advised investments, leaving Nigeria's economy debt-ridden and vulnerable to the oil-market downturn that followed in the mid-1980s.

To correct these problems, Nigeria launched a IMF/IBRD Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986, which was in place until 1992. Shortly after the military regime

took over in 1993, the economic advisors led a reversal of the SAP reforms implemented in 1986. Market mechanisms gave way to regulated exchange rates and regulated investment regimes. Income took a sharp drop in 1994 as a result of those policies which prompted the military government to take a second look. Since then, a number of SAP reforms have been reinstated. The exchange rate has been partially deregulated and the budget deficit has shrunk considerably. Regulations on foreign investment and foreign exchange transactions were eased. Decrees regarding money laundering and advance-fee fraud (known locally as "419" schemes) were promulgated to combat those crimes that badly tarnish Nigeria's image. But some distortions remain; the foreign debt remains high, currently at US\$32 billion.

Nigeria's basic infrastructure is extensive, but it is largely unmaintained and inadequate at the demands of a large country with a population of over 100 million. Deficiencies range from crumbling roads and bridges to erratic telephone service and endemic shortages of water, fuel and electricity. Political uncertainty, along with the declining economy and Nigeria's reputation for corruption and fraud, detract from the Nigerian Government's professed interest in attracting foreign investors.

About 70 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture. Before Nigeria began to export petroleum in large quantities, its chief exports were agricultural commodities such as cocoa, peanuts, palm produce, rubber, timber, cotton, and wood products. While many of these exports virtually disappeared during the oil boom years, Nigeria still depends on subsistence farmers using traditional methods on small plots for most of its food.

Over 65 percent of Nigeria's imports in recent years have been capital goods and raw materials for industry. Most of its imports are sourced from Western Europe, with the

remainder coming largely from the U.S., Japan, and other Asian countries. Locally produced consumer goods include textiles, beverages, lumber, furniture, plastics, pharmaceuticals, and food products. Other domestic manufacturers include cement, paper, and wood products. Nigeria has four oil refineries, and two fertilizer plants, with construction on a petrochemical plant underway. Other planned industrial projects in the development or planning stages involve steel, aluminum, fertilizers and liquefied natural gas.

Transportation

Local

“Go-slows” (traffic jams) are a way of life in Lagos. Most roads are in serious disrepair and are often congested. City streets are narrow and contain numerous potholes, which make them hazardous, especially during the rainy season. Floods in the rainy season cause, periodically, three to four feet of water in the streets. Also during the rainy season, “go-slows” are often worse than normal and driving even a short distance can take a long time. Violent car-jacking, especially of newer four-wheel-drive and other popular luxury vehicles, have become a major security concern during recent years.

Safe and reliable public transportation is not available. Public transportation in Lagos is primarily by large buses called “molues” or by yellow taxis. The buses are not utilized by Mission personnel as they are in disrepair, are always very overcrowded and pose serious danger to the occupants. For security reasons, the Regional Security Officer does not recommend that American employees utilize the local taxi service.

Regional

Nigeria’s transportation network consists of roads and air services. Although one or more of these links can be used to get to most areas of the country, the level of service can often be disappointing. There are

several domestic airlines but domestic air safety has been a problem. Not one domestic airline can assure safety—due to lack of proper maintenance, poor pilot and crew training, and inadequate air traffic control. Service is now available on a daily basis from Lagos to Abuja, the capital, and at least three times per week to most other major cities. The country’s two international airports in Lagos and Kano are served by several international airlines. Domestic and International flight schedules are not reliable due to maintenance problems, inclement weather and/or over scheduling of planes.

All driving within Nigeria is on the right side of the road. Major inter-city roads are paved, but maintenance is poor. Some roads between cities are close to impassable in some sections. Bandits are a constant danger, so adequate preparation for security should be made before beginning any road trip. Traveling in caravans is strongly recommended by the Regional Security Officer. Roadside facilities are far from adequate and lack basic amenities. Food, water, medical kit, and some basic automobile parts should be carried in the car and caution should be used at all time. Since medical care is seldom available, attention to safety on the road is critical.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is sporadic at best and unreliable. The service level offered in Nigeria is still inadequate for the country’s size and is troubled by frequent interruptions and breakdowns. Trunk lines connect most of Nigeria’s principal cities, but telephone service throughout Nigeria is usually unavailable. International calls may be made by direct dial, via satellite, to the U.S. and to Europe. Service is reliable, but it is sometimes difficult to get an outgoing line, especially during office hours. A great deal of patience is required.

Radio and TV

The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) oversees the operation of the Federal television network, which comprises the National Television Production Center in Lagos and NTA station in each of the 30 states and Abuja. An estimated 6.9 million TV sets are in use. Programming begins about 4 p.m. with children’s programs, including “Sesame Street,” and continues until midnight. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, transmission on most stations starts at 9 a.m. All broadcasts are in color. Most of the on-air programs are locally produced by Nigerians, but both American and British programming is frequently seen. Newscasts are shown several times nightly on the national networks. Television in Nigeria uses the 625-line PAL color system.

Radio is the primary source of information for most Nigerians. As of 1997, Nigerians owned an estimated 23.5 million radio receivers, mostly medium wave. Broadcasts, talk programs, and much disco music, are transmitted in English and several local languages over a national network operated by the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and by stations owned by the 30 states. In 1994, the first private radio station, RAY POWER 100, opened in Lagos. It is affiliated with an American station located in Los Angeles.

Many radio stations outside Nigeria broadcast to West Africa, and short-wave reception is usually good, particularly at night. VOA and BBC programs can be heard on several frequencies. All radio, phonograph and other electronic equipment should be tropicalized and carefully packed. American models are difficult to repair in Nigeria. Many people use voltage regulators for TV’s, videos, and stereos because of occasional power surges.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There are numerous local newspapers and almost all are printed in English. Although newspapers are at least partially owned by federal

or state governments, the press is lively and expressive. International coverage is minimal with major stories taken from the wire services. The *International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today* and the *London Times* as well as *Time*, *The Economist* and *Newsweek* magazines, are available.

British, French, German and other American magazines such as *Readers Digest*, *Ebony* and *Essence* are available on a regular basis at selected locations on Victoria and Ikoyi Islands. Books for all ages, especially paperbacks from the U.K. are sometimes available but are not always in good condition.

Health and Medicine

Community Health

Common diseases are frequently seen in travelers here in Nigeria, but severe trauma (auto accidents) is the greatest risk. Everyone should **WEAR THEIR SEAT BELTS AT ALL TIMES** whenever traveling in any vehicle and caution should be exercised at all times while driving on Nigerian roads. Although diseases endemic to Africa such as parasitic intestinal infections (amoeba, giardia, shigella) are common among the local population, they remain relatively rare among visitors. In any case, treatment is relatively straight forward and well tolerated. Viral "flu," colds, gastro-intestinal upsets, and common skin infections make up the majority of medical problems. Individuals, and especially small children, who suffer from asthma, allergies or skin problems such as eczema or psoriasis may find that these problems become more pronounced in Lagos.

Travelers visiting areas outside of the major cities should carry at least some fundamental first aid equipment with them during their travels. Snake bites are very rare among visitors, although quite common among the indigenous population in some parts of the country. Travelers should be aware of this risk, especially in bush areas, and

should wear protective shoes and clothing when hiking and exploring these regions.

Water shortages are quite common and general sanitation is poor throughout the entire region. As a consequence, outbreaks of water, food and mosquito-borne illnesses are often identified even within our own community. All water used for drinking and preparing ice cubes must be boiled and filtered before use. Bottled water is generally considered safe for consumption. Fruits and vegetables purchased on the local economy are often contaminated with parasites and bacterial contamination and should be cleaned by soaking with dilute cloxox or other safe decontaminants. Imported products are generally safe, but refrigeration is not always reliable. Restaurants offer foods from different countries and generally considered to serve "safe" food. However, one should avoid foods prepared by the street vendors—a reliable source of illness!

Preventive Measures

Malaria is endemic throughout Africa, similarly so in all of Nigeria. Falciparum malaria makes up 95 percent of all the malaria that are seen here. This unfortunately is the same malaria that has become resistant to many drugs and is the one that can, if not treated promptly or if treated incorrectly, can lead to cerebral malaria which has a 20 percent fatality rate despite treatment. It is absolutely imperative that **ALL MUST TAKE MALARIA PROPHYLAXIS**. Mefloquine is the drug of choice for this region, but there are other alternatives if this medication is not tolerated. Combinations of Chloroquine plus Paludrine may be used or one can use daily Doxyxycine. Neither is as effective as Mefloquine. All anti-malarials should be started 1-2 weeks before arrival at post and should be continued for 4 weeks after your permanent departure from a malarious area. The final permanent cure requires an additional medication taken daily for 2 weeks after your departure (Primaquine). In spite of good prophylaxis, breakthroughs of malaria are still possible and require prompt treatment with appropriate follow-up to exclude resistance.

laxis, breakthroughs of malaria are still possible and require prompt treatment with appropriate follow-up to exclude resistance.

Nigeria requires that all persons over the age of 1 year traveling to this country **MUST** be immunized against yellow fever. It is especially important to receive all of your immunizations before coming to post. It is of some note that we have minimized our use of Gamma Globulin to prevent hepatitis A and now use the recently released Hepatitis A vaccine.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The U.S. Department of State warns against travel by U.S. citizens. Violent crimes can occur throughout the country, and kidnappings are common throughout the Niger Delta region.

Direct flights from the United States to Murtala Muhammed Airport were suspended in September, 1993, due to inadequate provisions for security. Direct flights to Lagos are available from several European cities. Travelers are encouraged to arrive during the day or early in the evening for security reasons.

American Visitors. Any American traveling to Nigeria should exercise caution by ensuring that they are met at the airport by persons known to them.

Airport Arrival. Air travelers arrive in Lagos at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, about 15 miles from downtown Lagos. Although only a short distance, the trip into the city can take from 45 minutes to 1-1/2 hours, depending on traffic conditions. Private vehicles en route to and from the airport are frequently subjected to armed shakedowns by persons uniformed as police officers. Violent car-jacking also occur from time to

time. Special Note: There are no public telephones at the airport.

All U.S. citizens must have a valid visa to enter Nigeria, which is issued at Nigerian embassies and consulates worldwide. Apply for visas well in advance.

Travel to neighboring West African countries invariably requires a visa. If you plan to travel out of Nigeria for business or pleasure, bring at least thirty (30) passport-sized photos. These will be needed for visa applications and other documentation.

Personnel should obtain a cholera stamp and be sure that a yellow fever shot is recorded in their immunization card in order to guarantee entry into Nigeria. All personnel should check with the State Department immunization clinic for a list of the immunizations currently recommended for official personnel.

Nigerian law provides only for the private ownership of breach loaded, non-pump shotguns and rifles, excepting rifles above the caliber of 30-06. A pump action shotgun is prohibited as this is considered to be an auto-loading device. Shotguns that are single or double-barrel are acceptable. No pistols or other handguns are legal for private possession in Nigeria.

The basic unit of Nigerian currency is the Naira, which consists of 100 kobo. Nigeria abandoned a fixed exchange rate system in September 1986. Since then, the value of the Naira has been allowed to fluctuate in accordance with market forces. In August 1996, one dollar equaled about 84 Naira. A number of well-known European and U.S. banks are established, as minority partners, in the Nigerian banking system. These include the affiliate of Citibank, the Nigerian International Bank.

Nigeria has adopted the metric system of weights and measures.

Some hotels accept American Express credit cards as well as travelers checks, which they will

exchange for Naira. The Embassy, however, advises against use of any credit card in Nigeria and other arrangements for payment should be made. No financial information should be left in the home or hotels and no account numbers should be given or available to anyone.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Worker's Day
June 12	Democracy Day
Oct. 1	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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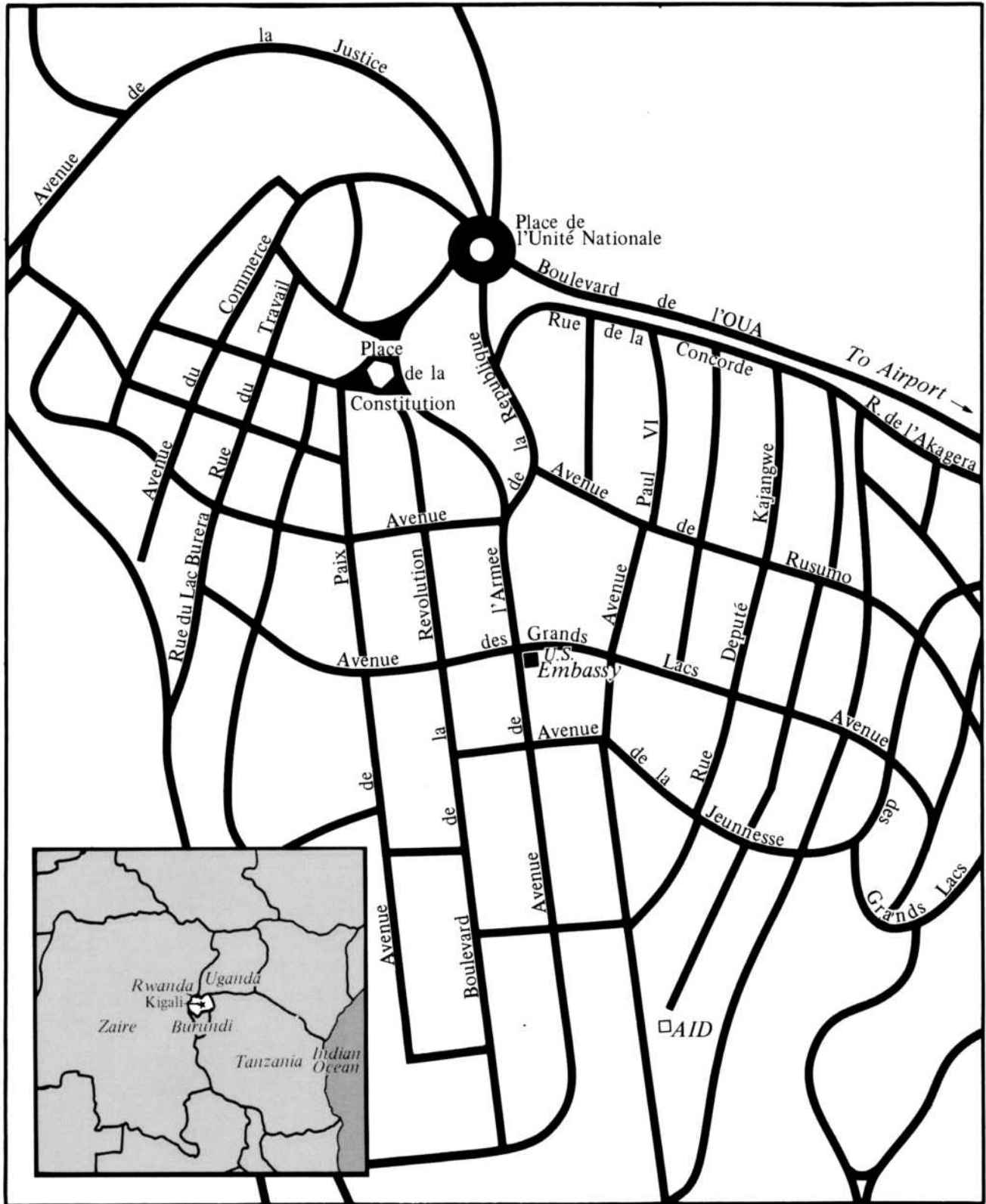
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Kigali, Rwanda

RWANDA

Republic of Rwanda

Major City:

Kigali

Other Cities:

Butare, Cyangugu, Gisenyi, Ruhengeri

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Rwanda. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Rwanda, known as the "land of a thousand hills," is situated in east central Africa. Physically, it is a country of mountains, hills, lakes, and rivers. Slightly smaller than the state of Maryland, Rwanda is the most densely populated country on the continent.

The capital, Kigali, is a small city located in the heart of the country. Despite its proximity to the Equator, the altitude (approximately 4,800 feet) of Kigali provides a temperate climate throughout the year.

MAJOR CITY

Kigali

With independence in 1962, Kigali became the capital of Rwanda. Kigali is a small city perched on a series of hills and ridges at an altitude of almost 4,800 feet. Rather than having a defined city center, Kigali is a mixture of low buildings, European-style housing and mud-brick African dwellings. Kigali offers tree-lined streets and plentiful gardens. Main streets are paved.

Utilities

Water shortages lasting several days can occur at any time.

If you will be bringing electronic equipment such as a stereo, television or computer, plan on bringing a heavy duty servo-stabilizer or voltage regulator that will accommodate all of the items and UPS equipment if needed. In addition, you should bring surge protectors for each piece of electronic gear. If possible, bring appliances that are made for 220 volts. Short power outages occur fairly often. Residences are equipped with European style wall sockets of various sizes. Bring plug adapters—they are in short supply in Kigali.

Food

Locally grown fruits and vegetables are good. Many vegetables available in the U.S. are also available in Kigali, with the exception of yellow corn, lima beans, and a short season of broccoli. Mangos, pineapple, papaya, passion fruit, guava, bananas, and seasonal citrus fruits are all on the market. South African apples are found from time to time in some import stores, but are very expensive.

A German butcher has established a reliable shop offering beef, pork, chicken, fish and deli and breakfast meats. Most cuts tend to require tenderizing.

Most Americans use either imported UHT milk or powdered milk. UHT cream from Belgium is available. Imported cheeses can be found, if you don't mind paying the price! A local cheese is tasty and good for sandwiches, pizza or casseroles. A number of grocery stores offer a wide variety of imported items, but generally at great cost. Supplies fluctuate, with some products being off the shelves for months at a time.

Clothing

For men, khaki pants and sport shirts suffice in the office. Most women wear dresses or suits to the office. Cocktail clothes do not need

to be overly fancy. Depending on your personal interests, leisure time clothing should include a warm jacket, running shoes, hiking boots, rain gear, bathing suit. Shorts are worn at home, during athletic activities in town, and at safari camps. Generally speaking, dress for both men and women is conservative.

Larger sizes of shoes are difficult to find in Kigali, and variety of styles and types of shoes is limited. It is advised to purchase shoes before arrival.

It is always a good idea to include a winter coat in your shipment in case you must travel to the U.S. in the winter.

Supplies and Services

With a number of import shops available in Kigali, most household supplies and toiletries are available. Be prepared to pay much more than you would pay in Washington. If you have favorite brands of particular items, bring them with you, as many American products are absent from the shelves.

Tailoring and dressmaking services can be found; however, fabric selection is limited and/or expensive. Shoe repair is possible but the results are marginal. Washable clothing is the best bet as local dry cleaners are only adequate.

Servicing of radio, television and other electronic equipment is somewhat reliable. Unisex beauty salons operate in the major hotels.

Domestic Help

In Kigali, servants generally do not live in. A housekeeper does most of the household chores, including ironing.

Be prepared to train your servants in food preparation and personal hygiene. They should receive annual medical examinations. Some employers provide locally made uniforms. Employers should register servants with Rwandan social security and make the required payments. Severance pay is two weeks' salary.

Religious Activities

Catholic, Anglican, and other denominations have one or two services on Sundays.

Sports

Kigali has a challenging 9-hole golf course complete with club facilities. Membership is US \$500 a year. Bring equipment, including balls, tees, gloves, etc. Weekend instruction is available.

The Cercle Sportif, Kigali's sole private club, boasts of complete facilities for tennis, squash, basketball, volleyball, soccer, swimming, and riding. The Club also provides bar and restaurant service. Anyone can join the club, which offers membership at varying lengths of time and according to the facilities you want to use.

The American Club is upgrading its weight room, and also has a basketball hoop, pool table, and dart boards.

The Hash House Harriers is a popular Saturday event, with trails set for runners and walkers. Every Sunday afternoon, a number of expats play softball.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Since the war in 1994 a number of popular destinations within Rwanda are now off limits, including visiting the mountain gorillas in the northwest.

The National Museum at Butare and the handicraft shops there are a popular destination, as is Akagera National Park, a good spot to go fishing, camping, bird watching, and with any luck, spot zebra, antelopes and hippos. The border to Uganda is a two-hour drive from Kigali.

The region offers many travel adventures including white-water rafting, photographic safaris, ballooning, mountain climbing, hiking, gorilla watching in Uganda, boat trips on the Nile, a week at the

beach in Kenya or Tanzania, and much more.

Entertainment

The American Club is a lively spot attracting a very international membership representing the many NGOs and international organizations that are present in Rwanda. Happy hours, parties, movie nights, international dinners, and other special events are always on the calendar. The Club has a fairly well-stocked video lending library.

Pleasant restaurants, discos for dancing, and the occasional dinner-dance sponsored by a local organization are the alternatives to entertaining at home.

Traditional Rwandan Intore dancers and drummers often perform on Rwandan holidays and other special occasions.

Remember to join a book club or bring an ample supply as English-language books are difficult to find. Video tapes, CDS, and cassette tapes are expensive and the selection is small.

Life in Kigali is informal. Small dinners, private parties and government or diplomatic receptions round out the entertainment possibilities.

OTHER CITIES

Situated close to Burundi on the southern border of Rwanda, **BUTARE** combines traditional housing areas and a commercial section. Before 1962, Butare was called Astrida. It is the second largest city in the country, with a population of about 40,000. In 1963, the National University of Rwanda was opened in the city. A museum of anthropology also is located here. Approximately 10 percent of the inhabitants are non-Africans. Most are foreign teachers at the National University of Rwanda.

CYANGUGU is situated in southwestern Rwanda, near Burundi. It is about 100 miles west of the capi-

tal with a population of roughly 12,000. Major crops include beans, cotton, tea, bananas, cassava, sweet potatoes, and corn. Industries include tea and meat processing.

The pleasant city of **GISENYI** is situated on Lake Kivu, one of the most beautiful lakes in Africa. The city is in the northernmost corner of the country, about 50 miles west of the capital. Gisenyi boasts of flowering trees; safe, sandy beaches; beautiful scenery; and the national park of the Virunga Volcanoes. The park is the home of a rare species of mountain gorilla. The population of Gisenyi is about 22,000.

Located in northern Rwanda near the borders of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), **RUHENGERI** is situated at the foot of the Birunga volcanic chain. The roughly 33,000 inhabitants of Ruhengeri are primarily engaged in farming. Sorghum, potatoes, bananas, coffee, and tea are grown. Industrial capacity is very small and is centered on flour-milling and the processing of pyrethrum, a natural insecticide. The city has a modern hospital and small airfield.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Rwanda is located in the mountains of east central Africa and covers 10,169 square miles (4,587 sq. ft. of which is water). Slightly smaller than Maryland, it is circular in shape. The eastern boundary is shared with Tanzania; Uganda, to the north; the west borders the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) and Lake Kivu; Burundi, to the south. The western edge of the country along the Congo Nile watershed, rises steeply, formed by a chain of volcanoes called the Virunga Mountains. It is here that the country's highest point, the volcano Karisimbi



Marketplace in Cyangugu, Rwanda

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at an elevation of 14,782 feet, is found. Gisenyi, a town at the northern end of Lake Kivu, enjoys spectacular vistas of the surrounding volcanoes. Rwanda's green valleys produce beans, sorghum, corn, manioc, Irish potatoes, rice, sweet potatoes, soybeans, bananas, coffee and tea.

The low mountains and steep hills of the remainder of the country diminish in height as one travels towards the east and southeast. On the Tanzanian border, low hills, papyrus swamps, and shallow lakes are interspersed with semiarid savanna. Hardy thickets, 8 to 15 feet tall, cactus like candelabrum trees and grassy glades are found here.

Despite Rwanda's location of only two degrees below the equator, the altitude provides a mild, temperate climate for most parts of the country. The average 24-hour temperature in Kigali is 73°F The higher reaches above 14,700 feet might even experience frost and snow.

Two rainy seasons generally occur between February and May and September through December. However, changes in world climate can cause variation to these seasons. The rains can be torrential, although brief, and sometimes are

accompanied by strong winds and lightning. Although sunshine appears throughout the rainy seasons, mildew in unventilated rooms can become a problem. Annual rainfall averages 31 inches and is generally heavier in the western and northwestern mountains than in the eastern savannas.

The long dry summer season, May to September, turns the hills around Kigali a reddish ochre, fine dust is everywhere, and the grass dries up. Added to this is the smoke from fires as farmers burn away the dried brush. Dust from vehicles on unpaved roads reduces visibility, sometimes causing accidents.

Population

A July 1997 estimate puts Rwanda's population at 7,737,537, with a population growth rate at 8.24%. Despite the 1994 genocide and civil war between Hutu and Tutsi factions that killed up to 1 million Rwandans and forced more than 2 million to flee to neighboring countries, Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa. Rwanda's birth rate is estimated at 38.73 births per 1,000 population; the death rate is estimated at 21.06 deaths per 1,000 population; and the net migration rate is estimated at 64.78 migrants per 1,000 popu-

lation. According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, in 1996 and 1997 nearly 1,300,000 Hutus returned to Rwanda.

Ethnic groups within Rwanda are comprised of 75% Hutu; 24% Tutsi; 1% Twa (Pygmoid). Traditionally, the Hutu are known as cultivators, the Tutsi as cattle raisers, and the Twa as hunters, but population pressure has reduced the importance of cattle raising and hunting and now over 95% of the population depends on subsistence farming. Despite these differences, Rwanda has no tribes, as that term is usually understood, since all groups speak the same language (Kinyarwanda), inhabit the same areas, freely intermarry, and share one culture.

In contrast to many African countries, life in rural Rwanda is not centered around villages (except in recent resettlement projects), but rather around but compounds called "rugos," scattered throughout the hillsides.

The population is divided religiously as follows: 65% are Roman Catholic; 9% are Protestant; 1% Muslim; and indigenous beliefs and others make up 25%. The infant mortality rate (1997 est.) is 118.8 deaths per 1,000 live births. The life expectancy at birth for the total population is 39.11 years; for males, 38.64 years; for females, 39.6 years (1997 est.). The total fertility rate is 5.93 children born per woman.

Official languages include Kinyarwanda, a universal Bantu vernacular; English and French. Kiswahili is used in commercial centers.

Approximately 8,000 non-Africans live in Rwanda, including Belgians, French, Germans, Italians, Dutch, Swiss, British, Scandinavians, South Asians, and Americans.

History

According to folklore, Tutsi cattle breeders began arriving in the area

from somewhere in the north about 500 years ago and gradually subjugated the Hutu inhabitants. The Tutsis established a monarchy headed by a Mwami (king) and a feudal caste of nobles. The Tutsis reduced the Hutus to serfdom through a contract known as "ubuhake," whereby the Hutu farmers obligated their services to the Tutsi lords in return for cattle. Some successful Hutu and Twa were adopted into Tutsi aristocracy. Ultimately, the fortunes of some Tutsi declined until they enjoyed few advantages over the Hutu, and the boundaries of race and class became less distinct.

The first European known to have visited Rwanda was the German, Count van Goetzen, in 1894. He was followed by missionaries, notably the "white fathers." In 1899, the Mwami submitted to a German protectorate without resistance. Belgian troops from then Zaire chased the small number of Germans out of Rwanda in 1915 and took control of the country. After World War I, the League of Nations mandated Rwanda and its southern neighbor, Burundi, to Belgium as the territory known as Ruanda-Urundi. Following World War II, Ruanda-Urundi became a United Nations Trust Territory, with Belgium as the administering authority.

Reforms instituted by the Belgians in the 1950s encouraged the growth of democratic political institutions but were resisted by Tutsi traditionalists who saw in them a threat to Tutsi rule. An increasingly restive Hutu population, encouraged by the Belgian military, sparked a revolt in November 1959, resulting in the overthrow of the Tutsi monarchy. Two years later, the Party of the Hutu Emancipation Movement (Parmehutu) won an overwhelming victory in a UN-supervised referendum. During the 1959 revolt and its aftermath, more than 160,000 Tutsis fled to neighboring countries.

The Parmehutu government, formed as a result of the September 1961 election, was granted internal autonomy by Belgium on January 1,

1962. A June 1962 UN General Assembly resolution terminated the Belgian trusteeship and granted full independence to Rwanda (and Burundi) effective July 1, 1962.

Gregoire Kayibanda, leader of the Parmehutu party, became Rwanda's first elected President, leading a government chosen from the membership of the directly elected unicameral National Assembly. Inefficiency and corruption began festering in government ministries in the mid-1960s. On July 5, 1973, the military took power under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Juvenal Habyarimana, who dissolved the National Assembly and the Parmehutu party and abolished all political activity.

In 1975, the President formed the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), whose goals were to promote peace and unity and national development. Rwandans went to the polls in December 1978, overwhelmingly endorsed a new constitution, and confirmed Habyarimana as President. President Habyarimana was reelected in 1983 and again in 1988, when he was the sole candidate. Responding to public pressure for political reform, President Habyarimana announced in July 1990 his intention to transform Rwanda's one party state into a multi-party democracy.

On October 1, 1990, Rwandan exiles banded together as the Rwanda Patriotic Force (RPF) and invaded Rwanda from their base in Uganda. The rebel force, composed primarily of ethnic Tutsis, blamed the government for failing to democratize and resolve the problem of some 500,000 Tutsi refugees living in Diaspora around the world. The war dragged on for almost two years until a ceasefire accord signed July 12, 1992 in Arusha, Tanzania, fixed a timetable for an end to the fighting and for political talks leading to a peace accord and authorized a neutral military observer group under the auspices of the United Nations. A ceasefire took effect July 31, 1992,

and political talks began August 10, 1992.

On April 6, 1994, the airplane carrying President Habyarimana and the President of Burundi, was shot down as it prepared to land at Kigali. Both Presidents were killed. As though the shooting down were a signal, military and militia groups began rounding up and killing political moderates regardless of their ethnic background and all Tutsis. The Prime Minister and her ten Belgian bodyguards were among the first victims. It soon became clear that the killing was not limited to Kigali; between April 6 and the beginning of July, a genocide of unprecedented swiftness left up to a million Tutsis killed at the hands of organized bands of militia - Interahamwe - and even ordinary citizens were called on by local officials and government-sponsored radio to kill their neighbors. The dead President's own MRND party was implicated in organizing many aspects of the genocide.

Immediately after the shooting down of the President's plane, the RPF battalion stationed in Kigali under the Arusha Accords came under attack. The battalion fought its way out of Kigali and joined up with RPF units in the North. The RPF resumed its invasion, and civil war raged concurrently with the genocide for two months. In July, French forces landed in Coma, Congo (then Zaire) on a peacekeeping mission. They deployed throughout western Rwanda in an area they called "Zone Turquoise." The impact of their intervention is still hotly debated and forms the basis for a still-strained French Rwandan relationship.

The Rwandan army was quickly defeated by the RPF, and fled across the border to Congo, followed by some two million refugees. The RPF took Kigali on July 4, 1994, and the war ended a few weeks later. The RPF took control of a country ravaged by war and genocide. A million or so had been murdered, another two million or so had fled, another

million or so were displaced internally.

The international community responded with one of the largest humanitarian relief efforts ever mounted. The U.S. was one of the largest contributors. The UN peacekeeping operation, UNAMIR, was drawn down during the fighting but brought back up to strength after the RPF victory. UNAMIR remained in Rwanda until March 8, 1996.

Political Institutions

After its military victory, the RPF organized a coalition government based on the terms of the Arusha accords. On May 5, 1995, the Transitional National Assembly adopted a new constitution which included elements of the constitution of June 18, 1991, as well as provisions of the 1993 Arusha Peace Accord and the November 1994 multi-party protocol of understanding. The MRND Party was outlawed. Political organizing was banned until 1999.

The biggest problem facing the government is rehabilitation of war damage, and reintegration of the one and a half million refugees who fled to Tanzania, Burundi, and Congo, returning from as long ago as 1959. One problem of particular urgency is the prison population, which has swelled to 130,000 since the war.

Rwanda has 12 administrative divisions known locally as prefectures: Butare, Byumba Cyangugu, Gikongoro, Gisenyi, Gitarama, Kibungo, Umutara, Kigali rurale, Kibuye, Kigali, and Ruhengeri.

The legal system is based on German and Belgian civil law systems and customary law. Within the Executive branch of government, the principal government officials are: President Pasteur Bizimungu; Vice President and Minister of Defense Maj. Gen. Paul Kagame; Prime Minister Celestin Rwigema; Minister of Foreign Affairs Anastase Gasana; Ambassador to the

United States Theogene Rudasmgwa; and Ambassador to the United Nations Manzi Bakuramutsa.

Arts, Science, and Education

Rwanda is especially noted for its handcrafted baskets. The baskets are made in a wide range of sizes, usually with lids and graphic patterns woven into the sides. They can be quite intricate and magnificent. Private and government-operated handicraft shops can be found in Kigali. In Butare, a city two hours to the south of Kigali, the German development agency, GTZ, coordinates a non-profit artisan coop which offers a wide variety of handicrafts, including wood carvings, basketry, reed rugs, clothing, drums, and other tourist items. The National Museum of Rwanda, also located in Butare, offers a fascinating display of Rwandan history and culture, and a small gift shop sells many interesting pieces.

Before the 1994 war, many religious missions produced artwork and handicrafts, but little if nothing has been produced since.

Butare is also the home of the National University of Rwanda. The University operates primarily with Canadian, Belgian and French technical assistance. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides assistance to the Law School. The Institut de Recherche Scientifique et Agricole du Rwanda (ISAR) maintains an agricultural experiment station at Rubona, above Butare. Additionally, the Institut National de Recherche Scientifique (INRS) maintains an anthropological museum and arboretum at Butare and conducts studies of regional fauna and flora. The Ministry of Natural

Resources maintains a small but interesting geological museum in Kigali. Rwanda's literacy rate within the total population is 60.5% of those aged 15 and over who can read and write. Of this percentage,

69.8% are male and 51.6% are female (based on 1995 estimates).

Commerce and Industry

Rwanda, one of the poorest nations in Africa, continues to suffer bitterly as a result of the ethnic-based civil war and genocide of 1994. The economy suffers from failure to maintain the infrastructure, neglect of important cash crops, and lack of health care facilities. Data since the war suggests that the GDP dropped 50% in 1994 and came back partially, by 25%, in 1995. By 1997, the economy posted a 13% growth rate, but has not attained pre-war levels. Agriculture dominates the economy; coffee and tea provide 80% to 90% of Rwanda's exports. However, deforestation, soil erosion and the limited amount of fertile land reduces the agriculture sector's production potential.

According to 1995 estimates, of a labor force of 3.6 million, 93% work in agriculture, 5% in government and services, and 2% in industry and commerce. The agriculture sector has recovered to about 85% of its pre-war level of production.

The limited tourism potential that existed before the war has not recovered. Rebels continue to fight government forces in the northwest mountains, home to the mountain gorilla. Akagera National Park, once home to a wide variety of wild animals, has been reduced in area by two thirds to accommodate refugees.

Recovery of domestic production will proceed slowly. Light industry includes mining of tin and tungsten ore, cement, processing of agricultural products, small-scale beverage production, soap, furniture, shoes, plastic goods, textiles, and cigarettes.

Foreign aid, especially from Belgium, Canada, Great Britain the World Bank, the European Union, UNDP, France, Germany, Holland, the United States and Japan, con-

tinues to account for most new capital in recent years. The United States is a leading donor to Rwanda and channels approximately \$12 million per annum through USAID, with an additional \$200 million provided in emergency assistance since 1994.

Transportation

Automobiles

Japanese sedans and American and Japanese four-wheel-drive vehicles are driven by most Americans. Sedans are suitable for most roads in Kigali as well as major highways, but a 4x4 is essential on unpaved roads found throughout the country. Both right and left hand drive vehicles are found, while all traffic requires driving on the same side as in the U.S.

Service at garages varies from poor to acceptable; however, spare parts are very expensive and can take months to secure.

Finding a local mechanic to service an American vehicle can be a challenge. The dry season requires that air and oil filters be changed frequently. All drivers must carry third-party insurance, purchased locally. Insurance for fire, theft, and transportation should be purchased in the U.S.

U.S. drivers licenses can be used in Rwanda.

Local

Many roads between major towns are unpaved, but paved roads extend from Kigali to the Uganda border via Byumba in the north; from Kigali to Rusumu on the Tanzanian border in the southeast; between Kigali and Gisenyi and Ruhengeri in the northwest, and between Kigali and the Burundi border via Butare in the south. Traffic moves on the right in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo; on the left in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. Buses and bush taxis (vans or open pickup trucks) service all parts of the country, but are slow, overcrowded, and dangerous.

Regional

Within Rwanda there are 12,000 km of highways; as of 1997, some 1,000 km. are paved.

There is no rail system in Rwanda, so goods are either flown or trucked in. Sabena Airlines has direct service from Brussels to Kigali two times a week. Connections via Kampala or Nairobi increase the number of options for flying to and from Europe. Additionally, flights are available from Kigali to Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, and South Africa.

Communications

Telephone

Most American households in Kigali have telephones. Calls are individually charged based on duration and distance.

Long-distance service within Central and East Africa is fair in quality and charges. Satellite service to Europe and the United States is reliable but expensive. Internet service is also available and expensive.

Radio and TV

Local broadcast radio stations number one AM and two FM and several shortwave. Bringing a shortwave radio allows you to pick up programming from around the world.

There is one local television station which broadcasts in English, French and Kinyarwanda. The American Club offers a video tape (NTSCVHS) rental service.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There is a local French-language newspaper available, and The New Times, a Rwandan paper published in English.

American news magazines are available locally, but not many paperbacks are available in English. The USIS library has a small collection of English-language books and The American Club maintains a lending library of several hundred paperbacks.

French hardbound and paperbacks can be found at Caritas, a shop in central Kigali.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Very limited medical services are available in Kigali. Serious medical or dental conditions will require evacuation.

Local pharmacies stock mostly European drugs, vitamins and over-the-counter medication, including antihistamines, cold pills, and throat lozenges. Some antibiotics are sold without a prescription.

Eyeglasses cannot be made in Kigali, so bring an extra pair.

Dental care is below U.S. standards. All preventive dental work should be done before departing for Kigali. Dental emergencies require evacuation to Nairobi or London.

Community Health

Public sanitation is reasonably good. Drains in most European-type houses are adequate; main streets are cleaned periodically, and trash and garbage are collected though irregularly.

Insects abound and learning to live with them is the best strategy. Geckos, a useful, silent, insect-eating lizard, are found in every home, usually inhabiting the upper reaches of house walls. Poisonous snakes are not a major health hazard. Rabies is prevalent; it is advised that you receive immunization against rabies.

Rwanda's temperate climate is generally healthful, but dust and pollen aggravate throat or respiratory ailments during the dry season. Allergies may be exacerbated due to mold and dampness during the rainy season.

Preventive Measures

Most hazards to your health encountered during your tour in Rwanda can be avoided by being

vigilant and by taking a few necessary precautions. Malaria, AIDS, dysentery, bilharzia, and hepatitis can be either avoided completely or your risk greatly reduced by using the appropriate method of prophylaxis. Food preparation, well-cooked meat, water purification, inoculations, repellents, mosquito nets, and appropriate behavior all reduce the risk to your health.

In addition to those mentioned above, diseases endemic to Rwanda include tuberculosis, cholera, and leprosy. Also prevalent are venereal, alimentary tract, parasitic, respiratory, and childhood infectious diseases. Outbreaks of meningitis occur in the rural areas and several cases of "sleeping sickness" are reported each year. Cantaride, known in East Africa as "Nairobi Eye," is a common seasonal skin infection caused by a thin green and orange striped insect. First and second degree burns can occur from contact with the bug.

Recommended inoculations include yellow fever, Hepatitis A & B, typhoid, MMR, tetanus, anti-rabies, and polio. Anti-malaria prophylaxis should be taken.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport and evidence of yellow fever immunization are required. Visas are not required for American citizens entering Rwanda for less than 90 days. U.S. citizens planning on working in Rwanda should apply for a work permit at the Department of Immigration as soon as possible after arrival in Rwanda. Detailed entry information may be obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda, 1714 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20009, telephone 202-232-2882, fax 202-232-4544, Internet site: <http://www.rwandaemb.org/rwanda/>. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Rwandan embassy or consulate.

Travelers who wish to travel to the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with visas and/or entry/exit stamps from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda or Zimbabwe may experience difficulties at the DRC airport or other ports of entry. Some travelers with those visas or exit/entry stamps have been detained for questioning in the DRC.

Direct flights from Europe to Kigali arrive from Brussels, or via Entebbe or Nairobi. Travelers from the U.S. may take an overnight rest stop.

Make reservations well in advance and reconfirm them; check-in early since flights are frequently overbooked.

The airport embarkation fee is \$20 per person.

Airfreight from the U.S. can arrive within 3 weeks, but delays are common. Surface shipments are normally routed through Antwerp, Belgium and airlifted from there to Kigali. Transit time from the U.S. to Antwerp is 8 to 12 weeks, but may be longer.

Private vehicles driven to Rwanda must be declared at the border; importation formalities are arranged later in Kigali.

U.S. citizens who plan to travel to Rwanda are urged to register with the U.S. Embassy and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Rwanda. The U.S. Embassy is located at Boulevard de La Revolution; the mailing address is B.P. 28, Kigali, Rwanda, telephone 250-05601/05602/05603, fax 250-502128; e-mail address is amembkigali@hotmail.com. The Embassy's Internet web site is <http://www.usembkigali.net>

Pets

Pets are not quarantined, but dogs must have proof of rabies vaccinations and a veterinarian's certificate showing origin and health. The above is not required for cats, but is recommended.

At present, veterinary service is good; however, many pet supplies are not available, so bring a supply of flea and tick repellent, heart-worm medicine, and pet food.

Firearms and Ammunition

Weapons imported into Rwanda must be registered and approved before they enter the country or turned over to Customs once they are brought into the country (thus requiring a separate packing crate) until they are registered and approved.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Rwandan franc (FRW) is tied to the SDR and fluctuates as the SDR fluctuates. As of June, 1998, FRW 307=US\$1.

The two commercial banks are the Banque Commerciale du Rwanda and the Banque de Kigali. At these banks, Americans can have a personal checking account in Rwandan francs and buy U.S. dollar traveler's checks

The metric system is used throughout the country.

Disaster Preparedness

In 2002, Rwanda experienced the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo which lies across the border in the

Democratic Republic of Congo. Tremors were felt throughout Rwanda, including in the capital, Kigali. Seismic activity is unpredictable and infrequent, but American citizens should be aware of the possibility of earthquakes. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
April 7	National Mourning Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
July 1	National Day
July 4	Independence Day
July 5	Peace & Unity Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Sept. 25	Kamarampaka Day
Oct. 26	Armed Forces Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Finlay, Hugh and Crowther, Ceoff. 1997. *Lonely Planet Guide - East Africa*. Lonely Planet Publications. ISBN 0864424493.

Courevitch, Philip. *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*.

Isaac, John and Greenberg, Keith Elliot. January 1997. *Rwanda: Fierce Clashes in Central Africa*. Blackbirch Press. ISBN 1567111858. For ages 8 and above.

Keane, Fergal. August 1997. *Season of Blood: A Rwandan Journey*. Viking Pen. ISBN 0140247602.

Newbury, Catherine. February 1989. *Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Ruanda, 1860-1960*. Columbia University Press. ISBN 0231062567.

Prunier, Gerard. September 1995. *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide*. Columbia University Press. ISBN 0231104081.

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe

Major City:
São Tomé

INTRODUCTION

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE is Africa's smallest country. The first successful settlement in São Tomé dates to 1493, under the Portuguese crown. By the mid-1500s, the Portuguese settlers, with slave labor, turned the islands into Africa's largest sugar producer. The farming technology and plantation system utilized by the Portuguese in São Tomé later served as the model used in Brazil and the Caribbean. During the 1600s, São Tomé's sugar industry declined as new colonies in the Americas were developed, and the island was only used as a port. The plantation system was used later to grow coffee and cocoa, and that system led to abuses against the African farm workers. Labor unrest continued well into the 20th century. Although slavery formally ended in 1869, in the early 1900s forced labor and poor work conditions were still common. In 1953, Portuguese soldiers fired upon striking plantation workers, killing 1,032. On July 12, 1975, after a period of transitional government, São Tomé and Príncipe achieved independence from Portugal. The country allied itself with the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Cuba in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1990s, the government became more

politically open and conducted direct multiparty elections.

MAJOR CITY

São Tomé

São Tomé is the capital city, with a population of about 57,000. Most of the island's population lives in the capital area. In 1493, Álvaro da Caminha, a member of Portugal's royal household, was given generous privileges to help rejuvenate the ailing colony. He brought many settlers to the wide bay of Ana de Chaves where the city of São Tomé now stands. The city was founded in about 1500 and serves as the trading and shipping center for the country. São Tomé was used as a penal colony by Portugal until 1881.

Recreation and Entertainment

Two sports facilities opened in 1992. Sports have a cultural and patriotic importance to São Tomé. During the 1950s, many residents joined cultural and recreational associations such as the pro-nationalist Sporting Club do São Tomé.

São Tomé and Príncipe's scenic beauty, wildlife, and unique historic architecture have the potential to

attract tourists, but tourist facilities are restricted largely to the port areas. The first tourist hotel opened in 1986.

The town center of São Tomé dates back to the late 19th century. At that time, rich plantation owners had many fancy buildings constructed. São Tomé's historical buildings follow one of two architectural styles: colonial, with verandas, high ceilings, colonnades, and courtyard gardens; and French, with mansard roofs and shutters. The Portuguese planters had stately mansions built, many of which are still in good condition (some are still well-maintained). Vista Alegre, Boa Entrada, São Nicolau, Água-Izé, and Nova Moca all have plantation houses. The most elegant is probably the Rio d'Ouru plantation house, which is controlled by Empresa Agrícola Agostinho Neto, São Tomé's largest agricultural plantation company. The plantation houses exhibit tropical colonial, oriental, and alpine architectural styles. Although São Tomé does not have a developed tourist industry, the pruned gardens, ornate architecture, and exotic scenery of the old plantation houses could become a tourist attraction.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

São Tomé and Príncipe, the smallest country in Africa, lies in the Gulf of Guinea about 225 off the west coast of Gabon. The country's total area is 371 square miles, of which the island of São Tomé occupies 330 square miles and the island of Príncipe covers 42 square miles. The islands form part of a chain of extinct volcanos and are both very mountainous. São Tomé's highest peak is Pico de São Tomé, at 6,640 feet. Along the south coast of the island, there are dramatic geological features such as Cão Grande and Cão Pequeno, two precipitous towering spires of volcanic rock. São Tomé's rich vegetation tends to conceal some of its volcanic topography. The islands are tropical, but temperatures vary with altitude. Coastal temperatures average around 81°F, but the mountain regions average only 68°F. Seasons are distinguished more by a change in rainfall than by a change in temperature. Between May and October, the islands receive 150–200 inches of rain, most of it falling on the southern windward areas. Northern areas receive only 40–60 inches of rain.

Population

São Tomé and Príncipe has an estimated population of 160,000, with about 94% of the total residing on the island of São Tomé. Most of the islands' permanent residents are *mestiços*, descendants of the Portuguese (colonists, deported criminals, and orphans) and the African slaves who came from Gabon and the Guinea coast. Along the southeast coast of São Tomé lives a group known as the Angolares, the descendants of Angolan slaves, shipwrecked in the 16th century, who established independent fishing communities. Other ethnic groups include the *forros* (descendants of freed slaves), *servicais* (contract

laborers from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde), *tongas* (children of servicais born on the islands), and Europeans (primarily Portuguese). During the persecution of Iberian Jews in 1492, 2,000 Jewish children were taken from their parents' custody and shipped off to São Tomé as settlers. By 1500, only 600 remained alive (and by 1532, only 50–60) and presumably came to form a unique element of the island's population. Today's *forros* population traces its origins to the resettled Portuguese convicts and the Jewish orphans of the 15th century. Roman Catholicism is the majority religion, with professing Catholics estimated at over 80% of the population. There are smaller numbers of Evangelical Protestants and Seventh-Day Adventists. São Tomé's population speaks a centuries-old dialect of Portuguese; the Creole dialect also reveals the heavy influence of African Bantu languages.

Government

São Tomé became a Portuguese concession in 1485, and was taken over by the Portuguese crown in 1522 (Príncipe followed in 1573). Plantation slavery was the basis of island labor for centuries, and even when slavery ended in 1869, plantations used slavlike contract laborers from other areas of Portuguese-speaking Africa. In 1953, the governor of São Tomé ordered Portuguese troops to open fire on striking plantation workers, killing over 1,000. The massacre sparked a nationalist passion that gained momentum. A liberation group for São Tomé and Príncipe went into exile to Gabon in 1960 and remained there until 1974, when Portugal recognized it as the sole representative of the people of São Tomé and Príncipe. On July 12, 1975, São Tomé and Príncipe became an independent republic. Under the constitution adopted in 1990, a president is chosen by a multiparty election for a maximum of two five-year terms. The legislative body, known as the People's Assembly, is composed of 55 members elected to four-year terms. Judges of the Supreme Court are

appointed by the People's Assembly. After a short-lived 1995 bloodless coup, in 1996 a government of national unity headed by Prime Minister Armindo Vaz d'Almeida was inaugurated. In elections in 2001, Fradique de Meneses was elected president. Manuel Pinto da Costa is the current prime minister.

The flag consists of three unequal horizontal stripes of green, yellow, and green; there is a red triangle at the hoist, and two black stars on the yellow stripe.

Arts, Science, Education

Schooling is compulsory for only four years; many children do not complete elementary school. Secondary education has two stages: the first four years are followed by three years.

Commerce and Industry

São Tomé and Príncipe has one of the poorest economies in the world. The country imports about 90% of its food, and is reliant on cocoa-producing plantations for its foreign earnings. Cocoa accounts for most of the country's foreign exchange earnings—changes in the price of cocoa on the world market can create serious economic problems. Drought and mismanagement have caused cocoa production to decline in recent years, resulting in a poor balance of trade and increased foreign debt. The government has implemented businesslike fiscal and economic policies since 1991, which have slowly started to improve the economy. In December 2000, the country received \$200 million in debt relief from the Highly Indebted Poor Countries program.

Transportation

Roads on São Tomé and Príncipe reflect the plantation economy and serve principally to bring export crops to the port towns. Schooners are the main form of transport for

people living too far from town. Although there are ports at São Tomé and Santo António, large freighters must be unloaded from their anchorage by barge because the ports are not deep enough to accommodate them. The international airport at São Tomé is serviced mainly by the Angolan airline Transportes Aéreos de Angola. Equatorial Airline of São Tomé and Príncipe flies to Príncipe and Libreville, Gabon.

National roads are limited but adequate. Public transportation and emergency road service are unavailable.

Communications

There is a national radio station that broadcasts in Portuguese, and a television station that broadcasts two days a week. Two weekly newspapers are published: *Diario da República* and *Noticias São Tomé e Príncipe*. There are over 3,000 telephones in use.

Health

Malaria and outbreaks of smallpox were major health problems in São Tomé until the early 20th century. There have been problems with malnutrition, but the government has promoted crop diversification to help alleviate the circumstances.

Outbreaks of tuberculosis and measles have occurred in the 1990s.

Medical care in São Tomé and Príncipe are extremely limited. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services. U.S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the United States. The Medicare/Medicaid program does not provide for payment of medical services outside of the United States. Travelers have found that supplemental medical insurance with specific overseas and medical evacuation coverage has proven useful. For additional health information, travelers can contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's international travelers hotline, telephone (404) 332-4559. Internet address: <http://www.cdc.gov>.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Travelers should obtain latest information and details from the Permanent Mission of São Tomé and Príncipe, 122 East 42nd St., Suite 1604, New York, N.Y. 10168, telephone (212) 697-4211. Overseas, inquiries should be made to the nearest Sao Tomean diplomatic mission.

There is no U.S. Embassy in São Tomé and Príncipe. U.S. citizens in São Tomé and Príncipe needing assistance may contact the U.S. Embassy in Libreville, Gabon, located on the Boulevard de la Mer. The mailing address is b.p. 4000, Libreville, Gabon. The telephone is (241) 762003/4 or 743492.

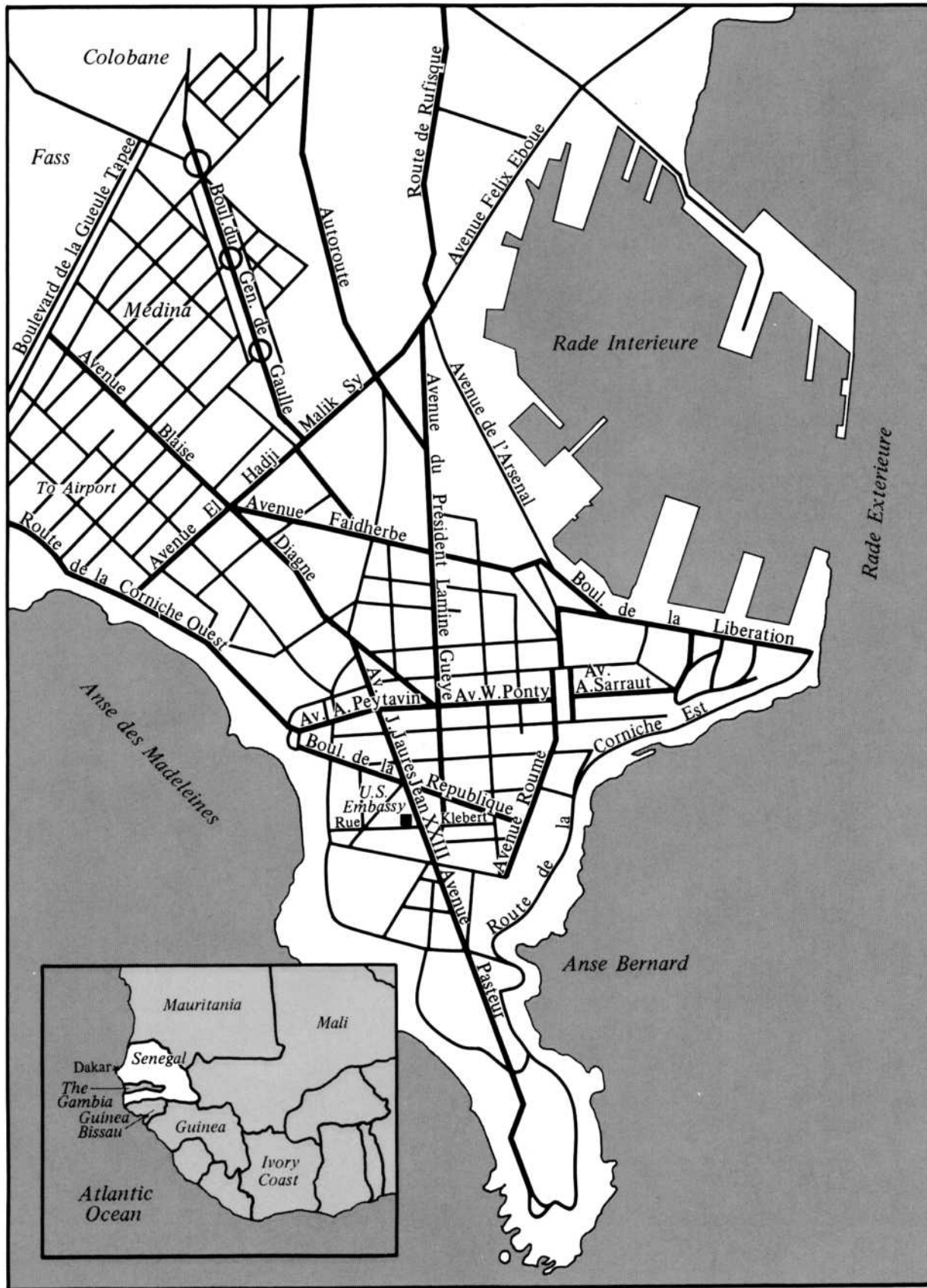
LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 4 Martyrs' Day
- May 1 Labor Day
- July 12 Independence Day
- Sept. (first week) Armed Forces Day*
- Sept. 30 Farmers' Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas & Family Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Hodges, Tony and Malyn Newitt. *São Tomé and Príncipe: From Plantation Colony to Microstate*. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1988.



Dakar, Senegal

SENEGAL

Republic of Senegal

Major Cities:

Dakar, Saint-Louis

Other Cities:

Diourbel, Kaolack, Louga, Rufisque, Tambacounda, Thiès, Ziguinchor

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

For the American coming to sub-Saharan Africa for the first time, Dakar, capital of the Republic of Senegal, affords a moderate and agreeable introduction to the developing world. It is not a place of extremes—of climate, geography, culture, or political ideology. It is in many ways similar to a European city but still maintains its African atmosphere. Dakar lies midway between Arab-Mediterranean North Africa and tropical rain forest countries along the Gulf of Guinea. Senegal's main crop, peanuts, is characteristic of the sandy, dry soil and climate. Senegal is composed of various African populations. Superimposed on their black African traditions and cultures are two major

external influences: Islam, which arrived in the 11th century, and French colonial rule, which began in the 17th century and ended in 1960. Senegal is now over 94 percent Moslem. Its institutions are largely French in character. The official language is French, but Wolof is the lingua franca. Senegalese society offers unusual opportunities for friendly and enterprising French-speaking Americans. Senegalese are interested in the U.S. as the increasing number of visitors and students attests. A widespread genuine curiosity exists about America. In addition to its still close ties with France, Senegal, politically moderate and democratic, enjoys friendly relations with many other countries. Dakar offers a fascinating opportunity to gain insight into a way of life shared by millions of Africans—people with whom the U.S., as a matter of national interest, will be increasingly concerned in the future.

MAJOR CITIES

Dakar

Dakar, Senegal's capital and metropolitan center, is one of the great seaports and industrial centers of West Africa. It is the most European

city between Casablanca and Abidjan. First occupied by the French as a military post in 1857, Dakar soon developed as a seaport and administrative center to replace Saint-Louis as Senegal's principal city. When the Federation of French West Africa was formed, Dakar became the seat of federal government. Following independence from France, the city remained the cultural center of French West Africa. Dakar occupies the southern end of the Cap Vert Peninsula, the westernmost point of the continent. On a plateau about 30 meters (100 feet) above sea level on either side, are the tall, modern buildings, handsome residences, and tree-lined avenues of the business and administrative district. A crowded neighborhood, housing about 100,000-110,000 people, adjoins the business district. To the north are residential districts and suburbs including: Grand Dakar, Colobane, Baobabs, Point E, and Liberte. Although some communities are randomly developed, others are carefully planned residential areas with modern homes, surrounded by trees and gardens. Industrial areas are on the peninsula's southeastern side, along the railroad to Rufisque and the interior. On the western side, beyond Medina and facing the open sea, is the impressive University of Dakar complex and the fashionable suburb, Fann. Dakar-Yoff

International Airport is about 16 kilometers (10 miles) northwest of downtown, not far from Pointe des Almadies, the western-most point on the African continent. Dakar has most of the public utilities and services usually enjoyed by any large city. However, because of the city's growth and the vast quantities of water used by visiting ships, available water supply is sometimes insufficient for the city's needs. Diesel-generated electricity voltage fluctuates, and power failures occur but are usually short-lived. Most apartment facilities are not equipped with emergency generators. No sewers exist outside the downtown area.

Food

A wide variety of food is available locally, but prices are frequently more expensive than in the U.S. Locally produced and French-imported products are well stocked in the markets or super marchés. Beef, lamb, pork, and veal are considerably leaner than U.S. cuts. Seasonal seafood is excellent, plentiful, and inexpensive. Garden vegetables are abundant in winter but scarcer during the hot, humid, rainy summer weather. Fresh fruits are available all year. Fresh milk is available from a Danish-Senegalese enterprise and provides an alternative to the long-life (sterilized) milk products. However, both products offer many varieties. Also available are good varieties of imported dairy products such as butter, yogurt, cream, and cheese. Fresh bread specialties and delicious pastries are baked daily by numerous French, Lebanese, and Senegalese bakeries. Specialty items such as prepared baby food and pet foods are available but extremely high priced.

Clothing

Bring washable clothes since local dry-cleaning is expensive and does not match U.S. standards. Imported, expensive but fashionable, Western-style, ready-to-wear clothing and shoes are available locally in limited supplies. Dress in Dakar is informal, but not casual except at home or at the beach. Senegalese men and women are fashion conscious and

dress well. Bring sport clothing, footwear, and beach accessories to post. An umbrella is very useful during the rainy season.

Men: For the hot, humid summer (July–October) lightweight suits and slacks are worn with short-sleeved white and colored shirts. For winter, heavyweight summer suits or lightweight tropical worsted suits, long-sleeved shirts, and a few sweaters are useful.

Women: During the summer season, women dress as they would in the Mid-Atlantic, in July and August. Washable, lightweight cotton and linen fabrics are best. Cool, sleeveless dresses are worn during the day, both in the office and in public. Tailored slacks are also worn. Shorts are not appropriate in public unless engaged in athletic activities. Most entertainment is informal or casual. Dakar's winter season compares with late spring and early fall in Washington, D.C.—warm days with cool evenings. Because houses and offices are not heated, lightweight warm clothing is required for indoors. Dark cottons, knits, and light woollens are useful. Shawls are often worn since entertaining continues outdoors, even in winter. Some cold-natured individuals wear heavy knits and medium-weight woollens. Since the cool season is short, a large amount of heavy clothing is unnecessary. Light sweaters or jackets are recommended for the few cool and windy months. Many people purchase material and hire local tailors to make clothing. The quality of work is quite good but can be very expensive.

Children: During the winter months in school, most boys wear long or short washable pants or blue jeans with long-sleeved shirts or sweatshirts, whereas in the summer months shorts and T-shirts are preferred. Throughout the school year, girls wear dresses, skirts and blouses, or jeans. Bring an initial supply of tennis shoes. Local purchases are expensive and do not wear well. Several sweaters, corduroy jackets or Windbreakers are

good for winter. For infants and toddlers, bring a large selection of warmer clothing since most houses have cold, ceramic tile floors, and no heating systems. During summer, children may change underwear and playclothes often; bring an adequate supply as frequent washing can cause wear and tear. Cottons are cooler and more comfortable than polyester. Locally purchased disposable diapers are expensive when available.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: All local purchases are expensive. Lightweight cotton or wool blankets or lightweight comforters are used during winter. French personal products are available. If you prefer certain American brands, bring them. Prescription glasses are filled here, but are expensive. Sunglasses are recommended. Contact lens wearers should bring ample cleaning and disinfecting supplies. Bottled water is available. Backup glasses should be brought since dust may cause some contact lens wearers difficulty. Wide selections of imported and African material for clothing, draperies, and upholstery are available. Locally produced cottons include tie-dyes, African prints, and intricately woven "jacquards."

Basic Services: Dakar has laundries, dry-cleaners, and shoe repair shops. Service quality varies. Numerous French-operated barber-shops and hairdressers offer good quality service at moderate to expensive prices. Experienced tailors are available to help you expand your wardrobe quickly.

Religious Activities

Dakar, although predominantly Moslem, has several churches and missions. Catholic churches offer Mass, in French, regularly during the week and on Sundays. A few priests and nuns speak English. Other Sunday services in French include one by French Protestants and one by the United World Mission. The Southern Baptist Convention holds an English-language interdenominational service and

Sunday School service. Dakar does not have a synagogue; however, the small French-speaking Jewish community attends services in each other's homes.

Education

Senegal's schools, private and public, are open to Senegalese and foreign children. The public elementary school system is overcrowded and not recommended. Catholic and Protestant churches operate several private French schools. The International School of Dakar (ISD) is a nonsectarian English language school in Dakar. Supported by the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools, ISD is an independent, coeducational day school offering an American educational program reflecting the diverse international background of the student body and faculty. Classes are currently offered in pre-kindergarten through grade 9. The pre-kindergarten class offers a morning program and is located on the campus but is self contained. The class caters to students 4 years old at the start of the school year with a few places available for 3-year-olds. The kindergarten, for 5-year-olds, offers a full-day program. ISD is accredited in the U.S. by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. The school calendar year is from early September to mid-June. ISD follows an American curriculum including math, reading, science, social studies, and writing. At all grade levels, French, music, art, computers, and physical education are required.

Each full-time teacher at ISD is certified by a school system in his/her country of origin; several hold Master's Degrees (or equivalent) in their subject area. ISD is conveniently located in a quiet residential suburb of Dakar known as Fenetre Mermoz, overlooking the ocean. The new facility, opened in January 1989, includes 20 classrooms, a library, science and computer labs, and changing rooms. In addition to the school's playground, a regulation-size sports field, and an multipurpose gymnasium/auditorium; the student body has access to the



Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

Beach at Dakar, Senegal

American Club pool and playing courts. The school is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected by the International School Association of Dakar, the sponsoring body of the school.

The ISD's mailing addresses are as follows:

International School of Dakar
 B.P. 5136
 Dakar, Senegal
 Telephone numbers:
 Tel.: (221) 23-08-71
 Fax: (221) 25-50-30

The Dakar Academy, which was founded in 1961, is sponsored by three missionary groups. Today, an open enrollment includes students of many nationalities. An American curriculum is offered for kindergarten through grade 12. Bible class and weekly chapel attendance is compulsory for all grades. French, music, art, and physical education are offered at all grades. Science and computer lab classes using state-of-the-art equipment are also offered. English-as-a-Second-Language instruction is required for all students with inadequate English comprehension skills.

The school is accredited by ACSI and the Middle States Association

of Schools and Colleges. The large campus located in Hann (near the zoo) includes surfaced sports/tennis/basketball, track and field areas, and a newly refurbished auditorium. The faculty consists of fully certified teachers holding bachelor's degrees or higher. Most have had teaching experience before coming to Dakar Academy. Children must reach the age of 6 by October 31 before entering the first grade. Sometimes exceptions are granted if the child will be 6 by December 31 and achieves a satisfactory score on a readiness test. School begins in late August and continues until early June. Progress reports with letter grades are given four times a year. Parents seeking enrollment in the academy should write the academy principal at the following address:

Dakar Academy
 Route des Maristes (HANN)
 B.P. 3189
 Dakar, Senegal
 Tel. (221) 32-06-82

Other options available to parents with older children include sending teenagers to boarding schools abroad or seeking enrollment in a French-language lycee. French schools commence in late October and continue to mid-July. Students



Courtesy of Kenneth Estell

Guards at the presidential palace in Dakar, Senegal

should not enroll in a local French-language high school without thorough French fluency. Non-French-speaking students are placed in a special class or have several months of private French tutoring.

Several good private French-language nursery schools are located in Dakar.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Dakar offers a French language and civilization course (20 hours a week from late October through mid-June) for serious students only. Placement tests are given the third week in October.

Sports

A variety of clubs and private facilities for athletics include: For flying enthusiasts, the Aero club de Dakar offers flying lessons and rental of private planes. The archery club uses facilities at the Cercle de l'Etrier (CED). (Bowhunting is illegal in Senegal.) A 12-hole golf course is located near Dakar at Camberene. The Meridien President Hotel has an 18-hole and 9-hole course and very good facilities. Horseback riding is popular; Dakar has six riding clubs. Membership and riding fees are comparable to U.S. costs. Boarding and lessons are

available. Dakar has 11 tennis clubs. Some are equipped with showers and a bar.

The Senegalese Tennis Federation sponsors one or two world-class exhibitions a year. Two squash clubs also exist. An active softball league includes teams of Americans, Canadians, French, Koreans, and Japanese. The season runs from October through March with a break over the Christmas holidays. Games are held on Saturday or Sunday alternating on the fields of ISD, the Ambassador's lot, and the French military base. In February each year, Dakar invites softball teams from other West African posts to come to Senegal for the annual West African Invitational Softball Tournament (W.A.I.S.T.). The Association Dakaroise de Tir offers a range for European-style competition target shooting. The club is licensed by the Senegalese Government, and membership is limited to 50 persons for the entire country. Only serious and dedicated target shooters are welcome. Classical ballet, gymnastics, aerobatics, yoga, karate, and judo instruction are available at various locations. Sports enthusiasts should bring appropriate clothing and equipment. Several local sports shops have good selections but prices are high.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Senegalese Government actively encourages tourism. Opportunities for interesting excursions exist in Dakar and throughout the country either by car or on an accompanied bus tour. Accommodations range from Class A deluxe resort hotels to village encampments offering primitive lodging and the opportunity to experience village life up close. During the year, several traditional festivals are held throughout the country. The ocean is undoubtedly Dakar's main recreational asset. Excellent swimming, boating, fishing, skin diving and scuba diving are available. Dakar has a multitude of white, sandy beaches along both sides of the peninsula. However, not all beaches close to town are safe or clean enough for swimming. Waterskiing, wind surfing and sailing equipment rentals are available at some boating clubs and hotels in Dakar. The ocean off the coast is unpredictable with sporadic surf, undertow, currents, and storms. Prudence dictates safety first for all water activities. Boaters and deep-sea enthusiasts should be well informed on local weather reports and air-sea rescue procedures. For these activities, bring safety equipment, including lifejackets. The Cap Vert Peninsula has many beaches along its coastline. N'Gor Island, 3-4 minutes off the coast by pirogue, has an excellent beach and some cottages. Historic Goree Island, 20 minutes by ferry, has a small beach, three restaurants, and two museums. Both islands have areas suitable for skin diving.

The Meridien, Teranga, and six other hotels have swimming clubs with excellent facilities. Many have beach restaurants serving snacks and drinks. Several popular beaches and resort areas are within a 2-hour radius of Dakar. Some mission personnel rent beach houses and a few have purchased cottages. Year-round fishing is available. Although surf fishing is the most accessible, the most popular method is trolling. Several local fishermen will rent their pirogues on a half-day basis if

you supply the gas. More enjoyable but expensive are the deep-sea Air Afrique charter boats, costing 280,000 CFA per day from June through October. Many deep-sea fishing enthusiasts believe membership at the Club de Peche Sportif de Dakar is a good investment. Affiliated with the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA), the club sponsors fishing contests and various social events. Available equipment costs three or four times U.S. prices. Dakar has four well-supplied fishing shops. U.S. catalog orders can take 5 weeks to arrive, and most fishing rods are not mailable. Skin diving and spear fishing are popular. Compressed air bottles can be charged locally. Waters around Dakar are not as clear as the Mediterranean but are much warmer. Neoprene shirts are necessary only from December to April. Hunting is gaining popularity in Senegal. Imported guns must be registered with the Senegalese government. Prospective hunters are advised to join the Association de Chasse et de Tir du Senegal, licensed by the Senegalese government. The hunting season normally runs from November to May. The only big game hunting is near the national animal reserve at Niokolo-Koba, 300 miles from Dakar. Dakar has two yacht clubs with boats ranging from 20-40 foot "Requins," "Dragons," or smaller "Snipes" to hybrid sail and motorboats.

Entertainment

Dakar has several cinemas. All films are shown in French. Theaters are air-conditioned and showings are 7 days a week. The American Club shows American films during the weekend for members and guests. The Daniel Sorano National theater is open between October and June and presents well-known local and international theatrical groups and singers. The Dakar International Music Society periodically produces choral and musical productions. Interested participants are always welcome. The IFAN museum at Place Soweto has an interesting collection of West African arts and crafts. The main IFAN building on the University of Dakar

campus has an excellent, specialized library on African subjects. Another IFAN museum worth visiting is located on Goree Island. An interesting and active art community creates modern and abstract works. USIS, the French Cultural Center and private galleries occasionally schedule exhibitions. Several charity balls and numerous French presentations are held during the social season. The excellent National Troupe Folklorique performs several times a year. Local hotels schedule many performances of the African Ballet troupe which offers traditional dance exhibitions. A few people in the European community play chamber music and are always looking for new talent. Classical guitar and kora lessons are also available. Dakar has several impressive but expensive night clubs, discotheques and a casino. A combination of bands and current records are used. Also a few jazz clubs offer excellent entertainment. Good French, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Italian, and African restaurants are open 6 days a week for lunch and dinner. Numerous restaurants are located in the hotels and along the beaches. Prices range from moderate to expensive.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The American community in Dakar includes U.S. Mission personnel, missionaries, private business people, and students. Americans gather informally for social activities, including picnics, beach parties, and sports events. The Marine House is a favorite meeting place for American families to relax. The Detachment sponsors various informal parties and social events. The American Club is located next to the ISD on the Corniche about 5 miles from the Embassy. The Club is open daily from 10 am to 8 pm and later for special occasions. American direct-hire and U.S. contract employees may become full members; non-official Americans and third-country nationals are associate members through sponsorship by a full member. Facilities include a 10x25 meter swimming pool, two lighted tennis courts, one lighted all purpose (ten-

nis/volleyball/basketball) court, a party room, snack bar for light meals, snacks, and drinks, changing rooms and an outside area for showing movies. The American Club is a facility of the ECWRA whose Board of Directors is also responsible for commissary, cafeteria and video tape club operations.

English-speaking women in Dakar are invited to join two separate English-speaking women's clubs offering a variety of programs, an organization for all wives within the diplomatic community or the organization made up largely, but not exclusively, of French women. The Hash House Harriers (HHH) are universally known. An active international group of joggers and walkers gathers every Saturday night at a predetermined location announced weekly. Scouting activities are encouraged for girl and boy scouts. Troops offer a variety of activities including camp-outs, field trips and international service project participation.

International Contacts: Opportunities for establishing international contacts in Dakar are numerous. The extent of the contacts will depend on your own initiative and ability to meet others. The Senegalese are hospitable and entertain frequently. Americans often attend their social functions and reciprocate the hospitality.

Special Information

Senegal is one of the most stable countries in the region. The internal threat to Senegal is minimal. A separatist insurgency in the Casamance region of Southern Senegal posed serious threats in the late 1980s and 1990s, but fighting calmed when a cease-fire was signed in 1993 between the Government of Senegal and the Mouvement de Forces Democratiques de Casamance (MFDC). However, a resurgence of violence in this region has occurred in recent years. On the crime front, Dakar is subject to the usual problems associated with big cities. Violent crime, although relatively low, is on the rise, but is overshadowed by the frequency of petty

crimes. Pickpockets are very aggressive and very good. Bags, briefcases or satchels, left unattended, even momentarily, may be stolen; articles left in plain sight in vehicles are also at risk. Carry as little cash as possible and not all in one place. Do not show money openly on the street and do not wear expensive jewelry. Carry only photocopies of your identification documents, i.e., passport and drivers license. Beware of your surroundings at all times and do not venture into unknown areas.

Saint-Louis

Saint-Louis, at the mouth of the Senegal River, is a city of about 179,000. It has a long history as the capital of Senegal and also of Mauritania. It was the maritime outlet for waterborne commerce of the Senegal River Basin for many years but, when the Saint-Louis/Dakar railroad was completed in 1885, the city declined as a seaport and commercial center. Today, it remains fairly important as the capital of the Fleuve Region and as a gateway to Mauritania.

The main district is on a narrow, sandy island in the river estuary. On the mainland across the channel to the east is the suburb of Sor, terminus of the railroad to Dakar, and a point on the highway from Dakar to Rosso and Nouakchott in Mauritania. To the west, two bridges link the island with Languede Barbarie, where the fishing villages of N'Dar Tout and Guet N'Dar are situated. A mile or so east of Sor are the electric power plant and an airfield.

There is a beautiful national park in Saint-Louis, with an interesting wild bird sanctuary. Excursions can be booked at most of the hotels or tourist agencies in Dakar.

OTHER CITIES

DIORBEL is about 90 miles east of the capital in the western half of the country. The city, with a population over 60,000, produces perfume,



Harbor scene, Saint Louis, Senegal

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

beverages, and peanut oil. Diourbel is also the site of an artistic mosque.

KAOLACK, capital of the Region of Sine-Saloum, is the commercial and shipping center of the richest peanut area in Senegal. It has developed during the last 65 years into a city with over 195,000 people, second only to Dakar in size and, in importance, as a port on the Saloum River. A plant that makes salt from evaporated seawater and a peanut oil refinery are nearby.

Situated near the Atlantic Ocean, **LOUGA** is in the northwest region of the country. The inhabitants of the city are Fulani (nomads), and Wolof (farmers). Louga is a cattle market, connected to the capital and the port city of Saint-Louis by road and rail. The city is known for its sandstone plains in the interior and its dunes on the coast.

RUFISQUE, a city of over 100,000, antedates Dakar by several centuries. It was once the main commercial center and shipping point for the Cap Vert area, and regained considerable importance as an industrial and residential suburb after World War II. Well served by rail and highway, but able to accommodate only shallow-draft shipping, the city has peanut oil refineries,

textile and shoe factories, a pharmaceutical plant, and several other enterprises. Natural gas deposits are located near the city. Nearby, at Bargny, is a large Portland cement plant.

Located in the southeast, **TAMBACOUNDA** is nearly 280 miles east of Dakar. Crops grown in this tall-grass and woody area include cotton, corn, peanuts, and rice. The town is connected by rail to Dakar and the Republic of Mali. Senegal's largest national park, the Niokolo-Koba National Wildlife Park is located 45 miles southeast of Tambacounda. The population is estimated to be over 30,000.

THIÈS, a commercial, communications, and industrial center, has over 200,000 inhabitants. It is the capital of the region of the same name and an important market for peanuts, Senegal's main product. Several processing plants are located here. The railroad from Dakar branches at Thiès to form Senegal's two main lines to Saint-Louis and the Mali border. Reserves of aluminum phosphate found near Thiès are being exploited.

ZIGUINCHOR is the capital of the Casamance Region and the seaport and commercial center for a well-

populated area of farms, timberlands, and fisheries. Its 1994 population of 165,000 has grown from only 6,000 in 1937. Ziguinchor is on the south bank of the Casamance River, approximately 65 kilometers (40 miles) above its mouth, and is connected by river ferry with a road through The Gambia to Kaolack, and a secondary road to Banjul. A fairly good road runs 25 kilometers (15 miles) south to San Domingos in Guinea-Bissau. Barges and small craft ply the numerous waterways of the region. Ziguinchor has a small number of industries, including several sawmills, an ice factory, a peanut shelling plant, and a peanut or palm oil mill. It has an airfield with scheduled flights to Dakar, Bissau, Cap Skirring, and Kolda.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Senegal, located on the bulge of West Africa and covering 196,000 square kilometers (76,000 square miles), is about the size of South Dakota. It is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the west and separated from the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to the north by the Senegal River. On the east, it is bordered by the Republic of Mali, on the south by the Republics of Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. The independent, English-speaking state of The Gambia, straddling the Gambia River, penetrates fingerlike over 320 kilometers (200 miles) into Senegal. Averaging less than 220 meters (650 feet) in elevation, Senegal is mostly flat or rolling plains with savanna-type vegetation. In the southeast, however, plateaus 500 meters (1,640 feet) high form foothills of the Fouta-Djallon Mountains. Marshy swamps, interspersed with tropical rain forests, are common in the southwest.

North of Dakar on the Cap Vert Peninsula, the coast forms almost a straight line; further south it is

indented by many estuaries and is often marshy. The country is drained by four major rivers flowing almost parallel from east to west: The Senegal, Saloum, Gambia, and Casamance, each navigable for a good distance inland. Senegal has two well-defined seasons: alternative northeast (winter) and southwest (summer) winds produce the cool, dry winter season (November–June) and the hot, humid summer (July–October). During winter, Dakar days are invariably sunny with temperatures between 17°C and 27°C (63°F and 80°F). During summer, the average temperature is 30°C–35°C (86°F–96°F) with high humidity. Beginning in January, the harmattan brings dust and sand from the Sahara Desert for 2 or 3 months. Between July and October, Dakar receives 400–500 millimeters (16–20 inches) of rainfall a year. Precipitation increases further south, exceeding 1.5 meters (60 inches) a year in parts of the Casamance region in the southern part of the country. Typically, Senegal is considered a dry, almost desert country with a pleasant climate.

Population

Of Senegal's estimated 10.4 million people (2000), 60 percent live in rural areas. In Senegal, there are French and Lebanese citizens, as well as a sizable Cape Verdean community. Dakar has some 2 million inhabitants. Four other Senegalese cities surpass 100,000 in population: Kaolack, Thies, Rufisque, and Saint-Louis. By ethnic group, inhabitants are 43 percent Wolof, 24 percent Peulh or Fulani, 15 percent Serere, 4 percent Diola, and 3 percent Mandingo. Smaller ethnic groups include the Sarakole, Moor, Bassari, and Lebou. The population is young, 44 percent being under 14. Population growth is estimated at 2.9 percent a year. The birth rate is 37 per 1,000. Infant mortality is high; life expectancy is about 63 years. The Senegalese constitution provides for freedom of religion. Religious institutions are autonomous. About 92 percent of the population is Moslem, 2 percent

Christian (mostly Catholic), and about 6 percent animist.

Public Institutions

Senegal's constitution, adopted on March 3, 1963, provides for an executive-presidential system. The President (chief of state) is elected by universal adult suffrage to a 7-year term. In 2000, Abdoulaye Wade was inaugurated as president. Senegal's legislature is a 120-member National Assembly elected by universal adult suffrage concurrently with the President, and a 60 member Senate. The highest court in the independent judiciary is the Supreme Court, ruled by presidential-appointed judges. For administrative purposes, Senegal is divided into 10 regions, each headed by a Governor appointed by, and responsible to, the President.

Arts, Science, and Education

Although the literacy rate for the country as a whole is low (about 33 percent), Senegal has long been considered the intellectual and cultural center of West Africa. The University of Dakar attracts students from all of francophone Africa. The university maintains faculties in Arts and Letters, Law and Economics, Sciences, Medicine, Journalism, Technology, Library Science and Teacher Training which are all highly regarded in the region. Other university institutes sponsor scientific research in energy, applied linguistics, psychology, and pediatrics. The University's Institute of French Teaching for Foreign Students offers a 1-year course of language, literature, and civilization. The Institut Fondamental de l'Afrique Noire (IFAN) museums and ethnographic institute, a division of the University of Dakar, enjoys an international reputation; it receives scholars, researchers, and tourists from all parts of the world. A second university, smaller in scale and modeled after land grant institutes in the U.S., was opened in the city of Saint Louis in 1991.

Since the Senegalese elite are avid readers, multiple newspapers and magazines are published in Senegal. Book stores and newsstands in Dakar do a brisk business. Bookstores carry French-language publications, with Senegalese and other African writers well represented. The works of such well-known novelists as Mariama Ba, Aminata Sow Fall, Cheikh Hamidou Kane, and Sembene Ousmane are readily available. Also available are the works of younger writers in affordable paperback editions published by the Nouvelles Editions Africaines. Newsstands and supermarkets offer a variety of magazines and newspapers, published in Senegal and abroad. Available international publications include *Time*, *Newsweek*, *International Herald Tribune*, and *The Economist*. Senegal's film industry, active and widely admired during the 1960s and 1970s, has suffered in recent years from a scarcity of government funding. Only a few filmmakers are able to obtain resources in France or Germany, and the number of films made by Senegalese each year has fallen to a very low level. However, the industry is being privatized with a new organization (SIMPEC), which is taking charge of film distribution. Although most commercial cinemas offer first-run films from France, the U.S. (dubbed in French), Italy, and India are also represented. The works of Senegalese filmmakers Sembene Ousmane, Mahama Johnson Traore, Momar Thiam, and Moussa Bathily are occasionally shown on the commercial circuit.

Films from other parts of Africa can sometimes be seen as well. Under the leadership of former President Senghor, the arts received an especially strong impetus which, in the face of the current economic situation, could not be sustained. Nonetheless, as a consequence of the efforts of the Senghor period, the country now boasts a reservoir of trained artistic talent. For example, individuals who studied at the Dakar School of Fine Arts and abroad are now mature practitioners of painting, sculpture, and tap-

stry weaving. The National Tapestry Works at Thies produces monumental tapestries designed by Diatta Seck, Theodore Diouf, Mamadou Wade, Khalifa Gueye, and Bocar Diong. Their brilliantly colored tapestries reflect African themes, traditions, and folklore in modern Western technique. Senegalese musicians and singers in the traditional "guot" style, Youssou N'Dour, Baba Mal, Ismail Lo, and others have emerged as exciting and popular international artists. Another increasingly popular art form is the glass painting of Gora Mbengue and others, depicting customs and habits of ordinary people in urban areas. In the field of performing arts, the Daniel Sorano Theatre offers a varied program each year. Plays by local dramatists (e.g., Sembene), concerts by local choral groups, and performances by visiting musical and dance troupes constitute typical selections. French, Italian, British, German, and U.S. Embassy cultural centers sponsor quality film shows, art exhibitions, and cultural performances. These centers also operate libraries and language classes.

Commerce and Industry

Since 1980, Senegal, with the help of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the U.S., and various other donors, has engaged in an economic restructuring program. The goal of the program is for Senegal to generate and maintain a positive per capita economic growth rate. One objective of this structural adjustment program is to increase private sector activity. To achieve this objective, the Government of Senegal has substantially reduced its role in the economy and created an environment providing impetus for private enterprises. The Senegalese Government is attempting to sell or liquidate many state-owned businesses to reduce and redefine the size and role of the remaining parastatals; return economic incentives to the rural sector by eliminating fixed prices from major food crops; give farmers a freer hand in

production and marketing; and to demand improved industrial efficiency by lowering tariffs and trade barriers and exposing local business to healthy competition. This economic program is revolutionary in a country that has for decades shared many of the statist approaches of its former colonial power, France.

In January 1994, Senegal and the 13 other members of the CFA franc zone devalued their common currency by 50 percent. The CFA franc's value had been fixed relative to the French franc since 1948. During restructuring, new opportunities have been created but some economic power centers have had to face competition for the first time. Urban real incomes are down as the government cuts spending and subsidies. Urban unemployment is up as government employment is reduced and inefficient businesses are closed. Senegal's major foreign exchange earners are fish, phosphates, peanut oil and tourism. A precarious agricultural resource endowment and a relatively limited manufacturing base make trading and commerce a way of life in Senegal. Senegal is a nation of traders, and France is its leading trading partner. A common language, a currency tied to the French franc, a substantial French commercial presence, and large flows of French financial aid have enhanced the bond. Senegal's trade with the U.S. is limited; but has begun to increase. Senegal imports food, capital equipment, and used clothing from the U.S., and exports to the U.S. live birds, seafood, and artisanal products. Senegal is a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union which along with its central African counterpart and the Comoros islands forms the CFA franc zone, (the 3-country Senegal River Basin Development Organization, the 4-country Gambia River Basin Development Organization, and the 16-country Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS). Senegal participates actively and effectively in international affairs as a member of the United Nations Committee on Trade and Development

(UNCTAD), in negotiations on the General Agreement of Tariff and Trade (GATT), and as a member of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Sonatel, Senegal's telephone company, is extending and improving telephone service in the Dakar region as well as in the eastern part of the country. Water and waste disposal systems have improved in Dakar. Many residential and commercial areas now receive daily trash pickup. Following is a brief listing of the major commercial and economic centers outside of Dakar: Kaolack, 192 kilometers south of Dakar, economic capital of the Sine-Saloum River basin, is the commercial and shipping center of the richest peanut area in Senegal. It has developed since the 1920s into a city second only to Dakar in size and importance. A plant that makes salt from evaporated seawater and a peanut oil refinery are nearby.

Rufisque, only 28 kilometers south of Dakar, a city of over 100,000 people, antedates Dakar by several centuries. It was once the main commercial center and shipping point for the Cap Vert area, regaining considerable importance as an industrial and residential suburb after World War II. Well served by rail and highway, the city has textile factories, a pharmaceutical plant, and other enterprises. Nearby, in Bargny, a large Portland cement plant is operational. Rufisque is now administratively a part of the Dakar metropolitan area.

Thiès, 70 kilometers east of Dakar is a commercial, communications, and industrial center with over 176,000 residents. This regional capital is an important market for peanuts, Senegal's principal agricultural export. The railroad from Dakar branches at Thiès, forming Senegal's two main lines north to Saint-Louis and east to the Mali border. Saint-Louis, 264 kilometers north of Dakar, at the mouth of the Senegal River, has a population of 115,372 people. First settled by the French in 1659, the city was the colonial capital of Senegal and Mauritania. For many years it was the



Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

Local fishermen display their catch in Dakar, Senegal

maritime outlet for waterborne commerce of the Senegal River Basin. In 1885, when the Saint-Louis/Dakar Railroad was completed, the city declined as a seaport and commercial center. Today, it remains important as the capital of the Fleuve Region. Ziguinchor, 454 kilometers south of Dakar, is the economic capital of the Casamance Region with a seaport and commercial center for a well-populated area of farms, timberlands, and fisheries. It has over 125,000 people, compared to some 6,000 in 1937. Located on the south bank of the Casamance River, 65 kilometers above its mouth, the city is 260 kilometers by road (through The Gambia) from Kaolack. A fairly good road runs 24 kilometers south to San Domingos, Guinea-Bissau. Ziguinchor has a small number of industries, including several sawmills, an ice factory, and a peanut processing plant. The airfield serves scheduled flights to Dakar, Bissau, and Cap Skirring, an important seaside resort which boasts a Club Med and Savannah Hotel as well as locally run hotels and pensions.

Transportation

Good roads make a variety of excellent resorts around the perimeter of the city easily accessible by car.

Driving is on the right side of the road and international road symbols are used. Priority to the right is the rule governing most intersections not controlled by traffic lights or police.

Dakar has an extensive public transportation system, but buses are often overcrowded and off schedule. Most American personnel prefer to use their own cars or to take taxis. Taxi fares are not set; metered taxis are rarely available throughout the city. Passengers usually must negotiate fares before taking a taxi. However, fares are reasonable.

Dakar has excellent and frequent worldwide airline connections. Air Afrique has two flights per week to and from New York. European airlines servicing Dakar provide excellent connections to other areas of Africa and Europe. Dakar's international airport is usually busy since it is the connecting point for many flights terminating elsewhere in Africa. Make reservations as far in advance as possible for travel to Dakar or cities requiring onward air travel from Dakar. Trains are available from Dakar to some major cities in Senegal as well as to Bamako, Mali at very reasonable prices.

Accommodations are very simple and delays often occur.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Direct-dial telephone service between Dakar and the U.S. is available via satellite. Fax service is also available. Direct-dial rates from the U.S. to Dakar are significantly lower than those originating from Dakar. Some localities do not have lines available. Telegrams and Telefax are sent from Sonatel, Senegal's telephone company. Costs depend on destination. Service is generally reliable; however, telegrams occasionally fail to reach their destination.

Radio and TV

A good shortwave radio is useful for intercepting Voice of America (VOA) and British Broadcasting Company (BBC) programs. The international network, Radio Senegal, broadcasts mainly in French, and the national network transmits more than 40 hours weekly in the five national languages. Excellent music is often played on French broadcasts with some tapes furnished by the U.S. Information Service (USIS). A state-owned TV station broadcasts 3–4 hours per evening, including a 30-minute news program. Up to 13 other stations can be received if a locally purchased antenna is obtained. Only multi-system TVs (SECAM) can be used for reception of these channels.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Some English-language newspapers, including the *International Herald Tribune*, are available a day late from local newsstands. International editions of *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *People* are sold weekly. Regular delivery of papers and magazines must be arranged with local vendors or via subscriptions from Europe. Readily available are French newspapers including *Le Monde* and other popular periodicals. Dakar has three daily newspapers, published in French, and several weekly papers. When sub-

scribing to periodicals from the U.S., consider the 3- to-4 week transit time to Dakar. Dakar's good bookstores stock mostly French books, at double French or U.S. prices.

Health and Medicine

The community in Dakar relies upon a few small multispecialist clinics and a large French military-administered general hospital (Hospital Principal).

Medical Facilities

Several local dentists do satisfactory work, but their services are expensive. Therefore, it is best to have all dental work done before arrival.

Community Health

Maintaining good health in Dakar means taking appropriate preventive measures. Anywhere in Senegal, amoebic dysentery, giardiasis, hepatitis, typhoid fever, and many worm infestations may be acquired from food or water. Therefore, all water for drinking and making ice cubes should be boiled and filtered. Cook all meat until well done and avoid raw seafood. Wash all raw, unpeeled fruit and vegetables in an iodine solution before cooking. Proper food handling is an essential measure of preventive medicine.

Malaria is endemic in Senegal, and all Americans should take malaria suppressants. Hepatitis is prevalent, and Americans should receive gamma globulin shots every 4 months. Tuberculosis, leprosy, meningitis, polio, influenza, and measles are also found in Senegal. All Americans must possess a current medical clearance, and a valid yellow fever immunization, and should have completed all required and recommended immunizations. Rodent and insect control is satisfactory.

Preventive Measures

The likelihood of contracting tropical diseases or infections is minimal if normal precautions are taken. Persons in good physical condition and adaptable by nature suffer no serious problems in Dakar. The dan-

ger of infections is minimal if small cuts and wounds are treated properly. The possibility of schistosomiasis should deter wading and swimming in all freshwater areas. Swimming is safe at designated beaches and swimming pools. For protection from Acquired Immune Deficiency (AIDS), avoid contaminated blood products, unsterilized needles, and take recommended precautions for avoiding sexual transmission.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

American citizens entering Senegal must possess a valid passport, a Senegalese visa and an international inoculation certificate bearing evidence of inoculation against yellow fever.

Rabies is endemic in Senegal. Rabies shots should be renewed annually. Although no quarantine period is required, dogs and cats must have a valid health certificate and rabies certification before entering the country. Contact airlines for shipping details and secure reservations well in advance. Several veterinarians practice in Dakar, including an English-speaking doctor who makes house calls.

Exchange rates fluctuate based on the dollar exchange rate to the French franc. CFA and French francs are readily interchangeable in Dakar. CFA cannot be obtained or exchanged outside of CFA countries, except in France. The rate of exchange as of January 2001 was \$1=699 CFA francs. Travelers checks are available at local banks. The metric system of weights and measures is used in Senegal.

Several commercial banks offer banking and exchange facilities. Major credit cards are accepted by most major hotels, restaurants, airlines, and some shops.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
April 4	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension*
May/June	Whitsunday (Pentecost)*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

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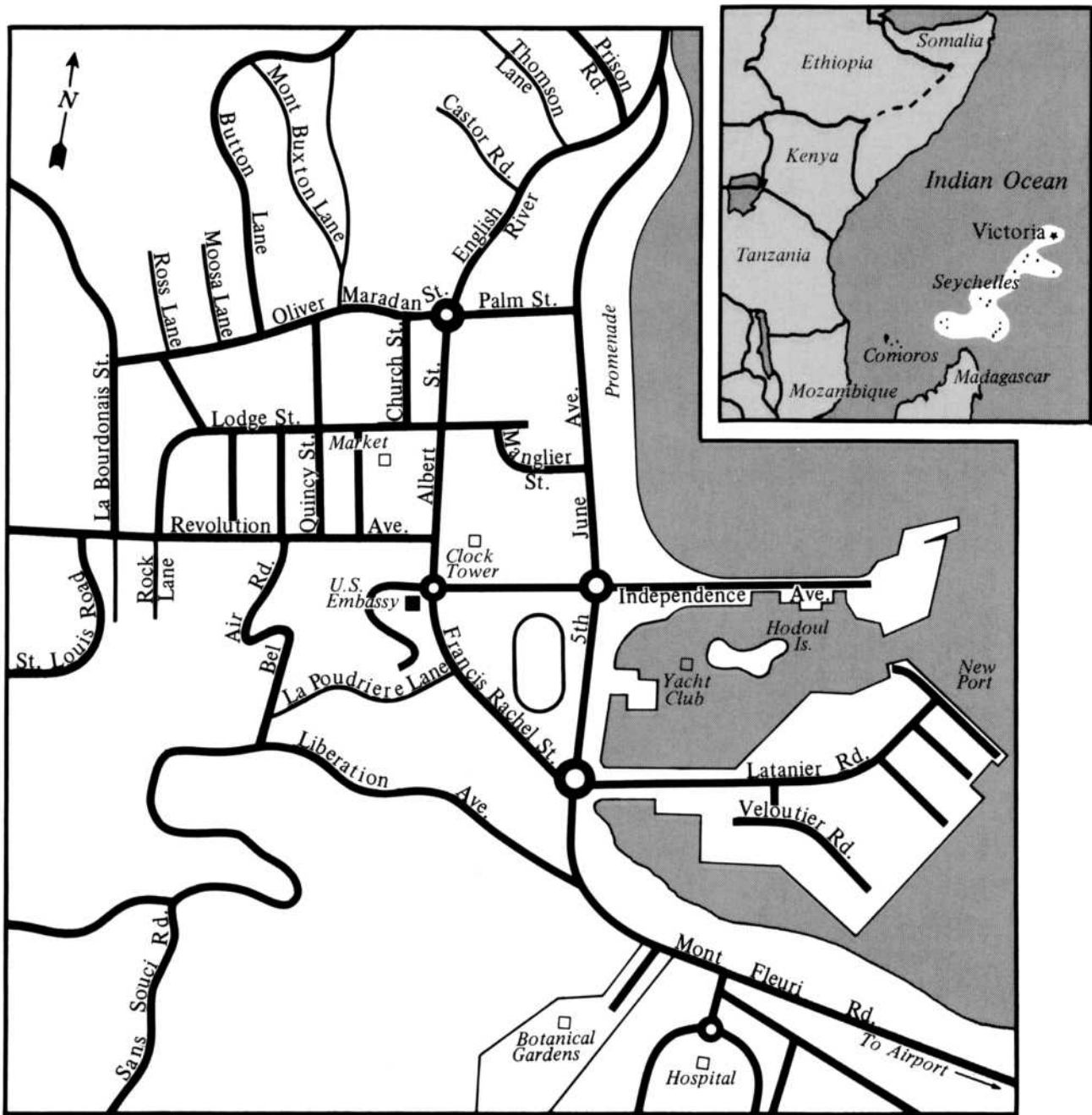
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Victoria, Seychelles

SEYCHELLES

Republic of Seychelles

Major City:
Victoria

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The 115 lush, tropical islands which comprise the Republic of **SEYCHELLES** are considered the jewels of the Indian Ocean. Untouched for centuries, and settled only in 1744, the archipelago rises from the sea in colorful, majestic panoramas. It is so unique in its beauty, "a thousand miles from the rest of the world," that romanticists have suggested that it may have been the original Garden of Eden.

In Seychelles, people of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds have come together to forge their future. The Seychellois are united by their Roman Catholic religion and Creole language, with few of the animosi-

ties which have divided other nations.

MAJOR CITY

Victoria

Victoria, the capital and principal town, is the seat of government. It is situated on Mahé Island. For many years, it was only a small village but, today, it is becoming an attractive city with privately owned buildings, a new town area, a harbor, and banking facilities. Its area population is about 23,000—a number swelled considerably each year by throngs of tourists. The international airport, served by carriers from Europe, Africa, and Asia, is located eight miles from the center of the city.

Victoria has several banks, supermarkets, a cinema, a number of shops, several excellent restaurants, a service station, and an open-air market. Hotels (seven of international standard) and numerous guest houses are situated around the island.

Mahé is the largest of the islands in the Seychelles. Its beaches are famous for their water-sports facilities and resort comforts. Beau Val-

lon, on the western coast, is the most famous.

Schools for Foreigners

The International School of Victoria, based on the British system, provides an education for non-Seychelles students up to grade five. French is taught as a foreign language. In addition to a standard curriculum, students can participate in extracurricular activities. These include drama, gymnastics, field trips, squash, basketball, sailing and canoeing.

Recreation

Because of the pleasant climate, Seychelles offers a wide assortment of outdoor sports. Victoria has one nine-hole golf course, a tennis club, a yacht club, several squash courts, and a flying club with its own light aircraft and instructor. Golf and tennis competitions are organized frequently. Scuba diving, wind-surfing, snorkeling, water-skiing, and sailing are all offered at the bigger hotels.

Soccer is the national sport, but basketball, track and field, volleyball, boxing, and weight lifting are increasing in popularity. A small but active rugby club is composed mostly of expatriates.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Cityscape of Victoria, Seychelles

Entertainment

Movies, cocktail and dinner parties, and hotel and club dancing provide most of Victoria's opportunities for entertainment. The civil and social organizations consist of Rotary Club, Round Table, and youth groups who meet in town centers. The American community has no organized activities as such, but the Satellite Club at the tracking station on Mahé frequently hosts dances or picnics on American holidays. Considerable informal entertaining is done at home.

Personal relations with host country nationals are excellent, and it is relatively easy to develop associations and friendships. The diplomatic missions in Victoria, other than that of the U.S., are the British, French, Chinese, Russian, and Indian. The largest component of the 2,000 foreign residents is comprised of South Asian expatriates employed by the Seychelles Government, parastatals, and multinational corporations.

It should be noted that, for all its charm, Seychelles is small and isolated. Since the distance to the mainland is about 1,000 miles, it is prohibitively expensive to leave the island periodically. The result is that some people suffer from "island fever," although it is usually only an

especially long stay that produces such an effect.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Situated in the western Indian Ocean, just south of the equator, The Republic of Seychelles consists of a nucleus of several granitic islands, with a large number of outlying coralline islands. It is an aggregate of more than 171 square miles of land, and about 600,000 square miles of territorial sea and exclusive economic zone. The 115 islands in the archipelago are divided into two distinct groups: the Mahé, 40 granite islands with high hills and mountains; and the coralline group, which are, for the most part, only a few feet above sea level, and generally uninhabited except for plantation workers collecting coconuts for copra. The main group of islands is of rugged formation and lies on the center of a bank which covers about 16,000 square miles.

The granitic group is fairly compact, with no island being more than 35 miles from Mahé. Its total land area is 87 square miles, of which Mahé

(the largest and most important island) claims 55.6 miles. These islands are rocky in formation, with an extremely narrow littoral, from which a central range of hills and mountains rises steeply to almost 3,000 feet. The vegetation is lush and tropical, and the sea gentle and beautiful, owing to the surrounding coral reefs.

Mahé lies between 4° and 5° south latitude. It is 17 miles long and four to seven miles wide, rising abruptly from the sea to a maximum altitude of 2,969 feet at the top of Morne Seychellois National Park. The only other islands of importance in terms of size and permanent population are Praslin, 21 miles from Mahé, and La Digue, 30 miles away.

The coralline islands lie between 60 and 612 miles from Mahé. No permanent population resides on most of them; indeed, some are waterless and uninhabitable.

The daily temperature is about 80°F, and varies little throughout the year. The hot, humid season runs from December to May. March and April are the hottest, but temperatures seldom exceed 88°F. During the coolest months, July and August, temperatures drop as low as 70°F. Southeast trade winds blow regularly from May to November and this period, corresponding to winter elsewhere in southern latitudes, is the coolest, driest, and most pleasant part of the year. At higher altitude levels, on the inhabited part of the rocky hills, temperatures are cooler and the air fresher.

Rainfall varies considerably from island to island and from year to year. The rainfall recorded at Victoria, the capital, has averaged 94 inches for the past 25 years. The greater part falls in the hot months when the northwest trade winds blow. During the rainy months, the climate is enervating because of high humidity and constant heat. The islands are outside the hurricane zone, and thunderstorms are rare and mild when they do occur. By contrast, rainfall in the outlying coralline group is far less, ranging

from 50 inches in the more easterly islands to 20 inches on southernmost Aldabra, which is considered the world's largest atoll.

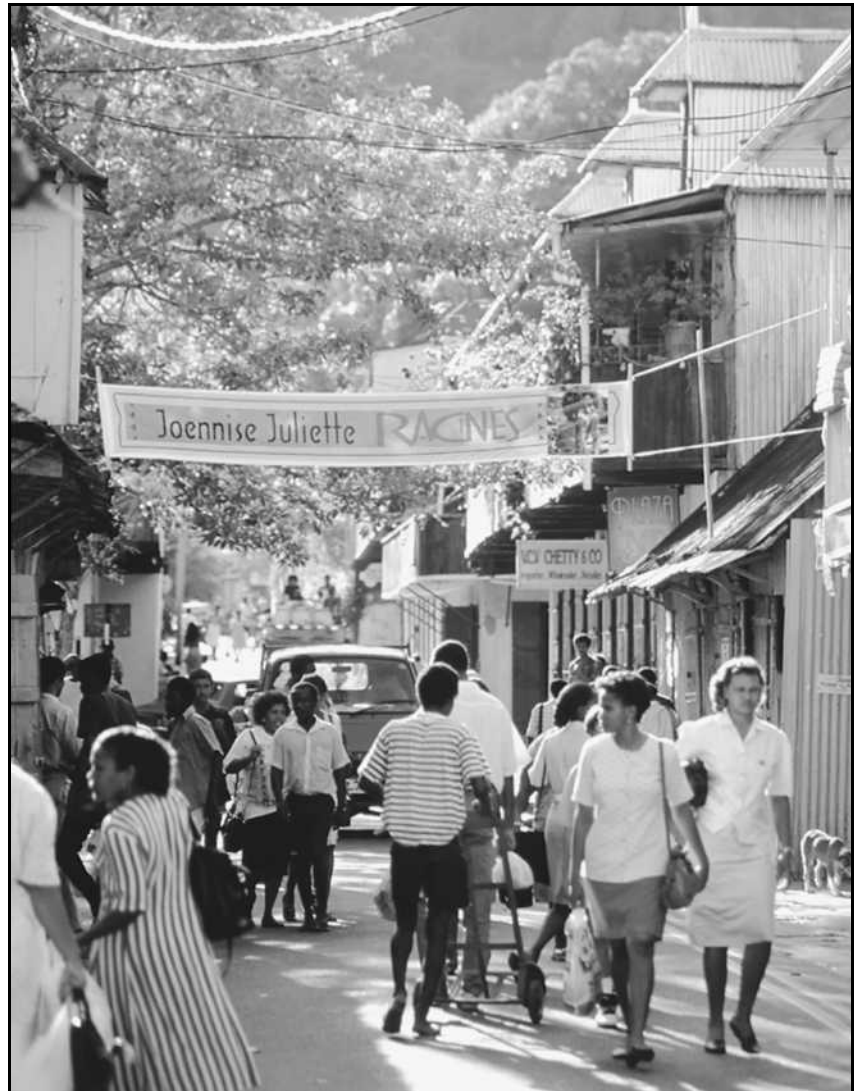
Population

The people of the Seychelles are non-indigenous. The islands were completely uninhabited until the middle of the 18th century when French settlers arrived, bringing with them African slaves. Since then, an influx of Chinese and Indian traders has formed today's main mercantile class. Inter-marriage has been widespread, resulting in a great diversity of people. It is difficult to delineate ethnic groups accurately.

The total population of Seychelles is about 80,000, with nearly 90 percent living on Mahé. Victoria's population is approximately 40,000; some of these are expatriates, including French, British, Italians, and other continental Europeans. The predominant group remains the British, and includes business representatives, technical assistance workers, and many retirees. Since 1963, when the U.S. Air Force satellite tracking station was constructed on the Mahé mountain range of La Misere, the expatriate population has included many Americans.

Seychelles' islanders are charming and hospitable. Their official language is now Creole, but English is a second official tongue, and the study of French is compulsory in schools. Some 90 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, and the remainder Anglican, Seventh-Day Adventist, Baha'i, Hindu, and Muslim. About 58 percent of the adult population is literate.

Civic and social groups consist of the Rotary Club, the Round Table, and youth groups which meet in social centers. Neighborhood athletic leagues participate in soccer, boxing, field hockey, basketball, and volleyball.



Street in Victoria, Seychelles

© Nik Wheeler/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Government

Seychelles achieved independence from Great Britain on June 29, 1976. Following a coup on June 5, 1977, the existing constitution was suspended, and the legislature dismissed. A new constitution took effect on the same date two years later.

The 1993 constitution permits multiparty elections. The Seychelles had been governed as a one-party state since 1978, controlled by the Seychelles People's Progressive Front. Provision is for a National Assembly to be comprised of 34 members (25 directly elected and 9 assigned on a proportional basis). Under current terms, the president

(who serves as both chief of state and head of government) is elected for a five-year term. France Albert René, who assumed power in the 1977 coup, was elected to the presidency two years later, and reelected in 1984, 1989, 1993, and 1998. After the multiparty elections in 1998, there were four opposition members in the National Assembly.

The civil service is based on the British system. Principal secretaries are charged with day-to-day operation of the ministries, under the guidance of presidentially appointed ministers.

Seychelles follows a policy of non-alignment in international affairs,

and (in theory) requires a guarantee that all naval warships docking in the islands are without nuclear weapons.

Since 1996, the flag of Seychelles has consisted of five oblique bands of blue, yellow, red, white and green.

Arts, Science, Education

In 1981, a structured educational system was implemented, requiring attendance in grades one through ten. After completing the tenth grade, students who wish to continue their education may attend a one-year National Youth Service (NYS) Program. While living at the NYS village, students receive academic instruction as well as training in gardening, cooking, housekeeping, the care of livestock, etc. Those finishing NYS are then eligible to attend Seychelles Polytechnic (not a university-level institution) for pre-university training, or go to one of the technical training schools.

The initial language of instruction is Creole. English is introduced as a teaching language for certain subjects, beginning in grade three, and French in grade six.

No institutions of higher education operate in the islands. University entrance and higher professional training are available through the United Kingdom's technical assistance program, Commonwealth scholarships, U.S. African Manpower Development Program, French Government scholarships, and other programs.

The main library is the National Library in Victoria, with a branch on Praslin. The Seychelles National Archives and Museum are located just outside of Victoria at "La Bastille."

The handicrafts industry consists of tortoise shells and seashell items and basketry.

Commerce and Industry

Seychelles' primary problems are demographic and economic. The birth rate is still high, and poverty exists, although it is reduced in severity by the benign climate. Efficient production of plantation crops has required less labor in recent years. Increasing population, however, creates considerable development expenditures. Although government policies emphasize increased food production by small holders, agricultural production for export is still mainly based on the plantation system. Copra and cinnamon production is predominantly for export, and many foodstuffs are imported despite soil and climatic conditions that could produce a wide variety of agricultural products.

Vegetables are grown on the island along with many tropical fruits; however, importation is necessary. The land, though fertile, is limited in quantity and additional room is not available to expand production. Agricultural production has not kept up with the increased demand for food. Modern methods have not taken hold because of the high cost of imported materials.

The two most important crops are copra and cinnamon. Pakistan receives virtually all copra exports. Other important exports are canned tuna, fresh and frozen fish, oil (used in the manufacture of soap and perfume), fresh coconut, and guano.

The main industries prepare copra and vanilla pods and extract essential oils for export. Coconut oil for cooking, coconut for stock feed, soap, *coir* (coconut fiber) rope, mattress fiber, beer, soft drinks, tobacco, and cement are produced in small quantities for local consumption.

Seychelles has a small handicrafts industry. Locally made handicrafts include tortoise shell, coral jewelry, black coral, sea shells, batik, shark spine walking sticks, baskets, dolls, and the famous *coco-de-mer* or sea coconut, found only in the Sey-

chelles. Ceramics and pottery are available at a local Potters Cooperative and a variety of African jewels and curios are on the local market.

Tourism provides more than 70 percent of foreign exchange earnings, over 20 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), and 30 percent of formal employment. This growth was made possible by the opening of the islands' first commercial airport on Mahé in December 1971.

A hotel building boom began in the 1970s. The number of tourists steadily increased. As a result, employment in tourism escalated rapidly, and foreign exchange earnings from this source rose to record levels. However, stiff international competition for tourist dollars and a dramatic drop in tourist receipts because of the 1991 Persian Gulf War caused the government to take steps to broaden its economic base. Over 120,000 tourists visit the Seychelles annually, generating over \$100 million in revenue.

During the 1970s, considerable effort and money was devoted to improving infrastructure, primarily on Mahé, but also on the nearby islands of Praslin and La Digue. Roads, water and electricity supplies, a new deep water pier, urban land reclamation from the sea, improvement in telecommunications, education, and health projects are capital developments carried out during the past few years.

The main objectives of the Seychelles government are: diversification of the economy, particularly in agriculture and fisheries; expansion of home ownership; steady, controlled growth which can be sustained; increased employment; greater Seychellois participation in the economy; inclusion of the outer islands in economic development; more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic development; and a slower population growth rate.

Seychelles has traditionally incurred a trade deficit, offset by

aid, private capital investment, and tourism earnings.

Seychelles is a member of the U.N. and several of its specialized agencies, the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth of Nations, and the International Monetary Fund.

There is no official Chamber of Commerce in the Republic of Seychelles.

Transportation

Mahé is served by several international air carriers. Flights operate most days a week to Africa, Europe, and Asia. A few cruise ships call at Port Victoria each year.

Interisland travel is provided by Air Seychelles, ferryboat service, and private launches.

Mahé's public transportation is sporadic. Small buses operate to all parts of the island during the day. Taxis are in service on Mahé and Praslin. Rates are high and service after midnight is limited. Car rentals are readily available.

Roads are steep and narrow with dangerous hairpin turns and few guardrails. A single traffic lane moves on the left, and maximum speed is 65 kilometers (40 miles) per hour. There are few traffic signals, and no traffic signs posted.

For any extended stay in Seychelles, a personal car is a necessity. Only compacts or subcompacts are advisable; the steep, narrow roads have no shoulders or sidewalks, and cars often are parked on the sides. Good brakes are essential.

Spare parts for American cars are unavailable, and U.S.-manufactured automobiles are difficult to repair, especially those with automatic transmissions. The types of cars available locally are Toyota, Mazda, Honda, Nissan, Suzuki, Peugeot, and English Ford; all can be easily serviced and repaired. Wear and tear on vehicles, particularly on tires and brakes, is pro-



Independence monument in the Seychelles

Courtesy of Barbara Beach

nounced because of driving and road conditions.

Vehicle insurance rates are comparable to those in the U.S., but include full comprehensive, collision, and third-party coverage in the initial protection purchase.

Communications

Telephone and telegraph service is excellent. International calls and cables are carried by satellite, with a call to the U.S. rarely requiring more than three minutes for contact. Airmail arrives from the U.S. in approximately 10 days; surface mail is en route from three to six months.

Radio Seychelles broadcasts in French, English, and Creole. Television broadcasting is in the PAL-B format. Programming is limited to two or three programs per week of general interest, including feature films, sitcoms, and newscasts.

A wide range of magazines and newspapers is available in Seychelles. It is possible to obtain the *International Herald Tribune*, weekly editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, and a variety of other publications in French and German, as well as in English. The American Cultural Center displays more than 25 different periodicals. Bookstores carry a good selection of fiction and nonfiction paperbacks. Some home

and fashion books or magazines are available.

Health

Local facilities on Mahé are adequate for most routine medical needs, and the major hospital on the island is suitable for emergency medical and surgical care. The hospital is staffed by expatriate doctors, a few of whom have received their training in the U.K.

Although there is a dental clinic, most specialized medical care is unobtainable. For example, no optometrist or optician practices in the country, and U.S. residents find it necessary to travel to Nairobi (Kenya) for routine eye examinations.

Health problems on Mahé include intestinal parasites (hookworm, amebiasis, whipworm, and tapeworm). Venereal diseases are widespread, with no active health programs for their control. However, infectious hepatitis is uncommon, and tropical diseases such as malaria and yellow fever are unknown. Dengue fever epidemics occurred in 1976, 1978, and 1986; some cases were also reported in 1992. While it is not fatal, this disease causes high fever and severe discomfort for up to a week, followed by unpleasant aftereffects. Government-supplied water is potable.

All raw fruits and vegetables should be washed before eating. Most meats come from abroad and can be eaten rare. Persons assigned to Seychelles (or visiting) are advised to receive, as well as thorough medical and dental checkups, inoculations against typhoid, measles, and DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus), and gamma globulin shots.

Most drugs, including antibiotics, can be obtained either locally or at the tracking station, but an adequate supply of nonprescription medicines (including vitamins), insect repellent, familiar brands of cosmetics, and other drugstore items should be kept on hand. Wash

raw vegetables and fruits before eating.

Clothing and Services

American-style summer clothing is both appropriate and comfortable in Seychelles. Men find that safari suits, casual slacks, and short-sleeved shirts are acceptable everywhere. Women wear either cotton or cotton-blend fabrics (synthetics are too warm) in long and short styles. Sundresses are most comfortable during the day; pantsuits are rarely worn. Shorts are suitable only at home or at the beach. Coats and ties (for men) and formal or expensive clothing (women) are needed only for such occasions as weddings or funerals. Simple, lightweight fabrics are best for children.

Because of the humidity, mold, and mildew, clothes and shoes do not last as long as in the U.S. Shoes are of good quality in Seychelles, but tend to be overpriced.

Umbrellas, light raincoats, sunglasses, lightweight sweaters, and shawls are needed. Winter clothing is inappropriate for island living, but one should keep in mind the possibility of travel to cooler climates.

Adequate shoe-repair service can be found in Victoria. No dry cleaners are available on the island. Major hotels have beauty/barber salons, and hairdressers are located in various places throughout the city. Good dressmakers and tailors are also available. Radio and appliance repair is virtually nonexistent. Hardware stores carry a good supply of tools and repair materials. Auto repairs (for standard-transmission vehicles) are excellent when spare parts are available. Film developing is available but expensive.

A good selection of toiletries and cosmetics is easily obtained at local shops, but at prices higher than in the U.S. Stores carry brands from

South Africa and Europe. A family planning an extended stay in Seychelles should have a supply of paper products, candles, art materials, sports equipment, sewing needs (including fabrics), toys, and craft/hobby items. All manufactured goods are more expensive in Victoria than in the U.S.

Most foodstuffs are imported from New Zealand, India, Kenya, France, South Africa, Singapore, and Australia. Because of the uncertainty of shipping schedules, Victoria experiences occasional shortages of particular items.

Beef, lamb, and shellfish are imported. Pork, chicken, duck, and various fish can be purchased locally and are of excellent quality. Canned meats and luncheon meats are not always available. Local bacon and sausage have a high fat content. Frozen vegetables are limited and expensive. Some seasonal fresh tropical fruit and vegetables are available locally; quality varies from good to excellent. The following vegetables and fruits are imported periodically and are expensive; celery, oranges, strawberries, apples, cauliflower, potatoes, grapes, pears, cabbage, and squash.

Canned, powdered, reconstituted, and sterilized milk are available, as are eggs and butter. Cheese is imported and when available the selection is good. A modest selection of cooking spices is always available.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available, and most domestics have some experience and speak English. Salaries are somewhat high. Local government regulations strictly enforce minimum wages and social security benefits. While all salaries are negotiable above the minimum, the Seychelles Labor Board sets recommended wages for domestic workers, based on each person's requirement.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 2 & 3	Bank Holiday
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1.	Labor Day
May/June	Corpus Christi*
June 5	Liberation Day
June 29	Independence Day
Aug. 15	Assumption
Nov. 1.	All Saints' Day
Dec. 8.	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 25.	Christmas Day

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The most direct route from the U.S. to the Seychelles is from New York to Nairobi (Kenya), and from there to Victoria via Kenya Airways. Some people prefer to travel to Europe (London, Frankfurt, Paris), and then to Seychelles on a direct flight.

No special problems should be encountered for entry into Seychelles. Americans do not need visas (only passports), but should have a transit visa for Kenya.

Travelers arriving from the U.S. or Europe are not required to have immunizations; those arriving from endemic areas must show evidence of current cholera and yellow fever inoculations. Cars entering Seychelles must have third-party liability coverage, and drivers are required to have valid U.S. or international licenses.

Pets must be quarantined in the United Kingdom for six months before entering Seychelles. No exceptions are considered.

No firearms or ammunition may be brought into the country.

The Anglicans and Roman Catholics each maintain a cathedral in Victoria, and the Seventh-Day Adventists have a church. A Sunday interdenominational service is conducted each week by the Far East Broadcasting Agency (FEBA), a Christian missionary group. A non-sectarian mosque opened in Victoria in 1982. No facilities exist here for most other Protestant denominations or for the Jewish faith.

The time in Seychelles is Greenwich Mean Time plus four hours.

Local currency is the Seychelles rupee (SR). Amendments to foreign exchange laws require that visitors pay for their hotel stays via a credit card. If they wish to make payment in Seychelles rupees, they are required to show proof of acquisition. If the rupees were won at a casino, a casino receipt should be shown as proof.

In 1981, Seychelles converted to metric weights and measures. However, many commodities entering the country are marked in accordance with British or American standards.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Camerapix. *Seychelles*. New York: Hunter Publishing, 1991.

Fodor's Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles. 3d ed. New York: Fodor's Travel Publications, 1990.

Hassall, S. *Let's Visit the Seychelles*. London: Macmillan Publications, 1988.

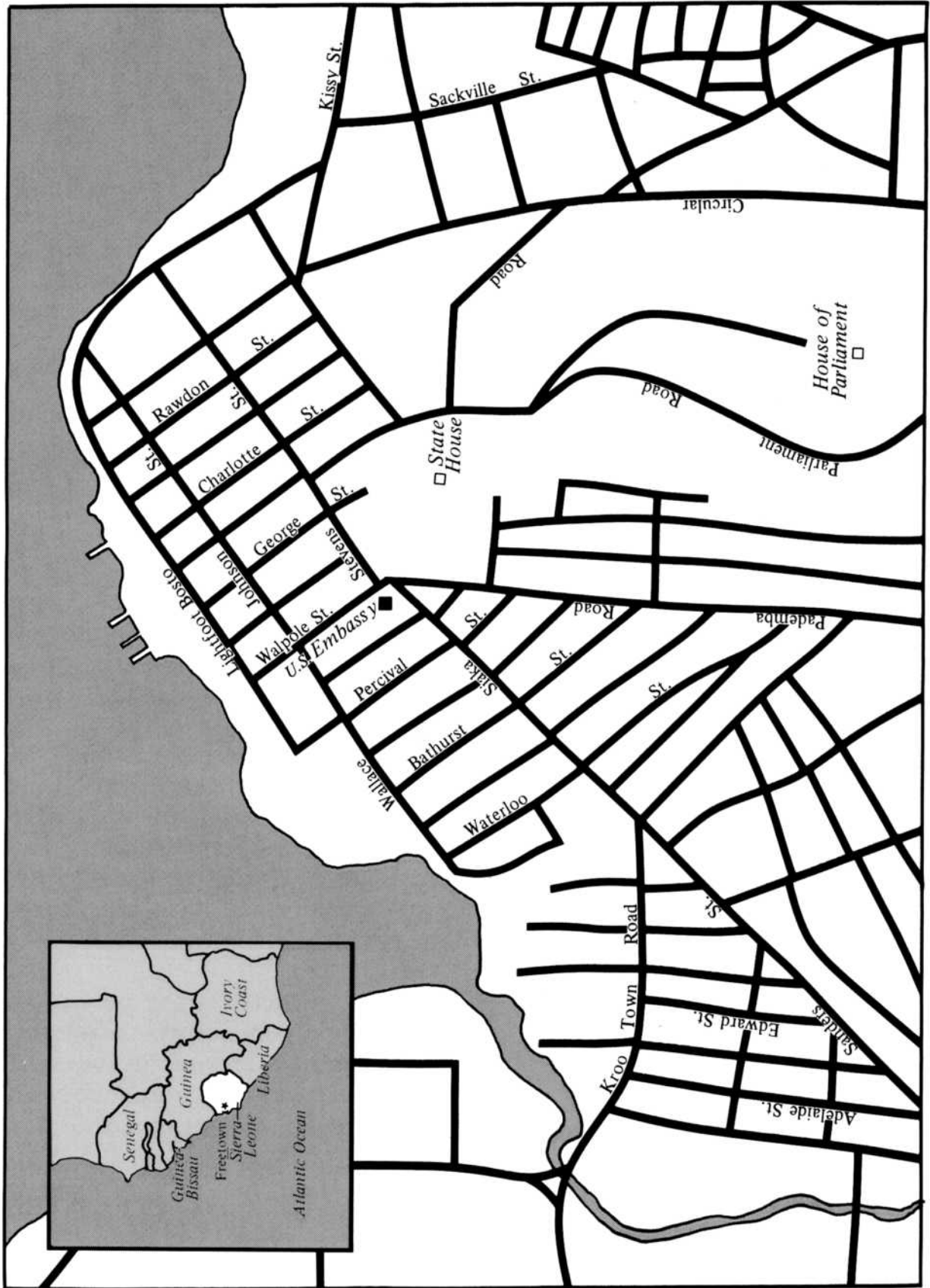
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Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles: With Ratings of Major Safaris. 3d ed. New York: McKay, 1990.

McAteer, W. *Rivals in Eden*. London: Book Guild, 1991.

Willox, Robert. *Mauritius, Reunion & the Seychelles: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1989.



Freetown, Sierra Leone

SIERRA LEONE

Republic of Sierra Leone

Major City:

Freetown

Other Cities:

Bo, Kenema, Makeni

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Sierra Leone. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SIERRA LEONE means "The Lion Mountains," translated from the Portuguese. The name was given by Portuguese navigator Pedro da Cintra in 1462 to describe the spectacular mountain crests rising 3,000 feet from the sea on the peninsula where Freetown was later established.

The colony at Freetown was founded in 1787 by British philanthropists as a haven for about 400 freed slaves. These settlers were later joined by blacks from the New World; many were American slaves who fought with the British during the Revolutionary War. Other settlers were Africans freed by the British Navy from slave ships captured on the open seas. These

"recaptives" came from nearly every ethnic group on or near the Atlantic coast of the African continent, and occasionally from beyond. Thus, the colony was a major melting pot in which European, North American, and West Indian influences mixed with those of various African cultures. This mixture eventually amalgamated into a single society collectively known as Creole.

The settlement became a British crown colony in 1808. Four years before the turn of the 20th century, the British Government declared a protectorate over the hinterland area, and defined the frontiers with Guinea and Liberia. During the 1950s people from all over the country rushed to diamond-producing areas to look for wealth. These efforts helped to spread the wealth throughout the country as never before.

Sierra Leone became independent in 1961, and a republic in 1971. Today it is a nation where modern Western features blend with historic Creole and tribal cultures. This aggregation of Western, African and Victorian English cultures results in a society that is comfortably familiar yet delightfully foreign to the Westerner, while the vibrancy and conviviality of the people make a stay here stimulating and enjoyable.

MAJOR CITY

Freetown

Historic Freetown, with its busy port and unspoiled beaches, is a picturesque city. It is situated on the slopes of wooded hills—unusual on the west coast of Africa—and overlooks one of the world's most magnificent harbors. From 1808 to 1874, Freetown was the capital of British West Africa.

The city's architecture is a combination of modern buildings and those of 19th-century style, typified in small, wood-gabled and latticed houses. At the hub of the city is the great Cotton Tree, already a landmark when the first Creole settlers arrived in 1787. Freetown is located at the northern tip of the country's Western Province, four miles from the mouth of the Sierra Leone River. It has a population of approximately 1 million.

For a city of its size in Africa, Freetown is unexpectedly Western in character. There are several good hotels, an international airport offering a variety of services, a university, a sports stadium, churches, six large grocery stores, car-rental facilities, several banks, and 15 foreign embassies.

Education

An American school was opened in September 1986 to serve the needs of Freetown's international community. The American International School of Freetown (AISF) is a private, coeducational, day school offering an educational program from pre-kindergarten through grade eight to students of all nationalities. It is housed in a modern, air conditioned building of eight classrooms, a 6,000-volume library, and two administrative offices.

A.I.S.F. follows a modified American curriculum stressing the mastery of basic skills, art and science, and the fostering of basic creativity. Critical thinking is emphasized, and the small classroom size allows the school to respond flexibly to individual needs. Although the school serves a diverse international student body, the curriculum is essentially U.S. based, and most of the texts and materials are published in the U.S. Extracurricular activities include gymnastics, swimming, school newspaper, and various field trips. The school year is divided into two semesters. It begins in early September and ends in mid-June. Holidays are scheduled at Christmas and Easter. Space is limited, particularly in the two nursery classes, which accept students once they have reached their third birthday. Prospective parents are advised to contact the school in advance. The mailing address of the American International School is c/o U.S. Embassy, Walpole Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone. U.S. mail may be addressed in care of U.S. Embassy—Freetown, Sierra Leone, Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-2160.

There is no adequate provision for education of children beyond grade eight. Expatriates generally send their children to boarding schools for secondary education, either in Europe or the U.S. No schools are equipped to meet special educational needs. Tutors have been found in the past among the missionary of American community to assist children with reading prob-

lems or to give limited outside instruction.

Several American families send their children to the French School, which has grades kindergarten through six. This small school, run by a local board of parents and teachers, follows the French national curriculum. Children under the age of seven may enter the school with no French language ability; older children are required to have some prior knowledge of the language.

Additionally, there is the small primary school located at the Fourah Bay College, offering somewhat comparable standards of education to those of the British primary system, and the large Lebanese-supported school which, while primarily focused on the Lebanese community's educational requirements, maintains a curriculum which follows the U.K. standard of primary and secondary education. Both schools are multinational in character, with the Lebanese school more formally structured.

These schools often have waiting lists. Tentative reservations can be made for incoming children, but it is usually more satisfactory to wait until after arrival to make final placement decisions. The caliber of schools fluctuates with staff changes, and the "best" school varies according to the individual child and family.

Few foreign children attend Freetown secondary (high) schools. Those who do find the experience more valid cross-culturally than academically. Admission to secondary school (usually at age 11, but sometimes as early as 10) is based on results of the Selective Entrance Examination given every March to all students in primary classes six and seven. However, foreign students who have not taken the exam can apply for direct admission. Most secondary schools have five forms (through the British Ordinary Level Examination), although a few offer

the sixth form (Advanced Level Examination).

Some junior and senior high school expatriates have used correspondence work from the Calvert School (grades seven and eight) and the University of Nebraska (grades nine and above). This has been satisfactory academically, but of mixed benefit socially. The expatriate peer group is always small, and sometimes nonexistent, and it is difficult to make friends with local teenagers outside of a classroom situation. Boarding schools are strongly advised for this age group.

Piano teachers are available in Freetown although pianos are scarce. Because of the climate, it is best not to bring a piano or string instrument to Sierra Leone; if shipped, it should be tropicalized beforehand. Ballet lessons for young girls are given at the International School, and karate lessons are given for boys. French lessons are offered at the Alliance Française; adults can also take courses at Fourah Bay College, either on a special or full-time basis.

The Kabala Rupp Memorial School, a coeducational, boarding, church-related institution, is located in the northern town of Kabala. Founded in 1957, the school is sponsored by the American Wesleyan Mission, the Missionary Church, Inc., and United Brethren in Christ. The U.S. curriculum for grades one through nine is taught by a staff of American teachers to a student body comprised mostly of Americans. Facilities include four buildings, three classrooms, an auditorium, covered play area, playing field, cafeteria, dormitory, and a 3,000-volume library. The mailing address of the Kabala Rupp Memorial School is Box 28, Kabala, Sierra Leone, West Africa. U.S. mail may be addressed in care of The Missionary Church, 3901 South Wayne Avenue, Fort Wayne, IN, 46807, U.S.A.

Recreation

Freetown offers increasingly better recreational opportunities as new

facilities are added. The Siaka Stevens Stadium, named for the country's former president, is one of Africa's largest sports complexes, and is a center for a variety of activities. Tennis, squash, and golf all are popular in the area. The Freetown Golf Club has a 12-hole course with sand greens (playable most of the year), squash and tennis courts, and a modest clubhouse. The Hill Station Club has tennis courts, and an active social program. At the Aqua Sports Club, there is a marina, a saltwater pool, squash courts, and a clubhouse and bar. Membership is required at these clubs, but fees are reasonable.

Some hunting is done in Sierra Leone. Bush fowl and guinea fowl, plentiful within 30 miles of Freetown, are usually hunted during the rainy season. Duck and geese are abundant in swamps about 80 miles from the city, and are usually taken by jump shooting from dugouts. Very little big game is found in the immediate Freetown area, but 150 or 200 miles up-country several varieties of African antelope, wild pig, bush cows (West African water buffalo) and, occasionally, hippos and elephants can be found. However, most big game is protected by law. Field clothing in camouflage patterns is prohibited by regulation. Bird hunters should bring briar-resistant clothing and snake-proof boots.

Fishing is available in and near Freetown. Saltwater species include barracuda, cobia, red snapper, Atlantic jack, Spanish mackerel, and grouper. The freshwater angler may find tigerfish, catfish, and several subspecies of tilapia. Most saltwater fish are taken by trolling lures. This necessitates the use of a boat; however, no charter boat facilities are offered in Sierra Leone. The experienced surf-caster should do well on the coast. Catches, however, have declined somewhat in recent years because of heavy fishing of coastal waters by international groups.

The Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary, developed with the assistance of Peace Corps volunteers, offers an opportunity to view a wide variety of primates and other tropical rain-forest wildlife in their native habitat. Located seven hours from Freetown, it provides accommodations and an educational and relaxing break. The Outamba Kilimi National Park at Koto, far in the northern part of Sierra Leone, has hippos, numerous tropical birds, elephant sightings, and monkeys. It is a one-day trip from Freetown and has tent accommodations for visitors.

Sierra Leone's picturesque and uncrowded beaches offer the greatest recreational diversion. Many are within easy driving distance of Freetown. Since occasional strong currents and undertow occur, precautions should be taken while swimming. Sharks and barracuda are seldom seen. The rivers in Sierra Leone are unsafe for swimming because of parasitic organisms. A few sites exist for interested deep-sea divers and snorklers. Waterskiing is also popular.

The beaches, tropical vegetation, and varied tribal groupings provide an unending supply of colorful subjects for those interested in photography, painting, or sketching. Discretion should be used, however, since some tribes still maintain taboos against being photographed. Both color and black-and-white film, although expensive, are available for most cameras, including Polaroid. Black-and-white film is developed locally, but color film must be sent to the U.S. or England.

A number of places of interest outside Freetown are accessible by car. The 60-mile trip around the peninsula is a pleasant drive, fringed by some of the world's most picturesque and unspoiled beaches. The drive passes through several colorful Creole villages with British names, as well as typical fishing villages at Baw Baw and Tokeh. Two tourist resorts, catering primarily to European tourists are located

within an hour's drive from Freetown and provide a relaxing change of pace for a weekend stay or Sunday luncheon.

Bunce Island, an 18th century English slave fort with remarkably intact ruins, is located 20 miles from Freetown, a 90-minute boat trip up the Sierra Leone River. This fort, is gaining interest in the U.S. since researchers have discovered that many Americans along the South Carolina and Georgia coasts had origins in Sierra Leone. Other boat trips of longer duration, to the Bananas Islands and Turtle Islands, are available through local travel agencies.

Roads from Freetown to the up-country towns of Makeni, Yengema, Bo, and Kenema are generally good, although not always properly maintained. The Port Loko district, about 80 miles northeast, is a scenic, forested area, higher in elevation than Freetown, and affords a refreshing change in climate. Woodworking is done in the Kenema district, another heavily forested area about 200 miles from Freetown. Makeni, in the northern district, is a center for crafts.

The diamond mines at Yengema in the Eastern Province may be visited by invitation of the National Diamond Mining Company; a government permit is needed. Most of the alluvial mines are located along small streams in the scrub forest.

Although none of these areas provide a radical scenic or climatic change, they are interesting and readily accessible. Other inviting sights, such as the Bintumani Mountains, the Bumbuna and Bikongo Falls, and the Kabala area, are not comfortably reached by car. Travel on unpaved roads is easier at the beginning of the rainy season, when the dust has settled; it is most difficult at the height of the rainy season. Government-operated ferries, not always in service, transport vehicles across up-country rivers.

Adequate hotel accommodations are practically nonexistent, so upcountry travelers should arrange to stay with government officers, missionaries, or Peace Corps volunteers. At Sierra Leone government rest camps, such as the one at Shenge, an old port and pirate hideaway about a six-hour drive from Freetown, one must be completely self-sufficient. This includes carrying boiled, filtered water, food, a kerosene lamp and stove, mosquito nets, a cot, bedding, dishes, and utensils.

Driving time from Freetown to Monrovia, Liberia, is about 10 hours in the dry season. Flying time to Monrovia is only 45 minutes, but transport to and from the airports at either end increases the total travel time to six hours. It is possible to drive to Conakry, Guinea, in six hours during the dry season.

Entertainment

Air-conditioned movie theaters in Freetown feature some American films, although they may be three or more years old. Videocassette recorders are popular in the foreign community. There are several video clubs in Freetown that rent tapes in both VHS and Beta formats. Many Americans receive tapes from family and friends in the U.S. Spectator events are limited to soccer games and native dancing fests. The Sierra Leone Military Forces also occasionally present colorful ceremonies.

The Paramount, Cape Sierra, Bintumani, and Mammy Yoko hotel restaurants are regularly patronized by Americans. Three other restaurants at Lumley Beach—the Atlantic, the Lighthouse, and the Palm Beach—offer good food and dancing to live or recorded music. Two casinos at Lumley feature roulette, blackjack, and slot machines. A small Chinese restaurant, located between the city and Lumley Beach, is popular, as is the Provilac Restaurant which has weekly buffets featuring Sierra Leonean dishes.

Social life in Freetown is generally relaxed and informal, and usually centers on home entertainment.

Newcomers quickly meet the community through business contacts, membership in clubs, and social functions in homes. Protocol is taken seriously by some diplomats or older Creoles, whose social framework is traditional British, and it is advisable to familiarize oneself with patterns of handshaking, verbal greeting, and deference. Americans are often seen as too abrupt by Sierra Leoneans. Business is conducted only after a short exchange of greetings and talk of a more relaxed nature has preceded it.

Freetown has branches of the International Rotary and Lions Clubs.

OTHER CITIES

BO, just over 100 miles southeast of the capital, is the commercial center of the interior, with a population of about 81,000. The trading of ginger, palm oil and kernels, coffee, cocoa, and rice is important to the economy; goods are transported to Freetown mostly by road. The city has a number of educational centers, including teacher-training colleges, as well as the largest hospital outside of Freetown.

Located in southeastern Sierra Leone, **KENEMA** is home to the country's timber industry and an important market town for the Mende people. Alluvial diamond mining is an important industry. Kenema produce coffee, cocoa, and palm kernels and oil. Kenema is the site of a government library, schools, and several private hospitals. The city's estimated population is 71,000.

MAKENI is situated in central Sierra Leone, less than 100 miles north of the capital. It is a trade center for the Temne people. The main crops sent to Freetown are rice, palm oil, and kernels. Known for its Gara tie-dyeing, Makeni has a church, government schools, a teacher's college, and a hospital. The population is about 106,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Sierra Leone is nearly circular in shape, and has an area of 27,925 square miles (about the size of South Carolina). It is located on the southwestern part of the great bulge of West Africa, between the seventh and 10th parallels north of the equator. It is bordered on the north and east by the Republic of Guinea, on the south by the Republic of Liberia, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

Three main topographical regions run northwest to southeast, roughly parallel with the coast: a belt of mangrove swamps and beaches; an area of low plains covered with secondary forest and cultivated crops; and an easternmost region of high plateaus and mountains, some rising as high as 6,000 feet. The mountainous peninsula on which Freetown, the capital, is located comprises a fourth, distinct geographical region. It is the only place on the West African coast where mountains rise near the sea and where the beaches are both exceptionally beautiful and generally safe for swimming.

The climate is tropical, with both rainy and dry seasons, constantly high temperatures, and almost constant high humidity. The rainy season extends from May to November, but is heaviest between July and September, when over half of the annual rainfall occurs. In Freetown, rainfall is as much as 150 inches; inland areas receive less. The beginning and end of the rainy season is marked by frequent strong electrical storms, similar to those occurring during the hot summer months of the eastern United States. Coastal temperatures during the rainy season range from a daily high of about 80°F to a nightly low of about 76°F. Most Westerners reside in the hills above the city, where a constant breeze makes for

comfortable living and encourages outdoor entertaining.

Relative humidity in Freetown rarely falls below 80 percent, except when the *harmattan* reaches the coast. This current of dry, dusty air flows from the Sahara Desert toward the south and west, usually reaching Sierra Leone in December. The *harmattan* brings Freetown its best weather; during this season, temperatures reach about 90°F during the day and fall to about 74°F at night.

Because of the climate, insects abound and mildew can be a problem. Flies, ants, and cockroaches are occasional nuisances, but lizards are also plentiful and help to keep the others in check. Numerous snakes exist, some of them poisonous. Precautions must be taken against mildew and corrosion and, during the dry season, against the bothersome red laterite dust.

Population

Sierra Leone's population is estimated at 5.4 million, with an increase of 3.6 percent per annum. Density averages about 121 per square mile; the highest densities of several hundred per square mile are in the western area of the country; the lowest, of about 25 per square mile, are in the remote northern and eastern sections. Life expectancy in Sierra Leone in 2001 was 43 years for males, 49 years for females. Freetown, with 1 million people, is the capital, the commercial and educational center, and the only large city.

The African population consists of 20 ethnic groups, each with its own language and customs. The two largest groups (the Mende in the south and the Temne in the north) are about equal in number and make up approximately 60 percent of the country's population. The 54,000 descendants of the original settlers make up the Creole society, mostly settled in the Freetown area. Their language, Krio, is the lingua franca of Sierra Leone, although the Mende and Temne tongues are also

widely spoken. English is the official language.

Followed by 60 percent of the population, Islam is the predominant religion of the country, with animism and Christianity (both Protestant and Roman Catholic) following. Both Islam and Christianity retain perceptible overtones of indigenous animist beliefs. Islam is strongest in the Northern Province; Christianity, even though numerically small, is influential in southern regions and the Freetown area, where missions have been active for over 100 years.

Many Creole customs, which derive from Victorian England, are easily identifiable with those of Western cultures. Tribal customs, however, differ greatly from cultural patterns encountered in the U.S. Secret organizations, such as the women's Bundu or Sande and the men's Poro societies, still play a dominant role in tribal life.

Women in rural areas often wear only a cloth or *lappa* tied around their waists; children are commonly scantily clothed and occasionally naked. Strong extended family structures are frequently comprised of several wives and their relations.

The Lebanese and the Indian communities are mainly merchants. European and American residents are scattered throughout the country.

Government

After World War II, self-government was gradually established in Sierra Leone, leading to complete independence on April 27, 1961. The following September, Sierra Leone became the 100th member of the United Nations. The first general elections with universal franchise were held in May 1962.

Under the constitution brought into effect on Independence Day, Sierra Leone adopted a parliamentary form of government. Executive authority was vested in Her Britannic Majesty, Elizabeth II, who was

queen of Sierra Leone and represented by a governor-general.

In April 1971, the country adopted a republican constitution with an executive president, but retained membership in the British Commonwealth. Executive authority is exercised by the president. The unicameral parliament consists of 127 authorized seats, 105 of which are filled by elected representatives of constituencies and 22 by paramount chiefs elected by fellow paramount chiefs in each district. The president is authorized to appoint up to seven members.

A separate judiciary system includes a Court of Appeals, Supreme Court, High Court, magistrates' courts, and local courts having jurisdiction in certain customary (tribal) law cases.

The Freetown peninsula, which together with Sherbro Island comprised the former colony, is now called the Western Province. Freetown has one of the oldest civic governments in Western form in all of Africa south of the Sahara. The rest of the country, formerly known as the Protectorate, is divided into three provinces, the Northern, Southern, and Eastern. These provinces are made up of 12 districts comprising 146 chiefdoms, where paramount chiefs and a council of elders constitute the basic unit of government.

Major Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh was elected president in January 1986. In May 1992, mutinous army troops staged a military coup. Momoh was overthrown and fled to neighboring Guinea. Captain Valentine Strasser took control of the government, promising a return to civilian rule.

In 1996 Strasser was overthrown by Julius Maada Brio. Elections in February 1996 resulted in the installation of Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as president following a runoff vote. However, his government was overthrown in a coup led by Major Johnny Paul Koromah in May 1997.

The president was reinstated in 1998 and was reelected in 2002.

The flag of Sierra Leone is made up of green, white, and blue horizontal bands.

Arts, Science, Education

The country's intellectual life centers around the University of Sierra Leone. The university's Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827 by Anglican missionaries and situated on Mount Aureol high above Freetown, is the oldest English-language college in West Africa, and still attracts students from Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and other countries to study alongside students from the growing number of Sierra Leonean secondary schools. The curriculum includes liberal arts, education, theology, law, economics, engineering, and pure and applied sciences. The university includes three institutes—the Institute of African Studies, the Institute of Public Administration and Management, and the Institute of Library Science.

Njala University College is the second part of the University of Sierra Leone. It is an agricultural and educational institution formed on the U.S. land-grant college principle, and is located 130 miles from Freetown at Njala. In addition, Sierra Leone has several teacher training colleges, the most notable of which is Milton Margai Teachers College, just outside of Freetown.

Choral, drama, and music groups in Freetown produce occasional plays (both in English and in Krio) and give recitals. A National Dance Troupe presents high-quality traditional dancing performances. The small National Museum displays local artifacts, and the Sierra Leone Artists Association promotes the sale and exhibition of local art work. Weaving, carving, and *gara* cloth (tie-dyed fabric) are the principal artistic media of the people.

Commerce and Industry

Sierra Leone's economic and social infrastructure is not well developed. The economy remains primarily agricultural although minerals, particularly diamonds, account for roughly 70 percent of all exports. In recent years, serious balance-of-payments and budget deficits have stifled economic growth. The Sierra Leonean economy has been saddled with high unemployment, large trade deficits, and a growing dependence on foreign aid. The value of the national currency has declined and wages are extremely low.

Agriculture accounts for over 40 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs over 70 percent of the labor force. Most agricultural production is of a subsistence nature. Rice is the staple food crop, but a significant percentage is imported. Other important food crops are cassava, bananas, sweet potatoes, sorghum, and corn. Palm kernels and oil, coffee, and cocoa are Sierra Leone's primary cash crops and major sources of export earnings.

Because of the value and quality of Sierra Leone's diamond resources, the mining sector has traditionally played a central role in the economy. The profitability of the country's diamond resources is hampered by the depletion of reserves and illegal smuggling. Sierra Leone also has the world's largest deposits of rutile, a mineral used to manufacture paints and alloys. Most reserves of rutile are located in the southwestern part of the country. Large bauxite reserves are also known to exist in the northeast.

Sierra Leone's industrial sector is small and underdeveloped. Industrial capacity is limited mainly to the manufacturing of cigarettes, paint, beverages, plastic footwear, and textiles.

Minerals, such as diamonds, rutile, and bauxite, make up the bulk of Sierra Leone's exports. Coffee and cocoa are also valuable export com-

modities. The Netherlands, Great Britain, the United States, Germany, and other European Community (EC) countries are the primary recipients of Sierra Leone's exports. Sierra Leone imports capital goods, foodstuffs, petroleum and related products, transport equipment, machinery, and light industrial goods. These imports are provided by the United States, EC countries, Japan, China, and Nigeria.

Sierra Leone is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The country receives foreign financial assistance from China, Germany, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Community, the United States, and Great Britain.

The Chamber of Commerce of Sierra Leone is located in Freetown; the address is P.O. Box 502.

Transportation

International air service to Europe is provided by British Airways, KLM, and UTA. As of May 1990, British Airways flew to London twice a week, KLM to Amsterdam once a week, and UTA to Paris twice a week. Provincial Air Services provide charter helicopter services to many parts of the country, but rates are high. In-country travel is by road, as railroad and airline carrier service is no longer available.

The Road Transport Corporation operates bus service within the capital city, although it is not often used by official Americans or U.S. visitors because of overcrowding. Many taxis also operate in Freetown, but they are hard to get since they cannot be summoned by telephone; because cabs are unmetered, fares should be agreed upon beforehand. Fares outside the city are high. Taxis invariably pick up several passengers on any given trip and are, therefore, always crowded. Taxis are seldom used at night by expatriates (for safety reasons).

A car is a necessity for those living in Freetown, but American-made

vehicles are not recommended. Acceptable servicing exists for most British cars and some other makes, such as Peugeot, Renault, Fiat, Volkswagen, Mercedes, Honda, and Nissan. Spare parts, however, are often scarce and always expensive. Mobil, Texaco, Shell, and British Petroleum gasolines are sold at American-style stations.

In the capital, the streets are narrow and congested with pedestrians; there are no sidewalks. Driving is on the right.

Communications

Facilities for telephone communications in Sierra Leone are adequate. A computerized central system has been installed which should improve telecommunications considerably. International calls to the U.S. can be made at the Sierra Leone External

Telecommunications but take time, since the number of overseas lines is limited.

Local liability insurance can be arranged and is required for personally owned vehicles. It is not expensive, but coverage is very limited. Comprehensive insurance is also available but costly. Telegraphic communications are usually reliable, although the delivery of telegrams is sometimes delayed. Airmail from the U.S. takes from five days to two weeks to reach Freetown, and occasional delays are experienced.

Sierra Leone has the oldest radio broadcasting service in English-speaking West Africa. The government-owned Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service operates a number of radio stations broadcasting in English, Krio, Limba, Mende, and Tenme. However, these stations are on the air infrequently due to power failures and the lack of spare parts for broadcasting equipment. A shortwave radio is necessary to receive international broadcasts. Radio reception in Freetown is generally good.

Commercial television service is limited. Sierra Leone uses the European system for its television broadcasts. American television sets receive the visual, but not the audio portion of the signal. However, with a small radio having a TV audio band, the voice signal comes in. This is cheaper than conversion in the European system. Many American expatriates bring a VCR and a supply of videotapes with them to Sierra Leone.

The government-owned *Daily Mail* is the main newspaper. It is published daily, but gives very little coverage to international news events. The Paris edition of the *International Herald Tribune* is available by subscription and usually arrives a month late. Current copies of the international edition of *Newsweek* are sold locally.

Books, especially paperbacks, the majority of which are published in the U.K., are available in quantity from a number of sources. Several libraries (USIS, British Council, and the Freetown city libraries) have reasonable collections.

Health

Freetown's four large hospitals—Connaught General, Princess Christian Maternity, Children's, and Hill Station—as well as several small private hospitals and nursing homes, offer minimum facilities. None is satisfactory in size, equipment, hygienic standards, or staff. The level of nursing care is below that of institutions in the U.S. Many medical problems require evacuation to Europe or the U.S. for treatment. Several well-qualified physicians and dentists practice in Freetown, although the absence of basic diagnostic and treatment facilities presents a considerable handicap for them.

Water shortages sometimes occur in Freetown. During the dry season, water supply and pressure may be irregular if the level in local reservoirs drops below normal. Although the water is treated with chlorine, it should be boiled about 20 minutes

before using; all drinking water must also be filtered.

For most of Freetown, the sewage disposal system is below standard. Open drainage ditches running throughout town are breeding places for insects, and cause unsightly flooding when outlets are plugged or covered by debris. Many residences have septic tanks, but most of the population use pit latrines.

Irregular garbage collection and disposal; inadequate laws governing inspection, storage, and sale of food; and the lack of health and sanitation consciousness by most cooks and stewards are health hazards to Westerners. Vigilance and constant attention to good hygiene practices are strongly advised.

Major communicable diseases are malaria, measles, typhoid, hepatitis, intestinal diseases, influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis, meningitis, cholera, and lassa fever. During the rainy season, children may be particularly susceptible to fungus or other skin disorders. Intestinal upsets are common.

Those moving to Sierra Leone should begin taking malaria suppressants three weeks prior to arrival, and continue taking them weekly for the duration of the stay. One should also obtain a gamma globulin injection against hepatitis as well as inoculations against cholera, yellow fever, typhoid fever, tetanus, polio, and rabies. Because rabies is prevalent in Sierra Leone, pets should also be vaccinated against the disease.

All locally purchased vegetables should be either cooked or disinfected, if they cannot be peeled. Taking vitamin tablets as a daily supplement is a common practice. All clothes, bedding, and towels must be machine dried or ironed to avoid tumba-fly infestation. Mosquito netting for homes, especially where young children reside. Not only is malaria a concern, but bites that are scratched become infected easily in the tropical climate.

Clothing and Services

Being neatly, smartly, and appropriately dressed is important to Sierra Leoneans, and they expect it of others. Ready-made clothing sold locally is European in style; limited in selection, size, and quality; and also very expensive. Local tailoring is good and generally moderate in cost. Shoe repair is crude but functional.

In selecting a wardrobe, one should remember that the temperature range is narrow, and seasonal change minimal. Offices, however, are air-conditioned and can be cool. Clothing appropriate for Washington, DC summers is generally right for Freetown. Washable fabrics are preferable. Local dry-cleaning is not recommended. Garments that cannot be washed or that require special handling should be kept to a minimum. Laundry is done at home. Cotton or predominantly cotton blends are more absorbent and not as hot as synthetics. Knits are good for traveling and office wear, but are generally too warm for regular street wear.

The hot weather requires frequent changes and consequent laundering of clothes. This, plus the lack of seasonal variation and a fairly limited social orbit, makes a variety of clothes important. Some warm clothing will be needed for travel out of the area in cold months. A light sweater or shawl is handy for cool evenings, and some rain gear is also useful. Umbrellas can be bought locally.

Men wear wash-and-wear clothing throughout the year. Short-sleeved shirts are generally worn in the office. Social life is informal (often no coat or tie is necessary), but official affairs require a dark suit and long-sleeved shirt.

Women need a variety of cotton dresses for daytime, and washable long dresses for the numerous social activities in Freetown. Because evenings can be cool, and home and res-

taurants air-conditioned, some dresses should have sleeves, jackets, or stoles. Shorts and slacks are worn for sports activities and at home, but less often downtown or in the office. Gala African dresses are purchased locally and are popular for evening wear, but should only be relied on to augment an evening wardrobe. Sierra Leonean women wear hats and hosiery for formal daytime occasions, including church, but Western women normally do not wear hats. Hosiery is a matter of personal choice. Maternity clothes are not available in Freetown.

Children usually wear shorts or jeans, but party clothes are sometimes needed. School uniforms are made locally. Clothing for babies and young children is extremely limited here, and the items are more expensive than in the U.S. Shoes must be worn at all times when outdoors to protect feet from worms and bacteria that can enter the body through small cuts or abrasions. Children generally wear tennis shoes and sandals.

Tomatoes, sweet peppers, green beans, cabbages, green squash, pumpkins, radishes, parsley, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, potatoes, and onions are seasonally available. A variety of greens (spinach substitutes), okra, sweet potatoes, and small tomatoes are sold year round in outdoor markets. Imported vegetables are available, but at very high prices. Good local tropical fruits such as bananas, oranges, pineapples, limes, grapefruit, avocados, mangoes, and papaya are seasonally available in abundance. Purchasing fruits and vegetables from street vendors involves considerable bargaining.

Local beef, lamb, and pork are sometimes used by Americans. Beef is not aged and most of it is tough, but the fillet is tender and reasonably priced. Lamb is both expensive and fatty. Pork is better tasting than in the U.S. and trichinosis is not known in Sierra Leone. However, pork should be cooked well as a pre-

caution. Local poultry is acceptable, but expensive. Fresh and locally frozen fish are perhaps the best bargains in Freetown. Fresh and frozen shrimp and lobster are also good. Lobster, squid, barracuda, sole, and snapper are among the local favorites. Eggs, although more expensive than in the U.S., can be bought most of the year. Fresh milk or cream is not available, but good powdered or canned milk is. Imported sterilized milk sealed in cartons (three-month shelf life without refrigeration) is also available.

Freetown's supermarkets stock a surprising variety of canned goods, cereals, nuts, and pastas, all of which are imported. However, these products are several times the U.S. price, availability is never certain, and the length of time that they have been sitting on grocers shelves in tropical heat is unknown.

Tailoring, shoe repair, and dry cleaning are below American standards, although of acceptable quality. Freetown has a few barbers and beauty salons that give acceptable haircuts, permanents, manicures, and facials. Some local electricians work on radios and stereos, but spare parts for American-made items are not readily obtainable.

Domestic Help

As in most places in Africa, household servants are usually male. Most families hire one person to serve as a steward, with responsibility to clean and perhaps help with cooking. Families with small children may hire a nanny. Generally, household help do not live in the home, but live-in nannies can be found.

Most domestics require close supervision. Uniforms are provided by the employer. Each servant should have a physical examination and X-ray when hired; periodic checkups are advisable. Salaries are generally low.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

January 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 19	Republic Day
Apr. 27	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The Department of State warns against travel to Sierra Leone and advises all U.S. citizens to exercise caution when traveling to Sierra Leone, particularly in the areas south and east of Bo and Kenema, and to defer all travel to the area along the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia. There are reports in these areas of banditry and incursions by rebels from Liberia, and there have been clashes between these rebels and the Sierra Leonean military. Travel at night should be avoided, and travelers to the affected areas can expect to encounter road-blocks and vehicle searches by Sierra Leonean security forces. Travel outside the capital is dangerous because of armed military groups.

Several African and international airlines provide service to and from Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Persons arriving in Sierra Leone must have valid passports, visas, and current health certificates with records of inoculations against yellow fever and cholera. Injections to prevent hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus, and polio also are strongly recommended, as are malaria suppressants.

Pets may be brought into the country with an international certificate of good health, obtained from a veterinarian. Proof of rabies vaccination and proper health certificates are required. There is no quarantine period.

The Government of Sierra Leone will permit importation of 50 rounds of ammunition for each registered firearm, with no limitation on the number of firearms. More than what is considered a reasonable quantity, however (one pistol, one rifle, one shotgun), must be approved. Only guns designated as suitable for sporting purposes are allowed; no military or police models can be imported.

The following denominations have places of worship in Sierra Leone: Anglican, Church of Christ, Evangelical United Brethren, Pentecostal, Bahai Faith, Methodist, Muslim, Roman Catholic, Samaria West African Methodist, and Seventh-Day Adventist. Non-denominational Protestant services are held weekly at St. Augustine's Anglican Chapel, Hill Station. Freetown has no synagogue. Most services are conducted in English.

The time in Sierra Leone is Greenwich Mean Time.

The monetary unit is the *Leone*, which is divided into 100 cents. The symbols used are "Le" for *Leone*, and "c" for cents. The Bank of Sierra Leone, a central bank with no commercial facilities, manages the currency. There are several commercial institutions, including the Standard

Bank of Sierra Leone, Ltd; Barclay's Bank Sierra Leone, Ltd; and the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, Ltd.

All weights and measures conform to British standards.

The U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone is located at the corner of Siaka Stevens and Walpole Streets, Freetown (across from the city's historic Cotton Tree); telephone: 232 (22) 226-481; FAX: 232 (22) 225-471.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Alie, Joe A.D. *A New History of Sierra Leone*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990.

Bell, L.V. *Mental and Social Disorder in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991.

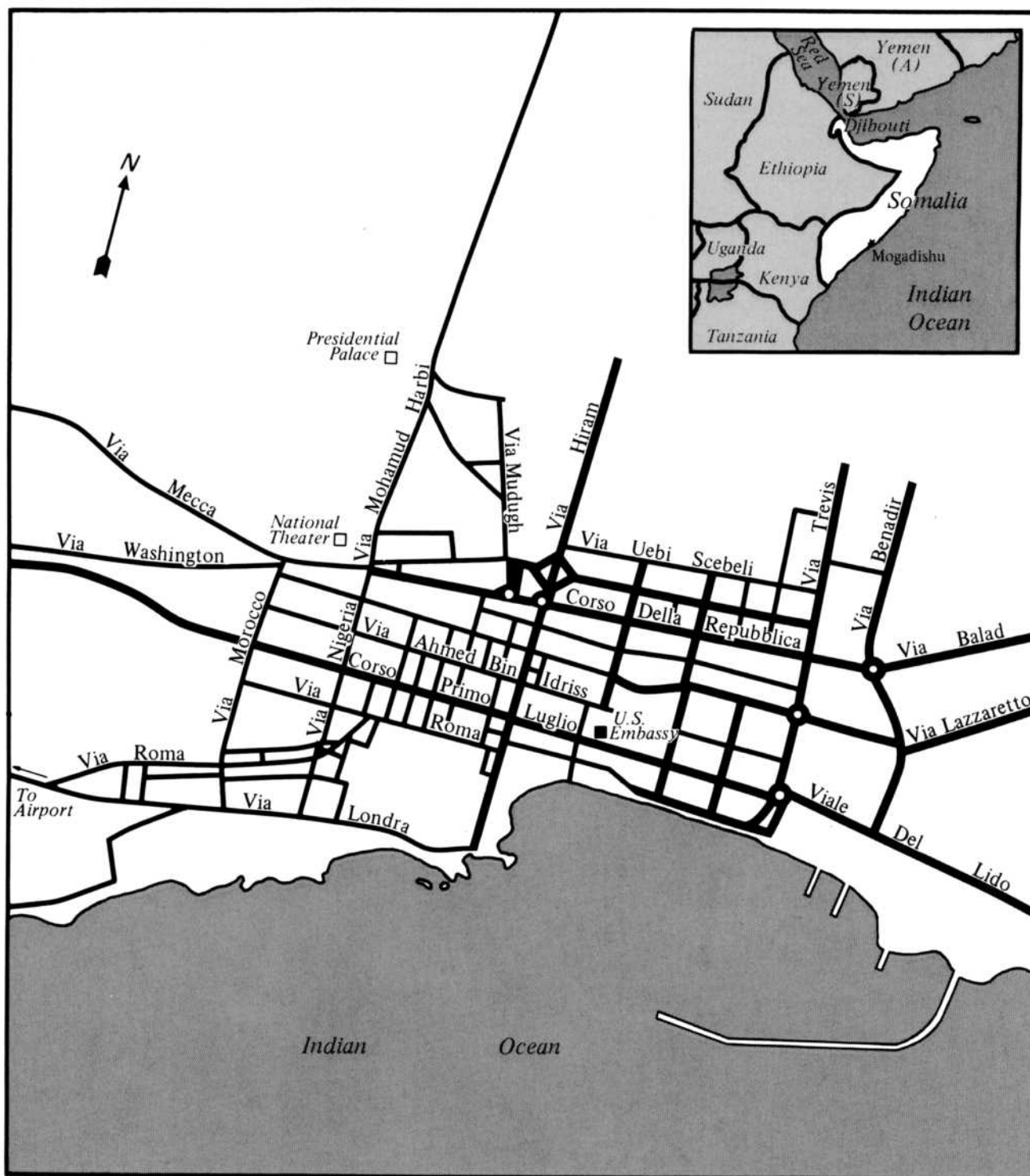
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Milsome, John. *Sierra Leone. Let's Visit Places & Peoples of the World Series*. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.

Weeks, John. *Development Strategy & the Economy of Sierra Leone*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Wyse, Akintola J.G. *H.C. Bankole-Bright and Politics in Colonial Sierra Leone, 1919-1958*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

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Mogadishu, Somalia

SOMALIA

Republic of Somalia

Major City:

Mogadishu

Other Cities:

Berbera, Hargeisa, Kismayu, Marka

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Somalia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Editors Note: From 1989 to press time a brutal civil war rages in Somalia leaving the country with no national government. The capital city of Mogadishu is badly damaged. Since 1992, the U.S. State Department has considered the situation in Somalia to be extremely dangerous. Rival factions continue to fight for control of the country, causing widespread destruction, famine, and death. On December 9, 1992, former President George Bush announced that U.S. troops would be sent to Somalia as part of Operation Restore Hope, an international effort designed to insure that food supplies would be able to reach Somalia's starving population. US forces were reduced in May 1993

and reconstruction work was assumed by the United Nations. UN-sponsored peace talks failed to stop the warring factions. In 1994 the UN redefined its role in Somalia to be less assertive. The United Nations completed its troop withdrawal in March 1995. With the departure of the UN, the country split into zones controlled by the various warlord factions. Most sections of this entry reflect the conditions in Somalia prior to the outbreak of hostilities.

Once known as the Land of Punt, **SOMALIA** has a rich and ancient history. Famed for its frankincense and myrrh (which it still exports), Somalia today is better known for its pastoral economy, its nomadic population, and its important place in the strategic Horn of Africa.

Somalia possesses beautiful white sand beaches bathed by the waters of the Indian Ocean. Traveling along the coast, one is struck by the stark beauty of the countryside, and the harsh but picturesque desert landscapes.

The coastal cities, in particular, reveal a long contact with foreign influences. Travelers from the Arabian Peninsula, Pakistan, India, and even China, called at the capital city hundreds of years before the Portuguese arrived early in the 16th

century. Many old mosques, houses, and intricately carved doors and windows reflect the various cultures which have touched this country.

Before the outbreak of hostilities a favorable social climate existed toward Americans. It was possible to meet and socialize with Somalis and to travel, within limits, within the country.

MAJOR CITY

Mogadishu

Mogadishu is Somalia's capital and largest city. It lies on the Indian Ocean about two degrees north of the equator. It extends approximately four miles along the sea and a mile inland on a line of dunes 100 to 200 feet high. Beyond the city limits, the countryside is flat and barren, with vegetation consisting of bushes and thorn trees, and occasional seasonal grassy areas. The prevailing tone of the countryside is a desert gray much of the year, but it turns green during the two to five months of the rainy season.

Mogadishu's rapidly expanding population is estimated to be about 1.2 million. This figure includes a large



Street in Mogadishu, Somalia

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Yemeni community, and smaller groups of Italians, Indians, and Pakistanis. The largest diplomatic missions in the city are those of Italy, the U.S., and the People's Republic of China. There is also a large United Nations Development Program (UNDP) mission in the city, in addition to several volunteer agencies working under the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Among other foreign agencies engaged in developmental work or assistance in Mogadishu are Africare, OXFAM (Oxford Committee for Famine Relief), Finnish Medical Aid, and the University of Saskatchewan.

New visitors to the city can visit a camel's milk market or the Lido Market where meerscham craftsmen and straw weavers ply their trades. Hamarweyn is the core of the old city and the location of the Bendair weavers. The National Museum displays past and present items of Somali folk culture.

From the time of its founding by Arab colonists in the eighth century, Mogadishu was an independent town until its occupation in 1871 by the Sultan of Zanzibar. Italy leased its port late in that century, and in 1905, purchased the town and made it the capital of what was then Ital-

ian Somaliland. The influence of the Italians remains to this day, and is noticed especially in the use of that language in all walks of official, business, and domestic life.

Education

The American School of Mogadishu was organized as a cooperative venture in 1959, and has a student body in kindergarten through grade eight. The campus is located on the western edge of the city on Afgoi Road, and the buildings include classroom wings, a gymnasium, a 6,000-volume library, and offices. Extensive playing fields surround the school and often are used by community organizations as well as by the students. The present building was started in 1965, and was completed with the help of Agency for International Development (AID) and U.S. State Department grants.

American School offers a fine opportunity to study with an international student body in small and personalized classes; average class size is 20 for grades one through four, and 15 for grades five through eight. Subjects are departmentalized in grades seven and eight. American textbooks and materials are used, and the curriculum is comparable to that offered by schools in

the U.S. The school's sports program includes swimming instruction for about eight weeks a year at the nearby International Golf and Tennis Club. Information on the academic program can be obtained by writing to the American Embassy in Mogadishu.

The director and deputy director, both with teaching spouses, are recruited from the U.S., as are two other teaching couples. Other teachers are recruited locally. Most of the present staff is American. The school has been able to provide qualified teachers in every grade and academic standards are high. Students with special learning needs are not accepted due to the lack of trained staff. Accreditation was granted by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in March 1985.

Emphasis is placed on training the staff in U.S. educational methods and practices. Grades one through eight meet from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., five days a week, Sunday through Thursday. Kindergarten and preschool hours are 7:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Kindergarten pupils must be four years and nine months old by September, while preschoolers must be three years and nine months old by September of the year of admission. A record of immunization and a birth certificate are required for admission to all grades.

There is no provision for students at the secondary level, and they must attend boarding schools in Europe or the U.S., although limited possibilities for high school exist in Kenya.

Recreation

The principal outdoor activities in Somalia are swimming, sunbathing, snorkeling, jogging, fishing, tennis, golf, volleyball, badminton, softball, boating, and camping. Spectator sports include soccer and basketball. The Mogadishu Hash House Harriers hold a cross-country run every Sunday afternoon. The Golf and Tennis Club, located in the American Embassy compound and

managed by the Recreation and Welfare Association, has a nine-hole sand golf course, four cement-surface tennis courts, a large swimming pool with adjacent children's wading pool, and a snack bar.

Mogadishu has good beaches and an abundance of sunshine. Lido, the main city beach, is not used by Americans for swimming because of the shark hazard; The beaches south of town are used mainly for picnics and camping. During much of the year, snorkeling and spearfishing are popular activities. The best snorkeling is at Gezira, a beach area about 10 miles southwest of Mogadishu. A few small sailboats and windsurfers are seen there inside the reef during the quiet season.

The Anglo-American Beach Club and the U.N. Beach Club at Lido Beach are open to the international community. Each clubhouse contains a social room, bar, restaurant, changing and shower rooms, and a sun deck. Circolo Italiano, also at Lido, is a private club offering recreational and cultural activities to its members, mainly from the Italian community.

Besides Lido and Gezira beaches, many other beaches and coves are found up and down the coast. These areas are pleasant for picnicking and camping, but are accessible only by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Although an environmental or climatic change in or near Mogadishu is impossible, short and interesting side trips may be taken to the sugar plantation and refinery at Johar; the ancient port of Marka; the nearby beaches at Gezira, Warsheikh, and Shark's Bay; the birding area beyond Balad; and the hippo pools between Shalambod and Janale. The nearest place offering a change is Nairobi (Kenya) and its surrounding countryside. There, all the amenities of a modern city can be found, and the environs offer a lush countryside and exciting game reserves.

Outside of Mogadishu, Kismayu, Shalambod, and Hargeisa, few hotels and restaurants exist. When traveling to outlying towns and villages, it is necessary to take food, water, and camping equipment, unless arrangements can be made to stay with someone. Travel overland is restricted during the rainy season, as roads become impassable even for four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Somalia has a wealth of big game and smaller wild animals, although numbers and ranges have been greatly reduced in the last 50 years. Monkeys, hippopotami, elephants, giraffes, rhinoceri, buffaloes, and zebras are found in the southwestern part of the country. Hippos and crocodiles can be found along the Juba and Shabelli Rivers. Antelope, gazelle, kudu, and oryx range throughout the country. Dik-dik and waterbuck are limited to the southwest, and the hartebeest inhabits the Haud in the northeast. Warthogs, dik-dik, monkeys, hippos, and Speakes gazelles (limited to Somalia) can be seen near Mogadishu.

Bird life is profuse and spectacular throughout the country. Waterbirds, including ducks, geese, pelicans, flamingos, cormorants, storks, and osprey, are particularly numerous. Migratory birds from Asia Minor, Europe, and the eastern Mediterranean have winter quarters in Somalia. The ostrich is common in the open plain.

Entertainment

Theater, concerts, opera, and television are not a part of life in Mogadishu. Several local outdoor movie houses show dated films in Italian, Hindi, or Arabic, but most Americans do not frequent these theaters. The French and Italian cultural centers offer regular programs of their films, often with English subtitles.

Social activities among Americans and other expatriates in Mogadishu are relaxed and informal. The American School, its Parent-Teacher Association, the Recreation and Welfare Club, and various

other clubs make important contributions to the community's social life. Governed by elected boards, each of these organizations welcomes willing workers and leadership. An amateur dramatics society meets regularly to read plays and give productions. Opportunities for volunteer work are few, but do exist. A sewing group meets weekly to make clothing for a local orphanage. Girl Guide and Boy Scout troops have been formed.

OTHER CITIES

Rich in history, **BERBERA** was once the Muslim settlement of the state of Adal. Later it was ruled by the Portuguese in 1518, the sharifs of Mocha in the 17th century, and the Egyptians from 1875 until the British took control in 1884. It was the British Somaliland capital until 1941. Due to improved ports, Berbera now exports sheep, hides and skins, gum arabic, myrrh, and frankincense. Some of its 213,000 residents migrate during the hot season to the Ogo Highlands. Berbera is the site of a naval and missile base that was built by the former Soviet Union. The city is situated in northwestern Somalia on the Gulf of Aden.

HARGEISA, with a population of about 231,000 (2002 est.), is a major watering and trading center for nomadic stock herders. The city exports skins, meat, and livestock via Berbera. There is an international airport and a public library in Hargeisa. Hargeisa sustained heavy damage during the civil war. Most of the town was reduced to rubble, and most of the population fled.

Located in southern Somalia near the mouth of the Juba River, **KISMAYU** is an important seaport. The city was founded in 1872 by the sultan of Zanzibar and taken over by the British in 1887. The city has a large meat-processing plant. Kismayu's estimated population in 2002 was 201,000.

MARKA (also spelled Merca and Merka) is located in southern Somalia on the Indian Ocean. It is nearly 50 miles southwest of Mogadishu. The city was founded by either Arab or Persian traders in the 10th century. The major export is bananas; during the 17th century, trade included slaves, cattle, and ivory. The population is estimated at 173,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Somalia comprises the perimeter of the Horn of Africa, the easternmost point of the continent. It is bounded on the north by the Republic of Djibouti and the Gulf of Aden; on the east and southeast by the Indian Ocean; on the south and southwest by Kenya; and on the west by Ethiopia. The country extends about 1,000 miles along the Indian Ocean, 600 miles along the Gulf of Aden, and about 200 miles inland. The total area is about 246,300 square miles—roughly the size of Texas. It is generally flat country in the south, with few areas rising over 1,000 feet. Much of the northern region is plateau, with altitudes reaching 3,000 to 4,000 feet, and occasionally rising to peaks of almost 8,000 feet. Southern Somalia is traversed by two rivers which flow toward the sea from Ethiopia. The Juba flows into the Indian Ocean near the port of Kismayu, and the Shebelli disappears into a marshland near the sea about 200 miles southwest of Mogadishu.

Located two degrees north of the equator, Somalia's climate is tropical, but arid. The year is divided into four seasons: two wet and two dry. The major rainy season, called the *Gu*, is from late April to late June. It is followed by a dry season, the *Haggai*, which lasts until late August or early September. The minor rainy season, the *Der*, generally begins at that time and contin-

ues until early December. It is followed by the major dry season, the *Jilal*, which lasts until the onset of the major rains. Annual rainfall in Mogadishu averages 15 inches. Shade temperatures in Mogadishu seldom exceed 90°F, and generally drop to the mid-70s at night throughout the year. Alternating northwest and southwest monsoon winds blow for most of the year, creating a moderating effect. From mid-December to mid-February, strong wind blows the fine sands about freely. Humidity in Mogadishu averages 80 percent year round. In the interior, the winds are warmer, temperatures higher, and humidity lower. Daylight is usually from about 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. throughout the year.

Population

Somalia's population was estimated at 7.5 million (2001). In addition, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Somalis live outside the country, mainly in the Ogaden and Hararghe areas of Ethiopia, but also in the Republic of Djibouti, and in northeastern Kenya. Somalia's annual growth rate is 3.48 percent (2001 est.).

The origin of the Somalis is unknown, but some ethnologists have speculated that they are a mixture of Arabic and African peoples. Their language, which is Cushitic, belongs to the large African-Asian group which includes the Hamitic and Semitic languages. The Somalis settled in what is now Somalia in the relatively recent past, having replaced the Oromo, who had driven out the Bantu peoples. Vestiges of the Oromo and Bantu can still be found in the country. Somalia is a rarity in the African continent, with its common ethnic heritage, culture, religion, and language.

The Somali are generally classified in six major-clan families: the Dir, Hawiya, Darod, Digil, Issak, and Rahanwein. The Digil and Rahanwein are usually found only between the Juba and Shebelli Rivers; those of the other major groups

live throughout the country, and in Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya.

Somalis are generally tall and slender, with fine features. They are known for their intense pride, quick minds, and good sense of humor. The men usually wear either Western dress or the colorful sarong-type garment called a *ma'awis*. The women, who have considerably more freedom than those in many other Muslim countries, wear long, colorful dresses; sometimes young teenagers in town wear slacks. The nomadic Somali wears a two-piece cloth garment that resembles a toga.

The Muslim faith is the state religion, and most Somalis (99 percent) are members of the Sunni sect of Islam.

Traditionally, the majority of Somalis (70 percent or higher) are nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralists. About 30 percent are settled agriculturalists. There are very few skilled laborers in a work force that numbers nearly 3.7 million.

Government

Until January 1991, Somalia was ruled by Mohammed Siad Barre. Barre, who seized control of Somalia after a 1969 military coup, ruled the country as a dictator. All political parties, except Barre's Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) were banned, political opponents was arrested, and the press tightly controlled. According to several international human-rights organizations, the Barre dictatorship was one of the cruelest regimes on the African continent.

In 1989, a rebel group known as the Somali National Movement (SNM) launched an offensive against government forces in northwestern areas of the country. At roughly the same time two other rebel groups, the United Somali Congress (USC) and the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) launched attacks against Barre's troops in central and southern parts of the country respectively. Fighting between the rebel

groups and government forces continued throughout Somalia, with the rebels steadily gaining the upper hand. By late December 1990, the rebel groups had completely surrounded Mogadishu. Barre, however, refused to give up his hold on power. In early January 1991, the rebel groups entered Mogadishu. For nearly four weeks, the rebel forces and troops loyal to Barre waged a vicious battle for control of the capital. Much of the city sustained very heavy damage and thousands of civilians were killed. On January 27, Barre fled the city in a tank convoy. The next day a member of the United Somali Congress (USC), Ali Mahdi Mohammed, was named interim president. Mahdi quickly promised that a democratic system of government would be formed and multi-party elections held at a later date.

Despite the removal of Siad Barre, peace did not return to Somalia. The two rebel groups who had fought alongside the USC, the Somali National Movement and Somali Patriotic Movement, refused to accept Mahdi's authority. Both groups were angry that the USC would form an interim government without first consulting them. Bloody battles quickly erupted between the three rebel groups in Mogadishu. The violence between these rival factions soon spread to other parts of Somalia.

Somalia has virtually no working government, police force, or army that can restore order and control the countries warring factions. Mogadishu, the scene of bloody clan fighting, was divided between two rival warlords. Northern portions of Mogadishu were controlled by force loyal to Ali Mahdi. Mogadishu's southern regions were in the hands of supporters of Gen. Mohammed Aidid. Several United Nations-brokered cease-fire attempts in 1992 failed to hold. The break down in law and order and the wealth of available weapons led to a proliferation of heavily armed groups of bandits. These gangs roamed Mogadishu and the country at will, robbing and killing innocent people



Jason Laure. Reproduced by permission.

Three men sitting near the seashore in Brava, Somalia

and ambushing convoys of international food relief destined for Somalia's starving people. As a result, the number of Somalis dying from hunger and disease increased dramatically.

On December 9, 1992, former President George Bush announced that American troops would join an international relief effort to feed Somalia's people. The American troops arrived in Somalia and were warmly received by the Somalis. The troops provided protection for convoys of food and medical relief and established law and order in Mogadishu and several other cities. Food relief convoys were soon able to reach famine relief centers set up by international relief organizations. The number of Somalis dying from hunger and disease decreased after the arrival of American and international troops. American and international troops also captured large amounts of weaponry and disarmed many bandits.

In early 1993, representatives from all of Somalia's warring factions met in Ethiopia. After much discussion, a cease-fire agreement was signed. However, 23 Pakistani soldiers were killed in an ambush in June 1993 and 18 US Army Rangers were killed in October 1993. Subsequent UN-sponsored peace talks

failed. In 1994 the UN redefined its role in Somalia to be less assertive. The United Nations completed its troop withdrawal in March 1995. With the departure of the UN, the country split into zones controlled by the various warlord factions.

A transitional government was established in October 2000. Abdiqasim Salad Hassan was appointed president by the interim parliament. A new constitution is to be created and elections are to be held before 2004.

The Somali flag is light blue, with a five-pointed white star in the center.

Arts, Science, Education

A rich oral literature and poetry has traditionally been the most important means of artistic expression among the Somalis. A Latin script adopted for the language in 1972 has made it possible for much of this literature to be preserved, and has encouraged new forms of literary expression. Unfortunately, few new literary works are being published in Somalia.

All private schools were nationalized in 1972 and education is now tuition-free. Formal education is

being geared to the country's technical and economic needs. Plans are underway to create comprehensive training centers in 10 regions for nomads. United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is assisting with the development of a national library system.

Local handicrafts are limited, although wood, ivory, and meerscham carvings, attractive basketry, and a great variety of beautiful shells are available. Tie-dyed cotton cloth is locally made, inexpensive, and useful. Handmade gold and silver jewelry is also for sale, but is not the bargain it once was.

Somalia has an ancient weaving tradition. Some 450 weavers in five major communities along the Benadir coast from Hamarweyn to Brava still produce intricate patterns in narrow cotton fabric. At one time, the coast supported as many as 2,000 weavers who carried on a lively barter trade up and down the east coast of Africa and inland as far as Sudan. The industry was dealt a severe blow in the mid-1800s by the arrival of cheaply produced cloth from America.

In 1972, Somali became the country's sole official language. Nevertheless, English is used predominantly in diplomatic circles and, in Mogadishu, Italian is still the second language. Often, the Italian spelling of the city's name, Mogadiscio, is seen. Arabic, the second official language, is spoken by many Somalis and is taught in the schools from early grades through high school.

In 1990, an estimated 24 percent (male 36%, female 14%) of Somalis age 15 and over could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

Somalia is one of the world's poorest and least-developed countries. Since 1990, the economy has been in

shambles, the consequence of drought and protracted civil war. Continued fighting and lack of central authority prevent significant improvements in economic conditions. The country's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which accounts for roughly 65 percent of export earnings. Subsistence agriculture predominates in Somalia, with corn, sorghum, and sugarcane grown for domestic consumption. Bananas are the primary export crop. Livestock such as camels, cattle, sheep, and goats are an important economic commodity. Most of the livestock is raised by nomads or semi-nomads, which comprise more than half of the population. The major agricultural region is in the south, particularly in the area between the Juba and Shebelli Rivers. A considerable amount of irrigation occurs along the two rivers, although the Shebelli dries up during the longer of two dry seasons.

Somalia's industrial sector is extremely small and contributes less than 10 percent of GDP. Most industries are involved in meat and fish processing, sugar refining, textiles and leather goods, and fruit and vegetable canning. Many factories have closed down due to the ongoing civil strife.

Gypsum, feldspar, columbite, iron, sepiolite, and salt deposits exist. Except for salt and gypsum, much of Somalia's mineral resources remain unexploited. Potential oil and gas reserves have been located in northern parts of the country and near Mogadishu. However, these sources are currently untapped.

Livestock, hides and skins, bananas, and fish are Somalia's primary export products. Most of these products are imported by Saudi Arabia, Italy, and Yemen. Somalia imports large quantities of textiles, petroleum products, foodstuffs, transport equipment, and construction materials. Major suppliers of these products are Saudi Arabia, Italy, the United States, Germany, France, and Great Britain.

Somalia's economy is devastated as a result of the 1991 civil war. As of July 1992, the situation in the country was extremely bleak. Because of drought and widespread destruction in agricultural areas, millions of Somalis face starvation. International relief efforts have been severely hampered by continued fighting among various armed factions and banditry.

The Chamber of Commerce in Somalia is at P.O. Box 27, Mogadishu.

Transportation

All travelers to Somalia arrive by air; the most commonly used routes are the two flights a week via Frankfurt and two via Nairobi. Somali Airlines flies to Rome, Frankfurt, Nairobi, Cairo, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Djibouti, and Moroni. Saudi Airlines flies to Jeddah; Kenya flies to Nairobi; Djibouti Airlines flies to Djibouti. The most reliable connecting flights to major European cities are available through Nairobi or Frankfurt. Flight schedules are subject to immediate changes.

No regularly scheduled passenger ship service is available to Mogadishu. Hard-surfaced roads within the country are limited to a major north-south system, and a few others to larger towns.

The capital city swarms with red and yellow Fiat taxis, which have neither meters nor fixed rates. Bargaining for a rate must be done at the outset. Mogadishu's public bus system is unsatisfactory for regular use.

Most persons find a car essential. Only occasionally can a good used car be found for purchase from another American, or from a member of the international community. A small European vehicle is the most practical for city use, but for driving outside of Mogadishu other than on main roads or to the beaches south and north of town, a four-wheel-drive is preferable. Service is spotty, and parts are in short

supply for almost any vehicle, American or foreign, so it is necessary to assemble a supply of spare parts before moving to Somalia.

No unleaded gasoline is available and the overall quality of gasoline is poor. Due to the poor condition of roads and the presence of potholes, a car with a heavy duty suspension system is essential. The main streets in Mogadishu itself are paved, but side streets are a combination of loose sand and rock.

A valid U.S. or international driver's license is needed to obtain a Somali license. Only those 18 and older are eligible under Somali law.

Communications

Mogadishu has an automatic, but capricious, telephone system. Service is generally limited to the city proper. Long-distance calls may be placed at any time to Europe or the U.S. by booking them at the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs. These calls are much more expensive than if booked in the reverse direction. Since all existing internal lines are in use, obtaining a residential telephone is nearly impossible.

The Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs also provides a wireless telegraph service daily to Europe and the U.S., via Rome, from 7 p.m. to 11 a.m. Telex service is available in Mogadishu at the Croce del Sud Hotel and at the American Embassy.

International postal service is limited. Airmail to or from the U.S. takes a minimum of 10 days to two weeks.

Somalia has two radio stations, Radio Mogadishu and Radio Hargeisa, both run by the Ministry of Information and National Guidance. Radio Mogadishu broadcasts 18 hours daily in Somali and Arabic. Thirty-minute foreign-language broadcasts, on the 49 SW band, include English, French, Swahili, Italian, Amharic, Afar, and Oromo. English broadcasts can be heard from 3 to 3:30 p.m. Somali TV, inau-

gured in 1983, transmits daily in Somali and Arabic from 8 to 10 p.m., using the European PAL signal. Shortwave radio reception ranges from poor to good. Voice of America (VOA) and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) are usually strong during early morning and evening. A good shortwave radio is the best source of current news.

The principal locally printed news source for expatriates is the Somali National News Agency (SONNA) bulletin, which offers local and international news summaries in English. *Time* and *Newsweek*, a few other English-language periodicals, and a variety of Italian publications are usually available about five to seven days late. Newsstand prices are high, however. Several expatriates subscribe to the *International Herald Tribune*, which arrives anywhere from two to 20 days late. Only a few local bookstores, which sell mostly used books, operate in Mogadishu.

Health

For illnesses requiring hospitalization, surgery, complicated diagnostic facilities, or drugs, most Westerners go to Nairobi; serious cases are sent to Europe.

Dental care is virtually nonexistent. All dental programs should be taken care of before leaving home.

As a general rule, local pharmacies cannot be depended on to provide adequate service. Patent medicines and current prescriptions should be kept in three-month supply. A copy of one's eyeglass prescription is a must, since replacing glasses in Somalia is difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. Glasses can be made in Nairobi at a price and quality comparable to those in the U.S.

Generally, most Westerners staying in Mogadishu enjoy good health. However, many diseases affect the local population, and the incidence of tuberculosis, syphilis, bilharzia, dengue fever, measles, polio, and malaria is high. With proper health precautions, few resident foreigners

are affected by serious diseases; intestinal upsets (diarrhea, amoebic dysentery, or other parasitic infections) are the greatest risk. Fungus and skin infections, including boils and prickly heat, are quite common, particularly during the hot seasons. High humidity also can cause discomfort to those susceptible to sinus ailments or to neuromuscular complaints, such as rheumatism and neuralgia.

Public sanitation practices are not up to U.S. standards, but the hazards are lessened to some degree by the hot African sun and the porous desert sand. Since no sewage disposal system exists, septic tanks are used in most Western-style homes. Flies, ants, mosquitoes, and cockroaches are numerous, especially during the rainy season. While the great numbers of lizards in all households may help to reduce the insect population, householders still need an ample supply of bug sprays in Somalia. In public eating places, food handling and serving standards are poor, and dishes and utensils are usually washed in cold water.

The required immunizations for Americans are those for yellow fever and cholera. Tetanus, polio, and typhoid immunizations should be up-to-date; gamma globulin is recommended every four months. Although Mogadishu is generally malaria free, some nearby areas have malaria cases. Therefore, it is necessary to take suppressants at least one to two weeks before arriving in Mogadishu, during the entire stay, and for at least six weeks after leaving.

Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) is an endemic disease contracted from fresh water where disease-carrying snails breed. Swimming in rivers or lakes is not safe.

The almost constant wind and fine-blowing sand may cause some difficulty for contact lens wearers.

Clothing and Services

Wash-and-wear fabrics are popular among Westerners because of the ease of care, but many are now finding that pure cotton is more comfortable in the heat and humidity. A good supply of all clothing should be included in one's initial wardrobe, since frequent laundering and drying in the sun causes garments to wear out quickly. Sandals are practical for everyday wear, and thong-type sandals manufactured locally are attractive and inexpensive. Some warmer clothing may be needed for trips to Kenya, northern Somalia, or (in the case of a long business assignment in the country) to Europe.

Summer clothing is suitable year round. Standard dress for the office (for men) is lightweight slacks with open-neck, short-sleeved shirts or bush shirts. Sport shirts are worn for most informal evening gatherings; lightweight suits are needed occasionally for special functions. Dinner jackets or tuxedos are never required. Shorts are not worn as street attire, but may be worn jogging, on the beach or tennis courts, or at home.

Women wear dresses of lightweight fabrics, either sleeveless or with short sleeves, for business or other daytime activities. In the evening, either long or short dresses are acceptable. Shorts are not worn as street attire, but are suitable for the beach or tennis courts. Bare sundresses often are worn to functions where Somalis are not present. A hat is never needed, except for protection from the sun; scarves are useful in the strong wind. Sometimes the evenings are cool enough for a sweater or a stole. Most women find slacks and hosiery too warm for the climate.

Children spend much of their time outdoors. Their play clothes should be of lightweight material, and they will need several extra bathing suits and beach towels. Sneakers or sandals are usually worn. Jeans, of

course, are a favorite with older children.

A variety of local food is available, although with seasonal limitations. Local meats include fair-to-good quality beef, camel, goat, and lamb. Local chickens and small birds are little and tough, but, properly cooked, can be tasty. Pork products are unavailable locally. A variety of fish is sold throughout the year at reasonable prices. Many local species are delicious. Lobster is a seasonal delicacy, obtainable according to biological cycles and the weather, but it can be frozen and is one of the pleasures of life in Mogadishu. Good smoked fish is also available seasonally.

Bananas, limes, grapefruit, and papayas are excellent and sold year round. Good mangos and watermelon are available seasonally. Locally grown vegetables include tomatoes, spinach, lettuce, radishes, potatoes, green beans, peppers, eggplant, zucchini, and parsley. Some are seasonal.

Some pasta is produced locally, but most other foods on the local market, including rice, cheese, processed meats, and canned foods, are imported at high prices from Italy, Kenya, China, and Eastern Europe. Mogadishu has a local dairy, but health standards are questionable, and all fresh milk must be boiled. Powdered whole milk for infants is sold in local shops, but is expensive and may have spent considerable time on the shelf.

Mogadishu has shoe repair shops, a dry cleaner/laundry, and radio and auto repair shops. The quality of dry cleaning is mediocre and prices are high. Washable clothing is more practical, since laundry usually is done by household servants. Appliance repairs and service on American cars are often unsatisfactory. Adequate automobile service facilities (and authorized dealers for American vehicle parts) do not exist. Fiat, Toyota, and Land Rover parts are sometimes available, and always expensive.

Tailoring services are mediocre because tailors lack quality material; most men use tailors only for alterations, but one or two tailors in Mogadishu do adequate work on women's clothing. Some can make copies of dresses in simple patterns. Fabrics, designs, and cuts do not compare with American ready-to-wear clothing. Tailors can also make simple drapes and slipcovers, but notions (drapery hooks, curtain rings, and bindings) are usually not available and, if available, are expensive.

Beauty and barber services are found in town.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

As of January 1991, the Department of State was advising all U.S. citizens to avoid all travel to Somalia indefinitely. Hostilities can break out at any time. All U.S. government employees and dependents were evacuated from Somalia and our Embassy there was closed on January 5, 1991. Under the circumstances, the United States Government is unable to offer American citizens in Somalia any type of assistance and protection.

Authorized air routes from the U.S. are London/Nairobi/Mogadishu, Frankfurt/Mogadishu, Rome/Mogadishu, and Frankfurt/Nairobi/Mogadishu. Somali and Kenya Airways each fly from Nairobi to Mogadishu once a week.

A visa, valid passport, and a record of inoculations against cholera and yellow fever are required to enter Somalia. If a visa has not been obtained beforehand in the U.S., it can be applied for at the Somali Embassy either in Rome or Nairobi. The Kenyans also issue visas at Nairobi Airport for incoming tourists. At least 24 photos are needed for the various local forms and visa applications.

Household pets may be imported to Somalia but, because of cargo limitations, it is better to take the animal as accompanied baggage. Dogs and cats must have rabies inoculation certificates signed by a licensed veterinarian, and stamped by the municipality or state, confirming that the animal is free from infectious disease, and that the area of origin has been rabies-free for at least six months. Satisfactory kenneling is available at Nairobi for transiting animals. Mogadishu is a reasonably healthy place for pets; however, during certain seasons, ticks and fleas are endemic. Owners are advised to have an ample supply of appropriate medications, as veterinary service and supplies are limited.

Special note: Muslim doctrine prohibits contact with dogs, and Somalis are generally unfriendly to them. Dogs must be restrained in public places, or when Somali guests are present. Servants working in the American community usually tolerate dogs, although they do not particularly like them.

As a general rule, no weapons should be taken to Somalia. Rare exceptions are made.

Mogadishu has Roman Catholic churches but, except for two English-language masses a week, all masses are in Italian. A service is held on Saturday at 6:15 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Church (at Fiat Circle) and on Sunday at 5:15 p.m. at the Cathedral. An interdenominational Protestant service is held once a week on Saturday evening in one of the Catholic churches.

The time in Somalia is Greenwich Mean Time plus three.

The currency is the Somali *shilling*, written So.Shs. The units are *shillings* and *centesimi*: 100 *centesimi* equal one *shilling*. All banks in the country are nationalized. The Somali Commercial and Savings Bank currently has five branches in Mogadishu, one in Hargeisa, and others in smaller cities; these branches, however, do not accept personal dollar checks unless an account is maintained with the bank.

Somalia uses the metric system of weights and measures.

The U.S. Embassy in Somalia is located on Corso Primo Luglio, Mogadishu. **Note: The American Embassy in Somalia was closed on January 5, 1991, due to deteriorating conditions in the country. The embassy has not been reopened.**

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

May 1	Labor Day
June 26	Independence Day (Northern Region)
July 1	Independence Day (Southern Region)
Oct. 21	Revolution Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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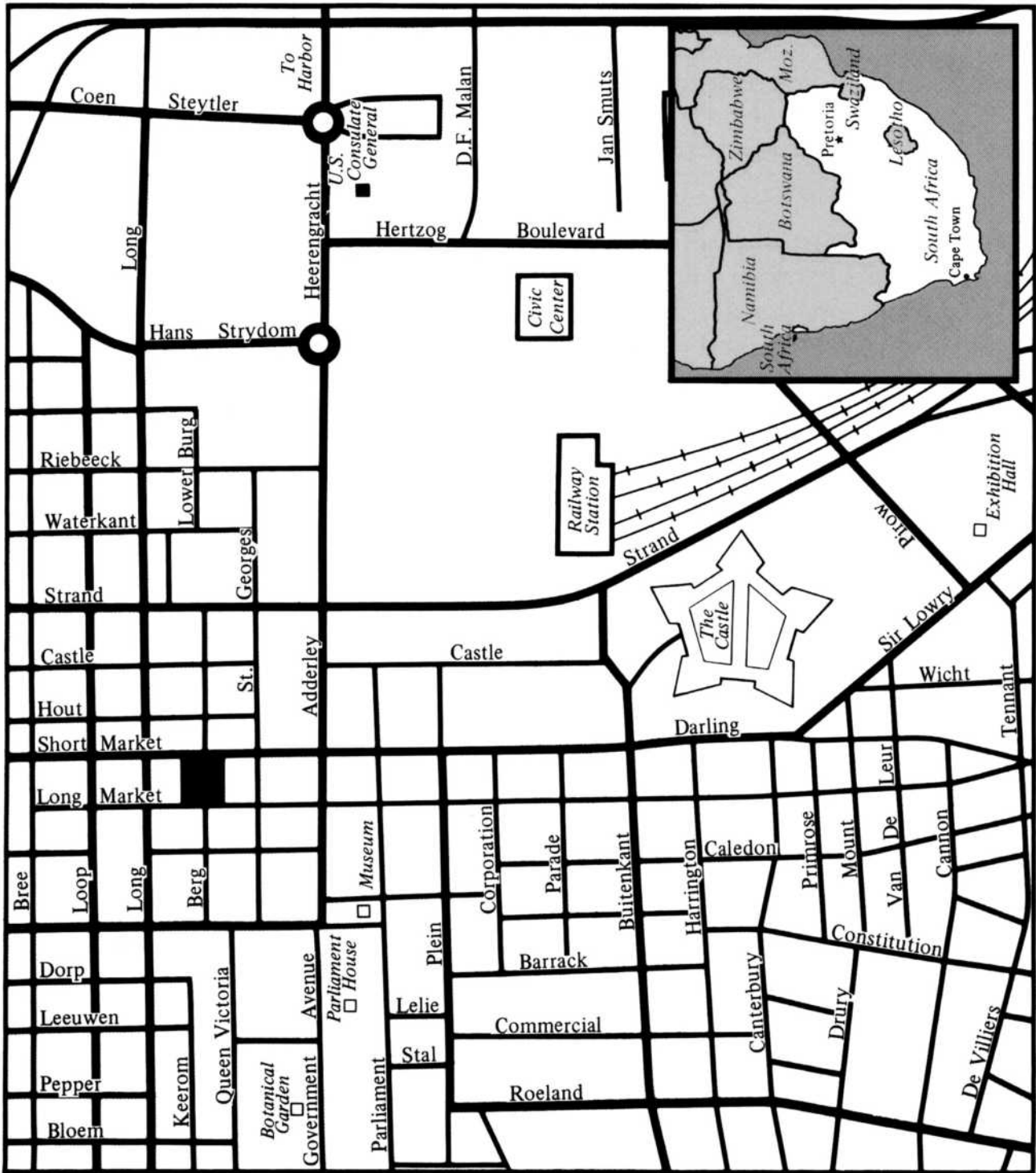
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Cape Town, South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA

Republic of South Africa

Major Cities:

Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein

Other Cities:

Benoni, Boksburg, Germiston, Kimberley, Krugersdorp, Ladysmith, Paarl, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Roodepoort, Soweto, Springs, Vereeniging, Welkom

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for South Africa. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa, a country of stark beauty and diverse cultures, provides an exciting and dynamic work environment. With the end of apartheid, South Africa's new government has embarked on a historic effort to build a multi-racial, sustainable, market-oriented democracy. The success or failure of this effort will have enormous implications for the rest of Africa and for the world. Our official objectives are concentrated on support for a successful South African transition.

South Africa is a large country, about twice the size of Texas, and consists of an extensive interior plateau (altitudes range from 3,000 to 6,000 feet) with a narrow coastal

plain. The climate is moderate with sunny days and cool nights. Latest estimates put South Africa's population at 44.6 million, including non-documented immigrants. The country has eleven official languages, including English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana. English is widely understood even by those who do not speak it as a native language.

With the most sophisticated economy on the continent, South Africa has a highly developed financial and physical infrastructure. Much of the country's wealth originally came from gold and diamond mines, but today South Africa exports a wide variety of manufactured products. Despite South Africa's impressive economic achievement, gross inequities exist along racial lines in the distribution of wealth and job opportunities. These disparities reflect the South African government's previous policy of apartheid - a system of legally mandated racial segregation favoring the white community. Although the present government has dismantled the legal basis for such racial discrimination, apartheid's legacy of widespread black poverty will take years to eliminate completely.

Besides a challenging work environment, South Africa offers a host of unique vacation experiences. The

vineyards of the Cape, wildlife of Kruger National Park, and beaches of Durban are just some of the country's tourist attractions. Travel is easy, and people are helpful wherever you go. South Africa's combination of physical beauty and a changing society will make your stay rewarding.

MAJOR CITIES

Pretoria

Pretoria is the administrative capital of South Africa. Greater Pretoria has about 1,081,187 people (Source: Central Statistical Service, 1991 Census). It is located in Gauteng Province, 35 miles Northeast of Johannesburg, 30 miles from Johannesburg International Airport, and 437 miles from Durban, the nearest port city in South Africa.

Founded in 1855, Pretoria is the seat of executive government for South Africa. It lies in a long valley edged by several ridges. The rural surrounding area consists of undulating veld with low trees scattered over the landscape. Aside from the Iscor Steelworks and automobile assembly plants located outside the city, and a few small industrial establishments, Pretoria is mainly a

government town with enough shops and department stores to cater to its population. Schools, hospitals, doctors and dentists are in adequate supply.

Pretoria is a quiet, modern city offering current movies, plays, operas, ballets, and concerts. Two universities, the Transvaal Museum and the Transvaal Province Library, an excellent zoo, sports grounds, including several golf courses, and many beautiful parks provide cultural enjoyment and relaxation. Those seeking a brighter nightlife generally go to Johannesburg, though Pretoria has many good restaurants, some with dancing and/or live entertainment. Sundays in Pretoria are spent visiting friends, participating in sports, or indulging in the national pastime of the "braai vleis" (barbecue). In the city, flea markets and open-air art and craft markets are often held as well. Aside from the U.S. Embassy staff and their families, 250 other Americans live in Pretoria, including church and missionary representatives and American spouses of South Africans. Most American business representatives live in the Johannesburg suburbs. Diplomatic representatives of the U.S. and other countries form the nucleus of the growing foreign community.

Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Soshanguve are the historically black townships surrounding Pretoria where the majority of the black citizens of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan area still live. Atteridgeville is 7 miles, Mamelodi is 15 miles, Soshanguve, Ga-Rankuwa, Winterveldt and Temba are all about 25 miles away. Nearly all residents work in Pretoria, traveling by bus, train, or taxi. A few drive personal vehicles. Lenasia, about 10 miles south of Pretoria, is home to many of the area's citizens of Asian descent. Each of these communities has its own town council and civic association and participates in the regional "super government," the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council. Unemployment is high in the townships and standards of living significantly lower than in Pre-

toria proper. There is also a serious shortage of housing in the townships, which has given rise to large informal settlements or "squatter camps" on the periphery of established areas. Township councils resisted squatting initially, but because they did not have houses for the squatters, they began to provide water and toilets for them.

Food

Basic foods, locally produced baby foods and infant formulas are all available. Baby food is widely available, however all dried cereals contain sugars. Fresh fruit and vegetables of all kinds are available most of the year. Dairy products, including butter, cheeses, eggs and whole, low fat and skim milk are all readily available. Several good quality South African and British brands are available in the major metropolitan cities. South African, as well as imported, coffees and teas are excellent and comparable in price to those sold in the U.S. Iced teas and ice tea mixes are rarely available.

Soft drinks (Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta and other Coke products) are widely available.

Ice cream lovers will satisfy their taste buds with higher quality brands, however, sorbets and sherbets are seldom available.

Most spices are available, however, the gourmet chef may wish to bring familiar brands and varieties with them. Extracts are not available.

White and brown sugars are both coarse, with the exception of powdered sugar, which is equivalent to that sold in the States.

Pancake syrups are limited in variety, and the quality is not the same as that available in the States. Corn syrup is not available.

Chocolate and other baking chips are either not available or of a lesser quality than that available in the States. Other baking items (cake mixes, bread mixes, pancake mixes,

pie crusts and crumbs) are not available.

Graham crackers are not available, but saltines are available from local grocery stores.

Meats (beef, pork, lamb, chicken) are plentiful and reasonably priced. Seafood is widely available in coastal cities and is shipped (fresh or frozen) into inland areas. Turkeys (small fresh or frozen medium or large) are available primarily in November and December.

Solid shortening (Crisco), stuffing mixes, pumpkin pie filling, and certain ethnic foods are not available on the open market.

Breakfast cereal varieties are very limited, and many of the brands sold in the States are not available.

Liquors, beers, and wines, (domestic and international brands) are widely available and reasonably priced. South Africa is increasingly becoming known for its wide variety of great wines.

For those U.S. products you must have, several on-line shopping services will ship most items via diplomatic pouch, provided they are not prohibited.

Clothing

South African men and women dress similarly to Americans and Europeans. Imported stylish European shoes are available although at a much higher cost. American shoe widths, especially narrow, are limited. Persons with small or very large feet may have difficulty finding shoes that fit. Although a winter coat is usually not necessary, some southern areas are colder in winter, often having frost and snow. Jackets, all-weather coats or wraps would be a good investment for use in winter months in any area of South Africa. Shoe and clothing sizes differ from those in the States.

Men's styles follow current trends. Wool and lightweight business suits are common. Winter wear is needed about four months a year, except for

the southernmost and eastern area of the country, where the weather is colder for about three months a year. For business, most men wear suits or sports jackets and slacks. Dress shirts are available, however, better short sleeved shirts are seldom sold. Although you may purchase or rent tuxedos and dinner jackets, it is recommended that you bring your own formal wear.

Generally, women's clothing is similar to that worn in western U.S. cities. Hosiery is of a lesser quality than that available in the States. The sizes are different and much more costly. It is advisable for ladies to bring an ample supply of hosiery. There are few occasions when evening gowns are needed; cocktail dresses and/or pantsuits are more commonly worn. Accessories and undergarments are available at a higher price, but may vary in sizes and the quality may not compare to that of the States.

Children's clothing is available, however it is expensive. It is suggested that you bring needed clothing items with you or purchase them through U.S. catalogues.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, household supplies, medicines, prescription drugs, etc. are in good supply, however some familiar U.S. brands may not be available. Cosmetics and perfumes (mostly imported) are expensive. It is recommended that you bring a supply of your favorite brands. Paper and plastic products (tissue, napkins, foil, freezer bags, etc.) are of a lower quality than that sold in the U.S. Many brands of disposable diapers are available, with quality comparable to those sold in the U.S. Disposable baby bottle liners are not available. Locally made toys are expensive. However, many Americans shop through catalogues. For on-time delivery, it is recommended that you shop early, especially during the busy holiday season. There is a "Toys 'R.' Us" store in the suburbs of Pretoria.

Many American and British brands of cigarettes are manufactured and

sold in South Africa. Tobacco is readily available at a cheaper price than in the U.S.

It is recommended that you purchase a supply of postage stamps prior to arrival or order them from the U.S. Postal Service's 1-800-STAMPS Service Center.

Domestic Help

Many domestics are experienced and proficient. Some speak limited English and require specific instructions and directions. The best well-trained cooks command good wages and are rarely available. Less experienced cooks require considerable instruction and demonstration in preparing and serving food.

Some domestics are accustomed to performing only the tasks for which they are hired. A cook would not be expected to perform cleaning and laundry tasks. Most people employ domestics who are not specialists, but workers who can perform various chores.

Religious Activities

Various religious denominations are represented in South Africa. The Dutch Reformed Church, whose members include most of the Afrikaans-speaking white population, conducts services in Afrikaans. Catholic churches offer Mass in English, Afrikaans, and many African languages. Protestant churches other than the Dutch Reformed include Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational. The Zion Christian Church, Christian Science, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Seventh-day Adventist, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish synagogues also conduct services. There are also Hindu temples and Muslim mosques.

Education

The American International School of Johannesburg (AISJ) is located midway between Johannesburg and Pretoria. It is situated on 67 acres of rolling hills. The school was established in 1982 and is a non-profit institution. It is the only school in this area, which offers a U.S. curricu-

ulum and school calendar (school year from August to June) for kindergarten through 12th grade. AISJ has an outstanding student-teacher ratio of one teacher to ten students. A limited program of physical education and sports activities is offered.

The South African school system follows the United Kingdom Standard form of schooling. Some are co-educational, most are single sex. The South African school year begins in mid-January and ends in early December. Students transferring from a U.S. curriculum based school need to be cognizant of the difference in school year start times.

There are several universities in the Pretoria-Johannesburg area for adult family members interested in pursuing studies while in South Africa.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Pretoria Preparatory School for children (ages 5-13), UNICA, Prins-hof School for the Blind, Sonitus, and The New Hope School are among the schools available for children with special needs in Pretoria. Bellavista, Casa Do Sol, Cedarwood, Crosswoods, and Delta Park are among schools in the Johannesburg area serving children with special needs. Within Cape Town, Bel Porto, The Glendale School and Tafelberg are schools available to serve special needs students. The Browne School, The Golden Hours School and The Kenmont School are Durban area schools serving special needs children.

Sports

South Africa is one of the finest areas of the world for participant sports. Golf and tennis are played year round.

Weekend hunting, fishing, mountain climbing and water-rafting trips are available seasonally. Along the coastal areas, you may surf, scuba dive and sail. Many mineral baths are located in the surrounding areas, offering families a nice retreat with various pools. A popu-

lar participant sport, particularly with senior members of the local community, is lawn bowling. Ten pin bowling is available (limited) in the larger metropolitan areas. The most popular spectator sports are soccer, cricket, rugby and horse racing.

Excellent country clubs are within short drives of the city centers. Each has golf courses varying from good to excellent. Golfers may want to bring golf clubs from the U.S. although clubs and equipment are available locally at competitive prices. Golf clothing is more conservative than that worn in the U.S. Squash facilities are available at several country clubs and other local clubs. There are also many health clubs in the metropolitan areas with reasonable priced individual and family membership available.

Public tennis courts do not exist. Many tennis clubs are available in and around the metropolitan cities and have no or minimal membership fees. Standard tennis clothing is worn; colored attire is acceptable. Tennis rackets and balls are available at higher than U.S. prices. Restringing services are also available. Because of its inexpensive cost, many take private lessons. Once a year, there is a diplomatic tennis tournament in Pretoria.

Several horseback riding facilities are located in the area. Lessons are available for all ages, and costs are considerably lower than the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

South Africa has many national parks, including the famous Kruger National Park. Several game reserves, including Pilanesberg National Park which is the third largest in South Africa, are close to the city and can be enjoyed as day tours. Short holidays to the game reserves are a favorite form of entertainment for South Africans as well as visitors to the country. Additionally, Pretoria and Johannesburg both have excellent zoos.

South Africa has many hunting farms. Hunting in the national parks is forbidden, but private hunting safaris will be able to help the serious hunter, offering a wide variety of game. Hunting migratory waterfowl is prohibited. Permits are necessary to hunt in South Africa, and can most times be arranged through the hunting safaris. Rifle and shotgun ammunition is available at prices similar to those in the U.S.

Camping (Carlovingian, as it is known in South Africa) is a popular activity with many South Africans, and equipment is readily available everywhere. Excellent terrain for hiking and mountain climbing is found in parks throughout the country; both are extremely popular sports. Almost all resorts offer walking and hiking trails. The Mpumalanga and Kwa-Zulu Natal areas of the country have excellent freshwater fishing in the numerous streams and reservoirs scattered throughout the areas. Trout fishing farms are abundant. Saltwater fishing is also popular and available at various points along South Africa's eastern and southern coasts. Many spots provide surf or rock fishing, and charter trips may be arranged for big game fishing. Fishing equipment is available locally and is priced comparably to similar equipment in the U.S.

Scuba diving is also very popular in South Africa, with diving shops available everywhere. This sport is increasingly popular with expatriates wishing to take advantage of the reasonably priced lessons offered by most shops, and the wide variety of diving sites available along South Africa's coastline.

Golf and tennis are, by far, the most enjoyed sports, with exceptional facilities for tennis and championship golf courses available throughout the country. Top quality equipment is readily available but somewhat more expensive than in the U.S. You should include an ample supply of golf balls in your shipment since these are about 3

times the price you normally pay in the U.S.

Only a very limited opportunity exists for snow skiing. Skiing is offered in the southern Drakensberg Mountains. The slopes are not challenging for those beyond the beginner, low intermediate stages. A rope tow and a poma lift are used. The terrain leading to the area is extremely difficult and can only be traversed with 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Entertainment

Professional theater, ballet, concerts and opera are all available at prices much cheaper than the U.S. Art exhibits and craft shows are held almost each weekend in various venues throughout the major metropolitan areas. Movie theaters and several drive-ins show first run American movies.

South African television is government owned and offers three channels. CNN World News and BBC News are broadcast at various times throughout the day. Some American produced syndicated series are shown. Met Cable System offers four additional channels showing movies, sports and sitcoms. Investing in a satellite television system is another option if you desire a larger selection of news, entertainment and sports programming. Digital Satellite TV (MultiChoice) offers 44 channels featuring the entire range of programs as well as 40 music stations. This is very good value and relatively inexpensive to install, with a monthly fee similar to what you will pay for a cable subscription in the U.S.

In order to view American videos, you must have an NTSC VCR or a multi-system VCR. The local TV system is PAL-I. If you have a European PAL (CCIR) system television, a qualified TV repair shop can convert your set to PAL-I. American TV sets (NTSC) cannot receive South African television broadcasts. Video rental stores are located in most major metropolitan areas and are well stocked. VHS is the standard tape format in South Africa; how-



View of Cape Town, South Africa

Courtesy of Edmund Decker

ever, rental videos are recorded on the PAL system and will not operate in an American VCR.

Radio in the area is varied, with many stations playing American music. The Voice of America (VOA) and BBC Radio are easily heard at night on an AM station and several short-wave bands.

Social Activities

Social activities are primarily family oriented with outings, braais (barbecues), and informal dinner parties being preferred. Children's birthday parties are festive occasions among the South Africans, with swimming parties, jumping castles, and visits to children's playlands as favorite forms of celebration. Adults usually enjoy casual, at-home entertainment or dining out with friends. There are numerous fine restaurants in the area.

Three active American-oriented social clubs exist in the area-The American International Women's Club of Pretoria, the American International Women's Club of Johannesburg, and the American Society of South Africa. The latter is open to both men and women. All three enjoy a large membership and offer many activities for their members.

Cape Town

Cape Town easily qualifies as one of the most beautifully situated cities in the world. The sea and the mountains come together to create "The Fairest Cape in the Whole Circumference of the Earth," as Sir Francis Drake described it in the 16th century. Today Cape Town is a busy city with many of the advantages of a first-world infrastructure and economy. The outskirts of Cape Town, however, include many typical aspects of a large developing city.

Cape Town has a Mediterranean climate with warm, dry summers (December, January and February) and cool, wet winters (June, July and August). The weather is seldom extreme, except for frequent very strong winds. Sweaters and jackets are needed in the winter when temperatures can fall to the 40s. The lack of central heating in most homes intensifies the effects of the damp winters. Snow occasionally falls on the mountain peaks just north of Cape Town. Spring brings a riot of wild flowers to the area, while in autumn the numerous orchards and vineyards in the region turn red-orange.

Khoi-Khoi and San peoples ("Hot-tentots" and Bushmen in colonial-

era parlance) lived in the Cape Town area for millennia prior to the arrival of Dutch settlers in 1652. The Dutch East Indies Company developed Cape Town as a "seaward looking caravansary on the periphery of the global spice trade." Many old buildings and farmhouses, built in the Cape Dutch style of architecture, link modern Cape Town with its historic past. The British controlled the Cape off and on from 1795 until 1910, when Cape Town became seat of parliament for the Union of South Africa. From colonial times through the 1948-94 apartheid era, Robben Island, located in Cape Town's Table Bay, was an infamous penal colony housing many political prisoners, including President Nelson Mandela.

Some three million people live in Cape Town, which serves as South Africa's parliamentary capital as well as the capital of the Western Cape Province. About half of the city's population is "colored," about a quarter is black, and a quarter is white. English predominates, but Afrikaans and Xhosa are also widely spoken. Approximately 1,900 Americans live in the consular district, with some 1,000 in the greater Cape Town area. Cape Town's economy is based on financial services such as banking and insurance, light industry (textiles, food processing), the harbor, fisheries, and tourism.

Cape Town is fast becoming a major tourist destination. Opportunities for active visitors include mountain climbing, hiking, fishing, golf, bird- and whale watching, horseback riding, bicycling, surfing and swimming (although the ocean is quite cold). Cape Town offers a wide variety of cultural events, including theater, concerts, art exhibitions, and first-run movies. World-class botanical gardens and national parks complement the scenic wine country near the city. The Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, somewhat akin to Baltimore's Inner Harbor, boasts more than 200 upscale retail outlets and restaurants.

Education

Nursery school, kindergarten, elementary school, preparatory, and university education are available in Cape Town. Unless otherwise desired, instruction is in English. Anglican, Roman Catholic, and other religious denominations sponsor many private schools in Cape Town. Public schools are available. The educational system approximates that in Great Britain. Vacancies in most schools are very limited.

The school year is divided into 4 terms and runs from mid-January through mid-December, each term lasting 10 weeks.

Afrikaans language study is required in all government and most private schools in the Western Cape, but exceptions are given to temporary residents (consular children) in most private schools. Language instruction other than Afrikaans usually begins in grade 5.

Most schools (except nursery schools) require students to wear a uniform. This usually includes, but is not limited to blazers, dresses or shirts and trousers, hats, sweater, stockings, shoes, gym suits, and in many cases underclothing. Purchase these items locally.

Special Educational Opportunities

Many adult classes at institutions such as the University of Cape Town (UCT), The University of Western Cape (UWC) and University of Stellenbosch offer instruction in the normal range of university studies, including various degree courses. Compared with American universities, the full-time annual tuition at these universities is inexpensive for a university of fairly high academic standards.

The Cape Technikon (Technical College) offers a wide selection of homemaking courses. A nominal fee is charged.

Sports

As mentioned above Cape Town offers excellent facilities for outdoor activities and sports, such as hiking, mountain climbing, bird and whale watching, tennis, golf, horseback riding, bicycling, surfing, swimming. There are several country clubs where expatriates might obtain membership. Initial fees for these clubs are substantial. Cape Town has two yacht clubs, and the peninsula boasts hundreds of small boat enthusiasts. One yacht club has headquarters in the port basin, the other is on a 600-acre freshwater lake 13 miles from Cape Town.

The Cape is unique in providing opportunities for both cold and warm water fishing. The wide range of fish around the reefs and beaches of the peninsula coastline provides excellent sport for anglers. Reasonably good freshwater fishing is also available.

Durban

Durban once famed as the "last outpost of the British Empire," today is the commercial, transport and vacation center of the Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) region. The city is in the heart of one of the nine provinces created after the historic general election in 1994. Out of a total of 7.7 million KZN population, the city proper has about 775,000 people and the entire metropolitan 2.5 million people.

Durban is located 437 miles Southeast of Pretoria, (5 hours by road or 1 hour by air) and 1,108 miles Northeast of Cape Town. It is the second largest city after Johannesburg and also the fastest growing in South Africa. Its expanding rates are similar to those of Mexico City and Lima.

Renowned as a tourist resort center, Durban is equally important as the largest international port in Africa, as an industrial commercial center and as a center of a thriving agricultural area. Although sometimes hot and humid, the year round subtropical and long stretch of beaches com-

bine to make the coast of Kwa-Zulu Natal a popular resort area.

Numerous cultures and subcultures co-exist in the city also known by its Zulu name Thekwini. The three major groupings totaling 2.5 million include 13.7% whites, 3% coloreds, 27% Indians and 57.3% Africans. The Zulus comprise the predominant cultural group.

Many people of British origin live in Durban, though in recent years more Afrikaans-speaking people have settled there, attracted down from the "reef" by the warmer weather and the low prices. As with major South African cities, former racial barriers remain evident in housing and in schooling but access to public facilities is fully open.

Americans in the Durban area number 3,200 persons of whom one-third live in Durban. Americans in Durban are mainly retired or American children of South African citizens, academics, and businessmen. Americans residing elsewhere in KZN are largely engaged in missionary work.

Education

The division of Durban schooling into standards parallels the British system. South Africa's school year starts in January, but children are accepted at any time. School uniforms are compulsory for boys and girls. South African education, with its rigid curriculum requirements and often rigid rules governing behavior and appearance, is different from American education. Adjustment, particularly in the upper grades, may be difficult for American students.

Only two co-ed schools are located in Durban, but many excellent private schools for girls or boys (ages 8-18) are available. Several outstanding English-model boarding schools are located in the cool hill areas within an hour of Durban. A day and boarding school in Tongatt is about 25 minutes from the city, and this school extends from grade 7 to grade 12 (Standard V to matriculation). This school has a more relaxed atmosphere but high aca-



© Charles O'Rear/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Street in Durban, South Africa

demic standards. The private schools are expensive, but standards are high.

Government schools average 30 students per classroom. Primary schools, up to and including Standard V (7th grade), charge minimal fees. At the high school level, some nominal fees are charged in government schools.

High schools offer a 5-year course culminating in the matriculation examination. Passing this examination qualifies a student for admission to a university. New students will have difficulty with instruction in Afrikaans, as it is part of the required curriculum as a second

language in English-medium schools. Athletics, including cricket, rugby, swimming, and track, are usually included as part of the curriculum for boys. Girls participate in tennis, swimming, hockey, and basketball. Sports are a big interest for students and adults as well.

Three government high schools (one for boys and two for girls) are located in Durban North. Other high schools, private and government owned, are located in the city and may be reached by bus. Primary schools through grade 7 are distributed throughout the residential areas and are usually co-educational. On the average, not more

than three or four American children attend any one school.

The University of Natal, with branches in both Durban and Pietermaritzburg, offers a wide variety of courses leading to degrees in liberal arts, science, engineering, and law. The University of Durban Westville also offers courses in these areas. In addition, many technical schools called "technikons" offer a range of courses in arts, design, dress making, commercial cookery, engineering, etc.

Some private nursery schools catering to 3- and 5-year-old children are available.

Special Educational Opportunities

Both the Universities of Natal and Durban Westville, as well as the technikons, offer adult part-time courses for academic credit. Actual degree programs are not offered part time. UNISA has offices in Durban that offer course work (including master's and doctoral) in various fields.

Private tutoring in music, ballet, and art is available to adults and children. Business courses and instruction in driving, flying, popular dance, fishing, diving, golf, tennis, swimming, riding, and ice skating, etc., are available. The cost of flight school is reasonable, and the instruction is excellent.

Sports

Durban offers recreational facilities of all types, with emphasis on outdoor sports for both spectators and participants. The many parks and playgrounds for children and the beaches are among the finest in South Africa. Sports, including yachting, fishing, golf, tennis, swimming, and bowls, may be enjoyed throughout the year, but access to some sports requires membership in a private club. Durban also has an ice dome for skating. Other popular sports include rugby, cricket, tennis, horseracing, baseball, and squash.

Four first-class, 18-hole golf courses are within Durban proper and four or five more are within a radius of 15 miles. Local courses are not designed to accommodate golf carts. At most courses, nonmembers can play for a nominal green fee.

Excellent asphalt and concrete all-weather tennis courts, most of which are operated by private clubs, are available, but admission is by availability. Inexpensive aqua-cise classes and well-equipped health studios, which provide aerobics and individual training programs, are close to homes in Durban and in the central business district.

All types of sporting equipment can be purchased locally, though costs are slightly higher than in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Durban is blessed with a wide range of outdoor recreational facilities. KZN offers hunting, fishing, camping, boating, mountain climbing, hiking, lake swimming, and sight-seeing. Ocean swimming and surfing are major attractions, but Durban must contend with shark dangers. The city has instituted a system of shark netting to protect most of its public beaches.

The city maintains several museums, a botanical garden, library, aquarium, and an aviary. Game reserves are within a few hours' drive from Durban, as are extensive parks and nature reserves.

Entertainment

American, English, and other films are shown at reasonable prices. Visiting professional repertory companies present plays and musicals, and several university and amateur companies perform regularly.

The city boasts many excellent restaurants and many nightclubs, ranging from sailors' dives to plush discos.

Photography is popular in Durban, and all equipment, including developing and printing services, is available at higher than U.S. prices.

Many colorful and interesting local festivals, including fire-walking ceremonies in the Indian community and Zulu dancing, especially the Zulu King's Reed Dance, are popular attractions.

Johannesburg

Johannesburg is a city of skyscrapers but is often called the Golden City for the gold mines in the surrounding area. It is the industrial, commercial, and financial capital of South Africa. Hotels, restaurants, theaters, shops, homes, and apartment buildings are similar to those in modern European and American cities.

Johannesburg is South Africa's largest city. Located 35 miles south of Pretoria, it is 300 square miles with an official population of 1.6 million. PWV area (Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vereeniging) has about 7.4 million people. This figure includes the black township of Soweto, which is an integral part of the Johannesburg metropolitan area. Estimates of Soweto's population exceed 2 million. Johannesburg, Pretoria and the Southern Transvaal have an American community of about 7,000.

Education

Most American children attend local, private, or public schools, or the American International School serving the Johannesburg/Pretoria area. Attendance is daily, but limited boarding facilities are available.

Popular schools for boys include: Marist Brothers St. David's College (private, Catholic); King Edward (public); St. John's (private, Anglican); St. Stithian's (private, Methodist); Woodmead (private); and King David (private, Jewish). Most private schools are oversubscribed and have long waiting lists for admission.

Girls' schools include: Roedeana (private); Kingsmead (private); Parktown Convent School (private, Catholic); St. Andrews (private, Anglican); and St. Mary's School for Girls (Anglican). Redhill is a private coeducational school. Parents are responsible for transportation to private schools.

Johannesburg also has a large number of private preschools (including Montessori) in the suburban areas.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg is South Africa's largest English-language university. Its eight faculties include arts, science, medicine, engineering, commerce, law, dentistry, and architecture. The university confers degrees in arts (including education, fine arts,



View of Johannesburg, South Africa

EPD Photos/Woodfin Camp. Reproduced by permission.

music, public administration, and social work); science, medicine, physiotherapy, engineering (chemical, civil, electrical, land surveying, mechanical, mining, and mining geology); commerce, law, dentistry, architecture, town and regional planning, and quantity surveying. It also grants post-graduate and undergraduate diplomas and certificates. Classes are during the day only.

Other educational opportunities are provided by several vocational schools, technical colleges, and colleges of education. These institutions serve as professional training centers for whites and nonwhites.

Sports

Facilities for all sports are available and enjoyed throughout the year. See also Sports—Pretoria.

Entertainment

Johannesburg is larger and more cosmopolitan than Pretoria and offers considerably more by way of restaurants, theaters, museums, art galleries, and night life. For general information, see also Entertainment—Pretoria.

Social Activities

The American Society of South Africa holds several large annual

dinners, dances, and outings. The American International Women's Club has numerous activities, including talks and outings. Many opportunities for volunteer work are available.

Bloemfontein

Bloemfontein, the republic's judicial capital, is also the capital of the Free State. It is a bright and modern Afrikaner city, about 295 miles west of Durban, and close to the border of Lesotho, the "enclave country" which lies within the boundaries of South Africa. Bloemfontein is noted for its beautiful parks and gardens and for the many buildings which date back to the founding of the city in the middle of the 19th century. On Naval Hill, overlooking Bloemfontein, is a large game reserve featuring eland, springbok, and blesbok, animals indigenous to the area. The Lamont-Hussey Observatory, established on Naval Hill in cooperation with the University of Michigan, now serves as a theater.

The Appeal Court, the highest judicial authority in South Africa, is located here, as are the Supreme Court and the official residences of the Free State president, the state administrator, and the chief justice

of the republic. Among the newer attractions is Sand du Plessis Theatre, which is the venue for opera, ballet, and conferences. Bloemfontein's Zoological Garden in King's Park is the home of the famous "liger," a cross between an African lion and a Bengal tigress; a large collection of apes is also featured.

The University of the Orange Free State, formerly a constituent college of the University of South Africa, was founded here as an independent institution in 1950. There are currently nine faculties and a student body of close to 9,000. Bloemfontein is also the home of the noted Boyden Station Observatory. The metropolitan population is about 400,000.

OTHER CITIES

Situated 20 miles east of Johannesburg at an altitude of 5,600 feet is **BENONI**, home to such industries as iron and steelworks and a brass foundry. It has a metropolitan population of 406,000. Benoni began as a mining camp in 1887, and today is an important mining center with some of the richest gold mines in the world.

BOKSBURG is the principal gold-producing city of the region just east of Johannesburg, with a population of about 290,000. Electric motors, cranes, soap, and ceramics are among its products. The town is surrounded by residential suburbs and is the focal point of a number of major roads.

South Africa's largest railway junction is at **GERMISTON**, immediately southeast of Johannesburg. This city of some 284,000 residents is the site of the Rand Refinery, the largest gold refinery in the world. Gold bullion from all over the country is recovered here. Germiston also has smelting, cotton-ginning, and other industries.

KIMBERLEY, an industrial city of close to 190,000 people, is the capital of the Northern Cape province

and lies about 90 miles west of Bloemfontein. It was founded in 1871 following the discovery of diamonds in the region. Kimberley is the world's diamond center (DeBeers and Kimberley are among the mines in operation), but it is known also as a commercial center and rail hub. To the south of the city are several Boer War battlefields. Kimberley's scenery is marked by large pits and mounds of earth, the aftermath of mining operations. Today, diamond mining and cutting remain prominent industries. Kimberley is also a marketing and service center for a prosperous irrigated-farming and cattle-raising area. Iron, salt, and gypsum are also mined near Kimberley.

KRUGERSDORP, in the northeast 20 miles west of Johannesburg, is the site of the Paardekraal Monument, commemorating the victory of the Boers over the Zulu chieftain Dingaan on December 16, 1838. It is the object of an annual pilgrimage. The city is a mining and industrial center. Gold deposits have declined steadily in recent years. Manganese, asbestos, and limestone are also mined near Krugersdorp. The Sterkfontein Caves and archaeological sites are near the town, which was founded in 1887 and has a population of about 225,000.

LADYSMITH, located in northwestern KwaZulu-Natal province, was founded by the British in 1850. The town was the sight of a 115-day siege during the Boer War. The Boers besieged the town from November 2, 1899 until February 28, 1900 cutting off all supplies. Many people died during the siege and subsequent British operation to rescue the town. Today, Ladysmith has almost 100,000 residents. The city serves as an important rail junction and industry is based on food processing and the nearby KwaZulu-Natal coal fields.

PAARL, 30 miles east of Cape Town, is known for its agricultural products. Wine-making has been a part of the city's life since the Huguenots introduced viticulture in the 17th century. Citrus fruits,

tobacco, and olives are also important products. Cigarettes, processed foods, and textiles are manufactured here. Paarl is a center of education, with a population of about 156,000.

PIETERMARITZBURG, a city of 420,000, lies in the eastern part of the country in KwaZulu-Natal. There is currently uncertainty whether the provincial capital will be in Pietermaritzburg or Ulundi. Its name, unfamiliar to most foreigners (except those acquainted with South Africa's history and geography), is derived from the names of two Boer War leaders, Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz. The city has several industries, producing rubber and aluminum products, furniture, footwear, and rice. One of the University of Natal's campuses is here (the other is at Durban). The Queen Elizabeth Nature Reserve, Union Park, Municipal Game Reserve, Bakone Malapa Open-Air Museum, and the Scottsville Race Course are among the city's many attractions.

PORT ELIZABETH, located in southeastern Cape Province 400 miles east of Cape Town, is a major seaport for South Africa, and the center of the automobile industry. Although it was settled in 1799, there was no real development until the completion of the Kimberley Railroad 75 years later. The current metropolitan population is about 834,000. A notable seaside resort, Port Elizabeth is also known for its Snake Park, which features more than 2,000 reptiles. In addition, Addo Elephant Park is nearby. Excellent communications, cheap power, and water combine to create one of the country's busiest manufacturing centers. Tourists are attracted by Port Elizabeth's beautiful beaches and excellent surfing.

ROODEPOORT, 12 miles west of Johannesburg, is an industrial and residential. It was founded with the discovery of gold in 1885 and has since expanded through the annexation of nearby areas. It was here that the noted colonial administrator, Leander Starr Jameson, was

captured in 1895 after leading an unauthorized and premature raid into Boer territory. The venture became famous as Jameson's Raid. Roodepoort's eastern section is an industrial and manufacturing district. Most of the city's residents live in the western portion of Roodepoort.

SOWETO is a residential community adjacent to Johannesburg, with its name taken from the South-Western Townships. Soweto has a population of over one million people, primarily Zulus and Xhosas. Homes in Soweto range from stately mansions to makeshift shantytowns. The township was the scene of the Soweto Rebellion, the 1976 uprising that focused international attention on apartheid. A Community Council authorizes the development of roads, transport, water supply, housing, and electricity. Other municipal services include schools, libraries, sports facilities, playgrounds, and hospital. Since Soweto has very little industrial development, most of Soweto's residents commute to Johannesburg for employment.

SPRINGS, a manufacturing town of almost 180,000 residents, 29 miles east of Johannesburg, was the world's most productive gold-producing area in the 1950s. It began as a coal-mining camp in 1885. Glass, machine tools, bicycles, foodstuffs, cosmetics, and paper are manufactured in Springs today.

VEREENIGING, 35 miles south of Johannesburg on the Vaal River, was the site of peace negotiations that ended the South African (or Boer) War in 1902. It is one of the country's major industrial communities, manufacturing iron and steel products, bricks, glass, and tiles. Large local thermal power stations transmit electricity through the national grid. Demonstrations in 1960 denouncing pass laws at the nearby township of Sharpville led to the shooting deaths of 69 blacks. The population is about 385,000.

WELKOM, located southwest of Johannesburg, was founded in 1947

amid goldfields. The booming gold industry helped Welkom to become Free State's second largest city. Welkom, with a population of 226,000, continues to grow quickly. It is a wealthy industrial city whose inhabitants boast the highest per capita income in the country. The city has numerous citizens, drive-in theaters, a variety of restaurants, a library, and numerous modern sports facilities.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

South Africa lies at the southern tip of the African continent. To the west, south and east, South Africa borders on the Atlantic and Indian Oceans with a coastline of 1,836 miles. To the north, South Africa shares common borders with Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland. The independent kingdom of Lesotho is completely enclosed by South Africa.

South Africa has a narrow coastal zone and an extensive interior plateau with altitudes ranging from 3,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level. Lacking arterial rivers or lakes of significance, extensive water conservation and controls are necessary. South Africa's 472,494 square mile area is about twice the size of Texas. South Africa has nine provinces, starting from the south they are the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Free State, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Northwest and Northern Provinces.

South Africa has a moderate climate with sunny days and cool nights. The most southerly point has a mean yearly temperature of 61.8 degrees Fahrenheit, while Johannesburg about 1,000 miles to the northeast and 5,700 feet higher, has an annual mean of 60.8 degrees Fahrenheit. Pretoria is 4,452 feet

above sea level and has a mean annual temperature of 63.5 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperatures can be deceiving because of the very bright and dangerous high sun during most of the year, especially in the high yield areas.

Pretoria and Johannesburg in Gauteng Province are on the high plateau. The surrounding countryside is characterized by treeless, rolling hills. The Magaliesberg Mountain Range is thirty miles northwest of Johannesburg and about the same distance west of Pretoria. The large Hardebeestport Dam is located in this area. The more picturesque Drakensberg Mountain Range (located in Mpumalanga and Kwa-Zulu Natal) extends north and south 200 miles to the east. Its beautiful peaks rise to 11,000 feet in Lesotho. The lower range of the Lebombo Mountains form the eastern boundary of the Johannesburg Consular District in the Mpumalanga Province.

The Free State offers a geographic variety of high plateaus spotted with barren but picturesque hills on the East and characterized by flat country to the west and south. The Vaal River separates the Free State from Gauteng Province. Bloemfontein is the provincial capital of the Free State as well as the Judicial Capital of South Africa.

Durban, located on the eastern seaboard of the Indian Ocean, is the principal city in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province and the largest seaport in Africa. Its shoreline extends north and south, along the Indian Ocean. Topographically, the coastal belt of Kwa-Zulu Natal rises sharply from the ocean to a fertile central plateau and then extends to the escarpment of the Drakensberg Mountain Range.

The Western Cape has the widest range of scenic attractions, including the Mediterranean-like luxuriance of the Cape Peninsula, rolling uplands to the east, excellent surfing beaches, the majestic peaks of the Katberg, the placid lakes of the Wilderness on the south coast of the

picturesque Garden Route, and the vast, arid distances of the Karoo and in the northern and northwestern Cape.

Although the country lies close to the Tropic of Capricorn, the inland areas are tempered by the high altitude. Being in the Southern Hemisphere, its seasons are opposite those of the U.S.-summer extends from October to March; winter from June to September. The rainy season in the Pretoria-Johannesburg area is during summer, and the temperature seldom rises above 90°F, with cool nights. Winter is dry and cool with daily temperatures varying from as low as 30°F during night to as high as 75°F during day.

Along the coastal area where Durban and Cape Town are located, heavier rainfall occurs during winter and spring, causing high humidity. Both cities experience strong winds-Durban from August through October and Cape Town throughout the year. The seasons are not pronounced but blend almost imperceptibly. South Africa's climate is comparable to that of central and southern California. For the most part, trees and shrubs remain green, with flowers blooming throughout the year. The high veld, however, which includes the Pretoria-Johannesburg area, has a dry, brown landscape during the winter drought period.

Population

Census figures indicate South Africa's population is 44.6 million. This attempts to take into account the unknown numbers of non-documented immigrants moving into the country from neighboring African states. Because ethnicity is politics in South Africa, a country with a history of cultural diversity, most analyses of the country's population are broken down into the major cultural and linguistic groupings. As of this date, no generally recognized nomenclature has yet taken the place of the former apartheid categories which were used as an instrument of racial domination and suppression. The terms remain and

are used in the census descriptively rather than prescriptively as in the past: "Africans" or "blacks" constitute 34.3 million, or 77% of the population; "whites" 5.4 million, or 12%; "coloreds" (people of mixed racial origin) 3.8 million or 8.5%; "Asians" (including Indians) 1.2 million or 2.5%. (Source: Development Bank of South Africa) Of the population of European descent, 60% are native Afrikaans speakers, 40% native English speakers.

Most of the "colored" population lives in the Cape, while most South Africans of Indian descent live in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Eleven languages are officially recognized and enjoy equal legal status. In descending order of demographic importance they are Zulu (7 million), Xhosa (6 million), Afrikaans (5 million), Pedi, English, Tswana, Sotho, Tsonga, Swati, Venda and Ndebele. While English is spoken by only 9% of South Africans in the home, it is the lingua franca of the country, with Zulu, Xhosa and Afrikaans spoken across a wide spectrum as well.

While many Africans still have no economic options other than to live in the rural areas (former "Homelands") to which they were relegated by the apartheid regime, blacks of all ethnic groups can be found living and working throughout South Africa. About 75% of employed blacks work outside the Homelands to which they were originally assigned. The Homelands are now fully politically integrated into the country.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Boer War (or the "Anglo-Boer War," as it is called in South Africa) largely ignored the majority of indigenous peoples living on South African territory. The struggle was between "Afrikaner"-descendants of the Dutch, French Huguenots, and Germans who came to the Cape in the seventeenth century; and the English who arrived two centuries later. The influence of these two groups remains disproportionately high compared to their demographic

representation, mainly because they were able to impose their political, cultural, and economic will over the country during the course of 300 years. Afrikaners are largely members of the Dutch Reformed ("NG") Church, traditionally a bastion of conservatism. Other religions found in South Africa include other Protestant as well as Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, and Hinduism, Judaism and Islam.

The system of legally mandated racial segregation, or "apartheid," is now officially dismantled though economic and social barriers still stand in the way of genuine integration. Former apartheid laws which held the system together (now repealed) were the Group Areas Act of 1950, which segregated residential neighborhoods by race; the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, which restricted black ownership of land to certain designated homelands; and the Population Act of 1950, by which people were racially classified at birth.

The Homelands, which were never recognized by the U.S. or the world community at large, gathered ethnic groups in geographic areas, which were not conducive to trade, production or development. The efforts of the apartheid government to make life in these areas economically viable were a generally recognized failure. Much of the black labor from the Homelands was employed in areas of production outside the Homelands as transient workers. The practice was highly disruptive to the family structures of those employed.

Now that the impediments to free movement have been lifted, black migration to the cities has intensified, and has created challenges to urbanization with rapid shifts in population, and with infrastructures unprepared. Questions of land reform, electrification, potable water and other amenities have become acute. The ANC government can boast of doubling school enrolment since it took office in 1994, and in major advances in rural electrification. However, hous-

ing construction has followed at a much slower pace.

Local and national governmental structures have generally passed to the hands of the majority population, and antidiscrimination laws have been passed in areas such as fair employment and fair access to housing. However, economic readjustments have taken only baby steps thus far, with high unemployment exacerbating the sense of stagnancy in the black community. The official figures on unemployment hover at 28-30%, while the generally accepted rate is 50-60%. In the townships, the figure often approaches 80-90%.

Another indicator of discrepancies in the lifestyle of the various ethnic groups is life expectancy, which for whites is 73.1 years, but remains at 60.3 for blacks (and 66.5 for coloreds and 68.9 for Asians). Birth rates have declined in recent years in all ethnic groups, from 40 per 1000 for blacks in 1970 to 25.3 in 1994; versus 22.9 for whites in 1970 down to 13.7 in 1994 (source: Central Statistical Service).

Crime remains a challenge for the government and the citizenry, with all ethnic groups among the victims. Homicide, now stemming generally from criminal and not political motives, stands at a proportional rate of seven times that of the U.S.

Public Institutions

The new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, signed into law on December 10, 1996, codifies the separation of powers, appropriate checks and balances and a far-reaching Bill of Rights. South Africa is one of the few countries, which, through a single entrenched law, protects all universally accepted fundamental rights against government interference and individual abuse. Socioeconomic rights such as housing, health care, access to food and water, social security and basic education are also recognized. The constitution makes the bill of rights "horizontal" in its application, bind-

ing private persons as well as the State.

In terms of the constitution, the Constitutional Court is the highest court in cases regarding the interpretation, protection and enforcement of the constitution. While the Constitutional Court decides on constitutional matters only, the Supreme Court of Appeal has jurisdiction to hear and determine an appeal against any decision of a High Court.

After centuries of minority rule and decades of confrontation, South Africa held its first democratic election in April 1994. The African National Congress (ANC) obtained 62.65% of the national vote in the 1994 elections against the National Party's (NP) 20.39%, the Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP) 10.54%, the Freedom Front's (FF) 2.17%, the Democratic Party's (DP) 1.73%, the Pan Africanist Congress's (PAC) 1.25% and the African Christian Democratic Party's (ACDP) 0.45%. Nelson Mandela (ANC) subsequently became President, with Thabo Mbeki (ANC) as Executive Deputy-President and FW de Klerk (NP) as Deputy-President. On a provincial level the ANC won seven out of the nine provinces, while the NP won a majority in the Western Cape and the IFP in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

The Cabinet consists of the President, the Executive Deputy-President and 25 Ministers appointed by the President. A party with at least five percent of the seats in the National Assembly, which decides to take part, may have one or more Cabinet posts based on the number of seats it holds.

Government is structured at national, provincial and local levels. Instead of a clear division of powers, the constitution introduces the concept of "co-operative governance" in terms of which each tier of government must endeavor to resolve any disputes by mediation and negotiation.

Parliament consists of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and

the National Assembly. The Senate was replaced by the NCOP, which came into operation on February 4, 1997. The NCOP was established to ensure that provincial interests are taken into account in the national legislature. South Africa is divided into nine provinces, each with its own Legislature, Premier and Ministers.

The National Assembly consists of 400 members elected by a system of proportional representation. Each party has a number of seats based on the share of the votes gained in the 1994 election. Of the 400 members, 200 were elected on a national list and 200 on provincial lists.

There are currently seven political parties represented in the South African Parliament and the seat representation in the National Assembly is as follows:

- African National Congress, 252
- National Party, 82
- Inkatha Freedom Party, 43
- Freedom Front, 9
- Democratic Party, 7
- Pan Africanist Congress, 5
- African Christian Democratic Party, 2

The ANC has succeeded in stabilizing the inflation rate and liberalizing exchange control regulations, but unemployment, low economic growth and housing shortages remain serious problems. The ANC has had problems maintaining labor support for its "liberal" Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) macro-economic framework.

With the May 1996 withdrawal of the NP from the Government of National Unity (GNU), party politics entered a new phase. Deputy President FW de Klerk's resignation from the Cabinet left the ANC in almost total charge of government, with the IFP receiving two ministerial positions. The NP has been racked by internal tensions and resignations; has experienced a distinct decline in the opinion polls; has had little success in building a black support base; and may be headed towards a future as a

regional political entity in the Western Cape.

While the IFP remains a powerful force in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal, it has lost substantial support amongst White and Indian voters, leaving little formal organization outside of its key support base of Zulus in the Kwa-Zulu Natal hinterland. More serious to the IFP is the party's loss of popular electoral support amongst Zulus in the urban areas of Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The IFP now faces a dilemma-to move closer to the ANC in order to form an alliance or to keep its distance, acting as a regional opposition party.

Born out of the Afrikaner nationalist far right, the Freedom Front (FF) has continuously engaged the ANC-led government in pursuing its goal of protecting Afrikaner minority rights in the new South Africa. A pragmatic approach from General Constand Viljoen has made him one of the most respected white political leaders outside the ANC. A dwindling ethnic-Afrikaner support base and the ANC's refusal to countenance the creation of a "volkstaat" does not bode well, however, for the party in the run-up to the next election.

The DP, while outperforming many of its rivals in proposing alternative policies to those offered by the ANC, is still hampered by its inability to break out of its narrow support base of middle-income whites. The party has bounced back after a poor performance in the 1994 elections under the dynamic leadership of Tony Leon. The party refused an offer in 1997 from President Mandela to join the government, preferring to polish its opposition credentials.

The Pan Africanist Congress is still unable to attract any large-scale support away from the ANC. The party is simply too small with too few symbols of the struggle to attract meaningful quantities of black voters.

Arts, Science, and Education

Most South African cities have an active cultural life. Each province has a Performing Arts Council, subsidized by the central government, whose productions come from both the Western and indigenous repertoires. Following the end of the cultural boycott, a number of prominent foreign artists have recently appeared in South Africa. Johannesburg has several ambitious multiracial performing arts centers and an active local community theater. South Africa is highly developed scientifically. Its scientists are well educated, and many have international reputations. The veterinary faculty of the University of Pretoria at Onderstepport is one of the world's finest. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) covers a wide range of scientific research. The medical profession is highly developed, and significant progress has been made in experimental medicine—South Africa was the pioneer in successful heart transplant surgery. The Medical Research Institute is capable of the development and production of sophisticated pharmaceuticals. South Africa has 21 universities that include those in the former Homelands. They are open to all races, although historically many have been reserved for either white or black students. All of the most prestigious traditionally white institutions now freely admit qualified blacks. The University of South Africa, with 110,000 enrolled, offers instruction to all races by correspondence. Admission is based on stringent matriculation examinations. Universities do not yet have programs of general studies during the first 2 years as in American universities, but require specialization for the entire 3-year course at which the bachelor degree is given. "Honors," the completed fourth year of university instruction, provides the equivalent of a 4-year U.S. bachelor's degree. Other bachelor degrees may take 4-5 years. A bachelor of architecture takes 6 years.

For those students not attending the American International School in Johannesburg (AISJ), which provides a standard American high school curriculum, entry into American universities may pose some problems. Some students may have difficulty in adjusting to different curriculum standards beginning with Standard 9 (11th grade) when local students begin a 2-year matriculation program geared toward entry into the local university system. An above-average student should have little difficulty, but a weak student, without the benefit of pre-matriculation curriculum training, may find it difficult to master the program without tutoring, particularly in science and mathematics which are accelerated compared to most American public schools. The school year begins in January and ends in December with 3-4 week holidays separating the three school terms.

The South African curriculum is a blend of British and South African education (i.e., Standard 9 corresponds to the British Form IV and almost corresponds to U.S. grade 11—Standard 10 [Form V] is the matriculation year that is followed by university study). The regular matriculation course of study includes English, a physical science, a foreign language, a social science, a combined mathematics course, and minor courses such as art and physical education.

The manner in which subjects are presented in class may also require adaptation by American students. Mathematics is broken down into algebra, geometry, trigonometry, etc., but is considered one completely integrated unit with advancing stages of difficulty each year. A percentage grading system is used in almost all schools that require clarification to U.S. university systems. In some high school courses, for example, 40% can be a pass and 75%-80% is frequently a distinction.

The local high school curriculum follows the same subject matter as in the U.S. (English, social science, foreign language, mathematics, etc.)

American students entering the matriculation process (Standard 9) at age 16 or 17 without previous earlier level study here may find little flexibility in course offerings. Students are required to take whatever language or social science is given in a particular school. World history is also a course that extends through the entire 2 year matriculation period and mainly focuses on South African and European history. Local schools do not teach American history which is required in the U.S. Matriculation courses are taught through the lecture method; students should take extensive notes and frequent examinations. The seminar or project educational method is rarely used in the public high school system. Examinations are given much emphasis and weigh heavily in determining the final grade. For these reasons, Americans with 17- and 18-year-old children (preparing for U.S. universities) may prefer to send their children to AISJ. AISJ enrollment as of June 1998 is approximately 600 students (K-12).

Contact AISJ directly (Tel 27-11-464-1505 and Facsimile 2711-464-1327). AISJ is accredited in all areas.

Commerce and Industry

Despite the introduction of democracy to South Africa in 1994, gross inequities continue to exist along racial lines in wealth, income distribution and education as a result of apartheid. In addition, the South African economy declined during apartheid's final decade and the increase since then has been too small to create the formal-sector jobs needed by the country's population. Nevertheless, much of the South African formal economy more closely resembles that of the United States or Western Europe than those of other African countries. There are modern transportation, communication and financial infrastructures that easily overshadow and dominate the economies of South Africa's neighbors. A large

manufacturing sector produces a wide variety of consumer goods including automobiles, some of which are exported to Europe and Asia. Inflation has recently declined to about 5% and the decline of the Rand since 1996 has made prices on many items inexpensive in dollar terms. While tariffs on most items have declined considerably over the past few years, automobiles are still expensive relative to similar U.S. models. With the decline in the price of gold, mining is no longer the single most vital part of the economy. Agriculture, financial services and tourism are all strong and growing contributors to the South African GNP. The economy is organized according to free market principles, but there remains from apartheid days considerable government involvement in many industrial sectors. The private sector remains dominated by six large industrial groups but the degree of dominance has declined considerably as the economy has opened to the outside world and local conglomerates restructure themselves in order to compete internationally.

Transportation

Automobiles

Privately owned motor vehicles are essential in South Africa. Public transportation is available but does not serve all areas. Taxis must be called by phone but are not reliable and expensive.

Traffic moves on the left. Right hand drive imported Chryslers and Fords are now available (not US model) in South Africa. Other vehicles, which can be purchased from a bonded warehouse, are Saab, Volvo, Renault and Peugeot. Toyota, Nissan, Hyundai, BMW and VW are available locally. 4 x 4 models currently available are Jeep, Isuzu, Mitsubishi, Toyota and Ford Explorer. Prices of new vehicles are competitive. Reconditioned vehicles can be imported from Japan. The quality of these vehicles seems satisfactory.

Leaded and unleaded gas is available locally and prices fluctuate regularly around R2.25 per liter.

The South African Foreign Ministry requires balance of third-party insurance for all vehicles, as a minimum. However, due to the high crime and accident rates in South Africa, comprehensive insurance is recommended. The Department of State requires personal liability insurance for all personal vehicles whilst vehicles are being driven in South Africa or any other African country. Local insurance companies offer the required coverage at good rates.

Local

Public transportation to and from the city and around the suburbs is frequent and reliable during business hours. However, it does not serve all residential areas. Weekend and evening schedules are limited both in area of service and availability. Taxi service is available 24 hours daily by telephone because they do not service areas seeking passengers.

Regional

With few exceptions, international flights into South Africa land at Johannesburg International Airport located 16 miles from Johannesburg and 30 miles from Pretoria. However, there is a direct SAA/AA flight between Cape Town and Miami. International arrivals and departures with direct or connecting flights are scheduled to almost any point in the world. The American Airlines/ South African Airlines code share provides daily flights from Johannesburg and Cape Town to New York and Miami respectively. United/Lufthansa and Northwest/KLM also provide daily service to the United States via Europe and return. South African Airways serves all major cities in South Africa. Service is good with numerous daily flights to Cape Town, Durban, and other cities. British Airways, operated by ComAir and Sun Air also serve major cities in South Africa as well as neighboring cities including Windhoek, Victoria Falls and Gaborone.

Railroad transportation with South Africa is available. The Blue Train from Pretoria or Johannesburg to Cape Town provides luxury service at very high cost but make reservations well in advance.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone communications in South Africa are good. International Direct-dial connects all major cities and connections to the U.S. are good but rates are higher than in the U.S. Many people use MCI, SPRINT, AT&T or a call-back service for their long distance carrier. Telegraph service is available at reasonable rates to all parts of the world.

Mail

International mail to and from the U.S. is reliable and takes 8-14 days. Air letter forms may be used in either direction at a reduced rate. International surface mail from the U.S. takes 4-8 weeks.

Radio and TV

South Africa's state-owned television service (SABC-TV) broadcasts daily on three channels. SABC 1 and SABC2 offer entertainment and news programs in all of South Africa's eleven official languages. SABC3 offers news, entertainment and educational programming in English only. All SABC-TV broadcasts are in the PAL-I system. American broadcast standard (NTSC) television sets will not work properly in South Africa. Cable TV (M-NET) and Direct Satellite TV (MultiChoice) are available at reasonable costs. These services offer movies, sports, and American and international news, and audio programming. South Africa's first privately owned free-to-air television station is scheduled to begin broadcasting in late 1998.

Video rental stores are common throughout South Africa. Rental tapes are all in VHS format and PAL system. Your VCR must either be a PAL or multi-system machine to view locally rented videotapes.

Radio in South Africa ranges from low-power community stations (broadcasting mostly in FM), to state-owned SABC stations throughout the country, to several new privately owned stations. There is a format for every taste. For local news, listen to Radio 702 (702 kHz) and SAFM (103 to 107 MHz). VOA reception at 909 kHz is very good in the evenings and early mornings.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

English-language newspapers are published daily in South Africa. The Star, Sowetan, Pretoria News, Business Day, Citizen (in the Johannesburg-Pretoria area), the Cape Times and the Cape Argus (in Cape Town), and the Mercury and Natal Witness (in Durban) are the main English-language dailies. Weeklies include the Weekly Mail

Guardian and City Press. The two main Sunday papers are the Sunday Times and the Sunday Independent. The International Herald Tribune, Time, and Newsweek are available at bookstores or by subscription at slightly higher than U.S. prices. Reader's Digest is also published in South Africa. Bookstores are well stocked with current books and magazines, including technical journals. U.S. editions of magazines may be received through the pouch or through international mail, but may arrive several weeks late. You may also use the Internet to access publications, news and information.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

South Africa medical and dental facilities in the major cities of Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Durban, Cape Town, Nelspruit, Kimberly, Rustenberg, and Port Elizabeth are excellent.

Specialists of all types are available in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, and Durban. Many excellent private hospitals and clinics are available and most public univer-

sity hospitals are also well equipped. Nursing care is excellent. Extremely modern and well-equipped laboratory and radiology facilities exist throughout the country. A highly developed pharmaceutical industry produces or imports a complete listing of medications.

Community Health

High standards for community sanitation exist in the major cities. The water is potable and in good supply. Sewage and refuse disposal is good. Electricity supply is excellent. Minor traffic congestion and city pollution exist.

Animals are immunized for rabies. A lowland, rainy season annual increase in malaria cases occurs requiring travelers to those areas to take malarial prophylactics. The AIDS virus has reached epidemic levels in South Africa. Because of the high caseloads of HIV disease, tuberculosis cases are also increasing.

Fresh water lakes and rivers are infested with the schistosomiasis (bilharzia) parasite that enters through the skin.

Restaurants in general are reputable and prepare good food with sanitary techniques.

Meat, poultry and seafood can be purchased locally and prepared normally. Insects and vermin are no major problems although occasional poisonous snake and scorpion exposure occurs.

Vegetables and fruits require no special treatment, and milk and milk products are pasteurized.

Preventive Measures

Pretoria and Johannesburg are between 5000 and 6000 feet above sea level causing some mild symptoms of increased fatigue upon arrival. These symptoms clear in a couple of weeks.

The climate is dry with increased dust in the highlands. Solar exposure is increased and sun block, pro-

TECTIVE clothing and sunglasses should be used.

Although malaria is not a problem in the major cities of South Africa, medication prophylactics is needed in lowland areas near the game parks and along the Zimbabwean/Mozambican borders.

In South Africa, precautions are mandatory for sexual and body fluid exposure due to the high incidence of AIDS. Unprotected sex must be avoided. Blood exposure should occur only in hospitals with HIV testing available.

Fresh water wading and swimming should be avoided due to schistosomiasis. Yellow fever immunizations are required for travel to tropical countries, and South Africa requires proof of immunization if you visit any of those countries.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

When packing, remember that seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S. Spring and fall coincide approximately with fall and spring in the U.S.

South Africa has tightened its visa requirements for certain categories of visitors. Only visitors on tourism, short business consultations, or in transit do not require visas; others need visas or they will be refused admission and returned to their point of origin. Visitors who intend to work in South Africa must apply for work permits abroad at the appropriate South African embassy or consulate. Travelers entering South Africa from countries where yellow fever is endemic are often required to present their yellow World Health Organization (WHO) vaccination record or other proof of inoculation, or they must be inoculated at the airport in order to be permitted entry. Travelers may obtain further information from the Embassy of South Africa, 3051 Mas-

sachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 232-4400, web site at <http://usaembassy.southafrica.net>, or, the South African consulates in Los Angeles, Chicago, or New York. Overseas, inquiries should be made at the nearest South African embassy or consulate.

Travelers should avoid nighttime travel and use caution when driving in the former "independent homelands" of Transkei and Ciskei, which have been incorporated into the provinces of Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Some areas, such as the "wild coast" in the former Transkei, have significant levels of crime and inadequate medical services. This situation, though improving, has caused problems for foreign travelers to the area. Travelers may contact the U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town or the U.S. Consulate General in Durban for further information before embarking on trips to these areas.

Americans living in or visiting South Africa are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the nearest U.S. consulate and obtain updated information on travel and security within South Africa. The U.S. Embassy is located at 877 Pretorius Street Arcadia in Pretoria, telephone (27-12) 342-1048, fax (27-12) 342-5504. The U.S. Embassy web site is <http://usembassy.state.gov/pretoria/>. Note: The U.S. Consulate General in Johannesburg provides most consular services for Americans in the Pretoria area.

The Consulate General in Johannesburg is located at No. 1 River Street (corner of River and Riviera Road), Killarney, Johannesburg, telephone (27-11) 644-8000, fax (27-11) 646-6916. Its consular jurisdiction includes Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern, North West, and Free State provinces.

The Consulate General in Cape Town is located at Broadway Industries Center, Heerengracht, Foreshore, telephone (27-21) 421-4280, fax (27-21) 425-3014. Its consular

jurisdiction includes Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape provinces.

The Consulate General in Durban is located at Durban Bay House, 29th floor, 333 Smith Street, telephone (27-31) 304-4737, fax (27-31) 301-8206. Its consular jurisdiction includes KwaZulu-Natal province.

Pets

At present, there is no quarantine imposed for pets being imported from the USA. Pets shipped from the US must be in possession of a valid rabies and health certificate and must be accompanied by the original import permit. The rabies vaccine must be older than 30 days and not older than one year. Your

local vet should carry out the health clearance, within 90 days prior to departure for South Africa. The area or Government vet must also clear the rabies and health clearance certificate within 90 days prior to departure for South Africa.

The following information must be furnished to obtain an import permit: Number and/or species and/or class of animal, Country and city of origin, Airport from which the animal will be loaded, Date of embarkation for South Africa, Address and telephone number to which the permit must be sent. Permits are sent via courier service at a cost of approximately \$20.

Pets must travel as manifested cargo and may not be brought as excess baggage or in the cabin. Should you not comply with this regulation and/or provide the required documentation, the pet will be returned to the country of origin.

In addition to the above regulations, cats must be accompanied by a feline enteritis vaccination certificate and a rhinotracheitis vaccination certificate (snuffles vaccination).

Firearms and Ammunition

Those over age 16 or older may purchase locally from a reputable and

licensed South African weapons dealer one rifle and one approved shotgun each for personal use provided they comply with all South African laws pertaining to the use and storage of such weapons. Under no circumstances is the purchase, possession or use of handguns permitted.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

South Africa's currency is the Rand (R). The rate of exchange in July 1998 was approximately \$1 = R6.40; the rate is subject to frequent fluctuation. Banking facilities are adequate. With good Internet service available, Internet banking, for paying bills and transferring money in the U.S., is possible for an increasing number of people.

While Electronic Funds Transfers are not yet reliable enough to recommend within South Africa, FSC Paris does have the capability.

The South African Rand is a freely convertible currency and the rate against the US Dollar varies daily due to market influences. Many find it convenient to open a checking account with a local bank. Banks also have available Visa and MasterCard for your use, although the interest rates are high. Stateside credit cards can be used at most local stores including supermarkets, theaters, travel agencies and numerous retail outlets.

US Dollars and travelers checks as well as cashier checks are available from the banks given sufficient notice (usually two workdays).

The system of measurement in South Africa is primarily metric.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 14 Valentine's Day
- Feb/Mar. Shrove Tuesday/
Pancake Day*
- Mar.
(2nd Mon) Commonwealth
Day*

Mar/Apr	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr	Easter*
Mar/Apr	Easter Monday/ Family Day *
Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar. 21	Human Rights Day
Apr. 1	April Fool's Day
April 27	Freedom Day
May 1	Worker's Day
June 16	Youth Day
Aug. 9	National Women's Day
Sept. 24	Heritage Day
Oct. 31	Halloween
Nov 5	Guy Fawkes Day
Dec. 16	Day of Reconciliation
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Day of Goodwill

* variable

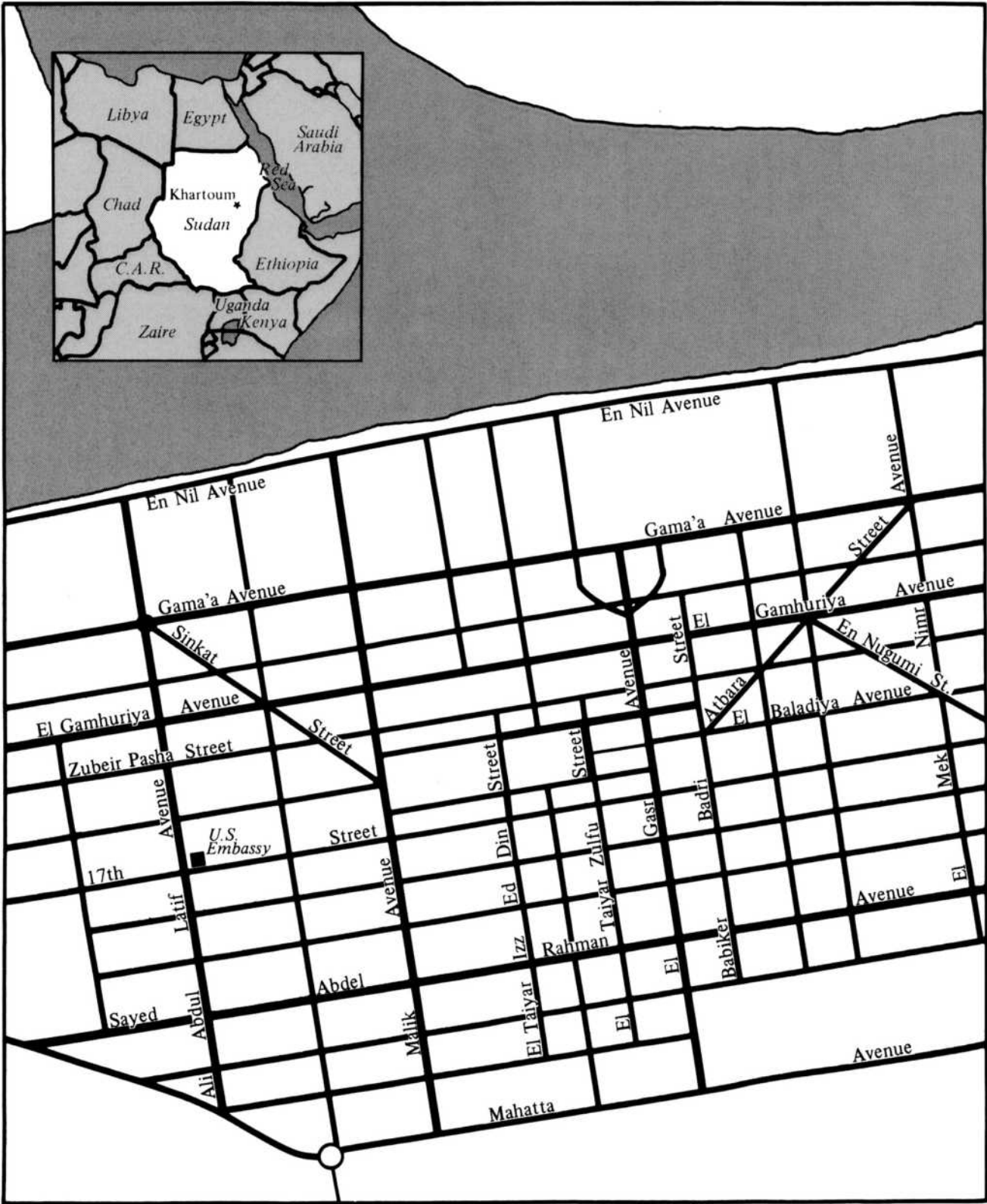
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Khartoum, Sudan

SUDAN

Republic of the Sudan

Major City:

Khartoum

Other Cities:

'Atbarah, El Fasher, El-Gedaref, Jubā, Kassalā, Khartoum North, Omdurman, Port Sudan, Wadi Medani, Wau

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Called Nubia by the ancient Egyptians, the Republic of the **SUDAN**, with its rich cultural diversity and historical background is, in many ways, Africa in microcosm. The largest country in area on the continent, it lies at the traditional crossroads between East and West Africa, and between Africa and the Middle East.

Sudan has been called a country of the 21st century. Although it is one of the least-developed nations in the world, and remains primarily agricultural, it continues efforts to implement an ambitious development program. With the cooperation of several Western countries and

international institutions, it has had the potential of emerging as a principal food-growing area and an important source of minerals. However, the drought which has enveloped such a large part of Africa in this decade has significantly slowed economic growth.

MAJOR CITY

Khartoum

Khartoum is northeast of the country's geographical center, at about 15 degrees north latitude. At the junction of the White and Blue Niles, the area contains a total population of an estimated 3.8 million in three cities: Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman. Khartoum is the busiest and the government center. Most resident Europeans live in the city and its outlying suburbs. Across the Blue Nile from Khartoum is Khartoum North, a traditional city with a growing industrial area. The ancient city of Omdurman, across the White Nile from Khartoum, contains miles of traditional markets, where local artisans make and sell their wares.

Once dominated by Arabs, Khartoum now has a sizable population

of displaced southerners. Arabic is the common language, but English is usually understood by Sudanese who have completed secondary school. English is used in transacting business with foreigners. Minority groups resident in Khartoum include Egyptian, Greek, Lebanese, Italian, West African, and Armenian.

Shops and businesses often close between 1:30 pm and 5:30 pm, during the hottest part of the day.

Food

Importation, manufacture, or consumption of alcohol is prohibited by the Government of Sudan.

Some imported products can occasionally be found in local groceries. Fresh fruits and vegetables are sold at open air markets. Available fruit includes small bananas, grapefruit, limes, oranges, watermelon, and mangoes. Throughout the year, onions, cucumbers, green peppers, carrots, tomatoes, okra, garlic, and eggplant are available. For a few months such cool season crops as cabbage, potatoes, beets, squash, lettuce, green beans, radishes, peas, and cauliflower appear. Beef, mutton, chicken, and, occasionally pork are available locally. Pork can be ordered. Beef and mutton are frequently found in unfamiliar cuts.



Flooding in Khartoum, Sudan

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Outstanding Nile perch and tilapia provide an alternative to meat and are sometimes available.

Individuals in outlying areas find some food staples available locally. Meat and seasonal fruits and vegetables are usually available; the variety depends on local production.

Clothing

Clothing is informal; however, Sudanese are conservative in dress, and Western attire is frowned upon. Clothing is washed more frequently here and therefore wears out faster. Sturdy cottons are best for hot months, and polyester is suitable for winter. Sweaters and wraps are needed in early mornings and evenings during cool months; a few winter things are necessary if you intend to travel to cooler climates.

Clothing needs in outlying areas are similar to those in Khartoum, except individuals visiting the

southern regions should include rain gear because of the heavy annual rainfall in that area.

For men, work attire consists of sport shirts or safari suits. Many men wear shorts for home or recreation. A lightweight suit or sports jacket is appropriate for more formal occasions. Men should avoid shorts and going shirtless in public. Bring wash-and-wear shirts since dry-cleaning is expensive, and quality may be unsatisfactory. Women wear dresses, skirts, and tops or pants in the office or for leisure. In deference to Islamic traditions, women should avoid sundresses, shorts, or tight slacks or blouses. For evenings, long skirts or caftans are popular. Outdoor entertaining makes flats more comfortable, as high heels sink into the lawn. Children wear jeans and shorts, and sandals or tennis shoes. Long Bermuda shorts can be worn to school.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Many commodities are in short supply or not available. Bring favorite brands of toiletries and cosmetics, unless you are prepared to switch.

Basic Services: Tailors and seamstresses can be found, but work is slow and quality poor, except for the most simple safari suits for men and long, formless dresses for women. Simple shoe repair is available.

Barber shops and beauty parlors are more reasonably priced than those in U.S. cities. Quality of supplies, cleanliness standards in the shops, and qualifications of some operators, do not measure up to U.S. standards, however.

Religious Activities

The Anglican, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches, and the Khartoum International Church

(Protestant) conduct regular English-language church services.

Education

Most American children attend Khartoum American School (KAS). The school's major vacation is 18 days at Christmas. School hours are 7:20 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The school is located on the southern edge of New Extension in a new, air-conditioned/air-cooled, eight-building campus built to U.S. standards. KAS offers a U.S. curriculum taught by a well-qualified staff that maintains U.S. standards. The curriculum consists of various academic subjects, ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction, music, art, and physical education. Foreign-language offerings include Arabic and French. There is also a computer specialist and a resource specialist. A good library is served by a trained librarian. It has 14 classrooms, a science laboratory, a computer lab, and art and music rooms.

Bring paper, notebooks, pencils, pens, colored pencils, colored pens, etc., as a limited supply is available at school. A lunch break is given at midday. All children take at least a quart of water to drink each day, usually utilizing a large, unbreakable Thermos (e.g., Playmate jug).

There are no other English-language schools in the area, other than the KAS. The French School might accommodate students reasonably fluent in French, though its enrollment is small.

While there are secondary-level English-language schools in Khartoum (e.g., Unity High School, Sisters School for girls, and Camboni College for boys), vacancies are rare.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Khartoum and the African International University offer language instruction in Arabic. Applicants for full-time uni-

versity study must pass rigorous exams in *both* English and Arabic.

Sports

Khartoum has an American Club. Membership includes expatriates assigned to Sudan as well as Sudanese. The American Club's facilities include a swimming pool, concrete tennis courts, and a snack bar.

Sudanese professional clubs—civil service, army, engineers, university—are exclusive, but sports clubs accept those actively interested. The Sudan Lawn Tennis Association is also open for membership and offers both grass and cement courts.

Bowling and billiards are available to those who join the private Hilton Hotel Club. The annual individual membership fee allows access to bowling (with automatic equipment), billiards, sauna, massage, and hard-surface tennis courts with lighting.

Water skiing on the Blue Nile is available. Joggers are invited to participate with the Khartoum Hash House Harriers on their weekly jaunts. Spectator sports are limited to soccer, tennis tournaments, occasional horse and camel races, and informal polo matches. Public sports facilities are scarce, and each private national club has its own activities for members only.

Al Mogran Family Park is an amusement park on the point of land where the White and Blue Niles meet. The park has rides, refreshment stands, and a first-aid station. It is operated by the Sudanese People's Armed Forces.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Jebel Aulia Dam, a 1-hour drive (possible in a sedan with high clearance), is a pleasant spot to see a wide variety of water birds and watch Sudanese cast their round nets for fish. Fish can be purchased on the spot. A small grass plot is

available for picnics. The dam serves as a major crossing of the White Nile. A constant stream of camels, donkeys, sheep, and goats with their herders passes by. Bird-watching, especially during migratory seasons, is also good all along the Niles.

Other excursions outside Khartoum are likely to take on the aspects of a picnic or a camping trip by four-wheel-drive vehicle fully equipped for the length of the journey. A favorite day or overnight outing is an about a 2-hour drive north to the Nile's Sixth Cataract in Sabaloka Gorge. On a 3-day weekend you can visit the Meroitic ruins near Shendi. A visit to Dinder National Park, a game preserve, takes several days and is rugged. If attempting this last trip, one must be prepared to carry along about 90 gallons of fuel.

Facilities available to travelers are almost nonexistent outside Khartoum. Ample food, fuel, and water must be carried on trips. Bring camping gear if you enjoy this type of activity. With continual fair skies, people rarely bother with tents, but cots are recommended, as the ground is stony and covered with thorns.

The Red Sea has some of the world's most beautiful coral. Snorkeling and scuba diving in Port Sudan are popular, but no facilities are available to refill scuba tanks. The coast is over 700 miles away from Khartoum. Port Sudan is 1 hour by jet, or 2½ hours by prop plane from Khartoum. A small resort at Arusa is north of Port Sudan, and the ancient city of Suakin is 60 km. south of Port Sudan. To reach Suakin, one must fly to Port Sudan and obtain transportation to Suakin.

Hunting opportunities range from local bird shooting (sand grouse, dove, water fowl) to big game hunting in the southern parts of Sudan. Hunting requires use of a four-wheel-drive vehicle and often a guide. Hunting licenses are required for different types of game.

Sport fishing is possible along either Nile or at Jebel Aulia Dam on the White Nile. Giant Nile perch are excellent to eat, but are rarely caught from shore. Good tasting and commonly caught from shore are tilapia and several varieties of catfish. Tigerfish are good game fish, but they are not edible.

Points of interest in the Khartoum area include the National Museum housing archeological collections and the Faras frescoes, the Ethnological Museum with a charming display of tribal artifacts, and the Natural History Museum's display of specimens of Sudan's birds and wild game. There are a few zoological gardens in Khartoum that are also pleasant to visit.

Omdurman's large market area (or "souk") offers local color, an occasional bargain, and the Khalifa Museum. The museum was formerly a residence and now houses relics of the Mahdiya period. On Friday afternoons, whirling dervishes perform near the tomb of a saint. Opposite the zoo is the landing for the Tuti Island Ferry. You can cross to the island for a walk around its typical rural village and small farms.

Photography in Sudan requires a special permit. Caution must be exercised, since many scenes or areas are not to be photographed. At times whole groups will insist on posing for you; in other cases, the presence of your camera will create vigorous disapproval.

Entertainment

American, British, French, and German cultural centers have libraries, show films, and sometimes offer special programs. The Rec Site has a film night each week. Dining out choices include restaurants in the larger hotels, a Chinese restaurant, and a few restaurants serving local cuisines.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The International Volunteer Welfare Group (IVWG) membership has open

membership. They meet monthly to raise funds for Sudanese charities and hold monthly programs on Sudanese culture.

International Contacts: Although private clubs are strongly divided by nationality, it is possible to mix internationally. Social activities, such as tennis, bridge, Hash runs, bingo, and sports, provide contacts in the local and international communities. For those interested in singing, the Khartoum Singers is an informal group that performs at Christmas and at a few private functions. The Sudanese Archaeological Society, supported by the German and British Cultural Centers and the University of Khartoum, arranges regular tours of sites and lectures for its members.

OTHER CITIES

'ATBARAH (also spelled Atbara), a city of about 115,000 in 2002, is situated in northeastern Sudan. Located at the junction of the Nile and Atbara rivers, it is a major administrative and commercial center. Two main road and rail lines converge at 'Atbarah, providing the bulk of the jobs in railway maintenance. A large cement factory is located south of town.

EL FASHER (also spelled Al-Fashir) is the capital of Darfur Province, about 500 miles southwest of Khartoum. It is a primitive city, with simple buildings and straw homes. As the market center for the cereals and fruits of Darfur, El Fasher also has a vigorous trade in animals, as well as in gum. El Fasher's population is about 186,000.

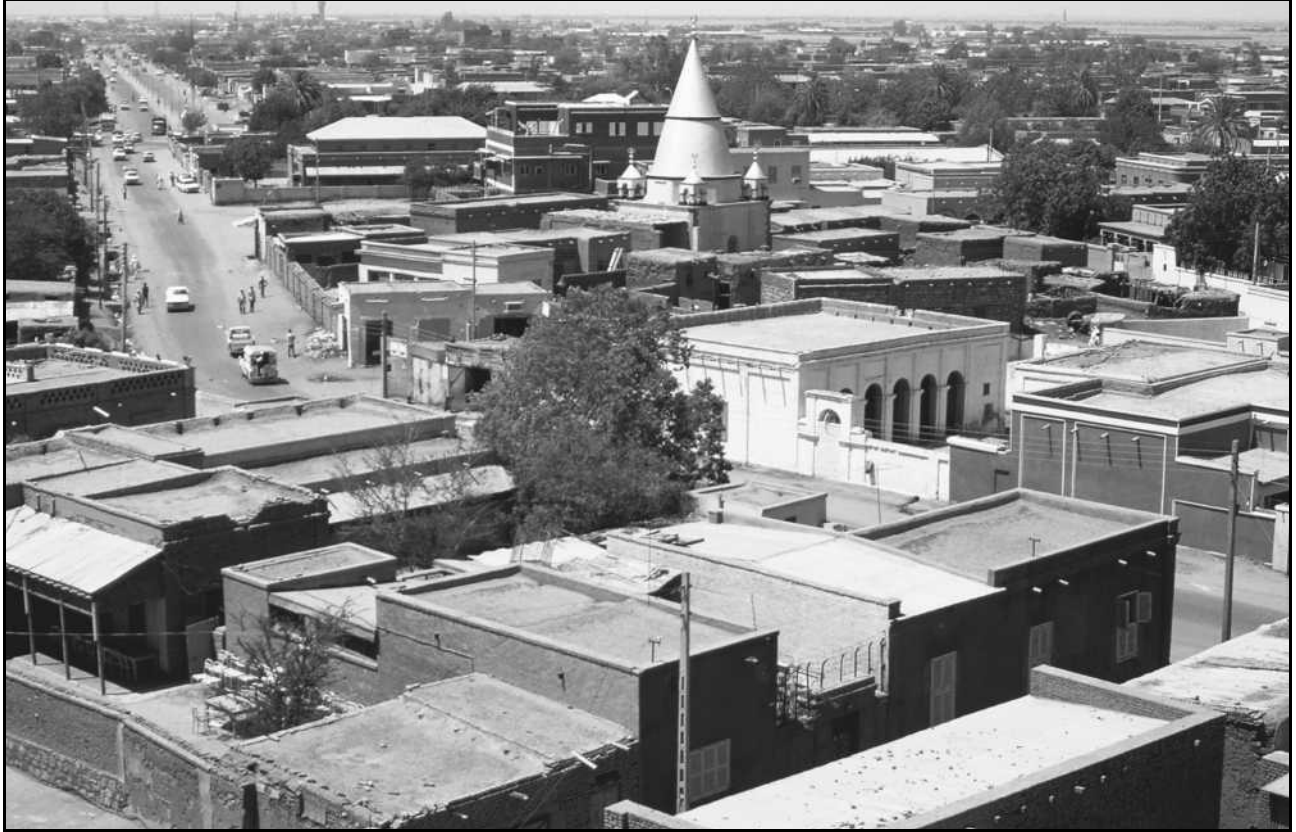
About 200 miles southeast of Khartoum is **EL-GEDAREF** (also spelled al Qadārif), a commercial center for many products from the southern areas of the province. The population, currently 251,000, is mainly Arab or Nubian Sudanese.

Situated in southern Sudan, 100 miles north of the Ugandan border, **JUBĀ** acts as a critical transportation hub. The nearby agricultural areas bring tobacco and coffee for trade; Jubā is the southern terminus for Nile River traffic. It is the headquarters of the University of Jubā, founded in 1975. The city was the site of a conference in 1947 which united the Sudan. Ironically, Jubā spurred a revolt that led to civil war in the late 1950s. The population is about 151,000.

KASSALĀ is the capital of Kassalā Province in the northeast, 250 miles east of Khartoum. The city, with a current population of 308,000, is situated on a plain about 1,700 feet above sea level. It has noted fruit gardens and an extensive market trade which compensate for the decline of its cotton trade. It has excellent transportation links to Khartoum and Port Sudan, to the north of the Red Sea. Kassalā was founded as a fort by the Egyptians in 1840. It was held from 1885 through 1894 by Mahdists and retaken by Italian forces after a battle on July 17, 1894, and restored to Egypt in 1897. During World War II, the city was held briefly by the Italians.

KHARTOUM NORTH and Omdurman, although technically part of the greater capital area, are large cities which have expanded from town or suburb status on the river banks across from Khartoum. Khartoum North, with a population of 921,000, is a growing textile city, and the site of an agricultural college. The city contains dockyards, marine and rail work shops, and sawmills. Several industries are located in Khartoum North, among them brewing, brickmaking, tanning, and food processing. A cultural center located in town has tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a library.

OMDURMAN has a population of 1.7 million, and is a commercial center for livestock and a variety of handicrafts and other goods. The Islamic University of Omdurman



Aerial view of Omdurman, Sudan

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founded there in 1912, was elevated to university status in 1965. Furniture, pottery factories, and a tannery are also important to the local economy. Most goods are shipped by truck. For the tourist, Port Sudan offers sailing, a selection of swimming pools, and an excellent fishing opportunities.

PORT SUDAN, in the far northeast part of the country on the Red Sea, is a modern harbor and rail terminus. Located in Kassalā Province about 400 miles northeast of Khartoum, it currently is the country's only port; however, another is planned at New Suakin. Port Sudan was founded in 1904, but was not expanded and modernized until the 1950s and 1960s. Shipping lines are operated here from the Red Sea to ports in the Mediterranean and northern Europe. Port Sudan serves the cotton-growing regions of the Nile Valley, and also is the export center for peanuts, oils, and hides. An oil refinery and an international

airport are located near the city. The city has a population of approximately 401,000 (2002).

WADI MEDANI (also spelled Wad Madanī), capital of the Blue Nile Province 100 miles southeast of Khartoum, is another city of significant size (277,000), but is not often visited by Americans. It is the center of Sudan's irrigated agricultural region. The University of al-Jazirah, founded in 1975, is located in Wadi Medani. A good railway and road link Wadi Medani to Khartoum. A ferry service operates on the Blue Nile near the city.

Located in Southwestern Sudan, **WAU** is an important trading center for agricultural produce, cereals, fruits, and vegetables grown north of the city. Wau was virtually destroyed during anti-government protests in 1965. The city was reconstructed in 1972 and is home to 110,000 residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Sudan, a vast, sun-baked land, gained independence in 1956, following the end of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. It is the largest country in all Africa, stretching almost 1 million square miles. Superimposed over a map of the U.S., Sudan would reach from the Canadian border to Houston, and from eastern Utah to St. Louis. To the north are the Libyan and Nubian Deserts. In mid-country, a band of rocky semi-desert reaches from the Chad border eastward to encompass the range of arid mountains along the Red Sea coast and the Ethiopian border. The southern half consists of savanna and swampland grading into semitropical forests along the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda

borders. Although arable, fertile land is available (37%); little (1.5%) is cultivated because of inadequate water usage. The U.S. was involved in many projects to improve water usage and agricultural methods through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), but these programs were cut when the military took over the civilian government in 1989.

Through these diverse regions flow the White and Blue Niles, which converge at Khartoum. The Nile system, with its major tributaries—the Bahr al Ghazal, Sobat, and Atbara—is the primary water supply for much of northeastern Africa. Most cultivation in the north of Sudan depends on these rivers, but further south, rainfall is sufficient for cultivation and grazing.

The river is navigable only in certain areas. The Bahr al-Arab, flowing west to east, forms a natural frontier. Another, more formidable obstacle to the south is the Sudd, an immense 12,000 square miles of swamp and floating vegetation into which the White Nile expands before reverting to river again. Over great distances, only a few paved roads, a limited rail line, and unreliable air service connect broadly scattered towns and settlements.

Khartoum is Usually hot and dUsty. During May, June, and July, daily temperatures average 120 °F, with frequent dust storms called “haboobs.” July, August, and part of September are not as hot, with rare but heavy rain storms (average 8 inches yearly) and continuing haboobs. From November until April, daily temperatures range around 95 °F; nights, around 70 °F, are pleasant. Cool weather at night and in the early mornings sometimes requires light sweaters or blankets.

Population

Sudan bridges Arabic and African cultures. Its approximately 36 million people are from different ethnic

groups, cultures, and creeds. About 70 percent are Moslem and 30 percent are Christian or animistic. Among the northern groups are the Hadendowa, Bisharin, and Beni Amer of the Red Sea hills; the Nubian tribes of the northern Nile Valley; a conglomeration of “Arab” tribes occupying the central belt; the Kababish and other nomadic tribes west of the Nile; and descendants of earlier peoples, such as Nuba, Fur, and Ingessana. Although some still speak their own Hamitic, Semitic, or other ancient languages, the common language of northern Sudan is Arabic. Many local dialects are spoken.

Southern Sudan was isolated from early external influences by climate and geography. It is inhabited by African ethnic groups that speak over 100 separate languages and dialects classified as Sudanic, Nilotic, and Nile Hamitic. The common language of Sudan is Arabic. The Dinkas, with a population around 2 million, constitute the largest southern tribe. Other tribal groups include the Nuer, Shilluk, and Azande.

Political History

The North and South of Sudan have been at war for the last 10 years. The military dictatorship was overthrown in April 1985. After a transitional period, Sudan held its first free elections in 17 years in 1986. Although the civil war prevented elections in 37 of 68 southern constituencies, a Parliament was elected and a democratic coalition government formed. Six of 40 parties from a broad political spectrum participated in Sadiq Al-Mahdi’s coalition government until June 30 1989, when General Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir headed a military coup which overthrew the government. Bashir dissolved the Parliament and suspended activities of all political parties. The present regime is heavily influenced by the National Islamic Front.

Arts, Science, and Education

Sudan’s education system requires 12 years compulsory education. Literacy is 46 percent. Instruction through high school is in Arabic. The University of Khartoum is the center of Khartoum’s intellectual life. Arabic has replaced English as the primary language of instruction in Sudanese universities.

Al Nilein University (or University of Two Niles), formerly the University of Cairo, is located in Khartoum; the Islamic University and the Ahfad College for Women operate in Omdurman—adjacent to Khartoum. The University of Juba has moved to Khartoum due to the war. There are also the University of Gezira in Wad Medani, and Kordofan University in El-Obeid. The French and German Cultural Centers offer language classes and cultural events. The American Center (U.S.IS) sponsors academic exchanges and arranges cultural activities.

Commerce and Industry

Agriculture is one of the country’s major activities, capitalizing on extensive fertile land irrigated from the Nile. Agriculture provides much of the country’s export income: cotton is the leading cash crop, followed by sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, gum arabic, and livestock. Fruits and vegetables are grown for local consumption. Limited industry processes agriculture produce. Sudan’s natural resources include some oil reserves, iron ore, copper, and chrome. Although Sudan is believed to possess other minerals, including zinc, iron, and uranium, mining is still insignificant. The country’s petroleum resources had attracted some foreign investment (led by Chevron), but Chevron sold its last oil concessions to a private Sudanese corporation in 1992. In 1999, a boom in oil production changed the face of Sudan’s economy, spurring economic growth.

Approximately 185,000 barrels of oil are produced daily, and oil now accounts for 70 percent of the country's export earnings.

Despite Sudan's physical advantages, it is among the world's poorest countries, with a per capita income of about \$1,000 a year. The Sudanese economy has suffered from high inflation and low output. Labor shortages have developed, because skilled workers have emigrated to better job prospects abroad. Like many developing countries, Sudan's infrastructure has gaps: Transportation, especially outside Khartoum, is difficult and impedes development; power blackouts are frequent, and telephone service is irregular. Certain essential commodities are occasionally scarce.

Oil production has helped lift Sudan's economy, allowing growth of 6-7% annually in recent years. Overall results, however, have been disappointing, in part because of declining foreign assistance levels. Western economic assistance has declined drastically due to international dissatisfaction with the Government's human rights record, and any assistance received from the Gulf states was terminated when Sudan sided with Iraq during the Gulf War. Current Western assistance is almost entirely humanitarian relief.

Transportation

Local

Local buses are rarely used by foreigners. Taxis are easy to find downtown, but cannot be called by telephone. Most Sudanese white-collar workers use taxis, frequently in groups. Taxis are not readily available after dark in residential areas. Most taxi drivers do not speak English. Daytime rates are reasonable; they usually double at night. Rates typically are at least double for foreigners.

Regional

Sudan's regional transportation system seriously impedes its economic development. Paved, all-weather roads connect Khartoum with Port Sudan via Kassala, and with Kosti and Sennar. Travel elsewhere by car is difficult, even with four-wheel-drive vehicles. In the rainy season, travel in the southern regions is virtually impossible. At the present time, travel to the south is restricted due to the ongoing civil war. Because of the danger of breakdown, you should travel any lengthy journey with at least another four-wheel-drive vehicle.

There is good, daily train service between Port Sudan and Khartoum.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The telephone system is overloaded in Khartoum and inadequate beyond. Installation of a new telecommunication system is underway.

Commercial telex facilities are available at the Hilton and the Acropole hotels. Some individuals have had success placing international calls at Key International and the Nissan Parts Place, both in the Amarat section of Khartoum.

Radio and TV

Radio Omdurman broadcasts one 15-minute English newscast daily. Other programs of commentary, poetry, drama, and music are in Arabic. Sudan TV broadcasts in color about 7 hours each day. Four or five programs a week are broadcast in English, but they are usually dated and of minimal interest.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The main printed source of news in English is the daily mimeographed news bulletin put out by SUNA (Sudanese News Agency). A monthly magazine in English published by the Government of Sudan, *Sudanow*, is filled with informative stories of Sudanese issues and

events, as does the daily *New Horizon*.

The European edition of *Newsweek* appears on newsstands some days old, as do copies of the *International Herald Tribune* and a few other European papers, but availability is inconsistent. If you want regular delivery, it is best to order your own subscription. The American Center (U.S.IS) holds the best collection of U.S. periodicals and newspapers.

Several small bookshops offer a limited selection. All English-language books are imported, and the costs of transportation, duty, etc., make them expensive.

Health and Medicine

Community Health

Khartoum water is potable when it leaves the processing plant, but the distribution system is subject to contamination.

The extreme heat occurring 9 out of 12 months of the year quickly ferments uncollected garbage dumped on abundant vacant lots. Sewage problems are common in some areas of the city when frequent power outages stop sewage pumps. Lack of toilet facilities, inadequate refrigeration, and poor health standards in food handling and processing make it necessary to use extreme care in preparing food at home and selecting food when eating out. During and following the short rainy season, the city is infested with flies, mosquitoes, and other insects.

Constant dust plays havoc with sinus and bronchial systems. If you are prone to respiratory disease, dust allergies, and hay fever, be aware that this is a hazard in Khartoum. Air humidifiers are recommended in the bedrooms at night because of extremely low humidity.

Preventive Measures

Endemic diseases or other health hazards in Khartoum and through-

out Sudan include malaria, dysentery, parasitic and respiratory infections, hepatitis, rabies, cerebrospinal meningitis, and tuberculosis. Bilharzia is present in the Blue and White Niles, and the main Nile.

Boil and filter drinking water, and drink pasteurized, fresh milk. Do not use local long-life milk because of local storage and age factors. Other brands of long-life milk are available at the commissary. Meat should be well cooked, and salads or other uncooked vegetables and fruits should be avoided unless you are sure that they have been properly cleaned.

Adults should drink 12–16 glasses of water or similar clear liquid (excluding coffee, tea, and alcohol) a day to prevent dehydration in the extreme heat and low humidity.

All persons coming to Sudan should begin taking malaria suppressant tablets two weeks before arrival and continue the program throughout the specified period. Yellow fever, rabies, polio, tetanus, typhoid, and hepatitis immunizations, and necessary childhood immunizations should also be current before arrival.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The U.S. Department of State warns against travel to Sudan due to security instability. Rebel activities, ongoing civil war, and bombing campaigns make the area unsafe for travelers. Extreme caution should be exercised at all times.

American carriers do not operate to Sudan. The best connections from the U.S. are made through Frankfurt, Paris, and Amsterdam. Each of these involves another stop in Cairo before arriving in Khartoum.

Importing foreign currency is not quantitatively restricted, but is

closely monitored by the Sudan Government.

A visa is required for entry into Sudan. Although presentation of up-to-date immunization records is no longer routinely required upon arrival in Sudan, travelers should have them available.

Careful consideration should be made before bringing a pet to Sudan. Owners should keep in mind the extreme heat and possibilities of disease. Though death/illness of pets does not happen often, a few very unfortunate incidents have occurred. Many people choose to adopt animals found in Khartoum, such as dogs, cats, even rabbits. Veterinary care is available in Khartoum for treatment or inoculation.

You may bring animals into Sudan with an import permit. Pets arriving without a permit are subject to quarantine and possible extermination.

The Sudanese dinar (SDD) is the national currency. In January 2002, the exchange rate was SDD 257.44/ U.S.D.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Sham El Nasseem/ Easter Monday
Jun. 30	National Salvation Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

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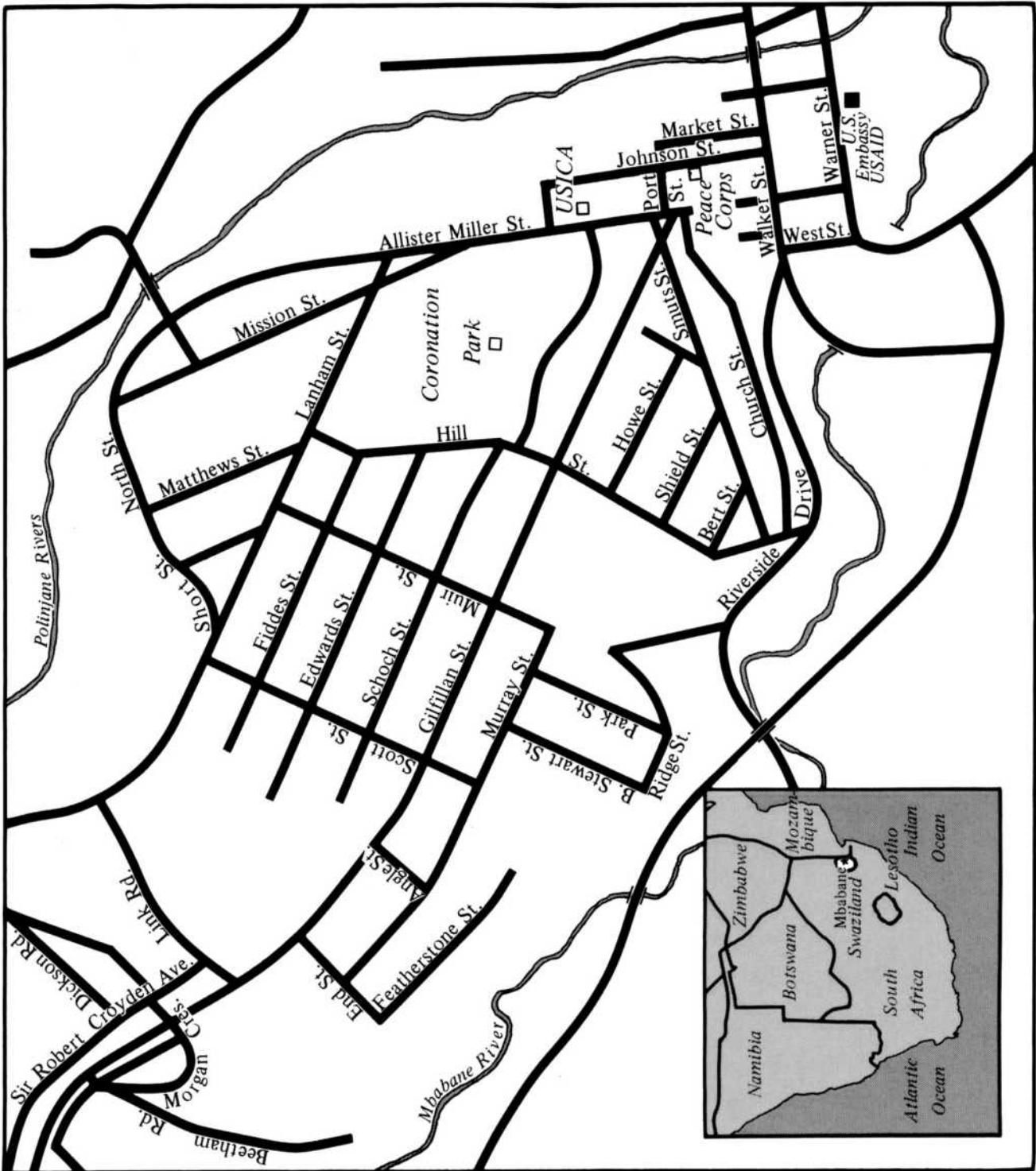
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Mbabane, Swaziland

SWAZILAND

Kingdom of Swaziland

Major City:

Mbabane

Other City:

Manzini

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Swaziland. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SWAZILAND, geographically one of Africa's most diverse smaller states, lies landlocked in the southeast corner of the continent between Mozambique and South Africa. A country of rolling hills and valleys, sound fiscal management, and financial cooperation with its largest neighbor, South Africa, Swaziland's standard of living is better than that of most African countries. Swaziland also maintains the simplicity and mysterious traditions that tend to keep it relatively insulated from the turmoil that afflicts the other nations of southern Africa. Many Swazis continue to wear traditional dress rather than Western fashions. Mbabane, Swaziland's capital city, is a clean and orderly

town where an outdoor African market and a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant coexist.

Sobhuza II, known to his people as the Lion of the Swazis, the Inexplicable, the Great Mountain, the Bull, the Son of the She-Elephant, and the Knight of the British Empire, was the world's longest reigning monarch, ruling Swaziland from 1921 until his death on August 21, 1982. For the next four years, Queen Ntombi Tfwala, one of Sobhuza's many wives, acted as regent until the coronation of Crown Prince Makhosetive. The coronation, held April 25, 1986, took place three years earlier than anticipated in order to end an ongoing power struggle between vying royalist factions. Eighteen-year-old King Mswati III, *the Ngwenyama*, or lion of his people, told his countrymen at his colorful coronation ceremony: "My experience is short, but I have behind me the sacred trust and strength of the people."

MAJOR CITY

Mbabane

Mbabane was chosen by the former British administrators as the capital of the High Commission Terri-

tory because it was free of the malaria prevalent at lower altitudes in the country. Today, it bustles with commercial and official activity resulting from its status as the seat of government of independent Swaziland. Pleasant, well-shaped residential areas spread over the hills surrounding the growing business section. Downtown stores and a nearby shopping mall with a U.S.-style supermarket provide most of the goods and services available in a small- to medium-sized American town. Mbabane's population is approximately 67,000.

Mbabane has many social and climatic characteristics of a small town in Oregon or Washington. The combination of its 26° south latitude (longitude 31° east) and 3,800-foot altitude gives Mbabane cool and dry winters and mild summers. Most of the rainfall comes in long, misty drizzles between October and March. Heavy rains in that period are frequently accompanied by hail and violent electrical storms. Evenings tend to be cool, even in summer, and frost can occur in the winter months.

The capital's previous English colonial atmosphere has dissipated with the "localization" of the civil service. Although a substantial European population remains, it is now com-



Women outside a mall in Mbabane, Swaziland

Jason Laure. Reproduced by permission.

posed mostly of South Africans, English, and Portuguese engaged in commercial activity. Mbabane's Swazi population is made up of government officials and also rural Swazis who have to come to the capital looking for jobs. Languages most heard in the capital are siSwati, used by Swazis among themselves and for most local broadcasting; English, spoken by expatriates and in government offices; and Portuguese, used by members of the Portuguese business community.

Taxis are available at all hotels in Mbabane; the usual tip is 10 percent. There are also car rental services in Mbabane; an international driver's license is required and driving is on the left.

Allister Miller Street, one of the main thoroughfares in Mbabane, has modern shops, boutiques, hotels, commercial banks, and the offices of several diplomatic missions. Nearly all of Swaziland's government ministries and departments are located in and around the Mbabane area.

On the south side of the city is the Industrial Site, with several light industries and commercial concerns. The Small Enterprises Devel-

opment Company's (SEDCO) complex is located here. There is a friendly little shopping center offering handmade clothes in colorful African fabrics, finely crocheted shawls, pottery, tapestries, artificial flowers made from local grasses, and a wide range of other items.

Visitors are drawn to the Swazi Plaza, now the established commercial center of Mbabane. The plaza provides nearly every type of shopping and service facility, all on one level. Access from the adjacent Mbabane town center is gained by merely walking across the bridge that spans the Mbabane River.

Education

Sifundzani School is a primary school in the city of Mbabane that provides adequate facilities for American children, and as a Swazi Government school, it follows a British curriculum. Founded in 1981, the school is a coeducational institution and receives support from the Office of Overseas Schools. The school is situated in a hillside area and consists of six buildings, 14 classrooms, an auditorium, playing field, and swimming pool. Sifundzani has grades one through seven and enrolls children the year they turn six. The curriculum at the school includes five years of French

and siSwati. Extracurricular activities include drama, sports, and choral and instrumental music. Visits to game reserves, museums, houses of Parliament, industrial areas, and agricultural projects are part of the curriculum. The school day is from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Simple, inexpensive uniforms of shirts and jeans for boys and pinafores for girls are required. The school year lasts from January to December. Further information can be obtained at: P.O. Box A286, Swazi Plazi, Mbabane, Swaziland.

Waterford-Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa (P.O. Box 52, Mbabane), a private school set among the foothills overlooking the city, is considered one of the finest preparatory schools in southern Africa. Because it is usually full and often has a waiting list, parents contemplating enrolling their children in Waterford-Kamhlaba should communicate with the headmaster as many months ahead as possible. However, admission to Waterford-Kamhlaba on any level is by competitive entrance examination and by merit.

The school was founded in 1963 with the aim of providing a high standard of secondary education in a multiracial environment. Originally a boy's school, it is now coeducational.

The school is comprised of 20 buildings, 21 classrooms, a 16,000-volume library, auditorium, four tennis courts, three playing fields, seven science labs, computer center, swimming pool, and infirmary.

Waterford-Kamhlaba offers a seven-year British (approximate) secondary curriculum divided into a five-year section and a final two-year section. The first five-year program leads to the Cambridge External Board School Certificate ("O" level) which is almost equivalent to a U.S. high school diploma. At the end of the first five years, a student must reapply for the final two years, which will lead to the International Baccalaureate degree. Classes begin at 8 a.m. Monday

through Friday and alternate Saturdays. They end at 3 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and at 1 p.m. on Wednesday and alternate Saturdays. Sports activities are scheduled two days a week and, on these days, students may remain as late as 4 or 5 p.m.

Subjects offered include English language and literature, history, geography, mathematics, economics, chemistry, physics, biology, languages (Afrikaans, Spanish, French, Zulu/siSwati), music, and art. The "O" level examinations are taken on six to nine subjects from the list. The International Baccalaureate examination is taken on a combination of six subjects and includes a "theory of knowledge" paper and an extended essay based on the student's own research and reading under the guidance of one of the teachers. Extracurricular activities consist of sports (including swimming), art, chess, music, science clubs, camping and other outdoor activities, drama, gymnastics, dance, yearbook, and newspaper.

Many parents and children living in the Mbabane area, including American families, share the faculty's view that boarding provides the ideal educational and social experience. Boarders may join their families every Wednesday afternoon and weekends.

Several nursery schools operate in Mbabane. Private tutoring in art, crafts, and sports is also available. In addition to its regular Swazi-oriented programs in English and siSwati, Sebenta National Institute (adult education) has evening courses in siSwati for foreigners.

Recreation

Swaziland has many good sports facilities. Group sports, usually conducted by clubs, are typically British: soccer, rugby, cricket, and bowls. Many Swazis are avid soccer players and fans, and semi-professional games are played weekends in Mbabane, or in the Somhlolo National Stadium in Lobamba.

The country has several golf courses, including one at the Mbabane Club and the international-standard course at the Royal Swazi Hotel. Tennis is increasing in popularity. There are three municipal courts at Coronation Park in Mbabane, six courts at the Mbabane Club, and others at nearly every major center in the country. Horseback riding facilities are available at several hotels and nature reserves around the county as well as privately run stables. Stabling is available for privately owned horses. Most hotels have their own pools.

Swaziland's striking mountains and highveld attract outdoor enthusiasts. Camping, hiking, picnicking, and fishing are popular in the latter. Horses can be rented for outings. Several bushmen painting sites are within easy driving distance of Mbabane. The country now has five game parks: a small but growing one in the middleveld in the Malkerns valley (Mlilwane), and a larger, undeveloped protected area in the bushveld (Ehlane). The former has well-kept roads that bring the visitor within a few feet of a wide variety of game, many imported from other parts of Africa. These include antelope, rhino, zebra, giraffe, hippo, ostrich, and many birds. Elephants and rhinos are being reintroduced into Swaziland in the outlying reserves. The Swaziland Natural History and Mineral and Gem Societies often arrange lectures and tours to these areas.

Indigenous fish, including bream, yellowfish, silver barbel, mud fish, and eels, are found in most rivers. Black bass have been successfully introduced into a number of dams. Streams in the Usutu Forest are stocked with trout but fishing in these waters is by permit only. Permits are available from the Usutu Forest Fishing Club.

The Swaziland Automobile Club organizes many rallies during the year. The Swaziland Flying Club at Matsapha Airport has its own plane and gives flying lessons. An annual

raft race is held on the Usutu River near Big Bend.

Travel in neighboring South Africa is a favorite way of adding variety to Mbabane's small-town life. American tourist travel is not encouraged by Mozambique, which usually issues visas to Americans on official business only.

Those in search of "city lights" can choose between the South African cities of Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Durban, all of which offer cinema, theater, music, and good restaurants and nightclubs. However, many facilities are closed on Sundays. Durban, on the Indian Ocean, has the additional attraction of beaches and a seaport atmosphere.

Those looking for wider open spaces have a number of available routes. Two hours north of Swaziland is South Africa's Kruger National Park, containing much of the game still found in southern Africa, including lion and elephant. The northern Natal areas have other smaller game parks, and also the famous Drakensberg mountains with snow-covered peaks where one can go climbing, trout fishing, and camping. Blyde River canyon, about three hours north of Mbabane, has beautiful hiking and climbing areas.

Entertainment

Mbabane is a town of self-generated entertainment. It can be dull for a person not active in sports or in social and cultural life. Nightly movies are shown, including recent releases, at the Cinelux Theater in Mbabane, and older films are shown at a cinema in Manzini. "Classic" and art films are shown several times a week in the 230-seat theater of the Mbabane Theatre Club, which also stages frequent dramatic productions. They also have a dinner theater featuring short plays and amateur folk nights. Touring vocal and instrumental artists appear on an average of once a month, under the auspices of the Swaziland Music Society.

In addition to its nightclub entertainment, the Royal Swazi Sun

Hotel has roulette tables, poker and blackjack games, and slot machines. On payment of a small fee, nonresidents have access to these diversions and to the hotel's facilities for golf, tennis, bowls, swimming, and dancing, as well as to its spa compound. Several "local color" nightclubs are in Mbabane. Square dance evenings are organized in Mbabane, and Scottish dancing evenings are held in Manzini.

Occasional horse events and gymkhanas are held at local stables. The Swaziland Art Society sponsors two exhibitions each year featuring the work of artists residing in Swaziland. A commercial art gallery, Indinglizi, in Mbabane, has regular exhibitions. Swaziland is a photographer's delight with both natural scenery and colorful national dress. Film processing is available in Mbabane, but slides are sent to South Africa.

The Swazis have two traditional dance festivals each year, the *Umhlanga* or Reed Dance (women) in late August or early September, and the *Incwala* (men) in late December or early January. Both are open to the public. Permits are normally required for taking still photographs at close quarters, and the use of movie cameras is discouraged. Visitors may get permission to photograph these ceremonies from the Government Information Service at B.P. 338, Mbabane.

Although social entertaining in the Western sense is not a part of Swazi social life, occasional opportunities exist to visit Swazi homes, and Swazis usually accept dinner invitations. Small lunches, dinners, barbecues (called *braais*), and similar get-togethers are held often. Many Swazis go to their homesteads on weekends, so most entertaining is done during the week. Swazi people are very friendly and helpful to visitors.

OTHER CITY

The largest city in Swaziland is **MANZINI**, located in the central part of the country about 25 miles southeast of Mbabane, with a population of 73,000. Most Swazi towns originally grew around trading stores, and Manzini, the industrial and agricultural center of the country, is a prime example. The town has modern shops, a maize mill, light engineering works, small factories, a rice drying plant, and is the seat of the Swaziland Trade Fair Exhibition Center. Dairy and beef cattle are also raised, and Swaziland's main meat processing plant, creamery, cotton gin, and fruit canning factory are located in and around Manzini. Manzini was the capital of Swaziland before 1902. There are two hotels in Manzini. Their names and addresses are: The George, P.O. Box 51; and Highlands Inn, P.O. Box 12. Taxis are available for hire at the hotels. Cars may be rented at the Manzini airport, located five miles outside of town.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Swaziland is an independent kingdom in southeastern Africa. Its 6,704 square miles (less than the area of New Jersey) are all but surrounded by the Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of the Republic of South Africa. Its eastern border on Mozambique is about 40 miles from the Indian Ocean. The greatest distance from north to south is less than 120 miles, and from east to west is less than 90 miles.

Swaziland has four well-defined regions of roughly equal breadth, running from north to south: highveld, middleveld, lowveld (or bushveld), and the Lubombo Plateau. The mountainous highveld in the west (where Mbabane, the capital,

is located) rises over 6,000 feet, with an average altitude of 4,000 feet. The middleveld averages 2,000 feet, the lowveld 700 feet, and the Lubombo Plateau about 1,800 feet.

The highveld has a humid, near-temperate climate with 40 to 90 inches mean annual rainfall. Daytime weather is more variable in the highveld than in the other regions, with a foggy or overcast morning sometimes followed by a sunny afternoon, and vice versa. Temperatures for Mbabane, located in the highveld, range between a mean low of 51°F and a mean high of 72°F. Extremes of 17°F and 99°F have also been recorded.

The middleveld and Lubombo Plateau are subtropical and drier, with 30 to 45 inches mean annual rainfall. Temperatures for Manzini, the country's main industrial center and the city nearest the university campuses, range between a mean low of 57°F and a mean high of 78°F. Extremes of 32°F and 108°F also have been recorded.

The lowveld is warmer and less humid than the middleveld, with 20 to 35 inches mean annual rainfall, usually during heavy summer storms. Temperatures for Big Bend, center of the sugarcane industry in eastern Swaziland, range between a mean low of 58°F and a mean high of 84°F. Extremes of 26°F and 108°F have been recorded.

Population

Swaziland's resident population is estimated at 1.1 million. Thousands of Swazi nationals normally work outside the country, principally in the South African mines. Mbabane has a population of 67,000 (2002 estimate). Swaziland's other major city is Manzini, which has a population of 73,000. The annual growth rate is about 1.8 percent.

A small percentage of the Africans in southern Swaziland are Zulus; most of the rest are Swazis. The European community of about 30,000 consists of English-, Afrikaans-, and Portuguese-speaking

groups. Afrikaners are in both the northern and southern parts of the country, whereas the English and Portuguese are located largely in the north. Europeans engage mainly in agriculture, trading, construction, mining, and the professions.

Most Swazis are engaged in agriculture and are strongly bound to tradition. Society is patriarchal, with the usual family homestead including a man, his wives, his unmarried children, and his married sons and their families. If his mother is living, she has a great deal of influence in the homestead. The Swazi farmer lives in a "beehive" hut, wears beaded neck ornaments and a brightly colored wraparound cloth overlaid with an animal skin, and has a diet consisting mainly of maize, greens, and milk. Although Swazis love meat, those living in homesteads have meat only on special occasions or when they have visitors. Even though many homesteads have cattle, they prefer to slaughter them mainly for celebrations.

More than half of the Swazis belong to various Christian churches; most of the rest practice a traditional religion based on ancestor-worship. The official languages of Swaziland are English and siSwati.

History

One of Africa's last ruling dynasties, the Swazis trace their history back 400 years. In the 19th century, as one of the weaker Bantu tribes of southern Africa, the Swazis were driven back by the powerful Zulus to the rocky, mountainous region that became Swaziland.

Early Swazi rulers kept their land independent from the surging Zulus, Boers, and British with a combination of warfare and diplomacy, until the 1890s when the Boers took control. Following the British victory in the Boer War, Swaziland became a British High Commission Territory in 1903. It achieved independence on September 6, 1968, becoming the 28th inde-

pendent member of the British Commonwealth.

Government

As a British colony, the British High Commissioners who ruled Swaziland foresaw the tiny African nation as one day being incorporated into South Africa. Independence was not contemplated until the 1960s, and at that time, the British envisioned the government to be a constitutional monarchy with a democratic parliament. But Sobhuza II, whose reign during the British protectorate was as a limited constitutional monarch with a largely ceremonial role, believed that his rule, with the advice of a tribal council, was better for the Swazis than any form of Western democracy. He formed his own political party—*Imbokodvo* (Grinding Stone)—and in the first parliamentary election held in 1967, won all 24 seats in Parliament with 80 percent of the vote. Full independence was achieved for Swaziland, with Sobhuza II in control, on September 6, 1968.

The constitution in effect at the time of independence stated that legislative power was vested in a bicameral parliament, with a senate and a house of assembly. In April 1973, King Sobhuza repealed the constitution, suspended political activity, and took all executive, legislative, and judicial powers himself. Although there was no threat to Sobhuza's power, it appeared that he preferred to rule as Swazi King rather than as constitutional monarch, and to have governmental organization and procedures more compatible with Swazi tradition. In September 1973, the Royal Constitutional Commission was appointed to draw up a new constitution. In March 1977, the king abolished the parliamentary system and replaced it with traditional tribal communities—*tinkhundla*. The other traditional council—known as the Supreme Council of State until 1985 (*liqoqo*)—is composed of 16 members of Swazi royalty and other notables appointed by the king, who advise him on all matters regulated

by Swazi law and custom and connected with Swazi tradition and culture.

A new constitution was declared on October 13, 1978, and is based on traditional tribal communities. It called for a bicameral Parliament, or *Libandla*, made up of a House of Assembly with 50 deputies and a Senate with 20 senators. An 80-member electoral college, made up of two people elected from each *tinkhundla*, in turn elect 40 deputies and 10 senators. The king then chooses an additional 10 members for each house. The functions of the legislature were confined to debating government proposals and advising the king. Ultimately, the king must approve any parliamentary acts before they become law.

Sobhuza II was the world's longest reigning monarch when he died in 1982 at the age of 83. He was born the same year in which his father, King Ngwane V, died. Traditionally, the king's successor is not named until after his death so as to prevent the successor from posing a threat to his father. Sobhuza was chosen from among his father's many heirs by a tribal council headed by the queen mother, or favored wife, who is designated as a She-Elephant. Sobhuza's power was partly based on tradition and on his people's belief that he was the great rainmaker and the sole source of fertility in Swaziland. The role he played during the British protectorate, while viewed as merely ceremonial, was in fact very important because ritual plays a large role in the lives of the Swazis.

On August 21, 1982, the full powers of the head of state were transferred to the constitutional dual monarch—the Queen Mother, or She-Elephant (*Indlovukazi*). The Queen Mother, Dzeliwe, also took the title of Queen Regent. On August 9, 1983, Dzeliwe was replaced in a palace coup by Queen Ntombi, the mother of Sobhuza's successor, Prince Makhosetive. The new Queen Regent was advised by the Supreme Council of State (*liqoqo*) and was assisted by Prince

Sozisa Dlamini in administering state affairs until his suspension in September 1984. It was expected that Queen Ntombi would act as regent until her son reached age 21 and was crowned king. During that time, the young prince was to receive his formal education in England as well as learn his country's tribal customs and laws. However, due to the power struggle between members of Sobhuza's family that began with the dismissal of Queen Dzeliwe, the regency of Queen Ntombi was terminated three years early. Prince Makhosetive, Sobhuza's second youngest son, born April 19, 1968, was crowned King Mswati III on April 25, 1986. Swaziland is one of only three monarchies that rule on the African continent. The others are Morocco and Lesotho.

Swaziland has two court systems. Swazi National Courts, under the Ministry of Local Administration, administer Swazi law and custom and all rules made by the *Ngwenyama* or chiefs. The other system, under the Ministry of Justice, deals with matters in the modern sector. It comprises a number of magistrate courts throughout the country, plus a one-man high court (chief justice) and a multi-judge court of appeal, convened when necessary to review decisions of the high court.

Red Cross, Scouting, and 4-H (called 4-S in Swaziland) are active in varying degrees throughout the country.

Swaziland is a member of the United Nations, UNESCO, WHO, the Economic Commission for Africa, and several other world and African organizations. It maintains diplomatic relations with 40 countries, including Israel, Mozambique, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, all of whom have embassies in Mbabane. Swaziland also maintains diplomatic missions abroad in London; Washington, D.C.; Maputo, Mozambique; and Nairobi, Kenya.

Swaziland's flag consists of five horizontal bands: narrow blue (for peace), broad crimson (for past bat-

ties), and narrow blue, divided by gold stripes (for mineral resources). The large central emblem consists of an ox-hide shield and spears decorated with feathers.

Arts, Science, Education

Much of the Swazi artistic expression is reflected in traditional dances held several times a year nationally, and more frequently on a regional basis. Best known are the dances performed by special male troupes called *Sibaca* dancers; by puberty-age girls in the annual Reed Dance in reverence to the queen mother; and by men of the various age-group "regiments" in their year-end homage to the king on the occasion of the religious festival of Incwala. Choral singing is another form of artistic expression for the Swazis. Regional, national, and international competitions are held annually.

Swazi handicrafts are widely recognized as being among the most creative in Africa. In recent years, a lively export market has been established worldwide. The Mantenga Craft Center, located south of Mbabane near Swaziland's most famous waterfall—Mantenga Falls—has contributed to the success of the handicraft market in stimulating the natural weaving ability of local women trained at the center. Established in May 1976 as the country's original handicraft center, Mantenga Craft Center trains people in tapestry, rug-making, ceramics, screen-printing, and the making of silver jewelry. The center consists of a series of workshops converted from farmsheds situated in the cool shade of tall trees, and today employs 150 local craftspeople.

Pictorial tapestries, woven from handspun, hand-dyed wools, cotton, and mohair are among the most outstanding items produced at the center. Scenes depicted in the tapestries are based on the pastoral elements of daily traditional life. The workers at the center also produce intricate woven hair tapes-

tries. These are based on the traditional African culture that decreed a wide range of hairstyles. The tapestries are woven in merino wool, with long thick strands of cotton or linen representing the hair, which is tied, twisted, and knotted in various styles. Many of these tapestries have been displayed in Europe or are in private collections. Handwoven cottons produced on fast-shuttle looms are another specialty of the Mantenga Craft Center. Designs are taken from traditional and contemporary symbols of local life and are sewn into placemats, tablecloths, and bedspreads. Beautifully shaped pottery, with a distinctive earthy look, is yet another facet of the center's craftsmanship.

Primary education in Swaziland is voluntary beginning at age six and lasting for seven years. Secondary education is by choice; it begins at age 13 and is divided into two cycles of three and two years.

Swaziland is the site of two campuses of the University of Swaziland, both some 20 miles southeast of Mbabane. The Kwaluseni campus houses the faculties of humanities, economics and social studies, education, and science; the Luyengo campus houses the faculty of agriculture, which operates a farm and several research stations around the country. In addition to the University, several schools exist for technical training, adult literacy, management, and teacher training.

In 1995, 77 percent of the Swazis were considered literate. Almost all of them have at least attended primary school.

Commerce and Industry

Since independence in 1968, Swaziland has made steady progress in terms of economic growth and has significant promise for the future. Given its size and population, it is one of the wealthiest countries in Africa. Because of the pineapples and sugarcane grown here, it is often called the "African Hawaii."

Real growth averaged around 4.7 percent in the 1970s; from 1979 through 1982, it averaged about 1.7 percent; in 1984, it jumped to 11 percent. In 1990, real growth rate was estimated at five percent. This has been made possible by rapid expansion in the modern agricultural sector and through diversification of the economy as a whole. Swaziland's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was \$4.4 billion in 2000; per capita income was estimated to be about \$4,000, making it one of the highest in Africa. However, this figure does not accurately represent the average Swazi, who is still a subsistence farmer.

About 60 percent of the country's land area is held by the *Ngwenyama* in trust for the Swazi nation. The remaining land is owned primarily by Europeans and commercial companies, many of whom are not resident in Swaziland. The problem of land alienation, stemming from the granting of extensive concessions to Europeans in the last two decades of the 19th century, is still large. However, under a British grant-financed program, the Swazi nation is acquiring under-utilized freehold land on a "willing buyer, willing seller" basis. Almost 70 percent of the country is unimproved grazing area.

About 75 percent of the country's exports go to South Africa. Agriculture and forestry account for approximately one-quarter of the GNP and employ three-quarters of the work force. However, due to the fact that most land in the country is owned by foreigners, the agricultural sector is almost entirely in non-Swazi hands.

The country's three sugar mills, all of which are irrigated, are located in the lowveld. The sugar industry (headquartered in the southeastern town of Big Bend) produces the largest export and employs close to 20 percent of the work force. Soft drink concentrate and sugar are the main exports. Much of the sugar is exported to the European Union countries. Wood pulp is produced from pine and eucalyptus trees har-

vested from some of Africa's largest man-made forests.

Swaziland's manufacturing is considered large for a developing country. Manufacturing activities consist primarily of five export-oriented sectors: wood pulp production, drink processing, fruit canning, refrigerators, and sugar processing. Mining has been declining in Swaziland. The Ngwenya iron ore mine, which opened in 1964, ceased production in 1978. Exports stopped late in 1980 with the depletion of the reserves. The Havelock asbestos mine is one of the largest in the world and is 15 percent government owned. In the past Swazis have valued cattle for their own sake as a nonproductive status symbol. They are increasingly regarding them as a source of milk, meat, and profit. Slaughter stock, hides, and skins are becoming important exports.

Tourism is a very important component of Swaziland's economy. Visitors are attracted to the country's game reserves and beautiful mountain scenery. Of the total number of visitors, most were from South Africa. Most South Africans are lured by the Swaziland Casino, since gambling is prohibited in South Africa. Most tourist visits to Swaziland are short, usually weekend visits. Nearly 300,000 tourists visit Swaziland each year.

Most of Swaziland's imports are of South African origin. Principal imports are motor vehicles, machinery, transport equipment, petroleum products, foodstuffs, and chemicals.

Remittances by Swazi nationals working in South African mines accounts for a significant percent of national income. Receipts from the Southern African Customs Union provides between a quarter and a half of the government's revenue.

The government promotes foreign investment through the National Industrial Development Corporation of Swaziland (NIDCS).

The Swaziland Chamber of Commerce and Industry is located in Mbabane. The mailing address is P.O. Box 72, Mbabane. The address of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism is B.P. 451, Mbabane.

Transportation

Daily flights from Matsapha Airport, near Manzini, link Swaziland, with Johannesburg (for connections to main world routes). Twice weekly there are flights to Kenya, Lesotho, and Tanzania and there are five weekly flights to Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Flights leave for Maputo daily except Tuesday and for Durban four times a week. The Swaziland railway crosses from the Ngwenya iron ore mine, near Oshoek, to the Mozambique border, where it connects with the line to the port of Maputo. It does not, however, have passenger service.

A private car is essential for the enjoyment of any prolonged stay in Swaziland. Registration and licensing of motor vehicles is a simple procedure, which requires a road-worthiness certificate issued by the Public Works Department. The Mbabane and Manzini areas have taxis (few, expensive, and unreliable) and unscheduled buses. Scheduled buses link the main towns. Few Americans use public transportation

Traffic moves on the left. Good all-weather roads link the main centers, but most side roads are dusty and uneven during the dry season, and very slippery and dangerous during the rainy season. The maximum speed limit for all motorists is 50 miles per hour. Drivers must keep within the indicated limits; must be careful of pedestrians, particularly children; and must keep an eye open for stray cattle. It is not advisable to drive at a high speed on



Street scene in Swaziland

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

gravel roads, especially in wet weather.

Heavy mists, which blankets Mbabane and other areas of the highveld several months each year, combined with poor car maintenance, intoxication, and general risk-taking behind the wheel makes driving hazardous. Indeed, Swaziland has one of the highest accident rates and accident fatality rates in the world. It is highly recommended to wear seat belts at all times, to have children in car seats or seat belts, and to drive defensively. The crime rate in Swaziland, particularly violent crime and theft, is increasing. Car alarms and immobilizers are recommended to combat the escalating rate of car theft in Swaziland.

The main national highway runs from Oshoek on the western border to Lomahasha on the eastern border. It is paved for the 65 miles

between Oshoek and Mpaka. The remaining 38 miles to Lomahasha are of fair-quality gravel. Thirty-one miles of paved road link the Usutu Forest settlement of Mhlambanyati with the main national highway.

Car dealerships in Mbabane include Audi, BMW, Mazda, Nissan, Opel, Toyota, and Volkswagen, Honda and Mercedes are available in Manzini.

Third-party insurance is covered by a levy included in the gasoline price. Comprehensive coverage is highly recommended because of the high rate of vehicle theft and accidents.

Communications

Telephones in Mbabane and Manzini operate on a dial system, and are connected to the rest of Swaziland and to international operators through the local exchange. Direct dialing is available for between many countries, including the U.S.,

and for calls from those cities to South African exchanges. International and local telegraph facilities are available. Fax machines are incorporated into most business and donor communities. International airmail takes about five days to two weeks between the U.S. and Swaziland.

The Swaziland Broadcasting Service (SBS) is on the air in both siSwati and English. FM is the popular mode, but there is one medium-wave station that also provides service. English service is on the air approximately eight hours per day (medium-wave only). Daily programs are listed in the local newspapers. South African broadcasts can be heard in most areas with normal aerials. Voice of America (VOA) medium-wave transmission can be picked up clearly in the evening, and other English-language short-wave transmissions, including the BBC, can be heard in Swaziland

with a high-quality FM and short-wave receiver.

Color TV is broadcast by the Swaziland Television Broadcasting Corporation for five-six hours each evening, with extended service on weekends. Transmission includes local news and delayed international news from London as well as programs purchased in the U.S. and Europe. With special antennas, you can receive broadcasts from South Africa, including daily South African and international news and sports programming. American expatriates are advised to bring a multi-system or PAL/I TV set and VCR with them, as local broadcasts and videotapes are PAL/I system. Several video rental outlets have opened around Swaziland, carrying a good, up-to-date selection. Most tapes are PAL/I VHS format.

There are two daily English-language newspapers in Swaziland that are published Monday through Friday with separate weekend/Saturday editions. They are the privately-owned *The Times of Swaziland* and the parastatal *The Swazi Observer*. The *Swazi News* is published weekly. South African newspapers arrive in Swaziland about six hours after publication in Johannesburg. Two magazines are published monthly in Swaziland. *Dzadze* family magazine covers various aspects of Swazi life, customs, and politics, *Swazi TV Times* is a TV guide, with local news and events. International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are sold at newsstands. The Swaziland News Agency in Mbabane carries some London papers, arriving five days after publication, and a limited variety of magazines and paperbacks. Books can be borrowed from the National Library in Manzini, 25 miles from Mbabane, and from the privately-operated lending library in downtown Mbabane.

Health

Adequate medical care is available in Swaziland for routine illnesses. Because there are no trauma or intensive care facilities in Swazi-

land, serious illnesses and accidents must be treated in South Africa. In such emergencies, helicopters airlift patients to Johannesburg or Pretoria to medical facilities and care that compare to those in the U.S. However, helicopter evacuations can only occur during daylight hours, in the absence of rain and fog. In addition to government hospitals and clinics throughout the territory, a few privately run clinics and hospitals operate, which Americans use more frequently. One of the latter, the Mbabane clinic, has 26 beds, major and minor operating rooms, and X-ray equipment. It also has a small medical laboratory, but complicated tests must be performed in South Africa. The Raleigh Fitkin Memorial Hospital in Manzini, operated under Nazarene missionary auspices, has 25 beds for private patient care, X-ray equipment, a small laboratory, and U.S.-trained anesthetists. A limited intensive-care unit is being added. The Mbabane clinic and the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial Hospital provide 24-hour medical care.

Swaziland lacks trained anesthetists and functioning EKG equipment. There are also no satisfactory delivery facilities. It is recommended that women plan to deliver in South Africa or elsewhere. There are physicians who provide prenatal care in Mbabane.

Most physicians are associated with the local government or missionary-run installations. About half of the physicians in the country were trained in Great Britain or South Africa. Mbabane and Manzini have adequately stocked pharmacies. Dental services are available from the clinic and from private expatriate dentists.

Public sanitation facilities (sewage, garbage disposal, etc.) run by the Mbabane and Manzini municipal governments are satisfactory. Water from the town supply is not considered safe for drinking. Milk from the local commercial dairies is pasteurized and is used by many American and other foreign families. Since dairy sanitary controls are not up to

U.S. standards, some families prefer to use powdered milk.

Tuberculosis, bilharzia, malaria, venereal diseases, and tick fever, are endemic to Swaziland. Malaria is not found in the highveld, but it is found year round in the middleveld and lowveld areas. Those living in or traveling to the lowveld should take malaria suppressants and see a physician at the onset of any fever. Similarly, travelers to Mozambique, Kruger Park, and Natal should take malaria suppressants; in all cases, these should be effective against chloroquine-resistant malaria. Bilharzia is still prevalent in all streams, ponds, and lakes below 4,000 feet, and can be contracted simply by coming into contact with the water. Swimming, wading, or washing in natural bodies of water should be avoided here. Snakes, including poisonous species, are common in Swaziland, especially in the bushveld.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is an increasing problem in southern Africa as it is worldwide. Local blood supplies are not safe, although they are screened. The American community contributes to a "walking blood donor" program administered by the Embassy nurse. Advice on AIDS prevention is available from the health staff at the American Embassy and HIV testing is available locally.

Roaming dogs are sometimes rabid, even in Mbabane, and persons (especially children) who may be frequently in contact with them should receive injections against rabies.

Clothing and Services

Mbabane's climate is moderate throughout the year. However, the temperature can vary noticeably between morning and evening in both summer and winter. For this reason, the layered look is practical because various articles of clothing, including a sweater, can be added or

removed. Several hot weeks in summer require light dresses or suits. Woolens and sweaters are sometimes needed for the rainy, misty weather common to Mbabane summers and are essential in winter. Therefore, a full range of clothing, including rainwear, is needed.

The only clothing taboo in Swaziland pertains to women wearing slacks and pantsuits. Mini-skirts, see-through blouses, and short tennis skirts are not appreciated in town. Women wear short dresses or skirts to work and in the evening.

Because of Swaziland's outdoor orientation, visitors will find a good pair of walking shoes useful. Adults should bring a supply of dress and regular shoes with them. It is impossible to find shoes in narrow widths such as AA. Children's shoes are available locally. Sandal-toe or support hose are not obtainable in Swaziland or South Africa.

A basic but limited selection of clothing is available in Mbabane at prices generally higher than in the U.S. Adults should bring most of their clothes with them.

The range of foodstuffs in Mbabane compares with that available in a small- to medium-size American town, but with occasional shortages. Several grocery stores, produce markets, bakeries, and butcher shops, as well as a delicatessen, are available. Items not available include chocolate chips, solid vegetable shortening, good vanilla extract, and other baking essentials. Some ingredients for Mexican, Italian, and other ethnic dishes are hard to find. However, many can be obtained on shopping trips to South Africa where those items are usually quite expensive. A full range of liquor is available in the local stores. Swaziland also has a brewery. Wine from South Africa is both inexpensive and quite good.

Most personal and household needs can be supplied in Mbabane; they are usually imported from South Africa and are expensive. Not all

American brand name products are obtainable.

Clothing repair and dry cleaning facilities are available in Mbabane, but at a standard lower than in the U.S. Dressmakers and tailors are available. The quality is variable. Beauty salons and barbershops are available.

Some garages in town do adequate work on European and South African cars, but are rarely able to deal adequately with American makes. American-made cars should be taken to Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, or Ermelo (90 miles from Mbabane) for major repairs. Body work is available at a reasonable price.

Domestic Help

Most houses in Mbabane have servants quarters and many families hire domestic and garden workers. Domestic workers usually live in, sometimes with their children. Workers are usually provided a "13th-month" payment, a food allowance, overtime pay for baby-sitting and dinner parties, and many employers take responsibility for their worker's health care. An employment act lists minimum wages and other regulations concerning worker employment.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 25	National Flag Day
May/June.	Ascension Day*
July 22	King Sobhuza II's Birthday
Aug/Sept.	Reed Dance Day*
Sept. 6	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Swaziland is linked with international routes by regular air service to and from Matsapa Airport, which is about five miles from Manzini.

To enter the country, an American citizen needs only a valid passport unless he is entering from an endemic yellow fever area, in which case yellow fever immunization papers are required. Inoculations for infectious hepatitis A (gamma globulin), hepatitis B, yellow fever, tetanus, and typhoid are recommended before arrival.

Visitors or temporary residents must register with police within 48 hours of arrival.

An import permit for pets is required by the Swaziland Government and must be presented upon the pet's arrival. If the animal will transit South Africa, a South African transit permit for the animal is also required. Both permits can be mailed to the traveler if at least eight weeks notice is given. It is advisable to have several copies of all papers dealing with pets. The Swaziland Animal Welfare Society operates kennel facilities in Mbabane. They also have pets for adoption. A private veterinarian practices in Mbabane and several veterinarians are on contract with the Swazi Government.

Big game hunting is prohibited in Swaziland. Permits for hunting small game and birds are issued by the Ministry of Agriculture. Diplomatic personnel are discouraged from bringing firearms into Swaziland. Non-diplomatic personnel desiring to import firearms into Swaziland must obtain a permit in advance from the Firearms Licensing Board, P.O. Box 49, Mbabane or apply to the Royal Swazi Police.

Anglicans (Episcopalians), Baha'is, Baptists, Catholics, Christian Scientists, and Methodists hold Sunday services in English in Mbabane.

There is a nondenominational Protestant Sunday school. The Nazarenes are very active throughout the country and have services in most towns. There is no synagogue, but the Israeli Embassy usually holds services on the important holidays. An Islamic Information Service organization and a Christian Women's Club are located in Mbabane. Several Bible study groups and prayer cells meet regularly.

The time in Swaziland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus two hours.

Swaziland introduced its own currency (singular, *lilangeni*; plural, *emalangeni*) in 1974, although the South African rand is still freely

accepted by local vendors on a par basis.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

The U.S. Embassy is located in Mbabane in the Central Bank Building, Warner Street, P.O. Box 199; telephone (268) 404-6441/5; FAX (268) 404-5959.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

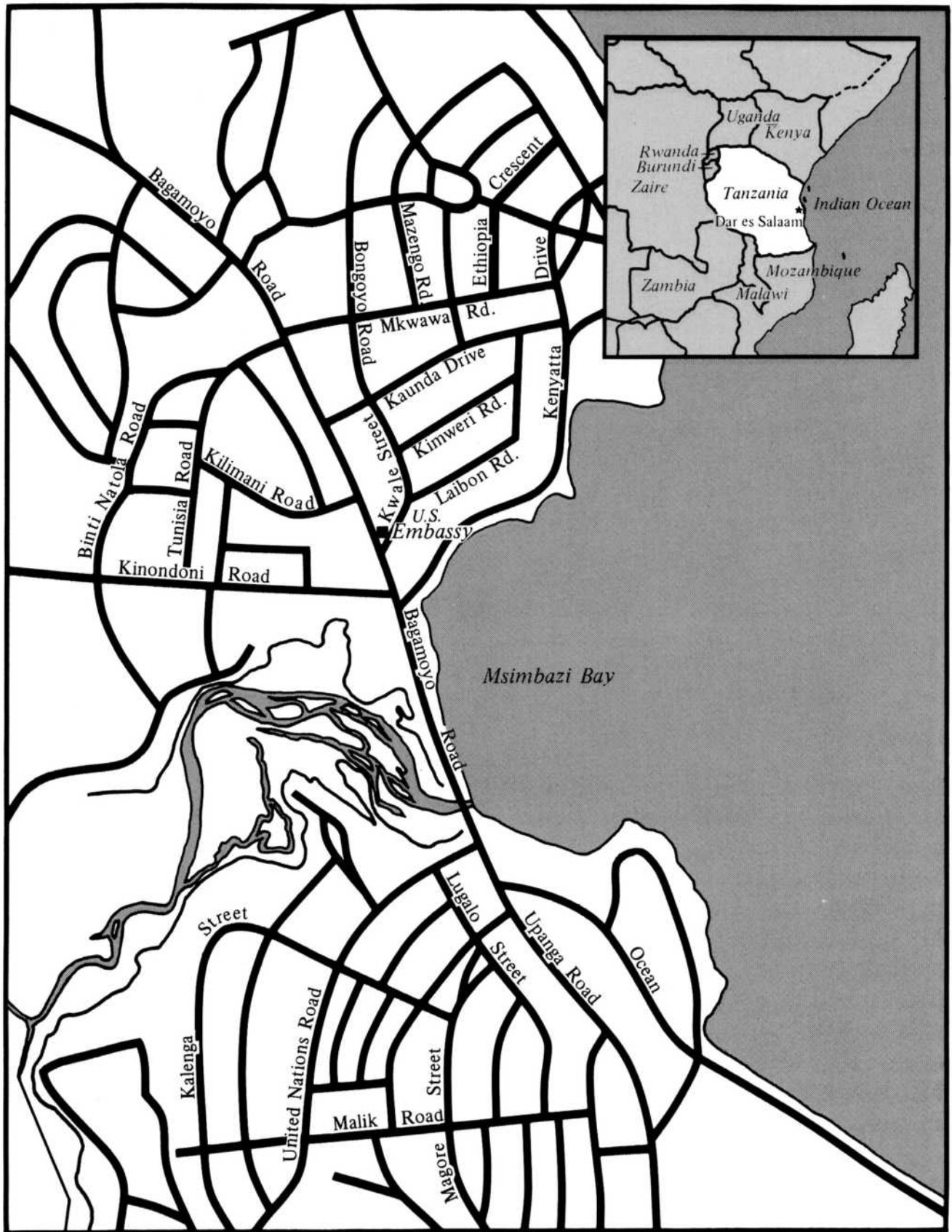
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Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

TANZANIA

United Republic of Tanzania

Major Cities:

Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar

Other Cities:

Arusha, Bagamoyo, Bukoba, Dodoma, Iringa, Lindi, Mbeya, Morogoro, Moshi, Mwanza, Tabora

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania's history is varied—including Portuguese exploration, Arab domination, German colonization, British administration under a League of Nations mandate, and UN Trusteeship. Tanganyika gained independence in 1961, and in 1964, Zanzibar, also independent, united with the mainland to become the United Republic of Tanzania.

For over 20 years following the 1967 Arusha Declaration, Tanzania followed a policy of socialism and self-reliance. Although this is still the official policy guiding government programs, the past few years have seen significant changes. The United Republic has played an active role in efforts to bring inde-

pendence and majority rule in southern Africa. Mainly because of its past prominence in regional and international affairs, Dar es Salaam is an active diplomatic post.

A hot climate, changing economic conditions, and health risks offer challenges for those staying in Dar es Salaam, but a visit here can be stimulating and enjoyable. Tanzania offers warm and friendly people, magnificent mountain scenery, the seashore, the finest wild game preserves on earth, excellent game fishing, scuba diving, and other water sports.

MAJOR CITIES

Dar es Salaam

Under German rule, Dar es Salaam became the capital of Tanganyika in 1894. The Germans designed a spacious city plan, began to develop the natural harbor as a port, and constructed many public buildings that are still in use. On the north side of the harbor are tree-lined streets, a botanical garden, and a museum. The President's office and most government buildings are in this area.

At the end of World War I, Tanganyika became a mandated territory of

the League of Nations under British rule. Between wars, the town developed slowly. But after World War II, the city developed rapidly and great population growth brought wealth to the capital.

Since the 1979 war with Uganda, and as foreign exchange problems have become acute, the city has deteriorated sharply. Streets are poorly maintained. The prices of luxury items and basic commodities have risen astronomically. Crime has increased with the shortage of commodities. The city is home to 2.4 million in habitants.

Food

On the local market shortages of basic items such as flour, sugar, bread, rice, and cooking oil sometimes occur. Fresh fruits and vegetables are available seasonally. Green beans, cauliflower, carrots, eggplant, onions, potatoes, and salad vegetables are of fair-to-good quality and available most of the year. Tropical fruits such as coconuts, pineapples, papayas, bananas, oranges, limes, avocados, and mangoes are plentiful.

The quality of local fresh meat is below U.S. standard cuts, but is, nonetheless, quite adequate. Beef, pork, lamb, chicken, and eggs are available. Shrimp, lobster, and

other fish are excellent, plentiful, and not overly expensive.

Clothing

Tanzanian custom combined with the climate make Dar es Salaam very informal. Tropical clothing is worn year round. Local shoes are of poor quality, and sizes and widths differ from the U.S.

Dry-cleaning facilities are limited and of poor quality, so bring washable fabrics.

Men: Men wear short-sleeved shirts and trousers or short-sleeved safari suits to the office and to most evening gatherings. Sports clothes are similar to those worn in the warmer regions of the U.S.

Women: Women need several washable skirts, tops, and dresses for daytime wear both in and out of the office. Informal long or short dresses or skirts are common for most evening occasions; caftans or evening dresses are worn to receptions and more formal dinners. A lightweight sweater or shawl is useful for evenings in the cooler season. Panty hose or stockings are seldom worn. Miniskirts and low-cut blouses or dresses should not be worn. Sundresses, jeans, modest shorts, and T-shirts are acceptable for nonbusiness occasions.

Children: Bring comfortable summer-weight clothes and sneakers or sandals. Sunhats are useful for trips to the beach.

Supplies and Services

Basic Services: Tailoring services are available, but workmanship is only fair.

Religious Activities

Christian denominations in Dar es Salaam include Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, and Mennonite. Many, including the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Lutheran have Sunday morning services in English. Dar es Salaam

has several mosques and Hindu temples, but no synagogues.

Education

Most children attend the International School of Tanganyika in Dar es Salaam. Three units—located on separate campuses—comprise the school: Kindergarten, Lower School (grades 1-6), and Upper School (grades 7-12).

In the past kindergarten to grade 6 levels have suffered from erratic leadership and organization. A new curriculum is being instituted, a new management team is in place, and teacher performance is being more closely monitored, however. Most parents consider the elementary school to be of adequate standard. Educational materials for classroom use are adequate.

Grade 7-8 fall well below overall U.S. standards. The school board is making a concerted effort to correct deficiencies, however, and improve overall academic standards. The curriculum for grades 9 and 10 is based on the English system known as IGSCSE.

Grades 11-12, which make up the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, are considered sound academically. The school has now brought its program into conformity with international standards and the educational program is a standard 12-year program.

Children must have reached the age of 5 by September 1 to enter kindergarten 2, and age 6 by September 1 to enter 1st grade. The school is very rigid in this regard; no exceptions are made.

Classes are taught in English, but many students are learning English as a second language. The curriculum is a mixture of British and American curriculums with the British influence stronger at the upper level. Some curricular modifications are made to accommodate the needs of an international student body such as the English-as-a-second-language program. The

Upper School offers French language classes.

The school does not have programs for handicapped children, but does have a program for children with mild learning disabilities in the Lower and Middle schools.

The school year, approximately September 1 through the end of June, is divided into three terms with a 3-week vacation at Christmas and a 1-week break in October and at Easter. The Lower and Middle School begins at 7:10 am and ends at 12:30 pm, Monday-Friday. The Upper School begins at 7:10 am and ends at 1 pm, Monday-Friday. Upper-level students in the Upper School also attend afternoon classes twice a week.

Students must wear uniforms to school. Girls wear a simple-styled dress made from blue/white vertically striped material. This may be of any material, so long as it is blue and white striped. There is no standard for shade of blue. Girls can wear a blue-and-white-striped skirt and a white blouse—the blouse must have a collar and at least short sleeves. Sleeveless dresses or blouses are not acceptable. Boys wear plain white cotton shirts with collar and short-sleeves and gray shorts. There is no standard for shade of gray. Uniforms are worn 2 days per week. Both boys and girls wear navy blue shorts and plain white T-shirts for physical education classes twice a week. Some ready-made uniforms are available, but they are expensive and children may be reluctant to wear them once they see the range of clothing worn to school. Bathing suits are required for swimming lessons. One day per week is designated as a free-dress day when students may wear clothes of their choosing.

The school has its own large playing fields and swimming pool with instruction once a week. Afternoon programs for the children include instruction in art, drama, music, and sports but enrollment is limited.

Dar es Salaam also has a French school with supervised correspondence instruction in French, and a Swedish elementary school with instruction in Swedish.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Alliance Francaise gives French lessons. The Goethe Institute offers instruction in German.

A number of departments at the University of Dar es Salaam conduct seminars in English that are open to the public. Under exceptional circumstances, foreigners can enroll in certain subjects at the University.

Sports

Tanzania is one of the world's principal "big game" countries. The Tanzanian Wildlife Corporation enforces strict control of hunting. Hunting licenses for select game such as impala, warthog, and buffalo are granted to residents from July 1 to December 30.

Several beaches offer year-round swimming, scuba diving, and snorkeling. Sailing, fishing, and shelling are also favorite pastimes. You can keep both sail and power boats at the Yacht Club. The Yacht Club offers scuba diving lessons.

The Gymkhana Sports Club has tennis courts and an 18-hole golf course of fair quality with sand greens. Lessons in tennis and golf are offered. Squash courts are maintained. The club sponsors cricket, soccer, hockey, and rugby teams.

Membership in the Yacht Club and Gymkhana Club take some time to acquire. Both are based on a British membership system that requires that prospective members be sponsored and seconded by current members. Americans frequently find this tedious, but it can be an entertaining experience if approached in the right spirit. Both of these clubs have members from a variety of cultures, races, and ethnic groups, and each provides multiple opportunities for socializing outside the official American community.

The International School pool is open to school families on a membership basis.

The amateur mountain climber can try to climb Mount Kilimanjaro (19,340 feet). It is an extremely long, but technically not exacting, hike. Tanzanian law requires that experienced guides take climbing parties up the mountain. Children under age 12 are not allowed to climb. You do not need special equipment, but warm clothing and comfortable climbing shoes are necessary. Almost everything that is needed can be rented from nearby hotels.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Tanzania's many game parks offer opportunities for vacations away from the city. You can visit several of these parks by car, but road conditions make a four-wheel drive vehicle preferable and, in many cases, necessary. Rental vehicles are sometimes available from the AERA and occasionally charter aircraft are available locally, but they are expensive.

You can drive from Dar es Salaam to Mikumi National Park in 3-4 hours. Arusha, near the northern game parks, is an 8-10 hour drive. Accommodations are adequate, but not luxurious. If you plan to go on safaris, tent camping offers a unique dimension to the experience as well as greater economy. All major wildlife parks have camping facilities.

Air service operates between Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Zanzibar is 30 minutes by plane, and about 90 minutes by hydrofoil.

Entertainment

Dar es Salaam has several movie theaters, including a drive-in theater that usually shows Asian films. Few American travelers attend films at any of the cinema houses.

The Dar es Salaam Musical Society is open to anyone who plays an instrument or sings. The Dar es Salaam Players, an amateur group, is open to prospective thespians.

They stage five or six plays a year. Sometimes foreign governments sponsor concerts by artisans from their countries.

A number of restaurants offer European, Chinese, Indian, and Ethiopian food, but the food can be unsafe. Dining out can be pleasant, however, so long as one chooses foods that are not subject to quick spoilage (generally, avoid shellfish in restaurants). The service at Tanzanian restaurants is a source of entertainment all its own.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Social contact among Americans is mostly at informal cocktail parties, dinners, and buffet suppers at home. Daytime coffees, teas, and bridge parties are held occasionally. The American Community in Tanzania (ACT) is an active organization open to both women and men. Its purpose is to have enjoyable gatherings and learn more about the host country through tours, lectures, and films.

International Contacts: The most popular form of entertainment is the cocktail party, held in the home between 7 and 9 pm. Small dinners and buffets are also held at home. At functions you will have an opportunity to meet Tanzanians and citizens of other countries represented in Tanzania. The International Women's Group hold monthly meetings. A number of charitable and social organizations such as Rotary, Lions, the Corona Society, and the Caledonian, St. Patrick, and St. George Societies welcome members.

American travelers in Tanzania find limited opportunities for community activities with the International School, churches, hospitals, and orphanages.

Zanzibar

The city of Zanzibar on Zanzibar Island, 45 miles to the north off the coast from Dar es Salaam, has a fascinating history as a slave trading center. The Afro-Arabian architecture of the old town has been pre-



Sailors at work in Dhow Harbor, Zanzibar, Tanzania

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

served, and its unique setting in luxuriant tropical scenery makes it one of Africa's most beautiful spots. Among its historic buildings are David Livingstone's house near the harbor, and the former sultan's magnificent palace facing the sea. The island itself is called the Isle of Cloves in recognition of its principal export.

Bougainvillea, exotic flame trees, and the bright blue blossoms of the jacaranda line the streets, providing a colorful backdrop for the market and residential areas. Westerners who visit Zanzibar find that life here is quite different; there is opportunity for swimming, fishing, or sailing, but there is no golf, limited access to tennis, and no hunting. The beaches provide excellent bathing at high tide. Little danger exists from sharks, but care must be taken in some coral and rocky areas to avoid cuts and abrasions.

It is possible to take interesting drives to visit beaches and palace ruins, but the island is small and the length of drives is, accordingly, limited.

Zanzibar has no live Western entertainment. African music, local or from the mainland, is presented

periodically, usually in connection with public functions at one of the clubs. Cinemas show Indian and European and, occasionally, American, German, Russian, or Chinese films. Color television, the first in Africa, is broadcast for about two-and-a-half hours each evening, but programming is almost entirely in Swahili, and is strongly local in orientation. The current population is approximately 249,000.

OTHER CITIES

ARUSHA, 50 miles from the Kenyan border, is the starting point for safaris into the famous Serengeti National Park. The city, which has several shops and services that cater to both photographic and hunting safaris, is noted for its lavish flower displays. Manufactured products include the renowned meerscham and briar pipes. Arusha's population is about 166,000.

BAGAMOYO is a seaport town 50 miles north of Dar es Salaam. The last mainland stop for slaves before shipment to the Zanzibar slave markets, the settlement was once Tanganyika's capital. The Old Customs

House, ruins where the slaves were kept, and a small German fort are among historic sites. The population is about 66,000.

BUKOKA, on the western shore of Lake Victoria, lies in an area of rolling grassland and heavy rainfall. The presence here of the tsetse fly has prevented livestock raising. Coffee, tea, and bananas number among the principal cash crops of the region. Fishing is also important. Bukoba has a population of approximately 42,000.

DODOMA, in the northeast-central zone, will be the nation's capital in a few years. All government ministries have moved to the city from Dar es Salaam. A wine industry and 84,000-acre ranch are in the vicinity. On the Arusha road, about 100 miles north of Dodoma, the Stone Age Kondoia Iranqi rock paintings can be viewed. The city is a market center for peanuts, sunflower seeds, maize, rice, wheat, coffee, tea, tobacco, and sorghum. Several industries are located in Dodoma. These industries manufacture furniture, beverages, processed food, milled rice, flour, and soap. The population of Dodoma is about 157,000.

IRINGA, 100 miles due south of Dodoma on the main Tanzania-Zambia road, is a farming center. Tobacco is the major crop. Ruaha National Park can be easily reached from Iringa, whose population is 138,000.

LINDI, a regional capital and seaport, lies in southwestern Tanzania at the mouth of the Lukeledi River. Roads link the city to Dar es Salaam and Nachingwea. Lindi, with a population of about 67,000, is the site of a regional airport.

Situated near the Southern Highlands in the southwest, **MBEYA** is the final stop on the Tanzam railroad before Zambia. The city is the capital of Mbeya region, and has a population of about 199,000.

MOROGORO, one of the most industrialized cities in Tanzania, lies 105 miles west of Dar es

Salaam. An industrial hub, it ships sisal (a durable fiber used to make twine), tobacco, kapok (a silky fiber mass utilized as filling for mattresses), and sugar. The area is the site of a large military base. A tarmac road, rail access, and an airport provide good transportation. Morogoro's current population is about 235,000.

Mount Kilimanjaro towers over **MOSHI** in the far northeast. The city is in the middle of a fertile area which grows nearly half of Tanzania's wheat. It is also the heart of the coffee-growing zone. Kilimanjaro International Airport, located between Moshi and Arusha, spurs development for the expanding game-park tourism industry. Moshi's population is approximately 183,000.

MWANZA is a city of nearly 291,000 residents in the northern region of Tanzania. It lies on the southern shore of magnificent Lake Victoria, and serves the surrounding area as a major port and rail terminus.

TABORA (formerly called Kazeh) is a commercial and agricultural trade center in the west-central area. Its location at the junction of east-west and north-south railways makes the city a major trade link. The modern town was founded by Arabs in 1820; during World War I, it was taken by Belgian forces on September 19, 1916. Tobacco, vegetables, and cassava are principal cash crops. The current population in 2002 was estimated at 139,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Tanzania, the second largest country in East Africa, is just south of the Equator. The mainland stretches from north to south for 740 miles and from east to west for 760 miles with a 500-mile coastline

on the Indian Ocean. It shares borders with Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire, Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique. Including the islands of Unguja and Pemba that make up Zanzibar, Tanzania's total area is 362,820 square miles (with 20,600 square miles of lakes), equal to the area of Texas and New Mexico. The coastal strip is tropical with high humidity; temperatures range from 80°F to 95°F. The country's annual rainfall averages 65 inches. The central plateau (altitude 3,000-4,000 feet; rainfall 2-30 inches), which covers much of the country, is hot and dry. The semi-temperate highlands (up to 6,000 feet; rainfall 40-100 inches) are fertile and cool. The islands of Zanzibar (rainfall 60-75 inches), 25 miles off the coast, are tropical and humid.

Tanzania has two rainy and two dry seasons. During the long rains, from March through May, heavy downpours occur daily (though it is not unusual to have as many as 2-3 days of sunny, pleasant weather between showers). The short rains come in November and December. Temperatures and humidity are high from November to April, and surface winds are moderate. June through September is pleasant and generally mild. Mildew and rust are constant problems.

Population

Tanzania's population is about 36.2 million; 99 percent are of African origin. Tanzania has more than 130 tribes; principal tribes are the Nyamwezi, Ha, Makonde, Gogo, Haya, Chagga, and Hehe. These agricultural peoples migrated to Tanzania in the last 2,000 years. A small part of the population is made up of peoples of Nilotic origin. The Masai, the best-known group, are nomadic livestock keepers.

The national language is Kiswahili; however, each tribe has its own language, often related to other Bantu languages. Kiswahili is a Bantu language with strong Arabic and some English influences. English is widely used in government, commerce, and for all education above

the primary level, although the level of English has fallen sharply in recent years.

About 50,000 Tanzanians trace their ancestry to the Indian subcontinent and southwest Asia. Its traders came to East Africa during the last 3 centuries, but mostly since 1900. About half the original number of Asians have left Tanzania since independence. Arab immigrants and people claiming Persian origin have migrated to East Africa for 1,000 years; this group has almost been assimilated into the African population. Several thousand Western expatriates live in Tanzania as missionaries, technical experts, business people, or farmers.

Tanzania's first residents were animists. Their practices and rituals included ancestor worship and belief in the unity of the dead and living. The first Arab traders were Islamic, and Islam is now the religion of over one-third of the population. Christian missionaries first arrived in the mid-19th century. Today about one-third of the population is Christian. The remainder practice traditional religions, and members of all faiths continue to share many traditional beliefs, such as ancestor worship. A sizable percentage of the Asian minority are Hindus.

Public Institutions

In 1992, Tanzania became a multiparty democracy. This amendment was made to allow for political opposition to the Revolutionary Party (Chama Cha Mapinduzi in Swahili, or CCM), which was formed in February 1977 with the merger of the mainland's Tanganyika African National Union and the Afro-Shirazi Party of Zanzibar. Currently, thirteen different political parties are officially recognized by the government, although the CCM still holds a significant majority in the National Assembly. The country's first multiparty elections were held in 1995. Elections were held again in 2000, at that time Benjamin William Mkapa was elected

for a second term as president. Frederick Sumaye was appointed as prime minister in 1995.

All major posts in government and civil service are held by Tanzanian citizens. Foreign expatriate employees serve as advisers or technicians in fields for which Tanzanians are not yet trained. The government's policy is to gradually replace these expatriates with Tanzanian citizens.

The National Assembly has 275 members, 232 of whom are popularly elected from the mainland and Zanzibar. The remaining composition of the assembly includes 37 seats appointed for women and 5 members elected by the Zanzibar House of Representatives.

National Assembly actions are valid for Zanzibar only in specifically designated Union matters. Zanzibar's own 75-member House of Representatives has jurisdiction over all non-Union matters.

The judiciary includes primary courts, district courts, resident magistrate courts (regional), the High Court of Tanzania, and the Court of Appeals. Tanzania bases its legal system on Anglo-Saxon principles of jurisprudence, with modifications to accommodate the country's authoritarian political system, and customary and Islamic law in civil cases. The Constitution provides for a nominally independent judiciary, due process, and equality before the law and, for the first time, the 1984 Constitution contains a Bill of Rights.

The Chief Justices appoint judges, except those for the Court of Appeals and High Court, who are appointed by the President. Military courts do not try civilians, and no security courts exist. The government offers legal counsel to defendants charged with treason or murder; in Dar es Salaam, free legal counsel is provided to some indigent defendants by the Tanzanian Bar Association and Legal Aid Society.

Zanzibar, comprising the islands of Unguja and Pemba, united with mainland Tanganyika in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania. Despite the Union, Zanzibar retains considerable self-government. Foreign affairs and defense are considered Union matters. Following the 1964 revolution, Zanzibar experienced bloody purges and expulsions and a severely repressive, arbitrary regime. The first popular election did not take place until 1981. The adoption of a 1984 Isles Constitution, however, brought with it a number of reforms. The new constitution includes a Bill of Rights, provides for the popular election of the President run by the sole political party, and, for the first time, mandates that a two-thirds majority of the Zanzibar House of Representatives must be directly elected by the people. The new constitution also brought Zanzibar's judiciary into conformity with that of the mainland and did away with the former system of people's courts in which legal representation was denied and judges had no legal training.

Among the nongovernmental organizations active in Tanzania are the Red Cross, YMCA and YWCA, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Confederation of Tanzanian Industries, Rotary Club, Lions Club, Round Table, Christian Council, Caritas, Salvation Army, Catholic Relief Services, Plan International, Africa Wildlife Fund, and World Wildlife Fund.

Arts, Science, and Education

Tanzania has made a major effort to improve its educational system. It has a literacy rates estimated at approximately 69 percent of the population (1995). The University of Dar es Salaam is located on the city's western edge. Sokoine University, a smaller agricultural and technical college, is located in Morogoro about 100 miles west of Dar es Salaam.

Educational, scientific, and artistic activities accessible to foreigners are limited. Tanzania is one of the world's best known areas for field work in paleontology and zoology. The traveler can visit the site of the famous Leakey discoveries at Olduvai and browse through the tiny museum. Jane Goodall's work with chimpanzees at Gombe Stream is well known. A number of Americans come to Tanzania every year to do other extensive field work in wildlife studies. Many researchers are affiliated with the Serengeti Research Institute.

Commerce and Industry

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita GDP of \$710. Numerous external factors have contributed to the problem—oil price increases, poor rainfall, and the war with Uganda—but most of the blame falls on the government's socialist economic policies. These policies were viewed by sympathetic nations in the 1970s as an alternative model for African development. The policies, however, were not successful. Recently, in partnership with multilateral and bilateral donors, Tanzania has undertaken an economic reform program that has begun to reverse previous negative economic trends. Strict fiscal policies have helped the country achieve significant economic growth in recent years, averaging 5 percent each year.

The Tanzanian economy is heavily dependent on agriculture. This sector accounts for about 49 percent of the total gross domestic product (GDP), about 88 percent of total employment for the country's 36.2 million people, and 85 percent of Tanzania's export earnings. Tanzania grows crops for food and export. The most important food crops are maize (corn), rice, cassava, wheat, bananas, and beans. Export crops include coffee, cotton, tea, sisal, cashews, pyrethrum, and cloves. From 1973 to 1985, when the agricultural policies of the ruling party were implemented, production

steadily declined, particularly that of export crops. Poor government policies included artificially low producer prices, over-centralized marketing systems, poor input delivery programs, and over concentration on an inefficient, state-owned industrial sector.

Minerals are exploited only on the mainland. Diamond production from mines near Shinyanga has declined considerably since the 1967 peak of 998,000 carats, but is still an important foreign-exchange earner. The deposits are owned by the government and private business. Other important mineral products are gold; Tanzanite, a gemstone unique to Tanzania; other gemstones; coal; and salt.

Despite the government's strong emphasis on the industrial sector, it is one of the smallest in Africa, contributing about 17 percent of GDP. The severe economic crisis the country has been facing, which worsened seriously starting in 1981, has forced many plants to close. Virtually all run far below capacity due to water and energy shortages, as well as the inability to obtain the foreign exchange needed to purchase new materials and spare parts.

The oldest and largest manufacturing enterprises are in the agricultural processing sector; cigarettes, meat canning, brewing, pyrethrum processing, and cashew nut shelling. Textiles, sugar refining, and cement capacities have expanded rapidly but operate substantially below capacity.

Tanzania has great potential to attract tourists, but remains substantially undeveloped. The beautiful Indian Ocean beaches, magnificent game parks, and reserves of the north and south are tremendous resources that are hardly used. The tourist infrastructure is gradually improving, but the industry's services are erratic in quality and significantly overpriced.

The country has been experiencing severe balance-of-payment problems. Exports have been declining



Transporting bananas in Tanzania

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

in dollars and volume. Despite stiff economic reforms, imports continue to grow faster than exports, increasing the hard currency deficit and the government's dependence on foreign donors.

The World Bank, Sweden, Netherlands, EEC, West Germany, and Denmark provide much of Tanzania's donor assistance. The USAID assistance to Tanzania is active in the transport (rural roads and the Tazara Railroad), private enterprise development, and health (family planning and AIDS control) sectors.

Peace Corps volunteers are working in Tanzania. Their projects cover a wide range of activities including wildlife management, teaching, forestry, and agricultural mechanics.

Transportation

Local

Bus service is available in and around Dar es Salaam and up-country, but schedules and routes are inadequate. Buses are always crowded, undependable, and unsafe.

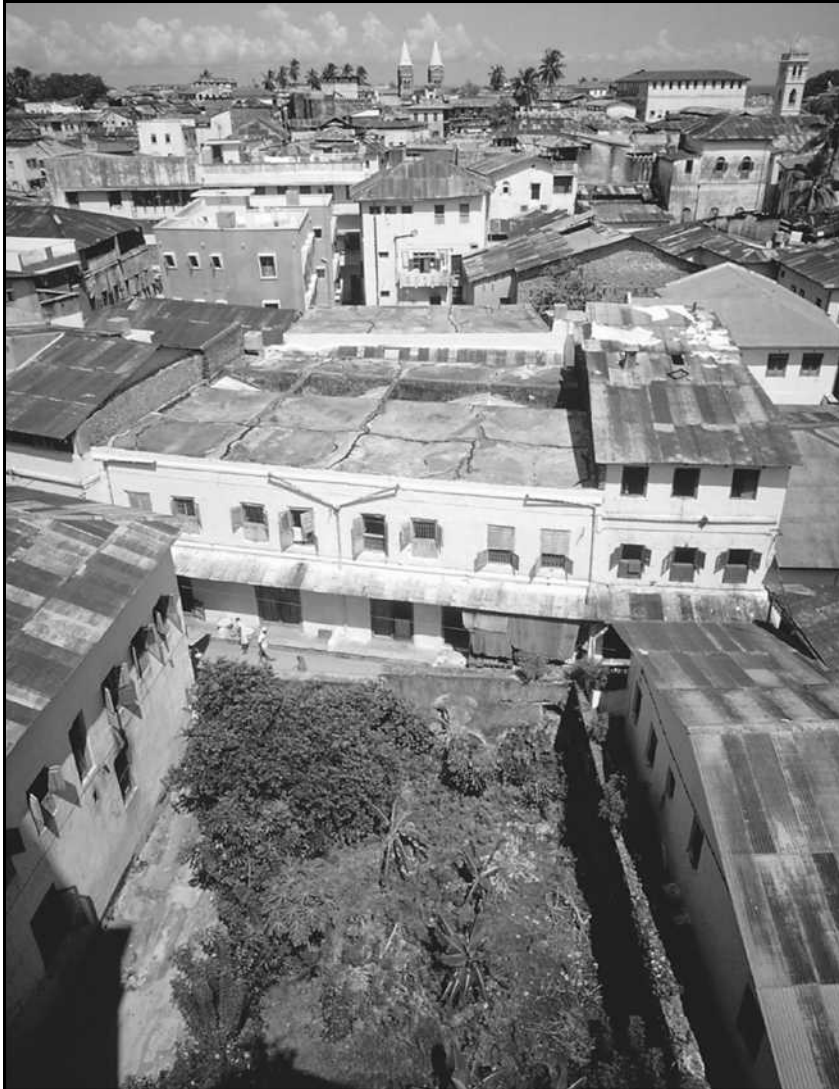
Taxis are available 24 hours daily at certain locations, including the airport, railway station, Kilimanjaro Hotel, and the Palm Beach Hotel at

Selander Bridge. Drivers seldom use meters, but charge flat rates per trip. Agree on the rate in advance, as taxi drivers will try to gouge the passenger.

Regional

From Dar es Salaam International Airport, flights are available to several points in Europe and East Africa. At least one European airline is scheduled almost every day between Dar es Salaam and various European cities. Flights and connections to African locations are fewer and less convenient; most are via Nairobi or Addis Ababa. Air Tanzania provides domestic and some regional service, but due to overbookings and maintenance problems, delays and cancellation of flights are common.

Dar es Salaam is the ocean terminus of the railway that runs 900 miles to Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika and to Mwanza on Lake Victoria by way of a branch line beginning at Tabora. Full train service with sleeping and dining cars runs daily but experience lengthy delays and occasional derailments. The Chinese-built Uhuru Railway, or TAZARA as it is more commonly known, running 1,000 miles from Dar es Salaam to New Kapiri-Mposhi, Zambia, began passenger service in



View of Zanzibar, Tanzania

© Jack Fields/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

October 1975 and now operates four round trips weekly. Facilities on passenger trains are far below American standards, but for the adventurous a trip can be a unique experience.

Many of Tanzania's roads are badly deteriorated, but an extensive World Bank integrated roads program is attempting to reverse that trend. One main paved 123-mile road to Morogoro leads out of Dar es Salaam. This road connects with the main road system in Tanzania and East Africa and provides connections to Tanga, Arusha, Nairobi, and Mbeya, among other locations. Do not drive at night outside Dar es Salaam, even on good roads.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Tanzania has local and long-distance telephone service. International connections are available to the U.K., U.S., and other parts of the world. Direct dialing of international calls is now available.

The telephone system is in very poor condition; as not all residences have telephones.

Radio and TV

Radio Tanzania, a government-owned company, broadcasts locally in Swahili and English on medium, shortwave, and FM (monophonic).

Programs consist of music, news, and special features. A good short-wave receiver can pick up Europe and the U.S., as well as Nairobi. Schedules for the Voice of America are available from USIS. Bring a good-quality shortwave radio.

Zanzibar telecasts in color in Swahili a few hours in the evenings. These telecasts require a good antenna in Dar es Salaam and cannot be picked up by standard American sets.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Daily News is an English-language newspaper and has limited coverage of world events. Uhuru is published in Swahili. A few new weekly and biweekly newspapers have recently started publication. The International Herald Tribune, available by postal subscription, arrives at least 4 days after publication (though street vendors frequently have it within 2 days of publication). The Kenya Daily Nation is available on the day of publication.

Local bookstores carry a few international magazines and very few paperbacks.

The Dar es Salaam Public Library has an aging collection of books for children and adults. The British Council also has a good collection of books. The USIS Library is open to the American community, but its collection contains little fiction; rather it concentrates on economics, international affairs, management, business, and communications for a Tanzanian audience.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Tanzania has legalized the private practice of medicine, and several clinics and small hospitals in Dar es Salaam offer limited services. Muhimbili Medical Centre, the public teaching hospital administered by the Department of Health, is the main source of medical care for the

general population. Although the local hospitals have some fairly well trained physicians, they are not reliably accessible and when available have limited diagnostic or treatment facilities. Ancillary medical facilities such as laboratory, x-ray, and EKG are either not available or not reliable as to accuracy of results. Equipment is often antiquated or, if newer, not functioning because of lack of parts. Unreliable sources of electricity and water contribute to nonfunctional medical facilities.

The Nordic Dental Clinic will see Americans for emergency dental work and on a space-available basis for routine care. Most employees defer dental work until they are in the U.S. Optical services are available in town. Repairs and simple lens work can be readily accomplished. Eyeglass frames are expensive and in short supply.

Tanzania has some well-trained physicians, but they are hampered by severe shortages of medicines, medical equipment and supplies, lack of trained staff, and medical facilities that have been allowed to deteriorate over the last 30 years.

Bring prescriptions for ongoing medical problems, as well as birth control supplies, contact lens solutions, over the counter medications, lotions and sun screens, extra eyeglasses, and sunglasses.

Community Health

The level of sanitation in Tanzania requires special measures. Tap water is not safe to drink until it is boiled or otherwise disinfected and filtered. The city streets in Dar es Salaam are full of piles of garbage, due to extremely irregular garbage pickup. Disinfect all fruits and vegetables before eating.

Mosquito and fly control measures are necessary. Residences are equipped with screens on the windows and mosquito nets are supplied for each occupied bed.

A number of diseases now rare in the United States are endemic to

Tanzania. These include bacterial meningitis, cholera, rabies, plague, and a variety of parasitic infections.

Preventive Measures

Simple precautions will offer more than adequate protection from any of the common medical problems. Don't eat or drink anything unless you know that it has been properly cleaned and disinfected. Don't go near animals unless you are certain that they are not infected with rabies or other transmittable animal-borne diseases. Make sure all your recommended vaccinations and inoculations are up to date.

Chloroquine-resistant malaria is endemic in Tanzania. Several measures are recommended to limit mosquito bites. Sleep under mosquito nets, use mosquito repellent, wear protective clothing, ensure that the windows are adequately screened, and use insecticides to kill the mosquitoes inside the house.

Anti-malarial medication is provided for members of the mission. The current recommendations are: (1) chloroquine weekly and Paludrine daily, or (2) Mefloquine weekly.

Chloroquine is a very potent drug with a narrow margin between the effective dose and the toxic dose. It is extremely toxic for small children in excessive amounts, so it should be stored in a safe place where a child cannot have access. Significant side effects to chloroquine are rare. Some people experience some nausea and stomach distress that can usually be avoided by taking the medication with meals or at bedtime.

Chloroquine in the recommended dosage does not affect the eyes and is safe to take during pregnancy. Paludrine is a drug with relatively minor adverse reactions, such as mouth ulcers or stomach upset. Paludrine must be taken daily to be effective. Mefloquine is a relatively new drug as an alternative medication for malaria prophylaxis. Side effects can include GI upset, dizzi-

ness, headache, and, rarely, psychotic episodes.

Malaria in a pregnant woman is a very serious problem because the changes brought on by pregnancy alter a woman's ability to fight this disease. Paludrine and chloroquine can be taken safely during pregnancy. Because malaria is potentially a threat during pregnancy, pregnant women may wish to consider departure to the U.S. early in pregnancy.

The fluoride level in the water in Dar es Salaam is 0.25 parts per million. Children between the ages of 3 and 13 should receive 2.2 mg of sodium fluoride daily.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a serious problem in Tanzania. It is transmitted sexually and through blood transfusions and use of contaminated needles. The Government of Tanzania is beginning to recognize the seriousness of the problem and has launched an extensive AIDS control program. With personal prevention, exposure to the virus can be avoided.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Several flights during the week are available from a number of European cities to Dar es Salaam.

Visas are required to enter Tanzania. All travelers to Tanzania must have valid immunization certificates for yellow fever and cholera.

You must have an import permit to bring a pet into Tanzania. This permit may be obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Animal Industry Subdivision, P.O. Box 9152, Dar es Salaam. You should initiate this action far in advance since the procedures are time consuming. For both cats and dogs, include a certificate that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies at least 6

months and not more than 3 years before entry into Tanzania. No dogs or cats younger than 7 months old will be allowed into Tanzania except with the special permission of the Director of Veterinary Services. The permit, along with a health certificate from a licensed veterinarian issued within 10 days of departure for Tanzania, should be attached to the pet's shipping crate. Keep copies of these documents.

The Tanzanian shilling, divided into 100 cents, is the basic local currency. It cannot be imported or exported and generally is nonconvertible. The official rate of exchange changes slightly from time to time. In December 2000, the rate of exchange was Tshs 803.4=U.S.\$1. Coins in current use are in denominations of 1, 5, 10, and 20 shillings. Bill denominations are 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 shillings.

Tanzania uses the metric system of weights and measures.

No limit is placed on the amount of dollars, other foreign currency, or travelers checks that you can bring into the country. You can convert foreign currency to shillings only at authorized points. Strict currency control regulations govern conversion of shillings into foreign currencies.

No private or foreign banking facilities are yet available in Tanzania. The banking laws have been revised, however, and although private banking is legal, no private foreign bank has yet been licensed. For the time being, the government-owned National Bank of Commerce (NBC), the only commercial bank, has branches throughout Tanzania. It provides a wide range of national and international banking services including sale of U.S. and foreign travelers checks. Major credit cards are becoming increasingly accepted at major hotels and restaurants.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 12	Zanzibar Revolution Day
Feb. 5	Birth of Chama Cha Mapinduzi
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 26	Union Day
May 1	Workers' Day
May 9	Idd El Hajj
July 7	Peasants' Day
Dec. 9	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Id al-Adah* Ramadan* Id al-Fitr* Hijra New Year* Mawlid an Nabi*

* variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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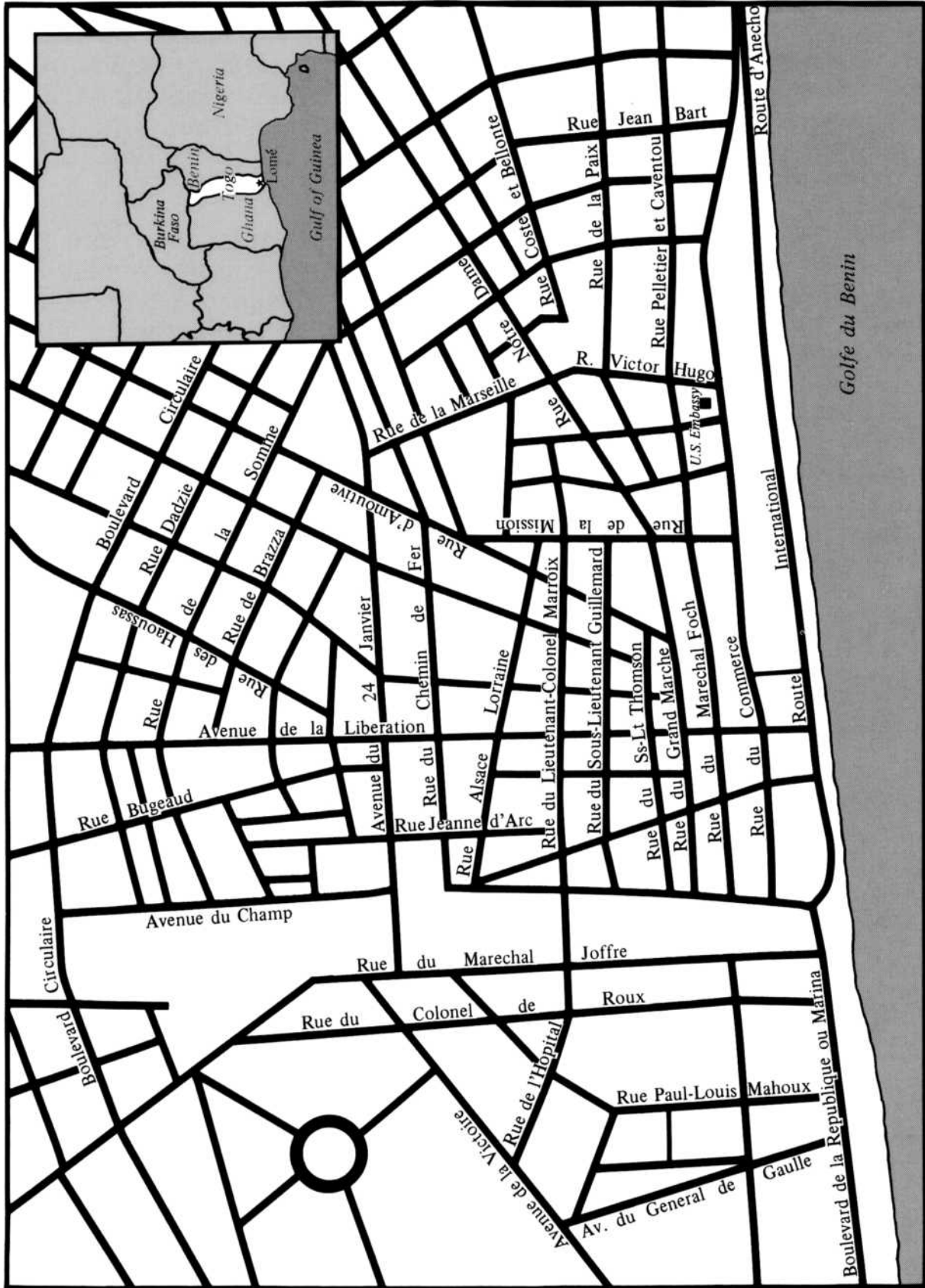
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Lome, Togo

TOGO

Republic of Togo

Major Cities:

Lome

Other Cities:

Aného, Atakpamé, Dapaong, Kpalimé, Mango, Sokodé, Tsévié

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated September 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The West African Republic of **TOGO**, which had existed as part of the German protectorate of Togoland, as a League of Nations mandate and, later, as a United Nations trust territory under French administration, has been independent since 1960. Four years earlier, Togo had gained autonomy within the French Union.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore the Togolese coast, arriving late in the 15th century. Between 1600 and 1800, Brazilian, British, and other slave traders repeatedly and tragically raided the region, and Togo became known as the Slave Coast.

This small republic gives the visitor an unusual, first-hand look at developing Africa. Densely populated by African standards, it has a variety of cultures among its more than 35 ethnic groups, many of whom still follow their African traditions and customs.

MAJOR CITIES

Lome

Lome, the capital and chief commercial center of Togo, is on the Atlantic coast at Togo's extreme southwest corner. Part of the city lies on a mile-wide sandbar that rises 15–20 feet above the sea. The center of the city is a 20-minute walk from the Ghanaian border. Lome shares the climate of Togo's southern zone, and its sea breeze blows pleasantly all year. The city proper has 658,000 residents, and the greater area has a population of 727,000.

The major central thoroughfares are lined with small shops, occasional parks, and countless street vendors. In the Grand Marche, a bustling three-story building, vendors sell food, cloth (largely wax-print cottons locally made or imported from England and the Netherlands), housewares, small

fetish objects, and almost anything else found in Lome. The railroad, as well as some buildings and roads still in use today, were built by the Germans.

Only main city streets have lights. Some streets are paved; others are of red laterite earth and sand—dusty in the dry season, muddy when it rains, and usually full of potholes.

Most buildings are cement over soft-brick or concrete blocks. However, traditional rectangular one- or two-room mud-brick with corrugated metal or palm-thatch roofs built along the walls of a compound are still common. Residential areas with large houses include Lome proper, the suburb of Tokoin above the lagoons, Kodjoviakope, and a housing project located near the University of Benin.

The larger businesses are, for the most part, controlled by the French. A small but economically important Lebanese population also engages in commerce. Lome has 11 resident foreign diplomatic missions, 8 honorary consulates, U.N. and other country aid organizations, and regional banks.

Food

Lome has a good supply of fresh foods, although supply can be sea-



Aerial view of Lome, Togo

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sonal. Local vegetables include leaf lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, green beans, sweet peppers, cabbage, eggplant, spring onions, onions, carrots, palm hearts, potatoes, sweet yams, African yams, hot peppers, mint, parsley, and several other herbs. The local fruits available are avocado, lemon, lime, orange, pineapple, banana, papaya, guava, grapefruit, cantaloupe, watermelon, coconut, mango, and passion fruit. Imported apples, pears, kiwi, and a few other European fruits can sometimes be found. Local fruits and vegetables are generally available in open markets throughout the year. Imported fresh fruits and vegeta-

bles are sometimes available in supermarkets at high prices.

Fresh meat, imported and domestic, includes beef, veal, pork, lamb and poultry. Locally made and imported French and German sausage, pate, ham and other prepared meats are available in the butcher section of local supermarkets. Duck, rabbit and guinea fowl are available at the local market, as well as the local delicacy, bush rat or agouti. Fresh fish, shrimp, lobster, mussels, hard-shell crabs and other seafood are sold in season either in the local market or in one supermarket.

Imported fresh foods arrive by air every week and some by ship every 2 weeks. These stocks include meat, cheese, fish, vegetables (artichokes, mushrooms, celery, endive, and lettuce), and fresh fruits. A limited variety of wines, herbs, and spices is imported, as are specialty items like canned Chinese and Lebanese foods. Prices for imported items are high. Imported frozen foods are available at several locations, include meats, poultry, fish, fruits, vegetables, prepared foods, and deserts.

Imported UHT and powdered milk are readily available, as are puddings and whipping cream. Local

milk products such as yoghurt and sour cream can be found in the supermarkets. A local Danish-run factory produces ice cream. Some better quality, but very high-priced, imported brands are also available in supermarkets. Good French breads and fair pastries are made in Lome.

Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, soda water, tonic and a variety of other local soft drinks is bottled here. A good beer is also bottled by a German-established factory.

Most Americans do their shopping at one or more of the three modern supermarkets in Lome. In the heart of the business district is a lively congested Grand Marche, a three-story, open-air market where Togolese sell their fresh produce, fish and other foodstuffs. Clothes, household items, glass beads, wax cloths, and an endless variety of goods can be found. Many intriguing items can be discovered on a walking tour of the central business area, which abounds in small shops selling a wide diversity of items. Every "quartier" has its own open market. Many small provision stores, mostly run by members of the Indian community, are located around town. Necessary items are rarely all available in one place and sometimes not at the expected place, so shopping requires several trips and lots of time.

Clothing

Men: Dress is less formal than in Washington. Safari suits or slacks and shirt combinations may be worn during office hours. Formal clothing (light-weight dinner jacket and black dress trousers) is optional. Sport shirts and slacks or safari suits suffice for most social engagements. Cotton or cotton polyester blend slacks and short-sleeved shirts are advisable for road travel. All clothes should be light-weight and washable since dry cleaning services are expensive and limited. Clothing wears out quickly due to frequent washing. All synthetic fabrics are less comfortable in the heat and humidity than cotton, linen or cotton-blend fabrics.

Women: Warm-weather washable dresses, blouses, and slacks or skirts are the norm. Simple dresses are worn at daytime and evening affairs. Cocktail dresses are often worn, and more formal long gowns are worn on few occasions. A light wrap or shawl may be useful at night during the cooler rainy season. Outdoor clothing and sometimes a sweater are convenient.

A limited supply of imported dress materials, as well as extensive supply of African-style cotton prints, both imported and locally manufactured, are available in the market area. Dressmakers do adequate work with supervision. A few expensive boutiques carry dresses and fancy dresses and accessories. Hats, gloves, and stockings are seldom worn. Lingerie in cotton or the cooler synthetic fabrics is usually not available. Walking on Lome's sandy streets is easier with sensible shoes. Several pairs of sandals are suggested.

Children: Bring a good supply of outdoor, hot-weather washable children's clothes, underwear, and shoes. Some sandals, underwear, and clothes are sold locally. Local seamstresses do a fair job making children's clothing.

Bring plenty of suitable sportswear and equipment for the entire family, including tennis or golf clothes and equipment as these are either expensive or not available locally.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Consider bringing your own brand of toiletries, cosmetics, medicines, etc., as many American brand products are not available.

Basic Services: In general, community services are not well developed, and materials are often not available.

Dry-cleaning is not recommended except at the Hotel 2 Fevrier or Sarakawa, and at one dry-cleaning shop in town. Several beauty shops are recommended, as are several barbers in Lome. Some Togolese

barbers will come to your home for a moderate fee. Shoe repair is satisfactory, but the materials used are usually of poor quality. Tailors or dressmakers do adequate-to-good work. Wicker and wooden furniture can be made locally and wears well in the humid climate. Due to high humidity, mildew is a problem.

Religious Activities

Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Roman Catholic, Church of Christ, Islamic, Lutheran, Protestant, Pentecostal and Methodist places of worship can be found in Lome. Most services are in French and Ewe and occasional Protestant services are in English. An English-language non-denominational Christian service meets every Sunday at the Hotel 2 Fevrier and an English-Language Roman Catholic mass is celebrated each Sunday at the cathedral in Lome.

Education

The American International School in Lome, established in 1967, follows the general academic curriculum for American schools. The private, coeducational international school, encompassing pre-school through eighth grade, is currently applying for accreditation. The school year extends from September to June. The school day begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m. Instruction is in English. The school is housed in a large two-story building, and has a library, science room, and music room. In addition to basic academic subjects, AIS's curriculum includes French, art, music, drama, P.E. and health.

None of the several Togolese primary and secondary schools in Lome are recommended. Lome has one very good French Government supported lycee. The school ranges from kindergarten through the end of secondary school and prepares students for the French university entrance examination. The school program is identical to that of schools in France. Instruction is conducted in French; inability to speak the language presents a major drawback for all levels except grade 1. Several privately-run

French-language nursery schools for 2–5 year olds are open most of the year.

In addition to the American and French schools, the privately-owned International Primary School offers an accredited American-based curriculum in English for children 2–12. The British school of Lome offers 3–16 year olds instruction in English following the British system.

Recreation and Social Life

Lome is a generally pleasant place and offers the opportunity for year-round sports activities. Many Americans enjoy touring in-country and taking short trips to the several neighboring countries which can be easily and quickly reached by road.

Sports

Swimming is possible in hotel pools. Due to the heavy surf and a dangerous undertow, saltwater swimming is limited to certain beaches. The sea and lagoons offer limited fishing. Lac Togo, located about 20 minutes from Lome, has sailing, windsurfing, and pedal boating.

Several tennis clubs, including hotel clubs that Americans can join, are available, as well as volleyball, badminton, and table tennis facilities. The golf club has a nine-hole course about 8 miles from Lome. There is a riding club at the Hotel Sarakawa, and another near the airport. There are several fitness centers offering karate, weight lifting, body building, aerobics, and sports therapy massage.

Soccer is the principal spectator sport. Tennis, basketball, volleyball, and handball are other sports that are enjoyed by both Americans and Togolese. Sporting stores are few and merchandise that is available is expensive.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

In Lome itself, tourist attractions include the National Museum and the Village Artisanal Center where handcrafts are made and sold.

Outside of Lome, you may join tours of Togo and Benin arranged by hotels for their guests or by the Bureau of Tourism. Most in-country touring is done individually by private car. A main road extends from Lome northward to the Burkina Faso border. The road is paved and suitable for motoring, but the driver must be alert for animals and people on the road. Daylight travel is best.

The paved coastal road from the Ghana to Benin borders provides a continuous view of beaches, coconut palms, and small, scattered fishing villages. About 18 miles east of Lome and a short distance inland is Lac Togo, a lagoon with a hotel, restaurant, bar, swimming pool, and boat dock next door. Residents visit the Lac for a mild change in scenery; visitors from neighboring countries appreciate its French cuisine. On the hillside bordering the lake is Togoville, a small village that was the first permanent German settlement in Togo. It can be reached by car or pirogue.

An automobile trip to Kpalime and its environs can include the Centre Artisanal in Kloto, the Blind school and the Chateau Viale, which offers a mountain view and an occasional glimpse of Lake Volta.

Two hours beyond Kpalime brings you to the Akowa waterfall, just 7 miles from Badou. The Akowa waterfall, 35 meters high, descends vertically from an underground spring. It is accessible to the reasonably hardy. Following an animal trail, under vines and over rotting logs, one must hike for nearly one half hour before reaching the allegedly therapeutic falls. The scenery is beautiful. Guides must be hired at the village. The trip can be made in one long day, or visitors can stay at a hotel in Badou.

North of Atakpame, you journey more deeply into Togo's traditional culture. Acceptable but very modest hotels at Atakpame and Sokode provide overnight lodging. Many visit the game park at Fazao in central Togo, which suffers from a lack of

wildlife at present, however. The hotel at Lama-Kara offers good accommodations and a swimming pool. Further north, the traditional African-architecture accommodations in the Keran reserve are adequate.

Places of interest in the neighboring country of Benin (also French-speaking) are within easy driving distance from Lome and include: Ouidah, the center of voodoo and the site of an old Portuguese fortress whose museum houses relics of the slave trade and illustrates cultural exchanges between Brazil and Africa; Cotonou, Benin's capital and major city; the villages of Lac Nakous and Ganvie, built on stilts in the middle of the lake; Porto Novo, 19 miles from Cotonou, which has a museum of handicrafts; and Abomey, a day's drive from Lome and the seat of the ancient kingdom of Abomey (1600–1900), with an interesting historical museum in a former palace.

Entertainment

For those who like to dine out, Lome has a number of good restaurants offering French cuisine as well as Chinese, German, Italian, Lebanese, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, and traditional Togolese dishes. Restaurants are comparable to those in U.S. cities. Lome has many night clubs and discotheques, including those at the major hotels. Saturdays are disco nights in Lome, and discos are generally crowded and lively, with a variety of music and atmosphere. The Hotel Palm Beach, the Sarakawa, the 2 Fevrier, and the Hotel de la Paix all have casinos with tables for Blackjack and Roulette.

The German, French, and American Cultural Centers are active in Lome, offering scheduled monthly activities, as well as occasional special programs such as jazz and classical music concerts, art exhibits, and other cultural offerings.

Foreign films and a few American films (with the soundtrack dubbed in French) are shown at the cinemas. Sound equipment, projectors,



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Going to market in Togo

seats and overall cleanliness could be better at some.

The USIS library, available to the public, is well stocked with American periodicals, books in French and English, and some recordings of American music. The German Cultural Center has books available for public use. The British School has a large book and video (PAL system) library available for those who have children enrolled in their school or otherwise sponsored. Bookshops in Lome are well supplied with French books and periodicals but quite limited in English-language periodicals and books. Avid readers should bring a supply of reading material and arrange to receive subsequent mailings from one or two book clubs.

Other activities available in Lome include dance classes and lessons and the International Choir.

Since both Accra and Cotonou are within 2 1/2 hours of Lome, Americans often visit these cities for a day or weekend of shopping and sight-seeing.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The home is the center of evening activities such as cocktail parties, barbecues, and card games. Other social activities may also include one or two dances a year, occasional concerts, and national day celebrations.

International Contacts: Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Nigeria, Libya, North Korea and Zaire have embassies in Lome, and several countries are represented by Honorary Consuls. The U.N. has a resident representative and personnel from various nations working in Togo. The European Union is represented. Several nations have technical assistance

teams. Rotary, Lions, Zonta and Soroptomist Clubs are active. A newly formed International Women's Association provides opportunities to make friends quickly with women of other nationalities and engage in charitable work.

OTHER CITIES

ANÉHO, 26 miles east of Lomé, dates to the slave-trade period. Later, the Germans and French made the town Togo's capital. Aného is an important intellectual center for Togo, although it hasn't grown as rapidly as other cities in Togo. Still standing are many of the thick-walled colonial homes built by the Germans. The current population is about 25,000.

The town of **ATAKPAMÉ** was settled in the nineteenth century by the Ewe and Yoruba peoples. It is situated in an important cotton-growing area, and serves as a major trading center for cocoa and coffee. The current population is 62,000.

Situated in northern Togo, **DAPANG** is renowned for its temperate climate. People from all over Togo and Burkina Faso come to this city of 30,000 for the festive marketplaces and local dances.

KPALIMÉ (often written Palime) is Togo's cocoa city, about 65 miles northwest of Lomé. Coffee and oil palms are cultivated here. Kpalimé is a major center for commercial trade in Togo. Scenic areas surround Kpalimé, including the massive Mount Aghou and Kpime and Kolme waterfalls. The Pottery Centre is a haven for ceramics lovers. The population is about 72,000 (2002).

Inhabited by the Anoufo people, **MANGO** is on the Oti River in northern Togo. It is the center for the cattle and peanut trade in the region and currently has a population of 23,000.

In the central region lies **SOKODÉ**, the nation's second largest city. Because of its location in the middle of the forest, hunting is popular. The city is a major commercial trade center for the country's northern regions. Industrial activities include cotton ginning and sugar processing. Muslim holidays are celebrated in Sokodé, especially *Adossa*, or Festival of the Knives. The population is approximately 82,000 (2002).

Located 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of Lomé **TSÉVIÉ** is home to the Ewe people. The town is an important palm oil processing center and a major commercial trading area. In 2002, Tsévié had a population of roughly 36,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Togo, a narrow country of 21,853 square miles, about the size of West Virginia, stretches 370 miles from north to south and averages 56 miles in width. It is bounded on the west by Ghana, on the east by Benin, on the north by Burkina Faso, and on the south by the Bight of Benin on the Atlantic Ocean.

Brackish lagoons cross the country to the southeast, separating the mile-wide sandbar along the Bight of Benin from the geographical mainland. To the southwest a low plateau gradually rises, followed by a southwest-northeast mountain range that is from 2,300 to 3,300 feet high. Another plateau lies to the north of the mountain chain. An open savanna then unfolds and extends to the Burkina Faso border.

Togo is mostly flat. Much of the land lies at an altitude of less than 660 feet; scarcely one-sixth of the land exceeds 1,300 feet. Togo has no navigable rivers, but several rivers have the potential for irrigation, which the Togolese are beginning to exploit. The country's most fertile areas are in and around the mountain range; the northern savannas are the poorest.

Savanna-type vegetation dominates. Large trees, including the baobab, common in the south, are rarer in the north. Mangrove and reed swamps dot the coastal region, and coconut plantations grow along the sea.

Some deer, antelope, buffalo, wart hogs, and hippopotamuses roam the north. Togo's most common animal life includes monkeys, snakes, lizards, and birds. Chickens, sheep, goats, and a few other domestic animals are kept in the city as well as the rural areas.

There are protected forest game reserves at Fazao and Keran, in the central and savanna regions.

The country is divided climatically into southern and northern zones. The southern tropical temperatures fluctuate between 70°F and 89°F, with February and March the hottest months, and June, July, and August the coolest. Humidity is high (80%–90%) most of the year. The major dry season extends from the end of November to the end of March; August and early September are also sometimes quite dry. The two wet seasons are from the end of March to July, with maximum rainfall in June, and from September to mid-November, with the greatest rainfall in October. The coastal area receives the least rainfall; the region of Kpalime, about 65 miles inland, receives the most. Equatorial conditions in the mountains of Togo support the country's only rain forest.

Northern temperatures fluctuate between 65°F and over 100°F, and humidity is less severe than in the south. The northern zone has one rainy and one dry season. In December–January, a cool, dry, dust-laden “harmattan” wind from the Sahara sweeps across the land.

Population

The population of Togo was estimated at 5.2 million persons in 2001. Lomé, the capital city, has a population of about 727,000. Other major population centers are Sokode, 82,000; Kara, 49,000; Atakpame, 62,000; Kpalime, 72,000; Tsévié, 36,000; Dapaong, 30,000; Bassar, 30,000; Aneho, 25,000; and Mango, 23,000.

In Togo, 59 percent of the population are animists; 29 percent are Christians; and 12 percent are Muslims. In the south, most of the Ewe, Guen, Ouatchi, Akposso, and Ife-Ana ethnic groups are Catholics and Protestants. In the north, most of the Kabiye, Losso, and Lamba are Catholics and Protestants, but the Cotocoli, Bassar, Konkomba,

Tchamba, Anoufo, and Moba are primarily Muslims.

Although Togo has some 37 different ethnic groups, three major ethnic groups dominate the population. These are the Ewe, the Kabiye, and the Mina groups. The Ewe group includes the subgroups of Ouatchi and Guen. They live in the Maritime region and a large part of the plateau region. The Kabiye group includes the Cotocoli and Losso groups. The Kabiye are mostly located in the Kara region. The Mina group is dominated by the Moba, followed by the Gourma, the Bassar, and the Konkomba groups. The home area of these groups is the savanna region.

Togo's prehistory and early history were marked by the migrations of various African peoples: prehistoric Sangoan hunting and gathering tribes who settled in central and southern Togo; people from the Sudan-Nile region who came to the north in the 10th–13th centuries; and the Ewes and other tribes from Nigeria who migrated between the 14th and 16th centuries; the Mina and other peoples from Ghana; and the Cotocoli and other ethnic groups from Burkina Faso who came in the 17th century. The boundaries of these kingdoms extended beyond present-day Togo.

The Portuguese, the first Europeans to explore the Togolese coast, came in the late 1400s. Between 1600 and 1800, Brazilian, British, and other slave traders raided the coast and later the interior, and Togo became part of what was known as the Slave Coast. German traders and missionaries reached Togo in the mid-1800s. In 1884, Germany set up a small coastal protectorate, gradually moved inland, and developed the social and economic infrastructure so successfully that Togo became its sole self-supporting colony. From 1885 to 1914, Lome was the administrative and commercial center of German Togo (called Togoland), which included what is now Togo and the Volta region (now part of Ghana). In 1914, Britain and France jointly invaded and took con-

trol of Togo. After World War I, Togo came under a League of Nations mandate and was divided into British and French Togo. The U.N. took over the mandate in 1946. Social and economic repercussions of the British-French trusteeship continue to be felt, particularly the splitting of the Ewe and other tribes and their territories.

In late 1956, French Togo voted for status as an autonomous republic within the French Union; the British-ruled people of the Volta region opted to join Ghana, which became independent in 1957. On April 27, 1960, French Togo gained full independence from France.

Although Western contact has affected the life and outlook in the towns, much of the countryside remains less affected. Traditional animist culture, and the customs peculiar to it, continues to strongly influence the Westernized population. Polygamy is widely practiced in rural areas and even in Lome and other towns. As in the rest of Africa, Togolese life centers on the extended family, which includes those far from the immediate family circle. Loyalties reach out beyond the family to the tribe. Traditional mud-brick homes and communal wells give way, in urban areas, to more modern housing and facilities. However, walled courtyards as centers of family life, cooking with charcoal or wood fires, and communal piped-water taps with the customary social life they create, are still common. Complex traditional women's hairstyles and dress for both men and women provide interesting contrasts to European fashions.

Western culture and Christianity have had the greatest influence in the south, the area that has been the source of most government officials, teachers, journalists, office workers, artisans, and traders. Recently, however, more northerners have become civil servants and professionals through an active government program to rectify past disparities.

The literacy rate in Togo is 51 percent. There are about 50 African dialects spoken. French is the official language, as well as the language of commerce. Some people also speak English or German. The government has a policy of developing two national languages—Kabiye and Ewe—as languages of instruction. Some broadcasting (both radio and TV) is done in these languages, and one page in the daily newspaper is devoted to news in each of these languages. The principal native languages are Ewe and Mina in the South, and Kabiye and Hausa in the North.

Public Institutions

Togo's first President, Sylvanus Olympio, was overthrown and killed in a coup d'état on January 13, 1963, in which the current President, General Gnassingbe Eyadema, participated. After 4 years of rule under civilian President Grunitsky, Togolese President Eyadema came to power as a result of a bloodless coup d'état staged on January 13, 1967. The country's constitution and National Assembly were abolished, and the President ruled by decree. In 1969, the *Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais* (RPT) was founded as the sole political party, with Eyadema as its President and founder. However, beginning in late 1990, strike actions and demonstrations led by students and taxi drivers began a movement that demonstrated the Togolese wish for a more democratic form of government.

A transitional government was named in August 1991 to lead Togo through constitutional, local, legislative, and presidential elections. The transition process was not smooth. Demonstrations, an opposition-sponsored political general strike from November 1992 through July 1993 that severely shocked the economy, and sporadic outbreaks of violence from elements of the security forces and others created an unsettled atmosphere for much of 1991 through 1994.

Progress toward free elections and installation of a definitive government was slow and painful. A new, democratic constitution was approved in a referendum in September 1992. In seriously flawed presidential elections in August 1993 and again in 1998, President Eyadema was reinstated for a 5-year term. However, these elections were boycotted by the major opposition parties and a majority of the voters and therefore did not resolve underlying divisions between the opposition and pro-Eyadema factions of Togolese society. After extensive negotiations between the opposition and the presidential side, legislative elections were held in February 1994. The parties opposed to Eyadema won a slim majority in a poll that was generally held to have been free and fair. The 1999 parliamentary elections were boycotted by the major opposition parties, allowing the RPT to gain control of 79 of the 81 seats.

The constitution requires the president to name the prime minister from among the parliamentary majority. President Eyadema selected Agbeyome Messan Kodjo to be Prime Minister, and his government was installed in August 2000. Overall, the government, while faced by severe economic difficulties, shares the generally free-market, pro-Western orientation of previous governments and has declared its intention to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law but faces a major challenge fulfilling its promises of political and economic betterment.

Arts, Science, and Education

All public education in Togo is free. In principle, all children must begin school at the age of 6, but attendance is not compulsory. The attendance situation varies from region to region. In almost all villages, there are primary schools, and in the administrative districts, some junior secondary schools and lycee (secondary schools). Educational institutions, whether primary, sec-

ondary or technical, are either government affiliated or are associated with the Catholic church, Christian missionaries, or private institutions.

The Universite du Benin, founded in 1970, has a faculty of sciences and letters, schools of law, medicine, agronomy and science, and an advanced Institute for Industrial Engineering. Many Togolese go abroad to study, usually to France. Some also study in Germany and the U.S.

Paul Ahyi, sculptor, muralist, and painter, is the country's best known artist. Many of his works are publicly displayed in Lome. Several other artists occasionally exhibit works at Lome's hotels, the Palais du Congres, or the American, French, or German Cultural centers.

Many bronze, wood, ivory, and semi-precious stone artifacts are peddled by the ubiquitous traders in Lome and in other cities. Handicraft making has been boosted by the creation of a crafts center in Kloto, about a 30-minute drive from the capital. Craftsmen fashion batiks, hand-carve wood, weave cloth, and produce glazed pottery. Jewelers, sandal-makers, embroiderers, cloth and basket weavers, and workers in wood, ivory, and bone can be found in major cities.

Folklore remains an integral part of Togolese life, particularly in the villages, where you will find spontaneous plays and community singing and dancing. Traditional regional festivals are celebrated throughout the year.

Commerce and Industry

Togo is a small country on the coast of West Africa. Its economy depends heavily upon agriculture, phosphate mining, and regional trade. Togo had a per capita income of \$1,500 and GDP of \$7.3 billion in 2000. The majority of the population depends on subsistence agriculture. The

agricultural sector accounts for 42 percent of the GDP and employs over 65 percent of the population. Principal food crops include yams, cassava, millet, corn, sorghum and groundnuts. Agricultural production rose to a record high in 1993 due to political disturbances and an 8-month general strike (1992–93) that forced many unpaid civil servants to migrate from Lome to rural areas and farms. Coffee, cotton, and cocoa are the major cash crops produced for export and account for approximately 40% of export earnings. Some attempts are being made to export pineapples, houseplants, vegetables, and palm oil. There has been a greater emphasis in cotton production in the last decade, leading to major growth in exports. Cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs are also raised.

Phosphate mining is the most important industrial activity. Togo has an estimated 130 million tons of phosphate reserves, and the government-owned Togolese Phosphates Office (OTP) has a production capacity of 3.25 million tons a year.

Industry plays a growing role in the Togolese economy, accounting for 21 percent of the GDP. Much of Togo's industrial base dates back to the government's industrialization program in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which resulted in a number of poorly run parastatals. Demands for higher wages have had a particularly negative impact on domestic industry. The government has liquidated some parastatals, privatized others, and improved the management of many of those remaining under state control. The government's privatization campaign has brought foreign investment in several former state-owned companies, including a steel mill, a dairy factory, a cookie factory, a pasta factory, a brewery, a flour mill, a detergent factory, and an edible oil refinery. In 1989, Togo created an export processing zone to encourage foreign investment and an export-led economic growth. Growth has been limited by Togo's political troubles.

Togo has few energy resources of its own and relies heavily on hydroelectric power from Ghana for its electrical needs. Togo's energy production capacity, however, increased with the completion of the Nangbeto hydroelectric dam, which was built on the Mono River in central Togo, near the Togo/Benin border. Electricity supplies in Lome and in several smaller cities are generally reliable, but wide fluctuations are common.

Regional trade is a very important component of the economy of Togo. In fact, commerce is the single most important economic activity in Togo, after traditional agriculture, and Lome has long been known as an important regional trading center. The commercial sector is dominated by five major trading companies, which control roughly half of the registered import activity. There are also many smaller registered commercial enterprises. Togo has a well-developed banking sector, with five full-service commercial banks. Lome's position as a regional banking center, however, has been reduced because of the political and economic difficulties of the early 1990s.

The modern and autonomous port of Lome, an extensive paved road network, and an improving telecommunications system all help to make Togo's infrastructure one of the best in the region. The country has over 2,250 miles of paved roads, the most important of which are the north-south road from Lome to the Burkina Faso border and the coastal road linking Ghana and Benin. The port of Lome, which was inaugurated in 1968 and expanded in 1984, has piers capable of handling a large variety of ships. The port operates daily and has extensive transit and storage facilities. It has a 173-acre free port area and an additional 1,581-acre industrial park, making it an attractive regional base. Warehousing, assembling, and manufacturing operations can receive customs exoneration on imported raw materials and exported finished exports. Togo's good infrastructure has made Togo

an important transshipment center, particularly for goods going to Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

Togo's relative advantages as a regional trading center have eroded in recent years due to improvements in the business climates in neighboring countries and the political instability in Togo. The decline in regional trade was accelerated from late 1990 to 1993, due to political unrest. Trade through the port of Lome has dropped.

Capital and consumer goods in Togo are imported mainly from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Lebanon and China. Some 60 percent of the imports consist of consumer goods, one-third of which are foodstuffs and beverages.

In the past the Togolese Government had put a high priority on developing the country's tourist trade. Lome has 5 modern European-style hotels and many smaller tourist hotels. There is one nice, government-owned hotel in Kara, 430 kilometers north of Lome. The tourist industry has been badly affected by the long period of political instability and periodic violence.

Transportation

Local

In-town taxis provide inexpensive transportation to any point within central Lome, although vehicles are often in poor condition. Tipping is not expected. Taxis can be easily obtained during business hours. American drivers should exercise extreme caution while driving. Personnel should wear seat belts and have car seats for infants and small children. The condition of motor vehicles on the road is quite poor, so defensive driving is very important. The majority of Lome's population walks or cycles and frequently ignores traffic rules. Sheep, goats, chickens, and dogs wander the streets freely.

Cars can be rented with or without a chauffeur from a car rental firm, but prices are high.

Bicycles, motorscooters, and motorcycles are numerous on already congested streets. Limited brands/models of bicycles, motorscooters, and motorcycles (Yamaha, Honda, etc.) can be obtained locally. Togolese law requires the wearing of helmets, however, many cyclists do not wear them or wear inadequate protection.

Avoid night driving whenever possible. Many roads are full of large potholes and most are without street lights, additionally, many cars do not have proper headlights or taillights.

Most police vehicles are blue and white. Fire department vehicles are red. Official government vehicles are generally black. It is common practice to stop or reroute traffic if a VIP is going to pass. Everyone is required to obey either police or military persons directing traffic.

Most Americans travel by privately owned vehicle, although taxis and mini-buses provide regular (if crowded and not very safe) transportation to all towns. A railroad provides limited service from Lome to Blitta and Kpalime.

Regional

Togo's air-conditioned airport officially opened in 1988. Air services to and from neighboring countries are available although delays are common. Air Afrique flies three times weekly between Paris and Lome, making stopovers in other African cities. KLM offers two flights a week between Lome and Amsterdam, with connections to New York. Sabena airlines also offers two flights a week between Lome and Brussels, with connections to New York. Air France has a weekly flight between Lome and Paris. No American carriers serve Lome.

Togo has limited rail transport, but the two-lane macadam roads to Cotonou, Benin and Accra, Ghana permit automobile travel. All driving

within the west African region is done on the right-hand side of the road. Cotonou and Accra are both about 3 hours by car from Lome; Lagos, Nigeria is approximately two hours beyond Cotonou, but road travel is not recommended to Lagos for safety reasons. It is also possible to drive to Burkina Faso via a serviceable paved road completed to Togo's northern border in 1980.

Togo's roads are not in good condition, with many potholes and bad stretches of road. Most country roads are dirt or sand routes. four-wheel drive vehicles are popular among the American community.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

France Cable operates a satellite communications system linking Lome, Europe and the U.S., 24 hours daily. Service is reliable and efficient (especially on weekends) but expensive. Phone connections to cities in Francophone Africa, such as Cotonou and Abidjan, can be made without too much delay, but calls to other African cities are difficult and sometimes impossible to make in a day.

PTT Lome, in conjunction with France Cable, provides commercial telegraph service 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, and 8:00 am to noon, Sundays and holidays.

Telex service to all parts of the world is fair.

Radio and TV

Radio Lome broadcasts from 5:00 a.m. to midnight daily, with news broadcast in French and local languages. Radio Kara, in northern Togo, broadcasts 97 hours per week. Radio France International (RFI) has received approval to set up an FM transmitter in Togo. Privately-owned Radio Kanal Plus, the station most listened to by English-speaking expatriates, plays an eclectic selection of music, ranging from European classical to rap. The Voice of America (VOA) and the British Broadcasting Corporation

(BBC) transmit shortwave English-language broadcasts to West Africa.

Government-owned TV Togo (one station, one channel) was officially inaugurated in 1973. Programming is in color. Broadcasts are generally in French from 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. weekdays, and from noon to 11:30 p.m. on weekends. There is a prime-time newscast in French at 8:00 p.m., which is repeated at 10:00 p.m. TV fare features movies, music videos, documentaries, and some American TV situation comedy reruns dubbed into French.

The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC-TV) can be received with an outside antenna and booster. GBC-TV offers a wider variety of programs than TV Togo. Most programs are in English. They transmit from 5:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. on weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. on weekends and holidays. Prime-time news is shown at 7:00 p.m. and retransmitted at 10:00 p.m. CNN International is featured from midnight to 1:00 a.m. American TV sitcom reruns are shown, as well as feature films.

There is a cable company in Lome that offers access to CNN International and Canal France International for those with special antennas. The company is currently negotiating with several other cable operators, including BET International.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The government-owned *Togo Presse* is published six days a week. Most of the paper is in French with one page (half-page each) in Ewe and Kabiye, the major Togolese languages. Several independent French-language weeklies can be bought from street hawkers or local bookstores, which also carry the French dailies *Le Monde* and *L'Express*, and other French and European magazines. European editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *International Herald Tribune* are available. Air subscriptions of these publications are available, but they

are expensive and arrive with delays.

English-language books can be found on rare occasions in some local shops. Those who have children enrolled at the British School can borrow English-language books from their well-stocked library.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Bring eye-glass prescriptions with you in case you need emergency replacement. Bring any cleaning solution/equipment for contact lenses with you as you won't be able to find these in Lome.

Local dental care is adequate for routine care, such as fillings and cleaning, but you should complete any special treatment (endodontal, periodontal, crowns, or oral surgical problems) before coming.

The Lome city hospital is below American standards and is not used for health care by the American community. A small missionary hospital staffed by American surgeons is situated 2 1/2 hours north of Lome. The hospital has an adequate laboratory, x-ray unit and a clean, well-equipped operating room.

Lome's physicians, both generalists and specialists, are European or locally trained, and are called in for consultation on occasion. Obstetrical and diagnostic services are extremely limited. Prenatal care is substandard, and expatriates must be medevaced for delivery. Pregnant women are at increased risk from malaria.

Community Health

The level of sanitation in Lome, while good by African standards, is far below that of cities in developed countries. Water from the public system is contaminated and must be boiled and filtered. Most of the city is not served by a sewer system. Waste and contaminated water are discharged on the beaches. Garbage and trash are collected irregularly.

Local government funds for food inspection, insect control, and disease prevention are extremely limited. Therefore, locally butchered meat must be thoroughly cooked, and fruits and vegetables should be soaked in a suitable disinfecting solution.

Many diseases unknown in the United States are present in Togo. These include malaria, dysentery, typhoid fever, leprosy, Guinea worm, Schistosomiasis, skin diseases, and various intestinal parasites, to name a few. For expatriates living in Lome and observing ordinary sanitary precautions, most of these illnesses are not a hazard. Rabies is present in Togo and care must be taken to avoid infected animals. Childhood diseases such as measles, diphtheria, polio, and strep infections are common. With the advent of chloroquine-resistant *Falciparum* malaria to West Africa, malaria has been a major concern for expatriates. Malaria in Togo is a pervasive, year round disease. The mortality rate among the Togolese is high. Expatriates are extremely susceptible to the disease and constant attention to preventive medications and mosquito control is necessary.

Preventive Measures

Most Americans remain remarkably well in Lome by following a number of preventive measures that soon become routine:

Bring water to a rolling boil for 3 minutes and then filter.

Wash fresh fruits and vegetables well, and soak in chlorine or iodine solution for 30 minutes, then rinse with boiled water.

Maintain a clean kitchen; foods spoil quickly here—refrigerate and store foods carefully; ensure that servants are not disease carriers by obtaining a pre-employment medical exam; periodic follow up tests for parasites every 6 months, and chest X-rays every 2 years; also ensure that servants are carefully instructed in sanitary working habits.

Be sure that the entire family has received, and remains up-to-date on, recommended inoculations. Yellow fever is required for entry into Togo. Inoculations recommended include: measles, mumps, German measles, polio, hemophilus, meningitis, hepatitis, tetanus, rabies, and typhoid.

Teach children basic health and hygiene practices. Contact with infected soil causes hookworm infestation and larva migrate. Contaminated food and carriers can be the source of several intestinal parasites.

Machine dry or iron all clothes to prevent larval infestation of the skin.

Do not swim in or drink from bodies of water or streams of fresh water anywhere in Togo. Schistosomiasis due to infected snails is prevalent and enters through the skin. Guinea worm is contracted by drinking contaminated water.

The State Department's Office of Medical Services recommends that all Americans take mefloquine to prevent malaria. Mefloquine is an effective prophylaxis regimen in Togo and most other areas where there is chloroquine resistance. Mefloquine is safe and well tolerated when given weekly. Doxycycline has comparable effectiveness. However, those unable to take mefloquine or doxycycline should take chloroquine in combination with paludrine to prevent malaria.

Dosages for the prevention of malaria should begin 2 weeks before arrival, continue while in Togo and 4 weeks after you leave. While in Togo, screen houses, use mosquito nets at night; use repellents and aerosol sprays as necessary; and control local mosquito breeding areas. Malaria is a life-threatening disease.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Air travel to Lome is the only feasible transportation for visitors coming long distances.

Visas for Togo are issued by the French consular officers in the countries with no Togolese diplomatic mission. Americans may enter Togo without a visa and obtain a resident visa after arrival.

Dogs and cats being imported into Togo must have a current rabies vaccination and a certificate of good health issued within 48 hours of departure. With the exception of Accra, which allows dogs to accompany visitors, entering British or former British areas en route to Togo requires special permits, which are difficult to arrange. If possible, avoid such areas and bring dogs and cats by air directly to Lome. Although available locally, pet supplies are very expensive.

Togo's currency is the CFA franc (Communaute Financiere Africaine) which is fixed to the euro. The exchange is about 656 CFA to one euro, and in January 2001 was 699 CFA to the U.S. dollar.

Commercial banks in Togo include: Ecobank, Union Togolaise de Banque (UTB), Banque Internationale pour l'Afrique Occidentale (BIAO), and Banque Togolaise pour le Commerce et l'Industrie (BTIC).

Commercial banks provide checking facilities, sell travelers checks, and will accept currency, drafts, and travelers and personal checks. Banks charge for service when a deposit in dollars is made to a franc account and do not return cancelled checks with periodic statements. While some larger hotels and restaurants may accept credit cards, not all types are accepted.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

No ceiling is imposed on the amount of CFA francs you can legally import. However, permission must be obtained from the Togolese Government to convert CFA into dollars, except in the case of official personnel to whom the privilege is extended automatically.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 13	Liberation Day
Jan. 24	Economic Liberation Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 27	Independence Day
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Pentecost Monday*
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Few specific descriptions of Togo in English are available to the public. Most public libraries have the standard selection of recent books on formerly British Africa that may have some pertinence to Togo. Writings on formerly French African territories often contain a section on Togo. The French Embassy and Information Services have published excellent pamphlets.

Consult the American Association of Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) in the Foreign Service Lounge and the Overseas Briefing Center at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center.

Articles in various news magazines, such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The Economist* have carried the events of the past few years.

Aithnard, K.M. *Some Aspects of Cultural Policy in Togo*. UNESCO: Studies and the Documents on Cultural Policies, 1976.

Carey, Joyce. *Mr. Johnston*. Harper & Row: New York. An English administrator's frustration and a young Nigerian employee's bewilderment and disappointment on a bush road development scheme.

Carpenter, Allan and James Frostman. *Togo*. PLB: Enchantment of Africa Series, 1977.

Conton, William. *The African*. This novel, by a Sierra Leonean, depicts the path from village hut to dominant politician's villa.

Cornevin, Robert. *Histoire du Togo*. Editions Berger-Levtault: Paris, 1969. General history of Togo with interesting chapters on early Togolese history, a long selection on the colonial period, and details of colonial administration.

Crowder, Michael. *West Africa Under Colonial Rule*. Hutchinson & Co., Ltd.: London, 1970. Africa in the mid-19th century, subsequent imposition of colonial rule, and local efforts to resist various colonial powers. Includes a section on Togo.

Decalo, Samuel. *Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military History*. Yale University Press: New Haven.

———. *Historical Dictionary of Togo*. 2nd ed. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987.

Francois, Yvonne. *Le Togo*, Karthala, Paris, 1993.

Gess, Denise. *Togo*. Places & Peoples of the World Series. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.

July, Robert W. *A History of the African People*. Faber & Faber: London, 1970. A well-written, accurate, and up-to-date history of Africa with good maps, pic-

tures, and excellent bibliographies.

Knoll, Arthur J. *Togo Under Imperial Germany, 1884–1914*. Hoover Institute Press: Stanford, 1978.

Laye, Camara. *The African Child*. (L'Enfant Noir, also The Dark Child). Fontana Press. A warm and moving autobiography of the youth of a well-educated Guinean under French colonial rule.

Levtzion, Nehemia. *Muslims and Chiefs in West Africa*. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1968. The Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Gonja areas of northern Ghana, the Chokossi State centered around Mango in northern Togo, and another part of the Kotokoli of north-central Togo.

Oliver, Roland and J.D. Fage. *A Short History of Africa*. Penguin African Library: Baltimore, 1966. Paperback. Excellent introduction to African history.

Packer, George. *The Village of Waiting*. New York: Vintage Books, 1988.

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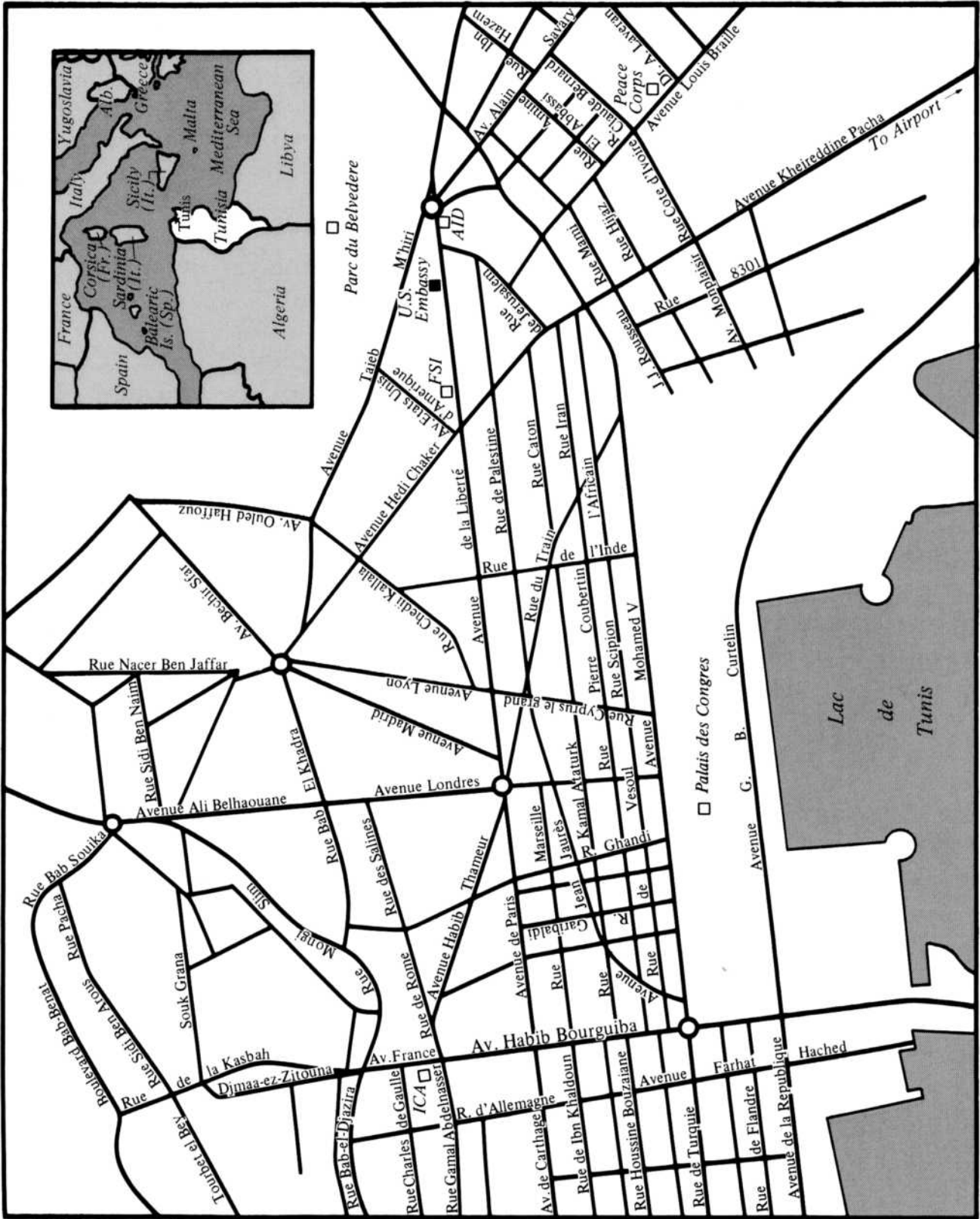
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and special projects reported regularly.

Foreign Affairs. Serious discussions by scholars, administrators, and African politicians, plus a bibliography.

Jeune Afrique. French-language weekly that covers African news and current events. Published in Paris.

National Geographic. West, Central, and sub-Saharan Africa at their most photogenic, with usually accurate observations in the text. New African. West Africa.



Tunis, Tunisia

TUNISIA

Republic of Tunisia

Major Cities:

Tunis, Monastir, Kairouan

Other Cities:

Béja, Bizerta, Gabès, Hammamet, La Goulette, Mahdia, Menzil-bourguiba, Moknine, Nabeul, Qafsa, Sfax, Sousse

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

TUNISIA is a land abounding in contrasts. It is not the stereotypical African desert country, even though it is enveloped by a large percentage of arid land. In fact, it was once called "the green land," describing the days when it served as a granary of Rome, and the wheat, wine, and olives introduced by the Phoenicians were sent north across the Mediterranean. Tunisia is Mediterranean in its affinity for the inland seas and in its proximity, both culturally and politically, to southern Europe. The countryside west of the capital city of Tunis is decidedly more European than African. The tree-lined roads are reminiscent of southern France, and the resort areas on the Gulf of Hammamet,

which include 700 miles of white sand beaches, are similar to those of the Côte d'Azur.

Historically, Tunisia has been at the crossroads between Europe and the Middle East. Bathed in centuries of Phoenician, Roman, and Arab civilizations, it was then westernized by several decades of French presence. The legacies left behind have helped to shape this land into the most modern and sophisticated country in North Africa. History still abounds in the ruins of Carthage, Utica, and Dougga, as well as in the modern cities of Tunis and Kairouan.

To a generation of Americans and British, Tunisia is the memory of major battles fought during World War II in North Africa. In the quiet greenery of its military cemeteries and scattered burial plots lie thousands of victims of the battles of El Alamein, Kasserine, Long Stop Hill, and Hill 609. However, the intervening years have softened the image, and new generations of Westerners are converging on Tunisia. Its closeness to Europe makes Tunisia even more attractive, for, in a short time, one can change continents, culture, and civilization.

MAJOR CITIES

Tunis

Tunis is built on the west bank of a shallow salt lake on Tunisia's northeastern Mediterranean coast. Originally a Phoenician trading post, it has been the capital of what is now Tunisia since the 13th century. It comprises two adjacent districts, widely different in character—the old Arab town (the *medina*) with its narrow, shop-lined streets, and the new French-influenced city of wide avenues and tall buildings. The *souks*, where anything from hand-woven rugs to used buttons can be found, the famous Zitouna Mosque, old residences noted for their tiles and blue grillwork, and narrow alleys that twist and turn are some of the memorable sights in the *medina*. The new city, developed during the French Protectorate of 1881 to 1956, resembles a typical western Mediterranean metropolis, and surrounds the old section.

Greater Tunis covers an area of more than 1,600 square miles. It has a population of 1.64 million, of whom perhaps 30,000 are Europeans, mainly French and Italian. French and Arabic are spoken; little English is heard.

Tunis has four seasons, with spring and fall the most pleasant. Summers are hot and dry, although sea breezes moderate the heat. Winters are rainy and damp, with days of brilliant sunshine intervening. Except at the highest altitudes, the temperature rarely drops below 40°F.

Agriculture remains a major source of income. Olives and cereals are the principal crops grown. There are several manufacturing companies in Tunis that produce carpets, cement, textiles and clothing.

Tunis is the center of government, and an active commercial center and seaport. The large international airport, Tunis-Carthage, is five miles from the city and, although there are many large, good hotels in town, the beach resorts on the outskirts attract most of the European visitors. Car rental agencies operate both in the city and at the airport. Detailed information about tours and hotel accommodations is available from Office National de Tourisme Tunisien at avenue Mohammed V, Tunis.

Currently, more than 60 countries maintain resident diplomatic missions in Tunis. The city has been the site of the Arab League's international headquarters since 1979.

Education

In Tunis, the American Cooperative School, designated as a U.S. Government-sponsored institution and established in 1959, has facilities for 160 children from kindergarten through tenth grade.

The teachers at American Cooperative are qualified members of the U.S. and international communities. Instruction is in English, although French is taught in all grades. The curriculum is similar to, and compares favorably with, those in U.S. schools.

Almost all American children in Tunis attend American Cooperative.

Girl Scout, Brownie, Boy Scout, and Cub Scout troops are very active. The groups hold weekly meetings after class hours. American Cooperative plans periodic activities for children, such as sporting events and dances. It also has an active Hyper Club for students in grades five through nine; activities have included a bowling night, ski trip, beach parties, and a sight-seeing trip to Roman ruins. Other extracurricular activities include computer training, choral and instrumental music, and school yearbook.

Public schools and private Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim schools are available at all levels, including high school. A few private French nurseries operate in the city and its suburbs.

Tunisian schools are similar to those in France. From an American point of view, they have a rigid curriculum and long hours of class work. Fluency in French is imperative, and some classes are conducted in Arabic.

Americans have sent their children, with mixed results, to one of the three French *lycées* operating in Tunis and La Marsa. The tuition is considerably less than at the American Cooperative School, but parents must pay for textbooks and supplies. Uniforms are required.

Many junior and senior high school children attend schools in Morocco, Italy, Spain. The U.S. Torrejon American High School in Spain is operated by the U.S. Department of Defense. It is a coeducational institution, with instruction in English.

Notre Dame International School in Rome, conducted by the Brothers of the Holy Cross, provides a liberal education in accordance with American tradition. The faculty is mainly American, and instruction is in English. Classes are for grades four through high school. Its sister school for girls is the Marymount International School. The faculty consists mostly of nuns of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

St. Stephen's School is a four-year coeducational school emphasizing college preparatory work. It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Recreation

Tunis and its environs offer good facilities for tennis, golf, hunting, scuba diving, and some fishing. Swimming, sailing, and windsurfing are also popular, but the beaches close to and in Tunis used for swimming have been found from time to time to be contaminated and unsafe. Americans should check with the U.S. Embassy Medical Unit before going to the beach. Tunis has three municipal swimming pools, two of which are heated in winter; the weather is suitable for outdoor swimming from June through September.

Public tennis courts are available in most of the suburbs, and private courts can be found in several places around the city and at resorts. In Tunisia, white is still worn on the court, but is not mandatory everywhere. Tennis balls should be brought from home; local ones are expensive and of poor quality.

Some Americans play golf on the 18-hole course at La Soukra, about seven miles from Tunis. The course is good from October to June, but very dry in summer. The greens are a mixture of sand, crushed olive pits, and crude oil—a new experience for most American golfers. Lunch and dinner are served in the clubhouse, which may also be used for large receptions. Annual dues are high, but nonmembers can play at daily or weekly rates. The magnificent new 18-hole course at the resort of Port El Kantaoui in northern Sousse, about a three-hour drive from Tunis, is good for a golf weekend. Created by eminent golf-scape architects, the course is star-shaped and covers four miles and 170 acres. Each of the 18 holes is on a different kind of terrain. There is a luxurious clubhouse and equipment to rent.

Softball games and jogging programs are enjoyed by the American community. In addition, bowling is



V-shaped office building in Tunis, Tunisia

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

available at a standard six-lane alley at La Baie des Singes Hotel in a northern suburb of Tunis.

Saltwater fishing and scuba diving are popular sports. Little freshwater fishing exists in Tunisia because only one river flows year round. Motorboats may be rented, but no facilities are available for chartering boats for offshore fishing. Spearfishing with scuba equipment is prohibited, but is permitted while using snorkeling gear. No facilities currently exist for refilling scuba bottles.

Wild game is in season from September to June. A shotgun can be used for small-game hunting. Open-season dates vary only slightly each year and are published each August. Quail, duck, woodcock, snipe, partridge, and wild boar are the most common game. The latter is found in the mountainous regions close to the Algerian border. Hunt-

ers are limited exclusively to shotguns in the pursuit of game, and 12-gauge is the most common. Rifled slugs are required for boar hunting; buckshot is prohibited. Hunters must have a permit for the weapon, a hunting license, and insurance.

Camping is popular among Americans. Many undeveloped and a few developed campsites exist in the countryside. All equipment should be brought from home, as it is both scarce and expensive in Tunisia.

Kasr Sa'id, known as one of the most beautiful racetracks in North Africa, is about five miles from Tunis. The racing season begins October 1 and lasts through May. Purebred Arab and English racehorses—some locally bred and some imported—and imported trotters compete for the purses. Kasr Sa'id has a riding club; another is in La Soukra.

Sailing centers around the yacht clubs at La Goulette and at Sidi-bou-Sa'id, the exquisite artists' village near Tunis. Various types of boats, including cruisers, sailboats, sloops, and ketches are available. There is no single racing class of boats in Tunisia.

The visitor can make endless sight-seeing and picnic trips to the Roman, Punic, and Byzantine ruins scattered throughout Tunisia. Le Bardo Museum in Tunis contains the largest and most beautiful collection of Roman mosaics in the world, as well as Roman and Punic statues, coins, jewelry, and other interesting exhibits.

Tunisia's main places of interest are all within easy driving distance of Tunis, and are connected by good blacktopped roads. The port city of Bizerta is 40 miles to the north through pleasant countryside. The ruins of ancient Utica may be vis-



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Seaside complex on the Mediterranean in Tunis, Tunisia

ited just off the Bizerta highway. Sousse (87 miles from Tunis) and Sfax (166 miles) are central Tunisian seaports. The old Arab sections of both cities are still encircled by ancient ramparts and watchtowers. Sousse, a popular tourist attraction because of its beautiful beaches, has a small, excellent museum devoted to Roman and early Christian mosaics. Nearby are catacombs as extensive as those in Rome. Just north of Sousse is the huge new complex called Port El Kantaoui, with its 18-hole golf course, magnificent harbor, luxury hotels, villas, riding school, tennis courts, pools, and beaches.

Many other smaller resorts and tourist centers can be visited. Tunisia is continuing an extensive program to improve tourist facilities throughout the country, including attractive modern hotels ranging from first class to economy. Ain Dra-

ham, in the cork and oak forests of the Kroumirie Mountains 110 miles west of Tunis, offers a change of scene and climate. At an altitude of 2,600 feet, Ain Draham is pleasantly cool in summer and often has snow in winter. It offers excellent boar hunting. About an hour south of Tunis are the picturesque seaside towns of Hammamet and Nabeul where one can swim off broad sandy beaches. At Nabeul, Tunisian artisans work on rugs, baskets, and their famous pottery.

About 350 miles south of Tunis is Djerba, a palm-covered white sand island, which retains much of the original Arab architecture. According to local tradition, it was the home of the indolent, dreamy *lotophagi* (lotus eaters) of Homer's *Odyssey*. On the island is a Jewish colony, which may antedate the Diaspora. Its beautiful synagogue at Hara Kebira is well worth a visit.

The oases of Tozeur and Nefta, which produce fine dates, are 310 and 350 miles, respectively, southwest of Tunis on the Algerian Sahara border and on the edge of the extensive Chott Djerid, a dry salt lake. Tozeur has, perhaps, the most luxurious oasis. Its 200 springs feed thousands of the best date palms. Tozeur's buildings are built with unfired yellow bricks; the town can be toured on donkey or camel. Nefta's oasis resembles a bowl. The town, made up of sand-colored homes and holy places, is situated on a plateau. A guide is needed for a trip through the oasis on donkey.

Motor trips to Djerba and the oasis country make pleasant four- or five-day journeys. The best time of year to visit these areas is from late fall to early spring. Daily flights to Djerba from Tunis are available all year.

Roman ruins are scattered throughout Tunisia. The ruins of Utica can be reached from Tunis or Bizerta. Utica was a Phoenician colony founded in 1100 B.C. After entering by a great arched gateway, the visitor will see the marble flooring of a mansion set in a garden. Mosaics depicting sea fish decorate a water basin and the pool of a former fountain. Remains of several other houses reveal decorated flooring of Phoenician, Roman, and Byzantine periods. Phoenician tombs contain interesting remains.

Carthage, historically the most famous ruins, is closest to Tunis—only 20 minutes by car. When the Romans, furious at humiliations inflicted upon them by the Carthaginians, conquered Carthage in 146 B.C., they razed and plowed it into the ground. Later they rebuilt the city, making it their provincial capital of North Africa. The Vandals further destroyed the city in 439.

More extensive ruins can be seen at Dougga (70 miles), Thuburbo Majus (32 miles), and Sbeitla (160 miles). Dougga was a major Roman city with paved streets. Its theater, built in A.D. 168 to seat 3,500, resounds again when classical plays and other performances are staged. El Djem, 125 miles south of Tunis, features a coliseum almost as large as the one in Rome.

Train and bus transportation is available to most sites, but public transportation may be uncomfortable or inconvenient for longer distances. It is an advantage to have a car for trips, although many local travel agencies and hotels now operate modern air-conditioned buses.

Entertainment

The theater season in Tunis is November through May. Two companies present a series of six to eight well-known French-language plays. The Tunis Symphony Orchestra gives monthly concerts from November through May, with guest soloists and touring groups appearing occasionally. Theater and symphony performances take place at

the Municipal Theater in downtown Tunis.

Tunis and its suburbs have about two dozen movie theaters that offer a wide selection of American and English films, with French dialogue dubbed in. Italian, Spanish, Mexican, and Egyptian films are also occasionally shown. Most films, however, are French produced. Cultural centers, notably the French and Tunisian, offer films at little or no charge to the public.

Many special occasions are celebrated in Tunisia. The Orange Festival of Cap Bon in January; the Festival of the Hawks in El Haouaria in April; music and dancing festivals in Hammamet, Djerba, Dougga, and Bizerta during the summer; the International Cultural Festival of Carthage in July; Monastir's Drama Festival in August; the spectacular Festival of the Sahara in November; and a number of other events which lure visitors from Tunis.

Restaurants in Tunis and environs are attractive and the food is very good. Among those recommended are the Strasbourg, the Hungaria, the Malouf, and Chez Slah. The national dish is *couscous*—semolina (a specially processed wheat) prepared with vegetables, meat, fowl, or fish, and a piquant sauce called *harissa* (hot red peppers). Another favorite local dish is *brik*, a thin, fried pastry envelope with an egg, meat, or tuna stuffing.

In the summer, outdoor dining and dancing places may be found along the coast. Many restaurants in the city are closed from mid-July to September, during the beach season.

The International Women's Club is an active organization providing services to the international communities. All American women and wives of U.S. citizens residing in Tunisia are eligible to join; one-third of the total membership is composed of people from other countries. The club eases the adjustment to life in Tunisia, and provides a

center for service projects and social activities.

Tunisians are kind and hospitable, and this is reflected in their warm style of entertaining. At nonofficial parties, informality is the keynote; meals are usually buffet style, with food always in great abundance. Tunisian Muslims generally do not eat pork, so alternatives must be provided when they are guests. Alcoholic beverages may be served, but soft drinks or fruit juices should also be offered.

Monastir

The seaport town of Monastir, the birthplace of former President Habib Bourguiba, is situated in northeast Tunisia, on the southernmost point of the Gulf of Hammamet. It is about 80 miles southeast of Tunis and just south of Sousse. A fort has existed on this point since the dawn of history, warding off invaders who threatened from the sea. Up until the end of the seventh century, Monastir—first as Rous Penna of the Carthaginians and later as the Roman Ruspina—has played an uninterrupted role as the defensive stronghold of the coastline. The area was further built up as a military fortification by the Aghlabites in the eighth century.

One building from this era—the *Ribat*—still stands today as a majestic reflection of the past. Built in the eighth century and then fortified and enlarged in the ninth and 11th centuries, the *Ribat* was originally a defensive fortress and a place for monastic seclusion. Today, the *Ribat* exudes the charm of a historical shrine. The Hall of Prayer, on the first floor, has been converted to a Museum of the Islamic Arts. A vast array of objects preserved from the past are displayed and carefully labelled.

Not only known as a military stronghold, Monastir was also a holy city from the 11th century onward. A number of sacred legends date from that era. One of the legends said that entry into heaven could be ensured with a three-day

stay in Monastir. Another legend, told by the Prophet himself, was that Monastir had the distinct privilege of containing a gate to heaven.

Monastir today uses its history and location to great advantage. As a seaside resort, it welcomes visitors to enjoy the sunshine and local curiosities. Since Tunisia's independence in 1956, the government has introduced an infrastructure that has rejuvenated the economy of Monastir. The Chraga quarter has been restored and a new roadway has been constructed. Located in the heart of Monastir, the Chraga offers craft shops (where the traditional arts of tapestry, pottery, basketwork, wrought iron work, and other decorative and practical items are displayed and sold), cafe terraces, and restaurants where visitors can try local specialties. The Habib Bourguiba Mosque, rebuilt recently at the edge of this quarter, is an example of classic religious architecture.

Nostalgia is found throughout Monastir. Leaving the *medina*, the visitor can't help but notice the high battlement walls flanked by square towers. These are the only parts of the 18th century ancient fortified enclosure that remain standing. The century-old streets also reveal ancient Monastir and its 12 gates. In contrast to the old parts of Monastir, the city is also proud of its modern buildings. Green areas, squares, and modern intersections adjoin the old areas. A convention center was recently built to house international meetings.

University life in Monastir is developing around schools of chemistry and dental surgery affiliated with the University of Tunis. There is also a residence hall for girls, a library, and a stadium that seats 20,000.

Monastir is becoming a favorite spot for the international film world. Franco Zeffirelli shot *Jesus of Nazareth* here, and, in 1981, a studio was constructed to film indoor scenes.

A number of festivals and cultural events are held in Monastir during the summer. From the end of July through the beginning of August, an international folk festival is held every other year. In the intervening years, there is an international theater festival. A fair and exhibition are held from August 1 through 15.

Hotels run along the coastline to the little fishing port between the two peninsulas. On Sidi Ghedamsi Island, linked to the coast by a causeway, is the tourist complex of Cap Monastir. The area boasts many different sporting facilities including a golf course, a marina, and a fishing port. Due to its proximity to the Skanes-Monastir airport, Cap Monastir is recognized as one of the area's most comprehensive tourist centers. Monastir's current population is 59,000.

North of Monastir, in a residential area, is the Presidential Palace of Skanes. The residence is richly decorated with Arabian ornaments, marble, and decorated earthenware. It is situated in the middle of an exotic park. Beyond the park lies the oasis of Dkhila, known for its palm wine. Hotels line the beaches of Dkhila, where numerous water sports may be enjoyed. Visitors can participate in windsurfing, water skiing, and sea excursions. Beginner's lessons in horseback riding, tennis, and other sports are given at the hotels by qualified instructors approved by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. At night, discotheques play the latest European and American hits, but the Tunisian folk customs of belly dancing and snake charming may also be enjoyed.

Kairouan

Kairouan is a city of 116,000, located 100 miles southwest of Tunis in the center of a vast plain. Kairouan is the third most holy city in the Islamic world, after Mecca and Medina. Founded in 670 by the warrior, Oqba Ibn Nafaa, it grew from a simple military outpost to the greatest cultural center of the Maghreb. During the Kharijite Revolt of 758-761, the city was pil-

laged, but restored during the Aghlabite Dynasty (800) on an even grander scale. The Aghlabites gave the city some of its most beautiful monuments. They developed all spheres of activity in Kairouan, and soon the city rivalled all other great civilization centers of the Mediterranean.

Kairouan (also spelled Qairawan) is comprised of an old city encircled by a high wall of uniform brick with many imposing doorways. The ramparts were built in 1052 by Al-Moezz, the Fatimite, and restored by the Husseinites in the 18th century. The modern city, on the other side of the ramparts, has conformed to an ancient architectural style evident in its recently completed cultural and commercial center.

Long a holy city to Muslims, Kairouan's religious vocation is evident everywhere. According to legend, seven visits to Kairouan equalled one to Mecca. The city is especially known for its mosques and tombs. Its Great Mosque is the most fascinating Islamic structure in Tunisia. Dating back to the eighth century, the mosque draws thousands of visitors in prayer and admiration. The Great Mosque is the focal point of the city's *medina*. The vast inner sanctuary stretches out like a fortified stronghold with its imposing architecture. From the entrance, one can see the marvelous archways and immense marble-laid courtyard. The columns, done in various architectural styles; the interior of the prayer hall; the bas-relief work; the floral and calligraphic designs; and the crystal chandeliers all make this mosque one of the most beautiful in the Muslim world. Kairouan is also endowed with 50 other mosques in its *medina*.

The proliferation of religious activities does not prevent the inhabitants of Kairouan from enjoying life. The joyous occasion of *Mouled* (or Mouloud), the Prophet's birthday, brings pilgrims from all around to the city to join in lighthearted celebration. In addition to the *makroudh*—small cakes made of hard

wheat paste stuffed with dates and soaked with honey—that are a year-round specialty of Kairouan, the city's women also prepare *assida*—a sweet dish—to mark the beginning of the festivities.

Kairouan is also known for its handicrafts. Metal engraving, weaving, and saddle-making are all carried out in the city. But, the most important handicraft which, along with the Great Mosque, has made Kairouan famous, is the art of carpet-weaving. The National Office of Handicraft encourages the development and production of carpets and has set up a quality control system whereby each carpet is examined by specialists in the control center before being granted the official seal of approval. The National Office of Handicraft houses a Museum of Rugs; the Museum of Islamic Art is located opposite the Great Mosque.

Lodging in Kairouan is pleasant and reasonably priced. The deluxe Aghlabite Hotel, on the city's outskirts, has a swimming pool, fine restaurant, and wooded grounds. Other hotels are located in the central city and play an important role in the activities of Kairouan. The range of restaurants in the city run from the deluxe to the corner cook-shop, giving the visitor a wide variety of local cuisine.

OTHER CITIES

BÉJA has a history dating to ancient times. Situated 65 miles west of Tunis in the Marjardah Valley, the city was the site of Vacca, a Punic town and Roman colony. Béja exports wheat and has been a major agricultural market since at least the first century B.C. Sugar refineries and an agricultural research station help employ the estimated 56,000 residents.

BIZERTA (also spelled Bizerte), on the Mediterranean, is Africa's northernmost town. Once the Roman city of Hippo Zarytus, there are reminders throughout the area of the various civilizations that suc-

ceeded one another. Oil refining and fish canning are the two principal industries. A beach resort, Bizerta is also a major exporting area and seaport. Bizerta exports fish, phosphates, iron ore, and cereals. The town is connected to Tunis, 50 miles southeast, by road and rail. Visitors will find cooler weather in Bizerta during the summer season. Its population is approximately 112,000.

GABÈS, (also spelled Gabis) located in east central Tunisia on the Gulf of Gabès, is 200 miles south of Tunis. It is a fishing port and center of an oasis known for date palms and textile milling. Founded by the Romans, Gabès was one of the chief Tunisian headquarters for the French Saharan garrison. The economy of the city was focused entirely on the needs of the army. Since then, Gabès has developed an infrastructure and industry that has made the city important throughout the country. A power station and an oil refinery have been constructed here. A large port and a railroad terminus link Gabès with the rest of Tunisia. The current population of Gabès is about 109,000.

HAMMAMET is a small fishing village which attracts numerous tourists each year with its marvelous gardens, and its luxurious hotels concealed behind orange trees, palm trees, bougainvilleas, and a thousand other perfumed plants. Located in northeastern Tunisia on the Gulf of Hammamet, at the southern base of the peninsula ending in Cap Bon, Hammamet is about 30 miles southeast of Tunis. The city's fort, built on the sea in the 15th century, has long arched passages, galleries, and square towers. In the main courtyard of the fort, there is a small museum of traditional costumes. During World War II, Hammamet served as the headquarters for the German general Erwin Rommel. Hammamet has an International Cultural Center where, during summer, there is an open-air theater and an International Cultural Festival. Hotels in Hammamet are built to blend in with the natural surroundings; there is an agreed maximum height

for buildings so as to not overshadow the natural beauty. Hammamet boasts clean beaches and a wide variety of leisure activities, including swimming, tennis, golf, and horseback riding. There are also terrace cafes, restaurants, shops, and two art galleries. Hammamet's population was about 51,000 in 2002.

LA GOULETTE (also called Halq al-Wādī and Goletta) is the port of Tunis, seven miles from the capital. Its harbor manages most of the country's imports and roughly half the exports, principally fruits, vegetables, iron ore, and phosphates. The city is a renowned bathing resort and residential area of Tunis. La Goulette boasts remnants of Hispano-Turkish battlements nearby. About 79,000 people live in the city.

MAHDIA, (also spelled al-Mahdiah) a fishing port and resort town, is 30 miles south of Monastir. The all-powerful Obaid Allah, known as the Mahdi, developed the town in the 10th century as a stronghold and capital of the Fatimite dynasty. Economic activities center around olive cultivation, olive-oil production, fishing, fish canning, and a thriving handicrafts industry. The population of Mahdia is about 44,000.

Ten miles southwest of Bizerta lies **MENZIL-BOURGUIBA** (also spelled Manzil Bū Rugaybah and formerly known as Ferryville). Named after Tunisia's president, Habib Bourguiba, the town is a modern one. Much of its growth took place during the French Protectorate (1881–1956) with the development of adjacent Sidi Abdallah's naval base and dockyard. Today Menzil-Bourguiba is a heavy industry center. Roads and a railway link the town with Bizerta. The population is about 49,000.

MOKNINE is a market town of 49,000, located 13 miles south of Monastir. Part of its population is Jewish, and the traditional jewelry items they make are among the exhibits in the town's small folk museum.



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Modern Carthage

NABEUL (also spelled Nabul) is the administrative capital of Cap Bon, located at the southern end of the base of Cap Bon Peninsula, about 40 miles southeast of Tunis. Ancient Phoenician ruins are found along the shore; the Romans destroyed the Phoenician settlement in 146 B.C., later rebuilding it as Neapolis. Today, it is one of Tunisia's most important towns because of its special activities: ceramics, embroidery, and pottery; perfume distilleries using the oldest formulas; needlework and lace. Pottery is an art dating back to Roman times; there are hundreds of workshops in Nabeul producing both glazed and porous pottery. Functional utensils, curios, jars, and ornaments are made. The workshops of blacksmiths, weavers, embroiders, and lacemakers may also be visited. The city's weekly market—Le Vendredi—offers regional specialties, including tapestries, curios, agricultural products, and camels. The current population of Nabeul is 57,000.

QAFSAH (also spelled Gafsa) is a popular irrigated fruit-growing oasis, in the eastern part of the country, about 115 miles west of Sfax. The original town was destroyed by the Romans, rebuilt, and became a center of Byzantine, Arab, Berber, and Ottoman leaders. Today, Qafsah is a major shipping center for phosphates. The area is populated primarily by nomads and cultivators of olives, dates, and cereals. Qafsah's population is roughly 80,000.

SFAX (also called Sāfagis) is Tunisia's second largest city and a bustling commercial center. Situated in eastern Tunisia on the Gulf of Gabès, it is about 150 miles south of Tunis, and is the terminus of the Sfax-Gafsa railroad. The town was bombarded by the French in 1881 prior to their occupation of Tunisia and during World War II, when it was used as an Axis base until captured by the British in 1943. With Gabès farther south, the city serves

as a major port for the export of phosphates, olive oil, cereals, and sponges. Offshore oil has been discovered in the area. Once the site of Phoenician and Roman colonies, Sfax was briefly held by Sicily (1150) and by the Spanish (16th century), and was later a stronghold of Barbary pirates. The current population of Sfax is 266,000.

Fishing and tourism provide the economic mainstays of **SOUSSE** (also spelled Sūsah and Sousa), located in a convenient central position on the eastern coast 75 miles south of Tunis. Once the ancient Phoenician trading post of Hadrumetum, Sousse has kept its ancient walled city in original form. The eighth century *Ribat* was built as one of the fortified monasteries defending North Africa from Christian attacks. Its watchtower gives a splendid view of the *medina*, as does the garden terrace of Sousse's museum. The city grew rapidly under the French Protectorate

(1881–1956), and today is a prominent trade area. Sousse is a popular resort, with beautiful sand beaches, opportunities for horse and camel riding, and many excellent hotels. It is an export point for olive oil, and its ancient remains include Christian catacombs. About 153,000 people live in Sousse.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Tunisia lies at the northernmost tip of Africa. Together with Morocco, Algeria, and northwestern Libya, it forms the Maghreb (the Arabic name for the northwest), a place of common history, language, ethnic groups, and culture.

The country's area of 63,378 square miles is slightly smaller than Missouri. Tunisia has 1,000 miles of Mediterranean coastline. Northern Tunisia is the most heavily populated part of the country, and is mountainous and relatively fertile, although elevations rarely reach 3,000 feet. The north also claims Tunisia's one major river, the Majardah. The central section of the country is semiarid highland with poor soil, little rainfall, and scant population. The south is arid and barren, except for occasional oases, as it merges with the Sahara. The desert makes up about half of Tunisia's total square miles.

Tunisia's climate is temperate, with mild winters and hot summers. The countryside becomes dry and brown in summer and quite green in winter. Summers in Tunis, the capital, are characterized by high temperatures and low humidity; evenings are pleasant. Winters are short, rainy, humid, and chilly. The temperature rarely is below freezing. Snow occurs in the northwestern mountain region. From mid-May until mid-October, the sky is usually cloudless and little rain falls. In an

average year, only 120 days have any rainfall.

Population

Tunisia's population is estimated at 9.7 million; 98 percent are a mixture of Berber and Arab origin, and about one percent are European. The French comprise the largest foreign community, and the influence of the French language and culture is still quite strong. The population is young and increasingly urban.

In the 15-year period following the country's independence in 1956, the Tunisian population increased by 45 percent. As jobs are sought in urban areas, there has been a decrease in the rural population of Tunisia; in 1995 that decrease was 38 percent.

Islam is the state religion, and nearly all Tunisians belong to the orthodox Sunni sect. Other religions are tolerated; Christian and Jewish denominations continue to exist.

In 1995, an estimated 67 percent of Tunisians age 15 and over could read and write. Tunisia's relatively high literacy rate is due in large part to the strong emphasis placed on universal education. The official language is Arabic, but French is widely spoken in urban areas and is used by the government as a second working language.

Government

After 75 years of French protectionism, Tunisia gained independence in 1956. Tunisians then voted to abolish the monarchy. Today, Tunisia has a republican form of government with strong executive powers.

Habib Bourguiba, who had served as Tunisia's president since 1957, was ousted from power on November 7, 1987. The new president, Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, instituted a number of political reforms to curb the excesses of his predecessor and calm domestic unrest. One of the most significant political reforms

was the legalization of opposition political parties in 1988. The president is elected to five-year terms and appoints the prime minister, the cabinet, and 23 provincial governors. In 1994 and in 1999, President Ben Ali was reelected without opposition. The Constitutional Democratic Party is the dominant political party of Tunisia.

Legislative authority is vested in a 182-member Chamber of Deputies. Elections to this legislative body are held every five years. In 1994 the government changed the electoral code to guarantee that the opposition would be able to win seats.

The former religious tribunals have been integrated into secular courts to form a single three-level judiciary: first-instance courts; courts of appeal; and the highest judicial body, the Court of Cassation, which ultimately resolves cases not solved in the lower courts. All judicial proceedings are in Arabic. In addition to the existing auditing court, there is also an administrative jurisdiction.

Women share equal rights with men on the basis of a personal-status code established shortly after independence. This code is considered a model for Arab and developing Third-World countries. Polygamy is illegal.

The Tunisian flag is red, with a central white disc containing a red crescent and a red star.

Arts, Science, Education

Tunisia's cultural and artistic heritage is a blending of Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Turkish, French, and Berber influence. Museums have magnificent collections of Roman mosaics and statues, Phoenician coins and jewelry, and early Arab manuscripts. Archaeological sites scattered through the country are constant reminders of the abundance of Tunisia's legacy. Remains of Punic ports; a Roman coliseum, aqueduct, numerous temples, and

villas; and Turkish forts are all part of the country's living past.

The University of Tunis was established in 1960 under the Ministry of National Education. Entry requires passing the baccalaureate and is very selective. Most of the faculties are in the Tunis metropolitan area; others are in Sousse (medicine), Sfax (medicine), and Monastir (science). Institutes affiliated with the university also provide advanced study in public administration, management, press and communications, commerce, languages, and education.

The university, however, only represents the pinnacle of an educational system that has expanded rapidly since independence. Today, more than a million students, almost 90 percent of school-age children, attend public schools. To earn the high school baccalaureate degree they must attend at least 13 years of school and pass the qualifying exams. This achievement-oriented system results in a high literacy rate (67 percent). Concurrently, with the expansion of education, the government promoted the Arabization of instruction. Thus, many students who do not continue their educations beyond the primary level are literate in Arabic rather than French.

Commerce and Industry

The Tunisian Government has prepared a series of economic development plans aimed at raising the standard of living, diversifying agriculture, and promoting industry. Economic planning is centered on resolving Tunisia's persistent unemployment and trade deficit problems.

The largest economic sector is services, accounting for about 54 percent of GDP. Tourism, the largest source of foreign exchange, was severely affected by the Gulf War in 1991, but has since recovered. The manufacturing and industry sectors

comprise 32 percent of GDP. Agriculture comprises about 14 percent.

Oil exports provide Tunisia with a large source of foreign exchange earnings. National oil production from existing fields peaked at 5.4 million tons in 1981 and now remains roughly at 3.4 million tons. Oil exploration is currently being conducted throughout the country, and involves several American firms. In 1967, the oil field at El Borma, in southern Tunisia, was established. It has 55 million tons of recoverable reserves and currently produces over three million tons. The offshore Ashtart field, in the Gulf of Gabès, produces more than 20 percent of Tunisia's annual crude oil production.

Since 1981, there have been new finds at Zarzis and El Franig-Sabria. Natural gas production is limited at present, but royalties from Algerian gas flowing through Tunisia and possible future production from the large offshore field at Miskar and several recently discovered fields promise substantial quantities of natural gas, as well as some oil.

Phosphates and some iron, fluoride, barite, lead, and zinc are also exploited. The government-owned phosphate company is the largest company in Tunisia in both number of employees and capital investment.

New industries, including textiles; paper pulp manufacture from esparto grass; a steel mill; an oil refinery; assembly plants for trucks, automobiles, and tractors; as well as the production of enriched phosphate fertilizers, have been created. An industrial complex has been developed at Gabès, based on a phosphoric acid plant, and a new port was established there in 1972. Additional fertilizer and chemical plants are being planned for the Gabès area.

Tourism is also an important foreign exchange earner for Tunisia, providing the largest source of foreign exchange earnings. Large

investments in this sector from other Arab countries have led to rapid expansion of tourism infrastructure. Over 3.8 million tourists visit Tunisia annually, spending over \$1 billion.

Tunisian artisans, under the leadership of L'Office National de l'Artisanat, are striving to preserve their traditional crafts, including rug making, pottery, jewelry, and ironwork.

Tunisia is meeting the challenges of economic problems and population pressures with a determination that has attracted interest from many aid-giving countries. Other than from the U.S., which has been an important source of such aid, there has been active interest in Tunisian development from Germany, Kuwait, France, Italy, Canada, Sweden, Norway, the former U.S.S.R., the People's Republic of China, Bulgaria, Belgium, and many others.

The Chambre de Commerce is at rue des Entrepreneurs, 1000 Tunis.

Transportation

Tunis Air and Air France fly daily direct flights to Paris. Daily flights to Rome are provided by Tunis Air and Alitalia. Most of these flights can be coordinated with flights from Paris or Rome to New York or Washington. KLM flies weekly to Amsterdam, and Tunis Air flies there twice weekly. Several flights to Frankfurt are available on either Lufthansa or Tunis Air, and there are six weekly flights to Casablanca. Five international airports provide service—Tunis/Carthage, Monastir, Jerba, Sfax, and Tozeur.

Personal air travel from Tunis may be paid for in Tunisian dinars which have been purchased at a bank with foreign exchange. In this case, the official exchange attestation must accompany the dinar payment. Tickets may also be purchased with a check from a convertible dinar account. All airlines accept the American Express card. Some travel agencies and airlines accept other credit cards as well. Costs for

short trips are about 30 percent higher than for longer flights. No direct sea transportation is available from Tunis to the U.S., but weekly sailings of large, comfortable ferries to Naples, Genoa, and Marseille are possible on Italian (Tirrenia), and Tunisian lines. Crossings take 22 to 24 hours, and reservations must be made months in advance if a vehicle is involved. Those interested can contact NAVI-TOUR, 8 rue d'Alger, Tunis, for information on the Italian and Tunisian lines.

Local transportation is crowded and only marginally satisfactory because of overcrowding and unreliable schedules and equipment. Buses travel the more heavily populated sections of Tunis, and electric trains and buses serve the outlying suburbs. Service to most areas ends by midnight.

Taxis are plentiful in Tunis but, can be almost impossible to find at certain hours and in some areas. They carry a maximum of three passengers. Fares are metered and inexpensive within the city. For a trip to the suburbs, the price should be predetermined. All the larger Tunisian cities are connected by well-kept, hardtop roads. The railroad system covers almost 1,400 miles, and serves all of the large cities; long-distance bus service also exists.

Communications

Local and long-distance telephone service is good, although occasional interruptions occur. Direct dialing is available for many international calls. Overseas calls are expensive when initiated in Tunisia, but are only about half the price if the call is made from the U.S. Telegraph service is worldwide, and also expensive. Transit time for international mail is 10 to 14 days.

Local radio stations broadcast in both French and Arabic on standard AM frequencies. There are local FM stations; one broadcasts in Arabic, another in French. A shortwave radio offers wider reception, with

broadcasts from Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and the Armed Forces Radio Service.

A few television channels broadcast in Tunisia. A domestic channel features programs mainly in Arabic. A second TV channel features 90 percent of its programming in French, following a cooperative agreement which was signed with the France II TV channel. Most of the programs are in color. An Italian channel, RAI 1, offers programming relayed from Italy. Both the Arabic-language channel and the Italian channel operate daily from the afternoon through late evening. The French-language international channel operates from 11:00 a.m. until midnight, except on weekends when it begins in the afternoon.

Only sets incorporating the PAL/SECAM system are suitable. They may be purchased locally or in Europe.

The *International Herald Tribune* arrives in Tunis from Paris late on the same day of publication, and is available at newsstands or by subscription. International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* may be purchased within a few days of publication. Several French- and Arabic-language dailies are published in Tunis; daily newspapers from France are also available. The U.S. Embassy library is open to all, and facilities at the British Embassy, United States Information Service (USIS), and American Cooperative School may be used with permission.

Health

Tunisian physicians represent almost all medical specialties. Most have received all or part of their training in France. Many do not speak English. Small private hospitals (clinics) and laboratory and X-ray facilities are available in Tunis. Many American women have their babies in Tunisia, although *primiparas* (first pregnancy/delivery) are strongly discouraged from delivering in Tunis.

Local pharmacies stock a wide range of French products. A number of dentists provide adequate general dental services. Currently, no orthodontists or periodontists practice in Tunis. There are no facilities for handicapped individuals. Public sanitation standards, although constantly improving, are still somewhat lower than in Western Europe. Trash and garbage are picked up daily, including Sunday, in Tunis and its suburbs. A municipal sewage system has been enlarged and made more efficient. Drinking water should be boiled.

Americans generally maintain good health in Tunisia, but diseases such as tuberculosis, intestinal infections, intestinal parasites, hepatitis, and schistosomiasis require some precautions. Raw fruits and vegetables must be properly cleaned, and raw shellfish avoided.

Malaria is present only in certain remote areas, and malaria suppressants, in most cases, are not required.

Mandatory inoculations include those for yellow fever (within six days of traveling from infected area). Recommended immunizations are for polio and diphtheria-tetanus, plus gamma globulin for hepatitis. Rabies pre-exposure immunization is also advised.

Clothing and Services

A normal Mid-Atlantic wardrobe is suitable for Tunis. Lightweight, washable clothing is worn from May through October; light woollens are recommended for the rest of the year. Winters are cold, damp, rainy, and windy, making raincoats with zip-out linings very practical. An umbrella and rain boots are also useful.

Clothing can be purchased locally, but the choice is limited and the prices are high, especially for imported clothes. French and British materials are good, and available most of the time. Although

there are good seamstresses and tailors in Tunis, their work is expensive. Locally made sandals and summer shoes are comfortable and inexpensive, but not durable.

Children need few heavy winter garments. Sweaters and warm jackets are the most practical choices. A substantial wardrobe (especially of shoes) is advised.

Meat, poultry, fish, excellent fresh vegetables, and fruit are available year round. Tunisia has no commercial frozen food industry yet, so fruits and vegetables are available only in season. Prices are set by the government and posted in the marketplace. With the exception of bread and some dairy products, which are subsidized by the government, food is as expensive as in Washington.

Pasteurized and sterilized milk, eggs, and other dairy products are available, but occasional shortages occur. Tunisian and Italian brands of sterilized milk are good and have a long shelf life. Few imported foods are sold locally; they are expensive, and supply is sporadic.

The colorful central market in downtown Tunis has hundreds of stalls where produce, meat, fish, and dairy products are sold. Pork can be purchased there and at a few other locations in the Tunis area. Smaller central markets are found in most neighborhoods. Several large chain stores offer self-service grocery facilities.

Most services are available in Tunis. Shoe repair, dry cleaning, beauty care, radio repair, etc., all are easily obtained, but some services are not up to American standards. Dry cleaning is expensive and, occasionally, clothes are damaged in the process. Few commercial laundries exist.

Domestic Help

Domestic services are available and inexpensive. Most servants speak French; few have any knowledge of English. The employer sometimes

provides food, lodging, and uniforms. Local customs require additional expenses, such as daily transportation costs and holiday gratuities.

Domestics are not included in the Tunisian government's social security system, but some customs must be respected; e.g., provision for one free day a week for full-time help, and 12 days, paid vacation after one year of employment. No regulation exists for separation pay, although it is usual to give a week's salary for each year of employment.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

No nonstop or direct flights are available between North America and Tunis. Air travel from the U.S. to Tunis is via Frankfurt, Paris, or Rome. Sea travel is via Marseille or Naples.

Valid passports are required for all visitors arriving in Tunisia; visas are not required for a stay of four months or less, or for nationals of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, the U.S., and certain other countries.

There are no restrictions on the importation of pets but, to avoid administrative delays, pets should accompany owners when possible. Owners of dogs and cats must provide a good health certificate, a rabies vaccination dated more than one month and less than six months before the entry date and (for dogs) a distemper certificate. Adequate veterinarian services are available in Tunis.

Religious denominations represented in Tunis are Muslim, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Jewish, and Greek and Russian Orthodox. Catholic and Protestant services are in French and English. Mass is said in English at St. Jeanne d'Arc Church, located near the U.S. Embassy. St. George's Church, in the *medina*, is Anglican and holds Sunday services

in English. Jewish services are conducted every Friday and Saturday at the Grand Synagogue, 43 avenue de la Liberté.

The time in Tunisia is Greenwich Mean Time plus one hour. The official currency is the dinar, divided into 1,000 millimes. Among the foreign banks represented by branches are Bank of America and Citibank. Tunis is the main financial center. The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Special Note: Visitors to Tunisia will find no restrictions on travel within the country, but care must be exercised in visiting certain frontier regions.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan. 18	.....	Revolution Day
Mar. 20	.....	Independence Day
Mar. 21	.....	Youth Day
Apr. 9	.....	Martyr's Day
May 1	.....	Labor Day
July 25	.....	Republic Day
Aug. 13	.....	Women's Day
Oct. 15	.....	Evacuation Day
Nov. 7	.....	Commemoration
	.....	Hijra New Year*
	.....	Id al-Adah*
	.....	Ramadan*
	.....	Id al-Fitr*
	.....	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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Kampala, Uganda

UGANDA

Republic of Uganda

Major Cities:

Kampala, Entebbe

Other Cities:

Jinja, Kabale, Kisoro, Masaka, Mbale, Mbarara, Moroto, Tororo

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

UGANDA, once called the "Pearl of Africa," is a nation that has, in little more than two decades, been battered into near ruin by rampant military violence and blatant abuses of the most basic human rights. It has suffered a succession of brutal, dictatorial regimes, widespread atrocities, and crushing starvation and disease.

Raging terrorism affected every segment of society until finally, in January 1986, rebel forces overthrew those in power and a new leader, Yoweri Museveni, promised the formation of a non-aligned government committed to the restoration of peace and stability. Museveni's National Resistance Movement

largely put an end to the human rights abuses of earlier governments and initiated substantial political and economic reforms. A new constitution was ratified in 1995 by a popularly elected constituent assembly.

The United Kingdom, which had established hegemony over Uganda in the 1890s, granted full internal self government to the country in March 1962. Political struggles soon began, and were intensified during the turbulent rule of the infamous Idi Amin (1971–1979). Both Great Britain and the United States severed diplomatic relations with Uganda, following open threats and brazen incidents of human rights violations. The U.S. Embassy was reopened in the capital city of Kampala in 1981, but tough American criticism of continuing abuses in Uganda created mounting tension. With a new government in place, a calmer atmosphere prevails.

Insurgent groups, with support from Sudan, harass government forces and murder and kidnap civilians in the north and west. Due to Sudanese support of various guerrilla movements, Uganda cut off diplomatic relations with Sudan in 1995.

MAJOR CITIES

Kampala

Kampala began as a settlement near the palace of the *kabaka* (the former absolute monarch of the Baganda) at Mengo, and in the 20th century developed into the largest town in Uganda, dominating the country's political and economic life. It was granted city status during the nation's independence celebrations in October 1962. An estimated 774,000 people live in the metropolitan area.

Kampala lies on the shores of Lake Victoria, about 20 miles north of the equator, at an altitude of close to 4,500 feet. It is built on a number of low-lying hills, surrounded by green, rolling countryside dotted with small farms. These farms grow mostly plantains, the main subsistence crop and staple food.

Along Kampala's central streets, modern stores and office buildings—many of them multi-storied—mix with old-style shops. On Janan Luwum Street and Nkurumah Road, near the main market, are many small shops that trade in a variety of goods. On the other side of the main street, called variously along its length Bombo, Kampala,



Jason Laure. Reproduced by permission.

Street in Kampala, Uganda

or Jinja Road, are large government structures, the most important of which is the Parliament building with its Independence Arch.

Residential areas, located on a series of hills surrounding downtown, had made Kampala one of Africa's most attractive capitals, but more than two decades of neglect is sadly apparent. Some effort has been made to restore the city to its once verdant beauty. Within the city are Kololo Hill (easily recognized by the tall television mast), and other hills such as Nakasero, Makindye, Makerere (the home of Makerere University), Mulago, Mbuya, and Muyenga. Outside of Kampala, still more hills are dominated by Namirembe Cathedral (Anglican), Rubaga Cathedral (Roman Catholic), the Baha'i Temple, the former *kabaka's* palace, and Kibuli Mosque.

Education

The Lincoln International School, assisted by the U.S. Department of

State's Overseas Schools Program, serves the international community. It follows the American curriculum for kindergarten through the twelfth grade. The school is coeducational.

Extracurricular activities include drama, yearbook, choir, field trips, swimming, soccer, softball, basketball, and volleyball. The school also offers numerous clubs.

Most children of expatriates (in upper grades) attend schools in the U.S., Europe, or Kenya.

Recreation

Club membership is necessary in Kampala to use facilities for tennis or golf, but such membership is inexpensive and available. There is an 18-hole course at the Kampala Golf Club.

The Kampala Club has good facilities for tennis and squash, and also has a swimming pool which is gen-

erally in usable condition. Swimming in Lake Victoria is dangerous because of the likelihood of contracting bilharzia, a debilitating parasitic disease.

The Nyanza Sailing Club sails from two locations in the Kampala area on Sunday afternoons and holidays.

Soccer is a national sport and attracts large crowds for weekend matches.

The Kenya Highlands to the east and the mountains of southwestern Uganda provide a change from the weather of Kampala. Cold-weather gear for an extended trek to the higher altitudes may be useful. These are both six-to-eight-hour drives. The accommodations in Uganda are not good at present, but rehabilitation is going on. In Kenya, pleasant country hotels offer modest facilities for rest and relaxation. The capital city of Nairobi provides an opportunity to enjoy excellent

shopping for foodstuffs, household items, African handicrafts, as well as offering night life and other diversions. Nairobi is nine to 10 hours by road and 90 minutes by plane.

Uganda is the home of three of the best game parks in Africa. All are open and operating, and extensive repairs are in progress. Some animals are beginning to return to Kabalega National Park from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the former Zaire) and other nearby areas where they took refuge during the 1979 Liberation War. Poaching is still a problem and the animals are quite shy. The game park also offers the opportunity of seeing a spectacular cataract in which the Nile forces its way through a 19-foot cleft in the rocks. Chobe is the nearest operating game lodge and it offers comfortable lodgings. No scheduled launches go to the falls, but arrangements can generally be made at Paraa Lodge.

Kidepo Park in northeastern Uganda contains land of great beauty, and also some animals which are not observable anywhere else in Uganda. It is, however, remote and difficult to reach. Rwenzori National Park in the west still has some surviving large animals.

Mombasa (Kenya), on the Indian Ocean, is two-to-three days' travel by road. It has pleasant beach accommodations and many tourist attractions. The islands of Madagascar, Mauritius, and the Seychelles are also nice places to visit. Frequent air service from Nairobi reaches the coastal resort areas as well as the islands.

Entertainment

Entertainment is limited in Kampala. The Alliance Française offers French films with English subtitles on Saturdays, and the French Cultural Center has educational programs. Amateur theatricals in English and in local languages are shown at the National Theater.

The British High Commission Social Club sponsors an active

Darts League that meets on Fridays during the equivalent of "happy hour." A rugby club meets twice a week on a pitch near the stadium. Golf, tennis, fishing, and sailing are common entertainments for Americans and Europeans as well as for many Ugandans.

A small, but good, museum is a must for newcomers. It portrays the history, culture, and economy of Uganda.

Kampala's active professional soccer league plays daily games from January through May at Nakivubo Stadium.

Entebbe

Entebbe, situated on the equator 22 miles south of Kampala, is Uganda's other principal city, but its population (43,000) is lower than that of other centers. It was administrative capital of the country from 1894 to 1962 and, although most government offices have moved to the capital, the State House (residence and office of the president) remains at Entebbe. It is the center of a region that produces bananas, coffee, and cotton.

Several attractions are located in Entebbe, among them botanical gardens, a veterinary research laboratory, and a virus research institute. The city is a transportation hub for eastern Africa, with an international airport and shipping connections to Kenya, Tanzania, and other parts of Uganda via Lake Victoria.

Entebbe figured prominently in international news in July 1976, when the passengers and crew of a hijacked airliner were rescued in a dramatic Israeli commando raid on Entebbe Airport. An elderly British citizen died, and it was at this time that the United Kingdom broke diplomatic relations with Uganda. Gen. Idi Amin Dada, now in exile in the Middle East, was president and dictator at that time.

OTHER CITIES

JINJA, 50 miles east of Kampala, is Uganda's second largest city, with about 65,000 residents. Built around the Owens Falls dam and power station, it is the country's chief industrial region. Jinja is home to several industries, including the first steel-rolling mill in eastern Africa, a copper smelter, a brewery, tannery, textile factory, and large sugar plantations. The city is a major transportation center for railroads and lake steamers.

KABALE, the highest town in the nation at 6,600 feet above sea level, is 200 miles southwest of Kampala. Trips to nearby lakes, especially to Lake Bunyonyi, are considered worthwhile for tourists. The current population is 29,000.

KISORO, in the Mitumba Mountain range of the extreme southwest, is a popular tourist spot. The city of 10,000 is the starting point for expeditions to Mounts Muhavura and Mgahinga. Numerous lakes and Ruwenzori Park are in the area.

Historic Fort Mosaka is in **MASAKA**, 80 miles southwest of Kampala. A market town and commercial center, the city produces processed meat and fish, beverages, footwear, bakery products, furniture, clay products, and glass. It is a critical commercial area for the surrounding coffee growing region. The population is approximately 50,000.

Mount Elgon dominates **MBALE**, the country's third largest city and the hub of the eastern region. Round trips to the mountain, an extinct volcano, take about three days; climbs in the rainy season may be difficult. Mbale is an agricultural trading center and the site of one of Uganda's principal dairies. The current population is about 54,000.

MBARARA is a center of cattle ranching in the southwestern region of Uganda. The famous Ankole cattle are raised in the area.

The city is the headquarters of a large army camp and base for the Lake Mbuho Game Reserve. Located 167 miles southwest of Kampala, Mbarara is noted for its woodcarving, weaving, and pottery-making. Industries produce soap, oils and fats, textiles, beverages, processed food, rope and twine, and plywood. It has approximately 41,000 residents.

MOROTO, in the extreme northeast near the Kenyan border, is the home of the Karamojong people. Cattle are vital here, and disputes with Kenyan border tribes over cattle raiding are common. The proud, traditional Karamojong should be approached with care, ideally with a knowledgeable guide. The Karamojong produce various crafts including pottery, woodworking, weaving, and clay products. The current population is 14,000.

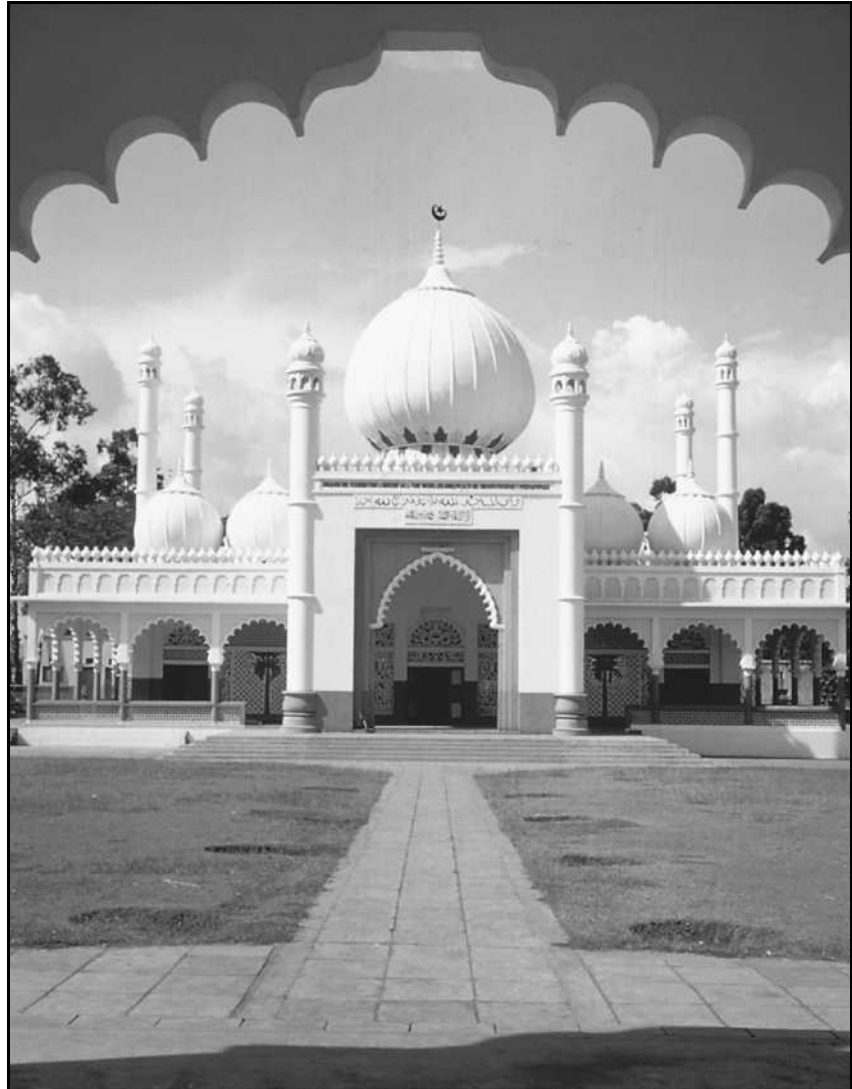
TORORO is a major road and rail junction in the far eastern region, near the border with Kenya. This town of 44,000 lies at the base of a hill that dominates the area.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Uganda occupies a fertile plateau in the center of Africa at an average altitude of 4,000 feet. The plateau's edges are turned up on the east by Mt. Elgon (14,178 feet) and the Kenya highlands, and on the west by the Rwenzori Mountains (16,791 feet). The country is crossed diagonally from southeast to northwest by the Nile River, which begins its journey to the Mediterranean near the city of Jinja on Lake Victoria, about 50 miles from Kampala. With an area of 91,000 square miles, Uganda is roughly the size of Oregon.

The temperature ranges from a high of 80°F to 85°F at noon to 60°F to 65°F at night. A greater range of



Mosque in Kampala, Uganda

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temperature change occurs during the course of the day than between seasons. The hottest interval is generally from October through March, and the temperature is usually hot in the sun from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. anytime of the year.

Annual rainfall averages 63.9 inches. During the rainy seasons—March/April and September/October—the weather is cool and overcast. Frequently heavy thunderstorms last 30 minutes to an hour. It seldom rains for an entire day, even during the so-called rainy seasons. Wind gusts accompanying downpours are sometimes strong, yet seldom damaging. Red murrain dust can be a problem dur-

ing dry periods, but this affects city dwellers primarily when they venture beyond the town and leave the asphalt roads.

Virtually every residence has insects of various sizes, but the ever-present lizards provide “exterminator” service.

Population

The population of Uganda is 24 million. Africans of four racial groups—Bantu, Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, and Sudanic—constitute most of the populace. Of the four, the Bantu are the most numerous and include the Baganda, the largest single ethnic group, with more than 3.5 million

members. The Iteso constitute the second largest group, followed by the Basoga, Banyankore, and Banyarwanda, all with populations of more than 500,000.

At one time, the Indo-Pakistani comprised a large part of the population. Most were deported during Amin's rule, but some returned as skilled laborers and office workers. Many Europeans also fled the country during Amin's rule and, after the Liberation War, they too began to return, although political turmoil kept their numbers at a minimum.

English is the official language. It is spoken by almost the entire European community, most of the Asian community, and all of the educated Africans in Kampala.

Elementary Swahili is useful in the Kampala area for talking to servants and to African tradesmen and craftsmen. Outside of Kampala and the Buganda region, Swahili is used as the lingua franca among many people who do not speak English, in addition to their maternal tongues.

Most members of the Baganda tribe, however, prefer not to speak Swahili. They use their own language, Luganda, which is spoken or understood by at least four million people.

The religious work begun in 1877 by missionaries was successful, and today some 66 percent of the Ugandan population is Christian, divided equally between Protestants and Catholics. The rest is made up of Muslims (16 percent) and animists (18 percent).

History

When British explorers, searching for the headwaters of the Nile, first arrived in Uganda in 1862, they found the northern shores of Lake Victoria controlled by the Baganda, a people who had developed a complex agricultural society ruled over by an absolute monarch called the *kabaka*. Christian missionaries entered the area in 1877 and, by 1892, British authority was established through a series of treaties of

protection with Buganda and the other kingdoms of Uganda. These kingdoms had already well-developed political institutions dating back several centuries.

As a result of the decision by the early British administrators to govern indirectly through the chiefs and rulers, and because of their beliefs that the area was unsuited to European settlement, the country was developed from the beginning primarily as an African territory. Land ownership was reserved for Africans at an early date, so that there is now almost no Asian or European rural settlement group.

Government

When the bloody dictatorship of Idi Amin Dada came to an end in 1979, Dr. A. Milton Obote, who had been overthrown by Amin's army coup eight years earlier, was restored to power. Continued abuses of human rights, however, led to the ousting by rebel troops of Obote and his government. The rebel troops, calling themselves the National Resistance Movement, selected Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as chairman of the National Resistance Council. The National Resistance Council (NRC) is the legislative branch of the National Resistance Movement. Under the NRM system, local resistance councils at the village, parish, subcounty, county, and district level elect representatives to the next level in the pyramidal structure.

The main thrust of the present government is to rebuild the seriously damaged economy. Food production is the area of greatest concentration.

A number of philanthropic and social organizations thrive here. The YMCA, YWCA, Lions, and Rotary are active and play an important role in charitable affairs. In addition, the Uganda Red Cross, which has ties to International Red Cross groups, and the Uganda Foundation for the Blind are active. Youth programs are organized by the National Council of Sports. The National Union of Youth Organiza-

tions sponsors a sports club program. In addition to the above, youth programs are organized through the school system.

The Ugandan flag consists of repeated bands of black, gold, and red. In the center is a white disc with an emblem of a crested crane.

Arts, Science, Education

In the arts, the National Theatre once again is flourishing with performances in drama, dance, and song every weekend throughout the year by groups coming to Kampala from all over Uganda. Several popular rock groups entertain regularly. The Uganda Museum, presents a comprehensive insight into the area's history. There are regional museums at Saroti and Kabale. The Nommo Gallery, a parastatal institution, features mostly *batiks*, but is striving to reestablish its collection in diverse art forms. Many individual *batik* artists ply their trade within the country. Although radio and television have some technical problems, they do a commendable job in theatrical and musical presentations.

Interest in the sciences is beginning to form again. Individual Ugandans are still invited to international science conferences, but are often unable to attend for lack of foreign currency.

A strong public and private secondary school system exists. Only the most promising primary school students are enrolled. For more than a decade, almost nothing was done to develop and nourish higher education. Makerere University, once the premier institution of higher learning in East Africa, is on the rise again but faces many difficulties because of lack of sufficient funds. Shortages range from lack of housing for faculty and students to insufficient textbooks, scientific journals, and laboratory equipment. Despite its problems, Makerere continues to educate a student body in various disciplines. Other higher educa-

tional institutions are the National Teachers College, Institute of Teacher's Education, Uganda Polytechnic, the National College of Commerce, and the Institute for Public Administration.

Commerce and Industry

Uganda has substantial economic resources, among them fertile soil, regular rainfall, and abundant reserves of cobalt and copper. However, commerce and industry were seriously disrupted under both Amin's and Obote's rule, and by the looting that followed the countless civil disturbances. Government and private businesses, with foreign assistance, are making progress rebuilding the industrial sector. Manufacturing began recovering in the 1980s, and by the mid-1990s Uganda's industrial production was three times larger than it was in the late 1980s. Most facilities are still trying to rebuild, however, and the industrial sector still operates at only 40 percent or less of capacity.

Agriculture is Uganda's principal economic sector, employing 82 percent of the labor force. Coffee, cotton, tea, beans, corn, and tobacco are the main export crops; sugar and cocoa also are important. The main food crops are cassava, millet, corn, sweet potatoes, beans, and cereals. The chief industries are those for the processing of the food crops and for textiles, soap, cement, brewing, metal products, vehicle assembly, and steel. Rehabilitation of the sugar, textiles, paper, and steel industries is underway, mainly funded by international aid agencies.

The tourist industry, very important as a foreign exchange earner, is slowly beginning to recover. Several lodges are being rehabilitated for the public, and animals are becoming more evident in game parks, although many have been killed by poachers. Uganda's principal attractions for tourists are the forests, lakes, and wildlife. In the late 1980s, Uganda launched a program

to create new national parks and build new hotels.

The National Chamber of Commerce and Industry is at 17-19 Jinja Road, P.O. Box 3809, Kampala.

Transportation

Air traffic into Uganda is being used increasingly. Entebbe Airport is only 20 miles from the capital over an asphalt road, but there is a scarcity of public or private transportation available between the cities. Kenya Airways and Uganda Airlines operate flights between Entebbe Airport and Nairobi several times a week. Air Tanzania also has one flight per week between Uganda and Tanzania. Buses travel to the Kenya border where bus connections to Kisumu and Nairobi can be made. The Uganda Railways Corporation operates train service between some rural towns and Kampala.

In Kampala, public transportation is poor. The few available buses are overcrowded and do not follow any schedule. Local taxis are, in reality, private cars that crowd in as many passengers as possible, and charge as much as those passengers will pay. The taxis are unsafe and unreliable. Most Americans do not use public transportation.

In general, private automobiles are a necessity. Those planning a stay in Uganda should either bring a car to the country or purchase one in neighboring Kenya. Autos can be bought locally, but selection is limited, and the cost is many times the actual value.

While large cars are more comfortable for long trips, small vehicles are easier to handle on Uganda's narrow roads. A Ugandan driver's license is required and, unless the applicant has a valid Kenyan or Tanzanian license, both oral and road examinations are necessary. Americans who have, or who can show that they have held, a driver's license from an East African or British Commonwealth country, can obtain a permit without testing.

All automobile owners are required by law to carry minimum third-party insurance, but rates are low. However, comprehensive coverage is quite costly because of the high incidence of auto thefts. The prospect of easy money from the sale of stolen vehicles makes owning a car a risky prospect in Uganda. Gasoline, at about five dollars a gallon, is usually available. Traffic moves on the left.

Communications

Telephone service is only fair. International calls to the U.S. and Europe are sometimes difficult to place, but reception is generally good, since there is a satellite station in Kenya. Overseas telegraph facilities are available, but not always reliable. Service for local calls within Uganda is often reliable.

International airmail to and from the U.S. is slow, taking roughly 10-15 days. Delivery is fairly reliable for letters. However, packages should be sent through international mail.

Special note: The typewritten stamps of Uganda, issued before the country owned a printing press, are among the most unusual in the world. They were prepared by Rev. E. Miller of the Church Missionary Society in 1895, and are very valuable today.

The government-operated radio system, Radio Uganda, broadcasts in many different languages, divided into the following linguistic groups: the Bantu spoken in the south by three-fifths of the population; Nilotic or Nilo-Hamitic found in the north and northeast; the Sudanic found in the northwest; and English, French, and Arabic. English-language news is broadcast six times daily. Ordinary radios in Kampala are limited to local-station reception. In order to receive a variety of shortwave broadcasts, a good set is required. Reliable shortwave sets can pick up Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and the U.S. Armed

Forces Radio Service. Commercial FM radio stations began broadcasting in the mid-1990s; these carry VOA and BBC news and play a wide variety of contemporary music.

Local and foreign-produced television programs consisting of news, entertainment, movies, and sports are shown in the evenings. Most shows are in English, but there is some Swahili and Luganda programming. Television is transmitted by the British and European PAL system. American television sets are not compatible with this system. A multi-system receiver should be purchased. Television sets purchased in Nairobi are compatible with the system in Uganda.

Uganda's freedom of press has given rise to several daily and weekly newspapers in both English and Luganda. *New Visions*, *The Star*, *Monitor*, and *The East African* are some of the major newspapers. There are several weeklies and periodicals. A number of newspapers have editions in the Luganda language, and are widely read in the Kampala area. Some American or international newspapers or magazines are available.

Bookstores typically carry a fair selection of academic books but stock very little fiction. The Makerere University Library has a rather large collection, especially of East African and Ugandan history, but lack of tight control and inadequate air conditioning have resulted in theft and the deterioration of the collection. Uganda maintains no public lending libraries. However, United States Information Services (USIS) has a small public library, with a selection of current magazines and back issues of U.S. newspapers and the *International Herald Tribune*.

Health

Mulago Hospital is a government-owned hospital, but there have been problems with lack of personnel and supplies. Several missionary hospitals, which are well staffed, provide adequate services. Nsambya Hospi-

tal is run by the Franciscan Sisters and staffed by Irish nuns who are physicians and nurses. It has its own training school for general nursing and midwifery. The hospital has an adequate laboratory, X-ray unit, and blood bank. The operating room is clean and well equipped.

A British general practitioner who runs a competent private practice is under contract to the U.S. Embassy, and is recommended highly. He has a small laboratory and uses hospital X-ray facilities when needed. He is available at night and on weekends, and he makes house calls. Westerners with serious medical problems go to Nairobi for treatment.

In Kampala, public sanitation is quite good, and a waterborne sewage disposal system serves 90 percent of the municipal area. However, immediately outside the city limits, public sanitation is completely lacking. A large portion of the population are afflicted with intestinal parasites; health inspections of food are not stringent. The city sporadically collects garbage around some of the market areas.

For those who wash fresh fruits and vegetables well, boil and filter all drinking water, and take an antimalarial drug regularly, health hazards are not great within Kampala's residential areas. Allergy diseases (hay fever, asthma, sinus), colds, diarrhea, influenza, and several unidentifiable viruses constitute most maladies.

All water must be filtered because of the silt content, regardless of the purification process. Drinking water must also be boiled; as an alternative, treatment with iodine or chlorine is acceptable. Bottled water is not available. A household bleach or iodine solution should be used to disinfect fresh fruits and vegetables.

Malaria is widespread in Uganda. Four different parasites of *Plasmodia* cause four types of malaria. The type most common in Uganda is falciparum, which the old textbooks called "malignant malaria," since its

frequent complications involve the brains and kidneys, and often cause death. No mosquito-control inspection or spraying is currently taking place. A regular regime of antimalarial drugs is advised, starting two weeks before arrival in Uganda and continuing for four weeks after leaving. Chloroquine (Aralen or Nivaquin) and Fansidar are the drugs commonly used by Americans.

There is a significant AIDS risk in Uganda. Visitors and expatriates are urged to use extreme caution in order to avoid infection. Contracting tuberculosis is a risk if one is exposed over a lengthy period.

Most houses in residential areas are equipped with modern plumbing facilities. Nevertheless, ants, cockroaches, mosquitoes, fleas, and ticks are a constant, if minor, problem. Sanitation standards are not high in the market area, and food bought there should be carefully inspected and washed.

Clothing and Services

Summer-weight clothing is needed all year in Uganda. Very little is available to suit Westerners' tastes, except for the cotton prints in African designs which are always in the marketplace in Nairobi (Kenya), and sometimes in Kampala. Clothing and shoes for the entire family sometimes can be bought in local stores, but they are expensive.

Men find that tropical safari suits are the most comfortable and satisfactory. Often they wear either suits or sports shirts and slacks to work. Women need sweaters and stoles for cool evenings and during the daytime in the rainy season. Women usually wear slacks, jeans, cotton blouses, and skirts during the day.

Several dry cleaners do business in Kampala, but most laundry is done at home. A few reputable hair salons in Kampala serve both men and women, but their prices are extremely high. Of the handful of shoe repair shops, one is good; the

two or three others are mediocre. Some automobiles and radios can be repaired locally.

Fresh fruits and vegetables abound in the markets around Kampala. Fresh vegetables, such as green peppers, lettuce, carrots, potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes, eggplant, and cucumbers, are always in stock. Most tropical fruits also are available and in good condition. Pears, peaches, and apples are not found in Kampala. Beef, poultry, and eggs are plentiful, but prices are high compared to those in the U.S. Good quality, fresh, lake fish is available. Pork, sausages, bacon, and frozen fish sometimes can be found in butcher shops.

Packaged pasteurized milk made by Uganda Dairy Corporation is sometimes available. Fresh milk can be bought from farmers by prior arrangement, and instant powdered milk and evaporated milk are available. Canned margarine, butter, imported coffee, and salt, though usually available, are expensive. High quality Ugandan coffee and tea are in plentiful supply. Cooking oil, which can be adulterated, is not always available and is extremely expensive. Baby foods, dried fruits, soy sauces, spices, and salad dressings are not usually sold in local markets. Several bakeries make bread and a variety of pastries.

There is a great shortage of goods. Most medicines and toiletries are both expensive and difficult to find. Toys and books must be brought from home.

Domestic Help

As good servants are scarce, constant supervision is necessary to see that work is done properly and theft is kept to a minimum. Breakage of china and glassware and some disappearance of food must be expected. These problems can be controlled with proper supervision. Both male and female servants are available for cooking and housecleaning. *Ayahs*, or nursemaids, can be hired to care for small children.

There are no European or Asian servants.

The minimum wage prescribed by the Ugandan government is very low. If servants provide their own food, they get an allowance. The average American household has a combination cook/houseboy, a gardener (if house and plot are occupied), and an *ayah* if there are small children. Single people living in apartments usually need only one servant. Most servants live in semi-detached or detached servants quarters. Day and night guards are necessary.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 26	Victory Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
June 3	Martyrs' Day
June 9	Heroes' Day
Oct. 9	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
.	Id al-Adah*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-fitr*

* Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The required entry visa can be obtained at either the Ugandan Embassy in Washington, D.C., or the diplomatic offices in New York. Incoming travelers must also possess cholera and yellow fever immunization certificates on the World Health Organization's standard form. It is wise, once in Uganda, to renew visas for multiple entry.

Because of rebel and bandit activity and fighting in the area along the Sudanese border, travel in the northern part of Uganda is dangerous. The area affected encompasses Apac, Gulu, Kitgum, Kotido, Lira, Moroto, Moyo, Nebbi, and Soroti Districts. The inability of the Ugandan government to ensure the safety of visitors makes any travel in the area unwise. Vehicles have been stopped and destroyed; passengers have been robbed and/or killed. There have been at least two land mine explosions on the roads north of Gulu. Additionally, random acts of violence involving American and other tourists have occurred in northern Uganda, such as a grenade attack at a tourist hotel in Arua. Bomb attacks have occurred in Kampala at various public places, all travelers should exercise extreme caution.

Travel to Murchison Falls National Park is unsafe. Three Americans were robbed in a violent attack by armed men in March 1997 near the southern entrance to the park. In addition, rebels have operated inside the park on the northern side of the Nile River. Visitors should consult U.S. Embassy officials about travel plans to Murchison Falls National Park.

Travel to western Uganda is unsafe. The Ugandan military is pursuing rebel groups in the Rwenzori Mountains, Queen Elizabeth National Park, and in portions of Kasese, Bushenyi and Rukunguri Districts. In March 1999, tourists were kidnapped and murdered in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Travel to the southwestern corner of Uganda near the Zaire and Rwanda borders can also be risky. There have been attacks by bands of armed men in and near Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, as well as the abduction of American tourists. Visitors should consult U.S. Embassy officials about travel plans to western Uganda.

The Government of Uganda is expected to maintain laws forbidding the importation of firearms

and ammunition. Updated information should be sought.

Pets bought into Uganda must have valid health and rabies vaccination certificates. Pets will not be quarantined if they are accompanied by these certificates.

Many religions (Baha'i, Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and animist) are represented in Kampala and its environs. Christian churches include Baptist, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Seventh-Day Adventist, and Church of God. Services are usually conducted in English.

The time in Uganda is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus three hours.

Uganda uses a decimal currency of shillings and cents.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Kampala and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Uganda. The U.S. Embassy

address is: P.O. Box 7007, 10-12 Parliament Avenue, Kampala; telephone: 256-41-259-792/3/5.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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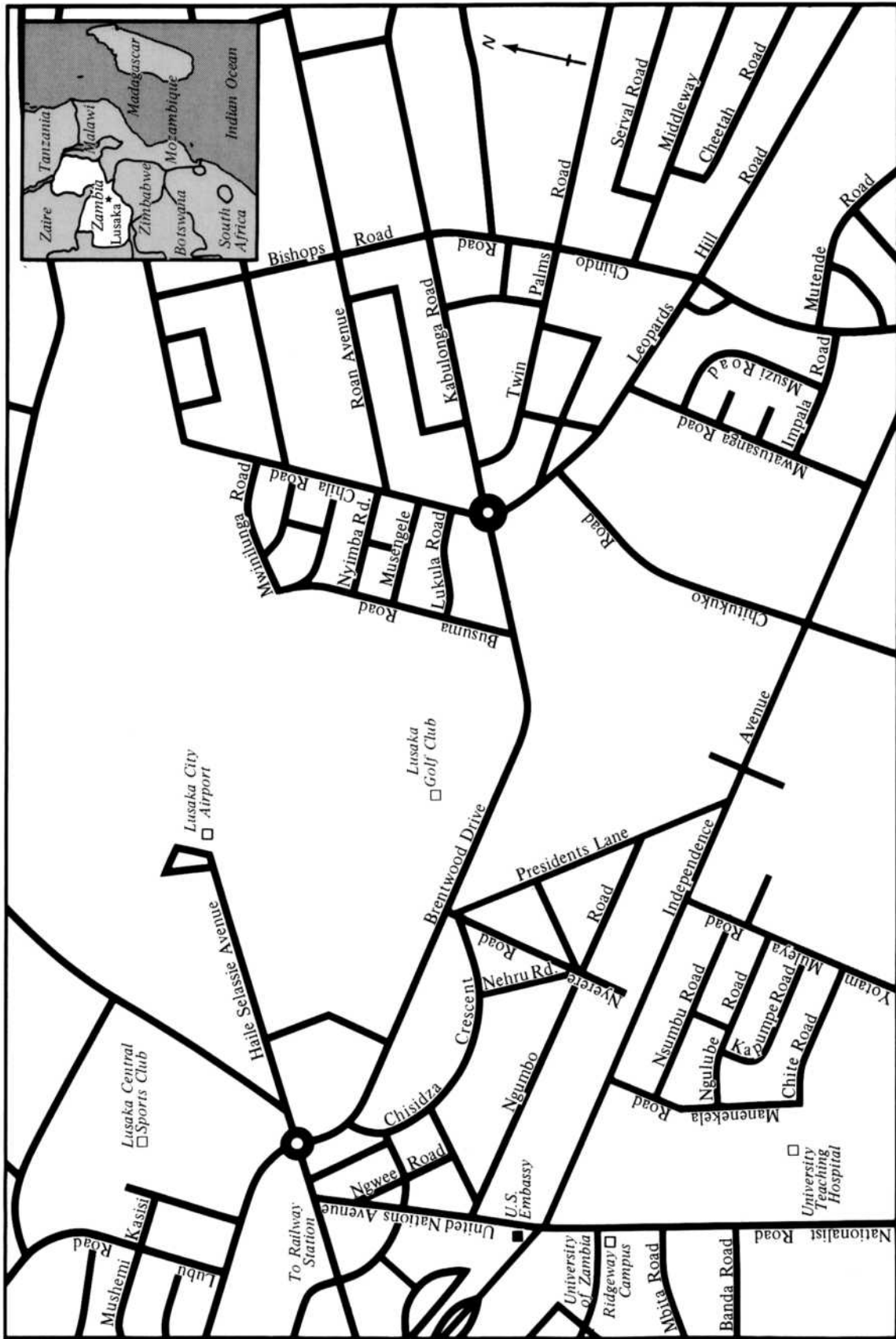
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Lusaka, Zambia

ZAMBIA

Republic of Zambia

Major Cities:

Lusaka

Other Cities:

Chingola, Kabwe, Kitwe, Livingstone, Luanshya, Mbala, Mongu, Mufulira, Ndola

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The best thing about Lusaka is the climate—it's wonderful. If you enjoy outdoor activities, i.e., horseback riding, golf, camping, etc. this is the place to be. It is also within reasonable driving distance of Victoria Falls, several game parks and Harare.

ZAMBIA is one of the continent's newer, developing nations. Its intense concern over minority rule in southern Africa, its relative affluence, and its prestige among non-aligned nations worldwide accord it a singular measure of importance.

Formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, Zambia was a British protectorate from 1923 until 1953, when it

became one of the three territories of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. On October 24, 1964, the country achieved independence as the Republic of Zambia, 75 years after first coming under the administration of the British South Africa Company.

MAJOR CITIES

Lusaka

Lusaka, with a population of almost 1.7 million, lies 4,200 feet above sea level and spreads across a rolling plain. The city is well planned and landscaped. Several wide boulevards planted with trees and shrubs divide the city into sections. In the most affluent residential areas, large and comfortable ranch-style houses preside over wide lawns and gardens. In other parts of the city, the City Council has constructed substantial, modest-income housing. Shanty towns exist on Lusaka's outskirts, and the city itself has areas of squalor and congestion like many other African capitals.

Lusaka's main shopping area is a boulevard called Cairo Road. Adjacent to this boulevard are several streets of Asian and African general stores that sell traditional African

staples: blankets, cooking utensils, kerosene lamps, cornmeal, clothes and shoes. An industrial park lies at the northwestern end of town. Smaller shopping areas are scattered throughout the city.

Food

A fairly wide variety of fresh produce is available in local markets. In addition to tropical fruits, you can buy oranges, apples, pineapple, strawberries, grapefruit, and lemons in season. Vegetables abound: potatoes, onions, tomatoes, carrots, mushrooms, spinach, lettuce, cabbage, green beans, peas, broccoli, garlic, celery, beets, green and red peppers, cucumbers, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, pumpkin, and squash. Some shops even offer Chinese cabbage and bean sprouts.

On the economy, one can buy sugar, molasses, jam, coffee, tea, condiments and spices (curry powder, cinnamon, coriander, cloves, nutmeg). Supermarkets stock flour, pasta, sunflower oil, household laundry soap and cleaning products. Keep in mind that these are made in Zambia, South Africa or Zimbabwe and may not be exactly the same as American products. Imported goods in local stores are expensive.

Lusaka butcher shops sell good quality chicken, beef and pork, including sausages and bacon, at

reasonable prices. Baby food and formula are sometimes available on the economy, but most people find these unsatisfactory. Dietetic and diabetic foods are not generally stocked.

Clothing

Summer clothing is worn eight months of the year. Moderately heavy clothing is necessary during the cooler winter months. Remember the seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S. Lusaka nighttime temperatures can get as low as 40–50 degrees fahrenheit from mid-May to mid-August. Those arriving are advised to pack some light wool or wool-blend clothing in their suitcases. The rainy season (November through April) requires lightweight raincoats (rain boots for children) and umbrellas. Include a good supply of clothes in your shipment. Local shops are not a reliable source due to sporadic availability, poor quality and high prices.

Bring a sufficient supply of shoes, as those locally manufactured are of poor quality. Imported shoes are rarely available and are expensive. Fabric shops offer a variety of cotton, rayon and polyester fabrics suitable for clothing and home furnishings.

Men: Men customarily wear lightweight tropical-worsted or dacron blended suits at the office and official functions, although at least one wool, informal suit is a good idea. During the hot summer months, many men wear slacks with a shirt and tie. For restaurant dining and unofficial events, sport shirts and slacks (without ties) or safari suits are acceptable. Golfers who prefer to wear shorts are required to also wear knee-high socks.

Women: Women wear short-sleeved or sleeveless cotton, linen or lightweight fabric dresses, cotton and linen skirts, or tailored trousers and blouses for the office. Sweaters or lightweight jackets are also needed during winter months. Informal long and short dresses are normally worn to cocktail parties and dinners. For barbecues, pool

side, and patio parties, women often wear long or short sundresses, jeans, slacks, skirts, pantsuits, or shorts with casual tops, depending on the season and time of day. For cooler evenings, sweaters or lightweight wraps or shawls may be required.

Children: Bring a good supply of all children's lightweight summer clothing, swimwear, tennis and sandal-type shoes, and sweaters. Children wear mostly cotton dresses, shorts, jeans and T-shirts.

Supplies And Services

Supplies: U.S. brands deodorants and other toiletries, cosmetics, feminine supplies, medicines and over-the-counter drug items, laundry detergent and cleansers, paper supplies, and other common household items are not generally available. Those found on the economy are usually not up to American standards and/or very expensive.

Basic Services: People who have found good tailors and dressmakers in Lusaka are happy to recommend them to newcomers. Many tailors and dressmakers can copy ready-made garments as well as follow printed patterns. Dry-cleaners are of mixed reliability. Haircuts, perms, manicures and pedicures are available.

Religious Activities

Religions represented in Zambia include but are not limited to (in alphabetical order): Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baha'i, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Greek Orthodox, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Seventh-day Adventist, and various independent Pentecostals.

Education

American Embassy School of Lusaka (AESL), founded in 1986, offers a curriculum designed to meet or exceed the standards of better public schools in the U.S. The school enrolls children aged 2 to 14 years, starting with preschool for 2–4 year

olds and ending with grade 8 for 13–14 year olds. Class size is restricted to 10–16 children in a class with one teacher and 17–19 children in a class with two instructional staff (a teacher and an assistant teacher). AESL is accredited in the U.S., as well as Europe, and is sponsored by the United States State Department. The school's curriculum emphasizes the academic subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies and includes art, music, physical education, computers and information technology, and library skills. Children in grades 1-8 have daily French lessons. Throughout the curriculum there is an emphasis on helping children learn about and appreciate Zambia's people, culture and environment. Special programs are provided for children who are learning English as a second language and for children with learning disabilities.

The school has moved into a new, purpose-built facility on a 15 acre campus with spacious classrooms, a well-stocked library media center with video and computer areas, specialized rooms for art, music, and science, and extensive sports facilities, including playgrounds with equipment for younger children, soccer/softball fields, tennis courts, a running track, a covered basketball court and a large swimming pool with changing rooms. The parent community is encouraged to use the school's sports facilities.

A few other schools in Lusaka enroll children of expatriates. In its primary section, the International School of Lusaka uses American materials, but all other schools are based on the British, South African, or Zambian systems of education. These include Nkhwazi School, Baobab Trust School, Lusaka International Community School and Lake Road School.

Sports

Zambia's most popular spectator sport is soccer. Throughout the country, teams compete in various leagues.

Facilities are available both in Lusaka and in the Copperbelt for cricket, field hockey, golf, tennis, squash, bowling (on the greens), and swimming. The Municipal Council operates an Olympic-sized public swimming pool in Lusaka near the International School. Entrance fees are nominal. The Lusaka Sports Club, which is quite run-down, maintains several clay tennis courts, a billiards room, squash courts, a swimming pool and a children's wading pool. It also sponsors soccer, cricket, field hockey, badminton, squash, and tennis teams.

Golf is quite popular in Zambia among both expatriates and Zambians. Three golf clubs in Lusaka have excellent courses: the Lusaka Golf Club and the Chainama Hills Golf Club (both 18 holes) and the Chilanga Golf Club (9 holes). A polo club sponsors periodic horse shows. The Lusaka Flying Club, located at the Lusaka City Airport, provides flying lessons.

All sports items cost more than in the U.S. Zambia boasts vast wildlife resources and hunting is popular. Hunting licenses for small game are inexpensive, but difficult to obtain. Licenses for large game are expensive and more difficult to obtain. Game is available for the enthusiast who has a rugged disposition and the necessary equipment, including a four-wheel-drive vehicle. A hunting safari can be costly, but photo safaris are quite reasonable.

Foreigners and Zambians enjoy fishing and many Zambians depend on fish as their chief protein source. About 35 miles from Lusaka is the Kafue River, which offers fair-to-good angling for bream, barbel (a type of catfish), and a variety of large mouth perch. Also, within 30 miles of Lusaka are many small man-made ponds that offer bream and barbel. Although fishing is generally possible throughout the year, the best time is between April and November. The Zambezi River offers perhaps the best tiger fishing grounds in Africa. Kasaba Bay on Lake Tanganyika is renowned for

its Nile perch and nkupi (yellow-bellied bream). Other good fishing grounds are Lakes Kariba, Samfya and Kalabo.

Horseback riding is popular. Several stables are here. The Lusaka Gymkhana Club and the Lusaka Pony Club sponsor periodic horse shows. At the Lusaka Polo and Hunt Club, polo is played every weekend from March to October. Membership fees and dues for these clubs are reasonable. The cost of purchasing and stabling horses in Lusaka is less than in the U.S. Tack and riding apparel are not available locally. Riding instruction for children is available, although the quality varies.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

As a tourist center, Lusaka is ideally situated. It lies at the junction of the main highways to the north, east, south and west. Lusaka has an international airport with convenient airlinks to the tourist attractions of Luangwa Valley and Victoria Falls. Zambia's natural heritage offers unequalled opportunities for the tourist to view waterfalls, rivers, lakes and vast wildlife sanctuaries. In recent years, the Zambia National Tourist Board has made a determined effort to improve tourist facilities.

Victoria Falls, known by its ancient name of "Mosi-o-Tunya" (The Smoke That Thunders), is a must stop for all visitors to Zambia. The falls (twice as high and half again as wide as Niagara) are 295 miles, or a six-hour drive, from Lusaka near the border town of Livingstone. Accommodations range in cost and comfort from the Intercontinental Hotel to rustic cottages. Just outside of Livingstone is a small drive through park with 1,300 varieties of animals, reptiles and birds, including lion, giraffe, zebra, white rhino, antelope, warthog and bush pig. Other attractions near Victoria Falls are the National Museum, which houses many cultural and anthropological exhibits; the Maramba Cultural Village; and

white water rafting trips organized by the American Company Sobek.

Zambian game viewing, walking safaris and hunting safaris are unparalleled. South Luangwa National Park is outstanding, comparable to the famous parks of East Africa in variety of game present. Kafue and Lochinvar National Parks offer conducted walking or Land Rover safaris, where visitors can get quite close to most wildlife. Luangwa and Kafue have inexpensive self-catering cottages with kitchens, as well as numerous full-service lodges. Each park is approachable by road, but visitors to Luangwa usually prefer to fly because of the long distance and poor roads (400 miles northeast of Lusaka).

Lake Tanganyika is accessible by road but nearly 700 miles from Lusaka. Lake Kariba, conveniently situated 93 miles south of the capital is a favorite weekend resort for Lusaka residents. Here you can stay on the Zambia side or cross into Zimbabwe. The area offers boating, fishing, water sports and swimming. Another option at Lake Kariba is spending your time on a house boat and cruising the lake.

Entertainment

Most Americans entertain in their homes. There are several movie houses in Lusaka; few non-Zambians attend them.

Lusaka restaurants are in the moderate to expensive range; dining quality ranges from fair to good. The Intercontinental Hotel has a coffee shop, barbecue grill and an expensive restaurant. The Pamodzi Hotel also has a coffee shop, an a-la-carte restaurant, and a poolside snack bar. Other restaurants offering both lunch and dinner are: Arabian Nights (Pakistani/steak); Danny's (Persian/Asian); Golden Spur, Holiday Inn (steak/mixture); Gringo's Grill (steak); Jayline (steak/Creole); Lilayi Lodge (buffet/a-la-carte); Marco Polo (Italian); Polo Grill (steak); and Shenai (Indian/Chinese). The Intercontinental has a casino.



University buildings in Lusaka, Zambia

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Social Activities

Among Americans: The largest American get-togethers occur at Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The American-Canadian Women's Club is open to all American and Canadian women and wives of Americans and Canadians. Activities include monthly afternoon meetings at the homes of members featuring guest speakers and refreshments. The Club runs special holiday events for children and evening parties for members and their partners.

International Contacts: Official representatives of 89 nations and 30 international agencies are accredited to Zambia. Of these, 74 are resident in Lusaka. Also present are many international business visitors interested in the copper industry, government contracts, and development opportunities. Another source of international contact is

among the expatriates: professors, doctors, engineers, missionaries and other professionals who come to Zambia from around the world to assist in development projects.

OTHER CITIES

CHINGOLA, 30 miles northwest of Kitwe, is a large city which has expanded with the growth of the copper-mining industry. It has a current population of 186,000.

KABWE (formerly called Broken Hill/Kabwe), 50 miles north of Lusaka on the Great North Road, is a city of historic prominence. In the early 1900s, the Broken Hill mine was opened, introducing Zambia to foreign mining interests. One of Africa's first hydroelectric power plants began operations here in 1924 to supply power to the mines. Archaeologists found human and animal fossils in the mines in 1921,

leading to the discovery of the "Rhodesian man." Kabwe is also the home of Zambia Railways and of a major trucking firm. The city is surrounded by large, fertile farming areas. Corn and tobacco are cultivated in the large farming areas surrounding the town. The population is approximately 210,000.

KITWE, with a population of 439,000, is about 175 miles north of Lusaka. Several small international communities of business representatives are in the area. Express and local trains from Lusaka serve Kitwe, and many amenities (although not equal to those in Lusaka) are available. The Edinburgh and Nkama Hotels are both modern and convenient. Taxis or car hire are easily obtained. Kitwe is Zambia's second largest city and is connected by rail, air, and road with major cities of central and southern Africa. The city has a large European population.

LIVINGSTONE, a marketing, distribution, and tourist center in southern Zambia, is close to Victoria Falls. This city of 108,000 was the capital of Northern Rhodesia from 1907 to 1935. It has several good hotels, among them the Intercontinental and the North-Western, the latter a favorite gathering spot for expatriates. Frequent buses from Lusaka serve Livingstone. The city is a major distribution point for agricultural products and timber. Livingstone has several nearby tourist spots, including Victoria Falls, Lake Kariba, Livingstone Game Park, and Kafue and Wankie National Parks. The Livingstone Museum has a collection of ethnological, historical, and archaeological exhibits, including those related to the explorer-missionary David Livingstone. The population in 1988 was 98,000.

Known as "the garden town of the copper belt," **LUANSHYA** is a city of 125,000, about 150 miles north of Lusaka. It is the terminus of a rail branch from Ndola and is linked to other cities in the province. In addition to mining, there are also machine shops and factories in Luanshya.

MBALA is a city of 16,000 in the extreme north, off Lake Tanganyika. Hills provide a majestic backdrop for the town, with the Kalambo Falls—nesting place of the maribou stork—nearby.

MONGU is a fascinating tourist stop located in the Western Province, some 300 miles west of Lusaka. Two noteworthy ceremonies performed here are the *Kuomboka* in March and the *Kufulehela* in July. These correspond to the rainy season, so actual dates fluctuate. Lozi basketwork and carvings are on display in the town's curio shop. A thermal power station at Mongu supplies electricity to the area. An airfield is located in Mongu. The current population is approximately 37,000.

MUFULIRA is a principal copper-mining center in north-central Zambia, southeast of the Zaire border.

Smelting and refining of copper as well as an explosives plant are the city's surface industries. Mufulira's population is close to 131,000.

NDOLA, 175 miles north of Lusaka on the Zaire border, is Zambia's second largest city. It is linked by rail to the capital, Lusaka. Its more than 348,000 residents work in copper and sugar refineries, tire and car factories, and service industries. Educational opportunities in Ndola include the National Technical College and the Ndola campus of the University of Zambia.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography And Climate

Zambia, in central southern Africa, is mostly on a high, level plateau, 3,000-5,000 feet above sea level. Lusaka is one of the higher points in the country. Zambia, bordered by Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Angola and Zaire, has an area of 290,586 square miles (a little larger than Texas).

All of Zambia lies within 18 degrees of the Equator. The climate is pleasant and rivals that of southern California. Humidity is quite low except during the rainy season (November-April), and the temperature rarely exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit; it can get into the 40s during the winter months (June and July). Summer clothing is worn mid-August to mid-May. Light woollens are useful in winter (mid-May to mid-August). Generally, summer evenings are cool and winter days are sunny and warm.

Annual rainfall during the rainy season averages 34 inches. At the season's beginning and end, showers are brief. During January, however, heavier rains punctuated by thunderstorms often occur.

Population

Zambia's estimated population in 2001 was 9.8 million. Expatriates, mostly British or South African, live mainly in Lusaka and in the Copperbelt in Northern Zambia. There are about some Americans living in Zambia, most of whom are missionaries. Zambia also has a small but economically important Asian population, most of whom are Indians. The annual growth rate is 1.93 percent.

There are more than 70 tribal groups; English is the official language, with about 70 local languages and dialects. The principal ones are Bemba, Tonga, Nyanja, Lozi, Luvale, Ndembu (Lundu) and Kaonde. Some tribes are small, and only two have enough people to constitute at least 10 percent of the population. The predominant religion is a blend of traditional beliefs and Christianity.

The major cities are the capital - Lusaka (population 1.2 million), Ndola (348,000), Kitwe (305,000), and Kabwe (213,000).

Like many African countries, Zambia's new African elite consists of high government officials and successful business representatives. Next in salary status are lesser officials and urban managerial employees. Mine workers, factory laborers, and clerical and manual employees form a third social stratum in Lusaka, Livingstone and on the Copperbelt. Most Zambians in rural areas are subsistence farmers growing corn, soybeans, cotton, sugar, sunflower seeds, wheat, sorghum, millet, cassava, tobacco and various vegetable and fruit crops.

Public Institutions

After 27 years of one party rule, Zambia experienced a dramatic transformation in October 1991. After a vigorous multi-party campaign, the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) won a resounding victory and established a new government committed to democracy, respect for human

rights, and economic reform. The President of Zambia, currently Levy Patrick Mwanasa, has executive power and appoints a 23-member Cabinet. The 150-member National Assembly has legislative powers. The President can veto legislation enacted by the National Assembly, and the Assembly can overrule the veto by a two-thirds vote. The judiciary is independent.

Arts, Science And Education

Artistic and intellectual activity in Lusaka is usually an informal affair with people gathering at one another's homes. A few organized societies for the arts exist, prominent among which is the Lusaka Musical Society that offers several professional performances annually.

Zambia requires seven years of compulsory education but attendance is less than 50 percent of those eligible for grades 1-7. Less than 20 percent of primary school graduates are admitted to secondary school. The literacy rate is 78 percent.

The University of Zambia, founded in 1966, is the educational center of Lusaka. The University maintains a library, sponsors lectures and seminars, and hosts cultural events of variable quality.

Copperbelt University, established first as a regional branch of the University of Zambia in 1977 and opened as a separate institution in 1989, includes the schools of Business, Environmental Studies, and Technology. Teachers' training colleges, Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts and Commerce, and other primarily vocational-technical schools complete the picture of Zambian tertiary educational institutions.

The fine arts in Zambia are still in the developmental stage, but a few painters and printmakers have achieved recognition beyond Zambia's borders.

The Zambia Cultural Services maintains a handicrafts shop with objects drawn from rural areas throughout Zambia and offers occasional outdoor performances by the national Dance Troupe at Kabwata Cultural Village. The National Collection, housed in Lusaka's Mulungushi Hall, is an interesting exhibition of works of Zambian artists. The nation's best museums are the Livingstone Museum in Southern Province, Mbala's Moto-moto Museum in Northern Province, and the Choma Museum (on the way to Livingstone).

Commerce And Industry

Zambia is one of Sub-Saharan Africa's most highly urbanized countries. About half of the country's 9.8 million people are concentrated in a few urban zones strung along the major transportation corridors, while rural areas are underpopulated. Unemployment and underemployment are serious. Per capita annual incomes are lower than their levels at independence, and at \$880 place the country among the world's poorest nations. Social indicators continue to decline, particularly in measurements of life expectancy at birth, currently only 37 years, and maternal and infant mortality. The high population growth rate, near 2 percent per annum, makes it difficult for per capita income to increase. The country's rate of economic growth can support neither rapid population growth, nor the debilitating effects on maternal and child health resulting from it. Inflation is extremely high, at 27.3%.

Agriculture provides the main livelihood for 80% of Zambia's population. Maize (corn) is the principal cash crop as well as the staple food. Other important crops include soybeans, cotton, sugar, sunflower seeds, wheat, sorghum, millet, cassava, tobacco and various vegetable and fruit crops. Zambia has the potential for significantly increasing its agricultural output, as cur-

rently less than 20 percent of its arable land is cultivated.

The Zambian economy has historically been based on the copper mining industry, which has accounted for a significant portion of the gross domestic product (GDP), from one-third to one-half of government revenues, and more than 75 percent of Zambia's foreign exchange earnings. Due to a decline in world copper prices starting in the mid-1970s, lack of investment to increase productivity and output, nationalization and mismanagement, and socialist economic policies, the copper mining base of the economy has eroded over time.

Beginning in the 1970s, Zambia relied heavily on socialist-style planning and administrative controls to manage its economy; on the public sector - especially parastatal enterprises - to undertake investment and generate economic growth and employment; and on international borrowing to finance public sector investments and to support levels of consumption that proved to be unsustainable. As a result, in late 1991, the Zambian economy faced many problems: basic goods and services were in short supply; the money supply was growing rapidly because of the manner in which the government's domestic debt was financed; military expenditures were rising while social sector expenditures were declining; tax compliance was low, the budget deficit was large and increasing; many parastatal companies were heavily indebted and suffered crippling losses; private investment had collapsed; business and consumer confidence had eroded; external debt was not being serviced; a parallel market in foreign exchange was flourishing; asset holders were transferring their capital out of the country and switching to foreign currency for local transactions; the country's physical infrastructure was rapidly deteriorating; and Zambia had neither food reserves nor the financial resources to deal with natural disasters and emergencies.

The present government came to power after democratic, multi-party elections in November 1991, committed to an economic recovery program. Since these economic reforms began, Zambia has suffered droughts (three years out of the five) and falling copper production.

Although growth has been slow, positive effects are emerging. All domestic and external trade, except petroleum products, has been left to the private sector, resulting in a greatly improved availability of consumer and producer products in the market.

Transportation

Local

Buses are generally unsuitable and unsafe for commuter travel. Taxis and rental cars are expensive (Avis is available). Taxis tend to be unsafe.

Regional

Paved roads lead from Lusaka to the Copperbelt, Livingstone, Tunduma (on the Tanzanian border), Mongu (near Angola to the west), and to the Malawi border. Dirt or gravel roads connect the capital with other parts of the country. Paved roads usually have potholes.

Lusaka has an international airport, with flights to Europe, the United States and other cities in Africa originating with either British Airlines, KLM or South African Air. Aero Zambia and Zambian Express fly to points in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Ndola and Livingstone in Zambia. Eastern Air flies to Chipata, Mfuwe (Luangwa Game Park) and Kasama. Flights are often full during British and South African school holiday times and travelers should make reservations well in advance.

Zambia Railways offers domestic passenger service, but because passenger service is unreliable and unsafe and rail travel is generally slower than travel by car, few foreigners travel by rail. TAZARA Railway operates to Dar es Salaam

several times a week. It is a fascinating (albeit very long) trip for those who do not expect European train travel standards. First class approximates European second class coaches. At the southern end of the line of rail, Zambia Railways ties into the Zimbabwean rail system connecting with the Mozambique Railroad coming up from the Indian Ocean port of Beira, and with the South African railway system. Bus service is also available to major points in Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as Johannesburg.

Zambia's distance from the capitals of the neighboring African states makes air travel the most comfortable, convenient and popular way to travel to and from Zambia.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local service is adequate, but repair times can be lengthy. Direct dialing and trunk booking connect Zambia to the U.S. and many other locations in the world but can be extremely expensive. Obtain an AT&T calling card to take advantage of the AT&T USA Direct line, which offers much cheaper rates.

International cable service is generally good, but domestic service is still questionable.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The principal papers are the daily *Times of Zambia*, *Daily Mail*, *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Mail*, *Post*, *Financial Mail*, *National Mirror*, and *Sun*.

Lusaka has several commercial bookstores. None has a wide or dependable selection. The University of Zambia's bookstore usually offers numerous titles on Zambia and Africa.

Lusaka has several free libraries, including the Municipal Library in the main business area. The National Archives Library has a good collection of books on Africa. USIS and the British Council each

operates a library. Books are limited to American and British subject matter, respectively. The American Embassy School of Lusaka has a fine children's library.

Health And Medicine

Medical Facilities

In Zambia most hospitals and outpatient clinics are government subsidized, and care is provided at relatively low cost. Unfortunately, these clinics and hospitals are far below American standards, poorly staffed, with virtually no medicine available and limited testing capabilities.

Local dental facilities are adequate for routine care, such as fillings and cleaning, but complete any special treatment (i.e., crowns, periodontal or oral surgical procedures) before coming. Additional dental clinics will be opening with more capabilities such as crowns and partial dentures which are made in South Africa. Ophthalmologists are scarce. Several opticians practice in Lusaka, but glasses are expensive. Purchase contact lenses and glasses (including extra pairs) before arrival in the country. Bring eye prescriptions with you in case you need emergency replacement. Bring any cleaning solution/equipment for contact lenses with you since you won't be able to find these in Lusaka. Most medicines are difficult to find in Lusaka. If you take medicine routinely for any long-standing medical condition, be sure to bring adequate supplies with you.

Community Health

The sanitation level in Lusaka is fair. City tap water is not potable. Testing of water in many of the residences showed that the chlorine levels were far below what is needed to make the city or bore hole (well) water acceptable for drinking. The local water lacks fluoride. Cholera and other diarrhea diseases are also endemic but should not affect the U.S. community when water is filtered and proper food handling and hand-washing are practiced. Pas-

teurized milk is available and is considered safe to use.

Preventive Measures

Automobile accidents probably present the greatest risk to personnel. Therefore, it is particularly important to wear seat belts and to have car seats for infants and small children. The condition of other motor vehicles on the road is quite poor, so defensive driving is very important. Avoid night driving whenever possible, as most roads are without street lights, and many cars do not have proper headlights or taillights.

Malaria is a constantly changing and challenging disease. Malaria is endemic, and all personnel should begin taking malaria prophylaxis two weeks prior to arrival.

Other measures to prevent mosquito bites are very important.

Consider all bodies of water (lakes, rivers, dams) to be infested with bilharzia. Anyone swimming, wading or using these waters will be at risk for developing bilharzia. Use only treated pools for swimming.

A shot record is required for entry into Zambia. Although no vaccines are strictly required for entry, yellow fever is required if entering from an endemic area. It is valid for ten years. Immunizations for typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, rabies, hepatitis A and B, polio and meningitis are strongly recommended.

Wear protective clothing to protect against snake bites, especially for travel in rural areas.

Some well-staffed hospitals with limited medical supplies are in the rural areas, but the distances between them are often great.

AIDS and HIV

The most quoted figures for HIV prevalence in Zambia range between 25 to 30 percent, especially in urban areas such as Lusaka. HIV/AIDS continues to be a large and difficult health problem in Zambia in spite of many government

and donor-sponsored programs to supply information and prevention. The death rate due to AIDS and AIDS-related illnesses appears to still be escalating.

Since HIV/AIDS is not casually transmitted, this situation should pose minimal risk to Americans posted here. The health unit periodically checks any local clinic or dental clinic to whom American personnel may be referred with special emphasis on sterilization of equipment and single use of all disposable items.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage

Travelers, including Foreign Service personnel, temporary duty personnel, consultants, experts and any official or nonofficial visitors, must obtain visas from the Zambian Embassy in Washington, D.C., or at the Zambian Mission to the U.N. in New York. All travelers should also have a South African visa in the event a medical evacuation to that country is necessary.

Currency, Banking, And Weights And Measures

Zambia uses a decimal currency. The kwacha (which means dawn) is the main currency unit. Currency notes come in the following denominations: 10,000, 5,000, 1,000, 500, 100, 50 and 20. The exchange rate in January 2001 was 4,024.53 kwacha to one U.S. dollar.

Facilities

Banking facilities in Lusaka are satisfactory. A growing number of major commercial banks operate in Lusaka, including one American bank.

Travelers checks are easily cashed at banks and hotels, but not at all shops. Money cannot be withdrawn from automatic teller machines unless the traveler has an account set up in Zambia. American Express, Visa, MasterCard and other credit cards are accepted by some hotels, shops and restaurants in Zambia and surrounding countries.

Zambia follows the metric system for weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1 New Year's Day
 Mar.
 (2nd Sat) Youth Day
 Mar.
 (2nd Mon) Commonwealth Day)
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May 1 Labor Day
 May 25 Africa Day
 July
 (1st Mon) Heroes' Day
 July
 (After Heroes'
 Day) Unity Day
 Aug.
 (1st Mon) Farmer's Day
 Oct. 24 Independence Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

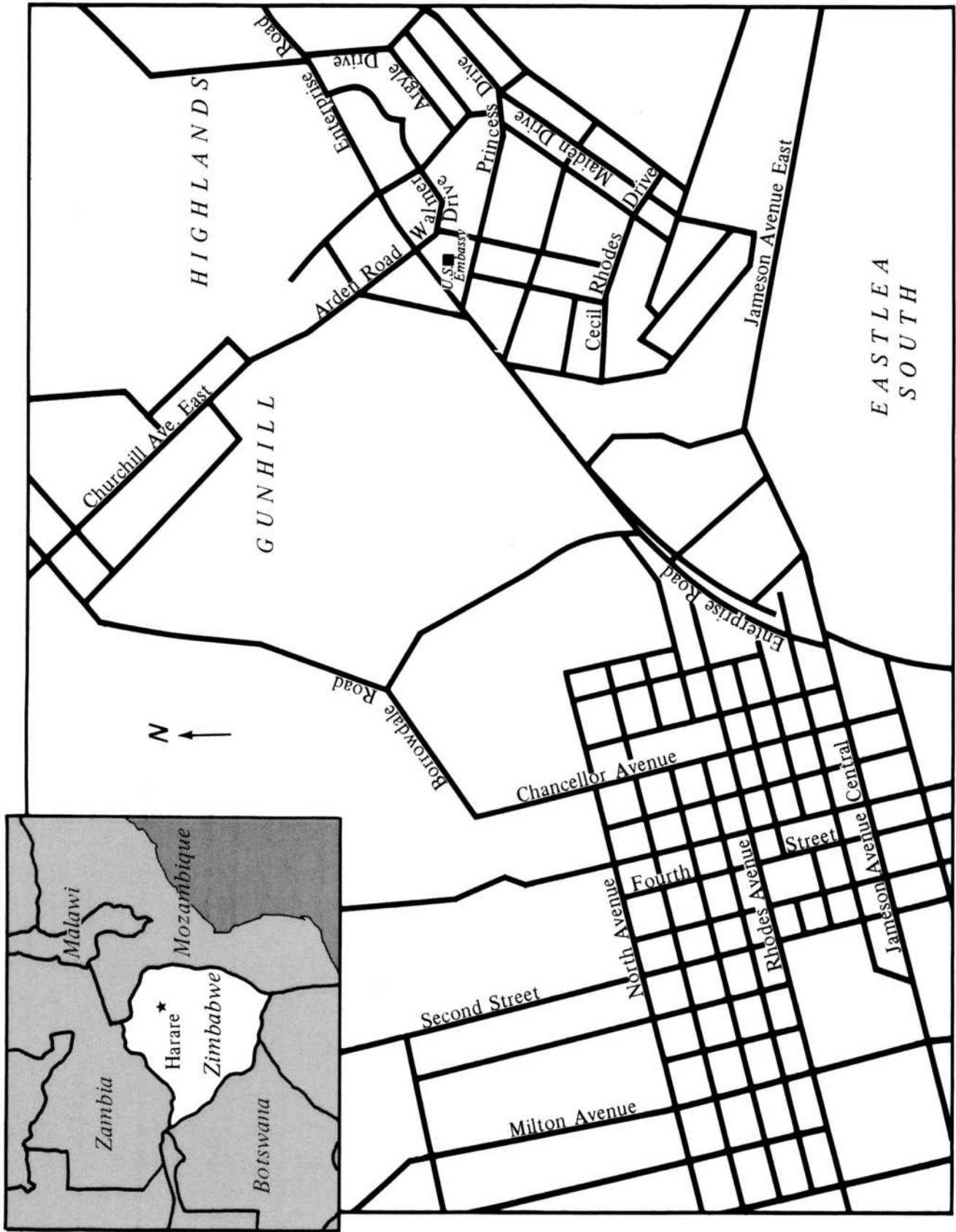
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In addition to the above books, the Wildlife Conservation Society of Zambia has a small selection of films available for loan. Particularly worth viewing is the documentary, "Last Kingdom of the Elephants," which was filmed in Zambia's Luangwa Valley and is narrated by the late Orson Welles.



Harare, Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE

Republic of Zimbabwe

Major Cities:

Harare, Bulawayo

Other Cities:

Gweru, Hwange, Kadoma, Kwe Kwe, Masvingo, Mutare, Nyanda

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Zimbabwe. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The word "Zimbabwe" derives from the Shona *dzimba dza mabwe* (house of stones). It has been written that one of the most striking features of Zimbabwe is the depth of its historical roots; that the past of Zimbabwe can be followed, through both traditions and documents, as a continuous story for five centuries.

With more than a passing resemblance to a magazine's best-of issue cover, Zimbabwe is a beautiful country to visit. The cities are bright and well-organized havens; the hinterlands are positively bursting with gorgeousness, both four-legged and furry, wild and winged, spiky and splashy.

Bantu-speaking farmers were the first occupants of the Great Zimbabwe site in the south of the country. As early as the 11th century, some foundations and stonework were in place, and the settlement, generally regarded as the nascent Shona society, became the trading capital of the wealthiest and most powerful society in southeastern Africa. In the 19th century European gold seekers and ivory hunters were moving into Shona territory. The best known of these was Cecil John Rhodes who envisioned a corridor of British-style "civilization." Sanctioned by Queen Victoria, white settlers swarmed in, and by 1911 there were some 24,000 settlers.

Ian Smith became Rhodesian President in 1964 and began pressing for independence. When he realized that Britain's conditions for cutting the tether would not be accepted by Rhodesia's whites, he made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, which the UN declared illegal. Increasingly fierce guerilla warfare ensued and whites began to abandon their homes and farms. Smith was forced to call a general nonracial election and finally had to hand over leadership. In 1980 Zimbabwe joined the ranks of Africa's independent nations.

In Zimbabwe traditional arts include pottery, basketry, textiles,

jewelry, and carving. Shona sculpture, a melding of African folklore with European artistic training, has been evolving over the past few decades.

Music has always been an important part of cultural life. Traditional musical instruments include the marimba, a richly toned wooden xylophone, and the mbira, a device more commonly known as a thumb piano.

English is the official language of Zimbabwe, but it is a first language for only about 2% of the population. The rest of the people are native speakers of Bantu languages, the two most prominent of which are Shona and Sindebele.

As one of the world's newest nations, Zimbabwe offers the rare combination of an exciting and evolving political and social scene and, in its capital of Harare, a pleasant living environment.

MAJOR CITIES

Harare

Harare is a pleasant city located in the north-central part of Zimbabwe. It is the seat of government and the



Aerial view of Harare, Zimbabwe

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country's cultural, transportation, and communications center. Harare was first established by British settlers in the 1890s and has a modern downtown and numerous attractive residential neighborhoods. The brilliant colors of the flowering trees contrast sharply with the city's modern architecture. Since independence, residential suburbs have become fully integrated, although a large percentage of the black population still reside in a number of surrounding high density suburbs.

Harare proper has several major hotels of international standard, a national art gallery/museum, 12 movie theaters, a choice of good restaurants, and a few nightclubs. Extensive parks and sports and recreational facilities, including thoroughbred racing, tennis, golf, trail riding, horseback riding lessons, squash, and swimming are available. Entertaining is often done in homes or private clubs. A car is essential, as residential areas are

spread out. Religious services are available for Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and other denominations. Hobby, art, theater, dance, and musical groups are active.

Supermarkets and department stores provide shopping facilities comparable to a small American city, though with a much more limited selection of goods. Most necessities are locally produced and usually available. A wide variety of products are now available on the market. New and diversified shopping centers have been built in the northern suburbs, thereby decreasing the need for people residing in those areas to shop in the city center.

Utilities

Both electricity and water are generally reliable in Harare, although the local electricity company may occasionally practice a brief period of load shedding. Most houses have generators. All electrical current is

220, 50 cycles. Adapter plugs (to the Zimbabwean three square prongs) can be purchased locally. All appliances provided are electric, including cooking ranges. Most appliances can be purchased locally, but prices are considerably higher and quality often lower than comparable equipment in the U.S.

Food

Over the last couple of years Zimbabwe has seen tremendous changes with regard to the quantity and quality of items stocked in local stores. However, over the past two years, prices have more than doubled. There are local cheeses and you can buy processed cheese from South Africa. Cottage cheese, cream cheese, yogurt, and sour and fresh cream taste a bit different, but work well in recipes.

Most spices and basic gravy mixes and food colors are available (not pure essences though), as are French and English mustards, and

Heinz Ketchup. Hellmans Mayonnaise and Miracle Whip are now in most stores. You can get pickles though they don't taste like their American counterparts; Greek olives, bottled salad dressings are available (not as many varieties, and you cannot find Ranch). Vegetable oil is available as is olive oil. Occasionally, you can buy extra virgin olive oil, but if you use it a lot, bring it. Plain rice is plentiful; most baking products are available locally (baking powder, cream of tartar, baking soda, dry yeast, cooking chocolate and cocoa), however, you may find that they do not always taste exactly like U.S. brands. Supermarkets now carry Duncan Hines Cake Mixes. Most varieties of nuts are available (some expensive), but pecans and macadamias are locally grown and inexpensive. Local and imported cereals are available.

Tuna is available in brine and oil. Juices are available in boxes in a variety of brands. Most are quite good. Some Mexican and Chinese products are available, but expensive. Dry pastas are plentiful. Canned tomatoes, puree, and paste are available, but not tomato sauce. Canned kidney beans and other canned vegetables are available as well.

Formula and baby food are available, but you may not be able to find a special. Jars of baby food are available, but expensive (US \$1 a jar). Zimbabwe makes and imports baby cereals-compared to the U.S. there is not so much variety and the quality is not as good.

Good meats, vegetables and fruits are in abundance. Fresh fish, including some varieties of frozen freshwater and deep sea, is also available.

Local wines and beer, and imported wines, beers and spirits are available in Harare shops.

Several brands of local cigarettes are produced. Pipe and chewing tobacco are not available.

There is no cat litter in Zimbabwe, so owners should bring a large supply. Pet food is available, but inferior.

Clothing

Fashionable, Western-style clothing is popular in Harare with very little traditional African dress in evidence. Sweaters, jackets, and light coats are needed in June, July, and August, when the evening temperatures can drop below 40 °F. Since homes are not centrally heated, flannels and bathrobes are needed. Virtually all clothing products can be purchased locally, but style, quality, and prices differ from those in the U.S.

Evening wear is similar to that worn in the U.S. Men wear a suit or sport jacket.

Women tend to dress less casually here. Jeans, shorts, and T-shirts are reserved for home wear. Dresses and skirts are worn to the office more often than slacks. Pantyhose are available, but quality varies.

Supplies and Services

Both electricity and water are generally reliable in Harare, although the local electricity company may occasionally practice a brief period of load shedding.

Locally produced varieties of most household and personal supplies can be bought in Harare at moderate prices, though quality is often inferior to U.S.- or European-produced goods. U.S.-made items are not available. Hair care products are expensive and some items are not available, although an appointment at the hairdresser for a shampoo and dry is only US\$3-\$5.

Most basic services are available at a reasonable price in Harare. These include dry-cleaning, tailoring, hair and beauty treatment, shoe repair, and most small appliance repairs.

Domestic Help

Wages for domestic help are relatively low. The average wage for domestics (most of whom reside in staff quarters adjacent to the house)

is US \$50 a month, plus "rations." Rations vary from home to home. Many employers pay domestics cash in lieu of food supplies; others provide meat, tea, bread, sugar, cornmeal, toilet paper, and soap.

Employers are not required to pay social security or government contributions of any kind for domestic employees, but must respect minimum wages set by the Zimbabwean Government for domestic employees. Many enroll their domestic employees in a local health program.

Religious Activities

Harare's religious community encompasses virtually all major denominations. Services are in English and Shona, as well as in other languages. Consult the local newspaper for details of church services.

Sports

Because of Harare's moderate climate, outdoor sports opportunities abound. Local clubs play cricket, rugby, softball, and soccer. Golf courses and tennis courts (and instruction in both) are plentiful. Horseback riding is another recreational opportunity in Harare. Serious riders may consider bringing their own saddle and tack and can lease a horse at a local stable for a very reasonable rate.

Bring your own equipment, as local varieties are expensive and frequently unavailable. Tennis balls in particular are expensive.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Zimbabwe has some of the most beautiful scenery in Africa. Lake Chivero Game Park, a 30-minute drive from Harare, offers fair game viewing in a relaxed atmosphere on a weekend afternoon. Also within a 30-minute drive from the city are the Ewanrigg Botanical Gardens with 24 hectares of landscaped gardens, a large collection of cactus, and many exotic trees; the Lion and Cheetah Park; a snake park; and the Larvon Bird Gardens, in which

are 400 species of local and exotic birds.

Several attractions within a 2-3 hour drive afford pleasant weekends. The Eastern Highlands (Nyanga, Troutbeck, Vumba) offer beautiful and serene surroundings and diverse recreational opportunities. The choice of accommodation is wide, ranging from self-contained cabins in the National Parks to a five-star hotel complete with a casino in Nyanga.

Destinations within the country for long weekends or short vacations are numerous. The Zimbabwe Ruins, described as "one of Africa's greatest mysteries," are fascinating, and a tour to this area is a must for any visitor to the country. Hwange National Game Park is Zimbabwe's largest game sanctuary, covering some 14,620 square kilometers (larger than Connecticut). Safari vehicles are designed to offer maximum opportunity to photograph and view the large variety of animals that abound there. Victoria Falls have been described as one of the seven natural wonders of the world. They are 1,690 meters in width and their mean height is 92 meters; their greatest recorded flow was 160 million gallons per minute; the gorges were cut over millions of years by the raging waters of the Zambezi River.

A leisurely cruise on Lake Kariba is very relaxing. The lake is the home of the tigerfish, the supreme challenge for any angler; and a sundowner cruise, which takes place in the cool of the evening, is a good way to unwind.

Other destinations include Lake Kyle, Chimanimani Mountains, Bumi Hills, and Spurwing and Fothergill Islands.

An elaborate network of roads is well paved and reasonable and attractive package tours are available by air. One can choose between a "full board" rate (all meals and transportation paid) or a "bed and breakfast" rate, which allows the

traveler to choose how to spend leisure time.

Hunting and fishing trips are plentiful and fruitful in Zimbabwe, though hunting licenses for big game are expensive. Facilities for camping, hiking, and boating are good and readily accessible.

No restrictions are imposed on travel in Zimbabwe except in some parts of the Matabeleland area (south), and the extreme eastern border with Mozambique. However, the unpredictability of fuel supplies makes travelling outside of Harare more restrictive.

Entertainment

First-run films are shown at Harare's many movie theaters. The films arrive about 2 months behind their release in the U.S. and can be censored. The local theater group, REPS, performs regularly. Several international special attractions also come to Harare each year, namely theater groups, comedy shows, and special fairs. The annual Harare Show is a week long festival that provides interesting exhibits and attractions. Symphony, ballet, and choral societies give occasional performances.

There are numerous video clubs in the Harare area, but the tapes are VHSm British PAL system, and therefore require a multisystem television and VCR.

Social Activities

Social life among the American community is generally casual, with most informal entertaining done at home, either around meals or cocktails or during an afternoon "braai" (cookout).

The American Women's Club, an active society composed primarily of private American citizens resident in Zimbabwe, sponsors dinners and other social events.

An informal crafts group meets occasionally to share ideas, plan field trips, and work on crafts projects.

Charitable organizations are abundant in Harare, including the SPCA, hospital aid societies, and local orphanages. These organizations provide excellent opportunities to meet Zimbabweans and other foreigners.

Bulawayo

Bulawayo, 240 miles southwest of Harare, is the second largest city in Zimbabwe, with a population of close to 414,000. It is the chief town of Matabeleland, and a rail and commercial center for the vast surrounding area. The city was founded toward the end of the last century, and has grown dramatically in size and importance. Breweries and flour mills are important industries here. Automobiles, tires, building materials, furniture, televisions, and textiles are produced here. Gold and coal deposits have been found close by. The good air, rail, and bus services are constantly expanding, and the city has many hotels and a variety of restaurants.

Nearby tourists attractions are the Khami Ruins, and the Rhodes tomb in the Rhodes Matopos National Park. A National Museum is located in the city.

Bulawayo has been the scene of intense dissident activity during the past 25 years. Joshua Nkomo, the guerrilla leader who helped free his country from white-minority rule, lives in a suburb south of the city.

OTHER CITIES

GWERU, which was called Gwelo until 1982, is in the southwest. Several industries are located in Gweru. Dairy products, footwear, textiles, and building materials are produced here. It is a mining center with a population over 120,000.

HWANGE (formerly called Wankie) is in far western Zimbabwe, about 300 miles west of Harare. Its 39,200 residents depend on coal mining for their economic base. Nearby Hwange National Park and local

safari areas add tourism to the economy. The city was founded about 1900 and named after a local chief, Whanga.

KADOMA (formerly called Gatooma) was named for nearby Kadoma Hill, in the central region, 75 miles southwest of Harare. It is a vital farming center, with both an agricultural research station and cotton pest research agency located in the city. Kadoma's population is about 44,600.

KWE KWE (formerly called Que Que) is situated in the center of the country, halfway between Harare and Bulawayo. It is an important processing and distribution point for products such as rails, chrome, and steel, as well as livestock and tobacco. Cotton textiles are manufactured near Kwe Kwe and nickel and pyrites are mined nearby. Cotton textiles are manufactured near Kwe Kwe and nickel and pyrites are mined nearby. Approximately 47,600 people live in Kwe Kwe.

MASVINGO, located near the Macheke and Mshangashe rivers, is a tourist center for the Kyle National Park, and the Great Zimbabwe ruins. Asbestos and gold are mined near the city. Masvingo is linked by road with Harare and Pretoria, South Africa.

MUTARE (formerly called Umtali) is a city of 85,000 in northeast Zimbabwe, on the Mozambique border. Great fields of tobacco are grown in the area. Gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron deposits are found throughout the adjoining region, for which Mutare is the trading center. Several industries are located here among them oil refining, automobile assembly, textiles, clothing, and leather goods manufacturing. Tourism in the nearby national parks is an important economic asset.

The city of **NYANDA** now uses a local name but, for 92 years, it was Fort Victoria, named in honor of the woman who was then England's queen. Located in an area of gold mines 190 miles south of Harare, it has a resident population of 25,000.

Nyanda is noted especially for its proximity to the famed Zimbabwe ruins.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers of south-central Africa. Elevations range from below 2,000 feet in the river basins to over 7,000 feet in the Eastern Highlands. Harare and most population centers are located on the highveld, a savanna-covered plateau, some 4,000-5,000 feet above sea level.

Zimbabwe covers 150,000 square miles, about the size of Montana. It is bounded by Zambia on the north, Mozambique on the east, Botswana on the west, and South Africa on the south. The landscape varies from flat and rolling ranges, to farmland and mountains, all marked by granite outcroppings. Points of geographical and scenic interest include the magnificent Victoria Falls and man-made Lake Kariba on the Zambezi River; the mountainous Eastern Highlands along the Mozambique border; and the historically important ruins of Great Zimbabwe, the capital of the ancient civilization of Zimbabwe, located near Masvingo; and a number of game parks.

The climate on the central plateau is moderate in all seasons with warm days and cool nights. Homes do not have central heating or air-conditioning, although room heaters and fireplaces are used on winter nights (May-August). Annual rainfall averages about 28 inches on the highveld, more in the Eastern Highlands, and much less in the lowveld of the southeast and the Zambezi Valley. The sun shines nearly every day, even at the height of the warm rainy season (November-March). In Harare, the average low temperature in winter is 45°F at night,

though frost occasionally occurs. The average daily temperature in summer is 75°F, with temperatures seldom surpassing 90°F.

Population

Zimbabwe's population was 12.4 million in mid-1998 and has been growing at an annual rate of 3.1%. The population is 87% African. Of that group, some 71% belong to Shona-speaking tribes. The largest

Shona subgroups are the Karanga, the Zezuru, and the Manyika. The remaining 16% of the black population is Ndebele tribe of Zulu origin inhabiting the southern and western part of Zimbabwe-or Kalanga, Deme, San, Shangaan, Swana, Tonga, and Venda. Whites, mainly of South African, British, and European ancestry, number about 70,000. Asians, of Indian ancestry, and Coloreds, people of mixed European-African origin, number about 30,000.

English is the official language. Shona and Sindebele are spoken in their respective areas. The literacy rate is estimated at 85%. A large majority of the population is formally or nominally Christian. Thousands of Zimbabweans have earned university degrees in their own country or in the U.S., U.K., or Europe, giving the country one of the most highly educated populations of any African state.

The Harare metropolitan area has a population of more than 1.6 million, including the municipality of Chitungwiza, which has an estimated population of between 350,000 and 800,000. Other major cities are Bulawayo (790,000), Mutare (170,000) Gweru (160,000), and Kwe Kwe (100,000). Most Zimbabweans live in communal lands, areas formally reserved for African settlement and covering nearly half the nation's territory. Some 40% of the population live in urban areas. Communal lands tend to be overcrowded and overgrazed, and inhabitants rely heavily on subsistence agriculture. About 4,000 mostly white-owned commercial farms occupy much of

the nation's most productive land and produce half of Zimbabwe's staple food crop, white corn, and the main export crops: tobacco, cotton, sugar, tea, and coffee. As a result, Zimbabwe possesses one of the highest inequality ratios in all of sub-Saharan Africa. Resettlement of blacks on government-purchased commercial farmland is a high priority of the administration, but the question of land distribution remains highly controversial.

Public Institutions

The Republic of Zimbabwe became independent on April 18, 1980, after a guerrilla war against the white colonial government that had announced its Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from the U.K. in 1965, in an effort to avoid the tide of majority rule which was then sweeping through Africa.

The African majority had fiercely resisted UDI, as it forestalled achievement of self-rule, and the first incidents of armed opposition against Prime Minister Ian Smith's regime began in the late 1960s, continuing at a low level through the early 1970s. The fall of the Portuguese Empire in 1974 led to the creation of an independent Mozambique in 1975. The outlawed Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), which had been in exile in distant Tanzania, was then permitted to operate from adjacent Mozambique, while the rival Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) continued its guerrilla operations from Zambia, resulting in an increase in the general level of fighting.

Various attempts at ending the "Rhodesian problem" through negotiation failed, as did the attempt to create a state under the joint rule of Ian Smith and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, known as "Zimbabwe-Rhodesia." A joint conference held at Lancaster House in London under British auspices between September and December 1979 led to agreement by Smith, Muzorewa, ZANU leader Robert Mugabe, ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo, and

other factional leaders on a constitution and a plan which provided for a brief return to British rule, general elections open to all parties, and ultimate independence.

In the elections of late February 1980, which were monitored by international observers and considered to have been free and fair, Mugabe's ZANU-Patriotic Front won 57 of the seats in the 100-member House of Assembly; Nkomo's Patriotic Front-ZAPU won 20; Bishop Muzorewa's United African National Council (UNAC) won 3; and Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front (RF) won all 20 seats reserved for whites. Robert Mugabe was selected to be the country's first Prime Minister.

Once in office, Mugabe pursued a policy of national reconciliation with the country's small, but economically influential white community. He set up a government of national unity which included PFZAPU and some whites. Normally blessed by good rains and spurred by international aid and pent-up demands resulting from the 15 years of U.N.-imposed sanctions, the economy was very healthy and the internal political situation was positive in the first year of independence. However, the euphoria of independence wore off as the Government came to grips with the myriad of problems involved in running a country. Serious political differences developed between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU as the result of strife between excombatants of the two former guerrilla armies and the discovery of illegal arms that were cached on PF-ZAPU properties. As a result, Mugabe fired Nkomo and several of his close aides from the cabinet in 1981. A low level security problem-marked by serious human rights abuses by both the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) and the "dissidents" continued in the Ndebele-populated provinces of Matabeleland, where Nkomo's party was the strongest, until 1987. That year, ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU agreed to unite; the parliamentary seats reserved for whites were abolished, and Prime Minister Mugabe became

executive president, initially for a 3-year term. However, ethnic tension and the failure to redress the human rights issues remain an underlying point of stress in the so-called Unity Accords. ZANU-PF's dominance of Zimbabwe politics was confirmed again in 1990, when Mugabe was elected to a full 6-year term as President and led his party to victory in that year's Parliamentary elections for a new 150-member unicameral Parliament, consisting of 120 elected seats, 10 chiefs elected by their peers, 8 provincial governors, an attorney general, and 12 non-constituency MPs appointed by Mugabe, and a speaker of Parliament elected by parliament. Mugabe was re-elected to the presidency in 1996.

The constitution provides for protection of fundamental human rights as well as the independence of the judiciary. The central government is responsible for making and implementing policies on health, education, and social welfare throughout the country; however, city councils in the urban areas and rural councils in the countryside have increasing powers as the country implements a policy of decentralization and the central government's resource base shrinks. The civil service is set up along British lines; a nationwide police force is controlled from national headquarters in Harare.

The Government repealed the 25-year-old state of emergency in 1990. It announced plans to repeal the repressive Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA), but has since backtracked on these plans. Also in 1990, the ZANU-PF Central Committee formally abandoned the one party state, and other political parties were allowed to operate. In 2000 there were approximately 35 opposition parties. ZANU-PF also relaxed its Marxist/Socialist policies during the 1990s and has generally allowed the private sector to operate freely. Economic liberalization has been slow, however, and the Government still controls a wide array of inefficient and money-losing parast-

atals that continue to drain Government resources.

In 1999, leaders of the country's powerful labor union confederation, The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), formed the country's first major opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Capitalizing on a sluggish economy and growing dissatisfaction with the Government, the MDC quickly became the first serious challenge to the ruling ZANU-PE. In February 2000, the voters defeated the Government's proposed new constitution in the first electoral setback for the Government since independence, Veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle and other ZANU-PF supporters embarked on a campaign of political violence designed to intimidate supporters of the opposition. Despite the intimidation campaign, the MDC won 57 of the 120 contested seats in June 2000 parliamentary elections-another setback for ZANU-PE which previously held 117 of the contested seats.

Zimbabwe is replete with civic and charitable organizations including the Red Cross, the Jairos Jiri Association and St. Giles Association (for the physically handicapped), the St. John's Ambulance Corps, Rotary, Island Hospice, Masons, Soroptomists, and numerous missionary organizations that welcome volunteer assistance.

The country enjoys a number of relatively strong nongovernmental organizations, including civil society organizations, human rights groups, and welfare organizations. Examples of civil society organizations which focus on good governance, accountability, and human rights include: Zim Rights, Transparency International, Amani Trust, Legal Resources Foundation, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Women's Action Group, Zimbabwe Women Lawyers' Association, and the National Constitutional Assembly.

Foreign Relations

Nearly 4,000 Zimbabweans studied in the U.S. during the UDI period. Now scattered throughout senior levels of both government and the private sector, they represent a substantial reservoir of good will toward the U.S.

The U.S., which played a behind-the-scenes role during the Lancaster House Conference, extended official diplomatic recognition to the new government immediately after independence, and a resident Embassy was established in Harare on Zimbabwe's Independence Day, April 18, 1980. The first U.S. Ambassador arrived and presented his credentials in June 1980. Until the arrival in 1983 of a resident Ambassador in Washington, Zimbabwe's relations with the U.S. were handled by its Ambassador to the United Nations (U.N.) in New York.

At the Zimbabwe Conference on Reconstruction and Development (ZIMCORD) held in Harare in 1981, the U.S. Government pledged US \$225 million over 3 years as the U.S. contribution to Zimbabwe's development needs. This goal was more than met; from independence to September 1998, the U.S. provided more than \$720 million in economic and development assistance to Zimbabwe, making it the largest bilateral aid donor. In addition, most of this assistance was in the form of direct grants and was used to help rebuild schools and clinics, train agricultural experts, build low cost housing, and get the national economy-suffering from the war and sanctions-back on its feet.

Agency for International Development (AID) assistance to Zimbabwe in the 1990s has focused on agriculture/food security, education, family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention, private sector development, low-income housing, micro-enterprise funding and democracy and governance programs, and emergency food aid.

Bilateral relations are generally good. A series of undiplomatic state-

ments by the Zimbabwe Government led to a suspension of most U.S. aid in 1986, but aid resumed in 1988. The collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union led Zimbabwean leaders to reexamine their world view, and Zimbabwe and the U.S. cooperated very closely during the former's latest tenure on the U.N. Security Council, 1991-92.

President Mugabe visited Washington informally in September 1980, and on official working visits in September 1983, July 1991, and in 1995, meeting with Presidents Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton respectively. He also led the Zimbabwean delegation to the U.N. in 1980, 1984, and 1991. Then Vice President, George Bush, visited Harare in November 1982 on a trip to several African countries.

Diplomatic relations with the West again soured in 1997 when President Mugabe announced plans to seize white owned farms without providing compensation. An agreement was reached between the Government and donors in 1998, whereby donors would provide funding to much needed land reform. The process broke down in 2000 when the Government again announced plans to seize white owned farms for the resettlement of landless Blacks in a "fast-track" resettlement program. The Government's program was implemented by war veterans occupying more than 1,000 farms. Many Western donors withdrew part or all of their aid until the Government took steps to restore law and order in the land reform process.

Historically, Zimbabwe's closest links have been with the U.K.; however, in the past 3 years, this relationship has been very strained. Britain has provided substantial aid as the result of a pledge made at ZIMCORD. A British Military Advisory and Training Team assisting the Zimbabwe Army. British investment in Zimbabwe remains the largest of any single nation. As with the U.S., thousands of Zimbabweans studied in the U.K., and private

links remain close; however, official relations at times are strained.

Other West European countries have also forged close ties with Zimbabwe. The Scandinavian countries share certain philosophical affinities and have provided much assistance as have France, Canada, and the Federal Republic of Germany. Portugal and Greece maintain links partly because of the sizable Portuguese and Greek communities in the country. Similar historical ties have led to the establishment of close relations with India and Pakistan, and to a lesser extent, with Bangladesh.

Zimbabwe maintains diplomatic relations with virtually every African country, although some ties are closer than others. African nations with embassies in Harare are Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, the Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia, and DRC.

Because of its "birth by armed guerrilla warfare," Zimbabwe developed and maintains close ties with a number of revolutionary states and organizations. Among these are the People's Republic of China, Cuba, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Yugoslavia, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

Shortly after attaining independence, Zimbabwe was welcomed into the world community of nations and granted membership in many international organizations. Chief among these is the United Nations, which Zimbabwe joined just before the General Assembly convened in September 1980. In honor of its newest state, Africa chose Zimbabwe to hold one of its seats in the Security Council, which it did for the biennium 1983-84 and again in 1991-92. Zimbabwe participates in many bodies within the U.N. system. It is also a member of the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Common-

wealth, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

Arts, Science, and Education

Zimbabwe's cultural life is diverse, with ample opportunities for foreigners to study, appreciate, and participate in both Western and African traditions.

The National Gallery of Zimbabwe offers a small collection of European art and a collection and workshop for African sculpture, mostly impressionistic soapstone works. The Queen Victoria Museum in Harare, located next to the College of Music, has ethnographic, geological, and natural history displays. The National Archives also has excellent permanent displays. The National Museum of Bulawayo has very good displays of Zimbabwe's wildlife and history. Harare and Bulawayo have several private art galleries which show interesting work.

Amateur theater groups welcome new participants. Professional or semi-professional theatrical performances are continually available. There are several choral groups and a few small orchestral ensembles. Several cinemas offer films (mostly American and British) a few months after their first run in the U.S. Video shops rent tapes of feature films, and there are occasional dance performances Zimbabwean, modern, and classical-by local groups. Performances by Zimbabwean popular musicians are numerous and inexpensive.

Performances by non-Zimbabwean artists and groups—whether of music, dance, or drama—are relatively rare.

There are scientific, cultural, hobby related, and artistic societies, with frequent meetings open to spectators and prospective members.

Several subscription libraries in Harare offer a fair selection of reading material. A decent selection of

new books is available in local bookstores.

The University of Zimbabwe is an important force in the community, and its courses, lectures, and library are open to foreign students. Universal primary education remains one of the state's goals. The government currently estimates that there are more than 2.5 million children in school in Zimbabwe, up from about 800,000 at independence. Educational opportunities have greatly increased, but unfortunately so has unemployment.

Commerce and Industry

At independence, Zimbabwe inherited one of the strongest and most complete industrial and financial infrastructures in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as rich mineral resources and a strong agricultural base. Most urban infrastructure is comparable to that in rural areas of the U.S., although much of it suffers from decades of insufficient investment and lack of maintenance. However, cellular service providers are rapidly filling the gap, albeit at much higher rates. Erratic electrical power is another periodic problem area.

Zimbabwe has been one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa able to consistently feed itself, although it is subject to periodic droughts with devastating effects (not just to the economy, but people, too). Locally produced fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy products, and processed fruits are usually available. Subsistence agriculture still provides the livelihood for a majority of Zimbabwe's farmers. Corn, called maize in Zimbabwe, is the staple crop. Export crops include tobacco, cotton, sugar, horticultural products, coffee, and tea.

Manufacturing is developed, largely as the result of international trade sanctions imposed during the UDI period. Privately owned factories grew to supply many consumer goods, although a large percentage

of these businesses grew inefficient over the decades as they remained highly protected from import competition as the Government of Zimbabwe pursued an import substitution economic growth model. The largest industries are iron, steel, metal products, food processing, chemicals, textiles, clothing, furniture and plastic goods. Tourism is very important as a foreign currency earner for the country.

Zimbabwe is endowed with rich mineral resources. Mining is largely in the hands of multinational companies. Exports of gold, asbestos, chrome, coal, nickel, and copper are foreign exchange earners. No commercial deposits of petroleum have been discovered, although the country is richly endowed with coal-bed methane gas that has yet to be exploited.

The Government is currently attempting a reorientation of the Zimbabwe economy, moving from the state-controlled socialist paradigm it espoused during the 1980s toward a more market-based, private sector-oriented model. The Government of Zimbabwe expressed an intent to attract foreign investment to complement what domestic business can generate and is in the process of liberalizing and eventually reducing many of the restrictions that served to deter investment in the past. It has decontrolled many prices and moved to eliminate the losses of several large parastatal companies. South Africa is still the predominant trading partner, though trade with Europe, Japan, the U.S., and neighboring African countries is considerable.

The giant Kariba Hydroelectric Dam on the Zambezi River, supplemented by several thermal generators and a coal-fired thermal plant recently established at Hwange supply the country's electric power. Without petroleum of its own, the country must depend on imports of gasoline and diesel for all transport needs. To stretch imported supplies,

gasoline is blended 85/15 with locally produced ethanol.

Zimbabwe's inflation rate at year-end 1999 was more than 55%. The per capita income is about US \$350. The country experienced rapid devaluation of the local dollar vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar in 1997/2000. The official exchange rate as of November 2000: US \$1 = Z\$55.

Transportation

Automobiles

Traffic moves on the left, British fashion, but although U.S. standard left-hand-drive cars can be used, they are not recommended for safety reasons.

Valid U.S. or foreign drivers licenses are acceptable for use in Zimbabwe, provided there is a photograph on the license.

Local auto insurance is required. All customary forms of automobile insurance are available. All Americans must purchase at least "third-party extended" insurance, which covers damage to other vehicles and injury to parties not in the insured car. The cost is minimal, less than US \$50 per year per vehicle. Comprehensive and collision insurance is highly recommended.

Parts are generally, but not always, available for domestically assembled vehicles. Delivery of parts from South Africa for other makes can take several weeks. Fuel shortages have become endemic since January 2000, with supplies sporadic and unpredictable. Gasoline, when available, at current exchange rates, costs about US \$3.00/gallon. This results in limited vehicular mobility.

Local

Taxis are readily available and inexpensive, but not up to U.S. standards. They are found at special stands in town and are available on call in the suburbs. Bus service within Harare is available, but buses are usually crowded and ser-

vice does not always keep to schedule.

A very good network of paved roads stretches across the countryside. Buses and passenger trains serve the larger towns. Air Zimbabwe and/or Zimbabwe Express run daily flights linking Harare, Bulawayo, Kariba, Victoria Falls, and other towns. An express bus service operates between Harare, Bulawayo, and Mutare.

Regional

International flights connect Zimbabwe with London, Amsterdam, Athens, Frankfurt, Lisbon, and Vienna in Europe; with Australia; and with numerous regional African cities. Other destinations are within easy reach via connections in neighboring African countries. Flights to and from Europe are generally overbooked and can be extremely difficult to reserve during the school holidays-December-January, April-May, and August-September.

In addition to Air Zimbabwe, the national airline, Harare is also served by British Airways, South African Airways, Kenya Airways, Ethiopian Airways, Egypt Air, Ghana Airways, and Air Tanzania. There are also flights via regional African airlines.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Harare's telephone system is being upgraded, but it is not always reliable, especially during the rainy season. Fortunately, several mobile phone companies have recently entered the market and service is beginning to improve. Calls made from a home phone that are not operator-assisted are charged by the unit. This includes local and long distance direct-dial calls, and unless a call is booked through an operator, which is more expensive, the individual charges are not listed on the phone bill.

A satellite ground station began operation in 1985, and direct dialing out of Zimbabwe is sometimes eas-

ier than reaching a local number. It is cheaper to call from the U.S. to Zimbabwe than vice-versa. Zimbabwe has direct telex and telegraph service through London to most countries. Internet service providers are available in Zimbabwe.

Mail

International airmail between Zimbabwe and the U.S. takes 5-21 days; sea mail sometimes takes several months.

Radio and TV

Radio and TV in Zimbabwe are government owned. The state TV system broadcasts from about 4 pm until 11:30 pm on two channels that feature a variety of shows, including many older British and American series. Some residents have opted for satellite TV and subscribe to the South African entertainment channel MNet which offers several movie channels, ESPN, CNN, BBC, MTV, VH-1, Cartoon Network, cooking stations, Discovery Channel, and more. The television system used in Zimbabwe is British PAL. A television set purchased in the U.S. will not work in Zimbabwe, except when used to play NTSC videotapes. Radio Zimbabwe transmits on two AM and four FM channels in Shona, Ndebele and English from early morning to late evening. One FM station broadcasts 24 hours daily. Shortwave reception for U.S. Armed Forces Radio, VOA, and BBC is generally good with the aid of an external antenna.

There are also numerous local video rental clubs around Harare, although the quality of the videos is sometimes somewhat less than that of U.S. videos. A multisystem or PAL system TV and VCR are necessary to play local tapes.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There are two daily newspapers, at least three weekly and two Sunday papers in Harare, in addition to numerous local magazines on a variety of subjects. A limited selection of international publications is available. U.S. magazines found in

bookstores include Newsweek and Time. Others magazines are available, but expensive. Ordering them via pouch is advisable. Bookstores carry a fair selection of popular British and American fiction and nonfiction, but prices are high. Secondhand bookstores offer reasonable prices. The selection of children's books is very limited.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

There are three adequate hospitals; one opened in December 1998. There are good clinicians in most of the medical specialty areas. Laboratory, diagnostic imaging, and blood transfusions services are of good standards. Pharmacies are adequately stocked, and medicines that are not available in Zimbabwe can usually be purchased from South Africa. However, the unavailability of foreign exchange has made purchasing of certain medicines uncertain. The trauma clinics and road/air evacuation standards in Harare continue to improve. Medical evacuation is usually to South Africa.

However, adequate private medical care outside Harare is sparse. Government medical facilities are declining throughout the country.

Community Health

Public health standards are quite high in low-density urban suburbs. However, it varies throughout the high-density and rural areas. Public boards are responsible for, and stringent in setting standards for meats and produce available locally. Water in major cities is generally safe to drink. Sewage treatment is advanced, as are virtually all sanitation controls.

HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and bilharzia are at epidemic levels throughout the nation.

Preventive Measures

Malaria continues to be a problem in regions outside Harare. Adjunctive measures for prevention of

malaria are strongly recommended. Mefloquine or Doxycycline are the prophylaxis regimes of choice because of the high incidence of chloroquine-resistant malaria.

No particular safeguards are necessary in food preparation. Fruits and vegetables are washed thoroughly with tap water. Drinking water should be boiled and/or filtered as a precaution.

Most lakes and standing bodies of water are infested with bilharzia. Swimming and wading in them is ill advised.

Individuals with asthma or allergies may be adversely affected due to the great variety of year-round pollens and dry and wet seasons.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport, return ticket, and adequate funds are required. U.S. citizens traveling to Zimbabwe for tourism, business and transit can obtain a visa at the airports and border ports-of-entry, or in advance by contacting the Embassy of Zimbabwe in Washington, D.C. U.S. citizens who intend to work in Zimbabwe as journalists must apply for accreditation with the Zimbabwean embassy at least one month in advance of planned travel. It is no longer possible to seek accreditation within Zimbabwe at the Ministry of Information. Journalists attempting to enter Zimbabwe without proper advance accreditation may be denied admission or deported.

There is a non-waivable airport departure tax of 20 dollars (US) by all U.S. citizens, including holders of official and diplomatic passports.

Travelers should obtain the latest travel and visa information from the Embassy of Zimbabwe, 1608 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009; telephone (202) 332-7100. Overseas, inquiries should be

made at the nearest Zimbabwean embassy or consulate. Upon arrival in Zimbabwe, travelers should keep all travel documents readily available, as well as a list of residences or hotels where they will stay while in Zimbabwe.

Most Americans in Harare travel through Europe and then to Johannesburg, in South Africa. British Airways, KLM, and Lufthansa no longer fly non-stop to Harare. An overnight rest stop is permitted and recommended in Europe to break up two consecutive all-night flights.

If you arrive between May and August, include in accompanying baggage warm clothes for chilly evenings. Unaccompanied airfreight from the U.S. can take 1-3 months.

Currency control restrictions are tight in Zimbabwe, and frequent arrests are made of those dealing in the export of Zimbabwean or foreign currency. Declare to customs officials the amount of cash in all currencies you are carrying. No more than Z\$2,000 may be imported or exported.

Americans living in or visiting Zimbabwe are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe and obtain updated information on travel and security within Zimbabwe. Americans may register on-line by accessing our web site at <http://USEmbassy.State.Gov/Zimbabwe>, then access the consular/American citizen page to complete the registration on-line. The U.S. Embassy is located at 172 Herbert Chitepo Avenue, Harare, telephone (263-4) 250-593/4, after hours telephone (263-4) 250-595, fax (263-4) 722-618 and 796-488. The mailing address is P.O. Box 3340, Harare. The e-mail address is consular-harare@state.gov. American citizen service hours are from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Fridays, except U.S. and Zimbabwean holidays.

Pets

No quarantine period is required for cats and dogs in Zimbabwe. Birds can be imported, but the paperwork takes some time to complete. Import permits for all animals are required and can be obtained by writing directly to the Ministry of Agriculture at the following address: The Ministry of Agriculture Ngungunya Building, 1 Borrowdale Road P/Bag 7701 Causeway Harare, Zimbabwe.

Transiting South Africa with a pet can be problematic. It is easier to travel through Europe.

Veterinary services are quite adequate with a simple consultation costing about Z\$500 (about US \$7.50). Dogs and cats are dipped for fleas and ticks regularly during summer (October to April). A rabies vaccination is required prior to arrival and it is advisable to have a parvo and hepatitis shot as well. Government of Zimbabwe Customs also requires a veterinary certificate stating the animal is in good health. Bring all grooming aids and anything special that your animal requires, as well as any special foods or medicine. Pet foods are available, but cat litter is not. There is a kennel club, a feline club, and a bird club in Harare and dog and cat shows are held throughout the year.

Licenses are required for both cats and dogs. Unspayed females are Z\$20, and males and spayed females are Z\$10.

Firearms and Ammunition

U.S. citizens who are bringing weapons and ammunition into Zimbabwe for purposes of hunting should contact the Embassy of Zimbabwe in Washington, D.C. to find out what permits are required. (Please check the Entry Requirements section for the address and telephone number for the Embassy of Zimbabwe.) Some Americans traveling in Zimbabwe have come under added scrutiny from immigration and police officials in the wake of the March 1999 arrest of three American citizens at Harare International Airport, who were allegedly in possession of undeclared assault

weapons. Travelers are advised to make sure that all of the necessary documentation is in order before departing the United States. The weapons also must be cleared through U.S. Customs to ensure their expeditious re-entry into the United States at the conclusion of one's trip.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The local currency is the Zimbabwe dollar (Z\$). US \$1 equals about Z\$55 (as of November 2000). However, this rate is extremely volatile at this time.

Barclays, Standard Chartered, and Zimbank provide commercial banking services. Zimbabwe uses metric measurements.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country.

American University. *Area Handbook for Zimbabwe*. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1983.

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LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1 New Year's Day
Mar.

(2nd Mon) Commonwealth Day

Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*

Mar/Apr. Easter*

Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*

Apr. 18. Independence Day

May 1 Worker's Day

May 25 Africa Day

Aug. 11 Heroes' Day

Aug. 12 Defense Forces Day

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Dec. 26 Boxing Day

*variable

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CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

**Volume 2:
The Western Hemisphere
(exclusive of the United States)**

**Cumulative Index
Volumes 1-4**



CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

CITIES OF THE WORLD

A Compilation of Current Information
on Cultural, Geographic, and
Political Conditions in the Countries
and Cities of Six Continents, Based on
the Department of State's
"Post Reports"

In Four Volumes

**Volume 2:
The Western Hemisphere
(exclusive of the United States)**

Cumulative Index Volumes 1-4



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PREFACE

Cities of the World represents a compilation of government reports and original research on the social, cultural, political, and industrial aspects of the nations and cities of the world. Most of the country profiles included here are based on official personnel briefings issued as *Post Reports* by the U.S. Department of State. The *Post Reports* are designed to acquaint embassy personnel with life in the host country. Consequently, the reports concentrate on cities in which the U.S. government has embassies or consulates. To increase coverage of other important cities, the editors have added information on a large number of cities—31 of which are new to this edition—not reported on by the Department of State.

Since the fifth edition of *Cities of the World*, the Department of State has issued 62 new or revised *Post Reports*, all of which have been incorporated into this sixth edition. Selected data in *Post Reports* not revised by the Department of State since the last edition of *Cities of the World* have been updated by the editors with revised statistics acquired through independent research. In addition, articles have been written on thirty-three countries for which no *Post Report* exists.

Readers familiar with the fourth edition of this publication will notice that with the fifth edition the page size was enlarged to accommodate more information. This sixth edition includes new photographs selected by the Gale editors. The photographs depict scenes found in a city and countryside and, in many cases, reveal the cultural flavor of the area as well. As in the prior edition, many chapters feature a map of that country's capital or major city, with a superimposed locator map indicating the nation's geographic location in relation to its regional neighbors.

Volumes in This Series

This series includes four volumes:

- Volume 1: Africa;
- Volume 2: The Western Hemisphere (exclusive of the United States);
- Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East;
- Volume 4: Asia, the Pacific, and the Asiatic Middle East.

In all, this set provides coverage of over 2,000 cities in 193 countries.

Format and Arrangement of Entries

Cities of the World is arranged alphabetically by country name. Its chapters are divided into two basic sections, Major Cities and Country Profile, each of these with several subdivisions. A Major City listing might comprise information on Education, Recreation, and Entertainment. Other Cities, smaller cities and towns which are designated as other than major, are discussed in brief paragraphs at the end of the Major City section. Country Profile sections are subdivided into: Geography and Climate; Population; Government; Arts, Science, Education; Commerce and Industry; Transportation; Communications; Health; Clothing and Services; Local Holidays; Recommended Reading; and Notes for Travelers. Thus, *Cities of the World* presents not only basic information, but also comprehensive data on local customs, political conditions, community services, and educational and commercial facilities.

Contents and Index

The Contents and Index in each volume provide easy access to these reports. Listed under each country in the Contents are the cities that appear in its Major Cities section, as well as listings for the Other Cities and Country Profile sections. A Cumulative Index, combining the four individual volumes is found at the end of each volume. The Index is arranged alphabetically by city name, including listings for both major and minor cities that are mentioned in each volume; as well as by country name with names of cities indented below.

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to thank the U.S. Department of State for providing copies of *Post Reports* to aid in the compilation of these volumes. The editors would also like to thank Adam A. Gall and Marlon C. Tussel for their editorial assistance.

Suggestions Welcome

The editors invite comments and suggestions concerning *Cities of the World*. Please write to: Editors, *Cities of the World*, The Gale Group, Inc., 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535; fax (248) 699-8074; or call toll-free (800) 877-4253.

CITIES OF THE WORLD

Volume 2:

**The Western Hemisphere
(exclusive of the United States)**

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Major City:
St. John's

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Antigua and Barbuda. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

ANTIGUA (pronounced An-tee-ga) is a three-island nation located about 1,200 miles southeast of Miami. The country consists of the islands of Antigua, Barbuda, and the uninhabited island of Redonda. Each of these islands is unique. Antigua's topography is varied. In the north and west, the gently undulating terrain consists of limestone, marls, and sandstone. In the south and east, the land is of volcanic origin, with high ridges and forests common to many other Caribbean islands. Thirty-two miles to the north, Barbuda is a 62-square mile flat island composed of limestone, ancient coral reefs, and sand. It has a 14-mile long beach. Twenty miles west lies Redonda, a solitary

volcanic cone jutting directly out of the sea to a height of over 1,000 feet. Steep cliffs surround the area of less than one-half square mile.

Among Antigua's attractions are 365 beautiful white sand beaches. Tourists arrive by cruise ship, yachts, and airliners to relax in the sea, sun, and surf, or enjoy all kinds of water sports. In the off-season, it is possible to find many uninhabited beaches. History buffs will find Antigua rich in human events, agriculture, and strategic importance.

MAJOR CITY

St. John's

St. John's, with a population of 24,000 (2000 estimate) is the capital of Antigua and Barbuda. It is situated on Deep Water Harbor, where as many as five Caribbean cruise ships dock for the day, adding hundreds of tourists to the daily activity. From this protected location nearly all commerce occurs; from the quaint fish market to the modern mini-mall, people come to trade and transact business. In daytime, people scurry about in the narrow streets, taking time to greet friends along the way. On cool evenings,

people stroll leisurely in the refreshing sea breeze.

Clothing

Antiguans dress in moderation and are conditioned to tropical living. As a result, it is common for men to work in blue jeans and long sleeve shirts, and women in synthetic fabric dresses. It is acceptable for tourists to wear shorts. However, American women living in Antigua find dresses or slacks more appropriate. North Americans who are not accustomed to living in tropical climates should bring lightweight clothing. Cotton or cotton-blend garments are the most comfortable. Antigua has a few fine-quality clothing stores, but clothing is expensive. Expatriates should bring an ample supply of shoes as local varieties are not well made and sizes are different from U.S. standards. In the heat and humidity, shoes one-half size larger are more comfortable.

Clothing and accessories suitable for men include wash-and-wear business suits, sport jackets, shirts worn with or without ties, sport shirts, and slacks. Shirt jacs or a *guayabera*, and slacks are popular. Working attire for women is usually a modest suit, a cotton dress, or a blouse and skirt. Stockings are not normally worn. Hats are not normally worn except occasionally to

church or at a sunny beach. Antiguan women are fashion conscious and like to dress for cocktail and dinner parties. Nights are occasionally cool, so a lightweight cotton sweater or shawl is useful. For children, normal U.S. summer wear is suitable, with lightweight jackets or cardigans for cool evenings. All schools, including preschool, require uniforms. Girls wear simple one-piece dresses, or skirts and blouses. Boys wear slacks and shirts. In secondary schools, a tie completes the dress code. Uniforms are made and sold locally.

Supplies & Services

In general, it is possible to buy most anything in Antigua. However, prices are often highly inflated. Stocks are often small and selections are poor compared to the U.S. American expatriates often order most items via catalogs. St. John's offers an interesting variety of stores and boutiques. Specialties include straw goods, pottery, batik and silk-screened fabrics and jewelry incorporating semiprecious Antiguan stones. China, crystal, watches and perfumes are obtainable at duty-free prices. Heritage Quay and Redcliffe Quay are the two main shopping areas in St. John's. Many expatriates also making shopping trips to St. Martin's or Puerto Rico.

The number of establishments offering basic services is limited. Dry-cleaning services are poor. Many people restrict the need for dry-cleaning because of the expense, and availability of cotton and synthetic substitutes. Shoe and leather repair service is good, and some crafters do custom work. Barber-shops are adequate and charge reasonable prices. A wide range of hair care services are available, including permanents, tints, and stylings. Many hairdressers are expatriates. Dressmakers vary in skill, but some can take a length of fabric and fashion anything from sundresses to formal wear. Some repair work is good, but the standard of most is uneven, particularly if unsupervised. Progress is often slow and further



Street in St. John's, Antigua

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hampered by periodic unavailability of materials and electrical failures. Repair work on cars, electronic equipment, and household appliances varies in quality, because of the lack of expertise and unfamiliarity with certain electronic devices.

Food

St. John's has four supermarkets, several well-stocked minimarkets, and numerous small stores. Many canned and packaged goods are U.S. name brands, the rest are from Europe or nearby islands. Imported dairy products are safe; local products are not. Most eggs are imported. Cattle, hogs, and chickens are raised and processed locally. All are safe to eat if cooked properly. Cuts vary widely from those in U.S. meat markets. Beware of frozen packaged meats in smaller stores; power failures are frequent and meat lockers may not have generator backup. Local bakeries make fresh breads and pastries. Packaged cereals may not be fresh, and grain products are subject to bug infestations.

Fresh seafood is always available at the Saturday morning market; for other times, it is wise to establish contact with a local fisherman. Fresh vegetables and fruits are also

sold at the Saturday market and stores. Most are imported, since the economy does not have an agricultural base. Most stores sell wines, hard liquor, and brand name soft drinks. Diet foods and products are rarely available.

A local cuisine specialty is *roti*. It is an unleavened bread shell folded in half and filled with a curry gravy, vegetables, and a meat. *Roti* made from conch meat is considered a delicacy. Barbudan lobsters are excellent. Cockles are an island favorite, especially around Whit's Day. Numerous downtown restaurants cater to the professional community. Antigua has a U.S.-based fast-food chicken restaurant.

For dining out, it is possible to choose from a variety of hotel restaurants, offering everything from smorgasbords to full course meals. Most specialties are "the catch of the day" seafoods. Also, ethnic restaurants featuring Italian, French, Chinese, British, and American cuisine exist. Dress is casual at restaurants, but hotels are slightly more formal. Hotels that cater to tourists may inflate some prices.

Domestic Help

Domestics are available for laundry and household chores. Some fami-

lies with large gardens may also hire a part-time gardener. Reliable employees can usually be found through friends. However, it is best to hire on a temporary basis at first and set out the terms of employment.

Wages are governed by law; minimum wage is generally EC \$20 a day from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., five days a week. Workers have one paid holiday a month. Domestic help is entitled to all local holidays, and a Christmas bonus is suggested. All workers over 18 years of age must register. Employers pay social security and medical insurance that is accumulated by a deduction of 5.5% from employee wages and an employer contribution of 7.5%. Employers provide either transportation or bus fares.

Education

The children of American expatriates attend local schools. Schooling is adequate through high school. However, American history and geography are not taught. Many parents select private schools as they are perceived to have a higher quality of education. Schools in St. John's follow the British educational system and are in session from September until the last week in June. Instruction is in English. Teachers and teaching assistants may be hired locally or recruited from neighboring islands or the expatriate community. All schools have open play areas and all-purpose playing fields; however, they do not have closed auditoriums. Some extracurricular activities are available such as scouting, cricket, basketball, volleyball, and soccer.

Schools in Antigua cannot support special educational requirements. Children with learning disabilities, or physical, behavioral, or emotional handicaps should be placed in U.S. schools.

Recreation

As in most Caribbean countries, cricket is Antigua's national sport. Soccer (locally called football) and basketball are played in the off-sea-

son. A local board game, called *warri*, is played on a board with hollowed pockets. Two opponents move warri beans about, seeking to capture the opponents' beans. Warri is popular with cabbies and bus drivers awaiting fares.

Antigua has two golf courses open for year-round play. Cedar Valley Golf Club has an 18-hole championship course. This challenging course has narrow fairways, deep roughs, and hilly terrain. Clubs and accessories are available at the recreation building. Half Moon Bay Hotel, located on the opposite side of the island, has a 9-hole course more hospitable to casual players. Equipment can be rented.

All water sport activities abound. It is possible to rent sailboats, both large and small. Powerboating is used mainly for fishing, but in some places, powerboats are used for parasailing, water skiing, and sight-seeing. Small craft and inexperienced pilots should not operate in the open Atlantic. Coral reefs and shoals encircle Antigua, and novices must learn to identify and navigate these hazards. Antigua's clear waters offer abundant marine flora and fauna.

St. John's offers many sight-seeing opportunities. St. John's has an old fort that can be readily explored. Fort James, built in 1703, guarded the entrance to St. John's Harbor. Many of the original buildings no longer exist, but some buildings that remain date back to 1749. The fort still has ten cannons. Each weigh about two and one half tons and can propel a cannonball one and one half miles. Another tourist attraction is St. John's Cathedral. Built in 1722, the cathedral's interior is encased in wood to protect it from hurricane and earthquake damage.

In addition to sights in St. John's, there are points of interest throughout the island. Nelson's Dockyard, built in 1784 as the headquarters of Admiral Horatio Nelson, is situated in one of the safest landlocked har-

bors in the world. Today, the Dockyard has been restored to its original state and houses a museum that is very popular among visitors. Indian Town, one of Antigua's national parks, features Devil's Bridge, carved out by the forces of the Atlantic Ocean. Clarence House, the Governor's residence, is open to the public when the Governor is absent. The house was once the home of the "Sailor King," William IV, when he was Duke of Clarence.

Many old sugarcane mills are familiar landmarks throughout the island. Betty's Hope is one of the oldest plantation sites in Antigua, dating back to 1655. It was Antigua's foremost sugar plantations for large-scale sugar cultivation and innovative processing methods. The Sugar Factory had twin stone windmill towers, a laborers' village, and an extensive water catchment system. Most buildings are in ruins, but restoration plans are underway.

Antigua hosts several international events. In late July, Antigua hosts a ten-day Carnival. Visitors come from all over the world. It is a time when people celebrate the people's emancipation and freedom from subjugation. During "J'Ouvert," a Carnival highlight, everyone comes together jumping and jamming to the pulsing, rhythmic sounds of steel pan and brass bands. Carnival Monday is a riot of color. The elaborate costumes are combinations of sequins, feathers, beads, and glitter, often towering ten to fifteen feet in the air. Each represents countless hours of painstaking work to design and create.

Antiguan Sailing Week has evolved into one of the world's top sailing regattas. It attracts many spectators to watch the excitement of the races and to join in the parties that follow. Sailing Week, which begins the last week in April and continues during the first week in May, is a blend of international, regional, and local yachts. Many colorful sails catch the wind as yachts jostle to pass each other on the sea. Races

are organized into different categories.

Entertainment

St. John's has limited forms of entertainment. One popular discotheque occasionally offers performances by regionally well-known groups. Apart from this, nightlife is confining. The one movie theater, in the shopping district, offers a mix of martial arts movies, "B" movies, and an occasional recently released film. Video clubs are coming to Antigua, but prices are high.

Many hotels offer live entertainment on particular nights. Steel drums and reggae bands, along with other musical groups, are featured. Casino gambling is popular; however, odds heavily favor the house.

Among expatriates, cocktail parties, small suppers, or dining out are common ways to entertain. Community fund-raising events are held throughout the year. The American Women's Club coordinates philanthropic and community activities. Most people find the life-style on Antigua limiting and feel a periodic need to leave the island. Many expatriates also enjoy golf, bridge, and special hobbies.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Antigua is roughly oval in shape, 10 miles by 12 miles, with a land area of 108 square miles. Although Antigua is volcanic in origin, it also has extensive limestone geology. Various coral reefs surround the island. Antigua's shores are washed by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Caribbean Sea on the west. This makes Antigua unique and diverse in both terrestrial and marine flora and fauna. Boggy Peak, at 1,330 feet, is the highest prominent landmark. Barbuda, which is not commercialized or overly developed, promises a nearly unspoiled fishing,

snorkeling, and scuba-diving paradise. Most of the 1,500 Barbudans live in the town of Codrington.

Antigua's climate is heavily influenced by the easterly trade winds and sea currents that are present all year. Drier than most other Caribbean islands, Antigua and Barbuda's climate is tropical, with low humidity and an average rainfall of 42 inches. Most homes in Antigua have cisterns, and the island has numerous ponds, reservoirs, and catchment systems to store rain water, which until recently was the only natural fresh-water source on the island. During the cool season, December-February, night temperatures range from 60°F to 65°F. Average daytime temperatures are 76°F, December-April, and 85°F in August and September.

Although the official hurricane season begins June 1 and ends November 30, August and September are the two most active months. At this time, tropical storms form in the eastern Atlantic Ocean and spend days building their wind velocities as they approach the Caribbean. On September 16, 1989, Hurricane Hugo passed within 40 miles south of Antigua, causing extensive damage to the entire island. Historically speaking, the threat of a major hurricane hitting Antigua is small; the last direct strike was in 1952.

Population

The people of Antigua and Barbuda are almost exclusively of black African origin. Antiguan and Barbudans are largely descendants of African slaves who were transported from West Africa in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Several minorities are also represented. These persons are the descendants of Lebanese and Syrian traders, British colonial settlers, and Portuguese laborers. Statistically, life expectancy is 68 years for males and 73 years for females (2001 estimates). The educational requirement is a compulsory 9 years, and the literacy rate is roughly 90%. Antigua and Barbuda

has an estimated population of 64,500; 98% live on Antigua. Redonda is uninhabited.

History

The earliest known human-made artifacts have been carbon dated at least to 1775 B.C. These people have been named the "Siboney," the Stone People. Their society was that of nomadic food gatherers having no agriculture or permanent settlements.

About the time of Christ, an agricultural society made its way up the chain of islands from South America. They brought with them new plants such as peanut, pineapple, cotton, and tobacco plants.

Later, A.D. 1200-1300, two Amerindian societies with opposing lifestyles coexisted; the peaceful and pottery-making Arawaks, and the fierce and warlike Caribs. Arawaks came here for clay, a resource in short supply elsewhere and essential for making pottery. The Caribs are thought to have exploited another earth resource, flint, a hard mineral necessary in the making of arrowheads and spear points.

The first Western explorer believed to have discovered Antigua was Christopher Columbus. In his second voyage in 1493, Columbus was sailing from the south when he spotted Antigua on the horizon. It was at this time that he named Antigua after a sainted miracle worker, Santa Maria de Antigua, from Seville Cathedral, Spain. Columbus did not stop or set foot on Antigua, he continued northbound to Hispaniola, convinced that gold and spices existed there.

For the next 200-300 years, there was great imperial rivalry for control and possession of the Caribbean islands. The Spanish Armada, the Dutch and French fleets, and British Navy all had a military presence.

The English successfully colonized Antigua in 1632. Although the

island was held briefly by the French in 1666, Antigua remained thereafter under British control.

Sir Christopher Codrington established the first large sugar estate in Antigua in 1674 and leased Barbuda to raise provisions for the plantation. Barbuda's only settlement is named for him. Sir Codrington and others brought slaves from Africa's west coast to work the plantation. To exploit the land for sugar cane production, plantation owners cleared the forest and woods. Today, many Antiguans attribute frequent droughts to the island's early deforestation. Antigua's profitable sugar plantations were soon the envy of other European powers. To defend the island's growing wealth, the British built several large forts. The ruins of these forts are notable tourist attractions.

Antiguan slaves were emancipated in 1834, but they remained bound to their plantation owners. A lack of surplus farming land, no access to credit, and an economy built on agriculture rather than manufacturing limited economic opportunities for the freed men. Poor labor conditions continued until 1939, when a member of a Royal Commission urged the formation of a trade union movement. The Antigua Trades and Labor Union, formed shortly afterward, became the political vehicle for Vere Cornwall Bird, who became the union's president in 1943. The Antigua Labor Party (ALP), formed by Bird and other trade unionists, first ran candidates in the 1946 elections, thus beginning a long history of electoral victories. In 1971, general elections swept the Progressive Labor Movement into power, but Bird and the ALP returned to office in 1976. Prime Minister Bird's ALP government has led the country since, winning a renewed mandate in the 1989 general election.

Government

Antigua and Barbuda is a member of the British Commonwealth. As head of the Commonwealth, Queen

Elizabeth II is represented in Antigua and Barbuda by a Governor General, who acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party of the House, and the Cabinet conducts affairs of state. Antigua and Barbuda has a bicameral legislature: a 17-member popularly elected Upper House or Senate appointed by the Governor General (mainly on the advice of the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition) and a 17-member popularly elected House of Representatives. The Prime Minister and Cabinet are responsible to the Parliament, which has a normal term of five years.

Constitutional safeguards include freedoms of speech, press, worship, movement, and association. Like its English-speaking neighbors, Antigua and Barbuda has an outstanding human rights record. Its judicial system is modeled on British practice and procedure, and its jurisprudence on English Common Law.

The flag of Antigua and Barbuda is red with an inverted isosceles triangle based on the top edge of the flag; the triangle contains three horizontal bands of black (top), light blue, and white with a yellow sun rising in the black band.

Arts, Science, Education

The longest established gallery is The Art Center at English Harbor. It only displays local art, but it has influenced the development of art in the Caribbean. The island's newest addition is the Seahorse Studio's Art Gallery. This studio was established in 1985 to provide graphics and layout services for local businesses. In addition to Caribbean art displays are unique gold and bronze marine crafts made in Antigua by "The Goldsmitty." The Island Arts Foundation has four galleries in Antigua, and six associate galleries throughout the islands. Island Arts offers the widest variety of Caribbean art anywhere in the region. It is a nonprofit company devoted to

economic support of Caribbean-based artists. Coates College and The Art Gallery both feature local artists' exhibits year round. Harmony Hall of Jamaica has a branch studio on Antigua at Brown's Bay. Exhibitions change every three to four weeks, November to March. Aiton Place has art pieces at numerous fine hotels.

The Antigua Arts Society, a group of local and regional artists, actively provides direction and promotes growth in all art forms. The Society sponsors regional art fairs and showings.

Antigua has four museums. The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda has tours, book libraries, and computer libraries open to visitors and residents. It is also a research area for foreign students. The museum has direct links with several universities, such as Tulane, Brown, Northern Illinois, and Cambridge. Students can research in areas from geology and archeology to sociology and communications. A second museum, the Museum of Marine and Living Art, offers a stunning collection of seashells and relics salvaged from old shipwrecks.

The oldest museum in Antigua was established in 1953 at English Harbor. The Dockyard Museum is near the waterfront and deals with naval history. Antigua was Britain's major Caribbean naval base for much of the colonial period. The museum has large ship models on loan from the British National Maritime Museum.

The newest museum is on the road to Shirley Heights. This once was the largest fort, and its main function was to reinforce Antigua's defenses. It now houses the Military and Infantry Museum.

In Antigua, public education is free and compulsory for children ages five-16. The education system is modeled after British schools. Parents provide books and uniforms for the three local coeducational elementary schools. One is secular, a

second is Roman Catholic, and a third is Lutheran. Tuition varies according to the school's funding.

Antigua has two Roman Catholic high schools, one for girls and one for boys. Both schools are highly regarded. Uniforms are required, and a demerit system governs discipline and conduct. Classes in history, geography, and literature are regional in nature.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) has campuses in Barbados, Trinidad, and Jamaica, and maintains extramural departments in several other islands including Antigua. Antiguan students interested in higher education enroll at UWI campuses, or schools in Britain, the United States, Europe, and Canada.

The Venezuelan Institute for Culture and Cooperation offers many interesting programs, free to the public. Spanish lessons are provided for adults at all conversational and grammatical levels. Sewing lessons are offered throughout the year. Occasionally, cooking, music, and art classes are also given.

Commerce and Industry

Sugar cultivation, long dominating Antigua and Barbuda's economy, was a major export until 1960, when prices fell dramatically and crippled the industry. By 1972, the industry was largely dismantled. The agricultural pattern in Antigua has shifted to a multiple cropping system. Though fruit and vegetable production predominates, the Antiguan government has encouraged investment in livestock, cotton, and export-oriented food crops.

Currently, the economy is based on services rather than manufacturing. Tourism is the economic backbone and main source of foreign exchange. Over 150,000 cruise ship visitors and 250,000 overnight visitors arrive each year.

In the private sector, domestic and foreign investments are encouraged. Private businesses benefit from a stable political environment, good transportation to and from the island, and a pleasant climate. Government policies also provide liberal tax holidays, duty-free import of equipment and materials, and subsidies for training local personnel. The country's reasonably sound infrastructure is an added incentive.

Nontraditional exports have grown in recent years. Foreign investors, lured by Antigua's good transportation connections to North America and Europe, have set up light manufacturing industries on the island, primarily in the finished textile and electronic component assembly sectors. Some of the newer industries produce durable household appliances, paints, furniture, mattresses, metal and iron products, and masonry products for the local market as well as for export.

Barbuda supports a tremendous diversity of unexploited native habitats, including a bird sanctuary. It is hoped that development will focus on preserving these natural attributes.

Redonda's economic importance lies in the past. In 1860, Redonda was worked for its valuable bird guano, and later for aluminum phosphate. At the outbreak of World War I, mining operations ceased. After the war, technological advances made during the war made further mining uneconomical. Today, the island's only inhabitants are the birds. Redonda's quarry works stand alone, mute testimony to a bygone day.

Transportation

Americans need private cars. Most Americans buy cars here, as right-hand drive vehicles are more appropriate for local driving. Japanese cars predominate locally; other Asian Pacific Rim cars make up the difference. There is a 100% duty

rate for locally purchased or imported cars. U.S. Government employees are exempt from this tax. Landrovers are popular, especially for exploring the island or towing a boat. Many people consider air-conditioning indispensable, particularly in the rainy, hot season. Fuel-injected or sport cars are not recommended due to the inferior quality and low octane of imported gasoline.

Auto mechanics and repair shops service locally sold cars satisfactorily, but parts are generally unavailable for other imports. Expatriates should bring an ample supply of spare parts with them, including a dry-charged battery, fanbelts and hoses, a tune-up kit, fuel and water pumps, windshield wiper blades, oil, gasoline and air filters, headlights, indicator lamps, and an extra set of tires.

An Antiguan drivers license is required for all drivers. To obtain a license, present a valid U.S. drivers license to the local constabulary. A three-month temporary permit is issued and should be used until the permanent license is received. The U.S. drivers license is also returned.

Antiguan roads are not well maintained. Potholes are numerous, and roads are narrow and steep in hilly areas. Newcomers should exercise extreme care when driving in Antigua. The accident rate is very high because of poor road conditions, excessive speeding and passing by some residents, and because Americans are unfamiliar with driving on the left. Speed limit signs are infrequent and poorly observed or enforced. Taxis and buses frequently stop in the middle of the road for passengers. Road markings, such as center lines, are absent. In the city of St. John's, only a few streets are identified with signs. Rural roads do not have signs. Caution should be observed when driving in rural areas because livestock often wander aimlessly into traffic.

For those who do not have their own cars, taxis and rental cars are the main source of transportation. It is important to negotiate fares before getting into a cab because the cabs are not metered. Some comfortable, newer buses and minivans commute between St. John's and outlying communities. However, they are often overcrowded and driven recklessly. Several car rental firms offer mostly small Japanese models for rent by the day, week, or month. Rates are expensive.

Vere Cornwall Bird International Airport handles all international flights. Nonstop connections to Antigua from London, New York, Miami, Puerto Rico, Toronto, Frankfurt, Guadeloupe, Baltimore, and St. Maarten are available. Connections from several U.S. cities are routed through San Juan, Puerto Rico. Regularly scheduled air service is provided by British Airways, American Airlines, British West Indies Airways, Air Canada, and Continental Airlines. The regional airline, Leeward Island Air Transport (LIAT) provides service from Antigua and Barbuda to many locations within the Caribbean.

Communications

Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Hugo and is slowly repairing and upgrading its telephone equipment. Phones often stop working, and service is slow and unreliable. Long-distance, direct-dialing is available to most of the world.

The government-operated Antigua and Barbuda Broadcasting Service (ABBS) has one radio station and a television station. A privately owned radio station, Radio ZDK, broadcasts from St. John's. The format of Radio ZDK consists primarily of local news and features and sometimes includes prerecorded programs from U.S. satellite services. Antigua's one Christian broadcast radio station, Caribbean Radio Lighthouse, is affiliated with

the Baptist Church. Many Americans enjoy listening to GEM-94, which broadcasts from the island of Montserrat. This satellite syndicated station features contemporary and oldies music.

Because it experiences little electromagnetic interference, Antigua is an ideal location for shortwave reception. Stations from around the world, including BBC Caribbean and Radio Deutsche Welle, can be received. The Voice of America also has a relay station on Antigua that broadcasts daily. Programming is mainly regional and world news, with some special music features and world reports aired on the weekends.

Antigua has three weekly publications that publish local and regional events but do not cover social and international events. Freedom of the press is guaranteed by law. *The Nation* and *The Worker's Voice* are government owned and abridged. *The Outlet* is privately owned and unabridged.

U.S. paperbacks and magazines are readily found. *The Miami Herald* and *USA Today* are available one day late. Bookshops, although small, sell a wide range of paperback novels, some reference books, and hardcovers at about twice U.S. prices. The small public library in St. John's has a good reference section. Library fees are reasonable.

Health

Antigua has some qualified doctors who were trained in the U.S. or Britain. However, specialists in pediatrics, surgery, ear, nose, and throat, cardiology, oncology, dermatology, neurology, orthopedics, and more advanced internal medicine are limited. Emergency obstetrical care is not immediately available. Holberton Hospital is old and inadequate. Nursing care is limited.

Current community health requirements fall below U.S. standards. In St. John's, open gutters carry

untreated waste. Sewage treatment is inadequate, and the limited public restroom facilities are unclean. The weekly garbage pickup is deposited into open dump sites.

In St. John's, water is treated and has been safe to drink. However, the distribution system is old, and broken water mains can lead to contamination. If this occurs, unpotable water must be boiled and filtered before use. Homes have cisterns as an alternative source.

Infectious hepatitis, gastroenteritis, and intestinal parasites are common. Tropical weather and high humidity are conducive to skin and fungal infections.

Frequent power outages can result in food spoilage. Therefore, exercise caution when purchasing frozen foods. Meats purchased in Antiguan markets should be thoroughly cooked. Some large predatory fish that feed from the reef environment food chains contain a neurotoxin, which can produce diarrhea, vomiting, muscle aches, numbness, tingling of the mouth and extremities, itching, and severe headaches. Neurological symptoms can last a few days or longer.

Although none of the following inoculations is required for entry, they are highly recommended. Visitors and expatriates should be inoculated against typhoid, polio, tetanus, and hepatitis. Children should have measles, mumps, rubella, and DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus) shots, and an oral polio vaccine (OPV).

Although no special preparation of fruits and vegetables is required, visitors and expatriates should be aware of some toxic plants. The manchineel is a tropical American tree that has a poisonous fruit and a poisonous milky sap that causes skin blisters on contact. Three other common ornamental plants with a similar alkaline sap are the candleabra cactus, the frangipani bush,

and the poinsettia. They too can cause skin redness and irritation.

Antigua and Barbuda do not have poisonous snakes since the introduction of the mongoose. However, there are scorpions, centipedes, and tarantulas. Their sting or bite is toxic and painful, and immediate care should be sought. The islands also have rodents and flying and crawling insects. Certain types of coral formations (the fire coral) can cause severe skin irritation, and spiny sea urchins can cause major foot infections if stepped on and left untreated. Visitors should also be aware that the stings of Portuguese man-of-war and the scorpion fish can be very painful and possibly deadly. Broken glass and sharp metal objects are often found at old ruins and abandoned sites. Caution should be exercised when exploring these areas.

Gradual exposure to the tropical sun's rays is the best protection against painful sunburn. Gradually increasing the length of exposure time each day will build up a protective tan. A hat should be worn between 11 am and 2 pm as the sun is most intense during this period. A sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or better should be worn.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May	Labor Day*
May	Queen's Official Birthday
June	Whitsunday*
June	Whitmonday*
Aug.	Carnival*
Nov. 1	State Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport or certified birth certificate and picture identification, such as a driver's license, are required of U.S. citizens entering Antigua and Barbuda. A return ticket is sometimes requested. Immigration officials are strict about getting exact information about where visitors are staying. There is no fee for entering the country, but there is a departure tax. U.S. citizens entering with documents other than U.S. passports should take special care in securing those documents while traveling. It can be time-consuming and difficult to acquire new proof of citizenship to facilitate return travel.

The possession, use, or sale of non-prescription controlled substances such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana, etc., is expressly forbidden. Bring prescriptions in their original containers with prescription labels attached.

Americans living in or visiting Antigua and Barbuda are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados. Travelers may contact the Embassy to obtain updated information on travel and security within Antigua and Barbuda. The Embassy is located in the Canadian Imperial Bank and Commerce (CIBC) Building on Broad Street, telephone (246) 436-4950, web site <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhemb1.html>. The Consular Section is located in the American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) Building, Cheapside, telephone (246) 431-0225 or fax (246) 431-0179, web site <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhcons.html>. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday - Friday, except local and U.S. holidays.

U.S. citizens may also register with the U.S. Consular Agent in Antigua,

whose address is Bluff House, Pigeon Point, English Harbour, telephone (268)463-6531, fax (268)460-1569, or e-mail ryderj@candw.ag. The Consular Agent's hours of operations are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, except local and U.S. holidays (please call for an appointment).

Pets

Only pets currently residing in Britain may be imported, accompanied by appropriate veterinary certificates, into Antigua and Barbuda. This rule offers no waivers or relaxations. Pets from the U.S. can be sent to Britain for six months' quarantine. This is, however, extremely costly. Mongrel dogs and cats abound in Antigua, and many strays need homes. Antigua has an American veterinarian. The most common endemic parasites treated are tapeworm, hookworm, and heartworm. Rabies is not present on the island.

Firearms & Ammunition

Prior approval by the Chargé d'Affaires is required to import weapons and ammunition. In addition to obtaining the prior approval of the Chargé, all authorized weapons must be registered and licensed by the Police Commissioner. Separate applications must be made for the licensing of each gun including air rifles and pellet guns. Licenses are issued for a twelve-month period.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The official currency of Antigua is the Eastern Caribbean (XCD) dollar. All currency is graced with the likeness of Queen Elizabeth II. Paper bill denominations are in the amounts of 5, 10, 20, and 100 dollar notes. Coins are minted in 1-, 2-, 5-, 10-, and 25-cent denominations and a EC\$1 coin. The official exchange rate in May 2002 was 2.70XCD to \$1 U.S.

Travelers checks and major credit cards are honored at many hotels, restaurants, and most businesses.

Personal checks drawn on U.S. accounts are not generally accepted.

Antigua has no personal income taxes or general sales taxes. However, hotel and restaurant bills include a 7% government tax, and many restaurants also add a 10% gratuity.

The U.S. standards of measurement are the most widely observed in daily commerce. However, since virtually everything is imported, metric units are often used in food stores and appliance centers.

Disaster Preparedness

Like all Caribbean countries, Antigua can be affected by hurricanes.

The hurricane season normally runs from June to the end of November, but there have been hurricanes in December in recent years. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Ali, Arif. *A Little Bit of Paradise, Antigua and Barbuda*. London: Hansib Publications, 1988.

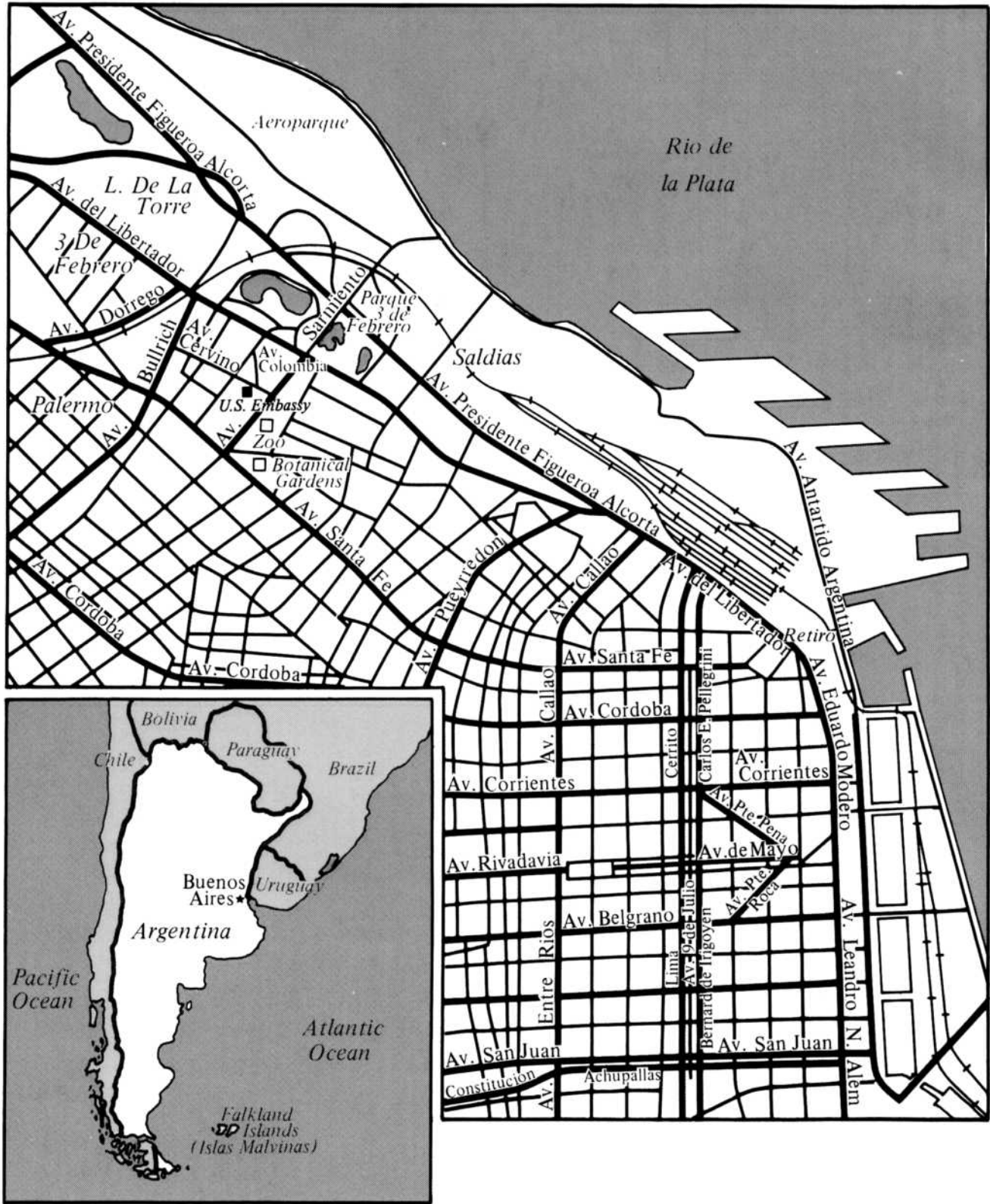
Antigua & Barbuda. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.

Crewe, Quentin. *Touch the Happy Isles*. Terra Alta, WV: Headline Book Publishers, 1988.

Dyde, Brian. *Antigua and Barbuda: The Heart of the Caribbean*. London: MacMillan Caribbean, 1990.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place*. New York: New American Library, 1989.

Michener, James A. *The Caribbean*. New York: Random House, 1989.



Buenos Aires, Argentina

ARGENTINA

Major Cities:

Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Rosario, La Plata, Mendoza, San Miguel de Tucumán, Mar del Plata, Salta

Other Cities:

Avellaneda, Bahía Blanca, Catamarca, Comodoro, Rivadavia, Concordia, Corrientes, Godoy Cruz, Paraná, Posadas, Resistencia, Río Cuarto, San Juan, Santa Fe

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

ARGENTINA is different from most Latin American countries in that 97% of its population is Caucasian, with Spanish and Italian strains predominating. There were few Indians in the area when the first permanent Spanish colony was established in 1536 on the site of what is now Buenos Aires. As a result, the Indian genealogical influence is slight. In the early years of this century, large-scale European immigration stimulated the modernization of the country, giving it economic and cultural status in the Western Hemisphere. Argentina is the second largest country in South America (after Brazil).

MAJOR CITIES

Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires is the capital of Argentina and its largest city. Situated on the Rio de la Plata 100 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, it is the country's major port and the center of virtually all activity.

Greater Buenos Aires has approximately 12,431,000 people; it is the world's fifth largest metropolitan area.

The general atmosphere of Buenos Aires is cosmopolitan and its people are quite sophisticated. The change from leisurely 19th century European living to present-day patterns is striking in the residential areas of Barrio Norte, Palermo, and Belgrano. Here, Paris-inspired mansions with wrought iron grillwork and carved doors pass from private hands to become Ambassadorial residences, government agencies, museums, or make way for tall apartment buildings boasting penthouses and swimming pools. In the high rise apartments and in the comfortable houses of the northern suburbs of Olivos, Martinez, and San Isidro, it is possible to reproduce U.S. patterns of living while enjoying much of the Argentine way of life.

The streets and avenues of Buenos Aires tell the story of the city, from afternoon tea at a sidewalk restaurant on Avenida Callao to late night on Avenida Corrientes, the "Broadway" of Buenos Aires. There is, for instance, Avenida 9 de Julio, claimed to be the world's widest avenue, and Calle Florida, an exclusively pedestrian mall where tourists shop year round. Avenida Santa Fe could be called the Fifth Avenue of Buenos Aires, while on Avenida Alvear, the small, elegant shops remind you of Paris and Vienna. The Costanera, the wide riverside boulevard, boasts dozens of open-air cafes.

There is a modern system of transportation with bus, train, and subway complexes contrasted with horse-drawn vehicles, whose drivers offer carriage rides through Palermo Park. Buenos Aires has some supermarkets and department stores. However, small businesses abound, from open and covered marketplaces to arcades lined with small boutiques and cafe bars.

Entertainment is plentiful and varied in Buenos Aires. The Colon Theater, one of the world's great opera houses, each year plays host to ballet troupes, opera stars, and symphony orchestras from Europe and the U.S. Folkloric music can be heard at various restaurants

around the city. In small out-of-the-way places, the Tango is still danced to the music of small combos; and the colorful water front area of La Boca offers noisy nightlife. With over 60 legitimate theaters in the city, Buenos Aires is popular with traveling theatrical groups as well as outstanding local professional companies.

The city is very sports minded, too. Golf, tennis, riding, fishing, horse racing, polo, soccer, rugby, and boating are all popular sports. "Pato," considered the Argentine national game, is played on horseback with a leather ball (about soccer size) with six leather handles. More than a dozen private golf courses and a municipal course in Palermo Park are near the city center. In recent years bowling has become popular, with automatic alleys in both the city and northern suburbs.

The foreign community is extensive. The passport-holding Italian community is the largest (488,000), followed by the Spanish (374,000), the Polish (57,000), and the German (24,000). The British number about 22,000; North, Central, and other South Americans number about 800,000.

Food

Food is plentiful in Argentina. Supermarkets are well stocked, and carry some U.S. brands.

Clothing

Most clothing items are more expensive in Argentina, but are plentiful and fashionable although for women, smaller sizes only. When planning and packing, remember that when it is summer in the U.S., it is winter in Argentina.

Men: Men wear medium-weight woolen suits during cool months (mid-April to mid-November) and tropical worsted and wash-and-wear suits during the warm months. Many wear vests or sweaters under suit coats for extra warmth in July and August. The same type wardrobe worn in Washington, D.C. is needed here except that heavy overcoats are seldom needed. Due to the high cost of dry

cleaning, wash-and-wear suits are a wise investment.

Good woolen cloth is manufactured in Argentina, and good tailors are available. Nice, reasonably-priced winter suits can be bought locally, but few wash-and-wear suits are sold. Raincoats with zip-out linings are useful. Good leather coats and jackets are made here with prices similar to the U.S., as are woolen sweaters and socks.

Women: Woolen suits, dresses, pants, blouses, and sweaters are basics for Argentine winter wardrobes. Ready-made woolen and knit clothing can be found locally in sophisticated styles but more expensive than comparable qualities in the U.S. Raincoats and coats are necessary although winter weather is less severe than in Washington, D.C. Lightweight summer clothing is recommended for the warm, humid months. Local cotton fabrics are available but drip-dry fabrics are seldom found. Tall and large sizes are virtually nonexistent.

Some opera evenings are very formal, but most performances can be attended in afternoon attire. Shorts can be worn on the streets and golf courses, but are more commonly used for beach wear, tennis, and casual outdoor parties.

Argentine shoes are of excellent quality leather, but the lasts are different and sometimes uncomfortable for Americans. Broad feet are more easily fitted than narrow and large sizes (9 and up) are very difficult to find. Gloves, belts, purses and other leather items can be purchased locally in a wide variety of styles, colors and prices. Hats, except for rain, are seldom used in Buenos Aires. Woolen sweaters of excellent quality are available at fairly reasonable prices.

Children: Beautiful knit clothes for babies are sold locally, however, most children's and babies' clothing is of lower quality than in the U.S. and is very expensive. Rubber pants and disposable diapers are often of inferior quality. U.S. diapers are better for keeping babies dry at night.

Shoes are of fairly good quality although narrow and small shoes are hard to find. Woolen sweaters and coats are generally of good quality. Snowsuits are often used for infants as winters are damp and cold. Winter pajamas with feet are popular with children and blanket-type sleeping bags are often used for babies. Warm socks, sweaters, trousers, and coats are standard wear.

Supplies and Services

Common household supplies are available in Buenos Aires on the local market, and nearby pharmacies dispense first aid supplies, pills, and other drugstore needs. Special prescriptions should be brought in quantity. Many well-known cosmetic firms have branches in Argentina, although their products may be slightly different, and the prices higher. Bring along a good first aid kit.

All books are expensive in Buenos Aires.

Tailoring and dressmaking as well as mending services for hosiery and shoes, are available. Beauty shops are plentiful and Radio and TV repairs are generally good if parts are available. Occasional problems are experienced with stereo repairs.

Religious Activities

Argentina is predominantly Roman Catholic. Other denominations include Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Latter-Day Saints, Lutheran, Seventh-day Adventist, Presbyterian, Jewish, Russian, Greek Orthodox and Christian Scientist. English services are conducted at some of the churches.

Education

Most American children in Argentina attend the Asociacion Escuelas Lincoln, generally known as the American Community School. It is a tuition-supported school which also receives periodic grants from the U.S. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

It is essential that you begin the enrollment process at least 60 days prior to your arrival. Screening tests are given to all new students

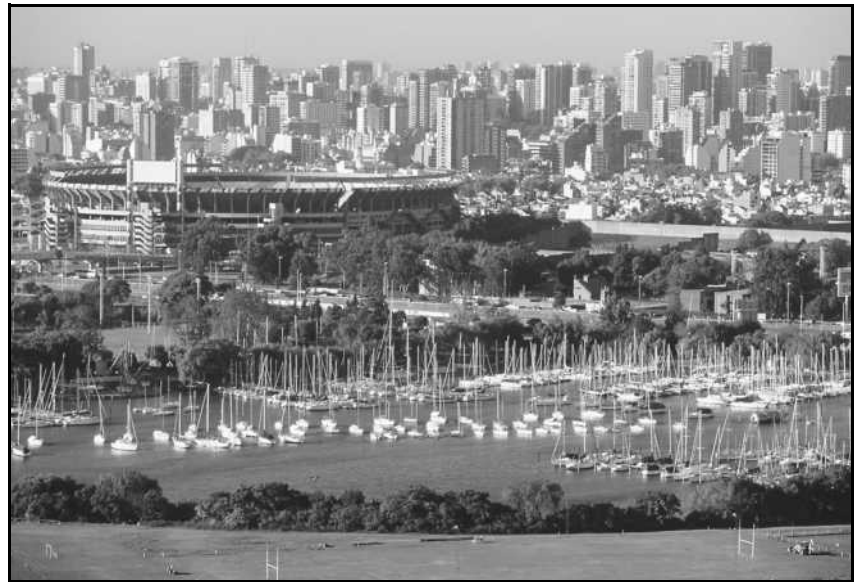
in grades K-8. Lincoln School has established English proficiency standards based on testing for full admission as well as for conditional admission.

Students admitted without knowledge of Spanish are provided with special Spanish classes until they can integrate with their regular classes. Students are screened for placement in the Special Spanish program.

Lincoln maintains an Elementary Resource Room which is setup to attend to the needs of students with minimal learning difficulties on a part-time pull out basis, grades 1-8. Due to the nature of the school and curriculum, it is not possible to provide a special program for every student as is the norm in most U.S. school districts. It is ESSENTIAL for parents of students with a history of learning problems to contact the school WELL IN ADVANCE so that it can be determined if Lincoln is a suitable educational environment and, if so, to obtain the necessary testing data. There is no special education program in the high school.

Diagnostic Testing—In grades K-6, based on teacher and parent referral, the Guidance Counselor and Resource Room Teacher administer specific diagnostic tests to students who exhibit learning problems. These tests are used to diagnose learning styles and achievement levels so that individual educational programs can be developed to meet each student's needs. The American School maintains a preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1-12. It is located in the Buenos Aires suburb of La Lucila along the shores overlooking the Rio de la Plata. Enrollment is about 800 students.

Approximately 35% of the student body is American but also includes Argentines and children from about 40 other countries. The property of the school includes a playground, athletic field, auditorium/gymnasium, cafeteria, and large swimming pool. The school has well-stocked libraries and suitable laboratory facilities.



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Aerial view with La Plata River, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The curricula of both private and public schools in Argentina must conform with that stipulated by the National Council of Education. By Argentine law, all students through the first semester of the 8th grade must pursue the Argentine course with instruction in Spanish.

Approximately one third of each day must be devoted to these studies. Newcomers are placed in language classes commensurate with their knowledge or abilities. New students should not be too concerned, as a "grace period" of one semester is allowed before testing in Spanish proficiency is attempted. New students are not expected to be proficient in the language upon arrival. All high school courses are taught in English, except for foreign language courses.

School terms run from early August to late December, and from mid-February to late June. The summer holiday of about five weeks starts in July. The American Community School's academic year corresponds as closely as possible to the school year in the U.S.; i.e., the second term of the academic year begins after the long summer vacation.

Bus service and hot lunches are available to children attending the

American School. The school has no boarding facilities. School hours are 8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

In addition to academic education, extracurricular opportunities abound for adults and children within Greater Buenos Aires, including lessons in guitar, piano, riding, dancing, yoga, art, and ceramics. Children may join scout groups or participate in Little League, soccer, basketball, and other sports.

Sports

Recreational opportunities abound in Argentina. There are excellent private golf clubs and one public course, the Municipal Course in Palermo Park. Good tennis clubs and facilities for yachting, fishing, rowing, swimming, horseback riding, bowling, skiing, and hunting are available. There are also tennis courts which can be rented by the hour, with or without lessons. Jogging, biking and roller blading in the parks are popular exercises. Indoor facilities include several gymnasiums, one of which—the YMCA—is equipped for handball, fencing, boxing, wrestling, and many other sports. Most clubs specialize in only one or two activities, making the cost of participating in a variety of interests, quite high.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Avenida 9 de julio, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Ocean swimming is available in Uruguay or south of Buenos Aires in Mar del Plata, Pinamar, Miramar and other beach resorts. The nearest ski areas are in Bariloche and Neuquen in the Argentine Patagonia (4 hours, depending on type of aircraft; 2 days by train or car), or in Chile.

Hunting licenses are easily obtained. Most hunting is done on private lands and is by invitation or arrangement. Hunters find an abundance of game birds, including the “perdiz” (similar to partridge), copetona (resembling guinea hen), “colorado” (a pheasant-like bird having all white meat) and duck. You can also hunt deer, rheas (the Argentine ostrich), wild boar, hare, and fox. Guanaco and mountain goats are found in the high mountains, and pumas are found in many parts of the country. U.S. hunting equipment is highly prized here. Guns can only be imported with a customs declaration and special

permit. Satisfactory shotguns and 22 caliber ammunition are available locally. High quality ammunition should be brought with you.

Fishing catches include dorado, a large, gold-colored fish found only in the rivers of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil. Deep sea tackle is used for these game fish. The country abounds in trout and landlocked salmon, which grow to fantastic sizes. Trout fishing with a fly rod is very popular. Bring a fairly heavy casting rod to do double-duty casting and trolling. Spinning reels are recommended. Equipment for most sports can be bought in Buenos Aires, but quality is inferior to U.S. equipment and prices are higher.

Spectator sports include the immensely popular football (soccer), played year round at every level from sandlot to professional (at many stadiums in the city); the aristocratic polo; tennis; horseracing (tracks in Palermo, suburban San

Isidro, and nearby La Plata); pato, the rough gaucho-on-horseback spectacle; rugby; car racing; and boxing and wrestling at the Luna Park Stadium.

Polo was first played in Argentina by a group of Britons on August 30, 1875. They called it the game “of the mad Englishmen”, but it was taken up with enthusiasm by the Argentines. The game spread with the founding of the Buenos Aires Polo Club in 1882 and was made popular among Argentines with the emergence of great players.

In 1920 Argentine polo made its presence felt internationally and soon became known as the best in the world, a label it has never lost. Argentina is known to have the best polo ponies, which are much sought after by the rest of the polo-playing world. While the early matches were played on farm horses, the breeding of polo ponies soon became a fine art. Today’s polo ponies are fast, strong, agile, docile, and intelli-

gent, and often crossbred with racehorses.

In Argentina the horse has always been associated with the country dweller's work and play. Pato is a game played on horseback, and forms part of the native tradition. It is played by two teams of four players each. A stuffed leather ball similar in size to a soccer ball, but with six leather handles attached, is held by one of the players. The name of the game derives from the original ball—a live duck tied up in a sack. The object is to throw the ball through a vertical ring defended by the opposing team. The game requires both skill and strength and puts the horses' speed and endurance to the test. The match is divided into four or six *tiempos* (sets) of 8 minutes each, with 5-minute intervals between them. The pato season in Buenos Aires runs from the end of April to November.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

While expensive and generally far from Buenos Aires, Argentina has numerous beautiful and interesting tourist areas. One of the most popular recreation spots for the Argentines and an exception to the previous sentence is Tigre, 28 miles from Buenos Aires on the Parana River delta, reached by train, bus, or car. Facilities are available for sailing, fishing, rowing, and cruising among the main islands and channels at the mouth of the river.

Mar del Plata, about 250 miles southeast of Buenos Aires, is the principal seaside resort in Argentina and is 30 minutes by plane, 5½ hours by train, 5 hours by car, or 6½ hours by bus. Mar del Plata is an important city and seaport. It has magnificent residences, parks, wide beaches, hotels, restaurants, shops of all kinds, and a huge, luxurious casino. A smaller casino is attached to the famous Hotel Provincial, one of the city's best. Mar del Plata is one of Argentina's most popular vacation spots, and the atmosphere is similar to Atlantic City. Several smaller seaside resorts near Mar

del Plata include: Pinamar, more expensive and exclusive, with more private homes than hotels; and Miramar, called the "City of Children," which attracts many American visitors. Attractive beaches in the River Plate area are found at Punta del Este near Montevideo, a ferry trip from Buenos Aires or 35 minutes by air.

In northeastern Argentina at the junction of the Argentine, Paraguayan, and Brazilian borders lies the spectacular 237-foot-high Iguazu Falls (Niagara is 167 feet high). It may be reached by a two-day car ride or by plane. Excellent hotels are available on both the Brazilian and Argentine sides of the falls. There are 14 large falls, most of them of great height and beauty. The river areas below the Falls provide excellent fishing. Because of cooler temperatures and more abundant rainfall, the best months to visit Iguazu are from May to September.

Bariloche, in the lake district of Nahuel Huapi in the Patagonian Andes and about 950 miles southwest of Buenos Aires, is another popular tourist resort. It is very pleasant in summer and an excellent place to escape from the city heat. Winter skiing can be done over well-developed trails. Bariloche may be reached by plane, train, or car. Often called the "Argentine Switzerland", it boasts beautiful scenery, with snowcapped mountains, noble forests, mirrorlike lakes, and numerous trout streams.

The city of Mendoza, at the foot of the Andes, is the center of the wine-growing district. The Transandine Railway connects Mendoza with Santiago, Chile, and passes the tallest mountain in the western hemisphere, Aconcagua—almost 23,000 feet high. The Chilean beach resort of Vina del Mar is three hours by car from Santiago.

For the traveler who is looking for something extra, it is possible to visit the Antarctic though a very expensive trip. Other attractions within a few hours by air of Buenos Aires include Asuncion, Paraguay,

which also can be reached by river boat or bus from Iguazu; Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost city in the world; and such Brazilian cities as Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Camping is very popular and campsites are numerous. Some have water, electricity, bathrooms with hot water, and general stores, while others are open land where you must set up a tent. Many beautiful National Parks have camping sites next to lakes or high in the mountains. Caution: Do not bring a tall tent. Argentine camping requires mountain tents, even in the flat lands, due to occasional high winds. For those who are interested in camping, it is advisable to purchase equipment in the U.S.

Entertainment

If you have a good knowledge of Spanish, the scope of entertainment in Buenos Aires is unlimited. Local theater is active, with good professional companies and amateur groups. Modern and classic plays by Spanish and Argentine authors, as well as translations of Broadway and European hits, are presented year-round. In summer, open-air performances are given in the Teatro Caminito, located in a section of Buenos Aires called "La Boca," one of the older parts of the city with tenements gaily painted in corals, greens, and blues. In this period (December to March), several outdoor theaters present classical plays, while operas, concerts, and ballets are held in San Martin Theater and Palermo Park, and the grounds of the National Library. Many of these summer performances are free.

Teatro Colon, the huge opera house, is typical of Old World magnificence. According to Arturo Toscanini, it has the best acoustics in the world; it was inaugurated on May 25, 1908. It covers an area of 7,050 square meters, is 117.5 meters long, 60 meters wide, and is 43 meters tall at its highest point.

The regular opera and symphonic season lasts from April to November

with a full program each year of operas, concerts, soloists, and ballets. As the season in Buenos Aires falls during summer in the Northern Hemisphere, many of the great opera stars from Europe and the U.S. have been able to appear at the Colon. Argentina's symphony orchestras give many performances throughout the year. Ballets are also presented by local companies.

Movies are numerous, imported from the U.S. and Europe, and represent a good cross section of the world's cinematography. Most foreign films, including American, are subtitled and are heard in the original language.

The city has several good museums and many art galleries. There are many guided tours of the city with English-speaking guides available. Local newspapers publish schedules of cultural events in the entertainment section.

Small nightclubs, called "boites," are common in the city, and larger places have open-air dancing in the suburbs along the river. The music, orchestral and recorded, alternates between Latin and North American dance beats. Argentine folk music, while little known outside the country, is becoming increasingly popular with Americans here. "Penas Folkloricas" (public folk music clubs) offer the whole range of native music, from the lively carnavales of the far northwest to the slower samba and the familiar tango of Buenos Aires.

Social Activities

The American Club of Buenos Aires, at Viamonte 1133 on the top three floors of a 10-story building, is principally a lunching club, open Monday through Friday. The dining room accommodates members and guests for lunch only. Private dining rooms for parties up to 120 people are available on the 8th floor, and the 9th floor dining room is used for private functions of up to 500 people for cocktails or 350 for lunch or dinner.

The American Women's Club meets twice a month week. All female citi-

zens of Western Hemisphere nations may join. In addition to biweekly teas and monthly meetings, activities are planned around the members' interests, and are in English. In the recent past, classes have been held in art, bridge, Spanish, cooking, music, and Argentine literature and poetry. The American Women's Club holds a charity benefit each year.

The American Society of the River Plate is the social and welfare organization of the American community in Argentina. Citizens of the U.S. and sons and daughters of U.S. citizens may join. The society has no clubrooms but meets in the American Club. The society promotes and maintains friendly relations between the U.S. and Argentina, encourages friendly relations between U.S. and Argentine citizens and promotes their respective interests, assumes responsibility for the celebration of days of national remembrance and Thanksgiving, and gives aid to institutions and/or individuals in need of assistance.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Argentina represents over 500 U.S. business firms. It publishes trade statistics, a weekly newsletter, a monthly magazine, and an annual business directory.

The Chamber holds monthly membership luncheons with guest speakers from government (both Argentine and U.S.) who are prominent in international business. Various committees are active. For example, the Export Committee (AGEX) gives seminars in Argentina and other countries on the technicalities of exporting, and a communications committee arranges—among other things—a lecture program designed to convince students in 15 Argentine universities of the advantages of the free enterprise system. Also active are a legal committee, an industrial relations committee, involved in salary studies among other things, and other committees.

Americans have many opportunities to meet and work with Argen-

tines and representatives of other nations.

The University Women's Club meets monthly for luncheons featuring guest speakers. The club offers orientation courses, tours, and study groups. Programs are generally in English. Any woman, regardless of nationality, who has attended an accredited university or college for 2 years is eligible for membership.

Special Information

By the terms of Law 12.665, the Argentine National Commission of Museums, Monuments, and Historic Places is empowered to register, control the transfer of, and expropriate private property which it considers to be "of historic-artistic interest." Objects of this nature may not be removed from Argentina. When ownership of such antiquities is transferred, the former owner is obliged to report the transaction, together with the name and address of the new owner, to the Commission within 10 days. Failure to do so automatically raises a presumption of concealment. Anyone guilty of such concealment, or of illegally transferring or exporting such articles, is subject to fine. The law specifically includes historical documents in the category of national treasures and lists such things as old maps, autographed letters and memoranda, and public documents.

Córdoba

Córdoba, a cultural and intellectual center on the Primero River about 400 miles northwest of Buenos Aires, is Argentina's second largest city. It is the capital of Córdoba Province and one of the earliest cities in the country. Founded in 1573, it predates the first permanent settlement at Buenos Aires. Córdoba prospered during colonial times as a link on the commercial route between Buenos Aires and Chile. The advent of the railroad in the 19th century also increased its prosperity. In 2000, it had a population of 1,407,000.

Córdoba is the seat of the country's oldest university, which was founded in 1613 by priests of the Jesuit order as the College of Monserrat. The original building still stands. The college became a university in 1622 and is now, as Paraná, part of the national educational system. A new Catholic university was founded in the city in 1956.

Córdoba is noted for its excellent astronomy observatory; the beautiful and well-preserved colonial architecture; its museums and theaters; its numerous new, large buildings which have transformed the skyline; and its physical beauty, which is emphasized by its location on the slopes of the Sierra de Córdoba.

Near the city, on the Primero, is one of South America's most important dams. (Dique San Roque) Formerly used for cattle ranches, the surrounding land has been enriched by irrigation and transformed into orchards, vineyards, and grain fields. Wheat, cattle, lumber, and minerals are exported from Córdoba.

In recent decades, many industries have developed (textiles, leather, food processing, chemicals, glass), and the city is now one of Argentina's principal commercial and transportation centers. The city is serviced by a modern airport, Pajas Blancas, as well as excellent highways and railways. Also, the tourist industry in and around Córdoba continues to grow.

Education

There are two schools in Córdoba which are recommended to English-speaking students, although Spanish is used as an integral part of their curricula. Academia Arguello is located in the city on Avenida Rafael Nunez, and Reydon School for Girls is at 5178 Cruz Chica, Provincia de Córdoba, Argentina.

Rosario

Rosario is the principal city of Santa Fe Province in the north-central part of the country. It is a major rail

terminal and the nation's largest inland port. Rosario lies on the Paraná River, 190 miles northwest of Buenos Aires, and is a commercial city and export center for the neighboring agricultural provinces. Its population of over 1,228,000 includes a large British expatriate community. Nearby Fisherton Airport serves the city.

Rosario was settled in 1689, and founded as a city under its present name in 1725. After the Argentine war of independence, the nation's first flag was raised here in 1816 and, each summer, commemorative ceremonies are held at the site.

Rosario began developing into a major center late in the 19th century, and is now an important industrial city known for sugar refining, flour milling, automobile production, steel milling, and meat processing. It has a national university, founded in 1968.

The city has several museums, among them the Municipal Decorative Arts Museum, the Municipal Fine Arts Museum, and the Museum of Provincial History. Tourists also enjoy viewing Rosario's Renaissance-Style Cathedral, Municipal Palace, and the Monument of the Flag which commemorates the raising of the first Argentine Flag.

La Plata

La Plata, 35 miles southeast of the capital, was built as a new city after Buenos Aires became a federal district in 1880. For a brief period, from 1952 to 1955, La Plata's name was changed to Eva Perón, in honor of the wife of Juan Perón, who was president at that time. The city's name was returned to the original when Perón fell from power.

La Plata, the capital of Buenos Aires Province, has a population of 676,000. Its commercial enterprises include meat packaging, textiles, oil refineries, and sawmills. Among its cultural institutions are a national university, a museum with a world-famous collection of anthropological

artifacts, a national library, and fine zoological gardens.

Mendoza

Mendoza, situated in an oasis in western Argentina called the "Garden of the Andes," is a major metropolis and the center of a fruit- and wine-producing region which was settled mostly by Italian immigrants. Its vast fields are irrigated by the Mendoza River. Each March, the city celebrates the grape harvest with the Fiesta de la Vendimia, and *bodegas* (wine cellars) in the surrounding area are open to the public for the sampling of the new wine.

Mendoza was founded in 1516. It belonged to Chile until 1776, when it came under the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata. José de San Martín began his final preparation here in 1817 for the liberation of Chile. The city was destroyed by an earthquake and fire in 1861, but rebuilding was well underway within two years.

Mendoza is the eastern terminus of the 75-year-old Transandine Railway, which traverses the Andes at Uspallata Pass, connecting the city with Santiago, Chile. It passes the tallest mountain in the Western Hemisphere, Aconcagua, at a height of 22,834 feet. In Mendoza, from the summit of Cerro de la Gloria, which is crowned with a statue of San Martín, there are spectacular views of the Andean peaks to the west.

Mendoza, with a greater area population of 943,000 is noted for its museums and parks, and for its numerous restaurants which offer fine food at moderate prices. The city has several theaters, the National University of Cuyo and two other private universities. The population of the city proper, considerably smaller, is somewhat over 120,000.

San Miguel de Tucumán

San Miguel de Tucumán is a city of about 642,000 inhabitants in northern Argentina, and is the center of

the country's sugar industry. Its more than one million acres of sugarcane are irrigated by tributary waters of the *Dolce River* at the foot of the *Sierra de Aconquija*, in the eastern range of the Andes. Large maize-producing plantations are also in operation in the area. A mild, pleasant climate and rich flora has earned the city a reputation as "the garden of the republic." The surrounding district is also known as a lumbering center, and the entire area is rich in mineral deposits.

It was at Tucumán on July 9, 1816, in the first congress of the republic, that the United Provinces of La Plata (the River Plate) proclaimed their independence from Spain after a bitter war against the royalists.

The city had been founded originally in 1565 on the *Río del Tejar*, south of the present site, in a place now known as the *Pueblo Viejo*, but was moved to its present location in 1685 in the aftermath of a disastrous flood. Many colonial buildings of the 18th century remain.

The National University of Tucumán was founded here in 1914. The city also boasts a shrine to Our Lady of Mercy, which is visited annually by throngs of tourists. Tourists also visit the city's museums, colonial cathedral, and the *Casa de Gobierno* (Government House).

Mar del Plata

Mar del Plata, about 250 miles southeast of Buenos Aires, is the principal seaside resort in Argentina and is six hours from the capital by train, car, or bus. It is an important city and seaport, with an atmosphere similar to that of Atlantic City. It has magnificent residences, parks, wide beaches, luxury hotels, restaurants, and shops of all kinds. Each year, during Easter and the November "spring" holidays (Southern Hemisphere seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S.), the population figure of about 533,000 is swelled to more than a million by the influx of tourists. All activities during these weeks seem to revolve around the huge casino which is one

of the largest in the world. A smaller casino is attached to the *Hotel Provincial*, one of the city's best.

Several smaller seaside resorts near Mar del Plata include: *Pinamar*, expensive and exclusive, where there are more private homes than hotels; and *Miramar*, called the "City of Children," which attracts many American visitors. Lovely beaches in the *Río de la Plata* area are found near *Montevideo* (Uruguay), just an overnight boat trip from Buenos Aires, or 45 minutes by air. Costs are higher there than in Mar del Plata.

Mar del Plata is home to the *Stella Maris University*, and the *National University of Mar del Plata*, as well as several museums. The city is linked by modern highways, railroads, and air transport with other major Argentine cities.

Salta

Salta, capital of the northwestern Argentine province whose name it bears, has a population over 350,000. It is situated in the *Lerma Valley*, close to the foothills of the Andes, and is considered one of the country's prettiest cities. It is the commercial center of the region, exporting sugar, farm products, minerals, tobacco, wine grapes, and livestock. Its access to the Pacific came with the completion of a railroad extending to the north Chilean port of *Antofagasta* in 1848.

Founded in 1582, Salta is one of the oldest cities in the country. Here, in 1813, Argentine patriots under *Manuel Belgrano* defeated Spanish royalists in a battle leading to national independence. The city has experienced severe earthquakes throughout the centuries. However, many of Salta's colonial buildings remain intact. Of particular interest are the *Church of San Francisco*, which is reported to have the tallest tower of any South American house of worship, and the city's well-known cathedral. One of the best Argentine museums, the *Cabildo Histórico*, is located here. Other tourist attractions include the ther-

mal springs located near the city and the *Miracle Fiesta*, a festival held every September to celebrate Salta's survival after a severe earthquake in 1692. During the *Miracle Fiesta* (*Fiesta del Milagro*), religious icons are paraded through the city streets. The tourist office is at *Avenida Buenos Aires 93*.

OTHER CITIES

AVELLANEDA (formerly called *Barracas al Sud*), on the estuary of the *Río de la Plata* in east central Argentina, was named in honor of Argentine President *Nicolás Avellaneda* in 1904. Avellaneda is situated just south of Buenos Aires. The city is a major seaport and an industrial center. Wool and hides are shipped, and industries include meat-packing, textile production, and oil refineries. The population is approximately 350,000.

BAHÍA BLANCA ("white bay") is an Atlantic port approximately 370,000 in southwestern Buenos Aires Province. It is situated at the head of a deep, sheltered bay, and is the chief shipping port of the country's southern region. Bahía Blanca is also an industrial center and rail terminus. It originated as a trading post in 1828, but development came in the early 20th century with the increased production of the south *Pampa* area. The city conducts a huge import-export business; oil, grains, wool, and hides are the major exports. Bahía Blanca has a university, founded in 1956.

CATAMARCA (also called *San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca*) is located in the foothills of the Andes in northwestern Argentina, 210 miles northwest of Córdoba. Situated in a fertile valley, the city's economy depends on the agricultural products of the region; These include the production and processing of cotton, grapes, cereals, meats, and hides. Catamarca is known for its hand-woven woolen ponchos. Tourists enjoy the city's pleasant winter climate, hot springs, excellent scenery, and historical build-

ings dating to 1694. Catamarca also has a museum of art and an art gallery. The city also has many fine examples of colonial architecture such as the Church of the Virgin of the Valley. Its population is about 100,000.

The city of **COMODORO RIVADAVIA** is a seaport in southern Argentina on the Golfo San Jorge, about 1,000 miles south of Buenos Aires. It is significant to Argentina's economy because of nearby oil production. A 1,100-mile-long pipeline supplies natural gas to Buenos Aires, and tankers from the city's port deliver oil to refineries in northern Argentina. Comodoro Rivadavia has a population of approximately 126,000. The city's university was founded in 1961. Comodoro Rivadavia is linked by a national highway and air transport with Buenos Aires and La Plata. The city is the site of a major base of the Argentine Air Force.

A trading hub in northeastern Argentina, **CONCORDIA** is 225 miles north of Buenos Aires. It is situated on the Uruguay River, opposite Salto, Uruguay. As one of the largest cities in the region, Concordia enjoys a flourishing shipping market and trades with Uruguay and Brazil. Its main industry is food processing. Other industries include sawmills, flour mills, rice mills, and tanneries. The modern city was founded in 1832 and has a race track, a theater, a golf course, and parks. Salmon and dorado fishing in the Uruguay River is an added tourist attraction. Its population is about 120,000.

CORRIENTES is the center of a rich agricultural region, and the capital of Corrientes Province in the northeastern part of the country, close to the border with Paraguay. This commercial city of nearly 270,000 is an important port on the Paraná River, exporting cotton, *quebracho* (a sumac-like wood), cabinet woods, grains, rice, tobacco, citrus fruits, and livestock. Founded by the Spanish in 1588, Corrientes was the scene of a dramatic uprising in 1762 against the colonial governor, an

event which foreshadowed the wars of independence. The city and province were also among the first to rebel against the tyrant Juan Manuel de Rosas in 1844. Corrientes boasts a museum, founded in 1854, and a university, founded in 1957. The city is noted for its colonial architecture and served as the setting for the novel *The Honorary Consul* by Graham Greene.

GODOY CRUZ is located in western Argentina, less than 20 miles south of Mendoza. The city is a major manufacturing center with flour mills, canneries, breweries, sawmills, and meat-packing plants among its industries. It is also known for its wine-making. A highway and railroad link the city with Mendoza. A hydroelectric power plant is located near the city. Its population is about 180,000.

PARANÁ, a port city on the river of the same name, is the capital of Entre Ríos Province in northeastern Argentina, 80 miles north of Rosario. The city, with an approximate population of 207,000, was founded in the late 16th century by settlers from Santa Fe. It is the center of the grain and cattle district, and the home of an agricultural school. Paraná was the capital of the Argentine Confederation from 1853 to 1861. Paraná is the site of several notable buildings and monuments, among them are the Bishop's Palace, the Cathedral of Parana, the Museum of Entre Rios, the Senate of the Argentine Confederation building, and the home of Argentina's first president, General Justo Jose de Urquiza.

Located in eastern Argentina near the border with Paraguay, **POSADAS** is the capital of the Misiones Province. Situated on the Paraná River opposite the Paraguayan city of Encarnación, Posadas was established as a Paraguayan trading post and port. In 1879, the city was named in honor of Gervasio Antonio Posadas, a national hero. Most of its 140,000 residents work in public service. The city is an administrative center, and also manufactures iron and

wood products. A ferry between Posadas and Encarnación links Argentina and Paraguayan railroads.

RESISTENCIA, the capital of Chaco Province in northern Argentina, lies opposite Corrientes on the banks of the Paraná. A city of 230,000, it is a center for the shipping of cattle, hides, lead, and *quebracho* wood. Resistencia is connected by a bridge with the city of Corrientes.

RÍO CUARTO is located in north-central Argentina, 350 miles northwest of Buenos Aires and 125 miles south of Córdoba. It was established in 1794. The city's economy is basically agricultural, but there has been some light industrial development. Fruit, meat-packing, and flour milling are important activities. Historical landmarks include the Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes and a cathedral built in 1794. The city is also the site of a military base and an arsenal. Río Cuarto's population is about 150,000.

SAN JUAN, capital of the eponymous province in western Argentina, is also a center for wine-growing; its vineyards add to the charm of the surrounding landscape. The province also produces fruit, raises cattle, and is rich in minerals. Situated 100 miles north of Mendoza, San Juan was founded in 1562 and moved to its present location after 1593. This city of about 120,000 residents figured prominently in the civil wars of the 19th century. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the romantic writer and president of the republic from 1868-74 was born in San Juan. In 1944, a disastrous earthquake almost leveled the city.

SANTA FE, a city with an approximate population near 350,000, is the capital of Santa Fe Province in east-central Argentina, 90 miles north of Rosario. It is a port connected to the nearby Paraná River by canal; the port was opened to ocean going vessels in 1911. Santa Fe's modern port is the most inland seaport in the world and accommodates ocean going vessels. It also is a shipping

point for grain, meat, and *quebracho* (a sumac-like wood), from the country's northwest. Several industries are located in Santa Fe, among them are dairy plants, flour mills, mineral smelters, and automobile manufacturers. Santa Fe has several notable churches and is the seat of the National University of the Littoral, founded in 1889. A Catholic university also opened here in 1960. The Argentine constitution was promulgated in Santa Fe in 1853.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography And Climate

Argentina is South America's second-largest country, after Brazil, in size and population. It occupies most of the continent's southern region between the Andes Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. Argentina stretches from 22 to 55 south latitude—a distance of about 2,300 miles—and is shaped roughly like an inverted triangle that tapers southward from a base about 1,000 miles wide. It borders on five South American countries: Chile to the west, Bolivia and Paraguay to the north, and Brazil and Uruguay to the Northeast.

In climate, size, and topography Argentina can be compared with the portion of the U.S. between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, although the North American region has colder winters. The humid lowlands of eastern Argentina, especially along the rivers of the Rio de la Plata system, resemble the Mississippi Valley. In northern Argentina, the savannas and swamps of the Chaco region find a parallel in coastal Louisiana. Westward, the humid Pampa (plain) gives way to rangeland and finally to desert that is broken only by irrigated oases, just as the Great Plains of the U.S. become drier toward the west. The Andes present a far more imposing barrier than the Rockies, but both mountain systems mark the western end of the plains.

Argentina's area of 1,072,067 square miles is about one-third that of the U.S. Although Argentina is narrower than the U.S., it extends much farther from north to south. Thus, Argentina has a range of climates that supports a broad diversity of vegetation, tropical as well as temperate. But the extreme temperatures that characterize comparable latitudes in North America are mitigated in Argentina by the oceanic influences that affect much of the country.

Except for its northernmost fringe, which lies in the Tropics, all of Argentina is in the Southern Hemisphere's Temperate Zone, which includes the world's most economically advanced regions south of the Equator. Climates in the Temperate Zone range from subtropical in the extreme north to sub-Antarctic in southern Patagonia. About 22% of Argentina's land area consists of accessible forests; another 3% is inaccessible forests. The variety of vegetation in Argentina is striking. The Patagonian-Fuegian Steppe in the south is characterized by a cold, windy, and very dry climate. Trees are scarce, and vegetation is dominated by low plants bearing a cluster of leaves that grow in a dense, cushion-like tuft. North and northeast are desert and scrub regions of the interior parts of central and northern Argentina. This desert/scrub area, known as the monte, has a climate as dry as that of the Patagonian-Fuegian Steppe, but somewhat warmer and essentially without a winter season. Its vegetation is highly drought-resistant and consists partly of low trees. In the Chaco region of northern Argentina the vegetation is a mixture of forests and savannas. The trees often grow in salt-impregnated soils, marshes, or swampy areas. The southern Andes region has high intermountain valleys with dry grasslands and often sub-desert shrubs and trees.

In sharp contrast with such areas of limited economic efficiency is the vast Pampa region. It is the most extensive level grassland in South America, and covers roughly one-

quarter of the nation. A great nation has been fashioned from its economic potential. It fans out for almost 500 miles from Buenos Aires. Containing some of the richest topsoil in the world, the Pampa is extensively cultivated in wheat and corn and provides year-round pasturage for most of Argentina's 50 million head of cattle. Average annual rainfall ranges from 20 inches in the west to 40 inches in the east.

The Andean region extends from the dry north to the heavily glaciated and ice-covered mountains of Patagonia, and includes the dry mountain and desert west of Cordoba and south of Tucuman, embracing the irrigated valleys on the eastern slopes and foothills of the Andes. Annual precipitation ranges from 4 inches to 24 inches in the arid regions and 20 inches to 120 inches in the heaviest rainfall areas.

Patagonia is a region of arid, wind-swept plateaus, covering about 300,000 square miles. Except for some irrigated valleys, this is poor, scattered pasture land. Far south, the weather is continuously cold and stormy; the region has no summer, and winters can be severe.

The alluvial plain of the Chaco in the north has a subtropical climate with dry winters and humid summers. Rainfall decreases from 60 inches to 20 inches and temperatures reach 120°F.

The Argentine Mesopotamia, which consists of the provinces between the Uruguay and Parana rivers, is made up of flood plains and gently rolling plains. The highest precipitation falls in the extreme north of Misiones Province, where it amounts to about 80 inches yearly.

Buenos Aires, is located on the right margin of the Rio de la Plata, and is part of the vast Pampa. The terrain within the city varies from low flatland only inches above the high tide line to slightly rolling country with a maximum elevation of 129 feet. The city's climate is similar to that of Washington, D.C., except that

winters are less severe and it never snows.

Average rainfall in Buenos Aires is 39 inches (Washington—41.4 inches), distributed evenly throughout the year. Humidity is high year-round (yearly mean is 76%). High humidity makes winters seem colder and summers hotter. Abrupt temperature changes are experienced throughout the year, bringing relief to summer's heat and winter's cold.

Population

Argentina's population is approximately 37,215,000 (2000 est.). Ninety-seven percent of the people are Caucasian, mostly of European origin, with Italian and Spanish strains predominating. The population also includes many Germans and Central Europeans, and about 700,000 of Arab descent, most of them Lebanese Christians. Practically no Indians or mestizos reside in Buenos Aires; however, some 650,000 are concentrated in the northern and western border provinces.

Since most of the land is habitable, space is available for an increase in population. The Pampa's 15th century settlers were the offspring of Indian mothers and Spanish fathers. For more than 200 years they and their descendants populated the Pampa. The gaucho, or cowboy, was the typical country dweller who herded cattle, was an expert in breaking horses, and was said to be quick with his knife. Gauchos were the rank and file of the revolutionary army that won independence from Spain in the early 19th century.

During the 19th century the population grew rapidly. From then on the Spanish element lost its numerical dominance, blacks practically disappeared as a visible group, Indians were reduced to a few thousand living on reservations, and the mestizo population decreased. Much of the present population stems from a European immigration that was concentrated in the years 1880-1930, with a spurt after World War

II. The proportion of foreign born reached a peak of 30% in 1944. Of the total European migration between 1859 and 1937, Argentina received 11%. Birth rates were much higher than death rates during this period of population increase.

Since 1910 the Argentine nation has been more urban than rural. Over half its people reside in places of more than 2,000 population. Much of urban Argentina is concentrated in one area, Greater Buenos Aires, where more than a third of the Argentine population lives. Argentina is by tradition a rural, agricultural country, and the transition since 1910 to an urban society and an industrial economy has created strains in the social structure.

Industry developed and business flourished. Urban society was much like that of European countries, with a growing middle class of business and professional men and women. By the end of World War II many rural workers migrated to the cities in search of a better living. The pace of this migration has since increased. At the same time industry and commerce have grown substantially, requiring more workers.

Most Argentines are city dwellers, and most of them live in apartment buildings. Family life is close and affectionate. Women frequently work outside the home, if they do not have young children.

Argentine people eat well, and their per capita consumption of meat is one of the world's highest. Salads are popular; vegetables and fruits are abundant and available year-round. Many Argentines dress well and keep up with international fashion trends.

In sports, the Argentines favor football (soccer), horseracing, boxing, and tennis. Their polo teams are said to be the best in the world. "Pato" is a gaucho equestrian sport.

Argentines read widely. A tradition of public libraries goes back to 1870, when then-President Sarmiento established 100 free libraries. Some

of the best known Latin American book publishers can be found in Argentina and Buenos Aires is the home of thousands of book shops; the annual book fair is a major public event.

Public Institutions

Argentina is a republic of 23 provinces and a federal capital district (the city of Buenos Aires). The Argentine Constitution, modeled on the United States Constitution, provides for an executive branch with ministries, a bicameral legislature, and a Supreme Court.

Roman Law forms the basis of Argentine jurisprudence. Although provincial and federal courts, and ultimately Supreme Court-appointed judges traditionally administer justice behind closed doors, public, oral trials for criminal cases are increasingly common.

In 1983, free elections were held after 7 years of military government, and the country returned to constitutional rule. Full liberties were restored following years of a state of siege and the suspension of many civil and political rights originally aimed at combating leftist-inspired political violence. National, provincial and local elections have been held regularly since then; the most recent were presidential elections in May 1995. The national congress and provincial legislatures function normally again, alongside elected governors, mayors, and other municipal authorities.

The Argentine military is under the civilian control of the President, who is Commander-in-Chief, and the Ministry of Defense. While there have been three minor military uprisings since 1983 (the last in 1991), the armed forces as a whole have pledged their respect for democratic institutions and civilian government.

Argentina is a member of the UN, the OAS, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World

Bank, the Red Cross, and many other international organizations.

Arts, Science, and Education

Buenos Aires is the cultural capital of Latin America and is one of the world's largest book publishing centers. It has more than 60 theaters where internationally known groups (such as the Comedie Francaise or well-known English theater groups) and artists (such as the New York Philharmonic Orchestra or American Ballet Theater) perform during the cultural season (April to October). Along with these international attractions, local performers compete with experimental avant-garde groups in this lively city. The Colon Theater, one of the world's most beautiful, is the leading opera house in Latin America; it features famous artists, both foreign and Argentine.

The National Library holds 1,700,000 volumes. Every day public lecturers present talks in Buenos Aires on diverse cultural and artistic subjects. More than 100 art galleries exhibit the works of important foreign and local artists. Other cities, such as Rosario, Cordoba, and Mendoza, also take great pride in their extensive cultural life.

Argentina has 75 officially accredited universities with a total of 740,545 students. The largest, the University of Buenos Aires, has 173,345 students.

The country has a high literacy rate, estimated at 96%. The educational system provides free primary and secondary schooling. Primary (or elementary) education is compulsory up to grade 9 - the pupils' ages range from 6 to 14 years.

Private, foreign, and religious schools are permitted but must conform to a nationally prescribed pattern of teaching in the Spanish language. The Lincoln (American Community) School offers classes in Spanish and English in conformity with government regulations.

Commerce and Industry

Argentina has the second largest economy in South America with a gross domestic product of \$476 billion (2000 est.) and a per capita income of about \$7,600, the highest in Latin America. The strength of the economy is largely related to economic restructuring in the 1990s, which included major new investments in services and industry. As a result, Argentine exports have more than doubled in eight years - from about \$12 billion in 1992 to about \$26.4 billion in 2000. Imports also grew rapidly during the same period, rising from \$15 billion to about \$25.2 billion.

Argentina is traditionally a leading exporter of agricultural products, including sunflower seeds, lemons, soybeans, grapes, corn, tobacco, peanuts, teas, wheat and edible oils. Other exports include fuels and energy, and motor vehicles.

One major boost to trade came from MERCOSUR—the customs union of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, which entered into force in January 1995. Chile signed a free trade agreement with MERCOSUR which became effective in October 1996 and Bolivia is expected to join soon.

Foreign trade now equals approximately 18% of GDP and plays an increasingly important role in Argentina's economic development. Still, exports represent only 10% of Argentine GDP.

Foreign capital has been a key component in Argentina's recent economic growth. U.S. direct investment in Argentina is concentrated in telecommunications, petroleum and gas, electric energy, financial services, chemicals, food processing and vehicle manufacturing. The stock of U.S. direct investment in Argentina approached \$18 billion at the end of 2000.

Transportation

Local

Buenos Aires has an extensive transportation system. Five separate privately-owned subway lines serve many parts of the city. At certain stops you can transfer from one subway line to another without paying an additional token.

The most extensive above-ground transportation is by "colectivos" (privately owned buses holding about 40 passengers). Bright colors indicate the line and route traveled. The average fare is about 50 cents and there are no transfers.

Fares for Buenos Aires metered taxis are quite reasonable. Small tips are appreciated, though not always expected. Taxi meters show units based on distance and time.

The "remise", a kind of taxi-limousine service, is telephone dispatched, but you can hail them in front of major hotels. Charges are lower than U.S. cab fares. Always establish the fare before riding.

Traffic moves on the right. Buenos Aires has many wide streets and highways (such as Avenida del Libertador, Santa Fe, and the Costanera), but few modern super-highways such as the Ricchieri Autopista from Ezeiza Airport into the city limits, the General Paz which follows the city limits along three sides of Buenos Aires, 25 de Mayo which runs east to west, and the Pan American Highway.

Driving in Buenos Aires has been described as being at least as hectic as Rio, Tokyo, or Mexico City, as your first ride in a taxi or "colectivo" will reveal.

Regional

Travel outside Buenos Aires can be by train, air, bus, or auto. But since the general points of interest in Argentina are so far apart, a great deal of time is lost if you do not go by air. Some overnight train service is available to main cities with sleeping cars and service (room and food). Two main airports are accessible to

the city. One is Aeroparque Jorge Newbery, near the downtown section and the River Plate. This airport handles propeller aircraft and smaller jets such as the Fokker-28 and Boeing 727 and 737. All domestic flights, and several regional flights to Asuncion, Montevideo, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, and Santa Cruz, use the Aeroparque. The International Airport of Ezeiza is about a 45-minute drive from the city center. It handles all large jets and most international flights.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The telephone company (former ENTEL), which was a government entity, has been privatized. Presently, former ENTEL has split up into private companies (Telefonica and Telecom), which are responsible for different sectors and TELINTAR, which is mainly responsible for international service. Phone service in Buenos Aires is generally very dependable.

A telephone is essential in Buenos Aires.

Long distance calls can be made from your home. Many people use a call-back service which is less expensive than using a calling card, or direct dialing.

Users of ATT, Sprint, and MCI credit cards receive a substantial discount on overseas calls.

The government owns and runs a telegraph and telex system.

Radio and TV

Buenos Aires has a wide range of radio programming on both AM and FM, featuring talk, music, news and sports (particularly soccer). Radio Mitre, Radio Del Plata, Radio Continental and Radio America, plus the government-owned Radio Nacional, are the most popular stations in Buenos Aires. VOA broadcasts are available by shortwave and Radio Nacional will begin using at least one hour daily of VOA programming late in 1996 after the installation of a VOA-donated antenna.

Television viewing in Buenos Aires changed dramatically over the past several years. From having five "air" channels available, one of them government-owned, television viewers in the federal capital now have the option of 65 channels from one of the big three cable TV systems: Cablevision-TCI; VCC; or Multicanal. Local programming is competing with a wide range of foreign programs, especially from the U.S. American channels, such as HBO, Fox, Warner Brothers, Cinemax, Sony, ESPN, CNN, TNT and others are heavily represented on the Cablevision-TCI (51% American-owned) cable system and, to a lesser degree on the others. Certain U.S. channels are broadcast with two audio tracks, Spanish and English, which can be accessed using a stereo television, or only in English with Spanish subtitles. USIA's Worldnet television network is also available on all Buenos Aires' cable systems.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Buenos Aires is an important Spanish-language publishing capital. There are 10 daily newspapers, varying in importance and size from "La Nacion" and "Clarín" to small circulation money-losers. The "Buenos Aires Herald" is the only English-language daily. Newspapers are very expensive in Buenos Aires, costing an average of \$1.25 per copy. Economic hard-times have forced many people to reduce the number of newspapers they buy daily from two or three to one, further pressuring the highly-competitive newspaper market place.

A wide variety of magazines are available locally, from picture and news magazines such as *Noticias*, and *Gente* to trade, technical, and professional journals. *Time*, *Newsweek* and many other American magazines are available on local news stands, but some are very costly. For example, an issue of "Vanity Fair" costs over \$7.00 on the local market.

Bookstores are numerous in Buenos Aires and books in major languages,

from publishing centers around the world, are available here. Stores such as ABC and Rodriguez have large stocks of English-language books but all imported hardbacks and paperbacks are expensive.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Buenos Aires has many good hospitals which in the private sector are called either "clinicas" or "sanatorios." U.S. trained physicians practice in all specialties. Medical costs are higher than in the U.S.

Community Health

Sanitary conditions in public facilities, such as restaurant kitchens are usually good. Health and sanitary controls are enforced and immunizations for school children are checked by the Health Ministry.

Hepatitis does occur, and all susceptible travellers should be immunized with the newer Hepatitis A vaccine. The Hepatitis B carrier state has been estimated at 1.1%. Vaccination against hepatitis B is recommended. Yellow fever is present in the northeastern portion of Argentina, and vaccination may be required when entering into another country. Carrying your yellow "International Health Certificate" with you is advisable. Malaria does occur below 4000 feet elevation in Jujuy and Salta provinces, and has on occasion been found in the Misiones and Corrientes provinces. Risk is higher in the summer months (December through May).

Water supplies are considered to be potable in Buenos Aires; higher risk of water-borne illness occurs countrywide outside of Buenos Aires.

The humid climate, vegetation, and diesel fuel can aggravate sinus conditions. Colds sore throats and mild forms of flu are common.

Traffic is generally heavy, and the risk of accidents is high. Seat belts and child restraint systems should always be used.

Keep these immunizations current: diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid, yellow fever, measles, mumps and rubella. Hand-carry your "yellow" International Immunization card. You do need special malaria prevention for in-country travel.

Flies and mosquitoes are common in summer. Most houses and apartments are not equipped with screens.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Mar/Apr.	Holy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
May 25	Revolution Day
June 10	Sovereignty Day
June	
(Mon nearest	
June 20)	Flag Day*
July 9	Independence Day
Aug. 20	Death of San Martin
Sept. 21	Students' Day
Oct. 12	Columbus Day
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
*variable	

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

American and United Airlines have regular flights between the U.S. and Argentina. The flights take approximately eight hours from Miami.

The most rapid and direct transport from Ezeiza International Airport is by remise (rental car with driver) which will charge a flat rate from point to point (maximum three passengers per car). Bus service is also available in front of the terminal and will drive to major hotels and/or a bus terminal in central Buenos Aires where taxis are available.

Buses are convenient for one passenger. For more than one passenger, the cost of the bus is almost the same as the cost of a remise.

A passport is required. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for visits up to 90 days for tourism and business.

The age of majority in Argentina is 21 years. Minors who are permanent or temporary residents of Argentina who are traveling alone, with one parent, or in someone else's custody, are required to present at departure from Argentina a notarized document which certifies both parents' permission for the child's travel. A parent with sole custody should carry a copy of the judicial custody decree. Although Argentine regulations do not require that minors who enter Argentina as tourists carry certified parental permission, immigration officials infrequently do request such a certification upon arrival in Argentina. Either document should be notarized before an Argentine consular officer or, if in Argentina, a local notary (escribano). For current information concerning entry and customs requirements for Argentina, travelers can contact the Argentine Embassy at 1600 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, tel. (202) 939-6400. Internet: <http://athea.ar/cwash/homepage>. Travelers may also contact the nearest Argentine consulate in Los Angeles, Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, or Houston.

Americans living in or visiting Argentina are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires and obtain updated information on travel and security within Argentina. The U.S. Embassy is located at 4300 Avenida Colombia, 1425 Buenos Aires, Argentina. The main Embassy switchboard telephone is (011)(54)(11) 5777-4533. Recorded consular information, including instructions on whom to contact in case of an American citizen emergency, is available at telephone (54)(11) 4514-1830. The main embassy fax is (54)(11) 5777-4240. The Consular Section fax is

(011)(54)(11) 5777-4205. Additional information is available through the Embassy's web site at <http://us---embassy.state.gov/baires> embassy, which has a link to the Consular Section's email inquiry Address: BuenosAiresConsulate@state.gov.

Pets

For the importation of pets into Argentina, you will need veterinary certificates of good health and rabies vaccination, each accompanied by a photograph of the animal. The signature and license of your veterinarian must be authenticated by a federal veterinary officer in the country in which you are living. In addition, the certificates must be validated by an Argentine Consul.

If such certificates are not presented at the Argentine port of entry and/or if the animal shows symptoms of sickness, it will be quarantined for 40 days at the owner's expense.

Limited boarding facilities exist for pets in Buenos Aires. You should investigate them carefully in advance for cleanliness and quality of service. Some residential hotels will accept pets.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency in Argentina is the Argentine peso (ARS) It is issued in both bills and coins, with the bills in the same denominations as US currency. The value of coins are of 5, 10, 25, 50 centavos and 1 peso.

The value of the peso is pegged to the US dollar at a fixed rate. 1ARS=US\$1.

Argentina uses the metric system of weights and measures.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published in this country. The

Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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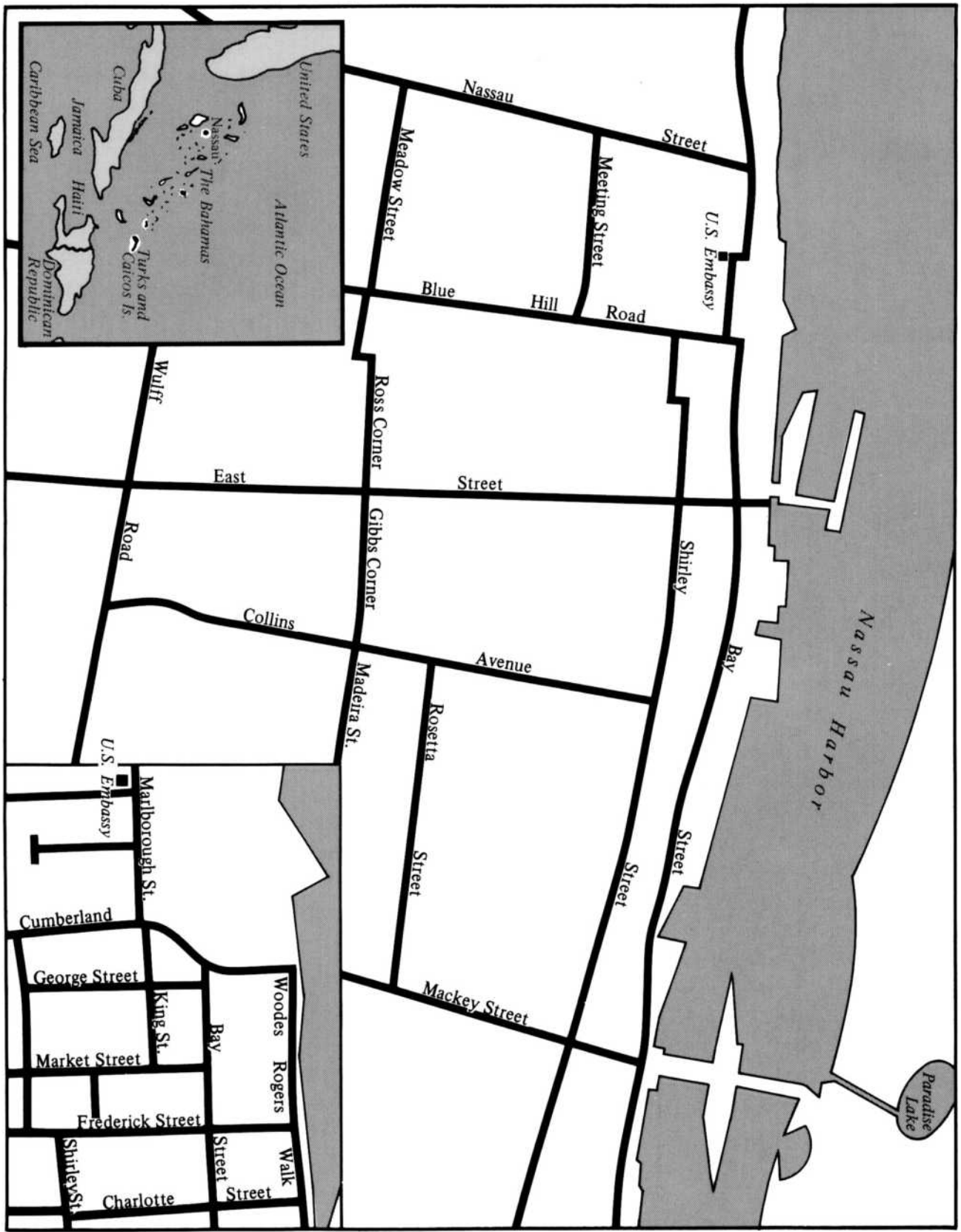
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Nassau, Bahamas

THE BAHAMAS

Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Major Cities:

Nassau, Freeport

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated September 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth of the **BAHAMAS** is a chain of islands, cays, and reefs that sweep in a broad arc from 50 miles off the Florida coast, southward to the northern limits of the Caribbean. Blue skies and sparkling waters have lured generations of winter visitors to this subtropical archipelago, which was British colonial territory as recently as 14 years ago. The islands now comprise a fully independent state within the community of the British Commonwealth, having achieved autonomy in July 1973.

Close historical, social, cultural, and economic ties with the United

States have left their imprint here. American investments and tourism in this island nation continue to make the Bahamas substantially more important to the U.S. than its small size and population would indicate. However, it retains its own distinctive character, and the society and institutions which lie behind its facade defy easy classification. Bahamian culture is a blend of the islands' African, English, and American origins, combined with the influence of the sun, the sea, and the tourists.

MAJOR CITIES

Nassau

Nassau, capital of the Bahamas and its major port and city, is nearly 300 years old. Time and the elements—hurricanes, decay, fires, and termites—have destroyed many of the old buildings. The downtown area has a distinctive architecture accented by columns, verandas, jalousies, and pastel colors. More Victorian than anything else, Nassau's narrow walks, streets, and prolific flowering bougainvillea and hibiscus have helped preserve its charm.

Nassau's population in 2000 was estimated at 195,000.

Nassau is located on the island of New Providence—21 miles long and 7 miles wide—one of the smallest and most central of the Bahamas chain. Nassau and its suburbs, which range east and west along and behind Bay Street, occupy mostly the northern half of the island. Miami is 210 miles to the northwest and New York is 1,080 miles almost due north.

History

Proprietary governors of Carolina and other North American colonies administered the Bahamas as trading markets with little pretense of civil administration. By 1700, the islands were well established as pirate camps for such immortals as Blackbeard and Calico Jack. In 1718, the First Governor, Captain Woodes Rodgers (an ex-privateer), gave the Bahamian pirates the choice of either confronting the small army he brought with him, or accepting a Royal Amnesty. Most took the latter, but eventually drifted off to other islands to resume their profession.

During the American Revolution, the Bahamas served as a supply point. Afterwards, the islands saw



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Government building in Nassau, Bahamas

their biggest change, as some 8,000 British loyalists and their slaves fled the U.S. These settlers brought the plantation system to some of the smaller islands, but poor soil, over-cultivation, and the boll weevil exhausted the chances of large-scale cotton crops in less than 10 years.

With the agricultural exhaustion of lands, poverty became more serious. However, the American Civil War brought prosperity as Nassau became the center for Confederate blockade running and the Royal Victoria Hotel (a once grand, now largely demolished) old building in the center of downtown Nassau became the haunt for both spies and gunrunners. In 1866, depression returned and for the next 50 years a succession of attempts to create wealth from conch (pronounced “konk”) shells, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, sponges, and shipbuilding

failed. The Florida land boom from the early 1900s and again in 1920 drew many Bahamian immigrants to the U.S.

With the Prohibition Act of 1920, the Bahamas reemerged as a major base for blockade running, this time for bootleggers. World War II and the establishment of U.S. bases and facilities in the Bahamas brought back the prosperity of the 1920s.

Food

The selection and quality of food found in Bahamian food stores in Nassau is comparable to those of an average American supermarket with some exceptions. Certain popular brands may not be available, and specialty items such as delicatessen and ethnic food selections are usually meager. Produce is not comparable to an American supermarket,

but a broad selection does exist and fresh vegetables can be found through careful shopping. Prepared food items often cost twice as much as the same products in southern Florida.

Clothing

Local tastes and standards are similar to those of southern Florida. Summer clothing is worn year round, but with somewhat heavier material during the Bahamian “winter.” Fabrics comfortable for the season range from lightweight washables to heavier fabrics and knits. Winter can be quite cool and clothes tend to be more formal. Wardrobes should include sweaters and possibly lightweight woolens. Heavy clothing is not necessary unless winter trips abroad are contemplated. Sportswear is available locally at reasonable prices.

Bahamian women often dress elegantly when attending church services and other special occasions.

Children's clothing is dictated by the time of year. All schools require uniforms which are available locally, so children probably need little more than play clothes. Children's clothing is available, but expensive. Parents may wish to purchase additional children's clothing before arrival.

All students wear uniforms for school and casual clothes at other times. Attractive casual clothes, including a sport jacket or suit for boys and appropriate dresses for girls are necessary, as young people are often included in social functions. Clothing for girls is readily available, but student sizes for boys are difficult to find.

Supplies and Services

Nassau drugstores, supermarkets, and speciality shops stock a variety of brand name toiletries, cosmetics, feminine personal supplies, home medicines, and common household needs. Prices are higher than in the U.S., and stores do not always maintain adequate supplies.

There are at least five custom tailor shops and six dressmakers in Nassau, and 23 custom drapery shops. The quality of the tailoring and dressmaking shops is spotty; only a few are recommended. Custom-made drapes and reupholstery in Nassau are expensive and believed to be on a par with the more expensive shops in large U.S. cities.

Dry-cleaning and laundry outlets are conveniently located. The quality of dry-cleaning service is poor. Some individuals have experienced difficulty with delicate fabrics and specialty cleaning, such as removing difficult stains from linens or silks.

Most skilled appliance and automotive service personnel are employed by major appliance stores and auto-

mobile dealers. Preference is given to customers who have purchased the appliance or automobile from the dealer. Warranties on items imported from the U.S. are not valid. Several independent automotive and appliance repair shops exist. Service varies greatly. Some independent repair shops take on projects for which they lack proper tools, equipment, training, or knowledge and can create more service/repair-related problems than they solve.

All the major hotels have qualified beauticians and barbers who meet U.S. standards of sanitation, styling, and beauty care services.

Shoe repair is limited but heels and soles can be repaired while you wait. Only two watch repair shops are located in Nassau but the quality of service is good. Some small, independent jewelers also do limited watch repairs and produce high quality custom-made jewelry. U.S. companies, such as IBM, Xerox, and Wang, provide reliable service on electric typewriters and personal computers.

Religious Activities

Full freedom of religion exists in the Bahamas, which has no favored or official State religion. The Bahamas is a predominately Christian country, and over ninety churches on New Providence represent Protestant, Roman Catholic, and interdenominational religions. Most of these churches are members of the Bahamas Christian Council, a national association which coordinates church activities and represents church services. Church services are conducted in English, but one church conducts services in Creole for Haitian residents. New Providence has no Jewish synagogues or Islamic Mosques.

Education

The Bahamian school system, including most private schools, offers curricula based on the British system. All the Catholic schools are

based on the American system. However, parents should be prepared to supplement their children's education with studies of American history and literature, especially for students in grade 7 and above. Overall, the resource centers, libraries, and curricula are inadequate by comparison. On the other hand, most private schools in Nassau have smaller class sizes and less disciplinary problems than many public schools in the U.S. No American International School exists in Nassau. The school systems follow the British in terms of grade levels.

A major concern is that teachers in many schools are not required to fit their study programs into a planned, step by step overall program, resulting in some gaps in subject coverage. Elementary Schools in Nassau range from thoroughly inadequate (Bahamian public schools) to very good. The upper grades (9-11), however, offer neither breadth nor depth in their study programs. Many college-bound high school students go to boarding schools in the U.S., Canada, or Britain. However, there are some good high schools in the Bahamas.

People with school-age children should complete and forward school applications to the CLO upon learning of their assignment to the Bahamas. Many schools have waiting lists.

A short description of the highest rated schools follows:

Lyford Cay School, located on the extreme western end of New Providence, occupies a six-acre wooded site within the boundaries of Lyford Cay. The school is able to take advantage of a 24-hour private security system. The children have access to two superb beaches and a 20-meter swimming pool at the Lyford Cay Club.

The school receives children from all over the island and accommodates up to 175 children ages 3-11. The pupils come from many different backgrounds and nationalities.

The school curriculum is based on the British system and is geared to the resources of the Bahamian environment. The children are tested annually by the Bahamian government and the Educational Research Bureau. Tuition for the 1993-94 school year ranged from \$3105 to \$3500.

St. Andrew's School is interdenominational, and coeducational. The children come from families in the middle and upper income brackets. Approximately 75% are Bahamian and the teaching staff is mostly British, with 3-year teaching certificates. The campus is large, the buildings are in good condition, and the student-teacher ratio is approximately 20 to 1. The school offers many extracurricular activities and has excellent sports facilities, including an outdoor swimming pool.

Structured on the British system, the school offers programs for approximately 750 students as young as 3 in a preschool program, and ranging to the late teens for children in the 12th grade. Tuition for the 1993-94 school year ranged from \$4,755 to \$5,790 per year depending on grade level. Even though the school is structured on the British system of eleven grades, the twelfth year was added to help students compete with other 18 year olds in the U.S. system.

St. Augustine's College (high school, grades 7-12) St. Augustine's is Roman Catholic, and coeducational. The students are 90% Bahamian, from middle and upper socioeconomic bracket families. All the teaching staff is Bahamian, most with teaching certificates.

The buildings are well kept, on a large and beautiful campus. Religious education and regular church attendance are mandatory. The school has excellent sports facilities, including an outdoor swimming pool.

The curriculum is equivalent to British Comprehensive schools, incorporating elements of American junior and senior prep school along with computer science. In addition, the S.A.T. is taken in the final year for admission to American colleges and universities. The library is inadequate and most books date from 1967 or before. The physical education program is good, and a few extracurricular programs are offered. Tuition for the 1993-94 school year was \$2,040.

Tambearly School is an independent, recently established school with a curriculum for children age 4 (Reception) through eighth grade. It has a well planned study program using a combination of textbooks and workbooks (rare for Bahamian schools), combined with frequent field trips. Its goal is to prepare students for integration into schools abroad. All students utilize the computer and take French and Spanish.

Tambearly has a student enrollment of approximately 130, and is located at Sandypoint, West Bay Street. The school accommodates up to 15 students per class, and has a staff of 12 full-time teachers and four part-time. Tuition for the 1993-94 school year was \$4,050.

Special Educational Opportunities

The College of The Bahamas offers programs leading to the Bachelors Degree, the Associate Degree, Advanced Level G.C.E. (London), College Diplomas, and Certificates in Business Administration, Education, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Nursing and Health Sciences, Social Sciences, and Technology. The College's first Bachelor's Degree program, a B.B.A. in Banking and Finance, was introduced in September 1991. The College operates on a semester system—two semesters, and one summer session. Tuition fees are about \$25 per credit hour per semester for Bahamians and \$50 for non-Bahamians.

The Bahamas Hotel Training College and the University of the West Indies (degree program) offer courses in tourism and hotel management.

The University of Miami, Barry University, and Nova University, conduct a 2-year program in Nassau leading to an MBA. Courses are held on weekends and are designed for business executives and managers. American family members who have enrolled have found it challenging and worthwhile. Additional information on the University of Miami program is available by telephoning the University at (305) 284-2510, or contacting the CLO or USIS Education Advisor.

Several business schools offer courses in secretarial skills, business, word processing, and computer programming. The Industrial Training Center offers one-year courses in the technical/vocational curricula.

Sports

The emerald and turquoise waters of the Bahamas set the backdrop for sports in the country. Swimming, fishing, boating, sailing, scuba diving, snorkeling, and water skiing are excellent year round. Instruction is available for all sports, but may entail club memberships.

Golf and tennis are also popular. Nassau has four 18-hole golf courses, but green fees are expensive. Paradise Island's seaside course offers a view as well as a challenge. Divi Beach Golf Course is the newest course. Like Paradise Island, it can be crowded and expensive. Electric carts are required at all courses. The course at Lyford Cay has a limited membership and is very expensive. Many hotels have tennis courts. Several private tennis clubs are available, as well as athletic clubs, gyms, and spas. The world-class "Gold's Gym" opened in October 1993.

New Providence Island has in-season pigeon and duck shooting. The

Family Islands also have seasonal pigeon, duck, and wild boar shooting. Horseback riding is offered by stables in the Coral Harbour area as well as on Paradise Island and Nassau East.

Spectator sports include boxing, baseball, cricket, softball, soccer, rugby, basketball, American football, and volleyball. Some events are free; others charge a small admission fee.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Literally all of New Providence can be explored in less than a week's time. The Family Islands, including Eleuthera, the Exumas, Bimini, and Abaco, are most popular with Americans. The terrain is flat as in New Providence. The islands can be reached by air, charter boat, or mailboat. Tours can be taken by taxi, bicycle, and surrey, or by glass-bottomed boat trips, sailing cruises or even an air-conditioned submarine which dives 80 feet below the surface.

Entertainment

The major importance of the tourist industry to the Bahamian economy has determined to a large extent the type of entertainment facilities here, which mirror those of a popular American resort city.

Luxury hotels on Paradise Island and on the north shore of New Providence offer a wide variety of specialty restaurants, cocktail lounges, cabarets, and discos. Two large casinos exist in Nassau, one on Paradise Island at the Britannia Towers Hotel and the other at the Crystal Palace Casino. Both the Crystal Palace Hotel and the Britannia Towers Hotel produce a Las Vegas-style extravaganza or floor show. Several other night clubs located in hotels and separate from hotels offer Bahamian and American-style shows and dancing.

Apart from the luxury-class restaurants, many good restaurants fea-

turing Bahamian, American, Italian, and Greek food are patronized by nontourists.

Many choirs exist in Nassau and the Dundas Centre for the Performing Arts produces numerous well-known musicals and plays throughout the year. In addition, it also produces folk ballets and dramas written by Bahamians. Several of the larger hotels offer aerobic and other dance classes.

Two movie theaters operate in Nassau. They feature popular American films.

Social Activities

An American Men's Club and an American Women's Club, the latter affiliated with the Federation of Women's Clubs of America, coordinate philanthropic and community activities among resident Americans. Outstanding among these are the annual Fourth of July picnic and the annual Christmas season wine and cheese tasting and dinner dance.

An Hispanic Women's Club, including many U.S. members, is also active in the community.

Some organized activities exist for children, ages 7 to 15 years, including Boy and Girl Scouts, and extracurricular school events. Two swimming clubs for children offer competitive swimming. A riding school exists for those interested in horses. Some children also participate in operetta society productions, gymnastics, tennis, and Little League baseball.

You may contribute your time and skills through churches, the American Women's Club, the Hispanic Women's Club, the Bahamas National Trust, the Yellowbirds (Princess Margaret Hospital volunteers), the Bahamas Humane Society, Animals Require Kindness, the Red Cross Society, Ranfurly Home, the Women's Crisis Center, and assorted clinics. The Historical Soci-

ety and the National Trust offer lectures on the Bahamas.

Special Information

The primary hazard facing anyone living in or visiting Nassau comes from residential and street crime, primarily burglary, robbery, and larceny. Residents and visitors should exercise caution and common sense. Doors and windows should be kept locked at all times, and deserted beaches, back streets, and poorly lighted areas should be avoided.

As the Bahamas remains a transit area for drugs designated for the United States, narcotics are easily obtainable. Parents should take extra precaution to educate their children on the dangers of illegal drug use. Parents should also become involved in their children's outside activities and closely monitor the company they keep. Drug offenses are dealt with very seriously in the Bahamas.

Temporary duty visitors to The Bahamas and newcomers should exercise extreme care while driving. The accident rate in Nassau is high due to the driving habits of Bahamians, poor enforcement of speed limits, and adverse road conditions. Accident rates among visitors who rent motorbikes and motorscooters are particularly high.

Freeport, Grand Bahama Island

Freeport is a modern community located on the southwestern shore of Grand Bahama Island, 120 miles northwest of Nassau. In 2000, Freeport's population was approximately 41,000. The island is 530 square miles in area, and the highest point of elevation is 68 feet. Although cooler than Nassau and with a higher rainfall, effects of the climate are similar to those in Nassau.

Freeport boasts a 450-seat Regency Theater in which the Freeport Players Guild presents several plays

throughout the year. In addition, the Grand Bahama Players also present plays by Bahamian playwrights. The Freeport Friends of the Arts are active in bringing music and dance performers to Freeport. In the past, the group has brought in the Billy Taylor Jazz trio, the Alvin Ailey Dance Repertoire Ensemble, the English Chamber Orchestra, Russian concert pianist Boris Block, and singer Harry Belafonte.

Tourism is an important factor on Grand Bahama Island, and more than 5,000 resort hotel rooms are available for tourists. Planned less than 30 years ago, Freeport is still hopeful of attracting more investors. Major industries in Freeport include an oil transshipment company, several pharmaceutical plants, a perfume factory, a liquor blending company, three shipping companies, and a cancer immunology research center.

Taxis are readily available. No public transportation system exists, but jitneys are sometimes available. Roads are excellent and better designed than in Nassau. Most major highways are divided expressways.

Communications

Telephone service in Freeport is reliable, but callers to the U.S. find that the circuits are often busy. Direct dialing to long distance numbers is possible. Listings for Freeport and Grand Bahama are contained in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas Telephone Directory published by the BATELCO.

The Broadcasting Corporation of the Bahamas operates radio station ZNS-3 out of Freeport to service Grand Bahama, Abaco, and Bimini with local as well as national programming originating in Nassau. AM reception of Florida stations is fair to good depending on atmospheric conditions, but FM reception from Miami requires special antennae. A Miami-based company operates a CATV positive cable sys-

tem which provides good reception to seven television stations from southern Florida. In addition, viewers can tune into Bahamian Channel 13, ZNS. Satellite dishes are popular, but expensive.

Three Bahamian newspapers, the *Guardian*, the *Tribune*, and the *Freeport News*, are available as are the Miami Herald and the New York Times.

Health

Medical facilities in Freeport are adequate for routine medical care, but are more limited than those in Nassau. The government-owned Rand Memorial Hospital has 50 beds and includes departments of surgery, general medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, radiography, and an emergency room. The Antoni Clinic is privately owned, and in addition to the services provided at Rand Memorial, this clinic includes plastic surgery, dentistry, and orthodontics, as well as oral and maxillo-facial surgery. The Lucayan Medical Center is limited to family medicine, internal medicine, and obstetrics.

Community health conditions in Freeport are comparable to those in Nassau, but Freeport does not have a large Haitian expatriate population.

Education

The same concerns that affect choice of education in Nassau hold true for Freeport. Numerous private schools, mostly church affiliated, offer programs for preschool age (3-5) children through high school. School years are divided into three terms. Brief descriptions of major schools follow.

Freeport Nursery School and Play Group—Calvary Academy This kindergarten offers three terms during the period September-June for children ages 3-5. Classes are from 9 am to 2:30 pm. In addition, the day care center operates from 8 am to 5:30 pm for children between the

ages of 3 months and 5 years. Tuition varies from about \$300 per term.

Sunland Lutheran School Sponsored by Our Savior Lutheran Church, this coeducational school accepts children ranging from nursery school through grade 10. Fees range from \$508 per term for nursery school children, and are graduated for older children up to \$650 per term. Enrollment is approximately 500, with 35 faculty members.

Mary, Star of the Sea School This Roman Catholic school offers coeducational training from nursery school through 8th grade, and is staffed by two Franciscan sisters and about 40 lay teachers. Enrollment is approximately 850, and at times applicants are put on a waiting list. Term fees range to about \$440.

St. Paul's Methodist College This coeducational school accepts children ages 3-16 and is administered by the same Board of Trustees as Queens College in Nassau. Term fees range from \$435 to \$554. The faculty consists of 40 teachers and maximum enrollment is 800.

Freeport High School This coeducational high school (grades 7-12) is administered by the Anglican Diocese of the Bahamas. Normal term fees are \$550. A special college preparatory program is also available for an additional fee. Enrollment is about 400, with 25 teachers.

Grand Bahama Catholic High School This coeducational high school schedules its instruction in two semesters and offers a 4-year program to prepare students to take the American College Board examinations based on the British System. Tuition is approximately \$1680 per year. Enrollment is 340 and the faculty consists of 18 lay teachers.

Recreation and Social Life

Grand Bahama offers an unusual activity for underwater explorers that is unavailable in Nassau. Due to the unique "sponge-like" structure of the Grand Bahama land mass, many ocean holes or small underground lakes connect to the sea. These underground, water-filled caverns are popular with scuba divers who enjoy exploring. One of the larger underground caverns, the Lucayan Cavern, contains over 33,000 feet of exploration line. Due to abuse by some souvenir hunters, the Bahamas National Trust closed this cavern to the public for an indefinite period.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Bahama Islands lie between 20 and 27 °N. latitude and 72 and 79 °W. longitude. Separated from the North American Continent by the Florida Channel and cooled in the summer by the northeast trade winds, the Bahamas enjoys a moderate climate. During the summer, temperatures rarely rise above 90°F, while the lowest winter temperatures vary between 40° and 50°F. Rainfall ranges 40-60 inches a year.

The Bahamas extends over 100,000 square miles of sea, with slightly less than half lying in the Tropics. The Tropic of Cancer crosses the lower part of Long Island.

The Bahamas covers a distance of some 760 miles from northwest to southeast and include 29 inhabited islands, 661 cays, and about 2,387 exposed reefs. The total land area is approximately 5,380 square miles, about the size of Wales or two-thirds the size of Massachusetts. The largest island is Andros, with an area of 2,300 square miles, and the smallest is Spanish Wells, with an area of one-half mile. Some of the most

beautiful beaches and lagoons in the world are located in the Bahamas.

Over 50 varieties of trees can be found here, including such exotic species as the African tulip, the casuarina (hardy Australian pine), the cork tree, several varieties of palm trees, and about 40 varieties of fruit trees. In addition, large varieties of shrubs, climbers, vines, vegetables, and herbs are found here.

Significant seasonal changes requiring winter clothing or central heating do not occur here. The rainy season is from May to October, and the hurricane season extends from May to November. In the winter, temperatures rarely fall below 60°F, and usually reach 77°F by midafternoon. During the summer, temperatures fluctuate between 90°F in the daytime and 75°F or less in the evening.

Although humidity can reach above 80% (relative humidity for September is 82%), prevailing easterly winds lessen personal discomfort. Temperatures vary from a low of 76.7°F in January to a high of 89.1°F in August. Humidity causes mildew on leather and textile products, but homes equipped with central air-conditioning or dehumidifiers neutralize the harmful effects.

Rainfall often occurs in the form of fairly intense showers, frequently accompanied by strong, gusty winds. These storms are usually short and are followed by clear skies. Weather conditions can change rapidly. Statistically, a hurricane can be expected to occur in some part of the Bahamas every nine years. The last hurricane (Andrew) struck in August 1992.

Population

In 2000, the approximate total resident population of the Bahamas was 287,550. The statistics show that New Providence (where Nassau is located), has 171,542 persons accounting for 67.35% of the popula-

tion, representing a 2.7% increase compared to the 1980 census. Grand Bahama, with the second largest population, has 41,035 persons representing 16.11% of the population, an increase of 31% over 1980. Abaco follows with a population of 10,061 or 3.95% of the population, Andros with 8,155, and Eleuthera with 8,017 accounting for 3.20% and 3.15%, respectively. Exuma had 3,539 persons and 1.39% of the total population, while Long Island with 3,107 persons had 1.22% of the population.

The Lucayan Indians, a branch of the Arawaks, discovered the islands in the ninth century. Some 600 years later, on October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus made his first landfall in the New World on San Salvador Island. Some studies by historians have disputed the San Salvador theory, however, and suggest that the landfall may have occurred at Samana Cay instead. Spanish adventurers followed Columbus to the Bahamas and soon shipped the remaining Lucayan population as slaves to mines in Cuba and Santo Domingo, where the race was extinguished.

The islands were the setting for several attempts at establishing colonies of religious refugees, including the Eleutherian Adventurers. Although they all ultimately failed, many family names in the Bahamas derive from seventeenth century English settlers.

Most Bahamians are of mixed African and European descent. Of the European portion of the population, 90% are descendants of early British and American settlers, most notably loyalists from New York, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The Bahamas also has a considerable Greek community. Most are second and third generation Bahamians, whose descendants came to the islands as sponge fishermen.

English is universally spoken as is Bahamian, a variant of Caribbean English. A wide variety of religious

denominations and interfaith and evangelical churches are found in the Bahamas.

Public Institutions

The Bahamas is a constitutional, parliamentary democracy. As a fully independent member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the nominal Head of State is Queen Elizabeth II, represented in the Bahamas by an appointed Governor General. The Head of Government is the Prime Minister. The 1973 Bahamian Constitution was enacted by a Parliament composed of the Senate and the House of Assembly.

The House of Assembly consists of 49 members, elected by constituency every 5 years on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The Senate consists of 16 members appointed by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The Parliament performs all major legislative functions. The leader of the majority party serves as Prime Minister. The Cabinet, which answers to the House of Assembly, consists of the Prime Minister, a Deputy Prime Minister, an Attorney General, and other Ministers of executive departments.

The judiciary consists of a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeals, and various Magistrates' Courts, with the right to appeal to Her Majesty's Privy Council in the United Kingdom. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

In January 1993, the government instituted a form of local government for the Family Islands (Bahamian islands beyond New Providence) by appointing individuals to local licensing boards. Commissioners, who formerly served as administrators for the Family Islands, now serve as secretaries to these boards in addition to their duties as local magistrates.

Arts, Science, and Education

The historic Bahamian cultural experience is essentially British (English), but American cultural values have had an increasingly important impact on Bahamian society due to modern media, the large number of Bahamians who visit Florida, and the increased number of American tourists who visit the Bahamas.

Education is free and compulsory between ages 5 and 14. The Ministry of Education has responsibility for all Bahamian educational institutions. Ninety-six primary schools, 29 secondary schools, and 46 all-age schools receive government funding. In addition, 6 special schools, and 45 independent schools operate in the Bahamas.

Courses lead to the Bahamas Junior Certificate (B.J.C.) taken in grade 9. In 1993, a new Bahamian National Examination (administered in grade 12 as an exit examination), the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE), was instituted in both private and government schools.

The College of The Bahamas (COB) is the only tertiary level institution in the country. Founded in 1974, it currently enrolls some 2,500 full and part-time students. Essentially a 2-year institution offering Associate of Arts degrees in liberal arts and sciences, the COB recently instituted a Bachelors Degree program in banking and is working on plans to add additional 4-year degree programs. It also administers a School of Nursing. In conjunction with the University of the West Indies (UWI), it offers a Bachelors Degree in Education. UWI operates a Center for Hotel and Tourism Management, also a degree program, which draws students from throughout the Caribbean.

Success Training College offers certificates, diplomas, some associate degrees in business, computer sci-

ence, and electrical technology. Several U.S. universities (St. Benedict's/St. John's, Nova University, Barry University, and the University of Miami) offer in-country programs to be followed by courses on the parent campus which lead to Bachelors or Masters degrees.

A large number of Bahamians complete university studies in the United States; fewer further their education at schools in Great Britain, Canada, and at UWI.

The Dundas Center For the Performing Arts, located in Nassau, presents two repertoire seasons each year including performing artists in drama, dance, and song. The Bahamas National Dance Theatre and the National Youth Choir were founded in 1992 as part of the country's activities in commemoration of the Quincentennial Celebrations of Christopher Columbus's discovery of the islands and the New World. Other active cultural groups include the Nassau Music Society, The Renaissance Singers, The Nassau Players, and the Freeport Player's Guild, located in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

Two of the most spectacular folk cultural events in the Bahamas each year are the Junkanoo Parades held on December 26 (Boxing Day) and New Year's Day. The parades begin at 2:00 am and continue until 9:00 am. Participants prepare costumes, rehearse months in advance, and compete for various individual and group prizes. The Junkanoo is an integral part of the traditional culture of the Bahamas, dating back to the days of slavery when slaves were given three days off during the Christmas holidays.

Music is provided by goatskin drums, cowbells, whistles, conch shells, and bicycle horns. Junkanoo music can also be heard whenever Bahamians feel in a festive mood or wish to celebrate.

Commerce and Industry

Since World War II, the Bahamas has become a tourist and financial center. These two industries remain the mainstays of the Bahamian economy.

The Bahamas was a vacation destination for over 4.2 million visitors in 2000. Realizing the importance of tourism for the economy, more than more than \$1.5 billion has been spent on hotel construction and refurbishment in The Bahamas over the past five years. Tourism and related services now account for up to 60% of GDP and employ nearly two-thirds of the labor force.

About 80% of the tourists who come each year are from the U.S. The luxury hotels and casinos are clustered in Nassau, Paradise Island, and Freeport. New directions in tourism include a growing interest in the smaller, sometimes very luxurious, resort hotels of the Family Islands. About half the tourists visiting The Bahamas arrive by cruise ship, and port facilities in Nassau and the Family Islands have been upgraded to accommodate this growing market. In October 1995, The Casino Taxation Act was amended to allow for the establishment of small-scale casinos and the Lotteries and Gaming Acts allowed for sports betting.

Financial services, the second major sector of the Bahamian economy, consists primarily of banking, trust administration, insurance and mutual funds. The 400 banks and trust companies engage primarily in the business of managing assets of wealthy individuals. Strict banking secrecy laws are enforced. The Bahamas are widely known as a tax haven for non-Bahamians seeking to avoid income tax payments. As a result of new anti-money laundering laws passed in response to an initiative with the G-7's Financial Action Task Force (FATF), government revenues from International Business Companies (IBCs) declined from \$2.5 million in the

first four months of 2000 to \$908,701 for the corresponding period in 2001.

The Bahamian Government recognizes the need for diversification, new industry development, exploration, and exploitation of agriculture and fisheries resources. The Bahamas imports over \$250 million in agricultural goods per year, representing about 80% of its food consumption.

The agriculture and fisheries sectors together only account for about 5% of GDP and employ about 5% percent of the work force full time. A larger portion of the workforce is employed on a temporary basis during the opening weeks of lobster (crawfish) season. In an attempt to meet more of its own food needs, the government is working with local farmers to introduce new varieties of crops. However, foreign investment will be needed for this project.

The U.S. is the Bahamas' most important trading partner. Principal Bahamian exports to the U.S. are pharmaceuticals, lobster, salt, and hormones. Most food and other consumer goods are imported from the U.S. Brand name products are readily available, although transport and considerable import duties add some 50% or more to comparable U.S. consumer prices.

Freeport, the industrial center of the country, is a planned community built by foreign investors. A subsidiary of a major U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturing company has a sizeable facility there and there are several smaller export-oriented pharmaceutical and chemical plants. Solar salt and aragonite, two of the Bahamas' otherwise scanty natural resources, are exported from other points in the island chain.

The Bahamas have several labor unions, the largest and strongest of which is the Hotel Workers' Union.

Transportation

Local

Most areas of New Providence are serviced by small mini buses called jitneys. The jitneys operate from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., although service to some residential areas is infrequent and hours of operation more limited than in the downtown area. The fare is about 75¢. No inexpensive limousine or bus connections serve Nassau International Airport. Taxis are metered and rates are controlled by the government. Cabs can also be hired for about \$25 - \$30 per hour. Limousines cost \$50 per hour.

Several automobile rental agencies are in Nassau and Freeport, including subsidiaries of some well-known American agencies. Rental fees vary with the size and type of vehicle and the duration of the rental period, but are much higher than in the U.S. Several agencies also rent motorbikes, but they should be avoided because of the vehicles' very high accident rates.

Regional

Traffic moves on the left side of the road in the Bahamas. Road conditions vary greatly from four-lane highways to narrow streets with sharp curves. Some road surfaces are very poor with potholes and badly eroded shoulders that could damage a vehicle. Surface drainage is poor and large areas of standing water can be found on the roads after a heavy rainstorm. Posted highway speeds vary from 25 to 45 miles per hour. Cars, taxis, and buses often stop unexpectedly in the middle of the road to pick up or discharge passengers.

Regional travel throughout the Bahamas is principally by commercial, charter, and private aircraft. Fares on car ferries serving Eleuthera, Andros, and Abaco from Nassau are \$200 for a car and two passengers, or \$59 for foot passengers. Some travelers use the services of interisland mailboats. More than 20 mailboats depart Nassau

for the Family Islands each week; one way fares range from \$20 to \$45.

Several direct flights connect Nassau with major American airports daily. American Eagle provides hourly service to Miami. Bahama-sair, Delta, U.S. Air, Carnival Airlines, Paradise Island Airlines, and others provide direct service to Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh-Durham, Fort Lauderdale, Miami, New York, Orlando, and West Palm Beach. Air Canada has flights to Toronto on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday only. Schedules change frequently.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

New Providence (Nassau) has a 24-hour telephone and telegraph service provided by the Bahamas Telecommunications Corporation (BATELCO). BATELCO has in the past few years completed systems upgrades, modernization, and increased features for its customers. For instance, direct dialing service is now available to 120 countries around the world, including the U.S., except Alaska. Direct dial calls are considerably less than for operator-assisted calls. For example, a 3 minute night call to Virginia costs \$1.05, whereas the same operator assisted call costs \$6. In some overseas areas the savings are more dramatic; a 3 minute call to Switzerland is \$4 if dialed directly, whereas an operator assisted call costs \$15. New digital exchanges have enabled BATELCO to offer several new features in addition to the standard services. Two speed calling services are now available. The eight most frequently called numbers can be reached by dialing only one digit. The other allows calls to 30 most frequently dialed numbers by dialing just two digits. Both services include long distance direct dial numbers. Other services available include call-forwarding and three-person conference calls. These new features and services are not

yet available to all subscribers, although some 90 to 95% of the population is currently covered.

While BATELCO has made dramatic strides in modernizing its equipment and in expanding its range of services, it is still plagued by chronic problems associated with growth and older equipment. In some areas of Nassau, customers have waited months and even years for a telephone line. In other areas, frequent malfunctions occur and telephones can be out of order for weeks. The quality of calls to the U.S. is excellent. BATELCO maintains an over-the-horizon link with Florida City and a submarine cable links Nassau, Grand Bahama Island, and West Palm Beach, Florida. The quality of calls to other overseas locations is comparable to calls placed from U.S. telephones.

The monthly rental charge for one basic telephone instrument is \$9.50, with additional costs for added features and extensions.

Telegrams may be telephoned to the telegraph office and charged on the regular telephone bill. Full rate telegrams to the U.S. cost \$.24 per word and night letters cost \$.12 per word (minimum 22 words).

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

While at times strained by the volume of cases, adequate medical facilities and sufficiently trained physicians in Nassau provide reliable medical care for most routine needs. The principal hospital is the government-operated Princess Margaret Hospital offering 24-hour emergency medical service and has 484 beds. Doctors Hospital is privately owned and operated, and has 72 beds and offers 24-hour emergency medical services. Rooms are considerably more expensive than those in Princess Margaret. Both are located in downtown Nassau. On the western end of New Provi-

dence in Lyford Cay, the Western Medical Clinic has a 14-bed care facility with a four-bed intensive care unit. It specializes in plastic and reconstructive surgery. The hospital houses the cardiac diagnostic center providing such services as doppler echocardiography, 24-hour electrocardiograms, exercise electrocardiograms, and facilities for pacemaker implantations and evaluations. The Sandilands Rehabilitation Center, with 344 beds, is a psychiatric hospital and a 133-bed geriatrics facility, including a maximum security unit, a child and family guidance center, and a combined substance abuse facility for drug and alcoholic patients.

Nassau has over 111 physicians including specialists in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, dermatology, cardiology, gastroenterology, nephrology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, anesthetics, pathology, radiology, and internal medicine. Among the 42 dentists in Nassau, two are oral surgeons.

Most doctors and dentists attended medical or dental schools either in the U.S., Canada, or the United Kingdom. The ophthalmological service at Princess Margaret Hospital is partially staffed by Yale Medical School ophthalmology residents who rotate every three months.

Community Health

Nassau has no major medical hazards. The water, however, tends to be brackish, and at times is not potable. Some visitors have experienced gastroenteritis, vomiting, and diarrhea after drinking tap water. These symptoms usually run 24-72 hours and subside without medication. Tuberculosis, hepatitis, and malaria have been reported among Haitian refugees living in close quarters, but no major outbreaks have occurred.

Newcomers should be aware that at certain times of the year, some large predatory fish which feed from reef environment food chains contain a neurotoxin (ciguatera) that can pro-

duce diarrhea, vomiting, muscle aches, dysesthesia (abnormal sensations), paresthesia (numbness and tingling) of the mouth and extremities, itching, and severe headaches. Neurological symptoms can last a few days, several months, or years. No known specific treatment for ciguatera exists. Barracuda and certain species of jack and grouper have been known to cause ciguatera. Deep ocean fish such as shark, marlin, salmon, and tuna do not feed on the reef and therefore are usually safe. Lobster, shrimp, and other shellfish are not affected. Occasionally, food poisoning associated with raw or "scorched" conch occurs, usually from improper handling by street vendors.

Preventive Measures

No serious, prevalent, endemic diseases exist in Nassau. Sanitary standards for food handlers, barbers, and beauticians are high. Food is imported from the U.S., Europe, and New Zealand and subject to inspection by the country of origin. Locally produced dairy foods meet U.S. health and sanitary standards. No special preparation of fruit and vegetables is required. Sewage is adequate but, in some low areas where drainage is poor, septic tanks and drainage pits require frequent waste water removal.

Although New Providence has no poisonous snakes, it does have poisonous insects, such as black widow spiders and scorpions. Certain types of coral formations can cause severe skin irritation and spiny sea urchins can cause severe foot infections if stepped on. No known cases of rabid animals have been reported on New Providence Island.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Ample flights are available on American air carriers and should be

used. Bahamasair, which flies the Miami-Nassau route, is a Bahamian carrier.

For the traveler who may have forgotten that airplanes were once powered only by propellers, Paradise Island Airlines, an American carrier, offers flights from downtown Miami and Fort Lauderdale International Airport in an amphibious, propeller-driven aircraft. The flights land in Nassau Harbor.

U.S. citizens must present original proof of U.S. citizenship (a valid or expired passport, a certified U.S. birth certificate or a Certificate of Naturalization), photo identification, and an onward/return ticket for entry into The Bahamas. Voter registration cards, driver's licenses, affidavits and other similar documents are not acceptable as proof of U.S. citizenship. Visas are not required for U.S. citizens for stays up to eight months. There is an airport departure tax of \$15 for travelers age six years and older. For further information, U.S. citizens may contact the Embassy of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, 2220 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 319-2660, or the Bahamian consulates in Miami or New York. Additional information is available on The Bahamas Tourist Board web site at <http://www.bahamas.com> or telephone 1-800-422-4262, and on the official web site of the Government of the Bahamas at <http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/>.

The Bahamas Dangerous Drug Act makes it an offense for an unauthorized person to import, export, or be in possession of marijuana, morphine, opium, or lysergic acid (LSD) in the Bahamas. The provisions of this Act are strictly enforced.

Firearms & Ammunition

It is illegal to import firearms or ammunition into The Bahamas or to possess a firearm in the country without appropriate permission. Tourists who arrive by private boat are required to declare firearms to

Bahamian Customs and leave firearms on the boat while in The Bahamas. Penalties for illegal possession of a firearm or ammunition are strict and can involve heavy fines, lengthy prison terms, or both. For further information on firearms in The Bahamas, please contact the Embassy of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas in Washington, D.C., or the Bahamian consulates in Miami or New York

Americans living in or visiting The Bahamas are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Nassau and obtain updated information on travel and security within The Bahamas. The U.S. Embassy is located next to McDonald's restaurant on Queen Street in downtown Nassau; telephone (242) 322-1181, after hours: (242) 328-2206. The Consular Section hours are 8:00 a.m. - 12 noon, Monday - Friday, except local and U.S. holidays. The U.S. Embassy is also responsible for consular services in the Turks and Caicos Islands, an overseas territory of the United Kingdom. The Consular Information Sheet for the British West Indies provides additional information on the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Laws

Boaters should be aware that long-line fishing in Bahamian waters is illegal. All long-line fishing gear must be stowed below deck while transiting through Bahamian waters. Fishermen should note that stiff penalties are imposed for catching crawfish (lobster) or other marine life out of season or in protected areas.

U.S. citizens should exercise caution when considering time-share investments and be aware of the aggressive tactics used by some time-share sales representatives. Bahamian law allows time-share purchasers five days to cancel the contract for full reimbursement. Disputes that arise after that period can be very time-consuming and

expensive to resolve through the local legal system.

Pets

There are no known cases of rabid animals in the Bahamas. No pit bulls and no dogs under six months of age are permitted to enter the Bahamas.

An Import Permit is required from the Bahamian Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for all animals brought to the Bahamas. Applications for such permits should be made several weeks in advance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, P.O. Box N-3028, Nassau, Bahamas. The telephone number is (809) 322-1277.

Dogs and cats over the age of 6 months, imported from the U.S. or Canada, must be accompanied by a Veterinary Health Certificate issued within 24 hours of embarkation and a certificate of Rabies Vaccination issued not less than 10 days or more than 9 months before.

Pets under 6 months do not require a Rabies Vaccination Certificate, but must have a Veterinary Health Certificate. Dogs under six months are not permitted to enter.

Dogs and cats traveling to the U.S. from the Bahamas need a Health Certificate issued within 24 hours of departure. If you intend to ship pets to the U.S., check with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Inspector at Nassau International Airport well in advance of planned travel to confirm this policy.

Disaster Preparedness

The Bahamas, like all countries in the Caribbean basin, is subject to the threat of hurricanes. Hurricane season officially runs from June 1 to November 30, although hurricanes have been known to occur outside that time period. Visitors to The Bahamas during hurricane season are advised to monitor weather reports in order to be prepared for

any potential threats. General information about disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Virtually all stores, restaurants, hotels, and other commercial facilities accept American currency, which is on par with the Bahamian dollar. Major credit cards and travelers checks are also widely accepted. No restriction is placed on the amount of currency brought into or taken out of the Bahamas.

American currency, usually exchanged on a one-to-one basis with Bahamian dollars, can be used throughout the Bahamas. Most major stores, hotels, and restaurants will accept major credit cards and travelers checks, but will not accept a personal check without a check cashing card (Chekard).

Standard U.S. weights and measures are used in the Bahamas.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May/June.	Whitsunday*
May/June.	Whitmonday*
June	
(first Friday)	Labour Day
July 10	Independence Day
Aug. 3	Emancipation Day
Oct. 12	Discovery Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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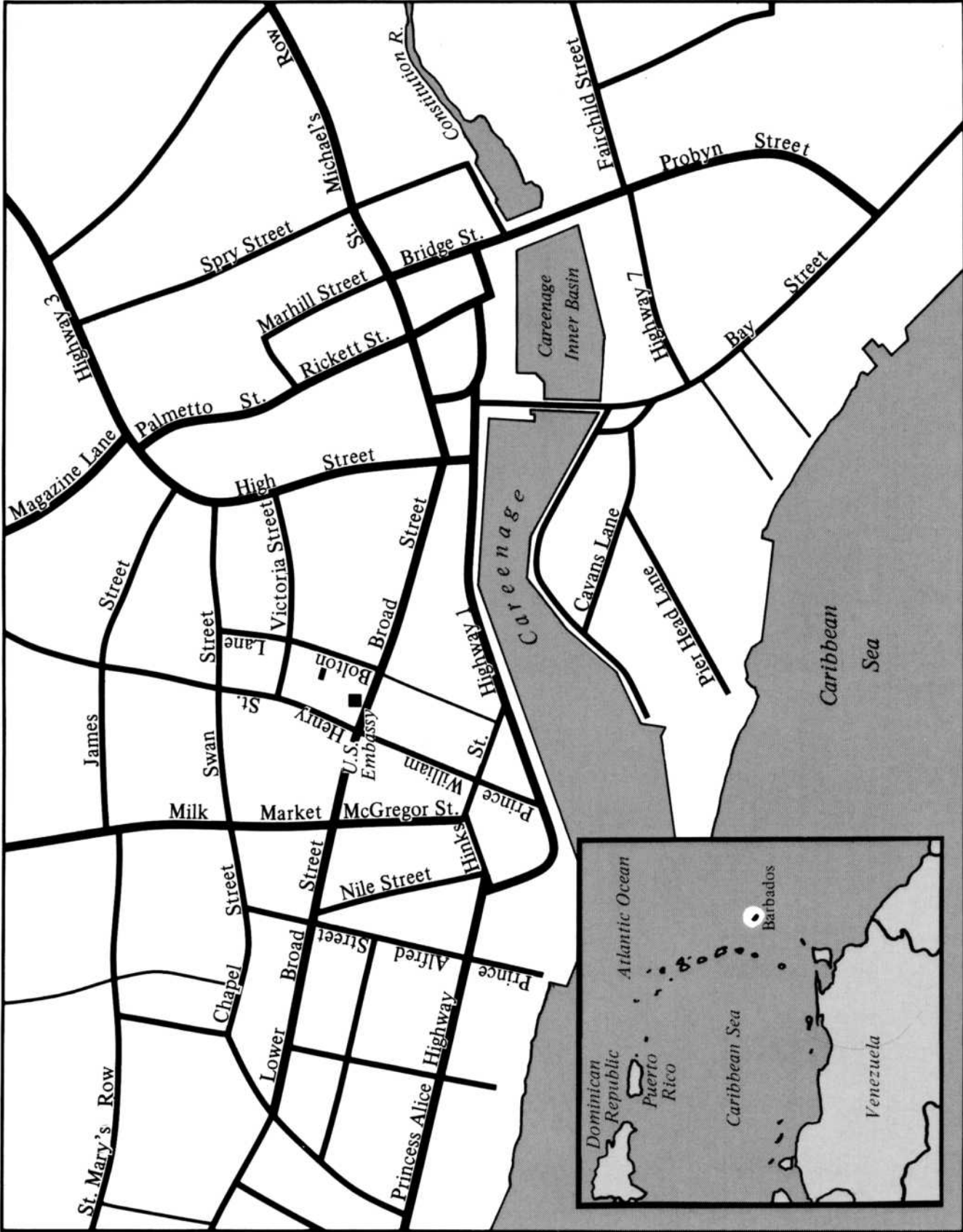
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Bridgetown, Barbados

BARBADOS

Major Cities:
Bridgetown

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated November 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The British influence remains alive and strong in **BARBADOS**. Although this small Caribbean nation has been independent for more than two decades, the mark of the Crown survives in its language, in its passion for cricket, in conservative dress, and in the carefully nurtured observance of afternoon teatime. A renowned tourist mecca, Barbados is, in many ways, the most advanced of the smaller Caribbean islands, and it enjoys its position as a stable, independent state within the British Commonwealth.

The island is geographically isolated and offers few sophisticated cultural amenities, but the sun shines nearly every day, and the sea

beckons to visitors throughout the year. From quiet coves to sprawling, luxurious resorts, Barbados is well-equipped for tourism.

The island was settled by the English, but it is thought that perhaps it had been named earlier by Portuguese explorers—*Los Barbados*—for the bearded fig trees they found in such profusion.

MAJOR CITY

Bridgetown

Bridgetown, founded in 1629, is Barbados' capital and largest city. It has about 123,000 inhabitants. The Careenage, a small inlet of the Atlantic Ocean, divides the city. Some tourist charter boats and fishing boats are docked there. Two of the old warehouses lining the Careenage have been partly renovated and provide space for some cafes and shops.

Broad Street is the principal tourist shopping and banking street. A small statue of Lord Nelson stands in the square, commissioned by the Bridgetown merchants in gratitude for Nelson's saving the West Indies by defeating the French at Trafalgar.

A deep-water harbor was constructed in 1961, and interisland shipping has since been moved from the Careenage to a shallow draft harbor. The government has built Bridgetown Fishing Harbour, which provides piers and moorings for the fishing fleet and a fish market.

The Garrison Savannah, once the training ground for the British West Indies Regiment, is now a park. Horse-racing is held at the track there on most Saturdays in season and on some holidays. Surrounding the Savannah are private buildings that once housed the British forces. One of these is the Barbados Museum.

Many of the older buildings in Bridgetown have been destroyed to make way for modern, utilitarian structures. In recent years, the Barbados National Trust has become interested in preserving Barbados' architectural heritage. As a result, a few of the charming old buildings have been repainted and renovated.

Food

Most meat sold locally, except for chicken, is imported. American beef is available, but quite expensive. Local pork, chicken, and lamb are available, fresh and frozen. Fresh fish is sold every afternoon at fish markets around the island. Kingfish, dorado (referred to locally as



Boats in Bridgetown Harbor, Barbados

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

dolphin), and flying fish are staples; red snapper is available during the summer months. Tuna, shark, and marlin are also available. Shrimp and lobster are available, but at high prices.

Pasteurized milk, cream, yogurt, cottage cheese, and sour cream are available from the local dairy and are safe for consumption. They are also expensive by U.S. standards and tend to spoil rapidly. Ice cream and frozen yogurt are also produced locally, but are very expensive.

The variety and quality of fruits and vegetables available are disappointing. Prices are high by U.S. standards, whether the produce is locally grown or imported. Most fruit sold in the supermarkets is imported. Local lettuce is available, as are cucumbers, green beans, carrots, bell peppers, and cabbage, but with frequent shortages of these items, especially during the tourist season (mid-December to mid-April). Tomatoes, avocados, melon, squash, broccoli, mangoes, and papayas are seasonally available. Quality varies and you may have to search through the local vendors stalls to find good ones. All bananas sold in Barbados are grown locally. Oranges, grapefruit, and pineapple are imported from the other CARICOM countries. The market at

Cheapside, open mornings, Monday through Saturday, is where many local small farmers sell their produce. Although the variety is limited, the prices are much lower than in supermarkets, and some families find this a better source than the supermarkets.

Clothing

Dress in Barbados is more traditional and conservative than elsewhere in the Caribbean. This translates to more suits and ties and dresses than may be expected from perusal of tourist brochures of cruises and vacations in the Caribbean.

Lightweight, informal clothing is worn by both men and women. The selection available locally is limited and expensive.

Keep in mind that clothing will be laundered more frequently here; it fades and wears out quickly. Elastic loses its stretch; metal pieces rust. When purchasing new items for Barbados try to avoid metal buckles, zippers, snaps, or buttons. Leather belts and shoes tend to mildew.

Clothes not worn frequently that are left in closets on metal hangers may be damaged by rusting of the hangers, sometimes even rusting

through the fabric at the shoulders. Leave most woolen clothing or other items that require dry-cleaning in storage. The humidity increases the amount of mildew forming on clothing kept in closets, resulting in the need to wash or dry-clean clothing that has not been worn.

Men: A suit is worn to the office and most social functions. The locally available “shirt jac” (something like the *guya-bera* in Latin America or safari suit in Africa) is acceptable on some occasions. When selecting your wardrobe for Barbados, keep in mind the heat, the humidity, the island’s limited professional cleaning facilities, and the fact that clothing fades and wears out quickly here.

Women: Short-sleeved cotton dresses or skirts and blouses are suitable for work. Short-sleeved or sleeveless cotton dresses, sundresses, blouses, and skirts or shorts are suitable for home or running errands, although residents do not generally wear shorts downtown—only the tourists do. Slacks are also worn in the evening or when the weather is cooler. Bring 100% cotton clothing and lingerie. Synthetics are fine for the office or evening. Hats (except on the beach), gloves, and hose are rarely worn. Sweaters are rarely needed, except at the office.

Children: School-age children wear uniforms. Each school has their own color uniform. Some pieces (i.e., white shirts, brown or black shoes) may be purchased in the U.S. at a lower cost. Some specific items must be purchased locally. Children will live in swimsuits, shorts, and T-shirts. Children’s clothing is more expensive and of poorer quality than that available in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Tailors and dressmakers are hard to find, and the quality of workmanship varies. Dry-cleaning is much more expensive than in the U.S., and the quality is not always the best. Several good beauty shops

operate with prices that are similar to those in the U.S.

Religious Activities

More than 140 different religious denominations and sects are represented in Barbados. The Anglican Church predominates and Anglican churches abound. The island has six Catholic churches. Protestant denominations include Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, Moravian, Pilgrim Holiness, New Testament Church of God, Church of the Nazarene, Assembly of God, Baptist, and the United Christian Brethren. Christian Science, Mormon, and Jehovah's Witnesses are also here. More Caribbean in character and African in outlook are the Sons of God Apostolic Church or "Spiritual Baptists" and Rastafarians. Barbados has two Greek Orthodox churches, a synagogue, and a mosque. Baha'is and Hindus are also here.

Education

The education system in Barbados is modeled on the British system and is in many ways not comparable to education in the U.S. In addition to the stress of coping with a different education system, the educational environment lacks amenities taken for granted in the U.S. The schools have no science labs or theaters; the libraries and gyms are inadequate or nonexistent; very little computer training is available. The buildings generally appear run-down; the walls are bare. Children coming from an American education system have found the adjustment especially difficult at the secondary level.

Many parents are satisfied with local preschools and primary schools. The local schools are not obliged to accept U.S. children, however, and it is difficult to find places after June 30.

Primary school children usually attend St. Gabriel's, St. Angela's, or St. Winifred's. All schools require uniforms. Some schools have Brownie and Cub Scout troops.

Secondary education begins at age 11 upon completion of the 11 plus examination.

The differences in the educational system are most apparent at the secondary level, where emphasis is on memorization of material in preparation for taking public examinations. The curriculum is inflexible, and course offerings are limited by the form (grade) in which a child is placed. For example, if your child is ready to begin the second year of Spanish and the form is in the third year of French, the child will have to do third-year French or no foreign language at all. Creativity is not rewarded and often discouraged. No credit is given for having completed course work; scores on the year end public examination determine success or failure. Extracurricular activities such as sports, drama, music, journalism, or other special interests are not normally available. Pressure is placed on children to compete with their classmates to be "first in form."

Special Educational Opportunities

Children can take lessons in ballet, modern dance, swimming, tennis, riding, piano, Spanish, French, chess, table tennis, drawing, karate, judo, gymnastics, and recorder. The Barbados Yachting Association offers sailing lessons in the summer for children 8 and older.

The Barbados Community College also offers courses to adults in foreign languages, computers, and other continuing education. The Alliance Francais offers French-language courses at various levels.

The University of the West Indies will allow a college-age dependent to enroll as an "occasional student" and audit courses on a noncredit basis. Expenses are equal to a non-resident student at a U.S. university. Computer courses are held at a local institute.

The Office of Overseas Schools advises against bringing handicapped children to Barbados.

Sports

Cricket is the national sport, and most Barbadians take an avid interest in it. The quality of cricket played locally is high, especially the test matches, and the West Indian team is one of the world's top test match teams.

Soccer, rugby, golf, field hockey, running, cycling, and tennis are popular, and basketball is becoming increasingly so. Individuals have access to three courses: the 18-hole Sandy Lane Hotel Course, the 18-hole course at the new Royal Westmoreland Golf Course, and the 9-hole course at Rockley. Tennis courts are available, although few are public, and most require club membership. At least five squash clubs are available and several gyms and fitness centers offer exercise classes as well as Nautilus equipment. Bodybuilding is a very popular sport in Barbados. The country has produced a number of world-class bodybuilders, including a former Mr. Universe and a former Mr. World.

All beaches in Barbados are public. A certain amount of harassment by panhandlers and itinerant vendors is a problem with some selling drugs. Women who are alone can expect to be approached by several persistent young men who make a living that way. Swimming, water skiing, sailing, windsurfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, and fishing are popular sports. The water is warm year round. Some of the hotels offer use of their pools gratis or for a small fee. Most swimming areas do not have lifeguards, and swimming on the east coast can be very dangerous.

Sailing conditions are good, but possible local destinations are very limited. No marinas or docks are available to pleasure boat owners in Barbados. Those that exist are only for commercial fishing boats. Boats may be moored along the coast; most are moored in Carlisle Bay adjacent to the Yacht Club. No charge is made for your mooring. The Yacht Club has modest fees to join for both boating and tennis and

sponsors serious sailing races for racing, cruising, and dinghy classes.

Thoroughbreds on the island are limited in number, although the Barbados Turf Club holds periodic races during the year. Horses are occasionally brought in from Trinidad or Martinique. Polo matches are held during winter.

Barbados offers opportunities for water polo, horseback riding, rifle shooting, Ping-pong, and netball. For runners, two or three 10K races and a marathon are held each year. The Barbados Hash House Harriers meet every Saturday afternoon at various spots on the island for a run or walk through the countryside. The National Trust sponsors walks each Sunday morning and afternoon that offer great views as well as good exercise.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

All touring on Barbados is done by car. Distances are not great, but travel can sometimes be time consuming due to narrow, congested, and unevenly maintained roads.

Barbados has several old plantation "Great Houses" open to the public. Sam Lord's Castle, Villa Nova, and St. Nicholas Abbey are the best known, but Sunbury and Francia are also interesting to visit. Farley Hill, a great house now in ruins, is a National Park with beautiful views of both coasts, a picnic area, and playground. The Flower Forest, Welchman Hall Gully, and Andromeda Gardens are botanical parks. The Wildlife Reserve has monkeys, caiman, peacocks, tortoises, and other small animals and is a favorite with children. Harrison's Cave is a large limestone cavern also very popular with the younger set.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines offer some of the most beautiful sailing waters in the world. It is a short flight from Barbados to Grenada, Union Island, or St. Vincent. Chartering a sailboat and sailing among the Grenadine islands is a memorable experience for those who are able to take advantage of the oppor-

tunity to explore the unique character and attractions of each of the islands.

Entertainment

Entertainment possibilities in Barbados, beyond the tourist-oriented shows, are limited and hard to find. Those who seek them out, begin by asking long-term residents and Barbadians. The island's drive-in movie theater is a great treat on balmy evenings with a cooler of drinks and a vat of popcorn.

Most Americans in Barbados have VCRs (VHS predominant) and get current copies of releases from the many video clubs located around the island. Many of these copies are of indifferent quality and do not appear authorized. Amateur and semiprofessional theater, music, and dance groups perform occasionally. In addition, most larger hotels provide calypso and steelband music of varying quality year round. The island also has some nightclubs and discos.

Barbados has many restaurants that, in general, offer standard tourist fare at tourist prices. A few noteworthy restaurants offer excellent cuisine at prices comparable to those of similar quality in Washington, D.C. Some of the hotels offer buffet specials, which can be more reasonably priced.

The Barbados National Trust holds an open house each week from January to April at some of the finer homes on the island. The plantation houses are varied, with luxury winter homes. These tours are popular with residents and tourists alike. The Barbados Museum supports an amateur archeological group that has been digging with great success at a pre-Columbian Indian site.

Amateur photographers and artists will find both scenic beauty and human interest shots. Art materials are limited. Film can be purchased locally, but is expensive.

Several active bridge clubs hold regular sessions. The Barbados Bridge League offers duplicate bridge four

times a week. A chess club and a ham radio club accept members.

Social Activities

The American Women's Club is a large local organization that meets monthly. Membership is open to both Americans and others. The club sponsors several activities, including a book group, a cooking group, bridge, a literary group, and an occasional charity ball.

Opportunities exist to meet Barbadians officially and in community activities. These contacts can later broaden into more personal relationships, but may require more effort to overcome the reserved distance characteristic of Barbadian culture. Nationals of other countries, particularly the U.K. and Canada, are easy to meet and share many interests with Americans. The Multi-National Women's Committee sponsors an annual fundraising fair to benefit a variety of children's charities each February, thereby offering opportunities to get involved in Barbadian society and meet people from many countries.

International organizations represented in Barbados include, among others, UNDP, PAHO, EEC, IDB, UNICEF, and the OAS.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Barbados lies about 270 miles northeast of Venezuela and 1,612 miles southeast of Miami. It is 21 miles long and 14 miles wide with an area of 166 square miles. Constant westward tradewinds temper the tropical climate much of the year.

Situated 100 miles to the east of the Caribbean Windward Island chain, Barbados is distinct from those islands in many ways. It is a coral island, rather than volcanic, and relatively flat.

Mt. Hillaby, the highest point, is only 1,104 feet above sea level. Bridgetown, the capital, is located on the southwest corner of the island. The west and south coasts leading out of the city are densely populated, with hotels, residential, and commercial areas intermingling. The rugged, windswept east coast boasts the scenic Scotland district. The currents on the east coast are very dangerous, and swimming is forbidden in many areas. The interior of the island rises gently and sugarcane fields are interspersed with villages, farms, and the occasional plantation Great House.

Actual temperatures in Barbados vary little during the year, averaging about 77°F (25°C) and rarely rising above 89°F (32°C) or falling below 65°F (18°C). The intensity of the sun this near the Equator makes it seem much hotter, but the effects of the changes in humidity are even stronger. During the summer months, which make up the rainy season and coincide with the hurricane season, high humidity levels greatly intensify the discomfort of the higher temperatures. During the winter, which is the “dry” tourist season, it can feel almost cold in the evenings. Even during those months a significant amount of rain falls.

Population

Approximately 260,000 people live in Barbados, with about 123,000 of them residing in the capital of Bridgetown.

Arawak Indians are thought to have lived here once, only to be destroyed by the fierce Carib Indians who then abandoned the island. Barbados was uninhabited when British sailors landed at what is now Hometown, in 1625. As the sugar industry developed into the main commercial interest, Barbados was divided into huge estates. Slaves were brought from Africa to work the plantations until slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire in 1834.

Barbados is much more densely populated than its Eastern Caribbean island neighbors. The people of Barbados came from Africa, England, South America, North America, other Caribbean nations, and, more recently, from Asian countries. Over 90% of the population is directly descended from African slaves, and they dominate the island's politics. Over the last 15 years, a growing interest in exploring their African cultural heritage has occurred. Approximately 20% of the population are of mixed black and white blood, with shades of skin color playing an important role in defining how Barbadians view one another. This can be seen in the variety of terms used to describe the variations between black and white—brown skin, light skin, fair skin, high brown, red, and mulatto among them. About 7% of the population is white, and still control much of the economic activity on the island. Since the mid-1980s, a willingness on the part of educated blacks and others to discuss racial problems and concepts has often led to heated debates. Racially motivated violence, however, is rare to nonexistent.

Barbadians consider themselves as friendly, relaxed, and informal, and many visitors to Barbados who stay for only a few days or weeks leave with that same impression. Outsiders who live here, however, perceive Barbadians as more reserved, formal, and less spontaneous and outgoing than any other people in the West Indies. They are not nearly so quick as Americans to deal with others on a first-name basis, resorting more often to titles and formal forms of address. A proud people, Barbadians may take offense easily to any perceived slight, and sometimes seem to be looking for signs of disrespect or condescension.

English is the official language, but dialects vary from country to country in the region, as well as from parish to parish on each island. Most Americans need some time to adapt to the heavy Barbadian dialect, which can become absolutely impenetrable at will. A French

patois is spoken widely in St. Lucia, Dominica, and in certain areas of St. Vincent as these islands were all under French control at one time or another.

Public Institutions

From the arrival of the first British settlers in 1627 until independence in 1966, Barbados was under British control. Its House of Assembly, which began meeting in 1639, is the third oldest legislative body in the Western Hemisphere, preceded only by Bermuda's legislature and the Virginia House of Burgesses.

Local politics at that time were dominated by a small group of British plantation owners and tradesmen. It was not until the 1930s that a movement for political rights was begun by educated descendants of the emancipated slaves. One of the leaders, Sir Grantley Adams, founded the Barbados Labor Party in 1938.

Progress toward a more democratic government was made in 1950 when universal suffrage was introduced. This was followed by steps toward increased self-government until full internal autonomy was achieved in 1961.

From 1958 to 1962, Barbados was one of 10 members in the West Indies Federation. When the Federation was terminated, Barbados reverted to its former status as a self-governing colony. Following several attempts to form another federation composed of Barbados and the Leeward and Windward Islands, Barbados negotiated its own independence at a constitutional conference with the U.K. in June 1966. After years of peaceful, democratic, and evolutionary progress toward self-rule, Barbados attained independence on November 30, 1966.

Barbados is now an independent and sovereign state within the Commonwealth. Under the current constitution, Barbados is a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. The Queen of England,

Barbados titular head of state, appoints a Governor General as her representative in Barbados. The bicameral Parliament, consisting of an appointed Senate and an elected House of Assembly, is supreme. The Prime Minister (normally the leader of the House majority party) and other Cabinet members are appointed from among the House members. The Senate consists of 21 members; the House, 28. The Governor General appoints all Senators: 7 without advice to represent religious, economic, social, or other interests; 12 on the advice of the Prime Minister; and 2 on the advice of the opposition leader. The country's two major political parties, the Barbados Labor Party and the Democratic Labor Party (which arose out of the labor movement in the West Indies) have precipitated much of the country's political change.

The judiciary comprises the Supreme Court of Barbados and numerous courts of summary jurisdiction. The Supreme Court includes a Court of Appeal and a High Court.

The island is divided into 11 parishes and the city of Bridgetown. No local government exists, and all these divisions are administered by the central government.

The territories are linked in various ways, but little popular support exists to merge the islands into a common Caribbean or other regional political grouping. There have been unsuccessful attempts to form a single political union.

Arts, Science, and Education

The educational system, traditionally geared to prepare administrative and clerical personnel as well as some university entrants, has changed recently. Certain branches of technical training, especially manufacturing, engineering service, hotel management, and management training, have progressed greatly.

The government operates primary and secondary schools, and through grants, aids some private schools, all of which offer regular academic subjects—English, math, languages, science, history, and geography. The educational system is patterned after the British model. The Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) has faculties of law, arts, and general studies, natural and social sciences, and a school of education. Other UWI facilities are located at the Jamaica and Trinidad campuses. The Barbados Community College offers junior college-level courses in commercial, engineering subjects and liberal arts and recently introduced the associate degree program modeled after the U.S. system. The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic Institute concentrates on vocational and technical education. Erdiston College conducts a 2-year teacher training course. Codrington College, an Anglican seminary dating back to the early 1700s, now is also affiliated with UWI.

Each year the National Cultural Foundation (NCF) sponsors a guitar festival in February, and the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) in November. The Caribbean and Latin American Music Society (CLAMS) sponsors a series of classical chamber music concerts in January, and the Barbados Dance Theater sponsors a "season of dance" in March. All of these activities involve a limited number of amateur performances (usually fewer than six) over the space of a few days. The NCF also sponsors the island's largest festival, Crop-Over, from June to August. This is similar to the Carnival celebrated on other islands in the Caribbean. It includes calypso competitions and other festivities, culminating in "Kadooment," a street parade of costumes and general merrymaking.

Throughout the year, performances by calypso artists, amateur theatrical productions, the Barbados Symphonia (a local orchestral ensemble), and a variety of talent competitions and concerts by local

groups and church choirs are offered. Several local art shows are also here.

Commerce and Industry

Historically, sugar production was Barbados' largest industry since its introduction in the 17th century. But in recent years, tourism and light industry have surpassed sugar both as foreign exchange earners and employers.

Tourism is a major industry in Barbados and continues to increase each year, with an 8% growth in 2000. The majority of visitors are from the United Kingdom, but U.S. visitors have increased in the past few years. To encourage tourism and industrial development, the government is expanding the recently completed major highway program that links the airport, deep-water harbor, several industrial parks.

Sugar production continues and even rose by about 10% in 2000 to its highest yield since 1997. Most of the sugar produced is sold to the European Community at a guaranteed price. Non-sugar agricultural production, vegetables and cotton, grew by about 6%. However, agriculture only accounts for about 4% of the GDP, and imports are still needed to provide Barbados with much of what it needs to survive, not only in foods, but in energy and other consumer products. In 2000, Barbados import expense was about \$800 million. Major trading partners are the U.K. and the U.S.

Barbados is a member of CARICOM, a regional trade alliance.

Unions play an important role in the nation's political and economic development. Some 40% of the work force is unionized, and the labor movement, particularly the Barbados Workers Union, has traditionally been a significant factor in the political process in Barbados.

Transportation

Local

Barbados has an extensive road network—900 miles of paved roads—but the roads are narrow, poorly developed, and many are indifferently maintained. Blind corners and dangerous intersections are encountered throughout the island. The tropical climate includes frequent brief rains that leave the roadway extremely slippery. The lack of sidewalks means pedestrians are often encountered in the road. Traffic tends to be congested in Bridgetown during daytime hours.

Inexpensive public bus service covers nearly all the island. Buses are not air-conditioned and are overcrowded during rush hours and on Saturdays when people go to market. Independently owned minivans operate at low cost and breakneck speed, with a minimum of regulation and according to no published schedule. Taxis are available in population centers and at most hotels, but fares are too high for regular use.

Regional

Daily flights are available to Miami, New York, and through San Juan to other cities. Travel from the U.S. to the other islands of the Caribbean can be expensive, particularly in the high season—mid-December to mid-April. Travel within the Caribbean islands costs the same year round. Several local travel agents offer moderately priced packages over holiday weekends and during the low season to the other Caribbean islands, Puerto Rico, and Caracas. Martinique, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, and Grenada are close.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The telephone system in Barbados is good, with direct-dial service via satellite to the U.S. Repairs can take a very long time. The area code for Barbados and most of the Caribbean is 809. Direct calls are expensive, but cheaper when charged to a U.S. telephone credit card (cur-

rently, AT&T and cable and wireless have an agreement to permit use of AT&T cards in Barbados). Telegraph service is also good.

Radio and TV

Two local AM radio stations, four local FM radio stations, and one wired service are available only to subscribers. The AM stations favor West Indian sounds, with lively discussions on local issues and extensive local news coverage. The FM stations present American pop, easy listening, and religious formats. One of the FM stations also presents a classical program on the weekends. The wire service, Redifusion, carries classical music, drama, and literature. The BBC's *World News* is broadcast on both AM and FM daily. In addition to the Barbados stations, several regionally based radio stations can be picked up on the AM band, including Radio Francaise Outre-Mer and stations in Grenada, St. Vincent, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, and Venezuela. VOA is carried 7 hours a day over Radio Antilles (930 AM).

The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) TV station carries 12 hours of programming daily, including about 4 hours of CNN *Headline News* weekday mornings. Evening programming is a mix of older American and British serials, locally produced news, and information and entertainment shows. *Sesame Street* is telecast weekday afternoons. CBC broadcasts in NTSC and U.S. sets operate without adjustment. They have recently made available four subscriber channels, ESPN, CNN, TNT South, and Lifetime, at a fee comparable to U.S. cable services that have many more channels.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Barbados has two daily newspapers, *The Nation* and *The Advocate*, both published in Bridgetown and available throughout the island. These concentrate on local and regional news. Their coverage of international news not directly affecting Barbados is limited. Home delivery is available. A local distributor

offers same day or 1-day-later provision of *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *The Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times*.

Popular U.S. magazines may be purchased at the three or four local bookstores and newsstands, but they are expensive. International editions of U.S. news magazines are available locally.

Barbados has a public library system, and the small central library has a fair collection. Several local bookstores carry a very limited selection of paperbacks and hard-bound books at very high prices.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Barbados has good medical facilities, and most medical specialties have practitioners here. Some areas of medical practice are lacking, however, and certain ailments and injuries cannot be adequately treated locally.

Medical facilities on the other islands are barely adequate, and most lack the facilities to treat major medical problems. Each island has at least one hospital, but complicated cases are usually transferred to Barbados.

Two main hospitals, the government-supported Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the private Bayview Hospital are available, along with local polyclinics. The selection of a personal or family physician is the responsibility of the individual and should be done as soon as possible. The physician with whom you register will determine at which hospital you will receive treatment. In case of emergency, your private physician will meet you at the hospital, which will greatly speed the care given.

Individual or family counseling is available through recommended community resources.

Therapy services, including physical, occupational, and speech, are available both privately and through government services. Most therapists are trained abroad in the U.S., U.K., or Canada and provide good-quality care by U.S. standards.

General dental and orthodontic services are available. When possible, crowns, root canals, dental surgery, etc., should be done in the U.S.

Not all local pharmacists will fill U.S. physician prescriptions. In general, pharmacists will supply a medicine to someone who has run out of a supply while visiting, if the vial and some form of identification are produced. Drug agencies in Barbados order from all over the world, including the U.S., with many of the brand names supplied in the U.S. available here, sometimes at a lower price.

Community Health

The Government of Barbados is continuing its efforts to improve sanitation. Most residences in Bridgetown are connected to sewers. Free garbage pickup is provided once or twice a week in many areas. Sanitation inspectors periodically check homes, hotels, restaurants, and factories to control flies and mosquitoes.

Barbados has pure water, filtered through 600 feet of coral. Tap-water is potable. The water is not fluoridated. The water's lime and calcium content are high. Do not assume the tap-water is potable on the other islands. Drink bottled water, soft drinks, etc.

Preventive Measures

The intense sunlight is a serious hazard. Use sunscreen daily before leaving home. Children particularly need to be protected from overexposure. Sunscreen is available locally. The climate can cause heat exhaustion, sunburn, and fatigue. Drink plenty of fluids to offset increased perspiration.

Local milk and milk products are safe. Fruits and vegetables need only washing.

Skin problems such as acne and fungal infections may be aggravated by the humid climate, and extra measures of hygiene are necessary. Photosensitivity reactions from taking certain medications may occur. Pollen from cane, cashews, and other flora may cause allergic reactions. Some people suffer gastrointestinal disturbances after arrival, but the effects are generally slight and mainly due to the change in eating habits, climate, and water. External ear infections are common. Hookworms, roundworms, and pinworms are common, but normally do not present a problem to resident Americans.

Dengue fever occurs periodically. No protection is available other than the avoidance of mosquito bites. Use coils and repellants. A few cases of bilharzia (schistosomiasis) continue to be reported annually on St. Lucia as well as the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. To avoid the disease, do not expose any part of the body to any freshwater streams, lakes, or pools. Tuberculosis is a recurrent problem in Dominica, and, to a lesser extent, in St. Lucia. Skin tests for tuberculosis are available in the Medical Unit.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

The exact dates of some religious holidays are based on the lunar calendar and change each year.

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 21	Errol Barrow's Birthday
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Sunday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Whitsunday*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 1	Emancipation Day
August (first Monday) . . .	Kadooment Day
October (first Monday) . . .	United Nations Day
Nov. 30	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

You can reach Bridgetown from Washington, D.C., by air via New York or Miami. American Airlines has daily flights from JFK and Miami with a stopover in San Juan. No regularly scheduled U.S. passenger liner service is available between the U.S. and Barbados.

U.S. citizens may enter Barbados for up to 28 days without a valid passport, but must carry original documentation proving U.S. citizenship (i.e. valid or expired U.S. passport, certified U.S. birth certificate, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, Certificate of Naturalization, or Certificate of Citizenship), state-issued photo identification and an onward or return ticket. U.S. citizen visitors who enter Barbados without these items, even if admitted by immigration authorities, may encounter difficulties in boarding flights for return to the United States. U.S. citizens entering with documents other than U.S. passports should take special care to secure those documents while travelling. It can be time-consuming and difficult to acquire new proof of citizenship to facilitate return travel. The Barbados government requires payment of a service tax upon departure from the island.

Barbados customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Barbados of items such as firearms and agricultural products. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Barbados in Washington, D.C. or one of Barbados's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Barbados are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Barbados and obtain updated information on travel and security within Barbados. The U.S. Embassy is located in Bridgetown

at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) Building on Broad Street, telephone (246) 436-4950, web site <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhemb1.html>. The Consular Section is located in the American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) Building, Cheapside, telephone (246) 431-0225 or fax (246) 431-0179, web site <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwh-cons.html>. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except local and U.S. holidays.

Pets

Barbados is rabies free, and the authorities are determined to keep it so. Most families purchase animals locally. Some purebred animals are sold locally, but they are expensive. Dogs and cats can generally be imported into Barbados only from the U.K. If you want to import a dog or cat, strict quarantine regulations require that the animal be quarantined for 6 months in the U.K. You must then apply for an import permit from the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture at least 30 days in advance of pet's arrival date. Importation from another rabies-free country is not always permitted, but the cost savings make it worth taking the steps to apply for an import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture well in advance of your arrival. The U.K. Ministry of Agriculture will supply a list of recommended kennels for quarantine upon request. If you want to import other animals, you must obtain an import permit from the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture before shipping the animal. Excellent veterinarians are located on the island who offer boarding facilities as well.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit is the Barbados dollar (BDS\$), comprising 100¢. US\$1= BDS\$2 (fixed rate). Most hotels and restaurants on the island accept U.S. currency. The East Caribbean dollar (EC\$), comprising 100¢, is also accepted. US\$1=EC\$2.70. Rates seldom fluctuate.

The Central Bank of Barbados issues Barbados currency in denominations of \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10, \$5, and \$2 in notes. Coins are issued in \$1, 25¢, 10¢, 5¢, and 1¢ denominations. The Caribbean Currency Authority issues East Caribbean notes in denominations of \$100, \$20, \$10, \$5, and \$1. Coins are minted in 50¢, 25¢, 10¢, 5¢, 2¢, and 1¢ denominations.

Barbados and the other islands of the Eastern Caribbean use the metric system.

Disaster Preparedness

All Caribbean countries can be affected by hurricanes. The hurricane season normally runs from June to the end of November, but there have been hurricanes in December in recent years. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The

Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Several books are available in Barbados regarding West Indian life, history, and culture. Most are not widely available outside of the Caribbean. Rather than include a long list of these books here, members of the Embassy staff recommend newcomers read the following books, which are available in the U.S. as an introduction to Barbados.

A-Z of Barbadian Heritage. Kingston, Jamaica: Heinemann Publications, 1990.

Alleyne, W. *The Barbados Garrison and Its Buildings*. Hampshire, England: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990.

Beckles, Hilary. *A History of Barbados*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Broberg, Merle. *Barbados*. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.

Hoefler, Hans. *Barbados: Insight Guides*. APA Publications: Singapore, 1985.

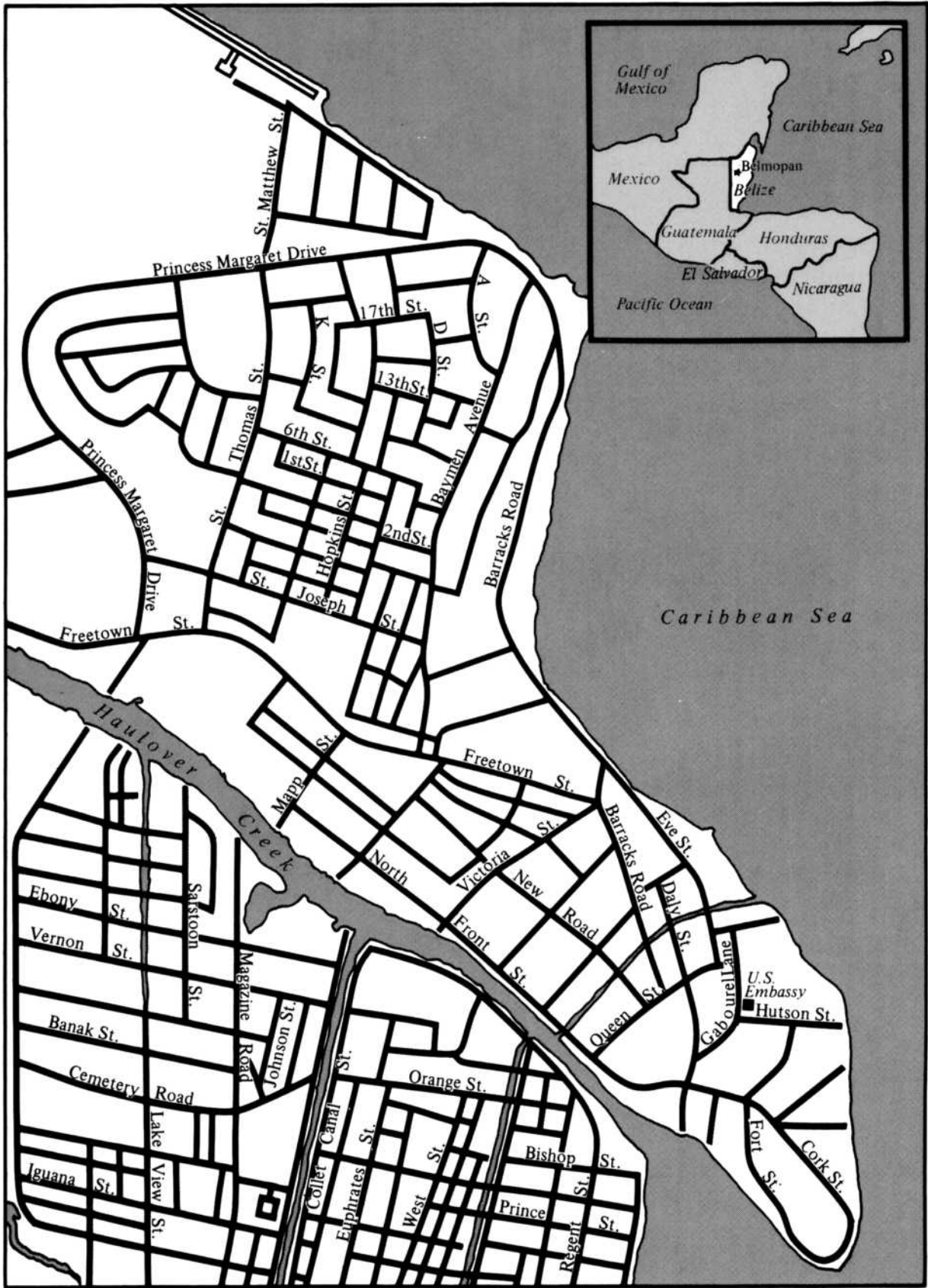
Hoyos, F.A. *Barbados: A History from Amerindians to Independence*. Macmillan Publishers.

Michener, James. *Caribbean*. New York: Random House, 1989.

Pariser, H. *Adventure Guide to Barbados*. New York: Hunter Publishing, 1990.

Potter, Robert B., and Graham M.S. Dann, comps. *Barbados*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1987.

Wouk, Herman. *Don't Stop the Carnival*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965.



Belmopan, Belize

BELIZE

Major Cities:

Belmopan, Belize City

Other Cities:

Dangriga, Orange Walk, Punta Gorda, San Ignacio

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Belize. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The tiny country once known as British Honduras, lies on the Caribbean coast of Central America, tucked in between Mexico on the north and Guatemala on the west and south. Its first European settlement was made in 1638 by shipwrecked British sailors but, subjected to repeated attacks by neighboring Spanish colonies, it endured a troubled 150-year period until the British established control just before the turn of the 19th century. Full status as a crown colony was formally declared in 1862. Belize has been independent since 1981. Although Britain had sovereignty, Guatemala had long disputed Britain's claim to the territory, maintaining its own terri-

torial claim allegedly inherited from Spain. Guatemala finally recognized Belize's independence in 1991. The Guatemalan claim, however, remains unresolved.

Belize is a land of natural wonders and broad ecological diversity. It is noted for its virgin rain forests and pine savannas; the richness of its marine and wildlife; and, especially, for its 176-mile-long barrier reef, second only in size to the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. Estuaries, caves, and cascading waterfalls add further wealth to the tropical environment.

Archaeological sites at Xunantunich and Altun Ha reveal the extensive Mayan civilization that flourished here approximately 1,500 years ago. With almost every new excavation, spectacular discoveries are made, and the country becomes ever more notable for its pre-Columbian culture.

MAJOR CITIES

Belmopan

Belmopan is situated some 50 miles inland in the foothills of the Maya Mountains, at the country's geographic center. When the capital

was moved here in 1970 from Belize City, the principal municipality, the area first had to be cleared of its dense jungle growth. The city was built after the devastation wrought in 1961 upon Belize City by Hurricane Hattie. Although Belmopan is also vulnerable to hurricane winds, its mean altitude of 182.5 feet above sea level is greater than Belize City's, and this protects it against the waters which have inundated the latter in previous times, causing widespread damage and loss of life.

Belmopan is easily accessible by one of the country's two good highways, although heavy rains can cause severe flooding on the sections of road close to Belize City.

The capital's main point of interest is the National Assembly building, patterned on an ancient Mayan motif, and flanked by government ministries around a spacious esplanade.

The official residences of the governor-general and the prime minister also are here, as are some foreign consulates. The city is administered by an agency of the national government rather than by an elected municipal authority.

Belmopan lacks the amenities found in Belize City. It has a handful of shops and stores, a market, one movie theater, a hotel, two commer-

cial banks, one service station, and a small hospital for minor health problems. On weekends, many people travel the short distance to Belize City for shopping and entertainment.

Current plans for Belmopan's future include expansion to accommodate several times its present population of about 6,000 with the addition of residential, governmental, commercial, industrial, educational, and medical facilities. A 20-room hotel has convention facilities. Also, the broad, fertile valley of the Belize River, stretching several miles to the north and west of Belmopan, provides an excellent area for agricultural development.

Belize City

Belize City is a mixture of modern concrete buildings, Victorian-style wood houses, and old buildings dating back to the 1800s. A branch of the Belize River, known as Haulover Creek, divides the city into "northside" and "southside". Three bridges join the two halves. Downtown (alternately described as dumpy and charming) and the poorer sections of town are southside. The Fort George area and the Southern Foreshore, facing each other at the mouth of the Creek, are the older residential areas. Kings Park, Caribbean Shores and Bell Vista, where most Mission personnel live, are newer developments on the nourished, upriver toward the airport.

The city is built on reclaimed mangrove swamp and expansion can occur only by further reclamation, an expensive process. The two roads leaving the city pass through several miles of wetland before reaching slightly higher ground.

Seaward, the view is interesting. Four or five scenic cayes with good fishing, swimming, and skin-diving, lie within a 30-minute boat ride. The island villages of San Pedro and Caye Caulker are the favorite jumping-off spots where skin-diving and scuba equipment can be rented.

Close in to Belize City, the sea is shallow, muddy, and polluted. Freighters dock at a cargo pier outside the city, while cruise ships often anchor offshore in winter. Though locals can often be seen swimming along the city shoreline, there are no beaches. You should swim only at the cayes, along the reef, up rivers or at designated beach areas. The nearest white-sand beaches are 30 minutes east by boat or a one-hour drive south.

Food

Most packaged, canned and bottled items needed in the average household can be bought in Belize. Four supermarkets and several small groceries carry a good supply of imported U.S. and British food and housekeeping supplies. Most baby foods, formulas and disposable diapers are available. Prices on all items are high. The supermarkets have imported fresh butter, margarine, various cheeses and a modest assortment of frozen products, including fruits, vegetables, bakery goods, and processed meats. Frozen whole chickens, chicken parts, beef and pork from local producers are stocked as well. Fresh meat is sold in various meat markets and, with the exception of lamb which is increasing in popularity, is in generous supply. Beef is not as tender here as in the U.S., but is lean and of quite acceptable quality. Local chickens are good, as are local dairy products in general.

Fish, conch, shrimp and lobster are caught and frozen locally. The supply of fresh fish varies according to the weather and prices are cheaper than in the U.S.

Mexico offers less expensive shopping: Chetumal is just over the border (two-hour drive), while Cancun and Merida (six-hour drives) boast fully stocked Wal-Marts and Sam's Clubs.

Clothing

The most important thing to keep in mind when buying clothing to wear in Belize is that the fabric must be suitable for the hot and humid climate. No garment will be wearable

if the fabric is heavy or retains heat. Synthetics and double knits are too hot. Pure cotton is ideal, but always think lightweight and permanent press. There is one dry-cleaner in Belize City. Another consideration is the type of recreational activity most popular here. Casual clothing is acceptable for swimming, fishing, boating and travel to out-of-the-way archeological ruins. It also is a good idea to have a hat for protection from the sun. Ladies straw hats and men's summer caps can be purchased in Belize, but beachwear is best brought to post. Remember that clothes wear out quickly, as there is no change of season. Therefore, bring more, rather than less; little is available on the local market. Lightweight hiking boots and outdoor clothing or jungle fatigues are a good idea for hiking in the rainforest.

Men: Dress is cool and casual. Guayaberas (embroidered Mexican shirts with evenly hemmed tails worn outside the pants) are appropriate on most occasions and are worn in the office and for evening social events. Any open-necked short- or long-sleeved shirts are acceptable for business and most informal social occasions. Lightweight suits are worn for a few special events, especially official functions. Black-tie is almost never worn, but when it is, both black and white jackets are acceptable. Poor drainage in the city, which is one foot below sea level, floods streets and hides ditches during the rainy season, so getting wet is a part of life here. Sweaters are needed for winter evenings.

Women: Dressing is casual, although less so in the office where air-conditioning is efficient. Dresses or slacks are worn. Lightweight slacks and tops, and sleeveless dresses are worn for shopping and marketing. Sun-dresses are also popular for everyday wear. Stockings are never worn except occasionally in the evening and in the office. Hats are rarely required. Short cocktail dresses and patio-type clothes are worn at evening parties. Formal parties are rare, so the need

for long evening dresses is minimal. In December and January, dresses with sleeves are comfortable. A light stole is useful to have in the evening during the cooler months. Bring a sweater and heavier clothing for traveling to mountain areas.

Completely closed leather or synthetic shoes are a bit warm for Belize. So canvas espadrilles and sandals are common daytime wear. Women's casual shoes are sold here, but styles and fit are limited. Narrow sizes are not available.

Children: Infants and children wear simple clothing. Cotton T-shirts, light pants, shorts, and simple dresses are worn. Sneakers are the usual footwear, so bring a supply. Children tend to dress up for birthday parties and religious services.

All schools mandate that uniforms be worn. Children's shoes are available, but don't count on the local selection. Some British and American toys and baby supplies are sold, but prices are high.

Supplies and Services

Most all necessities can be bought at one of the several department, hardware, and drugstores, but shortages occur. Hobby, recreational, beauty and medicinal/medical items can be another story. If they are available, they're expensive. Make sure you bring along books, art supplies, CDs and special needs like cosmetics, medicines and toiletries. A good rule of thumb is: If it's not in every store in the U.S., don't assume it's to be found anywhere in Belize (though sometimes Belize can surprise you).

There is one dry cleaner in Belize City and three or four commercial laundromats. Electricians, plumbers, carpenters, auto mechanics, etc., are easy to find, but service is generally slow, and replacement parts not always on hand. Barbers and hairdressers are competent, as are upholsterers, drapery makers, dressmakers and jewelers.

Domestic Help

Most American households have a maid, though experienced and trained servants are difficult to find. Domestic workers typically do not live in, and work 6-8 hours per day. The legal minimum wage for domestics is Bz\$2.25 per hour. Overtime is paid for extra hours. Employers pay Social Security tax for all domestics who work over 23 hours per week. Maids do routine cleaning, laundry and child care, and may speak Spanish and/or English. Night baby-sitting and help at parties requires overtime pay. Hours and fringe benefits should be agreed upon at time of employment.

Religious Activities

Belize is roughly 60% Roman Catholic and 38% Protestant. Although church attendance is relatively low, the country is very religious; prayers accompany virtually every public ceremony. Denominations represented in Belize include Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Hindu, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mennonite, Methodist, Mormon, Muslim, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Seventh Day Adventist. All conduct services in English.

Education

Local schools provide good education through the junior high school level. The basics are taught, but creative art, music and laboratory science are lacking. The school year usually begins the first Monday after September 10, and ends in mid-June. There is a three-week vacation at Christmas and a two-week vacation at Easter.

Some schools have U.S. priests and nuns on their staff, but most of the schools are staffed by Belizeans. The educational system is basically British (although the textbooks in some schools come from the U.S.), and some of the curriculum and the approach to learning differs from that in the U.S. Most students re-entering schools in the U.S. have no difficulty at their expected grade level.

To enter first grade, a child must be five years old by January 1, following the beginning of the school year. Infant I (kindergarten) enrolls children from ages three to five, and there are morning and afternoon sessions.

Most foreign grade-school children attend the British Toucan School, located at the Belize Defense Forces Airport Camp. Some others attend the new and privately operated Belize Elementary School.

At the high school level, girls can attend St. Catherine Academy or Palloti, both of which are run by Roman Catholic nuns. St. John's College, run by Jesuit priests, is the premier school for boys. The Anglican Cathedral College is a coeducational high school. Belmopan Christian Academy in Belmopan offers an American curriculum and several American teachers. These schools are regarded as the best in Belize.

Special Educational Opportunities

St. John's Sixth Form is a coeducational junior college with U.S. accreditation. St John's College Extension and the Extramural Department of the University of the West Indies offer a few evening courses for adults. Several people have learned Spanish through these courses as well as the Mexican Cultural Institute. These night classes are attended by working people who are studying to pass the high school equivalency test or who are upgrading then office skills by taking commercial courses

The University College of Belize provides higher education. Degrees are offered in Business Administration, Math English, Chemistry, Biology, Environmental Health, Education and Social Work Elective courses are in English, Literature Economics, History and Mathematics

Sports

Adequate exercise and outdoor recreation are essential to morale and physical wellbeing in Belize. Opportunities for outdoor recreation are

limitless, while those who don't like the outdoors are likely to find life here frustrating. Jogging and bicycling are popular. Close proximity to some of the world's most beautiful boating and swimming makes this an ideal post for water sports. Sailing, canoeing (on rivers), sea kayaking, motor-boating, SCUBA, snorkeling, fishing, and exploring the barrier reef and the cayes are popular activities. From Belize City, water taxis take you out to the cayes. There are plenty of boats for hire, or bring your own. Outboard motors are in ample supply and cheaper than in the U.S. Races for various classes of local and imported sailboats are held two or three times a year. Fishing tournaments, too, are held several times a year. Manatee can be seen upriver; and it is possible to canoe from the Guatemalan border into Belize City in 3 or 4 days (experienced outfitters can arrange the trip). The Belize Pickwick Club, the main tennis and social club, is in decline and membership is expensive. There are a few free or less expensive courts to be found around town, and partners are easy to find.

There is one private golf course. The Caye Chapel course is on an island ten miles east, and is being upgraded whilst the entire island is remade into an exclusive resort. It charges Bz\$50/round. (Bring your own set of clubs, rentals don't exist here.) Golf is also possible in Cancun.

The cost of recreational and hobby equipment is high. It's a good idea to bring your own supplies and equipment. A fully equipped gymnasium is available northside at reasonable monthly fees.

Bird watching and hiking are popular activities. Belize is a world famous bird watching destination with over 560 species. An enthusiastic and professional Belize Audubon Society is active throughout the country. Belize has several caves to explore. Some can even be floated through on rivers in inner tubes.

The Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina, and the Fiesta Inn open

their main pools to non-hotel guests, who have come for a meal. Also, a public pool has just been completed.

The Belize Fishing Association benefits sports fishermen and promotes fishing-related tourism. The association explores all kinds of sport fishing, organizes fishing tournaments, and advances marine conservation by maintaining records of fish caught in Belizean waters, such as grouper, snapper, tuna, marlin and swordfish.

Popular sports include karate, softball, basketball, horse racing, body building, soccer and cross-country bicycle racing.

The government reciprocally issues amateur radio licenses upon presentation of a U.S. license. The Belize Amateur Radio Society offers code and technical courses. In addition to high frequency operations, there is wide-spread two-meter activity across the country, with the assistance of active repeaters.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Possibilities for weekend excursions are limitless. Roads, hotels, food and restaurants are generally good, the language is English, distances are short, and the variety of scenery great. A wide variety of ethnic groups can be found, and rural people are friendly. Particularly welcoming are the resident Americans, who are scattered all across the country, and are preeminent in the tourism industry.

A number of Mayan ruins in Belize have been excavated and partially restored. The two well-excavated ruins are Xunantunich, 70 miles west of Belize City, and Altun Ha, 30 miles north. The latest ruin, Caracol, rivaled (and in fact once defeated) Tikal, and requires an adventurous 4-wheel trek into Belize's tropical rainforest. Many sites are still under excavation and archeologists sometimes welcome visitors.

The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center, 30 miles west of the city, is a trend-setting world-class

facility, started and run by an American. It offers not only an interesting selection of Belizean wildlife in their natural settings, but also has educational programs on the flora and fauna of the region. A Baboon Sanctuary (actually black howler monkeys), butterfly farms across the country, bird sanctuaries (featuring the Western Hemisphere's largest bird, the jabiru) near Belize City and several national parks nationwide have established trails and guides. The world's only jaguar reserve is in the south.

The Mountain Pine Ridge, about three hours from Belize City off the Western Highway, provides a change of climate with cool nights. A number of resorts in the 3,000-foot high Pine Ridge offer horseback riding through Mayan ruins, inner tubing through ancient river caves, and ecological camping trips. Caves, waterfalls, natural pools and scenic views abound. The Mexican town of Chetumal (a two-hour drive), with freshwater, crystal clear lagoons for swimming close by, makes a good weekend excursion. The modern resorts of Cancun, Cozumel, Playa del Carmen and Isla Mujeres are six hours by car and are popular vacation sites. Cancun boasts every American chain restaurant and a Wet n Wild water park. Merida, the capital city of the Yucatan is also a six hour drive. It has excellent shopping and sightseeing facilities, and can be used as a base for visits to the famous ruins of Uxmal and Chichen-Itza.

Guatemala City and the colonial town of Antigua are an inexpensive and easy flight away. The quaint, sinking Guatemalan island village of Flores and the nearby Mayan ruins of Tikal are three hours by car.

Closer to home is Ambergris Caye, a large sandy island, only 15 minutes by plane or 1-1/2 hours by boat from Belize City. A fishing village turned tourist hub, San Pedro, is the premier jumping off spot for the best fishing, diving and boating. Many other lovely cayes are minutes from Belize City by boat, a couple with cabana guest rooms. Placencia, a

rustic, mainland fishing village about 30 minutes by air or three hours by car, is one of several popular beach-front village vacation spots in the south.

Entertainment

The Calypso Bar and Grill, part of the Fiesta Inn, has a live band and dancing every Thursday through Saturday nights, and attracts an older crowd. Lindbergh's Landing is a popular hangout, and the happy hour at Mangos restaurant is well-attended. The Bellevue Hotel is favored by older young people. Karaoke is popular. There are several nightclubs, but no movie theaters.

There are a number of festivals year round. September 10, the anniversary of the Battle of St. George's Caye, and September 21, Independence Day, both feature parades, beauty contests, street dances and special events. Pan American Day and Garifuna Settlement Day (the anniversary of their arrival in Belize) are also celebrated.

Social Activities

The 3,000-strong American community consists mainly of business people who have enterprises, hotels or farms on the cayes or in the interior. Several American clergy and religious orders live in Belize City and in the districts. An American Chamber of Commerce formed in 1998.

Your social life can be active or quiet depending on inclination. Belizeans are friendly and easy to get to know, and a wide circle of acquaintances can easily develop. Most social activity takes place in the home, out on the cayes, and through scheduled events of the various clubs. Both Rotary and Lions have active branches in Belize.

OTHER CITIES

DANGRIGA (formerly called Stann Creek) is located in east-central Belize on the Caribbean Sea. The town was founded by black refugees from Honduras in 1823. It soon became a

trading center and port for timber, fish, coconuts, and bananas. Dangriga has facilities for canning and freezing orange juice. The town's population is about 7,000.

Situated on the New River in north-eastern Belize, **ORANGE WALK** is about 50 miles north of the capital. During the late 19th and early 20th century, Orange Walk enjoyed prosperous mahogany trading. Today, the economy is based on sugarcane and rum distilling. The area's inhabitants are a mixture of Maya Indians, Creoles, and a small number of Mennonites. The city's population is about 10,400.

PUNTA GORDA, in southern Belize, lies on a coastal plain about 75 miles south of Belmopan. Livestock are raised locally. Punta Gorda is linked to Belmopan by the Southern and Hummingbird highways via Dangriga. Its exports include coconuts, sugarcane, and bananas. Most of the 2,600 residents are Caribs.

SAN IGNACIO (formerly called El Cayo or Cayo) is the administrative center of the Cayo district in west-central Belize. The town lies on the Belize River, near the border with Guatemala. Rice, beans, cattle, and corn are traded in San Ignacio. The town's inhabitants are mostly Maya Indians, *mestizos*, and a substantial number of Mennonites. The population is about 8,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Belize is located along Central America's eastern coast, bordered to the north by Mexico, to the west and south by Guatemala and to the east by the Caribbean Sea. It measures 175 miles north to south and 69 miles across at its widest point. Total land area is about the same as New Jersey.

The savannas of northern Belize are flat and dry compared to the rest of

the country (receiving only 50 inches of rain a year). The primary source of income for the predominantly Mestizo population there is sugarcane. South and westward, the hilly inland terrain is more forested, including some remaining stands of mahogany. Next is the Mountain Pine Ridge range, with pine-covered peaks of over 3,000 feet that enjoy cool nights year round. To the south are citrus plantations, fishing, and rainforests where the annual rainfall increases to 120 inches. The Mayan Indian and Garifuna inhabitants subsist primarily upon small-scale farm - subsist and fishing.

Much of the coastline consists of either dense growths of mangrove habitats or broken, low-lying and narrow sandy shoreline. Belize City itself rests upon filled mangrove forest, with an elevation that is actually a foot below sea level.

The central Belize District is the most populated of six and is predominantly Creole. Economic activity centers around commerce and some light manufacturing. Belize's barrier reef is the second largest in the world, running some 150 miles nearly the entire length of the coast, featuring three of the Caribbean's four atolls. Small islands or cayes (pronounced keys; abundant in the crystal-clear waters of the reefs.

Belize's subtropical climate is hot and humid most of the year. In Belize City the average daily temperature is 85°F, but the daytime high is often in the 90s between May and October, with uncomfortably high humidity. Dry season runs from January through April. Heavy rains begin in June and can continue through December. Mosquito outbreaks are a perennial result. From March to November, a fairly steady breeze makes the heat in Belize City less intolerable. The coolest period is December to February, when the average daily temperature is only 75°F. During this period, night temperatures can drop into the upper 50s.

Tropical storms and hurricanes can occur from June through November.

In 1931 and 1961, hurricanes devastated Belize City; Hattie in 1961 put 15 feet of water in the chancery. Hurricane Greta (1978) was much less intense, but still covered the first floor of the chancery with 18 inches of water.

The country's capital is Belmopan, at the country's geographic center in the foothills of the Maya Mountains. It was conceived and constructed as the capital after hurricane Hattie's devastation. Though Belmopan is still vulnerable to hurricane winds, its distance inland (50 miles) and 180-foot elevation protect it from the waters that inundate Belize City. Belmopan is an easy hour away by paved highway.

Belmopan's modest main point of interest is its government buildings, styled after ancient Mayan architecture, arranged around a wide plaza. While it lacks the amenities of Belize City, it does have a handful of shops and produce stalls, a supermarket, banks, three hotels and a hospital. Plans to increase the city's 7,000+ population have stalled in recent years, and Belize City remains the principal shopping, business and entertainment center.

Population

Belize's three major ethnic groups are the Mestizo (Spanish/Indian descent), the Creole (African/European descent) and the indigenous Maya Indians. Garifuna (African/Arawak Indian descent), East Indian, Lebanese, European, Mennonite and Chinese people make up the rest of the population, which is estimated at 230,000. Average annual growth rate is 2.6%, due to a high birth rate coupled with a higher immigration than emigration rate.

The Creole and Garifuna together comprise roughly 36% of the population. Descended from African slaves, the two groups are distinguished by lineage and culture. The Creole, who predominate in Belize City, intermarried with Europeans, and their local English dialect is



Street in Belize City, Belize

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

also known as Creole. Their culture is a blend of West Indian, British and American. The Garifuna are slaves intermarried with Carib Indians, who were deported by the British from the French West Indies around 1800. Garifuna communities are in the south. They maintain distinctly African cultural traits, while their first language combines an African dialect with Maya and Spanish words.

About 45% of Belizeans are of Latin and/or Indian lineage. Some are direct descendants of the regional Mayan tribes, who have become part of the money economy, learned Spanish, and married Latin descendants; this group is often referred to as the Mestizo. In remote areas, such as in the south, some Mayans still maintain some ethnic purity in custom and language.

In recent years, the influx of Hispanic refugees has had a significant impact on the population of Belize. The refugees came mostly from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras during the wars of the 1980s. A reduced number still come, primarily for economic reasons. Official estimates place their numbers at 40,000. Some are being assimilated into Belizean society, working as laborers or in service industries in the larger towns. Many live as squatters, practicing slash-and-burn agriculture on interior lands.

Mennonites of European stock are often seen in black clothing and horse and buggy. They inhabit the northwest, and produce lovely furniture and much of the country's poultry and vegetables. The few remaining British subjects, the Lebanese, East Indian and Chinese business communities are predominantly in Belize City. English is the official language and mother tongue of over half of the population, with Spanish, Mayan dialects and Garifuna spoken as the first language of the rest of the population. Literacy is liberally estimated at 90%.

Public Institutions

After more than 200 years of British colonization, independence was granted on September 21, 1981. But Belize has enjoyed internal self-government since 1964, boasting the most stable democracy in the region, with a British-style parliamentary government, headed by a Prime Minister and 10 or more Cabinet ministers who all serve in the House of Representatives or Senate. Upon independence, Belize joined the Commonwealth, making Queen Elizabeth the head of state. The monarch is represented by a Governor General, whose appointment is recommended by the Prime Minister.

In 1993, British Forces withdrew all but a small training detachment of

its former garrison. Today, defense is the responsibility of the small but dedicated Belize Defence Force (BDF). Policemen, like the British bobby, are unarmed on the beat.

There are two principal political parties—the People's United Party (PUP), and the United Democratic Party (UDP). The two have exchanged control of the government in every election since independence.

Arts, Science, and Education

Most exponents of Belizean art are the Garifuna, Creole, Maya and East Indian peoples. The work of wood and slate carvers, black coral jewelers, and local musicians and vocalists are readily available in stores where tourists shop, although much of the handicrafts are imported from Guatemala. There are many talented and popular painters, some of whom are exhibited fairly regularly in Belize City, especially at the National Handicraft Center and the Mexican Cultural Center.

Various choral societies practice and perform regularly. There are five national dance companies under the auspices of the National Arts Council, a couple of which have toured overseas on occasion.

The Belize National Theater Company and the Arts Council put on three to four shows a year, favoring works by local and Caribbean writers.

Scientific activity centers around the excavation of some of the 900 pre-Mayan/Mayan ruins throughout the country. A historical society, run by an American expatriate, is active.

The government and private citizens have set aside tens of thousands of acres of wildlife and ecological habitats where researchers study everything from herbal medicines to the coral reefs, manatees, mangrove trees and the spiny lobster. Reportedly, Belize has a higher percentage of its land (40%)

held as nature reserves or parks than any other country; and ecotourism is popular.

The University College of Belize (UCB), the only 4-year junior college with U.S. accreditation; the Belize Agricultural College; the University of the West Indies (UWI) Belize campus; and the Belize Teachers College are the premier institutions of higher learning. Check with the individual institutions, however, for their accreditation and academic levels of proficiency, as relevance and carry-over to American programs may differ greatly.

There are relatively few cultural traces of two centuries of British colonialism; widespread cable television in particular, has increasingly Americanized the country.

Commerce and Industry

Sugar, citrus, rice, bananas, fishing, cattle ranching, and tourism have long since surpassed logging as the country's major economic activities. Still, only a small percentage of the cultivable land is in use, and tourism is now the largest industry (160,000 tourists, 65% of them Americans, visited in 1997).

Historically, Belize has exported agricultural products such as sugar and bananas, and has imported everything else. Through the efforts of Mennonite and Central American immigrants, it has achieved a modicum of self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs like rice, corn, and red kidney beans. There are only a handful of small industries - cigarettes, beer, soft drinks, floor milling, concrete blocks, dairy products and agricultural processing.

Since Belize's modest market imports almost everything from the U.S., the UK or the English-speaking Caribbean, the cost of living remains high. Many Belizeans do their shopping in Mexico or Guatemala, where goods are cheaper.

Transportation

Automobiles

Private cars are a necessity and air-conditioned, heavy-duty vehicles are popular. High clearance vehicles are needed for traveling out of town. Parts and service are most easily obtained for Fords and Toyotas, which have full dealerships here. Jeep, Chrysler, Land Rover, Mitsubishi and Suzuki have agencies, with a limited supply of parts. The Ford Explorer and Suzuki Vitara or Sidekick are among the most popular models. Flood damage and poor maintenance make urban streets so full of potholes that tires and shock absorbers often need replacement (some would say high clearance is needed in town as well).

Driving licenses and registration certificates are issued with minimum formality and free of charge. Third-party liability insurance is compulsory and can be obtained locally at reasonable rates. Regular, high-octane, leaded and unleaded, and diesel fuels are readily available.

Local

Tropic Air and Maya Island Airways are the two local airlines, using single- and twin-engine planes to serve the district towns, resort cays and Tikal, Guatemala.

Paved roads link Belize City north to the Mexican and west to the Guatemalan borders. A dry-weather road (now being paved) connects to Punta Gorda in the far south. Roads on to Tikal, Guatemala and Cancun and Merida, Mexico are paved and in good shape.

Regular, inter-city bus service (on modern as well as aging buses) operates on the all-weather roads. In-town bus service is infrequent. Traffic moves on the right, American-style. Taxis are reasonably priced (Bz\$5 per person within the city during the day), and are usually available.

Regional

From Houston and Miami, Belize is a 2 hour flight. TACA makes daily flights from these cities, San Salvador (with connections to all Central

America), and Roatan and San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Continental Airlines flies twice daily from Houston, while American Airlines flies daily from Miami. Commuter airlines link Belize City to Tikal, Guatemala, and Chetumal and Cancun, Mexico.

Commercial cargo flights arrive in Belize weekly. Freighters make port calls from Miami two or three times a week, taking three days to make the journey. It is also possible to sail on cruise ships that call at Belize City in the winter.

Communications

Telephone and Internet

Belize enjoys excellent but expensive telephone service. All districts and major population centers are now linked by dial service. Direct-dial capability to the U.S. and many other countries is available through the local phone company. It is possible to use USA Direct for both AT&T and MCI from Belize if you have a calling card.

The country is Internet-friendly, with a well developed net, lots of web sites and home e-mail service readily available.

Mail

International airmail service between Belize and the U.S. is reliable. Postage for a one-half ounce letter to the U.S. is 75¢ (US\$3 80 equivalent). International air parcel post from the U.S. is expensive, but fast and reliable. Airmail packages sent from Belize to the U.S. are slightly less expensive and service is equally reliable. International mail from Belize can be registered and insured.

Personal mail between the U.S. and Belize can take from four days to a week (first class or priority mail). The same is true of parcel post. Fourth class mail generally arrives within a month; and mail is received on a daily basis.

Radio and TV

There are few facilities for entertainment and recreation, so two

local TV stations and 60-plus cable channels make a TV and VCR a necessity.

There has also been a rapid increase in the number of radio stations across the country. For the most part, programming consists of contemporary and Caribbean music. Live programming takes the form of newscasts, talk shows, government and public service announcements and political propagandizing. Though the country is English-speaking, Spanish stations and programs are on the rise.

British Forces Belize broadcast on FM in Belize City, and IBB/VOA can be heard on AM. Short-wave reception is good.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

There are five weekly newspapers in circulation in Belize. All are in English and each represents a different point of view. Four are published in Belize City, and one in San Pedro on Ambergris Caye.

A variety of U.S. magazines, including the Latin American editions of Time and Newsweek are sold locally. Several poorly stocked bookstores carry detective, Western, gothic romance and comic books. Belize City has a new public lending library with novels, text and reference books, but few are new.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Some local doctors are well-trained and competent to thwart common ailments. Diagnosis and treatment of complicated illnesses are difficult due to lack of equipment and facilities. Trained laboratory technicians are available, but equipment and supplies in the government hospitals are limited. For these reasons, serious conditions and cases involving special care are treated in Miami. Many Belizeans travel to Mexico or Guatemala for medical attention. Local ophthalmologists provide high quality care, and

glasses, contact lenses, and exams are comparatively priced to the U.S. Emergency dental work should be evacuated to the U.S.

Several pharmacies carry a wide variety of basic medicines. However, bring to post a supply of prescription drugs, medicines and first aid supplies, since these items are imported and scarcities occur.

Community Health

Although Belize City now has a modern water treatment plant, and sanitation has improved greatly in recent years, things are still well below U.S. standards. About 90% of urban households are connected to the citywide sewage system, but sewage still runs in some open canals which empty into the sea. Although there is regular removal of city garbage, it is common to see it strewn about.

Houseflies, horseflies, sandflies, mosquitoes, roaches, land crabs, rats, and mice are widespread, and mildew, rot rust, and salt air corrosion are a continuous problem. For pets, ticks and fleas are a constant annoyance. Bring plenty of tick/flea shampoo, spray, collars, powder or whatever you normally use to control the problem (what is available here is expensive).

The constant mildew and dust in the city can aggravate allergies and sinus conditions, and colds are common. The high heat and humidity make this a debilitating climate, and extra exertion can quickly bring on heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Preventive Measures

No specific immunizations are recommended for Belize.

Bring an ample supply of insect repellent (Belizean mosquitoes are immune to Skin So Soft) and sunscreen to avoid the damaging effects of overexposure to the sun's rays. The latter is particularly important when traveling to the cays by boat where the sun's intensity is amplified by the reflection from the sea.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

From the Texas border, it is a 1,650 mile drive across Mexico to Belize City, most of it on 4-lane toll expressways. Good hotels, restaurants, spectacular scenery and mild mountain temperatures mark the route. Or, one can drive to Miami and take a plane from there to Belize City.

Plane connections to Belize are through Miami and Houston.

U.S. citizens need a passport valid for duration of stay. U.S. citizens do not need visas for tourist visits up to thirty days, but they must have onward or return air tickets and proof of sufficient funds. Visitors for other purposes must obtain a visa. Additional information on entry and customs requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of Belize at 2535 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20008, telephone (202) 332-9636. Information is also available at the Belizean Consulate in Miami or at the Belizean Mission to the UN in New York.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Belize are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Belize City and obtain updated information on travel and security in Belize. The U.S. Embassy is located at the intersection of Gabourel Lane and Hutson Street in Belize City; telephone 011 (501) 2-77161/62/63. The Embassy is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for the 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. lunch hour.

Pets

Although no restrictions exist for bringing pets, and no quarantine is imposed, a current rabies shot and a health certificate (valid for no more than six months prior to arrival in country) are required. Also, a pet importation permit is required from the Vet Clinic in Belize, and a copy

of it is required by the international carrier before personnel can board with their pet(s). A fee of BA 10 per pet is levied, and the permit is valid for 60 days. A veterinarian's health certificate must show an examination conducted not more than 10 days before arrival in country.

Heartworm is a deadly illness in Belize, therefore all dogs must receive constant preventative medication. Daily and monthly worming medicines are available, but you may want to bring your own supply to guard against shortages. Belize has a good clinic with several veterinarians, usually trained in the U.S. or Britain.

Firearms and Ammunition

Weapons must be registered with local authorities upon arrival. Only the following non-automatic firearms and ammunition may be brought to Belize.

Item Quantity: Pistols 1, Rifles 1, Shotgun 1. Ammunition: Rifle/pistols 100 rounds, Shotgun 50 rounds.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Belize dollar (BA) rate of exchange has remained steady for over 20 years at Bz\$2 - US\$1. U.S. dollars are accepted everywhere. It is not possible to access U.S. bank accounts through automated teller machines (ATMs) in Belize. Travelers, however, can obtain cash advances from local banks, Monday through Friday, using major international credit cards.

Distances are measured in miles and weights in pounds.

Disaster Preparedness

Belize is a hurricane-prone country. The coastal islands of Belize, which are low-lying and lack high ground, are particularly vulnerable to direct hits by hurricanes and tropical storms. The islands have been cut off from communications and assistance during previous hurricanes. Extensive flooding as a result of storm activity is common both on the islands and in areas of the country not directly affected by hurricanes. General information about

natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar. 9 Baron Bliss Day
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May 1 Labor Day
 May Commonwealth Day*
 May 28 Memorial Day
 Sept. 10 National Day
 Sept. 21 Independence Day
 Oct. 12 Pan American Day
 Nov. 19 Garifuna Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 Boxing Day
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Conroy, Richard (vice-consul here 196062). *Our Man in Belize*. St. Martins Press, 1998.

Fernandez, Julio. *Belize: A Case Study for Democracy in Central America*. Avebury, 1989.

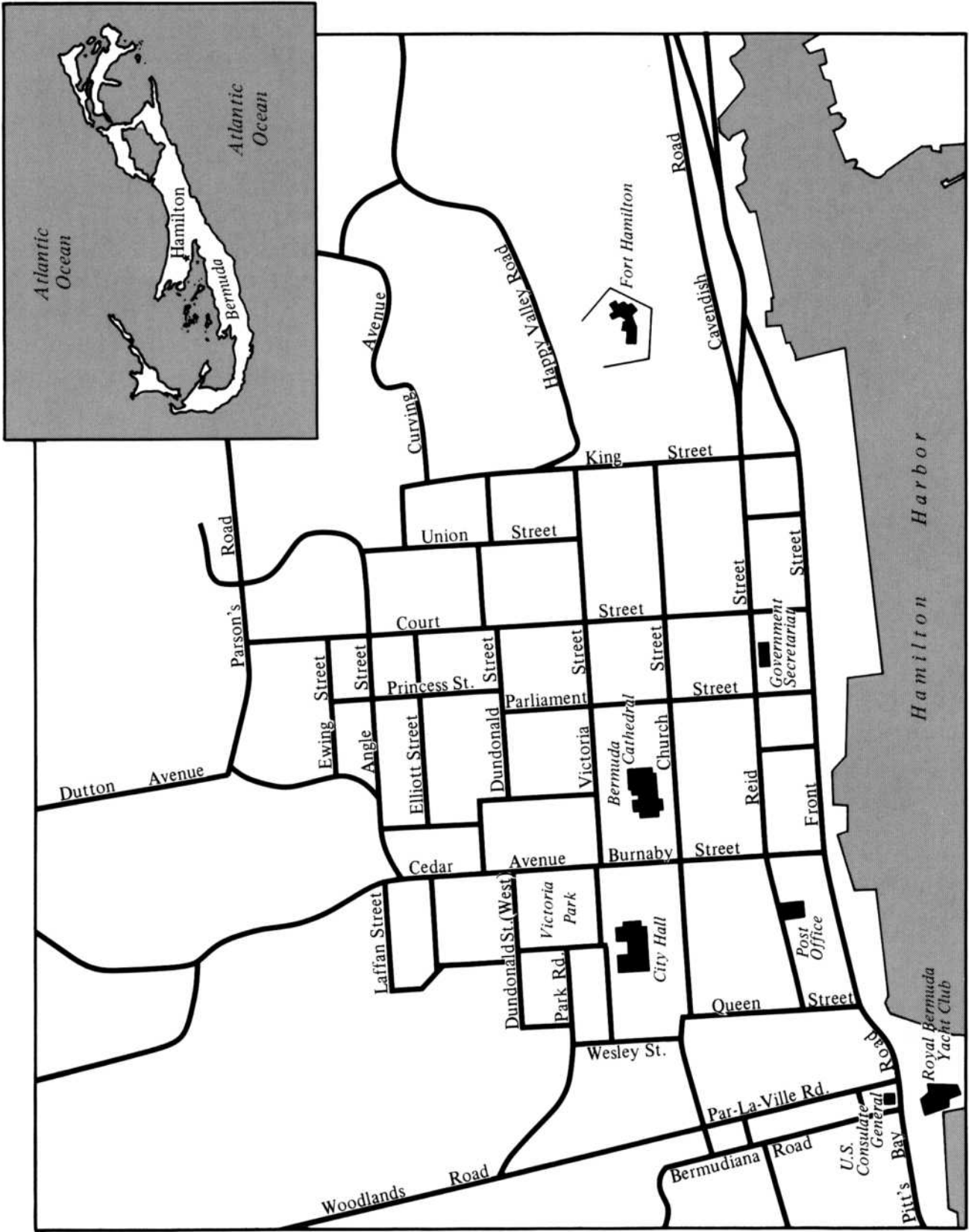
National Geographic. "Belize, the Awakening Land." January 1972.

National Geographic. "La Rita Maya." October 1989.

Rabinowitz, Alan. *Jaguar. Struggle and Triumph in the Jungle of Belize*. Arbor House: New York, 1986.

Smithsonian Magazine. "Illuminating the Maya's Path in Belize." December 1989.

Sutherland, Anne. *The Making of Belize: Globalization in the Margins*. Bergen & Garvey, 1998..



Hamilton, Bermuda

BERMUDA

Major City:

Hamilton

Other City:

St. George

INTRODUCTION

Bermuda is the most northerly group of coral islands in the world, lying just beyond the Gulf Stream some 650 miles off the coast of the Carolinas. Although very small and isolated in its part of the ocean, it offers a wide variety of places to see, people to meet, and things to do. With an economy based on tourism and international business, Bermudians enjoy a high standard of living with almost no unemployment, no national debt, and no income tax. They do face, however, a high cost of living and an increasing share of the stress associated with maintaining the lifestyle of an economically developed western society.

Places to see vary from Hamilton, the capital, with its smart shops and busy harbor, to St. George, the only other municipality, with its Old World lanes and fortresses. You can sightsee from the North Shore, with its bizarre rock formations, to the South Shore with its pink and white beaches. From end to end Bermuda is picturesque. Nature has endowed it with an abundance of verdant trees and colorful flowers. The landscape is dotted with pastel-hued, white-roofed houses and stately, tasteful hotels. No factories, billboards, or neon signs blot the quaint scenery.

In addition to the pleasant and hospitable Bermudians, the people include large numbers of more recent arrivals from around the world, some official representatives of the UK and their families, hundreds of Americans and Canadians who live on the island all or part of the year, a constant stream of tourists from the U.S. and Canada, a small but long-settled Portuguese community, and many residents and workers from the West Indies.

Bermuda offers many things to do. For recreation, Bermuda offers a host of outdoor sports including golf, tennis, fishing, sailing, diving, and swimming, and an adequate number of pursuits such as movies, occasional theatrical productions, and musical concerts.

Life in Bermuda is confined, yet varied. The island can be restful, yet interesting, busy, but not hectic

MAJOR CITY

Hamilton

Only 2,000 people reside within Corporation limits, but as the island's business center Hamilton's daytime population swells to about 14,000. The city's main attractions

are its restaurants and its smart shops and department stores along Front Street, which faces the busy quay side of Hamilton's harbor. The city's low traditional buildings are rapidly giving way on many streets to international-style low-rise business buildings with a few Bermudian architectural grace notes, but the town still retains a basically

British-colonial appearance. From across the harbor, its central skyline is dominated by the towers of City Hall, the Bermuda Cathedral, and the Sessions House or parliament building. The last contains the chambers of the House of Assembly and Supreme Court. Nearby on Front Street is the Cabinet Building, which houses the Senate chamber and the offices of the Premier and his staff. On a hill just north of the city stands Government House, the official residence and office of the Governor, overlooking the city and the harbor to the south, the Dockyard across the water to the west, and the ocean to the north. Hamilton's other attractions include Albouy's Point, site of the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club and a park overlooking the harbor, the Bermuda Library, which houses the Museum of Bermuda History, and the adjacent Par-La-Ville Gardens. The remains of Fort Hamilton are on the east side of the city, also pro-



View of the harbor, Hamilton, Bermuda

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

viding harbor and city views from its ramparts

Utilities

Electricity in Bermuda is U.S. standard, 110/60 cycle. All American electric or electronic equipment can be used here. The electrical supply is fairly reliable, with the occasional weather-associated or equipment-failure outages to be expected by residents of islands.

Food

Almost all of the island's food supply is imported. With transportation costs and import duties, all consumer good prices are much higher than in the US. A few foods—some vegetables, bakery goods, fresh milk and eggs, meats and several species of fish—are produced locally but are expensive. U.S.-style supermarkets abound.

Clothing

Clothing which would be suitable for wear during summer in Washington, D.C., may be worn in Bermuda from April through November. Moderately heavy clothing is useful during Bermuda's frost-free but chilly winters. Sweaters are essential but are something of a bargain at times in local stores.

Fashionable clothing of all sorts is available in local stores, usually but

not always at prices somewhat above those of Washington. Wash-and-wear clothing is a great boon in Bermuda's climate, especially since dry cleaning is very expensive.

Office wear is more casual than in Washington, and Bermudians often wear Bermuda shorts with long socks, blazers, and ties. In general, dress in Bermuda is informal and colorful, but not to the extent associated with the tropical tourist islands to the south. Most social occasions and visits to all the better restaurants and hotels require at least jackets and ties, if not suits, for men and comparable outfits for women. Formal wear can be rented locally.

Supplies and Services

Virtually everything is available in Bermuda at a price or can be obtained quickly by mail order from the United States.

Numerous satisfactory beauty salons and barber shops are available in Hamilton and elsewhere. Nearly all appliance repairs are available somewhere in Bermuda but can be difficult if the right parts are not in stock. As with everything else, this can be expensive.

Musical instruments suffer in the climate and need tuning every few

months. A piano becomes "tinny" after a year or two of exposure to the subtropical climate. The wooden structure of a violin or guitar may warp. A brass instrument may corrode, unless frequently polished.

Domestic Help

Good, reliable domestic help is hard to find and is expensive because the demand greatly exceeds the supply. For general housekeeping, count on paying about \$15 per hour. Very few live-in domestics or nannies are available. Importing one from elsewhere may be useful. Baby-sitters are available but are also expensive. The going rate for an average teenage babysitter is approximately \$7 per hour. Gardeners are provided where needed at leased housing.

Education

Bermuda is in the process of reorganizing its public education system to provide middle schools and reduce the number of existing secondary schools. Professionally, the Ministry of Education seems to rely heavily on advice from educationists in the Province of Ontario and has followed many of their approaches to educational policy.

The Bermuda College, established in 1974, provides post-secondary education on a level with American junior or community colleges. Courses offered include "academic studies" (designed for preuniversity work), "commerce and technology" (designed to prepare students for various trades and business skills), and "hotel technology." In 1980, the government opened Stonington Beach Hotel, which is operated by the College and staffed by students training for careers in the hotel industry. The College offers some courses from Queens University in Canada.

Bermuda has a number of private schools. In addition to denominational (Roman Catholic and Seventh-Day Adventist) schools, there is one girls' school and two co-educational English style grammar schools, one of which offers a post-graduate year designed to prepare qualified graduates of any Bermuda

secondary school for attendance at American and Canadian universities. Another private school on the university level is Webster University which operates associate, bachelor's, and master's degree programs.

The reorganization of the public school system has created distrust among the public in the system as a whole. This in turn has nurtured a growing rush by parents to place their children in private schools, so waiting lists may apply.

The island's proximity to the U.S. east coast opens a wide choice of specialized schools for those who wish it.

Sports

Much of the island's life centers around outdoor activity. The island boasts of having more golf courses per square mile than any other country in the world. Of nine courses on the island, three are public, four are associated with hotels, and two are private with long waiting lists for membership. Greens fees are more expensive than at comparable courses in the U.S.

Tennis is also popular and almost all hotels have courts. The National Tennis Stadium has five courts available at moderate charges, and five tennis clubs throughout the island may be joined easily.

Sailing is the outdoor sport supreme; racing in the various classes takes place throughout the year, but the sport is expensive. Sailing classes for children are held three mornings a week at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club and the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club during the summer. The Bermuda Yachting Association also offers a subsidized sailing program in the summer.

Excellent light tackle fishing is available and more than 200 species of fish are found in the waters off Bermuda. Charter boats equipped with outriggers and all modern equipment are available at reasonable prices.

Bermuda's beaches are the main recreational areas. Along the South Shore stretch superb white and pink sand beaches which are ideal for swimming and sunbathing. Throughout the year hardy individuals can bathe in the sea, although the popular swimming season is from late May to early October. A Bermudian would not think of taking a dip in the sea between October and May, but visitors and foreign residents do. Water skiing can be enjoyed in the protected waters of the harbors and sounds. Skin-diving with mask and snorkel or with aqualungs is popular, and even inexperienced swimmers can soon learn how to explore reefs close off Bermuda's shore.

Most sporting equipment can be bought from local shops. Every make of camera and film can be found in Hamilton's shops.

Entertainment

Hamilton has two modern movie theaters. Other movie theaters are located at Dockyard and St. George's. Visiting concert musicians and ballet troupes sometimes perform in the small theater at Hamilton's City Hall. In recent years several excellent plays have also been presented by overseas theatrical groups.

As a tourist mecca, Bermuda has a varied program of spectator events. The Queen's Birthday in June and other national holidays are celebrated with military parades on Front Street. The opening of Parliament each autumn is also marked by impressive ceremonies. The International Yacht Race between Newport, Rhode Island, and Bermuda, held every other year in June, brings well over 100 entries from North America, South America, and Europe to Hamilton Harbor where they form as large a fleet of ocean-going sailing vessels as may be seen anywhere in the world. Another popular sports event is the two-day cricket Cup Match each August. Both days of the match are national holidays. 1997 also saw the third annual "ShootOut" professional golf tournament, and the

inaugural offerings of a celebrity golf tournament and a Bermuda Film Festival.

There is an active International American Women's Club and Junior Service League for women.

Good restaurants are available throughout the island, and most hotels have first-class dining rooms. However virtually all dining establishments are priced for the tourist trade and are expensive. "Continental" and Italian cuisine predominate. Ethnic restaurants-Chinese, Indian, and Mexican-exist, but are far from authentic. Many hotels and clubs offer dancing nightly. Prices are scaled to the tourist traffic.

OTHER CITY

The only other municipality in Bermuda is **ST. GEORGE**, on the extreme east, about 12 miles from Hamilton. It is much larger than Hamilton, with an area of 400 acres, but has a population of less than 1,700. St. George is probably the oldest English-speaking community in the Western Hemisphere, and it preserves the atmosphere and appearance of a 17th-century settlement. A series of high-walled, cannon-bedecked fortresses dating from the early 1600s line its eastern seacoast. The most imposing is Fort St. Catherine, and in one of its chambers an illuminated diorama illustrates scenes from the colony's history. Nearby is Gunpowder Cavern, a brick-lined cluster of chambers and walkways deep within a man-made hill—formerly an ammunition magazine, but today a charming restaurant.

In King's Square, the former marketplace, stands a replica of an ancient stock and pillory. Around the square are most of the city's main attractions: St. Peter's Church, probably the oldest Anglican church site in the New World, in use, although often restored, since 1612; the Old State House, the colony's first stone building, constructed in 1619; Tucker House, a

high-ceilinged mansion built in 1711, and the St. George Town Hall, in use since 1782. The square is lined on the south by the busy docks on the harbor.

Across St. George's harbor, to the south, lies St. David's Island, most of which is occupied by the U.S. Naval Air Station. The base's runways are shared with the Bermuda Civil Air Terminal, the colony's only civilian airport. The southernmost tip is the site of the Bermuda National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) installation, which has played an important role in manned space programs.

Separating St. David's and St. George's Islands from the 15-mile-long central island—sometimes called Main Island—is Castle Harbor, a six-square-mile body of seawater. Much of the eastern portion of Main Island is occupied by Harrington Sound, a three square-mile incursion of the sea that almost forms a lake.

Along the narrow strip of land between Castle Harbor and Harrington Sound are several caves where visitors may view impressive formations of stalactites and stalagmites. On the neck of land between Harrington Sound and the sea lies the village of Flatts, the most populous settlement between St. George and Hamilton. Nearby is the aquarium, where a fascinating collection of more than 200 varieties of fish and other marine life found in Bermuda's waters may be seen. Adjoining is the Natural History Museum, which displays shells, fossils, and marine antiques, and the Zoological Garden, featuring an array of tropical birds and animals.

At the southernmost point of Harrington Sound is Devil's Hole, a natural saltwater pool stocked with large fish and tortoises. Here visitors can drop baited, but hookless, lines to lure the creatures part way out of the water.

The western portion of Bermuda has its attractions, too. The large village of Somerset occupies much of

Somerset Island, which lies just off the western terminus of Main Island, about 12 miles from Hamilton. Like St. George, Somerset retains much of the atmosphere and appearance of a 17th-century settlement. This island is connected with Main Island by Somerset Bridge, reputed to be the smallest functioning drawbridge in the world. It has a 22-inch-wide plank across its center which is raised by hand to allow clearance of sailboat masts.

Near Somerset, on a peninsula off Main Island, lies the U.S. Naval Air Station Annex, occupying about 268 acres. North of the base are the waters of Great Sound and, to the south, lies Little Sound. On Main Island, directly south of the base across Little Sound, stands Gibbs Hill Lighthouse, one of the most powerful lighthouses in the world. Completed in 1846, it stands on a 245-foot hill and is, itself, 117 feet high. Its rotating beam of a half-million candle power is visible as far away as 40 miles. Visitors may mount the spiral stairway to the top during the daytime.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Area and Geography

Bermuda is an archipelago of seven main islands and some 150 other islands and islets. The main islands, joined by bridges or causeways, stretch from northeast to southwest in a long, narrow formation that hooks northward at the western end. On the map the shape is much like that of a fishhook. The main islands are in close proximity, and since being joined the Bermuda Islands (or Somers Isles, their other name) are generally called the island of Bermuda.

Total land area is about 20 square miles—some 22 miles in length and an average of less than a mile in

width. This is slightly smaller than the area of Manhattan. During World War II, the U.S. military created 1.25 square miles of the present area by uniting and enlarging some of the islands with material dredged from the sea bottom.

The archipelago is the summit of a submerged volcanic mountain range, 14,000–15,000 feet high, which has been extinct since before the first ice age. Over the volcanic foundation and just under the inches-thin layer of soil capping it lies a 200-foot thick layer of limestone formed by deposits of mollusks, coral polyps, and other sea creatures. The coral content in the limestone substructure justifies Bermuda's classification as a "coral island," though it is more accurately a mixed superstructure of aeolian petrified sand hills and limestone upon an eroded volcanic base. Only the surrounding reefs are true coral growths, and Bermuda is the most northerly point on the globe where reef-building coral exists.

Bermuda lies at latitude 32° 18' N and longitude 65° 46' W. Geographically, it is remote and does not lie within or near the West Indies or Caribbean, with which it is often erroneously identified. The nearest land is Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, 570 nautical miles away. New York City is 733 nautical miles to the northwest.

The terrain is hilly. Some hills exceed 200 feet in height; the highest, Gibbs Hill, is 260 feet above sea level. A fertile valley extends along the length of the main island. On the rocky northern shore wind-carved cliffs cascade into the sea. Similar rock formations form a dramatic backdrop for the long beaches and small coves of the sandy south shore. The enclosing reef, a few yards offshore on the south coast and up to several miles offshore on the north, emerges from the sea each day at low tide, framing the islands and completing the topographical picture.

Except for a few small ponds, no rivers, streams, lakes, or other fresh-

water surface formations exist on the islands. For most of its history, Bermuda was thought to have no ground water, but in the 1920s and 30s, freshwater lens formations lying above underground salt water were discovered and exploited to supplement the island's main source of drinking water; rainwater collected on roofs and paved catchments.

Though far north from tropical latitudes, Bermuda has a mild, humid, frostfree climate. The annual mean temperature is 70.2 F. Highs in summer rarely top 90 E, lows in winter rarely are below the upper 50s. The lowest temperature ever officially recorded was 44 E. The Gulf Stream, running west and north of the island, is the main reason for the good climate. Average annual rainfall is 57.6 inches, spread evenly across the 12 months. The year-round high humidity, averaging more than 75%, makes some days uncomfortably sticky in summer and damp in winter.

January through March tends to be overcast and squally, though when the sun shines it can be just breezy and spring-like. April and May are very pleasant. June through August are like summer in Washington, D.C., except that Bermuda nights are comfortable in houses positioned to catch southerly breezes. September is the stormy season; the hurricane season extends from June through November. Barring hurricanes, October through December are calm, usually sunny, mild months, considered by many the most pleasant part of the year. The climate plus the well-distributed rainfall and heavy dew make for a luxuriant growth of vegetation of every description, despite the dearth of soil.

Palms, Australian and Norfolk Island pines, mangrove, poinciana, casuarina, and ficus trees, along with citrus and some tropical fruits, grow well in Bermuda. Oleander and hibiscus are common. The famous Bermuda cedar trees which for centuries dominated the landscape and were the islands' pride

were afflicted by a blight in the early 1940s and by 1944 more than 90% of them were dead. They are now protected but few are as robust as formerly. Some cedar reforestation, with blight-resistant stock, is being undertaken.

History

Bermuda is named for the Spanish seafarer Juan de Bermudez, who discovered the island in 1503. There is evidence of occasional visits by Spanish or Portuguese seamen, and at least one fruitless Spanish plan to settle the island, but generally the local reefs and raucous native birds gave Bermuda a bad name among Spanish sailors, who avoided a place they thought inhabited by devils. In 1609, Admiral Sir George Somers' ship *Sea Venture*, carrying a new lieutenant governor to Virginia, ran aground on Bermuda's eastern reef. The crew was stranded until they built a new ship from local timber to continue their voyage. Descriptions of Bermuda attracted great interest, and in 1612 about 60 colonists (including some of Somers' crew) sailed for what were then called the Somers Isles. Shortly after landing, they founded the town of St. George at the eastern end of the island. In 1790, the more centrally located town of Hamilton was incorporated. In 1815 the seat of government was transferred from St. George to Hamilton, which had a larger harbor and was more central to a greatly-expanded British program of fortification building that saw the creation of the massive Royal Dockyard at the West End, and Fort Prospect (the principal land garrison) and other forts in the parishes near Hamilton.

During the first three centuries of the Colony's existence, except for its function as a military bastion of the Empire and periods of prosperity generated by the American Revolutionary War and Civil War, Bermuda itself remained quite isolated from developments abroad. The industrial revolution virtually passed it by. By the turn of the 20th century, wealthy Americans, Canadians, and Britons, seeking refuge

from the pressures of modern life, were renting or buying homes and estates for seasonal occupancy in Bermuda. Soon shops and restaurants sprang up to cater to this carriage trade. As the economic benefits of tourism became apparent, the colony sought to cultivate and broaden it. During the 1920s several impressive luxury hotels were built. In the early 1930s large passenger steamships were put into liner service between New York and Bermuda. In 1937, passenger seaplane service between New York and Bermuda was inaugurated. The tourist industry continued to develop until the outbreak of World War II.

The war gave new significance to the Colony as a strategic outpost for the Anglo-American forces. In 1941, the UK granted the U.S. a 99-year rent-free lease for construction and maintenance of two bases in Bermuda. The bases, the U.S. Naval Air Station, Bermuda, on St. David's Island, and the U.S. Naval Air Station Annex in Southampton, were for fifty years an integral and important part of the Bermudian scene and economy. The U.S. bases closed, however, in September of 1995. The airfield built by U. S. forces as part of the base during World War II now also serves as Bermuda's international airport.

Population

Bermuda's population is 58,460 (1991 census). This includes about 15,800 foreign-born residents without Bermuda status (the nearest thing to citizenship this British Dependent Territory has). The racial composition of the native Bermudian population is about 76% black and 24% white; of the total population the proportion is nearer 60% - 40%.

Several thousand Americans and Canadians live on the island either all or part of the year. About half the 6,000 or so Portuguese (Azoreans) on the island are now Bermudians, with the other half contract workers expected to return to their homeland. Several hundred Europeans-

British, Italians, Yugoslavs, Irish, Austrians, Swiss, and French-are employed in Bermuda's hotels, restaurants, guest houses, and other service areas, as are an equal number of Filipinos, other Asians, and West Indians. Some 600,000 tourists visit the island every year, most of them Americans.

Slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1834, but racial segregation was practiced in Bermuda's schools, restaurants, hotels, and other public places until the 1960s. Racial discrimination in any form is not tolerated in today's multiracial Bermudian society.

English is the official and vernacular language of Bermuda. The traditional Bermudian dialect is characterized by broad vowels and a frequent transposition of "v" and "w" sounds. Educated Bermudians have accents ranging from standard British to standard American, with the "typical" accent sounding to the American ear like a cross between New England and Maritime Canadian. British visitors often find the local accent American, while many American visitors think it is vaguely British-sounding. Some Azorean Portuguese is also heard in Bermuda.

Bermuda has a strong religious tradition, rooted in its rural past. Many Christian denominations are represented on the island, distributed among the Church of England (28%), Roman Catholic Church (15%), African Methodist Episcopal (12%), Methodist (5%), and Seventh Day Adventist (6%), along with many other smaller Protestant followings. Baha'i, Moslem, and other groups are also present. Jewish services are held informally; there is no synagogue on the island.

Public Institutions

Bermuda is the oldest self-governing colony in the British Commonwealth. Representative government was first introduced to the Colony in 1620. Since 1684, the Governor of the Island has been appointed by the Crown and the colony's laws

enacted by a local legislature. Though Bermuda is a British Dependent Territory, it has a separate written Constitution, giving its elected Cabinet government almost complete self-determination in conducting local affairs. The Bermuda Parliament is the third-oldest in the world, following Iceland's and Britain's.

The Queen appoints the Governor, who is responsible for external affairs, defense, and internal security. In other matters the Governor acts on the advice of the Cabinet. The Deputy Governor is appointed by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and is normally a British Foreign Service Officer. These two officials are the only representatives of the United Kingdom on the island.

The Legislature consists of the Senate and the House of Assembly. Members of the Senate are appointed by the Governor, five on the advice of the Premier, three on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, and three by the Governor at his own discretion. The Senate elects its own president and vice president. The House of Assembly, consisting of 40 popularly elected members from 20 constituencies, elects a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker. Universal suffrage on the one-person, one vote principle has existed since 1968. In 1989, the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18.

The Cabinet consists of the Premier and at least six other members of the Assembly or the Senate. The Governor appoints the majority leader in the House of Assembly as Premier, who in turn nominates the other Cabinet Ministers. They are responsible for government departments and related business. The Opposition Leader, which in British parliamentary practice is a formally designated position, is the leader of the largest minority party in the House of Assembly.

The judiciary consists of the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, and the Magistracy. The Chief Justice presides over the Supreme Court

and is consulted by the Governor in the appointment of judges, magistrates, and court officers.

Hamilton, the capital, was made a city by an act of legislature in 1897 and is governed by a Corporation. The town of St. George, one of the oldest English settlements in the New World, was founded in 1612 and remained the capital until 1815. Charges for water and dock facilities and municipal taxes are the main sources of revenue for both.

Aside from the two municipalities, Bermuda is divided into nine districts, called parishes. From east to west, these are St. George's, Hamilton (not to be confused with the city of Hamilton), Smith's, Devonshire, Pembroke, Paget, Warwick, Southampton, and Sandys.

Politics

The United Bermuda Party (UBP) is the ruling party and has not lost an election since its founding in 1968. It is a multiracial party, and has combined moderately progressive social policy with conservative fiscal policy. The UBP saw significant erosion in its parliamentary majority in the 1989 elections, falling from 31 to 22 of the 40 seats in the House, largely because of internal party dissension arising from disputes over independence for Bermuda. In the 1993 elections, the UBP's majority slipped even further, and the party now maintains only 21 seats in the House, as well as five Senate positions. New elections must be held every five years, and thus the next scheduled vote must take place by the Fall of 1998.

The opposition Progressive Labor Party (PLP) holds 18 seats in the House and three in the Senate. The PLP is largely identified with the black population, closely allied to organized labor, and favors independence for Bermuda.

In August of 1995, former Premier Sir John Swan, the head of government for 13 years, bucked UBP supporters and staked his political

career on an independence referendum, which was defeated at the polls by a three to one margin. The new Premier and UBP leader, Pamela Gordon, has held her position since March 1997. She previously served as Minister for the Environment & Minister for Youth, Sports & Recreation.

Arts, Science, and Education

Bermuda hosts a variety of cultural events featuring both local talent and groups touring from abroad. The Bermuda Festival is held in January-February, attracting additional tourists during the winter and providing cultural entertainment for local residents. The Festival features performances by international-class artists, which have included The Dance Theater of Harlem, the Flying Karamazov Brothers, the Vienna Choir Boys, Wynton Marsalis, and The Empire Brass Quintet.

Local amateur arts groups include the Bermuda Musical and Dramatic Society (performing arts), Bermuda Society for the Arts (exhibitions, art gallery), and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society (light opera). Memberships and participation are open to all.

The Bermuda Biological Station, on Ferry Reach at the island's eastern end, was founded by a group of North American universities to further the study of marine sciences, and receives both Government of Bermuda and U.S. National Science Foundation support. It hosts researchers from the U.S. and elsewhere, conducting research at sea with its own ocean-going research vessels.

Conservation/preservation groups include the Bermuda National Trust, Audubon Society, the Bermuda Maritime Museum, and the Bermuda Zoological Society (responsible for the popular Aquarium, Zoo, and Natural History Museum). The Bermuda Botanical Garden (also site of the Premier's

official residence, Camden) and an Arboretum are publicly maintained.

Commerce and Industry

Bermuda's GDP is over \$9 billion, or about \$27,500 per capita—one of the highest per capita income rates in the world. Most Bermudians owe their livelihood, directly or indirectly, to tourism, which provides 55% of GDP.

Bermuda's other source of national income is foreign companies operating out of offices in Bermuda. These offshore "exempt" and "nonresident" companies, almost all of them reinsurance or captive insurance companies, for the most part conduct international operations unrelated to Bermuda. The fees, charges, and taxes they pay, and their local expenditures, contribute about 40% of GDP, a share that is growing relative to tourism. Some 8,700 foreign firms are registered in Bermuda, though only a few actually maintain a physical presence here.

Total exports for 1996 were estimated at \$67.7 million. Roughly 98% of total exports fell under the tariff #99.7000 - "Other Miscellaneous Manufactured Items". The re-export of pharmaceutical goods accounts for roughly 99% of this tariff number. Trading countries for pharmaceutical items include: Holland (50%), Brazil (13%), Canada (6%), Caribbean (5%), and all other countries (26%). The remaining export items are traded to the following partner countries: USA (91%), Canada (1%), Caribbean (1%), and UK (7%).

Fishing and agriculture (vegetables, fruits, eggs, and some milk) produce only a fraction of Bermuda's needs. Almost all manufactures and foodstuffs are imported, nearly two-thirds of them from the United States.

The largest single source of government revenue is customs duties, supplemented by a land tax, employment taxes, hotel occupancy

taxes, departure taxes, and a hospital levy. There is no local income tax. Government spending in the FY 95 budget totaled \$406 million on current account, including \$34.5 million on capital projects. Bermuda traditionally does not borrow for current expenditure, and public borrowing for the capital account is limited to 10% of GDP.

Bermuda has tight immigration and property ownership and management regulations. The Immigration Board will grant permission for a non-Bermudian to work only if no qualified Bermudian, or person with Bermudian status, is available for the position. Applications for work permits are scrutinized carefully, and the procedure is complicated and time-consuming. Foreigners may purchase only those houses or condominiums listed as available for sale to non-Bermudians. The list is short and the properties are expensive. Such properties may not pass by inheritance beyond the children of the original purchasers.

Transportation

Automobiles

Cars have been a part of the Bermuda scene only since 1946. The law limits a car's size and horsepower, forbids the use of private cars by all but residents, and provides for only one car per household (and only members of that household may drive it). Because of the latter restriction, most families own one (or more) motorbike, motor scooter, or motorcycle in addition to a car. Rental cars are not available.

Bermuda's laws restrict passenger vehicles to a maximum of 169 inches in overall length and 67 inches in overall width, with a maximum engine capacity of 2,000 cc (2.0 liters). There are technical restrictions that might bar other vehicles, such as sports cars or unusual models. Most cars in Bermuda are of Japanese manufacture (Mitsubishi, Nissan, Honda, Toyota, and Mazda, etc.). Volkswagen, British Ford, Hyundai, Peugeot, BMW,



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Fishermen cleaning their catch in Hamilton, Bermuda

and various other makes are also sold here. Bermudians drive on the left, so almost all cars are right-hand drive. Right-hand drive cars are not compulsory, however. Because most roads are narrow and winding, Bermuda's speed limit is 35 km/h (21.7 mph).

Bermuda's laws virtually forbid the import of used cars. A vehicle may be imported only if it was purchased new within 6 months of importation. The local used car market is small and prices tend to be high, as they reflect the 75% duty that new car buyers pay. New cars may be purchased through local dealers.

Cars brought to Bermuda should be undercoated to protect the chassis against the corrosive effects of the climate and seasprayed roads. Bermuda has adequate repair shops for most popular makes of small cars; spare parts are usually in stock. Labor and materials are expensive.

All drivers must, without exception, pass a driving test. The Transport Control Department (TCD) does not recognize any foreign licenses for use by Bermuda residents. A driver's license issued in Bermuda is normally valid only for the licensee's car.

All motorized vehicles must be registered with and inspected by TCD. Motorized vehicles with engines of 50cc or less may be driven with a local learner's permit or a foreign license (this permits tourists to rent 50cc mopeds or scooters on temporary visits to Bermuda). TCD vehicle inspection requirements are similar to examinations in the U.S. Third-party liability insurance is also compulsory on all vehicles. Most Bermuda insurance firms grant no-claim discounts; travelers with a record of accident-free driving should bring letters from their previous insurance firms attesting to this.

Used motorbikes or scooters are readily available. As with cars, duty must be paid on a new vehicle bought from a local dealer's existing stocks.

Gasoline sold at local service stations costs about \$4.60 a gallon. Safety helmets must be worn when driving any two-wheeled vehicle.

Local

More than 600 taxis are available. Some 300 Bermudian taxi drivers have attained "Qualified Tour Guide" status by successfully completing special government exams. Taxi fares are high; the fare from the airport to Hamilton is about \$25.

Local bus service is extensive and reasonable in price and is heavily used by both Bermudians and tourists. The government ferry service connects Hamilton with points in Paget and Warwick (across the har-

bor from Hamilton) running at frequent intervals. Less frequent service on larger ferries goes to three points in Somerset, including the Dockyard. The ferries are heavily used by tourists and are a convenient form of commuting for those living near the landing points. The ferries are canceled, however, whenever sea conditions are unfavorable.

Regional

Flights are available daily between Bermuda and New York. Good non-stop services also connect Bermuda with Baltimore, Boston, Atlanta, London, and Toronto. Baltimore-Washington International Airport is about 2 hours away by plane. British Air and Air Canada are the only non-American carriers serving Bermuda. Passengers on the many U.S. carrier flights to the U.S. are pre-cleared by U.S. Immigration and U.S. Customs at Bermuda's airport, arriving at domestic terminals on the mainland. Bermuda is on Atlantic Time, one hour ahead of the East Coast throughout the year.

Cruise ships service Bermuda from New York and Boston from May to October, with occasional voyages from other ports during this period.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and fax service extends throughout the island. Long distance service is rapid and efficient, with direct dialing to the U.S. and most of the world.

Rental rates and local service costs are comparable to those in the U.S. A 3-minute direct-dialed station-to-station call to the East Coast averages \$3.75. Calls to Bermuda from the U.S. are cheaper than the other way around. The Bermuda Telephone Company, Ltd. uses Canadian-built equipment and many international brands of telephone and fax sets are available for home and business use.

International telegraph service is operated by Cable & Wireless Ltd.

Round the clock service is available by calling 297-7000. Communications in Bermuda are state-of-the-art, with multiple satellite, ocean cable, and fiber-optic cable facilities in place.

TV and Radio

The three local TV stations can be received on any standard American TV set without alteration. One is a CBS affiliate, another carries NBC programs, and the other carries some ABC programs. A fourth station offers some CNN and BBC programming. Cable service is also available, similar to that in most American cities.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Bermuda has one daily newspaper, the morning Royal Gazette. The Mid-Ocean News and Bermuda Sun appear weekly on Fridays. While all newspapers concern themselves mainly with local events, they have wire-service coverage of leading U.S. and other foreign news stories. The New York Times and Washington Post are received by local vendors daily and usually arrive by air the same day of publication, or the following morning. Several other leading American and British newspapers are available on local stands.

American newspaper and magazine subscriptions should be sent via pouch. Magazines are normally sent by surface mail, arriving at least two weeks after publication. Current books, including paperbacks, are available in Hamilton bookstores, but are quite expensive. Subscription to book-buying services or clubs in the U.S. is advisable.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

All physicians in the yellow pages of the Bermuda telephone directory are licensed by the Bermuda Government and are considered acceptable.

The only hospital in Bermuda is the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital just east of Hamilton. It is a well-equipped and modern general medical and surgical hospital with about 300 beds. All customary services are available at King Edward, including an emergency and outpatient department. The hospital is accredited under a Canadian system. Local dentists are competent, most trained in the U.S. or Canada.

Community Health

Immunization and preventive care in Bermuda are undertaken vigorously and the general health of the community is good. Immunization programs exist for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, and measles. Vaccination against smallpox is compulsory. No unusual communicable disease or severe epidemics have been recorded in the past few years. A successful diabetic program and the family limitation and birth control programs are being continued. The decrease in the number of births has continued annually since 1963.

As in any subtropical region, Bermuda is afflicted with a variety of insect pests. Most households, no matter how clean or how fumigated, may have ants and/or cockroaches and termites. These are kept under control by regular spraying under commercial contracts. Few mosquitoes are found on the island, due to the scarcity of standing fresh water, and mosquito-borne diseases have been eliminated. Small and harmless lizards, mostly chameleons, may enter houses but are often welcomed as scavengers of insects. Bermuda has no snakes and few household rodents.

The Department of Health monitors food operations of all hotels, restaurants, shops, food manufacturers, pasteurizing plants, dairy farms, and slaughterhouses. A close watch is kept on the quality of imported foods. The health standards of housing and sanitary engineering are supervised by the Bermuda Government. Garbage is collected once a week as are recyclables. Recycling at present is limited to aluminum

cans and glass. Virtually all homes have septic tanks for sewage disposal, utilizing either brackish or fresh water. In the latter case, the supply is dependent on rainfall and may run short during droughts.

Preventive Measures

Few health hazards exist in Bermuda. Because the source of home water supply is rainwater stored in cisterns, the possibility of contamination always exists. Simple precautions and periodic testing of each water supply has made this problem minimal.

Foodstuffs available on the island present no health hazard. Milk from local dairies is safe. No unusual dangerous insects or animals are present, and the island is rabies free.

You can be severely sunburned during the summer, and standard precautions should be taken. The Portuguese man-of-war abounds in the waters off Bermuda; its presence near shore depends on prevailing currents. Its sting produces serious but not fatal illness among swimmers. If you are stung, get immediate medical care.

No special treatment of raw fruits and vegetables is required. All milk is pasteurized. Some people add chlorine to the water in underground storage tanks.

The Bermuda Department of Health recommends that those coming to Bermuda be vaccinated against smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough, but merely as a precautionary measure. Tuberculosis exists in Bermuda, but its incidence is decreasing and cases are rigidly controlled.

Those with respiratory ailments may suffer from the humid climate, which also seems to activate potential arthritis in those susceptible. Asthma and hay fever sufferers, however, will find some relief here. You need not bring any special medicines or drugs; any medication can be bought locally. It would be economical to stock up on any regular

medications needed, however, as local pharmacy prices are high. Fluoride supplements are provided for all children over 6 months old at government expense, as part of a 25-year study.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

U.S. citizens entering Bermuda must present a U.S. passport or a certified U.S. birth certificate, and photo identification. The Consulate strongly recommends that visitors travel with a valid passport at all times. A U.S. driver's license or a voter registration card is not sufficient for entry into Bermuda. For additional information on entry requirements, travelers may contact the British Embassy at 3100 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 462-1340, or the British consulate in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York or San Francisco; Internet: <http://www.britain-info.org> or the Bermuda Department of Immigration; <http://www.immigration.bdagov.bm>.

U.S. citizens who are taking prescription medication must inform Bermuda customs officials at the point of entry. Medicines must be in labeled containers. Travelers should carry a copy of the written prescription and a letter from the physician or pharmacist confirming the reason the medicine is prescribed.

Bermuda customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Bermuda of items such as animals, arms, ammunition and explosives, building sand, crushed rock, gravel, peat and synthetic potting media, foodstuffs (animal origin), fumigating substances, gaming machines, historic articles (relating to Bermuda), lottery advertisements and material, motorcycles, motor vehicles, obscene publications, organotin anti-fouling paint, plants, plant material, fruits

and vegetables (living or dead, including seeds), pesticides, prescription drugs, prohibited publications, seditious publications, soil, VHF radios, radar and citizens band (CB) radios. For additional information on temporary admission, export and customs regulations and tariffs, please contact Bermuda Customs at telephone 1-441-295-4816, or email customs@bdagov.bm, or visit the Bermuda Customs web site at <http://www.customs.gov.bm>. U.S. citizens may register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Consulate General located at Crown Hill, 16 Middle Road, Devonshire DV03, telephone 1-441-295-1342, where they may also obtain updated information on travel and security in Bermuda. Office hours for American Citizens Services are 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Monday through Thursday, except Bermudian and U.S. holidays. American citizens in need of after-hours emergency assistance may call the duty officer at telephone 1-441-235-3828.

Pets

Bermuda has no quarantine restriction, for pets arriving on the island, but an animal entry permit from the Bermuda Department of Agriculture is required. Failure to satisfy all requirements for this permit can result in the animal being refused entry, and there are no facilities at the airport or elsewhere for storing animals while the permit is straightened out. Veterinarians are available in Bermuda, as is pet grooming. Fleas abound.

Firearms and Ammunition

Bermuda laws are extremely strict with regard to firearms and ammunition. No private firearms may be brought into Bermuda. There are no exceptions to this regulation.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Bermuda's currency is on the decimal system; notes come in \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10, \$5, \$2 denominations, and metal coinage in \$1, .25, .10, .05, and .01 issues. U.S. money, while not legal tender in Bermuda, is freely accepted by all trading

establishments on a one-for-one basis, although the official exchange rate makes the Bermuda dollar worth slightly more than the U.S. dollar.

Most local concerns accept U.S. credit cards and many vendors take checks drawn on U.S. banks. No restrictions are placed on the importation of U.S. dollars, other currency, or travelers checks-the export of Bermudian currency requires a foreign exchange permit (usually granted) from the Bermuda Monetary Authority.

British Imperial standard weights and measures are in general used in Bermuda and many Bermudians habitually use American terms of measurement-but the Bermuda Government has adopted a policy of gradual shift to the metric system. Road signs and local gas pumps are metric.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 24	Bermuda Day
June	Queen's Birthday*
Aug.2	Emancipation Day
Aug.	Somers Day*
Sept.3	Labor Day
Nov. 12	Remembrance Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Bermuda Travel Guide. New York: Macmillan, 1989.

Cancelino, Jesse, and Michael Strohofer. *Diving Bermuda*. Locust Valley, CA: Aqua Quest Publications, 1990.

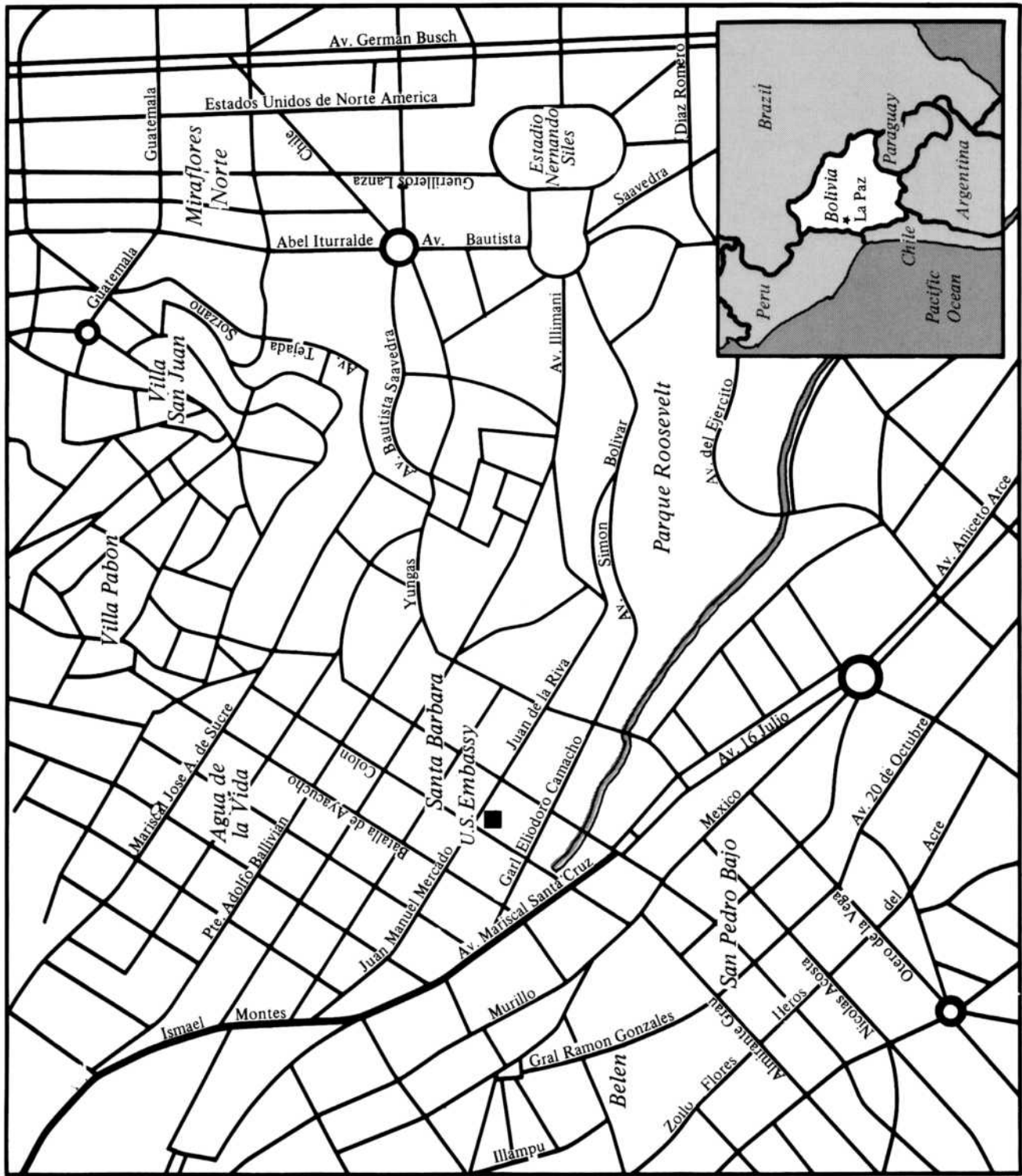
Christmas, Rachel J., and Walter Christmas. *Fielding's Bermuda & the Bahamas Nineteen Ninety-Two*. New York: Fielding Travel Books, 1991.

Fodor, Eugene. *Fodor's Bermuda, 1991*. New York: McKay, 1991.

Fox, Larry, and Barbara Radin-Fox. *Romantic Island Getaways: The Caribbean, Bermuda & the Bahamas*. New York: Wiley, 1991.

LaBrucherie, Roger A. *Images of Bermuda*. Rev. ed. Pine Valley, CA: Imagenes Press, 1989.

Raine. *The Islands of Bermuda*. Edison, NJ: Hunter Publishing, 1990.



La Paz, Bolivia

BOLIVIA

Republic of Bolivia

Major Cities:

La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Sucre, Potosí

Minor Cities:

Oruro, Tarija, Trinidad

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

BOLIVIA can be described as a land of contrasts. There are spectacular geographic contrasts—its natural beauty varying from the dramatically barren *altiplano*, to the snowcapped Andean mountains, to the lush jungles of the Amazon lowlands. Its chief cities, which lie in the *altiplano*, are some of the highest in the world, and Lake Titicaca, also situated on this two-and-a-half-mile-high plateau, is the largest freshwater lake in all of South America.

Furthermore, Bolivia is endowed with some of the richest mineral resources in the world. An international leader in tin production, it also mines copper, silver, tungsten,

bismuth, antimony, and zinc. But despite these mineral riches, Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in Latin America; most Bolivians live by subsistence farming, raising sugarcane, potatoes, corn, wheat, and rice.

The people of Bolivia are predominantly Indian. They descend from the Aymara, who produced a highly advanced culture between the seventh and the 10th centuries, and from the Quechua-speaking Incas, one of the world's greatest imperial dynasties. The Spaniards arrived from Peru in 1535 to conquer Bolivia, and during most of the colonial period kept it as a dependency of the viceroyalty of Lima. Independence was established in 1825.

MAJOR CITIES

La Paz

La Paz, the de facto capital of Bolivia, is in the west-central part of the country, in a deep canyon about 60 miles south of Lake Titicaca. At about 12,500 feet, it is the highest capital city in the world and has a metropolitan population of about 1.5 million.

La Paz was founded in 1548 by the Spanish conquistadors, who chose the site as a halfway station for the llama pack trains bearing silver ore from Potosí to Lima. After Bolivia achieved independence, La Paz grew to be the commercial and financial center of the country. Although Sucre remains the constitutional capital, all government offices except the Supreme Court are in La Paz.

The city's architecture is a mixture of colonial and modern styles. The older sections, with their narrow cobblestone streets, contain some fine colonial buildings from the 16th century. Many high-rise office and apartment buildings have been completed or are under construction in the center of the city. Most business is conducted in small shops or in local markets run by colorfully clad Indian women.

Business activity within the city is mainly light industry, such as clothing and food manufacture, and commercial and financial enterprises, which support the country's mining economy.

One of the few level areas in La Paz is directly adjacent to Avenida 16 de Julio (El Prado) in the center of the city. Virtually all major streets radiate from the Prado, and some are so steep that they are difficult to negotiate.

Deeply eroded water courses cut through the city at a number of points, contributing to the irregular street pattern. The slopes of the canyon are rocky and bleak, except where eucalyptus trees have been planted. Although the *altiplano* countryside is barren, the magnificent snowcapped mountain peaks (particularly Mount Illimani) that overlook the canyon and the multi-colored eroded hillsides provide a most spectacular setting for the city.

La Paz Airport, above the city on the *altiplano*, is the highest international airport in the world, at 13,300 feet above sea level. The descent from the *altiplano* provides a beautiful panorama of the entire canyon and city. Most of the year, particularly during “winter,” the air is crystal clear and the sky is a magnificent blue.

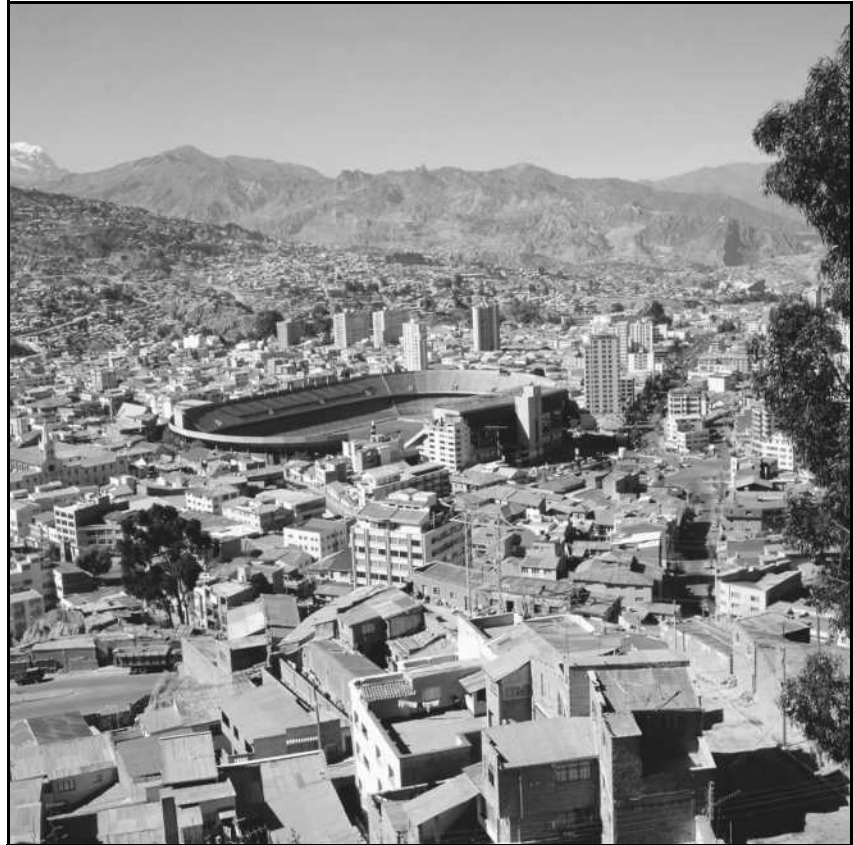
Clothing

Temperatures in La Paz are not extremely hot or cold. Spring and fall clothing may be worn all year. Temperatures vary considerably in the sun or in the shade. Although lightweight clothing may be comfortable in sunshine, temperature drops are sudden in the shade.

During winter—May through August—a light winter coat is worn in the morning and evening. With the sun, daytime temperatures become quite warm, especially at midday. During rainy weather a raincoat (preferably with a zip-in lining), boots, and umbrella are needed. Warm bathrobes or sweat-suits and slippers are comfortable at home during mornings and evenings.

Except for fur and wool items, clothing in La Paz is expensive, hard to find, and usually behind U.S. styles. Shoes in La Paz (except for Italian imports) are poorly made, wide, and expensive. Due to steep and very slippery sidewalks, low-heeled, rubber-soled shoes are needed.

Some good seamstresses and tailors in La Paz copy fashions from photographs. Fabrics (including British wool imports) are available but at



Aerial view of La Paz, Bolivia

© Stephanie Colasanti/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

higher prices, making it cheaper to buy material in the U.S.

Men wear medium-weight suits all year. Some men wear vests or sweaters with their jackets on cooler days. A good supply of shirts, shoes, underwear, socks, and accessories should be brought from the U.S. as well as lightweight clothing and sportswear.

Clothing worn in the U.S. in early spring and fall is worn by women year round in La Paz. Skirts and sweaters, as well as basic medium-weight suits and dresses that can be dressed up or down are best. Three-piece suits and dresses with jackets are practical, since they can be varied to suit temperatures. It is advisable to bring shoes, undergarments, purses, and sportswear from the U.S. These items are expensive and hard to find. Sweaters are essential and available locally. Pantsuits, slacks, and jeans are seen everywhere and are worn for casual wear to provide warmth

in unheated buildings. Some summer clothes, including a bathing suit, are needed for trips to warmer climates.

In general, children’s clothing in La Paz resembles what is worn in Washington, DC in the fall. Emphasis should be on layered clothing that can be added or subtracted according to temperature changes, rather than on extra heavy clothing. All types of clothing for babies and some children’s clothing are available in La Paz. Locally made clothing is inexpensive. Imports are limited and expensive. Dress for school-age children is informal. Girls wear jeans, slacks, skirts, sweaters, and dresses to school. Boys wear jeans, slacks, and shirts without ties. Both need windbreakers or jackets, sweaters, raincoats, and sturdy shoes. Children use lightweight jackets, sweaters, or sweatshirts almost daily. Locally made blouses and shirts and velour sweatshirts are well-made and can be bought at reasonable prices.

Food

Availability of most foodstuffs is good, through there are occasional shortages of basic and specialty items in the marketplace. Processed food in La Paz costs much more than in the U.S. since many goods are imported. Stocks are less varied and almost no frozen foods exist. Major food sources in La Paz are local shops, open-air markets, and a supermarket in Obrajes. Markets sell fresh produce, meats (beef, pork, lamb, and poultry), fresh fish (especially trout from Lake Titicaca and tropical fish from Cochabamba), and dairy products. The wide variety of fruits and vegetables is of good quality and reasonably priced. Meat is not cut U.S. style, varies in quality, and supply is sometimes limited. In addition to open-air markets, small shops and several supermarkets stock expensive canned and packaged items and specialty shops carry good quality, expensive cheeses and other imports. Although called "supermarkets," these stores only slightly resemble U.S. chains.

Reconstituted pasteurized milk, butter, and limited cheeses are available. Locally canned fruits and vegetables are expensive and of lower-than-average quality.

Meats and vegetables require longer cooking in La Paz due to altitude. Pressure cookers save time and energy and tenderize tougher meat cuts. Cakes and other pastries require adjustments in ingredients and baking time. Although local cooks are familiar with high-altitude cooking, Americans find the *Andean Cookbook*, written in Spanish and English, very useful.

The wine industry in Bolivia is just being developed, but a couple of local wineries are marketing some good wines.

Supplies & Services

La Paz has several adequate dry cleaners and prices are reasonable, but to rid clothes of strong cleaning fluid odors, they must be aired. A few laundries are available, but

most laundry is done at home by maids or laundresses.

Men's tailoring costs about the same as in the U.S. but quality is somewhat lower. Good quality women's tailoring is available. Fair shoe repair and leather service is available and costs compare with those in the U.S.

La Paz has good barbers and beauticians who offer all standard services at moderate prices.

Electrical and mechanical repairs vary in quality. Prices depend on parts availability. Labor costs are reasonable; quality work is rare. It is advisable to check and repair electrical and mechanical items before coming to La Paz. Automobile body service is very satisfactory.

Film developing is available but of poor quality, high cost, and not all films can be processed. Camera and watch repairs can be made here.

Religious Activities

Most churches in Bolivia are Roman Catholic. Services are usually conducted in Spanish. An English mass is said every Saturday at the Santa Rosa Church in La Florida, and La Paz Community Church, a non-denominational Protestant church, has services in English every Sunday. Most major Protestant denominations have at least one Spanish-speaking church in La Paz. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon) has several Spanish-speaking branches in the capital and other Bolivian cities. The headquarters of the Andes South Mission is in La Paz. The Jewish community in La Paz holds religious services at two synagogues, and also maintains a school.

Domestic Help

Virtually all foreigners find domestics necessary due to marketing difficulties and the extra time needed to prepare and cook food at the high altitude. A combination maid/cook is generally sufficient for a couple with one or two children in a small house. Many Americans with more than two children employ a cook and a general maid or houseboy.

Everyone with gardens needs a part-time gardener.

The salaries for domestics are reasonable. The employer provides meals, uniforms, medical care, and lodging for live-in servants. Local law requires an extra month's pay as a Christmas bonus and a patriotic bonus paid in July. Domestics are entitled to 10 days of paid vacation per year. If mutually acceptable, extra pay may be given in lieu of vacation.

Domestics vary in efficiency and dependability, but all need training. During a three-month probationary period, an employee may be terminated without notice or compensation. After this period, 15 days' discharge notice or 15 days' pay are required. When employees are discharged after 12 months' service they can receive a longevity bonus equal to 15 days' pay for each year of employment.

The prospective employer pays for medical checkups (which include a chest X-ray) before hiring domestics. All employees sign a work contract.

Education

Most American children living in La Paz attend the American Cooperative School in the residential suburb of Calacoto. The school also sponsors a kindergarten and pre-kindergarten at the same location. In 1994, the school had 500-600 students, 25% American, 55% Bolivian, and 20% third country nationals. The school had 60 full-time teachers, 80% of these teachers were American. The student-teacher ratio was less than 25 students per teacher. An American director supervises American high-school and elementary school principals, and the teaching staff. Instruction is in English, secondary-level courses compare to college preparatory courses in U.S. schools. Spanish is taught as a foreign language.

The American Cooperative School has maintained a good rating and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. School runs from mid-August to late May,



Skyscraper in Cochabamba, Bolivia

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

with the usual holidays and vacations. The school also runs a six-week summer school offering a variety of courses, including remedial math and English classes, Spanish, sports, and others. Special education resources are also available at the school.

In addition to the regular curriculum, several extracurricular activities are offered. Among these are student government, a school newspaper, intramural and interscholastic sports program, drama, forensics, Knowledge Bowl, astronomy, photography, the Cultural Convention, and a jazz band. Various Boy and Girl Scout troops spon-

sored by the American community also use school facilities.

School facilities include modern buildings, housing science laboratories, auditorium with stage, cafeteria, library, audiovisual center, gymnasium, all-purpose room, sports field, volleyball and basketball courts, and shower and dressing rooms.

There are several other schools available in La Paz, all opening in February or March and running to late October or early November. The American Institute is a coeducational school operated by Methodist missionaries. It has regular primary

and secondary grades and also offers a three-year commercial course. Classes are held in Spanish, and English is taught as a foreign language.

St. Andrew's is a Catholic-administered, nonsectarian school with a U.S.-trained Bolivian headmaster. Classes are taught in Spanish.

Franco Boliviano is a French coed school, supported partly by the French Embassy. Classes are conducted in French with Spanish and English taught as foreign languages.

San Calixto and La Salle are Catholic coed schools; classes are taught in Spanish with English as a foreign language.

School of the Sacred Heart is a coed school directed by a French mother superior. Classes are in Spanish, with French and English taught as foreign languages.

The German community in La Paz directs and supports nonsectarian Mariscal Braun. Classes are in both Spanish and German.

Kindergartens are maintained by the English Catholic College, the Mariscal Braun School. Several private kindergartens, not connected with schools or institutions, are also available. Little English, if any, is taught in private kindergartens. A Spanish-speaking Montessori school is available for preschool children.

Private instruction in photography, art, music, folk dancing, and ballet is available. The American Cooperative School provides the community with a program of after school and evening sports and educational activities for both students and adults. Depending on demand and availability of teachers, these include photography, ballet, exercise, square dancing, handicrafts, business courses, language, and culture.

The German, American, and French binational centers periodically offer courses and lectures in various

fields. Once each semester, a graduate-level course for credit is offered at the American Cooperative School through the University of Arkansas. For those with a working knowledge of Spanish, other special educational opportunities exist. The municipal government sponsors a cultural foundation (Casa Juvenil de la Cultura "Juancito Pinto") which offers music, folk dancing, and puppetry to children, free of charge.

Recreation

Bolivia's varied climate is ideal for outdoor sports. The elevation at La Paz adds a sense of novelty to participation in sports such as skiing, golf, and tennis. Tennis balls are depressurized especially for the high altitude, and 300-yard drives on the golf course at La Paz are occasionally enjoyed by the competent player. Soccer is the national sport, but basketball and volleyball are sufficiently important to support national federations. The American Cooperative School's evening programs include a men's basketball league.

La Paz boasts the Mallasilla Golf Club, an 18-hole course with magnificent vistas, about 25 minutes from the city. There are tennis clubs, a rod and gun club, a bowling alley, and a glider club. The climate in the capital discourages swimming, but in warmer areas of the country swimming can be enjoyed.

Many Americans enjoy trout fishing in the areas surrounding La Paz. The trout of Lake Titicaca and nearby glacier lakes are of the salmon family. Catches in Lake Titicaca have been reported as weighing up to 28 pounds; however, fishing here has been poor in recent years due to netting, trapping, and dynamiting by commercial fishermen. The small glacier lakes, about three hours from La Paz, produce rainbow trout weighing up to four pounds. Fly fishing is found two-to-three hours from La Paz in the streams of the lowland valleys of the Yungas. Stream fishing is as effective as lake fishing, but is more difficult due to the rugged terrain

and fast waters. Better fishing may be found farther from La Paz, but reaching the least-fished waters requires four-wheel-drive vehicles or transportation by air. Other tropical varieties of fish are found in the warmer waters of the Beni and Sata Cruz.

Opportunities for partridge, duck, and wild fowl shooting are available year round on the eastern shore of Lake Titicaca, and at certain other high-altitude lakes. The Beni area in the lowlands offers big-game hunting possibilities, including wild hog, puma, ocelot, anteater, deer, and alligator. Hunting and fishing licenses are required in Bolivia. Bolivia has a long list of protected animals and birds with which one should be familiar. No special clothing nor dogs are required for hunting. Hunters or fishing enthusiasts should bring their own gear.

Sailing on Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable lake, is rewarding. Actually it is two lakes, separated by a narrow strait. The lower lake—Huinamarca—is much smaller and shallower than Upper Chucuito, a veritable inland sea, with water horizons and persistent swells. Visibility is generally almost unlimited. The most consistent winds and sunniest weather occur on winter afternoons. Summer, though generally warmer, is characterized by light, variable winds, and frequent rain showers.

Chacaltaya, site of the highest ski run in the world at 17,400 feet, offers a spectacular course for expert skiers on a glacier during the October through April season. When snow cover is heavy enough to fill gullies in upper headwalls, experts will find very challenging skiing. The primitive, 5,000-foot cable tow operates on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays when there is skiing. The slopes adjacent to deep precipices are wide and steep, with varying and unpredictable snow conditions. Chacaltaya is about a 90-minute drive from La Paz; the Andino Club provides transportation from La Paz. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is recom-

mended for driving the steep dirt road, although normal cars can manage under good conditions. A day lodge serves soft drinks and some snacks.

Bolivia offers excellent opportunities for mountain climbing and hiking. Two major cordilleras, the Cordillera Real and Cordillera de las Tres Cruces, are accessible by mining roads. The third significant cordillera, Apolobamba, is harder to reach. Bolivia's highest peak is Nevada Ancochuma (21,489 feet) near the Peruvian border. Other mountains over 20,000 feet include Illampu, Sajama, Illimani, Huayna Potosí, and Chachacomani. Hundreds of peaks in the 17,500- to 18,500-foot class are excellent for experienced climbers. Although most summits have been reached, many new routes are possible, and climbing is still very challenging. Backpacking is another popular pastime, and Bolivia offers superb opportunities. Mountain hiking is aided by a network of Indian paths and ancient trails on the dry western slopes, and a less extensive network on the wet and steep eastern side. It is on these eastern slopes, however, that hikers in good condition find excellent opportunities for walks of from two days to a week through magnificent scenery, often over trails originally engineered by the Incas. Stretches of these well-designed ancient roads remain in use today.

Good one-day rock and ice climbs can be found in the Khala Cruz-Charquini-Sora Patilla group south of Huayna Potosí and on nearby 18,700-foot Cerro Milluni and its rocky satellites. Climbers and walkers should bring their own equipment to Bolivia.

La Paz has a glider club. Some hang gliding has been done, but thin air makes this sport difficult and dangerous. Andean air currents offer some of the world's most challenging and highest gliding for experienced pilots, but this area is not considered suitable for novices. An equestrian club offers boarding facilities for privately owned horses

and classes in horsemanship. Another club offers rentals and lessons. Periodically, public horse races are held.

By far, the most popular spectator sport in Bolivia is football, or soccer. Several Bolivian teams are often in international competition. Other spectator sports include wrestling, basketball, and an occasional bullfight.

Bolivia has many interesting tour sites. A popular place is Copacabana, a resort town 88 miles from La Paz on Lake Titicaca. It is noted especially for the Shrine of the Virgin of Copacabana, to which many Bolivians make a pilgrimage. Copacabana can be reached by car from La Paz in about four hours. It also is possible to take a hydrofoil from Huatajata (a town on Lake Titicaca) to Copacabana. Day trips by motorboat to the Isles of the Sun and Moon, famous in Incan mythology, can be made from Copacabana.

En route to the western shore of Lake Titicaca, 60 miles from La Paz, are the ruins of the advanced Aymara culture of Tiwanaku, which can be reached by car from La Paz in about two-and-a-half hours.

Situated 95 miles from La Paz at 8,700 feet, Sorata provides relief from the high altitude of the capital and the *altiplano*. Sorata is in a valley at the foot of Illampu, one of the highest mountains in Bolivia. There are some interesting caves that can be explored nearby. The trip takes roughly four hours, one way, by car. In the vicinity of Sorata, along the east shore of Lake Titicaca, is a tremendous slough that provides some of the best duck and goose shooting in Bolivia.

The Yungas are a series of deep valleys sloping from the cordillera into the eastern jungle region. They can be reached by car in three-to-four hours. Landslides may block roads during rainy months. The road from La Paz to the Yungas crosses the eastern cordillera through a 15,000-foot pass, then drops down rapidly into lush, semitropical valleys in less than 50 miles, one of the

most spectacular sights in the country. Hotel accommodations are available at Coroico, Chulumani, and a few other points.

North of Lake Titicaca in Peru is Cuzco, center of the ancient Inca civilization and famed site of the Incas' last stand. Cuzco and nearby Machu Picchu, the "lost city of the Incas," are sight-seeing attractions for tourists from all over the world. The trip from La Paz to Cuzco by air takes 50 minutes.

Arica, a Chilean seaport 20 minutes away by air or 12 hours by train, is a good change of scene for those who enjoy the seashore.

The tropical lowlands facing Brazil provide another interesting change from La Paz. These areas are interlaced with large rivers, are heavily forested, and abound in many varieties of wild game. Driving trips to some parts of the area are possible but require elaborate preparation and four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The region around Santa Cruz is the fastest developing area in Bolivia. Santa Cruz can be reached by road and by air. Northwest of Santa Cruz is the department of Beni, a sparsely populated region with great potential for agricultural development and increased cattle production. The region is traversed by the major rivers in Bolivia and offers excellent fishing. These tropical lowlands facing Brazil provide a pleasant change from La Paz. They are interlaced with large rivers, and are heavily forested, with a large variety of game. Road trips during dry months to some areas are possible but require elaborate arrangements and four-wheel-drive cars.

Entertainment

Adequate entertainment is available in most of the large cities. La Paz has a few nightclubs, and the most popular among these are the discotheques. Others have dance bands, and most feature additional entertainment on weekends. Americans as well as Bolivians enjoy the *peñas* or clubs which specialize in authentic folk singing, dancing, and art. These clubs have shows on Fri-

day and Saturday nights, and serve drinks and meals. A visit to one of these *peñas* is a good way to be introduced to Bolivian folklore.

Some unique folklore festivals highlight the year in La Paz. In January, a week-long fair, "Alacitas," centers around Ekeko, the Aymaran talisman of prosperity and good fortune. Miniatures, from clothes to buses, are bought (and given) with the hope that what they represent will be obtained soon. Carnival is celebrated with parades (a very charming one features children in costumes) and dancing in La Paz. "Jesús, el Gran Poder" is honored in June in La Paz with a parade of dancers and musicians. Year round, small pueblos in the outskirts of La Paz stage interesting festivals.

Several restaurants have good quality food, service, and atmosphere that Americans normally associate with dining out.

Movie theaters in La Paz are inexpensive and show many American films as well as films from Argentina, Brazil, Italy, and France. All films are in the original soundtrack with Spanish subtitles. Films make their debut in La Paz a year or more after their release.

Video clubs recently have become very popular. The variety is not the best, but tapes can be rented for very reasonable prices. Local clubs carry Beta and VHS tapes.

Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz, the seat of early Spanish culture, was founded in the mid-16th century, and reestablished in 1595 by settlers from Paraguay. With a population of 1,110,000 (2000 est.), it is the second largest city in Bolivia. Its economy is based on exports of oil and agricultural products.

The people of Santa Cruz call themselves Cruceños or Cambas. They are staunchly proud of their land and of their heritage. The Cruceños are innately polite and hospitable, slow to anger, generous, and proud. Typical of the people of tropical cli-

mates in Latin America, Crucenos maintain a very active social calendar, and are extremely warm, friendly, and outgoing.

Education

The Santa Cruz Cooperative School is a coeducational, day, school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The school was originally established to serve the children of the Gulf Oil Company personnel. When Gulf Oil was nationalized, many Americans left Bolivia. The school continued as a cooperative, and over the years, the percentage of host country students has increased to a large majority. Currently about 10% of the students at SCCS are American, 65% are Bolivian, and 25% are from other various nations. Facilities include two science laboratories, a computer lab, a new library/media center, and a comprehensive sports/fine arts complex. Classes follow a U.S. school year and a U.S. curriculum, granting both American and Bolivian secondary diplomas.

Cochabamba

Cochabamba is Bolivia's third largest city. Its population is approximately 377,260 (2000 est.). This valley city is 8,430 feet above sea level. Cochabamba was founded in 1574 and was originally called Villa de Oropeza. The city has many historical buildings and is an important alpaca handicraft center and vacation spot.

Education

Cochabamba Cooperative School is a coeducational school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. A U.S. curriculum is used for its 100 students.

The American International School of Bolivia offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) as well as U.S. and Bolivian degrees. It receives a State Department grant and has about 100 students in kindergarten through grade 12.

The Carachipampa Christian School is run by the Andes Evangelical Mission and has about 100 stu-

dents kindergarten through grade 12.

Sucre

Sucre is the judicial center and constitutional capital of Bolivia. Its population is 152,000 (2000 est.). The city lies in a mountain valley on the eastern slope of the Andes, 9,320 feet above sea level. A learning center for centuries and the city where Bolivia proclaimed independence, Sucre is now a university town. It offers large monasteries, fine churches, exquisite colonial architecture, colonial paintings, and Old World art collections.

Potosí

Potosí, at 4,000 meters (over 14,000 feet), is the highest city in the world. Today it is a mining town producing some silver and substantial amounts of tin, lead, and zinc, but in 1553 it was decreed an Imperial City by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, due to the discovery of silver here by the Spanish conquistadors in 1545. During the late 1500s, it was one of the largest cities in the world (population 160,000), and the name Potosí became synonymous with the idea of untold riches. It is estimated that over a billion dollars' worth of silver was extracted from the Cerro Rico Mountain overlooking Potosí. By the 18th century the silver mines were depleted and the city was in decline. In 2000, Potosí had a population of 114,092.

However, the aura of its fabulous past still lingers and can be seen in some of the colonial architecture, much of which is baroque in design. The colonial Art Museum in Sucre contains detailed color drawings of Potosí in its prime. One of the chief attractions and places of renown in Potosí is the Casa de la Moneda, or mint, established to control the minting of colonial wealth. The restored building has been called the most important monument of civilian building in all of South America. It houses an important collection of colonial paintings,

sculptures, and archaeological and minting materials.

OTHER CITIES

ORURO, with a population of 125,240 (2000 est.), is 120 miles southeast of La Paz, situated at an altitude of 12,160 feet. Capital of Oruro Department, the city is also the country's railroad center. Founded early in the 17th century to exploit the nearby silver deposits, Oruro nearly became a ghost town in the 19th century when silver production declined. However, other mineral resources, primarily wolfram, copper, and tin are now mined and are the basis of the city's economy. Due to the altitude, agriculture is almost nonexistent. A technical university was founded in Oruro in 1892. A major tin refinery is located here. An outstanding celebration takes place here; day-long parades feature the world-famous *diabladas* (devil dancers), bears, and *morenadas*, creating an outstanding display of folkloric costumes and *altiplano* music. Oruro is a major hub for Bolivia's railway system.

TARIJA, at an altitude of 6,398 feet, is located in a fertile Andean valley, about 160 miles southeast of Potosí. The area has rich soil and a moderate climate, making the region famous for its vineyards and orchards. Vegetables, wheat, potatoes, corn, and other crops are grown near Tarija. However, due to the city's remote location, they are consumed by the local population. Founded in 1574, the city's commercial growth lagged due to a lack of communications. With a population of nearly 403,000 (2000), Tarija is known for its *Vendimia*, or grape harvest festival, held each February. Residents of the city are noted for their outdoor religious processions. A university, founded in 1966, is also located in Tarija.

TRINIDAD, capital city of the Beni Department, is located in northeastern Bolivia, about 250 miles north of La Paz. The city has a sugar refinery and also trades in sugarcane,

rice, beef, and cotton. A busy commercial center, Trinidad has an airport and several roads leading to other cities. The city is the seat of the “Mariscal Jose Ballivian” Bolivian University.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Landlocked Bolivia shares borders on the north and east with Brazil, on the south with Argentina and Paraguay, on the southwest with Chile, and on the northwest with Peru. With an area of 420,000 square miles, Bolivia is about the size of Texas and California combined. The country has three well-defined geographic zones—the high plateau (*altiplano*); the temperate and semitropical valleys of the eastern mountain slopes (*yungas*); and the tropical lowlands (*llanos*) of the Amazon River Basin. Each of these regions differs from the others in a significant way.

Lying between the main eastern and western ridges of the Andean Mountains, the *altiplano* is 500 miles long and 80 miles wide, at altitudes varying between 12,000 and 14,000 feet. It is one of the world’s highest inhabited regions. Lake Titicaca is situated in the *altiplano* and straddles Bolivia’s border with Peru in the north. It has an area of 3,500 square miles with depths of up to 700 feet, and maintains a constant temperature of 55°F. The land surrounding the lake is the most agriculturally productive and heavily populated section of the *altiplano*, with a population density of more than 125 per square mile in some localities. Most of the region’s inhabitants are Aymara and Quechua Indians, who maintain a primitive subsistence agricultural and grazing economy. Principal animals are sheep, alpacas, llamas, and the fast-disappearing vicunas. The rich mineral deposits that form the backbone of the Bolivian economy are found on



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Going to the market in Bolivia

the *altiplano* and in nearby mountainous areas. Several cities (La Paz, the capital; Oruro; and Potosí) and industries are located here.

To the east and northeast of the *altiplano* lie the *yungas*, the temperate and semitropical valleys. Cochabamba, Sucre, and Tarija are major cities in the more arid mountain valleys to the southeast of the capital. These areas vary in altitude from 1,600 feet to 9,000 feet above sea level and have a moderately warm and humid climate. This region is mainly agricultural—chief crops are corn, barley, coffee, cacao, citrus fruits, and sugarcane.

The *llanos* cover more than two-thirds of the country. Through the *llanos* flow the major tributaries of the Amazon: the Mamoré, Beni,

Ichilo, Itenes, and Madre de Dios rivers. With the exception of the Santa Cruz area, the lowlands are sparsely populated and are only now being developed. This fertile region offers excellent possibilities for agriculture and stock-raising. Santa Cruz (Bolivia’s second largest city), Trinidad, Riberalta, and Cobija are the principal cities in the lowlands.

Bolivia lies entirely within the tropics, but the extreme differences in elevation—as low as 300 feet along the Brazilian border and more than 21,000 feet on the highest mountain peaks—produce a great variety of climatic conditions. These, coupled with a wide diversity in soils, result in vegetation ranging from the sparse cover of scrub in the semi-arid highlands to lush rain forests

in the abundantly watered plains of the east.

La Paz has only two seasons: rainy and dry. The rainy season begins in December and continues through March; some rain falls almost daily during this period. Even in the rainy season, the humidity is very low. Average annual rainfall is 20 inches. The climate is cool, but the warm sunshine raises the temperature during the daytime, making outdoor parties and activities at midday very pleasant.

Population

Reliable demographic data is difficult to obtain in Bolivia. Bolivia's estimated population is about 8.1 million (2000), with an estimated 1.5 million people inhabiting the capital city of La Paz. Population density, the lowest in Latin America, is approximately 7 per square mile, but varies greatly by area.

An estimated 55% of the people are Aymara- and Quechua-speaking, descended from peoples of pre-Inca cultures. Virtually all Indians live in rural areas or villages. The hard daily life of the Indian population is occasionally brightened by colorful fiestas which often last for days. Bolivians of mixed Indian and European ancestry (*mestizos*) comprise 30% of the population and work mostly in small businesses, factories, and government offices. *Mestizos* generally speak Spanish as a first language, but often know at least one native language.

The rest of the population is of European descent and fill most professional and management positions in Bolivian society. The most recent large-scale immigration of Europeans to Bolivia took place before and during World War II. More recently, there have been smaller immigrations of Taiwanese, Japanese, Koreans, and Mennonites to the underpopulated tropical lowlands of Santa Cruz.

Although Roman Catholicism is the recognized religion of Bolivia and

95% of the population is Catholic, other religions are freely practiced.

History

Between A.D. 600 and 900, Aymara Indians living at the southern end of Lake Titicaca produced an advanced native civilization known as Tiahuanaco. In about 1200, the Quechua-speaking Incas invaded the area and incorporated much of what is now Bolivia under their control, until the Spaniards arrived from Peru and conquered Bolivia in 1535.

The area became a dependency of the viceroyalty of Lima, and the principal cities were Chuquisaca (now Sucre), the seat of the Audencia de Charcas, La Paz, and Potosí, for many years the largest city in the Western Hemisphere. The Bolivian silver mines were a major source of the wealth of the Spanish Empire. As Spanish royal authority weakened during the Napoleonic Wars, Bolivia swarmed with secret patriotic societies. Although independence was proclaimed in 1809, 16 years of struggle followed before the Republic (named for the patriot and liberator, Simón Bolívar) was established on August 6, 1825.

The 19th century saw one military leader after another succeed to power, frequently by force. This political disorder and instability impeded social and economic progress. A disastrous war with Chile (1879–84) caused Bolivia to lose its seacoast and the rich nitrate fields and copper mines of the region around Antofagasta, Chile. A major aim of Bolivian foreign policy since then has been to recover a port on the Pacific coast.

Government

Political stability improved during the early 20th century, although the Chaco War with Paraguay (1932-35) exhausted Bolivia economically and discredited its traditional ruling classes. A protracted period of political unrest ended in the revolution of April 9, 1952, which put in power the Nationalist Revolutionary

Movement (MNR). The MNR introduced universal suffrage, agrarian and educational reform, and nationalized the three largest private tin enterprises under the state mining corporation, COMIBOL.

Divisions within the MNR and growing opposition to its rule led to its overthrow in November 1964 by a military junta. The Ovando-Barrientos junta retained the MNR's major reforms. In August 1966, the junta leader was elected president. On September 26, 1969, the military overthrew the president and formed a civilian-military government.

From 1969 to 1982, Bolivia experienced several coups and rapid changes of government. The first two years of the UDP (Popular Democratic Unity, 1982-85) were marked by national disasters, a deteriorating economy, and lack of political consensus. The fragile government was teetering by 1984, threatened by political extremists and undercut by its lack of coherency. The president, responding to an initiative of the Catholic Church, began talks with the opposition, and, as a result, curtailed his term, calling for elections in 1985.

Since then, despite continual changes in players, elections have been held peacefully and on schedule.

The 1967 constitution, revised in 1994, provides for balanced executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The traditionally strong executive, however, tends to overshadow the Congress, whose role is generally limited to debating and approving legislation initiated by the executive. The judiciary, consisting of the Supreme Court and departmental and lower courts, has long been riddled with corruption and inefficiency. Through revisions to the constitution in 1994, and subsequent laws, the government has initiated potentially far-reaching reforms in the judicial system and processes.

Bolivia's nine departments received greater autonomy under the Admin-

istrative Decentralization law of 1995, although principal departmental officials are still appointed by the central government. Bolivian cities and towns are governed by elected mayors and councils. The Popular Participation Law of April 1994, which distributes a significant portion of national revenues to municipalities for discretionary use, has enabled previously neglected communities to make striking improvements in their facilities and services.

The Bolivian flag consists of three horizontal bands in red, yellow, and green.

Arts, Science, Education

Education, from primary to post-secondary, is currently the subject of much debate in Bolivia, focusing on how to provide educational opportunities for all and still maintain quality.

Bolivia has nine state universities and eight private universities. In addition to their usual curriculum, the universities serve as centers of scientific activities with programs in space sciences, geology, mineralogy, genetics, and other sciences. The University of San Andrés Observatory at Chacaltaya (near La Paz) is world famous for its work on cosmic rays.

The National Symphony Orchestra and the Coral Nova choir, based in La Paz, give several concerts a year. A national ballet company performs occasionally and visiting music and dance performers are sponsored by the Casa de la Cultura, the Centro Boliviano Americano, and other cultural institutions. There are also a Chamber Orchestra and a Youth Orchestra in La Paz. Folk music can be enjoyed at the various folklore nightclubs called *peñas* on weekends and some week nights at programs of the Centro Boliviano Americano. The Municipal Theater offers various programs, including visiting artists, jazz groups, and other entertainers. These perfor-

mances vary in quality, from very good to mediocre.

Art exhibits are held in the National Museum of Art, the Casa de la Cultura, the University of San Andrés, the Centro Boliviano Americano, the lobby of the newspaper *El Diario*, and in a number of private galleries, and commercial art galleries in the major cities. La Paz has several museums. The National Museum of Archaeology and the Diez de Medina Museum both house good collections of Inca and pre-Inca artifacts. The National Folklore Museum and the Fine Arts Museum are located in beautifully restored colonial palaces. The latter contains interesting examples of colonial art, but the finest collections are in Sucre and Potosí.

A wealth of handicraft art is found in colorful Indian markets or urban boutiques in Bolivia, ranging from the crude and primitive to the refined. Gold and silver jewelry is a good buy; Bolivian goldsmiths can make jewelry in any design at a cost below that in the U.S. A great deal of work is done with pewter and in a metal similar to silver, and the products are handsome. Good quality sweaters, coats, scarves, and rugs of sheepskin, llama, and alpaca are reasonably priced.

Commerce and Industry

Since 1985, the Government of Bolivia has been implementing a far-reaching program of macroeconomic stabilization and structural reform aimed at restoring price stability, creating conditions for sustained growth, and alleviating poverty. Important components of these structural reform measures include the capitalization of state enterprises and strengthening of the country's financial system.

The most important recent structural changes in the Bolivian economy have involved the capitalization of numerous public sector enterprises. (Capitalization in the Bolivian context is a form of privatization where investors

acquire a 50% stake and management control of public enterprises in return for a commitment to undertake capital expenditures equivalent to the enterprise's net worth). Parallel legislative reforms have locked into place market-oriented policies, especially in the hydrocarbon and mining sectors, that have encouraged private investment. Foreign investors are accorded national treatment, and foreign ownership of companies enjoys virtually no restrictions in Bolivia. The privatization program has generated commitments of \$1.7 billion in foreign direct investment over the period 1996-2002.

In 1996, three units of the Bolivian state oil corporation (YPFB) involved in hydrocarbon exploration, production, and transportation were capitalized. The capitalization of YPFB allowed agreement to be reached on the construction of a gas pipeline to Brazil. A priority in the development strategy for the sector is the expansion of export markets for natural gas. The Brazil pipeline contract projects natural gas exports of 9 million metric cubic meters per day (mmcmd) by the end of 2000, increasing to over 30 mmcmd by 2004. The government plans to position Bolivia as a regional hub for exporting hydrocarbons.

By May 1996, three of the four Bolivian banks that had experienced difficulties in 1995 were recapitalized and restructured under new ownership with support from the Bolivian Government's Special Fund for Strengthening the Financial System (FONDESIF), which helped restore confidence in the banking system. In November 1996, the Bolivian Congress approved a comprehensive pension reform that replaces the old pay-as-you-go system by a system of privately managed, individually funded retirement accounts, and the new system began operations in May 1997.

Bolivia's trade with neighboring countries is growing, in part because of several regional prefer-

ential trade agreements it has negotiated. Bolivia is a member of the Andean Community and has free trade with other member countries—Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela. Bolivia began to implement an association agreement with MERCOSUR (Southern Cone Common Market) in March 1997. The agreement provides for the gradual creation of a free trade area covering at least 80% of the trade between the parties over a 10-year period. The U.S. Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) allows numerous Bolivian products to enter the United States free of duty on a unilateral basis. Tariffs have to be paid on clothing and leather products only.

The U.S. remains Bolivia's largest trading partner. In 1998, the U.S. exported \$626 million of merchandise to Bolivia and imported \$149 million, according to the World Trade Atlas of the Global Trade Information Service. Bolivia's major exports to the U.S. are tin, gold, jewelry, and wood products. Its major imports from the United States are computers, vehicles, wheat, and machinery.

Agriculture accounts for roughly 15% of Bolivia's GDP. The amount of land cultivated by modern farming techniques is increasing rapidly in the Santa Cruz area, where weather allows for two crops a year and soybeans are the major cash crop. The extraction of minerals and hydrocarbons accounts for another 10% of GDP. Bolivia exports natural gas to Brazil. Manufacturing represents less than 17% of GDP.

The Government of Bolivia remains heavily dependent on foreign assistance to finance development projects. Most payments to other governments have been rescheduled on several occasions since 1987 through the Paris Club mechanism. External creditors have been willing to do this because the Bolivian Government has generally achieved the monetary and fiscal targets set by IMF programs since 1987. Some countries have forgiven substantial amounts of Bolivia's bilateral debt.

Transportation

Jet service to and from the U.S. is available daily. Flights to Guayaquil (Ecuador), Cali (Colombia), and Asunción (Paraguay) are also possible. LAN Chile, and LAB (Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano) also fly to and from Santiago (Chile). Lufthansa Airlines has two flights a week to and from Lima (Peru). LAB, the national airline, has frequent flights to other major cities in Bolivia as well as international flights to Arica (Chile), Asunción, Cuzco (Peru), Caracas (Venezuela), Panama, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Buenos Aires (Argentina), São Paulo (Brazil), Lima, and Miami. Argentine, Brazilian, and Paraguayan Airlines have flights to several Bolivian cities.

Train service is generally limited and slow. Trains run from La Paz to Antofagasta and Arica (Chile); and from La Paz to some interior cities and to Argentina. An interesting train trip is one between La Paz and Cochabamba. Many points in Bolivia can be reached only by car, truck, or bus over inferior roads, and many interesting and important areas are frequently inaccessible except by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Cars move on the right in Bolivia. La Paz has few stop signs, and automatic and hand-operated traffic lights are erratic. Uphill traffic has the right-of-way; car horns are sounded to signal right-of-way at intersections. Most Bolivian drivers use no lights or only parking lights for night driving. Defensive driving means adjusting to hazardous conditions. Streets in La Paz are steep, narrow, and often slippery, particularly during the rainy season. Outside the city, most roads are unpaved, can be dangerous, and are sometimes impassable during the rainy season.

Bus and taxi service is erratic at best. Small buses, or *micros*, operate to the suburbs. They seat about 21 persons, and carry as many standees as possible. The large *littoral* buses are cheaper, but seldom used by Americans because they are slow

and overcrowded. Taxis must be hailed on the street (no call service) and can be identified by their orange license plates with a "T" prefix. *Trufi* taxis, following several set routes, operate from the suburbs to the city. These taxis are identified by flags on their bumpers. All taxis are collectives, so one usually must share a cab with others going in the same direction.

Communications

Telephone service within Bolivia is steadily improving, and direct-dialing between most major cities and between the U.S. and some major cities is possible. Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (ENTEL) provides long-distance service to the U.S. A microwave system links La Paz, Oruro, Sucre, Potosí, Trinidad, Tarija, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz, with calls made through an operator, but service is good. Calls to other parts of the country are reached through the long-distance operator. Telegraphic service is available to all foreign points. International airmail between Bolivia and the United States takes between five and eight days, and surface mail six to eight weeks.

La Paz has 18 AM and nine FM radio stations which broadcast in Spanish and in two Indian languages. Music programs include Bolivian and Latin music, American popular music, and some classical selections. Some stations specialize in covering sports events; others emphasize news or cultural programs. All stations currently tie into the government news broadcasts. A shortwave radio is essential for receiving American or English stations. The quality of shortwave and FM reception varies with location and ionospheric conditions, but is generally adequate. Several Americans operate ham radios in La Paz with satisfactory results.

Eleven television stations currently broadcast in La Paz; seven are privately owned and the one is owned by the government. The other three broadcast in the UHF band. All programming is in Spanish. A private

cable company also offers English-language programming for an installation fee and a monthly charge.

Six daily newspapers are printed in Spanish in La Paz. The better papers contain fair coverage of international news along with extensive local coverage. No English-language newspapers are published in La Paz but U.S. newspapers can occasionally be found. Except for the Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, American magazines are outdated and expensive in La Paz.

Several bookstores carry English-language books and paperbacks at prices about double those in the U.S. Records are also available here, but prices are high. La Paz has a municipal public library, used only for research. The library at the Centro Boliviano Americano lends books and magazines including works in English. The La Paz Book Club maintains a lending library also.

Health

The newcomer to Bolivia is sometimes apprehensive, often because of stories about serious altitude effects. Most of these stories are exaggerated. Altitude sickness symptoms are grouped under the term *soroche* and may include headaches, sleeplessness or sudden awakening, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, abdominal cramps, nausea or vomiting, chest pains, and dizziness. For most people these symptoms, if present at all, gradually decrease or disappear after the first few days. Many of the symptoms are due to dehydration; therefore, sufficient fluids should be taken. Humidifiers and vaporizers are also helpful. Newcomers are advised to rest for three days after arrival, eat only light meals, and not drink alcoholic beverages or smoke cigarettes for the first week.

You should make sure you consult with your doctor before making the trip to Bolivia, particularly if you have one of the following illnesses or

conditions: sickle cell anemia or sickle cell trait, heart disease, lung disease, elevated cholesterol or blood pressure, diabetes, or asthma.

Respiratory infections such as colds, sinusitis, and bronchitis are relatively common. Colds are treated with rest, aspirin, and occasionally antihistamines. The most common complaint is nasal stuffiness and dryness, usually caused by the extreme dryness of the altitude rather than by allergies. Fungal skin infections are rare in dry climates. Severe sunburn and excessive skin dryness are the most troublesome skin disorders. Ultraviolet radiation is high; light-skinned persons should have no more than 15 minutes of direct or reflected exposure at one time. Some people report difficulty with contact lenses due to diminished atmospheric pressure and dry air; plenty of lubricating solution should be brought along.

Several good physicians and dentists—many trained in the U.S.—practice in La Paz. Hospitals and inpatient clinics, for the most part, are inadequate by U.S. standards. Travellers should carry a sufficient supply of medications, prescription and over-the-counter, along with first aid supplies.

Bolivia's sanitation procedures are poor, and sewage disposal is inefficient and inadequate. Purification of city water is not reliable, and few official inspection systems for water and food products exist. These conditions increase the incidence of intestinal disorders, especially during the December, January, and February rainy season. Flies transmit bacteria and amoebic cysts. Water for drinking, making ice cubes, brushing teeth, and rinsing vegetables must be filtered and then boiled for at least 20 minutes. For out-of-town trips, water should be treated with Globaline tablets.

Rabies exist here because many wild or loose dogs roam freely through the cities and countryside. Routing pre-exposure rabies vaccine is recommended. All animal bites and scratches should be reported

immediately to a physician. Pets should be vaccinated against rabies, distemper, and parvo virus. Snakes and venomous insects are rare except in tropical areas.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Commercial travel from U.S. to La Paz is by air. Service to Bolivia is available from Washington, New York, Miami, Houston, and New Orleans. Direct flights to La Paz via Panama take 10 to 15 hours, depending on point of departure. Surface travel to other places in Latin America and then overland to landlocked Bolivia is possible, but complicated and time consuming.

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Bolivia. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of one month or less (that period can be extended upon application to 90 days). Visitors for other purposes must obtain a visa in advance. U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Bolivia must obtain a new passport and present it, together with a police report of the loss or theft, to the Bolivian government immigration office in La Paz, Cochabamba, or Santa Cruz to obtain permission to depart. An exit tax must be paid at the airport when departing Bolivia. Travelers who have Bolivian citizenship or residency must pay an additional fee upon departure. For further information regarding entry, exit, and customs requirements, travelers should contact the Consular Section of the Bolivian Embassy at 1819 H Street, N.W., Suite 240, Washington, DC 20006; telephone (202) 232-4827/4828; or the Bolivian consulate in Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, or Seattle.

The Bolivian government has very strict laws concerning attempted theft or removal from Bolivia of any item that it considers to be a national treasure. The Bolivian and

U.S. governments are currently completing renewal of a cultural property protection agreement. In addition to the traditional examples of pre-Colombian artifacts, certain historical paintings, items of Spanish colonial architecture and history, and some native textiles, the Bolivian government also considers certain flora, fauna, and fossils as national treasures. It is illegal to remove any such items from Bolivia without prior written permission from the appropriate Bolivian authority. Any type of fossil excavation, even picking up a fossil, without prior written authorization from the appropriate Bolivian authority, is also illegal. Violation of the law can result in lengthy jail sentences and fines. Please contact the Embassy of Bolivia in Washington, D.C. or one of Bolivia's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Bolivia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in La Paz and obtain updated information on travel and security in Bolivia. The Consular Section is open for U.S. citizen services, including registration, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. weekdays, excluding U.S. and Bolivian holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located at 2780 Avenida Arce in La Paz; tel. (591-2) 2433-812 during business hours 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., or (591-2) 2430-251 for after-hours emergencies; fax (591-2) 2433-854; Internet: <http://www.megalink.com/usembla-paz>. There are also U.S. consular agencies in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, which are open weekday mornings from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, excluding U.S. and Bolivian holidays. The Consular Agency in Santa Cruz is located at Calle Guemes 6, Barrio Equipetrol; tel. (591-3) 3363-842 or 3330-725; fax (591-3) 3325-544. The Consular Agency in Cochabamba is located at Avenida Oquendo 654, Torres Sofer, Room 601; tel. (591-4) 4256-714; fax (591-4) 4257-714.

Pets

Pets may be imported by presenting a valid certificate of vaccination against rabies certified by a Bolivian consul or other official. No quarantine is imposed. Pets obtained in Bolivia should be inoculated against distemper and rabies. Veterinarians will make house calls to provide these shots. Other medication for pets is difficult to obtain.

Firearms & Ammunition

The only firearms which may be imported are pistols, rifles, and shotguns (one each), and a total of 500 rounds of ammunition. All firearms must be registered with the police immediately.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The time in Bolivia is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus four.

The unit of currency is the *peso* Boliviano (\$b). Banking facilities are readily available in La Paz, where there are several branches of U.S. banks. Dollars in cash or travelers checks are widely acceptable and can be exchanged at favorable rates at most banks or *cambio* (exchange houses). They are accepted at hotels, restaurants, and stores at very favorable rates. American Express and Visa cards are accepted on a limited basis.

The metric system is used in local weights and measures, except in the markets, where pounds and kilos are both used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb/Mar (Mon. & Tues. before Ash Wed. . . Carnival*
- Mar/Apr Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr Easter*
- May 1 Bolivian Labor Day
- June Corpus Christi*
- July 16 La Paz Day (in La Paz only)
- Aug. 6 Bolivian Independence Day

- Nov. 2 All Saints Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Blair, David Nelson. *The Land and People of Bolivia*. New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1990.

Griffiths, John. *Let's Visit Bolivia*. Bridgeport CT: Burke Publishing, 1988.

Jacobsen, Karen. *Bolivia*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1991.

Klein, Herbert S. *Bolivia: The Evolution of a Multi-Ethnic Society*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Lawlor, Eric. *In Bolivia*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

Morales, Waltraud Q. *Bolivia: Land of Struggle*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

Morrison, Marion. *Bolivia*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1988.

Odijk, Pamela. *The Incas*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Silver Burdett Press, 1990.

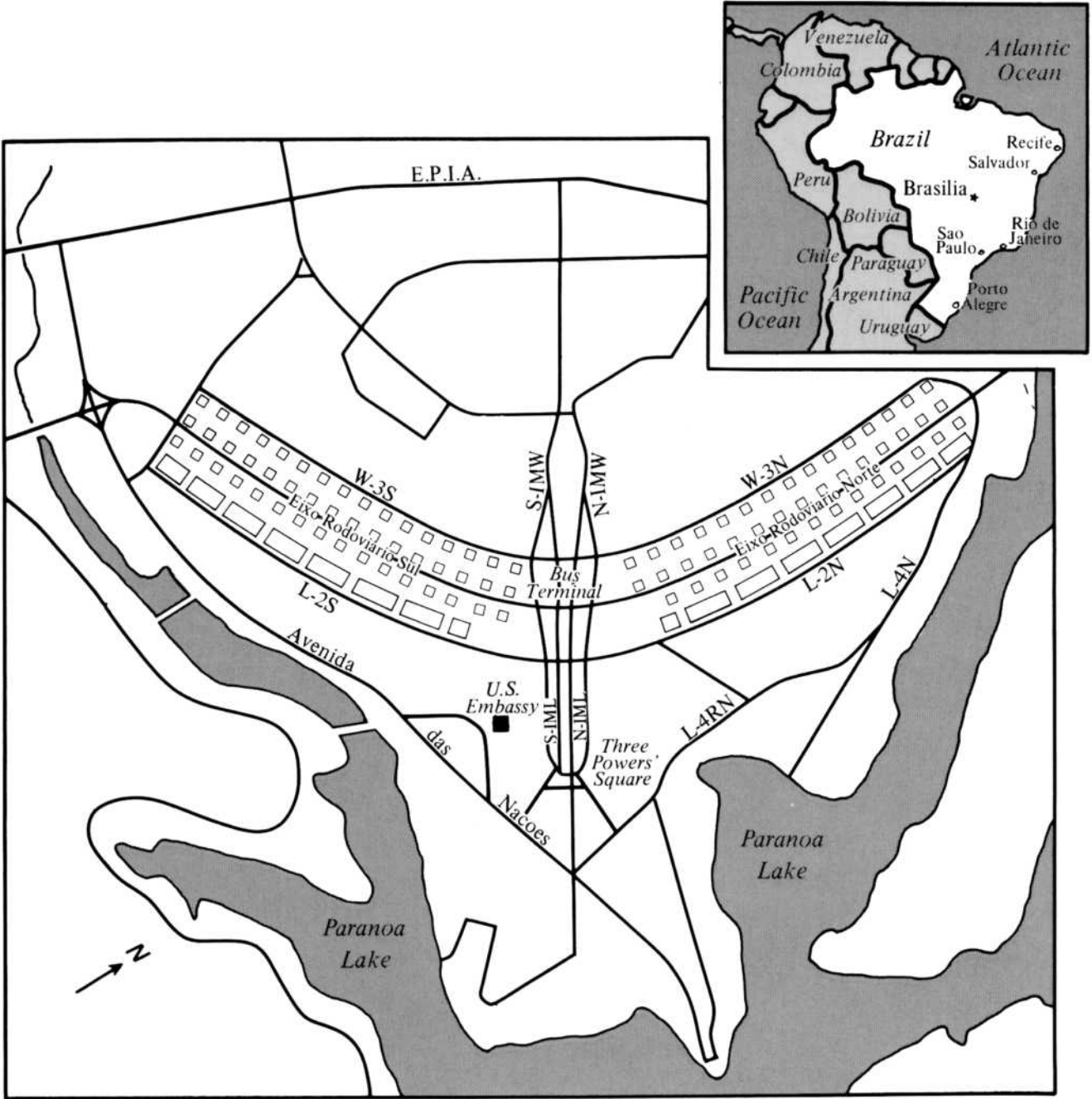
Rasnake, Roger Neil. *Domination and Cultural Resistance: Authority and Power among an Andean People*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988.

Sachs, Jeffrey, and Juan A. Morales. *Bolivia: Nineteen Fifty-Two to Nineteen Eighty-Six*. San Francisco, CA: ICS Press, 1988.

Schimmel, Karen. *Bolivia*. New York: Chelsea House, 1990.

Swaney, Deanna. *Bolivia: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1988.

Yeager, Gertrude M., comp. *Bolivia*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1988.



Brasilia, Brazil

BRAZIL

Federative Republic of Brazil

Major Cities:

Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Recife, Pôrto Alegre, Salvador da Bahia, Belo Horizonte, Belém, Manaus, Fortaleza, Curitiba, Goiânia

Other Cities:

Anápolis, Aracaju, Campina Grande, Campinas, Campo Grande, Caxias do Sul, Corumbá, Florianópolis, João Pessoa, Juiz de Fora, Maceió, Natal, Olinda, Ouro Prêto, Ribeirão Prêto, Santos

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Brazil. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Federative Republic of **BRAZIL**, occupying almost half of continental South America, is the fifth largest country in the world. With a 1996 population of roughly 160 million people, it sprawls across 3.3 million square miles of forest and plain, and shares boundaries with every South American state except Chile and Ecuador. In spite of profound economic problems, Brazil is an intriguing country. Its daring venture, nearly three decades ago, of carving a new capital city out of almost inaccessible territory, captured the interest of the world. Its bustling cities offer a broad contrast to the beauty of the countryside, and the widespread intermixtures among Caucasians, Negroes, and

native Indians have resulted in a land of varied cultures and fascinating people.

MAJOR CITIES

Brasilia

The city of Brasilia, one of the wonders of the modern world. Modern buildings, is a futuristic city design and road system, rolling landscape, and a lake are features of the city. Brasília, 600 air miles northwest of Rio de Janeiro in the central plateau of Brazil, is similar in topography and vegetation to western Texas. The Federal District, home of Brasília and its satellite cities, lies within the State of Goiás and comprises some 2,200 square miles. The District lies at the junction of the headwaters of three major Brazilian river systems, with an elevation of about 3,700 feet.

Brasília is growing steadily but retains many U.S. small-town characteristics, such as an emphasis on family life. People are friendly and lifestyles tend to be informal. Construction of Brasília began in 1957. In 1960, the city formally became the capital of Brazil. Over the next decade, the President, Congress, Federal Supreme Court, Foreign

Ministry, and most other government agencies moved to Brasília from the former capital, Rio de Janeiro. All official acts are signed in Brasília, and all embassies are here.

Brasília's demographics and economy make it a unique city. Brasília's standard of living (the highest in Brazil) is stable due to regular employment in the government. Indeed, most of the population depends either directly or indirectly on government employment. Locals consider Brasília as being on the Plano Piloto, while other cities in the Federal District are satellite cities. Satellite cities, originally created to house construction workers early in Brasília's history and intended to disappear after construction was completed, have remained to be Brasília's suburbs. Although construction workers originally populated them, skilled and semi-skilled workers and government bureaucrats now mostly populate satellite cities.

The city's population comes from all parts of Brazil and is heterogeneous. The native population is small. The appearance, thinking, and idiosyncrasies common to each area within Brazil are present in Brasília. People consider themselves state citizens and form close associations with state groups.

Brazilians rely heavily on the family unit, spend their free time together, and depend on one another for assistance. The big Sunday family dinner is far more common here than in the U.S. Although some Brasilienses speak English, Portuguese is important for dealing with any stratum of Brazilian society. Limited recreational facilities and cultural activities, close living, and isolation can be problems, unless you develop hobbies or other leisure-time activities. Most who have served here have found life in Brasília pleasant.

Outside the official U.S. Embassy community, most Americans living in Brasília are missionaries, farmers who only work part of the year within the Federal District, and teachers employed by the American School.

Brasília's moderate temperatures make the climate pleasant. Winter temperatures drop as low as 55°F at night and reach about 80°F during the day. Summer temperatures average from 65°F to 85°F. Average relative humidity varies from 50% to 70% during the summer's rainy season. Rainfall averages 60 inches annually, falling mostly between October and April. During this period, mildew is sometimes a problem. During the rainy season, flash storms bring several inches of rain in a short time. It rains in the morning or afternoon, followed by clear skies. Brasília has spectacular sunrises; the sunsets are equally breathtaking.

The dry season, from April to September, has little or no rainfall, with humidity as low as 10%. Days are warm, but nights are cool.

Although pests do not plague Brasília, ants, roaches, mosquitoes, flies, lizards and spiders are sometimes plentiful. Snakes are not generally found in populated areas.

Food

Brasília has several well-stocked, large supermarkets. Vegetables and fruits are in good supply. They can also be purchased in small shops,

Japanese markets, or from large, open, suburban markets where fruits and vegetables are fresher, cheaper, and found in greater quantity and variety. Frozen meats and prepared foods are available.

Almost all American-type fresh fruits and vegetables are available. Tropical fruits such as papaya, pineapple, mango, tamarind, passion fruit, sweetsop, Chinese gooseberry, and even more exotic fruits are available seasonally. Other fruits such as strawberries, apples, grapes, pears, peaches and nectarines are imported. Standard U.S. beef cuts are not widely available, but Brazilian cuts are acceptable. Beef filet, chicken, and fresh pork are excellent. Lamb is also available. Fresh and frozen fish are abundant, but shellfish is expensive. Local fresh, pasteurized, powdered, and long-life milk are available. Dairy products, such as butter, cream, yogurt, and cheese, are available in grocery stores, cheese stores, health food stores, delicatessens, and bakeries.

Brasília has many good restaurants. Chinese, French and Mexican cuisine is available, as well as outstanding, traditional Brazilian barbecued meat (churrasco), and other national and international dishes. The American fast-food chains McDonald's and Arby's have representation here, too.

Clothing

Men: Summer and spring suits are worn year round. Bring primarily lightweight suits and one or two medium weight suits for the cool season. Generally, the quality of dry-cleaners is good, but expensive. Slacks and sports shirts (short or long sleeved) are suitable for off-duty hours. Bring a variety of clothes for a warm climate, from casual to semi-formal. Sport jackets, sweaters, light jackets, and wind breakers are comfortable during the cool season. Local clothing prices vary from city to city and U.S. sizes are not always available. Styles are more European than American.

Women: Fashion-conscious Brazilian women follow all the latest trends abroad, and have some of their own. Although entertaining is informal, elegant sports clothes are often worn. You can buy chic well-made clothing, but prices are high. Cotton suits and lightweight knit dresses can be worn during the cool and rainy seasons and evenings. Some warmer clothing is occasionally necessary. Except for the rainy period, days are often hot, so bring cotton and synthetic blends. If you are planning to travel to Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, or south of Brasília during winter, you will need winter clothes. Generally, informality prevails in Brasília. However, evening wear is often considered "elegant casual." Bring sweaters or lightweight jackets for occasional cooler days and nights of the rainy season and the evenings of the dry season. A raincoat may be too warm, but an umbrella is essential. Wool slacks and long-sleeved blouses or dresses for cool, rainy days and a warm robe are welcome.

Bring plenty of sportswear, including washable slacks and shorts. Local prices for underwear and beach ensembles are high. Women's and girl's swimwear is available in all sizes, but run small. Brazilian swimwear, even one-piece suits, exposes more than U.S. styles. Sun hats are advisable.

Bring shoes or leave shoe size with a U.S. store and order as needed. All types of shoes, sandals, and tennis shoes are found in Brasília, but it is difficult to find good fits, particularly for half and narrow sizes. Brazil manufactures many kinds of footwear available at a variety of prices, though for the most part the quality is inferior to shoes found in the U.S.

Children: Bring washable children's clothing, swimwear, and shoes. Include sweaters and lightweight jackets for cool nights and mornings. Blue jeans are a must for outside play. Light-colored play clothes stain easily from Brasília's red clay. Dress at the American School is informal; both boys and

girls may wear jeans. Elementary school-aged children wear shorts with short-sleeved shirts or T-shirts most of the year.

Supplies & Services

Toiletries and patent medicines of Brazilian manufacture may be bought locally. Many are U.S. brands manufactured under license and are expensive. Bring or order specialty items from the U.S. Bring all essential store items with you such as Tylenol, children's cough syrup, toothpaste, suntan lotion, contact lens solution, etc. If you have a baby or are expecting, bring all items with you. These items are imported to Brasília and the costs are about double that in the U.S. Baby food and diapers can be ordered through the commissary or the internet Netgrocer shopping service.

Litter boxes are not available in Brasília. Pet supply stores sell leashes, brushes, flea collars, and a few toys. Pet treats and rawhide chew sticks are available. Fleas are prevalent year round. Consult your veterinarian regarding flea repellents and flea collars. Anti-flea sprays and lotions, shampoos, etc. are roughly twice the price here than they are in the States. Program is also sold here, although it is more expensive than in the States.

Laundry and dry-cleaning services are available throughout Brasília.

Beauty shops and barbershops do acceptable work and some are reasonably priced. Specialty services such as hair coloring/frosting and perms are generally more expensive than in the U.S. Massages, manicures, and pedicures are available at varying prices.

Domestic Help

Part-time servants usually suffice, although full-time and live-in help are desired by some. Wages vary from USD 150-200 (at an exchange rate of R\$2 to USD 1) a month for live-in maids, plus the cost of various benefits guaranteed them under Brazil's Constitution.

In addition to wages, the employer of a live-in servant provides bed linens, towels, food, and, if desired, uniforms. Live in maids are sometimes scarce, as many prefer to work during the day only. House-keeping and laundry services are fair, but you must train the maids to use modern appliances.

Day cleaning personnel currently charge USD 15-20 per day (again, with an exchange rate of R\$2 to USD 1). They are generally available for 1 or 2 days a week per family, with services divided among two or three employers. The 1988 Constitution guarantees various rights to domestic workers.

Religious Activities

Brasília has many Catholic churches. An English-language mass is conducted each Saturday at one of the churches. Several Protestant churches and a Greek Orthodox church have congregations in Brasília. English-language worship services and religious instruction are held Sunday mornings by an interdenominational Protestant group and a Baptist church. A small Jewish cultural association welcomes members from the official and diplomatic communities. Services are conducted weekly and on all holidays at the local synagogue.

Education

The American School of Brasília (EAB) was founded in 1964 and offers preschool through grade 12 based on a U.S. public school curriculum. Instruction is in English, but English-speaking students are required to study Portuguese. The school has about 600 students from about 40 countries. Facilities include a soccer/softball field, a library with 10,000 volumes, a science lab, a computer classroom, a gym, and a canteen. Enrollment is close to school capacity.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the U.S. accredits the school. The lower school is recognized by the Secretary of Education in the Federal District. The educational allowance currently covers all school expenses

for grades K-12. Preschool is not covered by the educational allowance. The school year runs from early August to early June, with a one-week vacation at Carnaval and a four-week vacation during the Christmas season.

Some supervised extracurricular sports, as well as other after-school activities including band, are available, though they are quite limited, especially for the lower grades. Bring music materials, as they are expensive in Brasília.

EAB participates in sports and some academic competitions along with other American schools in Brazil and the region, giving students the opportunity to travel and take part in these events while meeting a variety of South American and international students.

Another school that is used by some in the American community in Brasília is the School of Nations, a B'hai school. Instruction is bilingual, one-half in English and one-half in Portuguese. The school is not accredited. The School of Nations offers instruction from pre-kindergarten through 11th grade and offers a US-based curriculum with a strong emphasis on diversity and values.

Preschool aged children may attend the Affinity Arts pre-school. There is a strong emphasis on music in the program along with other activities such as language, science, theater, swimming, cooking and playground.

Other schools in the Federal District include public, private, and parochial institutions. Instruction is given from nursery school through grade 12, but not in English. Children with a good background in Portuguese may attend these schools. Note: the Brazilian school year has summer vacation during December, January, and February, with a mid-term break in July.

Sports

Sociedade Hipica de Brasília (Horse Riding Club): This is the most complete and centrally located



Atlantic coast development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

horse-riding club in Brasília. Horses are rented. Nonmembers can ride on weekends at scheduled times.

Other facilities include a social clubhouse with bar and restaurant, two swimming pools, tennis court, basketball, volleyball, soccer, and a large riding pavilion. Riding lessons are available.

The following clubs are available for membership, but memberships are extremely expensive: the Yacht Club of Brasília (late Clube), the Club of Nations (Clube das Nações and the Brasília Country Club, Cota Mil Yacht Club, and the Academia de Tennis (Tennis Academy). There are numerous commercial health clubs (called academias) whose fees are similar to health-club fees in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Brasília's Lake Paranoá is beautiful. However, floating debris and raw

sewage make all water-related activities in the lake unsafe. Swimming in pools is a popular pastime. Bring diving masks, goggles, and flippers if desired.

Brazil's national sport is soccer. Numerous games are played in Brasília between various amateur teams, and a small professional league. Brasília has a team in the national league.

Hunting for birds and small game is prohibited in all states except Rio Grande do Sul. Fishing for any but the smallest kinds of fish requires a 3- to 4-hour drive to the Verde River or an 8-hour drive to the Araguaia River in Goiás State. Excellent fishing is found on the Island of Bananal, accessible only by 1-1/2 hours' flight by small plane.

Brasília offers limited sightseeing with few museums and galleries. A well-laid out zoo houses several species of Brazilian wildlife and is con-

tinually expanding. You can view various types of vegetation and plant life can be seen at the botanical reserve.

Brasília's TV tower is the fourth tallest in the world at 715 feet. Oscar Niemeyer, the famous architect who designed much of Brasília, designed it. The top of the tower is 4,403 feet above sea level, and a lookout platform provides a panoramic view of the city and surrounding countryside. A "hippie" fair, featuring handicrafts, clothes, shoes, and wood and leather items, is held at the foot of the tower on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. There is a lovely gem museum located on the Center level of the TV tower. At Christmas, the tower is strung with lights to resemble an enormous Christmas tree.

An outstanding landmark in Brasília is the national flag flown on Three Powers Square. The enormous 286-square meter flag flies

from a 100-meter high flagpole that consists of 22 joined staffs representing the states of Brazil. A different Brazilian state donates a new flag on the first Sunday of every third month. The new flag is raised amidst a colorful ceremony with music and traditional folk dancing.

In late June, Brasília hosts the "Feira dos Estados," a charity state fair including state displays, local products, regional cuisine for sale, folk dancing performances, and a midway. Representatives of foreign countries also participate.

In May, one of the liveliest and most colorful festivals is the Cavalhadas in Pirenópolis about 2 hours from Brasília. During this brilliant pageant, richly caparisoned horses and riders simulate ancient Iberian Peninsula tournaments. Both fine horsemanship and wild stunt riding by masked riders are displayed in this fascinating folk festival.

Driving outside Brasília can be a pleasant pastime. The town of Cristalina, a gem seeker's paradise, is about 2 hours south of Brasília. The shops located around the town-square offer Brazilian precious and semiprecious stones and other gifts or souvenirs. You can visit some working pit mines a short drive out of town. A quaint country restaurant serving local fare is located in Luziania, mid-way between Brasília and Cristalina, and is a popular place to stop for lunch when returning from a shopping expedition.

Goiânia, about 2-3 hours southwest of Brasília, is the capital of Goiás and its largest city. The city, founded in 1933, is a planned city like Brasília. With an altitude much lower than Brasília's, it is warmer and more humid. Goiânia is a pretty town with tree-lined streets, interesting 1930s architecture, a centralized shopping center, good hotels, tall apartment buildings, and some excellent restaurants. On weekends, a "hippie fair" offers a variety of goods and crafts.

The beautiful Itiquira waterfalls, amid a rugged terrain, are located 2 hours north of Brasília over newly paved roads. For those interested in a health spa, a first-class resort hotel and several warm, natural pools are located near Caldas Novas, about 5 hours from Brasília in Goiás. Visit this resort for a relaxing 3-day weekend.

Travel to São Paulo - Brazil's largest city, or to Rio de Janeiro - world famous for its natural beauty - for a real change of pace and scenery. By highway, Rio is 753 miles and 15-20 hours away; São Paulo is 627 miles from Brasília with driving time of 14-17 hours. Frequent air connections to both cities are available. Air travel time is about 1-1/2 hours.

If you want to leave the main road, secondary roads are often unpaved and difficult. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are useful, especially for camping.

There are two softball seasons, and several coed teams, with participants from the American and international community. Bowling is available at Park Shopping.

The Parque da Cidade (City Park), located in Asa Sul, offers opportunities for outdoor activities such as bicycle riding, jogging, walking, paddleboats, children's amusement park, barbecue sites, etc. Additionally, one of the main highways is closed on Sundays and made available to bicyclists and joggers.

Entertainment

Dinner parties, cookouts and casual buffets are a popular form of home entertainment. The American Women's Club International (AWCI) organizes monthly meetings with speakers on various topics. Weekly and monthly AWCI activity groups meet to enjoy such things as tennis, bridge, playgroup, Portuguese conversation and social services work, to name just a few. The AWCI book clubs buy a wide selection of current bestsellers with membership fees. The American School sponsors a Christmas Bazaar, Fun Run, International

Fair, Flea Market, and two stage productions which are attended by the Brasília community at large. The Casa Thomas Jefferson, which is actually three Brazilian-American binational centers, sponsors art exhibits and musical events that feature both American and Brazilian artists and performers.

Brasília has many movie theaters. Admission costs are comparable to the U.S. English-language films are popular. Most films are American originals with Portuguese subtitles. Children's films tend to be dubbed. Some French and Italian films are also shown in the respective embassies as well as in Brazilian theaters.

The National Theater presents concerts and occasionally has ballet or other dance performances. The circus comes to town once a year, as do various foreign performers. The University of Brasília holds interesting performances by staff members in its music school. Military and police groups hold parades and other activities on various national holidays. Americans are welcome at all cultural and national celebrations.

Brasília has some nightclubs; most have dancing, some have floor shows. Several popular discotheques attract various age groups. Outdoor cafes featuring drinks and snacks are popular evening meeting places.

Shopping malls have movie theaters, a variety of shops and eateries. Park Shopping, adjacent to one of the largest supermarkets in the area, has eleven movie theaters, a 24 lane bowling alley built by Brunswick, a McDonald's, an international food court, and approximately 175 shops. Many other new malls have been built recently, including Brasília Shopping and Patio Brasil, each with stores, eateries and movie theaters. There is an arcade with small amusement rides and video games, and an in-door skating rink during the Christmas holidays.

Rio De Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro, the center of a metropolitan area of about 11 million people, offers one of the world's most beautiful physical settings. Set adjacent to an ocean bay off the Atlantic Ocean and facing south, Rio is surrounded by mountains with spectacular formations and tropical greenery, and is truly what its residents, the Cariocas, call the *Cidade Maravilhosa* (marvelous city). Its landmarks are the striking Sugar Loaf Mountain Pão de Açúcar and Corcovado Mountain with its famous Christ Statue overlooking the city. Brazil's seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S., with summer from December to March. Rio's normal temperatures range from 75 to 95°F. Extremes vary from 40°F during winter to 105°F in the hot, humid summer. Intense rainfall also occurs throughout the year and may occasionally cause severe flooding within the city itself. Infrequent landslides affect housing on mountain slopes in densely populated slum areas known as *favelas*.

The city was Brazil's capital until 1960, and many government offices are located here. Rio is a focus of transportation, communications, military, cultural and journalistic activity. However, its history is as a seashore resort famous for its beaches, Carnival, and its outgoing people. But the continued population increase within Rio has created other problems common to a megapolis: traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, and a high crime rate. Pollution and crime have, in fact, jeopardized the traditional tourist industry. The Department of State has designated the crime threat rating level for Rio as critical.

While Rio is cosmopolitan, Portuguese is necessary for everyday use (shopping, newspapers, and social events). Its beaches are often a focal point for recreational activities but they can be overcrowded and polluted.

Cariocas commonly refer to Rio being divided into three residential areas: Zona Sul (South Zone) and

Zona Norte (North Zone) and Barra da Tijuca. There is a mountain range, which forms a spectacular, scenic separation between the zones. The Zona Sul area is significantly smaller, less than 1 million people and is also the area where virtually all official Americans reside. The sparsely populated area known as Centro, separates the relatively more affluent south zone from poorer neighborhoods in the north zone.

Another fast-growing and relatively new part of Rio de Janeiro is the southern suburb of Barra da Tijuca. This area which was once considered out of town is the fastest growing district in the city. Barra da Tijuca features several large shopping centers as well as large megamarkets, which include everything from groceries to clothes to hardware to car supplies (i.e., similar to Super Wal-Marts in the States). In addition to the shopping, dozens of new condominiums have sprung up. American fast food outlets are common. Office parks are also being built, not to mention major amusement parks. Barra da Tijuca is also home to the cleanest beaches in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

The American community in Rio is fairly large, with about 6,000 registered at the Consulate General. Only a relatively small number participate in activities that bring the expatriate community together. Rio's American Society organization is active. The American business community in Rio is strongly represented with Fortune 500 firms. The American Chamber of Commerce meets regularly and maintains full-time offices. However, significant reductions in the presence of American businessmen have had a marked affect on community life, including reduced enrollment by American students at the American School of Rio.

Food

Rio has many large supermarkets. Selection is generally good. Many employees purchase fresh produce from weekly markets (*feiras*) that rotate through residential areas;

costs can be higher but the quality is better. Each neighborhood has its own smaller grocery store, butcher, bakery, and other specialty shops which results in decentralized frequent shopping (Brazilians often shop on a daily basis). Local beef is not aged and lacks tenderness but is reasonably priced; lamb is generally not available. Fish and seafood are plentiful, but expensive. The COBAL in Leblon is another market similar to the *feiras*, but is covered. It is open Tuesday through Sunday. Fresh fruits, vegetables, fresh cut flowers, meat, seafood and poultry are available. The prices vary from stand to stand, but the quality is similar to those at the *feiras* or (better).

Recognized international and U.S. food companies manufacture many of their products in Brazil but retail prices are higher than in the U.S. Employees are supplied bottled drinking water. One and a half liter plastic bottles are now available at the supermarket; larger size containers can be home-delivered.

Clothing

General: Bring lightweight, washable, comfortable clothing. Dry-cleaning is available but is expensive and not always reliable. Small clothing stores line shopping malls and shopping areas with reasonable selections and often focus on designer clothing. During summer days, beachwear is frequently the norm in shopping areas and restaurants. Shoes available here may not conform to U.S. sizes or durability. Good sandals and casual shoes are available locally. Shoe repair workmanship is good and reasonably priced.

Women: Although temperature differences between summer and winter are not wide, seasonal differences in dress are noticed. In summer, bright, gay colors, and patterns in lightweight materials predominate; in winter, lightweight woollens and knits in darker tones appear. A light jacket is occasionally needed, and during damp, rainy weather, a sweater or sweatshirt would be comfortable. Slacks and jogging

suits are worn year round. Hose is rarely worn, except on dressier occasions or in office settings. Locally produced panty hose is of variable quality, so bring a supply from the U.S. A good selection of casual wear is a must for both seasons.

Bikinis dominate beach wear (Cariocas actually prefer the even briefer tanga), but all styles are worn. Frequent swimmers or sunbathers should have several changes of beachwear to avoid drying problems. All styles of swimsuits and beach cover-ups are available locally, but larger sizes (above a US size 10) may be difficult to find. Evening social events require dressier clothing. Brazilian women favor long or very short dresses of silk and other fine materials. Dressy cottons and synthetics are practical.

Many seamstresses are available, but finding the right one is difficult. Some prefer to work in their own homes; others will work in a customer's home and must be provided a sewing machine. U.S. patterns are not available locally; some seamstresses make their own patterns, use those in Brazilian fashion magazines, or copy from ready made clothing or pictures. If you sew, bring a supply of U.S. patterns. A wide variety of Brazilian textiles, some in wash-and-wear materials, is available. Many fabrics are not preshrunk. Quality materials cost more than U.S. goods.

Stylish belts, costume jewelry, purses and other accessories are available in Rio. Brazilian gems and jewelry designs are world renown. The quality of Brazilian ready-made clothing is adequate, but expensive. Women's sizes are not comparable to those in the U.S., particularly undergarments. Bring an ample supply of hot weather clothes, as during the long summer, repeated laundering and intense sun cause fabrics to fade and lose body.

Men: Heavy wool suits are never necessary. Suits of lightweight wool, linen, or other natural fiber are comfortable and practical. Dark

suits are useful for evening events. The need for formal clothing is negligible in Rio.

Raincoats or overcoats are rarely seen on men except during a cool winter's rain. Ready-made suits in various materials are available locally, but cuts differ from the U.S. Tailors are expensive but offer quality continental-style tailoring.

Sports clothing is necessary. Long sleeved sports shirts in conservative colors and sports jackets are commonly worn to social functions and restaurants. A wide variety of good-quality sports clothes, including jeans, is available locally at prices roughly comparable to those in the U.S. Bring cheap, generic baseball caps for use on the beach. Cotton sweaters and light jackets are useful on cooler days.

Children: Children's shoes and clothes are more expensive and sometimes less durable. Most families order clothes from U.S. catalog companies.

Supplies and Services

Rio has several large shopping areas and malls where one can find both local and imported products. The variety is impressive. More specialized malls include the São Conrado Fashion Mall, emphasizing clothing, and the Rio Design Center in Leblon, with beautiful furniture and decorative accent pieces for the home. Many international pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies manufacture locally under license. Suntan lotion is an expensive item in Brazil. Appliances, household tools, electrical supplies, plastic ware, and a wide range of consumer goods are manufactured locally. In most instances, prices are higher than comparable U.S. items.

Beauty shops and barbershops abound. Prices are generally higher than U.S. levels, depending on location and reputation of the shop. Quality is good if language is no barrier. Some hairdressers for both men and women have trained in either the U.S. or Europe. Repair costs for electrical equipment and

appliances, such as radios and TVs, are higher than U.S. prices. Reliable service is a problem.

Print film can be developed locally and 1-hour processing is available. Several good automobile repair shops exist. General bodywork is adequate but more sophisticated electronic repairs are difficult to obtain. Costs are sometimes high, especially for spare parts, and estimates should be requested before repairs are authorized. Spare parts for U.S. cars must be imported; tires are available locally for U.S. cars. Repair services for Brazilian made cars (Chevrolet, Ford, Fiat and VW) are good.

Domestic Help

The quality of domestic help varies and turnover is high. Domestic workers who have worked for other Americans are helpful, but few understand English, and you need at least a rudimentary knowledge of Portuguese. Most apartments have domestic quarters that are located off of the kitchen area. Employers furnish room and board, uniforms, and linens. A cook or housekeeper currently receives about \$200-\$400 monthly, plus the Brazilian Social Security contribution, currently 12% of salary. Day workers are paid from \$20 to \$40 per day plus lunch. Occasionally transportation cost will be assessed.

Religious Activities

Brazil is the most populous Roman Catholic nation in the world. Many Catholic churches are found in Rio. The Chapel of Our Lady of Mercy has services in English.

Protestant churches with English language services include the Union Church, a Protestant nondenominational church; the Christ Church (American Episcopal Church of England), which has an international membership; the International Baptist Church; the Christian Science; and the English Lutheran.

Jewish services are held at the Sinagoga Copacabana (Orthodox), the Associação Religiosa Israelita

(Conservative), and the Centro Israelita Brasileiro (highly Conservative, Sephardic). All services are in Hebrew.

Education

The American School, Escola Americana of Rio de Janeiro (EARJ), is a coeducational school offering a U.S. curriculum from pre-school through grade 12, including the International Baccalaureate degree. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the U.S., it is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools. Its enrollment is about 1,000, and U.S. colleges readily accept its graduates. The faculty numbers 118 (37 Americans). Students with American citizenship make up about 10% of the student body with about 85% being Brazilian students.

The first semester begins in early August and runs to mid-December; the second term runs from early February to mid-June. Extracurricular activities are at an extra expense. Classes are 5 days weekly, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., in a modern, hillside complex of 9 interconnected buildings. Full cafeteria facilities are available; extracurricular activities are similar to those in U.S. schools. School buses serve most residential areas.

Arrangements for enrollment can be made directly with the Escola Americana, Estrada da Gavea, 132, Gavea Rio de Janeiro, RJ 22451-260 Brazil.

Our Lady of Mercy School, a coeducational Catholic school, follows an American curriculum for grades 1 through 12. The U.S. Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools accredits the school. The school is sponsored by the Society of Our Lady of Mercy and provides a chapel for English-speaking Catholics. Graduates have been readily accepted in U.S. colleges. Our Lady of Mercy also offers a pre-nursery school program for children age 2 and up.

The school term is similar to the American School. Hot lunches are available. Extracurricular activities are similar to those in U.S. Schools. Make enrollment arrangements directly with the Headmaster, Rua Visconde de Caravelas 48, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro RJ 22271-030, Brazil.

The British School is coeducational and offers instruction from pre-nursery through age 13. Following a British curriculum, it qualifies students for the British common entrance examinations. School terms are from February to July and August to December. Lunch is provided for all, except pre-nursery and kindergarten children who go home at noon. Large playground and playing fields are available for sports. School bus transportation is available. Average class size is 24. Enrollment is arranged through the Headmaster, The British School, Rua da Matriz, 76, Botafogo Rio de Janeiro, RJ 22260-100 Brazil.

Several pre-schools accept children as young as 1 year old. One such institution, St. Patrick's, teaches in English. All are more expensive than comparable U.S. facilities. Bus service is available for many. Arrangements for these schools may be made after you arrive at post. Generally, St. Patrick's accepts children age 2 and up. Classes are taught in English through the 4th grade.

Special Education Opportunities

Working knowledge of Portuguese greatly enhances any trip to Rio. Portuguese language training is available through various institutions. The Brazilian-U.S. Institute offers frequent Portuguese language courses. Tutors for private lessons are available. Portuguese courses are also available at any of several local universities. There are no programs of higher learning in the English language in Rio.

Sports

The main recreational activities relate to the beach. The popular beach promenades have all been

illuminated and are now enjoyed by many both day and night. Games of soccer, volleyball and that incredible combination of the two, fute volley, seem to be going on 24 hours of the day. There are no public recreational facilities with swimming pools or golf courses. Club memberships within Rio range in price from the nicely affordable (Clube Flamengo) to the extravagantly expensive (Country Clube). While a few apartment buildings have facilities reserved for tenants, most buildings do not. The city does have a bicycle path that follows along certain beach areas. On Sundays and holidays, half of the primary beach avenue is closed to normal traffic to the great enjoyment of walkers, joggers, cyclists, and rollerbladers.

Soccer is the national sport. Brazil won the 1994 World Cup; the popularity of the sport is reflected by the size of Rio's Maracaña Stadium. It is one of the world's largest, originally configured to seat 200,000 people. The nearby smaller Maracañzinho Stadium is used for special events, such as ice shows and basketball games. Neighborhood soccer and volleyball games are also played frequently, as are weekend games on nearly every beach.

Rio's extensive beaches are popular for swimming, boogie boarding, and surfing but one must be alert to publicized, regular health warnings and avoid dangerous levels of water pollution. The advisability of beach swimming is published daily in the local newspapers. Strong undertow is also a common hazard. Many people with their own transportation travel to cleaner, less heavily populated beaches south of the city.

Sports equipment is manufactured locally and imported, but prices are generally higher than U.S. prices. Be sure to bring your bicycles and rollerblades.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

As a transportation and communications center, Rio offers excellent opportunities for touring all parts of Brazil. The cost of domestic air

transportation is high. If possible, try to purchase the special Brazil Air Pass from the Brazilian carrier Varig prior to your arrival (not all travel agents can/ will sell these since one purchase requirement may be the possession of a round trip ticket to Brazil from the U.S.).

For overland travel, many highways are good but sometimes crowded. Brazilian drivers are impatient in heavy traffic. Highway fatality rates are among the highest in the world. Night highway driving is exceptionally dangerous and is not recommended. Bus service, including the sleeper bus, is frequent, and not overly expensive. The bus conditions are varied but can be cramped.

An automobile trip of about an hour and a half will lead you to cooler mountain areas. Quaint colonial cities, lovely seaside communities, and modern industrial centers are all within a 3-6 hour drive. Few roadside motel accommodations are available; lodgings at major destinations are satisfactory.

Camping, hang-gliding, surfing, surf fishing, mountain climbing, and water skiing are other activities available within Rio's vicinity. Deep-sea fishing is fair but expensive; freshwater fishing is available in the mountains. Hunting is prohibited in Brazil, except in Rio Grande do Sul.

Entertainment

The greatest single annual entertainment event in Rio is its famed Carnival. During the 4 nights and 3 days preceding Ash Wednesday, commercial and official activities come to a complete standstill. Then samba schools, street parades, and night-long parties dominate Rio's scene. Carnival also attracts many foreign visitors. Tickets for Carnival balls and main parade seating are relatively expensive but the events, especially the parades, are exceptional and should not be missed.

From June to September, outstanding Brazilian and foreign artists offer varied programs of music,

opera, and dance at several theaters. The Brazilian theater season is year round; both original Brazilian works and foreign plays are presented in Portuguese, and in an informal off-Broadway style. Children's plays are offered regularly in Portuguese. An English-language small theater group offers productions and performance opportunities on an irregular basis.

Nightclubs and small boate offer shows of varying quality; many feature jazz, samba music, and dancers. Well known foreign entertainers and groups appear occasionally at some larger theaters and nightclubs.

Movie theaters are numerous and good. First-run American and European films are shown with original dialogue and Portuguese subtitles at prices comparable to the U.S. Late-night network TV sometimes features programs in English. Rio has several good TV stations, which can help improve Portuguese language abilities. Many neighborhoods offer cable TV for a monthly fee with programs such as CNN, ESPN, and MTV Excellent FM radio broadcasting is also available.

Restaurants offer varied national and international cuisine at comparable U.S. prices. A churrascaria (specializing in barbecued meat) is a popular type of Rio restaurant.

Many art and historical museums are available. Rio also has interesting and photogenic churches, a large botanical garden, a major tropical forest park (Tijuca National Park), and a zoological park. Art galleries abound, and although prices of established Brazilian artists are high by U.S. standards, new painters always await discovery. Art courses in Portuguese are available at the Parque Lage, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Catholic University.

Rio has no English-language newspapers. Local newsstands regularly offer the Miami Herald and the International Herald Tribune; individual subscriptions can be

arranged at reduced cost, but are still expensive. English language editions of some leading U.S. news magazines are also available.

Social Activities

The American Society and the International Newcomers Club help integrate the social activities of the American community. Another organization, "The Players," has periodic English language performances that provide opportunities related to the theater.

São Paulo

São Paulo is the largest and one of the fastest growing cities in South America. It is a thriving metropolis of contrasts, with skyscrapers built alongside small, residential houses; narrow cobblestone streets feed wide avenues; street vendors hawk their wares near five star hotels. A dynamic city rich in historic and modern culture, it boasts three symphony orchestras, many fine art galleries, and an international selection of museums. Thousands of avid spectators follow everything from soccer matches to horse races. São Paulo is the industrial and financial heart of Brazil, and the bustling city sets a pace that resembles New York City. [It is also home to fine restaurants, theaters, nightclubs, first-run movie theatres, and performances by major international stars.] With something of appeal from every point of view, these inviting contrasts make living and working in São Paulo exciting, interesting and challenging.

Utilities

The water supply is plentiful in São Paulo. Water pressure is reasonable in all areas of the city. All parts of the city now have fluoridated water, although levels of fluoridation are below recommended U.S. levels. Tap water is not consistently potable anywhere in Brazil. Electric current is 110v 60 cycle, AC; 220v, 3-phase, AC, is available for ranges, high-voltage heaters, and dryers. Power interruptions are uncommon, though voltage regulators are recommended for occasional current



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Aerial view of Sao Paulo, Brazil

fluctuations. Electrical outlets vary even within households and you will need several different types of adapters. They are available locally for a reasonable price, but you may want to bring an assortment.

In the past, U. S.-made appliances were preferred for quality and price to local products. However, appliances are now increasingly comparable to U.S. products in price, quality and availability.

Like any large U.S. city, São Paulo has a wide variety of local radio stations, including several FM stations with continuous (mostly American and Brazilian popular) music, classical music and talk radio. Radio

short-wave bands receive VOA and BBC in the evening.

Local TV is on the PAL-M system, so U.S.-purchased sets (NTSC or European PAL sets) will only receive in black and white, unless modified-a process that is commonly performed for around 150 Reals. Videocassette recorders are popular and video clubs like Blockbuster are plentiful. However, U.S. VCRs are not compatible with PAL-M-only TVs and must be converted, the cost of which is about 100 Reals. Cable is available at costs comparable to U.S. prices.

São Paulo winters can be cold and damp. The temperature rarely drops below 32 Fahrenheit, and cen-

tral heating is nonexistent. Electric blankets and space heaters are recommended. Blankets and comforters are more expensive in São Paulo, so bring a sufficient supply. As a side note, pollution tends to be heavier in the winter months. Occasionally, this affects individuals with allergies or respiratory problems. You may want to bring air purifiers.

Food

Most foods are available locally. Pasteurized fresh milk, butter, cheeses, and other products are plentiful. Almost all fresh fruits and vegetables are available year round in supermarkets, as well as open-air fruit and vegetable markets. Oranges, tangerines, bananas, pineapples, papayas, melons, mangoes, and other fruits are always in season. Locally grown apples, pears, peaches, plums, strawberries, and grapes are available seasonally, and imported varieties, year round. Ample supplies of meat and fish exist. American-type supermarkets and European-style hypermarkets carry locally made goods that compare with U.S. brands. Some of these supermarkets also offer U.S. cuts of beef (Brazilian cuts differ markedly from U.S. cuts). Local wines and spirits are of good quality.

Clothing

Although São Paulo's climate is milder than that of the northeastern U.S., bring clothes for cool and rainy weather, including sweaters, fall suits, raincoats, and umbrellas. Rain is common in São Paulo and during the summer there can be heavy rainstorms each afternoon. Every family member needs at least one good umbrella. Temperatures vary, so layered dressing is important. Fall and winter (June - October) can be chilly. Bring light and warm clothing that can be worn indoors due to of lack of central heating. An all-weather coat with removable lining should meet your outdoor needs. Those accustomed to living in very warm climates may need a pair of gloves, a scarf, and a knit hat.

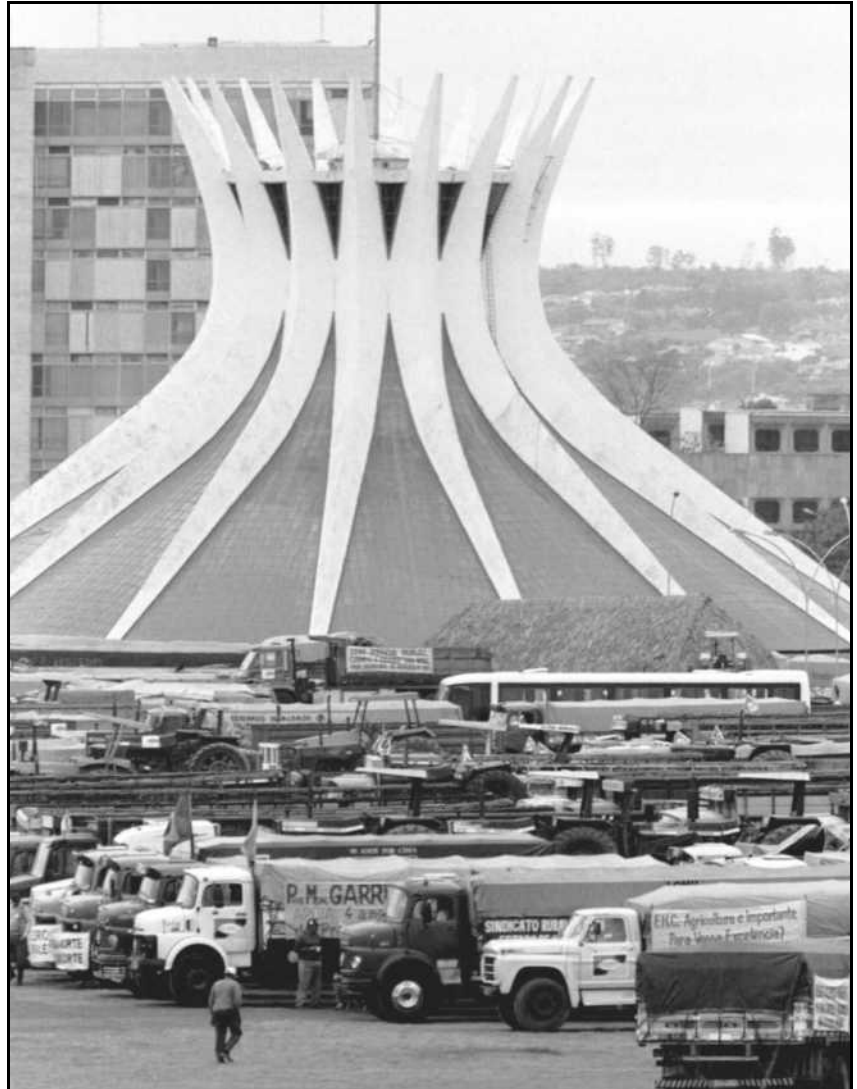
Local shoes vary in quality though shoes are stylish and easily found although narrow widths are not readily available. Walking shoes are a must and, due to uneven, cobblestone sidewalks, occasional heel repair is necessary. Leather is of good quality. São Paulo is a high fashion city; every new fashion can be seen and is acceptable, from conservative to trendy. All types of sports goods and clothing are sold in São Paulo, at prices similar to those found in the U.S.

Dress for social functions is often business attire, depending on the nature of the event. Tuxedo or formal dress rental places are abundant throughout the city. Long dresses are seldom worn to formal dinners. For women, local lingerie, hose, and other nylon clothing are of lesser quality than U.S. made products, but are readily available.

Supplies and Services

It is important to note that the Brazilian economy is drastically changing and therefore it is difficult to state with certainty that Brazilian-made products are higher or lower in cost relative to the U.S., although imported items are generally higher-priced (e.g., some clothing, luxury items). The cost of living is comparable to that in Washington, D.C. Dining out, food purchases, and entertainment (theater, movies, etc.) cost the same or less.

Miscellaneous toiletries, cosmetics, household needs, cigarettes, tobacco, and liquor products are sold on the Brazilian market. However, not every brand is consistently available. American-style supermarkets and superstores like Walmart and Sam's Club sell all types of household cleaning equipment. Prescription and nonprescription drugs, many made by subsidiaries of U.S. or European companies, are available at reasonable prices. Imported cosmetics are more expensive, but some U.S. brand names (Revlon, Helena Rubinstein, etc.) are manufactured locally. Travellers with infants or small children may want to bring disposable diapers, a supply of baby food, any special



Cathedral Brasilia, Brasilia, Brazil

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

baby formula, and a bottle warmer in accompanied airfreight. Disposable diapers are available locally, but are expensive.

Dry-cleaning and laundry services are common and equal to U.S. prices. Shoe repair is inexpensive, workmanship is good, and rubber and leather are used for heels and heel tips. Nylon is not generally available. Hair salons are less expensive than in the U.S.; work is good and reasonably priced. Consider bringing your favorite hair shampoos, rinses, and sprays, as these are not consistently available. Repair work on watches, radios, stereos, televisions, and other electrical appliances is good.

The quality of auto maintenance and repair facilities is inconsistent. Repair work is good, but most services take more time than in the U.S. GM, Ford, Fiat, and VW produce cars locally at favorable prices.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is readily available, but trained servants are hard to find and few speak English. Salaries depend on class of servant, i.e., trained cooks earn R\$100 to R\$150 a week; live-in housekeeper, R\$100 and up. Staff with newborns often hire a live-in nurse who has had about 6 months of formal education in pediatric nursing. The live-in nurse earns around R\$125 a week. Families with older children often

employ a live-in nanny. Salaries may change as the economy settles.

Brazilian houses and apartments are designed with a maid's room and private bath, located near the laundry and kitchen area. Employers can provide uniforms, and live-ins normally receive bedding, towels, and furniture. Servants get one day off weekly, plus major national and religious holidays. Under the Brazilian Constitution, employers must give servants a 13th-month bonus equal to one month's salary or prorated to the length-of-employment during the year. Also, the employer must contribute to the local Brazilian retirement system for the domestic employee.

Medical Care

São Paulo has very competent doctors and dentists. Many speak English and were trained in the U.S. Quality orthodontic services are available as well. In general, the costs for an office visit are equal to fees in the U.S. Maternity and other in-hospital care is good, despite a lack of thorough training for support personnel.

Religious Activities

São Paulo has many churches and synagogues. Many Protestant churches, including the Fellowship Community Church, inter-denominational; St. Paul's (Anglican); Calvary International Church; First Church of Christ Scientist; and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, hold English-language services. The American priests of the Order of the Oblate Fathers conduct services in English at the Chapel School. A Greek Orthodox Cathedral also exists. The city has several synagogues. The largest, Congregação Israelita Paulista, follows the conservative traditions and has an American rabbi.

Religious-oriented summer camps are available for children.

Education

Three schools in São Paulo follow the U.S. public school curriculum: the São Paulo Graded School, the Chapel School (School of Mary

Immaculate), and the Pan American Christian Academy. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits all three schools.

The local Chamber of Commerce established the São Paulo Graded School, in 1929. The faculty, though predominantly American, employs teachers of several nationalities. Instruction is from kindergarten through grade 12. There is also a large preschool for 3-year-olds and older. The preschool and lower grades are taught on a modified Montessori program. The school follows curriculum standards of New York State. Enrollment is about 1,168; 38% are U.S. citizens. Facilities include a gym, auditorium, science labs, computer center, satellite TV, libraries, and a cafeteria serving hot lunches. Buses serve all residential areas. Most sports played in the U.S., except American football, are offered; teams compete within the school and with other American schools in Brazil. Additional extracurricular activities include theater, yearbook, and scouting. A program for students with special learning problems is available.

Felician Sisters and lay teachers staff Escola Maria Imaculada (The Chapel School) under the direction of the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate. Instruction is from nursery school through grade 12. Advanced placement and the International Baccalaureate are integral parts of its quality academic program. Most graduates are accepted into universities and colleges of their first choice. The students represent over 30 countries; 40% of the students are non-Catholics and enrollment is 700; 25% are U.S. citizens. Facilities include: two libraries, a gym, a large playing field, a cafeteria, an auditorium, science labs, a computer center, an audiovisual room, an infirmary staffed by a nurse, and a student union. Organized sports include soccer, basketball, gymnastics, softball, tennis, handball, and volleyball both varsity and junior varsity teams. The school is a member of the São Paulo High School League. Twice a year, sports meets are held

with American schools in São Paulo, Brasilia, and Rio de Janeiro at alternating locations. Additional extracurricular activities include judo, cooking, ballet, debating, choral groups, and band.

The Pan-American Christian Academy is operated by evangelical missionaries and is located some distance outside the city. Instruction from kindergarten through grade 12 is conducted in English. The level of instruction and discipline is reportedly high. Enrollment is approximately 317; 40% are U.S. citizens.

Each school begins in early August and runs through early June, with a 6-week midyear vacation in December and January. Requirements for enrollment are similar to those in the U.S. Schools adequately prepare students for entrance into U.S. colleges and universities.

Two preschool programs often used by American families are: Playpen, a Montessori school that has classes in English, and Portuguese and Tiny Tots, a preschool operated by a British-Brazilian family, with instruction in both English and Portuguese. Both often offer instruction during periods when the major schools (Graded, Chapel, etc.) are not in session. There are numerous other preschool programs in Portuguese throughout the city.

Tuition costs vary according to school and grade, with higher costs for middle school and senior high school.

A French-language school and a British school, St. Paul's, are also available. Also, many Brazilian nursery schools and kindergartens offer excellent, inexpensive programs. The required Portuguese language programs at the American schools are good, but some families send younger children to a public or private Brazilian school to learn Portuguese. Most Brazilian schools do not have facilities for children with speech or learning problems. Differences exist in preparation for American and Brazilian universi-

ties; therefore it is not recommended that you use Brazilian schools beyond the primary level.

Special Educational Opportunities

Although São Paulo has several fine universities, among which are the University of São Paulo, Mackenzie University, and Fundacao Getulio Vargas (FGV), you must be fluent in Portuguese in order to take advantage of their study programs. The Alumni Association and Uniao Cultural, two U.S. Brazil binational centers in the city, offer Portuguese language courses that can be used to supplement the post's language training program. However, there are certain opportunities for educational advancement available in English.

Through the Graded School, graduate level education courses are periodically offered for teachers, parents, and community members, with priority for enrollment in that order. These courses are taught by visiting professors from U.S. universities. The Graded School also offers courses in computers for teachers, parents, and members of the community. Other computer courses, in English and Portuguese, are available at private institutes throughout the city. Many schools of dance, adult exercise classes, and tutors in music, ballet, and painting are available.

Sports

Like other metropolis areas, São Paulo has various spectator sports. The most popular sport is soccer. Horse, auto and motorcycle racing, basketball games, tennis and golf tournaments, sailing regattas, polo, boxing, and wrestling matches complete the picture. São Paulo has no public golf courses or tennis courts, but many private tennis, squash, and racquetball courts are widely available on a pay-as-you-go basis. Private clubs include facilities for golf, tennis, swimming, horseback riding, boating, and basketball. Membership is expensive.

Most sporting equipment sold locally is comparable to price and quality of products in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The area around São Paulo is ideal for weekend excursions. Many beach and mountain resorts are within 100 miles of São Paulo and connected by good roads. Hotel quality and prices vary greatly, though most are very reasonable. Weekend houses are sometimes available for rent. The northern coast has various little towns and pristine beaches where hotel rooms are as little as \$15 a night and rental boats will take you to secluded natural pools.

Iguaçu Falls (2 hours by air) offers one of Latin America's unique tourist sights. You may want to take an extra day to visit the falls from the Argentine side. The huge Itaipu hydroelectric project is nearby. Other popular outings for weekends or vacations include Rio de Janeiro; Ouro Preto, a mining town in Minas Gerais, with colonial baroque churches and other old towns nearby; Campos do Jordão; and Brasilia, a stunning example of city planning and modern architecture. Local travel agencies can be helpful in obtaining tour packages throughout Brazil and to other South American locations. São Paulo and Mato Grosso offer excellent fishing and camping along the coast.

Weekly artist fairs are held on Sundays at the Praça da Republica, in the Asian neighborhood of Liberdade, and in Embu, on the outskirts of São Paulo. These fairs offer local artwork, handicrafts, and geological specimens. The city also has many shopping facilities reminiscent of those in American cities.

Entertainment

São Paulo offers excellent, professional theater in Portuguese. During winter, several symphonies often offer concerts, some with guest soloists. Operas are presented and local and touring concert groups and ballet companies also perform. Most movie theaters feature first-

run American or foreign movies, as well as many Brazilian films. Foreign movies are usually shown with Portuguese subtitles. The city has many world-class art museums and galleries. Every 2 years, São Paulo hosts the Biennial, an internationally important modern art exposition, with extensive multinational representation.

With about 25,000 restaurants, cafes, and bars, São Paulo is one of the world's greatest cities for dining out. The city is especially rich in Italian, Japanese, and continental restaurants, and almost all ethnic communities are well represented. Brazilian churrascarias abound, serving a wide variety of richly seasoned, grilled meats accompanied by generous salad bars and side dishes. Fast food branches of American chains or local imitations are increasingly available.

Social Activities

There is a wide range of both business and social events, while home entertaining is also common. Much of the entertaining in the American community consists of luncheons and dinners.

The Newcomers Club, an English speaking club composed of all nationalities, is open to individuals for their first 2 years in Brazil. The club helps newcomers get acquainted and settled, and provides an opportunity for members to exchange information. Social activities include coffees and teas, museum outings, luncheons, dinners, book exchanges, and trips.

The American Society is a social and philanthropic organization for Americans in São Paulo. It organizes an annual field day for American Society members on the Fourth of July, an eggnog party at Christmas, and sponsors other social activities during the year. The American Society also issues an annual directory of members, a handy classified shopper's guide in English, and publishes a monthly newspaper with news of the English-speaking community. The American Society has a welfare pro-

gram that provides financial, medical, and educational assistance to U.S. citizens in distress and also sponsors little league baseball, soccer, and flag football.

The São Paulo Women's Club, an international English-speaking club, provides social, cultural, and charitable activities. These include two book clubs, a free circulating library, a chorus, small theater group, current events group, and classes in bookbinding, painting, languages, and gems.

Masons, Rotary, and Lions clubs meet regularly in São Paulo. Illinois and São Paulo participate in a program called Joint Partners of the Americas. Finally, the PTAs of the three American schools sponsor many children's activities, such as sports teams and competitions, scouting, drama, dances, and school trips.

Special Information

If you are traveling between June and October, include cool weather clothing in accompanied baggage; other times bring warm weather clothing.

The winter is brief but can be chilly. An all-weather coat with zip out lining should meet your needs. Those accustomed to living in warm climates may need a pair of gloves, a scarf, and a knit hat. Children need a warm jacket. For the rest of the year, cardigan and pullover sweaters and sweatshirts in assorted weights will suffice.

It rains nearly every afternoon in summer (December to February). Therefore, each family member needs at least one good umbrella. Plastic rainwear is uncomfortable, and a lightweight cloth raincoat would be preferable. Footwear for wet weather is also useful.

Travelers with infants or small children should include disposable diapers, a supply of baby food, any special baby formula, and a bottle warmer in accompanied airfreight.

Disposable diapers are available locally, but are expensive and of poor quality.

São Paulo has competent doctors and dentists. Many speak English and were trained in the U.S. Their fees for an office visit are higher than fees in the U.S. Adequate orthodontic services are available at prices higher than those in the U.S.

Maternity and other hospital care is good, despite the absence of thorough training for support personnel. Admission to private institutions, even for an emergency, requires a substantial cash deposit if you do not belong to a local health plan.

São Paulo is a major metropolitan area with all the noise, pollution, and congestion found in large cities. Pollution levels are high, which affects those with allergies or respiratory problems. Heavy traffic and noise are common problems.

Recife

Recife, a city of startling contrasts, stretches 30 miles along Brazil's east coast. Miles of attractive beaches front the modern, luxury suburbs of Boa Viagem and Piedade at the city's southern tip. The central city, situated on two islands and the delta formed by the Capibaribe and Beberibe Rivers, is laced with numerous old and new bridges. It is a bustling, dynamic area, with thousands of taxis and small passenger vans clogging the narrow streets. The total absence of a grid system, the rivers winding through the city, and maze of one-way streets (at times unmarked) make finding one's way a challenge.

Recife's many small parks and plazas are well maintained. The thriving open market, Mercado de São Jose, is a principal tourist attraction, as are feiras (smaller markets) scattered throughout the city. Colonial Portuguese churches abound, the railroad station is a well-restored Victorian marvel, and an adjacent former prison has been converted into the Casa da Cultura, where hundreds of stalls feature

local handicrafts. Neighboring Olinda is considered one of Brazil's greatest colonial treasures and offers a fascinating glimpse into 17th century architecture.

Recife is the capital of Pernambuco and is the principal port city of Brazil's developing northeast. It is the commercial, cultural, and political center of the consular district, which has about 40 million people. The city has 2 million inhabitants; the greater metropolitan area has 3.5-4 million inhabitants. The city skyline is an impressive jumble of modern skyscrapers and sturdy old church towers. Residential areas along the Boa Viagem, Piedade and Candeias beaches feature kilometers of 2030 story apartment buildings.

Developing industrialization includes sugar refining, alcohol distillation, truck assembly, aluminum fabrication, and the manufacture of textiles, rum, vegetable oils, leather, glass, ceramics, canned goods, pharmaceuticals, paint, electronic equipment, and synthetic rubber. Tourism is an expanding industry with a growing influx of tourists traveling from southern Brazil during winter and summer and from Europe in winter. Agriculture remains the base of the Pernambuco economy; sugar has been the principal crop for over 300 years. Cotton raised in the interior, sisal, livestock, and fruits, vegetables, and grain crops are also economically important. Over the past few years, Brazil's largest center for the production of irrigated tropical fruit has developed in Petrolina, about 700 km west of Recife.

The countryside surrounding Recife is tropical, hilly, and fertile; it reaches inland some 20-30 miles. The undulating foothills and low mountains of the drier agreste region offer some relief from the tropical monotony of the coast. The agreste gives way to the semiarid sertão which stretches far into the central regions of the Northeast. It is dry and desolate most of the year; its cowboy folklore reminds one of the American southwest. Its loca-

tion on the eastern extremity of Brazil places Recife about 1,500 miles across the south Atlantic from Dakar, Senegal, and about 1,300 miles north of São Paulo. Recife's geographic location makes it an important refueling point for transatlantic flights from South America to Europe. There are currently several non-stop flights a week to Miami as well as to destinations in Europe. Local connections to other Brazilian cities are also widely available and deregulation in recent years has led to a drop in domestic airfares. While few American tourists visit Recife, increasing numbers are visiting other beach cities in the consular district, most notably Natal and Fortaleza. Fernando de Noronha, an archipelago approximately 400 miles northeast of Recife which belongs to Pernambuco state, is rapidly gaining international notoriety as a destination for ecotourism.

Recife is located on the eastern edge of Brazil's time zone; sun time is over an hour ahead of clock time. Throughout the year it is dark soon after the Consulate closes at 5 pm, and there are never daylight hours for outdoor activities in the evening. Many Brazilians rise with the sun at 4:30 or 5:30 am and exercise on Boa Viagem beach or use the 8-kilometer walkway that stretches the length of the beach. For the late starter, for whom vigorous early morning exercise has little appeal, there are other options, including golf, equestrian sports and sports facilities at local clubs.

Recife has year-round rainfall, but the winter rainy season (May-September) has heavy daily rains that account for most of the annual 77 inches along the Pernambuco coast. Summer (October-April) is drier, with many clear, beautiful days. During the winter rainy season humidity is high and temperature variations are slight; the thermometer rises from 80°F to almost 90 degrees F, distinguishing winter from summer. The Northeast averages 250 days of sun per year, and the sun shines at least part of the day even during the rainy season.

The climate is not unbearably tropical, due to prevailing trade winds. Nevertheless, many expatriates experience problems with upper respiratory allergies during the rainy season, and post has obtained dehumidifiers to alleviate problems with some success.

Brazilians are a mixture of many ethnic groups: Portuguese, African, and Brazilian Indian backgrounds predominate in the Northeast. The largest foreign community is Portuguese, but small French, German, Israeli, Italian, Japanese, and Middle East groups exist. There are over 2,000 Americans registered in the Consular district and approximately 25% live in Recife. Many of those registered are dual nationals, although there is an important American missionary community.

Food

Recife's modern, air-conditioned supermarkets are well stocked and provide all the essentials to meet food and other household requirements of the average American family. In addition, the city is host to several specialty stores that provide oriental and other ethnic foods. Some types of meat, veal for example, are hard to obtain, but aside from this, you can maintain a perfectly adequate nutritional regimen with the food products available locally. Exceptional local tropical fruits and vegetables are available year round. Temperate climate fruits are brought in from southern Brazil and Argentina.

Clothing

Men: Summer clothes may be worn year round as temperatures seldom fall below 70 degree F. Most businessmen are casual in their dress, although some, such as bankers, still prefer suits to sport shirts.

Wash-and-wear items are most practical. Local custom-made linen, tropical worsteds, and Brazilian-made wash-and-wear suits range from \$200 to \$300, but are of lower quality. Bring at least one or two dark, lightweight suits for business calls and evening social functions.

You do not need hats (although caps for use in outdoor activities are highly recommended), but bring shirts, underwear, socks, and shoes. You can buy good-quality imported shirts in Recife, but they are expensive. Summer-weight washable slacks and shorts are useful, as is beach attire. Dry cleaning is available, but of questionable quality and expensive. Formal attire, such as a tuxedo or smoking jacket, is rarely required (only for the Carnival ball). Tuxedos can be purchased or rented locally.

Women: Clothing stores are plentiful and varied, although Brazilian styles are considerably tighter fitting than U.S. clothing. Bring plenty of comfortable summer clothing: skirts, shorts, shirts, and bathing suits. A good basic evening wardrobe might consist of washable cocktail separates (pants, skirts, blouses, etc.) and a few washable evening dresses. Cotton dresses and separates are preferable for afternoon functions.

Dressmakers range from expensive designers to tailors who take in mending; in between are competent, reasonable dressmakers who can adequately copy the simple lines of current fashions. Fabrics are available locally. Hats are seldom worn (except for informal hats and caps for outdoor activities). Carnival calls for costumes of fancy dress or shorts and a T-shirt.

Children: Bring children's clothing from the U.S. Given the weather, do not purchase winter clothes. Spring and summer weight clothing can be used year-round. Children rarely require long pants. Local seamstresses can be hired to mend and alter clothing and to make play clothing for children, although inexpensive locally manufactured play clothing is available and of acceptable quality.

Supplies and Services

Brazilian cosmetics and toiletries, many manufactured under agreements with U.S. firms, resemble U.S. products and are plentiful but more expensive than their U.S.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Teatro do Amazonas, Manaus, Brazil

counterparts. Internet buying services offer an excellent option for the purchase of U.S. goods.

Dry-cleaning service is available in Recife, but the quality is not up to U.S. standards. Full- or part-time launderers work in homes. Good beauty shops are available. Men's haircuts average \$10. Women's cuts and styling range from \$20-\$40.

Repair work on radios, TVs, and other electrical appliances is not always satisfactory, but authorized service centers are available for most major brands. Parts are available, but expensive. Recife has the second most developed medical infrastructure in Brazil, and as a result medical and dental care is excellent, but more expensive than in the U.S. Note: Check your health insurance before arrival to see if overseas claims are based on an U.S. fee schedule or on a straight percentage of charges.

Domestic Help

Servants are necessary in Recife for the American or Brazilian running a household. The system benefits the family in that necessary household help is supplied, and employment and security is provided for semiliterate and untrained persons. Nannies are also common and readily available. Current monthly wages (including all benefits are estimated as follows: cook/housekeeper, \$200; nanny \$200; cook, \$150; housekeeper, \$150. Fringe benefits include quarters for the live-in cook and housekeeper (all housing, including smallest apartments, provides separate servants quarters and bath), food, uniforms, and social security/health insurance (for those that do not live in, a transportation allowance is also provided). Live-in employees are more common and less expensive. Part-time domestic employees charge on average \$200 a month. A note of caution, finding suitable servants can be difficult and challenging.

Religious Activities

Recife has churches of almost every denomination including a synagogue, but few English-speaking services. English-language Baptist church services and a children's Sunday school are held every Sunday. Many beautiful and historical Catholic churches are located in Recife and in the adjoining town of Olinda. Mass is conducted in Portuguese. Many Catholic churches hold special Masses for adults, family, and youth. The youth mass is particularly interesting for young people who bring their guitars for group singing.

Education

The American School of Recife, founded in 1957, is a private, non-sectarian coeducational school that offers an instructional program from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for students of all nationalities. The school is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected for a 2-year term by the Association, composed of the par-

ents of children enrolled in the School. The Principal Officer is a non-voting member of the school board.

The curriculum is mainly that of U.S. general academic, preparatory, public schools. The Southern Association of Colleges accredits the school. There are 32 full-time and 6 part-time faculty members, of which 13 are U.S. citizens, 20 Brazilians, and 5 of other nationalities. Enrollment is approximately 350 students of which 40 are U.S. citizens, 250 host-country nationals, and 60 third-country nationals.

The school occupies an 8.5-acre site in a beautiful residential area of Recife. The pre-K/Kindergarten, elementary and high schools are in separate buildings. General facilities include classrooms, a science laboratory, two audio/visual rooms, a computer laboratory, a library with 12,000 volumes and a small theater. The school also has an adequate snack bar and lunch area as well as spacious sports and playground facilities.

Special Educational Opportunities

An art academy and a music conservatory are located in Recife. The Federal University of Pernambuco School of Fine Arts offers courses in theory, instrumentation, and ensemble playing. Private instruction is available on musical instruments. Private art instruction and group ballet lessons are also available.

Spouses need a basic command of Portuguese before coming to Recife; all practical day-to-day communications is in Portuguese. Additional language instruction for adult dependents is available.

Sports

Many health clubs and fitness centers in the city offer aerobics, gymnastics, dance, and exercise equipment. They are similar to those in the U.S., with trained instructors and such amenities as saunas, steam baths, and optional massages. Membership fees are low

by U.S. standards and are paid monthly.

Other social clubs offer recreational facilities in the city. There is also a golf and equestrian club.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Northeast offers some of the best beaches in Brazil, and many are less than a day's drive from Recife. Beaches range from established resorts to isolated stretches and most are easily accessible by vehicle, although a four-wheel drive vehicle would be preferable. Other one-day sightseeing trips afford visits to sugarcane plantations and mills, forts from the Dutch era in the 17th century, and quaint fishing villages on the coast and inlets. Most major routes are paved, and the remote, adventuresome routes are passable, except during the rainy season.

Several small towns, from 2-3 hours away offer a cooler, drier climate than the coastal region. Satisfactory overnight accommodations are available. Other cities in the consular district, such as Fortaleza, Natal and João Pessoa offer considerable tourist attractions. Salvador, the colorful, historic first capital of Brazil is approximately an hour's flight south. Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are a 2-1/2-hour flight south.

Entertainment

Recife has several modern multiplex theaters offering first-run U.S. and Brazilian movies. Several comfortable movie theaters also show other foreign films. Foreign films are in their original language with Portuguese subtitles, although children's films are dubbed. Recife has many restaurants ranging from simple, beachfront seafood houses in Olinda, to luxurious and expensive restaurants in Boa Viagem. Downtown restaurants are patronized mainly at lunchtime. Open-air restaurants along the beach in Boa Viagem are popular for evenings and weekends. Cuisines include Chinese, Italian, and seafood restaurants; churrascarias for grilled meats are also available. Prices

vary, but dinner for two with wines is less than in the U.S.

The renovated old city, Recife Antigo, offers an excellent option for nightlife. Open-air bars and sidewalk cafes, along with cultural events sponsored by the city, make Recife Antigo the center of nightlife in the city. There are several large discos and nightclubs (including Brazil's largest) which are very popular.

Recife also has several large modern shopping centers with many services, including bowling alleys and arcades. One, Shopping Recife, is the largest shopping center in South America.

Several radio stations and five color TV stations broadcast in Recife. An American black-and-white TV operates with a transformer and a voltage regulator. U.S. color sets need a PAL-M to NTSC converter, which can be purchased in the U.S. Local TVs are readily available, although more expensive than U.S. TVs.

Local TV offers numerous variety shows, popular Brazilian novelas (soap operas), daily national news programs, public interest features, Brazilian soccer and, occasionally, world sports events. Direct TV is available as are affordable satellite TV services offering US premium cable channels.

No English-language newspapers are published in Recife; foreign news is sparsely covered in the local press. The Latin American editions of Time and Newsweek are available weekly. However, internet service is readily available and inexpensive (approximately \$20 per month for unlimited access).

Recife's Carnaval is world famous. It is considered the largest street carnival in the world. Two events during Carnaval, the Bloco de Parceria on the Sunday before Carnaval and the Galo de Madrugada the Saturday of Carnaval vie for the title of largest concentration of people in the Guinness Book of World Records (each brings an estimated 2

million people together). Tourists from around the world flock to Olinda and Recife Antigo for more traditional carnivals. Other important celebrations include the São Joao festival in June, which offers typical northeastern music and dancing and special Brazilian dishes, and Recifolia, one of the largest out-of-season carnivals in Brazil. Several libraries are located in Recife for those who can read Portuguese, although books cannot be loaned out. A small library of American books and current periodicals is located at the binational center.

Social Activities

This region of Brazil is known for its hospitality and receptivity to foreigners. Most of the social activity in Recife revolves around the extended family, which often includes close family friends. Dinners are also common. Most entertaining, both in a family or more formal setting, is done at home. Entertaining is also more informal in nature, reflecting this family orientation.

The social life in Recife is active and Americans are readily welcomed into the community. Adults, adolescents and children quickly develop their own social life and meet frequently for parties and various activities.

Pôrto Alegre

Pôrto Alegre, capital of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, is the center of one of the most prosperous areas of Brazil. The city, with an estimated population of 2.9 million, lies at sea level at the mouth of the Guaíba River, the head of the sea's freshwater outlet, Lagoa dos Patos. The State of Rio Grande do Sul covers 108,951 square miles, and is slightly larger than Colorado. It is bordered on the north by the State of Santa Catarina, on the west by Argentina, and on the south by Uruguay.

Traditionally an agricultural state, it grows and processes rice, corn, wheat, soybeans, livestock, and a

variety of other products. Extensive industrial expansion, including the refining of petroleum and its by-products, and the production of steel, ships, footwear and leather products, wine, wood, paper and cellulose, textiles, and electrical products has occurred in recent years.

Although Pôrto Alegre's basic cultural pattern is dominated by its Luso-Brazilian heritage, this has been modified by Texas-like gaucho traditions, and (more recently) by heavy German and Italian immigration.

Pôrto Alegre's architecture reflects its historical development: early colonial buildings, baroque structures derived from Italy and France, and Brazilian modern design. Pôrto Alegre is built on hills, some of them quite steep. Narrow cobblestone streets, buses, and taxis, and many office buildings in the downtown district contribute to traffic congestion that is out of proportion to the city's size.

The Americans in Pôrto Alegre include those on assignment with agencies of the U.S. Government, a small number of business firms, and several religious organizations. The British community is somewhat larger. Periodically, American business representatives visit the city. Membership in the American Chamber of Commerce is almost entirely Brazilian.

Schools for Foreigners

Rio Grande do Sul, and Pôrto Alegre in particular, has one of the best school systems in Brazil, but all instruction is in Portuguese. Fluency in that language is more or less mandatory for admission and for satisfactory performance in Brazilian schools.

The only English-language school in Pôrto Alegre is the Pan-American School, which offers kindergarten through eighth grade, and can provide correspondence-school supervision for grades nine through 12. The school was organized in 1966, and had a 1991 enrollment of about 87 students. There were nine full-time

and seven part-time teachers at the school in 1991. The Pan-American School is a coeducational institution with a U.S.-style curriculum. The school has 12 classrooms, a 5,000-volume library, playing field, computer lab, and science lab. Extracurricular activities include soccer, field trips, and school newspaper. Information is available from the school at Rua João Paetzel 440, 90.000 Pôrto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Four private American missionary schools exist but, as the founders have died or been replaced by Brazilian teachers, the schools have lost their U.S. character. The schools are Colegio Americano (Methodist for girls), Instituto Pôrto Alegre (Methodist for boys), Colegio Batista (Baptist, coeducational), and Ginasio Menino Deus (Catholic, coeducational in the primary grades, operated by the Bernardine Sisters from the U.S., but taught mostly by Brazilian nuns). All offer first grade through high school. Children, especially girls, must wear uniforms.

Several good Portuguese-language schools are in Pôrto Alegre—the Colegio Anchieta (Jesuit, coeducational), Colegio Farroupilha (coeducational), Colegio de Aplicação (junior high and high school, coeducational), Colegio Rosario (Marist Brothers for boys), and Colegio Sevigne (Sisters of St. Joseph for girls). Pôrto Alegre's Jewish community runs the Ginasio Israelita Brasileiro. Schools are in session about four hours a day, morning or afternoon, six days a week. Children too young to travel alone are taken to and from school by parents. A few private institutions have buses.

Principal universities in Pôrto Alegre, among the first in Brazil, are Catholic University and Federal University. Courses are taught in Portuguese. Private Portuguese-language instruction on a reasonable hourly basis may be arranged.

Recreation

Many sports are available in the Pôrto Alegre area, among them ten-

nis, golf, yachting, fishing, swimming, riding, and trap, skeet, and target shooting. A number of clubs maintain good tennis courts, and several clubs also have swimming pools. Ocean swimming is available at beach resorts such as Torres, Capão da Canoa, Tramandaí, and Cassino, two to six hours by car from the city. There is a fine harbor at Veleiros do Sul, one of the two major yacht clubs. The other club, Jangadeiros, caters to day sailors and holds frequent regattas for small centerboard sloops. Motor-boating is also popular.

Spectator sports are soccer and horse racing.

Those interested in touring will find Caxias do Sul an interesting spot. About 75 miles north of Pôrto Alegre in the center of the mountainous wine-growing region, it is a clean and attractive city well worth visiting. The Italian community holds an annual wine festival there. Slightly closer than Caxias do Sul is the mountain resort town of Gramado. Many people living temporarily in Pôrto Alegre also make trips to Florianópolis, the capital of Santa Catarina, to enjoy the fine beaches. Iguaçu Falls are accessible by scheduled airlines in a three-hour flight or a one-day drive over good roads. Bordered by Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay, the falls are world renowned for their volume and beauty.

Entertainment

Pôrto Alegre has several air-conditioned movie theaters. U.S. films (six months to one year old) predominate, supplemented by French, Italian, German, British, and Brazilian productions.

The Pôrto Alegre Symphony Orchestra plays at least once a month in season, and another concert series brings international guest artists to the city. Professional Brazilian theater companies perform occasionally. The city offers many good restaurants, some featuring German, Italian, or Chinese cuisine, as well as the traditional

churrasco (barbecue). Several night-clubs exist.

Celebration of *Carnaval* season is fairly moderate and is best represented by social events organized by clubs and neighborhood groups.

Many members of the English-speaking community join the British Club. Facilities include tennis courts, swimming and wading pools, and playground equipment. Although the club serves as a gathering place for English speakers, membership is not confined to persons familiar with the language. The International Women's Association also offers opportunities for social activities.

One of the attractive features of visiting or living in Pôrto Alegre is the chance to meet and know Brazilians, and the only limit to the newcomer's international contacts is language. Pôrto Alegre has several active Rotary and Lions clubs and Masonic lodges. The ability to speak Portuguese fluently will greatly enhance opportunities for social contact.

Special Information

Santa Catarina, in the U.S. consular district of Pôrto Alegre, is in the south temperate zone of Brazil. Its climate is similar to that of Rio Grande do Sul. The state is divided into three distinct geographical zones: the coastal plain, the central highlands, and the western highlands. The state borders Argentina to the west, Paraná to the north, and Rio Grande do Sul to the south. The capital is Florianópolis.

Blessed with abundant rainfall and numerous lakes, the state is one of Brazil's most beautiful. The coastal area includes superb beaches and coves, and attracts visitors from many parts of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina.

The State of Santa Catarina's population of four million includes 30 percent German, 30 percent Italian, 15 percent Portuguese, 10 percent Polish, five percent Russian, five percent Negro, and five percent of

mixed origin. Santa Catarina is the most European of Brazil's states. Entire communities of German-speaking peoples abound, especially in the Blumenau-Joinville-Brusque area. The architecture, language, music, and cultural traditions all give the state the air of a central European country.

Santa Catarina has elementary and secondary schools in all municipalities of 2,000 inhabitants or more. In the western highlands, few secondary and preparatory schools exist.

The only accredited university in the state, the Federal University of Santa Catarina, is in Florianópolis. Present enrollment is about 6,000 full-time students. Separate faculties also exist in Joinville (economics and public administration) and in Lages (chemistry and industrial engineering). Blumenau has a municipal university.

Santa Catarina's many lakes and ocean-front beaches make it a fisherman's heaven. For hunters, all sorts of wild game abound, including rabbit, squirrel, bobcat, puma, bear, raccoon, wild boar, and over 25 species of game birds. The western portion is ideal for overnight camping.

Salvador Da Bahia

Salvador Da Bahia, formerly Salvador, is Brazil's oldest city, located in one of the most historic parts of the country. The Portuguese first landed in Brazil at Pôrto Seguro in the southern part of the State of Bahia, and when they colonized the country, they built the city which is now Salvador da Bahia. It was Brazil's capital from 1549 to 1763.

Situated on a hilly peninsula at the entrance to All Saints' Bay (Bahia de Todos os Santos), it is a picturesque city famed for its many baroque churches, distinctive food, colorful costumes, and religious ceremonies. Although strong African influences are found in Bahia, the main cultural tradition is Western, influenced at first by Portugal, and

more recently by France and the U.S.

Salvador da Bahia is one of Brazil's largest modern ports. Cocoa, tobacco, sugar, sisal, diamonds, iron ore, aluminum, hides, and petroleum are exported through Salvador da Bahia's port. The city has many important industries, among them textiles, ceramics, food and tobacco processing, automobiles, chemicals, and shipbuilding.

The metropolitan area has an estimated population of 2.4 million and is growing rapidly. Although this growth is accompanied by modern urban problems, the city retains much of its charm because of its privileged location by the bay and ocean, its varied topography, and its rich collection of historic buildings, many of which are registered and cannot be torn down.

Salvador da Bahia is divided into two parts—the "lower city" at sea level with the old port and commercial district; and the "upper city," reached by stone steps, and the site of government buildings, residential areas, museums, and churches. Some of the old and historically significant churches have been made into museums.

Schools for Foreigners

The Pan-American School of Bahia, with a student body of about 470, representing many nationalities, is partially sponsored by the U.S. Government. It offers an English-language curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade. In 1991, the school had 50 full-time teachers, 25 of whom were Americans. Located 15 minutes from downtown Salvador da Bahia, the school consists of two buildings, 25 classrooms, a 35,000-volume library, two playing fields, two science labs, and a computer lab. In December 1977, Pan-American was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Its program follows the U.S. educational system, and students have transferred easily into American schools and universities. Extracurricular activities include field trips, computers, year-

book, basketball, volleyball, and soccer. The school address is: Caixa Postal 231, Salvador da Bahia 4000, Brazil.

Two universities in Bahia offer interesting courses, seminars, and lectures for those with a firm command of Portuguese. Many Americans study that language with private tutors or at the Binational Center.

Recreation

Golf, tennis, sailing, swimming, and volleyball are the sports which normally attract members of the foreign community in Bahia. Skin diving, rock fishing, and deep-sea fishing are also available. Game in the area is scarce, but duck hunting is possible.

Many Americans join clubs which, in addition to offering sports facilities, provide a place to dine and relax on weekends. The Yacht Club, with a large freshwater pool, a boat-house, and restaurant/bar in attractive surroundings, makes available a temporary (four-month) membership. The Associação Atletica also offers a temporary (six-month) membership. Both the Bahia Tennis Club and the Cajazeira Golf Club provide either transferable or temporary memberships. The British Club, strictly a social organization, is the gathering place for the English-speaking community, and an English-language library is maintained there.

Salvador da Bahia and many nearby historic towns are good for sight-seeing. In the city itself, there is the excellent Museum of Sacred Art, considered the most beautiful in all of Brazil; it contains many works of Brazil's renowned baroque sculptor, Aleijadinho (Antônio Francisco Lisboa), known as "the little cripple." The visitor will also find numerous churches, forts, a small zoo, and many buildings of historical and architectural interest.

It is possible, by prior arrangement, to attend a *condomble* (voodoo religious ceremony). Photographs may

not be taken at such ceremonies without specific permission.

Entertainment

Movies in English, with Portuguese subtitles, are shown in many theaters. A cultural society presents a series of musical recitals and concerts during the May-to-December season.

The few nightclubs, generally discotheques without live entertainment, compare in price to those in large cities of the U.S. Salvador da Bahia has many fine restaurants.

Local radio programs are good, and shortwave is usually satisfactory, but sets should be tropicalized and powerful because of the distances involved. Most people on extended assignments have stereo equipment for home entertainment, and they find that the humidity makes it necessary to use cartridges of variable inductance rather than the ceramic type. There are three television stations in the city. No adjustments are needed for reception on black-and-white American sets.

The closely knit international community in Salvador da Bahia consists mainly of Americans (executives from the private industrial sector and petrochemical complex, and petroleum industry workers), Scandinavians, Swedes, English, Germans, and Argentines. Most speak English and send their children to the Pan-American School. In several book clubs, English-speaking members collectively purchase and share publications. The International Women's Club is one of the city's active social and charitable organizations.

Foreigners participate actively in the city's normal social life. Bahians are friendly and welcome contact with foreigners, especially Americans. English-speaking business representatives meet each Wednesday for lunch at the Clube do Comércio.

Because of the interesting scenery and relaxed life in Salvador da Bahia, many prominent artists



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Transporting soda pop in Brazil

make their homes in the area, and are easily accessible to foreigners.

Belo Horizonte

Belo Horizonte (Beautiful Horizon), capital of Minas Gerais, is Brazil's third largest city, with a population of over 4 million. Minas Gerais is Brazil's second most important state economically, after São Paulo. It is a major center of mining, steel production, automobile (Fiat), electronics, heavy machinery, and agriculture.

Minas Gerais maintains a higher economic growth rate than the nation as a whole. The state's utilities are generally well run providing better than average services, for Brazil. However, investment in basic infrastructure, especially roads, has not kept pace with the state's economic growth. The effects of rapid economic growth of the past decades are evident in the prolifera-

tion of common urban problems, such as air pollution (especially severe during the dry season), a crowded downtown area, and slums. Nevertheless, the city is less crowded and congested than Rio or São Paulo, and seems much smaller than a city of 4 million.

Accelerated economic growth in the past few years has also brought an explosion in the cost of living in Belo Horizonte. Consumer prices and rents are comparable to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Officers stationed in Belo Horizonte do not receive tax-free gasoline privileges.

Belo Horizonte, founded in 1897, is spread out over a rolling terrain and many streets are steep. The cross-work of avenues, streets, and diagonals can be confusing to a newcomer. Belo Horizonte has few landmarks of historical significance. The most interesting features of the city include the Praça da Liberdade, the center for the state government;

the Municipal Park with tree-shaded paths, a small recreation area for children, small lake, and the Lagoa da Pampulha area with a larger lake; and the Oscar Niemeyer-designed São Francisco de Assis Church, with murals and frescoes by the internationally famed Brazilian painter, Portinari. Brazil's colonial past is illustrated by a series of beautifully preserved historical cities such as Ouro Preto and Sabara, within 2 hours' drive of the capital. The city has an active night life, with many bars, clubs, restaurants and music.

Belo Horizonte enjoys a warm and dry climate. Winters are mild and sunny, with few genuinely cold days. Summers (December-March) are warm with few spells of hot, muggy weather. Most precipitation occurs from November to February with intermittent rain, heavy at times, causing severe, dangerous flooding.

The city is a junction for highways, connecting Rio de Janeiro (4-4-1/2 hours by car), São Paulo (8 hours), and Brasilia (10 hours). Highways are paved and in good condition, although overcrowded with trucks carrying mineral and steel products and agricultural goods. The city's streets are well kept generally, although the quality of pavement is poor in many areas. Most of the city is paved and has a clean look, although pollution is becoming a problem. Modern shopping centers are located in and around the city, offering many stores, including many international chains.

Two airports, Confins (60 min. downtown) and Pampulha (20-30 min.), provide frequent connections to Brasilia, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and other cities.

Food

Food is available locally in adequate quantity and variety. Fresh meat is plentiful. Fruits and vegetables in season are plentiful. Canned goods, frozen foods, and a growing variety of packaged and convenience foods are available but expensive. The central market and neighborhood markets continue to be important sources of supply for fruit, vegetables, and meats. Large supermarkets carrying a wide variety of merchandise, in addition to food items, are available.

Clothing

All types of temperate climate clothing are useful, including a limited number of woollens for occasionally chilly winter mornings, evenings, or when traveling in southern Brazil during winter. Styles for men and women are informal, but some business and social occasions call for business suits or formal wear. Brazilian women are style conscious and women coming to post may wish to vary their wardrobe after arrival according to local fashions. Various pants, blouses, and pantsuits will suffice for most occasions, with long dresses used only for formal social events.

Supplies and Services

Basic supplies are available locally. Officers stationed in Belo Horizonte should make arrangements to buy items available at the commissary in Brasilia.

Local tailors and dressmakers are adequate. Shoe repair is good. Laundry and dry cleaning services are good, but prices are high.

Local physicians, surgeons, and dentists can treat all but the most serious medical problems. Many have studied or done residencies in the U.S. and speak some English. The cost of medical services in Belo Horizonte is high. An office call currently costs about \$70. You can obtain advanced and highly specialized medical services in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Pharmacies carry adequate stocks of Brazilian-produced prescription and nonprescription medicines.

Repair facilities for foreign automobiles, appliances, or electronic items are difficult to find. The reliability of repairs varies. Local carpenters and cabinetmakers are competent, but slow.

Good household help is difficult to find. Increased job opportunities for women in manufacturing industries and businesses have sharply reduced the number interested in domestic employment. Finding and keeping skilled and reliable help is a problem. Personal recommendations are the best way of finding help; employment agencies are not recommended.

Education

American and English-speaking children attend the American School. Classes are from kindergarten through grade 12.

The Federal University of Minas Gerais and the Catholic University of Minas Gerais provide programs in most subject areas. Foreign students are few. The binational center and the Federal University offer Portuguese courses.

Sports

Free public recreation facilities are limited and crowded. These include the Municipal Park downtown, a zoo in the Pampulha area, Mangabeiras Park, and Minas Gerais and Fernão Dias Parks.

Many local residents join sports and social clubs and memberships cost \$2,000 and up. Clubs offer swimming and tennis facilities. Monthly fees cost \$200 and up. Fishing and boating are available on the San Francisco River, some 200 miles from the city. Spectator sports include professional soccer, basketball, and volleyball.

Entertainment

Several colonial cities famous for their baroque architecture and colorful settings are located in Minas Gerais State and are popular tourist attractions. Movie theaters often feature international films with Portuguese subtitles. The Palácio das Artes is home of the Minas Gerais Symphony Orchestra and sponsors performances by local and international musical and theatrical groups. A growing number of art galleries exhibit the works of local artists. The city has an active night life, with many bars, restaurants, nightclubs, concerts, and dancing. The small American community offers limited opportunities for social contact and activities. It consists of temporary residents working for American firms with local branches, missionaries, and permanent residents, including Americans settling in Minas Gerais after marrying Brazilians. A monthly picnic is held at the American School for all members of the community. The city has a small diplomatic community with consulates from Portugal, Argentina, Italy, and Chile.

Mineiros, as natives of the state are known, are friendly but reserved. Host country and other officials meet through business, commercial, fraternal organizations, country clubs, and artistic and cultural events. Family life centers in the home in Minas Gerais. However, once new acquaintances are estab-

lished, families welcome friendly relationships in their homes.

Belém

Belém, a port city, lies about 1°S. of the equator. The ninth largest city in Brazil, it is the capital of the State of Pará. Belém is the economic and political center of the Amazon region. Its narrow streets, tile-fronted homes, random Victorian architecture, modern high-rise office and apartment buildings, and wide streets lined with mango trees bear testimony to Belém's rich and varied history. The city was founded in 1616 by the Portuguese as a base to protect their territorial holdings in what now is northern Brazil. Throughout its history, as now, Belém has served as the port of entry to the vast Amazon Basin, and port of exit for regional products. Products exported via Belém include Brazil nuts, cassava, jute, black pepper, and aluminum.

Some of Brazil's most beautiful old churches are in Belém, among them the Santo Alexandre, the Basílica da Nossa Senhora de Nazaré, and the 17th-century Mercês Church. The city's Cathedral (cathedral) dates from 1748. Noteworthy among the modern structures is Teatro da Paz, one of the country's largest theaters, the public library, and archives building.

The city is 90 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean, at the junction of the Guamá River and Guajara Bay, which form part of the southern estuary of the Amazon River system. High temperatures and relative humidity make the climate debilitating and, at times, exhausting, but moderate easterly winds bring some relief. Insect and animal pests flourish.

About 25 percent of the city's estimated population of 1.5 million is of European descent, mostly Portuguese. The remainder is either of Indian or mixed racial origin. The foreign community includes some 25,000 Portuguese, 10,000 Japanese, and several hundred English, Dutch, French, German, Italian,

Spanish, Lebanese, and Eastern Europeans. About 1,000 Americans live in and around Belém, and another 1,500 are scattered throughout the district.

A modern airport, which is one of Brazil's largest, is maintained in Belém.

Manaus

Manaus (formerly spelled Manáos) is the capital of Amazonas State and the major city of the Amazon Basin, standing near the confluence of the Amazon and the Río Negro. The rubber boom of the late 19th century effected temporary prosperity, but the decline in that industry left the city to shrink in influence until a renewed interest in the Amazon Basin brought economic growth. Approximately 615,000 people now live in Manaus. It is the major port of northwestern Brazil, and its floating docks can accommodate oceangoing vessels. Brazil nuts, rubber, rosewood oil, and several forest products constitute Manaus' primary exports. Several industries make their home in Manaus, including ship building, soap manufacturing, brewing, petroleum refining, and chemical production. An international airport has been built, and coexists with the British-built customs house, the Portuguese townhouses, and the lavish Opera House, where Sarah Bernhardt once sang.

Manaus features a cathedral, zoological and botanical gardens, and the Museu Indígena Salesiano, which is dedicated to the region's Indian cultures. The tourist office is at Praça 24 de Outubro, Rua Taruma 329, and there are information kiosks at the airport and at the floating docks. Most banks in the city will change foreign currency only in the morning, but money can be exchanged at *Selvatour* in the Hotel Amazonas. One- and two-day river trips up the Río Negro from Manaus are readily available, and considered worthwhile excursions; it is possible to stop along the river banks to explore the fringes of the forest or to canoe in the clear lakes of the interior.

Fortaleza

Fortaleza (Portuguese for fortress), a city with an estimated population of 2.8 million residents, is the capital of the State of Ceará in northeastern Brazil. The city (often referred to as Ceará, the state designation, by foreigners) served as a center for the sugar plantations in colonial times and, today, processes sugar and cotton, and ships exotic products such as carnauba wax and oiticica oil. Fortaleza is also known for traditional handicrafts, especially lace-making.

The Dutch occupied Fortaleza in the mid-17th century, and Nossa Senhora da Assunção, a fort built by them, still stands. Excellent seafood is brought to the nearby beaches by the fishermen in their hand-crafted vessels each day at about sundown, and the lobsters here are considered particular delicacies. The 1,393-acre Ubajará National Park, featuring caves of the same name, is close by. Fortaleza's tourist office is located at Rua Senador Pompeu 250, and there is a branch in the old prison.

Curitiba

Curitiba, a rapidly growing city of more than 1.4 million residents, is a commercial and processing center, and also the capital, of the southeastern State of Paraná. It was founded in 1654, but developed slowly until the influx of German, Italian, and Slavic immigrants in the early part of the 20th century. The metropolitan area now accommodates well over one million residents.

During the past 30 years, Curitiba has seen swift expansion and modernization. New housing and public buildings have sprung up both in the central city and the burgeoning suburbs, yet the city has not succumbed to the clutter and confusion which often accompanies urban growth. Beautiful, wide avenues and vast expanses of park land remain, bestowing an aura of tranquility seldom found in a modern setting.

Curitiba is home to several industries which manufacture textiles, automobiles, furniture, matches, tobacco, soft drinks, lumber, and tea. Tourist attractions in the city include the Paran ense Museum and an Egyptian-style temple located near Lake Bacacheri.

Two institutes of higher learning are located here—Federal University of Paran , dating from 1912, and Catholic University, which opened in 1959. Curitiba also is the site of the State Library. The International School of Curitiba, which follows a U.S. curriculum and employs six American teachers, is in a suburb overlooking the city.

Goi nia

Goi nia, capital of the State of Goi s and its largest city, is about two-and-a-half hours west of Brasilia. Like Brasilia, it is a planned city, and was built in 1933 to replace the old city of Goi s as the state capital. With an altitude much lower than Brasilia's, it is usually considerably warmer and more humid. Goi nia is an attractive city with tree-lined streets, attractive parks, interesting 1930s architecture, a shopping center, good hotels, and some excellent restaurants. It also has fine museums and art galleries, and a good urban transportation system. The Sunday fair is one of the best in the area.

Goi nia's population has grown to over 702,000. The city is a shipping and processing center for livestock, crops, and minerals. It is the seat of two schools of higher learning, Federal and Catholic universities, as well as several technical institutes. The city is accessible by air, road, and railway.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **AN POLIS**, in the State of Goi s, is situated in central Brazil, 82 miles south of the capital. Lumber, rice, coffee, and livestock are processed in this industrial center. An polis distributes diamonds,

gold, maize, and rubber by rail. A highway and an airport are located nearby. Its population is about 161,000.

ARACAJU is the capital city of Sergipe State in northeastern Brazil. It is near the mouth of the Sergipe River and has an excellent harbor. As the state's commercial hub, it ships cotton, sugar, hides, and rice. The city has several industries which process salt, cotton, sugar, beans, bananas, cashews, and leather. Several roads and airports link Aracaju to Recife, Macei , and Salvador da Bahia. Aracaju's population is about 289,000.

CAMPINA GRANDE is situated in northeastern Brazil in the State of Para ba. Since Campina Grande is located in a cotton-growing region, most of its industries are mainly based on that product. Other factories in the city manufacture metallurgical products, pharmaceuticals, and plastics. It also produces sugarcane, fruit, vegetables, and tobacco. The city is the home of an art museum and a regional university. Road, river, air, and rail transportation is available to Recife, Jo o Pessoa and several other cities. The population of Campina Grande is about 222,000.

Located in the State of S o Paulo, **CAMPINAS** is about 57 miles northwest of the city of S o Paulo. At one time, Campinas was Brazil's top coffee producer. Today, its industries include the processing of cereals, cotton, and sugarcane as well as coffee. Cosmetics, soap, textiles, motorcycles and agricultural machinery are also produced. Campinas has a symphony orchestra, as well as theaters, museums, and art galleries. A tourist attraction near Campinas is the Salto d'Ita Falls, located five miles north of the city. There are two universities here. The city's population is approximately 567,000.

CAMPO GRANDE, in southwestern Brazil, is the fastest-growing city in the State of Mato Grosso. Industries include tanneries, meat-packing plants, and slaugh-

terhouses. Coffee, corn, rice, and beans are grown in areas surrounding the city. The railroads and airways in Campo Grande are an essential means of transportation for the surrounding region. Campo Grande's population of 282,800 is the largest in Mato Grosso.

CAXIAS DO SUL (formerly called Caxias) is an Italian immigrant settlement in the State of Rio Grande do Sul in southern Brazil. Regional farming supports the city's industries which include cattle-raising, wine making, and hog slaughtering. The city's population is close to 199,000.

CORUMB , a small southwestern port city of approximately 66,000 residents on the R o Paraguai, is the chief trade center for Mato Grosso State. Visitors often take boat trips north from here through the Pantanal, a vast wildlife preserve. Other attractions are the regional museum, and the arts and crafts center at the old jail. Corumb , a junction on the railroad connecting Brazil and Bolivia, was a key strategic point in the War of the Triple Alliance (1865), and changed hands often. Factories in the city process xarque (dried beef) and animal hides.

FLORIAN POLIS is located on Santa Catarina Island, off the coast of southeastern Brazil, and is connected to the mainland by two spans, the oldest of which is the handsome and historical Herc lio Luz Bridge. The city has spilled over onto the Estreito strip of the mainland, and the total population is estimated at 154,000. The city produces a number of products including pharmaceuticals, communications equipment, perfume, and plastics. Now a bustling commercial center and the capital of Santa Catarina, Florian polis' colonial houses still stand along the narrow streets of the city's older section. An anthropology museum at Federal University is worth visiting, and excellent beaches have made the area popular with tourists. The city, named for an early Brazilian president, Floriano Peixoto, was once

known as Destêrro. It is linked by excellent roads with the coastal cities of Pôrto Alegre and Curitiba. Flights are available from Florianópolis to Rio de Janeiro, Pôrto Alegre, and São Paulo.

Located in northeastern Brazil, **JOÃO PESSOA** is the capital of Paraíba State. Founded in 1585, João Pessoa today supplies cement, clothing, beverages, and cigars locally. One of its better-known historical buildings is the 18th-century Church of São Francisco. The church still has its original wooden grilles, entrance, and decorative towers and domes. The city manufactures chemicals, metals, plastics, and electrical products. The city is the home of Paraíba University. João Pessoa's population is close to 290,250.

JUIZ DE FORA is 80 miles north of Rio de Janeiro in the southeastern State of Minas Gerais. The city, with an estimated population of 300,000, is an important manufacturer of knitwear. Many crops are grown near Juiz de Fora, among them bananas, sugarcane, coffee, and rice. Textiles and plastics are also manufactured here. A major tourist attraction is the Mariano Procópio museum. In 1960, the Federal University of Juiz de Fora was opened here.

Situated 125 miles southwest of Recife, in northeastern Brazil, **MACEIÓ** is the capital of Alagoas State. An industrial city, Maceió produces household items, cotton textiles, chemicals, cigarettes, sugar, and foods. Exports include tobacco, cotton, rum, and sugar. Reflecting its colonial background, the city's landmarks include a lighthouse in the center of the city the Church of Bom Jesus dos Mártires, the Metropolitan Cathedral, and the Government Palace. Maceió is linked with Recife and cities to the north by road and rail. The population here is about 375,700.

NATAL, with a population of close to 376,500, is situated in northeastern Brazil. It is the capital of Rio Grande do Norte State. A major

port, it ships hides, salt, cotton, and sugar. Important industries include salt refining and cotton spinning and weaving. The city was founded on December 25, 1599; "natal" means "Christmas" in Portuguese. The coastline has nice beaches and a folk museum housed in a 16th-century fort. Railroads and highways extend from Natal to the interior and to coastal urban centers. Flights are available to the cities of Recife and Teresina.

Located on the Atlantic coast in Pernambuco State, **OLINDA** is about 60 miles south of Natal and about 50 miles north of Maceió. Less than four miles from Recife, Olinda is one of the major architectural centers of Brazil. The narrow, steep streets here are flanked by beautiful churches and centuries-old houses. A large colony of artists in the city produce wood carvings and pottery. The colorful Moorish fountains give an added dimension to this historic town of 267,000 residents.

OURO PRÊTO, located in the mountains of eastern Brazil, was founded during the gold rush at the turn of the 18th century, and became a prosperous mining town in the following decades. Since 1933, the city has been considered a national museum, and bears the designation, "world monument," an honor bestowed by United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The city's colonial-era houses, churches, and public buildings have been preserved and restored. On June 24 of each year, it becomes the capital of Minas Gerais State for one day (it was superseded by Belo Horizonte in 1897). The 18th-century atmosphere of twisting streets, and the old houses and churches of the town have been preserved. At the churches of São Francisco and Carmo, one may view the baroque sculpture of Aleijadinho, the "little cripple." The museum of the Inconfidência, housed in a large colonial penitentiary, is dedicated to the history of gold mining and culture in Minas Gerais. For those interested in mineralogy, a museum at the old colonial governor's palace contains a

beautiful collection of minerals native to Brazil. The still-operating gold mines three miles north of town are of interest. The tourist office at Praça Tiradentes 41 features films about Ouro Prêto several times daily. Maps in English are available at the Luxor Hotel. The population here is about 27,900.

Once the coffee capital of Brazil, **RIBEIRÃO PRÊTO** is located in southeastern Brazil in São Paulo State. It was founded in 1856 and has over 300,000 residents. Several crops are grown near the city, among them corn, rice, cotton, sugar, and fruits. Cottonseed oil, beer, and textiles are manufactured in Ribeirão Prêto. The city is accessible by road, air, and rail from São Paulo.

SANTOS, a city of approximately 416,000 in São Paulo State, is the world's largest coffee-exporting port, and one of the principal ports of Brazil. Settled in 1543, it is situated on the island of São Vicente, near the town of the same name, which was the first permanent Portuguese settlement in the New World (1532). Several factories are located in the city. These factories produce soap, soft drinks, cement, and candy. Santos' energy needs are met by a large hydroelectric plant and the petroleum refinery at Cubatão. Santos' humid climate and marshy terrain once made living conditions difficult, but new housing, drainage canals, and updated sanitation facilities have dramatically improved the city. Santos, with its fine beaches and seaside facilities (particularly at suburban Guarujá), is a fashionable residential and resort area.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Brazil, with a land area of 3.3 million square miles, is larger than the

continental U.S. It extends from the Amazonian equatorial plains at latitude 4°N. to cool uplands at 30°S., where frost often occurs. It borders all South American countries except Chile and Ecuador and, to the east, the coastline runs along the Atlantic Ocean for 4,600 miles.

The vast regions of the Amazon and La Plata River basins occupy about three-fifths of the total area. The huge plateau, rising from 1,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level in São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul, is the country's main physical feature. This is crossed by two mountain ranges; the highest, at 9,823 feet, is near Rio de Janeiro. A second mountain system, in central Brazil, has an eastern range with a maximum altitude of 4,206 feet, and a western peak of 4,500 feet near the city of Goiânia. Because of its great plains and basins, 40 percent of the country has an average altitude of only 650 feet.

Although Brazil is immense in size and varies in topography from the sweeping sea-level Amazon basin south to the mountains of São Paulo and Pôrto Alegre, the temperature range is narrow. The seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S., with summer from December to February. The rainy season usually extends from October to March.

Population

Brazil's population of roughly 160 million is composed of four major groups: indigenous. Indians, the Portuguese, Africans brought to Brazil as slaves, and various. European and Asian immigrant groups. The Portuguese navigator Pedro Alvares Cabral discovered Brazil in 1500, and the country was subsequently colonized by the Portuguese. A strong African influence exists in the northeast, the legacy of slaves brought to Brazil. The population in the southern half of the country reflects various waves of immigration, with many Brazilians of German and Italian descent in Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul. A large Japanese population is concentrated in the agricultural and

industrial area around São Paulo, and Brazil also has a significant population of Arab descent. Travelers to Brazil will note a distinct atmosphere and population in each region—the result of the wide diversity in Brazil's ethnic composition.

Brazilians are warm and friendly people eager to know foreigners and their habits and customs. In large cities, many Brazilians speak some English, but appreciate Americans who speak Portuguese. A knowledge of the language is necessary to understand and enjoy the people and their intriguing culture.

Some 90% of the population live in the central plateau and the narrow coastal plain along the Atlantic. The tropical Amazon River basin, comprising almost half of Brazil's total area, is sparsely settled. The Trans-Amazonian Highway Project, as well as several large development projects such as Carajas, are aimed at developing the local economy and encouraging migration into the less populated regions of northern Brazil.

Almost every religion is represented in Brazil, but Roman Catholics are predominant (89%). Animism is widespread and is practiced alongside Catholicism. Religious freedom and separation of church and state prevail.

Public Institutions

Brazil is a constitutional federal republic with broad powers granted to the federal government. The 1988 constitution establishes, at the national level, a presidential system with three branches - executive, legislative, and judicial. Brazilians reelected President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and his vice-president, Marco Maciel, to second four-year terms beginning January 1, 1999. This marked the fourth direct election for Congress, governorships and the President.

The bicameral national Congress consists of 81 senators (three from each state and the Federal District)

elected to eight-year terms, and 513 federal deputies elected at large in each state to four year terms, based on a complex proportional representation system, weighted in favor of less populous states. The apex of the judicial system is the Supreme Federal Tribunal, whose 11 justices are appointed by the president to serve until age 70.

Brazil is divided administratively into 27 states and a federal district, which includes the capital, Brasília. The structure of state and local governments closely parallels that of the federal government. Governors are elected for four year terms. A federal revenue-sharing system, in place since the 1988 constitution, provides states with considerable resources.

Arts, Science, and Education

Brazil's tremendous ethnic and regional diversity makes for a vibrant and varied cultural scene. São Paulo and Rio audiences enjoy a constant menu of outstanding national music and art events, and a steady diet of top international fare as well. Brasília and Recife are less tied into the international circuit, but local and national cultural options are regularly available.

Brazil's federal and state higher education institutions include some of the finest in Latin America, a product of heavy government investment in graduate-level programs and university research capacity since the 1960s. Of the 68 major universities in Brazil, 35 are federal, 20 are private or church-related, two are municipal and 11 are state supported. Every state but one (Tocantins) and the Federal District of Brasília has one or more federal universities, all of which operate directly under the Ministry of Education. In many states there are also one or more state universities and one or more Catholic universities. In addition to the universities, there are approximately 800 other degree-granting colleges and institutions of higher education

in such areas as engineering, medicine, agriculture, law, economics and business administration. While bloated payrolls and an innovation-stifling bureaucracy have come to pose a serious challenge to the health and quality of the system, a number of reforms stressing greater teacher and student performance based accountability and more streamlined budgetary processes promise to address many concerns.

The Cardoso Administration recognizes that to be competitive in today's more open and service-driven economy places greater demands on workforce education at all levels, and resources are being shifted to the long-neglected primary and secondary levels. Both access and quality are showing improvement. Although eight years of schooling have been legally compulsory since 1973, 1992 figures revealed that the average Brazilian worker had fewer than five years of formal education. That figure is expected to be closer to seven years in 1998 figures, and the sharply upward trend is likely to continue based on much better retention rates in primary schools over the past four years and surging enrollment rates in secondary schools.

During the 70s and 80s, the poor quality of public schools prompted almost all Brazilian middle- and upper-class families to send their children to private or church-affiliated schools. Those children were then better prepared to pass the difficult entry exams for the public universities, creating a paradox in which the less affluent Brazilians were the least able to benefit from the free public universities. Today that trend is showing some signs of softening as quality improvements and economic pressures lead an increasing number of middle-class families to opt again for public schools.

Commerce and Industry

Brazil's gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$800 billion in 1998

makes it the world's ninth largest economy. Brazil's population of 160 million makes it the fourth most populous country, and its territory is the fifth largest. Rich resources make Brazil a country of tremendous potential. Per capita income averages US\$5,000, with sharp disparities; in general, the south and southeast are more prosperous, while the northeast is much poorer.

Brazil's economy is highly diversified both agriculturally and industrially. Brazil is a major exporter of manufactured products (73 percent of total exports). It is the world's largest exporter of coffee and orange juice concentrate and a major exporter of soybeans, sugar, cocoa, meat and cotton. Mining is also important, particularly iron ore production.

After many years of high inflation, Brazil achieved its most sustained period of stability, beginning in July 1994 with the introduction of a new currency, the real (plural is reais; abbreviation is R\$). This stabilization plan was developed when current President Fernando Henrique Cardoso was Finance Minister (May 1993 - April 1994). The inflation rate, which had reached 50 percent per month by June 1994, declined to less than two percent per month throughout 1995. Inflation came down as a result of a strongly valued currency bolstered by very high real interest rates.

In order to consolidate the stabilization program, attract more long-term investment, and put Brazil on the path to long-term sustainable growth, the government must implement wide-ranging structural reforms. Over the years, Brazil has built a cumbersome government-dominated economy that has benefited a few special interests at the expense of the overall society. Many of the necessary reforms require amendment of Brazil's 1988 Constitution. The Congress passed in 1995 five reforms opening the economy to greater investment by the private sector, including foreign investors. Since then some US\$80 billion of mostly federally owned

assets have been privatized with another US\$20 billion of state and local enterprises set for the auction block in 1999.

The GOB has been engaged in a multifaceted program to stabilize its economy in the face of a global financial crisis which began in Asia in late 1997 and was further aggravated with Russia's default and the devaluation of its currency in September 1998. Brazil's vulnerability was its high fiscal deficit. To address this, the Brazilian government has cut spending modestly while simultaneously raising taxes. In early 1999, it abandoned its foreign exchange policy which had closely bound the real to the dollar in a "crawling peg," embracing, instead, a floating exchange.

There was strong consensus that the real has been overvalued for some time. The result was a nearly 50 percent devaluation against the dollar in its first month. To further address the fundamental causes of fiscal deficit, Brazil continues to make structural reforms, primarily in the area of social security and public sector retirement programs. Other reforms currently under consideration include an overhaul of its tax system, labor reform, and political reform to strengthen party organization and discipline.

Transportation

Automobiles

Parts for cars not produced in Brazil must be ordered from abroad. Few mechanics are trained for repair of imported vehicles. Brazil manufactures gasoline, alcohol, and some service-type, diesel-powered vehicles. Gasoline available is only a 72-octane gasohol mixture. Nearly all gasoline sold in Brazil contains up to 25% anhydrous alcohol. Non-Brazilian-manufactured vehicles run well on the local gasohol. But low-compression engines, either imported or produced locally, are recommended. The gasoline is non-leaded and therefore it is not necessary to remove the catalytic converter.

Ford, Chevrolet, Fiat and VW manufacture full lines of vehicles in Brazil. Most models are based on the companies' European models, but a few are similar to models sold in the U.S. Toyota, Honda and Renault manufacture a limited selection of models in Brazil. Brazilians overwhelmingly prefer vehicles with manual transmissions; automatic transmission is available on a few models, though not all. Used cars are readily available.

The number of imported cars in Brazil is increasing, and dealers are improving service and parts availability. However, it would still be prudent to bring a shop/repair manual and some make/model specific spare parts. There are several competent mechanics in town.

All POVs must carry mandatory and third-party insurance. The mandatory insurance covers personal medical expenses resulting from an accident and costs about R\$60 a year. The third-party insurance may be obtained from a Brazilian or a U.S. firm. The minimum required coverage is \$400,000 for property damage and \$400,000 for personal injury or death. Insurance should include coverage for all persons who may, with permission, operate the vehicle.

The Brazilian Transit Department (DETRAN) issues Brazilian drivers licenses. Those without a valid U.S. or other foreign license are required to have an eye exam. Only eligible family members (EFMs) 18 years old or older are eligible to obtain a Brazilian license.

Brasília: Taxis are available and offer adequate transportation, particularly for short runs. They are, however, expensive. Municipal governments set metered taxi rates, with higher rates being charged after 11 p.m. on weekends and holidays. All cabs have red license plates with white numbers. Tips are not required, but 10% of the metered fare is appropriate for excellent service.

Bus transportation passes through the center of the city, as well as on other major thoroughfares and is good. Bus service is also available to Brasília's many satellite cities.

Rio de Janeiro: Many metered taxis are available at reasonable prices, depending on the distance to be traveled. Radio controlled taxis which can be requested by phone are also available. Drivers have a reputation for being reckless. The Security Office advises personnel to avoid riding public buses because of the high incidence of theft. The Metro is also another form of transportation from Copacabana to downtown. The Metro is reasonably priced at R\$1.00 each way. Air conditioned buses are widely available and the price ranges from R\$3.00 to R\$5.00. The air-conditioned buses are generally safer than the public buses. Public bus price is R\$.70 each way if you choose to take this route of transportation.

São Paulo: Metered taxis are available at reasonable prices.

Recife: Recife's extensive bus system is efficient and inexpensive. Taxis are abundant and inexpensive. Although we recommend against their use, inexpensive gypsy cab vans ply regular routes.

Belo Horizonte: The rapid growth of this city has overburdened the city's transportation system. Bus lines are extensive and inexpensive, but some knowledge of the city is required. The bus system is chaotic, with most lines ending in the downtown area requiring a change of bus for cross town trips. Although economical, city buses are overcrowded and offer only minimal comfort.

Taxis are plentiful and can be found at stands situated throughout the downtown and principal residential areas. Taxi fares are moderate. Trips to outlying areas require a fare supplement. Taxi companies provide radio-controlled service.

Crowded traffic conditions and a limited number of parking spaces in the downtown and adjacent com-

mercial areas of the city make the use of private cars impractical at times. Trips to this area during business hours are best taken on foot or by taxi.

Regional

Direct international air service is available to and from the U.S., Africa, and Europe. Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are the primary entry airports for U.S. flag carriers. However, some international flights terminate in Manaus, Belem, Recife, Brasília, Belo Horizonte, and other Brazilian cities. Intracountry connections to Brazil's major cities by national airlines are excellent, but airfares are high. Air transportation to and from Belo Horizonte is excellent, as the city is served by all four Brazilian commercial air carriers and American and United Airlines. Air transportation to and from Porto Alegre is also excellent, although most destinations require an intervening stop in Rio or São Paulo.

Bus transportation between cities is inexpensive and widely used. Some of the longer routes have air-conditioned buses with sleeper chairs (leito), coffee service, and toilets. Most intracity buses are not air conditioned and are crowded during rush hours, but run frequently and are inexpensive. Metro service operates in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

The highway system in southeastern Brazil and as far north as Salvador is good. Brasília is connected directly to Foz do Iguacu, Belem, Goidnia, and to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Gas stations, restaurants, and hotel accommodations are scarce on some highways.

The Amazon and Plata Rivers with their tributaries provide 25,600 miles of navigable rivers. Regular water transportation is available from Rio de Janeiro south to Buenos Aires and up the Amazon to Iquitos on the Peruvian border. You can obtain information in Belem on ships traveling up the Amazon.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Brazil's telephone service is good. Local rates are higher than in the U.S., however. Reception on incoming international calls is excellent; for outgoing calls reception varies considerably. Direct dialing is available internationally and throughout Brazil. A telephone calling card from a major carrier (AT&T, Sprint, MCI, etc.) is quite useful. Cellular phone service is popular.

Mail

Registered mail service is available at Rio de Janeiro only.

Radio and TV

Brazil has some 3,000 radio stations and more than 400 television stations. For most Brazilians, TV and radio act as the principal source of news, sports and entertainment. TV Globo, with 107 stations, is known throughout the world for its telenovelas (soap operas), which bring Brazilian stories to TV fans throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Unlike the U.S. standard NTSC system, Brazil television is broadcast with the PALM system. A U.S.-purchased NTSC set can receive the PAL-M signal, but only in black and white. NTSC-PAL-M converters that will allow you to use your NTSC set and receive the normal color transmission are available in large cities for prices that range between \$60 and \$100. Multisystem TVs are available in Brazil, as well; as of February 1999, a 29-inch SONY multisystem set was selling for about \$600.

While Brazil's commercial and public networks provide an ample selection of Portuguese-language news, talk shows, soap operas, sports and variety programs, most expatriates also subscribe to one of the cable systems. Since the launch of cable service in 1993, it has grown rapidly, with projections to reach an estimated 6 million subscribers in the year 2000. The major companies are Globo's NET, TVA/Abril and Direct TV. Monthly fees range from

about \$25 to \$40, depending on the package selected. CNN, ESPN, HBO, Cartoon Network, Discovery Kids and similar cable fare are available via all three systems.

Video rental outlets, including U.S. giant Blockbuster, are common throughout Brazil. American-made films for children are generally dubbed into Portuguese; those for adults generally carry subtitles. Video rental prices range from \$1 to \$3 at February 1999 exchange rates.

Radio fare runs the gamut from MPB (Brazilian Popular Music) and Bossa Nova to Motown and classical music. U.S. music fans can easily identify several stations that focus on music from back home, and Portuguese-speaking news hounds will find a growing selection of all-news or mostly-news formats. The Brazilian Government continues to require all commercial broadcasters to air the government-run Radiobras news program from 7 to 8 p.m. During election time, the public airwaves are also dedicated to a couple of hours a day of free campaign spots for candidates.

Internet use has grown rapidly in Brazil. An estimated 3.5 million Brazilians will be surfing the net by the year 2000, and Brazilian web sites are proliferating daily. Those who would like to practice their Portuguese from the U.S. can start by accessing dozens of Brazilian newspapers via <http://www.zaz.com.br/noticias/jornais.htm> or listen to Brazilian radio stations via the Internet at <http://www.lancc.utexas.edu/ilas/brazctr/radio.html>

Internet providers are multiplying throughout the country, and prices have become more competitive over the past couple of years. You can expect to pay \$20 to \$35 for monthly service, depending on the amount of usage and your location. AOL is coming into Brazil shortly, so the U.S. standby will also be an option. Phone lines have historically been the limiting factor with Internet service, as 56k modems were wasted on bad lines. With the privatization of phone companies throughout

Brazil, the future looks brighter (and faster).

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Brazilian newsstands are jammed with an array of newspaper and magazines, ranging from the serious to the frivolous. Major dailies such as *Folha de São Paulo*, *Jornal do Brasil*, *O Estado de São Paulo*, and *O Globo* are great sources for information about Brazilian politics, society and culture. They and many smaller, regional newspapers can be accessed on-line via <http://www.zaz.com.br/noticias/jornais.htm>. *Veja*, the most widely circulated weekly magazine in Brazil, offers both newcomers and veterans an excellent overview of the country.

International newspapers such as the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Miami Herald* and *The New York Times* are available at major newsstands, but the news will be at least a day - and sometimes a week - old. Single editions sell for the equivalent of USD 2.50 to USD 4.00, and subscriptions are available.

Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, which focus more on international events and issues, are available both at newsstands and via subscription. National bookstore chains such as Saraiva and Livraria Siciliano carry a selection of English-language paperbacks alongside their Brazilian titles, but prices tend to be significantly higher than what readers can find via amazon.com or other U.S. providers.

Internet Support: Computers and associated hardware are more expensive in Brazil than in the U.S. Parts for personal computers made by international vendors (Dell, Compaq, Hewlett-Packard, etc.) are usually available. Qualified repair personnel can be difficult to find. Be sure to bring power and telephone line protection for computer equipment.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Most of the pharmaceuticals used in the United States are available in the Brazilian post cities. In some cases the identical brand name medication is marketed locally. However, in some instances, the quality or availability of locally marketed medication is suboptimal.

The testing of blood products for transfusion purposes in Brazil has improved considerably over the past several years and blood supplies are considered safe.

Brasília: There are several very adequate hospitals available and the level of competence and technical sophistication among the local health care providers is very good. Dental, orthodontic, and prosthodontic care is available and of good quality. Supplies of medications are good. There is an abundance of specialist consultant physicians available, many of whom are English speaking and have had training in the United States.

Rio de Janeiro: As in Brasília, there are inspected and satisfactory hospitals, well trained specialist physicians, and other medical support services are readily available. Likewise, dental, orthodontic, and prosthodontic care is available and of good quality. Supplies of medications are good.

São Paulo: São Paulo is the largest city in Brazil and as such has a very sophisticated and excellent medical infrastructure.

Community Health

Bottled water, available on a post-reimbursable basis, is recommended for direct consumption, at all locations. Municipality supplied water is treated and considered acceptable for bathing, laundering, and cooking. Fluoride content is variable and not directly added to bottled water and so fluoride supplementation is advised, for children under the age of twelve.

Food inspection and cleanliness of marketed meats and produce is very variable. Fruits and vegetables that are eaten uncooked and or unpeeled should be thoroughly washed and soaked in a disinfecting solution prior to consumption. Meats should be cooked thoroughly. Adequate pasteurization of dairy products is much improved but still variable and "long life" milk is recommended. Likewise, restaurant inspection is less enforced than in the United States. It is advisable to keep this constantly in mind and use discretion in ordering choices, and particularly to be careful with buffet type presentations in regard to freshness and adequacy of food chilling.

Several insect borne diseases are a problem in different areas of Brazil. In the Amazon and Northern regions malaria and Chagas disease are endemic. Dengue fever, a mosquito-transmitted viral illness, is becoming more disseminated throughout the country. To date, Brasília and São Paulo are still considered nonendemic cities. There is no vaccine available for dengue fever. The malaria in Brazil is considered chloroquine resistant. As important, is to make provision for avoidance of mosquito bites by means of protective clothing, bed netting, and insect repellents. Schistosomiasis, a tissue-invasive worm infestation, is present throughout the countryside. The parasite is transmitted by a microscopic water dwelling larval form, which can invade through the skin unnoticed. Bathing in lakes and river pools is inadvisable because of this organism.

Viral hepatitis, both A and B types, is a significant danger in Brazil and immunization for both is strongly recommended. Tuberculosis is a widespread illness in the country and biannual skin testing for the disease is appropriate. The incidence of HIV AIDS is rapidly increasing in Brazil. Appropriate protective measures and diligent awareness of the problem are essential. Education of potentially at-risk individuals is well advised.

Rabies is present in the country, but not in sufficient intensity to warrant universal immunization for individuals. Pets accompanying the employee should be current in rabies vaccination. Environmental hazards include heat prostration, air pollution in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, dehydration during the dry season (May-October) particularly in Brasília, and sun exposure-related skin problems. Liberal use of sun screens lotions/creams while outdoors along with wearing protective clothing and headgear is a good habit to develop.

Preventive Measures

You should be immunized against yellow fever. Likewise, immunization against polio, typhoid fever, tetanus, diphtheria, and hepatitis A and B should be current for those coming to Brazil. Due to Brasília's elevation and proximity to the equator, the sun's ultraviolet rays are more intense and hence more dangerous to skin exposed to the sun. It is important to protect against this hazard with clothing, hats, and sun-screen application.

Persons with ongoing health problems requiring medication or medical appliances and equipment should bring several months' supply of the prescribed drugs along with them. If you use corrective lenses, bring an extra pair of glasses as well as the lens prescription with you, the same applies to contact lenses. The local supply of these items is actually quite adequate, but some delay may be involved in the replacement process.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Direct Delta, United, and American flights to Brazil are available from New York, Miami, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Usual ports of entry are Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

A passport and visa are required for Americans traveling to Brazil for any purpose. Brazilian visas must be obtained in advance from the Brazilian Embassy or consulate nearest to the traveler's place of residence. There are no "airport visas," and immigration authorities will refuse entry to Brazil to anyone not possessing a valid visa. All Brazilian visas, regardless of validity, are considered invalid if not used within 90 days of the issuance date. Immigration authorities will not allow entry into Brazil without a valid visa. Minors (under 10) traveling alone, with one parent or with a third party, must present written authorization by the absent parent(s) or legal guardian, specifically granting permission to travel alone, with one parent or with a third party. This authorization must be notarized, authenticated by the Brazilian Embassy or Consulate, and translated into Portuguese. For current entry and customs requirements for Brazil, travelers may contact the Brazilian Embassy at 3009 Whitehaven St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20008; telephone (202) 238-2818, e-mail consular@brasilemb.org; Internet: <http://www.brasilemb.org>. Travelers may also contact the Brazilian consulates in Boston, Houston, Miami, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, or San Francisco. Addresses, phone numbers, web and e-mail addresses, and jurisdictions of these consulates may be found at the Brazilian Embassy web site above.

Americans living in or visiting Brazil are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or Consulates in Brazil and obtain updated information on travel and security within Brazil. The U.S. Embassy is located in Brasilia at Avenida das Nacoes, Lote 3, telephone 011-55-61-321-7272, after-hours telephone 011-55-61-321-8230; web site at <http://www.embaixada-americana.org.br>. Consular Section public hours are 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon and 1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday except Brazilian and American holidays. There are consulates in the following cities:

Recife: Rua Goncalves Maia 163, telephone 011-55-81-3421-2441, after-hours telephone 011-55-3421-2641; web site at <http://www.consulado-americano.org.br>. Consular Section public hours are 8:00am-12noon and 1:00pm-4:00pm Monday through Friday except Brazilian and American holidays.

Rio de Janeiro: Avenida Presidente Wilson 147, telephone 011-55-21-2292-7117, after-hours 011-55-21-2220-0489; web site at <http://www.consulado-americano-rio.org.br>. Consular Section public hours are 8:30am-11:00am and 1:00pm-3:00pm, Monday through Friday except Brazilian and American holidays.

Sao Paulo: Rua Padre Joao Manoel 933, telephone 011-55-11-3081-6511, after-hours telephone 011-55-113064-6355; web site at <http://www.consuladoamericano.org.br>. Consular Section public hours are 8:30am-11:00am, Monday through Friday and 2:00pm-3:30pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday except Brazilian and American holidays.

There are Consular Agencies in:

Belem: Rua Oswaldo Cruz 165; telephone 011-55-91-242-7815.

Manaus: Rua Recife 1010, Adrianopolis; telephone 011-55-92-633-4907.

Salvador da Bahia: Rua Pernambuco, 51, Pituba; telephone 011-55-71-345-1545 and 011-55-71-345-1548.

Fortaleza: The Instituto Cultural Brasil-Estados Unidos (IBEU), Rua Nogueira Acioly 891, Aldeota; telephone 011-55-85-252-1539.

Porto Alegre: The Instituto Cultural Brasil-Norteamericano, Rua Riachuelo, 1257, Centro; telephone 011-55-512-225-2255.

Pets

Dogs and cats are required to have the following documentation before their arrival: (1) certificate of vaccination against rabies, and (2) a U.S.

public health certificate issued within 30 days of departure and validated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Veterinarians are familiar with this procedure.

The same procedure is followed for pets coming from outside the U.S., i.e., a public health certificate from the country where the pet is located.

Firearms and Ammunition

The importation of personal firearms is to be for sporting purposes only. Those wishing to import a personal firearm into Brazil or purchase one locally should be aware of the following restrictions: There are restrictions on the number and caliber of weapons that can be imported or purchased locally. All personal firearms must be legally registered with the Brazilian Government. The focal point for all matters pertaining to personal firearms is the regional security office in Brasilia. All questions pertaining to personal firearms should be directed to that office. A written request which includes the make, model, serial number, and a copy of the original sales receipt must be forwarded to that office a minimum of 120 days prior to the intended date for shipping personal firearms.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The currency of Brazil is the real. The rate of exchange is determined by market forces and varies from day to day. It is illegal to purchase currency from individuals or entities that are not authorized by the Central Bank of Brazil to perform exchange services.

In Recife and Belo Horizonte, authorized exchange dealers provide these services. A limited number of automated teller machines (ATMs) accept U.S. ATM cards. This service is expanding. As an added convenience, many personal bills for things like residential telephones and cable television services may be paid at banks.

Brazil has many banks, including Citibank and the Bank of Boston.

Most banks also offer ATM service for account holders.

International credit cards are beginning to enjoy widespread acceptance in Brazil. Major credit cards include Diner's Club, American Express, Master Charge, Visa, and Credicard. They may be used for a variety of purchases and for travel expenses. The rates of exchange offered on credit card purchases are competitive at this time.

The international metric system of weights and measures is standard for Brazil.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar. (Mon & Tues before Ash Wed.) .	Carnival*
Feb/Mar	Ash Wednesday*
Mar. 19	St. Joseph's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Apr. 21	Tiradentes Day
May 1	Labor Day
June	Corpus Christi*
Sept. 7.	Independence Day
Oct. 12	Our Lady of Aparecida
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 2	All Souls' Day
Nov. 15	Proclamation of the Republic
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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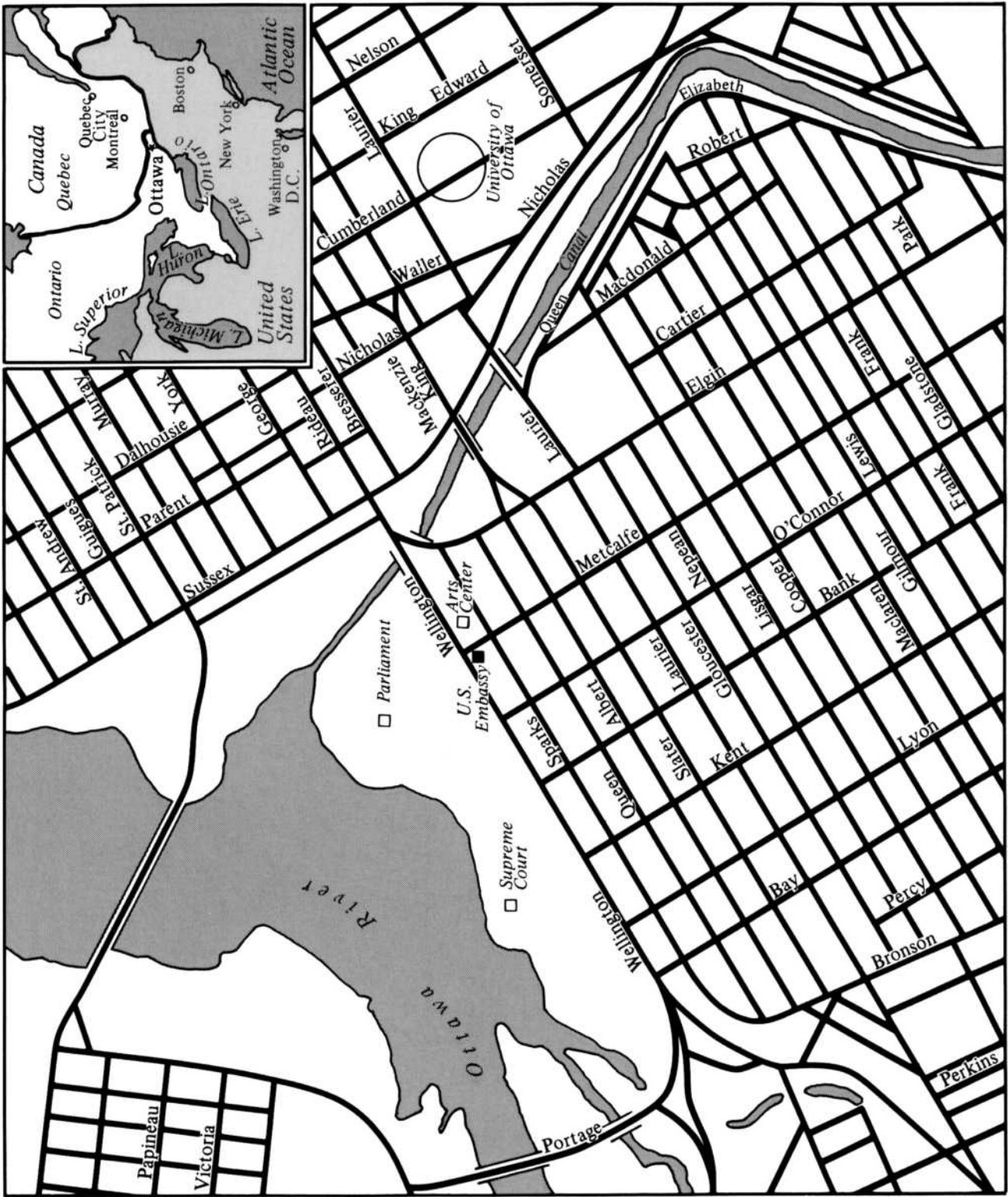
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Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

CANADA

Major Cities:

Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City, Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Regina, Edmonton, London, St. John's, Victoria, Windsor

Other Cities:

Antigonish, Brampton, Brantford, Charlottetown, Dawson, Fredericton, Gander, Guelph, Kingston, Kitchener, Medicine Hat, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-lake, North Bay, Oakville, Oshawa, Peterborough, Prince Albert, Prince George, Saint Catherines, Saint John, Saskatoon, Sault Sainte Marie, Stratford, Sudbury, Thetford Mines, Thompson, Thunder Bay, Trois Rivières, Whitehorse, Yellowknife

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The vast nation of **CANADA**, which borders on three oceans and spans seven time zones, abounds in contrasts. It boasts magical coasts, majestic mountains, wild rivers, untrod forests, and untouched lakes. It also boasts sky-scraping cities, sophisticated shopping, and culinary delights. From the Calgary Stampede to the Shakespearean Festival, from ethnic festivals to the changing of the guard in Ottawa, Canada is a fascinating blend of English and French, historic and modern, ceremonial and casual.

Canada has always had close ties with the United States, as evidenced by the fact that the two countries share the longest

unguarded border in the world. In spite of its extensive geographical, cultural, financial, and economic ties with the U.S., however, Canada retains a unique distinction from its southern neighbors.

MAJOR CITIES

Ottawa

Ottawa (from an Indian word meaning "near the water") is a clean, attractive, modern city at the junction of the Ottawa, Rideau, and Gatineau Rivers, about 60 miles north of the New York State border and 120 miles west of Montreal. City residents total over 400,000, and the total metropolitan population is over one million. The climate is healthful and bracing, and the area abounds with opportunities for outdoor activities and family living.

Samuel de Champlain reached the site of what is now Ottawa in 1613; however, a permanent settlement did not develop until after the Rideau Canal was built in 1827. Originally named Bytown, Ottawa was incorporated as a city under its present name in 1854. It was selected as the national capital by Queen Victoria in 1888.

As Canada's capital, Ottawa's main business is government and, as in Washington, DC, little industry exists. Living conditions are similar to those in comparably sized U.S. cities, although social life is geared to demands of diplomatic and government circles.

Small Oriental, Lebanese, Portuguese, and Italian colonies exist in Ottawa, but the majority of residents are of British or French descent. Most francophones (35% of the population) are also fluent in English. Approximately 15,000 Americans live in the Ottawa district; they have merged into the population and do not constitute a discernible American colony. About 50 U.S. companies have subsidiaries or affiliates in the area, but only a few have American citizens on their local staffs.

During summer, there is a flow of U.S. tourists through the city, and all year government officials and business representatives visit Ottawa in their respective roles.

The diplomatic community is large and growing. Some 146 nations maintain relations with Canada, although only 100 have resident missions in Ottawa. Most are small, with two or three officers and a chief of mission. The only large missions are those of the U.S., U.K., Russia,



View of Ottawa

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France, Germany, and the People's Republic of China.

Education

Ottawa's public school system offers instruction from kindergarten through grade 13. There are 55 elementary schools for kindergarten through grade eight, and 15 high schools with English instruction and five with French instruction, both covering grades 9 to 13. Tuition is free for Ottawa residents attending public schools. Children may enter kindergarten at age five, or four if the child will be five before December 31 of that year.

Courses meet the standards established by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The teacher-student ratio in elementary schools is about 1:16, and in secondary schools about 1:12, ratios which have remained constant for several years.

Parents may place their children in one of two language programs: the immersion program consisting of instruction totally in French in the first few years, and a gradual phasing in of English instruction until the program becomes bilingual; or the core program consisting of at least 20 minutes daily of French instruction from kindergarten

through eighth grade and making it optional at some level after that. The core program is not a rigid one and may vary from school to school.

While some students coming from U.S. schools have found the Ottawa high schools somewhat less demanding than their own, most students and parents report few differences or problems. Instructional programs and course offerings vary from school to school within a particular area.

Students pursuing a commercial, technical, or vocational curriculum in high school can receive a diploma after grade 12. Those planning to continue their studies beyond high school, especially if applying for admission to colleges and universities in Ontario, have, until recently, been required to complete grade 13, but this proviso is currently being phased out.

The Roman Catholic Church maintains a "separate school" system in Ottawa composed of 42 primary schools (19 with French instruction, 23 with English); six intermediate schools (five with French instruction, one with English); and two junior high schools, all with English instruction. Tuition through grade

10 is free for Ottawa residents. The curriculum of the "separate schools" meets all the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The schools located in the suburban areas of Ottawa come under either the Carleton Public or Carleton Roman Catholic School Boards. Tuition for schools in both systems is free for residents of the school district. The Carleton Public School Board has 60 elementary schools (including 28 offering French immersion). There are 16 high schools, grades nine through 13, including several with a French immersion program. In addition to the schools offering French immersion, many schools in the Carleton jurisdiction offer French instruction similar to the Ottawa Board's core program. As with the Ottawa Board, parents are advised to check with the school in their neighborhood for specific details regarding the French program.

The Carleton Roman Catholic School Board has 51 elementary schools (32 with English instruction, 19 with French), all of which provide kindergarten to grade eight, and five high schools, grades nine through 13. However, after grade 10, the schools are considered private and tuition must be paid by parents. Many English-instruction elementary schools have French programs similar to those offered in the public school system. For details, parents should check with the neighborhood school their children will attend. The Carleton Roman Catholic School Board has no high schools where the language of instruction is French.

As in the Ottawa public and separate school boards, the curriculum in both boards in Carleton meets all the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Education.

While a few American families live in Quebec Province (across the Ottawa River in the greater Hull area), the U.S. Embassy strongly discourages families with school-age children from residing in Quebec. The volatile French-lan-

guage issue and related educational controversies, plus frequent teachers' strikes, have created considerable turmoil in the schools. Children not already reasonably conversant in French will probably encounter problems, especially at the high school level, even if enrolled in an English-language school.

Quebec Province requires all high school students to take French throughout high school and to pass a standard provincial French-language examination before graduation.

Both public and separate school systems in Ottawa and the suburban areas offer extracurricular activities similar to those found in the U.S., including athletics, drama, music, and student government. The Ottawa school year, longer than that of the U.S., runs from Labor Day to the last week in June. Students have a week-long vacation at Christmas and a spring break of 10 days (usually in March). Grades are released quarterly.

Ottawa has a number of nursery schools which accept children from age three. In addition, there are a number of "play schools" for children 18 months to age four. These are usually two or three half days a week, and these require some type of parent participation.

There are two private preparatory schools in the Ottawa area: Elmwood School for girls (kindergarten through the fourth grade is coeducational; grades five through 13 are only for girls), and Ashbury College for boys (covering grades five through 13). Ashbury enrolls both day and boarding students.

Two universities, a technical institute, a teachers' college, and a variety of business and professional schools provide ample opportunity for education on a full- or part-time basis. These include Carleton University (English-language and private, founded in 1942); and University of Ottawa (bilingual and government-supported, founded in 1848). These universities offer a

multitude of courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels leading to degrees in liberal arts, sciences, engineering, theology, business administration, education, medicine, nursing, law, and applied sciences. Evening courses at both universities provide many opportunities for both degree and non-degree study. Both universities have extensive evening programs for part-time students as well. Unlike most U.S. colleges, courses are generally conducted on a yearly rather than semester basis.

Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology, a community college with four campuses, offers a wide range of day and evening courses, one-year certificate programs, and two- and three-year diploma programs. In general, tuition and fees for colleges and universities in Ottawa are less than those of state colleges and universities in the U.S.

Ottawa has four schools for trainable, mentally handicapped children. They are École Jeanne-Lajoie, the Clifford Bowie School, McHugh School (affiliated with the Royal Ottawa Psychiatric Center), and the Crystal Bay School (Carleton Board of Education). One school, Centennial, is for the physically handicapped, and additionally, the Ottawa Crippled Children's Treatment Center has teaching facilities for physically handicapped and autistic children.

Other educational opportunities include tutoring or group study in languages, music, dance, art, and related activities. These are available for all ages at reasonable cost, usually through the various school systems, Algonquin College, the universities, and the YMCA. Often, however, waiting lists are encountered for those wishing to obtain the most competent instruction available. This is particularly true of French-language courses.

Recreation

Extensive opportunities for participation in many recreational sports activities exist in and around

Ottawa. In winter, cross-country and downhill skiing are very popular. Trails and slopes abound within a 100-mile radius of the city, ranging from those for the beginner or casual skier to expert slopes for the advanced enthusiast.

Main roads are kept open and passable in winter, providing access to a number of ski trails and tows in developed ski complexes. Bus service is available. There is one ski area within the Ottawa city limits—Carlington Park. Within an hour's drive are the ski complexes of Camp Fortune and Edelweiss Valley. Camp Fortune, located in Quebec Province (in Gatineau Park) is one of the country's largest ski complexes, offering downhill and cross-country skiing at all levels of difficulty, day and night skiing, instruction, and rentals. It is a 20-minute drive from Ottawa.

Farther afield, the slopes at Mount St. Marie (Quebec) and Calabogie (Ontario) are 60 miles away. All have a variety of slopes and trails and offer instruction and rentals. Season passes for instruction, rentals, and tows are offered at most ski facilities. The elaborate winter sports resorts of Mount Tremblant, Quebec, can be reached from Ottawa in about three hours.

Ottawa also boasts what is billed as the world's largest outdoor skating rink. During the winter, a five-mile stretch of the Rideau Canal, built by the British after the War of 1812, between Dow's Lake and the National Arts Center is cleared and partially lighted for ice skating. Warming huts and snack bars are located at convenient intervals along the canal. It is not unusual to see business-people, with briefcases in tow, skate to work on the canal.

Ample facilities for all types of sports have been developed in and around Ottawa, including ice skating arenas, curling rinks, bowling alleys, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, and tennis and squash courts. One of the largest, and most unique, is the Nepean Sportsplex located in West Ottawa. Under one

roof it contains an ice skating rink, hockey arena, curling rink, gymnasium, squash courts, indoor swimming pool, auditorium, sauna, pub, and restaurant. It offers instruction for all age groups in sports activities as well as physical fitness classes, ski fitness clinics, arts and crafts, ballroom dancing, and ballet and tap dancing. The sportsplex publishes an annual bulletin of activities; enrollment in some courses is limited, and first preference is given to Nepean Township residents.

In the summer, ample opportunity for all types of water sports exists on the Ottawa, Rideau, and Gatineau Rivers, and at nearby lakes. There are several yacht clubs with extensive sailing programs. Beaches within Ottawa city limits are limited to one or two spots along the Rideau River, and Britannia Beach on the Ottawa River; facilities at these places are often crowded. On some of the lakes in the area, both in Ontario and Quebec, there are developed-access roads, beaches, and docks for canoes and boats, while other lakes are more isolated and primitive.

Some private golf clubs keep their courses open from May to October; several operate their dining rooms all winter. Ottawa also has public courses.

Tennis and squash facilities are available at a number of private clubs, such as the Ottawa Athletic Club. Municipal tennis courts are scattered about the area as well, offering seasonal membership at reasonable cost, or free use on a space-available basis. Instruction is also provided at the private and public tennis facilities.

Bicycling and jogging are very popular during summer, and there are numerous cycling and jogging trails in Ottawa and across the Ottawa River in Quebec's Gatineau Park. Some roads are closed to auto traffic on Sundays for the exclusive use of hikers, joggers, and cyclists. Additional popular participant sports include archery, badminton, bowling, camping, cricket, flying, judo,

riding, rugby, rowing, soccer, snowshoeing, and sailing.

For the spectator in winter, ice hockey, Canada's national sport, is virtually a mania. National Hockey League games are televised several times a week. In 1992 the Ottawa Senators, a new National Hockey League franchise, began play. The Ottawa Rough Riders represent Ottawa in the Canadian professional football league. The season begins in late July and ends in early December with the Grey Cup finals between the champions of the Eastern and Western Conferences.

Canadians are avid baseball fans, too, and root for the American major league teams as well as the Canadian entries in Toronto (Blue Jays) and Montreal (Expos). Tickets for Montreal Expo games are sold in Ottawa, and there are chartered buses from downtown Ottawa to the baseball stadium in Montreal for selected games. Stock car racing is held in Stittsville, about 20 miles from Ottawa, in the summer months.

In the greater Ottawa area, which includes suburban areas in and around Hull, Quebec, there are numerous parks operated by various municipal, provincial, and federal authorities. Much of the land adjacent to the Ottawa River on the Ontario side is part of the National Capital Commission and is maintained as park land, with hiking and bicycle trails which serve as cross-country skiing trails in winter. In nearby Quebec is the largest of the area parks, Gatineau Park, whose 75,000 acres are maintained by the National Capital Commission. It offers opportunities to painters, hikers, photographers, naturalists, skiers, and picnickers.

Ottawa citizens often form private fishing and hunting clubs, which acquire and stock private lakes within driving distance. Public or crown lands, other than in the protected areas of Gatineau Park, are generally open to hunters and fishermen. Ontario hunting licenses are issued for a nominal fee upon pre-

sentation of a valid hunting license from another province or from the U.S., or after passing a basic firearms handling test.

In Ottawa there are several museums of interest, including the National Gallery of Art; the Museum of Science and Industry, with unique viewer-participation exhibits especially recommended for school-age children; the Museum of Man; the Bytown Museum (natural history); and Laurier House (former residence of Canadian prime ministers).

Tours of the Parliament buildings are conducted daily throughout the year. During the summer there are sight-seeing tours and moonlight cruises on the Rideau Canal and the Ottawa River. Tours of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police headquarters, the Queen's Printer, the Royal Canadian Mint, and other government agencies can be arranged upon request. Within an easy drive of Ottawa are the St. Lawrence Seaway, the Thousand Islands area, and the restored pioneer settlement of Upper Canada Village.

Toronto and Montreal, Canada's two largest urban centers, are both close to Ottawa—Toronto is 275 miles to the west, and Montreal 120 miles to the east. Toronto, five hours away by road and rail and 55 minutes by air, is the business center of Canada. Here, visitors find a wide variety of reasonable hotel accommodations, extensive shopping facilities, museums, restaurants, and a lively theater district. Montreal is only two hours from Ottawa by road and rail, or 35 minutes by air, and offers a definite French-Canadian atmosphere, which can be enjoyed in a day's visit or for a longer period. There are attractive shopping areas, numerous restaurants, nightclubs, museums, and theaters.

Washington, DC (Dulles) and Baltimore, Maryland (BWI) airports are connected to Ottawa by direct air service. There are daily flights between Ottawa and BWI. Air travelers to other cities in the U.S. must

make connections in either Montreal or Toronto. Washington, DC is about 600 miles by road from Ottawa, via excellent interstate highways. New York City can be reached in one day by car and is about 455 miles from Ottawa, also via interstate highways.

Entertainment

Ottawa offers a wide variety of entertainment. The National Arts Center is a cultural center of the first rank, where national and international stars, orchestras, and ballet and theatrical troupes perform regularly. Top-flight soloists and musical groups also are featured at Ottawa and Carleton Universities in programs which are open to the public. The Ottawa Little Theater, with a cast of amateur players, offers a full season of plays.

Ottawa now has some 20 movie houses, and an active National Film Theater whose thrice-weekly showings of classic and foreign films attract crowds of movie buffs to the auditorium in the Public Archives.

The National Gallery of Canada owns and displays a small but excellent collection of European and Canadian paintings, and a small group of contemporary American art. Special exhibits are scheduled throughout the year; the opening ceremonies and receptions are well-attended social events. The gallery also sponsors film shows and art lectures.

The number and quality of Ottawa's restaurants has been rising, and ethnic cuisine is available in a range of prices. Dancing is provided nightly in hotels, in the National Arts Center, and in several of the nightclubs in town and across the Ottawa River in Hull, Quebec. Another attraction in Hull is the abundance of excellent restaurants which may be found in that predominantly French-Canadian city.

Annual events of interest are the Winterlude Festival in February; the Tulip Festival in the latter half of May; and the Central Canada



Ontario Place, Toronto, Canada

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

Exhibition, a week-long country fair held each September.

Because of the absence of a language barrier and the openness of Canadian society, Americans blend easily into the local scene. Ottawa has a number of social clubs and public activities which provide opportunities for contact with Canadians. These include an International Women's Club; Boy and Girl Scout groups; and a number of civic organizations, such as Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, and Optimists.

Toronto

Toronto, Canada's largest city, occupies the site of an old French trading post, Fort Rouillé founded in the 1790s. The city was founded as a British Army garrison town, Fort York, on the shores of Lake Ontario in 1793. It succeeded Niagara-on-the-Lake as capital of Upper Canada in 1797. Chartered as a city in 1834, its name was then changed to Toronto. Toronto served as the country's capital from 1849 to 1851, and from 1855 to 1859.

The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto consists of the city of Toronto and five boroughs, with an estimated population of 4.7 million (2000), and covering an area of about 625 square miles. It is a beau-

tiful city of parks and trees with a mixture of old and new buildings, connected by an excellent network of roads. Tall construction has been kept to a minimum, creating a feeling of spaciousness. The city is the capital of the Province of Ontario, the most populous and industrialized province in Canada. Toronto is the commercial, financial, and industrial center of Canada.

With the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Toronto has become an important shipping center with modern harbor facilities. It is also one of Canada's principal aviation and railway focal points. Well over 1,000 U.S.-controlled companies have plants or representation within the U.S. consular district, and American investment in the area is enormous. This area is said to contain the largest concentration of American-owned or American-controlled plants in any consular district outside the U.S.

Toronto is the headquarters of the Canadian book and magazine publishing industry, three large daily newspapers, and English-language radio and TV broadcasting. It is the center of English-speaking culture in Canada.

An estimated 200,000 U.S. citizens live in the district; many are dual



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Skyline of Toronto, Ontario

nationals. In addition, tens of thousands of Americans visit the city annually, many of them in connection with conventions, or while en route to and from recreation and vacation areas north of the city.

Education

English is the language of instruction in virtually all public schools and in the universities. For those families who may be interested, French has been offered recently as the language of instruction at certain selected public schools throughout the metropolitan area. French is also taught as a required subject in elementary schools.

Toronto's public school system, used by most expatriates, consists of kin-

dergarten, eight years of elementary school, and four or five years of secondary school, depending on the course selected. The fifth year of high school (grade 13), once necessary for admission to most universities in Ontario, is currently being phased out to put Ontario in step with the rest of Canada and the United States. Standards in Toronto secondary schools are comparable to those in the U.S. Course work may be on a yearly basis or semester system, depending on the school attended. Some students entering during the later high school years may have difficulty with subjects that are not taught as a matter of course in American schools. In Canadian schools, many subjects build on a foundation established

the year or two before. It does not seem to be an impossible problem, but young people should come prepared to study hard if they wish to enter a collegiate school. It also should be remembered that, in this bilingual country, French is required of all students. All college entrance examinations are offered in Toronto.

A separate school system is maintained for Roman Catholic children. Catholic schools receive financial support from the property taxes assessed on those homes occupied by Roman Catholic families. Education is free through grade 10, but tuition must be paid from grade 11. Uniforms are required beginning in ninth grade, and only a couple of Catholic schools are coeducational.

Several excellent private schools accept both boarding and day pupils. Tuition rates are about the same as in comparable schools in the northeastern U.S. These schools are usually not coeducational, and uniforms are worn.

Toronto offers extensive educational opportunities, ranging from the University of Toronto to night courses available at the local high schools.

The University of Toronto (founded in 1827), an institution of high academic standing, offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses in virtually all fields of endeavor, including the arts, sciences, commerce, medicine, applied sciences, and engineering. The Ontario College of Art and the Royal Conservatory of Music are affiliated with the university.

York University is Toronto's second university; founded in 1959, it is much newer, and has faculties of art, administrative studies, environmental studies, fine arts, science, and law.

Admission standards at both universities are high, and completion of grade 13 or an equivalent year is mandatory. Undergraduate courses

are offered in the evening, and summer school is also available.

In addition to university-level education, the past few years have seen a rise in the number of community colleges. These schools offer post-secondary education in numerous fields, primarily in technical areas.

The Toronto area offers exceptional facilities for the education of the mentally retarded. Special full-time programs are available through the public schools; counseling, special classes, and parent relief activities by the Provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services' Surrey Place Center; and a very active association for the retarded with its own nursery and training programs and community activities (summer camp, meetings with specialists, etc.). These combine to provide families with retarded children greater opportunities for development. However, as possibilities may depend on the age of the child and the nature of the retardation, advanced contact with the Metropolitan Toronto Association for the Mentally Retarded and with Surrey Place Center is advised.

Recreation

Toronto and the nearby areas have much to offer the sports enthusiast, both as spectator and participant. For the spectator there are both professional and amateur hockey, football, soccer, lacrosse, tennis, wrestling, boxing, baseball, and horse racing.

Hockey is by far the most popular professional spectator sport, and is followed by all ages with such enthusiasm that it ranks as a national craze. The Toronto Maple Leafs, an entry in the National Hockey League, play to packed houses at Maple Leaf Gardens from October through April.

Close behind hockey in popularity is football. The Toronto Argonauts are members of the Canadian Football League. There are two horse racing tracks within the metropolitan area offering both thoroughbred and harness racing. Pari-mutuel betting is

permitted. The Toronto Blue Jays baseball team became a member of the American League in 1977, and has gained an enthusiastic following of fans of all ages; they won the Eastern Division pennant in 1985 and the World Series in 1992.

For the sports participant, there are swimming, tennis, roller and ice skating, curling, golf, bowling, skiing, fishing, and hunting. Swimming is a popular summer sport and there are many public pools, operated by the Toronto Parks Commission. Because these pools are usually overcrowded on weekends, and because the waters of Lake Ontario are generally considered too cold for anything other than wading, many Torontonians head north to the lake regions for swimming.

Tennis can be played on a number of public courts. Artificial ice skating rinks are located throughout the metropolitan area. Curling, a new game to most Americans, is another popular winter sport, played indoors on ice in arenas built expressly for this purpose.

Numerous golf courses are in the Toronto area or within a 30- or 40-mile drive. They range from crowded public courses to the exclusive, well-maintained, and expensive private clubs.

Because of Toronto's proximity to Lake Ontario and the lake regions to the north, boating is a popular summer pastime, and the city has several yacht clubs. Good fishing and hunting can be found by driving about 120 to 150 miles north of the city. Skiing in and around Toronto is possible, but the real skiing enthusiast will go north 60 to 100 miles to the Collingwood and Gravenhurst areas.

The Province of Ontario maintains an excellent system of toll-free expressways and paved secondary roads, making all but the most remote parts of the province accessible by car. However, traffic is heavy, particularly during the summer months. Distance by road (miles) to

the following points are: Buffalo, New York, 100; Windsor-Detroit, 235; Ottawa, 286; Montreal, 350; Quebec City, 480; New York City, 478; and Washington, DC, 520.

Toronto's fine park system offers a variety of activities, winter and summer. The pride of the system is Centre Island Park, located on a large island in Lake Ontario off the harbor area, and accessible only by ferry. Ontario Place is also located on a series of man-made islands in Lake Ontario, adjacent to the Canadian National Exhibition grounds, the largest annual exhibition in the world. The Canadian National Exhibition is a popular event. The exhibition features theatrical and musical events, animals, farm and horticultural displays, and an international air show.

Children's playgrounds are located throughout the city and, in summer, playground directors supervise children's activities. During winter, the Parks Department operates numerous ice skating and hockey rinks.

Entertainment

Toronto does not lack cultural or entertainment activities, and offers everything normally found in a cosmopolitan city of comparable size.

Many first-run and neighborhood movie theaters show American, British, and foreign films. Live theater is also very much in evidence in the Toronto area. The 3,200-seat O'Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts and the Royal Alexandra Theatre both present full seasons of opera, ballet, and musical and dramatic productions, featuring not only the top Canadian companies, but also the best American and British companies. Toronto's concert hall, Massey Hall, a venerable old building with near-perfect acoustics, housed the Toronto Symphony Orchestra until the Roy Thomson Hall was opened. Recitals are given here by touring internationally known artists.

In Stratford, Ontario, about 90 miles southwest of Toronto, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival

features world famous actors. Niagara-on-the-Lake, about 80 miles south of Toronto, is the home of the Shaw Festival. Both have become very popular spots for the theater lover during the summer season.

Jazz, folk music, chamber music, and numerous smaller professional and amateur theatrical groups can be found throughout Toronto. The city is purported to be the third most important center for theater in the world, after New York and London. There are also many fine restaurants of every cuisine, cocktail lounges, coffee shops, and night-clubs to suit every taste.

The Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Art Gallery, the McLaughlin Planetarium, and the Ontario Science Centre provide many hours of interesting viewing.

Montreal

Montreal, with an estimated metropolitan population of 3.4 million, is the second largest city in Canada and the second-largest French speaking city in the world. When Jacques Cartier visited the area that is presently Montreal in 1535, he found the Indian village of Hochelaga. The island was visited in 1603 by Samuel de Champlain, but was not settled by the French until 1642, when Sieur de Maisonneuve founded the Ville Marie de Montreal. The city became the center of fur trade and a starting point of expeditions into the interior. Montreal was the last Canadian city held by the French; it surrendered to the British in 1760. From 1844 to 1849, Montreal was the seat of Canadian government.

Montreal is a cosmopolitan city of charm and variety, where skyscrapers share space with 200-year-old buildings. More than two-thirds of its people are French-speaking. Most of the rest are English-speaking, primarily of English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh descent. Italians are the third largest ethnic group. About 60% of all the people in Montreal speak English fluently. Several million Americans visit the



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Street in Montreal, Quebec

Province of Quebec every year, and nearly all visit Montreal.

The visitor soon discovers that Montreal has everything needed for a pleasant stay—an absorbing history, a rich and varied culture, outstanding cultural and recreational facilities, comfortable and attractive apartments and houses, a French cuisine which justifies the title of “Paris of America,” and over 3,000 restaurants specializing in the foods of many other nationalities. The general standard of living is high. Montrealers, particularly well-to-do French-Canadians, are more fashion-conscious than most Americans and accept European style trends more readily.

Montreal is located in the southern part of the Province of Quebec, 120 miles east of Ottawa, and about 40 miles from the New York and Vermont borders. By car, it is 400 miles from New York City and 615 miles from Washington, DC. It is situated

on an island some 30 miles long, and seven to 10 miles wide, at the junction of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. Mount Royal, for which it is named, rises almost in the center of the city to a height of about 765 feet above sea level (the city’s average altitude is 63 feet). Most of Mount Royal is a natural park, providing areas for picnics in summer and skating and skiing in winter.

Education

Over the last several years, the school system in Quebec has been in a state of some turmoil because of strikes and linguistic and pedagogical issues. The current provincial language law severely restricts access to English education, although exceptions are granted to children expecting to live in Quebec Province for temporary periods only.

The public school system in Montreal consists of 11 grades (grades one through six is elementary school; grades seven through 11 is

high school). Some public schools have kindergartens, but this is not the general rule. The public schools, which are free, are run by two separate school boards: Catholic and Protestant, each administering francophone and anglophone schools. For public school purposes, Protestant generally means non-Catholic. Basic instruction can be in French or English. Moreover, English schools provide French immersion courses in which students may elect to take a portion of their subjects in French.

Students entering the Quebec system in the elementary grades will generally find the education to be on a par with that in the U.S., with the bonus of being able to develop a sound knowledge of French. Students entering at the secondary level may, however, encounter problems as a result of French-language requirements and the 11-grade system.

Provincial regulations require that any student who has been in Quebec for more than two years pass a French equivalency test, given to all 11th-grade students, in order to receive a school leaving certificate, which is the equivalent of a high school diploma. Most students entering in the eighth or ninth grades will therefore require extra tutoring to enable them to attain required proficiency levels in French.

Grading procedures in Quebec are also different than in the U.S. For the upper grades, class marks, which are reflected in transcripts, are heavily based on standardized provincial examinations, given at the end of the year to all Quebec students.

The absence of a 12th grade presents other problems. For the Quebec student, the normal sequence is to graduate from high school at the end of the 11th year, enter the two-year CEGEP system (somewhat like a U.S. junior college), and subsequently go on to a university. Based on recent experience, education authorities will not authorize

entry to the CEGEP system for any American student who has not graduated from an American high school. The alternatives for an entering student who would normally enter the 12th grade in the U.S. are to repeat the 11th grade, which Quebec authorities insist is equivalent to the American 12th grade, or to go to school in the U.S.

American students finishing the 11th grade in Quebec have several alternatives. They may elect to go to a boarding school in the U.S. for the 12th grade, although a graduating student could elect to stay in Montreal, since one private boy's school offers a 12th-grade program. However, no 12th-grade programs for girls exist in Montreal. Alternatively, the student could elect to enter the CEGEP system or apply directly to an American college. Some Quebec students enter U.S. colleges after the 11th grade. The willingness of an American college to consider the application of an American student from Quebec would depend, however, on the success of the student in fulfilling course requirements by the end of the 11th grade.

Montreal has a number of private schools. Entrance to these schools is based on competitive examinations, and most of them have waiting lists for entry. The role of private schools in Quebec and the extent to which they should receive government support are under review by the provincial government. Most private schools in Quebec require uniforms.

Montreal has adequate facilities for any type of education from nursery school to the most advanced academic and scientific degrees; private tutoring in any subject; instruction in music, dancing, painting, and the other arts; and special training in crafts, hobbies, sports, gardening, use of power equipment, and other skills.

The Montreal school system has facilities at all grade levels for both physical (including the deaf and blind) and learning handicaps.

The school year runs from just after Labor Day until mid-June. The opening and closing dates for Catholic and Protestant schools differ by a few days, but time in school is the same. All schools have a five-day week. Schools have a two-week holiday at Christmas and a few days at Easter, usually Holy Thursday through Easter Monday.

While extracurricular activities are similar to those in the U.S., they tend to be less extensive, particularly in the area of sports.

Montreal's universities have many American students. The largest of the universities is the French-language Université de Montreal, founded in 1876. The Université du Quebec à Montreal (founded in 1969) is also a French-language institution. Most popular with Americans is the English-language McGill University, founded in 1821. The other large English-language institution is Concordia University, formed by the amalgamation of Sir George Williams University and Loyola College. Concordia has an extensive evening program where it is possible to earn degrees in a variety of fields. All of Montreal's universities offer evening extension programs, but not all lead to degrees.

Recreation

Canada's national sport is hockey. Canadian children learn to skate almost as soon as they learn to walk, and start playing hockey soon thereafter. In winter, free public skating and hockey rinks are found in every section of the city. During the season, Les Canadiens, Montreal's almost legendary National Hockey League team, play at the Forum. Announcements at Canadiens games are made in both French and English.

Montreal's professional baseball team, the Expos, is part of the National Baseball League. The Expos utilize the 1976 Olympic Stadium for their home games. Bowling and curling also are popular, and there are a number of clubs and leagues.

The city has many public tennis courts, and a number of tennis clubs, some with indoor courts. The Montreal area is dotted with private golf courses. A few public courses exist, but they are usually crowded. Excellent and extensive jogging paths are located on Mount Royal. Joggers also enjoy running along the seven-mile Lachine Canal. The Montreal International Marathon, run in late September, attracts over 10,000 participants annually.

Boating is popular. Several yacht clubs on Lake St. Louis (about a half-hour by car from the city) and on the Lake of Two Mountains offer keen inter-club competition and a limited cruising area. Most sailboats on Lake St. Louis are center-board types because of the large shoal areas, but there are many larger boats, and the International Dragon Class is very active. Two- to three-week cruises to the Thousand Islands, Ottawa, and the Rideau or Lake Champlain are popular with local yachters.

Montreal has an excellent range of readily accessible year-round recreational opportunities in Quebec Province and in northern New York and New England. The Laurentian mountain area, which begins about 45 miles from the city and includes Mont Tremblant Park, is one of the most attractive winter and summer resort areas in Canada. Mont Tremblant, 100 miles from Montreal, and Stowe, Vermont, 120 miles away, provide the best skiing in eastern North America. There is limited skiing in Montreal itself on Mount Royal, but the nearest really good skiing areas begin about 50 miles away. Cross-country skiing is very popular both in and outside of Montreal.

The many lakes in the Laurentians and other nearby areas provide swimming, boating, and water-skiing. There are good camping facilities and accommodations, from luxury hotels to simple lodgings in all areas.

Fishing and hunting are good and are possible close to Montreal. The

lakes, rivers, and streams of the province have a variety of fish; speckled trout are the most common. Partridge are found in most woods. The flyways over Lake St. Francis and Lake St. Peter, each about 75 miles from Montreal, offer some of the finest duck shooting in North America. About 150 miles down the St. Lawrence is the only place in the world for hunting the beautiful snow goose. Deer and bear are found within 100 miles of the city.

Montreal has 362 parks. The top of Mount Royal has been preserved as a 500-acre natural forest park. Both the Chalet, at the peak, and Beaver Lake, at the beginning of the park area, are popular in winter and summer. The Chalet has a remarkable view of the city. Beaver Lake, an artificial lagoon, is a favorite place for model-boat enthusiasts. In addition to skiing and tobogganing in winter, the Beaver Lake Pavilion has a large ice skating rink. Mount Royal also has bridle paths for horseback riders.

Another delightful park is located on St. Helen's and Notre Dame Islands in the middle of the St. Lawrence, between the harbor and the seaway. It has an amusement park (the site of Expo '67), swimming pools, picnic areas and playgrounds, and other attractions, including Montreal's Military and Maritime Museum. Its Helene-de-Champlain Restaurant, in a castle-like chalet, provides a picturesque setting and good food.

The Garden of Wonders, better known as the Children's Zoo, is a fascinating feature of Lafontaine Park, which also has two lagoons. Rowboats are for rent, and rides can be taken in a miniature paddle-wheeler "showboat" and in a miniature train.

The extensive greenhouses of Montreal's Botanical Gardens, conveniently located on a principal street, are open all year; its outdoor gardens are open from May or June to October. There are spectacular exhibitions in November and at Easter,

and excellent shows at various other times.

Montreal has a number of fine museums. The best historical museum is the Chateau de Ramezay, built in 1705 as the residence for the governor of Montreal. It was the headquarters of the American Army of Occupation in 1775-76, and well-known Americans who stayed there included Benjamin Franklin, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Benedict Arnold. Redpath Museum has interesting geological and zoological exhibits and Indian relics. McGill University's McCord Museum, now associated with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, has a unique collection of Canadian historical and North American archaeological exhibits. The Wax Museum has more than 200 life-size figures, depicting scenes from Canada's earliest history to modern times. The Bell Telephone Company of Canada has an industrial science museum with original equipment, replicas, and pictures of communications from ancient sight and sound signals to Telstar. Many of these exhibits can be seen in operation.

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, entering its second century, is located in the city's center, and houses a formidable collection of paintings, decorative arts, and sculptures, as well as ancient glass and textile collections.

Several Catholic churches have museums with collections of paintings and religious and other exhibits. The museum of Notre Dame de Bon Secours Church, also known as the Sailor's Church, has model ships presented by sailors and an excellent collection of fine dolls. There is also the Museum of Contemporary Art, which opened prior to the 1976 World's Fair held in Montreal. A planetarium and an aquarium were established within the city during 1966-67.

In February 1990, the Montreal Insectarium opened to the public. Built to resemble a stylized insect, the building has a total area of



View of Quebec City, Quebec

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approximately 7,000 square feet and includes exhibition areas, open-space laboratories, a multipurpose hall and a 40-seat theater.

Entertainment

Nowhere is Montreal's cosmopolitan nature better reflected than in its entertainment. Plays may be seen throughout the year in both English and French, with occasional productions in other languages. A mobile summer theater for children is operated by the Montreal Parks Department. The Montreal ballet company, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, performs regularly, and there are other ballet performances as well.

Montreal's modern Place des Artes is the city's center for symphonies, ballets, stage productions, and visiting national and international performers. Place des Arts houses three theaters, the largest seating approximately 3,000 people. Throughout the year, there are many vocal and instrumental recit-

als. The International Music Competition, held in May or June of each year, is one of the most important artistic events held in Montreal. The Montreal International Jazz Festival, held in June or July, features concerts and shows by many of the world's great jazz musicians. The World Film Festival is held annually in August and September.

There are many movie houses, both downtown and in the neighborhoods. New American films are shown at the same time as in the U.S. Films are in English and French. A few theaters show films in their original languages, with English or French subtitles.

The midwinter Carnival festivities in Quebec City are attended by many people from Montreal, Quebec, New England, New York, and elsewhere. The Sherbrooke Festival des Cantons features Quebecois shows, horse-pulling, and gourmet cuisine.

Almost every social group contains a number of the Americans living in Montreal. An American Women's Club meets regularly for lunch and has annual bazaars, fashion shows, dances, and bridge tournaments for the benefit of Canadian charities. The Montreal Post of the American Legion is also active. No other American community organizations exist.

Quebec City

Quebec City is the provincial capital and the center of French Canada. The city takes its name from an Algonquin Indian word meaning where the river narrows, but its many residents, although North American, bear the clear imprint of their French ancestry and culture. The city is located on the site of the old Indian town of Stadacona and was visited by Jacques Cartier in 1535 and 1541. In 1608, Samuel de Champlain established a trading

post here which became the first permanent settlement. The area was briefly controlled by the British and was the capital of New France from 1663 to 1763. It also served as capital of Canada from 1851 to 1855, and from 1859 to 1867.

Greater Quebec is a metropolitan area of about 646,000. Quebec, the largest municipality, is divided into two distinct areas. These are Lower Town (which winds around the base of the promontory, along the banks of the St. Lawrence into the St. Charles River Valley), and Upper Town (on heights 200 to 300 feet above the St. Lawrence). When viewed from the sister city of Levis (part of Greater Quebec), Upper Town has a distinctly Old World appearance, including the imposing roof and turrets of the Château Frontenac. Stone walls encircle part of the business and residential section of Upper Town and reach to the ramparts of the Citadelle. The area within the old city walls is recognized as a historic monument. Building restrictions and the tasteful restoration of old houses preserve the Old World flavor of the area. Most buildings in the city have painted tin roofs, dormer windows, colorful shutters, and wooden doors.

The city's population is about 96% French-speaking. Most of the remainder are English Canadians, and only a small minority is of other national and racial origins. In the surrounding countryside, the population is almost totally French-speaking, and is descended from French colonists led by Champlain, who established the first settlement in 1608. Although they are undeniably French in origin, their attitudes and viewpoints reflect the fact that development of their distinctive society has taken place in North America.

Quebec harbor is one of the most important in Canada. It has extensive passenger and freight-handling facilities, including large elevators for the transshipment of grain. Quebec is a regularly scheduled port of call for

steamship lines during the ice-free months from April through November and, for several years, has enjoyed an increasing volume of winter freight traffic as well.

The Port City life has been reanimated at the Vieux-Port de Quebec. La Société du Vieux-Port, commissioned by the Canadian Government, manages this facility which consists of a walkway, outdoor amphitheater, marina, market, and residential units.

In 1977, developers and artists pooled their resources to rescue North America's oldest neighborhood from an undeserved fate. Warmed with color and flowers, the Quartier Petit Champlain is once again a community and a real delight. Its beautifully restored houses shelter more than 50 businesses, outdoor cafes and restaurants ranging from classic French to European fast-food, art galleries, a theater, and charming boutiques. One can meet artists and crafts-people in their studios, or in the street, where pedestrians, musicians, clowns, and jugglers mingle.

Currently 2,000 Americans are registered with the U.S. Consulate and about 7,700 Americans live within the district, many of them French-Canadian descent.

Education

Quebec's public and private schools, from preschool through eighth grade, are generally comparable to American schools. High schools, however, are organized somewhat differently and, in general, are less demanding than their American counterparts.

The final year of high school is the 11th year of studies. Provincial regulations require that every student have two years of high school French and pass both oral and written examinations in French before graduation. The exception to that rule is only for dependents of diplomats, who are exempt from the language law, and who may attend

either English- or French-language schools.

Public schools in the province are Catholic or Protestant, but the emphasis on religion has diminished considerably in recent years. Quebec now generally minimizes the importance of religious study much the same as in U.S. public schools.

Quebec has no French-language Protestant schools, public or private. Protestant parents are free to enroll their children in the French-language Catholic schools located throughout the city.

Excellent boarding schools are found throughout the neighboring New England states and in Montreal.

There are a number of specialized schools and organizations in the area for physically and mentally handicapped individuals. Children with learning disabilities attend special classes in the regular school system. For those more severely handicapped, special education, including vocational training, is available through grade nine. Interested individuals should contact the U.S. Consulate in Quebec for further information.

At Laval University (founded in 1852), many faculties, such as medicine and law, accept students only at the graduate level. Other faculties accept students at what would be considered the undergraduate level. Students wishing to enter Laval should discuss the matter with university authorities.

Laval offers evening courses during the academic year in a variety of subjects at the undergraduate level. Instruction in these courses is in French. Laval also offers an intensive summer French-language program which is well known in the U.S. and is attended by several thousand Americans each year. At other times, French-language instruction is offered in the evening at both beginning and advanced levels.

Recreation

Many opportunities exist for ice skating, skiing, and other winter sports in Quebec City. Good ski slopes are within 30 miles of town. Mount Ste. Anne—the highest—has a vertical drop of over 2,000 feet and is one of the best ski mountains in eastern North America. Cross-country skiing is enjoying a major boom, and cross-country trails are maintained in a great number of federal and provincial parks within easy driving distance. For those who prefer to break trail on their own, the open rolling countryside near the city offers virtually unlimited opportunities.

In winter, two or three professional ice hockey games are played each week by the National Hockey League's Quebec Nordiques. The Coliseum was recently renovated and enlarged. Announcements at Nordiques games are made only in French. Several other ice arenas in the municipal area provide instruction and organized competition in both hockey and figure skating.

Quebec City's premier cold-weather event is the annual 10-day Winter Carnival, held in February. There are ice sculpture contests, a majestic ice castle on Place du Palais, a canoe race on the St. Lawrence, and two parades through city streets.

Several indoor curling clubs admit both men and women to membership. There is great interest in this ancient sport here, and membership in one of these clubs affords an opportunity to meet a large number of business and professional persons.

There is good hunting and fishing close to Quebec. The provincial government runs camps in the Laurentides Park. Summertime can be very pleasant in Quebec, in spite of the overwhelming number of tourists who crowd into the city. Golf, tennis, sailing, and fishing are available near town, as well as swimming, hiking, and camping.

Quebec City is the gateway to the Laurentides Park, which begins

about 30 miles north of the city and is easily accessible on one of the newest and most modern highways in the province. The areas north and east of Quebec City abound in wooded hills and mountains, with numerous small lakes perfect for flat-water canoeing and boating. These areas can be reached in a short time on good roads. Fishing and hunting are excellent. There are opportunities for day-hiking and backpacking in the park, particularly in the valley of the Jacques Cartier River. The valley also affords supervised rock-climbing, as well as white-water canoeing and kayaking.

A popular summer resort is located at Murray Bay (La Malbaie), on the north shore 100 miles down-river from Quebec. The principal hotel is the Manor Richelieu, operated by the Quebec Government. There is a fine swimming pool and golf course, both of which are open to the public. Another resort, Tadoussac, is 50 miles farther down-river at the mouth of the Saguenay River, but this resort is primarily popular with older people, and there is little excitement or activity to be found. Murray Bay can be reached by train, car, or the Saguenay excursion boats in half a day. Tadoussac can be reached by car, although the road is not well surfaced. The trip is best made by boat.

Baie St. Paul, on the north shore 89 miles down-river from Quebec, has an art center and several art galleries. This artists' haven is also a favorite among crafts-people.

Chicoutimi, a city of 60,000, located 130 miles north of Quebec City, is a tourist base for exploring the Saguenay area. The Saguenay River itself is a fjord with steep canyon walls which can be viewed from sight-seeing boats from June to September. The city is also surrounded by true "wilderness," offering excellent hunting and fishing as well as numerous other outdoor activities.

The south shore of the St. Lawrence and the Gaspé Peninsula has many small resorts of interest during the

warmer months, and the trip around this spectacular peninsula can be made comfortably in four or five days by car. Lake St. Joseph and Lake Beauport, about 30 to 15 miles, respectively, from Quebec, are pleasant places to spend a day or weekend during summer.

An attraction only five miles from Quebec is the thunderous Montmorency Falls; just beyond that lies the Island of Orleans, accessible by bridge, which retains much of the charm of the early French-Canadian countryside. The island has several good restaurants and numerous artisan stores offering handwoven articles and ceramics. In summer, visitors can buy fresh fruit at farmers' stands, or pick their own in the fields.

A short distance farther along the north shore of the river is Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Refuge, where virtually the entire east coast population of snow geese congregate in a vast honking horde twice a year, in the spring and fall, on their way to breeding or wintering grounds.

Entertainment

Quebec has several good movie theaters showing American, French, French Canadian and, occasionally, English films. One or two theaters show English-language pictures, but most American films are shown with French soundtracks.

Many visiting companies and artists stop in Quebec. The Quebec Symphony Orchestra, the oldest in Canada, has a full season. There are several avant-garde stock theater groups of considerable talent. An opera company performs occasionally during the winter season, and gifted local folk singers offer concerts. The Grand Théâtre, dedicated in January 1971, has a large auditorium for music, plays, and opera, and a small auditorium for experimental theater. The Grand Théâtre is the home of the Quebec Symphony Orchestra. Several societies, such as the Institut Canadien, offer interesting series of lectures and concerts.



Canada Place, Vancouver, British Columbia

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

The Quebec Winter Carnival is a major event in the area. For three weeks before the beginning of Lent, little else occupies the minds and time of the Quebecois. Among the principal events are the masquerade and regency balls, peewee hockey played by boys 12 and under, boat races over and around the ice floes on the St. Lawrence River, dog-sled races, huge parades, and street dancing. A three-story palace is constructed of enormous blocks of ice, and ice snow statues are carved and placed along many city streets.

During July, the city sponsors a 10-day music festival offering jazz, folk, rock, and classical music in several public parks in the old town. The city, in general, is particularly lively during summer as numerous Quebecois stroll through the historic area and frequent outdoor cafes.

The historic area of Quebec City is beautifully preserved and is completely surrounded by ramparts. The city's oldest hotel, the Chateau Frontenac, and the Citadel, a star-shaped military fortress, are two main historical attractions.

Quebec boasts some excellent restaurants offering French cuisine, among them the Continental, Marie Clarisse, Rabelais, and the Serge

Broyere; and out of town, the Manoir St. Castin at Lac Beauport. The variety of nightclubs is limited.

The recently-opened Museum of Civilization is a popular attraction in Quebec City. This museum contains an entire hall dedicated to the history of games—board games, cards, gambling, toys, and other recreational activities.

There are few resident Americans in Quebec, and they are well integrated into the community. A group called the American Colony Club meets infrequently, but participates in community activities and organizes an annual Thanksgiving dinner, a children's Christmas party, a summer picnic, and receptions. Rotary Club also has a chapter in the city.

The city's tourism office, located at 60 rue d'Auteuil, has advice and free booklets for tourists.

Vancouver

Vancouver, the third largest city after Toronto and Montreal, is the largest, most cosmopolitan, and most exciting city in western Canada. Strategically located in the extreme southwest corner of mainland British Columbia, it is the gateway to Alaska, to the Pacific

Ocean, to the American Northwest, and to the Orient. The provincial capital and seat of government is Victoria, on Vancouver Island.

The first settlement in the area was established by 1865 and called Granville. It was incorporated as a city in 1881 and named for Captain George Vancouver. Vancouver's development was aided by the completion of the trans-Canada railroad in 1887. Fire destroyed Vancouver in 1886, the year it was incorporated. Reconstruction began immediately and an area known as Gastown became the new city center. The Gastown area declined when the commercial district expanded away from the waterfront; in 1969 restoration of Gastown began and it was preserved as a vital link to the city's past.

As of 2000, Vancouver had an estimated population near 2 million. It is by far the largest city in the Province of British Columbia. Vancouver is located on the eastern shore of the Strait of Georgia, between the Fraser River on the south and Burrard Inlet on the north. The city has a beautiful, landlocked, ice-free harbor, with wooded mountains to the north rising to 4,000 feet and snow-capped much of the year. Its glittering skyscrapers are softened by a dazzling array of parks that bring British Columbia's great outdoors to the heart of the urban setting. At its doorstep are 10 beaches and miles of sheltered cruising waters, with the lighted ski runs on Grouse Mountain only a half-hour to the north.

Vancouver's year-round port handles more dry tonnage than all five U.S. West Coast ports combined. The port is a hub for most passenger ships and Alaskan cruises from May to October.

The climate is comparable to that of Seattle, with few extremes of heat or cold. The temperature rarely exceeds 80°F in summer, and winters have relatively few days when the temperature drops below the freezing point. The mean temperature is 63°F in summer and 36°F in winter. Rainfall averages 59 inches

annually in Vancouver, but is considerably less in the outlying districts south of the city. There is also very little snowfall. Living conditions are comparable to those of many other large modern cities in North America, with the additional attraction of extensive and readily accessible outdoor recreational facilities.

The U.S. consular district covers both the Province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory—a total of 573,331 square miles. It is an area greater than California, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, and Montana combined. The population is relatively small in British Columbia (3,105,000 in 1989) and in the Yukon (29,000 in 1990), but British Columbia is Canada's second fastest growing province.

People from the prairie provinces, as well as immigrants to Canada, are moving into British Columbia in large numbers, attracted by the climate and economic opportunities. These include Australians, Indians, Iranians, Germans, Dutch, Italians, Scandinavians, French, Swiss, Filipinos, Chinese, and Japanese. Next to San Francisco and New York City, Vancouver has the third largest Chinatown in North America. As a result, many shops specializing in ethnic goods or foods are found in the city, in addition to a host of Chinese restaurants. Chinese laborers were instrumental in building the Canadian-Pacific Railway in this part of Canada.

Currently, about 60,500 American citizens reside in British Columbia and the Yukon. Tourism plays a major role in the economics of the province. About two million Americans visit "The Evergreen Playground" each year. Vancouver was the site of the world's fair—Expo '86—in 1986. It was opened on May 2 by the Prince and Princess of Wales, Charles and Diana.

Education

Public and private schools are on a par with those in the U.S. The Vancouver public school system consists of roughly 95 elementary schools

and 18 secondary schools. Roman Catholic schools are run by the church and charge monthly tuition. One public elementary school offers a French immersion program through sixth grade. French is also offered as an optional subject, along with other foreign languages at the secondary level.

Vancouver has three provincial universities: the University of British Columbia (founded in 1890 at Point Gray), University of Victoria (founded in 1902, elevated to university status in 1963), and Simon Fraser University (founded in 1963 at Burnaby).

In addition to credit and non-credit programs and courses offered by technical institutes, vocational training centers, and community colleges, Vancouver and the surrounding municipalities offer adult education day and evening classes. Subjects range from strictly academic courses to instruction in sewing, golf, and ceramics. Fees are moderate.

Vancouver has about 30 educational facilities for the mentally retarded and physically handicapped. Treatment is available for most age groups in schools specializing in disabilities ranging from autistic and behavior disorders to the multi-handicapped. Schools specifically for the deaf and blind are also available. A complete listing of facilities may be obtained by writing directly to the U.S. Consulate General.

Recreation

Vancouver is a sportsman's paradise. There are a number of excellent golf courses, both public and private, where the visitor can play most of the year. The city also has many public tennis courts. Horseback riding is available, but expensive. The surrounding mountains offer skiing from December through April. Popular runs are found on Seymour and Grouse Mountains in North Vancouver; Garibaldi Park, 30 miles from Vancouver; Whistler Mountain, some 75 miles away; and Mount Baker, east of Bellingham, Washington, where skiing is possi-

ble most of the year. Also available are numerous cross-country trails, some close by on the North Shore. There are several public and private ice skating rinks.

Boating and water-skiing are very popular, and numerous small-boat launching sites and mooring facilities are found in the surrounding salt water. Many of the interior lakes also provide boating facilities. The boating season runs from late May through September. Bowling (both indoor and lawn variety) and curling are popular. The many mountain trails offer good hiking possibilities.

For the spectator-sports fan, Vancouver has three professional teams. The British Columbia Lions play in the Western Conference of the Canadian Football League; the Vancouver Canucks are in the National Hockey League; and the Vancouver Canadians, the top farm club of the Milwaukee Brewers, are members of the Pacific Coast League. Major U.S. sporting events are telecast in Vancouver as well.

British Columbia is famous for its fishing and hunting. Freshwater trout and salmon are the most popular catches of the sport fisherman. For big game, including bear, deer, moose, mountain goat, and wild fowl, the hunter usually has to travel some distance into the interior of the province.

Camping is a popular summer activity, but facilities are often rough in the interior regions.

Numerous points of scenic interest are within easy driving distance of Vancouver. Vancouver Island, the largest island on the west coast of North and South America, features the provincial capital of Victoria, unusual gardens, beaches, and mountain scenery. One of the most scenic attractions in the Province of British Columbia, Victoria is just an hour's drive along the highway overlooking Howe Sound. The spectacular Fraser River Canyon is several hours away via Hope and Cache Creek.

In the interior of the province, east of Quesnel, lies the historic ghost town of Barkerville, a booming gold town a century ago. The Rocky Mountain Resorts of Banff and Lake Louise, about 650 miles east, just across the British Columbia-Alberta border, can be reached by car, rail, or plane almost all year. Alaska can also be reached via weekly sailings from Vancouver.

Metropolitan Vancouver contains many attractive parks, the largest being world-famous Stanley Park on a 1,000-acre forested peninsula adjacent to the downtown area. Governor General Lord Stanley, in whose honor the NHL's championship cup was named, dedicated the peninsula as a park in 1889, a year after its official opening. Stanley's life-size statue graces the park's entrance. It is a prime tourist attraction, with a zoo, gardens, one of North America's finest aquariums, picnic areas, woodland trails, playgrounds, and scenic viewpoints overlooking the entrance to Vancouver harbor. The MacMillan-Blodel Conservatory is in the park. Queen Elizabeth Park, south of the downtown section, is another picturesque area, noted for its flowers and views of the city and surrounding area.

Vancouver has a strong international flavor, with large Italian, Greek, and East Indian communities. The city has the second largest Chinatown in North America. Every possible kind of ethnic cuisine is served somewhere in the city.

Gastown is Vancouver's "heritage" area—a colorful redevelopment of the original settlement. Cobble streets, a steam clock restored heritage buildings housing shops and restaurants, a town square and a statue of Vancouver pioneer Gassy Jack are all part of the ambience. Handicrafts and local artists flourish here.

Shopping in Vancouver tends to be mall oriented and, because it is a port city, many exotic goods can be found. The corner of Georgia and Grandville is the key to a major downtown shopping area. The city

has two underground malls, Pacific Centre and Vancouver Centre. A \$100-million extension to the Pacific Centre complex has made it one of the largest retail-office complexes in Canada. It is linked to the rest of the shopping center by overhead walkway and a tunnel. The extension added 100 stores to the existing 127 retail outlets, and features a covered central atrium and a waterfall.

Numerous beaches exist in Vancouver proper and in north and west Vancouver, although the water is usually chilly, even in summer.

Vancouver also has a small but growing art gallery, an excellent maritime museum, and a new planetarium. The Anthropological Museum at the University of British Columbia is excellent.

Entertainment

Entertainment to suit all tastes is available at some time during the year. The excellent Vancouver Symphony Orchestra has a regular concert season extending from fall to spring. This and other orchestras, an opera company, soloists, and first-class theatrical companies, ballets, and choruses from many parts of the world perform at the modern Queen Elizabeth Theater, which has a capacity of 2,800.

Vancouver has a large pool of professional actors from which resident theater companies draw for stage productions of a high order. The Playhouse Theater Company, based in the Queen Elizabeth Theater, and the 450-seat Arts Club Theater, located on Granville Island, each offers seven or more major annual productions, ranging from Shakespeare to Tennessee Williams and modern Canadian playwrights.

The Waterfront Theater, Carousel Theater (for young people), and City Stage add to the variety of what is available on almost a year-round basis. A six-week Festival of Arts each summer features both local and visiting artists of distinction. A Jeunesses Musicales chapter fosters youthful musical activities in Van-

cover and throughout the province. The city has many first-run movie theaters and assorted nightclubs.

Many cultural events also take place from October to June at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University.

The Pacific National Exhibition (PNE), held the last two weeks of August, draws exhibitors from across Canada, the U.S., and other countries. Many top entertainers perform here during the exhibition's run. The "midway" section of the PNE also is open during summer and on weekends during good weather. An Oktoberfest is also held in Vancouver.

The excellent main public library has branches in every neighborhood.

Vancouver social life is like that in any large U.S. city. Americans soon find opportunities to make acquaintances among Canadians. People in Vancouver are hospitable and extend numerous invitations to various social or public affairs.

Organized groups include, among many others, the Board of Trade, Rotary, the English-Speaking Union, and the Consular Corps—both a men's and women's group. Vancouver has three downtown men's luncheon clubs; the Vancouver Club, the Terminal City Club, and the University Club. All of these offer comfortable, convenient facilities, pleasant associations, and good food. American men and women are welcome to participate in the charitable organizations that exist in Vancouver.

Calgary

Calgary is located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, 3,440 feet above sea level. From the city, one can see jagged peaks of the Rockies rising to a height of 12,000 feet only 65 miles to the west. Calgary is 160 miles north of the U.S. border.

Calgary, with an estimated population of 888,000 (2000), is one of Can-

ada's fastest growing cities. It is the center of Canada's oil industry (there are about 400 oil companies producing 90% of Canada's oil in the city) and the heart of an extensive ranching area. Calgary was founded in 1875 when the Royal Northwest Mounted Police established a fort at the junction of the Bow and Elbow Rivers. The Canadian-Pacific railroad reached Calgary in 1883; soon a bustling town had outgrown the fort to become the hub of cattle ranches and meat-packing plants. By 1891, the town had attracted 3,100 people. It was chartered as a city in 1893. By the 1950s, it had grown into a peaceful, prosperous provincial city of nearly 100,000.

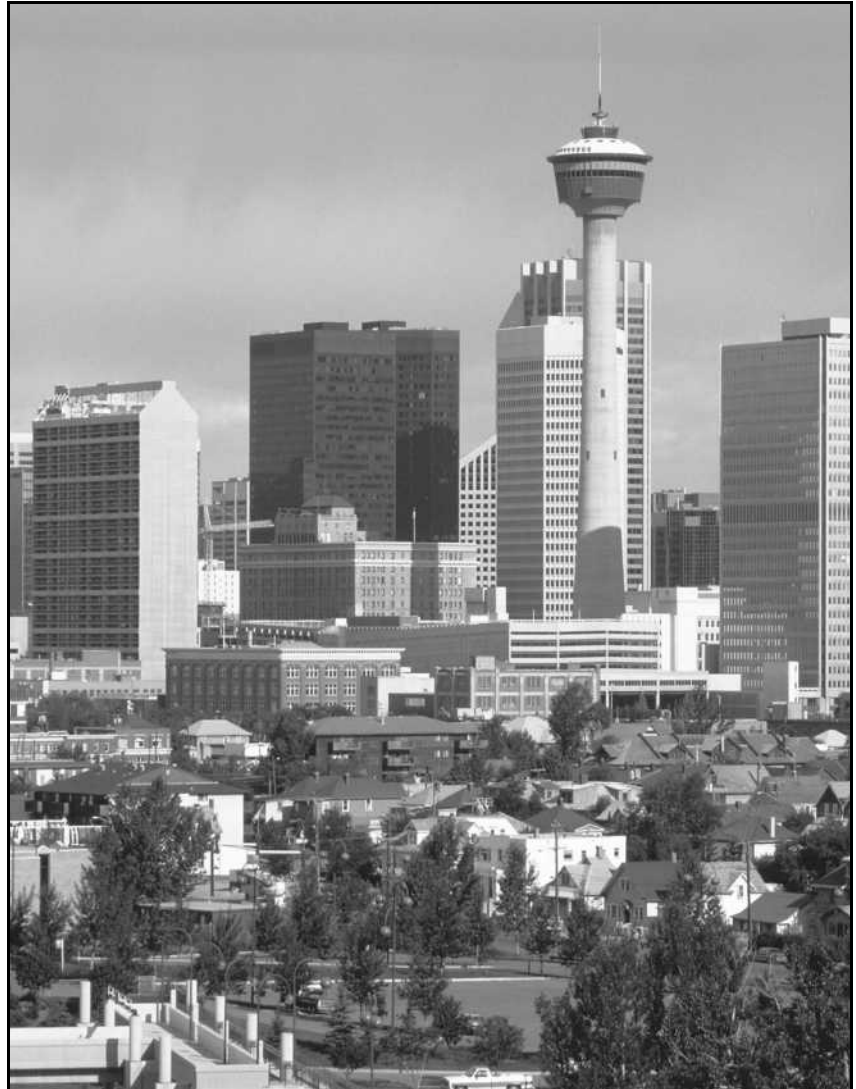
A U.S. consular agency was established at Lethbridge in 1891, soon after railway connections were opened to Great Falls, Montana. This later was closed, and a consulate was established in Calgary in 1906, a year after Alberta became a province. In 1963, that Consulate was made a consulate general. The consular district includes the Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba and the MacKenzie and Keewatin Districts of the Northwest Territories.

Calgary was the host of the XV Winter Olympic Games in 1988. To prepare for this event, downtown office complexes, hotels, and department stores were connected by climate-controlled elevated skyways.

Education

Calgary has a good public school system, which includes elementary, junior high, senior high, and combined junior and senior high schools. Tuition is free for all Calgary residents attending public schools. Instruction is in English, and in some schools, in French.

Physical education is compulsory through grade 10, after which it becomes an extra elective. Inter-school athletic competitions are an integral part of school life. French is, in general, the only language offered through grade 12. Two years of a foreign language are among the requirements for a high school



Downtown Calgary, Alberta

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diploma. Music and art instruction is offered in all grades.

Several private nursery schools and kindergartens are available. Nursery schools generally accept children from the age of three.

The Catholic Church maintains a separate system of elementary, junior high, combined elementary and junior high, and high schools. French and Latin are the only languages offered through grade 12. Textbooks are supplied free through grade nine, and no tuition fees are charged for Calgary residents.

The University of Calgary gives complete courses in arts, commerce,

education, engineering, music, physical education, and science, premed. The student body totals about 20,000.

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology provides educational programs in technology, art, business, trades, correspondence, instruction, and adult education. The institute is operated by the Alberta Department of Education and is financed by the provincial and federal governments.

Mount Royal Junior College is a public institution offering several types of programs: vocational training; high school completion at accelerated rate; course make-up while

studying at the University of Calgary; and a transfer program geared to enrollment at a degree-granting institution.

The Calgary School Board offers a wide range of evening courses and services, primarily in high schools. Academic subjects for adults as well as general interest courses are also offered at the University of Calgary and Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.

Calgary has programs to aid the mentally and physically handicapped and children with learning disabilities. Special educational services provide alternative educational programs for children unable to cope with or benefit adequately from the regular school programs. Emphasis is placed at the elementary level, but programs for some students are available through grade 12. Schooling for the handicapped is also available at the Children's Hospital.

Recreation

Football is the main spectator sport in Calgary, and the Stampeders play in the Western Conference of the Canadian Football League. Beginning with the 1980-81 season, Calgary also has a team in the National Hockey League. The Flames moved to the Canadian city from Atlanta, and play during the winter at the Saddledome, which was also used during the 1988 Winter Olympics.

Several good horse shows are held during the year, and pari-mutuel horse racing is held regularly. Good public and private golf clubs are nearby; both the Banff Springs Hotel and Jasper Park Lodge have excellent courses.

The city has several tennis clubs. During the winter many enjoy badminton, curling, and ice skating. Boating and canoeing are also popular. Within the city, many parks and playgrounds have community swimming pools. Bowling, both five-pin and 10-pin, is popular. Downhill and cross-country skiing are available just outside the city limits, as well

as on the slopes at Banff and Lake Louise. Several riding academies on nearby ranches offer lessons. Calgary also has an excellent planetarium and zoo.

A spectacular annual event is the Calgary Stampede, held during the first part of July. This event, which began in 1912, has since grown into a 10-day celebration. Rodeo and western enthusiasts are drawn from all over Canada and the U.S. during this time, when the city completely surrenders to the spirit of the Old West. Besides rodeo programs and chuck wagon races, street dancing, chuck wagons selling flapjacks and bacon, and marching bands are popular. More than half-a-million Americans pass through Calgary every year to see the stampede and to enjoy nearby scenic attractions.

Within a few hours of Calgary, in the Canadian Rockies, are some of the most scenic areas of North America: Banff (also known as a center for native arts and crafts), Lake Louise, and Jasper National Park. Banff, about 75 miles to the northwest, may be reached by car in about one-and-a-half hours; another half-hour will take the traveler to Lake Louise. The "Badlands" at Drumheller, and the dinosaur burying ground, some 85 miles north and east, are also of interest, as is the Cypress Hills area in the southeastern corner of the province.

To the south, straddling the Canadian-U.S. border at the junction of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana, is Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. This rustic recreation area comprises large park sites of both countries. The oil and natural gas fields in Turner Valley, just southwest of Calgary, are points of interest, as are the Pembina and Leduc oil fields to the north. The tourist may drive on the Alaska Highway to Dawson Creek and beyond. Excellent highways extend into British Columbia through beautiful scenery. The nearest U.S. border points from Calgary are the small Montana towns of Babb, 165 miles to the south, and Sweetgrass, 195 miles to the south-

east. Other road mileages from Calgary are: Helena, Montana, 395; Great Falls, Montana, 330; Seattle, Washington, 760; Boise, Idaho, 680; and Salt Lake City, Utah, 995.

Edmonton, Alberta's capital, is connected to Calgary by an excellent highway and frequent air service.

Big-game hunting is possible, and antelope, caribou (woodland), bear (black and grizzly), deer, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and moose are found within easy driving distance of Calgary. On the flyway for millions of migratory water fowl, Alberta offers excellent hunting for several varieties of duck and geese. Pheasant, grouse, partridge, and ptarmigan are hunted in many areas.

The larger northern Alberta lakes are inhabited by huge northern pike and lake trout; pike, perch, and pickerel can be found in most Alberta lakes. In the Rocky Mountain lakes and streams are found Dolly Varden trout, rainbow trout, and grayling. The Bow River, which flows through Calgary, is one of the best rainbow trout streams in North America.

Camping is popular in Alberta, and campsites are available in the three Rocky Mountain National Parks, as well as in 37 provincial parks. The national parks offer superb recreation throughout the year; entry permits, valid for a year, can be bought for a nominal fee.

Entertainment

Calgary has a philharmonic orchestra, a chamber music society, several choral groups, an amateur theater, an opera association, and a large number of movie houses. The permanent home of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra is the splendid new Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts. In addition, traveling orchestras, ballets, and musicals visit the city each year. The Glenbow Museum houses displays of Eskimo and Indian artifacts, as well as exhibits on ranching, railroads, farming, oil, and the mounted police.

Calgary's Chinatown is small compared to those in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal, but the restaurants on South Centre Street are lively late into the evening. There are very good Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Mexican, and Vietnamese restaurants, and first-class French cuisine.

Calgary has several public libraries. New works of fiction and nonfiction from Canadian, American, and British publishers are regularly added to the stacks. An almost complete array of U.S. magazines and pocket-books can be found at most newsstands, department stores, and supermarkets.

Social contact between members of the American community is informal. The American Women's Club is a group of mainly longtime Calgary residents, many of whom are Canadian citizens.

Other gatherings include both Canadians and Americans. Many opportunities exist for contributing voluntary time, skill, and effort to Canadian charitable and other activities. Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions Clubs are active in the city. Several ranking men's clubs are available downtown, including the Calgary Petroleum Club, the Ranchman's Club, and the 400 Club.

Halifax

Halifax is the center of economic, political, and military activity in the Atlantic provinces. The capital of the province of Nova Scotia and the largest, most important city in the Atlantic region, Halifax is located on the south coast of the Nova Scotia peninsula. The city itself is a tiny peninsula with one of the finest natural harbors in the world.

Halifax was founded in 1749 by Edward Cornwallis as a British stronghold, and became the capital of Nova Scotia in place of Annapolis Royal the following year. It was incorporated as a city in 1842 and has been an important Canadian naval base since 1910.

Beginning life as a fort, its situation was so ideal for trade that, during the early 19th century, Halifax was the wealthiest part of Canada. Today, Halifax is an interesting mix of old and new. Province House where the Nova Scotia legislature meets, is a fine example of Georgian architecture. The residence of the lieutenant governor is also a beautiful building with lovely period furniture. The Old Town Clock on Citadel Hill, ordered by the Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, during his tenure as commander of the Halifax Garrison, has been the symbol of Halifax for many years, but is now challenged by the towers of encroaching high-rise office and apartment buildings.

The Halifax Container port, Halifax Shipyards Ltd., and HMC Dockyard (the largest naval base in Canada) are the most important waterfront industries. Although Halifax spent the first half of the 20th century tearing down its old buildings, it is spending the latter half restoring those which are left. A fine example of this change of heart is the Historic Properties waterfront development, which features warehouses, banks, and other buildings of historic value.

The population of metropolitan Halifax (including its twin city of Dartmouth and other contiguous communities) is estimated at 321,000 (2000). The decline in merchant shipping has adversely affected the local economy, as have the recent severe problems in the fishing industry, an important one in this area. Nova Scotia now bases its hopes for economic prosperity on the gas finds off Sable Island, just as Newfoundland has great expectations founded on offshore oil. Although the oil glut has dimmed these hopes for the moment, exploration is still going on. Dartmouth, until recently best known as the bedroom of Halifax, is doing better with related industry which supplies the drilling rigs. Unlike Halifax which, cramped into its small peninsula, literally has no place to go, Dartmouth is able to provide space for industry in its Burnside

Industrial Park. Halifax International Airport is located in Kelly Lake, about a 20-minute drive from Dartmouth.

Halifax is the Atlantic regional headquarters of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC); the federal departments of Manpower and Immigration; Northern and Indian Affairs; Public Works; and Transport. It is also the principal military, rescue, and emergency planning headquarters of eastern Canada. The main office of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council is in Halifax, as are the regional headquarters of many banks and corporations.

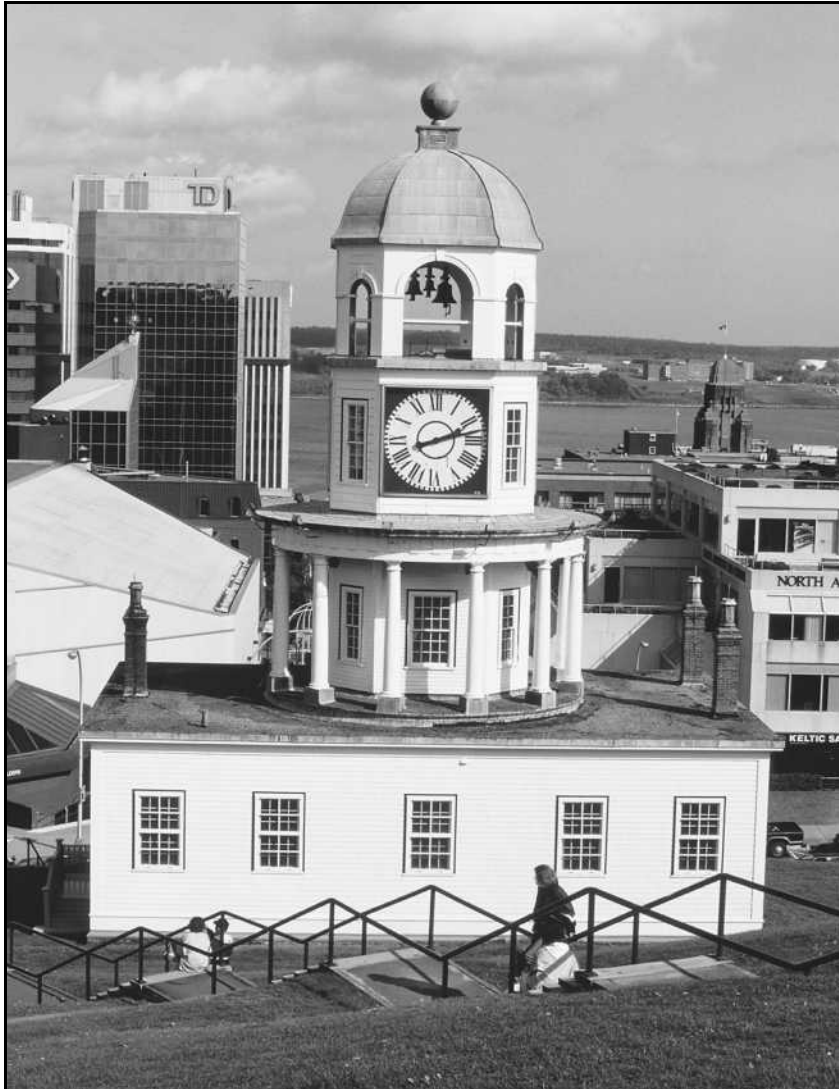
The U.S. consular district was originally established in 1827 as the first consular office in British North America. Now, it covers four of Canada's 10 provinces—New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. The first three are known as the Maritime Provinces; along with Newfoundland, they are known as the Atlantic Provinces.

Education

Educational opportunities are excellent in Halifax, which is the center of the largest concentration of institutions of higher learning in Atlantic Canada, attracting students and teachers from many parts of the world. This contributes to the area's growing cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Within the corporate boundaries of the city are seven degree-granting institutions—Dalhousie University (founded in 1818), St. Mary's University (founded in 1841), King's College, Nova Scotia Technical College (founded in 1907), Mount St. Vincent University (founded in 1873), Atlantic School of Theology, and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Also available is the Nova Scotia Institute of Technology.

School attendance is compulsory for all children ages six to 16. The language of instruction for most of Nova Scotia is English. The Halifax public schools are divided into elementary schools and junior and



Old Town Clock in Halifax, Nova Scotia

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senior high schools. Vocational and technical training is offered by the provincially operated vocational school.

Tuition is free for Halifax residents. No school bus transportation is provided; students either walk or rely on public transportation. French instruction is available on a voluntary basis at all levels, and one school offers a French immersion program in elementary grades. It is anticipated that the program will expand gradually to include upper grades as well.

The Catholic Church operates one private school in Halifax—the Convent School of the Sacred Heart.

Tuition is charged. The school offers classes for girls through grade 12, and for boys in grades primary to six.

Another private school is the Armbrae Academy. It is coeducational and offers classes for grades primary through twelve.

Halifax has a number of nursery schools, one popular school being the Halifax Early Childhood School, on Inglis Street.

Special education opportunities in Halifax include facilities for the mentally handicapped and those with learning disabilities, grades primary through nine, and for the

physically handicapped, grades primary through 12. In addition, educational facilities are available for the emotionally disturbed and those with behavioral difficulties in grades one through nine. Transportation, if required, is available, and in very special cases, teaching in the home is possible.

A school for the blind (primary to 11th grade) is also located in Halifax. An effort is made to keep visually handicapped children within the regular school system, particularly at the high school level. A school for the deaf, serving New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia, is located in Amherst, Nova Scotia, about 125 miles from Halifax.

Recreation

Several beaches are on both the south and east shores within two hours' drive of Halifax. Sea bathing is for the hardy only, since the water temperature is rarely over 65°F. Freshwater swimming is available at Grand Lake outside Halifax and in the Dartmouth Lakes. Indoor pools are located at the YMCA, the YWCA, and Centennial Pool. The Halifax Dalplex and the Dartmouth Sportsplex offer swimming, skating, and gym facilities, as well as exercise classes. Skating and curling clubs are popular. Outdoor skating on the various lakes is limited because of the changeable climate.

Most of the city's leading business and professional people belong to one of two yacht clubs, the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron or the Armdale Club, even if they do not own boats.

The area has four golf clubs: a public club, the Ashburn Golf and Country Club in Halifax (the largest); Brightwood in Dartmouth; and a private club, Oakfield Golf and Country Club, Ltd., outside the city.

A majority of the tennis courts are controlled by the tennis clubs and universities. Among the clubs with tennis courts are the South End Tennis Club, the Waegwoltic Club, St. Mary's Boat Club, and the

Northwest Arm Rowing Club. Indoor tennis is available at the Burnside Tennis Club in Dartmouth. Public tennis courts are located on the Halifax Common and at other parks throughout the city. Other court games available (at private clubs) are squash, handball, and badminton.

Persons who have some skill in football, basketball, or hockey can join amateur leagues or club teams. Health-building programs and gym facilities are available at the local YMCA, YWCA, and at various health clubs. Nova Scotians are also interested in skating and curling. Many people join skating clubs. The ancient Scottish game of curling is entirely a club activity, and membership in either of two curling organizations is an easy way to get to know the Haligonians.

Wentworth, about 90 miles north of Halifax, and Mount Martoc near Windsor have limited skiing.

Halifax is far from the larger Canadian and U.S. cities, but is well situated for excursions within the Maritimes. Its coastal scenery is beautiful, and the provinces contain many places of interest, with sailing, sunbathing, hunting, and fishing as the chief attractions. These points are not resort towns in the usual sense, so a car is useful. Bus transportation is available; railway travel is slow, except on the main line.

Two main highway routes connect most points of interest. One leads from Halifax to Yarmouth, on the southwestern end of the province, close to the famous tuna fishing grounds, then northeast along the Bay of Fundy through the apple-growing belt of the Annapolis Valley and Evangeline country. The Evangeline trail covers the country first colonized by the French. The oldest permanent settlement in North America was at Port Royal, and the French Habitation built there in 1605 has been reconstructed.

The other route leads northeast from Halifax, across the Strait of Canso and around the scenically magnificent Cabot Trail to Sydney, a city of about 35,000 and Cape Breton's steel center. Cape Breton Island, with its Cabot Trail, Louisbourg Fortress, and the Alexander Graham Bell Museum at Baddeck, is a very popular tourist attraction.

Hubbards, Chester, Mahone Bay, and Lunenburg, all with less than 5,000 population, lie along the Atlantic Coast, some 20 to 100 miles southwest of Halifax. These towns have comfortable accommodations for visitors in the tourist season, as do most Nova Scotian towns. Peggy's Cove and colorful fishing villages lie along the bays of the south coast.

Nova Scotia's 4,500 lakes, 50 rivers, and numerous streams offer fantastic fishing—shad, brook trout and, especially, Atlantic salmon. Some of the best smoked salmon can be found in the small Nova Scotian town of Tangier.

In New Brunswick, Fundy National Park, maintained by the federal government, features camping facilities, hiking, boating, horseback riding, nature trails, and many other worthwhile recreational activities. New Brunswick also has a number of festivals related to the area's fishing industry, including the Shediac Lobster Festival and the Campbellton Salmon Festival. Not far away is the former summer home of President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Campobello Island, now maintained jointly by the U.S. and Canada. The picturesque resort town of St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, with its white frame houses, reminds the visitor of the U.S. New England states.

Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.), the garden province, is alive with activity in the summertime, with its many museums, beaches, parks, and theaters. Music camps and the Atlantic Canada Institute Summer School are held in July at the University of P.E.I. Country Days and Old Home Week feature music, agri-

cultural displays, handicrafts, and parades. The Anne of Green Gables Festival, along with lobster, strawberry, and potato blossom festivals and craft fairs, are also part of its summer attractions. P.E.I. is a favorite vacation spot for young families.

Newfoundland offers many opportunities for camping, hunting, fishing, and sight-seeing. Its capital, St. John's, is a good base from which to explore the province's scenic and historic Avalon Peninsula.

Year-round ferry service to Port Aux Basques on Newfoundland's southwest coast is offered from North Sydney, Nova Scotia. Many summertime visitors to Newfoundland, however, prefer to take the ferry which operates during summer months from North Sydney to Argentia, Newfoundland, an Avalon Peninsula port (in Placentia Bay near the site where Roosevelt and Churchill drafted the Atlantic Charter), only 85 miles from St. John's. Newfoundland's annual regatta is one of the oldest sporting events in North America.

Air service is provided by Air Canada and Eastern Provincial Airways to numerous cities in the Atlantic Provinces. Two ferry services connect Nova Scotia with Prince Edward Island at two points: one, operating throughout the year, crosses from Cape Tormentine in New Brunswick to Port Borden, about 35 miles to the west of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; the other, which operates only when there is no ice, crosses from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to Woods Island, about 35 miles southeast of Charlottetown.

Entertainment

Halifax has a professional repertory theater, The Neptune, and is the home of Symphony Nova Scotia, a professional orchestra, recently formed under the musical direction of Boris Brott, a well-known and talented Canadian conductor. The orchestra performs chamber music as well as symphonic programs. Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, located

at Dalhousie University, is the locale for various kinds of entertainment, including concerts by such well-known Canadians as André Gagnon and Liona Boyd. An ensemble called Nova Music performs classical music by contemporary composers. Distinguished films are shown in the auditorium on Sunday nights.

Dalhousie University, St. Mary's University, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) sponsor concert series throughout the season which feature international and national artists. Local amateur groups also present plays and operettas. Spectator sports include football, basketball, hockey, boxing, and wrestling. The various university and service teams compete in amateur football, basketball, and baseball.

Several movie theaters in Halifax and Dartmouth show current American and British films. Nova Scotia is also the home of the Annapolis Apple Blossom Festival and the Highland Games.

Two Canadian television stations have studios in Halifax, and there are several radio stations in the metro area, both AM and FM. Halifax Cablevision Limited provides a cable service which picks up the U.S. public broadcasting channel, NBC, and ABC from Maine transmitters. French-language broadcasts are presented on radio and TV.

The Halifax Memorial Library, established in 1951, offers free library service from its collection of about 130,000 volumes. It has a good selection of late and current fiction and nonfiction and an excellent reference section. A mobile service for the city and the county has been operating for several years. Books are available at local bookstores, but cost 20% more than in the U.S.

Art exhibits are held at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and at various universities.

Some excellent restaurants are located in Halifax, specializing in seafood delicacies and French cuisine.

Winnipeg

Metropolitan Winnipeg is the fifth largest city in Canada, ranking after Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary. It is known worldwide for its seemingly endless wheat fields, its blizzards, and its hockey team, the Jets.

A fur trading post was established on the site of modern-day Winnipeg in 1738, and later a colony was founded by the Scots. The village of Winnipeg was settled in the late 1860s, and incorporated as a city in 1873.

Winnipeg resembles cities of comparable size in the middle western plains in the U.S. Situated on the eastern edge of an 800-mile stretch of prairie-land, it is the home of the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners. Winnipeg is also located almost midway between the two oceans, near the geographical center of North America. Its people are friendly and hospitable. Their interests, habits, and mode of life are similar to those of the American Westerner.

The capital of the Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg is situated at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, about 70 miles north of the international boundary. It is 485 miles, by car, from Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is 760 feet above sea level, and the surrounding area within a 100-mile perimeter is flat, broken by occasional wooded areas and streams. The area has a healthy climate, comparable to that of Minneapolis, although colder. Winter temperatures drop to as low as 40°F or more below zero. Winters are fairly dry and summers are cool and pleasant.

Greater Winnipeg's population was about 652,400 in 2000. English is the principal language spoken in the city. However, in St. Boniface, a

part of metropolitan Winnipeg, more than 40% of the present population is of French or Belgian ancestry, and most people speak French as well as English.

Although about 40% of Winnipeg's population is British in origin, with a strong Scottish strain, there are a number of other nationalities, including Ukrainians, Germans, French, Italians, Dutch, Philip-pines, Vietnamese, and Chinese. There is no American colony as such in Winnipeg. In fact, the social, economic, and cultural background of the city is practically the same as in the contiguous areas of the U.S. There is a constant shift of population in both directions across the border, and estimates place the number of persons in the district with claim to U.S. citizenship above 10,000. Upwards of one-and-a-half million American tourists have annually visited the Province of Manitoba.

Education

Winnipeg's good, free education for kindergarten through grade 12 is comparable to American standards. Two nondenominational private schools and two Roman Catholic schools are also of good reputation. The nondenominational school for girls, Balmoral High School, has classes from kindergarten through grade 12. The Roman Catholic school, St. Mary's Academy for Girls, provides facilities for grades seven through 12. St. John's Ravenscourt School for Boys (and girls from grades nine through 12) provides excellent education from grades one through 12. St. Paul's College (Roman Catholic) provides education for boys and young men (grades nine through 11 and through university). Tuition and annual fees at private schools are slightly lower than those in the U.S.

Special educational opportunities are available in each school division in Winnipeg for children who have learning disabilities or who are mentally or physically handicapped. Special educational institutions are also available for severely physi-

cally handicapped or mentally retarded children.

Winnipeg has two universities. The University of Manitoba, is the oldest university in Western Canada. Founded in 1877, it is a first-class provincially operated institution and offers a large number of undergraduate and graduate programs. The University of Winnipeg, located in the center of the city, is a relatively new institution (founded in 1967), with undergraduate courses in the liberal arts and pre-professional education.

Red River Community College specializes in practical courses for both degree and nondegree students. All three institutions have evening and summer sessions.

Various levels of instruction are offered at the Winnipeg School of Ballet. Students taking private lessons in music may take examinations leading to the certificate of Associate of the Toronto Conservatory of Music. The University of Manitoba gives a bachelor's degree (AMM) in music. The Winnipeg Art Gallery also offers art classes.

Recreation

Winnipeg offers numerous and varied year-round recreational facilities for adults as well as children. Nearly every residential neighborhood has school playgrounds and local community clubs where instruction is given to children in handicrafts, dancing, skating, hockey, football, tennis, and other sports. Four large and some small parks, the largest of which is Assiniboine Park (which has a fine zoo, formal gardens, and conservatory), provide pleasant surroundings for picnicking, sports, and walking. All parks are conveniently served by local transportation.

Golf, tennis, swimming, and boating are the most popular summer sports in Winnipeg. Golf may be played at several very good municipal courses or at a number of semiprivate clubs where reasonable greens fees are charged. Winnipeg has a number of neighborhood wading pools, one

large municipal outdoor pool, and several indoor pools. An Olympic-size indoor pool, one of the largest in the world and the site of the 1967 Pan American Games' swimming events, is located in the city.

Several local skiing clubs teach the fundamentals of skiing and jumping on the banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, but it is necessary to travel some distance from the city for really good downhill skiing conditions. Cross-country skiing is popular in and around Winnipeg. Indoor sports such as badminton, squash, bowling, curling, and roller skating may also be enjoyed.

Excellent hunting abounds in Manitoba. Deer, moose, and even polar bear are found in the north. Duck, geese, prairie chicken, and grouse are found only a few hours' drive from Winnipeg in some of the best hunting regions in Canada. Good fishing can be found throughout the district, and both open water and ice fishing are very popular.

The Precambrian Shield, 50 miles east of the city, is an area of woods, rocks, and lakes. The nearest resort area is the district on the southern shores of Lake Winnipeg, about 35 miles to the north by road, where many people have small cottages. There are limited bathing facilities in several of the beach towns.

The western section of the very attractive Lake of the Woods area is about 120 miles east of Winnipeg and easily accessible by car, bus, or train. Among the pleasant resorts closest to Winnipeg are Kenora, Whiteshell Forest Reserve and, to the west, Riding Mountain National Park. Many attractive summer homes are found throughout the area. Hotel accommodations are good; motels are satisfactory. Most resort spots offer special camping facilities.

To the north, places such as Flin Flon, a copper-zinc-gold mining center, and Fort Churchill on Hudson Bay are interesting places to visit. There is a good paved road to Flin Flon (560 miles) and to Thompson (a

nickel mining town), but Fort Churchill is reached only by rail or air. Each year a few rail excursions of several days' duration are run to Churchill, with the tourists living on the train. The Selkirk Navigation Company operates a five-day cruise on Lake Winnipeg during June, July, August, and September. Accommodations on the modern *Lord Selkirk* are comfortable.

Northwest of Winnipeg, at the south end of Lake Dauphin, is the town of Dauphin (population 9,000). Known for barley, timber, and fisheries, Dauphin is also host to Canada's National Ukrainian Festival, held annually in August.

Entertainment

Winnipeg prides itself as being "The Convention City" and, as might be expected, it offers a wide variety of entertainment opportunities. These include the internationally renowned Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Manitoba Theater Center, the Contemporary Dancers, and the Opera. Performances are usually held in the Concert Hall and the Manitoba Theater Center, both located at the Centennial Center adjacent to City Hall. There is also an open-air theater—Rainbow Stage—where plays, musicals, and other attractions are held during the summer.

Also in the Centennial Center is the Museum of Man and Nature, which offers a wide variety of exhibits on the general theme of man in relation to the environment. There are several other museums in the city, the most impressive of which is the new and strikingly handsome Winnipeg Art Gallery.

The city's ethnic diversity is reflected in the variety of festivals held throughout the year, including Festival du Voyageur (a winter festival in St. Boniface), Ukrainian Week, and Folklorama, a major event each summer, during which pavilions representing various ethnic groups provide entertainment in the form of traditional songs, dancing, and food.

Probably the most popular attraction in the city is hockey, with its National Hockey League franchise, the Jets. The Winnipeg Arena is located on Maroons Road, named after a senior hockey team which brought honor to the city 20 years ago. When the Jets joined the NHL, the roof of Winnipeg Arena was raised and 5,400 additional seats were installed. This brought the arena up to NHL standards of at least 15,000 seats.

Other spectator sports include football and curling games, as well as thoroughbred racing at Assiniboine Downs.

There are about 15 motion picture theaters in the city. Several of these are first class and feature the latest American and, on occasion, European films. Winnipeg also has a 200,000-volume, Carnegie-endowed public library located in a new, attractive building.

Weather dictates the nature of much of the activity: concerts, theater, ballet, bridge, and winter sports when it is cold; and fishing, touring tennis, golf, cycling, and walking when the glorious spring and summer weather arrives.

Hamilton

Hamilton, on the western tip of Lake Ontario, is about 40 miles southwest of Toronto. Explored by Robert LaSalle in 1669 and first settled in 1813, it is Canada's most important steel-producing center, and also is a transportation hub with a harbor, an airport, and a rail terminus. Other industries include the manufacture of automobiles, tires, railroad equipment, clothing, chemicals, and farm implements. The metropolitan population is approximately 599,800 (2000 est.).

Hamilton has many attractions for the visitor. Its 1,900-acre Royal Botanical Gardens are among the most beautiful on the North American continent. There are also gardens in Gage Park, and formal gardens close to the Art Gallery of Hamilton. The city is home to Can-

ada's largest open-air market, which teems with residents and visitors during the growing season. Hamilton Beach on Lake Ontario is a summer playground.

One of the major tourist sites in the city is the 72-room Dundurn Castle, which houses a museum and a children's theater. It was built by Sir Allan Napier MacNab from 1832 to 1835 and bought by the city in 1900. MacNab was prime minister of the United Province of Upper and Lower Canada from 1854-1856.

The Hamilton Visitors and Convention Bureau is located at 155 James Street South.

Regina

Regina is the capital city of Saskatchewan, Canada's fifth largest province. Founded in 1822, it was the capital of the Northwest Territories from its inception until 1905 and, that year, when Saskatchewan was designated as a separate province, it became the seat of provincial government. It is called by Canadians the "Queen City of the Plains."

Regina is a transportation and commercial center in the midst of a large farming region. It is the site of Campion College (founded in 1917), the Canadian Bible College (founded in 1941), the Regina branch of the University of Saskatchewan, and Luther College (founded in 1921). Among its points of interest are the Museum of Natural History, the Regina Plains Museum, the Telecommunications Historical Museum, the Saskatchewan Archives, and MacKenzie Art Gallery, with its extensive collection of Canadian and European art and antiquities from the ancient world. Sports enthusiasts can spend a day amidst memorabilia and artifacts at the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and Sport Museum. Its population is approximately 192,800.

Regina was named by Princess Louise of Great Britain in honor of her mother, Queen Victoria. It was the

headquarters of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police until 1920. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Centennial Museum contains buffalo coats, guns, saddles, uniforms, and photographs illustrating the legendary police force's intriguing past.

Regina hosts a number of major events each year: the Western Canada Farm Progress Show in June, Buffalo Days in July, the International Arabian Horse Show in August, and the Canadian Western Agribition each November.

The city has a rich cultural tradition as evidenced by its many theater, dance, music and ethnic performing groups and by the Saskatchewan Center of the Arts, one of the finest concert halls in North America. The Regina Symphony is the oldest continuously operating symphony orchestra in Canada.

The city operates a number of excellent parks and complexes, the Regina Sportplex, five outdoor swimming pools and several excellent golf courses. Wascana Centre, located in the heart of the city, has a man-made lake, bicycle paths, paddle-boat rentals, a waterfowl park, double-decker bus tours, and several historic points of interest.

Just north of Regina, in the small town of Craven, the largest outdoor country music extravaganza in Canada is held annually in July. The Big Valley Jamboree features many U.S. country music performers.

Saskatchewan's rich Indian heritage can be explored at the summer powwows held on most Indian reserves. Major ceremonies include the Poundmaker Powwow near Cutknife, and the Standing Buffalo Indian Powwow at Sioux Bridge near Fort Qu'Appelle.

Edmonton

Edmonton, Alberta's capital, is Canada's "Gateway to the North," known for its excellent quality of life. It boasts a population of 940,000 and is the oil capital of the

country. In addition to oil, Edmonton's major industries include flour milling, meat-packing, plastics, tanning, dairying, lumbering, and petrochemical production. Established in 1795 as a Hudson's Bay trading post, it expanded and developed during the gold rush to the Klondike in 1898. The quiet town of 1,500 settlers became the supply center for miners drawn by the promise of gold. It is now a modern city with a new international airport. The city's numerous rail lines have contributed to Edmonton's reputation as the transportation hub of northwestern Canada.

Located 350 miles north of the U.S. border, Edmonton is the northernmost major city in Canada. Just 185 miles from the center of Alberta, Edmonton is surrounded by a rare natural setting. Verdant foothills banked with wood and the mighty North Saskatchewan River soften the effect of all the city's new concrete. Along the river runs an impressive 35 miles of greenbelt.

The University of Alberta (founded in 1906) is located in the city, as are St. Joseph's College (founded in 1927), the Christian Training Institute, and other specialized schools.

Football and curling are popular spectator and participant recreational activities, but of greatest interest is Edmonton's National Hockey League team, the two-time Stanley Cup champion (1984 and 1985) Oilers.

Attractions in Edmonton range from various types of theater, particularly at the Citadel, to galleries and the domed Provincial Legislature buildings. Several rodeos are held during the summer months. In July, when the sun hardly sets, Edmonton hosts Klondike Days. The city's frontier past and gold rush days are celebrated at that time with sourdough raft races, beard growing contests, and other events. In August, the city hosts a Folk Music Festival. This festival features traditional and bluegrass music, country, blues, and Celtic

music, arts and crafts displays, and a food fair.

Perhaps the biggest attraction in Edmonton is West Edmonton Mall, located seven miles from downtown. It is the world's largest shopping mall and the world's largest indoor amusement park—all under one roof. Covering 110 acres and housing 836 stores on two levels, the mall also includes a reproduction of the Versailles fountains; a recreation of New Orleans' Bourbon Street; a miniature golf course; an indoor amusement park called Canada Fantasyland; a water park that offers water-skiing and body surfing on artificial waves; an NHL regulation-size ice rink (the Oilers practice here often); and a hotel, with fantasy-style rooms.

Built in phases (the first was opened in 1980) by four Iranian-immigrant brothers at a cost of \$750 million, the mall attracts 400,000 visitors a week, two-thirds of them from out of town.

London

London, a city of 381,500, is the chief municipality of southwestern Ontario. It is an industrial and railroad center, first settled in 1826, on the Thames River, about 20 miles north of Lake Erie. Much of its architecture and atmosphere is suggestive of the more famous city on another Thames, and visitors find that the Ontario London has many characteristics reminiscent of England's capital. London is surrounded by a rich agricultural area. Vegetables, fruits, grain, and dairy products are produced in this region. Several products are manufactured in London, including brass and steel products, textiles, diesel locomotives, food products, clothing, and electrical appliances.

London is well known for its art museum and for its Museum of Indian Archaeology and Pioneer Life, housed at the University of Western Ontario. Other popular tourist spots include the Storybook Gardens for children and the Royal Canadian Regiment Museum.

There is also a unique Guy Lombardo Museum.

The city offers theaters and cultural activities (many connected with the several private colleges and the university) and other opportunities for sports and entertainment.

St. John's

St. John's, the capital of Newfoundland, is the oldest city in North America north of Mexico. Located on the southeast coast of the province, on the Atlantic Ocean, St. John's is the commercial center and principal port of Newfoundland. With a metropolitan population of about 173,000 the city has an excellent natural harbor and is the terminus of the railroad which crosses the island.

The area was colonized by Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1593, and Water Street bustled in 1600, making it the continent's oldest business district, but a permanent settlement was not established until early in the 17th century. Twice destroyed by the French and Indians, St. John's was permanently controlled by the British beginning in 1762. It served as a naval base during the American Revolution and the War of 1812. On Signal Hill in 1901, Marconi received the first trans-Atlantic wireless message. The first nonstop, trans-Atlantic flight was made from St. John's in 1919.

As a base for the province's fishing fleet, St. John's industries are mainly related to fishing, and include shipbuilding, manufacturing fishing equipment and marine engines, and the storing, preserving, and processing of fish. St. John's has Roman Catholic and Anglican cathedrals, and is the site of the Newfoundland Museum, Memorial University (founded in 1949), and Queen's College (founded in 1841).

St. John's has many fine parks throughout the city. One of the largest is C.A. Pippy Park. This park offers opportunities for recreation and relaxation that include hiking

and cross-country skiing. It has picnic areas, a campground, golf course, and row-boat rentals. Bowring Park is located in the western part of the city. The park is noted for several very attractive and interesting pieces of statuary. It has been customary for various heads of state and members of the British Royal Family who have visited St. John's to follow the tradition of planting a tree in Bowring Park as a living reminder of their visit.

Victoria

Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is located on the south-eastern portion of Vancouver Island, at the east end of Juan de Fuca Strait. The 2000 population of the metropolitan area was estimated at 287,900.

Victoria is the largest city on the island, as well as its major port and business center. Industries in the city include sawmills, woodworking plants, grain elevators, and fish processing factories. Victoria is also the base for a deep-sea fishing fleet and the Pacific headquarters of the Canadian Navy.

The city was founded in 1843 as Fort Camosun, a Hudson's Bay Company post. It was later named Fort Victoria. When Vancouver Island became a crown colony in 1849, its new town (built in 1851–52) was called Victoria and named the capital of the colony. In the late 1850s, gold was discovered in British Columbia and Victoria became an important base for miners on their way to the Cariboo gold fields. The island was united with the mainland in 1866, and Victoria remained the capital. In 1871, it became the capital of the province.

Victoria, with its mild climate, beautiful gardens, and many parks is a popular center for American and Canadian tourists. The city's most famous garden is Butchard Gardens, which dates back to 1904. Other beautiful gardens worth visiting include those at Government House and Beacon Hill Park. Beacon Hill Park features ponds, gar-

dens, forests, and one of the tallest totem poles in the world. The Dominion Astrophysical Observatory and the University of Victoria (founded in 1902 and elevated to university status in 1963) are located here. During the annual Victorian Days festival, inhabitants dress in Victorian clothing.

The downtown core of Victoria is small and packed with stores. Handmade chocolates, imported bone china, Irish linens, antiques, and English woolens are some of the items sold.

Nightlife includes the brilliantly lit parliament building, a small Chinatown, and an old section of town full of boutiques and restaurants. The city's provincial museum contains Indian, gold rush, early settler art and artifacts, and many superb old totem poles. A sawmill and logging museum is located in the nearby town of Duncan.

For the sports enthusiast, golf is available year-round at such courses as Royal Colwood, Olympic View, Glen Meadows, Cordova Bay, and Cedar Hill. To see harbor seals, porpoises, marine birds and killer whales, one can take a three-hour, 50-mile boat trip into the Gulf Islands. For those interested in salt-water fishing, charters for both sail and power boats are available at Victoria's marinas.

Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, known as the "City of Roses," on the Detroit River, is a major border crossing between Canada and the United States. The Ambassador Bridge and the busy Detroit-Windsor river tunnel, which connect the two countries, carry countless commuters to their jobs in both cities, and serve the thousands of tourists who casually shop and dine and attend theaters and recreational activities in Detroit and Windsor.

A two-week-long International Freedom Festival is held jointly with Detroit in late June and early

July, celebrating both the Canadian and the U.S. independence. The highlight of the festival is a huge fireworks display over the Detroit River. Windsor's riverfront is lined with parks. Jackson Park and Dieppe Gardens are the pride of the city.

With an estimated 2000 population of 262,000, Windsor has grown into a modern business and industrial center in the years since its incorporation as a village in 1854, then as a city in 1892.

Windsor was settled by the French at about the turn of the 18th century, just after the foundation of Detroit in 1701. It was headquarters for U.S. Gen. William Hull in the War of 1812.

Among the many products manufactured in Windsor are automobiles, pharmaceuticals, machine tools, and chemicals. Brewing and distilling facilities are major businesses here also. The city's educational institutions include the University of Windsor (founded in 1963), Assumption University (founded in 1857), and Holy Name (1934), and Canterbury Colleges (1957).

The town of Amherstburg, just a few miles south of Windsor, is one of the oldest settlements in the area, with an eventful history reflected in the numerous historic sites and buildings. When the British left Detroit, they established a fort and a navy yard here. Fort Malden National Historic Park contains part of the 1796 British earthworks. The Boblo Island amusement park can be reached by the Amherstburg ferry. Several intimate restaurants have recently given the town a reputation for fine cuisine. The population of Amherstburg is 5,700.

OTHER CITIES

ANTIGONISH is a city of 5,000 in northeast Nova Scotia, off St. George's Bay. The French first settled the region in 1762, followed by the British some 25 years later.

Antigonish exports lumber and fish and has nearby quarries. With its 117-year-old St. Ninian's Cathedral, the city is the seat of a Catholic diocese. The Antigonish Movement (a pioneering, self-help, cooperative program) was founded at local St. Francis Xavier University in 1930. Tourists visit the Highland Games which the city holds every summer; these have their origin in the Braemar Games of Scotland.

BRAMPTON, known as the "Flower City" because of its many nurseries, is located in southeastern Ontario, 20 miles west of Toronto. Founded in the 1820s, Brampton pleasantly blends old and new, and has preserved much of the architecture from its early days. Recently, the city has become industrialized, manufacturing metal products, automobiles, shoes, furniture, stationery, optical lenses, and communications equipment. Visitors to Brampton enjoy the Great War Flying Museum, which displays World War I aircraft, as well as the five-story-high White Star Slide, located in the Shopper's World mall. Brampton's population is approximately 268,000.

BRANTFORD is located in southeastern Ontario, about 22 miles southwest of Hamilton. It was founded in 1830 and named for the famous Indian chief, Joseph Brant, who led the Six Nations Indians from their homeland in upstate New York to this site on the Grand River. Today, Brantford retains many of its associations with the heritage and culture of the Six Nations Indians; there are exhibits in the Brant County Museum and the Woodland Indian Cultural Education Centre and Museum. Indian heritage is celebrated every August during the Six Nations Indian Pageant and at the Indian John Memorial Shoot, an archery contest held each June. Her Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks, located in Brantford, is the world's only royal Indian chapel and the oldest Protestant church in Ontario. Brantford is also the place where Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone and made the first long-distance call

from his home to Paris, Ontario, in 1876. Bell's home in Brantford is open to visitors; it is furnished just as it was when he lived here and many of his inventions are on display. Brantford has a population of approximately 76,070. Truck bodies refrigeration equipment, textiles, and agricultural implements are manufactured here. The city is also the birthplace of hockey's Wayne Gretzky.

CHARLOTTETOWN, capital and only city of Prince Edward Island, has a population of 15,300. It was named for Queen Charlotte, consort of George III. It is on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, near Prince Edward Island National Park.

Historic **DAWSON** (formerly called Dawson City) lies at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers in western Yukon Territory. A town of only 1,790, Dawson in its heyday of the Klondike Gold Rush (late 1890s) boasted over 30,000 residents. The rapid exhaustion of accessible mines in the early 20th century dealt the community a serious blow. The town's status as administrative center of the territory was lost in 1953. Now a major tourist and distribution area, Dawson celebrates its past with annual Discovery Day celebrations in August. The cabins of writers Jack London and Robert W. Service have been restored. Other attractions include the restored turn of the century Palace Grande Theater, Post Office, gold dredge No. 4, the Steamer Kero, and the cabin of the famous Canadian author, Robert Service.

FREDERICTON is the capital of New Brunswick, located 60 miles northwest of St. John's in the south-central region. The city has military, political, and literary traditions dating to the post-Revolutionary War period. A stronghold of Empire Loyalists (Tories), Fredericton is named after Frederick, King George III's son. Canada's first university, the University of New Brunswick, is in this Georgian-style city. Riverside mansions recall earlier days of grace and charm. Loyalist traditions live on at Kings Landing

Historical Settlement. Fredericton is located alongside the Saint John River. The river is a focal point of city life. Each summer, the River Jubilee Festival pays tribute to the river. Tours and dinner cruises are available aboard the Pioneer Princess, a replica of the original paddle-wheelers that once plied the river. Fredericton is also the home of the internationally renowned Beaverbrook Art Gallery. The gallery displays a permanent collection of 2,000 works of art. It is distinguished as being one of the most comprehensive British collections in Canada and the most complete representation of Canadian painting, historical and contemporary, east of Montreal. The population of Fredericton is approximately 44,000.

GANDER is a modern city of 10,000, 210 miles northwest of St. John's, Newfoundland. It is best known for its airport, one of North America's largest. Transatlantic flights have been handled in Gander since 1939. During World War II it was a critical connection for air ferries and Atlantic patrols. The area's many wild geese and the Gander River were the origin of the city's name. It was incorporated in 1954.

The manufacturing city of **GUELPH** is located in southeastern Ontario, about 15 miles northeast of Kitchener. Founded in 1827 on several hills, Guelph produces rubber goods; electrical apparatus; paint; carpets; clothing, cigarettes, woolen, cotton, and linen goods; and iron and steel products. Foundries and tobacco warehouses are located in the city. Guelph is characterized by maple trees, wide avenues, and fine old homes constructed of local limestone in early Canadian architecture. The city is the birthplace of Col. John McCrae (1872-1918), the poet and physician best known for his nostalgic poem, "In Flanders Fields," written in 1915; his birthplace is open to the public. The University of Guelph, founded in 1964, covers 1,110 acres and includes a 350-acre arboretum. Guelph boasts one of the largest mechanical floral clocks in the province; it contains six to seven thousand flowers. A

Spring Festival, featuring classical music, recitals, concerts, and song and dance programs, is held annually in late April and mid-May. Guelph's population is approximately 88,000.

KINGSTON, with a population of roughly 57,380, is strategically located in southeastern Ontario at the southern end of the Rideau Canal at the point where Lake Ontario flows into the St. Lawrence River. Fort Frontenac was built here by the French in 1673 and was destroyed by the Iroquois Indians shortly thereafter. Restored in 1695, the fort became a key point in reaching the Upper St. Lawrence River. The present city of Kingston, or "king's town," was settled by Loyalist refugees in 1793. In the early 1800s, the city seemed a likely target for an American invasion, so Fort Henry was built to guard the royal dockyards; it was used as a base for the British naval forces on Lake Ontario during the War of 1812. Fort Henry is currently a military museum. Kingston served as the capital of Canada from 1841 through 1844. Today, the city is an important transshipment point for the Welland Ship Canal and an outlet for traffic on the Rideau Canal. Aluminum sheeting, synthetic fibers, ceramics, mining equipment, ships, leather, and diesel engines are manufactured here. Kingston is the home of Queen's University (founded in 1841) and the Royal Military College of Canada (equivalent of West Point; founded in 1876). The city has an impressive concentration of 19th-century buildings that give it a unique appearance. Many of these buildings have been converted into pubs, restaurants, art galleries, and museums. The city is a departure point for boat tours along the Rideau Canal to Ottawa and around the scenic Thousand Islands. Kingston was the birthplace of organized hockey and the first league game was played here in 1885. The International Hockey Hall of Fame museum depicts the development of the sport through displays of equipment, photographs, and mementos.

KITCHENER, an industrial city in southeastern Ontario, is about 60 miles southwest of Toronto. Largely settled by the Pennsylvania Dutch in 1806, the area was then settled by Germans in 1825. The Germans named the city Berlin, but it was renamed in honor of Lord Horatio Kitchener, a British statesman. Kitchener honors its German heritage with an Oktoberfest, North America's largest. The city has a population of 178,000 (1996 est.); its metropolitan area, which includes the adjoining city of Waterloo, has a population of 346,000 (1990 est.). Manufactured items include furniture, textiles, shoes, appliances, and rubber products; industries include distilling, brewing, tanning, and meat packing. Kitchener is the site of St. Jerome's College, founded in 1864, and of Woodside National Historic Park, which commemorates the birthplace of William Lyon Mackenzie King, a Canadian statesman and former prime minister.

MEDICINE HAT, Alberta, lies on the South Saskatchewan River, 180 miles southeast of Calgary. This city of 40,000 is located in the heart of one of the biggest natural gas fields in the world. It is also on the Trans-Canada Highway and Canadian Pacific Railway. Medicine Hat is the home of several industries, among them pottery manufacturing, glassblowing, and flour milling. The mostly agricultural economy is dominated by ranching and vegetable growing. According to Indian legend, Medicine Hat acquired its name from a frightened Cree medicine man who lost his hat escaping from warriors. The city hosts an annual stampede and exhibition and has a highly regarded historical museum.

NIAGARA FALLS, with an estimated population of 70,500, is the site of one of the world's great natural wonders, drawing tourists from all over the world. The city itself is a manufacturing center located just below the falls in southeastern Ontario, opposite Niagara Falls, New York, to which it is connected by two bridges. Founded in 1853, the city was known as Clifton from

1856–1881, and was incorporated in 1904. The center of a large hydroelectric power complex, Niagara Falls also produces fertilizer, chemicals, abrasives, cereal, paper goods, silverware, and sporting goods. It is best known, however, as a bustling tourist town with several man-made attractions. A 25-mile park system stretches from above the falls downriver to Niagara-on-the-Lake. The falls are equally spectacular in the summer and in the winter when frozen; an illumination system also makes them a spectacular nighttime attraction.

Situated in a beautiful setting on Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Niagara River, **NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE** is one of the prettiest and best-preserved 19th-century towns in North America. Founded in 1780 and originally named Newark, Niagara-on-the-Lake was the first capital of Upper Canada from 1791–1796. Although the town was burned in 1813, parts of Fort Massasauga are still visible. Today, the city is best known for the Shaw Festival, a major annual theater event featuring the plays of George Bernard Shaw and his contemporaries. Performed in the Royal George Theatre, the Court House Theatre, and the modern Festival Theatre, the festival runs from early May through September. Located opposite Fort Niagara, New York, Niagara-on-the-Lake has a current population of 12,200.

Situated on the northeast shore of Lake Nipissing in northern Ontario, **NORTH BAY** is a busy year-round tourist city, well known to fishermen and hunters. It has a "golden mile" sandy beach with picnic facilities and shore-land parks, as well as numerous hiking trails. A transportation hub, North Bay produces lumber, dairy products, fur products, mining machinery and brass fittings; there are dairy farms in the area. The city is also home of the Quints Museum; the original Dionne family log farmhouse has been restored and now houses memorabilia from the world's first

recorded surviving quintuplets. The annual Festival of the Arts, a series of cultural, musical, and social activities, is held in late September and early October. The local French community organizes sports and social events in early February for the Bon Homme Winter Carnival. North Bay's current population is 51,300.

OAKVILLE, located on Lake Ontario 22 miles southwest of Toronto, is a wealthy community of approximately 128,400 with an attractive harbor and an enduring, 19th-century charm. Automobiles, plastics, aluminum ware, and paper are produced in Oakville. The city is also a summer resort and has a golf course—Glen Abbey—designed by American pro golfer, Jack Nicklaus.

OSHAWA, situated on Lake Ontario 33 miles northeast of Toronto, is one of the main centers of Canada's automobile industry. Founded in 1795 as a lake port, Oshawa was incorporated as a town in 1879 and as a city in 1924. There are several old buildings near the lake-front that are preserved as part of the city's past. As an industrial city, Oshawa produces motor vehicles and parts, foundry products, electrical appliances, metal stampings, glass, plastics, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and furniture. The Canadian headquarters of General Motors is located here. The Canadian Automotive Museum, which displays collections from Canada's early car industry, is also located in Oshawa. The city's population is roughly 134,000.

PETERBOROUGH, a bustling city with many reminders of the past, is located in southeastern Ontario on the Otonabee River and Trent Canal, 13 miles north of the west end of Rice Lake and 70 miles northeast of Toronto. Sawmills were established on this site in 1821; the city was founded four years later and incorporated in 1905. Today, Peterborough is an industrial city whose products include electrical machinery, marine hardware, boats, plastics, lumber, carpets, and watches. Dairy farms are also

located in the area. In addition, Peterborough is the southeastern gateway to the Kawartha Lakes and is the major link in the Trent-Severn Waterway. The Hydraulic Lift Lock is the world's highest hydraulic lift and the symbol of the city. It literally lifts pleasure craft, along with the water in which they float, 65 feet straight up. There is constant traffic, especially on summer weekends; during winter, there is skating on the canal beneath the lift lock. Peterborough also boasts the highest jet fountain in Canada. The Centennial Fountain shoots water 250 feet up from Little Lake, just south of the city. Trent University was founded here in 1963. The population is roughly 62,500. Southeast of Peterborough is the industrial town of Belleville, located on the Bay of Quinte. With a population of 35,300, Belleville is the gateway to two great recreation regions—the Highlands of Hastings, with its clear lakes (Bancroft is a tourist center there), and the sandy beaches of Quinte's Isle to the south (Picton attracts tourists there). A popular vacation spot, Belleville has one of Ontario's finest yacht harbors, along with facilities for golf, fishing, and swimming. Southwest of Belleville, on the eastern terminus of the Trent Canal system, is Trenton, whose population is 15,100. A popular water-oriented city, Trenton offers sailing, swimming, and fishing in summer, and ice boating and ice fishing in winter.

Situated in south-central Saskatchewan, **PRINCE ALBERT** is an important distribution point for the northern reaches of the province. Its varied economic base includes oil refining, woodworking, paper milling, tanning, and food packaging. Tourism here centers on nearby Prince Albert National Park and the unique Lund Wildlife Exhibit. Visitors are often attracted to Prince Albert's numerous museums and art galleries. Outdoor enthusiasts also enjoy the area's excellent hiking and skiing trails, and beautiful lakes where fishing is abundant. The metropolitan area is the site of a federal penitentiary, a school for the retarded, and several

Indian reservations. Prince Albert has a population of about 34,000.

Situated in central British Columbia, 485 miles north of Vancouver, **PRINCE GEORGE** serves as an important provincial administrative and transportation hub. Explorer Simon Fraser founded the city in the early 1800s as a trading post on the river that now bears his name. The city grew with the opening of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1913. The community's approximately 66,000 residents rely heavily on the lumber industry, as well as on minerals, oil, and hydropower, for their livelihoods. Tourists and sportsmen know Prince George as a base for expeditions into the Cariboo district.

SAINT CATHERINES, "the Garden City," is an industrial city situated on the Welland Ship Canal, just south of Lake Ontario. Settled by the Loyalists in 1790, Saint Catherines was incorporated as a town in 1845 and as a city in 1876. It was once a depot of the Underground Railroad; was the site of the first Welland Canal, built in 1829; and had the first electric streetcar system in North America. Today, Saint Catherines produces automobile parts, machinery, electrical equipment, hardware, textiles, and hosiery. Fruit is packed and shipped from its harbor. Brock University, founded in 1962, was named for (Gen.) Sir Isaac Brock, who commanded the Canadian and British forces at the battle of Queenston Heights in 1812. The Niagara Grape and Wine Festival, marking the ripening of the grapes in the Saint Catherines area, is held annually in late September. The 10-day festival, begun in 1952 as a one-day observance, now includes more than 200 events. The population of Saint Catherines is approximately 124,000.

SAINT JOHN, New Brunswick's largest city, boasts an excellent harbor, large dry docks, and terminal facilities. It is a year-round port with shipping connections to Europe, North and South America, and the West Indies. The city is the

commercial, manufacturing, and transportation center of the province. The city's major industries include brewing, tanning, fish processing, shipbuilding, and oil refining. Visited in 1604 by French explorer Samuel de Champlain, Saint John eventually became a French fort and trading post (1631), and in the ensuing years was captured and recaptured as England and France struggled for possession. Saint John is famed for its museums; its buildings dating to colonial times; and for the Reversing Falls, which are actually rapids caused by the famous high tides. Not far away is the former summer home of U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Campobello Island, now maintained jointly by Canada and the U.S. Historical attractions include the Carleton Martello Tower, a stone fortification surviving from the War of 1812; the Fort Howe Blockhouse, a replica of a 1777 blockhouse. Visitors are afforded a panoramic view of the city from the fort. Many of St. John's homes and buildings are worthy examples of historic architecture. The population of Saint John is about 102,000.

SARNIA is the center of Ontario's oil refining and petrochemical industries. Located on the Saint Clair River in southeastern Ontario, at the south end of Lake Huron, Sarnia is connected to Port Huron, Michigan, via the Bluewater Bridge, as well as by a railway tunnel. An important lake port, Sarnia produces lumber, plastics, sailboats, and automobile parts. Settled by the French in 1807 and by the English in 1813, Sarnia's waterfront offers a variety of recreational activities, including swimming, boating, and golfing. There are more than a dozen fully equipped marinas along 42 miles of white, sandy beaches. One of Sarnia's main attractions is fishing—trout, perch, whitefish, pickerel, walleye, chinook, and coho salmon may be caught from shore or boat. Water pollution problems have, occasionally, been serious. Those concerned about swimming in this region or eating locally caught fish are advised to contact

appropriate provincial agencies. Known as the "Salmon Capital of Ontario," the city is host to the annual Sarnia Salmon Derby in May. Thousands of sailors and spectators descend upon the city for the Port Huron-to-Mackinac Race each summer. The population is estimated at about 80,000.

SASKATOON, in Saskatchewan, is the potash capital of the world. Half of the world's potash reserve is located in this area. Industries located in Saskatoon include food and dairy processing, flour milling, brewing, tanning, oil refining, and meat-packing. The city also manufactures electronic equipment fertilizers, clothing, and chemicals. Saskatoon is the home of the Mendel Art Gallery, which houses a collection of works by Canadian artists. Other museums in Saskatoon include the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, which has contemporary and historical exhibits dealing with the early settlement of Saskatchewan and culture on the Ukrainian people, and the Western Development Museum, which features a "Boom Town" that recreates a 1910 village. Saskatoon also hosts several annual fairs, and festivals which attract tourists and natives alike. The city offers numerous opportunities for fine dining. The population is about 194,000; the city is the birthplace of hockey great Gordie Howe.

SAULT SAINTE MARIE was established on the site of a mission founded by Pere Jacques Marquette in 1668. It is situated at the falls on the St. Mary's River (the link between Lakes Huron and Superior), just opposite Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. This is the site of one of the most active canals in the St. Lawrence Seaway system; lake freighters traveling to and from the upper Great Lakes use the locks to bypass the rapids. Tours of the locks are available. Two-hour cruises through both the American and Canadian locks, the world's busiest, are offered from late May until Thanksgiving. The Canadian lock, located at the edge of the St. Mary's River rapids, was completed in 1895

and is the oldest in the system. A pretty city with many old stone and brick buildings, Sault Sainte Marie's economy depends upon the Algoma steel plant, lumber, agriculture, and tourism. Although the city is considered part of the summer resort system, it also has many wintertime events. World class cross-country skiing trails are numerous and the downhill skiing is excellent. Groomed trails for snowmobiling are available. The Ontario Winter Carnival Bon Soo, featuring dog sled races, speed skating, polar bear swimming, and more is held here in late January/early February. To the east of Sault Sainte Marie, on the North Channel of Lake Huron, are several resort and vacation centers. Bruce Mines was named for Canada's first successful copper mines. Thessalon, a lumber town situated at the river mouth, has a large government wharf and marina. Iron Bridge, on the historic Mississagi River, is known for its sturgeon fishing. Blind River is a mining and lumbering center. A short distance inland is Elliot Lake, founded in 1954 when uranium deposits were discovered nearby. A modern town of 20,000 on the shore of one of the 170 lakes in the area, Elliot Lake offers winter and summer sports activities.

STRATFORD, Ontario, is located just north of London on the Avon River. Founded in 1832, the city produces furniture, brass, and leather and rubber goods. It is best known, however, for its deliberate resemblance to Stratford-upon-Avon, England, the home of William Shakespeare. The Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Ontario began modestly in 1953 and has since become a major world theatrical event, utilizing three theaters. While still based on a Shakespearean season, the festival now incorporates diverse forms of music and theater, from folk-singing to opera. The season runs from June through October. Stratford's population is over 27,000.

"The nickel capital of the world," **SUDBURY** is 40 miles north of

Georgian Bay in south-central Ontario. The city has a population of roughly over 90,000, and is in the middle of the country's most important mining region. Minerals were first discovered here in 1883; today, in addition to nickel, copper, gold, cobalt, sulfur, iron ore, silver, and platinum are mined. Industries include lumber milling, woodworking, brickworking, and machine shops. Sudbury is linked to other cities by the Trans-Canada Highway, as well as by two transcontinental railways. It acts as the area's main commercial and educational center.

THE FORD MINES is a mining community of 20,000, 50 miles south of Quebec City in southern Quebec province. It is known as one of the world's major asbestos-producing regions, but also mines chromium and feldspar (a crystalline mineral). Dairying, chromium and feldspar mining, saw milling, and fiberglass manufacturing are other commercial activities in Thetford Mines. It was founded in 1876 and became a city in 1912.

THOMPSON lies on the Burntwood River, 400 miles north of Winnipeg, in north-central Manitoba. This planned community was built in the late 1950s and has an estimated population of 14,700. The International Nickel Company is the principal employer. Its chairman, John Thompson, gave his name for the city when it was completed in 1961. The company's combination nickel mining-smelting-refining plant was the first of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. Thompson is linked to Winnipeg by air.

THUNDER BAY is Canada's third largest port, and the western terminus of the St. Lawrence Seaway. The twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William joined to form Thunder Bay on January 1, 1970. The city is located in the midst of a rich mining and fishing region. Several industries in Thunder Bay are involved in brewing, flour milling, paper milling, truck and aircraft manufacturing, and shipbuilding.

The city is easily accessible by boat, highway, and rail. It has an estimated population of 114,000.

TROIS RIVIÈRES (Three Rivers), in Quebec, is the second oldest city in the province. Founded in 1634, it is predated only by Quebec City, which was established in 1608. The city has a strong manufacturing base. Factories in Trois Rivières produce clothing, electrical appliances, paper, textiles, shoes, and wood pulp. Abundant woodlands, combined with a large hydroelectric plant make the city one of the world's largest producers of newsprint. It has a beautiful 17th-century Anglican church, and a Gothic-style cathedral whose stained-glass windows are among the most exquisite on this continent. Approximately 51,800 people live in the city.

WHITEHORSE, the capital of the Yukon, is headquarters for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Its population is roughly 20,700. The Yukon was the site of the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898. The Gay Nineties days are relived every summer. Dramond Tooth Gerties in Dawson is a gambling casino, with blackjack and roulette tables. Other points of interest in Whitehorse include the McBride Museum, which features an in depth look at Yukon heritage and wildlife, a tour aboard the restored steamboat *S.S. Klondike* and a guided tour of the city.

YELLOWKNIFE, capital of the Northwest Territories, is one of Canada's youngest cities (1935). It is only 275 miles south of the Arctic Circle. From May through July, this is the land of the midnight sun. In late June, Yellowknife hosts the Pacific Western Midnight Sun Golf Tournament. The Northwest Territories covers one-third of Canada's land area, but the total population is only about 14,000. Coppermine, Cambridge Bay, Bathurst Inlet, and Bay Chimo are small communities north of Yellowknife.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The world's second largest country in land area (3,851,809 square miles), Canada is bordered on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the northeast by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by the United States, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean and Alaska.

Much of Canada's industry is concentrated in the southeast near the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, in an environment similar to adjacent areas of the U.S. To the northeast are the rolling Appalachian country of southern Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, and the Island of Newfoundland. The most outstanding physical feature is the Shield, a rugged area of Precambrian rock which surrounds Hudson Bay and covers most of eastern and central Canada—almost half of the country. This semi-barren area, and the Arctic Archipelago to the north, are sparsely populated and as yet largely undeveloped.

Another major region is the Canadian prairies, an extension of the mid-continent Great Plains. This area lies between the western border of the Shield and the Canadian Rockies. It is the Canadian breadbasket, and an area that is also rich in petroleum, gas, and other mineral resources.

Far-western Canada, comprised mostly of British Columbia, is laced with towering mountain ranges. Most people here live on the temperate southwest coast and Vancouver Island.

The climate varies greatly in the many diversified regions—ranging from frigid to mild—but Canada generally may be described as lying in the cool temperate zone, with long, cold winters.

Population

More than two-thirds of Canada's 31.3 million people live within 100 miles of the U.S. border. Canadians and Americans are not "just alike," however, as many observers often assume. The Canadian character and outlook have been forged from a distinctive historical and social background which has produced a "Canadian way of life" that flourishes in a sovereign nation.

About 28% of the population is of British stock, about 23% of French, 15% is other European, and about 2% is indigenous Indian and Inuits (Eskimos). Canada's more than six million French-speaking citizens are mainly descendants of colonists who settled the country three centuries ago. They are concentrated in the Province of Quebec, although about 20% live in other parts of the country, mainly Ontario and New Brunswick. There is a sizeable French community in Manitoba as well.

The English-speaking population has been built up by immigration from the British Isles. The largest influx from the U.S. occurred during the American Revolution, when thousands of "Empire Loyalists" fled to Canada. Most settled in "Upper Canada," in southern and southeastern Ontario. Those Canadians who are of neither British nor French origin are mainly Germans, Ukrainians, Scandinavians, Italians, Dutch, Poles, Chinese, Indians, and Pakistanis.

Religion plays an important, though diminishing, role in the life of the Canadian. About 42% are Roman Catholics. The largest Protestant denomination, about 17% of the population, is the United Church of Canada—a union of Methodists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. Almost 10% are Anglicans, with Presbyterians, Lutherans, Baptists, and Jews next in number.

Government

Canada's parliamentary system of government reflects both its Old

World heritage and its North American experience. The British North America Act of 1867 provided a written constitution, similar to that of the British. The lack of specific guarantees of rights, combined with profound regional disputes, led to serious consideration of a truly Canadian constitution in the late 1970s. After years of discussions, then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau "brought home the constitution" in 1982. Following British Parliament approval, Queen Elizabeth II and Trudeau signed the Constitution Act on Ottawa's Parliament Hill in April 1982. Included in the new constitution is a Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Many of the country's legal and parliamentary practices are derived from ancient custom, as in Great Britain. On the other hand, the 10 provinces are united in a federal system resembling that in the U.S., though provinces have greater responsibilities and powers than have American states.

Queen Elizabeth II is the head of the Canadian state, and is a symbol of Canada's Commonwealth status. Her personal representative in Canada is the Governor-General.

Parliament consists of the Crown, the Senate, and the House of Commons, the latter clearly having the dominant voice in legislation. Its 282 members are elected for nominal five-year terms. The Senate's 104 members are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister, and hold office until mandatory retirement at age 75.

Executive power is vested in the Cabinet, headed by the prime minister, who is the leader of the political party in power. The Cabinet remains in power as long as it retains majority support in the House on major issues.

Provincial government is patterned much along the lines of the central government. Each province is governed by a premier and a single, elected legislative chamber. A lieu-

tenant governor, appointed by the governor-general, represents the Crown.

Criminal law, a parliamentary prerogative, is uniform throughout the nation, and is largely based on British law. Civil law is based on English common law, except in Quebec. Here, civil law is derived from the Napoleonic Code. Justice is administered by federal, provincial, and municipal courts.

During the past century, national politics has been dominated by two major parties, the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives. While these parties have adopted many traditions from their British counterparts, there are substantial differences. The Liberals correspond, in very general terms, to the Democratic Party in the U.S., while the Progressive Conservatives would be the rough equivalent of the Republican Party. Distinctions between the two parties, however, are increasingly blurred since both take a pragmatic approach to Canada's problems.

Also represented in parliament and active in provincial politics is the New Democratic Party (NDP). The NDP corresponds roughly to the social democratic parties of Europe. The Communist Party is almost insignificant, and holds no seat in either the federal or provincial legislatures.

Canada is a member of the British Commonwealth, the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the following international associations: Inter-American Development Bank, International Energy Agency, International Sugar Organization, International Wool Study Group, and the International Wheat Council.

The Canadian flag consists of a red maple leaf on a white background, flanked by vertical bands of red.

Arts, Science, Education

The development of the arts in Canada reflects not only the country's culture and geography, but also bears the imprint of a rapidly growing nation. The existence of two dominant cultural traditions—French and English—has led to a diversity in the arts. Focal points of artistic activity have grown up in several metropolitan centers scattered about the country. Since World War II, economic growth has given Canadians greater means to practice and enjoy the arts, and the influx of immigrants has increased the pool of available talent.

All provincial governments, through various departments, agencies, or educational institutions, provide some assistance for professional and amateur artists within their borders. The federally funded, as well as privately funded, Canada Council administers a similar program on a national scale.

Well-known artistic groups include the Stratford Festival Company, the Montreal Symphony, Toronto's Canadian Opera Company, and the Winnipeg Ballet. All of these groups make extensive tours throughout North America, and occasionally tour abroad.

A technologically advanced nation, Canada needs and produces much scientific activity. Most major research projects reflect the increasingly interdependent industrial, university, and government laboratories. In addition, considerable scientific cooperation is undertaken with other nations—especially with the U.S. and the U.K.

All of Canada's activities in the field of atomic energy are the responsibility of the federal government. The most diversified program of scientific research is carried out by the National Research Council—a federal agency. On the other hand, most basic medical research is conducted by universities.

Education at the elementary and secondary level is the responsibility of provincial governments; curricula and teacher qualifications vary a great deal. In all provinces, public education is free. Ages of mandatory attendance vary from province to province, but are generally from seven to 15. In Halifax, Vancouver, and Winnipeg, free public education is controlled and funded by public school boards, as in the U.S. Private schools, primarily Roman Catholic, exist as well, and charge tuition. The literacy rate is estimated to be 99%.

In other Canadian cities, free public education is funded and controlled locally by two types of boards—either “public” or “separate.” Except in Quebec, the public boards are nondenominational, reflecting a Protestant and English historical development; the separate boards are Roman Catholic. In Quebec, the public boards are Roman Catholic—further divided into boards for French- and English-speaking children; the separate boards are nondenominational, also with French and English subdivisions. Both types of boards fund public education from property taxes. Parents usually cannot elect to send children in the same family to schools controlled by different boards.

Education at the elementary level in Canada is considered to be on a par with schools in the U.S. At the secondary level, schools in Ontario and the western provinces are also considered to be at par, but in Montreal, Quebec City, and Halifax, schools at the secondary level do not always meet these standards.

In the non-French-speaking areas of Ottawa, Toronto, and Winnipeg, local school districts offer French-language instruction at all levels. In elementary schools, there are generally two tracks of instruction—a required French course, or an optional immersion program, which begins in kindergarten and offers instruction totally in French, with English being phased in gradually in the third or fourth grade. At the secondary level, French is usu-

ally optional and is offered along with other languages, such as German and Spanish. At other places (outside Quebec), French is offered on an optional basis, primarily at the secondary level. In English-speaking schools in Quebec Province, French is also a required subject at all levels.

Canada's 60 universities range from small liberal arts colleges with as few as 1,000 students to multiversities (made up of colleges, faculties, and research institutes) with enrollments as high as 20,000. Most instruction is in English—although some institutions use French only—whereas both English and French are used at the University of Ottawa and two other institutions. There are numerous community colleges, usually called technical schools.

Commerce and Industry

The Canadian economy is highly developed, giving Canadians one of the highest standards of living in the world. Manufacturing is concentrated in transportation and communications equipment, engineering, and steel and consumer goods. Especially notable is the production of motor vehicles and parts, encouraged by the auto pact between the U.S. and Canada. Most manufacturing is concentrated in Ontario and Quebec.

Alberta is growing fast in industries related to oil and natural gas. Primary industries built on Canada's rich natural resources remain an important part of the economy and a major source of exports. Leading resource industries are: forest products; oil, natural gas, and hydroelectric power; grains and other agricultural products; mining of asbestos, potash, and nonferrous metals; and fishing. As in other developed countries, the service sector is growing rapidly.

The economy is closely linked by trade and investment with other countries, especially the U.S. For-

eign trade, two-thirds of which is with the U.S., represents more than one-fifth of total output. There is considerable two-way direct investment between the U.S. and Canada, although the level of U.S. investment in Canada is higher, as is its relative importance in the economy.

Americans find that most products and services available in the U.S. are also available in Canada. Local prices are often higher, but this may be offset by a favorable exchange rate for the Canadian dollar.

The main office of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is located at 55 Metcalf St., Ste. 1160, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6N4. There are regional offices in all of the provinces.

Transportation

Except in the remote northern areas, Canada possesses an advanced transportation system in all modes comparable to that in the U.S. An extensive air network links all major and many minor traffic points with adequate connections to the rest of the world. Domestic air fares per mile are higher than in the U.S., and distances between population centers are considerably greater. A good highway system (with somewhat less emphasis on interstate-type roads) exists, and supports extensive truck, bus, and automobile traffic.

The Canadian railroad system, while vast, has many problems similar to those affecting the U.S. Although passenger service continues to exist, it is poor except in the Quebec-Windsor corridor.

Water transportation is important largely from the foreign trade viewpoint. Major ports exist at Vancouver, Montreal, other St. Lawrence River points, Halifax, and St. John (New Brunswick). The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway and River System is an important domestic and binational transport route, which permits the movement of smaller-sized oceangoing vessels as

far west as Duluth, Minnesota and Thunder Bay, Ontario.

All larger cities have public transit systems, generally buses. There are subways in Montreal and Toronto, and streetcars in Toronto and Calgary; plans are being formulated to develop rail systems in Edmonton and elsewhere. By and large, Canadian cities have public transportation arrangements at least as good as in American cities of similar size. They are better developed closer to the city's downtown center. Low population densities have inhibited the development of equivalent service in distant suburbs. The operation of public transport is frequently subsidized by provincial and local governments, making most fares reasonable.

In spite of extensive public transportation arrangements, Canada is as much an automobile society as the U.S. All American automobile manufacturers have plants in Canada, producing standard North American vehicles, and the greater portion of the automobile market in Canada is shared by these manufacturers. Most European and Japanese models found in the U.S. are also sold in Canada. Spare parts are available for all these vehicles. Repair facilities in the major cities compare to those in the U.S. There may be service problems with some European and Japanese cars outside the major cities, but most cars can be serviced readily except, perhaps, in remote areas.

U.S. grades of gasoline (leaded and unleaded) are widely available, and are sold in liters. Safety standards for cars are similar in the U.S. and Canada. Left-hand-drive vehicles are standard; traffic moves on the right. International highway symbols are used in Canada, and distances have been converted to the metric system. Seat belts and infant/child seat restraints are mandatory in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. Fines are imposed for non-use of seat belts and child restraints.

Communications

Telephone service, provided by the Bell Telephone Company of Canada in Ontario and Quebec, and by provincial companies in other provinces, is excellent. Canada (except for the Northwest Territories) is integrated with the U.S. direct distance dialing system. Telegraph services are operated by the two transcontinental railway companies, and by the federal government to outlying districts.

Mail service within and from Canada to other countries is satisfactory. All first-class mail is airmail within Canada at no extra cost, and letters to the U.S. require only a regular first-class stamp. There is no censorship, and customs formalities are minimal.

Broadcasting is well developed in Canada. Radio and TV stations operate in all major cities and carry extensive amounts of U.S. programming. There are two national TV networks (CBC and CTV), and independent TV stations also exist in many large cities. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) operates an extensive radio network, with domestic (AM and FM), northern, and international short-wave service. It operates dual networks for English and French programming; there are even French outlets in the western cities where the francophone population is limited. The Province of Quebec also has its own French-language broadcasting system. The Province of Ontario operates an impressive educational TV system which, at night, features nonacademic programs.

Direct reception of nearby U.S. radio and TV stations is possible in many parts of Canada. In most Canadian cities there is a well-developed cable TV system which relays most of the U.S. networks (including PBS), some distant Canadian stations for an additional charge, and distant FM radio as well.

About 109 daily newspapers are published in Canada—89% are in

English, the rest in French. Most major cities have at least two local papers, usually morning and evening. Ottawa has only one daily, *The Citizen*. About six Canadian newspapers publish a Sunday edition. Most cities receive major U.S. newspapers within a few days of publication. (*The New York Times* is available daily, including Sundays, in Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal.)

Most American magazines and books are available, but usually at slightly higher prices. *Maclean's*, a biweekly, is the only national Canadian news magazine. *Reader's Digest* publishes a Canadian edition.

Health

Medical care in Canada is excellent. Competent doctors, dentists, and specialists in all fields are available, and most, except in some areas of Quebec, speak English. Canadian medical educational standards are equivalent to those in the U.S., particularly in dentistry and ophthalmology. There is a shortage of trained personnel and facilities in the physical rehabilitation field, although availability of these services has improved in recent years.

Laboratories and hospitals maintain high standards and are well equipped. Professional fees and hospital and prescription drug costs are comparable to those in the U.S. Pharmaceutical facilities are excellent.

There are no special health risks. Standards of community health and sanitation are very good, and no diseases are endemic to large cities; however, several possible health problems should be noted. Winnipeg's climate might affect visitors seriously afflicted with asthma, sinusitis, or Raynaud's disease, a circulatory vascular condition. Hay fever sufferers should remember that Toronto has the highest pollen count of any large North American city. While the hay fever season is short—about six weeks—persons with hay fever experience great dis-

comfort unless they take medication or remain in air-conditioned areas.

Clothing and Services

Americans find that tastes and standards in clothing are basically the same as in the U.S. The climate in winter makes warm clothes essential. For the most part, summers are somewhat cooler in Canada, but hot periods occur, and lightweight clothing is necessary. Wraps are usually needed for evenings, even in summer. Children dress casually, as in the U.S., but those who attend private schools ordinarily wear uniforms.

Ready-made clothes of all kinds are available at every price level. Items manufactured in the U.S. are expensive—often one-third higher than the American retail price.

Practically all services and supplies are available in the cities throughout Canada. The prices are often higher, but the current favorable exchange rate offsets the expense. Domestic help is difficult to find (as in the U.S.), and if the level of competence and experience is favorable, wages also are high. Professional catering and cleaning services are available.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

When entering from the United States, U.S. citizens must show either a U.S. passport or proof of U.S. citizenship and photo ID. U.S. citizens entering Canada from a third country must have a valid passport. A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for a stay up to 180 days. Anyone with a criminal record (including a DWI charge) should contact the Canadian Embassy or nearest Canadian consulate before travel. For further information on entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Canada at

501 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001, telephone (202) 682-1740, Internet address: <http://www.cdnemb-washdc.org>; or the Canadian consulates in Atlanta, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, San Juan or Seattle.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Canada may register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or at a U.S. Consulate General in Canada, and may obtain updated information on travel and security within Canada.

The U.S. Embassy is in Ottawa, Ontario, at 490 Sussex Drive, K1N 1G8, telephone (613) 238-5335, fax (613) 688-3082. The Embassy web site is <http://www.usembassy-canada.gov>. The Embassy's consular district includes Baffin Island, the following counties in eastern Ontario: Lanark, Leeds, Prescott, Renfrew, Russell and Stormont; and the following counties in western Quebec: Gatineau, Hull, Labelle, Papineau, Pontiac and Tamiscamingue.

U.S. Consulates General are located at:

Calgary, Alberta, at Suite 1050, 615 Macleod Trail SE, telephone (403) 266-8962; emergency-after hours (403) 228-8900; fax (403) 264-6630. The consular district includes Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the Northwest Territories, excluding Nunavut.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, at Suite 904, Purdy's Tower II, 1969 Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3R7, telephone (902) 429-2480; emergency-after hours (902) 429-2485; fax (902) 423-6861. The consular district includes New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon.

Montreal, Quebec, at 1155 St. Alexander Street, telephone (514) 398-9695; emergency-after hours (514) 981-5059; fax (514) 398-0702. The

consular district includes south-western Quebec with the exception of the six counties served by the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa.

Quebec City, Quebec, at 2 Place Terrasse Dufferin, telephone (418) 692-2095; emergency-after hours (418) 692-2096; fax (418) 692-4640. The consular district includes the counties of Abitibi-West, Abitibi-East, St. Maurice, Trois-Rivieres, Nicolet, Wolfe, Frontenac and all other counties to the north or east within the province of Quebec. The new arctic territory of Nunavut is also in this district.

Toronto, Ontario, at 360 University Avenue, telephone (416) 595-1700; emergency-after hours (416) 201-4100; fax (416) 595-5466. The consular district includes the province of Ontario except the six counties served by the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa.

Vancouver, British Columbia, at 1095 West Pender Street, telephone (604) 685-4311; fax (604) 685-7175. The consular district includes British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

Pets

Dogs and cats imported from the U.S. must be accompanied by a veterinarian's certificate showing that the dog or cat has been vaccinated against rabies during the three years preceding entry. From countries recognized by Canada to be free of rabies, a certificate issued by a veterinarian of the National Veterinary Service of the country of origin is required, certifying that the animal has been in that country for a continuous six-month period preceding shipment. From all other countries, a certificate issued by a veterinarian of the National Veterinary Service should certify that the animal was vaccinated against rabies not less than 30 days nor more than one year preceding shipment. Dogs and cats from countries other than the U.S. arriving without a certificate will be placed in quarantine for a 30-day period and vaccinated for rabies.

Firearms & Ammunition

Firearms are strictly controlled. As of January 1, 2001, visitors bringing firearms into Canada, or planning to borrow and use firearms while in Canada, are required to declare the firearms in writing using a Non-Resident Firearm Declaration form. Multiple firearms can be declared on the same form. At the border, three copies of the unsigned declaration must be presented to a Canadian Customs officer. The declaration will serve as a temporary license and registration certificate for up to 60 days. The Non-Resident Firearm Declaration costs \$50 (Canadian). Visitors planning to borrow a firearm in Canada must obtain in advance a Temporary Firearms Borrowing License, which costs \$30 (Canadian). The form must be signed before a Canadian Customs officer and the fee paid at the border. In order to save time at the border, Canadian authorities recommend that visitors complete the declaration form, but not sign it, and make two copies of the completed form before arriving at the port-of-entry. Requests made at the border for photocopies of the form may be denied. Full details on this new policy are available at the Canadian Firearms Centre web site, <http://www.cfc-ccaf.gc.ca>, under the heading "Visitors to Canada." The Non-Resident Firearm Declaration and the Temporary Firearms Borrowing License applications may also be obtained from this web site.

Canada has three classes of firearms: non-restricted, restricted, and prohibited. Non-restricted firearms include most ordinary hunting rifles and shotguns. These may be brought temporarily into Canada for sporting or hunting use during hunting season, for use in competitions, for in-transit movement through Canada, or for personal protection against wildlife in remote areas of Canada. Anyone wishing to bring hunting rifles into Canada must be at least 18 years old, and the firearm must be properly stored for transport. Restricted firearms are primarily handguns; however, pepper spray and mace are also

included in this category. A restricted firearm may be brought into Canada, but an Authorization to Transport permit must be obtained in advance from a Provincial or Territorial Chief Firearms Officer. Prohibited firearms include fully automatic, converted automatics, and assault-type weapons. Prohibited firearms are not allowed into Canada.

In advance of any travel, please contact a Canadian embassy or consulate, or the Canadian Firearms Centre (<http://www.cfc-ccaf.gc.ca>) for detailed information and instructions on temporarily importing firearms. In all cases, travelers must declare to Canadian Customs authorities any firearms and weapons in their possession when entering Canada. If a traveler is denied permission to bring in the firearm, there are often facilities near border crossings where firearms may be stored, pending the traveler's return to the United States. Canadian law requires that officials confiscate firearms and weapons from those crossing the border who deny having them in their possession. Confiscated firearms and weapons are never returned.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Canada covers seven time zones. The time in Newfoundland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus three-and-a-half. The time in Halifax is GMT minus four. The time in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City, Hamilton, London, and Windsor is GMT minus five (Eastern Time in the U.S.). The time in Winnipeg and Regina is GMT minus six (Central Time in the U.S.). The time in Calgary and Edmonton is GMT minus seven (Mountain Time in the U.S.). The time in Vancouver is GMT minus eight (Pacific Time in the U.S.).

The unit of currency is the Canadian dollar, divided into half-dollar, quarter, dime, nickel, and penny coins, all similar in size and shape to U.S. currency. Canadian and U.S. dollars are fully convertible at

banks. The conversion rate fluctuates.

Canada officially adopted the metric system in September 1977. Most road signs are now showing distances in kilometers and speed limits in kilometers/hour. Containers show contents and weights in both pounds and ounces, quarts and kilograms, and grams and liters.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 2 Groundhog Day
- Feb. 14 St. Valentine's Day
- Mar. 17 St. Patrick's Day
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- Apr. 1 April Fool's Day
- Apr. 22 Earth Day
- Apr. 28 National Day of Mourning
- May Victoria Day*
- May (2nd Sun) Mother's Day*
- June (3rd Sun) Father's Day
- July 1 Canada Day
- Aug. (first Mon) . . . Civic Holiday (Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, and Vancouver. Called Natal Day in Nova Scotia)*
- Sept. 3 Labor Day
- Oct. Columbus Day*
- Oct. (second Mon) Thanksgiving* Day*
- Oct. 31 Halloween

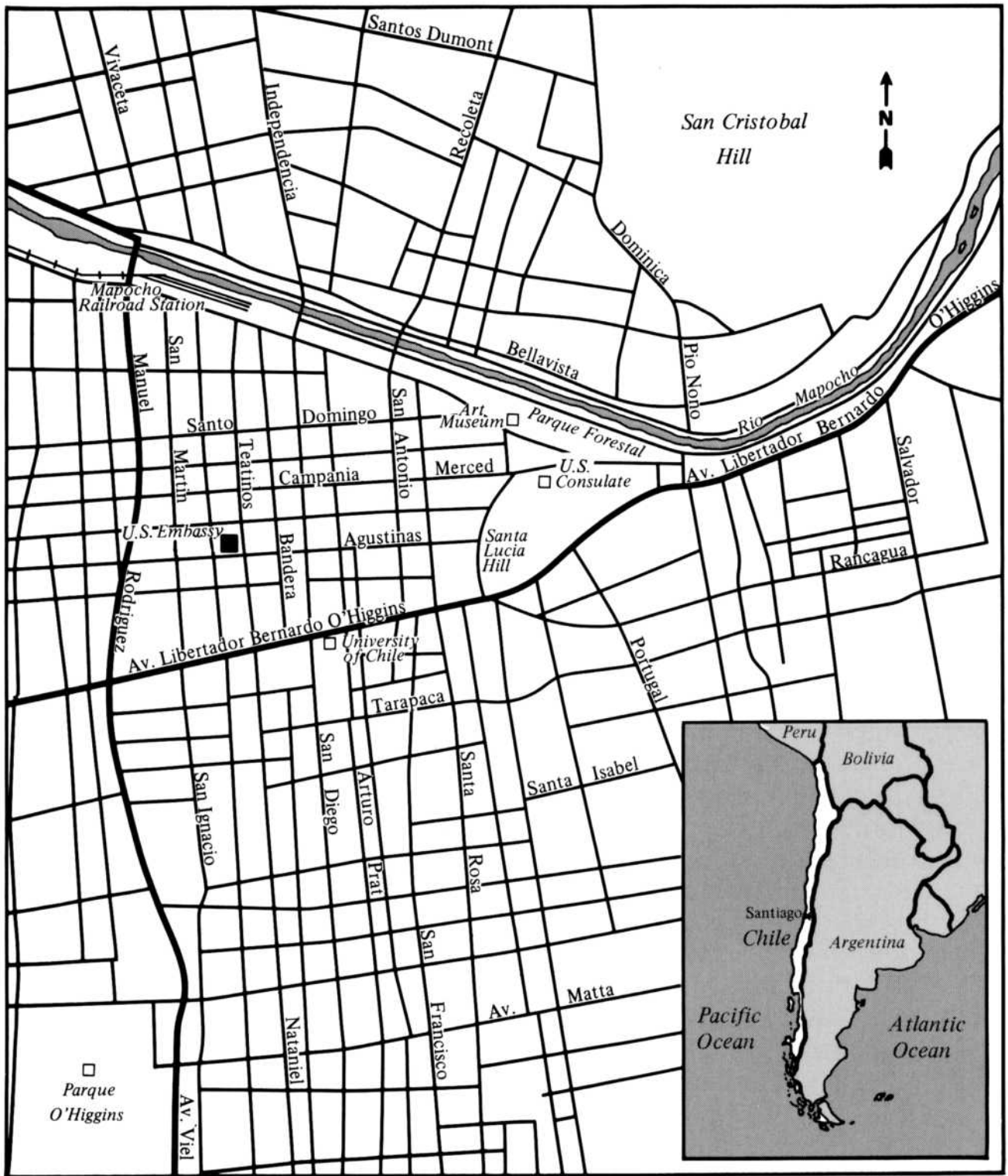
- Nov. 11 Remembrance Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Dec. 26 Boxing Day
- Dec. 31 New Year's Eve
- *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Berlitz Editors. *Canada 1992 Travellers Guide*. New York: Berlitz, 1992.
- Bothwell, Robert. *Canada & The United States: The Politics of Partnership*. New York: Macmillan, 1992.
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- The Penguin History of Canada*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1988.
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- Weaver, P. Kent, ed. *The Collapse of Canada?* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1992.



Santiago, Chile

CHILE

Republic of Chile

Major Cities:

Santiago, Viña del Mar, Valparaíso, Concepción, Antofagasta

Other Cities:

Arica, Chillán, Chuquicamata, Iquique, La Serena, Puerto Montt, Punta Arenas, Talca, Talcahuano, Temuco, Valdivia

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

CHILE can accurately be described as a land of variety and geographic delight. The northern deserts; the rich fields in the central valley; the labyrinths of channels, inlets, fjords, and peninsulas in the south; and the Andes in the east all provide stark contrasts that give Chile a unique beauty. Its cultural, political, financial, and commercial activities have been influenced by these geographical features. Its history is as varied as its topography, and it is almost as much a "melting pot" as the United States. Although many nationalities have settled here, the population is homogeneous and nationalistic.

Ferdinand Magellan was the first European to behold the coasts of

Chile when, in 1520, he made the crossing from the Atlantic to the Pacific through the strait that now bears his name. An expedition led by Diego de Almagro moved southward from Peru in 1536, but the conquest was halted due to unfavorable weather and hostile Indians. Six years later, the city of Santiago was founded. Historical sources reveal that the name Chile was derived from either the name of a native chieftain, from a river in the area, or from the sound of an indigenous bird.

MAJOR CITIES

Santiago

Founded in 1541 by Pedro de Valdivia, greater Santiago today is a modern city of 5,261,000 inhabitants. It is the cultural, political, financial, and commercial center of Chile. Santiago impresses foreigners as being more European than most Latin American cities—a reflection of its population characteristics and Chile's historical isolation from its neighbors. The city's high level of sophistication is apparent in the educated, neatly dressed populace, the posh shopping malls, and the efficient transportation system.

The city lies at the eastern edge of the fertile central valley, and some of its residential areas reach into the Andean foothills. The Andean peaks, which are snow-covered much of the year, are visible from the city's center on a clear day. Situated roughly 70 miles from the Pacific ocean, Santiago is at an altitude of about 1,700 feet.

Chile's standard of living, which ranks high in Latin America, is highest in Santiago, where most of the country's wealth and 40% of its population are concentrated. There is a small but active American community. Chile's other large population centers—Valparaiso, Concepcion, Temuco, and Antofagasta—have distinct personalities but are more provincial. Valparaiso has a long history as a vital and colorful seaport.

Food

Americans are usually delighted with Santiago's modern supermarkets which offer most of the variety of major US grocery chains. The colorful array of high quality fresh fruits and vegetables is one of the many attractions of Chile. However, they must be cleaned and soaked in a special disinfectant before being eaten. Winter produce is more limited but selection is still good. Fish and seafood from the vast Chilean coastline include many interesting,

little-known varieties which Americans have come to enjoy.

Milk products manufactured in Santiago are good quality. The pasteurized milk in supermarkets comes in three varieties: natural whole milk, reconstituted, and low in butterfat. Condensed, evaporated, long life, and powdered milk are also sold. A variety of local cheeses are available, in addition to many kinds of imported cheeses. Other local dairy products include yogurt, margarine, butter, sour cream, cream cheese, cottage cheese, ricotta, and ice cream.

Local brands of cereal, cake mixes, snack foods, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, and acceptable baby formula and strained foods are available, as well as the complete range of staples, such as flour, sugar, oils, vinegar, etc. Most locally produced food items in Chile are currently less expensive than in the U.S.

Chile is famous for its fine selection of excellent wines, which are inexpensive. Beer and soft drinks (including diet varieties) are also good quality.

Clothing

Located in the temperate zone, Santiago has four seasons. Clothing needs for this climate are the same as for the Bay area south of San Francisco. Winter is long but generally mild. June through September rainfall may be heavy but almost never freezes. During these months some poorly heated homes become damp and chilly, requiring warmer indoor clothing. Lightweight thermal underwear is useful. Bring raincoats, umbrellas, and boots.

Spring and autumn are sunny and mild with some rain. However, almost no rain falls during Santiago's warm, sunny and dry summer (December through March). Houses usually remain cool and pleasant.

The temperature drops at sundown, and cool summer evenings require a light wrap.

Chileans dress stylishly and shop windows display fashionable, well-made clothes. However, large sizes are difficult to find, and extra-long men's clothing is unavailable. Hand knit wool and cotton sweaters are a good buy here, as are leather goods. Chile manufactures lovely leather shoes, but, compared with US-manufactured footwear, the choice of lasts is smaller and most ready made shoes come only one width for each size. Long and narrow widths are available in only 2 or 3 stores. Locally made clothing is of good quality and reasonably priced, imported brands are more expensive.

Quality and workmanship among Santiago's seamstresses and tailors vary. Good men's suits can be made from the woolens, cottons, and synthetics locally available; a wider variety of material is available for women's wear. Dry-cleaning service is good.

Men: Men wear business suits for office and social functions. A dark suit is appropriate for almost all evening occasions. For year-round wear medium-weight wool blend suits are most practical, though some men prefer a heavier fabric for winter and wash-and-wear suits for summer. A raincoat is necessary, preferably washable with zip lining. A top coat may be useful; hats are a matter of personal preference.

Chile's four seasons require a variety of sportswear. Flannel or wool shirts are comfortable for winter. Attractive wool and synthetic knit shirts and sweaters are available usually for less than one would pay in the U.S. Slacks, shorts, and swim trunks are also available but styles and colors may be limited, and cuts may not fit everybody. Cotton knit underwear and socks are available.

Women: Chilean women tend to dress more formally than American women—even in the grocery store. They wear the latest European fashions in clothes, both in style and fabrics. A basic wardrobe of multi-purpose clothing is more practical than many clothes of limited use.

Suits, wool dresses, knits, and two and three-piece combinations of wool and wool synthetic blends are popular for office, street or daytime functions from April through October. Some houses may be damp and chilly during this period, so warm clothing is needed. Skirts, blouses, and sweaters often are worn for office and informal meetings as well as at home. Slacks are acceptable at the office, jeans are worn on the weekends and for very casual occasions. (Here again, for Chileans, they are usually "designer" styles.) The widely varying temperatures during a 24-hour period often make the "layered look" the most practical.

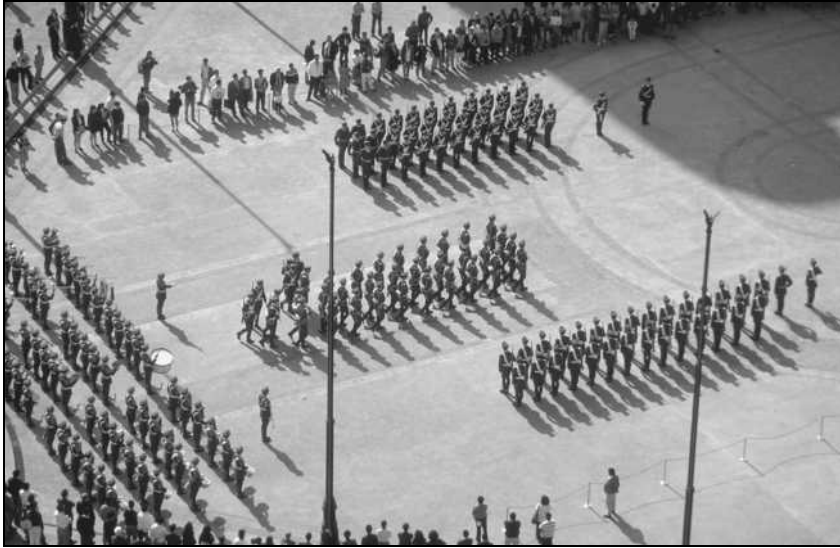
In the summer (and occasionally in spring and autumn) women wear cotton, linen, and synthetic fabrics. Cool evenings usually require a light wrap. Stoles and blazers, as well as sweaters or sweater-coats, are useful.

Children: Generally children's clothes are attractive and inexpensive here. Medium weight ski jackets are used a great deal. Boots are recommended. Sweaters that are easily washed, warm gloves, and light or medium-weight cotton thermal or knit long-sleeved pajamas are essential. Snowsuits are useful for winter trips to the ski resorts.

Satisfactory cotton knit and synthetic shorts and shirts are available for summer but may require special care compared with similar U.S. garments. This is also true of some of the highly styled children's clothes.

Most people buy their children's shoes locally. Leather shoes are generally well made and inexpensive. Sneakers such as Nike, Puma, and Diadora are sold in most stores and are expensive, but local brands are very reasonable.

School uniforms are required in Chile with the exception of nursery schools. However, the Nido de Aguilas School only requires uniforms through fifth grade. Some other schools where American students go do not require uniforms. No school



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

La Moneda, changing of the guard, Santiago, Chile

uniforms should be purchased until you know in which school your children will be enrolled. Younger children sometimes wear coveralls or smocks over their uniforms—these may be purchased locally.

Boys' uniforms for those schools that require them usually consist of medium to dark gray trousers, white or light blue shirts, tie, and navy blue jackets with navy socks and black shoes. In winter boys may wear navy blue pea-jackets or ski jackets. Girls wear navy blue jumpers that must be purchased or made here in a specified style. Private schools for both girls and boys have different type of uniforms.

Teens in secondary grades at Nido de Aquiles wear the same clothing popular in a typical US high school, i.e., jeans, T-shirts, tennis shoes. Stylish teen apparel for boys and girls is sold in all the shopping areas.

Supplies and Services

Some well-known brands of American and international toiletries are available on the market but, if not made locally, may prove to be expensive. On the other hand, certain brands of face soaps and shampoos such as Camay and Silkience are manufactured here and are inexpensive.

Tailors and dressmakers charge less compared to the U.S. Laundry service, dry-cleaning, and shoe repair are good quality and also less expensive.

Service at beauty salons, which includes care of wigs, is good and comparable to U.S. The same is true of barber shops.

Simple car repairs and services are readily obtained for American (especially GMC) and foreign cars.

Auto rental rates locally are expensive, \$60 and up per day.

Religious Activities

Chile is predominantly Roman Catholic, though Spanish-speaking Protestant congregations are also numerous. For the English-speaking community, the Santiago Community Church offers English language Protestant services, and the Holy Cross Order at St. George's School provides a Roman Catholic Mass in English during the Chilean school year. Other faiths represented in the city are Christian Science, Mormon, Baptist, Jewish, Greek Orthodox, and Seventh-Day Adventist.

The Santiago Community Church holds Sunday school for children. Through the International Preparatory School, Nido de Aguilas, and

other schools, Roman Catholic religious instruction is available. There is a Jewish day school. The Estadio Israelita (community center) offers religious instruction (in Spanish on Friday afternoons for children who do not attend the day school.

Education

Chile's established public school system is supplemented by numerous private schools for students in nursery through high school. The school year extends from March to mid-December with a vacation of two weeks in July and one week in September. All schools in Chile (public and private) schools require uniforms (see Clothing.)

Most American children attend Nido de Aguilas International School, (Casilla 16.211, Santiago 9), a coeducational, non-sectarian, N-12 school for students from Chile, the US, and numerous other countries. At Nido instruction is in English, and the curriculum, textbooks, and methods are US-based. The school is accredited by the U.S. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The student-teacher ratio is 20 to 1. Currently there are 750 students at Nido. The Headmaster is an American, as are approximately one-third of the teachers.

The elementary grades offer an individually guided program based on language arts, social studies, math, science, music, and art. The secondary school prepares students to meet the admission requirements of both US and Latin American universities.

Electives and special tutorial courses help to accommodate the varied educational backgrounds and needs of all international students. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program for grades 11 and 12 offers advanced level instruction in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies which can provide advanced placement in college.

College and career counseling for Chilean, American, and other international students is a regular part

of the program. The standardized testing program to measure achievement annually includes the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for grades 2,4,6, and 8; the preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) for grades 10 and 11; and the College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test; and National Merit Scholarship Test. The high school is a member of the National Honor Society. Junior and senior high school students can participate in Nido's active sports program and numerous extracurricular activities. The music program includes three bands, an orchestra, and a chorus. Nido's school calendar begins in early August and runs through the following June with a long break mid-December through February.

Several other schools offer an opportunity to study in English. Some of the schools that American children presently attend are: Santiago College (Pk-12), a bilingual school with courses taught in English at the elementary level and primarily in Spanish in grades 9-12; the International Preparatory School (Pk-12), a small British school; and the Santiago Christian Academy (K-12), a small Baptist missionary school with an American curriculum that follows the U.S. school calendar, but is not accredited by the Chilean Ministry of Education or the US Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Special Educational Opportunities

Spanish language training courses for adults are available through private tutors. The Chilean-North American Institute provides special study opportunities and many cultural activities, such as lectures on Chilean history and culture and exhibits on Chilean art, as well as Spanish and English language training. The Institute's library features facilities in both English and Spanish.

Courses in painting, judo, ceramics, ballet, guitar, folk singing and dancing, and other cultural subjects are offered at various institutes around Santiago. There are good profes-

sional schools in classical dance and a respected music conservatory with excellent instruction. Fees vary but compare favorably with stateside prices. French language courses are available at the Alliance Francaise and the French Bi-national Institute; German is taught at the Goethe Institute.

Admission to Santiago universities can usually be arranged for those fluent in Spanish and with adequate academic credentials. However, US colleges and universities do not always recognize credits from local universities. Several institutes offer computer training.

Sports

Chile has such a wide variety of tourist and sports activities throughout the year, that avid sports enthusiasts are hard-pressed to find the time to take advantage of all the opportunities. Even confirmed couch potatoes find themselves getting involved.

Tennis is played year round in private clubs or on the excellent public courts which provide ball boys and instruction for very modest fees. Most courts are clay, and players should bring balls from the States as they are expensive here. Both private and public squash courts are also available. Racquetball is a relatively new addition to the sports scene, but there are a few courts.

Homes with swimming pools are common in Santiago, but serious swimmers might prefer to join a private club with a larger pool. Also Sauna Mundt Spa located uptown offers an excellent indoor swimming pool. The city also has several public swimming facilities.

Golf is a favorite pastime in Chile, and the courses are lovely. Although all the golf clubs in Santiago are private, there are some public greens in the resort areas along the coast. Private country clubs range in price from prohibitively expensive (Club de Golf Los Leones) to fairly reasonable (Club de Golf Lomas de La Dehesa). Some of the more exclusive clubs have long waiting lists or are no longer accepting new member-

ships. For non-golfers, a sports club such as Stade Francais, which offers tennis, squash, swimming, and a restaurant may be more appealing and much less expensive. Gyms with weight machines and supervised exercise programs welcome memberships for a fraction of US prices.

Many water sports are popular throughout Chile. The lakes in the central valley and the south attract boaters and water skiers. In some of the coastal cities, motor and sailboats are available for rent.

White water rafting trips for beginners and experts can be arranged on certain rivers. Scuba diving requires a wet suit due to the cold ocean water.

Chile offers superb trout fishing from October through mid-April in the south-central part of the country and some mountain lakes.

However, the nearest fresh water fishing spots are over four hours away by car, and ideal trout and salmon fishing streams are a day away by car, bus, or train or about 3 hours by plane from Santiago. Deep sea fishing (broadbill, swordfish, and marlin) and surf casting are also available but less popular. Heavy tackle (20-25 pounds) is recommended; bring it with you. Hunting is popular, but Chile has no large game. Rifles may only be used in the extreme southern part of Chile. Most hunters use 12-gauge shotguns with No. 8 shot. Partridge, quail, doves, ducks, and rabbits are hunted throughout Chile, but very little game is found within a few hours drive of Santiago.

Horseback riding is a year-round activity in Santiago, where several academies and riding clubs rent horses and provide instruction. Riding trips of a few hours up to a week can be arranged, and during the summer there are children's camps that specialize in horseback-riding. There is also a polo club.

The mountains visible from Santiago offer a challenge to the day hiker as well as the experienced

mountaineer. At 8700 feet, Provincia can be scaled in a day, while the Cajon de Maipo, southeast of Santiago, is a mountain climber's paradise, with peaks reaching over 20,000 feet. There are hiking and climbing clubs in Santiago, catering to the needs of beginners and experts alike. Experienced guides are available for the most challenging climbs.

Skiing ranks as the outstanding winter sports attraction in Chile, where some of the finest skiing centers in the hemisphere are located. The skiing season extends from June to October (and occasionally through November). The most popular ski areas—Portillo, 3 hours away from Santiago, (site of international championship competitions located on the international highway to Mendoza, Argentina); and Farelones, Colorado, Valle Nevado, La Parva, one hour away from Santiago (weather permitting)—offer slopes for every skill level. Hotel rooms are expensive and reservations for July and August must be made several months in advance. The slopes are never as crowded as are many in the United States.

Spectator sports include soccer, horse-racing, and rodeos. Team sports for youngsters are offered at Nido de Aguilas (which has good facilities) and some other schools, as well as some of the private clubs. There is a local softball league which welcomes players and fans alike.

Shoes, clothing, and equipment for nearly every sport areas available in Santiago. Prices and quality vary. For instance, European imported skis are expensive, but are comparable to U.S. prices, while good fishing gear is very expensive. Golf equipment is very high while a top quality tennis racket may be slightly less than in the States.

Touring and Outdoor Activities:

Pleasant day trips are possible outside the city. In the winter one can decide between an active day on the ski slopes or a leisurely lunch by the

sea as a Sunday excursion. Beautiful beaches are located within a 2-4 hour drive from Santiago. Some, however, are dangerous because of strong undertows and lack of lifeguards. The cold water makes swimming unattractive even in the summer. Hotel accommodations are adequate, but make reservations for the summer months well in advance.

Chile's largest summer resort, Viña del Mar, offers excellent hotels, a municipal gambling casino, night-clubs, golf and tennis facilities, a racetrack, and public beaches. Other fine beaches, located both south and north of Viña, often lack the accommodations and facilities of the more popular resorts, but are far less crowded. Most Chilean hotels are currently comparable to United States hotels cost wise.

Other attractive summer resorts are found in the lake region, about 500 miles south of Santiago. Known as the "Switzerland of South America," this area offers excellent trout fishing and some of the most magnificent scenery on the continent. Limited hotels require advance reservations during January and February.

The long list of summer touring activities includes: boat trips through the channels and fjords from Puerto Montt to Punta Arenas on the Straits of Magellan at the tip of the continent; the excursion to the Juan Fernandez Islands, 400 miles off the coast at Valparaíso; a visit to wilderness preserves such as the Torres del Paine Park near Punta Arenas; or a trip to Easter Island in the South Pacific.

In Chile's extreme north (1,300 miles from Santiago, two hours and 40 minutes by jet), Arica features year round spring weather, making it a popular spot in winter. It is also the base for excursions to the high Andean plateau and Lauca National Park, with vicuñas, flamingos and other Andean wildlife. All the major Northern seacoast cities—La Serena, Antofagasta, Iquique, and Arica—have a mild cli-

mate, sandy beaches, and sunshine most of the Year.

Opportunities for mountain climbing, hiking, and camping abound.

Camping facilities vary widely, but most provide baths and hot showers. Campsites are crowded during January and February, but usually are empty the rest of the summer. Camping equipment and supplies are readily available, but are usually less expensive if purchased in the U.S.

Note that tours to out of the way areas involving boats or air travel can be very expensive. In addition, the Pan-American Highway is mostly two lane and heavily traveled, making trips by car long and arduous.

Santiago is rather isolated from its neighbors. Lima is three and a quarter hours away by jet; however, Peru's prime attractions, the Incan cities of Cuzco and Machu Picchu, Buenos Aires (700 miles from Santiago), Montevideo, and Brazil are other favorite tourist destinations. Mendoza, Argentina is only 40 minutes away by jet or four to five hours by car; however, in winter the pass is often closed by snow.

Entertainment

In Santiago, the lovely Teatro Municipal is the center of an opera season, two ballet seasons, and two symphony orchestras that offer weekly concerts during the winter. Chamber music and choral groups perform frequently. Inexpensive businessmen's concerts are held weekly during the season at lunch time with sandwiches and beverages available in the theater lobby. Relatively economical season tickets are available.

Theater plays an active role in Santiago's cultural life. Several theaters present a variety of dramatic and satirical plays in Spanish throughout the year. The English-language amateur theater group, Santiago Stage, produces shows and is always delighted to have newcomers join.

The numerous movie theaters in the city and suburbs are good and inexpensive. All films are subject to censorship, with enforced minimum age limits set for each. Foreign films, which include many American films, are shown in their original language with Spanish subtitles.

Santiago has a few good nightclubs and discotheques. In general, Chileans prefer entertaining in their own homes, although young, unmarried adults frequently patronize clubs. Teenagers are generally pleased with the nightlife here. Several discos cater to their age group, and young people usually go with a group of friends. Unfortunately (for parents, at least) Chileans keep much later hours, and discos and private parties often begin between 11:00 pm and midnight, making typical US curfews difficult to enforce.

Plenty of average-to-very-good restaurants are available in Santiago. Service starts at about 2000 hours and is usually very good. Excellent inexpensive Chilean wines provide an elegant accompaniment to any meal.

Social Activities

Membership in the American Association of Chile is open to all Americans in Chile. Monthly meetings, usually a lunch or tea, provide a good opportunity to meet other Americans from the private sector. The Association sponsors a variety of activities, such as tennis, golf, bowling, bridge, library, quilting, and sewing groups, and several charitable activities.

The Rotary and the Lions Club have several local chapters. The US Chamber of Commerce has an affiliate in Santiago. Both the YWCA and the YMCA offer facilities for sports and cultural programs in the downtown area.

Special Information

Central Chile is one of the most seismically active places on earth, and destructive earthquakes have

struck the country periodically throughout its history.

Residents of Santiago will frequently feel tremors which seldom result in damage.

Viña del Mar

Viña del Mar, a popular tourist spot near the Pacific Ocean, is Chile's second largest city. Located six miles east of Valparaíso, Viña del Mar has a population of close to 302,800. It is the country's largest summer resort, and also manufactures textiles, paint, glass, soaps, chemicals, and beverages. The area has first-class hotels, a municipal gambling casino and nightclub, golf and tennis facilities, a racetrack, beautiful parks and gardens, and public beaches. Other fine beaches may be found both south and north of Viña. These often lack the accommodations and facilities of the more popular resorts, but they are far less crowded.

Education

Mackay School, in Viña del Mar, is a boys' day school for kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1857 and governed by an elected board of governors, its admission requirements include tests and an interview.

The curriculum is Chilean-based, with English, French, and Spanish offered as foreign languages. Other elective classes are art, band, computer science, physical education, and vocational courses. Extracurricular activities include computer, drama, gymnastics/dance, guitar, literary magazine, newspaper, and rugby, soccer, and swimming. There are also special programs for children with learning disabilities.

The school year runs from March through December, with vacations in July and September. Enrollment is currently 651; there are 15 full-time and 50 part-time teachers. The staff also includes a math specialist, a counselor, and a nurse.

Mackay School is located in a coastal village about seven miles

north of Viña del Mar. Facilities include language, computer, and science labs; a video studio; audiovisual room; library; cafeteria; and sports fields. The mailing address is Casilla 558, Viña del Mar, Chile.

Valparaíso

Valparaíso is the third largest city in Chile and the country's chief port. It is located 60 miles northeast of Santiago on the Pacific Ocean. Founded in 1536 by the Spanish conqueror Juan de Saavedra, the city was not permanently established until Pedro de Valdivia's arrival eight years later. The early history of Valparaíso was scattered with raids by English and Dutch pirates; it was bombarded by the Spanish fleet in 1866. Unimportant during colonial times, Valparaíso grew after the last severe earthquakes in 1907 and 1971.

Valparaíso is situated on a narrow waterfront terrace. Steep hills rise to give the city the effect of an amphitheater, with the wharves and business section below and the residential areas above. A cable railway is used to ascend some of the steeper areas. The city faces a wide bay and is partially protected by the breakwaters. The climate is generally mild, although severe winds do occur during the winter months.

As the principal port in Chile, Valparaíso has extensive modern dock facilities and handles the bulk of the country's imports. It manufactures chemicals, textiles, paint, leather goods, clothing, metal products, vegetable oils, and sugar.

Thousands of tourists annually visit Valparaíso, whose resident population is about 276,800. Visitors are attracted to the city's parks, theaters, cafes, colonial buildings, and museums.

Concepción

Concepción, 275 miles southwest of Santiago near the mouth of the Bío-Bío River, is one of Chile's commercial and industrial centers. It was founded in 1550 by Pedro de



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Lower city along the bay, Valparaíso, Chile

Valdivia about six miles from its present site. Throughout its history, Concepción has been completely destroyed by earthquakes five times. It was further damaged in 1960 by an earthquake, and it is the numerous restorations that have given the city its modern look.

Concepción produces glass, steel, textiles, sugar, and hides. Woodworking, food processing, glassmaking, and brewing are also important industries. Its port, Talcahuano, located just north of Concepción on the Pacific Ocean, ships products produced in the rich agricultural region to the east. Concepción has an estimated population of about 33,000 (2000).

Education

St. John's School, in Concepción, is a coeducational, proprietary school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1942 and governed by an elected board, admission requirements include an application, past school records, tests, and an interview.

The curriculum is Chilean-based. French is offered as a foreign language, along with the following elective classes: art, chorus, computer science, and physical education. Extracurricular activities include ceramics, chess club, computers,

drama, yearbook, literary magazine, gymnastics/dance, guitar, and basketball, football, volleyball, hockey, and rugby.

The school year runs from the middle of March through December, with vacations in July and September. Enrollment in 1991-92 was 1,026; enrollment capacity is 1,260. There were 52 full-time and 20 part-time teachers. The staff also includes a counselor and a nurse.

St. John's School is located in a residential area of Concepción. Facilities include 45 classrooms, cafeteria, infirmary, a gymnasium, playing fields, and a 9,000-volume library; there are also science labs, computer labs, and a stadium nearby. The mailing address is Casilla 284, Concepción, Chile.

Antofagasta

Antofagasta, located 700 miles northwest of Santiago, is a port on the Pacific Ocean. It was founded in 1870 in Bolivian territory by Chileans wanting to exploit nitrates in the Desert of Atacama. This action, along with the city's occupation by Chilean troops, resulted in the War of the Pacific in 1879 with Bolivia. As a result of the Treaty of Valparaíso following the war, the area was ceded to Chile in 1884.

The economy of Antofagasta depends greatly on nitrates and copper exports, and the city is affected by fluctuations of these products in world markets. The city's industries include large foundries and oil refineries, food and beverage processing, and fish-meal production; it is also an international commercial center.

Antofagasta is surrounded by desert hills and has a pleasant, dry climate. Rainfall is scarce and necessitates the piping in of water from the San Pedro River, 280 miles away. The population was approximately 226,800 in 2000.

OTHER CITIES

ARICA, with a population that exceeds 180,000, is located in northern Chile, just south of the Peruvian border. Arica is situated on the Pacific Ocean at the northern limit of the Desert of Atacama. The city was originally part of Peru, but was occupied by Chile in 1880. Following the War of the Pacific, Arica was ceded to Chile, along with Tacna, through the Treaty of Ancon in 1883. After the Tacna-Arica Controversy was resolved in 1929, Chile retained jurisdiction over the city, but agreed to provide complete port facilities to Peru. Arica is currently a free zone, with both Chile and Peru maintaining customs facilities here. Access to the sea through Arica was also granted to Bolivia in 1920 via the Arica-La Paz Railroad. Today, Arica is a resort, and its port ships mineral exports—mostly copper, tin, and sulfur—for both Chile and Peru. Two major industries, automobile assembly and fish-meal processing, are located in Arica. The city is a major transportation center. It has an international airport, seaport, and railway links with neighboring Bolivia and Peru. With year-round spring weather, the city is popular during the winter months.

CHILLÁN, located in central Chile, is the birthplace of one of the nation's fathers of independence,

Bernardo O'Higgins. Chillán has had two severe earthquakes (1833 and 1939) since its founding in 1580. The city uses the raw materials (fruits, grains) from its rich farmland to produce wine and flour. Industries located in Chillán include shoe factories, flour mills, and lumberyards. Skiing is popular in the foothills of the nearby Andes. The resident population is approximately 163,000.

CHUQUICAMATA, about 125 miles northeast of Antofagasta, at an elevation of 10,435 feet, is located on the western slopes of the Andes. Chuquicamata is a mining town and has the world's largest copper-mining center. The open-pit copper mine, which dates to 1915, produces almost all of Chile's copper. Copper from this mine is transported south to Antofagasta for export. The population today is over 30,000.

IQUIQUE, a port on the Pacific, is located in northern Chile between Arica and Antofagasta, just 130 miles south of the Peruvian border. The city was founded in the 16th century and became part of Chile during the War of the Pacific in 1879. Rock and sand surround Iquique on the east; the city has fine beaches, a mild climate, and year-round sunshine. Water must be piped to Iquique from 60 miles away, as the area receives little rainfall. As a port, Iquique exports iodine and nitrates from the Atacama Desert. The city is an excellent place for deep-sea fishing. Tourism, based on sport fishing and beach facilities, also contributes to the economy. Fruits, sugarcane, and olives are grown near the city and exported through Iquique's port. The current population is about 160,000.

LA SERENA, 250 miles northwest of Santiago, is a popular beach resort noted for its cathedral and its gardens. With a population of close to 124,000, La Serena is situated on the Elqui River in a commercial and agricultural region known for vineyards and orchards. The city was founded in 1543 and was the site of

Chile's Declaration of Independence on February 12, 1818. La Serena has been damaged many times by earthquakes, but still retains its old world charm. La Serena is a popular tourist resort. The city has a mild climate and sunshine most of the year.

PUERTO MONTT is a port on the Gulf of Ancud, an inlet of the Pacific Ocean. With a population of just over 130,000, Puerto Montt is located 600 miles south of Santiago. Named for former Chilean president Manuel Montt, Puerto Montt was founded in 1853, and is an important area for fishing and sheep farming. The city's industries include fish canning, tanning, and sawmilling. Agricultural products, including potatoes and various grains, are grown near the city. The city is the southern terminus for the country's railroads and the starting point for navigation in the inland waterways and islands to the south. Puerto Montt is a popular resort with beautiful scenery—lakes, narrow fjords, forested hills, and peaks. During the summer, boat trips may be taken from Puerto Montt to Punta Arenas. There is an American School here; it is described in the Education section under Santiago.

PUNTA ARENAS, with a population of 120,000, is located in Tierra del Fuego. Sometimes called Magallanes, it is one of the world's two largest southernmost cities (Ushuaia, Argentina is further south), and the only one situated on the Strait of Magellan. Punta Arenas was founded in 1849 in order to secure Chile's claim to the strait, and was a busy coaling station until the Panama Canal was constructed. Today Punta Arenas is an important center for exporting Patagonian wool and mutton; naval and military facilities are also present in the area. Lumber and petroleum are exported through the city's port. Despite a long rainy season, Punta Arenas is a popular tourist resort and has one of South America's finest museums.

TALCA is about 150 miles south of Santiago near the Pacific Ocean. It is located in Chile's wine-producing region. Talca's industries include paper and flour mills, shoe factories, foundries, tanneries, and distilleries. The city was devastated by two earthquakes, in 1742 and 1928. Rebuilt in 1928, Talca now has a modern atmosphere with pleasant parks and avenues. The city is accessible by railroads and the Pan-American Highway. The population is estimated at 175,000.

TALCAHUANO is located on a small peninsula extending into the Pacific Ocean. It is in the State of Bío-Bío, approximately 50 miles north of Concepción. Talcahuano is an important manufacturing, and commercial center. Several industries are located here, among them flour milling, fish canning, and petroleum refining. Many products, such as hides, wool, fur, coal, and lumber are exported from Talcahuano's port. A large steel plant is located in nearby Huachipato. A Peruvian warship captured by Chile during the war of the Pacific is on display in Talcahuano's harbor. The city has a natural harbor that is considered the best in Chile. A leading commercial port, Talcahuano is also home of the country's naval base. The city suffered two earthquakes (1730 and 1960s). Its population today is about 270,000.

TEMUCO is 400 miles south of Santiago, on the Cautin River in central Chile. After its founding in 1881, other points to the south of Temuco began to be settled. The region was occupied by the Araucanian Indians, who are still an important part of life here. Temuco is a commercial city trading in livestock and agriculture produced in the region; grains, fruit, and timber are among the products traded and processed. Of interest in the city is an Araucanian museum. Temuco has a military air base, a cathedral, and several missionary schools. The city is accessible via railroads and the Pan-American Highway. The population was over 253,000 in 1997.

VALDIVIA is located in southern Chile, about 250 miles from Santiago. The city was founded as a fortress against the Araucanian Indians in 1552. When German immigrants arrived in the mid-19th century, the city began to grow with the introduction of its first two industries—beer and shoes. Other industries include lumber, metal goods, boats, and foodstuffs. Valdivia was mostly destroyed by an earthquake in 1960, but has been extensively reconstructed. Today, it has a population of about 122,000, and is a tourist center in the lake region.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Chile is a narrow ribbon of land stretching almost 2,700 miles along the west coast of South America. Although it is one of the world's longest countries, its average width measures only 100 miles, and its maximum width, only 250 miles.

Santiago, Chile's capital and largest city, is almost directly south of Hartford, Connecticut. Valparaíso, the country's chief port, is farther east than New York City.

Wedged between the Andes on the east and the Pacific on the west, Chile is bordered by Peru to the north and Bolivia and Argentina to the east. Larger than any European country, except Russia, Chile covers an area of 292,257 square miles, about the size of California, Oregon, and half of Washington state combined. In the extreme south where the Atlantic and Pacific merge, the land becomes an archipelago with Cape Horn at its tip. Since Chile is south of the equator, the seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. Santiago is about as far from the equator as are Atlanta and Los Angeles.

The Cordillera of the Andes which extends the length of the land is



Municipal market, Tenuco, Chile

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Chile's dominant feature. Over 100 volcanoes dot the mountain system, and its relatively recent creation accounts for the country's often damaging earthquakes. This majestic chain has several peaks over 20,000 feet, including Mount Aconcagua (23,000 feet), the highest in the western hemisphere.

Chile has distinct geographic regions which can be roughly divided into four areas: the arid North; the fertile central valley midlands; the forested land and lakes in South-Central Chile; and the archipelagos, fjords, and channels of the far south.

The great northern desert or "Norte Grande" which constitutes one fourth of the country is one of the driest most barren areas on earth. Ironically this desolate, inhospitable land also produces rich mineral deposits such as copper and nitrates which are vital to the country's economy. Separating the northern desert from the central valley is a semiarid stretch of land known as the "Norte Chico" (Little North).

The central valley, where most of the population lives, begins with the Aconcagua River basin north of Santiago and continues on to the Bío-Bío River at Concepción. The nation's major industrial and agri-

cultural production is located in this section.

South-Central Chile below the Bío-Bío River is punctuated with an exquisite string of lakes running on a line from north to south and parallel to the Argentine border all the way from Temuco to Puerto Montt. This is the famous lake district, renowned for its beauty.

The archipelago south of Puerto Montt is usually rainy, with forested fjords and many glaciers and sea channels resembling southernmost Alaska. Still further to the south are the windy steppes and sheep country of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.

A number of Pacific islands are a part of Chilean territory. The Juan Fernandez Islands are 400 miles southwest of Valparaíso. The abandoned sailor, Alexander Selkirk, lived on one of these islands for 5 years; his adventures inspired Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. About 2,000 miles west of the continent is the famous Easter Island, or Rapa-Nui (Chilean since 1888), which is inhabited by Polynesians and is distinguished by gigantic stone monuments and carvings unique to the island. Chile also claims a wedge-shaped portion of Antarctica.

Chile's climate is as varied as its geography. In the far north, summers are warm and winters along the coast quite mild. Despite the fact that much of the north lies within the tropics, the cold Humboldt Current off the coast and the relatively short distance between the coast and the snow-covered Andean peaks to the east modify what might otherwise be a tropical climate. Precipitation is scant. In Santiago long, dry summers (December-March) feature warm days and cool evenings with temperatures reaching the low nineties. The June-September winter season is cold and rainy (14 inches of rain per year), with dampness and fog making the cold more penetrating, even though the temperature rarely drops to freezing. The weather in the capital is almost identical to that of Palo Alto and the southern bay region of California. The lake region is colder and wetter with annual rainfall reaching 100 inches. In the far south, the climate is colder still with gale force winds most of the year. Rainfall continues at the rate of 100 inches annually except in Patagonia where it drops to 20 inches a year.

Population

Chile's population is about 15.2 million (2000). Chile is mainly urban (83%), with almost 40% of its people living in the capital and environs. As in other developing countries, the population is youthful. About 30% of the population is under 15 years of age.

Chile is one of the more sparsely populated countries of Latin America (about 50 inhabitants per square mile). Its annual population growth rate is 1.5%. The family is usually a cohesive unit at all levels of society. A large middle class, with a nucleus of professional people, is important in business and government. But Chile also has a large poor class living in "poblaciones" (makeshift communities scattered in suburban areas of the larger cities). The rural population, including the indigenous Araucanian Indians, has a

standard of living generally well below that of the urban population.

The largest ethnic group is Spanish. Other principal groups include German, English, Italian, Yugoslav, and Arab. The population includes a small number of native Indians but almost no Asians or Blacks. The Indians live mainly south of the Bío-Bío River and in the Andean North. The most important group, the Araucanian Indians, has never been fully assimilated into Chilean society.

During the colonial period, European immigration originated almost entirely from Spain; early colonists were mainly Basques and Castilians. A small but influential number of Irish and English immigrants also came to Chile and played important roles in Chilean history. Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's national hero, was of Irish descent.

After Chile won independence in 1810, many Irish, Scottish, and English immigrated to the new republic. In 1845 an official Chilean colonizing agency was set up in Europe to stimulate immigration, particularly from Germany. A small group of German colonists which arrived in 1850 was the first of a large-scale immigration that continued for 90 years. Most Germans settled in the Valdivia-Llanquihue-Chiloe area in the south, where towns have a decidedly Bavarian ambience. Spanish immigrants continued to arrive in large numbers throughout the 19th century and were joined by Italians, French, Swiss, British, Yugoslavs, and others. The twentieth century brought an influx of Middle-Easterners (principally Palestinians and Lebanese) as well as Europeans. Several thousand displaced persons resettled here after World War II.

Despite the diversity of their origins, few South American populations are more homogeneous than the Chileans. Their homogeneity and insularity are in large part the result of isolating geographic factors: mountains, deserts, a vast ocean, and long distances from outside cultural and political centers.

The Catholic religion predominates and is influential at all levels of society. However, religious freedom and separation of church and state are guaranteed by the Constitution. About 10% of the population is Protestant, and there is a small Jewish community.

Most Chilean holidays commemorate events important in the country's history or celebrate traditional feast days or holy days of the Catholic Church. The Fiestas Patrias, a 2-day celebration commemorating Chilean independence in mid-September, is the main patriotic holiday. The greatest religious festivals occur during Christmas and Holy Week. Some areas celebrate other religious holidays with centuries-old processions and dances.

Typical Chilean cuisine is simple, hearty, and rather blandly spiced. Beef, chicken, and seafood are the most popular main dishes. Cazuela, a stew of chicken, beef, pork, or fish, and the empanada (a pastry turnover filled with meat, fish, spiced onions, cheese, or even edible seaweed and served hot) are specialties.

Wine accompanies most meals. Other typical Chilean drinks include borrego, red wine mixed with sparkling water and fruit; cola de mono, a Christmas drink similar to eggnog; chicha, grape or apple cider; and pisco sour, an indigenous liquor distilled from grapes, mixed with sugar syrup and lemon juice.

Public Institutions

Chile is a unitary republic with a highly centralized administrative structure and a strong executive. The President who serves a six-year term and cannot seek immediate reelection, appoints cabinet ministers and rector of state universities, as well as 13 regional administrators (intendentes), 51 provincial governors and numerous other officials. In December 1993, Eduardo Frei, the candidate for a coalition of center and moderate leftist political parties, was elected President with 58% of the vote. Frei, the son of a

former president, took office in March 1994.

The bicameral Congress is made up of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The Senate has 38 elected seats—two from each of 19 senatorial districts (circumscripciones)—and nine designated seats, which are variously filled by appointees of the Supreme Court, The National Security Council and the President. In addition, ex-presidents who have served six consecutive years also have the option of serving in the Senate for life. Senators are elected or appointed to eight-year terms. Half of the elected seats come up for reelection every four years.

The 120 members of the Chamber of Deputies are all elected, two from each of 60 electoral districts, and serve four year terms. Permanent commissions, roughly equivalent to committees in the U.S. Congress, work out the details of proposed legislation. Since reopening with the return to democracy in 1990, the Congress has been located in the port city of Valparaiso, 115 kilometers (about ½ hours by car northwest of Santiago).

Chile operates under a constitution promulgated during the military government of General Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990). That constitution provides for a democratic system, including an independent judiciary, while containing some limitations on popular sovereignty. It also grants considerable institutional autonomy to the armed services and national police.

Arts, Science, and Education

Santiago has traditionally been one of Latin America's most active centers of the fine and performing arts. Cultural events are generally held from March to November.

The Philharmonic Orchestra of Santiago and the Chilean National Symphony have subscription series, as do the Municipal Ballet and Opera. The National Ballet of the University of Chile also performs

during the cultural season. The hub of ballet and opera activity is Santiago's superb Municipal Theater, which is a magnet for top foreign artists. The Beethoven Society of Santiago, the leading private cultural institution, offers a yearly subscription series featuring internationally recognized musicians during its May to September season.

Frequent concerts and recitals by local artists are held throughout the year. In January there is an international jazz festival in Santiago and in February there are two music festivals which attract international artists as well as local talent. One, held in Viña del Mar, features popular and rock and roll music; while the other, held in Frutillar on Lake Llanquihue, is devoted to classical music and provides a forum for Chile's young musicians. In addition, Santiago has a number of cultural FM radio stations.

Several professional theater companies in Santiago present exceptionally high quality productions by both Chilean and foreign playwrights. "Santiago Stage," the Anglo-American community's amateur theater group, produces plays in English each year. Many American and British films reach Santiago's cinemas only a few months after their release in the United States, and European and Latin American films are also frequently shown. Cinema films are usually shown in the original language with Spanish subtitles, though nearly all non-Spanish television films and other programs are dubbed in Spanish. Local "art" movie houses present re-runs of notable film classics.

Santiago has several good museums featuring pre-Columbian, folk, colonial, religious, and contemporary art; science; and Chilean history. Works by modern artists, sculptors, and photographers are exhibited and sold in the many private galleries. The National Library of Chile is one of the largest in Latin America. In addition, the Chilean-American Cultural Institute (BNC) has one of

the most modern libraries in the capital.

Chile's folklore is rich. Examples of traditional music and dance are offered nearly every night of the year in several Santiago nightclubs and at festivals and special occasions outside the capital. Other night spots feature urban "folk" music, jazz, and tango. Santiago has several discotheques.

Chilean writers have won international fame for their achievements. Among the country's twentieth-century poets are the Nobel Prize winners Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, as well as Vicente Huidobro and Nicanor Parra. José Donoso, Maria Luisa Bombal, Isabel Allende, Manuel Rojas, and Jorge Edwards head the list of leading novelists. The country has also produced a number of fine short-story writers, essayists, historians, and playwrights.

Science

The Chilean government, universities, and other public and private entities actively encourage scientific activity.

Most universities have departments of science and technology and several of the country's finest centers of higher learning specialize in these fields. The Chilean Scientific Society publishes a scholarly journal.

Although Chile, unlike Peru to the north, was never the seat of a great Indian culture, archeological research centered in the northern desert has uncovered considerable evidence of pre-Columbian settlements showing southward extension of Incan and pre-Incan Andean civilizations.

Its location and clear desert air have made northern Chile the center of Southern Hemisphere astronomical research. Two of the world's largest observatories are located near La Serena, a day's drive north of Santiago; one is run by a consortium of U.S. universities.

Education

Chile has been a leader in public education in Latin America since the mid-nineteenth century. Of the country's universities, the oldest and most prestigious are the University of Chile, founded in 1842, and Catholic University, founded in 1888. The University of Santiago, dedicated mainly to science and technology is also important.

Valparaiso has three good-sized universities and Concepcion two. Most other provincial capitals have universities which serve their respective regions. Many private universities have been created over the past 15 years being the most prestigious Diego Portales University, Gabriela Mistral, Universidad Central, Andres Bello, etc.

Commerce And Industry

Chile's current government adheres to largely free market economic policies, including low and uniform tariffs (except on automobiles and a few other items regarded as luxury consumption) and an openness to foreign investment. As a result of these policies Chile has enjoyed several years of real economic growth, relatively low inflation, balance of payments equilibrium and, more recently, near full employment. In particular, the innovative use of debt-for-equity swaps has allowed Chile to make deep cuts in its debt to foreign bankers.

To lessen the country's dependence on mining activity, especially copper, the government has promoted development in areas such as forestry, fruits, and fishing in which Chile has a comparative advantage. As a result copper now accounts for less than 50% of Chile's export earnings compared to over 80% in the early 70s.

There are no quotas or embargoes on imports, and foreign goods are abundant, though generally somewhat higher priced than in the US. The US remains Chile's main trading partner with some 23% of the

import market. Other important trading partners are Japan, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Germany. Chile is ranked 34th among the U.S. trading partners.

Transportation

Automobiles

The axis of the generally adequate road network is a hard-surfaced highway running from Arica (in the North) to Puerto Montt which expands to four lanes near Santiago. Many other roads, however, are narrow and unpaved. Good paved roads link Santiago with Valparaíso and other cities on the central coast and connect central Chile with the Argentine border en route to Mendoza, Argentina, and the Argentine highway system. The road to the Argentine border is frequently closed by snow in winter.

Bus

Santiago offers a very comprehensive bus system. Although there are many new buses, the majority are run down, and they are all crowded during rush hour. However, the price is right—about a quarter. The subway system is always a pleasant surprise to newcomers. Clean and efficient, it costs even less than a bus.

The streets are teeming with taxis which are easily recognizable by their color—black with a yellow roof. The service is good and prices are reasonable. All taxis now have meters except tourist taxis at larger hotels, which charge a flat rate for certain trips. Taxis levy a legal surcharge on Sundays and daily after 9 p.m. which increases again after midnight. This surcharge is not shown on older meters, but newer meters indicate holiday and night rates. In addition there are "colectivos" or shared cabs that follow fixed routes. All black, with signs on the roof announcing their routes, "colectivos" can be flagged down like cabs.

Public transportation can meet most needs, but as in the US, at the price of some inconvenience and waiting.

Railway

Chile has a fairly extensive but old railway system, although at this time no rail passenger service operates north of Santiago. Sleeping cars and roll-on, roll-off cars for automobiles provide overnight rail service between Santiago and Puerto Montt. Most intercity buses are new and comfortable and follow fixed schedules. Some long-distance buses feature sleeping berths.

Air

Air service is well-developed and important to Chile's economy. Several domestic lines serve principal Chilean cities. Various carriers provide frequent flights between Chile and the US, including two American airlines. American and foreign passenger ships and freighters call at Valparaiso.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service is very good. Privatization of long distance telephone service and local carrier completion has resulted in improved telephone service in all aspects. Calls can be made via the carrier of your choice (at last count there were six carriers operating in the Santiago area). International dialing rates are relatively inexpensive at this time, though the prices have been dynamic since the multi-carrier law went into effect in October of 1994. Local phone cards are available for placing long distance calls from any public phone in Chile or the United States. U.S. calling cards can also be used, though the rates tend to be slightly higher.

Radio And TV

Radio is Chile's most influential mass communications medium. There are a total of 300 AM and FM radio stations in Chile, with about 50 broadcasting from Santiago. Broadcasting is almost exclusively in the Spanish language, although a few English language programs can occasionally be heard. Several Santiago stations broadcast a broad range of American music in FM stereo. English language news can be heard on shortwave via the Voice of

America (VOA) and the British Broadcasting Company (BBC).

Santiago has six VHF TV channels, all of which broadcast in color, using the U.S. NTSC system. Programming includes a number of older U.S. television series and movie productions, local and imported soap operas, and a variety of news and local entertainment shows. There are no UHF stations. Some areas have access to one or two cable TV systems which carry the international versions of CNN, ESPN, TNT, HBO, AND MTV. There are also a number of stations from Europe and other Latin American countries as well as C-SPAN and Worldnet at certain times.

Newspapers, Magazines, And Books

English language books and magazines are scarce in Chile. Books in English can be obtained from a few local bookstores but they are expensive. The Chilean-American Cultural Institute (BNC) has 10,000 English language books and 115 U.S. periodicals. The American Association of Chile sponsors book groups which buy English language books for members' use, and the Santiago Lending Library is a volunteer organization which has a small but quality collection of fiction and nonfiction. (Both the latter charge a minimal monthly fee.) Students of Nido de Aguilas and their parents have access to the school library and some of the churches with English language services also have collections of books in English.

There is an English language weekly paper *The News Review*, also the international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are sold locally. American newspapers are available two to four days late through several newsstands. A subscription to the Miami Herald can be arranged with same day delivery, but it is expensive. The American Association of Chile publishes a monthly pamphlet, *The Spotlight*, which is full of information and practical advice for foreigners living in Chile. Likewise, The Journal of the American Chamber of Commerce is

geared to the needs and interests of the business community.

Chilean information media operate entirely in Spanish. *El Mercurio*, a conservative, Santiago morning publication, is Chile's most prestigious and influential paper. Several weekly news magazines representing various political points of view have a nationwide readership. In addition, there are magazines featuring women's fashions, science, economic-financial matters, and sports.

Health And Medicine

Medical Facilities

While in the US, individuals should obtain a yellow fever shot, which can be given only at approved vaccination centers. Though yellow fever is not found in Chile, the shot is required in some South American countries, and yellow fever immunization protects travelers in tropical and sub-tropical areas.

Most diseases or disorders can be treated in Santiago.

A number of local physicians have obtained medical training in the U.S. and Europe. Well-trained, English-speaking dentists and orthodontists also are available. The cost of doctor visits or dental care by these English-speaking or foreign-trained practitioners is comparable to US prices.

There are several hospitals in Santiago that provide the full range of medical services found in US hospitals, usually at a lower cost than in the US.

Many medical facilities provide round-the-clock emergency services, including ambulance transportation and duty medical personnel.

A number of pharmacies are open 24 hours on a rotating basis, and a few others are open 24 hours daily. The cost of some drugs is high, and many medications sold in the United States are not available in Chile.

Some commonly prescribed drugs in Chile are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and may have serious side effects.

Eyeglasses, including bifocals and contact lenses, and lens prescriptions can be obtained in Chile.

To protect your skin from the dry climate, body lotions, moisturizer creams and bath oils should be used. Suntan preparations should be worn at the beaches and skiing areas. Exposure to the sun should be limited to prevent severe burning, which occurs rapidly in this climate.

Community Health

Community health standards are generally fair in Santiago and compare to those of other large Latin American cities. The sewage system and trash collection are efficient. Nevertheless, earthquake damage and sometimes deficient supervision of sewage systems during construction and repair, e.g., road pavement, metro construction, etc., causes the drinking water to be occasionally contaminated in certain areas of the city. Otherwise the water is purified and generally safe to drink. Just the same, many people go through an adjustment period to the water due, in part, to its high mineral content; and some prefer to boil their drinking water. (To be effective water should boil for five minutes; however, boiling will not affect the mineral level.) Outside the larger cities water may be contaminated, and bottled water is recommended. No unusual pests or vermin problems exist in Santiago.

Food and beverages are generally safe. However, care is required in choosing restaurants and preparing raw fruits and vegetables. Milk sold in paper or plastic containers, often reconstituted, is pasteurized and safe. "Long-life" sterilized milk which does not require refrigeration prior to opening is readily available. To avoid tuberculosis, boil fresh milk found on farms. Good quality powdered and liquid processed milk is sold on the local market.

Santiago has a serious smog problem. Although the pollution hangs all year long in the congested downtown area, it is particularly heavy in the winter months when the fumes of heating fuels are added to the dust and the exhaust of vehicles. Even the outlying suburbs generally have air pollution problems, and there are days when the smog reaches up the slopes of the Cordillera. As a result, respiratory and eye, ear, nose, and throat problems are common for employees and dependents. Minor eye irritations are endemic on bad days, and "smokers' hack" hangs on for many nonsmokers throughout the winter. Joggers often quit running for the duration of their tours here because of the air pollution.

Preventive Measures

Because Santiago appears to be a relatively clean, modern city, people are often surprised at the number of intestinal problems they experience here. Almost no one is immune to these upsets (indigestion and diarrhea), but new arrivals are particularly susceptible to attacks, and mild disorders occur regardless of precautions taken. While most people adjust rapidly, some experience recurring problems throughout their tours. More serious infections such as bacillary dysentery, amoebic dysentery and typhoid fever usually can be avoided, if care is taken.

Wash all salad ingredients, berries, and fruits in an appropriate solution. (First they should be washed in detergent, rinsed, soaked in a solution of one tablespoon of chlorine solution to one gallon water for 15 minutes, and then thoroughly rinsed again.) Antiseptic products such as Zonalin or iodine tablets are not as effective as a chlorine solution such as Chlorous or its local equivalent, Chlorous.

In restaurants, avoid fresh, unpeeled produce. Mayonnaise, custard, and creme fillings spoil quickly, especially in the summer months. Insist on the freshest seafood at markets and restaurants.

Typhoid and hepatitis do occur. All travellers are urged to renew typhoid and to be vaccinated against Hepatitis A.

Respiratory ailments are prevalent. Chile's climate, with its sharp temperature changes from day to night, coupled with the pollution and poorly heated houses, contributes to a high incidence of respiratory illnesses. Sore throats and sinusitis are common.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport is required to enter Chile. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of up to three months. At the international port-of-entry, a fee, payable in U.S. dollars only, is levied on U.S. citizen visitors. The receipt is valid for multiple entries during the validity of the traveler's passport.

Dependent children under age 18 (including the children of divorced parents) arriving in Chile alone, with one parent, or in someone else's custody, are required to present a letter notarized before a Chilean consular officer in the United States certifying that both parents agree to their travel. To exit Chile, children traveling under one of these scenarios must present either the notarized letter used to enter the country or a letter of authorization signed before a Chilean notary if executed in Chile. In either case, the document presented must be executed not more than three months prior to entry or departure.

Travelers considering scientific, technical, or mountaineering activities in areas classified as frontier areas are required to obtain authorization from the Chilean government at least 90 days prior to the beginning of the expedition. The portions of Antarctica claimed by Chile are exempt from these pre-approval requirements. Officials at

the Torres del Paine National Park require mountain climbers to present an authorization granted by the Frontiers and Border Department, obtainable at the Chilean Embassy or Chilean consulates throughout the United States.

For further information concerning entry, exit, and customs requirements, travelers may contact the Chilean Embassy at 1732 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, tel. (202) 785-1746, Internet - <http://www.chile-usa.org>. Travelers may also contact the Chilean consulates in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Clara, Miami, Honolulu, Chicago, New Orleans, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, San Juan, Charleston, Dallas, Houston, and Salt Lake City.

Americans living in or visiting Chile are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Santiago and obtain updated information on travel and security in Chile. The U.S. Embassy is located at Avenida Andres Bello 2800, Santiago; tel. (56-2) 335-6550 or 232-2600; after hours tel. (56-2) 330-3321. The Embassy's mailing address is Casilla 27-D, Santiago; the Consular Section's fax number is (56-2) 330-3005; and the e-mail address is "santiagoamcit@state.gov". The Embassy home page is: <http://www.usembassy.cl>, where Americans may also register on-line.

Pets

Importation of household pets is permitted. The animal must be vaccinated against rabies within 30 days before arrival.

Health certificate issued by the US Animal Health Dept. must be obtained prior shipping pet. Rabbis and Health certificate are to be presented to Chilean animal Health Dept. upon entering Chile. Shipping a pet as accompanied baggage is usually safer, cheaper and more convenient than sending the animal alone. Animals are not quarantined upon arrival.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Chilean peso (CLP, written \$) is Chile's official currency. The official rate of exchange as of June 2002 is CLP\$660.74 pesos = US\$1.00. This rate changes slightly on a daily basis. Chile has 46 banking facilities, including several U.S. banks, many of which have numerous branches.

Chile uses the metric system of weights and measures.

Disaster Preparedness

Chile is an earthquake-prone country. Limited information on Chilean earthquake preparedness is available in Spanish from the Oficina Nacional de Emergencia de Chile (ONEMI) via the Internet at <http://www.angelfire.com/nt/terremotos2>. Other general information about natural disaster preparedness is available from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAY

- Jan. 1. New Year's Day
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - May 1. Labor Day
 - May 21. Battle of Iquique
 - June. Corpus Christi*
 - Aug. 15 Assumption Day
 - Sept. 11 Official Holiday
 - Sept. 18 Independence Day
 - Sept. 19 Day of the Army
 - Nov.1 All Saints' Day
 - Dec. 25. Christmas Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Bogota, Colombia

COLOMBIA

Republic of Colombia

Major Cities:

Santafe de Bogota, Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Bucaramanga

Other Cities:

Armenia, Bello, Buenaventura, Cúcutu, Girardot, Itagüi, Leticia, Manizales, Montería, Neiva, Palmira, Pasto, Popayán, Santa Marta, Tuluá, Tumaco, Tunja, Valledupar, Villavicencio

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

COLOMBIA, washed by the waters of both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, is a land of geographical diversity and broad historical interest. It is a bridge between two great civilizations that flourished before the discovery of the New World—the Aztec to the north and the Inca to the south. It is a nation of cosmopolitan Andean cities and booming coastal ports, and yet it spreads across thousands of square miles of mountains, plains, and rain forests. Also, it is the most Spanish of the South American countries, although it has been independent since 1819.

Colombia is steeped in history. During its colonial era, it was one of the

principal administrative centers of the Spanish possessions in the New World. Its present capital, Bogotá, was the seat of the viceroyalty of New Granada, which included what are now Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama. After Colombia attained independence, Panama remained part of the republic for 90 years. Simón Bolívar, the great South American patriot, was the country's first president.

MAJOR CITIES

Santafe de Bogota

Bogota is considered a high-threat area for both terrorism/insurgency and crime. Individuals must exercise caution and follow effective security measures to minimize risks and vulnerabilities while in country. Although the security situation is closely monitored, caution must be exercised at all times.

The city of Bogota is nearly 8,700 feet above sea level, on a plateau of the Eastern Cordillera (range) of the Andes and is surrounded by peaks rising to 10,500 feet. The climate is cool and there are only two seasons, wet and dry; however, it is frequently wet in the dry season, and there can be lengthy dry peri-

ods in the wet season. The weather resembles early fall or spring in the north-central U.S. average temperature is 55 degrees F. The San Andres Fault line also runs through Colombia, and there are occasional earthquakes. The most recent, on June 6, 1994, was centered about 250 miles from Bogota, measured 6.2, and caused hundreds of deaths and did extensive damage.

Besides being the capital and largest city (population 6,834,000), Santafe de Bogota is also the cultural and economic center of the country. While a modern metropolis in some respects, the city's infrastructure has failed to keep pace with its growth. Combined with occasional power outages, traffic jams are frequent and monumental.

Well-kept residential areas, schools, shopping malls, grocery stores, and many restaurants and movie theaters assist in adjusting to living in this city.

The city has a mixed look from old world Spanish architecture which dominates in the southern part of the city, to modern high-rise apartments which dominate the north. Scattered throughout all areas of the city, however, are structures in severe conditions of decay. The lower windows of old and modern

structures are heavily barred for security.

Bogotanos are proud of their cultural achievements. The city supports museums, universities, art galleries and many bookstores.

The English-speaking community is bolstered by a significant number of British and Canadian citizens, and many other people of European origin who live in the city. While Bogota is not considered a tourist center, about 1,000 Americans, mostly business representatives, visit the city annually.

Food

Bogota has an abundance of fresh foods and many varieties of fruits and vegetables; frozen seafood is carried by the better stores. Meat markets have large assortments of fresh meat. The quality is adequate, although meats are usually not aged and cuts often differ from those in the U.S.

Pasteurized milk is available in any supermarket and powdered milk is available, although expensive.

Local supermarkets are similar in style to those in the U.S. There is a variety of local and imported items, but fewer, smaller than in the U.S. There is usually a full stock of staple items. Some local supermarkets offer a variety of high-quality imported foods such as pate and smoked oysters, at very high prices.

Clothing

Clothing needed in Bogota is similar to that worn on the East Coast in the late fall season. The weather can be crisp and temperatures chilly. All-weather coats and umbrellas are a good idea. Styles for both men and women are fashionable and similar to that worn in the U.S.

Men: Colombian men tend to dress conservatively. Suits are worn more than sport coat-and-slacks combinations. Colors are also conservative—greys, dark blues and black predominate. Lightweight wool suits are recommended.

A wide variety of ready-made 100% wool and fine blended fabric suits and sport coats are available locally, but prices can be high. You will experience difficulty in obtaining ready-made suits in long sizes larger than 42.

Men's shirts must be tailor-made for sleeve length greater than 34.

Several tailors do excellent work and hand-tailored suits or of either imported or locally made material. Repair services are also available and reasonable. Socks and underwear are available, but do not equal U.S. quality.

Shoes are manufactured in Colombia, although it can be difficult to find a proper fit and the variety of styles is limited. Shoes and boots can be made to measure at reasonable cost.

Women: Shorts are rarely worn in Bogota, but are useful for tennis and trips to the "hot country." Skirts and sweaters or blouses are popular for daytime wear, as are lightweight suits and skirt-blouse-blazer combinations.

Jackets, short coats, and full-length fall coats are useful. Bring rain gear, including raincoat and umbrella.

Some name-brand lingerie is sold, but at higher prices than in the U.S.; therefore, bring a good supply of preferred items. Although nylons are sold, sizes are not U.S. standard. There are tailors and dressmakers who do good to excellent work at reasonable rates. Beautiful fabrics are available locally, but are expensive.

Locally made shoes are not made to American specs, and sizes vary. Narrow sizes and larger sizes are especially hard to find. Shoes can be made to order at prices similar to good quality, ready-made American shoes.

Children: Children wear the same type of clothing worn in early spring or late fall in the U.S. Heavy cloth-

ing is not necessary, but a supply of wool sweaters or jackets is recommended. Wool sweaters are available locally, as are good-quality blue jeans of local manufacture (prices are higher than in the U.S., and quality is poorer.) Children's tennis shoes compare with U.S. makes and sell for similar prices.

Bring raincoats, umbrellas, and boots. Bring baby supplies in your luggage.

Small girls wear jeans for play and cotton dresses with sweaters or skirts and sweaters for school. Older girls can use wool suits, skirts and sweaters. Lightweight coats and jackets are useful.

Warm clothing such as sweaters, long-sleeved T-shirts, corduroy creepers, etc., are desirable for babies.

Slim and husky sizes are hard to find and children with narrow feet cannot be fitted locally.

Supplies and Services

Many popular American brand-name cosmetics and toiletries are sold in Bogota at high prices. If you prefer special brands, bring a supply. Toothpastes and shaving cream are reasonably priced and many U.S. name brands can be found. It is best to bring a supply of family medical and cosmetic needs.

Bogota has several good dry-cleaning establishments. Since quality of work varies even in the best establishments, it is often necessary to re-press clothing which has been cleaned. Most laundry is done in the home by maids.

Bogota has many good beauty shops, and barbershops. Major hotels give inexpensive, quality haircuts.

General Electric, Philco, Westinghouse, Phillips and Whirlpool are represented locally, but appliance repairs are generally of fair quality.



Aerial view of Bogota, Colombia

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Religious Activities

There are a large number of Catholic churches in the city, and services are frequent during the week. There is one Catholic school which offers an English-speaking Mass on Sundays at 10:15 am. Masses are conducted by a group of American priests from the Mission of the Sacred Heart, and an order of Franciscan nuns offers instruction to the children. The chapel, located at Gimnasio Moderno, is located on Calle 74 between Carreras 9 and 11.

English-language Protestant, non-sectarian services are held in the Union Church on Sundays at 11:00 am. They also offer Sunday morning adult Bible study, Sunday School for children and a nursery service. The Union Church is located at Carrera 3a No. 69-06.

Additionally, there are three Jewish Synagogues, as well as a Baptist Chapel, Christian Science Church, and a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Education

Several English-language schools are available in Bogota. Parents are advised that all private schools in Colombia are Colombian-oriented and are administratively controlled by the Colombian Ministry of Education. Therefore, these schools are not, in the true sense, international in nature.

If you require special schooling for your child or desire some special type of education, curriculum, or extracurricular activities, contact either your agency or the school directly in Colombia for more information.

Colegio Nueva Granada is located at Carrera 2E No. 70-10. The mailing address is as follows:

Colegio Nueva Granada
 Director
 Apartado Aereo 51339
 Bogota, Colombia

Instruction is in English, but Spanish is a required course for all students. The school is divided into elementary (kindergarten-5); middle school (grades 6-8); and high school (grades 9-12). Each of the three sections has its own principal and counselor. The director of the school is a US citizen and U.S.-trained, as are most of the administrative staff.

Nearly all the staff are trained teachers—about 70% hired locally (both American and Colombian) and 30% brought from the U.S. The school is accredited with the South-

ern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The school year runs from late August to June.

A placement exam is required of all entering students before they are enrolled. It is given frequently during the summer months and at various times throughout the school year.

The school is coeducational with an enrollment of approximately 1,500 students. About 75% of the students are Colombian, 10% North American, and 10% dual citizenship (U.S./Colombian) 5% represent some 25 other countries.

The uniform of Colegio Nueva Granada as of the 1996–7 school year is as follows:

- White tennis shirts, plain white turtlenecks or mock turtlenecks, or white oxford shirts with the CNG monogram.
- Navy blue V-neck sweaters with two white stripes on the right sleeve.
- Navy blue gabardine trousers for boys and girls.
- Navy blue gabardine culotte-skirts for girls (optional).
- Navy blue CNG jacket - School tie for boys/girls on Fridays (middle and high school).
- Navy blue blazer with school emblem for boys and girls in middle and high school (optional).
- White, blue, or black tennis shoes or black, navy or brown leather shoes to be worn with white or blue socks
- A navy blue sweatsuit with CNG emblem required for elementary school.

The school sells uniforms on campus; plan to spend about \$200 per child. Jewelry and hair accessories are to be conservative and blue and white color and size for use with a school uniform. Only stud earrings

for girls are allowed. No earrings will be permitted for boys, and length of hair must be appropriate for school. NOTE- "Appropriate" in Colombia means conservative.

Special Educational Opportunities

Locally, both the Universidad de los Andes and the Universidad Javeriana provide instruction in Spanish and other languages using the most modern teaching techniques.

Those interested in linguistics will find the Instituto Caro y Cuervo one of the best of its kind in the world.

Classes in painting, sculpture, and music can be arranged at the following institutions: Universidad de los Andes, Universidad Javeriana, Galeria de Arte Moderno, and Conservatorio de Música. Teachers of piano and guitar are available and fees are reasonable.

Bogota has several good universities in addition to Andes and Javeriana. Worthy of special mention are Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Universidad Externado de Colombia, and Universidad de la Sabana. Special extension and night courses in many fields are offered at each. Instruction is in Spanish.

Recreation, Social Life, and Sports

Facilities for sports are limited and expensive. Although several country clubs have excellent golf and tennis courts, memberships are expensive.

Bogota has few public golf courses or public tennis courts. No swimming pools are open to the general public.

Arrangements can be made for horseback riding, and expert instruction is available at a reasonable cost. Many families make periodic weekend trips to the lower, hot country where swimming pools and tennis courts are available at the hotels and resorts. Spectator sports include soccer, boxing, wrestling,

horseracing, and bullfighting. Plaza de Santa Maria, the bull rink in the center of the city, has fights on Saturdays and Sundays between December and February. Soccer is very popular and fans avidly follow various local teams.

Lake Tota, northeast of Bogota, is a favorite fishing spot for foreigners and Colombians alike. The lake is high in a mountain basin in the Department of Boyaca. The lake can also be reached by flying to Sogamoso and taking a taxi about 18 miles to the lake. Its crystal clear waters are stocked and offer good trout fishing. Outboard motorboats can be rented. Two rustic hotels, plus the Tisquesusa, the Rocas Linda, and the Pozo Azul, offer comfortable accommodations. A small outboard motorboat (5-15 hp) is useful for trolling.

Trout fishing also can be found in Lake Neusa. Neusa is approximately a 1-1/2 hour drive north of Bogota. The drive is easy, and the roads are generally in good condition. Winding through the mountains, the roads take you through Pine and Eucalyptus forests. The entire trip is a steady climb into the mountains, probably 100 feet or more above Bogota. In Neusa, you can take a boat tour, or rent your own by the hour.

Deep-sea fishing is possible off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and the fishing enthusiasts will find trips to these areas rewarding. Fishing tackle is available in Bogota, but it is expensive.

Sailing is done on two of the man-made lakes near Bogota.

Scuba-diving and snorkeling can be done on the coast in Cartagena (1-hour flight from Bogota) or in the nearby island of San Andres or Santa Marta (both about a 2-hour flight from Bogota).

Hunting in Colombia requires a certain amount of planning and time. Dove hunting is popular, but the current security situation has

resulted in the closing of many traditional hunting areas.

The hills surrounding Bogota offer ample opportunity for the mountaineer, and the snowpeaks of the Andes are a real challenge to the serious climber. The Laguna de Guatavita, origin of the legend of El Dorado, offers a delightful one-day adventure.

Additionally, there are a number of gyms and spas for weight-lifting and aerobics. Monthly or yearly membership fees are similar to those in the U.S. Many have saunas and/or steam rooms, and some offer massages, facials and other cosmetic features.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

By virtue of certain characteristics, such as dress, speech, mannerisms, cars and homes, Americans are susceptible to criminal attack. Consequently, common-sense security precautions should always be practiced when touring and sight-seeing in Bogota and elsewhere in Colombia. For example, women should not wear elaborate jewelry when visiting crowded shopping areas of the city. Carry as little money as possible and guard your wallet, purse, watch and valuables carefully.

Several museums display the historical, cultural and artistic heritage of the country. A fascinating collection, consisting of gold objects fashioned by the Indians who lived in Colombia before the arrival of the Conquistadores, is in the Museo de Oro at the Banco de la República.

On a mountaintop, 1,500 feet above the city, stands the Spanish-style church of Monserrate, considered the characteristic landmark of Bogota.

The original church, built in 1650, was destroyed by fire. About 25 years old, the present church commands a magnificent view of the city and surrounding plains. You can reach the church by the old, almost perpendicular "funicular" railway or the newer Swiss-built

aerial cable car both of which take about three minutes.

A neighboring mountain peak, higher than Monserrate, is the site of the chapel of Guadalupe. This peak was the location of several earlier chapels dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron saint of Latin America. The present chapel, with its huge dominating figure of the Virgin, is a 20th century work.

At the falls of Tequendama during the wet season, the Bogota River plunges 475 feet into a narrow gorge below. Only 15 miles southwest of Bogota, this waterfall can be reached by road.

Thirty miles north of Bogota by train or car lies the salt mine of Zipaquirá—a solid mountain of rock salt. The mine has been worked since before the Spanish arrived, and while its tunnels penetrate deep into the mountain, the supply of salt has hardly been touched. On this site a massive Gothic-style cathedral has been carved out of the mountains. Illuminated by indirect lighting and severely simple in its decorations, the cathedral is impressive and unique. An interesting, colonial-style inn with a restaurant is on the grounds of the salt mine.

For a change of scenery and relief from the altitude and cool climate, the warm, tropical valleys that lead to the Magdalena River are ideal. Several resorts are within a few hours of Bogota. Girardot—1/2 hour by plane, three hours by car—is one of the most popular warm weather spots. Here, a large variety of tropical fruits and unusual pottery can be purchased in the town's center plaza.

Paipa, at about the same altitude as Bogota, can also be reached in about four hours by car. The Hotel Sochagota, in addition to its excellent conference facilities, is a popular first-class hotel fronting on a small lake. Activities center around the thermally-heated swimming pool but also include horseback riding, pool and billiards, and ping-pong. The

hotel also has 12 detached cabañas, each with sleeping facilities for six, fireplace, efficiency-type kitchen, two bathrooms and private thermal bath facilities.

Barranquilla, with a population of over 1.2 million is the principal seaport on the mouth of the Magdalena River. One hour by jet from Bogota, the city is popular for its February carnival. Its famous Hotel del Prado is a large country club-like hotel with air-conditioned rooms, swimming pool, tennis courts and exercise facilities including a sauna. The hotel also maintains the Prado Mar Beach Club at Puerto Colombia for ocean bathing and fishing.

In March, Barranquilla is the site of the international tennis tournament called the "South American Wimbledon."

Cartagena, population 918,000, is about 70 miles southwest of Barranquilla on the Caribbean coast. The walled city dates back to the days of the Spanish Main. Its famous fortress of San Felipe de Barajas and ancient churches, including the Shrine of St. Peter Claver, make Cartagena one of the most interesting cities in Colombia. The city boasts a number of modern beachfront high-rise hotels as well as the older, colonial-style El Caribe Hotel. Most hotels have swimming pools; some have tennis courts. Nearby restaurants offer good seafood. In November, Cartagena commemorates its independence in a carnival atmosphere which includes the national beauty contest for the crown of "Miss Colombia."

Leticia is Colombia's principal town on the Amazon River, 670 miles southeast of Bogota. Accessible by air, Leticia provides tourists with such attractions as Amazon River excursions, visits to primitive Indian villages, and trips through dense rain forests. Leticia is located at the northern end of the Peru-Brazil border, and it is easy to cross over to one country for lunch and then to the other for dinner, and return to Leticia for the night.

Entertainment

The National Symphony has regularly scheduled concerts during most of the year, often with world-famous guest artists. Dance companies, chamber music groups, and concert artists perform seasonally. Theater is available from time to time, but its enjoyment is limited to those fluent in Spanish.

Movie theaters and video clubs are numerous; those in the downtown section and better residential areas are equal to theaters in the U.S. First-run American films are shown with Spanish subtitles, three-four months after their U.S. premiere. Movies at the best theaters cost about USD 8.00 per person. Bogota has few American-type nightclubs; however, several clubs have floor shows and dancing and offer a welcome change on a night out. Many restaurants serve continental and regional dishes.

The changing of the guard outside the Presidential Palace at 5:00 PM every afternoon is a colorful ceremony. Soldiers dress in 19th-century-style uniforms, including spiked helmets. Various festivals are held throughout the year in Colombia. Cartagena has a world-famous film festival, and annual fairs are held in Barranquilla.

Social Activities

Social life in Bogota depends greatly on your own initiative. Because of the large number of Americans and educated Colombians, it is possible to have a wide, varied circle of friends.

The American Women's Club admits all American women in Colombia and meets monthly. The American Society is open to all Americans living in Colombia. This club sponsors monthly social activities and a number of charitable programs.

Social contacts among Colombians who enjoy having foreign friends can be also be made through the Bi-National Center (BNC) and its various groups and activities and

through a number of charitable, religious and social organizations.

Bogota has some resident business representatives from countries friendly to the US as well as about 40 other diplomatic missions. It is relatively easy to develop a circle of friends from among these groups.

Medellín

Medellín, with an estimated population of 3.8 million, is Colombia's second largest city. It is the capital of the Department of Antioquia, one of the country's most progressive areas. Although it was settled earlier, it was not officially established or named until 1675.

Medellín is an important industrial, commercial, and banking center and is located in a valley three to seven miles wide and about 25 miles long in the Central Cordillera of the Andes, about 150 air miles northwest of Bogotá.

Medellín, at an altitude of 5,000 feet, has a mild climate year round. Annual mean temperature is 70°F, with a temperature spread of 27°F. There are two rainy (winter) and two dry (summer) seasons of varying length each year. Rainfall averages about 55 inches annually.

The metropolitan area includes the city of Medellín and adjoining municipalities in the same valley. Total population of the valley is estimated at slightly above two million. The center of the city contains many large, modern office and apartment buildings. Despite a significant boom in recent years, however, a number of small businesses are still housed in converted residences.

Typical residential architecture is the one-story modern house, with red tile roof. There are two pleasant suburbs, 10 to 15 minutes from the city center, where the bulk of the foreign population resides. Comfortable, modern apartments are also available in the city.

Medellín, the original industrial heart of Colombia, remains a major

center of indigenous capital, and supplies wealth and talent to all parts of the country. It is a banking and insurance center and headquarters for ANDI, the Colombian equivalent of the National Association of Manufacturers. Medellín's industries include food processing, wood-working, automobiles, chemicals, and metallurgy. The principal industry is the integrated manufacture of textiles, cotton, cotton-synthetics and, to a lesser degree, wool. Other important products are steel and steel products, tobacco, plastics, leather, cement, glass, beer, ceramics, electrical appliances, soft drinks, and packaging materials. Medellín is also an important marketing center for coffee, bananas, cement, and cattle. The Federation of Coffee Growers, which exports Colombia's foremost dollar-earning product, has a regional office in the city.

Americans, British, and Germans, with lesser numbers of Italians and French, comprise the small foreign community. The American element, about 600 persons, is almost indistinguishable, as many are married to Colombians, or are the product of Colombian-American marriages. There is a large number of English-speaking people in Medellín. Many Colombian professionals are U.S.-college educated, and still others are acquainted with the language through travel and study.

Although the city dates from the middle of the 17th century, only slight traces remain of the colonial era. Many social customs still reflect the Spanish past, but these too are being rapidly modified.

Antioquenos, as the people of the department are called, consider themselves apart from other Colombians. The colony of Antioquia began with the immigration of a small number of Spanish Basques and Andalusians. The early settlers, noted for their large families, occupied themselves primarily with gold mining. As the population grew and the gold supply diminished, the people turned to the land and cleared the high, healthful regions for food

crops, and the middle levels for coffee production. Usually, the land was opened by the man who tilled it, and the small landholder pattern persists to this day. Larger families also meant forced migration, and the Antioqueno was the principal colonizer of the Departments of Caldas and Valle. Antioquia's population continues to grow rapidly, especially in Medellín proper (now over 1.6 million), which has attracted people from the rural areas in search of greater opportunities.

Antioquia is mountainous and, except for some fertile valleys and a banana-producing area in its northwest corner, is not well suited for agriculture. Cattle production is of growing importance. The Department of Chocó, which represents the other extreme within the Medellín district, is jungle-like, sparsely populated, and very undeveloped economically. Antioquia is Colombia's conservative stronghold and the Antioquenos, nearly all Roman Catholic, are devout supporters of the Church. A fairly rigid class structure persists and a large percentage of the wealth remains concentrated in the hands of a few families. Nonetheless, the region has traditionally provided opportunities for economic mobility to the industrious (or the fortunate), and an important and growing middle class exists.

Air travel is the most practical means of transportation in and out of Medellín. The airport, which operates during daylight hours only, is 10 minutes by car from the city center. Because of frequent fog and the lack of navigational aids, the airport is often closed and flight delays are common.

Driving in Medellín has certain risks, although the traffic is somewhat tamer than in Bogotá. Drivers in general, and bus and truck drivers in particular, are aggressive and undisciplined, and pay little heed to traffic lights or other controls. The size of the vehicle usually determines who gains the right-of-way, and under no circumstances should

pedestrians compete. Driving outside of the city calls for nerves of steel. The road network is limited, poorly maintained, and heavily used. Collisions are frequent and, although labor for bodywork is less expensive than in the U.S., import regulations result in much higher prices—and often delays—for repair parts.

Education

Two private schools in Medellín are considered adequate for the academic needs of American children. The Columbus School is a coeducational day school for kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1947 and sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, it is accredited in the U.S. by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The school follows both American and Colombian curricula. Most instruction is in English. French and Spanish are also offered. Extracurricular activities include computers, chorus, gymnastics, drama, newspaper, yearbook, and several participant sports. With a student body of about 900 (90% are Colombian), Columbus School employs 80 full-time and four part-time teachers; 43 are American. The staff also includes a counselor.

The school year runs from mid-August to mid-June, with a one-month vacation from mid-December to mid-January.

Columbus School is located on a mountainside, three miles northwest of Medellín. Facilities include seven buildings, 48 classrooms, science labs, computer lab, cafeteria, gymnasium, playing fields, and a 15,000-volume library. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 5225, Medellín, Colombia.

The Montessori School in Medellín is relatively new and plans to extend its grade structure by adding one grade each year. Currently, classes from kindergarten through grade eight are taught. The Colombian and American curricula are followed, with emphasis on English. Enrollment is divided between

Americans, Colombians, and several other nationalities. The school's directors are American. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 623, Medellín, Colombia.

Colegio Montelibano is a coeducational, day, company-sponsored school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It is located in the village of Montelibano, in the Córdoba Department, which is northwest of Medellín. Founded in 1980, the school is accredited by the Colombian Ministry of Education.

The school's curriculum is both U.S. and Colombian. Spanish is a required language; other courses offered include French, art, computer science, physical education, and vocational studies. Extracurricular activities are varied.

The school year, in English, runs from August to mid-June; in Spanish, the year runs from February to mid-December. Both calendars have a 10-day Easter vacation. The student body totals 387; enrollment capacity is 594. Of the 41 teachers, three are American.

Colegio Montelibano's facilities include science laboratories, an audiovisual room, and athletic fields. The school, on a 15-acre campus, is air-conditioned throughout. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 6823, Bogotá, Colombia.

Recreation

Because of the condition and extent of the roads, touring is not a popular pastime in the Medellín district. Nonetheless, a few nearby areas within a two-hour drive offer a change of scenery, and one of the prime pleasures of Colombians and Americans alike is the enjoyment of the surrounding countryside. Many Colombians own country homes, and these become the center of family life during weekends and the long Christmas season. Although Americans usually have no such refuge, nearby mountain areas provide many lovely spots for picnics.

Santa Fe de Antioquia is the original capital of the Department of

Antioquia. It has a population of about 18,000 and is a three-hour drive from Medellín. Situated on the bank of the Cauca River in what is locally termed the “hot country,” the city contains many examples of Spanish colonial architecture.

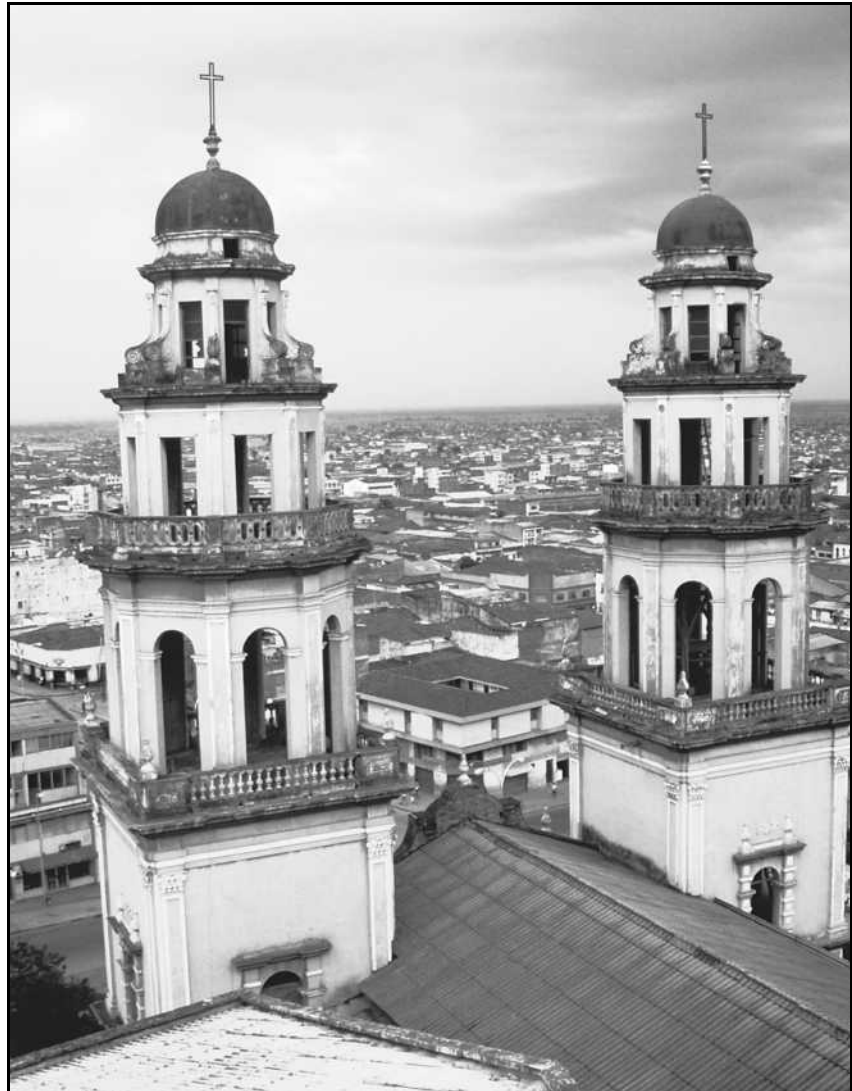
Rionegro is about an hour’s drive from Medellín. It is in an attractive valley at about 6,000 feet elevation. Rionegro was the site of the signing of the Constitution of 1863.

Quibdó, capital of the Department of Chocó, is on the banks of the Atrato River, which empties into the Caribbean Sea near the Colombian border with Panama. Chocó is sparsely populated by the descendants of escaped slaves who made their way to the hot, jungle-covered area bordering the Pacific coast of Colombia. The northern part of Chocó is said to have one of the most abundant rainfalls found anywhere in the world. Quibdó, with a population over 47,000, is about one hour by air, 15 hours by car.

La Pintada is a small town on the Cauca River two-and-a-half hours from Medellín and located in the “hot country.” As another alternative for weekend outings, it offers an attractive landscape and a modest hotel with swimming pool. The model ranch of the Antioquian Cattle Fund is also located here.

Medellín’s public athletic facilities are seldom used by Americans. There are private sports clubs, where membership is possible; Medellín also has two attractive private country clubs, each with a golf course, tennis courts, and swimming pool. Initial membership fees are expensive.

Spectator sports in Medellín consist chiefly of soccer matches, but baseball games are becoming popular among Colombians. Bullfights are held seasonally. Hunting and fishing are available, but facilities and accommodations within a reasonable distance from the city are almost completely lacking.



Church towers in Cali, Colombia

© Owen Franken/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Horseback riding at country *fincas* (estates) is a popular pastime. Water-skiing and sailing are possible on a man-made lake about three hours from Medellín.

Entertainment

Among the many movie theaters in Medellín, 10 are considered first-class. Newly released American films with Spanish subtitles are shown.

Local civic organizations and private industries sponsor occasional concerts and musicals. Good amateur plays are presented several times during the year at the Pablo

Tobon Theater. Several private clubs offer floor shows, and a few nightclubs are acceptable.

Medellín has active Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis clubs, through which it is relatively easy to broaden one’s contacts among other working professionals. Many women join the Pan-American Women’s Association, a group composed mainly of members of the English-speaking colony, including Colombians. There are a number of opportunities in Medellín for international contacts.

Although Colombians are favorably disposed to the U.S., most Americans find that it requires a major

effort to develop close personal relationships with them.

Special Note

In recent years, Medellín has been the center for a violent drug cartel. Because of this, the U.S. State Department advises against travel to this area. Visitors should check with the Embassy for further details.

As in many areas of the world, personal and physical security are increasing problems in Medellín. Nonviolent purse and jewelry snatchers abound on the streets, especially at night. Large amounts of money should not be carried, nor should jewelry be worn in public places.

Cali

Cali, Colombia's third largest city, rests in the southwest corner of the pear-shaped Cauca River valley, the principal center of cattle and sugar production. The city is also a manufacturing and distribution center between the Pacific coast port of Buenaventura and Bogotá. Cali is the capital of the Department of Valle del Cauca.

One of the oldest cities in the Americas, Cali was founded in 1536 by Sebastián de Belalcázar, who marched northward from Peru after aiding Francisco Pizarro in subjugating the Incas. Belalcázar's conquests afterwards were made a dependency of the Spanish viceroyalty of Lima. Parts of central Cali reflect the tastes of the colonial period, with palmed plazas lined by wood-roofed buildings. Charming bridges and walks along the river in the city's center date from the late 19th-century period. Newer sections of the city have incorporated varied contemporary influences.

Cali's elevation of 3,319 feet poses no physical challenge. Temperatures vary little throughout the year. Maximum daytime temperatures are in the low 80s; at night temperatures drop a little below 70°F, making it pleasantly cool in

most residential sections of the city. Humidity remains at a comfortable low year round. Most of Cali's moderate rainfall occurs during the Northern Hemisphere's fall and spring months. Heaviest storms cause flooding in low sections of the city, but the rain usually comes in brief showers. Hurricanes, tornadoes, and cyclones are unknown. However, several minor earthquakes have struck the city in recent years.

Cali's metropolitan population is approximately 2.1 million, and its physical size is about that of Washington, DC. The city center is compressed into a small area. Growth of better suburbs has been along and into the foothills, while poorer sections have pushed out across the valley floor. The city's main activity, industry, is a product of favorable location and transportation. Moreover, more than half of Colombia's foreign trade passes through Cali en route to and from Buenaventura, on the Pacific coast. It is also headquarters for units of the departmental government, the Third Brigade of the National Army, and the Air Force Academy at Marco Fidel Suarez Base.

About 3,000 U.S. citizens reside in the district, more than two-thirds of whom live in Cali. Most are associated with some 100 partially- or wholly-owned U.S. firms doing business in the area. Some of the larger ones are Grace, International Paper, Goodyear, U.S. Rubber, Container Corporation, Corn Products, Home Products, Colgate-Palmolive, Gillette, Union Carbide, Squibb, and Quaker Oats. A substantial number of Americans are working with the Universidad del Valle at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

Cali is becoming increasingly a center for tourism. The Pan American Games of August 1971 helped to bring the city to international attention, and its new Hotel Intercontinental and Palmaseca Airport have served as attractions to visitors. The Feria de Cali, with its week of bullfights, beauty contests, and parties,

is perhaps the major social event in Colombia during the Christmas and New Year period.

Education

Most American children in Cali attend Colegio Bolívar. It is a coeducational day school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The school was organized in 1948 through the efforts of the American business community, and receives help from the U.S. Government Inter-American Schools Service. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Colombian Ministry of Education.

The curriculum is U.S.- and Colombian-based. Classes are in English, with additional mandatory instruction in Spanish beginning in the third grade. Elective classes include art, vocal music, computer science, and physical education. Among the extracurricular activities are yearbook, newspaper, literary magazine, field trips, scouting, and various sports. There is also a special program for children with learning disabilities.

The school year runs from the end of August to the middle of June, with vacations at Christmas and Easter. In 1991, the student body totaled 1,050; of the staff of 90 full-time and two part-time teachers, 45 were American. The staff also includes a counselor and a nurse.

Colegio Bolívar is located on 10 acres of land in a rural area about 10 miles from Cali. Facilities include 10 buildings, 42 classrooms, cafeteria, auditorium, an audiovisual room, science laboratories, computer lab, gymnasium, playing fields, swimming pool, and a 20,000-volume library. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 26300, Cali, Colombia.

Cali has three other English-language schools: Colegio Bennet, for kindergarten through grade 12; Jefferson School, offering courses through the 12th grade; and the British-American School, which accepts children from kindergarten through grade 12.

The Centro Colombo-Americano offers Spanish courses, and also maintains an English-language lending library. The city's main bookstore, Librería Nacional, has a limited selection of American paperbacks. Most principal American newspapers are available, as is *Time* magazine, but often these are a week old.

Recreation and Entertainment

The Cali area offers several points of interest for outings or weekend excursions. Twenty miles northeast of the city, near El Cerrito, is El Paraiso, a country house which was the scene of the 19th-century romantic novel, *La María*, written by Jorge Isaacs and describing life in his native valley. Operated by the Colombian Government, the house is preserved in minute detail complete with original furnishings, and is beautifully located at the foot of the Andes. A similar country house, Canasgordas, lies six miles south of Cali. It too was the setting for a novel—*Eustaquio Palacios El Alferéz Real*. The house earlier served as the residence of Spanish colonial governors.

Within an hour's drive are various sugar refineries; Manuelita, in the city of Palmira, offers tours. Another site of interest is the Calima Dam and hydroelectric project, about a two-hour drive from Cali, in the western hills. En route to Calima lies the tranquil valley town of Buga, where lunch and an afternoon at Hotel Guadalajara's swimming pool provide a popular Sunday excursion. Buga's handsome 17th-century cathedral is being meticulously restored.

The nearest available beach with adequate hotel facilities is close to Tumaco (in Nariño Department), an hour away by plane. Hotel accommodations are adequate, but unpretentious. Other weekend trips can be made to the mountainous lake region near Pasto, where an attractive Swiss-run lodge is located, and to the interesting pre-Columbian archaeological site of San Agustín (in Huila).

Within certain limits, good recreational facilities are available in Cali year round. While no beaches are nearby and river swimming is discouraged, many Americans belong to one of several social clubs having excellent pools. Golf and tennis also are available.

Lake and ocean sport-fishing is possible within the district, but not near Cali. The Calima reservoir, one-and-a-half hours' drive from the city, is excellent for sailing, water-skiing, picnicking, or just for a change of scene. Dove hunting is available in the area, but big-game hunting requires a trans-Andean trip.

A number of good movie houses feature American films in English, with Spanish titles. Admission prices are low. Concerts and plays by local or visiting artists are given on occasion at the Teatro Municipal and at the conservatory. Visiting musical and dance troupes sometimes perform in Cali. Bullfights, featuring some of the world's best matadors, are given during the December *feria* week, and are also held at various times during the rest of the year. Boxing, baseball, soccer, and swimming meets are the available spectator sports.

Cali has many small nightclubs and discotheques, usually packed on Saturday nights. A handful of good restaurants in the city offer dinner at reasonable prices.

Cali has an American Women's Club and an American Men's Society.

Barranquilla

Barranquilla, capital of the Department of Atlántico, is the largest and most important northern coast city in the country. It is called the "Gateway to Colombia."

Although founded in 1629, it lacks the colonial atmosphere of many South American cities because there was little development here prior to the 20th century. Barranquilla emerged as an important seaport and industrial city with the

completion of the Bocas de Ceniza project, which created a deep-water river port at the mouth of the Magdalena River. This river serves as a major transportation link with the interior of the country.

Barranquilla spreads south from the river to a hilly area where most of the new housing and businesses are located. The city center and older suburbs show the effects of rapid growth and overcrowding found in most of the developing cities of the Third World. The population explosion (the estimated figure is over 1.2 million) has created a strain on city services, but new development programs are now underway, and municipal improvement has a high priority.

The biggest celebration in Barranquilla is Carnival, a four-day festival of parades, dancing, parties, and general festivities during which the city comes to almost a complete standstill. The popularity of Barranquilla for this mardi gras celebration—which in some cases rivals Rio in costumes and enthusiasm—is shown by the throngs of celebrants converging on the city. Pre-Carnival and post-Carnival celebrations abound as well and the outgoing Barranquillero is at its best during this joyous occasion.

Barranquilla is hot and humid year round, with cooling breezes during the windy season of December through February. The rainy seasons, April through June and September through November, bring torrential downpours which inundate certain streets and turn them into raging rivers. In parts of the city, curbs are 3-4 feet high in an effort to channel the water into the Magdalena River and out to sea. Knowledgeable Barranquilleros avoid these streets at all costs at the first sight of rain, since people, cars, and buses are frequently washed away.

Barranquilla's varied industrial base consists of chemical manufacturing, cement, metal fabrication, food processing, automobile assembly, textiles, shoes, publishing,

sugar, beer, glass, perfume, and clothing manufacturing. The city is the major air terminus for northern Colombia and is served by several international airlines. A darker side to the recent growth of Barranquilla has been the massive drug-smuggling trade. Both the U.S. and Colombian governments have active control programs, and the U.S. Consulate is a focal point of this activity.

The American community in Barranquilla is small, but should expand with the development of the El Cerrejón coal mining project. This project will exploit vast coal reserves in the César and Guajira Departments and involve the construction of two airports, a seaport facility, and a railroad to transport coal to the coast.

The consular district includes the Departments of Atlántico, Córdoba, Sucre, Norte de Santander, Cesar, Bolívar, Guajira, Magdalena, and the Intendencia of San Andrés y Providencia.

Education

Barranquilla has three English-language schools. Colegio Karl C. Parrish is a coeducational institution for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Colombian Ministry of Education, the school was founded in 1938. The Parrish School and other private schools in the area offer excellent bilingual education at the primary and secondary levels, and graduates are accepted at major universities throughout the world.

Colegio Karl C. Parrish follows the American-Colombian curriculum, with the study of Spanish required of all students. French is also offered, as well as computer science and physical education. Extracurricular activities include computer, newspaper, yearbook, and varied sports.

The school year extends from mid-August to the beginning of June, with vacations at Christmas and Easter. The student body totaled 727 in 1991; there were 66 teachers,

13 of them American. The staff also includes a reading specialist and a counselor.

Colegio Karl C. Parrish is situated on 20 acres just outside the city. Facilities include eight buildings, 35 classrooms, an audiovisual room, science laboratories, computer lab, playing fields, tennis courts, and an 8,000-volume library. Some of the classrooms are air-conditioned. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 52962, Barranquilla, Colombia.

The Marymount School is a coeducational day school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1953, it is accredited by the Colombian Ministry of Education, and is operated by the nuns of the Order of the Sacred Heart.

The school uses both U.S. and Colombian curricula. The study of Spanish is required of all students. French is also offered, along with other electives and several extracurricular activities.

The school year runs from the beginning of September to the middle of June, with a three-week vacation at Christmas and a one-week vacation at Easter. The student body in 1991 numbered 1,325, under the tutelage of 110 full-time and 20 part-time teachers, of whom 35 are American. The staff also includes a counselor.

Marymount is located in a residential section in the northern part of the city. Facilities include ten buildings, 80 classrooms, a gymnasium, two playing fields, two science labs, swimming pool, auditorium, and a 17,000-volume library. The library and a typing room are air-conditioned. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 51766, Barranquilla, Colombia.

Colegio Albania is a coeducational, company-sponsored school for children in kindergarten through grade eight. The school is sponsored by Morrison Knudsen International and accredited by the Colombian Ministry of Education.

The curriculum is U.S.- and Colombian-based, offering the study of Spanish as well as other electives, and a variety of extracurricular activities, including a Boy Scout troop, drama, dance, yearbook, newspaper, and field trips.

The school year follows the usual calendar here. In 1991, the school had 746 students. There were 85 full-time teachers, 25 of whom were Americans.

Colegio Albania is located one hour by air from Barranquilla in an isolated camp. Its facilities include science and computer laboratories, tennis courts, two swimming pools, three playing fields, and two libraries. The school is completely air-conditioned. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 52499, Barranquilla, Colombia.

Another school attended by Americans is Fundación Colegio Bilingue, located in Valledupar, about 150 miles east of Barranquilla. The school is a coeducational day school covering pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It was founded in 1979 and is accredited by the Colombian Ministry of Education. The curriculum here is both U.S. and Colombian. French is offered in the secondary grade levels; other elective classes are art and vocational studies. There is also a program for students with learning disabilities.

The school year at Colegio Bilingue runs from the end of August to the first week in June, with vacations at Christmas, *Carnaval*, Easter, and national holidays. The student body currently totals 380. There are 32 full-time and three part-time teachers, of whom 11 are American. The staff includes a counselor. Fundación Colegio Bilingue is located just outside the central business district. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 129, Valledupar, Colombia.

Several other private elementary and secondary schools in Barranquilla follow the Colombian system, and classes are conducted in Spanish. Also, universities here offer



Street in Cartagena, Colombia

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both graduate and undergraduate courses in a wide field of subjects, taught in Spanish. Anyone enrolling in these classes will need a working knowledge of that language.

Recreation and Entertainment

Several national parks located near Barranquilla have limited facilities, and their quality of maintenance is very low. They do, however, offer a chance to view local wildlife. No acceptable camping facilities are in the area, but interesting day trips can be made.

San Andrés Island, a one-hour flight from the city, offers excellent hotel accommodations, crystal clear

waters abounding with fish and marine life, and white sand beaches. This island is also a free port, and its markets stock a wide variety of U.S. toiletries, appliances, clothing, and food.

In Barranquilla, tennis, golf, bowling, and water sports are available, but most facilities are in private clubs. The Barranquilla Country Club has swimming pools, tennis courts, and an 18-hole golf course. The Club Caujaral offers full recreational facilities. Guest membership cards can be obtained for temporary use of these clubs.

Each March, the city is the site of the international tennis tourna-

ment called the "South American Wimbledon."

Santa Marta, one-and-a-half hours by car from Barranquilla, has excellent beaches and good hotels. This Caribbean city is also noted for its Spanish architecture.

There are several beaches within a half hour of Barranquilla. Unfortunately, the sea here tends to be quite dirty because of silt from the Magdalena River, and swimming is not recommended. Many people spend the afternoon at local beaches sunbathing, people-watching, and eating fried fish and *patacones* (fried banana slices).

Barranquilla has several air-conditioned movie theaters showing recent releases of both U.S. and European films. These are reasonably priced and serve as a major form of entertainment. A film club shows revivals of classic films in one of the local theaters.

Another major form of entertainment here is the video cassette recorder. Rental centers with cassettes in English abound. Local television transmission is compatible with that in the U.S. and offers black-and-white and color programming in Spanish. Several current American series are dubbed in Spanish.

Radio programs range from *cumbia* (Colombian folk dance) to classical music. Stations broadcast in Spanish. A shortwave set is necessary for the reception of Voice of America (VOA), Radio Canada, and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Barranquilla has a wide range of excellent restaurants. French, Italian, Chinese, Arabic, and other specialties are available, as are restaurants featuring steak and ribs. Restaurants serving typical Colombian food, such as seafood or chicken with coconut rice, are also very popular. Fast-food restaurants are opening.

English-language editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, the *Miami Herald* and, occasionally, the *New York Times*, are available. A small, cooperative lending library has books in English, and the Centro Colombo-Americano Library may be used by expatriates. The Centro Colombo-Americano often hosts art exhibits. Barranquilla public libraries do not shelve English-language books.

Cartagena

Cartagena, whose walled city dates back to the days of the Spanish Main, lies about 70 miles south of Barranquilla on the Caribbean coast. It was founded in 1533, and during the 17th century was a center of such importance in the Western Hemisphere that it was second

only to Mexico City. During Spanish times, Cartagena (full name, Cartagena de Indias) was a strongly fortified town on an island, but one of its two entrances to the bay was barricaded by the Spanish after a heavy attack by English forces, and the city is now permanently linked to the mainland. The greatest of the Latin American heroes, Simón Bolívar, made Cartagena his headquarters in the Magdalena campaign of 1811.

The famous fortress of San Felipe Borajas, towering over the approaches to the city, and the ancient churches, including the Shrine of St. Peter Clavar, make Cartagena one of the most interesting cities in Colombia. The old town is a maze of narrow streets, houses with tiled roofs and balconies, and small shopping stalls—a contrast to the new, commercial city with its wide boulevards and the Plaza Bolívar, where a huge statue honors the memory of “The Liberator.” Cartagena is a busy, modern city, handling the export of platinum, coffee, timber, and oil products. Cosmetics, textiles, sugar, tobacco products, leather goods, and fertilizer are produced here. Cartagena is one of Colombia’s major ports. Aerovías Nacionales de Colombia (AVIANCA) flies in from New York and Miami, bringing businessmen to its industrial and commercial houses, and tourists to its fascinating historical sites and cosmopolitan attractions. The population of Cartagena was 918,000 in 2000.

Cartagena commemorates its independence each November in a carnival atmosphere, which includes the national beauty contest for the crown of “Miss Colombia.” Candlemas Day, the religious feast of the Virgin de la Candelaria, is fervently observed every year on the second day of February at the monastery of La Popa, in the hills outside the city.

Cartagena is known throughout Colombia for its fine restaurants and its jazz and disco clubs. There are good hotels in the new city,

attracting tourists throughout the year.

Education

George Washington School is a coeducational, day, proprietary school for children in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1952 and sponsored by the Office of Overseas Schools and the U.S. Department of State, it is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Colombian Ministry of Education.

Both U.S. and Colombian curricula are used. Spanish is offered, along with art, computer science, and physical education. Extracurricular activities include drama, gymnastics/dance, literary and news publications, field trips, and varied sports.

The school year extends from mid-August to the beginning of June, with vacations at Christmas, Easter, and U.S. and Colombian holidays. In 1991, the enrollment at George Washington School was 483. Of 27 full-time and seven part-time teachers, eight were Americans.

George Washington School is located on beach front property in Cartagena. Facilities include 20 classrooms, science and computer laboratories, athletic fields, cafeteria, and a 11,000-volume library. The mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 2899, Cartagena, Colombia.

Bucaramanga

Bucaramanga, the capital of Santander Department, is in north central Colombia, about 200 miles northeast of Bogotá. It is situated in the Cordillera Oriental of the Andes Mountains at an altitude of 3,340 feet. The city was founded in 1622, and many of its colonial monuments and buildings are still in evidence. Today, with a population of 1.5 million, Bucaramanga is a leading commercial city in the center of the country’s coffee and tobacco area. Cacao and cotton are also produced. Several manufacturing ventures in the city produce cigars, cigarettes,

textiles, straw hats, and iron products.

Known for its beautiful parks, Bucaramanga is often called Colombia's "garden city." It is also noted for the modern Universidad Industrial de Santander, which opened here in 1947.

Many American children in the area attend the Pan-American School, a coeducational, day, proprietary institution. Implementing a U.S. and Colombian curriculum (French is a required language), the school year extends from February to December, with vacations at Christmas, Easter, and from mid-June to mid-July. In 1991, the school had 318 students. Nine of the school's 24 full-time teachers were American. The school has a cafeteria, science lab, computer lab, and playing field. The school is located on five acres of land just outside the city; the mailing address is Apartado Aéreo 522, Bucaramanga, Colombia.

OTHER CITIES

ARMENIA, located in west-central Colombia, about 100 miles west of Bogotá, is a relatively new city. The city is situated in a rich agricultural region, best known for coffee and for the production of food and beverages. Other crops grown include corn, beans, silk, sugarcane, and plantains. Its population, counted with neighboring Calarcá, has already reached 306,000. As the capital of Quindío Department, it is the seat of a university, founded in 1962.

BELLO, at 4,905 feet above sea level, is located in northwestern Colombia. Situated on the Río Porce, in a fertile region, Bello was once a commercial center. Today, it is a part of the industrial complex of Medellín, located six miles south. The major industries are textile milling and brush manufacturing. Bello's estimated population is 370,000.

BUENAVENTURA is a Pacific port, about 50 miles west of Cali. Located on Cascajal Island in Buenaventura Bay, the city is the shipping point for the tobacco and sugar produced in the nearby Cauca Valley. Other items exported from here include coffee, hides, platinum, and gold. The city was founded in 1540, but was destroyed by Indian raids in the 16th century. Buenaventura's importance as a port increased with the building of the Panama Canal. It has steamer connections with Panama and is also the terminus of railroads in western Colombia. The current population is 271,400.

CÚCUTU (also known as San José de Cúcuta) is in northeast Colombia, 250 miles north of Bogotá. It is the capital of Norte de Santander Department, near the Venezuelan border on the Colombia-Venezuela highway. Cúcutu was founded in 1733 and captured from Spanish forces by Simón Bolívar in 1813. From here, Bolívar set out on his march to Caracas. Destroyed by an earthquake in 1875, Cúcutu was rebuilt, and today its population, including the environs, is 682,325. Cúcutu is an industrial city and the center of a rich coffee, oil, and mineral region. The city is linked by air, river, and railway connections with the cities of northeastern Colombia and Venezuela.

GIRARDOT is about 50 miles southeast of Bogotá, and one of the most popular warm-weather spots in the country. The city is noted for its numerous acacia trees. Also, large varieties of tropical fruits, as well as unusual pottery, can be purchased in the town's central plaza. Founded in 1853, Girardot is a commercial center whose principal products include coffee, livestock, and tobacco. The current population is close to 125,000.

Located in northern Colombia near the Río Porce, **ITAGÜI** was formerly a resort and local commercial center. Today, like other cities in the area, Itagüi is a part of the industrial complex of Medellín, located five miles northeast. The important

industry in Itagüi is textile milling. Its population is close to 435,000 (2001).

LETICIA, capital of the Amazonas *comisaria* (lesser territory), is Colombia's principal town on the Amazon River, 670 miles southeast of Bogotá. Accessible by air, it provides tourists with such attractions as Amazon River excursions, visits to primitive Indian villages, and trips through dense rain forests. Leticia has practically no industry and relies on rubber gathering as a major economic activity. Leticia is located at the northern end of the Peru-Brazil border, and it is easy to make border crossings among the three countries in one day. The town, with a population of approximately 8,000, has been the site of several border disputes between Peru and Colombia. Peru ceded it by treaty in 1922, but seized it back 10 years later. The region was ultimately awarded to Colombia by the League of Nations in 1934.

MANIZALES, capital of Caldas Department, is 100 miles west of Bogotá and 125 miles north of Cali. Located at an altitude of 7,063 feet, it is a commercial and agricultural center in an area producing much of the country's coffee. The city was founded in 1847 by gold prospectors and there are gold and silver mines nearby. A cement plant is located in the city, as are factories producing agricultural machines, textiles, refrigerators, furniture, and leather goods. Manizales is the site of the University of Caldas. An earthquake destroyed Manizales in 1878, and it was leveled by fire in 1925. Situated in a higher and cooler setting than Cali, Manizales straddles a narrow ridge beneath snow-capped Mt. Ruiz, where adventurous souls have tried skiing on the 16,000-foot slope of year-round snow. The population today, including nearby Villamaria, is over 330,000.

MONTERÍA, with a population of over 230,000, is the capital of Córdoba Department. Situated in northwestern Colombia, it is an inland port on the Río Sinú. The city

was originally a Zenúe Indian village used as a hunting post—Montería means “hunting” in Spanish. Industries here include lumbering, stock raising, and tagua nut production. The University of Córdoba is located here.

NEIVA, the capital city of Huila Department, is located in south-central Colombia, over 100 miles south of the nation’s capital. Capt. Diego de Ospina claimed Neiva for the Spanish crown in 1612, after several others had tried unsuccessfully to establish the settlement. The city is basically agricultural, producing corn, rice, cotton, and sesame. It manufactures cement and cotton goods and processes marble. Neiva has excellent water, land, and air routes. The city’s population in 2001 was approximately 349,000.

PALMIRA, with a population of well over 150,000, is located on the Pan-American Highway about 50 miles east of Cali and 175 miles southwest of Bogotá. At an altitude of 3,000 feet, Palmira is situated in the Cauca River valley, and is known as the agricultural capital of Colombia. Major crops in the area include coffee, tobacco, rice, corn, and sugarcane. Tours of the sugar refineries in Palmira are open to the public.

The city of **PASTO** is located in southwestern Colombia, just over 100 miles north of Quito, Ecuador. It is the capital of Nariño Department and is situated on a high plateau at the foot of the Galeras volcano. Pasto has flour and textile mills, sugar refineries, distilleries, and tanneries. Its principal product is wooden bowls finished with locally produced varnish. Founded in 1539, the city served as royalist headquarters during the revolutionary wars. The University of Nariño is located here. Pasto’s population is almost 405,000 (2001 est.).

POPAYÁN, 75 miles south of Cali, is situated at an altitude of 5,500 feet on a volcanic terrace above the Cauca River. The city was founded in 1536 by Sebastián de Benalcázar and was the most important settle-

ment in southwest Colombia during the colonial and immediate post-independence periods. During colonial times, Popayán prospered as a religious, cultural, and aristocratic trade center. Following Colombia’s independence, Popayán lost much of its commercial importance, but retained its cultural prominence. There has been a university here since 1827. With a population of 230,137 (2001 est.), it is the capital of the Department of Cauca. Coffee is the chief commercial activity; mining is also done in the surrounding region. The city has several small manufacturing enterprises. These industries process food and beverages and manufacture building materials and clothing. Popayán is the repository of many priceless examples of Spanish colonial art and architecture. Numerous buildings destroyed in a recent devastating earthquake are now being restored. A visit to the city during Holy Week to view the internationally famous religious processions is worthwhile.

SANTA MARTA is situated in northern Colombia on the Caribbean Sea, 50 miles east of Barranquilla. Founded in 1525 by Rodrigo de Bastidas, Santa Marta is the oldest city in Colombia. It became an important banana shipping center in the late 19th century; today, the city’s banana industry is operated by the United Fruit Company and is one of the most important in South America. The Atlantic Railway, which climbs through the beautiful mountains to connect Santa Marta with the interior, was completed in 1961. The city is also accessible by highway and air. With a population over 235,000, Santa Marta has fine beaches and is a tourist resort. Santa Marta is the home of the Technological University of Magdalena. Simón Bolívar died on an estate near here in 1830.

TULUÁ is situated in western Colombia, over 100 miles from Bogotá. It was originally settled by the Putimáes Indians and called Villa de Jerez by the explorers. The Indians resisted the Spanish attempts at conquest and, in 1636,

Tuluá was established as a large cattle ranch and Indian village. It was not until 1814 that the city won municipal status. Primarily an agricultural center, Tuluá produces yeast, beef, and milk. An annual fair is held to display prize cattle and industrial goods. It is located near the Puerto Berío-Popayán railroad and the Pan-American Highway. The population here is almost 185,000.

TUMACO is located in southwestern Colombia, 375 miles from Bogotá. Situated on a small island just off the coast, it is Colombia’s southernmost Pacific port. A commercial center, with about 160,000 residents, the city is the center of lumbering activity including plywood and molding factories. Gold mines are in operation near Tumaco. Tumaco exports ivory, nuts, cacao, tobacco, vegetables, coffee, and other items produced in the country’s interior.

TUNJA, 85 miles northeast of Bogotá, on the Pan-American Highway, is the capital of Boyacá Department. The city was founded in 1529 and became independent from Spain in 1811. Many of its early structures are still standing. Situated in the Cordillera Oriental of the Andes, Tunja is a commercial center and distribution point for coal, emeralds, mineral water, and agricultural products produced in the area. Tunja is the home of the Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia. The city is linked by rail and highway to Bogotá. Tunja’s population is about 123,000 (2001 est.).

VALLEDUPAR, the capital city of César Department, has a population of approximately 354,000 (2001 est.). It is situated in northern Colombia, just west of the Venezuelan border. Founded in 1550, the city was prosperous during the colonial period but experienced setbacks during the 19th-century civil wars. Today, as a commercial hub, Valledupar produces bricks and ice. A large sawmill is also located here.

VILLAVICENCIO lies on the Meta River, about 50 miles southeast of Bogotá. Its position in the eastern foothills of the Andes makes it the gateway to the eastern plains of Colombia and the primary urban center of the llanos and forest region in this area of the country. Villavicencio is the capital of Meta Department. The climate here is warm, and the town is a cattle center with a frontier atmosphere. Industries include a distillery, a brewery, soap factories, coffee-roasting plants, and saddleries. Other products are coffee, bananas, rubber, and rice. The current population is about 340,300.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Colombia (about 440,000 square miles), roughly the size of Texas, Arkansas, and New Mexico combined, is in northwest South America. Its location on the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean, proximity to the Panama Canal, and economic potential give it a position of international importance.

As well as its frontier with Panama on the northwest, Colombia shares borders with Ecuador and Peru on the south, with Brazil on the southeast, and with Venezuela on the northeast.

The Andes dominate the western two-fifths of Colombia, giving it a very different character from the remaining three-fifths in the east. The Amazon region of southeastern Colombia lies below the Equator.

Well over 90% of the population is concentrated in the mountainous west and along the Caribbean and Pacific coasts. The remainder live in the Eastern Llanos, a large plains area, constituting 54% of the nation's area.

Most live on plateaus and mountain slopes, where elevation reduces the heat of the equatorial climate and contributes to the health and vigor of the people. By concentrating people in isolated pockets at high elevations, the mountain ranges determine not only settlement patterns, but also lines of communication and travel, which parallel the ranges in a north-south direction. Movement from rural to urban areas has been heavy, and nearly three-quarters of the population is now urban.

Colombia's climate varies with its different altitudes. Its three climatic zones are called "hot country," "temperate country," and "cold country."

Population

According to Colombian government statistics, the 2000 population was over 40 million. The population growth rate is 1.6%. Colombia is unique in Latin America in that 26 cities have populations over 100,000.

Due to recent improvements in health and sanitary conditions and a decrease in infant mortality, the population is relatively young: 31% are under 15 years of age, and only 5% are over 65.

In terms of total area, population density is a low 39 persons per square mile. This figure is misleading because the density per arable square mile is about 1,500 persons. Whether this ratio can be maintained or held down to a reasonable level through productive use of large jungle, forest, and plains areas is a major socioeconomic problem.

Settlement is divided into several broad regions. Each has been rather isolated by geologic obstacles to travel, so each has a high degree of economic independence of essential raw materials and fuel. Much of the prevalent regional sentiment can be traced to early settlement patterns.

When the Spanish Colonists entered what is now Colombia, they found a rather well-organized Indian population on the plateaus and high valleys of the Eastern Cordillera. A moderate climate, adequate natural resources, and Indian labor allowed the Cundinamarca-Boyaca area and parts of Tolima and Huila to develop into an economic entity which today has the heaviest concentration of people in the country. Here, Bogota became the economic, political, and cultural center of Colombia.

In the early 19th century, another population center developed along the northern end of the Eastern Cordillera when the export of cinchona bark became highly profitable. White settlers then appeared in significant numbers in what are now Santander and Norte de Santander.

A third population center developed in the area of the Departments of Antioquia and Caldas, usually called the Antioquia region. Other major population concentrations are in the Cauca River Valley (from Popayan to Cali and Cartagena), and the ocean ports: Buenaventura and the Pacific coast and the Cartagena-Barranquilla-Santa Marta region along the Atlantic shore.

Among the countries of Latin America, Colombia is commonly described as a mestizo nation, rather than a white or an Indian one, with a mixed and diverse society.

Colombians describe their society as tri-ethnic, due to mingling between Caucasians and peoples of African descent with the original Indians to form a new combination. This fusion has taken nearly four centuries and, consequently, most Colombians are of mixed origin. Ethnic boundaries have not been completely erased. Colombians still attach importance to ancestral characteristics, although these no longer demarcate distinct social groups.

Spanish is spoken throughout Colombia, except by small groups of

Indians who still speak aboriginal languages; however, these groups are becoming increasingly bilingual. San Andres, a small island Department in the Caribbean, is another exception; San Andrians speak English as a first language. Colombians are proud of their Spanish and consider it, especially that spoken by the upper classes in Bogota and other large cities, as the purest form of that language in Latin America today.

Colombia is overwhelmingly a Catholic country (approximately 90%.) Although freedom of worship is guaranteed by the Constitution, the Catholic Church receives some funds from the government and exercises considerable, although diminishing, influence over education. The church is the major social force in Colombia.

Public Institutions

The Republic of Colombia was established in 1823. In the same year, the United States became one of the first countries to recognize the new Republic and establish a resident diplomatic mission.

Colombia, unlike many Latin American countries, established an early tradition of civilian governments and regular free elections. Despite this background, Colombia's history has been marred by periods of violent political conflict. The period known as "La Violencia" in the 1940s and 1950s claimed between 100,000 and 200,000 lives. More recently, drug and guerrilla-related violence have plagued Colombian society. Since the early 1980s, the Colombian government has engaged in intermittent peace talks with guerrilla groups. In 1990, the guerrilla group M-19 (Movement of April 19) delivered its weapons to the government and scored surprising electoral gains as a legal political party. However, the two political parties, the Liberal and Conservative, soon shadowed the M-19 emergent preponderance. Two older and larger guerrilla armies, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation

Army (ELN), remain in armed conflict with the government.

A military coup in 1953 brought General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla to power. Initially, Rojas enjoyed wide popular support, partly for his success in reducing La Violencia. When he did not promptly restore democratic government, however, he was overthrown by the military with the backing of the two major political parties (the Liberals and the Conservatives), and a provisional government took office in 1957.

In July 1957, the last Conservative president, Laureano Gomez (1950-53), and the last Liberal president, Alberto Lleras Camargo (1945-46), proposed the formation of a "National Front," under which the Liberal and Conservative parties would govern jointly. Through regular elections, the presidency would alternate between the two parties every four years; the parties would also share all other elective and appointive offices.

The first three National Front Presidents brought an end to La Violencia and the blind partisanship which had afflicted both parties. They committed Colombia to the far-reaching social and economic reforms proposed in the Charter of the Alliance for Progress, and, with assistance from the United States and international lending agencies, achieved major economic development.

The 1886 Constitution was substantially amended in 1991 by a 74-member Constituent Assembly. On July 4, 1991 a new Colombian Constitution was enacted. The new Constitution, one of the largest in the world, expanded citizens' basic rights. Among others, the most relevant is the "tutela" (immediate court action at the request of a citizen if he/she feels his/her constitutional rights have been violated and no other legal recourse is available). However, keystones to the constitutional reform in 1991 were the need to reform Congress and to strengthen justice administration by introducing the accusatorial sys-

tem. Other relevant amendments were the approval of freedom of religion (in the past, Colombia's official religion was the Roman Catholic), civil divorce for all marriages, the election of a Vice-President, the election of governors, and dual nationality.

Colombia remains a democratic republic under a presidential system with Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government. Elected for a 4 year term, the President is the chief of the Executive Branch. He may not be reelected. The Vice-President runs for election on the same ticket as the presidential candidate, and both should be members of the same political party. The Vice-President fulfills the duties of the President in case of the President's resignation, serious illness, or death. However, the Vice-President may be assigned other special responsibilities, hold public positions, and even fulfill special presidential functions at the President's request. During the President's temporary absences, such as international trips, the Minister of the Interior or another minister in order of precedence performs his duties.

Colombia's bicameral Congress consists of a 102 member Senate elected on the basis of a nationwide ballot, and a House of Representatives whose number, currently 165, is elected proportionally by adult residents (age 18 and over) of the Departments and the Capital District. Congressional elections are held every four years, on a different date from the Presidential election. If a member of Congress is absent temporarily or permanently, his seat is taken by an alternate elected at the same time as the member.

Congress meets in two sessions annually, from March to June and from July to December. The president may convene special sessions at other times.

The country is divided into 32 departments, 1,025 municipalities—of which 30 cities have over 100,000 inhabitants—and the Capi-

tal District of Santa Fe de Bogota (herein referred to as Bogota). Governors and mayors are elected for a 3-year term.

Judicial power is exercised by subordinate courts and four high tribunals: The Constitutional Court (9 members elected by the Senate), the Supreme Court (20 members, highest criminal, civil and labor tribunal), the Council of State (26 members, highest tribunal for contentious administrative matters), and the Judiciary Superior Council (13 members, highest tribunal for justice administration and disciplinary issues of the judicial branch). The high court justices are elected for an 8-year term. Justices of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and the Council of State may not be reelected.

The Office of the Prosecutor General (Fiscalía General de la Nación) was created under the 1991 Constitution and serves as the driving force in Colombia's accusatorial model of criminal investigation. The Prosecutor General is elected by the Supreme Court for a 4-year term and may not be reelected.

The Office of the Attorney General or Public Ministry (Procuraduría General de la Nación) oversees the performance of public servants. The Attorney General is elected by the Senate for a 4-year-term oversees the performance of public servants. The Attorney General is elected by the Senate for a 4-year term.

The Office of the Public Defender (Defensoría del Pueblo), under the Attorney General, is elected by the House of Representatives for a 4-year term to protect and defend human rights.

Arts, Science, and Education

Bogota is a cultural center with thriving theaters, orchestras, opera, museums and art galleries. Other major cities in Colombia also support the arts. The Centro Colombo-Americano in Bogota and its coun-

terpart Binational Centers around the country also provide venues for art presentations.

Visiting dancers, musicians and actors from all parts of the world perform in Bogota. Films from around the world are also screened in the many cinemas, including current U.S. movies in English with Spanish subtitles.

Bogota's bookstores, among the finest in Latin America, offer titles in English, French and German as well as Spanish. The American Library at the Centro Colombo-Americano has a solid and current collection of books and recent periodicals in English.

A small video library is also maintained there, and the annex where it is located offers service to visitors and students on weekend hours. Other libraries also hold small selections of English-language collections.

Colombia's literacy rate is over 91%. The basic structure of education in Colombia includes two years of preschool, five years of primary school, and six years of secondary school. Curricula for public and private elementary and high schools are developed by the Ministry of Education.

Under the 1991 Constitution, education is compulsory up to age 15. Previously, only the first five years were mandatory. The student population, including 500,000 at the university level, is estimated more than 4.5 million. The more than 230 institutions of higher education in Colombia offer programs in a wide variety of disciplines and at different types of institutions which grant degrees at the technical and/or professional levels. The biggest public university is Universidad Nacional de Colombia, with the main campus in Bogota and others in Medellin, Manizales and Palmira. Some of the oldest and most reputed private universities are Universidad de Santo Tomas, founded in 1580; Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, founded in 1622; and Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario,

founded in 1653. Universidad de Los Andes in Bogota and Universidad del Valle in Cali are among the leading universities in the country and are known internationally for their academic excellence. Universidad Javeriana offers summer programs in Spanish language. Many Colombians do their graduate studies abroad.

Commerce and Industry

Colombia has a diversified economy which has enjoyed steady growth throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Contrary to popular opinion, cocaine trafficking does not play a major role in the overall Colombia economy nor does it provide significant foreign exchange earnings for the nation. Colombia is rich in natural resources and fertile agricultural land. It is the world's second largest producer and exporter of coffee. Other agricultural products include sugar, cotton, rice, bananas, corn, potatoes, yucca, cocoa, barley, flowers and sisal-like fiber ("fique"). Livestock also accounts for a large share of agricultural output, although in recent years the cattle industry has been in decline. Other products include petroleum, gold, platinum, silver, coal, iron, lead, limestone and salt. In addition, nickel exports are an important source of foreign exchange. Colombia's emeralds are world famous.

Coal and petroleum have become important exports in the last ten years. An affiliate of EXXON and the Colombian National Coal Company (Carbocol) together developed Colombia's giant north coast coal field. The project, named Cerrejon North, required an investment of US\$3.2 billion and represents the largest U.S. investment in Colombia. Production began in 1985, and exports grew quickly to over US\$600 million in 1990.

Occidental Petroleum Company and the Colombian national oil company Ecopetrol, jointly developed Caño Limon, a major oil field in the Llanos near the Venezuelan border.

Development includes facilities for extraction and transport, and storage and export facilities in Coveñas on Colombia's north coast. The field's proven reserves are over one billion barrels. Production from the field has helped make Colombia self-sufficient in crude oil and a significant Latin American oil exporter (approximately 250,000 BPD). Colombia must still import a large percentage of its gasoline, due to insufficient refining capacity within the country.

Drummond Ltd. recently began operations in La Loma coal deposit. This bituminous coal has similar characteristics to that mined at the Cerrejon deposit and La Loma's project infrastructure is capable of producing up to 10 million tons a year to be exported via a private port venture. The government can create incentives for foreign investors in mineral development projects under the Mining Code.

Colombia enacted its 1991 Constitution under the principles of sustainable development and the protection of the country's rich biodiversity. The creation of the Ministry of the Environment and the National Environmental System sets a new framework for the government to plan strategies for the development of an environmental conscience in the public and private sectors; to develop policies for the efficient use of natural resources; to enforce environmental regulations; to control industrial pollution sources; and, to improve the institutional and legal framework of the environmental entities within the system.

In 1990, Colombia greatly accelerated an ambitious program of economic opening, called *apertura*, which is designed to make Colombia globally competitive. The country's industrial base, while growing slowly, is undergoing changes as Colombia frees its trade regime to allow more imports to enter at lower tariff rates. Less efficient industries are facing foreign competition, forcing them to modernize, improving technology and efficiency.

As part of the *apertura* program, legislation was passed at the end of 1990 to liberalize and modernize the foreign investment, foreign exchange, labor, tax and foreign trade regimes. Changes include legalization of 100% ownership of financial institutions by foreign investors, a reduction in currency controls, increased profit remittance ceilings, and more flexible hiring and firing practices. Prior licenses for imports have been virtually eliminated. Tariffs, although still high for luxury goods, have been reduced substantially. These laws will improve the already close financial and commercial ties between Colombia, the U.S. and Europe.

Foreign investment is permitted in all sectors of the Colombian economy with the exception of public security (defense and police) and nuclear energy. The government is interested in privatizing or bringing private investment into previously restricted sectors such as telecommunications and public works. Long distance telephone services are scheduled to be provided by competing private companies starting in 1997. Private oil and mineral extraction projects must still be approved by the Ministry of Mines and Energy, and financial sector investments must have the prior approval of the Banking Superintendency.

Until recently, the Colombian government maintained a policy of gradual devaluation (crawling peg) of the peso against the dollar to keep Colombian products competitive in world markets. Colombia's principal exports are coffee, oil, coal, textiles, leather products, bananas, cut flowers, fruits and citrus, cotton, sugar, tobacco, cement, lumber, shrimp, rice, cowhides, and precious metals.

Approximately 80% of Colombia's population lives outside Bogota. Much of the country's economic activity is spread among several modern and urbanized industrial centers. The cities of Medellin, Cali, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Bucara-

manga, Pereira, among others, play a significant role in the country's economy. The existence of four major ports and six international airports guarantees that goods may flow freely to and from Colombia without dependence upon Bogota.

The United States continues to be Colombia's largest trading partner, accounting for about 35% of its exports and 39% of its imports. The two nations formed the Joint Commission on Trade and Investment (TIC) in July 1990 to further economic ties and reduce barriers to trade between Colombia and the U.S. The TIC met most recently in May 1996.

Transportation

Local

Taxis are easily available and rates are reasonable. You may call via telephone, and one will be radio dispatched, or you can wave them down on the streets. As in most large cities, your wait may be long during rush hours and on rainy days. All taxis are metered and inexpensive by U.S. standards, except the green - and - white tourist taxis, which provide transportation to and from the first-class hotels.

Special arrangements can be made to hire taxis by the hour for local shopping trips, sight-seeing tours, etc. Bogota and most other cities in Colombia have bus service, but security and safety are poor.

Regional

Airline service within Colombia is good, ranging from Avianca's modern jet fleet to some "budget" airlines' DC-3s. Fares are expensive by U.S. standards for jet service. Connections between major cities are frequent and schedules are generally adhered to.

Bogota has a major international air terminal, with daily flights to the U.S., Europe, and other parts of Latin America. Barranquilla and other major cities also have ade-

quate airport facilities with many international flights. Air fares for international routes are expensive; a round-trip excursion between Bogota and Miami between June through August and December through February, including taxes is approximately US\$700. At other times, the fare is approximately US\$500. Off-season special fares are currently offered twice annually. Both Continental and American Airlines service Colombia. The Colombian Government imposes a departure tax on international travelers of approximately US\$23 which can be paid in local currency or U.S.dollars.

Colombian drivers are very aggressive and often do not obey local traffic regulations. Traffic is heavy, road conditions are often bad due to numerous potholes. Minor accidents are frequent. Maintenance and body work are normally good, but parts and labor are expensive.

Traffic moves on the right. All distances and speed limits are given in kilometers, and international symbols are used for stop signs, railway crossings, etc.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Long distance telephone service is satisfactory. Calling the U.S. from Bogota is expensive, and you may wish to apply for a long-distance telephone credit card such as AT&T. A three minute call to Washington, D.C., costs about US\$8.48 (plus US\$1.49 per minute thereafter) during the week and US\$4 (plus US\$1 per minute thereafter) on Sundays.

Colombia has complete domestic and international telegraph and FAX service.

Radio and TV

Colombia has many commercial radio stations and reception is good.

Programs are mostly Latin American music; however, some stations broadcast classical music and cul-

tural programs and others give heavy play to American popular music, including rock and jazz. All broadcasts are in Spanish. English-language newscasts are heard on shortwave broadcasts by the VOA and American Forces Radio (AFRTS); reception is good. Numerous FM stereo stations operate in Bogota.

In 1992 the government began a program of restructuring Colombian television. Ownership has changed from completely government-controlled to shared public and private hands with the airwaves, transmission infrastructure and some of the production facilities owned by Inravisión, the government's broadcasting regulatory authority. Sixty percent of airtime must be given to Colombian-produced programs. Foreign programs are shown to supplement local production.

Inravisión operates three national channels. Programming includes local and world news, soap operas, sports, educational, entertainment and movies. There is also parabólica satellite antenna and Cable TV available for an additional fee, which offers several English-speaking movie channels as well as CNN and ESPN.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

All major cities have at least two daily newspapers; the two major dailies in Bogota, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, are available in all cities and on the Internet. Most papers lack comprehensive coverage of international events, but *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador* offer adequate coverage. An English-language weekly newspaper is available. Internet access is relatively expensive.

A satellite edition of the *Miami Herald* is printed in Bogota on a same-day basis. The *International Herald Tribune* and the *New York Times* are sold in major tourist hotels one or two days after publication.

The Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines are regularly available in all major cities. Copies of most US magazines available locally are scarce and at least double Stateside prices.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Reputable and reliable doctors, dentists and optometrists practice in Colombia. Many have been trained in the U.S. and speak English.

The Santa Fe Clinic (Hospital) is generally recommended, although there are several other local facilities which offer good care. Equipment and technology at the Santa Fe Clinic are equal to those available in good hospitals in the U.S. Nursing care is acceptable and improving. Support services such as laboratories are also above average.

Barranquilla has a University Hospital and private facility, Clínica Bautista, where medical attention of good quality can also be obtained. Doctors and support services are also adequate.

Common medications are available in Colombia and cheaper than in the U.S. Bring any specific/prescription or other medicines (allergy, etc.) in airfreight or household effects, since many brand names are unavailable locally.

Community Health

The Colombian environment is generally healthy. Sanitation in Colombia varies, depending on the area, from adequate to lax. Diarrhea, amebiasis, infectious hepatitis and other diseases caused by contaminated food and water are more prevalent than in the U.S. Water is considered safe in some large cities, but not in villages or outside the cities. Pasteurized milk and milk products of high quality are available in the supermarkets in large cities, as is bottled water. As in the U.S., mumps, measles, chicken pox, and poliomyelitis as well as other viral infections are encountered here.

Rabies is prevalent in some areas of Colombia; however, at present, cases of rabies transmission to humans are very rare in the cities. Antirabies campaigns are nagging in Colombia.

Preventive Measures

Most foods can be freed of contamination by cooking or boiling, or, with fruits, by peeling. Lettuce and leafy vegetables are treated by washing well and rinsing. A soaking for 30 minutes in an iodine or chlorine solution provides added protection.

Recommended inoculations include typhoid, tetanus, polio, yellow fever, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis A. Have your shots checked before departing, and keep them current.

Bogota's high altitude causes short-term breathing difficulties, insomnia, and weight loss in some healthy individuals. Normally, these symptoms quickly subside.

Malaria suppressant pills (i.e., Aralen) are unnecessary in the major cities, but are suggested for individuals who plan to visit eastern Colombia, the Pacific Coast and the lower Magdalena River Valley.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Air travel to Colombia is recommended; all major cities have airports American Airlines and Continental are currently the only U.S. flag carriers.

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Colombia. Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a tourist stay of 60 days or less. Stiff fines are imposed if passports are not stamped on arrival and if stays exceeding 60 days are not authorized by the Colombian Immigration Agency (Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad, Jefatura de Extranjeria, "DAS

Extranjeria"). U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Colombia must obtain a new passport and present it, together with a police report of the loss or theft, to the main immigration office in Bogota to obtain permission to depart. An exit tax must be paid at the airport when departing Colombia. For further information regarding entry and customs requirements, travelers should contact the Colombian Embassy at 2118 Leroy Place, N.W., Washington, DC 20008; telephone (202) 387-8338; Internet website - <http://www.colombiaemb.org>; or the Colombian consulate in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco or San Juan.

In an effort to prevent international child abduction, many governments, including Colombia's, have initiated procedures at entry/exit points. These often include requiring documentary evidence of relationship and permission for the child's travel from the parent(s) or legal guardian not present. Having such documentation on hand, even if not required, may facilitate entry/ departure.

Colombia's specific procedures mandate that minors (under 18), regardless of nationality, who are traveling alone, with one parent or with a third party must present a copy of their birth certificate and written authorization from the absent parent(s) or legal guardian, specifically granting permission to travel alone, with one parent or with a third party. When a parent is deceased, a notarized copy of the death certificate is required in lieu of the written authorization. If documents are prepared in the United States, the authorization and the birth certificate must be translated into Spanish, notarized, and authenticated by the Colombian Embassy or a Colombian consulate within the United States. If documents are prepared in Colombia, only notarization by a Colombian notary is required. A permission letter prepared outside of Colombia is valid for 90 days. A

permission letter prepared in Colombia is valid for 60 days.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Colombia are encouraged to register and obtain updated information on travel and security in Colombia either at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bogota or via the Embassy's website (see website address below). The Consular Section is open for citizens services, including registration, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Monday through Thursday, excluding U.S. and Colombian holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located at Avenida El Dorado and Carrera 50; telephone (011-57-1) 315-0811 during business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), or 315-2109/2110 for emergencies during non-business hours; fax (011-57-1) 315-2196/2197; Internet website - <http://usembassy.state.gov/bogota>. The Consular Agency in Barranquilla, which provides some limited consular services, is located at Calle 77B, No. 57-141, Piso 5, Centro Empresarial Las Americas, Barranquilla, Atlantico, Colombia; telephone (011-57-5) 353-2001; fax (011-57-5) 353-5216; e-mail: conagent@metrotel.net.co.

Firearms & Ammunition

Colombian law prohibits tourists and business travelers from bringing firearms into Colombia. The penalty for illegal importation and/or possession of firearms is three to ten years in prison. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Colombia in Washington or one of Colombia's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Pets

Pets must be accompanied by vaccination and health certificates certified by a Colombian consul. It is recommended that pets NOT be shipped as unaccompanied baggage.

Pets arriving at the airport as unaccompanied baggage after 2:00 PM cannot be cleared for entry until the next business day; unfortunately, the customs warehouse has no facilities for their proper care.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The basic monetary unit in Colombia is the Colombian peso (COP), a decimal currency. In writing, the same sign is used for both the peso (\$) and the U.S. dollar (\$) so they are often written either Col\$, COP or Ps. Both paper currency and metal coins are used; the most common bills are in denominations of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, and 20,000 pesos. Coins are minted in values of 50, 100, 500, and 1000 pesos. The exchange rate in June 2002 was roughly COP\$2,331.72 pesos per US\$1.

Among U.S. banks with partially owned subsidiaries in Colombia are the First National City Bank and Bank of America.

Colombia is officially metric, with all distances measured in kilometers, heights in meters and temperature in Celsius. Many bulk commodities, however, such as coal and wood, are sold in "cargas," which vary according to the material weighed. Generally, it is the amount which can be loaded on a horse or burro. Bulk foodstuffs, such as fruits, vegetables, etc., are sold by the pound rather than by the kilo, and gas is sold in liters.

Disaster Preparedness

Colombia is an earthquake-prone country. U.S. citizens in Colombia may refer to information on dealing with natural disasters on the U.S. Embassy's web site at <http://usembassy.state.gov/bogota/wwwhacsc.html>. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1 New Year's Day
 Jan.6 Epiphany
 Mar. St. Joseph's Day*
 Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*

May 1 Labor Day
 May/June Feast of the* Sacred Heart
 May/June Ascension Day*
 June Corpus Christi*
 June Saints Peter & Paul*
 July 20 Independence Day
 Aug. Battle of Boyaca*
 Aug. Assumption Day*
 Oct. Columbus Day*
 Nov.1 All Saints' Day
 Nov. Independence of Cartagena*
 Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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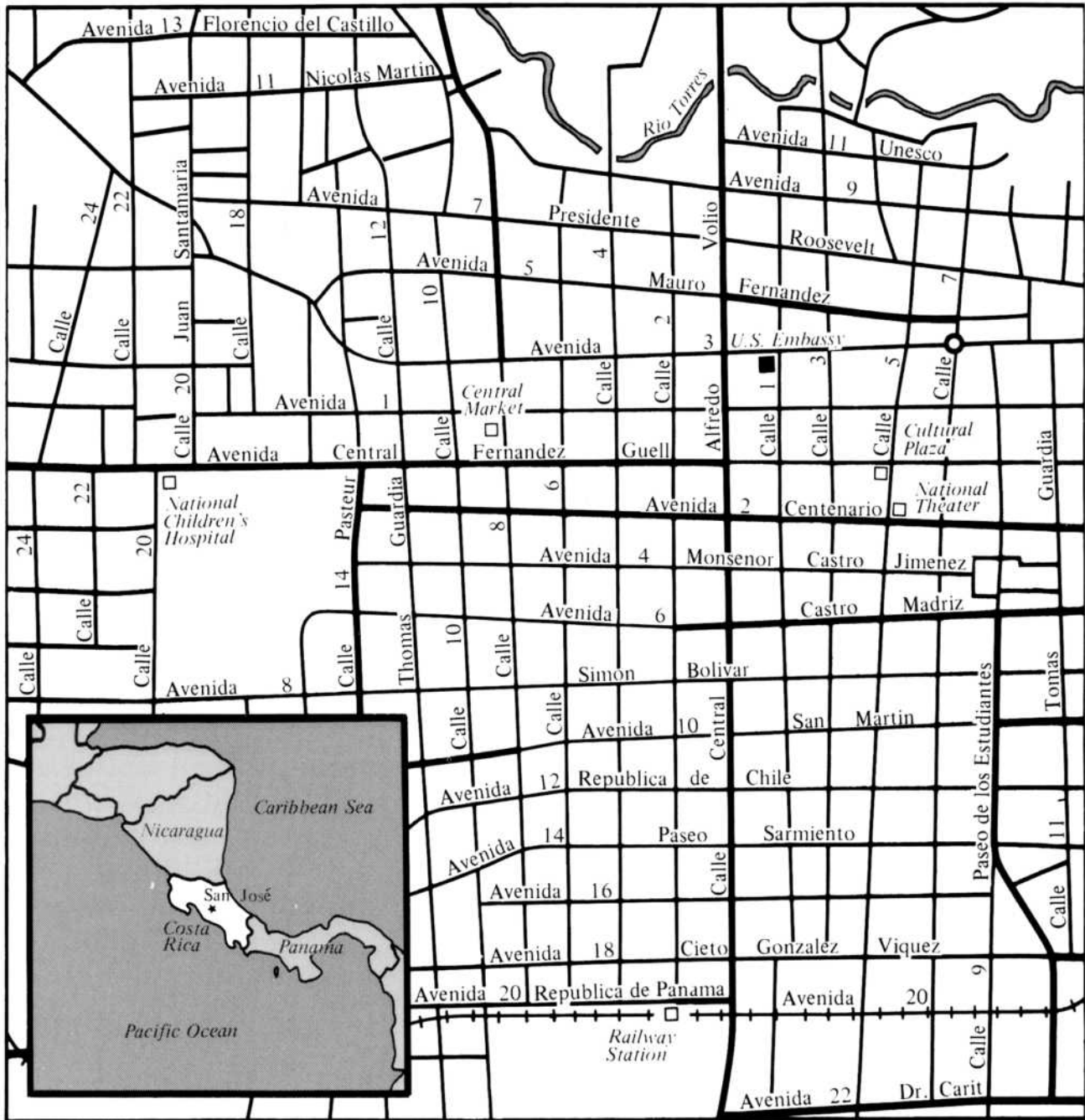
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San José, Costa Rica

COSTA RICA

Republic of Costa Rica

Major City:

San José

Other Cities:

Alajuela, Cartago, Golfito, Heredia, Liberia, Limón, Puntarenas

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Costa Rica. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes called the Switzerland of Middle America, Costa Rica straddles the mountain backbone that separates the Pacific from the Caribbean. Rugged ranges, topped by active volcanoes, climb sharply from lush jungles of the coastal regions and cradle a central plateau.

Legend holds that Columbus saw Indians wearing gold ornaments and named the region Costa Rica-Rich Coast. It enjoys a living standard considered the highest in Central America.

The explorers and "conquistadores" that were to come after Columbus did not find great native empires; instead, they found different tribes

that were loosely connected or fragmented completely. While important Indian empires were falling-in 1532 the Incas and in the 1540s the Aztecs-Costa Rica was left alone, mostly because dreams of gold and jewels had proved to be illusions. It was not until 1559 that Spain decided to conquer Costa Rica.

Costa Rica is different from the rest of Central America because its people distribute their wealth, land, and power far more equitably. Its social welfare system and parliamentary democracy have no equal. To its everlasting good fortune, it was the most neglected of colonial Central America. It had neither of the two things the Spanish conquistadors wanted: mineral wealth (gold and silver), or an abundant Indian population to work their haciendas. The absence of minerals and indigenous workers meant that settlers worked their own land-and there was plenty of it to go around for centuries-to form a huge middle class of yeoman farmers. Money became so scarce at times that colonists had to substitute it with the Indian equivalent — cacao beans.

Wheat and tobacco were among the first products to be exported to Spain and other countries. Costa Rica was transformed by coffee in the 19th century. The brown bean attracted foreign capital and immi-

grant merchants and promoted road and railroad development. In one of the major engineering feats of the age, the San Jose-Puerto Limon railroad was completed in 1890, and from it a banana empire was built in the process. It connected the U.S. fruit centers of New Orleans and Boston with San Jose.

The country boasts a population close to 3.5 million people, which by standards of the region, is not large. Also, the growth rate is only 2.3% per year and is one of the most homogenous of the region. 98% of the people are classified as white or mestizo, and two percent as black or indigenous.

Costa Rica is also homogenous in regards to social classes. Most of the population is middle class, and even though poverty exists, it is not as large a problem as it is in other Latin countries. By the standards of a developed country, Costa Rican incomes are very low, but when compared to other neighbors, salaries and earnings prove to be much better. Besides the poor and middle classes, there is an upper class, which is very elitist. The preponderance of a middle-class produces an impression of class and social homogeneity.

Democracy is the source of tremendous pride in a country that can

boast of having more teachers than policemen and of not having a standing army since 1948. Reform has always won over revolution and repression. Out of 53 leaders, only 3 have been military men and 6 can be considered dictators. Most Latin American countries can't affirm the same good fortune.

MAJOR CITY

San José

San José, with a metropolitan population of over one million, is almost completely surrounded by mountains, and just a few minutes' drive from the center of the city are foothills that offer a country atmosphere and lovely views.

The central part of the capital is divided into four quadrants by Avenida Central running east and west, and Calle Central running north and south. The arrangement of streets is logical, but initially confusing: Odd-numbered avenues (avenidas) are located north of Avenida Central and even-numbered avenues are to the south; odd-numbered streets (calles) are east of Calle Central, and even-numbered streets are to the west.

Street names or numbers are seldom used. Locations are given in relation to some landmark that may, or may not, be well known, such as a public building, a monument, a prominent intersection, or even a grocery store or gasoline station. Distances are expressed in meters ("metros" in Spanish), and 100 meters is roughly equivalent to a normal city block. At times the point of reference is a landmark that once existed but no longer is standing, a practice that works for longtime residents of San José but generally adds to the considerable confusion.

Most city streets in San José are paved, but many are narrow and rough, and congestion and noise are constant problems in the city. The

pollution at times can be stifling. Potholes are a constant threat to the unwary, both in the city and in the countryside, and often are deep enough to damage vehicles. Open manholes are a danger as well, since theft of manhole covers seems to be a favorite activity in San José.

Downtown commercial buildings usually have two or three stories, but newer structures are much taller. Residential sections have many modern homes of brick, wood, or concrete construction, with either tile or galvanized metal roofs. Parks of all sizes are located throughout the city.

The temperature in San José is generally pleasant, with two seasons distinguished mainly by the rainfall. The dry season runs from December through April and the wet season extends from May through November. Even during the wet season the mornings generally are clear, with the afternoons and evenings dominated by heavy rains nearly every day. Relatively high winds often are present during the dry season.

The average temperature in San José is 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit. In December, the coolest month, the average temperature drops to around 65 degrees. Temperatures drop into the 50s at night throughout the year.

Humidity in San José averages 80 percent throughout the year, and during the rainy season mold and mildew are serious problems. Leave a light burning in closets, but for more serious measures, a dehumidifier must be used to prevent damage. Electronic equipment, books, records, tapes, and photographic equipment also suffer in the humidity, and should be protected if possible.

More than 20,000 private American citizens, most of them retirees, live in Costa Rica, and approximately one half million tourists from the U.S. visit the country every year. Smaller groups of foreign residents include Canadian, British, French,

German, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, and other Latin Americans.

Precautions must be taken with regard to personal security. Pickpocketing, muggings, and assaults are on the rise, especially in downtown San José.

Food

Many newcomers to San José are shocked at the prices for food and other purchases, which often approach or exceed U.S. prices and are not typical of Latin America.

Most fresh fruits and vegetables are available year round. They include bananas, papaya, melon, grapefruit, oranges, lemons, pineapples, strawberries, plantains, tomatoes, beets, eggplant, radishes, cucumbers, zucchini, potatoes (white and sweet), carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, spinach, squash, lettuce, cabbage, celery, green and wax beans, and several varieties of fresh and dried beans. Local fruits and vegetables are of good quality. Apricots, peaches, pears, apples, and grapes are not grown in commercial quantities in Costa Rica, but they are imported by the better grocers. Prices for all imported fruits are high.

Good quality fresh meats are available at all times, and beef, pork, chicken, and fish are plentiful. Mutton and lamb are seldom available on the open market, but can be ordered from some butchers. Beef prices and quality are slightly lower than in the U.S., while chicken, fish, and pork are sold at prices similar to those in the U.S. Fresh and frozen shrimp is available, but prices are quite high since most shrimp is destined for the export market.

Several dairies sell pasteurized milk similar in price and quality to American brands. Other dairy products such as chocolate milk, ice cream, skim milk, buttermilk, cottage cheese, sweet and sour cream, whipping cream, yogurt and eggnog, and a great variety of cheeses also are available. The overall quality of dairy products is high.

Local supermarkets are well stocked with snack foods, packaged foods, pasta, canned meats and fish, and soft drinks. Dry cereals are available at high prices. Flour, sugar, yeast, chocolate, and other baking items are available, but packaged cake mixes are of poor quality. A few frozen items are available, but choices are minimal. Supermarket chains stock many imported American foods, but the prices for all imported items are inflated.

Clothing

Since temperatures vary little, basically spring and fall weight clothing as well as summer attire are suitable for San Jose. Local tastes and standards are similar to those in the U.S. and are becoming increasingly casual. Some lightweight sweaters are handy during the rainy season, when evening temperatures are slightly cooler, and for trips to the mountains. Umbrellas and comfortable rain gear are necessary accessories for your San Jose wardrobe.

Shoes made in Costa Rica and other Central American countries are available at reasonable prices. Styles are similar to those found in the U.S. Finding shoes made with American lasts is difficult and consequently locally made shoes may not fit satisfactorily. Shoes, however, can be custom made for prices lower than in the U.S.

While shopping malls do exist, as indicated, the major differences are price, selection, and quality.

A wide selection of locally made material is available for home sewing, and some imported material is available as well. Care should be exercised in buying, as "seconds" sometimes appear on the local markets. Local department stores have adequate supplies of zippers, buttons, hooks, and facings, but some notions, especially fancy trimmings, are difficult to find. Some women have used local seamstresses, with varying success.

Children's casual clothing follows U.S. styles, with emphasis on slacks

and jeans for both boys and girls, although girls are seen in dresses more often in Costa Rica than in the United States.

A recent change in regulations made school uniforms mandatory in all schools. Some uniforms can be purchased locally or from the U.S. Other uniforms are school specific and must be purchased locally. Prices for a complete uniform run between \$40 and \$50. Complete information about uniform requirements can be obtained from school representatives. Jackets, sweaters, and a water-repellent windbreaker with hood also should be included in a child's wardrobe. Locally made clothing is inexpensive, and of fair quality. Good quality, locally manufactured leather shoes are available in average widths, but extra shoelaces can be hard to find. Children's tennis shoes, made locally, are inexpensive and available in narrow to average widths, though no half sizes. Good quality boys underwear can be found, but underwear for girls is expensive if imported, and of inferior quality if made locally. Socks for both boys and girls are expensive. Infant clothing, as well as items such as receiving blankets, are available on the local market.

Supplies and Services

Some familiar American-brand and European-brand cosmetics, toiletries, and personal hygiene items are manufactured in Central America, and available at local drugstores and department stores. Common home medications found locally, and many medicines requiring a prescription in the United States, can be purchased over the counter. Generic medications are often sold.

A good supply of locally manufactured household products is available, such as soaps, detergents, floor wax, furniture polish, glass cleaner, insecticides (extreme care should be taken with some of the local products), and laundry supplies, although quality is below U.S. standards.

Locally made pots, pans, kitchen utensils, and dishes can be pur-

chased at moderate prices. Imported varieties also are available for much higher prices.

Laundries and dry cleaners in San José have modern equipment, but only one chain of cleaners offers U.S.-style martinizing service. San José has few self-service laundromats.

Small repair shops in the city service appliances, stereos, and cameras, but the wait is long and the quality of the repairs is poor. Household repair services are unreliable as well. Basic household tools are useful. Prices for tools are higher in San José than in the United States.

Many hairdressers have adequate equipment and competent operators, some of whom speak English. Services tend to be inexpensive. Satisfactory shoe repair is available.

Domestic Help

Many Americans in San Jose prefer to hire a live-in maid, as a convenience and as a deterrent to burglary, which is a major problem. Reliable maids are difficult to find. Some families are employing part-time maids instead of full-time, live-in employees. It is common practice to employ one person to do the cleaning and cooking for a family. For those who do not want a live-in maid, or who cannot find one, a guard or housesitter is necessary whenever the entire family is away from the house.

Some people also employ a day laborer part time to do heavy work in the home, such as waxing floors and washing windows. Local gardeners also can be hired for reasonable prices, and most have their own equipment. Tools are available locally, but are more expensive than in the U.S.

The typical cash wage in 1997 for a live-in maid was around 40,000 colones a month, plus 19.5 percent of their monthly salary that must be paid into the Social Security system on a monthly basis.



Street in San Jose, Costa Rica

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In addition to their salaries, both full-time and part-time domestics are entitled to two weeks paid vacation annually after 50 weeks of service, plus a Christmas bonus based on the number of months worked. Similar bonuses often are given to others, including garbage men, paper boys, and street sweepers. Maids are also entitled to severance pay when they are dismissed.

Full-time and part-time domestic employees are entitled to illness and maternity benefits of the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (the Social Security system). They are also covered under a Disability/ Old Age Retirement Plan. This is a compulsory program and in theory is funded through contributions by both the employer and employee. In fact, the employer generally pays the worker's share as well. Total contribution to the plan amounts to between 20 percent and 25 percent of the worker's salary. All domestic employees must be registered with the Caja.

Religious Activities

Catholicism is the state religion, and more than 90 percent of the population is affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. Several local churches offer English services either Saturday or Sunday. Other

denominations represented in San José include Episcopal, Baptist, Jehovah's Witnesses, Lutheran, Methodist, Mormon, and Seventh Day Adventist. San José also has a Jewish Synagogue.

Education

American children in Costa Rica have several educational alternatives, including some private schools that offer college-prep curriculums and operate on a U.S.-style August through June schedule.

During the past year, however, several newly arrived families have encountered problems with the school enrollment process. Missing required documents are the primary problem. These documents included: original school transcripts for the past two years, results of recent standardized achievements tests, passport or birth certificate, vaccination record, two passport size photos, letter of recommendation from the principal or counselor of the previous school. The schools require a personal interview and admission tests. Students will be tested on several academic subjects. The results of these tests often take up to three days to be released. Students will not be accepted until the results are known. Additionally, many arriving families fail to iden-

tify and contact the school they wish to use before arrival. These schools operate on a limited enrollment basis; failure to reserve a space early may preclude admission. Therefore, it is highly recommended that families with school-age children contact the selected school as soon as possible, ideally before May for the following August. This is especially important, if the family will arrive at after school begins.

Special Education

Parents should be aware that the schools have limited resources and/or programs for students with special needs. In most instances, the buildings lack structures to facilitate the access of those in wheelchairs or with other physical disability requirements.

A few public schools in San Jose have devoted resources to establishing programs for children with educational requirements. These programs are below standards developed by schools in the U.S. and all such instruction is in Spanish. A few specially trained therapists are available, but physical, occupational, and speech therapists are in critically short supply. Parents should correspond directly with local schools for information about their child's special needs. Local school directors also can provide detailed information about curriculums, accreditation, student-to-teacher ratios, facilities, and extracurricular activities.

Private schools operating on a U.S. style schedule with classes in English, include: American International School (former Costa Rica Academy). Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; 280 students; classes in English. Enrollment fee, \$1000 one time payment per student, grades 1 - 12; school maintenance fee, \$600 per family for 3 years; annual tuition: pre-kindergarten and kindergarten \$2000; for 1/2 day program, \$3500; for full day, 1st through 12th grade, \$5150; bus fee, \$900 annually.

For more information contact Director, Larry Lyons Apartado 4941-

1000 San Jose. Telephone: (506) 239-0376 E-mail: aiscr@cra.ed.cr

Country Day School: Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; 800 students; classes in English. Enrollment fee, \$375 per year; Annual tuition: pre-kindergarten half-day, \$1832; kindergarten and prep half day, \$2680; kindergarten and prep full day, \$3995; grades 1 - 12, \$5390; bus fee depends on the location of your residence.

For more information contact: Director, Timothy Carr Apartado 8-6170, San Jose Telephone: (506) 228-1187 or (506) 289-8406.

Marian Baker School: Kindergarten through 12th grade; 210 students; classes in English. Enrollment fee, \$450; Annual tuition: kindergarten, \$2500 1/2 day program; kindergarten, \$3500 full day; prep. - 5th grade, \$4500; 6th-12th grades, \$5300. Bus fee, \$540 per student.

For further information contact: Director, Linda Niehaus Apartado 4269, San Jose Telephone: (506) 273-3426 or (506) 273-3204 E-mail: mbschool@sol.racsca.cr

International Christian School: Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; 530 students; classes in English. Enrollment fee, \$190. PK \$340 for 1st child enrolled, \$220 for other siblings enrolled. Monthly tuition: pre-kindergarten half-day \$160; kindergarten and prep half-day, \$190; grades 1 - 6, \$300; grades 7 - 12, \$345.

For more information contact: Director, William Tabor Apartado 3512, San Jose Telephone: 236-7879 or 236-2970.

Each school may have additional fees not listed in the general pricing information provided, i.e., books, uniforms, school lunches, specialty or individual instruction classes, instrument rentals, maintenance and/or technology fees.

Private schools operating on the local February-November schedule,

with classes in English or in English and Spanish, include:

Lincoln School: Pre-kindergarten through grade 12; 750 students; classes in English. One-time family membership, \$450; Enrollment fee, \$180 per year; Registration fee, \$50 per year; Monthly tuition: pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, \$105; preparatory - grade 3, \$150; grades 4 - 6, \$170; grades 7 - 9, \$175; grades 10 - 11, \$185; grade 12, \$245.

For more information contact: Director, John Dellman Apartado 1919-1000, San Jose Telephone: 235-7733.

Escuela Britanica: Kindergarten through grade 12; 800 students; classes half in English, half in Spanish. One time fee per family, \$310. Enrollment fee, \$115 - \$162 depending on grade level. Monthly tuition: \$130 - \$225, depending on grade level.

For more information contact: Director, David Lloyd Apartado 8184-1000, San Jose Telephone: 220-0719

Of the above schools, Costa Rica Academy (American International School (AIS) and Country Day School (CDS) are the most similar to American schools, and their familiarity may help ease the transition for some students.

There are several preschools available for children.

El Girasol: Ages 2-6, instruction in Spanish. Monthly fees: \$90 with a matriculation fee of approximately \$80.

For more information contact: Director, Nora Masis Apartado 6063, San Jose Telephone 232-8496

ABC Montessori: Ages 1-1/2 to 5 years; 60 students, instruction in English and Spanish. Enrollment fee, \$95. Monthly tuition: \$105; materials, \$55; transportation, \$28, School calendar: March through

November. Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

For more information contact: Laura Patino, 759-1007 Centro Colon, San Jose Telephone, 232-1805.

Kiwi Kinder: Ages 2-1/2 to 5 years; 32 students; instruction in English. Enrollment fee, \$80 per semester. Tuition per semester: 5 days per week, \$775; 3 days per week, \$525. School calendar: August through mid-June. Hours: pre-school, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; kindergarten, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

For more information contact: Director, Dianne Patterson Apartado 549-6150, Santa Ana Telephone: 282-6512

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Costa Rica is situated on a modern campus in an eastern suburb of San Jose. The University has a faculty of some 2,500 and a student body of more than 30,000. Majors include history, art, law, education, science, economics, dentistry, medicine, microbiology, social work, agronomy, pharmacy, and engineering. Foreigners may take courses either for credit or on an audit basis. Admission requirements vary according to the courses desired and the individual's educational background. A good command of Spanish is necessary because all courses are taught in Spanish.

The Centro Cultural Costarricense-Norteamericano offers classes in Spanish at all levels, and private tutors of varying degrees of skill can be hired.

Courses in art are taught at the University of Costa Rica's School of Fine Arts, and in music at the National Conservatory. Many private teachers provide instruction in voice, music, painting, ballet, ceramics, swimming and diving, golf, tennis, and horseback riding.

Sports

The Costa Rica Country Club in Escazu is very expensive. It offers excellent facilities, including a heated swimming pool, tennis courts, a nine-hole golf course, saunas and exercise equipment, and a restaurant. The Costa Rica Tennis Club in La Sabana has a swimming pool, steam baths, tennis courts, and a restaurant. The Cariari Country Club, off the airport highway, offers an Olympic-size swimming pool, the country's only 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, exercise equipment, a nightclub, and a restaurant. The Indoor Club in Curridabat on the east side of San José, offers indoor and outdoor tennis courts, racquetball and squash courts, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, and a restaurant. And, the Los Reyes Country Club, located a half-hour drive from downtown San José, offers a nine-hole golf course, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a restaurant. There are also several health clubs in the area that include: Spa Corobici, Hi-Line Gymnasio, San José Palacio, and Club Olimpico. For children, 6 months to 15 years, Kid's Gym offers classes in gymnastics and modern dance.

Joining the various clubs remains a costly proposition. Membership at the Cariari, for example, costs around \$3000 initially, plus another \$100 a month. Prices are increased frequently.

Horseback riding lessons are available at several stables, but most, including one of San José's best establishments, La Carana, cater to riders with their own horses. One stable in Guachipelin does offer lessons in dressage and jumping using horses they rent.

La Sabana park has a public swimming pool and many fields for soccer, baseball, softball, and basketball. A paved jogging track also circles the park. Other activities include swimming, golf, and tennis competitions, many of which are open to Americans.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Costa Rica is a small country, and many interesting areas can be visited in a day trip from San José. They include the Braulio Carillo National Park; Poas, Irazú, Barva, and Arenal volcanoes; Lankester Gardens; beaches on both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts; the Sarchi ox cart factory; white water rafting trips, and a number of rustic restaurants reached after drives through the lush countryside. For those who prefer not to drive, there are scores of tour agencies that provide an abundance of packaged tours to all areas of the country.

After leaving San José the climate becomes either cooler or more tropical depending upon the destination, with altitude being the determining factor. Most day trips out of San José begin on divided highways, but the roads become less maintained outside the city. A few of these short trips include brief stretches on dirt roads.

Twenty-five percent of Costa Rica's land has been devoted to protected national parks and reserves, and visits to the parks can be the highlights of a stay in the country. The well-developed park system includes areas of dry forests, rain forests, and cloud forests, volcanoes, beaches on both coasts, caves, the highest mountain in Central America, nesting sites for several species of endangered sea turtles, and miles of hiking trails. Many of the parks are excellent sites for bird watching.

There are pristine beaches on both coasts, but most of the hotels are being developed along the Pacific. Several of the international hotel chains have accommodations at the more popular beaches. Small hotels, cabins, and bed and breakfasts can be found at almost any beach. Camping is available at some of the parks and beaches, but campsites with facilities are limited.

Social Activities

Periodic business and social meetings, dinner parties, and many other informal social events provide

opportunities for international contacts. Guest lists at such functions often include Americans, Costa Ricans, and nationals of other countries. The foreign segments may include people from the local or international business community, as well as people who have retired to Costa Rica.

The American Legion, Rotary Club, Lions, Masons, and several other fraternal organizations have branches in San José. Americans may join, although the memberships are mainly Costa Ricans.

Some of the many other international clubs that are available to join include: The Costa Rican Women's Club, Newcomers Club of Costa Rica, The Square Dance Club, National Bridge Association, and Women's Reading Group.

When invited to a formal dinner in a Costa Rican home, it is customary to send flowers.

OTHER CITIES

ALAJUELA, located in central Costa Rica 14 miles west of San José, was the capital of the country in the 1830s. With a metropolitan population of about 158,000, Alajuela is a commercial and agricultural center whose industries include sugar, coffee, and lumber. Four churches here are of outstanding architecture. The Juan Santamaria Museum is one of the city's principal tourist attractions. The museum features an exhibit of locally produced handicrafts. One wing of the museum exhibits the history of the Battle of Santa Rosa, where Costa Rican troops defeated filibusters led by William Walker in 1856.

CARTAGO is located on the Pan-American Highway, about 20 miles east of San José at the foot of Mt. Irazú. The city is situated at an elevation of 4,765 feet. Founded in 1563, Cartago was destroyed by the eruption of the Irazú volcano in 1723, and by earthquakes in 1841



Neighborhood in San Jose, Costa Rica

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and 1910. Because of these disasters, no authentic colonial buildings exist in Cartago. However, new buildings are built with colonial styling. Cartago was the political center of Costa Rica until 1821, when a more liberal government was seated in San José. It was in this rich coffee-growing region that the system of small plantations was begun, and many of the early colonial traditions survive. The population is estimated at close to 109,000. Cartago's principal church, the Cathedral of the Virgin of Los Angeles, is the scene of annual pilgrimages. Another attraction is the Church of Orosi, the oldest colonial church still in use in Costa Rica. In addition to regular services, the church houses a small museum of colonial and religious artifacts.

GOLFITO, surrounded by steep hills, is situated in southern Costa Rica off the Gulf of Dulce, about 100 miles south of San José. The heavy rainfall promotes the tropical rainforest vegetation found in this area. Golfito is a major banana port and belongs to the Banana Company of Costa Rica. The city handles about one-fifth of Costa Rica's seaborne trade. The city's population is estimated at 30,000.

HEREDIA, whose population is about 67,000, is located in central

Costa Rica. It is the center of the nation's coffee and cattle industries. Founded in 1571, Heredia is a tourist attraction because of its colonial architecture. The lush vegetation of the area has earned Heredia the nickname "La Ciudad de las Flores" (city of the flowers).

LIBERIA, with a population of about 33,000, lies on the Liberia River in northwestern Costa Rica. Located near the Pan-American Highway, it is about 100 miles north of the capital. Liberia is a commercial center for grains, fruits, sugarcane, and livestock.

LIMÓN, on the Caribbean about 100 miles east of San José, is the leading port of the country, and a modern, busy city. It was founded in 1874 during the construction of the railroad to San José. Limón's major crops are coffee and bananas; cacao and timber also are exported from this city, whose population is about 68,000. Nearly 40 percent of the country's exports pass through Limón. Limón is a tourist resort. Several beautiful parks are located near the city. Cahuita National Park, with its lush flora and fauna, contains the only coral reef on Costa Rica's Caribbean coast. Tortuguero National Park is the most important nesting ground for the green sea turtle in the western Caribbean.

The park has an unique system of natural and man-made canals that serve as waterways for transportation and exploration. Columbus is said to have visited this area on his voyage in 1502.

PUNTARENAS is located about 60 miles west of San José on the Gulf of Nicoya. It was a major Pacific port before the building and expansion of Limón. With a population of approximately 92,000, Puntarenas is the center of the country's banana industry; coffee also is exported from here. Other industries include shark and tuna fishing and fish processing. Puntarenas is a picturesque resort.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

At 19,730 square miles, about four-fifths the size of West Virginia, Costa Rica is, with the exception of El Salvador, the smallest country in Central America. It is bounded on the north and southeast by Nicaragua and Panama, respectively; on the east by the Caribbean Sea; and on the west and south by the Pacific Ocean. Limon, the major Caribbean port, is some 2,400 miles from New York; Puerto Caldera, the principal Pacific port, is located some 2,700 miles from San Francisco.

A rugged central massif runs the length of the country, north to south, separating the coastal plains. Even though Costa Rica lies totally within the tropics, the range of altitudes produces wide climatic variety. The country has four distinct geographic regions:

- The Caribbean Lowlands are hot and humid, and comprise about one-fourth of the total area of Costa Rica. It is the major banana exporting region. The lowlands contain less than 10 percent of the population.

- The Highlands are the economic, political, and cultural heart of the country, and include the Central and Talamanca mountain ranges and the Meseta Central where the capital, San José, is located. The Meseta, with elevations ranging from 3,000 to 4,500 feet, and adjacent areas contain nearly two-thirds of Costa Rica's population. The region has rolling, well-drained land, productive soil, and pleasant sub-tropical temperatures, with an annual rainfall of 60-75 inches. The central highlands have most of Costa Rica's improved roads, and there is direct access to both coasts by paved highway, rail, and air.

- The Guanacaste Plains comprise the rolling section of north-west Costa Rica, and include portions of the provinces of Guanacaste and Puntarenas, plus the Nicoya Peninsula. Despite having the lowest average annual rainfall and the longest dry season, the region is important for agriculture and livestock production as well as a popular area for tourism. The area contains 15 percent of Costa Rica's population.

Southern Costa Rica is the wettest part of Costa Rica with some 10 percent of the population.

Altitude determines the climate throughout Costa Rica. Areas below 3,000 feet have average annual temperatures of around 80 degrees, with little variation from month to month. The temperature drops from around 74 degrees at 3,000 feet to 59 degrees at 5,000 feet. Above 5,000 feet, the average annual temperatures can range as low as 40 degrees to the mid-50s, with occasional frost during the coolest months.

Palms abound in the freshwater and brackish swamps along the Caribbean coast, as do broad belts of mangroves along the Pacific shore and tidal streams and tropical hardwoods in the higher elevations. Logging operations, both legal and illegal, have stripped many previously wooded areas of Costa Rica,

and less than half the land now is forested. The broadleaf forests remaining contain mahogany, Spanish cedar, *lignum vitae*, balsa, rosewood, ceiba, nispero, zapote, Castilla rubber, brasilwood, and others. Oaks and grasslands once covered the Meseta Central, but the land there now is devoted largely to crops and pastures.

The country has approximately 12 active volcanoes; the last significant eruptions began in 1968. Seismic activity occurs on a regular basis in Costa Rica. The last major earthquake that caused considerable damage along the Atlantic coast was in April, 1991. Many buildings and homes in Costa Rica are built to withstand earth tremors.

Costa Rica long has been a haven for birdwatchers who track the 900-plus species. Animal life also is abundant. Deer, squirrel, opossum, tapir, monkey, porcupine, sloth, many species of reptiles, and several species of large cats can be found in some areas, although their ranges are constantly being reduced as their habitats are destroyed. Sport fishing on both coasts for tuna, swordfish, marlin, tarpon, and shark is popular, and opportunities for freshwater fishing also exist.

Costa Rica's economy traditionally has had an agricultural base, with the chief exports being bananas, coffee, sugar, and beef. Woodworking and leathercraft are the major handicrafts of the country. Tourism, along with the cattle industry, has grown rapidly in recent years, and non-traditional exports, both agricultural and manufactured, have become increasingly important as sources of revenue.

Population

In 1996, the population of Costa Rica was estimated to be 3.3 million. The San Jose metropolitan area, with a population of 1,230,848, accounted for over one-third of the country's people. Other provinces and their populations included Alajuela (607,486), Cart-

ago (381,420), Limon (258,369), Guanacaste (268,172), Heredia (272,711) and Puntarenas (379,002). Costa Ricans are called "Ticos" both by their Central American neighbors and among themselves.

According to the American Chamber of Commerce, more than 35,000 private American citizens, most of them retirees, live in Costa Rica, and approximately one half million tourists from the U.S. visit the country every year. Smaller groups of foreign residents include Canadian, British, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, and other Latin Americans.

Most Costa Ricans are Caucasians, and the country lacks the large indigenous Indian populations that characterize most other Central American countries. Small groups of Indians and Blacks live in Costa Rica, but together they account for less than 10 percent of the population. Descended from West Indian workers who began emigrating to Costa Rica in the late 19th Century, most Blacks live in the Limon Province on the Caribbean coast. Many speak English as their primary language.

Costa Rica's culture, like its racial composition, is relatively homogeneous. An old-line Spanish-Catholic tradition persists despite many changes brought about by an influx of people, goods, films, and books from other countries. Values of Latin American culture are evident in the great importance attached to family ties; a rather sedate, ritualized, conventional behavior; a yearly schedule of festivals; and an outwardly male-oriented and male-dominated society. Every town has its local patron saint whose day is celebrated with a "fiesta." Carnival in Limon in October, industrial and other fairs throughout the year are particularly interesting.

Public Institutions

Costa Rica is a vibrant democracy whose citizens have a strong sense of civic pride and considerable

respect for human rights, peaceful resolution of conflicts and democratic institutions. The national government, which employs a comprehensive system of checks and balances, consists of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, plus a highly respected Supreme Electoral Tribunal that oversees elections every four years. The 57-member Legislative Assembly has representatives from two major political parties as well as several minority parties. Overall, the president remains the single most influential political leader, but the Legislative Assembly wields considerable power. Since 1969, the Constitution has limited the president and legislative deputies to single terms, although deputies may gain reelection after sitting out one term.

Numerous political parties compete for elective office at the national and municipal levels every four years. The Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC) and the National Liberation Party (PLN) have dominated most recent elections. In February 1998, PUSC candidate Miguel Angel Rodriguez won the presidency by a narrow margin over PLN rival Jose Miguel Corrales. The PUSC also won a plurality in the Legislative Assembly.

Costa Ricans pride themselves on the country's abolition of its standing military in late 1948, a concept enshrined in the 1949 Constitution. Governments give priority to public spending on education and health care. A small civilian Public Force under the Public Security Ministry performs security and police functions. Costa Rica has exercised an international influence well beyond its relatively small size. The Figueres administration (1994 to 1998) hosted several regional conferences including the May 1997 San Jose Summit involving the U.S. President and his counterparts from Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Arts, Science, and Education

The arts are flourishing in Costa Rica. At the beautiful and historic National Theater, the Melico Salazar Theater, and other venues throughout San Jose, there is a steady stream of high-quality representations of the visual and plastic arts from Costa Rica and abroad. The National Symphony Orchestra offers an annual concert series, as does the Costa Rican Youth Symphony. The National Dance Company and university dance groups also perform during the year. Professional theater groups offer works in Spanish throughout the year, and an amateur theater group produces plays in English. Costa Rica hosts three major international festivals: the annual International Music Festival and, in alternate years, the International Festival of the Arts and the International Guitar Festival.

Several institutional and commercial art galleries are located in San Jose. The Museum of Costa Rican Art, located in the terminal of San Jose's original airport, now a large city park, features several exhibits every year by both Costa Rican and foreign artists. The Ministry of Culture, located in a restored liquor factory, houses the Museum of Modern Art and Design, exhibiting the more avant-garde works of local and foreign artists.

San Jose's movie theaters offer American films, with Spanish subtitles, shortly after original release, as well as films from Europe and the rest of Latin America. The San Jose metropolitan area has a variety of world-class museums. The National Museum, occupying a former fortress near the Legislative Assembly, has an excellent collection of pre-Columbian artifacts and a national history collection. The Central Bank's Gold Museum, located beneath the Plaza de la Cultura, near the National Theater, houses a stunning display of pre-Columbian gold artifacts. The Coin Museum is located in the same building. The Jade Museum, located in the

National Insurance Institute, features one of the world's foremost collections of pre-Columbian jade pieces. The Children's Museum, established only in 1995, is located in a former penitentiary and offers a permanent display of history, science and technology with hands-on exploration for children. Other museums include the Serpentarium, the Museum of Natural Science, the Juan Santamaria Museum in Alajuela, and the Simon Bolivar Zoo.

Education is a national passion for Costa Rica, as reflected in the vast array of schools and universities throughout the country. The literacy rate, at 95 percent, is the highest in the region. Four state-supported universities and nearly forty private universities offer undergraduate and graduate courses in almost all major fields of study. The Centro Cultural Costarricense-Norteamericano, also known as the Binational Center (BNC), offers regular courses in English and Spanish as second languages, as do a host of commercial language schools. The BNC also houses an excellent lending library, which Mission families may join for a small annual fee, and offers art exhibits and performing arts events featuring American as well as Costa Rican artists.

Commerce and Industry

Costa Rica's economy emerged from recession in 1997 and is poised for relatively healthy growth for the near future. National account statistics from Costa Rica's Central Bank indicated a 1997 gross domestic product (GDP) of 2.2 trillion colones (USD 9.5 billion at the average exchange rate for the year), up 3.2 percent in real terms (measured in constant 1966 colones) from the year before, when GDP declined. Inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, was 11.2 percent less than the 12.5 percent that was forecast. The central government deficit decreased to 3.4 percent of GDP in 1998, down from 3.7 percent from the year before but still above

the 3.0 percent target. Controlling the budget deficit remains the single biggest challenge for the country; economic policy makers, as servicing the accumulated public sector debt consume approximately 30 percent of the government's budget and limits the amount of resources available for needed investments in public infrastructure.

Costa Rica's major economic resources are its fertile land and frequent rainfall, its well educated population, and its location in the Central American isthmus, which provides easy accessibility to North and South American markets and direct ocean access to the European and Asian continents. With one fourth of it land dedicated to national forests, often adjoining picturesque beaches, the country has also become a popular destination for affluent retirees and ecotourists.

The country has not discovered sources of fossil fuels (apart from minuscule coal deposits), but its mountainous terrain and abundant rainfall have permitted the construction of a dozen hydro-electric power plants, making it self-sufficient in all energy needs, except oil for transportation. Mild climate and trade wind make neither heating nor cooling necessary, particularly in the highland cities and towns where approximately 90% of the population lives.

Costa Rica has an extensive road system of more than 30,000 kilometers, although much of it is in disrepair. All parts of the country are accessible by road. The main highland cities in the center of the country are connected by paved all-weather roads with the Atlantic and Pacific coast; and by the Pan American Highway with Nicaragua and Panama, the neighboring countries to the North and the South. Costa Rica needs to complete the Pacific coastal highway (and repair large sections of existing highway), build a new road along the Atlantic coast, and possibly construct coast-to-coast highway across the Northern plains of the country. These are

probably the most pressing infrastructural need of the country.

Tourism, which has overtaken bananas as Costa Rica's leading foreign exchange earner, is once again growing after stagnating in the mid-1990s. Earning in 1997 from an estimated 812,000 visitors were reported at 750 million U.S. dollars, up from 684 million dollars the year before. The number of visitors in 1996 was 781,000. The numbers also show that tourists spend nearly 1,000 dollars per person per visit. In 1998 the Ministry of Tourism projected a 4-5 percent increase in the number of tourists visiting the country.

Costa Rica is also aggressively pursuing investment in the high technology sector. Largely due to the personal efforts of President Figueres to attract new investment in the sector, Intel Corporation began construction of a plant in 1997 to produce Pentium II microchips with an investment plant that reached 200 million dollars by the end of 1998. Intel's total planned investment was 400-500 million dollars by the end of 1999. A number of other high technology companies were already present in Costa Rica, and more are expected to follow.

Reflecting the evolution away from agriculture, 1997 growth was strong in the construction sector (16.4 percent), in industry (4.5 percent) and in commerce, restaurants and hotels (4.0 percent). Agriculture declined by 0.7 percent. Statistics for 1997 indicated a widening of the trade deficit and an increase of the current account deficit from roughly 1.1 percent of GDP in 1996 to 4.5 percent of GDP in 1997. During 1999, roughly 55 percent of total trade was with the U.S. As usual, bananas led the list of merchandise exports, but tourism earned more foreign exchange. However, despite the current account deficit, strong private capital inflows brought international reserves to over 1 billion dollars, a level approximating three months of imports.

Transportation

Automobiles

The majority of streets and roads in Costa Rica are rough and narrow. Many of the roads to the beaches and other out-of-the-way locations are not paved. A high clearance, rugged suspension vehicle, such as Ford Broncos, Chevrolet Blazers, Toyota Land Cruisers, Isuzu Troopers, Jeeps, Mitsubishi Monteros and Nissan Patrols, is recommended if significant travel away from San Jose is planned. Replacement parts, when available, are expensive.

It is strongly recommended to install anti-theft devices, such as an alarm or the Club as car burglary and theft are serious problems.

Both international and local rental car companies have offices in San Jose, but the cost is substantial and the quality of the rental cars is not always of a high standard. Costa Rica is a dangerous country in which to operate an automobile. Driving in San Jose, and throughout the country, is a challenge. Turns across one or two lanes of traffic are common; and pedestrians generally are not given the right of way. The narrow roads often are blocked by stalled, unmarked vehicles, pedestrians, or livestock. Yawning potholes, honking taxis, and smoke-belching buses with dangerous drivers, make Costa Rican traffic most unpleasant.

Liability insurance is a monopoly of the Costa Rican Government and must be purchased in the country. A comprehensive policy can be obtained in Costa Rica and several U.S. companies sell comprehensive policies for coverage in Costa Rica, although few have local offices or claims adjusters.

Since 1995, all imported vehicles must have catalytic converters.

Local

Within San Jose, taxis are efficient and inexpensive, by U.S. standards, although during rush hours and when it is raining, taxis seem to vanish. Taxis are mandated to have

meters; passengers should insist that they be used, or at least determine the fare at the start of the trip.

Buses serve all parts of the city and surrounding suburbs. Service is inexpensive, but crowded, during rush hours, and some vehicles are in deplorable condition.

Regional

Costa Rica's principal cities are connected by air or highway with San Jose. The closest U.S. city is Miami, Florida, a two and a half hour non-stop flight. American carriers, American and United, as well as the national airline, LACSA, offer daily flights to Miami. Continental has a daily flight to Houston, Texas. American Airlines has a daily flight to Dallas, and Delta flies daily to Atlanta.

LACSA and other regional airlines include San Jose as a stop on their Central American schedules. Air travel within Costa Rica is very inexpensive, and many vacation spots can be reached easily by air. Travel to other Central American countries is quite expensive; a round-trip flight to Panama is \$300, and Guatemala costs approximately the same. Few discounts are available.

Currently, most international flights land at Juan Santamaria Airport, a 25-minute drive from downtown San Jose. Another international airport, located near Liberia, opened recently.

Several steamship lines offer freight service to both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of Costa Rica, and Cunard lines makes port calls at both Puerto Caldera and Limon. Both the Pacific and Caribbean ports are connected to San Jose by highway and air.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

An automatic telephone system covers all of Costa Rica. Long-distance calls may be placed from one's home, and direct-dial service to the

United States and other Central American countries is available. Direct-dial rates to the continental United States range from \$0.65 - \$1.60 a minute, depending on the time of day, though the peak rate is expected to drop to \$1.10 by the middle of 1998.

Radiografica Costarricense handles all international telegraphic messages.

Mail

International air mail service to San Jose is also available. The service is slow but generally reliable. Air mail and Special Delivery from almost any point in the U.S. to Costa Rica usually takes at least a week, and there can be a lengthy delay and considerable expense before a parcel can be collected from Customs.

TV and Radio

Short-wave reception is good in San Jose. The country has more than 80 commercial radio stations, almost half of them FM stations. Several broadcast in stereo, and a few offer regular classical music programming.

Twelve TV stations operate in San Jose, broadcasting in color and offering local news and entertainment programs, plus U.S. programs dubbed in Spanish. Cable television is available in most parts of San Jose, including the areas where most Americans live. Service is available on a monthly or bi-annual subscription basis and English-language programs from the U.S. include ABC, NBC, FOX and CBS networks, ESPN sports programming, several "superstations," two movie channels, and CNN news programs.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Costa Rica has six daily newspapers in Spanish, plus two weekly commercial publications, the Tico Times and Costa Rica Today, in English. There are also four Spanish news magazines published weekly. Many American books and magazines are available at local book shops and

newsstands, but prices are double those in the U.S. Consequently, magazine subscriptions and book club memberships are very popular.

The Centro Cultural Costarricense-Norteamericano, in the Los Yoses suburb of San Jose, maintains current periodicals and U.S. newspapers in its well-stocked library, the Biblioteca Mark Twain.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Costa Rica is known for the quality of its health care, and many competent surgeons, pediatricians, neurologists, dermatologists, gynecologists, cardiologists, general practitioners, dentists, and opticians work in San Jose. Many have trained in the U.S. or Europe, and some speak excellent English.

A number of local hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic laboratories are adequate for normal medical requirements, such as the Clinica Biblica or Clinica Catolica, both private medical facilities. Many Americans use the Clinica Santa Rita for maternity care.

Costa Rica also has an excellent social security (Seguro Social) hospital system with many hospitals in San Jose and other parts of the country. Costa Rica has the best children's hospital in Central America.

Essential medicines and medical supplies are available at local pharmacies, although prescriptions for some specific medications may be hard to fill.

Community Health

The general level of sanitation and health control in San Jose is below that found in the average U.S. city. Garbage is collected regularly, and San Jose has a central sewer system, but sanitary regulations sometimes are not rigidly enforced. The city's water supply is filtered and chlorinated, but the possibility of contamination is always present.

The altitude of San Jose (3,814 feet), the high humidity, the extremely high pollen concentrations at certain times of the year, and the general air pollution of the city can combine to affect persons with sinusitis, hay fever, or asthma. Colds and other respiratory problems occur with more frequency than in the U.S., because of the air quality, the pervading dampness during the rainy season, and the frequent and dramatic temperature changes from midday to evening.

Serious health hazards are found both in San Jose and in the provincial areas. These problems include common diarrhea, amebic dysentery, and bacillary dysentery. Common causes of intestinal diseases are contamination from flies, polluted water, and contaminated fruits and vegetables. Common sense precautions are necessary when dealing with food, particularly when traveling outside San Jose.

Cases of malaria have been reported in the coastal areas of Costa Rica that have altitudes of less than 2,000 feet at an increasing rate during the last few years. And in some regions of the country certain tropical diseases such as cholera and dengue still present a serious health hazard.

Use boiling as a means of water purification in areas where needed. Electronic water filtering systems are used in many restaurants and hotels. Commercially bottled water is available in San Jose.

Several dairies sell pasteurized milk and dairy products that are safe, but off-brand products should be viewed with suspicion. As in most countries, raw fruits and vegetables should not be eaten unless they have been properly washed, and this applies to produce purchased in local markets and grocery stores.

As of December, 1997, approximately 1,200 cases of AIDS had been diagnosed in Costa Rica, 60 percent of whom have died, and the number of undiagnosed HIV posi-

tives was estimated, as of December 1994, to be 15,000 to 20,000. AIDS testing is mandatory for certain groups, including blood donors, foreign applicants for temporary or permanent residence, patients consulting VD clinics or receiving treatment at Social Security hospitals, and prison inmates.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport is required to enter Costa Rica. At the discretion of Costa Rican authorities, travelers are routinely admitted with a certified copy of their U.S. birth certificate and a valid photo identification. Foreign tourists are generally permitted to stay up to 90 days. Extension of legal stay beyond that time requires application to the Costa Rican Department of Migration. Tourists who have overstayed their 90-day limit without receiving a formal extension can expect to be fined at the airport as they depart the country. Those who have overstayed repeatedly, or have overstayed and wish to depart Costa Rica by land, must pay a fine to migration authorities in San Jose before departure. There is a departure tax for short-term visitors.

Additional information on entry and exit requirements may be obtained from the Consular Section of the Embassy of Costa Rica at 2114 S Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 328-6628, or from a Costa Rican consulate in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Puerto Rico, San Antonio, or San Francisco. The Embassy of Costa Rica also maintains a web site at <http://www.costarica-embassy.org/>

Americans living in or visiting Costa Rica are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in San Jose and obtain updated information on travel and security within Costa Rica. The U.S. Embassy maintains a

web site at <http://usembassy.or.cr>. Americans visiting Costa Rica are encouraged to inform the Embassy of their itinerary and contact information via the web site. This can also be accessed through the Department of State's web site at <http://www.state.gov>. The U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica is located in Pavas, San Jose, telephone (506) 220-3050. The Embassy is open Monday through Friday, and closed on Costa Rican and U.S. holidays. For emergencies arising outside normal business hours, U.S. citizens may call tel. (506) 220-3127 and ask for the duty officer.

Pets

The importation of pets into Costa Rica is controlled by the Ministry of Public Health. Entry permits from the Costa Rican Health Ministry must be obtained before the arrival of the pet in the country. Failure to obtain the necessary permit may result in the pet being refused entry or being detained by health authorities. The pet should arrive with the family and be declared as luggage instead of cargo.

The following documents should be certified by a Costa Rican Consul before the pet's departure for Costa Rica, and must accompany the pet: international health certificate from an accredited veterinarian (this document must be certified by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/ APHIS before presentation to the Costa Rican Consul, call 301-436-8590); certificate of vaccinations for rabies, distemper, parvovirus, and leptospirosis (if applicable to the species of pet); and certification that the pet is free from taenia equinococcus. Plan ahead to have the vaccines given to your pets, as the rabies vaccine should be given at least 30 days prior to travel.

Costa Rican Government can require a quarantine period. Use proper cage or crate for shipment and bring a supply of pet food. If importing cats, bring a litter box, pooper scooper and cat litter. Cat litter is difficult to find; so, cat owners should bring a supply in their household effects.

American brands of cat and dog food are sold in local markets, at greatly inflated prices. Locally prepared pet food also is available, but the quality is not up to U.S. standards.

Firearms and Ammunition

Firearms are permitted in Costa Rica for persons over the age of 18. Firearm owners are authorized 1000 rounds of ammunition per weapon. Owners are advised to check with the U.S. Customs Service when shipping firearms from the continental U.S.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit in Costa Rica is the colon (C). Its exchange value with the U.S. dollar varies daily; in December 1999, the exchange rate was C296.00=US\$1. Costa Rica has a small black market with the unofficial rates close to the rates obtained at banks. Counterfeit money has also been found on the black market.

Banking and exchange facilities exist in San Jose, but they are painfully slow—even a simple visit to a bank to cash a check can involve a wait of an hour or more. Travelers checks may be purchased at a some local banks.

The Banco Central de Costa Rica (the Central Bank) directs monetary policy and foreign exchange credit facilities, as well as supervising the banking system. Major commercial banks are government institutions; private banking institutions perform some banking functions, but their services are somewhat limited.

The dollar is freely convertible into colones. Major credit cards are widely accepted at hotels, restaurants, large department stores and supermarkets, but it is best to check before making your purchase.

Costa Rica uses the metric system, and officially, weights and measures are in kilograms, meters, and liters. Unofficially, and illegally, it is not uncommon to find American mea-

asures or Spanish colonial measures still in use.

Unleaded gasoline costs approximately \$1.42 per gallon; leaded gasoline costs approximately \$1.28 per gallon, and diesel fuel costs \$1.06 per gallon in early 1995.

Disaster Preparedness

Costa Rica is an earthquake-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Mar. 19 St. Joseph's Day
 - Apr. 11 Juan Santamaria
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May/June Corpus Christi*
 - June 29 Sts. Peter & Paul
 - July 25 Annexation of Guancaste
 - Aug. 2 Our Lady of the Angels
 - Aug. 15 Assumption Day (Mother's Day)
 - Sept.15 Independence Day
 - Oct. 12 Dia de la Raza/ Columbus Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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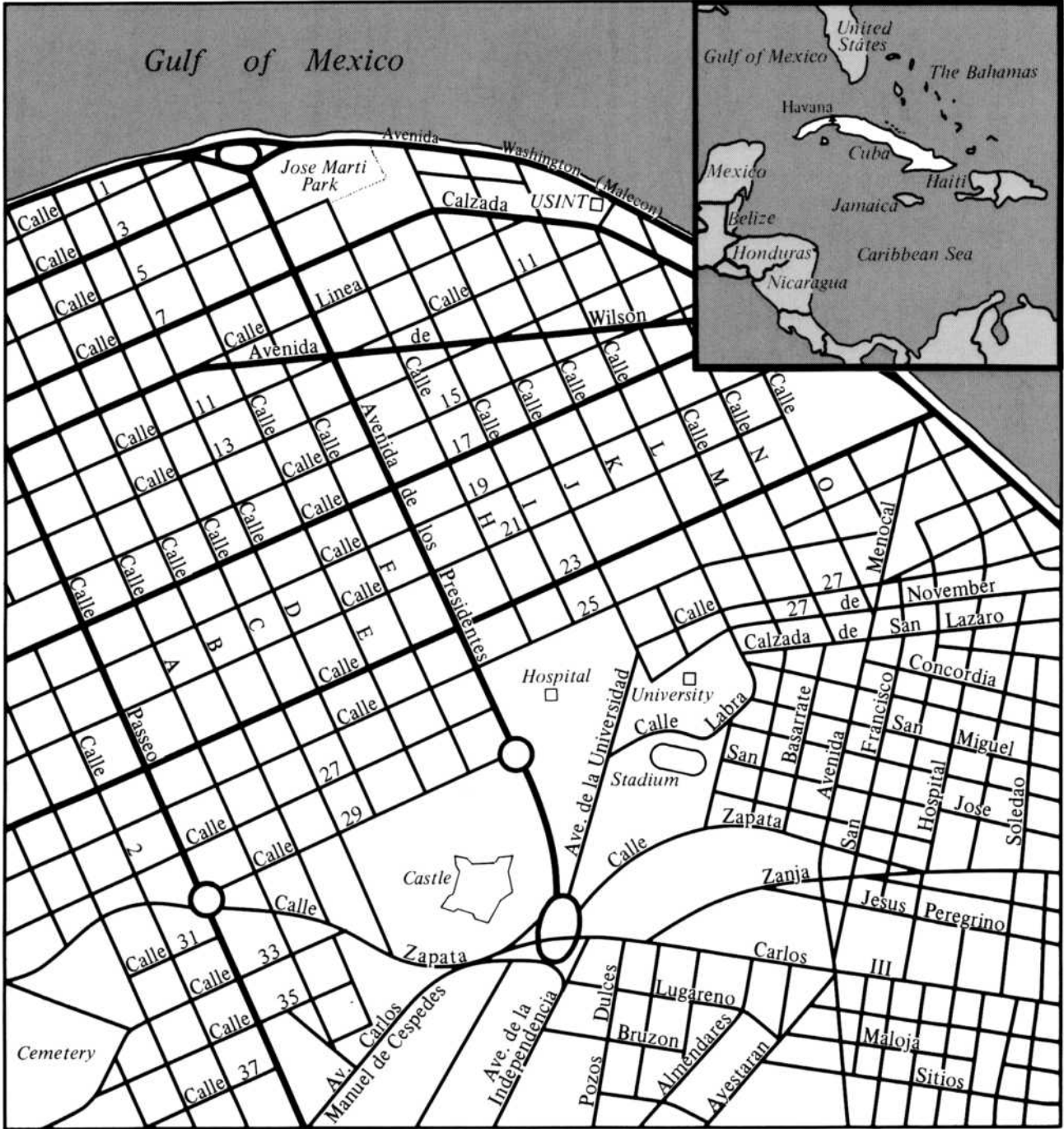
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Havana, Cuba

CUBA

Republic of Cuba

Major Cities:

Havana, Santiago de Cuba

Other Cities:

Bayamo, Camagüey, Cárdenas, Ciego de Ávila, Cienfuegos, Guantánamo, Holguín, Matanzas, Santa Clara, Trinidad

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated October 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The island that is now the Republic of **CUBA** was discovered and claimed for Spain by Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to the New World in 1492. Except for a brief period of British occupation soon after the middle of the 18th century, it remained under Spanish control for nearly 400 years. The Cuban struggle for independence, born out of discontent with a failing economy, broke into open rebellion in 1868, and peaked 30 years later when the United States battleship *Maine* was blown up in Havana Harbor, thus igniting the Spanish-American War. Spain lost the war and relinquished its rights to Cuba in the Treaty of Paris.

Three years of U.S. administration followed before independence was proclaimed on May 20, 1902. Cuba's history since then has been one of dictatorships and revolutions, the most dramatic of which was in 1959 when Fidel Castro overthrew the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship with promises for a return to democratic rule. Lands and businesses were nationalized, and the economy came under the direction of the state. All political activity remains under the authority of Castro's ruling Communist Party.

Although the United States Embassy in Cuba was closed in 1961, there has been a U.S. Interests Section here since September 1977, subject to a bilateral agreement with the Cuban Government, and under the aegis of the Embassy of Switzerland.

MAJOR CITIES

Havana

Havana is a capital rich in history, architecture, and culture. Old Havana, characterized by narrow, cobbled streets, El Morro Castle dominating the harbor entrance, stately buildings, and beautiful wrought-ironwork, evokes its Span-

ish colonial origin. The United Nations has designated virtually all of that area as a World Heritage Site, in an effort to stave off its demise and destruction.

The Riviera Hotel, Hemingway haunts like La Bodeguita Restaurant (where everyone adds their name to the graffiti-filled walls), the once-dizzy but now more worn Tropicana Nightclub, crumbling yet still beautiful former private residences, the number of mid-century American cars... all combine to reflect Havana's heyday as a 1940s and 50s gambling and vacation hotspot.

In the years following the Revolution, much of the government's energy and revenue went into rural improvements in the country's infrastructure. Schools, roads, electricity, and health clinics helped widen Cuba's pro-revolutionary advances in terms of Latin American literacy and health indices. Since the demise of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, economic support and subsidies have collapsed, compelling far fewer expenditures in those areas in the 1990s, and laying clear the inefficiencies and poor management resulting from a generous subsidy.

Clothing

Standards of dress in Cuba for most occasions are informal. Summer weight clothing is appropriate year-round. Women find dresses or skirts a good choice. Men wear guayaberas or short-sleeved shirts. Light jackets or sweaters are useful during the winter months (November-February) and in the office building.

Clothing is available in some *diplomatías*, but the variety is limited and generally quite expensive. You can have some clothing items made locally, and seamstress work is quite good.

Children's clothes are not available in any abundance or reasonable price range.

Supplies and Services

Dry-cleaning and shoe repair services are virtually nonexistent. The casual and tropical climate encourages more wash-and-wear clothing. Beauty parlors and barber shops offer acceptable services at an inexpensive price.

Religious Activities

From its Spanish legacy, Cuba developed an adherence to Roman Catholicism. From its African slave trade, Cuba absorbed tribal rituals and beliefs of ancestral gods. That vibrant mix, known today as *Santería*, remains a widely-believed and practiced religion. Of course, more traditional services are conducted, virtually all in Spanish. More churches appear open to worship than in previous years, as the Cuban Government alternately tightens and loosens its control over the faithful. A few Protestant churches and Havana's diminishing Jewish community offer services, too.

Education

There are three international schools in Havana. *L'école Française* provides instruction in French for nursery school (age 2 and-a-half) through the fifth grade. Secondary courses (grades 6 through 8) are provided via correspondence courses graded in



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Aerial view of Havana, Cuba

France. The Centro Educativo Espanol offers Spanish-language programs for children starting at age 2. Secondary courses are graded via testing reports from Spain. The International School of Havana (ISH) offers instruction in English from preschool through the high school level.

USINT children historically have attended ISH. The school is headed by an English-speaking principal (currently a citizen of the U.K.). All the teachers are Cubans and employees of Cubalse. Few have any formal training as educators. The Office of Overseas Schools (A/OS) rates the school as adequate through grade 6, yet parents of several children in the upper elemen-

tary grades (4-6) have been dissatisfied with the school's program. Still, with a new principal (1993) ISH is trying to move beyond past problems.

The few secondary educational courses offered operate under a University of Nebraska correspondence program or Mercer College (a British program). The International School currently follows a curriculum loosely based on the Fairfax County standard. All primary school textbooks are from the U.S.

Special Educational Opportunities

The International School of Havana is in the process of expanding its Adult Education Program (now lim-

ited to English as a Second Language), and has offered workshops on stress reduction and a Cuban Cinema Seminar. Casa de las Americas, an institute which studies the American continent, offers special seminars in literature. All instruction is in Spanish. There are no special facilities for those with physical, developmental, or learning handicaps.

Sports

Tennis, golf, horseback riding, swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, wind surfing, water skiing, and fishing are year-round sports in Cuba. Tennis courts can be rented or booked at several hotels.

Cuba has wonderful, unspoiled beaches, particularly at Varadero, two hours' east of Havana. That beautiful stretch of white sand beach ranks as one of the Caribbean's finest. Excellent beaches lie within 15 miles from Havana, while Herradura, the nearest coral reef for snorkeling or diving, is only an hour's drive west.

Cuba's coastal waters and coral reefs attract many fishermen and divers. You can charter deep-sea fishing boats at Marina Hemingway. Freshwater bass fishing is good at Hannabanilla, (called Treasure Lake on old maps of Cuba), a 5-hour drive into the mountains southeast of Havana. Scuba diving requires certification, which you preferably should have before arriving, along with your own equipment. Tanks can be recharged without problem.

The Havana Golf Club offers a nine-hole course, tennis courts, a squash court, bowling alley, pool and restaurant for a monthly fee. The Club Hipico Iberoamericano offers both Western and English-style horseback riding lessons and outings into Lenin Park. Some Americans enjoy bowling at the 24-lane alley built for the 1991 Pan-American Games, still in very good condition, and there is an outdoor roller-skating rink for rollerbladers of any age. Biking also remains a popular activity.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Cuba's economic disintegration, reflected by its difficulty in sustaining consistent oil deliveries, has limited touring into the far reaches of the island. Gasoline may not always be available, and the quality of much of it is suspect. Still, one-day and one-tank drives afford an opportunity to enjoy a change of scenery from the city.

Beginning in 1994, however, the Foreign Ministry requires that all trips outside of Havana Province be reported to it in advance of the trip. There is no need to wait for authorization; only to inform MINREX of travel plans beyond the province borders.

Heading west from Havana into Pinar del Rio province, two areas attract interest. The waterfall and nearby orchid gardens at Soroa are just an hour's drive west of Havana. Running adjacent to the ridge of mountains known as Cordillera de los Organos, the highway to Soroa passes through large tracts of sugarcane and cattle-grazing pasture land.

Another hour brings you to Valle de Vinales, where the combination of soil and climate produce the best tobacco for Cuban cigars. These western mountains also offer rather dramatic contrasts to the agricultural lowlands, attractive vistas and cave exploration. Two hours east of Havana, in the province of Matanzas, visitors to Las Cuevas de Bel-lamar are guided through a small part of the extensive underground caverns.

Other more distant places of interest include Guama (a commercial crocodile farm), the cities of Trinidad and Cienfuegos (Spanish colonial architecture), and Santiago de Cuba (Cuba's second-largest and most important city, which sits close to Spanish-American War sites). Playa Giron, better known outside Cuba as the Bay of Pigs, is a three-hour drive southeast and worth an occasional weekend for snorkeling. Cayo Largo and Cayo Coco, island

resorts being developed for Cuba's tourism industry, can be reached via small aircraft. All overnight travel outside of Havana should be arranged in advance in order to ensure accommodations, which can range from rustic to comfortable.

Entertainment

Frequent power outages may contribute to fewer performances of cultural events, but they have not diminished Cubans' interest in the arts. The National Ballet continues to stage various productions at the famous and still-lovely Garcia Lorca Theater. Jazz remains quite popular, and a yearly festival features local and international artists. Cuba has annually sponsored the Latin-American Film Festival—a Cuban film won Best Picture and critical acclaim in 1994—and a number of theaters show Spanish and American films.

Museums and art galleries provide occasional hours of enjoyable relief. The Museum of Colonial Art, Hemingway Museum, Museum of the Revolution, Museum of the City, and the Museum of Natural Science are worth visiting. Museo Historico in the nearby town of Guanabacoa displays extensive information on Santeria and other Afro-Cuban religions deriving from ancestral and spiritual worship.

Walking through parts of Old Havana is pleasurable. The beautiful and graceful Spanish Colonial architecture of the Havana Cathedral, its cobble-stoned plaza and adjacent buildings, evokes the grandeur of colonial Cuba. Stain glass windows, richly-detailed stucco and moldings, elegant doorways and window treatments, complement the historic if faded ambience of this U.N.-designated World Heritage site. Some caution is required, however, as purse snatchings have increased in recent years.

For nightlife, some hotels offer cabaret shows and discos, and of course, the famous Tropicana Nightclub continues its half-century plus reputation for dinner, drinks, and a dizzying floor show. Cuba's strong push



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Street in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba

to promote its tourism facilities and industry likely will result in more nightclubs, restaurants, and evening entertainment opening in the future.

Santiago de Cuba

Santiago de Cuba, a port on the southern coast of the island, is the capital of Oriente Province. With a population of over 405,350 (2000 est.), it is the nation's second largest city. It was founded in 1514, and was the capital of Cuba until 1589. Santiago, its more commonly used name, was once a center for brisk smuggling trade with the British West Indies, but is probably better known as the scene of military activity during the Spanish-American War. U.S. ships established a blockade here in the harbor and, on July 3, 1898, in the final major battle of the war, destroyed the Spanish fleet led by Pascual Cervera y Topete. There also was heavy land fighting near the city when San Juan Hill was taken two days before the successful blockade.

The Spanish-American battles were not to be the final military struggles at Santiago—the city was once again the scene of heavy fighting in July 1953, when Fidel Castro (Ruz) led his first armed revolt against the government in power.

Santiago has many famous landmarks, among them the old cathedral in the city and the crumbling forts on towering cliffs above the harbor. Interesting old colonial buildings add to the charm of Santiago. Two major libraries, one central and one provincial, are maintained here, as is the 30-year-old Universidad de Oriente, which has facilities in several disciplines and a student body now numbering 12,000.

Wood, minerals, and agricultural products are Santiago's major exports. Iron, copper, and manganese are mined in the area. A new textile factory was opened here in 1984.

OTHER CITIES

Founded in 1513, **BAYAMO** is in eastern Cuba, 60 miles northwest of Santiago, on Cuba's longest river, Río Bayamo. The city is commercially active, manufacturing sugar, coffee, tobacco, and rice. There is a major condensed milk plant here. Copper and manganese are mined in the area. The city is a patriotic favorite of Cubans. The Ten Years' War, 1868-1878, and the revolt of 1895 began in Bayamo. The population is about 141,000 (1995 est.).

CAMAGÜEY, with a population of almost 283,000 (2000 est.), is located in east-central Cuba. It is connected with Santiago and Havana by the Central Highway. Founded in 1515, the city prospered illegally by trading with the English and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean. Camagüey resisted Cuba's independence and several battles were fought nearby. The city maintains vestiges of its colonial architecture. Older parts of the city exhibit narrow, irregular streets and small plazas. Industries here include sawmilling, tanning, and dairying. The city is near major highways and railways, and has an international airport.

The port city of **CÁRDENAS**, on Cuba's north coast, is known as an important fishing port. The city's industries include rum distilleries, and sugar refineries. Cárdenas is 75 miles east of Havana and about 15 miles southwest of a fashionable spa, featuring white sulfur springs, in San Miguel de los Baños. A popular beach at Varadero is also nearby. Cárdenas has a population over 66,000.

CIEGO DE ÁVILA is in central Cuba, about 65 miles northwest of Camagüey. Situated in a fertile region, the city produces sugarcane, cattle, and tropical fruit. The population here is over 80,000.

The sugar port, **CIENFUEGOS**, is located about 140 miles southeast of Havana, on the south-central coast. Areas surrounding the city produce cattle, tobacco, coffee, rice, and sugarcane. Cienfuegos is home to several industries, among them are distilleries, coffee- and tobacco-processing plants. From May through November, the weather in Cienfuegos is hot and humid; winter temperatures are milder, with warm days and cool nights. The city is lovely—it boasts wide streets, numerous parks and promenades, a fine plaza, and interesting architecture. Visited by Columbus in 1494, Cienfuegos' port began operation in the early 1800s. Cienfuegos, site of Cuba's largest cement works, has a

population of approximately 195,000.

GUANTÁNAMO, a city of 200,400 residents (2000 est.), is a major sugar-producing center in southeastern Cuba. Its history dates to the early 19th century when French colonists, fleeing the slave uprising in Haiti, established a settlement here. The area is probably best known to Americans because of the U.S. Navy base which has been in operation since 1903 at nearby Guantánamo Bay. The city's port is at Caimanera, on the west side of the bay. The city's chief industrial activities are sugar milling, coffee roasting, and the processing of chocolate, salt, and liqueurs. Guantánamo is accessible by railroad and highway.

HOLGUÍN, which lies in the fertile hill country of northeastern Cuba 70 miles north of Santiago, has twice been a rallying spot for insurgents—the first time during the Ten Years War (1868-78), and again in the period preceding the outbreak of the Spanish-American War (1898). Holguín was founded in 1720. It is one of the country's major commercial centers, and products grown in the region (sugar, coffee, tobacco) are shipped from its port, Gibara. The city, whose population was 243,000 in 2000, supports a university extension institute, with schools of engineering and economics.

MATANZAS, situated in western Cuba, on the road between Havana and beautiful Varadero, is known for its fine, deep-water harbor. The lush Yumurí valley in which it lies, and the fascinating caves in the area, have become tourist attractions. Known as the "Athens of Cuba," Matanzas has a public library, active cultural institutions, and numerous scholars and artists. The city offers beautiful monuments, plazas, and scenic drives. Among Matanzas' industries are sugar refineries, textile plants, fertilizer, and shoe factories. The city, founded in 1693, has a current population of about 123,000. A municipal museum is established here.



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Calle Barcelona & Capitolio in Havana, Cuba

The 300-year-old city of **SANTA CLARA**, in the west-central part of the country, made its mark in recent history as the scene of a decisive battle in 1959, when Castro's guerrilla forces overthrew the Batista government. This attractive city, nestled among the hills of Villa Clara Province, is the site of the Universidad de Las Villas, one of Cuba's three major institutes of higher learning; the school was founded in 1948, and currently has a student body of 8,500. Sugar and tobacco are the principal products of the area. The city is situated near the geographic center of the island and is a major junction for Cuba's railroads. Santa Clara has a population of 194,350.

Founded in 1514, and once Cuba's wealthiest city, **TRINIDAD** is situated in central Cuba, about 75 miles southwest of Havana. In order to maintain its colonial atmosphere and to celebrate famous former residents—including Spanish explorer Hernán Cortés—Trinidad has been declared a national monument. The city has numerous and varied industries, including sugar refineries, dairies, sawmills, and cigar and cigarette factories. Tourists enjoy its cool climate and mountainous landscape. Gold, amianthus, and copper deposits are found nearby. Trinidad has an airport railway that links with Cienfuegos, and good highways.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

With more than 44,000 square miles (114,447 sq. km.) of land and 2,500 miles (4,000 km.) of coastline, Cuba rightfully lays claim to being the largest island in the West Indies, accounting for more than one-half of the total land area. The island stretches more than 745 miles (1200 km.) in latitude, yet only ranges from 20 to 125 miles (35-200 km) in longitude, lying about 90 miles (145 km.) south of Key West, Florida.

No larger than the state of Pennsylvania but contoured much differently, Cuba's coastline constantly breaks into literally hundreds of bays, inlets, and narrow, shallow rivers. The Isle of Youth (known as the Isle of Pines in pre-Revolution days), and some 1,600 keys and islets lie offshore. The deep-water harbors of Havana, Guantanamo, and Bahia Honda rank among the world's finest.

Topographically, three-fifths of Cuba displays flat or gently rolling fields and wide, fertile valleys - ideal for the sugarcane and tobacco crops which are the backbone and most recognizable symbols of the Cuban economy. The northern coast is low and marshy. Most of what remains, particularly at the southeastern end of the island, forms steep and at times formidable mountains. Three mountain ranges dominate the Cuban terrain, but by far the best-known and most rugged is the eastern Sierra Maestra, where peaks rise to almost 6,000 feet (1,829 m.) above sea level. Fidel Castro began his struggle there in the 1950s, and still today in speeches alludes to its historical significance in the Revolution.

Cuba is bordered on the north by the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida and on the south by the Caribbean Ocean. Prevailing trade winds combine with the warm

waters of the Gulf Stream to produce a mild and semitropical climate. Cuba's mean temperature is about 77°F (25°C) in winter and only slightly more, perhaps 80°F to 85°F (26°C), in summer. Averages range only between 70°F (21°C) and 82°F (27°C) for the coldest and warmest months. Summer readings of as high as 100°F (37°C) have been recorded. Occasional near-freezing temperatures occur only in mountain areas.

Relative humidity varies from 60 to 70% in the daytime and from 80 to 90% during the night, regardless of the season, of which there are only two. The dry season lasts from November to April. During the May through October rainy season, Cuba receives up to 75% of its yearly rainfall, which averages 54 inches (137 cm.).

Population

Cuba's population is over 11 million, with an annual growth rate of 1.1% and a density of 200 persons per square mile. Most of the population is of Spanish and African origin. Spanish, the official language, has particularly Cuban traits in its spoken form.

About 70% of the population is urban. Havana, the capital, is Cuba's principal port and city, and has a population of 2.3 million. Other major cities include Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, Santa Clara, Holguin, Matanzas, Cienfuegos, and Pinar del Rio.

Before 1959, Roman Catholicism was observed by about 85% of the population. The 1976 Cuban Constitution nominally protects freedom of religion. In practice, however, church attendance has only begun to grow in recent years, following years of official persecution of religious institutions. Various religions are sometimes permitted to publish literature for use within their churches. Religious public demonstrations or radio/television programming are not permitted.

Public Institutions

Under that same 1976 Constitution, Cuba is organized with a party-government-state structure. The Communist Party, described in the Constitution as "the highest force of the society and state," is headed by a Politburo. The Communist Party, Cuba's only legal political party, is the focus of power in the state.

Executive power within the government is vested in the Council of Ministers, which heads the government. Legislative power allegedly rests with the National Assembly of People's Power, which elects the Council of State, but in fact is a rubber-stamp body with no independent power. All courts, including the People's Supreme Court, are subordinated to the National Assembly of People's Power (and thus to the Council of State).

Administratively, Cuba is divided into 14 Provinces plus the Isle of Youth.

Arts, Science, and Education

Except for their enormous state of flux, few agree today on how to characterize the status of the arts and education in Cuba. One of the leitmotifs of the prize winning film, "Fresas y Chocolate", is derision of the low quality of popular education in Cuba. On the other hand, a long-time American admirer of the revolution, Carol Brightman, has written that:

The so-called achievements of the revolution—lifelong health care, free and universal education, generous social security payments, free housing—have materially raised the standard of living of the vast majority of the population to levels undreamed of before 1959. (*The Nation*, v. 258,9: p. 299)

The strategy for long term economic recovery, emphasizing biotechnology, tourism development, and related fields such as medicine and

English teaching, and the stringencies of special period cutbacks, i.e., the reduction of Cuban book publishing from about 20 million volumes to 250,000, are forcing momentous changes, though few are discussed very openly. The enormous subsidies paid through the Ministry of Culture that kept tens of thousands of Cuban artists and intellectuals on the state's payroll have been reduced dramatically since members of the Union of Artists and Intellectuals (UNEAC) and the Union of Journalists (UPEC) were first allowed to work independently in 1992 and retain some or all of their hard currency earnings in 1993.

The Ministry remains the central authority for most museums and galleries, ballet and theater companies, musical groups, publishing houses, and the motion picture industry, but the ministry's personnel and activities have been cut back so far that it runs very little any more. Independent entities, such as the Pablo Milanés Foundation, have arisen as cultural impresarios and musical groups are increasingly arranging their own contracts with record companies and tourist hotels where they can be paid in dollars.

Museums now often depend on the revenue they can generate from tourists and international donors. Artisans sell their wares through co-ops and tourist stalls. The only Cuban films made in recent years have been foreign co-productions. The Ministry also retains responsibility for the "culturalization" of the people, but the legendary popular concerts and live performances of yesteryear are now generally restricted to TV appearances during rare home visits by big name performers.

The legendary cultural exports of the revolution, ranging from Alicia Alonso's ballet to a panorama of revolutionary films and Milanés' ballads, have decreased to a trickle. The 1993 Latin American Film Festival almost recouped some of the past glory by attracting a large

number of films from other countries, but "Fresas y Chocolate" was the only Cuban film exhibited. The Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry (INCAIC) and the film institute that Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez helped found in 1986 continue to promote "Latin American film consciousness," just with much less Cuban content.

There are lots of cinemas, theaters and concert halls in Havana and spread around Cuba, but performances as advertised are much less reliable than in the past. Concertgoers are rarely surprised to hear a number not on the program, and having tickets for a performance of a particular opera or ballet does not insure that the performance will occur as scheduled. The Cuban National Ballet, founded by the "primitiva" ballerina, Alicia Alonso, performs periodically, but performances are limited between foreign tours. Camaguey's dance company now rivals that of Havana, but it, too, is mostly on the road outside Cuba. Notable visiting artists from around the world occasionally visit Cuba, but in recent years they have come more to show solidarity than to perform.

Education is a pillar of the revolution, and teachers, after medical cadres and the military, have been among its most faithful. The independent employment allowed to artists and intellectuals remains unavailable to teachers. The regime maintains its claim of 96% literacy despite some evidence of functional illiteracy and criticisms of the educational system. Control of reading material has loosened greatly in recent years as the means to acquire it have diminished. In 1992-94 several Cuban universities and the National Library started accepting materials from the USIS book program. The pace of requests for more publications has now far outstripped the capacity to supply them. USIS also has distributed post-produced publications and donated newspapers and magazines, especially to support English teaching programs.

Cuban self criticisms of the waste, mismanagement, and inefficiency of their economy has rarely been applied to the educational system. The revolution succeeded in widespread school construction, especially in provincial areas, and in establishing a large-scale system of technical and normal education and the expansion of the country's public universities.

However, the well-endowed schools of the past are now all-but-forgotten when each new school year opens with a drive to raise funds to buy pencils and paper. During the prolonged blackouts of the special period, most schools lack electricity and all that goes with it, and water supplies and sanitary conditions are unreliable.

Despite all these problems, classes go on at all levels of the system amid the reductions, especially at the higher levels. Cuba's six universities and other centers of higher education appear to be losing enrollment, and concerns about the furloughing of faculty and other changes of status are mounting.

The big challenge for the universities in Pinar del Rio, Havana, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Camaguey and Santiago, as well as in the twenty or so other institutes of higher education is the lack of access to dollars. In 1993 these institutions were allowed to develop self-financing programs for the first time. Despite seemingly endless numbers of special courses, seminars and conferences for foreign students and academics, earnings appear limited.

Beside the lack of funds, many Cuban scholars trained in the former Soviet bloc now are without means of maintaining their scientific and professional development with respect to any international standard. In some faculties large-scale English programs have been started to retool the language capacities of the staff, and professional contact with visiting American scholars is eagerly sought out where it was once avoided. Profes-

sors are encouraged to participate in internationally-funded programs and to accept teaching opportunities in other countries that may generate some funds.

Academic and cultural contact with the United States is growing rapidly, largely at the initiative of U.S. institutions, but Cuban counterparts are quick to go along and often to take control of programs. From a low point during the mid-1980s when only a handful of academics traveled each year, today there are scores of U.S. visitors each month at the University of Havana, and several hundred Cubans visit the U.S. each year. The provincial educational centers are far less involved, especially in allowing faculty to travel, but U.S. institutions are beginning to focus their attention beyond Havana.

Commerce and Industry

Since the late 18th century, the Cuban economy has been dominated by sugar production and has prospered or suffered due to fluctuations in sugar prices. Sugar still accounts for about three-quarters of export earnings. Cuba has never diversified from its basic monocultural economy despite some development of tourism, nickel mining, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology.

For almost 30 years, the defects in Cuba's economy and the effects of the economic embargo imposed by the U.S. in 1962 were partially offset by heavy subsidies from the former Soviet Union. But those supports ended with the collapse of COMECON in the late 1980s and with the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. Cuba's break with its former patron and failure to undertake needed reforms combined to produce an unprecedented economic crisis. Its economy is estimated to have declined 40% from 1989 through 1992.

The economic prospects are not good, largely because of the Castro regime's decision to maintain the

state's highly-centralized control over economic decision-making, the lack of energy supplies, and inputs for industry. The "Special Period in Peacetime" relies upon strict rationing of food, fuel, and electricity, and gives priority to domestic food production, development of tourism, and biotechnology production.

Basic public services are provided by the state, either free of charge or for minimal fees. Access to education through high school is still generally available, but urban housing and medical care have deteriorated, as have communications and transportation.

The state owns and operates most of Cuba's farms and all industrial enterprises. State farms occupy about 70% of farmland, while peasant cooperatives account for about 20%. Private farms account for about 10% of Cuba's agriculture. Cuba's manufacturing sector emphasizes import substitution and provision of basic industrial materials. In recent years, many Cuban firms have closed or reduced production because of shortages of foreign exchange and limited access to spare parts and imported components.

The U.S. has a comprehensive trade embargo on Cuba. The Cuban Democracy Act, signed into law in October 1992, revoked Treasury authority to issue licenses for most U.S. subsidiary trade with Cuba and bans for 180 days vessels which have entered a Cuban port from loading or unloading in U.S. ports. The legislation provides support for the Cuban people by permitting licensing for "efficient and adequate" telecommunications and for humanitarian donations to non-governmental organizations in Cuba.

With the loss of trade and aid from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Cuba has attempted to attract foreign investment and Western buyers for its nickel, petroleum, biotechnology, and other sectors. Except in tourism, minerals and mining, Cuba has had limited success in that effort because of the

deterioration of the economy, its unpaid debt to Western countries, and the lack of clear title to expropriated property.

In 1993, the Cuban Government introduced measures to help revive the economy, including allowing more exiles from the U.S. to visit Cuba, expanding the permission for self-employment, and decriminalizing hard currency possession. In addition, Cuba also established the Basic Units of Collective Production (UBPCs), which allow greater control over the farms' administration and division of any profits with the farms' workers. However, concerned by the specter of a renascent capitalism and the possibility of corruption, the government already has limited the scope of such measures as self-employment.

Transportation

Local

Travel within and between Cuban cities is complicated by a dearth of reliable road maps, and signs or markers which are infrequently posted and poorly visible. Cuba's economic disintegration, after years of Soviet and Eastern Bloc support, has clearly manifested itself in gasoline shortages. Vehicle traffic in Havana is light, relative to past years when traffic jams and heavy pollution ringed the city. Yet if the volume of vehicular traffic is down, heavy bicycle traffic compensates, posing the latest and constant road hazard.

Driving is hazardous also due to potholes, obscure traffic signals, and parked or stalled cars in lanes of traffic. Dwindling revenue and central planning have contributed to the diversion of resources away from road repair and other infrastructural improvements. Power outages make signal intersections dangerous and leave many other streets in total darkness.

Rainy season flooding forces traffic off some streets, and it is not uncommon to encounter stalled cars and buses on the road even under

good driving conditions. Vehicle inspection regulations are sporadically enforced at best. Spare parts, supplies, motor oil, etc. for privately-owned vehicles are seldom available, making maintenance and safety problematical. Indeed, the only thing keeping so many cars, including many vintage American models, running along Havana's boulevards is creativity and ingenuity.

Cuba's promotion of tourism has resulted in far more taxis plying the streets, although generally you can flag one only in front of tourist hotels and other hard currency locations. It is difficult to hail one on the street, but you can call for one. Bus transportation is erratic, unreliable, overcrowded, and not recommended.

Regional

Increasingly, even within Cuba's major cities, the road system reflects poor and infrequent maintenance. Secondary roads and more rural highways suffer from severe neglect, with little or no grass-cutting, no fencing to keep animals from wandering into traffic, few signs or other distance and safety markers, and crumbling pavement. Gasoline stations which are open, have fuel, and accept dollars are almost nonexistent in many outlying areas. The quality of refined petroleum in Cuba is questionable, and bad fuel has damaged or destroyed more than one fuel injector system. At \$3.50 a gallon, the availability and price of gasoline confine most Americans to Havana or trips which can be achieved with one tankful.

Cubana de Aviacion serves Cuba's major cities but has limited international routes, which Americans are prohibited from using anyway. For domestic routes Cubana is the only airline from which to choose. There are a number of other international airlines and flights. Overnight train service, with a special car for dollar customers, transits Cuba from Havana to Santiago regularly.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

International telephone service is fair to acceptable, but frequently poor for local calls. Calls from Cuba to the States are subject to disconnection or dropped lines. It is virtually impossible to call Cuba from the States, and is getting more difficult.

Telephone rates vary based on the location called. Calls to the U.S. cost about \$2.50 per minute, regardless of the time, distance or day of week. Calls to all other overseas destinations cost much more. Cellular telephone technology exists in Cuba, but rates are higher still. The quality of phone service discourages use of fax machines. Indeed, the quality of office and residential telephone service is questionable, as bills periodically reflect hundreds of dollars in calls never made. Radio and TV

For a large part of the population, radio and TV provide access to entertainment and information. Radio stations throughout the country offer programming varying from news and public affairs to sports, music, and soap operas. Western music is very popular in Cuba, and classical music programs are broadcast most of the day. Of course, some stations air programs with a more political orientation. Close proximity to the U.S. and favorable weather conditions permit some Florida radio signals to penetrate Cuban airwaves. Major shortwave radio signals from the VOA, BBC, and Armed Forces radio also can be picked up. USIA's Radio Marti' is easily received, but TV Marti' is actively jammed by Cuba.

The Cuban government maintains two TV stations which broadcast a variety of news, sports, political events and speeches, musical variety shows, soap operas, dramatic productions, cartoons and feature films from the U.S., Europe, Japan and the former Soviet Union, all but a few in Spanish. In recent years there has been a proliferation of privately-owned satellite dishes.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The quality of medical and dental care available in Havana has deteriorated. Hospitals designated to care for tourists and diplomats with relatively modern, imported equipment appear suitable for routine outpatient cases; but, pharmaceuticals are in short supply. A hospital's ability to provide a required medication on demand is open to question. A full range of medical specialists is available but secondary and follow-up care is not up to U.S. standards. Patients requiring evaluation or treatment of more complex cases are evacuated to Miami.

Community Health

Community public health and sanitation programs are collapsing. Mosquito bites and insect-borne diseases are common in Cuba. Garbage collection and disposal equipment is limited. Pick-up schedules are random and haphazard. Air pollution is common during sugarcane harvesting months (December through June). Trash burning in some residential neighborhoods adds to the problem.

Rain produces sewage backups jeopardizing public water supplies. While city water is adequately treated as it enters the municipal water system, tap water is not considered safe for internal consumption due to the deteriorated water distribution system. Sanitation during food preparation may be adequate, yet standards of cleanliness in food processing factories, markets and restaurants are marginal.

Upper respiratory and sinus problems are common in the Cuban climate. There are frequent flu outbreaks in the Fall and Winter (September through March) USINT personnel have experienced various minor ailments such as diarrhea, intestinal parasites, fungal infections, and conjunctivitis. With the breakdown of preventive public health programs and with periodic torrential rains and flooding, serious illnesses such as hepatitis, den-

gue fever, typhoid are a threat. The last major typhoid outbreak occurred in 1977. The last dengue fever epidemic was in 1981.

In 1993, an outbreak of optical neuritis affected about 50,000 Cubans, some seriously. Apparently in part the result of vitamin deficiencies, the outbreak subsided later in the year. No U.S. citizens were affected.

Preventive Measures

Boil all water. Raw fruits and vegetables should be scrubbed, soaked in a chlorine solution and rinsed in drinking water.

There is a shortage of medication in Cuba. U.S.-brand drugs are not available. You should bring a generous supply of mosquito repellent, sunscreen lotion, first-aid items, prescription drugs, and a full range of medicine cabinet drugs. If you wear eyeglasses or contact lens, bring a second pair.

There are no mandatory immunizations. Typhoid, influenza, hepatitis B, gamma globuli, and, for travel to Central America, yellow fever shots are recommended. Cuban authorities do not require any particular inoculations for persons coming from the U.S.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The Cuban Assets Control Regulations of the U.S. Treasury Department require that persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction be licensed to engage in any transaction related to travel to, from and within Cuba. Transactions related to tourist travel are not licensable. This restriction includes tourist travel to Cuba from or through a third country such as Mexico or Canada.

The following categories of travelers are permitted to spend money for Cuban travel and to engage in other transactions directly incident to the purpose of their travel under a gen-

eral license, without the need to obtain special permission from the U.S. Treasury Department:

- U.S. and foreign government officials traveling on official business, including representatives of international organizations of which the U.S. is a member.

- Journalists and supporting broadcasting or technical personnel regularly employed by a news reporting organization.

- Persons making a once-a-year visit to close family relatives in circumstances of humanitarian need.

- Full-time professionals whose travel transactions are directly related to professional research in their professional areas, provided that their research: (1) is of a non-commercial academic nature; (2) comprises a full work schedule in Cuba, and (3) has a substantial likelihood of public dissemination.

- Full-time professionals whose travel transactions are directly related to attendance at professional meetings or conferences in Cuba organized by an international professional organization, institution, or association that regularly sponsors such meetings or conferences in other countries.

- Amateur or semi-professional athletes or teams traveling to Cuba to participate in an athletic competition held under the auspices of the relevant international sports federation.

The Department of the Treasury may issue licenses on a case-by-case basis authorizing Cuba travel-related transactions directly incident to marketing, sales negotiation, accompanied delivery, and servicing of exports and reexports that appear consistent with the licensing policy of the Department of Commerce. The sectors in which U.S. citizens may sell and service products to Cuba include agricultural commodities, telecommunications activities, medicine, and medical devices. The Treasury

Department will also consider requests for specific licenses for humanitarian travel not covered by the general license, educational exchanges, and religious activities by individuals or groups affiliated with a religious organization.

Unless otherwise exempted or authorized, any person subject to U.S. jurisdiction who engages in any travel-related transaction in Cuba violates the regulations. Persons not licensed to engage in travel-related transactions may travel to Cuba without violating the regulations only if all Cuba-related expenses are covered by a person not subject to U.S. jurisdiction and provided that the traveler does not provide any service to Cuba or a Cuban national. Such travel is called "fully-hosted" travel. Such travel may not be made on a Cuban carrier or aboard a direct flight between the United States and Cuba.

Failure to comply with Department of Treasury regulations may result in civil penalties and criminal prosecution upon return to the United States.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Licensing Division, Office of Foreign Assets Control, U.S. Department of the Treasury, 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Treasury Annex, Washington, DC 20220, telephone (202) 622-2480; fax (202) 622-1657. Internet users can log on to the web site through <http://www.treas.gov/ofac/>.

Should a traveler receive a license, a valid passport is required for entry into Cuba. The Cuban government requires that the traveler obtain a visa prior to arrival. Attempts to enter or exit Cuba illegally, or to aid the irregular exit of Cuban nationals or other persons, are contrary to Cuban law and are punishable by jail terms. Entering Cuban territory, territorial waters or airspace (within 12 miles of the Cuban coast) without prior authorization from the Cuban government may result in arrest or other enforcement action by Cuban authorities. Immi-

gration violators are subject to prison terms ranging from four years for illegal entry or exit to as many as 30 years for aggravated cases of alien smuggling. For current information on Cuban entry and customs requirements, travelers may contact the Cuban Interests Section, an office of the Cuban government, located at 2630 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009, telephone (202) 797-8518.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passport with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available.

The U.S. Interests Section (USINT) represents American citizens and the U.S. Government in Cuba, and operates under the legal protection of the Swiss government. The Interests Section staff provides the full range of American citizen and other consular services. U.S. citizens who travel to Cuba are encouraged to contact and register with the American Citizen Services section. USINT staff provide briefings on U.S.-Cuba policy to American individuals and groups visiting Cuba. These briefings or meetings can be arranged through USINT's Public Diplomacy office.

The Interests Section is located in Havana at Calzada between L and M Streets, Vedado; telephone (537) 33-3551 through 33-3559. Hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. After hours and on weekends, the number is 33-3026 or 66-2302. Should you encounter an emergency after normal duty hours, call these numbers and request to speak with the duty officer.

U.S. citizens who register at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana may obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. There is no access to the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay from within Cuba. Consular issues for Guantanamo Bay are handled by the U.S. Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica. For further information on

Guantanamo Bay, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Kingston at telephone (876) 929-5374.

Pets

Cuba imposes no quarantine on arriving pets. However, all pets must have a certificate of good health signed by a veterinarian and dated within 10 days from the date of the animal's arrival in Cuba. Dogs and cats must have a veterinary certification showing the date of the last rabies vaccination. And all animals must be taken to a Cuban veterinarian shortly after arrival for a checkup.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Since the Cuban government legalized the use of dollars in July 1993, U.S. dollars are accepted for all transactions.

U.S. citizens and residents traveling under a general or specific license from the U.S. Treasury Department may spend money on travel in Cuba; such expenditures may only be for travel-related expenses at a rate not to exceed the U.S. Government's per diem rate. U.S. Treasury regulations authorize any U.S. resident to send up to \$300 per calendar quarter to any Cuban family (except families of senior government and Communist party leaders) without a specific license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control. Treasury Department regulations also authorize the transfer of up to \$1,000 (without specific license) to pay travel and other expenses for a Cuban national who has been granted a migration document by the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. For further information, travelers should contact the Office of Foreign Assets Control.

U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens are prohibited from using credit cards in Cuba. U.S. credit card companies do not accept vouchers from Cuba, and Cuban shops, hotels and other places of business do not accept U.S. credit cards. Neither personal checks nor travelers checks drawn on U.S. banks are accepted in Cuba.

Both English and metric systems of weights and measures are used in Cuba, although the metric system predominates.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1New Year's Day
- May 1Cuba Labor Day
- July 25-27Cuban National Revolutionary Festival
- Oct. 10Cuba Independence Day
- Dec. 25.Christmas Day

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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DOMINICA

Commonwealth of Dominica

Major City:

Roseau

Other City:

Portsmouth

INTRODUCTION

DOMINICA was the first island sighted by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage on Sunday (*dies dominica*), November 3, 1493. At that time, the island was inhabited by Carib Indians, whose ancestors had originally come from the Orinoco Basin of South America. The Caribs had seized the island from the indigenous Arawaks in the 14th century. The Caribs fought against conquest, and the Spanish lost interest in the island because it apparently had no mineral wealth. Carib resistance also prevented the French and English from settling on the island in the early 1600s. In 1660, England and France agreed to let the native Caribs control the island without interference, but within 30 years Europeans began settling there. France took possession of Dominica in 1727 but forfeited it to Great Britain in 1763. Dominica was governed by Great Britain as part of the Leeward Islands from 1871 until 1939. Between 1940 and 1958, it was administered as part of the Windward Islands. From 1958 until 1962, it belonged to the short-lived Federation of the West Indies. After that federation broke apart, Dominica became an associated state of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1967 and an independent republic on

November 3, 1978. Dominica fully supported the 1983 US-led military intervention in nearby Grenada.

MAJOR CITY

Roseau

Roseau, with a population of 21,000, is the capital of Dominica. Located on the southwest coast of the island on the south bank of the Roseau River, Roseau is the country's largest city. The town's name is taken from the French word for "reed" because the river's edge was once covered with reeds. Roseau has suffered from many catastrophes, including floods, fires, and ten hurricanes since 1781 (most recent in 1979, 1980, and 1989). Woodbridge Bay Deep Water Harbour, one mile north of Roseau, handles commercial and large cruise ships with a draft of 30 feet up to 500 feet in length. Agricultural plantations became the foundation of the economy. Coffee was the main crop during the French colonial era, and sugar production was later introduced by the British. The market near the mouth of the Roseau River is the city's center for commerce.

Recreation and Entertainment

Scuba diving and sailing are popular tourist activities. From Roseau, day trip hiking tours are available to explore the rugged natural beauty of Dominica's volcanic peaks, forests, lakes, waterfalls, and numerous rivers. Cricket is the national game of Dominica and is played all over the island.

The Botanical Gardens of Dominica lie just outside Roseau below the Morne Bruce hill. The gardens cover 40 acres and were first planted in 1890 from a converted sugarcane plantation. Since the gardens receive over 85 inches of rain per year, a wide variety of tropical ornamental plants can be grown. In the 1960s and 1970s, the gardens were a popular site for cricket matches. The aviary at the gardens is a breeding center for the endangered Jaco or Rednecked parrot (*Amazona arausiaca*) as well as Dominica's national bird, the Sisserou parrot (*Amazona imperialis*). The Morne Trios Pitons National Park to the east covers 17,000 acres. The park is a natural undisturbed rainforest, and it contains Boeri Lake and Freshwater Lake, as well as the volcanic Boiling Lake and Middleham Falls. The Emerald Pool, a cave filled by a waterfall and surrounded by beautiful plants, is also located in the Morne Trois Piton National

Park. Trafalgar Falls north of the city is located in a lush gorge covered with ferns and orchids.

The Old Market Square area in downtown Roseau features several prominent early buildings. Dominica has several historic churches, including some in Roseau such as the Romanesque-style Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption. The architecture of older wooden buildings, complete with overhanging balconies, gingerbread fretwork, shutters, and jalousies, displays the historic influence of France. Many of the older buildings were restored to their original style after Hurricane David struck Roseau in 1979. In 1993, the Bay Front district opened as a waterfront promenade. The construction of a new seawall allowed land to be reclaimed for the project and now offers the city greater protection from rough seas. Fort Young, with its massive walls, was constructed during the 1700s for protection of the city; it became a hotel in the 1960s.

Roseau's art galleries feature the works of local artists who have received international recognition. There are three main annual arts festivals: Carnival, DOMFESTA, and Independence. Carnival has street parades, and beauty and costume pageants. Music is an important part of Carnival, which features calypso and a marching competition. DOMFESTA is a week-long festival held at the end of July which focuses on contemporary art. Independence celebrates Dominica's heritage with traditional food, costume, dance, and music.

OTHER CITY

PORTSMOUTH is Dominica's second-largest town, located on the northwestern coast. Nearby Prince Rupert's Bay is a natural harbor that was originally home to the Caribs. The sheltered bay was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage and later became a Spanish port for conquistadors going to

South America. The town was originally planned as the capital, but the malaria-carrying mosquitoes in the nearby marshes led settlers to relocate to Roseau. Boat trips up the Indian River to see native flora and fauna are popular with visitors. Portsmouth has approximately 3,600 (1995) residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Dominica is part of the Windward Islands, and lies between Guadeloupe to the north and Martinique to the south. It lies in the middle of the Lesser Antilles chain of islands. Dominica has an area of 790 square miles and is 29 miles long (north to south) and 16 miles wide (east to west). Its terrain is the most rugged of all the islands in the Lesser Antilles, with many peaks, ridges, and ravines. There are several mountains with peaks that are over 4,000 feet above sea level. The Boiling Lake is the second-largest volcanic bubbling crater lake in world. Boeri Lake is a freshwater crater lake that lies 3,000 feet above sea level. Dominica's climate is fairly tropical. Temperatures average 77°F in the winter and 82°F in the summer. Annual rainfall ranges from 80 inches along the coast to 250 inches in mountainous inland areas. Almost one fourth of the land is planted with crops.

Population

Dominica's population is estimated at 64,000. The population density of 110 per square mile is one of the lowest in the West Indies. Over 90% of the population is descended from African slaves brought to the island in the 17th and 18th centuries. About 6% of the population is of mixed origins. The Carib Territory, some 3,700 acres on the northeast coast of the island set aside in 1903, belongs to the 3,400 descendants of

the original inhabitants of the Caribbean islands. Due to the historic influence of the French, about 77% of all Dominicans are Roman Catholic. Smaller groups include Anglicans, Methodists, Pentecostals, Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Baha'is, and Rastafarians. The Caribs' religious beliefs combine features of Christianity and nature worship. English is the official language of Dominica. Most of the population also speaks a French-based dialect called *kwéyòl*. Dominicans are increasingly using *kwéyòl*, which is unique but has elements in common with the dialects of St. Lucia and other islands with cultures influenced by France. Language in Dominica exhibits characteristics of Carib dialect and African phrases.

Government

Dominica became an independent republic on November 3, 1978.

Dominica has a Westminster-style parliamentary government, and there are three political parties: The Dominica Labor Party (the majority party), the Dominica United Workers Party, and the Dominica Freedom Party. A president and prime minister make up the executive branch. Nominated by the prime minister in consultation with the leader of the opposition party, the president is elected for a 5-year term by the parliament. The president appoints as prime minister the leader of the majority party in the parliament and also appoints, on the prime minister's recommendation, members of the parliament from the ruling party as cabinet ministers. The prime minister and cabinet are responsible to the parliament and can be removed on a no-confidence vote.

The unicameral parliament, called the House of Assembly, is composed of 21 regional representatives and nine senators. The regional representatives are elected by universal suffrage and, in turn, decide whether senators are to be elected or appointed. If appointed, five are



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Street in downtown Roseau, Dominica

chosen by the president with the advice of the prime minister and four with the advice of the opposition leader. If elected, it is by vote of the regional representatives. Elections for representatives and senators must be held at least every 5 years, although the prime minister can call elections any time.

Dominica's legal system is based on English common law. There are three magistrate's courts, with appeals made to the Eastern Caribbean court of appeal and, ultimately, to the Privy Council in London.

Councils elected by universal suffrage govern most towns. Supported largely by property taxation, the councils are responsible for the regulation of markets and sanitation and the maintenance of secondary roads and other municipal amenities. The island also is divided into

10 parishes, whose governance is unrelated to the town governments.

The flag of the Commonwealth of Dominica consists of a green field with a cross composed of yellow, black, and white stripes. In the center is a red disk with 10 yellow-bordered green stars surrounding a parrot.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 15. Transportation to secondary schools is a problem for students in rural areas. Higher education facilities include a teacher training institute, a technical college, a nursing school, and a satellite center of the University of the West Indies. The Alliance Française of Dominica sponsors French-language classes for all ages and main-

tains a library and cultural center in Roseau.

Commerce and Industry

Agriculture, with bananas as the principal crop, is still Dominica's economic mainstay. Banana production employs, directly or indirectly, upwards of one-third of the work force. This sector is highly vulnerable to weather conditions and to external events affecting commodity prices. The value of banana exports fell to less than 25% of merchandise trade earnings in 1998 compared to about 44% in 1994.

In view of the EU's announced phase-out of preferred access of bananas to its markets, agricultural diversification is a priority. Dominica has made some progress, with the export of small quantities of citrus fruits and vegetables and the

introduction of coffee, patchouli, aloe vera, cut flowers, and exotic fruits such as mangoes, guavas, and papayas. Dominica has also had some success in increasing its manufactured exports, with soap as the primary product. Dominica also recently entered the offshore financial services market.

Because Dominica is mostly volcanic and has few beaches, development of tourism has been slow compared with that on neighboring islands. Nevertheless, Dominica's high, rugged mountains, rainforests, freshwater lakes, hot springs, waterfalls, and diving spots make it an attractive destination. Cruise ship stopovers have increased following the development of modern docking and waterfront facilities in the capital. Eco-tourism also is a growing industry on the island.

Dominica is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues a common currency to all eight members of the ECCU. The ECCB also manages monetary policy, and regulates and supervises commercial banking activities in its member countries.

Dominica is a beneficiary of the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Its 1996 exports to the U.S. were \$7.7 million, and its U.S. imports were \$34 million. Dominica is also a member of the 14-member Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Transportation

A paved road circles the island. Both Roseau and Portsmouth receive ships. The Cabrits Cruise Ship Port, located in the northwest within the Cabrits National Park, handles only cruise ship traffic. There is a 2,500-foot airstrip north of Roseau.

Communications

In 1987 Dominica became the first country in the world to operate a telecommunications system that was entirely digital. There are five local radio stations and one cable television station. The island also receives broadcasts from neighboring islands. Two newspapers, the *New Chronicle* and the government's *Official Gazette*, are published in Roseau.

Health

Dominica's one general hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, is in Roseau. There are also smaller hospital facilities in Portsmouth, Marigot, and Grand Bay, and 12 health centers scattered across the country. Tuberculosis and other respiratory problems are made worse by high humidity and rainy conditions.

Clothing and Services

Dominicans dress modestly. Tourists are advised that scanty clothes and swimwear are only to be worn on the beaches. Casual light cottons are worn during the day, with a light sweater for cooler evenings. Raingear and hiking shoes are recommended for the mountains and rainforests.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

U.S. citizens may enter Dominica without a passport for tourist stays of up to three months, but they must carry an original document proving U.S. citizenship, such as a U.S. passport, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship or certified U.S. birth certificate; photo identification; and a return or onward ticket. For further information concerning entry requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 3216 New Mexico Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016, telephone:

(202) 364-6781, email: emb-domdc@aol.com, or the Consulate General of Dominica in New York at (212) 768-2480.

Dominica's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning the temporary import or export of items such as business equipment, food and beverages, paints and varnishes, and chemicals. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Dominica in Washington or the Consulate in New York for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Dominica are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados and obtain updated information on travel and security within Dominica. Consular Section hours are 9:00am-12 noon and 2:00pm-4:00pm, Monday-Friday except local and U.S. holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located in the American Life Insurance (ALICO) building, Cheapside, Bridgetown, Barbados, telephone 1-246-431-0225, fax 1-246-431-0179, e-mail: consular-bridge@state.gov or Internet: <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhcons.html>

Disaster Preparedness

Dominica is a hurricane-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

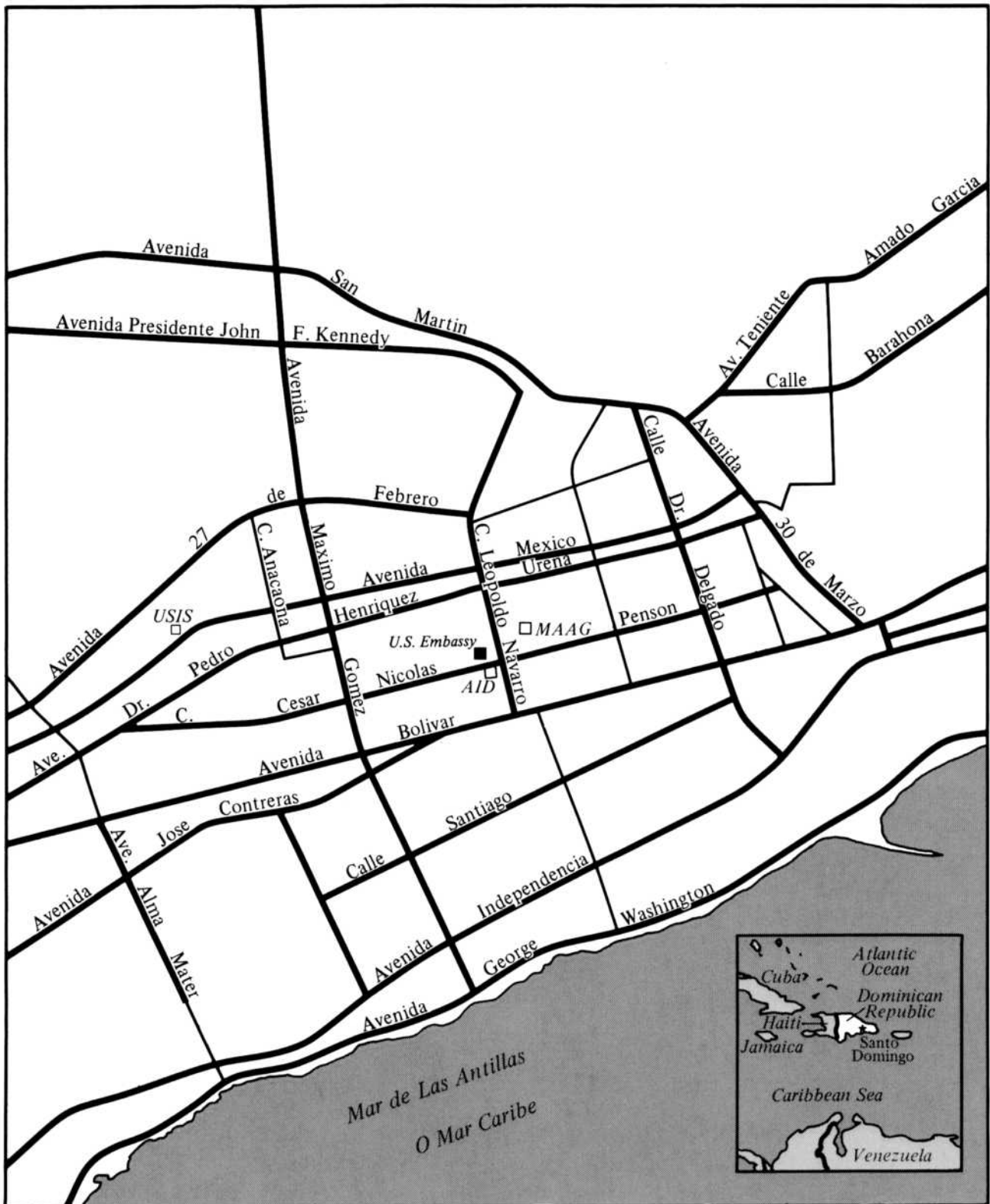
January 1 New Year's Day
 *Carnival
 *Good Friday
 *Easter Monday
 May 1 Labor Day
 *Whitmonday
 July 2 Caricom Day
 August
 (first Monday) . . *Bank Holiday
 November 3-4 . . . National Holidays
 December 25 Christmas

December 26 Boxing Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Philpott, Don. *Caribbean Sunseekers: Dominica*. Lincolnwood, Ill.: Passport Books, 1996.



Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Major Cities:

Santo Domingo, Santiago de los Caballeros, La Romana

Other Cities:

Azua, Baní, Barahona, Constanza, Higüey, Jarabacoa, La Vega, Puerto Plata, Samaná, San Cristóbal, San Francisco De Macorís, San Juan, San Pedro De Macorís

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Dominican Republic. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** shares with the Republic of Haiti the tropical island of Hispaniola, one of the Greater Antilles situated between Cuba and Puerto Rico. Troubled by unstable political conditions throughout most of its history, it has had little chance until recent years to develop a sound economy capable of providing more than a subsistence level of living for most of its people. The period from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, however, was marked by rapid economic development and progress, and the 1982 peaceful transition of power indicates the nation's growing stability.

Since its discovery by Columbus in 1492 and its colonization by Spain, Hispaniola has been, for brief periods, under the nominal control of Great Britain, France, Haiti, and the United States (1916–24). A bloody revolution on the French-held western end of the island in 1791 led to the establishment of Haiti as an independent country. Haitian forces dominated the island for varying periods between 1801 and 1843. The Dominican Republic gained its independence in 1844 after a successful revolt against Haitian rule, but its political history remained stormy, with foreign intervention in the country's affairs from the late 1800s to the middle part of this century. Recent political events suggest a promise of permanent democratic tradition.

MAJOR CITIES

Santo Domingo

Santo Domingo, the oldest continuous European settlement in the Americas, is the capital and largest city of the Dominican Republic. It serves as the commercial, social, and political hub of the country, as well as the principal seaport. It is a fast-growing city which has more

than doubled its population in the last 10 years. The population is estimated at 3.6 million. Most inhabitants live in the older, poorer, *barrio* sections, bordering the Ozama River. Outside these areas and the commercial districts near the port, Santo Domingo is fairly modern, with new homes, apartments, and office buildings continually under construction. Here, streets and avenues are lined with palm and flame trees, and flowering shrubs.

La Plaza de la Cultura, on the western side of the city, is the most impressive cultural area in the Caribbean, boasting the Museum of Dominican Man (Museo del Hombre), with a collection of artifacts from the Indian migrations from South America through the Caribbean islands; the National Library (Biblioteca Nacional); and the National Theater (Teatro Nacional). Parks and playgrounds are numerous in the immediate outskirts of Santo Domingo, and nearby beaches lure Dominicans and tourists alike.

The present location of the nation's capital evolved through a series of incidents. Christopher Columbus made his first landing in the New World December 5, 1492, on the northwest coast of an island he named Hispaniola. On Christmas Day of that year, his flagship, the Santa María, was wrecked on the

reefs of Cape Haitien, and from the salvaged timbers of this vessel the crew built the first European fort in the Western Hemisphere. Leaving a garrison of 40 men at the fort, Columbus set sail for further explorations and eventually went back to Spain. When he returned the following year on his second voyage, he found that the Indians had revolted against Spanish abuse, and had destroyed his small garrison. Columbus then ordered the construction of a new city, La Isabela, near the present city of Puerto Plata on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. His brother, Bartholomé (in English, Bartholomew), was made governor of Hispaniola.

In 1496, Bartholomé, enticed by rumors of gold, a good harbor, and fertile land, and disheartened by sickness and bickering among the colonists, transferred the seat of government to the south coast on the bank of the Ozama River. He named the new city Santo Domingo in honor of his favorite saint, Dominic. The spot served as Spain's stepping-stone to further explorations in the New World. Except for the period from 1936 to 1961, when the city was called Ciudad Trujillo, for (then) President Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina, this name has endured.

During the early 16th century, Santo Domingo was the staging area for the Spanish *conquistadors*. Among the famous explorers who contributed to the colorful history of the area were Ponce de León, Sir Francis Drake, Diego de Velázquez, and Hernán Cortés.

Clothing

Drip-dry materials, wash-and-wear cottons, and synthetic combinations will withstand repeated washings and the bright sun of the Dominican Republic. Because dry cleaning establishments are not up to U.S. standards, washable clothing is strongly recommended. For the most part, apparel that is suitable for a Washington, DC summer is appropriate all year in the Dominican climate. Jackets, sweaters, and shawls are needed for the rare cool

evening. Lightweight rainwear and umbrellas are useful during the rainy season; rubbers or boots are not. Hats and gloves are rarely worn. Sun hats, shades, and other protective clothing are recommended because the tropical sun can be hard on the skin.

Tropical-weight shirts and neckties are normal office attire but, for special functions, a white or dark business suit is appropriate. Black dinner jackets (never white) are worn on some occasions. Women dress simply in cool, sleeveless (or short-sleeved) dresses for office or other activities. Stockings are worn only for special occasions. Pantsuits may be worn to the office; slacks are acceptable for casual gatherings or for shopping. Shorts may be worn. Shoes are available locally, although they are expensive and often poorly made.

Children wear summer garments year round. Nightclothes suitable for U.S. summers are practical for older children, but infants and young children may need warmer wear in air-conditioned bedrooms. Children's shoes, both locally made and U.S. brands, are available. Teenagers in Santo Domingo are style and label conscious, and formal wear is worn much more in Santo Domingo than in the U.S.

Food

Several modern supermarkets in Santo Domingo offer a wide variety of U.S. canned and frozen foods including baby foods, but at high prices. Coffee, bread, rice, and a variety of other local products are found in most supermarkets. Supermarkets sell pasteurized milk, yogurt, butter, and cheese. They are usually safe to consume once checked for freshness.

Fresh foods on the local market are generally in good supply and of adequate quality. Farmers' outdoor markets and door-to-door vendors also sell fresh fruits and vegetables. Special outlets for meats, eggs, baked goods, and dairy products are available. Beef, veal, pork, poultry, fish, lobster, and shrimp are also

available locally. Due to the danger of ciguatera, a serious type of poisoning, do not eat fish at home or in restaurants. Both commonplace and tropical vegetables are found in season.

Local tropical fruits, including breadfruit, kumquat (nispero), gump (limoncillo), and guanabana, are plentiful and delicious. Lemons, as Americans know them, do not grow here; limes are used instead. Temperate zone fruits such as peaches, plums, and apples are imported occasionally, but are expensive.

Dairies sell pasteurized milk and will deliver. Milk in wax containers is preferable to bottled milk, as bottles may be contaminated. Local butter and cheese are usually safe, but should be checked for freshness.

The German-Jewish colony in Sosua, on the north coast, prepares excellent meats, cheeses, and good sandwich bread, all sold in Santo Domingo.

Fine local beers sell at prices approximately equal to those in the U.S. Most kinds of soft drinks are bottled here and sold at reasonable prices.

Supplies & Services

Beauty and barber shops are numerous in the cities and at the major resorts, with services varying from adequate to good. Tailoring is used mainly for alterations, but many American women find local dressmakers satisfactory. Shoe repair is satisfactory. All of these services are reasonable, but some radio, stereo, and television repairmen charge high rates. Cost estimates should be obtained beforehand. Laundries are available, but most expatriates prefer to have their laundry done at home. Washing and ironing should be supervised to prevent damage to fabrics, washers, and irons. At the few local dry cleaners, the quality of work is inconsistent.

Repair service is available on most cars, and prices for routine work are



City of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Courtesy of United Nations

reasonable. However, major repairs can mean delays while parts are ordered; this type of service is expensive and quality often only fair. Automatic transmission repair, electrical system adjustments, work on window and door fittings, and other jobs requiring a delicate touch are sometimes risky, depending upon the garage used.

Religious Activities

The Dominican Republic is officially Roman Catholic, but many other denominations maintain churches in the country. Members of the U.S. community in Santo Domingo usually attend English-language services at these churches: Epiphany Episcopal Church, Protestant Community Church, First Baptist Church, Parroquia Santiago Apóstol (mass in English), and Hebrew Synagogue Center (English prayer books, services in Hebrew each Friday). Other denominations, which have Spanish-language services, are Seventh-Day Adventist,

Plymouth Brethren, Latter-Day Saints, Assembly of God, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Roman Catholic.

Domestic Help

All types of servants are available. Generally, those who are experienced and well-trained pass from one expatriate family to another. Although efficiency and initiative are not outstanding characteristics, devotion to family and desire to please counterbalance these failings. Most servants speak only Spanish, but a few know some English. Many applicants for domestic work are illiterate and have no knowledge of American cooking or housekeeping, contrary to their claims. It is best to hire only on the recommendation of another employer, or to ask for advice at the U.S. Embassy personnel office, where a registry is kept on security-checked applicants.

The majority of Americans in the Dominican Republic (Santo Dom-

ingo, in particular) employ one or two full-time servants, and some have part-time yard boys and laundresses as well. Single people usually hire a maid for general housework, cooking, cleaning, and assistance with shopping at the local market. Some single people employ part-time maids. A family with children may need two servants, one acting as nursemaid in addition to helping with the housework. For security reasons, it is advisable to seek servants who will live in.

In addition to wages (\$200-300 a month for live-ins), the employer furnishes all meals, uniforms, linens, and toiletries. Additional money is agreed upon to cover daily transportation for servants who live at home. It is customary to give a month's salary as a Christmas bonus to domestics who have been employed for a year. Some employers assist with medical expenses, and a certain amount of paternal-

ism is involved in most employer-employee relationships. Servants customarily work a six-day week, with a paid two-week vacation after a year's service. Employers do not make obligatory payments for social or medical insurance.

Education

Most American children living in the capital attend the Carol Morgan School, a private, nonprofit institution providing coeducational instruction in English through grade 12. The curriculum parallels that of U.S. public schools, and the high school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The superintendent and teaching staff have U.S. certification. Of the total enrollment of 1,056, approximately 290 are Americans, 603 Dominicans (1994 est.), and the remainder other nationalities. School is in session from the last week in August to the first week in June, with a two-three week Christmas vacation, a week-long Easter break, and days off for the celebration of some U.S. and Dominican national holidays.

Carol Morgan School is just outside the city, in a complex of air-conditioned buildings. Spanish is taught as a foreign language in all grades, and four years of French are offered at the secondary level. The high-school curriculum is geared to college preparatory work. The physical plant has chemistry and physics laboratories, computer labs, 49 classrooms, infirmary, gymnasium, cafeteria, audiovisual facilities, and a 18,000-volume library. Physical education is offered in all grades, with intramural competition in volleyball, basketball, and softball. Extracurricular activities include a school newspaper, yearbook, literary magazine, dramatics and language clubs, and several special groups.

Santo Domingo has several other schools available to foreigners. Colegio Los Angelitos/St. George School has classes from nursery level to grade 12. The curriculum is bilingual. The school is large, well-orga-

nized, and follows a formal schedule combining British and American approaches to education. All teachers have certification. Resources and physical facilities are good. The school's name is Colegio Los Angelitos from nursery school through sixth grade, and St. George School in the upper-level classes.

ABC School offers a program based on U.S. and European educational systems. Enrollment is from kindergarten through grade six. Teachers either have college degrees or are university students.

American School of Santo Domingo provides coeducational instruction from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in the U.S. The elementary classes receive instruction in English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, Spanish, art, music, and physical education. Special programs include remedial reading and comprehension, English as a second language, and mathematics. The high school follows a college preparatory program, covering all of the general areas of study, plus Dominican history and Spanish. Several electives are offered.

The George Washington School of English Education is also coeducational. An English curriculum is offered from nursery school to 12th grade.

Two nursery schools, Froebel School and Lucy's Lambs, are especially recommended. The Froebel School has excellent equipment and resources. The staff consists of a director and three assistants. The school has three classes: one for three-year-olds, a pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds, and a kindergarten for five-year-olds. Instruction focuses on the artistic, social, and academic aspects of the child's development.

Lucy's Lambs accepts children from ages two through five. There are two nursery classes for ages two through four, a pre-kindergarten for

ages four through five, and a kindergarten for five-year-olds. Each class has about 20 children. The director and the kindergarten teacher are certified teachers. Instruction follows traditional approaches of learning colors, numbers, concepts, social adjustment, etc.

Recreation

Swimming, water-skiing, sailing, scuba diving, motor boating, baseball, softball, horseback riding, polo, volleyball, tennis, basketball, and cockfighting are among the more popular sports in the country. Americans in Santo Domingo enjoy these activities year round. Water sports are particularly popular, and several shallow, palm-lined beaches are within an hour's drive of the city. All major Santo Domingo hotels have swimming pools. Snorkeling and scuba diving are particularly interesting because of the clear water and the variety of marine life in the Caribbean. However, sharks and sea urchins are possible dangers.

Some of the finest fishing in the Caribbean may be found off the Dominican coast. Freshwater fishing and surf casting are popular, as well as fishing for marlin, sailfish, and other game fish. Some of the best spots include Cumayasa, La Romana, Cabeza de Toro, and Boca de Yuma, all east of Santo Domingo; Palmar de Ocoa and Barahona to the south; and Monte Cristi, Puerto Plata, and Samaná to the north.

Some Americans join the Club Náutico of Santo Domingo, about a 45-mile drive from the city. There is a clubhouse with dining room and bar, a small saltwater pool, a pier with a marina, and a fair beach. The club sponsors annual hunting and fishing tournaments.

Riding has become a popular sport, as have racquetball and running. For the latter, the city offers a few places for joggers, including the oceanfront or *malecon*, the six-mile perimeter of the Paseo de Los Indios Park, and the almost four-mile perimeter of the National Botanical

Gardens. Many informal walking groups exist in the country.

The Dominican Republic now has several golf courses, and others are being planned or built. One 18-hole course is at the Santo Domingo Country Club on the outskirts of the city; membership is open to non-Dominicans. Two other championship courses are 80 miles east of the capital in La Romana, beside the Caribbean. A fourth course, designed by Robert Trent Jones, is also of championship quality; it serves the tourist facilities around the seaport town of Puerto Plata.

Baseball is the national sport, and all games draw large crowds. There are two seasons. The professional winter season (which occasionally features players from the U.S. major leagues) lasts from late October to the end of January, and the summer season runs from April to September. Games during both seasons are played at Quisqueya Stadium in Santo Domingo, and at stadiums in Santiago de los Caballeros, San Pedro de Macorís, and La Romana.

Hunting is permitted in the Dominican Republic. Ducks, which migrate from North America in winter, and doves are the principal fowl hunted. Quail (in small numbers), *yaguaza* (a West Indian tree duck), and guinea hen are also hunted; no large game is found in the country.

The restored colonial section of the city is the location of Santo Domingo's principal tourist attractions. These include the Cathedral of Santa María la Menor, Torre del Homenaje, Alcazar de Colón, and the Museo de las Casas Reales (Royal Houses). The cathedral, built between 1523 and 1540, is one of the finest examples of Spanish Renaissance architecture in the Western Hemisphere. The onyx and marble monument inside the edifice was brought block by block from Barcelona, Spain. Santa María is the oldest cathedral in the New World, and is one of three places which claim to contain the remains of Christopher Columbus. The cathedral was completely rehabili-

tated in 1992 in time for festivities celebrating the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the New World.

Torre del Homenaje, part of Ozama Fortress, was erected in 1503, and reflects the power of colonial Spain. The Alcazar de Colón is the restored fortress palace built by Diego Columbus, son of Christopher, and first viceroy of the island; it contains some fine pieces of period furniture. Museo de las Casas Reales houses exhibits of historical interest, and is the former residence of the captain general of Hispaniola.

There are several other museums of interest in the city. The Museum of Dominican Man is best known for its collection of pre-Columbian artifacts; the National Museum displays works by well-known Dominican and regional artists; and the Museum of Natural History and Geography houses exhibits dealing with the topography, agriculture, and flora and fauna of the republic.

A number of parks are scattered throughout the city. The largest of these, beautiful Paseo de Los Indios, is three-and-a-half miles long and offers scenery, botanical specimens, and recreational facilities. A municipal amusement park in this area, Mirador del Sur, has a variety of attractions for small children. The Jardín Botánico Nacional Moscoso (botanical gardens named for Dr. Rafael M. Moscoso) covers an area of over 1,800,000 square meters, and contains special laboratories with hundreds of varieties of tropical plants. Other attractions are the Great Ravine, the Japanese Park, and the world's largest floral clock; small boating facilities are available in an artificial lake in the garden. The modern Parque Zoológico Nacional is spread over 1,250,000 square meters, and includes about five miles of roads and walks. Animals from different parts of the world are displayed in open areas which resemble their natural habitats. The zoo features the largest bird cage in the world, a unique African plain, and a children's zoo.

An Olympic park, with a complex of sports facilities, was built for the XII Central Caribbean Games in early 1974. The complex includes a stadium for soccer and track and field events, a covered sports palace with a seating capacity of 10,000, an Olympic-size pool, a cycling track, and court facilities.

The best beaches on the south coast are Boca Chica, 20 miles from the city; Guayacanes, Playa Caribe, Juan Dolio, and Villas del Mar, 30 miles; Barahona, 75 miles to the west; and Bayahibe, in La Romana, 80 miles to the east. Points of interest on the north coast are Puerto Plata and Sosua (about 150 miles from Santo Domingo) with their beautiful white-sand beaches.

Shopping in Santo Domingo is a real bargain because the Dominican *peso* trades favorably with most foreign currencies, and there is a wide variety of items from which to choose. Popular items include native handicrafts such as paintings, straw, macramé, and mahogany products. Amber, the country's national gem (more is mined in the Dominican Republic than anywhere else), is another good buy. Larimar, the sea-blue stone found in the western part of the country, is another recommended buy. There are duty-free zones in both Santo Domingo and Puerto Plata; Santo Domingo's is the largest duty-free area in the Caribbean.

Entertainment

Movies, shown in comfortable, air-conditioned theaters in Santo Domingo, are one of the principal means of entertainment outside the home. New and old U.S. films with original soundtracks and Spanish subtitles predominate, but British, Mexican, Italian, French, and German films are also shown. Santo Domingo has five popular gambling casinos at major hotels, and several nightclubs with floor shows. Also, various discotheques feature American music.

The National Theater is the center of a number of cultural presentations, including regular symphony

concerts, occasional solo recitals, plays, ballets by visiting troupes, and operas or plays by local artists. The Binational Center (the Dominican-American Cultural Institute) and several private galleries offer exhibits by local artists.

Santiago

Santiago de los Caballeros is the "second city" of the Dominican Republic. Its name is commonly shortened to Santiago. Situated on the banks of the Río Yaque in the north-central part of the country, it is known for its Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, a 23-year-old institution with a highly respected academic reputation. The university is considered the nation's best, and is supported by the Catholic Church and both public and private endowments.

Santiago was founded in 1504 by "30 Spanish gentlemen," and was rebuilt 60 years later after being demolished by an earthquake. It has endured not only several more earthquakes of varying intensity, but also a turbulent history of political insurrections. During the time that Rafael Trujillo was dictator in the middle years of this century, he tore down some of Santiago's finest old buildings, and erected what is widely considered to be an ugly "Peace Monument," and a \$4 million suspension bridge that leads nowhere.

Santiago has grown considerably in the past quarter-century, and is home to 1.5 people. It is the commercial center of an agricultural region and the distribution point for several industries. These industries are centered on the production of rum, furniture, cigarettes, soap, pharmaceuticals, and leather articles. It is an especially clean city which keeps a crew of workers sweeping and washing the streets daily.

Santiago is noted for its excellent hotels and restaurants, and for the *paradores*, or *pensiones*, which attract the tourist trade. It is also

famous for the fine Bermudez rum distilled here.

La Romana

La Romana is a seaport city of 133,000 in the republic's eastern province of the same name. Its popularity has increased in recent years with the completion of luxury tourist resorts, Casa de Campo and Club Dominicus, outside the city.

La Romana's name, meaning "The Scales," comes from earlier days when growers brought their crops to be weighed before shipment to Puerto Rican refineries. Its image has now changed to that of a spot popular with high society. It offers championship golf courses, superb tennis courts, good fishing facilities, swimming (off Catalina Island), a village inn, restaurants, a museum, and an exhibition hall.

The Casa de Campo complex near La Romana is fast becoming the Caribbean's most famous resort. Its 7,000 acres, spread out near the sea, include two championship courses designed by the golf architect Pete Dye.

About 10 miles from this luxurious resort is Altos de Chavón, an artist's replica of a 15th-century Spanish village. One of its famous attractions is a large, hillside amphitheater which serves as the site for cultural events. The tiny church in the village is popular for weddings.

La Romana itself is Gulf and Western Americas Corporation headquarters in the Dominican Republic, and also the site of the largest privately owned sugar refinery in the world. The city is home to several industries which manufactures soap, furniture, and shoes. The Abraham Lincoln School, a company-sponsored, English-language school, is open for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12; admissions information is available from Fundación Gulf and Western, Central Romana, La Romana, Dominican Republic.

OTHER CITIES

AZUA (full name, Azua de Compostela) is located near the Caribbean Sea about 50 miles west of Santo Domingo. The original town, established in 1504, was destroyed by an earthquake, and Azua was rebuilt three miles inland at the foot of the Sierra de Ocoa. Trading includes rice, coffee, sugarcane, fruits, and timber. A paved highway connects the city with Santo Domingo. Azua's population is over 64,000.

BANÍ, capital city of Peravia Province, is located in southern Dominican Republic, 30 miles southwest of Santo Domingo. The city is a commercial center that produces rice, coffee, and bananas. Baní's population is close to 100,000.

BARAHONA (full name, Santa Cruz de Barahona) is situated on the Caribbean Sea in southwestern Dominican Republic, about 80 miles southwest of Santo Domingo. The city, site of a major port, has industries which include fishing, sugarcane, and fruits. It is also known for hunting. The city is accessible by air and roadway. Barahona's population is approximately 74,000.

CONSTANZA, 90 miles northwest of Santo Domingo over tortuous mountain roads, offers a scenery and climate change at 4,000 feet above sea level. The city's population is close to 15,200.

HIGÜEY, the capital city of La Altagracia Province, on the east coast, is known for its basilica, which houses the largest carillon in the Americas. The church represents the country's most outstanding example of modern architecture. The city is surrounded by fertile land where cacao, cattle, corn, rice, and dairy products are produced. A major highway links Higüey with Santo Domingo. The population of Higüey is about 83,700.

JARABACOA is a colonial city in the mountains, 60 miles northwest of Santo Domingo. It is now a small rural community with pleasant

scenery, overlooking cloud formations in the lower mountain valleys. Potatoes, strawberries, apples, vegetables, and flowers are grown near the city. Jarabacoa has an estimated population of 13,400.

LA VEGA (full name, Concepción de la Vega) is the capital of La Vega Province in west-central Dominican Republic. Founded in 1494, La Vega is a commercial city in a fertile part of the country. Its crops include tobacco, coffee, cocoa, rice, and fruit. La Vega is located near the paved highway to the capital, and has an airfield. Its population is about 56,000.

PUERTO PLATA, situated on a crescent-shaped bay on the Atlantic Ocean, is an historic town where pirate ships docked in the 1500s. It became a free port during the 18th century, and later a coffee port, when plantation owners built their townhouses on the streets which now are part of a national preservation plan. In town, horses still pull carriages past gingerbread houses with latticed verandas. The city, originally named San Felipe de Puerto Plata, is the capital of Puerto Plata Province. About 130 miles north of Santo Domingo, Puerto Plata has a population of about 86,000. Tobacco, coffee, sugar, cacao, bananas, and hardwoods are exported here. Liquor, dairy products, pasta, and leather are manufactured in Puerto Plata. The city is among the country's ten greatest cattle producing areas. Recently, the area has become the site of a large, and still expanding, international tourist complex. Major resorts include Jack Tar Village, Playa Dorado Hotel, Dorado Naco, and Villas Dorados.

SAMANÁ (formerly called Santa Bárbara de Samaná), situated on the east coast, is about 170 miles from the capital. It was settled in 1864 by escaped slaves from the U.S., whose ship bringing them from the Underground Railroad was blown ashore. Their descendants, now numbering 7,000, speak English, and maintain several old Protestant churches built over the

years. Samaná, a seaside town, has excellent beaches and, as a spot for sport fishing, was once a favorite of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The city is a commercial and manufacturing center for coconuts, timber, rice, and marble. It has grown from a fishing village to a cruise port of note. Its population is about 38,800.

SAN CRISTÓBAL, 25 miles southwest of Santo Domingo, is the site of the Mahogany House, built and furnished by the late Rafael Trujillo. The city was the site of the signing of the Dominican Republic's first constitution in 1844. Founded in 1575, the city is situated in a region that produces rice, sugar, fruit, potatoes, livestock, and coffee. It is the capital of the province of the same name and has a population of approximately 124,000.

SAN FRANCISCO DE MACORÍS, the capital of Duarte Province, is located about 60 miles northwest of Santo Domingo. It is the busy center of an important sugar- and molasses-producing area. Timber, coffee, fruits, cacao, rice, hides, and wax are other major products of the district. The population of San Francisco de Macorís is about 130,000.

SAN JUAN (full name, San Juan de la Maguana), located in west-central Dominican Republic, was founded in 1508. The Battle of Santomé in 1844, which resulted in Dominican independence, was fought near San Juan. Markets include rice, fruit, corn, potatoes, and cattle. San Juan's population is roughly 50,000.

SAN PEDRO DE MACORÍS is located in the southeastern part of the country, about 40 miles east of Santo Domingo. The city's modern port handles most of the country's exports, which include molasses, timber, cattle, and sugar. Industries include corn milling, the manufacture of clothing, and soap and alcohol distilling. The Universidad Central del Este was founded here in 1970 and is located on the main road to Santo Domingo. The city's population is approximately

124,000. In recent years, San Pedro de Macorís has become a hotbed for baseball, producing more players per capita for U.S. major league teams than any other town ever.

Several other cities of interest are located within easy driving distance of Santo Domingo. On the north coast are La Isabela, Columbus' first settlement in the New World (1493); Sosua, settled by Jewish refugees from Germany in 1939; and Macao, 95 miles from Santo Domingo, noted for its beautiful, long beach.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola, the second largest (after Cuba) of the Greater Antilles group, and shares a 224-mile border with Haiti to the west. The island is bordered on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by the Caribbean Sea, and on the east by the Mona Passage, which separates the Dominican Republic from the island of Puerto Rico, 71 miles away.

The country has a land area of 18,712 square miles, slightly larger than Vermont and New Hampshire combined. With its 1,000-mile coastline, it extends about 240 miles east to west, and has a maximum north-south width of about 170 miles.

Much of the terrain is rugged. Four nearly parallel mountain ranges traverse the country from northwest to southeast. The Cordillera Central is the largest range and divides the country into almost equal parts. Pico Duarte, at 10,128 feet the highest mountain in the West Indies, is within this range. The largest and most fertile valley, the Cibao, about 150 miles long and 10 to 30 miles wide, is in the upper central part of the country.

Dominican rivers vary in flow with the season, and are navigable only for short distances at their mouths, if at all. Their main use is for irrigation and hydroelectric power. The major rivers are the Ozama, Yaque del Norte, Yaque del Sur, Isabela, Higuamo, and Soco.

The climate varies little throughout the year. Although the country is in the tropics, temperatures seldom exceed 90°F, mainly because of constant trade winds. Temperatures in the coastal cities average about 78°F, with seasonal variations of five to eight degrees. Rainfall varies regionally, with about two-thirds of the annual 57 inches coming in the May-to-November rainy season. However, this period differs in various parts of the country; for example, the rainy season on the south coast occurs between May and November, and in the north from November to May.

Mildew, mold, rust, and insects are problems related to year-round high humidity. Furniture, leather goods, clothing, metal items, and books must be carefully aired and protected. The climate also contributes to prevalent upper respiratory infections, skin irritations, fungus, and stomach and intestinal complaints.

Hurricanes are a significant weather threat, particularly from mid-July through October, and have caused serious damage in recent years. The worst hurricane on record, which virtually destroyed Santo Domingo, occurred in 1930. Hurricanes David and Frederick, in August and September 1979, caused considerable damage to the city and countryside. In September, 1987, Hurricane Emily barely missed Santo Domingo. Earthquake tremors are felt occasionally, but have not had serious consequences since 1948.

Population

More than half of the Dominican Republic's 8.3 million inhabitants live in towns with populations over 10,000. The cities, however, are

growing rapidly. The largest urban areas are Santo Domingo (3.6 million), and Santiago de los Caballeros (1.5 million).

The nation's population density of 171 persons per square mile makes it the seventh most densely populated country in Latin America, but it does not exceed that of most of the islands of the West Indies. Existing population pressure is accentuated by an annual growth rate of about 2%.

The nation's inhabitants are mostly descendants of both early European settlers and African slaves, but there are many relative newcomers of European and Middle Eastern origins. An estimated 16% of the population is Caucasian, another 11% are black, and the remaining 73% mixed Caucasian and Black. No traces of aboriginal Indians exist. No overt racial antagonism affects the relationship between the ethnic groups.

Spanish is the national language. It is spoken quite rapidly in the Dominican Republic, and many idioms and contractions are used in its colloquial form. English is spoken widely by the upper socioeconomic segment of society.

Under an accord with the Vatican in 1954, Roman Catholicism was formally established as the state religion, and the Dominican Government provides some financial support to the church. Freedom of worship is universal, however, and many Protestant denominations and missions of all faiths are found here.

Frequent colorful processions are held on various saints' day festivals. The nation's patron saint, Our Lady of Altigracia, is named after a vision of the Virgin Mary reported in the eastern part of the island in 1921. On holy days, mass is celebrated as a part of many public ceremonies.

The Dominican Republic does not have a large landholding class. A small but growing number of

wealthy people dominate the country's social structure. For many years (1930–1961), this group held what little economic power was not monopolized by the ruling Trujillo family. The preponderance of the Trujillos in both the economic realm and in government ended with the dictator's assassination in 1961, but some of the established social patterns continue to linger. Upward mobility is geared largely to the acquisition of wealth, although increasing importance is being attached to education and professional achievement.

Two small groups top the social scale. One is composed of well-to-do persons whose extensive rural properties were not expropriated under the Trujillo dictatorship, and who have used their land to gain leadership in commerce and industry. Most of this group is centered around the northern cities of Santiago and Puerto Plata, but many maintain second homes in Santo Domingo. The second group is composed of former civil servants and military officials who attained prominence and wealth under previous governments. Their ranks include a few professionals and men of letters, but many of the latter fall into the small but growing middle class.

The middle class has suffered in recent years due to economic problems. It includes civil servants, private-sector managers, white-collar workers, teachers, and other professionals.

About three-fourths of the people are at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. The majority earn a subsistence wage, have minimal education, live in substandard conditions, are largely rural, and are migrating to urban areas in the hope of improving their lot by serving as domestics or laborers.

Construction and public works projects employ substantial numbers of skilled and unskilled laborers in the urban areas, but not a sufficient number to offset the growing demand for jobs. It is estimated

that more than 45% of the available labor force is unemployed or underemployed.

For many Dominicans, emigration is a viable alternative. Although the number seeking to enter the U.S., Venezuela, Canada, and Europe is increasing, the outflow is partially offset by significant illegal immigration of Haitians (estimated at 600,000) to the Dominican Republic.

Government

Originally a Spanish colony and later under Haitian rule, the Dominican Republic gained independence in 1844. Its subsequent history was characterized by alternating periods of authoritarian rule and instability. The collection of Dominican customs revenues was controlled by the U.S. from 1905 to 1940. A naval mission, chiefly composed of U.S. Marines, governed the country from 1916 to 1924.

Following Trujillo's assassination on May 30, 1961, the country again underwent a series of political crises, including the election and overthrow of the government of Juan Bosch, the first democratically elected president since 1930. This government lasted only seven months before it was toppled in a military coup in 1963. An attempt to restore constitutional government in April 1965 ended in civil war and the arrival of the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF), of which U.S. forces were a part. Peace was restored, and the IAPF withdrew its last troops in September 1966.

In June 1966, Dr. Joaquín Balaguer was elected to a four-year term as president. During this period, his administration worked primarily to promote economic and social reforms. In June 1970, Balaguer was reelected to an additional four-year term. Although his second term was marred by both left- and right-wing terrorism and violence in 1970 and 1971, and by a minor short-lived guerrilla incursion in 1973, the country registered steady economic progress. Elections, in which an opposition alliance

abstained only days before (claiming unfair conditions), were held again in May 1974, and President Balaguer was returned to office for the third time. He was defeated for a fourth term in 1978 by the candidate of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, Antonio Guzmán (Fernández).

The 1982 elections brought Dr. Salvador Jorge Blanco to the presidency in an orderly succession, and a growing strength in the country's democratic institution has been demonstrated. The 1986 elections saw Joaquín Balaguer return to the presidency for a fourth term. Jacobo Majluta, the president of the Senate who opposed Balaguer in the balloting, conceded defeat after claiming irregularities in the closely fought race. Majluta lost by less than 44,000 votes. Balaguer was reelected to the presidency for a fifth term in August, 1990. The results of the May 1994 election were disputed, leading to scheduling of a new election in May 1996. Leonel Fernandez was elected president in a second round of voting and took office in August.

Under the constitution, executive power is vested in the president, who is assisted by a cabinet which includes secretaries of state for various areas of responsibilities, such as armed forces, foreign relations, finance, interior and police, education, fine arts and public worship, agriculture, industry and commerce, public health and social welfare, labor, public works and communications, and sports.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral congress. There are 30 senators, one for each province and the National District (the city of Santo Domingo). As a result of the 1990 election, the Social Christian Reformist Party held 16 seats, the Dominican Liberation Party won 12 seats, and the Dominican Revolutionary Party gained two seats. The Chamber of Deputies has 120 members, one for each 50,000 inhabitants, based on the 1981 census.

The judiciary consists of local justices of the peace and civil courts of the first instance, special land courts in each province, district courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court of nine justices. Judges are nominated by the Senate. The judicial system does not include trial by jury.

Local authority emanates from the central government. The country is divided into 29 provinces, each administered by a governor appointed by the president. Santo Domingo and the municipalities are each governed by a mayor and a municipal council, elected by popular vote for four-year terms.

Besides the majority and opposing parties now in Congress (the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) and the Reformists), several Communist parties and factions exist, as do others with Marxist leanings. These include the Dominican Communist Party (PCD), legalized in 1977; the Dominican Popular Movement (MPD); the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD); and the Anti-Imperialist Patriotic Union (UPA). These groups are active in intellectual circles, laboring classes, and student groups.

The Dominican Republic is a member of the United Nations and its various specialized agencies, the Organization of American States (OAS), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and is also a signatory to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The flag of the Dominican Republic consists of two red and two blue sections divided by a white cross centered with the Dominican coat of arms.

Arts, Science, Education

The Dominican Republic has begun to achieve maturity in artistic, technical, and intellectual pursuits. In the past, opportunity to study

abroad was limited and individual intellectual activity was discouraged. In recent years, an exciting ferment of new ideas, artistic expression, and an eagerness to discover and take part in the best intellectual and cultural developments has emerged. Santo Domingo's modern Cultural Plaza with its four museums, National Theater, and National Library is the scene of many artistic, musical, and theatrical productions. The opening of the National Theater in August 1973 signaled the beginning of a new cultural era for the country; the theater now draws artists and groups from around the world. The National Library, with a capacity for 200,000 volumes, and the Museum of Dominican Man were also inaugurated in 1973.

Individual artists who have achieved international renown include painters Gilberto Hernández Ortega, Guillo Perez, Ramón Oviedo, Candido Bido, Soucy de Pellerano, Ada Balcazer, Orlando Menicucci, Fernando Urena Rib, and Francisco Santos. Antonio Pratts Ventos, Domingo Liz, Ramiro Matos, and José Ramón Rotellini are leading sculptors who have done interesting work in metals and wood. Dominican architects show imagination and beauty in design.

Books of literary merit—novels, short stories, histories, and criticism—are published frequently. A five-volume anthology of Dominican literature has filled a need for gathering the best in the nation's writing. Popular music, *merengue*, *salsa*, and *nueva ola* performers are numerous. Several troupes of folkloric dancers and singers also perform.

Public education in the Dominican Republic has suffered greatly from a lack of funding, with the result that literacy may have slipped within recent years to less than 70%. Few families can afford to do without their children's labor, and only a limited number of free secondary schools exist. In general, schools are overcrowded, understaffed, and lack

educational material and equipment.

Higher education is possible for only a fraction of the literate population. However, the oldest university in the Western Hemisphere, the 60,000-student Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD), founded in the 16th century, has 10 times its enrollment of 20 years ago. Other excellent institutions are the Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in Santiago, the Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Urena and Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo in the capital, and the Universidad Central del Este in San Pedro de Macorís. Although vocational and technical training cannot meet present needs, progress is being made in home economics, education, agriculture, commercial work, mechanics, electronics, metallurgy, and construction trades.

The principal institution for advanced technical training is the Instituto de Estudios Superiores. An English/Spanish branch of the World University of Puerto Rico is also active in Santo Domingo. Approximately 800 Dominican students attend universities in the U.S. annually, and several hundred also study in Europe (especially Spain) and in neighboring Latin American countries, particularly Mexico and Venezuela.

Commerce and Industry

Agriculture provides employment for roughly 17% of the Dominican labor force, and accounted for 15% of the total export earnings. Sugar, the mainstay of the economy, generates over \$506 million annually. Other important agricultural products include coffee, tobacco, and cacao. The Dominican Republic also produces rice, potatoes, beans, plantains, yucca, and other crops for domestic consumption.

Industry has as its principal concerns sugar refining, textiles, pharmaceuticals, light manufacturing,

and breweries that produce excellent local beer and rum. Mineral exports account for a substantial portion of total export value. In addition to recently discovered coal, the nation has important deposits of gold, silver, bauxite, and ferronickel.

The vigorous promotion of the Dominican Republic as a tourist haven has swelled the numbers of visitors to record levels placing the nation among the top Caribbean tourist destinations. Major resort complexes have been built on both coasts in an ambitious development program.

The U.S. is the principal trading partner of the Dominican Republic, and typically accounts for 70% of its exports and provided 46% of all imported goods. A relatively low inflation rate, import exonerations, low labor costs, and tax holidays help the investment climate. A long-needed revision of the basic foreign investment law is being considered to enhance the investment picture.

Transportation

Santo Domingo's international airport, Las Americas, is 19 miles from the city. It is served by the national airline, Dominicana (Compañía Dominicana de Aviación), American, Avianca, Viasa, ALM (subsidiary of KLM), Iberia, Lufthansa, Prinair, and Varig. Aeropuerto Internacional La Unión is the modern north-coast airport for the Puerto Plata/Playa Dorada/Sosua area.

Several private companies in the capital offer chartered, air-conditioned bus tours. A group of five persons can charter a car (*público*) at reasonable rates for trips to Santiago, San Cristóbal, or Barahona. Air charter service is available from Herrera Airport in Santo Domingo; also, daily service to Santiago, Puerto Plata, and other points on the island is provided by Alas del Caribe, the country's domestic airline.

Passenger and cargo ships call at Santo Domingo, Puerto Plata, Haina, and Port-au-Prince (Haiti) on an irregular basis. Freight lines of various registries call at Santo Domingo from all parts of the world.

The Dominican Republic has no passenger or freight railways. Private car lines and buses connect outlying cities to one another and to the capital. Air-conditioned express buses run daily on regular schedules from Santo Domingo to Bonao, La Vega, Moca, Santiago, Puerto Plata, San Pedro de Macorís, La Romana, and other towns in the interior.

Buses, minibuses, and *públicos* have regular routes throughout the capital. The latter, usually painted blue with red, white, or green roofs (depending on the zones they cover) cruise certain streets picking up as many passengers as the car will hold. Regular taxis are available at large hotels, as is private call-a-cab service; these taxis operate on a zone system, but drivers are occasionally willing to carry a passenger a short distance, called a *carrera*, for a minimum fare plus tip. It is advisable to settle on a fare before hiring a cab.

Traffic moves on the right. Laws are similar to those in the U.S., but local drivers are aggressive, making defensive driving necessary. It is against the law to smoke while driving. Traffic police control busy intersections, and their signals must be learned quickly and followed closely. Police cars are green and white; ambulances are white; fire trucks are red.

Santo Domingo is the hub of a fairly extensive road network. A hard-surfaced, four-lane highway leads from the capital to the international airport and beach areas east of the city, but the road narrows to two lanes about 30 miles out. A fairly good, two-lane, heavily traveled road connects Santo Domingo with Santiago de los Caballeros—the nation's second largest city—and with Puerto Plata on the north coast. There is a highway connecting Puerto Plata

eastward to the Samaná Bay area. Road networks throughout the republic are improving. Blacktop and gravel roads connect many outlying communities, although rural roads and bridges are often in poor condition. Vehicles with heavy-duty suspension and four-wheel-drive are generally required for these latter roads. Most Santo Domingo streets are blacktop, and their condition ranges from excellent to poor. The city has several divided boulevards. Most streets are narrow, particularly in the downtown shopping area, and permit only one-way traffic.

International driver's licenses are not valid in the Dominican Republic. Anyone without a license from his own country must take a written examination in Spanish and a road test to qualify for a Dominican license. Minimum third-party liability insurance is required; coverage should be obtained from a local firm, since few U.S. carriers are permitted to underwrite in the Dominican Republic.

Communications

Telephone service links all major points in the republic, and long-distance connections can be made to other countries without undue delay. There are some areas where growth has out-paced telephone expansion, but difficulties are minimal; local service is adequate. International mail is handled twice daily and normally takes three to five days for delivery to and from the eastern United States.

The Dominican Republic has over 200 radio stations, including short-wave and FM outlets. There are periodic newscasts all day, as well as interviews and all-round variety music programming.

Station HIJB (FM) has two classical music programs daily, "Gala Concert" at 1 p.m. and "Concert Hall" at 8 p.m. On Sundays, Texaco sponsors an opera at 1 p.m. Good shortwave radios can also pick up Voice of America (VOA), American Forces

Radio, and Puerto Rican, Jamaican, and Florida stations.

Santo Domingo has six television stations: Rahintel, Color-Visión, Teleantillas, Tele-Inde, and Tele-sistema, all privately owned; and Radio Televisión Dominicana, government-owned. All stations transmit in color. Programs include local and international news, weather, sports, variety shows, movies, and dramatic serials produced in Latin America and the U.S. The majority of programs are in Spanish. CNN and 18 other cable TV stations are available 24 hours a day. Many hotels have satellite dishes that allow them to receive foreign language broadcasts from countries around the world. U.S. TV sets can be used in Santo Domingo without modification. Usual broadcasting hours are 11 a.m. to midnight.

Nine major Spanish-language daily newspapers (Monday through Saturday) are published in the Dominican Republic. *El Caribe*, *Listín Diario*, *Hoy*, and *El Sol*, the morning papers, carry extensive news coverage and take independent political lines. *Última Hora*, *La Noticia*, and *El Nacional* are published in the afternoon. *El Día*, *Ya*, and *La Información* are published daily in Santiago, and serve the interests of the Cibao Valley. *El Nacional*, *La Noticia*, and *Listín Diario* have the only Sunday editions. Some of these papers subscribe to Associated Press, United Press International, and other news services. One major weekly news magazine, *Ahora*, is published locally. The *Miami Herald*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The New York Times* arrive the same day or a day after publication. The English-language weekly, *The Santo Domingo News*, provides business and tourism news.

Health

Santo Domingo has many American-trained dentists and doctors, including specialists in obstetrics, pediatrics, neurosurgery, gynecology, cardiology, gastroenterology, dermatology, and diseases of the

eye, ear, nose, and throat. Most doctors speak some English. Emergency aids, such as incubators, oxygen tents, and blood banks are available, and several laboratories are equipped to do routine tests. A number of hospitals and small clinics are adequate, but not up to U.S. standards, particularly in nursing care, cleanliness, and diet. Nonetheless, Americans use them for obstetrical care, pediatrics, some surgery, and other illnesses or injuries requiring relatively short periods of hospitalization.

Primarily because of poor storage methods, the inadequate disposal of garbage and other wastes, and the tropical climate, Santo Domingo is infested with flies, cockroaches, ants, mice, and rats. Other pests include termites, ticks, bedbugs, tarantulas, and mosquitoes. Non-poisonous snakes are also found here. Small lizards and frogs sometimes get into houses. Commercial exterminators are available.

Sanitation standards are loosely enforced, and unsanitary practices in the processing, storage, distribution, and sale of food are common. Several modern supermarkets in the capital, however, have improved their refrigeration and handling of fresh produce and meat. Most Americans prefer these stores over local markets, even though supermarket prices are much higher. City water, often filled with surface seepage and sediment after heavy rains, is not potable unless boiled for 10 minutes. Filtered bottled water is available.

Fruits and vegetables must be washed thoroughly with soapy water and soaked in an iodine or clorox solution. Fruits should be peeled. Locally bought meats should be served well done. Shellfish is safe if cooked thoroughly.

Domestic employees should receive periodic physical examinations and chest x-rays to rule out tuberculosis. They must be trained in good food-handling techniques and in personal hygiene.

Dominican health authorities, with the cooperation of the Pan-American Health Organization and other international agencies, are conducting active campaigns against disease. Although some progress has been made, observers agree that the task is formidable. Diseases which affect the local population include intestinal parasites, tuberculosis, dengue fever, AIDS, malnutrition, venereal disease and, in some rural areas, malaria. Periodic epidemics of influenza and gastro-intestinal infections exist. Diarrhea, accompanied by dehydration and fever, is common, and particularly debilitating to young children. Other complaints include upper respiratory, ear, and gynecological infections; skin irritations; and fungal infections. Animal rabies is a problem.

The following immunizations are recommended by U.S. authorities: yellow fever and tetanus-diphtheria for ages seven and up; DPT (diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus), measles, mumps, rubella, and polio for those under seven; anyone over age 12 should take gamma globulin every six months to prevent hepatitis. Inoculations against measles, tetanus, and rabies are available locally.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport, or a U.S. birth certificate, Certificate of Naturalization or Certificate of Citizenship, along with photo identification, are required for both entry and exit. Because of the high incidence of fraud in the Dominican Republic and potential delays with Dominican Immigration, the U.S. Embassy strongly recommends that United States citizens travel with passports. Visitors who do not obtain a visa prior to entry must purchase a tourist card to enter the country.

Americans living in or traveling to the Dominican Republic are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the United States Embassy

in Santo Domingo and obtain updated information on travel and security within the Dominican Republic. The U.S. Embassy is located at the corner of Calle Cesar Nicolas Penson and Calle Leopoldo Navarro in Santo Domingo; telephone (809) 221-2171; after hours (809) 221-8100. The Consular Section is a half-mile away at the corner of Calle Cesar Nicolas Penson and Avenida Maximo Gomez. The American Citizens Services section can be reached by telephone at (809) 731-4294, or via the Internet at <http://www.usemb.gov.do/nacsl.htm>. Consular office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. There is a Consular Agency in Puerto Plata at Calle Beller 51, 2nd floor, office 6, telephone (809) 586-4204; office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. U.S. citizens may register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security in the Dominican Republic.

Pets

A signed health and rabies vaccination certificate from a licensed veterinarian must be presented when importing a pet into the Dominican Republic, or the pet will be quarantined. Regulations change frequently; it is advisable to check beforehand with authorities.

Firearms & Ammunition

Dominican customs authorities strictly enforce regulations concerning the importation of firearms. Persons bringing firearms into the country, even temporarily, may face jail sentences and heavy fines. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the Dominican Republic in Washington, D.C. or one of the Dominican Republic's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The time in the Dominican Republic is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus four (the same as observed

during Daylight Saving Time on the U.S. east coast).

The sole monetary unit is the Dominican *peso*, written RD\$. Currency is issued in the same denominations as U.S. currency, and the coins bear a close resemblance. The four American banks in the capital are Bank of America, Banco de Boston Dominicano (an affiliate of First National Bank of Boston), Chase Manhattan, and Citibank.

Officially, the Dominican Republic uses the metric system of weights and measures but, in practice, the U.S. system of ounces, pounds, inches, feet, gallons, and miles is commonly used.

Disaster Preparedness

The Dominican Republic is a hurricane-prone country. In the event of a hurricane alert, a notice will be posted in U.S. Embassy Santo Domingo's web page cited below. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 6 Epiphany
- Jan. 21 Our Lady of Altigracia
- Jan. 26 Duarte's Day
- Feb. 27 Dominican Independence Day

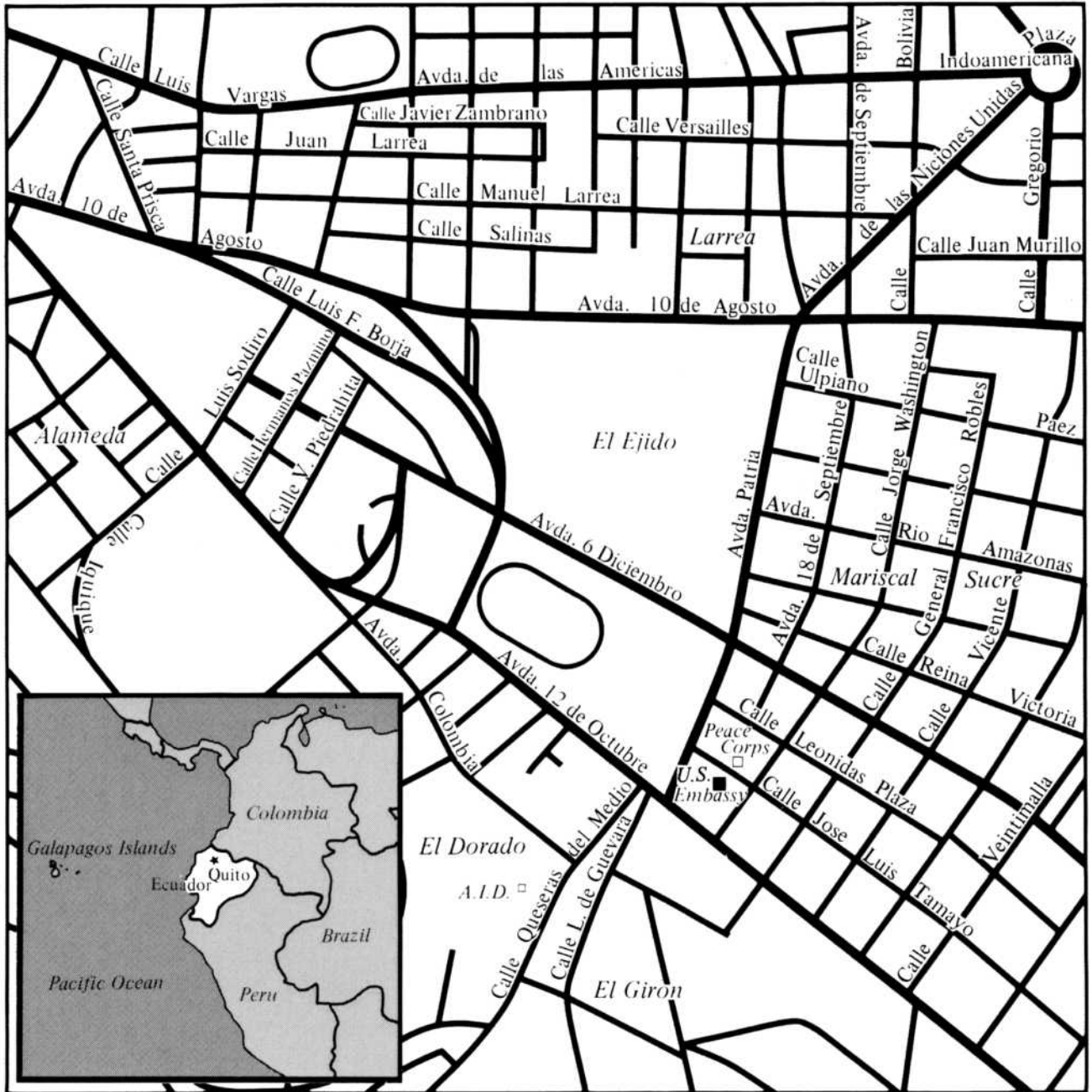
- Mar/Apr Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr Easter*
- May 1 Dominican Labor Day
- May/June Corpus Christi*
- Aug. 16 Dominican Restoration Day
- Sept. 24 Our Lady of las Mercedes
- Oct. 14 Columbus Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Finlay, Barbara. *The Women of Azua: Work & Family in the Rural Dominican Republic*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989.
- Fodor's '89 *Caribbean*. New York: Fodor's, 1988.
- Frommer's *Dollarwise Guide to the Caribbean*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1989.
- Grasmuck, Sherry and Patricia R. Pressar. *Between Two Islands: Dominican International Migration*. Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1991.
- Haggerty, Richard A. *Dominican Republic & Haiti: A Country Study*. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1991.

- Hillman, Richard S., and Thomas J. D'Agostino. *Distant Neighbors in the Caribbean: The Dominican Republic & Jamaica in Comparative Prospective*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- Hinze, Peter. *Practical Travel A to Z: Dominican Republic*. Chatham, NY: Hayit Publishing USA, 1992.
- Kryzaneck, Michael J. *The Politics of External Influence in the Dominican Republic*. New York: Praeger, 1988.
- Lowenthal, A.F. (ed.) *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- Lugo, Marta. *The Dominican Republic Guidebook*. Teaneck, NJ: Eurasia Press, 1989.
- Nelson, William J. *Almost a Territory: America's Attempt to Annex the Dominican Republic*. Cranbury, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 1990.
- Schoenhals, Kai, comp. *Dominican Republic*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1990.
- Schoonmaker, Herbert Garrettson. *Military Crisis Management: U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990.
- Vargas-Lundius, Rosemary. *Peasants in Distress: Poverty & Unemployment in the Dominican Republic*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991.



Quito, Ecuador

ECUADOR

Republic of Ecuador

Major Cities:

Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca

Other Cities:

Ambato, Azogues, Babahoyo, Esmeraldas, Guaranda, Latacunga, Loja, Portoviejo, Riobamba, Tulcán

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Ecuador. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Ecuador is not a large country, but it offers a striking variety of climates, customs, and cultures. The high, wide Andean plateau which dominates the country has been both a highway and a resting place for the Incan, Spanish, and mestizo civilizations which have shaped the nation's history. The lowland Amazonian jungle east of the mountains, home of several indigenous groups, is also the location of rough oil boom towns. The Pacific coastal plain to the west of the Andes is a land of tropical plantations, bustling port cities, and warm water beaches. Six hundred miles from the coast lie the Galapagos, a chain of volcanic islands which are home to unique

species of wildlife and a small number of islanders.

Quito is a city of sun and sky, set in agricultural highlands and surrounded by high mountains and snow capped volcanoes. With a balance of equatorial sunshine and mountain chill, the climate varies little throughout the year. Some newcomers find it difficult to adjust to the thin air and burning sun at an altitude of 9,300 feet and even the most athletic need to wait a week before undertaking any strenuous activity.

Guayaquil is a complete contrast to the capital. It is a busy, noisy town where the natives are both more aggressive and more openhanded than the reserved inhabitants of the Sierra. Like most port towns, Guayaquil is a center of commerce, a place where the shrewd can make a fortune or can capture and direct enough of the city's rough energy to make a successful political career.

MAJOR CITIES

Quito

When Spanish expeditions overwhelmed the Inca Empire, the Inca leader Rumiñahui destroyed the

city of Quito rather than surrender it to the conquerors. The Spanish built their own settlement, San Francisco de Quito, on the same site, at the southern end of the Pichincha Valley. It was an easily defensible location bordered by deep ravines and dominated by the smooth round hill now called the Panecillo.

Nestled in a high mountain valley surrounded by snow capped volcanoes, Quito will literally take your breath away with its natural beauty and altitude. The Andean setting, Spanish colonial architecture, Indian costumes, palm trees and bougainvillea, and steep hillsides with checkerboard patterns in vivid greens and yellows rising into the clouds a short distance from the sprawling city—all make Quito unique.

The colonial center of Quito has been declared a human heritage ("Patrimonio de la Humanidad") by UNESCO. This heritage is preserved today by zoning laws which forbid the demolition or exterior remodeling of the low, white-washed buildings in the center of the city. The old town, cut into squares by narrow streets with steep flights of steps, contains many colonial ecclesiastic monuments: La Compañía with its carved facade and gold-leafed interior; San Francisco, the



Aerial view of old Quito, Ecuador

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

first spiritual center in South America, with a museum crowded with sculptures and paintings by Caspicara and Miguel de Santiago; San Augustin, a quiet convent with treasures in its ceilings and altars; the Cathedral, famous for art works of the Quiteño school; Santo Domingo monastery, with another museum of priceless paintings and sculptures, and many others.

The narrow streets of colonial Quito are a pleasure for an unhurried stroll on weekends when the city seems to shut down completely, though street crime compels caution. During the week the heavy traffic makes a walk through the center of town something of a struggle and it is unwise to venture through the colorful Ipiiales street market with important documents or valuables. A respite from the bustling throngs of shoppers, vendors, and noisy traffic can be found in the broad plazas with well-kept parks bordered by churches and public buildings.

In the mid-20th century, Quito grew quickly. Industrial areas and crowded popular barrios developed to the south of the city. To the north, Quito spreads up a wide valley bordering the dormant Pichincha Volcano. Originally farmland dotted

with villas built in fanciful Spanish, Moorish, or 1930s modern architecture, this area is rapidly becoming Quito's modern center. The Rio Amazonas shopping district runs from the park through a modern business center of high-rise office buildings that offer a variety of restaurants, shops, banks, and sidewalk cafes. Avenida Gonzales Suarez, Bella Vista, Quito Tennis and El Bosque are the areas where most of the diplomatic community lives.

Utilities

Most homes have reservoir tanks, pumps, and small electric water heaters. Houses and apartments have modern plumbing for the most part. Because of long waits for new phones, rent a house or apartment with a telephone already installed, a cordless phone may be convenient.

Electric current is the same as in the U.S.: 110v, 60 cycles, with 220v available for stoves and dryers. Do not rent a home without 220v triple-phase current available for appliances.

Homes in Quito have no central heating, and evenings can be quite chilly. Some houses are colder than others; those with eastern and western exposure benefit from the strong equatorial sunshine and are

warmer than those with north-south exposure.

At times in the past, Ecuador has experienced shortages due to lack of rainfall in the southern part of the country. Extended power rationing has often occurred during the winter months. The rationing has not occurred recently.

Food

Ecuador has a plentiful supply of tropical fruits and vegetables all year, with varieties not seen in North America. Avocados, artichokes, raspberries, strawberries, bananas, pineapples and papaya can be purchased all year, and peaches, apples, pears and other fruit can be found in season. Several markets in Quito have fresh produce, seafood, chicken and meat, cut flowers, and potted plants.

Beef, pork, lamb and veal can be bought in supermarkets and butcher shops. Filet mignon costs about half the U.S. price. Chicken is more expensive, and turkey costs about twice as much as in the U.S. Both American and European cuts of meat are available, though the beef here is usually unaged, and may be tough. Some families use meat tenderizers or marinade. A pressure cooker is very useful for cooking at high altitudes.

Although a wide variety of food items are available in Ecuador, including items imported from the U.S. and Europe, certain American food are difficult to find or very expensive.

Milk is pasteurized, though quality control is irregular, and comes in disposable paper cartons or plastic bags. Heavy cream is available in the supermarkets, and sour cream can be found in some stores. A variety of cheeses are available, though not of the same quality or variation as can be found in the states. Several brands of ice cream are considered safe, and several brands of good yogurt are available. Excellent pastry and a variety of breads can be purchased in Quito and the surrounding small towns.

Quito has two large supermarket chains; Supermaxi and Mi Comisariato, which are well stocked with groceries, dry goods, and fresh products at very reasonable prices. U.S. goods are available, but at somewhat higher prices than in the U.S. Comparable Ecuadorian and Latin American products are less expensive. Many small shops and delicatessens offer excellent quality food stuffs such as ham, sausages, cold cuts, pickles, olives, and pastas. In general, the cook who can use the local foods with imagination will find it economical to do without processed, packaged, imported goods.

Ecuadorian cuisine depends heavily on corn, potatoes, and pork. Wonderful soups are made with the great assortment of vegetables. One local specialty is loco, a potato soup with cheese and avocado; another is llapingachos, a potato and cheese pancake. Delicious "cebiche" (marinated seafood), "humitas" (baked corn cakes), and "empanadas" (pastries filled with meat or cheese) are standard fare.

Clothing

General: Light to medium weight clothing is used throughout the year in Quito. Due to varying temperatures during the course of the day, you will need sweaters, jackets, or raincoats, and an umbrella. In general, you can use almost anything in your wardrobe except heavy winter clothing. Bring summer clothing for trips to the beach and the jungle, and swimsuits for the heated pools in Quito. Warm up suits are a must for joggers and tennis players in Quito. Bathrobes and warm pajamas will be a comfort. Hats are useful for protection from the sun. A wide assortment of brimmed hats in beautiful colors and styles can be bought in Ecuador for much less than in the U.S. A lightweight coat will be welcomed on some of Quito's chilliest evenings. It is a good idea to bring a winter coat, in case a trip to Washington in January comes up. A down parka also comes in handy when visiting the volcanoes.

Many boutiques offer stylish clothing, dresses, and suits imported

from the U.S. and Europe, but prices are high. Locally made sweaters are inexpensive. Leather and suede coats for men and women may be made to order. Fashionable knitwear may be bought ready-made or made to order at reasonable prices. The quality of dry cleaning is good, and inexpensive.

Boots and shoes of good quality leather can be made to order. In women's shoes, U.S. sizes above 8½ are hard to find in ready-to-wear. In men's shoes, U.S. sizes above 9½ are also hard to find.

Men: Light to medium-weight suits are worn all year. Sport coats, sweaters, slacks, and long-sleeved sports shirts are useful for informal and casual gatherings. A raincoat with a zip-in lining is welcome on chilly evenings. Business and professional men do not wear hats except when watching sports events or other outdoor activities. Equestrians should bring riding helmets. Good tailoring is available at reasonable prices. Tuxedos are occasionally needed; white dinner jackets are not worn.

Women: Blouses, skirts, sweaters, slacks, and jackets are standard daily wear in Quito. Because mornings and evenings are cool and temperatures at noon quite warm, a cardigan or blazer is usually worn or carried. Light-weight wool is the most practical material. Informal and casual clothes are worn at social gatherings outside the city on the weekends, but simple cocktail dresses are needed for dinner parties during the week in town. Long-sleeved dresses with jackets and dinner suits are good choices for chilly evenings. Shorts, short skirts and tank tops should not be worn in public. Bring a wraparound skirt or warm up suit to throw on after exercise classes or tennis.

Rainwear and a light or medium-weight coat, stole, or cape for evenings are necessary. Hats are not worn, except for protection from the sun. Embroidered capes and stoles, different kinds of sweaters, and ponchos are available locally. Dress-

makers are available and fabric can be purchased locally.

Children: Light to medium-weight clothes are the rule. Warm, inexpensive sweaters can be bought locally. Bring raincoats, boots, and shoes. You should bring with you any special sporting good attire or equipment. Warm pajamas or nightgowns, bathrobes, and slippers are recommended. Teenagers of both sexes seem to live in jeans or corduroy slacks and tennis shoes, but those who like discotheques and parties will need more formal clothing. Young men will probably want at least one sports coat and girls a nice dress, skirt or pantsuit.

Supplies and Services

The local pharmacies carry most medicines and drugs, but availability of item, varies from month to month. If you plan to sew or use a dressmaker's services, bring a supply of sewing accessories, especially thread and zippers. A wide range of fabrics is available at varying prices, but imported fabrics are expensive. Good quality woolens and synthetics are manufactured locally.

Bring basic tools, as well as any hobby and do-it-yourself equipment. Batteries of all sizes are available.

Stationery, quality envelopes, greeting cards, wrapping paper, and ribbon are scarce and expensive. Aluminum foil, plastic wrap, waxed paper, toilet paper and disposable diapers are available, but expensive. Plain paper napkins can be bought, but the quality is only fair. Candles are sold in different sizes and colors at U.S. prices, but the dripless variety are not available. Artists should bring all supplies.

Children's toys are very expensive. Bring toys for your children and for gifts. Bring lunch boxes for kindergarten and elementary school-age children.

Parts for common electrical appliances, electronic products, and cars are often available, but expensive. Parts ordered from the U.S. take a

long time to arrive, and if sent air-freight they will spend one to two months awaiting customs clearance. Local mechanics are good. The cost of service on cars and appliances is, much lower than in the U.S. Painting is inexpensive.

Quito has many excellent hairdressers and barbershops and prices are lower than in the U.S. Hairdressers, masseuses, and manicurists will come to your home at reasonable cost. Several cosmetologists offer good service at low prices. Many reputable local artisans make and repair jewelry for much less than in the U.S. Good catering services are available in the city, and prices are reasonable. Good tailors and dress-makers are available at a range of prices.

Domestic Help

Domestic maids and gardeners are available for reasonable wages. Residents sometimes prefer live-in maids for babysitting duties and for security reasons, however, live-in maids are becoming harder to find. There are few trained nannies, although some maids handle child-care responsibilities well. Many maids can cook, but it is hard to find cooks who will handle other household duties or who are trained for representational duties. There are many good caterers who are available for parties. Many people in houses share the cost of a security guard with their neighbors.

A combination maid-cook is generally desirable for a single person or couple without children. Large families often hire more than one domestic employee. Domestic employees generally earn about \$150 per month. Workers who come in by the day generally earn about \$10 per day.

Under Ecuadorian law, domestic employees must be covered by Ecuadorian Social Security. Stringent laws cover employment and termination. These regulations are included in orientation material for new arrivals and should be read and followed carefully.

In addition to an annual salary, the domestic employee receives (per Ecuadorian law) a 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th month salary plus a supplementary compensation, and a cost of living bonus. Live-out maids are also entitled to a transportation allowance. Although the employee and the employer are required to pay a portion of the employee's income to the Social Security system, most employers in Ecuador pay the entire amount for their domestic employees. By law, domestic employees are entitled to one day off every two weeks, but in practice they receive one day off each week. Domestic employees are also entitled to 15 days paid vacation annually. Domestic employees are not entitled to any holidays. Employers are required by law to provide uniforms for their domestic help.

Religious Activities

Ecuador is primarily a Catholic country, and Quito is the seat of an Archbishop. About 70 Catholic churches in the city serve Spanish-speaking congregations. An English-language service is held in the Dominican Chapel each Sunday morning, and confessions may be heard.

Traditional Jewish services in Spanish and Hebrew are offered each Friday evening and Saturday morning at the Asociacion Israelita.

The community has a number of Protestant activities and services in English. The Advent-St. Nicholas Church (Lutheran and Anglican) offers a worship service and adult discussion group every Sunday morning at Isabel La Catolica 1431. The First Baptist Church has Sunday school classes and worship services. The Inter-denominational English Fellowship Church, sponsored by the World Radio Missionary Fellowship (which runs radio stations HCJB and Voz Andes Hospital), offers Bible school and services on Sunday and a teen group program.

The Seventh-day Adventists offer services on Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings and operate the

Clinica Americana. Jehovah's Witnesses also have weekly services. The Church of the Latter-day Saints has Sunday services in Spanish.

Education

Quito has many public and private primary and secondary schools. Cotopaxi Academy, Alliance Academy, Colegio Menor and Colegio Americano are private schools usually preferred by Americans in Quito. Cotopaxi Academy and Colegio Americano receive limited grant support from the U.S. Government.

Cotopaxi Academy was founded in 1959 as a private, cooperative, American nonsectarian school offering classes from pre-kindergarten (for children from the age of 3) through grade 12. The school year runs from mid-August to mid-June. Some 750 students attend the school. About one-third are Americans, one-third are Ecuadorians, and one-third other nationalities. Instruction is in English, and both Spanish and English are taught as second languages. The teachers are certified in the U.S., and classes are limited to 20 students. An International Baccalaureate Diploma is offered for qualified students going on to universities around the world. It is located in a recently built campus in the northern part of the city.

Cotopaxi is affiliated with the Universities of Alabama, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania for student teaching internship programs. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the International Baccalaureate Office in Geneva.

In addition to the traditional academic subjects, classes are offered in art, band, physical education, computers, and French. Standard U.S. texts, teaching materials, and tests are used. Extracurricular activities include yearbook, newspaper, drama club, National Honor Society, Student Council, and several sports. Two guidance counselors are on the staff.

An integrated program for gifted students operates from prekindergarten

garten to grade 12. Programs for physically handicapped children and those with learning disabilities are limited, but available from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 after the candidates undergo prerequisite screening. The staff includes a remedial reading teacher. For children in higher grades who have special problems, consult the school prior to arrival.

Alliance Academy, founded in 1929 for the children of missionaries is a privately supported college preparatory school. The school provides educational facilities to the children of Protestant missionaries from Quito, as well as those from other parts of Latin America. It has kindergarten through grade 12. The school year runs from early August to late May. Of some 500 students, 60% are children of missionaries from many different missions, and 40% are children of diplomatic and international business families.

Eighty percent are U.S and Canadian citizens. Children from other international families are accepted on a space-available basis. The Christian Philosophy of Education is the focus of the school. Daily Bible classes and weekly chapels are a required part of the curriculum. Students of all faiths are accepted.

Classes are taught in English, and Spanish classes are required for all students. The basic subjects resemble those in most U.S. schools. Electives include woodworking, art, typing, home economics, photography, shorthand, and yearbook publication. Advanced placement courses pre offered in math, English, and Spanish. Computer math and programming are also offered. The school is well supplied with learning materials, including three fully equipped science laboratories, elementary and secondary school libraries, and an audiovisual center. The library holds about 35,000 volumes, 800 films, 2,000 filmstrips, and videotaping facilities. Spanish and English are taught as second languages. Programs are available for the gifted as well as for the mentally handicapped. The school con-



Street scene in Guayaquil, Ecuador

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

ducts a full and varied sports and extracurricular program, including chorus, band, and orchestra.

Alliance Academy is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and belongs to the Southern Association of Independent Schools, the Association of Christian Schools International, and the Association of American Schools of South America.

Colegio Americano was founded in 1940 as a private coeducational school for students of all nationalities from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. A Junior College provides secretarial and business management training. The school year is

divided into trimesters extending from early October to mid-July, the traditional Ecuadorian school year. The current school population is 2,800. Most students are Ecuadorian. The 22-acre campus is 10 miles north of Quito.

The curriculum is divided into two sections: an international section offers courses similar to those at U.S. college preparatory, public schools; a national section offers subjects required of Ecuadorian schools. Instruction is in both English and Spanish. Courses in art and music are also taught. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Ecuadorian Ministry of

Education. A Comprehensive Learning Disabilities program from prekindergarten through grade 12 is offered, as well as guidance counseling and college counseling. Both English and Spanish are offered as second languages. Eighty-three percent of the graduating seniors go on to study in universities in the U.S. and Europe.

There is at least one English-speaking preschool. Some accept children from age 18 months.

Special Educational Opportunities

Universidad San Francisco, Catholic University and the National Polytechnic School offer academic instruction at the university level in Quito. San Francisco and Catholic Universities have faculties of Law, Economics, Engineering, and Philosophy. The Polytechnic School offers courses in electrical and chemical engineering and nuclear science. All classes are taught in Spanish. The admissions process is lengthy and difficult.

Catholic University offers a special 6 week intensive courses in Spanish for about \$350. The course consists of 3 hours of class 5 days a week. Many Americans take this course. You can also find many schools in the city offering Spanish lessons at very reasonable rates. Tutors will also come to your house if requested.

Various well-known local artists accept students of all ages for private classes, and several resident Americans also give art lessons.

The National Conservatory of Music accepts students for voice training and instruction in musical instruments, especially piano and violin. Students attending the schools normally used by the American community may receive instruction in a variety of instruments. Students must have their own musical instruments, although the schools do rent smaller instruments.

The University of Alabama College of Education offers graduate studies



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

View of Cuenca, Ecuador from Mirador Turi

in education in Quito. Visiting professors offer courses in secondary education, elementary and early childhood education, and administration and planning. Four-week courses are offered in the fall and spring and during the summer to fulfill credit requirements toward a Master's Degree or Ph.D.

Several museums in Quito have impressive collections of paintings, archeological objects, and historical manuscripts. The National Museum of History has a noteworthy manuscript collection. The Casa de la Cultura often sponsors exhibits and performances of local artists. The National Museum of Colonial Art has an outstanding collection of sculpture and paintings.

The premier museum in Quito is in the Central Bank located at the Casa de la Cultura. Divided into separate archeological and colonial exhibits, the museum shows carefully selected pieces in a well-designed arrangement. Tours are conducted in several languages, and the museum shows an English-language film describing the country's history and archeology. Another interesting ethnographic museum is located a few miles north of Quito at the Mitad del Mundo monument on

the Equator. Nearby are the partially excavated ruins of an Inca fortress with guides on weekends.

Sports

Soccer is Ecuador's most popular sport, and games are played in Quito year round at the Olympic Stadium. Bullfights are also popular. In December a series of bullfights are held to celebrate Quito Days and some of the world's leading bullfighters perform then.

Those interested in outdoor and indoor sports will not lack for opportunity in Ecuador. Local parks are well-kept and widely used on weekends, but you should be aware of the rising rate of pickpockets or robberies in the parks. Don't go with large amounts of money or important documents. There are tennis, racquetball, basketball and squash courts as well as bowling alleys. American instructors give classes in gymnastics, yoga, and aerobic exercises. Judo and karate are taught at the YMCA. Volleyball is very popular. Bicycling is possible in the parks, but dangerous on the road. Flying lessons are available. There is a small hang-gliding group. Several private clubs in and outside of the city have dining facilities, tennis courts, golf courses, and stables. You



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Street in Cuenca, Ecuador

can often join these clubs at costs ranging from \$30 to \$300 a month, plus initiation fees.

Opportunities for horseback riding abound. Buying and maintaining a horse is much less expensive than in the U.S. Lessons are available at different clubs, and riding competitions are held monthly. Polo players will find a small but enthusiastic group of colleagues in Quito.

Quito and its surrounding areas have several places for swimming. Swimming memberships are available at the Hotels Colon, Oro Verde and Quito. The Los Chillos Valley, south of Quito, has several pools and beautiful country clubs. Lago San Pablo, an hour's drive north of Quito, near Otavalo offers opportunities for windsurfing, water skiing and boating.

Health facilities are available in Quito, but range quite a bit in price and services offered. Several offer aerobics classes, weight machines and swimming pools. Memberships are available at the Hotel Hilton Colon, Oro Verde, Hotel Quito and the Elan gym (this list is not all inclusive). Prices range from \$450 to \$1,200 per year for a single membership.

Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy excellent freshwater and deep-sea fishing in Ecuador. Off the coast, deep-sea tackle is needed for the abundant marlin, tuna, dorado, and other species. Areas close to Quito have good stream and lake fishing for bass and trout. The best trout waters are located high in the mountains, in cold and rainy areas where parkas and waterproof pants are essential. A license to fish anywhere in Ecuador is required.

Good dove hunting can be found near Quito, partridge may be hunted in areas several hours away by car, and duck hunting is good on the coast. The Hunting and Fishing Club has a new clubhouse and excellent shooting range at Lago San Pablo. An overnight trip by car and horseback takes the hunter into good deer hunting country. Guns must be registered.

Mountain climbing, hiking, and camping are popular. Most of the mountains are not technically difficult, but the altitude-ranging from 14,000 to 20,000 feet-can cause problems. There are several climbing clubs. Mules and guides can be hired in villages near Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Cayambe, and Tungurahua. Crude "refugios" on these

mountains offer shelter and cooking facilities. No one skis in Ecuador. The snow-covered peaks are steep and laced with crevasses. The Hash House Harriers has an active branch in Quito. This group sponsors runs twice a month and regularly organizes outings.

Ecuador is a paradise for the amateur photographer. Black-and-white, Kodachrome, and Ektachrome color film can be processed locally. Making pictures from slides is expensive. Film can be purchased locally but film speeds slower than 100 or higher than 400 are generally not available or difficult to find. It may be a good idea to bring extra film with you.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Almost every corner of the country offers opportunities for interesting exploration. Anyone planning to take advantage of all possibilities will want to use a four-wheel-drive vehicle. Most sightseeing can be done on long weekends.

Less than an hour drive to the north of Quito is the equatorial monument at "Mitad del Mundo," marking the division between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. Two hours from Quito is Otavalo, home of indigenous people known throughout the continent for their weaving. Their colorful Saturday morning market is a must for tourists, although you can now find a much smaller version of the market on any day of the week. The towns of Cotacachi and San Antonio de Ibarra, near Otavalo, are known for leatherwork and woodcarving respectively.

About three hours by car south of Quito on the Pan American Highway is Ambato, Ecuador's fourth largest city, which has an annual Festival of Fruits and Flowers held during Carnival. The region is known for its rug factories. Southeast of Ambato is the secluded and peaceful town of Baños, perched on the eastern edge of the Andean plateau at the foot of the Tungurahua volcano. Like many other resort

towns in the mountains, Baños is known for its thermal springs. Metropolitan Touring offers an interesting trip by train from Quito to the colonial city of Riobamba, continuing through this area by bus, with stops at the local Indigenous markets.

In the southern part of the country, continuing on from Riobamba is Cuenca, Ecuador's third largest and perhaps most picturesque city, known for its artisan work and hand-woven rugs and woolens. There are many factories that do the finish work on the Panama hats which are made in small towns close to the coast. The ruins of an ancient Inca fortress are nearby. The province of Loja, in the southernmost part of Ecuador, is famous for the town of Vilcabamba, whose residents are known for their longevity.

Trips can be made by road or air into the Oriente and the jungle. The low-lying tropics are a pleasant contrast to Quito's cool climate. Metropolitan Touring operates a river boat trip down the Rio Napo, with excursions into the jungle, and dug-out canoe rides. Visitors can reach the frontier oil towns by bus over rough roads if they prefer not to fly.

West of Quito, 3 hours by car down the Andean slope, is Santo Domingo de Los Colorados, home of Indigenous people who traditionally color their hair and skin with natural pigments. The area offers a wide variety of tropical fruits and other products. Farther down the road, 6-8 hours by car from Quito, is Guayaquil, the nation's largest city. Up and down the coast are beaches, some deserted, some dirty, some beautiful, and some highly urbanized, that offer a pleasant reprieve from Quito's altitude. The Galapagos Islands, 600 miles off the coast, are famous for their wildlife. In recent years Ecuador has taken great care to preserve the flora and fauna of the islands, strictly licensing and controlling the tourist industry that flourishes there. A proper tour of the islands takes at least a week. Ships operating in the tourist trade range from converted

fishing sloops with room for no more than six passengers to luxurious cruise vessels offering all the comforts of a large hotel.

Entertainment

Quito has some comfortable cinemas that show films in English with Spanish subtitles. Most of the movies considered "children's" movies are dubbed in Spanish with no English subtitles. Well over half the films are American, and major releases usually arrive in Quito within a few months of their premiere in the U.S. The Casa de la Cultura also programs foreign film series in conjunction with various embassies.

The National Symphony Orchestra offers an annual series of concerts, often with guest artists and conductors. Live theater is active in Quito, with several amateur and semiprofessional groups presenting works in Spanish. An English-language amateur group, the Pichincha Players, presents one or two plays or musicals a year.

Many talented groups of Ecuadorian musicians offer concerts and perform in the late-night folk music houses. The music of the Andes is especially known for its use of pipes, guitars, percussion instruments, and the "charango," a mandolin-like instrument fashioned from the body of an armadillo. For those who prefer a different kind of popular music, there are several good discotheques in town.

Quito has a growing number of nightclubs, most of which are small. Elaborate floor shows and large orchestras are rare, although Ecuador is on the circuit for touring Latin American musical spectacles. Casinos in the major hotels have slot machines, roulette, blackjack, and dice tables.

The city has an unusually large variety of good restaurants featuring Ecuadorian and international cuisines. Prices are reasonable except for imported items. A number of U.S.-style fast-food restaurants offer hamburgers, pizza,

Mexican food and fried chicken for those suffering from culture shock.

Quito, Latacunga, Guayaquil, and Cuenca have annual "festival day" celebrations with fireworks and dancing in the streets. Many of the surrounding towns have their own smaller versions of these festivities.

Social Activities

No formal organizations exist exclusively for Americans. There are many opportunities for U.S. citizens to meet and work with Ecuadorians and other foreign nationals. Quito has 36 resident and 37 nonresident embassies, plus several international organizations. Membership in private clubs facilitates contact with influential Quito residents. The Damas Norteamericanas y Britanicas runs a small library, and supplies funds for many local charities through profits made at their Thrift Shop and annual Christmas bazaar. The Women's Christian Fellowship Group holds monthly meetings, weekly Bible study groups, and occasionally sponsors trips and seminars.

The Ecuadorian-American Chamber of Commerce has a large and growing membership, including many prominent Ecuadorian and U.S. resident business representatives. Each month the organization sponsors a luncheon with a well-known speaker.

The Rotary and Lions Clubs are active. The Ecuadorian Canine Association sponsors dog shows, registers purebreds, and is involved in other activities. Quito has both the Boy Scouts of America and the Cub Scouts pack. Both groups are active within the community. Also, there is a very active group of Girl Scouts.

Guayaquil

This sea level city, formally named Santiago de Guayaquil, was founded in 1538. Tropical, bustling and noisy, Guayaquil is located on the Guayas River and boasts a large deep-water seaport on the saltwater

estuary 8 miles south of the center of town. The city is located 50 miles upriver from the Pacific Ocean. A few small hills rise abruptly in the northern residential section; the rest of the city is flat. With a population approaching 2,500,000, the city is growing rapidly, with extensive slums expanding on stilts over tidal estuaries. The city also has modern residential areas of attractive walled homes and gardens and many multistory apartment and condominium buildings. Temperatures are generally pleasant during the dry season from June to December, and no worse than Washington, DC in midsummer during the remainder of the year. Mosquitoes are common during the rainy season from January to May.

The business center is becoming increasingly modern, though unpainted cane buildings still exist side by side with modern high-rise structures on some streets. Many of the streets are in deplorable condition during most of the year despite patchwork repairs.

Guayaquil's vital commercial activity and frequently turbulent political life can help make for an interesting tour, though street crime and burglaries have become serious problems. The American community of several thousand new and long-time residents is well integrated with a much larger number of dual nationals, third-country citizens, and Ecuadorians who were educated or worked in the U.S.

Utilities

City water piped to houses is chlorinated and pure when it leaves the plant but is considered contaminated because of the old pipes and their proximity to sewer lines. Some areas of the city have frequent low pressure or water shortages because of distribution problems.

Standard two-wire, 110v, 60-cycle current is available for lights and appliances, including refrigerators and freezers. Water heaters, electric stoves, and some air-conditioners require U.S. standard three-wire, 220v-240v, 60-cycle current, which

is also available. Voltage regulators or surge protectors are highly recommended to protect specialized electronic equipment such as stereos, home minicomputers and microwave ovens against voltage fluctuations.

Food

Many tropical fruits and vegetables are available year round, and others in season. Some temperate zone fruits and vegetables are brought to Guayaquil from the cool mountain valleys. Prices are reasonable, but may rise during the rainy season.

Seafood, including fresh tuna, shrimp, crab, and oysters, is in good supply most of the time and is less expensive than in the U.S., but quality varies. Beef, chicken and pork are almost always available at prices similar to those in the U.S. Butter and cheese are of satisfactory quality. All imported foods are expensive. Soft drinks and beer are inexpensive, once the bottles are purchased. As a rule of thumb, bring in quantity anything non-perishable that you use often, such as Baker's chocolate, peanut butter, spices, cereal, or special cleaning aids.

Guayaquil has many good restaurants, fast food eateries and ice cream shops with prices similar to those in the U.S. Sanitation is almost never up to U.S. standards, therefore, salads, raw seafood and ice can cause stomach and intestinal problems.

Clothing

Men: Bring a dinner jacket (generally a dark jacket is used) only if you already have one. Men's clothing can be made here from local or imported material and tailors range from very reasonable to expensive. Lightweight suits, sport coats and slacks are worn in Guayaquil. A few dark conservative suits and some sporty outfits will fill most needs.

Women: You will need all your summer clothing here. Officers dealing constantly with the public, such as the principal officer and visa officers, wear dresses, suits, blouses and

skirts. For cocktail parties, dinners, and dances, the latest fashions are worn. Short-sleeved cocktail dresses for evening are comfortable most of the year.

Hats are not worn, except for brimmed sun hats. Sun-dresses and sandals are standard. Bring washable cottons, synthetics, and cotton blends. Tailors here make all types of clothing. Bring fabric and notions from the U.S. Cotton is more comfortable than synthetic material in this hot climate. Bring an ample supply of underwear and socks for everyone in the family.

Stoles, light sweaters, and scarves are used at night during the cooler season. Bring one or two autumn or winter outfits and party clothes for visits to Quito, Cuenca, and other mountain areas. Jackets and woollens are needed at that altitude, and warm slacks are useful. A great variety of stoles and ponchos are sold here at low prices.

Children: Bring a good supply of cotton clothing, shoes and sneakers. Blue jeans, warm jackets, rainwear and sweaters will also be needed.

The American School (Colegio Americano) and the Inter-American Academy both require school uniforms. At the Colegio Americano girls dress with skirts and boys wear blue jeans. Boys and girls are required to wear the same kind of shirt and physical education uniform. Black dress shoes are required except for the days students have gym class, when they bring white sneakers. The uniform for the Inter-American Academy may be purchased in the U.S. Girls wear dark blue jeans, slacks, or skirts with plain white shirts, and a blue jacket or sweater in cool weather. Shoes may be either leather or blue sneakers; sandals are not permitted. Boys wear blue jeans, white shirts, blue sneakers, and a blue jacket or sweater. The PE uniform for both boys and girls is plain blue shorts, white T-shirts, and blue or white sneakers. Reasonably priced blue jeans are available locally.

Supplies and Services

Most U.S. and European toiletries, cosmetics, cigarettes, and medicines are available, sometimes at less cost than in the U.S. Aluminum foil, plastic wrap, waxed paper and other paper products are more expensive than in the U.S., and are of inferior quality. Bring entertainment equipment. Video clubs abound in Guayaquil, with tape rentals from \$1.00 to \$2.00. An ice chest and beach supplies, particularly suntan lotion, are recommended.

The city has adequate shoe repair and dry-cleaning, radio, phonograph, and TV repair shops. Mechanics can repair most makes of automobiles, but service is from fair to unreliable, and generally slow. Automobile parts are readily available, but expensive.

A number of good tailors are available to make or alter clothing. Local hairdressers are good and reasonably priced. Single persons usually find they need at least a part-time maid, and many families have more than one domestic employee. Domestic employees' wages will run from \$80 a month for a general maid to \$120 a month for a cook, plus food and uniforms.

Religious Activities

The prevalent faith is Roman Catholic. One Catholic church offers an English Mass. Several Protestant denominations are represented in Guayaquil, but only the Guayaquil English Fellowship, and Inter-denominational group, offers services in English. Several branches of the Mormon Church are here, with services in Spanish.

Education

Educational facilities through grade 8 are generally adequate. Colegio Americano, with kindergarten through grade 12, has a student enrollment of 1,656. It has a bilingual program, and operates from a spacious campus a few kilometers north of the urban areas. The school year is May through January. Spanish and English programs through grade six exist at present. The Colegio Americano is accredited by the

Southern Association of Schools and by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education.

Inter-American Academy was formed in 1978 when the former International Section split off from the Colegio Americano. It has kindergarten through grade 12, and is the only English-speaking school in Guayaquil at the high school level. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Schools, and offers an International Baccalaureate diploma. The Academy's diploma and credits are not recognized by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education because it does not follow the Ministry's curriculum or calendar. The 1999 school year for the Academy starts in September. The 1998 student population is about 300. The school has limited athletic and laboratory facilities.

In addition to these schools, several Roman Catholic private schools have good reputations, but classes are taught entirely in Spanish. An excellent local German school is available for U.S. students who speak German.

Several nursery schools are available. Several Spanish-language universities exist, but the largest (University of Guayaquil) is frequently disrupted by political demonstrations, including occasional gun battles between rival groups of students.

Sports

Swimming, tennis, basketball, soccer, baseball, volleyball, jogging, bowling, and golf are enjoyed in the Guayaquil area. Lessons are available. The Tennis Club and the Country Club have swimming pools, but membership is expensive. The pool at the Oro Verde Hotel offers club membership at \$150 a year for families and \$120 for singles. A municipal Olympic-size public pool with adjacent running track is located nearby. The clubs, Nacional and Garibaldi, are moderately priced alternatives with tennis and swimming facilities. A few families have small private pools. Hunting in Ecuador, particularly bird hunt-

ing, can be excellent. In the coastal region around Guayaquil, dove and duck hunting can be spectacular, since there are more than six species of dove and three major species of non-migrating ducks. The rice-growing regions are home to the large Muscovy duck and wintering grounds for blue teal. White-tailed deer and collared peccary are game animals hunted locally. Other game includes the jaguar, but hunting is difficult in the thick swamps and rugged hills. Ecuador has no specified hunting season or bag limit. Hunters should bring all their equipment, including ammunition.

The Mountain Climbing Association in Quito draws members from Guayaquil. See also Sports-Quito.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Two beaches, Playas and Salinas, offer a cooler climate and swimming, fishing, and boating. Playas is 50 miles southwest of Guayaquil. A small, marginally adequate hotel is situated on a wide, sandy beach with a sheltered picnic ground. Furnished houses are sometimes available for rent on or near the beach. Beaches are generally uncrowded from May to December. The sun and the ocean currents should be treated with respect. The strong sunshine can cause severe sunburn even after short exposure. Ocean currents are very strong in the area and bathers must exercise caution.

Salinas, a resort town 85 miles west of Guayaquil, can be reached by asphalt road in 2 hours. There are more hotels, restaurants, and clubs than in Playas. Sailing and boating facilities are good. There are good beaches along the coast to the north, and a modern hotel nearby on the south coast. Salinas offers some of the best sport fishing (marlin and sailfish) in the world. Charters are expensive, but many fishing enthusiasts find it reasonable to go in groups. Good snorkeling is found among the coral formations in bays north of Salinas.

Over a long weekend, an excursion to the mountains becomes practical

and offers a pleasant change in both climate and culture. The nearest city in the Sierra is Cuenca, about a 4 or 5 hour drive from Guayaquil. The road is subject to occasional landslides (especially during the rainy season) and fog banks, but the trip offers spectacular views. The train trip to Quito was a widely known tourist attraction, but service was suspended in early 1983 due to floods, and it is uncertain if service will ever be resumed.

Entertainment

Guayaquil has many movie theaters, some air-conditioned, that show fairly recent movies in English, with Spanish subtitles. Films considered to be for children however will be dubbed in Spanish without English subtitles. Concerts and plays are occasionally given by traveling American, Asian, or European groups. A Bi-National Center (Centeo Ecuatoriano-NorteAmericano), has an air-conditioned auditorium for public gatherings and cultural presentations, and a lending library with more than 4,000 volumes. Its small membership fee offers access to special programs, including movies, speakers, courses, and other activities. The Guayaquil Players, an English-language amateur theater group, stages productions two or three times a year.

Small but good collections of archeological antiquities are located in the Casa de la Cultura, the Municipal Museum, and the Museum of the Banco del Pacifico. Several small art galleries have weekly exhibits of artists from Ecuador and other Latin American countries.

Guayaquil's Independence Day, October 9th, is the most important local holiday. Indigenous festivals and markets can be seen all year by driving into the Andes. Horse races with pari-mutuel betting are held on Sundays throughout the year. Polo games and soccer games are held in season. Several hotels operate casinos. Bullfights are held twice a year.

Social Activities

About 2,500 U.S. citizens live in Guayaquil, providing a good opportunity for socializing with other Americans. The International Society has monthly dinners and several dances during the year. Numerous opportunities exist to meet and work with Ecuadorians and foreign nationals. The American-British Club is now the ABC International Women's Club. Many Ecuadorians have attended schools in the U.S. and welcome association with Americans. Guayaquileños are especially open and hospitable.

Cuenca

Cuenca, capital of Azuay Province in south-central Ecuador, is in one of the richest agricultural basins of the Ecuadorean Andes. A city with a population of 195,000 (1995 est.), it is approximately 68 miles southeast of Guayaquil and, because of its good rail and road connections, is the commercial center of southern Ecuador. One of its leading industries is the manufacture of Panama hats, made from the leaf of the *toquilla* palm which is brought to Cuenca from the coast. Other industries include tanning, sawmilling, flour milling, and paper milling. The city is also known for its artisan work and handwoven rugs and woollens.

Cuenca was founded by the Spanish in 1557 on the site of a native town called Tumibamba. It has been a Roman Catholic bishopric for more than 200 years. The churches and many other old buildings reflect the early Spanish influence in the area, and open-air flower and vegetable markets add to the charm of the older parts of the city. During its "festival days," there are beautiful fireworks displays, and dancing in the streets far into the night.

Cuenca has two universities, one public and one administered by the Catholic Church. The former, founded in 1867, has a student body of 20,000. About 3,000 students attend the latter.

Several good restaurants attract visitors, and a wide variety of entertainment is available. The city has two fine museums, the Provincial Archaeological and the Spanish Abstract Art Museum. The Ecuadoreans in Cuenca, as in other cities, are friendly and hospitable. Many speak English, but a knowledge of Spanish presents more opportunities to meet and socialize with the local population.

OTHER CITIES

AMBATO, capital of Tungurahua Province in central Ecuador, has a population of close to 111,500. It is about 50 miles south of the capital, on the Río Ambato, near Mt. Chimborazo. Due to its location, Ambato is susceptible to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Much of the city was destroyed during an earthquake in 1949. The city's historic landmarks include the mausoleum of Juan Montalvo, the noted 19th-century essayist, and a Renaissance cathedral. Along with sugarcane plantations, Ambato is known for its fresh fruits. Industries include tanning, leatherworks, food processing, and textile milling. Ambato is located on the Pan-American Highway and on the Guayaquil-Quito Railway. Miraflores, a suburb of Ambato, is a lush resort for the upper classes of Guayaquil.

The capital of Cañar Province, **AZOGUES** is located in south-central Ecuador, in a high Andean valley. Situated on the Pan-American Highway less than 20 miles north of Cuenca, Azogues has an estimated population of 13,840. The economy is based on agricultural products such as grains and fruit. Industries in the city include leather tanning and flour milling. The city's name comes from the Spanish word "azogue" which means "mercury." Mercury is a local resource, along with silver and copper.

BABAHYO, capital of Los Ríos Province, is located in west-central Ecuador, less than 25 miles north of Guayaquil. On the southern shore

of Río Babahoyo, the city is a trade center for the surrounding agricultural region. Sugarcane, rice, and fruits are grown. There is a government-owned distillery making alcohol, ether, and perfume. A technical university was opened here in 1971. The city has an estimated population of 43,000.

As the capital and major seaport of Esmeraldas Province, the city of **ESMERALDAS** is the chief trading center for the region. Located about 85 miles northwest of the nation's capital, Esmeraldas lies on the Pacific coast. The city is not strong industrially, but an oil refinery was completed in 1977 and new oil port facilities were opened in 1979. Its main exports are timber and bananas. Tourism has increased because of the addition of seaside resort accommodations, a pleasant climate, and a good highway to Quito. A technical university was opened here in 1970. The population in Esmeraldas is estimated at 131,000.

GUARANDA, capital of Bolívar Province, has an estimated population of 14,100. It is situated on a head-stream of the Río Chimbo in the Cordillera de Guaranda of the Andes. Less than 50 miles north of Guayaquil and about 75 miles south of Quito, Guaranda is an agricultural center trading corn, chincona, wheat, and timber. The city was an important transshipment point before the opening of Guayaquil-Quito Railway in 1908. Guaranda is linked by highway with the cities of Quito and Riobamba.

LATACUNGA, with a population close to 34,000, is the capital of Cotopaxi Province in north-central Ecuador. Located in an Andean basin on the upper Río Patate, the city is situated at an elevation of 9,055 feet. A pre-colonial city, Latacunga was favored by Incan royalty because of its hot springs. The city has been damaged by volcanic eruptions and subsequent earthquakes and, as a result, had to be rebuilt in 1797. Industrial activities include

pottery, furniture manufacturing, and flour milling.

Located in south-central Ecuador, **LOJA**, capital of Loja Province, is situated on a small plain at the foot of the Cordillera de Zamora of the Andes. The city was founded in 1553 and has since been totally rebuilt as a result of an earthquake. Trade here is typical of the region (sugarcane, cereals, coffee, and cinchona). Industries include tanning and textile weaving, and the manufacture of light consumer goods. Loja has many beautiful marble buildings. Loja is on the Pan-American Highway and is an air link to principal Ecuadorean cities. The seat of a Roman Catholic diocese, the National University of Loja, and a technical university are all located in the city.

Founded in 1535 by Spanish colonists, **PORTOVIEJO** is situated in the Pacific lowlands of western Ecuador. The city is about 100 miles west of Quito, on the eastern bank of the Río Portoviejo. Formerly located on the coast, Portoviejo was moved inland because of Indian attacks. With an estimated population of 122,000, the city is an agricultural and lumbering center; products include cotton, coffee, cacao, and sugarcane. Light industries here include the manufacture of Panama baskets, hammocks, and hats. Portoviejo has been the seat of a bishopric since 1871; a technical university was opened in 1952. There are air and road routes connecting the city with Quito.

At an altitude of about 9,000 feet, **RIOBAMBA**, capital of Chimborazo Province, is situated in the central highlands of Ecuador. It is about 75 miles east of Guayaquil and is the headquarters of the Guayaquil-Quito Railway. The city dates from pre-Inca and Inca times; it was settled by the Spanish in 1534, 12 miles south of its present location. Because of a landslide in 1797, Riobamba was moved to its present site near the Riobamba River. In 1830, the first Ecuadorian constitutional congress met at Riobamba and proclaimed the

republic. Industries include carpets, textiles, cement, and cotton. Riobamba is known for its native artifacts. The city has a weekly fair that attracts Indians from the surrounding countryside. Many fine products can be purchased here. The population is about 81,000.

TULCÁN, with a population of nearly 34,000, is the capital of Carchi Province, in the northern tip of central Ecuador bordering Colombia. The city was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1923 and has since been rebuilt. Quito is about 75 miles to the southwest. Nearby sites include the natural bridge of Rumichaca over the Río Carchi and, in Colombia, only a few miles northeast, the shrine of Nuestra Señora de Las Lajas. Situated in a rich agricultural region, Tulcán processes sugarcane, coffee, cereals, and is known for its dairy products. The Pan-American Highway runs through the city.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Ecuador straddles the Equator, its namesake, on the west coast of South America, almost 3,000 miles due south of Washington, DC. It is roughly the size of Colorado. Two north-south ranges of the Andes Mountains divide the country into three distinct sections: the Costa, a belt of tropical lowlands 10-100 miles wide along the Pacific coast, where Guayaquil, the major city, is located; the Sierra, where Quito is located, is a highland plateau 3,000-10,000 feet high; and the Oriente, which are the jungle lowlands east of the Andes that make up about half of the country's area. In addition, the Galapagos Islands (Archipelago de Colon) lie 640 miles off the coast. The nine main islands are inhabited by some 15,000 people and an amazing variety of wildlife that has fascinated scientists ever

since Charles Darwin visited there in 1836.

Ecuador claims an additional 100,000 square miles of territory in the Oriente, an area which includes navigable tributaries of the Amazon River. This territory was lost to Peru under the 1942 Rio Protocol of Peace, Friendship, and Boundaries, a fact which the Ecuadorian people and Government have never fully accepted. The national motto proclaims, "Ecuador was, is, and will be an Amazonian nation." Revising the treaty is one of the government's foremost foreign policy objectives. Efforts to settle the dispute have been unsuccessful because of strong nationalistic feelings in both countries. In 1995 an undeclared war took effect between Peru and Ecuador along the disputed southern border. Since 1995 the guarantors (U.S., Brazil, Chile and Argentina) have been very active in assisting Ecuador and Peru to resolve their differences.

Most of Ecuador is covered by equatorial forests. The rest consists of cultivated agricultural areas, some arid scrubland near the coast, and barren mountain ranges with 22 peaks over 14,000 feet high. These peaks include Chimborazo (20,561 ft.) and Cotopaxi, which is the second highest active volcano in the world (19,347 ft.). The spectacular array of snow capped volcanoes stretching north and south of Quito has been called the "Avenue of Volcanoes", and on a clear day the view from an airplane is breathtaking. On the Pacific slope the principal rivers are the Esmeraldas and the Guayas. Eastern Ecuador is part of the Amazon watershed. Its principal rivers are the Napo and Pastaza Rivers. None of the Amazon tributaries in Ecuador are navigable by oceangoing vessels.

Because of variations in altitude, Ecuador has a variety of climates. The lowland- are generally hot and humid Temperatures on the coast are moderated by the Humboldt Current to a range of 65° to 90°E Temperatures in the Sierra are generally cool, ranging from 35° to 75°E

Due to the altitude and thin air, temperature in direct sunlight can reach 85°F at midday. In the evenings it can range from pleasantly cool to very chilly. The tallest mountains are always syncopated, but it never snows in the inhabited altitudes, although it hails occasionally. During the Sierra dry season, from June through September, gusty winds are common.

In Quito the temperature pattern rarely changes from day to day or month to month. Mornings are cool and crisp, and midday is agreeably warm unless skies are overcast. Fog and mist may occur in the mornings or evenings as low-lying clouds spill over the sides of the valley. Since Quito is such a short distance from the Equator, sunrise and sunset vary only slightly from 6 am and 6 pm. Average annual rainfall in Quito is 50 inches, with 43 inches falling from October through May, and 7 inches from June through September. Relative humidity averages 75%. Occasional tremors are registered in the area, these may or may not be perceptible to residents. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are infrequent but do remain a possibility.

Population

Ecuador's population is 11,937,000; it is estimated that the population is 40% mestizo, 40% Indian, 10% white, 5% black, and 5% Asian and others. About half of the population lives on the Coast, where the principal group is mestizo. The average annual population growth rate is currently 2.3%. The term "mestizo" has a cultural significance in the Sierra; it is not simply a mixture of blood. An Indian who leaves his or her community, abandoning traditional dress, tribal ties, and native language, loses his or her Indian identity and is called a "mestizo."

Spanish is the official language, but Quichua, the language of the Incas, is still spoken by Indians constituting about one-third of the inhabitants. In the Oriente, several indigenous languages and dialects survive; some having no identifiable

link with any recognized language families.

Internal migrations are occurring from the highlands to the coastal area, and from the countryside to the cities. Today the population is divided about equally between the mountainous central highland region and the coastal lowlands. The urban segment of the population is about 55%.

Most of the population is Roman Catholic, though Protestant missionaries have been active in the country since the turn of the century. Religious freedom is observed.

Primary education is compulsory, and an estimated 85% of the population is literate. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries have worked with indigenous peoples of the Oriente in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. Public university education is free, and there is an open admissions policy. Public and private university enrollment is large, although many students do not complete their degrees.

History

Perhaps 50 independent pre Columbian cultures flourished along the coast, in the Sierra, and in the Rio Napo Region before the Incas Conquered what is now Ecuador. Ceramics found in Valdivia date from 3200 B.C., are among the oldest found in South America. Archeologists have discovered rich gold works, ceramics, weavings, and mummies in several important sites. Around the year 1200, two important nations emerged: the Caras on the coast, and the Quitus in the Andes. These merged to form the Shyris nation, which was conquered by the Incas in the 15th century.

The Inca sovereign Huayna Capac consolidated his rule over the area in the early 1500s, just a few years before the first Spaniards landed on the shores of Ecuador. After seizing the treasures at Atacames on his first expedition along the coast from

his base in Panama, Francisco Pizarro returned in 1532 to conquer the Inca kingdom, by then weakened by civil war. The last Inca king, Atahualpa, was held prisoner for ransom and then killed by Pizarro.

A long period of warfare against the native population followed and the Spanish conquest destroyed all but a few of the Inca fortresses and temples. Quito was not subdued until Sebastian de Benalcazar took possession of the area, establishing San Francisco de Quito on December 6, 1534, on the site of the ancient Quitu capital. Guayaquil was founded a year later. Gonzalo Pizarro was named governor of the colony in 1540 and organized an expedition in Quito which resulted in the discovery of the Amazon River by Francisco de Orellana. In 1563 Quito was made a Royal Audiencia, first as part of the Viceroyalty of Peru, and then the Viceroyalty of New Granada, after 1718. Exploration, colonization and religious conversion of the Indians continued for almost three centuries, until independence in 1822. The first schools were established by the religious orders of the Catholic Church. So many monasteries and sumptuous churches were built in Quito that it became known as "The Cloister of America." The combination of Spanish art and Indian handicraft led to a unique production of sculpture and painting in what is known as the Quiteño School of Colonial Art, with many extraordinary native artists, such as Caspicara, Goribar, and Miguel de Santiago.

Land which had been taken from the aborigines was granted to the religious communities and to the Spaniards who had served their king. During the 17th and 18th centuries African slave labor was brought from the Caribbean to work the new plantations and agriculture flourished. The colonial economy rested on three institutions: the *encomienda* (a system of serfdom), the *mita* (forced Indian labor in mines and public works), and the *obraje* (forced labor in textile factories). While the land belonged to the Spanish crown legally, the

encomienda was the cession of land and people to the privileged. The Indians were supposed to receive the care of the patron and be instructed in the Catholic faith, in exchange for personal services. The native population suffered greatly under this system.

A number of European scientists visited Ecuador in the 18th century: Charles de La Condamine of France headed a geodetic mission to confirm measurements of the equator, and Alexander Von Humboldt made significant discoveries in natural science. Intellectual societies flourished in the capital and became centers of liberal political thought.

Eugenio Espejo preached independence and influenced many wealthy merchants and nobles who resented Spanish oppression, taxation, and trade restrictions. In 1809 a group of citizens overthrew the Royal Audiencia, but Spanish rule was restored within 3 months. In 1820 Guayaquil again declared independence, and soon after Simon Bolivar sent Antonio Jose de Sucre into Ecuador to lead a decisive campaign against the Spaniards. Sucre won a great victory in a fierce battle on the slopes of Mount Pichincha overlooking Quito in 1822, liberating Ecuador and uniting it with the Federation of Greater Colombia.

The Republic of Ecuador began its separate existence in 1830, and Juan Jose Flores was elected the first President. The constitution established a presidential system of government, with a division of powers among the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches. The new government was beset from the beginning by personal and sectional rivalries between the Coast and the Sierra. For many years political power alternated between the Liberal and Conservative Parties.

In the 19th century, political conditions were unstable, and during the first 95 years of its independence, Ecuador had a succession of 40 presidents, dictators, and juntas. In 1851 slavery was abolished, 60,000 Negroes were freed, and tribute

payments by the Indians were abolished. In 1860, 15 years of authoritarian rule by President Gabriel Garcia Moreno began. After his assassination in 1875 on the steps of the Presidential Palace, a period of liberal constitutional development followed. The greatest figure of this era was Eloy Alfaro, who completed the Guayaquil-Quito Railway and created the Public Health Service. Under his leadership new constitutions removed religious qualifications for citizenship, reestablished freedom of worship, confiscated Church estates, and secularized government education.

In the early 20th century, there was political unrest and economic distress following World War I. From 1925 until 1948, the country went through an even more troubled period, with 22 Chiefs of State. Twelve years of relative stability followed. Galo Plaza Lasso (former Secretary-General of the Organization of American States) was elected President in free elections in 1948 and was succeeded by Dr. Jose M. Velasco Ibarra who completed his presidential term, and in turn was succeeded by Dr. Camilo Ponce E., who also completed his presidential term. The next elected President was again Dr. Jose M. Velasco Ibarra, who did not complete his presidential term because he was overthrown by a military junta. Dr. Jose M. Velasco Ibarra was elected President on 5 occasions. After almost 2 decades under military governments, a constitutional government was elected, led by Dr. Jaime Roldos A., who died in an airplane accident in 1982 and was succeeded by his Vice-President Dr. Osvaldo Hurtado L. In 1984 there was an orderly transition from one democratically elected government to another when President Leon Febres Cordero took office. He, in turn, relinquished power to democratically elected Dr. Rodrigo Borja C. 1988-1992. Sixto Durán-Ballén was President for the period from 1992 to 1996. Abdalá Bucaram Ortiz was elected President in 1996 for a period of 4 years, however, his presidency was revoked in February 1997. Fabian Alarcón (February

1997 - August 1998) is the current interim president elected by Congress and further reconfirmed by popular consultation in May 1997. New elections will be held in 1998.

Public Institutions

Dr. Fabian Alarcón, Ecuador's sixth President since the return of democracy in 1979, was elected by Congress in 1997, after nation-wide popular protests forced President Abdala Bucaram to step down. Bucaram, who served 6 months in office, was widely viewed as Ecuador's most corrupt President in recent history. He fled to Panama to avoid prosecution. Alarcón was elected to serve as interim president until new elections are held in 1998.

President Alarcón was a compromise candidate from a small center-left party, the Radical Alfarista Front (FRA), who drew support from the larger center-left and center-right parties in Congress for his Presidency. He was elected by Congress to correct the corruption of the Bucaram government and to lay the ground work for a Constituent Assembly to overhaul the state. His party has grown from 3 to 12 deputies in Congress since he took office and he has managed to build a coalition with the larger parties from the right and the left supporting his reform agenda.

The Ecuadorian constitution provides for a separation of powers between executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. With 14 formally registered political parties and a free press, Ecuador has a lively and open political environment. In the 1998 national elections, a new President, Vice President, and Provincial and Municipal Officials will be elected to serve 4-year terms. In addition, of the 82 members of the unicameral legislature, 12 will be elected at-large for 4-year terms ("National Deputies") and the remaining 70 will be elected by province for 2-year terms ("Provincial Deputies"). Following a 1997 constitutional reform, the 31 members of the Supreme Court are selected by the Congress

from lists submitted by various social and professional organizations.

Ecuador's human rights record is generally good, although problems, principally involving abuse of authority and an ineffective judiciary, continue to exist.

Arts, Science, and Education

Quito's artistic tradition continued through the Republican era and flourishes today. Masters such as Oswaldo Guayasamin, Eduardo Kingman, and Oswaldo Viteri are joined by a younger generation that is gaining international fame. Marcelo Aguirre, one of these young painters, won the world's largest prize, the \$250,000 Marco prize from Mexico, in 1995. Galleries such as La Galeria and Art Forum in Quito and Expresiones in Guayaquil spotlight the best in contemporary art.

The National Dance Company performs modern ballet and groups such as Humanizarte focus on indigenous dance forms. The National Symphony performs weekly concerts throughout Quito and elsewhere in the country. There are also a number of classical concerts offered by the Philharmonic Society and several chamber music groups. Private clubs and restaurants showcase traditional Andean music, Latin pop, and even jazz.

Traditional arts and crafts are very much alive. Indian wool weavings and rugs woven in Inca designs have been successfully commercialized and are sold in the world famous market city of Otavalo, which is located about 2 hours outside of Quito. The city of Cotacachi, near Otavalo, is known for its leather goods, and San Antonio de Ibarra, just a few miles north, is a center for wood carving. The city of Cuenca has a wide variety of art forms, including sophisticated ceramics and the famous "Panama Hats." Tigua, a small town near Latacunga, is famous for native

paintings produced on stretched cowhides and furniture. A number of Indian communities combine colorful art forms with religious celebrations.

The government and a number of private organizations are working to preserve Ecuador's historic, archeological, and architectural heritage. Colonial Quito has been declared a "world cultural heritage site" city by UNESCO. Dozens of sites in Quito's historic center have been or are being restored. The Quito electric trolley system was built in an attempt to reduce the pollution and vibration that was harming many of the architectural treasures.

The Central Bank has long been a major player in the cultural world. The Central Bank's museums throughout the country showcase the artistic and archeological treasures of Ecuador. Perhaps the premier museum in Quito is the Central Bank museum at the Casa de la Cultura. The museum combines a large collection of pre-Columbian ceramics and gold with a historical review of Ecuadorian sculpture, painting, and furniture. The Guayasamin Foundation in the north part of the city pays homage to the work of Ecuador's best known painter. A major Quito city museum is due to be inaugurated, in the converted 16th century San Juan de Dios Hospital, sometime in 1998.

The Ecuadorian universities have lost much of their prestige over the past 25 years. Some 32 universities are recognized as "official" by the government. The two largest universities, the Central University in Quito and the University of Guayaquil, have launched reform projects, but it will take time for them to recoup the reputation for excellence they enjoyed 40 years ago. Most research takes place at the two technological universities, the ESPOL in Guayaquil and the National Polytechnic School in Quito. The Catholic University of Ecuador in Quito attracts some 200 U.S. students per year to study Spanish, while San Francisco Uni-

versity, founded just 7 years ago, has developed the nation's most impressive university campus in nearby Cumbaya while offering a 4-year liberal arts education similar to U.S. schools.

Ecuador's scientific community is small, however there is much work being done in biodiversity and other environmental areas. Researchers from around the world have come to Ecuador due to one of the richest environments on the globe. The Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos National Park is the center for studies of the islands. It receives funds from the Ecuadorian Government as well as international organizations for its activities. New research stations opened by Catholic University and San Francisco University in the Amazon basin are providing Ecuadorian and foreign scientists with the infrastructure to carry out projects there.

An increase in scientific activity is underway in Ecuador. The National Atomic Energy Commission is doing more extensive research with radioisotopes, particularly in medicine and agriculture. Several experimental agricultural stations are active. The Central University and the National Polytechnic School have research labs. Other research is being conducted in cancer, pharmaceuticals, astronomy, and linguistics fields.

Commerce and Industry

Ecuador is largely an agricultural country and enjoys abundant, relatively unexploited, natural resources. Both the coastal and highland regions are rich agricultural areas. The Sierra (highland) Region largely produces traditional consumption crops, but has excellent potential for export crops including flowers and vegetables. The coastal lowland produces mainly export crops, principally bananas, shrimp, coffee, and cocoa, as well as rice and sugarcane.

The main agricultural commodities accounted for approximately 43% of exports in 1995. Ecuador currently produces about 390,000 barrels per day of crude oil, about two-thirds of which are exported, accounting for 35% of total exports. Most of the oil is produced by state-owned Petroecuador, though foreign investors are conducting some exploration and development activities. Ecuador also appears to have extensive, underdeveloped mining potential, especially for gold. Ecuador's industrial sector produces largely for a domestic market which until recently has been heavily protected. Trade policy has been substantially liberalized in recent years, with current tariffs ranging from 5-20% and few nontariff barriers in place. Manufactured goods accounted for 20% of exports in 1995.

Economic growth in Ecuador has been uneven, influenced by international economic developments and natural disasters which have affected its petroleum and agricultural exports. Following a booming economy in the 1970s, which was driven by high petroleum prices, the 1980s was a decade of stagnation, as the debt crisis, inadequate domestic adjustment, and a volatile international oil market combined to thwart economic growth. Although economic growth has picked up in this decade, employment growth has been limited, and there is widespread agreement on the need for major structural reforms to revive economic growth. The economy grew by a rate of 2% in 1996, with inflation running at 31%. Open unemployment is around 7% and the informal sector employs over 40% of the urban workforce.

The Durán-Ballén government of 1992-1996 took a number of important steps to revitalize and restructure the economy. A major macroeconomics adjustment program was introduced, as were several important structural reform measures, including a budget reform law, liberalized investment regulations, a new capital markets law, hydrocarbons reform, customs

and tax reforms, new agrarian law, and a telecommunications privatization law. The government also reached an agreement with commercial banks on debt restructuring.

Economic reform stalled under the subsequent 6-month government of Abdalá Bucaram (August 1996 - February 1997) which was characterized by increased corruption and decreased investment. The current interim government of Fabian Alarcón (February 1997-August 1998) is faced with a number of challenges including implementing the Durán-Ballén era reforms, privatizing the state-owned telephone company, cutting the inflation rate to international levels and increasing social investment.

Transportation

Automobiles

City streets and principal intercity highways are reasonably well maintained. Many types of vehicles are used in Ecuador, from the smallest four-cylinder cars to the largest and most powerful luxury sedans. Automatic transmissions present no problems, except for replacement parts. Low-slung cars have problems when exploring remote areas. Heavy-duty shocks and suspensions are recommended. High road clearance and maneuverability are essential for this type of travel, and a good range of gears, heavy-duty tires, springs, shock absorbers, and a roll bar are recommended. An oversized radiator is a desirable safety feature. Four-wheel-drive vehicles, while expensive to rent, may be rented locally for recreational use or while waiting for your vehicle to arrive. Bring a new car or one in good condition. People who will not be traveling to remote areas will find a sedan or minivan to be an adequate means of transportation.

Unleaded gasoline is now readily available in Ecuador in two versions. The better quality is the "Super" gasoline which costs the equivalent of \$1.35 per gallon. The lesser expensive "Eco" which costs the equivalent of \$1.20, a low-

octane regular leaded gasoline is also available for \$1.10.

Most city streets are paved, although they are not always in good condition. Smaller towns usually have cobblestone or dirt streets. Travel by automobile can be slow, hard, and dangerous given the high number of unskilled drivers; some roads outside the cities are in poor condition and are very winding with steep drop-offs. The main roads are the north-south Pan American Highway that runs through Quito, the Quito-Guayaquil Road via Santo Domingo, and the Quito-Esmeraldas Road.

Local

Regular intercity bus service is available. Principal cities have numerous city buses. These are inexpensive, costing about \$.05, but they are crowded and often in need of repair. The city of Quito is now served by an electric trolley system running from the southern to the northern areas of the city and vice versa, the cost is about \$.25. Taxis are plentiful and the fares are reasonable. You can hail a taxi on the street or telephone to request one. If the taxi does not have a meter, negotiate the fare before beginning the trip. Taxis are difficult to find on the street, after 10:00 p.m. or when it is raining in Quito, but you can always request a taxi by phone.

Regional

American Airlines, SAETA and Ecuatoriana Airlines offer regular service to Quito and Guayaquil from Miami, with at least one flight daily. Continental provides daily service from Houston via Panama. There are several flights weekly to New York and also direct flights via Mexico or Miami to Los Angeles. Make your reservations well in advance of your trip, since all of these flights are crowded. Most are fully booked weeks in advance.

Mariscal Sucre is Quito's international airport. Ecuador has two international airlines (Ecuatoriana and Saeta) and three domestic airlines (SAETA, SAN, and TAME). Guayaquil is 30-45 minutes by air

from Quito, depending on the aircraft. Scheduled flights are also available to Esmeraldas, Cuenca, Lago Agrio, Coca, Loja, Manta, Machala, Tulcan, Portoviejo, Macas, and the Galapagos. The one-way fare from Quito to any continental Ecuadorian city is between \$40 and \$80.

Currently a round-trip flight from the capital to the Galapagos Islands costs about \$390 for persons who are not permanent residents of Ecuador.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The per minute rate for calls to the U.S. is currently approximately \$1.10. You may want to research companies and rates for current programs and services before arrival in Ecuador. Companies such as AT&T, Sprint, and MCI all offer service in Ecuador. There is no time period with reduced rates. Most phones are touch tone and direct dial to the U.S. is readily available. Calls placed from the U.S. to Ecuador are considerably less expensive than those placed from Ecuador. Cellular phones have also become very popular within the country and sometimes are more reliable than the regular phone system. Phones purchased in the United States may not be able to be programmed for use within Ecuador, or it may cost up to U.S. \$100.00 to program them. The price of cellular telephones and service is slightly higher than in the U.S.; you will need to check with the local companies for pricing and service information.

Mail

International airmail is expensive and not very dependable. Packages arriving by international parcel post and unaccompanied air-freight will be inspected and charged a duty.

Radio and TV

Quito has a wide range of AM radio stations presenting primarily Latin American and American popular music. Good FM radio stations oper-

ate here with most broadcasting in stereo. The FM service of HCJB, a missionary-run broadcasting organization, features light classical music and offers nightly news broadcasts in English. Short-wave reception is usually good. Both Voice of America and BBC can be received clearly. HAM radio operators should bring their own equipment, since the Ecuadorian Government issues licenses to those with a valid American license.

Quito and Guayaquil are served by a cable TV service that provides 50 channels, about one-fourth in English from the U.S. These vary as stations are added and dropped, but generally the three networks (ABC, NBC, CBS), Discovery, Fox, Warner Brothers, CNN, ESPN and a few rerun stations are available.

The cost for full service is about \$35 monthly. Local stations broadcast in Spanish and include shows from all over Latin America, dubbed versions of many U.S. series and a variety of motion pictures.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Quito has two independent morning newspapers, *El Comercio* and *Hoy*, and two afternoon papers, *Ultimas Noticias* and *La Hora*. Newspapers from Guayaquil, such as *El Universo* and *El Telegrafo*, are also sold in Quito. Newspapers are sold on the streets and in neighborhood stores and can be delivered to the home.

The Latin American edition of the *Miami Herald* is printed daily in Quito, using a direct satellite link and is currently available by subscription for around \$400 per year.

The Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines are available weekly at about \$2.25 per copy and \$75.00 per year by subscription. Other popular magazines from the U.S., France, Spain, and Germany are also available. The BiNational Centers in Guayaquil and Cuenca subscribe to numerous English-language periodicals and have libraries with fiction and non-

fiction English-language books. The Damas Norteamericanas y Britanicas' Club operates a small rental library. AERA has a circulating library of bestsellers in fiction and non-fiction which is renewed regularly from the U.S., the cost of membership is \$15 per year. Major hotels carry some paperback books. Several bookstores have limited stocks of books in English, but they are expensive.

Recordings of U.S. and European popular music are increasingly available. Those produced under license in Ecuador are relatively inexpensive (about \$5), but imported recordings are costly. Selections of classical music are limited; recordings of Ecuadorian and Latin American popular and folk music are abundant, inexpensive, and of relatively good quality.

There are several video clubs, including the U.S. chain "Blockbusters," offering a wide variety of VHS tapes comparable to what would be found in the U.S. New movies take a significantly longer time to become available here than in the U.S.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

There are several good hospitals for medical care and hospitalization. Many Ecuadorian physicians and dentists are trained in the U.S. or Europe and hospitals meet American standards. Though the local physicians and facilities are good, there are occasions that individuals are evacuated to Miami, Florida for medical treatment.

Quito has good dentists and orthodontists. Hygiene and quality of work is similar to the United States. Major dental problems such as root canal and crowns can be adequately accommodated here. Eye examinations and glasses are readily available in Quito. Contact lenses can also be fitted, though at a higher cost than in the U.S. German and American contact solutions are available on the local market, but

are also at a higher cost. It would be best to bring your own supplies if you prefer a specific brand. Contact lenses can be difficult to use due to the altitude and dryness of the climate. Bring a pair of prescription glasses as a backup. Most people find that the altitude and ultra-violet sun rays make sunglasses necessary. The sunlight is bright and sunglasses reduce the eye glare. Good dark sunglasses are difficult to find in Quito, bring a couple of pairs.

The local market does carry most of the medications available in the United States, but the availability at local pharmacies vary from month to month.

Local medical facilities are less adequate than Quito. Well trained physicians are available for consultation. The Clinica Kennedy is a small private hospital. Dental facilities are limited.

Due to the high humidity and temperature in Guayaquil, bring insect repellent and insecticides. Due to the risk of contracting malaria, insect repellent should be used when outside in the evenings. Insects are a problem in the homes, and U.S. brand insecticides (or bug sprays) are more effective in controlling their numbers. Antiseptic and antibiotic ointments are useful in prevention of bacterial skin infections.

Community Health

Quito and Guayaquil have central sewage systems, and garbage is collected regularly in most neighborhoods. However, sanitation facilities and public health controls are well below U.S. standards. Since the water system is subject to leaks and corrosion in the pipes, tap water is not safe.

Tap water should be boiled for 20 minutes.

The altitude can be a problem in Quito. During the first couple of days, most people experience some minor discomforts associated with the altitude. These symptoms

include shortness of breath, upset stomach, headaches, difficulty sleeping (including sleeping more than normal), dizziness, and loss of energy. After a period of adjustment, most individuals have no difficulty with the altitude. Colds and respiratory infections do require a longer convalescent period than at sea level.

Because of the thinness of the air and closer proximity to the sun, the equatorial sun is very intense. Skin irritation and sunburn can occur with short exposure to the sun. Use tanning products and sunscreens when outdoors. Bring a supply of sunblock with an SPF level of at least 8 but preferably higher. A wide assortment of brimmed hats can be bought locally, including the "Panama" hats (which are actually made in Ecuador).

Preventive Measures

Numerous diseases are endemic to Ecuador including cholera and rabies. Among the most common problems within the American community are intestinal parasites, hepatitis, viral infections and colds. Malaria is a problem below 5,000 feet (1,500 meters) in all areas of Ecuador, with the exception of the Galapagos Islands. Antimalarial medication should be taken by all persons living in or traveling to malaria areas including Guayaquil. Chloroquine-resistant malaria has been reported in parts of Ecuador, but neither Quito or Guayaquil are in these areas.

Vaccinations are a strong line of defense against diseases and illnesses while living in Ecuador. Yellow Fever injections are strongly recommended for Ecuador. Oral typhoid vaccine is another highly recommended vaccination for Ecuador. Hepatitis A vaccine is strongly recommended. Routine childhood immunization should be maintained including Hepatitis A and B, DPT, polio, MMR, and HIB. Tuberculosis is endemic in the country. It is advisable that immunization cards (the yellow shot cards) be reviewed in the United States before departing.

Soak fruits and vegetables in chlorine (Clorox) water for 20 minutes before being eaten raw. Wash fruits and vegetables with soap and water to remove dirt and pesticides before cooking.

Local milk is not considered to be pasteurized adequately for consumption without further boiling. Long-life milk and powdered milk can be purchased locally or in the commissary. Cheese and ice cream are processed adequately for consumption. All meat, including beef and pork, should be well done to prevent intestinal parasites. Do not eat mayonnaise based food because of risks of food poisoning. Food bought at the local supermarkets is safe and usually of good quality.

Have pre-employment medical examinations for domestic household staff members, especially if they will be cooking or caring for children. Establish strict standards for food handling and storage with your household staff.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

American Airlines has daily direct flights to Quito and Guayaquil from Miami. Some flights are non-stop and others may stop en route in Panama or Bogota. Continental Airlines has daily flights from Houston and New Jersey. SAETA and Ecuatoriana also arrive daily from Miami. Bookings on all airlines should be made well in advance of travel.

Immigration officials keep the international arrival card on file and return a carbon copy with the traveler's passport. Since you will have to surrender this copy upon leaving Ecuador, staple it to the last page of your passport. If you lose it, you may face a delay of 24 hours or more in obtaining a duplicate.

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Ecuador. Tourists must also provide evidence of return

or onward travel. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less. Those planning a longer visit must obtain a visa in advance. U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Ecuador must obtain a new passport at the U.S. Embassy in Quito or the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil and present it, together with a police report of the loss or theft, to the main immigration office in the capital city of Quito to obtain permission to depart. An exit tax must be paid at the airport when departing Ecuador. For further information regarding entry, exit, and customs requirements, travelers should contact the Ecuadorian Embassy at 2535 15th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; telephone (202) 234-7166; Internet - <http://www.ecuador.org>; or the Ecuadorian consulate in Chicago (312) 329-0266, Houston (713) 622-1787, Jersey City (201) 985-1700, Los Angeles (323) 658-6020, Miami (305) 539-8214, New Orleans (504) 523-3229, New York (212) 808-0170, or San Francisco (415) 957-5921.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Ecuador are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of either the U.S. Embassy in Quito or the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil and obtain updated information on travel and security in Ecuador. The Consular Section in Quito is open for citizen services, including registration, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, excluding U.S. and Ecuadorian holidays. The Consular Section in Guayaquil is open for those services from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Tuesday through Friday, excluding U.S. and Ecuadorian holidays. The U.S. Embassy in Quito is located at the corner of Avenida 12 de Octubre and Avenida Patria (across from the Casa de la Cultura); telephone (011-593-2) 256-2890, extension 4510, during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or 256-1749 for after-hours emergencies; fax (011-593-2) 256-1524; Internet web site - <http://www.usembassy.org.ec>. The Consulate General in Guayaquil is located at the corner of 9 de Octubre and

Garcia Moreno (near the Hotel Oro Verde); telephone (011-593-4) 232-3570 during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or 232-1152 for after-hours emergencies; fax (011-593-4) 232-0904. Consular services for U.S. citizens in the Galapagos Islands are provided by the Consulate General in Guayaquil.

Pets

Pets are generally well accepted in Ecuador and relatively easy to bring into the country. Dogs and cats should have an up-to-date health certificate certified by your veterinarian. The certificate should include name of pet, age, sex, breed, color, and an up-to-date certification of rabies vaccination. You should carry these papers with you and make at least one copy to put in the animal's cage. Please note that pets greatly limit the choices for temporary quarters upon arrival, since many of the better hotels do not allow pets.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Government of Ecuador currently imposes the following size restrictions on the importation of personal firearms:

Handguns cannot exceed 9 mm; Rifles, limited to .22 to .30 caliber; Shotguns, 10, 12, 16, 20, 28, and 410 caliber.

Private weapons will only be used for recreational purposes, such as hunting and target shooting, and not for personal protection.

All are required by Ecuadorian law to register firearms. Upon registration, individuals will receive a weapons permit issued by the Ministry of Defense. This permit entitles them to possess and carry the weapon.

Carrying firearms about the city is dangerous, provocative and, generally, ineffective for protection. U.S. citizens abroad bearing or using weapons can lead to legal and diplomatic problems.

Possession and use of any firearm must be in compliance with Ecu-

dorian policy. Persons who maintain weapons in their homes are urged to be cautious in the use of such weapons. All weapons should be stored in a manner to preclude accidental discharge by children or domestic employees.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Ecuadorian unit of currency is the Sucre, designated "S/." and issued in bills of 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, and 50,000. Coins are minted in denominations of 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 Sucres. After several years of relative stability on the exchange market, the Sucre has deteriorated in value against the U.S. dollar from S/120\$1 in 1981 to S/11,143-\$1 in August 1999.

The metric system is used for both weights and measures, although food is often measured in "libras" (pounds). The ounce and the yard may be used in commerce. In hardware stores, gauges of pipes and fittings are often listed in U.S. measurements, as well as metric.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Ecuador has a direct sales tax (LVA.) of 10% which is collected on sales of goods and services, except for food items. A 10% service charge (tip) is included on most restaurant bills, along with the direct sales tax of 10%. It is not necessary to tip further, although an extra 5% is always appreciated when service has been excellent. An airport tax of U.S. \$25.00 is charged to all persons leaving Ecuador. A tax of 10% is charged on the purchase of airline tickets when travel originates in Ecuador.

There are no currency controls in Ecuador and the Sucre is traded freely at any of a number of banks and exchange houses. Some find local Sucre accounts useful. Citibank maintains an exchange service in the Chancery, and you may cash personal checks, purchase Sucres or Sucre checks, and buy travelers' checks. Mastercard, Visa, American Express, and Diner's Club

credit cards are honored in most shops and restaurants.

Disaster Preparedness Volcanos

Beginning in September 1998, the Guagua Pichincha Volcano, located just west of Quito, has exhibited a significant increase in the number of tremors and an accompanying rise in magma level. Since October 1999, there has been an intermittent series of explosions. Volcanic ash has fallen on Quito during some of the explosions, causing temporary closings of area schools and the airport. In the event of a full-scale eruption, geological experts conclude that the city of Quito is protected from possible lava flows, avalanches, and lateral explosions by the bulk of Pichincha Mountain, which stands between the city and the volcano crater. Parts of Quito could be affected by secondary mudflows caused by heavy rains that usually accompany an eruption. The entire city could also be affected by slight to significant ash falls and resulting disruptions of water, power, communications, and transportation.

The town of Banos, a popular tourist destination located approximately 80 miles south of Quito, was evacuated in November 1999 because of the increased activity of the adjacent Tungurahua Volcano. The volcano has been ejecting significant amounts of ash and incandescent rocks. Geological experts advise that an explosive eruption could occur quickly and with little warning. The resulting pyroclastic flows would pose a significant and immediate threat to Banos and several small villages in the vicinity. Travelers are advised not to travel to Banos or the surrounding area.

The Quito City Government and the Ecuadorian Geophysical Institute continue to monitor these volcanoes and issue regular reports on their activity. Travelers are advised to pay close attention to the news media in Quito for updates on the situation. Besides Guagua Pichincha and Tungurahua, other volcanoes in Ecuador may, from time to

time, also exhibit increased activity. Further information about these and other volcanoes in the Western Hemisphere is available from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration via the Internet at <http://www.ssd.noaa.gov/VAAC/guag.html>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year
Feb.26, 27	Carnival
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
May 18	Battle of Pichincha
July 25	Founding of Guayaquil (Guayaquil only)
Aug. 10	Independence Day
Oct. 9.	Independence of Guayaquil
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 2	All Souls' Day
Dec. 6	Founding of Quito (Quito only)
Dec.25	Christmas Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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American University Foreign Area Studies. *Area Handbook for Ecuador*. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC. 1976. Gives general background and covers all areas.

Anhalzer, Jorge. *Through the Andes of Ecuador*. Ed. Campo Abierto: Quito, 1983. Mountaineering and

snowcapped peaks with beautiful photographs;

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Histografia Ecuatoriana. Banco Central del Ecuador, Corporacion Editora Nacional: Quito, 1985.

Hurtado, Osvaldo. *The Political Power in Ecuador*. 2nd English ed. Westview Press: Boulder, 1985. Analysis is made by Dr. Hurtado before his election to the vice presidency in 1979 and his ascension to the presidency of Ecuador in 1981. This edition contains updated information on the period since 1979.

Inter-American Development Bank. *Economic and Social Progress in Latin America*. Washington, DC, 1976.

Linke, Lilo. *Ecuador: Country of Contrasts*. Third edition. Royal Institute of International Affairs: London, 1960. A broad study of

Ecuador and an excellent basic reference.

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Mills, Nick. *Crisis, Conflicto y Consenso: Ecuador, 1979-84*. Corporacion Editora Nacional: Quito, 1984. An analysis of political relationship during the administrations of Jaime Roldos and Osvaldo Hurtado.

Oxandaberro, Roura. *Ecuador: Art / Folklore and Landscape*. Su Libreria: Quito, 1965.

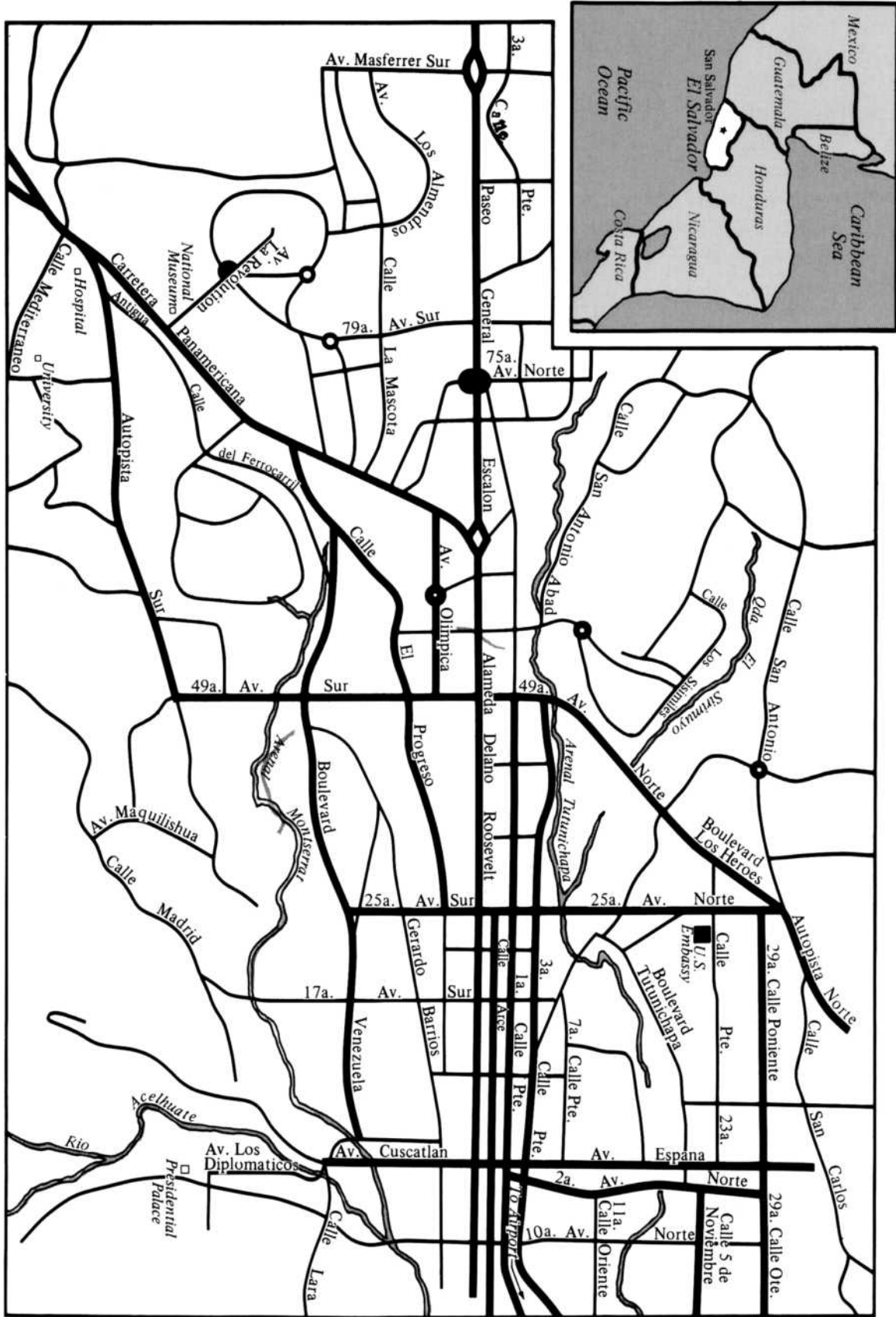
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Reyes, Oscar. *Breve Historia General del Ecuador*. 3 vols. 14th ed. Quito, 1981. A general but not brief, history of the country.

Salvat, Juan, and Eduardo Crespo, ed. *Arte Contemporaneo de Ecuador; and Arte Precolombino de Ecuador*. Salvat Editores Ecuatoriana S.A.: Quito, 1977. Amply illustrated text treating painting, sculpture, and handicrafts.

Thomsen, Moritz. *Living Poor: A Peace Corps Chronicle*. University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1969. An excellent book written about the author's experiences as a Peace Corps volunteer in Rio Verde, Ecuador.

Zendegui, Guillermo de, ed. *Image of Ecuador*. Organization of American States: Washington, DC, September 1972. A well-written, 24-page summary of Ecuador and its people.



San Salvador, El Salvador

EL SALVADOR

Republic of El Salvador

Major City:

San Salvador

Other Cities:

Acajutla, Ahuachapán, Cojutepeque, La Libertad, La Unión, Nueva San Salvador, San Miguel, San Vicente, Santa Ana, Sonsonate, Zacatecoluca

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

EL SALVADOR, the smallest of the Central American republics, shares with its neighbors a history marked by frequent uprisings and unremitting political discontent. Years of power struggles, and their resultant abuses of human rights, created such international concern and pressure in the late 1970s that a provisional government was accepted to initiate political and economic reforms. Under a new constitution, formulated in 1983, support of democratic premises and policies was established. In January 1992, a peace accord was signed between the Salvadoran government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The pact ended

a 12-year civil war between the two parties.

What is now El Salvador was once two large Indian states and several principalities whose inhabitants were Pipils, a nomadic Nahua tribe similar to the Aztecs. The area was claimed for Spain in 1525 by Pedro de Alvarado, and remained a Spanish colony until 1821 under the captaincy general of Guatemala. In 1823, it became one of the five states of the Federal Republic of Central America and, when this federation was dissolved 15 years later, El Salvador began its existence as an independent republic.

MAJOR CITY

San Salvador

San Salvador, the capital and principal city of the Republic of El Salvador, is located in the "Valley of the Hammocks" at the foot of San Salvador volcano (6,398 feet high), about 19 miles from the Pacific Ocean. It is built on the volcanic belt which parallels the coast and, over the centuries, the city has suffered from such recurrent and severe earthquakes that it has had to be rebuilt frequently. Public buildings are constructed to resist shock, but

an earthquake (measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale) rocked San Salvador October 10, 1986, killing 1400, injuring approximately 21,000, and heavily damaging the downtown area and the San Jacinto residential neighborhood. Two hundred aftershocks wrought additional destruction, and a state of emergency was declared. Among the buildings hit were all but one of the city's hospitals, and the U.S. Embassy on Avenida Norte.

The climate here is semitropical with distinct rainy and dry seasons, but no extreme seasonal temperature variations occur.

San Salvador is the economic, political, and cultural center of the country. It is an old city, established in 1524, and has been the country's capital since 1841, except for a three-year period in the mid-19th century. It is the site of a national university, founded almost 150 years ago.

The metropolitan population of San Salvador is 1.5 million, and includes the cities of Soyapango, San Marcos, and Santa Tecla. While primarily Latin American in culture, many U.S. and Mexican influences are also apparent. Living standards of the Salvadorans belonging to the higher socioeconomic classes (and most foreigners) are comparable to

those of the same strata in the U.S., although the standard is achieved at a greater cost. The city has modern, comfortable, fast-growing residential suburbs, several up-to-date shopping centers and supermarkets, and a less modern downtown area.

San Salvador hosts a large foreign colony, including about 3,000 U.S. citizens. Each year more North American tourists "discover" the country. Other principal groups in the city are Germans, Japanese, British, and other Latin Americans. The better educated Salvadoran frequently speaks English; however, local businessmen and officials often prefer to conduct business in Spanish. Almost no English is spoken in the open markets and other food markets in the city.

Education

The local educational system consists largely of private schools; the Spanish curriculum prepares students for entrance into Salvadoran universities. Few American children attend these schools.

School-aged dependents of Americans usually enroll at the American School (Escuela Americana). The institution is not U.S. Government-operated, but receives government support from grants and loans. It is a private, coeducational day school founded in 1946.

Located on a spacious 29-acre campus near San Salvador, Escuela Americana consists of 18 buildings, two cafeterias, three playing fields, four science labs, three computer labs, and two libraries with a total of 35,000 volumes.

Escuela Americana, in session from mid-August to late-June with a month-long recess over the Christmas holidays, maintains six subdivisions from preschool to high school levels. The preschool is for ages four to six; elementary school from grades one through five; junior high, grades six through eight; and the American high school, grades nine through 12.

Escuela Americana not only provides an American education at the elementary and secondary levels, but also serves to demonstrate American educational methods and practices. The schools are headed by an American principal and staffed by American and Salvadoran teachers.

The American high school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and follows a U.S. grading system. The high school curriculum is basically college preparatory. All students, grades one through 12, must study Spanish as a second language. Students also attend some classes that are taught in Spanish. Special efforts are made to help children who enroll without foreign-language capabilities.

The school has a small but active athletic program. Soccer—the national sport—is played instead of American football. The school has no swimming pool. Basketball and volleyball are also played at Escuela Americana.

Special educational facilities in El Salvador are limited. Americans rarely attend local universities. Some local teachers offer private lessons in painting, crafts, ballet, and music.

Recreation

Soccer is the most popular spectator sport among Salvadorans, and is played nearly every Wednesday and Sunday in the capital's stadium. Basketball, baseball, and softball also are major attractions, and the usual participant sports—swimming, golf, tennis, squash, fishing, hunting, and boating—are available.

Several interesting scenic and recreational areas are located within El Salvador, but few have attractive overnight accommodations. Public parks in various parts of the country have picnic and swimming facilities, but these are overcrowded on Sundays and holidays.

The most frequently visited places are Ilopango, a large crater lake about 10 miles east of San Salvador, which has both public and private recreational facilities; Coatepeque, a similar lake about 40 miles to the west; and Cerro Verde, a mountain-top park with a spectacular view of the volcano Izalco and surrounding countryside. All are accessible for a day's outing. A government-operated hotel at Cerro Verde opened in 1975.

The beaches near La Libertad, about 23 miles west of San Salvador on the Pacific, are popular, but also can be treacherous because of the strong undertow, unpredictable currents, and the possibilities of sharks close to the shore. Few public facilities are available on these beaches. Some of the beaches have black volcanic sand; some have white sand.

Excellent saltwater fishing is found in a large estuary about 30 miles from San Salvador. Since rented boats are unavailable, most fishing is done on invitation by friends who own boats. A fishing license is not required. Dove and duck are plentiful anytime, with no hunting season or legal limitations. Firearms permits and hunting licenses are required by law.

The National Archaeological Museum has a collection of artifacts recovered from pre-Columbian times. An Indian pyramid at El Tazumal is located not far from the city of Santa Ana, another is near San Andrés where digs have taken place. The most prestigious recent archeological find is Joya de Ceren, an entire city preserved in volcanic ash. The site is still under investigation.

Guatemala City, four to five hours away by car, is the largest capital in Central America. The volcanic highlands region is strikingly beautiful and offers several spots with good, moderately priced hotel accommodations. The country's unchanged Indian culture is fascinating. Ruins from the ancient Mayan civilizations can be seen in El Salvador,

Honduras (Copán), and Guatemala (Tikal). Many are accessible by car.

Entertainment

Entertainment facilities in San Salvador are limited to several comfortable cinemas that show American and European films (with Spanish subtitles), in addition to Latin American films and to an interesting and growing schedule of concerts. The Cine Presidente, a large national theater in the Colonia Benito area of the capital, is popular for both movies and concerts. The larger hotels, with dinner clubs and discotheques, are becoming popular. San Salvador has many good restaurants.

The American Society, open to all Americans in San Salvador, organizes luncheons, a Fourth of July picnic, and several other functions during the year. The American Women's Association has been active in various charitable activities; all English-speaking women in the city are eligible for membership.

OTHER CITIES

ACAJUTLA, with a population over 16,000, is situated near the Pacific coast, about 50 miles west of San Salvador. In 1524, the Spanish conquered the Indians and the city became a colonial port. As the country's major port, Acajutla exports coffee, balsam, and sugar. During summer, the city is a beach resort.

AHUACHAPÁN, in western El Salvador, is the capital of the department of the same name. It lies at the foot of La Lagunita volcano on the Río Molino. Its most important product is coffee. There are mineral baths here, drawn from hot springs located below the nearby Malacatiupan Falls. Ahuachapán has an estimated population of 20,000.

COJUTEPEQUE, a city of about 20,600 residents, is 22 miles east of the capital, near Lake Ilopango. It is a trading center; its market products include rice, sugarcane, cotton,

and coffee. Known in El Salvador for its cigars and smoked meats, Cojutepeque's landmarks include a Palladian-style church. A large festival is held here every August 29 in honor of St. John.

LA LIBERTAD, located on the Pacific Ocean, is 20 miles south of San Salvador. It is the chief seaport and port of entry for the capital city. La Libertad exports coffee and sugar, and is also a beach resort. Agriculture and fishing are primary economic activities. The population is about 16,000.

LA UNIÓN is approximately 100 miles east of San Salvador on the Gulf of Fonseca, an inlet of the Pacific Ocean. It is situated at the foot of the Conchagua volcano. With a population close to 57,000, La Unión is one of the country's major seaports, exporting cotton and livestock, as well as most of the foreign trade products. The city is situated at the southern terminus of a railroad system and is on the Inter-American Highway. La Unión was the scene of severe fighting during the civil war.

NUEVA SAN SALVADOR (formerly called Santa Telca) is located in west-central El Salvador, eight miles west of the capital. It was founded in 1854 after San Salvador was destroyed by an earthquake. When the capital was rebuilt, what is now Nueva San Salvador became a wealthy suburb. It is also in the midst of a coffee-growing region. The beach resort, Los Chorros, is nearby. The Salvadoran Institute for Coffee Research is in the city. The estimated population is 120,000.

SAN MIGUEL, a commercial center, is situated about 65 miles east of San Salvador, at the foot of San Miguel volcano (6,057 feet). Founded in 1530, and with a population of more than 182,000, San Miguel produces vegetable oil, leather goods, textiles, rope, tobacco products, pottery, and flour, and has textile and dairy industries. The town's industries suffered disruptions during the early 1980s

because of fighting between government troops and leftist guerrillas.

Located in a region of geysers and thermal springs, **SAN VICENTE** is at the foot of San Vicente volcano (7,155 feet). It is in central El Salvador, approximately 25 miles east of the capital. Originally the ancient Indian village of Tehuacán, the city was founded in 1635. It served as the capital (1834–39) and housed the national university (1854–59). Industries include textile manufacturing and sugar refining. San Vicente's population is over 20,000.

SANTA ANA is the second largest city in El Salvador and an important commercial and industrial center. Located in the northwestern part of the country, 50 miles from San Salvador, the city is also near the Santa Ana volcano which, at 7,828 feet, is the highest in the country. Santa Ana is the commercial and processing center for a region that raises sugarcane, coffee, and cattle. It also produces textiles, leather and wood products, cigars, and pottery. Industries include distilling and food processing. Historic landmarks include the Spanish Gothic cathedral and El Calvario colonial church. The population is approximately 213,000.

SONSONATE, about 40 miles west of San Salvador, is the commercial center of one of the richest agricultural regions in the country. Coffee, sugar, tobacco, and dairy products are produced here. Sonsonate, with a population of roughly 60,000, has two beautiful churches and is surrounded by parks and resorts located near the Izalco volcano. Colorful fiestas may be seen in the neighboring village of Asunción Izalco.

ZACATECOLUCA, in south-central El Salvador, is about 25 miles south of the capital. The city lies at the foot of the San Vicente volcano and has a population of around 26,000. Markets in Zacatecoluca include those for lumber, cement, salt, cotton goods, and baskets. The city was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1932. José Simeón

Cañas, who successfully fought to end slavery in Central America, was born here.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Most of El Salvador is situated on a plateau (about 2,000 feet above sea level) on the Pacific slope of the Central American Cordillera. With an area of 8,260 square miles, it is the smallest independent mainland state in the Western Hemisphere. Roughly rectangular in shape, it is bordered on the west by Guatemala, on the north and east by Honduras, on the southeast by the Gulf of Fonseca (which separates El Salvador from Nicaragua), and on the south by the Pacific Ocean.

Mountain ranges running from east to west divide El Salvador into three distinct regions: a hot, narrow Pacific coastal belt on the south; a subtropical central region of valleys and plateaus, where most of the population lives; and a mountainous northern region. Ninety percent of the land is of volcanic origin and many places still bear volcanic scars. Almost all of the arable land is cultivated.

El Salvador's climate is modified by its elevation and, except for the hot, narrow coastal region, is semitropical. The capital city of San Salvador, 19 miles from the Pacific, has a pleasant climate. Daily temperatures here average 73°F and range from 50°F to 90°F. Cool evenings moderate the sometimes uncomfortably hot afternoon peak hours. The country has distinct dry and wet seasons. The dry season (December to April) is dusty, particularly in the country. The hottest time of the year (March and April) precedes the rainy interval. During the wet season (May to November), the rain is not continuous, but usually falls in early evening, and is sometimes accompanied by thunder and strong

winds. Rain patterns change during the season, and some June and September mornings are overcast. Occasional two- or three-day rainy spells occur. Mildew and insects can become problems during this season. Annual rainfall in San Salvador averages 66 inches.

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have been hazards in the past, and tremors occur periodically. Most tremors are felt during seasonal changes. A major earthquake in October 1986 caused damage to some sections of San Salvador and to other areas of the country. Hurricanes do not threaten El Salvador directly, but a strong Caribbean storm can generate heavy, damaging winds and rains as in 1974 with Hurricane Fifi.

Population

El Salvador is Central America's second most densely populated country, with an estimated 292 inhabitants per square mile. The population figure for 2000 was 5.9 million, of which roughly half was rural. The estimated annual growth rate is 1.85%. Because of unsettled conditions, many Salvadorans now live in neighboring countries and in the United States.

El Salvador's population is remarkably homogeneous with no significant minority. It comprises 90% *mestizo*, 9% Caucasian, and 1% Amerindian. The indigenous Indian population has been thoroughly assimilated, and only two or three Indian communities with native customs, dress, or dialects survive. Spanish is the national language and Roman Catholicism the predominant religion. Food varies from typically Latin to typically American. Clothing, houses, shopping facilities, and amusements in San Salvador resemble those in the U.S., but the atmosphere is distinctly Latin American.

Government

El Salvador is a democratic republic governed by a president and an 84-

member unicameral Legislative Assembly. The president is elected by universal suffrage and serves for a 5-year term by absolute majority vote. A second round runoff is required in the event that no candidate receives more than 50% of the first round vote. Members of the assembly, also elected by universal suffrage, serve for 3-year terms. The country has an independent judiciary and Supreme Court.

The most recent presidential election, in March 1999, was free and fair, but voter turnout was low (39%). ARENA presidential candidate Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez faced Facundo Guardado of the FMLN party and won with 52% of the votes. Since Flores received just over 50% of the votes, a runoff was not required. Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez of the ARENA party began his 5-year term as president in June 1999, and cannot succeed himself. In the March 2000 legislative races, FMLN won 31 seats in the Legislative Assembly, the ARENA won 29, the National Conciliation Party (PCN) 14, the PDC five, and the Coalition Democratic United Center (CDU) and National Action Party (PAN) won 3 and 2 seats, respectively.

As of March 2002, defections and realignments in the Assembly left ARENA with 29 seats, the FMLN with 26, the PCN, 15, and the FMLN-splinter "Renewal Movement (MR)" 5. The governing ARENA party retains a working majority (43) with its PCN allies. The defection of five FMLN dissidents (MR) also stripped the FMLN of its ability to block qualified (two-thirds) majorities required for major legislation, including approval of international loans and confirmation of supreme court justices. The FMLN retains the capital city of San Salvador, where Hector Silva was re-elected overwhelmingly in 2000. Low voter turnout (35% in 2000) remains a concern.

In accordance with 1992 peace agreements, the constitution was amended to prohibit the military from playing an internal security

role except under extraordinary circumstances. Demobilization of Salvadoran military forces generally proceeded on schedule throughout the process. The Treasury Police, National Guard, and National Police were abolished, and military intelligence functions were transferred to civilian control. By 1993--9 months ahead of schedule--the military had cut personnel from a wartime high of 63,000 to the level of 32,000 required by the peace accords. By 1999, ESAF strength stood at less than 15,000, including uniformed and non-uniformed personnel, consisting of personnel in the army, navy, and air force. A purge of military officers accused of human rights abuses and corruption was completed in 1993 in compliance with the Ad Hoc Commission's recommendations. The military's new doctrine, professionalism, and complete withdrawal from political and economic affairs leave it the most respected institution in El Salvador.

The Red Cross, Caritas, the Green Cross, and other privately supported refugee relief organizations are active. Additional organizations, such as professional and university student associations and chambers of commerce, also have active programs in the country.

El Salvador is a member of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as the following international bodies: Inter-American Development Bank, International Wheat Council, Organization of American States (OAS), Central American Common Market, International Coffee Organization, and the Latin American Economic System.

The Salvadoran flag consists of three horizontal bands in light blue, white, and light blue, with a coat of arms on the white band.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Small church on a hillside in San Salvador, El Salvador

Arts, Science, Education

In addition to overseeing the school system of El Salvador, the Ministry of Education maintains a Directorate General of Fine Arts, with schools of arts, music, and dance. It also sponsors the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Chorus, and National Theaters in San Salvador and Santa Ana.

The Ministry of Education maintains a national archaeological museum and sponsors several excavations of archaeological and anthropological interest. El Tazumal, located near the town of Chalchuapa in western El Salvador, is the major locale of pre-Columbian civilization in El Salvador. The site is open to visitors and includes a small museum. In San Salvador, the ministry sponsors a recently refurbished and expanded natural history museum and exhibit hall, with exhibits by local artists. Parks, recreational areas, and a zoo complete the city's leisure facilities.

The National Symphony Orchestra and the National Chorus give several concerts a year. The annual ballet season offers opportunities for students and professionals to perform. Several private art galleries exhibit the work of Salvadoran

artists, and semiprofessional theater groups offer several plays a year. The Salvadoran Institute of Tourism (ISTU) also sponsors cultural events which include folkloric productions and music and dance festivals, often held outside the capital, as well as annual crafts festivals in Panchimalco and Nahuizalco.

The Salvadoran Cultural Center in San Salvador has a modest library of Spanish and English books. Classes in English and elementary Spanish are offered, and frequent art exhibits and concerts are sponsored here.

Many classes have resumed at El Salvador's National University, which was closed in 1980 because of political unrest. Numerous private universities have arisen with the encouragement and support of the Ministry of Education. The second-largest and oldest of these private institutions is the Jesuit-administered Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas; it offers courses in engineering, economics, administration, and the humanities. The university library has over 40,000 volumes and has embarked on an expansion program financed by the Inter-American Development Bank. Albert Einstein University, founded in 1976, offers courses in

engineering and architecture to some 8,500 students. Universidad José Matias Delgado, with over 9,000 students, has courses in law, economics, and communications, and a recently established School for Agricultural Investigation in Santa Ana. The American School in San Salvador offers a two-year program in English. In 1995, an estimated 70% of Salvadorans could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

The Salvadoran economy continues to benefit from a commitment to free markets and careful fiscal management. The impact of the civil war on El Salvador's economy was devastating; from 1979-90, losses from damage to infrastructure and means of production due to guerrilla sabotage as well as from reduced export earnings totaled about \$2.2 billion. But since attacks on economic targets ended in 1992, improved investor confidence has led to increased private investment.

Rich soil, moderate climate, and a hard-working and enterprising labor pool comprise El Salvador's greatest assets. Much of the improvement in El Salvador's economy is due to free market policy initiatives carried out by the Cristiani and Calderon Sol governments, including the privatization of the banking system, telecommunications, public pensions, electrical distribution and some electrical generation, reduction of import duties, elimination of price controls on virtually all consumer products, and enhancing the investment climate through measures such as improved enforcement of intellectual property rights.

Natural disasters continue to plague the Salvadoran economy. The damage caused by Hurricane Mitch to infrastructure and to agricultural production reduced 1998 growth by an estimated 5%. Because of the earthquakes that struck the country in January and

February, the economy grew less than 2% in 2001.

Fiscal policy has been the biggest challenge for the Salvadoran Government. The 1992 peace accords committed the government to heavy expenditures for transition programs and social services. Although international aid was generous, the government has focused on improving the collection of its current revenues. A 10% value-added tax, implemented in September 1992, was raised to 13% in July 1995. The VAT is estimated to have contributed 51% of total tax revenues in 1999, due mainly to improved collection techniques.

Large inflows of dollars in the form of family remittances from Salvadorans working in the United States offset a substantial trade deficit and support the exchange rate. The monthly average of remittances reported by the Central Bank is around \$150 million, with the total estimated at more than \$1.9 billion for 2001. As of December 1999, net international reserves equaled \$1.8 billion or roughly 5 months of imports. Having this hard currency buffer to work with, the Salvadoran Government undertook a "monetary integration plan" beginning January 1, 2001, by which the dollar became legal tender alongside the colón. No more colones are to be printed, the economy is expected to be, in practice, fully dollarized, and the Central Reserve Bank dissolved, by late 2003. The FMLN is strongly opposed to the plan, regarding it as unconstitutional, and plans to make it an issue in the 2003 legislative elections.

Transportation

The usual mode of travel to El Salvador is by air. Ilopango International Airport is equipped for jet planes. Service is provided to the U.S. and Central American countries by TACA (Transportes Aéreos Centro Americanos), LACSA (Líneas Aéreas Costarricenses), COPA (Compañía Panameña de Aviación), Belize Airways, and

SAHSA (Servicio Aéreo de Honduras Sociedad Anonima).

Of the two main seaports in El Salvador, Acajutla is most important because of its all-weather dock facilities. Another port is Cutuco in La Unión. The Atlantic port generally used for surface freight shipments originating on the U.S. coast is Santo Tomás de Castilla, Guatemala, where cargo is loaded directly onto trucks bound for the Salvador customs warehouse.

Frequent bus service is available to all parts of the country, but is seldom used by Americans. In the cities, taxis are commonly used; they do not have meters, but operate on zone charges.

El Salvador's main roads are generally good, and most are paved. Back roads are often difficult and rough on both the passenger and the vehicle. Two principal branches of the Pan-American Highway pass through El Salvador—one crossing along the Pacific, the other at a more northerly point. Narrow roads, poor driving habits, livestock and pedestrians on the roads at night, and badly placed traffic signs constitute driving hazards.

The most practical mode of travel is by private car. Road transportation and a lack of recreational facilities within city areas make a car most desirable. An air-conditioned car, while not essential, makes traveling more enjoyable, especially because of the pollution from diesel vehicles. Driving is on the right.

Nearly all European and Japanese automobile manufacturers are represented in San Salvador. U.S. manufacturers are not well-represented and, for the most part, do not maintain spare parts in stock.

Communications

Telephone and telegraph service is available throughout El Salvador, with direct dialing to most of North America, South America, and Europe. International airmail is

dependable; the rates are high for parcel post.

El Salvador's 75 commercial radio stations generally operate from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Several FM stations, including one which presents classical music, broadcast in stereo. A guerrilla group operates its own station. Over 90% of the homes have radios. Shortwave reception is good for Voice of America (VOA) and Armed Forces Radio broadcasts. VOA also broadcasts a daily program in Spanish (Buenos Días America) on medium-wave (Radio Centroamericana).

El Salvador has four commercial television channels that transmit in color. Standard U.S. color receivers are used. All channels transmit at least 16 hours per day. Government-owned channels 8 and 10 are used for educational and informational purposes. Salvadoran TV presents many U.S. programs with Spanish soundtracks. TV sets are costly here. Video recorders are widely used, and several cassette clubs offer a wide selection of movies.

San Salvador has four leading newspapers, *El Diario de Hoy*, *Diario Latino*, *El Mundo*, and *La Prensa Gráfica*. The Santa Ana newspaper is *Diario de Occidente*. The *Miami Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the *New York Times* are home-delivered on an almost-daily basis, and international editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and European periodicals are sold at newsstands. The Union Church in San Salvador has an extensive lending library of paperbacks; these also can be purchased in the large hotels and from various bookshops.

Health

Many Americans use the Hospital de Diagnostico y Emergencias, a 155-bed general medical and surgical hospital with an emergency room. Standards are below those of U.S. hospitals. More complicated or serious illnesses are normally referred to Gorgas Hospital in the Canal Zone or to U.S. facilities. San

Salvador has a good obstetrical center and maternity hospital, a satisfactory pediatric clinic, and an adequate emergency facility and hospital with 25 beds. Medical laboratories here have most of the necessary equipment. Nearly every medical specialization is represented in San Salvador by physicians who have received training in the U.S. or Europe, and who speak English. Satisfactory dental and orthodontic care is available at costs considerably below those in the U.S.

No water purification plant exists in San Salvador. Most water comes from deep wells or springs and is chlorinated; however, contamination is common because of the many cross constructions in the water distribution system. Potable bottled water is available, and tap water, boiled rapidly for 10 minutes, is also safe.

A food sanitation program is conducted by Salvadoran authorities, with routine inspections similar to those recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service, and carried out by trained sanitarians. Qualified veterinarians and sanitarians perform ante mortem and post mortem meat inspections. While modern meat markets have refrigeration facilities, most meat is not refrigerated either at slaughter or in distribution. Some control of poultry processing has improved sanitation, slaughtering, and packaging. San Salvador experiences frequent power failures, and refrigerated items are not always kept at the proper temperature. Caution should be used in buying foods the day after a power failure.

The country has no planned rabies control program as practiced in the U.S. Dogs are not required by law to be vaccinated against rabies, nor must they be leashed. At intervals, attempts are made to eliminate stray dogs.

The most serious health problems in El Salvador are intestinal diseases, including typhoid fever, and amoebic and bacillary dysentery. These diseases are usually caused by care-

less handling of food and contamination of food and water. Other diseases present are influenza, malaria, dengue fever (in the coastal regions), frequent colds, and hepatitis.

Clothing and Services

Except for the slightly cooler mornings and evenings during November, December, and January, little temperature change occurs in El Salvador. However, a lightweight wardrobe should be augmented with clothing suitable for travel to cooler areas such as Guatemala. Certain Central American ready-made garments (shirts, underwear, and casual trousers) are available and satisfactory. An umbrella is needed for the rainy season. A warm robe and slippers are useful. Clothing, especially leather, can mildew during the rainy season. It is unwise to use light bulbs in closets to counteract mildew, as they are a fire hazard. Electric dehumidifier rods are fireproof, more effective, and are available locally. Portable dehumidifiers are useful for home storage areas.

Cockroaches, grasshoppers, crickets, and other insects can damage clothing and upholstery; regular spraying with insecticides can eliminate nearly all of these problems. San Salvador has a number of satisfactory fumigating companies.

Several local firms make shoes of acceptable quality, but sizes do not follow the U.S. scale. Local cobblers can make leather boots at well below U.S. prices. Imported shoes are sometimes available, but at higher-than-U.S. prices.

Men wear lightweight clothing, such as tropical worsted, throughout the year. During cooler months, heavier suits of lightweight worsted are suitable for evening outdoor parties. Men wear shorts only on the beach and while participating in sports.

Salvadoran society quickly reflects U.S. women's fashion trends. Simple cocktail dresses (long and short) are suitable for most evening functions. Conservative, washable cotton/polyester knits and synthetic-blend dresses should be made of durable material, as the strong sunlight and frequent laundering quickly make even good fabrics look drab. Boutique prices in San Salvador are higher than in the U.S. Slacks are worn extensively in the city and for casual parties. Shorts are worn only at beaches, clubs, and homes, or for private parties.

Washable fabrics are preferable for children's clothes. Boys and girls wear clothing similar to that worn in summer in the U.S. Satisfactory children's shoes are available locally, but the quality is below that of the U.S. and replacements are required more often.

A wide variety of food is available in El Salvador. Cuts of meat often differ from those in the U.S., and quality meat is often higher in price.

Fresh vegetables are available throughout the year. All vegetables should be thoroughly washed, soaked, and peeled, or cooked before they are eaten.

A wide choice of tropical and semi-tropical fruit is available; temperate-zone fruits are imported and expensive. All fruit needs careful washing.

Pasteurized milk and cream are available, but quality is poor. Powdered and canned milk are also sold locally.

Tap water is not potable unless it is boiled. Local firms deliver bottled drinking water weekly, as well as beer, carbonated soft drinks, soda water, and tonic by the case.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

El Salvador may be reached by commercial airlines which serve the capital from any part of the U.S., via Washington, DC, Miami, New Orleans, Houston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Travel by ship is seldom undertaken, and is not recommended.

A current U.S. passport and a one-entry tourist card are required to enter El Salvador. The tourist card may be obtained from immigration officials for a ten-dollar fee upon arrival in country. Travelers who plan to remain in El Salvador for more than thirty days can apply for a multiple-entry visa, issued free of charge, from the Embassy of El Salvador in Washington, D.C. or from a Salvadoran consulate in the United States. Travelers may be asked to present evidence of U.S. employment and adequate finances for their visit at the time of visa application or upon arrival in El Salvador. An exit tax must be paid, either in Salvadoran colones or U.S. dollars, when departing El Salvador from Comalapa International Airport in La Paz. Travelers should be aware that airlines operating out of Comalapa International Airport require U.S. citizens to present a valid U.S. passport when boarding flights bound for the United States. Airlines will not accept Certificates of Naturalization or birth certificates in lieu of a U.S. passport, and information to the contrary should be disregarded. U.S. citizens traveling to El Salvador for any reason without a valid passport should apply for a passport in person at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador before attempting to return to the United States. Citizens applying for passports overseas are reminded that original proof of citizenship and identity is required before a passport can be issued. Photographic proof of identity is especially important for young children because of the high incidence of fraud involving children.

Americans living in or visiting El Salvador are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in the capital city, San Salvador, and obtain updated information on travel and security in El Salvador and neighboring countries. The U.S. Embassy is located at Final Boulevard Santa Elena, Urbanizacion Santa Elena, Antiguo Cuscatlan, San Salvador; telephone 011-503-278-4444. The Embassy's web site can be accessed at <http://www.usinfo.org.sv>. The Consular Section provides services for U.S. citizens from 8:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on normal Embassy work days.

Pets

The following health requirements must be met for the importation of a pet: the animal must be vaccinated against rabies no less than 30 days before arrival in El Salvador, and a certificate from a qualified veterinarian is required, stating that the animal is free from contagious diseases. Shots against distemper, leptospirosis, and gastroenteritis parvo-viral are required. If a bird is imported, the veterinary certificate must show that the bird is free of pullorum and laryngotracheitis; this must be issued within 30 days before arrival of the bird and certified by the nearest Salvadoran consul.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The time in El Salvador is Greenwich Mean Time minus six (the same as Central Time in the United States).

The monetary unit of El Salvador is the *colón*, but U.S. dollars are widely used.

El Salvador officially uses the metric system of weights and measures but, because of its proximity to the U.S. and the extensive trade between the two countries, U.S. standards are fairly well known and used. Gasoline, for example, is sold by the gallon rather than by the liter, and foods are sold by the pound.

Disaster Preparedness

El Salvador is an earthquake-prone country. There is also the risk of flooding and landslides. An earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale devastated much of El Salvador in January 2001. A second earthquake in February 2001 measured 6.6 on the Richter scale and caused significant additional damage and loss of life. The damage was most severe in the southern half of El Salvador between the cities of San Salvador and San Miguel. While reconstruction efforts are underway and the country is returning to normal, experts indicate that it is common for aftershocks to occur for months or longer following a major earthquake. There also is continuing danger from landslides, particularly during the rainy season that runs from May through October. The most recent data on flood and landslide risk can be found on the Government of El Salvador's web page at <http://www.rree.gob.sv>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- May 1 Salvadoran Labor Day
- Aug. Feasts of San Salvador*

- Sept.15 Salvadoran Independence
- Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
- Nov. 2 All Souls' Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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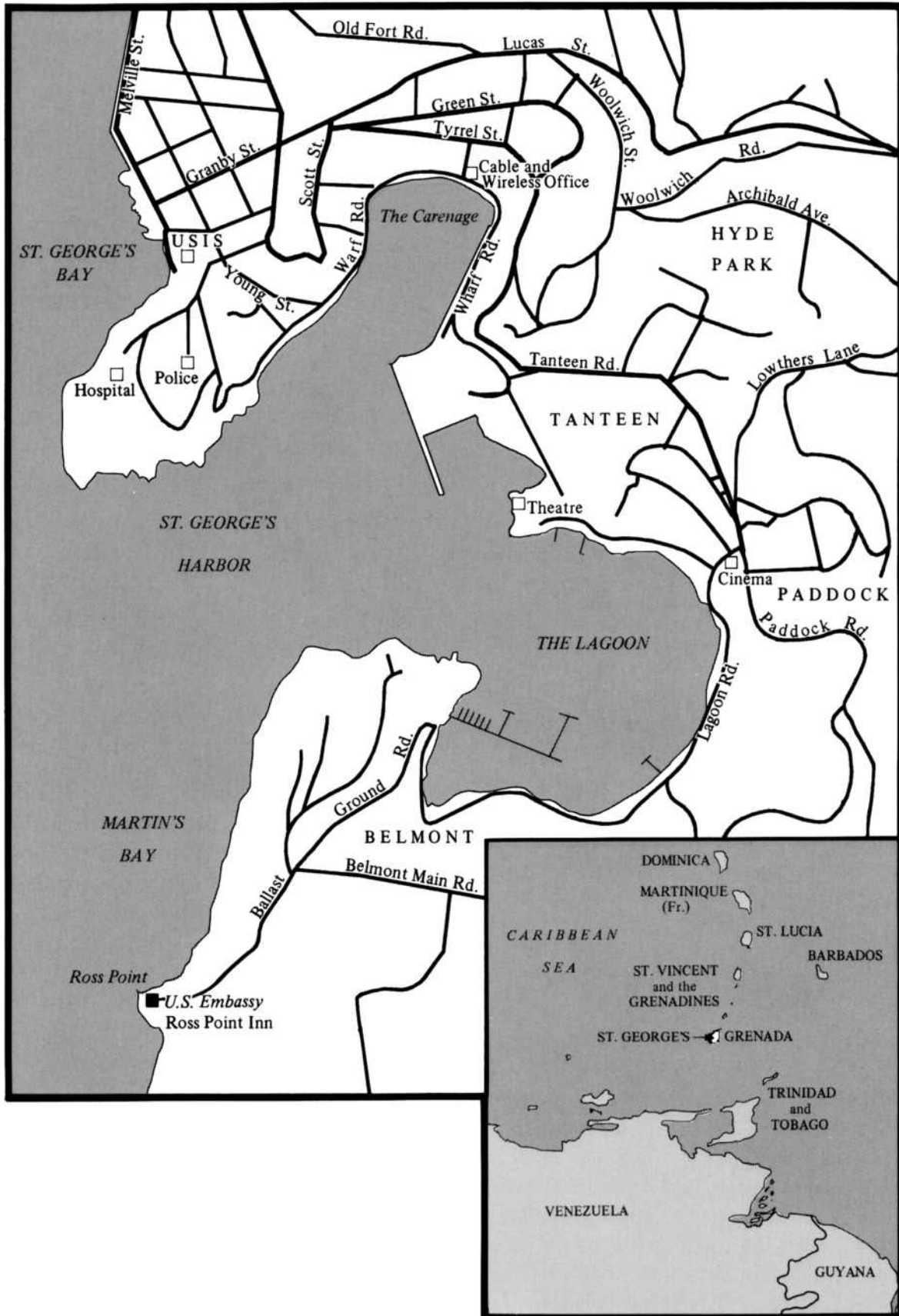
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Smyth, Frank. *Wayward War: El Salvador & the American Global Vision*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993.

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St. George's, Grenada

GRENADA

Major City:

St. George's

Other Cities:

Gouyave, Grenville, Hillsborough, Windward

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Grenada. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Volcanic in origin, the small island nation of **GRENADA** (pronounced "Gre-NAY-da") lies at the southernmost point of the Windward Islands in the eastern Caribbean. Its recent leap to instant recognition was prompted by a U.S.-led invasion against Marxist control in October 1983, and now, with a newly elected government in place, it is endeavoring to revitalize its economy and its reputation as a charming, picturesque tourist haven. Grenada is the only significant spice-producing area in the Western Hemisphere and, as such, is popularly referred to as the "Isle of Spice."

MAJOR CITY

St. George's

St. George's, the capital, lies at the southwestern end of the island. Its picture-postcard, almost landlocked harbor is considered one of the Caribbean's most beautiful. The town has a distinctly Mediterranean flavor, with its sun-washed buildings, some of them from the 18th century, and its steep, narrow streets. Towering behind the small city are lush green mountains, studded with fine residences and simple homes.

The hub of St. George's, where many important businesses are situated, is the waterfront, known as the Carenage. Brightly painted, wooden, inter-island trading vessels and larger freighters tie up alongside the harbor walls, and trucks can be seen loading or off-loading cargoes. Yachtsmen moor in the inner harbor and motor over in their tenders to shop at the waterfront stores. Fishing vessels unload their catches, which are sold in the nearby market square. One pier, 800 feet long, is capable of berthing cruise liners and other large ships.

Fort George, surrounded by steep walls, is in a prominent position at the entrance to the harbor. A curi-

ous feature is the Sendall Tunnel—in 1890, it was cut through St. George's Point to connect the Outer Harbor (also known as the Esplanade) with the Carenage. At the southern edge of town is a botanical garden.

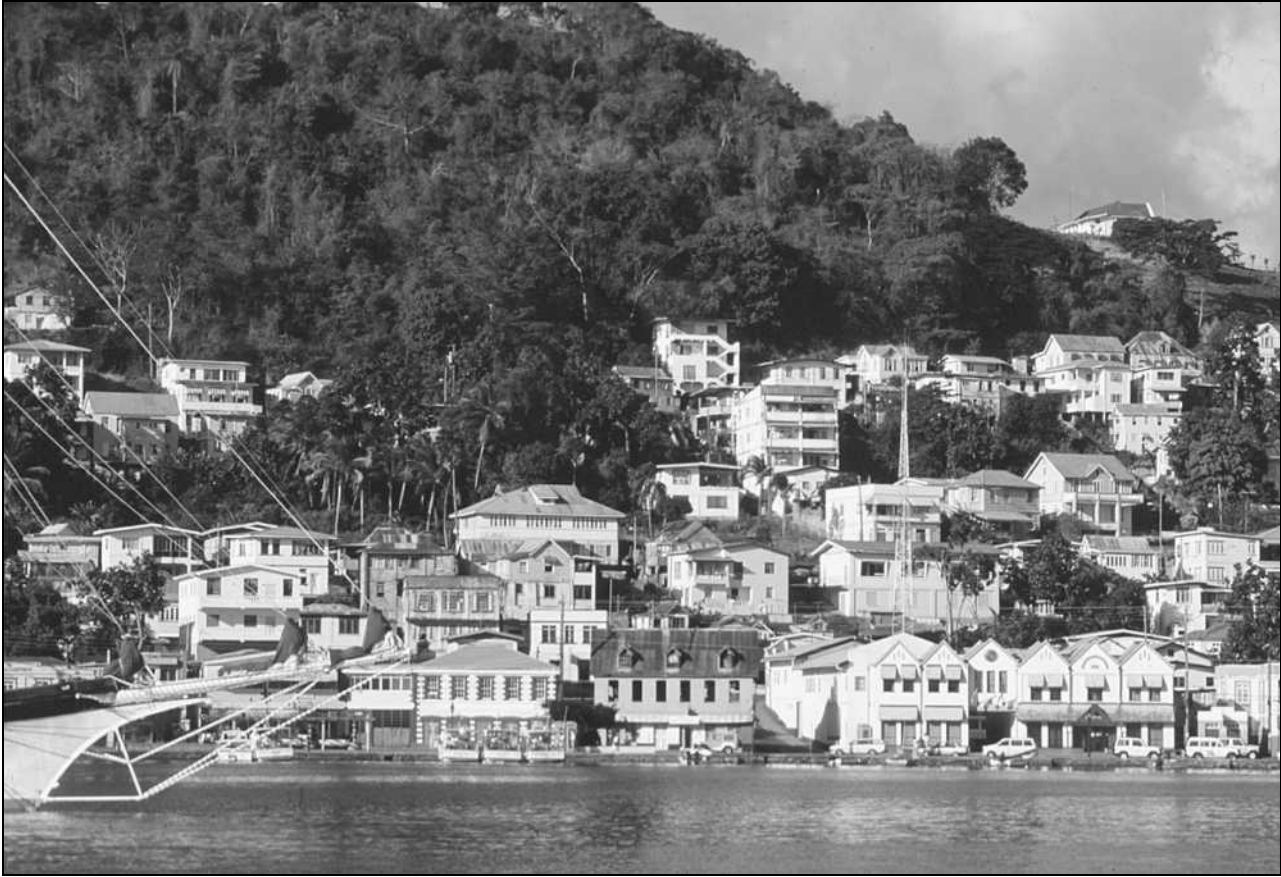
Farther south is the residential area of L'Anse aux Épinés, which has both large homes and simple, compact bungalows. Southeast of St. George's, the beautiful housing development of Westerhall Point overlooks the water.

The area population of St. George's is approximately 35,000.

Education

Education in Grenada follows the British system; children enter primary school at the age of five, and take the Eleven-Plus examination in sixth grade (age 11 or 12). Those who are successful then enroll in the government-run secondary schools, and take the "O" level exam at 16. Few students remain at school the extra two years to sit their "A" levels. The latter examination, required for entrance to British universities, is prepared and graded in England by Cambridge University.

Grenada's education, from an American point of view, is basic. The International School of Grenada



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Carenage Harbour, St. George, Grenada

opened in 1984. It is a coeducational institution that covers pre-school through grade seven. A U.S. curriculum is followed using U.S. textbooks and assistance from the Broward County/Miami Department of Education. Enrollment is about 40 with six full-time and four part-time staff. There is no permanent facility; the school's four classrooms, small library, playing field, and administrative office are housed within St. George's University School of Medicine. Tuition is \$1,300 annually. School is in session from the last week in August until the first week in June. Instruction is in English. Academic areas include language arts, math, social studies, science, French, art, music, computers, and physical education. There are no provisions for remedial programs or for students with severe physical, emotional, or learning disabilities.

Westmorland Primary is a good private primary school that is part of the Westmorland School, which is known to have the island's highest standard of education. However, the primary level has few vacancies and securing a place may be difficult. The school, covering nursery, kindergarten, and the early grades has an average class size of 24. It has a few trained Montessori teachers. The school year is divided into three terms and runs from early September to mid-July. There is another primary school, in the heart of St. George's, with a fairly solid reputation for teaching, but the physical plant is somewhat run-down, and has no telephone.

The vacancy situation at Westmorland Secondary is little better, with the lowest grade completely full and few places available in the more senior classes. Westmorland is a cooperative school owned by the parents of students and run by a

board of management elected annually. First consideration is given to Grenadian children and, since the school has a capacity for only 320 students, it simply does not have enough latitude to accommodate many foreigners. Westmorland prepares students to the "O" level.

The school year at Westmorland is divided into three terms, extending from early September to mid-July. Vacations are held at Christmas and Easter, and on the long summer holiday.

Government-run secondary schools do not meet U.S. standards. American children enrolled in these schools might feel isolated and uncomfortable because of differences in culture, social background, or future expectations between themselves and the main student body. Parents of older children would, in most cases, have no option

but to send them to the U.S. for secondary school.

No special facilities exist for children with learning disabilities or any other specific requirements.

Recreation

Pleasant drives amid breathtaking scenery of volcanic origin are among the most popular recreational attractions in Grenada. There are opportunities to see the beautiful Grand Étang (Great Pool) Lake in the rain forest; to drive through the resort developments at Fort Jeudy, Westerhall Point, L'Anse aux Épinés, and Levera Beach; and to visit the spice-processing factories at Gouyave or Grenville.

The old French and British bastions, Fort Frederick and Fort George, are points of historical significance in town. Other attractions include Grencraft, (the Grenada handicraft center), the National Museum, Spice Island Perfume Factory, the botanical gardens, the Anglican church, the old Georgian buildings on Le Carénage (the Carenage), and the Yellow Poui art gallery.

Neighboring Trinidad and Barbados afford a change from the quiet, small-island atmosphere of Grenada, and offer good shopping facilities. Trinidad, 90 miles to the south (flying time, 35 minutes), is renowned for its colorful pre-Lenten carnival; the island has a Hilton Hotel and a Holiday Inn, as well as various smaller hotels. Port-of-Spain, its capital city, has several large shopping malls.

Barbados, 120 miles from Grenada, is an attractive, bustling island with good hotels and restaurants and a lively nightlife. In the off-season, shopping is particularly good. Duty-free shops stock a wider range of items than can be found on Grenada; the many fashionable boutiques sell colorful sundresses, sarongs, and beachwear suited to the Caribbean climate. Flying time from St. George's to Barbados is 45 minutes.

Farther north are Martinique and Guadeloupe, with their French ambience and delicious cuisine. An interesting spot in Martinique is the St. Pierre Museum, an eerie monument to the 30,000 who died when Mount Pelée erupted in 1902. In Guadeloupe, a day trip to a living volcano, La Soufrière, can be arranged.

Venezuela's sophisticated capital, Caracas, with its eternal spring climate, is another spot for enjoying the bright lights. It has all the usual big-city amenities, but is expensive. Confirmed hotel reservations are essential.

The two most popular spectator sports in Grenada are cricket and soccer; the former is played on Saturdays and Sundays from November to May, the latter from June to November.

Several participant sports are available. The Richmond Hill Tennis Club, although privately operated, welcomes visitors as temporary members; public courts are at Tanteen and Grand Anse. Many hotels also have their own courts.

Grenada Golf and Country Club at Woodlands, with a nine-hole course, is in a beautiful setting overlooking the sea. It is a 15-minute drive from St. George's. The club sponsors tournaments throughout the year, often involving teams from other islands. Social events include games evenings, dances, and film shows. Membership rates here are reasonable.

Sailing is popular in Grenada, and the island is headquarters for some of the finest yachts to be found in Caribbean waters. Berthing is either in the harbor or at a marina in suburban L'Anse aux Épinés. The Grenada Yacht Club has more than 200 members, both Grenadian and foreign, and warmly welcomes newcomers. It sponsors various offshore races, including the annual Easter Regatta, and encourages visiting yachters from other Caribbean territories. The club, which has a sailing section, also serves as a social

center, holding dinners, cocktail hours, and barbecues all year. Mail and telephone facilities are maintained for offshore visitors.

The crystal-clear waters around Grenada make the island a yachting paradise, and cruising up the Grenadines, which extend from Grenada to St. Vincent, is especially rewarding. Sailing enthusiasts find a good selection of large, well-equipped yachts available with crew, and at reasonable rates, for daily or weekly charter. Carriacou Island sponsors an annual regatta the first week in August; races are held for work boats of all sizes, as well as for yachts. The many foreign vessels participating in this regatta make it one of the year's most important regional social events.

A combination of clear water, reefs, coral gardens, and tropical fish make scuba diving, spearfishing, and snorkeling excellent around Grenada.

From November to March, the waters offer good deep-sea fishing and boats for this purpose can be chartered by the day, week, or month. Small, open boats take parties out for a morning, or a day, to fish for snapper or grouper. It is advisable to ensure the availability of life jackets, especially for children, and to provide personal protection from the hot rays of the sun.

The Grenadian three-day fishing tournament, held the last weekend in January, attracts many large fishing cruisers, mainly from Trinidad. It is a popular sporting event and social get-together for the two neighboring islands.

Grenada has several attractive white sand beaches; the largest is Grand Anse, just south of St. George's, dotted with a number of hotels and guest cottages. There are no lifeguards, but the beach is relatively safe for bathing. Grand Anse Bay is popular for wind surfing. The many beautiful, quiet coves are good for picnicking and can be explored by car, although roads may be in poor condition.

Grenada has no public swimming pools or clubs with pool facilities. Some hotels will allow non-guests to use their pools, especially during the slow season.

Although few official sports clubs exist, some groups organize for informal activities such as bird-watching, hiking, or wind surfing. Small runs around the island are held every other Saturday, followed by an informal social gathering.

Entertainment

St. George's does not have a broad offering of formal entertainment. Apart from several popular discos, nightlife is non-existent. There is one poorly ventilated movie theater in St. George's which shows predominantly Kung Fu and "B" movies. Several video clubs exist which rent both current and classic movies.

Most of the restaurants feature local cuisine, and vary in quality. One of these, with a cheery, English-pub atmosphere, has become a favorite gathering spot for Grenadians, tourists, visiting yachtsmen, and U.S. students from the American offshore medical school at the southern point of the island. Some of the hotels have weekly barbecue parties featuring steel-band music for dancing. One of the yacht marinas operates an outdoor snack bar which many find ideal for enjoying a late-evening rum punch and mingling with people from visiting yachts. The marina's Thursday night barbecue is often attended by Americans, mostly employees of the U.S. Embassy in St. George's.

In recent years, Grenada has celebrated its annual Carnival, the national festival, in mid-August. It is an exciting event, but considerably smaller than the huge pre-Lenten pageant held in neighboring Trinidad. Steel bands and calypso performers—both Grenadians and residents of other Caribbean territories—vie for prizes as they parade in colorful costumes on the streets of St. George's.

Amateur radio enthusiasts enjoy Grenada because of its friendly ham-radio community; the terrain provides excellent antenna setting. Permission to operate is granted upon presentation of a valid Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license; third-party traffic is allowed. An adequate transformer is needed for 110-volt equipment.

It should be noted that Grenada, because of its size, has limited entertainment facilities and few cultural or educational opportunities. Grenadians are friendly and hospitable, but the educated professional community is small in number. Social contact is, therefore, circumscribed, and loneliness can become a problem for single people or for young children. Those who have been assigned to the island on official or business tours of any length, advise newcomers to bring with them a good supply of games, books, records, and hobby equipment.

There is no U.S.-sponsored women's club, but American women are welcome to join the few local organizations. Volunteer workers are needed by the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance Brigade, the Salvation Army, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). Children can join Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and Cub and Brownie troops, but teenagers find that there are few organized activities for them.

OTHER CITIES

GOUYAVE (also known as Charlotte Town), with an estimated population of 2,900, and **GRENVILLE**, with a population of about 2,100, are on opposite sides of the main island of Grenada. Both of these small towns have spice factories.

The only other population center of any size in Grenada is too small to be called a city but, as the capital of the dependent island of Carriacou, **HILLSBOROUGH** draws yachtsmen and tourists to its modest

accommodations. Market day, on Monday, brings the town to life. Many tourists also come here for leisurely walks through the hills or visits to the museum and the new Sea Life Centre. During Carriacou Regatta weekend, people come from all over the Grenadines to participate in the festivities. A highlight of the celebration is the big-drum dancing, an African tradition, in the market square.

WINDWARD, on Carriacou's east coast, is known for the building of wooden boats; many of its villagers are of mixed Scottish descent. Tyrell Bay, on the west coast, is also a boat-building center and a yacht anchorage.

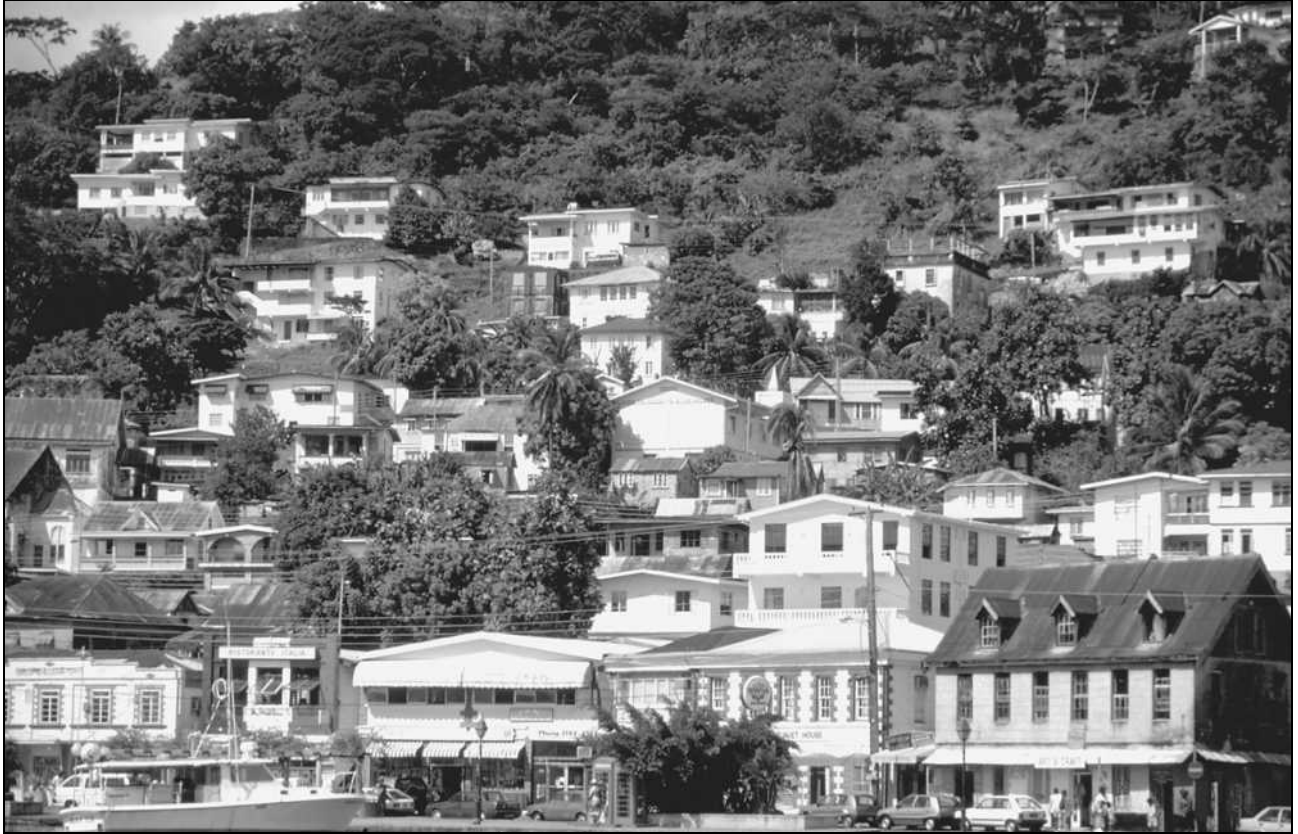
COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Grenada, the southernmost of the Windward Islands, is situated in the eastern Caribbean, 90 miles north of Trinidad and 12 degrees north of the equator. The three-island nation includes Carriacou, the largest island in the Grenadine chain, and Petit Martinique. Grenada itself, roughly oval in shape, is 12 miles wide and 21 miles long. It comprises 133 square miles of rugged mountainous terrain, with lush tropical rain forests and little lowland. Its central mountains rise about 2,000 feet above sea level. The clear, clean air is fragrant with the aroma of the spices grown on the islands.

Carriacou has an area of 13 square miles, and its geographical characteristics are similar to Grenada's except for its lower elevations (approximately 1,000 feet above sea level). Petit Martinique, with a population of only 700, has no tourist facilities, but is famous for boat building.

Grenada's climate is sunny and tropical, averaging 80°F, with dry and rainy seasons. The dry interval,



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Houses overlooking the harbor, St. George, Grenada

January through May, is more comfortable, with cooling trade winds, but also occasional showers. The rainy season, June through December, brings moderate to heavy rainfall which fluctuates considerably from year to year. Temperatures drop in the evening, making it pleasantly cool. Sunrise is at 6:30 a.m., and dusk varies between 6 and 6:30 p.m., according to the time of year.

Heavy rainstorms and high winds occur in the wet season, but violent hurricanes are rare.

Mildew can be a problem during the rainy months. Commercial desiccants are a help, but it is also advisable to avoid filling closets too full—this precaution keeps mildew to a minimum and discourages cockroaches, who like undisturbed, dark places. Other pests are mosquitoes, flies, moths, ants, termites, rats, and mice. Most of these can be controlled by taking particular care in household cleaning, and by proper

disposal of garbage. Chinese coils, sold in supermarkets, repel mosquitoes; the scent of the coils is not unpleasant. Screens are strongly recommended. Because sand-flies are sometimes a nuisance on the beach, insect repellent should be kept available. Rust is another problem in the wet season, and furniture and appliances must be wiped dry often.

Population

Grenada was first sighted in 1498 by Christopher Columbus, on his third voyage to the New World. The island was inhabited by fierce aboriginal Carib Indians, who successfully discouraged attempts at settlement until French colonialists from Martinique purchased it from them in 1650 for “two bottles of brandy and a few trinkets.” The Caribs eventually were eliminated, with the last remaining natives hurling themselves off the cliffs on the north part of the island rather than surrender. The spot where

they died, Caribs Leap, is now a famous tourist attraction in the town of Sauteurs.

A series of bloody conflicts between Britain and France followed, with the British finally taking control of the island in 1783 under the Treaty of Versailles.

The French and British brought Africans to Grenada to work their plantations so the population is predominantly of African descent, over 90%, with mixed, East Indian, and Caucasian persons making up the rest of the population. The 1998 estimate put the population at over 96,000. In recent years, the rate of emigration has exceeded the birth rate, leading to a population decline. Most of the population is located in St. George’s and four or five other coastal towns.

Christianity is the major religion; 53% of the people are Roman Catholic, 14% are Anglican.

The Creole culture of Grenadians derives from their African, French, and English heritage. English is the spoken language, but often a French *patois* is heard. Some customs, such as the pre-Lenten carnival, date from the days of French rule. Racial tension is almost nonexistent. Grenadians are courteous and exhibit good-natured tolerance of foreign visitors and their ways; invariably, a smile begets a smile.

Government

Grenada became an independent nation within the British Commonwealth in February 1974. In a coup on March 13, 1979, the New Jewel Movement took control, setting up the People's Revolutionary Government under the leadership of Maurice Bishop. Disagreements within the party led to violence and the assassination of Mr. Bishop less than five years later (October 1983), prompting intervention by U.S. and Caribbean forces. This military action, which routed a Marxist government, has been called a welcome liberation by some, but an invasion by others. In December 1986, Bernard Coard, Grenada's former prime minister, and 13 others were convicted of killing Maurice Bishop.

The constitution was restored after the events of October 1983, and the governor-general, Sir Paul Scoon, named an interim advisory council. In 1990, Nicholas Brathwaite was elected Prime Minister. Keith Claudius Mitchell followed as prime minister in 1995 and 1999.

Grenada is governed under a parliamentary system based on the British model; it has a governor general, a prime minister and a cabinet, and a bicameral Parliament with an elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate.

Citizens enjoy a wide range of civil and political rights guaranteed by the constitution. Grenada's constitution provides citizens with the right to change their government peacefully. Citizens exercise this right through periodic, free, and fair

elections held on the basis of universal suffrage.

Grenada's political parties range from the moderate TNP, NNP, and NDC to the left-of-center Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM -- organized by the pro-Bishop survivors of the October 1983 anti-Bishop coup) and the populist GULP of former Prime Minister Gairy.

Security in Grenada is maintained by the 650 members of the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF), which included an 80-member paramilitary special services unit (SSU) and a 30-member coast guard. The U.S. Army and the U.S. Coast Guard provide periodic training and material support for the SSU and the coast guard.

The United States, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela maintain resident diplomatic missions in the capital. In 2000, Grenada has an estimated population of 98,000. Grenada is a member of the United Nations, Organization of American States (OAS), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM).

Grenada's flag consists of a red border with yellow and green triangles that form a central rectangle. There is a red circle in the center with a yellow star; there are three stars at the top and bottom of the red border, and a nutmeg to the left of center.

Arts, Science, Education

In 1972, the Commonwealth Caribbean member states formed the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and, gradually, a new syllabus with more emphasis on regional matters has been developed. Some students still sit the British exam in certain subjects while Grenada converts to the new system. The University of the West Indies (UWI), which maintains campuses in several Commonwealth member

islands, is responsible for the preparation and grading of the CXC tests.

The Grenada National College at Tanteen, St. George's, conducts courses in carpentry and joinery, refrigeration, electrical installation and maintenance, plumbing, auto mechanics, and machine shop engineering. Its commercial division teaches stenography and office skills.

A craft center, also at Tanteen, offers instruction in woodworking, shell and bamboo craft, tie-dying, ceramics, and pottery. It also sponsors a summer extension program for cottage-industry instructors who teach handicrafts in villages throughout the island.

Most Grenadians interested in higher education enroll in British or Canadian universities, but some first-year evening classes are being conducted by UWI's extension department at Marryshow House, St. George's. UWI is working to restore a full curriculum for its student body, which dramatically declined after the 1979 political coup, and more courses will be developed during the next few years. The university's reference library is open to its students and faculty, as well as to librarians and academics working in Grenada.

Grenada's lively folk culture, based on its African heritage, is superimposed with French and English elements. Modern dance troupes still perform the old slave dances—*bele*, *shamba*, and *piqué*. At festival time, such traditional characters as the "stickman," "horsehead," and "jab-jab" are recreated. At a newly built small theater adjacent to UWI, concerts, dance shows, and operettas are performed. Children from all over the country stage regular concerts and Christmas pageants.

Several Grenadian artists, notably Elinus Cato and Canute Caliste, have received overseas recognition for their primitive paintings. Grenadian sculptor and painter Fitzroy

Harack teaches ceramics at the Jamaica School of Art.

The country has produced a number of outstanding writers, including folk poet Paul Keens-Douglas and journalist T.A. Marryshow. An English-born priest, Rev. Raymond P. Devas, O.P., has written a comprehensive history of the island, as well as books on birds and wildlife. Wilfred and Eula Redhead have published plays and children's stories, rich in Grenadian folklore.

Island music also reflects the people's African ancestry. The calypso beat is strong here, as in Trinidad, and Grenadians have even made the claim that old-time calypso, or *kaiso*, originated on this island and was taken to Trinidad by a group of Grenadian slaves. The steel band is popular; on a typical evening, the "pan beat" can be heard echoing softly against the hills, as "pan men" practice their skills.

Commerce and Industry

Grenada's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000 was estimated at about \$394 million, with a per capita figure of about \$4,400.

The economy of Grenada is based upon agricultural production (nutmeg, mace, cocoa, and bananas) and tourism. Agriculture accounts for over half of merchandise exports, and a large portion of the population is employed directly or indirectly in agriculture. Recently the performance of the agricultural sector has not been good. Grenada's banana exports declined markedly in volume and quality in 1996, and it is a question to what extent the country will remain a banana exporter. Tourism remains the key earner of foreign exchange.

Grenada is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues a common currency for all members of the ECCU. The ECCB also manages monetary

policy, and regulates and supervises commercial banking activities in its member countries.

Grenada also is a member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). Most goods can be imported into Grenada under open general license but some goods require specific licenses. Goods that are produced in the Eastern Caribbean receive additional protection; in May 1991, the CARICOM common external tariff (CET) was implemented. The CET aims to facilitate economic growth through intra-regional trade by offering duty-free trade among CARICOM members and duties on goods imported from outside CARICOM.

Transportation

An international airport opened in October 1984 at Point Salines, on the southwest tip of the island. The old Pearls Airport was unable to accommodate commercial jets or night landings. Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT) runs daily round-trip flights to Carriacou and, from there, a boat can be taken to Petit Martinique. Carriacou has one or two clean, but somewhat rustic hotels; a third has recently been taken over by new management and is located out of town. Since they are all small and have limited occupancy, reservations should be made in advance. Boats leave for Carriacou twice a week from the Carenage in St. George's, or private accommodations are available from Grenada Yacht Services and Spice Island Charters.

Private cars and taxis are the principal means of transportation used by U.S. citizens on extended stays in Grenada. Some comfortable, newer minibuses travel certain routes around St. George's and to the airport but, for the most part, public transportation is inadequate. Taxis assemble for hire at designated places on the harbor front, at the airport, and at major hotels. Fares are higher than those in the U.S., but should be negotiated in

advance, since cabs have no meters. Unmarked taxis can be identified by the letter "H" (for hire) in front of the license number.

Grenada's major roads have improved greatly since 1984, although some are still being rebuilt. Secondary roads are often in poor condition and badly maintained. Potholes are numerous; roads are narrow and often steep. A four-wheel-drive car is not essential, but useful if plans are to explore the island. The Japanese-made, Land Rover-type vehicles sold locally are well suited to the rugged driving conditions, but their small, under-padded rear seats make traveling in the back somewhat uncomfortable. Since they have no trunks, roof racks are necessary. Several lines of smaller Japanese jeeps, as well as some British models (all right-hand drive), are also sold in Grenada, but no American cars are available.

No import restrictions apply. If a new car is shipped to the island, it should be a right-hand-drive vehicle, preferably of a make and model sold in Grenada, as local mechanics work better with familiar cars, and parts are more readily available. Manual transmissions are more easily and cheaply serviced. As a rule, auto agencies satisfactorily service the cars they sell, as well as imported cars.

Before importing a used car, it is advisable to have it thoroughly overhauled, particularly the clutch and brakes, which wear out quickly in the mountainous terrain. Tires may have to be replaced sooner than expected. Spare parts for American-made cars, such as windshield wiper blades and arms, oil, air and oil filters, fan belts, contact points, and turn-signal flash units, should be kept on hand.

Air conditioning will make driving more comfortable, although repair delays are possible because of a lack of spare parts. Specially ordered air conditioners for cars bought in Grenada cost \$1,000 or more.

Traffic moves on the left and no speed limits are posted. A Grenadian drivers license is required to drive in Grenada and can be obtained upon presentation of a valid U.S. drivers license and a completed application form.

Several rental firms offer mostly Japanese models, Volkswagens, or *minimokes* (modified dune buggies) at rates similar to those in the U.S. Some people rent minibuses by the day, week, or month at negotiable prices. As Grenada has no school bus system, parents sometimes jointly hire taxis or minibuses.

Communications

The government-owned Grenada Telephone Company operates a recently modernized, fully automatic dial system throughout the island. International telephone service is available 24 hours a day. Calls between Grenada and the U.S. are usually satisfactory.

Cable and Wireless, Ltd., provides international telex service Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays to 1 p.m., and Sundays and public holidays from 10 a.m. to noon.

International airmail is received and dispatched Tuesday through Saturday by the Grenada General Post Office. Transit time for letters from the U.S. varies from six days to three weeks; letters from Grenada arrive in the U.S. in 7–14 days. Surface mail is erratic, and takes at least a month for delivery.

Radio Grenada operates an AM station providing music, local news, some Voice of America (VOA) programs, and a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) international roundup. AM broadcasts in English can usually be heard from Trinidad, Barbados, Montserrat, and The Netherlands Antilles. Spanish-language programs from Venezuela are also available. Although VOA and Armed Forces Radio can be received on shortwave, the quality of reception is often poor; equipment which

can be connected to outside antennas is advised. Radio Antilles in Montserrat broadcasts VOA news and other programs in the evenings on medium-wave.

Grenada-based Discovery TV transmits one channel in color, 7 days a week, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Local Grenadian news and cultural programming is interspersed with American series reruns, cartoons, films and some NBA games. CNN midday news is broadcast in the evenings. Those who live on the south side of the island can usually pick up TV from Trinidad.

There are several weekly newspapers which largely confine themselves to events on Grenada and other Caribbean islands. International news takes a back seat to inter-island gossip. The weeklies are *The Grenadian Voice*, *The Informer*, *The Grenadian Guardian*, *The Grenadian Tribune*, and *The Indies Times*. The last three are affiliated with political parties. The current Latin American editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are sold in book shops and supermarkets, and certain other popular U.S. magazines (*Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's*) are also available, although at least a month old. Women's magazines, such as *Vogue*, are often stolen from the international mail.

Three small, but well-stocked, book shops sell a good range of paperback novels, as well as reference books and hardcover publications.

The Grenada Public Library on the Carenage in St. George's has a good selection of books and periodicals, many donated by the U.S., U.K., and Canadian governments. Reference materials are non-circulating and are restricted to Caribbean history, culture, and politics. Library lending cards are issued upon receipt of a refundable deposit and two recommendations from Grenadian residents. A small, but well-kept, reference library at the University of the West Indies, Marrayshow House, is open to research scholars.

The collection contains many hard-to-find works by Caribbean writers.

Health

The General Hospital in St. George's is old and inadequately equipped, and the nursing care does not meet U.S. standards. Resident Americans in Grenada are advised to use the facility only for emergencies. However, the hospital does maintain an eye clinic which is currently updating its diagnostic services and equipment. Trained ophthalmologists from the International Eye Foundation run a clinic at the General Hospital which is open daily. For ordinary needs, St. George's has an up-to-date firm of opticians who perform eye examinations.

Two district hospitals are in operation—one in St. Andrew's Parish, the other on Carriacou. Health clinics, some of them with maternity facilities, are located throughout the island. The Simon Bolivar Clinic, a small, well-equipped dispensary is operated by the St. George's University School of Medicine on its Grand Anse campus.

Grenada has a few qualified specialists who were trained in England or the U.S.; their practices are in surgery, internal medicine, gynecology and obstetrics, and pediatrics. Preventive dental care should be arranged before moving to Grenada, however, several U.S. dentists are available locally by appointment a month in advance. Because there are no local orthodontists, those needing this particular type of care have to go to Trinidad or Barbados.

Local pharmacies carry adequate supplies.

Community sanitation includes sewage treatment and garbage collection (not up to U.S. standards). Water is treated at the source, but the distribution system and fluctuating pressure result in an unsafe yield. All drinking water must be boiled. Frozen foods are often suspect because of spoilage during

Grenada's frequent electrical outages.

Infectious hepatitis, dengue fever, gastroenteritis, and intestinal parasites are common. The tropical weather and high humidity are conducive to skin and fungal infections. Rabies is prevalent in animals.

Although none of the following inoculations are required for entry to Grenada, all are advised for anyone planning an extended stay: typhoid, polio, tetanus, gamma globulin for infectious hepatitis, and yellow fever. Children should be given measles, mumps, rubella, and diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT) shots, and everyone over the age of one should have pre-exposure rabies immunization. Children over 18 months should receive a Hemophilus influenza b (Hib) vaccination before going to Grenada, as outbreaks of meningitis occur on the island and the vaccine is not available locally.

Clothing and Services

Grenadians dress to suit the climate, but they are modest, and women rarely wear shorts or midriff garments in town. It is important that all clothing, including underwear and socks, be of extremely lightweight material; either cotton or a cotton blend is the most comfortable. With frequent laundering, necessitated by heat and high humidity, garments wear out quickly.

An umbrella is needed for the wet season's heavy, almost-daily rainstorms. Raincoats and heavy footwear are impractical in this heat. Beachwear and shorts are acceptable for adults and children in resort hotels and for recreation or relaxation; beach wraps are needed for lunches on hotel patios.

Office attire for men is either a shirt or *guayabera* and slacks, or a "jac suit," which is a short-sleeved, open-collared jacket worn with

matching pants; no shirt or tie is needed for this practical outfit. Few Grenadians wear a regular jacket and tie in the office. The "jac suit" is also favored for social events, although a lightweight jacket and tie are equally appropriate. Jeans, although heavy for the climate, are popular in Grenada.

Working attire for women is usually a modest, short-sleeved dress, or a blouse with skirt or slacks, and sandals. Stockings are not normally worn. Sleeveless dresses are ideal for street wear in the humid months, but are not worn at work. Sundresses and straw hats are sold inexpensively by beach vendors. Stout canvas espadrilles are recommended for walking on beaches or along Grenada's rough roads.

Grenadian women are fashion conscious and like to dress up for parties. Home entertaining is popular in the foreign community and, since the same people travel in that circle, women find that they need substantial party wardrobes. Silk dresses, unless they are washable, are impractical, as St. George's one dry cleaner does only a rudimentary form of dry cleaning. A light stole is useful for cool nights.

Normal U.S. summer wear is suitable for children, with lightweight jackets or cardigans for cool evenings. Every child needs several pairs of sandals. Most Grenadian schools require uniforms (available locally).

Grenada has few high-quality clothing stores. There are a couple of attractive boutiques in St. George's, but stocks are limited and prices are not competitive with those in the U.S. Tourist shopping, however, is interesting, with a wide variety of straw items, spices, and coral handicrafts. Duty-free shopping is also available.

St. George's has several good tailors whose work is not expensive. There are also dressmakers, varying in skill. Shoe repair is fair. Beauty shops, although not elegant, have

good reputations. Barbershops are adequate and reasonable in price. Repairs (electrical, auto, etc.) are available, but uneven in quality; progress is often slow and further hampered by periodic power outages and unavailability of materials.

The style of cooking in Grenada is Creole, similar to that of neighboring islands, with one or two specialties such as *lambie*, found in abundance in surrounding waters. On Saturday mornings, this variety of mollusk may be purchased directly from the conch boats at the Carenage. Local cooks have a touch with soups, and some notable ones are *callaloo*, made from a green bush with added seasonings, and *tannia*, from a root vegetable. Other island delicacies include crab-backs (seasoned crab meat served hot in the shell); *souse*, and black pudding.

In general, food prices are higher than in the U.S., but foreigners living here find that the supermarkets are well-stocked and carry a good supply of processed foods from the U.S., Europe, and other Caribbean territories. Small, family-run groceries abound. There is a wide variety of fresh fish, fruits and vegetables, bakery items, and imported candies and cookies. Most meats sold in the markets are local and of indifferent quality. Chicken is imported from the U.S. Powdered and evaporated milk and baby formula are readily available, as well as "flash" sterilized milk which does not need refrigeration. Although fresh milk is occasionally obtainable, it should be avoided, since some cattle are not tuberculin-tested.

French, American, and German wines are widely available, as is excellent rum from Trinidad and Barbados, marketed at reasonable prices. The local lager, Carib, is good; other beers are imported.

Domestic Help

Competent, trained maids and cooks work for moderate wages. An

experienced domestic receives a monthly wage plus food, and many are prepared to live in or return in the evening to baby-sit. The employer's contribution to the compulsory national health insurance plan is 4% of the servant's salary. Under current codes, the employee serves a two- to three-month probationary period, is given two weeks' leave after one year of service, three weeks after two years, and a Christmas bonus of one month's pay. In addition, a maid/cook expects one-two days off each week; arrangements for weekends and holidays are fixed by the employer at the time of hiring.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Direct service to Grenada from North America and other Caribbean islands is provided by British West Indies Airlines (BWIA). Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT) serves the country several times daily from Barbados and Trinidad. American, Pan Am, Eastern, and Air Canada provide connecting flights through Barbados.

U.S. citizens may enter Grenada with proof of U.S. citizenship, (a certified birth certificate, a Naturalization/Citizenship Certificate, or a valid or expired passport) and photo identification. U.S. citizen visitors who enter Grenada without one or more of these documents, even if admitted by local immigration officials, may encounter difficulties in boarding flights to return to the U.S. No visa is required for a stay of up to three months. There is an airport departure charge for adults and for children between the ages of five and thirteen years of age. For additional information concerning entry/exit requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Grenada, 1701 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 265-2561, e-mail grenada@oas.org, or the Con-

sulate of Grenada in New York at telephone (212) 599-0301.

Grenada customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Grenada of items such as firearms, antiquities, business equipment, fruits and vegetables, electronics, and archaeological items. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Grenada in Washington, D.C. or the Consulate of Grenada in New York for specific information regarding customs regulations.

Americans living in or visiting Grenada are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Grenada and obtain updated information on travel and security within Grenada. The U.S. Embassy is located on the right hand-side of the main road into Lance aux Epines in the "Green Building," and is approximately 15 minutes from the Point Salines International Airport. Telephone: 1-473-444-1173/4/5/6; fax: 1-473-444-4820; Internet: <http://www.spiceisle.com>; email: usemb_gd@caribsurf.com.

Pets

Grenada will permit entry of pets with proper documentation, including health certificates and proof of recent inoculation against rabies. The health certificate, stating that the pet is free from infectious diseases and rabies, must be issued by a licensed veterinarian and stamped with verification of that license. Both Trinidad and Barbados, still used by some as entry points to Grenada, have strict laws governing pet importation (other than from Great Britain or Ireland). A quarantine station and appropriate airport facilities are available in Trinidad.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The time in Grenada is Greenwich Mean Time minus four hours.

Local currency is the East Caribbean dollar, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar at a rate of

US\$1=EC\$2.70. Bills, from \$1 to \$100, are printed in a series of colors, and coins are minted in six denominations. All currency carries the likeness of Queen Elizabeth II. Only a few hotels and stores accept U.S. credit cards. Travellers checks are accepted everywhere.

Some effort is being made to introduce the metric system of weights and measures, but Grenadians continue to think in terms of pounds and miles, rather than kilograms and kilometers.

Disaster Preparedness

Grenada has experienced tropical storms during the hurricane season, from June through November. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 7	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Whitsunday*
May/June	Whitmonday*
May/June	Corpus Christi*
Aug.	Emancipation Day*
Aug. 13	Carnival Monday
Aug. 14	Carnival Tuesday
Oct. 25	Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Brizan, George. *Grenada: Island of Conflict: From Amerindians to People's Revolution, 1498-1979*.

Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1984.

Burrowes, Reynold A. *Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the U.S.-Caribbean Invasion*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1988.

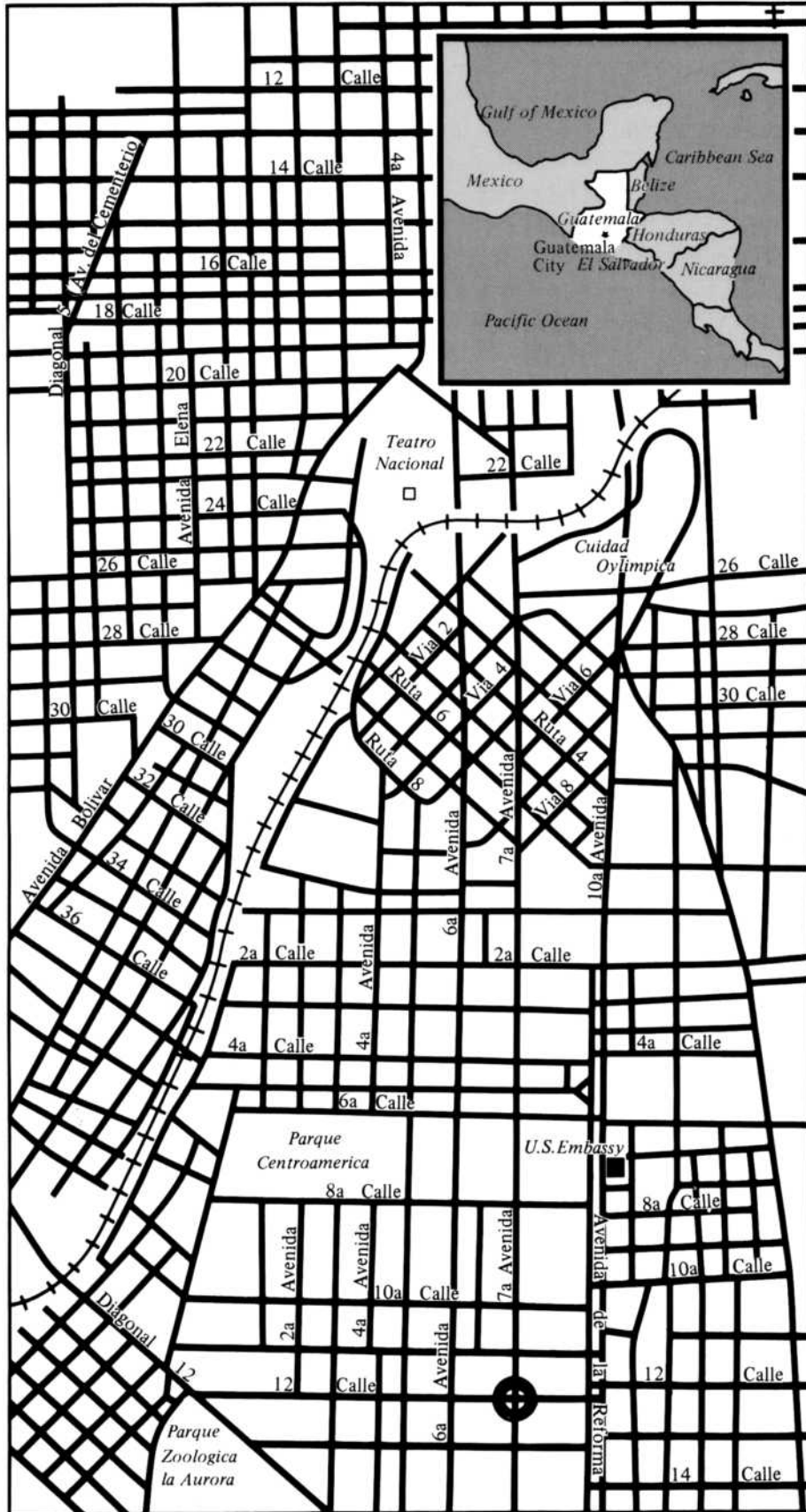
Grenada. Edison, NJ: Hunter Publishing, 1990.

Heine, Jorge, ed. *A Revolution Aborted: The Lessons of Grenada*.

Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990.

Lewis, Gordon K. *Grenada: The Jewel Despoiled*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

Sanford, Gregory W., and Richard Vigilante. *Grenada: The Untold Story*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985.



Guatemala City, Guatemala

GUATEMALA

Republic of Guatemala

Major Cities:

Guatemala City, Antigua

Other Cities:

Amatitlán, Chichicastenango, Chimaltenango, Chiquimula, Cobán, Esquipulas, Flores, Huehuetenango, Mazatenango, Puerto Barrios, Quezaltenango, San José, Zacapa

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

GUATEMALA is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Its more than nine million inhabitants live in the highlands, the tropics, and the central plateau. Almost half of them are pure-blooded descendants of the Maya Indians, whose civilization flourished throughout much of Guatemala before the Spanish conquest in 1523.

Modern, comfortable Guatemala City, the capital, contrasts sharply with the rural interior. That area is characterized by Mayan ruins, mile-high Lake Atitlán, the ancient Indian cultures of Chichicastenango and Huehuetenango, and colonial Antigua, the proud capital of the country until it was leveled

by two disastrous earthquakes in 1773. Guatemala has survived a turbulent history of dictatorships, political unrest, and economic instability, and is now pursuing a comprehensive plan for national development.

MAJOR CITIES

Guatemala City

Guatemala City, the capital, is a busy metropolis, and despite air pollution, dust in the dry season, and mud during the wet season, it is a fairly clean place. The colorful native dress of the large Indian population adds charm and uniqueness to this interesting city. Guatemala City (its full name is Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala la Nueva) is located slightly southwest of the country's geographical center at an altitude of about 5,000 feet, and is built on a long, narrow plain completely surrounded by hills and mountains. It is the largest city in Central America, with a population of 2.7 million (2000 est.).

The older buildings are Spanish-style, but starkly modern structures are rising rapidly. Residential districts are spreading beyond the

town's outskirts, with newer homes either modern or Spanish colonial in design. Downtown Guatemala City's streets are narrow and, despite one-way traffic, congestion is bad and parking difficult. Several new shopping centers away from the city's center are gaining rapid popularity. Streets in the newer residential and business sections are relatively wide, attractive, and less congested.

The city has a number of interesting old churches. Large daily markets, the main source of fresh fruits and vegetables, are also centers for a variety of native textiles, blankets, and some pottery. The large block-size relief map of Guatemala, the National Palace, the Archeological Museum, and the Mayan ruins on the outskirts of the city are sight-seeing attractions. Parks are always full, especially on Sundays and holidays. Aurora Zoo is small, but worth seeing.

In spite of the thousands of foreign tourists who stream through the city every month and the multinational, intercultural mix of residents, the city maintains a calm tolerant aura of well-being. Although some nightlife is available, Guatemala City is not a nighttime city, and quietly finishes most days well before midnight.



David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

Overview of city center, Guatemala City, Guatemala

The present city is the third permanent capital of Guatemala. It was founded in 1776 after Antigua was destroyed by earthquakes. An earthquake destroyed Guatemala City in 1917, but it was rebuilt on the same site. Guatemala City suffered less than did the countryside from the February 4, 1976 earthquake which killed 27,000, injured 76,000, and left more than one million homeless.

The level of living for Americans in Guatemala City is generally equal to that of a small U.S. city, but the cost of living is similar to that in Washington, DC. The American community, comprising some 6,500 persons in the capital and perhaps

1,000 elsewhere, is the largest single foreign group. The foreign community also includes much smaller German and British colonies.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholicism is the principal religion, and Catholic churches in the capital and throughout the country are staffed by native and foreign clergy in about equal numbers. Two of the churches, Villa Guadalupe and San Agustin are run by the American Maryknoll and Franciscan Fathers. Protestant services in English are offered by the interdenominational Union Church in Guatemala City and also by Episcopal, Lutheran, and Church of Christ congregations. Three Jewish

congregations, the Sephardic, Orthodox Ashkenazi, and a Reform group, hold regular services.

Education

The private educational system in Guatemala City is considered fairly good. Most schools require a birth certificate, a certification of good health, a vaccination certificate, and a transcript of education records. Although many private elementary and secondary schools operate in Guatemala, most American children attend the American or the Mayan School. Calvert System materials are not necessary, since these materials are provided by those schools using the system.

The American School (Colegio Americano) offers kindergarten through secondary school instruction. Despite its name, it is a private Guatemalan school with American administrators and some American teachers (the enrollment in 1991 was 1,600, of which 160 were American children). Accelerated courses are available in all grades for students planning to enter university or who will be transferred to other areas in the fall. Classes are conducted in both English and Spanish and students can elect to be taught in either language. Quality of instruction at all grade levels is considered adequate.

The secondary school is accredited by the U.S. Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. The number of American teachers usually averages 25% of the total faculty. Athletic activities consist of softball, water polo, track and field, basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball, and swimming. Other extracurricular activities include drama, dance, choral and instrumental music, yearbook, newspaper, literary magazine, computers, and field trips. An intramural and playground recreational program is stressed. Bus transportation to and from school is provided at nominal cost.

The school year runs from mid-January through mid-October, with vacations during Holy Week and at midyear. The school is located on 52



Central plaza, Guatemala City, Guatemala

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

acres of land in a residential area just outside the city. Facilities include an audiovisual room, auditorium, science labs, two computer labs, cafeteria, covered play area, gymnasium, swimming pool, and a 28,000-volume library. The mailing address is Apartado Postal 83, Guatemala City, Guatemala. U.S. mail may be sent in care of the U.S. Embassy, Guatemala, APO Miami, Florida 34024-5000.

The Mayan School (Colegio Maya) offers instruction for nursery through grade 12. It is a cooperative school sponsored by parents, administered by an elected board of directors, and fully accredited under the U.S. Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. The director and principal are American, as are at least 50% of the teachers and staff. The enrollment in 1991 was 340, almost equally divided among American, Guatemalan, and third-country nationals. General curriculum is taught in English with one class period daily in Spanish. Instruction provided in all grades is considered adequate. Art, physical education, and computer science may be elected. Extracurricular activities include drama, computers, yearbook, newspaper, field trips, and photography. Athletic activities comprise basketball, volleyball, baseball, and other orga-

nized sports. Playground equipment is also available for smaller children. Bus transportation is provided by the school.

The school year runs from the end of August to the beginning of June, with vacations at Christmas and Easter. The school is located on 12 acres of land about six miles from the city. Facilities include an audiovisual room, science and language labs, infirmary, cafeteria, a computer room, and a 10,200-volume library. The mailing address is Apartado Postal 2-C, Guatemala City, Guatemala. U.S. mail may be sent to APO 34024, Miami, Florida.

Recreation

Spectator events include frequent national and international soccer matches, bicycle and car races, and local wrestling. Baseball and softball are increasing in popularity and can be played year round. Joggers can be seen often here, and several organizations sponsor races throughout the year. Although Guatemala City has only two facilities, bowling is popular, with several regular city leagues and frequent national and Central American tournaments.

Golf courses and tennis courts are available for either membership or public use, as are several outdoor

and indoor pools. About two hours from Guatemala City, on the Pacific coast near the port of San José, is a large hotel with both fresh and salt-water pools. Ocean swimming on this coast, unfortunately, is not only dangerous because of strong undercurrents and occasional sharks, but also rather unpleasant because of the rough black sand, rocks, and narrow, limited "beach" areas. Caribbean beaches are lovely, almost virginal, territory, but not easily accessible.

Surf and deep-sea fishing are enjoyed on either coast where tarpon, barracuda, shark, sailfish, giant ray, red snapper, bonito, and jackfish are common. Lakes and rivers provide freshwater fishing.

Near Guatemala City, the volcanos Pacaya (8,345 feet), Fuego (12,851 feet), and Agua (12,307 feet) attract climbers and offer a rewarding view of both coasts on clear days. Pacaya, which is gently active much of the year, provides the unique opportunity for climbers to stand on one peak and view close at hand the lava activity on another. Climbing parties are organized during the dry season.

Wild game, such as deer, wild turkey, dove, geese, pheasant, duck, jaguar, and boar, is still plentiful in various parts of the country. Hunting is prohibited in most of Guatemala and hunters should obtain permission to hunt on private land.

Guatemala offers many opportunities for sight-seeing, as well as for sport. Lake Atitlán is two-and-a-half hours from Guatemala City by car over a good but winding road. Atitlán is generally considered the most beautiful lake in the country and is visited as part of the "must" excursion to Solola and Chichicastenango. Three large volcanos are nearby. Encircling the shores of the lake, 5,500 feet above sea level, are 12 Indian villages named after the Twelve Apostles. These villages can be reached by launch from the hotel area. Several good tourist hotels are located on the lakeshore in the town

of Panajachel. Swimming and boating are pleasant pastimes.

Tikal, largest and one of the oldest of the ancient Mayan cities, is located in the midst of a dense tropical rain forest in the Department of Petén, in the northeast section of Guatemala. Due to daily flights and occasional special tourist or charter flights, these magnificent ruins, formerly almost inaccessible to the traveler, are now within a short flying time of Guatemala City. Overnight accommodations with meals are available at either of two adequate but non-luxury hotels.

The highland and northern jungle regions of Guatemala, difficult to reach because of poor or no roads, offer a complete change of scene and atmosphere. The towns of Flores and Sayaxche are the jumping-off points for jungle trips. Trips can be arranged by air and jeep to the sites of Mayan ruins, and bus service is usually available to many remote villages. Airline service is furnished to about 20 points within Guatemala. The road-building program is gradually opening up previously inaccessible regions, and tourist traffic is increasing.

Visiting Indian communities throughout the country during their various patron saint festivals offers unique opportunities to experience the flavor of the Guatemalan heartland and its hospitable people. These fiestas, which usually begin a few days before the actual patron saint's day, are usually characterized by special dances, processions, and a profusion of decorations, as well as firecrackers, native marimba or other instrumental music, and often a lively market. There are no limits, outside those of good taste, to taking photographs.

For those who want to become acquainted with Guatemala, the country, and its customs, the Trekkers Club offers frequent group trips at minimum cost. The club is international in membership. Meetings are held one evening a month at the Union Church with featured speakers, movies, and/or slide show-



Tree-lined street scene in Antigua, Guatemala

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

ings. Trips are usually planned for weekends. Members share the responsibilities for organizing and leading the excursions, as well as serving on the board of directors.

Guatemala is a friendly country, and most Americans establish fine and lasting friendships with Guatemalans. Many Guatemalans speak excellent English, having been educated in the U.S., and many others are studying English at the Instituto Guatemalteco-Americano de Cultura (IGA) and other institutions. Americans usually find ample opportunity for social contacts, both private and official, with Guatemalans. Social contacts between the American colony and other foreign colonies are frequent and interesting.

The American Society is an organization of U.S. citizens living in Guatemala. Membership includes official personnel, members of the business community, and others. The society endeavors to improve Guatemalan-American relations on the local level and performs an important welfare function. The group also sponsors several social functions each year, including an annual Fourth of July picnic and a children's Christmas Party, and holds bridge and craft classes for

members. Other clubs include a Rotary Club, Lion's Club, an English-speaking Masonic Lodge, an American Legion post, and a Toastmasters International Club.

While the primary aims of the American Chamber of Commerce of Guatemala are business and investment-oriented, the group has a large and active membership of firms and individuals who maintain a high community visibility. Their monthly luncheon meetings are frequently open to the public and their programs and service activities promote excellent, broad-based relationships. Membership fees are reasonable.

Entertainment

Entertainment is widely available in Guatemala City, and the scope is quite ambitious. Guatemala City boasts a 2,000-seat National Theater that hosts plays, dance performances, and concerts. The National Symphony Orchestra and the National Ballet each have a wide repertoire that is expanding each year. Several small city theater groups perform everything from musical comedy to serious drama. Guest artists and performers, often traveling under the sponsorship of the U.S. Government, are consistently well received, and add fur-

ther dimension to the performing arts in Guatemala.

Recent U.S. films are shown at a number of theaters in Guatemala City, usually with Spanish subtitles. Mexican, Italian, French, and Argentine films are also featured, although less frequently. Guatemala City has several motion picture theaters, some of which are clean, modern, and as pleasant as any in the U.S.

Guatemala's art world is lively, especially the painting and sculpting. The binational center has at least one monthly exhibit, and frequent exhibits are held in the National Bank Building and smaller city galleries. Prices for art works, however, are comparable to those in the U.S. The National Palace displays examples of Spanish colonial art, and is decorated with vivid murals depicting the area's pre-colonial and Hispanic history. Several newer government buildings are decorated with facades of attractive modern sculpture.

One of the best sources of reading material is the IGA (the binational center) library, which has a collection of over 8,000 volumes in English and Spanish, and a bookstore offering current material. The American Club provides its members with a lending library of fiction and nonfiction best-sellers, and the Union Church maintains a library. Books are also available in commercial bookstores at import prices.

In addition to the first-class dining rooms of the major hotels, numerous good restaurants offer specialties ranging from typical dishes to French cuisine and Chinese food. Several popular restaurants specialize in "Argentine-style" beef. Many of the American fast food chains are represented in Guatemala.

Antigua

Antigua, previously named Ciudad de Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala, and sometimes called Antigua Guatemala, is located in

the south-central part of the country, less than an hour by car from Guatemala City over a good road. Once a metropolis rich in beauty and culture, its mossy arches, well-preserved architectural ruins, and quiet parks and gardens are reminders of the magnificence of a bygone era.

Antigua was founded in 1542 by survivors of nearby Ciudad Vieja, which was destroyed by an earthquake and a flood. The city became the capital of Spanish Guatemala and, by the 17th century, was flourishing as one of the richest capitals of the New World, rivaling Lima and Mexico City. By the 18th century, Antigua's population was over 100,000; the university was the center of the arts and learning and the churches, convents, monasteries, public buildings, and houses were characterized by extreme luxury. Situated amongst three volcanoes (Agua, Acatenango, and Fuego), Antigua was destroyed by two earthquakes in 1773. The capital was moved to Guatemala City a few years later.

Today, Antigua is a picturesque city of ruins and old, restored homes. Buildings are characterized by Spanish facades, patios, and arcades. With a population over 30,000, it is also a commercial center in a rich coffee-growing region. Now a major tourist center, Antigua has good, attractive hotels, one with a swimming pool, and all well-g geared to tourist traffic. Shopping in Antigua is considered delightful. Spectacular festivities are held here during Holy Week. Those planning to visit during this period should make hotel reservations well in advance.

Visitors to Antigua will delight in its many interesting churches and landmarks. The Cathedral of San José, built between 1543 and 1680, was a magnificent structure, featuring 16 chapels, 60 cupolas, vaulted archways, high naves, and excellent paintings and sculptures. The facade and much of the wall structure stand today, along with the ruins of several domes. Excavation

in 1935 revealed crypts beneath the cathedral. One is open to visitors and contains an altar, crucifix, and statues of saints. The conquistador of Guatemala, Don Pedro de Alvarado, is buried beneath the cathedral in an unidentified tomb. The present Church of San José was made from two of the original 16 chapels, which were restored in 1854. The cathedral was damaged in the 1976 earthquake, but has been reconstructed. Other interesting churches include La Merced Church, with lacy white stonework on its facade; and San Francisco, covering two square blocks, with its huge bell that tolls annually one stroke for each year of Guatemala's independence.

A few mansions, built during the colonial era, have been restored. Casa Popenoe, the House of Bells (converted into a shop), and the House of Lions all feature an austere outside wall encircling patios that contain fountains and gardens.

Ciudad Vieja (Old City) is about four miles from Antigua's central plaza, near the base of the volcano. The city was destroyed when it was engulfed by the eruptions of the volcano, Agua, in 1541. Parts of the city have been excavated. The church, built in 1534, was excavated intact; the third story of the governor's palace, built in 1527, has been exposed, but the first two floors remain buried.

There are several interesting Indian villages in the Antigua area that are accessible by car. Santa María de Jesús is less than seven miles from the foot of Agua volcano. Horseback and hiking expeditions to the volcano originate here. Just below Santa María de Jesús on the mountain slope is San Juan del Obispo. It is the site of the palace and former retreat of Antigua's colonial bishop; the palace is currently being rebuilt. Known for its hand-woven textiles, the village of San Antonio Aguas Calientes is five miles from Antigua.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Aerial view of the vegetable market in Guatemala

OTHER CITIES

Situated in the mountains of south-east Guatemala, the city of **AMATITLÁN** lies on the shores of Lake Amatitlán, 12 miles southwest of Guatemala City. The lake is badly polluted, however, and swimming is no longer safe. With a municipal population over 33,000, Amatitlán is the center of a popular weekend resort area for Guatemala City residents, and is particularly noted for its scenery. Beautiful vacation homes are built around the lake-shore and hot springs may be found throughout the region. Coffee and sugar plantations are also located in the area. Native skin divers find well-preserved relics of Mayan religious ceremonies that took place at the natural hot springs that empty into the lake. Fragments of pottery discovered on the bottom of the lake indicate that a cemetery of an ancient city could be buried in the silt.

CHICHICASTENANGO, about 90 miles west of Guatemala City, is the center of the Quiche Indian culture and a principal sight-seeing attraction. Located in the heart of the highlands at about 7,000 feet above sea level, Chichicastenango became the spiritual center of the Quiche following their defeat by Pedro de Alvarado in 1524. Often called Santo Tomás, the town is quaint and charming, with a main plaza connected by a maze of winding streets. It is the site of one of the most colorful markets in Central America. On market days, Thursday and Sunday, Chichicastenango is crowded with Indians in their colorful clothing. On Sundays especially, they practice their semi-pagan religious rites in the two ancient Roman Catholic churches on the main plaza. In the Dominican monastery, the famous Popul-Vuh manuscript of Maya-Quiche mythology was discovered. There are also several excellent collections

of Indian relics, many of which are carved in jade.

CHIMALTENANGO is located 30 miles west of Guatemala City in the central highlands. This market center of over 30,000 was founded in 1526; today, its residents grow grains, sugarcane, and livestock. Brick-making is an important industry. Chimaltenango is noted for its church built on the Continental Divide, where water flows around the foundation—half to the Pacific and half to the Atlantic.

CHIQUMULA lies 70 miles east of Guatemala City on the Río San José. The city has been ravaged by earthquakes, especially in the late 1700s during the colonial period. A colonial church remains, in ruins. Chiquimula's hinterland produces fruit, tobacco, sugarcane, and cattle. The city is linked to the capital by road and railroad and has a population of approximately 42,600.

COBÁN is situated in a rich coffee-growing area about 60 miles north of Guatemala City. Although an all-weather road connects the city to the capital, it is more easily accessible by plane. The hillside church, El Calvario, built in 1559, is located just outside of Cobán. Indian villages are also nearby and are known for their silverwork. Tourist attractions near the city include ancient Mayan pyramids and the Lanquin Caves, a series of underground grottoes stretching nearly 250 miles. The population of Cobán is approximately 23,000 (1989 estimate).

The town of **ESQUIPULAS**, located 75 miles east of Guatemala City, is known for its church that contains the figure of the Black Christ, revered by the Indians. Each year, more than one million pilgrims from Central America and Mexico visit the Black Christ. The six-foot image of Christ, completed in 1594, is made of balsa wood. The population of municipal Esquipulas is about 18,800.

Once a stronghold of the Itzá Indians, **FLORES** is located in a vast tropical jungle area in northern Guatemala. The town, with a population of about 14,000, is on an island in Lake Petén Itzá and is an export center for chicle, rubber, sugarcane, and lumber. It is accessible by road or plane but, during the rainy season, mud and flooding make driving hazardous.

HUEHUETENANGO is an old mining city on the slopes of the Altos Cuchumatanes Mountains, 75 miles northwest of Guatemala City. The name means Place of the Ancients, and ruins of an ancient Indian settlement called Zaculeu are located nearby. Lead, copper, and silver are mined in this city, which is also a major trading area for the local Maya Indians. Corns, beans, and potatoes are grown near the city. The estimated population of Huehuetenango is 37,200. The main Pan-American Highway is close by.

In the southwest, 60 miles southwest of Guatemala City, lies **MAZA-**

TENANGO. This commercial and manufacturing city provides a link between Pacific ports and the interior. Coffee, sugarcane, cacao, fruits and, especially cotton, are major crops. Mazatenango is connected to Guatemala City by road and railway.

PUERTO BARRIOS is located in eastern Guatemala, about 150 miles northeast of Guatemala City on the Bay of Amatique, an arm of the Caribbean's Gulf of Honduras. Named for Guatemalan politician Justo Rufina Barrios, Puerto Barrios is the capital of Izabel Department and the country's major port. Leading exports are coffee and bananas. Puerto Barrios had a population of 38,000 (1989 est.), is the terminus of the International Railways of Central America, and also is the eastern seaport for El Salvador. The city sustained heavy damage from the earthquake of 1976.

QUEZALTENANGO is Guatemala's second largest city, located in the western highlands about 75 miles west of Guatemala City. It can be reached in about three-and-a-half hours by highland route over the Pan-American Highway, which is paved all the way and generally in good condition. A mountain town at about 7,600 feet, it has a cool, invigorating climate and clean air. Its interesting old market offers excellent textiles and handicrafts. The city also has a multilevel shopping center. The development of hydroelectric power has helped Quezaltenango become one of the Central America's leading industrial cities. Principal industries in the city include mills, breweries, and textile factories. As the site of the ancient Quiche kingdom of Xelaju, Quezaltenango is also noteworthy for its hot sulfur baths and mineral springs. Many of Guatemala's best-known scholars, musicians, and writers have lived in the city. The population is approximately 90,000.

SAN JOSÉ, a commercial port on the Pacific Coast, is two hours from Guatemala City over a paved road. The nearby beaches of Chulamar, Likin, and Iztapa offer surf bath-

ing—limited, however, by a strong undertow at certain hours, and occasional sharks. The beaches are black volcanic ash, which is extremely hot in direct sun. Water-skiing, swimming, and fishing are possible on the canal and river that empty into the Pacific near Iztapa. Deep-sea fishing excursions can be arranged. Deer, wild pig, duck, and dove are also hunted in this area. The population is about 18,000.

ZACAPA is the capital of Zacapa Department in the eastern region, 25 miles from the Honduras border. This old community grew fast in the late 19th century with the completion of the Puerto Barrios-Guatemala City railroad. It now has approximately 34,000 residents. A principal railway junction, Zacapa is known for its cheese and cigars. Growers from the hinterland ship their products to the city; yields include corn, beans, sugarcane, and livestock. The 1976 earthquake caused extensive property damage.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Guatemala is the most northern and populous of the five Central American countries. Occupying 42,042 square miles, it is about the size of Tennessee. It is bordered on the north and west by Mexico, on the southeast by Honduras and El Salvador, on the east by Belize and the Caribbean Sea, and on the south by the Pacific Ocean. Guatemalan coastlines cover about 200 miles on the Pacific Ocean and 70 miles on the Caribbean.

The country is roughly divided into four geographic regions: the central-western highlands, the low northern plateau which is largely jungle, the southern volcanic regions of the Sierra Madre, and tropical coastal lowlands. The temperate mountain regions are the most densely populated.

Guatemala City's rainy season is May through October and its dry season, November through April. Temperatures are generally moderate during both seasons, ranging from an average low of 53°F in January to 60°F–85°F in April. Frost and snow are unknown, and flowers bloom year round.

Rainfall is heaviest from June through October; the annual average is approximately 52 inches. The wet months can cause mildew damage to clothing, shoes, luggage, and upholstered furniture. Frequent airing and the use of heating units in closets helps to prevent mildew. Long-stay travellers should consider bringing portable dehumidifiers. During the dry season, days are clear, and the sun is hot at midday with chilly to cold mornings and evenings. During these months it is dusty, foliage turns brown, grass and shrubs wither, and gardens must be watered.

Guatemala has 33 volcanoes, 4 within view of the city. Although most are inactive, Pacaya, about 27 miles south of Guatemala City, erupts occasionally with lava flows to nearby localities. Fuego, about 30 miles from the city, periodically produces impressive displays visible from Guatemala City.

Earth tremors are common. In 1976, a devastating earthquake struck Guatemala. Some 27,000 people were killed and over 1 million left homeless. Damage was greatest in areas with adobe housing. The modern sections of Guatemala City suffered light-to-moderate damage, but most of the city has been repaired. Before 1976, the last major earthquake to cause considerable damage occurred in 1917.

Population

The 2000 estimated population was 12.7 million—some 3 million of whom live in the capital and its suburbs. The annual population growth rate is about 3%. An estimated 43% of the nation's population is culturally Indian. The remainder, which

includes Caucasians and people of mixed descent, speak Spanish and wear Western dress. Most of the small black population lives in the Caribbean coastal area.

Spanish is the principal urban language. It is necessary to have at least a basic knowledge of Spanish for day-to-day living. At least four major Indian languages and over 20 dialects are predominant in the villages where Spanish is not widely spoken. Many Indians, descendants of the Mayans, maintain ancient customs and wear colorful and distinctive regional dress. Many practice traditional Mayan forms of worship, often mixed with Christianity.

Public Institutions

Guatemala's 1985 Constitution and 1993 constitutional reforms provide for a popularly elected President and Vice President, a unicameral legislature representing the country's 22 departments, and an independent 13-member Supreme Court. All officials serve for 4 years.

Municipal officials are also elected. Political power has been concentrated in the executive branch, consistent with Hispano-Roman tradition. Department governors are appointed by the central government. Approximately 19 parties span a political spectrum from right to moderate left. The executive branch consists of 13 ministries: agriculture, livestock, and food; communications, transportation, and public works; culture and sports; economy; education; energy and mines; finance; foreign affairs; government; labor; national defense; public health and social welfare; and urban and rural development.

Autonomous or semiautonomous public institutions include the Guatemalan Telephone Company (GUA-TEL), Planning Council, Institute for Agricultural Transformation (INTA), the Electrical Development Institute (INDE), and the Bank of Guatemala.

As in much of Latin America, the national university, the University of San Carlos, is an institution of considerable importance and provides Guatemala with most of its technical experts and political leaders.

Arts, Science, and Education

Textiles and painting are Guatemala's primary art forms; many artists have gained international renown. "Artesania" thrives across the nation, producing colorful pottery, wood carving, and other objects. Exhibits by aspiring and established artists are held at the now autonomous Binational Center, Instituto Guatemalteco-Americano (IGA), and in other galleries. The Patronato de Bellas Artes promotes artistic expression and the preservation of Guatemala's rich heritage of both Indian and Spanish colonial art forms. To further bolster the arts, the government has recently boosted funding to the National Theater complex and a new corporate body modeled after the National Endowment for the Arts.

The National Symphony Orchestra and the National Ballet Company perform as funding permits. The Biannual Paiz Cultural Festival showcases every February in odd years, the performing and plastic arts.

Guatemala's national instrument, the marimba, known locally as "the voice of the trees," is played singularly or in groups of up to 20 musicians simultaneously playing five instruments. Though U.S. music, even "rap" with Spanish lyrics, is increasingly heard, marimba presentations still figure prominently in formal shows and at restaurants and theaters.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Guatemalan art and Indian culture is the profusion of native textiles. Guatemala's 23 ethnolinguistic groupings exhibit their different roots by distinctive costumes. The intricately hand-

woven or embroidered women's "huipiles," or blouses, are famous among textile connoisseurs throughout the world. Many are trying to protect both family/community weaving enterprises and this dying art itself from machines churning out lesser quality tourist wares. The modern Ixchel Museum, built according to U.S. specifications, on the campus of Francisco Marroquin University, not only engages in this endeavor, it houses permanent and changing exhibits of indigenous textiles, and conducts educational programs.

Although many village men have adopted Western dress, interesting men's costumes can still be seen in the Lake Atitlan region, Chichicastenango, and in the Province of Huehuetenango.

Theater consists mainly of semiprofessional organizations whose performances follow no regular season. Productions are held in small theaters, the Binational Center, or the city's modern, attractive National Theater complex. The School of Theater at the Universidad Popular and the Teatro de Arte Universitario at San Carlos University also offer performances throughout the year.

The Guatemalan scientific community is based in the universities, the National Meteorological Service, and the Academia de Geografia e Historia. Several research centers formed under the auspices of the Central American Common Market, including the Central American Nutritional Research Center, are also headquartered in Guatemala City. Most scientific effort is directed toward economic development.

The San Carlos University, the national campus that enrolls upwards of 70,000 students for minimal fees, was founded in 1676. All lectures are in Spanish. The Faculty of Humanities corresponds to a school of liberal arts in the U.S., offering courses in philosophy, education, and literature. Courses in the sciences, engineering, medicine, and law are also available. Begin-

ning in the 1960s, four smaller private universities, Rafael Landivar, Mariano Galvez, Francisco Marroquin, and Del Valle, opened their doors to students and have continued to grow: the four universities sponsor 20-odd "extension" campuses across Guatemala's departments.

For decades, scholars, researchers, students, and culturally oriented tourists have been lured to Guatemala for its rich anthropological and archeological attractions. Epigraphers stand awed before the secrets of Tikal, now a national park; historians delightedly burrow through the treasures of the Archivo General de Centro America and the Centro de Investigaciones de Mesoamerica (CIRMA) in Antigua.

Commerce and Industry

Guatemala's GDP for 2001 was estimated at \$20.0 billion, with real growth slowing to approximately 2.3%. After the signing of the final peace accord in December 1996, Guatemala was well-positioned for rapid economic growth over the next several years, though a financial crisis in 1998 limited its ability to achieve its potential growth rates.

Guatemala's economy is dominated by the private sector, which generates about 85% of GDP. Agriculture contributes 23% of GDP and accounts for 75% of exports. Most manufacturing is light assembly and food processing, geared to the domestic, U.S., and Central American markets. Over the past several years, tourism and exports of textiles, apparel, and nontraditional agricultural products such as winter vegetables, fruit, and cut flowers have boomed, while more traditional exports such as sugar, bananas, and coffee continue to represent a large share of the export market. Because of Guatemala's continued reliance on coffee exports, the recent downturn in world prices has contributed to Guatemala's rel-

atively slow growth over the past 2 years.

The United States is the country's largest trading partner, providing 35% of Guatemala's imports and receiving 27% of its exports. The government sector is small and shrinking, with its business activities limited to public utilities--some of which have been privatized--ports and airports and several development-oriented financial institutions.

Guatemala was certified to receive export trade benefits under the United States' Caribbean Basic Trade and Partnership Act (CBTPA) in October 2000, and enjoys access to U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits. Due to concerns over serious worker rights protection issues Guatemala's benefits under both the CBTPA and GSP were reviewed in 2001. After passage of labor code reforms in May 2001, and the successful prosecution of labor rights violations against banana union workers dating to 1999, the review was lifted.

Current economic priorities include: Liberalizing the trade regime; Financial services sector reform; Overhauling Guatemala's public finances; Simplifying the tax structure, enhancing tax compliance, and broadening the tax base.

With 60% of all Guatemalans living in poverty, the country suffers from some of the worst mortality, illiteracy, malnutrition, and other social indicators in the hemisphere region. Providing \$30-\$50 million in annual assistance, USAID is working to address key constraints to Guatemalan development through the promotion of sustainable resource management, smaller and healthier families, improved basic education, enhanced trade and labor rights, and the sustained exercise of inalienable rights.

The headquarters for USAID's regional programs is also located in Guatemala. Through its regional programs, USAID promotes sustainable development throughout Central America, working with the

Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Nutrition Institute for Central America, the Central American Commission for Environment and Development, the Permanent Secretariat of Central American Economic Integration, the Tropical Agricultural Center for Research and Education, the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation, and a wide variety of nongovernmental organizations.

Transportation

Local

Buses, all private and independent, are the primary mode of public transportation within and between Guatemalan cities. In the capital, service is frequent, but most of the buses are old, smoke spewing, and noisy, and their drivers careless. Because of controversial increased prices and severe overcrowding on private buses, the city has recently inaugurated the use of converted semitrailers, with a capacity of 200 passengers, to offer express service along specified routes. Few buses are scheduled after 9 pm or 10 pm.; "ruleteros" (minibuses) pick up and discharge passengers along major streets until midnight. Taxis are available on a 24-hour basis, but are expensive and must be called by telephone or picked up at one of the several stations throughout the city. Use only recommended taxi companies such as those contracted by hotels. Since taxis are not metered, the cost should be settled before any trip. Tipping, though not expected, is always appreciated.

Regional

Interurban bus lines connect most towns and villages within the country. Although serviceable, these buses are often crowded and uncomfortable. Numerous tour agencies are available that offer comfortable transportation and guides at a reasonable cost; however, large-capacity rented vehicles and travel agency vans have been targeted by armed highway bandits.

Guatemala is a country brimming with natural beauty and color, and

travel into the countryside is a welcome respite from city living. Much of the country cannot be visited safely by surface transportation. Roadblocks are occasionally set up by thieves posing as military or police officers, and travel after sunset anywhere in Guatemala is extremely dangerous.

All-weather paved highways traverse the country between Mexico, El Salvador, and both seacoasts. Other roads, which are gradually being improved, vary from two-lane, gravel topped hard bed to single-lane dirt. During the dry season, most unpaved roads are passable, though often dusty and rough. In the rainy season mountain roads are treacherous because of poor markings, frequent landslides, and washouts. Driving to Mexico City takes about 3 days via the coastal route entering Mexico at Tapachula. San Salvador is about 4 1/2 hours by car from Guatemala City.

Drivers in Guatemala take more risks than those in the U.S.; one must drive defensively whether within the city and faced with cars coming in the opposite direction on a one-way street or along the highways where large semitrailers will pass on a blind curve at high speed. Guatemalan law is strict with all parties in an accident, and cars are often impounded.

Infrastructure problems common to many Third World countries are present in Guatemala. Main roads to the larger towns and cities are paved and generally fair though plagued by deep potholes, washed-out bridges, and, during the long, rainy season, sometimes impassable because of mudslides and large fallen boulders. The major road to El Salvador, along which is located one of the schools attended by Mission children, suffers from erosion and is continually undergoing construction efforts.

Bus service is available twice daily between Guatemala and El Salvador. Bus companies offer service from Guatemala to Mexico and Honduras but may require a bus trans-

fer at the borders. Travelers are urged to check with the Regional Security Office regarding guerrilla and criminal activity in the areas through which they plan to drive before planning any international travel. When traveling from El Salvador, the border crossing at Las Chinamas, El Salvador/Valle Nuevo, Guatemala, is preferred. When entering Guatemala from Honduras, the border crossings are at either El Florido or Agua Caliente. With all cross-border travel, travelers need plenty of time to complete border crossing formalities, which can be lengthy, in order to travel to a major town before dark. For group trips, chartered buses are available and border crossings are expedited.

Major car rental agencies, in convenient locations, offer car rental options, but rates are high, between \$35–\$50 a day for subcompact models. Insurance, both collision and liability, is required.

Tourism has recently increased between Guatemala and Costa Rica, with both the Costa Rican airline, LACSA, and Colombian airline, SAM, offering daily flights.

American Airlines provides three daily flights to and from Miami and one flight to and from Dallas each day. United offers daily service to and from Los Angeles, and Continental has one flight per day to and from Houston. The national airline, AVIATECA, has daily service between Guatemala City and Miami and Guatemala City and Los Angeles, and four flights per week to and from New Orleans, via El Salvador. AVIATECA also provides connections to Belize. TACA airlines offers a flight to Washington, D.C., and New York on a daily basis and provides connections to other Central American capitals. KLM, Iberia, and several other Latin American carriers also provide international connections.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

GUATEL, the government-owned and operated communications facility, provides internal and worldwide telephone service. Domestic rates are reasonable with the monthly usage rate averaging Q5. In 1995, a residential long-distance night call to Washington, D.C., cost \$8 for 3 minutes and \$2 for each additional minute. Direct-dialing is available 24 hours daily although service may be intermittent. An AT&T telephone calling card is useful in Guatemala. AT&T offers a more favorable rate on long-distance calling when the AT&T network is utilized. MCI and Sprint accounts also are operable in Guatemala City. The demand for new telephone lines and installations throughout the city has increased dramatically. GUATEL is currently in the process of modernizing their telephone network, which should facilitate the installation of new residential lines.

Telegraph service is also available through GUATEL to all worldwide locations. Internal usage is popular and fairly reliable. Western Union also provides a money transfer service to and from Guatemala.

Radio and TV

Guatemala City has over 65 Spanish radio stations. Thirty-four AM and 31 FM stations feature U.S.-style music, mostly of the pop hit parade variety. Some classical and jazz music programs are also available. News broadcasts can be heard three times daily on approximately 10 stations. Shortwave reception of VOA is good during the early morning or late evening hours. BBC programs (in English or Spanish) are also heard.

Five color TV channels, one government owned, broadcast a daily menu of mixed programs, including Spanish-dubbed U.S. series shows, feature films, Mexican soaps ("Tele-novelas"), and music revues. Two channels provide regular news programs in Spanish three times daily, at 1 pm, 6:30 pm, and 9:45 pm, and one channel offers an early morning

news broadcast from 7 am to 8 am. More than two dozen cable TV operators serve Guatemala City and offer a full range of U.S. programming in English. All major networks, with the exception of PBS, are available through cable, many transmitting 24 hours.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Four morning and one afternoon papers are published daily in Spanish, including one official gazette. The two largest circulating dailies are *Prensa Libre* and *El Grafico*, both with ample international wire service news coverage. A weekly news magazine, *Cronica*, covers Guatemalan economic, political, and cultural news. English-language air express editions of the *Miami Herald*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* circulate at major hotels and newsstands. Latin American editions of *Newsweek* and *Time* appear promptly, and many popular English-language magazines and books are available throughout the city, although prices are double the U.S. price. Two locally published English-language news weeklies, *Central American Report* and *This Week*, contain regional political analyses. They are available only by subscription. Two, more widely distributed, weekly newspapers published locally, the *Guatemala News* and *Guatemala Weekly*, provide additional current event coverage for the English-speaking community.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Good, reliable medical services are available in Guatemala City. Competent and reputable doctors, dentists, ophthalmologists, and veterinarians are available. Most have studied or been trained in the U.S. or Europe and speak English. Specialization is common in most major fields and one or more physicians are available in each.

The major hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic laboratories are adequately equipped. The local supply of medicines, which can usually be bought without prescription, is adequate, but some may be difficult to obtain. If you take prescription drugs, bring a supply with you and arrange to have them sent to you as needed. If special medication is needed, bring a supply and a copy of the prescription.

Community Health

Guatemala City is about 5,000 feet above sea level. Healthy individuals rarely suffer ill effects from the altitude, though precautions must necessarily be taken to guard against overexposure to the sun's harmful rays. Guatemala's standards of sanitation are fair. Generally, health conditions in Guatemala City are good.

Diarrhea and amoebic and bacillary dysentery are not uncommon. These illnesses, as well as paratyphoid and typhoid fever, can be contracted from unpurified water and uncleaned vegetables. Hepatitis is endemic to the region. Safe drinking water remains a problem, but many Guatemalan communities are developing adequate supply and purification systems. Tuberculosis is the most serious contagious endemic disease and is prevalent in a large percentage of the Indian population. Although sanitariums exist, control of those infected with tuberculosis is inadequate, and the annual death rate from the disease is high. Smallpox has been eradicated.

In the coastal and other lowland areas of Guatemala, as well as nearby Lake Amatitlan, malaria is prevalent. Although a malaria eradication program is in operation, the incidence of the disease has increased significantly in the past few years. When traveling to these areas, appropriate prophylactic medication should be taken.

It is important to have window screens in residences to keep out disease-carrying mosquitoes and houseflies, and to eliminate or minimize breeding places in the immedi-

ate vicinity. The use of insect repellent is also recommended during times of the year when mosquitoes are more prevalent, and when traveling to lowlands and coastal areas.

Preventive Measures

Guatemala City's water supply is sporadic. During the dry season, water pressure occasionally drops so low that there is little or no water in many homes; in some instances, city water is turned off completely. Processed drinking water is delivered to the door and may be purchased in 5-gallon bottles for Q7.50. Most Americans use this or boil tap water to make it safe for drinking.

Although several dairies deliver pasteurized milk to homes, for consistency in quality and freshness, powdered or long-life shelf milk is recommended.

Locally purchased fresh fruits and vegetables should not be eaten raw, unless they can be peeled. Cooking is the only sure way to disinfect fresh fruits and vegetables. Another effective method is to immerse them in actively boiling water for one minute. Leafy vegetables treated in this manner will show only slight wilting on the outermost leaves, and the palatability of other sturdier vegetables and fruits will not be affected. An alternative method is to use a Clorox bleach solution for soaking fruit and vegetables.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Flights to Guatemala can be arranged from the U.S. on the Guatemalan government-owned airline, AVIATECA, or on TACA. In February 1991, a new Guatemalan airline, Aeroquetzal, began U.S. service between Los Angeles and Guatemala City. Good connections also are provided by other carriers. Some expatriates drive to Guatemala from the U.S. if they have the time and stamina. Drivers are cautioned

that during the rainy months (May-October) the roads in Guatemala can be treacherous because of washouts, landslides, and earth tremors that create temporary impasses. No American passenger ships come to Guatemala, and travel by ship via Panama and air to Guatemala is not a commonly used route.

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Guatemala, even though many people, including some U.S.-based airline employees, mistakenly believe otherwise. U.S. citizens returning to the United States from Guatemala are not allowed to board their flights without a valid U.S. passport. Therefore, U.S. citizens are strongly advised to obtain a U.S. passport before departing the United States. Certificates of Naturalization, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and photocopies are not considered acceptable alternative travel documents. While in Guatemala, U.S. citizens should carry their passports, or photocopies of their passports, with them at all times. Minors (under 18) traveling with a valid U.S. passport need no special permission from their parents to enter or leave Guatemala. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less (that period can be extended upon application). An exit tax must be paid when departing Guatemala.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Guatemala are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City and obtain updated information on travel and security in Guatemala. You may now informally register with the American Citizen Services Section via e-mail to amcitsguatemala@state.gov. Your registry information should include your complete name, date and place of birth, U.S. passport number, itinerary, contact information in both the United States and Guatemala. You may wish to attach a scanned copy of your U.S. passport and/or e-mail it to your own address or to someone in the United States. This will enable you to easily retrieve a copy

of your passport to facilitate a replacement.

The latest security information is available from the Embassy, including its website (see below). The Consular Section is open for citizens services, including registration, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. weekdays, excluding U.S. and Guatemalan holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located at Avenida La Reforma 7-01, Zone 10; telephone (502) 331-1541 during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), or (502) 331-8904 for emergencies during non-business hours; fax (502) 331-0564; Internet website - <http://usembassy.state.gov/guatemala/>.

Pets

All pets must be covered by certification of rabies inoculation. In addition, an import license issued by Guatemalan authorities is required for any pet arriving in Guatemala.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The time in Guatemala is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus six (or equivalent to Central Time in the U.S.).

The Guatemalan unit of currency is the *quetzalq*, which is on a par with the U.S. dollar. U.S. paper currency is widely accepted.

Various systems of weights and measures are used in Guatemala. Pounds and kilograms (2.2046 pounds) are the most common weight units, but more exotic units such as the *quintal* (100 pounds) are also used frequently. Gasoline is sold by the gallon (U.S.), but milk is sold by the liter. Common units of distance include centimeter, inch, foot, yard, *vara*, meter, kilometer, mile, and *legua*.

Disaster Preparedness

Guatemala is a geologically active country. Therefore, visitors should be aware of the possibility of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, and the need for contingency measures. Occasional eruptions, such as those

in January-February 2000 of Pacaya Volcano near Guatemala City, have forced evacuations of nearby villages and briefly closed Guatemala City's international airport. The major earthquakes in El Salvador in early 2001 caused damage, injuries, and deaths in Guatemala, albeit to a much lesser extent than her neighbor to the east. Both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts of Guatemala are vulnerable to hurricanes and tropical storms from June through November. Mudslides and flooding during the May to November rainy season often kill dozens of people and close roads. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Sunday*
 May 1 Labor Day
 June 30 Army Day
 Aug. 15 Feast of the Assumption

Sept. 15 Guatemala Independence Day
 Oct. 20 Revolution Day
 Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 Dec. 24 (from noon) Christmas Eve
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 31 (from noon) New Year's Eve
 *Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Barry, Tom. *Guatemala: A Country Guide*. Albuquerque, NM: Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center, 1990.

Brosnahan, Tom. *La Ruta Maya: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1991.

Canby, Peter. *The Heart of the Sky: Travel Among the Maya*. New York: HarperCollins Publications, 1992.

Cummins, Ronald. *Guatemala*. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Children's Books, 1990.

Fauriol, Georges A., and Eva Loser. *Guatemala: A Political Puzzle*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications, 1988.

Frommer's Budget Travel Guide Series. *Costa Rica, Guatemala, & Belize on 25 Dollars-a-Day, 1991-92*. New York: Prentice-Hall General Reference & Travel, 1991.

Greenberg, Arnold, and Diana Wells. *Guatemala Alive*. 2nd ed., New York: Alive Publications, 1990.

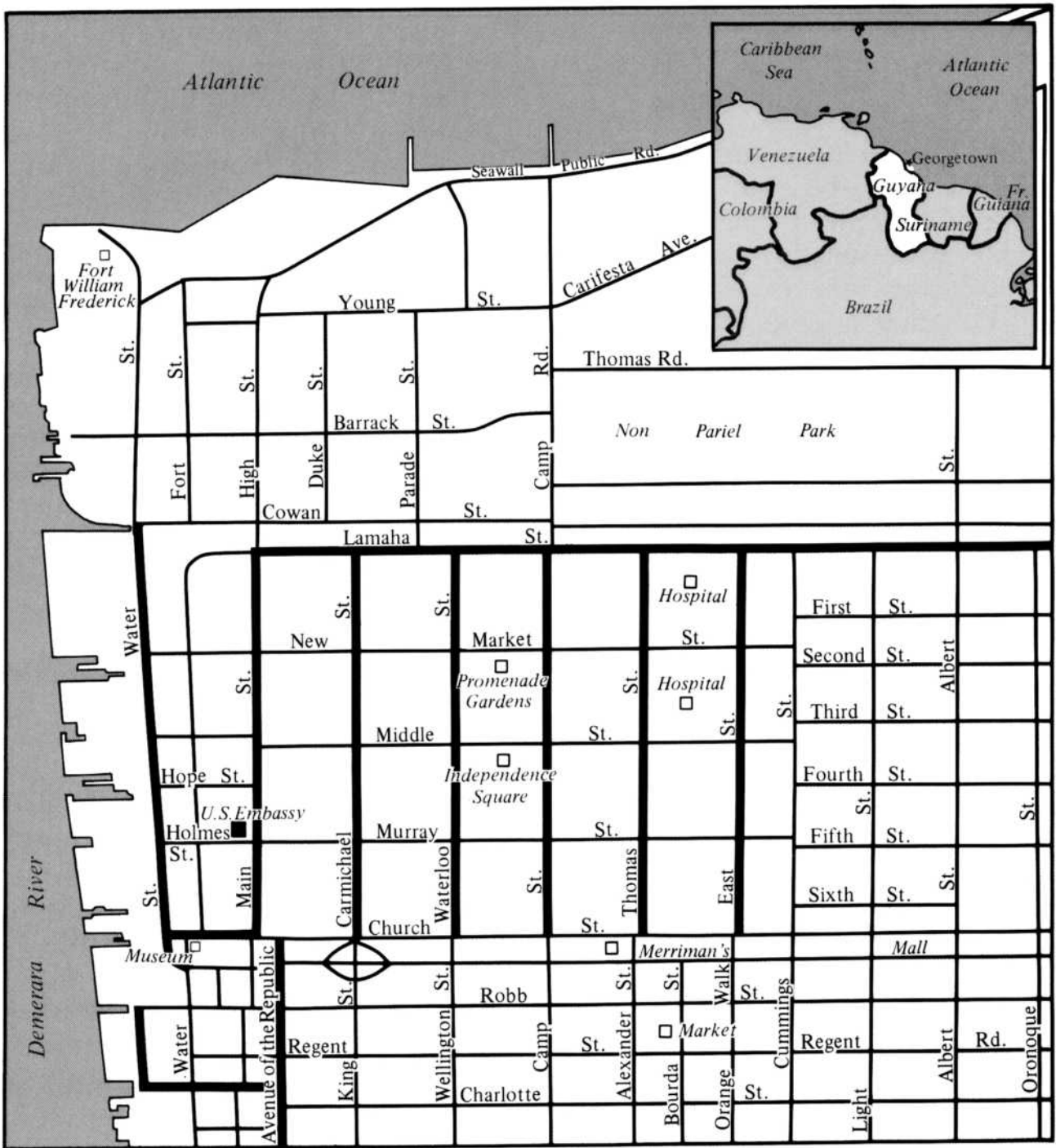
Harvard Student Agencies, Inc. Staff. *Let's Go, 1992: The Budget Guide to Mexico Including Belize & Guatemala*. Rev. ed., New York: St. Martin Press, 1991.

Jonas, Susanne. *The Battle for Guatemala: Rebels, Death Squads, and U.S. Power*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991.

Smith, Carol A., ed. *Guatemalan Indians & the State: 1540 to 1988*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990.

Vlach, Norita. *The Quetzal in Flight: Guatemalan Immigrant Families in the United States*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992.

Wright, Ronald. *Time Along the Maya: Travels in Belize, Guatemala, & Mexico*. New York: Grove Press, 1989.



Georgetown, Guyana

GUYANA

Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Major City:

Georgetown

Other Cities:

Bartica, Corriverton, Linden, New Amsterdam

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

GUYANA, the territory once known as British Guiana, has been a republic within the Commonwealth since February 1970. Its colonial history dates to the 17th century, when the Dutch West Indies Company developed sugar plantations in the settlements of Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice. The British gained control early in the 19th century and eventually united the three settlements as a crown colony.

Guyana is a young country which has suffered from political unrest, and is still a land of ferment and change. Its unusual racial situation combines African, East Indian, Amerindian, and British cultures and institutions, struggling to build

a sound economy. Guyana's topography includes a long, settled coastal area and a beautiful, isolated, and primitive frontier.

A tragic event in November 1978 brought worldwide attention to this small South American nation—900 members of a fanatic religious cult committed mass suicide in what came to be known as the Jonestown Massacre. Great numbers of the cult followers were American; U.S. Representative Leo J. Ryan and members of his party were ambushed and murdered when they arrived to investigate human abuses at cult headquarters.

MAJOR CITY

Georgetown

Guyana's capital city, Georgetown (pop. approximately 254,000), is located at the mouth of the Demerara River on the northeast coast of Guyana. Because it lies below sea level, it is protected by a seawall. Because there are no passable roads connecting it with any of the neighboring countries, and because its port is visited only by cargo vessels, Georgetown's only link to the outside world is by air. The only other communities of any size in Guyana

are New Amsterdam (pop. 25,000), 70 miles east of Georgetown at the mouth of the Berbice River, and the bauxite mining town of Linden (pop. 35,000), 67 miles south on the Demerara River. Inhabitants of the three principal urban areas are predominantly African; those of the countryside are mainly East Indian.

Declining national income during the 1980s and deteriorating infrastructure has resulted in substandard living conditions for most Guyanese citizens. Beginning in 1991, however, because of privatization, foreign investment, and the government's economic recovery program, the gross domestic product (GDP) has grown at rates in excess of 6% a year, and wages and benefits, employment, and working conditions have improved. Most consumer goods, which virtually disappeared during the 1980s, are now widely available again but still unaffordable for many Guyanese. Many basic services such as electricity, transportation, and health care, remain limited and unreliable.

About 310 third country nationals and 1,135 U.S. citizens live in Guyana, most of them dual nationals born in Guyana or born abroad of Guyanese parents. There are 12 foreign missions in Georgetown: the High Commissions of the U.K., Canada, and India, and the embassies of



Street in Georgetown, Guyana

EDP Photos/Richard Lobban. Reproduced by permission.

Brazil, Colombia, Suriname, Venezuela, the People's Republic of China, Russia, Cuba, North Korea, and the U.S. The U.N. Development Program, the European Union, the World Health Organization, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), and the Inter-American Development Bank also have offices in Georgetown. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat is headquartered here. Most of the other major countries have nonresident ambassadors who visit Guyana from time to time and a dozen or so are also represented by Guyanese acting as honorary consuls.

Food

Grocery stores and public markets in Georgetown offer a variety of meat, poultry, fish, and seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables. Sanitary conditions in the markets are poor.

Common locally grown vegetables include cassava, plantains, yams, breadfruit, eddoes (a dry variety of sweet potato) and eggplant. These are high in carbohydrates and available in season only. Green and yellow vegetables—bora beans (a thin green bean), leaf lettuce, cabbage, pumpkin and various squash, cucumbers, onions, potatoes, spinach, callaloo, and tomatoes—are

available throughout the year. Local celery is adequate for seasoning, but unsuitable for relish trays. Green onions (scallions), small red and green peppers, and fresh thyme are usually available. Parsley is expensive and occasionally found. Locally grown rice that has been parboiled before packaging is cheap and a staple in the Guyanese diet.

Local oranges, grapefruits, tangerines, watermelons, bananas, pineapples, mangoes, papaya, yellow melons, and avocados are good and plentiful, although some are available only seasonally.

A wide variety of canned foods, including canned baby foods and pet food, are available but expensive.

Local meats are generally available and special orders can be placed at several meat stores. Fish, chicken and pork are usually good; prawns (shrimp) and red snapper are especially tasty. Cheese, butter, milk (UHT, evaporated, and powdered, but not fresh), and all other dairy products are available at most grocery stores.

Clothing

Dress for tropical weather. Summer clothing is worn year round. Cotton wash-and-wear and synthetic knit fabrics are suitable. Silks are

impractical because of the need for expert dry-cleaning. Nylon is an easy-care fabric, but uncomfortable in the heat. Woolens are generally not worn, except for men's tropical-weight wool suits.

Men: In the office most men wear slacks with a short-sleeved shirt and tie. Suits and slacks can be made to order locally.

Most social occasions are informal or casual. Casual events call for short-sleeved sport shirts or the guayabera. Reasonably priced short-sleeved guayaberas can be purchased locally. Long-sleeved guayaberas (difficult to purchase locally) may be worn in place of a suit on some occasions.

Women: Sport and straw hats are worn frequently for outdoor events because of the strong sun. Few women wear stockings. Slacks are popular, but shorts are worn only for sports or at home. Long dresses are occasionally worn but cocktail dresses are popular for receptions and dinners. In the office, most women wear cotton dresses or blouses and skirts. Short-sleeved cotton or cotton-blend sweaters are also worn. Light sweaters or stoles are sometimes needed. Bring a good supply of shoes, sandals, sneakers, old shoes, and rubber boots. A fold-up plastic raincoat is useful, as is an umbrella. Bring a supply of lightweight undergarments.

Children: Guyana is beginning to produce some good children's clothing, particularly inexpensive, attractive dresses. Local clothing is limited in selection, size, and price, and even items of poor quality cost more than in the U.S. The American School does not require uniforms nor does the dress code prohibit jeans, shorts, sneakers, or jumpsuits.

Supplies and Services

Although toiletries and medicines can be purchased locally, the cost is usually high.

Laundry service is poor and slow. The only local dry-cleaning service

in town is reasonably good. Georgetown has numerous seamstresses and tailors, whose work is inexpensive but varies in quality. Shoe repair is adequate. Most beauty shop operators have been trained in the U.S. or U.K. and offer good services. Most shops are unisex and offer acceptable haircuts.

Religious Activities

There are many religious denominations in Guyana, and Georgetown has churches, temples, and mosques of many faiths, although the order of service and the music may differ from U.S. churches. The East Indians are mainly Hindu or Muslim. The largest Christian church is Anglican (Episcopal), with about 110,000 members; Roman Catholics number about 60,000. Other denominations include Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, Presbyterian, Christian Scientist, Lutheran, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptist, Pentecostal, Church of Christ, Moravian, Assembly of God, Baha'i, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Education

Most Americans and international children attend the Georgetown American School, an institution sponsored by the U.S. State Department through its Office of Overseas Schools, from nursery through grade 12. Founded in 1971, the school's goal is to provide an education equal to that offered at better American public schools. American texts are used in all courses. The faculty is well qualified and includes several Americans, one of whom is the Director. In recent years enrollment has steadily increased and for 1996–97 stands at 115. Class size is quite small and individualized instruction is the norm. In 1993–94, grades 10–12 were offered for the first time.

The school year runs from September through mid-June. The school day begins at 7:45 and ends at 2:15. Classes in music, art, foreign languages, and physical education are an integral part of the curriculum. The school has a respectable library,

a science lab, and an adequate number of computers.

The Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is composed of the parents of students enrolled at the school. School policy is set by a seven-member Board of Directors, six of whom are elected annually by the parents, and one, usually the Embassy administrative officer, is appointed by the U.S. Ambassador.

Special Educational Opportunities

Few opportunities for advanced study or adult education exist in Georgetown, other than those offered by the University of Guyana. Foreign language instruction in Spanish and Portuguese is offered to the public by the Venezuelan and Brazilian embassies. Language instruction in German is also available. A few music teachers instruct beginning and intermediate students, but facilities for advanced musical education are nonexistent. Ballet and modern dance lessons are available to adults as well as children.

Sports

There is a nine-hole golf course about 10 miles from town which is rough but playable. There are several tennis courts and tennis and golf tournaments and competitions are common. The Pegasus and Tower Hotels and the Guyana Bank of Trade and Industry (GBTI) offer swimming, tennis, and weightlifting facilities for a membership fee. Annual dues for access to tennis and swimming at the Pegasus for a family with children are about US\$600. GBTI is more reasonable. The Georgetown Club has a restaurant, bar and squash court, and annual dues are low.

Bicycles are widely used here for transportation among Guyanese, and bicycle racing is a popular sport. The National Park is an area where many people cycle, jog, or walk. It is not recommended that Americans walk/jog alone at the National Park or the seawall late in the evenings or early in the mornings.

Cricket and soccer are the two most popular sports for Guyanese. There are also rugby and basketball clubs and several karate groups. Another interesting sport, but not so common, is goat racing.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Guyana's tourist attractions are not easy or cheap to get to. The east-west road offers endless views of rice and sugar plantations and the pavement on the north-south road ends at the bauxite mines. Few foreigners swim in either the ocean or the Demerara River. Ocean currents from Brazil carry silt from the Amazon to Guyana's coast and silt from Guyana's own rivers makes the ocean the color of thick coffee with mudflats to match. However, for those willing to travel by boat, truck, or small plane, Guyana offers a vast wilderness of undiscovered eco-tourism sites. Excursions can be arranged independently or through local travel agencies to sugar plantations (most of which have guest houses), jungle creeks, Amerindian villages, rustic tourist lodges (Timberhead, Shanklands, Madewini, and Kaow Island) and spectacular waterfalls. Guyana offers fabulous hunting (duck, deer, wild hog, and other exotic animals) and fishing. Birdwatchers find a large selection of species.

Kaieteur Falls, Guyana's best-known and most heavily visited tourist attraction, is five times higher than Niagara, but has no protective railings or tourist shops. Located in thick jungle 160 miles southwest of Georgetown, it is usually reached by chartered aircraft, but some choose to make the difficult 4-day overland trip by truck/boat/hiking.

Several ranches in the Rupununi Savanna offer comfortable overnight accommodations and various activities including riding, hunting, fishing, and swimming. Karanambo Ranch, which offers refuge to the endangered giant river otters, has been the subject of a *National Geographic* television special.

Adventurous types will want to consider investing in a sturdy four-wheel-drive vehicle. Although not essential, a winch, heavy-duty mud tires, and even a liftkit are all useful for driving trips deep into the interior. The adventurous will also want to consider investing in a boat of some type, as the best sporting and travel opportunities in the interior are on Guyana's numerous rivers and creeks. Individuals have found canoes, foldable kayaks, and aluminum boats with 25-horsepower outboard motors useful and enjoyable. The key to boating in Guyana is having a craft which your vehicle can transport from the road to the river. This generally means having both a four-wheel drive vehicle and a boat that can fit on or inside it. A boat that requires a trailer is restricted to those major rivers which can be reached by paved road.

The Swims Club, about 40 minutes south of Georgetown on the Demerara, offers not swimming but storage facilities and loading ramps for boats. Some people keep larger boats with inboard engines there for excursions on the river.

Points of interest in Georgetown include the Botanical Gardens which have an excellent zoo and an adjacent playground with slides, swings, etc. The National Museum in Georgetown is small, but its exhibits on the history of Guyana, Amerindian life and customs, gold and diamond prospecting methods, animals, and plants are well worth a visit.

For a change of scenery, vacation trips are possible to Antigua, Barbados, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada or other West Indian islands, and also to neighboring Venezuela, Suriname and French Guiana. The islands are popular for their excellent beaches and more cosmopolitan atmosphere. However, flight schedules usually require more than a 2-day weekend. Flying time is about 1 hour to Trinidad or 2 hours to Barbados or Antigua. Round-trip fares to those islands are about US\$150. Hotel prices are high in season, mid-December to

mid-April, but considerably lower during the off-season. Some hotels give discounts to diplomats or residents of the Caribbean community.

Entertainment

The Guyana Theater Guild and other drama groups have several good productions throughout the year, but only one auditorium in Guyana, the National Cultural Centre, is air-conditioned. Many video clubs offer a wide selection of tapes. Movie theaters are not usually patronized by foreigners.

Occasional outdoor concerts by the Guyana Police Force and the Guyana Defense Force Bands usually are held in the Botanical Gardens or at the seawall bandstand. Visiting musical or dance groups occasionally perform in Guyana, usually under sponsorship of one of the embassies. The National School of Dance also offers occasional performances.

Social Activities

Four or five restaurants in town, including the Hotel Tower and Pegasus, allow private entertaining—the Cara Lodge Bottle Restaurant opened during 1996 and may be the best. However, most Americans entertain in their homes with informal cocktails or buffets. There are several floating bridge, poker, and games nights in Georgetown that many Americans participate in. Several charity balls are given throughout the year. Rotary, Lions, and Toastmasters Clubs all have active memberships in Georgetown.

CORRIVERTON lies 70 miles southeast of Georgetown, in the far northeastern corner of Guyana. This city of about 11,000 is on an estuary of the Courantyne River, separating Guyana from Suriname. The villages of Springlands and Skeldon were united in 1970 to form Corentyne River Town, which later became known as Corriverton. It is a small port, as well as the terminus of a road from Georgetown. Area agricultural products include sugarcane and rice; cattle are also raised. Most residents of Corriverton are East Indian.

LINDEN is located 40 miles south of Georgetown on the Demerara River. It serves as a processing point for the bauxite mined extensively in the region. Linden's population of about 35,000 is linked to Georgetown by road and air.

NEW AMSTERDAM is a commercial and manufacturing center for Guyana's northeast lowlands. Situated on the Berbice River 50 miles southeast of Georgetown, New Amsterdam was built by the Dutch in 1740. By 1790, it had become the seat of colonial government, only to be seized by the British 13 years later. An Anglican cathedral bespeaks the British influence in an otherwise Dutch atmosphere. Agricultural activities include sugarcane and rice production, as well as cattle raising. The city is linked to Georgetown via highways and railroad. The population of New Amsterdam is approximately 25,000.

OTHER CITIES

BARTICA, despite its small size, plays a big role in Guyana. Situated at the confluence of the Essequibo, Mazaruni, and Cuyuni Rivers, 40 miles southwest of Georgetown, it is a commercial center of a few thousand residents. Small oceangoing ships dock here, while critical roads to interior gold and diamond fields start in the town. Bartica has air service to Georgetown.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Guyana lies on the northern coast of South America, bounded on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the southwest and south by Brazil, on the northwest by Venezuela, and on the east by Suriname. Its 285-mile coastline extends from Punta Playa

(near the mouth of the Orinoco River) in the northwest to the Corentyne River in the east. Guyana is 82,980 square miles in area, about the size of Kansas or Idaho.

The low-lying coastland, one of Guyana's three geographic regions, is a flat, often swampy strip of silt and clay about 5½ feet below sea level at high tide. Man-made concrete walls and earthen barriers keep the ocean back and prevent floods. Canals with sluice gates permit drainage to the rivers, and at low tide, to the sea. Most of the country's population and agricultural activity are concentrated in this narrow coastal strip between the Pomeroon and Corentyne Rivers.

The mountain region includes the Pakaraima Range, which lies along the western boundary between the Waini and Rupununi Rivers; a sandstone plateau 22 miles long and more than 9,000 feet above sea level; and the Kanaku Mountains, which lie on both sides of the Rupununi River near the Brazilian border.

The intermediate region, to the east and south of the coastal and mountain regions, is the largest of the three areas. It is mainly tropical forest and jungle, except for the Rupununi Savanna on the southwestern border with Brazil. Large rivers and their tributaries form a vast network of waterways. Rapids and falls hinder navigation and development along the larger rivers. The principal rivers are the Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice, and Corentyne. The Cuyuni, Mazaruni, and Rupununi are major tributaries of the Essequibo River.

Guyana's climate is typical of most tropical countries. Humidity ranges from an average low of 68% in October to 77% in May, and an average high of 79% in October to 86% in May through August. The average annual mean (AAM) is 73% in the afternoons and 83% in the mornings. The high humidity can cause mildew, but air-conditioning and sometimes dehumidifiers and lightbulbs in closets are used to prevent

its occurrence. Minimum temperatures in Georgetown, on the coast, range between 22–26°C (71–80°F) year around, with an AAM low of 75. Maximum temperatures range between 28–32°C (83–90°F), year round, with an AAM high of 86. The sea breezes (east-northeast trade winds) significantly mitigate the heat on the coast.

The coastal area typically has two wet seasons: May to mid-August, when about 40% of the total annual precipitation falls, and December to mid-January, which receive another 20%.

However, occasional rain may fall at any time of the year. Georgetown and the coast average 90 inches of rainfall annually; in the interior, 60–150 inches occur.

Population

Guyana's population of about 703,400 is divided between two major ethnic groups: Guyanese of East Indian origin, estimated at 49%, and those of African origin, 32%. Amerindians constitute about 6%, those of mixed heritage, 12%, and persons of Chinese and European origin comprise about 1%. About 60% live in rural areas; 30% of the labor force is in agriculture. About 50% of the population, including most Afro-Guyanese, is Christian, 9% Muslim, and 33% Hindu.

Guyana celebrates two Hindu and two Muslim holidays as well as Christmas and Easter. Dietary restrictions must be considered when entertaining Guyanese: pork should not be served to Muslims, nor beef to Hindus. Some Muslim Indians do not eat crustaceans, and some Guyanese are vegetarians.

Each ethnic group has made a unique contribution to the character of life in Guyana: the food and the music and dances of the Africans, East Indians, and Amerindians; and the language and legal, commercial, governmental, and educational structures of the British colonists.

Public Institutions

Guyana was a colony known as British Guiana until May 26, 1966. The Co-operative Republic of Guyana was created in 1970. Under the 1980 constitution, Guyana has a mixed parliamentary and presidential system of government. The President and members of Parliament serve for 5-year terms, unless earlier elections are called.

There is a 72-member unicameral parliament, elected by proportional representation, and an independent judiciary and an ombudsman. The Constitution provides for civil rights and the protection of minorities. The two main political parties are the largely Afro-Guyanese People's National Congress (PNC), which governed Guyana for 28 years, and the largely East Indian People's Progressive Party (PPP), which in October 1992 won Guyana's first free and fair elections after independence.

Principal social, philanthropic, and commercial organizations include the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jaycees, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, and Toastmasters Clubs. The leading humanitarian organization is the Guyana Red Cross Society. The Boy Scouts, YMCA, and YWCA are active. Most denominations including the two largest, the Anglicans and Catholics—are represented on the Guyana Council of Churches.

Arts, Science, and Education

The University of Guyana is the mainspring of intellectual activity but is limited in scope. Located just outside of Georgetown, it offers degree programs in accounting, forestry, law, sociology. A university council under government authority administers the University's approximately 2,300 students, who are hampered by decaying facilities and a lack of books and qualified teachers.

Contemporary dance, steel bands, and drama are among Guyana's cul-

tural attractions. Scientific work, mostly agricultural in nature, is carried on at state-sponsored stations throughout the country.

Commerce and Industry

Guyana's economy is dominated by agriculture and mining. Principal products are sugar, rice, bauxite, and gold. The most important gold mine, operated by Canadian firms, is the largest in Latin America. The state-owned bauxite and sugar companies are in World Bank-sponsored rehabilitation programs that may result in their eventual privatization. Timber, rice, and fishing assets have been divested, and an American company purchased 80% of the phone company in 1991. As a result, international telephone and fax service is excellent. Internet service is available from local service providers. Increased demand for machinery in the mining and agricultural sectors is attracting American exporters to Guyana. Major U.S. firms are also involved in offshore oil exploration and the food and beverage industry. The Guyana Electricity Corporation is to be divested shortly.

Guyana trades mainly with the U.S., the European Community, Venezuela, Canada, and with neighboring Caribbean countries that belong to CARICOM. Trade with Brazil, Japan, and Cuba is also of some importance. In 1992 the U.S. supplied 38% of Guyana's imports and purchased 38% of Guyana's exports.

Transportation

Local

Most of Georgetown's streets are paved, but in need of repair. Fast-moving, crowded minibuses are a traffic hazard for Georgetown drivers. Taxis are inexpensive and much safer.

Outside of Georgetown, about 450 miles of paved roads run mainly along the coast and the populated east bank of the Demerara River. A

paved two-lane road runs south to the airport (27 miles). From the airport, a highway (in better shape than most roads) continues south to Linden (67 miles from Georgetown). Another main road runs from Georgetown east to Rosignol (65 miles), where the Berbice River can be crossed on a car and passenger ferry. On the eastern side of the river, at New Amsterdam, the highway resumes to the Corentyne River and the border of Suriname. The Corentyne, like the Berbice, is wide and unbridged, and only passenger ferry service is available.

Most of the 1,500 miles of unpaved roads and trails in the interior are passable by truck or four-wheel-drive vehicles, but only during the dry season. Speedboats, launches, and steamers service many river communities. Many miles of roadless swamps and jungle separate coastal Guyana from Venezuela. A laterite road from Linden to the towns of Lethem and Bon Fim on the Guyana-Brazil border is under construction, but about 60 miles remains to be finished. A floating bridge across the Demerara River opened in 1978. The Essequibo, like the Berbice, must be crossed by car ferry. In many respects, Guyana is like an island.

Regional

The main gateway to Georgetown and Guyana is Timehri International Airport, 27 miles from the city, 45 minutes by car. The government-owned Guyana Airways Corporation (GAC) has direct, nonstop flights to and from New York and Toronto. BWIA, a carrier based in Trinidad and owned by the Government of Trinidad & Tobago, provides daily service to and from JFK New York via Barbados and to and from Miami via Trinidad. It also flies from Guyana to Antigua and Jamaica. American Airlines flies daily between the U.S. and Trinidad and the U.S. and Barbados, but passengers on all the flights except the New York-Barbados flight, must overnight before taking BWIA, LIAT or Suriname Airways to Georgetown. LIAT (Leeward Islands Air Transport) operates between Geor-

getown and Barbados with connections there to all the eastern Caribbean islands as well as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Suriname Airways flies 2 days a week from Paramaribo to Georgetown. A small Venezuelan airline, ASERCA, provides service to Venezuela; there is no direct service to Brazil.

Guyana Airways Corporation offers daily service to many domestic locations. Charter flights can easily be arranged to other areas. Other means of transportation are poor or nonexistent. Guyana has no deep harbors, so only small ocean freighters, mostly under 10,000 tons, and a number of bauxite carriers call at Guyana's ports.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service is available in Georgetown and throughout the settled coastal area. International phone and fax service is excellent, and it costs less to call from Guyana to the U.S. than vice versa. Currently, a 3-minute call to Washington, D.C., costs about US\$2.05, but rates may soon be increased. In Georgetown the annual phone rental is about US\$18. Calls to nearby cities cost about US\$0.04 for 3 minutes. Principal settlements in the interior have radio/telephone facilities. Extremely cheap telegraph service is available to and from the U.S. and the rest of the world. Telegrams to Washington, D.C., cost US\$0.47 for 100 words; a 22-word night letter costs US\$0.10. Internet varies from US\$1 to US\$54 a month.

Radio and TV

Guyana's two government-owned radio stations (Voice of Guyana and Radio Roraima) operate on two AM and two FM frequencies in Georgetown. Direct relays of the Voice of America (VOA) are used for special events, and VOA is available on medium wave, mornings and evenings. Georgetown has 15 TV stations, 1 of which is government owned. Many rebroadcast U.S. pro-

grams; including CBS and CNN newscasts and the “McNeil-Lehrer News Hour.”

Newspapers, Magazines and Technical Journals

Two daily newspapers are published in Guyana: the state-owned *Chronicle* and the independent *Stabroek News*. The *Mirror* is the twice-weekly organ of the ruling Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) and the *New Nation* is the weekly organ of the People’s National Congress (PNC). The Catholic Church publishes the *Catholic Standard* every Friday, often with important local news missed by the daily papers. The daily papers devote one or two pages each day to wire service reports of international news. The international editions of *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines are available each week, but many current foreign periodicals are not. Several small book-stores and the book departments of general stores offer a very limited selection.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical services in Guyana are extremely limited. Medical care is very marginal and serious medical or trauma cases will need evacuation to the U.S.

Guyana has several qualified, practicing dentists, but due to poor sanitary conditions in the offices visited, only one dentist has been identified for referrals for minor problems. There are no qualified orthodontists or periodontists, and few local dentists can maintain and adjust already-installed braces.

The few competent local physicians are extremely busy and sometimes hindered by shortages of medications and supplies. Specialists who are even fewer in number, work with the most basic equipment. Currently, there is no qualified cardiologist and only one urologist. The Georgetown Hospital recently commissioned a new ambulatory health-care facility which is being

plagued by shortages of medicines and qualified staff. CAT scan facilities are unavailable in the country and nursing skills are generally considered poor.

Local opticians and optometrists are qualified to fill prescriptions for glasses, but the quality of eye examinations is questionable. Choice of frames and lenses is limited. Two qualified ophthalmologists have private practices.

Local pharmacies stock common medicines, but supplies may be erratic. Purchasing medicines locally is done with caution and only products from approved manufacturers are chosen. Persons taking regular prescription medications are advised to bring an adequate supply to last until they can access local sources or arrange for regular supplies to be obtained from the U.S.

Local laboratory facilities perform many routine tests but may be hampered by outdated supplies and shortages of reagents. Some tests which are considered routine in the U.S. may pose a problem here. Venipuncture techniques vary from technician to technician.

Community Health

The incidence of malaria in the interior of Guyana has increased over the years and cases number some 40,000 per year. Chloroquine-resistant falciparum malaria has been confirmed in the country along with infections from plasmodium vivax, plasmodium falciparum and mixed infections. There has been a slight increase in malaria cases reported in Region 4 (Demerara/Mahaica) which includes Georgetown, but malaria chemoprophylaxis is not advised for Georgetown at this time. All persons are advised to sleep under a mosquito net which has been sprayed with permethrin (permanone) and to use personal protective measures routinely. Persons traveling out of Georgetown to interior regions are advised to contact the Health Unit for advice on prophylaxis.

Microfilaria is prevalent in the Guyanese population, and the advanced state of infection of this parasite is seen in the form of noninfectious elephantiasis.

Tuberculosis is reportedly on the upsurge in certain regions of Guyana, especially in Region 4.

Cholera is also a threat with regular outbreaks in the neighboring countries.

Typhoid and intestinal parasites are now considered endemic in Guyana. Sporadic outbreaks of gastrointestinal diseases occur from time to time along with hepatitis.

Dengue fever has been reported in epidemic proportions in five countries in South America during the last 10 years. Cases of the more serious Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF) have been reported. The Vector Control Unit has reported confirmed cases of dengue fever in Guyana.

In Georgetown, city garbage collection is irregular, and garbage pile-ups and illegal dumping are widespread. Sewage disposal in the outskirts of the city is by septic tank. In the city itself, the underground sewer system is antiquated and inadequate, and presents many problems due to frequent blockages and overflows. The drainage system is not adequately maintained so there is often flooding and accumulation of stagnant water during the rainy season. Water supplies are usually adequate, but can be interrupted by low pressure or breaks in the water mains. Tap water is not safe to drink. It should be either filtered and boiled, or distilled.

Care is required when buying fresh food. Market standards are poor. Frequent and long lasting power outages may pose a threat to refrigerated stocks in commercial establishments or markets.

Preventive Measures

- Ensure that water for drinking is safe. Use milk treated by UHT or pasteurization. Powdered milk is

also available locally. Wash fruits and vegetables well with detergent, then soak in a solution made up of one tablespoon of household bleach (5% chlorine) to one gallon of potable water for 15 minutes, then rinse well with potable water.

- Ensure that required immunizations are kept up-to-date. Immunizations required for Georgetown are yellow fever, typhoid, tetanus, polio, and hepatitis A and B.
- Check with the Health Unit before traveling out of town or into the interior to assess the need for malaria prophylaxis. Ensure that a high standard of sanitation is maintained in the home at all times. Keep surroundings clean, and grass and trees well trimmed.
- Use of sunscreen lotions to prevent burning by the strong tropical sun is a good idea. Use of insect repellent is also advised when going out in the evenings or when you expect to be in contact with grass.
- Have a full medical examination before coming to Guyana so that any existing problems can be treated.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Guyana is by air, as no passenger ships call at Georgetown and it cannot be reached by road or rail from any other country. There are no U.S. carriers serving Guyana. American Airlines has daily flights from Miami to Trinidad and Barbados, but passengers must overnight in either country before taking a BWIA, Suriname Airways, or LIAT flight to Georgetown. American has flights twice a day from JFK New York to Barbados, both of which arrive in time to connect with a daily BWIA flight to Georgetown. BWIA, a Trinidadian airline, provides daily service to Georgetown

from JFK New York (via Barbados) and Miami (via Port-of-Spain). Guyana Airways Corporation (GAC) offers service from New York (via Curacao) three times a week and nonstop from Miami once a week. Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT) offers daily service from Barbados and via Barbados from other Caribbean Islands. LIAT has a strict excess baggage charge on all luggage over 20 kg. (44 pounds) and very limited cabin space for carry-on items. Suriname Airways provides air service from Paramaribo 2 days a week; which continues on to Trinidad and Venezuela.

A valid U.S. passport is required for U.S. citizens to enter and depart Guyana. On arrival in Guyana, visitors are granted a 30-day stay. Extensions of stay may be obtained from the Ministry of Home Affairs at 60 Brickdam Street, Georgetown. The Central Office of Immigration located on Camp Street, Georgetown, must then note the extension in the visitor's passport. Travelers for other than tourism purposes should check with the Ministry of Home Affairs for information about requirements for work permits and extended stays. U.S.-Guyanese dual nationals departing Guyana for the United States under a Guyanese passport must present to Guyanese authorities a U.S. Certificate of Naturalization or similar document establishing that they may freely enter the United States.

Americans living in or visiting Guyana are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. in Georgetown and obtain updated information on travel and security within Guyana. The U.S. Embassy is located at 100 Young and Duke Streets, telephone 011-592-225-4900 through 54909, fax 011-592-225-8497. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., except local and U.S. holidays. For emergencies after hours, on weekends and on holidays, U.S. citizens are requested to call the U.S. Embassy duty officer at 011-592-226-2614 or 226-8298 or 227-7868

and to leave a message for pager number 6516.

Pets

It is difficult to import pets into Guyana. Pets brought into the country must have a valid health certificate showing rabies inoculations at least 30 days from the arrival and must have an entry permit from the Government of Guyana. Pets must arrive with or after the employee.

All pets must be quarantined for 90 days, unless they are coming from Britain or another country using the British quarantine system. However, the official Government of Guyana quarantine stations are usually full. Pet food must be supplied by the pet owner. The quarantine cost at the Government of Guyana, Ministry of Agriculture/police kennels is US\$10 daily or US\$900 for 90 days. Food, etc., is extra.

Many exotic birds found in Guyana are protected species. The Guyana Ministry of Agriculture will permit only those persons who have been legally residing in Guyana for more than one year to take an exotic bird out of the country when they leave. Those Americans who have legally resided in Guyana for more than a year and who would like to take back to the United States any birds or animals, including pets, listed in Appendices I, II and III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), must have a Wild Bird Conservation Act (WBCA) import permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Please note that this is a U.S. regulation that applies regardless of distinctions among the three Appendices. U.S. residents and non-residents continue to arrive at U.S. ports of entry without WBCA permits, and they encounter difficulties. Individuals can obtain WBCA fact sheets and permit applications from the USFWS Office of Management Authority, Branch of Permits, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, telephone (703) 358-2104, fax (703) 358-2281.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Guyana's currency is the Guyana dollar (GYP). The current rate of exchange is US\$1.00 = GYP\$179.60. The rate is subject to change on a daily basis. Georgetown has five commercial banks; only the Bank of Baroda (India) and the Bank of Nova Scotia, a small private Canadian bank, are foreign-owned. A third foreign-owned, bank Citizens Bank of Jamaica has been licensed and opened in October 1994, as well as a new commercial bank—The Demerara Bank.

Commercial banks provide a full range of banking services, including sale and redemption of dollar or sterling travelers checks and cashing of personal checks.

American citizens are advised to exchange currency only with banks, hotels, and established money exchange houses ("cambios"). Many foreigners who opt to exchange money on the streets, lured by promises of higher exchange rates, are increasingly becoming victims of fraud and recipients of counterfeit currency. There is no legal recourse unless the police are successful in apprehending the perpetrator; even then there is no guarantee that the money will be recovered. Street vendors usually offer rates very near to bank or "cambio" rates, so there is little advantage to be gained by changing money outside the formal system.

Weights and measures are British, although the metric system was officially introduced in 1982. In many cases British units of measures are the same as American units. Liquid measurements differ; the imperial gallon is equal to 1.20094 U.S. gallons and the British cup is 10 ounces rather than 8.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 2 New Year's Day
 - Feb. 23 Republic Anniversary
 - Mar. Phagwah*
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May. Eid-UI-Azah*
 - July (first Monday) . . . Caribbean Day*
 - Aug. Freedom Day*
 - Aug. Youm-Un-Nabi*
 - October 23 Deepavali
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 - Dec. 26 Boxing Day
- *Variable

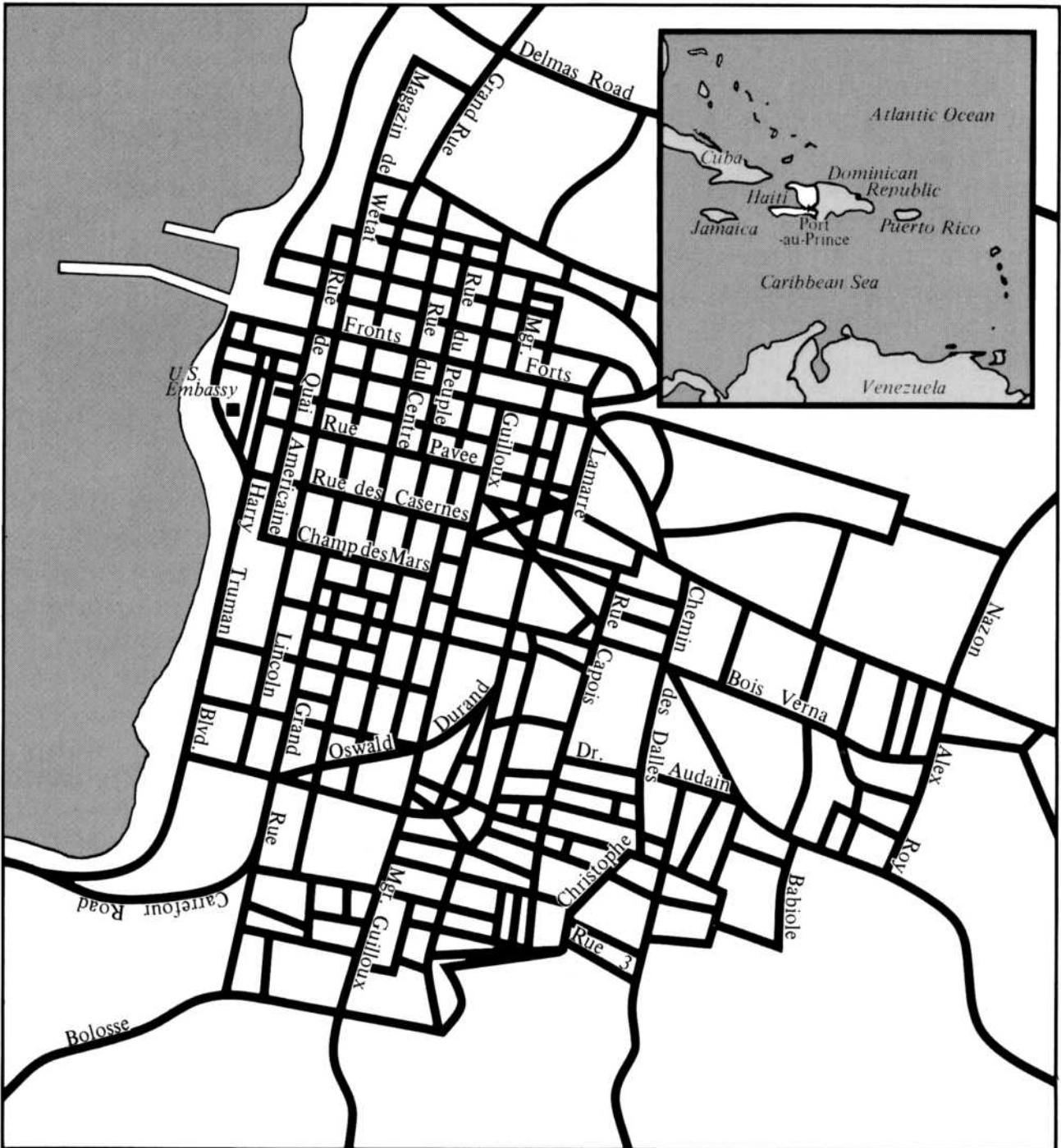
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Port-au-Prince, Haiti

HAITI

Republic of Haiti

Major City:

Port-au-Prince

Other Cities:

Cap-Haïtien, Gonaïves, Jacmel, Kenscoff, Les Cayes, Pétionville, Port-de-Paix

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

In October 1994, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was restored to power in Haiti by a U.S.-led Multinational Force (MNF), ending 3 years of military dictatorship and extreme hardship for the Haitian people. Economic sanctions were lifted, and MNF troops were deployed throughout the country to ensure Haiti's peaceful transition to democratic rule. Shortly after Aristide's return, the international donor community met and pledged \$1.2 billion to assist in the rebuilding of the Haitian economy and social institutions. Parliamentary elections were held in the summer and fall of 1995, and, in accordance with the constitution, elections for President were held in December

1995. President Rene Preval was inaugurated February 7, 1996, completing the first-ever peaceful transition from one elected President to another and giving Haitians a democratically elected government from the local level to the Presidency. A small U.N. or multinational peace-keeping mission is expected to remain in Haiti through 1996.

Haiti is a land with too many people and almost no natural resources. Its forests have been cut down and its topsoil washed into the sea. To the outside world, its name has become synonymous with "boat people" and voodoo. It is a land of hunger, poverty, pride, and beauty.

Americans living in Haiti find the climate delightful, the people handsome and approachable, the arts fascinating, the poverty appalling, and the overall experience unique to each person.

MAJOR CITY

Port-au-Prince

Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, is located on the Gulf of La Gonave, formed by the two great peninsulas that define Haiti's coastline. These two peninsulas are often compared to

the jaws of a crocodile that looks as if it is about to swallow Port-au-Prince.

To feel the pulse of Port-au-Prince, one can think of Haiti as "a fragment of black Africa which dislodged, drifted across the Atlantic and settled in the Caribbean." Following a successful slave revolt in 1804, this "bit of Africa" became the second independent country in the Western Hemisphere.

Port-au-Prince is a city with an uninspired waterfront and downtown area. The city has expanded onto adjoining hills with incredible vistas. At present, the city is a conglomeration of nondescript office buildings, slums, old Victorian houses with "gingerbread" trim, modern cement-block houses, and breathtaking million-dollar homes. The city's social system unofficially divides the populace into a majority of black African descent called "noirs" and a minority of mixed ancestry called "mulatres." This division continues to be the basis for the inequalities so glaringly visible in Port-au-Prince.

The city has few historic sites, but sight-seeing is ample for a short visit. Major attractions are the Episcopal cathedral with its Haitian Biblical murals, the Catholic cathedral, the Musee d'Art, and many private art galleries. Haitian handi-



Church in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

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craft stores feature metal arts created from old oil drums, many with a delightful sense of humor. There are over 8,000 U.S. citizens living in Haiti, and about half of those registered are children under 18. The American business community in Port-au-Prince is not sizable.

Food

During normal times Port-au-Prince offers a surprising variety of food products, although many items are imported and retail at prices well above the U.S. level. These include packaged, canned, and frozen foods, occasional cottage cheese,

sour cream and French cheeses, but only dry or long-life (UHT) milk is available. Goods are often beyond their peak upon arrival and many past their expiration date as well.

Local beef, pork, and chicken are available, but the quality does not

meet U.S. standards. Vegetables and fruit are available in season. Market women sell string beans, peas, avocados, beets, carrots, eggplant, tomatoes, squash, lettuce, cabbage, onions, garlic, parsley, special artichokes, cauliflower, potatoes, and radishes. Papayas, mangoes, oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, pineapples, bananas, and various melons are available in season but quality varies.

Uncooked vegetables or unpeeled fruit should be washed and treated with a chlorine solution as disinfectant.

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is worn year-round, with a sweater or jacket occasionally useful in the winter. The average temperature in Port-au-Prince is 80°F. Raincoats are not worn, as they are too warm, but umbrellas are useful. A lightweight sweater or jacket is needed for trips to the mountains.

Women: In public women wear dresses, skirts and blouses, or slacks and tops. Lightweight, washable cottons or synthetic cotton mixtures are most comfortable. A limited supply of Haitian-embroidered linen dresses are sold locally but at high prices.

Lingerie is available locally but is very expensive or of second quality. Nylon lingerie can be too hot for the Port-au-Prince climate. Hosiery is optional and rarely worn.

Locally made sandals are reasonably priced and available in the markets. It is wise to bring other footwear and tennis shoes from the U.S. Many beaches are stony, and sea urchins are numerous, so bathing shoes of some type are useful.

Children: Children in all grades at Union School wear uniforms. The uniforms, shirts and shorts are limited to the colors blue, white, and yellow and must be purchased locally. Play clothes are worn to children's parties. Most teenage entertaining is casual.

Supplies and Services

Most well-known brands of American toiletries and cosmetics are available but much more expensive. French and European toiletries and cosmetics often cost less.

Haitian fabric material is of poor quality, and imported fabrics are available but expensive.

Tailoring is inadequate for most types of men's clothing. Prices for low-quality tailor-made suits are reasonable.

Dressmakers are available. Seamstresses will come to the home at reasonable prices to make clothing for adults or children. Shoe repair often takes place on the street and is quite satisfactory. Good-quality dry-cleaning is hard to find.

In all of these service areas, language ability, or lack thereof, usually compounds any problem.

Religious Activities

Haiti is predominately a Roman Catholic country. Parish churches are located throughout the city, and the Port-au-Prince Cathedral is in the center city. Mass is traditionally said in French or Creole. An English mass is held on Sunday mornings at St. Louis de Gonzague Chapel in the downtown area.

Protestant services are held on Sunday mornings at the Episcopal Church of St. Jacques in Petionville and at the Quisqueya Chapel, a nondenominational church in Port-au-Prince. The Quisqueya Chapel also has Sunday School classes, Bible study groups, and a Sunday evening worship service. Services are held on Saturday mornings at the Church of the Adventist University of Haiti in Diquini.

Members of the Jewish and Muslim communities usually hold services in their homes to celebrate their holy days.

Vaudun (voodoo) plays a central part in the religious life of many Haitians. It is essentially a bringing together of beliefs and rituals of

African origin, closely tied to Catholic practices. Some understanding of voodoo is essential to an understanding of Haiti.

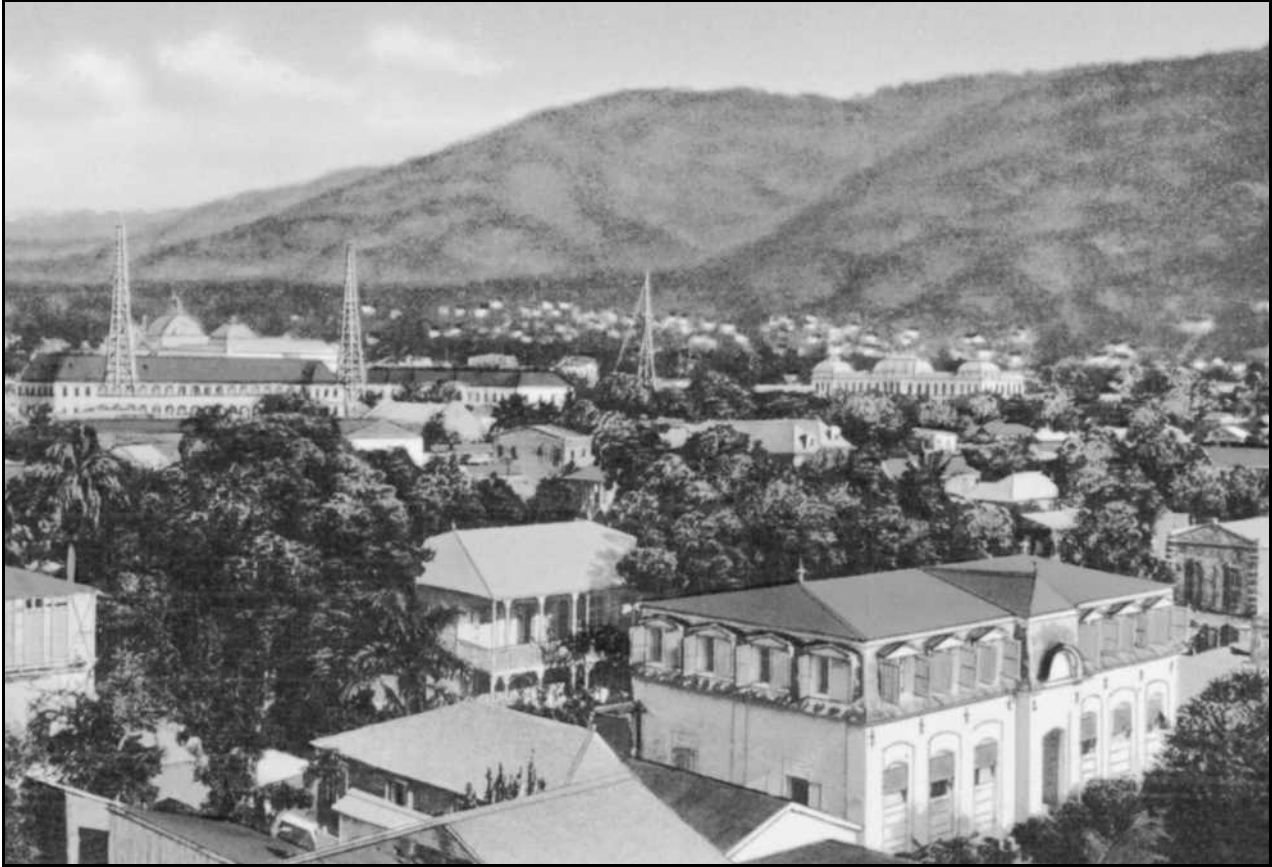
Education

The Haitian school system includes primary through university levels and is based on the French system, with classes taught in French or Creole.

Most foreign children in Port-au-Prince attend the SACS-accredited Union School. Classes are taught in English, with French a required subject at all grade levels. The Union School is open to all nationalities and offers a program from pre-school through grade 12. It has a capacity of 380 children and should be notified well in advance of enrollment plans for arriving children, particularly if they involve a mid-term transfer.

When planning enrollment in the Union School, students should bring with them complete school records including report cards and test results. A one-time bonding fee of \$150 per child is nonreimbursable. School hours are from 7:45 am to 1:30 pm. The school year normally begins toward the end of August and finishes in early June. Students at the Union School wear uniforms from kindergarten through grade 12, as do children in all Haitian schools. Children attending the Union School ordinarily have no difficulty transferring to U.S. schools.

The Union School has a Learning Center for children with mild learning difficulties, and it is generally recognized to have a very good elementary school program. Its high school curriculum has an advanced placement program, but there is no international baccalaureate available. The Quisqueya Christian School also provides English-language schooling from kindergarten through grade 12. The school is open to all nationalities and is attended by many American children. It currently has an enrollment of 200, and the staff are American educated.



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Aerial view of Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Sports

Sports activities in Haiti are found primarily in private clubs. (There are no organized sports facilities such as the YMCA.) The Petion-Ville Club, about 3 miles from downtown Port-au-Prince, is on a hill overlooking the bay. Included in its 145 acres are a rugged nine-hole golf course, six tennis courts (four lighted), a 75-foot swimming pool (which can be enjoyed by children), and a clubhouse with dance floor, dining, bar, and locker accommodations. There are a number of tennis clubs in Port-au-Prince. These often have social facilities available in addition to the tennis courts. Most clubs require an initiation fee and/or monthly dues.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

A great deal of Haiti's outdoor life centers around its coastal waters and beaches. There are safe and pleasant beaches about a 60-minute

drive from Port-au-Prince, and a number have overnight and restaurant facilities. Swimming and snorkeling are ideal for all ages.

Scuba diving is popular in Haiti, but divers should bring their own tanks. There is one place in Port-au-Prince that will refill tanks, but only to 2,200 pounds unless you have your own compressor. There is no scuba-diving equipment available locally. The Cormier Plage Beach Resort, adjacent to Cap Haitien on the north coast, rents equipment. Scuba-diving instruction for certification is possible in Haiti at both beginning and advanced levels. The cost is 550 Haitian dollars.

Unstable political conditions have restricted the formerly good hunting for ducks, guinea hens, wild pigeons, and doves.

Kenscoff (45 minutes from Port-au-Prince) is a town at an altitude of 4,500 feet, set in mountains as high

as 6,500 feet. It is cool year-round and may even be cold in winter. Although the road has suffered wear and tear, people enjoy visiting Kenscoff on weekends. There are some wonderful places to hike. The scenery in the mountains is extraordinary, and travelers like to stop en route to visit the Baptist Fermathe Mission's arts-and-crafts shop and have lunch in its pleasant restaurant. For historic content, Forts Jacques and Alexandre can be added to the itinerary.

Cap Haitien (157 miles from Port-au-Prince; 6 hours by car), Haiti's second-largest city, is of primary interest because of its historic past. The famed Citadelle Laferriere, often referred to as the "eighth wonder of the world," was built on a 3,000-foot peak overlooking Cap Haitien. Below the Citadelle is Milot, where one can visit the ruins of Henri Christophe's Sans Souci Palace. Above Milot, horses can be rented for the uphill ride to the Cit-

adelle. Cap Haitien has adequate hotel facilities, and nearby are two very pleasant seaside resorts.

Jacmel (73 miles from Port-au-Prince; 2 hours by car) is on the southern peninsula and well known for its beaches. It is a picturesque town with turn-of-the-century architecture, a small iron market, and a few small art galleries. Jacmel has beaches inside the town and nearby at Carrefour Raymond. The road to Jacmel is in fair condition, and the town has two good hotels with restaurants.

Les Cayes (125 miles from Port-au-Prince; 4 hours by car) is the principal city of the southern peninsula and the third-largest city in Haiti. The city itself has little to offer, but the road from the capital passes through beautiful and interesting country. One of the best beaches in Haiti, Port-Salut, is nearby and has a restaurant and hotel. Les Cayes has two satisfactory hotels, one on the outskirts and one in the city.

The Arts and Entertainment

The Haitian art scene has attracted world-wide attention since 1946, when English teacher DeWitt Peters brought Hector Hippolyte, Philomene Obin, and other greats of Haiti's primitive art scene to the attention of the world's art establishment. One of the unique experiences of living in Haiti is the chance to visit the studios and galleries of the artists carrying on this fascinating tradition.

Haiti has no concert or theater series, but the Philharmonic Orchestra of Saint Trinite Cathedral presents seasonal concerts of classical music, and the cathedral provides a locale for the all-too-rare performances by visiting soloists or chamber groups.

The Musee d'Art Haitien, on the Champs-de-Mars, houses both standing and rotating art exhibits.

Private art galleries abound in the Port-au-Prince area, but one that holds a special place in Haitian hearts is the Jean-Rene Jerome

Museum, opened in the mid-1980s to honor the much-revered artist.

There are few archaeological sites in Haiti, but Dr. William Hodges of the Good Samaritan Hospital in Limbe has had as an avocation during his 30-year career in the country a search for the site where Columbus landed his first expedition on the north coast. If one is traveling to Cap Haitien by car, a stopover to visit Dr. Hodges' small museum in Limbe should be considered. For the real enthusiast, a journey to the east of Cap Haitien takes one to the site that Dr. Hodges' research leads him to conclude was the actual spot where Columbus established the first colony in the New World.

Port-au-Prince has several movie houses, of which the Imperial is the largest and most comfortable. Most films shown are French films, but even American films are dubbed in French.

There are a number of quite good restaurants in the area. Excellent French cuisine can be had at the pricier establishments. The larger hotels have dining rooms that feature special buffets, Sunday brunches, and an occasional floor show. A few nightclubs provide Haitian or disco music, and there are two hotel casinos.

Coverage of the entertainment scene in Haiti cannot neglect Carnival where dancing in the streets takes place every Sunday after Christmas and culminates in Mardi Gras, the two days before Ash Wednesday. Musical groups called rara bands dance across the countryside during the pre-Lenten season. Many Haitians join in these singing and dancing festivities, and drinking is excessive. Things tend to become rowdy, and foreigners usually prefer to watch these celebrations on television.

Social Activities

Most entertaining takes place informally in the home. Single people generally find sports clubs or outdoor activities the most satisfactory way to socialize. As most Haitians

do not receive high salaries, it is often difficult for them to return hospitality. There is an American Women's Community Association (AWCA), which meets monthly. It provides a welcome to new American women, sponsors seasonal parties for the children, and is open to any activities or projects for which members indicate enthusiasm. The Women's International Gourmet Society (WIGS) meets monthly to sample different restaurant cuisine. The local churches have women's groups to which all are welcome. The Quisqueya Chapel sponsors periodic men's breakfasts at a local hotel. These are open to all men in the community.

OTHER CITIES

CAP-HAÏTIEN (also called Le Cap), about 85 miles north of Port-au-Prince on the northern coast, is Haiti's second largest city. It is of primary interest because of its historic past. There are ruins here of former colonial dwellings and buildings; nearby Milot is the site of the ruins of King Christophe's Sans Souci palace. From Milot, horses or burros can be rented for a two-hour ride to the Citadelle Laferrière, also built by Christophe, and surmounted on a 3,000-foot peak overlooking the nearby plain. The city has a modern harbor which handles one-ninth of Haiti's imports and exports. One of the world's largest sisal plantations is located in Cap-Haitien. Pineapples, sugarcane, coffee, bananas, and cacao are grown near the city. From Port-au-Prince to Cap-Haitien, the trip is four hours by car, or 35 minutes by air. Cap-Haitien's 1995 population was about 100,600.

GONAÏVES is a port city on the Gulf of Gonave in western Haiti. The country's independence was proclaimed here in 1804, and today the city is a major commercial center. The region's agricultural products, including sugar, cotton, coffee, and bananas, are exported from the harbor. A main attraction in the city is the Musée du Centenaire. It was

inaugurated in 1904 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Haiti's independence. The Gulf of Gonave is situated in the pincers of two mountainous peninsulas and is considered one of the most beautiful in the world. The city's population is estimated over 40,000.

JACMEL, situated on the southern peninsula, is a picturesque town of about 216,600. It boasts a small iron market, a few small art galleries, and beaches at nearby Carrefour Raymond. The road to Jacmel recently was rerouted and paved.

KENSCOFF, 10 miles south of Port-au-Prince, and where visitors go on weekends to escape the heat of the capital city, is at an altitude of 4,500 feet. Its mountains rise as high as 6,500 feet. The area is cool all year, and sometimes even cold during the winter. In addition to the climate change, the road to Kenscuff and the town itself offer beautiful scenery and picturesque countryside. Along the road to Kenscuff, sightseers often stop to visit the Baptist Mission's arts and crafts shop or to explore the historic forts, Jacques and Alexandre. The town has about 3,000 people.

LES CAYES is the principal city of the southern peninsula and the third largest city in Haiti, with over 37,000 inhabitants. It is situated 90 miles from Port-au-Prince, but the trip takes several hours by jeep, and then only when roads are passable. The city itself has little to offer, but the road from the capital passes through beautiful and interesting country. One of the best beaches in Haiti, Port-Salut, is nearby. The city is Haiti's principal southern port. Coffee, bananas, cotton, timber, and hides are exported from Les Cayes. Historic landmarks include an arsenal and several forts dating from buccaneer times.

PÉTIONVILLE, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, is five miles southeast of the capital in the hills of the Massif de la Selle. The community is mostly a residential resort area, tied to Port-au-Prince by a twisting toll road. Pétienville's estimated

population is 69,5000 (1995). Its name derives from that of Alexandre Sab s Pétion, a hero of Haiti's war for independence in the early 1800s.

Historic **PORT-DE-PAIX** is a seaport town opposite Tortuga Island, 45 miles west of Cap-Haïtien. Its tumultuous history dates to 1665 and the founding of the city by French insurrectionists from Tortuga Island. They originally settled near Môle Saint-Nicolas, where Columbus landed on December 6, 1492. The first slave revolt took place in Port-de-Paix in 1679. The area flourished in the 19th century when, for a while, it was the colonial capital. A 1902 fire devastated the city, physically and spiritually. Today, Port-de-Paix relies on coffee, bananas, rice, sisal (a strong fiber used to make rope), and tobacco production, as well as fishing, for survival. Agricultural produce, logwood, and hides are exported. The municipal population is over 20,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Eighteenth-century Haiti, famed for its wealth and productivity, was known to the colonial world as the Pearl of the Antilles. Located in the Caribbean Sea on the western third of the island of Hispaniola, Haiti is a 10,700-square-mile area of primarily mountainous terrain, some of which rises above 8,000 feet, and 850 miles of spectacular coastline. Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, which occupies the eastern two-thirds.

Haiti's tropical climate produces seasonal rainfall, although large areas of the country are semiarid. Temperatures year-round range from 70°F to 90°F with humidity sometimes high along the coast. Average annual rainfall varies from nearly zero in some areas to 53

inches in Port-au-Prince. The two rainy seasons that Port-au-Prince experiences are from April to June and from August to mid-November. Rain and accompanying thunder/lightning storms usually occur at dusk and at night, but the days remain clear and sunny. There is a crisp dry season from December to April. Surrounding mountains protect Port-au-Prince from Caribbean hurricanes.

Population

With its current population estimated at approximately 7 million, Haiti ranks among the most densely populated countries in the world. Port-au-Prince, the capital, has more than 1.7 million inhabitants. Cap Haïtien, on the north coast, is the second-largest city, with a population of 100,600. It is estimated that 95% of Haitians are of African descent. The remaining 5% include Haitians of mixed African-European descent plus immigrants from Europe and the Middle East. Haiti has both French and Creole as official languages even though only 20% of the population speaks French fluently. Creole is spoken and understood by all Haitians, but as a written means of communication it has to contend with Haiti's mere 45% literacy rate.

The culture and traditions of Haiti come from its African, Caribbean, and French roots. Following World War II, a significant number of Haitians began visiting or studying in the United States and Canada. Overseas Haitians now number around 1 million. This travel back and forth has made North American customs and habits increasingly familiar in Haiti. In an attempt to escape the country's grinding poverty (particularly during periods of political repression), tens of thousands of Haitians have attempted to enter the U.S. illegally, the vast majority in overcrowded, unseaworthy boats.

Public Institutions

The people of Haiti have fought with political instability since their independence in 1804. The country has had 21 different constitutions. But the most current Haitian constitution adheres to the principles of democracy and human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

The constitution provides for a system of representative government under which power is shared among branches.

The executive branch consists of a chief of state or president who is elected for a five-year term and is not eligible for immediate re-election or election for a total of more than two terms.

The head of government is the prime minister chosen by the chief of state from the membership of the majority party in Parliament; or, in the absence of a majority party, after consultations with the leadership of both parliamentary chambers.

The legislative branch consists of a senate made up of 27 members (three for each of the nine departments) elected by a direct popular vote at the departmental level for six-year terms and eligible for re-election for an indefinite number of terms. Terms are staggered on a two-year basis, one third of senators being elected every two years.

There is also a chamber of deputies consisting of 83 members elected by a direct popular vote at the municipal level for a four-year term, and eligible for re-election for an indefinite number of terms.

The Haitian judiciary is divided into four basic levels: justices of the peace; fifteen courts of first instance; five regional courts of appeal; and, The Haitian Supreme Court (Cour de Cassation).

The constitution also provides for an independent board of elections charged with the organization and

supervision of electoral procedures and political decentralization through the election of mayors and administrative bodies responsible for local government.

The Prime Minister's government is composed of a cabinet that must be confirmed by parliament. This cabinet is called the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers is presided over by the President of the Republic.

Many political parties of different ideologies are active in the Haiti. Most parties are not well structured. They lack adequate financial resources, and their focus is on personalities and regional alliances rather than national policy priorities.

Despite the dictates of the constitution, politics remain volatile. Elections are often contested and military coups have called for intervention from the U.N. and other countries. After elections supervised by the United Nations in December 1990, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was inaugurated as President in February 1991.

But in September 1991, a military coup forced Aristide out of Haiti. The U.S.-led Multinational Force restored government three years later and Rene Preval, took office in 1996. Aristide returned to be elected to a second term in the 2000 elections, but these were boycotted by the majority of opposition leaders.

Legislative elections were held in both 1995 and 1997, with disappointing results. New legislative elections did not take place until May 2000. They were expected to reconstitute the legislative branch of government, which effectively ceased to function January 11, 1999. However, they were so flawed as to call into question the legitimacy of the Parliament, which was convened on August 28.

The international community has refused to offer the new Haitian government funding for their projects if they do not negotiate

with the opposition in order to come up with an agreement that will satisfy both parties. Talks between the opposition and governing party aimed at resolving the political impasse have taken place under the mediation of the OAS (Organization of American States) and CARICOM (Community of Caribbean Nations), but have yet to result in an accord.

Arts, Science, and Education

Education is available in Haiti from preschool through university, although only 73% of 6- through 11-year-old Haitian children attend primary school. In driving through Port-au-Prince, one sees an extraordinary number of schools, including numerous preschools and kindergartens. Haitian parents prefer private schools over public ones and make great sacrifices to afford the tuition.

The University of Haiti, located in Port-au-Prince, is tuition free to those students who can pass the tough entrance exams. The university has schools of administration, agronomy, dentistry, economics, education, law, literature, medicine, and science. Most subjects are taught in French and in the French university tradition. Of late there has been some instruction in Creole, and the American educational system has influenced the curriculum at the Institute of Administration, Management, and Diplomacy (INAGHEI).

A significant number of art schools attempt to maintain the spirit of Haiti's 1940s explosion onto the world art scene. There are also institutes of science and technology and two private universities.

Commerce and Industry

Since the demise of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986, international economists have urged Haiti to reform and modernize its economy. Under President Preval (1995-

2000), the country's economic agenda included trade/tariff liberalization, measures to control government expenditure and increase tax revenues, civil service downsizing, financial sector reform, and the modernization of two out of nine state-owned enterprises through their sale to private investors, the provision of private sector management contracts, or joint public-private investment. Structural adjustment agreements with the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and other international financial institutions intended to create necessary conditions for private sector growth, proved only partly successful.

In 1999, Haiti's economy began to falter after about 4 years of positive, though modest growth. Real GDP growth fell in 2001 by 1.2%. The Privatization program stalled. Macroeconomic stability was adversely affected by political uncertainty, low investment, a significant increase in the budget deficit, and reduced international capital flows. The lack of an agreement with the IMF has prevented the resumption of crucial international assistance. This recent weakening of the economy has serious implication for future economic development as well as efforts to improve the general standard of living.

External aid is essential to the future economic development of Haiti, the least-developed country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. Comparative social and economic indicators show Haiti falling behind other low-income developing countries (particularly in the hemisphere) since the 1980s. Haiti's economic stagnation is the result of earlier inappropriate economic policies, political instability, a shortage of good arable land, environmental deterioration, continued use of traditional technologies, under-capitalization and lack of public investment in human resources, migration of large portions of the skilled population, a weak national savings rate, and the

lack of a functioning judicial system.

Haiti continues to suffer the consequences of the 1991 coup and the irresponsible economic and financial policies of the de facto authorities which greatly accelerated Haiti's economic decline. Following the coup, the United States adopted mandatory sanctions, and the OAS instituted voluntary sanctions aimed at restoring constitutional government. International sanctions culminated in the May 1994 UN embargo of all goods entering Haiti except humanitarian supplies, such as food and medicine. The assembly sector, heavily dependent on U.S. markets for its products, employed nearly 80,000 workers in the mid-1980s. During the embargo, employment fell below 17,000. Private domestic and foreign investment has been slow to return to Haiti. Since the return of constitutional rule, assembly sector employment has gradually recovered with about 25,000 now employed, but further growth has been stalled by investor concerns over safety and political instability.

If the political situation stabilizes, high-crime levels reduce, and new investment increases, tourism could take its place next to export-oriented manufacturing (the assembly sector) as a potential source of foreign exchange. Remittances from abroad now constitute a significant source of financial support for many Haitian households.

Workers in Haiti are guaranteed the right of association. Unionization is protected by the labor code. A legal minimum wage of 36 gourds a day (about U.S. \$1.80) applies to most workers in the formal sector.

Transportation

Local

"Service" (sharing) taxis operate on defined routes. There is no safe, clean, or modern intercity or intracity public transport available. There are some private taxi services, but these are very expensive, particu-

larly for new foreigners and during any gasoline shortages.

Regional

During normal times, Port-au-Prince has daily nonstop flights to and from Miami and New York and regular flights to Santo Domingo, Montreal, Paris, Kingston, and Curacao. Reservations can be difficult to make during the peak travel seasons of summer and Christmas.

Communications

Telephone, Telegraph, and FAX

Port-au-Prince has a dial telephone system, which is subject to interruption during rainy seasons and electricity shortages. Intercity calls can be made within Haiti. Overseas calls can also be made at most local hotels with a USA-direct card.

Radio and TV

Under normal conditions there are about 46 independent AM/FM stereo radio stations in Haiti, 22 of which are located in Port-au-Prince. Most broadcast 16 to 18 hours a day, including the government-owned radio station Radio Nationale. Shortwave radios pick up all principal international networks, including VOA and BBC. The VOA Creole service program is rebroadcast daily in the capital.

There are three television stations in the capital. Television Nationale d'Haiti (TNH), the government-owned station, broadcasts all over the country, with an estimated audience of 500,000. It provides French and Creole-language programs 18 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Tele-Haiti, a privately owned cable station, relays 14 separate channels of programs in English, French, and Spanish. These currently include CNN, HBO, the Learning Channel, the Disney Channel, and U.S. stations affiliated with CBS and NBC. Tele-Haiti (broadcasting 7 days a week, 24 hours daily) serves only Port-au-Prince and has approximately 100,000 viewers. Program quality is generally good, barring

power failures. PVS-Antenne 16, a privately owned station broadcasting on UHF, beams French- and English-language programming 8 hours a day, 7 days a week to about 20,000 viewers in the capital.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Local bookstores no longer supply major newspapers, but magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *L'Express*, and *Le Figaro* are available about a week after publication.

At present there are 15 newspapers in Haiti, including three French-language dailies in Port-au-Prince. One of these dailies has occasional articles in English. Radio, television, and newspapers draw on Agence France Presse, Reuters, and AP for international news.

The Haitian-American Institute library, open to Americans, has about 3,700 volumes and is probably the best lending library in the country; membership is 5 Haitian dollars per year. The Colony Club, a private lending library located at the Petion-Ville Club, is open Fridays from 4 to 6 pm and can be joined for a minimal fee.

A few commercial bookstores have American, British, French, and Haitian books, although the supply of novels in English is slim, and prices are higher than in the U.S. For small children there are few books available outside the school library. It is wise to subscribe to U.S. magazines and book clubs for both adults and children to make up for the dearth of current English-language reading material available in Port-au-Prince.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Port-au-Prince has a number of competent Haitian doctors, but lack of equipment limits medical facilities. Expert diagnostic service is not available. Locally, there are several competent dentists. A number of American- or Canadian-trained spe-

cialists in cardiology, pediatrics, and eye/ear/nose/throat are available.

Local oculists and optometrists can issue eyeglass prescriptions. Lens-grinding facilities are available, but special lenses must be ground outside the country. It is advisable to bring extra eyeglasses, contact lenses, and sunglasses with ultraviolet screening plus a copy of your current prescription. Selection of contact lens solutions is limited.

The Canape Vert Hospital in Port-au-Prince has a doctor covering the emergency room from 7 pm to 7 am. It has some air-conditioned private rooms, and most doctors are permitted to practice there. The rates are lower than in the U.S., but due to inadequate nursing care and lack of supplies, hospitalization is sometimes precarious.

It is advisable to bring any medications and over-the-counter drugs used regularly and to make arrangements with a U.S. pharmacy for refills. Pharmacies are available in Port-au-Prince but often stock only European pharmaceuticals.

Community Health

The level of community sanitation and public cleanliness throughout the country is far below American standards. Streets in Port-au-Prince are littered with refuse, and sewage often stagnates in open gutters. Port-au-Prince's sewerage system is totally inadequate for the city's needs. Local vegetables and fruit that cannot be peeled must be washed with soap and water and soaked in chlorine solution.

Preventive Measures

Malaria is a serious problem in rural Haiti. It is recommended that travelers take malaria-preventive medication.

Other diseases common to Haiti include hepatitis A and B, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, venereal disease (including AIDS), intestinal parasites, dengue fever, polio, and rabies. Due to the high incidence of some of these diseases, any hired household help should have a pre-

employment physical examination and periodic checkups.

Occasional cases of dysentery, diarrhea, or dengue fever occur among Americans living in Haiti. While no vaccinations are required for entry into the country (unless one is coming from a yellow-fever-infected area), the State Department recommends inoculations against typhoid fever, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, hepatitis B, measles, and rabies. Children should be up to date on all recommended immunizations. Immune globulin is recommended every 4 to 6 months for prevention of hepatitis A.

As the local water supply lacks fluoride, supplementation for children is important to prevent tooth decay. A supply of sunscreen is essential to prevent skin damage from the tropical rays.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Haitian law requires travelers to have a passport to enter Haiti. In practice, officials frequently waive this requirement if travelers have a certified copy of their U.S. birth certificate. Due to fraud concerns, however, airlines do not board passengers for return to the United States unless they are in possession of a valid passport. The U.S. Embassy recommends that U.S. citizens obtain passports before travel to Haiti. The Haitian government requires foreigners to pay a fee prior to departure. For additional information regarding entry, departure and customs requirements for Haiti, travelers can contact the Haitian Embassy, 2311 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 332-4090, one of the Haitian consulates in Florida, Massachusetts, New York, Illinois or Puerto Rico, or via the Internet at <http://www.haiti.org/embassy/>.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Haiti are encouraged to register at

the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince and obtain updated information on travel and security in Haiti. The Consular Section is located on Rue Oswald Durand, Port-au-Prince; telephone 011 (509) 222-7011; fax 011 (509) 222-1641. Consular Section hours are 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except U.S. and local holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located on Harry Truman Blvd., Port-au-Prince; telephone (509) 23-0200, 223-0354, 223-0955 or 223-0269; fax (509) 23-1641. Internet: <http://usembassy.state.gov/haiti>.

Pets

To be admitted into Haiti, a pet must have an Authorization to Import certificate, issued by the Haitian Department of Agriculture, which states the animal's breed and point of departure for Haiti. All pets are required to have a recent veterinarian's clearance stating that they have had a current rabies vaccination and are free from disease.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Haitian Government permits a free-market exchange of U.S. dollars for gourdes, the Haitian monetary unit. Most prices in Haiti are quoted in Haitian dollars, where a dollar equals 5 Haitian gourdes. The metric system of weights and measures is the official standard. U.S. weights and measures are also widely used.

Disaster Preparedness

Haiti, like all Caribbean countries, can be affected by hurricanes and other storms. Hurricane season runs from approximately June 1 to November 30 each year. Extensive flooding as a result of heavy rainfall has occurred in the past. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	Independence Day
Jan. 2	Ancestor's Day
Feb/Mar.	Mardi Gras*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter
May 1	Labor Day
May 16	Ascension Day
May 18	Flag and University Day
May 22	Sovereignty Day
May/June	Corpus Christi*
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Oct. 17	Anniversary of the Death of Dessalines
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
November 18	Anniversary of the Battle of Vertieres
Dec. 5	Discovery of Haiti by Columbus
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

* variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Much of the literature about Haiti is available only in French. The following is a suggested reading list of books in English. The more recent titles can be found in bookstores. Books published before 1989 may be available only in libraries. Novels and collections of short stories are indicated by an asterisk.

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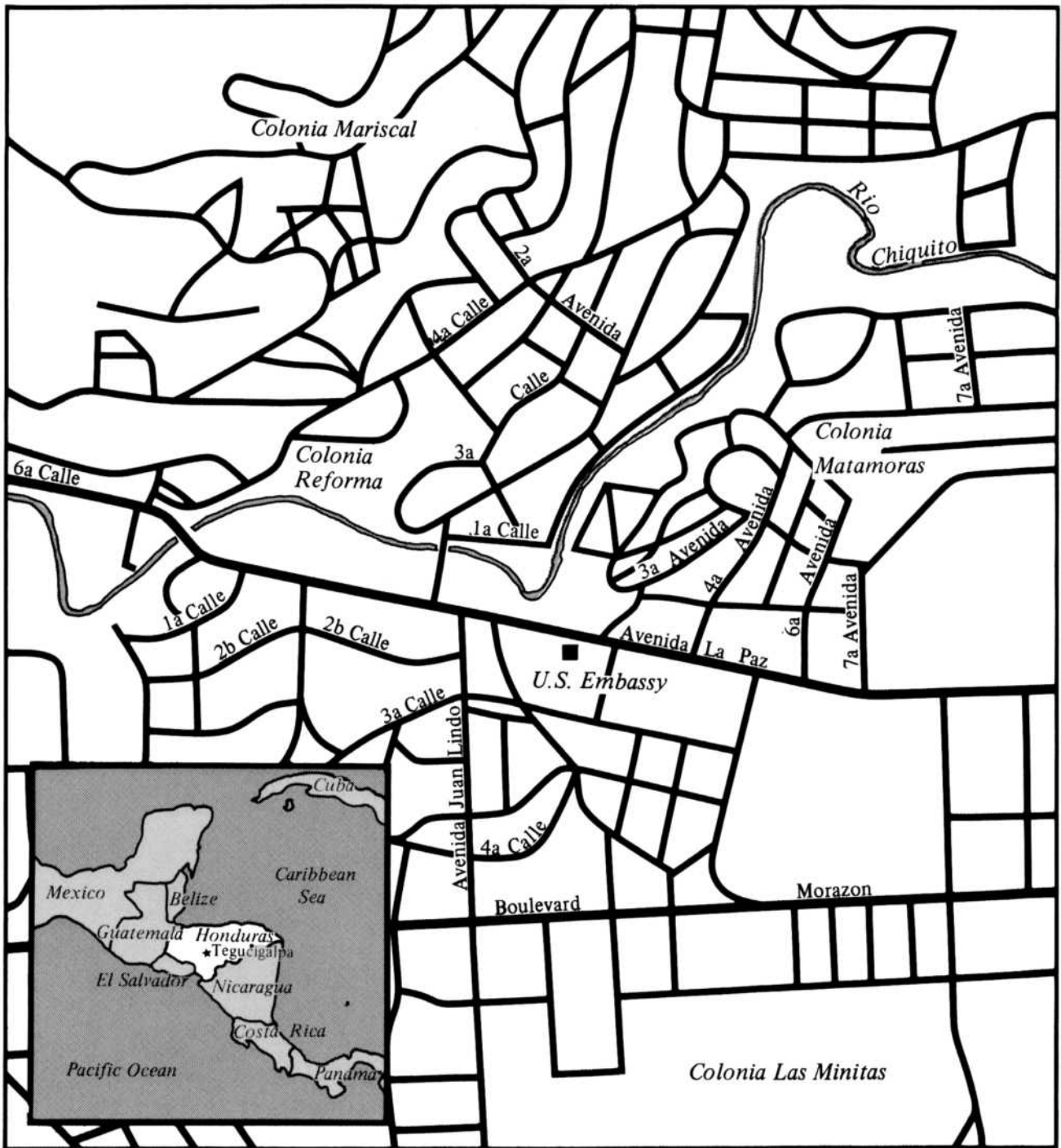
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Tegucigalpa, Honduras

HONDURAS

Republic of Honduras

Major City:

Tegucigalpa

Other Cities:

Amapala, Comayagua, Copán, La Ceiba, Puerto Cortés, San Pedro Sula, Santa Bárbara, Santa Rosa de Copán, Tela

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

HONDURAS, whose name is derived from the depth, or *hondura*, of the waters which surround its northern shores, is an underdeveloped Central American nation, struggling to improve its economic and social circumstances. It has had a history of turbulence since the coming of the Spaniards early in the 16th century—political struggles, war with its neighbors, intervention by others in its internal affairs—all major deterrents to the encouragement of progress.

Honduras is a country of rugged and varied terrain, a predominantly rural aspect, and a strong Indo-Hispanic culture. Its ancient temple city of Copán was one of the great

ceremonial centers of the vast Mayan empire.

MAJOR CITY

Tegucigalpa

Tegucigalpa, capital of the Republic of Honduras, is in a mountain-ringed valley about 3,200 feet above sea level. It is a provincial and picturesque city full of contrasts between the antique and the modern. At several points, streets of stairs connect one level of the city with another. At others, the city climbs the hillsides on terraces.

The predominant architectural style is Spanish colonial. Central Tegucigalpa is built around the traditional square. Narrow streets, remaining cobblestones, blank walls pierced by heavy doors and iron-grilled windows, and reddish tile roofs all add to an impression of architectural unity. But this unity is now being broken by the construction of new, modern buildings. Traces of former days contrast sharply with the new, modern residential sections surrounding the old town.

Spaniards founded Tegucigalpa in 1579 as a silvermining town with

the imposing name of Real Minas de San Miguel de Tegucigalpa. In Indian language this means hill or mountain of silver. In 1880 the capital of the republic was transferred from Comayagua to Tegucigalpa. Until 1898, Tegucigalpa and Comayagua, two settlements divided by the Choluteca River, were separate towns. The two were united in 1898 with the provision that each should retain its own municipal council. It was not until 1938 that they, together with other neighboring communities, were united to form the Central District.

Food

Pasteurized, fresh milk, as well as cheese, butter, eggs, cooking oil, and ice cream are available locally. Occasional shortages occur of items such as milk, eggs, flour, rice, beans, and chicken. Satisfactory locally bottled beer and soft drinks are also available.

Good quality frying chickens are available. Several outlets sell good quality beef (including fillet), veal, ham, and pork. Cuts and taste often differ from US meats. Good frozen and fresh lobster tails and shrimp are available at reasonable prices. Several supermarkets carry a fluctuating supply of local and imported food items and local meats. Items imported from the US are slightly



Courtesy of David Gibson

Overview of Tegucigalpa, Honduras

more expensive due to high transportation costs and import duties.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are available year round, but supplies vary with the season. Local vegetables include tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, beets, corn, eggplant, and lettuce. Avocados, oranges, bananas, limes, melons, pineapples, and other tropical fruits are available year round.

Clothing

Summer clothing is suitable for most of the year in Tegucigalpa. Bring a complete wardrobe, as local selection is limited, expensive, and of lower quality. Local tailors and seamstresses are good, but quality materials are expensive. Tegucigalpa's weather is tropical by day and cool in the early morning and

evening. During the cool season (mid-November to February) it may be chilly during the day. At this time, lightweight wools and long sleeves are worn.

Men: Bring tropical-worsted, dacron, and other lightweight suits. One or two lightweight woolen suits or slacks with sport jackets are comfortable for cooler months.

Locally manufactured shirts (some well-known US brands) compare to those made in the US and cost about the same. Many men purchase locally made "guayaberas" (loose-fitting shirts), which are frequently worn at casual gatherings. Bring a supply of shoes, as those available locally are not the same quality as those made in the US.

Women: Bring a good supply of lightweight, synthetic, cotton, and cotton-blend clothes for the dry and rainy seasons. During the cool season, you may use long-sleeved synthetic knits, lightweight wools, sweaters, light jackets, and blazers. Include street-length dresses and skirts, separates, and sports clothes in your wardrobe. Shorts are inappropriate except for the beach. Rainy weather and unpaved streets are hard on shoes. Bring sandals, sport shoes, and boots for picnics and hiking. Bring plenty of lingerie and hose or panty hose, since sizes, styles, and colors are limited, and quality is only fair. Good quality imported items are expensive here.

Children: Local prices for imported children's wear are high and selection is limited. Children will need

washable synthetic or cotton clothing most of the year with sweaters and/or jackets for cool months, and umbrellas. All schools in Tegucigalpa require uniforms for which materials can be purchased locally.

Supplies And Services

Local shops are open from 9 am to noon and 2 pm to 6 pm daily and 8 am to noon on Saturdays. Several large grocery stores are open on Sundays from 10 am to 6 pm.

Tailors and seamstresses are available in Tegucigalpa. Most make only simple, inexpensive clothes. A variety of material is available in all price ranges; however, quality material is expensive and selection is fair to poor.

Dry-cleaning is adequate for most fabrics, except leather. Laundry service is available. Shoe repair is satisfactory. Beauty shops and barbershops offer adequate service, but operators are not professionally trained, and sanitary precautions are not as strict as in the US. The barbershop in the Hotel Maya is cheap, excellent and hygienic.

Religious Activities

Most faiths are represented in Tegucigalpa. English-speaking Catholic and Protestant services are available. Tegucigalpa has several Catholic and Protestant Missions representing the Seventh Day Adventists, Assembly of God, Central American Mission, Baptist, Four-Squared Gospel, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mennonites, Lutheran, Mormon, Southern Baptist, and World Gospel Mission. The American community is also served by the nondenominational Union Church and an English-language Episcopal Church.

Most Hondurans are Roman Catholic. Highlights of the religious calendar in Tegucigalpa are Christmas and Semana Santa (Holy Week). Christmas week through New Year's Eve is celebrated with much gaiety and fireworks. Holy Week is rigorously observed. Most stores and all government offices remain closed from Wednesday through

Sunday. Vehicular traffic on Good Friday is minimal. Honduran Catholics celebrate February 2 and 3 as feast days of the Patron Saint of Honduras, Our Lady of Suyapa.

Education

The largest school in Tegucigalpa offering a US curriculum is the American School. The school, a private institution organized under Honduran law, is not affiliated with the US Government. An elected school board, which includes US members, administers the school. About 10% of the student body are US citizens, 80% are Hondurans, and 10% are other nationalities. Enrollment is about 1,000, including pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Through guidance and financial support of the State Department's Office of Overseas Schools, it has improved significantly, upgrading teacher's professionalism and improving facilities. A new building for the high school was completed in 1991 and a new preschool complex will be completed in the Spring of 1995. The school has a large gym and modern exercise equipment.

Most classes are conducted in English with one period of Spanish-language instruction daily. The school follows the US curriculum through primary school (grade 6). Beginning in grade 7, students may choose from two curriculums: one prepares students to enter US colleges, the other prepares students for the National University of Honduras.

The American School is located in Colonia Las Lomas del Guijarro, a residential area. Overall, children of US parents do well at the American School, scoring above average on scholastic aptitude tests (SAT), many gaining acceptance to prestigious colleges of their choice in the US after graduation.

All students in grades K to 12 wear uniforms. Boys wear uniform pants, white, short-sleeved shirts, and dark socks. Girls wear jumpers with white, short-sleeved blouses and white socks. Girls may wear uniform pants with a white, short-

sleeved blouse. All shirts/blouses must have the American School patch sewn on the sleeve. Material for the jumpers and uniform pants is available at the school as are the patches; shirts/blouses may be purchased from the school or local merchants and are readily available. A navy blue sweater or windbreaker is necessary for cooler days. Most students wear tennis shoes, or black or dark brown dress shoes on occasion. Kindergarten children wear the same uniform. The school, accredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges, has a parent-teacher organization. Extracurricular activities include cheerleading, band, sports, drama, and chorus.

School begins in late August and ends in June. Advance registration is necessary; the address is:

American School
Tegucigalpa
APO AA 34022
Fax (504) 32-2380

Some American children attend Academia Los Pinares. A board of missionaries administers this school, located in a highland area 1/2 hour by bus from Tegucigalpa. A US curriculum is followed from kindergarten through grade 12. The Honduran curriculum is also offered in grades 7 to 12. Bible study is a required course, emphasizing moral values. The grading system is academically more rigorous than that of the American School. Classes are in English with one period of Spanish-language instruction daily. Pinares offers a full range of sports activities, plus band and chorus.

Enrollment at the beginning of the 1994-95 school year was 625 in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The enrollment was 15% US citizens, 5% other nationalities, and 80% Hondurans. The school year runs from September to June. Academia Los Pinares students wear dark green uniforms with green-and-white checkered shirts. Many students wear tennis shoes. Socks are white.

Address all correspondence to:

Director, Academia Los Pinares
Apartado 143C
Tegucigalpa, Honduras, CA

American children also attend the Discovery School, a small private preschool and elementary school located in Colonia Payaqui, a residential area. A US curriculum and hands-on approach are followed from Kindergarten through sixth grade. Classes are capped at 15 students. Classes are in English with a daily Spanish class. Enrollment for is about 30 students, in three multi-grade classes, and about 20 in the preschool. Parents interested in sending a child to the Discovery School should write directly to the school.

Discovery School
TGU 00015
P.O. Box 025387
Miami, FL 33102-5387

The Mayan School and the Elvel School are two other English-language schools in Tegucigalpa. Several recently opened preschools offer varied curriculums. Parents wishing to enroll their children in a preschool should visit various facilities to determine which best suits their child's needs.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Honduras offers limited facilities for college age students and adults. All classes are taught in Spanish. Advanced study is usually undertaken abroad. French-language lessons are taught at the Alliance Francaise under the auspices of the French embassy. The Alliance offers an excellent curriculum from beginning to advanced studies. Guitar, piano, and marimba lessons are available.

Sports

Horseback riding is popular, and you can enjoy it year round. A stable near the outskirts of town offers English riding lessons. Horses are boarded for a monthly fee, which includes feed, utilities, rent, and membership. Lessons are available

on an hourly basis after the membership fee is paid.

There are two Country Clubs which offers tennis and golf memberships. The Hotel Honduras Maya and the Alameda Hotel offer pool memberships. The Country Club and Los Delfines del Maya have competitive swim teams for young people. Bosques de Zambrano, a 40 minute drive from Tegucigalpa has indoor and outdoor pools, skeet shooting, tennis courts, picnic grounds, and restaurant services.

Tegucigalpa has three ballet schools for children and adults. Karate and judo classes are available for all ages.

Little league baseball, basketball, and soccer are played at the American School. Adults can join in pickup basketball or volleyball games.

Scuba diving, snorkeling, and fishing in the Bay Islands are fantastic. An active scuba diving club (Honduras Underwater Group) makes regular trips to various diving areas. You can also charter sailing yachts in the Bay Islands or rent small cays for overnighting.

The rugged hills around Tegucigalpa and the La Tigre cloud forest offer excellent hiking opportunities. Tegucigalpa has limited museums, zoological parks, and playgrounds.

Amateur archeologists may be interested in the Mayan ruins scattered throughout the country. All archeological relics are the property of the state, and exportation is prohibited by Honduran law and a treaty with the US.

Bring all sporting equipment and special clothing with you since selection is limited and prices are high.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The former Presidential Palace, which has been converted into a museum is a beautiful, old building

situated above the river. Near the palace is the more modern Congress building. A stroll through its columned patio area is interesting. A drive or walk up the cobblestone streets to the old La Leona section of the city leads to La Leona Park, with its lovely view of Tegucigalpa. In this area are a few colonial style homes. Concordia Park is a small popular park that has replicas of the Copan ruins.

The National Cathedral of San Miguel was begun in 1756 and consecrated in 1782. One of the oldest pieces in the church is the stone baptismal font. As you enter the valley of Tegucigalpa, you will see Suyapa Basilica, home of the Patron Saint of Honduras, the Virgin of Suyapa, etched against hills to the east.

The Pan American Agricultural School at Zamorano is about 25 miles from Tegucigalpa over a mountainous paved road. School grounds are beautiful and well kept, and the colonial style architecture of the buildings is attractive. Nearby is San Antonio de Oriente, a picturesque mining town, home of well-known Honduran primitive painter, Juan Antonio Velasquez. It is a morning's hike from the Pan American School grounds, or you can go by four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Valle de Angeles is about a 30minute drive over a paved road that winds through hills to the quaint village where you will find an arts and crafts center. Santa Lucia, near Valle de Angeles, is a small silver mining town perched on top of one of the many hills surrounding Tegucigalpa. The age of the principal church in Santa Lucia is unknown, but a wooden plaque dated 1598 was found in the old building.

Parque Aurora, a lovely park off the north road, has a lake for rowing, a picnic area, roller skating rink, miniature golf, playground equipment, and small zoo.

Comayagua, th colonial capital of Honduras, is situated in a broad



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Street scene in Honduras

valley. It is a 90 minute drive on a paved road from Tegucigalpa. Comayagua's Cathedral, built over 400 years ago, is one of the most beautiful in Central America.

Lake Yojoa, the largest lake in Honduras, is about 2½ hours from Tegucigalpa. An hour's drive from Lake Yojoa is Pulhapanzak Falls. A jeep or four-wheel-drive vehicle is recommended.

Cedeno and Choluteca are reached by a paved road, the spur that connects Tegucigalpa with the Pan American Highway on the South Coast. A dirt road leads to the bathing beach of Cedeno on the Gulf of Fonseca, southwest of Choluteca. There is excellent fishing in the many shrimp farm canals near Choluteca.

The country's cultural heritage includes the remains of a great center of pre-Columbian civilization in

America, the Mayan ruins of Copan. This Mayan center rose and mysteriously declined seven centuries before Columbus set foot on Honduran soil. Since their discovery in 1893, the ruins of Copan have been explored, excavated, and studied by some of the world's leading archeologists. Copan is one of the greatest ceremonial centers of temple cities of a vast empire evolved from ancient peoples who inhabited Mexico and Central America before the birth of Christ. Visit by car or tour bus. Ranging from 10 to 40 miles off the North Coast are several picturesque islands, the largest of which are Guanaja, Roatan, and Utila. Once the haven of buccaneers and pirates, the islands are now sparsely populated by friendly descendants of English settlers who welcome all visitors. The Bay Islands offer lovely scenery, excellent snorkeling and diving, sailing, relaxed atmosphere, and good food, especially seafood. Go by boat,

scheduled airlines, or chartered aircraft.

Tela, on the North Coast, has fine, sandy beaches fringed by graceful palms. Telamar, a seaside resort, offers fair accommodations. La Ceiba also on the North Coast, is accessible daily by plane.

Entertainment

Movie theaters show current and old American films with English soundtrack and Spanish subtitles. They also feature some Mexican, Italian, French, and British films. Prices are low, even for first-run movies (L10 per person or \$1.10). Several new, air-conditioned, multi-cinema movie theaters are in the suburbs, and several comfortable movie theaters are in town.

The National School of Fine Arts has showings of local art. Classes are conducted in ceramics, painting, woodcarving, and sculpturing. The

average cost per class session is L25 (US \$2.80). Photography is a popular hobby. You can find considerable human interest subject matter as well as panoramic scenes. Most popular types and sizes of film are available in the commissary as is developing service for black-and-white and color films. Mail-order firms in the US can also be used for processing.

Occasionally, cultural attractions are sponsored by the US Government and other embassies. Locally produced concerts, folk festivals, and plays are also offered. Plays in English and Spanish are presented by a local dramatic group, Teatro Reforma. Mixed Company, an amateur English-speaking theater group, also presents several plays a year. Both groups welcome Hondurans and members of the international community. The National University has a theater group that presents occasional plays in Spanish. Instituto Hondureño de Cultura Interamericana (Binational Center) presents concerts, lectures, and local art shows.

Social Activities

The English-speaking Women's Club of Tegucigalpa is open to any English-speaking woman, regardless of nationality, and offers an excellent opportunity to meet Hondurans, Americans, and women from other countries. The club offers a monthly entertainment program and a variety of classes such as oil painting, international cooking, discussion groups, bridge, book club, etc.

OTHER CITIES

AMAPALA is the chief Pacific port in Honduras. It is located in the southern part of the country, on Tigre Island in the Gulf of Fonseca. Lumber and coffee are shipped to Amapala by launch from the mainland for export. Amapala is about 70 miles southwest of Tegucigalpa and has a population over 4,000.

COMAYAGUA, located about 35 miles northwest of Tegucigalpa, was the most important city of colonial Honduras. Founded in 1537, Comayagua, the conservative stronghold, rivaled Tegucigalpa, dominated by liberals, in the political struggle following Honduras' independence from Spain in 1821. The two cities alternated as capital until 1880, when Tegucigalpa became the permanent site. Comayagua today is the center of an agricultural and mining region. It has colonial landmarks, including a magnificent cathedral. The population over 40,000.

COPÁN is a village of about 2,000 people on the Honduran-Guatemalan border, 125 miles northwest of Tegucigalpa. It is near the ruined city of Copán, considered to be the center of the ancient Mayan culture. Of note among the ruins is the Hieroglyphic Stairway, dating to the year 756 and bearing the lengthiest known Mayan inscription.

LA CEIBA, located in northern Honduras on the Caribbean Sea, is about 100 miles north of Tegucigalpa. Situated at the foot of Peak Bonito, La Ceiba has beautiful beaches and is a departure point for the Bay Islands. The city is a commercial and processing center for the surrounding agricultural region; coconuts and citrus fruits are shipped from its port. La Ceiba was Honduras' main banana port until disease destroyed the surrounding plantations in the 1930s. The population in 1995 was about 89,200.

PUERTO CORTÉS lies on the Gulf of Honduras near the Guatemalan border, about 100 miles west of La Ceiba. Founded in 1525, Puerto Cortés is the principal Atlantic port, exporting mainly bananas, but also coffee, coconuts, hardwood, abaca, and minerals. The population here is approximately 42,000 (1987 est.).

SAN PEDRO SULA is the second largest city in Honduras, located 100 miles northwest of Tegucigalpa. With a metropolitan population

over 280,000, San Pedro Sula is a commercial center, producing foodstuffs, clothing, beverages, tobacco products, soap, and building materials. Industry here is small and consumer-oriented. The country's only railroad links northwestern banana and sugar plantations with the principal northern ports.

SANTA BÁRBARA is a commercial and administrative center in western Honduras, 80 miles northwest of Tegucigalpa. The community of over 26,000 residents, rests in the hot lowlands close to the Ulúa River and Lake Yojoa. In the city's outlying areas, livestock and sugarcane are economic mainstays; in the core, manufacturing of clothing and furniture is important. Nearby, ruins of the abandoned city of Tenacoa have been found. Santa Bárbara can be reached by a spur from the Inter-Oceanic Highway; it has an airfield.

Situated 25 miles from the Guatemala border and 115 miles west of Tegucigalpa, **SANTA ROSA DE COPÁN** is the country's westernmost major city. It was founded in the 1700s and first called Los Llanos. Today it is the commercial hub of western Honduras, with 32,000 residents. The varied economy here includes tobacco blending and cigar making, and the production of lumber, furniture, leather products, clothing, and beverages. Good transportation is assured by access to several highways in Honduras and El Salvador; Santa Rosa de Copán also has an airfield. A nearby tourist stop is the ancient Mayan city of Copán, 25 miles outside of town. Several ruins can be seen, mostly buried under tropical vegetation. Courtyards, ball courts, and stone columns are among the sites.

TELA is situated in the northwestern region on the Caribbean Sea, between Puerto Cortés and La Ceiba. It is the headquarters for a large area of banana plantations, as well as a port and commercial center. Tela has an estimated population of 71,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Honduras is situated in the middle of six republics comprising the Central American Isthmus between Mexico and Panama. Roughly triangular in shape, it has a 459-mile Caribbean coastline to the north and narrows in the south to 89 miles at the Gulf of Fonseca on the Pacific Ocean. It is bounded on the west by Guatemala, the southwest by El Salvador, and the east and southeast by Nicaragua.

Honduras has an estimated land area of 43,277 square miles, slightly larger than Tennessee. Second largest of the six Central American Republics, it ranks 14th in size among all Latin American nations. However, population distribution is unequal. The northeastern part (Mosquitia, consisting of eastern Department of Colon, most of Olancho, and all of Gracias a Dios) is thinly inhabited. It comprises 44.5% of the entire national territory and only 8.6% of the population.

Honduras also has insular possessions, including the picturesque Bay Islands formed by the summit of a submerged mountain range. The Bay Islands (Roatan, Utila, Guanaja, Barbereta, Santa Elena, and Morat) form one of the country's 18 departments. Farther northeast lie the Swan Islands, previously used by the US as a weather research station and now recognized as Honduran territory. Puerto Cortes (Honduras' first container-loading facility), Tela, La Ceiba, and Puerto Castilla are major Caribbean ports. Honduras has two secondary Pacific ports: Amapala, on Tiger Island in the Gulf of Fonseca, and San Lorenzo, on the mainland.

Honduran topography is exceptionally rugged. The Central American Cordillera crosses Honduras from east to west, making it the most

mountainous of the six republics. The highest mountain peaks are in the southwest. Lowlands are the northern and eastern coastal plains, a narrow southern coastal plain, and river valleys. Principal rivers are in the north and flow into the Caribbean. Government estimates list 63.6% of the land surface as mountainous and 34.4% as plains and valleys.

Geographically and commercially, the country consists of two general regions: the highlands of the interior and southern Honduras and the tropical, banana-producing North Coast. Southern coastal lowlands are grouped with the highland region because of their economic linkage with Tegucigalpa, located in southwest central Honduras.

Tegucigalpa, located in a mountain basin at about 3,200 feet, is surrounded by jutting peaks, one of which reaches over 7,000 feet. The city proper lies at the foot of and on the slopes of Mount Picacho. It is 82 miles from the Gulf of Fonseca on the Pacific coast and 230 miles from the Caribbean to the north. The Choluteca River separates Tegucigalpa and its twin city, Comayagua. Seven small bridges connect the twin cities.

Tegucigalpa's altitude renders a moderate climate, and most days are like spring. Moderate to cool nights relieve occasional hot days. Average monthly temperatures vary from 66°F in January to 74°F in May. Extreme temperatures as low as 44°F and as high as 90°F may occur. Seasonal differences vary more in rainfall than in temperature. The rainy season usually begins in mid-May and continues through mid-November, with heavy rains ending in late October. During the rainy season, rains occur in the late afternoons and early evenings, and days are mostly sunny and clear. From mid-November to February, cooler temperatures and strong winds prevail. The hot, dry season in Tegucigalpa can be uncomfortable and lasts for about 34 months, beginning as early as mid-January. It reaches its peak in

April and continues until the first rains. During this time water shortages occur, the earth becomes brown and parched, and heavy dust and smoke from brush/grassland burnings hang in the air.

Population

Honduras' population is estimated at 6.1 million (2000), about 55 persons per square mile. Population distribution is concentrated in a rough crescent beginning at the South Coast, running through Tegucigalpa and Comayagua to San Pedro Sula, and then eastward along the North Coast through Tela to La Ceiba. Tegucigalpa, including Comayagueta (Central District), has a population of more than 800,000. Beginning in 1950, migration to the city from rural areas caused the population to rise sharply. Other population centers are San Pedro Sula, the country's industrial center; Puerto Cortes and La Ceiba on the North Coast; and Choluteca in the south.

The family is the basic social unit. Family ties extend to cousins, aunts, uncles, in-laws, and even godparents (known as "compadres"). Many families are large and often include representation from several social strata and different political affiliations. Although Roman Catholicism predominates, freedom of religion exists, and many other sects and denominations are represented.

Most Honduran Indians have been assimilated into the Hispano-American culture. Today, more than 90% of the population is comprised of mestizos, i.e., a mixture of white and Indian. A Caribbean black population is centered on the North Coast and the Bay Islands where most were born. Spanish is the official language, but North Coast blacks and most inhabitants of the Bay Islands speak an English dialect. A large colony of Catholic Palestinian emigrants is active in commerce and trade.

About 8,500 US citizens, many of whom are missionaries, reside in Honduras. Others are employed by



Mayan ruins in Copan, Honduras

Courtesy of Molly Flint

US-based firms and the US Government. A small international colony includes British, Chinese, German, Italian, French, Dutch, Finnish, Greek, and Spanish citizens. Although some Hondurans possess great wealth, a gap exists between upper class and middle-class groups and the poorer rural and urban populations. The middle class consists principally of professionals, merchants, entrepreneurs, and government employees.

Honduras is largely agricultural. More than 29% of the population depends on agriculture for its livelihood. Basic dietary staples are corn (usually prepared as tortillas), red beans, rice, fish, and eggs. Meat and fresh vegetables are added to the diet as one progresses up the economic scale.

Public Institutions

The 1982 constitution provides for a strong executive, a unicameral National Congress, and a judiciary appointed by the National Congress. The president is directly elected to a 4-year term by popular vote. The congress also serves a 4-year term; congressional seats are assigned the parties' candidates in proportion to the number of votes each party receives in the various departments. The judiciary includes

a Supreme Court of Justice, courts of appeal, and several courts of original jurisdiction--such as labor, tax, and criminal courts. For administrative purposes, Honduras is divided into 18 departments, with municipal officials selected for 4-year terms.

Reinforced by the media and several political watchdog organizations, human rights and civil liberties are reasonably well protected. There are no known political prisoners in Honduras, and the privately owned media frequently exercises its right to criticize without fear of reprisals.

Honduras held its sixth consecutive democratic elections in November 2001, to elect a new president, unicameral Congress, and mayors. For only the second time, voters were able to cast separate ballots for each office, and for the first time, denied the president-elect party's absolute majority in the Congress. The incidence of cross-voting between presidential and congressional candidates was marked.

The two major parties--the Liberal Party and the National Party--run active campaigns throughout the country. Their ideologies are mostly centrist, with diverse factions in each centered on personalities. The three smaller registered parties--

the Christian Democratic Party, the Innovation and National Unity Party, and the Democratic Unification Party--have increased their political muscle in the National Congress by doubling their representation. Despite significant progress in training and installing more skillful advisers at the top of each party ladder, electoral politics in Honduras remain traditionalist and paternalistic.

Under the 1982 Constitution, the Armed Forces are entrusted with ensuring both internal and external security. A branch, the Public Security Force (FUSEP), assumes police functions. The Armed Forces also play an important role in national political and economic affairs. They have supported the democratic process.

For administrative purposes, Honduras is divided into 18 departments. The chief official of each department is a governor appointed by the President.

Arts, Science, and Education

Tegucigalpa has six institutions of higher education. The National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), founded in 1847, has its principal campus in Tegucigalpa with branches in San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba. UNAH and the local professional associations, such as the College of Engineers, share responsibility of issuing professional licenses. The public Universidad Pedagógica Nacional and the private Jose Cecilio del Valle University, a Catholic University, are also located in Tegucigalpa. Through extension programs, non-degree students can elect courses in painting, drama, archeology, and sculpture at any of these institutions. The newest private university in Tegucigalpa is the 1987 founded Central American Technical University (UNITEC). UNITEC offers 2-year programs, as well as BS and MS degrees in fields such as accounting, computer science, and human relations. The private

University of San Pedro Sula was founded in 1972 and offers degrees in business administration, economics, architecture, and anthropology.

In 1982 a scientific center of investigation was established at UNAH. The University has organized a marine biology center at La Ceiba. Despite these recent efforts, Hondurans pursue little scientific investigation and research.

The National School of Fine Arts and the National School of Music train qualified students. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism directs these institutions and sponsors the Cuadro Folklórico of Honduras and a Garifuna (a Caribbean coast ethnic group) song-and-dance group. The Institute of History and Anthropology, a part of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, maintains a small museum in one of Tegucigalpa's historic houses and offers exhibits on topics of natural history, Honduran political history, and archeology. A study center at the museum conducts archeological studies and preserves Mayan artifacts. A second museum devoted to Honduran history can be found in downtown Tegucigalpa. A museum of North coast history and anthropology recently opened in San Pedro Sula. An excellent museum is located at the famous Copan ruins.

Aside from occasional visiting cultural presentations and the opportunity to attend courses at educational institutions, cultural opportunities are limited and do not compare with those available in larger regional cities in the US.

Commerce and Industry

Agriculture is the principal industry in Honduras. Although much farming is done at a low level of technology for basic staples such as corn and beans, commercial farming for export has become increasingly important in recent years. The tropical location combined with the mountainous terrain creates a vari-

ety of micro-climates suitable for a wide range of crops. Bananas, coffee, and sugar are the most important export crops; coffee alone accounts for some 30% of total exports. Nontraditional crops such as cantaloupes, watermelons, and vegetables such as cucumbers and squash are produced for the winter market in the US on an increasingly larger scale. Many other fruits, nuts, and vegetables are also grown but have not yet become significant exports.

Despite agriculture's importance, the Honduran countryside often seems empty when viewed from the roadside. This is due to both extensive forests and extensive cattle raising areas. Although cattle ranching remains important throughout Honduras, beef production has declined recently. The same may be said for the forestry industry. Although Honduras still has abundant forest reserves, primarily pine but with extensive tropical hardwood forests in some parts, poor government policies and inadequate reforestation have reduced commercial exploitation. Much of the population still uses wood as a primary fuel. This, along with clearing land for cattle and other food production, has resulted in deforestation in southern and central areas particularly.

The fishing industry is concentrated on the North Coast and in the Bay Islands. The large fishing fleet takes lobster, shrimp, and, increasingly, fin fish for both local and export markets. Farm-grown shrimp concentrated along the Gulf of Fonseca in the south form the base of a dynamic industry, which began in earnest in the early 1980s. As over-fishing in the north causes catches to decline, aquaculture in the south increases in importance. Recently disease has hurt production in the southern shrimp farms.

Honduras historically was a mining country, producing gold, silver, lead, and zinc. However, poor policies and low mineral prices have reduced mining's importance. El Mochito, the only large mine, still produces

zinc and lead. Several smaller mines are active, and individuals do placer mining for gold on rivers in the east. No petroleum production exists, but onshore exploration activities were initiated in 1991.

Manufacturing consists primarily of consumer goods for local markets. The notable exception is, the booming apparel industry that generates considerable employment, primarily on the north coast. Many local apparel companies do assembly operations for well-known US brands and companies. In 1990, the first privately operated industrial park was inaugurated and others are expected soon. Occupants of these parks and free zones include US and Asian companies producing apparel for the US market.

Although not traditionally an important tourism destination, the industry shows signs of becoming more dynamic. Reef diving off the Bay Islands and well-preserved Mayan ruins are current attractions. Accommodations on the islands have improved and new development projects are in planning stages. Two American carriers (Continental and American), as well as several Central American airlines, serve Honduras.

Principal exports are bananas, coffee, sugar, shrimp, and apparel. Other exports include tobacco products, melons, winter vegetables, wood products, and minerals. Principal imports are petroleum products, fertilizers and pesticides, plastic resins, and paper products. A wide variety of machinery, vehicles, and consumer goods also reaches Honduran markets. The US buys about 55% of Honduran exports and provides 50% of its imports.

Transportation

Local

Individually operated buses and minibuses ("busitos") provide service within Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and nearby cities such as Choluteca and Danli. Bus fare is 75

centavos (\$.08). No transfers are given, and often you must take several buses to a given destination. Taxi service is adequate in downtown areas of Tegucigalpa, but some drivers pick up as many passengers as possible along the way. Taxis can be hard to find in most residential areas and often you must walk to a main street. Major hotels and the airport in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula have a fleet of cabs that charge two or three times normal rates. Taxis are not metered, so negotiate the fare first. Rental cars are available and taxis can be hired on a daily or hourly basis.

Regional

Rail service in Honduras is confined to the banana zone along the Caribbean coast and is not reliable.

Honduras has three international airports, located in Tegucigalpa, the capital city, San Pedro Sula, the commercial center and the coastal city of La Ceiba. Passenger and air freight services are reliable and efficient.

Air service from Tegucigalpa to Miami is provided by American Airlines and Taca Airlines. In addition, Taca provides service to New Orleans and Houston as well as to Guatemala City, San Salvador, Managua, San Jose, San Andres, and Panama. Continental Airlines provides air service from Tegucigalpa to Houston. Lacs, a Costa Rican airline, provides air service via San Pedro Sula to Cancun, San Jose, Panama, Barranquilla, New Orleans, Los Angeles, and New York. Since delays can occur in receiving your baggage when coming from the US, include a change of clothing and toiletries in your carry on bags.

Islena, a domestic air carrier, connect Tegucigalpa with the North Coast and the Bay Islands. Charter service and aircraft rentals (small single and twin-engine equipment) are available from private flying services operating out of Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and La Ceiba. Small jets land in Teg-

ucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and La Ceiba.

Of Honduras' 22,724 miles of roads, about 4,053 miles are paved. Pot-holes are constant hazards, particularly during the rainy season. Night driving is discouraged because of such hazards as poor road conditions, animals on the road, pedestrians, unlit vehicles, and heavy commercial traffic. It takes 4 hours to drive from Tegucigalpa to San Pedro Sula.

When political and security conditions permit, you can drive to neighboring Central American capitals.

Bus service is available from Honduras to principal cities of Central America. However, buses are often overcrowded and rarely meet US safety and comfort standards. There is, however, a comfortable and very reasonably priced express bus service between Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service is adequate, but obtaining a telephone in a new housing area is difficult.

Telecommunications of Honduras (HONDUTEL) provides domestic and international telephone service. The monthly rate for residential telephone service is L20 (US \$2.25). Additional calls and/or increased calling time increase your phone bill. Direct-dial, long-distance calling within Honduras and to the US and many other countries is available. Costs are based on destination, and rates are available through operator assistance. Night rates are charged from 10 pm to 7 am daily. Direct-dial calls placed from the continental US to Honduras are considerably cheaper. AT&T credit card holders may use the less costly "USA Direct" service. Sprint 121 service is also available. World-wide telephone service offers good connections.

Telegraph service, also through HONDUTEL, is available to all parts of the world at a rate of L7 (\$.08) per word, including name and address. An urgent telegram costs L1.40 (\$.18) a word

Radio and TV

Radio reception is satisfactory. US-style music is featured on several stations, but news is exclusively in Spanish. A good shortwave radio is necessary to receive American stations and international broadcasts including the Voice of America (VOA).

Five local TV stations can be seen in Tegucigalpa, all with Spanish-language programming. Local viewing will improve your Spanish. Some local companies offer cable service with a wide range of stations, including major networks, CNN and entertainment-oriented stations (HBO Ole, CINEMAX, etc.).

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Six Spanish-language dailies are published in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. One weekly English-language newspaper is published in Honduras. Major sources of English-language news are the Latin American air express editions of the Miami Herald, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, and USA Today. They normally arrive the day of, or day after, publication.

Overseas editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available at several newsstands at lesser cost. Several bookstores in Tegucigalpa carry limited selections of paperbacks, US magazines, and children's books. The Binational Center library carries a good selection of US newspapers, magazines, and some technical journals.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

If you require medication for long-term conditions, bring an adequate supply and/or make arrangements

with your physician and pharmacist to ensure a continued supply. Drugs may be obtained locally but are sporadically available. In addition, finding the exact item desired can be difficult.

Many local physicians have had part or all of their medical education in the US or Europe and enjoy the confidence of the community. Diagnostic facilities, such as radiology units and laboratories, provide most basic services. Three private hospitals are utilized frequently and two have emergency services. Hospitalization is usually limited to short stays, as comfort and nursing care are only fair and services limited.

Ophthalmology and optometry services are good. A new ophthalmology clinic has up-to-date outpatient care services and 24-hour emergency services. Lenses, frames, glasses, and accessories are imported but are cheaper than in the US.

Routine dental care is quite good. Orthodontia is excellent and inexpensive. Many types of medical specialists are available and often are good.

Community Health

Honduras provides very little environmental sanitation or community health controls. Tap-water is considered contaminated and must be purified by the 3 minute boil-and-filter method before using for drinking, making ice cubes, brushing teeth, or washing fresh produce. All raw food products such as fruits, vegetables, and meats should be considered contaminated, and must be treated or properly cooked. Most endemic health hazards, including intestinal parasites and bacterial infections such as typhoid and infectious hepatitis, are directly related to water and food contamination. Pasteurized milk and other dairy products are available.

During the latter part of the dry season (February-April) water shortages occur. Many homes have water storage tanks (cisterns) with electric pumps in readiness for

shortages. During this same period, burning empty fields within the city results in an inordinate amount of smoke in the air. Upper respiratory infections and lung ailments, such as allergies and asthma, may be exacerbated during this period of dry, dusty, warm weather with smoke. If you are subject to any of these illnesses, bring a nebulizer, vaporizer and/or air purifier.

Rabies is present in Honduras but does not constitute a serious health problem. Mosquitoes and other flying insects are present in Tegucigalpa and can be somewhat controlled by repellents, sprays, and good screening. Malaria is exists outside Tegucigalpa, and malarial suppressants are recommended when overnighting in areas with elevation lower than Tegucigalpa. Crawling insects can be problems, and controlling them in homes requires constant care. To keep bugs out of food, use airtight containers.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The best air travel to Tegucigalpa is via Miami on American Airlines (daily, nonstop flights are available). Luggage often does not arrive on the same flight as the traveler, therefore, use your carry on bag effectively (change of clothing, special medicines, etc.).

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Honduras. A visa is not required, but tourists must provide proof of return or onward travel. Visitors are given a permit to remain in Honduras for 30 days. Honduran immigration may grant up to two thirty-day extensions for a total of 90 days. Thereafter, tourists must leave the country prior to reentering. On departure, visitors are required to pay an exit fee, either in dollars or in local currency, at the airline counter.

Honduran customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concern-

ing temporary importation into or export from Honduras of items such as firearms, antiquities, medications, and business equipment. For example, Honduran law prohibits the export of antiques and artifacts from pre-colonial civilizations. To protect the country's biodiversity, it is illegal to export certain birds, feathers and other flora and fauna.

U.S. citizens who intend to stay in Honduras for an extended period of time and who bring vehicles or household goods into the country should consult Honduran customs officials prior to shipment.

For specific information regarding customs requirements, contact the Embassy of Honduras in Washington or one of Honduras's consulates in the United States.

Americans living in or visiting Honduras are encouraged to register at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Honduras. Travelers can register in person or fill out the form available on the Embassy website and fax it to the Embassy. Please include a copy of the data page of your passport and emergency contact information.

The U.S. Embassy and Consulate are located at: Avenida La Paz in Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Fax: 011-504-238-4357; Web site: <http://www.usmission.hn>; Telephone: 011-504-236-9320 or 011-504-238-5114. For information on services for U.S. citizens, ask for ext. 4400.

The Consular Agency in San Pedro Sula is located at: Banco Atlantida Building - 8th Floor, San Pedro Sula, Honduras, Telephone: 011-504-558-1580.

The Consular Agent at this office is available during limited hours to accept U.S. passport applications for adjudication at the Embassy in Tegucigalpa, perform notarial services and assist U.S. citizens with emergencies. Please call for office hours. The Consular Agent does not provide visa information or services.

Pets

The Government of Honduras' Ministry of Natural Resources has established import restrictions for pets. Before arrival, you must request an import permit and obtain a veterinarian certificate, which authorizes a 40 day in-house quarantine. Bring vaccination certificates for distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, and parvovirus. You must also bring, upon arrival in country, a health certificate not more than 14 days old and a rabies vaccination certificate that is at least 6 months, but not more than 1 year old. Local veterinarian services are fair to good.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official monetary unit is the lempira, named after a heroic Indian chief who fought against the Spanish conquistadors. It is usually written as L1 or 1 Lps.

Occasionally, the shopper will hear Hondurans use "peso". This monetary unit existed before the lempira was adopted and is currently equivalent to the lempira.

Lempiras are divided into 100 centavos. Bills the same size as US bills are issued in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 lempiras. Coins are issued in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 centavos.

Currently, the official rate of exchange is L16.36=US\$1. The Central Bank of Honduras regulates both imports and foreign exchange. The value of the lempira against the dollar (exchange rate) is subject to periodic adjustment according to supply of and demand for dollars and other political economic factors.

The official system of weights and measures is the metric system, but the US system is, used most in markets, shops, and gasoline stations. The old Spanish system (e.g., vara vs. meter) is used in legal affairs. Most mechanics and carpenters are also familiar with US weights and measures.

Disaster Preparedness

Honduras is prone to flooding and landslides from heavy rains, especially during the rainy season which generally occurs from June to December. Hurricane Mitch caused extensive damage and loss of life in October 1998. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King's Day
Mar/Apr.	Holy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Saturday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Apr. 14	Day of the Americas
May 1	Honduran Labor Day
May 1	Labor Day
Sept. 15	Independence Day of Central America
Oct. 3	Birthday of General Francisco Morazan
Oct. 12	Discovery of America
Oct. 21	Honduran Armed Forces Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

*variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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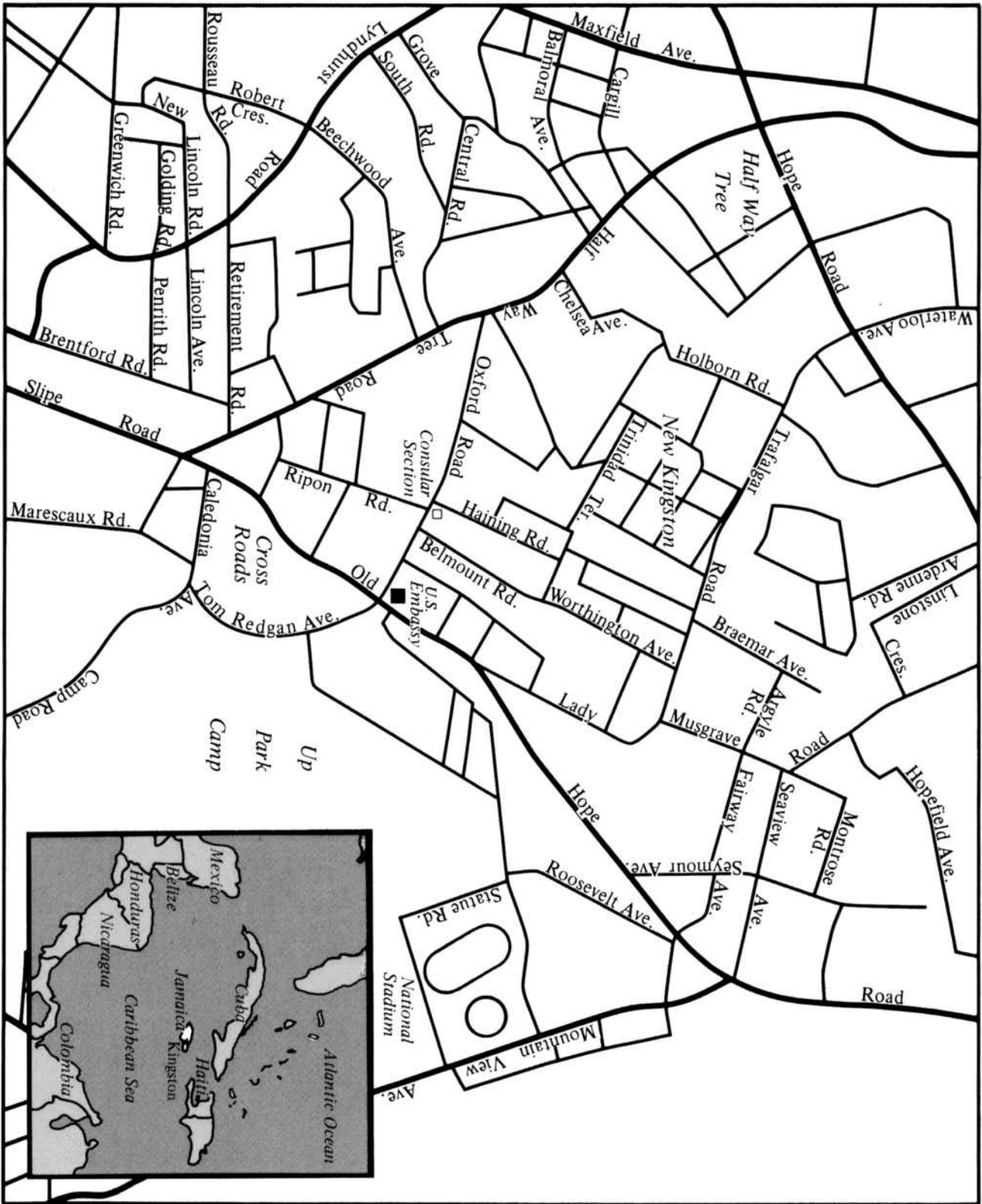
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Kingston, Jamaica

JAMAICA

Major Cities:

Kingston, Mandeville, Montego Bay, Port Antonio

Other Cities:

Bath, Black River, Falmouth, Morant Bay, Negril, Ocho Rios, Savanna-La-Mar, Spanish Town

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Jamaica. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Travelers have long regarded Jamaica as one of the most alluring of the Caribbean islands. Its beaches, mountains, and carnal red sunsets regularly appear in the world's tourist brochures, and, unlike other nearby islands, it democratically caters to all comers: You can choose a private villa with your own private beach; laugh your vacation away at a party-hearty resort; or throw yourself into the thick of the island's life.

Jamaica has a vivid and painful history, marred since European settlement by an undercurrent of violence and tyranny. Christopher Columbus

first landed on the island in 1494, when there were perhaps 100,000 peaceful Arawak Amerindians who had settled Jamaica around 700 AD. Spanish settlers arrived from 1510, raising cattle and pigs, and introducing two things that would profoundly shape the island's future: sugar and slaves. By the end of the 16th century the Arawak population had been entirely wiped out.

In 1654 an ill-equipped and badly organized English contingent sailed to the Caribbean. After failing to take Hispaniola (present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic), the "wicked army of common cheats, thieves and lewd persons" turned to weakly defended Jamaica. Despite the ongoing efforts of Spanish loyalists and guerilla-style campaigns of freed Spanish slaves (cimarrones, "wild ones"-or Maroons), England took control of the island.

Investment and further settlement hastened as profits began to accrue from cocoa, coffee, and sugarcane production. Slave rebellions did not make life any easier for the English as escaped slaves joined with descendants of the Maroons, engaging in extended ambush-style campaigns, and eventually forcing the

English to grant them autonomy in 1739. New slaves kept arriving,

however, most of them put to work on sugar plantations. The Jamaican parliament finally abolished slavery on August 1, 1834.

Adult suffrage for all Jamaicans was introduced in 1944, and virtual autonomy from Britain was granted in 1947.

Post-independence politics have been dominated by the legacy of two cousins: Alexander Bustamante, who formed the first trade union in the Caribbean just before WWII and later formed the Jamaican Labor Party (JLP), and Norman Manley, whose People's National Party (PNP) was the first political party on the island when it was convened in 1938. Manley's son Michael led the PNP towards democratic socialism in the mid-1970s.

Jamaicans may have a quick wit and a ready smile, but this is not the happy-go-lucky island of Bacardi ads. Rastafarianism may mean easy skankin' to some, but its confused expression of love, hope, anger, and social discontent encapsulates modern Jamaica—a country that is struggling to escape dependency and debt.

MAJOR CITY

Kingston

The destruction of Port Royal by an earthquake in 1692 led to the settlement of Kingston to the north across the harbor. So rapid was growth that by 1703 it was declared by law the chief seat of trade and head port on the island. In 1872, it became the island's capital. After 1911, internal migration began to focus on Kingston, which led to the continuing trend toward movement from the countryside to principal urban areas. Kingston is now the largest English-speaking city in the Americas south of Miami.

Kingston is spread along the low coastal area surrounded by picturesque mountains. It is a bustling, sprawling city of striking contrasts. Typical of large cities, Kingston has areas of modern homes set in lovely gardens as well as sections of slums. The government is attempting to replace the "tin shanties" of the slums with low-cost housing developments.

The better suburban residential areas are close to several fairly modern shopping areas, which include supermarkets, drug stores, dry cleaners, small specialty shops, movie theaters, and boutiques.

The modern-day Port Royal, beyond the airport and across the harbor from Kingston, is considered one of the more valuable archeological sites in the Western Hemisphere. It was known as one of the richest and most wicked cities in the world before the 1692 earthquake, which plunged much of this buccaneer capital into the sea. Several old buildings are still standing, and there is an excellent museum. Restoration and an underwater archeological project are under way.

Kingston itself has several interesting old houses as well as galleries, museums, and other places to visit. The city features panoramic views of the mountains or the sea from

nearly any point and offers many opportunities for an enjoyable tour.

Utilities

Electric service in Kingston is fair, with sporadic power outages. AC current is 110v, 50 cycles (the U.S. standard is 110v, 60 cycles). Many U.S.-made appliances function satisfactorily on 50-cycle current, but electric clocks, tape recorders, and some other equipment may not. Frequent voltage fluctuations sometimes damage electrical equipment.

Food

Supermarkets and small specialty shops in Kingston have a wide variety of meats, fruits, vegetables, and canned goods. The better quality shops and markets inspect their meat, but no government inspection is required. Prices are somewhat lower than those in the U.S. for all cuts of standard quality meats. Some American-type cuts of beef and pork are available. Fresh and frozen fish, lobster, and shrimp are available seasonally.

Vegetables range from tropical to standard fare and are available year round. Choices include white Irish potatoes (no baking), sweet potatoes, yams, beets, green beans, leaf lettuce, eggplant, green peppers, chilis, avocados, onions, scallions, celery, carrots, cucumbers, corn, tomatoes, varieties of pumpkin (squash), and several local varieties of vegetables. Quality is often below U.S. standards, and prices are moderately high, especially for potatoes and onions.

Fruits are also seasonal, with oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, limes, papaya, watermelon, mango, guava, pineapple, bananas, plantains, and other good local fruits available. Prices range from reasonable to high, although quality is good. All fruits and vegetables should be washed well before eating.

Clothing

Clothing suitable for men and women in southern Florida, southern California, and Hawaii is appropriate for Kingston. Some necessary

items for men, women, and children are expensive but can be found here. A limited selection of lightweight fabrics is available. A few hard-to-find dressmakers can make dresses. Ready-made clothing is sold, and prices are often high. Careful shopping can produce good results.

Bring a good supply of shoes, especially for women and children. These are hard to find in the right size, and quality is below U.S. standards. Imported shoes are available but are expensive. For possible trips to cooler climates or the U.S., include some warm clothing. Also bring blue jeans, sports clothes, slacks, and a pullover if you like mountain holidays.

American-style sportswear is worn here. Long patio dresses are worn, but short sundresses are popular for informal evening wear.

Drip-dry fabrics are ideal but are expensive here. Due to the climate and need for frequent laundering, elastic deteriorates rapidly.

For the infrequent cool evenings, sweaters or light evening wraps, depending on the function attended, will suffice. Men need only a lightweight tropical suit, even for the coolest Kingston weather.

Children wear typical play clothing, particularly shorts and T-shirts, tennis shoes, and sandals.

Supplies and Services

Bring your favorite cosmetics and toiletries, as well as prescription medications.

The quality of dry cleaning is fair. Barber shops are generally adequate and less expensive than those in the U.S. Beauty shops are nearly up to U.S. standards and charge U.S. prices.

Domestic Help

"Helper," not "maid," is the term used by Jamaicans and foreigners alike for domestic help on the island. Most Jamaican helpers are female. Most types of household help are available, but reliable,



Business district of Kingston, Jamaica

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well-trained workers, especially cooks and gardeners, may be difficult to find.

The Jamaican legal minimum wage is low, and most U.S. travelers pay more generous salaries. The standard pay for a dayworker, for instance, ranges from J\$200 to J\$300 a day, with average weekly salaries (40-hour maximum work-week) of J\$1,000 to J\$1,500.

Various arrangements are made for helpers food, bus fare, and lodging. Helpers daily hours are not rigidly set, and various schedules can be arranged to suit your family needs. Gardeners are generally competent, but are hard on American lawnmowers and tools.

If uniforms are desired, employers must furnish them. Once a year each helper receives 2 weeks' vacation with pay. In some cases, a helper is given quarters and lives in.

Helpers and employers must make modest weekly payments to the National Insurance Scheme, the Jamaican social security system. Payments for hospitalization or unemployment are not required, though often made by the employer. If a helper who has been employed at least 4 weeks is discharged without cause, 2 weeks severance pay is required.

Although local custom is not strongly established on this point, the employer should pay the costs of some medical services for a helper in case of sickness or injury. Public hospitals provide a wide range of free services, although receiving them can be time-consuming.

Religious Activities

Most major faiths are found in Jamaica. A partial list of denominations in Kingston includes Anglican, Baptist, Friends (Quaker), Jewish, Methodist, Mormon (Latter-day Saints), Presbyterian/Congrega-

tional, Roman Catholic, and Seventh-day Adventist. All services are in English.

Education

In the Jamaican school system, students take two important examinations, the Common Entrance and the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC). In 6th grade, at the end of January, every Jamaican student takes the Common Entrance Exam to enter high school. Doing well means acceptance in one of the nation's better high schools; doing poorly means the child cannot attend high school except as a private placement. In 1996, more than 55,000 Jamaican students sat the exam to earn one of fewer than 20,000 places. During the latter terms of 5th grade and the first term of 6th grade, students attend extra classes at the schools to prepare for the Common Entrance Exam. In its favor, the exam tests student abilities in math mechanics, adding, multiplication, etc.,

math reasoning and problem solving, spelling, English grammar, parts of speech, and reading comprehension. Students learn using rote memorization methods; yet they leave the Jamaican schools with a thorough grounding in the basics of math and English.

At senior level, grades 7-11, the Jamaican curriculum prepares students for the Caribbean Examination Council Exam. If students pass this exam, they go on to "A" level courses in 12th and 13th grades, and after that, to university. No Jamaican school will admit a student to the 12th grade unless the student passes the CXC.

The Jamaican high school curriculum treats science and math courses differently from the U.S. A Jamaican student studies a science course such as chemistry, biology, physics, etc., throughout 3 years and earns course credits only at the end of the third year. The Jamaican math curriculum incorporates general math, algebra, geometry, etc., into one mathematics course, whereas, under a U.S. curriculum, these are individual courses taught in separate years. In both math and science, it is difficult for a student to carry a useful transcript crediting the student with having completed algebra, geometry, the sciences, etc., to the U.S. or another school. Finally, as the high school begins at 7th grade, foreign language instruction also starts at that grade level.

Under the Jamaican education system, a person may teach in a classroom with 3 years' university certification. The student to teacher ratio is higher in Jamaican schools than in U.S. schools. Values and morals, such as integrity, responsibility, self-control, and self-reliance, are part of the Jamaican school philosophy. The students address their teachers as "Sir" or "Miss." Schools in Jamaica may not have the modern and well-equipped facilities of American schools, for example, full-scale libraries, computer and scientific laboratories, physical education gymnasiums, and sports field; nevertheless, facilities are more than

adequate and children receive an education equal to U.S. standards.

In Jamaica, children enter kindergarten at age 4; thus for Americans attending Jamaican schools, the age and grade do not correspond with the U.S. system and American children may frequently be a year older than classmates. The Jamaican schools tend to place incoming children based on age, so parents should work with the school in placing their child. Some students do very well, in effect, "skipping a grade," but parents must consider whether the U.S. school system will readmit the child at the advanced grade or return the child back to a grade more suitable for the child's age, maturity, and intellectual and social development.

American International School of Kingston: AISK was founded in 1994 to meet the growing demands for a school that would offer quality education that more closely follows the U.S. curriculum and style of education. It is applying for accreditation from the Southern States Association. Class size is small (no more than 15 students per class), allowing for more individualized attention.

The school year runs from early September through to late June or very early July and is divided into three terms, the Christmas, Easter, and summer terms. The Jamaican education system separates into preparatory schools, pre-kindergarten to grade 6, and high schools, grades 7 to 13. AISK follows a traditional American grade division: an elementary program for grades pre-kindergarten through 6, a middle school for grades 7 and 8, and a high school from grades 9 to 12.

Since it does not offer a program to prepare students for the two major Jamaican exams, Common Entrance and Caribbean Examination Council, AISK is a real alternative for children from the U.S. and other diplomatic missions, American and international business families, and Jamaican families who do not need their children to sit the

Common Entrance Exam because their children will attend high school abroad.

For grades 9-12, the school is fully accredited with the University of Nebraska and uses the university's directed home study program under the supervision of two high school teachers. Facilities include a library configuration that includes separate libraries for the lower grades (pre-kindergarten through 6) and upper grades (7-12), totaling over 5,000 volumes. Two computer labs with CD-ROM and access to the Internet are available to the students at AISK.

Because of the small class size, there is an emphasis on hands-on learning, and students may learn according to their own needs. The curriculum for the early grades includes Spanish, French, and art. The school emphasizes the development of the individual student. The goal of the school, at all levels, is to help students achieve their highest potential.

The high school at present does not provide facilities found in many U.S. schools. The home study system is quite different from a normal high school program, and while students lose out on a "normal high school social scene," they gain in their ability to work independently. Two students graduated in 1995 from 12th grade, and they were both accepted into Canadian universities. Students attending AISK's high school program will have no problem entering a U.S. high school when they leave Jamaica.

Hillel Academy: Hillel Academy, founded in 1969 as the Jewish community's contribution to education in Kingston, is nondenominational and religious instruction is optional. The curriculum is designed to prepare students for the CEE, CXC, and SAT examinations, as many Jamaican students attend university in the U.S. Hillel is in the process of applying for accreditation from the Southern States Association. Class size is large (28-30) per class, and this can be a problem for



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Jamaican novelty market

some children who require more individualized attention.

The highly regarded preparatory school is nursery, called reception, to grade 6, and the senior school is grades 7-13. The 1995-96 enrollment was 662 students.

The prep school offers a curriculum that is closely linked to that of U.S. schools. Many of the textbooks used are from the U.S., particularly in math and science. Language arts is based on a Caribbean curriculum and uses Caribbean textbooks; for example, within the Caribbean curriculum the word "harbor" is spelled with a "u," harbour. Students in the 5th grade begin to prepare for the Common Entrance Exam, given in January of 6th grade. The prep school offers a library, computer lab, art and music programs, French and Spanish languages, and after-school activities such as soccer, netball, tennis, martial arts, and ballet.

Hillel, which is building a swimming pool in time for the 1996 summer term, will offer swimming instruction as part of the physical education classes and swimming as an intramural sports program.

Although the senior school has experienced some problems in the past with curriculum and discipline, the school has installed a new principal in the high school, and the reports are that firm discipline and school structure are making changes in the school. All students are required to take French and Spanish the first 3 years of senior school.

Hillel is on an 8-1/2-acre campus at the foot of the mountains. Blue uniforms are required but may be bought from a local manufacturer. Black shoes are required for both boys and girls. Boys wear dark socks and girls wear navy socks. Bring both shoes and socks to post

as well as crew socks and white tennis shoes, which are needed for physical education. White shorts for phys. ed. can be bought locally, and the phys. ed. T-shirt will be sold by the school in the appropriate "house color" for your child.

Hillel Academy
 Dr. Hyacinth Hall (Director)
 51 Upper Markway
 Kingston 8, Jamaica
 Tel: (809) 925-1980

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the West Indies has its largest campus in Kingston. It is a modern institution offering liberal arts, natural sciences, and medical training. Entrance requirements are at the level of 1 year of college in the U.S. It is possible to enroll in selected classes but difficult to enroll for a degree program.

The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts includes the Schools of Dance, Drama, Art, and Music. Each offers programs for both adults and children.

Opportunities for learning languages such as French, German, and Spanish are available at the Alliance Française, the Jamaica-German Society, and the Institute of Bolivar y Bello. Private tutors are also readily available.

A number of facilities exist in Kingston for educating the handicapped, although equipment and staff are limited. These schools have limited space, and each should be explored for specific needs. Day programs are offered by the Jamaica Association for the Deaf, the Salvation Army School for the Blind, and the Mona Rehabilitation Center for the physically handicapped. Carberry Court Special School has day and boarding programs for the severely mentally handicapped. None of these programs meets U.S. standards.

Mico Care Center offers a 9-week remedial program for those with multiple handicaps. The Jamaica Association for Children with Learning Disabilities is a resource facility for assisting children while in their regular school program.

Sports

Jamaicans are sports conscious. Chief sports are soccer, cricket, golf, tennis, swimming, sailing, and horseback riding. Smaller groups are active in squash, rugby, scuba diving, snorkeling, basketball, and softball. Local sports groups and clubs accept foreign nationals.

There is a Saturday baseball league for students that begins in the fall. It is held on the campuses of local schools. Coaches and assistants are always welcome.

Although scuba gear is available for rental, it can be purchased here at higher-than-U.S. prices.

The Jamaica Sub-Aqua Club, a branch of the British Sub Aqua

Club (BSAC), gives scuba diving lessons for a minimal fee. BSAC certification with the club is required to participate in club-sponsored dives, arranged every weekend. PADI certification can be obtained at the Buccaneer Scuba Club in Port Royal and through some of the north coast hotels.

Jamaica has virtually no continental shelf, and the drop-off starts 200 yards from shore. Scuba diving and snorkeling enthusiasts enjoy exploring the many networks of caves, canyons, and crevices. The Ocho Rios area has traditionally had one of the Caribbean's finest reef communities. Over 50 species of coral include giant pillar, lettuce, antler, star and rose cup, and staghorn, as well as a wide variety of beautiful sponges and seaweed. Hurricane damage to the reefs in 1988 was extensive, particularly on the south side of the island.

Sergeant majors, tangs, and peacock flounders are among the many fish species to be seen. The island has over 800 species of shells.

There is saltwater sport fishing for jack, blue marlin (record 600 lbs.), sailfish, kingfish, dolphin, tuna, barracuda, tarpon, and snapper. Freshwater catches are snook, mullet, and others. Windsurfing is enjoyed at several north coast resorts. Water-skiing can be found in several places, especially at Blue Hole (Port Antonio) and Doctor's Cave (Montego Bay).

For joggers and walkers, the favorite spot to do laps is the Mona Reservoir. Daily running is also possible at the Police Officers' Club in Kingston. Running on the streets is not recommended because of dogs, traffic, and crime.

Constant Spring Golf Club offers a challenging 18-hole course marked by hills and narrow fairways. Entrance fees are moderate as are annual dues. Greens fees are low. Social membership entitles you to squash, badminton, tennis, and swimming. The initiation fee for social membership is moderate

when compared with U.S. private club fees. The clubhouse has a newly renovated bar and lounge room and snack bar. The pool area has also been renovated. There are no playground facilities at the club.

Caymanas Golf and Country Club is 12 miles from Kingston. Its facilities include a good 18-hole golf course and some tennis courts. Membership fees approximate those of the Constant Spring Club.

The Jamaica Golf Association (JGA) has a special arrangement for members of a Jamaican golf club. For a small annual fee, you may join JGA and play any course in Jamaica for about half price. There are 11 good golf courses on the island.

Kingston's Liguanea Club has a swimming pool; lighted tennis, badminton, and squash courts; a restaurant and bar; and an exercise room. The club has several dances a year and is used for other events. A special golf membership is available at Liguanea for play at the Caymanas golf course.

The Royal Jamaica Yacht Club has facilities available for those interested in sailing, boating, and fishing. Social events are also held. The club is located near the international airport, and its large veranda affords a panoramic view of the harbor, Kingston, and the mountains. Entrance fees and annual dues are moderate. Anyone with a desire to "crew" on sailboats should join the club and meet the boat owners.

Physical fitness clubs and health spas are available. The Spartan Health Club, for instance, offers universal weight lifting equipment, aerobic exercise classes, steam room, and shower facilities. Future Fitness is a state-of-the-art facility housed in the Wyndham Hotel. The air-conditioned facility offers aerobics as well as weight training, Stairmasters, bikes, and treadmills.

Kingston does not have extensive outdoor recreational opportunities for children. The city has a small zoo and botanical gardens where

children can ride bikes or rollerblade. Schools have limited playgrounds. Most families do not have sufficient space for bikes, except for tricycles. Children usually get their outdoor exercise in their own yards.

Many Jamaicans enroll their children in full-time nursery schools at the age of 2 or 3. Because of this, Americans find their own young children frequently lack playmates. Therefore, most families enroll young children in a nursery 5 days a week, at a reasonable cost.

There is little informal play between children of neighboring families in most neighborhoods in Kingston. Parents often schedule lessons or activities for the afternoons, especially for school-age children, since schools finish between 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. Tennis and golf lessons as well as piano, dance, and ballet lessons are popular. The Tae Kwon Do Club is enjoyed by all ages interested in self-defense.

Because summers are hot and humid, swimming is popular. Some families have homes with swimming pools, but beaches are some distance from Kingston.

Children will want to play indoors in the heat of the day when they first arrive, especially in summer.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The most popular form of outdoor activity on the island is beach-going. The north coast of Jamaica has luxury resorts, hotels, and private villas every few miles. The off-season from mid-April to mid-December offers lower rates.

Bicycle riding is not recommended in Kingston because of erratic driving habits, potholes, and overzealous dogs. There also have been incidents of bikers being attacked and bikes stolen. The University of the West Indies campus offers several miles of quiet, scenic roads for riders of all abilities and ages. There are several tour companies that offer bike excursions into the

Blue Mountains. Bring a car rack, helmet, and rear-view mirror.

Another popular outdoor activity is a weekend or day trip to Newcastle, a Jamaican Defense Force training center about an hour's drive from Kingston. At 4,000 feet, the weather can be quite cool so warmer clothes are advised. Hiking is a popular outdoor activity.

Bird watching is popular, and over 250 species can be seen, including 25 found only in Jamaica. Resident species shared with neighboring countries are of special interest, since some have developed differences in behavior and appearance peculiar to Jamaica. Bring binoculars.

Garden clubs have regular outdoor shows. The Orchid Show is an annual event enjoyed by many.

Touring is popular. Kingston-area locales include historic sites at Port Royal, Castleton and Hope Botanical Gardens, the National Gallery, and the nearby Blue Mountains. Touring elsewhere is an easy day's drive from Kingston.

Negril, on the western end of the island, has 7 miles of white-sand beach and uninhibited simplicity.

To the east of Negril along the north coast is Montego Bay, tourist capital of the island with its beaches, hotels, and attractions. The area includes several excellent golf courses and Rose Hall, Jamaica's most famous great house, which echoes with the mystery of Annie Palmer (the "White Witch"), its former mistress with a murky past. Nearby is Greenwood, once owned by the Barrett family whose best-known members were poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Sarah Barrett, "Pinkie" in Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait.

Falmouth, despite its neglect, is a charming north coast port. It is still the best-preserved late 18th- and early 19th-century town on the island. The old Georgian buildings are worth a sight-seeing tour.

The St. Ann's Bay/Discovery Bay/Runaway Bay area, where Columbus landed in 1494, is another interesting locale. Columbus Park, Columbus Statue, and the ruins of the first Spanish settlement, Seville Nueva, are here. Visitors to the area can tour the caves near Runaway Bay, which the last Spanish governor of Jamaica used as a safe haven while fleeing the British. Discovery Bay is the home of the University of the West Indies Marine Lab.

Ocho Rios is the resort area for the central north coast. The offshore reefs are among the finest in the Caribbean. Just south of Ocho Rios is Fern Gully, a rain forest where the road twists through a ravine. Also in the area is Jamaica's leading tourist site, Dunn's River Falls. Brimmer Hall Plantation (coconut and bananas) and Prospect Estate (pimento, citrus, and cattle) offer tours.

On the northeast coast near Port Maria is "Firefly," former home of Noel Coward. "Golden Eye," once home of James Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, is in Oracabessa.

Port Antonio, once vacation home of actor Errol Flynn, is considered Jamaica's most beautiful port and is the sport fishing capital of the island. The beauty of the area, the beaches, rafting on the Rio Grande River, Blue Hole (the world's largest natural swimming pool), Folly (ruins) built by an American millionaire for his love, Nunsuch Caves, Somerset Falls, and Maroon "jerk" pork and chicken still attract many visitors to its hotels and villas.

The trip back to Kingston along the coastal road to the east of Port Antonio is rewarding. Beautiful coastal scenes, extensive coconut and banana plantations, the John Crow Mountains, and interesting villages provide a pleasant break from tourist areas.

A 424-mile primary highway circles the island and several highways cross the mountainous interior from north to south. The two main north-

south roads used to cross the center of the island from Kingston are also interesting. A third, mostly paved road runs between Kingston and Buff Bay via Newcastle (41 miles). It is a narrow road through small villages and over Hardware Gap, the highest point on the primary road net, offering beautiful scenery. From Kingston to Annotto Bay (28 miles), a good but narrow road winds through the mountains. Along the way is Castleton Botanical Gardens, founded in 1862. These lovely gardens were severely damaged by the 1988 hurricane but have been restored. They provide a good setting for weekend picnic outings.

The other road crossing the island from Kingston begins by going west. It passes the Arawak Museum at White Marl, Caymanas race track, and Spanish Town, the old capital. Spanish Town is unique among Jamaican cities and has the longest history of settlement (1534) plus the finest collection of historic buildings and monuments on the island. It is also home of the National Archives.

From Spanish Town, the road winds its way north through the canyon of the Cobre River, across the narrow Flat Bridge, past Bog Walk, Linstead, and Ewarton (Alcan alumina plant), and over Mount Diablo (2,250 feet). At Moneague, where three small lakes periodically appear, the road branches to the left to St. Ann's Bay or to the right through Fern Gully to Ocho Rios.

Because of reasonable air fares and the proximity to Miami, Cayman Islands, and Haiti, it is easy to take trips out of Jamaica.

Entertainment

Two drive-in theaters and three walk-in theaters are frequented by Americans. Several theaters offer a selection of stage presentations: drama, reviews, variety, musicals, and pantomime. Kingston also has several active dance theater movements, the Jamaica Philharmonic, and several choral groups.

The island has several fine museums. The Institute of Jamaica has general displays. The Arawak Museum near Spanish Town and the Port Royal Museum with buildings and collections of relics of the Buccaneer heyday are all within the Kingston area.

The National Gallery of Art (downtown) and several smaller art galleries have excellent collections of Jamaican art. Regular exhibits of paintings, sculpture, ceramics, and native crafts are held in Kingston.

There are many colorful activities that are interesting to newcomers, including Jonkanoo dancing, a curious type of costumed, masked folk dancing of African origin that is seen during the Christmas season. Carnival is a popular event, celebrated the week after Easter with both adult and children's carnivals.

"Eating Jamaican" is not to be missed. Two popular dishes are ackee with saltfish and rice with peas (beans). Other specialties include curried goat, fricasseed chicken, escovitched fish, Port Royal's fried fish and bammy, jerk pork, jerk chicken, soups such as pepperpot and pumpkin, and gungo peas. Desserts such as sweet potato puddings, plantain tart, bulla, gizada, cut cakes, and grater cakes are popular.

Kingston has good restaurants offering Jamaican, British, Chinese, American, Indian, French, and Italian cuisine. Most restaurants are moderately priced compared to the U.S.

Social Activities

The American Women's Group is a social club for all American women. It has monthly programs and activity groups.

The American community, through various sponsors, celebrates our holidays-Christmas, Fourth of July, and Halloween-in traditional fashion.

Americans have opportunities to meet members of the foreign com-

munity. There are several active international groups such as the Diplomatic Association of Jamaica, the Consular Corps, International Proxy Parents and the Rotary Club.

Mandeville

Mandeville is a busy mountain city noted for beautiful gardens and a climate where both tropical and subtropical plants flourish. As a market center for the surrounding agricultural areas and a dormitory town for the two major bauxite and alumina installations, it is Jamaica's most flourishing parish capital. A U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) contract post is in operation here. The city has a population of about 34,000.

Mandeville, at an elevation of 2,000 feet above sea level, maintains a year-round comfortable climate where neither air conditioners nor heaters are needed. The rainy seasons are basically in May and October.

Five shopping centers, reasonably good medical facilities, pharmacies, banks, restaurants, and a good library are available. Both radio and television reception are good. There are churches of many denominations, with varied activities sponsored within each church. Service clubs include Rotary, Jaycees, Lions, and Kiwanis.

Schools for Foreigners

Belair School, an independent coeducational, boarding institution, offers classes from kindergarten through grade 12 for children of all nationalities. Founded in 1967, it is sponsored by two bauxite companies. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Belair's curriculum is a combination of programs typically found in U.S. academic and college-preparatory schools, and has subjects leading to the Cambridge GCE ordinary-level examinations. The current enrollment (mostly Jamaican) is over 650,

and the staff numbers 45. Uniforms are required.

The elementary school is situated on a two-acre campus near the center of town; the preparatory and high school are located on a separate 11-acre campus. There is a 10,600-volume library. Further information can be obtained from the school at 43 DeCarteret Road, Mandeville.

Montego Bay

Montego Bay, on Jamaica's northwest coast, is the tourist capital of the island, with its good harbor and fine beaches. The city's permanent population of close to 75,000, is swelled each year by the thousands of visitors who are drawn to the yacht races, the excellent golf courses, beach parties, garden tours, and nightlife. The world's largest reggae festival, Sunsplash, is celebrated here each August.

Montego Bay was, for many years, one of several small ports on the north coast from which sugar was shipped. Many of the old buildings in town have been restored and now house restaurants and shops. Shopping centers are found downtown and close to the resort areas.

The Cage, a jail built in 1807 for runaway slaves, is now a museum. Historic mansions have also been restored as museums, and are a glimpse into life of the colonial era. Among Montego Bay's plantation houses are Rose Hall, which echoes with the mystery of Annie Palmer, the "white witch" who is said to have dabbled with the occult; and Greenwood, once owned by the family of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

There are several trips that visitors may take to see the mountains and countryside around Montego Bay. The Governor's Coach is an all-day drive which winds through the mountains, stopping to visit the villages of Ipswich Caves and Appleton, and to tour a rum factory.

Port Antonio

Port Antonio, which lies on a divided bay in the northeast corner of the island, is a lovely port city called the "greenhouse of the gods" for its lush vegetation. It is almost the length of the island (134 miles) away from Montego Bay and 65 miles from Kingston, separated by the Blue Mountains. It is the fishing capital of Jamaica; dolphin, kingfish, wahoo, and bonito, with blue marlin are at their seasonal height in September and October.

Cruise ships dock here only infrequently, but the beauty of the area attracts numerous visitors to the town's hotels and villas. Attractions include the beaches; rafting on the Rio Grande River; Blue Hole, the world's largest natural swimming pool; Mitchell's Folly, the ruins of a palatial vacation villa built just after the turn of the century; nearby Somerset Falls; and Nonsuch Cave. Old Fort George, now part of the high school's grounds, is one of the town's few historic monuments, located at the tip of the peninsula.

Long a popular jet-set haunt, Port Antonio is still the site of many private villas nestled in the lush hillsides and along shoreline coves. The late Errol Flynn once had a home on the bay, and his former wife operates two boutiques in town and runs a 2,000-acre cattle ranch nearby. Port Antonio has a current population of approximately 13,000.

OTHER CITIES

BATH is located in southeastern Jamaica, 30 miles east of Kingston. The town of approximately 2,000 is famous for its hot springs and botanical gardens, the second oldest in the hemisphere. A runaway slave discovered the springs in the late 17th century; soon after, the area became a mecca for travelers from all over the island. The waters are supposedly helpful in the treatment of skin conditions, as well as rheumatic problems. The Bath Hotel has hot springs tanks for rent, in addition to outdoor bathing supplied by a bamboo pipe.

tion to outdoor bathing supplied by a bamboo pipe.

BLACK RIVER is a community of about 2,700 situated at the mouth of the Black River in the southwest, 30 miles south of Montego Bay. This quiet fishing town, once a main logging point, comes to life at the covered market on Fridays and Saturdays. The Waterloo Guest House here was the first house in the country to have electricity. Tourists enjoy visiting the Holland Estate and sugar factory. The acclaimed "Bamboo Avenue" is on the way to the town of Lacovia, less than 10 miles upriver.

FALMOUTH, despite years of destruction and neglect, is a charming north coast port. It is still the best-preserved late 18th- and early 19th-century town on the island. All the old Georgian buildings are worth a visit. Built as the capital of Trelawny Parish at the height of the area's sugar-growing prosperity, the town has been declared a national trust and plans for its restoration are being considered. Falmouth's population is about 4,000.

MORANT BAY, capital of St. Thomas Parish 30 miles southeast of Kingston, is a small town that played a big role in Jamaican history. This was the scene of the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865, led by Deacon Paul Bogle. A protest march on the courthouse led to street battles and, eventually, mass executions. The governor was recalled in the ensuing controversy and Jamaica gained new status as a Crown Colony. The nearly 3,000 residents of Morant Bay now have rebuilt the courthouse, with a statue of Paul Bogle set prominently in the front. Near the town are the highly saline Yallahs Ponds and the remnants of a signal tower, now a national monument.

NEGRIL, on the western end of the island, has seven miles of white sand beach and uninhibited simplicity. The country's newest resort town, Negril is two hours from Montego Bay. Hotels and tourist facilities have been constructed since the

area was discovered by the “flower children” of the 1960s, but Negril’s natural beauty remains because no building can be taller than the highest tree. Restaurants abound, and there is a wide range of accommodations, although the town is small, with a population of less than 2,800. During Jamaica Race Week, many yachts drop anchor in Negril harbor.

OCHO RIOS, once a small fishing village, is now the resort area for the central north coast, a scenic two-and-one-half-hour drive from Montego Bay. Its offshore reefs, although severely damaged by Hurricane Allen in 1980, are among the finest in the Caribbean. Ocho Rios, which has a population of 11,000, is the site of the University of the West Indies Marine Laboratory. Just south of town is Fern Gully, a rain forest where the road twists through an old riverbed. Also in the area are the 168-year-old Brimmer Hall Plantation (coconut and bananas) and Prospect Estate (pimento, citrus, and cattle), which conduct tours. Near Ocho Rios is Dunn’s River Falls, a 600-foot cascade, and perhaps Jamaica’s most famous beauty spot. Surrounded by lush vegetation, the water cascades over rocks to the waiting sea. Guided tours are available for climbing the falls. Daily tours to the falls are available from all of Jamaica’s main towns. Also nearby is the Shaw Park Botanical Garden and Bird Sanctuary. In the vicinity, on the north coast near Port Maria, are Firefly, the former home of Noel Coward; and Golden Eye, once the residence of Ian Fleming, creator of the fictitious James Bond.

SAVANNA-LA-MAR, 25 miles southwest of Montego Bay on the west coast, has a most unfortunate past. The city of 12,000 has been ravaged by hurricanes that at one time demolished it. A fort—today used as a large swimming hole—was likewise considered a disaster. An admiral derisively noted in 1755 that it was the very worst in Jamaica. Savanna-La-Mar, whose name means “plain by the sea,” is an active sugar port.

SPANISH TOWN, 20 miles west of Kingston in the island’s foothills, is unique among Jamaican cities. It has the longest history of continuous settlement (1534), plus the finest collection of historic buildings and monuments on the island, among them the Anglican cathedral, built on the foundation of a Spanish chapel erected in 1524. The town also houses the National Archives. Formerly called Villa de la Vega and St. Iago de la Villa, Spanish Town became Jamaica’s most important city after the destruction of Port Royal by an earthquake in 1692. It served as the capital until 1872, when the seat of government was moved to Kingston. The city, with a current population estimated at 107,000, is the commercial and processing center for the surrounding rich agricultural region.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The island of Jamaica is perhaps best noted for its lush and scenic tropical beauty: the rugged spine of blue-green mountains rising to 7,400 feet; warm, clear Caribbean waters with exciting underwater reefs; and the picture-postcard north coast with its white-sand beaches.

Jamaica is the third-largest Caribbean island and lies nearly 600 miles south of Miami, Florida. The island is 146 miles long and 51 miles across at its widest point. Except for narrow coastal plains mainly on the island’s south side, the landscape is one of sharp, crested ridges, unique “cockpit” formations, and deep, twisting valleys. Almost half the island is more than 1,000 feet above sea level. Some 50 percent of the island is used for agriculture, 40 percent is woodland, and the remaining 10 percent is divided between mining and urban areas.

Jamaica has about 120 rivers. Most flow to the coast from the central mountain ranges. Those on the north side tend to be shorter and swifter than those on the south side. Only one is navigable for more than a short distance.

Kingston, the capital, is on the southeast coast and has the world’s seventh-largest natural harbor. From sea level at city center, the terrain rises to 1,800 feet. The suburban residential areas of St. Andrew in the foothills of the mountains are slightly cooler than the rest of the city.

Jamaica enjoys a favorable, though warm and humid, climate. Average temperatures are about 80°–95°F, May through September, and 70°–85°F during the cooler months. The higher mountainous regions reach a low of 50°F in the cooler months. Northeast trade winds help maintain a feeling of relative comfort.

Temperature and rainfall are markedly affected by the changes in elevation and geography of the island. Rainfall varies from an annual average of 25 inches at the Kingston airport to an average of 250 inches at Blue Mountain Peak. Suburban residential areas of Kingston receive about 50 inches on the average. Rainfall is generally heaviest during April–May and October–November, though these are not rainy seasons in the tropical sense. Mildew is a problem during these months. Relative humidity in Kingston ranges from 63 percent in February to 86 percent in October.

Jamaica is in the earthquake and hurricane belts but has not had a disastrous earthquake since 1907, even though every year has a few tremors. In September 1988, the island was struck head-on by Hurricane Gilbert, the first since 1980. The main force of the storm affected the entire island, especially the eastern coastal areas, and caused widespread damage, mainly to crops and vegetation, coastal properties, utilities, and roofs.

The island suffers from periodic droughts. The water situation in Kingston was improved dramatically by the completion of the Blue Mountain Water Scheme. Occasional water shortages do occur.

Jamaica has no dangerous wild animals. Black widow spiders and scorpions are present but rare. Many varieties of soft-bodied lizards and nuisance insects—particularly cockroaches, ants, and termites—present some problems. Mosquitoes and houseflies are troublesome in the Kingston area. Grass ticks and fleas are also annoying to outside pets.

Jamaica has over 600 insect species as well as 250 bird species—25 of which belong only to Jamaica. About 120 species of butterflies, including the world's largest (6" wingspan), are also found here. The island is especially noted for its fireflies, otherwise known as blinkies or peeny-waullies.

A profusion of flowering shrubs, trees, and cacti reflects Jamaica's great variation of climate and topography. Hundreds of imported plants are well established. Pimento or allspice is from an indigenous plant, and Jamaica is the world's largest producer. The ortanique, developed in Jamaica, is a cross between an orange and a tangerine. Jamaica also has over 220 species of native orchids, over 500 different ferns, more than 300 mosses, and many fungi.

Population

Jamaica's population of 2.5 million, according to 1993 estimates, is distributed unevenly, with large, sparsely populated areas in the mountainous interior of the island. Kingston is the island's largest city, with an estimated population of 700,000 for the Kingston-St. Andrew metropolitan area. Nearby Spanish Town, with 112,000 inhabitants, and Greater Portmore, with nearly 500,000, although in the adjacent parish of St. Catherine, are in effect extensions of the Kingston metropolitan area. Montego Bay,

with a population of 85,500, is the largest urban concentration outside of the greater Kingston area.

A colorful, complex cultural heritage makes Jamaicans a unique people. Their society is multiracially integrated, and the term "Jamaican" does not carry a particular color connotation. Jamaica's population is about 90 percent African or mixed descent. The remaining 10 percent are chiefly European, Chinese, East Indian, and Lebanese.

Over 70 percent of the population is under 35—the mean age is 18. The economic and emotional focus of the home is frequently the mother, as reflected by the title of Jamaican sociologist Edith Clarke's book, *My Mother Who Fathered Me*.

The language in Jamaica is English, but it varies from precise Oxford English to Jamaican patois. Because of differences in phraseology, inflection, and word usage, new arrivals may experience some difficulty in understanding Jamaican English, particularly on the telephone. Given time, most difficulties disappear. The exception is with patois, sometimes called Jamaican Creole. Understanding it takes time and attention.

While most Jamaicans speak standard English, a combination of patois and English is commonly encountered in dealings with street vendors, domestic helpers, and artisans. Most Jamaicans are familiar with the dialect, although few speak only patois. However, modern Jamaican theater includes much dialogue in rapid patois, which may be difficult to follow, even after extended exposure to it.

Religion is an important facet of the Jamaican character and a major stabilizing influence. Most Jamaicans are Christians, with Baptists now representing the largest single denomination. The Church of Jamaica, successor to the Church of England (Anglican) since the 1880s; Church of God; and Roman Catholic Church have substantial followings.

Many other denominations are also represented, including Moravians, Seventh-day Adventists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Latter-day Saints (Mormons). There are also small Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu communities.

Also found are religious groups unique to Jamaica: the Revivalists, whose Afro-Christian blend of religion has a high trance-invoking emotional content, and the bearded, "dreadlocked" Rastafarians, who worship "Jah," whose earthly representative was the late Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.

Jamaican culture and traditions are largely African and British, but ties with North America are increasing. This is due primarily to the large number of Jamaicans who have lived in or visited the U.S. and Canada, the importance of North American tourists and the bauxite industry to the island's economy, and the influence of U.S. television shows and media.

Public Institutions

Jamaica is an independent member of the British Commonwealth. The British Monarch is the Head of State and is represented by a Jamaican Governor General nominated by the Prime Minister. The government is based on the Westminster parliamentary system and has an elected 60-member House of Representatives and an appointed 21-member Senate. Since the early 1940s, the Jamaican political scene has been dominated by two closely matched political parties: the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP). A third party, the National Democratic Movement (NDM), was formed in 1995 by former JLP chairman, Bruce Golding.

The government is elected for a 5-year term, but elections can be held earlier under certain circumstances. The ministries of government are directed by ministers selected from majority party members of the House and Senate and appointed by

the Governor General, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister. An experienced though somewhat understaffed civil service carries out governmental functions.

In the March 1993 general election, the PNP won a 52 to 8 majority in the House of Representatives. Jamaica's Prime Minister is P.J. Patterson, leader of the PNP, who succeeded Michael Manley when he retired for health reasons in 1992. Edward Seaga, leader of the opposition JLP, was Prime Minister from 1980 to 1989.

Legal institutions generally follow British practice. Cases are tried before an independent judiciary ranked in an ascending hierarchy of Petty Sessions Courts, Resident Magistrate Courts, Supreme Court, and Court of Appeal. Certain cases may be sent on appeal to the U.K. Privy Council for final determination.

The island is divided into three counties, which have no present-day functions. Within these counties are 14 parishes. Kingston and the suburban parish of St. Andrew are combined for administrative purposes into the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation. Local government functions are handled by Parish Councils, which are to be elected every 3 years. They depend on support from the central government and can be dissolved if the national government believes parish affairs are being mismanaged.

Arts and Science

Culture. Jamaica has long been noted for the richness and diversity of its culture and the quality of its artists. In the area of theater, the island has produced such notable actors as Madge Sinclair, the Honorable Louise Bennett-Coverley, and Charles Hyatt. A variety of plays can be seen daily in the capital city of Kingston. Jamaica has an international reputation in dance, especially through the National Dance Theater Company, which fosters the development of traditional dance forms. The country also has a high reputation for its many fine paint-

ers, sculptors, and writers. Music is another field in which Jamaica is well known, particularly for reggae, which has been made famous by singers such as the late Bob Marley.

Music. Jamaica's music is perhaps its most revealing form of folk expression. Frank, natural, and spontaneous, it springs from the soul of the people and often reflects historical circumstances. The songs record joys and sorrows, wit, philosophy of life, and religion.

Traditional Jamaican music is percussive, polyrhythmic, and repetitive. Vocals rely heavily on the call-and-response form, while drums control the accompanying dances. The major influences are evident in the structure and behavior of Jamaican melody and harmony: the older heritage of African music and rhythm and the more recent legacy of European religious and popular music, introduced over the centuries of British rule.

Popular music has steadily evolved over the last 20 years from mento to ska to reggae. Reggae has been internationally promoted through the late Rasta folk hero and international pop star, Bob Marley. Other prominent reggae artists include Dennis Brown, Jimmy Cliff, and the late Peter Tosh. Several Jamaicans also have gained international recognition in the fields of classical music and jazz; Curtis Watson and Monty Alexander are notable examples. The philosophy, doctrine, and music of the Rastafarians heavily influence reggae in instrumentation, lyrics, movement, and delivery. The latest musical movement is called "DJ music." Similar to American rap music, it relies heavily on rhythmic chanting and emphasizes experiences of inner-city youth. Other forms of popular music include "dance hall," "dub," and "soca," a form of merengue music heard primarily during Carnival celebrations.

Art. Jamaican art is varied and reveals no predominant cultural or ethnic influences except, perhaps, very stylized African motifs. Many

of the established Jamaican painters and sculptors have achieved acclaim outside this country, particularly in the U.S. and Britain, where many of them were trained. Sophisticated works can be obtained in various media: oils, acrylics, watercolors, silk-screen prints, woodcuts, sculpture, ceramics, pottery, and textile arts. There is a fairly large group of expatriate artists—mostly from the U.S. and the Commonwealth—resident in Jamaica.

Kingston is the art center of the island, with many artists, the art school, and several well-respected high-quality galleries. Three broad categories of art are discernible: intuitive, abstract, and representational. Representational is the dominant mode. The National Gallery of Art maintains a large collection of Jamaican and Caribbean art from the 18th century to the present.

Crafts. Local craftwork is strongly influenced by cultural heritage and finds expression in straw, semiprecious stones and jewelry, wood, clay, fabric, shell, and bamboo. A substantial amount of the alabaster, embroidered cutwork, and appliqué craftwork is exported to the U.S. An attractive cluster of craft shops is located on the grounds of Devon House, a historic site.

Dance. The National Dance Theater Company (NDTC) was formed in 1962. Many of the troupe's more recognized members studied in England and the United States. The NDTC emphasizes indigenous dance and experimentation. NDTC choreographers have produced an extremely varied and culturally rich repertoire. The revived folk dances are actively performed on the island. They are presented at cultural festivals, on TV, and in resort areas.

Drama. Drama has expanded considerably in the past decade. During the 1980s, Jamaican playwrights typically produced works based on social currents and issues of the day. Today, the theater offers a broad

base, ranging from comedy and reviews to serious drama.

Festivals. Jamaica places much emphasis on the cultural heritage of its people. The artistic and cultural awakening has been accompanied by a keen search for roots in folk forms based chiefly in colorful and intensely rhythmic dances and songs. This is best reflected in the annual festival celebrated from the last two weeks in July until Independence Day, the first Monday in August. Winners of "all island" parish dance, song, poetry, and drama competitions perform during the festival. Other high-profile festivals include the Ocho Rios Jazz Festival, the Reggae Sunsplash Festival, and Carnival. Festivals provide an avenue of expression for Jamaicans at every level of society.

Science. Organized scientific investigation in Jamaica dates back to 1774 when the Botanical Department and the gardens at Bath were established. The Institute of Jamaica—which includes the West Indies Reference Library, the National Gallery of Jamaica, and several museums—is the most significant cultural organization in the country. Its Natural History Division is the chief source of information on Jamaican flora and fauna. The Institute also produces publications on Jamaican history and culture. Perhaps one of the most active units of the Institute is the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts where students are instructed in dance, drama, music, and the fine arts.

Systematic geological surveys began over 100 years ago. In 1942, with the realization of the potential of bauxite, extensive research began, which led to the creation of a separate Geological Department in 1951.

Important areas of scientific research include geology, mineralogy, biochemistry, food technology, nutrition, agro-industry, crop and soil agronomy, epidemiology, ecology, and marine biology.

The Meteorological Office of the Jamaican Government and the Seismic Research Unit of the University of the West Indies compile and disseminate information to the public.

Commerce and Industry

Jamaica's pattern of trade and production has historically been based on the export of its principal agricultural products (sugar, bananas, coffee, cocoa, spices, etc.), as well as other foreign exchange earners (bauxite/alumina, rum) in exchange for imports of oil, machinery, manufactured goods, and food products (principally wheat, corn, rice, soybeans, butter). However, the fast growth of tourism, textile production, and the proliferation of service industries have changed the island's trading habits.

Tourism has been Jamaica's primary foreign exchange-earning industry since 1983. Total visitor arrivals have remained well over one million annually. Stopover visitors (visitors staying one night or more) average 65 percent of total arrivals, two-thirds of which come from the U.S. Hotel room capacity on the island is 19,760 and is expanding. In 1994, total foreign exchange earnings from tourism accounted for an estimated US\$977 million. The second largest source of foreign exchange in 1994 was remittances (approximately US\$600 million).

Jamaica has large commercial deposits of mineral resources such as limestone (two-thirds of the island), bauxite, gypsum, marble, silica sand, and clays. The mining and processing of bauxite continues to be the major economic activity. Net export earnings from bauxite/alumina (levies, royalties, local cash inflows) amounted to US\$231 million in 1994. Development of this industry is greatly influenced by worldwide aluminum consumption and price fluctuation in the international market. The agricultural sector generates about 8 per-

cent of GDP and employs over one-quarter of Jamaica's work force. Jamaica has a favorable climate and varied soil types. Major traditional export crops are sugar, spices, bananas, coffee, citrus, allspice, and pimento. Other crops of growing importance include yams, tropical fruits and vegetables, legumes, and horticulture.

Other nontraditional products have also strengthened Jamaica's export performance during the last few years. These include garments, cut flowers, ornamental plants, gourmet food items and spices, handicrafts, and furniture. World-renowned Jamaican products such as Blue Mountain coffee, cigars, and Red Stripe beer have experienced growth in demand. The U.S. continues to be Jamaica's leading trading partner, exporting an average of US\$1.06 billion annually to Jamaica and importing approximately US\$415 million worth of Jamaican goods during the 1992-94 period. Jamaica's other leading trading partners are the U.K., Canada, Venezuela, and Japan.

The Jamaican economy grew by 0.8 percent in 1994 following a modest growth of 1.2 percent in 1993. This resulted from growth in the agricultural sector, mining, tourism, financing, insurance, and other service sectors. The pace of economic growth in 1994 slowed somewhat due to tight monetary and fiscal policies, high inflation, and declining real incomes for the majority of the population. In addition, the servicing of a heavy debt burden, the deterioration in earnings from the bauxite/alumina industry, and high interest rates have further constrained economic growth.

Jamaica faces several ongoing economic problems. Although the external debt has been modestly reduced over the last 3 years, debt servicing still constitutes about 40 percent of the government fiscal budget, constraining both growth and the government's policy options. The stock of debt is approximately US\$3.6 billion, or US\$1,440 on a per-capita basis. Privatization,

tariff reform, liberalization of foreign exchange controls, and tight fiscal and monetary policies are some of the major policies implemented over the past few years to enhance economic growth and development.

Transportation

Automobiles

Driving is on the left, but either left-hand or right-hand drive cars may be imported. Left-hand-drive cars must usually have headlights re-aimed. Because of the narrow roads and in the interest of safety, serious consideration should be given to bringing a right-hand-drive vehicle.

Current Jamaican Government policy forbids the importation of vehicles over 3 years old (date of manufacture to date of entry into Jamaica).

Compact cars rather than larger American model cars are better suited to the narrow, winding Jamaican roads. A car with a high road clearance is an advantage because of the many potholes. Lighter colors are preferable, as they are cooler. An air-conditioner is desirable. Garages can service most American, Japanese, or European makes, but service is below U.S. standards.

Spare parts are expensive and sometimes hard to find, especially for older and less common models. Bring a basic supply of oil filters, radiator hoses, fan belts, and spark plugs, as well as points and condensers if your car uses them. Spare parts can also be obtained from Miami with delivery in only a few days, in most cases. Also, bring a basic tool supply and repair manuals for your make and model of car. Durable tires in good condition are necessary because of often poorly kept roads.

You must have a Jamaican license to drive. Automobile registration is accomplished by obtaining (1) an import license for your car at the time of importation, (2) compulsory

local liability insurance, and (3) a certificate of vehicle fitness.

Certificates of car fitness must be renewed annually. Besides being in good condition, all cars must have turn indicators. Those on U.S. cars are acceptable.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service is available to most of the island, but service is below U.S. standards. Calls from one exchange to another are treated as long-distance calls despite relatively short distances, with rates determined by the mileage between exchanges. A direct-dialing system serves the whole island. Service to the U.S. by satellite is generally adequate.

A 3-minute, station-to-station call from Kingston to Washington, D.C., costs about US\$5.27 at full rate and US\$4 at the reduced rate (night and all day Sunday and on Jamaican holidays). AT&T calling cards can be used, and many U.S. long-distance companies offer collect-call services from Jamaica. Direct-dialing from the U.S. is possible using area code 809 and the Jamaican seven-digit number.

International telegraph service is good, and rates are moderate. Cables are sent via JAMINTEL Limited through the Jamaican postal service. Local service and delivery are erratic.

Mail

Local airmail service is available to and from the U.S. Transit time to Washington or New York is about 10 days, with some fluctuations in service. The airmail letter rate to the U.S. is J\$1.10 per ounce. Surface mail and international parcel post depend on sailing schedules to Jamaica and are unreliable. Delivery time from the U.S. varies from 2 to 6 months. International letter mail service ranges from -excellent to disastrous, while local mail can disappear or take weeks to travel a few miles.

Radio and TV

AM and FM radio reception in the Kingston area is excellent. There are several major national radio networks, including RJR Limited and the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC). Radio stations offer a wide variety of programming, including music, talk shows, local and international news, and religious programs.

Shortwave reception from the U.S. and U.K. is fair to good, with occasional interference; some people find a shortwave set desirable. Voice of America (VOA) shortwave broadcasts get good reception in early morning and evening and have excellent news and sports coverage.

JBC has also operated a TV station since 1963. JBC-TV transmits Jamaican, U.S., U.K., and Canadian programs. A privately owned station, CVM-TV, broadcasts many popular American sitcoms and movies. Both stations offer regular local and overseas news programs. As a result of recent legislation governing cable TV service, a wide variety of cable programming is now, available through several local cable providers. Rates are comparable to those in the U.S. TVs made in the U.S. can be used in Jamaica.

Video rental stores can be found in Kingston. The vast majority of available tapes are VHS, not Betamax. Ordering of VCRs and color TVs can be done through the commissary at U.S. retail prices, plus transportation. There are now almost 20,000 satellite dishes in Jamaica that receive the whole range of U.S. TV offerings.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The *Miami Herald* and the *New York Times* are usually available at local newsstands late on the day of publication. Limited international coverage is provided by the *Daily Gleaner*, the *Herald*, and the *Observer*, Jamaica's three main newspapers. Copies of these papers are usually available for perusal at

the Jamaica Desk (ARA/CAR) in the Department of State.

English and American magazines are available locally. American magazines are marked up at least 12%. Subscriptions to U.S. magazines will save money. Send them by pouch, if you don't mind them arriving at least 2 weeks late and occasionally in batches of two or three. Subscriptions to the international editions of *Time* or *Newsweek* will ensure that the magazine arrives during the week of publication. Books printed in England are available from several booksellers. U.S. bestsellers are months late arriving at local shops and difficult to find. Books cost more than in the U.S.

The Public Affairs Library has about 2,200 volumes, ranging from art to technology and the social sciences, as well as general reference works. The library also subscribes to 69 U.S. periodicals. The Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library is part of the islandwide free public library service. It has about 75,000 volumes.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

General practitioners and specialists are available. Many have received specialty training in the U.S., Canada, or U.K. These doctors are highly qualified and good diagnosticians even without the benefit of sophisticated equipment. Fees are generally lower than those in the U.S., particularly in the specialty areas. There are many good dentists whose fees are also lower than those in the U.S. Many professionals have migrated to the U.S., and in several specialty areas it is sometimes difficult to get appointments quickly.

Several small and generally adequate private hospitals are found in and around Kingston. People go to the U.S. for special treatment or surgery. Local doctors recommend trips to the U.S. if they believe their

own facilities are inadequate. The regional medical officer, who visits Kingston every 4 to 6 months, has stated that no elective surgery should be done in Jamaica. Miami is the designated medical evacuation point.

Community Health

Community sanitation in Kingston has improved in the past few years. Drains and plumbing are inspected sporadically. Insects are a constant nuisance, and there is not a regular spraying program to control the breeding grounds. Trash and garbage disposal in the urban areas has also improved. In rural areas, it is an individual matter. Sewage facilities and treatment are adequate in Kingston.

Preventive Measures

Some infectious diseases are influenza, whooping cough, scarlet fever, and German measles. It is now mandatory for students entering school for the first time to have documents verifying that they have been immunized against whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria, measles, polio, and tuberculosis before admission is approved.

Rabies, yellow fever, and malaria are not present in Jamaica, but mosquitoes do transmit the unpleasant dengue fever. Cases of dengue fever rose dramatically in late 1995, but the problem is being addressed through aerial spraying and reduction of mosquitoes' breeding areas.

Quality pasteurized milk is available in Kingston. The commissary also stocks U.S.-origin milk and dairy products, but they are expensive.

Avoid excessive exercise during the heat of the day. Because of the large areas of dense foliage and high pollen levels, the climate can be unpleasant to asthma and sinus sufferers.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar.	Ash Wednesday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 23	National Labor Day
Aug. 1	Emancipation Day
Aug. (first Monday) . . .	Independence Day*
Oct. (third Monday) . . .	National Heroes' Day*
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Those arriving from areas where yellow fever is known to exist must be immunized.

U.S. citizens traveling as tourists can enter Jamaica with a U.S. passport or a certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate and current state photo identification. They must also have a return ticket and sufficient funds for their visit. U.S. citizens traveling to Jamaica for work or for extended stays are required to have a current passport and must obtain a visa before arriving. A departure tax is collected when leaving the country. For further information, travelers can contact the Embassy of Jamaica at 1520 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036, telephone (202)452-0660, the Jamaican Consulate in Miami or New York, or one of Jamaica's honorary consuls in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Seattle or Los Angeles. Travelers may also contact Jamaican representative in the

United States through the Internet at <http://www.emjam@sysnet.net> or at <http://www.emjam@emjam-usa.org>.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Kingston. The Consular Section is located on the first floor of the Life of Jamaica Building, 16 Oxford Road, Kingston 5, telephone 1-876-935-6044. Office hours are 7:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with window services available Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. For after-hours emergencies involving American citizens, a duty officer can be contacted at 1-876-926-6440. The Chancery is located three blocks away at the Mutual Life Building, 3rd floor, 2 Oxford Road, Kingston 5, telephone 1-876-929-4850 through -4859.

There is a Consular Agency in Montego Bay at St. James Place, 2nd floor, Gloucester Avenue, telephone 1-876-952-0160, fax 1-876-952-5050. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday.

The U.S. Embassy also has consular responsibility for the Cayman Islands, a British dependent territory. Please refer to the British West Indies Consular Information Sheet for information about the Cayman Islands. There is a Consular Agency located in the office of Adventure Travel, Seven-Mile Beach, George Town, Grand Cayman, telephone 1-345-946-1611, fax 1-345-945-1811. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday.

Pets

With the single exception of animals born and bred in the U.K., which have never had rabies shots, importation of pets is not allowed.

To bring animals from the U.K., the following procedure must be taken. You must have a certificate from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food at Hookrise, Surrey, England, proving that the animal was born and bred in the U.K. This certificate must then be presented to the Veterinary Department at Hope Gardens in Kingston to

receive an import permit. These steps must be taken before the animal arrives.

Several excellent veterinarians practice in Kingston.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The currency is the Jamaican dollar. Bills are printed on different-colored paper in denominations of \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, and \$500 while coins are minted in denominations of 5¢, 10¢, 25¢, 50¢, \$1, and \$5. The official exchange rate fluctuates within a 30¢ "band" or margin, and is adjusted at regular intervals. As of January 1996, it was US\$1 = J\$40. The exact exchange rate at any given time may be obtained from the Jamaica desk in ARA.

With the exception of gasoline, which is sold by liter, all other units of measure (inches, feet, yards, miles, etc.) and weight (pounds and ounces) are the same as in the U.S. However, there is an ongoing national project under way to convert the country to the metric system. Some road signs and consumer product labels already reflect these changes.

U.S. dollars or travelers checks may be converted readily into Jamaican currency at airports, banks, and hotels. While some north coast resorts will accept U.S. dollars, all official transactions must be made in Jamaican currency.

You may buy U.S. dollar instruments, including travelers checks, from local banks by presenting an airline ticket showing travel off the island.

Disaster Preparedness

Jamaica, like all Caribbean countries, can be affected by hurricanes. Hurricane season runs from approximately June 1 - November 30 each year. The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) has put measures in place in the event of an emergency or disaster. General information about natural disaster

preparedness is available from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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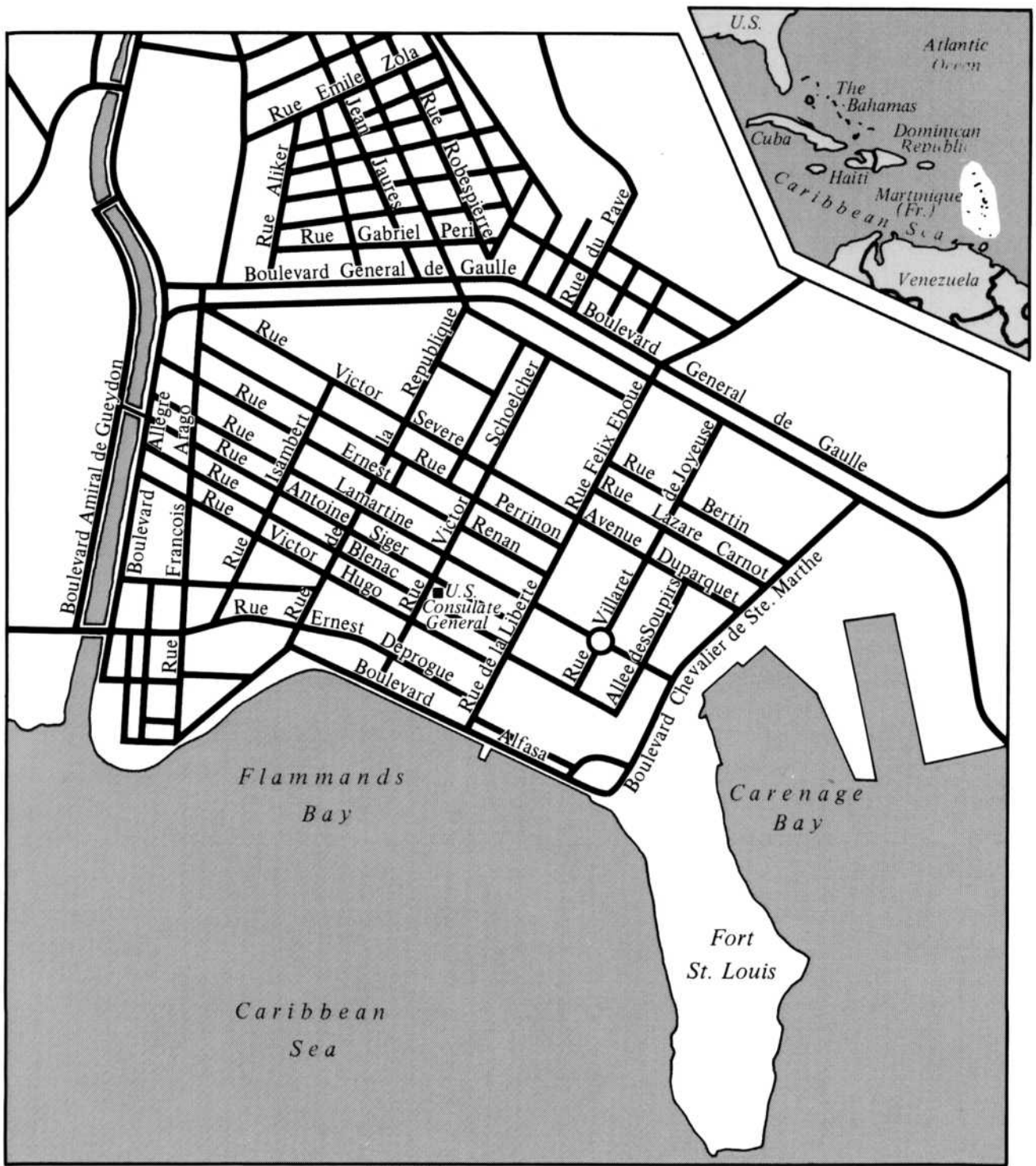
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Fort-de-France, Martinique

MARTINIQUE

(including Guadeloupe and French Guiana)

Departments of Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana

Major City:

Fort-de-France

Other Cities:

Basse-Terre, Cayenne, Grand Bourg, Kourou, Le Vauclin, Les Trois-Ilets, Maripasoula, Pointe-à-Pitre, Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, Saint-Pierre

INTRODUCTION

In the 16th and 17th centuries, France amassed a vast empire in North America and the Caribbean. Today, the three Overseas Departments of France in the Western Hemisphere—Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana—encompass virtually all that remains of that imperial sovereignty.

MARTINIQUE is one of the most beautiful islands in the Caribbean, and its beauty is matched by the richness of its history. Although discovered by Columbus, the island was taken for France in 1635 and has since been a possession of that country, except for three short periods when it was under British occupation. A singular feature of its history is that it has bred a race of queens. Joséphine, who was to become Empress of France; her daughter Hortense, who became Queen of Holland; Madame de Maintenon, morganatic wife of Louis XIV; and Aimée Debus, the *sultan validah*, or queen mother, of Turkey— all were born on Martinique.

Named for Santa María de Guadelupe de Estremadura by Christopher Columbus when he landed here in 1493, **GADELOUPE** offers a blend of cultures, mani-

fested in colorful dress and a variety of culinary delights. **FRENCH GUIANA** was probably discovered by Columbus on his third voyage in 1498. It has good beaches, but its principal charm lies in the unspoiled inner regions, reachable only by air or motorized canoe. The infamous penal colony, Devil's Island, was located off French Guiana.

MAJOR CITY

Fort-de-France

Fort-de-France, with more than 100,000 residents, is the only significant metropolitan center on the island. The city is picturesque in that the architecture is colorful, and the effects of the tropics tend to explain, and even soften, the rather shabby aspect of much of the town. Open drainage ditches alongside some streets are an eyesore and a nuisance, but they no longer carry sewage and are gradually being covered up.

Martinique was first settled by Europeans in 1635, and many parts of the island are associated with the history of the past three centuries. However, the climate, earthquakes, and the total destruction in 1902 of Saint-Pierre, then the island's prin-

cipal city, have erased many vestiges of the past. It was only after Saint-Pierre was destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Mount (Mont) Pelée that Fort-de-France gained prominence. Interesting archaeological sites exist on the island, once the scene of important developments of Arawak and Carib cultures dating back to the beginning of the Christian era.

Martinique and Guadeloupe are densely populated, tropical, and agricultural. Sugar, bananas, pineapples to a lesser extent, and assistance from metropolitan France are the economic underpinnings of the islands, providing them with a standard of living higher than that of most of the rest of the Caribbean. French culture is pervasive. The tourist industry has been slow to develop, although tourists are much in evidence during winter. They arrive aboard cruise ships, but generally leave after spending less than a day on Martinique.

Martinique lies about halfway down the arc of the Lesser Antilles that extends from Puerto Rico to Trinidad. It is some 900 miles north of the equator, about 280 miles from the South American mainland, and 4,400 miles from metropolitan France. Guadeloupe is 100 miles north of Martinique. Its island dependencies of French Saint-Martin and



Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

View of Martinique

Saint-Barthélemy are 150 miles north of Guadeloupe proper and about 100 miles from the U.S. Virgin Islands. French Guiana, wedged between Brazil and Suriname on the north coast of South America, extends from the second to the sixth degree of north latitude.

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is worn throughout the year; washable, wrinkle-free fabrics are preferable. Cotton underwear and children's clothes can be purchased locally. Good quality yard goods are available, but expensive.

Men wear clothing similar to that worn in Washington, DC in the summer. Dark suits are appropriate for evenings. Women rarely need hats (except sunhats) or gloves; these are worn almost exclusively at church ceremonies. Dressy cottons are comfortable and suitable. Dur-

ing winter, some women wear cocktail dresses of silk and brocade. Also necessary is an ample supply of low-heeled shoes for walking over the rough sidewalks and streets in town. Shoes may be found locally, but none narrower than a B width. A coat is never needed but, on occasion, a fabric stole is useful.

Food

A number of supermarkets are found in Fort-de-France, including large ones in residential districts. Most stock is imported, and prices are high. Variety of produce is usually good, although delay in transport can result in occasional shortages. A few American brands are carried locally, usually manufactured under license in Europe.

Locally produced meat and fish have their own sizable markets in downtown Fort-de-France, and sev-

eral similar markets sell local fruits and vegetables.

Supplies & Services

A few tailors and dressmakers do good work relatively inexpensively. Shoe repair is adequate. Dry cleaning and laundry services range from fair to good, but are expensive by U.S. standards. Beauty shops have reasonable prices, offer adequately skilled service, and are beginning to install up-to-date equipment. Radio and other household repair service is apt to be casual, with disregard for deadlines or commitments.

Pharmacies are well-stocked with French drugs, but precise equivalents of American products are not always available.

Education

All local education is in French. The public and parochial elementary and secondary schools have lower

academic standards than in metropolitan France, although they operate according to the same system. Kindergartens are both available and good. During the past few years, Americans have enrolled children in elementary schools or kindergartens in Fort-de-France, but it is hard to gain admission to some of these institutions.

American children who speak French have no difficulty making friends among the children in the various communities on Martinique, either local or from metropolitan France.

High school students are normally sent to boarding schools in the U.S. or elsewhere. For teenagers who want to stay with their parents and are willing or able to follow French courses, education is possible here.

Fort-de-France has a school of music and a number of private music and dance teachers. Tutoring is available in diverse subjects to those whose French is adequate. A branch of the University of the Antilles and Guiana, a government-owned institution whose headquarters are on Guadeloupe, offers a four-year program in some subjects and a two-year program in others.

Recreation

The Martiniquais are sports-minded. Everyone, it seems, plays or closely follows one or more sports. Football (soccer), cycling, and basketball are among the more popular games. In recent years, Americans have enjoyed sports such as tennis (four courts are available through membership in two tennis clubs), riding (two riding stables are in the residential environs of Fort-de-France), golf (one nine-hole course 45 minutes from Fort-de-France), gymnastics, and judo classes for both men and women. Boating is popular and may be attractive to those willing to assume the expense involved. Sailing lessons under French governmental auspices are inexpensive and popular. Martinique is a fairly good spot for scuba diving, spearfishing, and snorkeling.

Being a beautiful mountainous island, Martinique would seem to offer much in the way of outdoor activities. However, much of the island's potential is undeveloped, and the hot, humid climate is not conducive to sustained physical effort. Few parks or public recreation areas exist on the island, and the only beaches near Fort-de-France are artificially made beaches adjoining the principal hotels, mostly across the bay in Trois Islets area. Black volcanic beaches are in the north, and beautiful white-sand stretches in the south are accessible within an hour's drive.

Hiking in and around Fort-de-France is difficult because of the climate and the total lack of serviceable sidewalks or footpaths. The higher mountains have trails for hardy hikers. Only in French Guiana is there any worthwhile hunting. For those who enjoy the out-of-doors, nature studies are attractive.

The area around Victor Hugo, Schoelcher, and Antoine Siger Streets in Fort-de-France is replete with boutiques and duty-free shops. There are also a department store, a designer fashion shop, and an arts and crafts center in this area.

There are a few small museums on Martinique. The sugar-plantation birthplace of Empress Josephine has been turned into an historical repository and included here is a display of Napoleon's love letters. Other archives include the Volcanological Museum in Saint-Pierre, a new gallery dedicated to Paul Gauguin, and a small museum that displays pre-Columbian and colonial artifacts.

There are 30 hotels on Martinique. Discotheques, nightclubs, and gambling casinos light up the night, but dining seems to be the favorite evening activity; an endless choice of restaurants feature French and creole cuisine.

Twice a year, a small company of actors comes from France, once to

produce classical French plays and once to sing operettas. Occasionally a musician, a traveling lecturer, or a local artist offers his talent for public enjoyment. There is considerable interest in music here, and amateur musicians can find ample scope to develop their talents in a congenial atmosphere.

The American community on Martinique is small, and is confined to a few business people, missionaries, several American spouses of French citizens, and some Martiniquais who have acquired American citizenship after living in the U.S., but have chosen to retire in the Antilles. Social organizations, such as the local bridge club, attract many of these Americans.

The most socially active times of year are the Christmas/New Year holiday season and pre-Lent carnival, and early summer. Most social life is centered around the family and, for this reason some single Americans assigned here have found it difficult to establish contacts. Reasonable fluency in French is the principal requirement for establishment of professional and personal relationships.

OTHER CITIES

BASSE-TERRE, the capital of Guadeloupe, located at the southern tip on the island which bears the same name, is a banana port and commercial center. It was founded by the French in 1643 and, with a population of roughly 14,000, it retains its French colonial atmosphere. The city is in the mountainous section of the island. The volcanic peak, Soufrière, emits sulphurous fumes, but has not erupted in several years, and can be climbed. Basse-Terre's beaches are volcanic sand and, therefore, black. Snorkeling is good on the reefs off the west and south shores. Fort St. Charles, built to protect the port between 1650 and 1780, now houses the local historical museum. Fishermen from the island of Les Saintes come to Basse-Terre daily to sell

their catch; Saturday is the best day to visit the native market. Other sites on this island include Carbet Falls Gorge, the archaeological park at Trois Rivières, and the rain forest.

CAYENNE, the capital of French Guiana, is located at the mouth of the Cayenne River which empties into the Atlantic Ocean. The city was founded in 1643 by the French. An Indian massacre destroyed the town, and it was not resettled until 1664. Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands fought for control of Cayenne and the surrounding region during the 17th century, and it later was occupied (from 1808 to 1816) by both the British and the Portuguese. The development of the city has been slow because of internal strife, the tropical climate, and the prevalence of disease. The harbor is shallow, making it necessary for deep-water ships to anchor some distance out. Exports include rum, timber, essence of rosewood, and gold. The Pasteur Institute here specializes in the study of tropical diseases. Several buildings from Cayenne's colonial days still stand, and there are many lovely parks. The city gave its name to the pungent pepper which is derived from plants that grow in profusion in this area. The 2000 population of Cayenne was approximately 52,000.

GRAND BOURG is the capital of Marie-Galante Island, Guadeloupe. Situated in the far southwest corner of the island, it has a protected beach and is known for its Creole-sauce seafood. Two hotels are available: Le Salut and Solédad. El Rancho, a new entertainment complex, offers a movie theater, restaurant, discothèque, and overnight accommodations.

KOUROU is located about 30 miles west of Cayenne and has a population of about 6,500. From 1851 to 1946, it was the center of the penal settlements in Guiana. The most famous of these was Devil's Island, built in 1852 on îles du Salut, an island in the Caribbean off the coast of French Guiana. Used largely for

political prisoners, its most famous was Alfred Dreyfus. Excursions may be taken to these offshore islands, where the crumbling remains of the prisons can be seen. Today, Kourou is the site of an extensive space center from which the European Space Agency launches commercial satellites.

LE VAUCLIN is one of Martinique's most scenic areas, situated in the southeast, 16 miles from Fort-de-France. This fishing town of 3,000 has a palm-lined beach that suddenly comes to life with the arrival of the fishing boats. Salt marshes and the other worldly Savane des Pétrifications are nearby. The latter is an arid region where veins of lava flows appear to be petrified wood.

LES TROIS-ILETS, on Martinique, is six miles south of Fort-de-France Bay. It is best known as the birthplace of Joséphine Beauharnais (1763-1814), the Creole beauty who became the first wife of Napoleon. Her house, La Pagerie, has been partially restored. The church where she was baptized can be visited, as well as a museum of the Napoleonic era. The estimated population of Les Trois-Ilets is 1,500.

MARIPASOULA lies on the Lawa River, 140 miles southwest of Cayenne, on French Guiana's western border. This village of about 550 is the threshold to Wayana Indian territory. The Wayanas are warm, friendly people; they are hunters who follow colorful rituals. Maripasoula has a small airstrip and an inn near the water to accommodate visitors.

POINTE-À-PITRE is the largest city on Guadeloupe, with a population estimated at 27,000 in 1995. It is located on the island of Grande-Terre, at the southern entrance of the Rivière Salée, the narrow, shallow ocean channel that separates Basse-Terre and Grande-Terre. Pointe-à-Pitre is its island's main port. More than 900 ships call each year; chief exports

are rum, coffee, sugar, and bananas. Yachting is a major business, with close to 1,500 pleasure boats based here. Pointe-à-Pitre is also the finishing point (in November and December) for the Route de Rhum Rade, a 3,700-mile solo transatlantic event that begins at Saint-Malo, France. The marketplace at Pointe-à-Pitre is one of the most colorful in the area. Fort Fleur d'Épée, at Bas du Fort near Pointe-à-Pitre, was used to repel the British invasions of the 1700s. The new Edgar Clerc Archaeological Museum houses a collection of Arawak and Carib Indian artifacts from the Lesser Antilles. The stores in Pointe-à-Pitre have a fine selection of perfume, crystal, gold jewelry, and rum. There is also fine dining, especially at the little Creole restaurants, as well as dancing, and shows.

SAINT-LAURENT-DU-MARONI is a city of approximately 14,000 people on the Maroni River, 120 miles northwest of Cayenne, French Guiana. Shipping and the making of parquet flooring are the main economic activities here. This seaport was once a receiving station for prisoners during the prison era. All but the incorrigibles were housed here; ruins of the prison remain. Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni is the starting point for river excursions. The Atyp and Peslier hotels are said to provide basic, reasonable accommodations. The area nightspots bring this quiet community to life during the evening.

SAINT-PIERRE, 12 miles northwest of Fort-de-France, Martinique, was the first city the French founded in the area, in 1635. It was the scene of one of the most horrendous volcanic calamities of all time in 1902. Mont Pelée's last eruption wiped out all but one of the city's 30,000 people. The survivor was a prisoner in solitary confinement—in an underground cell. Saint-Pierre, in its heyday, was renowned as the "little Paris of the West Indies." The steps and some columns from its beautiful opera house are all that remain of that



Street scene in Martinique

Courtesy of Carolyn Fischer

era. The city is now a tourist stop, and caters to that trade with the Musée Vulcanologique. On a hill is La Factorerie, a large restaurant run by a student-restaurateur staff. A black-sand beach in the southern district is popular. Saint-Pierre's estimated population is 5,000.

ISLAND PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Martinique, part of a group of islands known as the Lesser Antilles, stretches across the entrance to the Caribbean Sea. This archipelago, in the shape of an arc bowed out toward the Atlantic Ocean, extends for 450 miles from the Virgin Islands southward, almost to the coast of

South America. The northern part of the group is called the Leeward Islands; the southern half, the Windward Islands. Many of the islands are the result of volcanic eruptions forcing the ocean bed up 10,000 or more feet. From prehistoric times, this string of islands has stretched across the throat of the Caribbean like a chain of smoldering furnaces about to burst into flame.

It is customary to speak locally of the period from December to May as the dry season when, in fact, some lowering of precipitation and temperature occurs. Throughout the year, however, the mean temperature in the capital, Fort-de-France, varies only slightly, from a low of 76°F to a high of 81°F, while humidity ranges from 65 to 95%. The weather fluctuates from hour to hour; rain showers are quickly followed by bright and sunny weather, and the heat is almost invariably

lifted by the trade winds. The relief brought by these prevailing easterlies makes an otherwise difficult climate more comfortable, particularly in the evenings.

Because of the consistently high temperature and humidity, insects are numerous; lack of screening makes them particularly noticeable. Rust and mildew must be continually combated.

Guadeloupe is actually two islands, the mountainous Basse-Terre and the flat Grande-Terre, which together resemble the shape of a butterfly. Separated by the Rivière Salée, the islands are connected by a drawbridge. The highest point is the volcano Soufrière, which rises 4,850 feet. November through April are usually the coolest and driest months. Temperatures vary from 74°F in January to 87°F in August;

humidity varies from 77% in April to 85% in August.

French Guiana, the largest of France's overseas departments, with an area of 32,252 square miles, is situated in the northeast corner of South America. Suriname is on the west, and Brazil on the east and south. The land consists of low-lying coastal plains, with tropical forest to low hills. The climate is sub-equatorial, and the temperature averages 80°F throughout the year. Annual rainfall amounts to more than 100 inches, with the wet season extending from December through June.

Population

The population of Martinique is estimated at 412,000 (June 1999). One-third of the population lives in or near Fort-de-France, the island's only major city. Migration of young people to metropolitan France in search of career opportunities limits the annual population growth rate to about 1%. Guadeloupe, Martinique's sister island 100 miles north, has about 421,000 residents. French Guiana's population is approximately 168,000 (1999 est.), half of whom live in Cayenne area.

French is spoken by virtually everyone in all three places, although a Creole *patois* is often heard. A good knowledge of French is essential for daily living, as well as for official and social requirements. The American community is quite small, and the few Frenchmen who know English usually prefer to speak their own language.

The people of Guadeloupe and Martinique are generally friendly toward Americans and other foreigners. The islands are 90% African and African-Caucasian-Indian mixture; 5% Caucasian; and less than 5% East Indian, Lebanese, and Chinese. French Guiana is 66% black or mulatto; 12% Caucasian; 12% East Indian, Chinese, and American Indian; and 10% other. A large proportion of the administrative and military cadre is metropolitan French.

Government

Since 1946, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, and Martinique have borne the formal designation, *Départements d' Outre Mer* (overseas departments) of France. The senior French official is the prefect/commissioner of the republic, a title which replaced that of "prefect" in 1982 in all French departments under a decentralization policy. The prefect/commissioner reports to the secretary of state for Overseas Departments and Territories who, in turn, reports to the minister of the interior.

Each of the overseas departments/regions has a general council, whose members are elected from each canton, and a regional council whose members are elected by proportional representation. The policy of decentralization provides that many of the powers formerly held by the prefect will be transferred to the elected assemblies. The French military commandant for the French Antilles and French Guiana, normally a general of brigade, has headquarters in Fort-de-France, as does the French Regional Navy commandant.

The French flag, consisting of three vertical bands in blue, white, and red, is flown in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana. Martinique and Guadeloupe also have their own territorial flags. Guadeloupe's flag consists of a broad horizontal red band, separated from green stripes at the top and bottom by narrower white stripes. In the red band there is a gold star offset toward the hoist. Martinique's flag has a light blue field with a centered white cross; a white serpent is in each of the four blue quarters.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is compulsory through age 16; literacy is about 80–90% in all three areas.

Two cultural centers in Fort-de-France present musical groups, including some American

musicians or ensembles from metropolitan France. (Many Martiniquais are well versed in the history of American jazz.) Occasionally, local groups perform plays, sometimes in Creole. An international guitar festival has been a cultural highlight in recent years. Some opportunities are available for amateur musicians to participate in local chamber music groups. The Ballet Folklorique de la Martinique performs three or more nights weekly at various tourist hotels.

Fort-de-France has a small museum that displays pre-Columbian and colonial artifacts. A small museum across the bay, La Pagerie, is devoted to Empress Josephine of France, who was born on Martinique in 1763.

Commerce and Industry

While the resources of French Guiana remain virtually unexploited, the economies of Martinique and Guadeloupe are based on sugar, bananas, rum, pineapples, tourism, and spending by the French government. Manufacturing is peripheral and in support of the agricultural base. Local markets are dominated by metropolitan France, and the prevalence of imported over locally made products contributes to the high cost of living.

Martinique's gross domestic product (GDP) is nearly \$4 billion, or about \$10,000 per capita (1995 rates). Ten percent of the labor force is engaged in agriculture, which includes bananas, pineapples, vegetables, flowers, and sugarcane for rum. Industry in Martinique includes construction, rum, cement, oil refining, and tourism. Exports include refined petroleum products, bananas, rum, and pineapples; imports are petroleum products, foodstuffs, construction materials, vehicles, clothing, and other consumer goods. France is Martinique's major trading partner.

Guadeloupe's GDP is approximately \$3.7 billion, or \$9,200 per capita. Over half of the labor force is engaged in services, commerce, and government. Guadeloupe's industry includes construction, cement, rum, and tourism. Bananas, sugar, and rum are the main exports; imports include vehicles, foodstuffs, clothing and other consumer goods, construction materials, and petroleum. Franc-zone countries are Guadeloupe's major trade partners.

French Guiana's GDP is about \$1 billion, or \$6,000 per capita. Sixty percent of the French Guianese labor force work in services, government, and commerce. Agricultural products include limited vegetables for local consumption, as well as rice, corn, manioc, cocoa, bananas, and sugar. Industries include construction, shrimp processing, forestry products, rum, and gold mining. French Guiana exports include shrimp, timber, rum, and rosewood essence. Among the imports are foodstuffs, consumer goods, producer goods, and petroleum.

Transportation

Travel among the three departments is mostly by air. American Airlines flies between New York and Fort-de-France on weekends. Air France has flights between Miami and Fort-de-France, usually with stops at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Three or four ships (freighters) sail monthly between the U.S. and Martinique.

Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT), whose headquarters are in Barbados, and Air Guadeloupe provide scheduled service between Martinique and several neighboring islands. Air France also operates between Martinique and Guadeloupe and between each of these and French Guiana. One or two commuter airlines offer service to nearby islands, geared to the tourist trade. Except for Air France, schedules and reservations can be erratic.

The scheduled bus service in Fort-de-France is rarely patronized by Americans. Taxis are expensive. For any extended stay, a personal or rented car is the most convenient method of transportation. Since the town streets are narrow, with few available parking spaces, and roads elsewhere are equally narrow and winding, compact cars are advisable. A U.S. license may be used on the island for a visit of up to 90 days.

Communications

Local telephone service is adequate. Calls to the U.S. can be dialed directly from Martinique, but operator assistance is required for some calls in the reverse direction. Telegraph and airmail service vary in adequacy.

The local radio station, Radio-Télévision Française d'Outre-Mer (RFO) broadcasts daily from early morning until late evening. Programs are produced locally, with occasional dramatic and discussion programs produced in metropolitan France. Medium-wave receivers pick up Radio Caraïbe from the nearby island of St. Lucia, and Radio Antilles from Montserrat—both stations broadcast in English and French and, occasionally, in Creole. About a dozen small, private FM radio stations broadcast in Martinique. Some medium-wave English-language stations in St. Lucia and Barbados, and the Voice of America (VOA) station from Antigua, can often be received. A shortwave is useful and recommended for American Armed Forces Radio, VOA, and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) broadcasts. Shortwave reception varies from fair to good.

Television is aired on the same time schedule as is radio. Except for the locally produced daily news, most programs originate in metropolitan France.

Newspapers are barely adequate in reporting local news, and coverage of international developments is

superficial. All popular French periodicals and most Paris newspapers appear on local newsstands, usually several days to two weeks after publication. Scarcely any English-language books, either hardback or paperback, are on sale in Martinique, although some bookstores do stock standard French works, fiction and nonfiction. The public library in Fort-de-France has a few English-language books.

Health

Local doctors, dentists, oculists, and opticians are competent for normal needs. Serious or complicated medical problems may require recourse to medical services in San Juan, Puerto Rico, or in the continental U.S. Physical facilities are improving, but remain below American standards; emergency treatment and laboratory work are particularly poor. Maternity facilities are adequate for routine deliveries only; these are normally accomplished without anesthesia and without the presence of a physician.

The water supply in Fort-de-France is safe. Reconstituted, canned, and pasteurized milk is available. Raw fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly cleaned, although this precaution has limited value since it is often ignored by those who prepare food eaten outside American homes.

A yellow fever vaccination is required for travel to French Guiana. Inoculations against typhoid, tetanus, poliomyelitis, and the common infantile diseases are advisable. Common serums and vaccines are available locally.

The invariability of the tropical climate must be included among debilitating factors for those not accustomed to prolonged periods in this type of climate.

The government public health machinery is adequate, but tropical conditions and human indolence encourage diseases and unhealthy conditions. Unsanitary conditions

in most eating places, the questionable standard of food preparation, and prevalence of insects encourage disease. A person of generally good health can expect to build up an immunity to most health hazards. Although filariasis, leprosy, bilharzia, and venereal diseases are present among the local population, only dysentery, skin infections, kidney and liver ailments, flu, mononucleosis, and dengue fever have affected Americans.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Fort-de-France can be reached on flights scheduled by American carriers out of New York, Miami, and San Juan.

Passports are required of U.S. citizens entering the French West Indies. Visitors who arrive on a commercial air carrier with a round-trip ticket may enter for up to 90 days without a visa. For further information, travelers can contact the Embassy of France at 4101 Reservoir Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20007; telephone 1 202 944-6000; or the nearest French consulate in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, New Orleans or San Francisco; Internet: <http://www.info-france-usa.org>.

There is no U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the French West Indies. For assistance in the French West Indies, U.S. citizens may contact the U.S. Consular Agency at 9 Rue Des Alpinias, Dedier, Fort de France, Martinique, Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., except local and U.S. holidays; telephone (011) (596) 71-96-90 or fax (596) 71-96-89. The mailing address is P.O. Box 975, CEDEX 97246, Fort de France, Martinique. For after-hours service, American citizens may contact the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados, telephone 1-246-436-4950. U.S. citizens living in or visiting the French West Indies are encouraged to register at the Consular Section

of the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, and obtain updated information on travel and security within the French West Indies. The Consular Section is located in the American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) Building, Cheapside; telephone 1-246-431-0225; fax 1-246-431-0179; Internet: <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhemb1.html>. The Consular Section is open for American Citizens Services from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, except local and U.S. holidays.

Passports are required of U.S. citizens entering French Guiana. Visitors who arrive on a commercial air carrier with a return ticket may enter for up to 90 days without a visa. For further information on entry requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of France at 4101 Reservoir Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20007; telephone 1-202-944-6000; or the nearest French Consulate in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, New Orleans or San Francisco. Internet: <http://www.info-france-usa.org>.

There is no U.S. Embassy or Consulate in French Guiana. Americans living in or visiting French Guiana are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Paramaribo, Suriname, and obtain updated information on travel and security within French Guiana. The U.S. Embassy is located at Dr. Sophie Redmondstraat 129, Paramaribo; telephone (011) (597) 472-900. The Consular Section is open for American Citizens Services from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Mondays and Wednesdays, except local and U.S. holidays, or by appointment. In an emergency after normal business hours, American citizens may contact the duty officer by pager at (011)(597) 088-0338.

Pets

Pets may be imported provided they have health certificates and documentation of recent vaccination against rabies. No quarantine

restrictions are imposed on dogs and cats.

Currency, Banking & Weights and Measures

The local currency is the French franc. Chase Manhattan Bank has offices in Martinique.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

The time in Martinique and Guadeloupe is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus four hours (or equivalent to U.S. Eastern Daylight Saving Time, year round). The time in French Guiana is Greenwich Mean Time minus five hours (the same as U.S. Eastern Standard Time).

Disaster Preparedness

The French West Indies can be affected by hurricanes. The hurricane season normally runs from June to the end of November, but there have been hurricanes in December in recent years. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Feb/Mar Carnival*
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May 8 Veterans Day
 - May 22 Emancipation Day
 - May/June Ascension Day*
 - May/June Pentecost
 - May/June Pentecost Monday*
 - Aug. 15 Assumption Day
 - Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

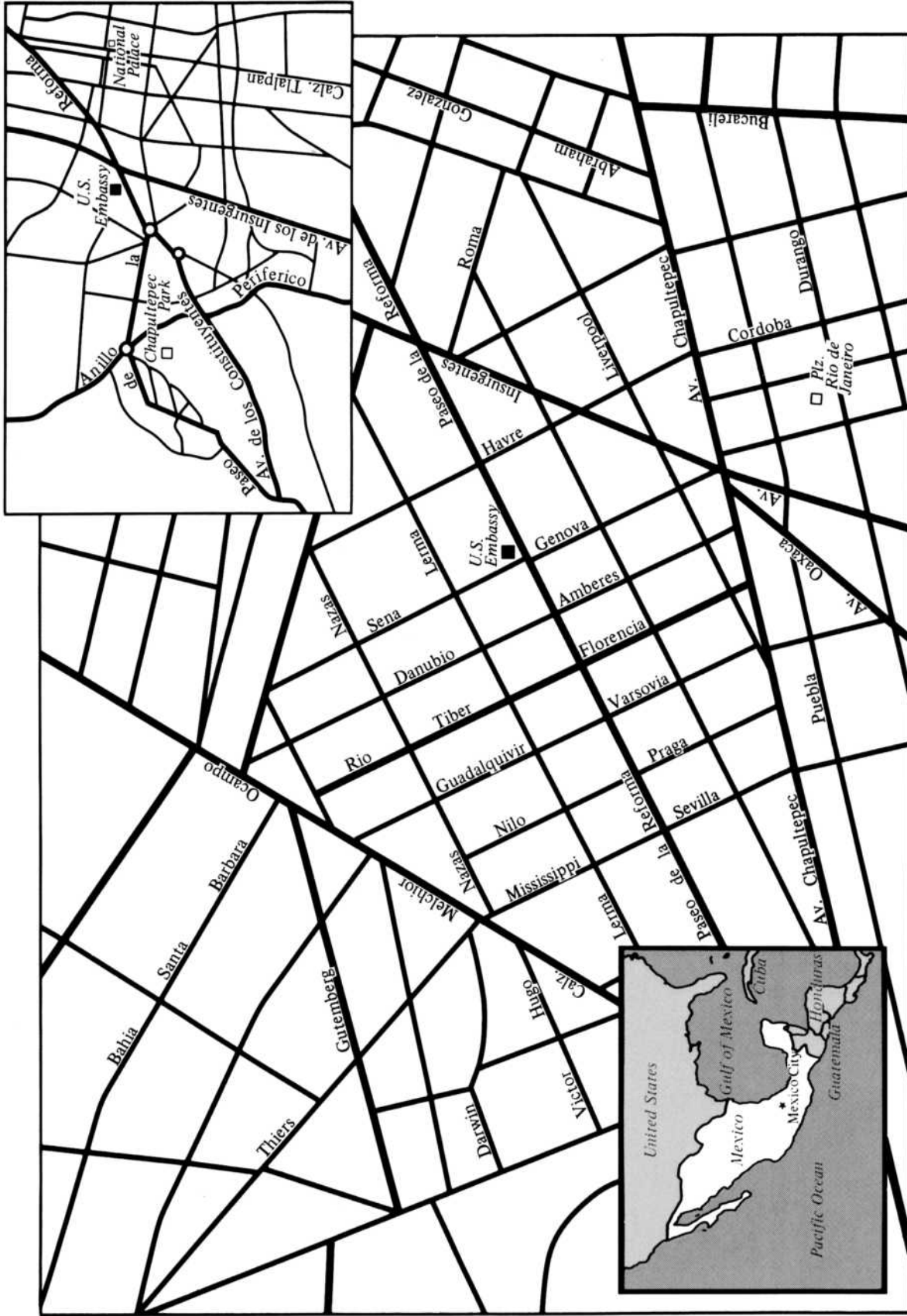
The following titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country:

Horowitz, Michael M. *Morne-Paysan: A Peasant Village in Martinique*. New York: Irvington Publishers, 1983.

Laguerre, Michel S. *Urban Poverty in the Caribbean: The Martinican Experience*. New York: St. Martin, 1990.

Miles, William F. *Elections & Ethnicity in French Martinique: A Paradox in Paradise*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1985.

Smith, A.L., and M.J. Roobol. *Mt. Pelee, Martinique: A Study of an Active Island-Arc Volcano*. Boulder, CO: Geological Society of America, 1991.



Mexico City, Mexico

MEXICO

United Mexican States

Major Cities:

Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey, Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Mazatlán, Mérida, Nuevo Laredo, Puebla

Other Cities:

Acapulco, Aguascalientes, Campeche, Chihuahua, Ciudad Obregón, Coyoacán, Cuernavaca, Culiacán, Durango, Guanajuato, Guaymas, Irapuato, Ixtapalapa, Jalapa, La Paz, León, Manzanillo, Mexicali, Morelia, Nezahualcóyotl, Oaxaca, Orizaba, Pachuca, Poza Rica, Puerto Vallarta, Querétaro, Saltillo, San Luis Potosí, Tampico, Taxco, Tepic, Toluca, Veracruz, Xochimilco, Zacatecas

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Mexico. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Mexico's rich past offers a visitor's backdrop of enchantment. Pyramids where Aztec priests performed human sacrifices still stand, approaching in bulk Egypt's largest. Monuments recall the exploits of a handful of Spaniards who toppled a mighty empire in a conquest unparalleled in history. Towns retain the flavor of a Spanish colony that flourished—even boasted a university—half a century before Jamestown began.

Mexico City, a metropolis of delightful climate and modern buildings amid historic charm, lies ringed by snow-capped volcanoes that slope down to pine forests, deserts, and balmy tropical beaches.

The first people to inhabit this land may have arrived 20,000 years before Columbus. Their descendants, including the Mayan and Aztecs, built a succession of highly developed civilizations that flourished from 1200 B.C.E. to C.E. 1521.

Hernán Cortez landed near modern day Vera Cruz in 1519. King Montezuma II invited the Spaniards into his palace and they promptly took him hostage. After the Spanish conquistadors destroyed the Aztec Empire, the position of the conquered peoples deteriorated rapidly. The Indian population fell from an estimated 25 million at the time of conquest to 1 million by 1605.

From the 16th to 19th centuries, a new colonial society emerged, stratified by race and wealth. The upper echelon was European, in the middle were people of mixed European-indigenous heritage, and at the bottom were the descendants of the native peoples.

Mexico began agitating for independence in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The struggle for independence was long and fitful, however, and freedom from Spain was not finally realized until 1821.

Culturally, politically, and economically, Mexico is experiencing rapid change. For a country composed

mostly of peasants before the Revolution (1910-20), Mexico has undergone broad and rapid urbanization. Mexico City emerged as one of the world's largest cities at the end of the 20th century. The economy has dramatically about-faced, embracing open-market policies and free-trade links with the U.S. and countries throughout the Americas.

MAJOR CITIES

Mexico City

Mexico City, formally known as Mexico, Distrito Federal (D.F.), is a cosmopolitan capital. The glass-walled sky-scrapers lining the Paseo de la Reforma, the stunning architecture of the Museum of Anthropology, the variety of international restaurants, deluxe hotels, the Lomas residential area with its stylish homes, and modern department stores and supermarkets are all signs of a world metropolitan center. But surrounding this glittering center are mass housing developments and barrios typical of the rapidly growing capital of a developing country. Heavy industry and millions of motor vehicles make the city one of most polluted in the world.



Cityscape of Mexico City, Mexico

© Nik Wheeler/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Mexico City lies in a long, flat valley on the high plateau of central Mexico. Many of the peaks encircling the city are volcanic-including glacier topped Popocateped, “The Warrior,” and Iztacchihautl, “The Sleeping Lady.” “Pogo” and “Izta” provide a spectacular setting for the city on the days when a drop in air pollution makes them visible.

Although Mexico City is only 19 degrees N. of the Equator, the high altitude (7,350 feet) creates a fall-like climate all year. Thus, despite its tropical latitude, the city has a pleasant average temperature range of 53 to 79°F in the warmest month (May), and 42 to 70°F in the coolest month (January). The two seasons are dry and rainy. The latter lasts from June through September when several hours of rain fall daily, usually in the afternoon and evening; but mornings are sunny. Nights and evenings after the storms are cool and damp. The weather is coolest November

through February when night and early morning temperatures can drop to freezing. March through May are the warm and dusty. These months are at the end of the dry season. Average humidity range is 44%-73% and annual rainfall averages 30 inches, 90% of which falls between May and October.

Utilities

Electricity is the same as in the U.S.: 110 volt, 60 hertz, alternating current. Buildings use liquid propane gas for hot water and cooking.

Water pressure varies and is often low; so many residences have reserve storage tanks to occasionally supply water when the city water is off for several hours or days.

Mexico uses the same two-prong outlets as in the U.S., but many residences have been upgraded with standard three-prong, polarized, and grounded outlets that are more

common in the U.S. Electrical blackouts of several hours are not unusual during the rainy season. Voltage fluctuations are common; so surge suppressors, voltage regulators, and uninterruptible power supplies for electronic equipment are useful. Kitchen and bathroom outlets are rarely found with ground fault circuit interrupters, which are required by most U.S. electrical codes.

Food

A variety of groceries, including fresh fruits and vegetables, packaged foods (both domestic and imported), dairy products, and meats are available. Supermarkets stock fresh or frozen meat and fish, dairy products, fresh produce, and canned or packaged goods. Major U.S. food packagers produce such goods in Mexico as cereals, bakery products, and beverages-but sometimes with a slightly different taste than what you may be accustomed to. Widely available fresh fruits

include pineapple, papaya, watermelon, and cantaloupe year round; as well as seasonal mango. Several large markets have unusual and common Mexican and tropical fruits and vegetables. Many specialty shops sell ethnic foods-including Middle-Eastern locally produced fresh kosher meats, and imported frozen foods. Most food items are available at reasonable prices, but imported items are only available at prices higher than in the United States. Most of the larger supermarkets feature sections devoted to imported goods. Smaller shops specializing in U.S. products are located in Lomas, Polanco, and a few other areas. All necessities and many other items are available.

Locally produced mixes and canned foods are of varying quality and very limited variety. Prepared frozen and packaged meals are imported and expensive. A large variety of Mexican cheeses are available. Many of the available cheeses are similar to common European and American types. Strained baby foods are expensive and of lower quality.

Mexican beer is good and very reasonably priced. Bottled soft drinks (including diet sodas or "lite" as they are known locally) are available at modest prices.

Clothing

Clothing needs in Mexico City do not vary a great deal throughout the year. Warm clothing is useful for cold spells in the winter (November to February) and rainy season (June to September). Temperatures can vary anywhere from 70°F to 40°F It is suggested that you take a few sweaters, a raincoat, and an umbrella.

Lightweight summer clothes are essential for travel to low-altitude areas where the climate is hot and humid, but are only needed in Mexico City from March through June when temperatures may reach up to 90°F. Remember that Mexico is approximately 7,300 feet above sea level; so mornings and evenings can be cool and even though it may

reach into the 90s in the sun, it can still be on the cool side in the shade.

Clothing of all kinds is available at prices comparable to the U.S., but the quality varies. Mexico City has large shopping malls, several different department store chains, and a large variety of small boutiques. Sears, Liverpool, and Palacio de Hierro are among the larger department stores. A wide variety of locally made and imported clothing is available.

Take U.S. swimsuits and underwear for children and adults. Some Mexican-made clothing, particularly stockings and pantyhose, often do not fit tall women (approx. 5'6" and taller). Mexican shoes are stylish and well made, however shoes do not go beyond American size eight for women. Narrow shoe sizes are very scarce.

Men: In Mexico City, men wear light- to medium weight business suits. The darker colors (black, brown, charcoal gray) are the most popular. Lightweight suits are comfortable in the spring and for traveling to low altitudes. Mexican shoes are stylish and well made, but do not go beyond American 10 for men. Narrow shoe sizes are very scarce. Take or order from the U.S. any sportswear, shirts, shoes, pajamas, underwear, and socks that you will need. These items are sold locally; but the quality and variety may not appeal to American tastes. It is suggested that you take along a supply of buttons (for suits) and thread. Buttons very frequently 'pop-off' at the most inconvenient time and thread sold locally may not be of very good quality.

Good tailors are available varying with prices. Hats or shorts are rarely worn in Mexico City, except for sports activities. A dark suit is appropriate.

Women: Take wool or cotton suits and dresses with jackets. Mexico City temperatures can change rapidly during the day, particularly during the rainy season. Long-sleeved blouses, sweaters, jackets,

and layered clothing are very useful; homes and offices are rarely heated. Pantsuits are very popular.

The dress for receptions, cocktail parties, dinners, and similar events varies according to rank and representational activity. Most Mexican women wear current U.S. fashions for both afternoon and evening social events. Shorts are not worn except for recreation, or at resorts. Locally made dresses are available in a variety of styles, including both current fashions and Mexican ethnic. Imported clothing from the U.S. and Europe is available. Good Mexican textiles are available; but some are not pre-shrunk, colorfast, or drip-dry.

Patterns sold locally cost twice as much as those in the U.S. The selection of such sewing accessories as thread is limited and the quality is often poor. Well-crafted silver, brass, and copper jewelry is less expensive than in the U.S. Native semi-precious stones such as turquoise, opals, and topaz in silver or gold mountings-are also available.

Children: Children's clothes are available in great variety. Price and quality vary, depending upon the store. Some parents take children's clothes from the U.S. or order from catalogs. Dress for all ages is similar to that in the U.S., although teenagers in Mexico seem very fashion conscious. Some schools require uniforms. European-style baby clothing is readily available, but American style clothing is not. Disposable diapers are available in the commissary and on the local economy; however some locally made disposable diapers have been known to cause severe diaper rash on some children. Children's shoes and sneakers are available at both a satisfactory price and quality.

Supplies and Services

A variety of both domestic and imported supplies and services are available on the local economy. Many U.S. brands of health or beauty aids are manufactured and sold locally. Most medications can

be bought at local drugstores and may cost less than in the U.S.

Film and developing are readily available, including 45-minute processing. Prices, quality, and service compare favorably with the U.S. Quality engraving and printing can be done locally.

Dry-cleaners and commercial laundries are slower, but competitive in price to those in the U.S. Pick-up and delivery from your residence is also available. Beauty shops and barbershops are numerous and compare favorably with those in the U.S. in price and service. Reasonably priced shoe repair is available. Audio, video, and personal computer equipment repair services are satisfactory; however, some parts are scarce and the work can be expensive. Service and repair on U.S. cars are fair. Dealer service is available for Chrysler, Ford, GM, Nissan, and VW models that are assembled in Mexico. It is suggested that you contact your local dealer in the U.S. to verify all warranty information.

Most stores and markets are located close to such tourist centers as the Zona Rosa (Pink Zone), Polanco (very popular neighborhood), and the Zocalo (Historic Center). The real bargains are in handcrafted silver, gold, copper, tin, onyx, leather, textiles, pottery, blown-glass, and paintings. Stores usually open at 10 am or 11 am, but the time may vary according to the owner's whim. They usually remain open until 7 pm or 8 pm. Many specialized stores open only half-days on Saturday and most stores close on Sunday, except for those stores located in the malls.

Domestic Help

Many U.S. expatriates have such domestic help as maids, gardeners or chauffeurs; however, few speak English. Truly skilled cooks are hard to find. Almost all domestic employees hired locally are Mexican. The Government of Mexico is strict about visas and work permits for foreign domestics because of the large number of Mexicans available.

Although many domestics live in, they can also be hired on a part-time "live-out" basis for laundry and cleaning purposes. Families with small children may find it helpful to have a live-in domestic to look after children, since good babysitters are very scarce. Most homes and many apartments have separate servants quarters. The cost of a domestic employee's salary, Christmas bonus, meals, uniform, severance pay, and Social Security has increased in recent years; but it is still significantly less expensive than in the U.S. An employer is liable for three months of severance pay upon departure once an employee has completed 30 days of employment. It increases at the rate of 20 days a year. One-third of the wage is retained to cover costs of room and board for live-in domestics. Domestic employees are entitled to one day off a week, Mexican holidays, and six to twelve days, paid vacation days a year. Employers have the option of enrolling servants in the IMSS health program or paying their medical expenses directly.

Religious Activities

Mexico City's large English-speaking community is served by several English language religious institutions, including but not limited to Catholic, Baptist, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Greek Orthodox, Jewish (Conservative), Latter-day Saints, Lutheran, Methodist, Quaker, Seventh-day Adventist, Union Evangelical, Interdenominational, and Unitarian religions/beliefs. Announcements for the times of services appear regularly in the English-language daily newspaper, *The Mexico City News*.

Education

The following schools offer programs from pre-school through sixth grade: Lomas Altas, Sierra Nevada, and Eaton. These schools are located in the Lomas de Chapultepec neighborhood.

The American School Foundation (ASF) (Address: Bondojito 215, Colonia Las Americas, Delegacion

Alvaro Obregon, 01120 Mexico, Distrito Federal, Mexico)

As a bicultural and bilingual school, its program is different than the U.S. schools. It offers accredited co-educational programs in pre-primary, primary (first to fifth), middle school (sixth to eighth), and high school (ninth to twelfth) levels. The SACS in the U.S. accredits the ASR. The school also has Mexican accreditation, by the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) for all grade levels and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Mexico City, for the high school program.

ASF receives some grant aid from the Office of Overseas Schools (A/OS); but, it is not affiliated with the U.S. Embassy. Under the terms of the Government's grant to the school, AFS must accept all children who meet admission standards. AFS has about 2,200 students—approximately 50% of whom are Mexican, 25% American, and 25% other nationalities. Classes in primary school are conducted half-day in Spanish and half-day in English. However, children with little-to no Spanish attend "Special Spanish" classes. In middle school, Spanish is taught as a second language. The ASF campus includes indoor and outdoor play areas, tennis courts, and an indoor swimming pool. An intramural sports program includes American football, soccer, and basketball.

The school year starts in mid-August and ends in late June. Two-week vacations occur both at Christmas and Easter. Uniforms are not required.

Children coming from schools with other than an American curriculum and children with poor academic records may be required to take an admission exam.

Summer activities include remedial and enrichment programs, in addition to a half-day Summer Camp Program. Extracurricular activities include drama, Model United Nations, a variety of sports,

National Honor Society (NHS), and various clubs.

Greengates: (Address: Avenida Circunvalacion Poniente 102, Balcones de San Mateo, 53200 Naucalpan, Estado de Mexico, Mexico). A private, coeducational school based on the British system that offers kindergarten through high school. Applicants are tested for acceptance and placement. The school year is from mid-August through late June. Classes are taught in English. Spanish is required as a second language and French is offered beginning in grade six.

The school requires elementary and junior high students to wear uniforms. An after-school activity program includes art, drama, music, chess, and photography. About 30 nationalities are represented. Summer programs include remedial education, arts, crafts, and sports. Expenses are within the education allowance.

Lomas Altas: (Address: Montanas Calizas 305, Lomas de Chapultepec, Mexico 11000 D.F. Tels 520-5375, 2027986, fax: 520-2276.) Lomas Alias is growing in popularity for younger children (up to the sixth grade). The school is a private, coeducational school for children from pre-school through sixth grade. There are regularly long waiting lists for spaces. Early registration is recommended. No uniform is required. The school year is from mid-August through to the end of June. The majority of children attending the school are Mexican. Beginning in the first grade, half the day's curriculum is conducted in Spanish and half in English. For younger children, the classes are all in English.

Westhill Institute: (Address: Monies Carpatos, No. 940, 11000 Mexico D.F.) Westhill is a private, coeducational school, founded in 1992. The school has two campuses. Kindergarten through grade 6 is located in Lomas de Chapultepec. Older children go to the campus in Santa Fe. Uniforms are required.

The standard curriculum includes some class work in Spanish and French.

In addition, numerous other schools—such as Montessori, French, German, and religious—are available. Many nursery schools and kindergartens are available and one or two have summer programs. Most schools have bus service.

Except for Greengates School, most schools must conform to the Government of Mexico requirements to teach Spanish at least half of every school day in elementary grades and follow the approved curriculum.

Special Educational Opportunities

UNAM has a school for foreign students, that offers programs in Latin American Studies and intensive Spanish. Most courses are in English, including those in Mexican history and culture. The university offers many degrees—including economics, dentistry, engineering, and the humanities.

A wide range of courses and programs is offered at The Ibero-American University (Universidad Ibero Americana) and the University of the Americas, Mexico City (Universidad de Las Americas).

Universidad Internacional de Mexico, located in Mexico City, is part of the U.S. International University of San Diego, California. The U.S. campus is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. It offers undergraduate degrees in business administration, general studies, and psychology as well as graduate programs in management and organizational development, psychology, international business administration, and business administration. All course work is in English.

Sports

The athletic facilities at numerous private clubs are open. The ASF campus includes lighted tennis courts and an indoor swimming pool, available for community use for a nominal fee. A swimming pool

at the YMCA is available for a small charge. Gold's Gym, located in Mexico City, offers various types of equipment and personal trainers for variable membership dues.

The Maria Isabel Sheraton Hotel has some athletic club facilities, including exercise classes. The Camino Real Hotel rents tennis courts by the hour.

Runners must take time to adapt to Mexico City's higher altitude. Heavy traffic and air pollution dampen some runners' enthusiasm, but Chapultepec Park and other locations provide pleasant surroundings for running. Runners must remember that crime is relatively high in Mexico City; so you must be cautious of where and when you choose to run.

As in most Latin countries, soccer is a favorite spectator sport. Other sports include horse racing, jai-alai, American football, baseball, softball, basketball, and polo. Bullfights are held almost every Sunday. Horseback riding is popular among Mexicans. Few riding clubs are available in Mexico City and its environs. You may rent horses to ride "Mexican saddle" in the countryside around Mexico City.

The Government of Mexico requires special permits to possess firearms or to use them for hunting.

Freshwater fishing for trout and bass is good.

Some of the world's best deep-sea fishing and beaches are at such Pacific coast resorts, as Acapulco and Ixtapa Zihuatanejo (Guerrero), Puerto Vallarta (Jalisco), Puerto Escondido and Huatulco (Oaxaca) near the Gulf of Tehuantepec, Mazatlan (Sinaloa), and Los Cabos (at the southern tip of the 1,000-mile-long Baja California Peninsula). The Gulf of California (also known as the Sea of Cortes) resorts include Guaymas (Sonora). The Gulf of Mexico resorts include Veracruz and Tampico (Veracruz). Caribbean resorts include Cancun and Cozumel (Quintana Roo). Mountain

climbing is popular at the nearby volcanoes of Popocateped ("Pogo" is the second-highest mountain in Mexico) and Iztacchihautli; and at the Pico de Orizaba (the highest mountain in Mexico and the third highest in North America, on the Puebla/Veracruz border) it is popular with the hardy who are also accustomed to high altitudes (17,000 feet above sea level). The lower slopes provide extraordinary beauty and offer an attractive alternative of hiking and scenery. The city of Puebla (altitude 7,030 feet), located on the eastern side of "Pogo" and "Izta," was one of the first Hispanic cities in Mexico. It has museums and buildings reflecting the Spanish colonial period. The Battle of Puebla, which marked Mexican victory over

French forces on May 5, 1862, is celebrated in today's Cinco de Mayo festivities.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring and sightseeing possibilities are excellent. Mexico abounds in archeological sites from the indigenous, meso-American civilizations of the pre-Hispanic era.

The Great Temple, the seat of the Aztec civilization, is in the Zocalo (or central plaza), in downtown Mexico City. Founded in 1325 as Tenochtitlan, it was conquered by Hernando Cortes in 1521. An adjacent museum displays artifacts found at the site. The pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, dating from C.E. 500, are found at Teotihuacan (also known as the City of the Gods), about a 45 minute ride northeast of Mexico City. Tula (Hidalgo), the capital of the Toltec civilization, is a one-hour drive northwest of Mexico City, off the toll road to Queretaro. Mayan sites are everywhere when you visit the Yucatan Peninsula.

The downtown Mexico City area includes excellent museums, the Cathedral, the National Palace with murals by Diego Rivera, glass factories, old churches, convents, and colorful markets. Chapultepec Park is a popular, lake-centered woodland.

It is several miles square and located near the Polanco and Lomas areas of Mexico City. It has a zoo, bridle paths, picnic areas, playgrounds, miniature trains, botanical gardens, bicycle paths, row boats, a colorful amusement park, fine restaurants, and Atlantis-an aquatic animal park.

Mexico City's central location makes weekend trips easy to low altitudes, scenic resorts, and towns by car, train, bus, or plane. Many old haciendas have been converted into beautiful hotels and resorts. Located within a day's excursion, south of Mexico City is Cuernavaca, Morelos (altitude 5,060 feet), known as the City of Perpetual Springtime; and Taxco, Guerrero (altitude 5,760 feet), a colonial town noted for silver manufacturing.

The Spanish colonial town of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato (altitude 6,140 feet) is two hours to the north. Toll roads fan out from Mexico City to these and other areas of interest.

Summer activities for children are somewhat limited. Summer jobs are not always available for high school and college-age students; so many families spend a few weeks traveling during summer.

Entertainment

Mexico City's performing and visual arts programs are international in scope. The National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA) offers a broad range of cultural activities at its numerous concert halls, theaters, museums, and other facilities. The Palacio de Bellas Artes and the National Auditorium are the traditional venues for performing arts programs. In recent years, newer facilities have suffered in various parts of the city. World class symphony orchestras, chamber orchestras, chamber ensembles, opera companies, jazz groups, modern dance companies and ballet companies perform periodically at Bellas Artes. Superb art exhibits, are held frequently.

The National Museum of Anthropology hosts programs of dance and music from Mexico's indigenous cultures.

Mexico's famed Ballet Folklórico performs each Wednesday and Sunday a Bellas Artes. UNAM administers an extensive cultural program, which often includes American activities held at their Centro Cultural, in the southern part of the city. Tickets for INBA and UNAM programs are moderately priced.

There are several amateur theater groups in addition to commercial theater groups. Movie theaters show first-run American movies about three months after their release in the U.S. at inexpensive prices.

Video clubs feature a selection of movies, most of which are in VHS format. DVD is sometimes available.

Dining out is reasonably priced and varied. The cosmopolitan nature of the city is nowhere more evident than in the variety of restaurants, with specialties ranging from the various regions of Mexico (Yucatan, Veracruz, etc.) to countries and cultures around the world. Mexican food in Mexico is very different from the Mexican-style food that has become so popular in the U.S. International restaurant offerings include anything from the Argentine-style "parrilla" to Middle Eastern cuisine. Good caterers are available throughout Mexico.

Mexicans normally eat their main meal as early as 2:00 pm and then have light dinner after about 9:00 pm. It is always better to make a restaurant reservation for parties larger than six. Nightclubs are everywhere you look in Mexico City.

Chapultepec Park boasts the National Museum of Anthropology, a handsome building housing one of the world's most extensive collection of pre-Hispanic artifacts from cultures indigenous to Mexico.



Church in Guadalajara, Mexico

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Lecture tours in English are available. The Museum of Modern Art provides an overview of 80 years of Mexican art, as well as numerous excellent foreign and Mexican exhibits. The Rufino Tamayo Museum, includes collections of paintings and sculptures by 20th-century artists from Mexico, the U.S., and Europe. Chapultepec Castle and museum, the residence of the Austrian Archduke Maximilian (1864-67), overlooks the eastern end of the park and Paseo de la Reforma.

Other fine museums include the San Carlos, the Pinacoteca Virreinal, the Frida Kalo, the National Museum of the Viceroyalty (the Spanish Colonial Period), and the Anahuacali Museum which features Diego Rivera's pre-Hispanic collection.

For those interested in Mexico City's active art scene, the city offers more than a dozen fine com-

mercial art galleries, which periodically show the best of Mexican and to a lesser extent-foreign artists. Artists also regularly exhibit in several out-door parks.

Social Activities

Well-known organizations with branches in Mexico City include: the American Benevolence Society, the American Legion, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Daughters of the American Revolution, Junior League, Lions, Navy League, Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Shriners, Hash House Harriers, St. Andrews, and various U.S. college alumni clubs. The American Society offers a wide variety of social activities.

A good knowledge of Spanish and a real effort to make friends helps to develop friendships. Many clubs within Mexico, such as Damas Diplomaticas and The Newcomers' Club, offer monthly meetings, speakers, tours to various sites in Mexico, dinners, and dances.

Guadalajara

Metropolitan Guadalajara, with a population of more than five million inhabitants, including approximately 50,000 resident U.S citizens, sits 5,092 feet above sea level on a broad plateau. A dramatic canyon, "La Barranca," forms the city's natural northern boundary; picturesque mountains rise to the east and west and Lake Chapala lies to the south.

Guadalajara enjoys a temperate climate year round. Dry, sunny days are interrupted by brief thunder-showers during the summer rainy season (June through October). Ninety percent of the average annual rainfall of 35 inches falls during these five months. Because of its altitude, Guadalajara escapes coastal heat and humidity. The average temperature range varies from 45 to 75°F in January and 55 to 90°F in May. The climate which is comparable to that of San Diego

except for the greater rainfall, has been instrumental in attracting thousands of tourists as well as American retirees.

A city of brightly colored tropical flowers, Guadalajara proudly blends its historic past with modern development. The Cathedral, government buildings, and expansive plazas of the city center stand as impressive remnants of Mexico's colonial heritage. Plaza Tapatia, a downtown pedestrian mall, offers hours of pleasant strolling amidst greenery, fountains, shops, and restaurants in the city's historic center. It is also the location of the Cultural Cabanas Institute, which houses the world-famous Orozco ceiling murals.

Utilities

Electric service is the same as in the U.S.: 110 volt, 60 hertz, AC. Voltage regulators or surge suppressors can protect televisions, stereos, and computers from electrical surges. Both are available locally. It is advisable to unplug the equipment when not in use and to not use the equipment in the middle of thunder and lightning storms.

Food

Guadalajara is home to such American chains as Wal-Mart Super-Center, Sam's Club, and Costco in addition to Mexican chain super-center-type stores. Many American products manufactured in either the U.S. or in Mexico can be found in these stores. However, those products made in the U.S. may not be routinely stocked by the store. It is best to stock up on desired goods when you find them in local stores. Additionally, there are innumerable specialty food stores, bakeries, and outdoor markets that offer a wide variety of products.

Frozen foods are readily available, and low-calorie, low-fat products are becoming more widely available. Pasteurized milk (whole and skim), cheeses, and heavy cream may be safely purchased in supermarkets.

City tap water is safe for bathing and cleaning, but not for drinking.

Bottled drinking water is sold in virtually all stores and delivery service may be established such that the water is delivered to your home on a set schedule.

It is necessary to disinfect fruits and vegetables before eating them. Disinfectant drops and powder are readily available in all local grocery stores.

Clothing

Guadalajara boasts an enviable spring and summer climate year round. Light and medium weight clothing is comfortable in all seasons. Heavy winter clothing is not needed. Take a raincoat and umbrella for the mid-June to October rainy season. Summer clothes are perfect for travel to low-altitude, warmer areas. Take your bathing suit for use at local pools and for the enjoyment of nearby beaches. Formal social occasions are rare; most functions are informal. A plain, dark suit for men or cocktail dresses for women is appropriate attire.

Guadalajara has several large, American-style shopping malls, and a variety of clothing styles is available in the many boutiques and department stores. Leather jackets, shoes and boots are available at reasonable prices as there are many manufacturers of leather goods in the area. Large sized shoes and clothing are scarce.

Supplies and Services

Housekeepers are available on apart-time or live-in basis. Wages are very reasonable in comparison to U.S. rates.

Gardeners are also available at a reasonable fee. Their services are generally needed every two weeks during the rainy season and less frequently for the remainder of the year. Medical care, furniture design, and construction, automobile and appliance repair, and other services can be found at a lower cost than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Several churches, including Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Pres-

byterian churches offer English services. A Jewish community offers services in Spanish and Hebrew.

Education

Guadalajara is home to five private and two public universities as well as several smaller institutions of higher learning. Also, a good number of excellent high schools and grammar schools exist where the language of instruction is Spanish.

The American School offers a coeducational, bilingual program from pre-kindergarten through high school. The student body consists of nearly 1,300 students, more than 80% of whom are Mexican. Children with special educational needs may not be well served there or by any other school in Guadalajara. The teaching staff is multinational, but predominantly Mexican. Most of the remainder is from the U.S. or Canada. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges of Schools. The school year runs from late August to late June with two-week vacations at Easter and Christmas.

Pre-kindergarten, elementary, and high school level courses have summer sessions. Uniforms are not required.

The John F. Kennedy School offers instruction from kindergarten through grade six. Kindergarten is taught completely in English; pre-first grade for six year-olds offers two subjects in Spanish and the rest in English; and primary school beginning at age seven is taught in Spanish and English on alternating days. Bus service is not available.

The Lincoln School, which offers prekindergarten through grade 12, has two different teaching programs: the bilingual program is taught half in Spanish and half in English; the traditional, bicultural program offers 90% of material in English, with the remaining 10% in Spanish. The school is built on Christian principles, with mandatory 20-minute devotions each morning. Bus service is not offered.

Sports

Guadalajara's climate encourages a wide variety of outdoor sports. Swimming, tennis, hiking, and horseback riding are popular. Five 18-hole golf courses, a nine-hole course and one practice range are available in Guadalajara. Both private clubs and city recreation facilities offer swimming, tennis, racquetball, basketball, and other sports.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Guadalajara is situated in close proximity to many areas worth visiting. The neighboring towns of Tonalá and Tlaquepaque offer an enormous selection of artisan crafts at very affordable prices. Tonalá hosts exciting market days every Thursday and Sunday for additional shopping pleasure.

Lake Chapala and the lakeside village of Ajijic are only an hour away. Beyond the lake are the picturesque towns of Mazamitla and Tapalpa.

For beach lovers, there are many options within about four hours' driving from Guadalajara. Puerto Vallarta, the principal beach resort in the consular district, is 25 minutes away by plane or approximately four hours by car. Manzanillo, another important beach town, is three hours away by car and home to great fishing as well as the largest seaport on Mexico's Pacific coast. Additional beaches include Barra de Navidad, Nueva Vallarta, and Tenacatita.

The neighboring states of Michoacán, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas are also, easy-to-reach destinations for vacations or long weekends.

Entertainment

Touring musical and dance companies from Mexico and other countries are often featured in the stately Degollad Theater or Cultural Cabanas Institute. Additionally, the University of Guadalajara presents an exceptional Ballet Folclórico every Sunday morning at the Degollado Theater.



Busy downtown street, Tijuana

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

There is a large and active American Society to welcome new American residents. The Mexican American Cultural Institute also sponsors program, of interest.

Depending on the neighborhood in which they live, families either have cable television or a satellite television service on which various American television shows are shown, and such Popular cable channels, as ESPN, and CNN are widely available.

Monterrey

Monterrey stretches from the arid plains near the U.S. border south to the northern tier of traditional, colo-

nial Mexico. The most distant major city in the district, Durango, is a six-hour drive from Monterrey. The total population of the district is estimated at nearly 12 million, of which an estimated 3.8 million live in the Monterrey metropolitan area. About 57,000 U.S. citizens live within the district, with 28,000 residing in greater Monterrey.

Monterrey is Mexico's third largest city and second most important industrial and financial metropolis. The capital of the state of Nuevo León It is located in the northeastern part of Mexico, about 150 miles from the Texas border. Monterrey is the hub of the most prosperous urban area in all of Mexico.

The area's geography and history have given the people of Monterrey, otherwise known as "Regiomontanos," an individualistic-reserved character. The trend setting business community is conservative in its politics, religion, and social structure. Monterrey is advanced in its approach to technical innovation and economic opportunities; closer to American than traditional Latin concepts in business practices; and devoted to the family, hard work and the expansion of the family enterprise. The "Group of Ten," are 10 large industrial conglomerates that play a crucial role in Mexico's economy.

Monterrey is situated in a semi-arid valley at an altitude of 1,766 feet and is bounded on three sides by rugged mountains. About two hours to the southeast of the city is one of Mexico's most important citrus-producing areas. Most of the surrounding countryside, however, is semi-arid and covered with brush.

While only minimal rainfall occurs during the November to April dry season, the average rainfall is 20 inches a year. Half the rain falls during August, September, and October. Summer temperatures usually begin in mid-March and last through October. Spring-like weather with warm days and cool nights occurs from November to March, but the cooler weather worsens the seemingly omnipresent smog. The average monthly temperatures vary from 50-74°F in January to 74-98°F in June and July. Summer highs regularly top 100°F for several weeks at a time; from mid-November through January, the mercury can sporadically plunge into the 30s overnight.

Dust can be an irritant year round, especially during the dry season, and chronic respiratory problems are aggravated by frequent thermal inversions. The phenomenal growth Monterrey experienced during the last decade has threatened the fragile ecology of the semi-arid region. Government efforts to reduce pollution have thus far had little effect.

Utilities

Piped natural gas is commonly used for stoves and water heaters. Electric current is the same as in the U.S.: 110 volt, 60 hertz, AC. Power outages are rare but fluctuations are common, making voltage regulators or surge protectors for PC's essential. Due to scarce rainfall, many houses are equipped with water tanks and some with cistern systems, which ensure water 24 hours daily.

Transportation

Public transportation within the suburbs and in Monterrey is adequate; nevertheless, you may want to bring a personally owned vehicle for a longer stay.

Driving in this area is not for the faint-hearted. Regulations concerning driver's licenses are loosely enforced and locals are known for their aggressive driving habits.

Food

Fish, seafood, and poultry are also regularly available. Most fresh fruits and vegetables familiar to Americans, plus a wide variety of tropical fruits, are sold here. The arrival of the South Texas grocery chain H.E.B. in Monterrey in 1997 elevated the food shopping experience to U.S. standards. Baby food, low fat, sugarfree and numerous ethnic foods are available year round. Most Americans make occasional trips to the Texas border towns to purchase hard-to-find specialty items or to take advantage of the lower prices. All cuts of good quality meat are available, but at prices higher than those in the U.S.

Clothing

Although clothes are often more expensive in Monterrey than in the U.S., tailors are a bargain.

Hats are seldom worn by men, except with sport clothes or for protection from the sun and rain. In summer, men often wear cotton suits; men's fashions are conservative, with business suits universal among government and private sector contacts. A variety of women's

clothing is worn. Slacks are often seen, but shorts are appropriate only for sporting activities. Women should bring what they would wear for the office, parties, or at home in the U.S. Although Mexican shoes are stylish and reasonably priced, many Americans have difficulty finding their shoe sizes. Attractive sandals for summer are available.

Religious Activities

English-speaking services are held at the Fatima (Roman Catholic), All Souls (Anglican) and Union Churches, the latter serving a broad based Protestant congregation. The independent Castillo del Rey offers English language Bible study. There are also services for Jewish (Orthodox), LDS, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Pentecostal, and independent congregations, some of whose services may be translated into English upon request.

Education

The American School Foundation of Monterrey, a private, coeducational school offering classes from nursery through grade 12. Instruction is in English with Spanish courses for American children. The school is accredited by SACS.

The school year runs from mid August to mid June. Current enrollment exceeds 2,000 students-of whom more than 10% are American. The preschool and elementary school operate at the Rio Missouri Campus and serve more than 1,000 children. A beautiful state-of-the art middle school and high school opened on a separate campus in August 1996. Students in high school have the opportunity to earn both a U.S. high school diploma and its Mexican equivalent. The school offers a rigorous college preparatory program and includes support services for children with mild learning difficulties.

Several children also attend the American Institute of Monterrey, a smaller bilingual school that is not accredited in the U.S.

Medical Facilities

Monterrey is known as the Houston of Mexico, boasting the best medical care facilities in all of Mexico. A full range of U.S. trained, English-speaking specialists is readily available to assist with virtually any medical problem. Nevertheless, some patients, in consultation with MED, would be advised to seek treatment in the U.S.-particularly expectant mothers. For dental and orthodontic needs, local professionals offer competent service at only a fraction of the stateside cost.

Sports

Public soccer fields and a jogging course are located in a long section of a dry riverbed. Few public tennis courts are in the city. Residents can join a number of reasonably priced gyms with weight rooms, aerobics, tennis courts, and small pools. The better equipped sports clubs in Monterrey are more costly. Two expensive equestrian clubs in the area offer riding and jumping. The city has a few bowling alleys, roller skating rinks, and small ice skating rinks. There are three private golf courses, but only one club offers membership-which is costly. Unfortunately, the heat and pollution limit the number of outdoor activities that can be enjoyed safely and comfortably.

Hiking and rock climbing are popular diversions in the nearby Chipinque and La Huasteca Parks, and in other nearby mountainous areas as well. The State of Nuevo Leon is actively encouraging adventure and ecotourism. Fishing is possible in several lakes in the region, although a boat is essential in most and rentals are unavailable. Lake Guerrero, a five-hour drive away in the neighboring state of Tamaulipas, allows bass fishing, although guides and lodging are expensive. Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon allow dove, quail, duck, and/or goose hunting. Finally, the northern border region allows whitetail deer hunting, although most of this takes place on private ranches and can cost hundreds of dollars per day. Hunting weapons are subject to

strict control and to cumbersome, expensive licensing requirements.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Nearby attractions and their facilities include: Chipinque (picnic area, a restaurant, beautiful hiking trails, and a scenic view); Horsetail Falls (picnic area, waterfall, and burro riding); Presa de la Boca (picnic area, boating, and water skiing); the Grutas de Garcia (caverns); Huasteca Canyon (picnics and hiking); and Plaza Sésamo an amusement and water park for children.

The city of Saltillo, Coahuila, is about an hour's drive from Monterrey. Situated at a higher elevation than

Monterrey, Saltillo offers a slightly cooler climate, a smattering of Spanish colonial architecture, and shopping for serapes. Most other handicrafts come from central or southern Mexico. Dog and horse shows (including "charreadas"), are announced in advance in the newspaper. Bullfighting is a popular spectator sport in Monterrey. During the October - May season, bullfights are held on Sunday afternoons and holidays. Monterrey boasts two professional soccer teams and two Mexican baseball teams similar to the AAA class in the U.S. The baseball season lasts from March through August.

Entertainment

Monterrey has many good, moderately priced to expensive restaurants offering Mexican, German, French, Italian, Arab, and Asian cuisine. A full range of fast food shops is available, including many U.S. chain restaurants. Several modern movie theaters show current U.S. films at reasonable prices. Younger adults frequent a few nightclubs. Although known more as an industrial center than a cultural center, Monterrey offers a growing and varied bill of fare for the performing and plastic arts-including sporadic performances by the symphony, ballet, and opera. The city boasts such art galleries and museums as El Museo de

Monterrey, the Glass Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Museum of Mexican History is also worth a visit.

Social Activities

Many Americans participate in the American Society of Monterrey [ASOMO], which sponsors a Fourth of July party, Christmas dance, Halloween party, Easter egg hunt for children, and other social events.

Opportunities for socializing with the local people are limited, particularly for single adults, since social events usually are for families and often take place at expensive private clubs.

Ciudad Juárez

Ciudad Juarez (commonly called Juarez) is Mexico's fourth largest city with a population of more than 1.5 million. It is the largest of all cities along the U.S.-Mexico border. Juarez is a blend of old and new. Because of its proximity to El Paso, it has strong cultural and economic ties to the U.S. Many families in Juarez have U.S. citizen relatives on the other side of the border. Still, Juarez is proud of its heritage and its history as the chief city of the state of Chihuahua, "Cradle of the Mexican Revolution." Although Juarez Mexicans are very friendly in a social or business setting, they rarely welcome new friends into the close family circle. Invitations to dine at someone's home are rare.

Many industrial plants have been established in Ciudad Juarez to take advantage of low labor costs. The "twin plant" or "maquiladora" concept, with labor-intensive plants in Juarez and El Paso, creates an appearance of one city separated only by long lines at the immigration checkpoints over the Rio Grande. It is responsible for the extremely low unemployment rate and the rapid growth of the city. El Paso, on the other hand, has not coped well with the changes brought by NAFTA. Unemployment is high. Good jobs are scarce.

Ciudad Juarez is located 3,700 feet above sea level in an arid desert region surrounded by treeless mountains. The region enjoys cloudless days, low humidity, and an average rainfall of less than 10 inches a year. Rainfall is less than an inch per month, except for July through September, when Juarez receives one to two inches a month. The average temperature range varies from 30 to 67°F in January to 67 to 100 °F in July. Both temperatures and humidity have been rising in the last several years. Juarez enjoys a change of seasons similar to that of Washington, D.C. Dust storms, Juarez's most unpleasant climatic feature, can occur at any time of the year and can cause difficulties for persons suffering from allergies.

Food

Modern supermarkets abound in both Ciudad Juarez and El Paso. Shopping for food and other daily necessities presents no problem. Food costs are lower than in Washington, D.C., especially for plentiful fresh fruits and vegetables. Locally produced alcoholic beverages are inexpensive and of good quality. Anything that cannot be obtained in Juarez is available in El Paso.

Clothing

A seasonal wardrobe is necessary in Juarez, with emphasis on lightweight clothing in view of the long summer. In winter, medium-weight suits for men and women are appropriate. Although subfreezing temperatures are rare, penetrating winds make hats, gloves, and lined coats useful. Rain is infrequent, so little rainwear is needed; but take umbrellas.

Fashion trends in Juarez follow those in the southwestern U.S., except that shorts are seldom worn in public. Suits and dresses are appropriate for work but after hours dress is casual. Formal dress is rarely required. Several representational functions require informal dress (suit and tie).

Women in Juarez dress more formally than American women for

luncheons and the like. El Paso is one of the best places in the U.S. to buy boots. Many manufacturers are head-quartered in El Paso and factory outlets are numerous. Western wear is popular on both sides of the border.

Supplies and Services

Domestic servants speak only Spanish. Full time, live-in maids have proven impossible to find. Part-time maids are available and charge \$25 to \$30 per day. If you need a full-time maid or nanny, the wisest course would be to take one with you.

Religious Activities

Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are located in Ciudad Juarez and in El Paso. All services in Juarez are held in Spanish. El Paso offers a Synagogue and temple. Evangelical groups are well represented on both sides of the border.

Education

Americans with school-age children may use any of El Paso's public or private schools. The public schools are overcrowded.

Juarez has at least four Montessori preschools. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), with an enrollment of 13,000, grants bachelor and masters degrees. Night and summer courses are available.

Voice and music lessons are available at El Paso Community College. The Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua maintains a branch in Juarez, where evening courses are offered.

Sports

Such sports as golf, tennis, and horseback riding represent popular forms of entertainment. Other enjoyable activities available on the border are hiking and camping. Many excellent campsites are within driving distance. Whitewater rafting is also available. Snow skiing is available in the Ruidoso-Cloudcroft highlands. Spectator sports events include UTEP basketball and football. UTEP hosts the

NCAA John Hancock Sun Bowl in winter. El Paso has a good minor league baseball team, the Diablos.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring attractions include day trips to White Sands National Monument, the Carlsbad Caverns, Hueco Tanks State Park, and Elephant Butte Lake. Manageable in a day is Silver City, New Mexico, with its nearby ghost town and the Gila Cliff Dwellings. Some of the more interesting weekend trips include the city of Chihuahua, capital of the state of Chihuahua, about four hours south by train or car. The Mennonite Community in Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, about 220 miles south of Juarez, is fascinating.

Big Bend National Park; Santa Fe, Taos, and Albuquerque, New Mexico; Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, and Las Vegas are frequent U.S. destinations made more appealing by fares to Los Angeles and San Diego that can be found as low as \$99 on Southwest.

Entertainment

Juarez boasts many good restaurants in all price ranges, including Chinese, Mexican and seafood. Tacos, burritos, and hamburgers are local favorites. Brown bag lunches are also popular. El Paso and nearby Las Cruces, New Mexico, also have good restaurants. Gourmet restaurants are rare. The best discotheques and nightclubs that are open until dawn in the area are in Juarez.

Mariachi clubs abound and bands can be hired for private functions. The downtown area has many bars and clubs with live entertainment. El Paso has country/western clubs in abundance, as well as top forties nightclubs. A comedy club occasionally attracts nationally known comedians. Movie theaters on both sides of the border show the most recent U.S. releases. Video clubs are numerous and inexpensive. The El Paso YMCA, YWCA, El Paso Community College, and UTEP offer various art classes for both adults and children. The unusual scenery

inspires painters and photographers. Other cultural activities include the El Paso Symphony Orchestra, touring dance groups, plays, lectures, and rock concerts.

Tijuana

Tijuana lies just south of San Diego, California. Its vegetation and terrain are identical to that of southern California. The city is 75 feet above sea level and about 5 miles from the ocean. It is built on and around a group of large hills, which are part of the Pacific coast range of mountains.

The climate is similar to that of San Diego. The temperature range in Tijuana varies from 42 to 68°F in January and 63 to 82 °F in August. Sunny days and low humidity help maintain comfortable conditions year round.

More than 80% of the rainfall occurs from November to March and averages only eight inches a year. Thus, vegetation on the hills surrounding the city is sparse, leading to dusty conditions year round. During periods of heavy rains, mud slides and clogged gutters often occur. Several minor earthquakes have shaken but have caused no damage to Tijuana.

Food

Foods available in California are also sold in Tijuana, but Americans normally shop in California supermarkets.

Clothing

Take warm sweaters, woolen clothing, and raincoats for winter-which is the rainy season. Formal wear is seldom needed. The women of Tijuana are fashion conscious and are always well dressed.

Religious Activities

Although Roman Catholicism is predominant among the general population, Tijuana has several Protestant churches and a Jewish Synagogue. However, no English-language services are available. Those wishing to attend services in the U.S. usually must cross the bor-

der before 9:00 am to avoid long lines on weekends.

Education

Most American children are enrolled in U.S. schools in the San Diego area. Parents often spend considerable time shuttling their children to and from afterschool activities.

Recreation & Entertainment

Because of Tijuana's proximity to the U.S., take advantage of the many recreational activities offered on both sides of the border. Although downtown San Diego is only a 25-minute drive from Tijuana, unpredictable waits at the border, varying from five minutes to one hour, make planning activities in the U.S. more complicated. Camping, fishing, hunting, swimming, and sailing take place on both sides of the border. The Tijuana Country Club has an 18-hole golf course that nonmembers may use for a nominal fee. Tijuana offers horse racing, dog racing, jai alai, and bullfights. San Diego has professional football, baseball, and indoor soccer teams.

The Tijuana Cultural Center offers the full range of theater arts, art galleries, exhibits, and musical events. A wide variety of theater and concerts are also available in San Diego. Located near the Cultural Center is the Rio de Tijuana Plaza-a large complex of department stores, boutiques, and specialty shops. Most Americans shop in San Diego. Tijuana has many excellent restaurants. Tijuana's nightlife consists of bars and hotels with live entertainment, several discotheques, and downtown bars designed for young U.S. tourists.

Other recreational activities include the San Diego Zoo, Wild Animal Park, and Sea World. Disneyland is an approximately three-hour drive from Tijuana.

Hermosillo

Hermosillo, though named for one of the early explorers of the region, is

in fact the "pretty little place" its name implies in Spanish. It is a city of modern houses, broad, tree-lined streets, pleasant parks, and several universities, with a population of nearly 700,000. The town is located near a river in the middle of the Sonoran desert, 800 feet above sea level, 180 miles south of Nogales, Arizona, and 60 miles inland from the Gulf of California.

Hermosillo is the hub of a small transportation network that provides the city with adequate bus, and air transportation north to the U.S. and south to central Mexico. Both Aeromexico and Mexicana offer daily flights to Mexico City, Guadalajara, Tijuana, Mexicali, and other destinations in Mexico. Tucson, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Houston are also served by non-stop flights from Hermosillo's international airport 7 miles west of town.

Thousands of Americans pass through the city en route to the seaside resorts of Bahia Kino and Guaymas/San Carlos on the shore of the Sea of Cortez, as well as to points farther south. Traditionally, the American colony was so small and well integrated into the local community that it was not recognizable as a group. However, the opening of a major Ford Motor Company plant, several maquiladora factories, and mining operations over the last two decades have expanded the size of the American community. This has had considerable influence on housing, schools, and social life in the community.

Hermosillo is the capital city of Sonora, the second-largest state of Mexico, which is part of the great southwest desert of the North American Continent. Geographically, the state has the same soil and climate as southern Arizona, New Mexico, western Texas, and the desert regions of California.

The relative prosperity of Sonora acts as a magnet to draw people here from other parts of Mexico (two of the state's largest cities-San Luis and Nogales-are situated on the

border and in the new Nogales consular district). The railroad passes through Hermosillo, providing freight service from Mexico City and Guadalajara to the U.S.

Sonora's relative prosperity has, as noted, been attracting new residents from other parts of Mexico, fostering a substantial middle class. Visitors are often astonished by the number of new cars and pickups on the roads, by the well-dressed matrons and teenagers thronging the sidewalks in town, and by the often elegant houses in the better residential neighborhoods.

The climate is hot and dry, yet healthful.

Summer, from May to October, brings daily temperatures of more than 100°F; rainfall averages less than 8 inches a year concentrated in two rainy seasons, one in July and August, the other in December and January. Winter months, from November to April, are cool and spring-like. Sinaloa, which includes the world famous beach resort of Mazatlan, has a more moderate climate, with considerably more rainfall.

The consular district, which covers the southern two-thirds of Sonora and all of the State of Sinaloa, has increased rapidly with respect to both population and output. The economy is farm based in the large, irrigated lowlands of western and southern Sonora, and rain-fed agriculture in Sinaloa. Cotton and wheat are the most important crops. The region is also a major producer of cattle, shrimp, poultry, oranges, grapes, and winter vegetables. Industrial output is increasing, and copper mining has always been important. The district has traditionally had close economic ties with Arizona.

Utilities

Electric service is the same as in the U.S.: 110 volt, 60 hertz, AC. Voltage regulators or surge suppressors to protect televisions, stereos, and computers from electrical surges are available locally. However,

houses are not grounded for electrical purposes like they are in the U.S., so surge suppressors may not offer adequate protection. In order to better protect expensive electrical equipment, especially during the rainy season, it is advisable to unplug the equipment when not in use and to not use the equipment in the middle of thunder and lightning storms.

Food

Hermosillo is home to American chains like Wal-Mart SuperCenter, Sam's Club, and Costco, as well as Mexican chain super center-type stores. Many American products and brand names can be found in these stores, whether they are manufactured in the U.S. or in Mexico. However, those products made in the U.S. may not be routinely stocked by the store, so it is best to stock up on desired goods when you find them in local stores.

Frozen foods are readily available, and low-calorie, low-fat products are becoming more widely available. Pasteurized milk (whole and skim), cheeses, and heavy cream may be safely purchased in supermarkets.

City tap water is safe for bathing and cleaning, but not recommended for drinking.

It is advisable to disinfect fruits and vegetables before eating them. Disinfectant drops and powder are readily available in all local grocery stores.

Clothing

During the summer months, daytime temperatures can reach 115°F, and summer weight clothing is a must. Light-to medium-weight clothing is comfortable the rest of the year, with a sweater sometimes necessary on winter evenings. Heavy winter clothing is not needed. Formal social occasions are rare; most functions are informal.

Hermosillo currently has no large, American-style shopping malls. Although the city center has many shops with all varieties of shoes and clothing, many residents (Mexican

and American alike) go to Tucson for major shopping.

Supplies and Services

Housekeepers are available on apart-time or live-in basis. Wages are very reasonable in comparison to U.S. rates.

Gardeners are also available at a reasonable fee. Their services are generally needed every two weeks during the rainy season and less frequently for the remainder of the year.

Generally all services, including competent medical care, furniture design and construction, automobile and appliance repair, etc., can be found at lower than U.S. prices.

Education

Hermosillo is home to three large universities (one private and two public) as well as several smaller institutions of higher learning. The language of instruction in the public schools is Spanish, with English instruction introduced at the secondary level.

The Instituto Irlandes offers a bilingual program from prekindergarten through high school, with boys and girls in separate classes in the upper grades. The Instituto Mexicano Americano de Relaciones Culturales (IMARC) offers bilingual instruction, on the American model, from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. However, since the overwhelming majority of the students are native speakers of Spanish, the bilingual schools are not geared to students who enter with no knowledge of that language. While this does not seem to present too much difficulty at the preschool and kindergarten level, it could be problematic for children entering at a higher grade.

At the secondary level, the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (perhaps Mexico's best private university, with campuses across the country) has a college preparatory school (grades 10 and up) and offers the international baccalaureate program.

Sports

Although summer can be too hot, Hermosillo's climate during the rest of the year encourages a wide variety of outdoor sports. Swimming, tennis, hiking, and horseback riding are popular. There is a country club with an 18-hole golf course, various hunting clubs, a shooting and archery range, horse and auto racing facilities, and a Mexican winter-league baseball team.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The immediate vicinity of Hermosillo offers ample opportunity to explore the Arizona-Sonora Desert, with many petroglyph sites. To the east are the mountains of the Sierra Madre Occidental, which can offer some respite from the heat of the lower elevations. In the south of Sonora is the colonial town of Alamos.

For beach lovers, there are two options within about an hour and a half drive from Hermosillo. San Carlos (about 80 miles to the south), with a growing American community, has several resort hotels, two marinas, fine beaches, and a Club Med, as well as shops that carry articles from all over Mexico. Bahia Kino (about 70 miles to the west) is more of a traditional beach town, with a large fishing fleet and fewer tourist services. Mazatlan, in Sinaloa, is about eight hours away by car, but can also be reached by direct flights from Hermosillo, as can the resort areas of lower Baja California.

Los Mochis, in northern Sinaloa, is the western terminus of the Copper Canyon Railroad, which goes into the neighboring state of Chihuahua.

Entertainment

The entertainment scene, apart from the many movie theaters showing both English and Spanish language films, consists of small clubs with a variety of musical formats. Touring theater and

dance companies from around the country are often featured in the

Casa de Cultura, the Municipal Auditorium, or at the University of Sonora.

Matamoros

Matamoros is located on the south bank of the Rio Grande, about 20 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico. With Brownsville, its sister city in Texas, Matamoros forms a metropolitan area of around 600,000 inhabitants. Matamoros, the larger of the two cities, has more than 400,000 residents.

The Rio Grande Valley, or the Valle, as it is called locally, comprises a population of about 1.5 million and includes the city of Reynosa in Mexico (approximately 65 miles upriver from Matamoros), and the cities of Harlingen and McAllen in Texas. Gulf sea breezes temper the tropical climate. The temperature range in Matamoros varies from 78 to 98°F in July and 50 to 60°F in January. The rainfall varies from one half inch in March to five inches in September. Temperatures at mid-day in summer can range well above 90°F with high humidity. Spring and autumn days are mild and brilliant. Winter is sunny and warm, except for an occasional "norther" when temperatures can drop suddenly to near freezing.

The Matamoros and Reynosa areas are home to more than 250 border industries, or "maquiladoras" These factories import parts duty free into Mexico, assemble them, and send them back to the U.S. or other countries, again duty free. A wide range of U.S. and foreign companies have plants, including Zenith, General Motors, AT&T, and Converse, among others. The area also has a large "agribusiness" center.

Matamoros has a thriving tourist industry, providing facilities to American winter visitors and retirees. Thousands of college students spending spring break at nearby South Padre Island visit Matamoros during March of each year. Shopping and restaurants are among Matamoros' chief attractions.

Domestic Help

Maids, both live-in and daily, are available but the cost has risen due to competition in the labor market surrounded by the rapidly expanding maquiladora sector. Day maids earn \$15 to \$20 per day. Live-in maids are available but tend to be younger, less experienced, and requiring of more supervision.

Food

All food needs can be met at modern supermarkets in Brownsville and Matamoros. Local produce is of excellent quality. U.S. produce is abundant in Brownsville, and most vegetables are available fresh, year round. Seafood, especially gulf shrimp, is also of high quality. Matamoros city water is not potable but inexpensive, sterilized drinking water is readily available.

Clothing

Business dress is informal and sports wear is acceptable year round. During the summer, an open-necked shirt and jacket are popular. Light spring and fall weight clothing is worn during the short winter season, although occasional cold spells make heavier clothing practical for a few weeks each year. Few social events will require black tie or formal attire; black tie dress can be rented in Brownsville.

Religious Activities

Most faiths are represented in Brownsville, which has many Catholic or Protestant churches and a Synagogue. Although Roman Catholic churches predominate in Matamoros, congregations of evangelical and Protestant denominations also exist.

Education

There are no English schools in Matamoros. Public schools are available in Brownsville free of charge to dependents, but most dependents attend private schools in Brownsville. The cost per pupil of private education is \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year. A full range of classes and subjects is available to more



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Street in Mazatlan, Mexico

advanced students at The University of Texas Southwest College in Brownsville, which has a modern library with an excellent selection of periodicals and journals.

Recreation and Social Life

Most social activities revolve around civic organizations, business luncheons, Rotary, Lions, etc. The State of Tamaulipas organizes a cultural festival in the fall and the University of Texas at Brownsville offers cultural programs throughout the academic year.

The Texas Rio Grande Valley is becoming famous as a recreational area for winter and summer tourists. South Padre Island, about 25 miles from Brownsville, offers excellent swimming, surfing, sailing, and deep-sea fishing. Golf is popular and can be played year round at the numerous public and private courses. The Rio Grande Valley also offers restaurants and first run movies.

Mazatlán

Mazatlán is an old, Mediterranean-style port city on Mexico's west coast. Located 780 miles south of Nogales, Arizona, it is situated on a picturesque peninsula. At the harbor's entrance, the highest recorded

lighthouse in the Western Hemisphere, El Faro, rests atop one of Mazatlán's few hills. The city's history goes back to the early part of the 19th century, but its growth is relatively recent. The population numbers approximately 400,000 full-time residents, increased by large numbers of Americans and other tourists who visit throughout the year.

The weather in Mazatlán is excellent, particularly during the winter season, November through March. In these months, temperatures range from 85°F in the daytime to 65°F at night. The tropical summer, lasting from April to October, is hot and humid with frequent thunderstorms.

Mazatlán's economy is influenced most directly by the commercial fishing dock, which makes it a shrimp capital of the world, and by the Pacífico Brewery. Agriculture is also an important industry; the northern part of the State of Sinaloa has become the chief supplier of winter vegetables for the United States. Since Mazatlán is the biggest and busiest seaport between San Diego and Panama, U.S. Navy ships make it a port of call.

Mazatlán itself actually is more than 300 years old, but it was not

incorporated until 1837. A few remnants of the colonial section remain, and they can be seen on a walking tour of the town's streets and alleys.

Most foods are available, and prices are less than or compare favorably with U.S. prices. Fish and seafood abound. Drug store items are, generally, not expensive, but some items cost more than U.S. equivalents, and some cost less. Special medications should be brought from the U.S.

Schools for Foreigners

Mazatlán has no American schools, but the Instituto Anglo-American (grade one through high school) teaches in both English and Spanish. Enrollment is small, and American students are often the children of U.S. citizens who are part-time residents during the winter. Other schools attended by American children are ICO (Instituto Cultural de Occidente), a private, coeducational school run by Italian priests (grades one through 12); Colegio Remington (girls only, run by nuns for grades one through nine); and Colegio El Pacífico (nonsectarian, grades one through 12). Most American children in Mazatlán attend boarding schools in the U.S.

Recreation

Mazatlán's beaches are beautiful, and ocean temperatures seldom dip below 65°F; the surf is well-suited for swimming and surfing. North Beach and Las Gaviotas (the sea gulls) are considered the best spots. Fishing for marlin, sailfish, and other large fighters is popular. Hunters may move through the nearby foothills in search of duck, dove, goose, and quail. Mazatlán means "place of the deer" in the Nahuatl language, and deer still abound in the area.

The Club Campestre and El Cid both have fine golf courses, with memberships available. El Cid also has tennis courts and a swimming pool.

There are several air-conditioned theaters, a large baseball stadium, and a bullring in the city. Three

television channels and seven radio stations provide news and entertainment in Spanish. Social events are informal, but both the American and Mexican communities are active.

Mazatlán's pre-Lenten *carnaval* is famous throughout Mexico.

Mérida

The Yucatan is noted for the friendliness of its inhabitants and its impressive archeological remains. Home of the Maya, it is strewn with ruins and relics of their culture. Merida itself is built on the site of the old Mayan ceremonial center of T'Ho. The area has a long history of separatism from the rest of Mexico. The Yucatecan habits, culture, and outlook differ from those of the rest of the country. It is home to three million people, the majority of whom live in the state of Yucatan, with smaller populations in the States of Campeche and Quintana Roo. Merida's population exceeds 600,000 and is mostly of mixed Maya or Spanish descent. English is widely understood in the metropolitan areas. Thousands of American tourists visit the district annually. New resorts on the Caribbean coast have become increasingly popular with U.S. tourists.

Merida is about 19 miles from the sea and 25 feet above sea level. The climate is tropical, with average humidity of 72% year round. There are three seasons: rainy season, May through October with more than 80% of the 38 inches of annual rainfall; cool or winter season, November through February; and dry season, March and April. The average temperature in Merida ranges from 73 to 93°F in June and 64 to 83°F in January.

Supplies and Services

Electricity is the same as in the U.S. It is subject to spikes, so surge protectors are strongly recommended. Satellite and cable TV are available.

Domestic help is reasonably priced. Live-in as well as daytime or hourly help is available.

Local authorities are concerned with growing water and automobile pollution and are beginning to monitor growth and contamination.

Food

Food is readily available in the several large supermarket chains that operate in Merida. The central market downtown is also available for those who love chaos and olfactory challenges. Most U.S. goods are available, but sometimes irregularly. Locally all kinds of meats, fresh fruit, and vegetables can be found at reasonable prices.

Clothing

U.S. type clothing is available in Merida. There are a variety of local department store chains and small shops. These all carry some U.S. brands.

There are also a few upscale department stores that have recently been constructed. American made products can be more expensive than in the U.S. Locally made clothing can be of poorer quality than in the U.S., as well. Extra care should be taken with leather goods and clothing in storage to avoid the ravages of humidity and mildew.

Coat and tie or formal dress is rarely worn at work. Men wear slacks and a shirt. Women wear cotton or lightweight dresses.

Religious Activities

Both Catholic and Protestant services are found within the consular district. One Catholic parish offers English-language services on Sunday.

Education

There are two bilingual schools operating in Merida. One is a Catholic institution, which is open to all; the other is secular. Both are considered suitable up to junior high level. All other schools are conducted in Spanish. Most other private schools are run by Catholic religious orders.

Limited special education is available.

Recreation and Social Life

Tennis, fishing, boating and golf are common in the area. The Club Campestre has tennis courts and a swimming pool. Cancun and Merida both have 18-hole golf courses. The beach at Progreso, where cottages may be rented, is about a 20-minute drive by car. Scuba diving and snorkeling are popular at Isla Mujeres, Cancun and Cozumel. All sports equipment, including tennis balls, is expensive. Many people take their own.

Merida has a few air-conditioned movie theaters, a large baseball stadium, a bullring and a few small museums. Social life is informal. Membership to the Club Campestre, the Golf Club, the Rotary Club and the Lions Club is open. Members of the international community sponsor events from time to time. The International Women's Club is actively involved with charitable events.

Nearby attractions include the archeological sites at Uxmal, Chichen Itza, and Palenque, among others.

All kinds of sports, summer schools, and summer camps are available for children or youngsters of any age. These activities are, for the most part, organized by their schools or church communities. Merida has several parks, a zoo, and programs for children (in Spanish).

Nogales

Nogales has been a border pass through the mountains since the middle 1800s, with a U.S. Consulate first established in 1886. The Consulate was closed in 1970 but reopened in 1998. Visitors are often surprised after expecting sand hills and finding a mountainous and pleasant countryside instead. The name refers to a now disappeared stand of black walnut trees, although the hills are still covered with a native scrub oak. The river

valleys glisten with the leaves of huge cottonwoods, green in the summer and golden in the fall. The riverbeds are usually dry; but torrential summer rains often fill them to overflowing, closing roads and washing out bridges. The weather in the western deserts can be dramatic. Nogales is located 60 miles south of Tucson, Arizona and 140 miles to the north of Hermosillo, Sonora, on the U.S./Arizona-Sonora, Mexico border.

Long a vital entry point into the U.S. from western and northern Mexico, Nogales has grown in the past 20 years from a pleasant, small town to a booming factory town with growth fueled by NAFTA maquiladora factories that assemble primarily U.S. made parts into goods exported around the world. There are approximately 90 factories in Nogales and another 50 to 100 in other border communities along the Arizona/Sonora border. These factories have caused tremendous growth, with many residents of central and southern Mexico moving north to seek employment. These factories account for 35,000 jobs in Nogales and another 35,000 jobs elsewhere in the consular district. The produce industry has also grown tremendously with 60% of all winter produce consumed in the U.S. and Canada passing through Nogales, Sonora, and processed in Nogales, Arizona. Most of the produce comes from areas in Sonora and Sinaloa. Cattle ranching, mining, and small farms still comprise an important part of the economy of the region. Nogales is also a major border crossing for Americans going south for the winter into Mexico and to the Pacific beaches year round.

Sonora has traditionally been a relatively prosperous state with a well-developed middle class. The capital of Sonora, Hermosillo, is a bustling and growing commercial and industrial center of almost a million. Unofficial estimates put the population of Nogales at 250,000. Agua Prieta and San Luis Rio Colorado, two other important border cities in this consular district, are also large and growing. Puerto

Penasco, a shrimp fishing port and vacation destination for Arizonans located at the top of the Gulf of California, has become a major resort and residence for Americans. The history of northern Sonora is inextricably linked to that of Southern Arizona. It begins with Father Eusebio Kino, a Jesuit priest who first brought European farming ideas and Christianity to the region. The churches he established are still functioning and form a tour route for those interested in Spanish colonial churches. The pleasant towns that have grown up around these churches (two of which are in Southern Arizona) form the heart of the region. Commercial and family ties between Northern Sonora and Southern Arizona are very strong and make this a unique region united culturally and historically.

The climate has dramatic temperature changes but can usually be described in two phrases: warm and sunny in the day, cool at night. The summers are hot but the nights cool off. Winter nighttime temperatures dip into the 20s and 30s but the days usually warm up to the 60s and 70s. It is very dry except in the summer rainy season in July and August. Shorts and tee shirts are the summer dress. Sweaters and jackets are appropriate for the winter. It snows on occasion, although old timers say less and less due to the increase in cars and concrete.

Utilities

Electricity is the same as in the U.S. (110v, 60 hertz, AC). Voltage regulators or surge protectors are recommended for sensitive, electronic equipment. Satellite and cable are both options for television.

Food

All food needs can be met at modern supermarkets on either side of the border. Nogales, Sonora, water is not potable; but drinking water can be purchased at reasonable cost and is plentiful.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available at a reasonable cost. Live-in maids, as well as daytime or hourly help are available.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholic churches predominate in Nogales, Sonora. However, there are small Protestant congregations and both Catholic and Protestant denominations may be found in Nogales, Arizona. Jewish and other religious communities are very limited in "ambos nogales." However, Tucson has a large and active Jewish community, as well as other religious groups.

Education

Although there are a few, self-described bilingual schools in Nogales, Sonora, instruction in these and all schools is predominantly in Spanish.

Recreation & Social Life

Tennis courts and bowling alleys are available in Nogales, Sonora. Golf is popular and can be played throughout the year at several public and private courses in Nogales, Arizona.

Entertainment in Nogales, Sonora and Arizona is limited mainly to dining; although there is also a modern movie theater in Nogales, Sonora. Southern Arizona, especially Tucson, offers a limitless variety of city and country cultural and shopping opportunities. Tucson has an opera, active theatre, a ballet, and a variety of sports events. Northern and central Sonora offer beaches, beautiful countryside, and Kino mission churches.)

Nuevo Laredo

Nuevo Laredo combines the convenience of shopping in the U.S. with the attractions of living abroad. Nuevo Laredo is the most important port of entry on the U.S.-Mexican border for shipping and for travelers to the interior of Mexico. Of its estimated 300,000 inhabitants, only about 10% speak English.

Nuevo Laredo is located on a gently rolling plain, with mountains skirting the southwestern boundary of the consular district. Brush, cactus and scrub vegetation abounds, as do more tropical plants. The city itself is 542 feet above sea level; and the climate is sunny and hotter than Washington, D.C., but much less humid. The daily temperature range averages 78 to 96°F in August and occasional high temperatures in winter are not uncommon. The average daily temperature range in January is 44 to 64°F. Annual rainfall is 18 inches. May, June, and September usually have the greatest rainfall.

Food

Adequate food supplies are available locally and at supermarkets in Laredo, Texas. Gourmet food items are not readily available.

Clothing

During the hot season, lightweight clothing is a must. Office attire for men is usually the traditional Mexican guayabera or sport shirts with slacks. Suits are worn occasionally. The guayabera is also appropriate for informal evening wear. Women wear cotton or linen dresses, blouses, skirts, and slacks. Men often wear sport shirts and slacks at social gatherings while women favor airy cottons. For more formal occasions, men wear black or white dinner jackets; women may wear either long or short cocktail dress in a wide array of fabrics and styles. During winter, custom occasionally requires formal attire (dinner jackets for men, gowns for women). Fall and spring weight suits, dresses, overcoats, and rain boots are used during winter when temperatures can drop into the 30s. All wearing apparel needed for this climate is available in Laredo, Texas.

Supplies and Services

Necessary supplies and services are available in both Laredos. In Laredo, Texas, there are two large shopping centers featuring nationally known department stores and boutiques.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion in both Laredos. Most Christian denominations are represented in Laredo, Texas and services in English are available.

Education

Schools in Nuevo Laredo are overcrowded and instruction is in Spanish. Children are usually enrolled in public or private schools in Laredo, Texas. Full curriculums for undergraduate and some graduate level degrees are offered at Texas A&M International University and Laredo City College.

Puebla

Puebla, capital of the state whose name it bears, is a city of over one million about 75 miles southeast of Mexico City. Its official name is *Heróica Puebla de Zaragoza*, in honor of Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza, who defeated the French here in 1862 in their attempt to establish Maximilian's empire.

Aside from the renown for its cotton mills and onyx quarries, and as a major commercial center, Puebla is known for the colorful Talavera tiles which adorn its buildings and churches. The cathedral on the main plaza, built during the 16th and 17th centuries, is one of the finest in Mexico. The city also claims to have the oldest theater in North America.

Puebla has several other notable buildings, among them the 340-year-old Biblioteca Polafoxiana, with 50,000 priceless volumes; the regional museum, dating from the 17th century; and the university founded in 1578 by Jesuit priests.

Founded by the Spanish in 1532 as Puebla de los Ángeles, the city early served as a link between the coast and the capital. It was taken by Winfield Scott in the Mexican War in 1847.

OTHER CITIES

ACAPULCO, in Guerrero State, southwest Mexico, is a fashionable international resort on the Pacific Ocean. Its fine natural harbors, surrounded by cliffs and promontories, once served as a base for Spanish explorers. Acapulco played an important role in the development of the Philippines between the years 1565 and 1815, when Spanish galleons made commercial voyages across the Pacific to Manila. After Mexican independence was achieved, the city lost its status as a major port. In the 1920s, a road was constructed to Mexico City, and Acapulco became a tourist center and, again, an important port during World War II. This city of 462,000, whose full name is *Acapulco de Juárez*, stretches out along bays and cliffs, and its many fine beaches attract thousands of swimmers and sunbathers. In the evenings, high divers can be seen at La Quebrada, performing for enthusiastic crowds. Acapulco's economy is heavily dependent on tourism, with the copra (coconut oil) industry second in importance. In its amphitheater, overlooking the sea, the city plays host to art exhibits and to musical and theatrical productions. A historic spot in Acapulco is San Diego Fortress (*Fuerte de San Diego*), where Mexico's last battle for independence was fought. The star-shaped fortress, which once defended the town and harbor against pirate raids, is now a museum. A summer school for foreigners, founded in 1955, provides tourists with courses on Mexican arts and archaeology.

AGUASCALIENTES is the capital of Aguascalientes State, 100 miles northwest of León in central Mexico. The city (whose name means "hot waters" in Spanish) is also known as "the perforated city," because of its extensive network of tunnels. These were dug in pre-Columbian times and have never been fully explored. City records date to 1522, when Cortés sent Pedro de Alvarado to conquer western territories; native tribal



Pyramid in Chichen Itza, Mexico

Courtesy of Andrea Henderson

attacks forced Alvarado to retreat. The city was founded in 1575 by a royal decree of Philip II, surviving in the early years as a wilderness outpost besieged by Indians. Modern Aguascalientes is a railroad center, known also for its orchards and vineyards, and for the ranches which breed bulls for *corridos*. An important native industry is drawn linen work. The broad-based economy includes railroad repair shops, textile factories, potteries, tobacco factories, and distilleries. Aguascalientes boasts lovely churches, especially San Juan de Dios, San Francisco, and La Parroquia; they contain excellent examples of colonial art. The annual San Marcos Fair features fireworks, parades, and an art exposition. Rail, highway, and air connections from Aguascalientes to other areas are good. The city has an estimated 643,360 residents.

CAMPECHE, the capital of Campeche State, is situated on the west coast of the Yucatán peninsula, 550 miles east of Mexico City. The largest city between Villahermosa and Mérida, Campeche is the first landing place (1517) in Mexico of Cortés and his *conquistadors*. Founded as a settlement by Don Francisco de Montejo in 1540, the old city wall and remains of 11 fortifications built in the 17th and 18th

centuries for protection from pirate raids attract tourists. Today, the city produces alligator leather and Panama hats (*campeche* is the Spanish word); logwood, mahogany, cigars, rice, sugarcane, tobacco, and cotton are exported. A university was founded here in 1756. Campeche's population is currently 217,000.

CHIHUAHUA, 100 miles south of the Rio Grande River in the northern region, is a state capital with a population of about 670,000. It was first settled in the 1500s, prospering late in the colonial period as a mining center. Chihuahua was twice captured by American forces during the short but fierce Mexican-American War of 1846–48. The city enjoys good transportation links to other areas, allowing easy access to its university, as well as to adjacent cattle ranches. Notable public buildings here number among Mexico's architectural treasures. The church of San Francisco is arguably the best example of 18th-century Mexican architecture. Chihuahua's plaza contains a monument to the religious leader, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, and his companions in the war for independence (1821), who were executed here. Center of a rich silver-mining, timber, and ranching district, the city is famous for the *chihuahuitas* (miniature dogs) bred in the area. From Chihuahua, inter-

esting side trips may be taken to the old mining town of Aquiles Sérdan, and to Aldama in the center of an important fruit-producing area.

CIUDAD OBREGÓN is located in northwest Mexico, 65 miles southeast of Guaymas. Situated in the fertile Yaqui Valley, the city is known for its contemporary buildings and complexes of storage elevators, grain mills, cotton gins, and numerous other industries. Agricultural products grown in the valley are irrigated by the Alvaro Obregón Dam, 35 miles northeast of the city. Cotton, wheat, rice, sesame, and corn are grown here. Boating and fishing are possible in the area. Sportsmen come here to hunt duck, dove, and quail; turkey, wild boar, deer, and bear may be found in the mountains to the east. Ciudad Obregón's population is 181,700.

COYOACÁN, a southern suburb of Mexico City, was settled by Cortés in 1521 and was the initial seat of Spanish government in New Spain. Cortés' palace stands in the city's main square and is now the Palacio Municipal. Russian communist leader Leon Trotsky was assassinated here in 1940. Landmarks include the Dominican Monastery (built in 1530) and the Church of San Juan Bautista (built in 1583). The Frida Kahlo Museum, the house occupied for more than a quarter-century by the artist and her husband, muralist Diego Rivera, is located here. Coyoacán's current population is approximately 360,000.

Located 120 miles south of Mexico City is **CUERNAVACA**, an internationally famous resort, with facilities for golf, horseback riding, tennis, and water sports. Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés seized the Indian settlement here in 1521; it later became a seat of a marquesate and finally, a state capital. Cortés' palace was decorated with murals by Diego Rivera (1886–1957) in 1929. Along with the Franciscan cathedral and nearby ruins (at Alpuyecá, 23 miles southwest), the city is a fascinating tourist stop today. Cuernavaca's Borda Gar-

dens—Emperor Maximilian’s retreat—has attracted many wealthy Mexicans and foreigners; the mansion was built by José de la Borda, who made his fortune in silver mining in the Taxco area. Besides tourism, agriculture and industry are important. Crops include fruit, corn, beans, and wheat. Various plants, mills, and factories constitute the industrial base. Furniture, fine silver, and leather goods may be purchased here; on market days, Indians sell their wares in the streets and plazas. There is a university here, and a modern expressway links the area with Mexico City. Cuernavaca’s approximate population is 338,000.

Situated at the base of the Sierra Madre Occidental Mountains, 30 miles from the Gulf of California, **CULIACÁN** (Culiacán Rosales) served as a base for Spanish expeditions in the early colonial era. The center of an important agricultural area, the city’s surrounding farms raise corn, sugarcane, tobacco, and many varieties of fruit, which are irrigated by a sophisticated water system. Culiacán’s location on the west-coast artery of the Pan-American Highway provides outstanding transportation for its approximately 307,000 residents.

DURANGO (officially called Victoria de Durango), an important political and religious center in early history, is located in northwest-central Mexico, 250 miles north of Guadalajara. Situated at an altitude of 6,314 feet on a level plain formed by foothills of the Sierra Madre Occidental, Durango is in a region known for its rich iron, gold, and silver deposits. Irrigated by surrounding mountain streams and by the water of the Río Tunal, the area produces cotton, corn, barley, and wheat; it is also a lumbering center. Several industries are located in the city, including cotton and wool mills, glassworks, iron foundries, sugar refineries, flour mills, and tobacco factories. Durango is the capital of Durango State, and was founded by Don Francisco de Ibarra in 1563. The main plaza, with an attractive garden, is the site of thrice-weekly

band concerts. Durango has also been the scene of location filming for some Hollywood studios; a number of the movie sets are permanent fixtures here. Durango’s population is about 258,000.

GUANAJUATO, the capital of Guanajuato State in central Mexico, was founded in 1554 in the Cañada de Marfil (“ivory ravine”). It is a city of narrow, steep, winding, cobblestone streets (some with rough stone steps), veined underneath with silver-mine shafts. For a while, the mine at La Valenciana, high above the town, filled the silver vaults of Spain. Silver, gold, and lead deposits are still being mined nearby. Guanajuato has so many important colonial churches and buildings—many showing a Moorish influence brought by the Andalusians who were among Guanajuato’s early settlers—that the city has been declared a colonial monument. The city, now home to the International Cervantes Festival each spring, figured prominently in the wars and revolutions of the 19th and early 20th centuries because of its geographical location. The royalist garrison of Alhóndiga de Granaditas, originally a granary in Guanajuato, was besieged and captured by Hidalgo y Costilla at the outbreak of the war against Spain. Guanajuato is a resort center today. The painter Diego Rivera was born here in 1886, and his house (with sketches for murals) is now a museum. Running nearly the entire length of the main street of Guanajuato is the Calle Subterráneo, an underground road which was constructed after a devastating flash flood in 1905. The University of Guanajuato was established there in 1945. Guanajuato’s estimated population is 141,215.

GUAYMAS, located in northwest Mexico 90 miles southwest of Hermosillo, is one of the country’s best seaports. Situated on the Gulf of California, Guaymas was originally settled by Indians in 1760. The settlement was a Spanish-Mexican free port and opened to common trade in 1841. Guaymas is actually two communities; the city, with its

shrimp docks, freighters, and tankers in the harbor, is separated from the resort area along Bocochoibampo Bay by a hilly peninsula. Swimming, skin diving, water-skiing, tennis, hunting, and horseback riding are popular resort activities. The city is also popular among fishermen. Big runs of marlin and sailfish usually occur in late June, July, and August. The Fiesta de la Pesca (Fishing Festival) is held in May; an international fishing tournament is held in July. San Carlos, about 13 miles northeast, is another popular vacation center. In 2000, Guaymas had an estimated population of 130,000.

Situated in a central Mexican farming district known for strawberries, **IRAPUATO** is 140 miles east of Guadalajara. A rapidly expanding industrial center, Irapuato was founded in 1547 and was the scene of many battles during the colonial era. The city’s central mall, a renovated shopping area surrounding the plaza and cathedral, prohibits motor vehicles. The current population of Irapuato is 440,000.

IXTAPALAPA, a southeastern suburb of Mexico City, was once a flourishing Aztec town. The Aztecs lighted new fires at the beginning of each 52-year cycle atop nearby Cerro de Estrella (Star Hill). The fertile land surrounding Ixtapalapa produces corn, alfalfa, wheat, beans, and vegetables. A number of industries are becoming an important economic asset. Ixtapalapa has a population exceeding 1.2 million.

JALAPA (Enríquez), capital of Veracruz State, is situated 150 miles east of Mexico City, just a few miles inland from the Bay of Campeche. Built on the fifth tier of a hill called Macuiltepec at an altitude of 4,500 feet, the city was once a Spanish stronghold and a stagecoach stop. Today, Jalapa is a mountain resort and an important commercial center for coffee and tobacco. Much of the city’s colonial atmosphere is evident in the red tile roofs, balconies, carved doors, and window grills along the narrow, cobblestone streets. In contrast, modern build-



View of Acapulco, Mexico

Courtesy of Paul Droste

ings line wide streets in the newer section of town. Often called the “Flower Garden of Mexico,” Jalapa is known for its mild climate. The University of Veracruz, founded here in 1944, has a well-known dance company and symphony. The estimated population is about 212,000.

LA PAZ is situated on La Paz Bay about 90 miles north of the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula, and 720 miles south of San Diego, California. With fine port facilities, La Paz is the capital of Baja California Sur State as well as the commercial center of the area. Isolation prevented permanent settlement of La Paz for three centuries; the area’s only regular inhabitants were privateers who dropped anchor in the bay. The Spanish finally settled La Paz in 1811. Mining and pearl diving provided growth and the city soon replaced Loreto as the territorial capital. Both industries declined about 1930, and La Paz faded until it was rediscovered by tourists and sportsmen. Now, La Paz boasts a growing number of fine resorts and fleets of pleasure craft. The city is linked to the Mexican mainland by air-conditioned, automobile-passenger ferries. Luxury crafts make the overnight run from Mazatlán six times weekly; sailings are twice

weekly from Topolobampo near Los Mochis. Flights regularly depart from the jet-capacity airport. La Paz’s population is about 196,000.

LEÓN, also in Guanajuato State, was once the second largest city in Mexico. Founded in 1576, it was almost washed away by floods (most notably in 1888), diminishing its prominence. A dam was later built as protection from such disasters. León lies in a river valley on the main rail line between Mexico City and El Paso, Texas, and is a commercial, agricultural, and mining center with a population of over one million. It is known especially for its production of gold and silver embroidery and silver-trimmed leather goods. Steel products, textiles, and soap are manufactured in the city, which contains tanneries and flour mills. The area also produces serapes, spurs, and knives. Most of León’s buildings are of colonial architecture. Adding to the charm of the city are flowering plazas, fine old portals around the central square, and the colorful market. Cathedrals and churches are of additional interest, and sulphur baths are nearby.

MANZANILLO, with a population of 124,000, is Mexico’s leading Pacific port. Situated in the south-

western part of the country, the city is 350 miles west of Mexico City and 130 miles southwest of Guadalajara. A bronze bell is rung from a high point west of the city to announce approaching vessels. Manzanillo has a spacious waterfront, and narrow streets ascend the hillside of the city. The tropical climate allows the banana and coconut plantations that line the shoreline to flourish. Manzanillo is a haven for fishermen (especially from November through March) who flock here to catch sailfish, marlin, red snapper, yellow-tail, shark, and other tropical varieties. Skin diving and water-skiing are among the popular water sports. The best still-water beaches are near Bahía de Santiago, eight miles north. Beaches near Coco and Las Ventanas have heavy surf and strong currents. The beach close to Cuyutlan, about 26 miles southeast, is known for the “green wave,” a mountainous swell that crests during April or May.

The city of **MEXICALI**, at the northern extremity of Baja California State, is adjacent to Calexico, California. It is a duty-free port, with customs offices open 24 hours. Irrigation programs have helped this desert region to flourish. Mexicali is now a focus for commerce, and also has gained wealth and note as a gaudy border resort. The city market, in an arcaded building, sells everything from handicrafts to food. A university is located here. The city is accessible by highway, railroad, and air from the southwestern United States and from many points in Mexico. The population is currently about 765,000.

MORELIA, 150 miles west of Mexico City, is a major intellectual and art center of about 620,000 residents. The country’s oldest institution of higher learning, Colegio San Nicolás, is located here, as are a classic baroque cathedral and colonial governor’s palace. Since the late 1500s, Morelia has also been Michoacán State’s capital and agricultural hub, processing the vegetables and cattle grown nearby. An unusual three-mile-long aqueduct

was built near Morelia in 1785 for famine assistance. Transportation here is good.

NEZAHUALCÓYOTL is Mexico's second largest municipality after Mexico City, located directly east of the Federal District (Distrito Federal). This suburb of approximately 2.5 million is tied to Mexico City by a highway and shared bus lines; its residents are greatly dependent on the capital for their jobs. A new city in Mexican terms, Nezhualcóyotl was marshland, considered uninhabitable, at the beginning of the 20th century. However, the tremendous growth of the Federal District's population made the area attractive by the late 1940s. The agglomeration of numerous area cities formalized municipal administration in 1963.

OAXACA, the capital of Oaxaca State, is situated at an altitude of 5,000 feet in a semi-tropical valley, surrounded by the summits of the Sierra Madre del Sur, 230 miles south of Mexico City. Once the center of the Mixtec and Zapotec civilizations, Oaxaca was founded as an Aztec garrison post in 1486 and was conquered by the Spanish in 1521. Oaxaca is the center of a noted handicrafts market; the area produces leather goods, hand-loomed cottons, tempered machetes and daggers, and carved idols. The nearby village of San Bartolo Coyotepec is known for its black pottery; the towns of Teotitlán and Ocotlán are weaving and pottery centers. Oaxaca is a mixture of colonial and modern periods and has a great many 16th-century buildings. The city's market is colorful on Saturdays when the Indians visit town to sell their merchandise. Original costumes of the state are worn here during July and December fiestas. Guides in the city are available for tours to nearby Monte Albán (a major religious city, with ruins of the Zapotec Indians), Mitla, and Zaachila. Oaxaca's population is about 170,000.

A major manufacturing city, **ORIZABA** is situated at an altitude of 4,211 feet in eastern Mexico, 150

miles east of Mexico City. The 18,000-foot volcano, Citlaltépetl, looms over the far reaches of the landscape here. Once an Aztec garrison post, Orizaba was chartered as a city in 1774. Today, it has some of the country's largest cotton mills. Other industries include breweries, cement plants, marble quarries, and coffee and fruit plantations. There are also important textile centers in the nearby towns of Río Blanco, Ciudad Mendoza, and Nogales. The city was nearly leveled by a strong earthquake in August 1973, but has since been rebuilt. Orizaba has a pleasant climate and an estimated population of 125,000.

Founded by the Spanish in 1534, the city of **PACHUCA** is the center of an area that produces about 15 percent of the world's silver. The capital of Hidalgo State in central Mexico, Pachuca is 50 miles north of Mexico City at an altitude of 8,150 feet. The surrounding hills are extensively tunneled and heaped with slag piles; smelters and ore-reduction plants are also located in the area. Landmarks of interest in Pachuca are the Church of San Francisco (built in 1596) and the Monument to Independence. There is also a university, founded in 1869. The mining town of Mineral del Monte overlooks Pachuca, at a distance of about seven miles. It has narrow, almost vertical cobblestone streets and houses. Pachuca's population is about 110,000.

POZA RICA is Mexico's chief petroleum-producing center. Located 150 miles northeast of Mexico City, the city pipes crude oil and gas to refineries in distant cities. Oil derricks, refineries, storage tanks, and oil wells dot the landscape around Poza Rica. The city itself features wide boulevards, modern buildings, and a population of about 196,000. Eleven miles south of Poza Rica is the ceremonial city of El Tajin, which reached its peak about A.D. 800. The city is accessible by highway and is served by Mexico's domestic airlines.

PUERTO VALLARTA, a coastal town in west-central Mexico, 100

miles west of Guadalajara, is a thriving resort combining a scenic locale with extensive recreational facilities. Situated on the Bahía de Banderas, Puerto Vallarta's older buildings with red tile roofs on narrow, stony streets are in counterpoint with more modern structures on the upper slopes of the mountains that surround the bay. Popular daytime activities include swimming and surfing at nearby beaches, deep-sea fishing, tennis, golf, and horseback riding. Hunting for deer, quail, iguana, and jaguar is excellent in the mountains to the east. Aquatic sports fishing is also extremely popular in Puerto Vallarta. Sight-seeing craft are available along the shoreline, and boats for sport fishing may be chartered. Puerto Vallarta's nightlife is lively, and includes nightclubs, hotel bars, and discotheques. Cruise ships stop here regularly; a ferryboat service operates twice weekly between Puerto Vallarta and Cabo San Lucas, at the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula. The city is a major port through which bananas, coconut oil, hides, and fine woods are exported. The current population is about 183,700.

QUERÉTARO lies in a valley 160 miles northwest of Mexico City at an altitude of 5,900 feet. The capital of Querétaro State, the city was already an Otomí Indian settlement before the Spaniards discovered the New World, and was absorbed as part of the Aztec Empire in the 15th century. Captured by the Spanish in 1531, Querétaro was the headquarters for Franciscan monks who established missions in Central America and California. Emperor Maximilian was executed here on June 19, 1867. Querétaro today is known for its exquisite parks, squares, and gardens. An aqueduct, built by the Spanish more than 200 years ago, is still in use. Opals are mined in the area and sold by sidewalk vendors. There are several churches of interest in Querétaro. A university, founded here in 1775, was elevated to its present status in 1951. Querétaro is the site of one of Mexico's oldest and largest cotton factories. The factory also produces

textiles, pottery, and processes food crops grown near the city. Querétaro's population is about 640,000.

SALTILLO is the capital and leading industrial city in Coahuila State. It lies at an altitude of 5,244 feet in a broad valley surrounded by imposing mountains, about 660 miles north of Mexico City. Founded in 1575, Saltillo is a modern city of 577,000 residents, but retains much of its Spanish colonial heritage. In the early part of the 17th century, Saltillo was headquarters for explorations to the northern part of the country. Between 1824 and 1836, it was the capital of a territory that included present-day Texas northward to the region of Colorado. Saltillo's altitude and dry climate make it a popular summer resort. Golf, tennis, swimming, polo, and hunting are available. Saltillo produces textiles in its numerous mills, and is especially known for the serapes woven here in brilliant hues and striking patterns. Gold, silver, lead, and coal mines are in the area. Educational institutions include the 15,000-student University of Coahuila, an institute of technology, an agricultural college, and the Institute for Iberoamerican Studies. Saltillo's market sells local products and handicrafts.

SAN LUIS POTOSÍ, a major industrial center, is located 250 miles northwest of Mexico City in an agricultural region. Founded as a Franciscan mission in 1583, the city was twice the seat of the national government under Juárez, in 1863 and 1867. The economy of San Luis Potosí depends mainly on the production of gold, silver, and industrial metals. A number of other industries are located here. Livestock raising is important, and hides, tallow, and wool are exported. Some of Mexico's richest silver mines are located in the city. The city is also a railroad hub and distribution center. Landmarks in San Luis Potosí include several notable churches and a cathedral. Its university, established in 1859, was elevated to university status in 1923. A pedestrian mall, with some of the

city's finest shops, is located on Hidalgo Street. The population of San Luis Potosí is 670,000.

A seaport and petroleum center, **TAMPICO** is located in east-central Mexico on the north bank of the Río Pánuco, six miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico and about 200 miles northeast of Mexico City. The city developed around a monastery founded in 1532. It was abandoned in 1683 following its destruction by pirates, and resettled again in 1823. Tampico today is a transportation center and one of Mexico's principal seaports. Exports include oil, copper ore, sugar, coffee, hides, livestock, and agricultural products. Oil tanks and refineries extend for miles along the south bank of the river. The city is also a tourist center and seaside resort known for its hunting, golfing, and fishing. The popular Miramar Beach is nearby. Tampico's current population is about 295,000.

TAXCO (formerly called Taxco de Alarcón), situated 50 miles southwest of Mexico City, is a world-famous silver capital. Perhaps the oldest mining center on the continent, it was originally an Indian town called Tlacho in the 1400s. Spanish conquest a century later brought silver-mine development, which has been constant to this day. Taxco, with some 60,000 residents, treasures its colonial past and atmosphere to the extent that the entire city has been declared a national monument. New construction must conform to old architectural styles; even the cobblestone streets may not be altered. The charm of this community has brought tourists from all over the world to sight-see and to buy unique handmade silver items from countless shops and vendors. Sundays in Taxco are market days. Indians sell their wares in the plaza, where licensed guides are available. The city's many spectacular fiestas draw visitors from across the country. Eighteenth-century landmarks include the magnificent Church of Santa Prisca and Sebastián—a richly decorated edifice built by José de la Borda, one of Taxco's most cel-

ebrated and prosperous citizens; Figuera House, finished in 1767 and restored in 1943 as an artist's studio; and Humbolt House (Casa de Villanueva), a restored Moorish-inspired masterpiece. Built on a hill in the middle of the Sierra Madre Mountains, Taxco is considered a difficult city for drivers. Its narrow, twisting streets—often without street signs—encourage use of the plentiful taxis, as well as leisurely walking.

TEPIC is located near Mexico's west coast, about 110 miles northwest of Guadalajara at the foot of an extinct volcano, Sängangüey. Dating back to the 16th century, Tepic's isolated position contributed to its slow development. Today, it is a fascinating combination of old and new, with busy streets and broad plazas. Tobacco is grown on plantations in the area and processed in local factories. Processing plants, refineries, and rice mills are located in Tepic. Several shops in the city offer Indian handicrafts. The cathedral in Tepic, built about 1750, has two Gothic towers. Ingenio de Jala Falls, which flow only in the rainy season, are in this area; El Salto, a beautiful waterfall, is west of the city. Tepic, with an estimated population of 305,000, is the capital of Nayarit State.

The commercial city of **TOLUCA** is 35 miles west of Mexico City at an altitude of 8,500 feet. Founded in 1530, it is, today, a community with many beautiful gardens, cooler in climate than Mexico City because of its higher elevation. Toluca produces dried meats, sausage, wine, dairy products, and native handicraft. The city's industries include brewing and distilling, textile manufacturing, and food processing. The extinct volcano, Nevada de Toluca, towers above the city 27 miles to the southwest. At 15,000 feet, its peak is snow-capped most of the year; the beautiful Lake of the Moon and Sun in the crater are formed by melting snow. With a guide, it is possible to drive to the top of the volcano and then down into the crater. Also near Toluca are several interesting Indian villages. Toluca, whose for-

mal designation is Toluca de Lerdo, has a population of 666,000. The city is the capital of México State.

One of Mexico's chief ports, **VERACRUZ** (full name is Veracruz Llave) is situated on the Gulf of Mexico, 260 miles east of Mexico City. The original settlement, Mexico's oldest, was founded in 1519 by Cortés and named La Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz (Rich Town of the True Cross). The present city and port date from 1599. Veracruz was the principal Mexican port for Spanish trade fleets from the 16th through 18th centuries, even though it was frequently sacked by pirates. The city was captured twice by the French, in 1838 and 1861, and by U.S. troops under Winfield Scott in 1847. Veracruz is the main port of entry from eastern and gulf ports; its port facilities were expanded and modernized after 1946. The city is also the terminus of two railroads and produces most of the country's cigars. In town, Veracruz's old buildings on cobbled streets contrast with modern structures. The area of old lighthouses is particularly interesting. Swimming, fishing, and boating are popular here. Band concerts are regularly held at the Plaza de la Constitución. The Mexican Naval Academy is located in the nearby coastal village of Antón Lizardo. Villa del Mar and Mocambo beaches are just south of Veracruz; they are often muddy and, sometimes, sharks lurk offshore. Veracruz's population is 460,000.

XOCHIMILCO, situated on the western shore of the lake whose name it bears, is 10 miles south of Mexico City. The city is intertwined with numerous waterways which are all that remain of what once was an extensive lake. The famous *chinampas*, or "floating gardens," were originally rafts woven of twigs, covered with earth, and planted with flowers; the rafts usually contained small huts and moved through the lake with oars. Through time, the roots of the vegetation on the rafts attached themselves to the lake bottom, and each "garden" became an "island." The number of these artificial islands increased until they

formed a vast meadow interspersed with waterways. Flat-bottomed boats filled with flowers are today's floating gardens. Xochimilco is a prime tourist attraction, as well as a Sunday-outing spot for the natives. The Convent and Church of San Bernardino predate 1535. A campus of the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Mexico City is located in the city. The estimated population of Xochimilco is 170,000.

The mining town of **ZACATECAS** in central Mexico, 160 miles north-east of Guadalajara, is the capital of Zacatecas State. The town was built on the slopes of Cerro de la Bufa at an altitude of 8,075 feet. Zacatecas was taken by the Spanish in 1548 and vast quantities of silver found here were shipped to Spain. Until the 19th century, the mines around Zacatecas yielded one-fifth of the world's silver. Although surrounded by agricultural and cattle-raising regions, Zacatecas is principally a center for silver mining. Zacatecas is characterized by closely built houses, an aqueduct, stone steps, and steeply inclined streets, all of which give the city a medieval look. In contrast are the modern facilities housing the University of Zacatecas and its museums of anthropology and mining. Colonial buildings include the Municipal Palace, Theater of Calderón, and Church of Santo Domingo; an 18th-century convent is located in the suburb of Guadalupe. Zacatecas' population is 123,700.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Mexico is located in North America. It borders the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico between Belize and the U.S. and borders the North Pacific Ocean between Guatemala and the U.S. Its land mass covers approximately 1.9 million sq. kms, or slightly less than three times the size of Texas, and has approxi-

mately 9,330 sq. kms of beachfront property. In July 1999, the population was estimated at 100.3 million.

Within Mexico, there are 31 states and one Federal District-Distrito Federal, the country's capital. Independence Day for Mexico was September 16, 1810. It is celebrated widely throughout the country. The flag has three equal vertical bands of green, white, and red with a coat of arms-in the form of an eagle perched on a cactus with a snake in its beak-centered on a white band.

With a climate that varies from tropical to desert, the terrain ranges from high rugged mountains to low coastal plains and high plateaus to desert. Its lowest elevation point is at Laguna Salada at -10 meters. The highest point is the Volcano, Pico de Orizaba, at 5,700 meters.

Mexico has such natural hazards as tsunamis on the Pacific coast, volcanoes and destructive earthquakes at the center and south, and hurricanes on the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean coasts.

The main agricultural products are corn, wheat, soybeans, rice, beans, cotton, coffee, fruit, tomatoes, beef, poultry, dairy and wood products. The Mexican currency is in pesos. The June 2000 exchange rate is 9.84 pesos=US\$1; but periodic fluctuations occur.

Population

Mexico has an estimated population of 100 million. It is the world's most populous Spanish-speaking country and the second most populous Latin American country.

Contemporary Mexico is an urban society, with close to 70% of the total population living in cities and 23% (18 million) in the Mexico City metropolitan area. Mexico is also a young nation. Almost 40% of Mexicans are less than 15 years old. Nearly 50% of the population lives in the high plateau central region (14% of the country).

About two-thirds are “mestizo” (mixed indigenous and Spanish blood). Mexican customs and traditions are an intricate mixture of the Spanish and the indigenous. Mexico has largely avoided racial divisions by proudly considering its population a distinct Mexican race, celebrated as *Día de la Raza* on the October 12 annual holiday. Economic conditions determine social class.

Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion. Small groups of Protestant Christians are often related to and supported by U.S. churches.

Mexico began an aggressive and far reaching national family planning effort in 1973 to reduce the population growth rate from its all-time high of 3.5% then to 1% for the year 2000.

Spanish is the national language, spoken by 97% of the population. In some remote areas, only Indian dialects are spoken. The literacy rate is about 75%.

Public Institutions

The country's official name is the United Mexican States (*Estados Unidos Mexicanos*). The 1917 constitution provided for a federal republic, which is now composed of 31 states and the Federal District where the capital is located. The government is made up of executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

The military forces are small and have stayed out of politics since 1946. The Cabinet is politically important; from the 1930s through the 1990s, all Mexican presidents had come directly from the Cabinet. The President, elected for a single six-year-term (“sexenio”), proposes and executes laws that are passed by Mexico's congress; and has the power to govern by decree in many economic and financial areas. No Vice President is elected; if an incumbent dies or leaves office before a term has been completed, the Congress elects a provisional President.

Until the National Action Party's victory in Mexico's 2000 presidential election, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) had been in power since its founding in 1929. It had won every presidential election and controlled the Congress by overwhelming majorities.

The Congress is composed of two houses: a 128 seat Senate, and a 500 seat Chamber of Deputies. Through a complex formula of proportional representation, the opposition parties are guaranteed at least 150 seats in the Chamber.

The judicial system, which is based on Roman civil law, consists of a Supreme Court and Federal and local courts. The President appoints Supreme Court justices with Senate approval.

The unicameral legislatures of the state governments are headed by elected governors, who serve for six years. In the absence of a county government system, there are only local governments at the municipal level. Mayors and city council members are popularly elected for three year terms.

Arts, Science and Education

Mexico City is the cultural hub of the country. The arts play an important role in national life and are heavily subsidized by the government. Influences of indigenous cultures, the Spanish colonial period, as well as North American contemporary culture are evident in architecture, literature, and art.

The richness and diversity of Mexico's cultural heritage and reflected by murals of Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros; paintings by Rufino Tamayo; and writings by Octavio Paz, Juan Rulfo, Carlos Fuentes, and Carlos Monsiváis.

Major arts festivals include the Cervantino International Festival in Guanajuato and Mexico City; the Festival of Mexico City's Historical

Center; the International Music Festival in Morelia, Michoacán; the International Festival of Contemporary Art in León, Guanajuato; the Jose Limón International Dance Festival in Mazatlán; and the Festival of the Borders in Mexicali and Tijuana.

Nine U.S.-Mexico binational centers from Hermosillo to Merida promote understanding between “*Estadounidenses*” and Mexicans through the teaching of English to more than 30,000 Mexicans annually; teaching Spanish to foreigners; and sponsoring cultural and educational activities. Benjamin Franklin libraries, which receive support from the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy, are located in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey.

Education is highly centralized under the Federal Secretariat of Public Education (SEP). Mexicans who can afford to send their children to private schools almost always choose to do so. More than 90% are educated under public SEP auspices. Teachers comprise half of the Federal workforce. Some 70% of Mexicans complete only primary school; about 10% finish some higher education, including university, teaching training colleges, or two-year technical institutes. The main teacher training institutions are the *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional* and the *Escuela Normal Superior*.

Traditionally, Mexican students have attended public universities—the most prestigious of which was the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the Americas. Two-thirds of the older Mexican political leaders are UNAM alumni. Government-subsidized tuition fees of approximately two cents per year have limited UNAM's resources. An attempt by the rector to raise tuition to approximately US\$200 provoked a student strike that began in April 1999 and ended in February 2000 when police retook control of the UNAM installations.

Other options for public education include: the Instituto Politecnico Nacional, the alma mater of President Zedillo (the first President not to have graduated from UNAM); the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana with its three campuses in the Mexico City metropolitan area, and 31 autonomous universities, many of which have multiple campuses located in the various states.

Today, about 25% of university students are enrolled in private universities. The Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey has 27 campuses linked by satellite across the country. Other recognized institutions of higher learning are the four campuses of Iberoamericana University; Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM), where most of the technocrats from the Salinas and Zedillo administrations studied; and the University of the Americas in Puebla. El Colegio de México also has an excellent research reputation.

Given the interest among Mexicans in continuing their studies in the U.S., the U.S. Department of State has facilitated 12 U.S. educational advising centers across the country. A 13th center was inaugurated in Chiapas in January 2000. There are currently more than 9,600 Mexicans studying in the U.S., making Mexico the 10th largest source country for foreign students in the U.S.

Commerce and Industry

During the last 20 years, the Mexican economy has undergone a dramatic reorientation away from protectionist policies. After decades of import-substitution practices and extensive state intervention, Mexico is now cited as a model for countries intent on pursuing outward-looking and market-oriented economic policies. In 1994, Mexico entered into a comprehensive free trade agreement with the United States and Canada—the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA; and in 1999, Mexico concluded a similar agreement with the European

Union. Tariff levels, as high as 100% before Mexico's 1986 accession to GATT (now WTO), currently average about 4% on a trade-weighted basis. The Mexican Government's divestiture then of airlines, banks, the telephone company, mines, and steel plants were major elements of a successful privatization program that has continued. Reduction and elimination of subsidies made a major contribution toward transforming a fiscal deficit that had reached a height of 16.0% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1987. It resulted in a very manageable 1.2% deficit in 1998. By turning increasingly to private capital for such basic infrastructure investment as toll roads and ports, the government has been able to expand budget outlays on education, health, and agricultural development.

GDP growth for 2000 was at the start of the year set to be around 3.6%. Inflation closed 1999 at less than 13%, and the central bank targeted an inflation rate of 10% for 2000. At more than \$30 billion, in late 1999, foreign exchange reserves stand near their all-time high.

NAFTA significantly expanded U.S.-Mexican economic ties. In 1999, Mexico overtook Japan as the second largest trading partner of the United States. NAFTA also raised Mexico's attractiveness as a recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI). During the first five years of NAFTA, the country cumulatively received \$36 billion in FDI, twice the amount received during the five years prior to the signing of the accord. FDI reached \$10 billion in 1998 alone, and is on target to exceed that level by 2000. About 54% of that investment comes from the U.S., which is further evidence of the two countries, increasing commercial integration. Awards of major projects to American firms are common and American companies comment frequently on the greatly improved business climate.

Mexico has a number of strengths empowering it to embark on a period of sustained economic growth. It is the world's seventh

largest oil producer; is ranked ninth globally in proven petroleum reserves; and is well endowed with such minerals as silver-of which Mexico is the world's number one producer—copper, and zinc. Its manufacturing sector continues to grow. Automotive parts and textiles are its most significant products. Mexico is also an important producer of steel, glass, cement, and petrochemicals. Manufactured products account for about 90% of its exports compared to 80% in 1993 and only 14% in 1982. In-bond assembly and manufacturing is the fastest growing sector in Mexico contributing to export growth. It employs more than one million workers.

To achieve its ultimate economic aspirations, Mexico must overcome a 24-year history of economic collapses brought about mostly by fiscal mismanagement. Mexico exhibits extreme regional differences in development. The richer, more vibrant and dynamic North contains the country's most modern industrial plants and is tightly integrated with the U.S. economy. The poorer, lagging South contains outdated plants and an inadequate infrastructure. Central Mexico shows signs of both regions. There also are extreme differences within some sectors, particularly agriculture. Modern and efficient export-oriented industrial estates coexist with poor and inefficient subsistence farms. The banking sector, which collapsed with devaluation of the peso, is undercapitalized and leaves businesses with little access to credit. As a result, the formal economy cannot generate sufficient jobs to absorb all of the new entrants into the labor market, pushing many of them into the informal sector. Other problems plague income distribution, nutrition, health care, education, and public services. Forty million people live under the poverty line; 26 million live in abject poverty. Of Mexico's 7.5 million unionized workers, 3.5 million belong to the Confederation of Mexican Workers and 1.5 million to the Confederation of Independent Unions.

Transportation

Automobiles

Traffic and parking make power steering and automatic transmissions desirable. In Mexico City, drive with closed windows to keep out pollution. In the more temperate climates, such as Guadalajara, air-conditioning is optional but desirable.

General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, Nissan, Honda, and Volkswagen cars are made in Mexico. Adequate repair services are available for those makes and for the American Motors Jeep and Renault, which were made in Mexico until 1986. Basic model cars are the easiest to service. The cost of parts is slightly higher than in the U.S., and parts for late model American cars—even though a vehicle with the same model name is manufactured in Mexico—may not be available in Mexico and must be ordered from the U.S.

Some cars, especially large ones with optional equipment, can lose up to 25% of their power in Mexico City's high altitude. Tune vehicles for high altitude driving to ensure efficient operation.

Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), the national petroleum company, sells vehicle fuel. Two grades (both unleaded): Premium (93 octane) in a red pump and Magna (87 octane) in a green pump. Therefore, retain catalytic converters on your vehicle. A few stations in cities and along major highways sell diesel. Keep fuel tanks at least half full, as stations are fewer and farther between than in the U.S. and may occasionally run out. Fuel is sold by the liter (3.785 liters equal 1 gallon). Use a locking gas cap.

Gasoline prices in Mexico are established by authorities in Mexico City and not by individual franchises.

Since 1991, all cars manufactured in Mexico are equipped with catalytic converters to reduce vehicle emissions that contribute to an acute air pollution problem in the

Valley of Mexico—which includes Mexico City and adjacent areas in the State of Mexico.

Driving is on the right. Traffic congestion is common in cities. Mexico honors a valid drivers license, regardless of origin. Dependents who are more than 16 years of age can obtain a drivers permit for a small fee. The Mexican Department of Tourism provides a reliable highway emergency assistance patrol called "Angeles Verdes" (Green Angels), easily identifiable in a green truck. Toll roads ("cuota") are designated by the letter "D" after the highway number and are faster and safer than free ("libre") routes. The toll roads en route to the border are more expensive than comparable roads (interstates and highways) in the U.S. But it is worth the extra cost for the excellent roadbeds and uncrowded conditions.

Wandering livestock, unlighted vehicles, and unmarked road hazards make nighttime driving dangerous on all highways.

Road courtesies in Mexico, particularly on the long stretches of two-lane highway between Mexico City and the border, are different than in the U.S. 2-way traffic will often move over to the shoulders to allow vehicles to pass in the center of the road. Unwary U.S. drivers risk head on collisions if they do not pick up on this quickly. Also, drivers wanting to pass will turn on their left turn signal and leave it on until the pass is completed. Large trucks, as well as cars, often use the same signal to inform a vehicle behind them that it is safe to pass.

Mexican law requires drivers entering Mexico to have liability insurance issued by a Mexican company. Several U.S. and Mexican insurance companies offer plans that cover a driver for 30 days after crossing the border. Comprehensive and collision insurance are available from both U.S. and Mexican companies.

Cars purchased in Mexico come with temporary registration, but no temporary registration is available

for imported cars. Therefore, all imported cars should have foreign registration and plates, preferably valid for at least four months from date of arrival to avoid being stopped by the police until Mexican plates are obtained.

Mexican vehicles may be sold locally, and Mexico has no restrictions on types of cars that may be imported.

Local

Licensed taxi service is readily available and inexpensive; a small tip is customary. The taxis are painted in various distinctive colors, include the word "taxi," have distinctive license plates, and either have meters or display rates. Airports often have buses or special taxi service ("transporte terrestre"), which is preferred. When using city buses and the metro subway system, observe security precautions that are appropriate for a large city.

"Combis" (or "peseros") are vans, smaller than buses, that carry passengers over assigned routes, to provide a convenient service. Licensed, chauffeured rental cars are also available, at prices comparable to taxi service in the U.S.

Mexico has extensive, inexpensive bus service throughout the country. Quality of service ranges from air-conditioned, luxury buses with reserved seats, that serve tourist destinations to often overcrowded buses providing the basics.

Regional

Railroad passenger service within Mexico is inexpensive, but covers only a few routes—including a few connections with the U.S.—and is being improved with new equipment.

Air service is good between major Mexican and U.S. cities. Within Mexico, air routes fan out from Mexico City. Domestic air travel however is expensive. Air travel between Mexican cities along the border is accomplished more easily by using U.S. airports.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and international services are adequate, and both domestic and international calls may be dialed directly. TelMex, the former Mexican national phone company and currently the leading private phone company in Mexico, provides the connection for a reasonable fee. Calls to the U.S. from Mexico are comparable in cost to calls from the U.S. to Mexico. International calls outside of North America are expensive. Telephone service within Mexico is inexpensive. Telegrams are accepted in English and may be billed to home telephone numbers. Domestic and international FAX service is available.

Long distance is feasible by several carriers other than TelMex; Alestra (AT&T-Bancomer), Avantel (MCI-Banamex), and Miditel. Local service is still provided by TelMex.

Along with standard landlines, Mexico has two major providers of cellular phone services - TelCel and USACell. Both are affiliated with major telecommunications companies: TelCel with TelMex (Telefonos de Mexico) and USACell with Avantel, a division of MCI. Prices are very competitive between the two providers and only slightly higher than that which is available in the U.S. Both suppliers offer contracts that provide the phone, "free minutes," and access to the cellular network. At the end of the contract, the purchaser owns the cell phone. Typical contracts run for 18 months. TelCel also offers an alternative to a contract called the Amigo phone, where one buys the phone and pays for the minutes separately to be used as needed. The cell phone units offered for both contract and the Amigo plan are the same phones available in the U.S. They include, but are not limited to: Motorola, Nokia, Ericsson, and Philips with both digital and analog features. GSM technology is not supported in Mexico.

Telephone calls made with a credit card offer a wide variety of applica-

tions. Unfortunately, security is not up to the same standards as the U.S., and caution is recommended when using credit cards to place calls.

Mail

The most direct means for mail service is via post office boxes in U.S. border cities or international mail.

Radio and TV

Mexican television (TV) broadcasts on the same standard (NTSC) as in the U.S. and Mexican TV companies generally operate with state-of-the-art equipment. Two networks dominate Mexican television. Televisa is the older and highest rated one, but TV Azteca-privatized in 1994-has proven itself to be a worthy adversary. Each network broadcasts on three or four channels, featuring soap operas ("telenovelas"), series, variety shows, children's programs, sports (including major U.S. broadcasts), movies, and news coverage. Although most programs are produced or dubbed in Spanish, some movies are shown in the original language with subtitles. The UHF spectrum is not as occupied as in the U.S. That is mostly due to the fact that pay television became available in most major market neighborhoods and in hundreds of small towns at reasonable prices before smaller companies resorted to UHF frequencies. Though "pay TV" companies initially simply passed through U.S. network signals, they now relay the "Latin" services that many U.S. companies have set up. There are also cable-only programs (including an all news service in Spanish) produced nationally. C-Band dishes enjoyed an early heyday, but direct-to home broadcasts on the Ku-Band are taking a greater market share.

The radio spectrum in Mexico City is saturated by radio stations operating mostly with state-of-the-art equipment. All companies, some of which own as many as 12 stations, have at least one morning news magazine program that runs 3 to 4 hours. The leading stations include live reports from the U.S. and other world capitals, though they empha-

size local and national events. Many Spanish-language AM and FM broadcasts feature music in English. Along the border, U.S. broadcasts are also available.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Although sold at prices substantially higher than in the U.S. -a wide selection of U.S. magazines and newspapers and a limited selection of books can be found in most Mexican cities. The international editions of Time and Newsweek are sold locally, as are the editions of such major magazines as U.S. News & World Report, Popular Science, People, The Economist. The News, an English-language paper published in Mexico City, covers local events in eastern and central Mexico including Monterrey, with state-side and international coverage taken from major U.S. newspapers. The Guadalajara Colony Reporter has similar coverage for the Guadalajara area. Delivery of local Mexican papers, as well as a selection of U.S. papers (The New York Times, The Miami Herald, The Los Angeles Times and The Wall Street Journal), is available in Mexico City and at the nine U.S. Consulates throughout the country. USA Today, the Miami edition of the International Herald Tribune, and papers from neighboring U.S. states are also available. El Financiero also publishes a weekly international edition in English, that focuses on economic and financial issues. It is sent to U.S. subscribers.

Mexico has specialized magazines in English on such subjects as computers, cars, scientific innovations, medical journals, and women that are sold in major cities at bookstores and popular restaurants.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Pharmacies in the cities carry most drugs at reasonable prices, but occasional shortages occur. Although many prescription and over-the-counter medications that are manu-

factured in Mexico are manufactured by Mexican affiliates of U.S. firms, there may be some minor differences in formulation; thus, consult with a health practitioner before purchasing locally manufactured medications. Take prescriptions and an adequate supply of prescription medications. If you plan to have refills sent from the U.S., make arrangements beforehand. A supply of basic medicine chest items should also be taken.

The American-British Cowdray (ABC) Hospital in Mexico City, staffed partially by English speaking, U.S. trained physicians, is recommended for emergencies and routine hospitalizations. There are other well-equipped private hospitals available with similar staff. Mexico City has many English speaking U.S. trained physicians, including medical and dental specialists. For major medical and surgical problems, patients may be evacuated to the U.S. The designated evacuation point is Miami, Florida.

Ciudad Juarez: The full range of medical services is available in El Paso, Texas.

Guadalajara: English-speaking, U.S.-trained physicians and several well equipped hospitals and clinics are available and provide adequate medical care.

Hermosillo: Hospitals and clinics in Hermosillo are adequate for routine and emergency care. Many doctors are U.S. trained and certified. A full range of medical services is available in Tucson, Arizona, a four-hour drive or a one-hour flight away.

Matamoros: The full range of medical services is available across the river in Brownsville, Texas, and other nearby cities in the Rio Grande Valley.

Merida: The incidence of diarrheal diseases and hepatitis is high. Malaria is rare; but there are incidents of other diseases transmitted by mosquitoes. Medical facilities are inadequate despite the presence of

competent doctors and dentists. In the event of serious illness, the patient will be evacuated to Mexico City or Miami, Florida.

Monterrey: Medical facilities in Monterrey are modern and adequate. Two large, well-equipped private hospitals have been approved for routine and emergency care. U.S. trained and highly specialized physicians and dentists are available. Difficult or unusual cases may be evacuated to Texas.

Nuevo Laredo: Use the medical and dental facilities in Laredo, Texas, or the medical center in San Antonio, Texas.

Tijuana: Complete health care is available across the border in the San Diego or Chula Vista area.

Tuxtla Gutierrez: A USDA installation is in this southern Mexico region. Private clinics and hospitals are minimally adequate, despite many well trained physicians. In the event of serious medical problems, evacuation to Mexico City or to Miami, Florida, will be authorized.

Community Health

Air pollution is widely recognized as a problem in Mexico City. In a study published in the spring of 1999, the World Resources Institute rated Mexico City as the number one city in the world for health risks to children age 5 and under due to air pollution. This pollution is due in part to rapid urbanization and industrialization, but mostly to the huge and ever growing number of vehicles. The air quality has improved in some categories since the early 1990s. According to the Mexican Government, the lead and sulfur dioxide levels are consistently within the acceptable levels, as defined by the World Health Organization; and the nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide levels are rarely above them. The levels for declaring environmental emergencies were recently tightened in response to evidence of negative health effects from ozone and particulate matter. Although there

were fewer ozone peaks above 330 parts per million annually in the past few years, it is still above acceptable levels over 85% of the year. Suspended particulate matter (PM 10) exceeds the standards 20% to 30% annually. Because of the continuing concerns about pollution, the standard length of tour remains at two years.

Tap water is not safe to drink. Boiling, iodine, or chlorine treatment is necessary.

Tuberculosis is still present in the general population; thus domestic employees should be screened for it. Malaria and other serious tropical diseases are present only in southern rural areas of Mexico. Persons who will reside or travel in southern Mexico should be vaccinated for yellow fever before departing the U.S. because of a yellow fever is endemic in parts of southern Mexico and Central America.

Intestinal infections are prevalent in Mexico. Most infections are due solely to the fact that Mexican bacteria are different from U.S. bacteria. Nevertheless, parasitic infections (including ameba and giardia) are common. Therefore, select food sources and restaurants carefully. Clean and treat raw vegetables and fruits with iodine. Unpasteurized dairy products may carry brucellosis and tuberculosis. Therefore, purchase only reliably pasteurized and refrigerated products.

Marijuana and cocaine and other addictive drugs are readily available, despite Mexican efforts to control drug trafficking. Drug offenders, including teenagers, are often jailed for lengthy periods.

Preventive Measures

Cigarette smokers should be particularly aware that they risk increased cardiopulmonary problems due to the altitude and pollution. The combination of altitude in Mexico's high plateau and pollution in the Valley of Mexico with smoking may be dangerous for pregnant women and the fetus. Numerous health clubs are available through-

out the city. Those who wish to exercise outdoors should do so in the morning, when the pollution levels are lowest.

Rabies is endemic in Mexico, thus keep pet immunizations current. Rabies vaccine is available in the Health Unit for all who wish to be vaccinated. It may be especially advisable for children, joggers, and rural workers to be vaccinated.

Recommended immunizations for Mexico include diphtheria, tetanus, polio, MMR, and yellow fever. Infectious (viral) hepatitis is endemic in Mexico; therefore gamma globulin injections every four to six months are recommended for those over 12 years old.

Newcomers to high altitude should allow time for acclimatization. In the first several weeks, you should avoid overeating, alcoholic beverages, and excessive physical exertion. Light-headedness, insomnia, slight headaches, and shortness of breath are common initial reactions to the altitude. Adequate rest and fluids help alleviate the discomfort.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The Government of Mexico requires that all U.S. citizens present proof of citizenship and photo identification for entry into Mexico. A U.S. passport is recommended, but other U.S. citizenship documents such as a certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate, a Naturalization Certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, or a Certificate of Citizenship are acceptable. U.S. citizens boarding flights to Mexico should be prepared to present one of these documents as proof of U.S. citizenship, along with photo identification. Driver's permits, voter registration cards, affidavits and similar documents are not sufficient to prove citizenship for readmission into the United States.

Travelers should be aware that Mexican entry regulations require Spanish translations of all legal documents, including notarized consent decrees and court agreements. Enforcement of this provision is not always consistent, and English-language documents are almost always sufficient.

A visa is not required for a tourist/transit stay up to 180 days. A tourist card, also known as a FM-T, available from Mexican consulates and most airlines serving Mexico, is issued instead. Travelers entering Mexico for purposes other than tourism require a visa and must carry a valid U.S. passport. The Government of Mexico charges an entry fee to U.S. citizens traveling to Mexico's interior.

Upon arrival in Mexico, business travelers must complete a form (Form FM-N 30 days) authorizing the conduct of business, but not employment, for a 30-day period. U.S. citizens planning to work or live in Mexico should apply for the appropriate Mexican visa (Form FM-2 or 3) at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, DC or nearest Mexican consulate in the United States. U.S. citizens planning to participate in humanitarian aid missions, human rights advocacy groups or international observer delegations also should contact the Mexican Embassy or nearest Mexican consulate for guidance on how to obtain the appropriate visa before traveling to Mexico. Such activities, undertaken while on a tourist visa, may draw unfavorable attention from Mexican authorities because Mexican immigration law prohibits foreigners from engaging in political activity. U.S. citizens have been detained or deported for violating their tourist visa status. Therefore, tourists should avoid demonstrations and other activities that may be deemed political by Mexican authorities. This is particularly relevant in light of the tension and polarization in the state of Chiapas. U.S. citizens and other foreigners have been detained in Chiapas and expelled from Mexico for allegedly violating their visa status or for

interfering in Mexican internal politics.

Mexican regulations limit the value of goods brought into Mexico by U.S. citizens arriving by air or sea to \$300 per person and by land to \$50 per person. Amounts exceeding the duty-free limit are subject to a 32.8 percent tax. For further information concerning entry and visa requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Mexico at 1911 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, telephone (202) 736-1000, or its web site at <http://embassyofmexico.org>, or any Mexican consulate in the United States.

Americans living in or visiting Mexico are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy or at one of the U.S. Consulates, in order to obtain updated information on travel and security within Mexico. The U.S. Embassy is located in Mexico City at Paseo de la Reforma 305, Colonia Cuauhtemoc, telephone from the United States: 011-525-080-2000; telephone within Mexico City: 5-080-2000; telephone long distance within Mexico 01-5-080-2000. You may also contact the Embassy by e-mail at: ccs@usembassy.net.mx.

U.S. Consulates General are located in:

Ciudad Juarez: Avenida Lopez Mateos 924-N, telephone (52)(1) 611-3000.

Guadalajara: Progreso 175, telephone (52)(3) 825-2998.

Monterrey: Avenida Constitucion 411 Poniente 64000, telephone (52)(8) 345-2120.

Tijuana: Tapachula 96, telephone (52)(6) 681-7400.

U.S. Consulates are located in:

Hermosillo: Avenida Monterrey 141, telephone (52)(6) 217-2375.

Matamoros: Avenida Primera 2002, telephone (52)(8) 812-4402.

Merida: Paseo Montejo 453, telephone (52)(9) 925-5011.

Nogales: Calle San Jose, Nogales, Sonora, telephone (52)(6) 313-4820.

Nuevo Laredo: Calle Allende 3330, Col. Jardin, telephone (52)(8) 714-0512.

U.S. Consular Agencies are located in:

Acapulco: Hotel Continental Plaza, Costera Miguel Aleman 121 - Local 14, telephone (52)(7) 484-03-00 or (52)(7) 469-0556.

Cabo San Lucas: Blvd. Marina y Pedregal #1, Local No. 3, Zona Centro, telephone (52)(1) 143-3566.

Cancun: Plaza Caracol Two, Third Level, No. 320-323, Boulevard Kukulcan, km. 8.5, Zona Hotelera, telephone (52)(9) 883-0272.

Cozumel: Plaza Villa Mar in the Main Square - El Centro, 2nd floor right rear, Locale #8, Avenida Juarez and 5th Ave. Norte, telephone (52)(9) 872-4574.

Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo: Local 9, Plaza Ambiente, telephone (52)(7) 553-2100.

Mazatlan: Hotel Playa Mazatlan, Rodolfo T. Loaiza #202, Zona Dorada, telephone (52)(6) 916-5889.

Oaxaca: Macedonio Alcalá No. 407, Interior 20, telephone (52)(9) 514-3054 (52)(9) 516-2853.

Puerto Vallarta: Edif. Vallarta, Plaza Zaragoza 160-Piso 2 Int-18, telephone (52)(3) 222-0069.

San Luis Potosi: Edificio "Las Terrazas", Avenida Venustiano Carranza 2076-41, (52)(4) 811-7802.

San Miguel de Allende: Dr. Hernandez Macias #72, telephone (52)(4)152-2357 or (52)(4)152-0068.

Pets

There are no quarantine requirements for pets, but they require specific documents issued by an

officially recognized veterinarian, and authenticated ("visado") by the Mexican consul with jurisdiction over the place of issue.

All Pets entering Mexico require a certificate that they were examined and found free of evidence of infectious or parasitic disease; this should be done within 10 days of arrival in Mexico. Dogs require proof of vaccination against rabies, viral hepatitis, leptospirosis, and distemper not less than 15 days or more than one year before arrival, and of parvo-virus vaccination not less than 15 days or more than 150 days before arrival.

Cats require proof of vaccination against rabies and feline panleucopenia not less than 15 days or more than 1 year before arrival.

Prior to travel, the Mexican consul in the U.S. requires certification from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Veterinary Services (APHISVS), that the veterinarian issuing the documents is officially recognized.

Pets traveling with their owners are cleared into Mexico with only these documents. Those pets who are shipped to Mexico require a free entry permit, which takes a month or more to obtain after the owner has arrived in Mexico. Pets shipped to Mexico must arrive in the morning to allow time for same-day customs clearance, as there are no pet storage facilities at airports.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Mexican Government has significant restrictions on the types of firearms and ammunition that may be imported into the country. Generally, the Mexican government prohibits the importation of .357 and .45 caliber handguns, rifles with a caliber of .30 and larger, and shotguns with barrels shorter than 25 inches.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit in Mexico is the peso. The symbol used to designate

pesos is the same as the dollar symbol, except that it has only one vertical line. The peso-dollar exchange rate is subject to change. Current currency notes include the following denominations: 500, 200, 100, 50, and 20. Coins in circulation include: 10, 5, 2, 1 peso, and .50, .20, .10, and .05 centavos.

The current exchange rate is approximately 9.4 Pesos=US \$1.

Mexican banking facilities are similar to those in the U.S.

Carry U.S. dollar travelers checks. Travelers already in Mexico may obtain travelers checks from the travel agency at the U.S. Embassy. U.S. dollars in cash or travelers checks are accepted widely, and can be exchanged at most banks or cambios (foreign exchange dealer), including those at border crossing points and international airports. Dollars and travelers checks are accepted at most hotels and many stores and restaurants, but at a less favorable rate of exchange. Major U.S. credit cards, e.g., American Express, Master Card, and Visa, are widely accepted in Mexico. Sears stores in Mexico accept Sears cards from the U.S. Credit cards can also be obtained locally with a peso account. The majority of gasoline stations in Mexico do not accept credit cards.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

A 15% value-added sales tax is applied to most goods and services. Hotels charge an additional 2% lodging tax that is not required to be itemized separately on your bill. Rather, it is usually included in the retail price of goods. It is always smart to ask if the price includes IVA (taxes); It is customary to leave a tip for baggage handlers, porters, chambermaids, tour guides, and drivers. Avoid leaving U.S. coins. Taxi drivers expect a tip only when an extra service is provided.

Hunting licenses are required. There is a value-added tax (IVA-impuesto al valor agregado) averaging 15% on most goods and services

except on food, medicines, newspapers, residential rents, and physicians' fees.

Security Precautions

The Department of State rates Mexico City's crime situation as CRITICAL (its highest designator). Walking in an isolated area anywhere in the city, especially after dark, raises a real risk of armed robbery. The use of roving taxis, those with green and white license plates, is discouraged because of the threat of robbery by the drivers or their criminal accomplices.

Disaster Preparedness - Earthquakes & Volcanos

Since December 1994, the Popocatepetl Volcano, situated 38 miles southeast of Mexico City, has registered varying levels of seismic activity, including the release of vapor, gas, ash, and incendiary material. Depending on the levels of activity, the Mexican National Center for Disaster Prevention restricts access or closes parks and hiking trails on the mountain's slopes. U.S. citizens planning to hike in the area should be alert to any warnings or signs posted, and should contact the U.S. Embassy for the latest information about seismic activity.

Civil defense officials in the states of Jalisco and Colima are closely monitoring activity at the Volcan de Colima, (also known as Volcan de Fuego), located in south-central Jalisco. The volcano produced a number of gas exhalations, explosions and ash falls in February 1999. There is also active lava flow on the south side of the mountain. A major eruption is possible. U.S. citizens should exercise caution if planning to travel to the area surrounding the volcano. They should contact the U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara, Mexico, at telephone 011-523-825-3429 for the latest information. Updated information may also be obtained in Spanish and in English at web site <http://www.ucol.mx/volcan>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Jan. 6 Day of the Kings
 - Feb. 2 Candlemas
 - Feb. 5 Constitution Day
 - Feb. 24 Flag Day
 - Feb/Mar. Carnival*
 - Mar. 21 Juarez's Birthday
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 - Mar/Apr Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr Easter Sunday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May 5 Anniversary of the Battle of the Puebla/Cinco de Mayo)
 - May 10 Mother's Day
 - Aug. 15 Assumption
 - Sept. 1. El Diadel Informe
 - Sept.16 Independence Day
 - Oct. 12 El Dia de la Raza/Columbus Day
 - Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 - Nov. 2 Day of the Dead
 - Nov. 20 Revolution Day
 - Dec. 12 Our Lady of Guadalupe
 - Dec. 23 Feast of the Radishes (Oaxaca only)
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 - Dec. 28 Holy Innocents' Day
 - Dec. 31 New Year's Eve
- *variable

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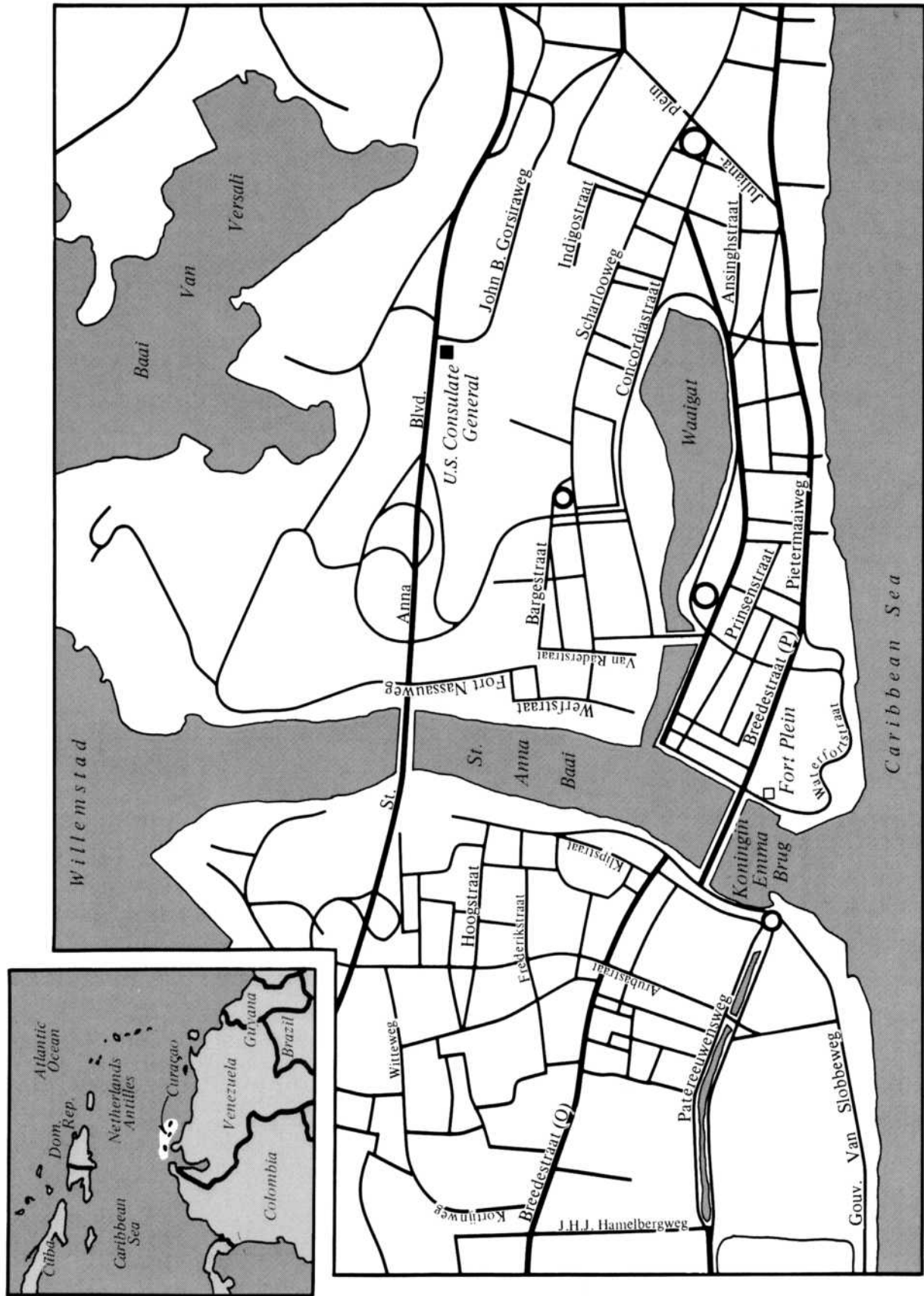
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Willemstad (Curaçao), Netherlands Antilles

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

(including Aruba)

Major City:

Curaçao (Willemstad)

Other Cities:

The Bottom, Kralendijk, Oranjestad, Philipsburg, Sint Nicolaas

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Netherlands Antilles. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, a Dutch colonial possession for the greater part of three centuries, and once a center for slave trade in the Caribbean, has been an autonomous territory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands since 1954. Aruba, one of the three largest islands (the others are Curaçao and Bonaire) withdrew from the federation in January 1986 to form its own domestic government. In 1990, however, Aruba requested and received from the Netherlands a cancellation of the agreement that would have granted independence in 1996. It remains under Dutch protection and, unofficially at least, is still referred to as an integral part of the Antilles group.

The islands are a fascinating blend of Afro-Spanish-Dutch culture—a tapestry of sites, peoples, and languages. The countryside is rich in history, and in natural marvels which draw increasing numbers of tourists each year to these jewels in the sun.

MAJOR CITY

Curaçao

During the colonial period Curaçao was a center of slave trade in the Caribbean. After emancipation of the slaves in 1863, Curaçao lost much of its economic importance until 1916 when Royal Dutch Shell built an oil refinery on the shores of Schottegat Harbor. Shell pulled out in 1985, and the Venezuelan petroleum company took over operation of the refinery. Curaçao also has the largest repair dry-dock in the Caribbean, a container port, an important offshore financial sector and several resort hotels.

The total number of American citizens residing on the island fluctuates but is in the neighborhood of 1,000. The overall "foreign colony", including Dutch nationals, makes up about 10% of the total population. Curaçao has as many as 40

nationalities represented, including a large percentage of Indians, Chinese and Indonesians.

Although Curaçao has been associated with the Netherlands for about 300 years, visitors to Curaçao find that a knowledge of Spanish is as helpful as Dutch. English is spoken and understood to one degree or another by a large percentage of the local population; Papiamentu is the language of daily life.

The town of Willemstad contains most of Curaçao's 150,000 population. Dutch architecture predominates in the older sections of the city. Homes in the suburbs are more modern and spacious.

Utilities

The city water supply consists exclusively of distilled, potable seawater. Electric current in Curaçao is 110v-130v, 50-cycle, single-phase AC.

Any American appliance, which relies on 60-cycle current for its timing (such as clocks, record players and tape recorders) must be converted for 50-cycle current in order to operate properly. If possible, have this done in the U.S. before shipment (transformers can only convert voltage, not cycles). Transformers and all types of electrical equipment and appliances are



Wathey Square in Philipsburg, Netherlands Antilles

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

available locally but at high prices. Most major brands can be serviced locally. The local power supply sometimes experiences surges, spikes and/or brownouts.

UPS's and/or surge protectors are recommended for computers, TV's, VCR's, stereos and other sensitive electronic equipment. They can be purchased locally but are less expensive in the States.

Food

Almost all food is imported. A good variety of canned and frozen foods, including baby foods, of U.S. and Dutch origin are available in modern supermarkets. Fresh produce is flown in regularly, mostly from the U.S. and Venezuela, but are not necessarily in stock at all times. Boats from Venezuela sell produce and fish at a central area in Willemstad called the "floating market."

Curaçao imports all its meat, mostly from Argentina, the Netherlands,

New Zealand, Denmark and the U.S. Quality is satisfactory although sometimes tougher than we are accustomed to in the U.S. and special cuts, particularly beef and veal, are often unavailable. Most frozen poultry is of U.S. origin. Eggs of good size and quality come from local sources. Butter and cheese are imported from the U.S. and the Netherlands. Frozen fish and seafood products come from as far away as Norway and Iceland. Fresh fish from South American and Caribbean sources is available and safe.

Since transportation costs are included, food prices are comparatively high.

Clothing

Men: At work, clothing suitable for summer in Washington is appropriate. Casual dress is typical at other times. Both European and American men's clothing is available but relatively expensive. A dark suit is

necessary and suitable for most representational purposes.

Women: Curaçao really has only one season-summer. Bring summer wear. Light cotton is preferable to polyester blends. Women wear short dresses at most evening social affairs not identified as "casual" or "sport." All kinds of women's clothes are available in Curaçao at prices higher than those in the U.S. A fair selection of women's shoes is usually, but not always, available; some American women have found excellent buys in European brand shoes.

Children: Infant and children's clothes are available at prices much higher than those in the U.S. but the selection is limited in size and style and the quality is sometimes inferior. Children's shoes are available in American sizes. Baby items (such as diapers) are much more expensive than in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Nearly all well known brands of American and European toiletries, cosmetics, personal hygiene supplies, home medicines and drugs are available on Curaçao. Prices range from less than those in the U.S. to up to 50% higher on some items. A good range of liquor and tobacco items is available through duty-free suppliers.

Most basic services found in a small community can be found on Curaçao but the quality varies widely. Tailors and dressmakers charge reasonable prices and their work can range from fair to excellent. A wide assortment of cottons and dress fabrics are available but sewing notions offer a limited selection.

Dry-cleaning facilities are available and the services provided are acceptable. Beauty shops compare with those in the U.S. and those in major tourist hotels have good operators and service. Costs are comparable with those in the U.S. Barbershops also have reasonable prices.

Radio and TV repair is adequate and reasonable but parts are not always available locally. Simple plumbing and electrical maintenance repair is available at reasonable prices. Automobile repair is satisfactory but, once again, parts are not always available locally.

Curaçao has a public library with a modest collection of books and publications in English. Several hotels and restaurants maintain a "swap" shelf of English language paperbacks.

Domestic Help

Domestics from English-speaking Caribbean islands are available but require permission from the Curaçao government to live and work here. Local law entitles maids to a three-week paid vacation annually, with supplementary pay for meals is not taken in the employer's home. Employers are obliged to provide health insurance for maids; the premium is about \$360 a year. Wages for part-time help are about

\$2 per hour, plus transportation, or about \$150 a month for house servants. The rate for gardeners is from \$2 to \$3 per hour.

Religious Activities

Curaçao prides itself on having the oldest continuously operating synagogue in the Western Hemisphere. Services are in English and Hebrew. Several Roman Catholic Churches offer services in Dutch and Papiamentu and at least one offers Mass in English. A Dutch Reformed Church holds services in Dutch; a Methodist Church and an Anglican Church hold services in English; and a Seventh-day Adventist Chapel and a few evangelical churches hold services in Papiamentu and English. The Protestant Church of Curaçao, with several locations in the city, holds services in Dutch and English.

Education

The International School was started in Curaçao in September 1968. The school is open to children of Curaçao residents. Grade levels include K-12. All subjects are taught in English, the curriculum is American and the school is accredited in the U.S. There are extensive extracurricular activities available for all ages, even some for adults. School enrollment for the last few years has averaged over 200 students. Parents are responsible for transportation. Tuition varies depending on grade and ranges from approximately \$4,500 to \$8,000 per year.

The local government supports a complete system of elementary and high schools equivalent to 12 grades or more in the U.S. Local schools are parochial (Catholic or Protestant) or public, with classes conducted in Dutch and Papiamentu. All schools have the same basic curriculum. Academic standards are good. The school year runs from August 15 to July 15, with 60 holidays during the year, including a one-month summer vacation. American children attending a local school above first grade will have difficulty adjusting to schooling in a foreign language. Intensive language training of sev-

eral months is often necessary. Children are usually put back one or two grades and then promoted grade-by-grade to their regular level as they learn Dutch. Reasonable tuition fees are charged.

Special Educational Opportunities

Papiamentu lessons are available locally but are expensive. Individual language training in Dutch, Spanish and Papiamentu is available through tutors at reasonable rates. Textbooks are available at the local bookstores.

The Curaçao Music School offers classes and individualized instruction in piano, rhythm instruments, orchestral instruments, guitar, accordion and choral group singing. Individual tutoring in both music and art is also available through independent tutors.

Sports

Water sports of all kinds are popular. Curaçao has numerous small beaches, some public and others that can be used for a small fee. Swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, water skiing, sailing and windsurfing are possible year round. Curaçao has an extensive number of dive sites, as well as an underwater park, for scuba divers; equipment rental and instruction are available from several Dive Shops. Other sports are available through clubs.

Membership in local clubs, or private membership at local resorts, provides for the use of swimming pools, bar and restaurants, as well as tennis, basketball, Ping Pong, soccer, yachting, sailing, water sports and horseback riding.

The Curaçao Golf and Squash Club has the island's only golf course. It has nine holes with oiled sand greens. The club sponsors weekend tournaments and has a small clubhouse where refreshments are served. A squash court is located near clubhouse.

The Curaçao Yacht Club and other private marinas offer facilities for sail and powerboats.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Harbor and Haystack Mts., Netherlands Antilles

For those interested in flying, a small flying club offers small plane rentals and flight instruction but the rates are high.

Baseball and soccer games are played enthusiastically with local and inter-island competition. A large sports stadium with facilities for various spectator sports is located at Brievengat.

Both U.S. and European sports clothing and equipment can be purchased locally but usually at prices higher than those in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Curaçao Museum has a permanent exhibition of antiques, paintings and artifacts.

Periodic art exhibits are held there and at the Centro Pro Arte and Centro Cultural de Curaçao. A museum of Jewish history is associated with

the synagogue. A commercial Seaquarium displays local marine life and there is a small botanical garden and zoo located in one of Willemstad's suburbs.

A national park surrounds Mt. Christoffel, which provides a panoramic view of the west end of the island to climbers. On a high ridge near the airport are the Hato Caverns, the grottos of Curaçao. Near the west end of the island is Boca Tabla, an unusual sea cave.

Entertainment

In addition to a local cinema that shows current U.S. and European movies, several video rental stores offer recent video releases. The Centro Pro Arte has facilities for ballet, symphony orchestras, operas and plays but offerings are limited and infrequent. Most of the theatrical events are in Dutch or Papiamentu. Several tourist hotels in Curaçao offer entertainment with orches-

tras, dancing and floorshows. Many have casinos and one has a discotheque. Several private discotheques are open as well.

The period between Christmas and Carnival is full of special events. A fireworks display and late night partying celebrate the New Year. Carnival time in February brings out street processions with flamboyant costumes, floats, and street dancing. Several bridge clubs are available for the enthusiast.

Social Activities

Private entertaining and official contacts provide the main source of contact with the American community. An American Women's Club holds regular meetings and sponsors social activities several times a year. A local chapter of the U.S. Navy League sponsors receptions for U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships during port calls.

Daily opportunities exist to meet host country nationals through work and socially. Local branches of Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs provide social contact with the Antillean and international communities.

OTHER CITIES

Saba's main town, **THE BOTTOM**, is home to about half of the island's total population of 1,000. Saba is just five square miles in area, and is an extinct volcano that rises 3,000 feet above sea level. Vegetation here is lush and there are many gardens and fruit trees. The island's four villages are connected by a single crossroad.

KRALENDIJK, the capital and chief town of Bonaire, lies on the west coast of the island, and has a population of close to 3,000. It is directly opposite the tiny island called Klein (small) Bonaire, noted for its choice snorkeling and scuba diving. Bonaire proper is casual and unspoiled, and is known as one of the best diving areas in the world. There are more than 50 choice diving spots; the average water temperature is 80°F. The beaches are secluded and several of them have sea-carved grottoes. Bonaire has six hotels and resorts, including two casinos. The island is nicknamed Flamingo Island and is home for a flamingo sanctuary, a breeding ground for 10,000 birds of that species. Washington National Park, on the northwestern shore, is a game preserve. Other interesting sites are the salt pans (solar salt works) and slave huts in the south; Rincon, the island's oldest village; and Willemstoren, Bonaire's 150-year-old light-house.

ORANJESTAD is the capital of Aruba and has about one-third of that island's 68,000 inhabitants. It is situated on the western side of the island. Aruba has an unusually flat landscape and interesting rock formations. Vegetation includes a wide variety of cacti and *divi-divi* trees, which are shaped by the cool-

ing trade winds. Its beautiful beaches, most notably seven-mile-long Palm Beach, are where most of the hotels are located. Aruba has more than 1,500 hotel rooms, 15 nightclubs, 60 restaurants, five casinos, and 51 low-duty stores on its main street. The Aruba Historical Museum opened in 1984 and displays Arawak Indian implements as well as furniture made by the island's early settlers. A betting facility located in the Aruba Holiday Inn and Casino, allows tourists to bet on football and other sports events. Aruba also has an annual carnival, which runs from mid-January through mid-March.

The principal town of St. Eustatius is **ORANJESTAD** (the same name as Aruba's capital), with a population of about 1,600. The island is undeveloped and has several small plantations.

PHILIPSBURG, with a population of about 11,000, is the capital of the Dutch portion of St. Maarten. As with all of the Netherlands Antilles, tourists can enjoy the beaches and water sports, as well as shopping along Front Street in Philipsburg.

SINT NICOLAAS is the former capital of Aruba, located 12 miles southeast of Oranjestad. A refinery closed here recently, seriously depressing the economy. The area has not developed a reputation as a tourist stop, but the adjacent beaches are considered attractive. No resort hotels are in the vicinity. The Aruba Golf Club, however, has accommodations just north of Sint Nicolaas. The community is also known by its Spanish designation, San Nicolás.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Curaçao is the largest of the "ABC" islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) which lie just off the coast

of Venezuela. Curaçao is 38 miles long, 7 miles wide at its widest point, and 2-1/2 miles wide at its narrowest point. Sint Christoffelberg, at 1,260 feet on the western end of the island and Tafelberg, at about 600 feet near the eastern end are the most prominent geographical features. Tafelberg has provided limestone for the construction industry for several years and now resembles a stepped mesa. Numerous small and large bays indent the island's southern coast. The largest of these, which comprises the inner harbor known as the Schottegat, is surrounded by the city of Willemstad.

Curaçao and the other ABC islands are hot year round. Temperatures seldom exceed 90°F during the day or fall below 80°F at night. Relative humidity averages 70% annually and seldom varies far from that average. The effect of the heat and the humidity, however, is lessened by the almost constant northeast trade winds. The ocean temperature averages 80°F and only varies a few degrees between summer and winter. Rainfall averages only 22 inches annually, most of which falls during the months of November and December, and the islands are below the hurricane belt so that particular danger is absent. Drought resistant plants, such as cactus, thorn tree; and succulents predominate. August, September and October are the warmest months; December, January and February are the coolest.

Mildew can occur when dehumidifying air-conditioning is not used, especially during the "rainy" season (October to January). Outdoors, items rust and fade quickly in the salt air and harsh sun. Lizards, roaches, flies, ants, rodents and mosquitoes are common.

In addition to the ABC Islands, the consular district includes the Windward Islands of Saba, St. Eustatius (or Statia and Sint Maarten. They are located south east of Puerto Rico and about five hundred miles north-east from Curaçao. Also of volcanic origin, they differ from the ABC

Islands primarily in that they have more annual rainfall and lush vegetation. The most populous and economically developed of the Windward group, Sint Maarten, shares its island with the French Department of Saint Martin.

Population

The population of the Netherlands Antilles is approximately 185,000. Curaçao has about 150,000; Sint Maarten, 23,000; Bonaire, 10,000; St. Eustatius, 1,500; Saba, 1,000. Aruba's population is around 90,000. About 85% of Curaçao's population is of African derivation. The remaining 15% is made up of various races and nationalities, including Dutch, Portuguese, North Americans, natives from other Caribbean islands, Latin Americans, Sephardic Jews, Lebanese and Asians.

Four languages are in common use. Papiamentu is the native vernacular in Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba. Dutch is the official language, though both English and Spanish are widely used on the ABC Islands. English is the predominant language in the Windward Islands.

Roman Catholicism predominates but several other churches are represented, these include Anglican, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Mormon and Baptist. The Jewish community is the oldest in the Western Hemisphere, dating from 1634.

Public Institutions

Willemstad, Curaçao, is the capital of the Netherlands Antilles, which is a separate entity in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Antilles are governed by a popularly elected unicameral "Staten" (parliament) of 22 members. It chooses the Prime Minister (called Minister President) and a Council of Ministers, consisting of six to eight other ministers. The Governor, who serves a 6-year term, represents the Queen of the Netherlands. Defense and foreign affairs are the responsibility of the Neth-

erlands but, otherwise, the islands are largely self-governing.

Local government is in the hands of each island. Under the direction of a Kingdom-appointed Island Governor, these local governments have a "Bestuurscollege" (administrative body) made up of Commissioners who head the separate government departments.

Aruba separated from the Netherlands Antilles on January 1, 1986, and now enjoys equal status (status aparte) with the Antilles within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Its government structure is similar to that of the Netherlands Antilles.

Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and Sint Maarten have quasi-governmental chambers of commerce, which are, among other things, the official registries of business firms on those islands. They also have trade and industry functions, which are comparable to an American Chamber of Commerce.

Arts, Science, and Education

The educational system is based on the Dutch model, with upper grades split into academic and vocational tracks. The University of the Netherlands Antilles, with law, business and technical faculties, is located on Curaçao. Many students also pursue higher education in the Netherlands or the United States.

Commerce and Industry

Oil refining, tourism, and offshore financial activities are the mainstays of the Curaçao economy. The Netherlands and the European Economic Community provide financial and development aid annually. Local agriculture and manufacturing is very limited. Most consumer goods are imported, often from the U.S. but also from the Netherlands and other European countries.

Transportation

Automobiles

Curaçao has well over 50,000 vehicles. Driving is on the right. Gasoline prices are currently approximately US\$3.80 per gallon. Routine service station maintenance is adequate and reasonable but spare parts and body repair work are expensive. The high humidity, salt air and intense sunlight cause automobile tires and bodies to deteriorate rapidly. Undercoating is recommended and may be done locally at reasonable prices. Overall, roads are fair to good but some parts of Curaçao can only be reached by rough dirt tracks.

Curaçao has no restrictions on automobiles other than normal traffic regulations and compulsory automobile insurance. Third-party liability insurance as well as property damage, collision, and fire and theft insurance can be obtained locally from several Dutch firms. If you present a statement from a previous insurance company stating that you have made no claims in the last five years, a discount of up to 50% is offered; or for each consecutive accident-free year a 10% discount will apply. Full coverage collision insurance is recommended for more expensive vehicles. Several car rental agencies operate on the island at tourist prices.

Local

Three types of public transportation are available: buses, privately owned vans operating as buses and taxicabs. Buses are crowded and run irregularly. The private vehicles operating as buses pick up passengers at specific locations for a flat fee. Taxi fares are fixed (no meters) but are geared to tourists and are relatively expensive.

Regional

American and United (through an ALM code-share) Airlines offer daily service between Curaçao and the U.S. Aruba and Sint Maarten also have daily U.S. connections via U.S. carriers. The Netherlands, Venezuela, Colombia, Trinidad and the Dominican Republic have direct

connections with Curaçao. Regional airlines provide service between the islands within the consular district. Several local travel agencies are equipped to arrange personal travel anywhere in the world.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is usually reliable although not always of the best quality and outages are not unexpected. The monthly charge is \$10 plus 10 cents for each four minutes of use for local calls. Long distance calls may be dialed direct to anywhere in the world at any hour but are very expensive.

Internet

Several local companies provide internet access on Curaçao; however, service is very expensive compared to the U.S. Access currently ranges from \$60 per month for unlimited access to three times that. The less expensive service provider has oversubscribed and it is very hard to connect during peak hours. In addition to the Internet access fees, you still have to pay the local per-minute phone charges that can effectively double your costs if you are a heavy user.

Mail

UPS-International, Federal Express and DHL also serve Curaçao.

Radio and TV

Curaçao has one TV station (Tele-Curaçao), which broadcasts in color. Most shows are in Papiamentu. Venezuelan TV can also be received on Curaçao. Cable TV is available, and presently CNN, ESPN, BBC World, HBO Ole, Cinemax, A&E, TBS, ABC, CBS, NBC and others are featured. Major American and European sporting events are generally carried via cable. Television sets are available locally at prices higher than in the U.S. Local television broadcasts on NTSC format and an U.S. television set works with no conversion necessary.

Local radio stations provide a wide range of music choices. Most radio

stations broadcast news in Papiamentu and Dutch; however, periodic English news broadcasts are transmitted by some of the stations.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

U.S. newspapers from New York and Miami are available the day after publication. Daily newspapers are printed in Curaçao in Dutch and in Papiamentu. Magazines in English, Dutch and Spanish are available at newsstands but are more expensive than in the U.S. It is less expensive to subscribe to magazines than to pay local newsstand prices, even for airmail editions. Magazines can be pouched but take from three weeks to one month to arrive. Many popular books are available in English at local bookstores but, once again, are more expensive than in the U.S.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

There are two private hospitals and one public hospital available on-island which provide adequate services for most any medical problem. The doctors are trained in Europe and in the U.S. and overall their quality is good to excellent. Many dentists practice in Curaçao; some have been trained in the U.S. and many in Europe. Specialists, both medical and dental, are either available locally or visit the island periodically from the U.S. or Europe.

Community Health

Community health standards are good. Tap water is distilled from seawater and is of good quality, although turbidity (suspended particles) is frequently high. Fresh foods are safe to eat.

Preventive Measures

Normal health precautions are in order, but some potential dangers warrant special mention. Precautions should be taken against the strong sun and heat, which can cause dehydration. Swimmers should be cautious of sea urchins and other stinging creatures on the

sea floor. Some common trees at Curaçao beaches have a poisonous sap (irritating) which rain can wash onto the unwary. Dengue fever has been reported in Curaçao.

Most medicines are available, but local pharmacy prices tend to be higher than in the U.S. Some over-the-counter medicines available in the U.S. are not available in Curaçao or are available by prescription only. You may wish to bring a supply for special needs.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Curaçao is by air.

A valid U.S. passport or a U.S. birth certificate accompanied by a valid photo identification must be presented. While a U.S. passport is not mandatory, it is recommended since it is more readily recognized as positive proof of citizenship. Tourists may be asked to show onward/return tickets or proof of sufficient funds for their stay. Visitors may enter for two weeks, extendable for 90 days by the Head Office of Immigration. For further information, travelers may contact The Royal Netherlands Embassy, 4200 Linn Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 244-5300, Internet: <http://www.netherlands-embassy.org>, or the Dutch consulates in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Houston.

The Netherlands Antilles, like most Caribbean territories, are subject to the threat of hurricanes. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting the Netherlands Antilles are encouraged to register with the U.S. Consulate General in Curaçao located at J.B. Gorsiraweg #1, Willemstad, Curaçao, telephone (599-9)461-

3066; fax (599-9)461-6489; e-mail address: cgCuraçao@interneeds.net.

Pets

Pets are admitted duty free and are not placed in quarantine. Dogs and cats must have rabies inoculations and certificates of good health issued within ten days of their arrival. Pet foods, medications and veterinary services are available locally. Fleas, ticks, heartworms and other infestations are a constant problem on the island.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Netherlands Antilles Government maintains strict control over the number of firearms and amount of ammunition on the islands and requires that a permit be issued prior to importation. As a further means of control, local authorities limit the number of authorized dealers in firearms. Sales to individuals can be made only to those licensed to own weapons, and the dealers must register all sales with the government.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The medium of exchange in the Netherlands Antilles is the Netherlands Antilles florin, also called the "guilder." The exchange rate is currently fixed at US\$1 = NAF 1.78. Local banks cash U.S. Treasury checks and exchange U.S. currency; however, a service fee is frequently charged. You do not need to buy Netherlands Antilles florins before arrival in Curaçao; US dollars are widely used and accepted. Have a supply of small bills with you for tips and taxi fares.

Local banking facilities are comparable to those in the U.S. and arrangements can be made to cash U.S. checks. U.S. ATM/Debit Cards can be used in some local automatic tellers and will allow you to withdraw either US\$ or NAF. Many local stores accept VISA and/or MasterCard.

No limit is placed on the amount of money (dollars or other currency) brought into the Netherlands Anti-

les. Nor are limits placed on amounts taken out. Reporting procedures are in effect for large or unusual monetary transactions. Local bank accounts may be useful but are not necessary.

The metric system is the official standard for weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar	Carnival Monday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 30	Queen's Birthday
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
July 2	Curacao Flag Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Tourist and travel information is available from the Curaçao Tourist Offices at the following addresses:

The Curaçao Tourist Board 330 Biscayne Boulevard Miami, FL 33132. Tel: (305) 374-5811 Fax: (305) 374-6741 Toll Free: (800) 445-826.

The Curaçao Tourist Board 475 Park Avenue Suite 2000, New York, NY 10016 Tel: (212) 683-7660 Fax: (212) 683-9337 Toll Free: (800) 270-3350 E-mail: CuraVao@ix.net.com

Several Internet sites can provide additional current information. Use the search words "Curaçao," "Netherlands Antilles," and "Willemstad."

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Managua, Nicaragua

NICARAGUA

Republic of Nicaragua

Major Cities:

Managua, León

Minor Cities:

Bluefields, Chinandega, Corinto, Diriamba, Estelí, Granada, Jinotega, Jinotepe, Masaya, Matagalpa

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Nicaragua. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

NICARAGUA, which has suffered relentless exploitation by dictators and foreign interests since its discovery in 1502, emerged from a decade-long civil war in the early 1990s. In 1996 the nation achieved its first peaceful transition of power in 100 years. However, it must still overcome a turbulent history of political strife and natural disasters as it struggles to achieve and maintain political and economic stability.

MAJOR CITIES

Managua

The capital, Managua, with a rapidly growing population of about 1

million, is the largest city and the commercial and political center of Nicaragua. It is located on the southern shore of severely polluted Lake Managua in western Nicaragua at latitude 121, longitude 861, and 110 feet above sea level.

Earthquakes destroyed Managua twice, once in 1931 and again in 1972. The earthquake on December 23, 1972, reduced the city's downtown to rubble. Businesses and residents relocated to the outskirts of the city, and there has been no reconstruction in the once bustling center. Therefore, Managua has no real business or commercial district. Offices and shops are often housed in residences and scattered throughout the city. Hostilities in 1978 and 1979 caused additional destruction, especially in the industrial section, along the north highway to the airport.

Construction during the Sandinista regime came almost to a standstill except for the burgeoning shanty towns. As the rural poor have poured into the city looking for work, this substandard housing, with no sanitary facilities of any type, has literally sprouted in every neighborhood and has replaced earthquake ruins as the dominant scene in Managua.

Food

Shopping for food in Nicaragua requires patience and flexibility; but, with perseverance, you can maintain a balanced, varied diet. A variety of goods is now readily available in local supermarkets.

Open markets, such as the Huembes Market off the Masaya Highway, offer the best selection of fresh fruits and vegetables. Seasonal fruits and vegetables common to the tropics are usually good quality and cost less than in the U.S. Mangoes, bananas, papaya, cantaloupe, watermelon, pineapple, nispero, citrus, and jocote are typical fruit selections, while vegetables are limited to potatoes, yucca, beets, lettuce, cabbage, onions, cilantro, garlic, parsley, tomatoes, celery, peppers, cucumbers, carrots, squash, broccoli, avocado, green beans, and occasionally asparagus, mushrooms, cauliflower, and eggplant. Imported apples, grapes, pears, and strawberries are sometimes available in supermarkets. Open markets also sell dried beans, rice, and some spices. You may also find staples such as flour, sugar, and oil as well as some packaged and canned goods, toiletries, and sundries. However, the commissary sells such items in better quality, if higher prices.



Courtesy of United Nations

Market in Managua, Nicaragua

Good selections of meat and fish can be found at supermarkets, butcher shops, and delicatessens. Processed pork products such as luncheon meat, ham, and smoked chops are subject to questionable handling, and therefore, not recommended for purchase except at Delikatessen Bavaria. Local chickens are small and, currently, more expensive than those the commissary sells. Various distributors sell lobster, shrimp, and other seafood, frozen for export.

Shoppers in the open markets provide their own bags. Young boys will besiege you to guard your car or to help carry your groceries for a small tip.

Milk products are readily available. The commissary sells long-shelf-life whole milk; canned, condensed, and evaporated milk; and assorted cheeses, cream, cottage cheese, and sour cream. One reliable source for local cheese, the La Perfecta Company, produces about six varieties of fresh and aged cheeses, but not

every type is available at one time. The factory, where the best selection can be found, is on the North Highway. The Eskimo Factory produces good-quality ice cream in several flavors.

There are bakeries where whole wheat bread, French bread, rolls, etc., can be found. An Italian-style pasta shop will prepare carry-out meals if you provide the casserole dish. Local beer and soft drinks are good and inexpensive if you buy refill bottles.

Generally, Nicaraguan production and handling methods fall short of U.S. sanitary standards; therefore, wash all raw vegetables and fruits properly. Washing in detergent, soaking in a bleach solution, and then rinsing thoroughly is recommended. However, this will not kill amebic dysentery spores or other types of contamination. The surest ways to avoid food contamination and food-borne illness are peel or cook fruits and vegetables, cook

meat and seafood well, and avoid raw seafood.

Those with babies should bring in their hand luggage, or mail ahead, a large initial supply of formula (powdered keeps better in the heat) or baby food they may need. Baby food produced in Central America is not always up to U.S. standards.

Clothing

Informal attire is acceptable on most occasions, including in the office. Open-collar dress shirts or locally made guayaberas and slacks are worn by men for both work and social events. Ties, suits, and sport jackets are occasionally worn. An event requiring a suit will usually indicate as much on the invitation. At the office, women wear short dresses, skirts, or slacks. Nylons are often seen but are a matter of choice. At dinners and receptions attended by Nicaraguans or the diplomatic community, women dress somewhat more formally than the men; however, at the same function you may see sequins and cotton dresses. Being improperly attired is almost impossible.

Warm-weather clothes are necessary, especially washable cottons. Avoid "dry clean only" apparel, because local dry cleaners are not always reliable. In addition, long sleeves are often useful at outdoor receptions during the first three months of the dry season, especially on the South Highway, which is cooler than the rest of the city. Lightweight sweaters and jackets are also useful for trips to cooler countries in the region. Local shoes, sandals, and cowboy boots are available. Some shoes are imported from the U.S. or Europe, but selection is limited, and prices are high.

Men: Men's clothing can be made at are reasonable cost. Tailors can copy styles, but quality material is scarce. If you are interested, bring all fabric and notions.

Women: Dressmakers are available at low prices, though they may not be reliable. Some can skillfully copy designs from fashion magazines or

from an existing model. They rarely use patterns. You must furnish fabric and notions, which, if available here, are very expensive. Many Nicaraguans do beautiful hand or machine embroidery as well.

Children: Children's clothes can be made at a reasonable cost from bright cotton bought locally or in the U.S. A limited ready-made supply is available here, but quality is mixed.

Supplies and Services

Bring all contact lenses supplies from the U.S. Few medicines are available in Nicaragua.

Household items bought here can cost two or three times the U.S. price. La Galeria sells electric appliances, radios, cameras, TV's, video machines, perfumes, clothing, liquor, and toys-all at high prices.

Good-quality wicker and wooden porch furniture can be ordered to specification. Several well-known Nicaraguan artists' works may be purchased. Lovely machine embroidered linens are made in Masaya and Granada. Finely woven, decorative hammocks are a Nicaraguan trademark; and woodcrafters, basketweavers, and potters make gift items in various parts of the country. Although these items are not the bargain they once were, they are usually reasonably priced when compared to buying them in the U.S.

Managua has several good restaurants, including two pizza and two sandwich shops. Restaurant prices are high, especially, if you order imported liquor or wine.

A maid will do almost all laundry. Drycleaning establishments exist, but they get mixed reviews. Some have been known to lose or ruin clothing. Some people save dry cleaning for trips to Costa Rica or the U.S.-thus, the need for washable clothing. Garment bags are useful during the dry season, when dust permeates the air. Bring extra hangers. Plastic ones are best as metal ones may rust in the rainy season.

Managua has several beauty and barber shops. Some have relatively modern equipment, but few have sufficient supplies or trained personnel. Some people take advantage of trips outside Nicaragua to have their hair cut and styled, though this industry in Managua is improving.

Dealers in radio and electric appliances, including General Electric, Westinghouse, Philco, and Sony, provide repair service, but replacement parts are scarce. Parts catalogs, which usually come with appliances when purchased, are valuable for ordering parts from the U.S. Bring parts that you feel you may have to replace.

Simple picture framing is available at a reasonable cost. Some people take items to Costa Rica to be framed. At numerous hardware stores, stock is limited and prices for quality, imported goods are high.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is loosely defined as employees engaged in household, gardening, guard, and similar services. They may, or may not, live in. Live-in help is entitled to room, board, and three uniforms as well as salary. Live-out help receives only salary and, perhaps, uniforms. The first month of employment is a trial period for both employer and employee. Either party can then terminate employment for any reason without incurring additional legal obligations. A work contract with employees is not required, but recommended.

Domestics specialize in cooking ("cocinera"), caring for children ("china"), laundry ("lavandera"), gardening ("jardinero"), guards ("celador"), and cleaning ("limpieza"), etc. Most employees combine various specialties required by the family. Because of the high crime rate, all homes should have at least one employee, or family member, home at all times. Potential loss from break-ins outweighs the cost of a competent, honest employee.

After each six-month period, domestic employees get 15 days of paid vacation, but most employees prefer double pay (for the 15 days) in lieu of time off. In December, local law requires the payment of a Christmas bonus equal to a month's salary. Keep a written record, signed by the employee, of wage payments to prevent complications over the amount of Christmas bonus or severance payments due when employment is terminated. Additional provisions regulate days off, sick leave, severance pay, and other matters.

Religious Activities

Most Nicaraguans are Roman Catholic. Catholic Churches in Managua celebrate Masses on Saturdays, Sundays, and Holy Days at various hours from 5 am or 6 am through noon and in the evenings. Mass is celebrated in English at the Lincoln School every Sunday at 9:30 am.

Nondenominational English services are held on Sundays at 8 am at the Nicaragua Christian Academy. Baptist, Mormon, Seventh-Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other missionary congregations conduct services in Spanish at various times during the week. Managua has no synagogues.

Education

For primary and secondary students, the American-Nicaraguan School (ANS), established in 1944, offers English instruction from the nursery and kindergarten levels through grade 12 by American, Nicaraguan, and some third-country national teachers. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. Graduates have successfully attended many U.S. colleges and universities. The school has about 1,250 students and 104 teachers. The school year for all students roughly follows the U.S. system: first semester, early August to mid-December; second semester, early January to early June.

Bus service is available for a monthly fee. Preschool students attend from 7:30 am to 11:30 am; all

other students from 7:40 am to 2:10 pm. Uniforms, consisting of dark blue pants or skirts with white shirts or blouses, are required for all grades here, as they are for all schools in Managua. You may bring shirts or blouses and sew the school patch (available in the business office) on to them. Books are provided. The school offers a standard U.S. college preparatory course, a business course, and a "bachillerato" program in Spanish. One honors course is offered. Spanish-as-a-second language is required at all levels, beginning at grade 2. Advanced placement classes are also available to students, beginning in their sophomore year. These classes are first-year college courses that students can take for college credit. ANS has five science labs, a full computer laboratory, a 5,000-volume library, new gym, outdoor sports facilities, a covered outdoor stage, and counseling quarters. Afterschool sports, drama, and community service activities are offered.

The Nicaraguan Christian Academy (NCA), established in 1991, has grown rapidly. Its current enrollment is 106 with 13 teachers (ten Americans, two Nicaraguans, and one third-country national). NCA has a 40% native English-speaking student body. Its out of the city location, just off the South Highway, makes it all the more appealing to those who live on that side of town. What it lacks in facilities, it makes up for in personal attention in its small classes. Pre-kindergarten hours are 8:30 am to noon; kindergarten, 7:30 am to noon; and grades 1 to 12, 7:30 am to 2:15 pm. NCA's classes begin early September and continue until mid-June.

The Lincoln International School, a Catholic school established in 1991, is located across the highway from NCA and currently has 500 students taught by 40 teachers. The percentage of native-English speakers is unknown. Hours are 7:45 am to 3 pm, and classes start in mid-August.

Notre Dame School, a Catholic school established in 1992, currently has 290 students enrolled (10% of whom are native English speakers) with 24 teachers. The hours are 7:45 am to 2:15 pm and the school year begins mid-August. It offers three diplomas: Nicaraguan, U.S., and International Baccalaureate. Although the last three newly established schools have limited facilities, they offer quality education.

Special Educational Opportunities

Nicaragua has numerous institutions of higher education including the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN), the Jesuit-run Central American University (UCA), the Harvard-affiliated Central American Institute of Business Administration (INCAE), the University of Mobile, the American Autonomous University (UAM), the National Agrarian University (UNA), the Polytechnical University (UPOLI), the National Engineering University (UNI), and the Catholic University (UNICA). (See Arts, Science, and Education.)

Some private or small group classes are offered in tennis, swimming, dancing, art, music, and bridge. Instruction in Spanish and other foreign languages is available. Anyone with a skill to teach will find that the community is receptive to new activities. Very limited special educational opportunities are available.

Managua does not have adequate teaching facilities for children with physical or emotional handicaps or learning disabilities.

Sports

The Intercontinental Hotel, the Camino Real Hotel, the Casa de Espana, and the Casa Grande have swimming pools. "Cabana Club" memberships are available at the Intercontinental. Swimming can be enjoyed at various Pacific Ocean beaches, at Lake Xilola, and Laguna de Apoyo. Montelimar, a private beach on the Pacific, has the only first-class overnight accom-

modations in Nicaragua outside Managua.

The Camino Real and Casa de Espana each have two night-lit tennis courts. Casa Grande has one court with night-lighting; the Ticomo Apartments has two day courts. For a minimum fee, Casa de Espana accepts temporary members and offers swimming, tennis, bar, and restaurant facilities.

A modern eight-lane bowling alley, with a sandwich shop, outdoor roller skating rink, and a video gameroom is located off the Masaya Highway.

Nicaragua has many areas for boating, but boats are expensive. For those with access, small-boat sailing is available and popular. Lake Managua, however, is not used for water sports because it is both shallow and contaminated. Rental boats are not generally available, except for fishing areas like San Juan del Sur, where rates are expensive and safe boating measures (such as providing life preservers) are not always practiced. Lake Nicaragua has tarpon, shark, and sawfish. (Lake Nicaragua is the only freshwater lake in the world where sharks have been found.) Guapote, a fish similar to bass, is found in many lakes and streams.

Baseball is the national sport; soccer is number two. Basketball is played in schools, colleges, and is sponsored commercially. Professional and amateur boxing is popular and a source of national pride.

Riding stables featuring Western-style riding lessons are available. Horses can be purchased, but few houses have sufficient grounds to stable a horse. Bring special riding equipment or clothing. Saddles are available locally.

Several regularly scheduled sports events take place at the Casa Grande, such as volleyball, basketball, softball, and exercise classes. Everyone is invited to join. Many people are involved in the local chapter of the Hash House Harriers, a running and walking club.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Nicaragua has panoramic natural beauty; and its mountains, volcanoes, and lakes offer many new experiences to visitors. Fine hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching, and boating are available, if you are the rugged outdoor type. However, few package trips exist. You have to make your own arrangements and provide all your own equipment. Hotels, lodges, sanitary facilities, and potable water are nonexistent; and a four-wheel-drive vehicle is essential. Managua has little tourist activity, but local travel agencies offer trips throughout Nicaragua. Cities outside the capital have retained their colonial flavor with low one-story houses, built around an inner patio, lining the sidewalks. The church always faces the main square park and together they usually form the geographic and social center of the town.

Located about an hour's drive from Managua, past the town of Masachapa, southwest of Managua, Montelimar, was once the private hideaway of the Somoza family. Converted to a tourist complex by the Sandinista government and now owned by a Spanish firm, it boasts the best accommodations outside of Managua. You can go for the day and take a picnic or eat at one of the restaurants. Comfortable rooms and cabins are available for overnight guests.

On the Pacific, Pochimil Beach is ½ miles from the town of Masachapa (37 miles southwest of Managua). It has a wide, gently sloping beach. The Nicaraguan Government opened a tourist center with picnic facilities at Pochimil in 1982. The beach is usually quiet on Saturdays and crowded on Sundays or during the Easter season. The undertow and cross currents can be hazardous.

Poneloya beach is 12 miles beyond Leon on a paved road. A hotel is available where you can change clothes and buy food and drinks; however, the accommodations do not appeal to most for an overnight



Aerial view of Managua, Nicaragua

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stay. The undertow and cross currents are also hazardous.

San Juan del Sur, located about 95 miles southwest of Managua on the Pacific, can be reached via a poorly paved side road from the Pan-American Highway. It has excellent deep-sea fishing, and you can rent fishing boats by making arrangements in advance.

Lake Xiloa is a crater lake 10 miles from Managua offers swimming, boating, and water skiing. An extensive tourist complex has been built, and the spot is popular as a nearby recreation area. Snacks and drinks are available.

The semiactive Masaya Volcano is 13 miles from Managua on the Masaya Highway. The park has paved roads, observation areas, picnic locations, a museum with a restaurant, and excellent views of the smoking volcano with molten lava in the crater. On the Atlantic coast, the Caribbean seaport of Bluefields can be reached by Nica or Costena Airlines or by poor roads and boat. English is the predominant language in this deeply tropical region. Its West Indies atmosphere differentiates it from the rest of the country.

There are two Corn Islands, both typical tropical isles with waving palms and broad beaches. The larger one is about three miles long and located 40 miles off the coast of Bluefields. Overnight facilities can be obtained in private homes on the islands, but they are primitive. There are no hotels.

Travel to neighboring countries by car is possible, and many people take advantage of the opportunity to escape Managua's heat, shop, and become acquainted with other Central American cultures. San Jose, Costa Rica (about a 7-hour drive), at an altitude of over 3,000 feet, is a modern city with a cool climate. Tegucigalpa, Honduras (about a 5-hour drive), is also over 3,000 feet. The drive to San Salvador takes some 10 hours and to Guatemala City, almost 14 hours. Major roads within Nicaragua are generally in fair condition, depending on the season and money available to patch them; however, the Pan-American Highway is usually passable year round.

All Central American capitals, and Mexico City, can be reached quickly by air on the many regional and U.S. airlines that serve Managua. (See Transportation Regional.) For cur-

rent information, contact the airlines. Approximate round-trip fares from Managua as of April 1997 were: San Jose, \$196; Tegucigalpa, \$200; Guatemala City, \$350; San Salvador, \$240; Mexico City, \$490; Miami, \$574; Houston \$788.

Entertainment

Managua has limited entertainment. Most There is one modern movie theater with two screens. First-run movies arrive within a few months of their U.S. release date. The four cable companies receive 40-65 channels. Rates range from \$20-\$30 a month.

A few foreign cultural groups perform in Managua each year, usually in the Ruben Dario Theater, which is one of the finest in the region. Local folk-dance groups perform there as well. There are usually a couple of major popular music festivals, with artists from other Latin American countries. The Ministry of Culture sponsors some events in the Ruins of the Grand Hotel where a theater has been built.

There are local disco-type nightclubs, as well as clubs that feature Nicaraguan and Latin American musical groups. Some restaurants, including Los Ranchos and the Lobster's Inn, are available for large parties. The Intercontinental and Camino Real Hotels have party, banquet, and conference rooms. However, entertaining is usually done at home. Caterers are available, as well as small musical groups, although prices are high.

Social Activities

The American-Nicaraguan Society, open to all members of the U.S. community, sponsors several events during the year. There is also the relatively new Christian Ladies Tea Group, which meets monthly at the Casa Grande.

The International Women's Club consists of women who are native Nicaraguans, some who married Nicaraguans and settled here, those who came to Nicaragua with their husbands to live, and women living here for only a short time. Their

meetings are conducted in English. The Nicaraguan English Speaking Theater (NEST) is composed of members from throughout the community and offers two productions a year which are highly attended.

Nicaraguans are usually open and hospitable. As the country has attained normalcy, so have relations between our two governments. Even though foreign investment is starting to return after having plummeted during the Sandinista years, there is still only a small foreign business community.

The Alliance Francaise offers language classes and a variety of entertainment, including movies, lectures, plays, and social dances year round.

León

Nicaragua's former capital, and second largest city, can be reached by paved highway, 42 miles from Managua, and has a population of 147,000. It is the seat of part of the University of Nicaragua (UNAN), and several of its faculties are located there. Leon's large 18th-century cathedral contains the tomb of Ruben Dario, Nicaragua's world-renowned poet.

OTHER CITIES

BLUEFIELDS is located in southeast Nicaragua on Bluefields Bay, about 170 miles east of Managua. Situated at the mouth of the Escondido River, it is Nicaragua's chief port on the Caribbean Sea. From here, bananas, coconuts, shrimp, lobsters, and hardwoods are exported. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Bluefields was a meeting point for English and Dutch pirates. In 1678, it became the capital of the British protectorate over the Mosquito Coast. Today, Bluefields is the capital of Yelaya Department and has a population of about 25,000.

Situated in the Pacific coastlands about 70 miles northwest of Managua, **CHINANDEGA** is a thriving

industrial city. It is the capital of Chinandega Department as well as a processing point for the hinterland. Revolutionary battles took place here in 1927, and again in 1978-1979. Crops grown near the city include bananas, sugarcane, and cotton. Chinandega's industries produce furniture, perfume, and toilet water. Several sawmills, metalworks, and tanneries are located in Chinandega. Its 1995 population was about 67,800. A line of the Pacific Railway passes through Chinandega; the city is connected to Managua by highway.

CORINTO, located on the Pacific Ocean about 75 miles northwest of Managua, is Nicaragua's chief port. Sugar, hides, coffee, cotton, and wood are exported from here. With a population of approximately 20,000, Corinto is also a railroad terminus.

DIRIAMBÁ is a 26 miles southwest of Managua, on the Pan-American Highway, and lies in the heart of a coffee-growing region. Limestone quarries and saltworks are also located near the city. It is situated at an altitude of 2,000 feet and has a pleasant climate. Diriamba was heavily damaged during the 1978-79 civil war. Casares and La Boquita are two undeveloped black sand beaches on the Pacific out of Diriamba.

ESTELÍ is an agricultural hub on the Estelí River, 70 miles north of Managua. The downtown area was virtually ruined in the heavy fighting of the revolution in 1978-1979. The Spanish settled Estelí near prehistoric stone figures; today, it is a commercial center on the Pan-American Highway. Industries in Estelí include hat manufacturing, sawmilling, and tanning. Several crops are grown near the city, among them tobacco, cotton, fruit, vegetables, and sesame. The estimated population of this departmental capital is 30,600.

GRANADA, Nicaragua's oldest city, formerly the country's commercial center, was founded by Hernandez de Cordoba, Nicaragua's colonizer in 1523. Its population is

about 75,000. The epitaphs on the marble tombs of Granada's cemetery provide a fascinating history of the city's turbulent past. The city is on the northwestern shore of the country's large freshwater Lake Nicaragua, 28 miles over paved highway from Managua. Here tourists are attracted to a group of beautiful lake islands, "Las Isletas." Ometepe and Zapatera, volcanic-formed islands in the lakes, are well-known sites for pre-Colombian artifacts.

JINOTEGA is a departmental capital in northern Nicaragua, 70 miles north-northwest of Managua. Coffee, tobacco, corn, beans, potatoes, wheat, and fruits are grown here. Several industries, including coffee processing, tanning, hat manufacturing, and flour milling are located in the city. A highway connects the city to Matagalpa. Jinotega's estimated population is 17,000.

JINOTEPE lies in the Diriamba Highlands, about 25 miles south of Managua. It is the capital of Carazo Department in addition to being an important commercial and manufacturing point. Quarries are located nearby and coffee, rice, sugarcane, and sesame are grown in surrounding farmland. The city's church contains a rare reliquary of precious gems. The area honors St. James the Great, its patron, with an annual festival. The city was heavily damaged during the 1978-79 civil war. An estimated 18,000 people live in Jinotepe, which is situated on the Pan-American Highway.

MASAYA, the "City of Flowers," 16 miles from Managua, has a population of 95,000. The town is well known to natives, and tourists as well, as Nicaragua's handicrafts center. Embroidered dresses and shirts, shoes, handbags, fiber floor-mats, hand fans, hammocks, black coral jewelry, wicker furniture, small gifts crafted of wood, and filigree-gold- and - silver work are available. One of the country's better-known restaurants, the Tip Top, which specializes in chicken dishes, is nearby.

MATAGALPA. This town is 81 miles north of Managua on a paved branch of the Pan American Highway and has a population of about 63,000. The city, at an altitude of 2,100 feet and consequently a cooler climate, is set in hilly country and surrounded by beautiful coffee plantations. The Selva Negra (Schwarzwald) Mountain Hotel has a restaurant. Near Matagalpa on the Dariense Cordillera.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The largest of the Central American Republics, Nicaragua borders Costa Rica to the south and Honduras to the north. It covers 57,143 square miles (about the size of Wisconsin) including the region's largest fresh water lakes-Lake Nicaragua and Lake Managua which total 3,500 square miles. The country is divided into three geographic sections: the drier Pacific coastal plain to the west with its low mountain ranges near the sea; the wetter and cooler mountainous extension of the Central American Highlands which runs from northwest to southeast across the middle of the country; and the hot and humid flat Atlantic lowlands along the east coast.

Most of the population is located in western Nicaragua on the fertile lowland Pacific Plains which surround the lakes and extend north to the Gulf of Fonseca. This region is the political and commercial heart of the country. Lake Managua and Lake Nicaragua dominate the map of this area, and a series of young volcanoes, many still active, dot the coastal plain paralleling the Central American Highlands. The tallest volcanoes reach 5,700 feet, and two are visible from Managua.

The mountain highland provinces of Matagalpa and Jinotega, northeast of the volcanoes and lakes, are more sparsely populated and Nicaragua's

major coffee producing areas. The easternmost section of the highlands receives the warm, wet Caribbean winds and is mainly sparsely settled rain forest, with a few operating gold mines near the town of Bonanza.

Eastern Nicaragua, with one-third of the total national territory which is an area about the size of El Salvador, has about 10% of the population and is tropical rain forests and pine-flats. The region, largely ignored by the Spanish, was a British protectorate until 1860. Even today, many of the people along the Atlantic coast prefer to speak English.

Nicaragua's climate varies with altitude and season. The summer, or dry season, from mid-November to mid-May, is hot and dry, with cooler nights. Winter, better described as the rainy season, from mid-May to mid-November, is hot and humid, with short, heavy tropical showers that may occur daily, often accompanied by violent electrical storms. Streams flood in the rainy season and dry up the rest of the year. The average daily high temperature in Managua ranges from 79°F to 93°F. Nights are usually temperate. Temperatures in the mountains can dip as low as 61°F, while the east coast high may be a humid 84°F.

Nicaragua offers appealing landscapes from the primitive Caribbean island beauty of Corn Island, to the lovely lake views near the colonial city of Granada, to the stark beauty of the semiactive volcano located between Managua and Masaya. Volcanic Lakes Xiloa and Apoyo, near Managua, are excellent for swimming and day sailing, and provide relief from the heat. Pacific Ocean beaches are nearby, and the cooler rainforest mountains of Esteli and Matagalpa are just a few hours drive away. (Note: Accommodations outside Managua are limited. See Recreation and Social Life.)

Managua never fully recovered from the 1972 earthquake, in which the entire city center was destroyed, and suffered further neglect

through the 1980s. Today, it remains mostly deserted, with visible earthquake ruins. Managua is now a widely scattered collection of neighborhoods that rim an empty hub, with no centrally located business or shopping district. However, the area near the recently inaugurated Cathedral appears to be becoming the city's new focal point.

Population

In 1995, the Government of Nicaragua conducted a census of the country's population, but the final results of this census have not been published. In 1996, however, voter registration predictions, based on preliminary results of the 1995 census, were found to be underestimated across the board. Observers, therefore, suspect that the 1995 census was flawed, particularly in remote rural areas of north and central Nicaragua, where conditions make it extremely difficult to conduct an accurate census. The national estimate is 4.4 million, with almost 1 million in Managua alone.

Nicaragua's history of political centralism, and geographic and ethnic diversity, has led to the development of three distinct societies. In the western one-third, known as the Pacific and where the bulk of the population, wealth, and political power is concentrated, the people are Spanish-speaking, predominantly Catholic mestizos.

Despite its minute population, the east coast has more ethnic diversity—primarily Caribbean black and Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians. These groups differ culturally and linguistically from each other, and, from their Spanish-speaking countrymen in the west and center. The foreign influence in this region, primarily from England but also from the U.S., shares dominance with the Hispanic culture. Caribbean English and Spanish are spoken by many communities of the Caribbean coast, but in the indigenous communities Miskito, Rama, and Sumo predominate.

The central corridor of Nicaragua, where most fighting occurred in the 1980s, has registered tremendous growth, both in terms of population and economic activity, since 1990. This growth is due in part to Nicaraguans returning to their country since the end of the war in 1990. In this region, a largely mestizo, Spanish-speaking population is pushing into areas populated almost exclusively by the indigenous peoples who predominate in the east coast.

Public Institutions

The election held October 20, 1996, culminated Nicaragua's transition to democracy that began with the 1990 election of President Violeta Chamorro. President Chamorro's tenure followed over 10 years of Sandinista rule and armed conflict between the Sandinista Popular Army (EPS) and the Nicaragua Resistance (RN). During President Chamorro's nearly seven years in office, the government achieved major progress toward consolidating democratic institutions, advancing national reconciliation, stabilizing the economy, privatizing state-owned enterprises, and reducing human rights violations.

In all, Nicaragua's 35 political parties participated in the 1996 elections, independently or as part of one of five electoral coalitions. With nearly 52% of the vote the center-right Liberal Alliance, a coalition of five political parties and sectors of another two, won the presidency for its leader, Armoldo Aleman, a plurality in the national legislature, and a large majority of the mayoral races. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) ended in second place with 38%. Only two out of 14 mayors belong to third parties. The first transfer of power in recent Nicaraguan history from one democratically elected president to another occurred January 10, 1997 with the Aleman administration's inauguration.

Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy with executive, legislative, judicial and electoral branches of government. In 1995, the executive

and legislative branches negotiated a reform of the 1987 Sandinista constitution, giving the National Assembly impressive new powers and independence, including over taxation (formerly, an exclusive executive branch power) and the power to elect Supreme Court judges and other important public officials.

Both the President and the Member; of the unicameral National Assembly (legislature) are elected to concurrent five-year terms. The President is head of state, as well as the head of government.

The National Assembly consists of 90 deputies elected from party lists, draws at the department and national level, plus, those defeated presidential candidates who obtained a minimal quotient of votes. In the 1996 elections, the Liberal Alliance won a plurality of 42 seats, the FSLN won 36 seats, and nine other parties won the remaining 15 seats.

The Supreme Court supervises functioning of a still largely ineffective, and overburdened, judicial system. As part of 1995 constitutional reforms, the Supreme Court's independence was strengthened by increasing the number of magistrates from organizing and conducting elections, plebiscites, and referendums. Magistrates and their alternates are elected to five-year terms by the National Assembly.

Freedom of speech is a right, guaranteed by the Nicaraguan constitution, and vigorously exercised by its people. Diverse viewpoints are freely and openly discussed in the media and in academia. Nicaragua does not use state censorship. Other constitutional freedoms include peaceful assembly and association, freedom of religion, and freedom of movement within the country, as well as foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation. Domestic and international human rights monitors operate freely within the country.

Both the military and police are increasingly professional and apolitical. In February 1995, General Joaquin Cuadra replaced then-Sandinista army commander General Humberto Ortega, in accordance with a new military code, enacted in 1994. He has espoused greater professionalism in the renamed Army of Nicaragua.

President Aleman has established a civilian-led Ministry of Defense to ensure that civilians assume their appropriate role in setting national defense and security policies. A new police organization law, passed by the National Assembly and signed into law in August 1996, further codified civilian control and professionalizing of that law enforcement agency.

Arts, Science, and Education

The Sandinista regime encouraged the arts, and the current government continues to support them, within budget constraints. There are a National School of Dance, National School of Fine Arts, and a National Conservatory of Music, along with several private schools dedicated to the arts.

Although the works of Nicaraguan plastic artists and artisans are internationally known, the nation's true pride is its poets. Indeed, it has been said that every Nicaraguan is a poet. Ruben Dario, a late 19th-century Nicaraguan poet, is credited with introducing modernism to Spanish poetry. He is internationally known and highly honored in his native land. A museum dedicated to his memory is located in Leon, and the impressive National Theater is named after him.

The national university scene continues to develop, as private universities continue to grow and prosper alongside Nicaragua's traditional, state-funded universities.

The Central American University, UCA, has a law school, social sci-

ences/humanities faculties, and the only journalism program in the country. The National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in Leon (UNAN-Leon, enrollment: 7,000 students), was founded in 1812. This state-run university has the most prestigious law and medical schools in Nicaragua. The state-run National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in Managua, UNAN Managua, was founded in 1941 as the Central University of Managua. It was officially part of UNAN-Leon until 1982. Its enrollment is 15,000 students and its degree programs include strong business and economics programs. It is the only university that trains the nation's primary and secondary schoolteachers, including teachers of English.

The Central American Business Administration Institute, INCAS (enrollment: 200 students), offers a solid, U.S.-style graduate business program. In 1996, the MBA program was reinstated after a 13-year absence. The Business School of Harvard University financially supports and exchanges faculty with INCAS.

The private Catholic University, UNICA (enrollment: 1,500 students), opened in 1993 on land donated by the Managua mayor's office. It is openly aligned with the Catholic Church and has right-of-center political interests, but it accepts students (with good grades) of all faiths and political leanings. It is now retrenching after an initial, ambitious growth spurt and has trimmed its course offerings and cut engineering as a major.

The American University, UAM (enrollment: 1,500 students), opened in 1993 in four small buildings, but has expanded dramatically since then. It runs one of only two international relations/diplomacy programs in Nicaragua, has a medical school, and recently established a dentistry program. UAM has recently been concentrating on its business course offerings and developing its computer science program. The University of Mobile Latin American campus (enrollment: 300

students), was founded in San Marcos in 1993. It is a private, U.S.-accredited, English-language branch of the Alabama university of the same name. This campus boasts the most modern facilities in Nicaragua. Each professor reportedly has a Ph.D. or Master's degree. It offers computer science, English literature, marine biology, biology, environmental technology, finance, accounting, business administration, economics, marketing, and tourism degrees. It owns and operates the University Hotel in Jinotepe as part of its hotel and restaurant management program.

The Polytechnical University, UPOLI (enrollment: 2,500 students), is a technical and scientific institution founded in 1967. It is administered by the Baptist Convention, with some government funding. The National Engineering University, UNI (enrollment: 8,000 students), was founded in 1982. Curriculums cover all engineering fields, except agriculture and forestry. UNI does a good job of selling services to the private sector and also receives assistance from European governments. The quality of instruction and equipment is fair but improving. Until SPRINT recently appeared on the scene, UNI served as Nicaragua's hub for Internet users.

The National Agrarian University, UNA (enrollment: 1,500 students), founded in 1990, was previously the Agricultural College of UNAN-Managua. UNA works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The Centro Cultural Nicaraguense-Norteamericano (CCNN), a non-profit binational center, offers English- and Spanish-language instruction, a 6,000-volume library of American books, and a wide assortment of U.S. periodicals.

Commerce and Industry

Nicaragua began to institute free market reforms in 1991 after 12

years of economic free fall under the Sandinista regime. Despite some setbacks, the country has made dramatic progress: privatizing almost 350 state enterprises, reducing inflation from 13,490% to 12%, and cutting the foreign debt by 50%. The economy began expanding in 1994 and grew a very strong 5.5% in 1996 (its best performance since 1977). As a result, total GDP reached \$2.029 billion.

Despite this growing economy, Nicaragua remains the second poorest nation in the hemisphere with a per capita GDP of \$476 (below where it stood before the Sandinista takeover in 1979). Unemployment, although falling, is 16%, and another 36% are underemployed. Nicaragua suffers from persistent trade deficits. That, along with a high-debt service burden and government fiscal deficit, leaves the nation highly dependent on foreign assistance (which equaled 22% of GDP in 1996).

One of the key engines of economic growth has been production for export. Exports rose to \$70 million in 1996, up 28% from 1995. Although traditional products such as coffee, meat, and sugar continued to lead the list of Nicaraguan exports, during 1996 the total value of nontraditional exports surpassed that of traditional goods for the first time. The fastest growing of these new products were "maquila" goods (apparel), bananas, gold, seafood, and new agricultural products such as sesame, melons, and onions. Rapid expansion of the tourist industry in 1996 made it the nation's third largest source of foreign exchange. The U.S. is the largest trading partner by far; the source of 26% of Nicaragua's imports, and the destination of 45% of its exports.

Nicaragua is primarily an agricultural country, but construction, mining, fisheries, and general commerce have also been expanding strongly during the last few years. The economy in 1996 saw increasing net inflows of foreign private capital, which totaled about \$190

million. The private banking sector continued to expand and strengthen. Private banks, which did not exist six years ago, currently hold 70% of the nation's deposit base.

Nicaragua now appears poised for rapid economic growth. However, long-term success at attracting investment, creating jobs, and reducing poverty depend on the Nicaraguan Government's ability to stay on track with an International Monetary Fund Program, resolve the thousands of Sandinista-era property confiscation cases, and continue to open its economy to foreign trade.

Transportation

Automobiles

Because of unreliable public transportation, a car is essential in Managua. The most popular cars are small-sized, four- or six-cylinder, U.S., or Japanese models. Many people, especially those who like to explore off-the-beaten track, have found four-wheel-drive vehicles very useful on Nicaragua's poor road system. High ground clearance for speed bumps and potholes is also an asset, and the high cost of gasoline (some \$2.50 a gallon) makes fuel economy a priority. Several Japanese and American (GM and Ford) distributorships have vehicles that sell above U.S. prices, but they do not meet U.S. specifications. Several car rental agencies, including Budget and Avis, have vehicles available at higher U.S. prices.

At Managua's several garages, repair quality varies. Labor is cheaper than in the U.S., but parts and tires cost much more than U.S. prices; and, most parts are not available locally at any price.

Cars shipped to the U.S. Despatch Agent in Miami are surface shipped to Puerto Cortes, Honduras, and transported overland to Managua. Send your car in good mechanical condition with good tires and undercoating. The tropical climate, humidity, rain, dust, and rough road

conditions all contribute to heavy wear-and-tear on tires and vehicles. Don't bring a convertible—they offer less protection from the elements and are more susceptible to vandalism.

Unleaded gasoline, including super and diesel, is readily available, but expensive.

All vehicles must have local third party-liability insurance coverage (cost \$107) before you receive license plates. Driving, especially at night, is often hazardous due to poor local driving habits, a lack of streetlights, and the rundown condition of vehicles and roads. In addition, pedestrians, vendors, beggars, and animals often wander in the driving lanes with no idea of the dangers they cause to themselves and to others.

Local

Local transportation is crowded with unsafe conditions. Most taxis are mid 70s Japanese models or Soviet-made Ladas in poor condition. Cabdrivers can, and do, pick up additional passengers; therefore, routes are usually indirect. The local bus system connects all parts of the city for a low fare but buses are scarce, uncomfortable, overcrowded (as much as triple the capacity), and in need of repair. Numerous pickup trucks, "camionetas," carry passengers as well. At rush hour, the crowded camionetas resemble cattle trucks.

Drivers who frequently fail to observe traffic rules are at fault in a large percentage of the traffic accidents. The disorderly driving of buses and taxis aggravates the already difficult driving conditions.

Regional

Augusto Cesar Sandino Airport, 11 kilometers from Managua, handles international traffic, including jet service.

Managua is currently served by several airlines, including Continental, American, Nica, Aviateca, TACA, COPA, Iberia, and LACSA. American carriers offer daily direct flights

to Miami and three times a week to Houston. The national airline, Nica, is the only major airline that provides both domestic and international service. Tickets for all airlines are purchased in U.S. currency, and credit cards are accepted.

Nicaragua has a primary highway system connecting principal cities by paved but poorly maintained roads. The highway network is mostly confined to the populous western part of the country. One paved road extends east to Rama, and an unpaved road goes to Puerto Cabezas; the latter is often impassable in the rainy season. The Pan American Highway (all paved but poorly maintained) is the country's major travel artery. It enters Nicaragua in the north at El Espino and exits in the south at Penas Blancas on the Costa Rican border.

Various privately owned bus companies have lines connecting Managua with all of western Nicaragua. Many are vans. Buses also run on a limited schedule to Costa Rica and Honduras.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local- and long-distance telephone service is available in Managua. International telephone and telegraph are handled by the Nicaraguan Telecommunications and Post Office Company (TELCOR). Direct dialing to the U.S. costs about \$1.15 a minute. If you have AT&T, SPRINT, and MCI cards you can make direct calls. The number of telephone lines is severely limited, new phones are hard to obtain, malfunctions occur frequently, and repairs are slow. Local and in-country calls are often difficult to make; overseas calls are more easily made.

Radio and TV

Managua has 120 radio stations broadcasting on both AM and FM. With the return to democracy, censorship has been lifted, and news programs have proliferated. Other offerings are usually limited to music and some religious program-

ming. For best FM reception, bring an external antenna (indoor or outdoor).

Shortwave radio reception is fairly good using built-in antennas. Broadcasts in English by VOA, BBC, and others are common and offer a variety of programs. To operate a ham radio, you must request and receive a license from the Radio Club of Nicaragua. If you are approved, TELCOR issues you permission to go on the air.

The eight TV stations currently on the air include privately run channel 2; Sandinista-affiliated Channel 4; private, conservative, channel 8; privately owned business-oriented channel 10 and channel 12, privately owned channel 19; channel 21, a religious broadcaster, and private music and youth-oriented channel 23. Almost all offer a mix of Latin soap operas, sports, and movies, some of which are dubbed, and some, subtitled. Several cable TV operators are active in the areas in and offer a full range of U.S. programming for about \$20-\$30 a month.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Nicaragua's print media are no longer subject to censorship. Managua has four daily newspapers: La Prensa is an independent newspaper owned by former President Chamorro's family; Barricada, no longer the official organ of the FSLN, still favorably reports the Sandinista's programs and views; El Nuevo Diario, which has the largest circulation, is supportive of the Sandinistas but highly critical of the U.S.; La Tribuna, privately owned, conservative, and independent, began publishing in 1993.

Several weekly magazines are published; best known among them are: El Semanario-political news and commentary, generally pro-Sandinista and Confidential-left-of-center news and commentary.

Several U.S. news and business magazines such as Time, Newsweek, and Fortune, as well as the

Miami Herald and the New York Times are available, but slightly delayed, at local newsstands.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local hospitals are far below U.S. standards; however, considerable improvements have been noted in the Baptist and military hospitals since 1990. Most medicines are available. X-ray, ultrasound, and endoscopy equipment is new. No elective surgery is done incountry. Some emergencies, however, can be, and have been, properly handled. Serious cases can be stabilized and evacuated either by Air Ambulance or commercial airline. Medical evacuations are authorized to Miami. Expectant mothers return to the U.S. for delivery. Many local laboratories are now equipped to perform almost all tests.

Community Health

Reports on local dental care are mixed. Some have had good experiences, but others have not. Some local dentists are well trained, but even those find it difficult to acquire high-quality equipment, which is expensive in a practice setting that will not financially support such purchases. In general, basic dental care (i.e., cleaning, polishing, and fillings) can be done locally. Have more complicated procedures, such as root canals, done elsewhere. Orthodontic care is available and at a lower cost than in the U.S.

Opticians and optometrists are available, and lens-grinding facilities exist and can be used if needed. Prices are higher than the level of quality warrants and, if you need glasses, bring them. Bring sunglasses also.

Public sanitation measures are rudimentary at best with resulting health and hygiene hazards. Garbage collection is erratic and collection areas are usually strewn with refuse, which is scattered by impoverished individuals "dumpster diving" in search of usable items and

feral dogs and rodents foraging for something edible.

Shanty towns, without water or sewage systems, have sprung up in every neighborhood. These areas are a reservoir of contagious illnesses such as typhoid, cholera, infectious hepatitis, and mosquito-borne illnesses.

Despite local government efforts to maintain the water system, and even chlorinate the water supply, the water system is aging and has been a victim of earthquakes, illegal tapping into the water mains by shanty town residents that increases the risk of contamination, and frequent water shortages in the dry season that leave stagnant water in the system that appears at faucets when the flow is restored. For these reasons, regard suspiciously any water that has not been boiled, or otherwise treated. Carry bottled water when you travel outside Managua.

Mosquito-borne illnesses are endemic. Malaria, in the form of vivax malaria, is present in most parts of the country, and dengue-fever infection rates are the hemisphere's highest. Budget restrictions severely hinder mosquito spraying to limited times and areas, which is only minimally effective.

Most food sold in public markets is handled and stored in unsanitary conditions. Perishable items in these markets are not well refrigerated, and erratic power supplies make proper storage impossible even in those shops that have refrigeration.

Suitable facilities are not available for the handicapped.

Preventive Measures

Typhoid, polio, tetanus, and diphtheria vaccinations are recommended before leaving the U.S. Incidents of infectious hepatitis are increasing in Nicaragua, and Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccine are recommended as a preventive measure.

Intestinal diseases affect everyone at one time or another, but you can experience fewer episodes if you take suitable precautions with food, your personal hygiene, and your household help. Boil or filter drinking water and water for ice. Fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly, peeled, or soaked in chlorine (chlorox) or iodine solution. Cook meats and seafood well before eating. If intestinal diseases occur, you can find medications to deal with them at local pharmacies.

During the dry season, dust and wind make life uncomfortable for those who suffer from sinusitis, allergies, and other respiratory ailments. Asthmatics must also contend with mold that forms during the rainy season; however, using a room dehumidifier can help relieve the problem.

The most hazardous insects in Managua are houseflies, mosquitoes, spiders, and scorpions. Roaches, ants, and other common household insects can be controlled with aerosol bombs. Regular fumigation is necessary. Poisonous snakes are seen occasionally.

Malaria is a hazard. It is recommended that chloroquine, a malaria suppressant, is taken weekly. Several U.S. travelers have been affected by dengue fever which, at times, reaches epidemic proportions. Keeping bedroom windows screened, or closed with air-conditioning, cuts down on possibility of mosquito bites. Mosquito netting is a good idea, especially for small children, and you can purchase it locally.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A U.S. passport, valid for six months beyond the duration of the visit, is required to enter Nicaragua. Tourists must also have an onward or return ticket and evidence of sufficient funds to support themselves

during their stay. U.S. citizens do not require a visa, but a tourist card valid for 90 days must be purchased upon arrival. Tourist card fees and airport departure taxes must be paid in U.S. dollars. Visitors remaining more than 90 days must obtain an extension from Nicaraguan immigration. Failure to do so prevents departure until a fine is paid. For further information regarding entry, departure, and customs requirements, travelers should contact the Embassy of Nicaragua at 1627 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20009; telephone (202) 939-6570 or (202) 939-6531; e-mail at embanic_prensa@andyne.net; or a Nicaraguan consulate in Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, or San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Although many restaurants and hotels now accept credit cards, especially in Managua, acceptance is not as widespread as in the U.S. Travelers checks are accepted at a few major hotels and may be exchanged for local currency at authorized exchange facilities ("casas de cambio"). There are few automatic teller machines, particularly outside Managua. English is not widely spoken.

Nicaragua is prone to a wide variety of natural disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes and volcanic eruptions. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Nicaragua are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Managua and obtain updated information on travel and security in Nicaragua. The U.S. Embassy is located at Kilometer 4½ (4.5) Carretera Sur, Managua; telephone (505) 266-6010 or 268-0123; after hours telephone (505) 266-6038; Consular Section fax (505)266-9943; e-mail: consular-

managu@state.gov; web page http://usembassy.state.gov/managua

Pets

Pets must have a certificate of rabies vaccine, health certificate, and certificate of origin (pet shop receipt, veterinarian's proof of origin, etc.) The health certificate must be certified by the Nicaraguan Embassy or Consulate before departing for Managua. Send the following information in advance of arrival: a) pet's species, b) breed, c) name, d) color, e) weight, f) sex, and g) height (in inches).

Firearms and Ammunition

Government of Nicaragua regulations require clear proof of ownership during customs inspection. A Government of Nicaragua firearms permit application must be filled out (with accompanying photos of the applicant).

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

All currency transactions are regulated by the Government of Nicaragua. The official unit of money is the cordoba, exchanged (September 1999) at a rate of 012.04 (cordobas) to US\$1. Local currency can be obtained at licensed money exchangers (Casas de Cambio) or local banks. All other currency transactions are illegal and should be avoided. U.S. currency can be obtained and personal checks may be cashed at Bancentro.

Nicaragua is partially on the metric system; weight is normally measured in pounds rather than kilograms, but distance is measured in kilometers.

No limitation is placed on amount of dollars or traveler's checks you can bring into the country. Traveler's checks are accepted by local banks, but the rate is likely to be below that available at a Casa de Cambio.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Sunday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - July 19 Anniversary of the Revolution
 - Sept. 14. Battle of San Jacinto
 - Sept. 15. Independence Day
 - Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Most current literature on Nicaragua was written in 1980s. Many of these books are biased toward one side or the other of the civil war that ravaged Nicaragua during that decade. A few books of a general nature on Nicaragua and its people are listed here. Most information on Nicaragua is included in larger studies on Central America.

Federal Research Division Library of Congress. *Nicaragua: A Country Study*. (Area Handbook Series.) 1994.

Barrios de Chamorro, Violeta. *Dreams of the Heart*. (1996). The autobiography of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

Christian, Shirley. *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family*.

Cuadra, Pablo Antonio. *El Nicaraguense*.

Deidrich, Bernard. Somoza. Gallegois, Paco. *Nicaragua Tierra de Maravillas*.

Garner, J.D. *Historia de Nicaragua*.

Garvin, Glenn. *Everybody Had His Own Gringo!*

Harrison, Lawrence. *Underdevelopment is a State of Mind*. (Contains a section comparing Nicaragua and Costa Rica).

Herrera Zuniga, Rene. *Nicaragua, El derrumbe Negociado, Los avatares de un Cambio de Regimen*. (1994).

Kaplan, Robert. *A Twilight Struggle*. A voluminous analysis of U.S. Policy on Nicaragua.

Kinzer, Stephen. *Blood of Brothers*.

Nunez, Orlando, ed. Nunez, Orlando et al. *La Guerra y el Campesinado en Nicaragua*. (A Sandinista analysis of the causes for the emergency of the Nicaraguan Resistance.)

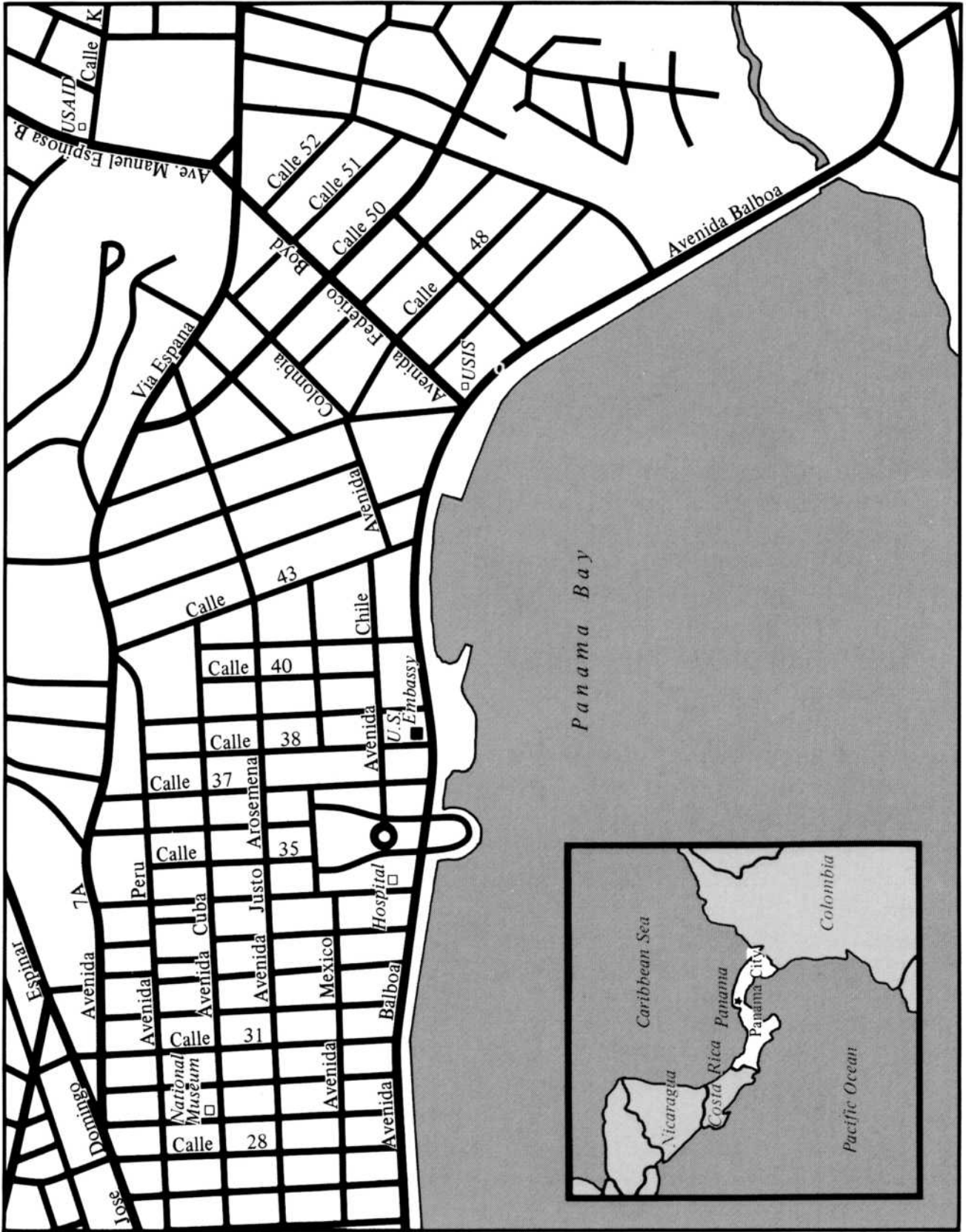
Randall, Margaret. *Sandnno' Daughters. Sandnno' Daughters Revisited: Feminism in Nicaragua. Las Relaciones internacionales y la formacion del poderpolitico en Nicaragua*. (1991).

Schwartz, Stephen. *A Strange Silence: The Emergence of Democracy in Nicaragua*. (1992)

Spalding, Rose J. *Capitalists and Revolution in Nicaragua: Opposition and Accommodation 1979-1993*.

Vilas, Carlos M. *Between Earthquakes and Volcanoes: Market, State, and the Revolutions in Central America*.

Waiter, Knut. *The Regime of Anastasio Somoza, 1936-1956*.



Panama City, Panama

PANAMA

Republic of Panama

Major City:

Panama City

Other Cities:

Balboa, Chitré, Colón, Cristóbal, David, Portobelo, Santiago

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

PANAMA, because of its strategic position on the isthmus connecting the North and South American continents, was a major center for exploration and expansion during the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1821, some years after the decline of Spanish colonial power in the Western Hemisphere, the territory became part of Greater Colombia.

The question of a waterway across the isthmus, linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and Colombia's refusal to ratify a treaty allowing construction, led to Panama's revolt and secession. The United States supported Panama with military forces, and recognized the new state on November 6, 1903. A treaty was

signed, giving the U.S. perpetual control over what came to be known as the Canal Zone, a designation that no longer applies. The covenant was amended in 1977, and implemented in 1979, with provision for ending U.S. military presence in Panama on the last day of this century, and for turning over responsibility and operation of the canal to the Panamanians.

MAJOR CITY

Panama City

Panama City, the capital and principal city of the Republic of Panama, is situated on the Pacific side of the country. In 2000, it had an approximate population of 1,088,000. Often called the "Crossroads of the World," it offers a uniquely international ambience and an active life with modern shopping centers, art exhibitions and many excellent NSrestaurants.

Food

A wide variety of American and ethnic foods are available at modern supermarkets in Panama City. Seafood, meat, fruits, vegetables, and canned and packaged goods are readily available in Panamanian

shops, although prepared foods which are imported from the U.S. or elsewhere can be expensive. Restaurants vary widely in both cost and cuisine. A full lunch can be had for seven dollars. There are also numerous top quality restaurants specializing in seafood, or any type of ethnic food, around the city. Pizza Hut, Dominos Pizza and other vendors offer home and office delivery.

Clothing

Summer clothes are worn year round in Panama. Cottons are the most comfortable, but cotton blends are satisfactory. Fabrics that are 100% synthetic neither absorb moisture nor "breathe" and are uncomfortable in Panama's humid climate. Many office buildings are overly air-conditioned so a light jacket or sweater can come in handy.

All types of clothing suitable for the Panamanian climate are available in retail shops in the Canal area, although selection may be limited at any given time. Prices in the local retail stores can be higher than U.S. prices, and size ranges are limited.

Men: Normal attire for male staff during working hours is a suit and tie. It is also preferred by many Panamanians. Some men use either the "guayabera" or a short-sleeved shirt. Casual sports attire is the

rule outside the office. The guayabera, a long, untucked embroidered shirt, is frequently worn for daytime or evening social functions and can be purchased locally.

Women: Female officers and staff members are most comfortable in lightweight suits or tailored or otherwise professional-looking one or two-piece dresses. A blazer, whether in a traditional color or something more tropical, is a useful addition to a working wardrobe. Casual outfits should be brought for general use, and beachwear, shorts, and slacks for recreational purposes. Shorts are not generally worn on the streets, but pants are acceptable. Sun hats are useful when outdoors. In recent years, the trend in female formal wear in Panama has been towards street-length rather than long gowns.

Children: Department of Defense schools do not enforce a dress code. Girls wear mostly shirts or blouses with slacks, jeans or skirts. Boys wear long pants (mostly jeans) or shorts with T-shirts or sport shirts. Private schools require school uniforms, which vary from school to school.

Supplies and Services

American brands of toilet articles, cosmetics, home medicines, drugs, tobacco products, cleaning materials, and household and entertainment accessories are readily available in retail stores in Panama City, but at prices higher than in the United States. Local brands are available at retail stores for very reasonable prices.

Panama City has good facilities for shoe repair, laundry and dry-cleaning, and radio and automobile repair. Beauty and barbershops are also available. You can take advantage of competent tailoring and dressmaking services here.

Religious Activities

Although Panama is a predominantly Catholic country (approximately 85%), places of worship of all denominations—with services in both English and Spanish—are



City view in Panama

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

located in Panama City and the Canal area. Sunday schools and church-related activities are numerous.

Education

Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) operates a school system in the canal area including grades K-12, as well as a two-year college curriculum. The schools are modeled on the U.S. public school system and are accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Instruction is in English. The schools are modern and well-equipped. Special education is available for children ages three and older. DODDS also has a talented and gifted program. Bus transportation is available for students in grades Kindergarten through twelfth grade. The school year runs from late August until mid June.

La Escuela Internacional de Panama (the International School of Panama) is the alternative school most often attended by American students, and is increasingly used due to the gradual closure of the DODDS system in Panama. Classes presently include grades K-12. The school's academic program meets the requirements of the Panama-

nian Ministry of Education and it has been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools of the United States. Instruction is in English except for a 40-minute class in Spanish each day.

Applications for admission to the International School are accepted at any time during the year. Classes are limited to a maximum of 24 students. All students are tested by the school counselor or other qualified staff member at the time of registration. If you would like to initiate the admission process before arriving in Panama, you may send your child's Iowa Test (ITBS) results or the equivalent. Following testing, the school's Admissions Committee will review the completed application to evaluate the student's potential and to determine whether acceptance will contribute to a balance of nationalities, transient vs. local population, language capability, personal interests, and personalities. The school year runs from early August to late June, with approximately seven weeks of vacation from just before Christmas until the end of January.

There are two other private schools: St. Mary's Parochial School and the Episcopal School of Panama both schools are well regarded in Pan-

ama. St. Mary's Parochial School, located in the canal area, offers classes for pre-school through the twelfth grade. Instruction is in English and Spanish. Registration is held one day during the first week of March. Preregistration is not possible.

The Episcopal School of Panama (Colegio Episcopal de Panama) is a small college preparatory school. Both English and Spanish are taught as first languages. This school has a waiting list. Both of these schools are in session from April through December.

There are several good nursery schools on the military bases, in the canal area, and in Panama City. Those located on the military bases conduct classes in English from September through June. All others, as a general rule, are bilingual with a preference toward Spanish, and are in session from April through December. It is best to postpone any decision until parents can visit the schools to determine which will best suit the needs and personality of their child.

For most schools you will need proof of age (for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten), a copy of the student's last report card, and an up-to-date immunization record. All schools that comply with the regulations set forth by the Panamanian Ministry of Education (all but DODDS) require that the birth certificate or a photocopy of the passport, and the previous year's school record be translated into Spanish and notarized.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Panama Canal College, part of the Department of Defense School system, offers a two-year college course with Associate degrees available in Business Administration, Accounting, Business Data Processing, and others, including Secretarial skills. Current full-time tuition is \$716 per semester for sponsored dependents under the age of 21. Dependent spouses may attend on a part-time basis (up to

eleven credits), at a charge of \$65.00 per credit hour.

The Panama Canal branch of Florida State University is located at Albrook Air Force Base. The university offers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Interamerican Studies, International Affairs and Social Science. In addition, students may complete up to 90 semester credit hours towards the 120 required for a degree in Business Administration. The last thirty credit hours must be taken in Florida. Tuition at Florida State is \$90.00 per semester credit hour.

Florida-based Nova University offers several degrees at the Panama Learning Center, which was founded in 1977. These include a Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Management, a Master of Arts degree in Applied Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language, and a Master's degree in Business Administration, and Computer Programs. The cost per credit hour ranges from \$125.00 for undergraduates to \$200.00 for graduate courses.

The University of Oklahoma has an extension campus at Albrook, offering a Master of Educational Psychology and a Master of Public Administration. Current tuition is \$203.75 per credit hour.

The above institutions are fully accredited. For additional information, they may be contacted at the following addresses:

Panama Canal College
DODDS, Panama Area
Unit 0925
APO, AA 34002

Florida State University
Panama Canal Branch
Unit 0922
APO, AA 34002

The University of Oklahoma
Education Service Center
Unit 0924
APO, AA 34002

Nova University
Panama Center
Unit 0924
APO, AA 34002

The University of Panama is located in Panama City. In general, you must successfully complete a five-year course to obtain a degree. The University will accept certificates from recognized secondary schools. Many classes are held in the evening and all instruction is in Spanish. For further information contact the University of Panama at Urbanizacion El Cangrejo, Republic of Panama.

The YMCA in the Canal area holds classes in Spanish, cooking, art, oil painting, ceramics, design, jewelry making, bridge, swimming, scuba diving and a variety of other subjects.

Sports

Organized athletic programs for adults are limited, but you can participate on an individual basis in almost any warm-weather sport. A number of swimming pools, tennis courts, golf courses, and stables are found throughout the city and the canal area. You can purchase athletic equipment of all types locally or at the sport shops on the bases.

Several hotels offer memberships to use their pools and other recreational facilities. There are also several quality health clubs in the city, as well as the gymnasiums on the bases, that offer aerobics and weightlifting. A variety of private social athletic clubs in Panama include the Club de Golf de Panama, the Club de Montana Altos del Lago, the Club de Yates y Pesca, and the Club Union.

Canal area facilities for children (organized by the Youth Recreation Program) include swimming, bowling leagues, league baseball and softball (December through April), soccer (in the Spring), Little League football (August through October), and lessons in judo, scuba diving, karate, and gymnastics.

Deep-sea and fresh-water fishing in the waters in and around Panama are among the best in the world. You can use most types of fresh-water and saltwater tackle. Fishing in Gatun Lake for Peacock Bass is a

popular pastime. Private boat skiing, fishing, and cruising is facilitated by the availability of various water crafts from several different locations for modest fees.

For the hunter, a variety of wild fowl, small game animals, and some larger animals such as deer abound. Most hunters in Panama use a shotgun, but air rifles are also used occasionally. Panama has a trapshoot club, as well as several rifle ranges in the canal area. Neither a hunting nor a fishing license is required in the Republic of Panama. The Panamanian Government does require a gun permit. The canal area has some easily-met licensing requirements, although there are some restrictions.

Horse racing, boxing and baseball are the favorite spectator sports in Panama. A local track holds races each week.

Baseball, basketball, softball and soccer are played extensively on the amateur level, and facilities are available for squash, racquetball, volleyball, and weight training.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

One small zoo is located in the Canal area. The Panama Canal Experimental Gardens are a popular spot for visits or picnics. Barro Colorado Island is a biological research center and forest preserve that is located in Gatun Lake within the canal system; day trips are made to explore this site where the Smithsonian Institute researches local flora and fauna.

Museums include the Canal Area Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, the National Museum of Panama, and the Museum of the Panamanian Man, with its interesting collection of pre-Columbian pottery and gold artifacts.

Another point of interest is the ruins of "Panama La Vieja," the first Panamanian city on the Pacific side of the isthmus, which was founded by the Spaniards in 1519. It was destroyed by the pirate Henry Mor-

gan in 1671. The Church of San Jose, with its famous Golden Altar, is another well-known site located in the colonial sector of Panama City. According to legend, the altar was saved from the assaults of Morgan the Pirate in the year 1671 when it was painted with white-wash to look like wood.

You can find a moderate change of climate in El Valle (2,000 feet) in the Cordillera de Veraguas, 80 miles from Panama, where a fair hotel is available. Boquete and Volcan are 350 miles away. At elevations of 4,000 and 7,000 feet, they offer spectacular mountain scenery, a cool climate, and good hotels. Contadora Island in the Las Perlas Archipelago is seventeen minutes by air from Panama City. The resort-like island offers a hotel, private homes that may be rented, and beautiful beaches.

San Jose, Costa Rica, is accessible by air at a reasonable price. The Colombian island of San Andres, as well as Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Barranquilla, and Cartagena in Colombia are also within easy reach by air. Country clearance must be obtained from the U.S. Embassy in Bogota prior to any travel to Colombia. By car, San Jose, Costa Rica is about thirteen hours from Panama City.

Beaches are available on the Pacific side (Panama Bay) approximately 60-90 minutes from Panama City. Beaches on the Atlantic side (Caribbean Sea) can be reached in a two-to three-hour drive. Both areas provide a number of good beaches and varied facilities.

Entertainment

Panama City has a number of fine indoor theaters, as well as those in the canal area, where first-run American films are shown. Those shown in the city are in English with Spanish subtitles. Video stores also abound. No professional theater exists, but a few small theater groups produce plays periodically in Spanish and English. The Ancon Theater Guild has an active production schedule and there has been high interest and involvement from

the mission community. The Balboa High School drama department presents two productions per year.

Concerts are presented by visiting musical artists and dance groups, either under the sponsorship of the National Concert Association, The National Institute of Culture or various Embassies. The national symphony and the ballet company also perform periodically.

A few cocktail lounges feature small combos and the major hotels have Happy Hours with local variety artists.

During the dry season, folk dancing in native costumes can be seen at the picturesque ruins of Old Panama and in some interior towns. A number of small fairs and festivals are held in the provinces at various times during the year. The ATLAPA Convention Center attracts a few big name musical and dance groups; most of the productions charge big-city prices for tickets.

Social Activities

Ample opportunities exist for social contact with both Panamanians and American residents of Panama and the American civilian and military population in the canal area. Many resident Americans play important roles in business and professional circles.

There are a number of social, vocational and fraternal organizations in the canal area. The Panama Audubon Society offers unique bird and nature study opportunities, and a Junior Audubon Society was established in 1986 to sponsor monthly outings and activities for children ages nine and over. The "Who's New" is another active and well-organized club where Americans may meet and mix with people of other nationalities. This club offers a book study group, children's play groups, bridge, tennis and a variety of other activities in addition to monthly coffees.

Extracurricular activities for school age children include Boy and Girl Scouts and Little League sports as

well as the activities organized by the Youth Recreation Centers on the military bases.

Apply the same techniques here to get to know people that you would to develop social contacts in any overseas community. While knowledge of Spanish helps considerably, many Panamanians speak English. Memberships in local international fraternal organizations such as the Lions Club and Rotary Club are available.

OTHER CITIES

BALBOA, at the Panama Canal's Pacific entrance, is the largest town in the area formerly designated as the Canal Zone. It has a population of only 3,000, but is the administrative headquarters of the new joint Panama Canal Commission, which replaced the U.S. governing body in October 1979. An American naval base remains here, with military forces of more than 10,000. Balboa is the port for Panama City.

Situated 90 miles southwest of Panama City, **CHITRÉ** is the capital of Herrera Province. The Río de la Villa flows by, nourishing locally grown livestock and agricultural products. Chitré is a marketing center that produces ice and beverages. Transportation facilities for this city of approximately 34,700 include a road link to the Pan-American Highway and an airfield.

COLÓN is the second largest city in Panama, with a population of 141,000 (2000 est.) Located at the Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, Colón is situated at the northern terminus of the trans-Panama railroad. The city was founded in 1850 by Americans constructing the railroad, and was originally named Aspinwall after William H. Aspinwall, one of the builders. The name was changed to Colón ("Columbus" in Spanish), in honor of Christopher Columbus, in 1890. An important port and commercial center, Colón was made a free trade zone in 1953.

CRISTÓBAL, a suburb of Colón, is also an important port in this area. It has a population of about 12,000. Rainbow City, formerly called Silver City, with a population of 3,000, adjoins Cristóbal.

DAVID, 200 miles west of Panama City, is the fourth largest city in the country and the capital of mountainous Chiriquí Province. It dates to 1738, when gold prospectors set up camp here. David, though modern, maintains old traditions. San José Church has two bell towers—one to call to worship, another to warn against Indian attack. This major commercial area's economy depends on industries such as meat-packing, food processing, and tanning. David may be best known for the saddles and harnesses made here. The city is located near Enrique Malek Airport and had a population of roughly 103,000 in 2000.

PORTOBELLO (also called Porto Bello and Puerto Bello) is located on the Caribbean side of Panama, about 20 miles northeast of Colón. Founded in 1597 just west of Christopher Columbus' earlier colony of Nombre de Dios, Portobello lies in a banana-growing region and has an excellent harbor. Once a thriving colonial city, Portobello was linked to Panama City by a stone highway. As a port, it sent out and received the royal Spanish fleets and was a transshipment point for Spanish Pacific riches. Portobello declined with the building of the trans-Panama railroad and the Panama Canal, and has a population of just under 3,000 (1992 est.) Sir Francis Drake died aboard ship near here in 1596, and was buried at sea.

SANTIAGO is one of Panama's oldest cities, situated about 110 miles southwest of Panama City. The capital of Veraguas Province, it thrived in colonial times, as many historic buildings indicate. Santiago is an agricultural marketing center with local gold deposits. The municipality has an airfield and is on the Pan-American Highway. Approximately 61,000 people live in Santiago.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Panama, occupying the isthmus connecting the North and South American continents, is situated between 77° and 83° west longitude and 7° and °30' north latitude. Covering an area of some 29,208 square miles, the Republic of Panama is slightly smaller than South Carolina. It is bounded on the north by the Caribbean Sea, on the south by the Pacific Ocean, on the east by Colombia, and on the west by Costa Rica. Due to the configuration of the isthmus, in Panama City the sun rises over the Pacific.

The Panama Canal Commission, in conjunction with a binational board of directors, operates the 43-mile canal which passes through the isthmus between the Atlantic (Caribbean) and Pacific oceans. Under the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977, the Commission will remain a U.S. Government agency until December 31, 1999, at which time the canal comes under total Panamanian control.

Panama has two well-defined regions: the Atlantic Watershed, which is covered by tropical rain forest, and the Pacific Watershed, whose narrow valleys and coastal plains receive less rainfall. Mountain ranges form the backbone of the Isthmus. Although some peaks reach 11,000 feet, the "cordillera" descends in the canal area to a height of only 290 feet.

Panama has a year-round tropical climate. During the dry season, which runs from January through April, there is only sporadic rainfall. The rainy season extends from May through December, with heaviest precipitation between September and November. The average annual rainfall in Panama City, on the Pacific side, is 69 inches; in Colon, on the Atlantic side, 128 inches. Temperatures and humidity vary

only slightly between the two seasons. During the rainy months, average relative humidity is 85%; in the dry season, only 55 to 75%. The average annual temperature in Panama City is 26°C (80°F), with an average maximum of 30°C (87°F) and an average minimum of 22°C (3°F). Colon's temperature and humidity are about the same. Nearly constant year-round breezes provide some relief from the heat, especially at night.

Population

In 2000 Panama's estimated population was 2,821,085. Nearly half of the country's population is located in the province of Panama, with the next largest concentrations located in the provinces of Chiriqui and Colon. Approximately two-thirds of the population is located in these three of the country's nine provinces.

Rodrigo de Bastidas, one of the captains accompanying Columbus on his second voyage to America, discovered the Isthmus of Panama in 1502. Columbus visited Portobelo, a small bay on the Atlantic, on his fourth voyage in 1502. Panama City was founded in 1519, about 5 miles east of its present site. Because of its strategic position, Panama City became the crossroads of Spanish exploration and expansion in America.

At the time of Columbus, more than sixty Indian tribes were living on the isthmus. Today, however, Indians comprise only 6% of the population. While the majority of these are Kuna and Guaymi, a small group of Chocoe Indians remain in the southeastern part of the Darien Province.

Direct descendants of the Spaniards who colonized the country remain influential, but no longer dominate Panama's social, economic, and political life. Mixed-blooded Panamanians share prominent political and professional status with the Spanish-descendant group, and participate fully in Panama's diverse and influential social circles. Much of Panama's population is a mix of

Spanish-Indian and black Hispanic ancestry. Immigrants from China, India, Europe, the Middle East, and South and Central America can be found in the growing middle class. Blacks of West Indian descent, whose ancestors provided most of the labor in digging the canal, tend to be concentrated in the provinces of Panama and Colon. While North American influence on Panama's basically Hispanic culture is evident in Panama City and Colon, the history and heritage of these distinct ethnic groups have combined to form the modern Panamanian way of life.

In the interior provinces, the ethnic makeup is more homogenous. The Spanish-Indian mixture is preponderant, and North American influence on customs and mores is relatively minor.

Spanish is the official language of the country. Although many Panamanians speak English, a working knowledge of Spanish is useful for shopping, communicating with servants, taking taxis, speaking with neighbors, and, especially, traveling in the interior.

Public Institutions

On November 28, 1821, the country declared its secession from Spain and associated itself with Colombia. This alliance existed in one form or another until November 3, 1903, when Panama was established as an independent republic.

Panama's constitution, which was adopted in 1972, provides for a representative democracy with direct popular election of the president and legislators, an independent judiciary, and a broad range of individual and civil rights. The constitution delineates the respective powers of the three branches of government, and contains extensive sections establishing broad economic, social and cultural rights and objectives for all its citizens. There have been several notable amendments. The last two, passed in 1994, abolished the Panamanian military and created an agency of

the Panamanian government to deal with the reverted areas of the Panama Canal zone.

Operation Just Cause, which began on December 19th, 1989, ended years of political instability in Panama with the reinstatement of President Guillermo Endara's administration and the removal of Manuel Noriega as national leader. 1994 saw a return to free, fair, and violence-free elections for Panama, in which Ernesto Perez Balladares won the Presidency as the head of a multi-party coalition. Balladares won with only 33% of the popular vote, but his party, the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), regained a near-majority in the Legislature. One of the first moves of this administration was to amend the Constitution to abolish the military, breaking with the tainted past of the Noriega era.

Legislators are chosen in a complicated process. Certain seats are granted to the party winning the plurality of the popular vote in the electoral circuits, while others are awarded by proportional representation in the more populous areas, and still others are reserved for Indian minorities. Legislators are nominated by a party and are subject to its discipline.

The 1983 constitutional reforms significantly increased the powers of the Legislative Assembly relative to the other branches of government. In contrast to the situation that prevailed between 1968 and 1984, the legislature now has a significant hand in budget matters and in establishing public institutions. Legislators are able to interpellate and censor Ministers and to impeach and try Presidents and Supreme Court justices. They may override a presidential veto of approved legislation with a two-thirds majority vote. The Assembly also has the power to declare war and to grant amnesty for political crimes. In addition, it must approve the appointment of Supreme Court justices, the Attorney General, the Solicitor General or Prosecutor, and other high administrative officials.

The Executive Branch is comprised of the President of the Republic, two Vice-Presidents, and the Ministers of State, or Cabinet Secretaries. The President and Vice Presidents and other elected authorities serve five-year terms. Voting is by direct and secret ballot, and a plurality is needed for election.

The President is responsible for appointing the Cabinet, coordinating the government, and maintaining public order. Along with the Cabinet, the President approves and promulgates laws passed by the Legislature and ensures their enforcement; appoints police, provincial governors and heads of various public agencies; prepares the national budget for submission to the legislature and conducts the country's foreign affairs.

The President, Vice Presidents, and Ministers of State together form the Cabinet Council, which appoints the Magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Attorney General, and the Solicitor General, or Prosecutor, subject to legislative approval.

The President and Vice Presidents may be removed from office for abusing their constitutional duties, for violent actions or coercion during an electoral process, or for preventing the meeting of the Legislative Assembly. The President and Vice Presidents need not belong to the same political party.

The Judicial Branch is comprised of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Electoral- and other Tribunals. The latter are created by the Legislature, while the first two are constitutionally decreed.

Under the 1983 constitutional amendments, Supreme Court Magistrates are appointed by the Cabinet Council and confirmed by the Legislature for staggered ten-year terms, with two magistrates appointed every other year, or as present magistrates resign or retire. The nine-member court is divided into three-judge panels for civil, criminal and administrative cases.

Its decisions are final and binding. The Judicial Branch is the ultimate interpreter of the Panamanian constitution and of the constitutionality of the laws and decrees of the Executive and Legislative Branches.

A separate three-judge Electoral Tribunal oversees elections, with one member chosen by the Supreme Court, the Legislature, and the Executive, respectively. Supreme Court justices choose the magistrates who sit on other tribunals, and the magistrates in turn choose the judges who sit on the lower courts. All sitting judges are prohibited from engaging in any other employment except as law professors, and from participating in political activities, except as voters. Although the Constitution provides for the right to trial by jury, the Legislative Assembly is empowered to determine whether this right will apply in cases against the President, Supreme Court Justices or members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Public Ministry, or Attorney General's office, is separate from the Ministry of Government and Justice and is constitutionally a part of the Judicial Branch. The Attorney General is appointed for a 10-year term. The Constitution mandates setting aside at least 2% of the annual government income for the Judicial Branch, thereby establishing its financial independence from the Legislature and the Executive. The Attorney General also oversees Panama's criminal police investigative agency, the Judicial Technical Police (PTJ).

Panama is a civil law country, with most law created by legislative codes rather than judicial decision. In 1983, the Legislature enacted new criminal and administrative codes. Implementation of some of these reforms has been delayed, however, for budgetary reasons.

Panamanian Public Forces. On December 20, 1989, the former Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) were neutralized by U.S. armed

forces during Operation Just Cause and, over the next several days, were diminished as an effective military force. As a result, the PDF was disbanded.

Panama no longer desires a military, and in 1994 the Constitution was amended, abolishing the standing army. The Panamanian Public Forces (PPF), a civilian law enforcement organization comprised of police, air, and sea services was created in the wake of Operation Just Cause. It drew heavily on the ranks of the former PDF because of the urgent requirement to reestablish law and order throughout Panama.

The PPF, the Panamanian civil police force, remains Panama's national security force. Challenged by rising international crime and narco-trafficking activity, the PPF continues to adapt to Panama's security concerns. Its efforts in this direction are aided by the U.S. Department of Justice, as well as other agencies. Resource limits are placing financial constraints on the PPF's ability to face up to dynamic crime challenges.

The Panamanian National Police (PNP) is charged with maintaining law and order nationwide. Directed by a civilian attorney, the PNP falls under the control of the Minister of Government and Justice. The police draw heavy criticism from opposition groups and the media for a variety of reasons related to its own transitional problems. The PNP still has no organic law upon which to establish itself firmly. In the meantime, and with U.S. assistance, it strives to build confidence, establish institutional roots, and—most importantly—serve the Panamanian public.

The Panama Canal Treaty. The Panama Canal Treaty was negotiated by four different U.S. Administrations over a period of thirteen years. This treaty, along with a separate treaty pertaining to the neutrality of the Canal, and a host of ancillary agreements, was signed on September 7, 1977. The U.S. Senate

gave its consent to ratification of the Canal Treaty on April 18, 1978.

As a result of the treaties, control of the Canal is presently in the process of being turned over to the Government of Panama. On December 31, 1999 Panama assumed ownership of and full operational responsibility for the Canal. The Panama Canal Commission, which operates the Canal, is a U.S. Government agency; however, its administrator is Panamanian.

The Department of Defense, under the terms of the Carter-Torrijos Treaty of 1977, is in the process of withdrawing U.S. forces from Panama. This process is scheduled to be completed by the year 2000. The U.S. military drawdown will include the closure of U.S. Military PX and Commissary facilities, Gorgas Hospital, DODDS schools and other social facilities and services to which embassy personnel now have access.

In 1994 the newly elected government amended the Constitution to create the Inter-oceanic Regional Authority (ARI) to plan for and implement the reversion of all lands formerly belonging to the U.S.

The U.S. Embassy in Panama has the responsibility of ensuring that the treaties and their related agreements are carried out smoothly and effectively and to ensure that the rights of the U.S. Government and of American citizens in Panama are respected.

Arts, Science, and Education

Panama's intellectual and cultural life largely revolves around activities sponsored by the Instituto Nacional de Cultura (INAC), the National Concert Association, and, from time to time, the University of Panama. INAC sponsors the National Theater, School of Dance, School of Plastic Arts, Symphony Orchestra, and Ballet.

Architecture is rich and varied, ranging from colonial to modern in private homes, public buildings, commercial office buildings, and high rise condominiums.

A fairly active art colony is to be found here, and several Panamanian artists have achieved international recognition. Accomplishments in music, drama, dance, and literature have been less notable in the last few years.

In the Canal area, research projects conducted at Gorgas Hospital (renowned for its work in tropical medicine), by the Middle America Research Unit of the National Institutes of Health, the Smithsonian Institution's Tropical Research Institute on Barro Colorado Island, and the Gorgas Memorial Institute are of international import. And, of course, the Panama Canal represents one of the greatest engineering feats of modern times.

Panamanians have historically attached great importance to education. This is reflected in its literacy rate of 83%—one of the highest in Latin America. There are a number of very good private schools in the country. Many graduates of the Instituto Nacional, a public school known throughout the country, have subsequently entered Panamanian political life. The Ministry of Education is working hard to improve instructional facilities and teacher preparation throughout the country.

The University of Panama consists of a main campus in Panama City and branches in three provincial capitals. Total enrollment is approximately 45,000. The Technological University of Panama, also based in Panama City, has branches in seven provinces and an enrollment of 8,000. A private Catholic university, Santa Maria la Antigua, has an enrollment of 4,500. American officers receive a cordial welcome at these universities, and many opportunities exist for exchanges and cooperative programs. Instruction is in Spanish.

The Panama Canal College, a two-year institution linked to the U.S. Department of Defense, is open to all qualified individuals. Several other U.S. institutions, including Nova, Florida State and Oklahoma universities, also offer courses in Panama. Instruction in these universities and at the Panama Canal College is in English, and course credits can be transferred to institutions in the United States.

Commerce and Industry

Panama's economy is based primarily on a well-developed services sector that accounts for 76.5% of GDP. Services include the Panama Canal, banking, insurance, government, the Colon Free Zone, and the transisthmian oil pipeline. Manufacturing, mining, utilities, and construction together account for 16.5% of GDP. Manufacturing is principally geared to production of items such as processed foods, clothing, chemical products, and construction materials for the domestic market. Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries account for the remaining 7% of GDP. Principal primary products include bananas, shrimp, sugar, coffee, meat, dairy products, tropical fruits, rice, corn, and beans. The sectors of the Panamanian economy with the greatest potential for substantial growth are mining, tourism, and maritime services.

From 1968 until 1989, Panama was governed by a military regime which implemented a statist plan of economic development. The government nationalized various private enterprises and instituted price controls on many goods, some of which still exist today. In 1990 the newly reinstated democratic government embarked on a reform program to liberalize trade and modernize government operations. These reforms were diluted, however, by entrenched special interest groups.

In 1994 a new government was elected and took office with an even more ambitious program of reforms, including GATT/WTO accession and

labor code reforms. The Government of Panama has recently taken initial steps toward privatization of the state-owned telecommunications company and has revoked the government-owned electricity utility's monopoly on electricity generation. Reform of the national labor code, although one of this administration's top priorities, is being met with strong opposition by the various labor organizations.

The use of the U.S. dollar as Panama's currency means that fiscal policy is the government's principal macroeconomic policy instrument. Because Panama does not issue its own currency, government spending and investment are strictly bound by tax and non-tax revenues and the government's ability to borrow.

Panama Canal business rose in 1994 over the previous year. Ocean-going transits increased 2.6% to 12,671 or 34.7 vessels daily, and net tonnage, on which tolls are assessed, jumped 7.9%. Toll revenues rose 3.1% to US\$425 million. The near-term outlook is for continued moderate to strong growth in both tonnage and toll revenue projected for 1995 and 1996. Work on expanding the canal's capacity by widening the Gaillard Cut through the continental divide continues and numerous other maintenance and upgrade projects are constantly in progress.

The development of areas reverting to Panama under the Panama Canal Treaties will present many opportunities for the Government of Panama, as well as investors. Projects in tourism, industry, and environmental areas will be possible. The exact nature of these projects will be determined by a development plan which is being prepared by Panama's Interoceanic Regional Authority (ARI).

The Colon Free Zone is the largest of its kind in Latin America and rivals Hong Kong in overall activity. Total imports to the Free Zone reached US\$5.0 billion in 1994, an increase of 11.5% per 1993. Free Zone trade is expected to show solid



Ships in Moraflores Locks, Panama

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

growth during 1995 as it has already made many of the adjustments necessary to deal with market liberalization in Latin America. U.S. exports to the free zone totaled approximately US\$370 million in 1994. The free zone's contribution to real GDP increased to 9.2% in 1994.

Transportation

Local

Taxi service is readily available and generally adequate. City buses are often very poorly maintained however, and riding them is not recommended for safety and security reasons.

Regional

Panama has two major highways. The Transisthmian Highway links Panama City to Colon. A Branch of the Inter-American Highway extends from the Costa Rican border to the town of Chepo, about 35 miles beyond Panama City. Both roads are two-lane and paved. There is also a recently finished road between Chepo and Colombia. Streets within Panama City and Colon are adequate. Many are subject to flooding during the rainy season.

American Airlines and Continental Airlines, COPA, and other major foreign carriers operate daily flights

to the United States and other parts of the world from Panama's Tocumen International Airport. All flights to or from Panama enter and exit the U.S. from either Houston or Miami. AERO-PERLAS and ALAS-CHIRICANAS are local carriers that provide service to Panama's provinces, Contadora and the San Blas Islands. These flights operate from Paitilla Airport, a ten-minute drive from the city center.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Panama City is good, although in some sections of the city residents must wait long periods for initial installation of a telephone.

Long-distance service is available to all parts of the country. Facilities are excellent for overseas calls to the United States (with direct dialing from Panama City) and to other parts of the world via radio or satellite. Rates vary depending on country and time zone.

Telegram facilities are excellent and provide worldwide service.

Radio and TV

There are both English and Spanish-language AM and FM radio programs and commercial TV stations

(including one educational channel), some of which broadcast sporting events and reruns of American feature programs and movies (all dubbed).

The Southern Command Network (SCN), an affiliate of the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, broadcasts on AM and FM radio in English on a 24-hour basis. SCN-TV presents news programs, sports events, old movies, reruns of U.S. feature programs and Saturday-morning children's programs in English. SCN-TV broadcasts daily: the weekly schedule is published in the base newspaper, *The Tropic Times*. American variety and series programs are broadcast in English. Live TV coverage via satellite of some news programs or sporting and special events is also provided. The station broadcasts Monday through Sunday from 6:00 a.m. until midnight, plus additional late night movies on weekends.

Cable TV is available in Panama City and provides a variety of satellite programming, including the Disney Channel, HBO/Showtime, CNN, and ESPN. There is usually an installation fee; monthly fees are upwards of \$40.

Local cinemas are comparable in quality to those in the U.S., yet prices are much lower. First run movies are shown in English with Spanish subtitles. Local video stores rent both VHS and Beta tapes at reasonable prices comparable to stateside, usually with Spanish subtitles.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Six Spanish-language newspapers (including three tabloids) are published on a daily basis. The English-language international edition of *The Miami Herald* is published locally.

Airmail editions of *USA Today* are available on the bases. Copies of the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* are occasionally available at the major hotels. Along with the *Washington Post*, they are also

available through subscription, but rates are higher than in the U.S. Home delivery of U.S. newspapers is available, but delivery is one day late.

The Latin American issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* are sold at most newsstands, drug stores, and in major hotels, usually within days of their domestic editions in the United States. Other U.S. magazines (on topics such as cars, sports, and outdoor hobbies) are available on the bases. Prices are comparable to those in the United States, although tax must be paid when purchased off the bases.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Health care services for U.S. citizens residing in Panama are generally excellent. Nearly all medical and surgical specialties are represented. Many of the local dentists and orthodontists are considered to be on a par with those in the United States, and prices are slightly lower than U.S. prices.

In conjunction with the U.S. military drawdown in Panama Gorgas Hospital is scheduled to close in 1998; however Paitilla Hospital is up to U.S. standards. Many Americans have been very pleased with the quality of care received there.

Many standard medications are available from Gorgas Hospital or from local pharmacies in Panama.

Community Health

For a tropical region, Panama's community health standards are good. With normal precautions one can avoid most health hazards. The cities of Panama and Colon have potable and fluoridated water supplies, although water should be boiled before drinking for 24 hours following water cutoffs. Travelers to more remote parts of the country should boil their water or use a water purifier. Milk is pasteurized and bottled under sanitary conditions, as are locally produced beers and other

beverages. Domestically produced meats are packaged and sold under generally sanitary conditions in the larger grocery stores. Local fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed before eating. Fresh fish and seafood are plentiful and inexpensive. Between the local markets and bakeries there is little one cannot find in Panama.

Trash is collected daily in most areas of Panama City. Roaches, ants, and other insects as well as mice and rats are ever present in this tropical climate, but, with vigilance, they can be kept under control. Until recently, Panama City had an active mosquito control program.

Common medical complaints include colds and other upper respiratory infections. Sinus and asthmatic conditions may be aggravated by the humidity, molds, and pollens. Swimmer's ear is a common complaint among both children and adults.

More serious illnesses such as malaria and yellow fever are virtually nonexistent in Panama City, but persons travelling to the interior of the country may be at risk. Hepatitis is considered a significant health threat, and individuals are encouraged to keep their gamma globulin inoculations current. Tuberculosis is endemic and common among residents of the poorer areas. Dengue fever cases are on the increase.

Preventive Measures

Persons being assigned to Panama should ensure that their Yellow Fever, Typhoid, and Tetanus/ Diphtheria immunizations, as well as a TB skin test are current. Hepatitis-A vaccine or gamma globulin is also recommended.

Immunization requirements for Panamanian schools vary. The Department of Defense schools require the following immunizations:

Oral Polio Vaccine—3 doses of Trivalent, at least one of which was

administered after the fourth birthday.

Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis*—3 doses, given singly or in combination, at least one dose of which was administered after fourth birthday and the last dose was given within ten years.

**Measles (Rubeola)
Mumps**

Rubella—1 dose of live attenuated vaccine given singly or in combination on or after 15 months of age. Individuals immunized after one year of age but before 15 months need not be reimmunized.

*Pertussis immunization is not required for individuals after their seventh birthday.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

U.S. citizens are encouraged to obtain a U.S. passport before traveling to Panama. Although entry into Panama is permitted with any proof of U.S. citizenship (such as a certified birth certificate or a Naturalization Certificate) and official photo identification (such as a driver's license), travelers may experience difficulties entering and/or exiting Panama when not in possession of a valid U.S. passport. Panamanian law requires that travelers must either purchase a tourist card from the airline serving Panama or obtain a visa from a Panamanian embassy or consulate before traveling to Panama. Further information may be obtained from the Embassy of Panama, 2862 McGill Terrace, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, tel. (202) 483-1407, or the Panamanian consulates in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia or Tampa.

U.S. citizens transiting the Panama Canal as passengers do not need to obtain visas, report to customs, or pay any fees. U.S. citizens piloting

private craft through the canal should contact the U.S. Embassy in Panama City for details on required procedures.

Panamanian customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Panama of items such as firearms and ammunition, cultural property, endangered wildlife species, narcotics, biological material, and food products. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Panama in Washington or one of Panama's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Panama are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Panama and obtain updated information on travel and security within Panama. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy is located on Panama Bay, Panama City, at Balboa Avenue and 39th Street. The international mailing address is Apartado 6959, Panama 5, Republic of Panama. The U.S. mailing address is U.S. Embassy Panama, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20521-9100. The telephone number of the Consular Section is 011-507-207-7000/7030 (after hours, 011-507-207-7000); fax 011-507-207-7278; web site <http://www.orbi.net/usispan/> and e-mail is usispan@pty.com.

Pets

Panama requires a veterinary certificate of health and certification of vaccination against rabies, distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus (dogs) and feline panleucopenia (cats) for each arriving pet. Each certificate must be authenticated by a Panamanian consul to be acceptable. This can be done by sending your pet's health certification to the following address for a consular stamp. There is a fee for this service.

Consulate General of Panama
2862 McGill Terrace NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
202-483-8413/8416(fax)

All incoming pets are placed in quarantine. If your pet arrives on a commercial flight to Tocumen Airport it must be examined by a Panamanian vet at the airport prior to being moved to quarantine. If your pet arrives on Friday it may not be examined and released until Monday. There is a transportation fee of \$13.50, as well as admission and importation permit fees.

The following documents are required for your pet to enter Panama: a health certificate for the animal (good for only ten days), a rabies vaccination certificate, a stamp from a Panamanian Consulate as outlined above, and a copy of your travel orders. These documents are to be attached, in an envelope, to the outside of the animal's cage.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency of Panama is the Balboa (B/) which is on par value to the U.S. dollar. The Balboa exists only in coin form and, in Panama, is interchangeable with U.S. coins. The official paper currency of Panama are U.S. dollar bills.

Both the U.S. system of weights and measures and the metric system are used in Panama. Speed limits are posted in miles per hour in some places, kilometers per hour in other places, some signs give both miles and kilometers per hour, and in many areas the limits are not posted.

Complete banking facilities are available at many banks in Panama City, including branches of Chase Manhattan, Citibank, Bank of Boston and American Express. Many local retail outlets accept personal checks drawn on U.S. banks.

You can purchase or cash travelers checks locally without difficulty. To deposit or cash U.S. checks in Panamanian banks, a service charge is assessed. Major U.S. credit cards are widely accepted in shops, hotels and restaurants.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 9	Day of Mourning
Feb/Mar	Carnival*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Panama Labor Day
Nov. 3	Independence Day from Colombia
Nov. 4	Flag Day
Nov.10.	Uprising of Los Santos
Nov. 28	Independence Day from Spain
Dec. 8	Mother's Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

- Abbot, W. *Panama and The Canal* (1976). Gordon Press Publications.
- Anderson, Charles L.G. *Old Panama and Castilla del Oro. Sudwarth: 1911 0.* Narrative history of the discovery, conquest, and settlement by the Spaniards of Panama, Darien, Veraguas, and other parts of the New World.
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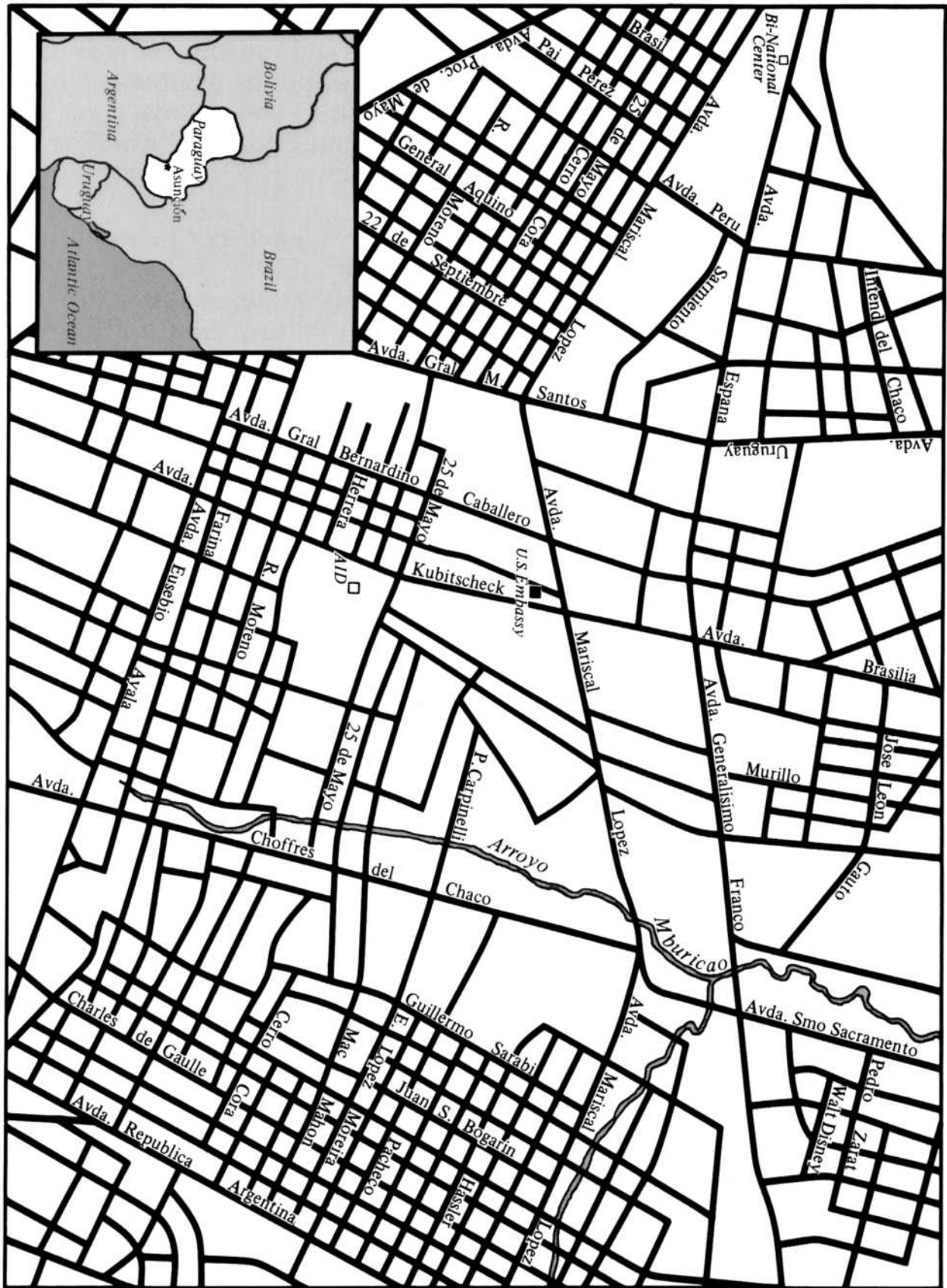
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Asunción, Paraguay

PARAGUAY

Republic of Paraguay

Major Cities:

Asunción, Encarnación

Minor Cities:

Caacupé, Caazapá, Ciudad Del Este, Concepción, Coronel Oviedo, Luque, Pedro Juan Caballero, Pilar, Villarrica

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Paraguay. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Located in the heart of South America, Paraguay is a landlocked, agricultural country about the size of California. The Parana-Paraguay River system is Paraguay's commercial access to the outside world. The eastern section of Paraguay, where most of the population lives, consists of rolling, fertile, farming areas and grasslands. The western section, called the Chaco, is a low lying plateau covered with grassy meadows, bogs, spiny bushes, palms, and small trees. Lack of roads and navigable rivers makes much of this region inaccessible. Paraguay's climate is variable and unpredictable. It is subtropical, with summer and winter seasons opposite those in the U.S.

Older than Buenos Aires, Asuncion, the capital, has not yet lost its aura of provincialism and isolation. With profuse, colorful year-round blossoms in residential gardens and along tree-lined avenues, Asuncion retains a quiet charm. Entertainment is diverse, with ready access to the nearby countries of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. Paraguayans are generally well-disposed toward Americans, and informal acquaintances can easily be made with coworkers, neighbors, and at school events. Social life, however, centers on the family and contact with outsiders is somewhat limited. The people do appreciate it when someone takes the trouble to learn their native language, Guarani.

MAJOR CITIES

Asunción

Older than Buenos Aires, Asuncion has not yet lost its aura of provincialism and isolation. Founded on August 15, 1537, and once the capital of the colonial River Plata Vice-royalty, it remains the center of Paraguayan activity. Increasing numbers of visitors (mostly from Argentina and Brazil) are attracted to Paraguay during the Southern Hemisphere winter. Modern hotels

and office buildings are springing up beside weathered structures of an earlier vintage in Asuncion's bustling downtown shopping and business area. With profuse, colorful year-round blossoms in residential gardens and along tree-lined avenues, Asuncion retains a quiet charm.

Utilities

Short water outages occur occasionally in Asuncion. Laundry areas and kitchens do not always have hot water. Showers are much more common than bathtubs.

Short power outages occur occasionally. Electrical current is 220v, 50-cycle, AC. Appliances using 110v current in the U.S. need transformers. A 1,500w transformer is necessary for high wattage appliances. Do not bring electric clocks as they require an impractical conversion.

Food

As an agricultural country, Paraguay offers ample locally produced fruits and vegetables as well as beef, pork, and poultry. Staple items and processed foods are not offered in the variety found in the U.S. Foods that are imported or not produced in large quantities can be expensive.

Several large markets in the city sell a variety of seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables, beef, pork, chicken,

freshwater fish, flowers, plants, herbs, and a jumble of household items.

Meat is also sold in small butcher shops and supermarkets. It is inspected but not always refrigerated and is sold freshly butchered. Beef is plentiful, but the variety of cuts is limited. Poultry, pork, hot dogs, cold cuts, and some good freshwater fish are available. Veal is uncommon, and lamb is rare. Supermarkets sell some pre-cut, packaged meat and poultry.

Good-sized supermarkets, scattered throughout the city, compare on a smaller scale to U.S. supermarkets. They also carry wines and liquors, and depending on size, some kitchenware, hardware, toys, stationery supplies, and clothing.

Most processed food is imported. Since Paraguayans depend primarily on fresh foods, the selection of canned fruits, vegetables, soups, or meals-in-a-can is small. Similarly, their tastes do not demand great variety in snack foods, convenience foods, sauces, and salad dressings. Paraguayan cheeses and those most commonly imported are bland types. More robust and highly flavored cheeses are imported in small amounts. Either skim or whole milk is available with a long shelf life and does not need refrigeration until ready to use. Yogurt is available in limited flavors and cottage cheese and cream cheese are available at times.

No canned pet food is sold, although dry pet food is available. You can buy liver and kidneys from local neighborhood pickup trucks or butcher shops. Mix it with kitchen scraps, for an inexpensive, yet nourishing, pet food.

The selection of vegetables has expanded over the years due to the influxes of agricultural technologies brought in by Japanese and Taiwanese immigrants. You can find a good selection of fresh green vegetables in local oriental markets or the Tuesday agro shopping fair in the Mariscal Lopez Shopping Center.

No home is more than a couple of blocks from a neighborhood grocery store ("dispensa"), which stocks a little of everything. Bakeries offer a good assortment of white and brown bread and rolls. Specialty shops sell cakes and pastries, cold cuts and sausages, and ice cream. Yard area permitting, a home garden can add diversity to seasonal menus. Insects can be a minor problem, but most plants grow quickly and well.

Frozen foods are not normally available in Asuncion.

Clothing

Styles are much the same as in the U.S., but are influenced by the long, hot summers and short, cold winters. Although almost any article of clothing can be found in Asuncion, the choice is somewhat limited by U.S. standards. The search can be time-consuming for those unfamiliar with Asuncion's local shops. Children's clothing is also available here. Bring underwear, socks and hosiery, diapers and baby clothes, and bathing suits. Jeans are popular for school and casual wear.

Dressmakers and tailors can make formal gowns, dresses, skirts, and blouses for women; shorts, sunsuits, and other clothing for children; suits, slacks, and jackets for men. A good selection of fine wool, cotton, and dressy fabrics can be found locally, whereas greater diversity in synthetic and wash-and-wear fabrics is available in the U.S. Asuncion's cobblestone streets are hard on all footwear; women's shoes with low or thick heels are practical. Sandals are popular in summer, when stockings are not usually worn.

Woolen or other warm clothing is needed during the June to September winter for the many cold, damp days and nights. Sweaters or jackets that can be layered or removed are particularly useful. Bring cotton flannel sleepwear and warm slippers. Umbrellas and raincoats are necessary.

Locally made embroidered shirts, blouses, and dresses of fine cotton

fabric called "aho-poi" are a good and useful buy in Asuncion.

Men: Bring a good supply of lightweight suits, sport coats, slacks, and shirts. Casual clothes may be worn to all restaurants and to some cultural events. In Paraguay's short cold season, some winter weight wool suits, sport coats, and slacks will be useful.

Women: Loose fitting cotton daytime dresses are more comfortable in summer heat than nylon and certain other synthetics such as polyester knit. Dressy cottons or other washable fabrics are suitable for casual evening wear. For more formal events, simple to elaborate cocktail dresses are appropriate. Heavier weight dresses are needed for winter wear; jackets or stoles are useful. Hats or gloves are seldom worn, but occasionally a hat to shield the sun's rays or leather gloves to ward off the morning cold are practical.

Supplies and Services

Imported medicines, drugs, toiletries, and cosmetics are available locally, but can be expensive. Certain U.S. brand toiletries, such as Johnson's Baby Powder, are made under license in Argentina and Brazil and are less expensive than those produced in the U.S. If generic brands satisfy you, you will find most everything here.

U.S.-type hardware items and tools, including garden tools, are available locally but are higher in price and limited in variety. Lovely nanduti lace or "aho-poi" embroidered placemats and tablecloths, guest towels, and doilies are handmade in Paraguay and sold at reasonable prices. Items difficult to find or expensive locally are: books, stationery, greeting cards in English, cocktail napkins, party supplies, special sewing or craft materials, games, toys, sports equipment, fishing gear, pool supplies, flashlights, anti-mildew products, and airtight storage containers.

Tailors and dressmakers, cobblers, and barbershops offer satisfactory

services at reasonable prices. Most hairdressers are small-scale neighborhood establishments unlike U.S.-style salons. Several higher quality salons offer many services at better prices than those in the U.S. Prices and quality vary. Drycleaning is acceptable. Laundry is generally done at home; hotel laundry facilities are expensive. Inexpensive, good quality work is done on picture framing, furniture upholstery, and drapery making. Attractive wicker and rattan furniture is made locally. Appliance and auto repair shops are reasonable but often do not meet U.S. standards and may not have parts. When thinking of items to bring with you for your car, remember filters, belts, spark plugs, and extra tires. Caterers supply food and equipment for large parties.

Domestic Help

Well-trained domestic help is rare, and good cooks are hard to find. Any help will probably speak Spanish and Guarani, rarely English.

Large families may have a maid and a nursemaid. Laundresses, cleaning ladies, or gardeners usually come once or twice a week. Wages do not represent the total expense to the employer. Food is provided to day workers, and live-in servants may receive food or allowances. Most houses have quarters for one live-in servant; the employer supplies furniture, bed, and bath linens. Work dresses, uniforms, and routine medical aid may also be provided. After completing 1 continuous year of service, servants receive a 13th-month bonus (Christmas bonus). For employees who work less than 1 year, a bonus will be established taking 1/12 of the total amount of all salaries paid during the calendar year. Under Paraguayan Law 1085, domestics-including regularly employed cooks, maids, laundresses, gardeners, chauffeurs, and nursemaids-must be covered by social security. It is not elective with either the employer or the domestic. All servants must have a medical examination at the employer's expense.

Religious Activities

Since most Paraguayans are Roman Catholic, Spanish-language Catholic churches abound. Mass is regularly held in English on Sundays and holidays for English-speaking Catholics by American priests of the Redemptorist Order. The Anglican (Episcopal) Church and Baptist Fellowship hold services and Sunday school in English every Sunday. Anglican and Baptist churches also have services in Spanish, as do the Free Will Methodists, Assemblies of God, and Seventh-day Adventist. The Lutheran and Mennonite churches offer German-language services. Services in Spanish can also be found at the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (Mormon), Jewish Synagogue (which also has a social club), and the Russian Orthodox Church.

Education

Many primary age school children attend the American School of Asuncion, accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The American School offers kindergarten through grade 12. Separate kindergartens for 4- and 5-year olds are available, but the education allowance only pays for the latter. First graders must have turned 6 before the opening of school in August.

Instruction is in English, but Spanish is taught as a native language, beginning with K-5. Both the U.S. standard and the Paraguayan curriculums are offered. Almost all teachers, except Spanish instructors, are U.S. citizens and U.S. certified. The school has no speech therapist. Some remedial tutoring is provided.

The school teaches standard U.S. curriculum subjects-language arts, math, science, and social science. General electives include French, Italian, special Spanish, Latin, German, economics, computer, creative writing, photography, government, sociology, biology, music appreciation, art, typing, and PE. Home economics and shop courses are not offered. The school has occupied its building since 1963 and has been

expanding and improving the facilities since then. The school has a library, a science lab, a dark room, a tennis court, an art room, locker/shower facilities, a canteen, and a computer room.

Hours are 8 am to 3 pm for all grades. Hot lunches are available in the canteen for children who do not bring their lunches. Lunch boxes and vacuum bottles are sometimes available locally.

The two-semester school year ends in July and begins in August, with a 2-week break between school years. A 2 1/2-month midterm vacation lasts from December through mid-February. The school observes all Paraguayan and some U.S. holidays.

The Asuncion Christian Academy is an interdenominational school sponsored by the evangelical missions in Paraguay. It provides Christian academic education to English-speaking children from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Instruction is in English, but Spanish is also taught. The school calendar is similar to that of the American School. Classes are from 7:15 am to 12:30 pm. Teachers must have U.S. certification; materials and methods are U.S. based.

Another option is the Pan American International School, also accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The PAIS offers education to students in grades K through 12. Instruction is in English. In addition to the required curriculum at PAIS, classes in drivers education and industrial arts are also available. Classes are from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm for grades 5 to 12 and 8 am to noon for kindergarten through grade 4.

Neither the American School nor the Christian Academy has a dress code.

Attendance at any other local school requires Spanish-language fluency. In some subjects, standards of the Paraguayan institutions are high, and Paraguayan students may be ahead of their American contempo-

raries. Curriculums naturally are geared to the local education system, with emphasis on Paraguayan history and geography. Teaching stresses rote memorization. English is sometimes taught as a foreign language.

The best private Spanish-language institution is the well-regarded Colegio Internacional. Established by the American Disciples of Christ Church, the school offers kindergarten, primary, and secondary classes. Instruction is by local teachers. English is taught as a foreign language. The extracurricular program, which includes music and sports, is excellent. The most prestigious Catholic boys school, San Jose, and the leading Catholic girls school, Santa Clara de Jesus, offer 12-year academic programs. The Santa Clara School, run by Catholic nuns, has coeducational kindergarten and primary classes, and a 4-year secondary school for girls only. The Goethe Institute, subsidized by the German Government, offers instruction in German and Spanish.

The University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa offers a Masters of Education program in the American School of Asuncion campus..

Special Educational Opportunities

Private instruction in Paraguayan harps and guitars is available. The instruments themselves are inexpensive and available locally. Piano lessons, and group ballet and Spanish dancing classes are available for children and adults.

With permission from local authorities, foreigners may attend lectures at the National University, gratis. All instruction is in Spanish. No academic credits are awarded.

Several nursery schools are available for preschool children. Only two are conducted in English, however, and the number of places in these are limited. Parents who wish to enroll their children should make a reservation well in advance. The names of some of the nursery schools are: Maria's Pre-School

(English-speaking), English Playgroup (English-speaking), and Casita de Sandy (Spanish speaking).

No special educational facilities for handicapped and learning-disabled English-speaking children exist.

Sports

Participant and spectator sports are available year-round in Asuncion. Some clubs, such as the Yacht and Golf Club and Asuncion Golf offer special rates for diplomats or waive initiation fees. The Yacht and Golf Club includes swimming, tennis, weight lifting, and squash. The American School has outdoor facilities for soccer, basketball, volleyball, and baseball, which are available to the community.

Asuncion has one bowling center with 12 automatic lanes. Rates are reasonable. Shoes may be rented for a small additional fee.

The main spectator sport in Paraguay is, of course, soccer. Rugby, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and boxing are also popular. Motorcycle and cross-country automobile races are held from time to time.

Fishing on the Paraguay River is principally for dorado, a large, fighting game fish, and several large varieties of catfish. Paraguay sponsors international fishing competitions in spring.

Popular fishing areas are Guraty, a 20-25-minute drive from Asuncion, where you can rent boats; Santa Rosa, 85 kilometers down river by boat; and Ayolas (300 kilometers south), which has a modern hotel and boat rentals. Villa Florida, a small town on the Tebicuary, a tributary of the Paraguay River, has hotel or camping facilities and boat rentals. Swift currents and an abundance of small piranas make swimming unsafe in these rivers. Fishing equipment brought with you and should include a heavy-duty rod, combination of trolling and bait-casting reel capable of holding 200 yards of 40-pound test line, large spoons, and plugs and wire leaders,

as both surubi (catfish) and dorado sometimes exceed 30-40 pounds. Motors are not usually available for rental and are expensive locally. Small boats (3-8-passenger motor launches) may be purchased locally. Garages service them. Dock-and-storage facilities are available near Asuncion, as well as at the Sajonia Club.

Most hunting is for game birds such as duck, perdiz (South American tinamdu), and doves. Crocodiles, wild boar, deer, jaguar, and puma are found in remote regions of the Chaco, but their status as endangered species means they are generally illegal to hunt. Although hunting on public land has been banned for several years to allow stocks to increase, hunting continues on many private lands. Paraguay does not require either hunting season or fishing licenses. To hunt, you must have access to private land.

For all practical purposes, big game hunting is impossible, since access to the Chaco is difficult. Bird shooting, especially perdiz, is very popular and easily accomplished, providing one gains access to a nearby "Estancia." Usually, any of the cattle ranches within 1 hour of Asuncion will have a large population of perdiz. A bird dog is a must for perdiz. The perdiz, a quail-like bird, prefers to run whenever possible. Without a dog, chasing perdiz could be futile in some areas. If you are a bird shooter, bring all your equipment, including reloading components. Although U.S.-made ammunition is very expensive, it is possible to buy Brazilian ammunition at lower cost, about like U.S. prices. Bird dogs, although available, are expensive and difficult to find. Bring your own. A 12-gauge shotgun will probably be most versatile; however, keep it light and chokes open. If you are a die-hard bird shooter, then the traditional lightweight 20 would be ideal.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Museums and buildings of interest in Asuncion include the Ethnologi-

cal and Archeological Museum, the Military History Museum, the National Pantheon, and the Casa de la Independencia. Near the Cathedral is the first seminary in Asuncion, which has several exhibits of religious artifacts, memorabilia from both wars, and some personal effects of Monsignor Bogarin, former Archbishop of Asuncion. The Bank of Asuncion has restored the former home of one of Mariscal Lopez's brothers, Benigno, and it contains an interesting historical exhibit of currency used in Paraguay. The Botanical Garden contains the Museum of Natural History and a small Indian museum as well as picnic areas, sports fields, and the zoo.

Not far from Asuncion, the town of San Lorenzo has an Indian artifacts museum and shop near the only Gothic style church in Paraguay. Capiata boasts a private mythological museum, which also has a display from the Triple Alliance and Chaco wars, and a collection of religious wooden statues carved by Indians, who had been instructed by the Franciscans. San Bernardino is Lake Ypacarai's most developed resort town with hotels, a casino, and concerts. On the other side of the lake is Aregua, which has picnic facilities and rowboat rentals. The town of Itaugua is the home of nanduti, a lace product found only in Paraguay. Every year in December pilgrims trek the 50+ km walk from Asuncion to Caacupe to see the Shrine of the Blue Virgin. Capiata also has a private mythological museum, which has a display from the Triple Alliance and Chaco wars.

Full day or weekend camping trips can be made to Pirareta Falls, Chololo Falls, and Cristal Falls, all less than 100 kilometers from Asuncion. All three have camping areas, and Chololo has a restaurant.

You will need 2 or 3 days to visit the ruins of several Jesuit mission towns in southern Paraguay. Some of the travel is on secondary, unpaved roads. Hotel accommodations are available at Encarnacion or Tirol del Paraguay, a hillside



resort. A comfortable, round-trip, 2-day ship excursion can be taken upriver to Concepcion.

The sprawling Chaco begins almost immediately northwest of Asuncion. For longer trips beyond all-weather roads, you need a four-wheel-drive vehicle, as well as camping gear, mosquito netting, and insect repellent. This area is reminiscent of the early American West with its vast open spaces, herds of cattle, and colorful cowboys. It is also a bird-watcher's paradise, and game animals abound here.

The world-famous Iguazu Falls are spectacular. The falls are located at

the juncture of the Parana and Iguazu Rivers where the Paraguayan border meets with those of Brazil and Argentina. The falls can be reached in 5 hours by car. An overnight bus can also be taken for those who wish to see the falls and return the same day. It is here that the International Friendship Bridge crosses the Parana to Brazil. At the falls, accommodations in all three countries range from camping areas to luxury hotels.

In planning road travel, you must consider high gas prices as well as the type and conditions of roads to be traveled. Hotels and restaurants are found in larger towns and on

both sides of the borders with Argentina and Brazil, but make reservations in advance. Prices are comparable to those in Asuncion.

To have a real change of scene, you must travel to one of the more developed neighboring countries. Visits to cosmopolitan centers such as Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Cordoba, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, or Santiago offer shopping, cultural, and entertainment diversions not found in Asuncion. Ocean beach resorts in Brazil and Uruguay provide a refreshingly different ambiance.

Entertainment

Commercial entertainment in Asuncion consists of films, plays, concerts, discos, a hotel gambling casino, karaoke bars, and hotels and restaurants with dancing and/or floor shows. Asuncion has several movie theaters that offer a fair selection of American and foreign films (mostly double features), including older action films and juvenile favorites. Shopping del Sol, Villa Mora Shopping Center, Excelsior Shopping Center, the Hiperseis Shopping Center and Multiplaza Shopping Center all have modern movie theaters showing relatively new movies.

Modern and classical plays are presented (in Spanish or Guaraní) at the Arlequin Teatro. The Centro Cultural Paraguayo-Americano (which boasts the best theater in town) and the cultural centers of other foreign missions also present plays and host film presentations, gallery shows, and concerts by musicians from their respective countries. Argentine, Uruguayan, and American professional groups bring occasional theater or music to Asuncion.

Entertainment at clubs and restaurants is principally local talent, with folkloric presentations such as the guaraní, the polka, and the bottle dance performed regularly. Asuncion has a variety of good restaurants, many of which offer ethnic menus such as Brazilian, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Lebanese.

Local festivals, all comparatively low-key and subdued, include a pre-Lenten carnival and the Festival of St. John's Eve featuring demonstrations of faith or bravado by people walking barefoot on hot coals. Most towns have processions on their patron saint's name day, and festivals in artisan towns near Asuncion are held during the winter tourist season. Photography is unrestricted at these events. Paraguayans are generally quite willing to have their pictures taken, although Indians expect to receive a tip or may set a price themselves.

Social Activities

American women, some years ago, organized a club known as Las Amigas Norteamericanas del Paraguay. Among its social activities are monthly meetings, visits to nearby places of interest, handicraft work, coffees, and luncheons. Its charitable activities include welfare work, participation in fund raising projects of other organizations, and an annual fair.

Paraguayans are generally well-disposed toward Americans, and informal acquaintances can easily be made with coworkers, neighbors, and at school events. As with many Latin societies, however, social life centers on the family and contact with outsiders is somewhat limited.

Church or cultural center activities, where shared interests form a common bond, provide some opportunities for meeting Paraguayans and other foreigners. Several business clubs, including Lions and Rotary, exist throughout the country. Charitable groups in which Americans participate besides Las Amigas and missionary organizations include: Damas Diplomáticas, a group of women from the diplomatic community who meet socially to raise money for charity; the International Women's group organizes different activities including visits to cultural centers and talks on diverse subjects; and the Red Cross, whose activities include sewing and conducting charity sales. The American School PTA sponsors various activities and events. The Damas Britan-

icas annual Caledonian Ball is popular with many Americans.

Encarnación

Encarnación, in the deep, southeastern part of Paraguay, is the country's second largest city (in terms of stable population figures) and an important port on the Alto Paraná, across from the Argentine city of Posadas. It serves as a major rail terminus for passengers, goods, and livestock; trains are ferried from there into Argentina and on to Buenos Aires.

Encarnación, with a population of about 31,000, is a busy commercial and manufacturing center, whose products from the surrounding rich agricultural area include lumber, tobacco, tea, rice, and maize. Several Japanese farm colonies nearby contribute heavily to agricultural production.

Founded in 1614, Encarnación was originally named Itapúa. It is now the capital of Itapúa Province. In 1926, the city was severely damaged by a tornado, but over the past half-century has rebuilt and expanded into an active community. Its people speak either Spanish or *Guaraní*; there are few hotels or shops where English is heard. British or other European newspapers occasionally are available at the airport outside the city. The library in Encarnación has some titles in English. No English-language schools are in operation.

Encarnación has a television station (Channel 7, Itapúa), which serves the southeastern part of the country. It is a subsidiary of one of the major channels in Asuncion.

OTHER CITIES

CAACUPÉ serves as the capital of La Cordillera Department, 30 miles east of Asuncion. Surrounded by the Cordillera de los Altos Mountains, Caacupé is the destination of pilgrims from all over the continent. Its central plaza contains the

Shrine of the Blue Virgin of the Miracles, whose feast day is December 8th. The city is an important agricultural processing center; tile manufacturing is another economic activity. The National Agronomic Institute is located here and does crop research. Caacupé is an important resort center. This community of approximately 10,000 people is linked to Asunción by a paved highway.

Founded in the early 1600s, **CAAZAPÁ** is a departmental capital on the edge of the Brazilian Highlands in the south. The economy depends on lumbering, agriculture, and tanneries. A regional hospital, several educational institutions, and an agricultural college are situated here. A monument to the city's founder, Friar Bolaños, stands in the city of about 3,000. A railway and highway provide transportation to Asunción, 50 miles northwest.

The city of **CIUDAD DEL ESTE**, formerly Puerto Presidente Stroessner, is a river port on the Brazilian border which grew from a small village to a population of 90,000 during its boom years, when the Itaipú Dam was being constructed across the Paraná River. The city was carved out of the jungle in 1957, and when work began on the dam in the mid-1970s, the population exploded. Now, with the completion of the dam, which was formally opened in November 1982, Ciudad del Este's fortunes have begun to regress. Thousands of families whose livelihood depended on the dam construction and attendant businesses, have left the area seeking other means of support. During the city's flourishing years, it was a black-market haven, and people from neighboring Brazil flocked across the border to buy cheap contraband. Some of this illegal activity continues, but not in the same bold proportions as during the boom years. The city is linked to Brazil by the 1,600-foot Puente de la Armistad Bridge. One of the principal tourist attractions is the Iguazu Falls, which are located outside of the city. Its population is approximately 111,000.

CONCEPCIÓN is an eastern trading port on the Paraguay River about 125 miles north of the capital. The city, founded in 1773, is also called Villa Concepción. Several banks and commercial establishments are located here. Several industries are located here, including sawmills, flour mills, tanneries, cotton gins, and sugar refineries. The 1995 population was approximately 25,600.

CORONEL OVIEDO, also in eastern Paraguay, is a town of 22,700 residents. It serves as the administrative center of Caaguacú Department. Oranges, sugarcane, and tobacco are grown near the town. The town has a hospital and a Catholic cathedral.

LUQUE, 10 miles outside of Asunción, made history in the late 1860s when war erupted with Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. For six years it was the national capital. Luque's produce and industry supply Asunción. Its population is estimated at 25,000.

PEDRO JUAN CABALLERO is on the Brazilian border in eastern Paraguay. It is the capital of the Amambay Department and one of the largest towns in the region. Cattle ranching and coffee growing are primary economic pursuits.

PILAR, capital of Ñeembucú Department, lies 60 miles south of Asunción. This port on the Paraguay River handles most of the agricultural products of the adjacent districts. It is also important in manufacturing. Manufacturing industries in Pilar include sawmills, textile mills, and distilleries. The city is linked with the rest of the country via the Asunción-Encarnación highway. Approximately 13,000 live in Pilar, which has an airport.

VILLARRICA, in south-central Paraguay, is a long-established commercial center about 70 miles southeast of the capital. Founded in 1570, it is the capital of Guairá Department, and the shipping point for a region producing cattle, tobacco,

sugarcane, wine, fruit, and *yerba maté* (Paraguayan tea). It is also known for its sugar refineries, textile mills, shoe factories, flour mills, distilleries, and sawmills. The population, which has a large percentage of people of German descent, is about 21,200. Villarrica's cathedral is a pilgrimage center.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located in the heart of South America, Paraguay is a landlocked, agricultural country about the size of California. It shares its borders with Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia.

The Parana-Paraguay River system is Paraguay's commercial access to the outside world. Rivers and their tributaries largely define Paraguay's boundaries, and the Paraguay River divides the country into two dissimilar sections, east and west.

The eastern section consists of rolling, fertile farming areas and grasslands, together with large, wooded areas and jungle patches near the Brazilian border. Most of the country's population live in the east and engage in small-scale agriculture. Asunción and other commercially important towns-Encarnación, Ciudad del Este, Pedro Juan Caballero, Concepción, Coronel Oviedo, and Villarrica-are in this area, and most are accessible by paved roads. The western section, nearly two-thirds of Paraguay's total area, is called the Chaco. It is a low lying plateau covered with grassy meadows, bogs, spiny bushes, palms, and small trees. Lacking roads and navigable rivers, much of the region is inaccessible. Only 3% of the population live in this area.

The riverfront elevation of Asunción is 177 feet above sea level. Residential areas are situated on low hills that rise another 200 feet. Eleva-



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Government palace in Asuncion, Paraguay

tions throughout Paraguay are moderate, the highest range of hills, located in the eastern region, rises to about 2,000 feet.

Paraguay's climate is seasonal and subject to abrupt changes. It is subtropical, with summer and winter seasons opposite those in the U.S. Winds are generally moderate, but high winds accompanied by thunder and electrical storms are common, especially in summer. The long, hot summer lasts from October through March, with January average maximum temperature 91°F and mean temperature 81°F. Severe hot spells with very high humidity are common. Temperatures often exceed 100°F during the day from December to February (the official record high temperature is 109°F), with little relief at night.

Winter extends from June through August. Cold snaps of 4 or 5 days with temperatures in the low 40s and high 30s are interspersed with several days in the upper 70s and low 80s. Frosts occur rarely. The official record low in Asuncion is 32°F, although the damp air and improper ventilation make it seem much colder. With frequent and abrupt changes, from winter to summer-like weather and back again (temperature changes of

20°F-50°F are common), a high incidence of respiratory and bronchial illness occurs in winter.

Relative humidity ranges between 67% and 78% (monthly averages) year round and is particularly high in summer. This causes problems in keeping certain foods crisp, and clothes and shoes may mildew.

Asuncion's average 59-inch annual rainfall is well distributed seasonally. Slightly greater amounts fall in hotter months. Torrential rains cause annual floods in riverside communities. The Chaco, which receives little rainfall, becomes semiarid in its western most reaches. During rainy periods, however, water covers large areas due to the impermeable clay subsoil.

Mosquitoes and a tiny gnat-like insect called "Mbarigui" are the most troublesome insects. Cockroaches appear at times in even the cleanest kitchens; but fast, good exterminators are available. Flies, ants, spiders, crickets, silverfish, and moths also prevail. Store woolen clothing in naphthalene during summer. Less common are rats, mice, bats, scorpions, and tarantulas. Depending on how developed a neighborhood is, animals in residential areas can include numerous

stray dogs, cows, grazing mules and horses, and a few snakes. Children should avoid any unfamiliar animal.

Population

Much of Paraguay is sparsely populated. Most of its 5.2 million people are concentrated in the smaller eastern half of the country. About 600,000 people live in Asuncion, the political, economic, and cultural center of the country. Asuncion's population triples during the day with the influx of workers from surrounding cities. Nearly 35% of the country's population reside in the greater Asuncion metropolitan area.

Almost complete assimilation of the early Spanish settlers by the native Guarani Indians has developed a distinctive racially homogeneous Paraguayan strain, which makes up most of the population. The important minority groups include some 100,000 unassimilated Indians, representing 17 different ethnic groups.

As a result of the expansion of the Brazilian economy up to and across its border with Paraguay, about 300,000 Brazilians live in the border area where many engage in mechanized farming. This phenomenon continues on and has begun to cause some border tensions. Most of these immigrants are from southern Brazil, which is predominantly European. About 20,000 Argentines live along the Argentine border. Other minority groups include 40,000 Germans, 10,000 Koreans, 8,000 Japanese, 2,000 Chinese, 1,000 Poles, 300 French, and 300 English. Some 20,000 Russian, Canadian, Mexican, and U.S. Mennonites live in agricultural communities scattered throughout the country. Paraguay has traditionally welcomed immigrants.

The official U.S. community (including dependents and Peace Corps volunteers) numbers 290. Of the 2,836 nonofficial Americans registered at the Embassy, many are missionaries and business rep-

representatives and their dependents, along with some students and retired persons.

The Paraguayan population is predominantly Roman Catholic. The 1992 constitution recognizes religious freedom and states that no confession will have official character. The constitution also states that relations between the state and the Catholic Church are based on independence, cooperation, and autonomy. Although all religious groups had been tolerated, in 1979 the Paraguayan Government took legal action against groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Children of God, and the Hare Krishna movement, whose teachings on patriotic and family allegiances conflicted with Paraguayan law and custom. In a related attempt to restrict the growth of religious cults, recent legislation has prohibited the conferring of legal status on any new religious groups. Spanish is the language of government, business, and education and is used among the educated. Paraguayans are proud of their native heritage and of the Guaraní language, also recognized as an official language.

Guaraní is used almost exclusively in rural areas and is widely spoken in urban areas. Anyone learning even a few words of Guaraní will find it greatly appreciated by Paraguayans.

Paraguayans are not as class conscious as some Latin Americans. All share a pride in their ethnic heritage and a fierce patriotism born of devastating, protracted wars with neighboring countries. Although extremes of wealth and want exist, display of great wealth is still uncommon; and conversely, abject poverty is less visible here than in many Latin American countries. Life, particularly in rural areas, can be hard, but social differences that divide groups are neither deeply felt nor well defined. This is due, in part, to the availability of land for those willing to homestead, to the almost total elimination of the landed Spanish aristocracy under the dictatorship of José Gaspar Rod-

riguez de Francia in the early 1800s, and to the leveling effect of the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-70), in which up to 70% of the male population was killed.

Public Institutions

Paraguay has had a turbulent political history. The area, first colonized in the early 16th century, achieved independence from Spain in 1811. Left with a legacy of authoritarian rule by its early leaders and nearly destroyed by the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-70), it has been plagued by a major conflict with Bolivia (Chaco War, 1932-35), periods of near anarchy, and civil wars interspersed with several prolonged periods of relative tranquility. The last major conflict was the 6-month civil war of 1947.

On February 3, 1989, a coup d'état overthrew 34 years of authoritarian rule. In May 1989, under the new President of the Republic, Paraguay began the long process of transition from authoritarianism to democracy. A new constitution took effect in June 1992, providing for a stronger Parliament, an independent judiciary, municipal autonomy, and limited decentralization of administrative authority.

Paraguay's two major, traditional political organizations, the Colorado and Liberal Parties, have each ruled the country for prolonged periods. Few ideological differences separate them. In 1991, a third party, the Encuentro Nacional, was formed. The Colorado Party, the dominant political force during the authoritarian years and the democratic transition, is likely to remain so for some time.

The traditional Liberal Party is split into several fragments. The largest of these, the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA), was the principal opposition party in the later years of authoritarian rule. The Liberals and "Encuentristas" hold a sizable minority of congressional seats. A small Christian Democratic Party (PDC) also participated in nationwide municipal

elections in the early 1990s, but has had little active role since then.

In March 1999, the Vice President of Paraguay was assassinated in a plot widely attributed to a disaffected former Army commander who enjoyed the protection of Paraguay's President. After mass public protests several days later, in which several protesters were killed, both the President and the former Army commander fled the country. The then-Senate President became President of the Republic, in accordance with the Constitution, and formed a "national unity" government with members of the Liberal and Encuentro Nacional parties.

Although the military was highly politicized during the first years of the democratic transition, it remains an influential institution in Paraguay and has been supportive of the attempt to transform Paraguay into a modern democracy. The army (10,000 troops), navy, and air force (1,000 each) lack modern equipment and training in many areas, but remain receptive to civilian control. In many isolated areas, the armed forces are the sole representative of government.

Arts, Science, and Education

The Centro Cultural Paraguayo Americano (BNC) sponsors numerous cultural activities and has a 12,000-volume library with both Spanish and English titles, including one of the country's most complete collections of Paraguayan works. As well as teaching at average of 6,000 students English, the center offers concerts, theater, gallery shows, and lectures and seminars on various topics. The Center opened a second branch in 1998.

Of the fine arts, painting and graphics are the most developed in Paraguay. The Contemporary Arts Museum, the Ceramics Museum, the Museo del Barro Manzanera de la Rivera, and the U.S.

Cultural Center gallery, as well as other binational institutions, exhibit Paraguayan and foreign artwork throughout the year. Asuncion has a part-time symphony that performs during winter in various auditoriums. Paraguayan folk musicians perform at various sites throughout the year. Paraguay's most popular theater groups present Spanish and Guarani comedies at the city's several theaters. Ballet troupes perform occasionally at the Municipal Theater or other locales. Cultural missions of France, the E.R.G., Argentina, Brazil, Japan, and the U.K. present music, theater, and films at their institutions.

Paraguay's two institutions of higher education are the National University of Asuncion and the Catholic University of Asuncion. Both have adjunct faculties in the larger cities of the interior.

Little scientific activity exists beyond instruction at the National University. Scientific museums include the Ethnographic Museum and the Museum of Natural Science.

Commerce and Industry

Paraguay is predominantly an agricultural country with vast hydroelectric potential but no known significant mineral or petroleum resources. The Paraguayan economy is extremely vulnerable to the vagaries of weather. It exports cotton, soybeans, cattle, and electricity. It also has a fairly lucrative business of reexporting products made elsewhere. Paraguay imports foodstuffs, machinery, transportation equipment, fuels and lubricants, and textiles. Its principal trade partners are Brazil, Argentina, Chile, U.S., and Western European countries. The U.S. maintains a healthy trade surplus with Paraguay. From a base of \$375 million in 1991, U.S. exports to Paraguay rose to \$913 million at the end of 1997. This represents a 24% annual increase. In 1998, Paraguay's total

registered exports amounted to \$1,002 million and total registered imports were \$2,377 million.

Since the 1980s, the economy has experienced a series of peaks and valleys. The decade of the 80s began with the final 2 years of rapid construction of the Itaipu Dam (with the largest hydroelectric-generating capacity in the world) fueling annual growth of 10%. From this peak, the economy alternated periods of recession with modest growth. The 1988-89 period saw solid economic growth averaging 5% a year. During 1990 and 1991, the pace of expansion sustained by the Paraguayan economy in the preceding 2 years began to slow. From 1992-98 the economy has grown at an anemic 2.5% per year. The year 1999 was the second consecutive year of negative economic growth.

The February 1989 coup d'etat marked the end of 34 years of repressive regime and the beginning of a transition process to democracy in Paraguay. Since then, successive administrations have implemented modest economic reform packages and have flirted with privatization of state-run telephone, electrical, and water companies. Some reforms include the unification of the exchange rate, the elimination of preferential foreign exchange rates and foreign exchange controls, expenditure reductions, and implementation of a new tax code. In the financial sector, interest rates were freed, and new savings instruments were authorized. Price controls on some basic products were also eliminated, and tax incentives to encourage investment and attract foreign investors were provided. The Government is now studying privatization of state-run enterprises and modernization of the state. Paraguay continues to have one of the lowest foreign debts in Latin America.

Since ending the 34-year Stroessner dictatorship in 1989, the Government of Paraguay has made significant progress in reinserting the country into the world community. On March 26, 1991, Paraguay

joined Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in signing the Treaty of Asuncion, to create Mercosur, a common market and customs union that went into effect in January 1995. Mercosur signed free trade agreements with Chile and Bolivia in 1996, and similar arrangements are under negotiation with Mexico, Peru, and the European Union. Paraguay became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in January 1995.

Transportation

Automobiles

Driving is on the right. Although distances traveled within Asuncion are not great and travel into the countryside is not extensive or frequent, most find a car necessary here. Unleaded gasoline is available countrywide. Fuel prices vary considerably due to fluctuating exchange rates. Unleaded (97 octane) costs about \$2.73 a gallon; regular gasoline (95 octane, unleaded with alcohol) \$2.53 a gallon; regular gasoline (85 octane, unleaded with alcohol) \$2.15 a gallon; and diesel fuel \$0.92 a gallon (April 2000). Currently, unleaded gasoline is sold without alcohol additives; regular gasoline does contain some alcohol. Various U.S., Japanese, Brazilian, and European-origin cars are driven here. Many vehicles are available locally; costs are higher than vehicles from the U.S. Brazilian and Japanese vehicles are the most common, but none sold locally meet U.S. safety requirements and smog control specifications.

Sport cars with low-road clearance are unsuitable for local cobblestone streets and unpaved roads. A diesel-powered car or low-consumption compact would be most economical and would probably have fewer maintenance problems. U.S. cars hold up well, although obtaining spare parts can involve long delays when repairs are needed as many are not available locally. Most parts purchased here are expensive. Service is fair-to-good.

Local

Of Paraguay's 28,000-kilometer road network, 2,700 kilometers are paved. Some roads are graded earth or gravel and are susceptible to closure from rains and flooding for considerable periods of time. The southeast portion of the country, east of the Paraguay River, where the major economic activity of the country is concentrated, has the best roads. Most of the main towns in this area, and from Asuncion to Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Montevideo, and Buenos Aires, are linked by paved or all-weather roads. Considerable highway expansion and improvement is planned or in the construction stage. Emphasis is on making the Chaco more accessible year round, routing truck transport of agricultural products to the Brazilian Port of Paranagua, and integrating the hydroelectric projects at Itaipu and Yacyreta into the national economy.

Road travel is the most common transportation for domestic freight and passenger travel. More than 50% of road traffic consists of trucks and buses. Excellent bus service is available to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, but distances and travel times are long.

Public transportation in Asuncion consists of taxis and buses. Radio taxis are available and reliable either by phone or at stands throughout the city; they are more scarce at night. City bus routes are extensive, with fullest and most frequent service downtown. Unfortunately, bus stops and routes are not well marked. Buses are noisy, uncomfortable, and in ill-repair. During rush hours they are dangerously over-crowded. To add to the adventure, buses often slow down rather than stop to discharge and pick up passengers. Bus travel is not recommended.

Regional

Paraguay's external ties are mainly through air, road, and river transport. Great distances and poor and sometimes impassable roads limit overland travel. Most travel in the

interior is for business, not pleasure.

Paraguay's most important transportation system is the inland waterway that connects Paraguay's inland ports with the Atlantic Ocean. It begins with the Paraguay River that runs north-south across the country and the Parana River that serves as a border with Brazil and Argentina, and continues past the Argentine Port of Rosario to Buenos Aires. Together with the Rio de la Plata, it constitutes a 3,170-kilometer system of transport, handling over 60% of the international traffic in the area.

Asuncion, the largest port, serves Paraguay's most important productive areas and is the only port with modern berthing facilities and cargo-handling equipment. Facilities are limited, however, and transit areas are very congested. With completion of the Itaipu, Yacyreta, and Corpus hydroelectric projects, water levels on the Parana River should increase from Encarnacion to Salto del Guaira. This will open the Parana River to oceangoing vessels and increase the importance of both Encarnacion and Ciudad del Este as inland ports.

For other than leisure sightseeing, air transportation is the only practical means of international travel to and from Asuncion. Asuncion is served by Silvio Pettirosi International Airport, a Category 3 airport. As such, there are no direct flights via U.S. carriers to the U.S. TAM offers daily flights between the U.S. and Asuncion. American Airlines offers daily flights to Miami, New York, and Dallas through Sao Paulo, Brazil. Varig also offers daily flights to Miami or New York through Sao Paulo. Airlines connecting Asuncion with other capitals and major cities include: American Airlines, Aerolineas Argentinas, Varig, PLUNA, LAN Chile, Lloyd Aereo Boliviano, Iberia, and TAM. The internal airline, ARPA, operates with a Cessna Caravan from Monday to Friday. Domestic air traffic is small but important, as it is often the only means into other sections of the

country, especially during bad weather. Airfields range from an all-weather airport under construction at Mariscal Estigarribia (halfway between Asuncion and Santa Cruz, Bolivia), where only military flights operate; to a restricted all-weather airport under the control of the Itaipu Binational Authority, north of Ciudad del Estate; to an International Airport named Guarani located in Minga Guazu, and to a few concrete strips in the more remote interior.

There is also daily bus service between Asuncion and Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo and Foz de Iguazu. There are very comfortable, air-conditioned executive buses, in addition to the regular buses.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Asuncion's telephone system is good but suffers from maintenance and repair problems. Long-distance service is available almost worldwide, with good connections. Calls to the U.S. are normally of excellent quality. Costs for a long distance call to anywhere in the continental U.S. are: weekdays (Monday through Saturday) \$2.23 a minute; Sunday, \$2 a minute.

Access to AT&T's USA Direct is now available. Also, you can join MCI and U.S. Sprint calling systems.

An ordinary telegram to the U.S. costs about 31 cents a word (with a 7-word minimum). Night letter (telegram): 7-word minimum and 21-word maximum costs 16 cents a word.

All costs listed above and throughout this report change considerably, depending on the prevailing exchange rate.

Mail

The Paraguayan mail system is becoming more reliable, but do not send money or valuables through the mail.

Radio and TV

Asuncion has four TV stations and two cable TV stations: Channel 2, Channel 4, Channel 9, and Channel 13. Channel 9 and Channel 13 have their national networks on subsidiary channels. Cable TV is growing. The main cable companies, CVC/TVD and CMM, carry channels from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Spain, Venezuela, and the U.S. (ESPN, CMM carries HBO Ole, CVC carries CNN in English and Spanish).

The main news programs are transmitted by Channels 4, 9, and 13 at noon and at 8 pm and cover news from around the world. Most of the series shown come from the U.S. and are dubbed into Spanish.

The color system used in Paraguay is PAL-N (similar to Uruguay and Argentina). A bistandard set NTSC/PAL-N will allow you to watch TV and view American video movies. A good 20-inch bistandard (or "binorma") TV set currently costs about \$350 if purchased here. U.S. color TV sets are not compatible with the PAL-N system. A bistandard video recorder would allow you to tape from local TV.

Several video-cassette clubs operate in Asuncion. These clubs do not operate with the same standards found in the U.S., and selection of tapes is not as varied.

Paraguayan TV stations may be received on indoor antennas.

In Asuncion, some 10 AM stations and 12 FM stations are available. There are some 30 other stations outside of Asuncion. All broadcast popular and traditional Latin music, local news, and sports. Most of the FM stations transmit music in stereo, including the latest U.S. and British popular music.

For English-language broadcasts, bring a shortwave radio, or you can buy one locally. A simple longwire outdoor antenna can help to bring in shortwave stations.

Bring stereo equipment. The 50 cycle current means that in addition to the 110v-220v transformer, however, phonographs and tape recorders without DC motors require modification. Phonographs may require a different pulley; tape recorders may need a different capstan. Both can usually be bought from the manufacturer. If possible, have these adjustments made before arrival. Newer equipment, however, is multivoltage and multi-cycle (as is computer equipment). Please check before departure.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Six independent daily newspapers are printed in Asuncion; one of them, *Ultima Hora*, has morning and afternoon editions. *Ultima Hora* and *ABC Color* have the largest circulations. Papers can be purchased from newsboys at street corners or at kiosks. Home delivery can also be arranged.

The following newspapers are located on the worldwide web as indicated: *Ultima Hora* at <http://www.ultimahora.com.py>; *ABC Color* at <http://www.abc.com.py>; *Noticias El Diario* at <http://www.diaionoticias.com.py>. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *People* are sold at newsstands. The only English-language newspaper available is the *Buenos Aires Herald*, which usually arrives in Asuncion on the day of publication. Subscriptions from the U.S. arrive from 1 day to 2 weeks after being sent.

Many English-language periodicals may be read at the Roosevelt Library of the Centro Cultural Paraguayo-Americano, Asuncion's BNC.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Although several well-trained physicians and surgeons practice in the city and several hospitals are adequately staffed and equipped to handle most emergency medical and surgical problems, persons

requiring complicated diagnostic work and all but minor surgery cases are normally evacuated to Miami. Many doctors are U.S. trained, including dentists, orthodontists, ophthalmologists, obstetricians, pediatricians, and surgeons. There are four hospitals used often by U.S. citizens and military personnel in the country. They are the Baptist Hospital with 44 beds, the Hospital Privado Frances with 55 beds, the Migone Hospital with 34 beds, and the Sanatorio San Roque with 66 beds. The four hospitals provide emergency rooms, intensive care units, lab and x-ray facilities, and doctors on 24-hour call.

Community Health

Most of Asuncion (73%) has a modern municipal water supply, and unfluoridated tap water connected to the system (CORPOSANA) is considered safe to drink. As a health precaution, however, all drinking water should be boiled and/or treated. Most hotels and larger homes are connected to the system. When contracting for a house, determine whether the CORPOSANA system has been installed. If not, note that well water, in and outside the city, must be boiled at least 10 minutes to ensure potability. Asuncion's sewers empty untreated waste into the Paraguay River. Many restaurants observe acceptable standards of health. Routine inspections are not considered to be reliable, however.

Milk is available in several forms. It is very safe to use long life milk which is available in all stores. The quality is good and it is sold at a good price. Powdered milk is also available.

Preventive Measures

Regional endemic diseases include measles, rabies, hepatitis, typhoid fever, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, parasitic diseases, and tuberculosis. Immunized healthy Americans taking normal sanitary precautions, however, are relatively safe from most diseases. Malaria suppressants are unnecessary. Be sure to have your Hepatitis A vaccine

and other routine immunizations up to date before departing.

Certain precautions are important. Wash all vegetables and fruits thoroughly, and have yearly physical exams for all household help. Since hookworm is prevalent, wear shoes or sandals outdoors. Fungi infections are common during the hot summers, and allergies aggravated by the many lovely flowering trees are common. Frequent climatic changes, particularly in winter, cause colds and other upper respiratory infections.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel time by air from the east coast to Asuncion is about 12 hours. American Airlines flies from New York, Washington, D.C Dulles, and Miami to Asuncion through Sao Paulo. Since delays are common, allow for adequate transit time where travel involves changes from one flight to another.

Ship travel from U.S. ports to Buenos Aires does not have regular service. From Buenos Aires, passengers for Asuncion can continue by plane or bus; however, air travel is more practical.

For entry into Paraguay by road, you will need all essential vehicle documents such as ownership and registration, certified in the form of a vehicle transit pass (Libreta de Paso) obtained from the automobile club of the country from which entry into Paraguay is made.

Travelers without Brazilian or Peruvian visas are not allowed out of the airport even if they have missed their connection. Peru requires visas in diplomatic and official passports, not in tourist passports.

Unaccompanied air baggage may take 6-8 weeks to arrive and be cleared in Asuncion. Include all

essential items in your accompanied luggage.

A passport is required. U.S. citizens traveling as tourists or for business do not need a visa for stays up to three months. Persons planning on working, formally or informally, or staying longer than three months, may require a visa and should seek information from the Paraguayan Embassy or consulate on the corresponding visas prior to travel. Although Paraguayan law allows changes in visa status, the procedure is lengthy and can be cumbersome. In addition, individuals wishing to reside in Paraguay for any length of time should have their civil documents (birth and marriage certificates, etc.) certified and authenticated by the Paraguayan Embassy or Consulate in the U.S. as well as translated into Spanish. For current information concerning entry and customs requirements for Paraguay, travelers may contact the Paraguayan Embassy at 2400 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 483-6960. Internet: <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/py.html>; or the Paraguayan consulate in Los Angeles, Miami, or New York.

Americans living in or visiting Paraguay are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Asuncion and obtain updated information on travel and security in Paraguay. The U.S. Embassy is located at 1776 Mariscal Lopez Avenue; telephone (011-595-21) 213-715. The Consular Section is open for U.S. citizens services, including registration, Monday through Thursday from 1-5 pm and Friday from 7:30 am to 11:30 am, except for U.S. and Paraguayan holidays. The Consular Section's Internet e-mail address is: usaconsulasuncion@hotmail.com. (This e-mail address is not checked on a regular basis.)

Pets

All types of pets may be imported. A USDA veterinary certificate of good health and certificate of inoculation against rabies (at least 15 days

prior to travel) are the only required documents. If you are staying overnight or transiting along the way before reaching Asuncion, permission to have your pet enter that country will be needed. All pets may be exported as well, except birds and wild animals indigenous to Paraguay. Pets purchased locally should be inoculated against distemper and rabies every 6 months.

Firearms and Ammunition

All firearms must be registered in country with the local government.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit of Paraguay is the Guarani and can be purchased with dollar instruments in the fluctuating free market through licensed banks and exchange houses. The rate of exchange (ROE) is about US\$1=G3,503 (June 2000). Currently, only one U.S. bank remains active in Paraguay and that is Citibank N.A. Paraguay officially uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar. 1	Heroes Day
Mar/Apr.	Holy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Paraguay Labor Day
May 15	Paraguay Independence Day
June 12	Chaco Armistice
Aug. 15	Founding of the City of Asuncion
Sept. 29	Victory at Boqueron
Dec. 8	Virgin of Caacupe Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Abou, Selim. *Jesuit Republic of the Guaranis (1609-1768) and Its Heritage*. Crossroad Pub. Co.: New York, 1997.
- American University. *Area Handbook for Paraguay*. U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1990.
- Arnold, Adlai E. *Foundations of an Agricultural Policy in Paraguay*. Praeger: 1971.
- Attenborough, David. *The Zoo Quest Expeditions*. Penguin Books: New York, 1982. This paperback reedition of three of Attenborough's books includes his Zoo Quest in Paraguay. Anecdotes about filming and collecting animals.
- Barrett, William E. *Women on Horseback: The Story of Francisco S. Lopez and Elisa Lynch*. Doubleday: Garden City, 1969. A novel about Francisco Solano Lopez and the famous Madame Lynch.
- Brodsky, Ayn. *Madame Lynch and Friend*. Harper & Row: New York, 1975. A biographical account of the lives of Irish adventurer Elisa Lynch and Francisco Lopez.
- Durrell, Gerald. *The Drunken Forest*. Rupert Hart-Davis: London, 1956. Amusing account of animal collecting in Argentina and the Paraguayan Chaco Region.
- Fretz, Joseph Winfield. *Immigrant Group Settlements in Paraguay*. Bethel College Press: North Newton, Kansas, 1962.
- Fretz, Joseph Winfield. *Pilgrims in Paraguay*. Bethel College Press: North Newton, Kansas, 1953. Both are studies of colonization by Mennonite and other immigrant groups, mainly European and Asiatic in Paraguay by an American Mennonite scholar.
- Frings, Paul. *Paracuaria: Art Treasures of the Jesuit Republic of Paraguay*. Matthias-Gronewald-Verlag: Mainz, Germany, 1982. This book, with texts in English, Spanish, and German, contains information about the Jesuit ruins in Paraguay and efforts to restore the ruins. Includes background information on the Jesuit republic and photographs of the art works.
- Garner, William. *The Chaco Dispute: A Study of Prestige Diplomacy*. Public Affairs Press: Washington, D.C., 1966. The only English-language diplomatic history of the Chaco War. (1928-1938).
- Greene, Graham. *The Honorary Consul*. Simon & Schuster: New York, 1973. (Also available in paperback from Pocket Books, a subsidiary of Simon & Schuster.) A popular novel about a British Honorary Consul who is mistaken for an American Ambassador and is abducted and held by Paraguayan revolutionaries.
- Greene, Graham. *Travels With My Aunt*. Bantam Books: New York, 1971. In this comic novel, Henry and his aunt Augusta travel to Paraguay.
- Hay, James Eston. *Tobati: Tradicion y cambio en un pueblo paraguayo*. CERI/Universidad Catolica, Pilar: Asuncion, 1999. An analysis of the change and development of a small Paraguayan town, Tobati. [This book should be available in English by 2002. English language copies may be obtained at research libraries, through University Microfilms or through Inter-Library Loan: Hay, James Eston, Tobati: Tradition and Change in a Paraguayan Town. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 1993.]
- Kolinski, Charles J. *Independence or Death*. University of Florida Press: Gainesville, Florida, 1965. A history of the War of the Triple Alliance, 1865-70.
- Lambert, Peter and Nickson, Andrew, Eds. *The Transition to Democracy in Paraguay*. St. Martin's Press, Inc.: New York, NY, 1997. The most up-to-date assessment of Paraguay after the transition from the Stroessner dictatorship.
- Land of Lace and Legend, An Informal Guide to Paraguay*. Compiled by Las Amigas Norteamericanas del Paraguay, 1977. It describes many features of life in Paraguay.
- Lewis, Paul. *Socialism, Liberalism, and Dictatorship in Paraguay*. Praeger: New York, 1982. This book places General Stroessner and his regime into the context of Paraguay's political culture. It deals with the struggles between Liberals and those who represented an indigenous socialism, shows how Stroessner rose to power, and describes his regime's structure and organizational support. Stroessner's policies with respect to economic development and foreign affairs are described and the state of the opposition under Stroessner is discussed.
- Lewis, Paul H. *Paraguay Under Stroessner*. The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1980. A political biography of the President of Paraguay that is rich in historical background and anecdotal detail. An excellent and educational book on contemporary politics of Paraguay.
- McNaspy, C. J. *Lost Cities of Paraguay: Art and Architecture of the Jesuit Reductions, 1607-1767*. Loyola University Press: Chicago, 1982. Gives an account of the Jesuit Reductions (missions) and describes sites in Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. The best book in English to date on this subject.
- Miranda, Carlos R. *The Stroessner Era: Authoritarian Rule in Paraguay*. Westview: Boulder, 1990. The author describes the political culture of, and the history of authoritarianism, in Paraguay before embarking on an in-depth study of the ideological bases of the Stroessner era, the politics of control of the Stroessner regime, and economic development and the pattern of co-optation during his dictatorship. He also exam-

ines the reasons for the demise of the Stroessner regime.

Pendle, George. *Paraguay, A Riverside Nation*. Third Edition, Royal Institute of International Affairs: 1967. This short volume reads like an extended encyclopedia article. Recommended as the best single book dealing with the historical, economic, and sociological aspects of Paraguayan life. Includes a comprehensive annotated bibliography.

Raine, Philip. *Paraguay*. Scarecrow Press: New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1956. An informative, comprehensive treatment by a U.S. Foreign Service officer.

Sergice, Elman R. and Helen S. Tobati. *A Paraguayan Town*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1954. A detailed study of life in a representative rural town.

Warren, Harris G. *Paraguay, An Informal History*. University of Oklahoma Press: 1949. Probably the best book in English for a historical overall view of the country.

Stover, Richard. *Six Silver Moonbeams: The Life and times of Augustin Barrios Mangore*. Quercus Pubs.: Clovis, CA, 1992. This book is a comprehensive and authoritative biography of the world's greatest guitarist/composer, Agustin Pio Barrios (1885-1944), also known as Nitsuga

Mangore. This extensive treatment of Barrios' life and music brings to light many facts about the amazing "Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay."

Paraguay and the Triple Alliance: The Post-war Decade, 1869-1878. University of Texas Press: Austin, Texas, 1978. A well-written, well-researched study of the years after Paraguay's disastrous war with Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

Warren, Harris Gaylord. *Rebirth of the Paraguayan Republic: The First Colorado Era, 1878-1904*. University of Pittsburgh Press: Pittsburgh, 1985. Warren writes a comprehensive history of Paraguay, based primarily on archival sources, from the watershed years of 1869-1870 to the Colorado defeat in 1904.

Washburn, Charles A. *The History of Paraguay*. Two volumes, 1871. An interesting autobiographical and historical account by an American diplomat in Paraguay at the time of the War of the Triple Alliance.

Whigham, Thomas. *The Politics of River Trade, Tradition and Development in The Upper Plata, 1780-1870*. University of New Mexico Press: 1991.

White, Edward Lucas. *El Supremo*. Durrón: New York, 1934. A good

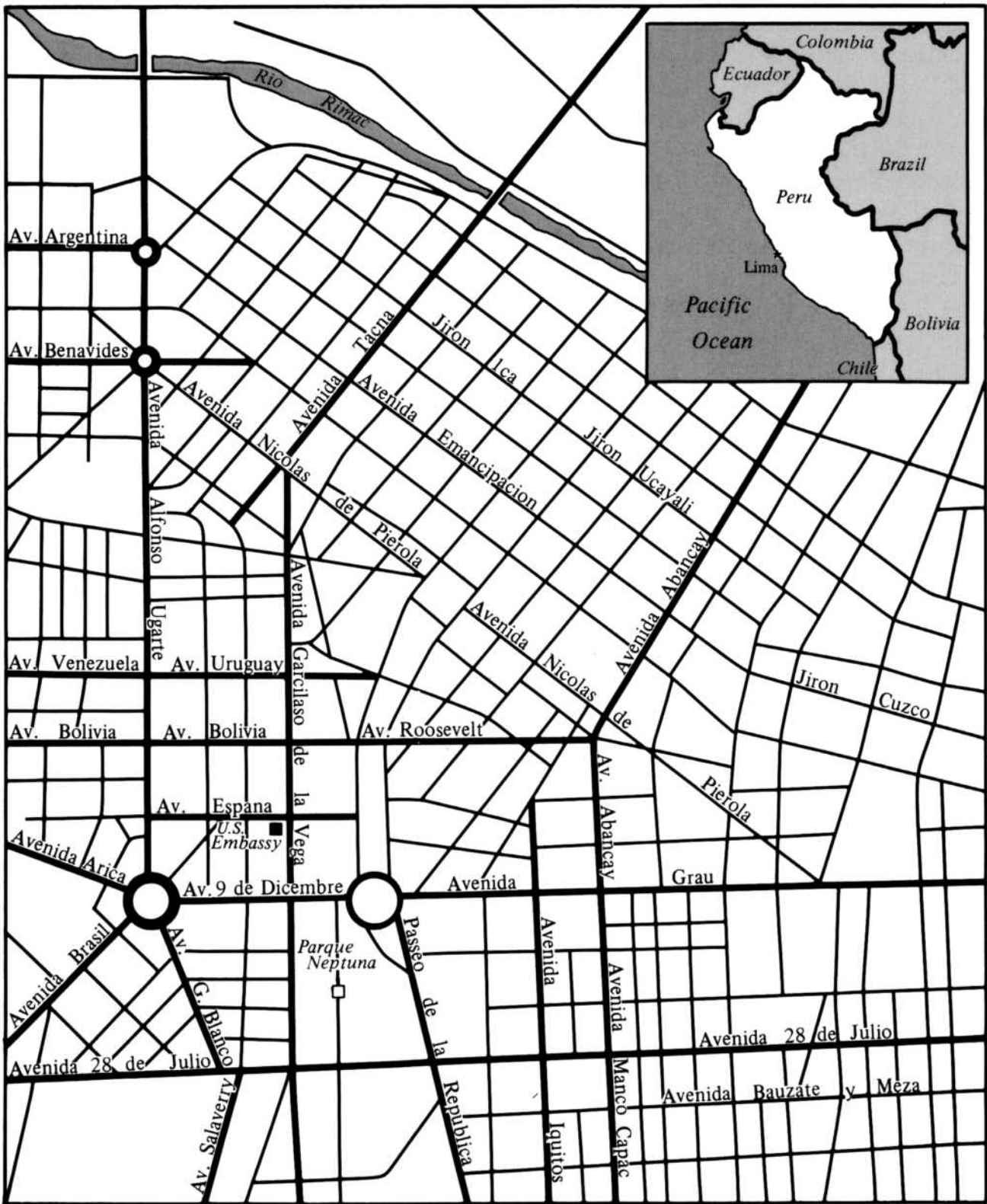
historical novel of Paraguay under Dr. de Francia.

White, Richard Alan. *Paraguay's Autonomous Revolution: 1810-1840*. University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 1978. A new look at the revolution carried out by Dr. de Francia following independence.

Williams, John Hoyt. *The Rise and Fall of the Paraguayan Republic, 1800-1870*. University of Texas Press: Austin, Texas, 1979. Examines this critical period of Paraguayan history as a period rather than a study of personalities.

Zook, David H., Jr. *The Conduct of the Chaco War*. Bookman Associates: New Haven, Connecticut, 1960. An interesting, in-depth treatment of this little-understood war from a politico-military viewpoint.

The following Internet sites are a few of many with information on Paraguay: <http://travel.state.gov/paraguay.html> <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/pa.html> <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pytoc.html> <http://www.wtgonline.com/data/pry/pry.asp> <http://www.latinworld.com/sur/Paraguay/> <http://travel.lycos.com/Destinations/South America/Paraguay/>.



Lima, Peru

PERU

Republic of Peru

Major Cities:

Lima, Arequipa

Other Cities:

Cajamarca, Callao, Cerro de Pasco, Chiclayo, Chimbote, Cuzco, Huancayo, Ica, Iquitos, Pisco, Piura, Pucallpa, Trujillo

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Peru. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

PERU is a nation of diversity and contrast. Historically, it was the nucleus of the great Inca civilization and, subsequently, the administrative center of the Spanish colonial empire in South America. Geographically, Peru includes the desert coastal region with its populous cities of Lima, Arequipa, Trujillo, Chiclayo, and Piura; the mountainous central area of the Andean chain; and the jungle region forming the headwaters of the Amazon Basin.

Situated on the Pacific coast of the continent, Peru shares frontiers with five South American republics—Ecuador and Colombia to the

north, Chile to the south, and Brazil and Bolivia to the east.

MAJOR CITIES

Lima

Lima lies in the center of Peru's coastal desert area on the Rimac River, 8 miles from the Pacific Port of Callao and about 475 feet above sea level. Its coordinates are 12 degrees south latitude and 77 degrees west longitude, the same longitude as New York City, 3,500 miles north. The Pan American Highway links Lima with Ecuador (600 miles north) and with Chile (720 miles south).

Although only 12 degrees south of the Equator, Lima is not tropical. The Pacific Ocean's cool Humboldt Current moderates the Peruvian coastal climate. Two distinct seasons occur: summer and winter. Winter is cool and damp with overcast skies; summer is moderate and generally pleasant. Rain is practically nonexistent in the area though light mist and drizzle persist throughout the winter.

Lima was founded by Francisco Pizarro on January 18, 1535, and named the "City of Kings," probably

because the site was discovered on Epiphany. The seat of the viceroy was established here in 1542 with jurisdiction over all Spanish territory in South America except Venezuela.

The City of Kings has changed in the past 25 years from a quiet city of Spanish colonial charm into a modern-day metropolis. Although many colonial landmarks still stand, new office buildings and hotels tower over the dignified mansions and churches of the 17th and 18th centuries. Greater Lima with its suburbs covers roughly 400 square miles and has a population of over 7 million, making it the fourth-largest city in South America. By day the city teems with business and traffic; at night it assumes a typical Latin American cosmopolitan appearance, offering excellent restaurants, nightclubs, discotheques, concert halls, and movie theaters.

The area is rich in centuries-old plazas and churches. Inca and pre-Inca ruins are nearby, and artisan objects of silver, leather, and alpaca wool are available. Many modern entertainment and sports facilities are also available.

Utilities

Electricity in Lima is 220v, 60 cycles, but the voltage varies. Some houses and apartments are wired



Courthouse and plaza in Lima, Peru

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

for both 110 and 220. Keep in mind that 110v appliances require a transformer. Most areas have enough water, but severe shortages can occur, particularly in summer. Telephone, electricity and water service are reliable in Lima.

Food

American-style supermarkets are abundant in most residential areas. Markets offer a variety of locally produced and processed goods. Many small specialty shops can be found throughout greater Lima, but imported foodstuffs are expensive.

Delicious fresh domestic and imported fruits and vegetables, both tropical and temperate, are sold in Lima year-round. Bananas, melons, oranges, and such tropical fruits as papayas, mangoes, and maracuya (passion fruit) are of good quality and reasonably priced. Apples, plums, peaches, strawberries, watermelon, pears, etc., are also available in season. Small limes are used for drinks and in cooking. Fresh fruit juices including strawberry and melon are popular. Many fresh herbs and spices are sold in the supermarkets.

Fish, fresh meat, and chicken are generally available. Beef, pork, and some cuts of lamb are good, but

quality varies. Cook pork thoroughly.

Fresh, pasteurized milk is available at some local supermarkets (La Molina brand is preferred but sometimes hard to find). Many Americans buy boxed, long-life milk. Powdered or canned milk is available. Local and imported cheeses are plentiful and varied. There is no lack of good cheeses in Lima. Ice cream is not very expensive and may also easily be made at home.

Seven brands of beer are brewed in Peru and good Chilean wines are available locally. World-famous "pisco" brandy (distilled from grapes) is widely served and "pisco sours" are traditionally offered as a gesture of hospitality. Locally bottled soft drinks include Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, Canada Dry Ginger Ale, Seven-Up, and tonic. The bright yellow Inka Cola is a favorite Peruvian soft drink.

Peruvian cuisine excites the palate and is imaginative and varied, with many dishes based on fresh fish and seafood. Corn, potatoes, and chicken are combined with such fresh herbs as basil and coriander (Chinese parsley) to make delicious soups. Rich desserts are popular. Restau-

rants are exceptionally good, though expensive.

Clothing

All items of apparel are sold locally but imported items are expensive. The style and fit of locally produced apparel are different. Local tailoring and dressmaking services are good. Excellent fabrics may be purchased here. Peru is famous for export of a high-quality cotton.

Attractive, good-quality shoes are available, but expensive, and large, half-size, and narrow sizes are hard to find.

Men: Most Peruvian men dress conservatively, wearing shirts and ties to both office and social gatherings. In summer, sport shirts and slacks are acceptable for day and evening wear.

Women: Women will find woolen and other medium-weight warm dresses or suits practical for office or social wear during winter. Evening jackets and wraps are necessary in winter and frequently lightweight shawls are needed in summer. Shorts are rarely seen in public in the city, but are common at clubs, picnics, and at home.

Dress slacks are generally acceptable, depending upon style and fabric, and are suitable for coffees, luncheons, teas, meetings, and cocktail parties. Street-length dresses or separates are worn more frequently.

Children: Uniforms required for various schools should be purchased locally. Black athletic shoes are acceptable to uniform standards and could be purchased in the U.S. Although kindergarten-age children do not wear uniforms, they will need them when they enter first grade. During March, school children are not required to wear uniforms because of the heat.

Supplies and Services

American and European brands of toilet articles and cosmetics are expensive here; domestic brands are

more reasonably priced and some are satisfactory.

Pharmacies are well stocked with antibiotics, vitamins, and U.S.-patented medicines at controlled prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Photography enthusiasts could bring a supply of film, but remember that it deteriorates if stored in a humid climate for long. Most film types are sold locally.

Tailoring, dressmaking, shoe repair, hairdressing, barbering, laundry, dry-cleaning, and other services are available at reasonable prices.

Domestic Help

A maid's salary is currently about \$150 to \$200 per month. For full-time help, the employer also must pay a social security tax of about 18% of monthly salary. Both live-in maid and day maids are easy to find. Besides monthly pay, the employer must provide uniforms, food, and for daily domestics, transportation money. Live-in servants need a simple bed and chest of drawers, available locally at modest prices. Some find that to have domestic help is essential because their presence helps improve home security and because air pollution and dust create constant cleaning problems.

Gardeners, and ironing persons, are available as day workers, who can be hired to wash and wax floors, clean windows, and polish furniture (jobs maids generally do not do). Gardeners generally have their own lawn mowers. Good caterers are available for special entertaining at reasonable prices.

Peruvian law requires employers to give servants 15 days vacation when they complete a year of continuous service. Also, 15 days indemnity will be due domestic workers for each full year of service.

Religious Activities

The Lima Cathedral, originally built in the 16th century, has been almost entirely reconstructed and is currently used primarily as a

museum. Lima has many other Catholic churches, some of considerable historic and artistic interest. Masses in English are conducted at the Santa Maria Reina Chapel, Avenida Sta. Cruz, Ovalo Gutierrez, in Miraflores.

Three Protestant churches have Sunday services in English: the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd at Av. Santa Cruz 491, Miraflores. Sunday services include Holy Communion at 8:00 a.m. with Morning Service at 10:00 (Creche and Sunday school available). The International Union Church at Av. Angamos 1155, Miraflores offers interdenominational Worship Services in English on Sundays at 10:30 and Sunday school at 9:30 (adults) and at 10:15 (children). The Union Church also offers Bible Studies on Friday, March to November. The New Life Bible Fellowship at Av. La Molina Este, 142 Rinconada del Lago, offers an interdenominational English Worship Service on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. in Iglesia Vida Nueva en Cristo. Nursery is available. Several Jewish congregations offer services in Hebrew and Spanish, with many English-speaking members of the congregation. Asociacion Judia de Beneficencia Eculto de 1870 is located at Jose Galvez 282, Miraflores (4451089), Central Social y Cultura Sharon at Dos de Mayo (440-0290) and Union Israelita del Peru can be contacted at 4400290. Mormon services in English are also offered. Lima has missionaries from many Protestant denominations, but their church services are usually in Spanish. The YMCA and YWCA are active in the Lima community.

Education

School-age children usually attend the Colegio Franklin D. Roosevelt, an international school in Lima. Instruction is in English and programs are offered for preschool age children (3 and 4-year old), as well as kindergarten through grade 12. Colegio Roosevelt is accredited by the U.S. Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This private, coeducational, nondenominational school, was

established in 1946 to provide schooling for dependents of major U.S. companies in Peru. Its curriculum is primarily designed to prepare students for future enrollment in universities. The school has about 1,300 students (kindergarten through grade 12). The student population is currently 1,337 with U.S. citizens making up 26%, 52% Peruvian, and the remaining 22% of the students are third country nationals.

The large campus is quite impressive. Separate buildings are used for the high school, middle school, elementary school, multipurpose media facility, and the gymnasium. Many faculty and administrative personnel are U.S. citizens. School begins the first week in August and continues until early July, with a 2-1/2 month holiday from mid December through February. The school does not have a cafeteria. Children either carry their lunches or purchase snack food.

Guidance counselor interviews of secondary students assist in class scheduling. To assist administrators, the school recommends that copies of official transcripts, standardized tests, report cards, letters of recommendation and any additional information that would be helpful, be forwarded to FDR prior to your arrival. English, history, social studies, Spanish, science, math, and physical education are standard offerings in the high school as well as elective courses. International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and diploma as well as Advanced Placement (AP) are available. Additionally, Roosevelt offers a strong computer education program. Extracurricular activities include sports (baseball, basketball, soccer, field hockey, tennis, softball and volleyball). Photography Club, Drama Club, National Honor Society, student government and Varsity Club. Gifted and talented children programs are offered. Students with diagnosed mild learning disabilities are included in regular classes with support from a specialist. However, it should be noted that Colegio Roosevelt has limited



Town square in Arequipa, Peru

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resources for special needs students. Programs for students with learning difficulties or those in advanced curriculums do not compare with those offered in U.S. public school systems. It is important to contact the school before enrollment to discuss how best your child can be accommodated. All relevant information should be forwarded, along with academic and health records, before arrival to enable the school to better evaluate individual students. More detailed information regarding resources for special needs students at FDR can be obtained from the Overseas Briefing Center.

The school offers a short summer activities program. Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt can be contacted at: (phone) 51-1-435-0890, (fax) 51-1-4360927 or (e-mail) fdr@amersol.edu.pe.

Their web site address to be contacted is: www.amersol.edu.pe.

Peru has many national and private universities, including 14 in Lima. One semester courses like those given in U.S. colleges and universities are generally not offered here. Agriculture and engineering are taught at national universities in Lima. All courses are in Spanish and enrollment is restricted.

The University of San Marcos in Lima is the oldest in the Americas (founded May 13, 1551) and the largest in Peru. Its faculties include humanities, law, medicine, sciences, economics, education, and veterinary medicine. But this university has been plagued with student disturbances and is suffering an economic crisis.

The Catholic University is the largest private university in Lima. During July and August it sponsors a

special program for U.S. students, as does the University of Lima, which has an excellent School of Communications. The University of the Pacific specializes in business education and other related programs.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Binational Centers offer a language program to teach Spanish to foreigners in Peru. In addition, English language classes are available. You can also arrange inexpensive private language tutoring.

Sports

Sports facilities, aside from various spectator sports, are primarily limited to private clubs, gymnasiums, or health studios. Lima has many popular, but expensive, sporting clubs and several tennis, golf, swimming, and riding facilities. Some

clubs have almost impossible admission requirements, but others have memberships available that range from expensive to moderate. Clubs usually require initiation fees or shares (some of which can be sold on departure) plus monthly or quarterly dues. Several modern, well-equipped health studios and gymnasiums in the area provide exercise facilities, boxing, wrestling, weight lifting, etc. An active softball league operates on weekends at Roosevelt School.

The American Association is a social/charitable membership organization for U.S. citizens and Canadians living in Lima. Among its activities are group trips to outlying areas, a monthly restaurant night, and other social events. It sponsors a community picnic each year on Labor Day and a joint Canadian/U.S. Independence Day celebration in July.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Almost every area and town in Peru has its own unique festivals and celebrations. These are mostly colorful religious events. Comfortable, clean tourist hotels operate in the most frequently visited towns. Reservations for all in-country travel can be made through several local travel agencies. The South American Explorers' Club has an office in Lima with extensive files on trips within Peru. Membership costs \$30 per year.

Nearby Pacific Ocean beaches offer swimming and surfing, but the undertow and currents are sometimes dangerous, and many nearby beaches are contaminated by raw sewage. About 20 to 30 miles south of Lima are clean, pleasant beaches that are also safe for children. These include the Punta Hermosa and Santa Maria beaches. Surfing in Peru deserves special mention. The many coastal beaches provide a variety of waves rarely seen in other localities. However, the water is usually quite cold, so surfers require wetsuits as well as surfboards. Both are expensive in Peru. A group of sailing enthusiasts in

Lima holds regattas during the summer for Lightning class craft.

Both expensive surf and small boat fishing are available at Pucusana (30 miles south) and Ancon, though it is hard to get small boats in summer. Trout fishing is available at Lake Titicaca, on the Altiplano in southeast Peru about 810 miles from Lima, and in neighboring mountain streams, but not in the vicinity of the city.

Three aviation clubs are located about 12 miles from the city center. These include a flying club, a gliding club, and a parachute club. Fees vary and at times have been high by U.S. standards. A good working knowledge of Spanish is needed to participate in the activities of these clubs.

Lima has facilities for target, skeet, and trap shooting. You may rent or board horses at several stables and riding clubs. Inter-Club riding competition is well organized and competition keen. Spectator sports include horse races (held on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday), polo, colorful bullfights (October–November), soccer, basketball, cockfights, and professional boxing and wrestling.

Bring any sports equipment you plan to use here, particularly tennis and squash racquets, scuba equipment, surfboards, golf clubs, badminton sets, ping-pong, volleyball, hunting and fishing equipment, bicycles, yard equipment for children, baseball gloves, balls and bats. Local equipment is expensive. A game known as "fronton" is also popular and is similar to outdoor paddle ball.

Lima offers a wide choice of good restaurants for business lunches and social dining. Sidewalk cafes and drive-in restaurants abound in the city. Some snack bars feature American-type services and food. Certain tourist areas offer more elegant dining. Many popular restaurants specialize in Chinese food, pizza, fried chicken, or Peruvian Creole food. Many U.S. fast-food

franchises such as Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Domino's Pizza operate in Lima.

Entertainment

Several theaters in Lima show first-run movies. American films are popular and are widely shown with original soundtracks and Spanish subtitles. Lima also has live theaters with most performances in Spanish. An active amateur theater group, sponsored by the British community, regularly presents plays in English.

The National Symphony Orchestra offers concerts during winter, at times featuring vocal or instrumental artists from Europe, the U.S., or other Latin American countries. The city has a local ballet company, and international ballet companies occasionally perform. International soloists participate in the elegant Municipal Theater's annual opera season.

Lima has several nightclubs with dance orchestras and floorshows, discos, and good jazz bars. These clubs are expensive and prices vary according to the entertainment offered.

Peruvians celebrate their country's independence on July 28 and 29 with military parades, official receptions, and religious ceremonies.

Social Activities

Most entertaining in Lima is done in private homes, clubs, or hotels.

Peruvians are conservative and reserved about admitting outsiders to their social and family circles, but they are friendly to Americans. With a little time and effort you can make valuable and pleasant friendships. It is a good idea to reconfirm appointments, particularly social engagements, the same day or the day before.

Social organizations open to membership by Americans (some by invitation only, others by application) include the American Society of Peru, the Toastmasters, the American Women's Literary Club,

the Lima Women's Chorale, Good Companions (British theater group), Lions, Rotary, and several sport clubs. For children, Lima has active affiliates of Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Girl Guides. Bring transfer cards if you wish to enroll your children in one of these groups.

Arequipa

Arequipa is 475 miles southeast of Lima, at the foot of the dormant volcano, *El Misti*, one of Peru's highest points (19,031 feet). The city proper, at an altitude of 7,550 feet, is the capital of Arequipa Department and had a metropolitan population of about 635,000 in 1990.

Arequipa was founded in 1540 by Francisco Pizarro on the site of an Inca town. It is situated on an oasis, in an arid region that grows crops for local consumption. The city is an important commercial center for southern Peru and northern Bolivia, producing leather, nylon, textiles, and foodstuffs. A steel mill and textile plants also are in operation.

Tourism is an important industry here. Incan ruins, hot springs, and bathing resorts are among Arequipa's tourist attractions. Examples of Spanish colonial architecture, almost completely destroyed in an 1868 earthquake, have been restored. Santa Catalina, a cloistered convent, is said to be an architectural marvel. Arequipa has been called the "white city" because of the light-colored *sillar* (building stone) which dominates the area.

There has been a university in Arequipa since 1821. The city is the seat of a Catholic diocese, the publishing center for two newspapers, and the site of several provincial banks and a Chamber of Commerce. One of Peru's three seismological stations is located here; the others are in Lima and Huancayo. The city is prone to severe earthquakes. The latest earthquake in the 1960s devastated the city.

Prescott Anglo-American School in Arequipa is a coeducational day

school for pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It was founded in 1965 and is accredited by the country's Ministry of Education. Its curriculum is Peruvian, with Spanish a required language. Six members of its staff of 70 are U.S. citizens. Enrollment is about 1,140. Prescott is located a few miles from the center of the city; the mailing address is Apartado 1036, Arequipa, Peru.

OTHER CITIES

The ancient Inca city of **CAJAMARCA** is situated 350 miles north of Lima in Cajamarca Province. Conquistador Francisco Pizarro captured and executed Inca chief Atahualpa here in 1532. The colonial presence is evident in the cathedral and San Francisco Belén Church. Cajamarca relies on mining, agriculture, and manufacturing for its economic well-being; tourism is increasing in importance. The thermal springs known as "Baths of the Incas" are near this provincial capital of approximately 93,000. A main trading hub of the northern Andes, Cajamarca has adequate transportation via road and air.

CALLAO, on the doorstep of the capital city, is the chief seaport of Peru. It is situated on Callao Bay, only eight miles west of Lima. The city is the capital of Lima Department, and had a metropolitan population of approximately 575,000 in 1989. Founded in 1537, at the same time that Francisco Pizarro established Lima, Callao was incorporated as a town in 1671. As the gateway to Lima, it was frequently attacked. Sir Francis Drake captured the town in 1578. It later was held by Spanish loyalists until 1825, even though Peru had gained its independence in 1821; the Spanish also bombarded the city in 1866. Callao was occupied by Chile from 1881 to 1883 during the War of the Pacific. Major expansion of its harbor was undertaken in 1958. The harbor, which is sheltered by a small peninsula and an island, handles more than half of the nation's imports and exports. Metallurgical

industries, shipbuilding factories, breweries, and sugar refineries are found in Callao. Exports include minerals, wool, refined metals, fish oil, and fish meal. Callao was totally destroyed in 1746 by an earthquake and a tidal wave, and again severely damaged in 1940; however, many colonial landmarks survive.

CERRO DE PASCO rests in Peru's central highlands 112 miles northeast of Lima. One of the highest cities in the world at an altitude of 14,436 feet, it gained renown for its mining in the mid-1630s. Silver dominated the industry for 200 years. Today the original silver deposits are long depleted, replaced by gold, copper, lead, zinc, and other minerals. Cerro de Pasco is the capital of Pasco Province and has an estimated population of 70,000.

CHICLAYO, with a 2000 population of about 517,000, is a maritime city in northwestern Peru, 400 miles north of Lima. The capital of Lambayeque Department, it is situated on the coastal desert between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes Mountains. Chiclayo gets little rainfall and may go years at a time without receiving any, but Andean streams are used for irrigation. The artificial watering enables the area to raise sugarcane and the greatest part of the country's rice. Chiclayo has a university, founded in 1962, and an agricultural college, established in 1963. The city has many parks and gardens and a large marketplace.

CHIMBOTE, one of Peru's fastest-growing urban areas, was reconstructed as a model city less than 20 years ago. The city, 225 miles northwest of Lima on the Pacific coast, made international headlines in 1970 when a massive earthquake struck. The unique natural harbor accounts for the important import/export business here. This involves agriculture, manufactured goods, and bulk materials. Excellent transportation for this community of 253,000 is provided by an airport and by the city's location on the Pan-American Highway. Chimbote is also the terminus of a local railroad.

CUZCO (also spelled Cusco) is 300 miles southeast of Lima at the junction of the Huatanay and Tullamayo rivers. Situated at an altitude of 11,200 feet, Cuzco's population, close to 300,000, is predominantly Indian. Cuzco once was the capital of a vast Inca empire, known as the "City of the Sun." It is thought to have been founded in the 11th century by Manco Capac, the first ruler of the Incas. At that time, the city had massive temples, fortresses, walls, and beautiful palaces. Today, the Temple of the Sun is the site of a Dominican convent. Ruins of some of the Inca buildings survive, notably the fortress of Sacsahuaman. Francisco Pizarro took Cuzco for the Spanish in 1522, destroyed much of the ancient city, and constructed a colonial city, using many of the old walls as foundations for new buildings. The Renaissance cathedral of La Merced is the most noteworthy of the many churches in Cuzco. An earthquake destroyed a broad area of the city in 1950, but most of the historical buildings have been restored, and Cuzco still is considered the "archaeological capital of South America." The National University of Cuzco was built in 1597. The Feast of Into Raymi is the important festival here. Close to Cuzco is the ancient, terraced, "lost city" of Machu Picchu. Cuzco is a commercial and industrial center. Among the industries are textile, beer, and rug production. The city is linked by air, highway, and railroad with Lima.

HUANCAYO, a city whose metropolitan-area population was estimated at 327,000 in 2000, is situated in central Peru, on the Montaro River. A university, founded in 1962, and a national seismological station are located here. Huancayo is the hub of a large Indian district. Many Indians come to Huancayo to trade at the city's central market. The city has many beautiful examples of modern and religious architecture. Huancayo is a major commercial and tourist center for Peru's Central Andes region. In 1966, the Museo Cabrera was opened. It contains pottery and

engraved stones from the ancient Nazca culture.

ICA, on the river whose name it bears, is 170 miles southeast of Lima. The capital of Ica Department, this city of 161,400 (1993 est.) is located next to the Pan-American Highway. The Spanish settled here in 1563. Ica, twice destroyed by earthquakes, is today a commercial center for the cotton, wool, and wine produced in the region, and is also a summer resort. A university was founded in Ica in 1961. The shrine of Our Lord of Luren, site of many pilgrimages, is located here.

IQUITOS is in northeastern Peru, 1,270 miles northeast of Lima. The capital of Loreto Department, it lies on the Amazon, approximately 2,300 miles from the river's mouth. Founded in 1863, Iquitos, with a 2000 population of 367,000, is the farthest inland port of appreciable size in the world. The city became important early in the 20th century with the boom in rubber, but declined soon afterward when the market collapsed. Today, rubber, coffee, cotton, and timber are exported from Iquitos. The Andes Mountains are a barrier to the transport of commercial goods to the Pacific, so Iquitos' products are exported via the Atlantic Ocean. A university was founded here in 1961. Iquitos is the cultural, religious, and tourist center of eastern Peru.

PISCO is a port on the Pacific Ocean, about 130 miles south of Lima, with a population of about 56,000. Large vineyards surround the city, and one of its major industries is the production of Pisco brandy. Cotton is also cultivated and processed in the area. Other industries in Pisco include textile manufacturing and cotton seed milling. Subsistence farming and fishing are also pursued. Adjacent to Pisco, on the Paracus Peninsula, are ruins from a pre-Incan civilization.

PIURA, 425 miles northeast of Lima, is situated in the Piura valley of the Peruvian coastal desert. San Miguel de Piura, originally situated

on the coast, was the first Spanish settlement in Peru, founded by Francisco Pizarro in 1532. Because of unhealthy conditions, the city was moved to the present inland site of Piura, about 35 miles southeast of its port, Paita. Sebastián de Benalcázar set out from here to conquer Ecuador. Severely damaged by an earthquake in 1912, this city of 325,000 (2000 est.) residents has developed into a commercial center for corn, rice, cotton, and sugarcane produced in the region. The cotton market in Piura is extensive; several cotton gins and cottonseed oil mills are located in the immediate area. A technical university opened here in 1961.

In east-central Peru about 80 miles from the Brazil border sits **PUCALLPA**, half civilized, half rain forest frontier town. This city of approximately 172,300 (1993 est.) residents was opened to the outside world in 1945 upon the completion of the Lima-Pucallpa highway. First settled in the early 1530s, Pucallpa is the largest city in Ucayali Department, as well as a market center and industrial district. Primary industries in Pucallpa include sawmills and plants for extracting rosewood oil. It is accessible by air or river traffic; there are no paved roads. This area has become headquarters for several missionaries and colonizers.

TRUJILLO is a coastal city in northwestern Peru, about 300 miles north of Lima. Its port, Salaverry, is nine miles to the west. The capital of La Libertad Department, Trujillo has a metropolitan population of about 652,500. The city was founded in 1534 and played an important role in the fight against Spanish rule. Independence was declared in 1820 and, in 1825, Trujillo served as Peru's provisional capital, as well as main headquarters for Simón Bolívar. In 1617, a wall was built to protect the city from English pirates; today, the wall is one of the principal points of interest. Situated in a fertile oasis of the coastal desert, Trujillo is a thriving commercial and industrial center. Rice and sugar are processed here, and the

city also produces textiles, leather goods, and food products. The University of La Libertad was founded in Trujillo in 1824. Four miles west are the ruins of the pre-Incan city of Chan-Chan, believed to have been established between 800 and 1000. Chan-Chan is recognized as the capital of the pre-Incan civilization of Chium, and once had 200,000 inhabitants. Walls, decorated in relief designs, are part of the ruins today. In 1990, Trujillo had an estimated population of 532,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Peru is on the west coast of South America, south of the Equator, between 0 and 18 degrees south latitude and 70 degrees and 81 degrees west longitude. It is the fifth most populated country in Latin America, and it is three times the geographic size of California.

The country has four distinct geographic areas: the narrow coastal desert region (about 25 to 40 miles wide), barren except for irrigated valleys; the Andean highlands or sierra, containing some of the world's highest mountains; the "ceja de montana" (eyebrow of the mountain), a long narrow strip of mountainous jungle on the eastern slope of the Andes; and the selva or rain forest area, which covers over half the country, including the vast Amazon River Basin and the Madre de Dios River Basin.

The sierra, which makes up over one-fourth of Peru, is an area of uneven population distribution, rich in mineral wealth. Many of its inhabitants live at elevations above 10,000 feet. The selva region is sparsely populated and only partially explored. The climate in the ceja de montana varies with the elevation from temperate to tropical.

Because Lima lies on an axis of instability in the Earth's crust, seismic activity is common. Light earthquakes called "temblores" occur but seldom cause damage. For example, between May 1998 and May 1999, 85 light earthquakes occurred. A strong earthquake occurred in Lima, Callao, and environs on May 24, 1940, causing major damage and claiming over 2,000 lives. Also, serious earthquakes occurred in Cuzco (1950), Arequipa (1958 and 1960), the Lima-Callao area (1966-74), and Chimbote and the Callejon de Huaylas (1970).

Peru lies below the Equator; therefore its seasons along the Pacific Coast are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. Summer lasts from about mid-December through April in that region and is generally pleasant, with warm, sunny days and cool, comfortable nights. February is usually the warmest, with an average temperature of about 79°F, but humidity averages 83 percent. Temperatures rarely range above the mid-80s. Only two distinct seasons occur in the highlands: the rainy season from December to April and a dry period the rest of the year. Temperatures in the sierra fluctuate considerably with the weather and altitude.

Winter along the coast lasts from May or June to November. The weather is chilly and damp. Sunny days in Lima's winter are rare, particularly in July, August, and September. Rain is virtually unknown; however, a fine mist often falls and fog is common. The coolest, dampest months are July and August, with average temperatures about 60°F and rarely falling below the low 50s. Humidity is high all year, especially in winter, requiring constant vigilance against mildew and mold.

Population

Peru's 1999 population was estimated at 25.23 million, with a population growth rate of about 1.7 percent per year. The nation's population consists of many ethnic groups, of which about one-third

live in the Lima metropolitan area. Indigenous peoples constitute about 35 percent of the population, while Peruvian of mixed indigenous and European descent ("mestizo") comprise almost 50 percent. Whites comprise almost 10 percent of the population, while Asians and Blacks make up less than 5 percent of the total population. In the Lima metropolitan area, the population is overwhelmingly mestizo and white, with relatively large Japanese and Chinese communities.

Peru has two official languages - Spanish and the foremost indigenous language, Quechua. Spanish is used by the government and the media, and in most forms of education and commerce. English is spoken by many educated Peruvians, and is understood in most major hotels and in many restaurants and shops catering to tourists. Amerindians who live in the Andean highlands speak Quechua or Aymara and are ethnically distinct from the diverse indigenous groups, who live on the eastern side of the Andes and in the tropical lowlands adjacent to the Amazon basin. All of the indigenous languages are losing ground with increases in indigenous people moving to the largest cities, where Spanish is the most commonly used language.

Public Institutions

When the Spanish arrived in the early 16th century, the territory now known as Peru was part of the Inca Empire that extended from southwestern Colombia to central Chile. Its conquest by a handful of adventurers led by Francisco Pizarro (who founded Lima, which he called the "City of Kings") was facilitated by the aftereffects of the succession struggle in the Inca Empire between two half-brothers, Atahualpa and Huascar.

Peru was part of Spain's American empire for almost 300 years. Several prominent leaders of South American wars of independence played a role in Peru's liberation: San Martin proclaimed Peru's independence on July 28, 1821; and Boli-

var was President of Peru from 1824 to 1826. Sucre won the battle of Ayacucho in 1824 (generally considered the last major engagement of the wars of independence).

Since becoming independent, Peru and its neighbors have been engaged in intermittent territorial disputes. Chile's victory over Peru and Bolivia in the War of the Pacific (1879–83) resulted in a territorial settlement in which Peru lost Arica and Tarapaca Provinces to Chile. Following a serious clash between Peru and Ecuador in 1941, the Rio Protocol (of which the U.S. is guarantor) established the current boundary between the two countries. Occasional brief skirmishes have occurred over the years along a part of the border area still undemarcated. Major fighting broke out on the Peru-Ecuador border (limited to a sparsely populated jungle area) in January 1995 until a cease-fire was brokered by the four Rio Protocol guarantors in March. The U.S. participated in observing the cease-fire, and along with Brazil, Argentina and Chile, helped facilitate the signing of a global and definitive peace agreement on October 26, 1998.

Throughout Peruvian history, the military has played a prominent role. Coups have repeatedly interrupted civilian, constitutional government. The last period of military rule lasted from 1968 to 1980.

For centuries, the Peruvian Indian population has cultivated the coca plant (*Erythroxylum coca vas coca*), whose leaf is chewed as a mild stimulant and specific against altitude sickness, used as an herbal tea, or used for some traditional or religious ceremonies. In the 1870s, the pharmaceutical industry isolated the cocaine alkaloid, a powerful local anesthetic, but also a highly addictive stimulant with significant potential for abuse.

An initial burst of cocaine abuse in Europe and the U. S. subsided at the time of World War I, but in the 1970s, escalating demand for

cocaine in the U.S. again led to vast expansion in the limited traditional coca crops by much greater cultivation destined for illicit drug production. Since that time, cocaine has become the most significant illicit substance of abuse in the U.S., and is a growing problem for the rest of the world.

Peru is overwhelmingly the world's largest producer of raw material for cocaine, and the illegal drug trafficking industry has since the 1980s become recognized by the Peruvian people as one of their greatest domestic problems, a source of financing for terrorist groups, corruption of democratic political and judicial institutions, economic and social distortion, and devastation of the Amazon environment.

Peru returned to democratic rule in 1980 when Accion Popular led by American-educated Fernando Belaunde Terry came to power. In the 1985 elections, Alan Garcia of the center-left American Popular Revolutionary Party (APRA) won the presidency and a controlled majority of the two Houses of Congress. American-educated Alberto Fujimori, an independent candidate, was elected President in 1990. On April 5, 1992, with the support of the armed forces, President Fujimori suspended the constitution and closed down the country's congress and courts in what became known as "the auto-coup." Following pressure by the international community, Fujimori called national elections to choose a new unicameral congress in November 1992 to draft a new constitution. Fujimori's political movement, Cambio 90/Nueva Mayoria, won a majority of seats; several traditional political parties boycotted the election.

The new constitution, which the congress drafted, was narrowly approved in a nationwide referendum in October 1993. Unlike the previous constitution, the new one allowed a sitting president to run for reelection, which Fujimori did and won by a landslide in April 1995. In 1996, the Congress passed legislation interpreting the consti-

tutional term limits for president, that made it possible for Fujimori to seek reelection in the 2000 national elections. The new legislative body is a unicameral congress with 120 members elected at large. President Fujimori's party holds 71 seats, and a variety of other groups, the largest of which is Union Por El Peru, hold the rest.

Under President Fujimori, many of the problems that haunted his predecessors—including terrorism, significant human rights violations, and hyperinflation—have been eliminated or greatly reduced. Some 30,000 persons, including thousands of noncombatants, died between 1980 and 1995 as two insurgencies challenged the government. A turning point was the September 1992 capture by police of Abimael Guzman, the founder and leader of Peru's largest terrorist group, Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path). However, other serious problems remain, including poverty, high unemployment, the illicit drug industry, and a controversial judicial branch.

Peru is divided into 24 departments and the Constitutional Province of Callao (the country's chief port, adjacent to Lima). The departments are subdivided into provinces that in turn are composed of districts. Municipal government is a distant second in power to the central government, with regional government a mere appendage of the latter.

Arts, Science, and Education

As Spain's most important viceroyalty in South America, Peru was an art-producing center. Art continues to be appreciated in Lima, where numerous commercial art galleries and museums exist. During the last three decades, painters such as Gerardo Chavez, Alberto Quintanilla, and Jose Carlos Ramos have gained international stature along with Peru's renowned painter Fernando de Syszlo and sculptor Victor Delfin. A younger generation of promising artists has also sprung up at a time

when Peru's economy provides more opportunity to promote the arts.

Peru is well known for its writers and poets. Mario Vargas Llosa is one of the world's most renowned contemporary novelists. His novels and essays are read abroad and have been widely translated. His bestselling titles include *Green House*, *Conversation in the Cathedral*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, and *The War of the End of the World*. His most recent is *A Fish in the Water*. Other poets and writers are Julio Ramon Ribeyro, Alfredo Bryce Echenique, Antonio Cisneros, and Blanca Varela.

With the recovering economy and the strengthened internal security situation in Peru, the country is resuming its cultural life. Musical offerings, including opera, are also available in Lima. Internationally known soloists, ensembles, and conductors perform with either the National Symphony Orchestra or under the sponsorship of the Philharmonic of Lima. The three famous tenors Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, and Jose Carreras, for example, all visited Peru during 1995. Top foreign singers, folk dancers, and ballet groups perform in Lima every year, and quality chamber groups present concerts during the May–December season. U.S. artists perform under the auspices of USIS and Peru's Binational Centers (BNC's) in Lima or in provincial cities.

The Peruvian theater has had a long and colorful history. Today, it is a popular national institution, with many active professional and amateur university groups. An increasing number of professional companies continue performing regularly, with several specializing in modern theater. USIS and the Lima BNC recently staged the Tennessee Williams play *The Night of the Iguana* with great success.

The Good Companions, a nonprofessional theater group sponsored by the British community, performs in English several times yearly at the

British Theater under the auspices of the British Council.

Spanish and English classes, a varied program of cultural presentations, and a modest bilingual library are available to Americans and Peruvians at the Lima Binational Center and its branch in Miraflores (Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano-ICPNA), where more than 10,000 Peruvians study English. Other Binational Centers, also supported by English teaching, are located in Arequipa, Cuzco, Trujillo, Chiclayo, Piura, and Huancaayo. Americans are encouraged to request the monthly activities bulletin of the Lima ICPNA's and to visit the provincial centers, where they are assured of a cordial welcome.

Commerce and Industry

Peru is a developing country blessed with extensive natural resources that enhance its potential for development. Rich mineral deposits in the Andes, abundant timber resources in the Amazon region, and an unusually bountiful supply of fish along the country's long coastline form a solid base of natural wealth. The arable lands along the coast offer the potential for considerable growth in agriculture, with sufficient investment in irrigation and other agricultural technologies.

In 1997, Peru's Economy grew by 7.2 percent, while inflation, at only 6.5 percent, fell to its lowest level in a quarter century. Peru's economy faltered in 1998, however, as the combined adverse effects of the Asian crisis (which depressed metal prices), the El Niño weather phenomenon (which hurt the important fishing industry) and the Russian crisis (which caused foreign investors to withdraw portfolio investments and foreign banks to suspend lines of credit to Peruvian banks) took their toll. The 1998 Gross Domestic Product grew by 0.7 percent while the inflation rate fell to 6.5 percent. The following year saw

an estimated growth of about 3 percent.

Confidence in the Peruvian economy stems from the program of fiscal discipline undertaken by President Alberto Fujimori since his first term in office (1990). His policies halted the hyperinflation of the 1980s and put Peru on an unprecedented growth path. He succeeded in reinserting Peru into the global financial community by committing to repay official debt to foreign creditors, and by his efforts to stem terrorist activity.

The Peruvian Government actively seeks to attract both foreign and domestic investment in all sectors of the economy. In 1991, the Peruvian government began an extensive privatization program, encouraging foreign investors to participate. From 1991 through 1998, privatization sales totaled about \$7 billion, of which foreign investors purchased the vast majority. Foreign investors have the same rights as national investors to benefit from any investment incentives, such as tax exemptions. Foreign direct investment has been spurred by the significant progress Peru has made over the last eight years toward economic, social, and political stability.

The Peruvian economy was not as hard hit during 1998 and early 1999 as some other Latin American economies (such as Brazil's which was forced to devalue its currency at the beginning of 1999). Most observers attribute the relative calm in Peruvian financial markets to its fiscal and monetary discipline, the size of its international reserves, and its floating exchange rate. Nevertheless, at the start of 1999 business leaders in Peru and others were calling for the government to spur domestic demand by increasing government spending.

The U.S. government advises the American Business Community that the best prospects for investment include mining, oil, and gas, construction, telecommunications, food processing, food packaging, and personal security equipment. Tour-



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Marketplace in Peru

ism-related products (such as hotel and restaurant supplies) are also promising. In the services sector, consulting services (especially in the areas of finance and tourism) and licensing of franchises are also good prospects.

Transportation

Automobiles

General traffic and driving practices differ greatly from those in the U.S. Traffic signs are widely disregarded. Improper signaling, failure to signal, and excessive speeding are frequent. Traffic signals frequently fail, compounding congestion and confusion. Lima's traffic can be nerve racking at first, but most people soon adjust to the improvised driving patterns. Traffic in Peru moves on the right as in the U.S.

Leaded gasoline is available in 84 and 95 octane and unleaded at 90

and 97 octane. The latter grades are most commonly used by those with American cars but do not give the same performance as U.S. high test. The cost of a gallon of gasoline in 1995 was almost double U.S. rates. Nowadays the cost of a gallon is between 6 and 7.87 new soles. Your catalytic converter may be removed here to accommodate the local leaded gasoline at more reasonable prices.

Local

Taxis, buses and smaller micro-buses abound. Buses are crowded but inexpensive. Regular taxi service is available at reasonable prices but the condition of most taxis is poor. Passengers should agree upon a price before entering the vehicle. Telephone dispatched taxi service is also available at higher rates.

Regional

Lima, an important air hub of South America, has a large, fairly modern

airport, served by American Airlines, Delta Airlines, United Airlines and Continental Airlines. Other international airlines serving Lima include Air France, Lan-Chile, Viasa (Venezuela), Avianca (Colombia), Varig (Brazil), Aero Peru, Iberia (Spain), LAB (Bolivia), Lufthansa (Germany), Alitalia (Italy), and others.

The ships that regularly service Callao Port and offer passenger transportation are from the Crowley American Transport and Maersk Lines. Their ships depart every 15 days or so from Miami, New Orleans, Houston, and New York.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Long-distance telephone and telegraph services to and from the U.S. and other countries are good and getting better.

All services are routed via satellite. AT&T, MCI and Sprint direct dialing to the U.S. is available through the Peruvian telephone company (Telefonica, a member of the ITU). It is possible to dial direct to almost any country in the world.

Radio and TV

Lima has 32 AM and 36 FM radio stations that provide news and popular Latin American, classical, contemporary, European, American, and Peruvian music. World news coverage in Spanish is adequate, and reception is good. Peru's leading news radio station is Radio Programas del Peru (RPP): BO 730 AM and 89.7 FM. VOA shortwave reception is good, and VOA Spanish programs are regularly rebroadcast on Radio Miraflores (1250 AM), RPP, and others.

Seven TV stations operate in Lima. One of them, Channel 5, transmits 24 hours daily, while the others start in the morning or at midday and broadcast until late at night. All broadcasts are in color and use the standard American television (NTSC) system. Most programs are the same as in the U.S. - soap operas, Westerns, audience participation, domestic comedies, old movies, and dubbed U.S. shows. All are commercial with 8 to 22 minutes of advertising an hour. Two Peruvian companies provide cable TV service to metropolitan Lima. The monthly fee is approximately \$40 for about 50 channels including some from Europe, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and the U.S. (CNN, ABC, NBC and CBS, but ESPN, TNT, FOX, and HBO are not the U.S. premium channels).

Recent enacted Peruvian telecommunications laws aim to make the content of Peruvian TV more educational and cultural. American TVs with a transformer to convert 220v current to 110v will receive local programs. However, cables, rabbit ears or access to an external antenna is required. Bring radio, TV equipment, VCRs, and TV cassettes from the U.S. as they are expensive here.

Ham radio operators, who hold a valid U.S. license, are entitled to operate in Lima.

Licenses also can be obtained locally. Prior notice and payment of a small fee must be given to the Ministerio de Transportes y Comunicaciones, Direccion General de Telecomunicaciones.

In the past few years, VCRs have become very popular. Many places rent English-language films, both current and classic, as well as U.S. TV shows. Tapes, the majority of these available for VHS systems at moderate prices, are often pirated so the quality is poor. However, a U.S. video chain (Blockbuster Video) has opened several stores.

Several local Internet Service Providers (ISPs) offer standard dial up services for those bringing personal computers. Surge protectors are advisable. 28.8 kbps to 54 kbps modem speeds are available depending on the telephone lines servicing the area where the user resides. ISPs provide communications and browser software for most standard operating systems. ISP subscription fees vary but closely parallel those in the U.S. ranging from \$10.50 to \$19 per month. Red Cientifica Peruana (RCP) is the longest established and perhaps the best known ISP with full, 24-hour dial-up service. America On Line (AOL) and other U.S. Internet services are available, but users must pay a per-minute charge for connect time via long distance telephone lines.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Lima has a competitive press with 16 daily newspapers. The most influential is the 159 year-old paper of record, conservative *El Comercio*. Well-informed readers often also consult center-right *Expreso* and center-left *La Republica*.

Gestion tries to be Peru's version of *The Wall Street Journal*. *El Peruano*, the government gazette, is the only medium that publishes the text of official communications. Other

dailies are more or less sensationalistic and colorful.

Three political magazines are published in Lima. The most influential is centrist *Caretas*; followed by independent, center-left *Si*; and the more popularly oriented *Gente*. Two respected intellectual bimonthlies, *Debate* and moderate leftist *Quehacer*, are published along with a wide range of specialized periodicals on economics and other fields.

Newspapers are relatively expensive. Newsstands sell copies at 58 cents to 88 cents daily and 66 cents to \$1.11 on Sundays with home delivery costing more. The official daily *El Peruano* costs a hefty 88 cents. Magazines have become quite expensive (at about \$3).

Lima has distributors of most major U.S. dailies. At one of them, Durlar, at Tiziano 205, San Borja, phone 475-8025, you can buy or arrange for delivery of the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *International Herald Tribune*, all 1 or 2 days old. They may also be ordered by mail. The international edition of the *Miami Herald*, which has been printed in Lima and available for same-day sale, including home delivery, is being renegotiated at the time of this writing. Newsstands sell *Time*, *Newsweek*, and a few other popular American magazines. Prices are higher than those in the U.S. Some bookstores, mostly in Miraflores and San Isidro, sell English-language books.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Lima has several good private hospitals called "clinicas." These clinics lack some of the high-tech equipment found in the U.S. but are more than adequate for emergency situations and stabilizing patients. The physicians are trained in Peru, Europe, and in the U.S. Many are U.S.-board certified.

Individuals should have planned elective surgery done in the U.S. In general U.S. health insurance is not accepted and payment is expected at the time of the visit (expenses generally are reimbursable as allowed through your specific insurance plan). Dental care including orthodontia is available by both U.S.- and Peruvian-trained dentists. Individuals should have a general dental examination prior to arrival.

Community Health

Lima has a high incidence of hepatitis A, measles, typhoid, diarrheal disease, and tuberculosis. Poverty, overcrowding, and malnutrition are common. Malaria, yellow fever, dengue, and rabies are common in the jungle.

Expatriate families are generally healthy. They experience the same illnesses as in the U.S. in addition to gastro-intestinal infections, usually from contaminated food or water. Winter (May through November) is cool and humid. The cool, sunless weather increases the number of colds, bronchitis, asthma, and allergy-related complaints. Due to many factors, e.g., terrorism, high crime, need for increased residential security, and periodic water shortages, and the long, sunless, gray winter, many individuals experience stress-related symptoms and occasional depression.

Preventive Measures

The following are suggestions for staying healthy in Peru:

- Use bottled water, as tap-water is not potable. Commercially prepared soft drinks and beer are considered safe.
- Vegetables and fruit require disinfection with a chlorine solution before eating. Avoid salads and raw vegetables and fruits in restaurants. Do not buy from “ambulantes” (street vendors).
- It is recommended that you start the hepatitis A and the hepatitis B series before coming. Yellow fever immunization is required for jungle

travel and for travel into some other countries (such as Brazil) from Peru. Have this vaccine before you come to Peru. The following immunizations should be kept current: typhoid; diphtheria; tetanus; polio; measles, mumps, and rubella; and HIB.

- Individuals who will be working in the jungles and/or traveling or living in outlying areas should take the pre-exposure rabies and hepatitis B vaccines prior to arrival.
- Hand-carry your immunization record as you would your passport.
- Bottled drinking water is not adequately fluoridated.
- Automobile accidents commonly occur. Seat belts and child-restraint systems are strongly recommended.
- Before traveling outside Lima, check for malaria precautions, as the malaria prophylaxis medication recommended depends on the area of jungle travel within Peru. Generally, Mefloquine or Doxycycline are recommended. Notes for Travelers

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Peru. Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a tourist stay of 90 days or less. U.S. citizens remaining in Peru more than 90 days must pay a monthly fee to extend their visa for up to three additional months, for a total of six months. U.S. citizens, including children, who remain in Peru over six months without obtaining a residence visa will have to pay a fine in order to depart Peru.

Visitors for other than tourist or family visit purposes must obtain a Peruvian visa in advance. Business

visitors should ascertain the tax and exit regulations that apply to the specific visa that they are granted. U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Peru must obtain a new passport and present it, together with a police report of the loss or theft, to the main immigration office in the capital city of Lima to obtain permission to depart. An airport tax of \$25 per person must be paid in U.S. currency when departing Peru. There is also a small airport fee for domestic flights. For further information regarding entry requirements, travelers should contact the Peruvian Embassy at 1625 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 605, Washington, DC 20036; telephone (202) 462-1084 or 462-1085; Internet <http://www.peruemb.org>; or the Peruvian Consulate in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Patterson (NJ), San Francisco, or San Juan.

You can fly to Peru from most sections of the U.S. in less than 16 hours (6 hours nonstop from Miami).

Remember that the seasons are the reverse of those in the U.S., so pack your luggage accordingly.

The Government of Peru prohibits the exportation of ancient Indian artifacts and colonial art. The U.S. Government supports this policy and, in accordance with the GOP Law No. 12958 of February 22, 1958, and Decree of Law 18780 of February 4, 1971 (available in General Services Office). The packing companies in Lima are prohibited from packing and shipping items that appear to be antiques. Due to the large number of facsimiles, the packing companies cannot differentiate between the real item and a copy. In order to avoid delays, acquire in advance a certification from the Instituto Nacional de Cultura verifying that the item is a copy and may be exported.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Peru are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Lima and obtain

updated information on travel and security in Peru. The Consular Section is open for American Citizen Services, including registration, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon weekdays, excluding U.S. and Peruvian holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located in Monterrico, a suburb of Lima, at Avenida Encalada, Block Seventeen; telephone (51-1) 434-3000 during business hours (8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.), Or (51-1) 434-3032 for after-hours emergencies; fax (51-1) 434-3065 or 434-3037; Internet web site - <http://usembassy.state.gov/lima>. This web site provides information but does not yet have interactive capability to respond to specific inquiries. The U.S. Consular Agency in Cusco is located in the Binational Center (Instituto Cultural Peruana Norte Americano, ICPNA) at Avenida Tulumayo 125; telephone (51-8) 24-51-02; fax (51-8) 23-35-41; Internet address consagent-cuzco@terra.com.pe. The Consular Agency can provide information and assistance to U.S. citizen travelers who are victims of crime or need other assistance, but it cannot replace U.S. passports. U.S. passports are issued at the U.S. Embassy in Lima

Pets

Pets must have a certificate of good health issued by a registered U.S. or foreign veterinarian. A Peruvian consul must then notarize this document. A certificate of rabies inoculation is also necessary for dogs and cats. Dog owners are especially cautioned that Lima has high infestations of fleas and mites that are difficult to control. Owners should bring appropriate pesticides and shampoos to aid in treatment.

Firearms & Ammunition

Local law provides that law enforcement and military personnel are authorized to import handguns in calibers up to .45 (pistol) and .357 (revolver). All others are limited to 9mm and .38 calibers respectively. Shotguns up to 16 gauge and rifles up to .44 caliber are permitted. Personal full automatic weapons are not allowed. All firearms brought

into Peru must be taken out of the country when you leave.

Currency, Banking & Weights and Measures

Peru's currency changed on January 1, 1986, from the sol to the inti. On January 1, 1991, the currency changed from the inti to the new sol. In December 1999, the exchange rate is new soles 3.49 = \$1.

A legacy from the years of hyperinflation is that many businesses price items in U.S. dollars. Payment is usually made in the sol equivalent value but many stores readily accept U.S. dollars as well. Counterfeiting, both of U.S. dollars and soles, is a problem and caution should be exercised when conducting transactions.

Peru uses the metric system of weights and measures, except for gasoline, which is sold by the gallon.

Specific Health Risks

Visitors to high-altitude Andean destinations such as Cusco (11,000 feet), Machu Picchu (8,000 feet), or Lake Titicaca (13,000 feet) should discuss the trip with their personal physician prior to departing the United States. Travel to high altitudes could pose a serious risk of illness, hospitalization, and even death, particularly if the traveler has a medical condition that affects blood circulation or breathing. Several U.S. citizens have died in Peru from medical conditions exacerbated by the high altitude. All people, even healthy and fit persons, will feel symptoms of hypoxia (lack of oxygen) upon arrival at high-altitude. Most people will have increased respiration and increased heart rate. Many people will have headaches, difficulty sleeping, lack of appetite, minor gastric and intestinal upsets, and mood changes. Most people may need time to adjust to the altitude. To help prevent these complications, consider taking acetazolamide (Diamox) after consulting your personal physician, avoid alcohol and smoking for at least one week after arrival at high altitudes, and limit physical

activity for the first 36 to 48 hours after arrival at high altitudes.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr	Holy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
June 29	St. Peter and St. Paul
July 28-29	Independence Days
Aug. 31	St. Rose of Lima
Sept. 5	Labor Day
Oct. 12	Combat of Angamos
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 14	Immaculate Conception
Dec 25.	Christmas

*variable

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ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

Major City:

Basseterre

Other City:

Charlestown

INTRODUCTION

Christopher Columbus landed on St. Christopher in 1493, naming the island after his patron saint. French and English colonists settled in the region in the 1600s, and the colonists shortened the name to “**ST. KITTS** island.” The settlers fought and eliminated the native Carib people. Sugar was the mainstay of the economy until well into the 20th century. St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla became part of the Leeward Islands Federation in 1871. In 1967, the three islands became an associated state. In 1969, Anguilla islanders rebelled and that island was permitted to secede in 1971. St. Kitts and Nevis became an independent federated state within the Commonwealth on September 19, 1983. In 1996, the premier of Nevis announced plans for the island to eventually secede from the federation and return to British control.

MAJOR CITY

Basseterre

Basseterre is the capital of St. Kitts and Nevis, with a population of 12,000. The city lies along the southern coast of St. Kitts’s central

region. The economy of St. Kitts was traditionally based on growing and processing sugarcane, but tourism and export-oriented manufacturing have assumed larger roles. The government-owned St. Kitts Sugar Manufacturing Corp. is still the largest industrial enterprise in the country.

Port Zante is Basseterre’s new cruise ship port. Thirty acres of land have recently been reclaimed from the sea and added to Basseterre, which has building codes that encourage an 18th-century architectural style. The cruiseship terminal can handle vessels of up to 75,000 tons with a draft of 30 feet, and a marina takes yachts up to 70 feet long with a draft of 12 feet. Bradshaw International Airport (scheduled for completion in mid-1998) has one of the largest runways in the Caribbean and can handle jumbo jet traffic.

Recreation and Entertainment

Popular local team sports include basketball, cricket, soccer, netball, and volleyball. Mountain biking, horseback riding, and scuba diving and snorkeling over the coral reefs are popular tourist activities. The most popular dive sights on St. Kitts are Monkey Shoals, Coconut Tree Reef, Nags Head, Sandy Point, and the shipwrecked freighter of the

River Taw. Local dive operators can provide instruction and equipment. There is a championship 18-hole golf on Nevis where PGA professionals offer private lessons.

The St. Kitts Sugar Manufacturing Corporation’s sugar conducts factory tours, as does the St. Kitts Breweries Ltd.

Basseterre’s Georgian architectural style attracts tourists. St. George’s Anglican Church was originally built in 1670 as a French Catholic church, and it has been destroyed both intentionally and accidentally several times over the centuries. The present building dates from 1869. Independence Square, in the center of Basseterre, was once a slave market. Brimstone Hill has a massive old fortress that took 100 years to build. The fortress covers 38 acres and rises almost 800 feet above the Caribbean.

The St. Christopher Heritage Society has a display of photos that shows the history, culture, and marine life of the island.

OTHER CITY

CHARLESTOWN is the main town on Nevis. The Museum of Nevis History is located at the birthplace of

US statesman Alexander Hamilton. The museum features displays of rare pre-Columbian artifacts and colonial-era objects. Several resorts offer golden beaches, hiking trails, water sports, golf, tennis with accommodations ranging from modest plantation inns to luxury hotels.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

St. Kitts lies about 5 miles southeast of the Netherlands Antilles and 45 miles northwest of Antigua in the Leeward Islands chain of the Caribbean Sea. Nevis lies two miles off the southeast coast of St. Kitts. The total area of St. Kitts is 104 square miles, and Nevis covers 36 square miles. Both islands are of volcanic origin. In the northwest of St. Kitts is the country's highest peak, Mt. Liamuiga (3,793 feet), and on the southern peninsula lies the Great Salt Pond. The highest point on Nevis is Mt. Nevis, at 3,232 feet. Temperatures stay between 68°F and 84°F throughout the year. The average annual rainfall is 43 inches, with the wet season lasting between May and November.

History

At the time of European discovery, the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis were inhabited by Carib Indians. Christopher Columbus landed on the larger island in 1493 on his second voyage and named it after St. Christopher, his patron saint. Columbus also discovered Nevis on his second voyage, reportedly calling it Nevis because of its resemblance to a snowcapped mountain (in Spanish, *nuestra senora de las nieves* or our lady of the snows). European colonization did not begin until 1623-24, when first English, then French colonists arrived on St. Christopher's island, whose name the English shortened to St. Kitt's island. As the first English colony in



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Clock Tower and town square in Basseterre, St. Kitts

the Caribbean, St. Kitts served as a base for further colonization in the region.

St. Kitts was held jointly by the English and French from 1628-1713. During the 17th century, intermittent warfare between French and English settlers ravaged its economy. Meanwhile Nevis, settled by English settlers in 1628, grew prosperous under English rule. St. Kitts was ceded to Great Britain by the treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Both St. Kitts and Nevis were seized by the French in 1782.

The Treaty of Paris in 1783 definitively awarded both islands to Britain. They were part of the colony of the Leeward Islands from 1871-1956, and of the West Indies Federation from 1958-62. In 1967, together with Anguilla, they became a self-governing state in association with Great Britain; Anguilla seceded late that year and remains a British dependency. The federation of St. Kitts and Nevis attained full independence on September 19, 1983.

Population

St. Kitts and Nevis has a population of 43,400. There are about 298 per-

sons per square mile, but the density on St. Kitts is twice that of Nevis. Over 90% of the population is of black African descent. There are minorities of mixed race persons, Indo-Pakistanis, and Europeans. The largest religious groups are the Anglican Church, the Church of God, the Methodist Church, the Moravians, the Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, the Pilgrim Holiness Church, and the Roman Catholic Church. English, spoken with local expressions, is the country's language.

Government

As head of state, Queen Elizabeth II is represented in St. Kitts and Nevis by a governor general, who acts on the advice of the prime minister and the cabinet. The prime minister is the leader of the majority party of the house, and the cabinet conducts affairs of state. St. Kitts and Nevis has a bicameral legislature: An 11-member senate appointed by the governor general (mainly on the advice of the prime minister and the leader of the opposition) and an 11-member popularly elected house of representatives which has eight St. Kitts seats and three Nevis seats. The prime minister and the cabinet are responsible to the Parliament.

St. Kitts and Nevis has enjoyed a long history of free and fair elections, although the outcome of elections in 1993 was strongly protested by the opposition, and the RSS was briefly deployed to restore order. The elections in 1995 were contested by the two major parties, the ruling People's Action Movement (PAM) and the St. Kitts and Nevis Labor Party. Labor won seven of the 11 seats, with Dr. Denzil Douglas becoming prime minister. In March 2000 elections, Denzil Douglas and the Labour Party were returned to power, winning eight of the 11 seats in Parliament. The Nevis-based Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) won two seats and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) won one seat. The PAM party was unable to obtain a seat.

Under the constitution, Nevis has considerable autonomy and has an island assembly, a premier, and a deputy governor general. Under certain specified conditions, it may secede from the federation. In June 1996, the Nevis Island Administration under the concerned citizens movement of Premier Vance Amory announced its intention to do so. Secession requires approval by two-thirds of the assembly's five elected members and also by two-thirds of voters in a referendum. After the Nevis Reformation Party blocked the bill of secession, the premier called for elections for February 24, 1997. Although the elections produced no change in the composition of the assembly, Premier Amory pledged to continue his efforts toward Nevis' independence. In August 1998, a referendum on the question of independence for Nevis failed and Nevis presently remains in the Federation. The March 2000 election results placed Vance Amory, as head of the CCM, the leader of the country's opposition party.

Constitutional safeguards include freedom of speech, press, worship, movement, and association. Like its neighbors in the English-speaking Caribbean, St. Kitts and Nevis has an excellent human rights record.

Its judicial system is modeled on British practice and procedure and its jurisprudence on English common law. The Royal St. Kitts and Nevis police force has about 340 members.

Two thin diagonal yellow bands flanking a wide black diagonal band separate a green triangle at the hoist from a red triangle at the fly. On the black band are two white five-pointed stars.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is provided by the government and compulsory for 12 years. The Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College in Basseterre, completed in 1996, offers courses in vocational fields, the arts, sciences, and general studies, with plans to offer associate degrees as well as classes in conjunction with the University of the West Indies. The College of Further Education also provides higher education.

Commerce and Industry

St. Kitts and Nevis was the last sugar monoculture in the Eastern Caribbean. Faced with a sugar industry, which was finding it increasingly difficult to earn a profit, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis embarked on a program to diversify the agricultural sector and stimulate the development of other sectors of the economy.

The government instituted a program of investment incentives for businesses considering locating in St. Kitts or Nevis, encouraging both domestic and foreign private investment. Government policies provide liberal tax holidays, duty-free import of equipment and materials, and subsidies for training provided to local personnel. Tourism has shown the greatest growth. By 1987, tourism had surpassed sugar as the major foreign exchange earner for St. Kitts and Nevis.

The economy of St. Kitts and Nevis experienced strong growth for most of the 1990s, but hurricanes in 1998 and 1999 contributed to a sharp slowdown in growth. Growth was only 1% in 1998 and 2.8% in 1999, compared to 7.3% in 1997. Tourism in particular suffered in 1998 and 1999 as a result of the hurricanes which forced the closure of one of the major hotels and heavily damaged the cruiseship pier. Significant new investment in tourism as well as continued government efforts to diversify the economy are expected to improve economic performance. Consumer prices have risen marginally over the past few years. The inflation rate was 3%-4% for most of the 1990s.

St. Kitts and Nevis is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). All members of the ECCU, The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues a common currency for all members of the ECCU. The ECCB also manages monetary policy, and regulates and supervises commercial banking activities in its member countries.

Transportation

The only railway on St. Kitts is a small line used by the government to transport sugarcane and processed sugar. Main roads circle each island. A state-run motorboat service shuttles passengers between the two islands. There is regular freight service to St. Kitts and Nevis from the US and Europe. Most ocean freight is now fully containerized. The deepwater harbor handles ships which service the islands. Smaller carriers sail between St. Kitts and Nevis and Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and St. Maarten.

Driving on St. Kitts and Nevis is on the left-hand side of the road. Seventy-five percent of the main road is in reasonably good condition, having been recently resurfaced, and secondary roads are also fairly good. The islands have good police enforcement of traffic regulations. More detailed information on roads

and traffic safety can be obtained from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Environment, Bay Road, Pelican Mall, P.O. Box 132, Basse Terre, St. Kitts, tel. (869) 465-8970.

Communications

The telephone system is operated by the government and international telecommunications services are privately operated. St. Kitts has one AM/FM radio station, and Nevis has two other AM stations. There is also one television broadcast station and two cable television systems. St. Kitts and Nevis has three newspapers: *The Democrat* (published by the opposition Peoples Action Movement), *The Observer* (independent), and *The Labour Spokesman* (affiliated with the governing Labour Party).

Health

There are over 40 physicians and 190 nurses in the country.

Medical care is limited. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services. U.S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the U.S. In some cases, supplementary medical insurance with specific overseas coverage, including provision for medical evacuation, has proved useful. For additional health information, travelers may contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's international travelers hotline at (404) 332-4559; Internet <http://www.cdc.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Feb.	Carnival*
Feb. 22	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday *
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June.	Whit Sunday (Pentecost)*
May/June.	Whit Monday*
May/June.	Corpus Christi*
June 8	Queen's Official Birthday
Aug. 2.	Emancipation Day
Aug. 30.	Feast of St Rose of Lima (Rose Festival)
Oct. 4	Thanksgiving
Oct. 17	Feast of St Margaret Alacoque
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 2	All Souls' Day (Fet le Mo)
Nov. 11.	Remembrance Day
Nov. 22.	Feast of St Cecilia
Dec. 13	National Discovery Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A valid U.S. passport or certified U.S. birth certificate and a picture identification that contains both name and date of birth are required of U.S. citizens entering St. Kitts and Nevis. Visitors should also have

a valid return ticket. St. Kitts and Nevis immigration recommends that visitors put their full home address in the U.S. on their arrival cards in order to facilitate the entry process. Stays of up to one month are granted at immigration. Anyone requiring an extension must apply to the Ministry of National Security. There is an airport departure tax. For further information, travelers can contact the Embassy of St. Kitts and Nevis, 3216 New Mexico Avenue, N.W., OECS Building, Washington, D.C. 20016, telephone (202) 686-2636, the Permanent Mission to the UN in New York at (212) 535-1934, or the Internet at <http://www.stkittsnevis.org>.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting St. Kitts and Nevis are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados and obtain updated information on travel and security within St. Kitts and Nevis. Consular Section hours are 9:00 am-12 noon and 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday except local and U.S. holidays. The U.S. Embassy is located in the American Life Insurance (ALICO) building, Cheapside, Bridgetown, Barbados, telephone 1-246-431-0225, fax 1-246-431-0179, e-mail address: Consular-Bridge@state.gov or Internet home page: <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/bb1/wwwhcons.html>.

Disaster Preparedness

St. Kitts and Nevis is a hurricane-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

ST. LUCIA

Saint Lucia

Major City:

Castries

INTRODUCTION

The second largest of the four Windward Islands, the Arawaks migrated to **ST. LUCIA** from South America during AD 200–400. The Caribs gradually replaced the Arawaks during AD 800–1000. Tradition has it that Columbus sighted the island on St. Lucy's Day (December 13) in 1498. The Dutch, English, and French all tried to establish trading posts on St. Lucia during the 17th century but the Caribs successfully defended their island for many years. Possession of the island changed between the British and French several times until 1814, when Britain took permanent possession. Unlike other islands in the area, sugarcane monoculture did not dominate the island's economy. Sugar was grown, along with tobacco, ginger, and cotton. Bananas became the main cash crop in the 20th century. Slavery was abolished in 1834 and indentured East Indian workers were brought to the island during the late 1800s. St. Lucia became an associated state with full internal self-government in 1967 and on February 22, 1979 it became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations.

MAJOR CITY

Castries

Castries, located along the harbor of Port Castries on the northwestern coast, is the capital of St. Lucia. Port Castries has been the hub of St. Lucia's economic activity for over a century. During the early 20th century, the port was an important coaling station in the Caribbean for ships crossing the Atlantic to and from South America. The town has a population of approximately 53,000, or about one-third of St. Lucia's population. Vigie Airport on the outskirts of Castries provides service to neighboring Caribbean islands. The port of Castries is a deepwater harbor with six berths and a cargo handling capacity of 365,000 tons per year. The main commodities shipped from the port include bananas, sugarcane, rum, molasses, cocoa, coconuts, limes, and various tropical fruits and vegetables. The Castries Market has operated for over 100 years and features hundreds of vendors selling tropical fruit and vegetables, spices, and local crafts.

Recreation

A fortress on Mt. Fortune (852 feet) overlooks Castries, and Vigie Beach is nearby. Coral reefs with colorful

marine life attract divers. Since the island is volcanic, there are also some spectacular steep drop-off dive sites. The most popular dive sites include Anse Chastanet reef, the Key Hole Pinnacles, Superman's Flight, the Coral Gardens, Fairy Land, and Anse La Raye. There are also two wreck dives to explore. There are dive operators that provide equipment and training. Sulphur Springs in nearby Soufrière is a drive-through volcano and features a 7-acre crater lake and pools of bubbling sulfur-laden steam. The National Forest covers 19,000 acres and is a favorite of birdwatchers and hikers.

The Diamond Botanical Gardens dates back to the 1700s, when France's King Louis XIV wanted a place for his troops to enjoy the natural hot springs. The gardens feature a variety of tropical fruit trees, shrubs, vines, and flowers. Pigeon Island National Park contains the old barracks, magazines, and ramparts of Fort Rodney, which dates from the era when the British and French battled over control of the island. The museum at the fort used to be the British officers' dining area and was restored to show how it looked in 1808.

St. Lucia has several smaller hotels that allow visitors the chance to

experience the authentic culture and cuisine of the island.

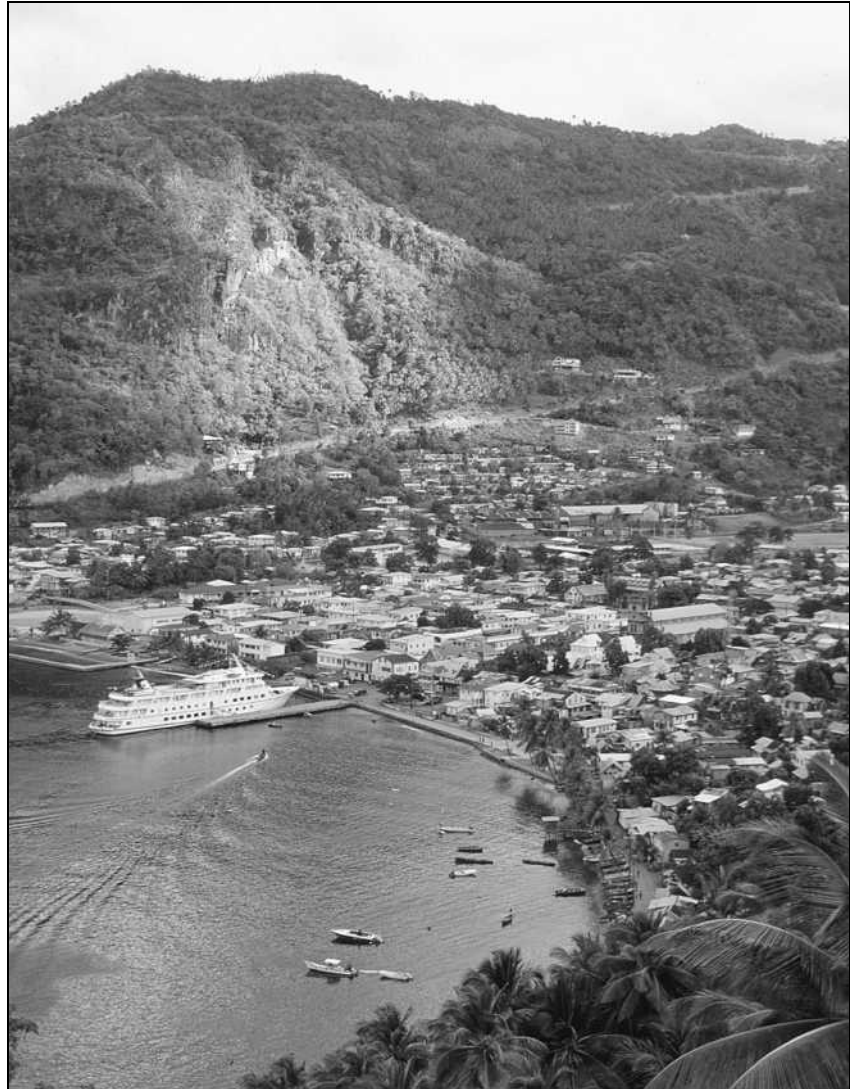
Entertainment

Jump Up is a weekly street fair and dance held Friday nights in Gros Islet, a small village north of Castries. St. Lucians and tourists alike pack the town's single street to enjoy Caribbean soca and reggae music, food, and drink. The Carnival celebration occurs every February and features a traditional Caribbean parade of colorful costumes and calypso music. The finals of the calypso competition and the naming of the Carnival King and Queen are held over the weekend, followed by a party in the streets that begins at 4:00 AM on Monday morning. The international Atlantic Rally for Cruises is a yacht race held in December that finishes in Rodney Bay. The St. Lucia Jazz Festival occurs in May and includes Caribbean and Cajun music shows, rhythm and blues, and contemporary and traditional jazz.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

St. Lucia is a part of the Windward Islands group of the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean sea. The island's total area is 239 square miles, or 3.5 times the size of Washington, D.C. The island is situated between Martinique to the north and St. Vincent to the southwest. The island is volcanic; the southern part is younger and more mountainous than the hilly and more level northern half. The highest mountain is Mt. Gimie, at 3,145 feet above sea level. Better known are the two peaks on the southern coast, Grand Piton (2,619 feet) and Petit Piton (2,461 feet), which together form one of the scenic highlights of the West Indies. The average yearly temperature is 79°F, with the warmest temperatures in September and the coolest in January. The average annual rainfall along the coast is 91 inches,



View of Soufriere, St. Lucia

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but more than 150 inches on the mountains.

History

St. Lucia's first known inhabitants were Arawaks, believed to have come from northern South America 200-400 A.D. Numerous archaeological sites on the island have produced specimens of the Arawaks' well-developed pottery. Caribs gradually replaced Arawaks during the period 800-1000 A.D.

Europeans first landed on the island in either 1492 or 1502 during Spain's early exploration of the Caribbean. The Dutch, English, and French all tried to establish trading

outposts on St. Lucia in the 17th century but faced opposition from hostile Caribs.

The English, with their headquarters in Barbados, and the French, centered on Martinique, found St. Lucia attractive after the sugar industry developed in 1765. Britain eventually triumphed, with France permanently ceding St. Lucia in 1815. In 1838, St. Lucia was incorporated into the British windward islands administration, headquartered in Barbados. This lasted until 1885, when the capital was moved to Grenada.

St. Lucia's 20th-century history has been marked by increasing self-gov-

ernment. A 1924 constitution gave the island its first form of representative government, with a minority of elected members in the previously all-nominated legislative council. Universal adult suffrage was introduced in 1951, and elected members became a majority of the council. Ministerial government was introduced in 1956, and in 1958 St. Lucia joined the short-lived West Indies Federation, a semi-autonomous dependency of the United Kingdom. When the federation collapsed in 1962, following Jamaica's withdrawal, a smaller federation was briefly attempted. After the second failure, the United Kingdom and the six windward and leeward islands--Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica, Antigua, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, and St. Lucia--developed a novel form of cooperation called associated statehood.

As an associated state of the United Kingdom from 1967 to 1979, St. Lucia had full responsibility for internal self-government but left its external affairs and defense responsibilities to the United Kingdom. This interim arrangement ended on February 22, 1979, when St. Lucia achieved full independence. St. Lucia continues to recognize Queen Elizabeth II as titular head of state and is an active member of the Commonwealth. The island continues to cooperate with its neighbors through the Caribbean community and common market (CARICOM), the East Caribbean Common Market (ECCM), and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Population

St. Lucia has a population of about 156,000, about one-third of which lives in Castries. The population density is about 669 persons per square mile. About 90% of the population consists of descendants of slaves brought from Africa in the 17th and 18th centuries. There are small numbers of mixed race persons, East Indians, and descendants of Europeans. About 80% of the population is Roman Catholic; there are also Anglican, Methodist, Baptist,

and Seventh-Day Adventist churches. English is the official language, spoken by 80% of the population. Almost all the islanders speak a French patois based on a mixture of African and French grammar and a vocabulary of mostly French with some English and Spanish words.

Government

In 1814, Britain took permanent possession of St. Lucia, after having changed hands several times between Britain and France. St. Lucia's democratic tradition began in 1924, when a few elected positions were added to the appointed legislative council. St. Lucia became an associated state with full internal self government in 1967 and an independent member of the Commonwealth in 1979.

St. Lucia is a parliamentary democracy modeled on the Westminster system. The head of state is Queen Elizabeth II, represented by a Governor General, appointed by the Queen as her representative. The Governor General exercises basically ceremonial functions, but residual powers, under the constitution, can be used at the governor general's discretion. The actual power in St. Lucia lies with the prime minister and the cabinet, usually representing the majority party in parliament.

The bicameral parliament consists of a 17-member House of Assembly whose members are elected by universal adult suffrage for 5-year terms and an 11-member senate appointed by the governor general. The parliament may be dissolved by the governor general at any point during its 5-year term, either at the request of the prime minister--in order to take the nation into early elections--or at the governor general's own discretion, if the house passes a vote of no confidence in the government.

St. Lucia has an independent judiciary composed of district courts and a high court. Cases may be appealed to the Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeals and, ultimately, to

the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. The island is divided into 10 administrative divisions, including the capital, Castries. Popularly elected local governments in most towns and villages perform such tasks as regulation of sanitation and markets and maintenance of cemeteries and secondary roads.

St. Lucia has no army but maintains a paramilitary Special Service Unit within its police force and a coast guard.

Politics in St. Lucia has been dominated by the United Workers Party (UWP), which has governed the country for all but 3 years since independence.

The flag has a blue background. In the middle is a yellow triangle surmounted by a black arrowhead whose outer edges are bordered in white.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is compulsory and provided by the government for ten years. An education complex in Castries has a teacher-training center, a technical school, a secretarial school, and a branch of the University of the West Indies. There is a research laboratory on the island serving the needs of banana growers in the region.

Commerce and Industry

St. Lucia's economy depends primarily on revenue from banana production and tourism with some input from smallscale manufacturing. There are numerous small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises. Revenue from agriculture has supported the noticeable socioeconomic changes that have taken place in St. Lucia since the 1960s. Eighty percent of merchandise trade earnings came from banana exports to the United Kingdom in the 1960s.

In view of the European Union's announced phase-out of preferred access to its markets by Windward Island bananas by 2006, agricultural diversification is a priority. An attempt is being made to diversify production by encouraging the establishment of tree crops such as mangos and avocados. A variety of vegetables are produced for local consumption. Recently, St. Lucia added small computer-driven information technology and financial services as development objectives.

St. Lucia's leading revenue producers--agriculture, tourism and small-scale manufacturing -- benefited from a focus on infrastructure improvements in roads, communications, water supply, sewerage, and port facilities. Foreign investors also have been attracted by the infrastructure improvements as well as by the educated and skilled work force and relatively stable political conditions. The largest investment is in a petroleum storage and transshipment terminal built by Hess Oil. The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) funded and airport expansion project.

The tourism sector has made significant gains, experiencing a boom during the last few years despite some untimely and destructive hurricanes. In 1999, 50% more tourists visited the island than in 1996, including 261,000 stayover tourists and 423,000 cruise- ship visitors. The development of the tourism sector has been helped by the government's commitment to providing a favorable investment environment. Incentives are available for building and upgrading tourism facilities. There has been liberal use of public funds to improve the physical infrastructure of the island, and the government has made efforts to attract cultural and sporting events and develop historical sites.

St. Lucia is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues a common currency for all members of the ECCU. The ECCB also manages monetary policy, and regulates and supervises

commercial banking activities in its member countries.

St. Lucia is a beneficiary of the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative and is a member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

Transportation

The Hewanorra International Airport on the southern tip of the island has direct flights to New York, Toronto, London, and Frankfurt. Ferries from Port Vieux on the southern coast link St. Lucia with St. Vincent and the Grenadines. All of the island's towns and villages are linked by all-purpose roads.

Vehicles travel on the left, traffic approaches from the right. Roads are narrow with steep inclines/ declines throughout the island. Road conditions vary from fair to poor with few guard rails in areas that have precipitous drop-offs from the road.

Communications

There is a fully automatic telephone system. St. Lucia has 4 AM and an FM radio stations and a television station. Television programs are usually local programming, videotapes, and broadcasts from Barbados and Martinique. *The Voice of St. Lucia* is published twice a week, while *Crusader* and *Star* are weeklies.

Health

St. Lucia has five hospitals with over 500 beds. The Victoria Hospital provides a range of medical treatment, while the Golden Hope Hospital specializes in psychiatric cases. There are also over two dozen health centers scattered throughout the island. Malnutrition and intestinal difficulties are the main health problems.

Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services. U.S. medical insurance is

not always valid outside the U.S. In some cases, supplementary medical insurance with specific overseas coverage, including medical evacuation, has proved useful. For additional health information, travelers can contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's international travelers hotline at 1888-232-3228, via CDC's toll-free autofax service, 1-888-232-3299, or via the Internet <http://www.cdc.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1 New Year's Day
 - Feb Carnival*
 - Feb. 22 Independence Day
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May/June Whit Sunday (Pentecost)*
 - May/June Whit Monday*
 - May/June Corpus Christi*
 - June 8 Queen's Official Birthday
 - Aug. 2 Emancipation Day
 - Aug. 30 Feast of St. Rose of Lima (Rose Festival)
 - Oct. 4. Thanksgiving
 - Oct. 17. Feast of St. Margaret Alacoque
 - Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 - Nov. 2 All Souls' Day (Fet le Mo)
 - Nov. 11 Remembrance Day
 - Nov. 22 Feast of St. Cecilia
 - Dec. 13 National Discovery Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas
 - Dec. 26 Boxing Day
- *Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

For stays up to six months, U.S. citizens may enter St. Lucia without a passport, but must carry an original document proving U.S. citizenship (U.S. passport, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship or certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate), photo identification, and a return or onward ticket. For further information concerning entry requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of St. Lucia, 3216 New

Mexico Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20015; telephone (202) 364-6792; or St. Lucia's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York. Internet: slunestop.com.

The U.S. does not maintain an embassy in St. Lucia. U.S. citizens requiring assistance can contact the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados; telephone 1 (246) 436-4950. The Consular Section of the Embassy is located in the American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) building, Cheapside, Bridgetown; telephone 1 (246) 431-0225. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. except local and U.S. holidays. U.S. citizens may register in the Consular Section of the Embassy at Bridgetown and obtain updated information on travel and security in St. Lucia and within the region.

Disaster Preparedness

St. Lucia is a hurricane-prone area. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Major City:
Kingstown

INTRODUCTION

ST. VINCENT may have been inhabited as early as 5000 BC. Agrarian Arawaks immigrated from South America. The Caribs eventually conquered the Arawaks, killing all the men and incorporating the women into their group. Christopher Columbus allegedly sighted the island on January 22, 1498, the feast day of the island's namesake. European settlers later arrived with African slaves. In 1675, slaves from a Dutch shipwreck made it to the island of Bequia and were given shelter by the native, or Yellow Caribs. Slaves from Barbados and St. Lucia later managed to escape to the island. The mixture of slaves and Yellow Caribs created a new group known as the Black Caribs. The Caribs ardently fought off European settlement on St. Vincent until the 18th century. Tensions between the Yellow Caribs and the Black Caribs led to conflict and territorial division. The perpetual hostilities delayed colonial development of the island, while several nearby islands already had an advanced sugar industry. In 1700 the French divided St. Vincent, with the west going to the Yellow Caribs and the east going to the Black Caribs. French settlers began cultivating coffee, tobacco, indigo, cotton, and sugar on plantations worked by

African slaves starting in 1719. Great Britain controlled St. Vincent from 1763 until French rule was restored in 1779. The British got control back in 1783. Under the British, sugar production fell throughout the 1800s, and arrowroot became the leading cash crop by 1900. St. Vincent is still the world's leading producer of arrowroot, which is used to make starch. St. Vincent became a crown colony in 1877, and a legislative council was created in 1925. The island was granted associate statehood status in 1969 and became the last of the Windward Islands to gain independence on October 27, 1979.

MAJOR CITY

Kingstown

Kingstown, the capital, is located on the southwestern coast of the island of St. Vincent and has a population of about 27,000. The town overlooks Kingstown Harbour and is protected by Berkshire Hill to the north and Cane Garden Point to the south. Cruise ships put into Kingstown Harbour. The E.T. Joshua Airport is located on the southern tip of St. Vincent near Kingstown. Local transportation is provided by open-air buses and small minibus

taxis sporting colorful hand-painted names and designs. Campden Industrial Park, about three miles west of the city, is a 30-acre enclave that serves as the principal industrial area of the country. The East Caribbean Group of Companies has operations there that handle animal feed processing, bag production, and flour and rice milling. In 1989 a fire destroyed much of Kingstown's center, but reconstruction in 1990 emphasized increasing tourism.

Recreation and Entertainment

St. Vincent has numerous beaches for swimming and surfing. The waters along the black sand beaches of the Atlantic coast are choppy and conducive to surfing and windsurfing, while the waters along the golden sand beaches of the Caribbean coast are calm and more pleasant for swimming. Cricket is played throughout the islands, and several local players have gone on to represent the West Indies at the international level. International sports are played at the Arnos Vale Playing Field. Soccer, netball, volleyball, and basketball are also popular. Soccer is the most widely played sport, and there are 14 local leagues that organize team play. Indoor sports such as squash and table tennis are played in the suburbs of Kingstown. Weight training, karate, and taekwondo are also becoming



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Harbor view, St. Vincent

popular. Swimming, sailing, and windsurfing are popular aquatic activities. Dominoes is a popular game among groups of men.

Bay Street is Kingstown's waterfront district, with shops and a few hotels. The Cobblestone Inn was built in 1814 as a sugar warehouse and was restored to its original Georgian style. St. George's Anglican Cathedral also is an example of Georgian architecture, and contains several Kempe and Munich stained glass windows. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral originally was built in 1823, and was most recently renovated in the 1940s. The cathedral is a mixture of Romanesque, Gothic, and Moorish designs.

The General Post Office in Kingstown features stamps produced by the government that are prized by international collectors. St. Vincent Philatelic Services, Ltd. in Kingstown works with an agency in New

York to produce nine collectible issues per year. Kingstown's vegetable market is one of the island's main commercial centers.

The St. Vincent Botanic Gardens and Museum on the outskirts of Kingstown features tropical foliage and brightly colored songbirds. It is the most ornate garden in the Caribbean and the oldest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. The gardens occupy 20 acres and were founded in 1765 as a nursery for plants useful to medicine and commerce. The French introduced exotic Asian spices (such as cinnamon) to the gardens. Cloves were brought from Martinique and nutmeg and black pepper plants from French Guiana. Breadfruit trees brought from the South Pacific by Captain Bligh were introduced in 1793. The St. Vincent National Museum at the gardens contains stone, ceramic, and shell artifacts dating from 500 BC to AD 1200 left

behind by the pre-Columbian inhabitants of St. Vincent and some of the other islands in the Grenadines. The Parrot Breeding Center at the Botanic Gardens is trying to increase the population of the islands' national bird, the St. Vincent parrot (*Amazona guildingi*). Fort Charlotte, west of Kingstown, sits atop a ridge 600 feet above sea level and was completed in 1806. A museum at the fort depicts the history of the Black Caribs on the island.

Cultural activities on St. Vincent include several festivals, arts and crafts exhibitions, dancing, and folksinging. The national carnival festival, known as Vincy Mas, is celebrated in early July. Costumed, steel, and calypso bands give performances, and there are beauty shows. The Music Festival has been held every other year since 1956 and features vocal, choral, and instrumental performances. There

is also an annual school drama festival. There are plans to build a performing arts center in Kingstown. The Kingstown Free Library has a display of Carib artifacts.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is located 21 miles southwest of St. Lucia and about 100 miles west of Barbados in the Caribbean Sea. Scattered between St. Vincent and Grenada are more than 100 small islands called the Grenadines, half of which belong to St. Vincent and the other half to Grenada. The Grenadines belonging to St. Vincent include Union Island, Mayreau, Canouan, Mustique, Bequia, and many other uninhabited cays, rocks, and reefs. St. Vincent has an area of 134 square miles, with a coastline of 52 miles. Bequia, the largest of the Grenadines, has an area of 7 square miles. St. Vincent is a rugged island with dark volcanic sand beaches. Its highest point is Soufrière, an active volcano that rises 4,048 feet above sea level. Only 5% of St. Vincent's surface has slopes of less than 5°. The low-lying Grenadines have wide beaches and shallow bays and harbors. The islands have a pleasant tropical climate throughout the year, with the average temperature ranging from 77°F in January to 81°F in September. The rainfall on St. Vincent averages about 91 inches per year, but more than 150 inches may fall in the mountains. The islands lie in the Caribbean hurricane belt and were devastated in 1780, 1898, and 1980.

Population

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a population of about 122,000, with over 90% living on the main island. Only about a dozen of the country's 120 islands are populated. About 66% of the islanders are descen-

dants of slaves brought from Africa. About 20% is of mixed origins and about 3.5% is of European descent. Some 5.5% of the islanders are descendants of 19th-century East Indian indentured laborers. About 2% of the people are indigenous Caribs. The mixture of Africans and the native Caribs (Yellow Caribs) created an ethnicity known as the Black Caribs. Some scholars believe that the African origin of the Black Caribs came from escaped slaves, while others believe they descended from a stranded group of 13th-century West African explorers. Today, the few remaining descendants of the Yellow Caribs live at Sandy Bay. The majority of the population is Anglican or Methodist. There is also a significant Roman Catholic minority. English is the official language of the country. Some islanders speak a French patois, which uses a mixture of African and French grammar, with a vocabulary using mostly French words, with some English and a few Spanish words. A minority of the islanders speak French as a first language.

Government

St. Vincent was one of the last of the West Indies to be settled by Europeans. The British and French agreed to leave the island to the native Caribs in 1660, and the island had a sizable Carib population until the 1720s. The island was formally taken by the British in 1763, who ruled thereafter except during 1779–83, when it was under French control. St. Vincent was administered as a crown colony from 1833 until 1960. Upon independence in 1979, St. Vincent and the Grenadines kept the British monarch as the nominal head of state, represented by a governor-general.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth of Nations. Queen Elizabeth II is head of state and is represented on the island by a governor general, an office with mostly ceremonial functions. Con-

trol of the government rests with the prime minister and the cabinet.

The parliament is a unicameral body with a 15-member elected house of assembly and a six-member appointed senate. The governor general appoints senators, four on the advice of the prime minister and two on the advice of the leader of the opposition. The parliamentary term of office is 5 years, although the prime minister may call elections at any time.

As in other English-speaking Caribbean countries, the judiciary in St. Vincent is rooted in British common law. There are 11 courts in three magisterial districts. The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, comprising a high court and a court of appeals, is known in St. Vincent as the St. Vincent and the Grenadines supreme court. The court of last resort is the judicial committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council in London.

There is no local government in St. Vincent, and all six parishes are administered by the central government.

The flag consists of three vertical bands of blue, yellow and green; centered on the yellow band are three green diamonds arranged in a V-pattern.

Arts, Science, Education

Primary education lasts for seven years and is provided by the government but not compulsory. There are about 65 primary schools. The government-assisted School for Children with Special Needs serves handicapped students. At the secondary level, there are a teachers' training college and a technical college. Government agencies sponsor adult education, vocational training, and agricultural training.

Commerce and Industry

The St. Vincent economy has traditionally been dependent on agriculture, but the government has attempted to diversify the economy in recent years. Agriculture now accounts for about 9% of GDP compared to 11% in 1996 and 13% in 1993. Bananas account for more than 80% of agricultural output, and account for upwards of 60% of the work force and about 35% of merchandise exports. Such reliance on a single crop makes the economy vulnerable to external factors. St. Vincent's banana growers benefit from preferential access to the European market. In view of the European Union's announced phase-out of this preferred access, economic diversification is a priority.

Tourism has become a very important part of the economy. In 1993, tourism supplanted banana exports as the chief source of foreign exchange. The Grenadines have become a favorite of the up-market yachting crowd. The trend toward increasing tourism revenues will likely continue. In 1996, new cruise-ship and ferry berths came on-line, sharply increasing the number of passenger arrivals. In 2000, total visitor arrivals were about 280,700. A relatively small number of Americans--under 1,000--reside on the islands.

St. Vincent is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues a common currency for all members of the ECCU. The ECCB also manages monetary policy and regulates and supervises commercial banking activities in its member countries.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a beneficiary of the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative. The country belongs to the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), which has signed a framework agreement with the United States to promote trade and

investment in the region. St. Vincent also is a member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Transportation

St. Vincent is on the main air routes of the Caribbean, with direct flights to Trinidad and Barbados as well as other islands to the north. The international airport is located on St. Vincent near Kingstown and there is another on the east coast, near Georgetown. There are also small airports on Bequia, Canouan, Mustique, and Union Island. All of the Grenadines have excellent harbors served by a ferry service out of Kingstown.

Harbors in the Grenadines are being expanded to increase potential tourism. There is a road on St. Vincent that connects all of the main towns with the capital.

Vehicles travel on the left, and traffic approaches from the right. Roads are narrow, with steep inclines/declines throughout the island. Taxis and buses tend to be relatively safe, but the buses are often overcrowded. Vans are generally overcrowded and frequently travel at high rates of speed. Rural mountainous roads are the more dangerous areas for road travel. Night driving should be done with great caution and is discouraged in mountainous areas because the roads are not well marked, there are few, if any, guardrails, and the roads are often steep and winding.

Communications

Cable and Wireless (West Indies) operates the islands' telecommunications services. There are two AM radio stations, one television station, and four weekly newspapers.

Health

The general hospital in Kingstown has over 200 beds and is equipped with x-ray, dental, and eye clinics. There are three rural hospitals, two

on St. Vincent and another on Bequia.

Clothing and Services

Sandals are an important beach accessory, as the sand can become very hot. Comfortable, casual clothing is the norm, but it is considered improper to wear swimwear when in town. A raincoat and light sweater may be needed for the higher altitudes of St. Vincent, where it can get wet, windy, and cool.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 22	St. Vincent & the Grenadines Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 6	Labor Day
May/June	Whit Sunday (Pentecost)
May/June	Whit Monday
July 1	CARICOM day
July	Carnival Tuesday*
Aug.	August Monday*
Oct. 27	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec.	26 Boxing Day

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELLERS

For stays up to six months, U.S. citizens may enter St. Vincent and The Grenadines without a passport. U.S. citizens must carry an original document proving U.S. citizenship (a U.S. passport, certificate of naturalization, certificate of citizenship or a certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate).

Photo identification, a return/onward ticket and/or proof of sufficient funds are also required.

For further information concerning entry requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of St. Vincent and The Grenadines, 3216 New Mexico Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016, telephone (202) 364-6730, or the consulates in Los Angeles, New Orleans, and New York.

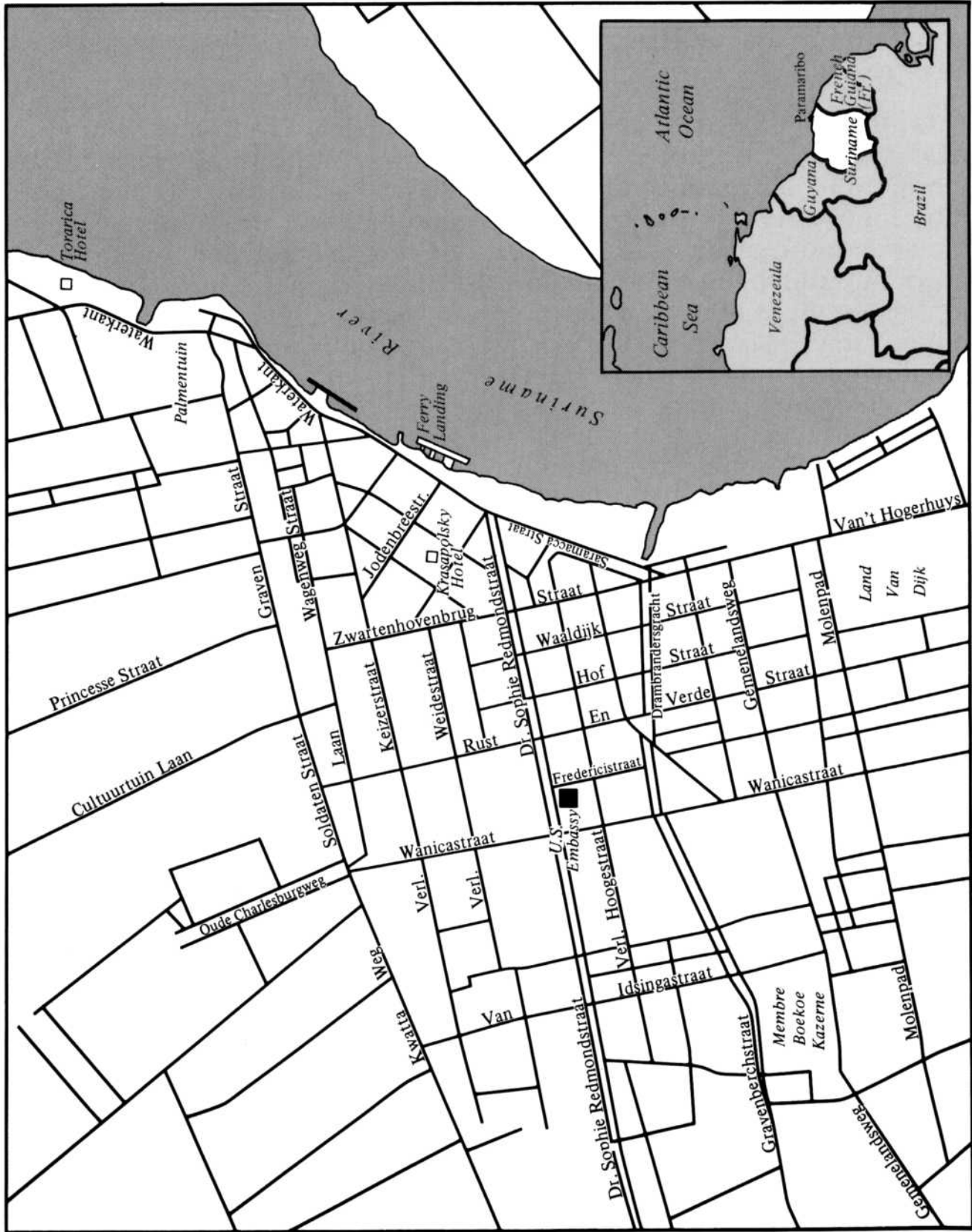
The United States does not maintain an Embassy in St. Vincent and

The Grenadines. U.S. citizens requiring assistance may contact the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados; telephone 1 (246) 436-4950. The Consular Section is located in the American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) building, Cheapside, Bridgetown; telephone 1 (246) 431-0225. Americans are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the Embassy in Bridgetown and obtain updated information on travel and security in St. Vincent and The Grenadines and within the area.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bobrow, Jill and Dana Jenkins. *St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Gems of the Caribbean*. Waitsfield, Vt.: Concepts Publishing Inc., 1993.

Philpott, Don. *Caribbean Sunseekers: St. Vincent & Grenadines*. Lincolnwood, Ill.: Passport Books, 1996.



Paramaribo, Suriname

SURINAME

Republic of Suriname

Major City:

Paramaribo

Other Cities:

Albina, Moengo, Nieuw-nickerie, Totness, Wageningen

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SURINAME, which, as Dutch Guiana, was an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of the Netherlands until 1975, is an independent, racially and ethnically mixed country on the northeast coast of South America. It retains much of its Dutch heritage in language and culture, while striving to develop an identity within the context of its geographical environment.

Suriname is currently pursuing institutional changes in a concerted effort to recover from a 1980 military coup and an escalating austerity alien to this once prosperous colony. From the beginning, it has been faced with a small population and an economic development

largely restricted to a narrow coastal band, and the suspension of Dutch aid in the wake of the military takeover has created additional hardships. Growing inflation and foreign exchange restrictions continue to strain immediate plans for development.

MAJOR CITY

Paramaribo

Suriname's capital city, Paramaribo, is located 12 miles inland, on the west bank of the Suriname River. Founded in 1613 as a trading post with the Indians it was, at various times, subject to alternating British and Dutch administration. The city expanded and developed greatly during the 18th century, but declined somewhat during the next century after two damaging fires. At present, many of Paramaribo's structures date from the early and mid-20th century, and exhibit a characteristic Dutch-colonial, tropical style of architecture. The canals are reminiscent of the Netherlands.

Some 180,000 people live in Paramaribo and its immediate suburbs. The city is the heart of Suriname's political, cultural, and intellectual life, serving not only its own popula-

tion, but also that of the entire country. Older cultural traditions prevail in isolated jungle villages.

Paramaribo is not generally afflicted by floods, although heavy rains can, at times, exceed the city's drainage capabilities and create isolated flooding on some streets and in low-lying areas.

About 350 American citizens live in Suriname. Most are connected with the U.S. Embassy, or are in Protestant missionary work.

Resident foreign embassies include those of the U.S., the Netherlands, India, Brazil, Venezuela, the former U.S.S.R., the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, Libya, France, and Guyana. A number of other countries are represented by honorary consular officers. Cuba established a trade mission in 1981, but its advisers were expelled after the U.S. invasion of Grenada in October 1983.

Schools for Foreigners

The American Cooperative School, operated by American Protestant missionaries, provides classes in grades kindergarten through 8. Instruction is in English and meets U.S. standards. The school year runs from late August until May.



Street in Paramaribo, Suriname

© Adam Woolfitt/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Suriname has a dual religious and secular educational system, conducted in Dutch. Schools are run by Catholic and Moravian Churches as well as by the state. While some foreign children enroll in the Suriname schools at Paramaribo, the necessity of learning Dutch and the problems of transferring credits make this difficult (if not impossible) for Americans. Standards vary from school to school, with the best schools having an excellent record in placing students in universities here and abroad.

Suriname's Anton de Kom University (in the capital) has faculties of medicine, law, technical and social sciences, and natural resources. Other institutions of higher education also operate in Suriname.

Recreation

The most popular national sport is soccer. Basketball and cricket are also available, and adult teams play regularly. Weight lifting, badmin-

ton, horseback riding, and aerobic exercise classes are also pursued by Americans. A nine-hole golf course is four miles from Paramaribo. Formerly a rice paddy, it is flat and low, and drainage, though extensive and well planned, is a problem during the rainy season. Americans have found Paramaribo an excellent place to learn to play golf under uncrowded but rustic conditions.

Hunting and fishing also evoke a great deal of interest, as neither requires any unusual equipment. Both, however, can involve hard trekking in deep forests. Stringent laws govern ownership of firearms and ammunition. Rifles and pistols are prohibited, and an individual may own only one shotgun. Guides and transportation to the best hunting areas are expensive; hunting without a guide is definitely not recommended. It may be necessary to hire a power boat and/or plane to get to the desired area. Dogs are needed for some kinds of hunting.

A gun club uses pistols (owned by the club) at a range near Paramaribo three times a week, traps at Paranam once a month, and rifles (owned by the club) at a range near Zanderij Airport, also monthly.

Fishing in the Suriname and Saracca Rivers, Afobakka Lake, and the surrounding streams is not unduly inconvenient, but trips to the interior or saltwater fishing are as difficult to organize as hunting trips. Tarpon is the principal sport fish, with catfish and other species also popular. Many excellent streams and rivers in Suriname are suitable for small boats. It is possible to do some fishing from the river banks.

Camping and hiking are difficult because of heat, insects, and lack of organized campsites and marked trails, but adventurous types might enjoy these sports at several of the national parks here. Bicycling is

popular, although heavy traffic makes it risky.

There are neither ocean beaches nor lakes suitable for swimming. Several tannic acid-colored rivers and creeks offer interesting and safe swimming and water-skiing. The city has one public swimming pool, and four private clubs maintain their own pools.

The Suriname Aero Club has a Cessna plane and operates both a ground school and a flying school. For beginners, at least a basic knowledge of Dutch is necessary, since the ground course and examination are conducted in that language. Costs are somewhat higher than those in the U.S., but not prohibitively so.

Some opportunities exist for sight-seeing. The visitor can drive to Kola Creek, Brokopondo Dam, Groningen, Joden Savanna, or Nieuw-Amsterdam for outings; some facilities for picnicking are available. It also is possible to drive to Cayenne, French Guiana, and to the border of Guyana. The scenery and climate in these places are similar to that of Suriname. French Guiana, however, offers the added attraction of French wines, cheeses, and meals, making it a popular place to visit. Trips to the interior by plane or boat are interesting, but can be expensive.

Entertainment

Paramaribo has one small museum (Fort Zeelandia), a natural history collection, a small zoo, and numerous public parks. There are 10 movie theaters, but not all of them are patronized by Americans. Films in English are popular at most of the theaters, and five establishments specialize in Indian movies. Movies are censored and may be restricted to certain age groups. A film league offers art films about every two weeks, and one drive-in theater shows an occasional movie in English.

Suriname's government-owned TV channel (STVS) broadcasts every evening and offers American variety

programs and occasional feature films. A private TV station (ATV), inaugurated in 1987, offers American, Brazilian, and European programs, mostly in English.

Videotapes in VHS or Betamax can be rented from commercial sources at low cost. The Beta format, popular here, offers the most variety.

Although the country has no legitimate theater, the Suriname Cultural Center (CCS) and Ons Erf sponsor occasional plays, concerts, and other cultural presentations. Plays are almost always in Dutch or Sranan Tongo. Modest parades and trade fairs are sometimes held on holidays.

Average-to-good Chinese, Javanese, and Korean food is served in at least five restaurants in Paramaribo. Prices are higher than those at good U.S. restaurants. A few continental-style restaurants are here.

No special or unusual etiquette is required when participating in any form of entertainment. Bush Negroes often object to being photographed in their villages.

The Torarica Hotel stages floor shows on weekends—usually a solo performance by a singer, dancer, or musician. It also has a dance band and a casino and restaurant. A few local discos and nightclubs cater to young people. Good Chinese and Javanese food is served in at least five restaurants, with prices comparable to those at good U.S. dining establishments. There is a good continental-style restaurant at the Ambassador Hotel, and a disco next to the Krasnapolsky Hotel.

Paramaribo is a friendly city. It is easy to meet people through personal introductions. Among men's and women's service clubs, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Optimists, Soroptimists, and Toastmasters are represented in Paramaribo. Anyone interested in social work may volunteer with the Salvation Army, Red Cross, YWCA, the family planning organization (LOBI), or one of many other secular and religious groups.

The American community is too small to support exclusive social activity, even in Paramaribo. Most of the non-Surinamese middle-class expatriate community is composed of Dutch Europeans and some Belgians, with few other foreigners. Social calls and social affairs among both Surinamese and Dutch are more structured than U.S. custom requires. Close friends usually do not call on one another without prior notice.

OTHER CITIES

ALBINA is a seaport town on the west bank of the Maroni (Morowijne) River. Besides being a district capital, it is the largest city on the French Guiana border.

MOENGO lies on the Cottica River in the northeast part of the country. The local economy depends on extensive bauxite deposits.

NIEUW-NICKERIE is Suriname's major coastal town in the northwest, across from Corriverton, Guyana. It is the capital of the Nickerie District. The city is an important port through which rice, cocoa, and lumber is exported.

TOTNESS is the capital and largest village of Coronie District. Situated on the Atlantic Ocean, halfway between Nieuw-Nickerie and Paramaribo, Totness has a government guest house and bus connections to Paramaribo. The village's main road traverses a great forest of coconut palms.

The small town of **WAGENINGEN** has great status in the field of agriculture. It lies on the Nickerie River, 30 miles southeast of Nieuw-Nickerie, in the northwest. Located in the heart of the country's rice-producing area, Wageningen is the home of one of the world's largest fully mechanized rice farms. The road from Nieuw-Nickerie is newly rebuilt.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Roughly square, Suriname lies on South America's northeast coast, bounded on the east by French Guiana, on the south by Brazil, and on the west by Guyana. Most of the 220-mile shoreline on the Atlantic ocean consists of mud flats and swamps. Suriname's inland boundaries with French Guiana and Guyana are in dispute.

Suriname (this is the Dutch spelling, but the English spelling, Surinam, is often seen) has a land area of about 63,000 square miles, and is about the same size as Georgia. However, most Surinamers live in the 1,900-square mile, narrow coastal plain in and around Paramaribo, Moengo, and Nieuw-Nickerie.

Suriname's coastal area is flat. Hills and low mountains, reaching a maximum height of about 4,000 feet (1,230 meters), rise in the heavily forested interior. Between these two zones lie the savanna lands, 30 to 40 miles in width. Large rivers and streams bisect the country from the south to the north and provide major transportation routes between the coast and the interior. However, they hinder east-west land transportation.

Suriname has a tropical rainforest climate—hot and humid all year. Daytime temperatures average about 90°F (27°C), although evening and night readings are considerably lower (about 70°F, or 21°C). Interior temperatures, not moderated by coastal breezes, are slightly more extreme.

Most Americans find the climate notably more agreeable than they had anticipated. On a normal day, outdoor activities such as golfing, fishing, and jogging are pleasant except between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun is high.

Seasons are distinguished only by more or less rain, with annual rainfall averaging 87 inches. December to February and April to August are generally the periods of heaviest rainfall. The hottest months are September and October, with temperatures averaging 89°F (35°C). Suriname lies outside the hurricane and earthquake area.

Population

Suriname's estimated population is 434,000 (2000 est.). Because of emigration to the Netherlands between 1972 and 1980, there was a significant decline in total numbers. The people are a mixture of several ethnic and racial classifications, with Hindustanis (37%) and Creoles (32%) the two largest groups. Others represented in the population include Javanese (15.3%), Bush Negroes (10.3%), Amerindians (2.7%), Chinese (1.7%), and Europeans, one percent.

The Hindustanis (East Indians) are predominately Hindu, but include a substantial Muslim minority. They are descended from contract farm laborers brought to Suriname in the latter part of the 19th century. Hindustanis are still heavily engaged in agriculture, but have become increasingly urbanized and are often active in business and commerce.

Creoles, of mixed African, European, and other ancestry, are descendants of African slave laborers emancipated in 1863. In this century, they have filled the ranks of civil service and office jobs.

The Javanese, who are descended from farm laborers brought to Suriname on contract from Java, in Indonesia, are chiefly active in agricultural life in the rural areas of Suriname. They have retained their own language. The Bush Negroes, or Maroons, are descended from escaped African slaves. Many escaped before losing their African culture, which has been maintained in some primitive villages along streams and rivers in the interior. Although such communities still

exist far removed from the developed coastal region, many Bush Negroes are now abandoning their traditional life-style to move to population centers in search of better education and job opportunities.

Amerindians, descendants of original pre-Columbian inhabitants, also live in tribal villages along interior streams and rivers. They are less hospitable and desire more privacy than Bush Negroes. Certain small Amerindian tribes in Suriname have been discovered only recently.

The Chinese, many born in China, are mostly shopkeepers, business people, and restaurateurs. They speak Chinese (Hakka and Cantonese) among themselves, and support a Chinese newspaper.

Caucasians are mainly descended from Dutch farmers who came here in the 18th and 19th centuries, though some are descended from early Jewish, French, and German immigrants. A small community of expatriate Europeans, mostly from the Netherlands, work in some local businesses.

Approximately 350 Americans reside in Suriname, mostly in Paramaribo. Mostly Protestant missionaries, they spend some of their time in the interior.

Each ethnic group maintains its identity and customs. Some wear distinctive clothing. Almost all celebrate their own holidays, observe their own religions and, except for sophisticated city dwellers, associate with members of their particular groups in exclusive or semi-exclusive social clubs and societies. Political parties are racially or ethnically oriented. The government seeks to break down such barriers and forge a national identity.

The official language of Suriname is Dutch, but *Sranan Tongo* (literally, Suriname tongue), also called Surinamese, a non-tonal English-based Creole tongue, is the lingua franca. Dutch is taught in school and used exclusively by the government; government publications and newspa-

pers are in that language, as are radio and television.

English is widely understood and almost all educated people speak it fluently. A great many Surinamers speak three or even four languages—Sranan Tongo, Dutch, and English, plus Hindi, Chinese, or Javanese. The latter three are used extensively in Paramaribo.

Freedom of religion is legally protected in Suriname. Hindus and Muslims comprise the two largest religious groups, but there are also many Roman Catholics and other Christians (primarily Moravians) and a small number of Jews and Baha'is. A significant number of Amerindians and Bush Negroes follow animistic religions, although the majority of both groups profess Christianity in either its Catholic or Moravian form.

Government

The popularly elected government that ruled Suriname after the end of Dutch colonial rule was overthrown in a military coup in February 1980. The sergeants who took power in 1980 were at first welcomed as reformers. Their gradual leftward drift, however, increasingly alienated the generally conservative middle-class Surinamese majority, and the repressive methods they employed to maintain control eventually cost them most of their popular support.

The executions of 15 opposition leaders in 1982 led to the suspension of Dutch and American development aid. Combined with a decline in world market prices for bauxite and alumina (Suriname's chief export commodities), the aid suspension led to a general economic downturn that had reached a critical stage. When an insurgent group began a series of attacks on military and economic targets in the interior, the government gave in to international and domestic pressures and announced that a new constitution would be adopted by the end of March 1987, and that

national elections would be held in November of that year.

Eighty-eight percent of Suriname's eligible voters took part in the elections, in which a coalition of traditional, ethnic-based, pre-coup parties called the Front for Development and Democracy won with an 85 percent majority.

Under the new constitution, the 51-member directly elected National Assembly is the highest authority in Suriname. The President, chosen by the Assembly, is both head of government and head of state. The Vice President, also elected by the Assembly, is chairman of the Council of Ministers that, together with the President and Vice President, makes up the government. Like the Assembly members, the President and Vice President are elected for five-year terms.

Despite the democratic elections of 1987, Suriname's political situation remained extremely unstable. Although the army had relinquished control of the government, it remained powerful and influential. The army often sharply criticized the new government's economic policies. A series of confrontations between the government and army caused relations to worsen. By 1990, the tensions between the two parties had come to a head. On December 24, 1990, the army launched a successful military coup against the government. President Ramswevak Shankar was overthrown and replaced by Johannes Samuel Kraag. A military council established shortly after the coup announced that Kraag would govern on an interim basis until new elections could be held.

The military fulfilled this promise by holding democratic elections in May 1991. Election results showed that the New Front Coalition, consisting of three ethnically-based parties and the Surinamese Labor Party, captured 30 of 51 seats. The pro-military National Democratic Party obtained only 10 seats. The rest of the seats were divided among several small opposition parties. On

September 6, 1991, the National Assembly and other elected representatives of districts and subdistricts met to select a new President. The New Front Coalition candidate, Ronald Venetiaan, became Suriname's new president after gaining 80 percent of the vote.

Economic difficulties caused Venetiaan's popularity to decline over the succeeding years, and he was replaced by NDP candidate Jules Wijdenbosch in elections held in May 1996. These elections marked the first peaceful transfer of power between democratically elected governments since Suriname gained independence.

In May 1999, after mass demonstrations protesting poor economic conditions, the government was forced to call early elections. The elections in May 2000 returned Ronald Venetiaan and his coalition to the presidency. The New Front ran its campaign on a platform to fix the faltering Surinamese economy. But while the Venetiaan administration has made progress in stabilizing the economy, tensions within the coalition and the impatience of the populace have impeded progress.

Suriname is a member of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as European Communities, International Bauxite Association, Inter-American Development Bank, Nonaligned Movement, Organization of American States and Latin American Economic System.

The flag of Suriname consists of green, white, red, white, and green horizontal bands, with a yellow star in the middle of the red band.

Arts, Science, Education

Some local cultural activities are available. Occasional plays and concerts are offered at the Suriname Cultural Center, Ons Erf Cultural Center, and elsewhere. Two or three

times a year, foreign groups (Chinese acrobats, American jazz ensembles) arrive for performances. Live theater is confined to two companies which produce plays in Dutch and Surinamese. A music school offers instruction in a wide range of instruments. There are several small ballet schools in Paramaribo.

Each government cultural center maintains a public library with a limited collection of English editions. English-language paperbacks and hardcover books are available from several retail outlets in Paramaribo, but are expensive. *Ons Erf*, a Roman Catholic Church organization, maintains an arts and crafts center and sponsors activities for younger children.

Suriname's main ethnic groups—Creoles, Hindustanis, and Javanese—maintain associations which occasionally sponsor cultural activities.

Suriname has an extensive educational system, with compulsory free schooling until age 14. Its Anton de Kom University has faculties of medicine, law, natural resources, and social and technical sciences. However, transfer of individual course credit to or from the U.S. is unlikely, even when a non-Dutch-speaking person is allowed to enroll. Teacher-training institutes, secondary schools, and technical schools also provide degrees. Nurses and dental technicians are trained in conjunction with the medical faculty. The adult literacy rate was approximately 93 percent in 1995.

The government and the Roman Catholic and Moravian Churches provide education from kindergarten through secondary school. All instruction is in Dutch, except at the American Cooperative Elementary School, administered by the Suriname Aluminum Company (SURALCO), and in two private schools administered by American missionaries. Lectures in English are sometimes given at the university. Many students still attend high

schools and universities in the Netherlands; a growing number study in U.S. universities.

The Government Language Center offers courses in Dutch, English, Spanish, and Surinamese. French is offered by the Alliance Française, Spanish by the Andrés Bello Center, and Portuguese by the Brazilian Cultural Center. The Indonesian and Indian centers give instruction in their native folk art and dance.

Commerce and Industry

Approximately 70 percent of Suriname's exports by value are bauxite and its aluminum derivatives. The attractiveness of Suriname's bauxite reserves has diminished in recent years as more economical sources have been developed elsewhere in the world and the worldwide marketing of bauxite and aluminum has become more complex. SURALCO, a subsidiary of ALCOA and the biggest private firm in Suriname, has reduced its labor force as its bauxite and aluminum shipments have fallen and internal costs have risen.

Agriculture is important as a major source of employment. Rice, citrus, other tropical fruits, vegetables, seafood, and a few other commodities are available. The principal food crop is rice. Suriname also produces half of the sugar it consumes. Commercial fishing is undertaken by Japanese, Korean, and Surinamese companies using imported labor. Shrimp is a major export; the catch has diminished since 1982 as the shrimp have at least temporarily moved to grounds closer to Guyana. However, production of other foodstuffs is inadequate to meet the needs of the country. Importation of a wide variety of foods is, therefore, necessary.

Forestry is an important sector of the economy, dominated by the state-owned company, Bruynzeel, which exports products derived from tropical hardwoods.

Wheat, potatoes, some poultry, milk powder, cheese, and many other commodities must be imported. Protective tariff and nontariff barriers and import substitution plans have been put into effect, sometimes limiting the variety of foods available on the local market. Local manufacturing consists of saw mills, shrimp-packing plants, a cigarette factory, a rum distillery, a brewery, soft drink bottlers, and a few other small industries.

A rapid deterioration in the Surinamese balance of trade began in 1983. It was brought about both by reduced bauxite revenues and by termination—due to Dutch displeasure with Suriname Government actions regarding human rights—of Dutch development aid. The virtual disappearance by late 1984 of freely available foreign exchange finally induced the government to impose stringent restrictions on import of consumer and industrial goods.

High wages, low foreign exchange levels, a small domestic economy, and little experience in exporting limit Suriname's competitiveness in international markets. Nonetheless, the country's GDP was an estimated \$1.48 billion in 1999. Per capita income is ten times that of the poorest Caribbean islands.

Suriname is a member of the Lome Convention and has observer status in the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM). The U.S. has traditionally been the country's largest trading partner, accounting for approximately one-third of export-import trade. The remainder has been carried on with European nations, Japan and, to an increasing extent, neighboring countries in the Caribbean and South America. This pattern may change, however, as the Surinamese Government does more centralized procurement in bulk from lower cost sources.

The Suriname Chamber of Commerce and Industry can be reached at P.O. Box 149, Mirandastraat 10, Paramaribo.

Transportation

Suriname's extensive rivers and streams are important avenues of transportation. Some rivers are navigable by ocean freighters for 100 miles inland. Hundreds of miles of smaller rivers are navigable by smaller boats and barges, which are used widely for moving people and freight. The boats of the Amerindians and Bush Negroes are vital to them.

Surinamese Luchtvaart Maatschappij NV (SLM) offers flights between major populated areas. The only practical means of reaching some interior areas is by small plane, using the recently built "grasshopper" airstrips. Chartered flights to these small fields are very expensive. Zanderij International Airport, 25 miles south of Paramaribo, can accommodate large jets. Zanderij is served by KLM, ALM, SLM, Guyana Airways, and Brazil's Cruzeiro do Sul, which connect the country with the U.S., Europe, and major South American cities. A small airfield on the edge of the city is limited to twin-engine propeller craft.

Suriname has no passenger rail transportation. River transport is one way to visit the interior and some coastal areas.

Buses serve Paramaribo, but service is erratic and the buses are hot and usually crowded during rush hours. Motorbikes, motorcycles, scooters, and bicycles are important local means of transportation. Traffic is hazardous, especially for riders of two-wheeled vehicles. Paramaribo has several taxi companies. Cabs are hard to find, but it is possible to phone for service.

Private cars are the best means of transportation in Paramaribo, particularly small vehicles, as some streets are narrow, and good maneuverability is necessary in traffic. Cars are not used very often for trips outside the city. Traffic moves on the left (although cars for right-hand traffic are numerous), and visitors are cautioned to be

careful when crossing streets, as it is easy to forget which way traffic is coming. The bicycle and motorbike paths can be hazardous, too, as the latter have the right-of-way.

Prices of small foreign cars are comparable to U.S. prices, and spare parts for these vehicles are more readily available than for large American cars. Insurance can be purchased at reduced rates (10 percent per year up to five years) with a statement from previous insurers that no claim has been made within five years. For other than liability, it is wise to purchase additional insurance through a U.S. company, as rates are more reasonable. A driver's license can be obtained for a small fee by presenting a valid U.S. license and two photos.

Communications

Postal, telegraph, and telephone systems connect Suriname's cities with one another and with the outside world. These services are quite reliable, and the rates reasonable. Suriname has a dial telephone system; direct dialing from the U.S. is possible using country code 597. International airmail letters arrive almost daily from the U.S., with transit time averaging 15 days. Surface mail takes two months or longer. Local mail service is slow, although reasonably reliable.

Government-owned, commercial stations provide news and entertainment in local languages, Dutch and English. Shortwave radio can pick up Voice of America (VOA), Armed Forces Radio, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), a few U.S. stations, and numerous Spanish and Portuguese broadcasts. The television broadcasts provide many recorded programs from the U.S., with some in color. The news is reported in Dutch.

Government publications and newspapers are in Dutch. The government cultural center maintains a public library with a limited collection of English editions. A few very expensive English-language paperbacks and hardcover books are

available from one or two outlets in Paramaribo.

Health

Paramaribo has medical facilities which are satisfactory for all but the most serious health problems. Local doctors have received their training in the Netherlands, Suriname, and the U.S. Several good dentists with modern equipment practice in the city. Eyeglasses can be fitted satisfactorily, as there are several eye specialists and opticians. Some common prescription and patent medicines are available, but most prescription medications are unavailable.

The general level of sanitation and health in Paramaribo, although not up to U.S. standards, is good. Garbage is collected weekly. Government efforts have eliminated yellow fever, malaria, and rabies from the capital area. Locally produced food, milk, bottled drinks, and meat are safe.

Tap water is potable in Paramaribo, Nieuw-Nickerie, and Moengo. In small villages and in the interior, waterborne diseases are always a possibility because of various unsanitary health practices. Skin infections are fairly common. It is inadvisable to walk barefoot, since schistosomiasis and other parasites can be contracted through exposed skin. The coastal area has been free of yellow fever and malaria for many years, but these diseases are still found in the interior. The visitor should take anti-malarial drugs when traveling in those regions.

Suriname's high humidity aggravates arthritis, sinusitis, rheumatism, and bronchial asthma. The damp, warm air encourages fungus growth which can affect the skin or cause allergic reactions. Numerous plants and flowers are also sources of allergies. The climate is debilitating to many Americans, particularly those arriving from cooler climates. New arrivals may feel weak and tired and may require extra sleep during their first few weeks in Paramaribo. The tropical sun is surpris-

ingly strong, and direct exposure at midday can cause uncomfortable burns in 15 to 20 minutes.

Mosquitoes are prevalent in some lower lying parts of Paramaribo. Some people use mosquito nets when sleeping in rooms that are not air-conditioned, especially in some areas outside the capital, where mosquitoes may carry malaria. Mosquito and insect repellents are widely used. The many insects found in this tropical region result in frequent, but mild, bites, which sometimes become infected despite precautions. Outside heavier-populated sections, there are poisonous reptiles and wild animals. Caution should be exercised by wearing proper clothing and keeping alert when in forested areas.

Clothing and Services

The warm, humid climate of Suriname normally necessitates only lightweight summer clothing, except in some air-conditioned offices and buildings. Evenings in the rainy season are cooler than in the dry season. It rains almost daily, so an umbrella is necessary for each family member. Because of the high humidity, raincoats are seldom worn.

Men normally wear light cotton shirts and lightweight suits. At many social occasions, casual attire is acceptable.

Women generally wear skirts or slacks while shopping in the city. Shorts should not be worn in public. Pants and pantsuits are often seen in casual social situations. Clothing accessories can be purchased in Paramaribo, but selection is limited, and prices are higher than in the U.S.

Basic services are adequate. The city has two laundries and two dry cleaners. Work is fair, and prices are higher than to those in the U.S. A few dressmakers, tailors, hairdressers, and barbers do good work at reasonable rates. Repairs of any

kind are adequate, but slow. Qualified technicians for some repairs do not exist in Paramaribo. However, many auto garages, especially those of dealers, have modern facilities, skilled mechanics, and do adequate work, although parts are often in short supply.

Virtually all miscellaneous household items, supplies, medicines, and tobacco are difficult to find locally. Since nearly everything must be imported, prices are high. It is advisable to have on hand a supply of special or unusual medicines or toiletries.

Domestic Help

English-speaking domestics are not only hard to find, but are rarely willing to live in. A full-time maid works six hours a day, six days a week, is paid at least \$300 a month, plus food and transportation, and is paid overtime for evening work.

Part-time gardeners often will do heavy tasks when required. For entertaining, ample extra help is available.

Expatriates should be careful not to hire persons with illegal residential status in Suriname, as is often the case with Guyanese and Haitians.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

There are several routes from the U.S. to Paramaribo, the easiest being the SLM flight from Miami, which departs twice a week. Transit can also be through Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, from Miami; or through Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, from either New York or Miami.

A passport, visa and, if traveling by air, return ticket are required for travel to Suriname. There is a processing fee for business and tourist visas. A business visa requires a letter from the sponsoring company detailing the reason for the visit.

There is an airport departure charge and a terminal fee. Travelers arriving from Guyana, French Guiana and Brazil are required to show proof of a yellow fever vaccination. For further information, travelers can contact the Embassy of the Republic of Suriname, 4301 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 460, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 244-7488, e-mail: emb-sur@erols.com, or the Consulate of Suriname in Miami, 7235 NW 19th Street, Suite A, Miami, FL 33126, telephone (305) 593-2697.

While the situation in the countryside is stable at present, there is insufficient police authority over much of the interior of Suriname to offer assistance in an emergency. Unaccompanied travel to the interior, particularly the East-West highway between Paramaribo and Albina, is considered risky due to the high incidence of robberies and assaults along this route. Isolated acts of violence, particularly in but not limited to the interior, may occur. Travelers to remote areas of the interior of Suriname should be aware that they may encounter difficulties because of the lack of government authority throughout the interior and inadequate medical facilities in some areas. The ability of the U.S. Embassy to assist in an emergency situation may be hampered by limited transportation and communications in some areas.

The rate of violent crime has increased. Burglary and armed robbery are increasingly common in the capital city of Paramaribo, as well as in the outlying areas. Banditry occurs along routes in the interior of the country where police protection is inadequate. An increasing number of tourists report being attacked and robbed. Visitors may wish to exercise caution when traveling to the interior without an organized tour group, and secure their belongings carefully while staying in Paramaribo. Visitors may find it useful to carry photocopies of their passport, drivers license, credit cards and other important papers and leave the originals in a safe place.

Travelers to Suriname may experience disruptions in travel plans because of the unreliability of scheduled airline service to and from that country. Suriname Airways (SLM), operating in conjunction with Antillean Airways, serves as the only direct air link between the U.S. and Suriname. Limited flight schedules and ongoing technical problems commonly result in delays. Additionally, transportation to the interior is unreliable. Interior flights are often delayed, sometimes for days, because of mechanical difficulties, fuel shortages, and runway conditions. Dutch is the official language of Suriname; however, English is widely used, and most tourist arrangements can be made in English.

Household pets must have veterinary certificates stating that they are free from disease and have had rabies shots. Quarantine is waived if the documentation is in order. No kennels are available.

Stringent laws govern ownership of firearms and ammunition. Hunting licenses are obtained only after acquiring a permit to own a shotgun, and importing and registering a shotgun is a long, slow process. An individual may own one shotgun. Twelve and 16-gauge shotguns are used almost exclusively. Rifles or pistols are forbidden.

Travelers should note that natives object to being photographed.

Paramaribo has Roman Catholic, Southern Baptist, Dutch Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian, Baptist, Assembly of God, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pilgrim Holiness, AME, and Seventh-Day Adventist churches,

an Anglican mission, two synagogues, a Baha'i center and several Muslim mosques and Hindu temples. English services are held regularly each Sunday at the Anglican mission and the AME church. A Catholic mass in English is offered once a month. Many Americans attend an interdenominational Protestant service held each Sunday.

The time in Suriname is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) minus three-and-a-half.

The Suriname *guilder* (Sf) is the monetary unit. Currency controls are stringent.

The metric system is used. An additional unit of weight measurement is the Dutch *pond*, which equals 500 grams, 46 more than in an American pound.

Americans living in or visiting Suriname are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Paramaribo to obtain updated information on travel and security within Suriname. The Embassy is located at Dr. Sophie Redmondstraat 129, telephone (011)(597) 472-900. The Consular Section hours of operation for routine American citizen services are Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., or by appointment, except on American and Surinamese holidays. U.S. citizens requiring emergency assistance evenings, weekends, and holidays may contact an Embassy duty officer by pager at (011)(597) 088-08302. The U.S. Embassy in Paramaribo also provides consular services for French Guiana. For further information on French Guiana,

please refer to the separate Consular Information Sheet on French Guiana.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Feb/Mar Holi Phagwa*
 Id al-Fitr*
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 May 1 Labor Day
 July 1 Emancipation Day
 Nov. 25 Independence Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 Boxing Day
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

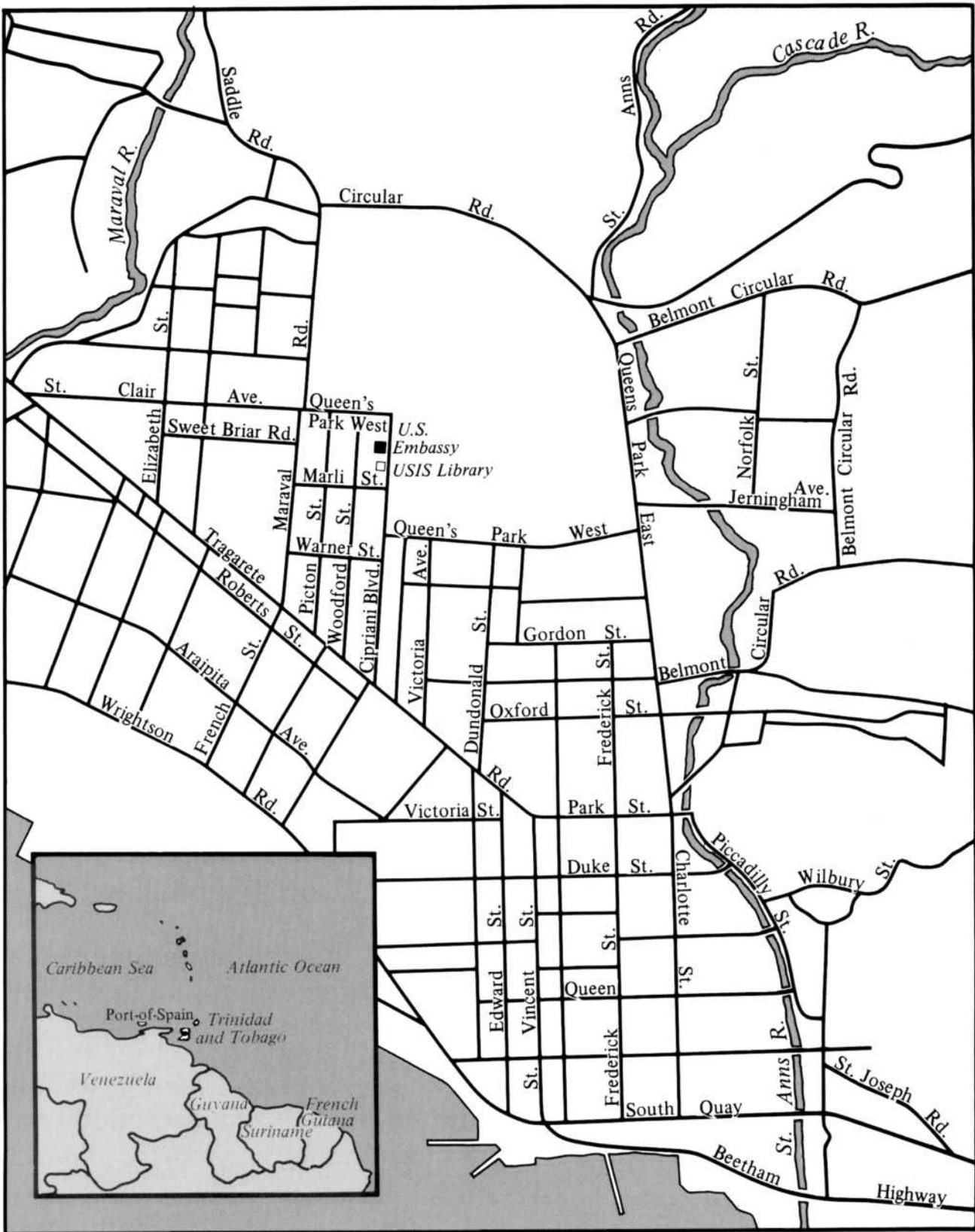
The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Beatty, Noelle B. *Suriname*. New York: Chelsea House, 1988.

Hoogbergen, Wim. *The Boni Maroon Wars in Suriname*. Kinderhook, NY: EJ Brill, 1990.

Price, Richard. *Alabi's World*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

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Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Major City:

Port-of-Spain

Other Cities:

Arima, Chaguanas, La Brea, Lopinot, Saint Joseph, San Fernando, Sangre Grande, Scarborough, Tunapuna

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Trinidad & Tobago. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Trinidad does not conform to the stereotypes of a Caribbean resort island. In fact, while it is blessed with great natural beauty and some good beaches, it is not a premier tourist destination. Tourism is growing rapidly on the sister island of Tobago, which is only a 20-minute flight away. What Trinidad lacks in tourist infrastructure, however, it more than makes up for in its unique ethnic and cultural flavor. Its abundant natural resources (oil and gas) have provided it the means to chart its own course, politically and economically, and make it a leader in the region. First-time visitors are often surprised at the level of industrialization in the country. It is a relatively prosperous nation as

measured by per capita GDP. Its population and landmass are larger than all of the Windward Islands combined. Even its geologic origins set it apart; it was originally a part of the South American mainland before it broke off thousands of years ago. This means that its flora and fauna are as varied as those of South America, but concentrated in a much smaller area. It is one of the world's premier destinations for bird watchers, boasting several hundred species, especially hummingbirds. Trinidad includes mountain ranges with peaks as high as 3,000 ft, as well as flat lands used for agriculture, and wetlands.

The Venezuelan coastline, less than 10 miles away, is visible from Port of Spain, yet cultural and language differences mean there is relatively little contact with Venezuela. Trinidadian society is a vibrant and unique mixture of races and national origins, with the two largest groups being of African and of Indian descent. In addition, there are smaller, but significant numbers of people of Chinese, Syrian, Lebanese, English, Portuguese, Spanish, and French origin.

Life for the community is good in Port of Spain, particularly for families and those who like outdoor activities. Port of Spain is as safe as many large U.S. cities, the weather

is good, and medical care and other facilities are adequate. The people are open and friendly toward Americans, the business infrastructure is reasonably modern and efficient, and housing and schools are good. While some of the conveniences Americans take for granted are not always available, one can dial direct to family in the U.S., easily access the internet and watch many state-side channels on cable TV, or find the latest video releases as well as decent bagels. At the same time, opportunities abound to be enriched by an interesting and unique culture.

MAJOR CITY

Port-of-Spain

Port-of-Spain is located between the sheltered Gulf of Paria and the mountains of the Northern Range that rise sharply from the sea to an altitude of 3,000 feet. With a metropolitan population of over 200,000 this bustling port city is on many important air and sea routes of the eastern Caribbean.

The city itself is situated on flat land, with hills rising on three sides and the sea on the fourth. Downtown streets are narrow and con-

gested. The downtown businesses are immediately inland from the dock and waterfront. On nearby Woodford Square stands the Red House, which is the center of government and houses parliamentary offices as well as the House of Representatives, and the Senate. Many political and social functions take place at Woodford Square or on the recently refurbished Brian Lara Promenade.

Further inland is the Savannah, cultural and recreational hub of the city, with its surrounding road often called the "world's largest roundabout." This huge, grassy, oval park is the site of numerous cricket and soccer games, food vendors, and spectators on park benches. A 2-1/2 mile long paved walk around the Savannah is used by roller skaters, joggers, baby strollers, and pedestrians. Many Carnival activities take place on the Savannah.

Many of Port of Spain's cultural attractions are located around the Savannah, including Queen's Hall (used for concerts and other performances), the Botanical Gardens, a zoo, the Hilton Hotel, and historical houses, many in Victorian style architecture.

With U.S.-style shopping malls and supermarkets in many locations, Port of Spain is a growing city with many of the conveniences of the United States.

Utilities

Since electric current is the same as in the U.S. (110v, 60-cycle AC), transformers are unnecessary. Plugs and outlets are American or a locally available three-prong type.

The electrical system experiences occasional surges and outages. Line conditioners are recommended for sensitive electronic items such as computers.

During the dry season (January-June) water supplies are low, and restrictions may be placed on watering lawns and washing cars. Water pressure and supply problems can

be a serious problem in hilly suburbs.

Food

Supermarkets similar to those in the U.S. are located conveniently throughout the city. Smaller family-run groceries, vegetable-fruit stores (called greengrocers here), and roadside stands sell vegetables, fruits and fish. Well-stocked store shelves hold many familiar brands.

Food prices, except for government controlled items, are comparable or higher than in the U.S., since prices for imported food reflect freight costs and some import duties. Products come from the U.S., Canada, UK, Venezuela, Jamaica, and elsewhere. Government-controlled items are sold at below market prices and are supported by government subsidies. These include rice, sugar, flour, and some imported foods such as butter and cheese.

Some items, which are solely imports, include baby food, cake mixes, pickles, olives, and canned and dehydrated soups. Locally produced coffee is available, but stronger than U.S. coffee. American ground coffee is available. Good quality juices produced locally can be had both sweetened and unsweetened. Both local and imported candy and snacks are widely available at reasonable prices. Local and imported nuts (peanuts, cashews, walnuts, and almonds) are available, but expensive.

Staples such as eggs, bread, butter, yogurt, cream and milk (fresh, UHT and powdered) of good quality are widely available at reasonable prices. U.S.-style breakfast cereals, both local and imported, as well as rice and pasta products are also widely available.

A wide variety of fresh, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are found in local supermarkets, neighborhood shops and roadside stands. While there are many fruits and vegetables not commonly found in the U.S., the availability of fresh herbs and the variety of vegetables

overall is less than that found in Washington, D.C. area supermarkets.

Fresh fish and shrimp can be purchased at the downtown central market, roadside stands, or from fishermen returning with their catch. Frozen fish is available at supermarkets. Local pork is good, as are New Zealand mutton and lamb. Beef cuts differ from those in the U.S. both in texture and taste and are often tougher and drier. Sausages, ham and luncheon meats are available.

Miller and Miller Genuine Draft are the only U.S. beers available locally.

Trinidadian cuisine reflects the nation's cultural diversity. "Creole" cooking includes dishes based on rice mixed with chicken, pork and various local vegetables. On their way to work, many Trinidadians enjoy a quick breakfast of fresh coconut water and jelly sold by vendors along the Savannah and Independence Square. Callaloo, a popular soup, is made from taro leaves, okra, pumpkin, coconut, and crabs. Other favorites are cow heel soup, crab backs, souse (pickled pig's feet), and pastels (ground beef wrapped in crepe-like pancakes and banana leaves). East Indian dishes include roti (usually beef, chicken, or pork with potatoes and curry spices wrapped in a large, thin bread), spicy hot curries, and chutney. Most Chinese food is Cantonese, but is prepared to suit Trinidadian taste and is somewhat different from what one finds in U.S. Chinese restaurants. Wild meats, such as maniocou (possum), armadillo, iguana, deer, and wild boar are delicacies here. Trinidadians especially enjoy fish including shark, king fish, red snapper, Spanish mackerel, flying fish, shrimp, carite, and cascadura (a fresh water fish).

Clothing

Lightweight summer clothing is worn year round by both men and women in Port of Spain. Due to Trinidad and Tobago's tropical climate, clothing made from natural fibers (cotton, linen, etc.) or a blend



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Carnival in Port of Spain, Trinidad

of natural and synthetic fibers is more comfortable than all synthetic materials. Clothing wears out quickly under the frequent laundering made essential by the high heat and humidity.

Men: Dress is casual and informal, although evening functions often require “lounge suits,” the local term for dark business suits. At more casual functions, sport shirts and slacks are commonly worn, as are “shirt jacks,” which are similar to the Latin American guayabera or African safari suit and are very popular among Trinidadian men. During the rainy season, showers can be expected nearly every day. Umbrellas are therefore essential. Raincoats and galoshes are not worn here due to the hot climate. Loose-fitting clothing made of natural fibers is the most comfortable.

Women: Women wear dresses, suits, or skirts to the office. Stockings are rarely worn due to the high

humidity. Plan to bring a good supply of dresses for social occasions, as parties and other social events are numerous throughout the year. Trinidadian women are generally smartly dressed no matter what dress is specified by the invitation. Casual and dressy short dresses or skirts are favored at most social functions.

More formal evening functions require long dresses or fancy short dresses.

Informal social functions require only skirts and blouses/tops.

Local boutiques sell the latest fashions, including interesting local designs, at relatively high prices. Fabric shops offer a wide variety of materials at reasonable prices. Seamstresses are numerous and many can sew without patterns; their prices vary.

Children: Clothing worn during summer in the U.S. is suitable here. Washable, lightweight materials with natural fibers are best. One sweater or feather-light jacket should be all the outer wear needed. Most children wear sandals or comfortable canvas shoes. They are available here at reasonable prices. Most schools require school uniforms, which can be purchased locally. The International School requires black or white shoes or sneakers, of which more styles are available in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Locally made laundry soaps and cleansers are available at reasonable prices. Imported soaps, cleaners, disinfectants, fabric softeners, grease cutters, and waxes are more expensive.

Numerous name brand cosmetics and personal hygiene items are sold locally, including hair care products,

lotions, nail polish, deodorants, foot powders, and shampoos. Except for a few locally made products, they are more expensive than in the U.S. Several brands of locally made diapers are sold at reasonable prices.

Photographic equipment is expensive and limited in variety. Film and black-and white and color processing services are available at higher than U.S. cost.

Attractive shops sell most of the kitchen items found in the U.S., but at higher prices.

There are several reasonably-priced but unreliable dry cleaners. Beauty and barber shops resemble those in the U.S.

Domestic Help

Domestic help can be found and hired at rates considerably below those in the United States. Few families hire more than a full-time maid and part-time gardener. Live-in maids are hard to find, because most employees prefer day work. Some families employ maids and waiters for representational functions, at hourly or evening wages. Baby-sitters are inexpensive but sometimes hard to find. In addition to wages, employers should provide meals or cash equivalent, uniforms, and a contribution to the compulsory National Insurance plan. If the employer requires the employee to have a pre-employment medical check-up, this should be done at the employer's expense.

Religious Activities

Freedom of worship exists in Trinidad and Tobago. Most religions have places of worship. The Roman Catholic, Anglican (Episcopalian), Presbyterian, Methodist, Hindu, and Muslim faiths predominate. There are no synagogues, but a small Jewish community (mainly foreign residents) organizes activities and observances.

Education

The school year begins in early September and ends in mid-July, with Christmas and Easter vacations dividing it into three terms. The

school week is Monday-Friday except for holidays. All Trinidadian schools above nursery level require uniforms that are inexpensive and well suited for the tropics.

Good preschools for 2-5-year-olds are available and are held in the teacher's home. Teacher-pupil ratio, physical setup of the classroom, and the teacher's training and method vary widely. Drilling on numbers and alphabet is a primary activity, and children have less freedom of movement than in U.S. nursery schools. However, some Montessori-type schools exist, and other schools have teachers who include some Montessori methods in games and activities.

Primary schooling (PreK through 12) is available at The International School of Port of Spain (ISPS). In April 1999, ISPS moved into a US\$4.5 million dollar, purpose-built educational facility on the banks of the Diego Martin River. ISPS is growing rapidly and is modeled on the American educational system and reflects a college preparatory curriculum. As an accredited, private independent school, it continues to expand course offerings and extra-curricular activities.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Venezuelan Embassy and the National Institute for Higher Education (Research Science and Technology) (NIHERST) in Port of Spain conduct free courses in Spanish conversation for adults. A similar service is provided in French by the Alliance Francaise for a nominal fee. Private teachers offer special courses in crafts, music, modern dance, and arts.

The University of the West Indies is located at St. Augustine, about 12 miles east of Port of Spain. Degree courses are offered by the faculties of agriculture, engineering, social sciences, the natural sciences, and the arts. The University also offers some non-degree courses in Port of Spain and at St. Augustine. The cost for non-degree study at UWI is high, but many of the more popular

departments (engineering, sciences, and premedical) are difficult to enroll in due to enrollment limits.

Sports

Trinidad and Tobago's primary national sports are cricket and soccer. Swimming, tennis, golf, boating, and fishing are also popular and are available in and around Port of Spain. Port of Spain has several parks, including a botanical garden and a small zoo.

Beaches in Trinidad are not resorts, but they are convenient to Port of Spain and are well used all year. The most popular beach is located at Maracas Bay on the north coast, about 35 minutes from Port of Spain. The smaller, less crowded, Las Cuevas Beach is 5 miles farther. There are beach houses for rent on the East Coast (about two hours' drive from Port of Spain) and on the small islands off the northwest coast (reachable through a short water taxi ride) which are popular weekend getaway spot. Swimming can be dangerous at any beach in Trinidad because of frequent heavy surf, rip-tides, and undertows. However, Maracas and several of the other more popular beaches have lifeguards. Several sports facilities provide swimming pools in Port of Spain at lower rates than the U.S. Tobago offers resort-type facilities, including hotels on or near the beach and a golf course. Many people find weekends on "Robinson Crusoe's Island" a welcome change from Port of Spain's routine. Tennis facilities in the city are frequently crowded, but adequate; equipment and clothing are expensive. The Tranquillity Square Lawn Tennis Club has five clay courts and one all-weather court. This private club accepts member referral and tennis is quite competitive. The Trinidad Hilton has two all-weather courts, but expect a short wait for half-hour of playing time. The Trinidad Country Club in Port of Spain has a large swimming pool (and a children's pool), six tennis courts, playground (swings, slide), bar, and eating facilities. As of June 1997, the cost was approximately US\$110 initiation fee per adult and US\$150 annual



View of Speyside, Tobago

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fees for families. Although these three private clubs are the most popular, smaller clubs exist. It is also possible to reserve an hour's play at a good all-weather public court.

Opportunities for scuba diving and spearfishing are fair in Trinidad and excellent in Tobago. The waters around Trinidad are generally murky and devoid of coral reefs, with dangerous currents. These conditions coupled with the lack of diving instruction and rental equipment, means divers should be experienced and outfitted before attempting dives in Trinidad. By contrast, Tobago diving is well organized with equipment and instruction available; the reefs, clear water, and tropical fish provide for excellent diving opportunities. Deep sea fishing is quite good, and there are some charter boats available.

Port of Spain has several boating clubs and marinas: the Trinidad and Tobago Yacht Club, Trinidad and Tobago Yachting Association, Island Properties, Power Boats, Crews Inn and Peake's, among others. The Yacht Club has boating facilities for members and guests. Power Boats and Island Properties, as well as Peake's, have haul-out and full service facilities for boats. The recently established Crews Inn is a world class marina for power and sail boats and includes a supermarket, hotel, bank, bookstore, and other features such as boat slips with full electrical, cable TV and telephone hookups. The Trinidad and Tobago Yachting Association, which is only for sailboats and dinghies, offers competitive sailing in a number of large and small boat categories. It also sponsors children's boating classes. Sailboats and powerboats can be purchased locally, but prices are high and selection limited.

St. Andrews Golf Club, situated in a valley 5 miles north of Port of Spain, offers an 18-hole golf course, restaurant, swimming pool, driving range, and putting green. Similar facilities and less expensive 18-hole course are located at Point-a-Pierre, 45 minutes south. A nine-hole public golf course, in an attractive valley northwest of town, is also available.

Small game hunting in the forests and duck hunting in the swamps is possible, but only with shotguns. Rifles are not legal hunting weapons here. Game is scarce and all but the most dedicated hunters find that the results are not worth the effort. The Trinidad Rifle Association and Trap and Skeet Association offer firing range facilities for shooting pistols, as well as skeet, small bore, and high-power rifles.

Good hiking opportunities are enhanced by an active Field Naturalists Club, which sponsors

monthly hikes to out-of-the-way spots. Informal group hiking is a common event. Opportunities are outstanding for bird watchers and butterfly collectors. The internationally known Asa Wright Nature Center near Arima provides overnight facilities for amateur and professional naturalists.

Other recreational opportunities include several karate schools, dancing schools, fitness centers, amateur theater, model building club, stamp club and various women's clubs.

Sports equipment and attire compare to those used in the U.S. and can be purchased locally, but prices are higher.

Port of Spain has an active Hash House Harriers Club that organizes trail runs every other week in different parts of the country. Unlike Hash groups in many other countries, the group is not dominated by ex-pats. There is a good mix of locals and foreigners. The hash is a good way for newcomers to meet people and see the country.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Many staff members enjoy visits to nearby islands and to the Venezuelan mainland. Visitors traveling by British West Indian Airways (BWIA) to Trinidad should include Tobago on their ticket, at no extra charge and get a free trip to Tobago within a year. A quiet, peaceful island, Tobago boasts lagoons, beaches, and undersea coral gardens with tropical fish, and an 18-hole golf course.

Barbados, 200 miles away, offers more tourist infrastructure than Tobago, excellent beaches and a wide selection of good restaurants and hotels. Moderate excursion rates are available during the off season. Caracas, Venezuela is another popular destination for long weekends, offering restaurants and shopping as well as a change from the typical Caribbean atmosphere. Georgetown, Guyana is an exotic break for the adventurous, where

Amerindian villages and huge rivers and waterfalls can be visited. Grenada, 90 miles north of Trinidad, is known as the "Isle of Spice". The most southerly of the Windward Islands, it offers beautiful beaches and several good hotels. St. George's, the capital city, has excellent yacht facilities. Moderate excursion rates are available during the off-season. Grenada is the southern gateway to the Grenadines, an increasingly popular cruising and sailing ground.

Entertainment

Port of Spain has a number of reasonably priced restaurants featuring continental, Indian, Italian, Thai, American, Chinese, and local Creole cuisine.

Several hotels and three or four nightclubs offer entertainment featuring steel bands, calypso, and other local music and dance bands. For the younger crowd, several discotheques play current U.S. disco and pop music favorites, local and Jamaican dance music.

Three large-screen movie theaters and a drive-in present mostly U.S. films. Other venues sometimes offer cultural events, plays or shows. An active semi-professional theater workshop group welcomes foreigners. In addition, interested visitors might participate in other smaller theater and dance groups. Video rental stores are used by many Americans.

The entertainment highlight is the annual Carnival. Many feel that Trinidad's pre-Lenten Carnival is second only to Rio's in grandeur and twice as enjoyable, since it is safer and more informal. Many Americans each year join one of the colorful "Mas" bands (masquerade groups). There are also numerous other special cultural events, festivals and competitions. The period between Christmas and Carnival is filled with "fetes" (parties) and is characterized by local calypso and steelband competitions leading to the national finals which take place the weekend preceding Carnival. During this time, one can visit

numerous local "pan yards" in the evenings to hear the world's premier steelband rehearsing intricate arrangements of specially commissioned competition tunes.

On a year-round basis, however, entertainment possibilities are less varied in Port of Spain than in a comparable U.S. city. Bring books, records, games, and hobby materials.

Trinidad is a destination which most young families find enjoyable because of the outdoor living, the friendliness and hospitality of the Trinidadians, and the relative safety and lack of serious health and political hazards.

Social Activities

Port of Spain has many opportunities for social activity. Trinidadians are friendly and very hospitable. Americans are welcomed at the many fetes that occur throughout the year. During the Christmas and Carnival season nonstop fetes are held. Most parties are informal. Other types of home entertainment include cocktail parties, dinners, bridge parties, and buffet suppers. Club activities include films, barbecues, and dances for members.

Some other clubs include the Horticultural Society, Trinidad and Tobago German Club, the Orchid Society, the Field Naturalists Society, Living Waters Christian Community, an informal Jewish community, and other groups.

Families with small children find opportunities for social contact in such groups as Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, Girl Guides, and Brownies. Older children and teenagers find few organized groups to join. Most American service clubs such as Rotary International and Lions, have branches in Trinidad and Tobago.

OTHER CITIES

ARIMA, the nation's other population center is on Trinidad. It is

about 15 miles east of Port-of-Spain, and many of its residents work in the capital. The population of Arima is about 24,600.

CHAGUANAS is a market center in western Trinidad, 12 miles south-east of Port-of-Spain. This town of roughly 6,100 residents is noted for its busy Saturday open-air market. Everything from produce to glassware and gadgets is offered for sale, spread out on blankets and displayed in small wooden stands.

LA BREA lies on the Gulf of Paria in the southwest, in one of Trinidad's most unusual regions. The adjoining Pitch Lake has become a major tourist attraction and the city itself has benefitted. The area is covered with pitch, so houses and buildings in La Brea tilt in all directions. Roads are full of potholes, and huge cracks. The pitch erupts and subsides quickly, even in the heart of town. Pitch Lake, referred to as "magnified elephant skin," is actually a massive field of resin, almost 300 feet deep. The lake supplies tons of asphalt from its more than 100 acres. La Brea's population is an estimated 1,500.

LOPINOT is a picturesque village tucked into a valley in north-central Trinidad, about 12 miles east of Port-of-Spain. The village dates to the 1800s, when it was founded by the Count de Lopinot. The Frenchman and his settlers were awarded the region by the British, and proceeded to carve out a thriving plantation from the dense forest. The count's estate is now a principal tourist spot, the house a museum with memorabilia and photos. The gardens are meticulously tended and are highly popular for picnickers. Residents of Lopinot are a mixture of French, Spanish, Amerindian, and African, and are known for their distinctive songs and instrumentation. Other features here include a church that was moved from a nearby town, linked caves with curious stalactites, and a dubiously interesting colony of white cockroaches—the only such species in the world—found in the caves.

SAINT JOSEPH is the former capital of Trinidad, situated seven miles east of Port-of-Spain on the main highway. Its population is approximately 4,100.

SAN FERNANDO, on the island of Trinidad, was founded in 1786. With a population of approximately 33,600 (1995 est.), it is a business and industrial center of growing importance. It is a seaport city, and several industrial plants have made their headquarters here.

One of Trinidad's most important market centers is **SANGRE GRANDE**, 25 miles southeast of Port-of-Spain. It has a population of about 9,000, and is the hub of St. Andrew County.

SCARBOROUGH is the chief town of Tobago, although it has only about 6,000 residents. It is situated near the island's Rockley Bay. Because Scarborough is in a resort area, it has hotels, several banks, and a car rental agency.

TUNAPUNA, 10 miles east of Port-of-Spain on Trinidad's main highway, is near the home of the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies. The city's population is an estimated 10,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Population

Christopher Columbus discovered, named and claimed Trinidad for Spain in 1498. Sir Walter Raleigh made brief bids for possession of the island in 1595. The indigenous inhabitants of the islands - the warlike Caribs, who flourished in Tobago, and the more peaceful Arawaks, who outnumbered the Caribs in Trinidad - were ultimately subdued and enslaved by the Spanish. By the end of the 18th century, they were almost extinct.

Africans were brought to Trinidad as slaves in 1702 to boost cacao production. When the Spanish crown

opened the island to immigration in the last quarter of the century, French planters and their slaves came by the thousands from other Caribbean islands and France, bringing their knowledge of sugarcane cultivation.

The Spanish ceded Trinidad to the English in 1797. Tobago, after changing hands among the Dutch, French, and British several times during the 16th and 17th centuries, was finally captured by the British in 1793.

When slavery was abolished throughout the British West Indies in 1834, plantation owners turned to indentured laborers from India, and some 150,000 arrived in Trinidad between 1854 and 1917. By 1921 East Indians accounted for almost one-third of Trinidad's population; today they comprise a slim plurality.

Trinidad was the site of a large U.S. military presence during World War II, serving as a huge naval base and training site for many of the troops headed for North Africa. It also protected supply routes for oil for the allied forces. German U-boats stalked allied supply and troop ships headed for the war in Europe, sinking many in the waters surrounding Trinidad and Tobago. A small, privately run military history museum outside of Port of Spain details this and other fascinating military chapters in the history of the islands. U.S. military bases and other facilities on the island were returned by the U.S. to Trinidad and Tobago in the 1960s.

A plurality of the population is Christian (Roman Catholic 30%, Anglican 11%, also Presbyterian, Baptist and other faiths). 24% are Hindu and 6% Muslim. There are also smaller groups following African derived religions.

Trinidad and Tobago's population is just under 1.3 million, of which over 50,000 live in Tobago. Greater Port of Spain, with about 200,000 inhabitants, is by far the largest city, followed by San Fernando, Arima and

Chaguanas. The largest town in Tobago is Scarborough. Over 2,000 Americans live in Trinidad and Tobago, many of local origin. Family and cultural ties with North America are strong, with sizable Trinidadian communities resident in New York, Florida and Toronto, Canada.

Most of the rural population in Trinidad lives in small roadside agricultural villages. The larger villages usually contain a church or temple, a police station, a primary school, recreational club/bar and small grocery stores.

The two major folk traditions are Creole and East Indian. Creole is a mixture of African elements as influenced by Spanish, French, and English colonial culture. Many East Indians have retained their own way of life and Hindu traditions and religious rites such as cremation and Divali (Festival of Lights). A smaller proportion of the East Indian population is Muslim. The entire population speaks English, often flavored with expressions derived from Trinidad's cultural heritage.

The people of Trinidad and Tobago enjoy social events called 'fetes' all year. One of the world's biggest fetes - Carnival - takes place each year on the Monday and Tuesday before Lent. This festival features parades with huge groups of masqueraders dancing in spectacular costumes through the streets of Port of Spain, accompanied by large sound trucks or steel bands, and calypso singers accompanied by brass bands performing at calypso "tents." The French introduced Carnival as an urban festival and it was celebrated initially among the upper class Creoles. In time it also became a means for the Afro-Trinidadian masses to break out of their normal routine, sometimes to express ridicule or to indirectly attack their social superiors and the government. It has now become a truly national event, with most segments of the population actively participating.

Public Institutions

Trinidad and Tobago is a democratic country with a parliamentary form of government. On August 31, 1962, the United Kingdom granted independence to Trinidad and Tobago as a member of the British Commonwealth with a Governor General as the Queen's personal representative. On September 24, 1976, Trinidad and Tobago adopted a new constitution, which established the country as a republic within the British Commonwealth. The Queen was replaced as head of state by a President elected by Parliament, and the position of Governor General was abolished.

The major governmental institutions, based on the British model, remained the same as those established by the 1962 constitution. They are: A Cabinet (currently 17 Ministers appointed and led by a Prime Minister).

A bicameral Parliament consisting of a 36-member House of Representatives and a 31-member Senate. Members of the House of Representatives are elected in parliamentary elections held at least every five years. Members of the Senate are appointed by the President: 16 on the advice of the governing party, six on the advice of the opposition party, and nine at the President's discretion.

A judicial system which has a Court of Appeals as its highest level in the country. Final appeals may be taken to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London.

In November 1995, the United National Congress (UNC), in coalition with the small National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) party, formed a government, with Basdeo Panday of the UNC as Prime Minister. The coalition took over from the People's National Movement (PNM) Government headed by Patrick Manning. The PNM was founded in 1958 under the leadership of Dr. Eric Williams. Dr. Williams in 1962 became the first Prime Minister of the newly

independent country, continuing in office until his death in 1981. In 1986 the PNM was swept out of office by the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), led by A.N.R. Robinson. In 1991, the PNM returned to power only to be defeated in 1995 by the UNC/NAR coalition.

Trinidad and Tobago belongs to a number of international organizations through which it exerts some influence on world affairs. On gaining independence in 1962, Trinidad and Tobago joined the United Nations and became a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. In 1967, it was the first Commonwealth Caribbean country to seek membership in the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Trinidad and Tobago was a founding member of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), and its successor organization, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). It is a member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and identifies with developing countries on many North-South economic issues.

Familiar organizations, such as the Red Cross, YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, PTA, Jaycees, Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, American Legion, etc., play significant roles in the community and welcome participation by foreign residents.

Arts, Science, and Education

The educational program inherited from the colonial administration was patterned on the British model, with structure and content resembling those of other Commonwealth Caribbean members. Students completing secondary school now take the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) examinations instead of the General Certificate of Education (GCE) exams prepared and graded in the U.K.

While Trinidad has one of the hemisphere's highest literacy rates and

has produced scholars of international renown, some educational problems persist. School facilities tend to be outdated, in poor condition and overcrowded. Teacher salaries and training are also well below the private sector. Not all teachers have university degrees; some have received pedagogical training, others have specialist diplomas, and some have general secondary education. Higher education is available in Trinidad and Tobago at the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies, located on the outskirts of Port of Spain.

In the literary field notable writers include Alfred Mendes, C.L.R. James, Samuel Selvon, Earl Lovelace and Sir Vidiandhar Surajprasad Naipaul. Selvon's work most often deals with the poor people of Trinidad at home and abroad, and his style is both humorous and sympathetic. Naipaul's novels show a deep sensitivity toward the racial and cultural complexity of Trinidadian society and an understanding of its tensions and prejudices. Trinidad's leading poet and playwright is Pulitzer Prize-winner Derek Walcott, a St. Lucian by birth, who is now teaching in the United States.

The music and dance of Trinidad and Tobago and the festivals that inspire and preserve them reflect the country's kaleidoscopic colonial heritage and its multicultural population. Each element of the social mosaic—the Spanish and English colonizers, the French immigrants, the African slaves, and the East Indian indentured laborers, as well as smaller communities of Chinese, Syrians and Lebanese—has contributed to a national folkloric tradition which is among the world's richest.

The calypso, the musical genre that has drawn international attention to Trinidad, evolved from folk culture but is considered a popular political music form. Today's calypso has been described as “witty, smutty, topical, and full of double entendre.” Stimulated by the commercialization of the music and the hotly contested annual competition for Carnival calypso monarch,

composers turn out some 40 or 50 “hit” songs each year. Soca, a high energy dance music, Indo-Trinidadian “chutney” music, Indian style “tassa” drum bands, and the limbo dance are also all of Trinidadian origin.

Trinidad's most notable contribution to world culture, however, may be the steel drum (“pan”). Several decades ago urban Afro-Trinidadians found that empty steel drums and similar objects were ideal for music making. The thousands of 55 gallon oil drums, discarded by the U.S. Naval Base at Chaguaramas during World War II, furnished an ample supply. From primitive beginnings they were slowly developed to be able to reproduce the entire chromatic scale. The bands, which can number over 100 musicians, typically have bass, guitar, and cello pans in the rhythm section, while tenor and “double second” pans play the melody. Pan music has become very refined and, aside from calypso tunes, now includes popular, jazz and classical pieces.

In the field of the visual arts, Boscoe Holder, who excels in figurative paintings, Noel Vaucrosson, a watercolorist, and Pat Chu Foon, a painter and sculptor, are well known. Peter Minshall, who designed the opening ceremonies at both the Barcelona and Atlanta Olympic Games, has become one of the stand-outs among the many talented “mas” (Carnival band) producers.

Clothing designers, producing a typical Caribbean style, have also come into their own in recent years.

Port of Spain has several small theaters and two larger auditoriums, which feature original and foreign plays and musical performances. While Trinidad and Tobago's cultural “market” is not large enough to draw many foreign acts (aside from Caribbean music shows), occasionally visits by lesser known foreign musical and dance groups liven up the local cultural scene.

Commerce and Industry

Endowed like neighboring Venezuela with rich deposits of oil and natural gas, Trinidad and Tobago became one of the most prosperous countries in the Western Hemisphere during the oil boom of the 1970s, ranking third in per-capita income behind the United States and Canada by 1981. Oil revenues enabled the nation to embark on a rapid industrial and infrastructural development program, within the framework of a “mixed economy,” in which government investment in state corporations played a major role. Oil wealth also fueled a dramatic increase in domestic consumption.

With the collapse of oil prices in the early 1980s, Trinidad and Tobago entered into a difficult period of economic recession. In mid-1988, worsening economic conditions forced the government to begin a stringent adjustment program guided by the International Monetary Fund. This included devaluing the currency, adopting strict austerity budgets, rescheduling foreign debt, and in 1990 imposing a 15% value-added tax (VAT) on most goods and services.

By 1997, the country successfully recovered from its decade of economic decline, posting three straight years of real GDP growth (3.5% in 1994, 23% in 1995 and 3.1% in 1996). Trinidad and Tobago's international debt rating and per capita income are now among the highest in the hemisphere, and the country is viewed as an economic and political leader in the Caribbean. New U.S. business investment has been running at about US\$1 billion a year since 1995.

As part of its economic restructuring, the government adopted a more welcoming attitude toward foreign investment. Since 1992 almost all investment barriers have been eliminated, and the government has aggressively and successfully courted foreign investors. U.S. firms, mostly in the hydrocarbon

sector and related downstream petrochemical industries, invested over US\$2.5 billion from 1996 - 1998, placing Trinidad second only to Canada in the hemisphere in per capita U.S. direct foreign investment. There are no currency or capital controls, and the TT dollar has been in a lightly-managed, stable float since early 1993. The government has concluded a Bilateral Investment Treaty and an Intellectual Property Rights agreement with the United States.

In moving toward a more liberalized economy based on open competition, the government has privatized many state-owned industries and reduced subsidies to those that remain in the public portfolio. Companies all or partially divested since 1994 include the National Fisheries Company, British West Indian Airways (BWIA), National Flour Mills (NFM), the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC), and the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA).

Inflation averaged over 12% annually during the economic downturn of the early 1980s, and over 8% a year during the restructuring period in the first half of the 1990s. Through a combination of prudent monetary policies and fiscal restraint in public-sector budgets, the government has been successful in bringing inflation under control. Consumer prices rose 5.3% in 1995, and just 3.6% in 1996.

Despite serious efforts to diversify its economy, Trinidad and Tobago remains heavily dependent on the energy sector, which accounts for one-fourth of total GDP and 20% of government revenue and a major share of foreign exchange earnings. Production of crude oil has been steadily declining over the past decade, but the discovery of large reserves of natural gas, primarily in off shore fields, has fueled the development of petrochemical and metals industries. There are now over 20 large industrial plants in Trinidad, with most dependent on natural gas as a feedstock or running on inexpensive natural gas-generated elec-

tricity. At current trends Trinidad and Tobago will become the world's largest exporter of ammonia and methanol by the year 2000.

Since 1989, Trinidad and Tobago, in partnership with many major international oil companies, has pursued an aggressive oil and gas exploration campaign. BP Amoco, the biggest player in Trinidad's energy sector, produces half of the country's crude oil and the largest share of natural gas. BP Amoco, in partnership with Cabot (Boston), Repsol (Spain), British Gas and the National Gas Company (TT) has constructed a US\$1 billion liquefied natural gas plant in southern Trinidad, the largest industrial project in the Caribbean, which began operating in early 1999.

Trinidad and Tobago is highly trade dependent, using the foreign exchange earned by its commodity and energy exports to buy consumer goods. The U.S. is by far Trinidad's most important trading partner, supplying about half of all imports and buying half of all exports.

Trinidad's exports are concentrated in a few sectors: oil, gas and downstream petrochemical products (chiefly fertilizers), and iron and steel. Thanks to its energy and commodity exports Trinidad has run a trade surplus in all but two of the last 20 years. Since the floating of the TT dollar in 1993, exports of manufactured products such as diapers, beer, soft drinks, processed foods, air conditioning equipment and plastic products have increased significantly, particularly to the country's CARICOM neighbors with whom T&T runs a ten to one trade surplus.

Trinidad and Tobago's agricultural sector is still dominated by sugar, which was introduced in colonial times. But despite preferential market access arrangements with the U.S. and the European Union, sugar production has generally been unprofitable, due to high costs and low volume. The state owned sugar company Caroni (1975) Ltd. has made attempts to diversify into

areas such as citrus production, livestock and aquaculture with limited success. Other export crops include cocoa, coffee and cut flowers, but none is currently a significant foreign exchange earner. Agriculture still only accounts for about 2% of GDP. The fishing sector is receiving increased attention both for the local market and for exports, but over fishing by commercial shrimp trawlers and coastal pollution are threatening once abundant fishing grounds.

In the oil-boom years, neither the government nor the people showed much interest in tourism. After the economic decline of the 1980s, however, Trinidad and Tobago has witnessed a positive change in attitudes toward tourism, and government has targeted the tourism industry for greater development. Currently largely confined to Tobago, tourism in Trinidad and Tobago is low-key and only accounts for 1% of GDP. Fewer than 200,000 tourists visit the islands each year, many of these during Carnival. Lack of sufficient hotel rooms and limited air transportation links are challenges in marketing T&T as a tourist destination. The marine pleasure yacht subsector has been a bright spot in the country's tourism picture in recent years. Since 1990 annual sailing yacht arrivals have increased from several hundred to well over 3,000. The government is focusing efforts on the development of ecotourism destinations, taking advantage of acclaimed diving sites off the coast of Tobago and the impressive biological diversity of both islands.

The country's labor force numbers around 521,000, according to the latest figures. In 1998, official unemployment reached its lowest level in a decade at 14%, falling from 21.1% in 1993. The largest employment sector is services, accounting for 30% of total employment. Other significant sectors are trade, restaurant and hotels (18%), construction (13.6%), and manufacturing (10.3%). The vital, but capital intensive, hydrocarbon sectors

employ only a small percentage of the labor force.

Trinidad and Tobago has an active labor movement. Although only about a quarter of the national labor force is unionized, the unions enjoy a relatively high public profile. Unionization in the industrial and public sectors is higher than in most other sectors. The Labor Ministry serves as conciliator in labor disputes, and the Industrial Court, to which disputes are referred when collective bargaining fails, has a record of fair, but slow, adjudication.

Transportation

Automobiles

Poor public transportation makes a personal car necessary in Port of Spain. Traffic moves on the left, so right-hand-drive vehicles predominate. Only right-hand-drive (RHD) cars are sold locally. There are dealers for nearly all Japanese and Korean brands and an increasing number of European models. U.S.-made right-hand drive Fords and Jeeps recently entered the market. Shipping a car to Trinidad, preferably of a make that is sold locally, is less expensive than purchasing one on the island.

A local driver's license (good for three years) is required and a valid U.S. license will facilitate its issuance.

Third-party liability insurance, required by law, is available locally at reasonable rates. A five-year claim-free statement from a previous insurer entitles you to a discount. Local auto insurance rates other than third party liability are high and vary according to the driver's age and safety record. Collision and comprehensive insurance is also available locally, but the rates are higher than U.S. firms.

Although some improvements are under way, many roads and streets (with the exception of a few major highways) are narrow, full of pot-holes, and poorly maintained. Wear and tear on cars is rapid and narrow

roads are often congested; small cars are recommended. Four-wheel-drive sport utility vehicles are also very popular, especially for those who enjoy exploring the dirt roads and secluded beaches of the island.

The typical Trinidadian driving style may surprise newcomers. Some drivers are aggressive and have little reluctance about straddling the center of the road. Driving with high beams on at night is fairly common. Taxis stop suddenly to pick up or discharge passengers. Newcomers quickly learn to drive defensively at all times but find that driving on the left is not as hard as it appears.

Local

Private cars and taxis are the primary means of local transport, but buses cover limited routes which concentrate on connecting Port-of-Spain with nearby towns and villages. The country no longer has a railway system.

Taxi stands are located in several areas of Port-of-Spain, including hotels and the airport. Taxis can also be summoned by telephone or hailed on the street. Travel by taxi on a daily basis is expensive; ask the fare beforehand, as taxis are not metered. Taxis are not identified by signs, or by uniform painting, but by the first letter "H" on the license plate. Route taxis or maxi-taxis (minibuses) are restricted to special routes. They display a sign in the windshield, but the color coding designates their area. Passengers are picked up and let off along the route. Fares are reasonable and many local residents rely on maxi-taxis for transportation.

Car rentals are higher than in the U.S. and usually require a large cash deposit or credit card. A typical compact car averages US\$45 a day when available, but long term rates are lower.

Trinidad has no school bus system. The lack of organized school transportation further congests the morning rush hour.

Regional

Popular regional destinations include Caracas, San Juan, Miami, Barbados, Grenada, and other islands. Air connections are reasonably good to all of these places. Regional airlines, British West Indian Airways (BWIA), Liat and American Airlines offer regular service from Port of Spain.

There are hourly 20-minute flights daily between Trinidad (Piarco Airport) and Tobago (Crown Point Airport). The fare is currently US\$48 round trip. Airport taxi fares on both islands are standard and are displayed at each terminal. Establish the fare before hiring a taxi.

A ferry also operates between Trinidad and Tobago. The round trip fare is US\$8 and US\$10 for economy and tourist class tickets and US\$20 for an average sized car (cost is based on car's weight). A cabin costs an additional US\$26 and must be booked early. The trip takes 5 1/2 hours from Port of Spain to Tobago, but only 5 hours return because of the favorable current. Car rentals in Tobago cost about US\$45 a day; reserve in advance in Port of Spain.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

A modern telephone system has been installed throughout the island. Trinidad and Tobago follows the North American Dialing Plan and uses the international area code 1-868.

You can dial international calls to the United States direct from home or office by simply dialing 1, the area code, and number. Worldwide connections are good, but costs are well above U.S. discount rates. Credit card billing to the U.S. saves money on longer calls, but costs more for short calls due to operator assistance. As of June 1997, calls to Washington, D.C., is approximately US\$1.00 per minute, if charged to a TT number.

TSTT International Cable Service offers worldwide telegram delivery,

but incoming service has not always been reliable.

Internet services are available in Trinidad through private vendors or TSTT.

Mail

International airmail from the U.S. is received about five times a week and takes from 3 to 10 days, depending on the point of origin. Airmail from Trinidad to the U.S. costs approximately US\$400 for a standard letter. There are reports, however, of lost or stolen mail, especially items such as magazines, catalogs and packages.

Radio and TV

Trinidad has fourteen local radio stations, three on AM and the balance FM, which offer almost exclusively international pop and local music. There is almost no classical, jazz, rock or world music programming. World news is broadcast regularly, but U.S. news coverage is limited.

Cable TV service is available through several companies providing about 40 or more channels, mostly from the U.S., including some network stations. The one government-owned TV station operates separate programs on two channels. Both transmit in color. Programs are mainly imported series, most of them from the U.S. Some locally produced shows as well as news programs are shown. A video cassette recorder (VCR) is useful for additional entertainment, with video stores located throughout Trinidad. Tapes, often of only fair quality, rent for approximately US \$2 each per week.

Trinidad and Tobago is on the U.S. scanning and frequency system, so TV sets manufactured for use in the U.S. will work in Trinidad without adaptation. Ship TVs, stereos, VCRs, radios, etc., from the U.S. as they are more expensive in Trinidad. Service and parts for the better known models can be obtained locally and repair work is relatively inexpensive.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Three morning newspapers and several weeklies are published locally. The papers subscribe to the Caribbean News Agency (CANA), AP, etc. All give coverage to overseas news highlights, but in-depth international reporting is inadequate. The quality of the journalism varies widely.

U.S. daily newspapers are not currently available in Trinidad, except on the Internet on a limited and delayed basis at some hotels. The current Latin American editions of Time and Newsweek are available, at close to U.S. prices, at newsstands and bookstores. Popular American magazines, such as Good Housekeeping, Vogue, Glamour and House Beautiful are also available, but are often at least a month old and more expensive. Subscribe to magazines in the U.S. and have them mailed via pouch.

Port of Spain has various bookstores, stocked with books and paperbacks published locally, and in the U.K. and the U.S. However, they are not comparable in selection to U.S. bookstores and prices are considerable higher. The Port of Spain City Library has a large selection of British and American classics and popular novels.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Trinidad and Tobago has a relatively large number of competent general practitioners and specialists who have trained in the U.K., U.S., and Canada. Some doctors practice in private clinics, but most maintain private offices located throughout the country.

Government-operated clinics are open to those who cannot afford private care. The Mount Hope Medical Sciences Complex is fitted with state-of-the-art equipment but, like other government hospitals which have well-trained staff, conditions often do not meet U.S. standards.

Private clinics also offer good-quality care; such as the St. Clair Medical Centre.

In a major medical emergency, when medical evacuation is not feasible, the St. Clair Medical Clinic has been designated the facility for use. Doctors are in attendance around the clock, and life-support equipment is available. Medical care in Trinidad and Tobago is adequate for routine procedures, but the U.S. is generally preferable for specialized treatment.

Most Americans and other foreigners use local dentists trained in the U.K., U.S. or Canada. Orthodontic care is available, as are eye specialists. Eyeglass frames are imported and expensive, but locally ground lenses are relatively cheaper. Overall, the cost of medical, hospital, and dental care is much lower than in the U.S.

Prescription drugs, medicines and remedies available locally are mostly British and U.S. products. A full range of items is available from well-stocked pharmacies, but some brands may be unfamiliar. Prices are also generally higher than in the U.S. Bring a supply of any medical items you use regularly, including contact lens supplies, prescription drugs, over-the-counter remedies, first aid supplies, and cosmetics. Many items can be ordered later by pouch.

Community Health

Community sanitation in residential areas is good. Garbage is collected three times a week in most neighborhoods and garden clippings are collected weekly. Port of Spain and its suburbs are connected to a central sewage disposal system; outlying areas rely on septic tanks.

Water, for the most part, is potable. Certain residential areas (particularly elevated ones) are subjected to water shortages, however, most of these residences have water storage tanks.

Food purchased from street vendors and small restaurants can be of

mixed quality. Qualified food handlers display a "food handler's badge." Fruits and vegetables are generally safe after being washed.

Preventive Measures

Epidemics are rare in Trinidad and Tobago. However, gastroenteritis in children continues to be a problem, particularly in the rural areas. South American cholera generally does not reach Trinidad and Tobago, but precautions such as vigilant hand-washing and avoidance of food and drink from street vendors are advisable. Mosquito-borne dengue fever has increased in frequency in recent years. Yellow fever outbreaks occur roughly every ten years.

Newcomers may suffer from heat rash due to the high temperature and humidity. The weather may also affect those who suffer from hay fever, bronchial asthma, and fungal infections, and prolong other infections. Mosquitoes, sand flies and chiggers can cause discomfort outdoors.

Typhoid, gamma globulin, and yellow fever inoculations are not required for travelers coming from the U.S. to enter Trinidad and Tobago, but they are recommended for those who plan to travel to South America. Immunization can be obtained locally.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Two daily flights from Miami to Port of Spain are available on American Airlines. In addition, non-American carriers provide regular service to Port of Spain from the U.S., Canada, Venezuela, and the U.K. as well as interisland service. Reservations may be difficult to obtain during certain seasons, especially Christmas and Carnival.

A passport is required of U.S. citizens for entry to Trinidad and Tobago. U.S. citizens do not need a

visa for stays of 90 days or less. Work permits are required for certain types of compensated and non-compensated employment, including missionary work. For further information concerning entry, employment and customs requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago, 1708 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 467-6490 or the consulates of Trinidad and Tobago in Miami at (305) 374-2199 or New York City at (212) 682-7272, or by email at embassyttgo@erols.com

Americans living in or visiting Trinidad and Tobago are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and obtain updated information on travel and security. The U.S. Embassy is located at 15 Queen's Park West in Port-of-Spain, telephone 1-868-622-6371, Consular Section fax 1-868-628-5462. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m.-12:00 noon, Monday-Friday, except U.S. and Trinidad and Tobago holidays.

Pets

All pets imported into Trinidad and Tobago except birds, are subject without exception to a six-month quarantine.

The animal must have a health certificate from a U.S. Government veterinarian, stating vaccinations received, disease history, etc. The animal must be confined in an escape-proof cage. (Dogs must have a collar and leash).

The owner must also provide all the food, two feeding bowls and a padlock with two keys for the bin in which the food will be kept and locked- the owner keeps one key.

Birds are not quarantined, but must have a similar permit and Health Certificate, along with a Species Certificate showing that the species may be imported.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The local currency is referred to as the Trinidad and Tobago dollar, TT

dollar or just "TT". Effective April 13, 1993, the Government of Trinidad & Tobago announced the floating of the TT dollar. As of September 1999, the exchange rate was approximately TT\$6.30 to US\$1. Coins and bills have the same denomination as U.S. money, but the bills are issued in different colors.

All weights and measures were converted to the metric system in early 1982. However, you will find that both systems are used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1New Year's Day
 - Mar. 30.Spiritual Baptist Liberation Shouter Day
 - Mar/Apr.Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr.Easter*
 - Mar/Apr.Easter Monday*
 - May 30.Indian Arrival Day
 - May/June.Corpus Christi*
 - June 19Labor Day
 - Aug. 1.Emancipation Day
 - Aug. 31.Independence Day
 - Dec. 25.Christmas Day
 - Dec. 26.Boxing Day
- *variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Turks and Caicos Islands

Major City:
Grand Turk

INTRODUCTION

Archeological expeditions have uncovered artifacts indicating Arawak habitation of the **TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS** at one time. Today, only eight of the 30 islands are inhabited. The Turks and Caicos Islands may have been the site of Columbus' landfall on his first voyage in 1492. Traditionally, however, Juan Ponce de Leon gets the credit for the European discovery of the islands in 1512. The islands then served as a hideout for pirates and as a port of call for explorers and merchants. The first European residents were Bermudians who, starting in the 1670s, came regularly to collect salt. The Caicos Islands were settled by Loyalist farmers who fled the southern states after the United States won independence from Britain. After slavery was abolished in 1838, the planters left and their former slaves remained. The islands were placed under the government of the Bahamas until 1848, and the islands were largely self-governing under the supervision of Jamaica until 1873. From 1874 until 1959, the islands were a dependency of Jamaica. The islands were under Bahamian control until the Bahamas became independent in 1973. In 1976, the Turks and Caicos Islands became a crown colony.

Independence was originally planned for 1982, but a change in government brought a reversal of that policy. The islands are still a crown colony.

MAJOR CITY

Grand Turk

Grand Turk (also known as Cockburn Town) is the main town among the islands, located on Grand Turk Island. The population of Grand Turk is about 4,000. The traditional economic activity was salt collection, but that industry ceased in 1964. Tourism and lobster fishing are the main economic activities. Offshore financial services have also become increasingly important. The main port for the Turks and Caicos Islands is at Grand Turk, and there are other ports at Salt Cay, Providenciales, and Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos. Grand Turk, South Caicos, Providenciales, and North Caicos have international airports. Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Ltd. provides national and international public telecommunications services. An Intelsat station on Grand Turk links the island to the USA, Bermuda, and the United Kingdom.

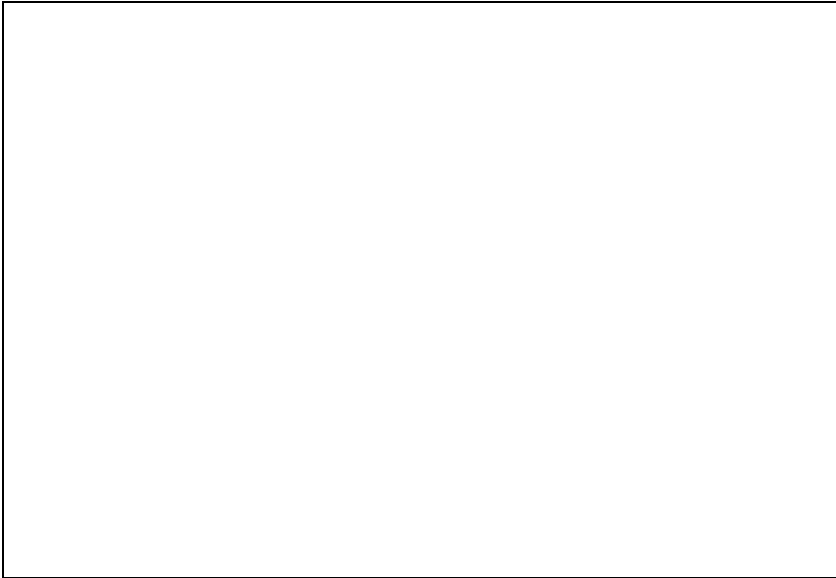
Recreation and Entertainment

The Provo Golf Club on the island of Providenciales has an 18-hole championship course. Scuba diving, snorkeling, yachting, fishing, horseback riding, tennis, and cycling are popular activities for visitors. The Turks and Caicos National Park covers 325 square miles and has 33 protected dive areas. There are organized whale-watching excursions for visitors. Grand Turk is known for its 19th-century architecture and horse carriages. There are historic windmills and salt-raking operations on nearby Salt Cay. The library in Grand Turk doubles as a museum. Its principal attraction is a display of Lucayan Indian artifacts. Churches and benevolent societies are important centers of social life throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Turks and Caicos Islands consist of two island groups separated by the Turks Island Passage, which is 22 miles across and about 7,000 feet deep. The island group consists



of 40 mostly uninhabited islands and cays. The Turks group has two inhabited islands (Grand Turk and Salt Cay), six uninhabited cays, and numerous rocks surrounded by a triangular reef. The Caicos group has six main islands (North Caicos, Middle Caicos, East Caicos, South Caicos, West Caicos, and Providenciales). The total land area of the islands is 166 square miles, or 2.5 times the size of Washington, D.C. Providenciales is the main island and has 200 miles of beaches, 200 miles of wildlife preserves, and 65 miles of coral reefs. The Turks group islands are low and flat, and surrounded by reefs and sunken coral heads. The land mass is limestone, with shallow creeks and mangrove swamps. The highest elevation is only 163 feet above sea level on Providenciales. There are limestone caves on Middle Caicos. Temperatures range from a low of 61°F to a high of 90°F, with April–November the hottest months. There are almost constant trade winds from the east. Rainfall averages 21 inches per year, and hurricanes are a frequent occurrence.

Population

The islands have a population of about 17,000, or approximately 33 persons per square mile. About half

the population lives on Grand Turk, and the other half resides primarily on South Caicos and North Caicos. Only six of the 40 islands are inhabited. Over 90% of the population is of black African descent. The remainder are of mixed, European, or North American heritage. Most islanders are Christian; the main sects are Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, and Roman Catholic. English is the official and common language spoken in the islands, interspersed with many local words and phrases.

Government

The islands experienced a great deal of autonomy under the supervision of Jamaica until 1873, and were made a dependency of Jamaica from 1874 until 1959. The Turks and Caicos were then placed under Bahamian control until the Bahamas became independent in 1973. In 1976, the islands became a crown colony. The Turks and Caicos Islands were supposed to become independent in 1982, but a change in government brought a reversal of that decision. The islands are still a crown colony. The 1976 constitution, revised in 1988, established a ministerial system in which a governor, representing the British monarch, has responsibility over external affairs, defense, and internal secu-

rity. An Executive Council consists of eight members of the Legislative Council, three nominated and five appointed by the governor. Derek H. Taylor was appointed as chief minister in January 1995 by the governor. The Legislative Council has 19 seats, of which 13 are elected. The legal system is composed of Legislative Council acts, certain laws of Britain's parliament, and a few Jamaican and Bahamian statutes. A magistrate conducts weekly hearings to administer justice.

The flag is the Blue Ensign of Great Britain with a shield of the colony in the fly; the shield is yellow with a conch, lobster, and Turk's head cactus represented in natural colors.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is provided free of charge and is compulsory for children aged 7–14. Six years of primary education are followed by five years of secondary school. There are no higher educational institutions on the islands.

Commerce and Industry

The economy is based on tourism, fishing, and offshore financial services. The US was the leading source of tourists in 1996, accounting for more than half of the 87,000 visitors; tourist arrivals had risen to 93,000 by 1998. Offshore financial services have become an increasingly important part of the islands' economy. With no direct taxation, the US dollar as the local currency, confidentiality, and a growing financial sector, there are over 10,000 offshore companies registered with the government. The Offshore Financial Center Unit was established in 1989 to promote the islands as a financial center. The government also actively tries to attract captive insurance companies from the US. An offshore registry program with the United Kingdom enables British merchant ships to register with the Turks and Caicos Islands. The pro-

gram cuts crew costs while enabling vessels to sail under the protection of the Red Ensign flag of the United Kingdom.

Transportation

The islands have about 75 miles of roads; the roads on Grand Turk and South Caicos are paved. The main seaports are Grand Turk, Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos, Providenciales, and Salt Cay. The islands have seven airports and four paved runways long enough to handle commercial jets. There are also three small unpaved landing strips on the uninhabited islands.

Communications

International telecommunications service is available through Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Ltd. There are three AM radio stations

and several cable television stations. Broadcasts are also received from the Bahamas. The *Turks and Caicos News* is a weekly newspaper published in Grand Turk.

Health

Grand Turk has a 30-bed hospital and an outpatient and dental clinic. There are 11 more outpatient and dental clinics on South, Middle, and North Caicos, Providenciales, and Salt Cay.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

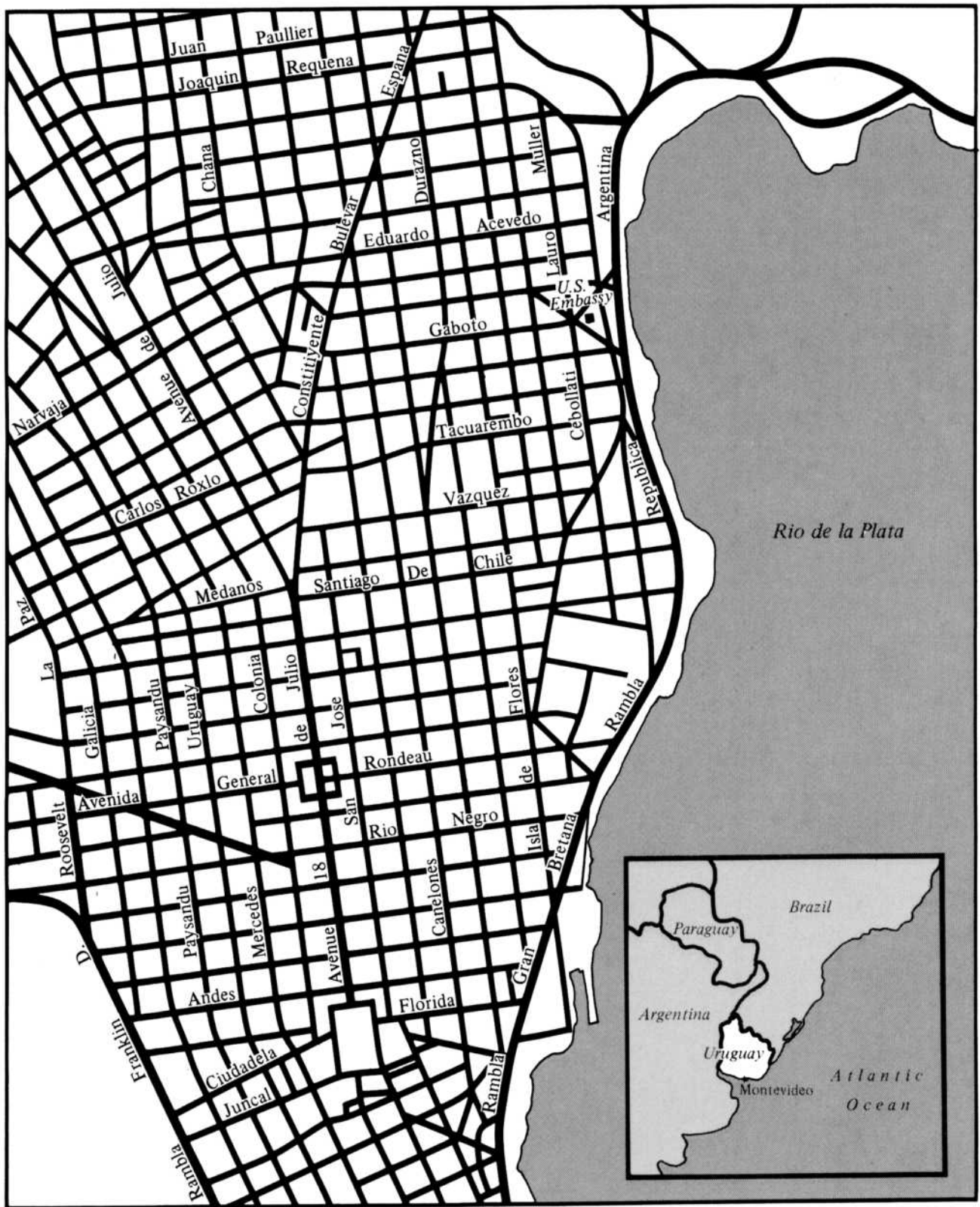
- January 1 New Year's Day
- *Good Friday
- *Easter Monday
- May *Commonwealth Day
- June *Queen's Official Birthday

- August
- (first Monday) . . . Emancipation Day
- August 30 Constitution Day
- October
- (second Monday) . Columbus Day
- October *Human Rights Day
- December 25 Christmas
- December 26 Boxing Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Boulton, Paul G. *Turks and Caicos Islands*. Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Press, 1991.



Montevideo, Uruguay

URUGUAY

Oriental Republic of Uruguay

Major City:
Montevideo

Other Cities:
Colonia del Sacramento, Fray Bentos, Minas, Paysandú,
Punta del Este, Rivera, Salto, Treinta y Tres

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Uruguay. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

A wedge of a nation tucked between Brazil and Argentina, Uruguay is the smallest and, after Ecuador, the most densely populated republic in South America.

Rolling grasslands of black, potash rich soil make raising cattle and sheep the lifeblood of the nation's economy. Also important are tourism and financial services. Montevideo, home of 45% of Uruguay's population, gears much of its industry to processing wool, meat, and hides. White-sand beaches and luxurious resorts stretch along the Atlantic shoreline, bringing Uruguay renown as a vacation playland. It has one of the highest living stan-

dards in South America and a broad program of social welfare.

A constitution provides for a republic with three autonomous branches of government. Under it, there prospers a progressive land where beef is the national dish and soccer the national game.

On the east coast of South America, south of Brazil and east of Argentina, Uruguay is comparable in size to Oklahoma. The country consists of a low, rolling plain in the south and a low plateau in the north. It has a 120-mile Atlantic shoreline, a 235-mile frontage on the Rio de la Plata, and 270 miles on the Uruguay River, its western boundary.

Prior to European settlement, Uruguay was inhabited by groups of indigenous peoples collectively known as the Charruas. The Spanish visited Uruguay in 1516, but the Portuguese were first to settle it. After a long struggle, Spain wrested the country from Portugal in 1778, by which time almost all of the indigenous people had been exterminated. Uruguay revolted against Spain in 1811, only to be conquered in 1817 by the Portuguese from Brazil. Independence was reasserted with Argentine help in 1825, and the republic was set up in 1828.

A military coup ousted the civilian government in 1973. The military dictatorship that followed used fear and terror to demoralize the population. After ruling for 12 years, the military regime permitted election of a civilian government in November 1984 and relinquished rule in March 1985; full political and civil rights were then restored.

Subsequent leaders have contended with high inflation and a mammoth national debt. Uruguay has pushed for constitutional and economic reforms aimed at reducing inflation, partially through tax increases and privatization.

MAJOR CITY

Montevideo

The southernmost capital in the hemisphere, Montevideo is the industrial, commercial, educational, and cultural center of Uruguay. It is situated on the northern shore of the estuary formed by the Uruguay and Paran Rivers, known as Rio de la Plata, 120 miles east-southeast of Buenos Aires.

Like most Latin American cities, Montevideo has the "Ciudad Vieja," (Old Quarter) characterized by nar-



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Downtown plaza in Montevideo, Uruguay

row streets and colonial buildings. There stands the city's oldest church (Basilica Metropolitana), the first city hall (Cabildo), and remnants of the original walled settlement (Ciudadela). Across the harbor rises a 435-foot hill, El Cerro, with an old fortress at its peak commanding a view of the greater part of Montevideo. It is believed the city was named after the hill—Monte Video—from "I see a hill" - uttered by a Portuguese sailor aboard a ship of one of the earliest explorers.

The old city contains much of Montevideo's commerce and banking. In the newer section are "galerias," housing many small shops under

one roof, often connecting two streets in midblock. Many wide, tree-lined avenues, along with numerous plazas and monuments, give the city a parklike atmosphere, although poor maintenance of streets and buildings detract from the city's overall beauty. Among the more attractive areas to the east are the residential suburbs of Pocitos, Punta Gorda, and Carrasco. The architectural diversity, terra cotta roofs, and ironwork balconies, and beaches make Montevideo's suburbs pleasant.

In its time, Montevideo was the pearl of Latin American cities, well planned and designed to take advantage of the riverside. The city

took pride in its architecture, boulevards, and boardwalk. The architectural tradition has been diluted with multistoried buildings, however, and is tarnished by poor maintenance and rubbish collection.

Utilities

Electrical current is 220v, 50 cycles, single phase throughout Uruguay. U.S.-made 110v, 60 cycle appliances, except for clock radios or timers, can be used with stepdown transformers.

Voltage fluctuations often occur during peak periods with occasional power failures. Battery operated radios and clocks, several flashlights, candles and a camping lantern are useful.

The telephone system functions well.

Food

Beef, the staple of the Uruguayan diet, is abundant, of good quality, and inexpensive. Pork and poultry are more expensive than in the U.S. Veal is difficult to find, and lamb (mutton) is only available at certain times of the year (August–January). Local cold-cuts are tasty and of good quality. Purchase freshly-baked bread daily. A wide variety of pastries and cookies is also available. A good selection of fish from the Rio de la Plata is often sold at reasonable prices along the river front and in local outdoor markets. Shellfish is expensive and available occasionally.

Fresh milk, cream, and milk products such as yogurt, ice cream, and cheese are one of the advantages of living here. Ice cream is good but about twice the U.S. cost. Long-life milk in cartons is also available.

Fruit and vegetables abound in season and become more available each year. Wash green leafy vegetables and fruits that are not peeled thoroughly before eating.

Many Americans enjoy buying produce and variety foods at outdoor markets (ferias) that are set up daily in different parts of the city

and dismantled in early afternoon. Most neighborhoods are served by a feria at least twice a week. Also, many permanent vegetable and fruit stands are available, some of which sell select produce and hard-to-find items. Also, some companies deliver milk, cheese, fresh bread, and pastry to your house daily.

Uruguayan supermarkets are smaller and have fewer items than in the U.S. Some supermarkets and many smaller stores stock imported foods.

Montevideo's typical restaurant is the "parillada." (A parillada has a huge grill where meat is slowly barbecued over coals of a wood fire.) The food is very good and prices are reasonable. A few restaurants offer Italian, German, Chinese, French, and Swiss cuisines. A few seafood restaurants are in Punta del Este and other coastal towns.

Rarely do restaurants open before 8 p.m. Because of the late dinner hour, tea is fashionable in Uruguay. Several tea shops offer a variety of sandwiches and pastries. Also many snack shops and sidewalk cafes are open throughout the day and into the night. These serve pizza, "chivitos" (the delicious Uruguayan variation of a steak sandwich), and other foods from snacks to full meals. The atmosphere is informal. A McDonald's has recently opened restaurants in Montevideo, Atlántida, and Punta del Este. Pizza Hut, Burger King, and Subway are also present in Montevideo.

Clothing

Clothing needed in Uruguay is similar to clothing worn during equivalent U.S. seasons.

Men: Local tastes in menswear are like those in the U.S. and Western Europe. Office and commercial workers wear suits and ties year round. For informal occasions, Uruguayans follow the latest fashions in sportswear. Shirts are available in common neck and sleeve lengths. Topcoats, heavy sweaters, scarves, and hats are worn in winter. Most foreign residents limit their pur-

chases of local menswear to wool sweaters, leather jackets, and high quality fabrics that they have made into custom-tailored suits (at reasonable prices).

Although quality varies considerably, shoes are available in most sizes at higher-than-U.S. prices. Those with narrow feet will have difficulty finding shoes. Uruguay's export lines are not available on the local market.

Women: Clothing for women in Montevideo is surprisingly fashionable and similar to that worn in the U.S. and Western Europe. Currently, short or cocktail length dresses are being worn for dinners, parties, and receptions. Suits, jackets with skirts and blouses, or dresses are appropriate office wear as well as for luncheons or teas. Casual outfits are needed for asados. No restrictions on the use of pants or shorts exist. Hats are rarely worn.

Warm clothes are needed in winter. Include some wool garments against the penetrating damp cold of Montevideo (indoors and out). As Montevideo's social life is much more active in fall, winter, and spring (March–November) than in summer, you will need a number of dressy, but warm outfits. Summer days can be humid and air-conditioning is rare so cotton, cotton blends, and rayon fabrics are suitable.

A variety of ready-made women's clothing is available locally; prices are higher than in the U.S. Some export-quality wool clothing is available locally. Quality knitwear is available; prices on wool and orlon products are reasonable. Quality hosiery and undergarments are expensive; selection is limited. Leather, suede, otter, fox, and nutria coats are available in many styles at popular prices.

A limited selection of apparel fabrics is available but very expensive. Good jewelry, especially amethyst and topaz, is available at reasonable prices.

Children: Ready-made clothing is attractive, but with the exception of knitwear, expensive, wears out quickly, and is difficult to clean.

All Uruguayan school children wear uniforms that must be purchased locally. The Uruguayan-American School does not require uniforms. The British, Scottish, and Italian schools, which are open to Americans, do require uniforms.

Jackets and coats for children are available at higher-than-U.S. prices. Children's shoes, including tennis shoes, are attractive and expensive, but not durable. Corrective shoes may be satisfactorily custom made here.

Infant wear in local stores is almost entirely wool or orlon knit; few terry-cloth suits are available. Under-shirts, polo shirts, and overalls are found, but prices are high and styles are not practical. Infant shoes are readily available.

Teenage clothing is limited and expensive.

Supplies and Services

Prescription drugs are generally available. Bring a supply of nonprescription medicines with you, including, but not limited to, acetaminophen, aspirin, antacids, and cold medicines.

Bring cosmetics, home perms, nail polish, and hair coloring from the U.S. Paper products such as toilet paper, tissues, sanitary products, and paper towels are sold locally, but are of poor quality and expensive.

Cameras cost two to three times U.S. prices. Most types of film can be purchased and developed locally at high prices. Families find film ordered and developed through U.S. film mail-order companies satisfactory.

Children's toys are very expensive. Those not imported from the U.S. seldom meet American safety standards. Bring toys for your children and for gifts. Also bring lunch boxes,

book bags, and school supplies for schoolchildren.

Most household appliances can be repaired locally but not always quickly or cheaply, especially if new parts are needed. TV service is good. Watch repair is of good quality. Shoe repairs are done quickly. Auto maintenance is adequate and reasonable, but spare parts are expensive and sometimes difficult to obtain. Bodywork is done well at reasonable prices.

Both beauty shops and barbershops are good. Adequate dry cleaning is available, but expensive; dry cleaning service is available through the commissary.

Diaper services are nonexistent. Laundry is normally done at home. Laundry service is Laundromat style: clothing is washed and pressed. Iron-on mending tape is useful to repair clothes and is available here.

Domestic Help

It is easier to find daily or part-time, rather than live-in, domestic help. Domestic help is relatively expensive. A few families with small children have a live-in servant. Other families and single people hire a daily housekeeper, part-time cleaning woman, or housekeeper/cook. It is easy to find someone to prepare party food, and good waiters are reasonable.

Employer obligations regarding time off, vacation, year-end bonus, severance pay, social benefits, etc., tied to regularly rising salaries, have sharply increased costs for domestic help.

Religious Activities

Montevideo has four churches that have English-language services: Christian Brothers (Roman Catholic), Christ Church (interdenominational Protestant), the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity (Episcopal), and the Church of Christ Science. Many other Christian sects are represented, holding services in Spanish.



Skyline of Montevideo, Uruguay

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With a fairly large Jewish population, Montevideo also has two synagogues, one conservative congregation and the other, orthodox.

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints also holds weekly sacrament meetings in Spanish. There are approximately 55,000 church members and 365 missionaries throughout the country.

Education

Uruguay has free public education from kindergarten through university. Many private and parochial schools also exist. Instruction is in Spanish, and private schools that do not provide instruction in Spanish must offer it as a second language. The local school year runs from March to mid December, with a mid-term vacation in June/July and a spring vacation in September. Montevideo's public schools, some of which offer good education and excellent facilities, are generally overcrowded and work on two or three shifts, 5-6 days a week. The private British and St. Andrew's Schools and a Christian school also offer instruction in English.

The Uruguayan-American School (UAS), founded in 1958, moved to its Carrasco location in 1978. It ful-

fills the requirements of an American school abroad. Sufficient classroom space is available in three separate buildings located on a spacious campus. The school offers food service (optional), and bus transportation can be arranged.

UAS provides classes in English from nursery school through grade 12. The school uses an American curriculum, methodology, textbooks, and American or bilingual teachers. All classes are coeducational. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school capitalizes on its overseas location to provide instruction in Spanish as well as other regional studies for U.S. and international students.

The student body numbers about 160, of which 60% is American; 20% Uruguayan; and the remainder come from various countries. The small high-school student population (50-65 students) does not enable the school to provide many extracurricular activities. Classes in art, music, computer science, and physical education are included in the curriculum. However, because of its size, the school offers limited electives/materials and sports facilities. The school has an 8,000-volume library and offers complete counseling services.

The school's first semester runs from early August through December, followed by a 10-week summer vacation. The second semester starts in late February and ends late June. UAS is the official testing center in Uruguay for the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the American College Test.

The British School is coeducational for kindergarten through grade 12. Located in a large attractive complex in Carrasco, the student population is primarily Uruguayan, with some British and a few Americans. It uses a British curriculum, but American history and government are also taught. American children accustomed to the American system may have difficulty adjusting to the British system, particularly in adjusting to the different way of teaching mathematics. However, the school offers excellent sports.

Coeducational St. Andrew's (Scottish) School has students from kindergarten through grade 8. Located in Pocitos, with adequate play facilities, it uses a U.K. curriculum.

The British School and St. Andrew's School have first semester from March to June and second semester from late July to early December.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the Republic and the Catholic University of the Republic Damaso Antonio Larrañaga, both located in Montevideo, are the country's only universities. Instruction at the University of the Republic is free and facilities are open to all foreign residents. However, courses seldom are transferable for credit at U.S. colleges and universities. Uruguay does have the University of Maryland, European Division. All courses are taught in English, and the professors are local, American, and British.

Sports

Uruguay's national pastime is soccer, locally called football (futbol). Teams enjoy fanatical support, especially the rivalry between the two best clubs, Nacional and Pe

arol. Montevideo's Centenario Stadium holds about 70,000 people and games are frequent. Tickets are reasonably priced.

Five-a-side soccer is currently the most popular sport among Uruguayans. Uruguayans and Americans alike can participate in informal league play.

Swimming is popular and enjoyed 4 to 5 months every year. Uruguay's beaches extend from Montevideo to the Brazilian border. The river and beach front in Montevideo are polluted and unsafe for swimming. Bathing and surfing is possible beyond Atlantida (28 miles east of Montevideo). Several private clubs with swimming pools are available in Montevideo.

Tennis is popular and some municipal courts are available. Several private clubs offer membership with reasonable entrance fees and monthly dues.

Golfers will find two challenging 18-hole courses in Montevideo. The Golf Club of Uruguay has a beautiful course in Punta Carretas, a residential area bordering the Rio de la Plata. Facilities include a large dining room, snack bar, swimming pool, and tennis and paddleball courts.

The Cerro Golf Club is across the bay from the downtown area, about 40 minutes by car. Less crowded than Punta Carretas, neither is crowded in the U.S. sense. The Cerro Golf Club offers light luncheons and its bar/gameroom is open Wednesday afternoons, weekends, and national holidays.

Riding is also popular. The Hipico and the Polo Club (which also has two tennis courts and a large swimming pool) offer all facilities needed for the care and maintenance of horses. Fees for horse rentals, including jumpers, are reasonable.

Horse racing is a popular diversion, and Montevideo has a good track in the northern part of the city. Bullfighting and cockfighting, popular

in many Latin American countries, were outlawed here many years ago.

Montevideo has three sailing clubs: Montevideo Yacht Club, Nautilus Yacht Club, and Montevideo Rowing Club. The Montevideo Yacht Club has several Marconi-rigged fin keelboats for members. Water sports other than swimming are just beginning to develop in Montevideo. Water skiing, surfing, and sailboarding are popular in Punta del Este.

Uruguay offers good freshwater fishing in the interior and surfcasting along the coast. The Rio Negro is famous for its large dorado, an excellent game fish. The best fishing is in Punta del Este where weakfish, blackdrum, and bluefish are most often caught. Boat rentals are expensive, particularly during summer. Bring your own tackle for shoreline and freshwater angling.

Good hunting is available within a relatively short drive of the city. Partridge, plover, dove, pigeon, and duck are among the game birds available. A permit and permission from the property owner to hunt on private property are required. Guns and ammunition are available in Montevideo, but at very high prices.

Almost all sporting equipment available in Montevideo is imported and expensive. Tennis balls are especially expensive. Bicycles are popular with both children and adults. Bicycles sold here are expensive.

Paddleball is the new rage. Squash courts are available through several inexpensive clubs. Racquetball is relatively new to Montevideo, though two clubs have opened with several courts.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Montevideo has a number of historic sites that are worth visiting, including the Cabildo (city hall) and El Cerro fortress. A planetarium offers scheduled shows.

The city has several parks and plazas, many with play facilities, and a botanical garden. The Legislative Palace boasts 47 kinds of native marble and is interesting to visit when either house is in session. A short drive into the country will take you into cattle and sheep country, land of the Uruguayan gaucho. Traffic in the interior is usually light and a Sunday drive can be relaxing.

Uruguay is unique in South America in that practically any point of the country is within a day's drive of the capital. Popular tourist attractions are the resort towns of Atlantida, Piriapolis, and Punta del Este. Beyond Punta del Este are many worthwhile sights on the way to the Brazilian border. Punta del Este's popularity with wealthy Argentines and Brazilians has pushed prices well past an official American's normal budget.

The town of Colonia, founded by the Portuguese in 1680, lies 100 miles west of Montevideo along the coast, and has several museums and restored 17th-century colonial buildings. Colonia is 1 hour from Buenos Aires by hydrofoil.

The city of Minas is 78 miles north of Montevideo in the interior. Known for its quarries of high-grade marble and mineral water springs, its lakes and hills present a change from the seaside. The pleasant interior towns of Salto and Paysandu, located along the Uruguay River, can also be reached in less than a day's drive. The Termas (hot springs) del Arapey, especially nice in winter, are less than 30 miles from Salto.

To the north, on the Brazilian border, are the towns of Rivera and Artigas. Located in the area between these cities are geological fields where amethyst and topaz are found. The Brazilian border town of Chuy, just 140 miles northeast of Punta del Este, offers a popular duty-free shopping area. Brazilian coffee and other consumer goods are available at advantageous prices. Also near the border are two

restored old forts, Santa Teresa and San Miguel, and the lovely small beach resort of La Coronilla. Near both forts are charming government-run inns (paradores), which are worth an overnight stay or even an extended vacation. Comfortable, reasonably priced hotels and several good restaurants are also in the area.

Brazil, Argentina, and Chile offer a multitude of tourist attractions. One of the most popular is Iguazu Falls, which most travelers consider a must. You can reach this series of unharnessed falls on the Brazilian-Paraguayan-Argentine border by automobile, bus, or air.

Entertainment

Montevideo has many movie theaters showing recent American and European films. Movies in English have Spanish subtitles. Admission prices are comparable to the U.S.

Montevideo has two casinos, the Parque Casino and the Carrasco Casino. Another is in Atlantida, a half-hour drive from Carrasco. No nightclubs exist; however, some restaurants with floor shows and a few lively late hour discotheques are available for teenagers and the twenties crowd.

Social Activities

The American Association holds monthly luncheon meetings. Membership enables you to meet Americans and Uruguayans representing business interests and other organizations in Uruguay. The association sponsors an annual golf tournament.

The American Women's Club is an active community service and social group composed principally of the spouses of Americans in Montevideo. The club holds monthly meetings at its Carrasco clubhouse, except during summer. Among its activities are a thrift shop, which sells used articles to raise funds for charity, and a number of social events.

Both the Lions and the Rotarians welcome Americans as guests or

members of their numerous Montevideo chapters.

Membership in a tennis, golf, or yacht club can be another excellent way of meeting people.

An English-language Cub Scout pack operates at the Uruguayan-American School, and scouting is also widespread among Uruguayans. Spanish-speaking Boy Scout troops meet at the British School.

Private entertaining usually takes the form of luncheons, cocktail parties, coffees, teas, buffet suppers, and small dinner parties. Uruguayans are open to social contacts, and representational activities are frequent.

OTHER CITIES

COLONIA DEL SACRAMENTO (also called Colonia), about 80 miles west of Montevideo in the far southwest, is Uruguay's most colonial-flavored city. Situated on the Río Plata across from Buenos Aires, Argentina, it was settled by the Portuguese in the late 17th century, and later by the Spanish. Tourism plays a big role in the local economy, and sites such as the parochial church, museum, viceroy's mansion, and lighthouse, are favorites. The ruins of the city's bullring, visited by throngs of Argentines until bullfighting was outlawed in the 1930s, can be viewed. Colonia del Sacramento serves as a commercial and manufacturing center for adjacent hinterlands. Its location makes it an important border crossing and trade zone. Connections to Buenos Aires are available via hydrofoil, ferry, and airplane. Travel to Montevideo is possible via highway and railway. Uruguay's main agricultural research center and a dairy industry school are located here. Colonia del Sacramento has roughly 17,000 residents.

FRAY BENTOS houses the largest meat packing plant in a country that once outstripped Argentina in beef exports. Situated in the south-

west about 160 miles northwest of Montevideo, the city is the capital of Río Negro Department. In 1969, the Puerto Unzué bridge was constructed in Fray Bentos. This bridge has greatly facilitated trade between Uruguay and Argentina. Fray Bentos was founded in 1859 as Independencia, but later was renamed for a religious hermit who lived nearby. It has a population of about 20,000.

MINAS is a mining city of about 35,000, situated in thickly forested hills 75 miles north of Montevideo. Its name, meaning “mines” in Spanish, was given in recognition of the nearby marble and granite deposits which support this picturesque spot. Juan Antonio Lavalleja (1786-1853), a leader of Uruguayan independence, was born here. He directed the *Treinta y Tres*, or “Thirty-Three Immortals,” who declared the country’s independence from Brazil in 1825 under the motto “liberty or death.” After three years of war, a British-mediated treaty confirmed Uruguay’s status as a sovereign state. The thirty-three revolutionaries, meanwhile, became politicians. Lavalleja’s equestrian statue has a prominent place. Considered interesting for the visitor are the church, nearby caves, and the local park—Parque Salus. The Cascada de Agua del Penitente waterfall also is a local attraction. The city is noted for its bottled mineral waters.

PAYSANDÚ, an often-used crossing point to Argentina on the Río Uruguay, gives the visitor a sense of history with its major attractions. The cathedral has cannonballs still embedded in its walls from the 1865 War of the Triple Alliance, when Paraguayans briefly held the town. In the next building is a museum in the Silesian college. Paysandú features several budget hotels, and a local tourist information office. Many industries are located in Paysandú, among them tanneries, breweries, distilleries, flour mills, meat processing plants, and textile factories. The city is a busy port through which goods are shipped to northwestern Uruguay. This

departmental capital has a population of about 75,000.

PUNTA DEL ESTE has emerged as one of South America’s most popular resort and conference centers. Located about 70 miles due east of Montevideo on the Atlantic coast, the city hosted several important political conferences in the 1960s, including the 1961 meeting which proclaimed the Alliance for Progress and a 1967 meeting of the presidents of the American republics. Foreigners, principally Argentines, Brazilians, and Chileans, vacation here regularly, visiting the many restaurants, casinos, and recreational facilities. Fishing is a popular pastime. Punta del Este, linked to Montevideo by a major road, has a population of over 10,000.

RIVERA is a city of 57,000 people on the Brazilian frontier, about 270 miles north of Montevideo. A street separates it from the Brazilian city of Santa Ana do Livramento. Rivera serves as capital of Rivera Department, as well as being the largest Uruguayan city on the border. Nearby are the Cuchilla de Santa Ana Mountains and livestock-growing regions. The city is home to several industries which manufacture mosaics, brooms, cigars and cigarettes, and textiles. Rivera is a trading center for the fruits, grains, and vegetables grown in the region. There is a local airport and good road connections.

SALTO is the last of the major population centers to be found when traveling up the Río Uruguay. The capital of Salto Department in the northwestern part of the country, it is a city of about 77,000, known as a rail and shipping center for agricultural products and livestock.

It is situated in the midst of a large area of vineyards and citrus orchards. The vineyards near Salto are considered the best in Uruguay. Many of these vineyards produce tomatoes, corn, wheat, and strawberries. For many years, a boat-building industry has operated here. Meat processing and wine production are also important indus-

tries. Salto lies opposite Concordia, Argentina. Salto is linked by rail, river, highway, and air services with Montevideo.

TREINTA Y TRES lies 150 miles northeast of Montevideo, near the Olivar River. This departmental capital takes its name from the *Treinta y Tres*, or “Thirty-Three Immortals,” who led the successful revolt for independence from Brazil in 1825. The city’s approximately 26,000 residents enjoy the Quebrada de los Cuervos National Park about 25 miles outside of town.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

La Republica Oriental del Uruguay (the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, or literally translated, the Republic East of the River Uruguay) covers an area of 72,200 square miles, slightly larger than North Dakota.

Topographically, the country is divided into three parts. The southern area is a belt of gently undulating alluvial plains; the western part, an extension of Argentina’s flat pampas; and the northern area, an extension of southern Brazil’s low regions and broad valleys. Maximum elevation above sea level is about 2,000 feet; the average being about 490 feet. Few natural forests exist, but extensive forestation has been undertaken.

Except for a small subtropical area in the northwest, the climate is even throughout Uruguay. Temperatures are generally mild but seasons are distinct: summer daytime temperatures average 70°F and rarely exceed the mid-90s; autumn (March–May) is mild; and spring (September–November) is often damp, cold, and windy. In winter, monthly temperatures range from 44°F to 60°F with occasional frost, although humidity, averaging 75 percent year round, intensifies the

cold. Average annual rainfall is 39.5 inches.

Population

Uruguay's population (2.97 million) is composed primarily of Spanish and Italian ancestry. The native Indians were killed or forced to migrate during colonization in the last century. Some 4 percent of the population is of African descent, mostly Brazilian immigrants. Small colonies of German, East European, Armenian, and British citizens also live here. Most of the elderly "anglos," who speak English as their primary language, are second and third generation dual-nationals whose ancestors came in the last century to work in the many British-founded companies. A small colony of Swiss lives in an area called Colonia Suiza located about 100 miles west of Montevideo. The various languages of their former country are still spoken and they retain the customs of their forebears as well.

About 45 percent of Uruguay's total population lives in Montevideo. Salto and Paysandu, with about 100,000 inhabitants each, vie for the honor of being the second largest city. Several other cities are in the 25,000–40,000 population range. Uruguay does not share Latin America's concern with the population explosion; a low birth rate and emigration result in an annual growth rate of less than 1 percent. Families are small and close.

Life expectancy in Uruguay is 70 years and the literacy rate is about 94 percent, the highest in Latin America. Spanish is the official language. Religion does not play a dominant role in the lives of Uruguayans, many of whom classify themselves as agnostics. Roman Catholicism is the predominant faith but many are Protestants. Montevideo has a relatively large Jewish and Mormon communities as well.

Public Institutions

Traditionally one of the strongest democracies in Latin America, Uruguay, in the early 1970s, experienced a gradual transfer of power to the Uruguayan military because of the government's inability to cope with a violent leftist urban guerrilla group, known as the Tupamaros. The process culminated in the dissolution of parliament in 1973 and the ouster of the elected President in 1976. Civilian, democratic rule returned to Uruguay on March 1, 1985, after the military agreed to hold parliamentary and presidential elections in November 1984. The military banned several leading politicians from participating in the 1984 elections, a proscription that was removed by the new civilian government before the 1989 elections. National elections were held without incident in 1989, 1994 and 1999.

Uruguay's constitution, adopted in 1967 and partially suspended during military rule, provides for a republic with three autonomous branches of government. The President and vice-president, elected by popular vote, serve a single 5-year term but can be reelected after an interval of 5 years. They are assisted by a cabinet, made up of 12 ministers and the heads of various state entities, appointed by the President.

The legislative branch consists of two houses, a Senate (30 members) elected at large, and a Chamber of Deputies (99 members) elected proportionally from the 19 provinces (departamentos). Although each province has at least two deputies, most come from Montevideo, where about 45 percent of the country's population resides. It takes a two-thirds vote of Parliament to overturn vetoes or remove executive branch officials. In special cases, such as national crises, Parliament can also be called into session as a unicameral General Assembly.

The judicial branch consists of a five-person Supreme Court, whose primary duties are interpreting the

Constitution and dealing with claims against the government. Appeals courts, criminal courts, and justices of the peace deal with other matters of law. Supreme Court justices are appointed by the President and must retire at age 70. Special courts oversee the election process, audit government departments, and arbitrate appeals against administrative acts.

Uruguay's 19 departments (provinces) are organized similarly to the national government. An "intendente," or departmental governor, is elected by popular vote and is assisted by a departmental council or "junta departamental," chosen on a proportional basis. Montevideo, the capital city, is treated as a one of the 19 departments and has a similar governmental structure.

The major political parties, the National ("Blanco") and Colorado parties, in the past embraced about 90 percent of the electorate. The two parties have seen their share of the vote decline to approximately 65 percent of the electorate. The "Broad Front" a coalition of the Communist Party, Socialist Party, and various leftist factions, is now a major force in Uruguayan politics. A fourth political force, the New Space Coalition, is a social democratic grouping that consists primarily of two social democratic parties that split from the Broad Front in 1989.

Uruguayan politics value consensus and compromise over confrontation. The Colorado and Blanco parties share the administration of the independent state enterprises, and political agreements to split Cabinet posts are not uncommon. Almost all politicians pride themselves on their refusal to let ideological differences result in personal animosity.

Arts, Science, and Education

Montevideo is the cultural center of the country and activities are varied and continuous. Most, however, occur during the school year,

March–November. Cultural mainstays are the S.O.D.R.E. (Servicio Oficial de Difusion Radiotelevision y Espectaculos), the official government radio and television network; the Intendencia Municipal; and the Centro Cultural de Musica, a local nonprofit organization that organizes international events.

S.O.D.R.E. offers a 15–18 week symphony season featuring Uruguayan and internationally famous conductors and performers. Concerts are broadcast on the government TV channel. Short opera and ballet seasons usually follow the symphony season. Since the S.O.D.R.E. theater was destroyed by fire in 1971, most of its programs are held at the Sala Brunet, a smaller hall, which has recently been refurbished. S.O.D.R.E. also sponsors events at the Teatro Solis (1,300 seats). SODRE is building a new cultural center that should be completed soon.

The Centro Cultural de Musica offers 8 to 10 cultural events during the year. Tickets for season and individual performances are less expensive than in the U.S. Expect to wait in line overnight when the season subscriptions go on sale. Except for extraordinary occasions, all events take place at the Teatro Solis.

The Intendencia Municipal sponsors the Comedia Nacional, the national repertory company, which plays at the Teatro Solis and Sala Verdi. In addition, the municipal government has a popular and varied program of cultural activities. For instance, the municipal symphony (Orquesta Filarmonica de Montevideo) repeats its weekly Teatro Solis concerts in different neighborhoods and all programs are free.

Other theaters presenting professional productions are the Teatro Circular, El Galpon, Teatro del Centro, and the Teatro del Notariado. The Montevideo Players, an amateur acting society with English and American participants, produces two or three plays a year in English.

The U.S. established binational center, known as the Alianza Cultural Uruguay-Estados Unidos de America is a large complex in downtown Montevideo. It houses an English teaching center (over 4,000 students), one of the city's most prestigious galleries, and one of its most sought after theater spaces. The Biblioteca Artigas-Washington, a USIS library, is located in the same complex and is considered to be the most up-to-date library in the country. The Alianza encourages Americans to participate in all of its programs and invites licensed English teachers to join the teaching staff.

Public education in Uruguay is free through the university level, and many people receive advanced degrees in numerous disciplines. Since 1985, a number of private, fee-charging universities have also begun operating. In 1993, the University of Maryland began offering courses at Alianza.

Commerce and Industry

Uruguay's economy is based on services (mostly tourism and financial services), along with exploitation of renewable natural resources and related industries. Natural-resources exploitation and related activities benefit from Uruguay's level terrain, temperate climate, abundant rainfall, and natural pastures. Although Uruguay exported mainly cattle hides during colonial times, the principal export products have been beef and wool for more than a century, and Uruguay has developed such additional exports as textiles, garments, shoes, and rice.

In the last decade, the most dynamic sectors of the economy have been transport and communications, construction, commerce, and tourism; industry and financial services have the lowest growth rates. Although Uruguay has no-known hydrocarbon deposits, it is generously endowed with hydroelectric resources, now mostly devel-

oped. Electric production from the world's fourth largest hydroelectric complex, at Salto Grande (a joint venture with Argentina), began in late 1979. Social indicators place Uruguay among Latin America's most advanced countries. Uruguay has long had one of the highest literacy rates in Latin America, and the income distribution is much more equitable than in most Latin American countries. Between 1990 and 1994, urban poverty was reduced by 50% to only 6%, the lowest in Latin America (Latin American average is 40%). Moreover, Uruguay's income distribution resembles that of industrialized countries; a per capita income of US\$6,000 places it among the upper middle income bracket in the World Bank classification. However, despite good social indicators, unemployment has been slightly lower - 10% in recent years. During the 1950s, with good export performance from farm and cattle products fueled by World War II and the Korean war, Uruguay provided incomes that were among the highest in Latin America, gaining the nickname "The South American Switzerland." However, as in many Latin American countries, Uruguay shifted its economic interests inward in the early 1960s, following an import-substitution model. For the next decade, Uruguay shut its doors to the world, protecting its industries with high import tariffs. Results were disastrous; export growth was low, inflation was high and volatile, and productivity performance and GDP growth were substandard. At the same time, with the creation of the European Economic Community which cut off traditional agricultural markets in Europe, Uruguay's agricultural sector suffered a serious setback. General stagflation ensued. These factors contributed to political instability during the 1960s and early 1970s.

In the early 1970s, the government adopted a program of gradual economic liberalization, loosened control over the economy, reduced public sector employment, and opened the economy to international trade. Exports of processed

items, including leather goods, foods, textiles, fish, marble, and granite, surged. By 1981, the dollar value of Uruguay's exports had more than doubled from their worth a few years earlier.

Even before the advent of global recession in the early 1980s, the Uruguayan economy suffered from an artificially high fiscal exchange rate and chronic public sector deficits. To finance its deficit and to maintain the exchange rate, and because of readily available international funds, the government borrowed heavily from abroad. By 1982, the total external debt was more than three times the amount at the end of 1978. Global recession compounded Uruguay's woes as exports and investment inflows declined and capital flight accelerated.

In November 1982, with the country well into a serious recession, the fixed-exchange rate was abandoned, and the peso was devalued almost 100% from 14 to 28 pesos per US\$. The GDP declined by 9.4% in 1982, 5% in 1983, and a further 1.8% in 1984. Unemployment peaked at more than 16% in 1983.

However, since 1985, Uruguay's growth trend has recovered. It has maintained an open-capital account in that interest rates are market determined, and there are neither price controls nor restraints on currency exchange. Between 1985 and 1990, the average annual growth was 3.4%; it reached 4% between 1991 and 1996. The GDP in 1999 was about \$21 billion, and most estimates indicate that Uruguay will continue to have annual growth unless external shocks arise.

The LaCalle and Sanguinetti administrations affirmed Uruguay's commitment to the economic liberalization process, which had begun in the 1970s. Furthermore, they have implemented some important structural reforms. First, the social security system was modified to convert the highly deficit-ridden public system into a mixed system of both public and private providers;

combined with laws passed on capital market and investment funds, this change should stimulate capital market operations and national savings. Second, educational reforms in progress are expected to have a positive impact on future human capital. Despite the setback of privatization by a 1992 referendum, private-sector access to previously state owned activities continues. Controlled by moderate and left-of-center parties, respectively, both the national and the Montevideo state governments encourage the private sector's growing economic role.

Managed by the government, the Uruguayan exchange system is based on a band inside, within which the exchange rate can float. As of December 1990, the estimated rate was 11.7 pesos to the dollar. The annual inflation rate has steadily declined for the past 6 years, decreasing from 130% in 1990 to about 4% in 1999.

Uruguay is a member of Mercosur, a regional common market, with Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. Argentina is Uruguay's largest trading partner, followed by Brazil, the U.S., and Germany. With Mercosur integration into the economies, duties among Mercosur's members were exchanged for a common external tariff applying to most products. Chile and Bolivia are associate members of Mercosur in that they do not belong to the Common Market, but rather, to the free trade area; negotiations with other countries are being held.

Transportation

Automobiles

Roads in and around the capital are fair-to-poor with many potholes. Many streets are poorly identified and illuminated. Intercity highways are well maintained and generally excellent, but the all weather aspect of some of these roads requires caution. More traveled routes, such as the highway between Punta del Este and Montevideo, have service

stations, tow trucks, and other facilities.

Gasoline is sold by a government company, ANCAP, as well as by ESSO, Texaco, Shell, and other international oil companies. The better grade of gas is of lower octane than that used in the U.S., but American cars operate adequately with it. Moderate detergent oil is used.

Local

Bus service is cheap and extensive within Montevideo. Taxis are readily available at reasonable fares.

Intercity bus service, the most popular transportation method, is frequent to most parts of the interior. Modern buses, including sleepers, connect Montevideo with Brazil and Argentina. Bus tickets are cheaper than in the U.S.

Regional

Several international airlines fly from Uruguay to other parts of Latin America, North America, and Europe. Many international flights board in Buenos Aires, only 25 minutes by air from Montevideo, but some flights require a wait of several hours and an expensive and time-consuming change of airports. Pluna, the government-operated airline, and others offer flights to Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Brazil.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The telephone network works reasonably well. Cellular phones are available in Montevideo and Punta del Este. Telephone connections outside Uruguay, especially to the U.S., are good but very expensive. English-speaking, long distance operators are usually on duty.

USA Direct service through MCI, AT&T, and Sprint is available and much less expensive than regular international operator-assisted calls to the U.S. Telegraph and fax facilities connecting Montevideo with

North America and Europe are good but expensive.

Radio and TV

Montevideo has some 35 radio stations including 12 FM. Radio programming consists of music, news programs, and soap operas. The tango, the music of the Rio de la Plata area, is heard on many stations, but modern rock from the U.S., Brazil, and Europe is more popular.

Shortwave reception is quite good in Montevideo, outside the downtown area. Listeners can pick up VOA, BBC, and the Armed Forces Radio Service. The best reception is from 8 p.m. to midnight. Uruguay has four TV stations that offer color TV transmission, and five cable channels provide additional programming. American TV's can be used here but will receive only black-and-white images unless they are converted to the PAL-N color system.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Newspapers, as well as several weekly papers, are published in Montevideo. The Buenos Aires Herald, an English-language daily, is expensive.

Time and Newsweek are regularly available. Some technical journals from the U.S. and Europe are sold in two or three bookshops specializing in foreign literature. Many bookstores sell paperbacks in English.

The Artigas-Washington Library at the Uruguayan-American Alianza is colorful, attractive, and modern. In addition to a selection of about 12,000 books in both English and Spanish, it provides members with an extensive audiovisual section, which includes audio cassettes, tapes, records, video tapes, and films, plus a broad selection of U.S. magazines and journals.

Health and Medicine

Community Health

Montevideo experiences few health problems. In rural Uruguay where livestock is raised, hydatid disease (echinococcosis) can be contracted by humans via food contaminated with dog feces. Avoid contact with strange dogs anywhere in South America. Other intestinal parasites and worms are uncommon in Uruguay.

Hepatitis A occurs occasionally in Montevideo. Have gamma globulin injections every 4-6 months or get the Hepatitis A vaccine.

Montevideo has four seasons. Spring and summer are very pleasant. Winter is cold, wet, and windy; hence, frequent colds and sore throats occur. Upper respiratory tract allergies and lower tract allergies may be aggravated.

Tap water is safe to drink in Montevideo and in most urban areas; it does not have to be filtered or boiled. Occasional breaks in the city water lines do occur. Since the water is low in fluoride, children under age 12 should take fluoride supplements.

Montevideo is located on the River Plate, and there are beaches along the river from the city to the Atlantic Ocean, about 45 miles up the coast. Beaches within the city limits are polluted. Most sports clubs have swimming pools that are usually well cared for and safe.

Except for seasonal mosquitoes, few insects are of concern in Montevideo. Parents should caution children against touching the "bicho peludo" (green or black hairy caterpillar) which inhabits gardens, trees, and plants. This caterpillar may be poisonous, causing an allergic skin reaction when touched.

Good dental care is available in the city of Montevideo and currently costs about one-third less than in the U.S.

Most Uruguayan doctors are graduates of the local medical school, although many have received further training in the U.S. and in countries in Europe. Many speak English.

Well-trained, qualified nurses usually have attended at least 3 years of nursing school. Nurses aides, who have on-the-job training, handle most of the floor duty. Hospitals. The British Hospital is adequate for routine medical care. Advanced procedures may involve medical evacuation to the U.S. Pharmacies. Most drugs, except tranquilizers and stimulants, certain antibiotics, hormones, and cardiac drugs are available without a prescription. One can usually find American drugs or good-quality equivalents. Bring special prescriptions from the U.S.

Thousands of babies are born each year in Montevideo without incident. Because of adequate hospital care and facilities, Uruguay has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the Hemisphere. State Department policy, however, now recommends medical evacuation to Miami, Florida, for labor and delivery.

In an emergency, call the Servicio de Emergencia Medico Movil (SEMM). This service dispatches an ambulance and physician to anywhere within the limits of Montevideo. Their care extends to accident victims as well as to people with chronic illnesses.

The British Hospital has an emergency room.

For children: Vaccines standard in the U.S. are recommended for Uruguay.

Adults: The only recommended immunization is tetanus-diphtheria (every 10 years). Yellow fever, typhoid, and cholera vaccines are neither required nor recommended. Adults born after 1956 may need a measles vaccination. Although not absolutely necessary, Hepatitis A and B vaccinations should be considered.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Carrasco Airport is about 13 miles from downtown Montevideo. The airport building has a currency exchange booth that is open during business hours only. The port where oceangoing vessels dock is near downtown Montevideo, just a few minutes from the better hotels.

A passport is required. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a visit of less than three months. For further information on entry requirements, contact the Embassy of Uruguay at 2715 M Street, N.W. Third Floor, Washington, D.C. 20007, tel. (202) 331-1313; E-mail: uruwashi@iamdigex.net; Embassy home page: <http://www.embassy.org/uruguay/>. Travelers may also contact the Consulate of Uruguay or the Honorary Consul in: Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Reno, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, San Juan, Puerto Rico or Seattle.

Americans living in or visiting Uruguay are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Montevideo and obtain updated information on travel and security within Uruguay. The U.S. Embassy is located at Lauro Muller 1776; telephone (598)(2) 408-7777; fax (598)(2)408-4110 or -8611. Internet: <http://www.embeeuu.gub.uy/>. Consular Section hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pets

Pets with a certificate of good health may be imported into Uruguay. Dogs and cats require also a certificate of rabies vaccinations. These certificates should be endorsed and authenticated by an Uruguayan consul in the U.S. or other point of departure before shipment.

Travelers with pets may find it more convenient to fly to Montevideo via Brazil rather than Argen-

tina, since a delay in Buenos Aires may be experienced if they must change airports to take a connecting flight. Pets leaving the area of the Buenos Aires international airport (Ezeiza) are considered as having entered Argentina and must be examined by an Argentine veterinarian. If a veterinarian is not immediately available, long delays may result. Since U.S. health and rabies certificates are valid in Argentina, travelers with pets should continue on to Montevideo on the same plane or change to a connecting flight that departs only from Ezeiza Airport.

Another consideration is the requirement that no pets are allowed in the cabin of any plane departing from Argentina. All pets are placed in the freight compartment. Since some planes do not have pressurized freight compartments, you may have to spend a number of hours in Ezeiza Airport waiting for a suitable plane.

Firearms and Ammunition

Only the following nonautomatic firearms and ammunitions may be brought to Uruguay:

Semiautomatic Pistol or Revolver, 1; Rifle, 1; Shotguns, 2. Ammunition for above firearms, 1,000 rounds. Uruguayan Government approval of a revolver may be more easily obtained than for semiautomatic pistols, as the latter are generally reserved for police and military use.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Since March 1, 1993, the basic currency unit in Uruguay is the Uruguayan peso. The current rate of exchange is \$11.84 as of March 31, 2000.

Uruguay has many banks, some with numerous branches throughout the country. Some foreign banks, including Citibank, First National City Bank of New York, American Express Bank, and Bank of Boston, have branches in Montevideo. Travelers checks may be purchased through banking facilities at the Chancery. Please note that they

are not readily accepted at local retail facilities, which prefer cash.

Adequate banking facilities exist in Montevideo, but long lines and short banking hours make it impractical to have peso checking accounts. The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan 1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar.	Carnaval*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Week
Apr. 19.	Desembarco De Los 33 Orien- tales
May 1	Uruguayan Labor Day
June 18	Natalicio De Artigas
July 18	Jura De La Constitucion
Nov. 5	Dia De Los Difuntos
Oct 12	Discovery of America
Nov 1.	All Saints' Day
Nov 2.	All Soul's Day
Dec. 8	Blessing of the Waters
Dec. 25	Christmas
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Alinsky, Marvin. *Uruguay: A Contemporary Survey*. Frederick A. Praeger: New York, 1969.

American University. *Area Handbook for Uruguay*. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1971.

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Caracas, Venezuela

VENEZUELA

Major Cities:

Caracas, Maracaibo

Other Cities:

Barquisimeto, Ciudad Bolívar, Colonia Tovar, Cumaná, Maracay, Mérida, San Cristóbal, Valencia

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated September 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Venezuela is important to the U.S. Venezuelans have practiced democracy successfully since 1958, and their success is an example for others in Latin America. Moreover, Venezuela is a principal trading partner for the U.S., ranking among the top 20 markets for U.S. exports. It traditionally has been a reliable supplier of petroleum products to the U.S. and currently is the second largest exporter to the U.S. of oil and its derivatives.

Caracas is at times a challenging place to live. It is crowded, noisy, and jostling, and it is often difficult to get services performed that are routine at home. But it can be exciting, and close at hand are oases of

beauty and tranquility that make the city livable: the rugged wilderness of the Avila mountain range ranging up to 6,000 feet over the city, the jewellike Los Chorros park, and the Parque del Este where early risers jog among hundreds of tropical birds. And, when long weekends or vacations permit, there is a varied universe of natural beauty ranging from the desert of Falcon State, to the spectacular high Andes; from the mesa country of the east with the world's highest waterfall, to the still largely unexplored Amazon jungle. Venezuela has over 1,300 varieties of birds and extraordinary flora, including magnificent orchids and frailejones.

Venezuela's varied beauty, strategic location, and natural resources, as well as its varied social structure, combine to make a tour here challenging and interesting.

MAJOR CITIES

Caracas

Caracas occupies a garden-like valley rimmed by the majestic Avila Mountain that forms a rugged barrier between the valley and the Caribbean. It is the political, cultural, and economic center of the nation.

Its architecture is a mixture of colonial and mainly modern styles. In the older western part of the city, some of the old world Spanish colonial charm has been retained. To the east are the newer areas, characterized by skyscrapers and freeways with modern, comfortable residential areas dotting the valley floor and spreading up the mountain sides.

In contrast with the modernity of much of Caracas and the genteel charm of the historical sections are the "ranchitos" or shack settlements built by the poor immigrants from the interior regions and immigrants from neighboring countries.

Justifiably, the Caraquenos refer to Caracas as "The City of Eternal Spring." Caracas has a mean average temperature of 71 degrees F. Daytime temperatures range from 60 degrees to 80 degrees during the dry season to a maximum of 80 degrees to 90 degrees during the hot parts of the summer rainy season. Nights are cool and pleasant year round. Winter temperatures have even dropped to the low 50s. A consistent east-west wind blows almost every day, keeping the atmosphere of the valley clear. There is no daylight savings time in Caracas, therefore it becomes dark every night at about 7 pm.

The eastern part of the city has many familiar American features: major arteries ablaze with neon signs advertising U.S. products, supermarkets, some department stores, air-conditioned theaters showing American films, and even soda fountains and drive-in restaurants. Late-model American cars literally congest the streets and nearly every home displays a TV antenna to receive one of the Spanish-language TV stations.

The American appearance, however, is superficial. Caracas is a distinctively Latin city. The dominant culture is Spanish with the vitality and zest of a Caribbean orientation to the world. The combination is not Venezuelan, but Caraqueno. Caracas has the amenities of a large, cosmopolitan city. It boasts a number of excellent restaurants, a good selection of movies, and a variety of theatrical and musical productions. The city has many nightclubs and discotheques, a concert and symphony series, several museums, a thriving art market, a zoo, and an ultramodern racetrack.

Food

Generally, Caracas offers a broad range of quality food products though you may have to search for certain imported items. Recent government-imposed restrictions will probably lessen the availability of many imported items. Shopping is done at the large, American-style supermarkets that abound, at convenient corner stores (*abastos*), and at the farmers' markets (*mercado libre*).

Supermarkets are generally well stocked, but some items are unavailable for months at a time. Cleanliness in supermarkets is not up to U.S. standards. Due to uncertainty about the effects of import prohibitions, it is not clear whether speciality shops will continue to carry unusual imported items.

Many Americans find the "mercado libre" both fun and economical. Arrive early to get the best quality fresh fruits and vegetables.

There is a wide variety of locally grown vegetables that are quite good, though not consistently up to U.S. standards. Some Americans take advantage of the excellent quality of fresh fruits and vegetables sold by vendors from trucks. Some deliver. Bananas, papaya (locally called *lechosa*), coconuts, pineapples, mangoes, melons, and citrus fruits are abundant. Local peaches and apricots are disappointing. Fresh-squeezed fruit juices, sold everywhere, are excellent and cheap.

Bread, meat, and fish are available in supermarkets. Bakery goods are generally excellent. Many Americans prefer to buy these items at the bakeries, at the butcher, and at the fish shops that dot the residential areas. Some deliver. Good quality beef is available. Venezuelan beef is range-fed and not normally aged. It is less tasty and less fatty than the U.S. corn-fed animal. Pork is excellent and reasonably priced. Local lamb is sometimes available. Veal is almost never available. Seafood is always obtainable and of good quality, with prices less than those in the Washington area. Shrimp, which is relatively inexpensive, and red snapper (*pargo*) are especially popular. Cold-cuts and sausage are varied and plentiful.

Fresh pasteurized and homogenized milk is available throughout the year.

Canned foods are expensive compared to fresh foods available on the local market. Most stores carry a variety of canned food imported from the U.S. or made locally under license. Neither the selection nor the quality of baby foods is comparable to what is available in the U.S. Infant formula is available, although all brands are not in stock at the same time.

Local cheeses are acceptable, but sometimes lack flavor and may be more salty than in the U.S. A few imported European cheeses are available, in particular Gouda and Edam from Holland. Good quality eggs are plentiful.

Venezuelan ice cream is excellent. It is available in the usual flavors plus some tropical fruit flavors not found in the U.S.

Paper products are available but some are of inferior quality. Imported paper towels, toilet tissue, Kleenex, etc. are available in the commissary.

Frozen vegetables, fruits and fruit juices are sometimes available, but variety is limited and in some cases products may have been thawed and refrozen.

Some American fast food chains, such as McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Domino's Pizza and Baskin & Robbins, have locations in Caracas.

There is a MAKRO Superstore in Caracas that is similar to the PACE Warehouse stores in the U.S. Membership is required. There are American products as well as Venezuelan products and many items are sold in bulk.

Clothing

General: Caracas' climate can be quite warm from April through September, and pleasant and cooler in December and January. Therefore, you will need a summer-weight wardrobe the year round although spring-weight clothes can be worn December through February. Bring a good umbrella for the rainy season. Raincoats are seldom seen here as they are usually too hot to wear. Sunglasses are necessary. Sportswear and beachwear suitable for the U.S. are fine for the clubs and beaches.

There is a wide selection of formal clothing for women in Caracas. Larger men's and women's sizes are not normally available. Good casual clothing is expensive and hard to find. Shoes are of good quality and reasonably priced.

Men: Summer-weight suits are more comfortable in Caracas' warm climate, therefore highly recommended. The quality of dry-cleaning is good and reasonably priced.

Sport shirts, guayaberas, and slacks are worn for informal occasions everywhere in Venezuela. Shorts are seldom seen on the streets except for joggers, cyclists, and other sports enthusiasts.

Dark suits will suffice for almost all occasions in the evening. Business and professional men rarely wear hats in Caracas.

Women: Women should bring what they would wear in late spring or summer in Washington or New York. Normal daytime wear is cotton, linen and other light fabrics. Blue jeans are popular for casual wear. You will need dressier cotton dresses and skirts and blouses for luncheons and coffees. Women dress up for evening occasions and follow the latest European and U.S. fashions. Cocktail dresses or nice evening dresses are normally worn to cocktail parties and dinners. Evening pants are permissible. Silk, satin, sheer knits and jerseys are popular fabrics. Fur stoles are seldom seen but a light sweater, shawl, or dressy jacket is useful for the cooler evenings. Hats are not currently being worn.

Beautiful and expensive fabrics are available. Women's shoes are stylish and of good quality with prices comparable to similar quality shoes in the U.S. Large size women's shoes (over size 9) or extra wide women's shoes are virtually impossible to find in Caracas.

Children: Durable summer wear is the best clothing for children in Caracas. Blue jeans are very popular among all ages. Bring light sweaters for cool evenings and mornings. Heavy pajamas or sleepers with feet are needed for infants in winter (December-February).

Venezuelan law requires that all school children wear uniforms.

Some American-style shoes are made and sold in Caracas. They are somewhat wider than standard American shoes. The quality of children's shoes varies.

For teenagers, one dressy outfit for occasional parties or school functions may be required. Jeans are universal wear for day-to-day activities. T-shirts are very popular.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Popular American brand name, but locally produced toiletries, cosmetics, and household supplies can be found in Caracas. Drugs and medicines are price controlled and can often be bought at prices below those in the U.S., many without prescriptions.

Basic Services: Tailoring, dry-cleaning, laundry, shoe repair, radio and TV repair, electrical work, plumbing, fumigation, and auto repair are available and generally adequate. Standards of workmanship and cost vary considerably. Good hairdressers and barbers are available at prices substantially lower than in major cities in the U.S.

Keep in mind that it is the custom here for stores to be closed anywhere between 12:30 pm and 3:00 pm in the afternoon, and to close in the evening at about 7:00 pm, even in the malls. Note: many establishments in Caracas close during the Christmas holidays from about December 15 to January 15.

Religious Activities

There are several major English-speaking church communities in Caracas: St. Thomas More, a Roman Catholic parish, is served by an Italian priest. The United Christian Church, an interdenominational Protestant Church; the Bethel Baptist Church; and the El Salvador Lutheran Church all have American ministers. St. Mary's Anglican Cathedral (Anglican-Episcopal) has a British bishop. There is also the First Church of Christ Scientist and the Centro Evangelico Pentecostal. They all have services in addition to religious instructions and Sunday school or Bible studies for the children on Sunday mornings. The Mormon community has several wards throughout the city. The Jewish (orthodox and conserva-

tive) congregations have several synagogues: Jabad-Lubavitch Yeshiva Gedola of Venezuela, or Shalom Synagogue and Union Israelita de Caracas. Services are conducted in Spanish and Hebrew. There is also an outstanding and beautiful mosque that has been completed recently that is the tallest in South America.

These congregations offer a variety of social activities that provide good opportunities to meet others from the international community. Church announcements are printed in the English-language newspaper.

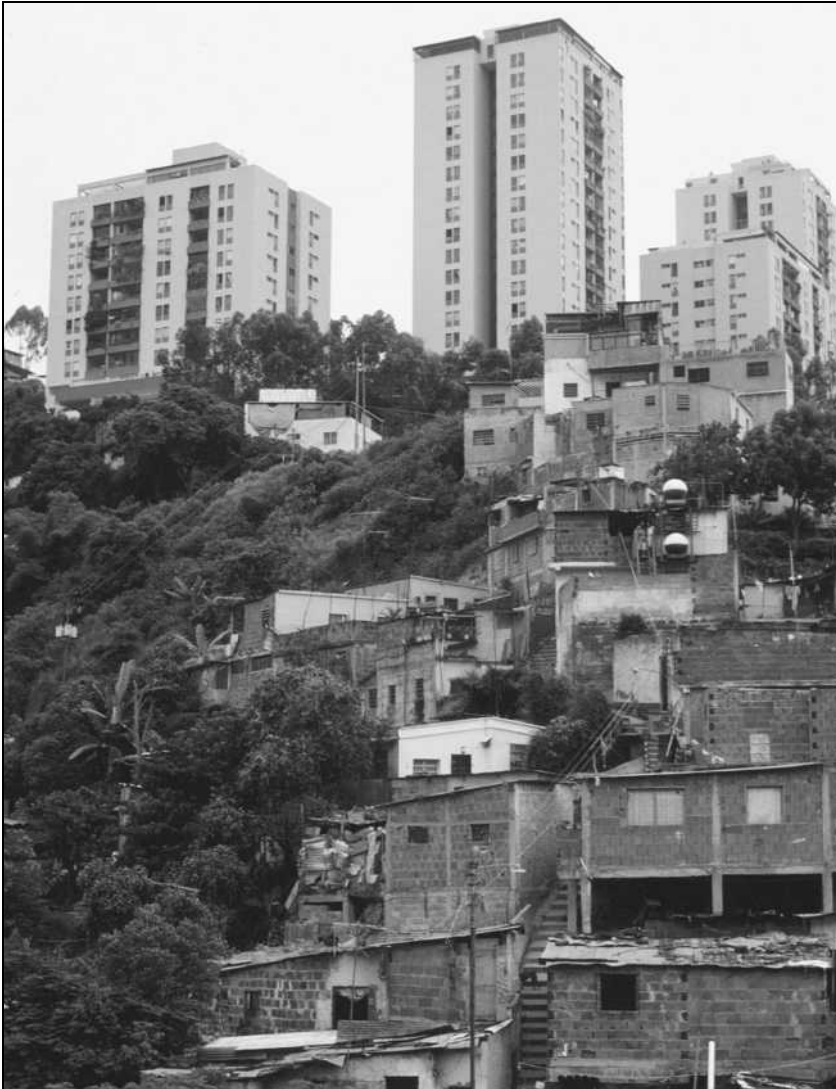
Education

Dependent Education. Good schools are available in Venezuela. Most American children attend one of two schools: Campo Alegre (Campo) which ranges from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 and Colegio Internacional de Caracas (CIC) which also ranges from kindergarten through grade 12. Documentation required for enrollment is a school transcript, transfers, grade cards, or school records. Entrance placement examinations are always given to assure correct placement. A certificate of medical examination and immunization record is also required. It is best obtained before arrival, but can be obtained in Venezuela.

Both schools are private. They require a registration fee, tuition payments, and transportation fees.

By Venezuelan decree, uniforms are required at all schools in all grades.

The school year extends from late August through early June. The program of instruction closely parallels the American system. Both schools use a contained classroom system at the elementary level and departmentalized classes in middle and secondary school. Students or graduates from these schools are qualified to enroll in public or private schools and colleges and universities in the U.S. since they both are accredited by the U.S. Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. Instruction is in English. A majority



City of Caracas, Venezuela

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of teachers are recruited from the U.S. and are U.S. certified. The Venezuelan Ministry of Education requires that all students receive some instruction in Spanish and certain civics and history courses. Library, science labs, and computer facilities are all considered more than adequate when compared with U.S. averages.

Each of these schools has a full-time administrative staff that operates under the direction of an annually elected Board of Directors. The schools also sponsor Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTA) and provide ample opportunities for formal consultation and informal exchanges between parents and

teachers. A full-time nurse is on duty at both schools.

Both schools offer honors, advanced placement and International Baccalaureate courses for talented students, as well as physical education programs, although varsity sports are not emphasized as they are in most U.S. schools. Varsity teams offer basketball, soccer, volleyball and softball. They have limited schedules, but an advantage is that a higher percentage of students have an opportunity to participate in sports than in large U.S. schools. CIC has athletic facilities that include a full-sized football field, a tennis court and swimming activities. Campo has a gymnasium, out-

door courts and a playing field used for softball and soccer.

There are some extracurricular activities and periodic evening social activities for the older children. Bus transportation is available to both schools from most neighborhoods where Americans live. The consensus here is that both schools offer a solid education. Most children tend to have to work harder than in U.S. schools, unless they were in a specialized, accelerated program in the U.S. Special resources for children with learning disabilities are available at the schools, but are limited.

Campo Alegre is situated in a residential area of Las Mercedes and has an excellent but crowded physical plant including a gymnasium, many science labs, Macintosh computer labs and a cafeteria. It is centrally located and access is easy. Enrollment is currently just over 1000 with 52 nationalities represented. Class sizes range from 13-22. The well-qualified and dedicated staff has written Essential Agreements in all curricular areas to enhance and reinforce the basic educational beliefs on which the school's philosophy is written.

Campo's programs are driven by 23 student outcomes and based on a belief that an international school setting is an enriching and positive factor in the education of children who will live and work in a global society. The school's curriculum includes Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate at the secondary level. Computer studies begin in kindergarten and continue through high school. There is an excellent physical education program that engages students in gymnastics, dance, ball skills and track and field.

Campo's physical education department recently hosted the first Caribbean Volleyball Tournament with participants from Costa Rica, Bolivia, Dominican Republic and other schools in the Caribbean area. A school psychologist directs a program of intervention for students

needing special help, both educationally and socially. Counselors at all levels are available for students and parents. Parents are kept well informed through regular reporting, conferences, a weekly newsletter (Campo News), and a program of parent forums on key instructional progress and issues (Parents Ask and Family Nights).

A comprehensive "English as a Second Language" program is well articulated with the other curriculum within the school. All elementary students have one period each day of Spanish. Spanish and French are offered at the secondary levels. A new middle school offers a program specifically designed to meet the needs of students from 12-14 years of age. Over 95 percent of the graduating classes enroll in college and the school offers a full range of placement and achievement tests (PSAT, SAT, ACT, AP). The school has a 650-seat auditorium with stage and orchestra pit that is well used by the Drama Program provided for Campo students and staff alike.

Campo is also a center for many English-speaking community functions. Art, music and cultural events are available for all students. Campo also has a chapter of the Junior and Senior Honor Society. Escuela Campo Alegre participates in the Merit Scholar program and the annual International Schools Model United Nations Assembly in The Hague, Holland. Cub and Boy Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts are popular as after school activities. A school-sponsored Activities Program offers a wide range of activities from a weekend adventure program at the secondary school to an elementary cooking class. The school is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of South American Schools and the European Council of International Schools.

Colegio Internacional de Caracas has a large campus on a hilltop commanding a sweeping view of the valley with ample space for sports

activities, as well as special events for students and their parents. On campus a canteen serves full lunches or snacks, and supplies food and drink for special get-togethers. Present enrollment of CIC is about 550, in grades nursery through 12, the largest single group being North American. The balance of the students are from around 40 other countries. Students enjoy relatively small classes and a high degree of individual instruction.

Clubs and after school activities are available for all students varying with student interest and adult supervisor availability. Art, music, drama, cultural development and global awareness are stressed in the elementary school and supported with classroom instruction at almost every level. CIC has a chapter of the Junior and Senior National Honor Society and presently offers a program for gifted and talented students at the elementary level. This program will be extended in 1994-95 or earlier, although the Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs already present challenging opportunities for the able students in the secondary school. The school also provides Resource Center services for children with mild learning disabilities, mild emotional handicaps, and attention deficit disorders. Tutoring services are also available at the Center through the Boost Program. The school participates in the National Merit Scholar program, the Close Up educational visit to Washington, and sponsors the yearly South American Model United Nations Conference attended by more than 200 students. CIC students also participate in the Model United Nations Assembly in The Hague, Holland. Over 95 percent of the graduating classes enroll in college, and the school offers a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, including the services of a psychologist. Achievement, college entrance and placements tests such as Metropolitan Achievement Tests, PSAT, SAT, and ACT are offered on campus, as are Advanced Placement

courses and the full International Baccalaureate Program.

Advanced programs are offered in English, French, Spanish, Italian, History, Math, and Science. Two modern media centers support the learning needs of the faculty and students. A laboratory and classroom-based comprehensive computer literacy program in the elementary school, and two computer laboratories in the secondary school, provide students access to these skills. CIC also offers summer school and summer day camp programs for students. A school-to-school program with a sister district in Bremerton, Washington, provides CIC faculty with opportunities to receive in-service and other professional development experiences.

Several other good, private schools in the Caracas area have been used by some North American families. However, none are accredited. The Washington Academy, located in Valle Arriba, offers bilingual education for kindergarten through eighth grade. The Jefferson Academy, also located in Valle Arriba, offers bilingual education for pre-kindergarten through sixth grade.

Caracas has many good, private nursery schools, some English speaking, some bilingual. A list can be obtained from the CLO coordinator. Neighborhood Spanish-speaking nurseries are numerous.

Other international community schools

Escuela Britanica offers kindergarten through grade six. The curriculum closely follows the British system. Uniforms are required. The education is excellent, but application must be made early.

Colegio Francia has a complete elementary school with instruction in French and Spanish. At the Colegio Humbolt, instruction is in German and Spanish for both elementary and high school grades.

Venezuelan Schools

There are numerous private elementary and secondary schools in

Caracas, many of which are Catholic.

Special Educational Opportunities

For Spanish-speaking students, college classes are available at several universities. Universidad Simon Bolivar is free but entrance is very difficult for foreigners. Universidad Andres Bello and Universidad Metropolitana are private and charge tuition. Another private university, IESA, the Institute of Higher Studies in Administration, offers post-graduate studies in business administration and management. Due to the general difficulty of transferring foreign credits to the U.S., many have chosen to audit classes. International House offers graduate degree work in English for M.E. degrees through Marymount College and is initiating a Masters degree program in Business.

The Audubon Society (La Sociedad Conservacionista Audubon de Venezuela), maintains an environmental reference library, holds meetings and has various excursions. The office is located in the Paseo las Mercedes shopping center. The Caracas Circulating Library maintains a collection of current best sellers in English, both fiction and nonfiction, as well as a children's library. It is open 3 days a week, 1 day being Saturday mornings. The cost is about \$5 to join and \$5 per month.

The Caracas Playhouse, an English-language theater group, produces plays and musicals with the purpose of developing amateur theater in Caracas. Previous experience is not required for participation.

Spanish and English instructions are available through the Centro Venezolano Americano. The CVA also has a lending library and sponsors a wide variety of cultural programs. Other languages may be studied through various institutions such as the Centro Venezolano Italiano and Alianza Francesa. English and Spanish language lessons are also offered through Instituto Cultural Venezolano Britanico.

The Venezuelan-American Association of University Women offers a biannual study group program that is open to nonmembers as well as members. Courses are offered in drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, calligraphy, interior design, batik, education (including Venezuelan Field Study), bridge, mini-lectures on countries of the world, world religions, shorthand and typing, Indians of Venezuela, music, languages, cooking, and physical fitness.

Classes in music, dance, physical fitness, arts and crafts, languages, and many other subjects are available at commercial institutions and from individuals.

Sports

Sports activities in the immediate Caracas area are limited, principally because of the lack of public facilities. There are few public swimming pools in Caracas. One of them, Parque Miranda, has swimming instructions in an olympic-size pool and offers swim team competition.

Clubs in Caracas are excellent, fully equipped and provide a wide range of facilities. Many are also very expensive. There are no public golf courses in Venezuela. There are also no public tennis courts, but at least one semi-public court exists and there is a tennis club that some Americans have joined.

Jogging is a popular sport here, particularly since the climate allows this activity year round; however, jogging is usually done in daylight hours at Parque del Este. The Hash House Harriers has a run twice monthly on Sunday afternoons in different neighborhoods of Caracas. Everyone does not run, and many people walk the route. Hiking is another popular activity. Excellent but steep trails lead up the sides of the Avila Range, and the varieties of flora are unbelievable. The plateaus offer opportunities for sports such as softball, volleyball, soccer, etc., and picnicking is also popular. The physically fit can hike to the top and view the Caribbean Sea and port

city of La Guaria on one side and on the other side have an airplane's view of Caracas. There is no charge for climbing the Avila and overnight camping is easily accommodated, however there are no facilities except for running water in some places.

Venezuela offers a range of challenges for every kind of fisherman. One can troll for monster marlin, tuna, wahoo, sailfish and other salt-water prizes along Venezuela's Caribbean coast, angle for trout in pristine Andean lakes or land peacock bass, catfish, and other freshwater game fish in the country's many rivers. The second major draw for any angler is the abundance and large size of fish in Venezuela's waters that have not been "fished out" as have many areas of the world that have long been popular for this sport. Side by side with offers for beach, jungle and Andean tours, one now finds that nearly all major travel and tourism agencies offer fishing packages for both salt and freshwater. A license is not required.

Hunting is not popular here and the rules and regulations are vague and unenforced. There is a hunting season, however, and all endangered species are off limits to hunters at all times. A hunting license is not required, however guns must be registered.

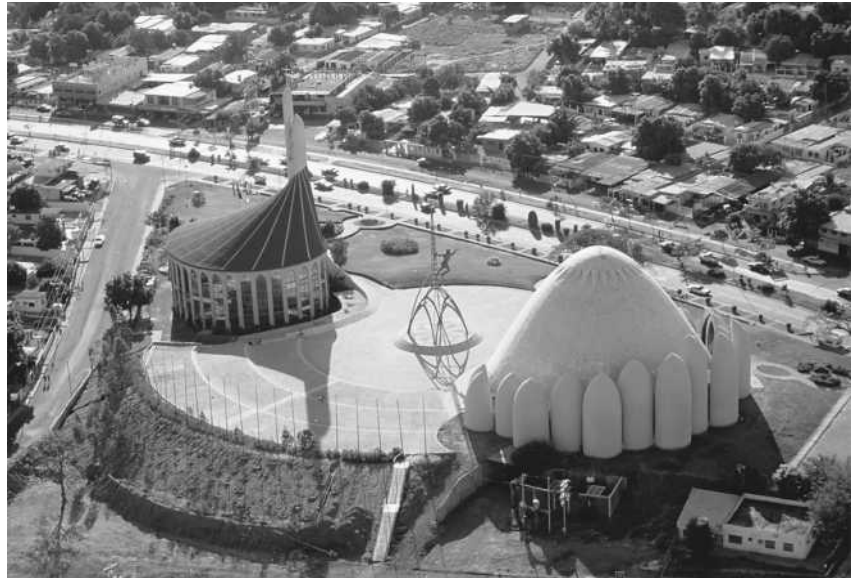
Spectator sports are as popular among Caraqueños of all ages as they are among Americans. Professional baseball leagues, often featuring major league American and Venezuelan players, have a full schedule of games after the U.S. season ends. The general level is that of a triple A league in the U.S. Soccer is followed by many Venezuelans. Some of the finest teams in the world tour here occasionally and are worth seeing. A major bullfight season is held annually in Caracas' Nuevo Circo with well-known bullfighters from Spain, Mexico, Venezuela, etc. Tickets are reasonably priced, but seldom advertised. Horseraces are held every Saturday and Sunday year round at a

superbly designed and equipped track. The spacious stands are nearly always filled. A large percentage of the city's residents bet the weekly "5 and 6" (Cinco y Seis) ticket (picking five or six winners out of the last six races). Bi-weekly night races are held.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Caracas has several historical churches and museums, including the birthplace of Simon Bolivar, a museum of fine arts, a museum of natural history, a science museum, and a museum of contemporary art. There is also a lovely colonial museum, the Quinta Anauco, which features evening concerts during certain times of the year, and a unique and interesting Children's Museum. There are also some fine parks within the city. Strollers may enjoy Parque del Este or Parque Los Chorros, which is located at the base of the Avila, and offers a pleasant escape from the traffic and the noise. Parque del Este also has a small zoo and is a popular spot for early morning joggers. The suburb of El Hatillo on the outskirts of Caracas offers quaint colonial style shops, houses and restaurants. There are many shops in El Hatillo but one, Hannsi's, sells handicrafts from all over South America.

Beaches within a short drive from Caracas are crowded on weekends and unfortunately the water is polluted. For longer trips, the beach at Cata to the west of Caracas or Rio Chico to the east are popular on weekends. The islands in the Morrocoy National Park, 3-5 hours from Caracas by car, and then reachable only by boat, offer beautiful beaches and great snorkeling. Camping is allowed on these islands although there are no facilities. The islands of Los Roques, reachable only by air (30 minutes from Caracas), are beautiful and offer excellent snorkeling, too. Camping is allowed there also, but again, no facilities. Beaches in Venezuela are not like the beaches of Florida and California. They are generally very short in length and width and are not the



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Church and museum in Maracaibo, Venezuela

type of beaches where one can take a nice long walk. However, some are beautiful and some have very crystal clear water.

There are several offshore islands that offer wonderful opportunities for snorkeling. Bonaire, one of the islands in the Netherland Antilles, is perhaps the best example. Scuba diving is also quite popular and there are certified diving instructors in Caracas who offer classes in English on a regular basis.

An interesting 1-day excursion from Caracas over winding but paved roads is to Colonia Tovar, a settlement of German immigrants about 40 miles from Caracas. The picturesque houses and cuisine remind one of the Bavarian Alps. Another pleasant day trip out of Caracas is to Los Teques where one can ride a narrow gauge train to El Encanto Park. When the train is operating, the trip affords lovely scenery and a chance to enjoy a picnic lunch at the end of the line. It is also near the Arte Murano glass factory, a favorite spot for buying Venetian style glass.

In the Andean region of Venezuela one can enjoy spectacular and beautiful scenery. The teleferico in Merida, when working, gives one a sweeping view of the mountains,

while the Hotel Los Frailes, once a monastery, offers charm and beauty. Popular activities in this area are mountain climbing, trout fishing, and horseback riding. On the opposite side of Venezuela is the tropical jungle in the State of Bolivar. Canaima is a small settlement in the jungle at the base of the spectacular falls of the Carrao River. This place of imposing beauty is a perfect trip for those who admire adventure and is accessible only by air. An added attraction is an aerial view of Angel Falls, highest in the world (3,312 feet). It was named for an American aviator, Jimmy Angel, who landed above them in 1937. It rivals the Grand Canyon in the U.S.

For birdwatchers and anyone interested in exploring the countryside, the local Audubon Society organizes outings regularly. The most interesting require a four-wheel drive vehicle and overnight camping.

Trips to nearby Caribbean islands are also popular. The Venezuelan island of Margarita combines the charm of old Spanish colonial forts and churches with some nice beaches. Curacao, Aruba, Bonaire, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago are other interesting islands to visit. Trinidad is especially exciting during Carnival when the entire island closes down and "jumps up" for 4

days to the music of hundreds of steel bands.

For the really adventurous traveler, there are canoe trips to the base of Angel Falls that require a few days, trips into the interior to visit missionaries working among primitive Indians (which require special permission), flights over the Grand Sabana area near the Brazilian frontier, boat trips down the Orinoco from Puerto Ayacucho to Ciudad Bolívar, and camping on the llanos (plains).

Traveling in Venezuela is often disorganized. Planes often get overbooked and sometimes trips don't go as planned. The best approach to this is to arrive very early at the airport and to have lots of patience.

Many apartments have nice window boxes for plants, herbs or flowers. There are numerous nurseries in Caracas and the climate is excellent for gardening. Most plants flourish here. Orchids are especially popular and are the national flower.

Entertainment

Caracas enjoys a diversity of international cuisine with Argentine-style steak houses, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and French restaurants being the most popular. Some restaurants provide music and dinner dancing. Caracas is truly a city of spectacular restaurants. Caraqueños love to dine out and it shows in the atmosphere, ambiance and diversity of their restaurants. The city also has many night clubs, and private discotheques and jazz clubs are becoming increasingly popular. A woman should have a male escort to enter clubs in Caracas at night.

Modern movie theaters, including several drive-ins, are located throughout the city. The majority of films shown are American with Spanish subtitles, but French, Italian and Mexican movies are also presented. Venezuela does not yet have a highly developed feature length film industry but sophisticated "soap operas", aired during prime-time by local TV stations are avidly followed by many.

Sports fans can expect to see regular season major league baseball games weekly in addition to the playoffs and the World Series. Professional basketball and the Super Bowl have also aired here in the past.

Social Activities

Caracas is a cosmopolitan city, offering opportunities to get involved. The extent and direction of social activities depends largely on your initiative. There are a number of organizations to help newcomers get introduced.

Groups and activities within the American community include the Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club International, Lions Club International, the Audubon Society, a hiking club, "Circulo Excursionistas" and scouting. The Centro Venezolano-Americano sponsors social and cultural events.

The Venezuelan-American Association of University Women (VAAUW) offers membership to university graduates only. Those who attended college for two years may join as associate members. However, their excellent and varied courses and many of their programs and activities are open to nonmembers.

The Children's Service League is a volunteer organization that works with children and young adults, raises money for hospitalized and handicapped children, and annually helps 20 institutions and hospitals. CSL activities include sewing workshops, a mini-bookstore, a bridge competition and a bowling league, as well as the design, preparation and sale of its annual collection of Christmas and note cards. The CSL holds a Christmas Bazaar at which these cards and handicrafts are sold.

The Newcomer's Club emphasizes welcoming you to Caracas with tips on how to adapt to its culture and social life. It is a good place to meet other newcomers who live in your own area.

Maracaibo

Maracaibo, the capital of Zulia State and Venezuela's second largest city (population was estimated at 1.9 million in 2000), is situated in the coastal lowlands, on the western shore of Lake Maracaibo. The lake, South America's largest, bounds the city on the east and south. The six-mile-long Rafael Urdaneta Bridge, which is the longest prestressed concrete span in the world, spans the narrow, northern neck of the lake and connects Maracaibo with the eastern shore. To the north, the lake opens into the Gulf of Venezuela and in the south, beyond the lake, rise the Andes.

Although 170 miles away, Pico Bolívar, the country's highest point, is visible from the city on a clear day. Called both the Bolívar Coast and Costa Oriental del Lago, this area is the center of Venezuela's petroleum industry. Scattered all along this coast and on the waters offshore are thousands of wells tapping the extensive deposits of the Maracaibo Basin, which provides 80 percent of the nation's oil.

Maracaibo was founded in 1571 and soon became an inland trading center. The city and the surrounding area underwent tremendous expansion following the discovery of oil in 1917. Production of Venezuela's three largest national oil companies is headquartered in the Maracaibo area. Directly across the lake from the city is El Tablazo, a huge petrochemical complex, and up the gulf coast on the Paraguaná Peninsula at Amuay is the world's largest oil refinery. Numerous petroleum-related companies, many of them U.S. firms, operate in and around Maracaibo.

Clustered around the port are the colonial-style buildings and narrow streets of the old city. This is the site of the Cathedral of Maracaibo and the Palacio de las Águilas, which serves as the seat of state government. Farther from the port, the architecture is more modern, with many multistory apartment and office buildings. Nearer the out-

skirts of the city, prosperity is less obvious, and modern buildings give way to brick and corrugated tin shacks.

The U.S. consular district of Maracaibo serves the coastal states of Zulia and Falcon and the Andean states of Táchira, Mérida, and Trujillo. An estimated 4,000 Americans live in this district—mostly in Maracaibo and across the lake on the Bolívar Coast in the oil towns of Cabimas, Las Morochas, Tia Juana, and Lagunillas. Because of the long history of American business participation in the area, Americans are generally well regarded, and many mixed-nationality families live here.

Maracaibo is hot and humid throughout the year, although winter months are slightly cooler. Daytime temperatures are usually 90°F or above, with 75 percent humidity. Annual rainfall is about 20 inches. The moderate rainy season begins in May, with rain becoming more frequent toward November.

Schools for Foreigners

Schooling in English is available from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade at Escuela Bella Vista, which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Some 30 nationalities are represented among the approximately 300 students; most are American and Venezuelan. There are approximately 40 full-time teachers, half of which are American. Although academic classes are conducted in English, Spanish-language courses are required at all grade levels. The quality of teaching is good, and students in the upper grades can choose from a variety of electives.

Bella Vista has good facilities, including an air-conditioned 14,500-volume library, cafeteria, two gymnasiums, science lab, computer lab, covered play area, a ball field, and tennis courts. Extracurricular activities include instrumental music, drama, school newspaper, yearbook, computers, gymnastics, soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, track and field, tennis, and field trips. The school has neither special facilities

for teaching children with learning disabilities, nor any programs for gifted students.

The school year runs from late August to mid-June. Venezuelan holidays are observed. Bella Vista is located at Calle 67, entre Avenue 3D y 3E, La Lago, Maracaibo. Mail can be addressed to Apartado 290, Maracaibo, Venezuela.

Special educational opportunities are offered at the University of Zulia, where those competent in Spanish can audit courses. Medicine, dentistry, law, engineering, and the humanities are taught at the university.

El Centro de Bellas Artes, established by Venezuelans and foreigners interested in fine arts, sponsors moderately priced classes and individual instruction in painting, sculpture, ceramics, leather work, and metalwork. The Spanish-speaking instructors are competent. Fees are moderate. Academia de Música, run by the State of Zulia, offers instruction in voice and various musical instruments. Private music and ballet instruction are also available.

Recreation

Boating and other water sports on Lake Maracaibo are available, but limited by the lake's pollution. The majority of beaches in the immediate area are neither attractive nor well maintained. Good beaches are several hours away. Several professional sports stadiums host soccer and baseball, which are very popular. During the annual Feria de La Chinita, bullfights are presented in the Plaza de Toros.

Recreational facilities for children and teenagers are virtually nonexistent outside of private clubs, causing some problems for families. Most sports activities take place during evening hours when it is slightly cooler. A public park, Paseo del Lago, has been constructed on the lake shore, and facilities there include a jogging course, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, and children's play equipment. The popular

Paseo often draws Maracuchos for evening recreation, but upkeep of the facilities is inadequate.

Maracaibo has only limited hunting opportunities; most hunting is for fowl and takes place on privately owned haciendas. Opportunities for fishing are more plentiful. This sport is possible in some parts of the lake, as well as in the Gulf of Venezuela. In the Andes, trout fishing is available.

An informal group of English-speaking men meet at Escuela Bella Vista for mixed sports once a week, alternating among basketball, soccer, and other games. Most other sports activities require membership in clubs, which are expensive. Among these private clubs are Los Andes Yacht Club, Maracaibo Country Club, Club Náutico, and the German Club; many English-speaking expatriates belong to the latter.

The nearest place of interest outside of town is the Río Limón area, about 30 miles north of the city. From there, the visitor may take a boat trip up-river to see the Paraguana Indian villages built on stilts over the water. A bridge crosses the river for car trips to the Indian villages of Sinamaica and Paraguaipoa farther up the coast from Río Limón. A modest beach resort, Caimara Chico (Balneario) on the Gulf of Venezuela, is near Sinamaica.

A pleasant change of scenery and climate is possible by visiting the Andean villages of La Puerta and Timotes, about 160 miles (three to four hours by car) from Maracaibo. Many Maracuchos have vacation cabins there, and some small inns cater to tourists. Valera and Mérida, farther down the Andean chain, are the nearest Andean cities accessible by air (about 45 minutes flying time). Alternatively, Mérida, a charming university town, is about a nine-hour drive, and from there one can travel into the Andes.

Aruba, a popular resort island, is less than an hour's flight from Maracaibo, and Caracas is about one hour by air or nine hours by car.

Entertainment

Maracaibo has many movie theaters, but few of them show first-run films. American movies are popular and are usually screened with Spanish subtitles. British, French, and Latin American films are also shown. Prices are reasonable.

Occasionally, it is possible to attend live performances presented by touring Venezuelan and international groups. Additionally, the binational center presents a full cultural program during the year. The Maracaibo Players, an amateur English-speaking dramatic group, stages two annual plays. The Maracaibo Symphony Orchestra, with several American members, gives reasonably priced Thursday evening concerts at Teatro Bellas Artes. Ticket prices are reasonable.

Maracaibo has several good restaurants. Steak is popular with Venezuelan diners, and this popularity is reflected in the number of good steak houses in town. Traditional Venezuelan cuisine—or *criollo*—is featured in several restaurants. The city also has a variety of Chinese, Italian, Spanish, and French dining spots. Numerous soda fountains and tea shops serve American-style sandwiches and ice cream. There also are a few American-style fast food restaurants.

For those interested in history, Maracaibo offers the Urdaneta Museum. This museum chronicles the history of Spanish settlement in the Maracaibo area.

The ability to communicate in Spanish is essential to a full social life. American men sometimes join the local Rotary, Lions, Jaycees, Toastmasters, or Masonic organizations; women join various church-connected groups or the Maracaibo Women's Tennis Club or Ladies Club. Maracaibo has an active North American Association.

Special Information

Maracaibo is located only about 50 miles from the Colombian border. The Guajira Peninsula, shared by the two countries, is north of Mara-

caibo, and this area (particularly the Colombian side) is known as a drug-trafficking center where law enforcement resources are extremely limited. Border areas south and southwest of Maracaibo are lightly populated, largely wilderness regions from which come sporadic reports of Colombian guerrilla activity and kidnappings. Travel to any border area should be carefully considered.

OTHER CITIES

BARQUISIMETO, established in 1552, a few years before the founding of Valencia, is the capital of Lara State in northwestern Venezuela. It is situated at an altitude of 1,856 feet at the northern end of the Cordillera Mérida, 170 miles southwest of Caracas. Barquisimeto is situated in a productive agricultural area. Cacao, sugarcane, sisal, and coffee are grown near the city. Several industries in the city produce cement, twine, and food products. A 230-foot tower built in 1952 to commemorate the city's 400th anniversary is a well-known landmark. Barquisimeto is the home of Central-Western University. In 2000, the city had an estimated population of 914,000.

CIUDAD BOLÍVAR is the commercial hub of the plains (*llanos*) region of the east. It lies on the south bank of the Orinoco River, 280 miles southeast of Caracas. The city dates to 1764, when it was called San Tomás de la Nueva Guayana de la Angostura. Simón Bolívar, the South American liberator, declared Gran Colombia's independence from Spain here in 1819; the city was renamed in 1846 in his honor. Ciudad Bolívar is a river port and the principal docking area on the Orinoco. Exports include gold, diamonds, cattle, horses, skins, hides, timber, and agricultural products. Fishing and tourism also are important in Ciudad Bolívar; the late June catches of the *sapoara* fish are popular, and gold trinkets made here—especially charms—are considered the best in Venezuela. The

city is home to the Jesus Soto Museum, which features works by Venezuelan and European artists. This state capital has an estimated population of 308,000. The planned city of Ciudad Guayana (or Santo Tomé de Guayana) is situated 60 miles to the east at the juncture of the Orinoco and Caroní rivers. It has a population of about 692,000.

The small "Black Forest" village of **COLONIA TOVAR** lies in the mountains 40 miles west of Caracas. Known for its German sausage, flowers, and jams, the town becomes congested with visitors from Caracas on Sundays. German immigrants founded Colonia Tovar in 1843; it remained virtually isolated until modern roads were built in the vicinity in the 1940s.

CUMANÁ is South America's oldest Hispanic community, located 200 miles east of Caracas on the main highway. Dating to 1521, the city of approximately 208,115 people (2000 est.) is known for Fort Antonio and other colonial-era churches and houses. Beset by earthquakes, especially the massive devastations of 1766 and 1929, Cumaná lies near large salt beds and sandy beaches. Sardine canning supports many here. Cumaná is nestled in a rich agricultural area. Sugarcane, beans, tobacco, coffee, cacao, and fruits are grown here. The city is the home of Eastern University.

MARACAY, with a population of 460,000 in 2000, is the capital of Aragua State in the north, 50 miles southwest of Caracas. The center of Venezuela's cattle industry, it was, during the early years of this century, headquarters for the military government which ruled the country. The city is home to many industries which produce textiles, rayon, sugar, rubber, paper, cement, and food stuffs. Maracay is linked to Caracas via the Pan-American Highway.

MÉRIDA is the capital of Mérida State, 325 miles southwest of Caracas. Situated deep in the Cordillera Mérida Mountains at an altitude of

5,400 feet, this is an agricultural hub for neighboring hinterlands producing coffee, tobacco, and vegetable oils. Mérida is the highest city in Venezuela. The “Five White Eagles,” a local name for looming mountain peaks, provide a stunning backdrop for Mérida’s 21 parks, most notably the Park of the Five Republics. This park has the world’s first Simón Bolívar monument (erected in 1842) and contains soil from each of the countries he freed. Recreational activities in the area include mountaineering and fishing. Andean tourists enjoy Mérida’s cathedral, zoo, colonial museum, university campus, and unusual cable car. The cable car is the highest and longest in the world, climbing to above 15,000 feet. There are several hotels here. Mérida is known for its candied fruits and *ruanas* (Andean poncho-like woolen cloaks). Mérida’s current population is approximately 230,000 (2000 est.).

SAN CRISTÓBAL, founded in 1561, is the capital of Tachira State in western Venezuela. A mountain city situated at the end of the Cordillera Mérida, it suffered great human loss and property damage in an earthquake which shook that part of the country in 1875. The 2000 population was estimated at 329,000. San Cristóbal is a commercial center for the cassava, corn, sugarcane, coffee, and pineapples grown near the city. The city’s industries include factories which produce textiles, leather goods, shoes, cement, and cigarettes.

VALENCIA, the capital of Carabobo State in northern Venezuela, is one of the principal industrial and transportation centers in the country. It is situated at the western end of Lake Valencia, approximately 80 miles west of the capital. The city dates to the mid-16th century. It is an important producer of automobiles and parts, pharmaceuticals, food and dairy products, garments, cement, furniture, rubber goods, fertilizers, paper, textiles, soap, and vegetable oils. Colegio Internacional de Carabobo, offering a U.S. curriculum for pre-kindergarten through

grade 12, is located five miles from the center of Valencia. The school has two computer labs, a science lab, an auditorium, cafeteria, recreational area, athletic field, and a library with nearly 13,500 volumes. Extracurricular activities include drama, dance, yearbook, literary magazine, field trips, and various trips. The school has approximately 25 full-time and 10 part-time teachers. Half of those teachers were American. Of the school’s approximately 260 students, about 80 are American. Further information may be obtained by writing to the school at Apartado 103, Valencia. Valencia’s population was estimated at 832,000 in 2000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Venezuela is located on the north coast of South America, and covers 352,150 square miles—about the size of Texas and Oklahoma combined. Caracas’ altitude is about 2,700 feet above sea level, giving the city a permanent springtime climate.

The Orinoco River and the various mountain ranges, all branches of the Andes chain, divide the country into four distinct regions:

South of the Orinoco River are the wild and largely unexplored Guyana Highlands, rich in mineral resources and in developed and potential hydroelectric power. They are characterized by rugged relief and mesa-like formations. The climate ranges from temperate in the Gran Sabana to tropical on the fringes of the plateau.

North of the Orinoco are the “llanos” or plains. During the dry season (December-April) the entire area is almost desert-like. But during the rainy season, flooding rivers make the area muddy and practically impassable.

Spurs of the Andes Mountains run along each side of the Maracaibo basin and part of the seacoast. The bulk of Venezuela’s population traditionally has lived in these highlands attracted by the temperate weather and fertile soil.

A tropical coastal plain stretches along most of Venezuela’s 1,750-mile coastline. This narrow strip of land between mountains and sea widens in the west to form the Maracaibo basin. The climate is uniformly hot and humid.

Population

Venezuela’s population in 2000 was 18,105,000. Over 38 percent of the population was under 15 years of age, and 66 percent was under 30. Rapid population growth and migration from rural areas have produced densely populated cities containing over 84 percent of the population, while vast areas of the interior are sparsely populated.

Venezuela proudly regards itself as being a melting pot. About 20 percent of the population are Caucasian, 9 percent are black, 2 percent are Indian, and the remaining 69 percent are mixed race (mestizo).

Caracas is especially cosmopolitan. Around a quarter of its residents are immigrants and their descendants from Spain, Portugal, and Italy, most of whom came after the World War II. Smaller numbers of immigrants from other European countries also play an important role in the city’s commercial and professional life. In the 1970s, the booming Venezuelan economy attracted large numbers of people from the other Caribbean and Andean countries. There are about 24,000 Americans in Venezuela, many of whom live in Caracas.

Public Institutions

Discovered by Columbus in 1498 on his third voyage to the New World, Venezuela was first explored by Alonso de Ojeda in 1499. According to legend, Ojeda named the country

Venezuela (Little Venice) after seeing the Indian houses on stilts in Lake Maracaibo. It was one of the first New World colonies to revolt against Spain (1810), but it was not until 1821 that independence was achieved. Francisco de Miranda began the task. It was completed by the great hero and statesman of Latin America, Simon Bolivar, Venezuela's national hero and native son.

Venezuela, together with what are now Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador, was part of the Union Gran Colombiana until 1830, when it withdrew and began its own existence as a sovereign state.

Until as recently as 1958, Venezuela's political history as an independent nation could be characterized as rule by a series of military dictators.

During General Juan Vicente Gomez' rule (1908-35), oil was discovered in the Maracaibo Basin, and Venezuela changed from a poor, largely agrarian country to one of the richest nations in Latin America.

The modern political forces set in motion by the new oil economy produced a brief experiment in democracy 1945-48, a military coup followed by a 10-year period of dictatorship under General Marcos Perez Jimenez, and finally the restoration of democracy in 1958. Former Presidents are Romulo Betancourt from the Accion Democratica (AD) Social Democratic party 1959-64; Raul Leoni (AD) 1964-69; Rafael Caldera from the Social Christian COPEI party 1969-74; Carlos Andres Perez (AD) 1974-79; Luis Herrera Campins (COPEI) 1979-84; Jaime Lusinchi (AD) 1984-89; Carlos Andres Perez (AD) 1989-93. Perez was removed peacefully after he was indicted by the Supreme Court. Ramon Velasquez became interim president until February 1994, when Rafael Caldera was once again inaugurated. President Hugo Chavez Frias came into office in February 1999.

Venezuela is a representative democracy. The constitution of 1999 provides for the direct election of the President every 6 years. The President is chief of state and head of the national executive branch, and he or she appoints the Vice-President. The President is assisted by Cabinet Members with the rank of Minister. State governors, legislators and municipal councilmen are elected locally.

The legislative branch consists of a unicameral National Assembly. The 165 representatives are elected by popular vote to serve 5-year terms.

The judicial branch consists of a Supreme Court and other courts on all different levels of government. The Republic of Venezuela is composed of 23 states and the Federal District that includes much of the Caracas metropolitan area.

Arts, Science, and Education

Venezuelan cultural life is centered in Caracas, a reflection of the capital's overwhelming political and financial influence. A quarter of the country's population lives in Caracas, a dramatic shift from the situation at the end of World War II when the city's population was about 250,000. In response to the petroleum boom and this population shift, numerous cultural and artistic institutions have been established. The luxurious Teresa Carreno performing arts complex opened in 1983 and is one of the most architecturally dramatic in the world. The Venezuelan Government has made a strong commitment to fostering culture, education, and the arts, backing these efforts with considerable state funding.

The National Cultural Council (CONAC), the major government funding source, actively promotes the arts and culture outside of Caracas as do individual state arts councils. Regional development councils, large state industries and private foundations also contribute

to the arts. Foreign embassies sponsor performing artists on tour and the U.S.-Venezuelan binational centers also promote cultural and artistic activities.

Music is perhaps the best developed of Venezuela's cultural attractions. There are four major orchestras in Caracas alone. The National Symphony gives regular concerts at the Teresa Carreno Theater and often has visiting conductors and soloists. World-renowned musicians have performed with the National Symphony. The newer Municipal Orchestra was established to accompany the Municipal Opera and a variety of ballet and dance groups.

The Philharmonic Orchestra also has a regular concert season. Additionally, there is an active and excellent youth orchestra with several other youth orchestras around the country that nurture provincial talent and send their best students to Caracas for membership in the national youth orchestra. Also, choral music is pervasive with many groups each devoted to a particular choral speciality (baroque, modern, etc.). Popular music—jazz and rock—is popular in Venezuela, and occasionally well-known entertainers come to Caracas. Most recently, Kenny G., Guns N' Roses, Robert Plant, and the B-52's have performed here. However, salsa and merengue remain the most popular among Venezuelans.

The Caracas Metropolitan Opera has a regular season in June and July, performing the standard repertoire with a mixture of artists from their own opera school as well as from Europe and the U.S. The opera school also gives workshop productions throughout the year, and independent entrepreneurs sponsor ad hoc performances.

Ballet has received enormous stature and impetus with the great success of the now world-renowned New World Ballet of Caracas which has two regular seasons, spring and fall. Many experimental groups are being spawned, founded by Venezu-

elans trained abroad. There are well-established ballet schools in Caracas as well as major cities of the interior, which give recitals. Many accept non-Venezuelan students. Baryshnikov has performed in Caracas as recently as 1993. Caracas is an active theater city with several plays being performed at any given time. Additionally, there are experimental groups, University players, children's theater, a black theater group near Caracas (Teatro Negro de Barlovento), the well-established Caracas Players who perform in English, and a venerable tradition of puppetry. Caracas has an annual theater festival, and is also the host of a biennial international theater festival. The International Theater Institute (ITI) has an office in Caracas.

The Venezuelan Institute of Folklore sponsors traditional festivals, regional fairs and dance groups in an effort to foster and preserve traditional Venezuelan culture. Such festival and other activities are often associated with local saints' days. For example, a popular dance known as Los Diablos Danzantes de Yare (the Dancing Devils of Yare) is performed on the feast of Corpus Christi. The village is approximately 50 miles from Caracas and the event draws a considerable crowd from the capital. Although this festival represents African influence on Venezuela, other festivals reflect the dominant Spanish influence on the country's folklore.

Private sector scientific activity is generally limited to instruction and some research, primarily in the social sciences. However, the Government's National Council for Scientific and Technological Investigations (CONICIT) plays a major role in developing science and technology in Venezuela. A bilateral agreement in science and technology between the U.S. and Venezuela provides the framework for mutually advantageous cooperative endeavors by our two countries in this field.

The arts flourish in Venezuela. The capital alone has three major muse-

ums: one devoted to Venezuelan painters, another to contemporary art beginning in the late 19th century and the third to fine arts with representations of all periods and all countries. Art galleries dot the city and are numerous, some with international connections. Provincial capitals also support local art museums. Venezuela's internationally known artists include Jesus Soto, Carlos Cruz, Hector Poleo, Alejandro Otero and his wife, Mercedes Pardo, and Cornelis Zitman. Art shows and auctions sponsored by such public service organizations as the Venezuelan American Association of University Women, the North American Association and Hadassah as fund-raising events, are very well attended.

The Venezuelan education system currently finds itself in a state of crisis. Educational planning was based on the premise of ever-increasing oil wealth, although petroleum revenues have, in fact, decreased in recent years. The oil boom's legacy, therefore, is an educational system that is overextended and underfunded. Yet the government remains committed to the notion that every citizen is entitled to a free education. The result is a student population that has increased more than seven times since 1958, including a university population that has risen more than 30 times in this period, and a Ministry of Education budget that has increased more than two-fold, yet is still considered inadequate.

There have been significant gains since the 1950s as a result of the government's policy of "Massification" of education. The adult literacy rate, for example, was 91% in 1995. In 1950, there were only four universities in Venezuela; today there are over 90 institutions of higher education. In 1958, there were 853,683 students in the entire system; today there are over 6 million.

The issue today in Venezuela is not quantity, but quality. The Ministry of Education has one of the largest budgets of any government depart-

ment and its efforts now lie in adapting the curriculum to the demands of an increasingly technological society, in expanding compulsory education, and in upgrading teacher qualifications. However, the current financial difficulties and a demographic bulge (75 percent of the population is under 35 years of age) are likely to cause some dissatisfaction in the future.

Commerce and Industry

Venezuela is one of the wealthier nations in the hemisphere. In 1992, its GDP, measured at the official exchange rate, was \$146.2 billion (2000 est.), or \$6,200 per capita. The Government dominates the economy; State companies control the petroleum, minerals and basic industries. However, in 1989, an economic adjustment program was started in order to provide Venezuela with a market-oriented, diversified, and export-competitive economy.

Petroleum is and has been the cornerstone of the Venezuelan economy for over 50 years. The petroleum sector dominates the economy, accounting for roughly a third of GDP, around 80% of export earnings, and more than half of government operating revenues in 2000. A strong rebound in international oil prices fueled the recovery from the steep recession in 1999. Nevertheless, a weak nonoil sector and capital flight undercut the recovery. Venezuela is the fourth-leading supplier of imported crude and refined petroleum products to the U.S. This takes into account crude oil and refined products, as well as indirect imports via Caribbean refineries. Venezuela is one of the founding members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Venezuela's huge oil reserves will keep it a major oil producer for at least the next hundred years.

Venezuela's total exports in 2000 were \$32.8 billion. Its most important nonpetroleum exports include

aluminum, steel, iron ore, petrochemicals, seafood, cement, coffee, cacao, and fruit. More than half of Venezuela's exports are to the U.S. It imported \$14.7 billion worth of merchandise in 2000. Principal imports include machinery, transportation equipment, semi-manufactured goods and agricultural commodities. The U.S. supplies 53 percent of all imports.

In contrast to the highly concentrated pattern of Venezuela's exports, the internal economy is quite diversified. Hundreds of small- and medium-sized industries provide many of the products needed by a growing local market for consumer goods. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Venezuela encouraged foreign and domestic investment in the automobile, tire, and food production industries to reduce imports of consumer goods. During the boom years of the 1970s, Venezuela allowed more imports to satisfy growing domestic demand, while restricting foreign investment in line with general Andean Pact policy. Recently, however, Venezuela has liberalized foreign investment rules, and the Government has embarked on an ambitious privatization program.

Transportation

Local

Many consider a car to be essential in Caracas, although taxis and por puestos are plentiful. Traffic is usually heavy both during the week and on weekends leaving the city. Parking can be very difficult, particularly in older sections, but parking garages exist in many areas of the city. Bicycles and motorbikes are not safe due to the steep hills and heavy traffic. Most apartment buildings provide lockable parking for their tenants. Traffic moves on the right side of the road.

Public transportation in Caracas consists of buses, taxis, collective taxis (por puestos) and the clean and modern Metro system. All are overcrowded during morning, noon and evening rush hours. Buses are

sometimes used by Americans, but they are slow and not always clean, comfortable or safe. Por puestos, which are cheap and travel fixed routes, are quite dependable.

The Metro system is clean and efficient though the network has not yet been fully completed. It runs through most major parts of town but service is not available to a few of the better parts of Caracas.

Taxis can be found on most main streets although they are scarce during rush hours and late at night. Several taxi companies have dispatcher service. Fares are currently inexpensive compared to the rates in major U.S. cities. There is a minimum charge and tips are not generally expected, although tipping is becoming more expected than previously. Prices increase with the lateness of the hour, the holiday seasons and out-of-town destinations. Take a map along, since many drivers are unfamiliar with the city.

International and Regional

The primary highway system is good, but often poorly marked, particularly in residential areas of cities. All major routes and connecting roads are paved. Mountain roads and some main roads suffer from landslides and washouts during the rainy season. Gas stations and garages can be found throughout the country.

All commercial flights, both domestic and international, use Maiquetia airport, about 15 miles from Caracas. American Airlines has daily flights to the U.S.—through Miami, San Juan and JFK in New York. United has daily flights—through Miami and New York. Two Venezuelan airlines, Avensa and Viasa, also have daily flights to the U.S.

Two national airlines, Avensa and Linea Aeropostal Venezolana (LAV), serve the principal cities of the country and many outlying areas not accessible by road. Both airlines have jet service between Caracas and the main cities of Venezuela.

Many carriers from Central and South American countries fly into Caracas, making travel to these countries relatively easy. There are also airlines from the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and Holland that fly into Caracas regularly.

Travel to some of the Caribbean islands may be complicated because of limited flight schedules.

Reservations to and from the U.S., particularly during the summer, Christmas and Easter seasons, are difficult to obtain on short notice. Personnel planning on arriving during these periods should request reservations well in advance.

Communications

Telecommunications

Local telephone service is relatively reliable when the phone lines are working; however, some people have problems with the phone lines going totally dead for weeks and sometimes even months. Long-distance calls within Venezuela may be dialed directly. Some sections of Caracas also have direct dialing to the U.S. and such calls take little time. If it is necessary to go through the long-distance operator, delays may be expected during peak periods. AT&T and MCI calling cards can be used in Caracas to call the U.S. direct, and collect calls can be made as well. The American company, GTE, acquired a controlling interest in the Venezuelan phone company in 1992. Service has improved dramatically and is expected to continue to do so.

Radio-telegraph service between the U.S. and Venezuela is very good. Local telegrams within Venezuela, however, are unreliable and sometimes slower than regular mail.

Radio and TV

Caracas has a variety of TV programs in Spanish and English. There are satellite dishes on many of the buildings that capture HBO, Showtime, USA, Disney and news channels such as CNN. Cable is also available from two cable TV compa-

nies in Caracas at a cost comparable to the same service in the U.S. The Super Bowl, World Series, U.S. Open, and other major American sporting events are telecast here. Spanish soap operas are popular here along with game shows and sitcoms. Some American series are dubbed in Spanish.

Radio stations in Caracas are similar to those in the U.S. There are stations broadcasting Latin American music, U.S. rock, jazz and classical, in the same broadcast bands (FM and AM) as in the U.S.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Caracas has a lively and competitive press with seven daily newspapers. There are three major papers: conservative, business-orientated El Universal; center-left El Nacional, and centrist El Diario de Caracas, which feature in-depth coverage of Caracas and foreign news. Caracas also has an English-language newspaper, The Daily Journal, which publishes opinions of well-known U.S. columnists and uses wire services as its principal source of news. There are also two good daily financial newspapers. In addition, The Miami Herald and the The Wall Street Journal can be purchased at Caracas newsstands a day or two late, or received via mail subscriptions. Some 20 magazines are published in Venezuela. Among the more prominent news magazines are Bohemia, Zeta, Autentico, Momento, and Elite, Numero, Veneconomia and Venezuelan Economic Review are good sources of local economic news.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Caracas has many highly respected general practitioners and specialists of all types, many of whom have had U.S. training and speak English fluently. There are several clinics organized by groups of doctors that include facilities similar to well-equipped hospitals in the U.S. The

quality of nursing care is generally below U.S. standards.

Caracas also has many U.S.-trained dentists, and many dental offices measure up to a great degree to the standards in the U.S., although some Americans have encountered problems. The cost of dental work in Caracas is generally lower than in the U.S.

Eye examinations by U.S.-trained specialists are available at reasonable prices, as are lenses and frames for glasses.

Selected pharmacies are open 24 hours daily on a rotational basis for use in case of emergencies. The schedule is printed in newspapers.

Community Health

Since 1936, a national health program has made Venezuela the largest relatively malaria-free tropical area in the world, although some resistant strains have shown up in the southern and eastern parts of the country. Many other diseases, including rabies, once endemic to the country, have been controlled.

Although health standards among the upper- and middle-classes are good, overall health conditions suffer from poor sanitation in the shack communities that surround the cities. Infectious hepatitis, amebiasis, and other intestinal problems, such as diarrhea caused by virus, bacteria or parasites, are health problems that may affect Americans. Gastroenteritis is one of the principal public health problems in Venezuela. Dengue fever, spread by mosquitos, is a rapidly expanding disease in most tropical areas. Individuals are advised to wear protective clothing and use insect repellent.

The climate in Caracas favors some allergy sufferers. However, the altitude, climate, and prevalence of tropical pollens during all seasons aggravate asthma and hay fever conditions. Sinus problems may also be aggravated. The frequency of respiratory infections such as colds is similar to that in the U.S.

Preventive Measures

The yellow immunization card is normally not checked when entering the country, but yellow fever vaccination is required for entry into many of the surrounding countries and islands. Because the vaccine is inconvenient to obtain locally, it is essential that visitors be vaccinated before arriving. Typhoid and tetanus immunizations are recommended. Immunizations against cholera are considered unnecessary. Gamma globulin has reduced the incidence of hepatitis A and personnel should take this injection every 3-6 months. Malaria is a problem in only a few areas. Mefloquine (lariam) or doxycycline is the recommended prophylaxis against malaria. The incidence of polio is similar to that of the U.S.

Sunburns are a common problem due to the close proximity of the equator, and you should use a good sunscreen to protect your skin. Sunscreens and suntan products are available in local pharmacies.

The city's faulty water pumping system has resulted in intermittent interruptions of the water supply in parts of the city. Tap water is not safe to drink and should be boiled before consumption. Nonfluoridated bottled water is available, and most apartments have bottled water delivered.

Caution should be used in eating tossed salads, slaws, raw or rare meat, and other possible sources of parasites. Cooking, boiling, or peeling is recommended. It is recommended not to eat raw seafood in the smaller towns outside Caracas.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Caracas has many flights from the U.S. arriving daily. United Airlines has daily flights from New York and Miami. American Airlines has daily flights from New York, Miami and San Juan. Viasa, a Venezuelan airline has daily flights from New

York, Miami, Houston and San Juan. Avensa, another Venezuelan airline has daily flights from New York and Miami, and Aeropostal has a daily flight from Orlando.

A valid passport and a visa or tourist card are required. Tourist cards are issued on flights from the U.S. to Venezuela for persons staying less than ninety days. For current information concerning entry, tax, and customs requirements for Venezuela, travelers may contact the Venezuelan Embassy at 1099 30th St. N.W., Washington D.C. 20007, tel: (202) 342-2214, Internet: <http://www.embavenez-us.org>. Travelers may also contact the Venezuelan consulates in New York, Miami, Chicago, New Orleans, Boston, Houston, San Francisco or San Juan.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Venezuela are strongly encouraged to register at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Caracas or the Consular Agency in Maracaibo and obtain updated information on travel and security within Venezuela. The U.S. Embassy is located at Calle Suapure and Calle F, Colinas de Valle Arriba, Caracas. The Embassy is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, telephone (011)(58)(212) 975-6411. In case of an after-hours emergency, callers should dial (011)(58)(212) 975-9821.

Cross-border violence occurs frequently in remote areas along the Colombian border in Zulia, Tachira, Apure and Amazonas states. U.S. citizens should consult the U.S. Embassy if they plan to visit these areas. Kidnapping, smuggling, and drug trafficking are common along the border between Venezuela and Colombia.

Most crime is economically motivated. Pickpockets concentrate in and around crowded bus and subway stations, along with the area around "Parque Simon Bolivar" near the "Capitolio" area in downtown Caracas. There have been cases of theft from hotel rooms and safe deposit boxes. The "barrios"

(the poor neighborhoods that cover the hills around Caracas) and isolated urban parks, such as "El Calvario" in the "El Silencio" area of Caracas, can be very dangerous. Most criminals are armed with guns or knives, and will use force. Theft of unattended valuables on the beach and from rental cars parked in isolated areas or on city streets is common. A guarded garage is not always a guarantee against theft. Travelers are advised not to leave valuables or belongings in open view even in locked vehicles. There have been incidents on Margarita Island where tourists have been targeted for robbery and theft.

Armed robberies are common in urban and tourist areas and travelers should exercise caution in displaying money and valuables. Also, four-wheel drive vehicles have been targeted in several recent carjackings.

Sporadic political demonstrations occur in urban centers. These tend to focus primarily on or near university campuses or secondary schools, and sometimes turn violent. Most tourist destinations, however, remain unaffected. The number and intensity of demonstrations have fluctuated widely. Merida, a major tourist destination in the Andes, is the scene of frequent student demonstrations.

Travelers may keep informed of local developments by following the local press (including "The Daily Journal," an English-language newspaper), radio and TV, and by consulting their local hosts, including U.S. and Venezuelan business contacts, hotels, tour guides, and travel organizers for current information on demonstrations, the purpose and location of which are often announced in advance.

U.S. citizens visiting certain areas along the border with Colombia may be subject to search and seizure. For further information regarding travel to these areas, contact the U.S. Embassy in Caracas.

A number of U.S. citizens have reported that Venezuelan officials at airports, immigration offices, and police stations have demanded bribes. U.S. citizens should report immediately to the U.S. Embassy any such demand.

U.S. citizens who do not have Venezuelan cedulas (national identity cards) must carry their passports with them at all times. Photocopies of passports prove valuable in facilitating their replacement if lost or stolen.

All pets entering Venezuela require a health certificate and a rabies certificate, issued by a veterinarian within the last 12 months, certifying that the animal is free from infections or contagious diseases, including rabies. For pets entering from the U.S., these certificates must be accompanied by a letter from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, certifying that the person signing the health certificate is a veterinarian. A Venezuelan consul must stamp and sign the health certificate and rabies certificate (and letter, if applicable). These documents must accompany the pet when shipped. Inquiries should be directed to the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C. Pets must not arrive as cargo; they must accompany the owner.

An exit permit is necessary to take a pet out of Venezuela. It is obtained from the Venezuelan Ministry of Agriculture. A rabies vaccine certificate and health certificate must be obtained from a veterinarian and these certificates must then be taken to the Ministry of Agriculture to obtain the exit permit. This must be done 15 days before actual departure. Pets must leave accompanied.

The basic Venezuelan currency unit is the Bolivar (abbreviated "Bs.") and is divided into 100 centimos. The bolivar is widely believed to be overvalued by as much as 50%.

Foreign exchange transactions must take place through commercial banks or exchange houses at the official rate. Hotels and banks often

restrict transactions to their clients only. Money exchange by tourists is most easily arranged at "casas de cambio" (exchange houses). Credit cards are accepted at most upscale tourist establishments. Visa, MasterCard and American Express have representatives in Venezuela.

Bills are printed in denominations of Bs. 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1000. Venezuelan coins, followed by their local names, are: Bs. .25 (medio); or Bs. .50 (real); Bs. 1.00 (bolivar, bolo, or "B" as pronounced in English); Bs. 2.00 (dos bolivares); and Bs. 5.00 (cinco bolivares).

The metric system is used in all local weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1. New Year's Day
 - Jan. 6. La Paradura del Niño (Parade of Baby Jesus)
 - Feb/Mar. Carnival*
 - Mar/Apr. Palm Sunday*
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Thursday*
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Holy Saturday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - Mar. 19 St. Joseph's Day
 - Apr. 19. Declaration of Independence
 - May 1. Labor Day
 - May 3. La Cruz de Mayo
 - May/June Ascension Day*
 - May/June Corpus Christi*
 - June 24 Battle of Carabobo
 - July 5. Independence Day
 - July 24. Bolivar's Birthday
 - Aug. 15 Assumption Day
 - Oct. 12. Dia de la Raza/ Columbus Day
 - Nov. 1. All Saints' Day
 - Dec. 8. Immaculate Conception
 - Dec. 25. Christmas Day
- *variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East

**Cumulative Index
Volumes 1-4**



CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

CITIES OF THE WORLD

A Compilation of Current Information
on Cultural, Geographic, and
Political Conditions in the Countries
and Cities of Six Continents, Based on
the Department of State's
"Post Reports"

In Four Volumes

Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East

Cumulative Index Volumes 1-4





CITIES OF THE WORLD SIXTH EDITION

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PREFACE

Cities of the World represents a compilation of government reports and original research on the social, cultural, political, and industrial aspects of the nations and cities of the world. Most of the country profiles included here are based on official personnel briefings issued as *Post Reports* by the U.S. Department of State. The *Post Reports* are designed to acquaint embassy personnel with life in the host country. Consequently, the reports concentrate on cities in which the U.S. government has embassies or consulates. To increase coverage of other important cities, the editors have added information on a large number of cities—31 of which are new to this edition—not reported on by the Department of State.

Since the fifth edition of *Cities of the World*, the Department of State has issued 62 new or revised *Post Reports*, all of which have been incorporated into this sixth edition. Selected data in *Post Reports* not revised by the Department of State since the last edition of *Cities of the World* have been updated by the editors with revised statistics acquired through independent research. In addition, articles have been written on thirty-three countries for which no *Post Report* exists.

Readers familiar with the fourth edition of this publication will notice that with the fifth edition the page size was enlarged to accommodate more information. This sixth edition includes new photographs selected by the Gale editors. The photographs depict scenes found in a city and countryside and, in many cases, reveal the cultural flavor of the area as well. As in the prior edition, many chapters feature a map of that country's capital or major city, with a superimposed locator map indicating the nation's geographic location in relation to its regional neighbors.

Volumes in This Series

This series includes four volumes:

- Volume 1: Africa;
- Volume 2: The Western Hemisphere (exclusive of the United States);
- Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East;
- Volume 4: Asia, the Pacific, and the Asiatic Middle East.

In all, this set provides coverage of over 2,000 cities in 193 countries.

Format and Arrangement of Entries

Cities of the World is arranged alphabetically by country name. Its chapters are divided into two basic sections, Major Cities and Country Profile, each of these with several subdivisions. A Major City listing might comprise information on Education, Recreation, and Entertainment. Other Cities, smaller cities and towns which are designated as other than major, are discussed in brief paragraphs at the end of the Major City section. Country Profile sections are subdivided into: Geography and Climate; Population; Government; Arts, Science, Education; Commerce and Industry; Transportation; Communications; Health; Clothing and Services; Local Holidays; Recommended Reading; and Notes for Travelers. Thus, *Cities of the World* presents not only basic information, but also comprehensive data on local customs, political conditions, community services, and educational and commercial facilities.

Contents and Index

The Contents and Index in each volume provide easy access to these reports. Listed under each country in the Contents are the cities that appear in its Major Cities section, as well as listings for the Other Cities and Country Profile sections. A Cumulative Index, combining the four individual volumes is found at the end of each volume. The Index is arranged alphabetically by city name, including listings for both major and minor cities that are mentioned in each volume; as well as by country name with names of cities indented below.

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to thank the U.S. Department of State for providing copies of *Post Reports* to aid in the compilation of these volumes. The editors would also like to thank Adam A. Gall and Marlon C. Tussel for their editorial assistance.

Suggestions Welcome

The editors invite comments and suggestions concerning *Cities of the World*. Please write to: Editors, *Cities of the World*, The Gale Group, Inc., 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535; fax (248) 699-8074; or call toll-free (800) 877-4253.

CITIES OF THE WORLD

**Volume 3:
Europe and the
Mediterranean Middle East**

ALBANIA

Republic of Albania

Major Cities:

Tiranë, Durrës, Shkodër

Other Cities:

Berat, Elbasan, Gjirokastrë, Korçë, Vlorë

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Albania is a country in the midst of tremendous change. From 1944 until 1990, Albania was a hard-line communist state whose leaders effectively sealed the country off from the rest of the world. The fall of communism throughout Eastern Europe in 1989 led to dramatic political changes within Albania. Massive anti-government demonstrations in 1990 forced Albania's communist leadership to make dramatic concessions, including renouncing its monopoly on power and agreeing to hold democratic elections. Democratic elections swept the communists from power in March 1992. Albania is now a democratic nation and is slowly opening itself to the outside world.

The country faces many daunting challenges, among them a collapsing economy, grinding poverty, and social unrest.

MAJOR CITIES

Tiranë

Tiranë (Tirana) is the capital of Albania and its largest city, with a population of over 245,000. Founded by a Turkish pasha in 1614, Tiranë became a crafts center with a lively bazaar. In 1920, the city was made the capital of Albania; Italianate government buildings went up in the 1930s.

The general atmosphere of Tiranë is reminiscent of 19th-century European living.

Most of Tiranë's housing consists of loose-brick apartment buildings. There are many narrow streets with old adobe one-story homes between them. Most of the city's housing is in poor condition.

Food

The local food supply has been inadequate by Western standards in availability and variety; however, there have been marked improvements recently. Availability of vege-

tables and fruits is seasonal, but prices for most items are relatively low. Local salt, sugar, rice, flour, cooking oil, and other basic items are now usually available. Milk, eggs, and good quality meat are often scarce. Soft drinks, bottled water, fruit juice, several varieties of imported beer, wine, and spirits are available.

There are several "supermarkets" in Tiranë but their stocks are usually quite limited. Locally produced wines and spirits are available.

Clothing

You will need the same kinds of clothing worn in the Mid-Atlantic. Winters are shorter and milder, and summers are longer and hot. Local ready-to-wear clothing is not of Western standards.

Albanian women usually wear skirts, trousers, or culottes, and sometimes shorts.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Western-quality toiletries, cosmetics, and soaps are expensive, and limited in supply. American cigarettes are available but cigars are not. Local pipe tobacco is not to American taste.

Basic Services: Dry-cleaning is available but generally not up to Western standards. Local shoe



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Reconstructed Christian church in Tirana

repair also does not meet Western standards. Dressmakers are available; however, quality material is not. Beauty parlors and barber shops are substandard in cleanliness.

Religious Activities

The newly established Interdenominational Protestant Assembly holds English-language services. The call-to-worship at the mosques is in Arabic, but the services are in Albanian. Masses at the Catholic and Albanian Orthodox churches are held in the Albanian language. In a few cases, Orthodox services are held in the Greek language.

Education

The Tirana International School, a private nonprofit institution that opened in September 1991, offers high-quality education in English for elementary students from 5–12 years of age. The enrollment for the school has been increasing since 1991.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Tourist areas in Albania include two “museum cities”—Berat and Gjirokastër—and archaeological sites at Apollonia, Butrint, Durrës, Bylis, and Koman. There are also

several medieval castle ruins of note.

Durrës

Durrës, with a population of approximately 85,000, is located west of Tiranë and is Albania’s second largest city. The city’s origins date back to roughly 627 B.C., making Durrës one of Europe’s oldest cities. Today, it is Albania’s principal seaport. Most of Albania’s imports enter through Durrës. Several industries are located in the city. These industries manufacture cigarettes, leather products, rubber, and plastics. Durrës location on the Adriatic Sea has led to the development of a large shipbuilding industry. An extensive railway system links Durrës to Tiranë and the cities of Lezhë, Shkodër, Elbasan, and Vlorë.

In 1991, Durrës was a point of departure for 18,000 Albanians who fled the country’s dismal economic and social conditions. Many of these persons sailed across the Adriatic Sea to Italy.

Recreation

Although Durrës is an ancient city, it has suffered many severe earthquakes and was invaded and conquered repeatedly over the

centuries. Consequently, much of its ancient architecture has been destroyed. However, visitors can still view remnants of the towns ancient walls. These walls were built during various periods by the Romans, Turks, and Venetians. An amphitheater built by the Romans in the second century has also been partially excavated and is open to tourists. North of Durrës, it is possible to visit the remains of the Porta Romana, a sixth century Roman fortification. Only a small section of its brick walls and a gateway with two towers remain standing.

One of Durrës primary attractions is the Archaeological Museum. This museum offers visitors an informative look at the history of the city. Each room in the museum is dedicated to a particular historical period. Prehistoric and Greek vases and coins can be viewed, along with artifacts from the Roman, Koman, Byzantine, Venetian, and Turkish periods. Outside of the museum are displays containing fragments of Greek and Roman sculpture.

Entertainment

Entertainment activities within Durrës are very limited. South of the city, many visitors flock to the beautiful beaches located on the Adriatic Sea. Several hotels on the waterfront offer excellent views of the Adriatic Sea and the surrounding area. Durrës is Albania’s principal holiday resort.

Shkodër

The city of Shkodër, with a population of approximately 84,000 is located in northwestern Albania on a plain surrounded by high mountains. Like Durrës Shkodër is an ancient city whose origins can be traced to the first millennium B.C. Throughout history, Shkodër has been occupied at various times by the Illyrians, Romans, Byzantines, Bulgars, Serbs, Turks, and Austrians. In the 19th century, the city became an important Roman Catholic religious center. Jesuits and Franciscan convents, schools, libraries, and churches were con-

structed. Following the communist takeover of Albania in 1944, the city became a center of resistance to the communist campaign against religion. Many Roman Catholics still live in Shkodër today, along with a large community of Muslims and a small minority of Eastern Orthodox Christians.

The city has always been one of Albania's major cultural centers. The country's first printing press was established in Shkodër in the 16th century. Also, Albania's first theatrical productions were performed in the city in the 1800s. Several noted Albanian artists have lived in Shkodër, including the poet Migjemi and Kolë Idromeno, a noted painter, architect, and photographer.

Shkodër is the main economic and marketing center of northern Albania. The city exports the grains, fruits, potatoes, and tobacco grown in fertile regions nearby. Several manufacturing industries are located in Shkodër. These factories produce processed foods, copper wire products, and textiles. Many of these factories are powered by a large hydroelectric plant located near the city.

Recreation

Shkodër has museums and mosques that are of interest to visitors. Many museums in Shkodër are located in old houses, which give visitors a flavor for the architecture of the city. The Migjeni House Museum honors one of Albania's famous poets and features personal mementos and manuscripts of Migjeni's work. Another museum, The Folk Museum, has been established in one of the city's largest houses. The museum offers beautiful displays of regional costumes and paintings of Albanian artists Kolë Idromeno and Simon Rrota. One of the city's principal mosques, the Mosque of Mehmet Pasha (Lead Mosque), is open to visitors. The interior of the mosque, with its grill-covered windows and beautiful frescoes, is of particular interest.

Enver Hoxha Street, one of Shkodër's main thoroughfares, attracts many visitors. Shops on this street are adorned with displays featuring objects from all over Albania. An exhibit on Enver Hoxha Street showcases products made and used by past and present residents of the city. The products include costumes, old weapons, fine jewelry, embroidered goods, and items made of wood, reeds, and straw. For those who want to learn about the life-styles of average Shkodër residents, Enver Hoxha Street offers a valuable educational experience.

OTHER CITIES

A city built on the slopes of Mt. Tomorr (2400m) and surrounded by fig and olive trees, **BERAT** is widely known as Albania's "Museum City." It has also been called the "City of a Thousand Windows" in reference to the many large windows of the cities red-roofed houses. The history of the site dates back to the 6th century BC, when it was home to the ancient Illyrian Dasaretas tribe. In the 9th century the town was captured by the Bulgarians, who renamed it, Beligrad (White City), from which the present name is derived. The museums, mosques, and monuments of Berat tell the stories of subsequent conquests and the will of the city to survive.

The Fortress of Berat, though considerably damaged, is still one of the most magnificent historic sites. Nearly the entire population of the town was able to live within its walls during times of distress. During the 13th century, nearly 20 Christian churches and one mosque were built inside. Those that remain include the Orthodox Cathedral of Our Lady, the Church of the Holy Trinity, the Church of St. Michael, and the Church of the Evangelists. The Church of St. Mary of Vllaherna includes 16th century mural paintings by Nikolla, son of Albania's most famous medieval painter, Onufri. The Church of St. Theodore,

located near one of the fortress entrances, has wall paintings by Onufri himself.

Art history buffs will want to visit the Cathedral of St. Nicholas, which has been meticulously restored and now houses a museum dedicated to Onufri. Works by Nikolla and other painters are also displayed, as are several icons and other religious artwork and crafts. A copy of the Berat Gospels (4th century) is here too. Points of interest in Mangalem include the Muslim quarter, the Leaden Mosque, the King's Mosque, the Bachelor's Mosque and Alveti Tekke, a small shrine where Islamic sects like the Dervishes once practiced.

Berat has a population of about 37,000 inhabitants and is 76 miles southeast of Tirana.

The city of **ELBASAN** is located in central Albania on the shores of the Shkumbin River. It was founded by the Ottomans in 1466 as a military base. It has since developed as a trading center for the corn, olives, and tobacco grown near the city. Elbasan is the home of several manufacturing industries. The industries produce oil, cement, and soap. The population of Elbasan is predominantly Muslim and numbers approximately 85,000.

Nestled on the eastern slope of the Gjere Mountains, **GJIROKASTËR** is one of southern Albania's smaller cities. During the Ottoman Turks occupation in the early 1800s, Gjirokastër became the home of the Turkish grand vizier, Ali Pasha. Pasha's palace, constructed in 1811, is still in existence today. The city was also the birthplace of Enver Hoxha, Albania's communist leader who died in 1985. Several factories in Gjirokastër produce chemicals, cigarettes, tobacco, shoes, and leather. The city is noted for its yogurt, cheese, and *hashaf*, a dish consisting of junket and figs. Gjirokastër has a population of 22,000.

KORÇË is located in southeastern Albania and is nestled in a fertile

mountain valley. The city was a major trading and commercial center during the 17th through 19th centuries. During World War II, Korçë was occupied at various times by the Italians, Greeks, and Germans.

Today, the city is a productive agricultural center for the wheat, apples, grapes, and sugar beets. In addition to agriculture, Korçë has several small industries. These industries manufacture beer, carpets, and knitted products. Korçë has a population of approximately 62,000.

The southern city of **VLORE** is Albania's second largest port city. The city was established by the Greeks around 400 B.C. Throughout history, Vlorë has been occupied by the Romans, Normans, Byzantines, Venetians, Serbs, Turks, Italians, and Germans. The former Soviet Union modernized and upgraded the city's port and used it as a naval base. Several small industries are located in the city. These industries include an olive-oil refinery, a distillery, and a fish canning plant. The city's primary attractions are the Archaeological-Ethnographic Museum and the Museum of Independence. Vlorë's population, which was composed of Muslims, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholics, is approximately 71,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Albania is a small country located on the coast of southeastern Europe. It occupies an area of approximately 11,097 square miles, slightly larger than Maryland. Albania is bordered on the north by Serbia and Montenegro, on the east by Macedonia, on the south by Greece, and on the west by the Adriatic Sea.

A little over 20 percent of Albania is flat to rolling coastal plain, poorly drained in some areas. Most of the country consists of hills and mountains, often covered with scrub forest. Major cities are located in the coastal plain or in the larger upland valleys. Primary rivers are not large and flow generally east and west. The only navigable river is the Buene (Bojana), which forms the outlet for Lake Scutari along the Albanian border with Montenegro.

Coastal areas of Albania enjoy a Mediterranean climate. Summers are dry and hot, while winters are mild and wet. Most of Albania's rainfall occurs during the winter months, although severe thunderstorms are common during the summer. Interior portions of the country experience a cooler, rainier climate. Heavy snows and bitter cold are prevalent in mountain regions.

Population

The estimated population in Albania in 2001 was 3.5 million. Approximately 95 percent of the population are ethnic Albanian. Albanians are divided into two distinct groups. Northern parts of the country are inhabited by Gegs, while southern Albania is home to the Tosks. Both groups of Albanians have similar dialects, social customs, and religion. Greeks comprise three percent of Albania's population. Small minorities of Macedonians, Roma (Gypsies), Vlachs, Bulgarians, and Serbs reside in Albania.

Albania had declared that it was the first official atheist state in the world. The government banned all public religious services in 1967. All churches and mosques throughout the country were closed. In 1990, after several antigovernment protests, the Albanian government re-instituted the right to religious expression. Traditionally, about 70 percent of Albanians were Muslim, while approximately 20 percent were Eastern Orthodox Christians and about 10 percent were Roman Catholic. However, decades of official atheism distorted these historical percentages. Following the

collapse of communism, a religious revival of sorts began, with many evangelical Christian denominations gaining new adherents.

The national language of the country is Albanian, with Tosk as the official dialect. Greek is also spoken.

In 2001, the estimated life expectancy at birth was 69 years for males, 75 years for females.

History

Throughout its history, Albania has been invaded and occupied by various foreign powers. The Ottoman Turks governed Albania from 1478 until 1912, bringing with them their Muslim faith. In 1912, Albania declared its independence from Turkey. The new country was admitted to the League of Nations in 1920 and remained independent until Italian troops invaded during World War II.

In 1943, Italy surrendered and withdrew its forces. They were quickly replaced by German troops. Small partisan groups, led by the communist National Liberation Front (NLF), launched a guerrilla campaign to oust the Germans from Albania. The Germans finally retreated on November 29, 1944. Albania was independent once more.

A provisional government was set up under the leadership of General Enver Hoxha. The United States and Great Britain formally recognized the new government with the understanding that free elections would be held. Instead, Hoxha consolidated his control of the country. On January 11, 1946, Albania became a republic with a communist government closely tied to the Soviet Union. The United States and Great Britain responded by breaking off diplomatic relations with Albania.

By 1960, Albania's close relationship with the Soviet Union had soured. Albania's leaders believed that the Soviet government under Nikita Krushchev was turning away

from strict communist doctrines. They also resented Soviet interference in Albania's economic and internal affairs. Tensions between the two nations reached a breaking point in 1961. The Soviet Union and Albania severed diplomatic relations. Also, Albania ordered all Soviet troops and naval personnel to leave the country.

Albania soon embraced the world's other communist nation, the People's Republic of China. By late 1961, the Chinese had provided massive amounts of military and financial aid to Albania. China quickly became Albania's staunchest ally and benefactor. This close relationship began to unravel in the early 1970s. Albania strongly criticized China's decision to improve relations with the United States as an affront to Marxist-Leninist traditions. China responded by drastically reducing all trade and financial assistance. In 1978, the Chinese informed Albanian officials that because of Albania's continued hostility toward its policies, China would end all trade and economic aid. Diplomatic ties were not severed, although relations between the two countries are tense. China and Albania agreed to resume trade in 1983.

In April 1985 Enver Hoxha, Albania's leader since 1946, died. He was replaced by a longtime protege, Ramiz Alia. Alia continued Hoxha's isolationist, anti-Western policies. However, Albania's hard-line government would soon be touched by the winds of reform sweeping Eastern Europe.

Massive antigovernment protest erupted throughout Albania in 1990. Seeking to end the unrest, Alia issued a number of reforms. Albanians were granted the freedom to travel abroad and a restoration of the right to practice religion, which had been abolished in 1967. Despite these changes, many Albanians remain unsatisfied or have left the country. Chronic food shortages, rampant crime, and government corruption remain a problem.

In early 1997, Albania dissolved into chaos when financial pyramid investment schemes collapsed and wiped out the life savings of thousands.irate citizens blamed President Sali Berisha for the collapse of the popular schemes and took to the streets, looting stores, homes, and armories. Thousands fled the country. The situation improved later that year, with the help of 6,000 UN-backed foreign troops to restore order.

Government

At the present time, Albania's governmental structure is undergoing many changes. Massive antigovernment protest erupted in Albania during 1990 and early 1991. In response to the unrest, the communist Albanian Workers' Party decided to give up its 45-year domination of Albania and allow other political groups to exist. The Albanian Workers' Party renounced its Marxist doctrines.

On March 22, 1992, Albania held national parliamentary and presidential elections. The Communist Albanian Workers' Party, which had renamed itself the Albanian Socialist Party, was trounced by the opposition Democratic Party (DP). Following the elections, Democratic Party leader Sali Berisha was sworn in as Albania's new president on April 9, 1992. President Berisha is Albania's first non-communist leader since the end of World War II. In the 1996 parliamentary elections, the DP won 122 of 140 possible seats, but in the 2001 elections the Socialist Party gained a parliamentary majority.

The flag of Albania is red with a black two-headed eagle in the center.

Arts, Science, Education

All children ages seven through 15 receive primary education at government expense. Secondary education is available in professional and vocational schools. In 1995, there

were an estimated 1,782 primary schools with over 550,000 students.

The University of Albania and the Albanian Academy offer opportunities for higher education.

The estimated literacy rate in Albania is 93 percent.

Commerce and Industry

Albania is considered to be one of the poorest counties in Europe. The economy has been stagnant after years of outdated economic practices and an unwillingness to seek financial help from other countries. The Albanian government has begun to implement various reforms to spur economic growth. In July 1990, the government gave up sole control of Albanian industries and allowed private citizens to start their own businesses. However, the government stipulated that owners of private businesses could only employ members of their immediate family. In mid-1992, the new Albanian government implemented a series of measures in an attempt to improve the economy. Unemployment benefits were cut dramatically and price controls on most essential commodities were removed. The result led to anti-government sentiments among many Albanians. However, the economy improved after 1993. In 1995, the government began privatizing large state enterprises.

Albania has a very small industrial base. Its main industries include cement, textiles, oil products, and food processing. The government is in the process of developing Albania's chemical and engineering industries.

Rich mineral deposits can be found in Albania, especially chromium, coal, oil, chrome, copper, and nickel. Many of these deposits lie undeveloped. In recent years, the Albanian government has intensified its efforts to exploit the country's mineral wealth.

Because of its rugged, mountainous terrain, Albanian has limited arable land. Most of the suitable farmland is located along the Adriatic sea-coast. Over one-half of Albania's work force is engaged in farming. Principal crops include wheat, corn, cotton, fruits, vegetables, and tobacco.

The majority of Albania's trade is with European countries. Italy and Greece are the major trading partners. Other trading partners include the U.S., Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Albania imports large amounts of chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, machinery, and iron and steel products. Its primary exports are petroleum products, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, metal ores, and asphalt.

Albania's estimated purchasing power parity of its gross domestic product (GDP) was \$10.5 billion dollars in 2000, or about \$3,000 per capita. The unit of currency is the *lek*.

Transportation

In 1998, Albania had approximately 11,460 miles (18,450 kilometers) of roadway. Most mountainous regions, however, have poor roads that are unsuitable for cars. Since February 1991, the Albanian government has allowed private citizens to have their own vehicles. Bicycles and donkeys are common forms of transportation.

Regular flights are available from Albania's capital, Tiranë, to Belgrade, Zurich, Berlin, Budapest, and Bucharest. The Greek airline, Olympic Airways, offers a weekly flight from Athens to Tiranë. In 1990, Albania opened its airspace to all foreign commercial airlines.

Because of its location on the Adriatic Sea, Albania has several excellent deep-water ports. The main ports are located in the cities of Durrës, Vlorë, Shengjih, and Sarande. Also, a passenger ferry service is available from Durrës to the Italian city of Trieste.

It is possible to travel around Albania by rail. Railroads connect the cities of Tiranë, Durrës, Shkodër, and Vlorë. Another rail line is available between Durrës and Titograd, Montenegro.

Communications

Albania's main radio station is Radio Tiranë. Foreign broadcasts are available on shortwave frequencies in 18 languages, including English. Seventeen AM and five FM stations carry domestic radio programs.

Regular television programs became available in 1971. There are nine television stations in the country.

Telephone service in Albania is inadequate. In 1997, the country had only 87,000 telephones. Some small villages may not have telephone service.

Internet usage is limited but available via internet cafes or by contracting with one of the seven available Internet Service Providers.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The most direct and frequently used route to Tiranë is via Zürich or Rome. Alitalia operates one flight daily between Rome and Tiranë. Swiss Air has several flights weekly to Zurich. For travelers arriving via automobile, the recommended route is from Greece via Ioannina or Kastoria. Ferry service is also available from Bari and Trieste, Italy, to Durrës, Albania, which is about 45 minutes by car to Tiranë.

There are no restrictions or controls on the import of pets into Albania at this time. A quarantine is not required for pets, and there is no fee for incoming pets. However, travelers coming to Tiranë with pets should insure that shots are up-to-

date and their animals are in good health, as veterinary care is not always up to U.S. standards. All pets should be neutered, if desired, before coming to Albania. Very limited dog and cat food and pet supplies are available on the local market. Pets transiting European capitals (such as Rome) to and from post must comply with health standards for those countries.

Travelers are advised to exercise caution and avoid crowds due to security problems. All American citizens in Albania are strongly urged to register at the U.S. Embassy located at Rruga e Elbasanit 103, Tirana.

The monetary unit in Albania is the lek. Albania is a cash economy with virtually no acceptance of credit cards.

Albania uses the metric system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 2	Albanian New Year's Day
Mar. 22	Nevruz
Mar/Apr.	Western Easter*
Apr/May	Orthodox Easter*
May 1	May Day
Nov. 29	Albanian Independence Day
Nov. 29	National Liberation Day
.....	Small Bajram* (end of Ramandan)
.....	Great Bajram* (Feast of the Sacrifice)
Dec. 25	Christmas

*variable

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ANDORRA

Principality of Andorra

Major City:

Andorra la Vella

Other Cities:

Encamp

INTRODUCTION

ANDORRA is the last of the independent March states—buffer states originally created by Charlemagne to keep the Muslim Moors out of Christian France. Tradition has it that Charlemagne granted a charter to the Andorran people in return for their fighting the Moors. A dispute between the Spanish bishop of Urgel and the French counts of Foix over the control of Andorra led to a *paréage*—a feudal institution recognizing equal rights of two rulers over a territory. On its secure mountain citadel, Andorra has existed outside the mainstream of European history, with few ties to countries other than France and Spain. This condition remained until the 1930s, when improvements in transportation and communications helped create a foundation for the country's tourist industry after World War II.

MAJOR CITY

Andorra la Vella

Andorra la Vella is the capital and the largest city, with a population of about 22,000. The city is located near the Riu Valira valley. A north-

south highway links Andorra la Vella with the Spanish and French borders. Buses are the most common means of mass transit, providing regular service to Seo de Urgel and Barcelona in Spain, and to Perpignan in France. There are no railways or commercial airports, but the airport at Seo de Urgel is only about 12 miles from Andorra la Vella. Roads provide passenger and freight transport routes, and there are several cable cars in operation. Trade and tourism form the basis of the economy, with a growing financial services sector. Andorra is a tax haven because there are no direct taxes. Prior to the creation of the European Union, Andorra la Vella was an active commercial center for trade in consumer goods, which were duty-free. Andorran manufactured goods still remain tariff-free, but agricultural products are subject to EU tariffs.

Recreation and Entertainment

Andorra's location high in the Pyrenees makes it a prime ski area. There is snowcover for six months, usually with clear and sunny skies, and resorts attract skiers from France, Spain, and elsewhere around Europe. Once ski season is over, hikers, mountaineers, and rock climbers visit Andorra's mountains. Hunting, fishing, cycling, and horse-

back riding are also popular outdoor activities.

Folk dancing is a popular form of entertainment among Andorrans. The national dance is the *sardana*, but there are various regional dances, such as the *contrapas* in Andorra la Vella. Folk singing is a popular pastime, and traditional pantomimes are still performed as well.

Visitors, mostly from France and Spain, come for summer holidays to enjoy the pleasant climate and scenery. There is skiing at Pas de la Casa and Soldeu in the winter.

Romanesque churches and old houses of interest are located in Ordino, Encamp, Sant Julià de Lòria Les Escaldes, Santa Coloma, and other villages. The best known is the shrine of Our Lady of Meritxell, Andorra's patroness, between Camilo and Encamp. The church houses a statue (the Virgin of Meritxell) that, according to legend, was found hundreds of years ago on a snowy hillside surrounded by blooming plants.

Many people from France and Spain make an annual trek to Andorra every September 8 for the festival day of Our Lady of Meritxell. Each of the larger villages has its own festival for the celebration.

The National Library and National Archives of Andorra are both located in Andorra la Vella. The country also has a general interest museum in Escaldes-Engordany, a decorative arts museum, and a science and technical museum focusing on the history of transportation in Encomp.

OTHER CITIES

Automobile enthusiasts will want to take a trip to **ENCAMP**, where you can see the Museu Nacional de l'Automòbil which exhibits about 100 cars dating from 1898 to 1950, as well as a number of antique motorcycles and bicycles.

The best skiing spots in the country are here, at the Soldeu-El Tarter and Pas de la Casa-Grau Roig resorts. Those who prefer a quiet afternoon of sightseeing can walk across town to see the beautiful Romanesque frescoes of the Església Sant Romà de les Bons (12th century), or the art and architecture of Sant Miquel de la Mosquera, situated in the center of the town, and the church of Santa Eulàlia, with the highest bell tower in Andorra.

Encamp, with a population of about 10,600 (1999 est.), is located about 3 miles from Andorra la Vella.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Andorra is landlocked along the southern slopes of the Pyrenees Mountains between the French departments of Ariège and Pyrénées-Orientales to the north and the Spanish provinces of Gerona and Lérida to the south. The country has a total area of 174 square miles, or about 2.5 times the size of Washington, D.C.

Andorra's main river basin is the Riu Valira, with two distinct branches and six open basins. Most of the country is rough and mountainous, and there is little level surface. The valleys have an elevation of at least 3,000 feet, and the average altitude is over 6,000 feet. The country's highest point is Coma Pedrosa (9,665 feet).

Andorra's high elevation causes severe winters, and the northern valleys have snow on the ground for several months. Rain falls mainly in April and October, and the humidity is generally low. Summer temperatures depend largely on the altitude.

Population

Andorra's population is approximately 68,000, with a density of 374 persons per square mile. The population lives mainly in the seven valleys that form Andorra's political districts. About one-third of the population consists of ethnic Andorrans, whose origins are Catalan. Almost half the population is Spanish, and there are smaller numbers of French and Portuguese. Over 92% of the population in Roman Catholic, and Roman Catholicism is the official religion of the state. There are small numbers of Protestants and Jews.

The official language is Catalan, but French and Spanish are also spoken.

Government

Andorra has a unique form of government. In 1607, an edict established the head of the French state and Spain's Bishop of Urgel as co-princes of Andorra. Andorra pays a token tribute of Fr960 to the president of France and P460 to the bishop. Each year the bishop also receives cheese, capons, partridges, and hams as part of the tribute.

In 1997, Marc Forné Molné won the general election to become president of the General Council. The council designates as its head a first syndic (syndic procureur général) and a second syndic for the conduct of administration.

The General Council consists of four councilors from each of the seven parishes, for a total of 28. Half of the seats are based on a national list and half are elected. In 1992, the voting age was lowered to 18 and broadened to include spouses of Andorran citizens and long-term residents. The Superior Council of Justice oversees and administers the legal system. Courts apply the customary law of Andorra and supplement it with Roman law and customary Catalan law.

The national flag is a tricolor of blue, yellow, and red vertical stripes. On the state flag the yellow stripe bears the coat of arms.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is provided by both French- and Spanish-language schools and is required of students until age 16. The French-language schools are partially subsidized by France, while some of the Spanish-language schools are supported by the church. Higher education for

secondary school graduates is available in France and Spain.

Commerce and Industry

The government encourages private investment in local companies. In addition to handicrafts, manufacturing includes cigars and cigarettes, distilled liquors, frozen food, and furniture.

Andorra's economy is based mainly on trade and tourism. There are over 240 hotels and 50 restaurants, making the tourist trade an important part of the economy. Andorra's government is trying to attract tourists from countries other than Spain and France. The banking industry is also important, because Andorra is a tax haven for foreign financial transactions and investments.

Transportation

A north-south highway links Andorra la Vella with the Spanish and French borders. Secondary roads also cross the border, but many are closed during the winter. Buses are the main means of transportation and provide regular service to Seo de Urgel and Barcelona in Spain, and to Perpignan in France. From the airport at Barcelona, Spain, it takes 2-3 hours by bus or taxi to reach Andorra. There is daily bus service to Barcelona and to Toulouse, France. Andorra has no commercial airports or railways.

Communications

Postal and telecommunications services are handled by the Spanish and French administrations. There are two radio stations, and Andorra has the highest transmitter in Europe. Radio and television are also provided through agreements with the Spanish and French government networks. There are two daily newspapers, the *Diari D'Andorra* and *Poble Andorra*. There are also some smaller Andor-

ran newspapers, and French and Spanish papers are widely available.

Health

Andorra has over a 100 hospital beds and a few dozen physicians. Catholic priests and lay personnel take an active role in administering the country's medical facilities.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport is necessary but a visa is not required for tourist or business stays of up to three months. For further information concerning entry requirements for Spain, travelers may contact the Embassy of Spain at 2375 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20037 tel.: (202) 728-2330, or the nearest Spanish consulate in Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, or San Juan. Further information on Andorra can also be obtained from the Andorran Mission to the U.N., 2 U.N. Plaza, 25th Floor, New York NY 10018, tel. (212) 750-8064.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

January 1New Year's Day
 *Good Friday
 *Easter Monday
 September 8National Festival
 December 25Christmas

*Variable.

RECOMMENDED READING

Carrick, Noel. *Andorra*. New York, NY: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.



Vienna, Austria

AUSTRIA

Republic of Austria

Major Cities:

Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Graz, Linz

Other Cities:

Baden, Bregenz, Dornbirn, Eisenstadt, Enns, Klagenfurt, Leoben, Steyr, Villach, Wels, Wiener Neustadt

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Austria. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Nature heaved mountains to the sky and gouged deep green valleys in Austria; the Alps and their foothills cross from west to east and cover three-fourths of the pear-shaped republic.

Its nine provinces shape a nation of diverse charm. In the Tirol, winter sees garlanded cattle return to valley farms from summer pasture on meadow heights, and skiers claim the slopes. Neighboring Salzburg, too, is a paradise of winter sports and summer hiking; its namesake city holds a famed festival rich with the music of a land that gave the world such greats as Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, and Haydn. Pine-forested and rocky peaks of these

provinces contrast with the blue lakes of Carinthia and the green vineyards of Styria.

Vienna, capital and once the core of the far-flung Austro-Hungarian domain, lifts its baroque silhouette above the plains of a brown river-immortalized as the beautiful Blue Danube waltz.

A quarter of Austria's population lives in Vienna along the winding streets of a past grand age or in one of the many modern apartment houses built by a booming economy. Steady expansion of mining, metalworking, and hydroelectric power has more than doubled Austria's industrial output since 1938, though one of six Austrians still farms the mountainous land. Hard work has not changed Austria's *Gemutlichkeit*, the gay, relaxed outlook that runs through its life like the swirling lilt of a Viennese waltz.

Vienna is one of Europe's oldest capitals. Noted for its physical beauty and rich culture life, Vienna is a cosmopolitan city that has historically served as a bridge between East and West. It is host to several important United Nations agencies. The dramatic changes in Eastern Europe since 1989 and Austria's entry into the European Union have highlighted the country's role in Europe's rapidly evolving political

and economic institutions, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), based in Vienna. An assignment to Vienna offers a challenging, professional environment as well as attractive recreational and travel opportunities

MAJOR CITIES

Vienna

Vienna, Austria's capital and largest city, is located in the Danube basin at the eastern end of the European Alpine range, near the borders of Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Initially established as a Roman outpost and trading center on the banks of the Danube, Vienna evolved, under centuries of Habsburg rule, into one of the world's most important capitals.

In the 19th Century the city was the leading capital in Central Europe. After the Habsburg Empire was dissolved in late 1918, however, the imperial city became the capital of a state unsure of its own identity. The political and economic crises of the 1920's and 1930's, World War II, and the postwar occupation stifled progress and reduced the city to an impoverished remnant of its once

great past. It was sometimes referred to as “a head without a body.”

Since 1966, however, the city has undergone a rejuvenation. The newcomer's first impressions are those of activity—new construction, renovation, street repairs, and traffic. The city's center lies within the First District, surrounded by the Ring (site of the old city walls, but now a broad thoroughfare). The main shopping area, fine hotels and restaurants, as well as many historic palaces and churches, are located in or very near to this district.

Knowledge of German is very important and helpful for professional effectiveness and full enjoyment of Austrian culture, although English is widely spoken.

Food

The Austrian market provide adequate quality and quantities of virtually all foods.

Local Austrian stores and markets are well stocked and are widely patronized by the U.S. community. Fresh vegetables, fruits, chicken, pork, veal, and beef are in good supply. Meat prices are higher than those in Washington. Cuts of meat differ, and meat is not aged.

Clothing

Clothing worn in Vienna is much like that worn in the northeastern U.S. Most Austrians dress conservatively. No special requirements or taboos exist.

Men: Ready-made suits are more limited in size and style than in the U.S. Tailors are good and materials are plentiful, but again, very expensive. Men may not find the style and fit of Austrian shoes entirely to their taste.

Women: The more expensive women's shops carry a wide variety of clothing of good style and quality. Generally, however, the selection of ready-made clothing is more limited than in the U.S. and much more

expensive. Fabrics of all types are available, and dressmakers are generally good, but both are expensive.

Women will find low-heeled shoes indispensable for Vienna's many cobblestone streets. Good quality women's shoes are readily available here, but narrow widths and small sizes are hard to find and are expensive. It is best to buy shoes before leaving the U.S. Warm, thick-soled boots are a necessity.

Women may wish to bring ball gowns to wear at any of Vienna's many balls held during Fasching season (between January 1 and Mardi Gras).

Children: Although expensive and somewhat limited, local children's clothing is attractive and of excellent quality. Rainboots bought here are worn without shoes. Many parents have difficulty finding shoes to fit their children's feet.

Supplies and Services

Cosmetics are available on the local market. Many women bring or order their favorite brands of cosmetics from the U.S. Most sundry supplies are sold on the local market, but are quite expensive.

Mothers may wish to bring a supply of baby bottles, nipples, and sterilizers. Baby furniture is sold locally but is expensive.

All basic community services such as dressmaking, tailoring, shoe repair, dry-cleaning, laundries, beauty shops, etc., are available locally, but expensive. Repair service for radios, phonographs, and electrical appliances is adequate but usually slow. Remember that most Austrians take a month's vacation in summer, and many shops, laundries, dry-cleaners, etc., are closed during that time.

Domestic Help

The rising Austrian living standard and low employment rate have led to a severe shortage of domestic help, and domestics are increasingly expensive. The basic monthly salary for a general, full-time, live-in ser-

vant is normally can be somewhat high, since the cost of food, health, and social insurance, vacation, and Christmas bonus must also be considered. Specific wage information may be obtained from the Vienna Retail Price Schedule, DSP-33. Extra catering help is available for entertaining, but is expensive.

Employers should insist that their servants have medical exams and chest X-rays before hiring them.

Religious Activities

The Vienna Community Church, an English-speaking interdenominational church with Sunday school and an American pastor, was established in 1957 by English-speaking Protestants in Vienna. Roman Catholic services in English are held at the Votive Kirche and confessions are heard in English. An Anglican-Episcopal Church, Christ Church (affiliated with the British Embassy), a Church of Christ Scientist, a Baptist Chapel, and a Methodist Church also have services in English.

German language Catholic masses are conducted daily and German services are conducted in several Lutheran churches, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the Reformed Church, several Methodist churches, several Baptist churches, and a Greek Orthodox church. A Quaker meeting is held weekly. Services at a Jewish Synagogue are conducted in Hebrew.

Education

The American International School (A.I.S.), operated under the sponsorship of the American and Canadian Ambassadors, offers a full curriculum from nursery school through grade 12. Over 50 nationalities are represented from among the school's 800 students. The director, the majority of the faculty, and about one-third of the student body are American.

While using the latest American teaching techniques, the school also takes advantage of local cultural resources. The result is an intellec-



Street scene in Vienna

Courtesy of Mira Bossowska

tually stimulating program which makes maximum use of the advantages afforded by the school's international staff and student body.

The elementary grades program includes art, music, Austrian studies and culture, and physical education, as well as a traditional U.S. curriculum. A daily course in German is compulsory for Grades 1-12 and four times a week in kindergarten. The high school college-preparatory program is designed to meet the admission requirements of the best American colleges and universities. The regular U.S.-style curriculum is complemented by the International Baccalaureate Program, a course of studies leading to

a diploma recognized by universities around the world. Academic standards are high. Children returning to the U.S. have been accepted at leading colleges and universities.

The physical plant of the school, built in 1964, is designed to provide an educational environment like that in the U.S. The buildings include a library, science labs, cafeteria, and new (1987) gymnasium. Athletic fields and a large wooded area are part of the 17-acre complex.

If you have received firm notice of an assignment here and are planning to enroll your children, write

directly to the school, giving the ages and grades of the children. The address is Salmansdorferstrasse 47, A-1190 Vienna, Austria.

Applicants for the first grade must be 6 years old by September 1 in the year of their entry; for the kindergarten they must be 5 by the same date. The school presently has no boarding facilities.

The Vienna International School (V.I.S.), located at Strasse der Menschenrechte 1, A-1220 Vienna, Austria, offers instruction in all grades, but follows a predominantly British curriculum, and has a more international faculty and student body than the A.I.S.

The Vienna Bilingual School (VBS) incorporates German/English bilingual teaching from Kindergarten to upper secondary school. VBS is a state school program and no fee is required. Inquiries can be addressed to VS 10, Selma-Lagerloef-Gasse 20, 1100 Vienna, Austria.

The French school, le Lycee Francais, is located at Liechtensteinstrasse 37a, A-1090 Vienna, Austria and has classes from kindergarten through high school. A branch of the worldwide Sacred Heart Schools, operated by the Sacred Heart Catholic Order, has a German-language curriculum and is coordinated with other Sacred Heart schools.

The Danube International School (D.I.S.) is an independent, nondenominational co-educational day school with courses designed for students seeking an international education in Vienna. The school was founded in 1992 by parents of the Vienna business community. Students are drawn from the diplomatic, international and local business communities and consists of grades K - 12 with an approximate enrollment of 280 students from over 30 different countries. At the elementary level, the International Schools Curriculum Project forms the basis of the curriculum, while the Middle School is strongly

influenced by the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programs. In the High School the curriculum enables students to be accepted by a range of colleges and universities throughout the world, including the U.S. Contact the registrar for further information: Gudrunstrasse 184, A-1100 Vienna, Austria, Tel: 043-1-603-02-46, Fax: 043-1-603-02-48.

The Vienna Christian School (V.C.S.) was founded in 1986 and is a private Christian school for grades 1-12. VC.S. has joined with the Network of International Christian Schools (NICS). NICS is an International Network of Christian Schools whose goal is to provide excellent academic training in a non-denominational setting. VC.S. serves children from a broad range of backgrounds, including business, diplomatic, United Nations, and missionary communities. VC.S. follows a basic American curriculum taught by certified teachers (in English), which leads to a fully recognized High School diploma. The full program included middle and high school art, sports, music, and drama. In 1996-1997 school year enrollment was 130 representing 23 different countries. The VC.S. consists of 2 buildings, 20 classrooms, and 1 library. The faculty at VC.S. is made up of U.S., U.K., Canada, and Austrian backgrounds. The VC.S. is located in Vienna's 19th District in the north part of the city; Kreilplatz 1/2, A-1190 Vienna. The phone number when calling from the U.S. is: 01143-1-318-82-11.

There are many private and state run nursery schools for ages 3-6.

Sports

Tourism is extremely important in Austria and the quality and number of the country's sports facilities are undoubtedly among the principal reasons.

The ski slopes at Kitzbuehel and on the Arlberg (Lech, Zuers), only 6-8 hours from Vienna, are among the best in the world. Good skiing can also be found less than 2 hours from Vienna at Semmering. Excellent ski

equipment can be purchased or rented in Vienna or at the ski resorts, although at a higher cost than in the U.S.

Hunting in Austria is varied and excellent. It is, however, quite expensive. The overall season for all game is long. Game is abundant, e.g., roebuck, stag, snipe, pheasant, etc.

Both a hunting license, "Jagdkarte," and hunting permission card, "Jagderlaubnis," are necessary before taking part in a hunt. Hunting premiums are charged in accordance with the type of game taken. These charges vary, but are generally very high by U.S. standards. Hunting is by invitation only and always done on game preserves. Contacts can be arranged to secure invitations through local tourist agencies.

To secure a hunting license, the applicant must present proof of his hunting ability, usually a valid certificate from a hunting organization in another country. Lacking a valid license, a hunting proficiency exam is administered by local authorities. Two sporting guns (unloaded) can be imported. Ammunition is available locally.

Fishing in Austria is also excellent. One can obtain permits to fish by invitation or by joining the Austrian Fishing Association "Oesterreichische Fischerei Gesellschaft," which assigns specific sections of a stream. To save money, bring your own fishing equipment; however, all types of equipment including spinners and flies may be purchased locally.

Vienna has several riding stables and many tennis and squash courts. A number of health clubs exist throughout the city. Ice skating is available all year round at the Stadthalle and from October through March at three other locations around Vienna. Three 18-hole golf courses are within 20 miles of Vienna; one is located at Prater Park.

Memberships at any of these golf courses can be arranged through the UNIDO Golf Club at reduced prices. By joining the Austrian Golf Association, one may also gain entrance to play on some of the finest courses in Europe. Sailboating and swimming on the Old Danube (now a beautiful lake) or at one of the many indoor or outdoor pools, biking, and hiking in the Vienna Woods are other favorite pastimes. Jogging is becoming increasingly popular in Vienna.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The beauty of its rustic landscape, the network of good highways, and the comfortable accommodations of its "Gasthaeuser" (inns) make Austria a paradise for those who love the outdoors.

The "Wachau", an area between Melk and Krems along the Danube, is famous for its vineyards, fruit trees, castles, and churches. The monastery at Melk contains one of the world's finest old libraries and a wealth of paintings, tapestries, and art objects.

The Province of Burgenland (an hour's drive southeast from Vienna) is an area of gently rolling hills dotted with vineyards, spas, and castles. Lake Neusiedl, a favorite Viennese resort area on the Austro-Hungarian border, has gained worldwide fame as a bird sanctuary; it also provides good sailing.

The central part of Austria, the "Salzkammergut", a beautiful recreation area with high mountains, lakes, hunting, fishing, ski resorts, old castles, and churches, is about 3 hours from Vienna.

Eastern European points accessible by car include Budapest (4 hours), Prague (5 hours), and Bratislava (1 hour). Visas are no longer required for visits to these cities by U.S. passport holders.

People generally travel to vacation areas by private car, but the daily trains and buses throughout the country are excellent and inexpen-



Skyline view from St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

sive. The Salzburg-Vienna autobahn affords rapid, easy access to Munich and the rest of southern Germany.

Entertainment

Vienna is the musical capital of Europe. The Vienna State Opera, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony, and the Volksooper are outstanding. The talents of world-famous conductors and virtuosos are on display throughout the year, although the opera houses close for July and August of each year. Tickets are very expensive. The Vienna Festival, held annually from mid-May to mid-June, is one of the high points of Viennese cultural life.

The Vienna theater also enjoys a worldwide reputation. Paced by the famed Burgtheater, the many theaters present the classical works of Goethe and Schiller (in German) as well as the most recent Broadway hits.

There are 3 theaters in Vienna presenting stage plays in English, the Fundus, the International Theatre, and the English Theatre. In addition, there are 4 movie theaters which offer original language movies (primarily in English).

Except for July and August and a short period during the winter, Sunday morning dawns with a special treat for the Viennese: the famous "Lipizzaner" white horses of the Spanish Riding School perform in the Riding Hall of the Hofburg, and the Vienna Boys' Choir sings in the Hofburg Chapel. During the summer, "Lipizzaner" performances are also shown on Wednesday afternoons. Tickets must be ordered by mail 6 to 8 weeks in advance or purchased through a Viennese ticket agent.

Vienna has many good restaurants with varying prices. Restaurants in the hills overlooking the city are popular, especially in summer. The

wine drinking cellars and gardens in Grinzing and Neustift are famous for their "Heurigen" (new wine) and folk song atmosphere. (The typically Viennese word, "Heurige", refers not only to the new wine itself, but also to the establishments in which it is served and to special occasions celebrated in those establishments.)

Social Activities

The American community in Vienna is not a tightly knit, highly organized social group. This is understandable when one considers that a metropolis like Vienna offers so much in the way of recreation, entertainment, and varied social contacts. Social recreation generally takes the form of cocktail parties, buffet suppers, dinners, receptions and "Heurigen."

The American Women's Association, open to all American women in Vienna, meets from September to June. They publish "Living in Vienna," which many find to be a

useful guide for daily survival in the city.

The American International School has a limited extracurricular program for students, including athletic teams. The U.S. Embassy sponsors Boy Scout Troop 427 and Cub Scout Pack 427, both of which are official members of the Transatlantic Council of Boy Scouts of America. The American International Baseball Club, Little League, is open to 6–15 year olds.

An English-speaking, mixed bowling league competes once a week for about 9 months of the year.

Salzburg

Salzburg, “*die schöne Stadt*,” is one of the world’s most beautiful cities, both in its surroundings and in its architecture. It lies at an altitude of 1,400 feet, and is divided by the Salzach River into the “new” and “old” parts. While the city itself has a population of only 138,000, it is visited yearly by more than a million-and-a-half tourists.

Archaeological finds date the founding of the city to the Stone Age. During the Roman period to about A.D. 500, the Old City, then called Juvavum, was important as the center of administrative government. Early in the eighth century, Salzburg began to develop around the monastery of St. Peter. In the year 800 (approximately), it became the seat of an archbishopric and was an ecclesiastical residence for almost one thousand years. Following the city’s secularization in 1802, it was given to Archduke Ferdinand, and then, between 1805 and 1815, Salzburg fell successively to Austria, France, and Bavaria. The Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) returned the city to Austria. The city of Salzburg is the capital of the province of the same name (population approximately 441,500).

The dominant architectural feature of Salzburg is the Hohensalzburg, an 11th-century fortress some 400 feet above the city. The views from

the ramparts are spectacular. Below the fortress are many examples of baroque architecture, including the ancient palaces of medieval archbishops, domed churches, and spacious squares with some of the most remarkable fountains in Europe. The tall, narrow, and well-kept houses lining the streets of the Old City testify to the pride the Salzburgers have in their tradition. The Residenz, built late in the 16th century for Archbishop Wolf Dietrich, opens its state apartment to view.

Next to the Residenz is Salzburg’s huge cathedral, and nearby is St. Peter’s Romanesque basilica, with its adjoining burial ground. The lovely old Mirabell gardens lie across the river.

Schools for Foreigners

Some American children attend schools in Salzburg, but classes are taught only in German. A small, two-room school at the U.S. base in Berchtesgaden teaches grades one through eight (staff dependents), and commuting is by bus.

Two American-style boarding schools at the secondary level are in the area: International Preparatory School at Moostrasse 106, A-5020, Salzburg; and Sea Pines Abroad at A-5324, Faistenau bei Salzburg.

Arrangements for students to attend the American International School (AIS) in Vienna must be made in advance. No established boarding facilities are at the AIS and living arrangements must be approved by the school before admission is granted.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Salzburg is open to students of all nationalities, and many U.S. students attend. In addition, the world-renowned Mozarteum offers advanced instruction to students of music. The Orff Institute, administratively connected to the Mozarteum, offers combined instruction in music and rhythmic, according to the musical education principles of the com-

poser Carl Orff. The Institute is open to all age levels. The Summer Academy of the Mozarteum offers music instruction for advanced students during the summer months.

Recreation and Entertainment

Vacationers generally travel by private car, but the daily trains and buses throughout Austria are excellent and inexpensive. The Salzburg-Vienna *autobahn* affords rapid, easy access to Munich and southern Germany.

A trip from Salzburg to Bregenz on Lake Constance (the Bodensee) provides one of the most spectacular drives in Europe, passing the length of Salzburg, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg. Quiet mountain valleys, particularly in the Langau area, afford a glimpse of native customs and dress unchanged by modern fashions. The area is rarely visited by tourists.

Skiing opportunities near Salzburg are practically limitless, with slopes ranging from beginners to competition only a short distance away. For those wishing to go to better known ski areas, Innsbruck is two hours ways, and both Kitzbühel and Zell am See are even closer.

Salzburg offers good tennis (indoor and outdoor) and golf. A small but picturesque golf course is located at Klessheim, on the outskirts of the city, and a rugged nine-hole course is operated by the Berchtesgaden center. Sailing is a popular summer sport on the lakes within a short distance from the city.

Salzburg, the birthplace and home of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, is one of the most music-oriented cities of the world. Part of the house on Getreidegasse where Mozart was born is now a museum and there is a commemorative statue on the Mozart Platz. The *Festspiele*, celebrated here annually from mid-July through August since 1925, draws thousands of music-loving tourists from all over the world and features widely known conductors and performers. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and its conductor, are



Skyline view of Salzburg from Hohensalzburg

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

special favorites, and the highlight of the season is the open-air performance of the medieval play, *Jedermann* (Everyman). Since 1920, this morality play by Hugo Von Hofmannsthal, has been performed in the cathedral square.

Music festivals are not confined to summer, however. Throughout the year, various programs are given. The Mozart Festival is held in the last week of January and during Easter week, when it again features the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in opera and concert performances. At the time of Whitsunday, concerts are also featured as separate festivals. The Salzburg Marionettes are a special attraction all year.

Salzburg's restaurants are good, although rather expensive, and many offer sweeping panoramic views of the surrounding area.

There is no American community here as such, but an Austro-American Society has periodic meetings to

discuss matters of mutual interest. The American Chamber of Commerce in Austria holds one or two functions each year in Salzburg or its immediate vicinity. Discussions, for the most part, are in German.

A tourist office is located at Sigmund-Haffner-Gasse 16/1/2, A-5010 Salzburg.

Innsbruck

Innsbruck, a famous winter and summer resort, is also a market and transportation center. With a population of 117,000, it is the capital of the Tyrol (or Tirol) Province (pop. 586,000), and is situated on the Inn River amidst soaring alpine ranges. Its main street, the Maria-Theresien-Strasse, offers a breathtaking view of the surrounding snow-capped mountain peaks.

Innsbruck, meaning "bridge over the Inn," was named for the bridge first built in the 12th century.

Established as a fortified town by 1180, Innsbruck supplanted Merano as the capital of the Tyrol in 1420. Today, a visitor may walk down arcaded streets and cobbled passages lined with shops displaying beautiful embroidery, leather work, and carvings made by hand in the surrounding countryside. Innsbruck's university was founded in 1677. The city hosted the Winter Olympic Games in 1964 and 1976, and a museum shows videos of highlights from these games.

There are many interesting sites in Innsbruck. The Hofkirche, or Court Church, built between 1553 and 1563, is an architectural marvel. There is a memorial tomb to Emperor Maximilian I; 24 scenes in marble high-relief cover the sides and depict the emperor's life. Around the tomb stand 28 bronze figures which portray his real and legendary ancestors and relatives. The grave of Andreas Hofer and other 1809 freedom fighters may be found here. The tomb of Archduke

Ferdinand II and his morganatic wife are in the Silver Chapel. The wooden organ, dating to 1600, is still played today.

The Fürstenburg, a 15th-century house, has a balcony with a gilded copper roof—the Goldenes Dachl. The late-Gothic structure, built under Maximilian in 1500, has 2,657 gold-plated tiles. Annasäule, St. Ann's Column, located on Maria-Theresien-Strasse, was erected in 1706 in thanksgiving for the successful defense against Bavarian invasion during the War of the Spanish Succession. Innsbruck has many museums, including the Ferdinandeum, containing the largest Gothic collection in Austria; and the Tyrolean Regional Museum, containing a history of mining and field sports.

The nearby Alps offer the visitor to Innsbruck another form of entertainment. Hiking, fishing, and swimming may be done in the mountains. Unforgettable views of these mountains can be seen by train, aerial cable cars, bus, gondola lifts, or by walking.

A tourist office is located at Bozner Platz 6, A-6010, Innsbruck.

Graz

Graz is Austria's second largest city (242,000), and capital of Styria (Steiermark) Province (1,118,000). It is both an industrial and cultural center and lies on the Mur River, 35 miles north of the Slovenia border and 120 miles southwest of Vienna.

Graz, derived from the Slavic word for fortress, was probably founded in the 12th century. At that time, a fortress was constructed on the mountain peak, Schlossberg, overlooking the Mur River. In the following century, the settlement was enclosed within fortifications, which later served as a bulwark against Turkish invasions. The city's glory days were during the 15th and 17th centuries when it was the seat of the Hapsburg emperors and the imperial capital of an empire reaching to the Adriatic Sea. The original part

of the city is built along the eastern bank of the Mur, overshadowed by Castle Hill, where the famous 16th-century Uhrtrum, or clock tower, stands as a symbol of the city.

Graz is usually forgotten by tourists who tend to visit Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, and the alpine resorts. Its lack of public attention, however, seems to be part of its charm, as the Old World lives on in a way that has long since disappeared in other parts of the continent. The city today exhibits many examples of late Gothic, Renaissance, and early baroque architecture. Spires, towers, and green copper domes overlook sharply peaked, rust-brown roofs. Special decorative touches include painted facades on old buildings, delicate statuary, and ornate rococo trim. There are beautiful parks and gardens, accessible via wide, tree-lined boulevards.

A medieval cathedral and several churches from the 15th century are among Graz's main attractions. The city's square, the Hauptplatz, laid out in 1164, faces the neo-Renaissance city hall. Cobblestone streets lined with 17th-century buildings fan out from the square. Most mornings, a bustling open-air market is set up around the statue of Archduke Johann.

The main thoroughfare, the Herrengasse, is closed to all traffic except streetcars. Here on the Herrengasse is the Landhaus, or Styrian parliament, designed in 1557 by Italian architect Domenico dell'Allio. The Landhaus has a vast inner courtyard resembling the architect's native Florence. Close by is an armory which displays 30,000 medieval weapons and armor, the largest collection of its kind in the world.

The state university at Graz dates from the 16th century, and it was here that Johannes Kepler (1571–1630), the German astronomer, taught for several years. The new university, constructed between 1890 and 1895, is known for medical studies.

There are many fine restaurants in Graz, and especially interesting are the low-vaulted cellar (*Keller*) restaurants. Menus usually feature authentic peasant specialties. Graz is known for its wine as well as its beer. The Graz Festival of drama, music, and dance takes place in late June and early July. Styrian Autumn, in October, is a month-long festival of the performing and graphic arts.

The tourist office in Graz is located at Landhaus, Herrngasse 16, A-8010.

Linz

Linz, the nation's largest port, is a Danube city in northwest Austria, 120 miles west of Vienna and 60 miles east of Passau, Germany. It is the capital of Upper Austria (*Oberösterreich*, population 1,270,000), as well as the country's third largest city, with a population of approximately 204,000. Important commercially and industrially, Linz manufactures iron, steel, machinery, and textiles.

Originally a Roman trading settlement called Lentia, Linz's history is varied and colorful, mainly because of its location at the crossroads of Europe's main north-south and east-west travel routes. Linz grew from a small market village in the ninth century, to the provincial capital of the Holy Roman Empire in 1489. It became a center of technological pioneering late in the 19th century. The first railway line on the continent connected Linz with České Budějovice in southern Bohemia.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the world's first metal airplane was built in Linz. Here, too, Johannes Kepler completed his main work, *Harmonices Mundi*, which laid the foundation for space exploration. The university in Linz is named in his honor. The city suffered considerable damage during World War II and was occupied by U.S. troops on May 6, 1945.



Street scene in Innsbruck

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

Linz today combines past and present, culture and industry. Architecturally, all styles can be seen in the city. Austria's oldest church, the Martinskirche (Church of St. Martin), was built in the eighth century in Romanesque style. Here also is St. Florian, the 17th-century baroque cathedral where the composer Anton Bruckner was organist; today the city's congress center and concert hall, the Brucknerhaus, is named for him, and the Bruckner Festival, held each September, has earned the hall and the city an international reputation in the music world. A neo-Gothic cathedral, the Neuer Dom, was built between 1862 and 1924. The tower is 145 feet high; the cathedral can hold 20,000 people.

The old marketplace is surrounded by baroque and rococo facades, while the main square with its Trinity Column is one of the largest and most beautiful town squares in Europe. The Provincial Museum gives a representative picture of the history and folklore of the city and surrounding countryside, as well as housing collections of indigenous and international art.

The restaurants in Linz offer a fresh and wide variety of food, since the city lies in the center of a fertile,

arable, and market gardening region. Wine is the only commodity not produced locally.

Linz offers a broad variety of leisure-time activities. The Pöstlingberg, the hill overlooking the city, is more than a place of pilgrimage; the grotto railway is a fairy tale world for children, and the terraces are decked with botanical specimens. The railway was built in 1898 and is Europe's steepest mountain track, making the trip from the suburb of Urfahr to the top of Pöstlingberg in 16 minutes. Linz also offers facilities for golf, horseback riding, tennis, swimming, and skating.

The official tourist office in Linz is located at Schillenstr. 50, A-4010. There is also an office in the main train station.

OTHER CITIES

BADEN (also called Baden bei Wien) is located in eastern Austria 15 miles southwest of Vienna, on the Schwechat River. Since Roman times, when it was called Aquae Pannonicae, Baden has been a popular spa resort. Lush villas and fashionable hotels adorn the city. There are parks, a museum, and a summer theater here. Architectural

reminders of when Baden was a Roman settlement are prevalent. The city served as Soviet headquarters during the occupation of Austria, 1945–55. The population here is about 23,000.

BREGENZ, the capital of Vorarlberg Province (306,000), is located in extreme western Austria. Situated on Lake Constance (in German, the Bodensee), 78 miles northwest of Innsbruck, Bregenz is a lake port and a winter sports resort. An ancient Celtic settlement and an important Roman station, Bregenz was chartered as a city around 1200. Ruled by the counts of Montfort and later the Hapsburgs, Bregenz became the administrative center of Vorarlberg in 1726. Today, with a population of 27,000, Bregenz is the site of a hydroelectric plant. Its industries include chemicals, electronic equipment, and textiles. A museum of Roman and Celtic artifacts is located in the city. Bregenz Forest, the densely wooded highland known for its scenic beauty, is nearby. The Bregenz Lake Festival, in July and August, is held on the wharf amphitheater.

Six miles south of Bregenz is the manufacturing town of **DORN-BIRN**. With a population of nearly 40,000, Dornbirn manufactures electrical equipment, machinery, and textiles.

EISENSTADT, situated in eastern Austria near the Hungarian border, is the capital of Burgenland (272,000). Composer Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), who lived in Eisenstadt from 1760 to 1790 under the patronage of the Esterházy family, is buried in the 18th-century church, Bergkirche. The Esterházy palace, built in the 14th century and restored in 17th-century baroque style, still stands. Until 1921, Eisenstadt was a part of Hungary and it maintains a distinct Hungarian atmosphere. With a population of approximately 10,000 today, the city produces wine and manufactures textiles. Every five years (the most recent in 1991), passion plays are staged on Saturday and Sunday at the nearby St. Margarethen stone

quarry from mid-June through early September. The plays are performed on the country's largest outdoor stage, in a quarry that the Romans used 2,000 years ago.

The town of **ENNS** is situated in the north halfway between Linz and Steyr. Enns is one of the oldest towns in Austria, having received a charter in 1212. It is located on an old trade route across the Danube, and was a prosperous market town during the Middle Ages.

KLagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia (Kärnten) Province (537,000), is a popular winter resort, surrounded by the mountain lakes of southern Austria near the Italian border. Chartered as a city in 1279, Klagenfurt reached the height of its commercial importance in the 18th century. Its current population is 90,000. A theological seminary and a large cathedral are located here. Austria's warmest lake, Wörther See, and the surrounding beaches are nearby. Near Klagenfurt, the Austrian Alpine International Academy at A-9161 Maria Rain is open to American students (kindergarten through grade 12) interested in English-language classes.

LEOBEN is located in Styria, southeastern Austria, on the Mur River, about 27 miles northwest of Graz. Situated in a coal mining region, Leoben is an industrial center with large ironworks, textile mills, and breweries. A preliminary peace treaty, superseding the Treaty of Campo Formio, was signed between France and Austria in Leoben on April 18, 1797. The population today is about 35,000. Less than 10 miles northeast is Bruck, or Bruck an der Mur. Bruck has a population of 18,000 and manufactures paper and iron goods. Knittelfeld, 12 miles southwest of Leoben, with a population of 14,000, is also an industrial city. It dates to the early 13th century.

STEYR (Steier), situated in northern Austria 20 miles south of Linz, has been an iron working center since the Middle Ages. An industrial

center located on the Steyr River at its confluence with the Enns, the city produces motor vehicles, tractors, sporting firearms, and iron goods. With a current population of nearly 40,000, Steyr has many well-preserved historic buildings. Among them are Lamberg Castle, built in the 10th century and restored in the 18th century; a 15th-century Gothic parish church; and an 18th-century town hall.

Situated on the Drau River, 21 miles west of Klagenfurt, in southwest Austria, **VILLACH** is the commercial and trade center of Carinthia Province. Lead from mines in Bleiburg is used here for manufacturing. Villach also trades timber. Among the city's sites is the 15th-century St. Jacob's Church, in Gothic style with a tall detached tower. The population is approximately 88,000 here. Nearby Warmbad Villach is known for its mineral baths.

Just west of Enns in Oberösterreich (Upper Austria) is **WELS**. With a population of 51,000, it is the second largest city in the province, located about 120 miles east of Vienna. Situated on a site occupied since prehistoric times, Wels is a manufacturing and commercial city producing agricultural machinery and textiles. There are natural-gas deposits and hydroelectric power in Wels. Architecture here is in the late Gothic and baroque styles. The castle where Emperor Maximilian I died in 1519 is located in Wels. Founded in 15 B.C., the city's ancient name was Ovilava.

WIENER NEUSTADT, located 35 miles southwest of Vienna, has a current population of 35,500. An industrial city that is also a railroad junction, Wiener Neustadt manufactures textiles and leather goods, and brews beer. Founded about 1193, the city was at the height of its prosperity in the 15th century. Severely damaged during World War II, Wiener Neustadt was occupied by Soviet troops on April 3, 1945. A visitor to the city may see a 13th-century cathedral, a 13th-cen-

tury castle, and three towers of medieval fortifications.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Austria, located in the heart of Europe, is about the size of Maine. It shares a common border with two members of NATO: the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy; three former East Bloc countries: Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia; neutral Switzerland; recently independent Slovenia; and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Austria is primarily mountainous, with the Alps and their approaches dominating the western and southern provinces. The eastern provinces and Vienna are located in the Danube basin.

Temperature extremes in Vienna vary between summer highs of 85°F and -4°F in winter. October may be damp and rainy, and light snowfalls occur in November and December. Snow, sometimes heavy, and frost can occur from January until mid-March. April, May, and early June offer pleasant spring weather, and summers are often delightful.

Vienna sometimes becomes uncomfortably hot in July and August, especially in the city's center, but the suburbs, particularly those which are elevated, are pleasant. The city is subject to rapid and marked changes in atmospheric pressures with accompanying winds. One such wind, the Foehn, carries warm air from the south. It has a special meaning for the Viennese since many people blame it for peculiar human behavior. Average annual precipitation in Vienna is 26.89 inches.

The mountainous regions have long, cold winters with heavy snowfall and bright, crisp days. The Danube basin usually has less snow, is more damp, and therefore has more gray



Austrians walking in front of the Schönbrunn in Vienna

Courtesy of Jolen Gedridge

and overcast days than the higher altitudes.

Population

Austria's population is 8.0 million; about 1.6 million live in Vienna. As opposed to the ethnic diversity of the old empire, the present-day population is fairly homogenous. Of the six officially recognized minorities, only 2 show significant numbers: about 18,000 Croats in Burgenland and some 15,000 Slovenes in Carinthia. In addition, significant numbers of individuals of Turkish, North African, and East European origin have recently settled in the country, residing mostly in Vienna. An estimated 40,000 Bosnian refugees are residing in Austria. Many Austrians, particularly in the Vienna area, have relatives in the neighboring Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. German is the first language of about 92% of the population.

Approximately 78% of the Austrian population is Roman Catholic. In contrast to the clericalism which strongly influenced Austrian affairs as late as the 1930s, the present church hierarchy is not politically active.

Public Institutions

The Republic of Austria is a federal state with nine provinces, one of which is Vienna. The government is parliamentary. A Council of Ministers headed by the Chancellor is responsible to the legislature. The directly elected President has predominately ceremonial responsibilities.

The legislature is bicameral with the Nationalrat (lower house) exercising real legislative authority. The Bundesrat (upper house) only reviews legislation passed by the Nationalrat and has delaying, not absolute veto, powers.

Since World War II, Austria has been politically stable. The two coalition parties - Social Democrats (SPO) and People's Party (ÖVP) have the support of about 66% of the electorate. The remaining 34% is divided among the Freedom Party (FPÖ), the Liberal Forum (LIF), and the Greens. Extremist parties have virtually no influence on government policy.

The Social Democratic Party traditionally draws its constituency from blue and white-collar workers, so that much of its strength lies in the urban and industrialized areas. In the past, the party advocated heavy state involvement in Austria's key industries, the extension of social security benefits, and a full-employment policy. In the mid-1980s, the party began to swing toward free market-oriented economic policies and balancing the federal budget.

The traditional constituency of the People's Party has been among farmers and businesses. Its centers

of strength are the rural regions of Austria. In economic matters, the party advocates conservative financial policies and privatization of much of Austria's nationalized industry. It advocates Austrian membership in NATO.

The Freedom Party has been the major opposition party. Recently, the party's mixture of populism and antiestablishment themes has won increased support. In provincial elections in Vienna in 1996 the Freedom Party moved into second position in city government with 28%. Nationally, it attracts approximately 22% of the vote. In February 1993 the Liberal Forum was established as a result of a split from the Freedom Party.

The Austrian parliamentary elections, held in December 1995, produced an SPOOVP coalition government. The Social Democratic Party under its former chairman, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, reached 38%. The People's Party, however, dropped to 28% of the vote. The Freedom Party, under Joerg Haider, increased its share of the electorate from 5% in 1986 to 22% in 1995. The LIF and Greens each polled 5%. National Parliamentary elections were held in October, 1999.

The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 ended the four-power occupation and recognized Austria as an independent and sovereign state. The Federal Assembly passed a constitutional law declaring Austria's "perpetual neutrality." Austrian neutrality prohibits membership in military alliances and the establishment of foreign military bases on Austrian soil. Over the years, neutrality came to symbolize much more than the law stated. With its decision to join the European Union January 1, 1995 - and following the demise of the Warsaw Pact - Austria has begun reassessing its definition of neutrality.

Austrian foreign policy is shaped by neutrality and the concept of "solidarity" under UN mandates. For example, Austrians serve in Bosnia

(IFOR/SFOR), and in UN peace-keeping missions in Golan, Cyprus, etc. Austrian leaders also emphasize the unique role the country plays as a link between East and West and between the industrialized and developing countries. Austria is active in the UN; several UN agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency and the UN Drug Control Programs, Space Program, and Center for International Crime Prevention, are headquartered in the Vienna International Center, which opened in 1979. The U.S. has a Mission (UNVIE) to these organizations headed by an American Ambassador, who also represents the U.S. at the organization charged with the implementation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. In addition, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) operates from Vienna and the Austrians play an active role. The U.S. Mission to OSCE is also headed by an Ambassador. USOSCE is also responsible for covering the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, which is headquartered in Vienna. The International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) have their headquarters in Vienna.

Arts, Science, and Education

Austria is a paradise for the arts. The Vienna State Opera, "Staatsooper," the Burgtheater, and the "Volksoper" rank among the world's leading cultural organizations.

The great Vienna orchestras include the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The "Musikverein" and the "Konzerthaus" present special concerts and recitals by internationally famous artists.

Visitors from all over the world are attracted to Austria each year by a variety of festivals: the Vienna Fes-

tival in May/June; the Salzburg Mozart week in January; the Salzburg Festivals at Easter, Pentecost, and in August; the "Sound of Easter" concerts in Vienna; the Carinthian Summer Festival; the Bregenz Festival; and the avant garde Styrian Fall Festival in Graz. Vienna is the home of the Vienna Boys' Choir and the celebrated Spanish Riding School which features the beautiful white Lipizzaner horses.

Interest in science and research is promoted by the universities, the Austrian Institute for Historical Research, and a number of think tanks, among them the Institute for Human Sciences and the Institute for Culture Studies, "IFK." The Institute for Advanced Studies is also located here.

Austria has 18 institutions of higher learning with university status, 6 of which are music and fine arts colleges. Recently, a number of polytechnics, so-called "Fachhochschulen," have been added. The total student body in Austrian universities is about 266,000, about 29,000 of whom are foreigners. Austrian universities are free for Austrian citizens. Foreigners in most cases have to pay a tuition fee of approximately US\$325.00 per semester. Austria's institutions of higher learning are open to qualified Americans in most departments. However, some fields - varying from university to university - have restricted access due to limited study and laboratory facilities. In these cases admission will be granted on a competition basis. American citizens planning to study in Austria should therefore check with the pertinent department prior to planning their studies abroad.

With the exception of the various language departments, most courses at Austrian universities are given in German. Therefore, a good knowledge of the language is one of the prerequisites for studying at an Austrian institution of higher learning. The other requirement relevant for American citizens is a high school diploma. For instruction in

the arts, particularly music and voice, excellent private teachers are available.

Also, a considerable number of American colleges and universities have branches in Austria with programs varying from 3 weeks to an academic year. Webster University offers a full undergraduate program with courses in art, history, political science, economics, management, international relations, German, and English. The internationally renown Salzburg Seminar at Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, each year attracts young scholars and professionals in a variety of fields from Europe, the U.S., and around the world.

Austrian education follows the traditional European system. School attendance is mandatory from 6 years until the age of 15, when students either continue their education or enter an apprenticeship program.

Commerce and Industry

Austria's economy since 1945 has been characterized by steady growth rates, low inflation, a stable currency, and increasing integration into the European economy. Key features of the economic landscape include the "social partnership," a consensus-building mechanism among government, business (represented by the Federal Economic Chamber) and labor (represented by the Labor Chamber and the Austrian Trade Union Federation). This partnership has helped bring about a high level of social services, wage increases in line with productivity, peaceful labor/management relations, and relatively low unemployment.

Most sectors of the economy have undergone important structural changes in the past few years, in response to Austria's entry into the European Union on January 1, 1995. This brought both new opportunities and new competition. Currently, exports of goods and ser-

vices account for about 42% of Gross Domestic Product. Some 35% of Austria's total trade is with Germany; another 25% is with other members of the EU, and 17% with Central Eastern Europe.

As a traditional gateway to Eastern Europe, Austria is an important center for the U.S. and other Western companies. About 150 of the 380 American firms in Austria base their Eastern European activities in Vienna. Austrian companies are also among the top investors in the East, especially in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

Transportation

Automobiles

Austrian law requires liability insurance in the legal minimum amounts for all motor vehicles with Austrian registration, including motor vehicles belonging to diplomatic missions and to all personnel of diplomatic missions. The law also requires that motor vehicles be insured with companies approved by the Austrian Ministry of Finance.

Local

Public transportation in Vienna is excellent. A network of streetcars, buses, and subways which maintain dependable service at reasonable fares, covers the city. Public transportation operates from 5:30a.m. until about midnight, thereafter there is a special "night service."

Many taxis are available 24 hours a day at stands in Vienna. Prices are relatively high, and drivers expect a tip of 10% beyond the meter price.

Regional

Rail transportation to most parts of Europe is frequent, fast, and reliable.

Many major international airlines have regular direct or connecting service to and from Vienna. Almost all of Europe's principal cities are easily accessible by air and rail.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph service to all countries is available through the Austrian post at standard international rates.

Monthly telephone charges are more expensive than in the U.S. as all calls are metered. An international station-to-station telephone call from Austria to the U.S. is normally more expensive than a call of the same duration placed from the U.S.

Mail

International mail deliveries to and from the U.S. are reliable and frequent; transit time varies between 5 and 15 days for airmail and 3-5 weeks for surface mail. Parcel post services are available at international rates, and delivery to the U.S. takes 4-6 weeks.

Customs declarations are required on all outgoing packages. Customs clearances are required on all incoming packages.

Radio and TV

The Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, ORF, is financed out of user fees and advertisement and governed by a board ("Kuratorium") of representatives from the broadcast industry, the government, and the public sector. ORF is known for its excellent news coverage, produced in Austria. Entertainment programming relies heavily on German series and U.S. and German movies. News and information programming is not overtly censored and the executive board has the obligation to see to it that all political voices are heard. ORF does exercise censorship on excessive violence in entertainment programs. The international community relies heavily on ORF's foreign language "Blue Danube Radio" which operates primarily in English and has community service programs and music tailored to the tastes of the English speaking community.

ORF continues to have a de facto monopoly on local broadcasting,

despite large-scale privatization of radio frequencies which began in April 1998. Several out of a planned 53 private radio stations licensed by a new "Regional Radio Authority" instituted under the Office of the Austrian Chancellor are now operating. The new stations are a long-term result of a liberalization process of the Austrian broadcast media scene which started in 1993, when the European Court of Justice ruled against Austria's broadcasting monopoly. A law permitting private regional radio stations came into effect in 1994 and limited the participation of print-media owners to 26 percent in one radio station and 10 percent in each of two other stations, to avoid media concentration. Laws permitting the introduction of private (terrestrial) television are planned for the near future. Cable television provides a broad variety of foreign television broadcast, including CNN, and there are several avenues of procuring direct TV or satellite system reception for monthly fees.

American radios will work with voltage transformers, but the television broadcasting system is different from that of the U.S. Compatible European television sets are sold locally, as are multisystem receivers, which can also be obtained at military shopping facilities in Germany.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The International Herald Tribune, The Wall Street Journal, and USA Today are sold at newsstands and hotels throughout Vienna's First District, usually the same day they are published. Austria Today, a local newspaper in English, is published weekly. Six general circulation daily German-language newspapers are published in Vienna. Three, Der Standard, Kurier and Die Presse, offer serious coverage of international and local news, as does the Salzburger Nachrichten, published in Salzburg but widely available in Vienna. Other European newspapers are available at local newsstands, as are some popular

American magazines. Imported publications are expensive.

A fairly good supply of books in English may be purchased at leading bookstores, but they are expensive. The facilities of Amerika Haus and the British Council Library are also available to the TriMission community. Since children's English-language books are in short supply, families should bring them from the U.S. or order them from the U.S. or British publishing firms.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Primary medical and dental care in Austria, while somewhat more expensive than in the US, is excellent. Austrian hospitals are well staffed and well equipped. Most patients requiring hospitalization (including deliveries) remain in Vienna.

Local pharmacies are well stocked with European pharmaceuticals, many of which are the same as their U.S. equivalent. Prices are similar to those in the U.S.

Community Health

Disease prevalence in Vienna is similar to that of any major American city. All milk is pasteurized and all water is safe and pure. No special precautions/immunizations need be taken for a tour in Vienna. However, please ensure that your standard immunizations/boosters are valid.

Preventive Measures

In certain parts of Austria and Central Europe, there is a danger of contracting an encephalitis from viruses carried by several common tick species. While not all ticks carry the tick-borne Encephalitis virus (FSME-viren), those that do are frequently found in wooded, low-lying areas, such as the Vienna Woods. An excellent and effective vaccine, developed in Austria, is highly recommended for all persons living in Vienna who expect to enjoy

outdoor activities, such as walking and jogging.

Drinking water in Vienna has an inadequate level of natural fluoride and none is added.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

If driving a car from any other part of Europe or the Middle East, a traveler should get a copy of the International Road signs and learn them; the signs are standard throughout Western Europe.

Roads in Austria are generally good to excellent. But one should not drive over Alpine passes in midwinter unless the car is equipped with chains and is in excellent condition; even then the roads are hazardous.

Vehicles must be covered by liability insurance valid in Austria as evidenced by an international (green) insurance card. If the car is not already insured, temporary insurance must be bought at the border. U.S. or international license plates may be used for up to 2 months or until Austrian plates are issued.

A passport required. A visa is not required for business or tourist stays up to three months. For further information concerning entry requirements for Austria, travelers should contact the Embassy of Austria at 3524 International Court, NW., Washington, D.C. 20008, Tel: (202) 895-6767, or the nearest Austrian Consulate General in Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York. The Austrian Embassy to the United States maintains a webpage in English that answers in detail, questions concerning the laws and regulations of Austria, including residency, driver's license requirements, and permission to work. For additional information visit <http://www.austria.org/index.html>.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the

U.S. Embassy in Vienna or at the Consular Agency in Salzburg and obtain updated information on travel and security within Austria. The U.S. Embassy in Vienna is located at Boltzmannngasse 16 in the Ninth District. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy is located in the Marriott Building, on the fourth floor of Gartenbaupromenade 2, in the First District. The telephone number for both the Embassy and the Consular Section is (43)(1) 31-339. There is also a Consular Agency in Salzburg at Alter Markt 1, Telephone (43) (662) 84-87-76, open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon. U.S. citizens in Salzburg who require assistance outside of these hours may contact the U.S. Embassy in Vienna. The Embassy also maintains a website, at <http://www.usembassy-vienna.at> with security updates and other information helpful to American citizens.

Pets

The Austrian Veterinary Service has strict rules about the entry of pets shipped by air to Vienna. The following requirements apply: rabies shots must be current; a valid veterinarian's certificate must be furnished with a statement that there has been no rabies among domestic or wild animals in the original municipality of the animals concerned or in the neighboring municipalities within the last 14 days before shipment; and permission must be obtained by the carrier from the Austrian Government (Ministry for Health and Environmental Protection).

Kennels are available locally.

No quarantine restrictions for household pets exist in Austria as long as the pets have the above documentation.

Currency, Banking, & Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the Austrian monetary unit is the euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 Euro. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

ATMs that accept U.S. credit and bank cards can be found throughout Austria. Austria has no currency restrictions on the import of reasonable amounts of foreign currency; export is limited.

Austria uses the metric system.

There is no exemption from paying the value-added tax (VAT) which is included in the price of most goods and services.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 6 Epiphany
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- Apr. 27 Second Republic Day
- May 1 Labor Day
- May/June Ascension Day*
- May/June Pentecost*
- May/June Pentecost Monday*
- May/June Corpus Christi*
- Aug. 15 Assumption Day*
- Oct. 26 National Day
- Nov. 1 All Saint's Day
- Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception
- Dec. 25 Christmas
- Dec. 26 St. Stephen's Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are presented as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Barea, Ilsa. *Vienna, Legend and Reality*. The Camelot Press Ltd.: London, 1967.

Crankshaw, Edward. *The Fall of the House of Habsburg*. (Cardinal Books) Sphere: London, 1974.

Janik, Allan and Stephen Toulmin. *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. Touchstone-Clarion, Paperback. Simon & Schuster, 1974.

Jelavich, Barbara. *Modern Austria: Empire and Republic, 1815-1986*. Cambridge University Press: New York, 1987.

Johnson, Lonnie. *Introducing Austria*. Osterreichischer Bundesverlag: Vienna, 1987.

Johnston, William M. *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 1972.

Jones, J. Sidney. *Vienna Inside-Out*. Vienna: Jugend und Volk Verlag, 1979.

Schorske, Carl. *Findesiecle Vienna: Politics and Culture*. Knopf: New York, 1980.

Waldheim, Kurt. *Austrian Example*. Macmillan, 1973.

It is recommended that travel books be purchased in the U.S. since English language books are not always available and are very expensive in Vienna.

BELARUS

Republic of Belarus

Major Cities:

Minsk

Other Cities:

Brest, Gomel, Grodno, Mogilëv, Vitebsk

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Settled originally by East Slavs in the 6th to 8th centuries, the Republic of Belarus is a historic borderland between western and eastern Europe. Because of its location, Belarus endured occupation by numerous regional powers over the centuries, such as Poland, Lithuania, and Russia. The former Soviet republic suffered its greatest destruction during World War II, when it bore the brunt of the Nazi occupation. One in four Belarusians was killed. Then in 1986, the republic encountered a modern-day foe, when 70 percent of the nuclear fallout from the disaster at Ukraine's Chernobyl nuclear power plant landed on Belarusian territory, contaminating one-fifth of its area.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Belarus declared independence on August 25, 1991. The United States recognized the Republic of Belarus on December 25, 1991.

MAJOR CITY

Minsk

Minsk, the capital of Belarus and the administrative capital of the Commonwealth of Independent States, is one of the "hero cities" of the Great Patriotic War (World War II). Situated halfway between Warsaw and Moscow and between Vilnius and Kiev, Minsk was almost completely destroyed during the fighting. It was rebuilt in pure Soviet style and has wide streets and large parks. In the past three decades, the population of Minsk has more than tripled to reach 1.9 million people.

Skorina Avenue (formerly Lenin Avenue) and Masherova Avenue are the primary thoroughfares dividing the city. Although few historic buildings remain, the 17th century Russian Orthodox cathedral of the Bernadine Convent is undergoing renovation, and the "Trinity Embankment," along the Svislach

River has been reconstructed in the 17th and 18th century styles.

Food

The availability of food is constantly improving, but the selection is never wide nor consistent. Shipping certain consumables, such as spices, food items associated with ethnic cuisines, and items necessary for special diets, is recommended.

There are stores in Minsk that best can be described as hybrids that fall somewhere between the local *gastronomes* and small Western-style supermarkets. Goods for sale mainly are imported and are displayed on open shelves from which customers make their own selections, and customers pay for everything at one time at checkout counters. A few of these shops operate around the clock. As well, more and more *gastronomes* stock imported foodstuffs and beverages. Shoppers usually can find canned goods, cheeses, pasta, juices, some fruits and vegetables, processed and cured meats, cleaning supplies, toiletries, packaged foods, soft drinks, snacks, liquor, sweets, and other goods at random. Food also can be ordered from a department store based in Helsinki. Deliveries are made weekly.

A large farmer's market is open all year in Minsk, and its merchants

sell fresh fruits and vegetables in season and imported items at higher prices all year.

Kitchen supplies such as trash bags, foil and plastic wraps, reclosable storage bags, ice trays, and egg cartons are not readily available.

Clothing

Clothing requirements in Minsk are relatively informal.

Western clothing styles and brands are beginning to be available in Belarus; several popular clothing and shoe manufacturers have opened retail outlets in Minsk. It is also possible to find a small selection of imported clothing in local department stores. Prices for such merchandise tend to be two or three times higher than in the West, and the choices are very limited.

Although Minsk is one of the cleaner former Soviet cities, it is still pretty grimy, and clothes are easily soiled. Easily cleaned garments in dark colors are preferable. A supply of warm winter clothing is necessary. This should include rain gear, warm hats, scarves, gloves, socks, and sturdy boots with nonslip soles.

Summers are usually mild, but temperatures can rise above 90°F. Spring and the short autumn are characterized by rain. Winter comes early, spring late.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Personal toiletries, cosmetics, and feminine hygiene products are available in local stores, though the availability is never guaranteed and the quality is not necessarily up to American standards.

Although a German pharmacy has opened in Minsk, a very limited selection of contact lens solutions is available through local contact lens clinics.

Paper goods, such as toilet paper and disposable diapers, are available locally, but supplies can never be guaranteed. Other paper prod-

ucts such as wrapping paper, stationery, or greeting cards are not sold locally. Also, most local stores do not supply bags for your purchases. Local people carry their purchases home in large plastic or canvas bags. These bags are inexpensive and widely available.

Basic art supplies for children, such as markers and paints, are available locally. Fabric and yarns are available, but the selection and quality are not always good. Western sporting goods are beginning to make an appearance, but the prices are prohibitive. Film and photo developing is available locally, and the service is quick and basically reliable for about the same price as in the U.S.

There are several firms specializing in computer sales and repair, from which it is possible to purchase basic computer supplies and software.

Western tobacco and alcohol products are sold locally; prices are approaching or exceeding Western levels. Other entertainment supplies such as music cassettes and compact disks are available, but the quality and adherence to copyright law is never guaranteed. Some videos are sold, but they are on the East European system, Secam-D/K. They do not play in Western VCRs.

There is not a great selection of pet food and supplies, but adequate products usually can be found.

Basic Services: There are several beauty shops, which are satisfactory and inexpensive, that give both men's and women's haircuts. Some hair products are available locally.

Tailoring, dressmaking, and shoe repair are available, but not to Western standards. Fabrics and other materials are available, but the selection is limited.

Several garages that repair foreign-made automobiles have opened in Minsk, but spare parts for Western automobiles still are hard to come by.

Religious Activities

There are a variety of religious societies in Belarus. Among them are Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Evangelical Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, and Krishna congregations. Roman Catholic services are conducted in Polish and Russian.

A nondenominational Christian fellowship that holds services in English meets each Sunday.

Education

The private, nonprofit Minsk International School, operated by Quality Schools International, opened in September 1993. The school holds classes in a Belarusian kindergarten about a block from the embassy. Instruction is offered in English for students in kindergarten through 7th grade.

For additional information, write:

Minsk International School c/o
American Embassy Minsk,
Belarus or call
011-375-172-34-65-37
Mr. James E. Gilson, President
Quality Schools International
Box 2002
15
Sana'a, Yemen or call 067-1-234-
437

Special Educational Opportunities

Russian and Belarusian language tutors are readily available. Arts and sports instruction (in Russian) is available through local government-sponsored institutions.

French and German government cultural facilities with language training are being established.

Sports

A tennis complex in the city is available for use, and the a nearby recreation area is a popular cross-country skiing location. There also are several swimming pools, weightlifting facilities, and an ice skating rink.

Minsk has many parks and jogging trails. Soccer is very popular, as is volleyball. Belarusians are avid chess players, and organized championships occur year-round.

On the outskirts of Minsk are several former Soviet Olympic training centers, including the winter sports center at Raubichi and the equestrian center at Ratomka.

The Minsk Yacht Club, catering to sailing and wind-surfing enthusiasts, is situated on the shores of the huge Minsk reservoir known as the Minsk Sea. Fishermen, campers, hikers, and nature-lovers will enjoy Belarus' many lakes and forests. Hunting and fishing are regulated and require licenses.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Most attractions within an hour of Minsk are historical structures, museums, and war memorials. These include the World War II Khatyn Memorial; the city of Zaslavl, site of a 13th-century Catholic church; or the 15th-century Mir Castle.

Belarus has a relatively good system of roads, and it is possible to travel to any corner of the country in three or four hours. Vilnius, Lithuania, is a two- to three-hour drive north, Warsaw and Kiev are eight hours away by car, and Moscow is a full day's drive.

Crimea, on the Black Sea in southern Ukraine, is the closest warm-weather destination.

Entertainment

Minsk offers a wide variety of live entertainment, including concerts, theater, opera, and ballet. The opera and ballet are excellent and have wide repertoires. A puppet theater and an experimental theater require a good command of Russian to be enjoyed. The indoor circus arena hosts many traveling troupes. Tickets are very affordable.

New restaurants open every month in Minsk, though there is not great variety in cuisines. As of August

1995, restaurant patrons could dine in Western style at a steak house and establishments featuring Spanish and Italian cooking. Service and menu selection are not up to Western standards, and prices tend to be very high. There is no "fast food" in Minsk, but several pizza restaurants and a cafe with some Arab-style dishes have opened in late 1994.

Travelers should subscribe to favorite periodicals and bring plenty of books to post. Western newspapers are rarely received in Minsk on a timely basis.

Social Activities

Travelers tend to socialize informally, sharing meals and going out to restaurants and Minsk's three nightclubs.

The international community in Minsk is small but growing rapidly. There is an English-language theater group that stages semiannual musical productions.

Organized opportunities for meeting host-country nationals are limited, and Russian language skills are necessary for contact beyond the diplomatic community.

Special Information

The southeastern corner of Belarus is officially a "no man's land" because of contamination from the Chernobyl incident. The residents of that area were relocated, but main roads through the area remain open for travel through it.

People traveling to Belarus by car may encounter long delays at the Belarusian-Polish border or the Polish-German border.

OTHER CITIES

On the right bank of the Bug River in southwest Belarus, less than two miles from the Polish border, **BREST** is an important railroad junction. Its population is 294,000. Brest was taken by the Germans during World War I and was the site

for the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty between Germany and Russia in 1918. During World War II, the city once again came under German occupation from 1941 until 1944, when it was retaken by the Soviets.

GOMEL, a city with a population of about 504,000, is located in southeast Belarus. First accounts of the city date from 1142. Gomel has been a cultural and historical center since the Middle Ages. The city was controlled alternatively by Poland and Russia until 1772, when it finally became Russian. A rail and water transportation center, Gomel trades in flax, wool, and lumber.

Located in a western corner of Belarus between the Polish and Lithuanian borders, **GRODNO**, at various times during its history, has been under Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian rule. During the 14th century the city was the capital of Lithuania; in 1795 it was the seat of the Polish *Sejm* which ratified the third partition of Poland, at which time Grodno became Russian. The city was occupied by German forces during both World Wars. Today, this city of 295,000 is an industrial and agricultural center.

MOGILĚV was founded in the 13th century and is located on the banks of the Dnieper River, 112 miles east of Minsk. Its current population is 356,000. Through its history, the city was controlled by Russia, Poland, and Sweden. It was partly destroyed by Peter the Great in 1708. In 1772 MogilĚv was annexed to Russia from Poland. Between August of 1941 and June of 1944, MogilĚv was occupied by German forces.

VITEBSK, 140 miles northeast of Minsk, is on the Western Dvina River. This city of 360,000 is an important industrial center that produces machine tools, furniture, and radios. Vitebsk was first mentioned in historical chronicles in 1021 and was the trading center of an independent principality for about two centuries. It came under Lithuanian rule in 1320 and then

under Poland in the 16th century. After the First Partition of Poland in 1772, Vitebsk became a Russian city. Occupied by the Germans between August, 1941 and June, 1944, Vitebsk was heavily damaged during this period.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Historically known as Byelorussia (White Russia), Belarus occupies 80,154 square miles (207,600 sq. km.), bounded on the north and east by Russia, on the south by Ukraine, on the west by Poland, and on the northwest by Lithuania and Latvia. The country is roughly the size of Great Britain or the U. S. state of Kansas.

Approximately one-third of the land area is forested, and 13 percent is uninhabitable marshland. The majority of the landscape is flat farmland, drained by the Dnieper, the Western Dvina, the Pripyat, and the Nieman rivers. Of the 10,000 lakes in the country, the largest is Lake Naroch in the northwestern part of the country, just east of Vilnius, Lithuania. The Bialavezhia Forest, on the Polish border north of Brest, is a nature preserve and popular tourist attraction.

Nuclear fallout from the 1986 disaster at Ukraine's Chernobyl nuclear power plant, just seven and a half miles (12 km) from the southeast border of Belarus, contaminated 23 percent of its farmland. Implementation of Belarusian laws regarding resettlement and medical care for the people and decontamination of the territories most affected by radiation has been difficult due to lack of adequate financing. However, in December 1993, the U.N. General Assembly, led by the efforts of the U.S., Japan, and Canada, adopted a resolution to study and attempt to minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.

At an altitude of 656 ft. (200 m.) above sea level, Belarus has a mild continental climate, with an average temperature in winter of 20°F (-6°C) and in summer of 62°F (17°C). Annual precipitation averages 22-28 inches. Belarus is on the 53rd latitude, the same as Hamburg, Germany; Dublin, Ireland; and Edmonton, Canada.

Population

The population of Belarus is 10.4 million, of whom 81 percent are Belarusian, 11 percent Russian, 4 percent Polish, 3 percent Ukrainian, and 1 percent Jewish.

Approximately 68 percent of the population lives in urban areas, concentrated primarily in Minsk, the capital, and the other major cities along the route from Warsaw to Moscow. Life expectancy is 62 years for men, 75 for women.

There is no state religion, though the majority of Belarusians are Orthodox Christians. Roman Catholics make up about 15 percent of the population, and 16 other religious sects are registered in Belarus.

The Belarusian Constitution, adopted in 1994, established Belarusian as the official language of the republic, and many public-place and street names were changed from Russian to Belarusian. Broadcast and print news media use Belarusian as does the government for official documents; however, Russian, still considered the language of communication, continues to be used widely. Belarusian is closely related to Russian and Polish. It is written using the Cyrillic alphabet, with two letters different from the Russian alphabet.

In May 1995, during parliamentary elections, referendums were passed that granted Russian equal status with Belarusian as the official language of Belarus and replaced the republic's post-independence coat of arms (a knight on horseback in a field of red) and red and white flag with ones nearly identical to

Belarus's Soviet emblem and flag. Although the modified Soviet-era flag flies above government buildings, the knight-on-horseback emblem is still much in evidence elsewhere.

Public Institutions

Belarus is a presidential republic, with a three-tiered structure of power: executive, legislative, and judicial.

The first constitution of the newly independent republic of Belarus was adopted on March 15, 1994, and its first popularly elected president, Alexander Lukashenko, won his seat on July 10, 1994 and was re-elected in 2001. The president selects a cabinet of ministers, headed by a prime minister, currently Gennady Novitsky.

The Parliament (Supreme Council) of the Republic of Belarus acts as the highest legislative body, and local governments are administered by Councils of Deputies, led by mayors.

In the judicial branch, a procurator general oversees the Constitutional Court of the Republic and a series of subordinate local procurators and courts.

There are a wide variety of political parties, but party designations are meaningless under current political conditions.

There are more than 600 nonpolitical public unions and associations, among them industrial trade unions, philanthropic foundations, sports and recreations groups, and associations for the disabled.

Arts, Science and Education

The Belarusian cultural presence is exemplified by the well-known Belarusian ballet; the artwork of Marc Chagall; the 16th century printing and translations of the scholar Francisk Skorina; handicrafts including carvings, straw



View of Minsk, Belarus

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weavings, and embroidered linens; and the popular traditions of folk music and literature.

Countless folklore groups perform Belarusian music and dances, and every year the Union of Belarusian Writers sponsors literary festivals. The poet Yakub Kolas is honored all over Belarus.

The Belarusian Bolshoi Theater of Opera and Ballet was founded in

1933, and the best-known composers include Yuri Semenyako and Evgeni Glebov.

Famous Belarusian scientists include Kazimir Semenovich, inventor of the multistage missile; Yakub Narkevich-Yedka, inventor of electrography and wireless transmission of electric signals; Sofia Kovalevskaya, a mathematician; and Pavel Sukhoi, an aircraft designer. The Academy of Sciences,

which was opened in 1929, unites 46 research, design, and technology divisions and is the forum for the republic's highest-level research and scholarly activities.

Belarus has many state-run institutions of higher learning, with about half in the capital city of Minsk. Belarus State University and the Minsk Institute of Foreign Languages are among the most prestigious. After independence, several

non-state universities, oriented toward such fields as the humanities and business, were established.

Children begin school at age six and continue through the 10th and 11th forms, at age 17.

Commerce and Industry

During the Soviet period, Belarus was the assembly line of the USSR, importing raw materials and exporting manufactured goods. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Belarus no longer has access to subsidized raw materials or energy products, and its as yet unreconstructed economy is floundering. Energy-inefficient factories make Belarusian manufactured goods, particularly heavy machinery, non-competitive on world markets. The defense industry, which played a significant role in the Belarusian economy, continues to experience difficulty converting to the production of civilian goods. However, with its highly qualified work-force, strategic location in the center of Europe, and well-established infrastructure, Belarus has good potential for economic growth.

Belarus is heavily energy-dependent, importing most of its oil and natural gas from Russia. As 2000, the republic was carrying a debt of approximately \$1 billion. The country's few natural resources include peat reserves, iron ore deposits, coal reserves and timber. The textile industry, also dependent on imported raw materials, includes flax, cotton, and wool processing and weaving, and the manufacture of linen, cotton, silk, and wool fabrics and products.

Belarus's agricultural sector remains largely unreformed, with state-owned and collective farms still in the majority. Private plots, however, produce most of the vegetables for sale in markets. The primary agricultural products in Belarus are potatoes, cereal grains, sugar beets, flax, and vegetables.

The republic completely satisfies its needs in (and is, in fact, a net exporter of) meat, dairy products, eggs, and potatoes.

Belarus's main trade relationships are with countries of the former Soviet Union, mainly with Russia. A customs union with Russia was signed in January 1995. Germany, Poland, the U.S., and Austria are Belarus's primary Western partners. Many joint ventures had been registered in Belarus, mostly with partners from Poland, Germany, and the U.S.; investors from these countries also account for the majority of wholly foreign-owned enterprises in Belarus.

Transportation

Local

Public transportation in the post city of Minsk is inexpensive and reliable, though usually extremely overcrowded. The metro and buses run from early morning until after midnight. Monthly passes, which provide access to all forms of public transportation, may be purchased.

Taxis are generally easy to find, either at the many taxi stands or by calling one of two companies. They are inexpensive by Western standards, though not always very clean or well maintained. Fares are calculated by multiplying the price indicated in Soviet rubles on the meter by an inflation factor. Tipping taxi drivers is not customary, and if one takes a private taxi as opposed to a state taxi, a "tip" is certainly included in the fare.

Regional

As in the U.S., Belarusians drive on the right side of the road. Belarusian driving regulations and traffic signals are somewhat different than those in the U.S.; American drivers should be aware of these differences. Signage is like that used in Europe, but road signs and traffic signals often are located in unexpected places. Belarusian drivers tend to be more aggressive than is customary in the U.S. and often dis-

regard the rules of the road. American drivers should be prepared to be pulled over often by the traffic police (GAI). Because of car thieves' preference for foreign vehicles, the traffic police are very conscientious about stopping foreign cars to verify their ownership.

Minsk has two airports. One is within the city limits and mostly serves domestic flights. The other is about a forty-minute drive from Minsk and serves international flights. The primary international airlines are Lufthansa, Swiss Air, Austrian Airlines, Estonian Airlines, and Lot (Polish). El Al recently initiated service to Minsk. Belavia is the Belarusian branch of Aeroflot and also serves international passengers, primarily to other cities in the former Soviet Union, though it has twice weekly flights to Shannon, Ireland.

Because Minsk lies on the direct route between Warsaw and Moscow, daily trains serve such major cities as Berlin, Kiev, Koln, Moscow, Odessa, Paris, Prague, Riga, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Vilnius and are often the fastest and easiest way to travel outside Belarus. To ensure their safety and comfort, Western passengers are advised to reserve entire full first-class compartments, even when traveling alone. By Western standards, fares (even in first-class) are relatively low, though foreigners must pay more than local people.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Belarusian telephone service is often slow and not very reliable. Much of the telephone system has not been updated since it was installed after World War II. Touch-tone service may not be available in all areas.

Radio and TV

Local television offers channels in Russian and Belarusian, and European Satellite television service, which during certain parts of the

day includes NBC Super Channel and CNN, is available for a fee. There is a commercial channel that shows some Western films in English with Russian dubbing.

Newspapers, Magazines, Books, and Technical Journals

Several daily newspapers, printed in Russian or Belarusian, are published in Belarus. No foreign newspapers are readily available, and even newspapers from Russia are difficult to find. A bi-weekly eight-page tabloid, the Minsk Economic News, is published in English.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical care in Belarus is below U.S. standards.

Community Health

The accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant affected Belarus more than any other Soviet republic. Northwesterly winds carried radioactive particles from the destroyed reactor, located just 12 km south of the Belarusian border, across Belarus and beyond. In the days immediately following the disaster, gamma radiation in Minsk exceeded safe levels by a factor of 25. However, after a decade, radiation levels in Minsk have returned to normal. A significant portion of Belarus's territory remains heavily contaminated (maps available in local bookstores show the location of the contaminated areas), and certain regions in the south of the country were evacuated; it is, however, safe to travel through the contaminated areas. In general, individuals are advised to avoid eating wild mushrooms and berries (which absorb and retain radiation longer than other vegetation) and to refrain from drinking locally produced milk.

Minsk was rebuilt entirely after World War II, and therefore has the newest fresh water and sewer infrastructure of any capital city of the

former Soviet Union. Rivers and streams, however, are considered unsafe for bathing and swimming due to sewage and agricultural runoff. The post provides tap water purifiers for residences.

Compared to other Eastern European cities, Minsk has little pollution, but levels are rising due to the increasing number of privately owned cars. Although municipal authorities are operating on very tight budgets, efforts are made to keep the streets clean, and there is regular trash pick up in most residential areas. Cockroaches are common in summer.

Preventive Measures

Tap water is not safe to drink, because of possible bacterial contamination and dirt in the pipes. Boiling the water for five minutes and then filtering it is recommended. Many Americans prefer to buy bottled water.

Meat and milk are of dubious quality. Food handling is not up to American standards. All meat should be washed and cooked thoroughly. Boxed UHT milk can be purchased in local stores.

While Belarus is relatively disease-free, there have been reports of TB and hepatitis. Cholera, diphtheria, malaria, and TB cases are on the rise in neighboring countries. No immunizations are required, but Hepatitis-B and Immune Globulin are recommended. As well, routine vaccinations such as measles, tetanus, and diphtheria should be updated. A fluoride supplement also is recommended.

NOTES TO TRAVELERS

There are no local entry or departure fees at the Minsk airport. There is no restriction on the amount of money that can be imported or exported in Belarus,

but amounts in excess of \$500 must be declared.

Export of art must be approved by customs inspectors. People buying art always should obtain an itemized receipt at the time of purchase or importation.

Single-entry visas may be obtained from the Belarusian Embassy in Washington, D.C. (1619 New Hampshire Avenue NW, 20009, 202/986-1606). Multiple-entry visas can be obtained only at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Minsk and will be issued upon arrival.

There is no quarantine requirement for pets coming into Belarus, but dogs and cats must have all rabies shots up to date within thirty days of departure. An international health certificate is required and must be obtained within ten days of the pet's arrival in Belarus.

Veterinary care is limited but available. Pet food and supplies, such as cat litter, are not readily available. Employees should carry enough pet food to last until air freight arrives.

Pets may be transported on Lufthansa Airlines for a fee.

Western-style boarding kennels are not available.

The Belarusian ruble is the official currency in the Republic of Belarus. Inflation is high in Belarus, but it has been artificially stabilized since January 1995. Belarus redenominated its currency in January 2000, with one new ruble equivalent to 2,000 old rubles. At the end of 2000, the exchange rate was 1,180 rubles per U.S. dollar. Virtually all transactions are in cash, though a few large stores and restaurants accept VISA cards. Money changing booths, which accept German marks or dollars, are located in all big stores and on most major streets. Traveler's checks are not widely accepted.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Belarus.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Christmas Day (Orthodox)
Mar. 8	All Women's Day
Mar/Apr	Easter (Catholic)
Apr/May	Easter (Ortho- dox)
Apr/May	Radunitsa* (9th day after Orthodox Easter)
May 1	Labor Day
May 9	Victory Day
July 27	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day (Catholic)

*variable

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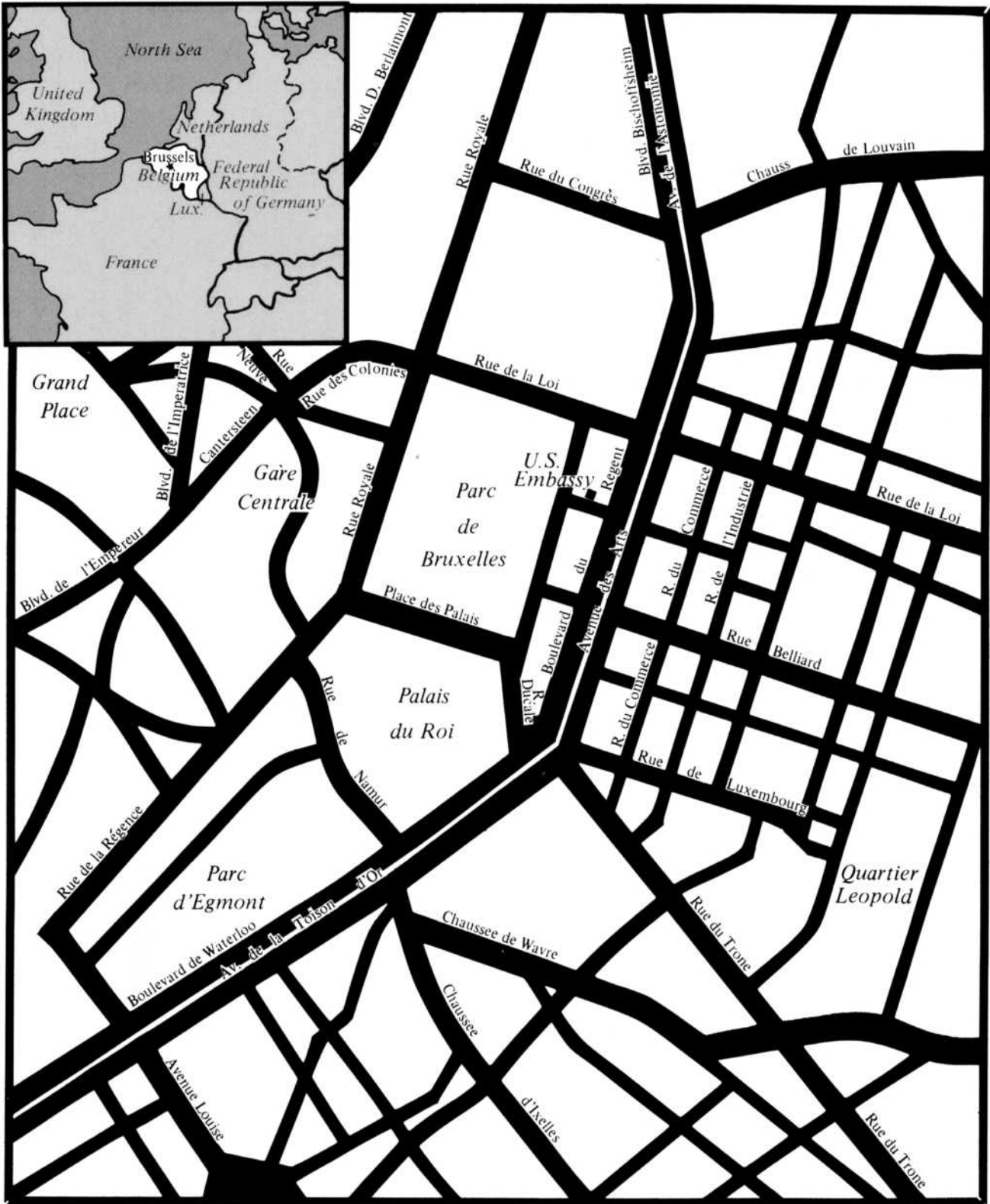
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Brussels, Belgium

BELGIUM

Kingdom of Belgium

Major Cities:

Brussels, Antwerp, Liège, Ghent, Bruges

Other Cities:

Aalst, Anderlecht, Charleroi, Geel, Kortrijk, Louvain, Mechlin, Mons, Namur, Ostend, Tournai, Verviers, Waterloo

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

BELGIUM, whose name comes from a courageous Celtic tribe, the Belgae, once flourished as a province of ancient Rome. It was successively ruled by the Franks, the dukes of Burgundy, the Hapsburgs, and the Spanish; it was annexed by France; it endured an unhappy union with the Netherlands through the Congress of Vienna; and finally, in 1830, it achieved independence. In spite of proclaimed neutrality, Belgium was twice occupied by the Germans, in 1914 and again in 1940. Its own colonial empire in Africa collapsed in the postwar era, yet this small kingdom astonished the world with its resiliency and enterprise.

Through the centuries, Belgium has witnessed an ebb and flow of cultures, and an appealing blend of these diverse elements are found here today. The picturesque cities of Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp are renowned for their medieval architecture and splendid Flemish art collections; theater-goers, music lovers, gourmets, and sports fans find ample occasion to pursue their interests; outdoor enthusiasts are drawn to the wooded countryside of the Ardennes and the charming beach resorts on the North Sea—and, adding their own special color to this tableau, are the profusion of flowers, the open-air markets, and the ubiquitous festivals.

MAJOR CITIES

Brussels

The origins of Brussels date back to the first centuries of the Christian era. On the banks of the Senne, a small stream long since covered and lost from view, Brussels grew as a crossroads and trading center. By the 10th century, Brussels was a principal stop en route from Cologne through France to the Channel ports. In 1402, the cornerstone of the Hotel de Ville, the central building of Brussels'

magnificent Grand Place, was laid. During the next five centuries Brussels experienced Burgundian, Spanish, Austrian, French, and Dutch foreign rule. In 1830, Belgium won its independence from the Dutch, the Belgian monarchy was founded, and Brussels became the capital of the new Kingdom of the Belgians.

Though retaining vivid architectural and cultural traces of its deep involvement in European history, Brussels today has all the excitement, activity, and comfort of a modern European capital. It is headquarters for the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as the European home for many leading multinational businesses. Brussels is legally bilingual in French and Dutch. English also is widely known and used, particularly in business circles.

Food

Generally, food prices in Belgian stores are higher than in the U.S. Fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant locally year round, with seasonal selections and variations. In winter, potatoes, carrots, brussels sprouts, endives, celery, turnips, cabbages, cauliflower, beets, apples, oranges, and grapefruit are in particularly ample supply. Many other choices are available in the large supermarkets.

Supermarkets and many smaller stores carry a wide selection of frozen fruits and vegetables at prices usually higher than those in the U.S. Local foods are safe, raw as well as cooked. All kinds of fresh fish and a variety of meats are available. Pasteurized milk is standard. An incredible variety of delicious breads and bakery items are sold at local bakeries and supermarkets. American brands of baby food are available at larger supermarkets.

Clothing

Clothing and shoe requirements in Belgium are similar to those for New England, the Middle Atlantic States, and the Pacific Northwest. In Belgium, however, more raincoats, umbrellas, and low-heeled, thick-soled walking shoes are needed. Winters, as a rule, are less severe than in Washington, D.C., with little or no snow. On the other hand, summers are not as warm. Lightweight summer clothing is not usually necessary, but at times can be useful for vacationing or on the rare occasion when the weather in Brussels is unseasonably hot. Summer clothing sold locally is usually of a heavier weight, often fully lined, and relatively expensive.

Men: The local market offers a wide choice of both ready-made and tailored clothing, but prices are often high.

Women: Women wear warm, often wool or wool-blend, dresses and suits most of the year. In July and August cotton or silk dresses are appropriate, but a sweater, blazer, or light wrap is often required. Lightweight suits are ideal for the changeable summer weather. An adequate wardrobe for Brussels includes sweaters, scarves, gloves, raincoats, rain boots, umbrellas, and good walking shoes. Women planning to attend private parties, theatrical and musical events, and other social events will occasionally need cocktail and short evening dresses, and less frequently, long evening dresses or skirts.

Ready-made suits and dresses sold in Brussels are more expensive than

garments of similar quality in the United States and may require alterations to fit properly. The semi-annual sales provide an opportunity to purchase items at less than normal prices, but often more expensive than comparable U.S. purchases. Tall women sometimes have difficulty finding suits and dresses in their sizes. Half-sizes do not exist in Belgium.

Excellent Belgian, French, Italian, Swiss, and English fabrics can be purchased. Good dressmakers are available. Custom-made suits and dresses compare in price and quality to American equivalents. Clothing shops in London, Amsterdam, Cologne, and Paris offer alternative shopping options within a reasonable distance from Brussels.

Women are advised to bring at least one warm winter coat. Fur coats and jackets can be worn comfortably, but are not essential for warmth during the mild Belgian winters. Raincoats in varying weights are strongly recommended.

Children: For children, warm comfortable clothing or layered outfits are advisable. Sweatshirts or sweaters in natural fabrics, tights for girls, warm pajamas, turtlenecks, hooded coats, and jackets are needed. Both boys and girls will want warm coats, scarves, gloves and mittens, sturdy shoes with rubber or composition soles, rain boots, raincoats, and hats.

Uniforms are worn in grades 1–5 at St. John's International School. For teenagers, the fashion trend is definitely American. American professional and collegiate sports logo items are the European fashion trend and are available in local shops at highly inflated prices. Baseball caps are very popular. Jeans are the norm for both girls and boys at all of the local schools. Children's clothing purchased here costs much more than in the U.S., but quality is good. Infant and baby clothing available locally is of German, English, French, and Belgian manufacture and is expensive.

Many styles of rain boots and shoes are found in Brussels shops. Warm fleece-lined boots are recommended for raw winter days. Many of the sidewalks and streets are cobblestone, which is slippery when wet and a menace to high heels. Belgian shoes are stylish, but are not always comfortable for American women. Small sizes and shoes narrower than "B" width are hard to find. French, Italian, and Swiss shoes are popular but expensive; they are normally unavailable in narrow widths.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Both American and foreign toiletries and cosmetics are available locally at prices higher than those in the U.S. Since the local water is hard, water softeners are often required for bathing and laundry.

Basic Services: Laundry, shoe repair, and dry-cleaning services are satisfactory and fast. One-day service is available. Laundromats can be found throughout Brussels and its suburbs. Coin-operated dry-cleaning shops are also available. Local dry-cleaning is more expensive than in the U.S.

Beauty shops abound, from reasonably priced neighborhood shops to "name" salons with accompanying high prices.

Religious Activities

Many religious denominations are represented in Brussels. The following English-language services are available:

Anglican/Episcopal:

Pro-Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Rue Capitaine Crespel 29, 1050 Brussels.

All Saints' Church, Centre Notre Dame d'Argenteuil, Chaussee de Louvain 563, 1380 Ohain.

St. Paul's English Speaking Church-Tervuren, Saint Paulus Church, Dorpsplein, 3080 Vossem.

Assembly of God:

Christian Center, Chaussée de Waterloo 47, 1640 Rhode St. Genese.

Baptist:

International Baptist Church, Lange Eikstraat 76-78, 1970 Wezembeek-Oppem.

Christian Scientist:

First Church of Christ Scientist, Chaussée de Vleurgat 96, 1050 Brussels.

Church of Christ:

Church of Christ, Rue de la Brasserie 78, 1050 Brussels.

Jewish:

Synagogue Beth Hillel and Religious School (reform), Avenue Kersbeek 96, 1190 Brussels.

Jewish Synagogue of Brussels, (orthodox) Rue de la Règence 32, 1000 Brussels.

Mormon:

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Strombeeklinde 110, 1820 Grimbergen.

Presbyterian:

St. Andrew's Church of Scotland, Chaussée de Vleurgat 181, 1050 Brussels.

Protestant:

The International Protestant Church, Kattenberg 19, Boitsfort, 1170 Brussels.

Religious Society of Friends:

Quaker House, Square Ambiorix 50, 1040 Brussels.

Roman Catholic:

Our Lady of Mercy, Place de la Sainte Alliance 10, 1180 Brussels.

Parish of St. Anthony, Avenue des Anciens Combattants 23-25, 1950 Kraainem.

Church of St. Nicolas (Bourse), Rue du Tabora 6, 1000 Brussels.

Education

English-language schools in the Brussels area offer comprehensive

educational programs for school-age children according to the American or British systems.

Belgian public schools offer viable educational programs and provide an opportunity for American children to learn French and Dutch. The 1993 Schools in Brussels: A Guide for U.S. Government Families contains detailed information on the educational options available in Brussels.

Brussels American School (BAS)
12 John F. Kennedylaan, 1960 Sterrebeek
Tel: 32 (2) 731-5626
FAX: 32 (2) 782-0230

BAS is a Department of Defense Dependents School (DODDS) sponsored institution serving the families of U.S. Government personnel, NATO personnel, embassies of NATO countries, and, on a space-available basis, American citizens working for private firms. It is located on the same campus as the NATO Health Clinic, in the commune of Sterrebeek, 5 miles east of central Brussels. Several AP programs are offered in the high school.

The school complex, constructed in 1967, is situated on 17 acres. It includes an administrative building, an elementary and middle school building, a high school building, a gymnasium, playing fields and tennis courts. BAS is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). There is a full-time guidance counselor at the school as well as a Parent-Teacher-Student Organization. Free bus service is available for students who live within the BAS bus routes.

International School of Brussels (ISB)
Kattenberg 19, 1170 Brussels
Tel: 32 (2) 672-2788
FAX: 32 (2) 675-1178

ISB, a private school on 40 acres of woodland, is located in the commune of Watermael-Boitsfort, just within Brussels city limits. The students and faculty are international. The school is divided into an early

childhood, elementary, middle, and high school, each with its own library. There is a full-day kindergarten program as well as a nursery school for 3- to 4-year-old children. An International Baccalaureate (IB) program is available at the high school. A few AP courses also are offered. Bus service is available throughout greater Brussels for an annual fee.

ISB is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in the U.S., and the European Council of International Schools (ECIS).

St. John's International School
Drève Richelle 146, 1410 Waterloo
Tel: 32 (2) 354-1138
FAX: 32 (2) 353-0495

St. John's is situated near the famous Waterloo battlefield, 30 minutes from the center of Brussels by car. It is an ecumenical Catholic institution with students of all faiths. St. John's offers programs to 900 students from preschool to high school. Basically the curriculum is American, but the British General Certificate of Secondary Education and the International Baccalaureate are also offered. A limited number of AP courses are taught. Bus service is available throughout greater Brussels and is covered by the educational allowance.

There is a one-time registration fee for new students.

The British School of Brussels (BSB)
19 Leuvensesteenweg, 3080 Teruren
Tel: 32 (2) 767-4700
FAX: 32 (2) 767-8070

BSB follows the British national curriculum leading to the General Certificate of Secondary Education. The school is located 6 miles east of the city center. It has strong programs in the sciences, languages and arts, and offers a wide range of science and technology programs. Students from preschool to Form 13 are on one campus.

The European School I
46 Vert Chasseur
1180 Brussels
Tel: 32 (2) 373-8611

The European School II
75 Avenue Oscar Jespers
1200 Brussels
Tel: 32 (2) 774-2211

The European Schools serve families of the European Union. There are two locations in Brussels and one in Mol, north of Brussels. The same curriculum is taught in six language sections. Some subjects are taught to composite classes of the same level. The school considers languages and its international character its biggest advantages. Primary school is a 5-year program and secondary school is 7. The European Schools charge fees to all non-EU employees. In recent years, because of severe overcrowding, the European Schools have been unable to accommodate applicants from non-EU countries.

The British Primary School
6 Stationstraat, 1981 Tervuren
Tel: 32 (2) 767-3098

The school is located in the rural suburb of Vossem, near Tervuren, about 20 minutes from central Brussels by car. It is housed in a contemporary brick building and has a large garden with playground equipment and a closed veranda for the nursery classes. Play, music, and art go hand-in-hand with organized free play.

Brussels English Primary School (BEPS)
23 Avenue Franklin Roosevelt
1050 Brussels
Tel: 32 (2) 648-4311
FAX: 32 (2) 687-2968

Brussels English Primary School (BEPS II)
Rue L. Deladriere 13
1300 Limal
Tel: 32 (10) 417-227
FAX: Same as BEPS I

BEPS provides education according to the traditional British primary school structure. The school is



Courtesy of Melissa Doig

Norton House in Brussels

located in Ixelles near the Bois de la Cambre, 15 minutes from the center of Brussels by car. The Nursery School provides a full range of pre-school activities and the children have access to a garden at the rear of the school.

BEPS II is located in Limal, about 20 miles southeast of Brussels, near the city of Wavre.

Other national groups operating schools in Brussels include the French, Germans, Scandinavians, and Japanese. Older students whose French or Dutch capability permits may attend many Belgian schools of high academic standing. Whether supported by private, city,

state, or religious funds, nearly all receive state subsidies and follow a standard curriculum. People enrolling their children in neighborhood schools pay either nominal tuition or none at all.

No documents or certificates are required to enroll a child in a Belgian primary school (grades 1 to 6). Enrollment in secondary education (grades 7 to 12) requires an "Attestation d'Etudes." This document, which must be signed by the principal of the American school the student last attended, should indicate the grade level completed and subjects taken during the last 3 years. The last report card is also required. The application for a statement of

academic course equivalence is normally made by the parents, who may apply directly to the following address: Administration de l'Enseignement Secondaire, Service des Equivalences, Cite Administrative de l'Etat (Arcades), Bloc D, 5 ème ètage, bureau 55222, 1010 Brussels.

Adjustment to a European school varies with the individual student's aptitude, personality, and previous educational background. To obtain a resume of Belgian curricula, write:

The Office des Publications
Administration des Etudes
Ministere de l'Education Nationale
Cite Administrative de l'Etat
(Arcades)
1010 Brussels.

Brussels has good preschool facilities. Most communes have nursery school programs for which there is little or no tuition. Excellent private nursery schools charge a nominal tuition. All programs provide excellent opportunities for children to enjoy supervised play and exposure to French or Dutch.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are a number of university level programs available in Belgium. Those who are interested in pursuing studies should write directly to the educational institution to request information.

Vesalius College of the Free University of Brussels (VUB) offers an English-language curriculum leading to the B.A. degree, with 15 majors offered. Vesalius College is located at:

2 Pleinlaan
1050 Brussels
tel: 32 (2) 629-3626
FAX: 32 (2) 629-3627

The historic Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, founded in 1425, has a wide choice of courses taught in English in several fields leading to B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. Specialized programs for post law degree

candidates are also available. Write or call:

KU Leuven
Dienst Internationale Relaties
Universiteitshal
Naamsestraat 22
3000 Leuven
tel: 32 (16) 284-025 or
32 (16) 284-027

Boston University Brussels is an integral part of Boston University and offers academic programs of the Metropolitan College and Graduate School. An M.A. in International Relations and an M.S. in Management are currently offered in English. Established in 1972, the school shares the facilities of the Dutch-speaking Free University, Brussels (VUB). Write or call:

Boston University Brussels
Font St. Landry 6
1120 Brussels
tel: 32 (2) 268-0037

Local communal art and music schools offer instruction for adults and children. Advanced students might enroll at the Royal Conservatory of Music or at the High School for Architecture and Decorative Arts. Private instruction in music and art also is available in Brussels.

Sports

Americans play golf at: Royal Waterloo Golf Club in Ohain; the Royal Golf Club of Belgium in Tervuren; the Golf and Business Club at Kampenhout; and the Keerbergen Golf Course at Keerbergen. Fees and dues are expensive at the first two; Kampenhout and Keerbergen are less expensive. Many golf courses in Europe restrict play to those who have a Golf Federation Card, which reflects current membership in a European golf club. If one does not have membership in a golf club, it is usually possible to play as a guest of a member. Most courses are not generally open to the public, but golf has become very popular and several new courses have opened in recent years, some with more liberal playing policies.

Soccer, field hockey, basketball, and horse racing are popular Belgian sports. But game shooting remains the traditional sport, with boar, deer, pheasant, partridge, duck, and other small game hunted. Hunting areas are strictly controlled, either by individuals or by clubs, and shooting is by invitation or by membership. Opportunities exist for camping, boating and sailing, fishing, and skiing in the Ardennes.

Brussels has many indoor and outdoor tennis clubs; fees and dues vary according to the facilities. Handball courts, indoor swimming pools, new indoor rock climbing walls, and modern bowling alleys are all available and enjoy considerable popularity with Americans. For horseback riders, there are bridle paths in the Bois de la Cambre and nearby forests.

The Brussels Sports Association, an English-speaking organization operated by parent volunteers, offers soccer, basketball, softball, and sanctioned Little League baseball for girls and boys, ages 6 through 15.

The Brussels American School (BAS), International School of Brussels (ISB), and St. John's International School provide junior varsity and varsity interscholastic sports programs. American football is offered only at BAS and ISB. St. John's and ISB offer baseball. All schools have basketball and soccer programs.

Skating enthusiasts enjoy roller skating in the Bois de la Cambre and ice skating at Foret National and Poseidon indoor ice rinks. Skates may be rented.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Many fine parks in Brussels offer a variety of outdoor activities. The Bois de la Cambre, a large green haven, features pleasant vistas for strolling, rowing, bicycling, horseback riding, roller skating, and miniature golf. The Parc de Tervuren has beautiful walks around lovely

lakes, boating, and play areas for children.

A pleasant spring and summer pastime in Belgium is "petanque" or "boule," an outdoor game played with weighted balls in a marked-off court. It originated in the south of France and reminds Americans of a mixture of bowling and horseshoes.

Swimming in indoor pools is a year-round activity in Brussels. The cool summers encourage only the hardy to venture into outdoor swimming areas. But beachcombers find the North Sea coast with its wide, sandy beaches well worth the 2-hour drive from Brussels. There are many resort areas; Ostend and Het Zoute are probably the best known and the most expensive. The season at the seashore is usually short and the water temperatures compare with those along the northern New England coast. Modern, comfortable summer cottages and apartments, as well as many reasonably priced pensions, are available in seacoast towns.

In addition to the many museums and attractions found in Brussels, its central location offers unlimited sight-seeing and travel opportunities, not only in Belgium but throughout Europe.

Entertainment

Brussels offers a full spectrum of entertainment. Opera, concerts, ballets, stage presentations (in French or Dutch), and visiting international performers provide an interesting range of cultural activities. British and American theater clubs present several productions yearly. Numerous movie theaters show films in French, English, Italian, and other languages. Usually a dozen or more American films are playing in Brussels at any one time. Most films are shown in the original language with subtitles.

Inexpensive discotheques with dancing and recorded music abound in the city. The few nightclubs offering floor shows are expensive.

Brussels' many good restaurants offer Belgian cooking (based on French cuisine), as well as Italian, Chinese, Serbian, Spanish, Middle Eastern, African, and other specialties. Prices range from very expensive at some outstanding restaurants to reasonable at smaller establishments. Dining out is a Belgian national pastime. Numerous small cafes do a brisk beer business day and night, and sidewalk cafes flourish in good weather. Belgian folk festival traditions with celebrations of every kind are some of Europe's richest. Especially colorful and exciting are those of the pre-Lenten season. The Carnival of the Gilles in Binche, a Shrove Tuesday event, dates from the 16th century when Spain ruled Belgium. It features the Gilles, those men and boys of the town entitled to wear the brilliant costumes topped with towering Inca-inspired feathered hats. With carnival enthusiasm, the Gilles dance through the town in Indian rhythm, beating drums, shaking bells, and tossing fresh oranges to the spectators. The Ommegang in Brussels and the Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges are other internationally famous Belgian festivals.

Certain Brussels communes have public lending libraries, some of which carry a few books in English. Brussels also has excellent research and professional libraries. The Royal Library, in particular, has some valuable possessions, including manuscripts, prints, and miniatures. The British Council Library is a good source for English-language fiction and non-fiction. There is also a well-stocked library at the NATO Support Activity. There are several English-language bookstores. There are many other bookstores which carry some English-language materials. Books can be checked out from most libraries.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Organizations within the American community include the American Club of Brussels, the American Women's

Club, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, and Girl Scouts.

All women are invited to join the American Women's Club of Brussels (AWCB). In addition to charitable work and other community services, the AWCB organizes excursions, lectures, luncheons, and activities classes, including bridge, yoga, and Japanese flower arranging. Participating in the club and its activities provides an opportunity to meet members of the expatriate American community. Within the AWCB are international members who have been sponsored by an American. There is also an active international group within the club which meets for various activities and for cultural exchange.

International Contacts: The Association Belgo-Americaine offers Americans a chance to meet Belgians interested in America and in knowing Americans through luncheons, lectures, and film showings. It promotes understanding and good will.

The Cercle Gaulois is a pleasant and sociable men's club with a good restaurant. Another club is De Warande.

Other organizations that welcome Americans include the Red Cross, Toastmasters, the American Theater Company, local scouting, sports and musical groups. Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, and other service clubs are also active. Brussels has an extraordinary range of clubs and organizations, both American and international, which afford individuals an opportunity to pursue almost any type of interest during their tour here.

Special Information

Belgian Telephone Numbers: The telephone numbers assigned to subscribers in Belgium by the servicing telecommunications companies consist of either a 6- or 7- digit configuration. Larger metropolitan areas normally issue 7- digit numbers; many rural and suburban



Gilded houses on Grote Market in Antwerp

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

areas utilize phone numbers consisting of 6 digits.

Exchanges with 7- digit phone numbers use a single digit city/local code; localities with 6- digit phone numbers have a 2- digit city/local code. The country code for all of Belgium is 32.

The phone/fax numbers listed are configured to reflect the following pattern:

country code (city/local code)
local number

For 7 digit numbers, the configuration is:

32 (##) ###-####

For 6 digit numbers, the configuration is:

32 (##) ###-###

Antwerp

The European Logistical Support Office personnel (ELSO) is located in the Flemish speaking city of Antwerp in the Flanders region. Antwerp is known for both its historic and artistic legacy (the home of Rubens) as well as for its large, modern seaport. It is about 45 minutes north of Brussels by car or train, and the climate is about the same.

Religious Activities

Catholic and Protestant religious services are held in English in Antwerp. Although no Jewish services are held in English in Antwerp, they are available in Brussels.

Education

The Antwerp International School is located 10 km north of Antwerp in the suburb of Ekeren. It offers an American program pre-kindergarten through grade 12 culminating in either a U.S. High School accredited

diploma or the International Baccalaureate diploma.

The EEC International School offers an English-language program from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 culminating in an American high school diploma of the University of Cambridge IGCSE and advanced level examinations.

Recreation and Social Life

A variety of recreational opportunities exist on the local economy. A limited number of social and recreational opportunities also exist with English speaking organizations such as the American Women's Club of Antwerp, the British Theater Arts Society, the Belgian-American Association, the international schools, and the churches.

Liège

Liège, whose Flemish name is Luik and German name Lüttich, is situ-

ated in eastern Belgium at the confluence of the Meuse and Ourthe Rivers, near the borders of both the Netherlands and Germany. Close to the Ardennes Plateau region, and 54 miles southwest of Brussels, Liège is the largest French-speaking city in Belgium. The city proper has about 185,000 residents. A major commercial, industrial, and transportation hub, Liège manufactures chemicals, textiles, furniture, motor vehicles, electrical and electronic equipment, and armaments.

Liège was established as a bishopric in the eighth century and, by the 10th century, it was the capital of an extensive ecclesiastical state, which was part of the Holy Roman Empire until 1792. During the Middle Ages, it was an important cultural city, as well as a center for the textile and metal industries. Liège was seized by Napoleon in 1794 and was a part of France until 1815, when it was assigned to the Netherlands by the Congress of Vienna. In the 19th century, the city was the center of Walloon culture and development, which included rapid industrial growth and social unrest.

The fortifications of Liège were reportedly among the strongest in Europe, but the city fell to the Germans after a 12-day siege in 1914. It suffered defeat again in World War II (May 1940). Although it was liberated by U.S. forces four years later, it had suffered extensive damage from German rockets during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 to January 1945.

Today, Liège is, for the most part, a modern city with some splendid historic churches, houses, and museums which contribute to its popularity as a tourist spot. The Walloon Museum depicts everyday life in the 19th century, and is housed in a 17th-century convent. Among the city's ancient buildings are two 10th-century churches and a cathedral, also built in that period. The Palais de Justice is the 16th-century palace of the bishop-princes, and has magnificent interior decorations. Liège has a university (founded in 1816), concert halls,

theaters, and an opera house where productions are presented from September to May.

Twenty-five miles northwest of Liège is the secluded reserve, Bokrijk, which has a park, arboretum, rose garden, several lakes, and an open-air museum. Here at the museum is a re-creation of a typical Kempen village, with farms, stables, and one of Belgium's oldest windmills. There are also a 12th-century church, and 17th-century thatched-roofed homes that contain period furnishings. The Ardennes Cemetery is 11 miles southwest of Liège, near the village of Neuville-en-Condroz. Thousands of Americans killed in the Battle of the Bulge are buried here.

Schools for Foreigners

The International School of Liège is a coeducational school covering kindergarten through ninth grade. It was founded in 1967.

Aspects of the U.S. and U.K. curricula are combined at International School. French is offered as a foreign language. The school year extends from September through June, with vacations at Christmas, Easter, and midterm. Currently, there are six teachers and 17 students (capacity is between 40 and 60).

International School is located north of central Liège. It has five classrooms, a gymnasium, playing fields, swimming pool, and a 5,000-volume library. The mailing address is boulevard Leon Philippet 7, Xhovemont, 4000 Liège, Belgium.

Ghent

Ghent (Gent in Flemish, Gand in French) is the capital of East Flanders Province. It is situated at the confluence of the Schelde and Lys Rivers, about 35 miles northwest of Brussels. Connected with the North Sea by the Gent-Terneuzen Canal and a network of other canals, Ghent is a major port as well as the chief textile, clothing, and steel manufacturing center of

Belgium. Called the "city of flowers," it is also the trade center of a bulb producing region. With a current population of 224,000, Ghent is Belgium's third largest city.

First mentioned in the seventh century, Ghent is one of the country's oldest cities, developing around a fortress built by the first count of Flanders on a small island early in the 10th century. The town spread to nearby islets and today is still connected by many bridges. In medieval times, the city was a major commercial center and the seat of the counts of Flanders. Ghent had become one of Europe's largest cities and a major wool-producing center by the 13th century; the work force was comprised primarily of weavers, fullers, shearers, and dyers at that time. Social conflicts between the workers and the upper classes were frequent. The city was the site on November 8, 1576, of the Pacification of Gent which was an alliance of the provinces of the Netherlands to drive the Spanish from the area. The modern industrialization of Ghent began with the development of its port and the establishment of textile factories early in the 19th century. The city was also the site of a treaty signed December 24, 1814, marking the end of the War of 1812. German forces occupied Ghent in both World Wars.

Ghent has more historic buildings than any other city in Belgium. The landmark is the famous belfry, erected in 1300 as a symbol of freedom. Standing about 300 feet tall, the tower also has an equally famous 52-bell carillon. Despite the symbolic nature of the belfry, more travelers visit St. Bavo's Cathedral. Built sometime between the 10th and 16th centuries, the cathedral's architecture has both Romanesque and Gothic additions. St. Bavo's houses several art treasures, including Hubert and Jan van Eyck's polyptych "Adoration of the Mystic Lamb," in a side chapel. The painting, which dates from the 15th century, is an extraordinary example of Renaissance-style use of detail and vivid color. The masterpiece is also one of the great



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Street scene in Bruges

mysteries of the art world, as experts cannot differentiate between the various parts painted by each of the brothers. Other works of art found in the cathedral are Rubens' "Conversion of St. Bavo" and various crowns and jewels. St. Bavo's is open daily.

The architecture of Ghent blends the medieval and Renaissance styles. Narrow streets and houses built close together make the city very picturesque. Famous structures include the ruins of the Abbey of St. Bavo, dating to the seventh century; and the guild houses, located on the Graslei, built between the 12th and 16th centuries, and reflecting Gothic, Romanesque, and Renaissance styles. The city's town hall was so long under construction that it combines Gothic and Renaissance architecture. Ghent has several other cathedrals (St. Nicholas, St. James), parks (Citadel Park), palaces (Floralia), and castles (Kasteel D'Ooidonk, castle of Laarne) of interest. St. Jorishof, built in the 15th century, is Europe's oldest hotel; today it is widely known for its restaurant. All historic buildings are illuminated nightly from May through October.

Ghent has an opera company and many fine museums. The city can be

toured by boat, leaving from Vleeshuisbridge and Korenlei, and by horse-drawn cart, leaving from Korenlei and St. Baafsplein. Ghent is surrounded by begonia fields, in bloom from late July through late September.

Bruges

Bruges (Brugge), situated in northwest Belgium, is the capital of West Flanders Province. Located nine miles inland, it is connected by canals to Zeebrugge and Ostend, outer ports on the North Sea. A commercial, industrial, and tourist center as well as a rail junction, Bruges manufactures textiles, lace, ships, railroad cars, electronic equipment, chemicals, and processed food. With a population of about 116,000, Bruges, known as the "city of bridges," is 55 miles northwest of Brussels.

The town was founded in the ninth century on an inlet of the North Sea and, by the 11th century, it had become a major trading center with England. In the 13th century, Bruges was one of the chief wool-producing centers in Flanders. One hundred years later, at its peak of prosperity, it was among the great commercial and financial cities of Europe, as well as the residence of the dukes of Burgundy.

The decline of Bruges began when the Flemish wool industry faltered because of foreign competition early in the 15th century. In 1490, the inlet on which the city is located became clogged with silt, and Bruges lost its access to the sea and its outer ports. Also contributing to what would be a 300-year decline was Antwerp's rise to prominence as a major port. The revival of Bruges began in 1895 when repairs to the port were begun; in 1907, the canal to Zeebrugge (or Brugge-on-the-Sea) was completed.

Bruges was occupied by the Germans during both World Wars. Today, although its chief income comes from tourism, lace making, and horticulture, it has regained importance as a port, and new prospects in industry, technology, and commerce are now underway.

A visitor to Bruges may absorb the medieval aura of the city by various modes of transportation. The sights may be viewed from a boat on one of the many canals, from a horse-drawn carriage, or from walking the ancient cobblestone streets. Most of the interesting sites are clustered around the city's main square, the Markt. Noted structures here reflect a variety of architectural styles and include the Basilica of the Holy Blood, the town hall (Europe's oldest, 1376), the old recorder's house, and the baroque provost's house. The Romanesque architecture found in the Basilica of the Holy Blood is evident in the chapel's crypt; built between 1139 and 1149, its upper chapel was rebuilt in Gothic style in the 15th century. What are claimed to be a few drops of Christ's blood, enclosed in a gold reliquary, were presented to the city by Derek of Alsace, count of Flanders, in 1150. On Ascension Day in Bruges, there is a procession of the Holy Blood through the city streets, along with characters and scenes from the Bible. The Church of Our Lady, although primarily Gothic, actually combines several different architectural styles. Paintings by Gérard David and a white Carrara marble statue by Michelangelo

entitled “Mother and Child” are displayed. The sculpture was purchased from the artist by a wealthy Flemish burglar and is the only statue of Michelangelo’s to remain permanently outside of Italy. The 16th-century mausoleums of Charles the Bold and Mary of Burgundy are also found in this church.

Bruges offers other interesting buildings, museums, and art galleries: Belfort en Hall, the market hall or clothworkers hall, was active from the 13th through the 15th centuries. Its belfry offers visitors an excellent view of the city. A 49-bell carillon entertains here with concerts on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings and on Sunday morning from mid-June through September. At the Groeningemuseum, paintings by artists of the Flemish primitive school, accounting for about 30 masterworks, as well as collections of later and contemporary art, are displayed. The Gruuthusemuseum, housed in a 15th-century palace, has interesting exhibits of Flemish lace, pottery, and furniture. The Hans Memling Museum was the medieval St. John’s Hospital, which accommodated travellers beginning in the 12th Century. Memling (1435–1494) was a painter who studied under Rogier Van der Weyden and lived in Bruges from 1465 until his death. His works exhibited at the museum include the triptych altarpiece, “The Marriage of St. Catherine” and “Shrine of St. Ursula,” which is considered one of the seven marvels of Belgium. Beautiful handmade lace is a centuries-old industry in Bruges; the intricacies of creating this openwork can be studied here, and it is possible to watch the students at work with their bobbins. A profusion of small shops cater to the ever-increasing tourist demand for lace made in Bruges.

From June to September, the canals and buildings in Bruges are flooded with light at night, reminding the visitor of Venice, Italy.

Just seven miles beyond the city is the North Sea port of Zeebrugge,

which offers lovely beaches and water sports activities. Zeebrugge, where the ferry crosses to and from England, drew international attention in March 1987 with the tragic sinking of a passenger vessel less than a mile from the harbor. A valiant rescue effort saved many lives, but 185 are known dead, either in the frigid waters of the North Sea or trapped in the overturned boat.

In the same area is the picturesque village of Lissewege. Medieval culture has been preserved here; there are windmills, a canal, low houses, a 13th-century church, and a 12th-century abbey.

OTHER CITIES

AALST, with a population of about 76,000, is situated on the Dender River, 15 miles northwest of Brussels, in western Belgium. Founded in the ninth century, the city has been occupied by the Spanish, Germans, French, and Dutch from 1056 until Belgium’s independence in 1830. Historical sites in town include the unfinished, Gothic style, 14th-century St. Martin Church and a statue of Thierry Martens, who established the first Belgian printing press here in 1473.

ANDERLECHT, with a population of 93,000, is a residential and industrial suburb of Brussels. Situated on the Charleroi-Brussels Canal, Anderlecht was the home of Erasmus, philosopher and scholar, from 1517 to 1521. His house is now a museum.

CHARLEROI is Belgium’s fifth city in size, with a population of 208,000 (greater area). It is located in southern Belgium, on the Sambre River and Charleroi-Brussels Canal. Founded in 1666 and named for Charles II of Spain, it is the center of an area that produces iron and coal. Metal, glass, and other industries are also present. An important strategic position during the 17th- and 18th-century wars, Charleroi was the site of a victorious German battle in World War I.

Today, the city has modern buildings and a technical university. Places of interest include the Industrial Exhibition Halls and the Palace of Fine Arts. Eleven miles southwest of Charleroi is the medieval village of Thuin, featuring old abbeys, hanging gardens, and a thousand-year-old tower. Six miles west of Thuin is Binche, known for its pre-Lenten Carnival and museum of carnival masks.

GEEL, located about 35 miles north of the capital, is known for its home-care system for the mentally ill. It has been a treatment center for the mentally impaired since the Middle Ages. When the tomb of St. Dymphna became associated with the cure of insanity, people came to Geel in large numbers. The townspeople began to board the pilgrims in their houses. In 1850, the government assumed responsibility for the system. Industries in Geel include textile and cigar factories and breweries. The city’s population is approximately 33,000.

KORTRIJK (in French, Courtrai) lies on the Leie (Lys) River, about 47 miles southwest of Brussels. By the 14th century, Kortrijk was the most important cloth manufacturing town in medieval Flanders. Today, with a population of close to 76,000, Kortrijk is an important linen and textile manufacturing center. The Church of Notre Dame here contains Rubens’ “Elevation of the Cross.” The Gothic town hall dates from 1526 and currently houses the tourist office. Ten miles northeast of Kortrijk, near the town of Waregem, is Flanders Field, the cemetery where Americans killed in World War I are buried—and touchingly remembered by grateful Belgians who still honor them with floral tributes and prayers.

LOUVAIN (in Flemish, Leuven), 17 miles east of Brussels on the Dijle River, was an important center of wool trade and of the cloth industry during the Middle Ages. It was the seat of the dukes of Brabant for centuries, but is best known for its university. Founded in 1425 by Pope Martin V, the university rapidly



14th century bridge in Bruges

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

became renowned as a center for Catholic learning. Its 800,000-volume library is considered one of the finest in the world; it was destroyed in both World Wars, and restored twice. A long-standing dispute between Belgium's Flemish and French-speaking (Walloon) sectors resulted in the division of the university into two separate units in 1968. The Flemish-speaking University of Leuven is in the city; the French-speaking Université Catholique de Louvain is at Ottignies. Noted churches in Louvain are the 15th-century Gothic St. Pierre's and the baroque St. Michel's. The town hall, built in 1459 in flamboyant Gothic style, is one of the most attractive buildings in Belgium; it houses the local tourist office. Louvain's population is about 75,000.

MECHLIN (Mechelen in Flemish, Malines in French) is located on the

Dijle River in north-central Belgium, about 12 miles south of Brussels. Once a center of Flemish clothweaving and known for its lace, Mechlin today is a commercial, industrial, and transportation center, manufacturing textiles, steel, and motor vehicles. It has 77,000 residents. The city was founded early in the Middle Ages, and was a fief for the prince-bishops of Liège until 1356. Although it has been damaged several times in wars, Mechlin retains many noteworthy buildings. The Gothic cathedral of St. Rombaut is considered one of the most beautiful churches in Belgium; built in the 13th century, it has a 319-foot tower and a 49-bell carillon. Concerts are performed on Sunday, Monday, and Saturday. A bell-ringing school attracts carillonneurs from all over the world. The cathedral houses Van Dyke's painting, "Crucifixion," and paintings by Rubens. The tourist office is located

in the town hall, built in the 14th century and rebuilt in the 18th century.

MONS (also called Bergen) is located in southwest Belgium near the French border. With a population of 94,000, it is the capital of Hainaut Province and the processing and shipping center of the Borinage coal mining district, as well as a manufacturing center. Charlemagne made Mons the capital of Hainaut in 840; in 1295, it was the seat of the counts of Hainaut. Mons was occupied by Dutch, Spanish, and French forces in wars of the 16th through the 18th centuries, and was the site of several battles in both World Wars. A visitor today finds winding streets, quaint buildings, and magnificent mansions, remnants of the city's long history. The castle of the counts of Hainaut is mostly in ruins, except for some subterranean passages and the

chapel of St. Calixte, whose belfry contains a 47-bell carillon. Collegiate Church of St. Waudru, a late Gothic structure, has 28 chapels, 16th-century stained glass windows, and the alabaster "Annunciation" by Dubrecq. Mons is the site of an annual pageant and festival of St. George. During winter, about three or four visiting ballet and opera companies and symphony orchestras perform monthly. Excellent shopping facilities, especially food stores, are available here. The town of Casteau, near Mons, is the site of Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE).

NAMUR, or Namen, the capital of the eponymous province, is situated at the confluence of the Meuse and Sambre Rivers in south-central Belgium. About 35 miles southeast of Brussels, and with a population of 106,000, Namur is a rail junction as well as a commercial and industrial center, producing leather goods and porcelain. Pink brick houses, baroque churches, and lovely gardens add charm to the city. The 11th-century citadel and castle of the counts of Namur overlooks the town and may be reached by road or cable car. Other nearby castles include Corroy-le-Château, a military fortress; Mielmont (16th century); and Franc-Waret (18th century). The baroque St. Aubin Cathedral, built in the 18th century, contains paintings by Van Dyke and Jordaens and has copies of Rubens' work. Namur's archaeological museum is considered one of the richest in Belgium. During summer, boat excursions may be made to Dinant in the Ardennes. The tourist office is located on Leopold Square.

OSTEND (Oostende) is the largest and oldest of the Belgian cities on the North Sea coast. With a population of about 69,000, it is a major commercial and fishing port, industrial center, and seaside resort, connected by canals with Bruges and Ghent. Ostend was a port as early as the 11th century and played an important role in the Dutch struggle for independence. From May to October, it is the country's most popular seaside resort, with a three-

mile beach, race track, casino, golf course, and facilities for other sports. Concerts, ballet, and other entertainment are presented at the casino during summer. Steamer trips across the channel to Dover, England, leave from Ostend's harbor.

TOURNAI (also called Doornik, in Flemish, and Tournay) is located in southwest Belgium on the Schelde River, nine miles from the French border and 43 miles from Brussels. A commercial and industrial center with a population of 68,000, Tournai manufactures textiles, carpets, and cement. One of the oldest cities in Belgium, Tournai was founded by the Romans in the third century and was destroyed in 881 by the Normans. It was part of France from 1187 to 1521, part of the Spanish Netherlands until 1714, and then was under Austrian rule. A cultural center since the 12th century, Tournai is also noted for its tapestries, china, and earthenware. The Museum of Fine Arts here displays works by Rubens, Brueghel, Manet, and others. The 13th-century belfry is the oldest in Belgium, and offers a fine view of the city. The Romanesque Cathedral of Notre Dame was built in 1171, and contains many sculptures, murals, and paintings. Château de Beloeil, 17 miles southeast of Tournai, is one of the finest castles in the province. It is complete with a moat and a garden-park. The Tournai tourist office is located at 14 rue du Vieux Marché aux Poteries, opposite the belfry.

VERVIERS, located east of Liège at the foot of the Ardennes, is an industrial center manufacturing textiles and machinery. Its population is about 54,000. Surrounded by lush countryside, Verviers has an 18th-century town hall and Church of Our Lady. The castle of Franchimont, in nearby Theux, is said to be one of the oldest in Belgium. Henri-Chapelle Cemetery is about 12 miles north, and here, over 8,000 American military personnel killed in World War II are buried.

WATERLOO, situated south of Brussels in central Belgium, is important historically. The Battle of Waterloo, fought just to the south on June 18, 1815, was where Napoleon was defeated. Visitors may explore the battlefield; there are also several monuments and memorials to those killed in this battle. The headquarters of the duke of Wellington, who led the British forces against Napoleon, may be visited by the public. The current population of this Brabant provincial city is close to 29,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Belgium is small, about the size of Maryland, with an area of 11,799 square miles. Thirty-nine miles of Belgian seacoast line the North Sea, and 896 miles of frontier border the Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, and France. The Meuse River and its tributary, the Sambre, divide the country into two distinct geographic regions: a level, fertile area to the north and west, and the hilly, wooded region, the Ardennes, to the south and east. The capital, Brussels, is in the center of the Kingdom. With Ghent and Antwerp, it forms a triangle enclosing the most heavily built-up and densely populated area of Belgium. More than 50 percent (4 million acres) of Belgium is still farmland; forest covers another 18 percent.

Belgium's climate is characterized by moderate temperatures, prevailing westerly winds, cloudy skies, regular but not abundant rainfall, and little snow. The weather is variable. Summer temperatures average 60°F (16°C). Rare annual extremes are 10°F (-12°C) and 90°F (33°C).

Population

Belgium has 10.3 million inhabitants. The principal cities are Brus-

sels (population about 959,000 for the 19 municipalities of the capital region), Antwerp (447,000), Ghent (224,000), Charleroi (201,000), Liège (186,000), Bruges (116,000), and Namur (105,000). Geographically and culturally, Belgium is at the crossroads of Europe. During the past 2,000 years, it has witnessed a constant ebb and flow of different peoples and cultures. As a result, Belgium has people of Celtic, Roman, German, French, Dutch, Spanish, and Austrian origins.

Public Institutions

Belgium is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch. Although the King, Albert II, is technically the executive authority, the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) makes governmental decisions. The Council of Ministers, led by the Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstadt, holds office as long as it retains parliamentary confidence. Elections are held at least every 4 years by universal suffrage with obligatory voting and a form of proportional representation.

The bicameral Parliament consists of a Chamber of Representatives and a Senate. The 150-member Chamber of Representatives is elected directly. The government ministers are responsible before the Chamber of Representatives. The Senate consists of 71 members; 40 are directly elected, 21 are appointed by the regional legislatures and 10 by fellow senators. The Senate has the right to review draft bills of the Chamber.

The 1993 amended Constitution and Devolution Acts have turned Belgium into a federal state composed of three economic regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels) and three cultural communities (Flemish, French, and German-language). The present government consists of a coalition of Flemish and Francophone Social Christians (CVP/PSC) and Socialists.

The judiciary is modeled after the French system. The King appoints court magistrates and court judges.

The highest court is the “Cour de Cassation.” There are 5 courts of appeal and 27 district courts. Courts do not pass on the constitutionality of legislation, but a special body, the Arbitration Court, rules in jurisdictional disputes opposing federal and regional legislatures.

Belgium is divided into 10 provinces, with executive power in each exercised by a Governor appointed by the King.

Arts, Science, and Education

Belgium is justly proud of its centuries-old artistic tradition. The country’s past is studded with the names of masters—Rubens, Brueghel, Hieronymous Bosch, Van Eyck—whose works are displayed in museums and churches throughout the country. Equally famous are such Belgian art cities as Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, and Leuven. Belgium’s art tradition does not end with the masters. James Ensor, Permeke, surrealists Rene Magritte, and Paul Delvaux are among the many considered to be outstanding 20th-century artists.

Brussels is a major center for the performing arts. Its Palais des Beaux-Arts offers a wide range of dance and music programs each season. The Theater Royal de la Monnaie is home of the opera. The Festival of Flanders, organized every summer in various Belgian cities, features concerts, theater, and dance performances. Brussels also hosts the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition. Begun in 1951, it offers material and moral support to talented young artists: pianists, violinists, and composers.

Since the Middle Ages, Belgian educational institutions have been famous centers of learning. The Belgian Constitution guarantees absolute freedom of choice of education. Most schooling is state-financed from primary school to the university level. Belgian universities attract large numbers of foreign stu-

dents, including many Americans. However, since 1977 foreign students must pay higher tuition than Belgian students.

The cost of this tuition varies according to the type of education (university or non-university) and even within these two subdivisions. Some exemptions from tuition exist: for the student whose parents work in Belgium and pay taxes, for the student whose parents work in an Embassy or with the European Union, for example. For those students who do have to pay, the fee varies. One should contact the educational institution to determine the charges applicable to the course of study one wishes to pursue.

Also well known are Belgium’s cultural and scientific institutions, such as the Royal Observatory, the Royal Library, and the Institute of Tropical Medicine. Their valuable collections range from precious medieval manuscripts to specialized scientific collections.

Commerce and Industry

Belgium is the one of the largest trading nations in the world and belongs to the G-10 group of leading financial powers. Because of the long-standing importance of trade to its economic prosperity, Belgium has been a strong supporter of liberal trade policies and participates actively in international cooperation through the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union (BLEU), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the World Trade Organization (successor to the GATT). Exports are equivalent to about two-thirds percent of gross national product (GNP) making Belgium not only one of the highest per capita exporters in the world, but also highly dependent on the economic health of its trading partners. Belgium imports many basic or intermediate goods, adds value, and then exports final products. Most of Belgium’s foreign trade is with other EU countries,

pointing up the country's importance as a commercial axis in Europe. Lying in the heart of the European Union, Belgium stands to benefit greatly from the developing single market.

Belgium and the U.S. have strong reciprocal trade relations.

Belgium is blessed with an excellent transportation network of ports, railroads, and highways. Major U.S. air cargo carriers have created one of the first and perhaps only European hub operation. Belgium has three linguistic communities: French, Dutch, and German. This diversity, combined with its history, location, and small, manageable size, makes the country an excellent test market and subsequent launching pad for the European operations of U.S. businesses. The Belgian market is highly competitive. Generous social payments help maintain a high standard of living but contribute to an unemployment level stuck at about 8 percent for several years.

The Belgian Government believes that the country's future economic prosperity is tied closely to the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Belgium became a first-tier member of the EMU on May 1, 1998. It introduced the euro as common currency in 1999. First used mainly by financial institutions, the euro became the country's only currency in 2002.

Transportation

Local

Brussels has an extensive public transportation network comprised of buses, trams (streetcars), and an underground rapid transit (metro) system. Special 10-ride and monthly or yearly tickets for combined Brussels transport facilities are available and afford great savings over the cost of one-ride tickets. Trains run frequently and on schedule. Taxis are fairly expensive, but the service charge or tip is included in the metered fare.

Regional

Brussels National Airport (in Zaventem) is a major international air terminal. American carriers and Sabena fly between Brussels and several major U.S. cities. Additional air connections to anywhere in the world can be made through London, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, and Paris, which are all less than an hour's flight from Brussels.

Excellent rail and highway systems link Belgium to adjoining countries and provide direct routes to major European cities. There are numerous "auto routes" (limited-access divided highways) which cross Belgium, connecting it to the main cities of Europe. There are no toll roads in Belgium and it is particularly easy to drive after dark because all major highways are illuminated at night, in part because of frequent fog.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph services to and from Belgium are comparable to those in the U.S. Direct-dial service is available to the U.S. and most European countries. All Tri-Mission leased housing is equipped with one telephone. Additional extensions are at personal expense. Portable phones can be used but U.S. models require a transformer, which can be purchased locally. Monthly costs and long-distance rates are generally more expensive than in the U.S., as are charges for trans-Atlantic calls. Rates through U.S.-based telephone companies and call-back services may be cheaper than local carrier rates. Competition among carriers and services is driving prices downward.

Radio and TV

Belgian radio and TV systems are government-owned with a few commercial channels. French- and Dutch-language stations are separate. Dutch-language TV often carries American and British programs in English with Dutch subtitles. Most American and British pro-

grams on French TV are dubbed. BBC has two channels available on most cable systems.

Cable TV provides a variety of programs in French, Dutch, German, Italian, and English.

The Armed Forces Network (AFN) broadcasts television and radio programs 24 hours a day in Belgium. Stations are located in Everberg (near NATO headquarters) and at SHAPE. Transmitted live by satellite, AFN television features popular sporting events and current American TV programs. A special antenna, which can be purchased locally, is required to receive AFN.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

La Libre Belgique, *Le Soir*, and *La Dernière Heure* are the most widely read French-language dailies published in Brussels. *Het Laatste Nieuws* and *De Standaard* are the most popular Dutch-language newspapers published in Brussels.

London and Paris papers, including *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Le Monde*, and *Le Figaro*, are sold in Brussels on the day of publication. *The Bulletin*, an English-language magazine catering to the substantial Anglophone community, appears every Thursday. *Prospects* is a monthly English magazine covering Belgian business topics.

The *International Herald Tribune* and the European editions of the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today* are sold the day of publication at Brussels newsstands or by subscription.

Several American periodicals, many of them European editions, are available on Brussels newsstands.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Many Belgian hospitals compare very favorably with good American

hospitals. They are well-equipped to handle emergency situations, as well as long-term care.

Community Health

Public health standards are equal to those in the U.S. Brussels has modern sewage and refuse disposal systems and water purification facilities. Tap water has a high calcium content, but is safe to drink. Dairy, meat, and other food products are safe.

Preventive Measures

Individuals should keep their immunizations current against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, and polio.

The climate is sometimes uncomfortable for those who suffer from sinus conditions or respiratory ailments. Colds are common in winter. Epidemic diseases are rare and are treated efficiently by Belgian public health authorities.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Most travelers from the U.S. arrive at the Brussels National Airport at Zaventem.

Visas are not required for Americans transiting or visiting Belgium, as long as the stay is less than 3 months. Travelers who will remain in Belgium more than 3 months must obtain a visa from a Belgian consulate in the country in which they reside prior to entering Belgium.

Dogs or cats entering Belgium from the U.S. are not quarantined. Belgian law requires a certificate of good health and a valid rabies certificate dated not less than 1 month and not more than 12 months before departure from the U.S. Transportation of pets, including birds of the parrot order, from other geographical areas is subject to various frequently changing regulations.

Belgium's currency is the euro. No currency restrictions affect the import, export, purchase, sale, or use of American or European currencies. Purchases on the local economy are made with the euro. VISA and Mastercard are accepted by many local businesses, and ATM's are found throughout Belgium.

Belgium uses the metric system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- May 1 Belgium Labor Day
- May 24 Ascension Day
- May/June Whitsunday
- May/June Whitmonday*
- July 23 Belgium Independence Day
- Aug. 15 Assumption Day
- Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Dec. 26 Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided to give a general idea of the material published on Belgium. The Department of State does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of any information in the following publications.

Baedeker's Brussels. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, latest edition.

Belgium and EC Membership Evaluated. London: Pinter, 1992.

Belgium in Pictures. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1991.

Carson, Patricia. *Flanders in Creative Contrasts*. Leuven, Belgium: Davidsfonds, 1990. An in-depth look at the Flemish: their roots, history, culture, values, evolution and contributions within Belgium and beyond its borders. Beautiful pictorial presentation accompanies the text.

Flynn, G. *NATO's Northern Allies: The National Security Policies of Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman, 1985.

Fodor's Belgium & Luxembourg. New York: McKay, 1991.

Hazlewood, Carole. *Long Stays in Belgium-Luxembourg*. United Kingdom: David & Charles (dist. in U.S. by Hippocrene Books), 1987.

Hill, H. Constance. *Fielding's Benelux 1992: Holland, Belgium & Luxembourg*. New York: Fielding Travel Books, 1991.

Keyes, Roger. *Outrageous Fortune: The Tragedy of Leopold III of the Belgians, 1901-1941*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1984. Historical biography of King Leopold and an examination of the social and political conditions in Belgium during World War II (1939-1945).

MacRae, Kenneth Douglas. *Conflict and Compromise in Multilingual Societies: Belgium*. Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University, 1986. Discusses multilingualism in Belgium and its effects on politics, government, and social conditions.

Matthijs, Koen. *The Belgians*. Tiel: Lannoo, 1992. This book examines the history of Belgian civilization.

Neuburg, Victor. *A Guide to the Western Front: A Companion for Travelers*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1989.

Simonet, Henri. *Belgium in the Postwar Period: Partner and Ally*. Washington: Georgetown University, 1981. Examines Belgium's role in the North Atlantic Treaty

- Organization and in national security matters.
- Stein, George J. *Benelux Security Cooperation: A New European Defense Community?* Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1990. Military relations, military policy and national security in Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.
- Wickman, Stephen B. *Belgium: A Country Study*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985.
- 1951-1991: Image of an Age*. Brussels: Palais des Beaux-Arts, 1991. A close look at Belgium under Baudouin I, King of the Belgians.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Major City:

Sarajevo

Other Cities:

Banja Luka, Bihać, Jajce, Mostar, Tuzla

INTRODUCTION

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA is one of the former republics in the old six-member Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Beginning in late March 1992, a civil war erupted throughout Bosnia with ethnic Serb guerrillas and allies in the Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army fighting Moslem Slavs and ethnic Croats over proposed independence from Yugoslavia. Ethnic Serbs living in Bosnia feared that Serb political and civil rights would be violated in an independent Bosnian state. In early April 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence from Yugoslavia. Throughout 1992 and early 1993, vicious ethnic warfare continued in Bosnia. By early 1993, Serbian forces controlled roughly 70 percent of Bosnia. Although all sides have committed atrocities against civilians, the Serbs were accused by the United Nations, the European Community, and the United States of the rape of thousands of non-Serbian women and creating large prison camps where prisoners were tortured and executed. The Serbs also implemented a policy of “ethnic cleansing,” which involves the forcible deportation of non-Serbs from Serbian-controlled areas. All of these actions by the Serbs led to widespread condemna-

tion from the world community. In March 1993, the United States air-dropped relief supplies to Muslim towns under siege by Serbian forces. Also in March 1993, the United Nations Security Council authorized the imposition of a no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina. In July 1995, Bosnian Serbs overran UN-protected “safe areas.” NATO leaders initiated air raids, and Serbs lifted their siege of Sarajevo. In September 1995, leaders of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia agreed to a new governmental structure for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In November 1995, the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia signed a U.S.-sponsored peace agreement in Dayton, Ohio. The first elections under the Dayton accord were held in December 1996.

Editor’s Note: The city and country profile information contained in this entry reflect the conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to the outbreak of civil war in 1992.

MAJOR CITY

Sarajevo

Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is situated in a valley near the Miljacka River. In 1998,

Sarajevo and its metropolitan area had a combined population of estimated at 496,000. However, data dealing with population numbers has been subject to error because of dislocation from the civil war.

Sarajevo is the government, commercial, and cultural center of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several major industrial firms are located either in or near the city. Industries in Sarajevo include communications plants, a furniture factory, a brewery, a tobacco factory, and a sugar beet refinery. The University of Sarajevo is here, as are the Bosnian Assembly and the republic’s government, and both the Bosnian National Theater and National Museum.

Socially and culturally, Sarajevo still maintains much of the flavor of its Turkish past—the area was occupied by Turkey for almost 500 years. Among the more than 70 mosques in the city, the largest is the Gazi Husref Bey Mosque. Constructed in the 16th century, the Gazi Husref Bey Mosque is a beautiful structure adorned with tiled walls, exquisite Persian carpets and prayer rugs, and a large domed ceiling. The Gazi Husref Bey Mosque also has one of oldest known copies of the Koran.



Courtesy of Melissa Doig

Principov Most (Princip's Bridge in Sarajevo)

During much of the year, Sarajevo is covered in a gray mist, and its dark, cobblestone streets and winding river give it an Old World feeling. The fascinating central bazaar and ubiquitous coffee houses add to the atmosphere.

Awarded to Austria-Hungary in 1878 by the Congress of Berlin, Sarajevo remained under Austrian rule until 1918, when it became part of Yugoslavia. It was the scene of the street-corner assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914—an act which precipitated World War I. During the Second World War, the city was occupied for four years by the Germans. Sarajevo was heavily damaged during World War II, but was extensively rebuilt.

Sarajevo was the site of the 1984 Winter Olympics.

No English-language education is available in Sarajevo. Association with other Americans is not exten-

sive, since only a few U.S. citizens live here. There is an authorized source of foreign information. In Serbo-Croatian, it is known as the *Američki Center*.

During the civil war, Sarajevo was under siege by Serbian forces. Artillery and sniper attacks were launched almost daily against Sarajevo from the surrounding hillsides, causing heavy civilian casualties and destroying many buildings. The city's electrical, transportation, sanitation, and telecommunications systems were decimated.

Recreation and Entertainment

Travelers can use three tennis courts in the summer. No other public recreational facilities are available, but hiking and horseback riding can be arranged. The mountains of Bosnia offer extensive opportunities for touring, fishing, hiking, and hunting. Overnight camping is allowed only in designated camping areas. Hunting and

fishing permits are required, and big-game hunting (deer, bear, etc.) can be expensive. The Adriatic coast, only four hours from Sarajevo by car, offers excellent resorts. Ocean fishing is allowed without permit.

The National Theater of Bosnia provides a full season (September to May) of opera, drama, and symphony concerts. Movie theaters show late-release films from many countries, with about 60 percent of the films in English.

Sarajevo has a number of museums that are of interest to visitors. The Museum of the Young Bosnia Movement (*Muzej mlade Bosne*) contains exhibits of photographs and personal artifacts of Gavrilo Princip, the man responsible for the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Princip and his colleagues have long been regarded as national heroes in Bosnia. Two footprints, believed to mark the spot from which Princip shot the Archduke,

are located outside of the museum. Another museum, the Regional Museum (*Zemaljski Muzej*), contains Roman relics, medieval tombstones, and ethnographic exhibits which chronicle the folklore of Bosnia. The Regional Museum also has excellent natural history and archaeological exhibits and a beautiful botanical garden. The Jewish Museum (*Muzej Jevreja*) details the arrival of Jews in Sarajevo in 1550 and has several exhibits of Jewish life in Bosnia. The museum contains a book entitled “Twelve Thousand Dead,” which lists the names of Jews killed during World War II by the Nazis and their collaborators.

OTHER CITIES

BANJA LUKA is situated on the Vrbas River in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina. The city is thought to date back to a Roman fort, but was historically important during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries when it was the site of several battles between the Turks and the Austrians. Although Banja Luka was struck by an earthquake in 1969, the city retains several of its Turkish vestiges. The old fortress, Kastel, is of special interest; Džamija Ferhadija, the mosque of Ferhat-Beg, is one of Bosnia’s best examples of Turkish architecture, with its decorative arabesques and inscriptions from the Koran. Today, Banja Luka manufactures leather goods; industries include an iron factory. The city has wide, tree-lined streets and attractive parks. There are thermal springs in the area. Banja Luka is a good starting point for trips through the scenic Vrbas Valley, south of the town of Jajce. Banja Luka had an estimated population of 179,000 in 2002.

The city of **BIHAĆ** is situated in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina on the banks of the Una River. Bihać was founded in 1260 and was controlled at various times in history by Hungarians and Turks. Today, Bihać is the home of productive textile and timber industries.

JAJCE, located in north-central Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been occupied at various times in history by the Turks, Hungarians, and Austrians. The city is now a tourist center with Turkish wooden water mills, medieval fortifications, mosques, and Oriental-style houses that are of interest to visitors. Jajce has an important chemical manufacturing industry.

Situated 50 miles southwest of Sarajevo, **MOSTAR** is on the Neretva River in western Bosnia and Herzegovina. Formerly the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo is its capital today), Mostar is the chief town in the area, surrounded by vineyards. The city produces wine, textiles, and tobacco. Mostar has many examples of Turkish architecture, built in 1566. It features a tower on each end and a stone bridge that arches nearly 30 yards across Neretva River. Mostar is a good starting point for excursions into the surrounding countryside. At Pocitelj, 19 miles southwest, there is an interesting combination of Mediterranean and Turkish buildings. In Radimlja, 25 miles southeast, is the necropolis of the heretical Bogomils, an orthodox sect, whose elaborately carved tombstones—*stecci*—are among the most beautiful of their kind. In 2002, Mostar had an estimated population of 120,000.

TUZLA, located 50 miles north-northeast of Sarajevo, is noted for its salt mines. The city was founded in the 10th century and was controlled throughout history by the Turks and Hungarians and became a part of Yugoslavia in 1918. Tuzla is a transportation and trading center for the surrounding region.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a triangular-shaped land located in the

heart of the old Yugoslav federation. The country is surrounded on three sides by Croatia and is bordered on the east by Serbia and the southeast by Montenegro. Bosnia and Herzegovina is nearly landlocked and has a coastline of only 12 miles (20 kilometers).

The topography of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists primarily of mountains and forests. However, the country also has fertile valleys which contain arable land. Several rivers, the Drina, Bosna, Una, and Vrbas, are located within Bosnia and Herzegovina. The country is subject to frequent and destructive earthquakes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s climate is generally characterized by hot summers and cold winters. In areas of high elevation, summers tend to be short and cold while winters are long and severe. Along Bosnia and Herzegovina’s small Adriatic coast, winters are mild and rainy.

Population

In 2001, Bosnia and Herzegovina had an estimated population of 3,922,000. Of this total, approximately 31 percent were Serb, 44 percent were Bosniak, and 17 percent were ethnic Croat. All three ethnic groups speak Serbo-Croatian (often called Bosnian), which is Bosnia and Herzegovina’s official language.

Three different religions are practiced within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnian Croats are predominantly Roman Catholic, while Bosnian Serbs are typically adherents of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Bosnian Muslims are generally members of the Sunni sect. Approximately four percent of Bosnians belong to Protestant denominations.

Government

Under the Dayton accords of 1995, a constitution for Bosnia and Herzegovina was established that recognized a single state with two



Courtesy of Melissa Doig

Homes on hillside in Mostar

constituent entities. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBH) incorporates the 51 percent of the country with a Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat majority, while the Republika Srpska (RS) occupies the 49 percent of the country with a Bosnian Serb majority.

The constitution calls for a central government with a bicameral legislature and a three-member presidency comprised of a member of each ethnic group. The constituent government of the FBH utilizes a parliament and a presidentially-appointed prime minister, currently Zlatko Lagumdžija, while the RS has a proportionally-elected parliament and two vice-presidents who serve under the president.

The flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of a yellow triangle on a royal blue field, with a row of white stars arranged on the diagonal.

Commerce and Industry

Bosnia and Herzegovina ranked next to Macedonia as the poorest component in the old Yugoslav federation. Traditionally, agriculture has been the mainstay of Bosnia and Herzegovina's economy. The foothills of northern Bosnia support orchards, vineyards, livestock, and some wheat and corn production. Although agriculture has been almost all in private hands, farms have been small and inefficient. Therefore, Bosnia has been forced over the years to import roughly half of its food needs.

Several manufacturing industries are located in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These industries produce wooden furniture, textiles, carpets, tobacco products, and automobiles. Bosnia and Herzegovina had a large armaments industry. Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in minerals, particularly coal, iron ore, zinc,

manganese, lead, and bauxite. This mineral wealth led to the development of a productive mining industry.

The war's destruction caused the gross domestic product (GDP) to drop 75 percent. Since 1995, trade has increased in the Croat and Muslim areas. Reconstruction programs initiated by the international community have financed the construction of infrastructure and provided loans to the manufacturing sector.

Transportation

The quality of roadways in Bosnia and Herzegovina ranges from generally good to poor. Bosnia and Herzegovina's principal highway stretches 113 miles (183 kilometers) from Sarajevo to the Adriatic coast. Trips to Zagreb (Croatia) and Belgrade (Serbia) can be made only on rough secondary roads. Bus service is available between Sarajevo and

Mostar. In 2000, Bosnia and Herzegovina had a total of 13,569 miles (21,846 kilometers) of roadway. Of this total, 64 percent were paved.

Train service is available between Sarajevo and Mostar, and between Mostar and the Croatian city of Kardeljevo. Railway links connect Sarajevo with Belgrade and Zagreb.

Sarajevo has an international airport located approximately six miles (10 kilometers) southwest of the city.

Communications

Bosnia's telephone and telegraph network is in need of modernization and expansion, with many urban areas being below average compared with services in other former Yugoslav republics. Communications and capabilities in Sarajevo and other Bosnian cities were nearly destroyed during the country's civil war.

There are no English-language newspapers, periodicals, or books published in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Radio and television broadcasts are controlled by Radio-Television Sarajevo. All broadcasts are in Serbo-Croatian.

Bosnia and Herzegovina uses the metric system.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Although the U.S. government recognized the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 7, 1992, the Department of State continues to warn U.S. citizens not to travel to Bosnia and Herzegovina at this

time because of widespread fighting throughout the country. The Department of State strongly recommends that U.S. citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina consider leaving the country as soon as possible. A state of violence resulting in deaths, destruction, food shortages, and travel disruptions affecting roads, airports, and railways make travel anywhere in the country extremely hazardous. In particular, the Department of State advises against travel to western Herzegovina, including West Mostar, Livno, and Grude, all of which are located in areas which have seen heavy fighting. An estimated one million unmarked landmines still remain throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Special care should be taken near former confrontation lines.

Travelers should be aware that there is no direct air service between the U.S. and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Commercial service is limited, and travelers should be prepared for delayed and canceled flights.

An increased number of cases of the disease "Q Fever" has been reported recently in various areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is an animal disease which can infect humans through raw or undercooked meat, unpasteurized dairy products, and dust from areas where infected animals, mostly sheep, goats and cattle, are found.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a cash economy; credit cards are rarely accepted. Traveler's checks may be cashed at major banks, but often with a delay of three to four weeks. The official currency is the convertible mark, but German marks are accepted in most shops.

The U.S. has recently opened an Embassy in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. U.S. citi-

zens experiencing difficulties in Bosnia and Herzegovina should contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance. All U.S. citizens who remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina despite this warning are urged to register their whereabouts with the U.S. Embassy, including an emergency telephone number so that attempts can be made to contact them if necessary.

The U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo is located at Alipasina 43; telephone: 445-700.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1/2 New Year's Day
 March 1 Independence Day
 May 1 Labor Day
 May 9 Victory Day
 Nov. 25 Day of the Republic

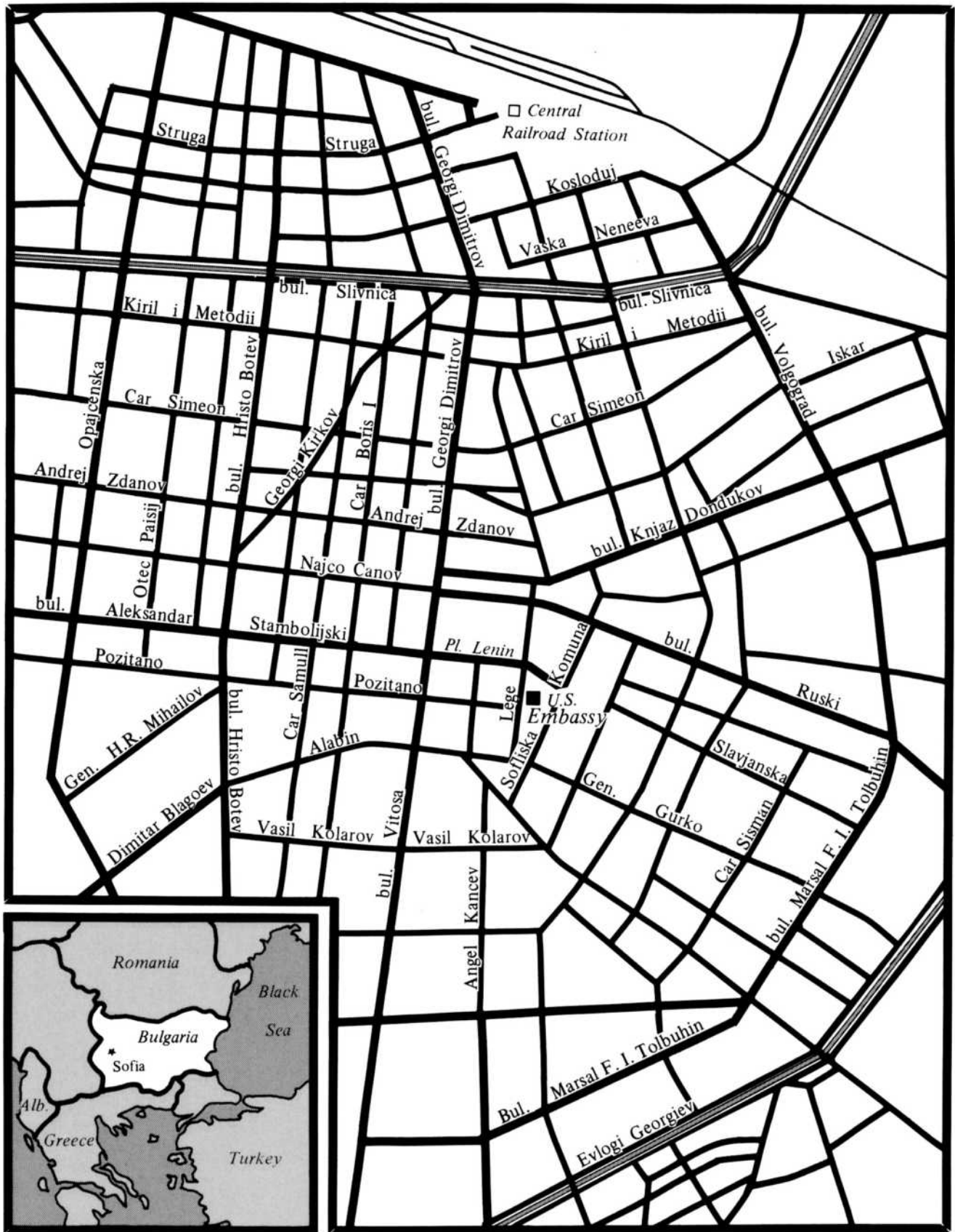
RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Andric, Ivo. *The Development of Spiritual Life in Bosnia under the Influence of Turkish Rule*. Edited and translated by Zelimir B. Juricic and John F. Loud. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.

Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States 1992. London: Europa Publications, Ltd., 1992.

Manuel, D. *Medjugorje under Siege*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 1992.



Sofia, Bulgaria

BULGARIA

Republic of Bulgaria

Major Cities:

Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna

Other Cities:

Burgas, Pleven, Ruse, Shumen, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Tolbukhin

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Bulgaria. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Bulgarian lands are an historic crossroads that to this day preserve evidence of many ancient civilizations and peoples: bronze and iron spears and arrows, ruins of classical temples, palaces, and cities, wise words carved on rocks and stone columns or written on parchment and leather. In the mid-17th century, early Slavic tribes came from the north, crossing the Danube river and reaching as far as the Black Sea and the Adriatic. They were followed by the Bulgars of Khan Asparuh. The first Bulgar state was founded in 681 A.D. as an alliance between the Bulgars and the Slavs.

In 862 the Saints Cyril and Methodius created the first Slavic alphabet-

the Glagolitsa. At the end of the 9th century another Bulgarian alphabet was created—the Cyrillic alphabet, which later was spread beyond the boundaries of Bulgaria. The Cyrillic script is still used in Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine, Russia, and other Slavic nations.

In 865, under the reign of Prince Boris I, the Bulgarians converted to Orthodox Christianity, which consolidated the country. The first Bulgarian kingdom reached its height during the reign of Tsar Simeon I (893-927). This era is known as the "Golden Age of Bulgaria" and is associated with the flourishing of literature, arts, and handicrafts. After a period of 167 years under Byzantine control (11th-12th centuries), Bulgaria reestablished itself as a state under the reign of Tsar Peter. During the 13th century, the Bulgarian state stabilized and its boundaries expanded to the Black, White, and Adriatic seas. In the middle of the 14th century, armies of the Ottoman Empire began raids into Bulgaria and finally conquered it in 1396. For the next five centuries Bulgaria remained under Ottoman rule. During this period over 400 uprisings broke out across the country, but all were suppressed.

The second half of the 18th century marked the beginning of a Bulgarian national renaissance, which

extended through the next century. Numerous schools were opened, textbooks in Bulgarian were printed, and teachers were trained. The Bulgarian Church regained its independence from the Greek Orthodox Church, replaced the clergy, and established an independent exarchate. The revolutionary movement organized across Bulgaria culminated in an uprising in 1876. The subsequent Russo-Turkish war led to the liberation of Bulgaria and the signing of the San Stefano Peace Treaty on March 3, 1878. Bulgaria became a principality which was nominally under Ottoman control, but in fact acted as an independent state. The Berlin Congress of the Great Powers, held in June-July 1878, annulled the San Stefano Peace Treaty and split up Bulgaria. The northern region (Principality of Bulgaria) and southern region (East Rumalia) were unified in 1885 by Prince Alexander Batenberg.

In 1908 Bulgaria became a fully independent constitutional monarchy, which survived to the end of WW II. Bulgaria fell under the Soviet sphere of influence, became a People's Republic, and a loyal Soviet satellite beginning in 1946. Communist domination ended in 1989. In the early 1990s, Bulgaria began the contentious process of moving

toward political democracy and a market economy.

MAJOR CITIES

Sofia

Sofia, the political, economic, cultural, and administrative center of the country, is a city where large parks and attractive older buildings blend with modern high-rises. Sofia is situated on a plain 1,830 feet high. Ten miles to the north lie the Balkan Mountains (Stara Planina), and just to the south is Mount Vitosha (7,000 feet), which is a national park and a popular hiking and skiing area. Behind Mt. Vitosha, near the resort town of Borovetz, lies Mt. Musala, the highest peak in Bulgaria (9,650 feet).

Utilities

Electricity is 220v, 50-cycle, single phase. The current is erratic, with frequent voltage fluctuations (as much as 10%) and occasional breaks in service. When repairs are taking place at the power station, regular power breaks occur, which are announced in advance. The city water supply, to which all apartments are connected, has frequent interruptions. Water pressure often fluctuates or is low on upper floors. Many buildings have an insufficient or inconsistent hot water supply that is centrally controlled. Each summer for about 3 weeks, sometimes less in the diplomatic apartments, the hot water is turned off to clean the water pipes. This is announced in advance. Heating is supplied through a centralized city-wide system, which means that one cannot regulate one's own apartment temperatures.

Food

There has been a great improvement in food availability in Bulgaria following economic liberalization. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are always offered at the markets, as well as some hardy, less seasonal imports. Meat and poultry are always available but are not cut and

prepackaged American-style. Frozen vegetables on the local market do not look particularly appetizing, but American and Turkish brands are available at the commissary. Finding good fresh or frozen fish is still a problem, but some people report that they have found sources.

The present exchange rate makes local produce reasonable for foreigners, and the sources of supply have increased. Many private shops and small supermarkets have opened recently, stocking a good variety of imported items as well as local products. There are now two "Metro" stores in Sofia that are of the size and variety of a Price Club-type store. These stores are more like warehouses and sell everything from wine to lawn furniture. This is pretty close to a one-stop-shop, since you can buy food, household appliances and furnishing, clothing, diapers, products for your office, and even automotive supplies.

Open or covered farmers' markets offer a rich assortment of local and imported produce all year around, although you may not be able to find your favorite fruits or vegetables. The larger vegetable markets are open every day of the week. Local dairy products, meats, and dry goods are found in corner groceries.

Clothing

You will need approximately the same kinds of clothing here as for the U.S. Winters are generally long and cold while summers are shorter, cooler, and dry. You should bring warm winter clothing, especially if you intend to take advantage of the winter sports opportunities available here.

The cobblestone streets can be hard on shoes. For women, closed-toe shoes with low or moderate heels are better than sandals or high-heeled shoes for most of the year, although many young Bulgarian women wear the latest platform high heels even on the cobblestones. Bulgarians are quite proud of their locally made shoes and boots, which are available all over town, and imported shoes and boots are also

easy to find for adults. For children's shoes and boots most people still either shop in Greece or Turkey or buy from American catalogs.

Office clothing is similar to that of the U.S., though those who regularly use public transportation may dress slightly less formally. More and more upscale sports and fashion shops are opening, and the Bulgarian clothing industry produces many attractive items. But in general it is still difficult to find what you want with regards to style and fabric in the size you want, so most people buy clothing at home or from catalogs.

In the last few years it has become much easier to find baby clothing, but parents with 10-12-year-olds report that

Domestic Help

Both full-time and part-time Bulgarian servants are available. All live out, and few speak English well. Normal work hours are Monday through Friday, with special arrangements made for weekends and holidays. Rates vary widely depending on the contract, 36.7% of that amount is given in addition for social security, unemployment and health insurance. It is also customary to give servants a gift at the end of the year; an extra month's wages is expected. For extra help at cocktails, lunches, and dinner parties, you can hire cooks, bartenders, and waiters. Evening babysitters cost about \$2 an hour, plus taxi fare.

Religious Activities

Most churches in Bulgaria are Bulgarian Orthodox. Anyone may attend services at these churches, including the

Alexander Nevski Cathedral, to hear the famous unaccompanied choir. This is especially interesting at Christmas and Easter. The former regime encouraged atheism; this is no longer the case, and now



Street in Sofia, Bulgaria

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many foreign missionary groups are active.

There is a resident chaplain at the British Embassy in Bucharest who holds Episcopal services periodically in the Fox Club, in the British Embassy residence building. The papal nunciature holds Roman Catholic services in English Sundays at 11:00 am, and St. Joseph's Catholic Church holds services in Polish, Bulgarian, and Latin at different times on Sundays. The International Baptist Church holds English services Sunday at 11:00 am in the basement of the World Trade Center; Sunday School at 10:00 am; and Bible study and prayer group meetings, as well as nursery service, during the 11:00 am service. Branches of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints and a Sephardic Jewish Synagogue with worship are also present in Sofia.

Education

The Anglo-American School in Sofia (AAS), a PK-8 school established by the American and British to the south of Sofia. Embassies in 1967, takes children primarily of the two embassies; other international children and a limited number of Bulgarians are given places as space permits. The school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. The school has a specific commitment to focus on curricula, resources, and methodologies that relate to the mainstreams of education in the U.S. and the United Kingdom. The director is British, and the teachers are mostly American or British.

The AAS of Sofia is governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of nine members; four members are appointed by the British Ambassador, and four by the American Ambassador, with the PTO presi-

dent serving as a full board member. The AAS is located on the campus of the American College of Sofia in Mladost. At present, about 140 children from 30 different countries are enrolled.

The school operates a preschool for children who are already 4 years old; it also offers an intensive ESL program, remedial reading and writing, a study skills program, a standardized testing program, French, music, art, after-school activities, field trips inside and outside Bulgaria, and an annual ski week on Mount Vitoshka. There are classroom computers and an extensive library. The school does not have any special separate provision for children designated as gifted and talented or as learning-disabled beyond what is listed above. Provision is made for individual differences by the teachers within the normal favorable classroom situation. Classes on average have 20 or fewer pupils. The annual edu-

cational allowance covers tuition and bus service. Classes begin in late August and end in mid-June.

Places are limited, so if you wish to enter a child, write as early as possible. The school will hold seats open. The address is: The Director, The Anglo-American School of Sofia American Embassy Sofia Department of State, 5740 Sofia Place Washington, DC 20521-5740.

The American College of Sofia, a private high school blending aspects of the Bulgarian and American educational systems, graduated its first class in 1997 after being shut down for 50 years under the Communist government. Most students are Bulgarian, with a minority of Americans and other internationals. A preparatory year, equivalent to the 8th grade, is used almost entirely to teach the entering Bulgarians English. In subsequent years students are taught math, philosophy, four sciences, including computer science, and languages and arts.

American teens have attended ACS and have received an excellent education there. Also, in the past, a few American teenagers have studied in the Bulgarian special-language high schools, where the language of instruction is either English, French, Russian, or German. Not all classes are held in the designated language and, of those classes given in English, the level is naturally most suitable for ESL students. Students beyond the 8th grade also have taken the University of Nebraska home study program. This requires active parent participation.

Special Educational Opportunities

Besides the Anglo-American School of Sofia, there are other opportunities for young children. The International Children's Creativity Centre (ICCC) is open to children aged 2 to 4, who attend the Centre two, three, or five mornings a week to play and learn using the English language. The ICCC Board is made up of five members, some of whom are parents of children registered at the

Centre. The Centre has enjoyed a good reputation since its inception.

The American English Academy offers courses in English for prekindergarten through 12th grade. The academy is accredited by ACSI in Colorado Springs, and the parents of children attending the academy are very pleased with the education their children are receiving. There is a religious affiliation, but no religion is taught. The textbooks and curriculum are American, and the president and at least half the teachers are American.

The American University of Bulgaria is located just 100 kilometers south of the capital city of Sofia. All instruction is in English, and the faculty is over 60% American. The University of Maine, the U.S. partner, provides accreditation and assists with curriculum development.

There is a French Government Lycee which welcomes children of all nationalities. Its students are eligible to specialize in baccalaureates in the sciences, literature, or social sciences. The program is rigorous and highly valued at American Universities, which often offer 1 year or more of advanced credit to holders of the Baccalaureate.

Sports

Skiing is a very popular winter sport, and prices for rental equipment and lift tickets are well below those in Western Europe. Sledding and winter hiking are also popular, with Vitosha Mountain right at the doorstep. There is a Hash House Harrier group, which organizes regular weekend runs and walks. Hiking on the Vitosha Mountain is popular. For the more adventurous sports enthusiasts, Bulgaria has a selection of mountain ranges from which to choose. Hiking, spelunking, hang gliding, kayaking and rock climbing opportunities exist.

Fitness centers are becoming more popular and there are several indoor and outdoor swimming pools in the city. There are several reputa-

ble good stables on the outskirts of Sofia.

Good locally produced and imported sports equipment and clothing is becoming more available in shops all over Sofia, although for the newest styles and equipment you may still have to shop elsewhere.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Within the city there are many fascinating museums to visit as well as several buildings of historical and cultural significance. Organized tours are available from Sofia to visit the many delightful points of interest in the country, including the nearby Rila Monastery and the town of Koprivshitsa, one of 14 designated museum towns. The Boyana Church, one site not to be missed, is located just outside of Sofia. This church contains frescoes that date from the 12th and 13th centuries and are of unusual interest to art in- and out-of-country travel opportunities. Many families drive fairly regularly to the Greek and Turkish coastal resorts and/or to Thessaloniki and Istanbul for shopping and pleasure. Bucharest is an eight-hour drive from Sofia via the Bulgarian city of Ruse on the Danube.

Entertainment

Several movie theaters in Sofia show American and European films. American films are usually shown in English with Bulgarian subtitles. The English titles are published weekly in the private newspaper, *The Sophia Echo*.

There are many theaters in Sofia offering a rich variety of performances from the classical to avant garde, with performances in Bulgarian. In the last couple of years there has been an English play performed by volunteers from the English-speaking community. Children's puppet theaters occasionally have pantomime shows, and there is a musical theater, which frequently performs musicals such as "Hello, Dolly."

The Sofia Philharmonic runs several cycles of performances at reasonable prices.

Sofia also boasts a young private orchestra, the New Symphony Orchestra, whose director is Rossen Milanov, also the director of the Chicago Youth Orchestra.

Numerous other musical events take place in the National Palace of Culture, a monstrosity of a building left from the days of communism. Pop, rock, jazz, and classical groups perform there.

The many and ever-changing assortment of restaurants, cafes, and pubs offer varied opportunities for exploration. Most restaurants are fairly inexpensive by American standards but have improved considerably in the last few years. Food and service are greatly improved, and excellent Bulgarian wines with dinner are well within an FS officer's budget. Besides a variety of international restaurants -Korean, Chinese, Indonesian, French, Spanish, Indian, and Italian - there are folkloric restaurants with floorshows, a restaurant that sells the antiques surrounding your table, restaurants with a view, and the usual assortment of American fast food restaurants.

Plovdiv

Plovdiv, rich in both ancient and modern history, is Bulgaria's second largest city, with a population of about 375,000. Situated on the cliffs overlooking the Maritsa River, it is about 100 miles east of Sofia, on the international highway to Istanbul. For more than 2,000 years, it has been a crossroads for east-west trade, and today is the site of the Plovdiv International Sample Fair, where tradespeople from both capitalist and communist countries gather each September to show their wares.

The ancient city was known as Philippolis, for Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, who made it a military post in 341 B.C. Under the Romans, who took the

city in 46 B.C., it was the capital of Thrace (or Thracia), and known as Trimontium. It was razed by the Goths, but recovered after Constantine V of Byzantine settled the Armenian Paulicians here. Again destroyed in the 13th century by Bulgarian raids, it revived as a center of the Bogomils, who were part of a religious movement of the Middle Ages. The Greeks retook the city in 1262, then lost it to the Turks in 1364. It became the capital of Eastern Rumelia when it passed to Russia in 1877. It was not until 1885 that it became part of Bulgaria.

The Plovdiv of today retains the color of its history in the town walls and gate, the old quarter, the Eastern Orthodox churches, and the Roman architecture. Many places of historical interest are a short drive from Plovdiv, most notably the Bachkovo monastery, second only to Rila in interest and beauty. Plovdiv has a 4,000-student university and several other institutions of higher learning, as well as a number of notable museums.

Varna

Varna is Bulgaria's principal seaport, and is also a beautiful resort with fine beaches on the western shores of the Black Sea. It has a thriving tourist industry, and its museums, galleries, and good theaters contribute to the economic health of the city. Varna supports its own symphony orchestra and also an opera house. During the resort season, its hotels are both busy and expensive. One of the major attractions of this city of more than 311,000 residents is its international music festival. Every three years, a ballet competition is also held here. From Varna, throngs of visitors take excursion boats up and down the coast.

Varna was founded in 580 B.C. as Odessus, a Greek colony. It passed to the Roman Empire in the first century A.D., and remained part of the Byzantine Empire until the Bulgarians defeated Constantine IV here in the year 679. Captured by the Turks in 1391, it became an

important seaport and, in the 19th century, a crucial railroad terminus. The Turks used Varna for almost five centuries as an outpost against the Christian Crusaders. In a turn-about, the British and the French made it their naval base in the Crimean War. The city was ceded to Bulgaria in 1878 by the Treaty of Berlin.

For eight years after World War II (1949–1957), Varna was known as Stalin.

OTHER CITIES

BURGAS, situated on the Gulf of Burgas, an inlet of the Black Sea, is one of the country's major ports. A city of about 200,000 people, it has several industries, including fish canneries, an oil refinery, and engineering plants. It also is the site of an institute of chemical technology. Burgas (also spelled Bourgas) was founded in the 18th century on the site of a fortified town which had existed four centuries earlier.

PLEVEN, with a population of about 140,400, is located 80 miles northeast of Sofia in north-central Bulgaria. The city lies near the Vit River in a small agricultural region surrounded by limestone hills. Pleven is a trading hub for the nearby farm districts and vineyards. Industries include those producing rubber goods, ceramic articles, tobacco, and cloth. A historical city since pre-Roman times, there are a number of museums and a school of viticulture here. A major battle of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 was fought in Pleven, and a mausoleum commemorating the Turkish surrender in December 1877 is in the center of the city.

RUSE (sometimes spelled Roussé), a city of close to 185,500, lies in northeast Bulgaria on the Danube, across from the Romanian city of Giurgiu (Giurgevo). It is Bulgaria's chief river port and an industrial and communications center which developed after 1878. Founded in the second century B.C. as Prista, it

later became a Roman naval base. The Turks ruled the city from the 15th to the 19th centuries, called it Ruschuk, and made it a military base. Ruse, noted for its old churches and mosques, houses a large technical university, Angel Kancev.

Founded in 927, **SHUMEN** is located in northeastern Bulgaria, about 500 miles west of Varna. Under Turkish rule during the 15th through 19th centuries, the city was strategically an important stronghold during the Turkish wars in the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, Shumen is a manufacturing city whose chief industries include flour milling, brewing, canning, and motor vehicle assembling. It is also a railway junction and a market for grains and other agricultural products. The city was originally called Shumen or Shumla, but was renamed Kolarovgrad in 1950 in honor of the communist leader Kolarov, who was born here. It reverted to Shumen in 1965. The current population is about 104,000.

SLIVEN (also called Slivno) is situated 155 miles east of Sofia at the foot of the Balkan Mountains in east-central Bulgaria. The city has long been considered strategically important due to its location at the entrance to the Balkan passes and has, consequently, been the center of conflict—in medieval times between Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire, and between the Russians and the Turks in the 19th century. Today, Sliven is a textile center that also produces foodstuffs, wine, machinery, glass, and electrical goods. Coal is mined in the nearby region. Several churches and mosques, and the ruins of a medieval fortress may be found in Sliven. The capital of Sliven Province, the city has a population of 102,000.

STARA ZAGORA is the capital of the district with the same name; it is approximately 110 miles southeast of Sofia and 50 miles northeast of Plovdiv. The city, with a population of about 145,000, is near the famous Shipka Pass in the Balkan Mountains. Stara Zagora produces

furniture, chemicals, textiles, and tobacco, and is known particularly for its vast fields of roses which provide oils for the perfume industry. It had to be rebuilt after the Russo-Turkish War and, as a result, several Roman and Turkish antiquities were found. A spa called Stara Zagora is located near the city.

TOLBUKHIN is a cultural and commercial center located 25 miles north of Varna in northeastern Bulgaria. The capital of the province of the same name, Tolbukhin produces cotton textiles, farm machinery, metal goods, and foodstuffs. Tolbukhin was formally called Dobrich; when it was occupied by Romania, from 1913-40, it was called Bazar-gic. It was officially renamed Tolbukhin in 1949 to honor the Soviet marshal who had liberated the city in 1944. Tolbukhin's population is about 102,300.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Bulgaria is a country of mountains, plains, and seacoast, occupying 110,000 square kilometers (43,000 square miles) of the Balkan Peninsula. It measures roughly 260 miles from east to west and about 150 miles from north to south. Much of the country is rugged and mountainous, and only about 40 percent is cultivated. The Danube River, Black Sea, and Pirin-Rhodope Mountains provide natural borders on the north, east, and south. Flowing south into Greece are the non-navigable Struma, Maritsa, Mesta, and Arda Rivers, important sources of water for irrigation. The Balkan range extends across the north-central part of the country, separating the wheat-growing Dobrudzha region from the Thracian plain, where vegetables, fruits, grapes, and tobacco are cultivated.

The climate is usually designated as "continental, with many microcli-

mates." From May to November, the climate is pleasantly warm and sunny. Sofia, though approximately on the same latitude as Rome, is about 1,500 feet up; it therefore, has a climate similar to, for example, Frankfurt. All plants, flowers, and fruits common in Britain and France grow well here, and the climate is too cold for citruses. November through April are cold, with snow and temperatures hovering near 32°F (0°C) but often falling lower, sometimes to 5°F (-15°C) in Sofia. Summer temperatures rarely exceed 90°F, and humidity is moderate. During July, the mean temperature is 68.7°F (20.4°C); during January, 30.6°F (-8°C). Mildew and insects are not significant factors.

Sofia's main climatic problem is winter smog, which is caused by industrial air pollution, soft-coal smoke, vehicle exhaust emissions, fog, and surrounding mountains that keep winds from blowing the smog away. Gray-brown dirt or coal-dust, as well as sand, is scattered on Sofia's snow-covered streets in winter. In Sofia, winters may often be gray, but they are quite beautiful in the nearby mountains. Mount Vitosha (altitude 2,290 m.), with its ski resorts and runs and walking paths, overlooks the city. Abundant trees and flowers make Sofia a more colorful city the rest of the year. Rainfall is moderate, averaging 25 inches a year.

Population

Bulgaria's National Statistics Institute reported the 1996 population at just over 8 million. Roughly 1.2 million, or 13%, live in and around Sofia, the nation's capital. Plovdiv, the second largest city and cultural center, has a population of about 350,000, while the Black Sea coast town of Varna, the third largest, has just over 300,000. Few of the other cities have populations greater than 100,000.

Recent years have seen a negative growth in the population, a condition also present in the early 1980s. The number of abortions exceeds live births, and in 1996 the country



Alexander Nevski Square in Sofia, Bulgaria

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

had an infant mortality rate of 15.6 deaths per 1,000 live births. Death and illness rates have increased since the early 1980s. The “squared” population profile is projected to lead to a population of 6 million by the year 2030. The population is aging, with nearly 30% of the people over the retirement age of 55; 48% representing those of working age (20-54 years); and a relative few remaining to address the needs of a hoped for economic expansion. A doubling of the percentage of severely handicapped further complicates this condition.

About 85% of the population is Bulgarian—a designation that includes people with numerous regional folklore traditions—and 9% is of ethnic Turkish origin. About 6% of the population is Roma, some of whom claim to be of Turkish descent. The country also has small numbers of Armenian, Jewish, Greek, and other minorities. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which belongs to the family of Eastern Churches that also

includes Greek, Serbian, Romanian, and Russian Orthodoxy, is the principal religious denomination. Today, Bulgaria has one of the highest levels of true literacy in the world.

The Bulgarian language, like Russian and Serbian, is based on the Cyrillic alphabet, the founders of which were two Greek brothers, Cyril and Methodius, who worked among the Slavs, and is a source of great pride for Bulgarians. The Cyrillic alphabet spread from Bulgaria to Russia. Knowledge of other Slavic languages (particularly Russian) is helpful in learning Bulgarian, in spite of significant differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Learning foreign languages has always been stressed in Bulgaria, and the systems developed for learning language are quite effective. The levels of fluency in languages such as English, French, and German, often without the benefit of travel, is noteworthy.

Public Institutions

The 1991 constitution includes the following provisions: that there be separation of powers, political pluralism, free economic enterprise, inviolability of private property, and protection of the investments and businesses of Bulgarians and of foreigners. Human rights are generally well protected, and Bulgarian domestic laws are being brought into conformity with international agreements.

The President is commander-in-chief of the army and appoints and dismisses ambassadors. He has a staff of advisers. When in office, he officially relinquishes partisan allegiances and is the leader of all the Bulgarian people. He cannot initiate legislation, but has a qualified veto. Elected by direct popular election for five-year term, he can be reelected once.

The Narodno Sobranie, or National Assembly, consists of 240 members,

each elected for a 4-year term with no term limit. They have public sittings that are extensively broadcast and televised. Both the Assembly and the Council of Ministers initiate legislation. The executive function rests with the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, including chairmen of functional committees. They are responsible for internal and foreign affairs. The judiciary does not check the actions of the executive or legislative sections; however, the new constitution provides for an independent judiciary.

A two-tier local government system is specified: regions and municipalities. Regional governors are appointed by the council of ministers, and the municipalities elect councils and mayors. Bulgaria became a member of the UN in 1955 and belongs to most UN-related agencies. It is a member of the World Bank, the IMF, and is a candidate for membership of the European Community and NATO.

Arts, Science, and Education

Full state support for the arts ended with the fall of the communist regime; however, the art scene remains vibrant, and one can pick from a rich variety of offerings: art and craft galleries; museums; theater (for those whose Bulgarian is good enough); opera; and classical, jazz, rock, and folk concerts.

Sofia has six full-time theaters whose offerings range from Bulgarian and European classics to modern works of world drama. The Sofia Opera features standards of classic grand opera as well as ballet, while operettas and musicals can be seen at the Musical Theater. There are three full symphonic orchestras, the Sofia Philharmonic, the National Radio Orchestra, and the New Symphony Orchestra, which exists and performs completely without subsidy from the state. Fans of popular music can enjoy live bands at many of the clubs around town and at the several commercial concerts throughout the year. Bulgaria also has international festivals of dance, classical music, folk, jazz, and rock during the spring, summer, and fall.

By U.S. standards, tickets to all cultural events are inexpensive and are readily available.

There are excellent state museums of Bulgarian and foreign art, an historical museum, an ethnographic museum, and a natural history museum, all with interesting exhibits. In addition, private art galleries have proliferated in recent years, and one can see (and purchase) works ranging from icons through modern abstract work.

For those interested in folk culture, Bulgaria offers a wealth of possibilities. Throughout the year one can see festivals of dance and folk music, and there are opportunities to attend traditional events such as the parades of mummers (*kukeri*). Several world-renowned troupes perform on occasion (when not traveling abroad), and the chance to hear troupes such as the Pirin Ensemble, the Filip Koutev Ensemble, and the famous part-singing women's choir, "Les Mysteres des Voix Bulgares," should not be passed up.

Bulgaria has had an excellent reputation in the world of science and education for years, and the recent economic troubles notwithstanding, it continues to educate students, particularly in math and science, whose test scores rank among the best in the world. Compulsory schooling ends at age 15, but more than 80% of students go farther. Bulgaria's literacy rate is greater than 98%, considerably higher than that in the U.S. With the political reforms of the last several years has come educational reform as well, and the entire educational system from primary school through graduate school is being reconstituted along Western lines.

The Ministry of Education has overall responsibility for maintaining standards and prescribing curricula for all public schools and any private educational institutions qualified to offer recognized diplomas. Secondary education in Bulgaria, despite serious economic problems, continues to offer a large variety of

educational choices ranging from vocational programs (often closely associated with factories) to special science and math high schools. Very popular also are the foreign-language high schools, which like the math and science schools, are "entrance by examination" institutions.

Bulgaria has 43 universities and other institutes of higher education and 45 colleges and technical schools. ("College" refers to semi-higher learning institutions for nursing, paramedical training, teaching, and technical education.) A new feature on the Bulgarian educational scene are the recently (re)established private schools. While these are governed by the various laws on education and are subject to a greater or lesser amount of oversight by the Ministry of Education, they receive no financial support from the state budget. Most notable among these private institutions are the American University of Bulgaria in Blagoevgrad, an American liberal arts college with a strong business school; the New Bulgarian University in Sofia; and the American College of Sofia, an English-language high school that was founded in the middle of the last century and reopened in 1992 after being closed for nearly 50 years. There is also a private English-language primary through middle school with American accreditation, the Anglo-American School of Sofia.

Unlike the situation in America, most basic research is not carried out in universities but rather in one of the more than 160 institutes and laboratories of the Bulgarian Academies of Science, Medicine and Agriculture. The Academies, which are not teaching institutions, have suffered even more than the school system from the economic hardships of the last years, and this has inhibited the exploitation of Bulgaria's scientific talent.

All educational and scientific institutions are eagerly seeking partnerships with Western institutions, and American programs spon-

sored by the Fulbright Commission and IREX have contributed significantly to linking Bulgarian scholars and scientists with their counterparts in the U.S.

Commerce and Industry

Following a severe economic crisis, the newly elected Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) Government adopted a currency board arrangement (CBA) in 1997. The CBA and its associated IMF program have provided the framework for cutting inflation from nearly 600% in 1997 to 6.2% in 1999. Fiscal discipline has kept budget deficits small and led to successive increases in Bulgaria's credit ratings. Despite the conflict in Kosovo, GDP grew by 2.4% in 1999 and is projected to grow by 4% in 2000. However, in the wake of large-scale restructuring of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), unemployment increased to 19% of the labor force in April 2000.

The UDF Government made considerable progress in privatizing SOEs last year. As of the end of 1999, about 71% of state-owned assets destined for privatization had actually been sold. The privatization process was to have been substantially completed in 2000, but difficulties in some sales make it increasingly likely that several large state-owned companies will not be sold until 2001.

Bulgaria joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in December 1996 and became a full member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) in July 1998. Bulgaria trades with European countries under preferential terms according to the European Union Association Agreement, effective February 1, 1995, and an agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), effective 1993. Bulgaria signed free-trade agreements with Turkey (effective January 1, 1999) and Macedonia (effective January 1, 2000).

In 1999, according to preliminary estimates, Bulgaria attracted \$755.3 million in foreign direct investment; during the period 1992-1999; foreign direct investment totaled \$2.8 billion. The U.S. is the fourth largest source of foreign direct investment (\$198.4 million, or 7% of the total). Among the largest foreign investors are the following U.S. companies: American Standard, AIG/ALICO,

McDonald's, Entergy Power Group, Hilton International, Seaboard Overseas, World Trade Company, Kraft Foods International, Bulgarian-American Enterprise Fund (BASF), Caresbac, DTS, Investments Corporation, Eurotech, Kontrako, and Eagle.

Germany is the top foreign investor, with \$425.9 million, or 15% of total foreign investment, followed by Belgium, with \$373 million, or 13% of total foreign investment, and Cyprus, with \$249 million, or 9% of total foreign investment.

The government seeks to improve the country's infrastructure. Many roads and railways have been reconstructed by the Phare Cross Border Program, but much remains to be done. Despite the ongoing modernization of the telephone system, the quality is below international standards. There are two cellular radiotelephone networks—one analogue and one digital. A second GSM (the Global System for Mobile communications) license will be issued later this year; the Bulgarian Telecommunication Company (BTC) is also to be privatized in the near future.

Transportation

Automobiles

Road conditions in Bulgaria can be poor, especially in winter, as only the major roads are cleared of ice and snow. Four-wheel or all-wheel-drive vehicles are recommended. Shell gas stations can be found in larger cities and along most major highways.

In Sofia and along the main highways, super (96 octane), and regular (91 octane) and unleaded (95H) gasoline is available. Diesel fuel is available at major gas stations only.

An International Driver's License is recommended, but not required, and can be obtained through AAA or an equivalent organization.

Traffic moves on the right as in the U.S. The following rules may be unfamiliar to people new to Europe: You must stop 3 meters behind and to the right of a tramway car stopping to discharge or pick up passengers. Speed limits are 120 kph on divided highways; 90 kph on regular main roads; and 50 kph in populated areas, unless there are signs to the contrary. Priority is given to the driver entering from the right on any equal junction.

You should strictly observe the priority of a pedestrian who has stepped onto a painted pedestrian crossing. It is illegal to drive with more than 0.05 parts per thousand of alcohol in the blood or when alcohol in any quantity has been consumed immediately before taking the wheel. If you have an accident, you must call the police, and both drivers should wait at the scene, even if there has been no personal injury. The police will issue a *protokol za proizshestvie* (police protocol). Without this piece of paper, you cannot make a claim on your insurance.

"Green Card" short-term, the overseas third-party liability, is mandatory for auto travel in Europe. When you arrive in Bulgaria, take out this policy for Bulgaria and for all of Europe through the local Insurance Corporation. It has also recently become possible to obtain this policy from Clements & Co. and other American firms.

Local

Sofia is served by a network of tram, trolley bus, and auto lines. A one-month pass cost \$14 (August 2000). Vehicles are often crowded but are handy, frequent, and very cheap—an important point now that parking is

very tight around the center of town. Taxis are legion. There are many taxi stands; taxis cruise, and you can also get taxi service by telephone.

Frequent air and railway service link Sofia with the Black Sea resorts of Varna and Burgas, as well as with other major Bulgarian cities.

Regional

No American air carrier serves Sofia. The Western European cities with frequent service by American carriers are Frankfurt, Paris, London, Zurich, Munich, and Vienna, but connections to and from Sofia vary in convenience according to the day of the week. The Bulgarian airline, Balkan, and other foreign carriers provide regular service between Sofia and Western European cities. In late fall and winter, fog or heavy snow may occasionally close Sofia Airport for several days at a time.

There are many rail and bus lines to/from major European cities, and to resort areas in Greece and Turkey. Travelers should be cautious about theft, especially when crossing borders on land transportation. The preferred route for coming to Sofia from Europe by car is via Vidin/Kalafat.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Direct dialing is available from the U.S. to Bulgaria. International connections with the U.S. vary from quick and clear to slow and unsatisfactory. The cost of calling the U.S. in early 1999 was about \$1.50 per minute when using the Bulgarian Telecommunications Company and dialing direct. Telephone charges begin when the connection is made with the U.S. operator, not with your party. From your home, you may dial direct to most Eastern and Western countries. Some people have had success with Internet telephony.

Several service providers offer connection to the Internet and also permit the use of American-based services. Prices are relatively reasonable in comparison to telephone costs and assist in maintaining contact with other Internet users on a considerably faster basis than "snail mail."

Radio and TV

Bulgarian TV broadcasts nationwide on two channels, Channel 1, which is broadcast in SECAM, and Channel 2, which broadcasts in PAL. Local broadcast stations exist in many cities. In Sofia the two local (and private) stations are New TV (PAL) and Seven Days TV (SECAM). Currently, there are two stations that have broadcast capability nationwide, one public-Channel 1, and the other private-BTV (Bulgarian TV).

In addition to broadcast TV, satellite reception is possible for those having a dish, and there are a number of cable operations as well. Satellite and cable offerings make available CNN, CNBC, BBC, SKY NEWS, MTV, and SKY SPORTS, and a large variety of other European channels. European-system and Multi-system television receivers are widely available for sale. Programming runs the gamut of news, entertainment, business news, film, and the like. Broadcast TV is almost exclusively in Bulgarian, while cable and satellite offerings feature programming in English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Greek, and Arabic.

Radio has both private and public (state) stations, with the latter having the only truly nationwide coverage. Deutsche Welle, BBC Radio, Radio France International, and Radio Free Europe have local FM broadcasting arrangements and are easily and clearly received. All but RFE do programs in both Bulgarian and their respective national languages (RFE does Bulgarian language news only). Bulgarian radio of both the private and state varieties offer some very good news, talk show, and music programming; however, a good grasp of Bulgarian

is required for all but the music programs.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Many general-interest publications, including English-, French-, and German-language newspapers and magazines are widely available in Sofia, though they tend to arrive a day late and are quite expensive. These, as well as a large variety of Bulgarian periodicals, are available in hotels and at street kiosks throughout the downtown area in Sofia.

Community Health

Apart from smog, coal dust, and pollen, which particularly affect people with sinus and respiratory problems (asthma sufferers in particular), Sofia has no special health hazards. Water, although deemed generally safe, should be distilled to remove heavy metals, mineral deposits, unusual taste, and color. Fluoride supplements are recommended for children up to age 16. Milk and butter are of uneven quality. Vegetables, fruits, and eggs should be thoroughly washed, but no other special treatment is necessary. Local pottery should not be used for cooking, storing, or serving food, as it may leach lead from local paints and glazes. Municipal services generally collect garbage and trash regularly, and there is a regimen of sweeping the city streets.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Flights on American carriers from the U.S. fly to Frankfurt, Paris, London, Vienna, Zurich, and Munich. From these cities, foreign airlines provide reasonably good connections to Sofia. To avoid possible conflict with the Fly America Act, consider Frankfurt, Munich, Zurich, or Vienna as the nearest points to Sofia served by an American carrier. Note that Sofia time is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)/Coordinated

Universal Time (UTC) + 2, whereas Yugoslavia and the countries of central and Western Europe are on GMT/UTC + 1.

A passport is required. A visa is not required for U.S. citizen visitors using regular passports for stays up to 30 days. Travelers who intend to stay more than 30 days, or travelers using official or diplomatic passports, must obtain a special 30 day visa from a Bulgarian embassy or consulate. Once in Bulgaria, this visa gives them grounds to apply for a residence permit. Travelers who have a 1-year multiple-entry visa for Bulgaria may stay up to 90 days altogether within six months. If a traveler comes to Bulgaria, stays in the country 90 days and then goes out, he or she will not be able to enter the country within the next 90 days.

All travelers are required to register with the regional passport office for foreigners or the police within 48 hours after their arrival in the country and to inform the office about any change in their address. For those staying at a hotel, a private boarding house or an apartment rented through an accommodation company, registration is taken care of by the proprietor. Visitors should carry their passport with them at all times. The Bulgarian authorities do not consider presentation of a copy of one's passport to be sufficient. For further information concerning entry requirements, travelers should contact the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria at 1621 22nd St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; Internet <http://www.bulgaria-embassy.org>, tel. (202) 483-5885 (main switchboard (202) 387-7969) or the Bulgarian Consulate in New York City.

Travelers carrying cash equivalent to 5,000 Bulgarian leva (about \$2,200) or more must declare the amount they are carrying on a customs declaration upon arrival or departure. Failure to declare currency and jewelry or improper exit from the customs area through the "green" (nothing to declare) line have resulted in confiscation of the

currency or the jewelry and, in some cases, arrest. Travelers who have with them the equivalent of 20,000 Bulgarian leva or more upon departure must have a permit to export the money issued by the Bulgarian National Bank's Headquarters, if they had less than the equivalent of 20,000 Bulgarian leva upon entry in the country. Travelers should also declare jewelry, cameras, computers, and other valuables to avoid difficulties on departure. Please contact the Embassy of Bulgaria in Washington, D.C. or one of Bulgaria's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs regulations.

Americans living in or visiting Bulgaria are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bulgaria and obtain updated information on travel and security within Bulgaria. The U.S. Embassy is located in Sofia at 1 Suborna (formerly 1 A. Stamboliyski Boulevard); tel. (359) (2) 937-5100; fax (359) (2) 981-8977. The Consular Section of the Embassy is located at 1 Kapitan Andreev Street in Sofia; tel. (359) (2) 963-2022; fax (359) (2) 963-2859. The Embassy's web site address is <http://www.usis.bg>. Questions regarding consular services may be directed via e-mail to: niv@usconsulate.bg, iv@usconsulate.bg and acs@usconsulate.bg.

Pets

Dogs and cats are admitted to Bulgaria with proof of current rabies shot and health certificate that should be obtained before arrival. Examination by a Bulgarian veterinarian is required upon arrival. Dogs should be licensed. Satisfactory veterinary care is available in Sofia, as well as most vaccines and medications.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency is the lev (plural: leva). Currency notes are available in the following denominations: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 leva. Coinage includes 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 stotinki (100 stotinki = 1 lev).

The lev is pegged to the euro at 1.956 leva per euro.

Bulgaria is still a largely cash economy. Visitors should exchange cash at banks or Change Bureaus. Some Change Bureaus charge commissions on both cash and travelers' check transactions that are not clearly posted. People on the street who offer high rates of exchange are usually con artists intent on swindling the unwary traveler. Damaged or very worn U.S. dollar bank notes are often not accepted at banks or Change Bureaus. Major branches of the following Bulgarian banks will cash travelers' checks on the spot for leva, the Bulgarian currency, or other desired currency: Bulbank, Bulgarian Postbank, Biochim, First Investment Bank and United Bulgarian Bank (UBB). UBB also serves as a Western Union agent and provides direct transfer of money to travelers in need. ATM cash machines are increasing in numbers in Sofia and other major cities. Major credit cards (MC, VISA, AMEX, etc.) can be used at a few establishments in and around Bulgaria (hotels, restaurants, and other tourist establishments), but usage is very low and is not recommended due to the risk of credit card fraud. Credit cards are useful when ordering goods from mail order houses in the States and from overseas duty-free supply companies like Peter Justesen.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Apr/May Orthodox
Easter
- Apr/May Orthodox
Easter Monday
- May 1 Labor Day
- May 24 Sts. Cyril and
Methodius Day
- Sep. 6 Unification Day
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Dec 26 Day After
Christmas

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published in English about Bulgaria.

- American Automobile Association Travel Guides. *Tourbook for Eastern Europe*.
- Ash, David. *Essential Bulgaria*. 1997. Arie, Gabriel. *A Sephardi Life in Southeastern Europe: The Autobiography and Journal of Gabriel Arie, 1863-1939*. 1998.
- Bar-Zohar, Michael. *Beyond Hitler's Grasp, The Heroic Rescue of Bulgaria's Jews*. 1998.
- Bousfield, Jonathan and Richardson, Dan. *The Rough Guide: Bulgaria*. Fourth ed. 1999.
- Carney, Peter and Anastassova, Mary. *Bulgaria: The Black Sea Coast*. 1997.
- Carney, Peter and Anastassova, Mary. *Bulgaria: The Mountain Resorts 1999*. Sold in the U.S. by Book Clearing House, tel: 800-431-1579, BOOKCHnaol.com, www.bookclearing-house.com, www.dir.bg, www.gyuvech.bg, www.onlinLbr
- Carney, Peter and Anastassova, Mary. *Bulgaria: Sofia and Plovdiv*. 1998.
- Chary, Frederick B. *The Bulgarian Jews and the Final Solution, 1940-44*. University of Pittsburgh Press: Pittsburgh, 1972.
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- Crampton, R.J. *A Concise History of Bulgaria*. Cambridge, 1997.
- Danforth, Loring M. *The Macedonian Conflict: Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World*. Princeton, 1995.
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- Marazov, Ivan, ed. *Ancient Gold: The Wealth of the Thracians: Treasures from the Republic of Bulgaria*. 1998.
- Markov, Georgi. *The Truth that Killed*. Ticknor & Fields: New York, 1984.
- Norwich, John Julius. *Byzantium: The Apogee*. New York, 1997.
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- Vazov Ivan. *Under the Yoke*. Twayne Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1971.
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CROATIA

Major City:
Zagreb

Other Cities:
Dubrovnik, Karlovac, Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Split, Zadar

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Croatia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Croatia, located in the middle of Europe, declared independence from Communist Yugoslavia in 1991, making it one of Europe's youngest nations. The capital, Zagreb, has all the characteristics of a historic and modern central European city.

MAJOR CITY

Zagreb

Zagreb, a city of some 1 million people, is the political, cultural, scientific, industrial, and commercial center of Croatia. The city is located

between the green hillsides of Medvednica in the north and the Sava River in the south. Sljeme (3,354 feet) is a mountain park on the north part of town. It is easily accessible from the city by public transportation. It has many hiking trails and during the winter some skiing is possible if there is enough snow. Zagreb is an ancient trading center with an old European look to it. Narrow streets slip between the walls of former houses of 18th-century nobility, and gardens bloom in the center. In the spring and summer the streets are lined with outside cafes that are always full of people enjoying coffee or a beer. In the winter, poorly maintained houses and buildings combine with gray skies and fog to give it a drab and gloomy look.

Medieval Zagreb developed from the 11th-13th centuries in the twin towns of "Kaptol" and "Gradec." In "Kaptol" the oldest part of town, is found the cathedral Sveti Stjepan, the Bishop's Palace, and remains of the towers from an 11th century fortress. On an adjoining hill of the upper city called "Gradec," there are the ancient city gates, St. Mark's Church (which sports a distinctive multicolored tiled roof), several museums, the Parliament building, and other government offices. Kaptol was the seat of the diocese, but Gradec was the free royal city. They

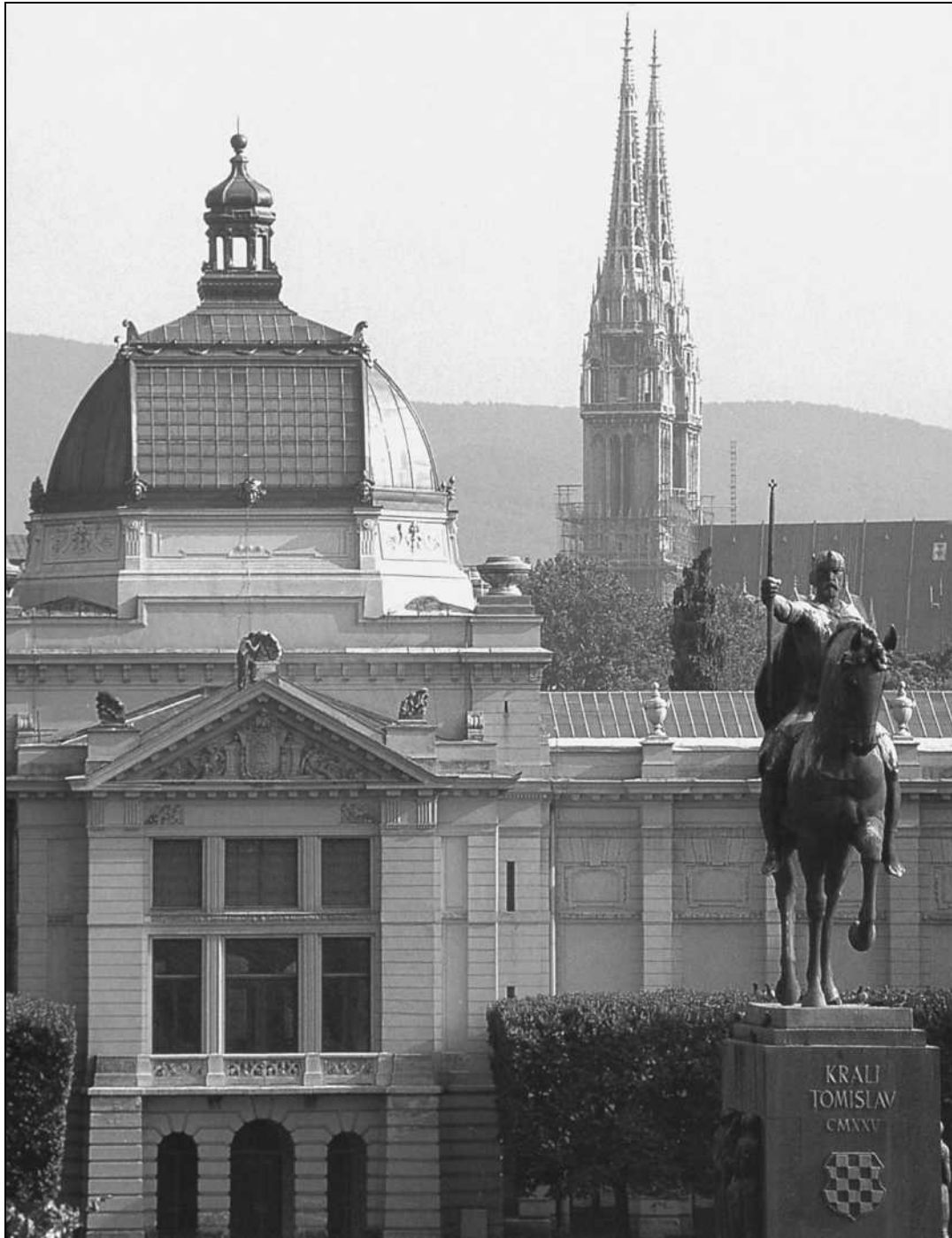
often fought one another, particularly during the 15th and 16th centuries.

In the late 19th century, the city spread out onto the flat area between the hills and river. Since WWII extensive high-rise construction has occurred in "New Zagreb" across the Sava to the south. Fortunately, the city weathered the chaotic period that followed Yugoslavia's breakup without sustaining much damage.

Utilities

All quarters have central heating and hot water. Window-unit air-conditioners are installed in some properties' bedrooms. Most cooking is by electric range oven, but a few units have gas ranges. Standard electric power is 220v, 50 cycles. Receptacles are standard mainland European-type with 2 round prongs.

Transformers are not readily available in Croatia, but Aviano AFB, Italy, sometimes has them in stock. Adapter plugs can be found at most U.S. military bases and travel stores in the U.S. Bring transformers, or dual-voltage, or 220v appliances, since transformers are limited in quantity. (Note that 110v/60Hz appliances such as record players, clocks, etc., often will not operate correctly even when used with a transformer unless other adjust-



Neo-gothic cathedral in Zagreb

Courtesy of the Croatian Embassy

ments are made. These adjustments usually must be performed by a trained technician and can be expensive.) A power surge regulator is recommended for personal computers.

Food

Zagreb's food supply has improved in the last couple of years in terms

of quality and variety. Many fruit and vegetable markets in town sell varied and fresh selections. Several new large supermarkets with parking areas have opened recently. It is becoming possible to find fruits and vegetables that are not in season, but prices are high. Generally, fruits and vegetables do not require extra

sanitation procedures, such as soaking them in iodine.

Around or near the market there are places in which to buy meat. Pork and chicken are particularly good, and cold cuts with prices comparable to those in the U.S. are sold. There is a variety of dairy products. Cheese and yogurt are good and

inexpensive. Fresh and long-life milk is available.

Local bread is delicious and inexpensive, but no preservatives are used, so you must buy it daily.

Some supermarkets offer what you would normally find in a small supermarket in the U.S., but with a much smaller selection of brands. Some imported products from Germany and Italy are available regularly. Numerous small neighborhood stores sell mainstays—milk, eggs, flour, juice, etc. The selection is always subject to change, and the assortment can be bewildering at times! You'll probably find one within walking distance of your home.

Zagreb has one very complete spice shop in town. Anyone fond of a particular cuisine should bring spices and be ready to substitute.

For the most part, everything is available. Nonetheless, many Croatians shop in Austria, Italy, and Hungary because they believe products are cheaper and of a better quality than in Croatia.

Local specialties will please your palate. Croatia's Dalmatian coast excels in seafood, including scampi and shellfish. A Zagreb specialty that sticks to your ribs is "strukli," a type of cheese strudel. Homemade Slavonian "kulen," a paprika-flavored salami, is widely available. Croatia is also famous for its plum brandies ("sljivovica"), herbal brandies ("travarica"), cognacs ("vinjak"), and liqueurs such as maraschino, a cherry liqueur made in Zadar. Italian-style espresso coffee is popular, as are Ozujsko and Karlovacko beers ("pivos"). Several good ice cream parlors in Zagreb make their own gelato-style flavors.

Clothing

Although some good-quality clothing is available, prices are generally much higher than those in the U.S., and fabrics generally don't hold up too well.

Men: Most entertaining is informal (coat and tie). Seasonal clothing needs are similar to those of New York or Washington, D.C. Zagreb has several very nice, but expensive, tie shops with designs which incorporate ancient Croatian motifs and symbols.

Women: Professional dresses are the normal dress for women. Women's suits, dress pants, and knitwear are practical and often worn to lunches, receptions, and cocktail parties.

Children: Bring a supply of children's clothes. Snowsuits, heavy jackets, coats, hats, mittens, ski pants, and warm boots are necessary for winter when temperatures dip below freezing and snow and ice can linger on the ground for weeks at a time. For summer, bring clothes for sports such as tennis and swimming. Temperatures reach the 90°F range in summer, so bring shorts and T-shirts. Bring special items like Halloween costumes, soccer cleats, ballet shoes, etc., with you.

Supplies & Services

Local stores seldom stock U.S. products, but several Croatian brands of shampoo, laundry detergent, lip balm, creams, and cleaning supplies are satisfactory and reasonably priced. In general, although you can find most anything you need here, it will be more expensive, and the shopping is not efficient, as parking is always difficult downtown and shops often run out of products on a weekly basis. High-quality brand-name cosmetics and toiletries locally will cost almost three times the U.S. price.

An English-language bookstore sells some children's books and cassettes, but most parents subscribe to children's book clubs or order books from catalogs. Parents of children at the American School of Zagreb can order books from the Scholastic Book Club every 2 months or so.

Tailors, dressmakers, and cobblers are available locally and offer excellent service at fair prices. Cloth is

available at bargain prices, and all you need is a picture from a catalog, and most clothing items can be duplicated. Local dry cleaners, beauty and barbershops, radio and small electronics repair shops, and other service facilities are adequate and reasonably priced. Such beauty treatments as facials, waxing, and pedicures are available by appointment. Photo developing is quite expensive here, so many people send film to the U.S. (Mystic Photo) for developing through the mail, but the drawback is that it takes weeks to get your pictures.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available. Many English-speaking young university students in Zagreb like to babysit. The average wage for childcare is \$4-\$5 a hour.

If you plan to bring a domestic employee, the Government of Croatia requires the individual to be declared through the local police (Department for Foreigners). If domestic help is employed full time (40 hours a week), your total gross monthly expenses would be about: Maid, from \$800-\$1,000; cook, \$1,200-\$1,400; driver, \$1,000-\$1,200; gardener, \$1,000-\$1,200.

The employee is responsible to report and to pay social security contributions and personal income tax.

The employer is responsible for: Signing a written contract (to include effective date, brief job description, expiration date, probationary period, annual leave, notice period, salary and benefits, work schedule); Ensuring secure working conditions (the employer is responsible for work injuries and damages as a result of working conditions that are not in accordance with Croatian regulations); Providing at least 18 working days of annual leave each calendar year; Providing maternity leave from 6 months to 1 year (compensation during maternity leave is paid with Croatian Social Security Funds); Paying for sick leave for a period of up to 42 calendar days (an authorized physi-

cian's approval is necessary); and Providing a separation notice in writing giving 2 weeks' notice if employed for less than 1 year, 1 month's notice if employed 1 year with the same employer, and 2 months' notice if employed 2 years with the same employer, etc.

If employees are employed from time to time, or just a few hours/week, there is no employer-employee relationship, and employees are paid hourly. Hourly rates vary.

Religious Activities

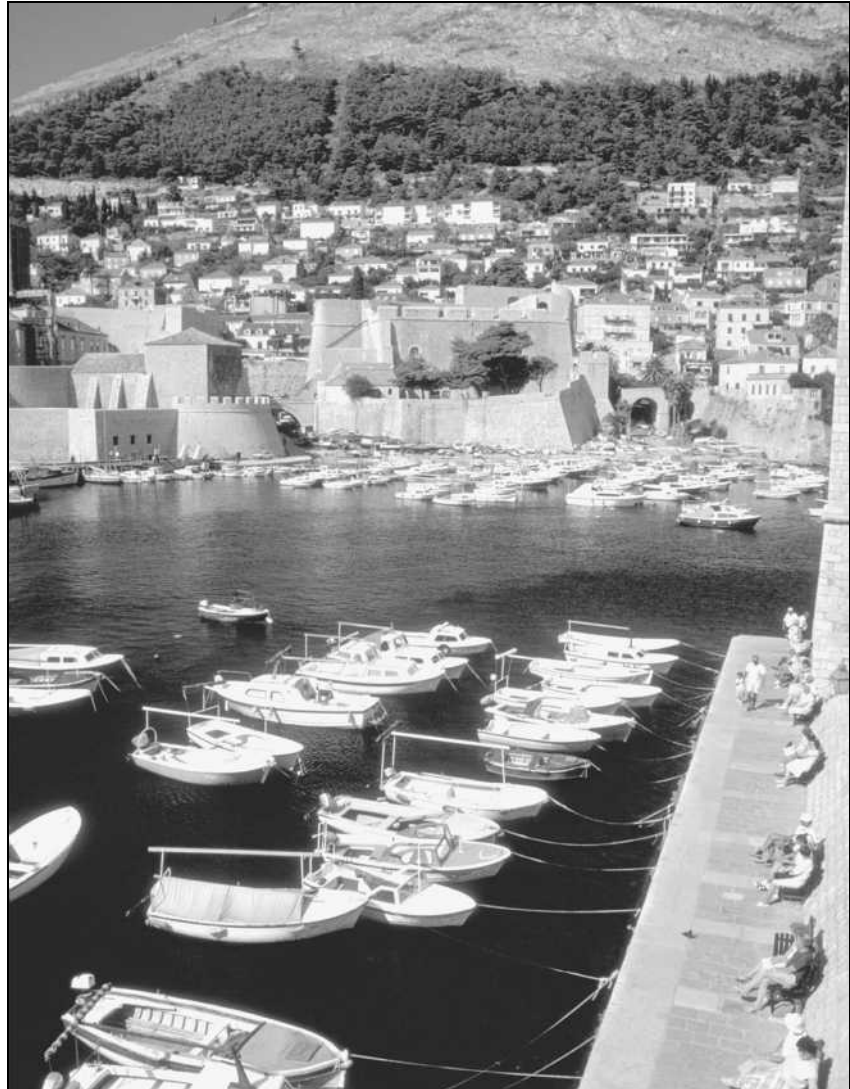
Zagreb is predominantly Roman Catholic, but the Serbian-Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist, Church of Christ, Seventh-day Adventist, Mormon, Moslem, and Jewish faiths are represented. Although there is no Rabbi, Jewish services are held in the Community Center on Friday evenings.

A small English-speaking Catholic group says regular Sunday Mass and offers a First Communion and CCD program for children. A Baptist Church offers a service with translation into English.

Education

The Department of State partially supports the American School of Zagreb (ASZ), founded in 1966, but most income is through tuition. It is a private, nonprofit school that provides complete coeducational and nonsectarian instruction (from kindergarten through grade 8) based on a U.S. curriculum, principles, and standards for children of Americans and foreigners temporarily living in Zagreb. ASZ is not legally recognized by the Croatian Government. Although not incorporated with any state in the U.S., it is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and is a member of the European Council of International Schools.

ASZ is governed by a school board. The board has the authority to develop policy and to make regulations for the conduct of school business and to administer school affairs. The school occupies a pri-



Harbor with pier on the Adriatic Sea

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

ivate home for the lower school (kindergarten through grade 4) and two apartments next door for the upper school (grades 5 to 8) in a nice neighborhood in the north hills of Zagreb. The school has nine classrooms, a library, a computer laboratory, an art room, and three workrooms. The school has no athletic facilities, so students go to a local gym twice a week for physical education. Enrollment during the 1997-98 school year was about 90 children. School usually opens the first week of September and dismisses the second week in June, with vacations comparable to those ordinarily observed in the U.S. (Christmas and spring break).

Children who are 5 years old by October 31 of the year of entrance are eligible to enroll in kindergarten, which runs for the full school day (8:15 am to 2:30 pm).

The school has witnessed incredible growth in the last few years, and a new facility is being sought in Zagreb.

The curriculum is that of the U.S. general academic, public schools. Instruction is in English. English-as-a-Second Language instruction is offered to students with limited English proficiency. Special education programs are not available. The foreign-language program includes

German and French. Croatian is not taught at the school.

The children take the ITBS (Iowa) test annually.

For preschoolers there are privately owned playschools for children ages 2-5 (potty-training is necessary). There are several English-speaking preschools as well as a newly opened French preschool and Montessori School. The preschools generally run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., but for working parents, some have hours until 4 p.m. Costs range from \$100-\$250 a month, depending on the program.

Special Educational Opportunities

Mirogoj, Zagreb's main cemetery, is a beautiful place to take a walk. Built in 1876 in the Renaissance style, the cemetery walls look almost like a fortress. Inside there are quiet wooded walking paths. It's interesting to see how burial places have been arranged according to religion. All Saint's Day is a fascinating time to visit the cemetery and see the thousands of burning candles and bunches of flowers placed on the graves of loved ones.

Extracurricular activities for children include karate, Tae Kwon Do, ice skating, tennis, swimming, piano, guitar, ballet and modern dance, and soccer. Costs for children to participate with a private instructor, or in a club, are comparable to, or less than, U.S. prices. Private tutoring in various languages is also available.

Sports

Zagreb has a variety of recreational facilities. The following sports are popular: skiing, ice hockey, hunting, water polo, handball, basketball, tennis, soccer, and sailing. For swimming, Zagreb has several indoor/ outdoor swimming pools with lap lanes, diving platforms, and baby pools. There are many private tennis clubs. The cost to play once a week is about \$150 a year. Indoor courts are available in winter. At Maksimir Park, tennis courts can be rented for \$4 an hour. Squash

courts are available at certain clubs and can be rented by the hour.

Basketball is popular in Zagreb, and from October to April games take place at the Cibona Centar. On Saturday afternoons soccer games are held at the Maksimir Stadium.

Yoga and aerobics classes are available in Zagreb through health clubs and private lessons.

Outdoor sports possibilities in Zagreb during winter are limited to skiing, horseback riding, skating, and sledding. Sledding is very popular in hilly Zagreb and its many parks. There are many natural hot springs (Toplice) with indoor/outdoor swimming facilities. Skiing in Sljeme is popular and easily accessible; however, most people drive to Slovenia, Italy, or Austria to ski. There are excellent downhill and cross-country trails for experts and beginners. Several ice-skating rinks offer skates to rent and children's lessons.

Foreigners in Croatia can hunt deer, birds, etc., as guests of Croatians. Without such an invitation, you must belong to a hunting club. Fishing licenses cost 40 kuna a day.

On Croatia's Dalmatian coast, sailing, wind surfing, and other water sports are very popular. Scuba diving certification is available in Zagreb. The rugged islands off Croatia's mountainous coast from Istria to Dubrovnik provide a yachting paradise. The channels are deep, and the winds are steady. Of the some 39 modern marinas dotting the coast, the Adriatic Croatia International Club (ACI) operates 19 of them. Yacht rentals can be arranged. You can hire a "bare boat" (no crew) for your party and set out on your own (you must prove your competence), or join a "flotilla" of yachts sailing along a fixed route. Crewed yacht charters are also available. All charters are for at least 1 week. Prices range from US\$1,350 to US\$5,375 a week, depending on the type of yacht, plus US\$100 a day for the skipper.

Sea kayaking is popular around the Kornati Islands. There are package tours available.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Pleasant excursions can be taken within the city of Zagreb and the surrounding areas. The hills and wooded areas around Zagreb are great for weekend walks and picnics. The Germans built and donated a particularly nice children's playground to Zagreb in Odranska, but otherwise children's playground equipment is substandard and does not conform to international safety standards. Good hiking trails go up to Medvedgrad, a medieval fortress on the southwestern part of Mount Medvednica, above western Zagreb. It was built in the mid-13th century to protect Zagreb from Tartar attacks. It has been partly restored. You can enjoy good hiking trails up and down Sljeme Mountain-and a cable car to ride-in case you get tired! There is also a paved road running to the top of Sljeme from Zagreb for those who want to drive.

Maksimir is Zagreb's largest and most beautiful park. The park has a zoo, several artificial lakes, and nice areas for biking and walking. Jarun is a lake with water slides, bike riding areas, picnic barbecue areas, and swimming. The Botanical Gardens were planted over a century ago and boast a wide variety of alpine and Mediterranean plants.

Though it may seem a strange destination, Mirogoj, Zagreb's main cemetery, is a beautiful place to take a walk. Built in 1876 in the neo-Renaissance style, the cemetery walls look almost like a fortress. Inside there are quiet wooded walking paths. It's interesting to see how the burial places have been arranged according to religion. All Saints' Day is a fascinating time to visit the cemetery and see the thousands of burning candles and bunches of flowers placed on the graves of loved ones.

There are nice "day trips" within a few hours' drive of Zagreb. Zagarje

is a region north of Zagreb known for its rolling hills, vineyards, orchards, small villages, streams, ancient castles, spas, and health resorts. Of Zagorje's castles, Trakoscan, Miljana, and Veliki Tabor are the most beautiful. The scenery is reminiscent of West Virginia's Appalachian region in the U.S. In Zagorje, Varazdin is a pleasant little town with a few Baroque churches and a medieval castle that now contains the municipal museum.

Risnjak National Park at Crni Lug, between Zagreb and Rijeka, is a good hiking area in the summer. There's a small park-operated hotel at Crni Lug with rooms at US\$20 per person. It's a 9-km, 2½-hour-climb from the park entrance at Bijela Vodica to Veliki Risnjak.

Kurnovec is the birthplace of Josip Tito. His house was built in 1860 in the center of town. Today, it is a memorial museum with furniture and household implements from the time of Tito's childhood. Around Tito's house about 30 village houses and farm buildings from the turn-of-the-century have been preserved. They were restored and reconstructed to form the Staro Selo (Old Village).

Samobor is a small town west of Zagreb with a tradition in crafts and inn keeping. It's a nice area for fishing, swimming, and Carnival festivities. Many people enjoy shopping in a crystal factory there.

Krapina is a small town situated in Zagorje only 50 km from Zagreb. Krapina became famous in 1899, when the remains of an early human settlement 30,000-40,000 years old were discovered at this site. Today, an archeological park features sculptures of early humans and animals. The Plitvice Lakes National Park occupies 195 km of forests, lakes, and meadows. There are hiking trails along the waterfalls and lakes. The color of the lakes depends on the plankton density—they range from a dark blue to a strikingly bright emerald color. The park, established in 1929, is on UNESCO's World Heritage List. It

is a nice day trip, or the hotel is reasonable if you wish to stay longer.

The Adriatic coast is famous for its Mediterranean landscapes and climate. Istria, the peninsula just south of Trieste, Italy, offers many lovely weekend getaways (4-5 hour-drive from Zagreb). Porec, even after the fall of Rome, remained important as a center of early Christianity, with a bishop and a famous Basilica. There are many places to swim in the clear water by the old town. Rovinj is an active fishing port with a large Italian community. Its high peninsula is topped by the 57-meter high tower of St. Euphemia Cathedral. The 13 green offshore islands of the Rovinj Archipelago offer pleasant, varied views. The cobbled, inclined streets in the old town are where local artists sell their works. Each year in mid-August Rovinj's painters stage a big open-air art show. Pula is a large commercial harbor. The old town has many well-preserved Roman ruins such as the first-century AD Roman amphitheater overlooking the harbor. The rocky-wooded peninsulas overlooking the Adriatic waters are dotted with resort hotels and campgrounds. Brijuni is a fascinating group of islands. Each year from 1949 until his death in 1980, Marshal Tito spent 6 months at his summer residences on Brijuni.

Brijuni is a national park with some 680 species of plants, including many exotic subtropical species planted at Tito's request. In Brijuni, visitors can see Tito's three palaces, the luxury hotels where his guests once stayed, St. German Church—now a gallery of copies of medieval frescoes—and an exhibit of Tito photos.

The Gulf of Kvarner is also a nice part of the coast for weekend getaways (a 3-4 hour-drive). South of Rijeka, between the Istrian Peninsula and the Croatian mainland, are many islands, including Krk, Cres, and Pag. Many people frequent Opatija, once a fashionable bathing resort of the Hapsburg elite until WW I. Many grand old hotels

remain from this time, and the promenade along the water affords a fine view. A massive concrete arch bridge links Island Krk to the mainland. It has many tourist hotels and many medieval churches and walls built in the 12th-15th centuries. Medieval Rab was an outpost of Venice for hundreds of years until the Austrians took over in the 19th century. Tall church towers rise above the red-roofed mass of houses on Rab's high peninsula. Places to stay in Istria range from private rooms for as little as \$30/night to hotels that can cost up to \$150/night. Prices vary according to the time of year (May-September is high season). Most of the nearly 100 campgrounds along the Croatian coast operate from mid-May to September only.

Dalmatia is Croatia's most famous vacation area. Historical relics abound in towns like Zadar, Trogir, Split, Hvar, Korcula, and Dubrovnik. These towns are framed by a striking natural beauty of barren slopes, green valleys, and clear water. A warm current flowing north up the coast keeps the climate mild. You can swim in the sea right up until the end of September. Unfortunately, Dalmatia was not spared the damages of the former Yugoslavia's civil war, and many historic sights suffered shelling. Although most damages have been repaired, many hotels and restaurants are still closed because of fewer tourists. On the bright side, Dalmatia is not as crowded or expensive as it was before the war. The drive from Zagreb to Dubrovnik takes longer than 9 hours and the winding, two-lane coastal highway is scenic, but slow going, especially if you're behind trucks and buses. Daily flights from Zagreb to Dubrovnik cost about \$100 one way but prices vary according to the time of year. There are ferries from Rijeka and Split to Dubrovnik as well.

Croatia's oldest tour company is the Atlas Travel Agency. Its "adventure" tours feature bird watching, canoeing, caving, cycling, diving, fishing, hiking, riding, sailing, sea



Courtesy of the Croatian Embassy

Croatians at outdoor café in Ban Jelacic square in Zagreb

kayaking, and white-water rafting in both Croatia and Slovenia.

Zagreb is accessible to Italy, Slovenia, Austria, and Germany. Ljubljana (a 2-hour drive from Zagreb) is near the mountain and lake resort district. Lake Bled is a resort area, which features an excellent golf course as well as the full range of winter sports. Trieste, Italy, and Graze, Austria, are favorite shopping towns-both about 2-3 hours' drive from Zagreb. Budapest and Vienna are about 5-6 hours' drive away. Venice is 4 hours' drive away. From Zagreb it is easy to explore and enjoy other European cities.

Entertainment

Zagreb's cultural life is rich: operas, concerts, chamber music, ballet, and theater are presented regularly. A monthly guide to events and performances in Zagreb is published by the Tourist Association, and copies can be obtained from the Tourist Information Center on the main square Trg Ban Jelacica. The guide

is packed with useful information on museums, galleries, sports and recreational activities, restaurants, entertainment, etc.

Opera season runs from September to April and offers a wide variety of German, Italian, and Croatian operas, usually sung in their original languages.

Numerous concerts by orchestras and chamber music groups are presented throughout the year. Stage plays are performed in many theaters, but most theater is presented in Croatian.

The Zagreb Puppet Theater for children (of all ages) presents shows in Croatian, but for English speakers the stories are often familiar, such as "The Three Little Pigs," or "Hansel & Gretel."

Movie theaters (kinos) are popular around Zagreb and show feature films from all over the world-many of them recent U.S. films. Admission

fees are low. Most cinemas show films in the original language with Croatian subtitles.

Zagreb has discos, casinos, and nightclubs as well. The B.P. Club is the best known jazz club in town. It is run by Bosko Petrovic, one of Croatia's best known jazz artists. Dance clubs such as Saloon and Kulusic are popular among the younger set.

In Croatia there are different types of restaurants: Restaurants, which offer international cuisine; Gostionica, which serves regional Croatian cuisine, i.e., dalmatinska; Bistro, which serves sandwiches, pizza, and snacks; Cafe Bar, which serves drinks and coffee only; and Slati-carna, which serves cakes, pastries, and baked goods.

Dining in the local restaurants is a popular pastime. Zagreb is full of small cafes where you can order drinks, pizza, or ice cream. In summer and fall, tables are set up out-

doors, providing some relief from the ever-present haze of cigarette smoke indoors. McDonald's opened its first restaurant in Zagreb last year, and the chain is spreading around town, including a drive-in at one. Ethnic restaurants are becoming more popular. There are newly opened Chinese, Turkish, Indian, Mexican, and Italian restaurants in town. Many Zagreb restaurants offer similar menus, with roasted and grilled pork and lamb, also some veal and beef as the mainstay specialties. Prices at several good restaurants range in price from \$20-\$40 per person. Eating out in Zagreb at a nice restaurant is not a child-friendly experience. Home delivery of fast food is not available, but a few pizza and Chinese places offer takeout.

Social Activities

The American community in Zagreb is small. In addition to U.S. employees and their families at the Embassy, you can meet other U.S. citizens who work for humanitarian relief organizations, the American School, the UN, as missionaries, American citizens married to Croatians, and journalists.

A friendly and active international community exists in Zagreb. Frequent social events revolve around the various embassies represented here, but no one has special facilities. The American School of Zagreb has annual picnics and holiday parties for families as well as spring and Christmas programs which the children present for parents.

The International Women's Club (IWC) is open to wives of business and diplomatic personnel, as well as Croatians. The IWC sponsors tennis, yoga classes, nights at the opera, a mother and toddler group, and language groups. The IWC also supports many charities. Their major fund raising event is the annual Christmas bazaar. Monthly meetings are held to exchange news and views over coffee.

The active chapter of the "Hash House Harriers" gathers for a run and barbecue every month or so.

The Harriers, founded originally by British diplomats in Kuala Lumpur, are popular all over the world.

OTHER CITIES

DUBROVNIK, established by the Greeks in the seventh century and virtually independent through its long history, is a lovely seaport on the Adriatic, and a major Croatian resort. Arts and literature flourished in Dubrovnik during medieval times. Traces of its early architecture remain—parts of the original city walls; a historic palace; the customs house and the mint; and several monasteries, one of which housed an ancient apothecary. Dubrovnik's independence ended when Napoleon took the city in 1808 and made it part of the Illyrian provinces. It was assigned to Austria from 1815 until 1918, the year it was claimed by Yugoslavia. Today, Dubrovnik's residents annually play host to thousands of European tourists who come to enjoy the climate and beauty of the Dalmatian coast. Swimming is excellent from April to October. At an annual festival, held in mid-summer, operas, ballets, and plays are presented in the city's palaces, squares, and fortifications. An excellent view of the city is found at the summit of Mount Srđ, which is reached by cable car. During Croatia's 1991 civil war, Dubrovnik was shelled by Yugoslav Federal Army tanks, artillery battalions, and gunboats. Many ancient buildings, monuments, and hotels were heavily damaged or destroyed.

The city of **KARLOVAC**, located 33 miles (53 kilometers) southwest of Zagreb, is situated at the confluence of the Korana and Kopa Rivers. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the city was unsuccessfully attacked several times by the Turks. A fortress, built in the 16th century, still stands today as a reminder of Karlovac's past. Karlovac is one of Croatia's important industrial centers. Industries in the city produce chemicals, footwear, and wool. The city is linked by rail with Zagreb

and serves as a transit point for wine, grain, and timber. Karlovac is also the home of Croatia's oldest public library.

The industrial city of **OSIJEK** lies along the banks of the Drava River in eastern Croatia. A fortress dominates the upper, or old, town, while the lower is the city's commercial and industrial heart. Textiles, tanneries, and manufacturing provide employment for Osijek's residents. The nearby town of Borovo has a large footwear factory, as well as a rubber-producing plant. Osijek received heavy damage during the Croatian civil war after Serbian forces shelled and besieged the city.

Considerable Roman remains can be found in the Croatian port city of **PULA**, which is situated on the Istrian peninsula in northwestern Croatia. Located about 50 miles south of Trieste, Italy, Pula is a naval base and shipbuilding center. Historically, the city was established in 178 B.C. as a Roman military and naval base. It has been destroyed and rebuilt many times and has seen the passing armies of the Byzantines, Franks, and Venetians. Pula became part of Austria via the 1797 Peace of Campoformio, part of Italy via the Treaty of St. Germain in 1919, and was assigned to Yugoslavia in 1947. Roman remains include the Temple of Diana; a triumphal arch; and a three-tiered amphitheater with 72 arches that seats 23,000 people. Roman and Byzantine mosaics may be found in Pula's archeological museum. Pula is also the site of many medieval churches and old palaces. Several beautiful, sandy beaches also attract tourists. The city is an important economic and industrial center. Industries in Pula produce textiles, glass, cement, and machinery.

RIJEKA, a seaport in northwestern Croatia, was known to the Italians as Fiume during the years of domination by that country after World War I. Early in its history, the city was part of the Byzantine Empire, later came under the domination of Croatian dukes and, in succeeding

years, passed to Austria, France, and Hungary. Italy, which had occupied the city in 1918, left the Paris Peace Conference the next year in a dispute over the area. Rijeka became a free city-state in 1920 in the Treaty of Rapallo, but fascist troops overthrew its government, and the city was divided—Rijeka (or Fiume) went to Italy, and the Suo Barros, to Yugoslavia. It was not until 1947 that the two parts were reunited in a formal transfer to the latter country. The old section of Rijeka has buildings dating from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Numerous museums, art galleries, theaters, and a library are located in the city. Rijeka is an important port and a departure point for cruises along Croatia's Adriatic coast. Several major industries are located in Rijeka, among them are oil refining and shipbuilding.

SPLIT is an important Croatian commercial center on the Adriatic. Its superb location on the Dalmatian coast has made it one of Croatia's leading resorts, with modern beaches and good hotels. Split's history began in the seventh century, when residents of the nearby colony of Salona fled from Avar invaders and took refuge at the palace of Diocletian, a Roman emperor of earlier centuries. A new settlement, Spalatum (now Split) grew within the palace walls. For hundreds of years, the town existed under a succession of rulers—Byzantine, Venetian, and Austrian—until it was claimed in 1918 by Yugoslavia. During World War II, the city was occupied by German troops. Some ruins of the destroyed colony of Salona are still found close by. Split itself has numerous monuments and a cathedral of note, once the mausoleum of Diocletian. Split is a major cultural center, with a number of museums and art galleries. One gallery honors Jan Mestrovic, one of Croatia's greatest sculptors. There are frequent presentations of opera, concerts, and ballet. Five miles northeast of Split are the ruins of Salona, a major Roman port.

The city of **ZADAR** is situated on Croatia's Adriatic coast. Zadar was founded in the ninth century and today is an important cultural and economic center. Cultural activities in the city are centered around museums, theater, and art galleries. Zadar has many historical buildings and monuments that are of interest to visitors. The historic sites include the remains of a Roman forum, an Arch of Triumph built in honor of the Roman emperor Trajan, a ninth-century church (St. Donat), a thirteenth-century cathedral (St. Anastasia), a Franciscan church and monastery, and many medieval churches. During the summer, St. Donat's hold classical music concerts. Zadar is the home of several industries and is noted for the production of *Maraska* cherry liqueur. Other industries in Zadar manufacture rope, cotton and synthetic textiles, leather, processed fish, cigarettes, and plastics.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Croatia is situated at the intersection between central Europe and the Balkans. Croatia covers 56,500 square kilometers (21,829 square miles) of mainland and somewhat less than 32,000 square kilometers (12,316 square miles) of sea. The Adriatic coastline, which includes 1,185 islands, islets, and reefs, is 5,740 kilometers (3,566 miles) long and famed for its clear waters. The republic swings around like a boomerang from the Pannonian Plains of Slavonia between the Sava, Drava, and Danube Rivers, across hilly central Croatia to the Istrian Peninsula, then south through Dalmatia along the rugged Adriatic coast. Croatia is about the size of West Virginia. It is bordered by Slovenia to the north, Hungary to the northeast, Serbia to the east, Bosnia and Herzegovina to the south, and Montenegro to the southeast.

Croatia's geography is diverse with its rocky coastline, densely wooded mountains, plains, lakes, and rolling hills. In an effort to preserve its environment, Croatia maintains seven national parks.

Zagreb's climate is predominately continental, with hot and dry summers and cold winters. Rainy weather, with accompanying fog and smog, is common in the fall from October through December. In winter, from December to March, snowfalls can be frequent, occasionally heavy, and temperatures sometimes fall below zero. The sun may not appear for weeks on end. Mean minimum and maximum temperatures are 20 °F-38 °F in January; 60 °F-81 °F in July. On the coast, the climate is typically Mediterranean with long, hot summers and moderate winters.

Population

According to the State Statistics Bureau 1995 estimate, Croatia's population is 4.78 million. The population of Zagreb is 930,550. There has been no census since 1991 because of the war in the former Yugoslavia. However the last census split the population as follows: 3.7 million Croats, 580,000 Serbs, 43,500 Moslems, and 113,000 others (Slovenes, Italians, Czechs, Albanians, Montenegrins, Gypsies, and Macedonians). Some 2.3 million ethnic Croats live abroad, including almost 1.5 million in the U.S. Pittsburgh and Buenos Aires have the largest Croatian communities outside Europe.

Roman Catholics account for 77% of the population. The Serbian-Orthodox represent 11%, Moslem 1.1%, and 633 Jews (0.01%). The remainder includes Greek Catholics, Protestants, and others. Croatian is a South-Slavic language. Before 1991, both Croatian and Serbian were considered dialects of Serbo-Croatian. However, since the war this term is no longer used. Croatian uses Roman script and spelling is phonetic. Because

Croatia was historically part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, German is the most commonly spoken second language in Croatia. Many people in Istria understand Italian, and English is widely spoken among the youth in Zagreb.

Public Institutions

Croatia first emerged as a nation-state in 925 A.D. and later became a semi autonomous province of Hungary, a status that lasted until the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire following World War I. In the intervening years, Croatia faced wave after wave of would-be conquerors, principally from the Venetian and Ottoman Empires.

With the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian empire in WW I, Croatia became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (called Yugoslavia after 1929) with a centralized government in the Serbian capital Belgrade. In 1939, an administrative reorganization granted Croatia some regional autonomy.

After the German invasion of Yugoslavia in March 1941, a puppet government dominated by the fascist Ustasa movement was set up in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina under the leadership of Ante Pavelic. Pavelic proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). The Ustasa launched an extermination campaign that surpassed even that of the Nazis in scale, murdering perhaps as many as 350,000 ethnic Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies and Croats who disagreed with the regime.

At the end of WWII, Croatia became one of six federal republics of the new socialist Yugoslavia, under the control of the Communist and former partisan leader Josip Broz-Tito. Tito's ruthlessness and political skill built a union which, despite unresolved underlying ethnic conflicts, lasted until well after his death.

In 1989, with political changes sweeping Eastern Europe, many Croats felt the time had come to end more than four decades of Communist rule and attain complete autonomy. In the April 1990 free elections, Franjo Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica) easily defeated the old Communist Party. On May 30, the new Croatian Parliament was formally established, and on December 22, 1990, a new Croatian Constitution was promulgated.

On June 25, 1991, Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia. The Serb minority opposed its secession and started a rebellion, backed by the Serbian-led Yugoslav army. During 6 months of fighting in Croatia, 10,000 people died, hundreds of thousands fled, and tens of thousands of homes were destroyed. By January 1992, when a U.N. cease-fire was agreed to, one-third of Croatia was under the control of the Serbs, who proclaimed their own republic of Krajina comprising three enclaves.

Croatia was formally recognized by the European Community (now European Union) on January 15, 1992. The U.S. recognized the new nation on April 7, 1992. Croatia became a U.N. member in May 1992. In August 1992, Tudjman was elected President and his HDZ party won an absolute majority in the Lower House of Parliament.

In two blitz offensives in May and August 1995, the Croatian army reconquered the largest chunks of the Krajina, prompting an exodus of Serbs. In November 1995, Zagreb agreed to peacefully reintegrate the last Serb enclave of Eastern Slavonia (located along the Danube River border with Serbia). According to the Erdut Agreement, reintegration was projected in 1998. Until that time, a transitional U.N. administration is present. In December 1995, Croatia signed the Dayton Peace Agreement, committing itself to a permanent cease-fire and the return of all refugees.

The Government in Croatia is divided among three branches: executive (President and Cabinet), legislative (Parliament), and judicial. The supreme executive power in Croatia is the President. The current President was reelected in June 1997 for a second 5-year term. The President appoints the Prime Minister and other members of the government. All executive appointments require confirmation by the Chamber of Representatives. The ruling HDZ party continued to dominate by winning the October 1995 elections for Parliament's lower house and the April 1997 vote for the upper house of Parliament and local administrative bodies.

The Parliament, the highest legislative body, consists of two Chambers: The Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Provinces. Legislation mandates that national minorities be represented in Parliament.

The following political parties in Croatia are represented in Parliament: Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSL) Croatian People's Party (FINS)

Croatian Peasant's Party (HSS)

Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP) Croatian Party of Right (HSP)

Istrian Democratic Parliament (IDS) Serbian National Party (SNS)

Croatian Independent Democrats (FIND) Croatian Christian Democratic Union (HKDU)

Croatian Independent Democratic (FIND) Action of Social Democrats (ASH) Independent Serb Democratic Party (SDSS)

Slavonia-Baranja Party (SBHS)

The Chamber of Representatives nominates and confirms the 15 members of the Supreme Court, Croatia's highest judicial body.

Arts, Science, and Education

Croatia has 219 museums, galleries, and museum collections, as well as 60 ecclesiastical and numerous private collections. There are 659 specialists, curators, restorers and researchers who oversee about five million objects in 1,100 various collections, a treasury of the cultural and natural heritage of Croatia.

The Mimara, one of Zagreb's most prominent museums, contains the works of Rafael, Rubens, Velazquez, Goya, Rembrandt, Hals, Degas, and Pissaro. The Mimara has 42 exhibition halls and a multimedia center. The diverse collection also contains large sections of glassware, sculpture, and oriental art. The Strossmayer Gallery houses many of the Old Master works such as Botticelli, Bellini, Tintoretto, Veronese, and El Greco. The Archeological Museum contains one of Europe's richest numismatic collections including some 260,000 samples of old coins, medals, medallions, and decorations. There are also Roman stone monuments dating back to the period from the first to the fourth centuries B.C. The Ethnographic Museum has collections of Croatian folk costumes, delicate pieces of lace from the Island of Pag, gold embroidered scarves from Slavonia, and the jewelry of Konavle. Also popular in Zagreb are the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Croatian Museum of Naive Art.

The works of Croatia's most famous sculptors, Antun Augustincic and Ivan Mestrovic, are renowned beyond Croatia's borders. Mestrovic's works can be seen all around Croatia. His sculpture and architecture display a powerful classical style he learned from Rodin. His Zagreb studio and his retirement home in Split have been turned into galleries displaying his work. Croatian naive art has also gained an international reputation. The most celebrated painters in the naive style are Ivan and Josip Generalic, Ivan Vecenaj, Mijo Kovacic, and

Ivan Rabuzin. The newly opened "Cudo Hrvatske Naive" exhibits and sells naive art. It also organizes exhibitions of Croatian naive artists abroad.

Zagreb has 20 theaters, the oldest of which is the Croatian National Theater, founded more than a century ago and built in the neo-Baroque style. Culture was heavily subsidized by the Communists, and admission to operas, ballets, and concerts is still reasonable. Season opera tickets in Zagreb (October-May) can be purchased for \$15-\$60. Operas are presented in their original languages, though the quality of performances is hit and miss. Visiting opera companies from the region perform as well. Zagreb has a popular children's puppet theater. Most theater is performed in Croatian. The Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall is the favorite place to hear the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra and various holiday musical concerts. Among those who started their artistic careers in Zagreb and went on to achieve international fame are pianist No Pogorelic, opera diva Ruza Pospis-Baldani, and conductor Vjekoslav Sutej.

Croatian folk music has had many influences. The kolo, a lovely Slavic round dance in which men and women alternate in the circle, is accompanied by Gypsy style violinists or players of the tambura, a three- or five-string mandolin popular throughout Croatia. The measured guitar playing or rhythmic accordions of Dalmatia have a gentle Italian air. The Croatian folkloric ensemble "Lado" perform lively Mediterranean dance rhythms and sing folk songs with haunting voices.

Zagreb hosts many international cultural events such as the International Folklore Festival, International Competition of Young Conductors, International Jazz Fair, Musical Biennial Zagreb, International Festival of Avant-garde Theaters, International Festival of Puppet Theaters, and the International Garden Exhibition. During

summer many coastal cities stage international festivals such as the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, the Split Summer Festival, and Zadar Music Evenings.

Zagreb is a university center-home to some 40 graduate and undergraduate schools and over 80,000 students. Its first secular school was founded in the mid-14th century. The first secondary school was established at the beginning of the 16th century, and the university opened its doors in the second half of the same century. Zagreb University is one of the oldest universities in Europe. The roots of higher education began with the establishment of the Jesuit Gymnasium in 1632 to teach moral theology. Thirty years later, in 1662, the Academy for Philosophy was introduced. In 1669, Emperor Leopold granted the school the right to award doctorates. The cities of Split, Zadar, Osijek, and Rijeka also have universities.

Croatia has about 2,000 libraries: 160 rank as scientific libraries, 4 of which are university libraries. The University of Zagreb Library is also considered the National Library. There are 91 faculty libraries, 60 libraries attached to research institutes, and 1 central library (attached to the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences).

The Academy of Arts and Sciences was founded in 1860. Zagreb has the following cultural institutes:

The French Institute has a library and reading room. CD's and videos can be borrowed. Cultural activities include theater, films, dance, lectures, and concerts.

The American Embassy's Peace Memorial Library, open to everyone, has more than 6,000 books by American authors and 200 magazines and journals in its stacks. A reference librarian is on staff. The Austrian Cultural Institute sponsors such activities as concerts, exhibitions, seminars, lectures, and courses for preschoolers in German.

The British Council has a large selection of books, periodicals, reviews, and videos. The Council promotes cultural, educational, and technical cooperation between Britain and other countries.

The Italian Cultural Institute in Zagreb has various cultural activities including films, concerts, shows, literary meetings, scholarships, and research assistance for students.

The Goethe Institute has a large public library with books, magazines, newspapers, CD's, and videos.

Commerce and Industry

The former Communist government of Yugoslavia emphasized heavy industry, especially in aluminum, chemicals, petroleum and shipbuilding. Today, Croatia is the world's third-largest shipbuilder, with most of the output from the shipyards of Pula, Rijeka, and Split intended for export. The following industries are centered in Zagreb and surrounding areas: chemical, machine tool manufacture, electrical engineering, and textiles. About 80% of Croatia's petroleum comes from local oil wells. Most of the wells in the former Yugoslavia were in Croatia, north and east of Zagreb. In the past, one-third of Croatia's national income has come from tourism, but in 1991 and 1992 Croatia received few visitors on account of the war. By 1993 Germans, Austrians, and some Italians had returned to Istria, but Dalmatia has had a slower recovery.

The collectivization of agriculture just after WW II failed and private farmers with small plots continue to work most of the land. The interior plains produce fruit, vegetables, and grains (especially corn and wheat), while olives and grapes are cultivated along the coast.

Croatia is negotiating admission to the World Trade Organization and the Central European Free Trade Organization (CEFTA) with member countries. It is also one of sev-

eral post-Communist countries seeking to become part of the European Union. Three international rating agencies gave Croatia investment grade ratings of BBB-and-equivalent in January 1997. Standard and Poor's placed it just behind Poland and ahead of Slovakia and Greece.

Since independence, Croatia has had to completely reorient its trade after the loss of markets in the southern regions of former Yugoslavia. In 1992 Italy, Germany, and Slovenia together accounted for well over 50% of Croatia's imports and exports. The average wage decreased during the war to US\$125 a month. Most Croats only manage to make ends meet because they still receive subsidized housing, health care, education, etc., and many hold down two or three jobs. Relatives abroad send money home and much of the rural population grows its own food. Others have savings from the good years before 1991.

An austerity program introduced in 1993 curbed inflation, which was running at 3 8% a month. In 1996 it was 3.5%. Although the inflation rate has stabilized, prices are noticeably increasing and are comparable with costs in large, urban U.S. areas. The IMF estimates GDP rose by 5% in 1996. In 1995 industry accounted for 20% of GDP, public sector services 24%, agriculture 11%, trade 9%, and tourism 4%-5%. Unemployment in 1997 was high at 16.6%.

Croatia is in the intermediate phase of the implementation of a complete economic reform program under agreement with the IMF. This 3-year program, to last until the end of 1999, worked to achieve an economic growth level with low inflation (3%-4% annually), maintain a stable exchange rate and low budget deficit, implement basic and structural reforms, and ensure an adequate social security network. There are detailed studies about the development of payment transactions and the introduction of high-liability systems to increase surveil-

lance over bank bonds. Croatia decided it would not take up the second and third branches of this \$486 million 3-year loan agreed by the IMF earlier this year.

U.S. policy supports strengthening bilateral economic ties particularly business relations. Croatia is included in the Generalized System of Preferences. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation covers political and war risk for U.S. firms investing in Croatia. Croatia is a member of the International Monetary Fund, IBRD, and EBRD and is seeking to be a party to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The U.S. Business Council for Southeastern Europe (formerly the U.S.-Yugoslav Economic Council) and its Croatian counterpart, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, work to stimulate economic cooperation and to develop further business opportunities. Croatia signed an agreement for a \$5 million PL-480 Title I loan for the purchase of U.S. sunflower seed oil in 1997. Bilateral agreements on investment and double taxation were also concluded in 1997. Throughout the war, U.S. trade and investment in Croatia was minimal, although it is increasing.

In May 1994, Croatia replaced its currency, the dinar, with the kuna, which takes its name from the marten, an animal whose pelt served as a means of exchange in the Middle Ages.

Transportation

Automobiles

The large car rental chains represented in Croatia are Avis, Budget, Euro car, and Hertz. Independent local companies are often less expensive than the international chains. At all agencies, the cheapest car is the Renault 4 and prices begin around US\$125 a day plus US\$0.20 per km (100 km minimum), or US\$300 to US\$350 a week with unlimited km. Full collision insurance is US\$8 a day extra and theft

insurance is another US\$8 a day. Add 20% tax to all charges.

Local

Public transportation is cheap and reliable with trams and buses leaving every 30 minutes from stops all around the city and surrounding hills. Taxis are available at taxi stands throughout the city, or may be ordered by phone. Taxis are safe, but quite expensive with meters that begin at

US\$1.25 and ring up US\$0.65 a kilometer. Rates are higher after 10 pm and on Sunday. For convenience, bring your own transportation. Although local transportation is readily available, it is usually very crowded, especially during rush hour.

Roads throughout Croatia are narrow—certainly not as wide as by Western standards—and parking is often tight in Zagreb, so consider a mid- to compact sized vehicle. Roads are in fair shape and are maintained and cleaned regularly. Of course, there are still numerous potholes to be avoided. Main roads are plowed in winter, but secondary and side roads are not always cleared. The hills and twisting roads outside the center of Zagreb are often treacherous in bad weather. Bring snow tires for your car. Croatians drive more recklessly than the average American, so defensive driving is a must. Motorists must also pay special attention to the trams (streetcars).

Since independence, Croatia has seen increasing numbers of cars. Now, roads toward the coast on weekends and in major cities experience heavy congestion on weekends and during rush hour. Primary roads are generally adequate, but most have only one lane in each direction, including roads to and from the coast. If you travel through former conflict areas, stay on paved roads to reduce the risk of encountering leftover mines. Emergency road help and information may be reached by dialing 987. For additional road condition and safety information, contact the Croatian

Automobile Association (HAK) at telephone (385) (1) 455-4433.

Regional

From the main railway station there are daily international lines for Munich, Vienna, Venice, Budapest, Paris, Geneva, Graz, and Moscow. There are daily international bus lines to: Graz, Munich, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Dortmund, Cologne, Zurich, and Barcs. Twice weekly buses leave for Berlin and Istanbul.

Zagreb Airport is located in the village Pleso, 17 kilometers from the center of the city, about a 25-minute drive. Airlines servicing Zagreb include Croatia Airlines, KLM, Lufthansa, Pan Avia, Swissair, Aeroflot, Air France, Austrian Airlines, Air Canada, and British Airways. Croatia Airlines has flights from Zagreb to Amsterdam (1 hour and 45 minutes), Berlin (2 hours and 15 minutes), Brussels (2 hours and 30 minutes), Budapest, Copenhagen (1 hour and 40 minutes), Dusseldorf, Frankfurt (1 hour and 30 minutes), Hamburg, London (2 hours and 10 minutes), Madrid, Manchester, Moscow (3 hours and 15 minutes), Munich, Paris (1 hour and 50 minutes), Prague, Rome (2 hours and 30 minutes), Skopje, Stuttgart, Tirana, Vienna (1 hour), and Zurich (1 hour and 15 minutes).

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Zagreb is good and reliable. Personal e-mail and Internet accounts can be established with America On-line or the Croatian telephone company. Expect to pay higher user rates than you would in the U.S. Long-distance calls to the U.S. are expensive (two to three times higher than calls placed from the U.S.) but relatively inexpensive to continental Europe. International operators can be accessed directly for AT&T, MCI, and SPRINT. The Croatian Post Office's telegram service is inexpensive and reliable.

Radio and TV

Broadcasting in Croatia is dominated by Croatian Radio and Television (HRT). Croatia passed legislation on private TV and radio stations in July 1994 and has begun granting licenses and frequencies for local and regional radio and television. Several small local radio stations emerged after independence. State-controlled HRT broadcasts daily on three television channels and three radio channels. HRT radio programs reach more than 96% of the population. TV programs reach 93% of the population. The prominent, semi-independent station, OTV Youth Television, reaches only the greater Zagreb area.

Croatian radio broadcasts are similar in format to Western European stations lectures and talk shows—and the music is largely Western. The stations are diverse, playing classical, pop (Top 40), and jazz music. European “club techno” music is popular with Croatia's youth. Croatian radio broadcasts the news in English every day at 8 am, 10 am, 2 pm, and 11 pm. Various radio stations are accessible on the Astra Satellite (19.2 degrees E), such as Virgin (UK), SKY (Holland), BBC 1-5, Radio France International, and America One (NPR).

American TV (NTSC) is incompatible with the local Croatian transmission system (PAL). A PAL TV or a multisystem TV with PAL capacity is necessary if you want to view Croatian/European TV. Three Croatian channels show a lot of American movies and sitcoms with subtitles. Most employees purchase a satellite dish. A 1½-2-meter dish will bring most anything you would desire to view such as: NBC Super Channel, CNN, SKY, TNT, MTV, etc.

It is a good idea to have a multisystem VCR, as many new video stores opening in Zagreb have a decent selection of movies.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Foreign newspapers and magazines can be found at newspaper kiosks all around the center of Zagreb. The

International Herald Tribune, international editions of American and European news periodicals such as Time, Newsweek, or Paris Match, are available. Daily newspapers and some reviews can be read in the reading rooms of the various cultural centers and libraries in town. Permanent foreign media bureaus in Zagreb include the New York Times, Associated Press, AFP and Reuters. There are also stringers and visiting correspondents for various bureaus.

There are three national and three regional dailies in Croatia: Vjesnik (Zagreb), government; Vecernji list (Zagreb), government; Novi list (Rijeka), private; Slobodna Dalmacija (Split), private; Glas Slavonije (Osijek), private; and La Voce Del Popolo (Rijeka), private; with a combined circulation of 375,000. The print media is under severe scrutiny by the government, which owns the majority shares of two of the three largest national news dailies. The Croatian news agency HINA serves all dailies. Popular weeklies include the tabloids Globus and Feral Tribune. Several weeklies and monthlies contain serious coverage of political, financial, and cultural events.

A new English-language bookstore in the center of Zagreb sells paperbacks, technical and educational materials, children's books, and computer software, all at considerably higher prices than in the U.S. Recent books in English on the war in Croatia and maps are widely available. Magazine subscriptions from the U.S. by mail are more economical, and the selection of books is much greater through a book-buying service on the internet or a book club/catalog.

Health and Medicine

Community Health

The public water supply is considered safe in all major cities in Croatia. Naturally carbonated mineral water ("mineralna voda") is

customarily sold in restaurants and stores. Sterilized long-life milk is available and has a shelf-life of 6 months. Fresh milk spoils quickly. Raw fruits and vegetables are of good quality, plentiful in season, and safe to eat using washing precautions normally followed in the U.S. Fish, meats, and poultry should be cooked well. Sewage and garbage disposal is adequate.

Preventive Measures

Travelers should have their shot records up to date and be immunized against tick-borne encephalitis. A flu shot is also recommended before winter. Sinus and respiratory ailments are aggravated by wintertime smog, and springtime provokes allergy problems.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport is required for travel to Croatia. A visa is not required for U.S. passport holders for tourist or business trips of less than 90 days. Visas are required for all other types of stays and must be obtained prior to arrival in the country. Unless the traveler is staying at a hotel, all foreign citizens must register with the local police within 48 hours of arrival. Failure to register is a misdemeanor offense: some Americans have been fined and/or expelled as a result of their failure to register. Additional information on entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of Croatia at 2343 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. (202) 588-5899 or from the Croatian consulates in New York City, Cleveland, Chicago or Los Angeles. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Croatian embassy or consulate. The Internet home page of the Croatian Embassy in Washington is <http://www.croatiaemb.org>.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy and

obtain updated information on travel and security within Croatia. The U.S. Embassy in Zagreb is located at Andrije Hebranga 2, tel. (385)(1) 455-5500, Internet home page: <http://www.usembassy.hr>. On weekends, holidays, and after hours, an Embassy duty officer can be reached at tel. (385)(1) 455-5281 or (385)(91)455-2384.

Special Information

Relatively speaking, Croatia has a low crime rate, and violent crime is rare. Many people can be seen walking on the streets and riding public transportation after dark. Foreigners do not appear to be singled out; however, as in many cities, displays of wealth increase chances of becoming the victim of a pickpocket or mugger. Such crimes are more likely to occur in bus or railroad stations. There have been several incidents of petty crime in residences, and car theft is on the rise (Note: Most of the cars which have been stolen are 4 x 4 utility-type vehicles). Restrictions on movements exist within Croatia and precautions must be taken in areas of instability.

In 1995, Croatian Government forces recaptured territory formerly controlled by rebel Serb forces. This area includes Western Slavonia and the Krajina Region. Although you can travel there, considerable risk of bodily harm caused by mines and unexploded ordnance continues to exist. The Dayton and Erdut Peace Accords ended fighting and reduced regional tensions. The remaining formerly Serb-held area of Eastern Slavonia is currently under UN administration. The region will be reintegrated into Croatia gradually. There continues to be isolated incidents of civil unrest, and you cannot enter the UN-administered part of Eastern Slavonia without prior UN authorization.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May 30	Croatian State Day
June 22	Croatian Uprising Day
Aug. 5	Homeland Thanksgiving Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

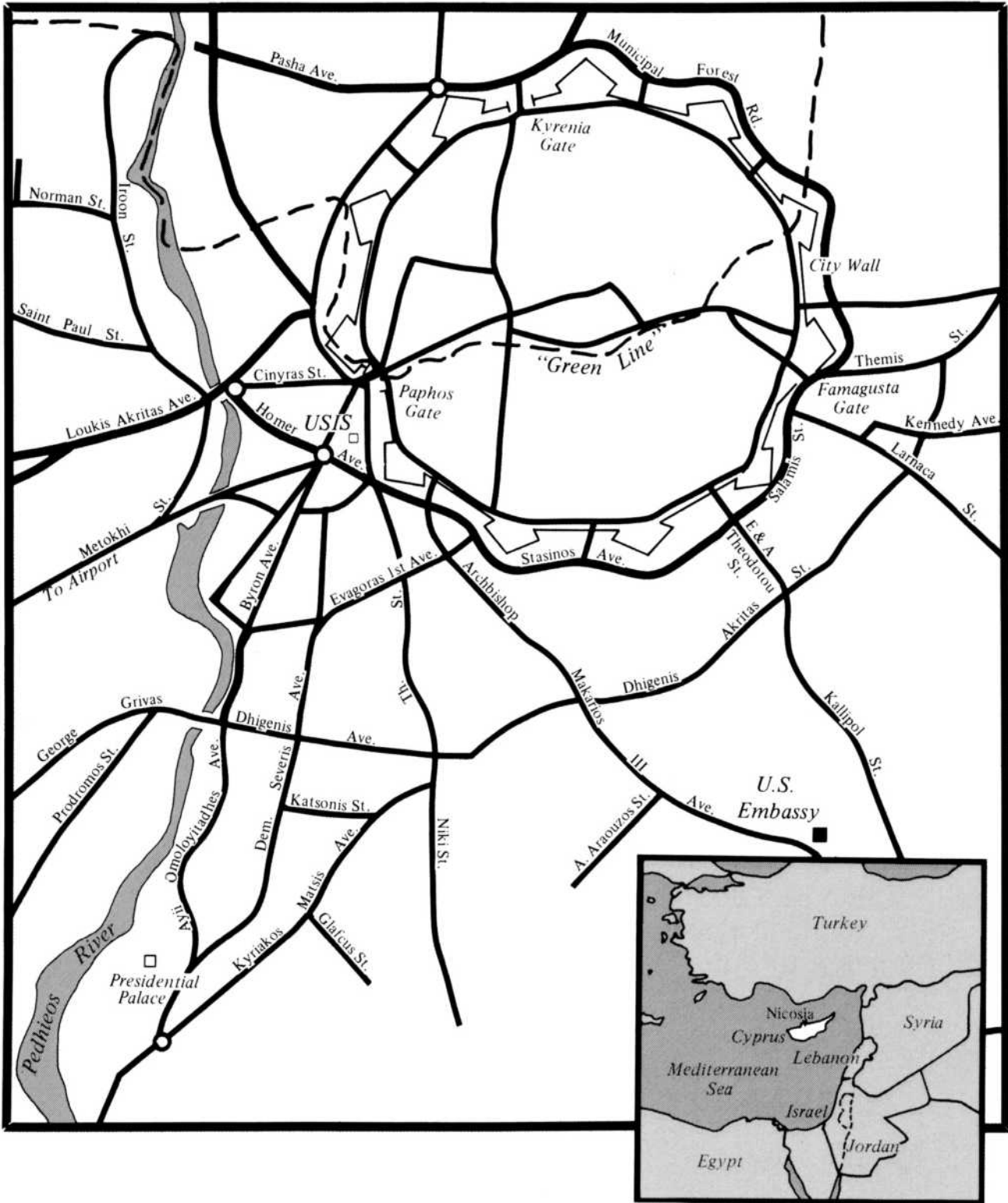
*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Dedijer, Vladimir. *The Yugoslav Auschwitz & the Vatican: The Croation Massacre of the Serbs During WWII*. Translated by Harvey Kendall. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 10992.

Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, 1992. London: Europa Publications, Ltd., 1992.



Nicosia, Cyprus

CYPRUS

Republic of Cyprus

Major Cities:

Nicosia, Limasso

Other Cities:

Famagusta, Kyrenia, Larnaca, Paphos, Salamis

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated September 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Cyprus has been divided since July 1974, when Turkey intervened militarily following a coup d'etat instigated by the military junta in Greece. The two Cypriot communities have lived separate existences since the outbreak of intercommunal trouble in 1963. Nearly all members of the Turkish Cypriot community live in the northern section of the island, while almost all Greek Cypriots are located in the south which is under the control of the Government of Cyprus. The 108-mile east-to-west "green line" between the two communities constitutes a buffer zone under the control of the United Nations Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP). There is essentially no movement of goods, per-

sons, or services between the two parts of the island.

Since the 1960's, the United States has supported efforts under U.N. auspices for a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus problem. Several sets of negotiations and initiations have been proposed. Because of changes in Cyprus developments, travelers going to Nicosia may want to update the more pertinent parts of this report by contacting either the State Department's Office of Southern European Affairs (EUR/SE), or the Embassy.

MAJOR CITIES

Nicosia

Nicosia, estimated combined population 195,000, has been the capital of Cyprus since the 7th century A.D., and is the political and administrative center of the island. It is also located in the geographic center of the island on a broad plain, at the site of one of the "city-kingdoms" of antiquity, Ledra, which today lends its name to the town's main shopping area.

Nicosia has spread far outside its ancient but still intact city walls. Modern flats and offices and attrac-

tive villas characterize the newer parts of the town.

Food

Local food shops are well stocked with domestic products and imports from Great Britain, Western Europe, and some from the United States. Imported items are more expensive than comparable items in the United States.

Beef, veal, pork, mutton, lamb, and chicken are always available. Domestic meats are sold freshly butchered. Since meat is not graded, careful selection of cuts is necessary. Fresh fish is surprisingly limited in supply; mullet, sea bass, swordfish and squid are the principal varieties on the market.

Frozen fish, shrimp and cod, as well as canned seafood such as oil or water-packed tuna, salmon and mussels are sold. Trout farms in the Troodos Mountains produce fresh and smoked fish, which is sold in stores in the city. There are numerous fish taverns and restaurants which offer both domestic and imported fish. Imported butter and margarine are stocked, as are fresh, powdered, evaporated, and condensed milk, and fresh cream. Pasteurized fresh milk is readily obtainable. Domestic olive oil is of good quality and not expensive. Cyprus cheeses, in most cases from

goat's milk, are popular with Americans. The selection of imported cheeses is limited and often unpredictable in supply. English and Irish Cheddar and English Stilton are good and inexpensive. Imported French cheeses are expensive.

Fruits are varied, delicious, and reasonably priced in season. Cyprus grows an abundant winter-long supply of oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, lemons, and, to a lesser extent, avocados and apples. During the long summer, a variety of fresh fruit is available, such as watermelons, cantaloupes, cherries, apricots, plums, figs, pears, peaches, strawberries, nectarines, apples, pomegranates, and grapes. Good stocks of spinach, lettuce, cabbage, green beans, broad beans, chard, carrots, broccoli, mushrooms, celery, and green peppers are usually available.

Eggplant and artichokes in season are abundant and inexpensive. Asparagus is available in season but is expensive. Onions, tomatoes, summer squash, zucchini, and potatoes are almost always available. Various fresh herbs and prepared spices are also sold. American made spices such as Durkee and McCormick are available but a bit expensive.

Clothing

General: Cypriots, either officially or socially, dress well. Most Cypriot women prefer to be fashionably dressed. Cypriot men follow British custom in business dress and casual attire.

Women's Clothing: A normal year-round wardrobe, with perhaps fewer winter and more summer clothes, will do. Women wear either spring coats, blazers, and topcoats or light winter coats throughout the winter. Although some Cypriot women wear fur coats, there are no reliable fur storage facilities here. Lightweight dresses are needed in summer; daytime dresses with the slightest shoulder cover are acceptable. Imports from Europe are usually up-to-date but expensive.

Bathing suits and beach accessories can be purchased locally. Shoes produced locally are plentiful but can be more expensive than those made in the states. Shoes are also imported from Europe. Quality ranges from fine to poor; styles are current. Good quality leather goods are made here.

Men's Clothing: Men wear cotton or wool suits all year round. Sweaters or jackets are useful in the winter. Suits made of washable cotton or cotton-synthetic mixtures are the most practical for summer. Short sleeved shirts are also worn in the summer months. In summer, shorts are worn at home, for sports, and on informal social occasions. Men's custom-made business suits of fine British worsteds, are moderately expensive. Factory-made suits are cheaper, but are not always well-tailored. A variety of shirts, neckties, socks and underwear is available at fairly reasonable prices. There are good quality shoes available, but they are expensive. Men needing wider or narrower than average sizes may have difficulty being fitted.

Children's Clothing: Fine cotton or woolen fabrics cost more here than in the U.S. Children need warm indoor clothing and night-wear because houses and tile floors may be chilly. Clothing, shoes, and accessories for infants are much more expensive than in the United States, but all necessary items are obtainable here. However, local cribs, playpens and car seats do not meet U.S. safety standards.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Among the better known cosmetics sold on the island are Clinique, Elizabeth Arden, Revlon, Helena Rubenstein, Lancome and Lancaster. American brands sold here are not made in the United States and are not always of the same quality. Cosmetics are more expensive here than in the United States.

Retail markets carry a good selection of very reasonably priced local

wines and liquors. Imported liquors are expensive.

Local pharmacies, open day and night, carry complete stocks of medical supplies and drugs, including children's pharmaceuticals. These items are normally British brand name pharmaceuticals.

Basic Services: Good quality shoe repair and dry cleaning services are available and moderately priced. Although laundries do acceptable work, they are expensive. You will find a good choice of barber and beauty shops.

Religious Activities

The principal Christian religion of Cyprus is Greek Orthodox. The Turkish Cypriot community is predominately Sunni Moslem. The following churches conduct services in English and are attended by the American and other communities:

- Nicosia Community Church (Interdenominational Protestant)
- St. Paul's Anglican Church
- Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church
- Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Interdenominational Congregation (Russian Cultural Center Building)
- The Church of Jesus Christ (L.D.S.)
- Even though the Jewish community numbers about 200, a synagogue has not been established. In Nicosia, services celebrating Jewish high holidays are held at the Israeli Embassy.

There are other church services, both Protestant and Catholic, on the U.N. base.

Education

The Montessori Centre: The Montessori Centre, opened in September 1993, is a preschool for ages 2 through 6. The school utilizes Dr.

Maria Montessori's philosophies, methods and materials. The two teachers received their Montessori training in London. Winter and summer uniforms are encouraged. The school charges CP 60 per month and operates from September through July. The school is located at 20 Dorieon St. Ayias Andreas, Nicosia. Tel. 454038..

The Romanos Nursery School:

The Romanos Nursery School is a private English speaking nursery school in Nicosia. They accept children ages 2 through 6. The school has good quality instructional supplies and a nice area for playing. The older children are taught numbers, letters and are prepared for reading. The school is located at 15 Romanos St. Tel. 454878

Wee Care Nursery School: The Wee Care Nursery School was founded by an American in 1983. Affiliated with the American Academy school in Nicosia, Wee Care offers a full preschool curriculum with Christian religious values and beliefs. The school is located at 17 Delphon St., Nicosia. Tel. 462863.

Highgate Primary School: The Highgate Primary School is an English school, offering programs for children two to eleven. The school has special programs for gifted learners and children with learning disabilities. Winter and summer uniforms are required. Some grades have a waiting list. The school is located at 17 Heroes Ave., Ayios Andreas, Nicosia. Tel. 462027/499145.

American International School In Cyprus: The American International School in Cyprus was established by International Schools Services in September 1987. An American based curriculum is offered to students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve, with a boarding unit for students in grades nine through twelve. In 1992, the school was purchased by the owner of American schools in Cairo and Kuwait.

The facilities of the school include a modern library, computer and science laboratories, art, ceramics and photography rooms, a swimming pool, tennis and volleyball courts, and recreation, dining, audiovisual areas, and boarding facilities.

- **Calendar:** The 180 day school year commences in late August, ends in mid-June, and is divided into two semesters. The school is closed during a two to three week winter holiday and a one week spring break in March.

- **Academic Program:** The academic program of AISC is organized into three divisions, the elementary school (pre-kindergarten through grade 4), the middle school (grades 5-8), and the high school (grades 9-12).

- **Elementary School:** The curriculum at the elementary level is integrated through a single homeroom teacher for reading, English, math, science, and social studies. Additional instruction is provided by specialists in physical education, music, art, computers, and foreign language. The style of instruction is hands-on, exploratory, and participatory.

- **Middle School:** The curriculum at the middle school level is delivered through a semi-departmentalized structure. The English and social studies classes are integrated and usually are taught by the same teacher. In addition to English/social studies, all middle school students are enrolled in mathematics, science, and physical education. Each student is also enrolled in either a foreign language, one of the special classes in ESL or the learning center.

- **High School:** A selection of required and elective courses are designed to prepare students for a wide range of options upon graduation. AISC requires 22 units of credit for either a college prep or general high school diploma.

- **Faculty:** All teachers are experienced in American and interna-

tional education. Many teachers are recruited from the United States to fill selected vacancies and hold advanced degrees. All faculty are active, participating members of the school community and sponsor after school and weekend activities.

- **Library:** The school library contains over 10,000 volumes and periodicals. Word processing, CD ROM electronic references, and a reference library room are available for student use before, during and after school hours.

- **International Baccalaureate:** The International Baccalaureate program, initiated in 1993, is a two year pre-university course, designed to facilitate the mobility of students and to promote international understanding. The comprehensive course of study for the Diploma is designed to provide students with a balanced education. Students holding the IB Diploma can be accepted by universities and other institutions of higher education in more than 65 countries.

- **ESL (English as a Second Language):** The objective of the ESL program is to provide intensive English instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, allowing non-English speaking students to attend the school and to quickly become a part of everyday learning and activities.

- **Activities:** A variety of after school activities is available for students in grades 1-12. Students choose from such activities as volleyball, bowling, swimming, soccer, basketball, cross country, track and field, tennis, fine arts festival, student council, yearbook, Boy Scouts, weight training, charity fashion show, academic games, chess club, talent show, geography club, drama, ice skating, arts and crafts, gymnastics, horseback riding, newspaper, choir, and band.

- **Computers:** All students, grades 1-12, use computers. The newest technology allows the students to use computers as an everyday tool.

The school's library uses CD ROM information access.

AISC is a member of the Middle States Accreditation Association, EMAC (Eastern Mediterranean Activities Conference), the Near East South Asia (NESA) Council of Overseas Schools, and the National Honor Society of Secondary Schools. It is also affiliated with the International Baccalaureate organization.

Senior Seminar is a required course for all seniors. A Senior Research Project is required for graduation.

The following must be completed before admission to the school is granted:

- Complete and return an application form
- Furnish records/transcript from previous school
- Present themselves for a formal interview with the headmaster
- Sit for placement exams, if requested
- Boarding students must complete a separate application form, which includes recommendations from previous teachers

If there are any other questions, you may address them to:

Headmaster, AISC
PO Box 3947
Nicosia, Cyprus

The English School: The English School was founded in 1900. The school is similar to a "selective grammar school" in England in its academic and out-of-class programs. It is coeducational with students aged 11-18, all pupils being admitted by selective and competitive examination.

The school year is from mid September to late June, with 2-week holidays at Christmas and Greek Orthodox Easter. The mailing address is:

The English School
P.O. Box 3575
Nicosia, Cyprus

The Falcon School: The Falcon School is an educational foundation offering a continuous education for girls and boys aged 4½-18. It has facilities for studying languages, the Sciences, the Arts, music and a wide range of sports. The language of instruction is English.

The school year begins in Early September and ends in late June. An entrance test and an interview is required prior to admission. The mailing address is:

The Falcon School
P.O. Box 3640
Nicosia, Cyprus

The Junior School: The Junior School was established in 1944. Children are admitted to the school between the ages of 4 and 12. The curriculum and teaching methods are the same as would be found in the United Kingdom. There is a British Headmaster and the teachers are trained and qualified in the United Kingdom.

The school year begins in September and ends in June. School uniforms are required. The mailing address is:

The Junior School
P.O. Box 3903
Nicosia, Cyprus

Sports

Cyprus offers a variety of opportunities for participant and spectator sports. Beaches can easily be reached from Nicosia by private car. Bus transportation to the beaches is available, and "service taxis" may be shared at a nominal cost. Taxi service between Nicosia and other cities on the island is regularly available. Sports equipment and clothing of all kinds is available but expensive.

Swimming: The proximity of the sea and the very hot summers drive most people in Cyprus to the water. The south coast is less than an hour

away from Nicosia and has good beaches. It is also possible to join sports clubs or health clubs at some hotels in Nicosia which includes use of their swimming pools.

Scuba Diving: Scuba tanks and equipment can be rented and filled locally, but if you have your own, bring them. Cost of locally made equipment is comparable to that in the United States.

Water Skiing: Water skiing is becoming more popular in Cyprus. It is best at Larnaca (45 minutes from Nicosia), but the sea is sometimes very choppy. Water skis are sold in Cyprus but at prices higher than in the United States.

Horseback Riding: The Lapatsa sports complex, a 15-20 minute drive south of Nicosia, offers horseback riding lessons and trail riding. A hard hat and riding boots are required.

Windsurfing: One of the most challenging and interesting sports in Cyprus is windsurfing. There are numerous beaches around the island with suitable conditions. Windsurfing is a good family sport. It is easily learned and requires few facilities. Equipment is available locally, but at prices higher than the United States.

Skiing: Snow skiing in Cyprus has developed in recent years. Simple skiing is done from the beginning of January to the end of March on the slopes of Mount Olympus, a one and one-half hour drive from Nicosia. Several short trails, one of which is groomed, are available for cross-country skiing.

The Cyprus Ski Club, located at Mount Olympus, offers the following facilities:

- Permanent and temporary memberships
- Four electrically driven "T"-bar ski lifts
- A cross-country skiing track

- A ski shop with ski equipment
- Ski instruction by qualified instructors

Golf: A new golf course opened in 1993, near the town of Paphos about 2 hours from Nicosia, but is extremely expensive. Golf may be played at the British bases if you join the golf course.

Tennis: Tennis is popular and facilities are good. Periodic tournaments are held at local clubs.

Hunting: Hunting is limited to hares and partridges. The hunting season established by the government varies from year to year. During the season, hunting is permitted only on Wednesdays and Sundays. The number of licensed Cypriot hunters is quite large in proportion to the amount of game available.

Fishing: Although fish are extremely scarce in the coastal waters, fishing with spear and snorkel can be most interesting. At some distance from the coast, there is good deep sea fishing; boats can be rented. Shoreline fishing would not satisfy the serious angler. There is no river or stream fishing, but shoreline fishing in some reservoirs has been reported to be good.

Spectator sports include:

Horseracing: The Nicosia horseracing season is nearly year round. Associate membership is open to Americans for a modest fee. The track has photo finish and an automatic tote board.

Basketball: There are several American basketball players on teams here in Cyprus. Local as well as visiting teams are popular.

Soccer: There are four divisions of soccer teams playing all over the island of Cyprus. Soccer is the most popular sport among Cypriots.

Gymnasiums: Several well-equipped gyms, offering both weightlifting and aerobics programs, are present and have reasonable prices.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Picnics, sight-seeing, and camping are popular pastimes in Cyprus. A wide variety of old castles, monasteries, and ancient ruins are available to be explored.

Kyrenia lies 16 miles north of Nicosia. A 7th century Byzantine castle, which also served the Venetians in the 15th century, overlooks the picturesque harbor. There are three castles on the Kyrenia Mountain Range which provide a beautiful view of the northern coast of Cyprus.

Famagusta, once one of the main port cities of Cyprus, is about 40 miles east of Nicosia on Famagusta Bay. Its center is in a well-preserved Venetian walled city. Legend has it that the citadel which overlooks the Bay of Famagusta was the setting of Shakespeare's "Othello."

To the north of Famagusta is the biblical port of Salamis where St. Paul entered Cyprus on his evangelical tour. Most of this ancient port is now submerged and the site offers a challenge to the snorkeler who might be interested in underwater archaeology.

Larnaca is an active seaport located on Larnaca Bay about 30 miles southeast of Nicosia. Its salt lake is a winter haven for large flocks of flamingos. There is a monastery, churches and museums located in and around Larnaca.

Limassol lies approximately 50 miles southwest of Nicosia on Akrotiri Bay. Seven miles west of Limassol is the tower of Kolossi built in the 15th Century by the Knights of St. John Hospitaler. The ruins of Curium, an Achaean religious and political center of the 2nd century B.C., include remains of the Temple of Apollo and a beautiful stadium. It houses some Roman administrative and bathing facilities, fine mosaics and other ruins, including a fairly well-preserved Roman theater, sometimes put to contemporary use.

Paphos, off whose shores legend says Aphrodite arose from the sea foam, lies on the west coast. The scenic route to Paphos from Nicosia along the south shore comprises the grand tour of many of the archaeological high spots in Cyprus. The "Fontana Amorosa" (Love's Spring), in the north part of Paphos, was a source of poetic inspiration during the classical age. It was said that whoever drank from it would fall in love.

The cool, pine-forested Troodos Mountains, a 90-minute drive from Nicosia, offer relief from the heat in the summer and skiing in the winter. In the Troodos Mountains in the Paphos district, lies Kykko Monastery. It contains the cherished icon of the Virgin Mary painted by St. Luke. Not far from the monastery is a beautiful valley of 30,000 cedars.

Archaeological Sites: The numerous archaeological sites on Cyprus are nearly all open to the public. All digs are under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Cyprus Department of Antiquities, and expeditions from other nations are often at work there. Some sites charge a nominal entrance fee; at others, you may wander at will, picnic on or near the site, and enjoy a freedom unknown at archaeological sites in other countries. Guidebooks available in Cyprus and brochures published by the Cyprus Museum give details of all the antiquities.

Entertainment

Most cinemas in Nicosia are air-conditioned. They generally show first-run U.S. or British films. Admission is reasonably priced.

The Nicosia Municipal Theater has operas, concerts, plays and ballets.

Cyprus has a permanent, Government-sponsored national theater whose repertory consists of international and Greek plays, the vast majority performed in Greek. There are also private theatrical companies with a similar repertory. No opera or professional symphony orchestra exists, but occasionally foreign concert artists, symphony



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Seascape of Kyrenia, Cyprus

orchestras, or popular music ensembles visit the island.

Night club entertainment exists in limited scope with a number of popular discotheques.

In addition to the restaurants offering standard and European cooking and atmosphere, less expensive and simpler tavernas serve Cypriot dishes, as well as those typical of the Near East. Most Americans like Cypriot food.

Most types of photographic film are sold locally, although it is rather expensive. Facilities for developing and printing black-and-white and color film are adequate for all but color slides. Camera and photographic equipment sold in local shops is reasonably priced. The amateur photographer will find interesting subject matter in the varied landscape and local color of the island. During seven or eight

months of the year, light conditions are excellent.

Social Activities

The American Women's Club is an active body open to all women in Cyprus. Its purpose is to promote friendship among American, Cypriot, and other foreign women.

It sponsors monthly programs of interest to the membership and organizes parties and fund-raising activities for charity. Activities include informal discussion groups, craft demonstrations, cooking classes, and tours to archaeological sites. This group is active in welcoming new arrivals, providing information on local shopping, sight-seeing, schools, and any additional information helpful to settling in.

Limassol

Limassol, with a population of 155,000, is on Akrotiri Bay, about 50

miles southwest of Nicosia. In this seaport city, the marriage of Richard the Lion-Hearted and his hard-won Berengaria of Navarre was celebrated with her coronation and dancing in the streets. Seven miles west of Limassol is the tower of Kolossi, built in the 15th century by the Knights of St. John Hospitale. The ruins of Curium, an Achaean religious and political center of the second century B.C., are a few miles west of Kolossi. This site includes remains of the Temple of Apollo and a stadium. Curium, with its superb Greco-Roman theater, is thought to have been founded by the Greeks; in the early centuries A.D., it housed some Roman administrative and bathing facilities, found in recent excavations. Some fine mosaics and other ruins, including a fairly well-preserved Roman theater sometimes put to contemporary use, have been unearthed.

Limassol is famed for its traditions and celebrations—an annual wine

festival, the pre-Lenten carnival—and is rapidly developing as a tourist center. Hotels and apartment structures are being built close to the new harbor, and restaurants, *tavernas*, and nightclubs are opening up here in ever-increasing numbers.

The Logos School of English Education is a coeducational institution in Limassol for grades kindergarten through 12. Founded in 1973, the school employs a combined U.S. and U.K. curriculum. There are also facilities for boarding and a planned seven-day program for boarders. The mailing address is P.O. Box 1075, Limassol, Cyprus.

OTHER CITIES

FAMAGUSTA, once one of the main port cities of Cyprus, with a population of about 28,000, is 40 miles east of Nicosia on Famagusta Bay. Its center is in a well-preserved Venetian walled city. Legend has it that the citadel which overlooks the bay was the setting for Shakespeare's *Othello*. The beautiful sand beaches and good hotels all along the shore give Famagusta (in Greek, Ammochostos) its name, which means "sand-hidden." New Famagusta (Varasha) is now deserted, in the middle of a Turkish military zone.

Further north from Famagusta and Salamis in the Kyrenia Range is Kantara Castle, 2,068 feet above sea level. "Kantara" means bridge in Arabic. The castle was named either by the Arab invaders or by Maronites from Lebanon who allegedly settled in that part of the island. Some say it was so named because its setting looks like an arch. This beautiful spot commands excellent views of the sea on both sides and long stretches of plain all around it. Both the summer resort, two miles from the castle, and the young forest in the district are called Kantara after the castle.

KYRENIA, a city of 14,000 inhabitants, is 15 miles north of Nicosia. A

seventh-century Byzantine castle, which also served the Venetians in the 15th century, overlooks the picturesque harbor. The city is dominated by the Kyrenia Range and the Castle of St. Hilarion, built in 1228 on a mountain peak 2,200 feet above sea level and said to have been a source of inspiration for Walt Disney's *Snow White*.

LARNACA is an active seaport with a population of approximately 69,000, situated on Larnaca Bay, about 30 miles southeast of Nicosia. Its salt lake is a winter haven for large flocks of flamingos. Belief here is that Lazarus came to Larnaca after his resurrection, and was later consecrated as the district's first bishop. The nearby Tekke of Umm Haram, a beautiful mosque built on the spot where the Prophet Mohammed's stepmother is said to have died, is a holy place to all Muslims. A new international airport near the city, and the reconstructed harbor, with its deep-water berths, have increased the popularity of Larnaca as a resort. Hotels and apartment buildings are continually under construction here. The American Academy on Gregory Afxentiou Avenue, in operation since 1908, serves an international student body and follows a U.S., U.K., and Greek Cypriot curriculum.

Twenty-five miles east of Larnaca is Ayia Napa, a small town with some of the best beaches in Cyprus. The town centers around a fine old monastery. Nearby are several coves with white sand beaches. The area is well developed for tourism. Good hotels abound and there are many apartments hotels and vacation apartments that can be rented short term. Aquatic sports facilities are good.

PAPHOS, from whose shores Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, is said to have risen from the sea foam, lies on the west littoral. It has about 40,000 inhabitants. The scenic route to Paphos from Nicosia, along the south shore, comprises the grand tour of many of the principal archaeological spots in Cyprus. The Fontana Amorosa (Love's Spring),

also known as the Baths of Aphrodite, in the north part of Paphos, is about half a mile from the sea. The spring was a source of poetic inspiration during the classical age, and it was claimed that whoever drank from it would fall in love. At Paphos, Christianity was introduced to Cyprus with the conversion by St. Paul of the Roman governor, Sergius Paulus. The pillar on which Paul was tied to receive the 39 lashes still stands in Paphos. In the Troodos Mountains in the Paphos district, Kykko Monastery contains the cherished icon of the Virgin Mary painted by St. Luke. Warm hospitality is always extended to visitors. Not far from the monastery is a beautiful valley of 30,000 cedars.

The Anglo American International School, for pre-kindergarten through grade 13, is located in Paphos. A coeducational day school with boarding facilities, Anglo American was founded in 1980 and is accredited by the Cypriot Ministry of Education. The school offers a U.S. and U.K. curriculum. The mailing address is 22-26 Hellas Avenue, Paphos, Cyprus.

Just north of Famagusta, also on the bay, is the biblical port of **SALAMIS**, where St. Paul entered Cyprus on his evangelical tour. Most of this ancient port is now submerged, and the site, a fine swimming location, offers a challenge to the snorkeler who might be interested in underwater archaeology. The Greco-Roman ruins here include excellently preserved Corinthian pillars and some fine, although headless, caryatids and statues.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, after Sicily and Sardinia, with an area of 3,572

square miles. It is in the eastern Mediterranean basin, 44 miles south of Turkey, 64 miles west of Syria, and 150 miles north of the Nile Delta. The island has a maximum length of 150 miles from northeast to southwest and a maximum width of 60 miles from north to south. Two mountain ranges dominate the landscape. The narrow and largely barren Kyrenia Range in the north (maximum elevation 3,360 feet) rises almost directly up from the northern coastline and follows it from east to west for some 80 miles. The forest covered Troodos Range rises in the southwestern sector of the island, culminating in Mount Olympus at an altitude of 6,400 feet. Between the two ranges, extending from Morphou Bay in the west to Famagusta Bay in the east, lies the Mesaoria ("between the mountains")—a broad, fertile, coastal plain which produces most of the island's cereal grains and other crops. Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, is on the Mesaoria. Throughout the long summer the plain is arid and parched, but in the winter and spring it is carpeted with a lush growth of young wheat and barley.

The climate of Cyprus may be compared to that of South Central Texas. Cyprus has hot, dry, dusty summers and fairly cool, damp winters. Nicosia's maximum mean temperature is approximately 80°F, while the minimum mean temperature is 50°F. From mid-June to mid-September, the temperature sometimes exceeds 100°F. After sundown, it usually falls to 60°F to 70°F. The summer heat is tolerable because humidity is usually low and high temperatures are often tempered by westerly winds. Nicosia's summer weather is generally more comfortable than in the seaside towns, where humidity is higher though temperatures are lower. Because rain falls almost exclusively from December through March, water may be rationed in Nicosia in the summer. Winters are usually cool and damp. On the whole, the climate can be characterized as Mediterranean, healthy, and quite enjoyable.

Population

Cyprus has had no official census since 1973. Before 1974, its population was estimated at 630,000 persons, of whom almost 80 percent were ethnic Greek and 18 percent ethnic Turk. The remainder were mainly Armenians and Maronites, with a few Latins. The population estimate for July 2001 is 763,000. The foreign population in Cyprus includes some 1,200 U.N. troops, a resident British presence of over 13,000 (including retired persons and troops in the Sovereign Base Areas), and some 1,000 American citizens.

The population is divided physically and culturally into two quite different societies—Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot. Each maintains its distinct identity based on customs, religion, language, and ethnic allegiance. Historically, this population was intermingled among six larger towns and over 600 small villages. One of the results of intercommunal violence during the 1960's was the enclavement of most Turkish Cypriots and, after the 1974 war, the physical separation of the two communities by the present cease-fire line.

Communal Institutions

The 1960 Constitution created a presidential system, with a Greek Cypriot President and Turkish Cypriot Vice President elected by their respective communities. As part of a number of safeguards designed to protect the rights of the Turkish Cypriot minority, the Vice President was given veto rights over defense, foreign affairs, and security matters. The Turkish Cypriots were also assured a representation of 30 percent in the civil service, and in the unicameral legislature which was to consist of 35 Greek Cypriot and 15 Turkish Cypriot members. The same ratio obtained in the 10-member Council of Ministers, three of whose members were Turk-

ish Cypriots, and one of whom had to hold the Defense, Interior, or Foreign Affairs portfolio. The constitutional system broke down with the outbreak of intercommunal fighting in late 1963, which led to the establishment of Turkish Cypriot enclaves.

In the summer of 1974, a coup d'état backed by the military junta in Athens led to Turkey intervening militarily and the occupation of some 37 percent of the island's territory by the Turkish Army. In November, 1983, the Turkish Cypriot Administration declared itself the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". The "TRNC" is recognized only by Turkey.

Under the auspices of the U.N. Secretary General, intercommunal negotiations have been conducted at various stages since 1968, with the goal of trying to resolve differences between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. The latest round of talks led to a draft "Set of Ideas." There is also a focus on developing ways of building confidence between the two communities. The basic issues in the talks center around security, the nature and structure of the federal constitution, territory, refugees, and settlers.

The Government of Cyprus has a Presidential system with a unicameral legislature, the House of Representatives. The President, Glafkos Ioannou Klirides, elected for a five-year term, was last elected in February 1998. The House was last elected in May 2001. The Greek Cypriot political scene is dominated by four main parliamentary parties. The oldest established Greek Cypriot party is the Communist party (AKEL), which currently has 20 of the 56 elected members of the legislature. The center-right Democratic Rally Party (DISY) holds 19 seats, the centrist Democratic Party (DIKO) holds 9 seats, and the Socialist party (EDEK) has 4 seats. The current President was a founding member of DISY party. The Democratic Party supported his

candidacy in the final round of the elections.

There are also four main Turkish Cypriot political parties. The Democratic Party (center-right) and the Republican Turkish Party (left-wing) formed a coalition following the December 12, 1993 election. Together the two parties have 19 seats in the 50-seat "assembly." The National Unity Party (right-wing), has 24 seats, and the Communal Liberation Party (center-left) has 7 seats. The "TRNC President," Rauf Denktas, was last elected in April 2000. Although the "constitution" nominally gives him little power, he is generally considered the most important and powerful political figure in northern Cyprus.

Arts, Science, and Education

Prehistoric pottery and sculpture have been excavated throughout Cyprus. The making of pottery and other folk arts are still practiced on the island. Embroidery is one of the most developed of these arts.

The revival of Cypriot painting began toward the end of the British rule. Many artists still show the effects of classical European training, although others reflect the Byzantine tradition. Younger artists show a definite leaning to American "hard edge" and other modern schools.

Cypriots generally attend universities in Greece, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and the United States. There are many local colleges targeting foreign students and the new University of Cyprus opened its doors in Fall 1993.

Commerce and Industry

The island's division into two economic areas disrupted the country's economic unity and overall productive capacity. While the economy in the area controlled by the Government of Cyprus (GOC) has devel-

oped and grown, the economy in the Turkish Cypriot-controlled north has been much weaker. A lack of technical expertise, foreign exchange reserves, and international financing have been inhibiting factors in this part of the island.

Care of the refugee population took first priority in the years immediately after 1974. Satisfactory housing facilities were provided to displaced persons under the GOC low-cost housing and self-help schemes, partially financed by the U.S. Government through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). U.S. grant assistance for refugee programs between 1974 and 1992 totalled over 200 million dollars. Another 65 million dollars has been provided through the Cyprus-America Scholarship Program, which was established in 1981.

In 2000, about 3.6 percent of the economically active population were unemployed and economic growth was identified at 2.2 percent. A political settlement of the Cyprus problem would likely greatly enhance the viability of the island and begin to bridge the disparity of economic opportunity between the two major communities. In 2000, estimated per-capita GDP was \$16,000 in the Greek Cypriot community and \$5,300 in the Turkish Cypriot community.

Clothing, citrus fruit, potatoes, vegetables, footwear, and vine products make up the bulk of exports. Main imports include food and feed grains, transport and industrial machinery, electronic equipment, and petroleum products. "Invisible" foreign exchange earnings, especially from tourism, remain strong and the Cyprus pound has been relatively stable. Although economic problems are by no means completely solved, economic prosperity is evident in all sectors of the Greek Cypriot economy. In 1988, Cyprus began a 15-year transition to a Customs Union with the European Union (EU).

Transportation

Local

Bus and taxi service are the only forms of local public transportation. Buses service is not developed in many localities and can be inconvenient and crowded. In the major towns of Cyprus, excellent taxi service is always available at moderate prices.

Scheduled taxi transportation between cities, on a shared-occupancy basis, is offered at a reasonable fixed charge per passenger. Automobiles, with or without chauffeurs, can be rented reasonably by the day, week, or month.

Regional

Cyprus Airways, Olympic Airways, British Airways and many other national airlines operate flights in and out of Larnaca International Airport to Athens, Tel. Aviv, Cairo, Frankfurt, and London, as well as to most other major European cities. Ships carrying cargo and passengers to Cyprus call at Larnaca and Limassol. Auto ferries are available between Piraeus (Athens port) and Limassol.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service is very reliable. Dial calls can be made to all the cities and villages. Cyprus has telephone, telegraph, and telex communications with all parts of the globe, as well as telephone and telegraph service with ships at sea. The International Subscriber Dialing (ISD) system was installed in 1976 and services the United States, Greece, and 104 other countries. Telephone calls to Europe, the United States, and other countries served are clear and uninterrupted. A satellite station has been installed in the south and is operational. The Turkish Cypriot telephone system is entirely separate from the CYTA (Cyprus Telecommunications Authority) network. Telephone calls to the north can only be made to a very few stations still linked to CYTA lines.

Radio and TV

Radio and TV reception is good. BBC broadcasts daily in the regular medium wave (AM) band. A short-wave radio is recommended for picking up other foreign and VOA broadcasts. The British Forces Broadcasting Service offers news, popular music, and some BBC programs. Cyprus Radio broadcasts in Greek, Turkish, and English. It offers news in English and some BBC programs from London.

Television service covers the entire island, and transmissions are in color. News and current events programs are broadcast in Greek, Turkish, and English. The news in English is limited to a 5 minute telecast once every evening. Many TV features are U.S. or British movies or series with Greek subtitles.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Nicosia's one English-language daily (except Monday) is the 12-15 page *Cyprus Mail*. The *International Herald Tribune* reaches Nicosia readers a day after publication. Subscriptions to the European edition of the *Stars and Stripes* are also available. Many local bookshops carry foreign periodicals, technical journals, and novels in English. The *Cyprus Weekly* newspaper appears every Friday in English. There is also a weekly English-language newspaper published in the Turkish Cypriot community, *Cyprus Today*.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Nicosia has specialists in obstetrics; surgery; ear, nose and throat; urology; orthopedics; and internal medicine. Nicosia has a number of small, private clinics in which Americans have been hospitalized or delivered babies. Cases requiring unusual diagnostic facilities may be evacuated to London or the United States. Medicine and laboratory services can usually be obtained locally. If you require special medication, however, bring a supply.

Optical care is generally quite good in Cyprus. Most lens prescriptions can be filled here. If your prescription is unusually complicated, bring spare glasses. Both hard and soft contact lenses are available at lower than U.S. prices.

Several good dentists, trained in Europe and America, practice in Nicosia. They use modern equipment and are highly recommended by Americans who have been treated by them. Fees are reasonable.

Community Health

Community and public sanitation standards, although lower than in the United States, are much higher than in many countries in the area. They may be compared favorably to those in most countries of southern Europe. Sanitary inspection laws are not always stringently enforced, however. Except at the top restaurants and markets, standards of sanitation can be suspect.

Window screening is generally uncommon. Flies and mosquitoes are common pests and can sometimes interfere with outdoor activities. Garbage is collected twice weekly.

Local health authorities consider the island one of the more healthful areas of the world because of the infrequency of serious diseases. Although the ordinary diseases usually found in most countries bordering the Mediterranean do occur here, Cyprus has no unusual health problems. Some cases of typhoid are reported occasionally.

The Cyprus Government conducts energetic campaigns to encourage immunization of young persons. Pollen and dust during the hot, dry summers can be a source of discomfort to those suffering from hay fever, asthma, allergy to dust or pollen, or from any chronic condition of the upper respiratory system. Rabies is nonexistent on the island. However, hydatid disease or echinococcosis, attributed to a tapeworm harbored by dogs, occurs among local inhabitants. There are no

known cases of Americans having been infected while in Cyprus.

Preventive Measures

Children should have the DPT and measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) inoculations.

Several local dairies pasteurize milk, making it safe to drink without further treatment.

Nicosia's water is treated and considered potable, but is sometimes rationed. Most homes have storage tanks on the roofs, which are a potential source of airborne disease contamination. For this reason, most kitchen sinks have a third water tap connected directly to the city main. This water tap should be used for all drinking, ice making, and vegetable rinsing. Bottled mountain spring water is available in supermarkets at reasonable prices, or large quantities can be delivered to one's home. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly, especially when they are eaten raw.

NOTES FOR TRAVELLERS

The Cyprus Government carefully controls the exportation of antiquities. Before such items can be removed from the island, an export authorization must be obtained from the office of the Department of Antiquities at the Cyprus Museum.

No U.S. citizen needs a visa to enter Cyprus.

Regulations concerning the entry of dogs and cats include, as a general rule, a 6-month quarantine period. Exceptions to this requirement in the form of early release to home quarantine, are possible, but expensive. Dogs should be inoculated against rabies prior to arrival on Cyprus.

The unit of currency on the island is the Cyprus pound which is divided into 100 cents. Currency notes are

issued in denominations of Cyp. Pds. 20, 10, 5, and 1. Coins are minted in the value of Cyp. Pds. .50, .20, .10, .05, .02, and .01. Adequate British and Cypriot banks are on the island. The Cyprus Pound trades at around \$1.60 (January 2001) and is well backed by foreign exchange. In the north, although the Cyprus Pound and U.S. dollar are accepted in most places, the Turkish lira (TL) has been the *de-facto* medium of exchange since 1975. Commercial banking is well developed.

The metric system is now in common use in Cyprus, though more traditional forms of measurement are still encountered.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Greek Community Holidays

Jan.1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan 6	.....	Epiphany Day
Mar/Apr.	.....	Green Monday* (Beginning of Greek Orthodox Lent)
Mar. 25	.....	Greek Independence Day
Apr.1	.....	Eoka Day
Apr/May	.....	Good Friday*
Apr/May	.....	Holy Saturday*
Apr/May	.....	Easter*
Apr/May	.....	Easter Monday*
May 1.	.....	Labor Day
June/July.	.....	Holy Spirit Day*
Aug. 15	.....	Assumption Day
Oct. 1.	.....	Cyprus Independence Day
Oct. 28	.....	Ohl Day
Dec. 24.	.....	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25.	.....	Christmas Day
Dec. 26.	.....	Boxing Day

Turkish Cypriot Community

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
	.....	Ramazan Bayram*
Apr. 23	.....	Opening of the Grand National Assembly
	.....	Kurban Bairam*
May 1	.....	Labor Day
May 19	.....	Turkish Youth Day
July 20	.....	Peace and Freedom Day
July 31	.....	Birthday of the Prophet
Aug. 30	Victory Day
Oct. 29	Turkish Republic Day
Nov. 15	Republic Day of Northern Cyprus

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CZECH REPUBLIC

Major Cities:

Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Plzeň, Olomouc

Minor Cities:

České Budějovice, Frýdek-Místek, Hradec Kráové, Liberec, Pardubice, Ústí Nad Labem, Zlín

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for the Czech Republic. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Czech Republic has a rich treasure in its own history, with much of it still visible in the bridges, palaces, and streets of Prague. The legacies of Charles IV, the Holy Roman Emperor; of Jan Hus, the religious reformer; of Comenius, the educator; of King George of Podebrady, the one Czech Hussite king; of Hasek and Capek and other writers; of the composers Dvorak and Smetana; of Tomas Masaryk, the philosopher and statesman, are still alive in Prague. Few world capitals have preserved their past so visibly, and few are so picturesque.

Politically, the Czechs have endured centuries of storms and trials. The Czech Republic's people, property,

and institutions were decimated by the Thirty Years' War; were dominated by the Hapsburg Austrian Empire for 300 years; experienced a brief but brilliant period of democracy and independence from 1918 to 1938; were occupied by Hitler after the signing of the Munich Pact; had an even briefer period of independence after World War II; came under Communist control in 1948; were invaded by the Warsaw Pact in 1968 after a brief burst of freedom during the "Prague Spring"; threw off communist leadership in 1989 and elected Alexander Dubcek and Vaclav Havel to top governmental posts in the country; and welcomed 1993 by officially splitting their country into two independent states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The political, social, and economic situations here are dynamic as the country completes the dismantlement of old structures and joins the NATO alliance and prepares for EU membership, thereby consolidating the transition to a free market democracy along Western lines.

From 1918 to 1938, the U.S. was intimately involved with Czechoslovak affairs. The millions of Americans of Czech and Slovak ancestry created a special bond, and former President Woodrow Wilson played a vital role in the creation of the

Czechoslovak state. Czechoslovakia's first president, Tomas Masaryk, married an American and was a great friend of the U.S. During the Cold War, the U.S. provided political and moral support for the Charter 77 dissidents. Today, the U.S. is an active partner of the young democracy that has been reborn in this ancient land.

MAJOR CITIES

Prague

Prague is an old city; a medley of Gothic, Renaissance, baroque, and art deco architecture gives the city its particular charm and makes it one of Europe's most beautiful cities. The green of Prague's numerous parks and hills sets off its many historic buildings, making it particularly attractive in late spring, summer, and early autumn.

Prague has a population of about 1.2 million. German and English are the most widely understood foreign languages. Within the Western foreign and diplomatic communities, English, French, and German are spoken in addition to Czech. Americans are currently popular among Czechs, and the opinion that Czechs have of our culture is high.

English is rapidly becoming the most-learned language.

History

The history of Prague began in the ninth century around the castles situated atop the Hradčany and Vysehrad hills, on the left and right banks of the Vltava, that still dominate the city's skyline. A major trade center a century later, Prague achieved real prominence when King Wenceslaus I of Bohemia founded a German settlement here in 1232. As the capital of Bohemia, Prague grew in size and prosperity and became one of the most splendid cities of Europe under Emperor Charles IV in the 14th century.

For the next 300 years, Prague was the residence of the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire; in the late 16th and 17th centuries, it was an important center for science, and the home of astronomers Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) and Johannes Kepler (1571–1630). In the mid-18th century, the city was occupied by the French and Prussians and, although Prague had lost much of its importance, it remained a major cultural center. The buildings constructed at that time gave the city a distinct baroque and rococo character.

Prague was the center of Czech revival in the 19th century, and played an important role in the 1848 revolution until it was bombarded and captured by Austria. In 1918, Prague was named the capital of the newly created Czechoslovak Republic. During World War II, the city was occupied by Germans, but was liberated by Soviet troops in May 1945.

The cultural aspects of the city developed extensively between the two World Wars. The center of Prague, the city's old section, is an architectural treasure characterized by the beauty of its location on the rolling banks of the Vltava. Hradčany Castle, on the river's left bank, dominates the city. A grand structure with many wings, the castle was the former royal residence and the seat of the Czech presi-

dents. The Gothic Cathedral of St. Vitus, next to the castle, was begun in the 10th century and finally completed in 1929; it contains the tombs of many kings and emperors. There are numerous other churches and palaces in the Hradčany quarter of the city.

The best-preserved part of Old Prague is Mala Strana (lesser town), situated on the slope extending from Hradčany Castle to the river. Mala Strana is connected with Staré Město (Old Town), on the right bank of the Vltava, by the 14th-century Charles Bridge, the most beautiful of Prague's water spans. Staré Město contains the Stavovske Theater; the Clementinum Library; the Carolinum, dating to 1348 and the oldest part of Prague University; and other historic structures. Adjacent to Staré Město is the Old Synagogue, built in the 13th century, and once part of the city's Jewish ghetto. In all, Prague has 77 palaces, about 150 ancient town houses, seven summer palaces, 20 mansion homes, over 100 churches, and more than 33 former monasteries.

A number of interesting towns surround Prague. Kutná Hora is known for its architectural beauty, including the Italian Court and several buildings which are examples of medieval stone mansions. There are a castle and a spa at Poděbrady. Mladá Boleslav is the center of Czech's automobile industry, but the town also boasts a castle in its old Renaissance section. Mělník, situated at the confluence of the Vltava and Elbe Rivers, is known for its vineyards and wine harvests, as well as a baroque-adapted mansion which features a picture gallery. The town of Kladno, known for the production of iron and steel, had modernized and expanded so that it nearly reaches the village of Lidice, which was destroyed by the Nazis in 1942 and is now a memorial. Příbram, a mining town, has an outdoor mining museum and baroque buildings which are part of its famous pilgrimage.

Several towns surrounding Prague are known for their mansions. Near the town of Benešov is the impressive mansion Konopiště; there is also a baroque mansion at Veltrusy that is situated in a park; a Renaissance mansion at Nelahozeves which houses a collection of modern Czech art; and a mansion at Žleby that exhibits arts and crafts. Other towns surrounding Prague have interesting examples of homes typical of certain eras or geographic locations. The stone cottages at Trébíz near Slaný have baroque influence; typical central Bohemian wooden cottages are found in Přerov; farm buildings in Kouřim are characteristic of the Kolín district; and the wooden mill at Bláhová Lhota, preserved in its original surroundings, is now a museum. The landscape of the area surrounding Prague has inspired many composers, and the towns of Jabkenice, Vysoká, Krčovice, and Všebořice all have landmarks to this effect. Numerous battlefields also dot the area. There is a memorial at Milín which marks the place where the final shots of World War II in Europe were fired on May 11, 1945.

Utilities

Electric current is 220v, 50-cycle, AC. Voltage stabilizers are useful but not usually required for delicate electronic equipment. Surge protectors for computers and TVs/ VCRs are recommended and can be purchased locally. Cycles may vary slightly.

Food

Basic foods are regularly available in Prague. Fresh fruits and vegetables have been a problem at times, but large supermarkets offer a wide assortment of groceries, vegetables, and fruits, both local and imported. Local food stores are beginning to have a wider assortment and a more reliable supply of groceries. But don't expect to find all fruits and vegetables all the time. Items will be available for a while, then disappear, only to reappear later. The quality of both meat and vegetables may vary; milk may spoil quickly



Three bridges in Prague

Courtesy of Mira Bossowska

because it is not refrigerated during distribution.

Clothing

Though acceptable clothing can be found, and both quality and selection are getting better, you may still wish to purchase or order outside of the Czech Republic. Prices of products on the German economy are higher than in the U.S.

No unusual clothing is required for Prague. A fall and winter wardrobe suitable for damp New York weather should be satisfactory. Bring many pairs of low-heeled, perhaps crepe-soled, shoes or boots for Prague's cobblestone pavements. Overshoes, galoshes or boots, raincoats, and umbrellas are needed. Because of the soft coal used for heating in the Czech Republic, light-colored clothing requires frequent cleaning in the winter.

Supplies and Services

Basic toiletries, cosmetics, tobacco products, medicines, and household

supplies are available, either from the duty-free shops, or local stores.

Good, reasonably priced tailors and dressmakers are available in Prague. Local dry cleaning, laundry, and shoe repair services are adequate. Beauty and barbershops provide adequate service, although some women prefer to supply their own hair care products.

Repair facilities for many makes of newer automobiles, audio and video equipment, and household appliances are available. However, parts may be unavailable. Repairs can take a long time, and the quality of the work varies.

Domestic Help

Household help is particularly useful for local shopping or various errands if you know there will be a language barrier.

Qualified personnel are available, but it can sometimes be difficult to find someone who has satisfactory English skills. Minimum wages are

set by Czech regulations and are still not high by U.S. standards. In addition to wages, the employer must provide meals (or a fixed payment in lieu of them) during working hours, and must pay a 36-percent Social Security tax to cover Social Security, medical care, and sick pay. Live-in help is unusual for Prague. Employees get two to four weeks of annual leave per year, which they usually prefer to take during summer. Cash can be paid instead of vacation, by agreement. A month's probation follows hiring, and an employer or employee must give two months' notice before termination.

Religious Activities

Prague now has services in English for those of the Anglican, Baptist, Interdenominational Christian, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Jewish faiths. There are also several discussion groups in English for various religions. A listing of times and places for services can be found in the English-language weekly, the Prague Post. Czech-lan-

guage Protestant services are held in local churches. Roman Catholic Mass is said regularly in Czech in local churches, including St. Vitus Cathedral in the Prague Castle, and traditional Czech Masses are sung for religious holidays. Jewish services are held in the Old-New Synagogue in the Jewish Quarter, the Jerusalem Synagogue, and Bejt Simcha.

Education

The International School of Prague (ISP), founded in 1948, was for many years located in the U.S. Embassy. Now it is housed on a beautiful new campus in Prague 6 (an administrative district in the northwestern part of the city),

The school is governed by a nine-member board, most of which is elected by parents, but with an Embassy representative as well. The school is fully accredited by the Middle States Association in the U.S. and the European Council of International Schools. The school employs an American director, and most of the teachers are recruited from the U.S. The enrollment has grown rapidly in the last few years and now has about 600 students representing more than 60 nationalities. Grade levels offered are pre-school through grade 12 with the U.S. and the International Baccalaureate diplomas offered. Children must be 4 by September 1 to be enrolled in preschool.

The school follows a U.S.-based curriculum, enriched by international perspective and content. Re-entry into U.S. schools is generally not a problem. Facilities include a large library, two computer labs, four science labs, two gymnasiums, and a theater as well as outdoor playgrounds, sports fields, and basketball and tennis courts. No boarding facilities are available. The school has a full extracurricular activity program, which includes intramural and interscholastic sports (soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, and swimming), drama productions, student newspapers, student government, literary magazines, band, and choir. Transport to and from

school is a parental responsibility via private car, taxi, or public transportation. The school year is divided into trimesters and runs from late August to the second week of June, with a one-week vacation in October, a two- to three-week Christmas/New Year's break, a one-week winter break in February, and a week off at Easter.

An elementary school, including nursery and kindergarten, is run by the French Cultural Center in Prague. The demand for enrollment in the nursery and kindergarten often exceeds available space. Instruction is in French and follows a standard French curriculum.

There is at least one Montessori preschool.

Other options for younger children include a number of privately run English language schools, some recently opened. These schools take children as young as 18 months old until 6 or 9 years of age; others enroll children at 3 or 4 years of age until they are 18.

Special Educational Opportunities

Adults may attend Charles University in Prague. Private instruction in art and music can be arranged.

Sports

Golf courses are available. There is an excellent golf facility near Karlstejn, a beautiful palace, about 30 minutes from Prague. Outside of Prague, there are first-class 18-hole courses at Mariánské Lázně and Karlovy Vary, though they are two hours away. There is a nine-hole course at Pobebrady, and, in town, the Motol course, located on a side of a hill, is small, but challenging.

Skiing and ice skating are popular winter sports. The nearest ski slopes can be reached in a day's outing. Small hotels can accommodate overnight trips, but reservations must be made well in advance.

Skis, boots, clothing, and other equipment can be obtained both locally and from outside sources.

Used equipment is available in local markets that sell previously owned equipment.

Indoor ice skating rinks are open to the public in Prague. Weather permitting, skaters use outdoor rinks and ponds, though indoor facilities are also available and inexpensive. Skating instruction is readily available and inexpensive. Through the auspices of a local skating club, an ice skating rink is made available to the foreigners for two hours on Sundays during winter months for a reasonable fee.

Hunting and fishing have long traditions in the Czech Republic and can be excellent. Pheasants, ducks, red deer, wild boar, stag and other game is plentiful. Membership in hunting clubs, as well as individual hunts for big game, can be expensive, and those wishing to hunt must pass appropriate firearms tests. Fly fishing in the Czech Republic is very good, and licenses and permits can be arranged. Well-marked hiking trails cover the countryside. Riding horses are available. Boating on both rivers and lakes, camping with tents or trailers, and outdoor bathing are popular. Particularly for those interested in architecture, photography can be rewarding. Cycling can be very enjoyable, once you learn how to avoid the cobblestone streets. Equipment for sports and outdoor activities is available locally.

Children's sports are most easily pursued through intramural and interscholastic school programs. Some American children have participated in Czech youth sports programs, such as ice hockey, basketball, and baseball. The Czech programs tend to require almost year-round practice and can be very intense with little possibility of pursuing more than one sport in a year.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Prague is an architectural and historical gem-walking is a pleasure. Parks, both large and small, public gardens, and a zoo add to the variety of things to be admired.



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Square of Liberty in Brno, Czech Republic

Many sightseeing and picnic areas are in the immediate vicinity of Prague, and weekend excursions to castles and historic cities and sites are popular. Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Munich, and Nuremberg are each within five to six hours by car. Other European centers can be easily reached by air.

Entertainment

Prague provides a varied and entertaining musical diet. The Czech Philharmonic, one of Europe's outstanding musical organizations, performs twice a week, except in summer. During summer, the philharmonic has outdoor concerts. Light classical music is performed in Prague's public gardens. Both Western and Czechoslovak operas are performed, and some foreign operas Czech. In addition, numerous recitals and performances by the Prague Symphony, the country's second most famous orchestra, are given. The famous Prague Spring Music festival in

May boasts performers from around the world.

Numerous theatrical presentations, classical and modern, are performed, usually in Czech. Puppet shows, pantomime, and operettas are performed, as are some world-renowned theatrical performances unique to Prague, including the Black Light Theater and Magic Lantern.

Prague also has several movie theaters showing U.S., British, French, and Italian films in the original language, with Czech subtitles or dubbing. The Italian and French cultural centers have regular film programs in Italian and French.

Prague has many museums and a fine National Gallery of Art.

Spectator events include horse racing, including the famous steeplechase at Pardubice, tennis, basketball, softball, soccer, and ice

hockey. Occasionally, American athletes participate in international competitions, and some exhibition teams visit Prague.

Although it is not known for its fine cuisine, Prague has good restaurants, as do other large cities, such as Brno. Prices are considerably lower than in the U.S. and Western Europe. Although variety can be limited, new restaurants are opening seemingly every day. The variety of ethnic restaurants ranges from Indonesian to vegetarian to Thai to Chinese and Tex-Mex. In less expensive restaurants, food may be rich in fat and high in carbohydrates. Pubs also provide good food; local specialties include goulash with dumplings or potato pancakes and fried cheese or pork with rice. Several restaurants have picturesque interiors. Some provide dinner music.

Western jazz and country music are popular. Good dance music can be

found in nightclubs. Czech beer is excellent and inexpensive. Native wine is fair, and the local sparkling wines are good, but both are reasonably priced.

Social Activities

There are several American-owned restaurants and clubs in Prague that provide natural gathering places for Americans.

There is an International Women's Group, begun in 1991, that now has more than 600 members. They have a coffee meeting the last Tuesday of every month and a newcomer's coffee the second Tuesday of every month, either in the morning or the evening to accommodate members' working schedules. Membership is Kc 1,000/year. A monthly newsletter is distributed to members. The club is advertised in the local English weekly, the Prague Post.

Brno

Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic, is located in the eastern part of the country, about 120 miles southeast of Prague. Situated at the confluence of the Svatka and Svitava Rivers, it is Moravia's chief city, with a population of 392,300.

A thriving industrial center since the completion of the Brno-Vienna railway line in 1839, the city is known chiefly for its woolen industry and for the manufacture of textiles. Machinery, mostly tractors, machine tools, and armaments are also produced. The well-known Bren gun, later manufactured in England, was developed in Brno.

Tourism is important to the economy. A large international engineering trade fair is held annually in September, and other exhibitions are sponsored in winter and spring.

Brno has several institutions of higher education, including Masaryk University (founded in 1919), Beneš College of Science and Technology, the Janáček Music Conservatory, and colleges of agricul-

ture and veterinary science. Research institutes are connected with these schools.

Landmarks in the city include a 15th-century cathedral, several Gothic and baroque churches, and the old and new town halls. The Moravian Museum has an archaeological collection which is among the finest in Czech. The city also boasts an outstanding library, the Janáček Theater, a large zoo, and an ice skating stadium. Near Brno is the town of Slivovice, known for its plum brandy.

Historically, Brno was a Celtic settlement which grew up between two hills. It was part of the Bohemian kingdom until declared an imperial free city by King Wenceslaus I in 1243. Brno flourished in the 13th and 14th centuries, was besieged by the Swedes in 1645, and served as Napoleon I's headquarters during the 1805 Battle of Austerlitz. The Spielberg Castle, captured by Hapsburg forces during the Thirty Years War, became their most notorious political prison from 1740 until 1855.

Ostrava

Ostrava, located in the heart of the Czech Republic's mining and industrial regions, is 175 miles east of Prague, near the Polish border. It is the capital of the North Moravian Region. Situated near the junction of the Oder and Opava Rivers, Ostrava's major products are anthracite and bituminous coal, iron and steel, rolling stock, machinery, and ship and bridge parts. Ostrava is a regional administrative center, a road and rail hub, and the site of a large chemical industry and several hydroelectric stations.

Ostrava, founded in 1267, was formerly called Moravská. It became prominent in the Middle Ages, mostly because of its strategic location at the entrance to the Moravian lowlands. The opening of the first coal mine and the coming of the railroad brought Ostrava industrial prominence early in the 19th cen-

ture. From 1939 until 1945, Ostrava was occupied by German forces, but soon after the war ended, rapid development began. Suburbs have built up around the city, and the population has grown to 332,000.

Also a cultural and educational center, Ostrava is the site of the renowned Academy of Mining Engineering, a university, and several other technical colleges. It also has a philharmonic orchestra, professional opera, and several theaters.

Plzeň

Plzeň is another of the Czech Republic's well-known industrial cities. Located in Bohemia near the German border, Plzeň is 60 miles west of Prague. It is situated near a region of coal fields in an area where sugar beets and hops are grown. Plzeň's beer—Pilsner—has been brewed here for 700 years; it is internationally famous, and exported throughout the world. The city is also the site of the huge Skoda Works, which, under Communist rule, were nationalized and renamed the Lenin Works, and where heavy machinery, tools, automobiles, locomotives, and armaments are produced. Other industries include distilling, sugar refining, and papermaking, as well as pottery and cement production.

Plzeň's educational and cultural facilities include a medical school, a technical university, museums, and theaters. The 13th-century Gothic church of St. Bartholomew and a 16th-century Renaissance town hall are some of the historic landmarks found in the city.

Plzeň was founded in 1290 and was an important trade center. The industrialization of the city dates back to the late 19th century with the establishment of the Skoda Works. Plzeň belonged to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy until 1918, when it became part of the newly independent Czechoslovakia. Taken by German forces in 1939, it was Germany's leading armament producer during World War II, and was consequently heavily bombed



Courtesy of Melissa Doig

Royal Palace in Prague

by the Allies. Plzeň was liberated and returned to Czechoslovakia in 1945.

Today, Plzeň's population is close to 175,000.

Olomouc

Olomouc, in the northeast section of the Czech Republic, 125 miles east of Prague, was the country's second largest town until the 17th century. Although it is set in lush, green countryside, it is now an industrial city whose factories produce steel, machinery, electrical equipment, and food products—especially chocolate and candy. Olomouc is home to 105,000 residents.

The city has a university, founded in 1566, the Cyril-Methodius Theological faculty, and several libraries. Notable landmarks in Olomouc include the Cathedral of St. Wenceslaus, dating from 1109, when it was built as part of Přemyslid Castle; a magnificent 600-year-old town hall; and two Gothic ecclesiastical structures, the Churches of St. Catherine and St. Maurice. The folklore and art of the region are displayed in an open-air museum in the nearby town of Rožnov pod Radhoštěm.

Olomouc was a strongly fortified ancient town and, from 1187 to 1641, the capital of Moravia. The city was the site of the Bohemian victory over the Mongols in 1242. It was held by the Swedes from 1642

until 1650. The Marquis de Lafayette was imprisoned in the fortress in Olomouc. Today, parks and gardens decorate the former site of the fortress.

An annual flower show is the major attraction of the region.

OTHER CITIES

ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE is the place from which the first horse-drawn railway in continental Europe ran to Linz, Austria, beginning in 1827. The city lies on the Vltava River, 80 miles south of Prague, and is capital of South Bohemia and a large industrial center with a population of more than 92,000.

České Budějovice's impressive town square, its Dominican monastery built in 1265, its 13th-century Cathedral of St. Nicholas, and numerous other old and magnificent buildings are of particular interest. The city, whose German name is Budweis, has been designated a historical town reserve by the Czech Government. Major enterprises in České Budějovice are a brewery (producing Pilsener beer for which Bohemia is famous), and factories making such diversified products as pencils, furniture, and processed foods.

FRÝDEK-MÍSTEK, set in the midst of the deep forests of the eastern Czech Republic, south of Ostrava, is an industrial center with about 60,000 residents. The city's baroque chateau exhibits collections of folk art in its museum, and also houses an institute of ethnography. Other points of interest include a small Renaissance church, and a town hall which was built in 1602. For many years, the famous Czech poet and "Bard of Silesia," Petr Bezruč, made his home here.

HRADEC KRÁOVÉ is a large and important city on the Elbe River 60 miles east of Prague. Founded in the 10th century, it is one of the oldest Bohemian towns, and many of its historical buildings erected in the Middle Ages have been preserved, including a cathedral, a town hall, and two large marketplaces. One of the bloodiest battles of the Austro-Prussian War was fought near Hradec Králové in 1866. The city underwent sweeping architectural modernization in the years between 1900 and 1930, and is now a thriving industrial center whose factories produce ship engines, chemicals, musical instruments, glass, and processed foods. The population is approximately 100,000.

LIBEREC is situated in the north central section of the Czech Republic, on the Neisse River, 55 miles northeast of Prague. Founded in the late 13th century, destroyed by war in the 15th century, and reestablished in 1449, Liberec has a population of about 100,000. Its most

important industry—textiles—has steadily developed since 1579.

PARDUBICE, the main cultural and administrative center of the Elbe valley, is noted both as an industrial city and historical reserve. Now home to a population of roughly 95,000, it was a large (for the times) settlement in the 13th century. After a devastating fire in 1507, many of the structures of Pardubice were rebuilt, but few of these survived the Thirty Years War and the siege of the Swedish armies during the first half of the 17th century. Some notable examples remain, including a 13th-century church, a Renaissance royal castle, and part of the town fortifications. On the outskirts of the city is a museum devoted to the national resistance movement. A museum of history and archaeology and the East Bohemian Gallery are located in the city, which is 60 miles east of Prague.

ÚSTÍ NAD LABEM is a city of 90,000 on the Elbe River in the northwest Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic, 45 miles from Prague. It is a major tourist spot which annually draws thousands of visitors to its historical buildings, sports center, and nearby chalets and thermal springs. Overlooking the city is Strékov Castle, said to have inspired Richard Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. A Dominican monastery, built in 1731, is of major interest; it was erected on the site of an older church, dating from 1186, and part of which is now a concert and exhibition hall. Anton Raphael Mengs, the Bohemian painter, was born in Ústí nad Labem in 1728. A river port and industrial center that became part of Germany in the 1938 Munich Pact but reverted seven years later to Czechoslovakia, Ústí nad Labem today produces chemicals, iron and machines, and processes food.

ZLÍN, in southern Moravia, is the center of the country's shoe industry, founded here in 1913 by Tomáš Bat'a. A factory community grew in the area, eventually spreading Bata manufacturing plants (spelled without the apostrophe) throughout the

world. Nationalized after World War II, the company in the Czech Republic is now called Svit National Corporation; it maintains a museum dedicated to shoemaking over the past six centuries. The city, with a population of about 85,000, was originally called Zlín, was named Gottwaldov in 1949 in honor of Klement Gottwaldt, the country's first Communist president, but was renamed Zlín after the "Velvet Revolution." The International Festival of Children's Films is held here.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Czech Republic lies in the heartland of Central Europe. It has fair to moderate summers, lush springs, and pleasant autumns. Winters can be wet, gray, and cold; Prague gets occasional but light snowfalls.

The main geographic subdivisions are the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia. At an altitude of about 500 feet, Moravia lies east of Bohemia and rises from the north of the Danube Valley. The remainder of Moravia consists of valleys and forested mountains and is bordered on the east and south by Slovakia and on the north by Poland. Prague lies on the Vltava River (Moldau in German), which flows northward and joins the Labe (Elbe) north of Prague. Prague, with an altitude of 800 feet, lies at the center of the gently rolling Bohemian Plain, which is surrounded on three sides (the German and Polish frontiers) by mountains 5,000 feet high. These mountains protect the country from the extremes of western and northern European winters. Nevertheless, high humidity makes the winter cold penetrating.

Prague's climate is temperate, with pleasant weather between May and August. Temperatures range from January's average daily high of

32°F (0°C) and low of 22° F (-4°C) to July's average daily high of 76°F (24.5°C) and low of 56°F (14°C). From November through March, the reduced hours of daylight (on cloudy days, for example, drivers feel compelled to turn their headlights on about 3:30 in the afternoon) combined with smog and raw weather create a gloomy atmosphere. Average annual rainfall is about 30 inches, distributed throughout the year. Humidity averages about 80 percent. Light to moderately heavy snow can be expected during January and February. Pollution can be severe during the winter months because of soft burning coal.

Population

The Czech Republic's population of more than 10 million includes 8.3 million Czechs, 1.3 million Moravians, and approximately 300,000 Slovaks. Minorities include Poles, Germans, Silesians, Romany (Gypsies), and Hungarians. Before World War 11, about 3.5 million Germans lived in Czechoslovakia, but most were expelled in 1945. Of the pre-war Czechoslovak population of 360,000 Jews, fewer than 10,000 remain.

Czechs are predominately Roman Catholic, although much of the population considers itself agnostic. There is a large Protestant minority.

A generation of Socialist rule has had no lasting effect on the traditional cultural ties of Czechs to Western Europe-France, Italy, Germany, and Austria. Czechs are proud of their earlier role in European cultural and political history. Many Americans (including Secretary of State Madeleine Albright) are of Czech descent, and the bond between the Czech lands and the U.S. remains strong.

Public Institutions

The Czech Republic, the western two-thirds of the former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, is a parlia-

mentary democracy. On January 1, 1993, the Czechs and Slovaks divided their common state of more than 75 years.

The Czech Parliament is bicameral, consisting of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The Senate comprises 81 members elected to two-, four- and six-year terms. The 200-seat Chamber of Deputies includes delegates elected from seven districts and the capital for four-year terms, on the basis of proportional representation.

The prime minister, who traditionally has represented the majority party of coalition, has considerable power. These powers include the right to set the agenda for most foreign and domestic policies, to mobilize a parliamentary majority, and to choose the governmental ministers. The president of the republic, as the formal head of state, is granted specific powers to nominate constitutional court judges, to dissolve parliament under certain conditions, and to enact a suspensive veto on legislation.

The Czech political scene supports a broad spectrum of parties ranging from the semi-reformed Communist Party on the far left to the nationalist Republican Party on the extreme right. However, Czech governments since the fall of communism in 1989 have been coalitions of right-of-center and centrist parties, which have derived most of their popular support from the swift, free market reforms they have advocated.

Arts, Science, and Education

A long tradition of devotion to the theatrical arts and the musical heritage of Mozart, Smetana, Dvorak, and Janacek is reflected in the Czech cultural scene. The leading theatrical institution, the National Theater, produces opera, ballet, and drama. Numerous theaters in Prague and the provincial cities are well-attended. The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra has a worldwide reputation, and many other excel-

lent musical organizations exist. The annual Prague Spring Festival is the cultural highlight of the year. Western popular musicians now include Prague in their tour schedules. Several theatrical groups have gained international recognition. Czechoslovak movies of the 1960s are world-renowned and many American movies play in Prague with Czech subtitles.

Prague's Charles University, founded in 1348, is the oldest university in central Europe. Czech science, education, and technology, once compared with the best in the world, suffered from the heavy hand of political control under the Communists.

Commerce and Industry

The Czech Republic has a well-diversified and highly industrial economy. Its reform process did not start until after the November 1989 Velvet Revolution somewhat later than in Poland and Hungary. The government has a strong focus on economic issues and has moved rapidly since 1990 to adopt free-market, Western-oriented business policies and practices.

The Czech Republic's economic transformation started shortly after the 1989 Velvet Revolution with measures to privatize the economy through property restitution and the transfer of state-owned businesses to the private sector, the liberalization of foreign trade and foreign currency restrictions, and the lifting of price controls. It has now largely consolidated its economic transition to a Western market economy with about 75 percent of the enterprises now in private hands. State control, however, persists in energy, banking, and infrastructure firms. The country enjoys a smoothly functioning democracy with moderate levels of deficits, strong foreign currency reserves, single-digit inflation, and moderate, though rising, levels of unemployment.

Due to a lack of microeconomic restructuring coupled with recent austerity measures, the country is now undergoing needed economic retrenchment after high, but unsustainable, levels of growth in recent years. Following a period of economic contraction in the late 1990s, the Czech economy has recently shown signs of renewed growth.

The country has since 1989 pursued balanced budgets, incurring small deficits in recent years. That policy orientation, however, looks set to change with the current recession and the new social democratic government's pledge to support a wide range of social welfare and investment programs.

These programs were promised by the new government, which was elected by capitalizing on citizens' anxiety about their economic future. Wage levels average \$200/month and are still only 10-20 percent of those in neighboring Germany and Austria. Productivity is also substantially lower because of chronic under-investment and the long absence of a competitive market environment. The state retains control of household energy prices, rents, and certain utilities. These prices will gradually increase to market levels at which point they will be liberalized entirely.

While the Czech Republic retains many hallmarks of macroeconomic stability, unfinished elements in the transition have produced strains in trade balances, competitiveness, and company restructuring. A strong legal and institutional framework for a market economy is needed to consolidate the transition. Lack of strong ownership, a weakly regulated and opaque stock market, scant threat of bankruptcy, and relaxed credit policies have allowed firms to put off fundamental restructuring.

The Czechs have continued work on reforms, such as the creation of a Czech securities commission, privatization of the three large state-controlled banks, and stricter rules on investment funds and bank lending,

to encourage restructuring and help realize the potential in the private sector.

While there are still economic ties to the former East Bloc trading partners, such as oil and gas imports from Russia, trade with the former East Bloc has fallen off substantially since 1990. In recent years, the Czech Republic has successfully reoriented its economy to the West. Its main export market is now the European Union, and the majority of foreign investment comes from EU member states.

As a member of the OECD, the Czech Republic remains open to foreign investment in virtually all sectors. The Czech Republic's economic stability has attracted an estimated \$7 billion in foreign investment. The U.S. holds 13% About 500 U.S. companies are represented in Prague-of foreign investment, the third largest portion after Germany and the Netherlands, respectively. The Czech Republic has an open investment climate and particularly welcomes U.S. investment as a counterbalance to the strong economic influence of Western Europe.

Machinery and transport equipment comprise leading Czech exports. Enforcement of intellectual property protection, lack of transparency in capital market transactions, and the need for modern commercial laws and judicial system remain key concerns of businesses operating in the Czech Republic.

The country is a member of the OECD, the Central Europe Free Trade Agreement, and has applied for membership in the European Union, membership in which is the country's leading foreign policy goal. Formal negotiations toward EU accession began in November 1998, but as yet, have not been accepted.

Transportation

Automobiles

Public transportation within Prague is excellent, but you will need a car to see the region easily.

All vehicles must pass a technical inspection and emissions test before they can be registered. They need to have a factory-installed catalytic converter.

Changes to Czech vehicle registration laws have made it much more difficult to register cars that do not meet EU specifications. It is possible to get a waiver for registration of a nonconforming vehicle (i.e., U.S. or other non-EU specification vehicle), but the process can be complicated.

Individuals should bring with them as much technical information about their vehicles as possible, such as fuel consumption, top speed, load weight, etc.

Third-party liability automobile insurance from the Czech Insurance Company is compulsory. Once the vehicle registration process officially starts, the local liability insurance, which is inexpensive, can be bought. Collision and theft insurance are also available locally.

Compact or smaller cars are preferred because of narrow city streets, fuel economy, and resale value. Any standard make car is suitable. Cobblestone streets and poor secondary roads are common and can be hard on a vehicle's suspension. Service facilities for most makes of European and

Asian cars are adequate. In addition, there are at least three facilities in Prague that can service many U.S.-made, U.S.-model cars that are not sold in Europe.

Several Western auto firms have sales and service outlets in Prague. Registration fees are nominal. Czech law requires that cars be equipped with catalytic converters, left and right outside rearview mirrors, mud flaps for rear tires, a rear fog light, a European first-aid kit

and “triangle” emergency breakdown marker, a set of spare fuses and bulbs, one spare wheel screw, and one spare spark plug. Snow tires are recommended for winter driving and radials provide better traction in cities. Austrian and German authorities often require that vehicles entering their territory in winter have tire chains.

Traffic moves on the right, and road signs and traffic conventions are similar to those used throughout Europe. The Czech Republic's main roads are adequate and in winter are salted or “sanded” (actually heavily covered with cinders), although not thoroughly plowed. Compared

to the U.S. or Western Europe, traffic on the highways is light, although the traffic situation in Prague during working hours and throughout the Czech Republic continues to worsen as more vehicles take to the roads.

Gas station facilities are excellent, with newly built, modern stations almost everywhere. Many stations are open 24 hours. Czech gasoline is sold in four grades: normal, 86 octane; special, 90 octane; 95 octane natural (lead-free); and super, 96 octane. Gasoline in the Czech Republic is about \$2.50/gallon.

A U.S. drivers license is valid in the Czech Republic, but an international license is required for some neighboring countries; it is recommended that all drivers obtain one before arrival. International licenses can be obtained locally, but only on the basis of a Czech license. Czech licenses can be obtained, though a brief test is required, even for holders of valid U.S. licenses. Without a valid U.S. license, a lengthy and expensive driver-training course and a thorough exam are required.

Local

Subway, trams, and buses are used in the city and suburbs. Frequent service is available up to midnight, after which trams and buses continue on a reduced schedule. Night

trams-indicated at stops by a white number on a dark blue background-run every 40 minutes. There are also five night buses that run out to some of the farther reaches of the city. The metro does not operate at all from midnight to 5 a.m. Public transportation is inexpensive, but prices are increasing. A single ticket costs about \$0.40 and a monthly pass about \$15. Yearlong passes are also available, but you must buy them in January.

Taxis are usually found at stands in the central part of town and at the airport. In outlying sections, you must call for a taxi. Outside of the tourist season, service is reasonably prompt up to 10 or 11 p.m. Many expats, use one or two companies that are dependable and charge fair, reasonable rates. Caution is advised for the many self-employed drivers, which have the reputation of practicing price-gouging.

Regional

The Czech Republic is served by a comprehensive network of bus, rail, and air transport; however, reservations are difficult to get during the holidays, music festivals, and trade fairs.

Train service is good, and there are several modern international express train services. Rail transport within the Czech Republic and to other nearby European countries is inexpensive, though prices continue to increase. Daily flights operate between Prague and other major European capitals.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and long-distance telephone, telegraph, fax, and telex services are available at reasonable cost within the Czech Republic. However, service outside the country, and particularly outside Europe, is much more expensive. USA Direct or similar American credit card services can substantially reduce the cost of personal calls to the United States. Callback services, which are another option for moderate long-

distance calls, can also be used. Although improving, the quality of local telephone service is still erratic by U.S. standards, and line quality is often poor. This is particularly troublesome to those using modems and personal computers at home for Internet access. There are several Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Prague of varying quality, reliability, and cost. Prices differ by almost an order of magnitude, so comparison-shopping is recommended for new arrivals wishing the service. Some international ISPs, Compuserve, and ibm.net, for example, also have points of presence in Prague.

Radio and TV

There are many AM and FM radio stations, including the BBC (101.1 FM). Czech FM stations have play lists similar to many American pop and country stations. Occasionally, there are special programs in English. Some or parts of advertisements are even in English. Short-wave radios can pick up BBC day and night, VOA morning and evening, and other European stations in English and other languages. VOA may also be heard in English at various times in the day on 1197 AM.

There are four TV channels, with most broadcasts in Czech. One channel carries a mixture of foreign broadcasting. Broadcasts are sometimes dubbed or subtitled, but often are in English, German, French, Russian, and Spanish. American (NTSC) TVs can be converted to the PAL system used in the Czech Republic, but with difficulty. Multi-system TVs capable of processing both local PAL broadcasts and the NTSC system used by American VCRs are available in Germany or they can be mail-ordered. Viewing is invaluable for studying the Czech language. Some employees have installed satellite dishes that enable them to receive English-language news programs and other broadcasts-also using the PAL system from one or more European satellites. Dishes are available locally and in Germany.

VCRs are also popular. There is also at least one video rental business, with thousands of English-language tapes, that caters to the large American and British expatriate community.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

International editions of news magazines, such as Time, Newsweek, and The Economist, are available at local newsstands, as are a wide variety of other popular magazines.

Another good source of local information is the Prague Post, an English-language weekly, that provides news of the Czech Republic and surrounding countries as well as lists of restaurants and cultural events.

Health and Medicine

Medical services are provided to resident foreigners in Prague at the foreigner section of Na Homolce Hospital, staffed by English-speaking general practitioners, pediatricians, and dentists. A doctor is on call at all times. The foreigner section refers patients to specialists for laboratory tests and hospitalization, as necessary. Privatization of health care facilities is gradually taking place in Prague in some specialties, such as OB/GYN, dentistry, and ophthalmology. Routine and emergency care in Prague is adequate, but local differences in the organization of medical care, a limited choice of physicians, cultural differences, and the language barrier can create problems.

Community Health

Community sanitation in the Czech Republic is high. Public health controls help to prevent outbreaks of serious diseases. Milk products are pasteurized and generally safe as long as they are stored properly.

The water in Prague is not fluoridated, and supplements, available from the health unit, should be given to children up to the age of 13. Generally, the water in Prague is

safe to drink and meets acceptable standards according to World Health Organization guidelines for adults and children over one year of age. The nitrate level in the water is potentially hazardous to small infants (under one year of age). Bottled or distilled water is recommended for this age group.

Preventive Measures

The most prevalent local diseases are hepatitis, measles, whooping cough, and respiratory diseases, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Upper respiratory ailments are common during the winter months. Prague's damp and sooty winter often brings on or aggravates bronchitis, viral influenza, head and chest colds, asthma, sinus trouble, and other respiratory difficulties. Coughs, hoarseness, and bronchial irritations seem to last longer, and people with a history of asthma may experience flare-ups, probably due to chronic irritation from the pollution. Vitamin supplements are recommended during the winter months when local markets have fewer fresh fruits and vegetables. Ticks in the Czech Republic can transmit a viral infection known as tick-borne encephalitis.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May. 1	Czech Labor Day
May 8	Liberation Day
July 5	Sts. Cyril and Methodius Day
Jul. 6	Jan Hus Day
Sep.28	Statehood Day
Oct. 28	Czech Founding Day
Nov.17	Struggle for Freedom Day
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

No immunizations are required, unless the traveler comes from areas where yellow fever or cholera is endemic.

A valid passport is required, but a visa is not necessary for U.S. citizens for tourism, short study or business visits up to 90 days. Visas are required for longer stays and for any gainful activity; application can be made at any Czech embassy or consulate (outside the Czech Republic). For further information concerning entry requirements for the Czech Republic, travelers can contact the Embassy of the Czech Republic at 3900 Spring of Freedom Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202)274-9103 or visit the Embassy's web site at <http://www.mzv.cz/washington>

Americans living in or visiting the Czech Republic are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic and obtain updated information on travel and security within the Czech Republic. Information is also available on the Embassy's web site at <http://www.usembassy.cz>. The U.S. Embassy in Prague is located at Trziste 15; tel. (420) (2) 5753-0663; for after hours emergencies only - tel. (420) (2) 5753-2716.

Pets

Pets may be taken into and out of the Czech Republic without major problems. Dogs must be licensed, on a leash, and if large or unreliable, muzzled when in public. When taking a pet into or out of the Czech Republic, a recent veterinary certificate (not more than three days old) attesting to the animal's health is required, as well as an international certificate with proof of current vaccinations. Rabies and distemper immunizations are necessary, and it is recommended that immunization against the local parvovirus be

given to dogs and cats soon after arrival.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Czech government revised the firearms laws in 1997 to come into line with EU norms. Importation of firearms (both shoulder arms and hand guns) is permitted. Individuals wishing to bring firearms into the Czech Republic must obtain written permission from a Czech Embassy or Consulate before shipping the weapons. All firearms brought into the Czech Republic must be re-exported.

All firearms imported to the Czech Republic must be registered with the police presidium. Shipping and customs can help with the registration process.

All individuals wishing to use firearms for any purpose must pass an examination. The test has both a written section and a practicum, which is held at a shooting range. The test is administered in Czech, but individuals are permitted to employ a certified translator. There are fees for both the test and the translation services.

Currency, Banking & Weights and Measures

The official unit of currency of the Czech Republic is the crown (kruna), abbreviated "Kc," which is divided into 100 hellers. Exchange rates vary but have been about US\$1=35.24Kc (December 1999).

U.S. and foreign currencies may be obtained from the local banks or exchange dealers for a commission. ATMs are readily available throughout Prague, and many

American residents obtain Czech crowns through these machines, which take CIRRUS, PLUS, MOST and leading credit cards. However, there is usually a charge for these transactions.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Bauer, Maria. *Under the Chestnut Trees*. Overlook: New York, 1984.

Bugajski, Janusz. *Czechoslovakia: Charter 77's Decade of Dissent*. Praeger: New York, 1987.

Demetz, Peter. *Prague in Black and Gold*. Hill and Wang: New York, 1997.

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Herman, A.H. *A History of the Czechs*. Allan Lane Press: 1975.

Kerman, George F. *From Prague After Munich: Diplomatic Papers, 1938-1940*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1968.

Korbel, Josef. *Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia*. Princeton

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Leff, Carol Skalnik. *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State, 1918-1987*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1988.

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Masaryk, Thomas G. *The Making of a State*. Fertig: New York, 1970.

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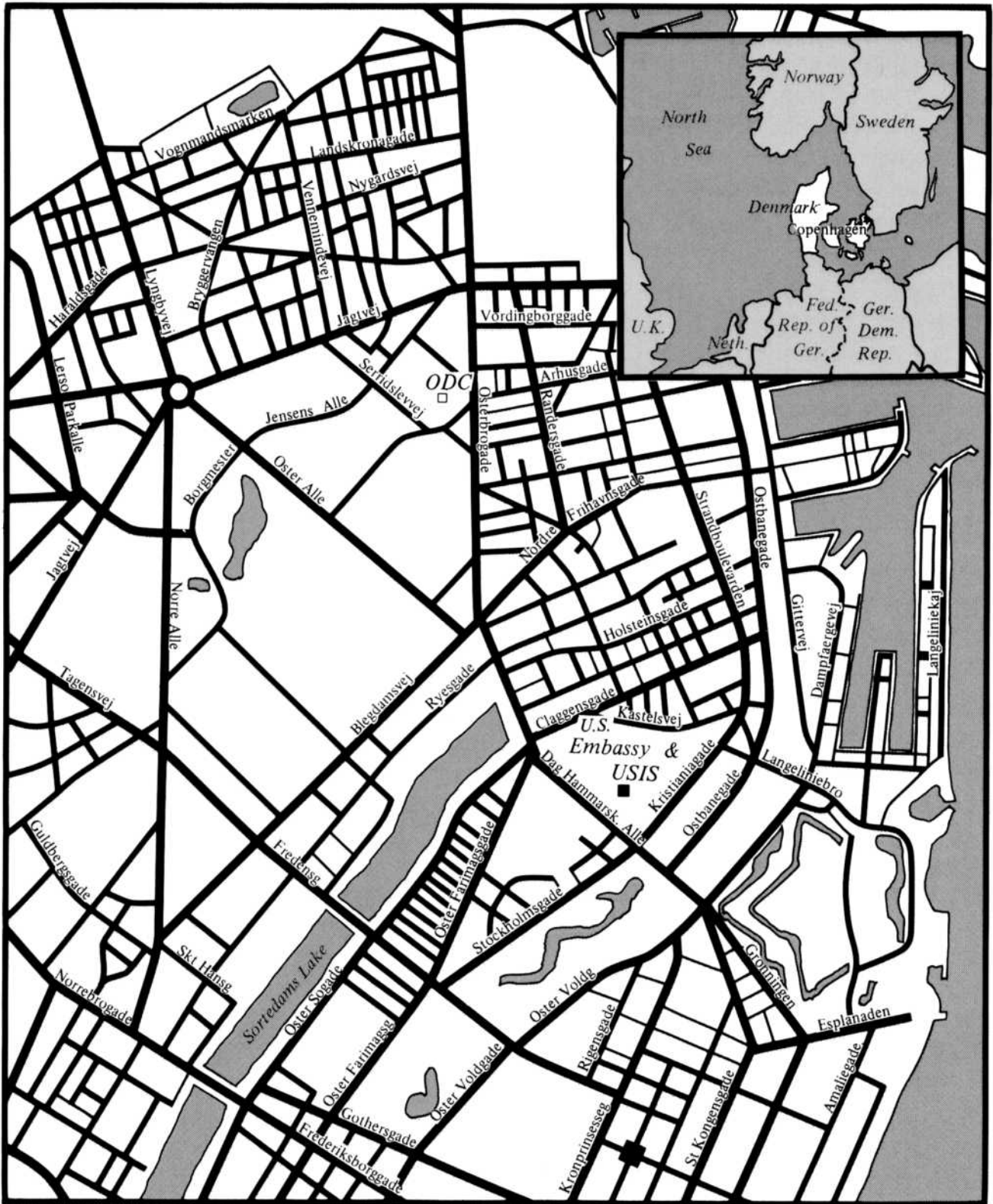
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Copenhagen, Denmark

DENMARK

Kingdom of Denmark

Major Cities:

Copenhagen, Århus, Odense

Other Cities:

Ålborg, Esbjerg, Fredericia, Gentofte, Helsingør, Horsens, Kolding, Naestved, Randers, Ribe, Roskilde, Vejle

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated December 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

DENMARK is the oldest kingdom in Europe, tracing its written history as far back as the Viking period of the eighth and ninth centuries. A country of gentle beauty, friendly people, and cosmopolitan life-style, modern Denmark is an industrialized nation with a high standard of living and one of the world's most advanced social welfare societies. The homogeneity of culture, breadth of economic activity, and variety of political opinion make it a stimulating place to visit.

A nation of rich cultural and intellectual heritage, Denmark continues to contribute to achievements of the modern world. Writers, scientists, philosophers, musicians, art-

ists—all with international recognition—are indicative of the range of accomplishments that have been reached in this fairy-tale kingdom so honored by its most-beloved son, Hans Christian Andersen.

MAJOR CITIES

Copenhagen

Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, lies on the eastern coast of the island of Zealand on the straits connecting the Baltic Sea to the North Sea. Between Zealand and mainland Denmark lie the island of Fyn and two channels—the Great Belt and the Little Belt. Copenhagen's strategic location on a main trade route between the Baltic and northern countries has made it one of the great transit ports of northern Europe.

With over 1 million people, Copenhagen is Denmark's largest city. Starting as a small fishing village more than 1,000 years ago, the city has grown into a major European commercial and cultural center. Its name (Kobenhavn or Merchant's Harbor) reflects its historical association with shipping and international trade. Copenhagen's busy harbor and shipyards confirm the

significant role these activities continue to play in the city's economic life.

Despite the modern pace of its commercial activity, Copenhagen maintains its Old World charm. The skyline is dominated by stately towers, their copper roofs green with age; thus its popular name, "city of beautiful towers."

Many buildings in the city's center date back hundreds of years, some as far back as the 16th and 17th centuries. The old houses that line the canals and cobblestone streets provide a sharp contrast to modern, high-rise apartment complexes that dominate the fast-growing suburbs and newer parts of the city.

The high standard of living of its citizens is reflected in the clean, well-maintained appearance of the city. Despite its size, many wooded parks and small lakes give Copenhagen an almost provincial quality. Copenhagen is a favorite of tourists, and thousands of Americans visit the city each year.

Food

Most types of food are available on the local market year round.

Clothing

Woolen clothing is worn most of the year. Even in summer, a light wrap

or sweater is usually needed after sundown. Rainwear is a necessity. Ready-made clothing for men, women, and children is available at prices often higher than those in the U.S. Shoes for men, women, and children are imported from all over Europe, but narrow widths are not readily available.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: All major brands of toilet articles and cosmetics are available, but taxes on cosmetics are high. Few American patent medicines are available in Danish drugstores, since most medicines are sold only by prescription.

Basic Services: Tailors and dress-makers are available but increasingly rare. Laundries, Laundromats, dry-cleaners, and shoe repair shops do work comparable to that in the U.S. Adequate electronics repair is available, but usually slow. Spare parts for U.S. makes are in limited supply. Denmark has many good barbershops and excellent beauty shops. Most basic services are more costly than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

The Lutheran Church is the state church of Denmark. Roman Catholic, Reformist, Unitarian, Methodist, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also hold services here. A minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America holds services for the International Church of Copenhagen. Services in English are also held at the Anglican Episcopal Church of St. Albans and the International Baptist Church. Catholic services in English are held at two churches in greater Copenhagen. Jewish services are held at the synagogue weekday mornings, Saturday morning, and every evening at sunset.

Education

The three English-language schools listed below are recommended for children of American travelers. Request admittance as far in advance as possible due to possible

lack of vacancies in certain classes. The school year runs from mid-August to June. Use the following addresses:

Copenhagen International Schools
Copenhagen International School (CIS)
Gammel Kongevej 15
1610 Copenhagen V
Tel.: 31 21 46 33

Copenhagen International Junior School (CIJS)
Stenosgade 4C
1616 Copenhagen V
Tel.: 31 22 33 03

Rygaards School
International Division
54 Bernstorffsvej
2900 Hellerup
Tel.: 31 62 10 53

The Copenhagen International Schools (Senior and Junior) are housed adjacently in a downtown location near public transportation.

The Senior School (CIS) was founded in 1963 to provide English-language secondary education for children of the international community (grades 10 to 13). The CIS curriculum is that of a U.S. general academic, college-preparatory public school. The school also prepares students for the international baccalaureate. English, German, French, and advanced Danish are taught as foreign languages, and all students must participate in a program of study of the Danish language and culture. The school's testing program includes the PSAT, SAT, and Achievement tests; ACT tests can be arranged.

The Copenhagen International Junior School (CIJS) was founded in 1973 to meet the growing demand for a school for younger children. It comprises pre-kindergarten and kindergarten (4- and 5-year-olds, with 3-year-olds who will be 4 before the end of December), primary school (grades 1 to 6), and middle school (grades 7 to 9). Pupils through grade 6 are taught in self-contained classrooms; those in grades 7 to 9 have a departmental-

ized curriculum taught by specialists in their fields.

The curriculum is international, combining the best of American and British education. The international school's curriculum will be followed as it becomes available.

The school is accredited by the European Council of International Schools and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Iowa tests of basic skills are available in grades 4, 6, and 8.

Rygaards School is located in a residential suburb of Copenhagen accessible by train and bus. The school was founded in 1909 by Catholic Sisters of the Assumption and is now recognized and supported by the Danish State. Children of all faiths are accepted.

The International Division consists of a preschool (4- to 6-year olds), a junior department (6- to 11-year-olds), and a senior department (12- to 16-year-olds). In addition to the International Division, Rygaards has a Danish Division. These two divisions function independently but in collaboration under one board and one headmaster.

The students at Rygaards come from 40 or more nations. Most of the teachers are British, and the academic instruction follows the British system, culminating in London University "O" level examinations in the final year. This corresponds to American kindergarten through grade 11.

Rygaards has an active Parents' Association. After-school activities are available for many age groups.

Special Educational Opportunities

Copenhagen has many nursery schools and kindergartens, both public and private. They are operated independently of the elementary schools, and completion of kindergarten is not a prerequisite for entrance to elementary school.



Shops on a pedestrian shopping street in Copenhagen

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Musical instruction is readily available for adults and children. Excellent contemporary and abstract art and dancing instruction are available.

Many municipalities (kommune) in the greater Copenhagen area offer extensive and inexpensive adult education programs with a wide variety of subjects, some taught in English. Several such courses are offered for the study of Danish. These courses usually begin in September and end in February. Pamphlets listing the courses are widely distributed in the Copenhagen area.

Sports

Facilities are available for most popular sports. Many neighborhood gymnasiums in Copenhagen have indoor swimming pools. Tennis and badminton are popular, and several

clubs have indoor and outdoor courts. Squash clubs are also available. A number of 18-hole, private golf courses are located near Copenhagen. Bowling, flying, gliding, and hang gliding are also available. Sports equipment is more expensive than in the U.S. but is available everywhere.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Summer sports are popular during the short, warm season. Yacht clubs are located along the coast, and sailing is enjoyed from May to October. Many swim in the sea in the summer, despite the chilly water temperature. Fishing on small, private lakes is available. Bicycling and hiking are popular, and hiking and biking clubs sponsor trips to some charming rural areas close to Copenhagen. You may hire horses

at lower rates than in the U.S. Several reputable riding schools have indoor rings for winter riding.

Excellent pheasant and duck shooting and some deer hunting is possible, but a game license is required. To obtain one, you must pass a test or hold a U.S. hunting license.

Winter sports are limited to ice skating and occasionally some cross-country skiing north of Copenhagen. Serious skiers must travel north to Norway, or south to France, Germany, Austria, Italy, or Switzerland. Oslo is 8 hours away by train, or overnight by the excellent sleep ferry from Copenhagen. The Bavarian and Swiss Alps are 18–24 hours away by train. Copenhagen travel agencies offer excellent, modestly priced, 8-day package ski trips to these areas.

Many guided tours of Copenhagen are available. One popular tour takes you by boat through the canals of Copenhagen into the harbor and past the famous statue of the Little Mermaid.

The airline charter industry is highly developed and competitive here, providing inexpensive vacation packages to all parts of Europe and many other points abroad.

Entertainment

Copenhagen's movie theaters show the latest American and European films. Most feature films are shown in their original language, with Danish subtitles.

This *Week in Copenhagen* (which, despite its name, is a monthly publication) lists a wide variety of events of interest.

Copenhagen has symphony orchestras, a ballet (one of the world's finest), and a national opera company. The most famous of the orchestras is the Radio Denmark Symphony, which gives weekly concerts in winter and often features leading American and European artists. The ballet and opera each offer several performances a week from September through May. Ticket prices are reasonable. Half-price tickets are often available after 5 pm on the day of the performance.

Many fine museums are located in or near Copenhagen, including the National Museum of Art and the Carlsberg Glyptotek (with an excellent Rodin collection).

The world-famous Tivoli amusement park, in the heart of the city, is synonymous with the spirit of Copenhagen. Open from May 1 to early September, Tivoli features arcades, rides, restaurants, and light and serious music in an atmosphere for children and adults.

Copenhagen has many fine restaurants. Traditional Danish cuisine is good, though often bland. Modern Danish cuisine is modeled on that of France. Hard liquor and wine are expensive; a bottle of the house

table wine can double the price of a meal. Most Danes stick to beer and snaps (a Danish drink made from potatoes and flavored with caraway) with their meals. Danish beer is deservedly world renowned.

Clubs

The American Club of Copenhagen holds monthly luncheon meetings, with guest speakers talking on topics of interest to the membership, which consists of American and Danish business and professional men and women.

The American Women's Club in Denmark, founded in 1934, is a philanthropic and social organization whose membership is predominantly American, but also includes many Danes and women of other nationalities.

This is an active social club with both daytime and evening groups for bridge, handicrafts, sports, and cultural/educational activities. The club is actively engaged in projects to raise money for scholarships, art awards, and charities. The club meets monthly on the second Tuesday.

The International Women's Club of Copenhagen (IWC), a nonprofit organization founded in 1977, was formed to welcome and assist newcomers and their families to Denmark, to further goodwill and friendship, and to give financial and material support to philanthropic projects.

A regular, monthly luncheon is held on the fourth Thursday of each month. A program is presented at each luncheon, either with an international theme or on some aspect of life in Denmark. Also, a wide range of activities is offered, giving members an opportunity to meet in smaller groups. Sports, language, and cultural interests are catered to so that there is something for everyone.

Copenhagen also has local chapters of Rotary International, Free Masons, Odd Fellows, and American Legion.

Århus

Århus (also spelled Aarhus) is Denmark's second largest city. Located on the east coast of central Jutland on Århus Bay, the city has a population of over 217,000. A commercial, industrial, and shipping center, Århus is also one of Denmark's oldest cities, developing rapidly after becoming an episcopal see in the 11th century. A decline followed the Reformation of the 16th century, but Århus began to prosper again in the 18th century.

Århus is also an important cultural center, with a university, a theater, a large library, and restored-town museum consisting of several old Danish houses. Other buildings of note include the Cathedral of St. Clemens, built in the 12th century, and the town hall, constructed in 1942 of Norwegian marble.

Århus' museum of prehistory, Mosegård, contains a fascinating exhibition which includes the "Grauballe Man," a mummified person of two millennia ago. The city also is the site of the world's largest fire-engine museum, and of a fine aquarium.

Tivoli Friheden, Århus' large amusement park, is open daily from late April to mid-August; concert performances are frequent features.

Odense

Odense, Denmark's third largest city with a population of 145,000, is located in the north-central part of Fyn Island. Linked by canal with the Odense Fjord, the city is an important commercial, industrial, and cultural center, as well as a rail junction. Odense, meaning "Shrine of Odin" (the supreme Norse god), has large shipyards which export agricultural produce. Machinery, textiles, beer, electrical equipment, and motor vehicles are manufactured.

One of the oldest cities in northern Europe, Odense was founded in the 10th century and became an episcopal see in 1020. Its Cathedral of St.



Sankt Clemens Torv Mall in Århus

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Knud, built in the 13th century, is one of the finest examples of Danish Gothic architecture. Odense is perhaps best known as the birthplace (in 1805) of Hans Christian Andersen, author of such fairy tales as *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Little Mermaid*, and more than 160 others. A small, red-tiled house at the corner of Han Jensensstraded and Bangs Boder, near downtown Odense, is Andersen's birthplace. The neighborhood has been restored to its 19th-century appearance and the Andersen home is now part of an impressive museum devoted to the Danish writer.

Other cities of importance on Fyn Island are Nyborg, with a population of 16,000, a seaside resort, known for its shipyards and textile mills; and Svendborg (population of 28,000), with its shipyards and breweries.

OTHER CITIES

ÅLBORG (spelled Aalborg until 1948) is located on Jutland in northern Denmark. Jutland, the peninsula that divides the North Sea from the Baltic Sea, is the only part of Denmark attached to mainland Europe. It has unspoiled beaches, medieval hamlets, lush countryside, and an English-speaking population that is quite hospitable. Ålborg, the capital of Nordjylland County, is situated on the Lim Fjord and is a major industrial and cultural center, as well as a commercial seaport. With a current population of about 120,000, Ålborg manufactures machinery, chemicals, cement, liquor, ships, and textiles. Known since the 11th century, the city was chartered in 1342. Of interest here is the 12th-century Cathedral of St. Botolph and a 16th-century castle. The local museum was designed by

the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. Scandinavia's largest festival of drama, dance, and music is held annually in Ålborg in September. Near the city is Rebild National Park, where American Independence Day is celebrated each year by Danes and Danish-Americans. Nearby, too, is Legoland, with its miniature cities, Mount Rushmore and Statue of Liberty replicas, and other wonders built from Lego blocks. Ålborg is also known for its oysters, both succulent and plentiful, from the Lim Fjord.

ESBJERG, Denmark's largest fishing port, is located in southwest Jutland on the North Sea. With a current population of 73,000, Esbjerg is a commercial and industrial center whose main development came after the construction of its port in the late 19th century. It was chartered as a city in 1899. Esbjerg's harbor, the best on the penin-

sula's west coast, exports meats and dairy products.

FREDERICIA, a seaport on the southeastern Jutland, has a population of close to 37,000. An important industrial center and rail junction, as well as a port of Lille Baelt, Fredericia manufactures textiles and chemicals and also has an oil refinery. Frederick III built the town as the main fortress on Jutland in 1650, and there was no expansion beyond the ramparts. Fredericia was the scene of the battle in which the Danes defeated the Prussians on July 6, 1849. Modern development began when the fortress was closed in 1909.

GENTOFTE, a suburb north of Copenhagen with a population of more than 77,000, is situated in eastern Denmark, less than 10 miles north of Frederiksberg. Many of the country's foreign embassies are located here. Gentofte has a horse-trotting course and is the home of the famous Tuborg breweries.

HELISINGØR (also called Elsinore) is located in northwestern Sjaelland directly across the Øresund Strait (or Sound) from Hälsingborg, Sweden. About 25 miles north of Copenhagen, Helsingør experienced its greatest growth from the 15th to the mid-17th century, when Danish kings collected tolls from the ships passing through the straits. Today, Helsingør is a fishing port, summer resort, and industrial center, manufacturing ships, machinery, textiles, and beer. Helsingør is probably best known as the site of Kronborg Castle, built between 1554 and 1585 and completely restored in the years 1925 to 1937. Considered the most secure fortress in the country, it was captured by Sweden in 1660. However, the castle is most famous as the scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; although Hamlet never lived at the castle, it is often the site of performances of the play. A maritime museum also is housed at Kronborg. The city is home to 35,000 residents.

HORSENS is a port on Horsens Fjord, on the east coast of central

Jutland. With a population of 49,000, the city is a commercial and industrial center 23 miles south of Århus. It exports dairy products and manufactures tobacco products, textiles, and electrical equipment. A fortified town in the Middle Ages, the 13th-century monastery and church within its ramparts may be visited in Horsens today.

KOLDING is located in south-central Jutland on the eponymous fjord, an inlet of Lille Baelt. A seaport which exports cattle, fish, and grain, Kolding has a population of 53,000. Dating back to the 10th century, the city is the site of two important battles in Danish history; in 1644, the Danes defeated the Swedes here and, on April 12, 1849, the Danes were defeated in the Schleswig-Holstein conflict. Historical buildings include the oldest stone church in Denmark, built in the 13th century, and Koldinghus, a royal castle built in 1248.

Situated in southeastern Denmark, **NAESTVED** is about 35 miles south of the capital. Built around a Benedictine monastery which was founded in 1135, Naestved developed into a market center after the monks moved in the 12th century. The city's landmarks include St. Peder Kirke, the only reminder of the monastery; St. Morten's Kirke; and the remains of a medieval hospital, which is now a museum. The city manufactures textiles, glass, pottery, and paper. With a population of about 40,000, Naestved also has a fishing port.

RANDERS is a seaport on east Jutland, at the mouth of the Gudenå River. Located 22 miles north of Århus, Randers, whose population is 56,000, is a commercial and industrial center that produces dairy products. The city was founded in the 11th century and was an important trade center in the Middle Ages. Noted for its salmon fishing today, Randers has a 15th-century edifice—Church of St. Morton—and an 18th-century town hall.

About 15 miles south of Esbjerg is the town of **RIBE**, the capital of Ribe County. With a population of 8,000, the city is known for its architecture. Its cathedral, built about 1130, and restored in the late 19th century, is an excellent example of Dutch Romanesque design. Ribe prospered in the Middle Ages; the Black Friar's Abbey (built 1228), St. Catherine's Church (built about 1230), and the city hall (14th century) are examples of architecture from that period. There is also a wealth of 16th- and 17th-century houses.

ROSKILDE is a residential suburb 20 miles west of Copenhagen. A port on the Roskilde Fjord, it is one of the oldest cities in Denmark, serving as the country's capital from the 10th century until 1443, when it was replaced by Copenhagen. Roskilde was Denmark's ecclesiastical center from 1020 to 1536; then, during the Reformation, it was suppressed. The Treaty of Roskilde, signed in 1658, ceded Denmark's lands in southern Sweden to Charles X of Sweden. The city's cathedral, built late in the 12th century, contains about 40 royal tombs, including those of most Danish kings. There is also a museum of Viking ships and an atomic research center nearby. The city's current population is approximately 43,000.

VEJLE, in central Jutland, is a seaport on the fjord which bears its name. A commercial and industrial center and a rail junction, with a population of nearly 48,000, Vejle manufactures soap, textiles, and leather goods. St. Nicholas Church, built in the 13th century and later restored, is among the interesting local sights.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Denmark lies directly north of Germany and south of Norway. The

European part of the country proper is slightly smaller than Vermont and New Hampshire combined. Denmark consists of the Jutland Peninsula and 406 islands, of which 100 are inhabited. The straits between these islands connect the Baltic and the North Seas.

About 40 percent of the population is located on the island of Zealand, the largest island in Denmark proper. Here, the capital, Copenhagen, can be found.

Greenland and the Faroe Islands, although self-governing, are parts of Denmark. Greenland is the largest island in the world.

Denmark is regarded as an agricultural country. However, dramatic changes have occurred in recent years, and today only about 5 percent of the population is employed in agriculture.

The coastline is irregular and dotted with inlets, breaks, gently sloping fjords, and impressive cliffs. The public has access, as a right, to all the beaches of the country, including right of passage along privately owned shore.

Because Denmark is almost entirely surrounded by sea, it has a moderate, maritime climate. This, however, produces changeable weather, which makes forecasting an imperfect art. The average temperatures range from 32°F in February to 61°F in July. Temperatures vary slightly from day to night. Average annual rainfall is 24 inches. August and October are the wettest months. Days are short in winter, with about 6 hours of daylight in December and January. Daylight in summer lasts 18-20 hours.

Population

Denmark's population is about 5.4 million. About one-fourth live in Copenhagen and its suburbs.

The Danes, a homogenous Gothic-Germanic people, have inhabited Denmark since prehistoric times. Danish, the principal language, is

one of the more difficult European languages to speak; a reading knowledge is more easily acquired. Most Danes speak English.

Education is compulsory from ages 7 to 16 and is free through the university level on the basis of competitive exams.

The Lutheran Church is state supported and accounts for about 95 percent of Denmark's religious affiliation. Several other Protestant denominations and other religions exist.

Public Institutions

Denmark is the oldest kingdom in Europe. During the Viking period (9th-11th centuries), Denmark was a great power, based on the Jutland Peninsula, the island of Zealand, and the southern part of Sweden.

It became a constitutional monarchy with the adoption of the Constitution of 1849, which removed the King's absolute power and provided for separate administrative, legislative, and judicial agencies. This system was retained in the Constitution of 1953, now in force.

The Danish royal family is the oldest dynasty in Europe. The present Queen, Margrethe II, ascended to the throne in 1972.

The Queen, as head of the government, holds formal executive power, but her authority is mostly symbolic. She governs through the Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who is chosen by the government party (or parties, in cases of coalitions) in the Parliament. The Prime Minister, in turn, appoints the Ministers, who implement government policy.

The Parliament, or Folketing, is unicameral. Its 179 members are popularly elected by universal suffrage. The usual term for the Folketing is 4 years, but the Prime Minister may call for national elections at any time. Eight parties are represented in Parliament, but none

has enough seats to form a majority government alone.

The judicial branch of government is an appointed and independent Supreme Court.

Arts, Science, and Education

Denmark has a rich cultural and intellectual heritage and continues to contribute to the cultural achievements of the modern world. The astronomical discoveries of Tycho Brahe and the brilliant contributions to atomic physics of Niels Bohr are indicative of the range of Danish scientific achievement.

The "fairy tales" of Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75), the philosophical essays of Soren Kierkegaard, and the short stories of Karen Blixen (pen name Isak Dinesen) have earned international recognition, as have the symphonies of Carl Nielsen.

Danish applied art and industrial design have won awards for excellence. The name Georg Jensen is famous for outstanding modern design in silver, and "Royal Copenhagen" is among the best of fine porcelains.

The Royal Danish Ballet is an exceptional company, specializing in the work of the great Danish choreographer August Bournonville. Danes have distinguished themselves as jazz musicians, and the Copenhagen Jazz Festival has acquired an international reputation.

International collections of modern art enjoy unusually attractive settings at the Louisiana Museum, north of Copenhagen, and at the North Jutland Art Museum in Aalborg. The State Museum of Art and the Glyptotek, both in Copenhagen, contain treasures of Danish and international art. The Museum of Applied Art and Industrial Design in Copenhagen holds exhibits, featuring the best in Danish design.

Among Danish writers today, probably the most prolific is Klaus Rifbjerg—poet, novelist, playwright, and screenwriter. Benny Andersen writes poems, short stories, and music. Poems by both writers have been translated into English by Curbstone Press. Kirsten Thorup's *Baby*, winner of the 1980 Pegasus Prize, is printed in English by the University of Louisiana Press. The psychological thrillers of Anders Bodelsen also appear in English.

In music, Hans Abrahamsen and Per Norgaard are the two most famous living composers. Hans Abrahamsen's works have been performed by the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C.

Two Danish films, "Babette's Feast" and "Pelle the Conqueror," won Academy Awards as Best Foreign Film in 1988 and 1989, respectively.

Danish education follows the traditional European system. School attendance is mandatory through age 15, when most students either continue their education or enter an apprenticeship program. Danes take great pride in achieving the status of skilled workers. Great emphasis is placed on adult education. Many evening courses are offered at Copenhagen University and in high schools.

Higher education is offered at commercial and technical colleges and universities. Denmark's universities are at Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense, Roskilde, and Aalborg. The University of Copenhagen, the oldest and largest, has five faculties: theology, law and economics, medicine, arts, and science. Other seats of higher learning include the Technical University of Denmark, Academy of Engineers, Dental Colleges, and School of Pharmacy. In addition to academic requirements, foreign students must be fluent in the Danish language.

Interest in science and the arts is promoted by universities and special foundations such as the Carlsberg/Tuborg Foundation. Other research is financed by the State.

One of Denmark's best known institutes is the Niels Bohr Institute of Theoretical Physics in Copenhagen.

Commerce and Industry

An agricultural economy until World War II, in the postwar period, initially assisted by the Marshall Plan, Denmark rapidly developed into a modern industry and services society. Agriculture and fishing today account for 3 percent of the economy, services 72 percent, and industry 25 percent. Metal working and food processing are the most important industries.

Denmark's few natural resources are farmland, fish, and oil and natural gas in the North Sea. The Danish economy is, therefore, based on adding value to domestic and imported raw materials. Its living standard is one of the highest in the world. It has a highly unionized, well-paid, and skilled labor force. Denmark is heavily dependent on foreign trade. About 73 percent of total commodity exports are manufactured products and 17 percent agricultural and fish products.

2000 saw a 2.8% increase in the economy, assisted by continued strong exports, but also by a recovery in domestic demand. The present inflation rate, 2.9 percent, is low among the OECD countries. Following more than a quarter of a century of recurring balance-of-payments deficits, resulting in a large foreign debt and consequently large interest payments, the balance shifted into a surplus in 1990 and 1991, where it has remained, with the exception of a temporary deficit in 1998.

The U.S., in 2000, ranked number seven among Denmark's trading partners, accounting for more than 4 percent of total Danish commodity trade worth \$68 billion. The EU accounts for more than half of the trade, Germany alone for 22 percent. Major U.S. exports to Denmark are aircraft, machinery and EDP equipment. Major Danish

exports to the U.S. are machinery and equipment, foodstuffs (mostly canned ham and pork), and furniture.

Denmark is a major shipbuilding and shipping nation. A large share of shipping earnings stem from liner trade to and from the U.S. Danish shipbuilding.

Transportation

Local

Traffic moves on the right. Copenhagen's public transportation system is excellent. It includes bus and train service that is quick, clean, safe, and convenient. Fares are reasonable and monthly passes are available at reduced rates. Trains provide quick service to the suburbs, but little between midnight and 5 am.

Taxis are usually plentiful. All taxis have meters for calculating fares. They are not expensive.

Regional

Copenhagen is connected to all major European centers by rail and air. Both TWA and Delta Air Lines have daily service between the U.S. and Copenhagen. Tower Air operates flights twice weekly. Scandinavian Air Lines and other international airlines also provide service between Copenhagen and major U.S. cities.

Daily rail service is available to most European capitals. Ferries travel to Norway, Sweden, Germany, Poland, and England.

Many Danes use bicycles, not only for recreation, but also as a primary means of transportation. Designated bicycle lanes exist on most major thoroughfares. They are situated between the street and the sidewalk. Bicycles are required to have reflectors and, at night, are required to display a white light in front and a red light on the rear. Insurance is recommended. New bicycles are more expensive in Denmark than in the U.S.

Bicycles have the right-of-way and cars must yield to them. The only time a bicycle must yield to a pedestrian or a motor vehicle is when a pedestrian exits a city bus or when a motor vehicle is turning with a protected turn green light.

Pedestrians and motorists must not walk or turn into a bicycle lane.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and long-distance telephone services are good. International telephone and telegraph service is available from Copenhagen to all parts of the world. AT&T credit card "USA Direct" service, MCI, and Sprint are available for calls to the U.S. and result in significant savings. Local telephone bills are received quarterly. No itemized breakdown of charge per call is available, even for long-distance calls, unless an operator is used.

Radio and TV

Denmark has two national TV channels and three national radio stations. Two Swedish TV channels can be received in Copenhagen with a good antenna. American and British programs and movies are often shown on all four TV channels in the original English, with Danish/Swedish subtitles. Color transmission is excellent. The PAL standard is used for broadcasting by Danish TV. Cable TV is available in most areas. Both CNN International and BBC are available on cable, as well as French, German, and Norwegian stations. Where cable is not available, satellite reception is available. Both systems have costs similar to those in the U.S.

Radio reception from Swedish, German, and British stations, as well as the German-based American Forces network, is possible with a good receiver and antenna.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Time, *Newsweek*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *International Herald Tribune* are sold locally. These

and other English-language newspapers are sold at the main train station and in lobbies of large hotels. Danish libraries are good and have English sections. Books in English are also available at the British Council library.

Copenhagen bookstores sell the latest American and British books at about double the U.S. price.

Health and Medicine

Danish medical care is of high quality and is comparable to the medical care one finds throughout Western Europe. However, despite its high quality, the system for providing care in Denmark is different from that in the U.S. Waiting periods are common for routine, non-emergency surgery. Diagnostic tests take longer to schedule than in the U.S.

Medical Facilities

Diagnostic laboratories and specialists in all fields of medicine are available. Hospitals are well-equipped and reasonably priced. Maternity hospitals and many clinics are available. Most doctors and dentists speak English.

Most medicines are available locally. They may not, however, be the same brand names as those used in the U.S. Prices are higher than in the U.S., even though the prices are state controlled. Bring a supply of medicine that you know you will need.

Community Health

Sanitary conditions in Denmark are excellent. Danish law is strict about commercial processing, cooking, handling, and serving of foods. All dairies in the city supply pasteurized milk from tubercular-tested cows. All milk is safe to drink. Copenhagen is cleaner than most U.S. cities of comparable size.

Denmark has had no serious epidemics in years. Colds, influenza, and throat infections may be aggravated in winter by dampness and lack of sunshine. Persons with

arthritis, rheumatism, and sinus troubles may find winter uncomfortable.

Preventive Measures

No special health risks occur in Denmark, and no special inoculations are required. Any needed immunization is available in Copenhagen.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Three King's Day
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Mar/Apr.	Palm Sunday
Mar/Apr.	Maundy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 16	Queen Margrethe's Birthday
Apr/May	Common Prayer Day*
May/June	Ascension Day*
May	Mother's Day*
May/June	Whitsunday*
May/June	Whitmonday*
June 5	Constitution Day
June	Father's Day*
June 15	Flag Day
June	Mid Summer Party*
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Second Christmas Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Travel to Copenhagen involves no special problems. Danish weather is variable, so bring clothing for cold and rain, whatever the season.

A valid passport is the only document needed for entry into Denmark. Neither a visa nor a

vaccination certificate is required for entry.

U.S. visitors to Greenland and the Faroes require visas.

Cats and dogs imported from Australia, Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, and the U.K. require no veterinary certificates. No stay is allowed outside these countries during travel to Denmark. The animals must be accompanied by their owner or other person.

Cats and dogs imported from other countries and Greenland require a special form, stating all relevant information, and certifying that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies, which must be presented to Customs. The certificate must further state that vaccination has taken place within the time limit of 1-12 months from the date of presentation. The pets must be accompanied by their owner or other person.

Import of other animals is subject to a special permit from the Danish Veterinary Authorities (contact Danish Consul).

A bilingual Danish-English certificate should be used if possible. A Veterinary Health Certificate, executed between 1 and 10 days before arrival in Copenhagen, is recommended.

The key to avoiding problems on arrival is to have the vaccination certificate, the health certificate, and the pet(s) accompany the traveler.

Denmark has decided not to convert to the euro. The Danish monetary units are kroner and ore, with 100 ore equaling 1 kroner. Coins are issued in 25 and 50 ore pieces, and 1, 5, 10, and 20 kroner pieces. Notes are issued in 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 kroner denominations. The current exchange rate is DKr 7.95=US\$1.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Denmark.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Andersen, Ulla. *We Live in Denmark*. Watts, Franklin, Inc.: 1984.

Baedeker's Denmark. New York: Prentice-Hall, latest edition.

Birch, John H. *Denmark in History*. Gordon Press: 1976.

Borish, Steven M. *The Land of the Living: The Danish Folk High Schools & Denmark's Non-Violent Path to Modernization*. Blue Dolphin Publishing: 1991.

Flender, Harold. *Rescue in Denmark*. Repr. Paper. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Gronlund, J. *The Denmark Book*. Vanous Arthur Company: 1988.

Hansen, Judith E. *We are a Little Land: Cultural Assumptions in*

Danish Everyday Life. Ayer Company Publishers, Inc.: 1981.

Hartling, Poul., ed. *The Danish Church*. Repr. of 1964 ed. Nordic Books.

Holbraad, Carsten. *Danish Neutrality: A Study in the Foreign Policy of a Small State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Johansen, Hans C. *The Danish Economy in the Twentieth Century*. St. Martin's Press: 1986.

Jones, W. Glyn. *Denmark: A Modern History*, 2nd ed. Chapman & Hall, Inc.: 1986.

Jones, W. Glyn, and Kristen Gade. *Blue Guide: Denmark*. New York: Norton, 1992.

Lye, Keith. *Take a Trip to Denmark*. Watts, Franklin, Inc.: 1985.

MacHaffie, Ingeborg S., and Margaret A. Nielsen. *Of Danish Ways*. New York: HarperCollins, 1984.

Miller, Kenneth E. *Denmark: A Troubled Welfare State*. Westview Press: 1991.

Lerner, Geography Dept. Staff. *Denmark in Pictures*. Lerner Publications Company: 1991.

P'ansson, Herman & Edwards, Paul. *Kyntlinga Saga: History of the Kings Of Denmark*. Coronet Books: 1986.

Tansill, Charles C. *Purchase of the Danish West Indies*. Repr. of 1932 ed. Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.: 1968.

Danish Embassies have an excellent selection of government and tourist organization publications on Denmark.

ESTONIA

Republic of Estonia

Major City:

Tallinn

Other Cities and Regions:

Hiiumaa, Narva, Saaremaa, Tartu

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Estonia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

ESTONIA has had a history of domination by other countries. Ruled at times by Germans, Swedes, Russians, and finally the Soviets, Estonia had a brief period of independence from 1920 to 1940, when it was forcibly annexed by the Soviets. Occupied by German forces between 1941 and 1944, Estonia was once again claimed by the Soviets after World War II and remained a Soviet republic until its independence was declared in August 1991.

Tallinn

Built in a naturally formed harbor on the Baltic Sea, Tallinn is a picturesque capital city with a long

maritime tradition. The Old Town and the adjacent Toompea (Castle Hill) contain Tallinn's oldest buildings that reflect the city's history as an important point on the east-west trade route from the Middle Ages and later. The 13th century fortress on Toompea and several church spires on Toompea and in the Old Town, built from the 13th to 16th centuries, dominate Tallinn's skyline. Near the lower town, where the artisans and merchants traditionally lived, remnants of the town wall begun in the 13th century remain. Cobble streets wind around the Old Town, passing houses once belonging to wealthy merchants and the guildhalls from where these merchants controlled trade in agricultural commodities and artisanship during the days when Tallinn was a member of the Hanseatic League. These days the Old Town is filled with tourists and Estonians frequenting the many cafes, restaurants, and shops.

Modern Tallinn has a vibrant business and arts community. Immediately east of the Old Town is the more modern center of Tallinn (Kesklinn). Theaters and museums are located in both the Kesklinn and Old Town, as are many apartment buildings.

Utilities

Standard electric power in Estonia is 220v and runs at 50 cycles, but voltage may run lower than that. Electricity is generally reliable. Any appliances or other electrical items that run at 110v must be used simultaneously with a step-down transformer. Also, bring, and use, surge protectors and step-down transformers for 110v computer equipment.

Food

A wide variety of shops and markets in Tallinn supply basic food needs, and the number of larger supermarket-type stores continues to grow. Availability and variety of imported fruits, vegetables, locally produced meats, dairy products, and various foods imported from Western Europe have increased dramatically since independence. Many American convenience type foods and specialty items are not available in Tallinn (boxed brownie and cake mixes, chocolate chips, Crisco, boxed macaroni and cheese, pop tarts, frozen waffles, etc.).

Clothing

Men: Business suits and slack/blazer combinations are recommended for work. Various weights of wool can be worn throughout the year. Few social occasions in Tallinn require a tuxedo. For casual fall and winter wear, wool, corduroy and

other heavier weight slacks are appropriate. Turtlenecks, sweaters, and clothes from various outdoor outfitters are best for keeping warm. However, you may not want to bring too many sweaters, as Estonian knitwear is of excellent quality, affordable, and readily available.

Women: Wool suits and separates are recommended, as are long-sleeved blouses, turtlenecks, and sweaters. Bring a large supply of heavier weight stockings or tights in addition to regular nylons. For some affairs, dressier cocktail-length dresses are appropriate. Heavier weight fabrics such as wool or corduroy are recommended. In general, more subdued colors are most common, but women in Estonia often wear bright colors to formal events. For social events, the fashion trend in Tallinn is stylish and follows that in any Western or northern European capital city.

Children: Good-quality, reasonably priced snowsuits and winter children's outerwear are available locally. Children, as well as adults, need to wear hats and gloves from October through May.

Both men and women should bring warm coats suitable for work and casual wear. A raincoat with a liner and umbrella is also useful throughout the year, but especially from March to October. Both men and women wear hats and gloves or mittens from October through March. Warm, breathable raingear is recommended for wet autumn months.

Winter clothes should include the warmest clothes you would wear in Washington, D.C., during January and February. These may be appropriate for fall and spring in Tallinn as well. You should count on layering and wearing sweaters and heavier dress clothes from October until May. In addition, bring several pairs of long underwear. Lightweight silk or synthetic long underwear is recommended.

In the summer, clothes worn in the fall or spring in Washington, D.C., are appropriate. Women will find

separates useful, especially jackets and cardigans, because the weather is cooler in the morning and late evening during summer. As for casual clothes, those that you would wear during a northern New England summer are best. Shorts are appropriate for sports, picnics, and casual outings. It should be noted that air-conditioning is almost nonexistent in Estonia. Office buildings, stores, shops, and homes can become quite warm for short periods in the summer months, so bring a small supply of short-sleeve dress shirts or blouses suitable for work.

Footwear throughout the year should be sturdy. The cobblestone streets of the Old Town, not to mention the damp, cold winter weather, are particularly hard on shoes. For winter, bring waterproof boots with soles that will not slip on the icy sidewalks and streets. From November through April, most women wear boots because shoes are not warm enough for walking on the cold, wet, and icy sidewalks. For men, thickly soled shoes or a pair of boots is recommended. Overshoes are also a useful wardrobe addition. Generally, footwear here is slightly more expensive than in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Since 1991, the types of goods and supplies available in Tallinn have increased week by week. The general rule of thumb is that almost any item can be obtained in Estonia's capital, but some items are prone to sporadic availability. In addition, a 18% value-added tax is placed on imported goods.

Western European and American toiletries, cosmetics, and feminine personal supplies are available in Tallinn as are cleaning supplies, food products, items for pets, clothes washing needs, contact lens supplies, and basic first-aid items. Not all brands are available, so if you are partial to a specific brand, bring it with you. Good-quality items are expensive but not prohibitively so.

Cooks interested in preparing various international or ethnic foods

should bring a basic supply of what they need, such as specialty spices and condiments. Some items for international cooking (especially Tex-Mex) can be found, but they are not always available.

There are a wide variety of basic services available in Tallinn, and increasingly, the quality of these services is similar to that offered in other Western European capitals.

Everyday services such as shoe, watch, and eyeglass repair are available in Tallinn. In addition to beauty- and barbershops at the major hotels, Tallinn has many smaller salons for men's and women's haircuts. Many individuals work as dressmakers out of their own homes.

Reliable drycleaning facilities, at prices similar to or slightly lower than in the U.S. are also available.

Kodak, Fuji, and Agfa franchises are located in Tallinn and have excellent machine-assisted developing processes. The quality of color prints is high, but the cost is higher than that in the Washington, D.C., area. Kodak, Fuji, and Agfa color print and slide film, as well as black-and-white print film, are readily available for prices similar to those in Washington, D.C. Camera batteries and other smaller batteries are also readily available.

In general, most local services are similar in quality and less expensive than in Washington, D.C.

Domestic Help

Domestic help, including childcare, is available in Tallinn. Most domestics are not trained household staff, per se. Rather, they are more often under- or unemployed people, often just out of school, or with grown children who have basic cleaning, cooking, and childcare skills who are attracted by the above-average wages paid by the international community (EEK2550/hour [\$2-\$3.50] depending on the tasks required). Generally, younger household help will speak at least some English, will be familiar with



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Estonian Orthodox church with three onion-dome towers

modern appliances, and will be easier to train. However, younger staff may not be committed to more than short-term or occasional work. Older domestic staff are more likely to commit to longer, full-time work, but are less likely to speak English, less likely to be familiar with Western appliances, and less likely to adhere to Western cleanliness and hygiene standards. Generally, domestic help is employed during business hours, and on evenings and weekends as needed. Live-in domestic staff is rare in Estonia. The best way to hire help is to find someone through word of mouth. The community liaison

By law, the employer must pay the employee's social security and ill-

ness compensation coverage at a rate of 33% of the employee's salary.

Religious Activities

Tallinn has Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, and Russian Orthodox churches. There is a service in English once a month and on holidays at a Lutheran church. The Catholic church holds services in English the first Sunday of every month. A Jewish community center, with a provisional synagogue, holds services in Russian on Saturdays and Jewish holidays.

Education

The International Elementary School of Estonia (I.E.S.E) was established in 1995 and has steadily increased its enrollment since then.

Under direction of an American, classes (preschool through grade 8) are taught in English. The curriculum follows Western education standards. Most teachers are native English speakers. Aside from the basic curriculum, German, Estonian, computer, art, music, and physical education are also taught. In fall 1997, the school moved to a new facility, sharing a wing of the Tallinn Medical School. This provided students with larger classrooms, use of a cafeteria, gymnasium, and auditorium, and a large outdoor play area. Currently, I.E.S.E. cannot accommodate children with special needs. The Tallinn International English Kindergarten, established in September 1997, is another option for preschool children.

Sports

Tallinn has a good range of sporting opportunities, including modern indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Most sports facilities and clubs cost less than in metropolitan Washington, D.C.

Indoor sports are particularly popular and, in winter, often a necessary diversion. Several sports clubs offer aerobics classes and weight lifting equipment. In addition, these clubs often have showering, sauna, massage, and solarium facilities. A couple of squash clubs have opened in Tallinn. Tallinn has several indoor swimming facilities, and a few of the large health clubs have small lap pools. Estonia's favorite team sport is basketball.

Tallinn has a bowling alley similar in quality and price to a U.S. bowling facility. Tennis players will find a tennis center in Kadriorg Park, as well as two other smaller outdoor facilities near downtown Tallinn. Some indoor courts exist, but outdoor courts offer late evening tennis during late spring and summer. Lessons with English-speaking coaches for children and adults can be arranged. Court fees are inexpensive.

Summer picnicking spots abound along the Estonian seacoast and

lakes, but they make for chilly bathing, even in the midsummer. Windsurfing, kayaking, and canoeing are possible on the Baltic as well as on Estonia's many lakes and rivers. The Tallinn Yachting Center, the site of the 1980 Olympic sailing events, is Estonia's premier sailing center. Sailboats (with or without crew) can be rented at slightly below U.S. rates. Boating equipment, particularly safety equipment, may be limited.

As soon as the first snow falls, Estonians begin to plan cross-country skiing outings. There are numerous skiing spots in wooded areas of Tallinn and at places in the countryside close enough to drive for a day trip. More adventurous skiers can plan overnight trips as well. Tallinn has two skating rinks, including a modern indoor facility. Good-quality cross-country skiing equipment and skates in all sizes are purchased easily and inexpensively.

Running is popular in Estonia, but cold temperatures, darkness, and icy sidewalks require that runners bring appropriate cold weather attire and wear safety reflectors. Sidewalks are often too icy for safe winter running. Rollerblading is increasingly popular in Estonia. Rollerblade equipment is readily available locally, at prices similar to or slightly below Washington, D.C. prices.

Estonia has one golf course, located about 12.5 kilometers from downtown. It is open to the public, well maintained, and offers a complete range of golfing services including a driving range, a pro shop, and a clubhouse. Greens fees are slightly higher than in the U.S.

Bicycling enthusiasts will find many possibilities for biking around Estonia. Rural roads just outside Tallinn and around the country are uncrowded, and the topography is usually flat. The hilly southeastern region resembles western Maryland and is also good for bike trips. Although main roads are surfaced, they are often rough. Bikes with wider tires such as "mountain

bikes" are more comfortable on rough surfaces. Tallinn's many bike shops sell a variety of brands and styles at prices similar to, or less expensive, than in Washington, D.C.

Horseback riding and lessons are available in Tallinn and at several other locations near the city.

Spectators can watch many sporting events and exhibitions during the year. For example, basketball, soccer, and handball games are played at various locations in Tallinn.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

There is much to do and see while touring Tallinn, the countryside, and the Baltic Sea coastline.

With many shops, restaurants, and cafes, Tallinn is well setup for visitors, most of whom are day- or short-term travelers arriving by boat from Helsinki. In the Old Town, you can take a walking tour (on your own or with a guide) of the cobblestone streets while looking at finely preserved examples of Gothic and Hanseatic architecture. The Old Town has a heavy concentration of shops, restaurants, cafes, museums, and other diversions. In Kadriorg Park, on the eastern edge of the city center, a walk in a peaceful wooded setting leads to the baroque Kadriorg Palace, built for Catherine I, wife of Tsar Peter I. The ruins of a cloister and convent dating from 1436 located near Pirita (about 2 kilometers east of the city center) provide another picturesque and interesting place to visit. In summer, Pirita Beach is popular for swimming, sunbathing, and boating.

Possibilities for day trips within a 3- to 4-hour round-trip drive from Tallinn abound, as Estonia is filled with pine forests and shoreline waiting to be explored. The Lahemaa National Forest, 40 kilometers east of Tallinn on the Gulf of Finland, is a good place to picnic and walk in naturally beautiful surroundings. Numerous well-preserved German manor houses are found in and around Lahemaa Park.

Matsalu, a 2½-hour drive from Tallinn, is a nature preserve and waterbird sanctuary on the coast south and west of the capital. It, too, is a good place to picnic and walk. A hilly inland spot with beautiful forests and lakes is Aegviidu, a 75-minute drive from Tallinn. Aegviidu is especially popular among cross-country skiers.

Interesting overnight trips from Tallinn can easily be arranged, as overnight accommodations have existed for a long time but are just beginning to be renovated for tourists and be advertised. Tartu, a 2½-hour drive from Tallinn, is close enough for a day trip, but there is enough to do there to make it an overnight excursion. It is worth seeing Tartu's several museums, art galleries, and historical buildings, including two red-brick Gothic churches (the remains of a 13th-century church and a standing 14th century church) and Tartu University. Hotels in Tartu offer comfortable accommodations. Near Tartu is the hilly region of southeastern Estonia, and the resort town of Otepää. Since there is generally more snow in southeastern Estonia than in other parts of the country, Otepää is popular with cross-country skiers. Several guesthouse-type accommodations are available in the area. Parnu is a 2-hour drive south of Tallinn and is a picturesque seaside resort town with many new cafes, restaurants, and several nicely renovated hotels. Narva, a 3½-hour drive northeast of Tallinn, is located on the border with Russia. Narva Castle, built when Narva was an important Hanseatic port, dates from the 13th century and now houses a historical museum well worth visiting. The castle's setting is unique because it sits across the Narva

River from the castle in Ivangorod, Russia. Residents of Narva claim that these two fortresses are the closest, once-warring castles in the world.

Estonia's many islands offer restful vacation places. The largest of the islands, Saaremaa, is a 3½-hour

drive-and-ferry ride from Tallinn. Kuressaare, the island's largest town, is quaint. The Kuressaare Episcopal Castle dates from the 14th century and is considered Estonia's best preserved castle. Like the castle at Narva, it houses a good historical museum. Saaremaa has many beaches, forests, and two wildlife preserves, including one with an established bird sanctuary. Hiiumaa Island, Estonia's second largest island, is also about a 3½-hour drive-and-ferry ride from Tallinn, and well worth a visit. Many of Estonia's islands offer over-night accommodations.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of Estonia's touring possibilities. Like most European cities, in order to decide where to go, you must consult guidebooks, various locally published newspapers and periodicals (in Estonian and English), travel agents, the Tallinn City Tourist Office, and Estonian friends. Estonia has a reasonably good road system that makes it easy to travel, and touring Estonia never disappoints the resourceful traveler.

Entertainment

Music is a central aspect of Estonian culture, and, therefore, entertainment in Tallinn usually centers around various kinds of musical productions. The Estonia Opera and Ballet Theater's Concert Hall and other venues offer classical concerts, recitals, and choir performances almost daily during the winter season. Likewise, very good opera and ballet performances take place at the Estonia Opera and Ballet Theater's Opera House. Occasionally, musicals are performed at the Opera House or Linnahall. Compared to the price for attending such kinds of cultural programs in the U.S., cultural events in Estonia are inexpensive. During summer many special dance and music festivals are in Tallinn and around Estonia. Every 4 years the National Song Festival takes place near Tallinn. During summer, there are also outdoor rock concerts in Tallinn featuring Estonian, Western European, and U.S. rock bands.



View of Tallinn, Estonia

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Restaurants, bars, and cafes often have live music during dining hours or later in the evening, and some nightspots have dance floors. Usually local bands play rock, blues, or jazz. You can expect a small cover charge to enter when there is music.

Foreign films are featured at a few of Tallinn's theaters. Occasional foreign film festivals and special showings of lesser known "art films" are held at the Kinomaja in Tallinn's Old Town. The Kosmos and Soprouse theaters show American films in English with Estonian and Russian subtitles. New movies arrive all the time. Employees can also purchase satellite TV that offers a wide array of programs.

Many of Tallinn's museums have very good art and historic collections that are worth seeing. The Eesti Kunstimuseum (Art Museum of Estonia) exhibits Estonian art from the 19th century to 1940 and other Baltic painters' works. The Tarbekunstimuseum (Museum of Decorative and Applied Art) exhibits 20th century crafts and decorative arts from Estonia. At Kiek in de Kok there are usually photography exhibitions. Just outside Tallinn is the Vabaõhmuuseum (Open-Air Museum) where 18th- to 20th-century rural build-

ings are on display throughout the year in a wooded park land. Historical artifacts are exhibited at the Linnamuseum (City Museum) and Meremuuseum (Maritime Museum), among other museums in Tallinn.

Other activities in the Old Town include shopping for Estonian hand-crafts and souvenirs, as well as eating and drinking at Tallinn's increasing number of cafes and restaurants located in renovated medieval buildings. Antique shopping is also popular, and Estonia has some genuine bargains (cut glass, silver, and amber jewelry, wooden objects and furniture).

International trade shows, special exhibitions, and presentations can be seen regularly at the Eesti Naitused (Estonian Exhibitions) Hall in Pirit. In 1997, exhibitions included a car show, a job fair, a trade fair for businesswomen, a travel fair, and a computer exposition and sale. Shows are often held through the weekends and are open to the public.

An important holiday in Estonia is on Jaanipäev (St. John's Day), or Midsummer's Eve. It is celebrated in every city, town, and village. Tallinn's big festival, Hanseatic

Days, is in early summer and features folk music and dancing. Most other local festivals are celebrated by folk dancing and singing with performers and participants in traditional dress.

Social Activities

The American Chamber of Commerce is very active in Tallinn. It brings together the overgrowing American corporate community and occasionally sponsors happy hours, fund raisers, athletic activities, and other fun activities.

The international community is quite varied, but the Americans, British, Germans, Swedes, Danes, and, most of all, the Finns, are most heavily represented. There is no central meeting place for the international community, so most activities revolve around dinner parties at home, going to concerts, the opera or theater, going to restaurants, or participating in school socials/activities. For women, the International Women's Club offers many interesting activities as well as a chance to chat and socialize. The International Women's Club has a children's playgroup that meets once a week.

Security

The most prevalent problem for residents in Tallinn is cart theft. Prudence should be exercised to park in well-lit safe areas and to use any security features available (e.g., the Club, engine cutoff switches, alarms, etc.).

Personal crime is primarily nonviolent and opportunity driven. Pickpocketing and purse snatchings are not uncommon in any crowded area but are most likely to affect visitors in Old Town, Kadaka Market, and other tourist areas. The use of violence is low by U.S. standards. Credit-card fraud can be a problem, and standard precautions should be taken when using credit cards in Estonia.

Generally, organized crime activity is more subdued in Estonia than elsewhere in the former Soviet

Union. Juvenile crime, however, is on the rise.

Life in Tallinn is safe when compared to large U.S. cities. Estonians, although generally reserved, are pro-American. If people exercise the same caution and use the same common sense that they would in any large city, they can expect to have a safe and rewarding tour or visit...

OTHER CITIES

HIUMAA, the second-largest island of Estonia, is located about 14 miles west of the mainland. The main town, Kärđla, offers beautiful coastline and gardens and often serves as a gateway point to the Tahkuna Peninsula. A lighthouse built in 1874 sits at the northern tip of the peninsula. At Ristimägi, the southern base of the peninsula, lies the Hill of Crosses. Handmade crosses cover the dune marking the spot where the last Swedes living here performed their last act of worship before being deported in 1781. Traditionally, first-time visitors to the island go to place a cross on the hill.

Käina, at the south end of Hiiumaa near the shore of Käina Bay, offers a major bird reserve. The ruins of a 15th century stone church are here as well.

NARVA, located in northeast Estonia on a river of the same name, less than 10 miles from the Gulf of Finland, has a population of 82,500. The city was founded by the Danes in 1223 and was a seat of the Livonian Knights and a member of the Hanseatic League. It was captured in 1558 by Ivan the Terrible of Russia, then in 1581 was taken by the Swedes. In 1700, Narva was the scene of a battle in which the Swedes, under Charles XII, successfully defended the city against the Russians, led by Peter the Great. In 1704, Narva was recaptured by Russia. During World War I, Narva was the site of many battles. In January 1919, the city was occupied by Communist forces who had also tried to

occupy, but were driven out of, Latvia and Finland. During World War II, German forces occupied the city. Today, Narva is a milling center, producing cotton, jute, wool, and flax. A hydroelectric power plant was built here in the mid-1950s. At the mouth of the Narva River on the Gulf of Finland is the city's port and a summer resort, Narva-Jõesuu.

SAAREMAA, the largest island of Estonia, consists mainly of farmland and forests. Those looking for a quiet, gentle vacation spot will enjoy the quaint features of the island, including many windmills, stone churches and fishing villages. Kuressaare, the capital of the island, is the site of a 13th century castle open for tourists. Viidumäe, about 16 miles west of Kuressaare, is the site of a beautiful botanical reserve that is home to such rare plant species such as the blunt-flowered rush, the Saaremaa yellow rattle and the white-beam.

From Kuressaare, nature buffs can take a boat to Abruksa, located four miles off the southern coast of Saaremaa. A botanical-zoological reservation is open here in the summer, offering classes, horseback riding and overnight stays in a rustic farmhouse. If you happen to be on Saaremaa in the winter, you can walk to Abruksa over the frozen strait.

TARTU, Estonia's second-largest city with a population of 115,500, is the site of an important university founded in 1632 by King Gustavus Adolphus II of Sweden. The university has several specialized institutes, a good library, and a botanical garden. Tartu was founded as a castle in 1030 by a Kiev prince. It was captured by the Teutonic Knights in 1224 and was a member of the Hanseatic League. Through the centuries, the city was under Russian, Polish, and Swedish authority. It became Russian in 1704. Tartu was the scene of considerable fighting during the Russian Revolution. Two important peace treaties were signed here: the first between the U.S.S.R. and Estonia in February of 1920, and the other between

U.S.S.R. and Finland in October of 1920. During World War II, Tartu was occupied by the Germans and was considerably damaged.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Estonia is the northernmost of the three Baltic States. West of Estonia is the Baltic Sea, north is the Gulf of Finland, and to the east is Russia. Estonia borders Latvia on the south. The smallest of the Baltic States, Estonia covers 18,086 square miles (45,226 square kilometers), and is roughly the size of New Hampshire and Vermont combined.

Estonia is located on the Great Northern European Plain. Its topography is typically flat in coastal regions and hilly in the inland southeastern part of the country. The elevation in northwestern Estonia averages 160 feet (49 meters), but rises to 320 feet (98 meters) in the southeast. The highest point in Estonia, at 1,040 feet (317 meters) high, is a hill called Suur Munämagi in the southeast.

Estonia's inland waters include 1,400 lakes and many shallow rivers. The largest lakes are Lake Peipus in eastern Estonia on the Russian border and Lake Võrts in south-central Estonia. Estonia's two major rivers are the Emajõgi, running east-west from Lake Was to Lake Peipus, and the Narva, that connects Lake Peipus to the Gulf of Finland. Estonia has substantial areas of bogs and wetlands, particularly in western regions. Forest and woodland, which is usually a mixture of coniferous spruce, pine, white birch, ash, maple, and aspen, cover 31% of Estonia.

Off the coast of Estonia are 1,520 islands that account for nearly 8% of the country's total land area. The largest islands are Saaremaa and Hiiumaa.

The climate is northern continental, with long winters and short summers. Winter begins in October and lasts often well into April. Snow cover is common from mid- or late November to the latter half of March. Cloud cover and slate gray skies are typical between October and early February, when drier and sunnier days arrive. Mean January temperatures are 22°F-25°F (-4°C-6°C). The Gulfs of Finland and Riga only freeze over during the coldest winters.

In addition to being cold and snowy, winter months are characterized by shortened daylight, a result of Estonia's northern latitude (59°N, about the same latitude as Juneau, Alaska). When days are at their shortest, daylight is present only between 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Prevailing gray skies from November through January make daylight seem even more fleeting. The sun, when it shines, hugs the horizon, thus giving the impression that it is early morning or late afternoon even at midday.

It is often difficult to say exactly when winter ends and spring begins. After the Vernal Equinox (March 21), daylight increases dramatically. Most days in late March, April, and May are sunny. Daytime temperatures, however, may still remain in the 30°F-45°F range into late April, and it is not safe to put winter clothing in storage until late May. Occasional snow flurries and light snow are possible through May.

Summer in Estonia is a short, magical season. Temperatures and humidity are generally cooler and lower than summer in the U.S. July and August temperatures are the warmest, averaging 67°F-75°F (19°C-24°C). Mornings are cooler and the late afternoon can warm up to the low 80s. The surface water temperature in the Baltic Sea is from 60°F-78°F (16°C-26°C). The heaviest rains occur in July and August, but they are usually passing showers. During summer months, Estonia benefits from its northern latitude, with daylight

extending long into evening hours, and reappearing well before earliest risers are out of bed. From early June to mid July, there is no real "nighttime."

The short autumn can start as early as late August, and is generally cool and rainy. Autumn colors are pleasant, but not as varied or spectacular as in the northeastern U.S.

Population

Estonia has some 1,475,000 inhabitants. Throughout Estonia's modern history, people from several ethnic groups have entered the country as immigrants to work in the industrial sector. The last major influx of immigrants, primarily ethnic Russians sent to live in Estonia during the Soviet era, occurred after World War II. Ethnic groups present in Estonia include 64% Estonian, 29% Russian-speaking, 3% Ukrainians, and 2% Belarussians. The urban population of Estonia is 71% of the total population, according to the census. Tallinn is the largest city with 420,470 residents, followed by Tartu with 101,901, and Narva with 75,211. Residents of Tallinn are 47.4% Estonian and 41.2% Russian. The rural population, including the islands, is 87% Estonian.

There is no state religion in Estonia. Currently, major denominations include Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, Baptist, and Catholic. The small Jewish community consists mainly of native Russian speakers.

History

A small nation located between East and West, Estonia has spent much of its history under foreign domination. In spite of this fact, the Estonian people have preserved their language and culture. In August 1991 the Republic of Estonia regained its independence, and, thus, began the challenging tasks of nation-building and the reorientation of Estonian public institutions toward those characteristic of a parliamentary democracy.

From the 13th- to the 18th-century, Estonia was ruled by the Danes, an order of German Teutonic Knights, the Poles, and the Swedes. In 1710, during the Great Northern War, Russia defeated Sweden, and the first era of Russian rule over Estonia began. Russian rule lasted until the Russian Empire collapsed with the Bolshevik Revolution at the end of World War I. Estonia declared its independence from Russia on February 24, 1918, but a war with Russia for this independence followed. Two years later, the two sides concluded the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty in which Soviet Russia recognized the independence and sovereignty of Estonia.

On the eve of World War II, Estonian sovereignty was again undermined. On August 23, 1939, Estonia's two powerful neighbor states, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, concluded a mutual defense pact (the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact), which contained secret protocols dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence, with Estonia falling into the Soviet sphere. The same autumn, the Soviet Union demanded Estonia for military bases. Confronted with the threat of annihilation, Estonia acceded to this demand. This led to the forcible incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union in the summer of 1940. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Estonia fell under Nazi control. In 1944, the Soviets regained the country and remained in control until the August 1991 failed coup in Moscow. Amid the coup, Estonia declared its independence reestablished. In early September 1991, the U.S. reestablished diplomatic relations with Estonia, which had been suspended in 1940.

Before Estonia's August 1991 declaration of independence, the period from 1985 to 1991 was marked by a gradual movement toward economic, social, and political independence. Two primary issues engendered public demonstrations and meetings in 1987 and 1988. The first issue was a proposed phosphate mine which opponents argued

would pollute the ground water and air near the facility. Demonstrations against the mining caused Moscow to abandon the plan the same year. The second issue was that of the secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the existence of which Soviet authorities still denied. In a dramatic public demonstration, well-known dissidents organized a public meeting on August 23, 1987, demanding the pact's publication in Estonia to prove that Estonia did not join the Soviet Union voluntarily.

In 1988, several prominent Estonians began to publicly criticize Communist leaders and call for sovereign Soviet republics. The Estonian "Popular Front" was founded and organized a rally where Estonians listened to nationalist songs and political speeches in an unprecedented show of support for national independence. This rally contributed to the independence movement's mystique and resulted in its being called "The Singing Revolution." The following autumn, the Estonian Supreme Soviet declared sovereignty.

During 1989, ethnic Estonians increasingly pushed for complete independence instead of sovereignty within the U.S.S.R. They established Estonian citizens committees throughout the country. The committees planned the first public recognition of Estonia's declaration of independence for February 24, 1989. On that day, the blue, black, and white flag of the First Republic era flew once again over Estonia. In the summer of 1989, the Popular Front organized a Baltic-wide demonstration on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact to call attention to the consequences of its secret protocols. A 400-mile-long chain of people held hands from Tallinn, Estonia, through Latvia to Vilnius, Lithuania, to demonstrate Baltic solidarity.

After nearly 50 years of occupation by the Soviet Union, the Republic of Estonia regained its independence and immediately began the difficult

task of reestablishing a democratic government. A constitutional assembly was convened in the fall of 1991. By the spring of 1992, the assembly completed a draft constitution that provided for a parliamentary democracy. This constitution was adopted by referendum in June 1992.

Public Institutions

The Republic of Estonia is a parliamentary democracy with a prime minister as head of government and a president as head of state. The Riigikogu, Estonia's Parliament, is a unicameral body with 101 members elected by proportional representation. The first post-Soviet elections were held in September 1992, and the new Parliament, government, and President took office in October. The Members of Parliament are elected for 4 years and the President for 5. The President nominates the Prime Minister. Parliament then authorizes the nominated Prime Minister to form a government. The authorized nominee then presents the proposed government to the President, who formally submits their names for office. Parliament then votes the Prime Minister into office. The constitution establishes an independent judiciary composed of the National Court, district courts, and county and city courts.

Each of Estonia's 15 provinces (Maakond) has its own provincial government.

Arts, Science, and Education

Culture and language have historically been reflected in the arts. Estonian society continues its high regard for music, literature, fine arts, and traditional crafts. Science and education are also highly valued and have a long tradition in the history of modern Estonia.

As Estonia prepared for its first period of independence, the first National Song Festival occurred in Tartu in 1869. Choruses sung in the

Estonian language during the first song festival set the tone for future festivals that further defined the Estonian sense of national identity. The choral music tradition continues today in modern Estonia with two primary choral groups and many smaller choruses. The two nationally known choruses are the National Male Choir and the Philharmonic Chamber Choir. The National Song Festival is now held every 4 years at the outdoor Song Festival Amphitheater near Tallinn. An international choir festival is held annually in Tallinn.

The modern musical tradition in Estonia includes classical and contemporary Estonian and foreign composers' music played by symphony and chamber orchestras. Estonia's two main orchestras are the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra and the Estonian Opera and Ballet Theater Orchestra, which is conducted by well-known conductor Eri Klas. These orchestras play at the Estonia Opera and Ballet Theater's Concert Hall and Opera House, respectively. The theater has an 800-seat Concert Hall and a 700-seat Opera House. Many smaller ensembles perform in Tallinn at restored medieval and modern venues around the city. Even small Estonian towns boast well-appointed concert halls.

Several Estonian composers, choir directors, and conductors are known internationally. These include composers Arvo Part, Lepo Sumera, Veljo Tormis, and Erki Sven-Tuur, as well as the late choir director and composer Gustav Ernesaks. Especially cherished in Estonia, Ernesaks composed music set to national poet Lydia Koidula's poem *My Fatherland Is My Love*, which became the unofficial anthem of the recent independence movement.

Kaljuste is another well-known choir director. Occasionally, foreign conductors and musicians collaborate with their Estonian counterparts on musical productions, thus bringing outstanding musical performances to Estonia from abroad.

Opera, dance, and dramatic theater productions are also plentiful in Tallinn and around Estonia. Operas in Tallinn are performed at the Estonian Opera and Ballet Theater's Opera House and are usually sung in Estonian. Larger dramatic productions are performed at either the Estonian Drama Theater or Russian Drama Theater. The plays are written by playwrights of various nationalities and are performed in Estonian or Russian. Recent performances have included "Hello Dolly," "Nicholas Nickleby," "My Fair Lady," "Hamlet," "A Streetcar Named Desire," and others. Smaller theaters often stage more avant-garde works. Musicals are often performed at the Linnahall, a modern 4,200-seat theater with a separate 3,000 seat arena for sports and other events. Rock and pop concerts are becoming more frequent on the song festival grounds. In August 1997, Michael Jackson performed there.

The Estonian people have a strong appreciation for literary figures who have contributed to the nation's sense of identity in literature and other writings. The literature will become more widely known as more works are translated. One contributor to Estonia's early literary history was Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, author of the national epic *Kalevipoeg*, which tells of Estonia's mythical hero. Poet Lydia Koidula wrote poems that defined the independence movement called the "National Awakening" in the mid-1880s. Koidula's father, J.V. Jannsen, helped establish the Estonian-language newspaper tradition by founding the ancestor of today's *Postimees* daily newspaper in 1857. Modern literary figures that have added to Estonian literature include Jaan Kross. Paul-Erik Rummo, Jaan Kaplinski, and poet Doris Kareva.

Several Estonian filmmakers have gained international reputations. Two animation filmmakers, Priit Parn and Rein Raamat, have produced excellent works. Dramatic film director Leida Laius made *Naerata Ometi* (*Smile Please*) and

Varastatud Kohtumine (*A Stolen Meeting*), both known outside of Estonia.

The Estonian national character and sense of identity have also been preserved in Estonian fine art and traditional crafts. The primary types of Estonian fine arts are painting, print-making, and sculpture. Traditional crafts include leatherwork (especially jewelry), woodwork, and knitwear. The Art Museum of Estonia has an extensive collection of paintings by Estonian and other artists from the Baltics. Modern paintings, prints, photography, glassware, and textiles are exhibited at many private galleries in Tallinn, which usually sell artists' work. Traditional and modern crafts are also sold in shops belonging to an artists' cooperative.

Centers for scientific studies in Estonia include the Estonian Academy of Sciences in Tallinn, Tartu University, and the Tallinn Technical University. Wilhelm Ostwald, a scientist who received his doctorate from Tartu University, was responsible for defining physical chemistry as a separate discipline within chemistry. Ostwald was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1909 for his research on catalysis, chemical equilibrium, and reaction velocities. Contemporary scientists are gaining worldwide attention for genetic research.

The first primary schools to teach in the Estonian language were established during the period of Swedish rule, in the 1680s. Tartu University, Estonia's first university, was founded in Tartu by King Gustav Adolf of Sweden in 1632. Tartu University has highly accomplished faculties in the hard sciences, medicine, and Russian literature. It is also the site of several ongoing U.S.-sponsored educational exchanges and training programs in public administration, political science, American studies, and English-teacher training. Estonia's Binational Center for North American Studies, which offers a minor in North American Studies through an interdisciplinary program, is

located at the university. Fulbright scholars to Estonia are posted at University Tartu in Tallinn. The other major institutions of higher learning that educate Estonia's highly literate and skilled society include the Tallinn Technical University, the Tallinn Pedagogical University, the Tallinn Music Academy, the Tallinn Art University, and the Estonian Agricultural University in Tartu. Several private schools, including the prestigious Humanities Institute, and business colleges including Concordia International University, The Estonian Business School, and others, have emerged in Tallinn.

Estonia has many libraries for research and general reading purposes. The newly constructed National Library opened its 4.2 million volume collection to the public in 1993. The Library of the Estonian Academy of Sciences was established in 1947 and currently holds a 3.5 million-volume collection. This collection emphasizes materials for research in the hard and social sciences. It includes the oldest books published in Tallinn (1631) and Tartu (1634) in a special Baltic collection, as well as a substantial collection of books about Estonia published in foreign languages and many reference materials for scholars. The Academy's library has exchange relationships with libraries in 38 countries. The Tartu University and Tallinn Technical University libraries also have large research collections.

Commerce and Industry

Estonia is evolving rapidly to meet the challenges it faces as a country with a liberal, open market economy. Change is the watchword for all aspects of the Estonian economy, from market orientation and trading partners to defining the private sector and reforming financial policies.

Traditionally, Estonia had a prosperous agrarian-based economy, but it was also a crossroads for

trade goods from the East and West. All of Estonia's major cities and towns were members of the Hanseatic League during the 13th century. Guildhouses in each city controlled trade in agricultural goods and artisanship. Swedish and Danish rulers also benefited from Estonia's agrarian economy and excellent geographic position for trade. In later years Estonia was industrialized by Imperial Russia. During the first period of Estonian independence from 1918 to 1940, the Estonian economy grew rapidly. By 1940, its standard of living was comparable to Finland. After annexation by the Soviet Union, its economy was fully controlled by central planners in Moscow.

After World War II, Estonia's industrial sector surpassed the agrarian sector in terms of national output.

Economic planners focused on developing Estonia's extensive oil-shale resource as a means to produce energy for domestic consumption and export to other Soviet Union republics. The planners also stressed development of industrial uses for phosphorite, Estonia's second most important natural resource. Meanwhile, in other economic sectors, there was large-scale nationalization of the banking and transportation systems, and 97% of the farms were collectivized by 1952.

The push toward industrialization continued; and, thus, the proportion of agrarian to industrial sector workers decreased throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Also, the number of Russians coming to Estonia to work in industry steadily increased during this period and into the 1980s. As one of the Soviet Union's most industrialized republics, with high employment levels and a skilled workforce, the standard of living in Estonia was higher than in the other republics.

Starting in the 1970s, there was a general sense of economic stagnation that lasted until 1987, when a loosening of the Estonian economy seemed within reach with Gor-

batchev's introduction of "perestroika." In 1987, Edgar Savisaar and several other prominent Estonians publicly suggested that Estonia be designated an autonomous economic zone under a plan called "Isemajandav Eesti (IME)." Although IME did not materialize, Savisaar's suggestion began a public debate on Estonia's autonomous economic and political future. In December 1989, banking legislation called for monetary reform and for the Bank of Estonia to prepare for issuing a new national currency. However, reform-minded economists held back, realizing in the late 1980s that substantive political changes were necessary before any meaningful economic reforms could happen.

With the 1991 return of independence came a new social, political, and economic era for the Republic of Estonia. Traditionally, Estonian industrial producers depended on raw materials from the former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe, and likewise finished products were sent to those republics and countries. This trend began to change in 1990 and has continued, so that Estonia has shifted its trade orientation toward Nordic countries and other Western European nations. At the same time, Estonia is pursuing widespread economic reform.

Monetary reform proposed in 1989 became a reality on June 20, 1992, when Estonia was the first of the former Soviet republics to issue its own currency. The Estonian "kroon" (EEK) was introduced with the full backing of gold and foreign exchange reserves and was pegged to the Deutsche Mark (at $EEK8=DM1$) with a 3% fluctuation rate. The new currency was a source of national pride from the day it was introduced and has proven to be a successful and stabilizing influence on the economy.

In addition to introducing the new currency, Estonia also implemented price reforms. In January 1992, major price reform legislation was enacted. Prices of more than 90% of

Estonia's goods and services are no longer controlled. In the 1980s, subsidies represented 13% of Estonia's gross domestic product (GDP), but as early as 1991, they represented only 2.2% of GDP. However, the cut in price subsidies hurt the average Estonian consumer, and consumers' purchasing power declined by 70% between 1989 and the end of 1992. Although the inflation rate rose dramatically just after price controls were lifted, it stabilized during 1992 and averaged about 2% a month in 1993. The economy appeared to bottom out in early 1993, and purchasing power has begun to increase modestly. The annual 1996 inflation rate decreased to 15%. Between January and June 1997, Estonia's total exports were \$1.3 billion and imports totaled \$1.8 billion. The republic's major trading partners are Finland, which accounts for 32% of its exports and 21% of its imports, Russia for 16% of its exports and 18% of its imports, and Sweden for 9% of its exports and 11% of its imports.

Estonia's major export goods are textiles/clothes, machinery/equipment, food, wood/wood products, and chemicals. The major import goods include machinery/equipment, minerals, vehicles, textiles/clothes, and food. Estonia has liberalized its import restrictions so that duties are levied only on tobacco products, alcohol, and luxury items (including automobiles). All other import items are duty free. Export licenses are only required for a handful of natural resources, such as oil shale. The lack of nontariff barriers, the favorable exchange rate of the Estonian currency, and Estonia's positive attitude toward free trade contribute to the republic's reputation as a respected trading nation.

Privatization and development of the private sector represents a significant area of reform in Estonia. The primary obstacle to privatization continues to be issues surrounding property law. Many joint ventures with Estonian and Nordic partners have established themselves in Estonia since indepen-

dence. The most successful ventures are in wholesale and retail trade, industry, the service sector, construction, food service, and hotels.

A strong banking sector has developed rapidly in Estonia since independence. Unlike other newly independent countries in the region, Estonia did not provide state support to unhealthy or unstable financial institutions. The result of this sink-or-swim strategy was a significant number of bank failures and mergers of smaller banks, followed by the emergence of several large, stable banks, offering the full range of Western banking services. The largest bank in the Baltics is Estonia's Hansapank. With the emergence of easier mortgage credit in 1997, banking in Estonia is now comparable to banking in Western Europe or the U.S. Estonia has a healthy, thriving stock market. In mid-July 1997, prices of bluechip shares jumped from between 10% and 20% on average, spurred in part by the announcement that Estonia would be asked to start negotiations on the EU membership. Until October 1997, share prices of several leading stocks rose by 1,000% or more. In the wake of economic turmoil in Asia, there have been several sharp downturns in the market. However, these drops have been viewed more as needed "corrections" which have removed many inexperienced, marginal, and speculative investors from the market. Estonians pay personal and corporate income, profit, and value-added taxes. The highest personal income bracket is 33%; corporate tax stands at 36%; and the value-added tax is 18% on services and imported goods. Employers pay social taxes equal to 33% of an employee's salary. These social taxes include a 20% tax for social security and a 13% tax for the medical insurance fund. Compliance with local tax law is high compared with other newly independent countries in the region. By law, the Estonian Government must have a balanced budget.

Workers in Estonia have the constitutionally guaranteed right to

join a union or employee association. They can also participate in collective bargaining. In April 1990, the Estonian Trade Union (EAKL), the largest employee organization, replaced the Labor Confederation from the Soviet period. Estonia joined the International Labor Organization in January 1992.

Estonia became a member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in December 1991, a member of the International Monetary Fund in May 1992, and a member of the World Bank in June of the same year. Estonia has received substantial monetary assistance from the IMF, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union (EU), and from individual countries including Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Norway.

In 1997, Estonia received the green light by the EU to start negotiations for membership. Many observers noted that the main reason was Estonia's strong well-cultivated reputation for reform. Full membership in the EU will probably be granted in the middle of the next decade.

To say that the business environment has changed for the better in the last 5 years is an understatement. Although business-to-customer services have improved, some remnants of Soviet-era business practices (mainly brusque or indifferent service) remain. However, compared to elsewhere in the former Soviet bloc, doing business in Estonia is generally a positive, pleasant experience.

The U.S. aided Estonia significantly in its drive to develop a free market economy. Between 1991 and 1996, U.S. assistance to Estonia, administered through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) program, concentrated on three main areas: economic reform and privatization; democratic pluralism and local government; and environmental protection and health. In September 1996, Estonia became the first country in central and Eastern Europe to successfully

“graduate” from USAID assistance. The U.S. Peace Corps, in Estonia since 1992, still sends volunteers to teach English and to assist with small business development.

A variety of U.S. technical advisers from private and public sectors have played a central role in helping Estonia establish its legal framework for reform. The fields in which U.S. technical advisers worked most extensively include privatization, constitutional and judicial reform, energy efficiency, banking, education, local government reform, national and local elections, municipal administration, taxation, national and local budget systems, cooperatives, agricultural production and agribusiness, small business development, bankruptcy issues, and environmental reform.

Transportation

Automobiles

All major car dealers are represented in Tallinn. Dealerships are able to sell, service, and obtain spare parts for American, Japanese, and Western European cars and minivans. Any model can be ordered by the dealer and shipped to Tallinn. European cars are generally cheaper than they would be in the U.S.

Dealership services in Tallinn are similar to those in the U.S. Most dealerships have maintenance facilities, and independent garage repairs are of good quality. Labor, especially at independent garages, is relatively inexpensive. Spare parts for American cars can be expensive and occasionally must be special ordered. Service and parts are readily available at reasonable prices for Russian and European cars. Quality auto bodywork for all cars is available in Tallinn.

Unleaded gas is readily available at modern, clean service stations. Many of these have convenience shops that sell Western auto-related items at prices similar to, or somewhat higher than, those in the U.S.

Estonia has the highest rate of car ownership growth in Europe. Correspondingly, many new drivers are on the road. This, combined with the fact that there are still many older Soviet cars on the road, has meant a substantial increase in traffic (similar now to a major U.S. metropolitan area) and a large number of fender-benders. Aggressive driving is the norm.

The speed limit on open roads is 90km/h (55 mph), but 50km/h (30mph) in residential areas. Car headlights must be on at all times, year round. The driver and front seat passenger must wear seat belts. Police enforce and most drivers take driving-under-the-influence-of-alcohol laws seriously. Car seats for babies and small children are mandatory and available locally. A first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, and safety reflectors in case of breakdown are mandatory. Winter tires, available locally at prices similar to or slightly lower than in the U.S., are mandatory between December and March. Studded snow tires are allowable and recommended. Estonia is a left-hand-drive country.

The Estonian Government requires that all drivers carry third-party-liability car insurance. Stiff fines are imposed on those who do not comply with this law. Third-party-liability insurance that is considered valid under Estonian law may be purchased in Estonia. However, drivers should note that valid third-party-liability coverage in Estonia may not be valid in neighboring countries, and therefore supplemental insurance must be purchased for travel to the neighboring countries. Some American insurers, such as Clements, will provide coverage that satisfies local requirements. Drivers intending car travel (via ferry) to Sweden or Finland should ensure that their liability insurance provides them with a green international insurance card.

State and private car insurance policies in Estonia offer minimal coverage compared to that in the U.S. They generally cover only damage to the driver's car and nominal

personal injury coverage. The local prevailing practice is that damages to another driver's car are covered out-of-pocket, but it can be difficult to get any settlement from a delinquent driver.

Estonia's main roads are adequate for daytime, fair-weather driving, but night driving and winter driving can be difficult. Roads outside Tallinn are not lighted and often poorly marked. Road construction is not well marked. During winter months, when roads are sanded and plowed sporadically or, more often, not at all.

On the other hand, summer driving in Estonia, and throughout the Baltic States, can be pleasant. The almost endless daylight, the reasonable quality of most roads (when not wet, dark, or icy), the relatively light traffic outside the cities, and the increasing availability of tourist and roadside services will do much to counter the cabin fever that results from the lack of winter mobility. Excellent road maps are readily available in Tallinn for all of Estonia and the other Baltic countries.

Local

Public transportation in the Tallinn area is generally convenient and reliable. All forms of public transportation are more crowded than in the U.S. One can travel easily, if not always comfortably, around the city and to the outskirts of Tallinn using the extensive public transportation system.

Tallinn has many taxis, all of which must use a meter. Taxis generally fall into two categories: those from larger taxi companies with clean, modern fleets (Tulika and several others), and those from smaller firms or independents using Soviet, Russian, and older Western cars. You can either get a taxi at a taxi stand or request one by phone, for an extra fee. If they do not do so immediately, remind drivers to turn on their meters. Taxi rates are generally cheaper than in Washington, D.C. Some modern taxi companies take credit cards. Passengers usu-

ally tip the driver a small amount (5%-10%), but tipping is not considered mandatory. Overall, using taxis in Tallinn is easier and more pleasant than in most U.S. cities.

Regional

There is regular intercity travel from Tallinn to other points in Estonia, the other two Baltic capitals, points in Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union, and major Western European cities.

Bus travel within and beyond Estonia is extensive. You can take a bus to all of Estonia's major cities and towns from Tallinn and can at least make a connection to many smaller towns not directly serviced by buses from Tallinn. You can also travel by bus and ferry to Estonia's larger islands. Buses travel regularly to Riga and Vilnius, as well as Klaipeda, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, and cities in Germany. Bus service is faster and usually more convenient than train travel. Many buses on the longer routes meet Western standards (i.e., with bathroom and small TV), but older buses are often used on routes within Estonia. Bus travel is cheap, compared with that in the U.S.

Trains from Tallinn service all major regional cities, including Narva and Tartu in Estonia and the following cities in other countries: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, Vilnius, Minsk, and Warsaw. For longer trips, an overnight sleeper car provides both for safety and comfort. Overnight train is a good way to travel to Moscow or St. Petersburg, but is substantially slower than the bus to Riga and Vilnius.

Tallinn offers frequent flights to cities in Western Europe and the former Soviet Union. Finnair flies daily to Helsinki and SAS flies to both Copenhagen and Stockholm. In addition, there is regular, nonstop, service to Riga, Vilnius, Hamburg, Amsterdam, London, Vienna, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Minsk.

There is regular ferry service between Helsinki and Tallinn (several times daily) and Stockholm and Tallinn (daily), as well as hydrofoil service between Helsinki and Tallinn from April through October. Ferries can carry motor vehicles, but hydrofoils are for passengers only. All ferries have restaurants, bars, shops, and other diversions. Passage by ferry to Helsinki takes about 3½ hours; the hydrofoil takes 1½ hours. Although the hydrofoil is faster, it is more expensive, and sometimes stormy weather and/or rough seas cancel trips. The trip from Tallinn to Helsinki by ferry is cheaper than flying and then taking a taxi or bus into the Finnish capital. The ferry to Stockholm sails from Tallinn every second day and takes 14½ hours. Although this is the most direct ferry route between Tallinn and Stockholm, it is also possible and less expensive to sail to Stockholm via Helsinki.

As noted above, car travel around Estonia and the Baltics, or to cities in the Nordic countries, Russia, and Eastern Europe, is feasible. Avis, Hertz, National (Eurorent), and other Western and local rental car firms have outlets in Tallinn and the other Baltic capitals, with rates somewhat higher than in the U.S. Most borders you would cross in the region cause no problem, except the border between Lithuania and Poland and the border between Estonia and Russia, where delays are frequent.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Currently, Estonia has three types of telephone systems, including an analog system, a digital system, and several cellular systems. Tallinn has upgraded 90% of the city's telephone system to digital. The rest of the country is undergoing gradual digital upgrades. Phone service in the capital is good but can be sporadic outside Tallinn.

Tallinn residents can dial international calls directly from their residential telephones or book them

through the operator. It is slightly cheaper to call the U.S. from Estonia than vice versa. Calls to Eastern and Western European countries from Estonia are cheaper than calling those countries from the U.S.

Local digital calls have per-call charges, but long-distance and international-call charges are the same as those for the older system. Many individuals and businesses use cellular systems for phone calls and fax machine transmissions. Cellular systems are more expensive than the other systems for local and long-distance calls. International calls made with cellular phones currently cost 30% more than those made with digital systems.

Computer usage in Estonia is widespread. The entire range of computer software and hardware is available locally at reasonable prices. Internet hookups are reasonably priced and easy to arrange. Microlink, Gateway, and several other familiar computer firms are present in Tallinn. All major computer companies and computer stores have knowledgeable staff people, most of whom speak at least some English. As occasional fluctuations in electrical voltage occur, bring surge protectors for all computer equipment.

Mail

The international mail system for letters and packages to and from Estonia is reliable. No difficulties concerning customs, pilferage, or damage to sent or received items has been reported. Currently, mailing letters and packages from Estonia costs more than from the U.S.

Many international courier services can send small packets and larger boxes to and from Tallinn including Federal Express, DHL, and UPS. Courier firms charge prices comparable to those in the U.S. for the same service. It usually takes smaller packets 3-5 days to/from the U.S. You can use most major credit cards for the fee.

Radio and TV

Several radio stations broadcast on AM and FM in Estonia. The state-operated Eesti Raadio (Estonian Radio) airs the BBC World Service in English from noon to 5 p.m. daily. In Tallinn, Raadio KuKu was the first independent station; it has primarily a music format that includes an eclectic mix of American rock, jazz, blues, and country music, as well as European contemporary popular and classical music. Raadio Tallinn, another independent station, broadcasts music and news in Russian. Love Radio plays easy-listening pop with hits from the 1970s and 1980s and has news in English every hour. Since 1991, the number of independent stations on AM and FM has increased, and this trend is expected to continue. Shortwave reception in Tallinn is good and includes broadcasts in various languages.

From Tallinn you can watch Eesti Televisioon (Estonian Television), three independent Estonian stations, one Russian channel, and four Finnish channels. Satellite dishes, increasingly popular in Estonia, enable you to receive more programming from abroad. Full satellite-dish receiving equipment sets and installation services are available in Tallinn at reasonable prices. English-language programs and movies are subtitled rather than dubbed on most channels.

A TV should be able to receive both SECAM and PAL systems in Estonia, because Finnish and Western European channels require SECAM and Estonian and Russian channels use PAL. Multisystem TV's, recommended for local viewing, are available in Tallinn. Selection is limited and they can be expensive. To receive Finnish channels you will need a special antenna. Bring a multisystem VCR to watch videos. A limited selection of VCR's are available in Tallinn at generally higher than U.S. prices.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

American and European newspapers and magazines are increas-

ingly available in Tallinn at the major hotels and some other shops. You can buy *The Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, *Time*, and *Newsweek* regularly, but the newspapers are usually a day old.

Other popular American and English-language magazines (primarily fashion and women's magazines) are sold in Tallinn, but newsstand prices are higher here. Major newspapers and magazines in German and French are also available.

Several English-language publications written and published in the Baltics are sold regularly in Estonia. *The City Paper* is a bimonthly magazine and travel guide with interesting articles about current issues and politics in Estonia. *The Baltic Times*, a weekly newspaper published in Riga, covers the current events of the three Baltic States. *Tallinn This Week*, a booklet published six times a year, is a guide to Tallinn's restaurants, shopping, cafes, nightlife, and cultural events. Several Estonian-language papers and magazines also include special English pages or columns.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Health care facilities in Estonia are improving, but still fall somewhat below the Western standard. Most health care providers, however, are well-trained professionals and many are conversant in English.

Community Health

Food-handling procedures, although improving, are not yet entirely reliable here. Some food bought at older markets and the (rapidly disappearing) Soviet-style food stores may be poorly refrigerated. Although the public water supply in Tallinn is chlorinated, water treatment facilities and distribution pipes are often in disrepair. Therefore, the water supply could be contaminated. High-quality local and imported bottled water is available in all food shops and convenience stores.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Customs, Duties, and Passage

A passport is required. Tourists and business travelers may stay in Estonia for up to 90 days without a visa. U.S. citizens who wish to work in Estonia or remain longer than 90 days must obtain a visa or residence permit. For further information concerning entry requirements and residency permits, please contact the Estonian Embassy, 2131 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 588-0101, or the Consulate General of Estonia in New York City at telephone (212) 883-0636. Also, please see the Estonian Embassy's Internet home page at <http://www.estemb.org>.

Customs restrictions on Estonian cultural artifacts exported from Estonia by anyone require a 100% duty on the purchase price of the item. Special permits are also required and may be obtained from the Cultural Values Export Board.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Estonia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security within Estonia. The U.S. Embassy in Tallinn is located at Kentmanni 20, telephone (372) 668-8100; fax (372) 668-8267; emergency cell phone (011)(372)509-2129, if dialed from the U.S., and 0-509-2129 if dialed from within Estonia. The Embassy's home page on the Internet is at <http://www.usemb.ee>.

Pets

The pet should have a health certificate which is less than 10 days old and a documented rabies vaccination given more than 30 days, but less than 1 year, before arrival in Estonia. Dogs should also have recent distemper and parvovirus shots. There is no quarantine restriction for household pets brought to Estonia.

Competent veterinarians, many of whom speak English, practice in Tallinn. Most veterinarians will commonly obtain pet vaccines and medicines in Finland or elsewhere in Europe. Veterinarians often make house calls to vaccinate and care for sick pets. Veterinarians' fees in Estonia are low by U.S. standards. Although pet medical care is inexpensive, pet food is more expensive compared to Washington, D.C., prices.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The only currency that can be used legally in Estonia is the Estonian kroon (EEK). The kroon was introduced as Estonia's national currency in June 1992, nearly a year after Estonian independence. It is backed by gold and foreign currency reserves and is fully convertible. The current exchange rate is about 15.9 EEK=U. S. \$1. The value of the kroon is pegged to the value of the Deutsche Mark at EEK8/DM1 with a fluctuation rate of 3%. Estonia's currency is issued in notes of the following denominations: 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, and 500. The coins include 5-, 10-, 20- and 50-cent coins.

Credit cards are now widely accepted in Estonia. Traveler's checks are also accepted by many major hotels and restaurants.

Travelers checks may be cashed for kroons in any bank in Tallinn. Currency may be exchanged for kroons at most banks, hotels, and many foreign exchange counters around Tallinn and other parts of Estonia. The kroon is fully convertible and therefore can be exchanged for foreign currency. However, except for those arriving via Finland, it may be difficult or impossible to obtain kroons before arrival.

Credit cards can be used at the major hotels and department stores and most restaurants throughout Estonia. The most common cards used in Tallinn are American Express, Visa, and Mastercard (Eurocard). It is possible to get a cash advance in kroons with a major credit card. Advances are available for a commission fee to the bank.

A value-added tax (VAT) of 18% is placed on goods imported into Estonia and services performed in Estonia.

The weight and measurement system in Estonia is the metric system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Feb. 24 Estonian Independence Day
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Sunday*
 - May 1 May Day
 - May/June Whitsunday/Pentecost*
 - June 23 Victory Day
 - June 24 Midsummer
 - Aug. 20 Day of Restoration of Independence
 - Dec.25 Christmas Day
 - Dec. 26 Boxing Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country:

Clemens, Walter Jr. *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

Hiden, John and Patrick Salmon. *The Baltic Nations and Europe: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Longman, Inc., 1991.

Jackson, Hampden J. *Estonia*. Second Edition. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1948.

Laar, Mart. *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival 1944-1956*. Washington, D.C.: The Compass Press, 1992.

Lieven, Anatol. *The Baltic Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

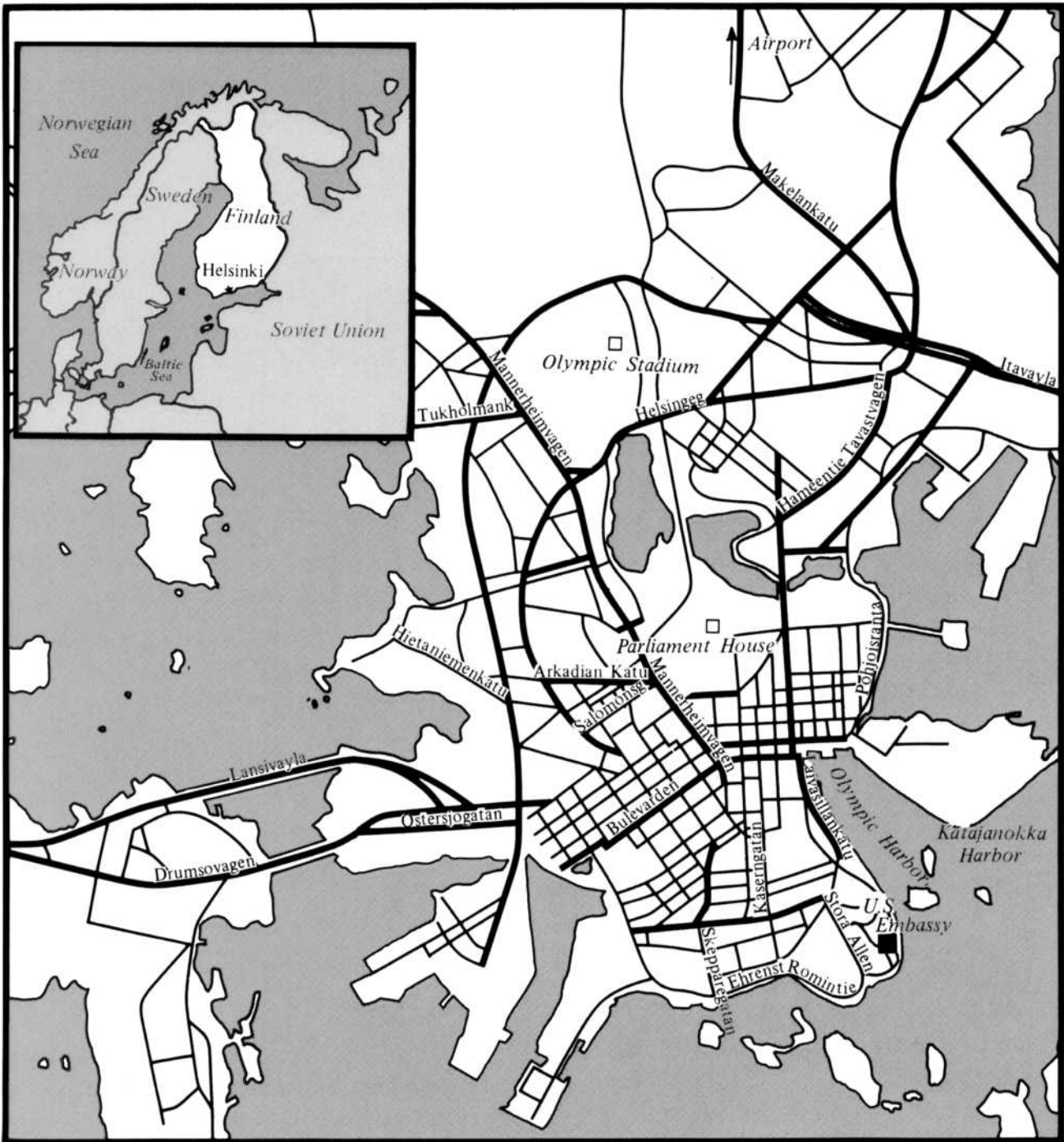
Loeber, Dietrich Andre, B. Stanley Vardys, and Laurence PA. Kitching, eds. *Regional Identity Under Soviet Rule: The Case of the Baltic States*. Hackettstown, N.J.: Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, 1990.

Misiunas, Romuald J. and Rein Taagepera. *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940-1980*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.

Raun, Toivo U. *Estonia and the Estonians*. Second Edition. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1991.

Taagepera, Rein. *Estonia: Return to Independence*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992.

von Rauch, Georg. *The Baltic States: Years of Independence 1917-1940*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974.



Helsinki, Finland

FINLAND

Republic of Finland

Major Cities:

Helsinki, Tampere, Turku

Other Cities:

Espoo, Jyväskylä, Kotka, Kuopio, Lahti, Oulu, Pori, Vaasa, Vantaa

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

FINLAND is a modern, progressive, Scandinavian country, rich in contrast between city and wilderness. The character of its people has been forged by the severity of life in this northern corner of Europe, and the challenge of existing between contending powers has produced a vigorous individualism and inspired a national culture.

Migrant groups from the south and southwest settled the region that is now Finland in the eighth century, driving the indigenous Lapps northward toward the Arctic Circle. Eventually Swedes moved onto the land and, in 1155, introduced Christianity. Sweden controlled Finland for hundreds of years until forced to

cede it, as a grand duchy, to Russia in the early part of the 19th century. A spirit of nationalism grew until, in the chaos of the Russian Revolution, Finland was created.

During World War II, the nation fought with Germany against the Soviet Union and, after tragic human and geographical losses and eventual reparation payments, signed an agreement of cooperation and friendship with its former ruling power. Finland's official policy of neutrality and nonalignment has led to the establishment of relations with other countries regardless of their political systems.

MAJOR CITIES

Helsinki

Helsinki, the capital and principal city, is a Baltic port on Finland's southern coast with an estimated population of 551,000. It lies north of such cities as Juneau, Alaska, and Churchill, Canada, and is the second most northerly capital in the world, after Iceland's Reykjavik. Helsinki is a modern city, yet it has areas which give a genuine and comprehensive picture of the atmosphere and architecture of the past.

The city was founded in 1550 by the Swedish king, Gustav Vasa. Great fires destroyed the old wooden Helsinki many times, but it was always rebuilt. The massive walls of the Suomenlinna Island fortress remain from the 18th century. Helsinki became Finland's capital in 1812. Many of its historically interesting sights date from the beginning of the 19th century, when the administrative center was built around Senate Square. The Cathedral of St. Nicholas, the National University, and Government Palace, for example, are among the finest of its architectural achievements. It has been said of the Helsinki of the Empire period that it was the last European city designed as an entity and created as a work of art. Historic Senate Square is one of the most remarkable achievements of neoclassicism at its height; many of its buildings reflect the genius of architect Carl Engel.

Helsinki today has a modern look, with some buildings designed by internationally known contemporary Finnish architects Eliel Saarinen and Alvar Aalto. In planning new areas and developing old ones, the aim has been to make the city a balanced whole with several regional centers, each with its own schools, sports fields, libraries, and shopping centers. The ideal is to combine the advantages of urban

living with those of rural life. Approximately 500,000 people reside in the city, which is the administrative, cultural, commercial, and industrial center of Finland. Including the suburbs of Espoo, Vantaa, and others, the population of Greater Helsinki was over one million in 1995.

Helsinki, whose name in Swedish (one of the two official languages) is Helsingfors, has many points of interest. Among the most popular are the harbor area and Market Square, where the Havis Amanda fountain symbolizes Helsinki rising out of the waves. Other attractions include the Olympic Stadium (site of the 1952 Summer Games), the Sibelius monument, the "Church in the Rock," Finlandia Hall, City Museum, National Museum, and Seurasaari Island.

Helsinki offers a wide and interesting variety of cultural activities, recreation, entertainment, and shopping, and it enjoys an unusually high standard of living.

Schools for Foreigners

The International School of Helsinki, based on American and British standards, offers an education from kindergarten through tenth grade. Several different nationalities are represented both in the student body and on the school board. The full-time staff consists of American and British teachers. The school has initiated a joint accreditation process with the New England Association of Schools and the European Council of International Schools.

International School comprises one wing of an established Finnish school, and can take advantage of some of the Finnish teachers for physical education and special activities.

The English School, Catholic-affiliated, receives support from the Finnish Government since it is primarily intended for Finnish students who wish to learn and maintain English. Religious studies are not part of the curriculum.

Classes range from kindergarten through grade 10.

A small, private school, L'École Française d'Helsinki, is run by the French Embassy. Schooling is assured for all ages, including kindergarten, and follows the studies prescribed by the French Ministry of Education. The staff is composed of French teachers provided by the sponsoring government or recruited locally.

The German School, long established in Helsinki, offers classes from kindergarten through high school, leading to a choice of either a German or Finnish diploma. The school is German-oriented, and has the reputation of providing a fine education. The teachers are German and Finnish; instruction is entirely in German. Books and materials are up-to-date and attractively presented. The school is part of the Finnish system, with similar semesters, holidays, and regulations. The staff welcomes children with no knowledge of German in the first few grades, but discourages those at higher levels because of the difficulty of catching up to classmates in the language.

Special Opportunities

The University of Helsinki is the largest university in the Nordic area. Courses in the English department may be taken at the university, but language restrictions in other departments make it difficult for most students to carry a full academic load.

The University of Helsinki offers courses in Finnish and Swedish for foreigners. Classes are taught at all levels of proficiency, during the day and after working hours.

Special educational opportunities are available for children with learning disabilities or physical handicaps, but all instruction is either in Finnish or Swedish.

Recreation

Finland first rose to prominence in sports at the 1912 Olympics, where it took first place in wrestling and

second place in track and field. In succeeding years, the country has become famous for long-distance running, ski jumping, speed skating, and target shooting. Sports unique to Finland are *bandy*, a form of ice hockey, and *pesapallo*, a game vaguely resembling American baseball. Soccer, hockey, and basketball are popular spectator sports.

From the first of June until late August, daylight hours are long and outdoor activities such as boating, sailing, bathing, swimming, hiking, picnicking, and motor trips may be enjoyed in the immediate vicinity of Helsinki. The time for golf and outdoor tennis is relatively short. Helsinki has four golf courses (two of which have 18 holes) and a few excellent outdoor clay tennis courts, as well as several indoor year-round tennis courts. It is not easy to obtain golf club memberships, and tennis courts usually must be booked in advance and, sometimes, at inconvenient hours.

Squash is also popular; court time is booked on a half-hour basis. Cycling possibilities are good in the Helsinki suburbs during the warmer months. Trails for jogging and walking abound. Boating begins in May/June and extends into September. Swimming and sunbathing at the several municipal beaches and in outside pools are popular for only about two months in the summer, but are possible year round at several indoor pools.

Winter sports include skiing and skating. Excellent trails for cross-country skiing are available in and around the city, and many of these are lighted for evening use. Several smaller towns within a few hours' ride offer good weekend skiing; spring skiing trips to Lapland are popular. Downhill skiing is possible, but facilities are limited. Although there are several small hills near Helsinki, the better locations are farther north. The city has many good outdoor skating rinks and some indoor rinks. Figure skating lessons are available.



Lutheran Cathedral and square in Helsinki

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

There are a number of horseback riding schools in the capital and its immediate vicinity. Helsinki also has one indoor riding hall.

Salmon fishing is found in northern Lapland. Ice fishing is quite popular throughout Finland during the long winter months. Game hunting is possible, but on a limited basis.

The sauna, a national institution in Finland, has existed for a thousand years. Finns normally indulge in a sauna once a week, and it is a custom that most Americans quickly learn to enjoy. Saunas are particularly enjoyable after physical exercise, especially cross-country skiing, and as a means of socializing, although mixed saunas are not customary.

The purpose of a sauna is to completely cleanse the body and soul by being subjected to great changes of

temperatures. After the heat of the sauna, there is either a shower or a swim in a pool, a lake, or the sea. The bravest participants roll in winter snow or plunge through a hole in the ice. After the sauna, a cold beer or soda before a warm fireplace is a necessary thirst quencher. Most Finnish apartment buildings and houses have saunas, some with pools. Summer houses, although quite modest, also have saunas, usually on a lake or the sea.

Outdoor recreation and touring opportunities are plentiful, particularly in Lapland and the lake district. Lapland—the land of the midnight sun, northern lights, and reindeer—is Finland's northernmost province. The principal towns are Rovaniemi, the capital, and Kemi, both accessible by air (two hours) and rail (nine hours), and about 500 miles (800 kilometers) from Helsinki. The overnight train

with space for cars is a popular way to get to Rovaniemi, a transit point to the tourist and resort areas of Pallastunturi, Kilpisjärvi, and Inari farther north. The traveler can also drive north into Norway and view the fjords. Lapland is especially popular in early April, when the days are longer and skiing is excellent; for midsummer's night to view the fires and festivities; and in September, when the leaves change colors.

The lake district, comprising most of southeast central Finland, provides excellent opportunities for scenic travel by car and steamer ship. A wood-burning steamer offers an unusually scenic 12-hour trip from Savonlinna to Kuopio, with its colorful market and interesting Orthodox Church museum. The 15th-century Olavinlinna Castle, a compact towering fortress built on an island near Savonlinna, is the

site of an international open-air opera festival each July.

Day trips to Turku, Hanko, and Porvoo are popular. Turku, Finland's oldest city and its capital until 1812, is two-and-a-half hours west of Helsinki by car. Hanko, a coastal city two hours west of Helsinki, is one of the best Finnish saltwater bathing resorts during July and August. At this time, yachting regattas and tennis matches are held. En route to Hanko, many travelers stop at Tammissaari, a charming seaside town with narrow lanes bordered by Empire-style wooden houses. Porvoo is an idyllic old coastal town one hour east of Helsinki by car. It was the home of Johan Ludvig Runeberg, the national poet of Finland, and is the site of an ancient granite cathedral.

A visit or business assignment to Helsinki provides excellent opportunities to travel to Sweden and Russia. Two shipping lines have overnight service between Stockholm and Helsinki. During summer, ships also travel to Tallinn (Estonia) and Travemünde (Germany). Daily flights are available on Finnair or Aeroflot, and daily trains serve St. Petersburg and Moscow. All excursions to Russia require a Russian visa. Since accommodations must be booked before a visa is issued, it is best to have a travel agent in Helsinki handle arrangements. Visa processing takes from 10 days to two weeks.

Entertainment

Since its designation as the nation's capital in 1812, Helsinki has developed into a cultural center. It is the home of many of Finland's most important museums. The largest of these is the National Museum, with its extensive prehistoric, historic, and ethnographic collections. The large Art Museum of the Athenaeum, located across the street from the railroad station, contains Finnish art from the 18th century to the present, and foreign works of art. Occasionally, large foreign exhibits are shown here. The Art Collections of the City of Helsinki and the Amos Anderson Museum of

Art are also noted institutions which often have exhibitions in addition to their regular collections.

Many good movie theaters in the city and suburbs offer the latest American, British, Italian, French, German, and other foreign films in their original versions, as well as locally produced films in Finnish. Strict regulations prevent children from attending films featuring violence, whether or not the children are accompanied by parents.

Helsinki has two permanent symphony orchestras, the Helsinki Philharmonic and the Radio Symphony. It also is home to the National Opera, with both opera and ballet companies, and the government-sponsored National Theater. Concerts and recitals are performed in the renowned Finlandia Hall, the Taivallahti Church, Sibelius Academy, and the House of Nobility, among others, providing a rich and varied musical life. During summer, Finnish and international artists and musicians are featured at special performances throughout the country. These events include the Kuopio Dance and Music Festival in June, the Jyväskylä Arts Festival, the Savonlinna Opera Festival, the Pori Jazz Festival, the Turku Music Festival, the Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, the Lahti International Organ Festival, the Tampere Summer Theater, and the Helsinki Festival.

Many Helsinki residents leave for the country in midsummer, and much of the city's cultural life closes down; however, restaurants and cinemas remain open.

The Finnish-American Society (Helsinki chapter) is a cultural and social organization linked to the League of Finnish-American Societies. All Americans are eligible to join for a nominal membership fee. Other clubs include the American Women's Club, the Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce, the Club of '32, and Rotary, Lions, consular, and diplomatic associations.

Special Note

In Finland, both men and women shake hands on meeting one another. Children also shake hands, and should not be excluded from this courtesy. Punctuality is a must, and guests are expected to arrive within five minutes of the stated arrival time for a dinner or other party. When visiting a Finnish home, it is the custom to take flowers to the hostess, or to send flowers preceding or following the visit. Flowers are usually given to the hostess unwrapped and in uneven numbers. In lieu of flowers, other small gifts may be presented.

At a dinner party, it is customary to make a welcoming speech as soon as the first course is served and all the wine glasses filled. No one touches his or her glass until this ritual has been performed. The honored guest makes a toast and thanks the host and hostess as soon as the dessert wine or dessert has been served.

Finns observe the name day as well as the birthday of close friends, relatives, and prominent people personally known. The really important birthday celebrations are the 50th and 60th, which are recognized by extending best wishes either by phone or telegram, or by sending flowers. Names for the day are published in local newspapers.

Tampere

Tampere, in Finland's southwestern province of Häme, is the third largest city in the country (population, 193,000) and one of the leading textile centers of northern Europe. It lies on an isthmus between Lakes Näsijärvi and Pyhäjärvi. In Swedish, the city is called Tammerfors.

Tampere has been a trade center since the 11th century, and today is known for its many industries which include paper, shoes, and machinery, as well as its famous textiles. It was here in 1918 that the country's White forces defeated the Finnish Bolsheviks.



Downtown street in Turku, Finland

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Particular points of interest in the city are the Sarkänniemi Tourist Center, with its aquarium, amusement park, planetarium, children's zoo, and the Näsinneula Observation Tower; the university; the town cathedral; the city hall; and the many fine old churches in the surrounding countryside, including

Messukylä Stone Church, the oldest in the area.

The Häme Museum is known for its collection of folk art, rugs, and ecclesiastical pieces that show the ethnography and cultural history of Tampere and the Häme province. The Sara Hildén Art Museum dis-

plays Finnish and international art, primarily post-war painting, sculpture, and graphics. Bus and boat excursions can be arranged to the lakes and forests.

Tampere is known for the Pyyrikki Summer Theatre, the world's first with a revolving auditorium, and for

the warm-weather concerts in Koskipuisto Park. The city has a golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, and nearby beaches. There also are first-class hotels and restaurants (one on the observation tower).

Turku

Turku (in Swedish, Åbo), capital of Turun-Porin Province in southwestern Finland, is a large port and industrial city at the mouth of the Aurajohi River, on the Baltic Sea. There are steel mills, shipyards, textile mills, and machine shops, but Turku is also the center of an agricultural region. Its population is approximately 172,000.

Turku is called “the cradle of Finnish culture.” It was the seat of the first bishop of Finland in 1229, and the home of the National University from 1640 to 1827; the following year, after a disastrous fire destroyed most of the city, the university was moved to Helsinki. Turku was the country’s capital until 1812. The Treaty of Åbo, in which Sweden ceded part of southeastern Finland to Russia, was signed here in 1743.

The city’s great 13th-century cathedral, consumed by fire the same year that the city was destroyed, has been restored. Its beautiful ceiling and the tombs and icons housed within the structure are particularly impressive reminders of Finland’s ancient past. Also rebuilt and now a museum is Turku’s castle, which dates from the 13th century; it was burned in 1614 and bombed during World War II.

Turku’s open-air handicraft museum is one of Finland’s most popular summer attractions. Tourists throng to the area to view the displays, and to patronize the hotels and restaurants. The city is interesting both for its history and for its cultural atmosphere. It supports three newspapers.

The picturesque old town of Naantali (in Swedish, Nådendal), with a population of 14,000, is close to

Turku, and serves as the city’s port. It dates from 1445 and is known for its picturesque wooden houses. The presidential summer residence is on nearby Luonnon-maa Island. Naantali hosts a celebrated chamber music festival each June.

OTHER CITIES

ESPOO (Esbo in Swedish), is the home of the Institute of Technology, with campus and buildings designed by famed architect Alvar Aalto. With a population of 210,000, it is located 11 miles west of Helsinki. Espoo has five regional centers and one of them, Tapiola, is a pioneer work of Finnish town planning, combining comfortable living with up-to-date services and blending into the natural surroundings. Prehistoric finds show that the area of Espoo was settled about 3,500 B.C. The Espoo Granite Church, completed early in the 15th century, contains medieval frescoes.

JYVÄSKYLÄ (population 78,000) is located amid the hills and lakes of south-central Finland. It was previously known primarily as a town of schools and culture, and today is famous for its modern university with buildings designed by Alvar Aalto. Jyväskylä has several museums, including the Alvar Aalto Museum, which displays Aalto’s sketches, drawings, designs, and furniture, the Jyväskylä town art collection, and temporary art exhibits.

The city of **KOTKA** is located in southeastern Finland, about 70 miles northeast of the capital. The main part of the town is situated on the peninsula between the two eastern tributaries of the mouth of the Kymi River and on the island of Kotka (Kotkansaari). Founded in 1878 by Czar Alexander II of Russia, Kotka began to grow during the late 1930s. Today, it is one of Finland’s major eastern ports and handles petroleum importation. The city, with an estimated population of 55,000, has a flour mill and a sugar refinery. The Ruotsinsalmi naval

fortifications, built by Catherine II of Russia, stood here from 1795 to 1855, when the English navy completely destroyed the fortification, except for the Orthodox church. That church, St. Nicholas, still stands, and is the city’s oldest building. Another historical site is a Lutheran church, built in 1898. The Kymenlaakso Museum, originally built for Alexander III, is 10 miles northwest. It houses objects connected with the naval battle of Ruotsinsalmi, textiles, porcelain, a numismatic collection, and ethnography and cultural history displays.

KUOPIO was founded by King Gustav III of Sweden in 1782. Today, with a population of 87,000, it is the capital of the province of Kuopio. Its location in south-central Finland on the western shore of Lake Kallavesi makes it a center of lake traffic. Museums include the Kuopio Art Museum, the Kuopio Museum, and the Orthodox Church Museum, with Western Europe’s most extensive collection relating to the Orthodox Church.

LAHTI is located approximately 65 miles northeast of Helsinki. With a population of 97,000, it is Finland’s seventh largest city. Built between two mountain ridges on the shore of Lake Vesijärvi, Lahti is a winter sports center that hosted the 1978 and 1989 World Ski Championships and the 1981 and 1991 World Biathlon Championships. It is also an industrial center for furniture, textiles, window glass, foodstuffs, and beer.

The capital of Oulu Province, **OULU** (Uleåborg in Swedish) is located in west-central Finland, about 325 miles north of Helsinki. The city was established as a trading post during the Middle Ages. It became a town in 1610 and was later the victim of several misfortunes. An explosion destroyed its fortress in 1793, a fire severely damaged the city in 1822, its depots and harbor were destroyed during the Crimean War, and many sections of the city were ruined during World War II. Today, Oulu is a modern city with universities and a dis-

trict hospital. Its industries include lumber, shipyards, tanneries, and fisheries. A hydroelectric power source, the Merikoski rapids, is also a major tourist highlight. The Oulu Music Festival is held each February. Oulu has a population of about 118,000 and is linked to other Finland cities by sea, air, and rail.

PORI (Björneborg is situated less than 70 miles north of Turku, in southwestern Finland. Settled farther north in the 12th century, and called Ulvila in 1365, Pori was moved to its present location in 1558. After a major fire in 1852, the town plan was modernized. Kirjurinluoto Islet is a natural park on the Kokemäenjoki River in the middle of town. It is the site of a summer theatre and the annual Pori International Jazz Festival, held in July. The city exports lumber and other products from the port on the Kokemäenjoki River. Located in the city are a 17th-century theater and a museum. Finland's largest short-wave wireless transmitting station is located here. Pori's population is around 76,000.

VAASA, the capital of Vaasa Province, has an estimated population of 57,000, with two-thirds Finnish-speaking and one-third Swedish-speaking. It lies on the Gulf of Bothnia in western Finland. The Swedish king, Charles IX, founded Vaasa in 1606. The country's second Court of Appeal was established here in 1776. After the fire of 1852 which destroyed almost the whole town, a new town plan was drawn up and built closer to the coast. Vaasa exports timber; industries include machinery and soap factories, textile mills, and a sugar refinery. There is regular ferry service to Sweden, along with rail and air facilities linking Vaasa with numerous Finnish cities.

Located less than 10 miles north of Helsinki, **VANTAA** was incorporated as a city in 1974. It is linked with the capital and Lahti by rail and highways. The city is a commercial and tourist hub and is the location of the Helsinki-Vantaa Airport. Points of interest include the Finn-

ish Aviation Museum and the 13th-century St. Lauri Church. Vantaa's population is approximately 176,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Finland, the sixth largest country in Europe, occupies an area of 130,160 square miles (338,312 square kilometers) about twice the size of the United Kingdom. Its coastline, excluding indentations, is 688 miles (1,100 kilometers) long. Finland is bordered on the east and southeast by Russia, on the west by Sweden and the Gulf of Bothnia, on the north by Norway, and on the south by the Gulf of Finland.

Most of the country is low, but not necessarily flat. Because the soil, mainly moraine deposits from Ice Age glaciers, is very thin, the topography reflects the contours of the Archean bedrock. Elevations greater than 2100 feet (650 meters) are found along the northwestern frontier with Norway and in the extreme northern region of Lapland. The majority of Finland's 60,000 lakes, comprising 10 percent of the total area, lie in the southern half of the country and provide important waterways and log-floating routes. An extensive and imposing archipelago, extending from the Russian border on the south, westward to the Aland Islands, and from there northward, provides an important fishing and vacation area noted for its magnitude and grandeur.

Apart from the lakes and archipelagos, the outstanding physical feature and natural resource of Finland is its forest, covering about 65 percent of the land area, the highest percentage in Europe. The forests of Finland are mainly coniferous; a limited area in the south and southwest contains hardwood deciduous trees. In Lapland, the

spruce and pines disappear, and dwarf birch usually forms the timber line.

Virtually all of Finland lies between latitudes 60° and 70°N, with one-third of its length north of the Arctic Circle, but the Gulf Stream current and the prevalence of warm westerly winds make the climate several degrees warmer than the average elsewhere at the same latitude. Summers are short (in southern Finland from June 1 to September 1) and mild, with daylight extending well into the night hours. In June and July, only a two- or three-hour period of twilight separates sunset and sunrise. In the extreme north, the sun does not set for 73 days during the midsummer period.

Precipitation, averaging 23 to 25 inches annually, is distributed over all seasons of the year. Winters are long and cold. Snow is possible from October through April, with January through March having the heaviest accumulations. Temperatures may vary from north to south, as does the snow coverage from one winter to the next.

Helsinki's location on the Gulf of Finland accounts for its high humidity level. The city's average temperature is 41°F (5°C). The average mean temperatures in January and July are 26°F and 71°F. The nearness of the sea also affects the city's weather. The mean temperature of 25°F during February, the coldest month, is considerably higher than the average for the country as a whole and, in July, the warmest month, constant sea breezes keep it cooler. During the coldest days of winter, the mercury might dip as low as -20°F, and on the hottest days of summer rise to 85°F, but the weather tends to be more temperate than that of the United States' northern midwest. Helsinki's maritime location also means frequent rain and high humidity.

Average temperatures in Lapland are 10°F (-12°C) in January, and 63°F (17°C) in July.

Population

Finland's population of 5.2 million includes some 3,000 Lapps. Since World War II, rapid industrialization, the growth of service industries, and expanded educational opportunities have fostered a continuous movement to urban centers. In recent years, however, this decline/growth cycle has stabilized.

Finland has two official languages—Finnish and Swedish. Under the constitution, the government must meet equally the cultural and economic requirements of both language groups. Finnish is spoken by 93 percent of the population, and Swedish by six percent. There is a small Lapp and Russian-speaking minority.

After Finnish and Swedish, English is the language most commonly used, followed by German. Foreign-language study is an important part of the secondary school curriculum, and more than 90 percent of all students choose to study English. Most business firms are able to correspond in English, and English-speaking tourists have little difficulty communicating in Helsinki.

Finns are generally of light complexion, with fair hair and blue or grey eyes. Racially the Finns are mixed, as are most European peoples. The main racial characteristics are derived from the East-Baltic and Nordic races. At the beginning of the Christian era, Finland was occupied by a semi-nomadic people, the Lapps. Gradually, the ancestors of the present-day Finns moved the Lapps northward to the Arctic.

The early Finns are believed to have come from Central Asia. Their language, unlike that of their neighbors, is not Indo-European. Like Estonian, Hungarian, and the languages of certain minorities in central and northern Russia, Finnish forms part of the Finno-Ugric family. Characteristics of the Finnish language include the use of case endings, post-positions instead of prepositions, a great wealth of ver-

bal forms, and a highly phonetic orthography. Finns never have trouble spelling.

Christianity was introduced to Finland in 1155 by King Eric of Sweden. For 300 years, the Catholic Church was influential but, during the Reformation, the Protestant religion became predominant. Today, some 89 percent of the population belongs to the state church, the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Finnish Orthodox congregation, with 1 percent of the population as members, is also a state church, but it owes allegiance to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. Bishops of the eight dioceses of the Evangelical Church are appointed by the president of the republic on the basis of elections held in each diocese. The bishop of the Turku diocese is the archbishop of the Church of Finland.

Finland has complete freedom of worship, and several smaller church organizations have congregations totaling 1 percent of the population. 9 percent of the population claim to have no religious affiliation.

History

Historically, Finland was controlled for long periods of time by both Sweden and Russia. From its first conquests in the 12th century until the surrender of Finland to Russia in 1809, during the Napoleonic wars, Sweden ruled. Then, Finland was annexed and became a grand duchy of Russia. Assurance given by Alexander I that Finnish laws and constitutional rights would be respected became obsolete under increasingly reactionary czars.

The cultural and political awakening of Finland in literature and in resistance to "Russification" quickened the pace towards creation of an independent state. On December 6, 1917, Finland declared its independence and was immediately plunged into a civil war between the "Reds" and the eventually victorious "Whites." A new constitution was proclaimed in 1919. The violence of the three-month struggle left

wounds that are still not entirely healed. Both the left and right in Finnish politics have their own version of the events. Political affiliation could still reflect a family choice of sides in 1918.

During World War II, Finland twice fought the Soviet Union: in the Winter War of 1939–40, and again in the Continuation War of 1941–44. Finland suffered heavy casualties, lost 11 percent of its territory to the Soviet Union, and over 400,000 Finns had to be resettled. The Treaty of Peace between Finland and the U.S.S.R., signed at Paris on February 10, 1947, provided for the cession to the Soviet Union of the Petsamo area on the Arctic coast and the Karelian Isthmus in southeast Finland, for the lease of the Porkkala area near Helsinki to Russia for use as a naval base, and for free access to this area across Finnish territory. In late 1955, the Soviets returned the Porkkala area to Finland. The treaty also provided that Finland pay Russia reparation in goods valued at an estimated \$570 million (completed in 1952). Finland's defense forces are limited by the Peace Treaty to 41,900 men (Army, 34,400; Navy, 4,500; Air Force, 3,000).

In the United Nations, which it joined in 1955, Finland favors membership for all nations, usually takes no stand on major East-West issues, stresses neutrality as policy of active participation in international life, and channels the bulk of its foreign assistance to developing countries through various U.N. agencies. Finland supports and actively participates in the U.N.'s peacekeeping activities.

An official policy of neutrality and nonalignment has led to the establishment of relations with other countries regardless of their political systems. Finland worked for the convening of the Conference on European Security and Cooperation in July 1973, involving the U.S.S.R., countries of Eastern and Western Europe, Canada, and the U.S. This conference culminated in a summit meeting of 35 heads of state and the

signing of the Final Act—often called the Helsinki Accords—on August 1, 1975. Finland has also supported the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), which began in Helsinki in 1969. In the Nordic Council, an inter-parliamentary organ of cooperation among Nordic nations, Finland works closely with its neighbors on matters of intra-Nordic concern.

Government

Finland is a Western-oriented republic. Under the constitution of 1919, the president, elected for a six-year term, has powers stronger than those of European counterparts, although not as great as U.S. presidential powers. The president, currently Tarja Halonen, has full powers over foreign affairs, is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and can dissolve parliament.

The Council of State Cabinet is appointed by the president and includes the prime minister, currently Paavo Lipponen, and usually about 16 ministers and associate ministers in charge of the 11 government departments. The Parliament (Eduskunta) is unicameral and consists of 200 members directly elected every four years through proportional representation. Under the constitution, the Eduskunta is the supreme authority in Finland. It has the power to amend the constitution, force the resignation of the Council of State, and override presidential vetoes without judicial review. Suffrage is equal and universal; all citizens over the age of 18 have the right to vote. Finland was the first country in Europe to grant full political rights to women (1906), well before the U.S.

Finnish policies on most basic domestic and foreign issues have been consistent, notwithstanding a relatively rapid turnover of cabinets and periods when no government commanded a parliamentary majority.

Nine political parties are represented in Parliament. Most Finnish

governments are multi-party coalitions, although at times it has been necessary to form cabinets composed of non-party technical experts. The average life of Finnish cabinets has been 12 months. By contrast, Finland has had only five presidents since 1946. Recently, however, the duration of cabinets has lengthened considerably.

Justice is administered by independent courts. The public courts of justice try both civil and criminal cases. In rural areas, courts of the first instance are known as circuit courts, the judicial authority resting in a legally trained judge and a jury of lay members. Cities have municipal courts, each presided over by a legally trained magistrate and two counselors. Other courts are the Courts of Appeal and the highest judicial authority, the Supreme Court, to which appeals may be made against the judgments of the former.

Judicial procedure differs from that in Anglo-Saxon countries; Finnish law is codified and does not provide for writ of habeas corpus or bail. Formal charges must be brought within seven days of detention on suspicion and, in practice, charges are usually brought within three to four days. Courts of first instance must hear a case within 30 days of arrest. Civil rights are deeply entrenched and strictly observed by the police and courts.

The 12 Finnish provinces are divided into cities and communes and are administered by municipal and communal council elected every four years. The eleven mainland provinces each have a governor appointed by the president. The governors report to the Ministry of the Interior. The island province of Aland, located between Finland and Sweden in the southern part of the Gulf of Bothnia operates under local autonomy under a 1921 international convention.

The flag of Finland is white with a blue cross.

Arts, Science, Education

Much of the richness of Finnish culture derives from the folk element. A wealth of songs, buildings, costumes, and traditions has been carefully preserved over the years. Finnish literature in its oldest form is comprised of the epic poems and tales passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. Since the first half of the 19th century, a determined effort has been made to preserve the national culture through creation of a Finnish-language literature. Many of the resulting masterpieces, both in poetry and prose, reflect a historical context and regional spirit. Publication in 1835 of the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala*, a collection of traditional myths and legends, first stirred the nationalism that led to independence in 1917.

Finnish architecture is justly famous, from the earliest achievements seen in medieval castles, through the elaborate wooden buildings of the 18th century, to the innovative and functional design prevalent today. Alvo Aalto (1898–1976), the modern Finnish architect, influenced urban and regional planning, interior decoration, and industrial art. Finlandia Hall, the National Pensions Institute, Aalto's Enso-Gutzeit Building, and the Helsinki Railway Station of Eliel Saarinen are only four of many buildings which attract students of architecture from all over the world.

In the fields of music, painting, and sculpture are found many examples of Finnish genius. Glass (Nuutajarvi, Iittala, Humppila, etc.), porcelain (Arabia), textiles (Marimekko, Vuokko, and Pentik), jewelry (Laponia and Kalevala Koru), and furniture (Alvar Aalto and Ilmari Tapiovaara) are some of the many items that bear the unique stamp of Finnish handiwork and design.

Finland, with virtually no illiteracy, has an advanced educational system, which is free and includes all textbooks and a broad medical-care program. Pupils receive a hot meal

each day at school. Special schools have been established in the larger cities for children who are handicapped or have learning disabilities. Four basic levels comprise the school system: preschool education, compulsory education (the nine-year comprehensive school), upper secondary education, and the universities and similar institutions.

Finland has a strong state-subsidized adult education program, with classes held at community schools or workers' institutes. This program supplements and/or completes the basic education and provides for advanced vocational training or cultural and intellectual pursuits.

The largest university is the state-supported University of Helsinki, which has spearheaded the country's intellectual life since the 17th century. Founded in 1640 as the State University of Turku, it was moved to Helsinki in 1828. Another important state school of advanced education is the Institute of Technology, established in 1908, and now located at Otaniemi in Espoo. The entire campus was designed by architect Alvar Aalto.

State-supported higher education facilities have undergone major expansion since 1958. Jyväskylä Teachers College, founded in 1934, was enlarged to university status. In 1959, a new university was established at Oulu in the north. It was followed by universities in Joensuu and Kuopio. The latest in Rovaniemi (Lapin Province), established in 1979, is the world's most northerly university.

Commerce and Industry

Finland has become a modern industrialized nation. The prevailing standard of living is at the same high level which characterizes the other Scandinavian countries, with Finland ranking in the top dozen or so nations in terms of per-

sonal-income levels. Economic development has taken place in the face of many obstacles. At the time of independence from Russia in 1917, Finland's economy was that of an undeveloped, remote Russian province; about 20 years after independence, Finland was thrust into a series of three destructive wars—two against the U.S.S.R. and one against German armed forces. Wartime damage was heavy and peace terms imposed on Finland included heavy "reparations" payments to the Soviet Union.

Today, Finland is an essentially private economy. Most businesses are privately owned; however, some larger industrial enterprises are government owned in areas such as steel and mining. Railroads are state owned and the Finnair airline is majority state owned. The telephone system is split between government and private companies. Oil refining is a government monopoly, but retail gas stations are both state and privately held; all sales of high alcohol-content beverages are in government-owned stores.

Overall, the country's economic situation is impressive. Finland has been a leader in Europe in terms of economic growth. Inflation has been at higher than prevailing European levels, but has recently been better controlled. Still, for various reasons, prices are high by current U.S. standards.

Finland's main economic force is in manufacturing—often for export. Forest industries are still strong, but they are shrinking. Agriculture has, over the years, been declining, but farmers continue to be encouraged by government support to maintain national self-sufficiency in basic food production, the quality of which is very high. Only eight percent of Finland is under cultivation. The service industries are enjoying healthy growth in fields such as banking, insurance, and engineering/design services.

Foreign trade is extremely important; Finland must import all of its

oil, as well as some metals, chemicals, and food products. Machinery imports are high, but are balanced by a high number of machinery exports. Forestry products, such as paper, are a primary export, as are ships, furs, clothing, and glassware. Germany, Britain, Sweden, Russia, and the U.S. are the primary source of product imports. Finland participates in international economic organizations; supports free trade policies; and is a member of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. Investment abroad is increasing as well, with nearly 200 Finnish-owned firms in the U.S., including four banks in New York City.

Finland donates foreign aid to less developed countries, particularly in Africa and Asia. Finnish citizens actively support Finland's aid policies.

The Helsinki Chamber of Commerce is located at Kalevanketu 12, 00100 Helsinki 10.

Transportation

The Finnish State Railways has a vast operating track (5,580 miles), with links to Sweden and the Russia. The northernmost point accessible by train is Kemijärvi, north of Rovaniemi.

The highway system is constantly being expanded; public roads cover 48,320 miles (77,796 kilometers), of which about half are paved. Trucking and bus services are steadily gaining in importance as carriers of passengers and goods. However, although highways are well maintained, they are not as efficient at transporting traffic as might be expected for a modern industrial nation; travel time is frequently longer than anticipated.

Finnair Oy (with the state as major stockholder) maintains regular air service to locales within Finland; to major European capitals; and to Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and

Montreal, among cities on other continents. Most freight and much of the passenger traffic is via sea. Harbors are kept open even during the coldest winter periods, with ferry links available to Sweden, Germany, and Estonia on a regularly scheduled basis.

Helsinki offers excellent bus and tram service. Taxis, readily available at many stands throughout the city, may be reached by calling the widely publicized numbers for these taxi centers. Fares are not excessive and drivers are not tipped. Certain suburbs are efficiently served by commuter trains. A subway line was recently opened to suburbs in the east, with further expansion planned. Public transportation is used by many people for getting to work and to recreational and social activities; however, a car is still extremely useful.

In winter, main roads are kept open, but winter driving, even in Helsinki and its outskirts, can be hazardous because of frequent icy conditions.

Communications

The government operates the domestic telegraph and most of the country's telephone facilities. Direct dialing is available to many foreign locations, including the U.S. In Helsinki to contact emergency systems, dial 000. A privately owned telegraph cable extends between Sweden and Finland, and nearly all cable communications to overseas destinations are transmitted by this route. International airmail normally takes five days in transit from Helsinki to New York. Postal rates are expensive.

Broadcasting is done by Oy Yleisradio Ab, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, and by MTV Oy, an independent commercial company. Yleisradio, however, is the only licensed corporation. A fair selection of musical programs is available throughout the day on Finnish AM and FM radio. Many radio channels can be received from other European countries. Good Voice of Amer-

ica (VOA) and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reception is possible with a shortwave radio.

Television channels operate during the afternoon and evening hours. Some foreign programs (including American, British, and Canadian) are offered in the original language with Finnish or Swedish subtitles. Finnish TV, which broadcasts mostly color programs, has the same technical standards as Germany. Private cable service, offering a wide selection of movies and serials, is available at various locations within the city of Helsinki.

The first Finnish newspaper was printed in 1771. Now, more than 300 papers are published at least four times each week. Ten newspapers are regarded as national dailies, although none of these has a truly nationwide coverage.

Time, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and the *International Herald Tribune* are sold locally, although the *Herald Tribune* usually arrives one or two days after publication. English-language books and magazines are sold at Helsinki's main train station, in lobbies of larger hotels, and at the city's two principal bookstores. A good selection of other foreign-language books and magazines can also be found at the two main bookstores—standard works in Swedish, French, Italian, German, and Spanish. All imported publications are more expensive than in the country of origin.

Health

The standards of the Finnish medical profession are high. Most physicians are educated at the University of Helsinki, and many study or do research abroad as well. A large number of doctors speak English and German, in addition to Finnish and Swedish. Specialists in most medical fields serve the major communities.

Hospitals are modern and well equipped, and the treatment is

good. Ophthalmologists are available and opticians can fill prescriptions promptly. Dentists and orthodontists are competent. A listing of area hospitals and doctors is available from the U.S. Embassy's administrative section in Helsinki.

Most medicines are available locally at reasonable, state-controlled prices. They may not, however, be the same compositions or brand names prescribed by U.S. physicians. Those planning an extended stay should arrive with a supply of necessary medications; this will allow time to consult with a doctor to determine the proper Finnish equivalent. Medicine is sold only at pharmacies ("apteekki"), while chemists ("Kemikaalikauppa") sell cosmetics only. Some pharmacies are open 24 hours and all pharmacies display a notice in their windows with the address of the nearest pharmacy on night duty.

The general level of community sanitation is high. Public cleanliness and controls are adequate to prevent serious outbreaks of disease, and there are no pest or vermin problems. Helsinki water is dependable, but not fluoridated; fluoride tablets for children can be obtained locally. Pasteurized milk is available, and the processing of fresh milk is closely controlled. The general sanitation and safety of local goods are comparable to those in the U.S. Sewage and garbage arrangements are excellent.

Helsinki's winter climate is cold and damp and may aggravate conditions such as neuralgia, rheumatism, and sinus disorders. Since long periods pass without much sunshine, vitamins are strongly recommended.

Clothing and Services

In preparing a wardrobe for Finland, one should remember that winters are long and cold, springs and autumns are rainy and cool, and summers are short. Layered outfits are ideal for differences in

seasonal temperatures, as well as for changes from indoors to outdoors. All clothing items can be purchased locally at prices which tend to be higher than in the U.S.; good sales occur during January and August, and it is worthwhile to shop at these times. Winter outer-garments and boots for all family members are well made, ideally suited to the climate, and generally worth the extra expense. Those who are difficult to fit in respect to shoe size or other wearing apparel are advised to bring extra items from home.

Men wear medium-weight suits throughout the year in Finland but, from October to May, heavier suits are often needed. Rain gear, overcoats, boots, and overshoes are necessary items, and fur hats are found to be very warm as well as popular locally. Tuxedos are appropriate for many social occasions during the year. "Informal" on a dinner invitation usually means coat and tie.

A useful wardrobe for a woman will include one long dress or skirt; several short dinner dresses; sports attire; and suits, casual dresses or skirts, sweaters, and blouses. Rain gear and heavy winter coats are needed also. Beautiful fur and leather coats are available locally.

Children's needs include warm, water-resistant snowsuits and boots, and lighter-weight coats and jackets for spring and fall. Rubber overalls, readily purchased in local department stores, are useful during both rainy and thawing periods. It may be advisable to have an extra set of outdoor clothes for children who actively participate in winter sports.

Laundry and dry cleaning are expensive, making it advisable to include cleaning compounds for spot removals in one's household effects. Certain neighborhood dry cleaners offer *kilo pesu*, or cleaning of items with the charge based on weight; these items are not steam pressed.

Local and European brands of toiletries, cosmetics, and patent medicines are available, but costly.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Helsinki is served by daily flights from many European cities, and Finnair flies from New York, Los Angeles, Miami, and Tampa. Northwest Airlines serves Stockholm, Sweden and, from there, the traveler has the option of taking the ferry boat to Helsinki.

Visas are not necessary for entry into Finland, but those planning to stay for more than 90 days must obtain residence permits after arrival. No inoculation certificates are required.

Dogs and cats can be imported to Finland; however, they must be vaccinated against rabies. A certificate issued by a veterinarian must state that the animal has been vaccinated at least 30 days and not more than 12 months prior to importation. Cats and dogs imported to Finland cannot be taken to Sweden or Norway without a quarantine period of four months in either country.

Only nonautomatic sport and hunting firearms may be imported, and local requirements for hunting licenses are handled by the police. No military or police-type firearms are permitted. Fishing licenses also are required.

Many religious affiliations are represented in Helsinki. Services in English are offered on a weekly basis by the Anglican Church at the Cathedral Chapel, Saalem Free Gospel Church, and the Tempe-liaukio Lutheran Church; St. Henrik's Catholic Church offers English services two Sundays a month. Other places of worship include: Uspensky Russian Orthodox Cathedral; two churches of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; Helsinki's synagogue; and Islam House.

The time in Finland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus two.

The *markka*, or *Finnmark* (FIM), ceased being legal currency on 1 March 2002, and was replaced by the euro. One euro is equivalent to US\$1.08 (22 May 2002).

Finland uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	May Day
May	Mother's Day*
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Whitsun Eve*
May/June	Whitsunday*
June	Midsummer's Eve*
June	Midsummer's Day*
June	Father's Day*
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 6	Independence Day
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

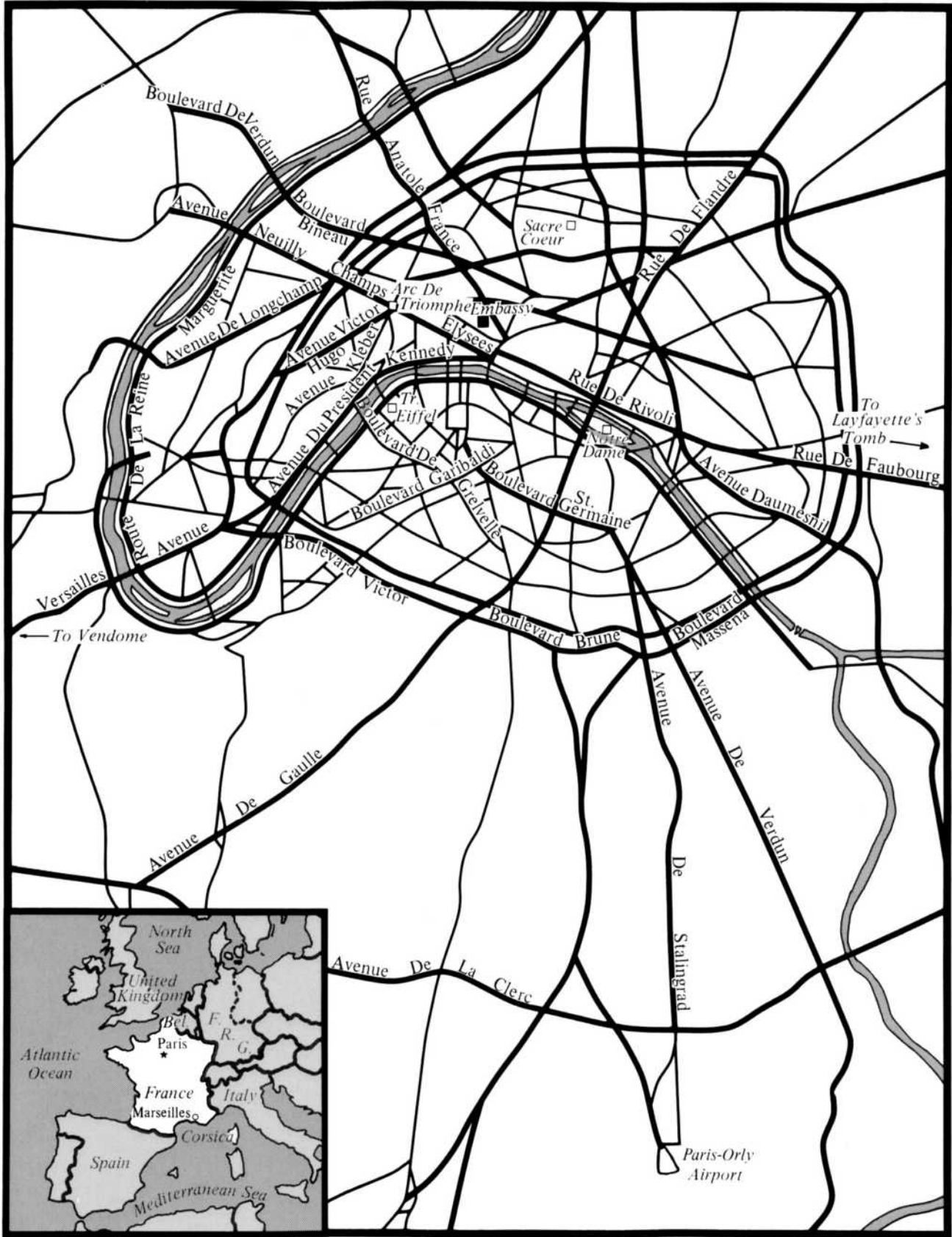
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Paris, France

FRANCE

French Republic

Major Cities:

Paris, Bordeaux, Marseille, Strasbourg, Lyons, Nice, Nancy, Caen, Le Havre, Lille, Montpellier, Nantes, Reims, Rouen, Toulon, Toulouse

Other Cities:

Aix-en-Provence, Alençon, Amiens, Angers, Angoulême, Annecy, Arles, Arras, Auch, Aurillac, Auxerre, Avignon, Beauvais, Belfort, Besançon, Blois, Boulogne, Boulogne-Billancourt, Bourg, Bourges, Brest, Cannes, Carcassonne, Châteaubriant, Châteaudun, Clermont-Ferrand, Colmar, Dijon, Grenoble, Le Mans, Limoges, Lourdes, Metz, Moulins, Mulhouse, Nanterre, Nîmes, Orléans, Pau, Perpignan, Poitiers, Rennes, Roubaix, Saint-Brieuc, Saint-Denis, Saint-Étienne, Saint-Malo, Saint-Nazaire, Tourcoing, Tours, Troyes, Valence, Versailles

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

MAJOR CITIES

Paris

Paris lies in north-central France in the Seine River Valley within the Department of the Seine. Climatic conditions in Paris are moderate. Winters are damp, but not severe. Snowfall is light, sunshine is rare in winter, and gray, foggy days are frequent. Summer temperatures are rarely oppressive, but rain is heavy at times. Hot weather may come as early as May and last as late as October. Conversely, June and July

can be cool or rainy. Winds are not excessive. The famous "April in Paris" is traditionally cold, wet, and windy, although autumn can be ideal.

The Paris region has a population of almost 9.7 million and Paris itself has about 2.1 million inhabitants. About 4,000 to 6,000 American students are enrolled in university-level education in Paris and the provinces. Paris receives about 1.8 million American tourists each year.

The Paris Embassy has the distinction of being the first American diplomatic mission overseas. Benjamin Franklin was appointed the first diplomatic agent in 1778, followed by Thomas Jefferson.

Food

Each neighborhood of Paris has an open-air market several days a week, where fresh produce, cheese, meat, and fish are sold at prices usually cheaper than the supermarkets. The French do their food shopping daily and therefore need to have an array of shops close to home, so each neighborhood also has a variety of specialty stores and

small grocery stores, some of which are part of a larger chain.

Throughout the city are larger chain supermarkets, some with underground parking. These are a little cheaper for most things than the neighborhood shops, but items are bulk packaged. On the outskirts of the city are even larger supermarkets with slightly lower prices and goods packaged in larger quantities.

Most people do their regular shopping on foot in their own neighborhood using their neighborhood butcher, cheese store, and bake shop with occasional forays to the big stores. However, shopping for milk at one store, bread in another, and meat in still another can be time consuming.

Scattered throughout Paris are several small specialty shops, such as The General Store and Thanksgiving, which stock only American import goods at higher than U.S. prices.

Prepared food is available from "charcuteries" or delicatessens, where a hot meal can be purchased

on a carry-out basis at midday, or fine pate, cheeses, cold meats, and salads can be purchased for a quick, cold meal. Stores specializing in frozen food, ready for the microwave or oven, abound. American-style carry-outs have sprung up all over the city, with hamburgers and french fries readily available.

Clothing

French summers are cooler and winters slightly milder than those in Washington, D.C., meaning that a full range of seasonal clothing is needed. A raincoat and umbrella are necessities, as are comfortable walking shoes, sturdy enough to withstand wet streets. Most Americans do more walking in Paris than in the U.S., and even use of the metro and bus often involves walking substantial distances. Comfortable shoes suitable for sight-seeing are essential. Local shoe stores carry excellent quality shoes, but at high prices.

Although Paris has a reputation as a mecca for shopping, prices for almost everything are higher than in the U.S. There are some discount and outlet stores, and the major January and July sales offer some bargains. There are a few second-hand or consignment shops, but most clothing is designer-labeled and expensive, even at half price.

Men: Business suits are worn to most social functions.

Women: Paris clothing needs are similar to those of any big city in the U.S. French women wear dresses, suits, and shirts, rather than slacks, to events. Colors are dark—black is a favorite. Sweaters, shawls, and blazers of all weights are useful.

Children: Prices are almost 50 percent higher than U.S. prices for similar quality goods. Low-priced outlets exist.

Supplies and Services

There are few supplies and services found in the U.S. that can not be found in Paris, but prices are higher.

Men's and women's haircuts cost slightly more than in the U.S.

Laundry, dry-cleaning, and shoe repair services are available, but at prices higher than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Most faiths have a congregation in Paris. The American Cathedral (Episcopalian) and the American Church in Paris (interdenominational) have American pastors and a predominantly American congregation.

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church offers services in English for the English-speaking community. Some Catholic parishes, where English-speaking foreigners ordinarily reside, have an English-speaking French priest. All congregations have affiliated social and religious organizations, such as Sunday school, choir, women's groups, etc. Several Jewish synagogues in the Paris area hold services in French and Hebrew.

Education

The Paris area has a number of schools that offer American curriculum instruction from kindergarten through high school. Several private French schools offer a bilingual French-English curriculum program. The majority of American children attend the American-curriculum schools. The French public school system offers a high standard of education, but classes are crowded and no provision is made for non-French speakers. In addition, French schools are zoned, making application difficult in advance of arrival.

Detailed information on the following schools may be obtained by writing directly to each school.

The American School of Paris
41, rue Pasteur
92210 Saint-Cloud
France
Tel: (1) 46.02.54.43

The American School of Paris, an independent, coeducational day school, offers an American educa-

tional program from pre-kindergarten through grade 12, including a strong college preparatory and the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Although the Upper School has an honors program, the Middle School does not. Located in the suburb of St. Cloud, the school has bus service to most parts of Paris and to the nearby suburbs.

Marymount International School
72, blvd. de la Saussaye
92200 Neuilly-sur-Seine
France
Tel: (1) 46.24.10.51

Marymount School of Paris is an independent, coeducational day school run by the religious order of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It offers an American educational program from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. Located in the suburb of Neuilly, the school offers bus service to most parts of Paris and the suburbs.

International School of Paris
Elementary School
96 bis, rue du Ranelagh
75016 Paris
Middle School
7, rue Chardin
75016 Paris
High School
6, rue Beethoven
75016 Paris
Tel: (1) 42.24.09.54

The International School of Paris is an independent, coeducational day school, which offers an Anglo-American program to students of all nationalities from pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

Various options exist for pre-kindergarten children. Children not attending preschool at any of the schools listed above usually go to either one of the two Montessori schools or to the U.N. nursery school. Detailed information on these schools may be obtained by writing to them directly:

United Nations Nursery School
40, rue Pierre-Guerin
75016 Paris

France
Tel: (1) 45.27.20.24

The Bilingual Montessori School
of Paris
65, quai d'Orsay
75007 Paris
France
Tel: (1) 45.55.13.27

Both state-run and private nursery schools have large classes averaging 25–30 children, and teaching is more formal than in American nursery schools. French children ages 3 to 6 attend neighborhood “*écoles maternelles*.” The state-run “*maternelles*” are free, but apply in May or June for the following academic year to secure a place. Schools are zoned within each neighborhood.

Special Educational Opportunities

Excellent French-language programs are offered by the Sorbonne, the Alliance Francaise, the Institute Catholique, and the British Institute. Private tutors charge about 100 francs an hour.

You can enroll in courses for college credit at the American University in Paris and through New York University. The American University is an independent college of arts and sciences that offers the Bachelor of Arts degree and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Other special education opportunities include the art appreciation courses offered to the public on a non-examination basis at the Louvre, cooking classes at the Cordon Blue and Ritz-Escoffier cooking schools, and a wine appreciation course. Short courses are offered through various organizations on such subjects as French antiques, art, history, the architecture of Paris, etc. Those with a good knowledge of French can attend evening courses offered by arrondissement civic centers.

Sports

Facilities for a variety of sports are available in Paris, but participation often requires membership in a pri-



Overview of Paris, Eiffel Tower in the distance

Courtesy of MaryBeth Mailloux

vate club with high costs. The many public swimming pools in Paris offer excellent facilities at reasonable cost. Facilities for bowling, ice skating, and roller-skating are all numerous.

Public and private golf courses are located within a short drive from Paris.

Tennis is popular with the French, but the number of courts available does not match demand. It is impossible to find a free court on short notice and those who choose to wait may spend up to 2 hours in line. To play regularly, you can book court time on a long-term basis, but the fee is high.

Horseback riding is a major national sport. Riding is available for the most casual and the most serious of riders throughout France. Opportunities exist for riding vacations, even promenades of several days. For spectators, riding shows, dressage and jumping competitions, races and horse auctions abound.

Other recreational activities within the Paris area include jogging and biking in the Bois de Boulogne (a large, wooded park on the western periphery of the city) and hikes and picnics in the surrounding forests.

The numerous city parks offer many activities for children, often with excellent playground equipment. Carousels, pony rides, boat sailing, and puppet shows are found in the major parks at reasonable cost.

Hunting and fishing are popular in France. Most areas require permits.

Many of Europe’s most renowned ski slopes are within easy reach of Paris. Group arrangements make week-long or weekend skiing inexpensive. The schools, and some congregations, organize a ski week in February for their students at reasonable rates.

Touring

Paris provides a wealth of activities ranging from traditional museum visiting to picnicking in the parks. Besides the well-known touristic spots—Louvre, Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, etc.—there are day and half-day barge cruises on local canals, tours through Paris’ sewers and catacombs, flea markets to explore, antique shopping, and cafe sitting. Possibilities for day trips or overnight excursions are endless. Within an hour of Paris are many famous chateaux and cathedrals, including Versailles, Fontainebleu, and Chartres. The Loire Valley with its chateaux to the southwest, the

sandy beaches and quaint towns of Normandy to the north, and the Champagne region to the east, can all be reached within 3 hours. An hour away from Paris is EuroDisney.

Entertainment

Paris has a wide variety of every imaginable type of entertainment, both French and imported. All events are well publicized in newspapers, street and metro ads, and in weekly publications that list not only theater, opera, and dance, but also museums, exhibitions, and films.

Paris produces grand opera, exciting ballet, and plays. During the season there is a constant stream of visiting talent—singers, orchestras, dance groups, theater, etc. Ticket prices for top events are high and sell out quickly for popular shows. Several locations sell tickets for half price, if any remain the day of the event. Subscriptions are available for ballet, opera, and theater.

Movies are popular and there is a wide selection of both French and foreign, old and new, dubbed in French, or in the movie's original language with French subtitles. Prices are slightly higher than in the U.S., but there are discounts on Monday, student reductions, and reduced fares for holders of movie cards available through the major movie houses.

Bordeaux

About 754,000 people live in Greater Bordeaux, the capital of both the department of Gironde and the Aquitaine region. Located 35 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean, Bordeaux remains an important seaport.

Reigning over the Garonne River, which flows through its center, Bordeaux recalls the grandeur of 18th-century France. Beautiful, intricate stone facades mark the majesty of an era when the city served as a gateway to Europe. Wine flowed from Bordeaux to the rest of the



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Street in Bordeaux, France

world. Montesquieu pondered the significance of the human spirit here. Visitors flocked to absorb the Bordelais version of the famous French *joie-de-vivre*.

Now, as before in its long history, the city maintains its charm. Modern buildings mix with the monuments of the past. Cars roll where carriages used to rattle, but the city preserves the essence of tradition. Visitors, many from the U.S., spend weekend after weekend exploring the beautiful vineyards and chateaux that surround Bordeaux. While enjoying nature, they drink great wines and learn about the colorful wine-making process. The city also lies within easy reach of the mountains and the sea.

U.S. representation in Bordeaux dates from 1778 when France formally recognized the independence of the 13 colonies and the Continental Congress appointed commercial agent John Bondfield as a political liaison. In 1790 President George

Washington commissioned Joseph Fenwick of Maryland as the first American consul to Bordeaux, and the post has been in continuous existence ever since (except during the Franco-American "cold war" of 1798–1800 and the Nazi occupation of 1941–44). In 1962 this oldest known American diplomatic station became a Consulate General.

Due to long-term cultural exchanges between this region of France and the U.S., thousands of people apply annually for appropriate visas at the Bordeaux Consulate General. The Consulate General also serves the significant number of Americans visiting or resident in the area.

The Bordeaux consular district includes 24 departments (five regions) in southwestern France and covers almost one-third of continental France. The district contains France's most famous prehistorical caves, many ancient forts and castles, exquisite churches, and most of

France's ultramodern aerospace industry—civil and military. The Basque region, with its mystifying ancient language, is 2 hours south of Bordeaux toward the Spanish border. Notable other cities in the consular district are Toulouse, Limoges, and Poitiers.

About 4,000 American citizens residing in the consular district have registered at the Consulate General (and approximately three times that number are estimated to reside in the district). Of the 4,000 registered, about 450 live in the immediate Bordeaux area.

Food

Food of excellent quality and variety is available. Prepared baby foods are expensive, as are some canned or frozen goods. Certain products used in the U.S. are not available here.

Clothing

Winters are mild in Bordeaux, but summers range from sweltering to cool. Although generally pleasant, the weather changes frequently. Heavyweight wool suits and dresses are practical in winter under lightweight topcoats. Conservative men's clothing suitable is fine for Bordeaux. Bring rain gear for all members of the family.

The Bordelais dress conservatively and formally by American standards. Business suits are worn by men at weekday social events. White tie is not worn and sports coats are usually suitable for weekend events.

Conservative women's clothing for daytime is the same in Bordeaux as in Washington, D.C. Women rarely wear pants to work. For evening women need several cocktail dresses and at least one long dress. French shoes are beautiful, but expensive, and do not always fit American feet.

Since most Americans walk more in Bordeaux than they do in the U.S., bring a good supply of comfortable shoes, especially those practical for wet weather and rough sidewalks.

Most French clothing is expensive. Moderately priced clothes do not sometimes meet U.S. standards of style or fit.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: A wide variety of toiletries for men and women is available, but prices are high. Travelers should bring any special home medications or drugs. Most basic household needs are available locally.

There is a bookstore specializing in English-language paperbacks and several French-language bookstores also have English-language paperbacks for sale, although highly priced.

Basic Services: Laundry, dry-cleaning, and shoe repair are available at prices higher than those in the U.S. The city has no diaper service.

Americans use local French doctors and dentists (rarely English-speaking, however) and local doctors' prescriptions can be easily filled as necessary.

Religious Activities

Besides many Catholic churches, Bordeaux has several French Protestant churches, a synagogue, and an Anglican (Episcopal) church that holds services in English.

Education

Facilities for elementary, secondary, and university education are good quality. Most school teaching is in French. Children up to age 12 learn the fundamentals of the language quickly and are able to take up work at their proper level after 6 months. Older children usually require supplementary language lessons to enable them to keep up with their schoolwork.

Among the public schools are those operated by the municipality and those by the national government (the lycees). Most private schools are run by religious orders.

In both public and private schools, hours of attendance and the amount

of homework greatly exceed U.S. standards. Normally classes are not held on Wednesday afternoon but are on Saturday morning. Tuition costs at private schools are reasonable by U.S. standards. State schools are free.

One English-language instruction school exists in Bordeaux which places children from kindergarten to high school level. The Bordeaux International School was founded with the intention of following the standard British educational program through the GCSE level. It is privately run and funded exclusively by tuition fees. It is suitable for most children who have studied in the U.S. and who prefer not to attempt French-language instruction by immersion. You can request a catalog by writing directly to the school at 53 rue de Laseppe, 33000 Bordeaux.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Bordeaux has faculties in law, medicine, science, and letters as well as an institute of fine arts, politics, and music. Tuition fees are modest. Their French for foreigners course is particularly recommended for older dependents and spouses who are not French speakers.

Adults can study French with private tutors, through a university audiovisual course or at a Berlitz School. Textbooks are readily available in the stores.

Sports

Public swimming pools and a gym are available, although sometimes they are reserved for private athletic associations or school groups. The city has several private tennis clubs and a private golf club. Membership dues and initiation fees are high, and club facilities are limited. The area has several private clubs for flying, sailing, riding, fencing, archery, judo, sculling, and gymnastics; for team sports such as basketball, soccer, rugby, and hockey; and for organized activities such as bicycle touring and skiing. Sports equip-



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Vieux Port, Marseille, France

ment and clothing are sold locally at U.S. prices or slightly higher.

The most interesting local spectator sports are basketball, soccer, and rugby. There are local (U.S.-type) ice hockey, football, and baseball teams, however, with almost 100 percent French participation.

Classic European-type parks are available for children near the office and residences. Neighborhood kindergartens and two public parks have playgrounds with swings and seesaws. Organized sports and activities for children are available (afterhours) at schools or clubs.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Boating, fishing, swimming, or other water sports abound at regional coastal resorts. A broad, sandy beach stretches southward 150 miles from the mouth of Gironde to the Spanish border. Principal resort areas are Arcachon (40

miles), Biarritz (113 miles), and St. Jean de Luz (120 miles).

The Basque country near the Spanish border is popular for hiking, cycling, and camping.

Skiing in the Pyrénées (3 hours by car) sometimes begins as early as December and can continue until April. These ski resorts are expanding rapidly and facilities are good, but the snow is unreliable.

The picturesque Dordogne River Valley has wonderful castles to visit and good hunting, fishing, and camping facilities.

Entertainment

During the regular season (October to April) there are plays, operas, ballet, and symphony concerts in Bordeaux and Toulouse. Since 1950, a 3-week music festival in May has brought instrumentalists of world rank, chamber music groups, choruses, orchestras, and theatrical companies to the city. Several mod-

ern movie houses show French, U.S., British, and other films, most dubbed in French. Bordeaux has several excellent small museums. Hobbyists devoted to bridge, chess, photography, the cinema, art, and other activities will be able to find groups sharing their interest.

Social Activities

Local residents usually entertain at home with teas, small dinners, or lunch parties. Cocktail parties in homes are infrequent, but cocktail-receptions given outside the home by institutions and organizations are common. Regional cultural patterns require frequent representation to develop and maintain professional and social contacts. Fluent French is essential for professional and social success.

Among the business service organizations present in Bordeaux are branches of Lions and Rotary. Chapters of France-Etats Unis (a French association devoted to bettering relations between the two coun-

tries) are in Bordeaux and many of the district's larger cities.

The Bordeaux Women's Club, which meets for lunch monthly, is open to all English-speaking women, as is the Bordeaux-Los Angeles Club, an active friendship associations with a young French membership.

Marseille

Marseille, the first and oldest port in France, is a busy industrial and shipping center. It has a population over 1.3 million and is one of the largest cities in France. Founded in 600 B.C. by Greek traders from Asia Minor, Marseille became the first Christian metropolis in France. It is a contrast of old and new. Modern buildings and conveniences exist alongside narrow, winding streets and centuries-old structures. The city is colorful, with its picturesque harbor, cliff drive along the sea, and tree-lined boulevards—a typical Mediterranean port city, full of life and vitality, dependent largely on maritime traffic.

Situated in the Department of the Bouches du Rhone, Marseille is located 20 miles east of the mouth of the Rhone River. The old city surrounds a small natural harbor which, for 25 centuries, handled all of Marseille's maritime traffic, but which today is little more than a picturesque marina for fishing boats and yachts at the foot of the Canebierre, the city's main street. In 1854 new docks were built outside the Old Port, which today extend north of the city. As France's largest port (the third largest in Europe), it accommodates U.S. aircraft carriers and handles more cargo than any other Mediterranean port. Together with the deep-water port in nearby Fos, Marseille constitutes the largest petroleum port and refinery center in France.

About 6,000 Americans, mostly retirees and students, reside in the Marseille consular district, which covers the 16 Departments of Ardeches, Aude, Bouches du Rhone, Drome, Gard, Herault, Isère Lozere, Pyrénées Orientales, Var, Vaucluse,

Hautes-Alpes, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Alpes-Maritimes, Haute-Corse, and Corse-du-Sud, as well as the Principality of Monaco. About 50 Americans live in Marseille proper. Thousands of American tourists transit Marseille each year, but few stop over because the city is not an important tourist attraction.

The hills around Marseille rise to 1,000 feet over the rocky coastline. The city recently completed a municipal beachfront development that provides ample space for swimming and windsurfing.

The local climate resembles that of Los Angeles, but with little or no smog. The prevailing northerly wind, the Mistral, sometimes blows at gale strength, making winters seem much colder, but also alleviating summer heat and problems of pollution.

Principal officers assigned to Marseille are accredited also to the Principality of Monaco, an area of 447 acres, roughly the size of New York City's Central Park, with 25,000 inhabitants. France conducts the Principality's foreign relations in most areas abroad and provides a French citizen to act as Minister of State. The relations are based on an 1861 treaty signed by Napoleon III and the Prince of Monaco, and last renegotiated on July 17, 1981. The present sovereign is Prince Rainier III of the Grimaldi family, the oldest reigning dynasty in Europe.

Food

Fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant and of good quality.

Buy or eat fish and shellfish only at reputable places. Carefully wash all raw vegetables and fruit.

Clothing

Gabardine, tropical-worsted, or wash-and-wear suits and light summer dresses are recommended for summer. Clothing for a Washington, D.C. winter is fine for Marseille's cold weather. A medium-weight coat will suffice on the coldest days.

Local shops and department stores can be relied on for small items such as scarves, gloves, socks, and underwear.

Supplies and Services

Basic Services: Good dressmakers are available, but prices are high. Shoe repair, dry-cleaning, and laundry facilities are adequate, but expensive. Prices at many beauty shops are somewhat less than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

The city has many Roman Catholic churches, three French Protestant churches, a Greek Orthodox church, an Armenian Gregorian church, a synagogue, and several foreign churches, including the Swiss Protestant church. The Anglican church holds services in English.

Education

Three English-language schools are in the area—the American International School in Nice, the Anglo-American School in Mougins, and CIPEC, a bilingual English-French school in Aix-en-Provence.

Many other schools, public and private, from kindergarten through high school, are available. Instruction is in French. Teachers are good and academic standards high. Most schools have no playground equipment or sports facilities. The school day is longer than in the U.S. Classes are held on Saturday morning (in primary schools) but not on Wednesday in most schools.

Public schools accept U.S. children without tuition fees, but students pay for books and supplies. Tuition at Catholic schools varies according to the grades.

The undergraduate school, the faculty of letters, and faculty of law of the University of Aix-Marseille are in nearby Aix-en-Provence. The faculties of science and medicine of the University are in Marseille; the schools of architecture, fine arts, and business administration are just east of Marseille at Luminy.

Sports

Public sports facilities in and near Marseille are good. A large public sports center has two indoor swimming pools. Several private clubs have pools. Rowing, yachting, and tennis clubs also exist. A golf club is located near Aix-en-Provence, about a 30-minute drive from the city. Hunting, fishing, skin diving, windsurfing, and spearfishing are available; and horseback riding, rugby, soccer, volleyball, and basketball are other popular sports. American football and baseball are becoming increasingly popular.

French sporting equipment can be expensive. However, French skin diving and fishing gear (masks, spears, etc.) is less expensive than U.S. brands. Camping equipment is of excellent quality and reasonably priced, but sports clothing is expensive.

Hunting weapons or the use of animals in hunting is not restricted. Hunters must buy annual licenses. Each community maintaining a hunting preserve charges a yearly fee for its use.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Marseille is convenient to many large cities: Paris (500 miles), Rome (600 miles), and Barcelona (325 miles). The consular district boasts varied scenery and points of interest.

Marseille is linked to Lyon, Paris, and the north by an excellent highway and by the high speed (TGV) train. To the east at Toulon is the French Navy Mediterranean Headquarters, which is visited regularly by units of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. The university cities of Montpellier and Perpignan on the Spanish border are located to the west.

The region near Marseille offers excellent opportunities for touring, sight-seeing, hiking, and picnicking. Also available in the district are skiing and mountain climbing in the Alps, as well as fine seaside amusement and recreation on the Cote d'Azur.

The historic cities of Arles, Avignon, Nimes, and Orange are easily reached by train, bus, or car, and the old university town of Aix-en-Provence is only 30 minutes away.

Entertainment

Several cinemas in Marseille show European and U.S. films with French soundtracks. On occasion, an English-language film with French subtitles is shown. Frequent plays, operas, operettas, ballets, and concerts are performed during the winter. The July music festival of Aix-en-Provence is internationally famous. Plays and operas are held in the Roman theater at Orange and in many other cities.

There are many restaurants in Marseille, but they are expensive. American-type nightclubs are few and expensive.

Marseille has several worthwhile museums and art galleries. Several trade fairs are held during the year. Local hobby clubs include photography, aviation, Ping-pong, and bridge.

During the summer, Sunday bullfights are held at the ancient Roman amphitheaters in Arles and Nimes. Except in winter, horse races are held at tracks in Marseille and Aix-en-Provence.

The nearby Riviera handles thousands of tourists each year and has ample entertainment facilities. Carnivals, flower shows, film festivals, auto shows, and open-air theaters are operated in various municipalities and by private groups. Many movie theaters show American films with French soundtracks. Art exhibits and concerts are frequent. Large casinos at Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and Juan les Pins sponsor dances, concerts, and theatrical attractions, in addition to gambling.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Social activities include dinner parties, luncheons, and receptions. Most entertaining is informal, and buffet dinners are common. Outdoor bar-

becues are popular, so bring the necessary equipment.

International Contacts: The Marseillais are friendly and easy to know, but can be reserved about inviting others to their homes.

Special Information

The former USIS library has some reference material in English and French. A few Marseille bookstores have small selections of English books, mostly classics. Aix-en-Provence has an English bookshop and the British Consulate operates a large English library.

Strasbourg

A proud and historic city, Strasbourg is located at the confluence of the Ill and Rhine Rivers on the Franco-German border. The surrounding countryside is picturesque and abounds with recreational opportunities. Like other cities in the Rhine Valley, Strasbourg enjoys a moderate climate, although temperature changes can be abrupt. For most Americans, sunny days are scarce.

Although Strasbourg has been an important Rhine River port and European crossroad for more than 2,000 years and is now a dynamic metropolitan area of 427,000 people, the city has retained a pleasing provincial character without the hectic atmosphere of a large capital. Yet, as the seat of the 27-nation Council of Europe and host for the monthly sessions of the European Community's (EC) directly elected European Parliament, the European Commission, and Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg has a cosmopolitan dimension often lacking in much larger cities. The Council of Europe, with its Ambassador-rank Permanent Representatives, the monthly sessions of the European Parliament, the 15 professional Consulates, and the 17 honorary consuls, give the city the second-largest diplomatic community in France. The frequent meetings of the European Parliament and the Council's Parliamentary

Assembly bring parliamentarians, ministers, and heads of state and government to Strasbourg from all over Europe, as well as from non-European countries.

But the city is not only a capital for European political institutions. Cultural opportunities include the outstanding Opera du Rhine, an excellent orchestra, and the only French national theater outside Paris. The University of Strasbourg, with 45,000 students from all over the world, is a recognized leader in the fields science of medicine, law, and economics. Eleven American universities have yearlong study programs here. For the tourist or resident, the historic sections of Strasbourg offer charming walks and almost unlimited gastronomic opportunities. Most newcomers find Strasbourg's attractions, a unique blend of French and Germanic traditions, and proximity to several other European countries more than compensation for its weather.

The regions near Strasbourg, including Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche Compte, have a diversified export-oriented economy. Major sectors include: manufacturing, automobile, textile, chemicals, agriculture, and financial services. With more than 12,000 scientists and researchers, the area hosts about 15 percent of the total French scientific resources. Thus, many laboratories and research organizations specializing in biological and electronic technologies are headquartered in the area.

More than 72 U.S. multinational corporations have investments in the area, of which the largest are Powertrain, General Motors, Eli-Lilly, Warner-Lambert/Capsugel, Timken, Rohm and Hass, Mars, Wrigley, and Trane.

Three of the largest American military cemeteries in France are within the area.

Food

All kinds of foods are available in Strasbourg with seasonal limitations. Fresh vegetables in winter

are sometimes scarce, but you can buy frozen foods in the larger markets. Frozen foods, meats, poultry, and ice cream are more expensive than in the U.S.

Clothing

A four-season wardrobe is needed in Strasbourg. Tailors, dressmakers, and quality ready-made clothing are all available, but prices are higher than in the U.S. Footwear is attractive and competitively priced, but many Americans find French sizes a problem. Do not overlook rain gear.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: All items normally required for housekeeping and household repairs are found here.

Basic Services: Dry-cleaning is about double U.S. prices. Laundries and shoe repair shops are plentiful, and prices are reasonable. The many good beauty shops are cheaper than in the U.S.

Several bookstores carry a limited number of books in English. Membership in the American Library in Paris is inexpensive and books can be mailed to members. The *International Herald Tribune* is available in Strasbourg on the day of publication. Local newsstands also carry *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *McCall's*. *Les Dernieres Nouvelle d'Alsace*, Strasbourg's principal newspaper, is published in French and German, and a number of other leading French papers are available.

Religious Activities

The population of Strasbourg is 45 percent Catholic, 35 percent Protestant (Lutherans and Calvinists), 10 percent Jewish, and 10 percent all other faiths. People of all three major faiths attend services regularly. Catholic and Protestant services are held both in French and German. An Anglican Episcopal service in English is held every Sunday. Protestant interdenominational services in English are held twice a month at the Temple Neuf Chapel.

Education

Although Strasbourg has many excellent French schools of all types, no English-language elementary or secondary school now exists. The French Government, in recognition of Strasbourg's position as host city to a number of European institutions, has established a special "international" school (currently with separate primary and secondary school facilities) designed to accommodate children of the foreign community. However, basic instruction is in French.

Special Educational Opportunities

Strasbourg has universities that prepare students for degrees in letters, law, political science, economics, science, medicine, and theology. The universities have special courses for foreigners in French language and civilization.

Students may be enrolled under certain conditions at the Conservatory of Music and the School of Decorative Arts. Private instruction in music and art is available.

Sports

The city's tennis clubs have good clay courts and one club has covered courts. The Strasbourg Golf Club, about 4 miles from the city, set in the charming countryside, has a 9-hole course generally playable year round. Indoor swimming is possible at the Schiltigheim municipal pool and at the older Strasbourg municipal bath. Beautiful outdoor swimming pools are available in Strasbourg near the Rhine Bridge, in nearby Kehl across the river, and at Obernai, an attractive town in the Vosges foothills about 30 minutes away. Skiing is available in season in the Vosges and in the Black Forest within less than 50 miles of Strasbourg. The season lasts from December through March. Strasbourg has a fencing club, and a bowling alley is not far from the Consulate General.

Some trout fishing is possible in the small streams of the Vosges and the Black Forest. For hunters, Alsace

has a great deal of excellent shooting. Quail, partridge, pheasant, and hare are abundant, and deer and wild boar are in the mountains. Opportunities for horseback riding and lessons are plentiful at Strasbourg, and the surrounding areas of Alsace have numerous clubs offering both ring and trail riding. The Vosges mountains offer the serious hiker and camper invigorating air and scenic vistas. "L'Orangerie" and the "Contade" are two favorite parks for afternoon walks.

Athletic competitions of all kinds, including soccer, basketball, tennis, water polo, swimming, boxing, and wrestling, can be seen.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The mountains and foothills of Alsace are dotted with small, picturesque villages. In spite of wartime destruction and intensive rebuilding, many houses remain from the 15th and 16th centuries, and the distinctive Alsatian architecture is attractive and interesting. Many fine examples of Romanesque and Gothic religious architecture, as well as 18th-century civil architecture, can be found all over Alsace. On the foothills and lower slopes of the Vosges are the vineyards of Alsace, which are the sources of some fine white wines and an unusual rosé. Higher up on rocky promontories, the ruins of medieval castles look out over the Rhine plain to the Black Forest in the distance.

The Alsatians are French citizens with a Germanic cultural background. Both French and Alsatian, a German dialect, are spoken by nearly everyone. In the countryside, Alsatian predominates and many older peasants do not understand more than a few words of French. German is widely understood and spoken.

Several Western European countries are easily accessible from Strasbourg. In Switzerland, Basel is about 80 miles away, Bern 170, and Geneva 219. Paris is 300 miles away. The distance to Heidelberg is 85 miles, to Munich 170, to Frank-

furt 138, to Bonn 214, to Luxembourg 130, and to Innsbruck, Austria 260. Opportunities to visit interesting places are innumerable, and exceptionally good guide books are available here. Baden-Baden, 45 minutes away, has a golf course and a famous casino with a fine restaurant and dancing.

Trains are fast, inexpensive, and reliable. Across the Rhine in Germany, the excellent, toll-free autobahn (expressway) system connects Strasbourg with Basel, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich. A newly completed French autoroute (expressway) makes Paris an easy 4- to 5-hour drive from Strasbourg, but tolls are high. Traffic on French secondary roads is intense, particularly at certain times of the day and in the summer. Gasoline prices are the highest in Europe. Unleaded gasoline is available in Strasbourg and nearby Germany.

Entertainment

Municipal theaters provide a full program of play, concerts, ballets, operas, and operettas. The city's radio-TV station gives free tickets to various concerts held throughout the year. The opera, symphony orchestra, and municipal ballet are particularly good, and many well-known chamber orchestras, quartets, and soloists come here on tour. A music festival is held every June with eminent visiting artists and first-class orchestras.

Strasbourg has about 20 cinemas. Movies are in French and occasionally in English. Most British and American pictures are shown with French soundtracks.

Social Activities

The presence of the Council of Europe, with its resident ambassadors and 1300-person secretariat composed of citizens from 44 countries, gives social life an international and cosmopolitan dimension. Social functions are frequent and tend toward sit-down dinners and receptions rather than informal affairs, although the business lunch is well established. Although no American club or organization

exists in Strasbourg, the local binational association, Alsace-Etats-Unis, organizes a number of events with an American flavor.

Special Information

Strasbourg is considered one of the best medical centers in France. Excellent doctors and surgeons are available. Hospital care is excellent. All the latest drugs are known and used, and the Hopital Civil and some of the clinics are equipped with diagnostic laboratories. Oculists and dentists are plentiful. Several good veterinarians also practice in Strasbourg.

Lyons

Lyons (Lyon), which forms the core of the second largest metropolitan area in France with a population of about 1.3 million, is the country's third largest city. It is at the confluence of the Rhône and Saône Rivers, some 300 miles southeast of Paris. Old Lyons lies between the rivers and up the hill on the west bank of the Saône. More recently, the city has grown on the east bank of the Rhône and west into the foothills bordering the Saône. The population of the city proper is about 453,000. The climate is similar to that of Washington, DC; it is humid, but snow or long hot spells are rare.

Lyons takes pride in its history, which goes back to Gallo-Roman times when it was Lugdunum, the Roman capital of Gaul. The emperors Claudius and Caracalla were born here. Many remaining buildings and artifacts remind residents and visitors alike of Lyons' origins in antiquity, including the oldest Roman amphitheater remains in France; its importance in the growth of French Catholicism; and its one-time role as the leading silk and cloth manufacturing city in the Western world.

However, the city is not all history. It has a new metro system, one of the largest shopping centers in Europe, world headquarters for Interpol and the International Congress Center, and a modern interna-

tional airport, Satolas. In October 1988, the city released a plan called "Lyon 2010," which lays the guidelines for the next decades' city growth. Included in the plan is the development of access routes into the city, 13 more miles of metro lines, expanded bus, train, and airplane service, renovations to the Musée des Beaux-Arts and a new concert hall and opera house. Lyons is a well-maintained and clean city where the old and the new are integrated into an attractive whole. Houses virtually unchanged since the 17th century, multi-storied office complexes reaching for the sky, wide tree-lined boulevards, and beautiful parks blend to make this a lovely, livable metropolis, whose residents still consider the traditional art of French cooking important enough to take a two-hour lunch. The illumination of the city's buildings and monuments was completely redesigned, making Lyons' night skyline a visual delight. And Bellencour, the geographical heart of the city, is the largest city-center square in Europe.

Lyons, a world-famous medical center, particularly in cancer research, has excellent medical facilities readily available. There are numerous fine large hospitals, but Americans have used the French Clinique or private hospitals for their needs.

The city boasts the oldest stock exchange in France (founded in 1506), a 178-year-old university, and several excellent museums. Lyons' museums are generally smaller than those in Paris and are usually dedicated to an aspect of the city's history or customs, although the Musée des Beaux-Arts is the second largest fine arts museum in France.

The first U.S. Foreign Service post in Lyons opened in 1826, when James Fenimore Cooper was appointed as its consul. The U.S. Consulate General in Lyons is located at 7, Quai General Sarrail.

Schools for Foreigners

Excellent French schools of all types abound in Lyons, but there are no

American or English schools in the district. All instruction is in French. Some children, who have been exposed to the language at home or in previous schools, enroll locally and do well in their classes, but it should be understood that French fluency is a prerequisite.

A few private bilingual schools exist and the Lycée Jean Perrin has opened international sections in English, German, and Spanish to accommodate Lyons' international community.

Accessible and desirable educational facilities can be found in Switzerland and Belgium, as well as in Paris. However, unless English-language education is a necessity, the fine schools of Lyons and other university towns in the district (Dijon, Grenoble, Clermont-Ferrand, and Saint-Étienne) should be seriously considered.

Lyons' excellent universities offer a multitude of courses. Ample cultural, artistic, and musical facilities are also available.

Recreation and Entertainment

Lyons is a convenient point for travel within France or to nearby Switzerland and Italy. An inexhaustible supply of touring sites, historical monuments, and museums is available for every taste. Virtually every known recreational activity has its followers in Lyons, and the area probably has a greater variety of recreational advantages, facilities, and resorts than any other in France.

All major European sports are popular. Most of the French Alps lie within the district and provide excellent skiing, hiking, and climbing. Lyons also offers facilities for swimming, golf, tennis, and other sports.

The 1992 Winter Olympics was centered at Albertville, approximately 75 miles east of Lyons in the Savoy Alps. Competition was spread throughout 640 square miles in the region.

There are several markets in Lyons for browsing, including an arts and crafts market held every Sunday, book markets, animal markets, and the one of the largest antique markets in Europe.

The types of entertainment found in any major U.S. city are readily available, popular, and reasonably priced in Lyons. However, the city is conservative compared to Paris, and the nightlife is surprisingly quiet.

Nice

Nice, in the Département of Alpes-Maritimes, is in the renowned Riviera resort area, 30 miles from Italy and 100 miles from Marseille. The city's international airport is two-and-a-half miles from the center of town. It handles more passenger traffic than any other airport in France outside Paris. Daily flights link Nice with all parts of the world. Work has been completed south of the airport to extend the facilities in order to meet the demands of the area.

Besides an advantageous location, Nice has an excellent climate and a stimulating variety of official, social, and cultural contacts. The population of Greater Nice, which stretches from the Var River to the independent corporation of L'Abadie, is now 889,000, making it the fifth largest city in France.

Most of Nice's labor force is employed in tourist-related occupations. Next to tourism in economic importance is the cut flower trade. The Nice wholesale flower market ships its products to distant points and to the large perfume-essence industry in nearby Grasse. Light industry, electronics, and construction are also important employers in the Nice area.

Nice was founded as Nicaea by a colony of Ionian Greeks from ancient Massilia (Marseille) in the fifth century B.C. It has had a history of domination by the Romans, the Saracens, the counts of Provence, the House of Savoy, the French, and



Bridge over Rhone River in Lyons, France

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the Turks. It was ceded to France by Savoy in 1860. Nice is the birthplace of Giuseppe Garibaldi, the 19th-century Italian patriot and soldier.

As a resort town, Nice has a pleasing, well-rounded character. It has miles of lovely promenades on the sea, an opera house, theaters, casinos, and many good restaurants, and is especially lively between January and April. Nearby mountains serve as a scenic backdrop and as a protection from cold winds. Best of all, there is sunshine about 325 days a year.

Schools for Foreigners

The American International School (AIS) on the Côté d'Azur is located in Saint-Laurent-du-Var, just outside Nice. It opened in September 1977 and provides education from kindergarten through grade 12. Several U.S. companies in the area (IBM, Texas Instruments, Rohm, and Haas) have contributed to a fast-growing enrollment, and the school now is in new facilities near

the Var River, with a view of the Maritime Alps. AIS offers an American-type curriculum to its students, and provides preparation and testing for college enrollment. Individualized programs are fitted to the needs of each student. The school's address is Quartier de la Tour, La Baronne, 06700 Saint Laurent-du-Var, France. Kindergarten through grade four are also taught at the Monaco Primary School section, located at Fortvieille, Stade Louis II, Monaco 98000.

French public schools will admit American children of all ages, but courses, study methods, and procedures differ from those in the U.S. It takes the average American child a difficult period of six months to a year to become fluent in French.

There are many private day and boarding schools along the Riviera; instruction is in French.

To be admitted to the University of Nice, the applicant must be fluent

in the language and have earned the equivalent of the French baccalaureate (*baccalauréat*), about 35 credit hours of American undergraduate study. The Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen, an adjunct to the university, offers special courses for foreigners, ranging from six to 19 hours a week. Cost varies per semester.

Recreation

As a tourist site, the Riviera is justly famous. Nice, its most renowned resort, is in Provence, a region with numerous places of scenic beauty and historical and artistic interest.

Mountain resorts are nearby for winter sports. The ski stations of Valber, Auron, and Isola 2000 can be reached by car in less than two hours, and several Italian resorts are within four hours' drive. All sports equipment and attire are similar in style to those in the U.S., but prices are higher. Equipment

may be rented at the ski resorts, and lessons are available.

Ample facilities also exist for other sports. Golf courses are located within 30 to 45 minutes of the city, and there are several tennis clubs in Nice and nearby cities. The most popular outdoor activity is ocean swimming, made possible five months of the year by the moderate climate. Wind surfing is a new sport which has become very popular.

Entertainment

The Riviera hosts thousands of tourists each year and has ample entertainment facilities. Carnivals, flower shows, film festivals, auto shows, and open-air theaters are operated in various municipalities and by private groups. Many movie theaters show American films with French soundtracks.

Art exhibits and concerts are frequent. Near Nice, museums of French impressionist painters Matisse (the Matisse Museum) and Chagall (the Marc Chagall National Museum) may be enjoyed by art lovers and art critics alike. Other art museums include the Anatole Jakowsky International Museum of Naive Art and the Jules Chéret Museum of Fine Arts which houses paintings from Vanloo to Picasso.

Large casinos at Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and Juan-les-Pins sponsor dances, concerts, and theatrical attractions, in addition to gambling. Many excellent restaurants offer regional French and Italian cuisine, as well as other traditional specialties. Prices for theaters, opera, and restaurants are about the same as in the U.S.

Monaco's National Day celebration on November 19, the feast of Prince Rainier's patron saint, includes a mass and *Te Deum* at the cathedral, luncheon at the palace, an afternoon football match, and a gala at the Monte Carlo Opera in the evening.

Nice offers a wide range of artistic entertainment. The National Theatrical Centre presents outstanding seasons; an Italian Film Festival

draws increasingly large crowds in December; a Choreographic Festival hosts the greatest international dancers. Opera can be enjoyed in Nice from November to April, the Holy Music Festival is in June, and the Great Jazz Parade is in July.

A number of facilities in the Nice area are geared toward the thousands of English-speaking residents and tourists. The *International Herald Tribune* and popular American magazines are sold at local newsstands. An English bookstore in Nice carries a good selection of classic and contemporary writers. An English-American library on the grounds of the English church has a varied, although somewhat dated, selection of books. The *Nice-Matin* is the most important local daily newspaper. Several weekly and biweekly papers are also published.

Nancy

Situated on the Meurth River and Marne-Rhine Canal, Nancy is the economic, administrative, and educational center of Lorraine Province. The city is located in northeastern France, about 178 miles east of Paris and 75 miles west of Strasbourg. The capital of Meurthe-et-Moselle Département, Nancy sits on the outer perimeter of the large Lorraine iron fields and, because of this, it is an industrial city known for manufacturing foundry products, boilers, electrical equipment, ironware, and machine tools.

Historically, Nancy grew up around a castle of the dukes of Lorraine, becoming the capital in the 12th century. In 1477, the gates of the city were the scene of a battle in which Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, was defeated and killed by René II, duke of Lorraine. Stanislaus I, duke of Lorraine from 1738 through 1766, resided in Nancy and, during that time, the city was a model of urban planning and 18th-century architecture. Nancy became part of France in 1766, and from 1870 to 1873 was occupied by the Germans following the Franco-Prussian War. An important rail-

road center in World War I, Nancy was unsuccessfully attacked by Germans in 1914, but was partially destroyed by heavy bombardment. During World War II, American forces reached the city on September 5, 1944, taking it 10 days later.

Landmarks in Nancy include an 18th-century cathedral, the Gothic church of St. Épyre, the 17th-century town hall, the 16th-century Palais Ducal (this palace contains a museum of Lorraine's rich past), and the Place de la Carrière. The 15th-century Church of Cordeliers houses the tombs of the princes of Lorraine.

In the heart of the city is the Place Stanislas. An imposing statue occupies the center of this large, paved square, enclosed by monumental buildings and decorated with green fountains and golden railings. The 18th and 20th centuries merge beneath the great statue of Stanislas, once king of Poland and the last duke of Lorraine. Stanislas built the square bearing his name in the middle of Nancy, between the 10th-century *Ville Vieille* (old city) and the 15th-century *Ville Neuve* (new city).

Nancy has an art museum, academy of fine arts, and a university, founded in 1854, that has colleges of mining, metallurgy, engineering, dairy science, chemistry, and commerce. In addition to faculties of science, law, arts and medicine, there is also an attached teaching hospital.

Nancy's current population is 106,000.

Recreation

Present-day Nancy has its science museums of geology, zoology, and scientific art. The Museum of Fine Arts, just a short walk from the Place Stanislas, houses over six centuries of canvasses of mostly French and Italian painters, including Delacroix, Manet, Vlaminck, and Modigliani. At Jarville, just outside of Nancy, is the Iron Museum, unmatched anywhere. Educational and fascinating, the museum also contains contemporary architec-

ture. There is also a Motor Museum and a zoo—Forêt de Haye.

Nancy has several stadiums, gymnasiums, and swimming pools. During winter, there is skiing in the Vosges every weekend, just an hour's drive away.

Entertainment

Nancy after dark is a little Latin and a little Oriental, and a town of measured refinement, with countless details to be enjoyed. The city has many restaurants, large and small, all of which excel in the standard French dishes as well as the local specialties of quiche, *potée*, and pike, and accompanied by beer or the local wine, *vin gris*. Discothèques, clubs, and other places for dancing, singing and enjoying oneself abound in Nancy.

The World Theatre Festival is held in the city every two years. During the 10 days of the festival, connoisseurs mingle with authors, actors with producers, and novices with specialists. In autumn, Nancy plays host to a jazz festival. The 10-day festival, featuring musicians from three continents, is a marathon of pulsating sound, explosive rhythm, and irresistible sensations. In addition to the two festivals, there is the Grand Théâtre, many cinemas, and visiting performers. Merry-go-rounds of the fair in Place Carnot bring delight to thousands of young and old for a month each summer.

Caen

Caen, in northwestern France, is situated on the Orne River, about nine miles from the English Channel coast and 126 miles northwest of Paris. With a population of nearly 117,000, Caen is a busy port canalized directly to the sea by Napoleon I. Due to improvements made to the canal, allowing present-day access to ships over 30,000 tons, it deals with millions of tons of traffic a year. A magnificent stretch of water has been adapted and reserved for sailing enthusiasts.

An industrial city with a thermal power station and extensive steel works along the Orne River, Caen is also near the country's second largest iron-ore mines. Items manufactured in Caen include automobiles, electronic gear, heavy equipment, textiles, and lace.

Historically, Caen was a favorite residence of William the Conqueror, and was under English rule in 1346 and from 1417 to 1450. During World War II, it was one of the main objects of the Allied invasion of Normandy. Attacked by the British on June 6, 1944 (D-Day), Caen became part of the German defense line. It was attacked again on June 25, taken by British and Canadian forces on July 9, and consequently, many of its architectural landmarks were almost totally destroyed. The 14th-century Church of St. Peter's lost its spire, while the Castle of William the Conqueror and the 17th-century town hall were both destroyed beyond repair. Some examples of 11th-century Norman architecture did survive and include the Abbaye aux Hommes where William the Conqueror is buried; Abbaye aux Dames, founded by Queen Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, in 1066; and the Church of St. Nicholas.

The city has a university, founded by Henry VI of England in 1432, which was destroyed and later rebuilt. The University of Caen has about 15,500 students. With its new theater, the Museum of Arts, and Museum of Normandy, Caen remains the cultural, intellectual, and artistic center it has been since the Middle Ages.

From Caen, it is easy to reach the large seaside resorts along the Channel coast (Côte Fleurie, from Franceville to Honfleur) and also to the famous beaches where the Allied Forces landed in 1944 (Côte de Nacre and Bessin, from Riva-Bella to Isigny).

Le Havre

Le Havre is France's most important port for transatlantic passen-

ger liners. A city of 193,000, it is in the Seine-Maritime Département of northern France, at the mouth of the Seine on the English Channel. Le Havre is also a major port for exports from the Paris region as well as northwestern France.

An important industrial center, its industries include sugar and oil refining and shipbuilding. Heavy equipment and electrical equipment are manufactured here. Le Havre was founded in 1517 as Havre-de-Grace and, by the 18th century, had passed Rouen, Nantes, and Bordeaux in importance. The city was developed as a port from the 16th century and was a naval base under Napoleon I. It was a major Allied base during World War I and, during World War II, it was occupied by the Germans from June 1940 through September 1944. Like so many other French cities, it was heavily damaged during World War II, but is now rebuilt.

Points of interest in Le Havre include the church of Notre Dame, the round tower of Francis I, an arsenal, and a theater. The resort suburb of Ste.-Adresse adjoins Le Havre and has a fine beach. Four miles east of Le Havre is the seaport of Harfleur, once a chief port of France. Opposite Le Havre on the Seine estuary is the seaport of Honfleur. Once a center for exploration, it is today known for its tourism industry. Étretat is another resort town near Le Havre.

Lille

Lille, formerly Lisle, is the capital of Nord Département in northern France. Situated near the Belgian border and about 130 miles northeast of Paris, Lille has a population of about 191,000, and about one million in the metropolitan area.

Lille was the center of industrial expansion in the 1960s that led to the establishment of a metropolitan community uniting nearly 90 towns. Including the cities of Tourcoing, Roubaix, Béthune, Bruay, and Lens, among others, this area is now France's richest economic region

and one of Europe's most important urban centers. A commercial, cultural, and manufacturing center, Lille is known for its textile products, but also produces iron, steel, machinery, and chemicals. There are brewing, distilling, and sugar refining facilities within the city.

Founded about 1030, Lille was the medieval capital of Flanders until given to the king of France in 1312. The city changed hands several times before it was restored to France via the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. One of the principal fortifications in northern France at the onset of World War I, Lille was occupied by the Germans from October 1914 to October 1918. During World War II, the Germans again occupied the city, from June 1940 until September 1944.

Principal buildings in Lille include a huge citadel; a 17th-century stock exchange; two 15th-century churches; a 16th-century church; and an unfinished cathedral, begun in 1854. Lille has a large university, established in 1560, and one of the most important art museums in Europe, which includes paintings of Flemish, Dutch, French, and Spanish masters.

The seaport of Calais is located 60 miles northwest of Lille on the Strait of Dover. Known for its lace-making, Calais has a population of 77,000.

Montpellier

A great commercial center, Montpellier is located in southern France near the Mediterranean Sea. The capital of Hérault Département, Montpellier is 77 miles northwest of Marseille and has a population of 229,000. During the 10-year period from 1960 through 1970, the city's population increased nearly 70 percent, due in part to a large influx of refugees from Algeria.

Montpellier's industries include salt working, textile milling, food processing, and printing. The city manufactures metal items and

chemicals, and has a large wine, fruit, and vegetable market.

Montpellier dates from the eighth century, when it was the center of a fief under the Toulouse counts. In the 13th century it passed to the kings of Majorca and, in 1349, was purchased by Philip VI of France. As a Huguenot center, Montpellier was taken by Louis XIII in 1622.

Today, Montpellier is best known for its university, founded in 1220 by Cardinal Conrad. Suppressed by the French Revolution, it was reestablished as a university in 1896. In 1970, it was divided into three units. The university's medical school can be traced to the 10th century; its most famous student was Rabelais. Montpellier has agricultural and military schools and is the home of an international wine festival. Here also is the oldest botanical garden in France, founded in 1593.

Notable structures in the city include a château, citadel, 14th-century cathedral, palace of justice and triumphal arch in Doric architecture.

Just south of Montpellier is the seaside resort of Sète. A city of 40,000, Sète is the principal seaport of southern France, after Marseille, with a large export trade in wine.

Nantes

Nantes, with a population of 278,000, is the capital of the Loire-Maritime Département in western France. Situated on the Loire River 107 miles west of Tours, it is an important industrial and shipping center; its ocean port is Saint-Nazaire. Nantes is the home of several educational institutions, and the seat of an episcopal see.

The city (once called *Condivincum*) was the capital of ancient Namnetes before the Roman conquest of Gaul. The Huns, the Normans, and the dukes of Brittany all laid siege to Nantes throughout the centuries and, in 1499, it became part of France upon the marriage of Anne of Brittany to King Louis XII. Dur-

ing the French Revolution, it was the scene of a violent massacre and mass drownings. Nantes was a major center of resistance in World War II.

There are numerous museums, concert halls, theaters, and sports facilities located throughout Nantes. The city is known for its many festivals and fairs including a commercial fair, musical festival, pre-Lenten carnival, and several folk festivals.

The industrial *commune* of Rezé is located opposite Nantes, on the Loire. With a population of 37,000, the city manufactures hats, furniture, shoes, and rugs.

Reims

Reims (or Rheims) is one of the French cities historically connected with the heroic Joan of Arc. A city of 191,000, it is located in the Champagne region in the northeastern part of the country.

Reims was once the customary place for the crowning of kings of France. Joan of Arc stood at the side of Charles II (the dauphin) at his coronation in 1429 in the beautiful Reims cathedral—the historic structure was later extensively damaged in both the Franco-Prussian War (1870) and World War I. Restoration was made possible by a Rockefeller Foundation grant, and the cathedral was reopened in 1938. It remains the city's most renowned building.

Reims is surrounded by vineyards and, since the 18th century, has been the center of France's champagne industry. It once was equally famous for its woolen textiles. Reims was the site of the unconditional surrender of Germany on May 7, 1945. Since it was rebuilt after heavy damage in both world wars, Reims today is a new city with modern buildings. There is an extensive network of caves beneath the city, used for the storage of wines. Textiles, machinery, and glass are also produced in Reims.

Rouen

Rouen, a city of 109,000 today, is probably best known for the events that took place in 1431. Two years after her victory over the English at Orléans, Joan of Arc was tried, sentenced to death, and burned here at the stake.

The capital of Seine-Maritime Département, Rouen is located in northern France about 70 miles northwest of Paris. The city is entirely surrounded by woods and forests of an immense variety of trees. With its suburbs, Rouen numbers some 390,000 inhabitants. Situated on the right bank of the Seine River near its mouth at the English Channel, Rouen functions as the port of Paris and handles a large volume of traffic. It has 15 miles of quays equipped with every modern facility. Wine, grain, livestock, sugar, and petroleum products are shipped from Rouen. Items manufactured within the city include chemicals, drugs, textiles, paper, leather goods, and metal products. Industries include shipyards, oil refineries, and railroad shops.

Rouen was founded in pre-Roman times and was taken and burned by the Normans in the ninth century. A century later, it was the capital of Normandy and one of the leading cities of Europe. It was occupied by the English during the Hundred Years War, 1418-49, by the Huguenots in 1562, and by the Germans in 1870. Rouen suffered heavy damage from Allied bombing during World War II and was taken by the Allies on August 31, 1944; the city and much of its port had to be reconstructed.

The city has been an archiepiscopal see since the fifth century and has many churches and cathedrals. Damaged, but now restored, are the cathedral of Notre Dame (built during the 12th through 15th centuries) with its well-known *Tour de Beurre* (butter tower); the palace of justice and Church of St. Maclou (both constructed during the 15th and 16th centuries); and the

Renaissance clock tower—*Gros Horloge*.

Landmarks honoring Joan of Arc are the 14th-century Abbey of Saint Ouen, where she was sentenced to death, and the Place de la Pucelle, where she died. Conducted tours of all historical places are undertaken twice daily in the summer.

The birthplaces of dramatist Pierre Corneille (1606-1684) and author Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) have been preserved and are currently museums. The Musée des Beaux-Arts is one of the most important in France, including masterpieces by Delacroix and Ingres. Paintings of the Italian, Flemish, and Dutch schools are found, as well as a rich collection of the French masters of the 17th and 18th centuries and the Impressionists. There is also a very important collection of *faïence*—Rouen-ware.

All major sports are represented in Rouen. Rowing and canoeing are possible on Île Lacroix and yachting may be done at Duclair and Hénouville. An 18-hole golf course is located at Mont-Saint-Aignan. Football, at the Football Club Rouennais; riding at area riding schools; and horse racing are all available in the Rouen area. Motor racing on the Rouen Les Essarts circuit, occurs in July.

Toulon

Toulon, a seaport in southeastern France on the Mediterranean Sea, has a population of 166,000. Located 30 miles southeast of Marseille, Toulon is an important industrial center and commercial port. In addition, it is the principal base of the French Mediterranean fleet, with docks, naval shipyards, and an arsenal.

Major industries include shipbuilding, ship repairing, fishing, and wine making. Figs, almonds, vegetable oils, bauxite, chemicals, machinery, furniture, and cork are produced. Toulon is also a winter resort.

Historically, Toulon was first mentioned as a Roman naval station in the third century. It became prominent during the Middle Ages as a hostel for Crusaders. Toulon was the scene of many historic naval battles, including the victory of Napoleon over French, English, and Spanish royalists in 1793. Napoleon gained prominence that same year by retaking Toulon for the French and, after 1815, the city became the center of French naval power.

During World War I, Toulon was an important naval station and port of entry. During World War II, a large part of the French Mediterranean fleet was stationed at Toulon after the French armistice of 1940. On November 27, 1942, the majority of the ships were scuttled by their crews to avoid capture by the Germans. The city suffered considerable damage before it was entered by French troops on August 22, 1944. The subsequent reconstruction retained much of Toulon's original charm.

Landmarks preserved include the Church of St. Marie Majeure, built during the 17th and 18th centuries, and a 13th-century cathedral. Toulon also has a naval museum.

Toulouse

Toulouse is one of the country's great commercial centers. It is situated on the Garonne River in southern France, and is capital of the Haute-Garonne Département. It is 133 miles southeast of Bordeaux and Metropolitan Toulouse has a population of approximately 761,000.

The city was part of Gaul, then became the Visigoth capital and, later, the capital of the Carolingian kingdom of Aquitaine (781-843). It was one of medieval Europe's cultural centers. Toulouse and the surrounding area became a separate country in 843, and did not pass to the French Crown until 1271; considerable autonomy was allowed the region until the French Revolution. In World War II, Toulouse was occu-

piated by the Germans for almost two years.

Toulouse houses the university which bears its name (founded in 1229), and the Académie des Jeux Floraux, which was chartered in 1323. The "old quarter" of the city remains much the same as it was in the 18th century.

Today, Toulouse is a center of the French aviation industry and produces fertilizer, ammunition, paper, footwear, and tobacco. It is a market for the surrounding agricultural region and a distribution center for textiles.

OTHER CITIES

AIX-EN-PROVENCE is located in southeastern France about 19 miles north of Marseille. A picturesque town of 137,000, Aix-en-Provence is a favorite sojourn for painters and was the birthplace of the artist Paul Cézanne (1839-1906). It is also an important tourist center known for the International Music Festival held here in July, as well as a commercial center in an area that produces olives, grapes, and almonds. Products manufactured in Aix-en-Provence include wine-making equipment and electrical apparatus. Historically, the city was founded as a military colony by the Romans in 123 B.C., and was the site of the defeat of the Teutons by Marius in 102 B.C. An archiepiscopal see in the fifth century, Aix-en-Provence has been the capital of Provence since the 12th century, becoming part of France in 1487. It was the seat of parliament in Provence from 1501 to 1789. Aix-en-Provence has been a cultural center, a music center, and the focus of Provençal literature since the Middle Ages. Its university, founded in 1409, was combined with one in Marseille. Aix-en-Provence's Cathedral of Saint-Sauveur was built in the 13th and 14th centuries. The city is also known for its therapeutic spa and a number of thermal treatment centers.

Situated in a fertile farm region, **ALENÇON** is a commercial center and the capital of Orne Département. Located in northwestern France on the Sarthe River, Alençon is 105 miles southwest of Paris and has a population of 29,000. The town is particularly known for its lace work, an industry that dates back to the 17th century; there is a school of lacework in town. Printing plants, sawmills, spinning mills, and ore quarries are also found in Alençon. Originally the center of the medieval territory of Alençon, the town was successively a lordship, county, and duchy. Alençon was heavily damaged during World War II, and taken by American forces in August 1944. Historic landmarks include Notre Dame Church, with 16th-century windows and porch; St. Leonard's Church, completed in Gothic style in 1505; and the 15th-century Ozé House. Northeast of Alençon is the town of Mortagne, with a population of 5,000. Its church of Notre Dame was built during the 15th and 16th centuries.

AMIENS, a manufacturing city, is situated on the Somme River in northern France, 30 miles south of the English Channel and 72 miles north of Paris. The capital of Somme Département, with a population of 139,000, Amiens has been an important textile center since the 16th century and is famous for velvet. The city also is a market and rail center for the truck farming carried on in the surrounding marshlands. Chemicals, tires, soap, and electrical equipment are manufactured in Amiens. The city was originally a Gallo-Roman town and an episcopal see since the fourth century. As the historic capital of Picardy, it was overrun and occupied by many invaders. Passed to Burgundy by the Peace of Arras in 1435, Amiens was returned to France at the death of Charles the Bold in 1477. It was captured by the Spanish in 1597 and then recovered by Henry IV. Amiens was the scene of the Treaty of Amiens, signed in 1802 between France and Britain. The city was captured by the Prussians in 1870, and was held by the Germans for a short time in 1914. The Battle of

Amiens, fought in August 1918, was part of the successful counteroffensive against Germany. In World War II, Amiens was occupied by the Germans from May 1940 through August 1944. The city was devastated during the war and, since 1945, has been rebuilt mostly in medieval style. The Cathedral of Notre Dame, begun about 1220, is the largest Gothic cathedral in France, and one of the leading representatives of Gothic architecture in Europe. It is 470 feet long and has a 140-foot-high nave. The 370-foot spire and large rose window were added in the 16th century.

Abbeville, with a population of 25,000, is 25 miles northwest of Amiens. Also nearby is the underground village of Naours, discovered in 1887.

ANGERS, with a population of approximately 156,000, is the capital of Maine-et-Loire Département. The city lies on the Maine River, 165 miles southwest of Paris, in west-central France. Angers has a number of medieval buildings including the 12th-century Cathedral of St. Maurice, the Abbey of St. Aubin, and a 13th-century castle. Industries include rope making cables, and leather goods manufacturing. There are several educational institutions here.

ANGOULÊME, with a population of 43,000, is a former river port and now a major road and rail center. It is situated in western France on the Charente River, about 64 miles northeast of Bordeaux. Angoulême is the capital of Charente Département. Paper-making is a major industry here, dating back to the 15th century; the city also has copper foundries, electric motor plants, and soap and shoe factories. The history of Angoulême dates back to A.D. 507, when it was conquered by Clovis, King of Franks; that year, Clovis also built the city's first cathedral. In the ninth century, Angoulême became the seat of the counts of Angoumois. It was ceded to England via the Peace of Bretigny in 1360 and was restored to France in 1373 by Charles V. Passing to the

house of Orléans in 1394, Angoulême was the center of the duchy created by Francis I, 1515-1844. The cathedral of St. Pierre, begun about 1110, is one of the city's landmarks.

Just west of Angoulême is the city of Cognac. It belonged to Richard the Lionhearted and later, in the latter part of the 16th century, became a Protestant stronghold. The French brandy to which the city gives its name has been manufactured and exported since the 18th century. Cognac's population is 20,000.

A popular French tourist resort, **ANNECY** is located in southeastern France, 20 miles south of Geneva, Switzerland. The town of 50,000 is situated in the northern Alps on Lake Annecy and is 63 miles northeast of Lyons. The center of the city has a distinctly medieval look, with many narrow, flower-fringed canals traversing the area. Fed by the underground springs of Lake Annecy, the canals are so clear that the bottoms are visible. Annecy has several churches, monasteries, and seminaries. Overlooking the city on a hill is the castle of the counts of Geneva, built during the 12th through 14th centuries. Besides tourism, Annecy has printing plants and factories that manufacture jewelry, leather, and wood products. The city also produces cotton yarn and linens, and a noted bell foundry is nearby.

Although today an important railroad and industrial center, **ARLES** is probably best known as the home of painters Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin. Located in southeastern France about 45 miles northwest of Marseille, Arles has a population of 52,000. Situated on the left bank of the Rhône River, the city is connected by canal to the Mediterranean Sea. Industries in Arles include shipbuilding, paper, and chemicals; grapes and olive trees are grown in the area. As Arelas, it was a flourishing Roman town and the metropolis of Gaul late in the Roman Empire era, as well as the birthplace of Constantine II. In the 12th century, Arles

became a free city ruled by an elected *podestà* (magistrate) who then appointed other officials; it retained this special status until the French Revolution. Today, Arles has many landmarks from its past. These include a Roman arena, built in the second century and now used for bullfights. There is also a Roman theater; the *Aliscamps* (Elysian Fields), a Roman cemetery; the Church of St. Trophime, built between the 11th and 15th centuries; and a 17th-century town hall. The Museon Arlaten, a museum of Provençal folklore and culture, is also in Arles. The manufacturing town of Uzès is located to the east of Arles. A ducal palace and cathedral may be found there.

ARRAS is the capital of Pas-de-Calais Département in northern France. Situated on the canalized Scarpe River, Arras is 25 miles southwest of Lille, and has a population of 41,000. An industrial, farm, and communications center, Arras has oil works and machinery and metal products factories. Historically, Arras was of Gallo-Roman origin and an episcopal see by the year 500. An important international banking and trade center by the tenth century, Arras became a center of culture and wealth in the 14th century, particularly known for tapestry. The city was the scene of the signing of two treaties in the 15th century. The latter treaty, ending the war between Maximilian I of Austria and Louis XV of France in 1482, made the city part of France. Arras was ceded to Maximilian of Austria in 1493 and was held by the Spanish branch of the Hapsburgs until 1640, when it was taken by Louis XIII. Arras was nearly destroyed by shellfire during World War I and further damaged during World War II. The city has, however, retained much of its Spanish-Flemish flavor. The town square is surrounded by 17th-century buildings in Flemish architecture. The town hall (built in the 16th century), the large bell tower, and the Abbey of St. Vaast (built in the 18th century) have all been restored. The abbey houses a museum today.

Nine miles north of Arras is the city of Avion, with a population of 23,000. It was the scene of severe fighting from April to June 1917. To the east of Arras is the industrial city of Cambrai. Known for its linen goods, especially cambric and cambresine which were named for the city, Cambrai has a population of 34,000.

AUCH is located in southwestern France on the Gers River in Gascony, about 100 miles southeast of Bordeaux. The capital of Gers Département, Auch is a commercial center and farm market known for the production and trade of Armagnac brandy, wine, and grain. Historically, Auch was one of Roman Gaul's chief towns. It was the capital of Armagnac and an archiepiscopal see in the 10th century, and the capital of Gascony in the 17th century. The old part of the town is steep and hilly and contains the city's most notable landmark, a late-Gothic cathedral, begun in 1489, known for its stained-glass windows and hand-worked choir stalls. Auch also has a museum and a library. The current population is nearly 22,000.

The picturesque town of **AURILLAC** in south-central France developed around the ninth-century abbey of St. Géraud. A famous seat of medieval learning, Aurillac is situated on the Jordanne River, about 105 miles northeast of Toulouse. The capital of Cantal Département, it is an industrial, market, and communications center known for its umbrellas, shoes, furniture, gloves, and Cantal cheese. Landmarks include an 11th-century castle and an 18th-century church. The current population is 30,000.

Important for its trade in Chablis wines, **AUXERRE** is a commercial and industrial city in north-central France. Situated 95 miles southeast of Paris, on the Yonne River, Auxerre is the capital of Yonne Département. Yonne flourished in pre-Roman and Roman times, becoming part of Burgundy via the Treaty of Arras in 1435. The city's 13th-century abbey—St. Germain—is built

on crypts that date from the sixth century. The abbey is now a hospital and has a magnificent clock tower built in Romanesque style. There is also a Gothic cathedral, built during the 13th through 16th centuries. An air force school was opened in Auxerre in 1965. The city's current population is 38,000.

AVIGNON is one of the loveliest cities in France. Surrounded by ramparts built in the 12th and 14th centuries, the city is located on the Rhône River in southeastern France, about 50 miles northwest of Marseille. The capital of Vaucluse Département, Avignon is a farm market with a wine trade and a diverse number of manufactured goods, including soap, chemicals, and leather products. Founded as a Phocaean colony, Avignon was conquered by the Romans, Goths, and Franks, among others. During Babylonian captivity (1309-1376), it was a papal see and, from 1378 to 1417, the residence of several antipopes. Avignon was an archiepiscopal see in 1475, and in 1793 it was incorporated into France. The city has many old churches, including a beautiful Gothic papal palace erected in the 14th century atop a hill. A part of the bridge that was built in the 12th century across the Rhône River still stands today. Since 1948, the Avignon Theatre Festival has presented plays, musicals, dance, cabaret, performance art, children's shows and circuses from early July through early August. During this same period, more experimental theatrical events are presented during another, unofficial festival known as Avignon Off. These two festivals draw approximately 125,000 visitors each year. The population is nearly 87,000.

Located 42 miles northwest of Paris, **BEAUVAIS** is the capital of Oise Département. It is a manufacturing town of 54,000 that produces carpets, blankets, musical instruments, ceramic tiles, and tractors. As a Roman development and early episcopal see, Beauvais flourished in the Middle Ages and again in the 17th century when the tapestry

industry was established here. During the two world wars, Beauvais was damaged extensively. The tapestry factory was destroyed in June 1940, and subsequently, the industry was moved to Paris. Among the landmarks in Beauvais are the Cathedral of St. Pierre, begun as the highest building in Christendom in 1227, but never completed; 10th- and 12th-century churches; a 12th-century palace; and ancient Roman ramparts.

BELFORT is located in eastern France, 80 miles southwest of Strasbourg and 40 miles west of the French borders with Germany and Switzerland. Since the 17th century, Belfort has been a major fortress town, commanding the Belfort Gap, or Burgundy Gate, between the Vosges and Jura mountains, and dominating the roads from France, Switzerland, and Germany. The city was an Austrian possession until passed to France in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and then fortified by Vauban. The garrison withstood a 108-day siege during the Franco-Prussian War; Bartholdi's statue, *The Lion of Belfort*, commemorates this siege. Due in part to this accomplishment, the Germans left Belfort and the surrounding territory to France when they annexed the rest of Alsace. Many Alsatians took refuge in Belfort at this time, and have made a significant contribution to the city's industrial growth. Today, Belfort is the capital of Territoire de Belfort and an important industrial and transportation center with large cotton mills and metalworks. The population is about 50,000.

BESANÇON, an industrial city with a population of 122,000, is the capital of Doubs Département. Situated in the Jura Mountains of eastern France, Besançon is 75 miles west of Bern, Switzerland. The city's industries include metallurgy, food processing, and textiles, but it is probably best known for its clock and watch factories, as well as a world renowned watch school. Additionally, Besançon is an important intellectual center, with a university, founded in 1422 in Dôle and

moved to Besançon in 1691. A music academy was founded in Besançon in 1726 and the city plays host to an international music festival. Historically, Besançon was of Gallo-Roman origin, was captured by Julius Caesar in 58 B.C., and was an archiepiscopal see beginning in the fifth century. As part of the kingdom of Burgundy, Besançon was a free city maintaining its independence until it came under Spanish rule in 1648 and was incorporated with Franche-Comté. When Louis XIV conquered Franche-Comté in 1674, Besançon became the capital of the new province. Besançon was heavily bombed during World War II, but many historic landmarks remain, including several Roman ruins—a triumphal arch of Marcus Aurelius, an aqueduct, and an amphitheater. There are also numerous buildings in Spanish Renaissance style, including the Palais Branvelle and a town hall. Victor Hugo, the author, was born here in 1802.

BLOIS, one of the country's most historic towns, is located on the Loire River in central France. Situated 90 miles southwest of Paris, Blois is an industrial and commercial center known for its trade in brandies and wines. Items manufactured in the city include aircraft, footwear, and precision instruments. The most powerful feudal lords of France were the counts of Blois in the 10th century. The last count of Blois was childless and heavily in debt, and he sold his fief to Louis, duc d'Orléans, in 1397. When Louis XII, grandson of the duke, became king of France in 1498, the title and jurisdiction passed to the crown. Blois then became a favorite royal residence. The city's landmarks include an ancient Roman aqueduct and a 17th-century cathedral. The current population is 49,000.

The fishing port of **BOULOGNE** (also called Boulogne-sur-Mer) is known for its herring catches from the North Sea. Situated 21 miles southwest of Calais, near the Liane River, Boulogne has daily ferry service to Dover, England. The city of 45,000 is also a favored resort with

a pleasant beach. Industries here include textile production and fish processing. As an ancient Roman port, Boulogne was known as Gesoriacum. It was the debarkation point for Roman soldiers in the conquest of Britain and was a gathering point for Napoleon's army between 1803-1805, in preparation for an attack on England. Boulogne suffered considerable damage during World War II and has since been rebuilt.

A Paris suburb, **BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT** is less than 10 miles southwest of the capital, on the Seine River. The city of 108,000 has two sections, a residential area in the north and an industrial area in the south. Boulogne-Billancourt has one of France's largest automobile factories. Other industries include the manufacture of chemicals and electrical goods.

BOURG, or Bourg-en-Bresse, is situated in eastern France, about 40 miles northeast of Lyons and 45 miles west of Geneva, Switzerland. The capital of Ain Département and the historic capital and chief city of the Bresse region in Burgundy, Bourg is a major transportation hub, farm market, and gastronomic center that manufactures furniture, machinery, shoes, and ceramics. Tourism is also a major industry. The 16th-century Gothic cathedral is one of the finest in France, and a museum of antiquities is also located here. The current population is about 41,000.

BOURGES is located in central France, 126 miles south of Paris. The capital of Cher Département, the city is a transportation center in a rich agricultural region. Aircraft, chemicals, leather, textiles, and rubber products are manufactured here. Historically, Bourges was known as Avaricum. It was taken by Julius Caesar in 52 B.C. and, under Augustus, it became the capital of the Roman province of Aquitania. It was an early episcopal see and the residence of Charles VII when most of France was in English hands. The site of numerous medieval councils, Bourges has a French Gothic cathed-

ral—the Cathedral of St. Étienne. Built in the 13th century, the structure is unusual in that it has no transept. A university was founded there in 1463 but was abolished during the Revolution. The current population of Bourges is 71,000.

BREST, a port and naval station in Finistère Département, northwest France, has a population of 156,000. The seaport was planned by Richelieu and fortified by Vauban in the 17th century. It is known to a generation of American soldiers as a debarkation point for troops sent to fight in France during the First World War. Brest was occupied early in World War II by the Germans who used its port as a submarine base; the city itself was almost destroyed by Allied bombings, but was finally captured on September 19, 1944. Items manufactured in Brest include chemicals, shoes, and linens. The city trades in wine, coal, flour, timber, fruit, and vegetables.

CANNES, best known for the international film festival held here each spring, is located in southeastern France on the Mediterranean Sea, about 18 miles southwest of Nice. An important and fashionable French Riviera resort, Cannes also has textile and shipbuilding industries. It manufactures soap and perfume and exports fruit, anchovies, and oil. Cannes was twice destroyed by the Moors as they advanced into France in the eighth century. Napoleon landed nearby following his escape from Elba in 1815. Cannes marked the easternmost landing point of American forces on August 15, 1944, during World War II. With a current population of 66,000, Cannes' landmarks include 16th- and 17th-century churches in the old part of the city.

Just east of Cannes is the winter resort of Antibes. This city of 71,000 trades in dried fruit, olives, oil, tobacco, perfume, and wine. Saint-Raphaël, a city of 30,000, is 18 miles west of Cannes. It was the scene of heavy fighting in August 1944. Fréjus is just west of Saint-Raphaël. It was founded by Julius Caesar and has Roman remains. West of Fréjus

is the noted resort of Saint-Tropez, population 4,000.

CARCASSONNE, with a population of 44,000, is located on the Aude River in southern France, 57 miles southeast of Toulouse and 60 miles north of the Spanish border. Carcassonne is the capital of Aude Département and also a farm trade center that produces rubber, shoes, textiles, and agricultural tools. Tourism is important in Carcassonne, as the old city—a medieval fortress atop a hill—is one of the architectural marvels of Europe, with an interesting history. The Romans fortified the hilltop about the first century B.C. Towers were built by the Visigoths about the sixth century and remain intact today. The viscounts of Carcassonne fortified the structure further in the 12th century. The fortress was taken by Simon de Montfort in 1209, but was yielded to the king in 1247. At that time, Louis IX founded the new city across the Aude River. During Louis' reign, the outer ramparts of the fortress were built, and later, under Philip III, intricate defense devices were added. When completed, the fortress was considered impenetrable and proved thus when Edward the Black Prince was stopped at its walls in 1355. When the province of Roussillon was annexed to France in 1659, the fortress was no longer useful, the ramparts were gradually abandoned, and it fell into disrepair. In the 19th century, the fortress was restored by Viollet-le-Duc. Other points of interest in Carcassonne include a 12-arch bridge, a castle, and a 13th-century Gothic cathedral.

The *commune* of Castelnaudary, with a population of 9,000, is northwest of Carcassonne. The town is historically important in ancient Languedoc.

CHÂTEAUBRIANT is situated in northwestern France, 40 miles northeast of Nantes. The city has a population of over 13,000. It is an important livestock center and manufactures textiles, food products, and agricultural machinery.

The castle in Châteaubriant serves as a museum and law courts.

CHÂTEAUDUN lies on a plateau overlooking the Loir River in north-central France. Situated less than 100 miles north of Angers, the city's population exceeds 15,000. It was rebuilt in 1723 after a fire. Today, Châteaudun has a promenade which offers a view of the Loir Valley. Historical sites here include a castle and the Church of St. Valérien, both built during the 12th to 16th centuries. Factories in the city produce optical and telephone equipment, dairy products, and machine tools.

A commercial and manufacturing city, **CLERMONT-FERRAND** is located in south-central France, about 80 miles west of Lyons. Clermont-Ferrand is on the Tiretaine River and is the capital of Puy-de-Dôme Département. Picturesquely situated near Puy-de-Dôme peak, the city is built mostly of the dark volcanic rock found in the region. An industrial center, Clermont-Ferrand is the home of Michelin and other tire factories, as well as important metallurgical works. Other items produced in the city include chemicals and linen. With a current population of 132,000, the city was formed in 1731 when Clermont was united with Montferrand, a nearby town founded by the lords of Auvergne in the 11th century. The history of Clermont dates back to Roman times. It became an episcopal see in the fourth century and was the site of several church councils, including the council that gave rise to the Crusades in 1095. Landmarks in Clermont-Ferrand include the 12th-century Romanesque Church of Notre-Dame de Port and the Gothic Cathedral of Notre-Dame, built in the 13th and 14th centuries.

COLMAR, seat of the Haut-Rhin *préfecture*, is situated in the Alsatian plain of eastern France, near the foothills of the Vosges. It is one of the most picturesque spots in the Alsace, and is the wine-growing capital of an area that attracts thousands of tourists each autumn for a

captivating journey along the *Route de Vin*. The route from Colmar north to Obernai, toward Strasbourg, is a narrow road that winds through small villages and open countryside, where privately owned vineyards often reach the roadside in an effort to make optimum use of the fertile terrain. Colmar itself, with a population of nearly 66,000, is an industrial and commercial city and a cultural center. There are many buildings of medieval architecture, among them the Collegiate Church of St. Martin, which dates to 1235, less than a decade after Colmar became a free imperial city; the outstanding Unterlinden Museum, erected on the site (and still using the preserved building) of a 13th-century Dominican convent; the old Customs House, or Koïfhus; Franciscan and Dominican churches of note; and several monuments and timbered houses on the boulevard du Champ de Mars and in La Place des Six Montagnes Noires. Another treasure remaining from the 16th century is the Old Guard House, one of the Alsace's most beautiful relics of that period. The Tanners' District is a reminder of an economic activity that made Colmar well known in the Middle Ages. Among the city's native sons were Martin Schongauer, whose masterpiece, *Madonna of the Rose Arbor*, was painted for St. Martin's; and the 19th-century sculptor, Auguste Bartholdi. Nearby Kayserburg is the birthplace of the renowned Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

Épinal, with a population of 35,000, is 75 miles west of Colmar. Textile and printing industries are located here. The fortified town of Turckheim, four miles west, is a favorite resort.

The old capital of Burgundy, **DIJON** is situated in eastern France, 100 miles north of Lyons and 115 miles west of Bern, Switzerland. The capital of Côte d'Or Département, Dijon is a transportation and industrial center on the Ouche River that produces food, metal products, and electrical and optical equipment. It is probably best known for its mustard and *cas-*

sis (black currant liqueur) and is also an important shipping center for the Burgundy wine that is produced in the surrounding countryside. Surrounded by eight forts, Dijon was founded in ancient times and began to flourish when the Burgundy rulers resided here in the 11th century. Dijon was a thriving cultural center even after Burgundy was reunited with France in the late 15th century; Dijon University was founded in 1722. The city is also known for its art treasures. Funereal statues of the dukes of Burgundy are housed in a museum in the town hall that was originally the ducal palace; it was built in the 12th century and greatly rebuilt in the 17th and 18th centuries. Landmarks in Dijon include the Cathedral of St. Bénigne (built in 13th and 14th centuries), the Church of Notre Dame (13th century), St. Michael's Church, the Hôtel Aubriot (built in the 14th century and now housing a museum of Burgundian folklore), and the palace of justice (built in the 15th and 16th centuries). Dijon was also the birthplace of the writer Bossuet, the composer Rameau, and the dramatist Crebillon. The current population is 148,000. Dijon holds its annual fair in early November.

Southwest of Dijon is Dôle. Roman ruins, a 16th-century church, and a hospital in Renaissance style may be found in this city of 25,000. Also southwest of Dijon is Beaune, a formerly walled and moated town which was important during the Middle Ages. The city is known for Hôtel Dieu, or Hospital of Beaune, built in 1450. The building functioned continuously in that capacity until only a few years ago and now serves as a hospital museum. The population of Beaune is 22,000.

GRENOBLE is entirely surrounded by the Alps in southeastern France, 133 miles northeast of Marseille. It is a commercial and manufacturing city, and capital of Isère Département. The Winter Olympics were held in Grenoble in 1968. The city's famous historical buildings include a university dating to 1339, a 10th-century cathe-

dral, fine art museums, and a Renaissance palace belonging to the dauphins of France. A nuclear research center was constructed in Grenoble in 1959. The city's population is 156,000.

LE MANS, famous for its annual international auto race, is capital of the Sarthe Département and is situated on the Sarthe River, about 35 miles south of Alençon in northwestern France. An important educational, communications, commercial, and manufacturing center, Le Mans dates back to pre-Roman times. It was a Merovingian capital and was the site of frequent sieges and battles throughout its history, including defeat of the French by Prussians during the Franco-Prussian war, 1870-1871. Le Mans was the birthplace of Henry II of England and John II of France. Landmarks include the Cathedral of St. Julien du Mans, built during the 11th through 13th centuries. The cathedral is partly Romanesque and partly Gothic; it contains the most daring system of flying buttresses of any Gothic structure. Le Mans today has a population of 151,000. Items produced in the city include electrical equipment, textiles, tobacco products, automobile parts, and plastics.

LIMOGES, with a population of 138,000, is located on the Vienne River in west-central France, about 110 miles northeast of Bordeaux. The capital of Haute-Vienne Département, Limoges is a manufacturing and commercial city known for its ceramics industry. Begun in 1736, Limoges porcelain workshops employ more than 10,000 people, making use of the abundant kaolin in the area. The city also produces leather goods, paper, furniture, textiles, and precision tools. Historically, Limoges was a Gallic tribal center destroyed in the fifth century. Two separate towns developed by the ninth century and were later merged in 1792. In the 12th century, Limoges was the seat of the viscounty of Limoges. It was often the scene of war, pestilence, and famine. Richard the Lionhearted was killed in a battle near Limoges in 1199.

Edward the Black Prince burned the city and murdered its inhabitants in 1370. In the 13th century, the well-known Limoges enamel industry was developed and thrived, but declined when the city was again devastated by the Wars of Religion. Prosperity returned to Limoges when porcelain china manufacturing was introduced in 1771. Landmarks in Limoges include a cathedral, a ceramics museum, and an art gallery that contains many works by Renoir, who was born here. The city also has a university founded in 1808, suppressed in 1840, and reopened in 1965.

LOURDES, a small *commune* of about 18,000, is located in southwestern France, just south of Pau and about 30 miles north of the Spanish border. Formerly the fortress of the counts of Bigorre, and known for its slate quarries, Lourdes became internationally famous on February 11, 1858, when the Virgin Mary was said to have made her first apparition before the peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous. There were 18 apparitions in all in the grotto. A large underground basilica was completed in 1958. This Roman Catholic shrine draws millions to Lourdes every year; the most important pilgrimage occurs annually during the week of August 18. Miraculous cures have been attributed to the waters of the shrine. The sanctuaries and pools are open throughout the year. Organized pilgrimages take place from the Sunday before Easter through mid-October. Religious ceremonies are held daily during the pilgrimage season. There are masses, stations of the Cross, a procession of the Holy Sacrament for sick pilgrims, and a torch procession each evening that always attracts a crowd. Lourdes is accessible by rail, by three main roads, and by the Lourdes-Ossun airport.

Located 178 miles northeast of Paris, **METZ** is situated at the confluence of the Seille and Moselle Rivers. The capital of Moselle Département, it has a current population of 127,000. Metz is a cultural and commercial center and an

industrial city that produces shoes, metal goods, canned fruit and vegetables, clothing, and tobacco. It is also the center of an iron-mining region. Of pre-Roman origin, Metz was one of Gaul's most important cities. Destroyed by the Vandals in 406 and the Huns in 451, Metz became the capital of Austrasia in the sixth century. It reached the height of its prosperity in the 13th century as a free, independent city. Along with Toul and Verdun, Metz was taken by the French in 1552 and, under the Treaty of Westphalia, formally ceded to France in 1648. Following a major siege in 1870, Metz was surrendered to the Germans, and remained under German rule from 1871 until 1918. The city was returned to France after World War I. It was heavily damaged in World War II during intense fighting from September to October 1944, and was captured by the Allies on November 20. There are historical landmarks in Metz from all of the city's prosperous periods. Gallo-Roman ruins include an aqueduct, thermal baths, and part of an amphitheater. From the medieval period is the Cathedral of St. Étienne, built between 1221 and 1516, and Place Sainte Croix, a square surrounded by medieval houses built between the 13th and 15th centuries. Metz also has several other churches including the oldest church in France—St. Pierre-aux-Nonnains. At St. Avold, 28 miles east of Metz, is Lorraine Cemetery, where more World War II American soldiers are buried than anyplace else in Europe.

MOULINS, a manufacturing city, is situated on the Allier River in central France. The capital of Allier Département and the ancient capital of Bourbonnais from the 10th through the 16th centuries, Moulins is 95 miles northwest of Lyons. Clothing, shoes, machine tools, beer, and furniture are manufactured within the city, which is also an agricultural market. Historically, Moulins became the capital of the duchy in the late 15th century, but was confiscated by the French crown in 1527. Here, in 1566, Charles IX held an assembly, adopt-

ing important administrative and legal reforms. Moulins is the site of several artistic and historic treasures. The 15th-century Gothic cathedral contains a triptych considered one of the best examples of French painting of the period. The tomb of Henry de Montmorency is in the former convent of the Order of Visitation, which is now a school. The ruined castle of the dukes of Bourbon and a Renaissance *pavilion* are also of historic note and located in Moulins. The modern city has a population of 21,000.

South of Moulins is Vichy, a noted spa and health resort. This city of 26,000 has many thermal alkaline springs used since Roman times. Vichy water and salts are exported in large quantities. As a result of the French armistice with Germany, Vichy was made capital of unoccupied France in July 1940 and was the seat of the French government until complete occupation by the Germans in November 1942.

MULHOUSE is an industrial city of 112,000 on the Ill River, approximately 20 miles south of Colmar. Situated at the very heart of western Europe, near the Rhine and flanked by the Vosges to the west and the Black Forest to the east, Mulhouse has always striven to make the most of its favorable geographic location close to both Germany and Switzerland. It was a free imperial city in 1308 and, from the 15th to the 18th century, was an allied member of the Swiss Confederation. It became a French town in 1798, and then was under German rule from 1871 until 1918, when it reverted to France. Its important attractions are the 16th-century town hall and a modern (and famous) car museum. There are also wallpaper and textile-printing museums, a National Railway museum, and the Mulhouse Fireman Museum. Mulhouse's zoological and botanic gardens are among the great achievements of the 19th-century ruling class. Today, the gardens are home to nearly a thousand animals.

A western suburb of Paris, **NANTERRE** has a population of 85,000. The capital of Hauts-de-Seine Département, Nanterre is situated in north-central France, on the right bank of the Seine River. It is an industrial center whose manufactures include automobiles, metals, machine tools, electrical equipment, and rolling stock. Landmarks include the National Basilica of Ste. Beneviève, with a 15th-century nave.

The commercial and manufacturing city of **NÎMES** is located in southern France, 64 miles northwest of Marseille and 30 miles north of the Gulf of Lions. The capital of Gard Département, with a population of 138,000, Nîmes produces textiles, brandy, footwear, and leather goods, and trades in wine and grain. Thought to have been founded by Greek colonists, it became Roman about 120 B.C. and, under the name of Menausus, was one of the principal cities of Roman Gaul. Nîmes came under the French crown in 1258, and later was a stronghold of the Huguenots. The Pacification of Nîmes was signed here in 1629, and when the treaty was revoked in 1685, the city greatly suffered. Nîmes is probably best known for its ancient Roman buildings and monuments. Some of these relics include a large Roman amphitheater, built in the first century A.D. and later used as a fortress by the Visigoths and Saracens against the Franks; seating 24,000, the arena is still used today. One of the finest examples of Roman architecture is the square house, or *Maison Carée*. Originally a Roman temple built in the first or second century, it was restored in 1789 and converted in 1823 into a museum that contains Roman antiquities. Other relics include the remains of an ancient tower, *Tour Magne*; two gates; ruins of a nymphaeum; and, near the town of Remoulins, 15 miles northeast, ruins of a major Roman aqueduct, *Pont de Gard*. Nîmes also has an 11th-century cathedral, built on the site of the former temple of Apollo.

Located 70 miles southwest of Paris, in north central France, **ORLÉANS** is an important transportation junction situated in a fruit and vegetable growing region. Industries in Orléans include food processing, chemicals, textiles, and pharmaceuticals. The capital of Loiret Département, Orléans has a population of 117,000 and is surrounded by modern, sprawling suburbs. Orléans was originally a Celtic city called Genabum. In a revolt against Julius Caesar, the city was burned in 52 B.C., and rebuilt under the name Aurelianum. A major cultural center in the early Middle Ages, the city was the principal residence, after Paris, of French kings in the tenth century. The siege of Orléans by the English in 1428-29 threatened to bring all of France under England's rule, but was saved by the heroics of Joan of Arc. Every May, the feast of Joan of Arc is celebrated with much spectacle in Orléans. The city was a prosperous industrial and commercial center during the 17th and 18th centuries, and its university, founded in the 14th century, was known throughout Europe. Many historic buildings in Orléans were damaged during the German invasion of France in 1940, including most of those associated with Joan of Arc. Structures that remain include the Cathedral of Sainte-Croix, rebuilt during the 17th through 19th centuries, after being destroyed by the Huguenots in 1568; a 16th-century church and town hall; a 17th-century prefecture, and an episcopal palace. One of the most famous intellectual centers of the Middle Ages, St.-Benoit-sur-Loire is 22 miles to the east, and features a noteworthy 11th-century Romanesque basilica.

A winter sports center, **PAU** is located in southwestern France 105 miles south of Bordeaux. Situated at the foot of the Pyrenees on the right bank of the Gave de Pau River, Pau is the capital of Pyrénées-Atlantiques Département. The city is a major tourist center known for its scenery. Pau has metallurgical and wool industries, and an oil refinery. Manufactured items include perfume, shoes, and cloth-

ing. Founded in the 11th century, Pau was the capital of Béarn in the 14th century and was the residence of the Navarre kings in 1512. Pau was the birthplace of Henry IV of France and of Jean-Baptiste-Jules Bernadotte, the French revolutionary general who became Charles XIV of Sweden and Norway. The city has a 12th-century castle and a university founded in 1724. Its population is currently 79,000.

A major tourist resort, **PERPIGNAN** is located in the south of France, less than 20 miles from the Spanish border and five miles from the Mediterranean Sea. Perpignan is the capital of Pyrénées-Orientales Département. There is a nearby international airport. The city is also a thoroughfare for motorists traveling to Spain. With a current population of 107,000, Perpignan is a farm trade center that handles fruits, vegetables, and wine. Industries include distilleries, factories, and canneries; items manufactured are paper, clothing, toys, chocolate, and ceramics. Perpignan was founded around the 10th century as the fortified capital of the Spanish kingdom of Roussillon; the architecture in the city today shows much Spanish influence. Perpignan was united with France in 1659. Notable landmarks include the 14th-century Loge, constructed to house the merchants' exchange; the Gothic Cathedral of St. Jean, built in the 14th and 15th centuries; and the castle of the Majorcan kings, built during the 13th through 15th centuries, which forms part of the old citadel that dominates the city. Close to Perpignan are the seaside towns of Port-Vendres, Elne, and St. Laurent.

Located in west-central France, 180 miles southwest of Paris, **POITIERS** is the capital of Vienne Département. A historic city situated at the confluence of the Clain and Boivre Rivers, Poitiers has many landmarks. They include the Baptistery of St. Jean, most likely the oldest Christian monument in the country, and Notre Dame la Grande, dating from the 11th and 12th centuries. The University of Poitiers, established by Charles VII

in 1431, is a coeducational facility funded by the state. The city's population is over 85,000.

Situated at the junction of the Vilaine and Ille Rivers in northwest France, **RENNES** is an industrial and commercial center 193 miles southwest of Paris. An archiepiscopal see as well as a railroad junction, Rennes produces a variety of items including automobiles, agricultural machinery, furniture, chemicals, textiles, honey, and lace. An important Gallo-Roman town, Rennes became the capital of Brittany in the 10th century and, from 1561 to 1675, was the seat of *parlement* (parliament, or seat of justice) in Brittany. The Norsemen ravaged the town during the Hundred Years War and, in 1720, it was destroyed by fire. It also suffered widespread destruction in 1944 during World War II. The Brittany Cemetery, 31 miles northeast in St. James, is the burial site for Americans killed during the Normandy and Brittany campaigns that year. Rennes has a university, founded in 1461 at Nantes, and transferred in 1735. Rennes is also the site of the National School of Public Health. The current population is 212,000.

Other towns in Brittany are known for their architectural treasures. Auray, Dinan, Fougères, Morlaix, Quimper, Vannes, and Vitré retain fine historic centers of interest to visitors.

ROUBAIX, a commercial and manufacturing city, is in northern France, seven miles northeast of Lille and just south of the border with Belgium. With a population of 96,000, Roubaix is the major center of the French textile industry. Chartered in 1469, it has dyeing plants and plastics and rubber factories. The textile industry developed in Roubaix in the 19th century. A national textile school is located here.

SAINT-BRIEUC, a manufacturing and commercial city of 44,000, is located on the Gouet River near the English Channel, in northwestern France. The capital of Côtes-du-

Nord Département, Saint-Brieuc is 240 miles west of Paris. A railroad junction as well as a coastal and fishing port, its industries include textiles and metallurgy. The city was founded in the fifth century, growing rapidly after the Welsh monk, St. Briomach, built a monastery here in about the sixth century. Saint-Brieuc has been an episcopal see since the ninth century. Of note in the city today is the 13th-century fortress-cathedral. Saint-Brieuc is 40 miles west of Saint-Malo, a fishing port, famous tourist resort, and yachting center situated on a rocky island in the Atlantic Ocean. Saint-Brieuc is also 60 miles west of Mont-Saint-Michel. A fortified rock in Mont-Saint-Michel Bay, a remarkable ancient abbey, and the town are located at the rock's summit.

An industrial suburb north of Paris, **SAINT-DENIS** manufactures chemicals, plastics, diesel engines, leather, pharmaceuticals, glue, and fireworks. Situated in northern France about seven miles northeast of the French capital, Saint-Denis has a current population of 134,000. The city was founded early in the Christian era, probably at the site where St. Denis fell and was buried. The abbey of Saint-Denis was built in 626 and quickly became the richest and most famous in France. Joan of Arc blessed her weapons at this abbey and Abelard lived in it as a monk in the 12th century. The abbey's banner—the oriflamme—served as the royal standard from the reign of Louis VI to Charles VI (12th to 15th centuries). The abbey was heavily damaged during the French Revolution, but was restored. Saint-Denis was the first cathedral considered Gothic in construction and became the prototype for many others. The cathedral contains the tombs of many French monarchs, including Louis XII, Henry II, Catherine de Médiçi, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and Louis XIII. Today, the abbey is a school for daughters of Legion of Honor members. Saint-Denis also has a museum of gold and silver.

SAINT-ÉTIENNE, capital of the Loire Département in Lyonnaise, is

located in east-central France about 32 miles southwest of Lyons. A city of 184,000 residents, it is an industrial center with an important textile and dyeing industry. Formerly one of the country's leading steel centers, its industries today include coal mining, and the production of chemicals, government armaments, and alloy steels. A noted school of mines is located in Saint-Étienne. The city has several museums and the beautiful Gardens of Rez. A church with the same name as the city dates from the 15th century.

The port city of **SAINT-MALO** is located 47 miles north of Rennes in northwestern France. Destroyed during World War II and later rebuilt, the city is a noted tourist resort. It was here, in 1944, that German occupation forces surrendered to the Allies. The 14th-century castle in Saint-Malo now houses a museum. Jacques Cartier, the explorer, and François-René de Chateaubriand, the writer, were both born here. The current population is 52,000.

The seaport and industrial *commune* of **SAINT-NAZAIRE** is located at the mouth of the Loire River on the Bay of Biscay, in northwestern France, 33 miles northwest of Nantes. This city of 118,000 is an important seaport mainly dealing in trade with Central America and the Antilles. A major shipbuilding center and fishing port, Saint-Nazaire also has aeronautical, metallurgical, chemical, and food industries. Saint-Nazaire was believed to have been built on the site of the ancient Gallo-Roman town of Carbilo, where the Romans built a fleet in 56 B.C. From the mid-19th century, Saint-Nazaire developed as a port. In World War I, it was a major debarkation port for the American Expeditionary Force; from 1940-44, during World War II, it was a German submarine base. Surrounded by Allied forces in August 1944, the German submariners surrendered in May 1945. Saint-Nazaire was nearly destroyed by the bombing, but has been rebuilt. Near Saint-Nazaire is the joint municipality of La Baule-Escoublac, a beach resort.

The manufacturing city of **TOURCOING** is located in northern France, just south of the border with Belgium. With the adjacent city of Roubaix, it forms one of the most important textile centers in France. Soap work and sugar refineries are also found in this city whose population is 93,000. Tourcoing was granted a city charter in 1491 by Maximilian I, in recognition of its important textile industry. The city was captured by the Germans in 1914 and was seriously damaged.

TOURS is situated in west-central France on the Loire River. The capital of Indre-et-Loire Département, Tours is 130 miles southwest of Paris and has a population of 133,000. It is a commercial and industrial city that is also a wine market and a tourist center. Industries include clothing, printing, metallurgical, and chemical manufacturing. Tours was originally a pre-Roman town that grew rapidly following the death of its bishop, Saint Martin, in 397. It became the center of medieval Christian learning under Gregory of Tours and Alcuin. Tours was the scene of Charles Martel's victory over the Saracens in 732, and became an archdiocese in 853. In the 15th century, Tours developed a prosperous silk industry. The city was the headquarters of the government national defense during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71; during World War II in June 1940, it was briefly the seat of the French government. Historical landmarks in Tours include Gallo-Roman ruins, the Gothic Cathedral of St. Gatien (built during the 12th through 16th centuries), and two towers and the cloister of the old basilica of St. Martin of Tours. Noted literary figure, Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), was born in Tours.

Fifteen miles to the east is the city of Amboise, with a population of 11,000. The city manufactures optical instruments and photographic equipment, but is best known for its castle.

TROYES is located in northeastern France, about 90 miles southeast of Paris, on the Seine River. The capital of Aube Département, Troyes has a population of 61,000. It is an industrial city and the center of the French hosiery industry. Other products manufactured in Troyes include textile machinery, needles, flour, automobile parts, and tires. Dating from pre-Roman times, Troyes was sacked by the Normans in 889 and became the capital of Champagne in 1019. During the 11th through the 13th centuries, Troyes prospered as a commercial town and was the site of the great Champagne fairs. These fairs attracted merchants from throughout the known world, and set standards of weights and measures for all of Europe; the troy weight has survived to the present. Troyes was the site of the 1420 treaty between Charles VI of France, Henry V of England, and Philip the Good of Burgundy. It was also the first town taken by Joan of Arc on her march to Reims in 1429. Troyes has many fine Gothic structures, including the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul (constructed during the 13th through 17th centuries), the Church of St. Urban (begun in 1262), several other notable churches, a 17th-century town hall, and a 12th-century hospital.

The capital of Drôme Département, **VALENCE** is located on the Rhône River in southeastern France. A city of 65,000, and 116 miles northwest of Marseille, Valence is a trade center in a fertile farming region. Silk, furniture, footwear, leather goods, and jewelry are among the items produced here. Valence is an old Roman town that has changed hands many times; it was taken by the Visigoths in 413 and by the Arabs in 730. It became an episcopal see in the fourth century, and was ruled by its own bishops from 1150 until the 15th century. The city's 11th-century Romanesque cathedral is of interest to tourists.

A major tourist center located 10 miles southwest of Paris, **VERSAILLES** is the capital of the Yvelines Département. Items



Notre Dame cathedral in Paris

Courtesy of MaryBeth Mailloux

manufactured in the city include brandy and watches. Versailles was an insignificant village made famous by Louis XIV when he built the palace and grounds that have been synonymous with the city's name since the mid-17th century. The growth of the town, which currently has a population of 83,000, began when Louis moved his court here in 1682. The magnificent palace, built in French classical structure, was the work of three architects—Louis Le Vau, J.H. Mansart, and Charles Le Brun. The park and gardens were designed by André Le Nôtre and contain sculptures, fountains, and reservoirs by Antoin Coysevox and other artists. Water is supplied to the fountains by a huge machine built at Marly-Le-Roi. Two smaller palaces—the Grand Trianon and the Petit Trianon—are also in the park, as well as several grottoes, temples, and decorative structures. The French Revolution began in Versailles, and the palace was never again a royal residence. It became a museum and national monument under Louis Philippe. Several important treaties were signed at Versailles: negotiations between the United States and Great Britain ending the American Revolution concluded here in 1782 and a preliminary treaty was signed; the 1919 treaty between the

Allies and Germany ending World War I and establishing the League of Nations; and the Grand Trianon treaty between the Allies and Hungary, signed on June 4, 1920.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

France, the largest Western European nation, covers 213,000 square miles and is about four-fifths the size of Texas. The landscape is varied: about two-thirds flat plains or gently rolling hills and the rest mountainous. A broad plain covers most of northern and western France from the Belgian border in the northeast to Bayonne in the southwest, and it rises to uplands in Normandy, Brittany, and the east. This large plain is bounded on the south by the steeply rising ridges of the Pyrénées, on the southeast by the mountainous plateau of the Massif Central, and on the east by the rugged Alps, the low ridges of the Jura, and the rounded summits of the densely forested Vosges. The principal rivers are the Rhône in the south, the Loire and the Garonne in

the west, the Seine in the north, and the Rhine, which forms part of France's eastern border with Germany.

France is bordered on the north by Belgium and the Duchy of Luxembourg, on the east by Germany; on the southeast by Switzerland, Italy, and Monaco; and on the south by Spain and Andorra.

There are cool winters and mild summers in the west and north of France, and southern France and Corsica have a Mediterranean climate with hot summers and mild winters. Precipitation is frequent year round. The average yearly rainfall in Paris for the last 30 years is 26 inches.

Population

France's population of 59.6 million consists of large elements of three basic European stocks—Celtic, Latin, and Teutonic. Over the centuries, however, these groups have blended so that today they may be referred to only in the broadest sense.

France's birthrate was among the highest in Europe from 1945 until the late 1960s, when it began to fall. The 2001 figures reveal 12.1 births per 1,000.

Traditionally, France has had a high level of immigration, and about 3 million people entered the country between the two World Wars. After the establishment of an independent Algerian state in 1962, about 1 million French citizens returned to France. By early 1982 France's population of immigrant workers and their families was estimated at 3.5 million or almost 7 percent of the population. By 1992 that figure rose to about 5 million immigrant workers (9% of the population), primarily of North African, Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish extractions with smaller groups coming from Turkey, Yugoslavia, Poland, Senegal, and Mali.

As of 2001 about 90 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, 2

percent is Protestant, and about 1 percent is Jewish. Immigration since the early 1960s from North Africa, especially Algeria, accounts for approximately 3 percent of the population, making Islam the second most practiced religion in France.

Public Institutions

The Constitution for the Fifth Republic was approved by public referendum in 1958. Under its provisions, as amended in 1962, the President of the Republic is elected directly for a 7-year term. The President, currently Jacques Chirac, names the Prime Minister, currently Jean-Pierre Raffarin, who presides over the Cabinet, commands the Armed Forces, and concludes treaties. The President may submit questions to a national referendum, can dissolve the National Assembly, and, in certain defined emergency situations, may assume full power.

The Constitution provides for a bicameral Parliament consisting of a National Assembly and a Senate. The Assembly's 577 deputies are elected directly for 5-year terms. All seats are voted on in each election. The Senate, chosen by an electoral college, has 321 members elected for 9-year terms. One-third of the Senate is renewed every 3 years.

The French political spectrum includes six distinctive political groups. From right to left, these are: the extreme right, the neo-Gaullists, the traditional center-right, the ecologists, the Socialists, and the Communists. Numerous smaller parties have variable national political impact.

A Socialist President was reelected in 1988 and, later the same year, a Socialist government replaced that of the center-right. The current president, Jacques Chirac, is a member of the conservative *Rassemblement pour la République* (Rally for the Republic) party. He was first elected in 1997 and reelected in 2002.

Arts, Science, and Education

Rich in history and steeped in tradition, France has made durable contributions, in all disciplines, to the global fund of knowledge. French philosophers, scientists, artists, and literary figures transformed the face of the world they found. Contemporary social, political, and artistic factors, however, have produced an era of redefinition in which French intellectuals are seeking new roles for their country to play on the world stage.

France's academic, artistic, and scientific communities are more open to an exchange of ideas with their U.S. counterparts than at any other time in the postwar period. Additionally, the lowering of market barriers and the open pursuit of closer political and economic ties among European neighbor states have made English the linguistic common denominator for future interaction. This turn of events will facilitate the two-way flow of ideas across the Atlantic.

The French often refer to themselves as "cartesian" (after celebrated mathematician/philosopher Renee Descartes), meaning their self-perception is one of practicality and realism. These qualities have been brought to bear on new technology as France becomes a prime European player in the esoteric world of computers, space exploration, nuclear energy, telecommunications, and high-speed rail transport. In a society where intellectuals were both seers and social arbiters, the technocrat is now finding a comfortable place of honor all his own.

Even with the thrust toward the practical, the arts and their various practitioners are solid components in the everyday lives of most French citizens. It would be hard to find someone who does not have a favorite painter or preferred film director, or who has no opinion whatsoever on the architectural integrity of new construction in any given city. Contemporary fine art-

ists, actors, musicians, and writers will always enjoy prestige and criticism.

Commerce and Industry

Since World War II, France has been transformed from a largely agrarian economy with modest mineral resources and small, fragmented industrial sectors into a diversified, integrated, and sophisticated industrial power. Still a large agricultural producer, France also has become a major producer and exporter of chemicals, motor vehicles, nuclear power stations, aircraft, electronics, telecommunications equipment, and civil engineering services and technology. This rapid industrialization was fostered by France's charter membership in the European Community (EC), and by heavy U.S. direct investment, particularly between 1955 and 1974. By 1990 U.S. investment in France reached \$15.9 billion and has continued to grow. French investment in the U.S. has grown explosively in the last few years.

Before World War II, railroads and public utilities were nationalized. In the early postwar period several major enterprises were nationalized, including the four largest banks and certain aerospace, automotive, and other manufacturers. In the early 1980s additional nationalizations occurred under a Socialist government followed by privatizations under a Conservative government. When the Socialists regained a majority in 1988, they did not reverse these privatizations.

France is determined to compete successfully in the unified European market, which began on January 1, 1993, and the French Government maintains substantial holdings in pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and electronics. Government intervention in the productive sector is greater than in the U.S., but France is mainly a free market economy, and foreign investors enjoy full national treatment. Gross



Champs-Élysées in Paris

Courtesy of Mira Bossowska

domestic product (GDP) in 2000 reached \$1,448 billion, or \$24,400 per capita (population 59.6 million). The majority of France's foreign trade is with EC partners, headed by Germany. Major imports from the U.S. included aerospace equipment, electronic components and equipment, chemicals, and pharmaceutical products.

Despite slower growth and surging unemployment, the French Government has reinforced its commitment to maintain tight fiscal and monetary control to keep inflation in hand. It is also taking measures to promote investment as a means of addressing its main areas of concern: growing unemployment and a moderate but persistent trade deficit.

Transportation

Local

Public transportation in Paris is excellent, inexpensive, and is preferred by most employees to the frustrations of rush hour driving. The metro (subway), although crowded during rush hour, is fast and trains are frequent. Trains and stations are well maintained and routes are clearly marked. Buses also are frequent and provide excellent service. A monthly pass for the

metro and bus system, taking you anywhere within Paris, may be purchased. Student rates are available.

Taxis are plentiful, though difficult to find during rush hour, holidays, and bad weather. Limited to 3 passengers, they are metered with surcharges for late rides, long rides, luggage, and use of radio.

Regional

France has an excellent system of highways, providing easy access to Belgium (3 hours), Germany (5 hours), and the Riviera (8–10 hours). Tolls are high on major roads. Heavy traffic on weekends and during holidays can cause considerable inconvenience. Secondary, two-lane roads, passing through the centers of small towns, are often more picturesque and interesting. The roads are well marked and detailed maps are readily available. The American driver may have initial difficulty adjusting to the aggressive driving habits of some French motorists. Bicyclists, motorcyclists, and pedestrians also encumber the roads both in towns and in the country.

France offers excellent rail and air transportation to all parts of the country and other European destinations. The French railway system is among the best in the world.

Train travel is fast, efficient, and inexpensive. Substantial fare reductions for use of public transportation are offered to children, students, and individuals over 60.

Frequent direct air service is available to many U.S. cities. The two airports serving Paris, Charles de Gaulle and Orly, are served by excellent bus and rail service to air terminals in the city.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph services to and from Paris compare favorably with those in any large U.S. city. A direct-dial telephone system links France to the U.S. and most of the world. Phones can be purchased or rented. American-made phones can be used when fitted with the proper plug, which is available locally. Calls to the U.S. may be charged to international telephone cards such as AT&T, MCI, and Sprint.

Radio and TV

French TV can only be received on a TV with French SECAM-L. The multistandard PAL/SECAM/NTSC TV's, which can be purchased in many parts of the world, will not receive French stations.

French TV offers government run stations and private channels. All channels feature heavy doses of popular American programs dubbed into French. American films dubbed into French or French-made films, game shows, and variety shows also predominate. The nightly news is at 8 pm. Children's shows, mostly cartoons, are shown, but for considerably less time than in the U.S. Many parts of Paris are able to subscribe to cable and can receive CNN, BBC1, and several other European channels. An additional channel, Canal Plus, which can be accessed by renting a decoder box for your French TV, carries movies in English. Every morning at 7 am, even without a decoder, you can watch the previous evening's CBS news in English with French subtitles on Canal Plus.

Radio reception is good. What you receive depends upon where you are in Paris. BBC International radio service can be picked up on AM. There is no VOA Europe broadcast in the Paris area. It is illegal to ship or hand-carry a two-way CB radio transceiver. It is possible, however, to join local amateur radio operator clubs. Reciprocal amateur licenses are available.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

French newspapers and periodicals are expensive, but readily available at newsstands around the city. French newspapers follow a particular ideological or political bent. Editorial comment and factual reporting are not always kept separate as they are in U.S. newspapers. There is a good deal of coverage of the American political scene and of French-U.S. relations.

English-language newspapers, including the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and British daily papers, are available throughout the city. The European editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* are also available. U.S. fashion and special interest magazines can be purchased, but at highly inflated prices. Subscriptions to the *International Herald Tribune* and British daily papers are available, but costly.

Brentanos, Galignani, and W.H. Smith bookstores specialize in American and British books. The Village Voice and Shakespeare and Company are equally rich English-language hunting grounds, with Shakespeare featuring reduced-price, used volumes. Tea and Tattered Pages stocks only used English books (mainly American paperbacks) and also has a small tea room. Even with the cost of postage, it is cheaper to order newly published books from the U.S.

A well-stocked "American Library in Paris" at 10, rue du General Camou in the 7th Arrondissement, has good American and English literature. Library facilities are open to every-

one. The USIS Benjamin Franklin Library, located in the Talleyrand Building, serves as a documentation/reference center for a variety of American topics.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Most medications used in the U.S. are available in France. A French physician must write prescriptions for medications purchased at local pharmacies. If taking a prescription medicine, bring a supply.

Paris has good medical facilities and well-trained physicians. A good resource list of English-speaking physicians is available, and many have trained in the U.S. Outpatient medical and dental care is more expensive than in the U.S.

The American Hospital of Paris in Neuilly (a Paris suburb) is a well-equipped American-style hospital with several American physicians on its French staff. The emergency room is staffed 24 hours daily with an English-speaking physician. Although it has an outpatient pediatric clinic, it has no separate pediatric unit. The large French public hospitals are well equipped and have specialists in most medical fields, and some speak English.

Community Health

The general level of community sanitation is good. Water in large cities is safe, but not fluoridated. Many people use a water filtering pitcher (available locally) to filter out the sediments and chemical deposits, or purchase bottled water. Good pasteurized milk is available.

Most personnel encounter no unusual health problems during their tour. Upper respiratory infections and allergies resulting from dust, pollen, and pollution are the most common complaints.

Preventive Measures

Although immunizations are not necessary for France, all Foreign Travelers should have current

immunizations against diphtheria-tetanus and polio. School-age children will be required to have the same immunizations as in the U.S.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1New Year's Day
 - Mar/Apr.Easter*
 - Mar/Apr.Easter Monday*
 - May 1.French Labor Day
 - May 8.French Veterans' Day (WWII)
 - May/June.Ascension Day*
 - May/June.Whit Sunday*
 - May/June.Whit Monday*
 - July 14.Bastille Day
 - Aug. 15.Assumption Day
 - Nov.1All Saints' Day
 - Nov. 11.Veterans Day (WWI)
 - Dec. 25.Christmas Day
- *variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Both the Charles de Gaulle and Orly Airports are about a 30-minute drive from Paris. Plan to arrive during the workweek and not on weekends, or on French or American holidays.

No vaccination or health certificate is required for entry if coming from the U.S., Canada, or Western Europe. Visas are no longer required for tourists or nonofficial business if the stay is less than 90 days.

Cats and dogs are admitted into France if their owners can provide the following documents: certificate of good health issued one month before entry into France; an antirabies vaccination certificate issued more than 1 month, but less than 1 year, before entry into France.

Medications for pets are much less expensive in the U.S. Bring supplies with you. There are many excellent

local veterinarians, several of whom have studied in the U.S.

No limit is placed on foreign cash, travelers checks, or letters of credit that may be brought in. Such currency instruments must be exchanged only at authorized banks or agencies.

Major U.S. banks with offices in France are Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Morgan Guaranty Trust, and Bank of America.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

General Reading

- Arday, John. *France in the 1980's*. Penguin Book: 1982.
- Baedeker's France*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, latest edition.
- Bell, David S. and Criddle, Byron. *The French Socialist Party: The Emergence of a Party of Government*. 2nd edition. Clarendon Press: 1988.
- Bernstein, Richard. *The Fragile Glory*, Knops Publishers: New York, 1990.
- Braudel, Fernand. *The Identity of France*. Vol. I. "History and Environment." Collins: 1987.
- Cobban, Alfred. *A History of Modern France*. Pelican Paperback, 3rd edition.
- Coble, Simon. *In the Heart of France: Rural Life in the Dordogne*. New York: Crown, 1990.
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- Mitterand, Francois. *The Wheat and the Chaff*. Seaver Books: New York, 1982.
- O.E.C.D., Economic Surveys: *France 1988-1989*. Paris and Washington, 1989.
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- Pineau, Carol, and Maureen Kelly. *Working in France: The Ultimate Guide to Job Hunting and Career Success a la Francaise*. Somerville, MA: Zephyr Press, 1992.
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- Schezen, Roberto, and Laure Murat. *Splendor of France: Chateaux, Mansions and Country Houses*. New York: Rizzoli, 1991.
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- Wright, Vincent. *The Government and Politics of France*. 3rd edition. Holmes & Meier Publishers: 1989.
- Zeldin, Theodore. *France: 1848-1945*. Five paperbacks: *Ambitions and Love, Politics and Anger, Intellect and Pride, Anxiety and Hypocrisy, Taste and Corruption* Oxford University Press: 1981.
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Historical Studies

- Bell, David S., and Byron Criddle. *The French Socialist Party: The Emergence of a Party of Government*. New York: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Prometheus Books: 1988.
- Carroll, Raymonde. *Cultural Misunderstandings: The French-American Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Cerny, Philip G. *The Politics of Grandeur: Ideological Aspects of de Gaulle's Foreign Policy*. Cambridge University Press: 1980.
- Cook, Don. *Charles de Gaulle, A Biography*. Putnam's: New York, 1984.
- Durosell, Jean-Baptiste. *France and the United States: From the Beginning to the Present*. Chicago University Press: 1978.
- de Gaulle, Charles. *War Memoirs; Memoirs of Hope*. Simon and Schuster: 1964.
- Paxton, Robert. *Vichy France*. Columbia University Press: 1982 (new edition).
- Lacouture, Jean. *Charles de Gaulle*. Vol I. "The Rebel." Homes & Meier: 1988, and Vol II. "The Statesman".
- Remond, Rene. *The Right Wing in France: From 1815 to de Gaulle*. Revised edition. University of Pennsylvania Press: 1969.
- Shirer, William L. *The Collapse of the Third Republic*. Simon and Schuster: New York, Birbaum, Stephen. *Birbaum's France*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1990.

GERMANY

Federal Republic of Germany

Major Cities:

Bonn, Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Leipzig, Munich, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, Bremen, Dresden, Heidelberg, Cologne, Potsdam, Lübeck, Hanover, Kassel, Nuremberg, Duisburg, Dortmund, Aachen, Bochum, Augsburg

Other Cities:

Bielefeld, Brunswick, Chemnitz, Dessau, Erfurt, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Hagen, Jena, Karlsruhe, Kiel, Krefeld, Magdeburg, Mainz, Mannheim, Münster, Rostock, Schwerin, Wiesbaden, Wuppertal, Zwickau

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Germany. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

A stay in Germany, the heart of central Europe, means living and working in one of the most dynamic, progressive and interesting of European countries. Today, it is an opportunity to witness, and participate in, an important new phase of German and European history. In addition, Germany offers a high standard of living, extensive travel opportunities both within and outside the country, world-class cultural events and recreational facilities for everyone.

Despite its linguistic and cultural affinity and close ties with the U.S., Germany is a distinctly foreign experience and assignment to Germany requires adjusting to a differ-

ent pace and way of life. As Europeans, for example, Germans are more formal in business and social relationships than Americans. The national culture and its regional variations are shaped by patterns rooted in a long and unique central European history. Although English is a commonplace alternate language in parts of Germany, living in Germany will be more rewarding for those who speak German or who have the interest and initiative to take advantage of the many opportunities to learn the language.

As the century ends and a new millennium begins, Germany's Government and Parliament have come back to Berlin, the nation's historic capital. The immediate postwar era is over. Both Germany and Berlin are whole again. Germany today is the world's third largest economy and the economic foundation on which the euro, Europe's common currency, rests. The years ahead are certain to be filled with exciting new challenges, new issues and new opportunities for partnership with the United States as Germany and Europe reshape themselves for the future.

This country of broad variations in its geography and its culture is one that has endured a long and troubled history, often as the battlefield

for the great conflicts which have embroiled the European continent. It was not until the mid-19th century that what is now Germany became a federation; until that time, it had been a conglomeration of independent states. The empire was formed in 1871 after Prussia's victory over France, and a period of prosperity and expansion began. Bowed by the outcome of the First World War and the subsequent economic and political chaos, Germany rose again as the Third Reich, but was finally defeated in 1945 by Allied powers and divided after the war. As a democratic republic, it has rebuilt itself into an important and influential state.

MAJOR CITIES

Bonn

Greater Bonn has a population of over 300,000. It was the provisional capital from 1949–91. Although Berlin has been reinstated as Germany's capital, Bonn remains, for the time being the country's political nucleus. The city is studded with buildings that house a myriad of official government offices. Bonn is also known as a university town and as the birthplace of Beethoven. The house Beethoven was born in is now

a museum and is probably Bonn's best known attraction. Bonn has a large concert hall, the Beethovenhalle, and an opera house. Bonn's Rheinisches-Landes-Museum contains the skull of the famous Neanderthal man.

The city, badly damaged during World War II, had not been restored by 1949 when it became the provisional capital. Facilities had to be found or built to provide housing and office space for the German ministries and various embassies, foreign journalists, etc. Existing facilities were converted to government use, and new ministries were built in a simple, functional style. Most embassies found or built structures for chanceries in Bonn, but diplomatic corps residences are located throughout the area from Cologne to Remagen, a distance of some 40 miles.

Food

The availability of food on the German market is much the same as in the U.S.

Local German markets are well stocked, and open-air markets sell excellent seasonal fruits and vegetables.

German grocery stores are somewhat smaller than their American counterparts, but the selections are generally good. Most German grocery stores carry fresh fruits and vegetables. Hours of operation are somewhat restricted compared to the U.S., with most shops closing at 6:30 pm on weeknights and at 2 pm on Saturdays. No Sunday shopping is available.

Clothing

Bonn has a moderate, maritime climate. Although lightweight summer clothing is generally not needed here, warm, humid spells can be expected most years. Warm clothing and rain gear are a must. Hat, gloves and a warm winter coat are advisable. The Plittersdorf Sales Store stocks a small quantity of American and European-made clothing. Local clothing is fashionable but expensive, and sizing is dif-

ferent. Children's clothes are especially expensive. Shoes are also expensive in Germany, and half, small, and narrow sizes are difficult to find.

Supplies and Services

German stores are well stocked for all household needs.

Tailoring, shoe repair, dry-cleaning, laundry, and beauty shops are available in Plittersdorf and other nearby German areas.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholic and Protestant services are conducted in English in the American Stimson Memorial Chapel in Plittersdorf. A full-time Catholic priest and two Protestant ministers serve the community. Sunday school, CCD, youth fellowship programs, Bible study, and prayer meetings are offered.

The Latter-day Saints, Anglican-Episcopal, Baptist, and Christian Science churches hold English services outside the community. A Jewish synagogue in Bonn offers services in German.

Education

The Bonn American Schools, operated by the Department of Defense Dependents School System (DoDDS), are accredited by the North Central Association. The elementary school offers instruction in kindergarten through grade 5, and the middle/high school grades 6 to 12. Both schools comprise about 500 students. Foreign students representing 45 countries make up almost 50 percent of the student population.

School standards and curriculum equal those of U.S. public schools. In addition to the regular academic curriculum, the elementary school provides special classes in talented and gifted instruction and individualized instruction for special education students.

The high school curriculum is considered to be excellent and covers 4 years of English, science, mathematics, and social studies, as well as

5 years of German and French and 2 years of Spanish. Music and art are also offered, as well as courses in home economics, industrial arts, and business. The school has an excellent reputation, with strong departments in foreign language, science, business, television media, music, and computer science. The extracurricular program (ECP) has an especially strong Athletic Department, with teams in football, wrestling, girls and boys golf, tennis, track, basketball, cross-country, soccer, and girls volleyball. The girls teams have won many championships over the past 4 years. The school competes in the Benenor Conference (Belgian, Netherlands, and North Germany). Other ECP offerings vary from year to year, but generally the school offers a band, chorus, yearbook, and school newspaper. The video club, which was started during the 1983-84 school year, is especially strong, with two weekly closed-circuit programs within the Plittersdorf community. (Although not a DoDDS-sponsored program, the community hosts a very active swim team that competes with military schools all over Europe.)

The high school has offered the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) since the 1982-83 school year, and the Advanced Placement Program (AP) since February 1983. There is an active Advanced Studies Program, which includes TAG (talented and gifted), IB, AP, Independent Study, and Accelerated Middle School Program. There are also strong programs in Special Education and English-as-a-second language (ESL).

Each school has its own School Advisory Council (SAC) and an active PTSA. Though advisory in nature, these volunteer organizations are highly influential in the successful operation of the two schools.

Both schools earned the number one spot in DoDDS-Germany on the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in May of 1987 and 1988,

with the high school repeating the rating for the second year. The elementary school was number 1 of about 90 schools, while the high school was ranked 1 among the 28 DoDDS high schools. Bonn American High is one of three DoDDS schools in the last 6 years to receive this award. Both schools score consistently in the top 5 percent.

Tuition at the Bonn American Schools, which ranged from \$7,200–\$7,500 for the 1992–93 school year, goes up annually at about the same rate as inflation in the U.S. For information write:

Bonn American High School
PSC 117 Box 390
APO AE 09080

or

Bonn American Elementary School
PSC 117 Box 125
APO AE 09080–0005

Some American children have attended the British Embassy Preparatory School. The tuition is about \$4,000. The school offers a British education for boys and girls in kindergarten through grade 8 (13 years of age maximum). The independent school can respond flexibly and quickly to parent-student concerns. If children are ready, they read in kindergarten. Emphasis is placed on composition, spelling, grammar, reading, and reading comprehension. American achievement tests are given by special arrangement. For information write:

The British Embassy Preparatory School
Tulpenbaumweg 42
53177 Bonn

A British secondary school is available for grades 9 to 12. For information write:

British High School, Bonn e.V.
Gotenstrasse 50
53175 Bonn
Tel. (0228) 37–40–84

The Bonn International Academy serves ages 3–16 and describes itself as offering a solid academic program based on the British School System with special consideration for the needs of the diplomatic child. For information write:

Bonn International Academy
Godesberger Allee 24
53175 Bonn
Tel. (0228) 37–77–88

The Nicolaus-Cusanus Gymnasium is an up-to-date German school which covers grades 5 to 13. The school population is one-quarter foreign and three-quarters German. Children up to age 15 who do not know German or who have inadequate classroom German are placed in “German for Foreigners” classes for up to 1 year or until their German is adequate. Tuition is free as are most of the books. There are minor expenses for extra books and supplies. Space in the foreigners’ program is limited, and parents who plan to enroll their children should correspond promptly with the school at:

The Nicolaus-Cusanus Gymnasium
Hindenbergallee 50
53175 Bonn

Other German elementary and secondary schools have been used by a few American families. Interested families should allow time to investigate the possibilities after arrival in Bonn.

The Bonn American Preschool, operated by AEA, provides a preschool program for children 3–5 years old. A typical school-day includes free play in the classroom, songs and stories, quiet activities, handicrafts, outdoor play, and cleanup. Creativity and self-expression are emphasized. Occasionally, there is a waiting list. AEA also operates a kindergarten.

Preference is given to U.S. Government dependents, but you should enroll your children by mail if you plan to arrive in Bonn late in the summer. Tuition provides the

school’s income. For preschool information write:

Bonn American Preschool
Kennedyallee 115
53175 Bonn

or

PSC 117 Box 270
APO AE 09080
(0228) 37–95–86
The Daycare Center

This facility provides a baby-sitting service for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years. It is open 5 days a week from 8 am to 6 pm. Fees are about \$2.35 per hour on a monthly basis and \$3 per hour on a drop-in basis. In addition, there is now an Infant Room which provides day-care for infants from 6 weeks to 14 months. Hours are the same as the Day Care and charges are about \$4 per hour.

Special Educational Opportunities

Bonn’s night schools, called Volkshochschulen, offer courses in German for foreigners and instruction in political science, philosophy, the arts, literature, sports, cooking, art, etc. Fees are moderate. Night schools sponsor trips to places of interest, film showings, and lectures.

The Bonn University offers the following courses: theology, law, political science, medicine, arts, mathematics, science, agriculture, economics, education, and social science. German-speaking foreign students are welcomed. Tuition is free. German universities begin at the college junior level by U.S. standards.

In Bonn, the University of Maryland offers various undergraduate courses. For American University courses at nearby military facilities.

Sports

Golfers have access to several challenging golf courses. An international riding school, German tennis clubs, swimming and rowing clubs, and athletic clubs, all with limited membership, are available in the Bonn-Bad Godesberg area. Ameri-

can children may play on local German soccer teams.

While not as extensive, there are opportunities for freshwater and deep-sea fishing.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The beautiful countryside around Bonn invites touring. There are many castles, Roman ruins and charming villages. Bonn is situated on the navigable Rhine River, and during summer, river cruises are popular. The area has excellent opportunities for cycling and hiking. Organized hikes through the German countryside or "Volks-marching" is a German pastime.

Skiing is possible during the winter months in the nearby Eifel Mountains and in the Hartz Mountains.

Within easy range of Bonn, the Rhine, Mosel, and Ahr Valleys with their vineyards, castles, and restaurants offer extensive and intensive exploring. More distant points of cultural and historical interest are easily accessible by rail or car on weekends. Because Bonn enjoys a central European location, day trips to Belgium, Luxembourg, and Holland are possible.

Entertainment

Theater, art galleries, museums, and musical performances may be found in any German city of more than 100,000. Although Bonn provides fewer recreational and cultural facilities than most European capitals, it has excellent facilities for a city of its size. Besides art galleries and museums, Bonn has the Beethovenhalle, in which concerts are given two or three evenings a week. Theaters and the opera house present plays, ballet, or opera each evening. Düsseldorf (population 675,000) is only 45 minutes away by car, and Cologne (population 994,000) is only 30 minutes away. Operas, plays, first-rate symphony orchestras, nightclubs, and good restaurants are found in both cities. Bonn celebrated the 2,000th anniversary of its founding in 1989, with

festivities that were held throughout the year.

Social Activities

The American Women's Group sponsors cultural, educational, and welfare activities. Other activities are available through the Bonn Booster Club, the PTSA, the Teen Club, Girl and Boy Scout Troops, and a Cub Scout Pack and Brownies for boys and girls. A German-American "Friends of Music" Group arranges concerts by German and American artists in private homes. The International Stammtisch arranges speakers one night a month at the American Embassy Club.

Berlin

Berlin is a capital city with a turbulent past, the crucible of a century of history. Reduced to rubble by World War II bombing, and starkly divided by the Cold War, the city has survived and prospered through the courage, optimism and determination of its citizens. Today, Berlin has a population of nearly four million. The city is situated on the North German Plain about 100 miles south of the Baltic Sea and 50 miles west of the Oder River, the modern border between Poland and Germany. Berlin is one of three German cities that comprise a separate Land although it is completely surrounded by Land Brandenburg. The city is divided into 20 districts, each with its own name, ruling authority and history. Since 1990, but especially since a huge construction and modernization boom started in mid-decade, the city has experienced a process of radical economic and physical change as well as a significant cultural renaissance. Berlin is once again the seat of Germany's Government and Parliament and the move of ministries, offices and embassies from Bonn is continuing.

Berlin's climate is similar to the northeastern U.S. even though the city lies at a much more northerly latitude. Overcast days are not uncommon and summers tend to be cool and rainy although uncomfort-

able summer heat waves do occur. Winters are cool and temperatures between 20°F and 40°F are usual from December to February although much colder days and nights are not infrequent along with periodic snowfalls. Berlin is one of Europe's most celebrated green cities with over 20 percent of its area devoted to parks. Although completely landlocked, Berlin is also a lakeside city, with an extensive complex of forested urban parks and lakes where residents enjoy swimming, sailing, water sports and sunning.

There are several Internet sites with Berlin-specific information. A good starting point is: <http://www.berlin-info.de> with English-language information about Berlin and excellent links to scores of other Berlin-relevant sites.

to maintain their own grounds. Many yards are very large, and you may wish to check with GSO before packing out to determine if you will need to ship gardening equipment. Lawn mowers are provided to Department of State employees (other agencies have their own policies concerning furnishings and equipment).

Food

The availability of food in German food stores is much the same as in the U.S. albeit with some important differences. Retail shopping is tightly controlled in Germany and the inconvenient shopping hours present serious challenges to working couples. Most food shops are closed evenings, Sundays and holidays and are tightly shut by mid-afternoon on Saturdays. Fortunately, loosening restrictions in Berlin have resulted in many major supermarkets remaining open until 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. on weekdays, and popular "warehouse" stores are open as late as 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Outdoor farmers markets and neighborhood groceries are a feature of city life throughout Berlin. Fresh fruits and vegetables are excellent but availability is dis-

tinctly seasonal. The German diet usually emphasizes meat (especially pork) at the expense of fish but fresh and smoked fish along with excellent poultry and game are available in most large markets. Fine bakeries are everywhere with huge selections of fresh bread and rolls and other tempting baked goods often made on the premises. German and other European wines and cheeses are widely available. Familiar U.S. products are found in most large supermarkets although favorite breakfast cereals, for example, may be slightly altered for the European palate. Ethnic food shops are scattered throughout the city. Berlin's famous Kaufhaus des Westens Department Store (popularly known by its initials, KaDeWe, or "Kah-Day-Vay") has a specialty food hall that rivals Harrod's in London with a huge (and quite expensive) selection of gourmet-quality fresh and imported food items which can be bought for home or consumed on the premises. Generally, food prices in Germany are somewhat higher than in the U.S.

Clothing

Clothing suitable for autumn and winter wear in Washington, D.C. will be ideal for Berlin. The climate is generally much cooler than Washington's. Clothing for men and women is readily available in Berlin with shops ranging from expensive boutiques offering familiar designer labels to more moderately-priced department stores. Clothing is usually costly in Europe, especially children's clothes, but quality is high and most goods are European-made. On the other hand, good European shoes are also widely available, usually at prices lower than in the U.S. Priority mail should be requested for mail order clothing from the U.S. Internet ordering significantly lowers telephone charges when dealing with the large U.S. mail order suppliers.

Supplies and Services

As with most large European cities, Berlin offers a nearly unlimited range of supplies and services. There are differences however, between U.S. and European stan-



Street scene in Berlin

Courtesy of Mira Bossowska

dards and practices that sometime make locating a particular item or familiar service difficult. Such services as laundry and dry cleaning, hair stylists for men and women, shoe repair and tailoring are readily available in most neighborhood at prices somewhat higher than in the U.S.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is difficult to obtain and expensive in Berlin although agencies exist to provide domestic services. Employers are expected to comply rigorously with applicable German immigration and social security laws which control legal status, working conditions and the payment of required taxes.

Religious Activities

Church services and Sunday School activities-both Protestant and Roman Catholic-are held in various Berlin Churches. English-language Protestant services are conducted in the American Church in Berlin. Berlin has a growing Jewish community, now more than 10,000 members, and Jewish services are held at locations throughout the city. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has an active community in Berlin. In addition, there are several other active Prot-

estant denominations, many of which offer services in English, and a particularly large Muslim community.

Education

The JFK School is part of the German public school system and is a special bicultural German-American community school originally established in 1960. English-speaking students are taught in English and study German until their German reaches a level of fluency to enable them to join German-language classes. The JFK School includes grades K-12 and offers a U.S. high school diploma (or a German diploma through its arbitur program which requires a 13th grade). The school currently has an enrollment of more than 1,000 students equally divided between German and foreign. The school's faculty is made up of Germans, Americans and other nationalities.

There are tutoring programs in reading and mathematics available at the JFK School. However, there are no facilities for children with special learning problems or children who have unusual physical or emotional needs. Questions about special educational issues should be addressed to the school Managing

Principal, John F. Kennedy School, 95-123 Teltower Damm, 14167 Berlin, Germany. You can also find the JFK School on the Internet at: <http://www.kennedy.beehive.de>.

Some American children attend the Berlin/Potsdam International School (BPIS), located near Potsdam. The BPIS offers the international baccalaureate program and the U.S. High School Diploma. The language of instruction is English. Other children attend the Berlin British School (BBS). The BBS offers nursery, primary and middle school programs for children between the ages of three and 13. The curriculum is based on the English national curriculum, but has been adjusted to roughly match those of other international schools. The language of instruction is English. The BBS is located in the Berlin district of Charlottenburg. Finally, some American children also attend standard Berlin public schools nearby their homes, where all instruction is in German.

In addition, there are other schools in Berlin with international student bodies. Together with the JFK School and other schools mentioned here, there are an increasing number of school options in Berlin providing American parents with unusually wide schooling choices. Parents should investigate the available choices and seek the best possible match for their school-age children. Various preschool and day care options are also available in Berlin.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are three large universities in Berlin: the Humboldt University, founded in 1910, and located in Berlin's Mitte District; the Free University of Berlin, founded in the post-war period and located in Dahlem; and the Berlin Technical University located in Charlottenburg. Instruction at Berlin's universities is in German. Several U.S. universities offer extension and correspondence courses in Berlin.

Sports

Berlin offers many private and public athletic facilities. These include private and semi-private golf courses, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, sailing facilities and outdoor sports fields throughout the city.

Although Berlin's terrain is flat, a few natural snow slopes exist for downhill skiers. Most nearby ski areas are for cross country skiing, a popular German wintertime recreation when snow conditions permit. Ice skating is also popular and there are several rinks open in winter. The Botanical Gardens and Museum and the extensive Gr newald and Tegel Forests provide extensive sites for family outings and parts of the Gr newald and Wannsee areas are designated nature preserves. The Wannsee is home to one of Europe's largest lake beaches. Running along city streets or pedestrian sidewalk, is not customary in Europe (although not uncommon in Berlin). There are many trails and paths reserved for biking and running, especially in the Gr newald which is criss-crossed with bike and pedestrian paths. The Tiergarten, Berlin's Central Park, and the grounds of Charlottenburg Palace also offer good runs for joggers.

Entertainment

Berlin's reputation as a great city for art suffered from the depravations of war and political division but now, with the reunification of Berlin, and the shift of the heart of the city eastwards to its historic and cultural center that had been East Berlin, the city is enjoying a cultural rejuvenation. A dramatic new center for culture has opened at the edge of the Tiergarten near the reconstructed Potsdamer Platz and is the new location for museums of modern art and the 18th and 19th century collections of the Gemaldegalerie, formerly situated in Dahlem. Meanwhile, in the Mitte District. Berlin's Museuminsel, home to the "old" National Gallery and museums of classical art, is undergoing renovation with plans for a dramatic new work by archi-

tect I.M. Pei on the drawing boards. Charlottenburg Palace houses several museums including Berlin's well-known Egyptian Museum. home to the famous bust of Queen Nefertiti.

Berlin is one of Europe's greatest cities for serious music. The Berlin Philharmonic is one of the world's premier orchestras. It performs in a sparkling new Philharmonic Hall in the Tiergarten complex. In addition, the city has three opera houses. The Berlin music season is long and feature, performances annually by nearly all the world's finest companies, dancers, musicians, conductors and singers, with both traditional and modern programs. Theater is a Berlin staple and, although most productions on the Berlin stage are naturally in German, there are local English-language theater groups and occasional visits by English-speaking touring companies.

Most American films reach Europe about three months after their U.S. openings. Foreign films (and television programs too) are dubbed in Germany although films are shown in their original language at some Berlin movie theaters. The Berlin Film Festival brings many of the world's best films to Berlin each February.

Berlin after dark offers plenty of entertainment for night-owls. Cabarets, dance clubs, rock and jazz joints and bars proliferate in all parts of the city. Fine restaurants at all prices are everywhere offering German and continental cuisine in addition to a huge variety of ethnic restaurants for every budget. In summer, the city blossoms with sidewalk restaurants and outdoor cafes fine for eating, drinking or just plain people-watching. Kids will love Berlin's famous Zoo, especially the giant Pandas, the bridge over the reptile pit and the attached Aquarium with 9,000 varieties of fish.

Social Activities

There are probably more opportunities in Berlin for making contact



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Central Frankfurt, Germany

with the local American and international community than hours in the day. Many social contacts tend to flow from professional relationships although several more traditional community and church-based organizations exist and have active social programs and sponsor fundraising activities. The Berlin Chapter of the Steuben-Schurz Society brings Americans together with prominent Berliners for lectures by distinguished speakers. The Berlin American Chamber of Commerce provides a forum for business contacts and activities with a commercial-economic focus. The Society of Parents and Friends of the John F. Kennedy School offers opportunities for parents to be involved with the school and to meet Berlin officials involved in supporting bilingual education.

Frankfurt

Germany's fifth largest city and most important transportation hub, Frankfurt am Main is Land Hes-

sen's giant urban center (the Land capital is nearby at Wiesbaden). The population is about 660,000 but the total metropolitan area includes many clustered towns and exceeds one million. The city is located on the Main River and is about 25 miles east of the river's confluence with the commercially important Rhine River at Mainz.

The new European Central Bank is headquartered in Frankfurt. The presence of this bank, perhaps 400 other financial institutions and over 800 American businesses make Frankfurt one of Europe's most important commercial and financial marketplaces. The Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Center (Messegelände) is one of the principal sites in the world for trade events, including the well-known Motor Show and International Book Fair.

The cosmopolitan nature of Frankfurt is reflected in its major airport complex with regular non-stop flights to virtually all regional cit-

ies, including cities in Europe and beyond, as well as daily flights to various destinations in the U.S. Approximately 90 airlines from nearly as many countries use the Frankfurt Main Airport.

Frankfurt is proud of its long and distinguished history. It has been a center for trade and banking for some 700 years. Until Prussia assumed control in 1866, the Free City of Frankfurt was, for 400 years, the site of the election of the Holy Roman Emperor. The "Romer" is the traditional symbol of Frankfurt. This historic building in downtown Frankfurt has been the city

hall since 1405. Frankfurt has long and illustrious ties with the New World-early visitors to Frankfurt included such distinguished Americans as William Penn, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson.

More detailed information about the city of Frankfurt can be found on the Internet, at English-language

sites such as: <http://www.frankfurt.de> <http://www.maincity.de>

One of Germany's most important newspapers, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, has an excellent German-language site at: <http://www.faz.de>

Food

Americans normally use German shops and markets as well. These are amply stocked with excellent fresh produce, dairy products and baked goods and a different mix of local and imported items, often at surprisingly moderate prices. Most fruits and vegetables can be found throughout the year, although prices rise for imported, out-of-season goods. Ethnic food and ingredients—particularly Asian and Middle Eastern—are easier to find in Frankfurt than at most other German cities.

Clothing

Frankfurt can often be overcast but its location along the Main River generally helps moderate the temperature extremes. Since the temperatures have been historically relatively mild in the summer months, few German facilities are air-conditioned but this is changing as new office buildings are constructed and others renovated. The frequency of misty or rainy weather also prompts the regular use of umbrellas. Winters can be quite cold but snow seldom accumulates.

Because Frankfurt is Germany's financial capital, dress tends to be “banker conservative,” although many contemporary designers are represented in trendy Frankfurt wardrobes. Local stores offer a full range of clothing in European sizes. Prices tend to be more expensive than U.S. department store standards.

Education

The Carl Schurz School, located in the Siedlung area, provides a pre-school for children aged two-four, and a day-care facility.

Parents with school-age family members have a number of choices

in educational facilities. All students receive an education allowance, which will cover tuition and fees to schools listed here. Any costs exceeding the approved educational allowances, however, must be paid by the parents. For example, costs for field trips associated with the school's program will normally be the responsibility of the parent. To obtain additional information regarding the schools, please write to:

Frankfurt International School (FIS) An der Waldlust 15, D-61440 Oberursel.

International School of Frankfurt Albert-Blank-Strasse 50 D-65931 Frankfurt am Main.

Halvorsen-Tunner American School (DoDDS - elementary) Rhein-Main Air Base, Bldg 610, Gateway Gardens 60549 Frankfurt.

H. Arnold High School (DoDDS) Texas Strasse Geb. 190, 65189 Wiesbaden/Hainerberg.

The DoDDS High School is accredited by the North Central Association; the FIS High School by the Middle States Association and the European Council of International Schools; the ISF school is a Sabis affiliated school and is not yet U.S. accredited. All schools offer athletic and extracurricular activities throughout the school year.

Special Educational Opportunities

In addition to full-time university studies in Mannheim, the European program of the University of Maryland offers a variety of evening classes at the local U.S. military facilities. The Education Center at RheinMainAir Base may be contacted to answer questions concerning costs and requirements. There are also classes offered through the City Colleges of Chicago, Troy State University, and the University of Oklahoma.

Sports

Other sports including golf and swimming are locally available. Pro-

fessional sports in Frankfurt include soccer, basketball and a professional American football team, the Frankfurt Galaxy, sponsored in part by the National Football League, with regular games in the European league.

Entertainment

Opera, ballet, concerts, music recitals and theater are available in Frankfurt and nearby Wiesbaden. Additionally, Frankfurt boasts excellent English-language theater with regular productions in the heart of the city. First-run movies in English are also available at several theaters in addition to movie theaters at U.S. military installations, including a popular theater at the Rhein-Main Air Base area known as Gateway Gardens.

Social Activities

The American Women's Club of the Taunus is a particularly active organization with special programs and events.

Hamburg

Hamburg, the second largest city in Germany (1.7 million inhabitants) is best known for its port. That image, however, is only a small part of a city that, for most Americans, is one of the best-kept secrets in Europe. Built around the Alster, a lake that is the size of Monaco, the city is graced with large open spaces (half the area is either water or parkland), elegant architecture and a thriving cultural life. Hamburg has the highest per-capita income of any region in the European Union, and the city is noted for stylish boutiques as well as a large and varied selection of fine restaurants.

The relatively modern look of Hamburg belies its age. In 1189, Hamburg was granted the right to a free trade zone and, in 1321, joined the Hanseatic League. Because of wood construction, the city was repeatedly destroyed by fires, the latest being in 1842. In the last decades of the 19th century, Hamburg underwent a building boom and the city took on its current outline by adding port areas, parks, and beautiful

buildings and homes constructed in Jugendstil architecture. During World War II, over sixty percent of Hamburg was destroyed. The city rebuilt many architectural treasures while maintaining a low skyline of new buildings of brick, steel and glass that reflect the city's maritime tradition.

Trade is still the backbone of Hamburg's prosperity. The city boasts the second largest port in Europe and the fifth largest container port in the world, despite the fact that ships must travel 68 miles down the Elbe River to reach the North Sea. In addition, the city is a center for media (print, TV, and multi-media), insurance and aerospace (it has the second largest number of workers in the aircraft industry after Seattle).

The weather in Hamburg is generally rainy and can be quite cool. Spring is lovely, with blooming tulips, daffodils and other flowers around the Alster and parks. Hamburgers take advantage of all sunny days (sometimes they are few) and can be found walking or having coffee or a beer at an outdoor cafe. Sweater-weather is common even in the summer although, on the occasional hot day, the weather can be humid and sticky. Winter days are frequently overcast, with temperatures similar to Washington but with the north German darkness approaching by 4:00 p.m.

Food

Almost all foodstuffs are available on the local market. There are many types of markets ranging from small mom-and-pop stores to large hypermarkets to open-air markets. German food quality and sanitation standards are extremely high. In general, most food items can be more expensive and a few baking ingredients and some processed foods may be more difficult to find; however, this is changing monthly.

Supplies and Services

Well-stocked German stores sell all European-style household items and are generally well made, but can be more expensive. Stores are generally open from 10:00 a.m. until

6:00 p.m., with the larger stores open until 8:00 p.m. during the week. Saturday hours are from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. On Sundays, all stores are closed except those located at train and gas stations.

All normal services are available on the local economy in Hamburg although prices and, in some cases, quality may differ from U.S. standards. A variety of Internet Service Providers (ISP) exist, such as CompuServe, AOL, UUNET and Deutsche Telekom's T OnLine, for local Internet connections. Prices tend to be more expensive than in the U.S. Local phone

Religious Activities

English-language services are held at the Lutheran Petrikirche, International Baptist Church, the English Church of St. Thomas a Becket, the Methodist Church, St. Elisabeth Roman Catholic Church, International Christian Fellowship and the Church of the Latter-Day Saints. Orthodox services are also available, but not in English. There is one Orthodox Jewish synagogue (services are in Hebrew and German.) There is a large Muslim community with several Mosques.

Education

Most school-age American family members attend the International School of Hamburg (ISH), which is situated in the western section of the city, about 45 minutes from the city center of Hamburg. This is the only school in Hamburg in which the principal language of instruction is English. The school is divided into two sections, the Early Learning Center/Junior School (equivalent to preschool through grade 5 in the U.S.) and the Secondary School (grades 6 to 12). ISH is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and as well, offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program. All students are tested before official acceptance. Children must be at least five years old by October 1 to enter the ISH kindergarten program.

There are 520 students representing 45 nationalities. Classes are generally small, from 14 to 20 students. Music, art and drama classes are offered; however, sport programs are not as comprehensive as in an American public school. The school is in the process of a major expansion program that should be completed by 2000.

The school arranges bus transportation to and from the ISH campus for children in kindergarten through grade 5 who live in the downtown area. Secondary students are not offered this option, but public transportation, the norm, is quite convenient and safe.

Special needs education: Certain opportunities exist for students with special needs at ISH and are considered on a case-by-case analysis every year. Contact the school in advance for more details.

For further information or applications for ISH, the address is: The International School of Hamburg Holmbrook 20, 22605 Hamburg, Germany Tel: (40) 8830010, Fax: (40) 88300199. E-mail: mail to: 100272.410@compuserve.com

German public and private schools accept foreign students, but instruction is in German. There is also a French Lycee for those interested in the French school system. There are many good German kindergartens (equivalent of American preschool), but waiting lists may be long for some of these kindergartens.

Special Educational Opportunities

Four different universities in the area offer a variety of degree programs in English. Rice University in collaboration with the University of Bremen and the City of Bremen is establishing an international, private, research university in Bremen that will grant undergraduate and graduate degrees similar to U.S. universities. Purdue University in collaboration with the State of Lower Saxony is establishing a private business school in Hannover and will offer MBA degree pro-

grams. The University of Hamburg is establishing an International Center for Advanced Studies, which will offer an international MBA degree program. The Technical University of Hamburg-Hamburg offers Bachelor and Master degree programs in engineering.

Sports

Hamburgers are quite serious about sport and exercise, and because of this, Hamburg has a wonderful selection of sports and sport facilities. Swimming is available year-around, with exceptionally nice, inexpensive and numerous indoor swimming pools. In the winter, there are several popular outdoor ice-skating rinks. The centrally located Alster Lake and many miles of intertwining canals offer wonderful opportunities for rowing and sailing in the summer, with a number of rowing, sailing and windsurfing schools available. Tennis and horseback riding are also very popular and many schools can be found in the area.

Hamburg abounds with playgrounds and parks. The Alster Lake, beautiful open areas and woods in the vicinity offer opportunities for walking and picnics. A pleasant way to discover the city and the surrounding countryside is by bicycle. Hamburg has an extensive system of bike paths, which make most of the city easily accessible by bicycle.

Entertainment

As a major European city, Hamburg provides something for everyone, from the prestigious opera and ballet to its many museums, from the Harbor Birthday to a night out on the world-famous Reeperbahn. The Hamburg State Opera is considered one of the world's leading opera houses and is the oldest in Germany. The Hamburg Ballet is world class and has been under the direction of an American since 1973. Three important orchestras are based in Hamburg. Jazz music enthusiasts will not be disappointed; the city offers year-round quality entertainment. Hamburg has some 30 theaters that are con-

sidered among the best in Germany. The English Theater group presents plays several times a year with professional actors recruited from London. The Hamburg Players, an amateur theater group, also presents plays in English. In German cinemas, most films are dubbed into German, but "original version" English language films are shown at more than one city location. There are several video stores with a large selection of current and classic English language videos. Most are in the PAL format, with a few in NTSC. For up-to-date information in English on events in Hamburg, see the Internet site www.hamburg-guide.de.

Social Activities

There are eight American-related clubs in Hamburg, which cover a wide range of interests such as social contacts, business networking, volunteer activities, and current events.

Again, there are a number of international clubs that hold meetings and lectures and conduct activities to promote international understanding and friendship through the English language. The International School is an important venue for international contacts for those with school age children. There are also numerous activities of the Consular Corps, depending on one's rank and function.

Leipzig

Situated in the center of the former GDR's industrial triangle, famous for its chemicals, steel, heavy engineering, and publishing, Leipzig has a proud heritage as home to the world's first and longest-running trade fair, more than 825 years old. An impressive fairground facility, between downtown Leipzig and the Leipzig-Halle Airport, was opened in April 1996. Banking, communications, and the service sector have largely replaced heavy manufacturing since German reunification.

Although Leipzig still bears scars of neglect and mismanagement, first at the hands of the Nazis and later under the yoke of the Communists, thousands of buildings have been restored or renovated, new construction abounds, and the infrastructure is on its way to becoming state-of-the-art. Eastern Germany already has the finest telephone system in Europe, and thousands of miles of roads have been widened, repaired, or replaced in the last ten years.

Leipzig's citizens played a primary role in toppling the Communist regime, demonstrating bravery en masse with peaceful demonstrations that sealed the end of the GDR in the fall of 1989. Throughout the Consular District, the United States, its people and policies, remain a source of considerable interest and curiosity; countless sister-city relationships, exchange programs, economic partnerships, and the like have been created in the past decade, and many more are in the planning stages. Additional information about Leipzig in English and German can be found on the Internet at <http://www.leipzig.com>.

The climate in Leipzig is moderate, although each summer there are generally several days above 90°F and each winter temperatures go down below zero. Rain is frequent (average 20-30 inches annually), and it generally snows several times each winter.

Food

Local markets are well-stocked with all types of food items. Store hours are limited; most shops close at 6 p.m. on weekdays and shortly after noon on Saturdays, and are closed Sundays, although by law stores may remain open until 8 p.m. weekdays and 4 p.m. on Saturdays. Neighborhood markets are augmented by large discount retailers located in newly built shopping malls, as well as the Leipzig Central Station, where stores are exceptionally permitted to remain open until 10 p.m.

Leipzig as well as other major cities in the district offers a wide variety of excellent restaurants, ranging from Saxon specialties to Italian and Asian delicacies. Fast food outlets abound. Prices are notably higher than in the Washington, D.C. area.

Transportation

A car is certainly not indispensable, though a few tourist sites are not accessible by public transport. At present many highways are in the process of being widened or rebuilt, causing extensive traffic jams, accidents, and other delays. Train travel is frequent and with a rail pass (Bahncard) relatively inexpensive. Traveling by train not only eliminates the headaches of negotiating traffic, but is also substantially faster. Within Leipzig buses, streetcars, and taxis are accessible and relatively inexpensive. Bus or streetcar tickets are generally obtained from machines (located at only the major stops) before boarding, although they may also be purchased from the conductor at a higher price. Taxis operate from several stands in the center, or may be called by telephone. For motorists, well-established car dealers and workshops offer a full range of services.vehicles.

Clothing

Standards for street and business dress are similar to those in Washington, D.C. Formal attire is rarely required. For most evening functions, a dark suit or cocktail dress usually suffices. Given the variable climate, a flexible wardrobe is useful. Given the large number of cobblestoned streets, several good pairs of walking shoes are advisable. Raingear and umbrellas get frequent use most of the year. Prices in local stores are high in comparison to the United States, and local stocks may be limited. However, gaps in local supply may be filled by shopping trips to Berlin, a two-hour drive.

Religious Activities

Regular Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, Russian Orthodox, and Jewish religious services are offered in Ger-

man by various congregations in Leipzig. A British pastor offers English-language services at the Anglican Church in Leipzig on an irregular basis.

Supplies and Services

A wide array of toiletries, cosmetics, and household products is available in Leipzig. Although all American brands are not represented, in nearly all cases there is an adequate alternative. Prices are, however, higher.

Dry cleaning services are of variable quality. Hairdressers are generally very good. Most repair services are more than adequate.

Education

Leipzig International School currently offers classes from Kindergarten through Grade 9 in English, based on a U.S. curriculum. The school intends to add one grade per year as part of the International Baccalaureate Program.

Special Educational Opportunities

Leipzig has University, Music Academy, Art Institute, and Volkshochschule (adult education institution) courses for those with German-language ability. Leipzig University is one of the oldest Germans peaking universities. The French, British, and Polish governments also have active cultural centers in town.

Sports

The Leipzig region offers opportunities for exploration of the area's rich cultural and historical heritage and is blessed with extensive parklands. Recreational facilities include swimming pools, bowling alleys, and fitness centers. Horseback riding is available nearby. Saxony's Erzgebirge offer opportunities for winter sports as does Thuringia's Rennsteig.

Entertainment

Cultural opportunities in this part of Germany are particularly extensive. Leipzig's world-famous Gewandhaus Orchestra and innovative Opera perform most of the year,

augmented by guest performances in the Gewandhaus's first class philharmonic hall. Other theaters include Leipzig's Schauspielhaus and the Musikalische Komodie, which offer a wide variety of drama. Leipzig's Kabarett, well-known throughout the German speaking world, serve up a special brand of biting political humor. The region is also home to no fewer than eight other opera companies within a two-hour radius, including Dresden's world-famous Semperoper. Dresden's Zwinger complex offers an Old Masters art collection to rival the leading collections in Western Europe, and the nearby Albertinum houses the treasures of the "Grunes Gewolbe." Weimar, the European Cultural Capital in 1999, is the home of the Goethe and Schiller houses and a splendid "Schloss" decorated in the Classical style, and Eisenach's Wartburg is the medieval castle whose "Singers' War" was made popular by Wagner's opera Tannhauser.

Local movie theaters offer recent releases, generally dubbed into German. Leipzig hosts several museums, including the Museum of Fine Arts, located in temporary quarters while a new facility is built, the Grassi Ethnographic and Decorative Arts Museum, Egyptian Museum, and several collections covering the historic Battle of Nations, scene of Napoleon's defeat in 1813. Travelling exhibits are often displayed in the various institutions.

Leipzig's traditional Christmas Market sets the tone for Holiday activities, while Dresden's Strietzelmarkt is the oldest Christmas market in Germany. The region is home to a number of festivals and celebrations, many related to its rich musical history.

Leipzig's nightlife revolves around various bars and discotheques, as well as Moritzbastei, a university-associated club, offers space for some 1,000 revelers in deep underground caverns.

Munich

Munich, capital of Bavaria and a metropolis of almost 1.3 million people, is the dominant commercial, travel, and political center of southern Germany. It attracts numerous conventions, meetings, fairs, and exhibits with a broad range of economic activities. Munich is also one of the world's outstanding cultural and entertainment centers. Its excellent theaters, museums, and galleries present unending high-quality cultural performances and exhibits, while the traditional Bavarian love of fun sustains a wide variety of festivals, atmospheric nightspots, and entertainment. It is a dynamic city with a multitude of recreational and intellectual possibilities.

Munich is Germany's third largest city, after Berlin and Hamburg. The city long ago outgrew its medieval walls, leaving a well-defined inner city, or downtown area. Munich is also Germany's fastest-growing major city. Expansion continues at a fast pace with construction of new suburbs and U-bahn lines. Part of this growth is due to Bavaria's drive to become the electronics, information sciences, aerospace, biotechnology, and media center of Germany.

Munich is about 1,600 feet above sea level on the southern edge of a flat plain stretching from the foothills of the Alps, about 25 miles away, north to the Danube River. The Isar River flows through eastern Munich on its way to join the Danube.

The climate is like that in the northern U.S. Winters are cold but not severe. Temperatures rarely fall below 0°F, and 2–3 feet of snow may blanket the ground in January and February. In spring and fall, pleasant, clear, warm weather is interspersed with prolonged stretches of rain and cloudiness. Temperate summers are short with a fair amount of rain.

Individuals interested in further information about Munich and Bavaria should also look at the fol-

lowing websites:
www.bayern.de
www.munich.de
www.suedbayern-online.de

Food

German food stores offer a wide variety of food items of excellent quality, but the current dollar/mark ratio has made local shopping expensive. The sidewalk fruit and vegetable stands have beautiful, fresh produce, and the large open-air market, the "Viktualienmarkt," just behind the Marienplatz, offers almost any fresh food you can imagine, but at a high price.

Munich has Italian and Oriental food stores.

Clothing

Clothing needed is like that worn in the northeastern U.S. During July and August, heavier weight summer clothes are needed. Only a few days are over 90°F, and even then, evenings cool off. Both men and women are comfortable working in suits or lightweight wool dresses for the women. Most entertaining in Munich is informal, and a business suit or dress is appropriate. Due to Munich's frequent rainfall, bring a raincoat, preferably one with a removable liner, and suitable footwear. Boots are a must for the winter.

Munich is a fashion center; beautiful and well-made clothing can be purchased here. U.S. retail outlets such as Eddie Bauer are gaining a foothold in the Munich area. However, clothing of similar quality to U.S. items is frequently more expensive in Germany. Sales are conducted only twice a year.

Supplies and Services

Bring a sufficient supply of special toiletries, cosmetics, and over-the-counter or prescription drugs. Some favorite products, such as liquid aspirin/Tylenol for children, are unavailable locally.

Electronic items, such as calculators, computers, fax machines, microwave ovens, TVs and VCRs, stereos, etc., are available, but

prices are sometimes higher than in the U.S.

All the normal necessities for comfortable living are readily available in Munich on the local economy. These include tailors, shoe and watch repair, laundry and dry cleaners, photo developing, small appliance repair, picture framing, and bicycle repair. Barbershops and beauty shops are in every neighborhood, and unless you frequent the most exclusive and expensive shops in the downtown area, prices will be comparable to those in the U.S.

Finding English-language reading materials will require some effort, at least until you gain a familiarity with the city. The closest U.S. library and bookstores are at least an hour's drive from Munich. The International Herald Tribune is available locally at some newsstands.

A locally published English-language magazine called Munich Found is very helpful in providing information and events in Munich and where to find certain things. Larger bookstores carry some English-language books and magazines, but the selections and supply are somewhat limited and are more expensive than in the U.S. Kiosks at the main train station carry a wide range of English-language newspapers and periodicals.

There are a number of Internet providers in Munich, including CompuServe, AOL and Deutsche Telekom's T-Online.

Domestic Help

Few families have domestic help, but such help is available on a daily basis. Domestic services are, however, hard to find and quite expensive. Consequently, when a good house cleaner is found, many families will arrange to share his or her services.

Religious Activities

English-language services in downtown Munich are held by the following churches: Seventh-Day Adventist, Baptist, Christian Sci-



Octoberfest in Munich, Germany

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ence, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Methodists and the Munich International Church (interdenominational). The American Church of the Ascension, (Episcopal) holds regular Sunday and Sunday School services in Harlaching. The University chapel and St. Killian's Church also hold Sunday masses in English.

Education

The Munich International School (MIS) is an accredited and well-respected English-language school located in the southern outskirts of Munich. The Bavarian International School (BIS) is a new school located north of Munich, near the international airport.

The Munich International School is operating at its full capacity of almost 800 students in kindergarten through grade 12. The school has more applications for admission than places available, and this situation is expected to continue for some time.

The Bavarian International School (BIS) is located in the northern part of Munich. BIS has the backing of the Munich business community, the international community, and the Bavarian Ministry of Education and Culture. BIS is currently offering grades kindergarten (age four) through grade 12 to 300 students. BIS has its own Board of Directors that meets regularly with the MIS

Board. BIS and MIS work together in a cooperative agreement to assure consistency of administration and curriculum for both schools.

Children with physical, emotional, or learning disabilities cannot be accommodate at present by the international schools.

German elementary schools with free tuition, in each section of the city, are open to American children. These schools may be extremely crowded, however, and the ratio of students to teachers is high. Children normally attend only half-day and have several; hours of homework. Older children sometimes enter German secondary schools, but language may be a barrier. Many German kindergartens accept American children, but they are also crowded and frequently have a long waiting list.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Munich, the largest in Germany, offers numerous courses. To enter, you must have an excellent knowledge of the German language and have already completed two years at a U.S. college. A German course for foreigners is taught only to those who have completed two years at a U.S. college. The nearest U.S. affiliated academic facility is a four-year branch of the University of Maryland in Schwaebisch Gemuend, approximately 200 kilometers from Munich.

Sports

Bavaria is a sports paradise. World-renowned German, Austrian, and Swiss ski resorts are within easy reach of Munich. Many resorts feature learn-to-ski weeks. Several Munich sport shops sponsor ski weeks at popular resorts, as well as special ski plans which provide transportation and instruction at a different slope each weekend. Most large sport shops rent ski equipment. The Munich International Ski Club organizes both day trips and longer trips throughout the ski season for its members.

Munich has three large public ice skating rinks, many large outdoor swimming pools and several larger indoor swimming pools. Several golf courses are also available, but greens fees are very expensive and many are operated by private clubs requiring membership. Horseback riding enthusiasts use several riding clubs.

The 1972 Olympic facilities give Munich the opportunity to host frequent international sporting events, e.g., equestrian competitions, soccer matches, and cycling competitions. Racing is also a popular spectator sport.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Walking tours through Munich are popular. From various observation towers you can see the city and as far as the Alps. Many old churches are interesting to visit. Numerous art galleries and museums are free or charge only a small entrance fee. The Deutsche Museum is the world's largest technical museum. Several large castles in and around Munich are well worth a visit. Many miles of pleasant and scenic trails are in the Alpine regions and in the Isar Valley on the outskirts of Munich. Also in Munich are several parks. The largest is the English Garden. Trips to Munich's Botanical Garden and to its Hellabrunn Zoo, one of Europe's largest, are also available.

The nearness of the Alps and a host of interesting cities offer unlimited touring opportunities. Bavaria has more interesting museums, castles, and architectural monuments than you could visit in a 2-year tour. Perhaps the most impressive points of interest are the towering Alps of Upper Bavaria and the Austrian Tyrol, with world-famous spas and sports facilities. Skiing is particularly popular, but the beautiful scenery, picturesque villages, and colorful people offer year-round attractions.

Numerous interesting cities are within a few hours' drive; included are Nürnberg, Ulm, Innsbruck,

Augsburg, Salzburg, Regensburg, and Bayreuth, site of the annual Wagner Music Festival. The so-called Romantic Road connects the 16th century walled towns of Dinkelsbuehl, Noerdlingen, and Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Eastern Austria, the Czech Republic, Northern Italy, and Switzerland are within a day's drive.

Bavaria is also an excellent hunting and fishing area. Game includes deer, boar, chamois, capercaille, black cock, hare, fox, pheasant, partridge, and duck. Streams are well stocked with trout, and there is some river char and pike fishing. German hunting and fishing licenses are required.

Entertainment

The large Bavarian State Opera House and about 20 theaters have nightly performances. Concert lovers will find the musical fare frequent, varied, and of outstanding quality.

Munich's world-renowned Oktoberfest, a combination carnival/beer festival, lasts about 2 weeks starting in mid-September. Fasching (carnival) begins in early January and ends on Shrove Tuesday. Munich is famous for its excellent beer, and the city features many beer halls. Europe's largest circus has its home in Munich and performs from Christmas until the end of March. Several theaters in downtown Munich feature recent English-language (usually American) films.

Social Activities

There are long-standing German-American clubs for men and women in the Munich community which combine social activities with charity work. The Columbus Society, a German-American society for all ages, offers a varied program of lectures, social gatherings, and outings. Membership is also available in international clubs such as the International Federation of Business Women, Zonta Club, Soroptomists Club and Lyceum Club.

Many opportunities for social contact with Germans are available, but initiative is required. Various sports, hobby clubs, and other social groups usually welcome German-speaking Americans. The Bavarian-American Center also sponsors exhibits, lectures, concerts, etc., during the year. These programs are well attended by Germans and offer a good opportunity to establish contacts with host-country nationals.

Stuttgart

Stuttgart, the cultural and political capital of Baden-Wuerttemberg, has a population of slightly fewer than 600,000 people; adjoining suburbs contain over two million. The area is a vigorous and vibrant cultural and economic center, with high-tech industries such as automobiles, chemicals, electronics, and machine tools. The city, surrounded on three sides by low hills, retains an old-world Swabian charm in its modern downtown core as well as in its more traditional outlying districts. More than 30,000 U.S. military and dependents are stationed in Baden-Wuerttemberg. Major headquarters are located in Stuttgart and Heidelberg.

Land Baden-Wuerttemberg, which comprises the entire consular district, is an area of rolling hills and forests with a population of nearly 10 million and a yearly export trade of over \$130 billion. In an area about the size of Switzerland (13,000 square miles) are such landmarks as the Black Forest, Swabian Alps, and the classical university towns of Heidelberg, Tuebingen, and Freiburg.

The climate is moderate, with mild summers averaging 60°F–70°F and winter temperatures slightly above freezing. Humidity is high, and the average annual rainfall is 20–30 inches.

Food

German markets are well stocked with all types of food items. Store hours are restricted, with most shops closing at 6 pm on weekdays

and early afternoon on Saturday. On the first Saturday of each month, stores remain open until 6 pm in winter and 4 pm in summer. Stores are also open Thursdays until 8:30 pm.

Transportation

Bus, streetcar, and subway services are well developed, but do not conveniently serve the Stuttgart area.

Clothing

Standards for street and formal dress in Stuttgart are becoming more casual. The variable climate makes a flexible wardrobe most useful. Prices for clothes in German stores are high, but twice-yearly sales provide high-quality items at bargain prices. Shoes for women and children have been difficult to find in the past.

Religious Activities

Regular English-language Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious services are held in Stuttgart under U.S. Army auspices. Monthly Anglican services are also available. German-language worship includes Lutheran Community, Catholic, Jewish, Church of Christ, Seventh-day Adventist, General Communion, and Latter-day Saints.

Education

Dependent Education: Parents may send their children to German public schools free of charge. Waiting lists exist for day-care centers and private kindergartens (ages 3–6).

Special Educational Opportunities

Undergraduate work in various fields is offered by the University of Maryland at U.S. Army Education Centers. In addition, in fall 1992, the University of Maryland University College opened a 4-year program in Schwaebisch Gemuend. A 2-year graduate program for a master's degree in education is offered by Boston College, and other university degree programs are available.

Stuttgart has university, music academy, and art institute courses

for those with German-language ability, and there is a film academy in Ludwigsburg. The French, Hungarian, and Italian Institutes offer lectures, concerts, films, and courses in French and Italian.

Numerous facilities exist for handicapped dependents, but specialized schools, such as those for the hearing or vision impaired, require fluency in German.

Sports

Hunting and fishing opportunities abound. Stuttgart and areas within 4 hours driving have an excellent range of sports—volksmarching, horseback riding, ice-skating, swimming, bowling, tennis, golf, and cross-country and downhill skiing.

Entertainment

Entertainment and cultural events are abundant. Stuttgart's internationally acclaimed ballet and its opera company have performances throughout most of the year (with the exception of 2 months in late summer). Frequent concerts are given by the State Symphony and other orchestras and by various local groups. Stuttgart is, among other things, a jazz center. Various international artists and circuses also perform in Stuttgart during the year.

There are several museums, including artistic, ethnographic, and natural history collections. The expanded Stuttgart Staatsgalerie has attained international prominence. The Wuerttemberg Art Association offers periodic painting, sculpture, and graphic arts exhibits.

The annual fall harvest festival, a rival to the Munich Oktoberfest (which starts somewhat earlier and closes as Stuttgart's Volksfest gets into full swing) always attracts large crowds. Many towns have similar colorful festivals during the year centered around harvest time or historical events.

Downtown cinemas show many first run (several months after the U.S. opening) American and international films, dubbed in German.

There are a few good theaters that occasionally show films in English or the original language.

There is a good downtown nightlife district, and one of the largest discos is located near the Trade Exhibition Center.

Social Activities

Several German-American groups are located in Stuttgart. Among these are the German-American Men's and Women's Clubs and the International Circle.

Düsseldorf

Düsseldorf is the capital of the German Land of North Rhine-Westphalia and a major political, commercial and cultural center. The city has a population of over 575,000 and the State, 17 million, about a quarter of Germany's total, making it one of Europe's most densely populated regions. The Ruhr is Europe's largest industrial region and Germany's principal producer of power for the entire nation. Today, the Ruhr's economy is more broadly based than ever before with less than five percent of the work force employed in the old coal and steel industries.

Dusseldorf is a large, cosmopolitan city with a flourishing arts community including opera, ballet, art galleries and concerts. The city has a sophisticated retail sector, including the famous Königsallee of exclusive shops and chi-chi restaurants. It is also the seat of the German fashion industry. Dusseldorf is the site of some of the largest commercial fairs in Germany: the fairgrounds or Messeglande are near the city center and the international airport. The Düsseldorf Airport is Germany's third largest and is served by American carriers. For current connections to Düsseldorf, Government travelers should check with the travel office of their agencies or with a travel agency.

Located in the lower Rhine Valley, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg are all within a few hours' drive or train ride of Düsseldorf.

seldorf. The city and its suburbs are built on the valley floor and are rimmed by low hills to the south and west. The Rhine is a major commercial thoroughfare and Düsseldorf is a major inland port. Much of the city was destroyed during the Second World War and has been rebuilt in a modern style, although Düsseldorf boasts a large and diverting Altstadt or old town full of charming restaurants and specialty shops. The city has incorporated suburbs on the opposite bank of the river, which include large parks and greenbelts, and there are a number of parks in the Innenstadt or downtown. Further information on Düsseldorf is available from the Internet at <http://www.duesseldorf.com> or its German language companion, <http://www.nrw.de>.

The climate in Düsseldorf is similar to the northern Atlantic seaboard of the U.S. with more rain throughout the year and much cloud cover. Significant snowfalls are rare. Summers are short and cool, particularly when compared to Washington, D.C.

Food, Clothing, Supplies and Services

German groceries and markets offer a wide variety of good quality foods. Most communities have open-air or farmers' markets selling fresh produce, meat and dairy products. All types of clothing and footwear are available locally from a wide range of shops and department stores although prices may be higher than those encountered in the U.S.

Clothing needed is similar dress for the northeastern United States. Standard business attire is worn in the office. Most social events do not require formal dress although there are a few occasions where it is needed or appropriate (e.g. opera, holiday balls, etc.).

Domestic help is available although very expensive. It is often possible to use an American ATM card at German bank cash machines connected to the PLUS or CIRRUS networks. For convenience with bill paying and for receiving funds elec-

tronically, most Americans have local currency accounts with one or another of the German banks, which have numerous branches throughout the region.

Religious Activities

English language services are held at Anglican (Episcopal), Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches in the Düsseldorf area.

Education

The International School of Düsseldorf has over 600 students in grades kindergarten through thirteen (postgraduate or international baccalaureate). Almost half the students are American; the next largest nationality is German, and the balance are from Britain, The Netherlands, Japan and other nations. The language of instruction is English. Other options include the German public schools, the Japanese international school or the French Lycee. Adult education in English is limited although some courses are available through university extension programs offered at nearby American military installations. There is no accredited international school in Cologne.

Sports

Participating sports opportunities include tennis, golf and ice-skating. There is an American professional football franchise in Düsseldorf—the Rheinfire—which has a regular spring season.

Social Activities

There is a large and active American community in Düsseldorf and NRW. Many events are held under the aegis of an American Women's Club that has over a hundred members. The club hosts monthly lunches, a charity ball in December and a number of outings and tours. The American Chamber of Commerce is active in Düsseldorf as are a number of German-American friendship groups which host social and cultural events.

Bremen

Bremen, dating from late in the 10th century, is one of the oldest and most interesting cities in Germany. It became a member of the Hanseatic League in 1358 and, from 1646, was one of Germany's free imperial cities.

The oldest and largest part of Bremen—including what was the walled city of the Middle Ages, now marked by the former moat—lies on the east bank of the Weser River. The area is an attractive park. A newer part of the city, Bremen-Neustadt, is on the west bank of the Weser. In addition, there are numerous suburban housing developments, including Neue Vahr, the largest of its type in Germany. The port and warehouse district lies to the north, along the banks of the Weser.

Bremen's position as a port has been long established, and it is today an important processing and distributing center for such products as coffee, wool, cotton, grain, and tobacco. Its industrial life has expanded greatly, and there are now several large shipyards, a growing electronics industry, a large and modern steel mill, and an important aircraft firm here. The population of the city is 674,000.

Bremen's cultural attractions include a number of museums, art galleries, theaters, an opera, libraries, fine old buildings of considerable architectural interest, and several parks. Among the latter is the large Bürgerpark, with exhibition grounds and congress halls.

Bremen's North Sea weather has a reputation worse than it deserves. On average, the temperature ranges from slightly above freezing in winter to the mid-60s in summer. In fall and winter, occasional prolonged periods of gray days are to be expected. For the rest of the year, however, the weather is tolerable to pleasant, although in the cooler range. Cloudless days are few, but many days are fine except for a short shower.



Skyline of Cologne, Germany on the Rhine River

Archive Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Bremerhaven, 40 miles from Bremen and with a population around 150,000, was an important trans-oceanic passenger port, but with the decline of that trade, it has become specialized in container shipment. It is also the largest single fishing port on the European continent.

Bremen and the surrounding area provide adequate opportunities for sports and outdoor life. A country club, the Club zur Vahr, has two golf courses, tennis courts, and a swimming pool. Several tennis clubs, including one with three indoor courts, are available. Fees are reasonable. There is a large indoor swimming pool and a number of public outdoor pools in and near Bremen. However, the weather is seldom warm enough (by American standards) to make outdoor swimming enjoyable. Riding is available, using English saddles. Skiers may go to the Harz Mountains or farther south to the Alps. Excellent hunting for boar, deer, hare, and fowl is

available within easy distance of the city.

Bremen has many good movie houses showing the latest American, as well as German and foreign, films. The latter, however, normally have German soundtracks.

Dresden

Dresden, once the home of one of the world's most important collections of art, is the capital of Saxony. Situated on the Elbe River about 60 miles southeast of Leipzig, it is a manufacturing city of 518,000 residents, producing precision tools, optical instruments, and electrical equipment.

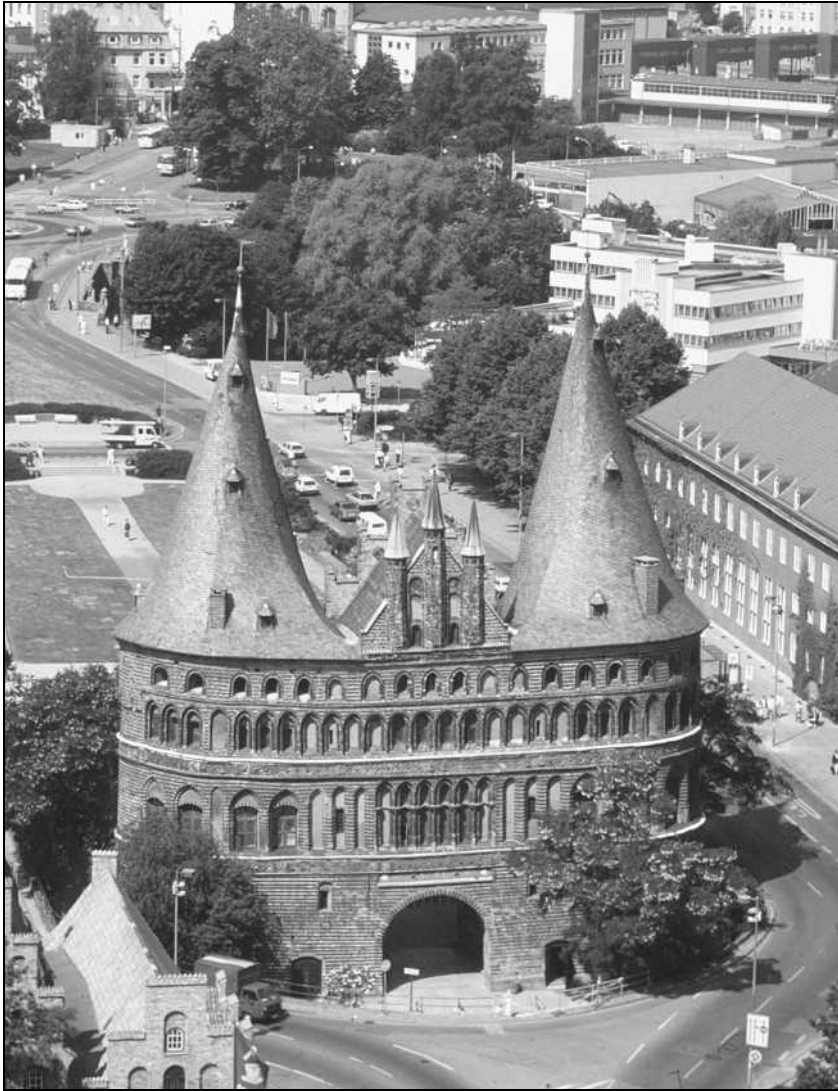
The city, called "Florence on the Elbe," was almost completely destroyed during the Second World War; 35,000 people perished in the bombing raids and the city was reduced to rubble. Dresden has since been rebuilt, with part of the inner city restored to its original

character. Most of its fabulous works of art were kept safe during the incessant bombings, but a great number of them were taken to Russia; some were returned in 1955, and fabulous art treasures are once again accessible to the public. The city became part of the Soviet occupation zone in May 1945.

Dresden was originally a Slavic settlement (Drezdzane) in the 13th century. It has been occupied by Austrians and Prussians and, from the late 15th century until 1918, was the residence of the dukes of Saxony.

Generations of writers, poets, and musicians were attracted to Dresden at some time in their lives, among them Goethe, Schiller, Heinrich von Kleist, Dostoyevski, Ibsen, Bach, Handel, and a host of others.

The city is famous for its National Gallery, its museums, its university and scientific institutes, its music



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View of Holstentor, Holsten Gate in Lubeck

conservatory and opera course, the Zwinger Palace and Museum, the city hall—and for Dresden porcelain which, in reality, is produced in nearby Meissen.

Heidelberg

Heidelberg, in the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg, is famous as the oldest university town in Germany. It is both a cultural center and a tourist attraction. Heidelberg escaped the bombing of World War II and is thus a combination of old and new, considered by many as the ideal German city to visit. Its most distinct disadvantage is its humid and overcast climate. It is neither very cold in winter nor very hot in summer.

Heidelberg's 15th-century castle, which draws thousands of visitors each weekend throughout the year, overlooks the old town and the Neckar River valley. Its most popular attraction, within the castle walls, is the Heidelberg Tun (Great Vat), a wine cask nearly 200 years old, with a 49,000-gallon capacity. The vat is a part of the city's folklore. Heidelberg itself has many interesting medieval buildings, and the cultural life generated by the university offers a wide variety of activities at reasonable prices. Concerts, theater, opera, and ballet are available at all times.

The University of Heidelberg dates from 1386, and probably is the coun-

try's most famous educational institution. Generations of scholars have added to its prestige throughout the centuries.

The recreational facilities in and around Heidelberg are good. In mild weather, there is broad opportunity for fishing, cycling, and swimming. When winter arrives, ski enthusiasts can find good areas in the Black Forest, which is only two to three hours away by car; if the weather is not cold enough there, the German, Swiss, or Austrian Alps can be reached in five to eight hours.

Nightclubs and restaurants are abundant for a city of Heidelberg's size. Many German movie houses are available, and the U.S. Army shows American films nightly in five area theaters.

Cologne

The ancient city of Cologne (Köln) is the capital of the Rhineland and one of Germany's largest centers of population (937,500). Founded as a Roman town in 50 B.C., it became, through the ages, a medieval city of note, a center of arts and culture, and finally, a cosmopolitan city of tourism, industry, and commerce. It is situated majestically on the left bank of the Rhine (the right bank is mainly industrial), and the spires of its 11th- to 13th-century churches are dominated by that of the *Dom* (the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Mary), one of the most famous Gothic buildings in the world. Cologne was a religious and intellectual center during the Middle Ages.

There is a wealth of activity to attract the visitor to Cologne. Nine municipal and numerous other private museums are open to the public, and the Rhine Park and Tanzbrunnen (open air dancing area and fountain) remain popular tourist spots from year to year. Among the famous museums and galleries are the Kunsthalle (Municipal Art Gallery); the Roman-Germanic Museum, which recounts the history of the city; the Wallraf-Richartz Museum with its paintings by the old masters; and Ludwig

Museum of contemporary and modern art.

Cologne offers opera, theater, concerts, fine hotels and restaurants, excellent shops, a zoo with 8,000 animals, an aquarium, and the ever-popular Rhine cable cars. Industry in the city encompasses cars, chemicals (eau de cologne, for example), pharmaceuticals, beer, marine engines, wire cable, paint, tools, and machines. Cologne has the largest broadcasting and television facilities in the Federal Republic.

The Amerika Haus of Cologne, at Aposteln-Kloster 13-15 in the city center, has been in operation for over 30 years.

Potsdam

Potsdam was the main residence of the Hohenzollerns under Friedrich the Great, the brilliant Prussian soldier and statesman whose philosophical and cultural leanings left a mark of refinement on the city. He built the Sans Souci Palace and developed the surrounding park lands during the mid-18th century; this and the enormous Neues Palais (new palace) are among the many showplaces in Potsdam today. Renovations are currently under way in these royal buildings.

The royal family of Prussia, later the imperial family of Germany, lived in this city, which became known as the home of Prussian militarism.

Potsdam is the capital of Brandenburg. It is situated on the Havel River, about 17 miles from Berlin, and is a manufacturing city for textiles, pharmaceuticals, and precision instruments. Its current population is about 135,000. Much of the German motion picture industry was developed in nearby Babelsberg. The studio is open year-round for tours and an adjacent theme park opened in 1991. Potsdam is the site of the Observatory of the University of Berlin and of Einstein Tower, an astrophysical obser-

vatory. In all, there are 21 colleges and technical schools in the area.

In 1945, the Potsdam Conference was held here by the Allied powers to implement the Yalta agreements for the administration of Germany. The Cecilienhof, a country residence built in 1913-15 by the son of the last German kaiser, was the conference site. It is now a hotel and museum.

The three gates of Potsdam—Neuen, Hunters', and Brandenburg—constitute the restored remnants of the city wall. The main road, Klement Gottwald Allee, and more than 100 buildings along its length, also have been reconstructed in recent years, and the city is a popular tour destination.

Lübeck

Hanover is located on what was once the border between West and East Germany. It is the largest ferry port in Europe and Germany's most important Baltic port. Second in size only to Cologne among the cities of medieval Germany, it was a Hanseatic town—it has a history dating back almost 900 years, and was known as the "Queen of Hansa." The Hansa was a union of North German merchants which, in the 14th century, became a league of cities offering defense of trading interests and commercial privileges, and which served as a court of jurisdiction. It was also a political power waging successful wars for economic aims. From 1926 to 1937, it enjoyed autonomy as a free city of Germany, and then was incorporated into the Prussian province of Schleswig-Holstein.

Among Lübeck's famous sons and honorary citizens are Thomas Mann, a Nobel Prize winner, and his brother Heinrich, also a writer; and Carl Jacob Burckhardt, Swiss historian who, as president of the International Red Cross during World War II, protected Lübeck by his negotiations to have the city declared a port of transshipment for Red Cross ships and a storage place for goods bound for Allied prisoners of war in German camps.

Lübeck has colleges of technical science, civil engineering, business administration, medicine, nursing, navigation, and music, and an institute of adult education.

The city's world-famous trademark is the *Holsteintor* (Holstein Gate), the best preserved town gate of the Middle Ages in Germany. The contours of the gate have become the distinguishing emblem of the town, and are shown on the 50 *Deutsche Mark* note of the German Bundesbank, on postage stamps, and as a trademark symbol by commercial firms. Among the products on which the *Holsteintor* emblem is used is *Lübecker marzipan*, the sweet almond pastry exported throughout the world.

Lübeck is 17 minutes behind Central European time.

Hanover

Hanover (in German, Hannover) is a city of 518,000 residents, located in the north central area of the country and is the regional capital of Lower Saxony. It is at the intersection of major highways and rail connections and is the site of the largest industrial fair in the world. It annually hosts exhibitions, conferences, and trade fairs, yet it maintains an atmosphere of culture and art with its many libraries, museums, and churches. Its beautiful Herrenhausen Gardens, formerly the summer home of Guelph princes, are now used for concerts and theater productions and for fireworks displays. One of the Herrenhausen gardens, the Grosser Garten, has been maintained in its original design for 250 years; another, the Berggarten, dating from 1666, has the largest collections of orchids and cacti in Europe.

The museums of Hanover include the Lower Saxony Regional Museum (art and natural and early history), the Hannover Art Museum (modern art); the Kestner, with its ancient exhibits, including a famous Egyptian collection; and the Wilhelm Busch Museum. There are

four major libraries here, including a veterinary college and a medical college library, and churches of major denominations. The First Church of Christ, Scientist, conducts a service in English on Sunday mornings at 11:30.

Hanover has facilities for many sports. There are a stadium, an indoor arena, several swimming pools and saunas, tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course at Blauer See, horse racing and cycle tracks, and ice skating rinks.

The city is the home of the Volkswagenwerk Foundation, which promotes scientific research, and the Federal Institute for Geo-sciences and Natural Resources. Currently, the Roderbrück Scientific Research Center is being developed.

A special feature of Hanover's many municipal services is an emergency medical consultation center at Ärz-tehaus, Berliner Allee 20. (The telephone number is 3-49-46.)

A British-operated English-language elementary school, comparing favorably with American facilities, is available up to grade six. Several good German elementary, secondary, and technical schools are also within the city, and Hanover has an excellent university.

The city hosts 15 consulates and two foreign/cultural information centers, of which Amerika Haus is one. Amerika Haus maintains a library and coordinates a program of lectures, seminars, and cultural events.

Kassel

Kassel, the urban center of the North Hesse region, is known internationally for its municipal art collection, which includes 17 Rembrandts. It is a city of theater and festivals, and its exhibition of contemporary art, the Documenta, held every four years (the next is scheduled for 1993), is world renowned. The city is also the home

of the Grimm brothers of fairy-tale fame.

Kassel is a center for industry, notably transportation equipment, and sponsors research and technology in that field. It is also the economic capital of Hesse and, as such, is host to numerous conferences every year at the Stadthalle (municipal center).

One of Kassel's major attractions is the beautiful Wilhelmshöhe Palace, built at the end of the 18th century as a residence for Jérôme Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon. Under Jérôme Bonaparte, Kassel was the capital of the Kingdom of Westphalia from 1807 to 1813. The hillside park at Wilhelmshöhe, the great fountain and waterfalls, and the colossal statue of Hercules attract thousands of tourists each year from spring until autumn. The château remains open all year, although with limited tour hours during the Christmas season.

Other places of interest in Kassel include the Orangerie Palace in the city park; Löwenburg Castle at Wilhelmshöhe; Fredericianum, the oldest museum on the European continent (built by Simon Luis DuRy from 1769 to 1779); the Ottoneum/Museum of Natural Science, which was Germany's first permanent theater building (1604); the Grimm Museum; the world's only Museum of Wallpapers; the Regional Library, which houses the *Hildebrandslied*, the oldest surviving example of German poetry in written form (translated into 140 languages); and the Astrophysics Collection at the Hessian Regional Museum.

Sports and spa facilities are a major attraction in Kassel. The Kurhessen-Therme is a center for brine bathing therapy and is widely used by people from outside the North Hesse region as well as by local residents.

Kassel's population is 200,000. Its university, founded in 1971, has a student body of 9,500.

Nuremberg

Nuremberg (Nürnberg), one of the great and historic German cities, is located in north-central Bavaria. In the 12th century it became, with Augsburg, a major crossroad on the commercial routes between Italy and Northern Europe; in the Middle Ages it flourished culturally as the center of the German Renaissance. Most of Nuremberg was severely damaged late in World War II because of the heavy production of military equipment in the city, but it has been rebuilt and is an important industrial center for products such as electrical equipment, chemicals, textiles, and precision instruments. Nuremberg also has large distilleries and breweries.

Students of 20th-century history will remember Nuremberg as the site of the International War Crimes Tribunal.

Much restoration has been accomplished in Nuremberg since World War II. There are many places of architectural and historic interest, such as the Schöner Brunnen (beautiful fountain), which dates from the 14th century; the medieval churches of Saints Sebaldus, Lorenz, and Jacob; Kaiserberg Castle; and the Germanic Museum, which is considered one of Germany's finest. The 15th-century Dürer house and the Liebfrauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) also are major attractions.

In a country renowned for its Christmas markets, perhaps none is more celebrated than Nuremberg's *Christkindlesmarkt*, with more than 2.5 million annual visitors.

Duisburg

Duisburg, one of Germany's "big twelve" cities, is the largest inland water port in Europe. An ancient town which was once a member of the Hanseatic League, Duisburg is now a major industrial city of North Rhine-Westphalia, situated northwest of Düsseldorf at the confluence of the Rhine and Ruhr Rivers. Duisburg was a powerful city during the



Street in Rothenberg, Germany

Courtesy of Molly Flint

Middle Ages, and much of its early history is reflected in the Nieder-rheinisches Museum collections.

In addition to having a central library and 34 district branches, Duisburg is the site of Germany's largest technical library. It is a center for congresses, exhibitions, and sports and cultural events, and boasts a beautiful theater on König-Heinrich Platz. Many of its old churches were restored after World War II, among them Salvatorkirche, which was built in the 14th century on the site of earlier houses of worship. Dreigiebehäuser, the oldest extant dwelling house (1536) and the ruins of the ancient city wall, which now has a Jewish memorial, draw a constant stream of visitors.

Duisburg, with a population of 525,000, supports a good zoo, the Kaiserberg; the Wedan Sports Park; Sechs-Seen-Platte (Six Lakes), a large water sports and recreational

area; and various other recreational facilities. Many visitors are particularly interested in exploring the exhibits at the German Island Shipping Museum at Duisburg-Ruhrort.

The educational facilities and health care institutions in Duisburg are excellent. There are 15 hospitals in the city.

Dortmund

Dortmund, another old Hanseatic town, is situated in the heart of the Ruhr district, about 50 minutes from Düsseldorf-Lohausen Airport. With a population of 587,000 in the district, Dortmund is the commercial and cultural capital of Westphalia. It is famous as a brewing center and annually processes six million hectoliters (about 634 million quarts) of its well known "Dortmunder" beer. The city has held brewing rights for more than 500 years, and its Kröne beer hall is

older than the better known Hofbräuhaus in Munich.

This huge European canal port is also the home of many other industries and commercial ventures. Steel, textiles, machine tools, nitrogen, and chocolate factories employ many thousands of people. Dortmund is also an engineering center for industrial complexes. It has a university and both teaching and research institutes.

The libraries of Dortmund contain 545,000 volumes in 16 buildings and four mobile units. The volumes are housed in the Municipal Archives, the university library, the Institute for Press Research, and the unusual and interesting Institute for German and Foreign Working-Class Literature.

The new Museum of Natural Science is only one of the many museums and permanent exhibits in

Dortmund. Others include the Museum for History of the Arts and Civilization, the Ostwall Museum of Modern Art, the Coin Exhibition, the Westphalian Schools Museum, and the Natural History and Electricity Museums.

The facilities for sports in Dortmund are extensive. Westfalenhall is the largest sports and all-purpose hall in Europe. There are pools, racing tracks, tennis courts, health and gymnastic centers, hockey rinks, and a number of other recreational areas. The Botanical Gardens, the German Rose Garden in Westphalia Park, and the zoo are popular spots for residents and visitors.

Dortmund has modern shops, theaters, and galleries, and also supports a philharmonic orchestra. Many hospitals and clinics serve the community.

Aachen

Aachen, for seven centuries the coronation city of the Holy Roman Empire, is situated on the western border of the country, at the foot of the Eifel and the Ardennes plateaus. The Belgian, Dutch, and German frontiers meet at its gates. The city is known throughout the western world by its French name, Aix-la-Chapelle, and is a place of history, culture, and flourishing economy.

Aachen is the city of Charlemagne (Charles the Great), and the cathedral with the famous Palatine chapel is one of the most important cultural monuments in the world; Charlemagne's marble throne is housed in the upper chamber of the gallery. This revered emperor was buried here in the year 814. In Aachen's *Rathaus* (town hall) where, for centuries, German kings were crowned, replicas of the imperial crown jewels are on display for the hundreds of thousands of tourists who annually flock to the city to see the renowned Christian relics.

Ecclesiastical art treasures are a significant, but not exclusive, part of Aachen's distinction. Its Rhein-

isch-Westfälische Technical College, with more than 34,000 students, is one of the largest in Western Europe and hosts many international technical congresses. Concerts and theater are an important part of city life, and elegant shopping in this ancient town of cloth makers and pin manufacturers draws visitors from many countries. Eurogress Aachen, the congress center in the park, is a famous European meeting point, and the many historic inns, hotels, and charming restaurants give the city a cosmopolitan flavor.

Aachen's spa, *Acquis Grani*, was famous among Roman legionnaires for its healing powers, and today the spa is operated throughout the year with the most modern facilities. Other major attractions of this western German city include the Casino of Bad Aachen, the world riding championships in the Soers Arena, the annual fair in Kornelimünster and, of course, the art treasures in the Suermondt-Ludwig Museum and the Neue Galerie, as well as those in the cathedral.

The population of Aachen is about 250,000.

Bochum

Bochum, an industrial city of 432,000 in the Ruhr Valley, is 650 years old as a municipality, but its history covers more than a millennium. Throughout the centuries it has been beset by fire, pestilence, and foreign invasion and, in 1960, Bochum suffered a major coal crisis. It is now a center of diversified industry and, more important, the home of the Ruhr area's first university, the Ruhr-University of Bochum, on the hills above the river at Querenburg. This was the first institution of learning in the country to provide an office for the exchange of information between school and industry, and its medical training program with the area hospitals, known as the Bochum Model Scheme, is unique in Germany.

In spite of its industrial nature, Bochum has many historical and

cultural attractions. The Old Parish Church of Stiepel, founded in 1008, still has the lower part of the tower and the remains of the walls near the choir, which were part of the first building. St. Gertrudis Deanery, with a 1000-year-old fort, is built on a foundation laid in the year 710. Two other historic houses of worship are St. Bartholomew Pilgrimage Chapel, known for its unique Renaissance door, and the Protestant Church of Gertrudisplatz, which was completed in 1763.

Within the city are the German Mining Museum; the Bochum Art Gallery and Museum; Haud Kenmade, a moated castle from the Middle Ages; the Grumbt Collection of musical instruments (at the castle), with valuable manuscripts and a local history exhibit; Bochum Observatory Planetarium; the Astronomical Observation Station; Institute for Space Research; Rhine-Ruhr Railway Museum; Wattenscheid-Helfs Hof (history museum); German Puppet Institute; a large central library and a reference library for patent specifications; the Music School of Bochum; and a famous school for actors, the Westfälische Schauspielschule.

Bochum also boasts a German Shakespeare Society, a symphony orchestra, an unusual number of gymnastics and sports clubs (284), a playhouse, a zoo, theaters, restaurants, and halls for meetings and conferences.

Local time in Bochum is 31 minutes behind Central European Time.

Augsburg

Augsburg, founded by Augustus in 15 B.C. as a Roman colony, lies on the Lech River in western Bavaria, about 30 miles from Munich. It is the principal city on the Romantic Road, the celebrated route through the historic German towns of the Middle Ages.

Augsburg was a commercial and textile center for northern and southern Europe in medieval times and today, with a population of more

than 250,000, remains a major textile hub. It was the richest town on the continent during the 15th and 16th centuries; two of its wealthy families, the Fuggers and the Welsers, were famous and influential throughout the Western world. The merchant Fuggers built a social settlement, the Fuggerei, for the old and the poor which remains in modern times as a housing development still serving low-income families for the original annual rate. The paths winding through the Fuggerei show the care with which the settlement was planned and, even now, the ancient houses appear in good repair.

It was here at Augsburg in 1955 that the Augsburg Religious Peace Treaty (religious peace treaty) was signed, settling the conflict caused by the Reformation between Catholic and Lutheran princes of the Holy Roman Empire. The city is rich in architectural treasures of that time, and of the centuries which preceded it. The cathedral, built in 995, houses relics of its era; stained glass from the 11th century, and a beautiful altarpiece by the elder Hans Holbein (1465–1524) are testimony today of the art that was produced in those times. St. Ulrich's Church, with its two towers honoring both the Catholic and Protestant religions, and the town hall (Rathaus) also are major attractions here, as is Maximilian Strasse, the Renaissance street which cuts through the city center. Near the Lech River are municipal botanical gardens and a zoo which keeps animals in a natural habitat.

OTHER CITIES

Located in west-central Germany, **BIELEFELD** is the center of the Westphalian linen industry, which began in the 13th century. The city also manufactures bicycles, sewing machines, and tools. Bielefeld is situated 55 miles southwest of Hanover and has a population of about 300,000. Built in the 1200s and restored in the late 1800s, Sparrenberg Castle is now a museum.

Many of the city's historical churches and buildings were damaged during World War II.

BRUNSWICK (in German, Braunschweig) is the capital of Lower Saxony and was formerly the capital of the duchy of Brunswick. The city, with an estimated population of 255,000, is situated in central Germany, 34 miles southeast of Hanover. Industries include the manufacture of cameras, pianos, and automobiles. Brunswick was allegedly founded in 861, by Bruno, son of Ludolf, the Saxon duke. Historical buildings include St. Blasius Cathedral, built between 1173 and 1194, which contains the tomb of the duke of Saxony, Henry the Lion. A fortress built by him in 1175, the Dankwarderode, still stands.

CHEMNITZ, called Karl-Marx-Stadt during the Communist era, is an industrial city on the Chemnitz River at the foot of the Erzgebirge mountain range, some 40 miles southeast of Leipzig. Made a free imperial city in the year 1125, it became an early center of the textile industry after it was given the monopoly of bleaching in the mid-14th century. It also developed as a transportation hub, and as a center for chemical production and machinery. Chemnitz suffered heavy bomb damage in World War II. The city has approximately 302,000 residents. It is the site of the prestigious Technische Hochschule (polytechnic institute), founded in 1836; the library contains 588,000 volumes. A combined city/regional library is also located here.

DESSAU is 34 miles north of Leipzig and is an important railroad hub on the Berlin-Leipzig line. Industrially, the city is well developed, especially in the area of mechanical engineering. Dessau has a sugar refinery that processes the beets grown in the rich surrounding farmland. German settlers established Dessau some time during the 12th century, and it received a city charter in the early 13th century. The city has a population of approximately 105,000.

ERFURT, with a population of about 215,000, is situated approximately 60 miles from Halle, in the central-west region of the country. A major commercial city, Erfurt manufactures office equipment and typewriters. It is known for horticulture and seed growing; a horticulture show-ground and museum is located here. Erfurt flourished during the Middle Ages as the gathering place of merchants. In 1808, the city was the site of the famous meeting between Alexander I and Napoleon. The heads of the governments of East and West Germany held their first meeting here in 1970. Historical points of interest include the ancient Merchants' Bridge that crosses the Gera River, built in 1325; the Old University, where Martin Luther studied; the Augustinian monastery, which he entered; and the 18th-century, baroque-style Governor's Palace. The elegant homes of the late medieval and Renaissance periods display Erfurt's former wealth. One of Germany's oldest universities was founded here in the late 14th century.

Located about 57 miles directly north of Bonn, **ESSEN** is a city of 620,000 residents. It extends southward through lovely suburbs into the timbered hills above the Ruhr River, where the abbey church of Werden, founded around 800, stands. Since World War II, Essen has taken on a modern look and has traffic-free shopping streets. Relics of the ancient city include the Münster Church, built around 873. The city was established about 852 and housed a convent for noblewomen. Essen later developed as a result of coal mining and heavy industry in the area. The manufacture of plastics and consumer goods are among its industries today.

The city of **GELSENKIRCHEN** is located in western Germany, about 40 miles northeast of Cologne. As a result of the northward spread of Ruhr coal mining in the late 1800s, Gelsenkirchen changed from a small village into a large industrial city. After 1958, when coal production decreased, the city had to diver-

sify its industries. Today, machine building, the clothing industry, and glass-making have become economic mainstays. There is a central shopping area, a zoo, a theater, an artists' area, and two racetracks here. Gelsenkirchen has an estimated population of 290,700.

Situated 10 miles south of Dortmund, **HAGEN** is on the northern fringe of the picture-perfect Sauerland Hills. Like other cities in the region, Hagen grew with the expansion of Ruhr coal mining. It was chartered in 1746 and remained small until the late 1800s when industrialization began. Hagen suffered considerable damage during World War II but was quickly reestablished after 1945. Hagen's current population is 209,500.

The city of **JENA** is located less than 100 miles west of Dresden and about 25 miles east of Erfurt. It has an economy based on the glass and chemicals industries. Jena is known for its university, founded in 1554; and its optical works, founded by Carl Zeiss in 1846. Notable landmarks include the Zeiss planetarium, the late-Gothic style St. Michael's Church, the old university, and a 14th-century town hall. The current population in Jena is about 106,600.

KARLSRUHE (also spelled Carlsruhe) is situated in southwest Germany, just east of the Rhine River near the Black Forest. Formerly the capital of the grand duchy of Baden, the city currently is a retailing, transportation, and manufacturing center. The German Court of Justice (supreme court) and Constitutional Court are located here. Karlsruhe, founded in 1715, has a symmetrical fan of streets that extend south of its 16th-century palace, which is now a museum. The streets to the north of the palace, through its parks and gardens, mirror the others. Germany's first technical university, Fridericiana University, was founded here in 1825. Karlsruhe's population is about 268,700.

KIEL lies at the head of Kieler Förde, a deep inlet of the Baltic Sea, which forms the eastern terminus of the Kiel Canal. Kiel's location, about 56 miles north of Hamburg, offers a magnificent view of the water and passing vessels. The city has facilities for processing foods, especially fish; other industries include brewing and manufacturing electrical and electronic equipment. The Old Market, with traffic-free shopping streets, lies in the shadow of the medieval Church of St. Nicholas. The city has an estimated population of 250,000.

The city of **KREFELD**, whose population is 220,000, is situated less than 50 miles northwest of Bonn. The Rhine River lies eight miles west of the city. Chemicals, silk, steel products, and clothing are among Krefeld's manufactured goods. Protestant refugees, including Mennonites, introduced the silk industry here in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Situated 80 miles southwest of Berlin, **MAGDEBURG** is a transportation hub with a population of close to 290,500. The city's economic life revolves around the nearby lignite (brown coal) field in Saxony and the large potash deposits around Stassfurt. Magdeburg's port plays a major role in the engineering and shipbuilding industries. Founded in 805 by Charlemagne, the city became an archbishopric in 967. Magdeburg was a leader among the Hanseatic League cities but was practically destroyed in 1631 during the Thirty Years War. It regained its prominent status after becoming part of Prussia in 1814. During World War II, Magdeburg was a major industrial center. The Allies bombed the city repeatedly and finally took it on April 18–19, 1945.

MAINZ lies on the west bank of the Rhine River in southwest Germany. Frankfurt am Main is located 20 miles to the east. A port city, Mainz is also an industrial hub, producing chemicals, optical glass, and food products. Mainz was once the capital of Rome's Upper Germany Province. The Romans founded the city

as a camp on the Rhine in 13 B.C. Mainz became a political and religious power, and was a free city after 1118. It remained influential until Napoleon dissolved the empire in 1806. Historical sites, most of which were damaged during World War II, include an 18th-century grand-ducal palace and an 11th-century cathedral. Johann Gutenberg, the printer-inventor, was born here in the late 1300s; the university named in his honor was founded in 1447. There is also a Gutenberg Museum in Mainz. The population here is about 185,000.

The port city of **MANNHEIM** lies on the east bank of the Rhine River, about 60 miles northwest of Stuttgart. Along with its twin city, Ludwigshafen, Mannheim is the country's second major inland port. The port area has grain elevators and facilities for petroleum storage and refining. There are excellent connections to other cities by water and rail. The city manufactures automobiles, electrical equipment, and farm machinery. Chartered in 1606, Mannheim was attacked and destroyed twice, first during the Thirty Years War, and then by the French. In the late 16th century Mannheim was the musical headquarters of Europe. The earliest plays of Friedrich von Schiller were performed here in the city's theater (built between 1776 and 1779). The city has a population of nearly 300,000.

Located in northwest Germany, about 80 miles northeast of Cologne, **MÜNSTER** is a distribution center for the area's grain and lumber. Dating from the year 805, Münster was originally named Mimigernaford; its current name was given in 1068. During the 13th and 14th centuries Münster was a dominant member in the Hanseatic League. The Peace of Westphalia, ending the Thirty Years War, was signed in Münster's town hall in 1648. Notable landmarks include a large 13th-century cathedral, a 14th-century town hall, and the Gothic Church of St. Lambert. Münster, whose population exceeds 273,000, has a museum of fine arts.

ROSTOCK lies on the Warnow River, just over 40 miles north of Schwerin. The current population here is about 254,000. Rostock is the country's largest port on the Baltic Sea. The city's industries include the manufacture of chemicals and diesel engines. Rostock was chartered in 1218, and in the 14th century it joined some 80 other German cities in forming the Hanseatic League to promote commerce. The University of Rostock was founded in 1419.

Situated on Lake Schwerin, about 60 miles east of Hamburg, **SCHWERIN** is a manufacturing city with a population of about 125,000. It manufactures cigarettes, food products, machinery, and ceramics. Settled by the Wends around 1018, Schwerin received its charter in 1161. It was the seat of a bishopric from 1167 to 1648. A 13th-century Gothic cathedral may be found here.

WIESBADEN, the capital of Land Hesse, is located in central Germany. It lies at an altitude of 500 feet at the southern base of the Taunus mountain range, 20 miles west of Frankfurt am Main. The population of Wiesbaden is 268,900; it is noted for its mineral springs and mild climate. Industries include the manufacture of pottery, boats, clocks, and paints. The city is a trading post for lumber, fruit, and vegetables. Rhine wines are produced from the nearby vineyards. The Celts founded Wiesbaden in the third century B.C.; it was a popular Roman spa. The city boasts a casino, a 19th-century palace, the Nassau State Library, and the Hessian State Theater. A U.S. military base and hospital is located in Wiesbaden.

WUPPERTAL is situated in the western region of the country, 40 miles north of Bonn. Industrially, the city relies on its textile production, which includes velvet, silk, carpets, linen, and artificial fibers. It is also a major center for the production of rubber and pharmaceuticals. The vicinity around Wuppertal was settled between the 11th and 12th centuries. This city of 380,000

residents was heavily damaged during World War II.

Positioned 40 miles south of Leipzig, **ZWICKAU** is a city with many historical buildings. Probably established in 1118, it was a free imperial city from 1290 until 1323. At that time, it was overtaken by the margraves of Meissen. Notable buildings include St. Catherine's Church, begun in 1212 and rebuilt in late Gothic style; the city hall of the 15th century; the late Gothic Clothworkers' Hall, built in 1522-36; the Church of St. Mary, dedicated in 1118 and altered in the late Gothic style in 1505-37, which contains a painting of Christ by Lucas Cranach the Elder; and the Oberstein Castle, built in 1565-85 and now a penitentiary. Zwickau today has an estimated population of 120,500, and an economy based on the nearby rich coal fields. The manufacturing of textiles, dyes, ceramics, and small automobiles also supports its residents. There is a technological institute located here. Zwickau was the birthplace of Robert Schumann, the composer.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Unified Germany comprises 16 states (Länder in the plural; singular: Land), of which three (Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg) are city-states. Berlin, with a population approaching four million, is surrounded by the State of Brandenburg, with the Brandenburg Land capital at Potsdam, a city that adjoins Berlin on the southwest. Bavaria is Germany's largest land. Germany's population exceeds 82 million and, with a total land area of only 137,800 square miles (slightly smaller than the State of Montana), the nation is one of the most densely populated and urbanized in Europe.

Germany has five distinct geographical areas and widely varying landscapes. From north to south these are: the flat north German lowlands; the hills and the low mountains of the Mittelgebirge; the west and south German plateaus and mountains (including the Black Forest, the Schwarzwald); the south German Alpine foothills and lake country; and the Bavarian Alps with the Zugspitze (Germany's highest mountain, 9,717 ft.) near Garmisch.

The most important rivers are the Rhine, the Weser, the Elbe, the Main, the Oder, and the Danube. The first three flow northward, emptying into the North Sea. The Main is a tributary of the Rhine. The Danube, starting as a spring in the beautiful, historic town of Donaueschingen in southwest Germany, flows east 1,725 miles to meet the Black Sea in Romania. Lake Constance (Bodensee), Germany's largest lake, lies at the border separating Germany, Switzerland, and Austria.

Germany is in the Temperate Zone and enjoys frequent weather changes, sometimes daily. The country has four distinct seasons with rainfall frequent in most months, especially in the autumn. Winter temperatures and snowfall tend to be more extreme in the southern part of the country where the average elevation is higher, but even low-lying Berlin has snowfalls and winter temperatures which occasionally dip below 10°F. Summer temperatures are usually cooler than Washington, D.C., although short summer hot spells are common.

Population

With a population totaling more than 80 million persons, Germany has one-quarter of the population of the European Union. It is the largest nation in Europe after Russia even though, in size, it is smaller than either France or Spain. Today, over 85 million people speak German as their mother tongue.

Many Americans call Germany home. There are thousands of U.S. military men and women including retirees, Government employees, representatives of U.S. businesses, academics and their family members throughout Germany. Relationships between Germans and Americans are generally very positive. Many older Germans remember the assistance provided by the U.S. Marshall Plan after World War II and the commitment and aid provided by the Berlin Airlift in 1948. America's steadfast support of German democracy, especially during the crises of the Cold War, adds to the generally positive reputation of the U.S. in Germany. Many Germans travel or have traveled to the U.S. for business or pleasure and many learn English from the earliest years in school. English is a common second language, especially in the western parts of Germany, although some German-language ability is necessary everywhere for a rewarding living and cultural experience.

History

The chronology of German events since the end of the Second World War has been dramatic and extraordinarily eventful. After Germany's defeat, the country was occupied by the four Allied powers—the U.S., the U.K., France and the Soviet Union. In 1949, the zones under control of the three western nations united to become the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). In the same year, the eastern part of the country, under control of German Communist authorities and the Soviet Union, was declared a separate German State and became the GDR. On October 3, 1990, following the revolutionary changes of late 1989, the Federal Republic and the GDR joined to form a reunified Republic of Germany that extended the constitution and laws of the former West Germany to five new eastern States.

The city of Berlin, surrounded by East Germany, had a special status in the immediate postwar period

and was under the military occupation of the four allies under a

By 1948, Soviet violation of Four-Power Agreements from the immediate post-war days increasingly had isolated their zone from those parts of Berlin occupied by the Western powers and the division of the city began to take shape. The Berlin airlift of food and supplies in 1948-49 was an Allied response to Soviet efforts to use their control of overland access to Berlin to force the Western powers from the city. The Berlin Wall, the infamous dividing line between East and West Berlin, went up almost overnight in August 1961 in an effort to stem the tide of East Germans departing for the West. The Wall remained in place as a physical and psychological barrier until November 1989 when, under the pressure of weeks of peaceful protests throughout the GDR and changes in Soviet policy, it suddenly collapsed along with the government that had built it. One year later, Germany was unified. In 1991, the German Parliament, the Bundestag, made the historic decision to move the German Government and Parliament back to Berlin from Bonn where it had been located in a “provisional capital” since 1949.

Public Institutions

Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany is founded on the Grundgesetz (Basic Law), which came into force in May 1949. It provides for a parliamentary democracy and is protected by the Federal Constitutional Court. The constitution contains strong guarantees of individual rights for all. Matters requiring centralized direction, such as foreign policy, foreign trade, defense, and monetary policy, are reserved to the Federal Government. Parliament has two Chambers. The first Chamber of Parliament, the so-called “lower house,” is the Bundestag, which normally comprises 656 members popularly elected every four years. The “upper house,” the Bundesrat, is composed of 69 deputies appointed by the State or Land governments.

This Chamber can approve or veto certain important legislation passed by the Bundestag.

Like the U.S., modern Germany is a highly decentralized nation. Each of the 16 States, or Lander, in the German republic has its own state government, with a Parliament and separate executive branch led by the head of government, the Minister-President. Education, social services, public order, and police are under Lander control. The ability of the Federal Government to affect Lander decisions in matters reserved to the states is quite limited, a feature of the German system of government deliberately created as a result of the experiences of the National Socialist period.

The Federal President, whose powers are mostly limited to ceremonial functions as head of state, is elected every five years by the Federal Convention, consisting of the members of the Bundestag and an equal number of members elected by the state legislatures. The Federal Chancellor, Germany's Prime Minister, is elected by a majority vote of the Bundestag for a four-year term corresponding to the life of the Bundestag. As chief executive, the Chancellor has a strong position in the German system of government. The Bundestag can remove the Federal Chancellor by electing a successor with an absolute majority of votes.

The largest national political parties are the Social Democratic Party (SPD), leaders of the governing coalition following Parliamentary elections in 1998, and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) which operates in tandem with the Christian Social Union (CSU) of Bavaria. The CDU governed Germany during the periods 1949-69 and 1982-98. Germany's “Greens,” a political party officially known as Alliance 90/The Greens, with roots in the environmental and left-wing movements of the seventies, entered government as junior coalition partner in 1998. The Free Democratic Party (FDP) is a small center-right party

that has participated as a partner in most German governments since 1949, with the exception of the periods 1957-61, 1966-69 and after the 1998 elections. The Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) is the successor political organization to the Communist Party which ruled in the former German Democratic Republic. It enjoys limited regional strength, particularly in some districts of Berlin and the states of the former GDR.

Arts, Science, and Education

Germany has a active and highly innovative theater culture, in both the large cities and smaller communities throughout the country. Theaters and acting companies are usually subsidized although more and more theatres are privatizing, especially in Berlin. Despite this financial dependence, theaters have great artistic freedom guaranteed by the German Basic Law.

For lovers of the visual arts, almost every city maintains art exhibitions and private galleries. Germany has more than 3,000 museums, of which 500 are concentrated in North Rhine-Westphalia, the most heavily populated of the Lander. There are outstanding art museums in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Hannover, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Munich, Kassel, Stuttgart, and Wiesbaden. The most extensive art collections in the care of a local authority are found in the city of Cologne, including the Wallraf Richartz Museum and the Ludwig Museum of Modern Art. The latter institution contains one of the largest collections of American modern art outside the U.S. Cologne also enjoys a global reputation as a sales center for contemporary art. Every five years, the city of Kassel, in the state of Hesse, hosts the largest festival of modern art in the world. Meanwhile, Berlin is also experiencing a revival in the arts and is seeking to establish the Berlin Biennial as a major international show and marketplace.

Foreign artists are frequently involved in German cultural events. Almost every German opera house has American singers under contract. Several German orchestras have an American conductor, and many have American musicians. Every year major American orchestras and dance companies perform under commercial auspices in Germany, touring several cities. American artists are represented in all major museums, exhibits, and galleries around the country. German-language productions of American plays and musicals are frequently part of the repertoire of German theater companies.

As in the U.S., where education is a State and local function, education in Germany is largely the responsibility of the Lander. The Lander coordinate their educational policies through the "Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs" (Kulturministerkonferenz). The Federal Government can legislate on vocational training and regulations governing the basic principles of higher education and research, and, as in the U.S., it provides important subsidies in these areas.

As an industrial nation lacking raw materials, Germany sees high standards of education and high levels of productivity as essential to the quality of life of its citizens. Although there are many regional variations in educational patterns and changes under way, certain basic practices remain as the German educational model. Compulsory schooling begins at age six and lasts nine years (in some Lander, 10). As in most European countries, Germany relies on early testing and the track system to select students for vocational training leading to skilled employment or further academic study culminating in the university. Most children are tested at age 10. Options include placement in a Hauptschule or Realschule-vocational high schools or in a Gymnasium, an academic high school. In some Lander there are comprehensive schools called Gesamtschulen. After completion of their compul-

sory schooling, students may qualify for higher-level specialized vocational training at a Fachöberschule, after which admission to a polytechnic university is possible. The Gymnasium leads to the award of the highly-prized "Abitur," a certificate received after successfully passing stringent tests at the conclusion of the 13th year. (Most eastern Lander give the Abitur after only 12 years.) The Abitur degree is required for university entrance. The comprehensive school embraces all these tracks.

There are nearly two million students at institutions of higher education in Germany. There are over 200 advanced institutions of several kinds (universities and technical universities, polytechnic universities, comprehensive universities, teacher training colleges, and fine art colleges). Numerous adult education centers (Volkshochschulen) also offer an attractive spectrum of subjects for personal enrichment.

Study courses at the 70 universities are divided into basic studies (Grundstudium) and specialized studies (Hauptstudium). Basic studies culminate in an intermediate examination or Vordiplom (usually after four or five semesters) and specialized studies in the Diplom or State Examination (after eight or more semesters, depending on the field). American students with two years of full-time college study may be admitted to German universities if they have the required language proficiency. Students with combined SAT scores above 1,300 may sometimes be admitted with less U.S. college credit. Admission requirements for doctoral and other advanced programs vary. There is limited access to the medical fields.

Education in Germany, including university education, is free of charge for all students, including foreigners.

Commerce and Industry

The Federal Republic of Germany is one of the world's leading economic powers. In terms of overall economic performance, Germany is Europe's major industrial nation, the world's third largest industrial country (after the U.S. and Japan) and the world's second largest exporting country. Its per capita income is higher than the U.S. and second only to Japan. Principal German industries include automobiles and other road vehicles, chemicals, machinery, electrical goods, iron, steel, and coal. Germany imports food, raw materials, textiles, oil, natural gas, and various manufactured goods.

International trade is crucial to the German economy and the nation enjoys a steadily increasing trade surplus of almost \$60 billion. Principal exports are motor vehicles, machinery, chemical products and electrical engineering products. In percentage terms, over 70 percent of Germany's trade is with European Union nations. The U.S. is Germany's third largest export partner, behind France and the U.K. At the same time, the U.S. is the fourth largest importer to Germany.

The German labor market has had to cope with profound changes during the past decade and the rate of joblessness, especially in the eastern parts of the country, was a major issue in the election of 1998 that returned the Social Democrats to power. Since then, strategies and policies to stimulate the economy and create jobs have been at the forefront of government deliberations and public discussion. The problem remains most acute in the eastern parts of the country, the former GDR, where an unemployment rate more than 50 percent higher than in western Germany persists in a region with only one-quarter of Germany's population. About one-third of German workers belong to large, powerful trade unions that bargain collectively for wages and working conditions and commonly participate in industrial

policy and managerial decisions. Pressures from continuing high unemployment, high labor costs, an aging population and costly social security/pension programs are forcing Germany to consider reform or restructuring of its labor market and social policies.

Transportation

Automobiles

Germany requires a valid German driver's license. No one under age 18 is issued a German driver's license. You can get German and international licenses during registration if you present a valid driver's license either from the U.S. or another country with an appropriate translation into German. A U.S. license must be valid on application. Without a valid license, you have to attend a local driving school to obtain a German license. Tuition rates are high, around \$730-\$900. A passport-sized photograph is needed for both the German and the international drivers licenses.

A driver's license issued in the U.S. or any other country brought into Germany is not accepted in Germany unless you can prove that the applicant was a resident in the country where the driver's license was issued for six months or longer.

Local

Germany's urban transportation system is generally excellent and consists of electric trains, streetcars, and buses. Subways or U-bahns are found in several cities including Berlin, Dusseldorf, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Cologne and Munich. All cities have superb taxi service. Taxi rates are relatively expensive and tipping is customary. Public transportation in Germany is easily accessible, clean, dependable, and safe, and is a common method of getting around cities.

As in other countries of continental Europe, Germans drive on the right-hand side of the road. City speed limits, unless otherwise posted, are usually 50 kilometers or 31 miles per hour; on State highways, 100

kilometers or 62 miles per hour. Sections of the German autobahns have no general speed limits for passenger cars, but certain stretches of roadway often will have posted limits that are strictly enforced by radar monitoring. Most emergency vehicles are painted off-white or red and white, with police vehicles painted green and white; emergency ambulances are lettered and numbered in orange or red. Fire vehicles are red.

The Berlin transport system consists of buses, trams, and U-Bahn and S-Bahn trains. There is excellent service to most parts of the city. A single adult fare (Einzelfahrschein) costs more than \$2 in Berlin although a variety of special fares exists for regular users of public transportation.

The large metropolitan areas of Diisseldorf, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich are also served by excellent S-Bahn and U-Bahn systems along with buses and trams. Leipzig has no subway system although public transportation is excellent and is being modernized.

Regional

Germany's largest transport network is the federal railway system (Deutsche Balm AG) which was privatized and decentralized in 1994. More than 25,000 miles of track connect cities and towns throughout Germany and the system is constantly being upgraded and modernized. In addition to domestic high-speed intercity express service, German cities are connected to cities throughout Europe by frequent international express trains. Rail service between German cities, large and small, is excellent, and most European capitals, including London, can be easily reached within 24 hours. Rail fares in Germany are lower and rail usage much more common than in the U.S.

Due to its geographical position in the heart of Europe, Germany is a hub of European air traffic. Almost all major international airlines

operate services to or within the Federal Republic. Frankfurt has the busiest international airport in Europe. Dusseldorf, Hamburg and Munich airports also accommodate international flights including direct flights to and from the United States. The Bonn/Cologne airport is a "feeder" for Frankfurt as well as an intra-Europe airport hub.

Only the United States has a more extensive network of highways than Germany. Because of its well-developed road system, Germany is an ideal country for automobile travel. Most people find a car desirable—sometimes for transportation to and from work—as well as for shopping and recreation. Express highways connect most major German cities, and secondary roads are usually excellent, so all parts of Germany are easily accessible by car.

International road signs are used everywhere in Germany. Drivers need to be familiar with these signs as well as with local driving rules, which are sometimes very different from U.S. driving customs. Parking regulations are rigorously enforced throughout the country and several different systems of paying parking charges may be encountered.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Post and telecommunication services in Germany were reformed by a landmark 1995 law in response to European Union requirements and the enormous technical and marketplace changes occurring globally. Further changes resulting from deregulation are continuing. Telephone service in residences is now available through Deutsche Telekom AG, Europe's largest telecommunications company and the third largest in the world. The company traditionally enjoyed a monopoly on local telephone service in Germany. Telephone service is charged on a "per unit" basis of actual usage and tends to be slightly more expensive than U.S. phone service, especially for high-volume users although deregulation and competition are

forcing rates lower. Rental and call charges are paid monthly. Itemized bills are now available. Direct long-distance dialing is available in all German cities to most places of the world. Dialing the U.S. from Germany costs much more than direct dialing from the U.S. to Germany. Collect calls from Germany to the U.S. are charged at U.S. rates. AT&T, Sprint, and MCI credit cards and callback services are currently used by many employees for U.S. calls at considerable savings although international long-distance rates are falling as more and more competition enters the communications marketplace.

Germany has an extensive cellular telephone network covering nearly the entire country and personal telephones are commonplace. Deutsche Telekom offers ISDN service to businesses and residences in most locations and the use of ISDN channels is growing fast. Installation fees and monthly service rates vary but are reasonable.

There are scores of Internet service providers (ISPs) in Germany, both local and national, including AOL and CompuServe. Deutsche Telekom offers Internet connections through its T-Online service.

UUNET, an affiliate of MCI World Communications, also provides Internet access throughout Germany. Costs to connect to the Internet are somewhat higher than in the U.S. because, in addition to paying the service provider, users must pay for their local calls on a "per unit" basis.

U.S. telephones, including most cordless telephones, answering machines, and fax machines will operate in Germany although devices with internal clocks may run slow because of the difference in cycles in the electrical current.

Radio and TV

Germany has both government and commercial broadcasting. Radio and television in Germany are dominated by two major organizations, ARD, a national public broadcasting

network combining eleven regional affiliates, each of which has a radio and a TV arm; and ZDF, Germany's national television broadcaster. The regional affiliates generate most of the programming for the main ARD channel, known in Germany as the "first channel." ZDF is the "second channel" and the regional affiliates, such as WDR or NDR, are the local "third channel." ARD affiliates and ZDF are neither purely commercial nor government-controlled broadcasters. They are independent corporations operating under public laws and controlled by boards whose members are selected by political parties, churches, labor unions, and other public groups. Television programming in Germany is supported both by viewer/listener fees and by commercials. All programs are produced or dubbed in German, including foreign programs and films. The public broadcasters usually favor a program mix more oriented towards news and documentaries.

The most important commercial television broadcasters include: RTL, SAT 1, RTL Plus, Pro 7, n-tv (the first all-news network in Germany), DSF (German Sports TV), RTL-2, and VOX (an "infotainment" channel). While the public companies broadcast on public frequencies, commercial companies rely mostly on the cable network and their programming emphasizes entertainment. Programs are interrupted by commercials. Households serviced by German cable networks can receive approximately 36 programs from Germany and neighboring countries. Satellite service is also available in Germany. English language television broadcasting such as BBC World, BBC Prime, CNN International,

CNBC and AFTN (Armed Forces Television Network) is available on many cable and satellite services.

Radio broadcasting in Germany is dominated by ARD affiliates. Virtually all of them broadcast on two or three frequencies. One channel typically concentrates on pop music and casually presented features and

news. Other broadcasts are reserved for classical music, political magazines, educational programs, and radio plays. The number of commercial radio stations in Germany is growing constantly and there are nearly 200 private radio stations.

It is well-known that transmission standards differ for European and American television (PAL vs. American NTSC). European television sets will not operate in the U.S. and American television sets will not operate in Germany. Similarly, NTSC video products cannot be shown on PAL-only television sets. Multistandard sets are required to receive programs where American community cable television systems are operated. CB use by U.S. citizens in Germany is authorized, but it is more restricted than in the U.S. Licensing is obtainable from German civil telecommunications authorities. If turntables for LPs and/or reel-to-reel tape recorders are brought to Germany, remember that the electrical current here is 230v, 50 cycles. Although transformers will reduce voltage to 110v, the 50-cycle adjustment requires replacing the 60-cycle pulley for operation at the correct speed.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Germany's Basic Law guarantees freedom of opinion and freedom of the press. There is no censorship. As a consequence of the strong position of a free press, Germany is as media rich as the U.S. In fact, in terms of the availability of news and information from other countries, Germany, like many other European countries, is far more news saturated than the U.S. There are, however, significant differences between the media in the two countries. Germany remains principally a newspaper-reading nation but the broadcast media are possibly even more influential in their ability to influence public opinion.

Regional newspapers, many with national circulation, play a larger role than in the U.S. and general newspaper readership far exceeds

that of the U.S. A circulation of 200,000 is an average circulation for a German regional paper with even higher figures for several regional papers that circulate nationally. Large circulation newspapers in Germany include the tabloid Bild (Hamburg), *Suddeutsche Zeitung* (Munich), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt) *Rheinische Post* (Diisseldorf), *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (Leipzig) and the influential Hamburg-based weekly *Die Zeit*. In Berlin, *Berliner Zeitung* is the daily with the largest circulation, followed by *Berliner Morgenpost* and *Der Tagesspiegel*. In addition to daily and weekly newspapers, about 9,000 periodicals of all sorts are published in Germany. *Der Spiegel*, a weekly news magazine with a circulation of over one million, is one of the largest. A typical well-educated German household might subscribe to a local paper, a national paper and a weekly news magazine. Many major papers and magazines are openly identified with particular political parties or political viewpoints.

Nearly 75 German newspapers are now on-line with Internet sites. One particularly good English-language site is: <http://www.Berliner-Morgenpost.de>. Updated every two weeks, the site has translations of the newspaper's feature stories about Berlin, lots of the latest information about the city and links to many other useful Internet sites with important information about Germany. Another valuable site is: <http://www.dwelle.de>, the home of Deutsche Welle, Germany's international broadcaster, which features the news of Germany and the world in English and links to other Germany sites. Visitors may also subscribe to Deutsche Welle's daily English news summary via e-mail.

The German Press Agency (*Deutsche Presse Agentur-DPA*) is the leading German news agency, with offices worldwide. The leading U.S. news agency, Associated Press, also services German newspapers. The English-language *International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today* and *The Wall Street Journal* are avail-

able in most locations. European editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are widely sold along with

daily editions of British newspapers. Bookstores in larger cities sell a limited number of English-language books, usually in British editions.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Excellent medical care is available in Germany. The approach to medical care, however, is different. A large number of physicians speak English.

Patients who have chronic medical problems requiring scheduled and unscheduled medical follow-up should plan to use local German physicians. Most local German hospitals provide 24-hour emergency care. German medical practice is often different from what is customary in the U.S. and not all hospitals can provide full English-language assistance.

Germany also has excellent medical and educational facilities for the mentally and physically handicapped, but all services are usually in German. English speaking facilities are scarce. Germany is not necessarily appropriate for all special needs children. Bills for German medical and dental care must be paid by the patient and then submitted to a health insurer. Dental and orthodontic care is available throughout Germany although standards may sometimes vary from U.S. standards. Charges for medical and dental care are standardized by the German Government and tend to be equivalent or somewhat higher than in the U.S.

Well-known German medical institutions include the OskarHelene-Heim Orthopedic Hospital of the Free University of Berlin, the Waldfriede Community Hospital and the Benjamin Franklin Klinikum, one of Berlin's finest large university

hospitals with a full service emergency room.

Dusseldorf: Excellent medical care is available from German providers in the Dusseldorf area.

Hamburg: The city and region have many competent and specialized German doctors and hospitals, many of which are internationally recognized and which provide excellent emergency and routine care. Generally, German doctors in Hamburg speak at least some English. The University Hospital of Hamburg-Eppendorf has a number of specialized clinics that treat illnesses and medical conditions of all kinds. For detailed information regarding this hospital, see their Internet site at www.uke.uni-hamburg.de.

Leipzig: Local medical establishments capable of handling routine medical problems and emergencies. A number of local medical and dental facilities have reached West German standards, and Leipzig recently opened a state-of-the-art cardiac care facility, which is one of the leading such institutions in Germany. In addition, the Bundeswehr Krankenhaus offers high-quality treatment and the Diakonissen Hospital offers most medical services. American tourists and business officials have also received satisfactory emergency services from Leipzig University's clinics and quality dental care from local practitioners.

Munich: Excellent medical care is available from German physicians and German hospitals in the Munich area.

Community Health

Community sanitation and public cleanliness are similar to or exceed those incomparable American cities. Drinking water, dairy products, fresh vegetables, meats and other food products are under strict German Government control and meet the highest sanitation and health standards. In recent years, information about the health risks of smoking have reduced the prevalence of

cigarette smoking in Germany. Smoking is not allowed, for example, on domestic airline flights and there are "no smoking" train compartments and "no smoking" rooms in many hotels. Still, few restaurants have smoke-free areas and smoking in public buildings and shops is common.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Frankfurt International Airport, continental Europe's largest airport, is the principal gateway city in Germany for international air connections. In many cases, other European cities may serve as convenient gateways to Germany and conform with travel rules. U.S. airlines serve many German cities directly from U.S. locations.

A passport is required. A visa is not required for tourist/business stays up to 90 days within the Schengen Group of countries, which includes Germany. Further information on entry, visa and passport requirements may be obtained from the German Embassy at 4645 Reservoir Road N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, telephone (202) 298-4000, or the German Consulates General in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, or San Francisco; and on the Internet at http://www.germany-info.org/newcontent/index_consular.html. Inquiries from outside the United States may be made to the nearest German embassy or consulate

Germany's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Germany of certain items such as firearms, military artifacts (particularly those pertaining to the Second World War), antiques, medications/pharmaceuticals and business equipment. Under German law it is also illegal to bring into or take out of Germany literature, music CDs, or other paraphernalia that glorifies fascism, the Nazi

past or the former "Third Reich." It is advisable to contact the German Embassy in Washington or one of the German consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in Germany are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or any of the U.S. consulates and obtain updated information on travel and security within Germany. A new initiative of the American Embassy in Berlin allows all Americans in Germany to obtain automatic security updates and Public Announcements by e-mail. To subscribe to this service, simply send a blank e-mail to GermanyACS@state.gov and put the word "SUBSCRIBE" on the subject line. Individuals planning extended stays in Germany are encouraged to register in person at their local consular section.

U.S. Embassy in Berlin is located at: Neustaetische Kirchstrasse 4-5; Tel: (49)(30) 238-5174 or 8305-0; the Consular Section is located at Clayallee 170; Tel: (49)(30) 832-9233; Fax: (49)(30) 8305-1215.

U.S. Consulates General are located at:

Duesseldorf: Willi-Becker-Allee 10, Tel.: (49)(211)788-8927; Fax: (49)(211)788-8938.

Frankfurt: Siesmayerstrasse 21, Tel: (49)(69) 75350; Fax: (49)(69) 7535-2304.

Hamburg: Alsterufer 27/28, Tel: (49)(40) 4117-1351; Fax: (49)(40) 44-30-04.

Leipzig: Wilhelm-Seyfferth-Strasse 4, Tel: (49)(341) 213-8418; Fax: (49)(341) 21384-17 (emergency services only).

Munich: Koeniginstrasse 5, Tel: (49)(89) 2888-0; Fax: (49)(89) 280-9998.

There is also a U.S. consular agency in Bremen located at:

Bremen World Trade Center, Birkenstrasse 15, Tel: (49)(421) 301-5860; Fax: (49)(421)301-5861.

When calling another city from within Germany, dial a zero before the city code (for example, when calling Berlin from Munich, the city code for Berlin is 030).

Pets

Germany is a pet-loving country and dogs especially are familiar companions in all German cities. Dogs and cats imported from abroad must be accompanied by a valid health certificate and a certificate of vaccination against rabies. These certificates should be issued by an official veterinarian in the country of origin. The health certificate must state that the pet is in good health, free from contagious diseases, and that no cases of rabies had occurred within an area of 20 kilometers of where the pet had previously resided. Rabies certificates must certify that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies at least 30 days prior to entry but not longer than one year before. Travelers should understand that animals may be refused entry if fewer than 30 days have passed since the rabies inoculation was administered. This health certificate itself should be less than ten days old when the pet arrives. The German Embassy in Washington provides a formal form for use when importing pets although experience has shown that officials at the entry port, particularly at Frankfurt International Airport, rarely demand the form when handling pets arriving from the U.S.

Animals without health certification may be admitted if they are found to be in good health after inspection by an official veterinarian at the airport and payment of the applicable veterinarian's fee. In the event that an animal thus imported becomes sick or dies within three months after importation, the owner must report the incident to the official veterinarian at the animal's place of domicile.

Birds of the parrot family and exotic animals are admitted only by special permission.

While walking your dog outside your own yard, it must be kept on a leash at all times. Canine varieties specified in German law as "dangerous" must wear a muzzle in addition to being leashed. Only in designated areas may dogs roam freely without running afoul of the law. German law also requires the removal by the dog owner of waste, when deposited on public property. Pet owners should plan to purchase inexpensive liability insurance available locally for pets, especially larger dogs. German pet owners typically carry such insurance. Excellent veterinary and dog grooming services are available everywhere in Germany. There is no heartworm (filaria) in Germany.

Animals sent by airfreight should arrive between 9:00 a.m. Monday and 5:00 p.m. Friday, since Customs offices are closed weekends and holidays. Travelers should carry the airway bill number to facilitate animal identification.

If you intend to walk a dog freely in Berlin, it is imperative to obtain the appropriate dog tax decal. House pets or dogs kept in one's own yard are not subject to this tax. documentation.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the Austrian monetary unit is the Euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 euros. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

Although credit cards, are used throughout Germany, especially in hotels and restaurants, their use in retail shops is not as ubiquitous as in the U.S. Most payments in Germany are made in cash, personal checks in DM or via direct bank transfer. Personal checks drawn on U.S. banks are not accepted. Cash machines are available for use

almost everywhere and most-but not all-provide cash withdrawals on credit cards. American ATM cards affiliated with major U.S. bankcard systems (such as the PLUS' or CIRRUS' networks) can be used at many bank cash machines.

In Germany, commodities are sold in liters for liquid volume and kilograms for dry weight. A gallon is 3.8 liters (one liter is 0.264 gallons) and a kilogram is 2.2 pounds. Measure of length is by meter, which equals 39.37 inches. Distances are measured in kilometers (eight kilometers are five miles) and speeds in kilometers per hour (80 kph equals 50 mph). Land measure is by hectares. One hectare is 2.47 acres.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Whitsunday*
May/June	Whitmonday
May/June	Corpus Christi Day*
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Oct. 3.	Day of German Unity
Oct. 31.	Reformation Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 21	Repentance Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Second Christmas Day

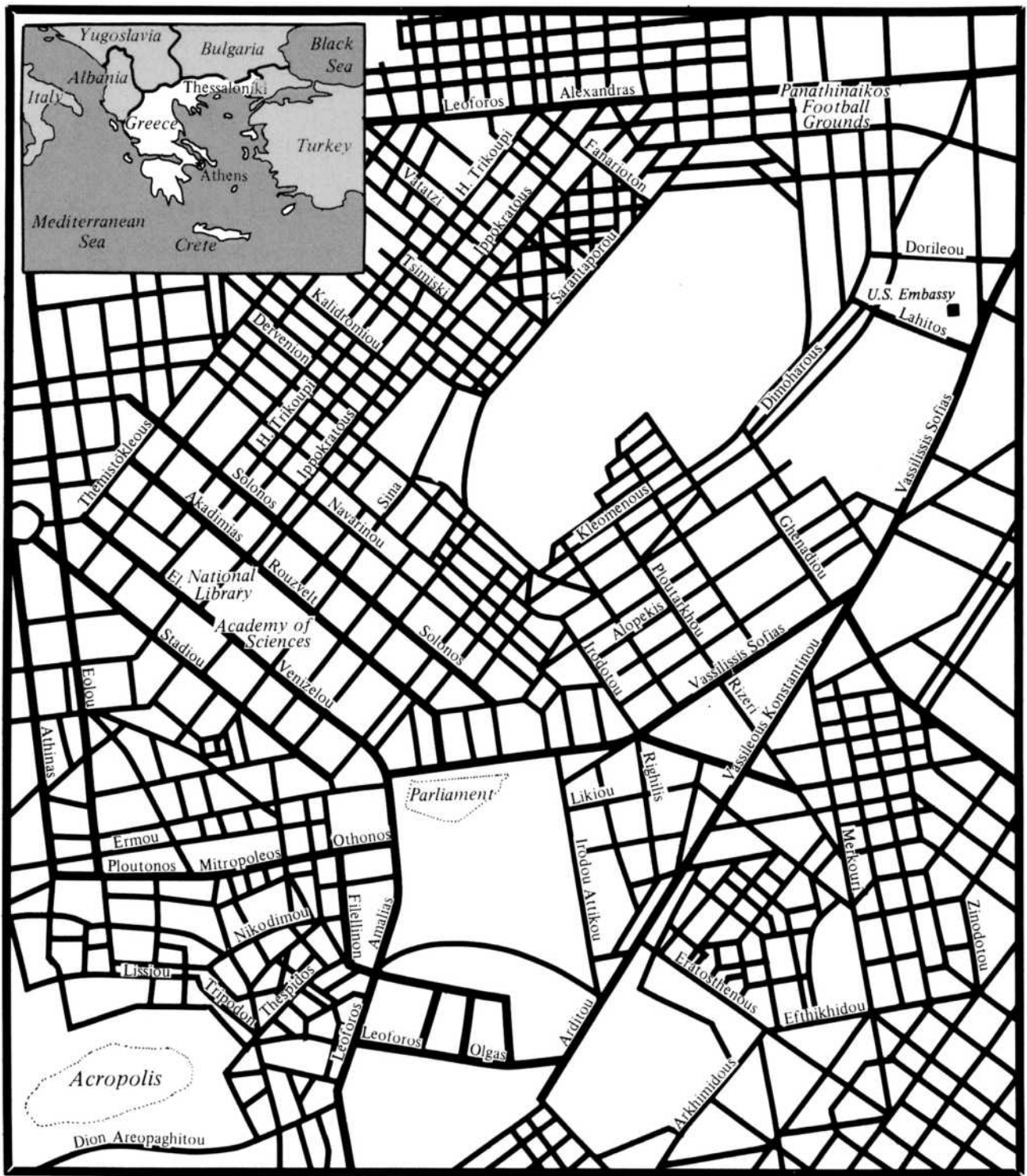
*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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- In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent*. New York: Random House, 1993.
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- Shirer, William L. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960.
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- Wise, Michael Z. *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998.

In addition to the U.S. Embassy's site (<http://www.usembassy.de>) and many other sites mentioned in this publication, two good starting points for Germany information are <http://www.germany-tourism.de> and <http://www.germany-info.org>. The Internet site <http://www.bundesregierung.de> contains excellent information in English and German on all aspects of Germany today as well as links to current news from the Federal Government's Press and Information Office. In addition, a variety of topical and helpful Frequently Asked Questions on Germany can be found at <http://www.physics.purdue.edu/~vogelges/faq>.



Athens, Greece

GREECE

The Hellenic Republic

Major Cities:

Athens, Thessaloníki, Rhodes, Patras, Kavala

Other Cities:

Canea, Corfu, Corinth, Iráklion, Larissa, Piraeus, Sparta, Tripolis, Vólos

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Greece. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Greek legend tells that Titans battling Olympian gods once hurled giant rocks at Zeus in an attempt to knock him out of the sky. Their missiles piled up to become the mountains which blanket Greece, and stray boulders splashed into the sea to form the islands that serve as stepping stones across the Aegean.

In the past 30 years, Greece has changed from an agrarian to a semi industrial economy, but on the few fertile plains and many rocky slopes of this tip of the Balkan Peninsula, farmers herd sheep or tend olive groves, wheat fields, and vineyards,

as did their ancestors for a thousand years. Each province preserves its traditional costume, brightening the festivals held in the small, square dominated villages. Throughout the storied isles of Greece—some 400 lie in the Aegean and Ionian Seas and account for a fifth of the nation's area—the white of house and church glints against the blue of sky, and men go down to the sea for sponges and fish. This seafaring tradition gives Greece the world's largest merchant tonnage—more than half of it registered under foreign flags for tax reasons.

During the Bronze Age (3000-1200 BC) a maritime civilization flourished. By 800 BC Greece was undergoing a cultural and military revival, with the evolution of city-states, the most powerful of which were Athens and Sparta. This period was followed by an era of great prosperity known as the classical or Golden Age. During this time, a tradition of democracy was ushered in. The classical age came to an end with the Peloponnesian Wars (431-404 AD) in which the militaristic Spartans defeated the Athenians.

Greece became a part of the Byzantine Empire in 395 AD. By the 12th century, the Crusades were in full

flight and Byzantine power was much reduced by invasions.

For 25 centuries a crossroads between Europe and Asia to both merchant and conqueror, Greece did not achieve political unity until rebellion brought independence after 400 years of Turkish rule in 1830. The Acropolis in Athens stands as an enduring monument to the “glory that was Greece,” fountainhead of Western culture and democracy. Below its marble ruins and glass-faced offices serve shipping, tourism, and flourishing light industries in a developing nation that still must import much of its food, machinery, and raw materials.

The arts have been integral to Greek life since ancient times. In summer, Greek dramas are staged in the ancient theaters where they were originally performed. Greek literature's ancient heritage spans poetry, drama, philosophical and historical treatises, and travelogues. Western civilization's mania for logic and “ideas” can be traced directly back to ancient Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and the West's sciences, arts, and politics are also deeply indebted to classical Greece.

MAJOR CITIES

Athens

Athens (Athínai, in Greek), the capital of Greece, is situated 300 feet above sea level in east-central Greece on the Attica Plain, bordered by the Aegean Sea and Mounts Parnis, Penteli, and Hymettus. The city proper is built around the historic Acropolis and picturesque Lycabettus Hill. The Attica Plain is the ancient division which outlines the territory of Athens; it is agriculturally rich, but surrounded by semi-arid hills and mountains. Athens is the commercial, cultural, and political center of Greece. Like many larger U.S. cities, Athens is a "mother city," the central point of a group of suburban townships with separate entities. Some northern suburbs are Psychico, Filothei, Kifissia, and Ekali. Old phaleron, Kalamaki, Glyfada, and Voula border the sea.

The architecture of Athens varies from the antiquity of the Acropolis to the contemporary structures of the modern suburbs. The city is burgeoning with construction, especially of apartment and office buildings in the downtown area. Like Boston, it is a "mother city," the central point of a group of suburban townships with separate entities. The northern suburbs are Psychico (Psychiko), Philothei, Kifissia, and Ekali. Old Phaliron, Kalamaki, Hellenikon, Glyfada, and Vouliagmeni are on the seafront.

Ancient Athens began as a city-state in the seventh century B.C. It reached the height of its splendor two centuries later, during the time of its great statesman, Pericles, and of its philosophers and dramatists, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. During these years, the magnificent white marble Parthenon was built on the Acropolis.

The Spartans captured Athens in 404 B.C., during the Peloponnesian War and, although the city eventu-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Temple of Olympian Zeus/Arch in Athens

ally regained its freedom, it never again basked in the power and glory of its earlier days. Athens eventually came under Macedonian and Roman rule, then was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1456, and remained under Turkish control until 1833. It became the capital of modern Greece in 1835. During World War II, the city was occupied for more than three years by the Germans.

Food

On the local market, fresh meat, both local and imported, is cut in the European manner and is expensive; good pork and lamb are available. Local beef is not aged and lacks the tenderness of American beef. Fresh chickens, eggs, and cheese are good buys. Many Greeks shop daily, so the local shopping centers are an important part of every neighborhood. Each has its own grocer, butcher, florist, green-grocer, pharmacy, and a fish merchant. Fresh produce, fruits, plants, eggs, and sometimes fish can also be purchased at the colorful weekly neighborhood farmers' markets. Fish is available but expensive. The huge central market daily sells fresh meats, game, chicken, seafood, spices, and a surprising variety of other commodities. A recent phe-

nomenon is the neighborhood Greek equivalent to the U.S. supermarket. Many of these establishments cater to the demands of clientele with international tastes, so they stock delicacies from around the world in addition to national products. Although some specialty items are expensive, there are also bargains. In any case, there is almost nothing that cannot be found in the Greek food market. Greek bakeries offer a tasty variety of home-style bread from wheat to French and Arabic all made without preservatives. Sweet shops specialize in a variety of Greek pastries and European-style cakes and chocolates. Health food stores are a new fad and located in many areas. Greek wines are plentiful, varied and inexpensive, and some of the finer ones compete well internationally.

Clothing

Wardrobes for Greece should include hot and cold weather clothing similar to that worn in Washington, D.C., although outer wear for snowy conditions is not necessary, except in northern Greece and in mountainous areas. Warm winter clothes and sweaters are necessary because apartments, houses, and some offices are not adequately heated. Summer clothing should be

lightweight and include many washable items.

Shoes wear out quickly because of dust, dirt, and uneven pavements. Fashionable shoes in average sizes and widths are available and of good quality but are expensive. People with large, narrow, or wide feet or who are more comfortable in shoes with a special American brand should bring a good supply with them or order through mail-order companies.

Men: Medium-to-heavyweight wool suits are most comfortable during late fall and winter. For outdoors, supplement these with a sweater or a medium weight coat. A lightweight raincoat is also useful. One or two dark conservative suits are a must. Dark suits are worn year round for official functions, receptions, and informal dinners. In spring, summer, and early fall, lightweight suits of Orlon, Dacron, and tropical-worsted gabardine are ideal. English and good Greek wools are available locally but are expensive. Since the weather is pleasant most of the year, bring informal sportswear (sport shirts, slacks, or jeans, loafers, etc.) for picnics, beaches, and at home. Order shirts, ties, underwear, pajamas, socks, etc., from the U.S. or purchase locally at higher prices.

Women: Lightweight cotton, cotton-linen blends, silk, or other natural fibers in simple styles are preferred during the summer season. Slacks are popular casual attire. Shorts are not popular unless on an island/ beach. Dark cottons, shantung, silks, and polyesters are worn during spring and fall. Suits and jacket dresses give versatility to clothes, particularly for changes of temperature and occasion. Wool dresses, suits, and sweaters are worn from October through April. Leather skirts, jackets, and coats are popular. Any cloth coat is appropriate in winter, as are fur coats. One or two raincoats are desirable. European women dress fashionably, particularly for social occasions. Black is always in style for dressy occasions. Simple dresses are suit-

able for cocktail parties. Short as well as long dresses are worn for formal occasions.

Stoles or evening sweaters are recommended for evening garden parties in summer. Ready-to-wear clothes of all kinds are a standard item in Greece. Prices and quality vary. Sales held twice yearly (August and February) offer good buys. Local shops carry good purses, belts, buttons, and jewelry. Imported or handmade items are expensive.

Greek markets offer a variety of yard goods. Imported silks, woolens, and cottons are available, but the best quality fabrics are expensive. Some local silks are attractive; Greek cottons, though less expensive, are seldom colorfast or pre-shrunk and never drip dry. Notions of European origin are plentiful. Dressmaking services range from local seamstresses to expensive couturiers. Local seamstresses are expensive. Local silver jewelry is attractive and reasonable. Yarns for knitting are available. Fur jackets, stoles, and coat, are available locally. Prices vary according to styles, kind of fur, and whether the skins are pieced or whole. Stone martens are native to Greece.

Sports clothes are practical. Purchase sports and walking shoes in the U.S. Greek and American women wear blouses or sweaters and skirts year round. These are available locally. Bring several swimsuits, since saltwater and bright sun wear them out rapidly. Attractive European-style swimsuits are available locally but are expensive.

Children: Ready-made clothing for children is available locally, but good quality apparel is expensive. Most families obtain children's clothing through catalog companies. As in the U.S., boys wear jeans or slacks to school, and girls wear dresses or skirts or jeans or slacks with blouses or sweaters. Sweaters are necessary, especially during colder months when building heat is inadequate.

Supplies and Services

Athens has several main shopping areas in the city and the suburbs, where you can find a good variety of locally made and imported goods. Stores of one specialty cluster together—furniture stores in one section and light fixtures in another. Large supermarkets and economy merchandise chains throughout the city carry a wide variety of cleaning and cosmetic products, as well as everyday household items. Each neighborhood has its own dry-cleaner, shoe repair shop, hairdresser, and men's hair stylist. A contracting dry-cleaning service is available through the employee's association. Hair stylists and beauty shops are expensive compared to U.S. prices for the same service. Friends, neighbors, and associates are helpful on where to find auto mechanics, plumbers, electricians, or carpenters.

Domestic Help

Many house dwellers employ a part-time gardener/handyman. These workers usually speak English, French, or German, in addition to Greek. By government decree and custom, in addition to regular compensation, servants receive bonuses at Christmas (a month's salary); Easter (half a month's salary); and vacation time (8-15 days' wages). Live-in servants also receive food, clothing, and medical care. The servant's medical care is provided under IKA (Greek social security). A legislative decree provides for obligatory insurance enrollment with IKA for all full-time, live-in domestic employees as follows: gardeners, butlers, and cooks pay 35%--45% of monthly wage (13.25% by employees and 22.20% by employer).

General house workers, chambermaids, and laundresses are paid whether living in or out. Some take their meals in the household and other receive food allowance. Mandatory insurance payments provide old-age pension and medical care. Those who employ day workers are not obliged to pay this insurance fee; the workers are responsible for their own coverage.

Religious Activities

In addition to the Greek Orthodox church, several other faiths are represented in Athens. St. Andrew's Protestant and Interdenominational Church has services in central Athens, Kifissia, and Voula/Glyfada. Centrally located are: St. Paul's Anglican, Church of the Latter-day Saints, Grace Baptist Church, Trinity Baptist Church, Crossroads International Christian Center, Glyfada Christian Center, and First Church of Christ, Scientist. Catholic Mass in English can be heard at St. Paul's in Kifissia. The central Cathedral has services in Greek, with readings and announcements occasionally in English. Beth Shalom Synagogue is located in Athens, and a mosque occupies the top floor of the Caravel Hotel. Sunday school and CCD classes are available through several churches.

Education

The American Community Schools (ACS) (tel. 639-3200) is a private, nonprofit school incorporated in Delaware. The governing body is an eight-member Board of Education elected by the Parents Association.

ACS provides an American educational program and offers the international baccalaureate program to interested students. ACS has two limited special education resource centers for learning disabilities. Admission to these centers is limited and is based on evaluation of records. ACS has a current enrollment of 800. Pupils with American citizenship comprise 50% of the student body; English-speaking citizens of more than 50 other countries make up the remainder. About 150 students graduate from high school each year, and, of these, 80% continue their education at colleges and universities. The school complex is located in Halandri, 7 miles from downtown Athens. It consists of three schools: an elementary school (junior kindergarten through grade 5), a middle school (grades 6-8), and a high school (grades 9-12), as well as administrative offices. Bus service is available. Curriculum includes advanced placement and

college preparatory courses, as well as the international baccalaureate program, business education, industrial and fine arts, home economics, physical education, extensive foreign language program, and work-study program. All faculty members are certified and more than 75% hold master's degrees. The international address is: 129, Aghias Paraskevis Street, 152 34 Ano Halandri, Athens, Greece.

Tasis Hellenic International School (tel. 808-1426) is a branch of the American School in Switzerland. It was founded in 1979 in a merger between Tasis Greece and the Hellenic International School, which was established in 1971. It prides itself on having a caring, student-centered community. Tasis Hellenic enrolls 323 students at the Middle and Upper School on the Kifissia campus. Tasis Hellenic offers American college preparatory, Cambridge University I.G.C.S.E. and A-level preparation, American advanced placement courses in all disciplines, and English as a second language. Classes are small; the average class has 15 students. All faculty are certified, and 92% of the graduating seniors continue their education at colleges and universities in the U.S. and the U.K. The academic year extends from September to mid-June. The school year is divided into 2 semesters, with a 3-week Christmas vacation and a 2-week spring break. Grades and teacher comments are sent to parents four times yearly. Bus transportation is provided from all major residential areas in and around Athens.

Tasis also has an elementary school (pre-K to grade 5) with a curriculum that is designed to meet the special needs of the young child. The elementary school is located 12 minutes from the middle and high school campus. The mailing address is: Tasis Hellenic International School, P.O. Box 25 Artemidos and Xenias Street, 145 62 Kifissia, Greece.

St. Catherine's British School (tel. 282-9750/282-9751) is coeducational

and caters for children aged 3 to 13 years. Some families are permanent residents of Athens while others are more internationally mobile. The curriculum is closely modeled on the British National Curriculum but has certain adaptations and additions that take into account the school's unique circumstances. All children follow programs of study in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, music, physical education, religious/moral education, and technology. Every effort is made to keep class size small. The school occupies a site in Lykovrissi, bordering the residential suburb of Kifissia, and is within easy access of other northern suburbs of Athens. All children are required to wear a school uniform, which is designed so that most items are relatively easy to obtain. The school's facilities in terms of playground space, campus environment, and outdoor swimming pool are excellent. Mailing address for overseas mail is: P.O. Box 52843, Nea Erithrea, Greece 146 10. Local address is: c/o British Embassy Plutarchou I, Athens 106 75.

Campion School (tel. 813-3883) is an all-age, coeducational international school run on British lines, admitting pupils of any race or nationality. Senior pupils are prepared for the "A," "O," and AP level exams and the SAT. Campion is registered in Massachusetts and has been a member of the Governing Bodies Association in the U.K. since 1970. Campion operates two elementary schools, one in the northern suburb of Halandri and the other in the coastal suburb of Glyfada. The senior school is situated in Ekali, 1.5 kilometers north of Athens. Bus service is available. One-third of the student body is British; the remainder represent 50 other countries. Computer and technical studies are available, and a particularly wide range of foreign languages is taught. The mailing address is: Dimitros & Antheon Street 145 65, Ekali, Greece.

St. Lawrence College (tel. Glyfada: 894-3251) is an independent coeducational school registered in

England. A British public/prep school prepares students for "A" and "O" level exams, as well as SAT's. Current enrollment is 400 pupils from 18 countries between the ages of 3 and 18 years. The school is located in the Hellenikon area of Athens. Bus transportation is available. Mailing address is: 3 Delta Street, 166 77 Glyfada.

Foreign Language Schools Japanese School (tel. 682-4278). Instruction is in Japanese. Address is: Embassy of Japan, 64 Vassilissis Sophias Avenue 115 28, Athens, Greece.

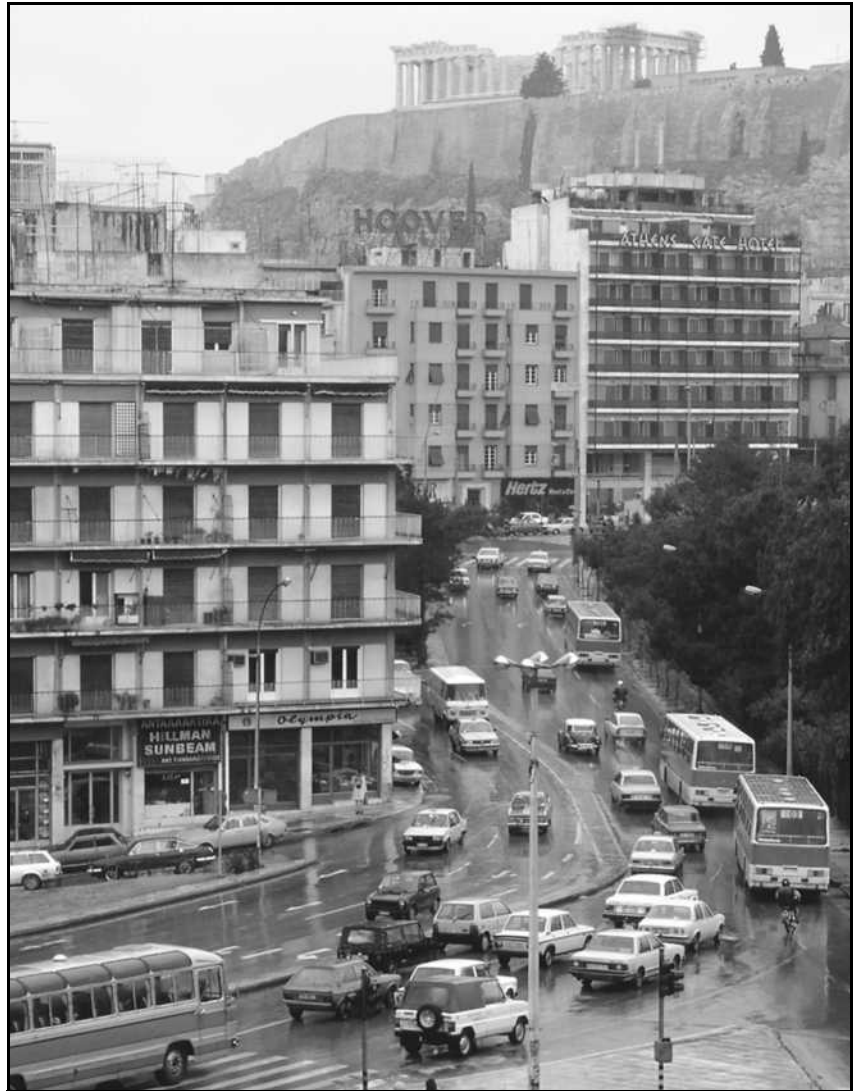
Dorpfeld Gymnasium (tel. 682-0921). Private German School in Paradissos, Amaroussion.

Italian School (tel. 228-3258). Elementary, high school, and lycee. Instruction is in Italian. Address is: 18 Mitsaki Street 11141, Athens, Greece.

Special Educational Opportunities

Special teachers and speech therapists are available for private hire through the Center for Psychic Health, 58 Notara Street, 10683 Athens, phone 881-2944 and 823-2833. (A private, independent organization called CARE/HELLAS also has a listing of specialists.

The American College of Greece or Deree College (tel. 639-3250) serves nearly 2,000 students at its two campuses. The college is an independent, nonprofit institution accredited by the New England Association for Schools and Colleges and under American direction. Primarily a coeducational liberal arts college in the English and American tradition, the main campus offers a 3-4 year program leading to a bachelor's degree in business administration, economics, psychology, sociology, English, history, and dance. The downtown center offers business and economics courses in the afternoon and evening and offers a 2-year associate degree in secretarial studies. Most Derree students are Greek; 20 other nationalities are also represented. Instruction is in English. Pierce College



The Parthenon above a modernized Athens, Greece

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(tel. 639-3250) is an affiliated secondary school on the main campus. The mailing address is: 6 Gravias Street, 153 42 Aghia Paraskevi, Greece FAX: 600-9811.

The University of LaVeme (tel. 810-0111) is fully accredited with academic requirements identical to the main school in California. Evening classes are held at TASIC School in Kifissia. BA and BS degrees can be pursued in business administration and economics, business management, behavioral science, sociology, history, political science, psychology, social science, and mathematics. Courses leading to a master's degree are available in business administration, management, and history. The mailing address is:

Xenias & Artemidos Sts. 145 62 Kifissia, Greece FAX: 620-5929.

College Year in Athens is a program intended as a year abroad to enrich education at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels. Instruction is given in English by visiting U.S. and Greek professors. Courses are Greek civilization, archaeology, culture, art, literature, and politics. A limited number of qualified adults may be accepted as part-time special students for credit. The mailing address is: 59 Denocratous Street, 106 76 Athens, Greece.

Tel.: 726-1622/726-0749, FAX: 726-1497 American School of Classical Studies is primarily a research institute for a limited number of

students sent from the U.S. by their graduate schools. The mailing address is: 54 Souidias Street, 106 76 Athens, Greece, Tel.: 723-6313, FAX: 725-0584.

Sports

Opportunities for sports participation abound in Greece. Many tennis clubs exist, from elite to affordable. A superb and rigorous test of golf is available at the 18-hole Glyfada Golf Course. Reasonable annual fees of around \$1,000, plus slightly more tourist-oriented daily greens fees, are available. Only four other courses exist in Greece; in Rhodes, Porto Carras (Halkidiki) serving Thessaloniki and Northern Greece, Rhodes, Corfu, and a small 9-hole course at the VOA Station in Kavala. American-style 10-pin bowling lanes are available in a few locations.

The annual Athens marathon group and weekly runs of the international Hash House Harriers welcome joggers wishing company. Roller skating and ice-skating rinks are accessible, and health clubs have become popular. Yachtsmen moor their craft in numerous marinas along the Saronic Gulf, and organized racing is available. The less affluent can charter various size yachts with or without a skipper to cruise the islands. Sailing classes are also available.

Windsurfers love the balmy breeze of the Aegean Sea, and water skiing, although not as popular, is available. Scuba divers and sailors must understand Greek regulations and have knowledge of local waters. For those who enjoy a sandy beach and cool swim, many beaches are available in close proximity to Athens. Some government-operated beaches offer lockers, sports equipment, parking, umbrellas, chairs, and restaurants in various locations.

Eight or more riding clubs are located in Athens, some with indoor and outdoor menages; lessons given in English can be arranged. All riding is English style. Horse racing takes place three afternoons weekly at the Faliron Race course. When

the waters cool, the mountains beckon.

Greece has several ski areas with lifts, good rental equipment, and instructors. The closest to Athens is near Delphi on Mount Parnassus; Mount Helmos in the Peloponnese is 317 miles from Athens; to the north are Mount Pelion and Metsovo. From mid-September to June, Athenians spend much time rooting for their favorite soccer team in one of two major stadiums in Athens or in Piraeus. The new Olympic Stadium is used for a variety of national and international sports events.

There are mountaineering, hiking, parachuting, track, table tennis, badminton, basketball, boxing, cycling, fencing, field hockey (not ice), riding, rowing, and volleyball associations. The American Women of Greece (AWOG) gives bridge lessons, and there are several Greek bridge clubs.

Fishing enthusiasts will find excellent trout streams 3-5 hours from Athens. Sole, bass, pike, mullet, tuna, red snapper, and perch can be caught in the Aegean Sea. Greece is not a hunter's paradise, and access to overcrowded areas is difficult. The country-wide hunting license does not indicate the holder has any gun safety knowledge. Dove season lasts from mid August to mid-March; partridge season from mid-September to mid-November; and other birds and game from mid-September to mid-March. Decoys and calls are prohibited. European and American hunting equipment, such as boots, guns, jackets, etc., are locally available, although American-made ammunition is difficult to obtain.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The heart of an assignment to Greece is definitely its availability of touring and outdoor activities. Outside the greater Athens area, one finds Greece. Even with a 2- or 3-year posting, careful planning is necessary to see what Greece offers, whether with numerous organized tours and cruises or using good

guidebooks and literature published by the National Tourist Organization.

Representing every era are historical sites and museums throughout Greece. Within a few hours' drive are Delphi (the ancient navel of the world), Corinth, Mycenae, Epidaurus, Tiryns, and other renowned sites. By ferry, hydrofoil, cruise liner, or on Olympic Airways, the numerous islands are accessible each with its distinctive character—Crete, Santorini, Rhodes, Hydra, Corfu, and the innumerable picturesque smaller spots. Back in Athens are the Acropolis, Agora, Byzantine churches, Roman ruins, and 10 fine museums. Accommodations are available year round in Greece; however, during peak tourist season, advance reservations are wise, and in mid-winter, many hotels are closed. Hotels vary from deluxe class to back-packer quality, and recently the National Tourist Organization renovated several typical old Greek villas in several areas for tourist use. Camping is also popular in Greece, and grounds have been established throughout the country. Charter flights fly in and out of Greece regularly, but are not permitted to originate here. Compensating for this, numerous, inexpensive package tours are developed by AWOG and private agencies.

Entertainment

Greece is characterized by the informality, spontaneity, simplicity, and individuality of its entertainment. Night life in Athens is diversified and interesting. Taverna-style restaurants throughout the city and suburbs offer music for dining and dancing. More sophisticated establishments offer floor shows. In summer, outdoor restaurants in the city, the suburbs, and on the sea front are popular. Athens' better restaurants and hotels serve Greek and continental food; several restaurants specialize in Asian and other ethnic food. In restaurants, cafes, bars, and nightclubs, a service charge of 15% is included in the bill; however, it is customary to round the bill up to the nearest Drs 100.

Athens and the suburbs have many movie theaters. Recent American films are popular and widely shown, as are Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, and German films. Most films are shown in their original language, with Greek subtitles.

In summer, most movie houses are traditionally closed, and outdoor theaters take their place. Acoustics at the outdoor cinemas are poor, but the ambiance makes up for it. Theater and movie ushers expect a small tip. The theater, a tradition firmly rooted from classical days, operates in modern Greece year round but suffers the same economic restrictions faced in the U.S. and Europe. Even so, most of the private long-established Athenian theaters have full seasons. Greek translations of classical and contemporary plays by foreign playwrights are included in the repertory. A revival of the ancient outdoor theater, with the plays of Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus, and Aristophanes, is the basis of the annual Athens Festival held from June through August. Performances are given in three locations: in Athens at the imposing Roman-era Herodus Atticus theater; at the modern Lycabettus Hill theater, dramatically situated overlooking the city; and at the fourth century B.C. amphitheater, noted for its superb acoustics and setting in the Peloponnese at Epidaurus, 2-1/2 hours from Athens.

There is a dance company that performs at the theater on Philopappou Street (opposite the Acropolis) during summer. Karagiozi shadow theater performances are held in public squares in summer. Greek commercial firms regularly organize recitals and theater and ballet performances with foreign artists and troupes during winter. The National Opera Company and the Athens Ballet Company perform in winter; the Athens State Orchestra and the Athens State Opera offer regular year-round programs. The Athens concert hall, the Megaron, has many classical music and ballet performances and hosts performers from around the world. "The Play-

ers," an amateur theater company, and the Hellenic Amateur Musical Society (HAMS), which performs musical plays and light opera, give several productions in English each year and are always looking for volunteers. National and religious festivals are colorful, impressive, and worth seeing. It is also possible to be an armchair viewer, as most significant festivals are shown on TV. Typical of such festivities are Epiphany (January) and the pre-Lenten carnival season. Common sense and good taste should govern photographing certain religious celebrations.

Art exhibits are held at many galleries and cultural centers in Athens. The National Gallery of Art, opposite the Hilton Hotel, on Vasileos Constantinou Avenue, contains a collection of works by Greek painters. There are many museums devoted to folk art and handicrafts, where articles of high quality may be found in Athens, as well as in shops, villages, and islands. Greece has a reciprocal agreement with the U.S. concerning amateur radio operation. Currently, licenses are available. Applicants must have a valid U.S. amateur license issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The Greek Government does not allow third party traffic.

Social Activities

Activities includes American clubs, fraternal organizations, and church groups that invite membership. For adults: AWOG; Newcomers; Greek Red Cross; American Legion; Masonic Order; Parent-Teacher Association; Propeller Club; YWCA; Women's International Club. AWOG was founded by the spouse of the American Ambassador in 1948 and is open to all American women, spouses of U.S. citizens, and to a smaller number of Greek and international members. The honorary president is always the spouse of the current American Ambassador. Originally founded as a study group, it has expanded to raise funds for welfare work in Greece, including bazaars, dances, musical programs, etc. It grants scholarships, aid to schools, orphanages, and hospitals. AWOG has an exten-

sive fine arts program, with weekly and monthly tours and lectures. It publishes "Hints for Living in Greece," which is helpful to all newcomers.

Newcomers is an informal and popular women's group with a wide international membership. Newcomers has no club dues, and the only membership requirement is the ability to speak English. Monthly meetings are held in members' homes. Other group activities include Greek cooking, international cooking, potluck dinners and cocktail parties, tennis, golf, play groups, tours, bridge, and walking groups. Religious groups include Catholic Women's Guild; Catholic Youth Organization; Protestant Women of the Chapel; Saint Andrew's Women's Guild; Saint Ann's Sodality; American Jewish Community Group. For young people there are Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Due to the many Americans and other English-speaking foreigners who live in Athens, international contacts are diverse and abundant. Thus it is easy to make social contacts among those with common interests. Americans are invited by Greek friends to weddings, christenings, and other ceremonies in churches and homes. Dress and etiquette vary according to occasion.

Dozens of clubs and organizations in Greece are dedicated to public service, charity, philanthropy, and the exchange of ideas and cultural aspects of Greece and other countries. It is important to note that Greeks tend to dress more formally for events, and the Greek notion of "informal" is usually business attire.

Membership in the Hellenic American Union is open to Greeks and Americans desiring to strengthen their cultural and friendship ties. The Union holds conferences, offers Greek language and art classes, lectures, and recitals; raises funds for scholarships; and promotes other worthwhile activities. The Propeller Club of the U.S. promotes business,



Seascape of Mykonos, Greece

Courtesy of Molly Flint

public relations, and cultural exchanges between the U.S. and Greece. Members are Greek and American business representatives, Mission officers, and Greek government personnel. The club holds monthly meetings with guest speakers, and its activities include granting scholarships and aiding schools, orphanages, and hospitals. The club's activities are financed by initiation fees, annual dues, and proceeds from an annual carnival ball cosponsored with AWOG.

Thessaloniki

With over 1 million inhabitants, Thessaloniki is Greece's second largest city, located 300 miles north of Athens in the ancient province of Macedonia. Built around the shores of the Thermaikos Gulf and framed by its acropolis and Mount Hortiatitis, Thessaloniki enjoys a splendid natural setting.

Thessaloniki was founded in 315 BC by Kassandros, brother-in-law of Alexander the Great, probably on the site of classical Therme. Kassandros named the city after his wife, the daughter of Philip of Macedonia and half-sister of Alexander the Great. Just two decades earlier King Philip had won a decisive victory for his Thessalian allies at

Chaeronia. He named the daughter born to him that year Thessaloniki ("Thessalian Victory") to commemorate his triumph. When Alexander's half-sister was wed to General Kassandros, the city was given to them as a home and renamed after her.

In 146 AD Thessaloniki, by then under the domination of Rome, became an imperial provincial capital governing the area from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. During this era the famous Via Egnatia was constructed as a through-road between Rome in the west and Constantinople in the east. The Via Egnatia is one of the great commercial roads of history and remains one of Thessaloniki's major arteries.

Thessaloniki achieved its greatest prominence during the late Roman and Byzantine periods when it became the first city of the "province" of Greece, far surpassing Athens in commercial and administrative importance. Its large natural port and location at a crossroads in southeastern Europe made it a tempting target for successive conquerors. As the Byzantine Empire declined, Saracens, Normans, and Venetians at various times gained control of the city. Venice bought Thessaloniki in 1423 AD, but the city was seized by the Otto-

man Empire in 1430 and suffered a decline in importance under the 482-year Turkish occupation. Many Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 settled in Thessaloniki, giving it, by the 19th century, one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe. Turkish rule ended on October 26, 1912, with the recapture of the city by Greek troops. October 26 is also the name-day of the city's patron saint, Demetrios, and the liberation is celebrated every year on that day.

The central part of Thessaloniki was rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1917 using a design drawn by the French architect Hebrard. During World War II the Germans occupied the city for nearly 4 years, until their withdrawal in October 1944. More than 50,000 members of the city's vibrant Jewish community perished during the Holocaust. Since the war, and particularly in the last 30 years, the city has expanded rapidly, its population rising from 380,000 in 1961 to 871,500 in 1981. Thessaloniki's character changed during this time from that of a prosperous provincial city to a booming, modern metropolis with all the urban problems that plague the world's large cities.

Thessaloniki is second in Greece only to the Athens/Piraeus area as an industrial and commercial center. Industries in the area produce petrochemical products, textiles, wood and paper products, steel, and assorted manufactured goods. As throughout the city's history, transportation services and shipping remain significant sources of revenue for Thessaloniki. The city dreams of regaining its Byzantine role as a pan-Balkan commercial center.

Although the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants are of Greek ethnic origin, Thessaloniki has small numbers of various other Balkan nationalities, as well as a few thousand members of the once-thriving Jewish community. Thessaloniki also houses two of Greece's largest universities and two US.-affiliated private colleges that

attract students from throughout Greece and the southern Balkans.

The post's consular district encompasses the two northernmost Greek provinces-Macedonia and Thrace-extending from Albania in the west to the Turkish border in the east and from the Aegean Sea and Thessaly in the south to The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria in the north.

Some 3,500 U.S. citizens live in the Thessaloniki area. Most are of Greek origin and reside permanently in Greece. Several Americans are employed by local English speaking private schools; others teach and study at the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki under Fulbright and other programs.

Food

Most Thessalonicians still shop at their small neighborhood stores. These stores come in a variety of distinct flavors: bakeries, pastry shops, butchers, cheese merchants, produce sellers, grocers, and fishmongers. All provide a wide selection of quality products. Additionally, there is a large, covered central market area that sells regional produce and other food-stuffs, and many neighborhoods have weekly farmers' markets. The fresh fruits and vegetables are usually of excellent quality and relatively inexpensive, although more seasonal than in the U.S. Seafood is readily available, but often rather pricey. Cheeses and dairy products are excellent, as is the large variety of bread available locally.

In addition to these traditional sources, there are two American-style supermarket chains with outlets in the city. These supermarkets stock, however, a European style inventory. Diet drinks and low calorie foods are difficult to find.

The city's unfluoridated water is potable but not particularly tasty. Most people drink bottled water, which is readily available at all locations. Local wines are inexpensive and of excellent quality. European and American brands are

also obtainable. Beer and liquor are not duty-free outside the commissary. Most Greeks prefer beer or scotch whiskey to wine, so there is no need to purchase other alcoholic beverages.

Shopping, Services, and Transportation

Barbers, hairdressers, and dry cleaners are available at US prices and quality, and traditional tailors and cobblers have shops throughout the city. Electronic, appliance, and automotive repair is also readily available in Thessaloniki, although spare parts for American and some other non-European models are often unavailable. Ford, Honda, Chrysler (Jeep only), Toyota, Hyundai, and all European manufacturers have service and parts facilities in the city but may be unfamiliar with models not sold in Europe.

Taxis in the city are numerous if a bit feisty. Drivers routinely pick up other passengers en route and often refuse to take customers to destinations deemed inconvenient. Radio taxis can be ordered at a slight additional cost but are sometimes unavailable at peak hours. Buses are frequent and inexpensive but often crowded. Traffic is heavy in the city center-often at unusual hours by U.S. standards but generally acceptable in most other neighborhoods. Many city streets are one-way, causing additional confusion. Street parking is difficult everywhere in town. Minor streets are very narrow and crowded with parked cars. Inter-city roads are well marked but of wildly varying quality. Road surfaces are more slippery than in the U. S. and stopping distances longer.

Telephone service is generally reliable and most of the network has been upgraded to all-digital lines. Local providers sell Internet access at approximately U.S. prices, but line speed is limited to 33.6 KB. Modems may require user software reconfiguration to detect local dial tone. Phone calls cost about 100 Drs./minute. Cell phones are ubiquitous and reasonably priced. Officers are provided with mobile phones

for official use. Other utilities are normally reliable, but water pressure and supply can be problematic in some areas during the summer.

ATMs connected to U.S. bank networks (Cirrus, Plus) dispense local currency around the clock.

Most shops are small family operations. As described above, the city also has several large supermarkets (which also sell clothing, appliances, electronics, office supplies, and other items), as well as a bulk purchase discount warehouse, Footlocker shoe stores, a large toy store modeled on Toys "R" Us, and two large hardware stores similar to Home Depot. Numerous shops sell antiques, and there is a weekly open-air flea market near the Rotunda. Sporting goods are expensive and difficult to find.

Most larger stores will have at least one employee who speaks some English. At smaller establishments, communication can require a bit more creativity on the part of the non-Greek speaker.

Prices for clothing, appliances, electronics, toys, cosmetics, toiletries, and most other items are generally higher than in the U.S. The selection of over-the counter medications is limited and available only at pharmacies. Shops are open three evenings a week but otherwise close in mid-afternoon. Virtually all are closed Sunday and holidays.

As in the rest of Greece, Thessaloniki's public hospitals provide nearly free healthcare; however, most foreigners choose to use private hospitals. Saint Lucas Clinic, a private hospital in Panorama, provides quality healthcare for slightly below U.S. prices. The InterBalkan Medical Center, a state-of-the-art private hospital affiliated with the Medical Center Hospital in Athens, opened in 2000. Many physicians speak English and are US-trained. Local dental and optical care providers are good.

Nearly two dozen television stations broadcast locally around the clock.

Most programs are in Greek, but normally there are one or two English-language movies on each evening as well as National Geographic and other documentaries. Many more American movies are broadcast late in the evening, usually after midnight. U. S. network evening news broadcasts are shown live early each morning. Satellite service is available free with a dish but offers only two channels in English, with the remainder broadcasting in French, Italian, German, and Polish. Pay cable TV includes movie and cartoon channels. Many shops rent videos (SECAM system) inexpensively. There are many radio stations, some featuring a mix of Greek and American music.

Domestic Help

Full-time domestic help is difficult to obtain, and wages are high. Part-time help is reasonably available for about \$30 for a 6-8 hour day. English-speaking childcare for evenings can be located with a little persistence but is difficult to find it for days.

Religious Activities

A synagogue serves the long-established Jewish community. The Greek Evangelical Church, located downtown, serves the small Greek Protestant community. The Church of the Immaculate Conception downtown holds Catholic Mass; services and sermons are in Greek and are in French on Sunday evenings. Confessions are heard in Greek, French, and Italian. An Anglican Episcopal vicar conducts services in English on Sunday in the Armenian Church on Dialetti Street.

Education

The Pinewood Schools Association, Inc. is a private, nonprofit corporation providing pre-kindergarten (ages 3 and 4) through grade 12 education for English speaking, mostly non-Greek children. The school year consists of two semesters running from early September to early January and from mid-January to mid-June. Curricula, teaching plans, and materials conform to U.S. standards, and the school has been accredited in the U.S. An elected 11-

member board, including the Consul General as an ex officio member, governs the school.

Pinewood has 20 full-time and 7 part-time teachers, about half of whom are American. Total enrollment averages 240 children. Roughly a quarter of the students are American and the rest are a diverse group from 32 different countries. With a student-to-teacher ratio of around 10:1, classes are normally small with frequent individual attention.

Pinewood has decently equipped and maintained facilities, including a chemistry/biology laboratory, small gym/ auditorium, library/ audio-visual center, music and art rooms, and computer room. The school offers instruction in music and Greek and provides a limited after-school activities program. There is an on-campus snack bar, and school bus service is available to most areas.

Pinewood can be contacted at: Director Pinewood Schools Association, PO. Box 21001, 555 10 Pilea, Thessaloniki, Greece. Tel.:30-31-301-221 Fax: 30-31-323-196 E-mail: pinewood@sparknet.gr

The American College of Thessaloniki provides a U.S.-accredited, liberal arts undergraduate education in English. Additional information is available at the: American College of Thessaloniki, c/o Anatolia College, PO. Box 21021, 555 10 Pilea, Thessaloniki, Greece. Tel.: 30-31-316-740 Fax: 30-31-301-076

The Aristotle University in Thessaloniki offers (in Greek) a foreign students program, including an excellent intensive Greek course, that does not require applicants to take an entrance examination. City University offers part-time (day and evening) undergraduate and graduate classes in English through the University of Sheffield (England).

Sports

Several small but good tennis clubs are available through club membership. In addition to public and

YMCA courts, Anatolia College rents two tennis courts during summer. The American Farm School also has a court available. The YMCA in the center of the city has a swimming pool, handball, and basketball courts, and offers aerobics, yoga, art classes, and other activities (in Greek). Several small private gyms offer members access to facilities of varying quality around the city.

Northern Greece's one golf course, on the Halkidiki peninsula, is currently closed. For horse lovers, several excellent riding schools (English saddle only) with inexpensive instruction in English operate in Thermi and Panorama.

Private tennis, swimming, pottery, and other lessons are available at a reasonable price. Cycling can be difficult due to traffic and dogs, but short, pleasant and safe rides are possible along the waterfront. Mountain biking possibilities exist in the forests and hills near the city. Athletic equipment is, however, both difficult to find and expensive.

Soccer is the most popular spectator sport in Thessaloniki, though basketball is also well attended. The city has three athletic associations that field both soccer and basketball teams in Greece's premier leagues.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The nearest beaches, including one with bathhouses, snack bars, chairs, and umbrellas, are 15-20 miles from the city. Some 45-75 miles from the city, crystal-clear water and isolated beaches provide excellent bathing and snorkeling. The more isolated beaches have no cabins or bathhouses to provide protection from the hot sun. Beach and snorkel equipment is available locally in season. Modest apartments near the beach are available for summer or year round rental at reasonable prices. VOA/ Kavala (3 hours by car) boasts a modest nine-hole golf course, club house, and private beach. Ferry service from Thessaloniki to many Greek islands is available throughout the summer. A

local hotel offers free pool use for families during the summer with the understanding that parents will purchase beverages and snacks during their visit.

Three yacht clubs provide anchorage but only limited service for small craft. Small motorboats are available but expensive. Most weekday mornings see a few sculls rowing across the main harbor. Good hiking is possible in nearby mountains, and ambitious hikers can climb 10,000-foot Mt. Olympus (40 miles distant), overnighing at one of the two hikers lodges near the summit. There are ski resorts within 2 hours at Selli in the Vermion Range, Tria-Pente Pigadia in Naoussa, Lialias in Serres, and 3 hours distant in Bulgaria. Locally purchased equipment is expensive.

Partridge, quail, dove, hare, and wild boar can be hunted in fall, but hunting is poor in the immediate vicinity of Thessaloniki. Waterfowl hunting can be arranged but is expensive. Salt water fishing and spear fishing is good in nearby Halkidiki, but nearby lakes are too polluted for fresh water fish to thrive. More isolated rivers and lakes are better choices.

Like all of Greece, the area around Thessaloniki boasts numerous archaeological sites and museums. Pella, ancient capital of Macedonia and birthplace of Alexander the Great, is 45 minutes from Thessaloniki. Several beautifully preserved mosaics and numerous artifacts are on display. At nearby Vergina, several royal tombs were discovered in 1977. One is believed to be that of Philip II, father of Alexander. The principal finds are on exhibit in new underground museum onsite. Naoussa, noted for its fruit trees, wine, and fresh trout; Edessa, with its dam and picturesque waterfalls; Kastoria, a picturesque, provincial town, noted for its Byzantine churches, scenic beauty, and fur industry; and the islands of Thasos and Samothrace are all within easy driving or ferry distance. The unique Mount Athos peninsula is also nearby. The monasteries of the

Mount Athos (known as the "Holy Mountain" in Greek) form an independent ecclesiastical government dating from medieval times. Visitors travel to Ouranoupolis by road (2 hours) and then by small boat out onto the peninsula. Entry to the peninsula requires a visa (issued locally), and no women or minors are allowed.

Entertainment

Local and international artists present a variety of Greek-language plays, concerts, lectures, and exhibits throughout the year. The Opera Company, the National Theater, and other Athens companies come to Thessaloniki annually for 1-to 2-week runs. The National Symphony Orchestra of Northern Greece performs weekly fall through spring, and in the summer an outdoor theater brings high-quality cultural events to a hillside venue above the city. The Thessaloniki Concert Hall, a new facility for classical music, and the fully remodeled Royal Theater opened their doors in 2000. Both host performances by international and Greek groups, including well known ensembles such as Britain's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The International Trade Fair of Thessaloniki is held annually during September with industrial exhibits, consumer goods, and entertainment activities. The city holds a wine festival during the fair, as well as a Greek song festival and a week-long cinema festival. An outdoor flower exhibit and international jazz festival open each May, and the city hosts a major cultural festival each October and an international film festival each November. Various colorful and interesting religious festivities occur throughout the year.

The city has a good-size waterslide park with tube rides and wave pool, and a year-round, carnival-style amusement park. There are a number of both indoor and outdoor movie theaters, including three state-of-the-art multiplexes. Theaters show mostly big-budget American films (which tend to appear 3 to 6 months after they debut in the States); movies are always shown in

their original language with Greek subtitles, except for cartoons, which are usually dubbed.

Thessaloniki has an active nightlife centering on the three club districts and a strip of cafes along the waterfront. Clubs are loud, trendy, and packed. The more popular places often charge significant covers even for nights with recorded music. Hyatt Regency operates an upscale casino just outside the city that features slots and gaming tables. A large nightclub and open-air theater complex just beyond the western edge of the city offers a variety of jazz, rock, and (Greek) comedy performances.

Thessaloniki is reputed to have over 3,000 restaurants, including hundreds of charming Greek restaurants and tavernas, many of them featuring al fresco dining. Non-Greek cuisine is confined to a few Italian, French, European, American, and Chinese restaurants of varying quality. McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Applebee's, and Haagen Dazs have outlets in the city.

Anatolia College (a local US.-affiliated high school) and the British Council Library have English-language books and periodicals for loan. Local bookstores have a fair selection of English-language books at high prices. Pinewood School keeps its library open 1 day a week during the summer for children who wish to borrow books when classes are out.

Social Activities

Northern Greeks adhere to a daily schedule that does not always fit well with an American workday. Offices open between 8 and 9 a.m., but many close permanently for the day in mid-afternoon. Lunch rarely occurs before 1:30 in the afternoon—later on the weekends—and tends to last several hours. Dinner in private homes and at restaurants seldom begins before 9 p.m. and can start as late as 10:30 or 11 p.m. on weekend evenings. Nightclubs and similar centers generally do not begin to fill with people before midnight and often remain active until dawn,

even during the week. The city's large university population (about 60,000) ensures that such establishments are always busy.

Social life among Americans is informal and casual. The principal social activity is entertaining at home: luncheons, buffet dinners, cards, cocktails, etc. Greek hosts take their guests to restaurants, although home entertaining is becoming more common.

Several pleasant outdoor restaurants offer dancing in summer, and charity balls are held during the 3-4 weeks in the pre-Lenten carnival season. Some Americans study Greek folk dancing at the American Farm School. Four Rotary Clubs welcome Americans, but Greek is the primary language used. Other clubs include the Lions Club; Propeller Club; International Women of Greece, which provides lectures and sightseeing trips for its members and engages in local charity work; and the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce.

Rhodes

Rhodes is a modern city of 41,400 residents, and is the largest, most cosmopolitan resort in Greece. It is located on the Island of Rhodes, which lies on the southeastern coast of the Aegean Sea, 225 miles southeast of Athens and only 12 miles south of Turkey. Rhodes, the most important of the 12 Greek islands known as the Dodecanese, is about 65 miles long and 25 miles wide.

The city is the capital of both the island and of the Dodecanese. Each year, three-quarters of a million tourists swell its population and bring business to its large shopping area, its restaurants and casino, its travel agencies, and its many hotels.

The city is, as well as a famous resort, a manufacturing center and port. There is an international airport with daily flights to Athens by Olympic Airways (45 minutes) and chartered flights to Europe and the Middle East. During summer, Olympic Airways also has flights to

London and Cairo, and to Mykonos, Santorini, Kos, Karpathos, Kasos, and Iráklion (Candia). There also are regular ship connections to all the Dodecanese islands, Piraeus (Athens' port), Crete, Cyprus, and Israel. The trip to Piraeus on large ferries takes approximately 20 hours.

The private American community is small, including a few families engaged in philanthropic work or the arts, and a number of retired persons, mostly Greek-Americans.

Rhodes enjoys a temperate Mediterranean climate, with cool summers and relatively mild winters, creating an excellent condition to produce crops such as figs, olives, grapes, vegetables, etc. During summer, a breeze called *meltemi* keeps temperatures below 90°F near the sea, although inland the temperature and humidity are higher. Freezing temperatures in winter are unusual. January and February are months of heavy rainfall.

Rhodes as an island was colonized in 1,000 B.C., but the city itself dates to 408 B.C. The present city is on the site of ancient Rhodes, and in its harbor is the famous Colossus of Rhodes, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Some of the powerful fortifications built by the Knights Hospitalers, who dramatically resisted Turkish siege in the Middle Ages, are part of the present harbor.

Recreation

Interesting sites to explore in Rhodes include the Citadel; Kameiros Temple; and the medieval group of buildings in the old section of the city—the Palace of the Grand Master (of the Order of St. John), the hospital, and the various inns, or billets, of the nationalities of knights forming the order. The Inn of Auvergne is a handsome 15th-century building set in the Square of the Amory. Interesting collections are on display in the Archaeological and the Byzantine museums, and the Museum of Decorative Arts.

Rhodes has an 18-hole golf course located at Afandou, near the transmitter plant, and playable year round. The course is part of a resort complex which includes clubhouse, tennis courts, Olympic-size swimming pool, and shallow pool for youngsters.

The Rhodes Tennis Club is open for membership for a very reasonable fee. The club has two clay courts in downtown Rhodes. Several of the tourist hotels have hard-surfaced courts, and these can be rented at an hourly rate.

The Rhodes Palace Hotel is the only place on the island with bowling facilities. The four-lane alley has AMF automatic pinsetters.

The main summer activities are swimming and sunbathing, with many available beaches. Swimming hazards are few, and shark attacks are unknown. The water is clear and clean.

Because of the narrow roadways in most villages, bicycling is an excellent, although tiring, way to see the island. Bicycles can be rented in the city of Rhodes at an hourly rate.

Arrangements can be made to rent or charter boats. Membership in the Rhodes Yacht Club is available; dues are quite reasonable, but facilities are minimal. Club members moor their boats free. Small boats are usually dry-docked during winter. Marine supplies are not available in Rhodes.

Special Information

Rhodes is considered one of the most beautiful places in Greece, but it is an island, isolated for most practical purposes from involvement and interests of mainland living. The main highway and almost all city streets are paved; however, many villages, popular beaches, and points of interest can be reached only by rocky roads. Streets in town are often quite narrow, and parking space is scarce.

Some services are limited, such as medical care, but in general the



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Fortifications and palace of the Grand Master in Rhodes

training and competence of physicians and dentists is good. There is a hospital, where minor surgery can be performed, and which has X-ray and laboratory facilities.

Basic services and supplies are readily available. However, items such as spare parts for cars are in short supply, and local mechanics have limited capabilities for automotive repair.

Rhodes does not have English-language libraries. The *International Herald Tribune* and many other papers and magazines can be found at various newsstands, but papers often are delayed on weekends and holidays.

Most hotels will not accept pets, so boarding arrangements must be checked in advance. Several veterinarians practice in Rhodes, but no kennels are available.

Patras

Patras, with a population of more than 142,000, is located in the northern Peloponnesus, and connects the Gulf of Corinth with the Ionian Sea. It is a major industrial center and the country's main western port. Its chief exports are currants, wine, olive oil, and sheepskins.

A city of lovely, arcaded streets, Patras is the center of Greece's elaborate pre-Lenten Carnival celebrations. Its old fortifications, dating from the Middle Ages, and its famous Claus winery are among the principal points of interest. A university was founded in the city in 1966.

Patras (in Greek Pátri) was occupied by the Turks during the 18th and 19th centuries (until 1828), and it was here that the Greek War of Independence began in 1821. For three-and-a-half years during World War II, from April 1941 until October 1944, the city was again occupied, this time by Axis powers.

History tells that it was in Patras that St. Andrew, one of the Twelve Disciples, was martyred on an x-shaped cross, which came to be known as a St. Andrew's cross. He had been a missionary in Asia Minor and in Macedonia.

Kavala

Kavala, with about 70,000, is a mixture of old and new. Its seaport accommodates light shipping, and fishing boats operate from there. It is a popular tourist city, with a picturesque old quarter, Turkish fortress, and Roman aqueduct. Kavala has an international airport near

Chryssoupolis, 20 miles east of Kavala, from which Olympic Airways operates daily flights to and from Athens.

A few miles from Kavala are the ruins of the ancient city of Philippi, named by Alexander the Great in honor of his father, and the site of St. Paul's first sermon in Europe. There, the theater of Philippi is still in use during summer, and portions of St. Paul's first churches in Europe still remain.

The climate is comparable to that of the U.S. southern states. In winter, temperatures are in the 30s and low 40s, with a few days of below-freezing weather. Northern Greece gets its rain in winter and early spring. In the summer months of July and August, temperatures range around 90°E.

The Kavala Relay Station is one of VOA's largest overseas radio relay stations. The Relay Station site occupies a 2,000-acre plot of flat land bordered on one side by the Aegean Sea. Near the western border of the plot is the mouth of the Nestos River. The site contains the transmitter plant building (housing the station's administrative offices and the transmitting plant operation), the power plant building (with nearby storage tanks that have a capacity of 1 million gallons of diesel fuel), the warehouse/garage facilities building, an antenna field, 15 houses for American families, and private beach facilities.

The transmitter plant receives RFE/RL VOA radio programs from the U.S. via satellite. Programs are rebroadcast to target areas, including east and central Europe, central and south Asia, the Middle East, and Africa by medium- and short-wave radio broadcast transmitters using directional antennas. The telephone number for Kavala Relay Station is (0541) 61120 and 61130.

Religious Activities

Mass is celebrated at the small Catholic church in Kavala on Sun-

days. No nearby religious services in English are available.

Recreation and Social Life

An extensive sandy beach winds along the south boundary of the station and can be enjoyed during summer. A 9-hole golf course and two tennis courts are available.

OTHER CITIES

CANEA, or Khaniá, the capital of Crete since 1841, lies on the north coast of the island known to the Greeks as Kríti. The arsenal and medieval fortifications testify to the history of the Venetian colony which flourished here in the 13th century. The town and the island itself have been, through the ages, under Roman, Arab, Byzantine, Venetian, Turkish and, finally, Greek rule. In May 1941, the area was heavily damaged and captured by German airborne forces. Canea is a seaport city with a population of 47,500. Greek Orthodox and Catholic bishoprics are located here.

The city of **CORFU**, on the beautiful island whose name it bears, is called Kérkyra in Greek. Churches, villas, museums, libraries, hotels, and parks are surrounded by the Ionian Sea in a setting that draws thousands of tourists throughout the year. The narrow, medieval streets of this island port belie the modern accommodations and resort facilities found here. The Greek royal family, now in exile, once maintained a summer villa outside the city. Corfu was a major port during its four centuries (1386–1797) as a Venetian possession.

CORINTH, as a new city, was founded in 1858 after a devastating earthquake leveled the ancient town which had stood near the present site for 10 centuries. Another earthquake in 1928 caused considerable damage, and extensive rebuilding was done again. Corinth lies on the Gulf of the same name in the northeastern Peloponnesus, and is home to about 22,500 people. The ruins of the ancient and once power-

ful city, about three miles from the modern community, include vestiges of the Agora (forum), theater, fountains, and some of the columns of the archaic temple of Apollo. Modern Corinth is a transportation center for wines and raisins. Like so many other strategic Greek cities, it was occupied by German troops during World War II.

IRÁKLION (also known as Candia or Heraklion) is a seaport city of 102,500 residents on the north shore of Crete. The largest city on the island, it is an episcopal see (Greek Orthodox), and also the site of a famous museum of Minoan antiquities. Founded in 832 by the Saracens, it was occupied by the Venetians between the 13th and 17th centuries. Still remaining around the town are some of the Venetian walls and fortifications. Iráklion is another of the many Greek cities devastated during World War II (spring of 1941) by German troops. The city is located on some of Crete's best farmland; exports include grapes, wine, olives, and leather.

LARISSA, with a population of about 113,000, is a rail and agricultural trading city on the Piniós River in eastern Thessaly. It was the ancient capital of the Pelasgians, a fifth-century Christian heretical sect who defied the accepted doctrines of theology. It was at Larissa that the Turkish military governor, Ali Pasha, maintained his headquarters in the Greek War of Independence in 1821. The city did not become part of Greece until 1881. In more recent times, it was the scene of bitter fighting between the German and the British-Greek armies in April 1941. Today, Larissa is linked with the port of Vólos by rail.

PIRAEUS, a part of Greater Athens, is linked to the capital by electric railway and highway. Situated six miles south of Athens on the northern coast of Greece, this major port and commercial city's population exceeds 196,000. Industries here include the manufacture of textiles, chemicals, and machinery.

Piraeus' harbor has been significant since the fifth century B.C., when it was Athens' naval base. The city's port was destroyed during World War II, and was restored after the war.

The ancient city of **SPARTA**, situated in the Eurotas valley of southern Greece, was renowned in history as the leading power of the country. Today, modern Sparta, with an estimated population of 12,900, lies near the remains of the old city, less than 75 miles south of Corinth. The few reminders of ancient Sparta are in poor condition. However, the Byzantine town of Mistra, founded in about 1250, is four miles west and is well preserved. Helen, wife of the Spartan king, Menelaus, was supposedly taken from Sparta. Her abduction is said to have instigated the Trojan War. During the eighth century Sparta was prosperous, and became a cultural center. It was a meeting hub for artists and poets. Currently, the city is the capital of Laconia Department; its economic mainstays are olives and grapes.

The capital city of Arcadia Department, **TRIPOLIS** (also called Tripolitsa or Tripolitza) is situated about 40 miles southwest of Corinth. Located in southern Greece, Tripolis is an important center for tanning, woodworking, agricultural trade, and textiles. The city was the regional capital of Morea under Turkish rule. It was severely damaged in 1821 and 1825 during the war for independence. Tripolis has a population of about 120,000.

VÓLOS is a seaport city in southeastern Thessaly on the Gulf of Vólos, an inlet of the Aegean Sea. It is a transportation, communications, and industrial center which has developed considerably in recent years; its population is around 71,000. Grain, wine, tobacco, and olives are the principal goods shipped from here. Close to Vólos are the ancient ruins of Iolcus and Demetrias.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Greece, a rugged country of mountains and islands, is bordered on the north by Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Federal Republic of Macedonia, and Albania; on the east by Turkey and the Aegean Sea; and on the south and west by the Mediterranean and Ionian Seas. The land area, including the islands, is 50,270 square miles (about the size of Alabama). Only 25% of the land is arable, and much of that is dry and rocky. Greece is 2 hours east (ahead) of Greenwich mean time and at about the same latitude as New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia.

Greece has mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. Athens daytime summer temperature averages 90°F and often exceeds 100 °F for periods in July-August. Humidity is low and the heat is tempered by sea breezes. Summer evenings are comfortable outdoors. Spring and fall temperatures are pleasant, and winter temperatures are 30 °F-55 °F. Snow flurries occur, particularly in the northern suburbs, but seldom accumulate. Air pollution is a major problem in Athens throughout the year, but the climate is otherwise healthy.

Thessaloniki, in northern Greece, experiences high temperatures and humidity from the end of May until the end of September. Summer heat is sometimes tempered by late morning and early evening breezes. July and August nights can be uncomfortably warm. In winter, periods of mild, sunny, and spring-like weather are interspersed with uncomfortable cold periods. Thessaloniki has periods of chilly and damp weather, with considerable rainfall and occasional snow. Temperatures often fall below freezing in winter. Although snow does not linger, the city has been struck by blizzards. One feature of Thessaloniki's climate is the vardari, a strong

northwesterly wind that appears suddenly and irregularly from the area of the Axios (Vardar) River Valley.

Population

Greece's population is about 10.1 million. Metropolitan Athens, including Piraeus, has about 4,250,000 people, and greater Thessaloniki 1 million. Other population centers are the cities of Patras, Volos, Iraklion, Kavala, Larisa, Kalamata, and Tripolis. Most of the remainder of Greece is sparsely populated. About 28% of the population is agricultural, a percentage that is declining with greater economic development and increasing urbanization.

Greeks claim continuity with ancient Greeks, whose language achieved its first written form in Mycenaean times 14 centuries before Christ. The modern Greek language, "Dimotiki," maintains most of the vocabulary and some of the grammar of ancient Greek. "Katharevousa," a 19th century attempt to eliminate foreign influences and return the language to its classical roots, has been almost completely phased out since 1974 as a language of culture and administration.

During Byzantine and Ottoman times, Greece received Slavic, Albanian, Turkish, Gypsy, and other population inflows. Since the 1821 War of Independence, however, Greece has been the subject of a nation building process that has resulted in one of the most ethnically homogeneous societies in Europe. The only officially recognized minority is a Muslim population (130,000 persons) concentrated in Western Thrace, though most Gypsies and many Vlach, Slav, and Albanian speakers continue to use their traditional languages at home. Urban Greeks strongly encourage their children to learn foreign languages. Most leading shops, hotels, and restaurants in Athens and Thessaloniki employ clerks who speak English. This is not the case outside major tourist centers, how-

ever, where some knowledge of Greek makes life easier and more rewarding. The Greek Orthodox Church is the predominant religion in Greece, professed by 98% of the population. The Church is self governing under the Archbishop of Athens and all Greece and has historic ties to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. American citizens residing in the Athens area are estimated to be approximately 30,000. Many Greek Americans are retired in Greece, and several multinational corporations who have local or Middle Eastern operations based in Athens employ US. citizens. Athens and the rest of Greece have a steady flow of US. tourists each year.

Public Institutions

Greece's current constitution dates to the restoration of democracy following the 1967-74 military dictatorship (junta). The 1975 constitution establishes Greece as a parliamentary democracy, the Hellenic Republic, with the President as its largely ceremonial head of state. The Prime Minister, as head of government, is responsible to a 300-seat Parliament of the Hellenes elected every 4 years by a system of reinforced proportional representation. Greece has an independent judiciary along European models. The constitution guarantees a wide range of civil liberties.

The largest political party in Greece's parliament is the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), which won 41.5% of the popular vote in the September 1996 general election and achieved 162 seats in Parliament. PASOK president Constantine Simitis is Prime Minister. Since winning its first election in 1981, PASOK has governed the country for about 13 years. The largest opposition party, the center right New Democracy Party (ND), holds 108 parliamentary seats after winning 38.1% of the vote in September 1996.

Three smaller parties, each of which received at least 3 percent of the popular vote in the last election,

together hold the remaining 30 seats. The current President of the Republic, Constantine Stephanopoulos, an independent conservative politician widely respected across the political spectrum, was elected by Parliament to a 5-year term in 1995.

The current government places its highest priority on entry into the European Union's Economic and Monetary Union (common currency union). To do this, Greece must satisfy the economic criteria in the Maastricht Treaty for acceptable performance on inflation, budget deficit, and government debt. If Greece meets expectations on the Maastricht criteria, it can look forward to EMU entry on January 1, 2001. Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981, and Greek policy on most international issues follows the EU consensus. Greece is also a member of NATO, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, and the United Nations.

Arts, Science, and Education

Greece has rich cultural roots, and a continuing literary, artistic, and musical life. Modern writers carry on the heritage and tradition of the giants of ancient and recent Greek letters. The writings of Nikos Kazantzakis and the Nobel Prize laureates, George Seferis and Odysseus Elytis, are available in English, as are many others.

Although Greek art suffered neglect during the centuries when Greece was under foreign domination, art is again flourishing with works from the primitive through realism to extreme avant-garde. Athens has scores of active and interesting commercial galleries, as well as other urban art centers.

Greek museums are also numerous, from the world class Cycladic Art Museum to the assortment of masterpieces in the National Archaeological Museum. Other important museums in Athens include the

Benaki Museum, the Folk Art Museum, the Byzantine Museum, and the Goulandris Natural History Museum.

Folk art and handicrafts survive in Greece, but, as a result of commercialization and tourism, it is difficult to distinguish between "souvenirs" and the genuine article. Greek popular music, with its delightful melodies and rhythms, can be heard on numerous radio stations around the clock, as well as at frequent public concerts and in nightclubs. Many Americans fall under the spell of more exotic music featuring the "bouzouki," a stringed instrument, heard not only on the radio, but also in "bouzouki clubs," where performances usually start at midnight. Rebetika (turn-of-the-century popular folk music) is experiencing a strong revival throughout the country. Folk dancing can sometimes be seen in the Greek countryside, especially on holidays, and city dwellers may spontaneously break into traditional dances at parties and other social functions. In the Plaka district of Athens, several taverns have live dance shows, as well as some other more authentic (but far from the center) folk music nightclubs. Athens has many theaters. Most performances are in modern Greek. Occasionally, foreign touring companies perform in English. The Karagiozi shadow puppet theater, with oriental and Turkish antecedents, is also worth seeing.

The Athens Festival, held every year from June to July, features performing arts ranging from Greek tragedy to modern dance and rock groups, often with internationally famous groups or stars from the U.S., Europe, and elsewhere. Cultural centers of interest to the English-speaking community are the Hellenic American Union (HAU), the British Council, and the Athens Center. Their programs, which normally extend from October through May, include concerts, films, exhibits, lectures, and panel discussions. Education is revered in Greece, and the hunger for education in both the humanities and sci-

ences remains high. Greeks attach great value to higher education, and many study abroad. The HAU in Athens is a private, nonprofit, binational educational and cultural institution with close ties to the Public Affairs Office. Its main function is English teaching, but the HAU also offers a variety of courses, including all levels of modern spoken Greek, Greek studies, Greek dance, creative arts, and writing skills. The library, which is currently closed for renovations, includes remnants of the former USIS library, including about 5,000 volumes on all subjects related to the U.S., as well as periodicals and on-line services. The library can be reached through the HAU switchboard. Athens has several libraries, most of which are non-circulating, e.g., the National Library of Greece, the Parliament Library, and the Athens Municipal Library. Some of the lending libraries open to the public are the following:

HAU, American Library, 22 Massalias Street, Athens

British Council Library Kolonaki Square, Athens, 363-3215

French Institute Library, 31 Sina Street, Athens, 362-4301

Goethe Institute Library, 14-16 Omirou Street, Athens 522-9294

National Research Foundation Library (periodicals only), 48 Vas. Konstantinou Ave., Athens, 722-9811

Evgenides Foundation Library, 387 Syngrou Ave., Athens, 941-1118

Commerce and Industry

During the past three decades, Greece has changed from an agrarian to a semi industrial economy. This shift has resulted in rapid urbanization, so that most of the country's 10.5 million inhabitants live in towns of more than 10,000 people.

In 1996, agriculture output accounted for 11% of the total GDP, industry 18%, while services (primarily tourism and shipping) totaled 63%.

Shipping is a major economic activity. The Greek commercial fleet is the largest in the world. The Greek flag flies on 946 ships with a total gross registered tonnage of 27.8 million tons (February 1998 data). Another 2,412 ships of 1.1 million tons are controlled by Greek interests under foreign flags (February 1998 data).

Greece's most important industries, in terms of production and employment, are food processing, tobacco, textiles chemicals, including refineries nonmetallic minerals, metallurgy shipbuilding, aerospace and military equipment, cement, and pharmaceutical; Greece is a leading world producer of bentonite, magnesite, and perlite, as well as an important European producer of bauxite, cement, ferrochromium, emery, and marble. A plant processing bauxite into alumina, then into aluminum, is operated by the French firm Pechiney on the Gulf of Corinth. A Greek-Russian agreement to complete a new plant to process bauxite into alumina in Domvraina (Biotic) near the bauxite of Mount Parnassus is still undecided. Greece is also endowed with lignite reserves, which are exploited for domestic energy uses.

U.S. investment in Greece is estimated at \$2.2 billion, representing almost a third of all foreign investment. Major U.S. investments include: Mobil Oil (\$170.2 million); Pepsico foods and beverages (\$101.6 million); Hyatt Hotels (\$106.2 million), Philip Morris Group (\$97.8 million), and Procter & Gamble (\$97.2 million).

Development projects by the Greek state include: a natural gas network for industrial and household use in Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissia, and Volos; hydroelectric power plants in northern and central Greece; a new international airport at Spata near Athens; metro systems for the cities

of Athens and Thessaloniki; a 1.5-mile bridge linking Rion and Antirion at the western end of the Gulf of Corinth; a tunnel linking Aktion-Preveza in Western Greece; an irrigation and hydroelectricity project in Thessaly (Acheloois river diversion); computerization of the Greek Postal Service; wastewater treatment plants for the cities of Athens, Iraklion, Volos, and Larissa; upgrading of the highway network; completion of ports infrastructure; and modernization of the main north-south railway system.

Greece's low levels of investment during the last decade have not expanded its industrial base sufficiently to meet domestic demand. As a result, imports are twice as large as exports. The merchandise trade deficit, however, has been largely counterbalanced in most years by strong inflows from tourism, emigrant remittances, shipping earnings, and net transfers from the EU.

In 1997, imports totaled \$25.5 billion and exports \$10.9 billion. The EU accounts for about 64% of the Greek import market due to increased intra-EU trade. U.S. exports in 1997 reached \$978.3 million, while imports from Greece were \$487 million, producing a record \$491 million trade surplus. Major Greek exports to the U.S. are textiles and apparel, foodstuffs, iron and steel, construction materials, tobacco, shoes, and petroleum products. The EU remains Greece's major market, absorbing 46.7% of Greek exports. The other European countries and Asia are the second and third largest markets. In 1997, the U.S. absorbed 4.5% of Greek exports.

Greek labor unions play an important role in determining wages, fringe benefits, and working conditions. Unemployment has dropped from 10.3% in 1997 to 10.1 in 1998 and is projected to decrease in 1999 to 9.8%. Although emigration has dramatically decreased over the last three decades, more than 5 million Greeks are estimated to live abroad, mainly in the U.S., Australia, Ger-

many, and Belgium. Per capita income is estimated at \$11,305 for 1998, a steady increase from previous years.

Greece became an associate member of the EU in 1962 and was elected the tenth full EU member on January 1, 1981. New inflows from the EU reached \$4 billion in 1998. These funds from the EU (about \$20 billion for the period 1994-1999, and another \$30 billion for the period 2000-2006) will go to projects such as building highway and rail networks, ports, bridges, the Athens and Thessaloniki metros, and the new international airport at Sparta.

Transportation

Automobiles

Automobiles are necessary for trips outside the cities and for commuting from the suburbs. Small cars are most suitable for driving on the narrow Greek roads and city streets. Air conditioning is desirable during hot, dusty, summer months. Traffic moves on the right. To obtain license plates, you must present a valid international drivers license or a valid Greek license. (Without a valid U.S. license, you may apply for a driving test but this will create considerable delay, and the test is in Greek). A license plate will not be issued to persons presenting only a U.S. drivers license. It is therefore imperative to obtain valid international drivers licenses prior to arrival. AAA offices in the U.S. are a good source for information/ application. The Greek Government requires third-party liability insurance for all motor vehicles. Vehicles cannot be driven prior to purchase of insurance.

Local

Main streets and highways are paved; secondary roads are rough and ungraded. Most roads are two-lane, except for parts of the National Road. The road network is good and constantly being expanded. In response to tourism, road surfaces are improving; however, in some remote areas, be prepared to find unimproved

conditions. The roads to Belgrade and Sofia are good. The borders between Greece and Turkey, FYROM, Bulgaria, and Albania are open to private automobiles. Before driving to Greece through FYROM, Bulgaria, or Albania, however, you might want to check with the U.S. Embassy to find out which border crossings you may use.

The Athens area now is home for more than 40% of Greece's 10.1 million people. The number of passenger cars in the Greater Athens area has increased dramatically from 111,000 in 1968 to 791,000 in 1989. The total number of vehicles circulating in Athens, including buses, trucks, motorcycles, etc., is more than 1 million. Many Athens streets are narrow and lined with parked cars. Heavy traffic flows in and out of the city from early morning until after midnight are typical. This causes noisy and irritating driving. In an effort to control the pollution problems in Athens, driving is restricted in the central area every day, except Sundays, holidays, and the month of August. Vehicles with license plates ending in an odd number may drive in the restricted area only on odd-numbered days, and those with even numbers may drive only on even-numbered days. Only public transportation, motorcycles, and vehicles with diplomatic license plates are exempt from these restrictions.

Because of congestion in the city, shopping trips and commuting can be extremely time-consuming. Commutes of about an hour each way are not uncommon. Athens has a good and inexpensive but very crowded public transportation system consisting of buses, trolleys, and a metro running from Kifissia to Piraeus. Additional metro lines are expected to open between 1999 and 2006. Taxis are inexpensive, but getting one can be frustrating. Cab drivers take more than one passenger or group of passengers and sometimes decline to pick up passengers at all. Radio taxis can be obtained by telephone but often require waits of 30-45 minutes to arrive. Parking is a perennial prob-

lem throughout most of the city and environs, even at supermarkets. Private vehicles are not allowed in the "historical center" of Athens. In the inner city, however, many historical sites, museums, and shops are within walking distance for avid walkers.

Regional

Olympic Airways, British Airways, Delta, Air France, Ethiopian Airways, Scandinavian Airlines System, Swiss Air, Royal Dutch Airlines, Sabena, and Lufthansa connect Athens with the Near and Far East, North Africa, and Europe, often with daily flights. Daily service within Greece is available from Athens to Thessaloniki, Alexandroupolis, Kalamata, Kavala, Corfu, Crete, Rhodes, and the other larger islands. Railroad service within Greece is good but not extensive. As a maritime nation, Greece has extensive interisland ferry and hydrofoil service. The main ports serving Athens are Piraeus and Rafina. Except for an occasional cruise ship, no direct ship service is available between Greece and the U.S.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Greek OTE telephone billing is different from that in the U.S. OTE bills cover two-month periods, arrive at least 6 weeks after the end of the billing period, and must be paid within 5 days after the payment expiration date to avoid disconnection. Calls are metered and charged per unit. Long-distance calls are metered and charges vary according to distance. A call to the U.S. costs about 75¢ plus 18% tax per minute. Residents of most Athens suburbs can request both touch-tone service and itemized billing. However, certain residential pockets still rely on rotary dialing and metered long-distance service. Direct-dial calls to the U.S. can be made by dialing the prefix 001 followed by the area code and the local U.S. number. Direct-dial calls may also be made to European countries and some nearby Middle Eastern

countries. Long-distance calls, collect calls, person-to-person calls, or credit-card calls may be made through the OTE operator by dialing 161. Public telephones are located at many newspaper kiosks. Local calls may be made for 7¢. Also, card phones are available throughout Greece.

Cellular phone use has proliferated throughout Greece. While somewhat expensive, there are a number of reliable networks to choose from. U.S. cellular phones are not compatible with the Greek telephone system.

Internet providers are plentiful in Greece. Typical subscription fees average \$25 per month plus separate telephone charges from OTE for the local connection.

Radio and TV

Reception in Athens is good, with most programs broadcast in Greek. However, major networks run recent U.S. movies and sitcoms in English, with Greek subtitles. AFRTS television service is available in private residences for a minimal fee. EWSA manages the distribution of the AFRTS decoders. Television reception can be augmented by erecting a satellite dish and subscribing to various pay for view satellite services. Unfortunately, Greece is located beyond the southern edge of SKY and other popular European satellite broadcasts, though CNN and EURONEWS are available. Greece has many English language programs on radio standard broadcast, and local stations offer a variety of good musical programs, both classical and modern. VOA broadcasts by shortwave in Greek and in English, and London BBC can be received on short-wave radios. Daily news is broadcast in English on several Greek radio stations. Greek TV has about 10 channels.

All channels broadcast in color using the European PAL/SECAM system. U.S. standard televisions will not receive this signal. Purchase of a multi-format, adjustable voltage television set and VCR,

available from AAFES or locally, which includes NTSC, PAL, and SECAM, is highly recommended. Video movies are popular in Greece. The EWSA rents videos in VHS NTSC. Numerous local clubs rent videos in VHS PAL/SECAM format at modest prices. U.S. standard TVs brought to Greece can be used with VCRs and computer games only from the U.S., without modification.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Newspapers, including the daily English language Athens News, on newsstands every morning but Monday, cover international and local news and contain information on current cultural events in Greece, as well as cinema and TV schedules. The Athens News Agency publishes a daily bulletin in English. The International Herald Tribune publishes an English-language insert, a condensed version of Kathemerini, which is available everyday except Sunday. Store the next working day after publication. The International Herald Tribune is now available six mornings a week, while airmail editions of other English- and foreign-language newspapers arrive a day late. Also available are a multitude of foreign magazines such as Paris Match and Oggi, (Italian). Locally published English language magazines, such as The Athenian (monthly), Business and Finance (weekly), Greece's Weekly, and 30 Days (monthly) are available by subscription or at newsstands. The Athenian covers what is happening in Athens and contains informative articles on all aspects of historic and contemporary Greece. Kiosks all over Athens offer a wide assortment of current events listings, technical and women's magazines, children's comic books, and paperbacks. International editions of Time and Newsweek arrive promptly; other American magazines arrive 3-4 weeks late.

In the streets near Syntagma Square, several bookstores carry a good selection of English-language books on all subjects, including the latest bestsellers. Prices, however,

are almost double what you would pay in the U.S.

Athens has a number of first-rate movie theaters which show recent U.S. and foreign films. Open-air theaters are a popular summer venue for movie lovers.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical Facilities are good. For specialized care, Athens has several general hospitals and clinics, including separate pediatric and maternity hospitals. The level of care at these facilities is good, with the only weakness being the level of nursing/support-type care. Most hospitals are equipped with modern diagnostic equipment and trained technicians. Therefore, emergency and most routine surgery, as well as general hospitalizations, can be handled at local facilities. If an individual requires medical evacuation for further treatment, the evacuation points for all posts within Greece are London and Germany. Routine dental care is available throughout Greece. In Athens, pedodontic and orthodontic care is available from American or Greek dentists or orthodontists, with a few who have received their training in the U.S. Athens has oral surgeons, if needed. If possible, individuals with corrective lenses should have extras made in the U.S. before arrival in Greece. Local opticians can fill optical prescriptions, however, and some local ophthalmologists have extensive experience with contact lenses. Additionally, bring sunglasses for sun-drenched Greece. In Greece, few facilities are available for handicapped individuals, and those that do exist are not up to Western standards. Some hospitals and other medical institutions are equipped for wheelchairs.

Community Health

The level of community health is considered high in Athens. Although the enforcement of regulations concerning the storage and sale of foods and drugs is less strict

than that in the U.S., most local restaurants and taverns are safe and good places to eat. The local fruits and vegetables are excellent and do not require any special preparation beyond cooking and cleaning. Most meats can be procured locally and are safe. Pasteurized milk in Athens is safe for consumption.

The sanitation practices in the cities are good, unless a public works strike occurs; trash can sometimes accumulate up to a week at a time. In Athens and its suburbs, the garbage is collected 3-7 days a week, depending on the area. Local sewage drainage and treatment are adequate. The water in most cities throughout Greece is potable, but use a fluoride supplement for children up to age 13. When visiting small villages and the islands, however, consume bottled water, as the water source may be limited and not well treated. Insects and vermin pose no particular problems, but mosquitoes, garden pests, and ants can be annoying.

The major endemic, communicable diseases of concern to Americans are respiratory infections, which are caused by high levels of pollution present in Athens at periods of time throughout the year. Therefore, individuals with chronic respiratory disorders such as severe allergies, asthma, and emphysema may experience difficulty breathing during heavy pollution periods. Otherwise, no unusual health risks are involved in living in Greece. Traffic accidents can be a cause of injury, both in Athens and outside of major cities. Defensive driving and wearing seat belts are crucial.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport is required but no visa is needed for tourist or business stays of up to three months. An AIDS test is required for performing artists and students on Greek government scholarships; U.S. test results are

not accepted. For other entry questions, travelers should contact the Embassy of Greece at 2221 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20008, telephone (202) 939-5800, or Greek consulates in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, and San Francisco, and Greek embassies and consulates around the world. Additional information is available at <http://www.greekembassy.org>.

Travelers may be required to declare U.S. dollars and travelers checks to customs officials on arrival. Importing dollars and dollar instruments is not restricted. Sporting and camping equipment and furs are registered in the owner's passport and must be reexported. Drugs and narcotics may not be imported under any circumstances.

Americans living in or visiting Greece are encouraged to register at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy/Consulate General and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Greece. The U.S. Embassy in Athens is located at 91 Vasilissis Sophias Boulevard, tel: (30)(1) 721-2951. The U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki is located at Plateia Commercial Center, 43 Tsimiski Street, 7th floor, tel: (30)(31) 242-905. The Embassy's website is <http://www.usisathens.gr>. The e-mail address for the consular section is consul@global.net. The e-mail address for the U.S. Consulate General Thessaloniki is cons@com-pulink.gr.

Pets

In compliance with World Health Organization (WHO) requirements, pets (dogs and cats) entering or departing Greece must have a health certificate stating that the pet is in good health, free from infectious disease, and has had a rabies inoculation not more than 12 months (for cats 6 months) and not less than 6 days before arrival or departure. The certificate must be validated by the appropriate medical authority in the country, where travel begins. In the U.S., validation

is performed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (DOA). In Washington, D.C., take the papers to the Greek Consulate for validation. Parrots may not be imported, unless they are coming from a country free from psittacosis, in which case no more than two may be imported and must have the same health certification as for dogs and cats. Greece has few boarding kennels available. Those available are not of Western standards, and bookings must be made in advance.

Firearms and Ammunition

Greek law prohibits importation of rifles and handguns of any kind. Shotguns of any gauge and air rifles may be imported. Shotguns may be imported by the owner only. The shotgun is written on his/her passport, then, the owner must go to the Greek Forestry Department to submit the proper papers for the issuance of the gun's ID.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the Greek monetary unit is the Euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 Euro. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

The value-added tax (VAT) was first implemented in Greece on January 1, 1987, in accordance with the European Economic Community requirements, and replaced previous indirect taxes. Today, income from VAT totals 50% of indirect taxes and 35% of total state revenues. VAT ranges from 8% percent on mass consumption goods, e.g., food, to 18% imposed on most goods and services, and 36% for all luxury goods, such as tobacco products, alcohol, cosmetics (some foodstuffs fall under this percentage)

Greece uses the metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline is sold by the litre.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan.6	Epiphany
Feb/Mar.	Clean Monday (beginning of Lent)*
Mar. 7	Dodecanese Accession Day (observed in Rhodes only)
Apr/May	Good Friday*
Apr/May	Holy Saturday*
Apr/May	Easter*
Apr/May	Easter Monday*
May 1	May Day
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Holy Ghost Day/ Penetecost Monday
Aug 15.	Assumption Day
Sept. 13.	Finding of the True Cross
Oct. 4.	Liberation of Xanthi (observed in Xanthi only)
Oct. 25.	Independence Day
Oct. 26.	St. Dimitrios Day (observed in Thessaloniki only)
Oct. 28.	Ohi Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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Budapest, Hungary

HUNGARY

Republic of Hungary

Major Cities:

Budapest, Debrecen, Miskolc, Szeged, Pécs, Győr

Other Cities:

Ajka, Baja, Eger, Hajdúböszörmény, Kaposvár, Kecskemét, Makó, Nyíregyháza, Sopron, Székesfehérvár, Szombathely, Veszprém

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Budapest, the capital city of Hungary located on the Danube River, is one of the most beautiful cities of Europe. An assignment here can be rewarding and highly enjoyable. Since the major political changes here in 1990, the challenges of living in Hungary have been greatly diminished; all who live or visit here can easily partake in the countless affordable opportunities presented in Hungary for working, learning, and enjoying life. Because of Hungary's location, travel to other European destinations is relatively trouble-free. The city of Budapest is split by the Danube, with the hilly, wooded section of Buda on the west bank and Pest, the flat, more urban side, on the east. It is a city growing

with the 20th century, yet retaining its Old World charm and rich sense of tradition, culture, and history.

MAJOR CITIES

Budapest

Budapest, the capital and principal city of Hungary, is a combination of three originally distinct cities: Buda on the western bank of the Danube River, Pest on the eastern bank, and Obuda, located north of present day Buda. The three are now linked by nine bridges across the Danube. Despite heavy damage during World War II and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Budapest has been rebuilt into one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. Much of the city, particularly Pest, has a decidedly 19th century look.

Buda, built on rolling hills rising to 1,700 feet, contains many attractive residential sections and wooded areas. Pest, built on level ground, is the business center of the capital. Obuda, located north of Buda, is the fastest growing area of the city. The greater city population is 1.9 million.

Food

Fresh fruit and vegetables (in season), meat and poultry are available in local markets year round, but the variety is limited during winter and early spring. The variety of fresh and frozen fish is limited throughout the year. Large and small shops stock canned and frozen produce, breads, dairy products, pasta, and cleaning and personal hygiene supplies. Such items are not available everywhere and at all times, so shopping can be an adventure. However, there are several large Western-style grocery stores that carry a wide variety of food and household items. Fresh milk is pasteurized and safe to drink, but tends to have a short shelf life. Long-life milk is widely available and is stocked in the commissary. All fruits and vegetables are safe to consume.

Local food prices are slightly lower than in the Washington, D.C. area, but imported items are more expensive.

Clothing

Dress in Hungary is similar to that in Washington, D.C. Cold weather clothing is an absolute necessity. Also, the spring season can be raw and rainy. The summer season stretches from late May through August, with temperatures ranging from 70°F through the 90's. Rain apparel, warm winter boots, and

walking shoes are necessary, as well.

It is advisable to bring shoes and boots from the U.S. These are available locally, but proper fit can be hard to find. Comfort is important for Budapest's rough and often uneven streets. Thin-soled shoes are not recommended, as streets are often in poor condition.

Men: Men's ready-made Hungarian-made suits are sometimes less than satisfactory in material and style; although imported clothing is of higher quality, it tends to be quite expensive.

Hats are not generally worn, except in cold or rainy weather.

Women: Women's suits and knitwear are practical and often worn to work, daytime affairs. Pants, dressy and sport, are worn by everyone, including Hungarians.

Children: Bring a supply of children's clothes. Baby supplies are available locally, but usually at higher cost and lesser quality. Good quality clothing can also be found in Vienna, but prices are much higher than those in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Services: A few excellent men's tailors are located in Budapest. Good dressmakers are also available at reasonable prices. Alterations are satisfactory. Zippers, buttons, thread and accessories are available. Shoe repair is inexpensive, and a number of shops have opened in convenient locations.

Dry-cleaning is reasonably priced and satisfactory.

Good salons are abundant, and the work is excellent. Beauticians use local supplies; hotel shops have more modern equipment, and more English language speakers, but rates are higher. Manicures are inexpensive, as are facials, massages and waxing. All local salons cut men's hair. A few shops cater especially to children.

Auto repair is available for most vehicles. Parts for some American cars may be difficult to obtain in Hungary.

Religious Activities

Religion can be practiced in total freedom in Hungary. Budapest has many Catholic churches, the most well known being the Matyas Templom (Matthias Church) in the Var. Several synagogues and places of worship for a variety of religions exist, such as Lutheran, Reformed, Calvinist, Baptist, and Seventh Day Adventist. These services are in Hungarian. However, there are a number of weekly English language services in Budapest, including Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Catholic, and Nondenominational Evangelical.

Education

There are a number of educational opportunities for children in Budapest. The most popular is the American International School of Budapest (AISB). There are other schools, as well, including a British-run elementary school, a Christian school, and other English-language schools. The AISB is the only American-accredited school in Budapest.

The American International School of Budapest, which offers instruction for kindergarten through high school, was founded in 1973. Since then, it has undergone tremendous growth. The lower school, which includes grades kindergarten through five, is located in the Buda hills next to the American Club. The upper school, which includes grades six through twelve, is located further up the hill, and is situated in the confines of a natural recreation preserve. Special features of the lower school campus include a large indoor swimming pool, full gymnasium, separate kindergarten playground, tennis court, sports field, theater, and computer lab.

Children must be 5 years old by September 1 of the year of entrance in order to be eligible for enrollment in kindergarten. Please note that there is NO exception to this age

requirement rule. Kindergarten classes run the entire school day.

Sports

Budapest has a wide variety of recreational facilities. The American Club has its own indoor basketball/volleyball court, a platform tennis court, and a full-size swimming pool. The clubhouse contains a bar area, television with satellite hook-up with Armed Forces Network, dartboard, and ping-pong table. Aerobics classes are held in the gym twice a week, and are open to American Club members. Nonmembers pay a small fee.

Softball, popular among many Westerners, is played on Margit Island from spring through fall, with games open to all who care to play.

Outdoor sports activities in Budapest during the winter months include jogging, skiing, horseback riding, skating, sledding, and platform tennis. A small ski area in the Buda hills, snow permitting, offers skiers a short run.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Many pleasant excursions can be made within the city of Budapest and the surrounding area, by car or public transportation. The hills of Buda provide numerous attractive areas for pleasant weekend walks and picnics. Szentendre, an artists' colony located on the Danube north of Budapest, and Esztergom, the seat of the presiding Bishop of the Catholic Church in Hungary, are worthwhile nearby visiting places and can be reached in less than an hour from the city.

Further away from the city, Lake Balaton, the summer retreat for a great part of Budapest's population, offers swimming, windsurfing and sailing. The major Balaton resorts of Balatonfured, Siofok, and Tihany are about 90 minutes from Budapest by car, and all offer adequate hotel facilities at international prices. In addition, cottages are available for rent throughout the Balaton region.

Other interesting points in the countryside are the attractive city of Eger, which has traditionally been the center of the Catholic Church in Hungary. A well-preserved minaret located in Eger is one of the most visible reminders of the century and a half of Turkish rule here during the 16th and 17th centuries. In addition, Eger is an important center of the Hungarian wine industry, and wine cellars outside the city are open to visitors. The countryside north of Eger is somewhat similar to the terrain found in the U.S. Appalachian Mountains in the vicinity of Washington, D.C., and provides some scenic contrast to the flat plain that accounts for the largest percentage of the Hungarian countryside.

Eastern Hungary contains the plain of the well-known Hungarian Puszta, where one is able to see for miles in any direction. At Hortobagy, in the middle of the Puszta, visitors can see displays of traditional horsemanship performed by costumed csikos (cowboys) and view the unique gray longhorn breed of Hungarian cattle, which have vanished from the landscape elsewhere. An overnight stay at the 250-year-old Hortobagy Inn, which offers charming deluxe accommodations, can be most enjoyable.

Half an hour east of Hortobagy lies Debrecen, the largest city in Eastern Hungary and the center of Hungarian Protestantism. Debrecen's Protestant College, one of Hungary's oldest learning institutions, is exceptionally interesting. It is noteworthy that Debrecen was the seat of the provisional government during the revolution against Austrian rule in 1848. Other interesting provincial cities include Szeged and Gyula, both of which host annual summer festivals; Kecskemet, which lies in the heart of the country's fruit growing region an hour from Budapest; Pecs, where two Turkish mosques remain and which enjoys an exceptional ballet company; Sopron, with its medieval walled city center; and Sarospatak, seat of the Reformed College, with a remarkable library

and cloister, which has been converted to a good restaurant.

In Budapest, Margit Island, the central city park, Varosliget, and a number of smaller parks offer greenery and play areas for children. The Varosliget also contains a city zoo, an ice skating rink for winter skating (boating in summer), an amusement park, a weekend flea market, and a circus.

A number of first-rate museums of old and modern art, several of oriental art, and of Hungarian folklore are located in Budapest. The Szechenyi Library contains old Hungarian publications and manuscripts.

Entertainment

Budapest's cultural life is rich with opera, symphonies, chamber music, ballet, theater, and nightclubs. There is a wide range of operas and ballets running concurrently. Operas are well staged and directed with a wide repertoire of German, Italian, Russian, and Hungarian works. Most are performed in Hungarian. A number of foreign and Hungarian guest stars appear in Budapest during the opera season. The Operetta Theater specializes in light musicals.

Budapest offers numerous concerts by symphonies and chamber groups. Stage plays are performed in over a dozen theaters. Although translated into Hungarian, many western and American musicals and plays are performed, including works by Albee, O'Neill, Williams, Miller, and Weber. The Duna Players, a fledgling amateur group of English speaking expatriates, presents plays periodically.

More than 100 cinemas in Budapest feature films from all over the world, including many recent American films. Most theaters show films in their original language with Hungarian subtitles, and there are many films shown in English. Folklore programs by the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble and other leading groups are presented at the Folklore Center and other venues throughout the year. Budapest is

also well known for its culinary opportunities; it boasts a wonderful variety of international cuisine. Many Hungarian restaurants feature live Gypsy music.

In the spring, Budapest hosts the annual Spring Festival, a month-long performing arts extravaganza. During the summer, performances of operas, ballets, concerts, and folklore programs are staged in the outdoor theater on Margit Island, at the Buda Castle, the Kiscelli Museum, and some of the smaller cities in Hungary. A music festival is held each summer in the city of Szeged. Youth concerts by various internationally-known popular music groups are offered throughout the year.

You may take pictures in Hungary, provided they are not of a military nature. Areas are marked where photography is forbidden.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Entertaining is informal. The new joint ventures opening in Hungary have brought a large number of American private business people to Budapest. Other American residents of Budapest include Peace Corps volunteers, Fulbright scholars, students, and retirees.

The American Club of Budapest, located in the Buda hills on the AISB grounds, provides an excellent opportunity to meet Americans and people of other nationalities. A restaurant and bar operate on the premises. Club members enjoy numerous special activities, including Thursday night family dinners, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and other sporting and social events. Many of these events celebrate children's holidays. The Club can also be rented for private parties. Membership in the American Club is open to individuals of all nationalities.

International Contacts: Budapest is home to a large and active international community. The International Women's Club is open to all foreign women in Budapest.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Bridge over the Danube River in Budapest

The American Women's Association, with membership open to all women from North America, meets monthly and sponsors numerous events.

Budapest boasts a chapter of the "Hash House Harriers," who enjoy a biweekly run and meal following. The Harriers are popular worldwide, and the Budapest group attracts many diplomats, business people, and other Westerners.

The Budapest Platform Tennis Association also promotes the enjoyment of the sport of platform tennis for the international community. A platform tennis court is located adjacent to the AISB and American Club. Several tournaments are held during the season, with some highly competitive matches.

Debrecen

Debrecen is located in eastern Hungary, 20 miles west of the Romanian border and 120 miles east of Budap-

est. With a population of 208,000, Debrecen is the country's second largest city, as well as the economic and cultural center of the Great Plain (Alföld) region east of the Tisza River. Industrially, the city produces railway cars, agricultural machinery, medical instruments, pharmaceuticals, furniture, and processed foods. Traditionally, Debrecen is known for its fairs and livestock markets.

Historically, Debrecen grew from a cattle and grain market in the 13th century to a stronghold of Hungarian Protestantism in the 16th century. From the 16th through the 17th century, the city was occupied by the Turks, enjoying semi-autonomous status and often serving as a refuge for peasants fleeing the Turks. Debrecen was also an important trade center before the late 17th century wars ruined the city's economy. The city was the center of Hungarian resistance against Austrian rule in the 19th century, and

on April 14, 1849, Hungary's independence was proclaimed from the church in Debrecen's center.

Miskolc

Miskolc, Hungary's third largest city with a population of 178,000, is located 90 miles northeast of Budapest on the Sajó River. A major industrial center, Miskolc has large iron and steel mills, machinery and motor vehicle factories, and lime and cement works. Iron ore and lignite mines are located nearby. Wine is also produced locally, and the region's numerous caves are used as wine cellars. Miskolc is the seat of a Protestant bishopric and the site of a law school and a technical university.

Historically, Miskolc was frequently invaded by Mongols, Turks, and Germans, and was nearly destroyed by the Mongols in the mid-13th century. Industrialization began late in the 19th century.

Landmarks here include the 15th century Avas Reformed Church, the remains of a 13th-century castle, and a museum displaying Scythian art.

Mezőkövesd, 20 miles southwest of Miskolc, is a city of about 19,000 noted for the embroidery produced there. Polgár, 20 miles southeast of Miskolc, has a population over 12,000; Ózd, 25 miles northwest of Miskolc, has 42,000 residents.

Szeged

Szeged, in southern Hungary near the Serbian border, is 95 miles south of Budapest at the confluence of the Tisza and Maros Rivers. A river port, railroad hub, and agricultural center, Szeged has a population of 166,000. Among the city's industries are food processing, flour milling, boat building, and textile production. The chief city of southern Hungary is also a principal tourist spot known for its attractive parks and squares. An annual festival of drama and music is held in Szeged.

The seat of a Roman Catholic bishopric, Szeged has a university, established in 1921, a medical school, and a library. The early history of Szeged saw the city as a military stronghold and trade center of the Arpad kings in the 10th century; it was ruled by the Turks from 1542 to 1686. Partly destroyed by a flood in 1879, Szeged was rebuilt in modern style. It retains a 13th-century Romanesque tower and a 16th-century church.

Hódmezovásárhely, 15 miles north of Szeged, with a population of 49,000, produces textiles. Békéscsaba, 60 miles northeast of Szeged, produces textiles and processes food; the population is 69,000. Kiskunfelgyháza, 40 miles north of Szeged, is a market center for livestock, tobacco, fruit, and wine, with a population of 33,000.

Pécs

Pécs is situated in southwest Hungary at the confluence of the Danube and Drava Rivers, 105 miles southwest of Budapest near the Croatian border. An industrial center in Hungary's chief coal-producing region, the city produces coke, metals, agricultural machinery, tobacco, and leather goods. There are also several vineyards in the surrounding region. Pécs is also known for its pottery.

One of Hungary's oldest cities, Pécs was the site of a Celtic settlement and was later the capital of the Roman province of Lower Pannonia. By 1009, Pécs was an episcopal see, and in 1367, the first Hungarian university was established there. The Turks ruled Pécs from 1543 to 1686. German miners and colonists settled there in the 18th century and in 1780, Pécs became a free city.

Historic landmarks include an 11th-century cathedral (rebuilt in the late 19th century), an episcopal palace, a Turkish minaret, and several churches that were formerly mosques.

The current population of Pécs is 161,000.

Gyor

Gyor is located in northwest Hungary, 65 miles west of Budapest near the Czechoslovak border. Situated at the confluence of the Raba and Danube Rivers, Gyor is a road and rail hub, a river port, and a leading industrial city and one of the fastest growing cities in western Hungary. With a current population of just over 127,000, the city is known for its textile and distilling plants, flour mills, and engineering works. Its location midway between Budapest and Vienna makes Gyor an important communications point.

Originally, the site of Gyor was a Roman military outpost called Arbona that was evacuated in the fourth century and later destroyed. Fortifications were built by the

Magyars in the same area in the ninth century. Gyor was established around the fortress, which was later used as a defensive position against the Turks in the 17th century. Hungarian forces were defeated by the Austrians near Gyor in 1849.

Historic landmarks include a 12th-century cathedral, an episcopal palace, and several impressive monuments. The baroque houses dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, the stately squares, and narrow, winding streets give Gyor an Old World charm.

The town of Mosonmagyaróvár, with a population of 31,000 is 22 miles northwest of Gyor. Pápa is 25 miles south of Gyor, with a population of 35,000. It produces tobacco products, textiles, and farm trucks, and is the site of an 18th-century castle.

OTHER CITIES

AJKA lies in the Csinger Valley in west-central Hungary, 15 miles west of Veszprém. It began as a small coal-mining village in the late 19th century. Major growth in the mid-20th century was the result of bauxite exploitation of a deposit said to be Europe's largest. Currently, the city has food-processing facilities, an aluminum furnace, and a telecommunications parts factory. Ajka's population exceeds 35,000.

BAJA is situated in south-central Hungary, less than 40 miles northeast of Pécs. With a population of 40,000, it is a market center for livestock and agricultural produce. Baja is also a river port that manufactures chemicals, furniture, and farm machinery. There are a number of baroque churches and old houses in the city.

EGER, a town of 62,000, is located in north-central Hungary, 25 miles southwest of Miskolc. The modern city is known for its orchards and vineyards and the resulting wine and brandy. Tourists may visit the town's wine cellars. Historically,



Street in Debrecen, Hungary

© Paul Almasy/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Eger gained fame in the 16th century when its small garrison held back a Turkish force of 150,000. It took the Turks more than 40 years to finally capture the fort, which they then held between 1596 and 1687. Ruins of the old fort still remain, as well as other historical buildings including an 18th-century county hall and a palace, which houses a county library.

HAJDÚBÖSZÖRMÉNY, about 20 miles northwest of Debrecen, has a population of 31,000 and a 16th-century church. Hajdúszoboszló, with a population of 22,000, is a health resort 13 miles southwest of Debrecen. Balmazújváros, a commune

just west of Debrecen, has a population over 18,000; and Püspökladány, 30 miles southwest, has a population over 16,000.

KAPOSVÁR is 25 miles northwest of Pécs and 30 miles south of Lake Balaton. With a population of 71,000, Kaposvár is the market center in a livestock-raising region. Nagykanizsa, 65 miles northwest of Pécs, was held by the Turks from 1600 through 1690. Oil and natural gas wells are near the city, which has a current population of 55,000. Mohács, 20 miles southeast of Pécs on the Danube River, is a commercial center with a population of 20,000. The city was the site of two

battles between the Hungarians and the Turks in the 16th and 17th centuries.

KECSKEMÉT, 50 miles north of Szeged, is a market center for an agricultural, fruit-growing, and livestock-raising region. With a population of 105,000, the city is also known for its leatherwork.

MAKÓ is 15 miles east of Szeged near the Romanian border on the Muresul River. A market town in an agricultural and livestock-raising region, Makó was the birthplace of the American journalist, Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911). The current population is 26,000.

NYÍREGYHÁZA is 30 miles north of Debrecen in northeast Hungary. The city was completely destroyed during the 16th-century occupation of Hungary and rebuilt in the 18th century. Today, Nyíregyháza is a road and rail center and a market for an extensive agricultural region which grows vegetables, tobacco, and potatoes. The city has museums that contain gold relics. The current population is 113,000.

SOPRON, 50 miles west of Győr near the Austrian border, has a population of 55,000. The only part of Burgenland that remained in Hungary after the rest of the province transferred to Austria in 1922, Sopron produces wine, sugar, and textiles, and has a medieval church. A former Roman outpost, Sopron today is still surrounded by much of the old garrison.

SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR, 40 miles southwest of Budapest, is a busy industrial town and market center for fruit and wine. It is best known, however, as the coronation and burial site of Hungarian kings. The patron saint and first king of Hungary—Stephen—is buried here. The Turks destroyed many of the medieval monuments during their 150-year domination of the city, but there are outstanding buildings from more recent times. Székesfehérvár's present population is 107,000.

SZOMBATHELY is 60 miles southwest of Győr near the Austrian border. A commercial center in a rich wine-producing region, Szombathely's population is 87,000. The site of a cathedral and an episcopal palace, the city was taken in World War II by the Soviets on March 29, 1945.

Named in honor of the Polish prince Bezbriem, the city of **VESZPRÉM** is nestled between the Bakony Mountains in western Hungary. It is located 60 miles southwest of the capital on the Séd River. Notable landmarks include the street of ancient houses, the baroque bishop's palace (1765-1776), the fortress with its Heroes' Gate, the Cathedral of St. Michael, and the Gizella Chapel with valuable frescoes from the 13th century. Industries include the manufacture of textiles, vegetable oil, and wine. Veszprém's population is over 70,000. The Veszprém University of Chemical Engineering opened in 1949.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Hungary is a landlocked country, 36,000 square miles in area. It is bounded by Slovakia on the north, Ukraine and Romania on the east, Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia on the south, and Austria on the west. Some parts of Hungary are flat, but other sections offer pleasant scenery, such as the Matra Mountains in the north and the area around Lake Balaton, central Europe's largest lake.

Budapest's climate is temperate. Winters, although damp and cold, are generally less severe than in Washington, D.C. Snow may fall from late November through February, but generally disappears on the Pest side after 3 or 4 days. In the hills of Buda, small amounts of snow may remain on the ground for

weeks. January, the coldest month, has an average temperature of 31°F. During the winter, the minimum daily temperature is generally below freezing. The July mean temperature is 71°F. The occasional periods of hot, dry weather are easier to tolerate than Washington's humidity. Temperatures are somewhat lower on the Buda side of the city. The yearly average precipitation is 25.2 inches.

Population

Of Hungary's 10.1 million people, 2.9 million reside in the capital city of Budapest. Hungary is the most densely populated country in east-central Europe, and trends indicate a steady urbanization. The ethnic composition is 89.9 percent Hungarian, 2.6 percent German, 4 percent Gypsy, 1 percent Slovak, .8 percent Southern Slavs, and .7 percent Romanian.

Roman Catholics account for 67.5 percent of the population. Calvinists and Lutherans make up 20 percent and 5 percent, respectively. All major churches receive limited financial aid. Religion can be practiced in total freedom.

Political Setting

Hungary is a young democracy. For 40 years prior to 1989, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Central Committee and Politburo established all policy. In 1989, round table discussions commenced between the reform-oriented communist government and the political opposition. A democratic republic was established in October.

Hungary has a functioning multi-party democracy, with all parties represented in Parliament committed to free market democracy and stability. The center-right coalition government headed by the Hungarian Democratic Forum, which led the country since Hungary's first free elections in 1990, was voted out in the May, 1994 parliamentary elections. The Hungarian Socialist Party and the Alliance by Free

Democrats formed a new government as a result of the elections. Hungarian foreign and domestic policies have not changed dramatically as a result of the change in government.

According to the Constitution, the 386-seat Parliament is the supreme organ of state power. It has the authority to propose, review, adopt or reject all legislation, and can override presidential vetoes. A political party must receive at least five percent of all votes to gain representation in Parliament.

The Government consists of the Prime Minister, currently Viktor Orbán, who is elected by a majority of the members of Parliament, and a Council of Ministers. The Ministers are appointed by the President of the Republic, currently Ferenc Mádai, upon the Prime Minister's recommendation. The Prime Minister chairs the Council of Ministers and is the government's chief executive official. The President, elected separately by the Parliament to an independent five-year term, is the Head of State. The President has limited, largely ceremonial powers, but his role in promulgating laws gives him the ability to return legislation to Parliament for further debate or to forward it to the Constitutional Court if he deems any of its provisions unconstitutional. The President also appoints the commander of the armed forces and approves the nation's defense plan. The Constitutional Court decides the constitutionality of legislation, and a separate Hungarian Supreme Court adjudicates appeals from lower courts.

Arts, Science and Education

Hungary has enjoyed a long and rich cultural tradition that has produced important leaders and innovators in the fields of music and science. Among the most well known are Ferenc Liszt, Bela Bartok, Zoltan Kodaly, Edward Teller, and Nobel Prize winner Albert Szent-György, a participant in the

U.S. delegation that returned the Crown of St. Stephen to Hungary in 1978.

Hungarian cultural life has also produced a number of outstanding writers and poets, such as Gyula Illyes and Endre Ady. Although translation of Hungarian works is increasing, it is a slow process that produces only a few works over a long period of time; this continues to hinder Hungary's rise in international literary eminence.

Budapest is the center of Hungary's cultural life. It has a large number of permanent theaters, as well as open air stages that offer performances in the summer. Performances of excellent opera productions, ballets and concerts, often featuring foreign artists, are held at both the State Opera House and the Erkel Opera Theater.

The city's highly rated symphonies, chamber groups, and soloists perform at the Academy of Music in the winter and on Margit Island in the summer. Budapest Music Weeks, arranged each year in the spring and fall, and the Liszt-Bartok Piano Competition, held every third year, are internationally known. The Hungarian State Folk Ensemble and the Budapest Ballet perform regularly during the winter season. The Budapest Festival Orchestra, a newly organized ensemble of polished younger musicians, now presents excellent programs throughout the year.

Hungarian filmmaking has achieved a high level of sophistication. A number of Hungarian films and directors have received international recognition, including Istvan Szabo, who received an Oscar for "Mephisto" in 1982. Budapest has many affordable first-run movie theaters that show both Hungarian and foreign films. A wide range of American and European films are shown regularly in theaters in Budapest. A good number of these remain in English, with Hungarian subtitles, although the trend is toward dubbing into Hungarian.

As a consequence of efforts to preserve Hungary's historical and cultural treasures, Budapest abounds in museums of all types. Among the most interesting are the Buda Castle Museum, which recreates the atmosphere of the Middle Ages with its artful blend of authentic medieval artifacts and skillful reconstruction; the Hungarian National Gallery, which focuses on Hungarian painting, sculpture, and graphic arts from the 19th and 20th centuries, both in the Var (Castle district); The Museum of Fine Arts, which houses an extensive collection of both Hungarian and foreign artwork, much of which is top quality; and the Hungarian National Museum, which is the repository of the Crown of St. Stephen.

A number of galleries and exhibition halls display the work of contemporary Hungarian artists. Among them are the Mucsarnok and Ernst Museums. Hungarian artists are well versed in Western art movements and tendencies, which often find expression in their work.

In all cultural areas, tickets are priced well below U.S. equivalents. Information on cultural events is published in each of the daily papers, while such publications as the *Pesti Musor* and *Programme in Hungary*, as well as the cultural pages of the weekly English language press, provide details. For further information on this topic, please refer to the following section on recreation.

Budapest is the center of Hungarian education. In addition to the Eotvos Lorand University, consisting of faculties of law, liberal arts, and the natural sciences, the Semmelweis Medical University, Budapest University of Economics, and academies for fine arts and technical fields are located in Budapest. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the country's highest scientific body, maintains more than 80 research institutes and centers, most of which are located in Budapest.

Commerce and Industry

Hungary possesses few natural resources other than agriculture, rich bauxite deposits, and some coal, oil, and natural gas. A strategic location in the heart of central Europe, a well educated population, and a history of government policies favorable to exports combine to give the economy a remarkable degree of openness. Emphases on internal reform and on foreign trade have helped make Hungary a leader among the reformist economies of central and eastern Europe.

Roughly three economic watersheds have taken place since 1945. The first was post-World War II reconstruction, setting the base for a highly concentrated Stalinist-type heavy industry. The second was the reintroduction of light industry and modern agriculture following the 1956 popular uprising and Hungary's acceleration through the 1968 New Economic Mechanism. The third, most dramatic and far-reaching step has been the economic transformation following the end of the socialist era here in 1990.

Recent Economic History and Current Situation

Hungary's transition to a free market economy has proven more protracted and difficult than expected. Unemployment in 2000 remained high (9.4%) in a society where job security was long taken for granted. Output has fallen throughout the economy. Privatization has been frustratingly slow. Hungary remains saddled with Europe's highest per capita foreign debt. 8.6% of the population lives below the official poverty line, and living standards of the middle class have declined.

However, painful policies are yielding positive results. The country has had strong economic growth in recent years. Hungary manages its foreign debt responsibly, and has

attracted over \$23 billion in foreign investment.

Hungary's creation of a market economy, its removal from the COCOM list of proscribed countries, and its trade agreements with European trading partners offer expanded opportunities for American businesses. The U.S. Government is assisting the country with a wide range of official assistance programs.

Transportation

Local

Public city transportation is excellent. Budapest and its environs are well serviced with a network of buses, streetcars, and subway lines. All systems are crowded during rush hour. The monthly pass for bus, subway, and streetcar is currently around 1,140 forints (\$11.40), but increases quite often. Taxis are numerous, and available at stands throughout the city. Taxi fares depend on the taxi company and time of day. In addition, a highly dependable van service operates to and from Ferihegy, the Budapest airport; fares are much lower than for taxis.

Regional

Air service between Budapest and most cities in Western Europe is adequate but, as is common in Europe, expensive. However, there are discount fares available in winter. Service is provided by KLM, Swissair, Austrian Airlines, Sabena, Iberia, Lufthansa, British Air, Alitalia, Delta, Air France, and Malev.

Trains are available in Budapest to almost any destination in Europe. During the summer, daily (except Sunday) hydrofoil boats travel the Danube from Budapest to Vienna. The ride is scenic, pleasant, and takes about 5 hours. Reservations must be made in advance.

There is zero tolerance for driving under the influence of alcohol. Police often conduct routine road checks where breath analyzers are administered. Persons found to be

driving while intoxicated face jail and/or fine. The condition of Hungarian highways is, in general, relatively good. However, roads in the provinces are narrow, badly lit, and in poor repair in some places. They are often used by pedestrians, agricultural machines, and animals, requiring increased caution from drivers.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph service to most countries is available, but quality is not up to U.S. standards. A stake in the Hungarian telephone company was recently purchased by a German-American consortium, which plans to upgrade the quality of service. Most countries can be reached by direct dialing, but service is unreliable and frustrating during working hours. After hours calling is easier and more reliable.

Long distance calls are expensive to the U.S. (two to three times higher than calls placed from the U.S.), but relatively inexpensive to continental Europe. It is now possible to use long distance calling cards here, and this results in some cost saving on calls to the U.S. The Embassy operates its own FAX services. Telegrams sent through the Hungarian post office are inexpensive and reliable.

All government-owned and -rented housing units have telephone service available at the occupant's expense. Monthly bills include a monthly service charge and a per-call charge; however, the calls are not itemized. Local monthly service is much cheaper than in the U.S.

Radio and Television

Hungarian Radio (MR) has eastern FM channels which broadcast to a nationwide audience. They play music, news, talk shows, and entertainment programs. Pending the lifting of the three-year moratorium on the licensing of TV and radio frequencies, there are other radio stations audible in Budapest. Privately owned Radio Bridge, which broad-

casts rock music on the western FM band, also runs Voice of America news in English several times a day, as well as locally produced English language news programs twice a day. Danubius Calypso Juventus, jointly owned by a media entrepreneur and the 11th District Council, broadcasts daily on the eastern FM band to a small section of Budapest. Radio Danubius and Radio Calypso, commercial stations owned by MR, play music on western FM. Radio Juventus is a private commercial channel based in Siofok.

There are numerous indigenous cable producers, and satellite television is increasingly popular in Hungary. The Hungarian government finances a satellite television network, Duna TV, which is seen in Hungary and surrounding countries.

Hungarian television uses the PAL SECAM standard.

Newspapers, Magazines and Journals

There are many daily newspapers in Budapest and scores of other regional and local dailies in the provinces. The printed press was privatized very soon after the political changes in Hungary, and many papers were bought by foreign investors. A wide variety of opinions and views are represented, though most papers tend to be associated with a particular political faction or point of view.

Western newspapers and magazines are readily available in Budapest, but less so outside the city. *The International Herald Tribune* is available on the day of publication, either by subscription or at the kiosks. *USA Today* is available, usually a day late. Daily newspapers such as *The New York Times* are almost impossible to find, and arrive late and at great cost. The international editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and other magazines are in the kiosks on the day of publication. There are currently several English-language newspapers published weekly by American publishers, including *Budapest Week*, *The*

Budapest Sun, and *The Budapest Business Journal*.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Many pharmacies are beginning to stock Western drugs as they become licensed in Hungary.

Local physicians are highly qualified and well trained. Many pediatricians provide home care. More and more small, private clinics are opening with well-trained, English-speaking doctors. Although the hospitals and other facilities are often dated and standards of appearance are lower than what Americans are accustomed to, medical competency is high. Most doctors and hospitals expect cash payment before providing health services.

Preventive Measures

Tap-water is potable. Because the water is considered very "hard," with a high metal content and sediment, many individuals filter their drinking water. Budapest is a source of naturally carbonated water, which is sold in restaurants and stores. It is not necessary to boil milk. However, regular pasteurized milk spoils quickly. Sterilized long life milk is widely available and has a shelf life of six months. Raw fruits and vegetables are safe to eat, using washing precautions normally followed in the U.S. Sewerage and garbage disposal is adequate.

Sinus and respiratory ailments are aggravated by winter smog and year-round pollution. Springtime provokes allergy problems.

NOTES FOR TRAVELLERS

Each person should have a Hungarian entry visa. Completed application forms and photographs should be submitted to a Hungarian diplomatic or consular mission under cover of a note from the individual's

post of origin. This should be done well before your estimated arrival time in Hungary, as the application process normally takes up to three weeks.

A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days. Further information concerning entry requirements can be obtained at the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary at 3910 Shoe-maker Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. (202) 362-6730, or the nearest Hungarian consulate in Los Angeles or New York.

Each member of the family, including children, should have his or her own passport.

Hungary has a low rate of violent crime. However, street crime, which occasionally involves violence, has increased especially at night near major hotels and restaurants and on public transportation. Theft of passports, currency and credit cards is a frequent problem, especially in youth hostels, at train stations, and when riding public transportation. The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to local police and to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Foreigners may also experience problems with excessive billing, etc., at night clubs featuring "adult entertainment." The number of burglaries has risen substantially, and vehicle thefts, particularly of high value automobiles, is a major problem.

No quarantine restrictions apply to household pets, but all animals must have valid, current general health and rabies certificates. All shots must be up to date at least thirty days before arrival in Hungary. Several well-trained veterinarians practice in Budapest, many of whom speak English and make house calls. Most pet supplies are available locally.

The unit of Hungarian currency is the forint (Ft.). Currency is available in notes of 5,000; 1,000; 500; 100; and 50 Ft., and coins of 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 Ft. The official exchange rate at the beginning of

2001 was around 282 Ft. to the U.S. dollar.

You may exchange travellers checks and hard currency at banks and leading hotels. However, the acceptance of traveler's checks and credit cards is not universal. The presence of ATM's is increasing in Budapest only. Black market exchange and use of unauthorized currency exchange vendors in Hungary is illegal.

Hungary uses the metric system.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy, and obtain updated information on travel and security within Hungary. The U.S. Embassy is at V. Szabadsag Ter 12 in Budapest; telephone (36-1) 267-4400, or afterhours at (36-1) 269-9331.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar. 15	Revolution Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Hungary Labor Day
May/June	Whitsunday*
May/June	Whit Monday*
Aug. 20	National Day
Oct. 22.	Hungary Government Holiday
Oct. 23.	Republic Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec. 31	Hungary Government Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Editor's note: Because of the political change in Hungary in 1990 and its subsequent effect on nearly all aspects of life in Hungary, much of the literature about Hungary and

Budapest is already outdated and obsolete. The following list is therefore necessarily short. It can be added to the literature which relates to Hungarian history prior to 1990 referred to in the reading list published in the previous Post Report. One may also consult *A Readers Guide To Hungary*, a reading list published by the Foreign Service Institute School of Area Studies.

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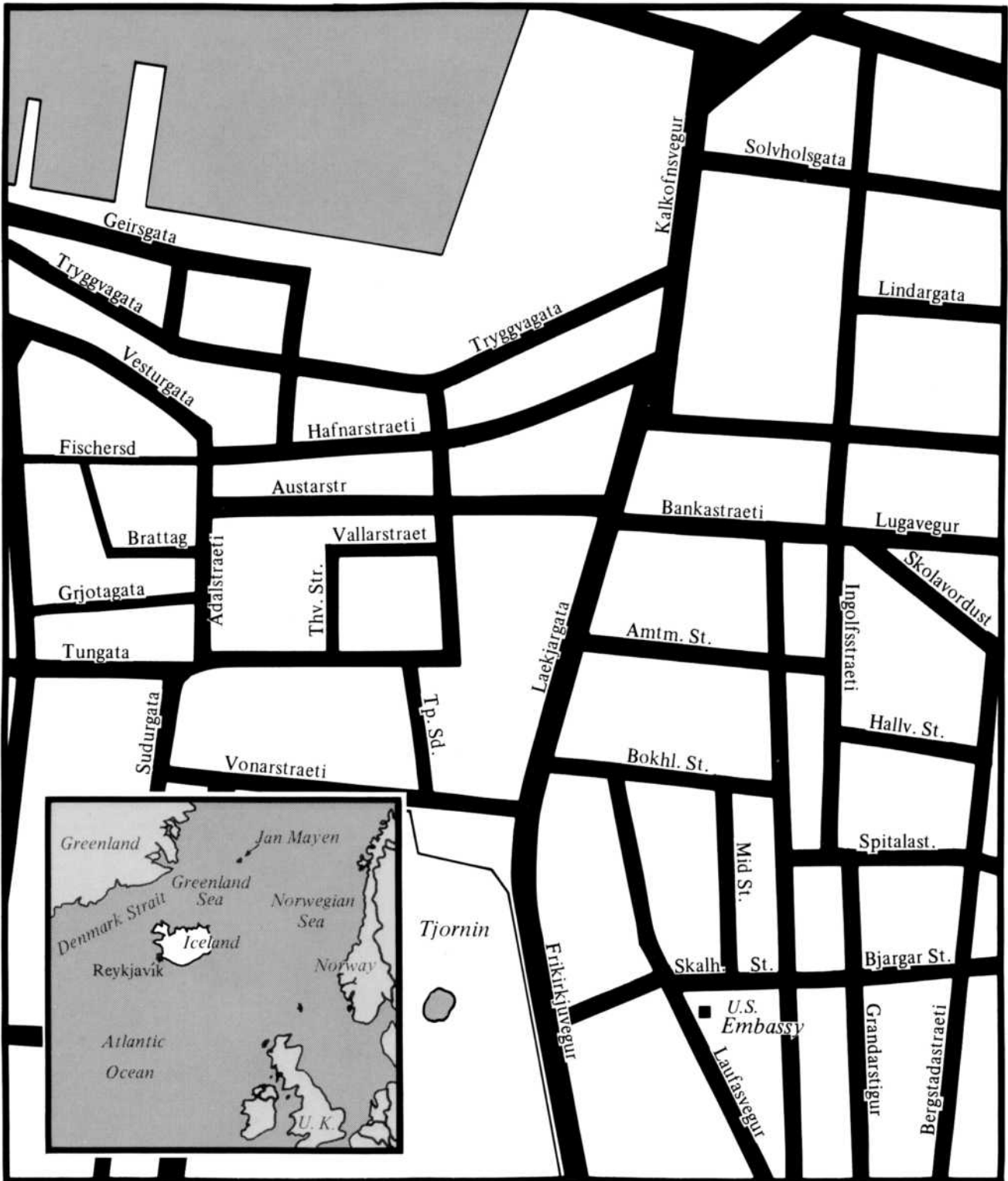
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Reykjavik, Iceland

ICELAND

Republic of Iceland

Major Cities:

Reykjavík, Akureyri

Other Cities:

Akranes, Hafnarfjörður, Keflavík, Kópavogur, Vestmannaeyjar

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Iceland. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

A trip to Iceland can be a unique and rewarding experience. Reykjavik is the northernmost capital in the world, and for its size, has unique cultural and healthy lifestyle opportunities. Icelanders speak the ancient language of the Vikings, spoken nowhere else, and enjoy the benefits of a modern welfare state comparable to any in the world. They endure almost 3 months of near darkness (November-January) and revel in 3 months of total daylight (May-July). With an average wintertime temperature of 32°F, Iceland's climate is not as harsh as its name would suggest.

Weather permitting, ample opportunities are available to enjoy winter sports, such as downhill or cross-country skiing and ice skating; or summer activities such as camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and trekking over some of Europe's most beautiful glaciers. Year round, you can swim in Iceland's famous natural hot springs or open-air swimming pools.

Iceland has good air connections to the rest of Europe.

Most Icelanders speak English, are open and friendly, and eager to share their ancient culture. A trip to Reykjavik will be remembered and cherished as one of the unique experiences of your life.

MAJOR CITIES

Reykjavík

Reykjavik is Iceland's capital and its largest city. Located on the southwest coast, it sits on a peninsula extending northwest into the sea. It lies at 64°N and 22°W.

Reykjavik is a modern, picturesque city. New buildings of reinforced concrete are rapidly replacing older wooden framed and corrugated iron

structures similar to those found in northern Norway.

Small detached and semi-detached houses and numerous apartment buildings are found in the city. Houses are well built, comfortable, and modern.

All of the city's central heating is supplied by hot springs. Reykjavik is often referred to as the "smokeless city" because of this heating method.

Reykjavik is the seat of government and the focal point of Icelandic cultural activity. It is the site of the University of Iceland, founded in 1911. It has a museum of natural history, a national museum, four art museums, a municipal and a national theater, a symphony orchestra, an opera, a ballet company, art galleries, libraries, seven movie theaters, an outdoor stadium, an indoor arena, and private and state radio and TV stations. The city has thermally heated outdoor swimming pools that are open year round, three small lakes teeming with wild bird life year round, and several parks.

Reykjavik's terrain is essentially barren lava; however, the mountains and natural harbor form a scenic setting for the capital. The harbor, with its extensive shipping

and fishing activities, is the lifeline of the city.

Reykjavik enjoys a high living standard. At around \$26,300 per capita, income is comparable to that in the U.S.

Utilities

Electric current is 220v, 50-cycle, single-phase, AC. Motors not wired for 50 cycles will operate on the local current but can overheat and burn up when run continually. Electric appliances equipped for 110v, except clocks and record players, can be operated with a transformer on the local current. U.S. record players must be converted from 60 to 50 cycles to operate properly. Normally, this takes only a small, inexpensive device that is quickly installed. Step-down transformers may be purchased locally. Wall sockets are usually the European, two-pronged, tubular type, although other types of plugs and sockets are sometimes used in newer construction. In any event, conversion plugs to adapt U.S. plugs to Icelandic wall sockets are available.

The municipality provides geothermally heated water for heating and other purposes to all city housing. You quickly become used to the slight sulfur smell of the hot water. The natural hot water is excellent for washing clothes but will blacken silver not rinsed immediately in cold water, which is nonsulfurous.

Food

Every neighborhood in Reykjavik has a bakery, fish shop, and dairy store. Bread and cakes are baked and sold fresh daily. Dairy stores feature many types of cheese, yogurt, "skyr" (a type of Icelandic yogurt), cream and a number of milk products not found in the U.S. All Icelandic food items are of good quality and completely safe to eat.

Clothing

Bring a good supply of shoes and boots, especially rubber rain and snow boots. All are available on the local market or at the base exchange. But local stores are expensive and styles do not always

appeal to American tastes. Strap-on "cleats" sold in Reykjavik can be useful on windy and icy winter days. Availability of such items at the Navy exchange is erratic.

In general, all family members should have adequate clothing for a cold, wet climate. Iceland produces fine woolen goods, especially sweaters, at quite reasonable prices, but all other clothing is expensive. The Navy exchange carries some basic

clothes for everyone, although styles, stocks and sizes are limited. Many people order clothing through U.S. catalog stores. A raincoat with removable lining is quite useful. Hikers should bring thermal underwear and sturdy boots or walking shoes as well as rain gear.

Men: Men wear wool suits year round, but bring fall- and summer-weight suits for travel outside Iceland and for those warm days of summer when lighter clothing may be more comfortable.

Women: Long dresses or skirts are sometimes worn, but cocktail-type dresses are suitable for all but the most formal occasions. Wool suits and dresses are useful. Hand-knit Icelandic sweaters are an outstanding value and are worn frequently. Head scarves and plastic rain bonnets are necessary. A long winter-weight raincoat with removable lining, a spring coat, and a summer-weight coat are useful. Bring weather-proof shoes for rain and/or snow.

Icelandic women dress fashionably, buying imported items here at prices three to four times higher than in the U.S. Local dressmakers are expensive.

Children: Children's clothing is expensive. Children tend to play outdoors year round even in the most inclement weather. Bring good rain gear and boots.

Supplies and Services

Common toiletries, cosmetics, and household needs are expensive at

local stores. Selection is often limited, so bring your favorite brands.

Men's tailoring is fair. Laundries and drycleaning are adequate and conveniently located, but there are no laundromats. Local prices for laundry and drycleaning are higher than in New York and Washington, D.C.

Reykjavik has several hairdressers and barbershops. Services are expensive but the work is of the highest quality.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is extremely difficult to find. Icelanders do not normally employ full-time servants. Some women do housework and help cook and serve at dinners and receptions for about \$12-\$15 a hour. They normally expect to get paid for a minimum of four hours. The rate includes any taxes that might be owed by the employee.

Babysitters cost \$5 or more per hour and are difficult to find on short notice.

Religious Activities

Protestant and Catholic services in Reykjavik are generally in Icelandic, but most clergymen speak English. The Catholic Church holds an English Mass on Sunday evenings. You can also participate in religious activities at the base. Services are held in English for Catholics, Protestants, and (occasionally) for Jews. A chaplain from the NATO base conducts a monthly nondenominational service at the University of Iceland chapel (in Reykjavik).

Education

The American Embassy School provides an American-style primary education from kindergarten through grade 6. Enrollment consists of Embassy children, Icelanders, and English-speaking children of foreign diplomats. The student population varies considerably from year to year (1996-97: 18 students; 1997-98: 14). Due to the school's size, classes are composed of mixed grades with different ages of chil-

dren. The school is in three rooms in an apartment building close to the center of Reykjavik. The head teacher/principal is a U.S. citizen, as are some other teachers. Most hold degrees from American universities and all speak both English and Icelandic. The school is well equipped with modern educational materials and supplies.

Local nursery school is a problem because schools are few and waiting lists are long. Preference is given to Icelandic mothers who work.

Sports

The most popular family sport in Iceland is swimming, done year round in pools filled with natural hot water. Reykjavik has four outdoor and two indoor pools. Charges are nominal and facilities are excellent.

A number of other sports and activities are possible in Reykjavik, even during the long winter months. Interest in track and field is strong, and many joggers run in parks or at the University's 400-meter track. Several private gymnasiums are in town that typically offer exercise and weight lifting equipment, saunas, and aerobics classes. Fees for use of such facilities average 1kr5,000 per month. The city has two bowling alleys and there are two more at the base. The base also has a well-equipped gymnasium and swimming pool. It is possible to play a number of racket sports such as tennis, badminton, and squash on indoor courts in Reykjavik, but prices are high. Other more sedentary activities such as chess and billiards are also popular in Iceland.

Both downhill and cross-country skiing are popular in Iceland. The main ski area for Reykjavik is located in the Blue Mountains, approximately 45 minutes from the city. The facility has two chair lifts 800 and 1,200 meters long, six tow lifts, and two bunny slopes. Two other ski areas are also near Reykjavik. Skiing usually starts in January and continues through April, but you cannot count on having sufficient snow in the Reykjavik area



City skyline from Reykjavik harbor

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

for skiing every year. Skiing conditions are more reliable in the north near Akureyri. Glacier skiing is good throughout the summer. A ski school is on one of the glaciers. Rent skiing equipment in town, at the Blue Mountain resort, or from the base Morale Welfare and Recreation Association. The Recreation Association also organizes reasonably priced ski tours to well-known European ski areas.

Ice skating is another popular winter sport. Reykjavik's skating rink is open from late October through mid April. Skate rentals are available. During very cold winters, skating is permitted on the pond in downtown Reykjavik.

The Reykjavik area has about six golf courses. Another course is available near the base. Though weather has to be considered, Iceland has many golfing enthusiasts.

Horseback riding is possible on trails and unpaved roads in the Reykjavik area. Icelandic horses are small, powerful, and independent minded creatures. Rent horses near Reykjavik for approximately \$17 an hour or \$50 for 3 hours. Summer cross country trips on horseback are offered by various travel bureaus. This is a sport that both adults and

children can enjoy. The usual riding dress is either riding breeches or jeans, knee-length rubber boots, and a weatherproof parka with hood. Rubber boots are used, since riders often ride in the surf or ford small streams. Horse shows, which include racing, are held on summer weekends. No betting is allowed in Iceland.

Bird watching is a popular activity. Iceland is world famous for its variety of birds. Beautiful Lake Myvatn in the north is noted for its waterfowl, including some which are not found anywhere else in Europe.

Fishermen from all over the world are attracted to the outstanding salmon streams in Iceland. Most of the better streams are rented to Icelandic clubs or to individuals, and fishing time must be reserved months in advance. Unless you are lucky enough to be invited as a guest, the average charge per rod a day for salmon fishing is a startling \$250-\$850, varying according to which rivers you go to and whether your trip is catered. River trout fishing is considerably less expensive at \$55-\$85 per rod a day. Lake trout fishing is also excellent and much less expensive, averaging \$14-\$30 per rod a day. And good lake trout fishing can be found within 15 min-

utes of central Reykjavik. Sea trout and German brown trout are found in streams near Reykjavik. Faxa Bay has good deep sea fishing, especially codfish, halibut, and haddock. A boat may be chartered for fishing parties. Group rates are reasonable.

Extensive and unusual camping opportunities are available during Iceland's short summer. It is easy to find an area affording complete privacy, and once in the countryside you can pitch a tent almost anywhere. Organized campsites with modern facilities are also available. Campers must be hardy, since temperatures during summer range from 35°F to 60°F and rain and wind are common. Bring your own gear if you plan to make frequent camping trips.

Some hunting opportunities exist. The season for geese and ptarmigan varies from 11/2 to 3 months in the fall. Reindeer hunting during the autumn is occasionally permitted, based on the size of the herd, by the government in the eastern part of the country.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Hiking and mountain climbing are interesting and rewarding. You must come equipped with sturdy hiking boots and suitable clothes for these activities.

The countryside is unique and beautiful, and summer sightseeing can be delightful, especially if the weather is good. Many sights, such as Heidmork Park, the Blue Lagoon, and Krisuvik hot springs, are within easy driving distance of Reykjavik. Thingvellir, seat of the ancient Icelandic Parliament, is about 30 miles east and has magnificent mountain views. It is on the north shore of Thingvallavatn, Iceland's largest lake.

Hveragerdi, a small settlement 25 miles east of the capital, has geothermal steam experiments in progress, including large, steam-heated greenhouses in which fruit and flowers are grown. Laugarvatn, 60 miles east of Reykjavik, has a

summer hotel and a lake warmed enough by subterranean heat to make swimming possible. At Geysir, a few miles farther east, is the world-famous spouter from which the word "geysir" derives. In the same area is Gullfoss, a magnificent waterfall. The well-known semi-active volcano, Mt Hekla, is located southeast of Gullfoss.

Trips to remote areas are frequently organized by local travel agencies. Camping tours in four-wheel-drive buses are a good way to see remote areas.

The Akureyri area is about 280 miles north of Reykjavik. Vaglaskogur is a lovely park near Akureyri with camping and picnicking sites. Nearby is Godafoss, a beautiful waterfall, and farther east Dettifoss, one of the world's largest waterfalls. Lake Myvatn, with its unique surroundings of lava and hot mud pools, is also in the Akureyri area.

Vestfirðir (the Westfjords) on the northwest peninsula has magnificent scenery. The chief town, Isafjörður, is about 200 miles from Reykjavik and can be reached by car, air, or ship. The roads, like those elsewhere in the countryside, are poor and often impassable in winter.

On the southeast coast of Iceland lies Vatnajökull, the largest glacier in the world outside the Antarctic and Greenland. Located about 185 miles from Reykjavik, the area has some of the country's most spectacular scenery. It takes a full day by car to reach this glacier. Hotel accommodations are scarce in this area, so bring camping gear unless you have made lodging reservations well in advance.

Another site of particular interest is the island of Heimaey in the Westmann Islands. It was here in 1973 that the volcano Eldfjall was created by an eruption in a pasture near the town. The island was evacuated during the eruption, but most of the population has since returned. Quite a contrast exists

between the untouched part of town and the desolate part of the town that remains buried under the lava.

Entertainment

Ten movie theaters in the Reykjavik area show mainly English-language films with Icelandic subtitles. The films are recent releases.

Regular stage performances are first rate but are usually in Icelandic. Occasionally, the National Theater presents operas and musicals. The Iceland Symphony Orchestra presents a regular concert season averaging a concert twice monthly from October through May. Season tickets are available. The Ballet Company at the National Theater also has occasional performances. Numerous excellent, though somewhat expensive, restaurants (including its own Hard Rock Cafe) are located in Reykjavik. McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Domino's (delivery only) are established here and are popular places for those seeking fast food service.

Reykjavik has several nightclubs, including a few at local hotels. All restaurants and nightclubs are expensive.

Social Activities

Due to the American community's small size, social life among Americans is limited. The International Women's Club of Reykjavik offers activities and an opportunity to meet spouses from the American diplomatic community and growing numbers of Icelanders.

Home hospitality is valued in Iceland. American families have found coffees, luncheons, buffet dinners, and informal cocktail parties all congenial ways of entertaining Icelandic friends.

Some older school-age children, especially if coming directly from the U.S., may have adjustment problems. They may be heightened if they arrive in summer, long before school begins. Their playmates will be Icelandic children, many of whom may not speak English. Most

older school children speak English. An effort needs to be made, but Icelandic and American children will often find common interests, such as sports.

Akureyri

Akureyri, located at the head of Eyjafjörður Fjord only 100 miles from the Arctic Circle, is the country's most important town in the north and the fourth largest population center (the second and third largest are suburbs of Reykjavík). Akureyri has a population of 14,400.

Founded in 1862 as a small farming and fishing post, today it is a modern commercial and industrial city with a frontier flavor. There are several shipyards in the area.

Accessible from Reykjavík by road, air, and a two-day steamer trip, Akureyri is Iceland's most important winter sports center. Several hotels, hostels, and camping areas (for summer use only) are located in or near the city. A folklore museum and the Museum of Natural History are both located in Akureyri, along with several Icelandic heritage homes of some of the nation's best known poets and writers. The botanical garden in the city is really a museum of every flower and plant grown in Iceland.

In June, the Akureyri Golf Club holds a 36-hole open international match, with tee-off just after midnight.

Guided tours of Akureyri are available, as well as flights north to view the midnight sun. The scenic Lake Mývatn area combines a placid lake, the world's most diverse duck colony, picturesque rock formations, lava fields, an active fissure volcano, and boiling water and mud pools. Nearby are two major waterfalls: Dettifoss, which in height and volume is Europe's largest waterfall, and Godafoss, which is noted for its beauty. Multitudes of birds of various species can be seen on Drangey Island and on Grimsey Island, which is right on the Arctic Circle. The fishing village of

Husavík has both a natural history museum and a folk museum; Skaðafjörður has another folk museum and the well-preserved Vithmyri Church.

OTHER CITIES

Located in western Iceland, at the tip of a peninsula between Borgor and Hval fjords, **AKRANES** is 20 miles north of the capital. It is the site of Iceland's state-owned cement plant. Akranes is a fishing port and a market center with a population of around 5,400. The city has a road leading to Reykjavík.

HAFNARFJÖRDUR, chartered in 1908, is a port in southwestern Iceland, seven miles south of Reykjavík. It is a distribution and fishing center with refrigeration plants, fish-meal factories, and shipyards. German and English traders fought over this port, with its excellent harbor, in the 15th and 16th centuries. An aquarium and small zoo, with exhibits of fish, seals, birds, reindeer, and polar bear, are located here. Modern Hafnarfjörður is home to about 14,500 Icelanders. It became Iceland's third largest town in the late 1980s.

West of Reykjavík, on Faxa Bay, lies **KEFLAVÍK**, a major fishing port known for its international airport built by the United States during World War II. Originally called Meeks Field, the air base was given to Iceland in October 1946. The U.S. was given the right to station troops there in 1951. Three thousand NATO personnel and 2,000 dependents live at Keflavík. There are around 7,500 permanent residents.

KÓPAVOGUR is situated in southwestern Iceland, just south of the capital. The town is a fast-growing, modern Reykjavík suburb which has grown up entirely since World War II. In the early 1970s, it became one of the country's largest towns. Its current population is about 15,900. Located nearby is the town of Bessastadhir, home of Iceland's president.

VESTMANNAEYJAR is the chief town of the Westman Islands, a cluster of 15 islands of organic origin off the south coast of Iceland. It sits on Heimaey, the largest of the islands, and its 5,000 residents represent almost the entire Westman population. The inhabitants live by fishing and fowling—colonies of gannet and waterfowl breed here. The 17th century saw the islands ravaged by Algerian pirates, who carried off 400 people into slavery. In 1973, a volcanic eruption forced the evacuation of the entire population in the course of a few hours. The eruption lasted close to five months, engulfing half the town in lava and covering the remainder in ash. The harbor and fish-processing plants were saved by pumping sea water to control the flow and rate of cooling of the lava—the harbor was actually improved. Most of the inhabitants returned. In addition to the grandeur of the scenery and the number and variety of birds on these islands, a popular attraction is the barren island of Surtsey, created by a 1963 underwater eruption.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Iceland, the second largest island in Europe (39,706 square miles), is slightly smaller than the state of Virginia. Three-quarters of the country is a wilderness of deserts, lava fields, glaciers, and extinct volcanoes. This lunar landscape serve as a training ground for American astronauts preparing for the first moon landings. A distinct beauty is found here in the treeless landscape. The combination of crystal clear air and brilliant sunshine creates vistas that can only be described as breathtaking. This is big sky country, where rivers and waterfalls are abundant. In summer the inhabited coastal area is verdant, its pastures filled with sheep, horses, and cows. In the dark of win-

ter, parts of the same area are wind-swept, sometimes snow-covered, forbidding, and often inaccessible.

Despite its location close to the Arctic Circle, Reykjavik's climate is similar to that of the northwestern U.S., although cooler and windier. The Gulf Stream helps keep the annual mean temperature at 40 °F. Changes between summer and winter are not extreme. It is rarely very cold in winter or warm in summer. Winter temperatures below 20 °F are unusual, as are summer temperatures above 60 °F. The wind blows year round, however, and a wind chill factor between -15 °F and 10 °F is common in winter.

Cooler weather lasts from October through April. Snow may fall in Reykjavik as early as September and as late as June, but the normal season is between October or November and March or April. Even in midwinter, rain is as likely as snow. A large accumulation of snow is rare. Average annual rainfall is 31 inches in Reykjavik. During winter and spring, winds in the capital can reach hurricane force. Overall, the winter climate is not as severe as that of New England or the Great Lakes; but on a yearlong basis, Iceland's weather is decidedly on the cool side.

Iceland is so far north that the amount of daylight varies considerably throughout the year. An average daily gain of 6 minutes of daylight follows the winter solstice on December 21, and a daily loss of 6 minutes follows the summer solstice on June 21. December and January days have only about 4 hours of daylight; in February the days rapidly begin to lengthen; and by April they are as long as at midsummer in the U.S. From late May to late July, there is no darkness at all—20 hours of sun (or clouds) and 4 hours of twilight. Following this period of “white nights,” the sun slowly retreats, and by October the days begin to shorten as rapidly as they lengthened in the spring.

Earthquakes are common in Iceland, but are rarely felt in Reykja-

vik. Volcanic activity is infrequent but rather spectacular when an eruption does occur. The underwater volcano that created the new island of Surtsey in the Westmann Islands off the south coast began erupting in November 1963 and remained active through mid-1967. In January 1973, a volcanic eruption on Heimaey Island in the Westmann Islands forced the evacuation of all 5,000 residents and destroyed more than 300 homes and buildings. In the Krafla area, near Lake Myvatn, an eruption took place in December 1975, lasting several days; this area subsequently has seen seven lesser eruptions, and further volcanic activity is expected there. The most famous of Iceland's volcanoes, Mt. Hekla, which had been expected to remain dormant for a 100 years or so after its spectacular 1947 eruption, produced eruptions in August 1980, April 1981, and January 1991. A volcano under the Glacier Vatnajökull erupted in November 1996, melting tons of ice and creating destructive flooding.

Population

Iceland is the most sparsely populated country in Europe, averaging little more than five persons per square mile. About 60% of Iceland's total population of 270,000 live in and around Reykjavik. The capital's population is 105,500. The second and third largest towns, Kopavogur and Hafnarfjörður, are both suburbs of Reykjavik. Akureyri, on the central northern coast with 15,000 people, is the fourth largest population center. Keflavik is the town nearest the NATO base and 32 miles from Reykjavik. The NATO base has about 3,000 military personnel and 2,400 dependents. Most other Icelanders live in small fishing villages or farming communities around the coast. The center of the country is completely uninhabited.

Excluding the American-staffed NATO base, approximately 700 U.S. citizens reside in Iceland. Of the 355,340 tourists and business representatives who visited the country

in 1995, about 30,000 were Americans.

Icelanders are descended from Nordic and Celtic peoples who first arrived in A.D. 874 and rapidly settled the island, previously inhabited only by a few Irish monks who lived as hermits. Most Icelanders are knowledgeable about their family history, some tracing it back to the time of the settlements.

The Icelandic language is of Germanic origin and was introduced from western Norway in the 9th century. It has gone through so few changes since the Viking age that an Icelander of today can read and understand 12th- and 13th-century literature—notably the famous Sagas. Despite the difficulty of the Icelandic language, some long-term visitors learn to read newspapers and carry on basic conversations. These efforts are greatly appreciated by Icelanders.

Foreigners are often confused by Icelandic family names. Few continuing family names are used. The given name is the primary name, and the surname tells only the given name of the father. Surnames for males are formed by adding “son” to the possessive form of the father's given name. For females, the suffix “dottir” is added to the father's given name. The wife keeps her maiden name. As a result, the Icelandic telephone book is arranged alphabetically by first names. Further differentiation is made on the basis of last name, profession and address.

Iceland's population is about 97% Lutheran. Although Lutheranism is the state religion, Iceland has complete religious freedom. Catholics number nearly 2,520 and have their own church. The population also includes some 3,700 members of other religious denominations.

Icelandic dress, housing, and food are similar to those in other Nordic countries. According to October 1997 statistics, about 4.5% of the population was earning its living from farming; 10.9% from fishing

and fish processing; 11.1% from manufacturing; 6.5% from construction; 13.7% from commerce; 7.1% from transport and communications; and the remaining from other service industries. Unemployment is about 4%.

Public Institutions

Iceland elects a president every 4 years. The President has largely ceremonial responsibilities. Iceland elected the world's first female head of state in 1980. She served four terms. On August 1996, Olafur Ragnar Grimsson became the President of the Icelandic Republic.

Parliamentary elections take place at 4-year intervals unless the Althing dissolves itself before the end of its normal term. The smallest districts elect five members of parliament (MPs), giving them a disproportionate share of the seats; the largest, Reykjavik, elects 18 MPs based on the share of popular votes for each slate of candidates.

Legislative power rests with the Althing, or Icelandic parliament, which is a unicameral legislature. Executive power is vested in the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Cabinet has always been formed by a coalition of political parties. A written constitution provides for a system of national and local courts to administer justice, and specifically guarantees personal liberties.

Iceland has an independent judiciary. A Supreme Court sits in Reykjavik, and criminal cases are handled by the state prosecuting attorney. The judicial system includes district and town judges, a Maritime Court, and an Arbitration Court for adjudication of labor disputes.

Iceland is divided into 34 districts and 22 towns. Each district and town is administered by a magistrate responsible to an elected council of 7-15 members. Normally, in the larger towns, a coalition of political parties within the council will form a governing majority. The principal responsibilities of magistrates

include police administration of state old-age pensions and other social benefits. Historically, the mayor of Reykjavik has been an important political figure. Five post-war prime ministers of Iceland were former mayors of the city.

Arts, Science, and Education

Icelanders have traditionally had a strong interest in education and the arts. The literacy rate is 99.9%. Reykjavik has a variety of bookstores that also carry English language books. Book prices and tickets for all cultural performances are high.

Painting, sculpture, theater, and music are enthusiastically supported. Museums and legitimate theaters feature Icelandic creative works as well as foreign productions, including American productions.

The Icelandic Research Council (IRC) operates under the Ministry of Culture, Education and Science. Its mission is to reinforce and underpin the cultural and economic foundation of Icelandic society by promoting vigorous and well-coordinated scientific endeavors, technical development, and innovation. The IRC advises the Government of Iceland, publishes information, and serves as a liaison with research institutes and companies and with agencies and relevant international organizations.

Education is compulsory for children ages 7 to 15. The University of Iceland in Reykjavik had 5,826 students during the 1996-97 academic year. It has departments of law, philosophy, economics, Icelandic language and literature, theology, medicine, dentistry, science, and engineering. The Saga manuscripts, returned from Denmark in 1971, are housed in the university's Manuscript Institute.

The Reykjavik Music Society, the Iceland Opera, and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, among other

local musical organizations, offer frequent performances of classical music, and local social clubs sponsor Icelandic and visiting concert artists. The Iceland Symphony Orchestra offers a concert series every other week during the fall, winter, and spring, often featuring internationally famous guest artists.

Well-known jazz musicians perform several times a year in Iceland.

The Icelandic National Broadcasting Service, in cooperation with the City of Reykjavik, sponsors a Jazz Festival every September. It features classical, rock, jazz, and folk music concerts by well-known performers as well as art exhibits and theater performances. Reykjavik has 10 cinemas featuring mainly U.S. movies, many of which are first run. In addition, university and college film clubs offer classic and foreign films. A Film Festival is sponsored by the City of Reykjavik every other September.

Commerce and Industry

Iceland's 1998 estimated GNP was about \$7.5 billion, or roughly \$28,500 per capita. The economy is essentially market-based but with significant government intervention. While the cooperative movement historically played an important role in many aspects of the economy, this is changing rapidly under a private-sector oriented government.

The national and municipal governments, directly and through the banking system and investment funds, control a large share of the financial resources available to Icelandic business firms. Government involvement is widespread in shipbuilding, fish processing, communications, tourist facilities, and electric power generation and distribution. The national government owns and operates one cement and one fertilizer plant.

Iceland depends on imports for many of its needs. Fishery products

comprise about 75% of exports. The biggest overseas market for Iceland's marine exports has traditionally been the U.S., but that has changed in recent years, and the U.K. has taken the top spot. The U.S. share of Icelandic fish exports has fallen from 21% in 1986 to about 18% in 1997. About 65% of Iceland's fish exports go to Europe. The U.S. supplied slightly more than 9% of Iceland's imports. Other major trading partners include Japan and Germany.

Iceland's future industrial development is likely to hinge on utilization of its abundant hydroelectric and geothermal power. The government actively encourages foreign investment in energy intensive industry that would make use of these resources. Nevertheless, apart from the fish processing industry, hydroelectric power installations, a diatomite plant, a ferrosilicon plant, and a Swiss-owned aluminum smelter, industry is rather small scale and geared mainly to meet local consumption needs. Ground was broken in 1997 for an American-owned aluminum smelter.

Transportation

Automobiles

As of July 1, 1992, all vehicles imported into Iceland must have a catalytic converter. Unleaded and diesel fuels are available here. All vehicles must pass a safety and emissions inspection before getting license plates. Equip all cars with shoulder seat belts in the front seat. Vehicles in Iceland must be driven at all times with their lights on. Automatic systems for turning lights on/off with the engine are mandatory. Required for registering the vehicle are a valid title, vehicle specifications, bill of lading, and a certificate of origin. Additional documentation is required for the importation of a brand new vehicle unless it has been registered in the U.S. before entering the country.

Jeeps and vans must have mudflaps. These can be obtained locally, if you do not already have them

installed. Use snow tires from November through April 15.

All vehicles must carry third-party liability insurance purchased through local insurance firms. You can buy other coverage from Icelandic, U.S., or European firms. Bring a valid U.S. or other national drivers license with you. Otherwise, it costs between \$557 and \$922, including the cost of driving lessons, to obtain an Icelandic drivers permit.

Local

Local taxi and bus service is safe and efficient. Monthly bus passes, as well as discounted individual tickets valid for use on all buses in greater Reykjavik, are available at reduced costs. Taxis are metered and zoned. They are widely used and readily available but cost more than in New York or Washington, D.C. Tipping is not customary.

Regional

Iceland has no railroads or streetcars. The two-lane highway from Reykjavik to Keflavik is one of the best roads in the country. A ring road circles the island (1,480 km., or 925 miles). Other roads outside Reykjavik are mainly dirt or gravel of good to fair quality. Nearly all inhabited parts of Iceland can be reached by car during summer (early June to mid-September). Use a four-wheel-drive vehicle with high road clearance for trips to the country's interior. Most of the popular tourist locations outside Reykjavik can be reached during summer without a four-wheel drive vehicle.

International

Icelandair (Flugleidir) is the only carrier with regularly scheduled service between Iceland and the U.S. Rates are two to three times the cost of U.S.-originating flights. Special bargain fares are available at low travel times. The airline flies daily to New York and Baltimore. It also flies five times a week to Boston, twice a week to Orlando, and four times a week to Minneapolis. A few charter air companies also provide service to Europe.

A car ferry operates with weekly sailings (June through August), between Seydisfjordur, 461 miles to the east of Reykjavik, and the Faroe Islands, Scotland, and Norway.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

State-owned telephone service is available to all parts of Iceland and principal points throughout the world. Connections to the U.S. are reasonably quick and clear. Direct-dial is available. Charges for direct-dial to the U.S. are about 75¢ a minute, slightly more for operator-assisted calls. There is a reduced rate from 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. at 56¢ per minute. Quarterly service costs are about \$20. AT&T, Sprint, and MCI calling cards and call-back services can be used in Iceland as well.

Mail

International airmail to the U.S. takes 3-10 days, depending on the destination, and costs about 92 cents for the first 20 grams. Mail service is reliable.

Radio and TV

The Navy radio station broadcasts 24 hours daily and can be heard in Reykjavik on AM 1530. Icelandic radio operates primarily on FM. Numerous stations, both state and private, have coverage lasting virtually all day. You might want to bring a good shortwave radio, as VOA and BBC program reception is good and is an excellent supplement to Icelandic and U.S. publications.

Numerous TV stations can be received seven days a week. The state TV station broadcasts approximately 24 hours a day and can be received by any set operating on the PAL system. Channel 2 and Syn are private stations also broadcasting in PAL. With the exception of the daily news program and a few other shows, their signals cannot be received without the payment of a monthly subscription fee. Syn plus cable (Discovery, CNN, Sky News, Cartoon Network, TNT, Eurosport, MTV, NBC Europe, BBC Prime) costs about \$38 a month. Channel 2

plus cable is about twice as much (about \$78 a month). The "cable" stations without Channel 2 or Syn can be ordered at about \$18 a month. Icelandic stations broadcast a variety of entertainment, news, cultural, and sports programs.

Many of the entertainment programs are in English with Icelandic subtitles. TV sets purchased for the U.S. (NSTC) system will not work in Reykjavik, but the Navy Exchange at the NATO base generally has a reasonable selection of multi-system TVs and VCRs, which will work in Iceland and in the U.S.

Video stores for PAL machines abound in Reykjavik. Cassettes are also available for rental at the NATO base, for the American NTSC system. So it is worthwhile to bring your present TV and VCR for operation with a transformer, even if they are American system only.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

American newspapers and magazines, such as the New York Times or Time, arrive approximately one week late. The Dutch edition of the International Herald Tribune is usually a day late.

European editions of Time and Newsweek are sold at local newsstands.

Reykjavik has three daily newspapers and one weekly, all in Icelandic.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Reykjavik's medical facilities equal those in comparably sized U.S. cities. The University of Iceland has its own medical school. Many Icelandic doctors and dentists have been trained in the U.S. and/or in Europe. Nurses and other medical staff do not usually study abroad, so they do not necessarily speak fluent English. Reykjavik has three well-equipped and well-staffed hospitals,

but they are usually crowded. Iceland has a state-supported medical program, and doctor's fees are reasonable by U.S. standards. Drugs and pharmaceuticals are expensive for foreigners. All medicines are sold only by prescription. Facilities for standard laboratory work are available. Only rarely must tests be sent abroad for more sophisticated evaluation.

Neighborhood clinics in Reykjavik provide well-baby check-ups and routine childhood immunizations for reasonable fees.

Icelandic dentists are competent and their prices are comparable to those in Washington, D.C. Orthodontia is also available in Reykjavik, generally with American-trained dentists. Eyeglasses and contact lenses are available on the local market. Prices in the latter are comparable to those in the U.S.

Obstetric care in Reykjavik is excellent. Child delivery can be done in Reykjavik's National Hospital. Iceland-trained midwives deliver babies with a doctor available if there is an emergency. Iceland has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world.

Community Health

Reykjavik is a remarkably tidy city, with however a sooty black air pollution (especially in the winter), a developing smog problem, and an occasionally strong smell when the fishmeal plants are operating. Iceland has no serious endemic diseases or health hazards. Levels are similar to those in the U.S. and Western Europe. Influenza, whooping cough, measles, chicken pox, and pneumonia are the most common ailments. Many people suffer from the flu each winter.

Light deprivation can be a real problem for some people. Days are drastically shortened in winter. The sun rises after 11 a.m. and sets around 3 p.m. In reality, because the sun is so low in the sky, even a low hill range can block its already weak lighting effect. Street lights,

activated by low-light sensors, are often on throughout the "daylight" hours. Many experience symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)-depression, sleep problems, anxiety, difficulty in concentrating, etc. High intensity lights are issued to each family to help counteract these effects. But the long hours of darkness remain extremely debilitating.

Water throughout Iceland is potable, pollution free, and so tasty it is often called "Icelandic champagne." It is not fluoridated. You can drink water from streams without boiling it. Hot water in homes has a slightly sulfurous smell, and it is completely safe to drink. You must be cautious, as it comes out of the tap at 176°F. Some people react to drinking the hot water. Others experience a dermatological sensitivity (especially during the first few weeks after arrival). Government standards for food inspection are high, and foods bought on the local market can be eaten without special preparation or treatment. Milk is pasteurized and government controlled, although it is not vitamin D fortified. Garbage is collected by the city once a week.

Preventive Measures

No special immunizations or therapeutic treatments are required before coming here, but German measles and mumps shots are advisable for infants and young children, as are polio vaccines and the other routine immunizations. Qualified pediatricians are readily available. Most children have no special health problems.

Those who suffer from respiratory ailments, rheumatism, or arthritis may find that Iceland's climate can aggravate these conditions. Dryness from the heating system and the constant winds may aggravate sinuses and dry skin.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Travel between the U.S. and Iceland is by air. Icelandair flies 757s daily between Keflavik and New York (a waiver on flying U.S. flag carriers applies). Flying time from New York is about five hours. Icelandair also flies daily to Baltimore, five times a week to Boston, twice a week to Orlando, and four times a week to Minneapolis. Icelandair also flies Luxembourg, Copenhagen, Oslo, Glasgow, and London. All international flights use Keflavik Airport.

A reasonably priced airport bus service takes passengers to the Hotel Loftleidir near downtown Reykjavik.

A passport is required, but no visa is needed for tourist or business stays of up to three months. U.S. citizens should be aware, however, that because of Iceland's participation in the Nordic Passport Union, the three-month period begins as soon as they enter the Nordic area (i.e., Denmark, Greenland, Faeroe Islands, Finland, Norway, Sweden or Iceland.) For further information concerning entry requirements for Iceland, contact the Embassy of Iceland at 1156 15th Street N.W., Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20005, tel (202) 265-6653, or the Icelandic Consulate General in New York at 800 Third Avenue, 36th Floor, New York, NY 10022, tel (212) 593-2700. See also the Embassy's web site at <http://www.iceland.org>.

Americans living in or visiting Iceland may register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Reykjavik and obtain updated information on travel and security within Iceland. The U.S. Embassy is located at Laufasvegur 21, tel (354) 562-9100; fax (354) 562-9118.

Pets

Importation of live animals into the country is rigidly controlled by Ice-

landic law. You must apply to the Ministry for Agriculture for permission to bring a pet into the country. If permission is granted by the state veterinary surgeon, the pet owner must bring with the animal a certificate of health (issued within the week before departure from the U.S.) and a vaccination certificate. These documents must be attached to the permit upon arrival in Iceland. Precautions must be taken to ensure that the animal does not come into contact with other animals en route.

On arrival the pet will be taken immediately to the quarantine area in Hrisey (an island in the north of Iceland), where it will be examined by the quarantine veterinarian.

Quarantine. The quarantine period is 6 weeks for pets coming directly from the U.K., Norway, and Sweden. Animals coming from elsewhere have an 8-week quarantine. Pit Bulls and Sharpees are banned from Iceland. Special permission must be sought to import a Rottweiler or Doberman.

The cost of quarantining a cat coming from the U.S. is about Ikr70,000-85,000 (1999: \$969-\$1,176). The cost of quarantining a dog ranges from Ikr80,000-140,000 (1999: about \$1,107-\$1,937), depending on the size of the animal. Separate charges are made for medication and tests. The pet owner must also pay for the animal's transportation to and from Hrisey. If these conditions are not met, quarantine not implemented, or the animal becomes sick with a disease unknown in Iceland, the owner is obliged to agree to have the animal put to sleep without compensation. The owner is also responsible for any damage caused by the animal during quarantine. The importation permit can be canceled without notice or cause.

Be aware that once your pet reaches Reykjavik, you will need to pay additional fees to allow it to remain in the city. (1999: about \$120 for first year, and about \$105 for each following year.)

Firearms and Ammunition

The importation of firearms is restricted under Icelandic law.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official basic unit of currency is the Icelandic crown (krona, plural kronur abbreviated Ikr). In December 1999, the official exchange rate was U.S.\$1=Ikr 72.27.

Currency exchange facilities are adequate. The National Bank in Reykjavik and the Merchants National Bank at the NATO base accept personal checks, travelers checks, and other negotiable notes in exchange for Icelandic kronur at the legal rate. It is difficult to change kronur to dollars outside Iceland.

Foreign (non-U.S.) currency may be imported from all Scandinavian and other European countries, according to the currency control regulations of the country concerned. The National Bank of Iceland in Reykjavik will accept such currency and exchange it for Icelandic kronur.

You can pay hotel room charges with travelers checks, major credit cards, or U.S. currency. Larger restaurants in Reykjavik may accept both currencies, and nearly all accept credit cards. Most business places (including McDonald's, most small kiosks, and grocery stores) in Reykjavik accept dollars in small denominations, as well as credit cards.

A sales tax is levied on all goods, services, and food items sold in Iceland. On most goods, the rate is 24.5%; for some food items, books and magazines, the rate is 14%.

While the English system of weights and measures is familiar to most Icelanders, the official system is the metric system, as in other European countries.

Special Circumstances

Extreme care should be exercised when touring Iceland's numerous nature attractions, which include

glaciers, volcanic craters, lava fields, ice caves, hot springs, boiling mud pots, geysers, waterfalls and glacial rivers. There are few warning signs or barriers to alert travelers to the potential hazards. For example, several tourists are scalded each year because they get too close to an erupting geyser, or because they fall or step into a hot spring or boiling mud pot. High winds and icy conditions can exacerbate the dangers of visiting these nature areas.

Also be aware that Iceland is occasionally subject to natural disasters in the form of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, avalanches, and violent storms. Learn how to prepare for and react to such events by consulting the web site of Iceland's National Civil Defense Agency at <http://www.avrik.is>. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1. New Year's Day
 Mar/Apr. Maundy Thursday*
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 Apr. First Day of Summer*
 May 1. Iceland Labor Day
 May/June Ascension Day*
 May/June Whitsunday*
 May/June Whitmonday*

June 17. Icelandic National Day
 Aug. 6 Bank Holiday
 Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 Boxing Day
 Dec. 31 New Year's Eve
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

American-Scandinavian Review. American-Scandinavian Foundation. 127 East 73d St., NY 10021. (Articles on Iceland often appear in this review.)
 Auden, WH. *Letters from Iceland*.
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 Byock, Jesse L. *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*. University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1982.
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 Gislason, Gylfi Th. and Almenna Bokafelagid. *The Problem of Being an Icelander: Past, Present, and Future*. Reykjavik, 1973. (Translated by Peter Kidson Karlsson.)
 Hjalmarsson, Jon R. *History of Iceland: From the Settlement to the Present Day*, 1993.

Iceland (Insight Guides). ed. Tony Perrottet. Houghton Mifflin: Boston, 1995.

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Laxness, Halldor Kiljan. *Independent People* (1945). Vintage Books (Random House): New York, 1997.

Linklater, Eric. *The Ultimate Viking*. The Macmillan Company: New York, 1950.

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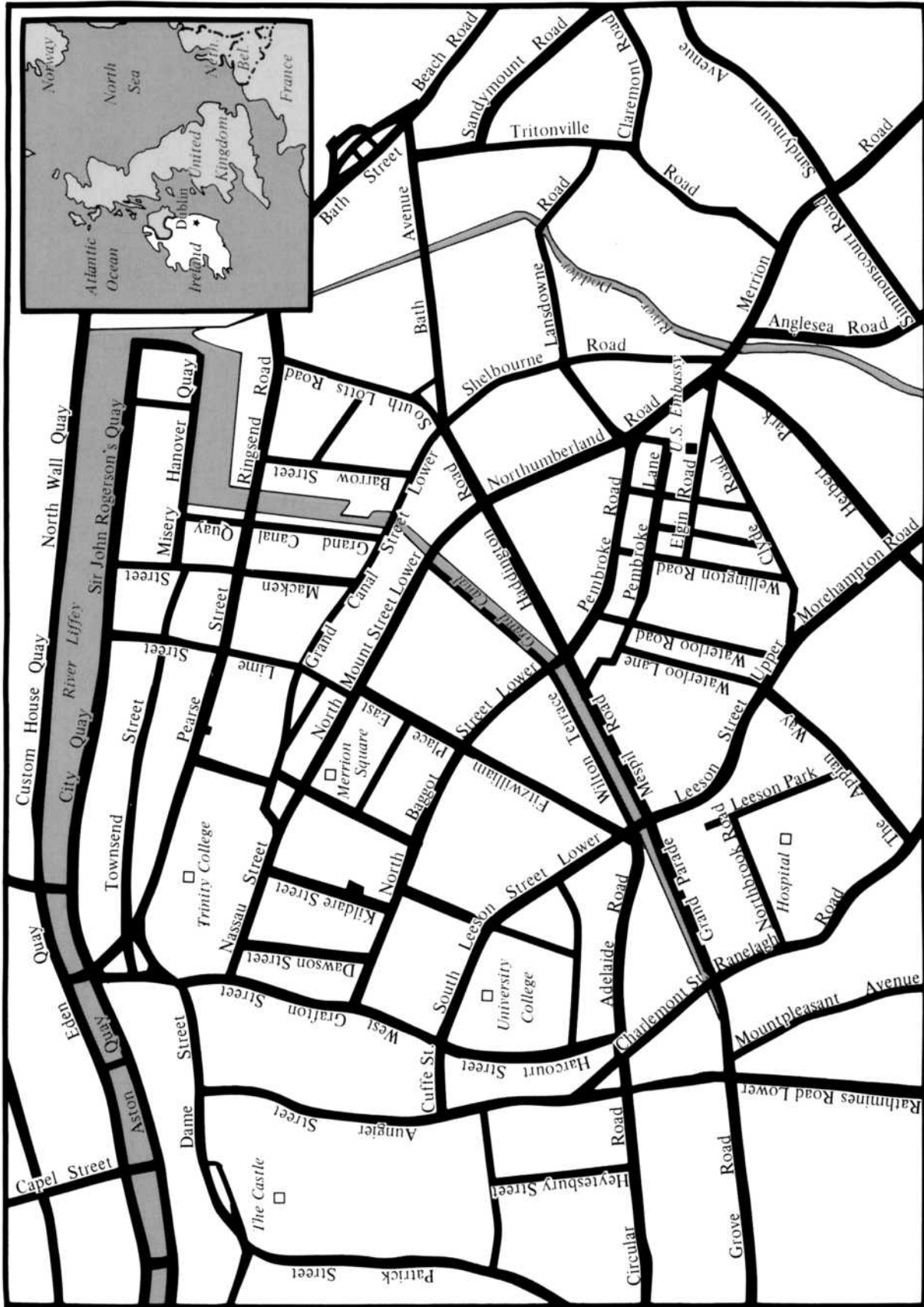
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Nordal, Johannes, and Kristinsson, Valdimar, eds. *Iceland 1996*. Central Bank of Iceland: Reykjavik, 1997.

Roberts, Dorothy James, ed. *Fire in the Ice*. Peter Davis: London, 1961.

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Tomasson, Richard E. *Iceland, The First New Society*. University of Minnesota Press, Icelandic Review: Reykjavik, 1980.



Dublin, Ireland

IRELAND

Major Cities:

Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford

Other Cities:

Cashel, Cavan, C  bh, D  n Laoghaire, Kilkenny, Killarney, Tralee, Wexford

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Ireland. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

It is said that Ireland, once visited, is never forgotten. The Irish landscape has a mythic resonance, due as much to the country's almost tangible history as its claim to being the home of the fairies and the "little people." Sure, the weather may not always be clement, but the dampness ensures there are 50 shades of green to compensate, just one of the reasons Ireland is called the Emerald Isle. Scattered mountains and hills rim a central plain, where the River Shannon flows past green woodlands, pastures, and peat bogs.

Ireland was the seat of learning and sent scholar-missionaries throughout Europe in the Dark Ages. Now it

draws visitors with a composite charm shaped of lilting laughter, Irish eyes, and the Blarney Stone; of soils man-made from seaweed and sand in the harsh Aran Islands, or palms waving in warm Glengarriff, of Donegal's lava and Killarney's lakes; of voluble, tempestuous people with a remarkable roll of literary lights—such names as Swift, Yeats, Wilde, Shaw, Joyce, O'Casey, Synge. Eight centuries of strife with Britain brought formal establishment of the republic in 1949. Its name in Gaelic is *t  ire*.

Although English is the main language of Ireland, it's spoken with a mellifluous lilt and a peculiar way of structuring sentences, to be sure. There remain areas of western and southern Ireland, known as the Gaeltacht, where Irish is the native language—they include parts of Kerry, Galway, Mayo, the Aran Islands, and Donegal. Since Independence in 1921, the Republic of Ireland has declared itself to be bilingual, and many documents and road signs are printed in both Irish and English. Jigging an evening away to Irish folk music is one of the joys of a trip to Ireland. Most traditional music is performed on fiddle, tin whistle, goatskin drum, and pipes. Almost every village seems to have a pub renowned for its music where you can show up and find a

session in progress, even join in if you feel so inclined.

Irish meals are usually based around meat—in particular, beef, lamb and pork chops. Traditional Irish breads and scones are also delicious, and other traditional dishes include bacon and cabbage, a cake-like bread called barm brack and a filled pancake called a boxty.

Though the nation's charms are fabled, it faces problems. The "troubles" are far from over in the North, but the recent referendum clearly signaled a willingness for peace and a genuine solution may be in sight.

The country is home to one of the most gregarious and welcoming people in Europe.

MAJOR CITIES

Dublin

Like most ancient cities, Dublin lies sprawled along a river. In fact, three visible and underground rivers converge and flow into the Irish Sea. The greatest of these is the Liffey, which has divided Dublin into north and south for more than 1,000 years, much as tracks divide the core of a railroad town. Today,

nearly one-third of the Irish population live in the greater Dublin area. It is the political, cultural, and economic heart of the nation.

The great public buildings, the red brick Georgian rowhouses, and the fine parks that give the city its distinctive character originated in the 18th century. The Grand and Royal Canals encircle the Georgian core of the city. Quaint shop fronts and pubs of the 19th and early 20th centuries add to the flavor of downtown. Dublin has begun reclaiming some of the historic past, though many once-fine areas have decayed badly from years of poverty and neglect. New office developments have changed the city center's skyline. The outer rim is ringed by newly built housing tracts and industrial parks. The quays along the Liffey River are beginning to change the image of a rundown seaport. New business has started to develop as well as seafront apartment buildings. Small villages, until this century a short journey away, are now enclosed within the city's sprawl.

Dublin, whose name in Irish (Gaelic) is Baile Átha Cliath, was a Norse stronghold in the ninth century. The forces of Brian Boru, high king of Ireland, took the site in a fierce battle at nearby Clontarf in 1014, forever ending Danish claim to the territory. In 1172, Richard Strongbow, the earl of Pembroke, captured the city for England; it was given a charter and made the center of the Pale, the indefinite limits around Dublin which were dominated by English rule (hence the saying, "beyond the Pale"). All of Ireland was besieged and colonized in the ensuing centuries, but Dublin enjoyed a period of prosperity in the late 1700s, during temporary respite from English authority. Intense nationalist efforts arose during the 19th century. On April 24, 1916, Dublin was the scene of the bloody and unsuccessful Easter Rebellion against British rule. It was not until 1922 that the Irish Free State was finally established.

Utilities

Single-phase, 200v-220v, 50-cycle, AC electricity is standard throughout Ireland. Outlets take British-type three-prong plugs. The wiring in many houses cannot take heavy loads. American 60-cycle clocks will not operate satisfactorily in Ireland.

Most types of electrical equipment are available locally; however, they are more expensive.

Food

Food in Dublin is more expensive than in the U.S. Meats, poultry, and fish are sold year round. Green-grocers offer a wider range of imported fruits and vegetables, but prices are higher than at supermarkets. Fresh meats and produce in Ireland pose no special hygiene problems. Canned fruits and juices are available, and good-quality dairy and bakery products abound. Baby food in cans and jars can be found in any supermarket. Although most shopping needs can be met through diligent shopping, bring special spices and condiments to prepare favorite ethnic dishes.

Clothing

Because of the cool damp climate, woollens can be worn most of the year. Even in summer, light cotton clothing is rarely worn. Irish houses are frequently cold compared to those in the U.S. In selecting clothes, include sweaters, gloves, scarves, and sturdy weatherproof coats and footwear. Flannel pajamas and bed socks are desirable for overnight travel and even at home. Rainwear for adults and children can be purchased locally at reasonable prices.

Ready-made clothing of all types is sold in Dublin. Good-quality articles, especially woollens and shoes, are expensive but on par with U.S. prices for similar quality. Narrow shoe sizes are hard to find.

Men: Good-quality, ready-made, and tailor-fitted wool suits can be found at reasonable prices in Dublin. Nonetheless, bring several medium- or heavyweight wool suits, a topcoat, and a raincoat. Although

dark suits are worn for most evening functions, a black dinner jacket (tuxedo) is occasionally required. Tuxedos and other formal wear can be rented or purchased locally.

Women: Department stores and discount stores stock a wide choice of fashions for women, priced according to quality. Comfortable closed walking shoes are invaluable. Boots are preferred by many during the winter. Although you can easily find a wide choice from fashions to shoes and accessories, it is advisable to bring complete wardrobes.

Children: Although quality is good, clothes can be very expensive for growing children. Bring complete children's wardrobes, anticipating larger sizes that will be needed. Good-quality sweaters and rainwear can be bought locally at reasonable prices. School uniforms are required and most items must be purchased at specified stores.

Supplies and Services

Cosmetics, toiletries, cigarettes, home medicines, and drugs are sold locally in considerable variety at prices above those in the U.S. English, French, and a few American brands are sold. Bring special cosmetics and home medicines if preferred, including sufficient prescription drugs to last until arrangements can be made with a local pharmacy. Most essential conveniences commonly used for housekeeping, entertaining, and household repairs are obtainable locally.

All basic community services, such as drycleaning, tailoring, beauty and barbershops, and shoe and auto repairs, are available in Dublin. A few dressmakers are also available. Mechanical services do not measure up to American standards. Delays are common, appointments are a must, and the quality of workmanship varies widely.

Religious Activities

Numerous religious denominations hold regular services in Dublin-Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland



Street in Dublin, Ireland

Courtesy of Thomas Musthaler

(Anglican), Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Greek Orthodox, Christian Science, Congregational, Evangelical, Seventh-day Adventist, Moravian, Society of Friends, Mormon, and Unitarian churches, four Jewish congregations, and the Dublin Islamic Center.

Education

Private primary and secondary schools are good. Instruction is in English. Credits are usually accepted in the U.S. for schoolwork completed in Dublin.

A typical curriculum in a Dublin secondary school includes English, Irish (foreign students are exempted on request), mathematics, geography, history, foreign languages, science, art, music, and physical training. Athletic activities include rugby, soccer, netball, track & field, cricket, hurling, field hockey, swimming, and tennis.

Instruction in dancing, riding, music, and art is available at extra cost.

Depending on the location, many parents cannot rely on public transportation and must drive their children to and from school.

Most American children attend St. Andrew's College. Founded by the Presbyterians, St. Andrew's is now a nonsectarian, coeducational school with a curriculum comparable to those in the U.S., although sequence of coursework follows the Irish system. American secondary students may opt to follow either the Irish School Leaving or International Baccalaureate curriculum during their last 2 years. Credit is easily transferred to U.S. schools. With the aid of a State Department grant, the school has an American teacher of U.S. studies. The Irish grading system is more rigorous. Report cards are meant to be shared

only by the student, parents, and teachers. American college applicants need special guidance in preparing applications that adequately explain the Irish system or their reported grades may often appear low. St. Andrew's College will prepare transcripts for U.S. colleges that explain Irish grades. St. Andrew's is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Ireland's Department of Education, and the European Council of International Schools.

Irish ninth graders must take a rigorous examination called the Junior Certificate. The examination covers a 3-year cycle in mathematics, science, English, history, geography, Irish, and business studies. Although foreign students who have not made the entire cycle may be exempted from the exam, some may choose to take it as much of the ninth year is spent preparing for it.

The 10th year is seen as a decompression year sandwiched between the high pressure Junior Certificate exam and the even more intense Leaving Certificate test held at the end of the senior (12th grade) year of high school. Although the Ministry of Education dictates the subjects covered during the 10th grade, methods of instruction differ from school to school. It is the only opportunity Irish students have to sample many different subjects without the pressure of external examination. The 11th and 12th grades are geared to passing the highly competitive Leaving Certificate, the key to admission to Irish universities. Although foreign students may be exempted from the Leaving Certificate, juniors and seniors should join their Irish classmates in preparing for it. Leaving Certificate studies provide good preparation for the American SAT examinations that are also given in Dublin.

School uniforms are required for students.

Our Junior School. The Junior School has its own principal and specially trained staff. The full range of elementary education subjects is taught: reading, writing, mathematics, environmental studies, art, music, nature study, handwork, Irish, Latin, a basic introduction to continental languages, and computer studies. Project work, physical education, and sports are also an important part of the curriculum.

The final year of the Junior School course is specially designed to prepare pupils for transition to the Senior School.

This transition takes place at the age of 11-12. Saint Andrew's also receives a large influx of pupils from other elementary schools at this stage.

Special Educational Opportunities

Dublin has five universities-Trinity College, University College Dublin, Dublin City University, American

College, Portobello College. Some technical, business, and professional (e.g., medicine, law) courses have higher fees. Ample opportunities exist for continuing education in Dublin through the universities, community and vocational schools, and foreign cultural institutes. A Guide to Evening Classes in Dublin is published each fall and also lists many daytime classes and activities for children. Purchase it at any bookstore or newsstand. In addition to such things as crafts, hobbies, business, and domestic skills, nearly all community and vocational schools offer lessons in Irish. Many schools offer classes on Irish culture, history, literature, and music and dance.

Sports

Despite the changeable weather, the Irish are great sports enthusiasts. Many opportunities exist for the active sportsperson and spectator alike. The Irish Tourist Board, "Bord Failte," has detailed information on sports activities. All equipment and clothing for locally popular sports are sold in Dublin.

Horse racing is a central feature of Irish sporting life. Irish horses have a fine record in events in England and other countries. Several leading courses are within easy reach of Dublin. The world-famous Irish Derby, the Irish St. Ledger, the Guinness Oaks, and other events are held at the Curragh in County Kildare, about an hour's drive from Dublin. The flat racing season is March to November. Steeplechase meetings take place throughout the year. Point to Point meetings are held in the spring. Racecourses within easy reach of Dublin are: Leopardstown, Fairyhouse, Nass, the Curragh, Navan, and Punchestown.

Greyhound racing is well established with many tracks throughout Ireland. Clomnel, County Tipperary, is the home of the Irish Coursing Club. Many thousands of dogs are registered in the Irish studbook each year, and greyhounds are a major Irish export.

Good riding stables are located near Dublin, and dozens more across the country offer both instruction and horses for hire. The Irish Horse Board, "Bord nag Capall," publishes a pamphlet called *Where to Ride in Ireland*.

Fish are plentiful in the rivers, lakes, and coastal waters of Ireland. The most common are lake and sea trout, salmon, and coarse fish. Although the best salmon streams are privately owned and strictly controlled, you can arrange a lease for a specified period at a moderate price. In addition, salmon and trout fishing are free in many areas subject only to the boat and boatman's hire fees. Those traveling to western Ireland for their angling can make all the arrangements, including any required permits, through their hotel or guesthouse. Sea fishing is good all around the Irish coast; the more popular areas are off the coasts of Cork, Mayo, Kerry and Wexford.

Hunting in Ireland usually means fox hunting, but there are also stag hunts and harriers. The season starts in October and ends in March. Club hunting takes place from September to November; these events are held early in the morning and arrangements can be made through a riding stable or the Honorary Secretary of the Hunt.

Shooting facilities in Ireland for sportsmen are limited and strictly controlled. Firearms certificates and hunting licenses are generally issued to visitors who have access to bona fide shooting arrangements or who have made advance booking with a recognized shoot; the number of certificates granted in respect to each shoot is controlled. Excellent shooting grounds, especially in the west of Ireland can be found. For queries on how to obtain a firearm certificate, you may call the Irish Department of Justice at 01-602-8202.

Within 20 miles of Dublin, you can find more than 45 private and public golf courses in all, many situated in splendid surroundings. Visitors



Courtesy of Peter Gareffa

Trinity College in Dublin

are welcome at any club. Membership is difficult to obtain, some clubs have a 12-year waiting list, and is very expensive, since temporary membership fees are nonrefundable. It is possible to play on these courses for modest greens fees. The most popular courses in Dublin are Carrickmines, Elm Park, Killiney, and Portmarnock.

Dublin has many tennis, badminton, and squash clubs. Membership in these can also be expensive and difficult to arrange, and nonmembers are not permitted to use the courts. Public tennis courts are also available, but they can be crowded on weekends and evenings in summer.

Camping, hill walking, and cycling are popular. Access to mountain and moorland trails is free. The Irish Tourist Board has information on campgrounds, national parks and

forests, organized trails, and hostels.

Strong winds and rough seas limit water activities. Swimming is popular among the Irish who are not deterred by the cold water. Dublin also has scuba diving schools and clubs that offer introductory lessons. Yachting is popular for those who can afford it, with centers located in Dublin and Cork harbors. Rowing is more popular than yachting, and numerous rowing clubs abound. The rivers and canals are easily navigated and offer beautiful countryside. You can also hire cruise boats for a splendid holiday on the Shannon River.

Irish hurling, a kind of field hockey, is one of the world's fastest field games. Hockey sticks and head injuries symbolize this rough-and-tumble sport. Camogie, a woman's game based on hurling, is played by many schoolgirls. Gaelic football is

related to rugby and soccer. The annual all-Ireland finals of both hurling and Gaelic football command national attention. Both games are regulated by the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), founded in 1884 and a major force in the national revival movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Handball, played with an extremely fast hard ball, is also a traditional game in Ireland. Many young people play rugby, cricket, and soccer at school and in athletic clubs.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

In and around Dublin are many places of interest to visit. In the oldest part of the city are the Church of Ireland Cathedrals of St. Patrick and Christ Church, and other interesting churches such as St. Michan's. You may visit Dublin Castle, parts of which date to the 13th century, which was the center of

British rule in Ireland for centuries. Many fine 18th-century public buildings are open to the public, including the Bank of Ireland, formerly the Parliament House; Leinster House, seat of the Dail; Mansion House, residence of Dublin's Lord Mayor; the Custom House; Four Courts and King's Inn; the General Post Office; and the earlier Royal Hospital at Kilmainham.

Trinity College, aside from its lovely squares and notable buildings, houses the nation's finest library. Among the famous manuscripts and early printed books is the Book of Kells, a masterpiece of Celtic illumination. Dublin also offers a small number of very interesting museums. The National Museum houses the finest collection of Irish antiquities and an assortment of decorative arts. The National Gallery of Ireland contains an important collection of European paintings, while the emphasis at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery is on changing exhibitions of contemporary work.

The Chester Beatty Library and Gallery of Oriental Art is devoted to the arts of the book and offers changing selections from one of the world's great collections of Islamic and Asian manuscripts. Kilmainham Gaol Historical Museum is the prison that held generations of Irish patriots. Within its walls, the leaders of the 1916 uprising were executed. It reopened in 1966 as a historical museum and has conducted tours.

Several beautiful parks can be found throughout Dublin. Phoenix Park, one of the world's largest urban parks, encloses the Zoological Gardens and the residences of the President of Ireland and the U.S. Ambassador. The National Botanic Gardens are located in Glasnevin in north Dublin. The fine Georgian squares of Dublin—St. Stephen's Green, Merrion Square, and Fitzwilliam Square—are also worth seeing. Well-preserved rows of Georgian houses surround Fitzwilliam and Merrion Squares.

Within an hour's drive of Dublin are many historic sights. Beautifully situated in the Wicklow Mountains are the ruins of the medieval, monastic community of Glendalough. The Hill of Tara, the ancient religious, political, and cultural capital of Ireland, lies north of the city. In a better state of preservation are two great houses—Castletown House and Russborough House; a castle, Malahide Castle; and the magnificent gardens of Powerscourt.

Rising just south of the city, the Wicklow Mountains offer grand scenery of green hills, bogs, forest, lakes, and waterfalls for those who like to hike, cycle, camp, or just go for a day's drive from the city.

Ireland is a small country; you can reach almost any point within a 5-hour drive from Dublin. The roads are paved, but mostly narrow and winding. The Irish countryside offers a change of scenery. The western coastline attracts many tourists with its sea cliffs and low-lying but rugged mountains: the Ring of Kerry, the Cliffs of Moher, and further north, the wild countrysides of Connemara and Donegal. On the Aran Islands off Galway Bay, the everyday language is Irish, and many aspects of traditional life are preserved. Indeed, in the villages and farms, you may glimpse the slower, more traditional lifestyle of the Irish.

Among the sights to explore are many ruined and restored castles such as Blarney, near Cork, with its fabled stone of eloquence; Bunratty, which holds nightly medieval banquets; and the well-preserved stronghold at Cahir. Medieval churches and monasteries include the great complex atop a rocky outcropping at Cashel, the ancient monastic city of Clonmacnoise, the Romanesque church at Clonfert, and the Gothic abbeys of Jerpoint and Holycross. The country is littered with pre-Christian ring forts, stone circles, and tombs. One of the best is Newgrange, 30 miles north of Dublin. At the Craggaunowen Project near Limerick, a neolithic ring fort and island crannog (lake

dwelling) have been completely reconstructed. Many great houses of the 18th and 19th centuries are open to the public, including Muckross House, overlooking the lakes of Killarney, Bantry House, and Westport.

Entertainment

Downtown Dublin has a dozen movie theaters, several of them multiscreen cinemas, showing recent American and British films, usually within a few months of their release.

The Abbey, Peacock, and Gate Theaters are among the best theaters in Dublin, and each presents a new play every month or two. The Gaiety and Olympia also present frequent changing shows ranging from serious dramas to musical reviews and rock concerts. Several small playhouses are active in Dublin and present first-rate theater. During the Dublin Theater Festival in the fall, dozens of foreign troupes perform.

The Dublin Grand Opera Society and Dublin City Ballet are not world-class companies but do provide appealing entertainment. The RTE (Radio Telefis Eireann) Symphony Orchestra performs regularly at the National Concert Hall. Many visiting chamber groups and soloists keep the musical calendar full.

For traditional Irish music, attend major concerts or simply frequent one of the "singing pubs," where informal sessions are regularly held.

Dublin has several cabaret shows, mostly a combination of folk musicians, singers, dancers, and comedians. Choose from among several discos, nightclubs, and ice-skating rinks for an evening out.

The most complete guide to regular and changing events is published in the biweekly magazine, *In Dublin*. A publication by the Dublin Tourism Board, *The Events Guide in Dublin*, is published biweekly and is also a good guide.



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National monument in Cork, Ireland

Many music festivals are held during the year. Among the more interesting are the Wexford Opera Festival, the Kilkenny Arts Week, and the Festival of Music in Great Irish Houses. The Royal Dublin Society's Spring Show, similar to a U.S. county fair, and the Horse Show in August present trade, livestock, and flower displays and some of the finest horse and pony jumping in Europe.

Dublin has many restaurants. Some are expensive, and the quality is generally excellent. Basic meals are wholesome and filling. Many pubs serve lunch and some have evening meals available.

Numerous clubs and classes in Dublin are open for membership and include: hunting, swimming, horseback riding, boating, yachting, shooting, fishing, hurling, Gaelic football, handball, squash, tennis, rugby, soccer, athletic, tenpin bowl-

ing, lawn bowling, cricket, camping, hiking, cycling, dieting, automobile, social, and cultural.

Social Activities

Americans living in Dublin include business representatives, students, spouses of Irish citizens, and many U.S. citizens of Irish background who reside in Ireland.

American women can join the American Women's Club. In addition to regular meetings, the club offers diverse interest groups and courses on Irish cultural heritage and tours.

The International Women's Club formed in 1982. The Club is composed of representatives from the various missions posted in Dublin, foreign women who have resided in Dublin a long time, and representatives from Ireland.

The Irish people are noted for their hospitality and affability. Ties between Irish and American families can be a key feature of Irish American relationships. Social entertainment outside the home usually consists of restaurant dinners or receptions. Members of the Rotary Club and Masonic Lodges can also attend regular meetings.

Cork

Cork, on the River Lee, is a principal port city with a long history of rebellion against English oppression. It is said to date from the seventh century, and was occupied and walled about two centuries later by the Danes. It established allegiance to England in 1172 but, during and after the Middle Ages, experienced much discontent and rebellion. Cork figured prominently in the 1920 fight for independence. Many of its beautiful public buildings were destroyed during the disturbances,

and its lord mayor was assassinated.

Cork, whose old meaning is “marsh,” has a population of approximately 133,000. It is Ireland’s second largest city and a major shipping and brewing center. On Great Island in Cork Harbor, is C  bh (formerly Queenstown), the starting point for the hundreds of immigrant vessels sailing for the New World in the last century.

Cork received its charter in 1185 from Henry II of England, and recently celebrated its 800th anniversary as a city with parades, festivals, regattas, and a full season of drama and music. Historical pageants revived ancient stories and traditions.

The city of Cork offers many attractions, among them noted University College (formerly Queen’s); a fine municipal school of art with renowned galleries; churches and cathedrals, including St. Finn Barre’s, on whose site the original community was established; a fascinating open-air market; and a popular race course. The Royal Cork Yacht Club, the first of its kind in the world, was founded in 1720 at the seaside village of Crosshaven in Cork Harbor; it remains the site of international races and Irish championships today.

A few miles from Cork is the mecca of Ireland’s tourist attractions, Blarney Castle, whose famous Kissing Stone is reputed to bestow the gift of eloquence (or, more specifically, skillful flattery). The castle is in two sections—the narrow tower and battlements and, below, the fortress in whose wall the Kissing Stone is set. The small village of Blarney, now a craft center, was once a linen and wool hub.

A number of market and seaport towns surround Cork, some in the spacious upland country to the northwest, others in the rolling farmlands and along the coast.

Limerick

Limerick, in the southwest of Ireland, is a familiar spot to the hundreds of thousands of travelers who use nearby Shannon Airport. It is a city replete with relics of Ireland’s past, but also a bustling business, dairy, and agricultural center, and a hub for the salmon industry. Limerick is famous for the making of beautiful lace. The population here is about 56,200, but a drive through the narrow, crowded streets gives the impression of a much larger city. During rush hour, traffic often is at a standstill.

Limerick was England’s first stronghold after the Revolution of 1688, and became known as the City of the Violated Treaty, a reference to the oft-violated agreement of political and religious rights which was signed with England in 1691. The Treaty Stone is preserved as a monument to the breached covenant.

Limerick was a Norse settlement in the ninth and 10th centuries, and was chartered in 1197. King John’s Castle, built in the following century, is among the structures remaining from that era. St. Mary’s Cathedral, even older, is another interesting historical spot here. Close to Limerick are Adare, Ireland’s prize-winning village; and the national forest park of Currah-chase, once an estate belonging to the 19th-century poet, Sir Aubrey de Vere.

Galway

Galway, the most Gaelic of the Irish cities, faces the Atlantic on the west coast of the republic. The Spanish influence of its early traders still is conspicuous in much of its architecture and in the colorful dress of its people. Galway and the surrounding area are known for unsurpassed salmon fishing (in the Corrib River) and for the many and extensive oyster beds. An annual international oyster-opening competition, the longest running of Ireland’s festivals, is held at Clarenbridge in County Galway; until recent years,

when the festival became so large that it could no longer be accommodated there, its site was the nearby village of Kilcolgan, on the Weir.

The population of Galway proper is about 50,800. In the midst of the Great Famine of the last century, the town was a teeming way station for immigrants bound for the United States. In earlier times, it was known as the “City of the Tribes” because of the 14 families (or tribes) who settled and developed it. Galway became a flourishing center for trade with Spain and France.

The city itself is the center of what is called the “haunting wilderness of the west.” The surrounding area is Yeats country, and was described by writer Eil  s Dillon during Galway’s fifth centenary celebration in 1984 as a “land of soft mists and silences.” In this part of the country, the Irish language (not generally called Gaelic) is heard often in the shops and pubs and on radio and television. Galway was a major seaport in medieval times but, according to   ras F  ilte (the Ireland West Board of Tourism), the town fell into decline during the next few centuries by backing the losing side in England’s civil wars and other upheavals. The famine of 1846–47 produced such heavy setbacks that it was not until the beginning of this century that Galway began its regrowth toward prosperity and prominence.

Among the city’s many points of interest are St. Nicholas’ Collegiate Church, built in 1320, and known by legend as the spot where Christopher Columbus attended mass before setting sail for America; University College, constituent of the National University of Ireland; Lynch’s Castle, built in 1600 and now housing a bank; the Claddagh, an ancient fishing village across the river; Galway City Museum at the Spanish Arch; and the new Cathedral of Our Lady and St. Nicholas, built in 1965 on the outskirts of the central city.

Across Galway Bay, about 30 miles from the mainland, lie the Aran Islands (Arana Naomh) of Inishmore, Inishmaan, and Inisheer, communities of fishermen and subsistence farmers who live and work much as they did centuries ago. The men still fish in *currachs*, traditional canvas crafts, and the women still spin and weave their wool and knit the famous Aran sweaters which withstand the brutal winds and waters of the Atlantic. Irish is spoken here more than English, and there is a primitive quality to the islands that creates much interest for tourists and native Irishmen alike. The prehistoric architectural remains are in extraordinary condition. Kilronan, on Inishmore, is the chief town. It is possible to reach the islands by boat or air ferry.

Waterford

Waterford, on the River Suir, is a port city in the southeast of Ireland. It has a population of approximately 39,500. Once a walled Danish settlement named Vradrefjord, it is now called Port Láirge in the Irish language. Waterford is probably known best throughout the world for the magnificent and much-coveted lead crystal which is manufactured here, but it also has other major industries, such as meat packing and dairy production.

Waterford has many places of interest. The towers of the Franciscan and Dominican monasteries date to the 13th century, a time soon after the charter of Waterford was issued by King John. There are both Catholic and Protestant cathedrals in the city (episcopal sees are located here) and St. John's College, a Protestant theological seminary. Sections remain of the city walls, built at the time of the Danish invasion, as does a massive fortress erected in the early years of the 11th century.

Each year, Waterford hosts the Festival of Light Opera, drawing visitors from throughout the British Isles and parts of Europe. Other major activities in the area include horse racing and golf at the nearby resort of Tramore.

OTHER CITIES

CASHEL, in County Tipperary, southern Ireland, is famed for its Rock of Cashel, on which are the ruins of an ancient cathedral and tower. Cashel was the seat of the kings of Munster. Legend has it that it was here St. Patrick explained the Trinity by using a three-leaf clover. The town itself is small, with a population of about 2,500, but tourist activity swells its numbers considerably during the summer months.

CAVAN, the capital of County Cavan, is located in northeastern Ireland, about 60 miles north of Dublin. Cavan, situated in a rural county, produces bacon. The town developed around a Franciscan monastery during the 1300s; only the bell tower still stands. Cavan suffered damages in 1690 under repeated attacks by William III's English forces. The city has a modern Roman Catholic cathedral. Its population is around 3,300.

Situated nine miles southeast of Cork, **CÓBH** is a city of 6,590 in southwestern Ireland. It was renamed Queenstown in 1849 to honor Queen Victoria's visit, but resumed its ancient name in 1922. An important port of call for mail steamers and ocean liners, (the *Titanic* made her last port of call here) Cóbh has excellent facilities for docking. On the dock here is memorial to the victims of the *Lusitania*, many of whom are buried in the old church cemetery. The ship was sunk off Kinsdale in 1915 by a German submarine, thus bring the United States into World War I.

DÚN LAOGHAIRE (pronounced Dun Leary), lies six miles down the seacoast from Dublin. It is the main steamer terminus and mail port on the Irish Sea, and is a major sailing and regatta center. It also is the terminus for the car ferry from Holyhead (Wales). Its Martello Tower houses a James Joyce museum, and some of the author's original manuscripts are kept here.

KILKENNY, home of the 16th-century College of St. John, is located in the southeastern part of the country. It has a noted castle and cathedral. Its modern Kilkenny Design Workshops, which encourage and promote the work of Irish designers, have created much interest both in and outside of Ireland. Retail stores connected with the workshops are here in the town, and also in central Dublin. Kilkenny, a parliamentary seat in the mid-14th century, has a population of approximately 10,000.

KILLARNEY is a noted tourist spot in the center of the beautiful lake country. Traveling by car from the city, one can drive through the famous "Ring of Kerry," 110 miles of breathtaking beauty and enchantment, and one of the most spectacular drives in all of Europe. An unusual aspect of this journey deep into Ireland's southwest is the surprise of finding palm trees growing in a country thought to be cool and damp most of the year. The coastline temperatures here are warmed by the Gulf Stream, and subtropical vegetation becomes apparent in the farthest reaches of this corner of the nation. The town of Killarney, which is the urban district of County Kerry, has a population of around 8,000.

TRALEE, 20 miles northwest of Killarney, is a seaport and the capital city of County Kerry. Its population is about 14,000. It was in this city that William Mulchinock wrote the popular ballad, *The Rose of Tralee*, during the mid-1800s.

WEXFORD, in southeast Ireland, is a seaport city of approximately 12,000 residents. The town was long held by Anglo-Norman invaders, and some of its early fortifications remain. An international opera festival is sponsored here annually in late autumn.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The island of Ireland ("Eire" in the Irish language) is divided politically into two parts: Ireland and Northern Ireland. Ireland (informally referred to as the "Republic of Ireland") contains 26 of the island's 32 counties. Northern Ireland contains the six counties in the northeast and has been administered as a part of the U.K. since partition in 1922.

The 26 counties cover 27,136 miles, with the greatest length from north to south being 302 miles and the greatest width 171 miles. Ireland is separated from Britain by the Irish Sea, ranging 60-120 miles across. The central limestone lowland of the island is ringed by a series of coastal mountains. The central plain is primarily devoted to family farming and is also notable for its bogs and lakes. The highest peak is Carrantuohill in Kerry at 3,414 feet. Newcomers are immediately impressed with the beauty and charm of the countryside, which is dotted with historic landmarks and alternating rolling hills and pastures, mountain lake country, and stark sea cliffs. Dublin has a moderate climate. Temperatures range from 16°F to 75°F. The mean temperature during the winter is 40°F; in summer 60°F. Annual rainfall is about 30 inches, distributed evenly throughout the year. Noted for its soft weather, rarely do more than a few days go by without at least a shower. Temperatures occasionally drop below freezing during winter, and light snow sometimes falls. During December, there are about 7 hours of daylight and an average of 1½ hours of sunshine. During summer, the average daily sunshine is 6 hours. Mild winds and fog are common and winds of gale proportion may occur, especially at night, from November to May. Humidity is fairly constant, averaging 78%. The climate is similar to that of Seattle, London, and The Hague.

Population

The population totals 3.62 million. About a million people are in the greater Dublin area, with approximately 480,000 in the city itself. The next largest city is Cork (180,000), followed by Limerick (79,000), Galway (57,000), and Waterford (44,000). A high birth rate and the end of net emigration for the first time since the mid-19th century have led to a remarkably young population with roughly half under age 30. Although English and Irish (Gaelic) are the official languages, Irish is commonly spoken only in small enclaves, called the Gaeltacht, which are located in the south and west. The government is encouraging a revival of the Irish language, which about 55,000 natives speak.

The population is predominantly Roman Catholic (about 92%). The second largest religious group (about 2.3%) belongs to the Church of Ireland, an independent Anglican Episcopal Church.

Public Institutions

After a prolonged struggle for home rule, Ireland received its independence from the U.K. as a free state within the British Commonwealth in 1921. The constitution was revised by referendum in 1937 and declared Ireland a sovereign, independent, democratic state. When the Republic of Ireland Act was passed in 1948, Ireland left the British Commonwealth.

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy, governed by the "Oireachtas" (Parliament) of two houses, an elected Uachtarán (President), who is head of state, and a "Taoiseach" (Prime Minister), who is head of government and holds executive powers. The two houses of Parliament are Dáil Éireann and the "Seanad Éireann." The 166 members of the Dáil called "Teachtaí Dála" or more commonly, T.D's, are elected by vote of all Irish citizens over the age of 18 under a complex system of proportional representation. An election must be held at

least every 5 years. The Dáil nominates the Taoiseach, who selects all other ministers from among the Dáil and the Seanad (but not more than two from the latter). The President, elected by direct popular vote for a 7-year term, formally appoints the Taoiseach.

The Seanad has 60 members, 11 nominated by the Taoiseach, and the rest chosen by panels representing the universities and various vocational and cultural interests. Although the Dáil is the main legislative body, the Seanad may initiate bills and pass, amend, or delay, but not veto, the bills sent to it by the Dáil.

Ministers exercise the executive power of the state and are responsible to the Dáil. The "Tánaiste" (Deputy Prime Minister) assumes executive responsibility in the absence of the Taoiseach. Under the constitution, the cabinet consists of 7 to 15 members. Junior ministers are also provided. The Taoiseach, Tánaiste, and Minister for Finance must be members of the Dáil. The Taoiseach resigns when his government ceases to retain majority support in the Dáil.

The three major political parties are Fianna Fáil Fine Gael, and Labour. Fianna Fáil is Ireland's largest political party and the one that has ruled Ireland more often than any other. Fianna Fáil is currently in a coalition government with the Progressive Democrats, under the leadership of Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, after winning a June 1997 election. The government must call the next election by the year 2002, but also may do so before that time. A merger between Labour and the small Democratic Left was approved by both parties in December 1998.

Ireland considers itself militarily neutral and is not a member of NATO. Since 1973, Ireland has been a member of the European Community.

Irish law is based on English common law, statute law, and the 1937

Constitution. All judges exercise their functions independently, subject only to the constitution and the law. Appointed by the President, they may be removed from office only for misbehavior or incapacity, and then only by a resolution of both houses of the Oireachtas.

Ireland has a multitiered court system. The district and circuit courts have wide civil jurisdiction and, in addition, may try all serious offenses except murder and treason. Most civil and criminal trials take place before a judge and a jury of 12 citizens.

The High Court has original jurisdiction over all matters civil and criminal, but normally handles only appeals from the lower courts and rules on questions of constitutionality in an appeal or a bill referred by the President. Its members also sit on the Central Criminal Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals.

The Supreme Court is the Court of Final Appeal and is empowered to hear appeals from the High Court, the Court of Criminal Appeals, and the Circuit Court, and to decide on questions of constitutional law. Its president is the Chief Justice of Ireland.

Arts, Science, and Education

Traditionally, the Irish have excelled in the literary arts, from ancient Irish sagas and legends to the rich folklore which plays its part in country life. Anglo-Irish writers such as Jonathan Swift and Edmund Burke were active in the flowering of Irish Arts in the 18th century, while the 20th century has produced many writers and poets of note: William Butler Yeats, Seamus Heaney, Frank O'Connor, Flann O'Brien, and the foremost chronicler of Dublin life, James Joyce. Irish dramatists have played an influential role in the development of English-language theater: from Oliver Goldsmith, Richard Sheridan, and Oscar

Wilde, to the 20th-century works of George Bernard Shaw, J. M. Synge, Brendan Behan, Samuel Beckett, and more recently, Frank McGuinness and Martin McDonagh. Each fall, Dublin hosts drama groups from around the world during the Dublin Theatre Festival. During the rest of the year, you may choose from among 6-10 plays each week in the city's large and small theaters.

Music plays a central role in Irish culture. The national emblem is the harp, and Irish folk music continues as a lively tradition. Frequent concerts and recitals of classical music are held throughout the year. The National Concert Hall, which opened in 1981, is the venue for several concerts each week.

Artists in Celtic and early Christian Ireland excelled in metalwork, stone carving, and manuscript painting. Among the finest examples are the Ardagh Chalice and the Book of Kells. The countryside abounds with the archeological and architectural remains of many periods, including megalithic tombs, ring forts of the Iron Age, medieval abbeys, and castles. Around the country, but especially in and around Dublin, are many great houses and public buildings from the 18th century, when architecture and other arts flourished in Ireland.

Scientific research in Ireland is supported by several public and private institutions. The regional universities are active in many fields. The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies specializes in theoretical and cosmic physics; the National Board for Science and Technology is a major source of funding; and the Agricultural Institute is the largest research organization in Ireland.

Two private institutions provide significant support for the sciences. The Royal Dublin Society (RDS) was founded in 1713 to encourage the arts and sciences and to foster improved methods of agriculture and stock breeding. The RDS sponsors a Spring Show devoted to these methods and the famous Dublin Horse Show every August. The

Royal Irish Academy, founded in 1785, promotes research in the natural sciences, mathematics, history, and literature.

The Irish Department of Education provides free primary and secondary education. Most schools are state aided, yet remain private and managed by their individual boards. Almost all have religious affiliations; many are not coeducational. Ireland has two universities: the National University of Ireland (NUI) and Dublin University. NUI has four principal constituent universities: National University of Ireland, Dublin; National University of Ireland, Cork; National University of Ireland, Galway; and National University of Ireland, Maynooth, which is also a seminary and Pontifical University NUI also has two "recognized" colleges: Dublin City University and University of Limerick, which emphasizes applied sciences and business. Dublin University, founded in 1591, has one college, Trinity College, Dublin (TCD).

Other third-level institutions include Dublin Institute of Technology, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, a medical school; the Honourable Society of King's Inns, which trains barristers; and the National College of Art and Design.

Commerce and Industry

The 1990s have been a period of rapid economic development in Ireland. Dubbed Europe's "celtic tiger," the Irish economy in 1999 will likely enjoy the fastest growth of any industrialized nation in the world for a fifth consecutive year (average annual GDP growth has measured 9% since 1994). From being one of the EU's least developed countries in the 1980s, per capita incomes in Ireland have grown from just 69% of the EU average in 1991 to just under 90% of the average by 1998, and now measure an estimated \$21,823. Most commentators attribute Ireland's "economic miracle" to the following factors: the

decade-old “social consensus” on economic policy between employers, trade unions, and successive governments that has ensured modest wage growth and harmonious industrial relations; low corporate taxes and generous grant-aid for foreign investors; a high degree of macroeconomic stability with low inflation and interest rates; Ireland's membership in the single European market and its adoption of the single European currency, the euro, from 1999; and high levels of investment in education and training.

The Irish economy is highly dependent on international trade, with Irish exports of goods and services equivalent to an estimated 93% of GDP in 1998 and imports equivalent to an estimated 81%. In 1998, Ireland had a surplus on the current account of the balance of payments of 2% of GDP. Ireland's industrial structure differs from most other developed countries. Much of Ireland's economic growth in the 1990s is the result of rapid expansion by export-oriented, foreign-owned high-tech manufacturing industries, particularly in pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and computer hardware and software (over two-thirds of Irish manufactured exports are produced by foreign-owned industry). Accordingly, at just under 40% of GDP, manufacturing industry accounts for a much higher proportion of total economic activity in Ireland than most other developed countries. In contrast, nongovernment services, which are dominated by retailing, tourism, and finance, are less developed than elsewhere in the OECD. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which account for around 6% of Irish GDP, has declined rapidly in importance over the last 30 years, although they are still important employers in rural and peripheral regions of the country. Although Ireland has a market economy, state-owned companies in transport, energy, communications, and finance still account for over 5% of Irish GDP. Total public expenditure as a proportion of total income, at an estimated 33% in

1999, is well below both the OECD and EU average.

Although real incomes have improved markedly in recent years, the main benefit of rapid Irish economic growth has been a dramatic increase in new jobs. This has helped reduce unemployment, increase female participation in the labor force, and bring Irish workers living abroad back to Ireland. Unemployment fell to 6.7% in March 1999, down from an average of 15.6% in 1993. The main danger facing Ireland's fast-growing economy is overheating. Shortages of both skilled and unskilled labor contributed to growth in average hourly industrial wages of around 6% in 1998, up from an average growth of 3.6% in 1997. Other economic challenges facing Ireland include widening income disparities caused by rising wages for skilled workers in Ireland's high-tech industries, increasing infrastructure congestion (as evidenced by the traffic “gridlock” in Dublin's streets), fast growth in house prices, and the widening economic divide between the prosperous southern and eastern regions of the country and generally poorer regions along west coast and border areas of the country.

Ireland's economic “golden age” has been accompanied by an intensification of U.S.-Irish economic relations, both in terms of trade and bilateral investment. In 1997, the U.S. overtook Germany to become Ireland's second largest trading partner, behind only the U.K. Total exports from Ireland to the U.S. in 1998 were valued at \$8.7 billion, while total imports into Ireland from the U.S. were valued at \$6.8 billion. U.S. companies operating in Ireland account for much of the fast growth in Irish exports to the U.S. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the stock of U.S. investment in Ireland in 1997 was valued at \$14.5 billion, up from \$8.4 billion in 1995. Furthermore, in 1997 Ireland was estimated to have received almost 25% of all greenfield investment by U.S. companies into the EU that year. Of the 1,500 foreign com-

panies in Ireland in March 1998, the U.S. had 570. These U.S. operations employ almost 70,000 workers in Ireland, which represents a staggering 5% of total employment.

In May 1998, Ireland, along with 10 other EU member states, was confirmed as meeting the requirements for EMU participation. Accordingly, on January 1, 1999, the Irish pound ceased to exist as Ireland's national currency, and the new single European currency, the Euro, became Ireland's official unit of exchange. Irish currency will continue to circulate until the introduction of Euro notes and coins in 2002. Although the Euro will not exist in physical form until 2002, from 1999 on, interbank, capital, and foreign exchange markets will be conducted in Euros. All government debt will be redenominated into Euros, and stock prices will also be quoted in Euros. Retail banks will also be obliged to offer private and corporate customers Euro bank accounts. The loss of national control over monetary and exchange rate policy presents a major challenge to Irish policymakers. Under EMU, changes in wages or employment levels, rather than adjustments to exchange and interest rates, are the primary mechanisms for the economy to react to external economic shocks. For the average Irish citizen, however, this first stage in progress toward EMU has had no concrete immediate effect.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) is the umbrella organization for most of Ireland's trade unions. Since 1987, collective bargaining has occurred in the context of national economic programs negotiated by representatives of government, trade unions, employers, farmers, and other “social partners.” These 3-year programs establish minimum-wage increases and broad economic and social objectives, and have been credited with Ireland's strong economic performance and sustained period of peaceful industrial relations during the 1990s. Just less than half of the Irish workforce is unionized.

Transportation

Automobiles

Dublin boasts dealerships and service facilities for most European and Japanese vehicles. Many drivers prefer smaller vehicles for negotiating the narrow, winding roads. Traffic moves on the left in Ireland, and right-hand drive vehicles prevail, though they are not mandatory. If you import left-hand drive vehicles, you should be aware that not only will driving be more difficult, but also, liability insurance premiums will be higher by about 20%.

Third-party liability insurance is mandatory and must be purchased from a local insurer. Insurers offer discounts for recent clean driving records, so bring a letter from your insurer indicating the length of claim-free driving. Currently, gasoline costs about \$3 a gallon on the local market.

Local

Dublin city bus service is uneven and ceases after midnight. A commuter train line follows the coast north and south of the city. Buses and trains are usually crowded. Taxis are expensive and may be difficult to obtain. Many are radio-dispatched, however, and most are clean and well maintained. Outside of rush hours, taxis may be hailed on the street with varying degrees of success.

Regional

All of the larger cities in Ireland can be reached from Dublin by private auto, rail, or intercity buses within 5 hours. Only intermittent stretches of four-lane highways exist in Ireland. Most roads outside the city are narrow, winding, and need repair.

Ferryboats travel between Dublin and Holyhead (Wales); Rosslare and Fishguard (Wales); Rosslare and Pembroke (Wales); Rosslare and Le Havre (France); Rosslare and Cherbourg (France, March-October only); Cork and Le Havre; Cork and Roscoff (France); Cork and Swansea (Wales).

London is 1 hour by air from Dublin, and flights to the Continent from Dublin are frequent. Delta Airlines, Continental, and Aer Lingus fly directly to Dublin from the U.S.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Modernization of the telecommunications network has been underway to bring an outdated system into line with the high technology being employed in other countries. You can dial directly to about 180 destinations, including the U.S., and contact about 40 more via the operator. Improvements have progressed to such an extent that, except for the more remote areas and parts of Dublin, a telephone can be installed within 6-10 weeks of application.

Mail

Airmail, air express, and surface mail between the U.S. and Ireland is reliable. International airmail between Dublin and New York takes about 8 days, and surface parcels take 4-6 weeks.

Radio and TV

An autonomous public corporation, Radio Telefis Eireann (RTE), operates the radio and TV services with revenue from license fees and advertising. RTE radio broadcasts on three networks nationwide on VHF in stereo-Radio One, 2FM (popular music channel), and Raidio na Gaeltachta/FM3 Music (Raidio na Gaeltachta is the Irish language program, and FM3 MUSIC is a quality/classical music station). Radio One and 2FM also broadcasts on AM nationwide, and Raidio na Gaeltachta also broadcasts on AM in the Irish-speaking areas (The Gaeltacht). There are also many independent radio stations playing a variety of music.

RTE TV is broadcast nationwide on 2 channels-RTE 1 and NETWORK 2. An independent station, TV3, started broadcasting during 1998. The stations broadcast from early morning until approximately 4 a.m. or 5 a.m. weekdays, with extended

schedules on weekends. In addition, with a cable system (available in most parts of Dublin) you can receive two BBC channels, two British ITV (Independent Television) channels, sports, and movie channels.

U.S. TV's will not receive local broadcasts without expensive modifications.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Seven daily papers are published in Ireland, all in English. Most emphasize local and national news, but the Irish Times provides more international coverage than the others. The leading British dailies and the International Herald Tribune appear on Dublin newsstands on the day they are published. A few popular U.S. magazines are also promptly available at the newsstands, e.g., the overseas editions of Time, Newsweek, Scientific American, and Omni.

British journals are freely available. Magazines ordered by U.S. subscriptions are much less expensive but arrive about 3 weeks late by pouch.

Dublin has several good bookstores; some offer secondhand books at reasonable prices. The public libraries are an alternative.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Competent specialists in all fields of medicine and dentistry provide satisfactory services, but their equipment is not always as modern as in the U.S. Obtain special medical or dental treatment before coming.

Drugs and medical supplies of almost every variety are sold locally. Some drugs normally found in the U.S. and other countries are not available.

Public hospitals and private nursing homes provide adequate treatment. Children under 12 are

admitted only to children's hospitals.

Community Health

The sewage system is modern, and community sanitation is good although below that for some U.S. cities. Water is potable and fluoridated.

Food handling is sometimes below U.S. sanitary standards. Because of the cool climate, refrigeration is used to a lesser extent. Meats may be displayed in uncovered cases. Nevertheless, these practices do not appear to present a special health hazard.

Among the general population, rheumatism and arthritis are common. Young children are now vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella with the MMR vaccine at about 15 months. Respiratory diseases such as bronchitis and asthma, glandular infections, and head colds are prevalent. No serious epidemics have occurred in Ireland for several years.

Preventive Measures

Have the triple vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) and TOPV for polio for all children. Immunizations of all kinds are available in Dublin.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport is necessary, but a visa is not required for tourist or business stays of up to three months. For information concerning entry requirements for Ireland, travelers can contact the Embassy of Ireland at 2234 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; telephone: (202) 462-3939, fax: 202-232-5993, or the nearest Irish consulate in Boston, Chicago, New York, or San Francisco. The Internet address of the Irish Embassy is: <http://www.irelandemb.org>.

Americans living in or visiting Ireland are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security in Ireland. The U.S. Embassy in Dublin is located at 42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, tel. (353)(1)668-7122; after hours tel. (353)(1)668-9612/9464; fax (353)(1) 668-9946.

Pets

Ireland has strict quarantine laws. Most pets entering the country must be placed in quarantine for 6 months at the owner's expense. There is only one quarantine facility in Ireland and reservations are necessary and this process can amount to as much as \$4,000. An excellent selection of all breeds of pets, reasonably priced, may be found in Ireland. Importation of certain types of birds is prohibited.

Firearms and Ammunition

Certain types of nonautomatic firearms and ammunition may be imported into Ireland.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the Irish monetary unit is the Euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 Euro. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

All banks in Dublin handle exchange transactions, and many offer Irish pound checking accounts. Banks will cash a personal dollar check, but might delay payment. Dublin has branches of Citibank, Chase Manhattan Bank, Bank of America, and First National Bank of Chicago.

The avoirdupois weight system and long measure are used. Liquid measure is based on the British imperial gallon. Ireland adopted the metric system in 1976 and is gradually eliminating nonmetric measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May (first Monday). . . .	May Bank Holiday*
June (first Monday). . . .	June Bank Holiday*
Aug. (first Monday). . . .	August Bank Holiday*
Oct. (last Monday). . . .	October Bank Holiday*
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

*variable

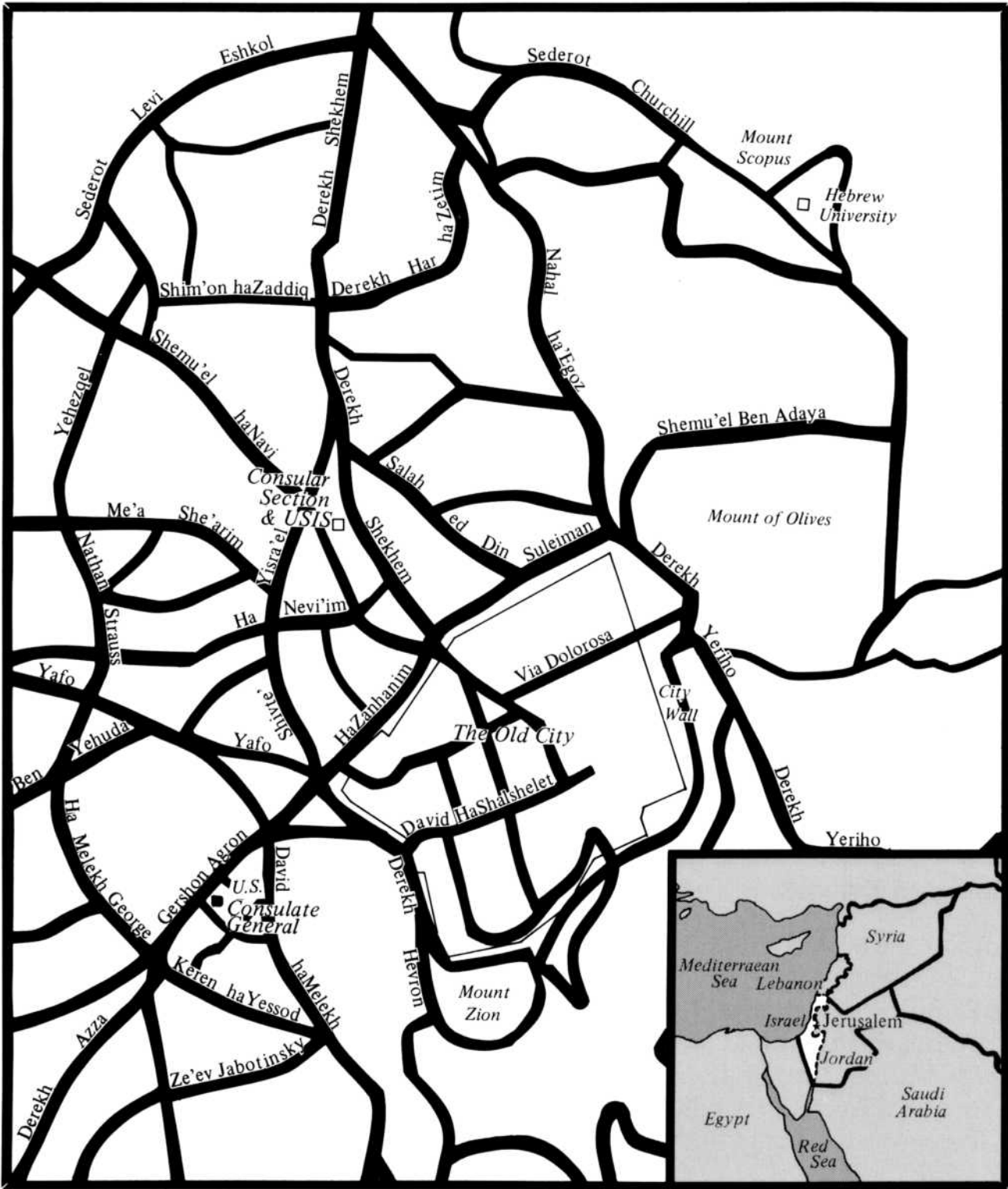
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Jerusalem, Israel

ISRAEL

State of Israel

Major Cities:

Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa

Other Cities:

Acre, Beersheba, Bethlehem, Elat, Hadera, Holon, Nablus, Nazareth, Netanya

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The modern State of **ISRAEL** was created in 1948 after more than a half-century of Zionist efforts to provide a homeland for dispersed Jews. The official design for this new nation was formed in 1917 with the Balfour Declaration, which avowed the British Government's support of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Other countries, including the United States, upheld the declaration and, after World War I, the United Kingdom assumed the Palestine Mandate.

Nazi persecution of Jews during the 1930s and 1940s increased the incentive for immigration to Palestine, and international support grew for the establishment of a Jew-

ish nation. In November 1947, the United Nations adopted a plan to divide the area into Arab and Jewish states but, as the end of the mandate approached, discord between the two segments of the population of Palestine degenerated into civil war.

The State of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948. The years since then have been marked with tension, border disputes, and open warfare—interspersed with cease-fire agreements and internationally sponsored peace talks. Anxieties remain about immediate possibilities for a negotiated solution.

MAJOR CITIES

Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv is Israel's second largest city (after Jerusalem), with a population of 349,000 in a metropolitan area of well over one million. Located approximately midway on Israel's Mediterranean coast, the city is bounded on the north by the small Yarkon River and on the south by the ancient city of Yafo (Jaffa). Between Tel Aviv and the city of Haifa to the north, numerous small communities give the appear-

ance of a megalopolis interspersed with farms and sand dunes.

Tel Aviv was founded in 1909 as a Jewish suburb of the Arab town of Yafo. The city grew rapidly, and quickly became the financial and commercial center of Israel. Banks, insurance companies, and business firms have their main offices in Tel Aviv/Yafo. Manufacturing firms, a new university, research activities, and the international airport give the feeling of living in a bustling metropolis. The pace of the city is Mediterranean with its hectic traffic, sidewalk cafés, and crowded, noisy streets; but the newness and lack of greenery and open space set it apart from most Mediterranean locations.

Tel Aviv began as a garden suburb and, without apparent thought or planning, it expanded. As a result, streets are narrow and buildings are crowded together. Among these are some modern glass and concrete office towers, including the tallest building in the Middle East. In the newer parts of the city, improved construction and planning can be seen. Renovations have been made on the main beach-front, and a mosaic promenade installed. People stroll here on weekend evenings, or sit at the cafés.

The Jewish Sabbath, *Shabbat*, begins late Friday afternoon and ends after sundown on Saturday. All banks and business firms are closed during that time, as is public transportation. Some restaurants remain open. Radio and television stations operate on Saturdays and on Jewish holidays, with the exception of Yom Kippur, when all commercial (and vehicular) traffic ceases. Sunday is a regular working day for Israelis.

The American Embassy is in Tel Aviv. Although Israel claims all of Jerusalem as its capital, the United States and most countries which maintain diplomatic relations with Israel accept only West Jerusalem in a *de facto* sense as the working capital. They regard the international status of Jerusalem as still undecided, pending final peace treaties between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Therefore, most countries maintain their embassies and legations in Tel Aviv, although they transact much of their business with Israeli Government offices in Jerusalem.

Schools for Foreigners

Walworth Barbour American International School in Israel (WBAIS), a U.S. Government-sponsored institution, provides instruction from kindergarten through high school. Enrollment represents the international community; only a small minority are Israeli, many of these recent immigrants are from South Africa, the U.S., and other English-speaking countries.

Hebrew instruction is mandatory in third grade, after which it is optional. Instruction in French can begin in the seventh grade. During the four years of high school, emphasis is placed on college preparation; French and Hebrew are also offered. Science laboratories are well equipped and the teaching staff, chiefly U.S. immigrants, is strong in all departments. Supplementary language instruction and other subjects are available if there is adequate demand. The library, directed by a professional librarian, is adequate, and constantly adds

new books and audio/visual materials.

Extracurricular activities at WBAIS include gymnastics, basketball, soccer, softball, and field hockey. There are a modern playing field, an excellent gym/auditorium, outdoor basketball courts, and an art center.

The school is directed by a board consisting of U.S. Government officials, Israelis, and other American and foreign members.

Several other educational facilities are available to foreign residents of Tel Aviv, including British and French schools. The British school, Tabeetha, sponsored by the Church of Scotland, prepares students for entrance to British universities. The school can offer the equivalent of a U.S. high school curriculum, but the grades available each year vary. French, German, and Hebrew are taught, and classes are conducted in preparation for the British A-level examinations in both the sciences and humanities, depending on demand.

In Israeli society, all children attend compulsory preschool, starting at five years of age. Private preschools, or *gans*, may accept children as young as 18 months. The *gans* are adequate to excellent, and are staffed by well-trained teachers. They operate six mornings a week within a flexible attendance schedule.

Special Opportunities

Tel Aviv offers special education facilities for handicapped children and those with learning disabilities. Walworth Barbour School has provided special teachers and instruction for several students, including blind and moderately learning-disabled children. English-speaking physical and speech therapists are listed with the medical advisor at the American Embassy. Severely handicapped children, however, may have difficulty finding schooling.

Most university courses in Israel are in Hebrew, but the Hebrew Uni-

versity in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv University, and Bar-Ilan University offer some courses in English.

The French and German embassies regularly sponsor both intensive daytime and weekly evening language classes. Teachers are available for many Eastern and Western European languages.

Many opportunities are available for those who wish to learn Hebrew. In addition to embassy language programs, there is a six-month course in Hebrew for the diplomatic community, sponsored by the Tel Aviv municipality. Those with more time or greater dedication can use the *ulpanim*, language-instruction centers run privately or by the Israeli Government; classes average four hours a day, five or six days a week; day sessions last up to six months. Evening courses are also available. The *ulpanim* and the Tel Aviv municipality course teach not only the spoken language, but also reading and writing.

Recreation

Swimming is possible here about eight months of the year and even year round for the hardy. Tel Aviv and nearby coastal suburban areas have beaches, but these are generally crowded and sometimes have tar. Some very attractive beaches are about an hour's drive north or south of the city. Bathing is prohibited at unguarded beaches because of a dangerous undertow, but this does not hinder popular seaside picnics from April to November.

The large, public saltwater pool in Tel Aviv and several freshwater pools in nearby Ramat Gan are usually crowded. Hotels in Tel Aviv and Herzliyya, as well as the Kfar Shmaryahu Community Club, have large pools. The Tel Aviv Country Club, five minutes north of the city, has excellent sports facilities, a double, Olympic-size freshwater pool (heated in winter), 11 tennis courts, and a large gym.

Skin diving, fishing, snorkeling, water-skiing, and scuba diving are also popular in Israel. Diving



Aerial view of Tel Aviv, Israel

© Annie Griffiths Belt/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

classes, with instruction in English, are given in Tel Aviv and at Red Sea resorts.

Small boats can be rented for the day in Haifa and on the Sea of Galilee at Tiberias. Skin divers can explore interesting underwater ruins off the coast of Caesarea. The Gulf of Aqaba, off Elat, has an incredible variety of tropical fish and coral reefs; an excursion by glass-bottom boat to see these is enjoyable. Elat also offers excellent skin diving, water-skiing, scuba diving, and snorkeling.

Israel has a golf course, located at Caesarea, 45 minutes north of Herzliyya. Near Tel Aviv, there are riding stables; a ranch north of Tiberias in the hills of Galilee offers trail riding. One ranch in the hills of Galilee runs guided horseback tours with camping and Western-style dining. Horse shows are frequent.

Hunters find a variety of game, including partridge and wild boar, but duck and geese are scarce. It is illegal to shoot gazelle. Hunters are permitted to shoot up to 10 game birds a day during the September-February hunting season. Guns of any caliber can be licensed in Israel, but hunting with guns of "military caliber" (larger than .22) is prohibited. Twelve-gauge shotguns and .22-caliber rifles are recommended, since ammunition for these sizes is more available in Israel. Ammunition costs more than in the U.S.

The most popular recreational activity here is touring. Israel is rich in history and archaeology. An advantage of a small country is that excursions can be made to almost any location in one or two days. Tour buses throughout Israel take in ruins, Crusader castles, old Roman and Phoenician cities, and

biblical sites, as well as modern towns.

Occasionally, arrangements have been made for volunteers to join archaeological digs. Some search for old coins and artifacts on weekends. An archaeology class in English, including excursions, is offered at Tel Aviv University.

For hiking enthusiasts, a four-day, cross-country march to Jerusalem is held each spring, yielding stories enough to last the rest of the year. Hiking in the mountains of Galilee is excellent; it is especially beautiful in spring, when the view from every mountaintop compensates for the climb. One of the most popular outings is to Mount Tabor, where a monastery at the summit serves meals and runs a guest house (by reservation). One can either drive up the mountain by winding roads or climb straight up; the climb takes about an hour.

Without detracting from the splendor of Jerusalem or the lovely setting of Haifa, the beauty of Israel lies not only in its cities, but in the land. From rich northern greenery to rugged southern deserts, the land is for exploring, strolling, picnicking, and mere enjoyment. For added pleasure, in harmony with the natural beauty are sites with histories dating from the Crusades and biblical times. Some spots connect with Israel's modern history and striking development. Among the places recommended are:

About an hour north of Tel Aviv, on a main highway, is Caesarea. This ancient, partially excavated city was founded by King Herod and was the Roman capital in Palestine. A long aqueduct from Roman times parallels the beach. The Roman theater hosts visiting artists during the summer music festival. Between these two remnants of ancient times is a Crusader city. The wall and moat are almost intact; inside the wall, much original pavement and several buildings have been preserved.

About one-and-a-half hours from Tel Aviv, is Megiddo. Archaeologists have uncovered 20 superimposed cities here. The lowest stratum dates back to the fourth millennium B.C.; the most recent one from the fourth century B.C. Megiddo was an ancient fortress and played a role in defending the country against Thutmose III. Later, it was one of Solomon's "cities for chariots." The Hill of Megiddo in Hebrew is *Har Megeddon*—the biblical Armageddon.

Tiberias, some two-and-a-half hours from Tel Aviv, is a winter resort on the Sea of Galilee. The drive to Tiberias through the hills of Galilee is probably one of the most beautiful in the world. The whole area around Tiberias is famous from the New Testament; Capernaum, Jesus' city, is nearby, as is the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount.

Acre (Akko) is about two hours from Tel Aviv. It is an Arab town and, like

Nazareth, is a reminder that Israel is indeed part of the Middle East. On the Lebanese border, a half-hour north, are the grottoes of Rosh Hanikra. The road heading east along the border is particularly beautiful.

The Galilee is within three hours of Tel Aviv. The area has some of the best scenery year round, and has such interesting sights as the Crusader castle at Montfort, the ancient synagogue at Bar'am, the nature preserve at Tel Dan, and numerous *kibbutzim* which, until 1967, were frequently under Syrian artillery fire. To the east, within the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, are the Banyas Waterfalls, the crater at Birkat Ram, and Mt. Hermon, where skiing is possible several months of the year.

The Dead Sea is the lowest spot on earth. On its southern shore is the infamous Sdom (the biblical Sodom), which is now the site of Israel's Dead Sea Works where salt and chemicals are extracted from the sea. A few miles north of Sdom is the well-preserved and -excavated mountain fortress of Masada, where Jewish defenders held off the Roman siege in the first century A.D. The climb to the top is a must for the hardy, but a cable car is also available. Farther north is the oasis of Ein Gedi—lush greenery amid the desert. A waterfall at Ein Gedi creates a pool which is excellent for swimming.

The Negev. Beersheba, 66 miles from Tel Aviv, is the gateway to the Negev. The city has historical interest as the home of Abraham. To the south are the ruins of Shivta and Avdat. At Avdat, a Byzantine church and Roman acropolis were superimposed on an ancient Nabatean foundation.

In touring and traveling, visitors should not drive through strictly religious towns or sections of cities on Friday night or Saturday, nor drive anywhere on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

Entertainment

In addition to its major theaters, orchestras, and museums, Israel has several repertory theaters as well as amateur and professional groups. Plays are performed in Hebrew, but many are familiar works translated from other languages, and some programs provide an English synopsis. Theater in English is sometimes possible to find from time to time. Internationally known entertainers in all fields appear frequently. Some plays are performed with simultaneous translation in English, available through earphones.

Tel Aviv has several movie theaters, including a drive-in. Recent American and European films are shown in the original language, with subtitles in Hebrew and English or French. To avoid waiting in line to buy tickets, one can buy them in advance from a booking agency located near the U.S. Embassy.

Yafo (Jaffa), directly south of Tel Aviv, abounds in nightclubs, cafés, and other evening diversions. The renovated artists' quarter glows by night; most little shops and galleries in the Old City remain open late into the evening.

The celebrations for Purim, the Feast of Esther, each spring include folk dancing and popular street entertainment, costume parties, and a beaux arts ball in the artists' colony of Ein Hod (near Haifa). A week-long Passover music festival is held at Kibbutz Ein Gev on the Sea of Galilee, and a festival of Christian liturgical music is given at Abu Gosh (near Jerusalem) in May. Each summer, the Israel Festival of Music and Drama brings outstanding groups and individual artists from many countries, especially from the U.S.

The Israelis are friendly and hospitable. They often entertain late in the evening by American standards, and enjoy having guests in for drinks (most Israelis prefer juice or soft drinks to alcohol), conversation, and coffee. There are many opportunities for resident foreigners to



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Western Wall and Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem

attend *seders*, *bar mitzvahs*, and weddings.

Most Israelis are not particularly observant of religious customs, but they may have special sensitivities nonetheless. Consideration should be taken in entertaining them, such as providing alternatives to pork and shellfish, and refraining from issuing invitations on Jewish holidays. If Israelis decline food or drink at any time, it is not an insult, but merely a matter of conscience. It is entirely acceptable to inquire in advance whether one's guests, either Jewish or Muslim, observe dietary restrictions.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem, Israel's capital and largest city, is situated in the Judean Hills about 40 miles from the Mediterranean, at an altitude of 2,710 feet. The physical setting is dazzling. On a clear day it is possible to look to the east and see the Dead Sea (1,300 feet below sea level), the Jordan Valley, and the Mountains of Moab.

Jerusalem's population is about 622,000 (including East Jerusalem, annexed in 1967). It includes a variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds—Palestinian Arabs,

Israelis, Armenians, Druze, Samaritans, and Bedouins. The languages are as varied as the population. Hebrew and Arabic serve as the official languages, and English is the most commonly spoken foreign tongue. Most street signs are printed in these three languages.

Present-day Jerusalem is divided into three areas: The Walled City (with its Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Armenian quarter) and West (Israeli) and East (Arab) Jerusalem.

The Walled City, a relatively small area covering less than a square mile, is the religious, emotional, and touristic heart of Jerusalem. Contained within the enclosure are the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, David's Tower, Via Dolorosa, Dome of the Rock, Al Aqsa Mosque, and other religious, historic, and archaeological sites.

The narrow streets and bazaars of the Walled City are often thronged with pilgrims, tourists, and residents going about their daily business. Immediately to the east, across the Kidron Valley, is the Mount of Olives, the lower reaches of which contain the Garden of Gethsemane.

West Jerusalem is that part of the city controlled by the Israeli Government prior to June 1967, and has a population that is almost entirely Jewish Israeli. It is a mixture of older stone houses, vast modern housing developments, government ministries, and educational and cultural institutions. Most shops, theaters, restaurants, and commercial institutions are located here.

Jerusalem was proclaimed the nation's capital in a 1950 resolution, but is not considered as such by the United Nations. The American Foreign Service maintains its embassy in Tel Aviv and, in addition, has one of its two independent consular posts in Jerusalem—the only other is in Hong Kong. The U.S. consular district in Jerusalem also includes the West Bank of the Jordan River. Most of the Arab population in East Jerusalem and the West Bank is

Muslim, but substantial concentrations of Christians live in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah and environs.

Jerusalem has vast emotional and symbolic significance for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is a short walk from the Dome of the Rock (the third holiest site in Islam) to the Western Wall (the western wall of the Second Temple platform—once known as the Wailing Wall), and to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (the site of Christ's tomb). Religion is an important element in city life, and religious holidays of the three major faiths are felt and observed as in no other city on earth. The Palestinian population is about 93 percent Muslim (mostly Sunni) and approximately seven percent Christian (of various sects, but mainly Greek Orthodox). Judaism, in varying degrees of orthodoxy, is practiced by the Jewish population.

Jerusalem contains many of the most important Jewish, Muslim, and Christian shrines in the world. The Walled City is a showplace of outstanding examples of Islamic, Byzantine, Crusader, and Ottoman architecture. A wealth of museums exists, ranging from the general interest Israel Museum (which includes an extensive archaeological display, sculpture garden, and children's wing) to special interest collections (archaeological, Islamic, and Palestinian) and Yad Vashem, a museum commemorating Holocaust victims. Windows painted by Marc Chagall, depicting the 12 tribes of Israel, are displayed at Hadassah Medical Center in Ein Kerem, on the outskirts of Jerusalem. The Rockefeller Museum offers a lecture series, and the Israel Museum hosts programs, films, and classes for children and adults.

Archaeological sites, excavated and unexcavated, are abundant throughout the area. The Albright School of Oriental Research, the British School of Archaeology, and the Institute of Archaeology at Hebrew University are but a few of the many centers located in Jerusalem.

Theological centers and schools, such as the Tantur Ecumenical Institute and the American Institute for Holy Land Studies, defy enumeration. École Biblique (famous for the Jerusalem Bible) has specialists in a number of fields, including archaeology and the Bible. Most of these institutions offer formal and informal courses and lecture series on a variety of topics.

The main campuses of Hebrew University, Hebrew Union College, and the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts are located in Jerusalem. Most courses are taught in Hebrew. On the West Bank, Bethlehem and Bir Zeit Universities offer many courses in English; Najah University in Nablus and the Hebron University offer courses in Arabic.

Recreation

About a million tourists visit Israel annually, and most find their way to Jerusalem. There are scores of hotels, hospices, hostels, shops, travel agencies, and restaurants catering primarily to the tourist trade.

The climate is mild, with a long summer (May to October) of warm days and cool nights and a chilly, often rainy winter (November to March). Summer temperatures seldom rise above 85°F. Humidity is low and mildew is rare. In winter, temperatures average 55°F, with occasional drops to freezing. Sometimes Jerusalem gets a *ham'seen*, or sandstorm. These occur infrequently and are not as strong as in other parts of the Middle East.

The drive from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem through the Judean hills is beautiful, with several interesting places to stop along the way. The countryside changes with every season: barren in winter, bright with green fields and blossoming flowers in spring, and parched in summer. In the city itself is the Israel Museum with its collection of Dead Sea Scrolls, the Billy Rose Sculpture Garden, and fascinating exhibits within the main buildings. The Israeli Government buildings,

Hadassah Hospital, the Kennedy Memorial, Mt. Herzl, and the scale model of the old city are all worthwhile. Mt. Zion, with King David's tomb and the room of the Last Supper, are outside the confines of The Walled City.

Plane connections from Ben Gurion Airport (about an hour's drive from Jerusalem at Lod, near Tel Aviv) are available to principal European cities, Cyprus, and the U.S. Travel by ship is also possible from Israel to Cyprus and to various other Mediterranean ports.

Sight-seeing, picnicking, and amateur archaeology are by far the most popular pastimes in and around Jerusalem, where short, half-day trips can be planned. Many organized tours are available for a modest fee; these tours go to almost every part of the country, and guides are usually competent.

Numerous places of archaeological and religious interest are within a few hours' drive of Jerusalem. Bethlehem is a 15-minute ride from the city. Nablus, home of the Samaritans and the site of the Roman city, Sebastia, is an hour's drive. Jericho, one of the world's oldest inhabited cities and a winter resort for Jerusalem's Arabs, is located near the Dead Sea, less than an hour away.

The religious sites at Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee are less than three hours from Jerusalem by bus or car. The ancient port of Caesarea, with extensive ruins, a bathing beach within its Old City, and an excellent golf course, is two hours away; Elat (or Eilat), five hours by car or bus or 40 minutes by plane, is a popular Red Sea resort, particularly in the fall or spring when the weather is not so warm.

Both Israel and the West Bank abound in historical sites ranging from the biblical to the Crusader period. Jericho, Masada, Lachish, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Sebastia, Caesarea, Ashkelon, Hebron, and Acre (Akko) are a few of the many places of significance for those interested in the area's history. Most can

be seen in a day; reasonable and adequate hotel facilities can be found for longer trips.

Traditional Palestinian handicraft activity (embroidery, olive wood carving, mother-of-pearl, and gold work) are centered around the Jerusalem and Bethlehem areas.

Except for soccer, which is quite popular, organized team sports are not common in Jerusalem. The YMCA and YWCA (and YMJA and JMWA) do, however, offer excellent facilities for swimming, tennis, squash, volleyball, basketball, and gymnastics. Membership fees are modest. These organizations have summer day camps for children seven to 14 years of age with swimming, gym, outdoor games, handicrafts, and outings.

Several attractive, clean swimming pools are in and around Jerusalem. Hotel pools offer seasonal or daily memberships. Ocean bathing at Mediterranean resorts (about an hour or two from the city) is popular. Resorts on the Dead Sea are open all year.

Horseback riding is available in Jerusalem. Hunting for birds and wild boar is permitted in Galilee and Golan, but not on the West Bank. Snorkeling and scuba diving are available at Elat, where the coral reefs and fish are magnificent.

Entertainment

Jerusalem's first-class concert hall features performances by internationally renowned artists and by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. There are also several art galleries, theaters, and dance studios in the city.

Movies are a popular form of evening entertainment. The city's movie theaters are somewhat spartan, but feature many American and English films. There is also a Cinematheque, and the Israel Museum and the Jerusalem Theatre run art films.

Israel's Philharmonic Orchestra plays regularly in the Jerusalem

Concert Hall during winter and spring, and features many world-famous conductors and renowned guest artists throughout the season. The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and excellent chamber music groups also perform.

Although the city is not generally considered a gourmet's paradise, several hotels and restaurants are satisfactory. Some of the larger hotels offer unique atmosphere and good cuisine; a few have piano bars, or dancing on designated evenings.

Photography is popular in Israel. Local processing of black-and-white film is satisfactory, but color film should be developed in the U.S. Photographers should be wary of taking pictures of Orthodox Jews or traditionally dressed Arabs, especially if they are at worship.

A number of holidays in both Israel and the West Bank offer interesting festivities. In the Arab sector of Jerusalem, the pilgrimages and ceremonies of the Eastern and Western churches during the Christmas and Easter seasons are impressive, and the Samaritan Passover at Nablus is an unusual event. In Israel, Purim (or Carnival) is celebrated by young and old in costume. Passover is commemorated by *seder*, or ritual family dinner.

A substantial American community lives in Jerusalem and on the West Bank. It includes American Jews immigrating to Israel, U.S. citizens of Palestinian-Arab ancestry who have come here to retire, and Americans who are in Jerusalem temporarily on work-related assignments or for religious or cultural reasons. Because of the variety in backgrounds and interests, this community is loosely knit.

Haifa

Haifa is in northwest Israel, about one-and-a-half hours from Tel Aviv. The nation's principal port, with a current population of 264,000, it spreads inland from the Bay of Haifa up the western slope of Mount

Carmel. The view of the city and the bay from above is unforgettable.

Most of Israel's heavy industry is concentrated in Haifa—steel mills, an oil refinery, chemical plants, and cement and glass works. It is also the site of a naval base. Haifa was called Sycaminum in ancient times, but its most interesting history dates from just after World War II, when it was the center of illegal Jewish immigration into Palestine.

Among the places of interest here are the Museum of Antiquities, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Ethnological and Folklore Museum. The Technion, a technical institute and Israel's premier engineering school was established in 1924 and Haifa University was founded in 1963. The world headquarters of the Baha'i faith are located above Haifa, within extensive gardens.

OTHER CITIES

ACRE (in Hebrew, `Akko) lies on the Mediterranean, nine miles northeast of Haifa. This seaport's economy is comprised of light industry, steel rolling mills, and fishing. The last stronghold of the Crusaders, Acre was the capital of the Latin Kingdom from 1191 to 1291. The Hospitaller Quarter here contains one of the world's oldest buildings, the Crypt of St. John, dating to at least the mid-13th century. Today called Crusader City, the subterranean structures were unearthed in the 1950s and 1960s. The Bedouin sheikh, Daher el-Omar, built a virtually impregnable fortress over its remains, and restored Acre's walls, some of which still stand. Napoleon was forced to abandon his eastern campaign when he met with stiff resistance in the city after piercing its walls in 1799. The old prison of the British Mandate era now houses a Museum of Heroism; the Municipal Museum has ancient archaeology and folklore collections. On the edge of town is the burial ground of the prophet of the Baha'i faith, Baha'u'llah (1817–1892), who spent the last years of his life in exile

here. Acre has been described as dilapidated, with an unsanitary appearance. Its population is approximately 46,000.

BEERSHEBA (in Hebrew, Be'er Sheva; in Arabic, Bir es Saba), "the City of Abraham," is the capital of the Southern Region, situated 45 miles southwest of Jerusalem. With approximately 160,000 residents, it is a busy, modern industrial and educational center, and the largest city in the Negev, a desert region. Chemicals and glass are its main products. Ben Gurion University opened here in 1965, and has been the site of important negotiations with Egypt. Israel targeted the area for settlement in the late 1940s; today Beersheba has a futuristic look. History and tradition are preserved in Tel Sheva, or biblical Beersheba, where tourists visit excavations and the Museum of the Desert. The Hebrew patriarch Abraham is said to have pitched his tent on the *tel* (a mound formation marking an ancient city), eight miles outside of town. Abraham's Well is a tourist stop, as is the Bedouin camel market, held Thursday mornings.

BETHLEHEM, the birthplace of Jesus Christ, is located a little over 6 miles south of Jerusalem. Once a stopping place on an ancient caravan route, the town hosted a variety of cultures, such as Canaanite, Byzantine, Arab, Islamic, Persian, Turkish, and later, British. The artistic and religious traditions of these various groups can be seen in the varied architectural styles around town.

The Church of the Nativity, located in Manger Square at town center and believed by many to be built on the actual site of Jesus' birth, is the one of world's oldest operating churches. Other sites of note include the Milk Grotto Chapel, a shrine to the Virgin Mary, and Rachel's Tomb, one of Judaism's most sacred shrines. Visitors can also walk through the Shepherds' Field in Beit-Sahour, believed to be the site of the angel's announcement to the shepherds of the birth of Jesus. Solomon's Pools, which have pro-

vided Bethlehem and Jerusalem with water throughout the past 2000 years, are nearby as are several desert monasteries begun by early Christians.

Today, Bethlehem is primarily a farm market town which is also well-known for industries in olive wood carvings and mother-of-pearl jewelry.

Several bus tours are offered through the city, many originating for Jerusalem, which is only about 40 minutes away. Both guided and self-guided walking tours are very popular in town. The population of Bethlehem is about 137,286 (1997 est.).

ELAT (Eilat), 212 miles from Tel Aviv, is the southernmost point in Israel and its only port on the Red Sea. The harbor is bordered on both sides by mountains: the Sinai range on one side and the Jordanian mountains of Edom on the other. The city, with a population of more than 43,000, is a major tourist attraction and winter resort with swimming, boating, water-skiing, fishing, skin diving, and a world-famous aquarium and underwater observatory. Just south of Elat in the occupied Sinai desert, is a Scandinavian-type fjord and the beautiful Coral Island. Farther along the coast of the peninsula, down to Sharm-el-Sheikh, are fine beaches with tropical fish and coral, for swimming and outstanding snorkeling and skin diving.

HADERA, located 26 miles south of Haifa, is a principal service center for nearby villages, and a processing hub for local agricultural products. Jewish settlement groups founded the community in 1890. Malaria killed many of the settlers, but a few survived to drain the marshlands. These were breeding grounds for the mosquitoes and source of the Arabic name, Hadra, meaning "the green one." The ancient Turkish *khan*, or rest house, near the central synagogue, has an exhibit of pioneer-era history. The current population is 76,000.

HOLON, in central Israel, has been a city since 1941. It is part of the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, and in recent years has grown considerably; it now has a population of 163,000. Holon is noted particularly for its silverware, and for the textile factories which contribute to its expanding economy.

NABLUS (also spelled Nābulus; in Hebrew, Schechem) is the largest city in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, with an estimated population over 80,000. Situated 30 miles north of Jerusalem, this is the religious center of the Samaritans, as well as the focal point of Arab nationalism in the region. Nearby, on the eastern slope of Mount Gerizim, is Jacob's Well, where Jesus met the woman of Samaria. In the same area, German archaeologists discovered remains of the biblical Sichem on Tel Balata. Other prominent sites include the mosques of Jāmi` al-Kābir and Jāmi` an Nasr.

NAZARETH (in Hebrew, Nazerat; in Arabic, An-Nāsira), is roughly 45 minutes from Tiberias, not far from the Sea of Galilee. It is the largest Arab and Christian town in the country and, with dozens of New Testament related places, the most visited city by Christians. However, the town's history was far from romantic.

The town was first settled during the period 600-900 BC, but was too small to be included in the list of settlements of the tribe of Zebulun (Joshua 19:10-16), which mentions twelve towns and six villages. The name is also missing from the 63 towns in Galilee mentioned in the Talmud. Archeological excavations show that Nazareth was merely a small agricultural village settled by a few dozen families. Today, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims come each year to this town of only about 56,000 residents.

The Basilica of the Annunciation is one of the grandest and most popular sites in Nazareth. It contains the Grotto of the Virgin, believed by the Roman Catholics to mark the site of the Virgin Mary's maiden home

and, possibly, where the angel announced to her that she was to be the mother of Jesus. Nearby is the Church of St. Joseph, which is believed to be the site of the Joseph's carpentry workshop and the home of the Holy Family. The Church of St. Gabriel is built above a spring that connects to St. Mary's Well, just across the street. In the Greek Orthodox tradition, this is the site of the annunciation. Mensa Christi (Jesus' Table) is believed to have been where Jesus' celebrated his last supper with his disciples. Also of note is the Synagogue Church, which is not actually a synagogue but is believed to be the site where Jesus preached as a young man.

Several Muslim sites are within the city as well. The El Abyad Mosque was the first to be built in the city (1812). The tomb of Abdullah et-Fahoum, the governor of Ottoman Nazareth and builder of the mosque, is located in the courtyard. The Maqam Shihab El-Din is a shrine to the nephew of Saladin. The Maqam Nabi Sa'in marks the highest point of Nazareth, where both Moslems and Christians used to come to make religious vows and oaths.

Walking tours, either guided or self-guided, offer a chance to enjoy some of the natural beauty of the city and its surrounding area as well as its historic sites.

The suburban Jewish municipality of Nazerat Illit (Upper Nazareth) was built in 1957 on hills overlooking Nazareth. It has a panoramic view of the city below and houses the Northern Region's administrative buildings. Residents are employed in auto assembly, food-processing, and textile plants. East of Nazareth on the Tiberias road is Cana, where Christians believe Jesus performed his first miracle. First-time visitors to the Nazareth area often leave dismayed by the crowds, noise, traffic, and commercialism.

NETANYA (also spelled Natanya), with a population of approximately

170,000, is a fast-growing resort and industrial center. Known as "the Pearl of the Sharon," it lies on the Mediterranean, 19 miles north of Tel Aviv. Netanya was founded in 1929 by citrus growers and named after Nathan Straus (1848–1931), the American philanthropist and one-time owner of Macy's department store. The city became urbanized in the 1930s, when European diamond-cutters fled persecution. Now this is the diamond-cutting capital of Israel, housing many workshops and showrooms. An industrial district here has textile mills and factories. Tourism also plays a large role in the local economy; the city's seven miles of bathing beaches, lined with a landscaped promenade, are a source of great civic pride. A "Meet the Israeli at His Home" program offers visitors a chance to get to know residents in their homes over a cup of coffee. Regular bus service and *sheruts* (taxi shuttle service) provide transportation to other parts of the country.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Israel is a narrow strip of land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, wedged between the sea and the Jordan Valley. About the size of New Jersey, the country is 280 miles long and varies from 10 to 41 miles wide, with a total area of 8,000 square miles.

Since June 1967, Israel has administered the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Golan Heights, and Gaza. The highest point within the pre-1967 boundaries is Mt. Hermon, 3,963 feet; the lowest point is also the lowest point on earth—the Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below sea level.

The climate varies considerably. The coastal plain has wet, moderately cold winters with temperatures of 38°F to 55°F; a beautiful

spring; a long, hot summer (80°F to 95°F); and a cool, rainless fall. Humidity in Tel Aviv is high, adding discomfort to the hot summers. Jerusalem, which is inland and approximately 2,500 feet above sea level, is drier. Thus, while Jerusalem is just as hot as Tel Aviv, it tends to be more comfortable. The inland hills are cooler than the plains and may have snow in winter. The southern section, the Negev, is a hot, barren desert. The only rain in Israel falls during winter and spring, usually in heavy downpours and thunderstorms. After the rainy season, drought becomes serious. As much winter rain as possible is held for irrigation; water from springs and rivers is also diverted for this purpose.

Sandstorms, the *sharav*, or *ham'seen*, are quite common during spring and summer. This hot, parching wind from the inland desert carries with it fine sand. The sun becomes brassy, and the temperature may climb as high as 100°F in Tel Aviv, and higher in the Negev. July and August are generally the most uncomfortable months. Pleasant, warm weather usually extends into early November. Insects are abundant; scorpions are found in the Tiberias area, and there are poisonous snakes in the Negev. None presents a major problem.

Population

Israel's population, excluding the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, is about 2.1 million. 80.1 percent are Jews, 14.6 percent Muslim, and 2.1 percent Christian. Jews are 20.8 percent native born; 32.1 percent are from Europe, America, and Oceania; 14.6 percent from Africa; and 12.6 percent from Asia. The literacy rate is 95 percent.

Since 1989 there has been a huge influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union. Israel faces the problem of providing the newcomers with housing, jobs and education.

Most of the Arab population lives in the Galilee and in villages along the

border between Israel and the occupied territories. Nazareth is the largest primarily Arab town within pre-1967 borders. An additional one million Arabs reside in the cities and villages of the territories. Bedouins still live in the Negev near Beersheba and in other southern areas.

In some Arab and Druze villages of the north and among the Bedouin in the south, many old, traditional Palestinian ways survive, little changed either by the British Mandate or by the State of Israel.

The people who live in Israel come from many parts of the world. Although the majority learn Hebrew and are quickly absorbed into the life of the country, their diverse origins are apparent. The most striking evidence is the variety of languages spoken: English, German, French, Yiddish, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Russian, Polish, Spanish, and Latino. Hebrew and Arabic are the official languages of the country, but many Israelis speak excellent English.

The government welcomes Jews from all over the world. Immigrants are taught Hebrew in *ulpanim*, intensive courses operated by the government. The *ulpanim* are only one arm of a phenomenally successful revival of the Hebrew language; it is also taught in schools and during compulsory military service. Virtually everyone speaks Hebrew but, for some 50 percent of the population, it is the second or third language.

Government

Israel is a parliamentary democracy with supreme authority vested in the *Knesset*, a unicameral legislature of 120 members. *Knesset* elections are held every four years, or more frequently in the event of a cabinet crisis, which leads to a *Knesset* vote for new elections. For electoral purposes, the country is treated as a single national constituency. Each party provides a slate of 120 candidates, and *Knesset* seats are apportioned according to each

party's percentage of the total vote, starting at the top of the lists.

The president of Israel, currently Moshe Katzav, is chosen for a five-year term by the *Knesset*; his duties are largely ceremonial and nonpartisan. The Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, is elected by the people.

The Cabinet is responsible to the *Knesset*. Ministers are usually members of the *Knesset*, although nonmembers may be appointed. As no political party has commanded a majority in the elections, all cabinets have been coalitions.

Civil and religious courts serve the three major Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities. Religious courts have exclusive jurisdiction concerning marriage and divorce, which they decide according to their own religious laws.

Since the Israeli Government considers Jerusalem the country's capital, most Israeli Government ministries are located in that city. The *Knesset* (parliament) is also in Jerusalem, as are the official residences of the president and prime minister.

Jerusalem's Role

Before the June 1967 hostilities, the eastern sector of Jerusalem and all of the West Bank of the Jordan River were governed by the Kingdom of Jordan. When Israeli Defense Forces overran this territory in 1967, the West Bank was placed under military government and is still considered "occupied territory." The Arab sector of Jerusalem was, however, incorporated into the State of Israel and is now considered by Israel to be an integral part of the state. Arab Jerusalemites retain their Jordanian citizenship and passports, but are considered by Israel to be "residents" of Israel. The administration of the enlarged city is entrusted to the Jerusalem municipality.

While the U.S. has had consular representation in Jerusalem for

over 100 years, the post's present status in the city is based on the 1947 U.N. "Partition of Palestine" resolution. This resolution divided Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Jerusalem, because of its unique religious and historical significance, was not included in either state. The city was set aside as a *corpus separatum*, an international area under the aegis of the United Nations.

The "Partition of Palestine" resolution was never implemented. Immediately after the termination in 1948 of the British Mandate in Palestine, war broke out between Arabs and Israelis. At the conclusion of the hostilities, Jerusalem was divided, with Arab forces in control of The Walled City and the suburbs to the north and east, and Israeli forces in control of West Jerusalem.

This division of Jerusalem was recognized *de facto*, but never *de jure* by the U.S. Government and most of the international community, the rationale being that the resolution of the status of Jerusalem should be determined through peaceful negotiation between Israel and Jordan. Determined to avoid any step that might prejudice the outcome of such negotiations, the United States maintained its embassy in Tel Aviv (where Israel initially established its government), and left the consulate general in charge of representing American interests in the divided city of Jerusalem.

The *de facto* division of the city continued until the Six-Day War in June 1967, when the Israeli Defense Forces conquered the entire city of Jerusalem and the West Bank of the Jordan River. Shortly after the war, the *Knesset* passed legislation which, by administrative decree, enlarged the Jerusalem municipal boundaries to include what was formerly Arab Jerusalem, as well as areas of the West Bank.

Fourteen years later, in 1981, Israel formally annexed the expanded city. The U.S. recognizes neither the expansion nor the annexation as legitimate; it has made clear its

belief that Jerusalem should be a united city within which would be available free access to the holy sites by people of all faiths and nationalities.

Israel's flag is white, with two horizontal stripes of blue. In its center is the Shield of David.

Arts, Science, Education

Israel's cultural, scientific, and educational institutions have played a significant role in blending a population of mixed geographic and cultural backgrounds into one nation.

Free, primary education is compulsory until age 15. Secondary education, which is not compulsory, is also free. Most schools are state-operated, but many primary and secondary schools are run by Jewish and Christian groups. The major universities are the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv University, Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, and the Israel Institute of Technology (Technion) in Haifa. Other important schools are Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, the University of Haifa, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beer-sheba, the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts in Jerusalem, and the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem.

Israel, enjoying a worldwide reputation in the sciences, can boast of one of the highest levels of scientific manpower and competence in the world. Israel's principal private research institutions are the Weizmann Institute, which offers graduate degrees in basic and applied sciences and in science education; Hebrew University; and the Technion.

Tel Aviv provides Israel's liveliest cultural life, with publicly supported theaters and many small off-Broadway type theaters. Most productions are in Hebrew.

The Israel Philharmonic, under the direction of Zubin Mehta, is one of

the world's top orchestras. Its home is the Frederic R. Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv, but regular concerts are also given in Haifa and Jerusalem. Season tickets usually are sold out each year, with some 24,000 subscribers in Tel Aviv alone. Occasionally tickets are available for individual concerts, as well as for special performances not covered by season tickets.

Other symphonic orchestras are the Jerusalem, Haifa, and Galilee Symphonies. Chamber ensembles include Tel Aviv's Israel Chamber Orchestra, the Beersheba Orchestra, and the Holon Chamber Orchestra. Tel Aviv has several internationally known chamber groups, including the Yuval Piano Trio, the Tel Aviv String Quartet, and the Israel String Quartet.

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem and the Tel Aviv Museum are the principal public art museums in the country. Also, innumerable works are found in other sites—from the Chagall stained-glass windows at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem to modernistic sculpture dotting the countryside. Private art galleries abound in main cities and smaller towns. Some excellent small art and archaeological museums can be found in about 10 *kibbutzim*. Safed, Ein Hod, and old Yafo (Jaffa) are considered special art colonies.

The Israel Museum also houses the outstanding collection of Dead Sea Scrolls, plus Jewish ceremonial objects, and archaeological finds.

Tel Aviv's Museum Haaretz includes glass, ceramics, numismatic, ethnological, science, and technology museums, as well as the Archaeology Pavilion, a prehistory museum, and a planetarium. The Archaeology Museum, in a former Turkish bath in old Yafo, contains many local unearthed findings.

Beth Hatefutsoth, the Diaspora Museum, on the campus of Tel Aviv University offers visitors a look at 2,500 years of Jewish history in excellently arranged contemporary exhibits.

Commerce and Industry

From the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 until the 1973 Israel-Arab war, the nation enjoyed one of the world's highest growth rates. The economy was characterized by rapid development, with Gross National Product (GNP) surging upward, sometimes at rates in excess of 10 percent a year in real terms. The pattern of rapid growth was necessary for the absorption of large numbers of immigrants and the building of a modern industrialized society. Large inflows of capital, mostly from the world Jewish community, permitted Israel to develop while consuming more than it produced. Israel has only limited natural resources and, until recently, no normal economic relations with its neighbors. Therefore, the nation wisely emphasized the development of a well-trained work force. The production base was built with emphasis on exports to Europe and the U.S. Substantial progress was made, and continues to be made, in developing these markets.

A major problem of successive Israeli administrations has been the government budget. It is divided roughly into three parts—defense, domestic and foreign debt repayment, and the remainder of government outlays (including welfare spending). Considering Israel's security situation, the government has found it difficult to cut defense spending over the years. Debt repayment must be made on time if Israel is to maintain its access to capital markets. In bargaining over the remaining one-third of the budget, the Israeli Government has run into the same domestic political roadblocks that have plagued most other Western democratic governments. It should be noted that U.S. assistance (in particular, massive military aid) is included in the government budget. Since the military aid is spent in the U.S. and the funds do not enter the domestic economy, the absolute size of the budget is not an accurate indication of the effect of central government spending on the economy.

Soaring inflation rates have characterized the Israeli economy in recent years; however, the degree of inflation has always been somewhat higher than that of other Western nations. Since 1977, the rapid rate of price increases has brought Israel to triple-digit inflation; but, by and large, Israelis have not suffered excessively from these high rates. Wages, welfare payments, pensions, and other incomes, as well as most financial assets and liabilities, and even the exchange rate of the *shekel*, are all adjusted periodically to take account of inflation. This “indexation” has allowed Israelis to cope with the situation but, at the same time, has made it difficult to lower the inflation rate. Even though Israelis individually are not impoverished by increasing prices, the economy suffers because of the distortions and uncertainties which inflation engenders. Analysts do not agree on the causes and ultimate solutions to the problem. It is clear, though, that large government budget deficits and resulting monetary expansion, imported food and fuel price rises, and expectations of further inflation all play major roles.

The U.S. is an important trading partner with Israel. Israel's other major trading relationship is with the European Community (EC). On July 1, 1977, Israel became an associate member of the EC, and all exports of manufactured goods now enter the EC duty free. Israel also benefits from the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); over 2,700 of its products enter the U.S. duty free. Israel enjoys a free trade agreement with the U.S. as well as with the EC.

The U.S. has extended to Israel over \$30 billion in economic and military assistance since 1949, and over \$840 million in 2000 alone. Nearly half of this is in the form of grants. The United States also provided \$3.2 billion in assistance over the 1979–1982 period to help finance the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. As part of that support, the U.S. built two new air bases in the Negev to replace those Israel left in the Sinai.

Israel maintains Chambers of Commerce in Jerusalem, at Hillel Street 10, P.O. Box 183; in Tel Aviv, at Hahashmonaim Street 84, P.O. Box 20027; and in Haifa, at Ha'asthmaout Road 53, P.O. Box 33176.

Transportation

Traveling to other countries from Israel is often inconvenient. Air links exist with many points in Europe, but fares may be considered high for the short distances involved. It is possible to arrange ground and air travel to Egypt, and to travel to other Arab countries via connecting flights from Cairo and Cyprus or by crossing the Allenby Bridge into Jordan.

Arkia (Israel's inland airlines) operates daily flights between Rosh Pina, near the Sea of Galilee, and Tel Aviv and Elat. Arkia also flies a Tel Aviv–Jerusalem route and conducts air/land tours for those with less time than money.

Steamship service is frequent, particularly in summer, between Haifa and Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, and western Mediterranean ports. During summer, weekly auto ferries run between Haifa and Piraeus, touching at Cyprus and Rhodes en route; frequent sailings are available to Corfu and Italy.

Trains run from Nahariya, near the Lebanese border, to Beersheba and Dimona in the Negev, and between Tel Aviv and Gaza. Frequent and inexpensive service operates among Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa.

Hitchhiking, or “tramping,” is a way of life in Israel. Drivers are quite willing to stop for needy travelers. However, sudden pickups pose a traffic hazard.

City taxis are quick, easy to hail, and usually metered. Group taxis, or *sherut* (Hebrew for service) operate within and between cities along predetermined routes. These run frequently, but only from central *sherut* stands for interurban runs.

Tel Aviv has an extensive bus system which is uncomfortable and crowded in rush hours. Service on interurban buses is good, although time consuming. Reasonably priced tour buses are both comfortable and enjoyable.

Municipal buses, trains, and Israeli airlines do not operate between sundown on Friday and sundown on Saturday (*Shabbat*). Taxis, *sheruts*, and a tour bus line are available for the determined tourist on this day.

A car is essential for most people who work in Tel Aviv—certainly for those who live outside the city proper. Almost any American car, even a compact, will be large by Israeli standards and may be difficult to maneuver through narrow, congested streets in some older parts of Tel Aviv (and other cities). Parking in town increases in difficulty proportionally. Apartment parking facilities in Tel Aviv are cramped, and much maneuvering is often required to get into and out of the space provided. Families who live in the suburbs, where parking is not a problem, often consider the safety aspects of a large, heavy car versus the convenience of smaller models. Road accidents, many of them serious, are frequent in Israel.

Compulsory third-party liability insurance rates are fixed by the Israeli Government. A vehicle may not be moved until this coverage has been paid for in advance. Many people also carry a U.S. comprehensive policy which includes collision and theft insurance; it should be noted, however, that a claim is likely to be more easily settled with a local insurer.

Although the annual inspection required for registration is gratis, several features are mandatory on all vehicles, and their installation can be costly. The most important of these features is asymmetric headlights; others are engraved engine numbers, side lights, and reflector strips. It is advisable to have asymmetric lights factory installed.

The damp, salty air and heavy dew at night make it difficult to start newer cars in the morning. Car covers will help protect against salt corrosion and rust. Air conditioning is useful during the hot summers.

Auto repair in general, and even the smallest replacement parts, can be quite expensive. One should be prepared with a supply of spare replacement parts. Windshield wipers, antennas, and side mirrors have disappeared from cars parked in Tel Aviv.

With few exceptions, the roads in Israel are good. Driving is on the right, and traffic signs follow international, rather than American, practice. Most street signs are printed in Hebrew, English, and Arabic.

Communications

Israel has a countrywide, government-owned dial telephone network. Although it is a modern and growing system, a shortage of long-distance lines, especially to Jerusalem, can make dialing outside Tel Aviv frustrating. International calls are easily made through an operator and are usually clearer than calls placed locally. Satellite-telephone relay equipment connects with most parts of the world, except the Arab countries.

Mail facilities are good. Reliable cable service exists to all but the Arab countries.

Israel Broadcasting Authority, the government radio network, broadcasts on several standard AM and FM frequencies. Newscasts in English and French can be heard in the early morning, early afternoon, and mid-evening, and in Spanish early morning and evening. In addition, Radio Cyprus, Voice of America (VOA), and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) are received on AM. Shortwave reception is spotty. Local broadcasting includes American and European popular and classical music, as well as Hebrew and Arabic programs. Classical music is

also aired on a special FM stereo station.

The national television network airs a number of English-language programs originating from the U.S., England, and Canada. At a moderate expense, an antenna can be rigged to receive TV broadcasts from the Amman (Jordan) station, which also has several English-language programs. In addition, a special antenna can be purchased which will receive broadcasts of Middle East Television (MET), which telecasts Monday Night Football and other U.S. sports programs one week late, and a number of American reruns. MET, transmitting from southern Lebanon, has an evening news program in English.

Reception of one Israeli and two Jordanian stations is good in Tel Aviv and its suburbs. American comedy shows are frequently shown, as are both old and fairly recent films in English. One of the Jordanian stations presents nightly news in English and French. Both Israeli and Jordanian TV operate on the European PAL system—625 lines, 50 cycles. Most programs are in color.

Receivers purchased in the U.S. work on the American system and, if color, on NTSC. They will not operate in Israel without adaptation. This can be done locally, but it is expensive and not always satisfactory.

The *Jerusalem Post*, a small independent daily newspaper, is an English-language paper in Israel. It covers most significant events concerning Israel, but is lacking in world news. Through an arrangement with the *New York Times*, the *Post* prints in its Monday edition the previous day's "News of the Week in Review" section of *The Times*. Local dailies are also available in Arabic, Yiddish, Hungarian, Polish, Bulgarian, Rumanian, German, and French. Several Hebrew-language papers (*Ha'aretz* is the leading daily) are sold, including two in easy Hebrew for new immigrants. No papers are published on Saturdays

or Jewish holidays. The *International Herald Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* arrive one day late. Major European newspapers are also available with short delays.

Many major American periodicals are available at local newsstands; prices are double those in the U.S. Subscriptions by surface mail arrive irregularly in four to eight weeks. International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* reach Tel Aviv within a day or two of publication, but subscription-copy delivery of air editions is slower. Bookstores are surprisingly few and carry limited stocks of English-language books other than current best-sellers.

Health

Israel has one of the world's highest ratios of medical doctors per patient. Physicians are extremely competent and well trained. English-speaking medical specialists in every field, dentists, oculists, and opticians are available. Most hospitals have laboratories, diagnostic clinics, obstetrical services, and other modern facilities.

The majority of hospitals in Israel are good, but crowded, with a somewhat lower standard of housekeeping and auxiliary services than found in the U.S. Medical fees differ slightly from those in the U.S. American women who have given birth in Tel Aviv believe hospital maternity facilities rank favorably with American facilities.

The numerous reliable and well-stocked city pharmacies are usually closed between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m., but a rotating duty pharmacy is open weekends and holidays.

Community health conditions in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are generally much better than in other Middle Eastern cities. Jerusalem, including the bazaar or *suq* area, is one of the cleanest cities in the Middle East.

Municipal health controls are satisfactory. The water is safe to drink; public cleanliness, sewage, and gar-

bage disposal are good. As in most tropical climates, insects in homes are not uncommon, especially in kitchens and pantry areas. The problem is most acute during summer, but insect-repellent shelving paper and other defensive weapons are available. During the summer months, flour and cake mixes, etc., should be stored in a cool area or refrigerator to prevent weevil infestation.

Tel Aviv has the usual contagious and communicable diseases, but none present a major problem. Amoebic dysentery and infectious hepatitis exist, but to a lesser degree than in other countries in the area. Fungus infections are frequent. Those allergic to dust, molds, and pollens may have trouble at times, and some people find the long, humid summers debilitating.

Israel requires no immunization for entry into the country; however, typhoid, tetanus, and gamma globulin shots are recommended.

Clothing and Services

Clothing worn in the Middle Atlantic States of the U.S. during spring, summer, and fall is suitable for Israel. The climate is hot and humid six to eight months of the year, making a large wardrobe of washable summer clothes advisable. Sportswear, shorts, sleeveless shirts and blouses, beachwear, and sneakers are appropriate.

In winter, houses are chilly and tile floors are cold. A good raincoat, an ample supply of sweaters and shawls, an umbrella, and boots are important. Occasionally, woolen hats and gloves are needed in winter.

While most types of clothing are available, they are expensive; many visitors purchase clothes (especially for children) through catalogues. Israeli shoes, made with European lasts, will not fit narrow feet, but shoes imported from Europe, especially Italy, are easily purchased,

although at high prices. Sandals are a local specialty.

American men find that life in Israel is quite informal, and the open-neck shirt is predominant among Israelis in daily business. Formal wear is occasionally needed, but a dark business suit can be readily substituted. Topcoats and medium-weight suits are sufficient for winter.

Israel is famous for its women's leather coats and jackets, and for colorful hand-embroidered dresses and blouses. Street-length dresses are the most popular for evening wear, but long dresses, skirts, and caftans are also useful. Gloves and hats are unnecessary. A medium-weight coat is needed for winter; a fur stole may be useful for special winter events, but a fur coat is not.

Clothing for children of all ages is costly. Children's shoes come in only two widths. Families assigned to Israel are advised to provide a sufficiently large wardrobe for each member initially, and to rely heavily on mail orders from the U.S. for future purchases. Tel Aviv's salt air and humidity are hard on clothes and shoes.

Most basic services are available in the cities. There are reasonably priced beauty salons, some of them excellent, in the neighborhoods, but salons in the larger hotels charge high rates. Dressmakers and tailors are fairly expensive; workmanship ranges from very good to only fair. Many good laundries and dry cleaners are available—again, with high prices.

Some American cosmetics are manufactured by Israeli subsidiaries of U.S. firms, but local pharmacies, although well-stocked, do not carry American brands.

In The Walled City of Jerusalem, many interesting items can be purchased. Among them are copper and brass pitchers, pots, and trays; olive-wood products; and various knickknacks.

Domestic Help

Experienced domestic help is available, especially in Tel Aviv, and wages compare to those in the U.S. Most foreign residents rely on part-time help, although a few families (those with official or business responsibilities) have one or two full-time domestics. Baby-sitting is done by teenagers, but it is possible to find *au pair* girls or mothers' helpers full time. Bartenders and waiters can be hired for evening functions.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Due to ongoing military activity in the west Bank and Gaza, the Department of State warns against travel to Israel. The situation in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza is very volatile, with potential for terrorist attacks, confrontations, and clashes. Travelers should exercise extreme caution and remain in close contact with the American Embassy in Tel Aviv.

The normal travel routes from the U.S. to Israel are by air, direct from New York to Tel Aviv, or via a stop-over in Paris or Rome. Travelers arriving in Tel Aviv may proceed to Jerusalem by bus or *sherut* (group taxi).

No visas are required in tourist passports, but are issued at time of entry. Bearers of diplomatic and official passports must have Israeli visas before entering the country. No immunization is required, although typhoid, tetanus, and gamma globulin shots are recommended.

Cats and dogs must have certificates of rabies inoculation. Other animals are admitted at the discretion of the veterinary officer, usually after a two-week quarantine (no quarantine in Jerusalem).

Only the following nonautomatic firearms can be brought to Israel:

.22 rifles (1); and 12 or 20 gauge shotguns (1). One hundred rounds of ammunition (600 for shotguns) are allowed. Updated information is available from the Office of Export Control, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC.

The time in Israel is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus two.

The Israeli *shekel* (IS) is the unit of currency. The *shekel* continues to fluctuate against an international "basket" of currencies, making it inadvisable to maintain large *shekel* accounts. Certain shops accept foreign currency but, in general, business transactions are made in Israeli currency.

The metric system of weights and measures is normally used. An exception is the *dunam* (one-quarter acre or one-tenth hectare), a land measure which dates back to Ottoman times.

SPECIAL NOTE

Synagogues abound throughout Israel. Several churches are found in Yafo (Jaffa): St. Anthony's and St. Peter's (Roman Catholic); the Greek Orthodox; the Anglican (Episcopal); the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian); and Immanuel Church (Lutheran). Christian worship services in English (ecumenical, Anglican, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic) are conducted every Sunday in Herzlia Pituach in private homes; a Mormon congregation meets Saturdays in Herzlia Pituach. A Baptist mission near Petach Tikva is about a 20-minute drive from Tel Aviv. A Christian Science group meets Sundays in Tel Aviv's Hilton Hotel.

Jerusalem probably has the world's highest per capita number of churches, synagogues, and mosques. Many buildings have historical, religious, and architectural significance. The Old City has Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Coptic patriarchates, and an Anglican church presided over by an archbishop. There are also bishoprics of the Syr-

ian Orthodox and various Uniate churches and a large Lutheran church. Other denominations represented include Scottish Presbyterian, Baptist, and smaller fundamentalist Christian groups. Jewish congregations cover the full range from Reform to ultra-Orthodox. Most of the city's Muslims are Sunni.

Opportunities to share in religious services of all faiths are frequent and include quiet, weekly observances as well as feast and holy days. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim observances attract wide participation by the faithful, and many services are open to the general public.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan/Feb.	Tu B'Shevat*
Feb/Mar.	Purim*
Mar/Apr.	Passover*
Apr/May	Israeli Independence Day*
Apr/May	Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day)*
Apr/May	Yom Hazikaron (Soldier's Memorial Day)*
Apr/May	Yom Ha Atzmaut (Independence Day)*
Apr/May	Lag B'Omer*
May/June	Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day)*
May/June	Shavuot*
July/Aug.	Tisha B'Av*
Sept/Oct.	Rosh Hashana (New Year) *
Sept/Oct.	Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)*
Sept/Oct	Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)*
Sept/Oct.	Simhat Torah (Rejoicing the Law)*
Nov/Dec	Hannukah*

*variable, based on the Hebrew lunar calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Ben-Tor, Ammon, ed. *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.

Benvenisti, Meron. *Conflicts and Contradictions: Israel, the Arabs, and the West Bank*. New York: Shapolsky Pubs., 1990.

Bickerton, Ian J., and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1990.

Canaan, Garson. *Rebuilding the Land of Israel*. Stamford, CT: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1991.

Canby, Courtlandt. *Guide to the Archaeological Sites of Israel, Egypt, and North Africa*. New York: Facts on File, 1990.

Fodor's Israel. New York: McKay, latest edition.

Kamel, Mohammed I. *The Camp David Accords: A Testimony*. New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 1986.

Keren, Michael. *The Pen and the Sword: Israeli Intellectuals and the Building of the Nation-State*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989.

Leonard, Carol S., et al. *Israel, Egypt, and the Palestinians: From Camp David to Intifada*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Rivlin, Paul. *The Israeli Economy*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

Tilbury, Neil. *Israel: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1989.

Uris, Leon. *Exodus*. New York: Doubleday, 1957 (available in paperback, Bantam).



Rome, Italy

ITALY

Italian Republic

Major Cities:

Rome, Florence, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Genoa, Trieste, Turin, Bologna, Venice

Other Cities:

Bari, Bergamo, Brescia, Bressanone, Cagliari, Catania, Messina, Modena, Padua, Parma, Siena, Syracuse

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Italy. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Like the Roman god Janus, Italy wears two faces. One, soft with the patina of age, looks back on a glorious history—the awesome monuments of Imperial Rome, the ruins of Pompeii, the magnificence of canal-fretted Venice or colorful Florence, cradle of the Renaissance. The other face, shiny new, reflects the modernity of a nation surging with superhighways, busy factories, and skyscrapers.

Northern Italy, center of the nation's economic life, sprawls busily across the Po River plain. Industries sprout alongside time-worn medieval towns, and the alluvial soils make the area one of the richest agriculturally in southern

Europe. Terraces on mountain slopes along the northern border grow grapes for wines and mulberry trees for leaves to feed silkworms.

Central Italy is dominated by Apennine ridges. Once they helped bar unity; even now a village dialect may not be well understood only a few miles away. This is the nation's heartland; the region of Dante, Saint Francis, and Leonardo.

Southern Italy, once poverty ridden and ravaged by malaria and erosion, rebounds under reclamation projects and expanding industry. Pacing its life is sunny Naples, the city of Vesuvius, of Capri, and Amalfi, of effervescent people who sing when they are happy, sad, or in love.

Italy is one of the most attractive assignments in the Foreign Service. The country boasts not only a rich cultural and historical tradition, but also enjoys a varied, pleasant climate. Italians are favorably disposed toward Americans, partly for historical reasons, but mainly because of their general appreciation of things American. Americans generally enjoy Italy, though some find it more difficult than they expect. There is a chaotic element to life here that becomes immediately visible in street traffic, in bank

lines, and in getting repairs done on an emergency basis. Urban air pollution has become a serious problem, particularly in Milan, Rome, and Naples.

Italy, as other Western democracies, currently faces striking economic and political challenges. It must reduce the economic differences between the wealthy north and the poorer south and control organized crime. In recent years, significant steps have been taken to deal with these problems, but they stubbornly persist.

Approached with a spirit of adventure, humor, and patience, a tour in Italy is sure to be rewarding, both personally and professionally.

MAJOR CITIES

Rome

Rome, one of the world's most famous cities, has been the capital of Italy since the nation's unification in 1870. It surrounds the small independent Vatican State, worldwide capital of the Roman Catholic Church. Rome is located about halfway down the Italian Peninsula, 15 miles inland from the Tyrrhenian Sea, astride the Tiber River.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Vatican City

Although the seven original hills of the city are small (roughly 44-50 feet above sea level), some of the hills on the west bank of the Tiber, such as Monte Mario (elevation 462 feet), are considerably higher.

A city of about 2.6 million people, Rome is primarily a government and commercial center, though with growing industrial presence. It remains a city deeply imbued with a sense of history. Nevertheless, it is also a modern city with all the modern amenities, and difficulties.

Rome is an international capital. Not only does it host the world headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, it is also the home to the Food and Agricultural agencies of the United Nations (FAO). A sizable foreign community is in Rome. Approximately 17,000 Americans permanently live in the consular district, which includes the regions

of Lazio (Latium), Abruzzo, Marche, and Umbria.

Food

A large variety of fresh produce is available locally. Prices and availability of particular items vary greatly with the season. Good beef can be hard to find, but veal is plentiful. Meats and poultry are much more expensive than in the U.S., and the meats are of different cuts. Groceries are available in great variety, including typically American cereals, crackers, and cheeses. Local bread keeps only a short time because it lacks preservatives.

Clothing

Men: American clothing is practical and satisfactory. Summer suits of synthetic materials can be worn here 6 months a year. Winter suits, a medium-weight overcoat, and a raincoat are also needed. Sports jackets are very useful. Tuxedos are

worn for formal nights at the opera. Formal wear can be rented in Rome.

Good ready-made suits are available, as are excellent tailors and a good selection of materials. Although prices vary greatly, the best tailoring is cheaper and the best material more expensive than in the U.S. Custom-made shirts of cotton and silk, worn by well-dressed Italians, are expensive. Underclothing, socks, and ready-made shirts are expensive. Fine silk ties and scarves, leather gloves, coats, and bags are a good buy.

Although Americans generally prefer American styling for their shoes, Italian shoes are considered attractive and are available in a wide range of styles and sizes.

Women: Wool or knit dresses and suits are popular and practical in Italy most of the year. American cottons are ideal for the summer. Cock-

tail and short dinner dresses are worn frequently to the opera, concerts and parties. Sportswear of all kinds is useful.

Dress shops are abundant in Italy, but the selection found in any one shop is limited. Clothing is in high fashion and made mostly of natural fibers (all wool, cotton, or silk). Casual wash-and-wear summer fashions are hard to find (i.e., knit tops and skirts). Winter skirts and sweaters are abundant, of good quality, and are reasonably priced. Remember that sizes and cuts are different and are not always to American taste. Good-quality undergarments are usually more expensive than similar items in the U.S. Some American brands are found locally.

Italian women occasionally have clothes made. This is expensive, but it assures quality. Quality materials are expensive, and simple cotton dresses may often cost as much as silk dresses. Silks and woolens, or blends, are beautiful and of good quality.

Italian shoes are stylish and attractive, but sizes generally vary by length only and do not always fit American feet. A few stores carry American-last shoes. Good comfortable walking shoes are hard to find, but all-leather boots are abundant.

Hats are seldom worn. Several hat shops in Italy sell ready made or made to order hats at prices comparable to those in the U.S. Ladies gloves and other leather goods are an Italian specialty and are generally cheaper than those in the U.S. Designer items from houses such as Gucci, Fendi and Valentino are expensive but cheaper than in the U.S.

Children: Beautiful handmade baby clothing and children's party dresses are abundant but expensive. Play clothes for children under 10 are available, but also expensive. Practical, inexpensive items, such as no-iron polyester/cotton clothing, are generally not available locally.



Spanish Steps in Rome

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

Supplies and Services

Adequate laundry and dry cleaning services are available, although not as numerous as in the U.S. Dry cleaning is expensive. Rome has both laundromats and coin-operated dry cleaning machines; however, paid attendants operate the machines with varying reliability. Shoe repair prices are comparable to those in the U.S. and the work is very good. Excellent hairdressers and barbers are available, but they are expensive by American standards. Several have English-speaking hairstylists. One should inquire about expertise with different hairstyles and types. It is possible to have an American manicure and pedicure.

Repairs to American radios, sound systems and electrical appliances are not always dependable because most local repairmen are not familiar with equipment made for the American market. It helps to have circuit diagrams or maintenance instructions for each item. Other repair services are generally good, but substantial effort may be required to locate the particular service needed.

Inexpensive plug adapters that eliminate the need for changing American plugs are sold locally.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is expensive, particularly if you are seeking experienced personnel. Italian workers are rare and the majority does not speak English. There are many third-country nationals available. The mandatory requirement for locally hired non-EU household workers is that they possess a valid sojourn permit for work in Italy.

Household worker employment is governed by specific Italian laws and by a National Contract for Household Workers, which is reviewed and renewed every four years. Italian law requires that employers pay several benefits, including health and social security insurance, food/lodging when appropriate, annual leave, 13th month bonus and termination pay. The cost of these benefits may equal the worker's basic salary. This applies to all workers (EU or non-EU citizens) regardless of whether they are temporary, full time, or part time. Workers' rights are based on Italian standards that are legally enforceable and failure to observe these basic standards can lead to unpleasant situations for the employer.

Religious Activities

Churches, synagogues and mosques in Rome with services in English

include American Episcopal, Anglican, Baptist, Christian Scientist, Evangelical Assembly of God, Methodist, Mormon, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian. Services of other faiths include Bahai, German Lutheran, Greek, Seventh-day Adventist, Italian Waldensian Protestant, Jehovah's Witness, Russian Orthodox, Islamic and Jewish.

Education

The following schools should be contacted as far in advance as possible for registration. Most schools provide student lunch facilities, athletic and recreational programs and bus service. The school year begins in September and ends in June. Good American, British, French and German schools are available. Private schools, including English and French, enroll an increasing number of Italian students because of disciplinary and curriculum reform problems in Italian public schools.

American Overseas School of Rome (AOSR), Via Cassia 811, Rome 00189. Tel: 06 3326 4841, Fax: 3326 2608, E-mail: aosradmissions@agom.stm.it. Nondenominational, coeducational day school offering instruction in the American educational system (kindergarten through grade 12.) Instruction is by a multinational but predominantly American faculty. The school program is primarily designed to prepare students for American universities. Credits are transferable to U.S. schools and colleges. The school has boarding facilities available for high school students at the Villa St. Dominique. Middle school students can board with local families. Preschool is available for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Marymount International School, Via di Villa Lauchli 180, Rome 00191. Tel: 06 3630 1742, Fax: 06 3630 1738, E-mail: marymount@pronet.it. An independent private day school is operated by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It follows the same course system and offers the same credits as their school in Tarrytown, N.Y, which is guided by the N.Y State Board of Regents program. It also offers the

International Baccalaureate program. The faculty is primarily non-clerical and international, drawing many teachers from Ireland and Great Britain. Instruction is offered in English to girls and boys from kindergarten through grade 12. Early childhood classes are available for 3- and 4-year-olds.

St. Stephen's School, Via Aventina 3, Rome. Tel: 06 575 0605, Fax: 06 574 1941. A private international high school accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, it offers a program in English designed to meet the entrance requirements of U.S. and European universities through the International Baccalaureate program to boys and girls in grades 9 through 12. Faculty is primarily American. Boarding facilities are available for both boys and girls. The school does not provide bus service for day students.

St. George's British International School, Via Cassia Km. 16, (La Storta) 00123 Rome. Tel: 06 3089 0141, Fax: 06 3089 2490, E-mail: admissions@stgeorge.school.it Nondenominational English day school, offering instruction in English to boys and girls from kindergarten through high school. Faculty is British and the curriculum is the standard general college preparatory program designed to prepare students for British schools and universities. For students in the International Baccalaureate program, it is adaptable for transfer to American schools and universities.

CORE- The Cooperative School, Via Orvino 20, 00199 Rome. Tel/ Fax: 06 8621 1614. This school was established in 1983 by a group of British-trained teachers and was formed as a cooperative. It is open to children of all nationalities from ages 3 to 11. All lessons are in English, although an optional Italian program provides for those who wish to enter the Italian state system at a later date. The curriculum emphasizes the basic skills, with each CORE teacher specializing in a subject that they teach throughout

the school. Music, art, physical education and drama are part of their program.

Ambrit Rome International School, Via Filippo Tajani, 50 00149 Rome. Tel: 06 559 5305, Fax 06 559 5309, E-mail: ambrit@email.telpress.it. Providing an international education based on American and British approaches and techniques, the school's programs of study and activities foster the development of the whole child with opportunities for growth in all areas. Awareness and understanding of different cultures is encouraged, especially an appreciation of Italy, its language and its culture. Foreign language instruction is introduced at any early age.

Special Educational Opportunities

American University of Rome, (300 students) Via Pietro Roselli 4, 00153 Roma. Tel: 06-58330919, Fax: 06-5833-0992, E-mail: aur-info@aur.edu. Instruction is in English. AUR offers bachelor-degree programs in business administration, international relations, interdisciplinary studies, and Italian studies and an associate degree in liberal arts. The American University of Rome is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools and licensed by the Education Licensure Commission of the District of Columbia. It is the Rome study-abroad center for several American colleges and universities.

John Cabot University, (400 students) Via della Lungara 233, 00165 Roma. Tel: 066819121; Fax: 06683-2088, E-mail: jcu@johncabot.edu. Instruction is in English. John Cabot University offers bachelor degree programs in business administration, international affairs art history and English language literature. Some associate degree programs are also available. John Cabot is affiliated with Hiram College in Ohio, which is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. All courses at John Cabot are transferable to Hiram College, which issues official



The Duomo rising above Florence, Italy

Courtesy of MaryBeth Heikkinen

transcripts for John Cabot students. It is the Rome study-abroad center for several American colleges and universities.

The Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Via Belmeloro 11, 40126 Bologna. Tel: 05-1232185, Fax: 05-1228-505, email: registrar@mail.jhubc.iinf.n.it. Instruction is in English. The Bologna Center is an integral part of The Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, D.C. The center offers an interdisciplinary program of graduate studies in international relations. Courses are given in international economics, European studies (history, politics and culture), international law, U.S. foreign policy, and related topics (demography, the environment, and human resources).

Degrees earned at the Center are granted by the Johns Hopkins University. Degrees offered: diploma in international relations (one year), M.A. in international relations (two-years, with year two at SAIS in Washington), master of international public policy (MIPP- one-year program for mid-career professionals), and M.A. in international relations (two-year program for non-Americans in Bologna).

St. John's University, Oratorio San Pietro, Via Santa Maria Mediatrice 24, 00165 Roma. Tel: 06636-937, Fax: 06636-901. Internet: <http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/cba/graduate/rome.html>. Instruction is in English. The Graduate Center of St. John's University, located at the Oratorio San Pietro in Rome, offers programs of study in business administration, church administration, and international relations. The M.B.A. program is fully accredited by the American Assembly of

Collegiate Schools of Business (A.A.-C.S.B.) and offers a full-time and part-time American M.B.A. with a concentration in international finance. The church administration program began in 1996; the M.A. program in international relations began in 1997. This is a program of St. John's University in New York.

Sports

Almost any form of sports activity can be enjoyed in the vicinity of Rome, including golf, tennis, skiing, swimming, riding, boating, bicycling, hunting, and fishing. Spectator sports include soccer, boxing, horse racing, and auto and motorcycle racing.

Much of Rome's sports activity is organized around private clubs. Most memberships in private clubs are expensive and are not refundable. The Acqua Santa Golf Club, 5 miles from the city, has an 18-hole

course. The Olgiata Country Club, about 10 miles north of the city, has a 27-hole golf course, swimming pool, tennis courts, riding horses, and a fine clubhouse. The membership fee is very high and you need a club member sponsor.

Several other tennis and swimming clubs are open to Americans. It should be noted that all sports/recreational facilities are very expensive to join.

Good sports equipment is available locally.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

An incredible number and variety of places of historical and artistic interest are found in and around Rome. Commercial and cultural organizations arrange tours and visits daily. Tours are conducted in a variety of languages, including English.

Naples is less than 3 hours by car and Florence is almost as close. Rome itself has major monuments and archeological and historical sites. These exist in greater richness and variety in Italy than in any other country. The many good guidebooks to Italy available locally or in the U.S. give details on tourist attractions.

Many recreation areas and campgrounds are found in the countryside. Good, but often crowded, beaches with cabanas and some beach equipment for rent lie within 20 miles of Rome and can be reached by public transportation. To the south, 2 hours or less by car, are beautiful and spacious beaches. Terminillo and Ovindoli, 2 hours by car or bus, are the nearest ski resorts with tow systems and equipment for rent. Some hunting and fishing is available in the countryside around Rome, but most hunting is generally limited to invitation-only private reserves. Horses are available from several riding academies in Rome at reasonable prices.

Hikers and mountain climbers will find a wealth of possibilities in the



Courtesy of MaryBeth Heikkinen

The Ponte Vecchio in Florence, Italy

nearby Apennines. The Club Alpino Italiano offers 1-day trips for mountain hiking and, in winter, cross-country skiing.

Rome has many parks for children. The large, beautiful Villa Borghese park has a zoo, a small theater where children's movies are shown in Italian, Punch and Judy shows, pony rides, small bicycles for rent, a lake with boats for rent, and a large playground.

Entertainment

Rome offers a variety of entertainment facilities appropriate to a major capital city. Knowledge of Italian is valuable. Movie theaters show current Italian, American, and other films with Italian soundtracks. One or two theaters offer French, English, and American films with original soundtracks.

Several theaters present classics, modern plays, and revues, usually in Italian. Rome's formal opera season opens in December and continues through May, with excellent productions and performances by leading Italian artists. During the summer, opera moves outdoors to the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla and Ostia Antica. Concert performances are given frequently during the winter season; outdoor performances are held in summer, usually in the late

evening. Prices for most of these musical events are reasonable. Visiting theatrical groups, as well as local pageantry, offer additional interest.

Rome has many discos and a few nightclubs. Good restaurants are plentiful, some steeped in atmosphere and others featuring famous food specialties. Many places offer outdoor dining in summer. Meals in fine restaurants can be expensive, but the discerning diner can often find a good buy as well as a good meal.

Social Activities

Rome has a variety of American organizations for men and women. Several hold monthly luncheons. Cub Scout and Brownie packs and Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops are supported by the American community.

Florence

Described by Petrarch as the "Pearl of Cities," Florence's glorious past and dynamic present never cease to fascinate students and visitors from all parts of the world. The splendors of the Italian Renaissance are seen not only in its famous churches, palaces, and museums, but are also kept alive in the tradition of craftsmanship, which makes Florence

and the region of Tuscany one of the world's major artisan centers.

Florence is in the heart of a rich agricultural region whose principal products are cereal grains, vegetables, olives, and the famous Chianti wines. The city has a population of 500,000. About 30,000 are non-Italian residents, mainly other Europeans, Americans and Chinese citizens. Most members of the foreign colony (except the Chinese) and the Italians who move in this circle speak English. Very few in the general Italian population, however, and virtually no Italian officials speak or understand English. Shopkeepers, travel agencies, and hotels catering to tourists have English-speaking personnel.

Religious Activities

The following churches have services in English: Christian Science Church, Via Baracca 150; Convento Ognissanti (All Saints Catholic), Borgo Ognissanti, 42; St. James American Church (Protestant Episcopal), Via Rucellai, 15; St. Marks (Anglican), Via Maggio, 16.

Education

The American International School of Florence offers an American curriculum as well as an international baccalaureate program for children from preschool through grade 12, with preparation for American schools and colleges. Transportation is available. The address is Villa La Tavernule, 23/25 Via del Carota, 50012 Bagno a Ripoli (Firenze). Tel: 640033. Information on tuition and other charges can be obtained by writing directly to the school.

Florence also has a number of good private and state-run nursery and elementary schools. Italian is the language of instruction in most of these schools, although a few teach in French or German. Many schools provide bus transportation at an additional charge. A number of American parents have found Italian public schools very satisfactory, especially in the lower grades.

No English-language schools are in Florence for children with learning



Courtesy of Linda Irvin

Courtyard of Uffizi in Florence

disabilities. Italian schools include handicapped children in classes with regular students under the guidance of specially trained teachers.

Special Educational Opportunities

Over 30 American colleges and universities, including some of the most prestigious, conduct a rich and wide range of full semester and summer programs in Florence and in other cities.

Several excellent schools in the Florence area, graduate and undergraduate, specialize in the fine arts, Italian language and culture, and music. These include the Pius XII Institute, the University of Florence

Center of Culture for Foreigners, the Luigi Cherubini Conservatory of Music, the Istituto Statale d'Arte, and the Accademia delle Belle Arti. Tutoring is available in art, music, and Italian language.

Sports

There is ample opportunity to enjoy sports in the Florence area. Golf, tennis, swimming, riding, bicycling, hunting, and fishing are the most popular participant sports. Spectator sports are mostly limited to horse-racing and soccer.

A great deal of sports activity centers around private clubs. The Ugolino Golf Club, about a 30-minute drive from the city, has an

excellent 18-hole course and swimming pool. The Circolo del Tennis offers good tennis courts and a small swimming pool. Children under 10 are not allowed to use the pool. Membership in both clubs is rather expensive.

Public sports facilities are limited to a number of children's playgrounds and a few large public swimming pools. Horseback riding is also available in and near Cascine Park.

Good sports equipment is available locally, but usually at higher than U.S. prices.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The hills and mountains surrounding Florence are excellent for hiking, picnicking, and camping. Fishing and small game hunting are also popular in this area. In winter, there is skiing at nearby Abetone and Vallombrosa. Equipment can be rented at moderate rates at both places.

Seaside resorts and public beaches dot the Tyrrhenian coast within easy weekend distance of Florence. Closest resort areas are concentrated around the towns of Forte dei Marmi, Viareggio, and Tirrenia.

Florence and the surrounding countryside are rich in points of historical and cultural interest. Besides the world-famous museums, churches, and palaces in the city proper, hundreds of charming and historically important villas, monasteries, and churches are within its environs.

Bologna, Siena, Pisa, Lucca, and a number of smaller towns of great cultural interest are all within easy driving distance. In addition, excellent autostrade and train service link Florence with most major Italian cities, making them accessible for weekend trips.

Many good camp sites with facilities are open during the summer throughout Italy.

Entertainment

Each season a number of worthwhile cultural and artistic events happen in Florence. The city's musical life reaches its high point in May and June with the Maggio Musicale featuring concerts and operas by world-famous performers and conductors. In addition, a winter opera season is followed by a concert season and many other musical events throughout the year. Open-air concerts are given at the amphitheater in Fiesole and in various locations in Florence during the summer. Plays are occasionally performed at the city's two theaters, the Pergola and the Verdi, always in Italian.

Movies are very popular with Italians, and the city has many cinemas. Foreign films are shown dubbed in Italian. There is a small English-language cinema that has films most of the year.

Florence is the site of a number of important fairs, including a crafts fair, a biennial international antiques fair, a gift fair, and others. Florence and other nearby towns have traditional pageants and festivals, with participants in medieval costume, held in the spring, summer, and fall. Among the most important are the Scoppio del Carro and Calcio in Costume in Florence, the Palio in Siena, and the Giostra del Saraceno in Arezzo.

Florence has many bookstores, some with a good selection of books in English. The American Library of the University of Florence and the library at St. James American Church both have many general interest books in English.

A wide selection of music, camera equipment, and film is available locally at prices generally higher than in the U.S.

Florence and the other cities of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna have many good restaurants, ranging from the high-priced deluxe to the inexpensive, simple establishments called "trattorie." The nightclubs of Florence are few and expensive.

Social Activities

The city has an active American community, and ample opportunities for to make rewarding friendships with other Americans in the area. Much of the charitable and social activity for Americans centers around the St. James American Church and the American International League. Other American organizations with primarily Italian memberships include the American Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, and Lions Clubs.

The opportunities for forming friendships with Italians and nationals of other countries are limited only by the initiative of the individual. The many social, cultural, and charitable organizations in Florence offer occasions for meeting Italians. In addition, several foreign cultural organizations, including the British Institute, the Institute Francais de Grenoble, and the Kunsthistorisches Institut, present opportunities for getting acquainted with other foreign resident communities in Florence.

Milan

Milan is a city of contrasts. Old buildings, some dating from the Middle Ages, line the narrow winding streets of the central portion of the city, while modern glass and marble skyscrapers and wide boulevards characterize the newer areas.

The city has a bustling atmosphere reminiscent of New York or Chicago and has been called the least Italian of all Italian cities. It is surrounded by an extensive and growing industrial area. A number of satellite cities have been built, many characterized by two- to six-story medium-priced apartment complexes interspersed with park and garden areas. Milan itself is a city of apartment buildings; most range from six to eight stories. Practically all Milanese live in apartments, and the American one-family house with its yard and garden is found only in the suburbs. An extensive and growing industrial area surrounds Milan. A number of satellite cities

have sprung up, characterized by two-to-six story, medium priced apartment complexes interspersed with park and garden areas.

Milan is not a tourist city. While probably 1.5 million tourists (10%-15% are Americans) travel through Milan, most are on their way to another destination. Many stop briefly to see the principal tourist attractions: the Milan Cathedral (Duomo), an amazing structure in flamboyant Gothic and the third largest cathedral in the world; the Brera Museum, one of Italy's outstanding galleries; and the Santa Maria delle Grazie church, the refectory of which contains Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. Another major attraction is a performance at the world-famous La Scala opera house.

For the resident, one of the finest aspects of life in Milan is its proximity to the Italian lake district, Alpine ski and summer resorts, the Italian Riviera and Adriatic beaches, and the tourist centers of Florence and Venice. By train, car, or plane, practically all of continental Europe can be reached in a day's travel time.

Milan is at about the same latitude as Ottawa, Canada, but the climate is temperate. Winter temperatures average 40°F–50°F; summer temperatures 65°F–85°F. Milan receives about 30 inches of rainfall a year; snow usually appears only a few times from December to March. Bring year-round clothing for the whole family, including gloves, hats, scarves for winter, and lightweight clothing for summer.

The headquarters of many of the largest Italian industrial firms are located in Milan, along with the headquarters of many of Italy's leading industries, trade associations, and largest banks. The city hosts many specialized trade fairs, national and international, throughout the year.

Milan is home to one of Europe's largest trade exhibition centers, the Milan fairgrounds. The U.S. Depart-

ment of Commerce frequently holds exhibits of U.S. products and services at the trade fairs staged in Milan.

The permanent foreign colony in the area is substantial, including at least 5,000 Americans and a slightly smaller number of British nationals. Swiss, German, and Austrian nationals compose a large part of the foreign population.

The amenities of urban life—electricity, gas, central heating, elevator service, garbage collection, telephone service—are almost on a par with those in the U.S.

In recent years, Milan has become one of the most expensive cities in the world, and almost everything on the economy is more expensive than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Most Milan churches are Roman Catholic and use the Ambrosian rite. The Santa Maria del Carmine Catholic Church holds services in English. Other Catholic churches hold only Italian-language services, although the cathedral and a few other churches have English-speaking priests who will hear confessions.

The following Protestant churches hold services in English: Methodist Church, Via Porro Lambertenghi 28, Sunday at 10:45 am; All Saints' Episcopal Church (Church of England in communion with American Episcopal Church), Via Solferino 17, Sunday at 10:30 am; Church of Christ, Via del Bollo 5, Sunday at 10:30 am.

Christian Science Church, 16 Via Bigli, holds English services every Sunday morning and on Wednesday evening.

A Jewish synagogue located in Via Guastalla 19, holds evening prayer service daily in Hebrew and Italian; telephone 791-851.

The North Italy Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) is located at

Via Gadames 128, telephone 308-7025. Two of the largest local Islamic associations are located at Viale Monza 160 and Via Fara 30.

Education

The American School of Milan (ASM) is a nonprofit institution accredited by the Midwest State Association. ASM offers a typical American high school diploma as well as an International Baccalaureate (I.B.) for those students who qualify. Many U.S. colleges and universities recognize the I.B. as equivalent to up to one full year of college education. Recent ASM graduates have attended Harvard, Stanford, Princeton as well as other prestigious U.S. schools. ASM is directed by an elected board of governors. There is currently a Director and Vice Director of the school.

ASM is located in modern facilities on about 10 acres near the outskirts of Milan, about 1/2 hour by car from the center of the city. It averages an enrollment of about 500, including about 160 American students, and offers a full American curriculum from nursery through grade 12. Over 70% of the teaching staff is American.

In the high school, almost half the courses are honors, advanced placement, or international baccalaureate level. Class sizes are usually small, and SAT scores are generally above average.

The school also offers extensive athletic, music, drama, and other extracurricular programs. Field trips throughout Europe are regularly scheduled for upper grades.

Children with serious learning disabilities cannot be effectively accommodated. There is no learning disabilities instructor currently at the school.

ASM offers optional bus service, which provides service to the city. Every effort is made to ensure that a bus stop is within easy walking distance of each passenger's home.

Milan has two other institutions, the British School and the International School, which offer English-language instruction under the British educational system. Although these may be adequate at the elementary level, there are possible accreditation issues involved for middle or high school students returning to the U.S. or transferring to other American system schools. There are also German, Dutch, Swiss, French and Japanese schools. American children are ordinarily accepted in the Italian kindergartens and elementary grades without special formalities. Although the Italian educational system is good, inevitable language and curriculum problems occur, which become more serious in the higher grades.

Special Educational Opportunities

The three universities in Milan offer instruction only in Italian. Private and community-sponsored adult education courses are also available to Italian speakers in a wide variety of subjects ranging from the arts to technical areas such as engineering and accounting. Arrangements can be made in Milan for private lessons or tutoring in languages, music, art, dance, tennis, and horsemanship.

The Open University offers BA, BSc, MA, MSc, and MBA diplomas as well as professional training certificates from a range of over 150 correspondence courses in English.

The opera and ballet schools of La Scala attract advanced students of music and dance from many parts of the world. Many private teachers in these fields are directly or indirectly associated with La Scala.

Sports

While Milan has some outdoor sports facilities, most are on the outskirts or beyond the city proper. With few exceptions, Milan's private clubs are exclusive and expensive. Few Americans join. A small number of health clubs with swimming pools are available at fees equivalent to similar U.S. clubs.

Within the city are public indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Public pools are quite crowded on holidays and during summer weekends.

Several riding schools and clubs are located in the city and in the suburbs. Private and group riding lessons may be arranged.

The nearest golf courses are private clubs at Monza, Barlassina, Carimate, and Montorfano. All are within reasonable driving distances of Milan. Some occasionally issue honorary memberships, particularly to principal officers. Otherwise, large, nonrefundable initiation fees (several thousand dollars) are required. Others, with smaller initiation fees, rarely have enough turnover in membership to accept new members. There is one public golf course that is located on the outskirts of Milan.

The city's two Ice Palaces are open for ice skating from October to April.

A number of American-style bowling alleys can be found in Milan and the near suburbs. In summer, boating and swimming in the nearby lakes (Como, Maggiore, Garda, Lugano) and picnicking in the vicinity are popular. Swimming areas at the lakes usually have rock or gravel beaches, and in some areas swimming is only possible by diving from rocks. The nearest ocean beaches are around Genoa (2 hours by autostrada or 2 3/4 hours by rapido train).

Many ski areas are within an easy drive of Milan, including several within 2 hours of the city, so that even 1-day trips are feasible. Ski season usually runs from November or December through April or May. Resorts provide accommodations in all price ranges. Slopes range from very easy to very difficult, with all types of lift facilities. The lower Alpine areas are popular with mountain climbers during the summer; climbing areas for the beginner and the expert are available.

Baseball has a small following in Italy, and a number of amateur teams compete during the summer in the Milan area. Basketball is becoming increasingly popular; four major professional and semiprofessional teams are in the area. American football is beginning to find its place in the sporting scene.

A racetrack on the outskirts of Milan has horse races 5 days a week from spring through fall and 3 days a week in winter. Italy's principal spectator sport is soccer, which is played almost year round. Milan has two class A teams. Their matches at the San Siro Stadium draw crowds of up to 85,000.

Hunting and fishing in season are popular among Italians; licenses are required.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

In addition to the participation and spectator sports described above, northern Italy and neighboring France and Switzerland have much to offer the sightseer. Many points of historical and artistic interest are easily reached on 1-day trips.

Entertainment

Milan offers rich entertainment for the music lover. There is a large number of concert and recital series throughout the winter, many presenting world famous artists, orchestras, and chamber music groups that feature music from all eras.

The opera season at La Scala begins early in December and runs through mid-July.

Eight or nine theaters in Milan present legitimate stage productions (all in Italian), ranging from Shakespeare and Chekhov to works of contemporary Italian and foreign playwrights, to musical revues and operettas.

Milan has as many cinemas as any large American city, presenting foreign as well as Italian films. Several movie theaters present foreign

films, including American, in the original language version.

Social Activities

The following organizations offer excellent opportunities to make international contacts: the Benvenuto Women's Club, meets monthly and regularly organizes additional inter-cultural programs for its international membership.

Americans in Milan is a group of Americans who operate under the umbrella of the Benvenuto Club. Monthly luncheons organized by the American Business Group are attended by Americans from a broad spectrum of American and Italian businesses.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Italy consists of Americans in business in Italy and Italian business representatives from firms doing business in the U.S. Its headquarters are in Milan; the Honorary President is the American Ambassador in Rome. Its business meetings and luncheons offer a chance to meet Italians in the commercial and economic fields. The Professional Women's Association has monthly evening meetings that provide professional women the opportunity to gather and make contacts in a social setting.

Naples

Few cities have undergone the social, political, and cultural changes that Naples has in its long and colorful history. Although Naples is a modern city with a range of modern problems, including crime, over-population, unemployment, traffic congestion, air pollution, and a stagnant urban center, it remains a beautiful city, a mixture of the old and modern, a city of great historical interest. Once a major Greek colony, and later ruled by the Romans, Byzantines, Normans, Swabians, and the Houses of Aragon and Bourbon, Naples is today a city of diverse cultural styles and competing historical influences. The splendid natural setting of the bay, flanked by Mount

Vesuvius, the Sorrento Peninsula, and the islands of Capri and Ischia, continues to attract a heavy stream of visitors from all over the world.

Although Naples is a major seaport and an industrial and distribution center for southern Italy, the city's economy is still dominated by small artisans and entrepreneurs. Many foreigners live in Naples, with Americans forming the largest group. A small American business community and about 10,000 American military personnel and their dependents live in the area.

Religious Activities

There are numerous Catholic churches throughout the city, with a weekly English-language Mass sponsored by the Filipino community at Gesu' Nuovo on Sunday afternoon.

Other churches with services in English are:

AFSOUTH Chapel. Catholic services at the NATO Base. Armed Forces Chapel. Nondenominational Protestant services, Sunday school, and Catholic Masses are held at the Naval Support Activity, Capodichino complex.

Christ Church. (Anglican/Episcopalian) at Via San Pasquale, Chiaia 15B.

Christian Science. Chapel behind Christ Church.

Church of Christ. Viale Augusto 164. Latter-day Saints. Piazza Vittoria 6.

A Jewish military chaplain visits Naples at regular intervals. There is an Italian synagogue in Naples that holds Sabbath services provided by a lay person and services at major holidays. In addition, the U.S. military forces sponsor services on the last Friday of each month and on certain high holy days.

Education

The Department of Defense operates two schools: an elementary/middle school (which includes

kindergarten), and a high school, both located at the new Gricignano facility that is nearly an hour outside of Naples. The schools are staffed with trained, experienced American teachers. These schools have special educational facilities for mildly developmentally delayed children and those with hearing and speech problems. They are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. There is an active after school athletic program that includes volleyball, basketball, football, soccer, gymnastics, track, and tennis. There is a school newspaper and other extracurricular activities such as choir, band, drama, and science club. Bus transportation is provided at no extra charge if you are on an established route. The DOD buses will not go to neighborhoods where military dependent children do not reside. The school cafeterias serve soup, sandwiches, and milk at fair prices. The schools have no boarding facilities.

The Allied Nursery and Kindergarten School, a cooperative endeavor, is run by wives of NATO personnel. Located in one of the buildings at NATO Headquarters at Bagnoli, it provides instruction five mornings a week. transportation to and from school costs extra. There is usually a waiting period for admittance.

The International School of Naples, also located on the NATO base, is private, coeducational day school of about 150 students offers instruction in English from kindergarten through grade 12. The non-graded method of class assignment is used from grade 5 on. It is accredited by the European Council of International Schools. Teachers are American and British citizens, except for the Italian-language instructor. Emphasis is placed on a classical college preparatory curriculum. Bus transportation is provided from most areas of Naples.

The Italian-American Montessori School, also located on the NATO base, this school of about 300 students offers an English-lan-

guage, American curriculum to children in kindergarten through grade 8, based on the teaching philosophy of Marie Montessori. Teachers are American or British. American textbooks are used in all classes. Bus transportation is available from most areas of Naples.

The University of Naples. The main campus is in the downtown section of the city. This school enjoys an excellent reputation and provides courses in agriculture, architecture, economics and commerce, engineering, law, letters and philosophy, medicine and surgery, naval affairs, oriental languages, pharmacy, science, mathematics and physics, and veterinary medicine. It is not too difficult for a foreigner to enroll in the university; however, instruction is in Italian.

Special Educational Opportunities

Naples boasts an Academy of Fine Art and a Conservatory of Music that Americans sometimes attend. At the NATO complex, the Universities of Maryland and Oklahoma offer courses leading to master's degrees in education, business administration, and human relations, and the University of Maryland and other schools offer undergraduate classes in various subjects. The University of Maryland and a growing number of other institutions also offer undergraduate and advanced degree courses via the Internet. (There are several Internet service providers available in Naples.) The French Institute gives French-language instruction to children and adults. Upon successful completion of various levels at the Institute, University of Grenoble certificates of accomplishment are awarded. Local schools offer typing, stenography, and related business subjects in English.

Language instruction is available. Private tutoring is available for persons wishing to study the language independently at a cost of approximately \$25 an hour.

Recreation and Social Life

Naples offers ample opportunity for sports and outdoor recreation during the long summer season. The Bay of Naples is ideal for sailing. Several beaches suitable for swimming are within an hour's drive.

In the winter, Roccaraso, a mountain ski resort about 2-1/2 hours from Naples, offers trails for beginners as well as experienced skiers. Skis and other equipment can be rented locally or at the resort at reasonable prices. The Naples area has many interesting places for hiking, sightseeing, and picnicking, including the islands of Capri and Ischia and the beautiful towns along the Amalfi Coast Sorrento, Positano, Amalfi, and Ravello.

For artists, historians, and interested amateurs, Naples and the surrounding regions are rich in possibilities. The Palazzo di Capodimonte, with its large collections of paintings, tapestries, arms, and furniture, is one of the most impressive museums in Italy. The National Museum houses the world's finest collection of Roman antiquities, many of them recovered from Pompeii. Countless numbers of small churches, museums, and castles within the city reflect the many periods and styles of Neapolitan history.

Excursions outside the city to places such as Paestum, Pompeii, and Herculaneum (to name only the most famous) offer unparalleled opportunities for exploring the remains of earlier civilizations. Many other sites in southern Italy can be visited in the course of weekend outings by car.

Sports attire commonly seen in the U.S. is acceptable in this region.

Entertainment

The season at the world-famous San Carlo Opera begins in January and runs until December (as opposed to the norm of September to June). The 18 first-run Naples cinemas only occasionally offer films in English. In addition to plays and variety shows presented in five the-

aters in Naples, some spectator sports events are available.

Palermo

Palermo is the capital of the region of Sicily, an area given broad powers of self-government by the national government in 1947. The city of Palermo, with a population of over 800,000, lies in a valley delineated by sharp rocky mountains that reach to the sea, with the Bay of Palermo presenting a topographical outline of striking natural beauty.

Though the city itself consists of a fair number of up-to-date commercial structures and many modern apartment buildings, it is also rich in Arab, Norman, and Spanish architecture, among others. The importance of these cultures in the history of Sicily is reflected in the many buildings that were left behind.

Winters are mild, and temperatures seldom drop below freezing. The famed Sicilian sunshine is no myth, and the weather is clear and sunny most of the year, with little rain during summer and fall.

Daily routine in Sicily is strongly influenced by the hundreds of years of Spanish rule. Meals are served late, lunch at 1:30 or 2 pm, and dinner at 8:30 to 9:30 pm. The noon meal is generally the larger of the two. A siesta after lunch is common, and all shops are closed from about 1 to 4 pm and remain open until 7:30 or 8 pm in the evening.

Food

The grocery markets of Palermo are full of almost all types of food. One of the great joys of food shopping is the large variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seafood. Most prices are comparable to those in the U.S., with the exception of meat, soap, and paper goods, which are about twice as expensive. Bread and wine are inexpensive and delicious. Palermo has several open-air markets that offer a unique view of one aspect of Sicilian life—the loud, boisterous methods of bargaining

and selling. The city also has a few “supermarkets,” but most people patronize the three or four small neighborhood shops, where one can buy everything needed. However, necessities for anything other than Italian cuisine are difficult to find on the local market.

Dining out in the Palermo-Mondello area can be a great experience, especially if one enjoys seafood. Prices are comparable to those in the U.S. Scores of good restaurants offer delicious traditional Sicilian dishes. The food lacks variety, however, since restaurants serving non-Italian fare are few in number.

Religious Activities

An Anglican church in Palermo holds services in English. Since the pastor divides his time between Palermo and Taormina, the church is sometimes closed for several weeks or months. Three other Protestant churches offer services in Italian only. Catholic churches are numerous; one, the Church of Santa Lucia, Via Ruggero Settimo, in downtown Palermo, holds Mass in English each Sunday at 5:30 pm.

Education

No English-speaking schools are in Palermo, nor are there any educational facilities available for learning-disabled children.

Local schools—public, private, and parochial—accept foreign children at all levels. Palermo schools offer instruction only in Italian.

Special Educational Opportunities

No truly specialized training opportunities are in Palermo, although it is possible to pursue many and varied hobbies, sports, and crafts generally found in most other cities in Western Europe—if one speaks Italian. Pottery-making is one such craft that is popular in the city.

Sports

Palermo offers a wide range of spectator sports, with soccer the most popular. The city has a professional soccer team. There is horse and har-

ness racing and an annual horse show. A local tennis club has excellent courts, and stars from all over the world compete at the annual invitational tournament.

Sports and outdoor activities are popular year round but particularly in summer. The centers for water sports are the nearby beaches and clubs of Mondello, a 15-minute drive from the center of the city.

Swimming, boating, sailing, fishing, water skiing, and skin diving are very popular. Along the coast, small open beaches and rocky coves, which are usually crowded, offer the swimmer and skin diver a chance to discover the wonders of the Mediterranean. Sailing is popular, and several private sailing clubs are found in the Palermo area. In addition, a number of enchanting islands off the coast offer opportunities for water sports.

The city has a modern bowling alley, two squash clubs, and several modestly equipped gymnasiums that offer lessons in judo and karate, with facilities for men and women. The scarcity of wild game (except rabbits and small birds) and the strict regulations governing the import and purchase of guns discourage most would-be hunters. A target range using clay pigeons is available for the enthusiastic marksman. Sicily has no golf courses. Skiing is done in the Madonie Mountains, 2 hours away, and on Mount Etna, 4 hours away. Camping facilities are available at various places throughout the island. A good variety of sports equipment can be found at the many sporting goods stores in Palermo at prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Touring is one of the real delights of Palermo. Even the casual observer is impressed by the grandeur of Sicily’s monuments and the beauty of the countryside. The National Museum of Palermo contains priceless artifacts dating from prehistoric, Greek, and Roman periods.

Museums in cities such as Gela, Agrigento, and Siracusa have collections that testify to the diverse and rich cultural history of the region.

Colorful local events, like the theater festivals held in Taormina in July and every other year in Siracusa in May-June, and religious ceremonies, especially at Easter and on other church holidays, are all profitable subjects for study and photography.

Entertainment

The city has many cinemas; foreign films are shown with Italian soundtracks. American films, dubbed in Italian, are often featured and are usually quite recent when released. TV programming in Italy is generally better than or at least comparable to that in the U.S. One can see many vintage American and European films on a regular basis, dubbed into Italian.

Palermo has two opera seasons; the principal one begins before Christmas and continues through June. Operas, operettas, and ballets are staged in the summer in an attractive amphitheater. Winter performances are usually excellent, with skillful and elaborate staging.

During the winter, good concerts are frequent, as some of Europe’s best instrumental artists include Palermo in their tours. Tickets are often inexpensive. Theatrical companies with some of the best Italian actors occasionally visit the city with a repertoire of national and foreign plays. Musical variety shows are given often throughout the year, though mostly in winter. All these performances are in Italian.

Sicily is famous for its puppet shows, which are given in tiny, family-owned theaters. The performances are not polished, but they are interesting entertainment, particularly for children.

The city has several nightclubs, but only one or two with floor shows. The others have small bands, where the music ranges from soft and slow

to the latest and loudest beat. Disco-theques are also popular.

Social Activities

Americans generally confine their entertaining to informal lunches or dinners at home. Unless one makes a sustained effort to become acquainted with Italian families, social life is limited. The foreign colony is small, with few entertainment centers.

Palermo club life is limited. Several tennis clubs offer various types of sports activities, including tennis, swimming, and soccer. Initial membership costs are expensive, although monthly dues are not prohibitive.

Genoa

Genoa (in Italian, Genova) is the capital of the Italian region of Liguria. The city, at the head of the Ligurian Sea, is about 330 miles by road from Rome. Sunshine and mild weather predominate most of the year although, in winter, cold days made dismal by piercing gusts and chilling drizzle are a reminder that Genoa is a northern city. It is, in fact, located at the same latitude as Augusta, Maine. The usually mild climate is due to the mountains which shield the area in winter from the full effect of northerly winds coming from the Alps.

Greater Genoa is dominated by its port. Much of the city's commercial life is directly involved or related to shipping. Principal industries include a large steel plant owned by Italsider (the largest steel producer in Europe) and major shipbuilding and ship repair yards. Genoa is also the starting point of several oil pipelines which link the Mediterranean with central European countries.

The city is an important producer of heavy machinery, electric motors, generators, and allied products. Major industries in the area are mostly government owned. Relatively few are the privately owned, medium-size concerns which played such an important part in the "Ital-

ian economic miracle" of the early 1960s in the other northern industrial centers.

Genoa's population is just over 700,000. The city is built on different levels in, on, and about the hills which dominate the area. Splendid palaces are found in all parts of the city; the best known is the Palazzo Doria, home of the famous 16th-century Italian naval hero, Andrea Doria. The ancient, narrow streets, called *vicoli* (alleys), still exist in labyrinthine profusion near the central port basin. In other parts of the city, steep, winding footpaths lead to various levels, giving Genoa a distinctive atmosphere and appearance which persists despite all efforts at modernization.

To Americans, Genoa is above all the city in which Christopher Columbus was born and raised. The Genoese themselves are proud of this fact. Genoa maintains a sister-city relationship with Columbus, Ohio, and official visits and gifts are sometimes exchanged.

Apart from the Columbus tradition, many ties exist between Genoa and the United States. Genoese shipbuilders secretly sold ships to the American Republic during the Revolutionary War. Genoa was heavily damaged during World War II, and many residents still remember that important segments of local industry were rehabilitated with Marshall Plan aid.

Nevertheless, this is not to say that Americans can expect to be eagerly welcomed into Genoa's social life. The Genoese (in Italian, Genovesi) are, by tradition, conservative, laconic, and inclined to be suspicious of outsiders (even other Italians). This is probably the result of centuries of isolation.

Until the advent of the railroad, the Apennines were an almost impenetrable barrier to communications with the hinterland and, except for several hostile incursions from the north, Genoa had little overland contact with the rest of Europe, or even with the rest of Italy. Although

Genoa was among the first great maritime trading centers as well as a leading seapower, the ancient Genoese city-state suffered several devastating invasions from the sea. The Saracens sacked the city several times. Thus, Genoa's role in maritime matters did not render its populace more cosmopolitan but, instead, tended to strengthen the traditional distrust of aliens, which is still part of the Genoese character.

This attitude appears to be changing, however, judging from the way the Genoese joke about themselves. The considerable influx of people from other Italian cities, notably immigrants from the south in search of employment, has also had a moderating effect. Still, one should expect considerably more reserve in personal and social contacts with the Genoese.

Italian is, of course, the principal language, but some of the people speak their own language, Genoese, among themselves. Genoese is definitely more of a language than a dialect, and there is an Italian-Genoese dictionary as well as a small body of literature in the vernacular.

Genoa's standard of living is high by almost any measure, but the city has not yet experienced the degree of modernization found in Milan, Turin, and other industrial centers of the prosperous north. Americans will find most of the goods to which they are accustomed available in Genoa, but often at higher prices than in the U.S.

Some 70 American families in business or engineering live in the greater Genoa area. In addition, about 3,000 Americans, largely of Italian origin, live in the district. During summer, numerous American tourists pass through the city every week. Most of them do just that—pass through—on their way to or from the French and Italian Rivas. Thus, the city itself has remained relatively untouched by international tourism, and the

Genoese, it would seem, prefer it that way.

Education

The American International School in Genoa (grades pre-kindergarten through eight) is the only school with classes in English. It has a professional staff of 13, most of whom are American. The student body numbers about 85. A U.S. curriculum is followed, and Italian is a required subject. The school year extends from mid-September to mid-June. American International's address is Via Quarto 13C, 16148 Genoa.

The public school system in the city includes elementary (equivalent to grades one through five), middle (grades six through eight), and secondary schools (classical pre-university high schools, and technical and vocational institutions). Parochial schools are numerous, especially for the elementary grades. A few nonreligious private schools are also in operation, but fluency in the language generally is required.

Private tutoring in most subjects, in either English or Italian, is available, and usually is necessary unless the student attends American International. Children planning to attend Italian schools may need language instruction, although young children generally learn the language quickly. Attendance at a local kindergarten is helpful in developing the preschool child's knowledge of Italian.

Instruction is available in voice and in almost every musical instrument, both from private teachers and in special schools. Painting courses are held throughout the year. Dance schools (mainly for children), exercise classes, and lessons in horseback riding, skin diving, and other sports are also available.

Adults with a good command of Italian can take courses at the University of Genoa. The French Institute offers advanced study of French language and literature, and is accredited by the University of Grenoble. The Italo-American Association has

an educational program, including instruction in English, as well as a series of lectures and films on American culture and events. The Goethe Institute gives instruction in German language and culture.

Recreation

The Genoa area offers opportunities for swimming, hiking, tennis, golf, roller skating, sailing, and rowing. Many beaches are only a short bus trip from the center of town, but they are of rocky surface rather than natural sand, and are polluted. The most popular and famous beaches and resorts along the Riviera (Santa Margherita, Rapallo, Portofino) are about 45 minutes from Genoa. Most of these are privately operated concessions and charge a rather stiff entrance fee. The city itself has an excellent outdoor swimming pool in suburban Albaro which is heated in the winter. Numerous other pool facilities exist, although most are private. One 18-hole golf course (in Rapallo) and one nine-hole course (in Arenzano) are within an hour's drive of Genoa. A few public and private tennis courts are available.

Soccer (*calcio*) is the national sport; Genoa has two teams in the Italian league. During the season, which extends from early fall to late spring, a game is usually played every Sunday in the city's stadium.

Narrow, congested streets and a hilly terrain make bicycling difficult in Genoa. However, enthusiasts can enjoy flat stretches of road along the sea.

Hunting in the surrounding area is poor. Many private reserves are beyond the Apennines, but with access by invitation only.

Hiking enthusiasts will find pleasant walks near the sea or in the hills. Numerous points of scenic interest along the Italian Riviera are available for sight-seeing by bus or car. The Italian Yacht Club has a clubhouse and yacht basin in the port of Genoa, and sailing is popular throughout Liguria.

Several ski resorts in the nearby mountains, about a two-hour drive from Genoa, are open five months a year. Special excursions at group fares are organized each weekend during the season.

Entertainment

Entertainment facilities in Genoa include cinemas and theaters. Films shown in commercial theaters are dubbed in Italian. The Italo-Britannica and Italo-American Associations sponsor a film club which has biweekly showings during the winter months of English-language films with original soundtracks. Film Story, an association interested in the history of the cinema, shows films in English about once a week. Occasionally, local theaters will sponsor a series of recent American and British movies.

Genoa's opera house, Teatro Carlo Felice, was bombed during World War II, but has been newly rebuilt and reopened in late 1991. The facade of the 2,000 seat opera was reconstructed to match its 1826 original. An excellent local theatrical stock company performs throughout the winter season. Visiting companies from other cities present musical reviews, plays, and operettas. The annual concert season runs from October through February. A chamber music series also takes place during the winter months. A short opera season occurs in fall and in spring. Occasionally, a ballet will be performed during the opera seasons, and an outdoor ballet series is held in suburban Nervi every two years.

To celebrate the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the New World, the city of Genoa in 1992 held an international exposition called "Christopher Columbus: Ships and the Sea." As part of this exposition, a new aquarium was built. Two football fields in length, it is Europe's largest and features sea life from aquatic habitats around the world.

Trieste

For many years, until the end of World War I, Trieste was the major port of Italy. It remained important until the end of World War II, when conflicting territorial claims between Italy and Yugoslavia led to the creation of the Free Territory of Trieste, administered by the Allied Military Government composed of American and British forces.

In October 1954, the London Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Italy, Yugoslavia, Britain, and the U.S., ending the military occupation of the city.

In early 1964, the Province of Trieste was grouped with the provinces of Gorizia, Udine, and later Pordenone, into the fifth special autonomous "region" of Friuli-Venezia Giulia; this region, plus the Veneto provinces of Venezia, Padova, Belluno, Treviso, and Rovigo, constitute what was the U.S. consular district.

Trieste's 258,000 inhabitants are principally Italian, but there is also a 10 percent Slovene minority, and the German and Austrian colonies are fairly large. American tourism to the district is concentrated in Venice and, during winter, to the major ski resort of Cortina d'Ampezzo.

The climate is pleasant. Summers are seldom hot and humid, and winters are usually without snow. From December to February, the famous Trieste *bora* (strong wind) often blows. Winds have reached over 100 miles per hour (although rarely) and may blow for three to four days at a time, intensifying the cold. Crisp, sunny days usually follow.

Education

The International School of Trieste, sponsored by the International Center for Theoretical Physics and partially supported by the U.S. Government, was founded in 1964. Instruction is in English on the American system, offering grades one through eight, a kindergarten, and a nursery. The academic year is

from September to June on a trimester basis, and the enrollment of approximately 200 students includes children of varied nationalities, mainly Italian. Information is available from International School at Villaggio del Fanciullo, Via Conconella 16 (Opicina), 34100 Trieste.

Some Americans send their children to the local schools, where instruction is in Italian. Previous tutoring is necessary for entry into all levels and, unless children speak Italian, they often must be enrolled one grade lower than the last completed. The Italian system involves five years of elementary school, three of middle school, and five of high school.

The University of Trieste offers a wide variety of college courses, all conducted in Italian. Individual or class lessons are available at the Conservatory of Music. The Art Institute of Trieste has a full curriculum available for students from 11 to 19 years of age, and the Museum of Modern Art offers inexpensive courses in painting and drawing. Also, extensive opportunities exist in Venice (about two hours by car or train) to pursue artistic and cultural studies.

Recreation and Entertainment

The most popular spectator sports in Trieste are soccer, trotting races, and basketball. Others include water polo, swim meets, sailing, rowing, horse shows, boxing, hunting, and fishing. Tennis and golf are available for those who wish to join clubs. Riding facilities exist, and extensive areas of the countryside are suitable for hiking. Excellent skiing and mountain climbing are found in the nearby mountains of both Italy and Austria.

Venice is about 100 miles away, some two hours by car or express train. Padua, Vicenza, and Verona—20, 45, and 75 miles, respectively, to the west of Venice—are also of considerable historic and cultural interest, and are connected with Trieste by express trains. Cortina d'Ampezzo, the popular Italian

mountain resort in the Dolomites, about 130 miles by car from Trieste, offers sports (especially skiing) in winter and beautiful scenery at all times.

Only 30 miles from Trieste are the ancient Roman ruins of Aquileia, with important early Christian mosaics. The seaside resorts of Grado and Lignano, with long, sandy beaches and swimming and wading areas, are also close by. Slovenia is easily accessible, and its increasingly popular Dalmatian coast is within a weekend drive.

Trieste offers a wide range of entertainment for a city of its size. The local opera company's season runs from November to March. The Trieste Symphony's concert series, which takes place in fall and spring, is extensive. Recitals, concerts, and miscellaneous musical events also are held. During summer, theatrical presentations are staged in the open-air Roman theater and, in winter, the local repertory theater offers a series of presentations, all in Italian.

Turin

Turin (in Italian, Torino) has a long and interesting history dating back to ancient Rome and including a brief period (1861-65) as the first capital of unified Italy. However, it is now known as a modern, thriving, industrial center, particularly in the field of automobile manufacture and design. During the past quarter-century, it has grown at an astonishing rate, and Greater Turin has a current population of more than 1.2 million.

The city is the capital of the Region of Piedmont (Piemonte), which includes the provinces of Turin, Asti, Alessandria, Cuneo, Novara, and Vercelli—an area about the size of New Jersey, Delaware, and Rhode Island combined. The semi-autonomous Valle D'Aosta Region, north of Turin on the French and Swiss borders, is not included in the Region of Piedmont. Turin is by far the largest city in the district and is the financial, economic, and cultural



Courtesy of Linda Irvin

City square near the Shroud of Turin exhibit

capital. It is a most important industrial city, although this is not made evident by its architecture.

Turin is equidistant from Rome and Paris and, partially due to many years of French rule, newcomers are often surprised by the “non-Italian” appearance of the city. Wide, straight, tree-lined boulevards slice through the central areas, and the architecture is often a hybrid of Italian and French design. On clear days, the city’s personality is radically changed by the awesome beauty of the nearby Alps, which surround it on three sides. On the fourth, or eastern, side, lush green hills—studded with churches and luxurious villas—rise from the banks of the Po River to overlook the city.

Turin has the highest standard of living in Italy. Unlike many cities, however, there is no focal point for

its entertainment and cultural forces—no “center of town,” and the streets of the city are remarkably free of crowds in the evening. Similarly, the important sights of Turin are not always found in the great piazzas or on main thoroughfares; one must seek them out or be told where to find them. Even getting there is often not enough; a beautiful chapel can be disguised as an office building, or a world-renowned museum can be housed in a structure as nondescript as its neighbors.

At first, friendships can be as difficult to find as the art treasures. The Turinese admit to being different from other Italians, and they take pride in it. In general, they tend to be reserved, courteous, and uninquisitive, and their distinct personalities have helped to create the atmosphere of their city. They prefer to amuse themselves privately; for example, Turin has an extremely

limited nightlife for so large a city. American-style bars and adult nightclubs are limited in number, and there are few restaurants serving foreign cuisine.

Turin is not a tourist center for Americans. When a traveler arrives in Turin it is usually because of business or traveling en route to another city. This, more than anything, probably has contributed to the fact that Turin has retained much of its distinctive character despite its rapid growth. On a more personal level, it also has resulted in a novelty: a large Italian city in which practically no one speaks English.

Aside from the charms of the city, however, the tourist misses a great deal when he fails to stop here—pleasures and sights which residents of Turin have come to love. Only a very short distance from the

city, for example, are some of the world's most famous ski resorts—Sestriere, Cervinia (Matterhorn), and Courmayeur. The Italian lakes are nearby, as are the French and Italian Rivas. All of the foregoing can be reached in from one-and-a-half to six hours by car.

A glance at the map will be enough to demonstrate that Turin is an excellent starting point for longer trips to much of Europe. On the other hand, there is a great deal to see within the district itself. The countless Roman ruins, castles, medieval towns, and Alpine valleys can keep a traveler busy for months.

Education

The American Cultural Association of Turin, an English-language school for nursery through high school, is located in a small hill town about 6.2 miles (10 kilometers) from the city. It has been in operation since 1974. The enrollment currently is 220. Italian is a required subject.

The school, which offers languages and the usual academic courses, maintains its facilities at Via Mario Mogna, 10020 Pecetto Torinese, Italy. Both the academic director and the elementary principal are Americans, as are more than half of the faculty members.

Recreation

Some of the world's most spectacular scenery is visible just outside the city of Turin. The Valle d'Aosta begins 40 miles to the north. It runs directly into Mt. Blanc, Europe's highest peak, after figuratively glancing off Mt. Rosa and Mt. Cervinia (Matterhorn), which are the second and third highest European peaks. All around these famed summits, as well as in the west and the Maritime Alps, valleys are begging to be explored by car. The roads are not always wide or straight, but they are quite adequate.

The Monte Cenisio Pass into France is just west of Turin at an elevation of 6,000 feet, and Geneva is a four-hour drive via the Mont Blanc tunnel. Lake Como and the other

attractions of the famed Italian lake country are available by public transportation or by a two-to-three-hour drive, as are most of the other interesting attractions of Italy.

Whether by car or public transportation, the visitor will enjoy touring in the Alps, in the picturesque wine country south of Turin, or in the nearby countries.

Travel time by car to the nearest point in France is one-and-a-half hours; Austria (except in the dead of winter), five-and-a-half hours; Liechtenstein, seven hours; and Spain, 14 hours.

The most popular participant sport in northern Italy is skiing. A dozen ski resorts are within easy reach of Turin, even for day trips. All these areas have lifts, instruction, and boots and skis for rent. If a skier tires of one side of the Alps, in an hour he can reach Chamonix just over the French border, or Zermatt, by cable car, on the Swiss side of the Matterhorn from Cervinia.

Hunting is popular. Quail and pheasant are the most common quarry, but some deer, chamois, and even ibex can be found.

The Circolo della Stampa Sports Club of Turin has 20 good tennis courts and a huge swimming pool. Other courts and pools are around town. An excellent 27-hole golf course is just outside the city, and there is a nine-hole, free course in town. It is difficult to join either golf club, but arrangements usually can be made for nonmembers to play the courses for a limited time.

Public swimming pools, available year round, are inexpensive. Mountain climbing, hiking, fishing (rainbow trout), rowing, skin diving, bowling, and even baseball are all practiced with great enthusiasm in this part of Italy.

Soccer (*calcio*) is by far the most popular spectator sport. Attendance at basketball games grows every year, especially since the major

teams have begun to import American stars.

Entertainment

The theater is active in Turin, with performances almost exclusively in Italian. The local repertory company (Teatro Stabile Torino) offers plays of high caliber and professional polish.

During winter, at least three productions are always in town at any one time. Movie theaters abound. Most of the better, and some not so good, American films are shown here, usually dubbed in Italian, as are British and continental films. Some movie clubs show a limited selection of films in the original versions.

Turin is the home of a symphony orchestra which broadcasts under the auspices of the Italian radio and television system each Friday during the season. A second organization, the Unione Musicale, presents a concert season, normally at least two programs a week. The Turin opera season, while not matching the splendor of neighboring La Scala in Milan, is thoroughly professional and relatively inexpensive for the best seats in the house. Turinese audiences are not inclined to be demonstrative, but they do appreciate good music.

Bologna

Bologna lies in the province of Emilia-Romagna, northern Italy, at the foot of the Apennines. Now a transportation center with a population of 417,500, it was first an Etruscan town named Felsina, and its history is rich in Roman, Byzantine, Lombard, French, and church culture. It was a great intellectual and political center in medieval times.

Bologna has been part of Italy only since 1860, when annexation from Austria was voted. It had been church-controlled from 1815 to 1831, the year it was occupied by Austria. Bologna's prestigious university, the oldest in Europe, was founded in 1088 as a school of

Roman law. Medical and theological faculties were soon introduced, but liberal arts were not added until the 14th century. Today, the enrollment is close to 60,000.

Some of Italy's most beautiful ecclesiastical structures are found in Bologna, most notably the old churches of San Petronio, Santa Maria dei Servi, Santo Stefano, and Santo Domenico. Several of the city's historic buildings were destroyed during the heavy bombing of World War II, among them the Archiginnasio and the exquisite 13th-century church of San Francisco.

Bologna has an excellent museum and art gallery; the city and the university attract serious students of art and architecture. Fine (and hearty) food is also one of Bologna's main offerings, and a number of restaurants are justly famous for their distinctive *Bolognese* cuisine.

Several major Italian publishing houses have headquarters in Bologna and each year the International Children's Book Fair is held here.

Venice

Venice (in Italian, Venezia), at the northern end of the Adriatic, is a city built on 118 alluvial islets and laced with 400 bridges. Once a dominant city-republic known as the "queen of the seas," Venice (population 352,500) is a major tourist attraction of Italy and, in fact, of all of Europe. Hundreds of thousands of visitors throng the squares and ride the famous gondolas and *motoscafi* (motor taxis) through the 160 canals which are the city's thoroughfares. Severe flooding in 1966 damaged much of Venice, but the splendid churches and public buildings have been restored and preserved. Art lovers and philanthropists throughout the world contributed millions of dollars toward the renovations.

Among the most famous attractions are the Piazza San Marco (St. Mark's Square), with its beautiful cathedral begun in the year 830, and consisting of examples of Byz-



San Marco in Venice, Italy

Courtesy of MaryBeth Heikkinen

antine, Greek, Gothic, and Oriental architecture; the 16th-century royal palace library; the Palazzo Ducale (Palace of the Doges, or dukes), rebuilt five times since its original structure was erected in 800; and the numerous galleries, palaces (most on the Grand Canal), and public gardens. Venice flies the emblem of the Winged Lion of St. Mark.

Throughout the year, Venice celebrates its illustrious past. In addition to its regular opera season, from December to March, there is a seemingly endless series of musical events, art exhibits, theater, religious festivals, and municipal celebrations.

There is a wide variety in Venice of hotel accommodations and dining facilities, from the simplest to the most luxurious. Shopping is excellent (although expensive) here, particularly for the world-famous Venetian glass and lace.

Close to Venice are several cities of the Veneto (administrative region) which are steeped in history and art. Among these are Padua, whose renowned 13th-century university is the second oldest in Italy, after Bologna's; Verona, celebrated as the city of Romeo and Juliet; and Vice-

nza, the birthplace of Andrea Palladio, Renaissance architect of note. Most visitors to Venice eventually find their way to these fascinating ancient towns.

OTHER CITIES

BARI is the major commercial center of the Province of Apulia in southeast Italy. Situated on the Adriatic Sea, about 140 miles east of Naples, this city of 387,800 has boat-building, machinery, oil-refining, tobacco, wine, and printing enterprises. Bari's complete name is Bari della Puglia. It once was part of the kingdom of Naples.

BERGAMO is the capital of Bergamo Province, situated at the base of the Alps, 30 miles northeast of Milan. Divided into Upper and Lower Bergamo, this is a main industrial and cultural hub. Upper Bergamo is the original, fortified section, dating to the second century B.C., when it was the Roman town of Bergomum. It has been ruled by Romans, Venetians, French, and Austrians. Landmarks here include the Romanesque cathedral, the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, and the Baptistery, all in the Piazza Vecchia district. Lower



A canal in Venice, Italy

Courtesy of Molly Flint

Bergamo has been the city's center since the 19th century. The Accademia Carrara here is noted for its outstanding art collection, one of Italy's best. Bergamo has preserved the birthplace of the composer Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) as a museum. The city has engineering works, textile mills, and cement factories. Its population is an estimated 122,000.

BRESCIA lies at the bottom of the Trompia Valley, 50 miles east of Milan. This area has several reminders of the Roman era, most notably the Capitoline Temple, built by Emperor Vespasian (8 B.C.–A.D. 79) in A.D. 73. The temple is adjacent to the Roman Museum, where one of the world's most celebrated sculptures, "Winged Victory," can be seen. Brescia is the seat of a bishopric and site of numerous churches, one dating to the eighth century. The Madonna del Carmine Church is considered a worthwhile tourist stop. Stairs behind the building lead to walls of a Venetian castle and, from this point, one can see across to the Alps. Brescia is also a railroad junction and manufacturing hub. It has a population of approximately 204,000.

The mostly German-speaking city of **BRESSANONE** is situated in the far north, 20 miles northeast of Bol-

zano on the Isarco River. With a population of 16,000, this is a tourist area known for its cathedral and Archbishop's Palace. There are 12 churches here, including several monasteries. Bressanone, as Brixen, belonged to Austria from 1803 to 1918.

CAGLIARI is the capital and main port of Sardinia, the largest of Italy's Mediterranean islands. Located on the Gulf of Cagliari in the south, it was founded by Phoenicians, but rose to prominence under the Romans, who made it Sardinia's major city. Remains in Cagliari's lower town attest to the Roman presence: a huge amphitheater, a house, and a great cemetery. The upper town has medieval remnants such as the cathedral, parts of the Pisan fortifications, and the University of Cagliari. An archaeology museum contains a renowned collection of Sardinian antiquities. Mineral exports, agricultural production, and salt mining constitute the local economy. The city has an estimated population of 225,000.

CATANIA, at the foot of Mount Etna in eastern Sicily, was founded by the Greeks in about 729 B.C. Its history reflects the many cultures which dominated it throughout the ensuing centuries—Greek, Roman, Saracen, and Norman. Catania suf-

fered serious earthquakes and volcanic eruptions in the 17th century. The city was a major German defense location in World War II, until successful attacks by the British in the summer of 1943.

MESSINA is a seaport in northeastern Sicily, dating to 730 B.C., when it was founded by the Chalcis Greeks. Now a trade and transportation center with a population of 273,000, Messina existed under the rule of many European conquerors, and has been part of Italy only since 1860. Its population was severely diminished during the plague in 1743, and the city was nearly demolished by earthquakes later in that century and again in 1908. Messina suffered heavy damage in World War II.

MODENA, with a population of 179,000, is said to be Italy's wealthiest city. It is located in the north-central region, 115 miles southeast of Milan and 200 miles northwest of Rome. Automobile manufacture is the mainstay of the economy; metalworking, iron foundries, and tanning are also important. An extensive urban renewal project here includes a massive, English-designed park. The Palazzo dei Musei art museum has one of the country's largest galleries, as well as rare illuminated manuscripts. Modena became a Roman colony in 183 B.C., and joined the Italian kingdom in 1860. A university was founded here in 1175.

PADUA (in Italian, Padova) a rail terminal and commercial city of 241,000, is situated in northeastern Italy. It was here in Italy's second oldest university (founded in 1222) that the great astronomer and physicist Galileo and the anatomist Fallopius taught, and here also that Dante and Petrarch (Petrarca, the poet and humanist) were among the famous students. Padua's botanical gardens, praised throughout the world, are the oldest in Europe, dating from 1545.

PARMA lies on the Parma River in the north, 75 miles northeast of Genoa. It has been a transportation

center since the second century B.C., when it was built by the Romans. This is also an agricultural area known the world over for its Parmesan cheese and *prosciutto* ham; fertilizers and alcohol are also produced. Noted conductor Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957) and printer Giambattista Bodoni (1740-1813) were among Parma's famous residents. Tourist highlights include a 12th-century cathedral, with a masterpiece fresco of the Assumption; the Glauco-Lombardi Museum, housing a collection of personal items of Napoleon's Empress Marie-Louise; and the Palazzo della Pilotta, the home of the Farnese dukes. The city suffered extensive damage in World War II, but painstaking restoration efforts preserved much of its beauty. Its current population is approximately 180,000.

SIENA is a city of considerable interest. It is located in Tuscany, about 40 miles south of Florence and, with its 13th-century churches and palaces, retains much of its medieval appearance. It became independent in the 13th century, and rose to great cultural heights, but its artistic light was diminished by the plague (Black Death) which swept Europe in 1348. Siena's university, built in 1240, remains a seat of learning, and it is said that this city of 70,000 residents is the only place in Italy where pure Italian, with no regional dialect, is spoken. The major attractions of Siena are its Gothic-Romanesque cathedral, its 13th-century Palazzo Pubblico, and its Academia delle Belle Arti. The city is also famous for the *Corsa del Palio* (Race of the Banner), an annual medieval horse race which highlights the summer season. Around the central square of Siena (Piazza del Campo) are great palaces which bear the names of the city's noble families.

SYRACUSE (in Italian, Siracusa), situated on the southeastern coast of Sicily, was the leading city of ancient Europe. Founded by the Corinthians in 734 B.C., it grew to dominate the Mediterranean under

the Greeks. After falling to the Romans in 211 B.C., the region was invaded by Franks in the third century A.D., and later by Arabs, Normans, Swabians, and Spanish. A 1693 earthquake devastated Syracuse, prompting rebuilding in a curious baroque architecture. Today this is a provincial capital of 119,000 residents. Local agricultural produce is processed in the city, and light industry plays a dominant role in the economy. Tourism is centered on Syracuse's Greek ruins, especially the fifth-century temple and a beautifully preserved theater. Performances are still held here, in even-numbered years. There is a regional archaeological museum in Villa Landolina Park.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Italy covers 116,300 square miles (301,225 sq. km.), an area roughly the size of Georgia and Florida combined.

Its prominent geographical feature is the 500-mile-long Italian Peninsula, which is shaped like a boot and extends southeast from Europe into the Mediterranean Sea. The Apennine Mountains form the backbone of the peninsula. North of the Apennine range lies the Po River Valley (300 miles from east to west), Italy's breadbasket and the center of Italian industry. North of the Po Valley are the foothills of the Alps, in which lie Italy's lake district. Its northern border meanders along the highest points of the southern Alpine passes.

The Italian islands of Sicily and Sardinia, which lie southwest and west of the Italian peninsula, respectively, are the largest islands in the Mediterranean. These, along with Italy's other, smaller islands, have hosted trading colonies since the dawn of recorded history and

have traditionally provided a window on the rest of the Mediterranean Basin (the western tip of Sicily, for example, is only 90 miles from Tunisia).

Italy's climate is generally pleasant. Although summer temperatures can rise into the mid-90's with high humidity, evenings are considerably cooler, allowing people to take to the streets and squares. In the winter, nighttime temperatures often drop to freezing, but snowfall outside the mountains is rare. In all seasons, the south tends to be warmer and drier than the north.

Population

Italy has a population of roughly 57.6 million on a land mass about three-quarters the size of California. Population density is about twice that of California. Historically, many Italians have emigrated (significant numbers of Italian communities are in the U.S., Canada, Belgium, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Australia), and approximately 2 million Italians still work in other countries. Recently, however, Italy has been experiencing a growing influx of immigrants, a cause of controversy despite the fact that there would be essentially no population growth in Italy were it not for the arriving immigrants.

Outside of Rome and the main tourist centers, few Italians speak a second language. Even in the big cities, truly bilingual persons are hard to find. The most commonly spoken foreign languages are English and French.

With the exception of the German-speaking autonomous province of Bolzano (Bozen) and the significant Slovene population around Trieste, ethnic minorities are small. Isolated, ancient communities of Albanians, Greeks, Ladinos, and French-speakers, however, are here.

The Italian constitution provides religious freedom for all. Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion, although only a small minority regularly attends church. There are

small Protestant (Waldensian), Jewish, and Greek Orthodox communities.

The Vatican or “Holy See” is an independent sovereign nation located in Rome, whose head of state is the Pope.

Public Institutions

Italy has been a Republic since June 2, 1946, when a national referendum abolished the monarchy. The constitution, which took effect on January 1, 1948, established a bicameral Parliament (Senate and Chamber of Deputies), a separate judiciary, and an executive branch composed of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) and President of the Council (Prime Minister), who is Head of Government. The Council of Ministers must retain the confidence of both houses.

The President of the Republic, who is Head of State, is elected for seven years by Parliament sitting jointly with delegates from the 20 regions. The President has limited powers. He or she appoints the Prime Minister, subject to Parliamentary concurrence. The President can also dissolve Parliament and call for elections, if it is clear that no governing majority can be formed.

Seventy-five percent of parliamentarians are elected as individual candidates, 25% by proportional ballot. There are 630 deputies and 315 senators, plus a small number of senators-for-life including all former Presidents of the Republic and a few appointed by the President in recognition of service to the nation. Parliament is elected for five years but may be dissolved by the President before the expiration of its full term. Legislative bills may be introduced in either house but must be voted by a majority in both. Below the national level, Italy is divided into 20 regions (roughly equivalent to US. states), 103 provinces and over 8,000 communes (cities and townships). Regions and provinces have presidents and governing councils. Mayors and city councils are elected locally. each

province has a prefect appointed by and representing the central government. The prefect has special responsibility for law and order issues.

Since 1953, no single political party has held an absolute majority in either house. Successive Italian governments have been formed by coalitions or other parties providing “external” support. Until recently, governments centered around the now-defunct Christian Democratic Party (DC) and until the early 1960s, were generally “center” coalitions (the DC plus Liberals, Social Democrats and Republicans). From 1962-94, most governments were “center-left” (the DC plus varying combinations of Socialists, Social Democrats, Liberals and Republicans). The Italian Communist Party (PCI) was excluded from government coalitions although, after the late 1970s, the PCI often provided “external” support to center-left government coalitions. The center-right governed briefly in 1994.

The “clean hands” trials of the early 1990s, which investigated illegal funding of political parties, completely changed the static landscape of Italian politics, and opened a period of transition and transformation which continues even at the beginning of the new century. By 1994, the large and powerful DC and Socialist parties had collapsed and out of their ranks, a number of new parties were formed. In 1991, the PCI broke with its communist tradition and eventually joined with former socialists, left-wing Christian Democrats and others to form the Democrats of the Left (DS). Center right “Forza Italia” was founded by entrepreneur Silvio Berlusconi in 1994. In 1998, the center-left formed the first government headed by a former Communist (DS) Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema.

Since the 1994 elections, a roughly “bipolar” arrangement has emerged in Parliament with the majority of seats controlled by either the center-right “POLO” coalition or the center-left coalition. New parties have subsequently been formed

within the coalitions and a few parties (see below) remain unaligned.

The following are major parties with representation in the national Parliament (as of January 2000).

Center-left Coalition

Democratici (Democrats)
 Democratici di Sinistra (Democrats of the Left)
 Partito dei Comunisti Italiani (Italian Communists)
 Partito Popolare Italiano (Italian People's Party)
 Unione Democratica per L'Europa (Democratic Union for Europe)
 Verdi (Greens)

Center-Right “POLO” Coalition

Allianza Nazionale (National Alliance)
 Centro Cristiano Democratico (Christian Democratic Center)
 Forza Italia

Unaligned Parties

Lega Nord (Northern League)
 Rifondazione Comunista (Communist Renewal)
 Radicali (Radical Party)

Arts, Science, and Education

Italy is the wellspring of Western civilization and has been a world crossroads for over 2,000 years. Continuous learning, creativity, and technological advancement on the Italian peninsula have shaped virtually every aspect of Western culture. Etruscan and Samnite cultures flourished in Italy before the emergence of the Roman Empire, which conquered and incorporated them. Phoenicians and Greeks established settlements in Italy beginning several centuries before the birth of Christ, and the Greek settlements in particular developed into thriving classical civilizations. The Greek ruins in southern Italy are perhaps the most spectacular and best preserved anywhere. With Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312, Rome became the open and official seat of the Catholic Church, and Italy has had a profound effect on

the development of Christianity and of Western concepts of faith and morality ever since.

Italy became a seat of great formal learning in 1088 with the establishment of the University of Bologna, the first university in Europe. Other Italian universities soon followed. These great centers of learning presaged the Renaissance, as did innovative works by Italy's great late-Gothic artists. The European Renaissance began in Italy and was fueled throughout Europe by Italian painting, sculpture, architecture, science, literature, and music. Italy continued its leading cultural role through the Baroque and Classical periods and into the Romantic period, when its dominance in painting and sculpture diminished and it reestablished a strong presence in music. Italian artists have been quite influential in the twentieth century. They were the primary exponents of Modernism in the 1920s and 1930s, and continue to have a strong presence in the international contemporary art market.

Today, Italy has one of the world's strongest and most vibrant popular cultures, and plays a large role in shaping worldwide trends in fashion, film, cuisine, industrial and interior design, advertising, and popular music. Following World War II, Italian neo-realism became an important force in motion pictures, and by the 1960s, Italy had established itself as one of a handful of great film cultures. Italian design shaped the look of the post-war world, and today Italy is arguably the international leader in fashion and design.

Italy's great presence in literature and the arts often overshadows its role in the development of science and technology. Italy has been a home for innovation in science and engineering in the centuries since Galileo formulated his theories of planetary movement and Leonardo da Vinci designed a primitive helicopter based upon his studies of nature. At the turn of the century, Marconi carried out experiments in electricity and developed the wire-

less, but he was preceded by Count Alessandro Volta, one of the pioneers of electricity, over 100 years earlier. By the end of the Second World War, Enrico Fermi's work in nuclear physics led to the development of both the atomic bomb and peaceful atomic applications. Today Italy is a strong competitor in high-technology sectors, including aerospace and communications. Italian education is still held in high regard for its rigor and thoroughness, and although the Italian curriculum and teaching method remains very traditional, Italy also produced Maria Montessori and her revolutionary educational theories.

Commerce and Industry

Italy has a diverse, industrial economy, the sixth largest in the world. It is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of textiles, clothing, gold jewelry, footwear and machinery to produce all those goods, as well as some agricultural products. Numerous Italian companies are famous worldwide, but it is small and medium-sized firms that dominate the economy and are responsible for its dynamism. Germany, France and the U.S. are the most important export markets. As in other industrialized countries, the role of the service sector is growing. Italy is very dependent on imported petroleum and natural gas from Libya, Iran, Algeria and Russia.

Industrial activity is concentrated in the north in a swath that runs from Torino in the west to the Veneto region near Venice in the east. This is one of the most industrialized and prosperous areas in Europe, and accounts for some 50 percent of national income. By contrast the center and particularly the south, or Mezzogiorno, are less developed. Unemployment in the Mezzogiorno is three times that of the north, and per capita incomes are much lower. Italy has a large underground economy. Researchers attribute that to high taxes and rigid labor laws, and estimate it

accounts for one-quarter of gross domestic product.

Italy is a founding member of the European Union (formed through the Treaty of Rome) and, in 1998, of Europe's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Members of the EMU have ceded monetary authority to a European central bank and begun using the euro for accounting purposes. Euro bills and coins go into circulation in 2002. Polls indicate that Italians are among the strongest supporters in Europe of EMU and continued European integration. To qualify for the Monetary Union, successive Italian governments in 1992-97 implemented widely-praised fiscal discipline measures that produced sharply reduced government deficits and debt levels, lower interest rates and lower inflation. Challenges that Italy still faces are liberalizing labor laws and regulations that govern businesses, improving infrastructure, reducing bureaucracy and addressing a looming pension burden.

Transportation

Automobiles

Due to traffic jams, narrow streets, and pedestrian-only sections in some shopping areas, public transportation is preferable in city centers. Private cars are preferable for traveling outside the city, however.

New vehicles are sold with city license plates, and it will take between 60 to 120 days before the vehicle becomes available. Car dealers ask for a maximum 10 percent deposit when the contract is signed.

Secondhand vehicles are available through local car dealers, but there is no IVA exemption on such vehicles. The cost for the transfer of titles ranges from \$450-\$600, based on the size of the engine of the vehicle.

Italy is a member of the European Community; its road code, in compliance with EC policies, requires catalytic converters.

If you want to nationalize your vehicle with city plates, you must produce: 1) a manufacturer's certificate stating that the catalytic converter on the vehicle meets EC standards; 2) a technical data information sheet. These documents must be endorsed and legalized with the Seal of the Secretary of the State (Apostille) from where the vehicle is purchased. These documents must be translated into Italian and notarized by an authorized translator in Italy.

The title and the registration card must also have the Apostille Seal and be translated into Italian.

The Italian Government requires the purchase of local liability insurance. Premiums for third-party liability are set by law and are, therefore, equal for all companies. Duty free-entry requests are not processed until the liability policy is in effect. Vehicle at driven into Italy must have an international "green card" certificate of insurance. Collision and theft insurance is available locally (but is expensive) or can be obtained from American insurers such as Clements in Washington, D.C., American International Underwriters, or USAA.

Current regulations allow foreigners to drive in Italy if they have a valid driver's license. If the license is not Italian, the original license with translation must be carried at all times.

Traffic moves on the right side of the road. The highways are generally well maintained but are often narrow and winding, the exception being the superhighways, called "autostrade."

Local

Transportation within the cities, whether by bus, tram, or subway (in Rome and Milan) is good, although crowded at rush hours. Always be alert to the danger of pickpockets and purse-snatchers on public transportation. Taxis are usually available but expensive. They do not cruise looking for fares but wait at

taxi stands throughout the cities or can be called by phone.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone connections within Italy and to international points are of excellent quality and reliable. For local calls, there is a usage charge of approximately two cents per minute. A long distance call to the U.S. can be direct dialed from any city at a rate of approximately \$.50 per minute. You can also subscribe to callback services in the U.S. or utilize calling cards such as AT&T and MCI. Residential lines or service for a newly leased residence can be obtained within two weeks of placing an order.

Cellular phone service is reliable with a usage fee of approximately \$1 per minute and a monthly basic service charge of \$30. Bringing a cellular phone from the U.S. to Italy is risky in that converting and registering it is not always possible. A basic unit runs approximately \$100 depending on the service agreement.

Personal telegrams can be sent for about \$4.

Mail

International mail service between Italy and the U.S. is unreliable. Surface mail takes 6-8 weeks. Packages sent via international mail are subject to customs inspection.

Internet Service

Internet access in Italy is widely available. A number of internet service providers (ISP) provide free internet access via dial up phone lines. The telephone charges during connection to the ISP from within Rome are approximately one cent per minute, depending upon the time of day.

Personal computers with U.S. specifications may be used successfully, although transformers may be required. Computer accessories and peripherals are available in Italy

and are generally compatible with equipment brought from the U.S.

Radio and TV

Italy has three state-controlled radio networks that broadcast day and evening hours on both AM and FM, in addition to RAI International on shortwave and virtual radio via internet. Program content varies from popular music to lectures, panel discussions, classical music, and opera, as well as frequent newscasts and feature reports. In addition, many private radio stations mix popular and classical music. A short-wave radio, though unnecessary, aids in reception of VOA, BBC, Vatican Radio in English and the Armed Forces Network in Germany and in other European stations.

The three public TV networks controlled by Radio-Televisione Italiana plus many other private stations offer varied programs, including news, operas, game shows, sitcoms, cartoons, plays, documentaries, musicals, and films—all in Italian. RAI also has a new 24-hour news and information system that is available on cable and at night on RAI-3. All programs are in color, except for the old black-and-white movies. Most Italians still depend on VHF/UHF reception, but both cable systems and direct satellite reception is increasingly common. Conventional satellite dishes can pick up European broadcasts, including some in English. Telemontecarlo and other private networks retransmit CNN and other American network programs late at night or in the early AM. CNN is widely available in four and five star hotels. Programs are chiefly news, sports, network comedies and movies.

Radios, TVs, VCRs (both using the PAL/SECAM standard) and DVDs are available locally, but at much higher prices than in the U.S.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The International Herald Tribune is published six days a week in Italy and is available with an English-

language supplement, "Italy Daily" (edited jointly with RCS Corriere della Sera) throughout most of the country. The European edition of The Wall Street Journal is published in Bologna, and along with USA Today, is available in major cities. European editions of Time and Newsweek are available one or two days after publication. Other foreign newspapers and magazines are also available on newsstands, and current U.S. magazines can be found there as well. The Center for American Studies in Rome subscribes to a variety of American magazines and professional journals and has over 70,000 volumes on subjects related to the U.S. Rome has several English-language bookstores with a varied but high-priced stock. A more limited selection in English is found in bookstores in other cities.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Quality medical facilities, including English-speaking physicians, specialists in most fields, and hospitals and clinics, are available in most cities. Public hospitals are usually understaffed, and frequently the staff does not speak English. Private hospitals are similar to those in the U.S. and are equally expensive. The staff in private hospitals may or may not speak English.

Equivalents to most American medicines are available in local pharmacies. Bring an adequate supply of medications, however, in case what is needed is not available.

Community Health

Sanitary controls throughout Italy are good. The water is safe but not fluoridated. Use only bottled water. Good pasteurized milk is available. Uncooked shellfish and uncooked pork are not safe. Precautions, such as washing fresh fruit and vegetables and avoiding raw seafood, are the same as those advisable in the U.S.

Preventive Measures

Environmental allergy symptoms are common during the spring and summer months due to dust and pollen levels. Viral and bacterial respiratory ailments are common during the winter months. Smog levels can be high in any of the major cities, but particularly in Milan. Throughout the country, when certain smog levels are exceeded, alternate day driving is instituted. No special immunizations are necessary other than those generally recommended.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Feb/Mar.	Carnival*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 25	Anniversary of the Liberation
May 1	Labor Day
June 2	Republic Day
June 24	St. John's Day (Florence)
June 29	St. Peter and St. Paul's Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Sept. 19	St. Gennaros Day (Naples)
Nov 4.	
(Sun closest to this day)	WWI Victory Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 6	St. Nicholas Day
Dec. 7	St. Ambrogio's Day (Milan)
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

*variable

In addition, each city observes the local patron saint's day.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A passport is required. A visa is not required for tourist stays up to three months. For further information concerning entry requirements for Italy, travelers may contact the Embassy of Italy at 3000 Whitehaven Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. Tel: 202-612-4400 or via the Internet: <http://www.italyemb.org>, or the Italian Consulates General in Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, or San Francisco.

Those tourists planning to stay other than in hotels for more than one month should register with the local police station within eight days of arrival in Italy. Visitors to Italy may be required to demonstrate to the police upon arrival sufficient financial means to support themselves while in Italy. Credit cards, ATM cards, traveler's checks, prepaid hotel/vacation vouchers, etc. can be used to show sufficient means.

Americans living in or visiting Italy are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Rome or at one of the three U.S. consulates general and obtain updated information on travel and security within Italy.

The U.S. Embassy in Rome, Italy is located at Via V. Veneto 119/A. Tel: 39-06-46741 and fax: 39-06-4674-2217. Internet address: <http://www.usis.it>.

The U.S. Consulates are located in:

Florence, at Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci 38. Tel: 39-055-239-8276/7/8/9, or 39-055-217-605; fax: 39-055-284-088.

Milan, at Via Principe Amedeo 2/10. Tel: 39-02-290-351 and fax: 39-02-290-35-273.

Naples, at Piazza della Repubblica. Tel: 39-081-583-8111 and fax: 39-081-761-1804.

There are U.S. Consular Agents located in:

Genoa, at Via Dante 2. Tel: 39-010-584-492 and fax: 39-010-553-3033.

Palermo, at Via Vaccarini 1. Tel: 39-091-305-857 and fax 39-091-625-6026.

Trieste, at Via Roma 15. Tel: 39-040-660-177 and fax 39-040-631-240.

Pets

Both dogs and cats must be accompanied by a health certificate containing the following: • Identification of the animal • Name and address of the owner • Statement that the animal has been examined on the date of issuance of the certificate and found sound. • Statement that the animal has been vaccinated for rabies at least 20 days, but no more than 11 months, before the date of issuance.

The certificate expires 30 days after the date of issuance and must be signed by an official or officially accredited veterinary doctor of the country of origin. Importation of dogs is subject to payment of an import tax, which is 19% of the dog's value, as determined by customs authorities, and normally runs between \$30-\$60.

If the owner of the animal is in the U.S., a statement is required from the Department of Agriculture certifying that the veterinarian who examined the animal was authorized to do business in the U.S. Current regulations provide that dogs and cats are subject to examination by an Italian veterinarian at the border, airport, or other port of entry into Italy. Pets may be sent unaccompanied by air but not by ship.

All dogs on the streets must be muzzled and leashed. No exceptions are granted, and the regulations,

though not generally enforced, are invoked in case of trouble.

Firearms and Ammunition

Up to a total of three pistols may be imported per year so long as the weapon is of the type, make and caliber registered in the "Catalogo Nazionale."

The same applies for shotguns. Three shotguns may be imported per year, so long as they are smooth bore. A shot gun with a rifled bore must be registered in the "Catalogo Nazionale" as mentioned above. Upon importation, the weapon would have to be sent to Gardone Valtrompia, Brescia, to the Banco Nazionale di Prova for ballistic typing and marking.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the Austrian monetary unit is the Euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 euros. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

Currency exchange facilities, which accept all convertible currencies and travelers checks, are available at the international airports and railroad stations, as well as at banks. They generally give better exchange rates than hotels.

Weights: 1 kilo equals 2.2 pounds (kilogram), 1 ounce equals 28.25 grams, 1 gram equals .04 ounces, 1 pound equals .45 kilograms.

A common unit of measure (weight) used when buying cold cuts, cheese, pasta, fruits and vegetables is the "etto" which equals 100 grams or about 4 ounces. If you ask for "due etti" of boiled ham, you would get about 8 ounces (half a pound.)

Liquid Measures: 1 quart equals .95 liter (almost a whole liter), 1 liter equals 1 quart, 2 ounces or 4 cups, 10 liters equal 2.64 gallons.

Distance: 1 inch equals 2.54 centimeters, 1 mile equals 1.61 kilometers, 1 meter equals 39 inches, 1 kilometer equals .62 miles.

To convert kilometers to miles, divide the number of kilometers by 8 and multiply the result by 5 or multiply the number of kilometers by .6.

Temperature: Temperatures are expressed in degrees Centigrade or Celsius.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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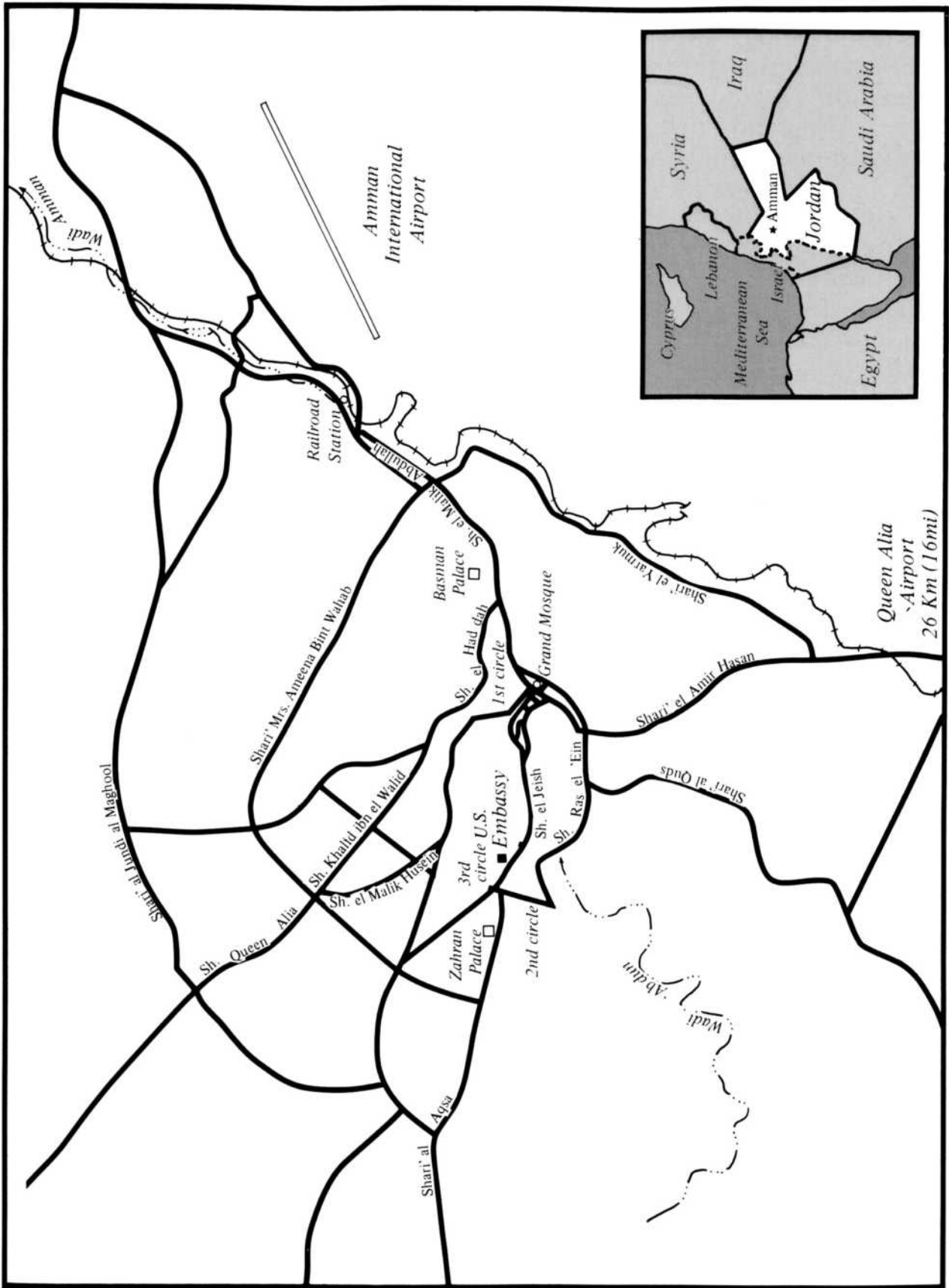
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Amman, Jordan

JORDAN

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Major Cities:

Amman

Other Cities:

Irbid, Jerash, Maān, Zarqa

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

From as long ago as the Bronze Age, **JORDAN** has been a crossroads of the world. It is a mosaic of cultures, the spiritual capital of three great religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—and today, a miracle of modern urbanization, with over half of the country's population clustered around the cities of Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid.

Jordan evokes images of the Bedouin, of Lawrence of Arabia, of spectacular deserts, and of warriors on camels. It has been home to a multitude of peoples and remains the repository of their relics. Canaanite cities, Roman and Byzantine palaces, Muslim shrines, and Crusader castles are all to be found

in this land of contrasts. Here, the mountains rise in places to 5,700 feet and, at the Dead Sea, the earth falls nearly 1,300 feet below sea level. The mystery of the nomadic desert life and the splendor of ancient cities meet in Jordan. The nation is blessed with few natural resources, yet has compensated for this need with an increasingly educated population which has gone forth to fill professional and managerial needs throughout the Middle East.

MAJOR CITY

Amman

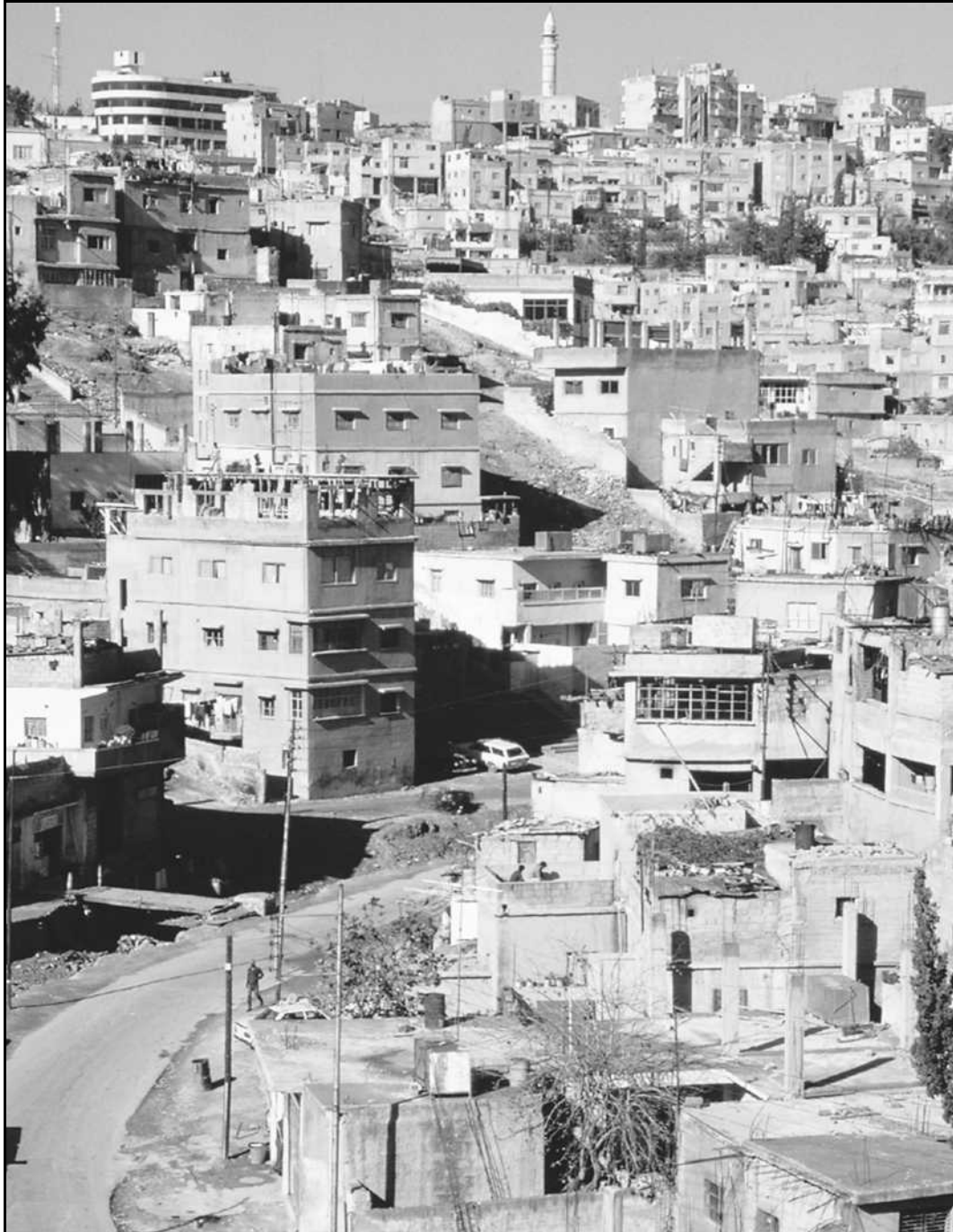
Amman, the capital of Jordan with a population of 1.3 million, is spread out over many steep hills. With an elevation ranging from about 2,450 to 2,950 feet above sea level, the city has a growing population of over one million. Here, in biblical times, was Rabbath Ammon, capital of the Ammonites, who were the descendants of Lot. The pharaoh, Ptolemy II, Philadelphus of Egypt (285-247 B.C.), ruled the city; he rebuilt it and renamed it Philadelphia.

Beginning in 63 B.C., the city fell under Roman rule. Before that time, it had flourished as a member of the

league of free cities known as the Decapolis. Briefly revived in the eighth century under the Umayyad Arabs, the entire country deteriorated in the ninth century when the Arab capital moved from Damascus to Baghdad. During the Middle Ages, Amman was no more than a tiny village. It became the capital of Transjordan in 1921 and, today, is a major city, with new construction everywhere and constantly increasing traffic and noise.

Most city activity centers around the government. Amman is Jordan's principal trading center, the main clearing point for commercial goods, and the hub of manufacturing activity. The city grew rapidly after the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967; following each war, large numbers of Palestinian Arab refugees and displaced persons from the West Bank became residents.

Amman's climate is moderate. Summer temperatures on the residential *jebels* (hills) range from 80°F to 95°F, but rarely exceed 100°F; the atmosphere is dry and even the summer evenings are usually cool. Many days are windy, and dust clouds occasionally blow in from the dry hillsides and nearby desert. Little rain falls from mid-April to mid-November. In winter, temperatures seldom go below 32°F, but the cold is penetrating, the wind frequently



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Cityscape of Amman, Jordan

strong, and houses are difficult to heat. Rain falls often in January and February. Snow falls occasionally and even a moderately light snow can temporarily disrupt traffic and communications.

Education

Several schools in Amman are suitable for English-speaking students,

including two nursery schools and a day-care center.

The American Community School was established in 1957 to provide a U.S. curriculum for American children in the city. It is primarily supported by tuition payments, but also receives assistance from the U.S. Department of State. Although

most of the students are American, there are also children of other nationalities. The school year runs from late August until early June, and regular classes are augmented by instruction in music, sports, dancing, and other extracurricular activities. A choice of French, Spanish, or Arabic is offered, starting in fifth grade.

American Community School has an excellent curriculum, with high standards of instruction and achievement. Information is available from the U.S. Embassy in Amman.

The Amman Baccalaureate School was established in 1981 and offers a U.K., Jordanian, and International Baccalaureate type of curriculum, although there are some Americans enrolled in the school, and on staff.

Private schools in Amman offer English instruction in certain subjects in grades 10 and 11 only. Their school year extends from September through May. The College de La Salle, a Catholic school for boys, offers European history, physics, English literature and grammar, and mathematics. The Bishop School for Boys, which has been in operation since 1936, has courses in English grammar, literature, and history, plus physics, chemistry, and biology.

At the Ahliyya School for Girls, instruction is available in chemistry, physics, English literature and grammar, European history, art, and biology.

Several nursery schools (with day care) are available to Americans. Enrollment is international, and instruction is by English-speaking teachers. Openings are limited and waiting lists are long.

The University of Jordan is an accredited institution offering English-language instruction in the following fields: English literature, science, medicine, and a new course in classical Arabic taught especially for nonnative speakers of that language. The university also offers courses outside the degree-granting program; several foreign students are enrolled in these courses.

Archaeology is one of Jordan's most interesting activities. The presence in Amman of the American Center for Oriental Research gives focus to archaeological pursuits, and a group called the

Friends of Archaeology sponsors field trips and lectures.

A number of courses are taught at the YWCA in Amman, including music and Arabic. Dance is taught at the American Community School as an extracurricular activity.

Recreation

Jordan has a good network of main and secondary roads and a sufficient number of gasoline stations. For long car trips, tourists should fill gas tanks and take along plenty of boiled drinking water or bottled mineral water. Travel to areas not on or near the main highways is difficult, but not impossible; main roads have been improved considerably in the past few years. Good places to visit include:

- Ajlun, with the forest and medieval ruins of the fort of Qal'at al-Rabad, a military fortress built in the 12th century as a defense against Crusader armies.
- Aqaba, Jordan's only seaport, which has good swimming, scuba diving, and water-skiing. Hotel accommodations are available.
- Kerak (Al-Karak), a Moabite town having one of the finest Crusader castles in the Middle East. The town, called Le Crac des Moabites (by the Crusaders), was taken by Saladin late in the 12th century and by the Turks two centuries later. The restorations have made it an accessible and popular tourist spot. Kerak has about 10,000 residents today, including a number of Christian families whose origins lie in Crusader times.
- Madaba, where a sixth-century mosaic map of Palestine can be found in the Greek Orthodox Church. Other Mosaics are also open for viewing.
- Mount Nebo, from where, overlooking the Dead Sea, Moses is said to have viewed the Promised Land. Mosaic finds here are excellent.
- Petra, a unique city carved by the Nabateans (of the ancient land

of Arabia) out of sheer red sandstone cliffs. Visitors ride on horseback through the Siq, the Silent City's mysterious approach, for about 45 minutes. Roman ruins are also located here.

- Qasr el-Amra, where a castle at Azraq (Qasr el-Azraq) near this site was used by Umayyad caliphs, and has early frescoes recently restored.
- Damascus, a colorful city with a rich history, a three- to four-hour drive from Amman, including stops at the Jordanian-Syrian border. It has a wonderful, inexpensive bazaar and an excellent museum. In late summer of each year, an international fair is held. Hotels are adequate, but rooms are in short supply during this period.

There are many opportunities for active sports in Jordan. Scuba diving, snorkeling, and deep-sea fishing facilities are available at the port city Aqaba, and there is fresh-water fishing at Wadi Ziglab and Azraq. No hunting is allowed at the present time.

Three sports clubs—Al Hussein Youth City (or Sports City), the Orthodox Club, and the Royal Automobile Club—are open to foreign membership. Single male membership, however, is not permitted in these organizations.

Several hotels have swimming pools and health clubs. The Royal Racing Clubs sponsors horse and (occasionally) camel races in spring and summer.

Entertainment

A semiprofessional theatrical group present productions in English and Arabic. Workshops for children and adults are conducted throughout the year. Amman also has an amateur theater group which performs regularly. Concerts are usually presented by one of the foreign cultural associations such as the Royal Cultural Center, the British Council, the American Center, the Goethe Institute, or the Haya Arts Center. They also offer classes for adults and children in dancing, aerobics,

art, language, and handicrafts. Many of these centers operate lending libraries. Local cinemas feature films in English (Hollywood productions) and Arabic. There are four modern movie theaters.

The Jerash Festival of Cultural and Arts takes place for two weeks each summer in the ruins of the ancient Greco-Roman city north of Amman. The festival offers international, regional, and local performances of drama, music, and dance as well as art displays, handicraft exhibitions, and children's activities. The festival is open to the public from afternoon until midnight.

The restaurants most frequented by foreigners serve either continental, Chinese, or Middle Eastern food. There are also American-style fast-food places. Music for dancing, discos, and even floor shows, are available at the Intercontinental, Holiday Inn, Marriott, Regency Palace, Amra, and San Rock hotels, as well as at a few nightclubs. The various sports clubs maintain restaurants for members and their guests.

The U.S. community participates in Rotary and Lions Clubs, both of which have active chapters in Amman. There also is a broad program of scouting for boys and girls.

OTHER CITIES

IRBID is a bustling industrial and agricultural hub in the extreme north, 53 miles northwest of Amman. This governorate capital of 260,000 residents lies near the Yarmūk River, which supplies irrigation for the fertile local fields and feeds numerous springs. Yarmūk University, founded here in 1976, is a multi-faceted, bilingual institution. English and Arabic are used in schools that range from arts and sciences to veterinary medicine. Irbid was the home for Bronze Age settlers, and is thought to have been a part of a Hellenistic league around the first century A.D.

JERASH is located north of Amman, less than an hours drive through the hills of ancient Gilead. The old provincial city has preserved some of the finest sites of its ancient Greco-Roman heritage. It is believed that the area has been inhabited since Neolithic times. Between the 1st century BC and the 3rd century AD, the city was part of Emperor Pompey's Decapolis, a ten-city commercial league of the Middle East. Today, the city of about 144,000 is the second largest tourist site in the country.

One of the most famous sights is the Triumphal Arch. The Arch once marked the grand entrance to the city. Now, however, the city entrance is through the South Gate, which leads directly to the Oval Plaza beneath the Temple of Zeus. Behind the Temple is the famous Hippodrome, or South Theatre, built in the 2nd century, that seats about 3000 people. This theatre hosts the annual Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts that usually takes place in July. At the festival, visitors will enjoy a variety of cultural entertainment that includes music, plays, and dances. From the theater, a 660 meter long, column-lined street leads to the magnificent Temple of Artemis.

Walking tours take visitors through a variety of markets, temples, fountains, baths, gateways and other structures with beautifully preserved art and architecture. Tour programs are generally offered in one of four languages: French, English, German and Arabic.

Just north of Jerash, through pine forests and olive groves, you can visit the medieval town of Ajlun, which offers stunning examples of Arab and Islamic architecture. Qala'at Ar-Rabad, or Ajlun Castle, was built here in the 12th century by the nephew of Saladin, Usama Ibn Munqich. It served as a military fort and buffer to protect the region from invading Crusader forces.

There are not many places to stay in Jerash. Many visit the city on a day

trip from Amman or Ajlun, which also has a few good hotels.

MAĀN is the capital of Maān Governorate, situated 60 miles south of the Dead Sea. The city of 31,000 serves as a departure point for excursions to the ancient ruins of Petra, 19 miles to the northwest. Maān lies on a major highway and is the southern terminus of a narrow-gauge railroad. Territorial status of the region was disputed from after World War I until 1965, when Saudi Arabia accepted placement of the Maān area within Jordan. Bedouin tribes inhabit this diffusely settled mountainous area.

ZARQA (also spelled Az-Zarkā') is an industrial city of 491,000, located 12 miles northeast of Amman. This was once the home of the handsome, proud Circassian people, and the former headquarters of the Arab League. Zarqa should not be confused with Zarqa Ma'in, a mineral springs center southeast of Amman.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is located in the heart of the Middle East and the Arab World. It is bounded on the north by Syria, on the east by Saudi Arabia and Iraq, on the south by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf of Aqaba, and on the west by Israel. It covers an area of approximately 35,000 square miles. Its size approximates that of the State of Indiana.

Most of Jordan's borders do not follow well-defined or natural features of the terrain. Rather, they were established by various international agreements, and, with the exception of the border with Israel, there are no major disputes. The precise delineation of the Jordanian-Israeli border is a key aspect of ongoing bilateral negotiations. In the 1967 war, the West Bank of the Jordan



Street corner in Amman

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

River, which Jordan had annexed in 1949, came under Israeli occupation. In 1988, King Hussein relinquished Jordan's claim to administrative control of the West Bank.

The country's terrain varies. On the eastern desert plateau, average elevation is 3,000 feet; in the west, mountains rise to 5,700 feet; and at the Dead Sea, terrain drops to the Earth's lowest land point of some 1,300 feet below sea level. Although historically an earthquake-prone region, no severe shocks have been recorded for several centuries.

Jordan's countryside offers a diversity of climate and scenery. Within easy driving distance of the capital city of Amman, one can visit Irbid's temperate highlands, Ajlun's majestic hills, the fertile Jordan Valley, the southern sandstone mountains, and the arid desert of the eastern plateau.

Inadequate rainfall is a chronic problem. Rainfall usually occurs only from November to April; the rest of the year has bright sunshine daily and low humidity. In the spring, a desert wind brings higher temperatures; daytime summer temperatures can be hot, but nights are usually pleasant, cool, and dry. Autumn is long and pleasant; winter often brings light snow to the mountains and to Amman; and spring carpets the country's grazing lands with beautiful wildflowers.

Population

Jordan has been home to many successive civilizations. Each group introduced new elements into the country's religion, language, and architecture—influences that are still seen today. Except for the Crusader period, Jordan has remained under Arab rule from the 7th century to the beginning of the 16th century by which time the Turkish

Ottoman Empire had expanded to include many Arab Middle Eastern countries.

Predominately Arab and Moslem, the population of Jordan today is 5.2 million. The 1948 influx of Palestinian Arab refugees, the 1967 postwar waves of displaced persons from across the Jordan River, and the 1991 "returnees" from the Gulf States have resulted in a population nearly evenly divided between "East Bankers" and Palestinians. Several of the first wave of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons were given Jordanian citizenship, and, today, hold prominent government, commercial, and professional positions. The well over 200,000 refugees who still live in camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) are not as assimilated into the Jordanian economy. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, an estimated 250,000 or more Palestinians and Jordanians

returned to the country, increasing the country's population by 8 percent.

The population represents a mixture of traditions. To be a Bedouin, or to come from Bedouin stock, is a matter of pride for many Jordanians. They are known as people of strong character, with a deep sense of family and tribal pride. Harsh desert conditions have spawned a well-developed code of hospitality that is still expressed toward one another and toward foreigners.

In the wake of the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, a non-Arab Sunni Moslem minority, the Circassians, settled in Jordan. Despite their relatively small numbers, they have long been important in government, business, and similar pursuits. Today, Circassian families are prominent in land owning, commerce, the military, and industry.

Numbering roughly 6 percent, Christians form the largest non-Moslem category of Jordan's population. The principal points of concentration of the East Bank's indigenous Christians are the towns of al-Karak, Madaba, al-Salt, and Ajlun. Most of Jordan's Christian population are Eastern Orthodox, with large numbers of Roman Catholics as well. The kingdom's several Protestant communities have resulted generally from American and European missionary activities.

There are also small communities of non-Christian minority groups, which include the Druze, the Samaritans, and the Bahais.

Jordan's population continues to grow steadily at a rate of more than 3 percent. The population is also becoming more and more urbanized, with more than 50 percent of the people living in the three main cities of Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid.

In general, Jordanians are courteous, friendly, and dignified in their relations with Westerners. Many speak excellent English and are well educated, often having studied in the U.S. or at American institu-

tions, such as the American University of Beirut. Although sometimes critical of U.S. Middle East policy, Jordanians, on a personal level, like Americans and treat them in a friendly and respectful manner.

Public Institutions

According to the 1952 Constitution, Jordan is a hereditary monarchy, in which the King forms and dismisses governments, may dissolve Parliament, and is the ultimate arbiter of domestic and foreign policy. The current King is Abdulla bin al-Husein II.

The King sets the broad parameters of foreign and domestic policy, while the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers manage daily affairs. In recent years, the Parliament, consisting of an appointed 40-member Senate and a popularly elected 80-member Lower House has been seeking to assert greater influence over policy. The ending of martial law in 1992 contributed to the creation of a climate in which Jordanians feel relatively free to express their political views.

Government organization is centralized, with authority and resources almost entirely in the hands of the national government. National government ministries regulate, supervise, and provide public services. Local autonomy and self-government are not highly developed, although many municipalities and villages have elected councils.

Municipalities are organized into 12 Governorates, headed by a "Muhafiz" or Governor appointed by the King and Cabinet. In some cases, the Governorates are divided into subdistricts, overseen by appointed district officers who have the power to supervise and regulate affairs and who report to the National Ministry for Municipal, Rural, and Environmental Affairs.

The General Intelligence and Public Security Directorates have broad responsibility for internal security and wide powers to monitor seg-

ments of the population that may pose a threat to the security of the regime.

Since April 1989, when riots in the southern city of Ma'an led the government to speed up plans to hold parliamentary elections, Jordan has taken important steps toward political reform and greater respect for human rights. Jordan held free and open elections for the Lower House in 1989 and 1993. Government-ordered changes to the election law, following Parliament's dissolution in August 1993, angered fundamentalist Islamists and extreme leftists, who blamed the change for their losses at the polls in November.

Jordan is a member of the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conference, and the U.N.

Arts, Science, and Education

In 1921 when the Emirate of Transjordan was created, educational facilities consisted of 25 religious schools that provided a narrow, tradition-oriented education. Today, the Ministry of Education estimates that nearly one person out of three in the kingdom is a student in one of the thousands of schools offering varied curriculums.

Because so many Jordanians place great value on educational opportunities for their children as a means of self-improvement and a way to develop a responsible citizenry, much of the Arab World looks to Jordan as a source of educated skilled workers and a provider of educational services.

Public education is free and compulsory through grade 10. Secondary education through grade 12 is provided by both academic and vocational high schools for those primary school graduates with the highest scholastic achievement. Students follow a standardized curriculum that heavily emphasizes rote memorization. All students must take the "Tawjihi" examina-

tion at the end of their 12th year in school. The score on this exam is the major determinant of each student's educational future in Jordan.

At the post-secondary level, Jordan has students enrolled in many community colleges. Students who attend community colleges are those whose Tawjihi scores are not high enough to permit them to enter one of five universities.

The country's first university, the University of Jordan, has a beautiful campus in the suburbs of Amman, with an expanding curriculum, including agriculture, arts, science, medicine, dentistry, law, physical education, education, administrative sciences, nursing, and "sharia" (Islamic Law).

Jordan's second largest university, Yarmouk, is located in the northern city of Irbid. Yarmouk's curriculum focuses on liberal arts.

The Jordan University of Science and Technology, a relatively new institution, has programs in medicine, engineering, and technology.

Mu'tah University was founded in 1981 as a military college, and a civilian wing was added in 1986. In the past 5 years, it has grown into the third largest university in the country. It is located in the southern city of Kerak and draws most of its pupils from the region south of Amman. The largest department is English Language and Literature.

A fifth public university, al-Elbait, opened in September 1994. Located in the northern city of Mafraq, al-Elbait University presents a general curriculum in an atmosphere of "progressive Islamic values."

In comparison with other developing countries, Jordan has a high proportion of university graduates. Since only a small number of those students who are seeking higher education can be accommodated in one of Jordan's four public universities or in other state-operated institutions of higher education, many study abroad, especially in the U.S.

A new phenomenon began in 1990, with the creation of Amman National University, a private university system. These institutions will absorb many of the students who are now qualified for higher education but unable to gain public university seats or afford education in the West.

Unfortunately, students today are finding that their employment opportunities have worsened. The previously abundant job market in the Gulf has virtually disappeared, and the domestic economy cannot absorb all the graduates that are currently being produced. Many foreign workers from the Gulf have returned to Jordan, exacerbating an already bad economic situation.

Jordan has a fledgling but growing commitment to the arts, which are considered an important part of social development. The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage heads a varied program of art exhibitions and other activities, while private efforts are continually expanding. The Queen Noor Foundation actively promotes the arts, as well as other social concerns. With the assistance of the U.S. Information Service (USIS), the Queen Noor Foundation has established the National Music Conservatory of Jordan, which now provides instruction for students of piano and wind and string instruments. Another Queen Noor Foundation project, the Jerash Festival of Arts and Culture, has become an internationally recognized event that draws numerous performing groups to Jordan during July each year. The Jordan National Gallery boasts the finest collection of contemporary Arab art in the world. The Royal Cultural Center offers exhibits, stage presentations, and special-film programs and concerts by artists from the U.S. and other countries.

Commerce and Industry

Jordan is a small country with limited natural resources. Water is scarce; only about 10 percent of the

land is arable. Rock phosphate, potash, and fertilizer are traditional exports and major sources of hard currency. Despite substantial development of the private sector since the mid-1970s, Jordan depends heavily on the outside world for energy, manufactured and consumer goods, and food.

Fueled by high levels of remittances by Jordanians working in the Gulf and financial aid from Arab States during the oil boom, Jordan's economy grew by an average of 10 percent a year between 1974 and 1982, with large increases in real investment and per capita income. This inflow of income allowed Jordan to develop its infrastructure, industries, and agriculture, and to expand government services. When the flow of money began to disappear in the mid-1980s, Jordan continued its expansion programs and, by 1988, had accumulated a foreign debt of more than \$8.3 billion. As foreign exchange dwindled, the overvalued Jordanian dinar fell under pressure and was devalued in October 1988, realizing a 45 percent depreciation. When the government took steps to cut subsidies and increase revenues through commodity price increases, rioting broke out in the economically depressed south.

In part due to the riots, Jordan concluded a standby arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1989, which included austerity measures and economic reforms. Other debt-rescheduling agreements were concluded or were being negotiated when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The Gulf Crisis cost Jordan several billion dollars from the loss of remittances, the suspension of aid from Arab countries, costs associated with the influx of refugees from Iraq and Kuwait, reduced shipping revenues from Aqaba Port, the decline of tourism, and the closing of export markets in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, more than 250,000 Palestinians and Jordanians returned to Jordan from the Gulf, increasing the country's population by about 8 percent and straining government services and

infrastructure. Jordan received some \$1.32 billion in emergency financial assistance from Western countries, primarily Germany and Japan. These funds, however, were not enough to rebuild the economy, only to offset the crisis.

The influx of returnees from the Gulf brought benefits to Jordan as well. The savings they transferred into the kingdom helped fuel a 2-year real estate and building boom that lasted until mid-1993. Aggregate consumption demand increased, and store shelves were once again filled with consumer goods. Per capita income rose in 1992 for the first time since the devaluation of the dinar. Economic growth slowed, however, in late 1993. Many economic problems remain from the 1980s, including high unemployment. The large balance-of-trade deficit declined somewhat in 1994.

The post-Gulf War environment brought great changes to Jordan's economy. Industries, such as pharmaceuticals and garments grew rapidly and exploited new export markets. Amman showed signs of developing into a regional service center for health care and education as new hospitals and schools were established. The returnees from the Gulf brought skills that were in short supply in Jordan in fields such as computer software development and marketing.

The government has taken steps to ease its high debt burden and reform its economy. It successfully completed a 2-year standby arrangement with the IMF in 1994 and entered into a 3-year extended fund facility, which requires the government to implement an agenda of sectorial reform. The government has signed two debt-rescheduling agreements, covering most of Jordan's bilateral creditors that will restructure most of the kingdom's foreign debt. Foreign aid will still be required, in the near future, for Jordan to meet its obligations and implement development projects.

In 2000, Jordan became a member of the World Trade Organization, and in 2001 it became the fourth nation to establish a Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. Both are likely to positively influence the economy, which has been growing slightly over 1% each year.

Jordan has entered into a period of unprecedented economic challenge and opportunity. The structural reform program is putting more pressure on the private sector to serve as the engine for economic growth. With its well-developed infrastructure and highly trained workforce, Jordan's economy would benefit from a reduction of Middle East tensions. Until there is calm, however, the country will not likely reach its economic potential.

Transportation

Local

Taxis (painted yellow) are available, but can be difficult to obtain in some residential areas, especially during off-hours, Fridays, and holidays. Most are now metered, and costs for trips within Amman are reasonable. Local buses and "service" or group taxis (painted white) are also available. However, because both of these operate on fixed routes and tend to be quite crowded, most Embassy employees use the individual metered taxis for travel within Amman. Generally, the taxis are in good condition, and the drivers speak sufficient English to understand simple directions. However, there have been some reports (lately) that, due to the large influx of people following the Gulf War, there are many drivers with no knowledge of the English language. Employees would be well served to learn simple Arabic phrases, such as: "Stop," "Turn left or right," etc. It is customary for men to ride in the front and women and small children in the rear.

For travel outside the city limits of Amman and to places outside of Jordan, such as Damascus (popular for shopping), many Embassy employees hire a "service." This can be done

through most of the major hotels in the city.

Due to traffic hazards and road conditions, the Mission advises against making out-of-town trips after dark or in inclement weather.

Regional

Royal Jordanian Airlines (RJ) is the national carrier. With a fleet of modern planes, it maintains scheduled flights to New York, Montreal, New Delhi, Cairo, the Gulf, Athens, Rome, Paris, London, Bangkok, Singapore, and other major cities. Other Arab airlines, as well as British Airways, Air France, KLM, Alitalia, and Aeroflot operate to and from Amman. No American airline flies to Jordan now, but connections with TWA, American Airlines, United, or Delta can be made via London, Cairo, Frankfurt, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, and other cities.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Dependability of connection and service is good. Long-distance service (direct dial) via satellite linkup to the U.S. and to most European cities is excellent. Calls made from the U.S. to Jordan cost less than calls made from Jordan to the U.S.

FAX machines are common in Jordan.

Radio and TV

Radio Jordan broadcasts in English on AM and FM mediumwave, as well as shortwave for about 17 hours a day. Popular, classical, and Western music are featured, as well as talk shows and newscasts. FM reception of classical music programs from Jerusalem is possible for much of the day. Voice of America (VOA) and BBC broadcasts in English are available on medium-wave during part of the day; at other times, shortwave reception is best.

Jordan has a government-owned TV station. Limited English-language programming is available through-

out the day. European-system TV sets (PAL) are required.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

An English-language newspaper, the *Jordan Times*, is published in Amman daily (except Fridays). The *International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, and the main British dailies are for sale locally 1 or 2 days late. *Time* and *Newsweek*, as well as British and other European magazines, are on sale locally at high prices.

Paperbacks are available locally at more than double U.S. prices. The selection of hardcover books is limited. The USIS American Center has a library where books can be borrowed, at no charge, with a membership card. The British Council maintains a library as does the American Women of Amman, both open to the public for a modest fee.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Physicians are available for medical and surgical care, including obstetrics and pediatrics. Generally, they are either British or American trained. The al-Khalidi Hospital, a private modern hospital located near Amman's Third Circle, has an emergency room staffed 24 hours daily. It handles most emergencies and after-hours medical problems, illnesses, or accidents. There is a modern, medical laboratory near al-Khalidi Hospital.

The King Hussein Medical Center, also located in Amman, is another good facility. Under its auspices is the Queen Alia Heart Institute, which can be used for cardiac cases; the Farah Rehabilitation Center has a modern burn unit.

Dental care is good, and most orthodontic treatments are available. As with all local medical care in Jordan, the costs are lower than in the U.S.

Community Health

Endemic communicable diseases, including infectious hepatitis, typhoid, meningitis, TB, and schistosomiasis are found among the local population. They can be controlled by observing normal practical precautions, such as filtering and boiling drinking water, careful washing and soaking of fruits and vegetables, watching what you eat in restaurants, not swimming in fresh water, and regular immunizations, such as gamma globulin, typhoid, and meningitis. However, even these efforts will not eliminate completely the occasional case of intestinal disorders, such as amoebic dysentery and giardia lamblia.

Few outbreaks of cholera have occurred in Jordan in recent years. The country has also seen occasional outbreaks of polio and meningococcal meningitis. When such outbreaks occur, the Ministry of Health moves fast to contain the outbreaks and to keep the public informed. Malaria is not a problem in Jordan.

Dry, dusty weather, however, complicates lung, sinus, and other respiratory problems and may make wearing contact lenses uncomfortable. Many people suffer from allergies, especially in the spring.

Medical supplies are good, generally of Jordanian, American, British, French, German, or Swiss origin. Except for U.S. brands, medicines are often less expensive than in the U.S. If specific medicines are required, bring enough supplies until they can be secured locally. Contact lens wearers should bring eye-drops and cleaning solutions, because these can be difficult and expensive to obtain here.

Preventive Measures

Strict sanitation in the home regarding food and water is the best defense against disease. Filter and boil drinking water for 10 minutes. Local, good-quality pasteurized milk is normally available (the Jordan and Danish Dairies are recommended). Do not eat uncooked vegetables or salads without taking

proper cleaning precautions and avoid locally made pastries and deserts sold by street vendors.

Children and adults should be immunized against tetanus, typhoid fever, polio, meningitis, and hepatitis B before arriving in Jordan. In addition, children should be immunized against whooping cough and diphtheria. Gamma globulin shots are recommended for protection against hepatitis for all adults and children over 12. Cholera boosters are optional. Adults should have oral polio boosters updated. Rabies can be a problem, so Mission personnel should be vaccinated against the disease before arriving at post and avoid contact with stray animals after arrival in country. (Also, vaccinate your pet.)

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Jan. 15 Arbor Day
 - May 25 Jordanian Independence Day
 - June 9 King Abdullah's Accession to the Throne
 - June 10 Great Arab Revolt & Army Day
 - Nov. 14 King Hussein's Birthday
 - Ramandan*
 - Id al-Fitr*
 - Id al-Adha*
 - Mawlid al Nabi*
- *Variable, based on the Islamic calendar

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

TWA and other U.S. carriers provide flights to several European and Middle Eastern cities for connections to Amman. Many international carriers fly into Jordan.

Passports and visas are necessary for entry. Short-term visas (one to

two weeks) are available at no charge on arrival in Amman. Persons whose passports contain Israeli visas or entry stamps are admitted only under special circumstances, and with great difficulty.

No vaccinations are required by Jordan. It should be noted, though, that there is some malaria risk in rural areas of the Jordan River Valley and the Kerak lowlands.

At present, pets are not quarantined in Jordan. To enter the country, all dogs and cats must have current health certificates and have been vaccinated against rabies not less than 30 days, nor more than 12 months, before entry. It is recommended that pets be isolated from Muslim guests.

Roman Catholic, Anglican, and non-denominational Protestant services are available in Amman in English, as are Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, and Protestant services in Arabic. The non-denominational Amman International Church has a full-time pastor. There are two American Jesuit priests attached to the

Pontifical Mission for Palestine who celebrate masses in English at the College of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

Firearm importation is difficult to arrange. Current information can be sought at the time of visa application.

The time in Jordan is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus two.

Local currency is the Jordanian *dinar* (JD), divided into 1,000 *fiils*.

Jordan employs the standard metric system of weights and measures.

SPECIAL NOTE

Many Muslims object to having their pictures taken. Discretion should be used in photographing women, or scenes that could be interpreted as showing poverty. Military installations (bridges included) cannot be photographed.

The U.S. Embassy in Jordan is located on Jebel Amman, in

Amman; telephone: 962 (6) 644-371; FAX: 962 (6) 659-720.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Finlay, Hugh. *Jordan and Syria: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Plant, 1987.

Fodor's Jordan and the Holy Land. New York: McKay, latest edition.

Garfinkle, Adam. *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

Hadidi, Adnan, ed. *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*. New York: Routledge, 1988.

Lunt, James. *Hussein of Jordan: From Survivor to Statesman*. New York: Morrow, 1989.

Wilson, Rodney, ed. *Politics and the Economy in Jordan*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

LATVIA

Republic of Latvia

Major City:

Riga

Other Cities:

Daugavpils, Jelgava, Liepāja, Ventspils

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **LATVIA** is one of the former Soviet republics. Latvia's declaration of independence from the former Soviet Union on September 6, 1991, marked the re-establishment of Latvian independence after over 51 years of Soviet domination. On November 18, 1918, Latvia became an independent republic. The Latvians remained an independent people until July 21, 1940, when Latvia was annexed and absorbed into the Soviet Union by Soviet leader Josef Stalin. The annexation of Latvia and the neighboring countries of Estonia and Lithuania was never recognized as legitimate by the United States or many other Western countries. The collapse of the hard-line Communist

coup in Moscow in late August 1991, paved the way for Latvia's re-emergence as a free, democratic nation.

Like the other former Soviet republics, Latvia is undergoing the painful transition from a Communist state-run economy to a free-market economy. Latvia retains close trade and economic ties with Estonia, Lithuania, Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. The country also seeks foreign investment and trade links with the United States and other Western nations.

MAJOR CITY

Riga

Riga is the capital of Latvia and is located on the Daugava River, just nine miles before it reaches the Baltic Sea. It has a population of 790,608 (1998 estimate).

Founded by Teutonic crusaders in 1201 A.D., by the end of the 13th century it had joined the Hanseatic League and become a major center of commerce in Northern Europe. The Old Town of Riga is its cultural heart and it has retained much of its medieval atmosphere. The old-world architecture ranges from Romanesque and Gothic to Renais-

sance and baroque and is now undergoing careful renovation. This 80-acre area is comprised of tiny, winding, cobbled streets; churches with tall, medieval spires; richly decorated portals and tile roofs; old guild halls, a 13th century wall, a 14th century castle and an abundance of tiny coffee houses, good restaurants, museums, art galleries and handicraft shops.

Outer Riga, aside from a few Soviet-style buildings in the center (and many dreary bloc-housing developments beyond) is graced with ornate 19th century Jugendstil buildings; extensive wooded park lands and boulevards lined with Dutch lime trees planted in the 19th century.

Its harbor, airport and rail and highway network s all contribute to making Riga a major trade and commercial center for all of the Baltic countries.

Utilities

All living quarters for staff in Riga have running water, flush toilets, a tub/shower arrangement, electricity, and telephone. Water pressure is often low, and the water is frequently too full of sediment to make tub bathing agreeable. In many parts of Riga, hot water is not always readily available.



Aerial view of Riga, Latvia

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Electricity is 220v, 50-cycle, AC. Consider purchasing one or two small transformers in the U.S. before departure for things like answering machines. It may be necessary to adapt your stereos and CD players to 50 cycles.

Use 220v irons and other small appliances. These can be purchased locally or ordered from Stockmann's in Helsinki or the export companies in Denmark.

Most appliance plugs now have 6 mm prongs (Western European style.) However, older outlets in Latvia (pre-1991) take only 4 mm prongs (Russian.) Electric adapters and multiple wall plugs (but not transformers) are available.

Food

A Riga landmark is its central market, which is housed along the Daugava River in five zeppelin hangars that were used by the Germans during World War I. It is one of

Europe's largest markets, and the selection, even in winter, is always good. The northern staples of beets, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, celery root, and pumpkin are always available, along with basic herbs, such as parsley and dill. In winter, fresh produce from Western Europe includes cauliflower, tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers, and cucumbers. As the weather warms, an abundance of local garden vegetables begins to appear, starting with sorrel, radishes, and peas. In summer, fruits and berries appear at the markets. Leaf lettuce and broccoli are usually available at the larger outdoor markets but not in shops. Spinach, celery, iceberg lettuce, and sweet corn are rarely available. A few imported vegetables, such as the sweet potato, have not yet appeared in Latvia.

Imported fruits are available year round, including apples, oranges, coconuts, and bananas. Pineapples, kiwis, mangoes, lemons, pears, and avocados are usually available at

very high prices even by U.S. standards. For locally produced foods, prices are about the same as in the U.S.

The quality of fresh meat varies. All varieties are available year round in the outdoor markets. These include beef, veal, pork, lamb, and chicken (including frozen chicken from Holland and other Western countries).

Locally raised rabbit, duck, turkey, and goose are usually on sale at the central market. (Better quality frozen poultry is occasionally available but expensive.) There is no refrigeration at the markets for meats, so shoppers should be wary in warm months. There is a separate zeppelin hangar for fish. The variety is good. Canned fish products and caviar can be purchased there as well. Cold cuts, smoked sausages, fish, and chicken are a popular quick meal for Latvians; these are easily found in shops all over Riga.

Milk is pasteurized but unrefrigerated. Most foreigners buy long-life shelf milk that comes in several varieties, including 5%, 2%, and 3.2%. Dairy products such as sour cream, fresh cream, cultured sour milk, butter, and cottage cheese are of good quality. Plain yogurt is unavailable, but flavored yogurt is very popular. Be aware of handlers' hygiene when buying in bulk at the markets, especially with dairy products like sour cream and cottage cheese. Local cheese is soft and spoils quickly, but there is good variety. More imported cheeses are beginning to appear. Swiss, roquefort, and cheddar can be found in a few shops but are quite expensive.

Excellent dark rye, sweet-sour caraway rye, and a coarse white bread, along with a range of pastry items, can be found at the many bread shops, bakeries, and markets. Now hot dog buns and sesame hamburger buns are also available.

Bring baking products such as extracts, brown sugar, cake mixes, marshmallows, corn meal, graham crackers, baking chocolate/chips, and pecans, as these items are either unavailable or difficult to find.

Bring low-fat, low-salt, or sugar-free foods if you prefer them; they are not yet on the market in Riga. Baby foods and pet foods should also be shipped if you have favorite brands.

There is a Ship Chandler's warehouse/ shop in the port area of Riga that also sells duty-free goods. Its drawback is that you can never be certain what will be available at any given time. Some months the shop has no stock except cigarettes. Their bestselling items are liquor and wine.

Month by month, more joint venture food and wine shops are springing up in Riga (primarily with goods from Western Europe), with a surprising number of new products. For example, Indonesian prepared sauces are often available (but rarely any Mexican food). Americans who travel regularly to Vilnius

or Tallinn often buy food there, as there is a wider (and cheaper) selection of imported foods in these cities. Local prices for liquor and wine are generally comparable to those in the U.S., and variety is good. For instance, it is not difficult to locate an acceptable Bulgarian red wine for about \$3 a bottle.

Clothing

Clothing in Riga is similar to that worn in the northern U.S., although frequently not as casual (except for the universal jeans/ sneakers wardrobe of children). Latvians dress quite smartly. In winter, for example, women wear appealing felt-brimmed hats or berets, well-tailored coats, dress boots, leggings, or skirts. You will notice a difference in styles if you visit Scandinavia, where women are more likely to wear parkas and slacks in winter. Include warm winter clothing, a variety of scarves and vests, and silk or thermal underwear for underheated rooms in winter: concert halls, classrooms, movie theaters, and churches. When the heating systems are off, public buildings can also be cold in spring and fall. There are many chilly and rainy days, so raincoats with linings, umbrellas, and waterproof footwear are necessities. The sidewalks in Riga are in poor repair, so have sturdy and waterproof walking shoes.

There are a few joint-venture clothing stores that sell attractive but expensive blouses, sweaters, skirts, suits, and coats. Do not plan on building up a wardrobe here. Clothing in the nearby Scandinavian countries is attractive but, aside from the luck of catching a good sale, usually very expensive.

It is not difficult to find skilled tailors and dressmakers in Riga who can copy just about anything if you have the fabric. Prices are going up but are still reasonable. There is a good store with imported fabric, but prices are very high. Larger shops now accept Visa and MasterCard.

Hand-knit children's hats, scarves, and mittens are inexpensive and

attractive. Likewise, these hand-knit items made for men and women are beautifully done, often in striking and imaginative color combinations employing ancient folk patterns. Women's fashion boots and shoes are available, as are exercise shoes, but in limited size selections.

Shoe repair and drycleaning are available and well done. Drycleaning is a bit more expensive than in the U.S.

Invitations that specify "formal" generally require no more than dark suits for men and dressy cocktail dresses, not necessarily long, for women.

Supplies and Services

Do not depend solely on the local economy for supplies, even though stores in Riga are carrying more and more items at equivalent U.S. prices. Bring cosmetics, toiletries, feminine personal supplies, tobacco items, home medicines, drugs, common household needs, and any other conveniences used for housekeeping, household repairs, entertaining, etc. If you are not particular as to brand, you can often find an equivalent (usually German) product (e.g., shampoo, soaps, tampons, aspirin, razor blades). There is a new chain of drugstores (Drogas) in Riga selling these items with a rapidly expanding inventory. Stockmann's Department Store in Helsinki carries durable and attractive household items at much higher prices than in the U.S.

Good cloth is very expensive, so consider buying fabric at sales in the U.S. if you do a lot of sewing. For instance, the fabric for simple bedroom curtains costs about \$200 per window. Good fabric for skirts costs about \$30 per meter.

Basic services, such as tailoring, dressmaking, shoe repair, drycleaning, beauty- and barbershops, and automobile repair, are available here. The shoe repair services and the joint-venture drycleaners are good. Tailoring and dressmaking are also done with care, and prices

are reasonable. The hotels have moderately priced beauty/barbershops, and there are many others, even less expensive, located in central Riga.

Domestic Help

Good domestic help is available in Riga. The employment of domestic help paid by the hour is the easiest to obtain and is adequate. The scheduling of wages and benefits is in a transitional period. Currently, domestic help is extremely inexpensive (in 1999 wages were about US\$2 an hour).

Religious Activities

There are few areas in Europe where such a variety of religious denominations exist as in the Baltics. Latvia has 278 Lutheran churches, 186 Catholic, 92 Orthodox, 66 Baptist, 54 Old-Believers, 32 Seventh-day Adventist, 25 Pentecostal, 4 Jewish synagogues, 4 Buddhist temples, 2 Methodist churches, and 1 Calvinist. In Riga, there are Catholic and Orthodox monasteries, as well as a Krishna Consciousness Society and an active Church of Latter-day Saints.

Services are either Latvian or Russian (Lutheran church services are in Latvian; Orthodox in Russian; Catholic in Latvian, Russian, and Polish). There is one English speaking service held every Sunday at 10 am in the old Anglican church of Saint Saviour's near Riga Castle in Old Town. The church has an active congregation composed of both Latvians and the growing international community in Riga.

The Catholic church of St. Jacob's, also in Old Town, plans to hold alternating French and English services every Sunday afternoon at 4:30.

The Salvation Army and YMCA are also active in Riga.

Education

The International School of Latvia is located in the coastal resort area of Jurmala, about a half-hour's drive from Riga. There are currently

about 130 children enrolled, ages 4 through 18.

There is a half-day preschool for 4- and 5-year-olds, from 8:45 am to 1 pm.

Kindergarten through grade 12 start at 8:45 am and finish at 3:15 pm. Instruction is in English. The school is sponsored by the State Department Office of Overseas Schools. Teachers are certified in the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Western Europe, and Latvia. Starting with grade 1, students choose to study either French or German as a foreign language.

Accreditation with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools is pending (October 1999). ISL was authorized to teach the International Baccalaureate Primary Years and Middle Years Programme in 1998/1999.

Extracurricular instruction is offered in art, music, physical education, computers, and Latvian culture.

External testing is available: SAT, TOEFL, PSAT, and SSAT.

Tuition is US\$9,500 per pupil a year for grades 6-8, and US\$9,000 for Kindergarten through grade 5. There is a one-time registration fee of \$1,000 per pupil. The school is expanding rapidly and is planning for an enrollment of 200 within the next few years. The school leases space from the Bulduri Horticultural College. There is an indoor gym, sports hall, swimming pool, and auditorium.

Transportation to and from the school is provided by a private firm that charges \$90 per pupil per month. Students must be at least 5 years old to ride the bus. It picks up children at various locations in Riga.

If you wish to arrange a correspondence course, one possibility is through the University of Nebraska. The address is:

The University of Nebraska University Extension Division Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

A complete listing of overseas schools used by American students can be obtained from: The Office of Overseas Schools U.S. Dept. of State Washington, D.C. 20520 703-235-9600. More information is available from the European Council of International Schools, which describes each member school, its fees, enrollment, curriculum, etc. ECIS Executive Secretary 2-8 Loudoun Road London, NW England.

Special Educational Opportunities

Choral singing is popular in Latvia (and of superior quality). Several members of the international community sing in choirs in Riga. Individuals who paint and sculpt have been able to rent studio space at reasonable prices, and, for nominal fees, sit in on drawing and printmaking classes at the Riga Academy of Arts.

Sports

There are a couple of Western-style commercial gyms that have relatively new weight machines, free weights, aerobics classes, sauna, and massage. Also, small groups do get together to play volleyball, soccer, and softball in the summer. Biking can be dangerous; it is often necessary to navigate heavy traffic. There are no bike lanes. There is a bike trail from the Riga suburbs to Priedane and another to Jurmala, which is quite nice on summer weekdays, when there are fewer baby carriages and dog walkers on it. A bike helmet is a must, but you will attract a lot of attention; Latvians do not wear them.

It is possible to arrange horseback riding, fishing trips, pistol shooting, sailing trips, and hunting expeditions. There is excellent deer, wild boar, and elk hunting in Latvia; and group trips can be organized. Hunting licenses cost \$330 (\$170 Ls).

A 50-meter indoor pool with two saunas and a weight room belonging to Riga Technical University,

located on an island in the Daugava. It is possible to swim there for a nominal fee, but there are no secure lockers. The Radisson Daugava Hotel also has a nice pool and offers monthly or yearly membership for the pool only or in combination with aerobics and weight training. Bird walks and other nature tours can be arranged by local tourist associations.

Billiards and bowling are available at the Seaman's Center and at the Boulinga centers. The Boulinga centers also has a few squash courts. Both facilities can be rented for parties.

Cross-country skiing is popular, and there are many suitable trails. Equipment can be cheaply purchased locally.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The closest tourist attraction to Riga is the coastal resort area of Jurmala, about half an hour's drive northwest of the city. Its 10-mile stretch of white, sandy beach and pine-covered dunes are a welcome respite from city life. The water can be quite cold and has a high iron content, but it is much cleaner than in Soviet times, and most areas are now considered safe for swimming. The Bay of Riga is very shallow, so the water does warm up, and you can wade out several yards before it gets even chest deep.

The Latvian countryside, with its dense pine and birch forests, rivers and lakes, and gently rolling hills, is especially beautiful in the spring, summer, and early autumn.

There are two 13th-century castles near the medieval town of Sigulda, 52 kilometers from Riga. Called the Latvian Switzerland, Sigulda is the gateway to Gauja National Park, a 920-sq. km. river valley with sandstone caves, steep cliffs, nature reserves, and a winter sports area that includes a world class bobsled run.

One of Latvia's outstanding examples of baroque architecture is the

Castle of Rundale (70 km from Riga). It was built by the same architect who built the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. It is located in the Province of Zemgale, an area rich with plains and woods, perfect for biking and car trips.

On the outskirts of Riga, there is an internationally known open-air ethnographic museum on the shores of Lake Juglas. There are more than 90 buildings, including two 16th-century timber churches, a fishing village, windmills, a peasant school, and an old inn that serves Latvian farm cooking: gray peas with bacon, sausages, cheeses, and beer.

Midsummer, which is celebrated on June 23 and June 24, is a very special holiday in Latvia. Called Jani or St. John's Eve, it incorporates many ancient customs as it calls upon the spirits of the home, the fields, and the forests. Special beer is brewed; special cheese is served; wreaths of flowers for women and oak leaves for men are woven; and farm animals and farm buildings are adorned with flowers. Fires are lit on hilltops, as dancing, singing, eating, and drinking go on through the "white night" until sunrise.

Entertainment

There are excellent operas, ballets (Alexander Gudonov and Mikhail Baryshnikov began their careers here), recitals, and concerts in Riga, and tickets are relatively inexpensive. The symphony and opera season runs between October and June, but concerts are held year round. Both amateur and state-sponsored theater are well attended, and some theaters offer earphones for English translations. There is also a permanent circus in Riga.

Folk music is popular, and there is a variety of folk groups—men, women, mixed—some featuring various traditional instruments, some including dance in their repertoires. Choral singing is a specialty of the country, and international song festivals are held every few years in the early summer when tens of thousands of Latvians from all over the world come to sing together.

Besides the open-air museum, there are many art museums in town, along with more diverse collections, such as the pharmaceutical museum, the automobile museum, and the military museum.

The Foreign Literature Library has the largest collection of fiction in English, along with American and British periodicals. The National Library of Latvia receives many English-language magazines and newspapers, including the New York Times, within a few days of publication.

Latvian independent TV presents a complete report of the country's news, sports, and weather in English every evening. The state TV station runs CNN and BBC news every weeknight from 10 pm to midnight. Radio Riga does an English newscast every evening, and another station plays "American top 40" on Sundays and Voice of America daily. There is a weekly English-language 12-page newspaper called the Baltic Times, which provides in-depth and up-to-date information on political, business, and cultural events in all three Baltic countries. It sells for 30 santimes in hotels and in many bookstores and kiosks.

Restaurants in all price ranges can be good in Riga. More are opening each month, and so are bars, discotheques, and casinos.

Spectator sports are offered throughout the year, including soccer, ice hockey, motorcycle racing, basketball, and volleyball.

There is an International Women's Club that holds monthly luncheons and various weekly activities. Volunteer activities are most welcome here as the country struggles out of its painful economic situation. There is a "Friends of the Regional Children's Hospital," which meets regularly and holds an annual charity ball every February.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **DAUGAVPILS** is located in southeastern Latvia. Daugavpils was founded in the 1270s and was occupied at various times in history by Poland, Russia, and France. The city sustained heavy damage during both World War I and World War II, but has been rebuilt. Daugavpils is home to several industries. These industries produce bicycles, furniture, processed foods, synthetic fibers, and electrical equipment. The city is also a trading center for agricultural and lumber products. Daugavpils is situated 136 miles (219 kilometers) southeast of Riga and is connected to the capital by an extensive railway system. Daugavpils has a population over 128,000.

The southwestern Latvian city of **JELGAVA** was founded in 1266. This city is one of Latvia's major industrial centers. Among the products manufactured in Jelgava are vegetables, foodstuffs, linen, and agricultural machinery. Jelgava had a population of roughly 75,000.

LIEPĀJA is located in western Latvia on the coast of the Baltic Sea. The city, founded in 1253 by Teutonic Knights, has been occupied at various times in history by Swedes, Poles, Russians, and Germans. Liepāja's location on the Baltic Sea led to the city's development as a major port and naval base. The city sustained major damage during both World War I and World War II. Several manufacturing industries have developed in Liepāja. These industries produce agricultural machinery, canned fish, textiles, tobacco products, linoleum, paints, and iron and steel products. The city's port is an important export center for Latvian agricultural, timber, and leather products. The population of Liepāja is estimated over 115,000.

The city of **VENTSPILS** is situated on the Baltic Sea coast, approximately 100 miles (161 kilometers) west-northwest of Riga. Ventspils is

a vital Latvian city because its port remains ice-free during the winter. Many products are exported from Ventspils, including lumber, grain, flax, chemicals, and oil. The city's location on the Baltic Sea has led to the emergence of a large fishing and canning industry. Ventspils has a population over 55,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Latvia is situated on the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga, bordered by Estonia to the northeast, Russia and Byelorussia to the east and Lithuania to the southwest. Its 25,499 square mile area is about the size of West Virginia in the U.S. and Belgium and the Netherlands combined in Europe. Geographically, grassland and marshy meadows, low hills and rolling plains make up most of the country which has an average elevation of 292 feet above sea level. Pine, oak, and birch forests cover approximately a quarter of the country. Latvia is rich in lakes (more than 5,000) and rivers (almost 1,000). It has a coastline of 307 miles, half lying on the Baltic Sea and half on the Gulf of Riga.

Only three European countries—Estonia, Finland, and Iceland—are further north in their entirety than Latvia which has a latitude of between 55 and 58 and a longitude of between 20 and 28. Winter daylight hours are considerably shorter than in the northern United States. During most of December and January, the sun does not rise until after 9 and sets as early as 3 p.m. On the other hand, to compensate, the longest day of summer lasts almost 18 hours. In spite of its northern location, winter temperatures average only slightly below freezing because of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf Stream. Summer temperatures average around 70. The maritime climate also accounts for the coun-

try's frequent cloud cover and considerable rainfall (average per year is approximately 27 inches).

Population

Latvia's population is estimated at 2.6 million. Almost half of the Republic's total population lives in Riga and in other neighboring cities and villages within a distance of 70 kilometers, or 6% of its territory. The capital city, Riga (population 916,000, of which 48% are Russian and 40% Latvian), is the largest Baltic city. It is situated in the middle of the country from east to west and has an active and potentially major international seaport. Because of Latvia's status as an occupied country for 50 years, which included massive deportations of Latvians and immigration of Russians, Latvians comprise only 56% of the country's population. The Russian population is about 33% of the total, with the remainder consisting mostly of Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, and Lithuanians.

Since almost one-half of the inhabitants of Latvia do not speak Latvian, a law giving Latvia the status of an official state language was passed in 1989. Most Latvians also speak Russian. During the years of independence prior to Soviet occupation, 55% of Latvians reported their religion as Lutheran, 25% Catholic, 9% Orthodox, 5% Jewish, and the remainder Baptists, Old-Believers, Seventh-day Adventists, and other sects. With the end of state controls, a religious revival is taking place.

Public Institutions

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia declared full independence on August 21, 1991, after 50 years of Soviet occupation. Latvia had lost its ancient independence in the 13th century and was ruled successively by Germans, Poles, Swedes, and Russians. In 1918, non-Communist Latvia proclaimed independence, which lasted until the outbreak of World War II. A brief period of Soviet rule was followed by 4 years of German occupa-

tion until Latvia was again incorporated into the former Soviet Union in 1944. Tens of thousands of Latvians were deported to Siberia both during and after the war, and Russians and people from other Soviet Republics began migrating to Latvia. In 1987, an independence movement emerged, with independence being granted in August 1991.

The supreme state power is held by the Parliament or the Saeima. Latvia's Chief of State is the President. The Saeima is authorized to accept for trial and decide on any cases of social and state significance. The Council of Ministers, headed by a prime minister, is the highest executive body in the country. It oversees 13 ministries and a variety of state committees and other departments.

Major concerns and priorities of the government include the need for a continuing energy supply. Latvia had been almost totally dependent on the former Soviet Union for oil and gas. Now, with the transition to world market prices, new sources are being sought. Electricity is purchased from Lithuania, which has its own generating plants.

Likewise, improvements in transportation, telecommunications, and environmental pollution control are top priorities. In the area of private-sector development, implementation of a large industrial privatization program and training in business management are major concerns.

Delicate issues remain to be resolved, particularly that of citizenship for the considerable Russian-speaking population. In 1998, the Citizenship Law was amended to allow children of non-citizens born after 1991 to become Latvian citizens automatically—no language test required. And the systems of windows regarding applying for citizenship for older residents was abolished. The applicant, who is born before 1991, must still, however, pass a Latvian competency exam.

Arts, Science, and Education

Folklore has had a strong influence on Latvian culture both because of the population's close ties to the land and also because of the country's late introduction to Christianity (by German crusaders in the 13th century). Many ancient customs, blended with Christian rituals, are still practiced today, and the geometric symbols of mother Earth—the sun, thunder, fate, etc., still appear as design elements in Latvian applied arts.

Because of its long periods of foreign domination, Latvian literature did not come into its own until the mid-19th century. This is when the ancient oral “dainas” were first collected, most notably by Krisjanis Barons, who published almost 36,000 verses over a period of 40 years. Also in this period, the great epic poem “Lacplesis” or The Bear Slayer was written by Andrej S. Pumpurs. Janis Rainis (1865-1929) is widely regarded as the greatest Latvian writer. Imants Ziedonis is perhaps the most famous living Latvian poet who established the Latvian Culture Fund—an organization promoting the development of all Latvian art forms.

Latvia has 10 theaters; most of them are located in Riga. They include a beautifully restored opera house and ballet theater, a Russian theater, a puppet theater, a permanent circus, and many drama theaters. There are 13 movie theaters in Riga: five of these regularly show English-language movies with Latvian and Russian subtitles. There is a philharmonic orchestra and a chamber philharmonic orchestra with concert halls for both. Concerts and recitals are held almost daily. The organ of the Dom Cathedral in Riga's Old Town is one of the largest and best known in the world. Noted organists come regularly from the world over to give concerts there.

Song festivals are a Latvian tradition; choirs and folkdance groups perform year long, and there are

occasional international festivals with folksinging and dancing in regional costumes.

A representative collection of classic Latvian painters can be seen at the National Fine Arts Museum, and there are numerous art galleries in Riga exhibiting contemporary Latvian paintings, tapestries, sculpture, and ceramics. There are 20 museums in Riga with a variety of collections, such as the Museum of History and Navigation and the Museum of Natural History. Latvians are avid readers. More than 200 Latvian and Russian newspapers are published in Latvia, as well as numerous magazines and periodicals. The city has 168 public libraries, although they have not been able to purchase new books or periodicals for several years due to underfunding.

The Latvian Academy of Sciences is the most prestigious academic organization and encompasses 14 research institutes. It is now working toward greater contact and cooperation with the West. Research in medicine and technical fields, begun in the years of independence before 1940, continued under the Soviets with internationally acknowledged results in microbiology, polymer mechanics, wood chemistry, semiconductor physics, and medicine. Now these research institutes are undergoing considerable restructuring and revision of priorities.

Education levels in Latvia are relatively high. The educational system is undergoing radical change in curricula after the effect of Soviet occupation on what was a highly developed school system ranging from free and compulsory preschool education to trade and technical schools and universities. There are 16 institutions of higher learning located in Riga. Throughout the country, there are also 55 technical colleges. The Baltic Academic Center, based in Riga, brings in scholars and university administrators from Western Europe and the U.S. to advise and teach during this critical period of transition. Through EU

and Swedish funding, a Stockholm School of Economics was established. It offers a 2-year bachelor's degree to Baltic citizens. This success will be expanded with the establishment of the Stockholm Law School, which is slated to open within the next 2 years.

Commerce and Industry

Latvia's economy, which was part of the centrally planned socialist structure of the former Soviet Union since the mid-1940s, is now being transformed to the free market system it had enjoyed between 1918 and 1940. The massive deportation of Latvians and immigration of Russian workers over the last decades now compound the enormous difficulties of implementing economic reforms.

Within the former Soviet Union, Latvia was the most prominent manufacturing center in the Baltics. It produced processed foods, railway cars, electronic components, and light metal goods. Livestock fed on Soviet grain yielded both meat and dairy products.

Latvia has few natural resources, except for amber, timber, peat, and raw materials for construction. It has the largest forested area in the Baltics, but timber resources are threatened by heavy pollution. Another serious environmental problem is water pollution due to chemical dumping in ports, untreated sewage, and extensive use of liquid fertilizers.

The country faced and is still encountering difficulties as trade with Russia collapses, prices soar, and unemployment grows. The material standard of living has declined for the majority of the population since 1991. There is an 18% Value Added Tax (VAT) on all goods and services. Nevertheless, great strides since independence have been achieved. Markets have refocused toward Europe, and the recent economic crisis in Russia has reinvigorated this transition.

On the positive side, agricultural privatization has moved quickly, and the number of private farmers has doubled in the last 2 years. Restitution is almost completed, and now the Government is working toward privatizing residential housing. Small-scale private enterprise is booming, especially in the retail area. Consulting groups are forming rapidly, and services are being developed to respond to business needs. Possibilities for development exist in the areas of communications, banking, the private sector, and transportation (there are three major ports: Riga, Ventspils, and Liepaja). Business ties to both the East and the West are increasing rapidly with the existence already of hundreds of joint ventures and the passage of an open free investment law. In addition, Riga and the Baltic seacoast of Jurmala, in spite of the pollution in the Bay of Riga, hold great potential for becoming major tourist attractions. Improvements in pollution and renovation of the unique architectural character that once made Jurmala one of the top spas in Europe have already reinvigorated this resort area.

Transportation

Automobiles

Driving in Latvia is on the right side. Generally speaking, roadways are in fairly good repair, although the absence of shoulders occurs frequently in the countryside. Most of the highways are two-lane. In the country, unless a 100-kilometer-an-hour speed limit is posted, the limit is 90 kph. In town, the limit is 50 kph. Aggressive drivers, poorly maintained roads, and drinking have given Latvia one of the highest accident rates in Europe.

In Riga itself, many of the streets are in ill repair, poorly lit, or not lit at all, and it is essential to be on the alert for unmarked potholes and darting pedestrians. Small street signs are affixed to buildings and are not visible at night. Driving in Riga has also become more hazardous and frustrating due to the boom in car ownership. During rush

hours, main thoroughfares move at a snail's pace. The increase in the number of cars has also made parking very difficult. Hopefully the parking situation will be alleviated to some extent by the development of parking structures (one outside the train station, one by Jacobs Barracks, and another off of Brivibas).

In the countryside, bicyclists on the highways are a particular hazard, especially at night. They typically wear dark clothes and have no reflectors on their bicycles.

There are several companies selling automobile insurance. Third-party-liability coverage is now available, and the Latvian Government requires third-party insurance of \$5,000 no matter what other liability insurance the owner carries.

The cost of theft insurance is high and may not fully cover the value of the vehicle. If the vehicle has both an alarm and an engine/transmission locking system, a deduction in the rate is possible. The insurance industry is a new concept in Latvia; make sure you deal with a reputable company.

Rental cars are available at several agencies for about \$70 a day for a late-model car, and \$40 for an older car. Volvo, Mitsubishi, Audi, Renault, Toyota, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Ford have dealerships/repair shops in Riga.

Both leaded and unleaded gasoline is sold at local stations. With the growing number of Western gas stations, it is also easy now to purchase 95 and 98 unleaded gasoline. In addition to selling high octane gasoline, Statoil, Neste, and Shell also sell tires and spare parts, and do oil changes and repair work at some of their stations. Statoil and Neste have their own credit cards and also accept MasterCard. Gas is still cheap by European standards; about 32 santimes per liter for 98 octane unleaded gas as of February 1999 (about \$2.40 a gallon).

A fire extinguisher and automobile first-aid kit are required by law.

Always carry a flashlight, reflective triangle, flares, lug wrench, and jack as well.

Local

Riga has an extensive public transportation network. Buses, trolleys, and trams are all inexpensive by Western standards. They are frequently crowded, and breakdowns are common, but there is an increasing number of new buses and trams donated by the Scandinavian countries. Trolleys, trams, and buses run 24 hours daily, but between midnight and 5 am, routes usually run only one per hour. Tickets can be purchased from the ticket collector on the bus or tram and cost 18 santimes (about 30 cents U.S.). Keep in mind that buses and electric buses require a different ticket than trams.

Taxis are numerous and can be found at one of the many taxi stands. Prices vary, so agree on the fare before departure.

Police cars and vans are grey and white, with a blue light on top and are labeled "Policija." Ambulances are various colors. They frequently do not use sirens but simply a flashing light. Fire trucks are red.

Streets and sidewalks in Riga are hard surfaced but with an abundance of potholes and cracks. Many cobblestone streets, especially in the Old Town, can be extremely slippery when wet.

Regional

Trains in Latvia are slow, overcrowded, lacking in food services and occasionally dangerous because of theft. Most highways are hard surfaced, but less-traveled roads are gravel or dirt. Bus schedules are generally reliable, and buses are popular modes of transportation for inter-country to Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland. Be aware that a reservation and a ticket do not always guarantee a seat. For example, Americans have reported standing on buses for the 4-hour trip to Vilnius. It is possible to make private arrangements to rent a car and

driver for trips to Lithuania or to Estonia.

A four-lane highway extends to the airport and on to the coastal resort area of Jurmala. There are other four-lane stretches in the country, for example, on the Baltic highway connecting Riga to Lithuania to the west and to Estonia to the east. Frequent encounters with farm machinery and heavy truck traffic can slow progress on the roadways.

Six international airlines service Riga at Riga Airport. Finnair flies to Helsinki three times a week; Lufthansa to Hamburg twice a week and to Frankfurt four times weekly; SAS to Copenhagen and to Stockholm four times weekly; Latavio Airlines to Helsinki twice a week and to Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Frankfurt each three times weekly; Hamburg Airlines to Berlin twice weekly; and Baltic International Airlines to Frankfurt and Dusseldorf four times a week. Air Baltic flies to London four times a week, Frankfurt daily, Stockholm daily (twice a day during the week), to Copenhagen twice a day, and to Helsinki daily Monday through Friday. Riair flies daily to Moscow; Belair flies daily to Kiev. British Air, Swiss Air, and Estonian Air also now service Riga and LOT Airlines and Czech Airlines have several flights a week to various cities via Warsaw and Prague, respectively. A typical fare from Riga to one of these cities is \$300 to \$400 and occasionally, there are specials to London and Copenhagen and a few other destinations. (1999)

In the past, there has been weekly boat traffic to Stockholm and Norrkoping in Sweden, to Kiel in Germany, and to the Island of Gotland off the east coast of Sweden. There is also now a ferry directly to Stockholm that runs about every other day. These do not run during the winter. You can drive to Tallinn and take the car ferry from there to Helsinki or take the train to Tallinn and ride the hydrofoil across to Helsinki. The hydrofoil makes the trip several times a day and takes less

than 90 minutes. The car ferries cross in about 3 hours.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone communications within Latvia are fairly reliable. Fax service is also available in several locations in downtown Riga. One page faxed to the U.S. costs about \$5. Telex service is also available. The current charge is \$1 per 25 words. Cellular phone service can be found all over Riga for about \$4 a minute for calls to the U.S. (This is the standard toll for calls to the U.S. from residential/business phones, as well.)

Mail

The cost of mailing a letter to the U.S. using Latvian postage is 40 santimes (about 75 cents). Weight allowances are less than the U.S.; if the letter exceeds the limit (about 4 pages) the price jumps to 80 santimes (about \$1.50).

There is also registered mail service operating out of the Central Post Office. The cost is double the normal rate, and delivery time is about the same.

DHL Express is also available. The cost of a 150g letter to the U.S. (about 1015 pages) is about \$45. Overweight letters are slightly higher. Delivery is 2 days. Free pickup service can be ordered by phoning 7013293 between 9:30 am and 5 pm. Couriers usually arrive within ½ to 2 hours.

UPS is now available as well. Envelopes up to 1kg. cost \$40 and take 2 business days for delivery. Free pickup is arranged by phoning 222247. UPS service to Latvia from the U.S. is about \$60.

Radio and TV

Shortwave VOA and BBC broadcasts can generally be received morning and evening. There are 11 FM stations on Latvian radio that play Western popular and rock music almost around the clock. BBC is also available on FM radio. Cable

TV is offered in Riga; it carries CNN, BBC, MTV, Eurosport, Super Channel, etc. Satellite dishes can be purchased in Latvia. Costs are similar to the U.S. U.S. TVs and VCRs will work with transformers. If you wish to watch Latvian TV, purchase a multisystem TV that can handle both PAL and NTSC signals. These are available from a variety of sources, such as the tax-free company of Peter Justesen, which delivers to Riga weekly by truck from Copenhagen. Mixing U.S. and European VCR systems can be tricky, because tapes made in the U.S. often will not play on European systems.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Local publications are of interest to those with Latvian- and/or Russian-language skills. Besides several regular newspapers, there are specialized publications dealing with literature, the arts, sports, business, fashion, etc. Even those without specialized knowledge of the language might find some of these papers useful for information on entertainment, concerts, sports, movies, theater, and TV programming. There is also a weekly advertising publication entitled *Reklama* that carries information about items for sale and reasonably priced charter tours to such places as Turkey, Israel, Cyprus, and Greece.

The *Baltic Times* is a weekly English language newspaper covering news in all three Baltic countries. Single copies are 40 santimes; subscriptions are \$40 per year for a private individual in Latvia.

There are two visitor guides (in English) that are published about four times a year: *Riga in Your Pocket* and *Riga This Week*. These contain very useful information on dining, entertainment, and transportation.

The daily *International Herald Tribune*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Economist*, and international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available at hotels. Four bookstores carry a limited number of books in

English. The Soros Foundation bookstore and the newer *Janis Roze* store have the best selections. Prices are higher than in the U.S. Paperback novels can cost \$9.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

There are English-speaking dentists in Riga. Some have up-to-date Western equipment and have received high recommendations from the diplomatic community. One of these dentists is Canadian.

English-speaking doctors are available who have had some training in the West. Medical facilities are improving. Some are up to Western standards. Helsinki, Stockholm, and Copenhagen are only an hour or two away by plane.

If you take prescription medicine regularly, bring an ample supply with you and use the services of a mail prescription plan.

Some medicines are not readily available in pharmacies, and it can be time consuming to locate particular nonprescription items; however, more and more Western-manufactured drugs are available, and they are occasionally cheaper in Latvia. If you have a favorite brand, you may still want to consider bringing a supply with you.

Community Health

Drinking water in Riga is sporadically chlorinated. City water has an unusually high iron content resulting from old, low-grade pipes. Tests of a double filtering system have been found to remove most pollutants and heavy metals from the water.

Because of occasional seepage of sewage into the water pipes, there have been outbreaks of typhoid and infectious hepatitis in the past. However, no pathogenic bacteria or viruses have been reported in city water since 1994.

Diphtheria, tuberculosis, and influenza also occur, because of inadequate public cleanliness and food handling techniques. Vaccines for both hepatitis A and B are available. Also make sure your oral typhoid and diphtheria/tetanus boosters are up to date.

It is possible to contract tick-borne encephalitis if you spend any time near forests or even city parks. There is a vaccine available that is strongly recommended. However, this is an Asian/European disease that does not occur in North America, so the vaccine is not available in the U.S.

There are significant numbers of large, aggressive dogs in Latvia, and dog bites are not uncommon, even from leashed animals. Consider rabies preventive vaccine (three injections in the arm). A few cases of AIDS have been reported in Latvia. An extensive public awareness campaign is in progress with a 24-hour hotline.

Preventive Measures

Colds, flu, and infectious diseases of the respiratory organs are the most common ailments here, especially during the winter months.

All immunizations should be up to date. Bring blood-type records for all family members. The blood bank in Riga has been found to be acceptable in terms of screening and sterility, but the availability of blood products is limited. Infection control in hospitals and clinics is not yet up to Western standards, mostly due to inadequate teaching, supplies, supervision, and time.

The local water does not contain fluoride, so bring a supply of vitamins with fluoride if you have small children. Most Americans use bottled water or distill/filter their own water with a machine to remove metallic and mineral residues.

Prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses can be replaced locally through the joint venture optical companies in Riga.

Bring a copy of your prescription with you. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is common among the local population and affects Americans as well. Depressive symptoms typically occur in the fall when the days become significantly shorter and continue through the winter when there is heavy cloud cover obscuring the sun for weeks at a time. In the summer, the symptoms are reversed: hyperactivity and sleeplessness. Specially marketed high-intensity fluorescent lights reportedly reduce the symptoms. They may also be purchased in Finland.

In winter, many people sustain serious injuries when they slip and fall on Riga's icy sidewalks. There are small cleats for sale in the U.S. that can be easily strapped over boots. These are not available in Latvia and would be a good investment. Remember that you will be doing much outdoor walking here, often while carrying packages. Downtown sidewalks are usually covered with thick sheets of ice during winter, especially in areas around markets and shops.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

No special immunizations are required other than hepatitis, due to the high incidence of this disease in Latvia

Lufthansa, SAS, Swiss Air, Austrian Air, British Air, and Finnair all service Riga several times a week.

You can drive from other parts of Europe; however, your vehicle should be in excellent condition, and it is necessary to carry extra gas, since full-service stations can be difficult to locate in some Eastern European countries. Do not count on using credit cards or travelers checks to purchase gas. Gas in Western Europe is as high as \$5 a gallon. Winter driving can be haz-

ardous, so it is better to avoid driving at night, since lighting and road conditions are poor in some areas.

A passport valid for at least six months is required. No visa is required for travelers remaining up to 90 days in a half-calendar year (from January to June and from July to December).

Travelers remaining in Latvia for more than 90 days, including 180 day periods that cross over two half-calendar years, must apply for temporary residence. Travelers who plan to remain in Latvia for more than 90 days must apply in-country for temporary residence. For more information, travelers may contact the Latvian Embassy, at 4325 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011, tel: (202) 726-8213. Within Latvia, contact the Ministry of Interior's Citizenship and Immigration Department at Raina bulv. 5, Riga LV 1508, tel. (371) 721-9424 or (371)721-9427, fax: (371) 782-0306. Any traveler to Russia, even in transit, is advised to obtain a Russian visa prior to entry into Latvia. The process of obtaining a visa at the Russian Embassy in Riga can be lengthy, and involve surrender of the passport for an undetermined period of time.

U.S. drivers' licenses are not valid in Latvia, and American tourists must use a valid International Driver's License issued through the AAA. After 6 months, Americans must apply for a Latvian Drivers' License. For specific information on Latvian driver's permits, vehicle inspection, road tax and mandatory insurance, contact the Latvian Traffic Safety Administration (CSDD), Bauskas Iela 68, Riga LV-1004, tel. (371) 627-437.

Americans living in or residing in Latvia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Riga and obtain updated information on travel and security within Latvia. The U.S. Embassy is located at Raina Boulevard 7; tel. (371) 703-6200; fax: (371) 782-0047. Consular information and current travel information

can also be found on the Embassy Riga home page at <http://www.usis.bkc.lv/embassy/>

Pets

No regulations or quarantines restrict importing cats and dogs. Pet owners should have immunization records, especially rabies vaccination (within 1 year), and health certificate records certified by a veterinarian within 2 weeks of departure. Make sure that international certificates are used. Since most departures transfer in Germany, the certificate should be translated into German if an international certificate is not available. The German and Swedish customs agents are very strict; do not take any chances. Germany requires the pet's health certificate be signed by your vet not more than 10 days before the flight. Sweden requires an animal import license, even to transfer your pet to a connecting flight. Call the respective Embassy or airlines if you have any questions. They can supply international certificate blanks.

Taking a pet from Latvia is subject to new restrictions due to the existence of rabies here. It is necessary to get a yearly rabies vaccination for your pet while it is here and then wait 30 days for a follow-up health inspection and certificate. Only then will you be allowed to take the pet from Latvia.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official monetary unit is the lat. Bills are in denominations of 500, 100, 50, 20, 10, and 5. Nominal values of coins are: 2 Ls, 1 L, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 santime. Be aware that the 2 and 1 lat coins resemble U.S. quarters but have values of \$4 and \$2 respectively. Currently, 58481lat=US\$1(as of December 1999).

Banks in Riga do not cash personal checks, but you can set up an account and arrange for a transfer of funds for a fee: usually \$10 minimum. Be aware that the banking situation in Latvia is in a state of flux. The largest commercial bank

in the Baltics failed in May 1995 and after a period of stability, the Russian financial crisis led to the closure of a few more banks in the fall 1998 and in the spring 1999.

American Express travelers checks are accepted by five local banks for a fee. They cannot be used elsewhere in Latvia. More and more stores and hotels accept Visa, MasterCard, and American Express.

Latvia uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Latvia Labor Day
June	Midsummer's Eve*
June*	Summer Solstice
Nov. 18	LR Proclamation Day
Dec.25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec.31	New Year's Eve
*variable	

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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Katz, Zev, ed. *Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities.* The Free Press: 1985.

Misiunas, Romuald J. and Rein Taagepera. *The Baltic States-the*

Years of Independence Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania: 1917-1940. C. Hurst and Company, London, and University of California Press, 1974.

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The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies publishes a newsletter and a quarterly journal. For more information contact: *Business and Subscriptions Executive Office of the AABS 111 Knob Hill Road Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840*

LEBANON

Republic of Lebanon

Major City:

Beirut

Other Cities:

Tripoli, Tyre, Sidon

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **LEBANON** is a country that is struggling to revive following years of warfare. From 1975–1990, the country was nearly torn apart by fighting between Christian and Muslim militias. Also, intervention and occupation by Syrian and Israeli troops in Lebanon exacerbates political tensions within the country. Lebanon faces many years of reconstruction and political unrest. There is hope that eventually all foreign troops will be withdrawn and Lebanese—Christian and Muslim alike—will learn to peacefully coexist.

MAJOR CITY

Beirut

Beirut, with a population of 1,878,000 (2002 est.), is Lebanon's capital city. Throughout its history, Beirut's position along the Mediterranean Sea has made it an important port and the largest population center. The city experiences short, rainy winters and hot, humid summers.

Traditionally, Beirut has been a vibrant, lively city. The city served for many years as one of the most important commercial and financial cities in the Middle East. Many

international businesses established their Middle Eastern headquarters in Beirut. Several flourishing industries, among them food processing and textiles, were concentrated in the city. Beirut's nightlife and beautiful beaches earned the city the nickname "Paris of the Middle East." Tourists from the West and Middle East flocked to the city. All of this changed with the onset of civil war in 1975. Beirut was divided into two sections. Christians occupied East Beirut while West Beirut was predominantly Muslim. Severe fighting between Christian and Muslim militias, terrorist bombings by both parties, and heavy shelling during the 1980s reduced much of the city to rubble.

With an end to the civil war in October 1990, Beirut has begun the long process of recovery. In December 1990, Beirut was reunited after 15 years of division. Also, by May 1992, many Christian and Muslim militias in Beirut had disarmed and were disbanded. Many Lebanese who fled when war broke out are slowly returning to Beirut. The removal of rubble and the demolition of destroyed buildings continues throughout the city. The reconstruction of Beirut began in 1992.

Prior to the outbreak of civil war, Beirut was the educational center of Lebanon. The city is home to Lebanon's major universities, including American University in Beirut and

Beirut Arab University. Both schools were able to remain open despite the civil war.

Beirut is one of Lebanon's transportation centers. International flights enter Lebanon through Beirut International Airport. The airport was closed intermittently during the 1980s, but has since reopened. Highways connect Beirut with the northern city of Tripoli, the southern cities of Sidon and Tyre, and with the Syrian border. Before 1975, Lebanon's port was an important transit point for goods bound for Damascus, Syria and Amman, Jordan. Lebanon's port was a major battleground during the civil war and suffered tremendous damage. Some repairs have been made, although the port is not operating at full capacity.

OTHER CITIES

Located 40 miles (65 kilometers) north-northeast of Beirut, **TRIPOLI** is Lebanon's second largest city and a major port. The city was founded around 700 B.C. by the Phoenicians and was occupied at various periods in history by the Seleucids, Romans, Muslims, Ottoman Turks, Egyptians, British, and French. Tripoli was controlled by Syrian troops during the 1980s and was the site of severe fighting in 1983 between Palestinian and Syrian forces. The Palestinians, who



Mediterranean coast of Beirut, Lebanon

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had established their headquarters in Tripoli in 1982, were forced to flee. The city is home to industries which produce textiles and soap. Several remnants of Tripoli's ancient past are still visible today, including the Tower of the Lions, the Teynal Mosque, and the Great Mosque. Tripoli has a population of approximately 209,000. The majority of Tripoli's residents are Sunni Muslim, although there is a substantial Christian population.

The city of **TYRE** is located on the coast of southern Lebanon. Tyre was founded by the Phoenicians around 2,000 B.C. and quickly became an important maritime port and trading center. Throughout the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., Tyre repelled attacks by the Assyrians and Babylonians. In 332 B.C., the city was captured by Alexander the Great after a seven-month siege. Many residents of Tyre were killed by Alexander's troops or sold into slavery. The city was eventually controlled by the Seleucids in 200 B.C. and by the Romans in 68 B.C. Tyre, during the years of Roman occupation, became known for a purple dye made from snails and for beautiful silk garments. In 638 A.D., Tyre came under the control of the Muslims. In the early 12th century, the city became a major battle-

ground during the Crusades, which were a series of military campaigns by Christians of western Europe to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims. Tyre was captured by Christian forces in 1124. Under the Christians, Tyre became a major city in the Crusader/Kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1291, Muslim armies captured and destroyed Tyre. Today, Tyre remains one of Lebanon's major ports. The city has been heavily damaged by the civil war and by Israeli invasions in 1978 and 1982. Although the majority of its inhabitants are Shia Muslim, Tyre's population includes many Christians of various sects. The current population is approximately 114,000.

SIDON, on Lebanon's southern Mediterranean coast, is one of the country's largest ports. The city is one of the oldest in the Middle East, dating back to the third century B.C. Sidon was founded by the Phoenicians and ruled at various times by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Seleucids, Egyptians, Romans, and Ottoman Turks. In February 1975, the city became one of the flash-points for the Lebanese Civil War when the Lebanese Communist Party and other leftists organized violent demonstrations on behalf of fishermen who were

threatened economically by a state-monopoly fishing company. The Lebanese Army was called in to restore order and armed clashes erupted. Many persons were killed. Residents of Sidon, which has a Sunni Muslim majority and a large Christian community, differed strongly as to who was responsible for the violence. Most Muslims blamed the army, while the majority of Christians felt that the demonstrators were at fault. Today, Sidon is a market, trade, and fishing center. The city is approximately 25 miles south of Beirut and is linked to the capital via highway and railroad. Sidon's population is predominantly Sunni Muslim, although there is a large Christian minority. In 2002, the city had approximately 146,00 residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Lebanon occupies a 135 mile strip of land along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It comprises an area of 4,015 square miles, slightly smaller than Connecticut. Lebanon is bordered on the north and east by Syria, on the south by Israel and the west by the Mediterranean Sea. The Mediterranean coast of Lebanon is narrow and sloping. Lebanon is a mountainous country, with two parallel mountain ranges. The Lebanon Mountains extend north and south along the western coast of Lebanon. The Anti-Lebanon Mountains hug the eastern border with Syria. Between these two mountain ranges lies the fertile soil of the Bija' Valley.

Although Lebanon has abundant rivers and streams, none of them are navigable. Her main river, the Litani River, is unique because it is the only river in the Middle East that does not cross a national boundary.

Lebanon has a Mediterranean climate characterized by a long, hot, and dry summer and cool, rainy winter. Fall is a transitional season with a gradual lowering of temperature and little rain; spring occurs when the winter rains cause the vegetation to revive. Topographical variation creates local modifications of the basic climatic pattern. Along the coast, summers are hot and humid, with little or no rain. Heavy dews form, which are beneficial to agriculture. The daily range of temperature is not wide, although temperatures may reach above 100°F (38°C) in the daytime and below 61°F (16°C) at night. A west wind provides relief during the afternoon and evening; at night the wind direction is reversed, blowing from the land out to sea.

Winter is the rainy season, with major precipitation falling after December. Rainfall is generous but is concentrated during only a few days of the rainy season, falling in heavy cloud bursts. The amount of rainfall varies greatly from one year to another. Occasionally, there are frosts during the winter, and about once every fifteen years a light powdering of snow falls as far south as Beirut. A hot wind blowing from the Egyptian desert called the *khamsin* may provide a warming trend during the fall but more often occurs during the spring. Bitterly cold winds may come from Europe. Along the coast the proximity to the sea provides a moderating influence on the climate, making the range of temperatures narrower than it is inland, but the temperatures are cooler in the northern parts of the coast, where there is also more rain.

Although the country is well watered and there are many rivers and streams, there are no navigable rivers, nor is any one river the sole source of irrigation water. Drainage patterns are determined by geological features and climate. Most rivers in Lebanon have their origins in springs, which are often quite large. The rivers are fast moving, straight, and generally cascade down narrow mountain canyons to the sea. Lebanon's main river, the Litan River, is

unique because it is the only river in the Middle East that does not cross a national boundary.

Population

The estimated population of Lebanon in 2001 was 3,628,000. No official census was taken between 1932 and 1995, when the official population figure was put at 3,111,828 (excluding Palestinians). Many Lebanese fled the country during the civil war. Of those that remain, approximately 95 percent are Arabs. Small minorities of Armenians and Palestinians reside in Lebanon. The official languages are Arabic and French. English is widely used by Lebanese government officials and in commercial circles.

It is estimated that 70 percent of Lebanon's population are Muslim while 30 percent are Christian. Both the Sunni and Shiite Muslim sects are represented, although Shiite Muslims are predominant (there are five legally recognized Islamic groups). The Druze sect, a group deriving from Shiite Islam but differing greatly from it, constitute a significant minority. Maronite Christians comprise the largest Christian sect. Other Christian sects include Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

In 2001, estimated life expectancy was 69 years for males and 74 years for females.

History

Lebanon's history dates back to the pre-Christian era. The Phoenicians settled in the country from approximately 2700–450 B.C. In later centuries, Lebanon's mountain ranges served as a safe haven for Christians fleeing persecution and the Crusaders established several strongholds there. For several centuries, Lebanon was controlled by the Turks and incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. After World War I, the Ottoman Empire disintegrated. The modern state of Leba-

non was created from the remnants of five Ottoman Empire districts. The country was administered by the French from 1920–43. Lebanon was granted full independence in 1943 and by 1946, all French troops had been withdrawn.

Since achieving independence, Lebanon's history has been marked with political turmoil and bloodshed. In July 1958, the Syrians inspired a revolt against the government. At the request of Lebanon's president, Camille Chamoun, U.S. Marines were sent to Lebanon to help restore order. The political situation stabilized and all American forces were withdrawn in October 1958.

In the 1960's, Lebanon was used by Palestinians as a guerilla base to launch attacks against Israel. As the activities of the guerrillas increased, Lebanon became a target for Israeli grievances against the Palestinians. In May 1968, Lebanese and Israeli troops engaged in several border skirmishes. Lebanon's own efforts to control Palestinian commandoes caused armed clashes in 1969. Between 1970 and 1975, Palestinians increased their attacks on Israel. Israel retaliated by heavily bombing Palestinian camps and bases inside Lebanon.

In addition to the Palestinian problem, tensions between Lebanese Christians and Muslims reached a boiling point. Under the 1943 National Covenant, all public positions were divided between the two religious groups. Because the Christians were in the majority, they received a dominant share of political power and social benefits. However, by the 1970's, Muslims were in the majority. They demanded that political power be redistributed more equitably between Christians and Muslims. In April 1975, a bus load of Palestinians were ambushed and killed in the Christian sector of Lebanon's capital, Beirut. In retaliation, Palestinians and leftist Muslim groups joined forces against Christian Phalange and Maronite militias. By 1976, a vicious civil war

had erupted and engulfed most of Lebanon.

Arab delegates met in Cairo in an attempt to end the conflict. At the invitation of the Lebanese government, various Arab countries agreed to send peacekeeping troops to Lebanon as part of an Arab Deterrent Force (ADF). The ADF, with a majority of Syrian troops, were dispatched to Lebanon. By late 1976, the ADF had quelled most of the violence and instituted a cease-fire.

In March 1978, Israeli troops invaded southern Lebanon in pursuit of Palestinian guerrillas. Israeli troops were eventually withdrawn in June 1978, but deployed pro-Israeli Lebanese militia groups along Lebanon's border with Israel. Fighting broke out between Syrian peacekeeping troops and various Christian militias in April 1981, effectively shattering the 1976 cease-fire. By late April 1982, violence had broken out not only between Syrians and Christians, but also between two Muslim factions. In June 1982, after an assassination attempt against the Israeli ambassador in London, Israel invaded Lebanon. Israeli forces quickly streamed north, eventually encircling West Beirut and laying siege to Palestinian guerrillas and Syrian troops trapped in the city. After two and one-half months of heavy bombardment, Palestinians and Syrian troops were allowed to leave Beirut under an American-brokered evacuation agreement. Troops from France, Italy and the United States were airlifted to Beirut to supervise the evacuation. Foreign troops soon became targets for terrorist activities. On October 23, 1983, 241 U.S. servicemen and 58 French troops were killed in their barracks in separate suicide bombing attacks. U.S. and other foreign troops were eventually withdrawn in 1984. Although Israel withdrew the bulk of her troops from Lebanon by 1985, she established a "security zone" in southern Lebanon. This "security zone" is manned by an Israeli-backed Christian militia.

In September 1988, President Amin Gemayel's term in office ended. He named General Michel Aoun, a Christian, as prime minister until another president could be elected. The Syrians and their Muslim allies refused to recognize Aoun's authority. Aoun launched a "war of liberation" in 1989 to oust the Syrians and their allies from Beirut. Vicious fighting between Syrian and Christian forces nearly destroyed the city. In February 1990, skirmishes broke out between troops loyal to Aoun and various Christian militias. Syrian forces eventually drove Aoun from power in October 1990. Aoun asked for and was granted refuge in the French embassy. He was eventually exiled from the country.

In late 1990, the government, backed by the Lebanese Army, began to reassert control over Beirut. With the help of Syrian troops, the Lebanese Army dismantled barricades in the city and disarmed Christian and Muslim militias. On December 24, 1990, a new Government of National Reconciliation took office. In February 1991, Lebanese troops moved into southern Lebanon in an effort to disarm Palestinian militias.

To date, Israel refuses to relinquish control of its "security zone" in southern Lebanon. Also, Syrian troops occupy most of northern and eastern Lebanon. Negotiations are continuing for the removal of all foreign troops and a return of Lebanese sovereignty.

Government

Despite the political upheaval during the civil warfare, Lebanon's governmental system continued to function. Lebanon is an independent republic. The Lebanese constitution was created with the help of the French in 1926 and has undergone several amendments. The constitution provides for creation of an executive branch, a National Assembly, and an independent judiciary body. The Lebanese constitution is also heavily influenced by the National Covenant of 1943. This covenant stipulates that a represen-

tative from each of Lebanon's dominant religious groups must fill one of the country's three top governmental positions. Therefore, the president is to be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of the National Assembly is a Shiite Muslim.

The president, currently Imil Jamil Lahhud, wields substantial power. He has the authority to enact laws passed by the National Assembly, negotiate and ratify treaties, and propose new laws to the Assembly. The president is elected for a six-year term and is not eligible for immediate re-election. The president is assisted by a self-appointed prime minister and a Council of Ministers. Together, these men constitute the executive branch of government. The prime minister, currently Rafiq al-Hariri, and the Council of Ministers are accountable to the National Assembly.

The National Assembly is a governmental body elected by the Lebanese people. The National Assembly now has 128 members and is responsible for levying taxes, passing a national budget, and evaluating the prime minister and council of ministers through a formal questioning on governmental policy issues. Because of the political turmoil in Lebanon, the National Assembly had only met periodically since 1975. In 1992, Lebanon held its first elections for the National Assembly since 1972. The validity of the elections was marred because many Christians refused to vote. Christians boycotted the election to protest the continued presence of 40,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon. A continued Syrian presence in Lebanon, according to Christians, would lead to an erosion of Christian rights and political domination by Muslims. Results of the 1992 elections indicated that pro-Syrian deputies gained a wide majority.

The judiciary system of Lebanon is based on a mixture of the Napoleonic Code, canon law, Ottoman law, and civil law. There are three levels within the Lebanese court system.

They are the Courts of First Instance, Courts of Appeal, and the Court of Cassation. No juries are used during criminal trials.

The flag of Lebanon consists of three horizontal bands. The top and bottom bands are red with a broader white band in between. In the middle of the white band is the Lebanese national emblem, a green and brown cedar tree.

Arts, Science, Education

The Lebanese, along with the Palestinians, had one of the highest literacy rates in the Arab world. The rate was estimated at nearly 86 percent in 1997, but like most other spheres of Lebanese life, communal and regional disparities existed. In general, Christians had a literacy rate higher than that of Muslims. Druzes followed with a literacy rate just above that of Sunnis. Shias had the lowest literacy rate among the religious communities.

The war adversely affected educational standards. Many private and public school buildings were occupied by displaced families, and the state was unable to conduct official examinations on several occasions because of intense fighting. Furthermore, the departure of most foreign teachers and professors, especially after 1984, contributed to the decline in the standards of academic institutions. Admissions of unqualified students became a standard practice as a result of pressures brought by various militias on academic institutions.

Primary schools are administered by the government and provide education free of charge. Primary education usually begins at age six and is compulsory for five years. Four years of intermediate school and three years of secondary school usually follow primary education. The National School of Arts and Crafts provides four-year vocational courses in mechanics, architecture, electronics and industrial drawing.

Commerce and Industry

Lebanese industry expanded rapidly in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This growth was characterized by a proliferation of small industries and was fueled by easy credit, a strong local currency, abundant and cheap supplies of skilled and unskilled labor, subsidized electric power, and trade protection at home and expanding markets abroad, particularly in the Persian Gulf countries. Years of strife changed all this. Civil war and disorder continually hampered production, and the financial climate was rarely conducive to investment. Many of Lebanon's primary commercial and industrial capacities were heavily damaged or destroyed. There is some light industry, mostly for the productions of textiles, cement, and consumer goods.

Lebanon has been able to produce agricultural products even though only 30 percent of the land is arable. Crops such as wheat, corn, citrus fruits, barley, vegetables, potatoes, olives and tobacco are grown. These serve as some of Lebanon's primary exports to Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan and Kuwait. Gold and precious metals, textiles, iron and steel goods and motor vehicles are Lebanon's main imports. In 1998, Lebanon's imports mainly came from Germany, Russia, Finland and Sweden.

Before the civil war, Lebanon was considered the financial and commercial center of the Middle East. Despite the violence, Lebanon's banking system has been surprisingly resilient. This is due in large part to the financial subsidies supplied by Lebanese who have fled the country.

Lebanon's unit of currency is the pound.

Transportation

Lebanon's transportation network has been severely damaged by years of civil war. Most of Lebanon's railways are either destroyed or in des-

perate need of repair. There were approximately 4,500 miles (7,300 kilometers) of road in 1999, 85 percent of which were paved. Most of Lebanon's roads, however, are in poor condition.

Lebanon used to have a patchwork railroad system. In 1991, Lebanon's 253-mile (407-kilometer) railway system was not operating, and prospects for the rail system's recovery were poor.

Air travel to Lebanon is extremely difficult. Beirut International Airport is serviced by few international carriers and has been frequently shut down for indefinite periods of time. Lebanon has two international airlines, Trans-Mediterranean Airways and Middle East Airlines/Air Liban.

Lebanon's main ports are Beirut, Tripoli, and Sidon. However, northern ports are in control of Syrian forces while southern ports are controlled by the Israelis.

Communications

In 1997, there were approximately 2.85 million radios and 1.18 million television sets in use. Lebanon's main radio station is government-controlled Radio Lebanon. Transmissions throughout Lebanon are in Arabic. Foreign broadcasts can be heard on shortwave frequencies in Armenian, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, French and English. Tele-Liban broadcasts television programs in Arabic, French and English on three channels.

Most of Lebanon's daily newspapers are published in Arabic. However, there are some in French. The last English-language daily, the *Daily Star*, ceased publication in August 1985. Weekly periodicals are in Arabic and French.

The country's telecommunications system suffered severely from the violence that occurred after 1975. There were an estimated 700,000 telephones in Lebanon in 1999. Local telephone service is highly unreliable. International telephone

communications are possible between Beirut and the United States.

Health

Before 1975, Lebanon boasted advanced health services and medical institutions that made Beirut a health care center for the entire Middle East region. The civil war, however, caused enormous problems. Emergency medicine and the treatment of traumatic injuries overwhelmed the health care sector during the civil war. The problems in health care continued into the 1980s.

Control over the quality of hospital and medical services was minimal, and many public and private hospital beds were unoccupied. Doctors, nurses and middle-level technical personnel were scarce. Health personnel were concentrated in Beirut, with minimum care available in many out-lying areas. Nowhere in Lebanon was there a health center that delivered a full range of primary health care services.

Because of the lack of adequate data, only cautious inferences, based on partial data and observations and interviews by the World Health Organization (WHO) mission in Lebanon, can be made concerning the incidence of disease. Respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases headed the list of causes of death, and infectious diseases were endemic. Malnutrition was reported to be restricted to groups living in particularly difficult situations, such as the Palestinians.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The Department of State continues to believe that the situation in Lebanon is so dangerous for Americans that no U.S. citizen can be considered safe from terrorist attacks. The U.S. Embassy in Beirut is not fully staffed and personnel remain there

under exceptionally tight security. Due to the limited staff and heightened security, the Embassy cannot perform normal consular functions.

Anti-American demonstrations throughout the Middle East have increased the risks associated with travel to Lebanon. Militants have become increasingly active along the country's southern border and active landmines are still found throughout the south and other areas where civil war fighting was intense. Extreme caution should be exercised by all travelers.

The Department of State has learned that several international carriers are now making intermediate stops in Beirut. U.S. citizens are advised not to board such flights because of the danger of traveling to Lebanon. Such stops are not always announced. Travelers should therefore inquire, before making travel arrangements in the region, whether a flight will make a stop in Beirut. Travelers are reminded that U.S. passports are not valid for travel to, in, or through Lebanon, which includes landing at the Beirut airport.

The mailing address for the U.S. Embassy in Beirut is Antelias, P.O. Box 70-840, PSC 815, Box 2.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday**
Mar/Apr.	Easter**
May 1	Lebanese Labor Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Nov. 22	Lebanese Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Al Hejra Mawlid al-Nabi*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

**variable Christian holidays

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The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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Tames, Richard. *Take a Trip to Lebanon*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1989.

Tanter, Raymond. *Who's at the Helm? Lessons of Lebanon*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990.

Thubron, Colin. *Hills of Adonis: A Journey in Lebanon*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990.

LIECHTENSTEIN

Principality of Liechtenstein

Major City:

Vaduz

Other Cities:

Malbun, Triesen

INTRODUCTION

The region now known as **LIECHTENSTEIN** has been continuously inhabited since 3000 BC. The region was a part of Charlemagne's empire in the 8th century, and it later was incorporated into the Holy Roman Empire. The Imperial Principality of Liechtenstein was established in 1719 and has been politically independent since 1815. The principality remained neutral in both World Wars. From 1852 until 1919, Liechtenstein was closely tied economically to Austria. When Austria's economy collapsed after World War I, Liechtenstein sought closer ties with its other neighbor, Switzerland. Liechtenstein has thrived since World War II as a prosperous center for trade, finance, precision manufacturing, and tourism. Wine production is also economically important.

MAJOR CITY

Vaduz

Vaduz is Liechtenstein's capital and main city, located in the western part of the country near the Rhine River. An estimated 5,000 people (about one-sixth of the country's

population) lives in Vaduz. Many Swiss and Austrian citizens commute to Vaduz. Few international trains make stops in Liechtenstein, but the main terminal for reaching the country is Buchs, Switzerland, about five miles from Vaduz. Buses regularly travel from Vaduz to Feldkirch, Austria via Schaan. Two one-way streets encircle the center of town. Banking is an increasingly important part of the local economy, and Vaduz is the headquarters for many law firms, banks, and trust companies. Bank secrecy laws and low taxes encourage foreigners to invest in the financial services industry. Near Vaduz are several industrial firms that produce a wide array of products including frozen foods, dental products, central heating systems, and protective coatings for CD-ROMs.

Recreation and Entertainment

The principality's ski resorts are world famous, especially those at Steg and Malbun. The Steg resort has a popular cross-country ski course with an illuminated 1-mile stretch for night skiing. The Malbun resort is located 10 miles from Vaduz and has 12 miles of downhill runs. Members of the British royal family and other celebrities visit the Malbun resort. Hiking, bicycling, and soccer are popular in the summer.

The annual number of tourists has been in decline since 1981, although tour buses are seen in Vaduz as much as ever. Vaduz is a small town, and in the summer its streets can become congested with buses and cars. There is a plan to close the main street to all but pedestrian traffic in order to reinvigorate the center of Vaduz.

The castle at Vaduz is closed to the public, but it is a popular subject for photographers. The Gutenberg Castle at Balzers is also closed to the public but there are plans to convert it into a museum.

The Liechtenstein National Museum contains coins, weapons, and folklore of the country. For such a small country, Liechtenstein has an extensive collection of art works but has never had a museum in which to display them. Hilti, the country's biggest company, has pledged to help finance the building of an art museum in the center of Vaduz. The museum will house the state art collection, exhibit parts of the prince's personal collection, and attract outside exhibitions. The Liechtenstein Postal Museum contains more than 300 frames of national stamps issued since 1912. Groups of ten or more are permitted to sample wines from the prince's own vineyard. Many residents belong to social clubs, and perform-



Street in Vaduz, Liechtenstein

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

ing in choirs and bands is popular as well.

OTHER CITIES

MALBUN is a hamlet in the mountains of southeast Liechtenstein and is known as the country's ski resort. The resort offers two ski

schools, and most runs are for novices or intermediates.

With a population of only about 4,200, **TRIESEN** is the third largest village in the country. South of Vaduz, it lies nestled between the Rhine and the Liechtenstein alps. The beautiful countryside is perfect for outdoor sports enthusiasts. Hikers may take a trail along the gorge

of Lawena, the 1500 meter high alp, or move down into the valley at the foot of the Falknis cliffs. Triesen has several tennis courts and bicycle paths through the village and a beautiful indoor swimming pool. Nearby is the winter sports area Malbun, which offers ski slopes and a natural ice rink. Triesen may also serve as a starting point for excursions to the Swiss mountains or to

Lake Constance and to Walensee (Lake Walen).

Triesner Hall offers a variety of local cultural and entertainment events throughout the year, including changing historical exhibits and concerts. The St. Mamerten and Maria Chapels are located in the lower part of the village and also contain exhibits on local history.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Liechtenstein is a landlocked country situated along the Rhine River Valley. Liechtenstein is one of Europe's so-called "microstates" (the others are Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, and Vatican City) and has an area of only about 62 square miles, almost the size of Washington, D.C. It is bordered to the north and east by the Austria, and to the south and west by the Switzerland. The Rhine River flows along its western boundary.

A narrow area of relatively level land lies near the Rhine River. The level land occupies about 40% of the country's total area, and the rest of the country is mountainous. The highest point is Grauspitz (8,527 feet) in the south. A steep Alpine slope called the *Drei Schwestern* ("three sisters") extends across the border with Austria.

A warm southern wind called the Föhn makes the climate less severe than might be expected from the elevated terrain and inland location. Lowland temperatures average 24°F in January and 68° F in July. The average annual precipitation is 41 inches.

Population

Liechtenstein's population is approximately 32,000. The population is most heavily concentrated in

the Rhine River Valley between Schaan and Vaduz.

Approximately 88% of the population is Alemannic, descendants of the Germanic tribes that settled between the Main and Danube rivers. The rest of Liechtenstein's population consists of foreign residents, mainly Italian and Turkish. Several thousand Swiss and Austrians commute daily to work in the principality.

The state religion is Roman Catholicism, to which approximately 80% of the population adheres. Protestants and other sects account for the remainder.

German is the official language, spoken in an Alemannic dialect.

Government

The Principality of Liechtenstein was created on January 23, 1719 by act of Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI. The government is a constitutional monarchy, ruled by the hereditary princes of the house of Liechtenstein. The current monarch is Prince Hans Adam II, who was first given executive power in 1984 and assumed control in 1989. There is a unicameral parliament of 25 members elected every four years. The prince appoints a prime minister, currently Otmar Hasler, selected from the majority party of the parliament. Although the principality has its own civil and criminal codes, in certain instances courts composed of Liechtensteiner, Swiss, and Austrian judges may have jurisdiction over domestic cases.

The national flag is divided into two horizontal rectangles, blue above red. On the blue section near the hoist is the princely crown in gold.

Arts, Science, Education

Primary and secondary education is modeled on Roman Catholic principles and is conducted under govern-

ment supervision. Many students pursue higher education in Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. The country also has a music school and a children's pedagogic-welfare day school.

Commerce and Industry

Liechtenstein has developed since the 1940s from a mainly agricultural to an industrialized nation and a prosperous center for trade and tourism. The majority of factories produce specialized small machinery in addition to precision instruments. Industrial products are made almost exclusively for export.

Transportation

The main railway for reaching Liechtenstein is Buchs, Switzerland, about 5 miles from Vaduz. Postal buses are the main form of public transportation. A half-mile tunnel connects the Samina River Valley with the Rhine River Valley. A major highway runs through the principality, linking Austria with Switzerland. The nearest airport is in Zürich, Switzerland.

Communications

Telecommunications services are administered by Switzerland. There are no television stations that transmit from Liechtenstein. There are two daily newspapers, the *Liechtensteiner Volksblatt* and the *Liechtensteiner Vaterland*, both printed in German.

Health

The principality has formed agreements with Switzerland and Austria that allow its residents access to hospital facilities in those countries. The government's health care system provides complementary medical examinations for children under the age of 10.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport is required for travel to Liechtenstein. A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays up to 90 days. For more information on entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Switzerland at 2900 Cathedral Avenue N.W., Washington D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 745-7900, or the nearest Swiss consulate in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, or San Francisco.

There is no U.S. Embassy or Consulate in Liechtenstein. For assistance and information on travel and security in Liechtenstein, U.S. citizens may contact or register at the U.S.

Embassy in Bern at Jubilaeumstrasse 93, telephone (41)(31) 357-7011.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Jan.2 St. Berchtold's Day
 Jan. 6 Epiphany
 Feb. 2 Candlemas
 Feb/Mar. Shrove Tuesday*
 Mar. 19. St. Joseph's Day
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May 1 Labor Day
 May/June. Ascension*
 May/June. Whitsunday*
 May/June. Whitmonday*

May/June Corpus Christi*
 Aug.15. Assumption
 Sept. 8. Nativity of Our Lady
 Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception
 Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
 Dec. 25 Christmas
 Dec. 26 St. Stephen's Day
 Dec. 31 New Year's Eve
 *variable

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Honan, Mark. *Switzerland*. Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1997.

LITHUANIA

Republic of Lithuania

Major City:

Vilnius

Other Cities:

Kapsukas, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Panevėžys, Šiauliai

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Baltic nation of **LITHUANIA** was one of the republics in the former Soviet Union. Following the end of World War I in 1918, Lithuania was created as an independent republic. Lithuania maintained its independence until 1940, when it was annexed and absorbed into the Soviet Union along with the neighboring countries of Latvia and Estonia. In March 1990, Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare its independence. The Soviets responded harshly by imposing an economic blockade in April 1990, but the Lithuanians refused to back down. After several failed attempts to resolve the dispute through diplomatic negotiations, the Soviet Union sent troops into Lithuania's

capital city and occupied several government buildings and communications centers. However, the Lithuanians remained defiant. The Soviet Union finally recognized Lithuanian independence on September 6, 1991. The country was also admitted as a member of the United Nations on September 17, 1991.

MAJOR CITY

Vilnius

Vilnius, the capital city, with an estimated population of 553,000, is situated at the confluence of the Neris and Vilnele Rivers, in southeastern Lithuania. Vilnius is 180 miles from the Baltic Sea, and just 21 miles from the Belarusian border. The city comprises an area of 100 sq. miles - of which one third is forests, parks, and gardens. The city is surrounded by wooded hills. Vilnius was founded and established as the capital of Lithuania in 1323 by Grand Duke Gediminas, founder of the Gediminian (later known as the Jogailian) dynasty, which ruled Lithuania, and later Poland, for 250 years. Archaeological findings show that the area was inhabited well over 2000 years ago. Over the centu-

ries it has been ravaged many times by foreign troops.

The interwar fate of Vilnius differed from that of the rest of Lithuania. When the Lithuanians declared independence in 1918, the borders of the state were not precisely defined. This was also true of the newly restored Polish state. Skirmishes with Poland began almost at once and continued during the short but intense Polish-Soviet War of 1920. Following a separate truce and the signing of the Treaty of Suwalki, renegade Polish troops under General Zeligowski, with unofficial approval from the Pilsudski government, invaded Vilnius and the surrounding territory. The League of Nations could not solve the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. The city remained under Polish administration until 1939. During that time the city grew and became a multi-ethnic center with large numbers of Polish, Jewish, and Belarusian inhabitants. In fact, 30 percent of Vilnius' population was Jewish. The city was known as the "Jerusalem of the North" and it was considered one of the world's most important centers of Jewish culture. In 1939, after Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union secretly agreed to divide Poland and the Baltic States between themselves, Lithuania signed a treaty with the Soviets whereby, in exchange for the

return of Vilnius, Lithuania accepted Red Army bases on its territory. This was followed by the first Soviet occupation in 1940.

One year later, in June 1941, came the German invasion and occupation. This lasted three years until 1944. One-third of the capital's population was killed. Mass executions took place in the nearby forest of Paneriai. Most of the Jewish population of Vilnius was murdered and the rich Jewish culture which had flourished in Vilnius since the Middle Ages was virtually annihilated.

The Soviets reoccupied Vilnius on July 13, 1944. At the end of the war, only half the prewar population remained. The city had no water, electricity, means of transport, or modern communications. All industrial enterprises had been destroyed and 42 percent of the city's residential areas and 20 percent of its architectural monuments were in ruins.

During the following Soviet period, Vilnius was the capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. The population steadily grew as the city was rebuilt. Huge apartment complexes were constructed and new industries were established. Vilnius was home to the only university in Lithuania, as well as to several other institutions of higher education. The city attracted students, artists, professionals, and workers. Many people from other Soviet republics were relocated to Vilnius to work, thus decreasing the indigenous population and associated nationalist tendencies. Vilnius also served as headquarters for units of the former Red Army, including the troops which assaulted the Television and Radio Tower on January 13, 1991.

Today Vilnius is the heart of Lithuania's political, economic, cultural, and public life. The Old Town is one of the largest in Eastern Europe, encompassing 74 blocks, 70 streets and lanes, and over 1200 buildings. These buildings were constructed over the course of five centuries, reflecting many styles of architec-

ture. Unfortunately, the Old Town was severely neglected for many years and many sections are in desperate need of repair. The modern sections of the city, built during the Soviet period, are typical of the planned "microregions" of the Bloc: very large apartment blocks, with stores, schools and recreation areas nearby. The large greenbelts and parks make the city pleasant in the Summer.

Food

The food supply situation in Vilnius has improved markedly, though prices are at Western European levels.

Fresh produce is still sometimes hard to find; most of it is imported. Bring specialty items, like ethnic foods and staples such as sugar, flour, rice and cake mixes.

Clothing

Lithuania is a northern country with a generally cool climate. As has been said, "There is no such thing as bad weather; only bad clothes." Lithuania is completely dependent on outside sources of fossil fuel, so houses may not be as warm as desired.

Bring winterwear, including thermal underwear from the States, or prepare to pay a premium

Men: Since the summer season is short, fall and winter weight suits and jackets will suffice. Sweaters are a must. In fall and spring, the city steam heat is turned off and homes get cold. Bring comfortable warm clothes to wear in the house during the unheated period. Formal wear is not required. Heavy winter coats and hats, raincoats, boots and socks are mandatory. Casual wear is worn away from the office.

Women: A well rounded wardrobe for all seasons consisting of several cocktail/dinner dresses, suits or skirts with jackets, blouses, sweaters, slacks, and sportswear is appropriate. Most Lithuanian women can knit or sew, and you can find or commission items for less than Western

prices. Heavy winter clothing, boots, and rainwear are a must. Also necessary are comfortable warm clothes to wear in the house during the fall and spring when the homes are unheated. Bring a good supply of leotard and pantyhose- especially if you are short or petite. Lithuanian women are fashion-conscious and generally dress more formally than women in the U.S.

Children: Schools do not require uniforms so play clothing is acceptable. Lots of sweaters, foul weather wear, and warm pajamas are a requirement.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: One can get almost any goods available in Western Europe, with some markup for shipping from there. This includes toiletries, cosmetics, etc. Many, but not all prescription drugs are available. For unusual or continuous-use prescription drugs, it is best to have a supplier in the U.S.

Basic Services: Dressmakers and tailors offer satisfactory service. Dry cleaning is available. Barbers and hairstylists are spotty in terms of quality and service.

Religious Activities

Lithuania is a predominantly Roman Catholic country. Feast days and holy days are observed with pageantry at churches and cathedrals. In addition, the city has Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Lutheran, and Evangelical services one can attend. Services in English are rare to nonexistent.

Education

The American International School of Vilnius has been growing steadily since it was founded in 1992. It currently has students in grades pre-K through 8.

Private language tutors as well as teachers of dance, music, art, crafts, and sports are readily available at reasonable rates.



Church in Vilnius, Lithuania

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Sports

There are opportunities for outdoor and indoor sports. Lithuanians are enthusiastic basketball players. They love to stroll in the woods collecting berries and mushrooms. Fishing is possible year round. Good riding stables are located just outside town. Many people enjoy cross-country skiing. Tennis and badminton courts are available. The Hash House Harriers are very active.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The old town of Vilnius is very attractive. There are exquisite examples of Gothic and Baroque architecture, such as the Church of

St. Anne. It is said that when Napoleon passed through Vilnius on his way to Moscow, he was so impressed with the small church that he wanted to “carry the church back to France in the palm of his hand.”

The University of Vilnius is a wonderful ensemble of buildings and beautiful courtyards. All of the different architectural styles seen in Vilnius are represented here. The neoclassical Cathedral and its bell tower (a perfect meeting place) stand at the foot of Castle Hill. From the top of that hill, the famous Tower of Gediminas dominates the skyline from Old Town. In October of 1988, the national flag of independent Lithuania was raised above

the Tower in place of the Soviet Republic banner.

Trakai, the medieval capital of Lithuania, is 18 miles southwest of Vilnius, situated in a beautiful area of recreational lakes, forests, and hills. This stronghold and former residence of Lithuanian Grand Dukes has been meticulously restored. The whole complex stands on an island. Trakai is also home to a small minority of Karaites (a tribe of Turkic people) who were brought to Lithuania by Grand Duke Vytautas in the 14th Century to serve as his bodyguards.

Kaunas, the second largest city in Lithuania, with a population of 379,000, is 60 miles west of Vilnius at the fork between the country’s two largest rivers, the Nemunas and Neris. It is said that Napoleon Bonaparte stood at that fork and said, “Here begin the great steppes of Russia.” Eighty-nine per cent of Kaunas’ population is ethnically Lithuanian, which, as the interwar capital, is much more homogenous than Vilnius. Kaunas’ Old Town is charming and boasts a pleasant Parisian-style walking mall. Museums there include the Ciurlionis Gallery and the Devils’ Museum. The former is shrine to an early nationalist composer, the latter chock-full of hundreds of depictions of devils from Lithuania’s Christian and pagan folk art past.

An hour from Vilnius on the road to Kaunas is Rumsiskes, location of the open air museum to Lithuanian peasant life. Although Lithuania is a small country, it is divided into four distinct regions: Zemaitija (Lowlands), Aukstaitija (Highlands), Dzukija and Suvalkija (south, near Poland). The Museum’s exhibits, brought to Rumsiskes from all over the country, are representative of these four regions. Easter is an especially good time to see the thatched farmhouses, take part in the Easter Egg Roll (like marbles, but with decorated eggs), and sample the simple cooking of Lithuania’s past. In Summer, the Rumsiskes Folk Music Ensemble creates an authentic country atmo-

sphere and encourages spectator participation.

For nature-lovers, Lithuania offers the striking contrasts of the Baltic sand dunes of Nida, the seemingly infinite forests and lakes of the East, and the spas of Druskininkiai and Birštonas.

Entertainment

Cultural life in Lithuania is rich and varied. One has only to look at the schedule of events at the Opera and Ballet Theater or the Philharmonic, to plan for an evening well spent. When the weather turns cool, operas and ballets offer respite from cold grey skies. The Academic Theater, State Youth Theater, Russian Drama Theater, and the Little Theater of Vilnius all produce plays by internationally known playwrights. Some knowledge of Lithuanian or Russian is necessary to follow the action.

Folk music lovers will not be disappointed in Lithuania. Every year in May, a week-long celebration of folk music takes place in Old Town. Tangible, lasting expressions of Lithuanian folk culture are captured in ceramic, textiles, and leather goods. "Daile (Art)" galleries are open in Vilnius, Panevezys, and Kaunas.

Social Activities

There are many Americans throughout the country. These include Peace Corps volunteers, USG contractors and grantees, missionaries, and Lithuanian-American businessmen.

Vilnius is home to both Rotary and Kiwanis; informal gatherings of businessmen take place often. Charity events draw from both business and diplomatic communities with impressive results. There is an International Women's Club which meets monthly and organizes different events.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **KAPSUKAS** is one of Lithuania's industrial centers.

Industries in Kapsukas produce textiles, furniture, processed foods, automotive parts, and building materials. Kapsukas has a population over 36,000.

KAUNAS, located 60 miles (90 kilometers) west of Vilnius, is Lithuania's second largest city. Between 1920 and 1940, Kaunas served as the capital of Lithuania. The capital was transferred to Vilnius following the Soviet annexation of 1940. The city was heavily damaged during World War II, but has been rebuilt. Kaunas is the home of many major industries. These industries manufacture furniture, machine tools, and textiles. The city also serves as a transportation hub for rail and water transportation. Kaunas has two excellent museums. The Museum of Stained Glass and Sculpture features many beautiful exhibits. Another museum, the Ciurlionis Museum, houses the works of famous Lithuanian artist M. K. Ciurlionis. In 2001, Kaunas had an estimated population of 379,000.

KLAIPEDA is Lithuania's most important port. The city's location on the Baltic Sea has led to the development of a large fishing fleet and several shipbuilding and fish canning factories. Klaipeda is also the home of other major industries. These industries manufacture timber, paper, and textiles. Klaipeda's port facilities are an important asset because they remain ice-free during the winter. The city has a Marine Museum and Aquarium that offers tourists many interesting exhibits. Klaipeda had a population of approximately 194,000 in 2001.

The city of **PANEVĖŽYS** is located in north-central Lithuania. Panevėžys is home to many industries. These industries produce glass, metalwork, and processed foods. The city's Panevėžys Drama Theatre is one of the finest in Lithuania. Panevėžys had a population of 122,000 in 2001. Current population figures are not available.

ŠIAULIAI is a Lithuanian city noted for its leather industry. In addition to leather, Šiauliai industries produce precision tools, furniture, processed foods, and metal products. Several educational institutions, including a medical school and polytechnic institute, are located in Šiauliai. The city had a population of 133,000 in 2001.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Lithuania, covering an area of 26,173 sq. miles, is the largest of the three Baltic States, slightly larger than West Virginia. The country lies on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea at approximately the same latitude as Denmark and Scotland. Lithuania's neighbors are Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east and south, Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation to the south and southwest. Lithuanians believe that the geographical center of the European continent lies 20 kilometers north of Vilnius, the capital.

A country known for its agrarian and wooded beauty, Lithuania is characterized by flat plains and rolling hills. The highest, Kruopine, is only 900 feet above sea level. Roughly one-fourth of the territory is covered by woodlands, consisting mainly of pine, spruce, and birch. One of the oldest oak trees in Europe, found in eastern Lithuania, is said to be about 1500 years old. The forests are home to a variety of animals including elk, bison, and wild boar; hunting is a popular pastime. Lithuanians especially enjoy mushroom collecting and berry picking.

More than 700 rivers and creeks crisscross Lithuania. The largest, the Nemunas, was once a strategically important shipping route through Lithuania. Its banks are dotted with castles and fortresses.



View of Vilnius, Lithuania

© Dean Conger/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

There are numerous lakes, especially in eastern Lithuania where the Ignalina National Park is located. This region is home to the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant which exports electricity to other countries in the region.

Lithuania's climate is moderate. Summer brings average temperatures of 65°F (afternoon highs in the 70's and 80's) and plentiful rain. July is the warmest month. Summer days are long with only a few hours of darkness. Winters tend to be cold, damp, and overcast. Temperatures average about 30°F and days are very short. Average annual precipitation amounts to about 26 inches.

Population

The Republic of Lithuania is home to 3,699,000 people, approximately 81 percent are ethnically Lithuanian; 9 percent Russian or Russian-speaking; 7 percent Polish; and the

remaining 3 percent Belarusians, Ukrainians, Latvians, Germans, and other nationalities.

The capital, Vilnius, with 553,000 inhabitants, has a multi-ethnic flavor as many residents are ethnic Russians and Poles. Other major cities include Kaunas, the interwar capital (379,000 inhabitants), the port city of Klaipeda (194,000); Siauliai (133,000) and Panevezys (122,000).

Public Institutions

On the leading edge of the processes which led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Lithuania today faces great challenges as it builds a democratic state and struggles to rid itself of the legacy of 50 years of Soviet domination.

Lithuanians have a long historical memory. They recall the glorious medieval Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which reached its zenith under

the rule of Grand Duke Vytautas the Great. It was he and Jagiello (Jogaila in Lithuanian), King of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, respectively, who led the joint Polish-Lithuanian troops to victory against the Teutonic Knights in the Battle of Tannenberg/Gruenwald (Zalgoris, in Lithuanian) in 1410, and stopped the medieval German drive Eastward. Under Vytautas, the territory of the Grand Duchy extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

After Vytautas' death, the political importance of the Grand Duchy slowly declined. In 1569, to counter the growing strength of the Russian state, the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy were formally united in a Commonwealth. The head of that union was elected king by the nobility. Following a series of partitions in the 18th Century, this Commonwealth was wiped off the European map in 1795 as Russia, Austria, and Prussia partitioned its

lands. Most of Lithuania fell under Russian rule while a smaller portion near the Baltic coast was appropriated by Prussia.

For the next 123 years, Lithuania experienced intense repression and Russification. Vilnius University was closed (1832) and the Latin alphabet was banned (1864). But as repression increased, so did the determination of a growing Lithuanian intelligentsia to retain Lithuanian culture, language, and traditions.

Taking advantage of the political turmoil in Russia near the end of the First World War, Lithuania declared independence on February 16, 1918. Wars to affirm this independence were fought against the Red Army, the Polish Army, and combined German-Russian mercenary forces which plundered broad areas in the Baltic states. Polish occupation of the Vilnius region in 1920 was a breach of the Treaty of Suwalki with Poland which confirmed Lithuanian rights to Vilnius. This step hopelessly strained Polish-Lithuanian relations between the wars. It rendered cooperation in the face of greater menaces, in 1939, impossible.

During the interwar years of independence, Kaunas became the provisional capital. Lithuania reached a living standard equal to that of Denmark and had one of the most stable currencies in the world.

Lithuanian independence was to be short-lived. The secret Molotov-Ribbentrop protocols between Germany and the USSR led to Soviet occupation in June 1940. During this first occupation, large-scale repression took place and about 40,000 people were exiled to Siberia. When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the Lithuanians attempted to reestablish an independent republic by revolting against the Soviets. In the face of the German Occupation, this effort failed. Under Nazi control, more than 200,000 Jews were murdered, 95 percent of the Jewish population, the highest proportion in

Europe. This wiped out a major center of Jewish culture and learning which had thrived in Vilnius (the "Jerusalem of the North") since the Middle Ages. Tens of thousands of Lithuanians were deported to the Reich for manual labor.

Soviet troops and terror returned in 1944. Another 250,000 Lithuanians were deported to the Siberian Gulag. Over 100,000 lives were lost in a guerrilla war against the Soviets which lasted until 1953. Virtually no family was left untouched by the horrors of the Second World War and the Soviet Occupation.

Lithuania spent the next 45 years as a Soviet republic. The Soviets restored lands occupied by Poland and Germany in the interwar and wartime years. Lithuanian exiles in the West, especially the U.S. kept the flame of an independent nation alive, along with Lithuania's culture and traditions. The Lithuanian diplomatic service continued to function in countries (including the U.S.) which refused to recognize its incorporation into the USSR. Inside Lithuania, many Lithuanians attempted to resist Sovietization. Armed resistance (the so-called "forest brothers") continued sporadically until the early 1950s. Lithuania resisted much of the Soviet-imposed industrialization, sparing the large influx of Russian workers which occurred in Estonia and Latvia. Despite these modest successes, life under the Soviets was hard. Moscow repressed any expression of Lithuanian national aspirations. Travel to the West was very difficult.

In the late 1980s, Gorbachev's policy of perestroika allowed deeply hidden aspirations of the Lithuanian nation to surface. "Sajudis," a movement which began in support of perestroika, quickly snowballed into a full-fledged drive for independence. Despite warnings and threats from the Kremlin, the Lithuanians, led by a distinguished musicologist, Vytautas Landsbergis, reclaimed their independence when the new, democratically-elected Supreme Council voted on March 11, 1990 to

reestablish the Lithuanian Republic.

The country persevered in its independence movement despite an economic blockade imposed by Moscow and Soviet Army operations which left 23 dead in 1991. The collapse of the Moscow coup in August of 1991 led to international recognition of Lithuania's independence, including by Russia. Foreign embassies began to open in the fall of that year.

The United States plus others never recognized Lithuania's forced incorporation into the USSR and maintained continuous ties with representatives of the interwar government in exile. The United States resumed diplomatic relations with an in-country government in September 1991.

Lithuania's present struggle to transform itself into a free-market democracy has shown considerable progress but is still incomplete. As in other Central and Eastern European countries, the society has been buffeted by economic dislocation, weak markets, a crumbling infrastructure, a bloated public sector, and a shallow understanding of working democracy.

In the Fall of 2000, Lithuanians elected a new Seimas (parliament). The Social Democratic Coalition, consisting of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, the Social-Democratic Party, the New Democratic Party, and the Lithuanian Russian Union, won the largest percentage of votes and the majority of seats in the new Seimas. In February 1998, Vldas Adamkus narrowly won the race for the position of President. The prime minister, appointed by the president, is Algirdas Brazauskas.

Arts, Science, and Education

"Folk art is the foundation of a nation's artistic tradition," said Mykolajus Ciurlionis (1875-1911), Lithuania's most renowned painter and composer. Since Lithuania has

traditionally been an agrarian society, most of its folk art has been created by peasants. It has a rich tradition of music and dance, folklore and architecture, as well as wooden sculpture and applied folk arts. Currently, there is intense interest in research on authentic folk culture. Many ethnographic ensembles, both professional and amateur, perform the music and songs that accompanied the simple people throughout life.

Song and music remain important means of expression for the Lithuanian people today. The struggle for independence from the Soviet Union was characterized by many as the "Singing Revolution." Unarmed, the people faced down the military might of the Soviets by standing side by side, drawing strength from the lyrical songs of their forebears.

During the Soviet period, cultural life was subsidized and censored by the government. However, performance excellence was achieved in many fields, including classical music, opera, ballet and theater. Released from the censor's shackles and responding more directly to the public's tastes and needs, the fine arts and music scene has developed in new, different directions. Especially notable for excellence are the Lithuanian State Youth Theater, the Vilnius Little Theater, the Vilnius Academic Theater, and the Kaunas Academic Theater.

Lithuania has a very high literacy rate and the nation reveres its poets and writers. The situation in publishing reflects an intense interest in translations of internationally known authors and genres, which once were forbidden.

Lithuania was at the forefront of science and technology in the former Soviet Union. Although much of the work in these fields was a part of the Soviet military industrial complex, the achievements by certain specialists in certain fields (mainly mathematics, physics, and natural science) were notable.

The educational system is broken down into preschool, elementary (4 years), middle school (up to 9- or 12-year programs); trade schools; and schools of higher education. Vilnius also has numerous Polish and Russian general education schools. Children enter elementary school at age 6 and education is compulsory until age 16. There are more than a dozen schools of higher education, including universities, technical schools, pedagogical institutes, and art schools.

Vilnius University, founded in 1579 by Jesuits, is the oldest and largest higher education institution in the country. Broad educational reform is underway.

Commerce and Industry

During the 50 years of Occupation, the economy was completely integrated into and subordinated to the centralized Soviet system. In 1991, the economy went into a tailspin as old ties dried up, payment systems broke down, and new markets were slow in emerging.

Historically, Lithuanians were a farming people. The Soviets forced the collectivization of agriculture and excessively rapid industrialization in the 1950's and 60's. The Supreme Council passed legislation in 1992, to privatize agriculture and implement a system of restitution for property seized during the Soviet Era. As a result, there were 134,000 private farmers in 1994. They farm about 32 percent of arable land. Production dropped as a result of dislocation due to the changes and uncertainty among farmers about markets for their produce. Under Soviet rule, Lithuania overproduced domestic needs for meat and dairy products by 150 percent and exported the surplus to the Moscow and Leningrad market.

The dominant sectors in industry are chemicals and food processing. Machine-building and metal works have been developed. Light industry includes textiles, knitwear, electron-

ics, furniture, plywood, building materials, and paper production.

Lithuania produces enough electrical power for its own needs and exports about 40 per cent of its output. In addition to the Ignalina power plant, there are other facilities for producing electricity with oil, gas, and hydropower. The Mazeikiai oil refinery produces refined petroleum products for domestic use and export. Crude oil is imported almost exclusively from Russia.

In addition to electricity and refined oil products, Lithuania's exports include food (mainly meat and dairy products), machinery and parts, and light industrial products. Major imports include crude oil, gas, metals, chemicals, machinery, consumer goods, and feed grain. Trade has shifted dramatically to the West, which accounts for about 60 percent of Lithuania's foreign commerce.

Lithuania became a member of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in 1992. Together with Latvia and Estonia, Lithuania is a member of the Baltic Council. Lithuania has close ties with the Nordic Council and most international and regional economic organizations.

Lithuania's economy continues to undergo a structural transformation. More than 86 percent of enterprises have been privatized, including companies in the energy and telecommunications sectors. Foreign investment remains modest, although the U.S. has been one of the largest sources. Major U.S. companies active in Lithuania include Philip Morris, McDonald's, IBM, and US West.

Lithuania has made efforts to ease its difficult transition from a command economy to a free market system. The country has signed free trade agreements with 20 countries. Lithuania has worked on restructuring its financial sector, which helped keep the country safe from the 1998 Russian financial crisis. High unemployment and low consump-

tion, however, have hindered economic growth.

Transportation

Local

The local transportation system includes electric trolley buses and diesel buses. They run regularly during the day throughout the city, but there are drawbacks: they are slow, often break down, and are terribly overcrowded at rush hours. Radio-dispatched cabs are still relatively inexpensive.

Regional

The main roads and highways between major cities are serviceable. One must take considerable care while driving off the intercity highways, as slow horse-drawn vehicles and large potholes are common hazards. During the winter months, snow and freezing conditions add to the driving hazards as the roads are not well plowed.

Intercity buses and trains are not geared for the comfort- or speed-oriented, except the express train between Kaunas and Vilnius. The overnight train to St. Petersburg is acceptable; reserving the entire compartment is recommended. Trains to Warsaw depart throughout the day.

Lithuanian Airlines, LOT (to Warsaw), Lufthansa, SAS, Finnair, and Austrian Air offer regular service to major European destinations. Ticket prices are high except to Eastern European destinations and the U.S. Two ferries connect Klaipeda with the German ports of Kiel and Mukran. Baltic Air and Estonian Air serve Riga, Tallinn, and Helsinki; a Denmark to Klaipeda ferry service is also available. Riga and Tallinn have ferry service to Scandinavia. The two other Baltic capitals are 3 and 7 hours away by car, respectively.

No visa is necessary for American citizens spending less than 90 days in Lithuania.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

International direct dial from residences is possible.

Radio and TV

There are now both Lithuanian (PAL system) and Russian television channels. Independent radio and TV stations have multiplied in recent years. Satellite television (CNN, British Sky News, CNBC, BBC, the Cartoon Network and numerous Scandinavian channels which carry English-language movies and series, as well as French, German and Italian stations) and some cable are available at moderate cost.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The major daily newspapers are Lietuvos Rytas, Respublika, Lietuvos Aidas (the Opposition paper), and Tiesa (the Labor Party press). Weeklies of the above press are published in Russian. Additionally, there is the Russian-language Echo Litvy and the Polish language Kurier Wilenski. A few English Language weeklies are available, including the Baltic Times. Some Western newspapers and periodicals are available at major hotels or by subscription.

Health and Medicine

The German Pharmacy stocks and sells most Western European medicines and treatments and most local drugstores (apteka) carry a wide assortment of West-European medicines. A number of spas and personal hygiene/cosmetology businesses have opened in the last year.

Community Health

Periodic outbreaks of serious infectious illness strike the Lithuanian population. Hepatitis is a concern, especially when traveling. Consumption of shellfish should be avoided in the warmer months. All travelers should make arrange-

ments to bring their shot records up to date before arrival.

Preventive Measures

Fluoride supplements are recommended for children as the city water is not fluoridated. Vitamin supplements are beneficial, especially in the Winter months.

The city water carries a burden of iron and other minerals from the well south of town, and an aging distribution system. While biological contamination in Vilnius is rare, drinking the water is not recommended because of the heavy mineral and metal content. Individuals are encouraged to filter or distill water prior to drinking or cooking. Bottled water is a must outside the capital area.

Pet Care

It should be noted that veterinary care falls below U.S. standards and "routine" operation in the U.S. are difficult, if not impossible, to carry out successfully in Lithuania. Care should be taken to ensure that pets are fully immunized against the standard diseases (most of which are required for entry to Lithuania). Pet food is easily available in the country.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

There are no direct flights from the U.S. to Lithuania. Several European airlines, SAS, Lufthansa, Finnair and a few others serve Vilnius from most major European air hubs. Make sure your travel plans comply with the Fly America Act.

There are strict controls on the export of items more than 30 years old. To avoid difficulties in reexporting any things that fall into this category, a detailed list of such items should be presented to Lithuanian customs. Items declared upon entry can be freely exported.

There is no limit on the amount of currency which can be brought into

Lithuania. Unofficial travelers must declare the amount of currency brought into the Country to expedite problem-free export.

Americans do not need visas to enter the Baltic States or Poland. Separate visas are necessary for travel to the Commonwealth of Independent States, or Russian Federation. Travelers should bring 6 passport-sized photos of self and family members for various ID cards. Passport photos are available locally.

Lithuania does not quarantine animals that are apparently in good health and are accompanied by a recent (no older than a month) veterinarian's certificate and proof of recent rabies vaccination.

The unit of currency is the Lithuanian Litas which, since 1993, has been fixed at 4-1 to the dollar under a currency board arrangement. Plans to peg the currency to the euro are underway. Credit cards are expanding in usefulness with many restaurants, hotels and some supermarkets accepting virtually any common card, but in general the

country has a cash economy. Lithuania uses the metric system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Jan. 13	Freedom Fighters' Day
Feb. 16	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
July 6	Mindaugas Coronation Day
Aug. 15	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Fike, Linus R. *Svetur (Away from Home)*. New York: Carlton Press, 1992.

Gordon, Harry. *The Shadows of Death: The Holocaust in Lithuania*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1992.

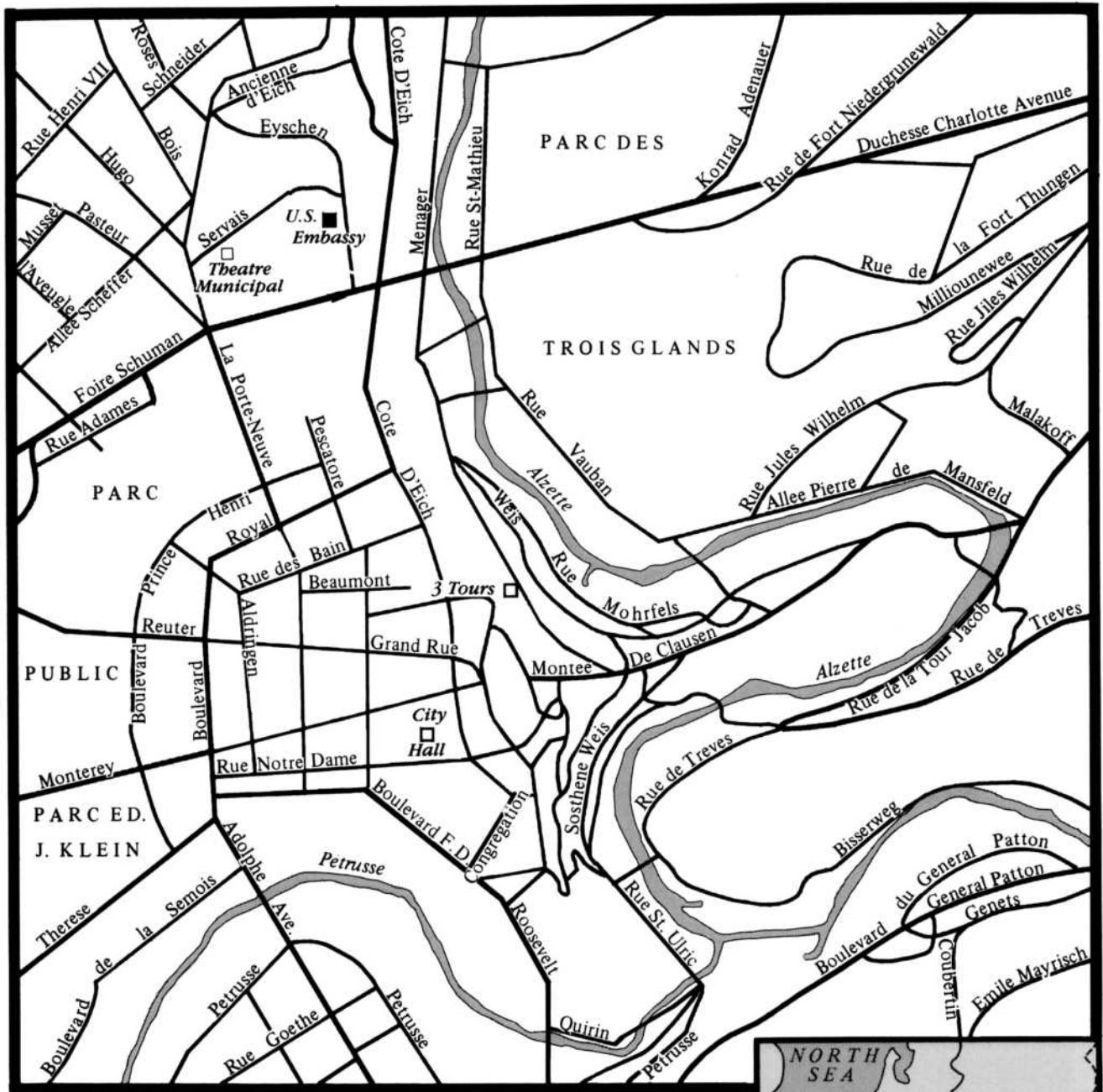
Lerner Geography Department Staff, ed. *Lithuania*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1992.

Lown, Bella. *Memories of My Life: A Personal History of a Lithuanian Shtetl*. Malibu, CA: Joseph Simon, 1991.

Senn, Alfred E. *Lithuania Awakening*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990.

Suziedelis, Saulius. *The Sword & the Cross: A History of the Church in Lithuania*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Publishing Division, 1988.

Willerton, John P. *Patronage & Politics in the U.S.S.R.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.



Luxembourg, Luxembourg

LUXEMBOURG

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Major City:
Luxembourg

Other Cities:
Clervaux, Diekirch, Differdange, Dudelange, Echternach, Esch-sur-alzette, Vianden

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Luxembourg. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

It would be easy to overlook tiny Luxembourg in a European itinerary, but you'd be missing out on a very charming experience. Squeezed into a pocket of land about one-fiftieth the size of England, it is Europe in a miniature, complete with wine country, abbey towns, a cosmopolitan city, hiking trails, restored castles, lovely river valleys, and a multilingual populace.

Luxembourg has been influenced at one time or another by the Spanish, Belgians, French, Germans and Austrians. But perhaps the most influential of all were the Romans, who ruled the land for nearly 500 years. They left behind an excellent network of roads and bridges that,

in addition to unifying the nation physically, linked the people psychologically.

Positioned between two major historical world powers (and having been conquered at times by both of them), Luxembourg takes a good deal of its identity from its neighbors' contributions. This shows itself both in the generally amicable relationship between the countries and their citizens and in their shared linguistic traits. Multilingualism is universal among Luxembourgers, and both the German and French languages are used in the press, in politics, and in daily life. French is most common in government and schools, though Luxembourgish is the language you will hear most frequently on the street. English is widely understood in tourist areas.

Luxembourg's location in the heart of Europe made it a desirable territory for the continent's abundance of expansion-minded rulers. So it built itself into one of the most powerful fortresses in the world. Most of the fortifications were dismantled in the mid-19th century, and fortresses were converted into parks too soon, as it turned out. Luxembourg was invaded and occupied in both World Wars by its neighbors to the east and sustained terrible damage in World War II at the Battle of

the Bulge. The damage has since been repaired, and Luxembourgers, grateful for the U.S. role in liberating their country, have been particularly friendly to travelers from the U.S. ever since.

Geographically, the country is surprisingly varied, considering its small size. The northern area has the best scenery, particularly in the heavily forested area of the Ardennes, whereas the southern area is more industrial and urbanized. The eastern region, along the Sauer and Moselle Rivers, has lovely vineyards and wineries.

Luxembourg offers the advantage of life in a medium-sized Western European city coupled with many of the social and cultural aspects of a modern capital.

MAJOR CITY

Luxembourg City

Luxembourg City is situated in central, southern Luxembourg. The city is the formal residence of the Grand Duke and the seat of government. The Court of Justice of the European Communities, the EU Court of Auditors, the general secretariat of the EU European Parliament, the

European Investment Bank, the EU Office of Statistics, and many other community services are also found here.

In 1963, the city celebrated its 1,000th anniversary. For centuries, Luxembourg was one of the most powerful fortresses in the world, earning the name of "Gibraltar of the North." Although the fortress was dismantled during the years 1867-83, the many remnants of these ancient fortifications, the medieval towers and ramparts, are of great interest. The casemates are a 23-kilometer network of underground passages, hewn from solid rock. The Grand Ducal Palace, built during the 16th and 18th centuries, is located among the narrow, winding streets of the old city.

Within the Cathedral Notre Dame are the Grand Ducal Mausoleum and the tomb of Luxembourg's national hero, John the Blind, who was killed in 1346 at the Battle of Crecy. The European Center on the Kirchberg Plateau commands an impressive view of the entire city. Built on ridges overlooking the confluence of the Alzette and Petrusse Rivers, the city has attractive park areas along both streams. The Place d'Armes, in the center of the city, is the site of numerous band concerts during the spring and summer months.

Food

Most foodstuffs, including many American products, are available in Luxembourg. Prices are higher than in the U.S. for many foods, such as meat. Uncooked fruit and vegetables are safe, and the quality is high. Beef is lower in quality than in the U.S., but the quality of pork is higher. American cuts cannot be obtained locally. High quality poultry is available. Excellent-quality fish and seafood are available.

Water is potable, but it has a high calcium content, making it hard for washing purposes. Bottled water is available at reasonable prices.

Clothing

Clothing is similar to that worn in the northern U.S. Average annual rainfall is heavy, so raincoats, umbrellas, and waterproof footwear are needed. Extremely cold weather is not prolonged, but it is often chilly and damp. Bring warm suits, coats, overshoes or other warm footwear, and a good supply of sweaters. Summer weather is also cool and unpredictable. Most summer-weight clothes can be worn for only a limited time. Sports clothing and heavy shoes are useful for walking, shooting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

Men: Ready-made European-style suits are available locally. Workmanship of these suits is good, but costly. Much available haberdashery is imported, and prices are higher than in the U.S. Good shoes from England, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy are available.

Women: Because of the cool, damp climate and the tendency to under heat houses, women wear more suits and sweaters throughout the year than in most parts of the U.S. Competent, but expensive, dressmakers are available. Hats, gloves, and other accessories are available, and there are several good, but expensive, women's wear shops. "A" width or narrower shoes are scarce, and local shoes are generally expensive.

Good-quality furs are priced lower than in the U.S. Mending, glazing, and alteration of furs are done well and more cheaply than at home.

Children: Children's clothes, including winter clothing, are similar to those worn in the northern U.S. and are readily available in Luxembourg, though they are more expensive than in the U.S. Due to the damp climate, children need warm boots and extra shoes.

Supplies and Services

General living needs are sold locally and at Bitburg/Spangdahlem. Internationally known cosmetics and toiletries are available locally.

Bring a supply of any favorite or special cosmetics.

A wide variety of good-quality fabrics is available locally.

A wide range of personal services is available in Luxembourg, including shoe repair, laundry, drycleaning, hairdressing, clothing alterations. Photographic equipment is readily available, and developing is satisfactory, but much more expensive than in the U.S.

Domestic Help

Full-time domestic help, especially a competent housekeeper, is extremely difficult to find. It is somewhat easier to find cleaning personnel who work by the hour. Persons who employ domestic help for at least 4 consecutive hours a week must register with the "Office des Assurances Sociales" The employer must contribute to the worker's social security. This tax is about 25% of the worker's salary and includes medical and retirement. The typical expense per week for a full-time (40 hours) maid runs about 15,000 FLux. Part-time help, e.g., 6 hours a week, costs approximately 1,800 FLux. Extra help is available for dinners and receptions. A commercial supplier charges 2,500 FLux per waiter for an evening.

Cleaning help can also be obtained from several companies who supply their own staff and equipment. The client pays these companies a flat hourly rate and they take care of all insurance. Some American students at the Miami University European Study Center take odd jobs, such as helping in the house, working in the garden, and babysitting. They may be contacted through the university.

Religious Activities

The local population is predominantly Roman Catholic. Although many church services are held in German, services in English, French, or Luxembourgish are available. Sermons are frequently given in a different language from the service. A Lutheran church with services in German and a syna-



View of bridge and the city of Luxembourg

Courtesy of the Luxembourg Tourist Office

gogue are also located in Luxembourg City.

The English-speaking Catholic Community of Luxembourg offers services in English. The Protestant Anglican Chaplaincy and Christian Community Church also hold services in English. A number of American residents in Luxembourg attend Christian services at Bitburg AFB and English-speaking churches in the area around Bitburg.

Education

Primary and secondary public education in Luxembourg is operated by the Ministry of National Education. Tuition is free and foreign students are accepted. The curriculum is roughly the same as in the other European schools. Languages of instruction are Luxembourgish, German, and French. American students, unless fluent in German or French, may experience considerable difficulty. English is

taught only as a second (fourth) language. Religious instruction is conducted in all schools by Roman Catholic clergy, but students are exempted if the parents so request.

The International School of Luxembourg, which offers a full American curriculum in grades kindergarten through 12. ISL is fully accredited by both the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) and the Middle States Association in the U.S. It is overseen by a predominantly American board of directors under the aegis of the Luxembourg Ministry of Education, which subsidizes ISUs operation. The total student body numbers 424, with 257 in pre-K through grade 6, and 167 in grades 7 through 12. Americans make up the largest single block of students with 28%; Scandinavians are next with 15%; altogether among the students there are 27 nationalities from five continents. The Upper School offers advanced placement and honors

classes in most key subjects. Small classes provide each student with a good deal of personal attention.

In addition to its formal curriculum, ISL offers a wide variety of supplementary and elective opportunities, including vocal music, instrumental music, art, computer science, theater, debate, etc. With its relatively new gymnasium and extensive contact with other American and international schools in the region, ISL conducts an active sports program, both intramural and interscholastic.

The European School in Luxembourg (kindergarten through grade 12) is for children of employees of the European Community who are working in Luxembourg. Instruction is in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, or Spanish. Each section has teachers accredited by the board of education in the respective countries. First choice, however, is given to families

belonging to the European Union countries.

An English-speaking International Kindergarten is also located in Luxembourg.

Miami University (Oxford, Ohio) European Study Center was opened in Luxembourg in 1968. About 100 American undergraduates come there from Ohio to study for one or two academic terms under a faculty of 12, including 4 American professors. Students wishing to attend the center must request approval from Miami University in Ohio.

Sacred Heart University (Fairfield, CT) is also established in Luxembourg and offers an MBA program as well as certificate in various fields of management.

Luxembourg has no full-curriculum university of its own. Luxembourgers must go to France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, or elsewhere for their higher education.

Special Educational Opportunities

Several language schools are located in Luxembourg. Private tutors are available for French, German, and most other school subjects. The Luxembourg Board of Education arranges courses in Luxembourgish for foreigners as part of its adult education program. Luxembourg City also makes available, cost free, courses in French, German, and Luxembourgish. Foreign women's clubs have also organized language courses.

A number of dancing schools and gymnastics classes are available in Luxembourg. There are also ballroom dancing classes for adults.

Some professional schools in Luxembourg allow amateurs to study pottery-making, drawing, etc. During the summer, special classes called Beaux Arts are held for about 6 weeks.

Sports

The Grand Ducal Golf Club has an excellent 18-hole course and a

small, attractive clubhouse where meals are available. The course, considered to be among the most challenging and beautiful in Europe, attracts golfers from all over Europe. Instructors and caddies are available. Membership is not inexpensive, nor necessarily available to all.

A permit from the Ministry of Justice is required to possess a hunting weapon. Hunters and fishermen also must purchase an annual license. Wild boar, deer, and pheasant hunting are excellent and popular in Luxembourg. Many wooded streams provide fine fishing. However, hunting and fishing rights are privately owned, so you are usually dependent on invitations from Luxembourgers.

Gym classes for men and women are available. The more popular spectator sports are basketball, soccer, rugby, bicycling, handball, and volleyball. Team membership in these sports and activities such as karate and judo are open to everyone.

The city has several swimming pools; the Olympic Swimming Pool in the suburb of Kirchberg is a world-class facility. Pool memberships are also available at the Hotel Intercontinental and Royal Hotel.

River bathing is possible in several places. Water skiing is popular on the Moselle, and scuba diving may be done in Lake Esch-sur-Sure. Sailing, kayaking, and canoeing are also possible, but you sometimes have to provide your own equipment.

Membership is possible in several private tennis clubs, and a few well-kept municipal courts are available. Indoor tennis courts are also available for hire by the hour or on a seasonal basis. About 4 miles outside the city is an indoor ice skating rink that can be enjoyed year round. Two riding academies offer riding lessons, and many riding trails are located in the surrounding countryside. A new squash club is also available. There are several lovely bicycle paths, both from the city and out in the countryside.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Luxembourg countryside is beautiful in the spring, summer, and early fall. There are hundreds of kilometers of well-groomed hiking trails throughout the country. Tourists and hikers from all over Europe enjoy the unspoiled natural attractions of "Little Switzerland," the Sure and Moselle Valleys, and the thick forests of the Ardennes Mountains. Over 130 old castles dot the country, including Vianden, Clervaux, Bourscheid, Beaufort, and Esch-sur-Sure. Grape and wine festivals and tastings are held in towns and villages along the Moselle in the fall and spring when the grapes are gathered and the wine is bottled.

Trier, a former provincial capital of the Roman Empire and an important German town in medieval days, is 30 miles from Luxembourg City and an interesting day's excursion. North from Trier along the German Moselle, a series of picturesque wine towns and ruined castles extends to Koblenz where the Moselle joins the Rhine.

To the south near Luxembourg, the Verdun Battlefield in France is well worth a visit. Paris and Brussels are fun for a weekend visit. Reims, Cologne, Aachen, and Strasbourg are within easy reach of the Grand Duchy. Spring trips to Holland's tulip fields also are popular.

Entertainment

Luxembourg has several motion picture theaters. American, English, French, German, Italian, and other films are shown. American films are usually 6-12 months old, but are ordinarily presented in their original English-language version.

Luxembourg City's cultural center is the Municipal Theater, which opened in April 1964. It offers opera, drama, symphonic concerts, and solo recitals and otherwise enriches the country's

cultural life. In the winter, the Municipal Theater presents two series of plays, one in French and

one in German, by excellent touring companies. Touring companies also perform operatic and ballet series each season. Luxembourg has an excellent philharmonic orchestra. Luxembourg's New Theater Club presents two or three plays in English during the season. The "Old Theater" on the Rue des Capucins has been revived and presents very interesting plays by professional and amateur actors.

The French, Italian, and German cultural centers have interesting programs. Luxembourg City has a number of small nightclubs.

In the summer, music may be found everywhere. Groups from all over Europe, Canada, and the U.S. perform in the Place d'Armes. Concerts are also held in the Municipal Theater, the "Cercle Municipal," churches, and various other places in and around Luxembourg City. The annual Open Air Theater and Music Festival at Wiltz Castle in northern Luxembourg provides a well-rounded selection of musical events, theater, and ballet, as does the Echternach Festival. The U.S. Air Force bands have concerts several times a year.

During 3 weeks in May, pilgrimages are made from all parts of the country to the Cathedral, culminating in a procession of the statue of "Our Lady of Luxembourg" through the city streets. The "Schueberfouer" comes to town at the end of August, following an almost unbroken tradition of over 450 years. This annual fair has all the usual attractions loved by children—bumper cars, carousels, shooting ranges—plus many temporary restaurants and two dance calls.

Social Activities

An American Chamber of Commerce, an American Business Association of Luxembourg, and an American Women's Club operate here. Small scouting groups are provided for both boys and girls. Luxembourg has an active American-Luxembourg Society.

OTHER CITIES

CLERVAUX is a tourist center with 1,000 residents, 35 miles northwest of Diekirch in northern Luxembourg. This medieval town lies on the eastern bank of the Clerf River, in a colorful, twisting valley. Noteworthy buildings here include the Abbey of the Benedictines of St. Maurice, the Chapel of Notre Dame of Lorette, and the castle, built in the 10th century by Gerard of Clervaux. The castle was badly damaged during the Ardennes offensive of World War II, but is being restored. Clervaux has several hotels, a youth-hostel, and official campgrounds.

DIEKIRCH, a town of 5,000 in the west-central part of Luxembourg, near the border with West Germany, dates to 1260. A brewery is located here.

DIFFERDANGE is 12 miles southwest of Luxembourg-Ville. With a population of 16,000, it is a center for the production of iron and steel. North of Differdange, near the Belgian border, is Pétange, with a population close to 12,000.

DUDELANGE, on the French border, 10 miles south of Luxembourg-Ville, has a population of about 14,000. It is an industrial commune that produces iron, steel, and aluminum.

ECHTERNACH, an ancient town which was one of the earliest centers of Christianity in Europe, lies northeast of Luxembourg-Ville. St. Willibrord, an English Benedictine missionary, is buried in the abbey he founded here in 698. Each year on Whit Tuesday, a famous festival, *La Procession Dansante*, is held in Echternach. This small town of fewer than 5,000 residents figured in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.

ESCH-SUR-ALZETTE, an industrial center and rail junction, is located on the French border about 10 miles southwest of Luxembourg-Ville. The country's second

largest city, with a population of 23,700, Esch-sur-Alzette is situated in a coal mining region, and manufactures iron, steel, cement, tar products, and fertilizer.

Situated in northeastern Luxembourg, **VIANDEN** is the city where Victor Hugo (1802-1885), the French literary figure, spent his voluntary exile in 1871. The city is surrounded by magnificent landscape. There are modern campgrounds, pleasant hotels, and comfortable cottages, as well as a number of sports and leisure facilities. Vianden's narrow, winding streets and its castle create a medieval atmosphere. Europe's most powerful hydroelectric pumping-station is located here. Vianden's population is about 1,500.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Luxembourg, located in Western Europe, is bordered by France, Germany, and Belgium. The country is 50 miles long and 36 miles wide, covering 999 square miles, or slightly less than the area of Rhode Island.

Geographically, the Grand Duchy is divided into two sections. The forested and hilly northern half of the country is a continuation of the Belgian Ardennes. In the south, the Lorraine Plateau extends from France, creating an open, rolling countryside with an average elevation of 1,000 feet. The Our, Sure, and Moselle Rivers flow north-south along the frontier between Luxembourg and Germany.

Temperatures range from 5°F (-15°C) to 90°F (32°C), with an annual mean temperature of 49°F (9°C). Summer temperatures average 60°F (15°C) and winters are mild with an average low of 29°F (-1.7°C). July and August are the warmest months; May and June are

the sunniest; and January and February are the coldest months. Luxembourg has a climate much like that of the U.S. Pacific Northwest—cool, temperate, and rainy. The northwesterly winds that traverse the western, lower portion of the Belgian Ardennes cause abundant clouds, fog, and rain. Average annual rainfall is 30 inches; some rain falls 50% of the year.

Population

The Grand Duchy has a population of approximately 440,000 (2000 est.).

The densest population is in the industrial southwest region and around the capital city, with a population of 78,300. Of the entire population, 34% are aliens, most from other European countries (12% Portuguese). The European Union Institutions located here employ many citizens of the different member states.

The native population is at least bilingual, often trilingual. Luxembourgish is the native language spoken in the majority of homes. German is the language of instruction beginning in first grade; French begins shortly thereafter as a foreign language. Luxembourgish and French are the official languages of the country. French is used in diplomatic exchanges, in drafting decrees and legislation, and in the upper courts.

Local newspapers are usually published in German, and German is used in the lower courts. French is the most common second language used in stores within the city, but German is often more useful in the northern part of the country. Luxembourgers invariably speak Luxembourgish among themselves. Related to the old Moselle Frankish language of Western Germany, Luxembourgish is basically a Germanic language enriched by French and Flemish words and expressions. This language is rarely written and varies from region to region. English is also taught in the schools.

While there is no state religion, Luxembourg is predominantly Roman Catholic. Protestant and Jewish communities also exist, and all faiths are welcome.

Public Institutions

Luxembourg has a parliamentary form of government with a constitutional monarchy. Under the Constitution of 1868, as amended, the Grand Duke is the Chief of State. Executive power is exercised by the Grand Duke and the Council of Government (Cabinet), which consists of a dozen members led by the President of the Government (Prime Minister). The Prime Minister is the leader of the political party or coalition of parties that has the most seats in the Parliament.

Legislative power is vested in the Chamber of Deputies, elected directly to 5-year terms. A second body, the Council of State, exercises some of the functions of an upper house, but can be overridden by the Chamber of Deputies. It is composed largely of ordinary citizens appointed in part by the Grand Duke, in part by the Council of Government.

The law is codified, as in France and Belgium, and is a composite of local practice, legal tradition, and foreign systems (French, Belgian, and German). The apex of the judicial system is the Superior Court, whose judges are appointed by the Grand Duke.

Under the Constitution of 1868, as amended, Luxembourg is a parliamentary democracy. A coalition of two of the three major parties—the Christian Social Party (CSV), the Socialist Party (LSAP), and the Democratic (or Liberal) Party (DP) have formed the government in recent years.

Arts, Science, and Education

Over the ages, the cultural influences upon Luxembourg life have been extremely varied. Until the

19th century, Luxembourg was dominated by the various European powers: France, Spain, Prussia, Austria, and the Netherlands. The strongest influences have been those of its immediate neighbors: France, Belgium, and Germany. Luxembourg's technology is primarily German-influenced. While many Luxembourg engineering students train in Germany, others take higher education in Belgium or France. The French and, to a lesser degree, the Belgians, are the strongest cultural influences. However, Luxembourgers are appreciative of many other cultures as well, including those of Great Britain, Italy, and the U.S.

Commerce and Industry

Luxembourg is aptly described in tourist literature as the “Green Heart of Europe.” The open rolling countryside is accentuated by Luxembourg's small but productive agricultural sector, which concentrates on animal husbandry. Its principal products are meat and dairy products. Vineyards along the Luxembourg side of the Moselle River annually produce almost 4 million gallons of high-quality dry white wine, almost half of which is consumed locally.

Luxembourg's standard of living and per capita income are the highest in the European Union. The Grand Duchy's currency is linked to Belgium's, and the two countries share customs facilities and are partners in the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union (BLEU). The economy is stable and prosperous, enjoying modest growth, low inflation, and low unemployment (2.9%; 1999 est.). Steel production, financial services, and light industry are the primary sectors. The industrial sector, until recently dominated entirely by steel, is increasingly diversified.

American investment has played a large role. Goodyear, DuPont, Guardian, General Motors, Commercial Intertech, and Delphi Auto-

motive Systems are among the American firms with industrial facilities in Luxembourg. The financial sector's rapid growth over the past two decades has more than compensated for the long-term decline of the steel industry, which now contributes only 1.8% of GDP.

Services, especially banking, account for a growing proportion of the economy. Luxembourg's 210 banks now employ over 9 percent of the working population (20,557).

Luxembourg's dependence on exports of goods and services has made it favorable to open borders and commercial activity generally. Most trade is with Luxembourg's immediate neighbors. The U.S. accounts for only 3% of Luxembourg's trade. Steel exports to the U.S. dominate our trade relations. Although the country usually registers a trade deficit, a surplus in earnings from financial services contributes a very large current account surplus.

GDP growth in 1999 was 7.6%, the highest in recent years. Inflation was 1.4%. Unemployment, at 3.3%, remains the lowest in the European Union.

Government finances are conservatively managed. Government budgets usually record surpluses. In order to prevent these surpluses from growing even larger, the government introduced tax cuts in both 1997 and 1998.

Transportation

Automobiles

Luxembourg has excellent paved highways and secondary roads. Driving in Luxembourg is on the right side of the road with "priority to the right" (the driver from the right normally has the right of way and exercises it).

Rental cars are available through car rental agencies locally or at nearby U.S. military bases. Gasoline quality is comparable to American grades, with an occasional slightly

lower octane rating. Unleaded gasoline and diesel is commonly provided by most gas stations in Luxembourg and neighboring countries.

Many people prefer small American or European cars. However, no restrictions apply to the type of car brought into the country.

Repairs and spare parts are not readily available for American automobiles in Luxembourg, and prices are higher than in the U.S.

Some cars need minor modifications to pass a safety inspection required for all vehicles registered in Luxembourg. Regulations on tire tread are strict.

Within 3 months of establishing residence, you must register your car in Luxembourg. Automobile registration costs about \$45. A valid U.S. drivers license is sufficient for a tour of duty not exceeding 1 year. After 1 year, you must apply for a local driver's license. Before registration can be completed, the car must pass inspection by the Ministry of Transport. The law requires that all cars registered in Luxembourg be insured with a Luxembourg firm for third-party liability insurance. The insurance "green card" proves that your automobile insurance is valid in Europe and is obtained from the Luxembourg insurance company with which you have third-party liability coverage. The cost of third-party insurance is based on engine displacement.

Local insurance companies' premiums are based on the value of your car when purchased, not the present value. Payment on claims, however, is based on the present value. A letter from your American (or present) insurance company stating that you have been driving "X" number of years without a claim against them, will cause the local insurance company to deduct 5% for each year (up to 45%) from the prices listed above on comprehensive insurance. Comprehensive insurance may be obtained outside

Luxembourg (i.e., Clements in Washington, USA).

The not-for-profit Automobile Club of Luxembourg provides travel information, maps, emergency, assistance, and many other services for a modest membership fee. With the purchase of a carnet d'assistance, members have access to services from automobile clubs throughout Europe and in North Africa. (Automobile Club, 54 Route de Longwy, L-8007 Helfenterbruck, Telephone: 45-00-45.)

Local

In the city, buses are inexpensive. Schedules are geared to students as well as Luxembourg shopping and office hours. Taxicabs are plentiful. Taxis do not cruise the city; they must be phoned, but they come quickly.

Regional

Luxembourg's central location is a definite advantage; all of Europe is easily accessible from Luxembourg. Paris is 4 hours away by car; Brussels 2 hours; Le Havre 10 hours; Frankfurt 4 hours; and Amsterdam 6 hours.

Bus or rail connections can be made between Luxembourg City and most other towns in the Grand Duchy. The schedules, however, are primarily geared to workers and students.

Trains stop at Luxembourg's Central Station en route to Paris, Brussels, Cologne, Amsterdam, Milan, and the south of France.

First class, round-trip fares by train are as follows:

Paris: FLux4,648, US\$126
 Bonn: FLux 3,852, US\$104
 Frankfurt: FLux 5,024, US\$136
 Amsterdam: FLux 4,900, US\$132
 Basel: FLux 4,172, US\$113
 Strasbourg: FLux 2,904, US\$78
 Brussels: FLux 1,995, US\$54

Second class is generally clean and pleasant. A modern airport (Findel) is located only 4 miles outside Luxembourg City. The passenger terminal was opened in November 1975.

Luxembourg has daily air service to Brussels, Paris, London, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam. Other major European cities are also served but not by daily flights. Limited tourist flights are scheduled to most major vacation areas. Attractive package tours to some 30 destinations from Algarve to Zurich are offered by Luxair, the Grand Duchy's passenger airline.

A wide variety of connecting flights to other points in Europe is available in Amsterdam, Paris, Brussels, London, and Frankfurt.

Round-trip, economy fares by plane to various points of interest are as follows:

Paris: FLux 15,700, US\$424
 Frankfurt: FLux 11,450, US\$309
 London: FLux 19,360, US\$523
 Nice: FLux 20,420, US\$552
 Palma: FLux 18,760, US\$507
 Vienna: FLux 31,390, US\$848
 Madrid: FLux 26,260, US\$710
 Rome: FLux 33,980, US\$918

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph service in Luxembourg is excellent. Telephone installation costs about \$70. Calls within the Grand Duchy cost 5 francs for each 4 minutes. You can dial directly to subscribers in most Western European countries and in the U.S. A 3-minute person-to-person call from Luxembourg to New York costs \$2.50. Telegraph or cable rates between Luxembourg and New York are FLux 1,900, including 40 words.

Radio and TV

Radio reception in Luxembourg is adequate to receive stations throughout Western Europe, including the BBC, VOA and the American Forces Network from Germany. In some areas, however, an aerial may be necessary.

Radio FM and television programs from Western Germany, Belgium, and France are received in Luxembourg. Radio Tele Luxembourg also

has daily television programs in French and German. In many areas, a large antenna is essential for reception. If your antenna is good, or, if you have subscribed to cable TV, you can receive three German channels, six French channels, Belgium's two French-language channels, and Radio T616 Luxembourg (when hooked up to cable TV; in addition, you can get several satellite programs, including some English-language channels). All channels are in color. An American TV, however, cannot be converted to receive Belgian,

French, German, or Luxembourgish programs. It is recommended that newcomers to Luxembourg buy multisystem TV's and videorecorders (available at Bitburg, Spangdahlem and other bases) in order to enjoy all available channels and/or programs in Luxembourg. Luxembourg does not tax owners of televisions and radios.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The leading newspapers of Luxembourg are in German, with the exception of the French-language *Republicain Lorraine*, published in France. The main newsstands in Luxembourg carry a wide section of Europe newspapers as well as French, Belgian, and German magazines.

The International Herald Tribune is also available at local newsstands or by subscription. It is possible to obtain American magazines in Luxembourg, but the selection is limited.

About 1,500 English and American books of the former USIS library have been donated to the National Library of Luxembourg. The University of Miami and the British Ladies Club maintain good reading libraries in Luxembourg. Some American books are sold in shops, but prices are high.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical and surgical attention in Luxembourg is good, although in view of the small community served, the depth of a coverage in some specialties might not be as great as, for instance, in the U.S. All Luxembourg physicians and surgeons receive their medical education abroad. Several local doctors, including pediatricians, have trained in the U.S. The hospitals, including maternity hospitals, are clean and well kept and are usually well staffed by Catholic nursing sisters.

Competent dentists practice in Luxembourg, and Americans are usually satisfied with routine dental work done locally. As with medical care described above, there may be areas of special dentistry where the size of the community does not support the fullest facilities.

Local ophthalmologists and opticians are dependable.

Pharmacies in Luxembourg are well supplied with most general medicines.

Community Health

Luxembourg enjoys a high standard of living. Public health standards compare well with those in the U.S. Sewage and garbage disposal are not a problem. The public water supply is potable.

Preventive Measures

Prevalence of disease is comparable to that in the New England states, except for a slightly higher incidence of tuberculosis and respiratory diseases. Several outbreaks of typhoid, influenza, and infantile paralysis have occurred since World War II; none has assumed serious proportions, and statistics reflect a steady downward curve. The last recorded case of infantile paralysis was in 1963. Ordinary colds and bronchial coughs from the damp climate are the most common ailments. Humidity increases sinus

trouble, rheumatism, arthritis, catarrh, and asthma.

Pasteurized milk sold in cartons is considered. Glass-bottled or plastic bagged milk is pasteurized but does not meet U.S. sanitary standards. No special treatment is required for water or fresh vegetables.

While potable, the local water supply is very hard. Many people drink mineral water or use a softener available at Bitburg or locally. In all new buildings and houses, a softener is automatically included at the input of water supply.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Most travelers arrive by air via London, Brussels, Paris, or Frankfurt. Some flights into Luxembourg are via short stopovers, but you do not need large amounts of currency for these cities. All airports have exchange facilities for changing small amounts of currency.

Flying time from New York to Luxembourg is about 12 hours, including a stopover at an intermediate airport. Unaccompanied airfreight from the U.S. usually arrives within 7 days. Surface freight takes a minimum of 1 month.

A passport is required. A visa is not required for American citizens for business or tourist stays of up to 90 days. For further information concerning entry requirements for Luxembourg, travelers can contact the Embassy of Luxembourg at 2200 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, Tel. (202) 265-4171/72, or the Luxembourg consulates general in New York or San Francisco

Americans living in or visiting Luxembourg are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg to obtain updated information on travel and security within Luxem-

bourg. The U.S. Embassy is located at 22 Boulevard Emmanuel Servais in Luxembourg City, Tel: (352) 46-01-23 or Fax: (352) 46-19-39. The Embassy website address is <http://www.amembassy.lu>.

For specific information concerning Luxembourg driver's permits, vehicle inspection, road tax and mandatory insurance, contact the Luxembourg National Tourist Office in New York at 212-935-8888, or via the Internet at <http://www.visitluxembourg.com>. For international driving permits, contact AAA or the American Automobile Touring Alliance at <http://www.aa.com>

Pets

No special formalities are observed in connection with the importation of pets, nor do any special rules or limits affecting clearance of particular items apply. Pets should be inoculated against rabies and should have had the parvo vaccine. Pet owners should obtain a Certificate of Good Health from their veterinarian before coming to Luxembourg. Upon arrival, dogs should be licensed in Luxembourg.

Firearms and Ammunition

The following quantities and types of nonautomatic firearms and ammunition may be brought to Luxembourg:

Pistols and revolvers, 2; Rifles, 4; Shotguns, 4; Ammunition 1,000 rounds.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the monetary unit Luxembourg is the Euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 Euro. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

The metric system is used for weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar.	Shrove Monday*
Feb/Mar.	Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras)*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Luxembourg Labor Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Pentecost (Whit) Monday*
May/June (Tues after Pentecost)	St. Willobord Dancing Procession in Echternach*
June 23	Grand Duke's Birthday
Aug. 15.	Assumption Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 2	All Souls' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

A great deal of bibliographic material on Luxembourg is available in English. In addition to *Fodor* and *Blue Guides* on Belgium and Luxembourg, many tourist pamphlets in English can be obtained from the Luxembourg Embassy in Washington or the Luxembourg Consulate General in New York. The good general books are "*Living in Luxembourg*" available from the American Women's Club, and "*Luxembourg Yesterday and Today*" by Joseph Petit, director of the Luxembourg Government Information Service.

The latest edition of the "*Political Handbook of the World*," published by the Council of Foreign Relations, contains a brief resume of useful

information on political affairs, party program and leaders, and the press of Luxembourg. *Attic in Luxembourg*, written in 1956 by Beryl Miles and published by John Murray, gives a great deal of historical and background information about the Grand Duchy and its customs and ceremonies.

In French, a brief but excellent general study of Luxembourg is "*Le Benelux*," published by the Editions Ode of Paris. Two books by Pierre

Majerus of the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "*Manuel de Droit Constitutionnel et de Droit Administratif Luxembourgeois*" and "*Le Luxembourg Independant: Essai d'Histoire Politique Contemporaine et de Droit International Public*," are highly recommended for their scholarly excellence and useful historical information. "*All the Best in Belgium and Luxembourg*" by Sydney Clark (Dodd, 1956) is also recommended reading. "*Le Luxembourg*" edited by Charles Dessart, and

"*Nature et Tourisme an Luxembourg*," published by the Touring Club Luxembourgeois, present pictorial evidence of the Grand Duchy's scenic and historical attractions. Finally, "*Le Luxembourg: Livre du Centenaire*," originally published in 1939 under the auspices of the Luxembourg Government and subsequently updated, is an exhaustive analysis of every aspect of life in Luxembourg, past and present.

MACEDONIA

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Major Cities:

Skopje, Ohrid

Other Cities:

Bitola, Kumanovu, Prilep

INTRODUCTION

On November 20, 1991, **MACEDONIA** declared its independence from Yugoslavia. This declaration of independence was met with widespread anger by Macedonia's neighbors, particularly Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia. Nationalist elements within these countries claim that residents in Macedonia belonged, by virtue of language and culture, to one or all of their neighbors and should not have formed an independent nation.

Protests against Macedonian independence became particularly strong in Greece because the northernmost province of Greece is also called Macedonia. The Greeks claimed that they would not accept Macedonia's independence unless the country chose a different name. The United States and the European Union (EU) formally recognized Macedonia's independence in 1994. In April 1993, Macedonia was admitted as a member of the United Nations. It is also a member of INTERPOL, EBRD, FAO, IMF, and UNESCO.

MAJOR CITIES

Skopje

The capital city of Macedonia, Skopje, is a thriving city of 582,000 people. Located on the Vardar River, the city was once the capital of ancient Serbia and for well over 500 years, from 1392 to 1913, was under Turkish rule. After a tragic earthquake destroyed or severely damaged 80 percent of the city in 1963, Skopje underwent extensive reconstruction, and now has the appearance of a very modern city, with new high-rise apartment buildings, factories, schools, and office buildings far outnumbering older structures. In contrast, the citizens of Skopje are mostly recent arrivals; the classic flow from rural to urban areas is visible here, where the population at the time of the earthquake was only about 160,000. The resulting mixture of a contemporary city environment inhabited by people still adjusting to the dynamic pace of modern urban life-styles make Skopje a fascinating study of contrasts and a challenging environment. Skopje is easily accessible via airplane, railway, and highway. An international airport located 14

miles (23 kilometers) southeast of Skopje handles international flights.

Skopje is Macedonia's commercial and industrial center. Several industries that produce glass, beer, bricks, tobacco, canned fruits and vegetables, and electrical goods are located in the city. Other industries include woodworking and leather processing.

Skopje has no English-language schools, but there is a suitable boarding school in Thessaloniki (Greece). Local day-care centers for preschool children are available at nominal cost.

Recreation and Entertainment

Macedonia has several good ski resorts within one to two hours' drive from Skopje, and acceptable overnight lodging is available. Good-quality ski equipment can be bought locally at reasonable prices. Renting is undependable. The mountains and rivers of Macedonia offer extensive opportunities for climbing, camping, and hiking, but overnight camping is allowed only in designated areas.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Hillside homes in Macedonia

Hunting and fishing are widely available, although moderately expensive. A hunter must join a local club. Rifles and shotguns may be imported only by special permit, and guns should be separately packed and listed for easier customs clearance. Shotgun ammunition is locally available; rifle ammunition must be brought from the U.S.

Skopje has a tennis club with clay courts. There also is an indoor swimming pool of acceptable quality and an outdoor pool (summer only) of marginal quality. Facilities are available in winter for ice skating and sledding, and for basketball and soccer, although the courts and fields are fairly crowded.

The city has a zoo, several interesting museums, and a large park. Travel to Greece and Bulgaria is convenient, and more extensive tours to other parts of Europe are possible at greater expense. The

Adriatic coast is one hour by air or a tiring, but scenic, ten hours by car.

The numerous movie theaters in Skopje often show American films with subtitles in Serbo-Croatian. An opera company, two theater groups, a ballet company, and a philharmonic orchestra are based here.

North and south of Skopje, it is possible to view vestiges of Macedonia's ancient past. Approximately four miles (seven kilometers) south of the city is the Church of Sveti Pantelejmon. This church, constructed in the 12th century, offers beautiful frescoes and breathtaking views of Skopje and the surrounding countryside. Another church, the Markov Manastir, is situated 11 miles (17 kilometers) south of Skopje and is filled with many exquisite 14th century frescoes.

Other 13th and 14th century frescoes, many of them quite beautiful, can be viewed at the Manastir Sveti

Nikita (Monastery of St. Nicholas). This monastery is located nine miles (15 kilometers) north of Skopje and is easily accessible by car.

Ohrid

Situated in southwest Macedonia beside picturesque Lake Ohrid is the city of Ohrid. Ohrid is Macedonia's major resort area and tourist center. Tourists flock to Ohrid's Ulica Samuilova, which is the city's main street, in search of copper coffee sets, native jewelry, and rustic pottery. However, most visitors come to Ohrid to view the city's many medieval churches. Ohrid's oldest surviving church is the Church of St. Sophia. Constructed in the 11th century, the church has many exquisite frescoes. When the Turks took control of Ohrid in the late 14th century, the Church of St. Sophia was turned into a mosque and its frescoes covered with white-wash. The frescoes were uncovered during excavation work in the 1950s

and, because of their protective coat of whitewash, were remarkably preserved. These religious frescoes, along with St. Sophia's many fine examples of Byzantine art, are popular tourist attractions. Another church, the Church of St. Clement, was built in Ohrid during the late 13th century. During the Turkish occupation of Macedonia, the Church of St. Clement was the only church allowed to hold Christian services. Therefore, it became a repository for many works of religious art, frescoes, and beautiful icons framed in silver. All of these treasures can be viewed by visitors. Other frescoes and icons can be seen at the 13th century Church of Sveti Jovan-Kaneo (St. John the Divine at Kaneo), which is nestled on a lovely hilltop overlooking Lake Ohrid. It is also possible to view the remains of the Church of St. Panteleimon. This church, built by St. Clement, was the site of the first Slavic university. It was destroyed by the Turks in the late 17th century and a mosque, the Imaret Mosque, was built in its place.

In addition to tourism, many agricultural crops are grown near the city. Abundant supplies of fish in Lake Ohrid has led to the emergence of a thriving fishing industry. Ohrid had a population of roughly 47,000 in 2002.

OTHER CITIES

BITOLA is Macedonia's southernmost city. Located close to Macedonia's border with Greece, the city was founded by Slavic settlers in 1014. Under Turkish rule (1383–1913), Bitola became a thriving commercial, trading, and religious center. By the mid-seventeenth century, the city had over 70 mosques, many shops, and several commercial houses. Today, Bitola has a population of approximately 84,000 and is an important industrial center. Industries in the city manufacture carpets, textiles, and rubber products. Bitola's main attraction is the ruins of the ancient town of Heraclea Lyncestis, which is located two

miles (three kilometers) from Bitola. Founded in the 4th century B.C., Heraclea offers visitors glimpses of well-preserved Roman baths, a large basilica filled with beautiful mosaics, an amphitheater, and wonderful examples of late classical and early Byzantine art.

The city of **KUMANOVU** is located in northern Macedonia. Located 15 miles (24 kilometers) northeast of Skopje, Kumanovu is an industrial center for canning and tobacco processing. The economy of this city of 78,000 is also heavily dependent on the trading of cattle, fruits, and liquor. The Staro Nagoricane Monastery, with its beautiful frescoes, is a popular destination for visitors. The monastery is located approximately eight miles (13 kilometers) east of Kumanovu.

The city of **PRILEP** is located 47 miles (76 kilometers) south of Skopje. During the 14th century, Prilep was an important commercial and political center. Vestiges of Prilep's medieval past include the monastery of Archangel Michael, the Church of St. Dimitri, and St. Nikola's Church. Constructed in 1299, St. Nikola's contains many beautiful religious frescoes. Today, Prilep is an agricultural center for tobacco and fruit grown near the city. Prilep's population in 2002 was approximately 56,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Macedonia is roughly rectangular in shape and occupies an area of 9,928 square miles (25,713 square kilometers), which is slightly larger than Vermont. Macedonia is a landlocked country surrounded on the north by Serbia, on the south by Greece, on the west by Albania, and on the east by Bulgaria. The terrain of Macedonia is rather hilly, with deep basins and valleys. Macedonia has

three large lakes, Lake Prespa, Lake Doiran, and Lake Ohrid. Lake Ohrid, which is nine miles (15 kilometers) wide and 938 feet deep, is the largest of the three lakes. Macedonia's major river is the Vardar. The Vardar River flows across Macedonia from northwest to southeast and eventually flows through Greece into the Aegean Sea. Macedonia is prone to earthquakes and has experienced several devastating earthquakes throughout history.

The climate of Macedonia is varied. Winters tend to be cold with heavy snowfall while summers and autumns are hot and dry.

Population

In July 2001, Macedonia had an estimated population of 2,046,000. Approximately 67 percent of the population are Macedonian. Albanians make up 23 percent of the population and are Macedonia's largest minority group. Most Albanians live in close communities along Macedonia's northwestern border with Albania. Ethnic Turks and Serbs make up four percent and two percent of the population respectively. Roma (Gypsies) account for 2 percent and other groups 2 percent.

The official language of Macedonia is Macedonian, which is similar to Bulgarian. However, the republic's sizeable Albanian population usually speaks Albanian. Other languages spoken in Macedonia include Turkish and Serbo-Croatian.

Macedonia is a land where several religions are represented. Approximately 67 percent of Macedonians are Eastern Orthodox, while 30 percent are Muslim. Macedonia's Albanian minority is overwhelmingly Muslim, although some are adherents of Roman Catholicism. Other minorities, such as the Turks, are also Muslim. Roman Catholics, Protestants, and others account for the remainder.



Church in Skopje, Macedonia

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In 2001, life expectancy in Macedonia was approximately 72 years for males, 76 years for females.

Government

Macedonia is in the process of establishing a democratic system of government after years of Communist rule. In November and December 1990, elections for a multi-party, 120-seat National Assembly (*Sobranje*) were held in Macedonia. Results of the election showed that an alliance of two nationalist parties, the Movement for All-Macedonia Action (MAMA) and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (IMRO-DPMNU), had captured 37 seats. The Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia (SDAM), which consists of former Communists, came in second with 31 seats. The Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), which represents Macedonia's powerful Albanian minority, garnered 25 seats. The Alliance of Reform Forces (ARF) took 19 seats. The rest of the seats in the *Sobranje* were captured by several small opposition parties.

On January 27, 1991, members of the *Sobranje* elected Kiro Gligorov as State President of Macedonia. Also, on March 23, 1991, the

Sobranje chose a new prime minister, Nikola Kjusev, and authorized him to create a new government.

In 1991, Macedonia's government took several major steps toward independence from the former Yugoslavia. On January 25, the *Sobranje* stated that Macedonia was a sovereign state with a right to self-determination. On September 8, Macedonians were asked by their government to vote on a referendum declaring Macedonian independence from Yugoslavia. At least 75 percent of the voters in the referendum had cast ballots in favor of secession. Albanian voters, fearful that an independent Macedonia would lead to widespread discrimination against the Albanian community, boycotted the election. On November 17, 1991, the *Sobranje* approved a new constitution that formally declared independence from Yugoslavia.

Throughout 1992, Macedonia's status remained unsettled. Although Macedonia was no longer viewed as a member of Yugoslavia, neither was it seen as an independent nation in its own right. The government was also faced with growing opposition from Macedonia's large Albanian minority, which demanded political autonomy over

Albanian-dominated regions of Macedonia. Frustration over the failure to obtain world recognition of Macedonia's independence had taken its toll on the government. On July 7, 1992, Macedonia's entire government resigned over its failure to convince other countries to unconditionally recognize Macedonian independence. Prime Minister Kjusev formed a new government on August 23, 1992. Macedonia was admitted to the United Nations in 1993. The current president is Boris Trajkovski, and Ljupco Georgievski is the country's premier.

Commerce and Industry

Macedonia was one of the poorest of the six republics in the former Yugoslavia. The economy of Macedonia is dependent upon agriculture, but has had growth recently in service and industry sectors. Agriculture provides 12 percent of Macedonia's gross domestic product (GDP). Principal crops are rice, tobacco, wheat, corn, millet, citrus fruit, vegetables, and sesame.

Industrial capacity in Macedonia is centered in Skopje and is growing. Most industrial production is limited to the manufacturing of wood products, tobacco, and textiles. Macedonia is rich in minerals, particularly metallic chromium, lead, zinc, coal, and ferro-nickel. Metallurgy is a major industrial activity. Privatization of companies has helped the GDP and reserves rise.

Political turmoil, both internally and in the region as a whole, has hampered Macedonia's economic development. Macedonia's geographical isolation, technological backwardness, and political instability placed it far down the list of countries of interest to Western investors. In 1994, United Nations sanctions against neighboring Serbia and Montenegro and a blockade by Greece cost the Macedonian economy an estimated \$2 billion. After pressure from the European Union, Greece lifted its embargo in

1995. In recent years, however, strong internal commitments to reform and free trade have helped bolster the country's economic development.

Transportation

Highways link Skopje with Ohrid and the Serbian capital of Belgrade. Macedonia's highways are in good condition.

Train service within Macedonia is inadequate. However, international train travel from Skopje to Athens, Greece and Belgrade, Serbia is fairly good.

Macedonia has sixteen airports. The largest airport, located 14 miles (23 kilometers) southeast of Skopje, handles international flights. A smaller airport is situated six miles (10 kilometers) north of Ohrid. Available flights between cities within Macedonia are very limited.

Communications

Telephone communication is available in Macedonia, although somewhat limited in remote areas. In 1997, there were approximately 408,000 telephones in Macedonia.

There are no English-language newspapers in Macedonia. All newspapers are published in Macedonian and Albanian.

There are both state- and privately-owned radio and television stations. Macedonia's main broadcasting organization, Radio-Television Skopje, transmits in Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The Department of State advises travelers to Macedonia that political and economic changes in the region make travel there difficult and potentially dangerous, and recommends that travelers defer their visit. Those entering or leaving Macedonia by its land border with Greece may experience delays. Delays may also be experienced at the Serbian-Macedonian border, especially by Americans of ethnic Albanian descent. Periodic closings of the border with Kosovo have occurred with little or no prior notice. The overall level of violence has diminished, but armed inter-ethnic disputes continue. Travelers should be aware of the threat of landmines, bombings, and violent demonstrations.

U.S. citizens are urged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Skopje located at Ilindenska bb, 91000; telephone: (389)(2) 116-180.

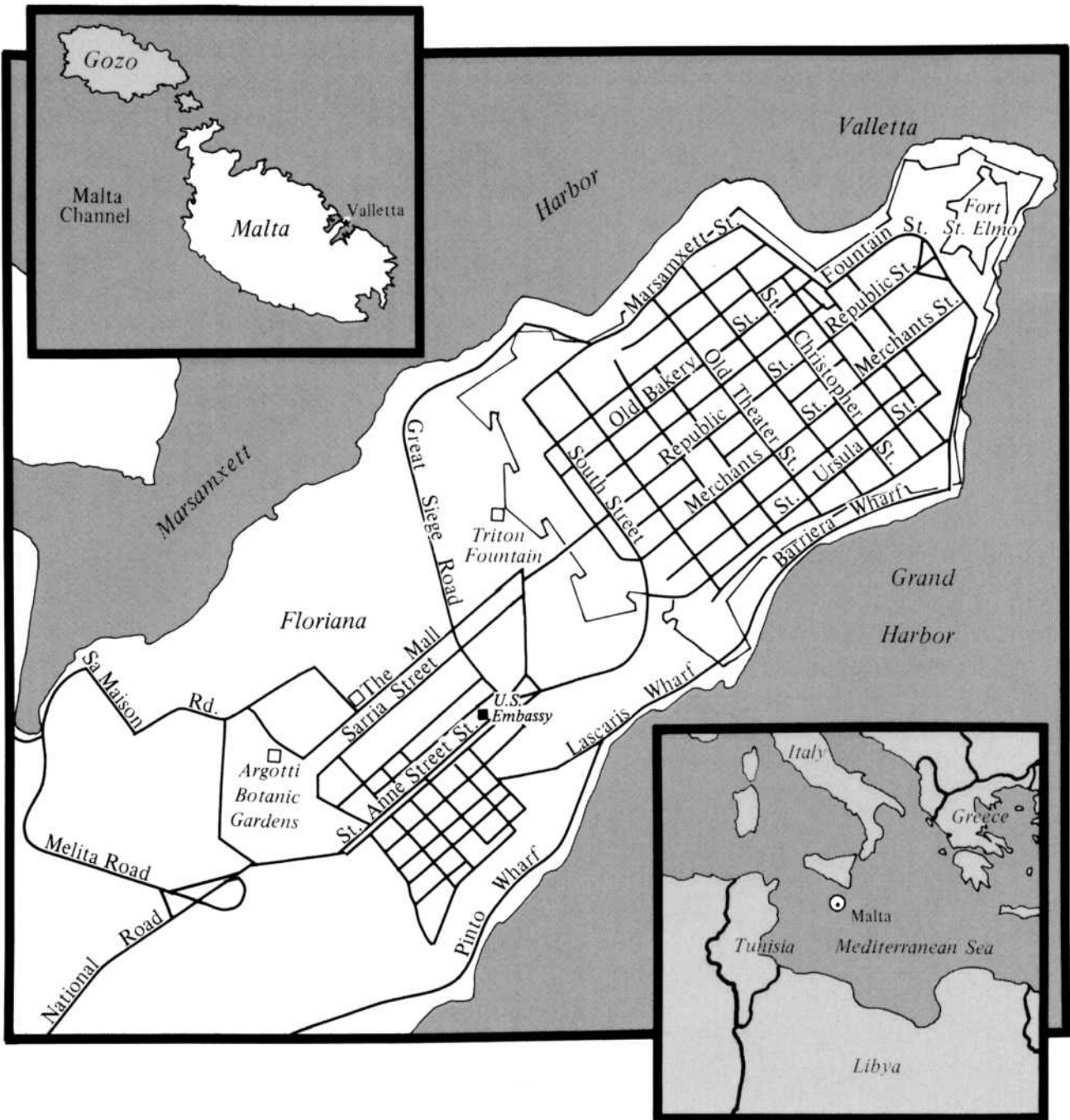
LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 7 Christmas
(Orthodox)
- April/May Easter*
- May 1-2 Labor Day
- Aug. 2 Day of the
Ilinden Uprising
- Sept. 8 Independence
Day
- Oct. 11 Veteran's Day
*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Borza, Eugene N. *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Hammond, Nicholas G. *The Macedonian State: The Origins, Institutions, & History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Hammond, Nicholas G. *Miracle That Was Macedonia*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.
- Yugoslavia*. New York: Prentice Hall General Reference & Travel, 1991.



Valletta, Malta

MALTA

Republic of Malta

Major City:

Valletta

Other Cities:

Birkirkara, Floriana, Mdina, Sliema, Victoria

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated November 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

MALTA, whose first known inhabitants were the Phoenicians, is the product of a long and fascinating past. Its story spans thousands of years, and is told in its archaeological and historical sites which range from Copper- and Bronze-Age temples, through Roman and early Christian settlements, to the 16th- and 17th-century architecture of the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. This small nation is made up of islands and islets positioned in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. It is a true collage of cultures, existing in a setting where folk patterns of the past blend freely with modern life-styles.

Malta was ruled by foreigners for all of its history until it became an independent republic within the British Commonwealth in 1964.

MAJOR CITY

Valletta

The capital city of Valletta, a powerful naval base for the British Mediterranean fleet in the 19th century, is located on a peninsula with deep-water harbors on two sides and the open sea on the third. It is a major port of call and important center for ship repairs because of its position midway between Gibraltar and Port Said.

The city is one mile long and several hundred yards wide. Its narrow streets are lined with buildings dating from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Pedestrians throng the streets during the day, and parking space inside the city is extremely limited. Modern office buildings are few, since new construction is restricted by the many national monuments that cannot be razed or radically altered. Valletta had an estimated population of 195,000 in 2002.

More than half of the 395,000 residents of the major island of Malta live in the central urban Valletta-Floriana-Sliema area, where nearly all major commercial firms and government offices are located. A number of British have retired here or have come to Malta to reside and invest in the island's development. Thus, urban Malta has a British flavor and is strongly British-oriented. Shops carry English and European goods of all types. Most tourists are British, but European and American visitors are increasing in number. The government has recently expanded its tourist programs, emphasizing the summer season.

This capital city was named for Jean Parisot de la Valette, grand master of the Knights of St. John, who successfully withstood the infamous Turkish siege of 1565. Valletta (also correctly spelled Valetta) and its environs were so besieged in World War II that the area was given the dubious distinction of being the most heavily bombed spot in Europe. Twelve hundred separate raids by German and Italian aircraft damaged or destroyed the garrisons and as many as 3,500 surrounding private homes. The attacks began in June 1940 and lasted throughout the war.

Schools for Foreigners

Verdala International School, at Fort Pembroke, was set in 1976 by an international oil-exploration firm, but is now financially supported by another sponsor. This coeducational institution has an American and British curriculum and takes pupils from kindergarten to grade 12. French, Spanish, and Italian are offered; special programs include English as a Second Language, advanced placement and remedial aid. The school has an American headmaster and American teachers.

Because the quality of high school education available on Malta does not reach American standards, many American parents prefer to have their high school aged children attend boarding schools, the nearest of which are in Rome.

American history, government, and spelling are not taught in any Maltese schools, so this instruction must be given at home by American parents. Science programs in schools are adequate, but not advanced. Some states in the U.S. may not accept the British system of grade classification, which could create difficulties for students returning home.

Recreation

Hiking in the rural areas of Malta, particularly the thinly populated north and northwest, can be pleasant and interesting. A number of picnic spots, many accessible only by foot, provide lovely sea vistas. Walking clubs tour the island on weekends. Malta has a medium-sized botanical garden.

The waters around Malta are beautiful, with deep shades of turquoise and green. Swimming, sailing, windsurfing, and skin diving can be enjoyed six months of the year. Sailing activities are available through the Valletta Yacht Club. The one golf course is used throughout the winter. Tennis is played year round at the Union Club, Holiday Inn, and

Marsa Sports Club, which also have squash courts. Limited facilities exist for horseback riding.

Water polo is a popular sport in summer. Soccer, the favorite Maltese spectator sport, is played year round, except during the hottest summer months. A surprising number of fine trotting horses are on the island. Trotting races start when the weather begins to cool in the fall, and continue until spring. Races are held on Sundays and holidays, and betting for small stakes is permitted.

Fishing from small boats or from the shore may be readily undertaken. No facilities exist, however, for deep-sea fishing from chartered boats equipped with heavy gear. In winter, hunting (small birds) is popular with Maltese men, who use both net and gun.

There are many sights to see. Perhaps most interesting are buildings from the period of the Knights, and prehistoric sites, several of which are still being excavated. Nonetheless, a week of concentrated sight-seeing would exhaust the principal attractions, including the most important architectural monuments and museums.

Despite Malta's relative proximity to a number of other Mediterranean ports (e.g., Greece), neither direct ship nor air service exists to points other than a few of the major cities of Europe and to Catania, Tunis, and Cairo. Therefore, travel to other areas in the Mediterranean basin must be via Italy.

Entertainment

During winter, Malta offers many concerts, theater, and opera presentations. While such performances are not first class, some fine talent can be found among composers and performers alike.

Most major American and foreign films eventually arrive in Malta, usually one to two years after their

premieres. All are censored by a government-appointed board, which includes a church representative. English-language films are shown in the original version; most other foreign films have English subtitles. Movie prices are low, but many cinemas are Spartan and ill-kept. The majority of movie theaters are neither air-conditioned nor heated.

A government-licensed casino operates year round, offering roulette, blackjack, and *chemin de fer* (a variation of baccarat).

In terms of local folklore, the village *festa*, held mostly between May and October, retains interest. *Festas* combine religious processions and ceremonies with elaborate street lighting, band parades, and fireworks displays. Similar celebrations take place during Mardi Gras season.

The resident American community is comprised of a handful of diplomatic and business representatives and their families, perhaps 50 spouses and children of oil and aviation company employees working in North African and Middle Eastern countries, and about 500 Americans (almost all of Maltese origin) who have retired in the area.

Because of the small size of the American community in Valletta, the American Women's Club is the only U.S.-related social organization. It sponsors limited cultural and charitable activities.

Many international and British charitable and philanthropic organizations have branches and/or active chapters on Malta. These include Rotary International, Lions, Round Table, St. John's Ambulance Brigade, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and the Playing Fields Association. Several Boy Scout troops are on the islands, but they are not fully accredited. Merit badges earned here are not entirely recognized in



View of Valletta, Malta

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the U.S. Girl Guides are also present in Malta.

Three local clubs with some available memberships provide useful facilities and social contacts. The Union Club in Sliema has a bar and a restaurant open for lunch and dinner. This club holds weekly dances and a biweekly *tombola*, (similar to bingo), and has an active bridge group, four tennis courts, and two squash courts. The Marsa Sports Club, in the center of the island, has several athletic fields, 18 tennis courts, three squash courts, a swimming pool, and Malta's only golf course. Marsa is surrounded by the island's race (trotting) track. Membership fees at local clubs are low by U.S. standards.

The Marsa Sports Club and Union Club jointly operate a May-to-October beach facility in Sliema (open

only to members). The Valletta Yacht Club on Manoel Island operates an informal bar and restaurant, mainly in the summertime.

The National Tourist Organization is located on Harper Lane in Floriana.

OTHER CITIES

BIRKIRKARA and **QORMI** are small towns within three miles of the capital. Their respective populations are approximately 22,000 and 18,000.

FLORIANA is a suburb of Valletta, and the site of the Argotti Botanic Gardens. The U.S. Embassy also is located here.

MDINA, one of the oldest towns in Europe, lies just inland from Valletta. Walled on all sides, it is the Città Vecchia (Old City) which was the capital of Malta until 1570. It is also known as Notabile. Pre-Christian catacombs are found here, as are a 17th-century cathedral and the old palace of the Grand Masters of the Knights of Malta, or Knights Hospitalers. It was at this spot that the Knights, the celebrated military religious order of the Middle Ages, defended Malta against the Turks in 1565.

SLIEMA, northwest across the bay from Valletta, is part of the capital city complex, although it stands as a town in its own right. The population is 12,000.

VICTORIA is the capital and main community of Gozo Island (ancient

Gaulus). Its population is about 7,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Maltese Islands are a small archipelago of six islands and islets in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. Malta (95 square miles) is the largest island of the group, followed by Gozo (26 square miles) and Comino (one square mile). Cominotto, Filfla, and St. Paul's are small uninhabited islets. The total area of Malta is approximately one-tenth the size of Rhode Island.

The longest distance on Malta is about 17 miles, from southeast to northwest; the widest part is nine miles in an east-west direction. The length and width of Gozo are nine miles and four-and-a-half miles, respectively. Gozo lies northwest of Malta across a narrow channel; Comino is in this channel. Malta's shoreline is 85 miles; Gozo's is 27 miles.

Some of Malta's and most of Gozo's villages are situated on hilltops overlooking the terraced fields that characterize the islands. Northern Malta is a series of ridges, valleys, bays, and promontories. The western side is dominated by 800-foot-high cliffs. Shorelines are quite rocky, and few sandy beaches can be found.

The islands are bare and rocky, with scattered fertile patches. Gozo has less high ground and more arable land than Malta, while Comino is almost completely barren. In summer, the landscape is brown and arid but, soon after the onset of the fall rains, the countryside becomes green.

Malta lies 58 miles south of Sicily, near the center of the Mediterranean Sea, with Gibraltar 1,141

miles to the west and Alexandria (Egypt) 944 miles to the east.

Annual rainfall averages 19 to 22 inches, but may vary from 40 to less than 10 inches. Temperatures range from 35°F in winter to 95°F in summer. The climate is temperate. First rains come in September, are heaviest from November to January, and ease off slightly in February and March. Beginning in March, rainfall diminishes until it stops in May which, next to July, is the driest month.

Summer is hot and dry with almost cloudless skies. The *scirocco*, a warm, humid, southeast wind, occurs in spring and from mid-September to mid-October. The *gregale*, a cold Greek wind, blows from the east and northeast in winter, sometimes reaching gale force. Winter is chilly to cold with occasional heavy downpours, but also has many fine days.

Population

Malta is one of the world's most densely inhabited countries. The total population of the Maltese Islands is approximately 395,000. Density is greater than 3,000 persons per square mile, compared to 55 per square mile in the U.S. A high percentage of Maltese live around Valletta and the harbor area.

Neolithic settlements date to at least 5,000 B.C. The first known inhabitants to settle in Malta and Gozo were the Phoenicians, followed by the Carthaginians. Later came the Romans, Arabs, Normans, Spaniards, Italians, French and, the British. The present population derives from this amalgam.

The Maltese remained a distinct ethnic group through the centuries, despite considerable intermarriage with the people who controlled the islands. Today's Maltese language incorporates Italian and English words, but is more like Arabic than any other language; speakers of the

latter tongue can understand and be understood by the Maltese. Arabic influence is also somewhat apparent in the island's architecture, folklore, and proverbs.

Knowledge of English is widespread among urban dwellers, and many young educated adults, students, and the upper-class older generations also know Italian and French. However, Maltese is the *lingua franca*. Since the early 1930s, both Maltese and English have been taught in the schools.

Maltese did not develop as a written language until the 20th century. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, Italian was the language of the schools, law courts, and Maltese society. Despite the country's small size, several variations of Maltese are spoken. Villagers at distant points on the islands use distinct idioms and pronunciation, and none speak the "pure" Maltese taught in the schools.

The 1964 constitution established Roman Catholicism as the religion of the country, but also guaranteed freedom of worship. Religion is a required subject in all government schools. Traditionally, Malta is 98 percent Roman Catholic. Over 360 Roman Catholic churches are on the islands, more than one for every 1,000 Maltese. No other religion has gained ground among the people, but a significant decrease has occurred in the strict observance of religious duties by urban dwellers. However, in the villages and, to a slightly lesser extent in towns, the parish church remains the focal point of community life. The annual *festa* of each town or village parish, in honor of the patron saint on his or her name day, is still the most important day of the year for the inhabitants. The people contribute substantially for church and street decorations, lights, floats, and fireworks, all essential to local observance of this ostensibly religious event.

In the absence of local or regional government authority, the village church was, and still is, the people's spokesman to secular authorities. The parish priest reads government notices from his pulpit, serves as legal adviser, banker, and letter writer for his parishioners, and retains his traditional role as the people's "patron" or spokesman to the government. This role, however, is rapidly diminishing.

More than 25 percent of Malta's population lives in essentially rural areas. The urban Maltese resembles, in outlook and sophistication, other Europeans of the same educational background and employment level. However, the typical rural Maltese is a provincial person whose life centers around the village. Many older villagers have not visited Valletta for years. In fact, thousands of Maltese have never left the main island, even to visit Gozo.

Italian, English, and American films and TV programs have had a great impact in broadening the Maltese viewpoint, but all cultural imports (films, TV programs, books, etc.) are subject to evaluation and control by a censorship board.

Italian TV broadcasts, not subject to this censorship, have a large audience.

Government

Malta's location has for centuries given it political and military importance out of proportion to its size and natural resources. The islands have been occupied and ruled by alien peoples from ancient times until independence from the United Kingdom was granted in 1964.

In recent history, the two longest and most significant periods of occupation were by the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem from 1530 (after their ejection from Rhodes by the Turks) to 1798, and by the British from 1814 to 1964.

The high point of the Knights' rule was their victory in 1565 when they withstood a four-month siege by 30,000 Turkish troops. Aided by their strong fortifications, the divided command of the Turks, and their own determination, the Knights and their Maltese allies resisted so stoutly that the Turkish army left in humiliation.

Almost equally famous was the prolonged and intense air bombing during World War II when Malta was the Mediterranean headquarters of the Royal Navy. The islands' population and defenders were close to starvation when a relief convoy of four surviving ships reached them on August 15, 1942. The danger of starvation did not abate until the spring of 1943, when control of the Mediterranean passed to Allied hands. In April 1942, Malta was awarded the George Cross for "a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history." President Roosevelt also saluted Maltese heroism when he visited the islands on December 8, 1943.

Malta, a self-governing republic, gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1964 and became a republic in 1974. Malta's parliamentary system is led by a prime minister. Parliament consists of a unicameral House of Representatives with 65 members, representing two parties—the Malta Labor Party and the Nationalist Party. The country has no local governments. The current president is Guido de Marco and Eddie Fenech Adami is the prime minister.

The judiciary consists of nine judges who sit in the superior courts, and nine magistrates who sit in the inferior courts. The legislative and judicial systems closely follow British practices, but the judiciary also owes much to Roman law, French law and the Napoleonic Code, as well as to the Italian judicial system.

Italian was, by default, the written language of government (including

the law courts) and the spoken language of society throughout the 19th century to the early 1930s. Precedent law of this period is all in Italian. Italian was commonly used by the elite of Maltese society until the 1940s, when Axis bombing raids rendered it politically unpopular. Since 1934, Maltese and English have been the official languages of government, including the legislature and courts. Government officials at all levels must have a minimum-tested level of competence in both languages.

Malta is a member of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the Non-Aligned Movement, among other organizations.

The flag of Malta consists of two equal vertical bands, white at the staff and red at the fly. A design of the George Cross, edged in red, is carried at the upper left corner of the white stripe.

Arts, Science, Education

Malta's opera house in Valletta, destroyed in World War II bombings, has not been rebuilt. The Manoel Theater, a charming 18th-century structure, is used for local and visiting cultural attractions. During the winter season, a number of orchestral, choral, and chamber music concerts are presented by visiting groups. The Malta Amateur Dramatic Club, Atturi Theater Group, and other drama companies present plays and musicals in English at the Manoel, the Deporres Arts Center, San Anton Gardens, and other locales in winter and spring.

Malta has a number of architecturally interesting churches, mostly of the baroque or rococo periods. Other architectural classics are the fortifications of the "Three Cities," built during the 16th century by the Order of St. John of Jerusalem; several 17th-century forts; and some

secular architecture (principally the Auberges) of Valletta, also built by the Knights of St. John. The old walled town of Mdina is lovely.

Principal Maltese art collections are at St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta, the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul in Mdina, and the National Museum of Fine Arts and Grand Master's Palace in Valletta. All four contain works of interest.

Local branches of the Alliance-Française, Dante Alighieri Society, and German Maltese Circle (each affiliated with the embassy of its respective country) operate in Malta, and frequently sponsor concerts and other cultural events.

Education in Malta has a long tradition of excellence, dating from the 16th century, when Jesuits founded an institution which developed into the University of Malta. During the British colonial period, English became the primary language of instruction, and the British educational system took root. The British system remains essentially intact, and English is still the major classroom language, but the system has been altered and the use of English has declined, especially in government schools.

University intake has been increased by around 200 percent, and the work/study concept has been made optional. The work phase has been reduced from five-and-one-half to two months during summer. The previous university entry requirements of sponsorship by an employer and Arabic language ability have been abolished. The points system which gave a 10 percent advantage to students coming from state schools over those applying from private schools has also been abolished. The study of liberal arts, basic sciences, and research has been reintroduced along with a traditional grading system. Some of the university professors who went overseas to work between 1977 and 1987 have

returned and resumed their faculty positions.

English is the basic language of instruction in most private primary and secondary schools, and Maltese is the language of instruction in government schools at least up to the higher secondary level.

Finding places for children in one of the private primary schools, virtually all of which are Catholic, is difficult. Demand far exceeds the number of places available, and entrance is determined principally by competitive examination. Placing foreign students in secondary private schools is somewhat less difficult.

The literacy rate in Malta is approximately 89 percent.

Commerce and Industry

For many centuries, Malta had a "fortress" economy dependent on various occupying powers for most of its national income. The country's excellent harbors and strategic location made it an important naval base and bunkering station. Even after independence in 1964, Malta remained heavily dependent on employment with, and expenditures by, British forces on the islands. Loans and grants from the U.K. were also important.

Since the mid-1960s, however, Malta has enjoyed impressive, broadly based, economic growth. Heavy foreign and domestic investment created a large number of new tourist facilities and export-oriented or import-substitution industries. The Maltese Government greatly expanded social services and certain basic infrastructures, and converted many ex-British service facilities to other uses. The former Royal Navy Dockyard became the Malta Drydocks and, with over 4,000 workers, remains the country's largest industrial employer. By the time the U.K./NATO Bases Agreement expired and the last British forces left the

islands (March 31, 1979), Malta's economy had made a largely successful transition to civilian production and services.

Malta lacks natural sources for energy, although there are possibilities for offshore oil and natural gas. The only natural resource is limestone. Agricultural and fisheries account for a little over four percent of Malta's gross domestic product. The country's requirements for foodstuffs, consumer goods, raw materials, and semi-manufactured goods for the export industries outpaced export growth.

In recent years, The European Union and the U.S. have been Malta's most important export markets. Manufactures comprise much of Malta's export; the most significant these have been transistors, valves and clothing. Other significant exports include electrical machinery and equipment, printed matter, yarns and textiles, rubber products, beverages, tobacco, and food.

Tourism has increased and is now a major source of income, accounting for approximately 40% of the GDP. About two-thirds of the tourists are from the U.K.

Since independence, Malta's income from tourism, investment income from abroad, substantial foreign aid, other transfers, and capital inflows have enabled the country to maintain, despite a widening trade deficit, an unbroken string of balance-of-payments surpluses. Foreign reserves have continued to grow, and Malta has one of the world's highest non-OPEC reserve/import ratios. Large aid donors include Italy, the People's Republic of China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the European Community (EC) and, through concessional oil sales which ended in mid-1980, Libya.

The United States and Malta formed the Maltese-American Business Council in 1983 to promote commercial cooperation. The largest

U.S. manufacturing firm in Malta is V.F. (Malta) Ltd., formerly Bluebell (Wrangler jeans).

Malta's economic progress and continued growth is highly dependent on external factors. Privatization and economic restructuring are high priorities for the Labor administration. The Labor administration is also seeking to reduce public expenditures.

The Malta Chamber of Commerce is located in Valletta at the Exchange Building on Republic Street, Kingway.

Transportation

Malta is 58 miles from the nearest point in Sicily and 180 miles from the closest point on the North African mainland. Regularly scheduled direct flights go to most destinations in Europe and North Africa—daily to Rome and London, and twice weekly to Paris, Munich, Brussels, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Lyon, Zurich, Catania, Tunis, Tripoli, and Cairo.

Scheduled airlines operating from Malta include Air Malta (the national carrier), British Airways, Alitalia, Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa, Tunisavia (Tunisian), Air Algerie, Libyan Arab Airlines, Swissair, Aeroflot, and Balkan Air.

Throughout the year, the Tirrenia Line sails round-trip from Malta to the Sicilian cities of Syracuse (Siracusa) and Catania, as well as to Reggio Calabria and Naples on the Italian mainland. The ship serving this route carries passenger cars. Ships on this line are far from luxurious, but are the only satisfactory way of traveling with private cars from Italy to Malta.

In Malta, transportation is by private or rented car, taxi, or public bus. Paved roads, even to remote villages, are common, but their condition is less than satisfactory. Few roads have shoulders. Children, unlit horse-drawn carts or antique

motor-driven vehicles, and animals abound, both in villages and on the highways. In summer, tourist-driven cars add to the confusion, and minor accidents often occur.

Traffic moves on the left. However, left-hand-drive cars are permitted, and an "LHD" emblem on the rear is not mandatory. Road signs along highways are frequently defaced or missing, and rarely indicate the right-of-way at intersections. Fortunately, driving speeds are relatively low because of the poor condition of most roads.

Persons planning to arrive in Malta with a private car must have valid auto tags of some foreign country, proof of ownership, and auto insurance valid for driving in Malta. There is no vehicle inspection or published traffic code. Automobile repair is only fair, but usually costs far less than in the U.S. Parts are difficult to obtain.

With an international insurance "green card," valid for Malta, a car can be driven on a 90-day tourist certificate. During these 90 days, locally issued third-party insurance and Maltese license tags must be obtained.

Public buses go to all parts of the main island, with one or more transfers needed to reach remote areas. Fares are low, but buses are crowded during morning and evening rush hours. Service on most lines stops early in the evening, or runs only infrequently after the evening rush. Use of public buses is not practical for evening social engagements.

Some garages operate taxi services. Cabs must be called for, since they do not cruise looking for fares. Also, the fare should be negotiated in advance. Car rentals vary according to season, model, type of insurance, and individual garages.

Communications

International phone service is available to Europe, parts of North Africa, and the U.S. Collect calls to the U.S. can be processed. International calls should be placed as early as possible. A direct-dialing service links Malta to the U.K., Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Libya, at varying rates per second. Commercial cable service is available worldwide. International postal service is adequate for letters, but inconvenient for outgoing packages because of customs formalities.

Malta television uses the European PAL system, and unmodified sets cannot receive programs from TV Malta (TVM). Color transmission began in July 1981. About half of TVM programming is local and broadcast in Maltese. The rest, imported mainly from the U.S. and the U.K., is broadcast in English. Several Italian stations also can be received, and the previous evening's American network news in English can be received via Italian TV stations each morning.

A variety of periodicals are published both in Maltese and in English. Many are affiliated with churches or political parties and have small circulations, parochial themes, and uneven journalism.

International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are sold on newsstands the day after publication. British daily newspapers and weekly periodicals are usually available on newsstands the same afternoon as publication. The *International Herald Tribune* is available via airmail subscription.

Health

Malta's health-care system has a long history of high standards, but it has recently undergone drastic changes caused by the government's efforts to establish a national health service.

Some Maltese physicians resisted the government's plan. All of those who contested the reforms were barred from hospital facilities and, as a result, have been limited to private practice without access to hospitals, or have left Malta for positions in other countries. The government has obtained replacement doctors from India, Pakistan, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia but, despite their presence, uncertainty about health care remains.

Fortunately, a number of good general practitioners and specialists are available to the American community and can deal with most routine health problems. These physicians will make house calls.

Foreign and Maltese doctors staff the government's large, well-equipped, public facility, St. Luke's Hospital, in Valletta, which is adequate for routine cases and emergencies. Currently, no private hospitals are in operation. For other than routine ailments, it is advisable to seek hospital care elsewhere.

Dental care is generally good, and several dentists here have British and American experience.

Common medicines, particularly of British origin, are usually available from local pharmacies. Those on long-term assignment who need special medications should have a six-month supply on hand.

No unusual health hazards exist in Malta, but incoming visitors or personnel should be aware of some conditions. Tap water is chlorinated, but has a high saline content and, for cooking or ice cubes, must be filtered and boiled. Americans drink bottled water and other bottled beverages, which are readily available at moderate cost. Various filters can be bought locally, but they will neither remove biological contaminants from the water nor eliminate the high salt content.

During summer, unrefrigerated foods are a source of bacterial contamination leading to food poisoning. Special care must be taken in the treatment of fruits and vegetables which are to be eaten raw.

Swimming and other water sports are major forms of recreation in Malta, and safety consciousness is essential, especially since there are no lifeguards at the beaches. Malta's strong summer sun and occasional violent offshore currents must be respected.

Mosquitoes and sand fleas are common during the summer months and, although they are not dangerous except to those with particular allergies, their stings are bothersome. Repellents and ointments are desirable, but common American products are not sold locally. Black-light insect lamps, which attract and kill flying insects, can be bought. There is no government spraying or insect-control program.

Winters are damp and windy, but Maltese homes do not have central heating. Precaution must be taken in the use of electric, bottled gas, or kerosene (called paraffin locally) space heaters.

Regular TB screenings and routine immunizations for polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and measles are necessary. Illnesses contracted in Malta are those familiar in the U.S. (i.e., virus infections or the common cold). Prudent care and attention to good health practices are urged.

Sanitation is good. Waste water is usually treated before being pumped into the sea. Sea water is clean and safe for swimming in most areas, except when stinging jellyfish are nearby. Due to the absence of heavy industry, air and water pollution, except for automotive exhaust and open burning of refuse, are not major problems.

Trash collection is daily, except Sunday, in urban areas.

Clothing and Services

Clothing available in Malta is mostly of English, Italian, or Maltese manufacture. Quality is mixed, and prices are high. Women's styles usually follow the latest fads. The grade of children's and men's clothing is uneven. Good-quality English and European woolen material is sold at high prices, and many men's tailors do good work.

Some ready-made clothing is available, ranging from formal dinner attire to sportswear. Selection is both limited and expensive, making it wise to depend on local supply for emergencies only. Clothing for women in size 18 or larger is almost impossible to find.

Some women either make their own clothes or have them made by the good local dressmakers. Others arrive in Malta with an adequate wardrobe, which they can later supplement on trips to the continent, or by the occasional use of a dressmaker.

Hats and gloves are rarely seen, and women do not wear hosiery during the hot summer months. However, a certain decorum should be observed by both men and women for street wear. Shorts are worn for sports only.

School children wear uniforms, but since children's clothing is so expensive in Malta, many parents buy certain items at home rather than wait until arrival. For example, black leather slip-on or laced shoes, white athletic shoes, and long or short-sleeved white shirts/blouses are standard items in most school uniforms. Blazers, ties, and dresses or skirts must be bought locally.

Evening clothes for men and women are essential on some occasions. Men's formal wear may be rented if necessary. Long dinner dresses are worn for the most formal occasions, but short dresses also are appropriate. Hostesses are accustomed to

guests who wear fur jackets, stoles, or other covering throughout the evening.

Since houses and buildings are heated below U.S. minimum standards in the winter season (home temperatures below 60°F are not unusual), sweaters, heavy slacks, and other warm items are essential. Some Americans living and working in Malta find thermal underwear useful.

Summer clothes should be of lightweight cotton or cotton/synthetic fabrics for women, and of the lightest available suit materials for men. Children also need suitable cool fabrics during the hot Maltese summer.

Toiletries, common medicines, and cosmetics sold locally are mainly English brands or English-manufactured American products. Imports of certain items, such as toothpaste and shampoo, are restricted. Variety is adequate for normal needs.

Supplies commonly used for house-keeping, home repairs, etc., are sold but, without American-style supermarkets and department stores, it is often difficult to find exact needs. Quality and variety of some items (toilet tissue, paper towels, paper plates, and detergents) range from good to poor.

Shoe repair is good and inexpensive. Dry cleaning facilities are uneven, and both laundries and cleaners are hard on clothes and do not iron or press well. Barbers and hairdressers do adequate work.

Radio and TV repair services are fair, but parts for some makes, particularly American, are unavailable. Other types of electrical repairs range from fair to good.

Generally speaking, community services in Malta are less adequate than those in the major cities of Western Europe.

Domestic Help

Finding Maltese women for employment as domestics, whether full or part time, is difficult, and requires patience to acquire. Domestic jobs tend to be specialized, so a housekeeper may not be willing or competent to cook, and a cook may not be willing to clean. Employers are generally required to pay social security insurance for full-time help. It is difficult to find live-in help or people willing to work on Sundays.

Malta has several catering firms that will provide the necessary number of workers needed for the type of entertaining that has been contracted for.

Malta does not have American-style day care centers. There are part-time nursery schools for preschoolers, but a nanny would have to be employed for full-time day care.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 10	St. Paul's Shipwreck
Mar. 19	St. Joseph' Day
Mar. 31	Freedom Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Malta Labor Day
June 7	Sette Giugno (Anniversary of 1919 Riot)
June 29	Sts. Peter and St. Paul Day
Aug.15	Feast of the Assumption
Sept. 8	Our Lady of Victories
Sept. 21	Malta Independence Day
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 13	Republic Day
Dec. 25	Christmas

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Daily flights to Malta arrive from London and Rome, and most travelers from the U.S. use one of these routes.

A passport is required, but no visa is necessary for a stay up to three months. Maltese visas are not required for official personnel and their dependents, regardless of the time period involved.

No health papers are necessary. However, when a contagious disease reaches epidemic proportions in any part of the world, persons arriving from infected areas are subject to isolation and surveillance.

The Maltese government permits cats or dogs to be imported into the islands under strict conditions.

Local law requires that all firearms taken into Malta be licensed with the police department.

Malta has over 360 Roman Catholic churches. Masses are usually held in Maltese, but some churches in Valletta offer masses in English. Several Anglican churches are found here, as are a Greek Orthodox and a Greek Catholic church. Services at Anglican churches are held in English.

The time in Malta is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus one.

Malta has its own currency. It adopted the decimal system in 1972. The Maltese *lira* (LUM) is the main unit; it is divided into 100 cents (c), and each cent into 10 mils (m). The American Express office in Valletta does not provide a full range of services.

The metric system is used. Gasoline is sold by the liter, and weights and measures are in grams and centimeters.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Eadie, Peter M. *Malta and Gozo*. New York: Norton, 1990.

Kanzler, Peter. *Practical Travel A to Z: Malta*. Chatham, NY: Hayit Publishing USA, 1992.

Malta. New York: Prentice-Hall General Reference and Travel, 1991.

Malta Travel Guide. New York: Berlitz, latest editions.

MOLDOVA

Republic of Moldova

Major City:

Chisinau

Other Cities:

Beltsy, Bendery, Tiraspol

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Moldova. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Moldova is a picturesque country, all rolling green hills, whitewashed villages, placid lakes, and sunflower fields-with an old world charm that is hard to manufacture. It also has some of the best vineyards in Europe. It is densely populated, with numerous ethnic groups represented, but the majority are ethnic Romanians. The economy is heavily dependent on labor-intensive agriculture, and Moldova must import virtually 100% of its primary energy. Chisinau is a moderate-sized city that has preserved much of its pre-Soviet character, with many low-rise, older structures and tree-shaded streets that have survived in the central city.

With its cultural ties to Russia, Romania, and Turkey, Moldova is something of an enigma. It has risen from the ruins of Soviet socialism to become a democratic republic split in two, one area controlled by the government and the other by separatist rebels loyal to Mother Russia. Unification with Romania, its closest neighbor, is an on again/off again issue, and yet it has more in common with other former Soviet countries. The official language, Moldovan, is phonetically identical to Romanian, but school and university classes are all taught in Russian. Everything in Moldova has an equal and opposite reaction.

Originally Moldova was part of the greater region of Moldavia. It lies directly between Russia and Romania and has always been the focal point for border disputes and expansionist policies. Prior to its tenuous unification, it had been overrun, split up, reunited, conquered, annexed, renamed, and taken back again many times over. It has been a long and bloody journey from the principality of Moldavia to the republic of Moldova, and it seems fitting that the flag includes a band of red signifying the blood spilled in defending the country.

The region was made a focal point for the diaspora of Magyars, Slavs,

and Bulgarians spreading across Eastern Europe. By the beginning of the Middle Ages, Moldavia (as part of Romania) was already a pot-pourri of different races and cultures.

In the mid-14th century, Moldavia was subsumed under the Ottoman empire, and it remained under Turkish suzerainty until 1711. In 1812 Turkey and Russia signed the Bucharest Treaty, which gave the eastern half of Moldavia to the Russians (renamed Bessarabia) and the rest of Moldavia and Wallachia to Romania.

Bessarabia remained under Russian control until the 1918 Bolshevik Revolution, when it reunited with Romania as a protective measure. In 1939 the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact handed Bessarabia back to the U.S.S.R., which it renamed the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (M.S.S.R.). The area was reoccupied by Romanian forces between 1941 and 1944, when the Soviet authorities once again took control.

With the collapse of Communism in the mid-1980s and Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika, reform followed, and finally, in 1991, Moldova declared its full independence.

Unity and peaceful coexistence seem tenuous, as republicans struggle to keep all the pieces together and smooth over the contradictions of being part Romanian, part Russian, and wholly Moldovan.

MAJOR CITY

Chisinau

Chisinau, Moldova's capital, is located almost in the center of the country on the river Bik. The first written mention of Chisinau dates to the 14th century when the region was under Turkish domination. During WWII, extensive portions of Chisinau were destroyed. The post-war reconstruction includes many typical examples of Soviet architecture, but the older sections of town retain much of their charm. Despite the size of the city (approximately 800,000 people), Chisinau still has a small town feeling. There are numerous pastel-colored single- and two-story houses in the city proper, built by traders and merchants in the 18th and 19th centuries. With large trees lining almost all of the streets in the city center, Chisinau is one of the greenest cities on earth from April to October.

Utilities

Electricity in Moldova is 220v, 50 cycle, AC. Items which depend on a stable supply of cycles (e.g., clock radios, answering machines with "date/time stamp" feature) to function correctly are not recommended: local 50 cycle current causes them to lose time every day. Bring 220v voltage stabilizers or surge protectors to protect sensitive, high fidelity, computers or similar equipment. A 110v computer with a voltage stabilizer or UPS will work through a transformer. Bring a good quality short wave radio that can run off 220v electricity as well as batteries.

Bring a supply of European electrical adapters and wall plugs.

Food

There are two Western-quality supermarkets in Chisinau: Green Hills and Fidesco. These supermarkets have a good Western-made selection of goods, sanitary refrigerated meats, packed fruits and vegetables and pasteurized dairy products.

In spring and summer, fruits and vegetables are abundant in this agricultural country. Every visitor to Chisinau should experience the Central Market-it is the largest market in town for fresh meats, fruits, vegetables and dairy products. There are many smaller neighborhood markets. Most Moldovans have kitchen gardens, even in Chisinau. In season, you will learn what "vine-ripened" and "fresh-picked" really mean. During summer, people eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, and Moldovans spend considerable time canning and preserving for winter months. Unfortunately, no one has found a way to preserve lettuce, which appears in the open markets briefly in early May. Occasionally, however, the supermarket Green Hills has lettuce in the winter. Beef, chicken and pork are available year round. The latter two meats are of excellent quality: beef usually requires a longer cooking time to become tender.

Some food products that are not usually available in Moldova are: peanut butter, brown sugar, dry yeast, baking powder, good quality powder sugar, vanilla extract, unsweetened cocoa, and unsweetened baking chocolate.

Chisinau's restaurants, small and large, are still short of international standards, but the scene is improving. One can have a good meal at very reasonable prices. Some restaurants accept credit cards but prefer to receive cash. Tips are generally not included in the bill, except for large parties. The standard tip is 10% or less. Reservations are recommended. Moldovan cooking is an interesting combination of Balkan, Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian influences. Mamaliga (cornmeal, similar to polenta), feta

cheese, and the abundant seasonal fruits and vegetables are staple items. The cuisine is not spicy but uses liberal amounts of onions, peppers, and garlic. Upscale restaurants serve a more international Eastern European cuisine, rather than true Moldovan cooking. There are also Indian, Chinese, Turkish, Georgian, and even two Moldovan-Mexican restaurants.

In summertime there is a wonderful explosion of sidewalk cafes with colorful Sprite and Coca-Cola umbrellas.

McDonald's has one downtown and one drive-thru restaurant, with more planned.

Clothing

Moldovans are quite fashion conscious, and enjoy getting dressed up for social events, although there are few true "black tie" events in Chisinau. For most formal receptions, a dark suit is the norm for men, and a long or short dress for women. It is a good idea to bring a lot of warm winter clothes, as many public (and private) buildings are only minimally heated during the winter months. Long down or wool coats are a must, as are sturdy waterproof snow boots, since the streets are icy and muddy throughout the winter. Also plan to bring lots of warm socks and gloves or mittens. Locally made fur hats are both fashionable and practical. Clothes are available in Chisinau although they are labeled in European sizes. Business clothes are of poor quality or are very expensive.

Supplies and Services

Although Chisinau shops carry an ever-greater variety of items, do not rely solely on the local economy since supplies are erratic and the price/quality ratio is higher than in the U.S. The following items are available, although supply, quality and price fluctuate wildly: toiletries, cosmetics, medicines, first-aid items, tobacco products, laundry detergent and other basic home, recreational and entertainment supplies. A good basic rule is to decide how devoted you are to a specific brand or kind of product. The vast

majority of generic items is available.

Generally, basic supplies and services are expensive and irregularly available. Most repairs are hindered by a lack of spare parts. Barber-shops are, in most cases, satisfactory. Beauty salons offer a range of services from pedicures and manicures to hair and eyelash coloring. The variety of salon-quality products is limited. Therefore, if you use a specific brand of hair coloring and/or treatment products, you should purchase them where available. Good quality dry cleaning is available.

Domestic Help

Good, reliable help is available, and English-speakers are becoming easier to find.

Host country laws concerning payment and legal employment of local help are still vague and changing.

Religious Activities

Although most residents of Moldova are at least nominally Orthodox, Protestant churches have increased their activities in recent years with the increased religious freedom. Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, the Church of Latter Day Saints, and other denominations hold services in churches around Chisinau and in many other areas. At present, there are no American congregations, nor are services conducted in English, although there are American Missionaries working with some of the Protestant churches. The Salvation Army has also begun activities in Chisinau. There is a small Roman Catholic community, with one Catholic Church in Chisinau. It holds services in Romanian, Russian, Polish, and German (sometimes during the same mass). There is one working synagogue in Chisinau for the Jewish community.

Education

QSI International School of Chisinau is an affiliate of Quality Schools International. All classes are taught in English and the school uses an American curriculum. Some expatriate families follow home-

study courses with their children. Enrollment (pre-K-8, at the QSI for the 1999-2000 school year was 22 students.

There are several, excellent private pre-K and grammar schools with curriculums taught either in Romanian or Russian. Both the Romanian and Russian curriculums emphasize foreign language training, English being one of the most widely taught languages. A growing number of expatriate children are enrolled in local pre-K and kindergarten programs (kindergarten typically is extended through age six, with children starting grammar school at age seven). Presently, there are no high-school age, expatriate dependents attending school in Chisinau.

University-level education in Moldova normally requires mastery of Russian or Romanian as a basic prerequisite.

Entertainment

Like any other city, Chisinau has a charm and warmth all its own. Visitors can easily find some interesting activities in Chisinau. In the fall and winter the local opera and concert circuit comes alive. The quality of the performances is excellent. Chisinau's numerous music schools support and promote classical music. Concerts are held at the Organ Hall, the National Palace, the Philharmonic Hall, and the Theater of Opera and Ballet.

There are two local movie theaters that meet Western standards: comfortable seating, surround sound, and large screens. The Patria theater screens American movies dubbed over in Russian. The Odeon Theater screens American movies in English with Romanian subtitles. In addition there is a local club that shows films in English throughout the week.

The National Library of the Republic of Moldova carries primarily Russian and Romanian books but has a small selection of English- and other foreign-language books. There are several museums in town, including the Museum of Natural

History and Ethnography, the National History Museum, and the Pushkin Museum. (The famous Russian poet lived in Moldova 1820-23.)

There are a new amusement park and a variety of circus shows in Chisinau. Chisinau has a city zoo. A new, outdoor swimming pool complex opened in June 1999. In the cold winter months the Fitness Club offers a first-class sauna, with dunking pool, and a trained massage therapist.

Social Activities

The International Women's Club of Moldova sponsors activities and interest groups for its members. The Moldova-International Charity Association formed by expatriates, raises funds for Moldovan children. These two organizations sponsor several annual events that expatriates look forward to and attend: The October Charity Ball, the December Christmas Bazaar, and the March St. Patrick's Day Auction. Moldovans are generally curious to see how Americans live, and will respond to social invitations. They are generous hosts and appreciative guests, as Moldovans are willing to experiment with most foods. The music culture is very deep in Moldova and many people include the performance of music in an evening of dinner with guests.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **BELTSY** is located in north central Moldova. Beltsy is the home of several major industries, among them wine making, sugar refining, and tobacco processing. Other industries in the city produce fur coats, machinery, and furniture. Beltsy has a population of approximately 162,000.

BENDERY is one of Moldova's oldest cities. Founded around the 2nd century B.C., the city is situated southeast of Kishinev on the Dniester River. Throughout history, Bendery has been attacked and occupied by various foreign powers. The city was totally destroyed dur-

ing World War II, but has been completely rebuilt. Bendery is a manufacturing center for textiles, electrical equipment, and food stuffs. Silk manufactured in Bendery is among the finest in the world. A 17th century Turkish fortress still stands in Bendery and is a reminder of the city's ancient past. Bendery's population is roughly 132,000.

The city of **TIRASPOL** is located on the Dniester River just east of Bendery. Tiraspol was founded in 1795 and was incorporated into the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1929. During World War II, the city was heavily damaged after a series of battles between the Soviet Union and Germany. The Soviets gained control of Tiraspol in 1944. Following the end of World War II, the city was rebuilt. Tiraspol is an industrial center noted for canning and wine making. Other industries in Tiraspol produce farm equipment, footwear, textiles, furniture, carpets, and electrical equipment. Tiraspol has a population of approximately 186,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Moldova encompasses what was until August 1991 the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, and is located between Romania and Ukraine. Except for a small strip of land on the Danube River, the country is land-locked. Moldova is a relatively small country, about 300 km long and 100 km across, about the same size as Maryland. Its total land boundary is 1,389 km. Its total area is 33,700 square km. The land border with Romania is 939 km and with Ukraine 450 km. The area east of the Dniester (Nistru) river, along with the city of Bender west of the Dniester, is the breakaway and officially unrecognized Transnistrian Moldovan Republic, or Transnistria. Transnistria is not recognized by



Government buildings in Tiraspol, Moldova

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Moldova, the U.S., or by any other country. Tiraspol is the capital of Transnistria. Moldova's total population is 4.4 million, of whom 800,000 live in Chisinau. The majority of the population lives in the countryside in villages organized around former state farms.

Moldova's climate is mild in the winter and warm in the summer—approximately that of New York City. Winter temperatures are typically in the 20s (F) but occasionally fall below zero. Highs in the summer are typically in the 80s but can go as high as 100. There are four distinct seasons, with foliage on trees between April and October. The climate is semi-arid. The coun-

tryside is comprised mainly of gently rolling agricultural lands with a gradual slope south toward the Black Sea. Seventy percent of the soil is composed of the famous, fertile "Black Earth" (chernozim) in this region. Because of the clearing of land for agricultural cultivation—especially in the Soviet era for grape production—there are few forests or woodlands. There has been soil erosion due to farming methods. The effect in the cities is that occasional dust can blow up from the streets in gusts. Humidity in the summer can be high but mildew and insects are not significant factors. Moldova is sparse in natural mineral resources, with some lignite, phosphorites, and gypsum. Moldova has suffered with

other countries in the region from serious environmental damage from the heavy use of agricultural chemicals, including pesticides banned in the West such as DDT.

Substantial amounts of its soil and ground water are contaminated. Because of the extensive use of asbestos in construction, village and urban area soil may have, in some areas, high concentrations of asbestos mixed with the soil. The two principal rivers—the Prut on the west and Dniester in the east—are polluted. Untreated drinking water may have heavy metal contamination, as well as pollution from agricultural chemicals.

Population

Moldova has approximately 4,400,000 inhabitants. It is the most densely inhabited of the former Soviet Union Republics. About 65 percent of the population is Moldovan (ethnic Romanian), 14 percent is Ukrainian, and 13 percent Russian. There are also small communities of Gagauz (Christian Turks) and Bulgarians, mostly in the south. Moldova is a largely agricultural country, with more than a third of the population employed in the agricultural sector and agroprocessing, including the production of wine and other alcoholic beverages (brandy, champagne), vegetables and fruits, sugar, grain, sunflower seeds and oil, cattle and pigs. The population in the countryside is largely ethnic Moldovan, with a number of Ukrainian villages, especially in the north. In the main cities, ethnic Russians and Ukrainians predominate. The state language is Moldovan (Romanian), although Russian is extensively used. Most of the population of Moldova is at least nominally Orthodox, and Moldova has preserved many Orthodox traditions, including colorful Easter celebrations and church festivals.

Moldova has a proud tradition of hospitality, and is renowned for its wine, cognac and champagne. Many people, even in the city, make their own homemade wines and are eager to share them with visitors. Local

cuisine shows the mixture of cultures, with traditional Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian and Jewish foods popular. National dishes include mamaliga (similar to polenta), placinta (a pastry filled with cheese, potatoes, or cabbage), and sarmale (stuffed cabbage); Russian-style borscht and caviar are also favorites.

Public Institutions

In June 1991, the Moldovan Supreme Soviet (parliament) announced the republic's sovereignty, and on 27 August 1991, declared the independence of the Republic of Moldova. After that, the forum revised the legislation and conducted multiparty elections. In the summer of 1994, the Republic of Moldova adopted a Constitution, dividing the power between an elected president, a prime minister and the parliament. In the summer of 1995 Moldova was admitted to several international organizations, including the Council of Europe—the first former Soviet republic to be admitted. Expanding its relations with the West, the Moldovan leadership, particularly the new Parliament, also preserves its ties with former Soviet Union republics. Parliamentary elections in March 1998 yielded 40 seats for communists (30% of the votes), while the centrist pro-presidential party received 24 seats (18% of the vote), and two center-right wing parties received 25 and 12 seats (26% of the vote). The center and center-right parties formed a coalition government, the first true coalition government in the former Soviet Union, with the communist bloc as the opposition. Two new governments have succeeded the center-right coalition. The transition was peaceful and democratic.

Arts, Science, and Education

Chisinau has an active cultural life, especially in classical music, although the institutions have suffered from the economic difficulties of the country. During the season,

from mid-autumn to late spring, there are regular performances by the opera, ballet, national symphony, and smaller musical groups. The Organ Hall and the Philharmonic Hall are frequent venues for concerts by local ensembles and touring groups. In addition to classical music, traditional folk music is very popular; Moldovan ensembles such as Flueras and Lautari are well known throughout the former Soviet Union. The folk dance ensemble “Joc” is especially admired for its performances featuring traditional dances from throughout the region. Chisinau also has several theaters performing in Romanian and Russian.

The Chekhov Theater performs classic Russian plays as well as some modern works and translations. The Eugene Ionescu Theater performs avant-garde and modern plays in Romanian. Several other theaters feature musicals, satirical plays or traditional favorites. A puppet theater in the center of town offers regular performances in Russian and Romanian, and the Circus hosts a wide variety of touring groups in addition to local performers.

Moldova has a number of institutions of higher learning, including the State University and the Independent International University, plus several pedagogical institutes and polytechnical institutes. Moldova has a special interest in agricultural research, and the Academy of Science has a large number of highly qualified specialists in this area. English is now widely taught and increasingly used, especially among young people.

Commerce and Industry

Moldova had relatively little of the Soviet military-industrial complex. Much of its industrial capacity was concentrated in light industry such as radioelectronics, clothing, and food processing. The industrial sector throughout Moldova has suffered from declining output, lack of investment, loss of markets, ineffi-

cient production, higher energy costs and new competition from Western producers. Many of the big enterprises have not been fully restructured. Industrial production continued to decline in 1999. Moldova's best export prospects for the future are agroindustry and production of wine and cognac, if these can be upgraded to assure consistent quality.

Transportation

Automobiles

Poor road conditions and aggressive local driving habits increase the possibility that a car will need service and/or repair during its stay in Moldova. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is desirable and advisable in this environment.

A new former Soviet-made car can be purchased for from \$3,000 to \$8,000. Americans find the level of comfort and the quality of assembly to be below that of Western-made automobiles, but it is easier to get a former Soviet-made car repaired in Moldova than a Western-made car.

It is not possible to export a former Soviet-made car to the U.S., as it will not meet EPA standards. Unleaded gasoline is available and new Western-style gas stations with minimarkets and car washes are becoming common throughout Moldova.

There is a rental car service in Chisinau (dispatcher speaks English). Cars with drivers are available for hire. Americans have rented Western cars for driving around town and for longer trips. The rental rate for a car and a driver is \$25 per day. Vans with a driver can be rented for \$50 per day.

Local

There is an extensive bus and minibus system, with low fares, but these are very crowded and uncomfortable. Expatriates seldom use public transport. A few Americans have encountered nonviolent theft on crowded buses.

Taxis are available by telephone or on the main streets. Taxi stands

offer a blend of modern vehicles and decrepit older models, and the passenger does get to choose among them. Rates are reasonable. Most local cab drivers speak only Russian or Romanian. One telephone dispatch company aimed at expatriates does have an English-speaker dispatcher and drivers who speak at least some English. Some expatriates rely heavily on this company, which charges a flat rate, about \$3 per trip.

Between the cities and the towns of Moldova, trains and buses are available at relatively reasonable prices. There are no internal air flights in Moldova.

Regional

Air Moldova, Air Moldova International, Tyrolean Airlines, TAROM, Moldavian Airlines and Transaero serve Chisinau. The following major cities are served at least 3 days per week: Athens, Beirut, Bucharest, Budapest, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Kiev, Moscow, Odessa, Paris, Tel Aviv, Vienna, and Warsaw. Americans can buy tickets in Chisinau for cash only: no travelers checks, credit cards, or other negotiable instruments.

American travelers have also gone to Kiev and Bucharest via train. It is less expensive than a plane, but it is a long, difficult trip. There is no heat in the winter or ventilation in the summer. Some travelers have had problems with border police on the train from Kiev.

Moldova and its neighbors have similar conditions for long-range driving. Moldova and all nearby countries use left-hand drive, have an extremely limited number of roads with more than two lanes, and have aggressive road police who often stop foreign cars. Carrying your diplomatic I.D. and/or your diplomatic passport at all times when driving is recommended, but especially when outside of Chisinau. In Moldova, the road police will usually not hinder any polite American diplomat carrying identification.

Travelers are advised to fill their tanks before they leave, although

Moldova has seen a proliferation of gas stations along the major roads. Travelers should expect long lines at the borders. If you are in a vehicle with diplomatic plates and are carrying a diplomatic passport, you may slowly make your way to the front of the line and receive expeditious processing through the border. Russian- or Romanian-language skills are useful in these situations.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is generally fair to good. Installation of new phones is possible but slow, as are repairs to existing lines. International calls to the U.S. and Europe can be placed via direct dial, and reception is generally good. Rates can vary between USD 1.50 to 3.00 per minute depending on the call. Overseas telegraph and Fax facilities, though available, are not always reliable. Cellular phone service is also available. The standard frequency is NMT analog. Cellular phones purchased in other countries, such as the U.S., can be used here but must be registered (cost is \$300).

Radio and TV

There are two AM radio stations broadcasting daily with more scheduled to start soon. Several FM stations are also operating. All broadcast a variety of music and programs in Romanian and Russian with some English-language music interspersed. To receive shortwave broadcasts, such as the VOA and BBC, you need a good shortwave radio.

Moldova has one television station that broadcasts daily, mostly in the Romanian language. Moldova also receives two other stations, one from Bucharest in Romanian and the other from Moscow, in Russian. Shows cover the full range of local and international news plus sports, musical entertainment, locally produced plays, educational broadcasts, movies, and some American TV shows. Most programming is in Romanian or Russian with two or

three movies and a few shorter programs shown weekly in English. TV is transmitted by the 625 PAL D/K European system, which can be picked up with a multisystem receiver. Some local electronics firms have opened, and multi-system televisions and VCR's are readily available. Moldova now has cable television. You can receive the above 3 stations plus 25 additional stations, 5 of which are in English, including CNN, EuroNews, and MTV HBO is available for an additional charge.

A number of private and commercial video libraries in Moldova rent tapes. These are all VHS cassettes for use with 625 PAL system equipment. The stock is mostly action-type and horror videos. All videos are in Russian. Bring a multisystem VHS videotape recorder and player if you want to rent from these collections.

Internet

Local service providers are available. The speed and reliability of E-mail service is inconsistent due to the limitations of the telephone system.

Health and Medicine

General Health Information

Local pharmacies in Moldova carry Western and local medicine but only a few of the supplies are in English. Aspirin (made in the U.S.) is available in most pharmacies. Bring a good supply of any necessary prescriptions, including contraceptives. If you have a chronic ailment, bring a large supply of the required medication.

Community Health

Weather and local sanitation can be a problem and aggravate certain health conditions. Garbage pick-up is often sporadic, but street sweeping is reliable, as is sewage disposal. Winter weather is hard because of fuel shortages, apartments and work sites often being irregularly heated. In winter, soot from burning wood and soft coal may aggravate sinus problems, asthma and aller-

gies. Dust from unpaved roads and construction may also aggravate these conditions.

Drinking water and that used for cooking should be distilled, boiled, or filtered before using. After periods of disuse (about 8 hours), turn on taps and run water for a full 5 seconds prior to using for purifying. Running the water in such a way helps remove the lead that leaks out of the lead pipes found in most homes during periods of disuse. Bottled drinks are considered to be safe. Cholera has been identified in one of the suburban lakes near Chisinau and in some of Moldova's villages. Cholera can be prevented by treating drinking water and water used for cooking.

In addition, fruits and vegetables should be well washed, peeled, or cooked. These tend to be inexpensive during the summer but prove to be expensive in the winter.

AIDS and seropositive HIV have come to the forefront in Moldova as a public health problem, although there have been only about 20 cases registered. AIDS surveillance programs are being discussed in Moldova as well as programs for screening for HIV and Hepatitis B. Syphilis and tuberculosis are on the rise.

Preventive Measures

All immunizations must be current upon arrival. One should have Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B, rabies, and meningitis inoculations. Children should have up-to-date DPT, MMR, and HIB vaccines. Bring blood-type records and immunization cards for all family members. Bring fluoride drops and vitamins with fluoride for small children. Respiratory, orthopedic, or other disorders that prohibit climbing stairs should be considered before traveling to Moldova. In Moldova, usually one flight of stairs is required to enter a building, and once inside the building, stairs abound, with either no elevator or an occasionally nonfunctioning one. Western-quality prescription glasses are available locally; however, it would be prudent to bring an extra pair of

glasses and/or a copy of your prescription.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

All flights to Moldova come into Chisinau airport, located roughly 6 miles (10 kilometers) from the city center. There are daily flights from Moscow, Budapest and Frankfurt, and several weekly flights from Paris, Bucharest, Vienna, and Warsaw, Prague and Bologna. Frankfurt is the most heavily used connection, with Budapest, Paris, and Vienna as good alternatives.

Chisinau may be reached by land from, with a drive that is very scenic but tiring. The eastern Carpathian Mountains in Romania require slow driving, even in good weather. Some travelers have taken a picturesque route through northern Transylvania and Bukovina, crossing the Carpathians near the Romanian city Suceava. Others have taken a southern route, crossing the Carpathians south of the Romanian city Brasov. Travelers may note that maps show routes over the mountains between these two points. These mountain passes can be dangerous and should be avoided without prior information on road conditions and weather.

Many gas stations are available enroute. Gasoline in Moldova and Romania may be purchased with local currency. Full-service stations (with windshield washing and oil checks) are available mainly in large cities, so be sure that your vehicle is in good condition before traveling. Carry spare belts, etc., for small emergency repairs on the road. In general, fill up the tank before traveling. Winter driving on Moldovan roads is hazardous, and you will not find places to stop should the need arise. Do not drive to Chisinau in winter. Avoid driving in threatening or treacherous weather no matter how sturdy or well equipped your car is. Bring

nonperishable foods and soft drinks or bottled water for consumption on the road.

The drive to Chisinau can be made from Budapest in two driving days. From the Greek or Turkish borders driving to Chisinau should take about 24 hours. Roads in Eastern Europe are two lane, and traffic is light to moderate by Western standards. Encountering slow moving trucks, tractors, tractor-trailer trucks, bicycles, motorcycles, and horse-drawn carts is not unusual. Allow ample time for these inconveniences. Be sure your Moldovan visa is in order before arriving at the border.

Do not drive at night in Eastern Europe. The road and most vehicles are poorly lighted, and people and livestock are often in the middle of the road. Never drive fast and be alert to pedestrians (who fail, in most cases, to look before stepping out into traffic and other obstacles. In Moldova, pedestrians do not obey traffic signals, and the streets are dimly lit. Streets in Moldova are dimly lit. Caution is strongly advised for evening driving. Fog can be a problem in fall and winter. Highways can be slippery when wet and one must beware of dirt and mud left by farm vehicles. Become familiar with international road signs before driving into Moldova. Have available your car's registration papers and the internationally recognized "green card" third-party liability insurance.

Obtain an international drivers license before arriving, which is available in the U.S. from the American Automobile Association. You must have a valid U.S. or foreign license and maintain its validity.

Travel by car into Moldova from the West through the Albita-Leuseni crossing in Romania is the most convenient Romanian border crossing for international land traffic. Crossings by car at some other Moldovan-Romanian border posts are possible but are less convenient. A traveler should expect possible delays at immigration and customs

going in both directions at the Albita-Leuseni crossing.

Travelers in cars should expect to be occasionally waved over by local police for routine inspections. Travelers driving by car into the Eastern region of the country Transnistria should expect to be stopped by Russian "Peacekeepers" and then by Transnistria border guards at the outskirts of Tighina (Bender) and when crossing over to the left bank driving toward Tiraspol. Depending upon where a traveler is driving in or around Transnistria, a car may be stopped by Transnistrian authorities, Russian forces, Moldovan police, or joint patrols consisting of two or three of the above. Discipline of forces in the security zone and at internal checkpoints in Transnistria is problematic at night. The city of Tighina (Bender) is in the security zone.

International rail connections are possible from Bucharest, Moscow, and Kiev. However, staff who have used these routes have not reported favorably about the experience. Some travelers have been victims of theft. Carefully check routes and train changes (if any) before boarding.

Bring plenty of food and snacks when traveling by car or train in Eastern Europe.

Personal airfreight is sometimes slow in arriving, even from points in Western Europe or the U.S. (make allowance for at least 3 weeks). Bring as much as you can in your accompanied baggage, especially seasonal clothing, toiletries, and any special medications.

Air Moldova will charge for hand baggage over 20 kilograms. If so, be sure to get a receipt. Have cases no larger than 28 inches (71 centimeters) high by 55 inches (140 centimeters) long by 43 inches (109 centimeters) wide. Larger cases will not fit into the cargo holds of some Air Moldova planes.

Immunization records are not routinely checked. Have an international license plate issued by the country of sale for new cars pur-

chased in Europe. No special regulations restrict incoming baggage: use common sense, as incoming baggage may be X-rayed at the airport and a suspicious-looking item could cause problems.

Visas are required of American citizens traveling to (or transiting) Moldova. All visas must be obtained in advance of arrival from a Moldovan Embassy or Consulate. Only those U.S. citizens who can provide evidence that they reside in a country in which Moldova has no Embassy or Consulate are permitted to obtain a tourist/business visa at the Chisinau airport. No invitation is necessary. Any person applying for a visa for a stay of more than three months must present a certificate showing that the individual is HIV negative. Only tests performed at designated clinics in Moldova are accepted. For more information on entry requirements, please contact the Moldovan Embassy, 2101 S. Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone: (202) 667-1130, (202) 667-1131, or (202) 667-1137, fax: (202) 667-1204, e-mail: moldova@dgs.dgsys.com.

All foreign citizens staying in Moldova for more three days or longer are required to register with local authorities at the Office of Visas and Registration. The place of registration (usually, a district police station) depends on where a visitor is staying in Moldova. Most hotels will register guests automatically. The Embassy encourages U.S. citizens to ask about registration when checking into a hotel. U.S. citizens not staying in a hotel are responsible for registering with authorities. To find out exactly where to register, a U.S. citizen may call the central Office for Visas and Registration at (373) (2) 21-30-78, and be prepared to give the address of the residence in Moldova. Under Moldovan law, those who fail to register with authorities may be required to appear in court and pay a fine. For more information on registering with Moldovan authorities, U.S. citizens are encouraged to call the Consular section at the U.S.

Embassy in Chisinau (373) (2) 40-83-00.

Americans living in or visiting Moldova are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Chisinau and obtain updated information on travel and security within Moldova. The U.S. Embassy is located in Chisinau, Moldova, Strada Alexei Mateevici 103; telephone (373)(2) 23-37-72, after-hours telephone (373)(2) 23-73-45.

Pets

No regulations restrict importing cats and dogs. Before arrival, pet owners should ensure that their pets are properly immunized and that they have immunization records (primarily rabies vaccine) and health certificate records, certified by a public health authority in the sending country. The health certificate should have been issued within 1 week prior to the animal's departure. Bring or ship any special needs such as worm medicine or particular food. Properly documented animals are cleared quickly through customs. Be sure all pet records are completely up-to-date before arrival.

Since local veterinarians do not always have vaccines, make sure your pet has all needed shots before you come. If you anticipate a need for particular medicines, ship a supply or make arrangements with a veterinarian to send additional supplies.

Chisinau has a large number of homeless cats and dogs that live on the streets. Pets (especially dogs) should only be allowed out of the homes when accompanied. Another danger to domestic animals may be from rodent-control poison, which can be set out without notice around garbage areas, resulting in reports of accidents and poisoning.

Firearms and Ammunition

There is one hunting club in Moldova. Presently membership in this

club is required of anyone who wishes to purchase a rifle.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Since November 1993, the Moldovan currency has been the leu (plural, lei, fractions, bani). It is convertible on the current account, and trades at a market rate against any other market currency, though it is not a "hard" currency. Bank transfers can be made into Moldova and bank accounts in hard currency can be opened, but checking accounts are virtually unknown and personal checks are essentially non-negotiable. Traveler, checks are accepted by at least one bank, but commissions for cashing them for hard currencies are high (for lei transactions, the normal commission is 2%) Credit cards are only slowly becoming accepted for purchases, so that Moldova remains largely a cash economy. This is in transition, and some ATMs have ever come on-line. By law, all payments in Moldova must be made in lei, not in dollars.

Moldovan currency regulations stipulate that an incoming traveler may bring in any amount of foreign currency or travelers checks, but amounts must be stated in a declaration and a currency exchange declaration form (a loose piece of paper) is placed in the passport. Travelers should ensure this paper remains in the passport until departure from Moldova. When leaving Moldova, the traveler must show the same currency and checks as upon entry, or list any amount named in a certificate of exchange from the Moldovan National Bank. Moldovan authorities enforce this rule unpredictably. Moldovan authorities prohibit the import or export of Moldovan lei.

Moldova is on the metric system.

Crime

Crime is a growing problem in Moldova and especially in the larger cities. The violent crime rate has been relatively low but is a growing

threat to foreigners. Car theft is a problem. Travel by car and in a group is relatively safe at night, but visitors are advised not to walk alone far from public places after dark.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 7 Christmas
(Orthodox)
- Mar. 8 International
Women's Day
- Apr/May Easter*
- Apr/May Easter Monday*
- May 1 Labor Day
- May 9 Victory Day
- Aug. 27 National Day
- Aug. 31 Our Language
Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published in this country.

Dima, Nicolae. *From Moldavia to Moldova*.

Fonseca, Isabel. *Bury Me Standing: the Gypsies and Their Journey*. New York: Vintage Press, 1995.

Goma, Paul. *My Childhood at the Gates of Unrest*. Columbia, La.: Readers International, Inc., 1990.

Horton, Nancy. *Chisinau, Moldova: The Essential Guide*. Chisinau: Lonely Peasant Publications, 1999.

King, Charles. *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1999

Sugar, Pete S. *Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977.



The Hague, Netherlands

THE NETHERLANDS

Kingdom of the Netherlands

Major Cities:

The Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Haarlem, Leiden, Maastricht, Eindhoven, Groningen, Nijmegen

Other Cities:

Alkmaar, Amersfoort, Apeldoorn, Arnhem, Breda, Bussum, Delft, Dordrecht, Enschede, Gouda, s'Hertogenbosch, Kinderdijk, Schiedam, Tilburg, Zaanstad, Zwolle

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for The Netherlands. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

In 1782, while posted to the Netherlands, John Adams wrote: "I love the People where I am. They have Faults but they have deep Wisdom and great Virtues and they love America and will be her everlasting Friend." He was negotiating recognition for the U.S., financial support for the Revolution, and a bilateral Treaty of Amity and Commerce. The Netherlands was the second country after France to recognize the U.S. as a sovereign-independent nation and is our longest continuous diplomatic partner. The two countries share a remarkable common heritage. Exploring the Dutch heritage is one of the pleasures of a posting to the Netherlands. However, the Nether-

lands is not a country devoted to its past at the expense of its future.

The Dutch are committed to a strong and modern Europe with continuing ties to the Atlantic Alliance. A tour in the Netherlands can mean challenging and interesting work that it puts Europe n on your doorstep. Throughout the Netherlands, more than 700 museums and numerous parks are filled with impressive works of past and contemporary artists. Theater, music, and sports fans will find ample opportunity to pursue their interests. Sightseers will find their pastime pleasant, popular, and inexpensive. Overall, the comfortable living conditions, the nearness of many interesting areas in Western Europe, and the friendliness of the Dutch make the Netherlands a desirable site. Most of the Dutch speak English. What John Adams said in 1782 about the Dutch loving America remains true.

MAJOR CITIES

The Hague

The Hague is the seat of the government, court, and parliament (States General), although Amsterdam is the capital. With more than a half-

million inhabitants, The Hague is the country's third largest city. It is attractive, clean, and well maintained with a relaxed-small city type of atmosphere. The city derives its name from the older and longer version, Gravenhage, meaning "The Count's (craven's) Hedge." This hedge surrounded the original hunting lodge of Count Willem II of Holland. After 1248, he erected a stronghold of which the present "Hall of Knights" formed a part. It included the site of the present parliament buildings. These, together with the inner and outer courtyards and the "Hofvijver" (artificial lake), form the medieval heart of the town. A mile away is the Peace Palace, which houses the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. It was completed in 1913 from funds donated principally by the American steel millionaire, Andrew Carnegie. The Hague has no large industries, consequently industrial air pollution is slight. Many U.S. firms, including Exxon, Dow Chemical, Cargill, Sarah Lee/Douwe Egberts, and IBM are represented in The Hague-Rotterdam-Amsterdam area. As a result, the American community numbers in the hundreds. Some 75 foreign missions are also located in The Hague. Scheveningen, an adjacent beach area, attracts many tourists, particularly Germans, during the summer. The area is undergoing

a revitalization centered around a renovated century old hotel, The Kurhaus. This fine old hotel has a respected restaurant, and overlooks the sea.

Food

Virtually any food item available in the U.S. can be found in the Netherlands. Supermarkets are popular and widely available in all Dutch cities. Neighborhood stores are small and specialize in certain types of goods. Fish, meat, fruits and vegetables, poultry, and groceries are sold in separate stores. Fresh vegetables and fruits are available in many areas from wagon or truck vendors or in open markets. Local foods are of high quality, and Dutch cheese, canned hams, beer, and chocolate have international reputations. Locally grown fresh vegetables are excellent. As a result of the many greenhouses in the Netherlands, a good selection is available year round and many are also imported.

Standard varieties of fresh fruits are found year round as well, and frozen and canned vegetables and fruits are staples of Dutch life. Beef, pork, lamb, veal, and poultry are readily available. Cuts are different, but some butchers will prepare special cuts according to your specifications. Meat prices are higher than those in the U.S., but good quality eggs, fish, milk, and other dairy products are reasonably priced. Smoked and preserved fish, meats, ham, sausage, and bacon are popular. Coffee in the Netherlands is delicious, but of a different blend than American coffee. Excellent breads and rolls are delivered daily. Canned baby foods are available, though not of the same consistency or wide variety as American brands. Some American baby foods are sold in local stores, but prices are high.

Pets are popular in the Netherlands and there are a wide variety of pet foods.

Clothing

The climate of the Netherlands requires a basic wardrobe of fall and winter-weight clothing for the

entire family. Northern Europe has hot summer days. The winters are damp and cold. Good rain gear is essential and available at reasonable prices on the local market. Local department stores and smaller shops carry a wide and attractive variety of European and American clothing. Fabrics, especially woolens, are of excellent quality. Both clothing and fabrics, however, are expensive. Suits for both men and women can be made to order but are expensive. The military exchange at Schinnen is better priced but carries a limited variety and supply of clothing and shoes. The quality runs from average to poor. Often basic items are not in stock. The exchange does offer a tailoring concessionaire that makes good suits for both men and women at reasonable prices.

Men: The Dutch tend to dress informally for work and recreation, but the usual attire for informal dinner parties, unless otherwise stated, is a business suit.

Women: Because of the damp-chilly climate, suits are worn most of the year. Dresses or skirts, slacks, and blouses with sweaters are the normal daytime wear. Dressy suits and afternoon and cocktail dresses are worn at informal dinners, luncheons, teas, and receptions. Anything smaller than a women's dress size 10 or shoe size 6 is very difficult to find here. Northern European women are taller than their American counterparts and have wider feet. Since many European streets and sidewalks are paved with bricks or cobblestones, shoes with wider heels are more comfortable and safer.

Children: Good children's clothing is available locally though not always in American-preferred styles or colors and at slightly higher prices. Jeans and running shoes are usually available at the military exchange. Mail order catalog buying is satisfactory.

Supplies and Services

Most household supplies, toiletries, cosmetics, home medicines, liquor,

and tobacco products can be found locally.

Shoe repair, drycleaning, laundry, and automobile and electronic repair vary in quality but are good. Barbers and beauty shops are comparable in price and quality to American ones. Dry-cleaning is expensive.

Domestic Help

Highly trained and specialized servants, such as cooks and butlers, are in short supply. However, with persistence, it is possible to find satisfactory domestic help. Because of high demand and limited supply, domestic help is expensive. If a servant is employed by a family for three or more days a week, the employer must buy Dutch health insurance for the employee. Extra help for entertaining is available, but not easy to find.

Religious Activities

English language services are held in many places of worship in The Hague, including the American Protestant Church, the International Roman Catholic Parish of The Hague, the Church of the Latter-day Saints, St. John and St. Philip Episcopal Church and the Liberal Jewish Congregation. Some churches outside the Hague include St. James Anglican Church in Voor-schoten, Trinity International Church in Wassenaar, and Scots International Church in Rotterdam. Many of the churches have active youth and women's groups, and religious education is offered by some. The American Protestant Church offers youngsters a summer school.

Education

The American School of The Hague (ASH) offers a complete elementary, middle, and high school program headed by American principals. The school is a large modern airy structure located in the elegant suburb of Wassenaar, one of the loveliest areas of Greater The Hague. The American School of The Hague contains fully equipped classrooms, science laboratories, gyms, a theater, and playing fields. With the exception of native foreign language

instructors, the faculty is almost entirely American trained and recruited from American school systems. Students are fairly evenly divided between Americans and non-Americans with a slight tilt towards non-Americans. Average class size is 15 students.

Kindergarten or its equivalent is a prerequisite for entering first grade. The school is divided into three segments: kindergarten and grades 1 through 4 (elementary school); grades 5 through 8 (middle school); and grades 9 through 12 (high school). In the high school, a minimum schedule of six subjects is required each year. Required subjects include a full college preparatory program in English, history, and social studies, mathematics, science, foreign language, health, and physical education.

The high school curriculum includes: English 14, Basic English, English as a Foreign Language, Journalism, French 15, Spanish 14, conversational Dutch, German 13, Latin, a full sequence of mathematics including calculus; Earth science, basic and general biology, chemistry, and physics; ancient and medieval history, modern European history, U.S. history, intellectual history, humanities, government, and economics; art, mechanical drawing, drama, photography, crafts, chorus, jazz band, concert band, instrumental lessons, typing, business education, and health and physical education. More than 10 advanced placement classes are offered. Honors classes are available in most subjects.

The school is a testing center for the College Board and administers the following tests: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and Advanced Placement (AP) examinations for which university credit may be granted. The high school program permits its graduates to compete academically with students graduating from better schools in the U.S. The high school students consistently score higher

on the SAT exams than the U.S. national average and have been accepted, upon graduation, at many universities in the U.S. including the Ivy League. Approximately 95 percent each year go on to higher education with the majority attending 4-year universities worldwide.

The American School of The Hague does provide limited services for students with learning disabilities, but students who cannot be mainstreamed in a regular classroom for at least 75% of the day will not be accepted. Wheelchairs can be accommodated in the current facilities. Parents whose children have learning or physical disabilities should provide full information to the school early so that an admission decision can be made. Computer skills are taught beginning in kindergarten. The nursery program is patterned after those found in private U.S. nursery schools. The session is a half-day and the size of the group is limited. To enroll, the child must be at least 3 years old. Only 1 year of kindergarten is reimbursable per child under U.S. Government education allowances. Bus transportation to and from school is available to all students.

Special Educational Opportunities

Some limited opportunities for university level education exist in The Hague area. In Leiden, a 10 minute train ride from The Hague, Webster University of Webster Groves, Missouri, has established one of its extended campuses. Fully accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, it offers B.A., M.A., and M.B.A. degrees. The emphasis is on business. An M.B.A. is also offered by Erasmus University in Rotterdam, an arm of the University of Rochester.

Adults wishing to attend courses at Dutch universities, or to enroll as matriculating students, will need a good command of Dutch besides the necessary educational preparation. Other types of adult education are available in The Hague. Day and

evening art classes are offered at the Vrije Academic, where beginners are accepted by interview with the academy's director. Other institutions are also available for art students.

Occasionally, the American School of The Hague offers evening courses in such subjects as European culture, calligraphy, computer skills, art, and languages. Instruction in most sports as well as gymnastics and all kinds of dance is available to both adults and children. A Dutch music conservatory, which is located in The Hague, houses a youth orchestra and provides good musical instruction for both adults and children.

Sports

The Dutch are great lovers of sports, and nearly every Dutch family belongs to one sports club or another. Clubs usually focus on a single sport, but multisport clubs—where soccer, field hockey, racket sports and even golf are played—do exist. Part of each weekend is spent at the club playing, watching, or socializing. Sports are not part of the normal Dutch school curriculum so clubs are important to the Dutch youngster, and sports fields are busy every afternoon after school. These clubs are open to foreigners, and some American children play in Dutch leagues.

American youngsters participate in sports organized by the American School and the American Baseball Foundation. The school offers intramural or interscholastic soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis, track and field cross-country, and volleyball to older children. The American Baseball Foundation offers opportunities for younger children and adults to participate in baseball, basketball, soccer, and flag football programs. The Foundation, a private organization with clubhouse and playing fields in the Wassenaar area, concentrates its efforts on providing practically the same extracurricular athletic environment that exists in the U.S. Its programs are well organized and an integral feature of American community life. The

Foundation also offers fields for adult sports. A softball league and organized volleyball exist.

Racket sports are popular in the Netherlands. Outdoor tennis courts are inexpensive, and several reasonably priced indoor tennis facilities exist. The city has adequate facilities for badminton but limited ones for squash. Racquetball also is played in a suburban indoor tennis center.

For golfers, the closest course is The Hague Country Club in Wassenaar, where a courtesy membership is available to Ambassadors. Private courses are expensive in the Netherlands, although open to all golfers with official handicaps. At least two public courses, with reasonable green fees are within an hour's drive of The Hague. Golfers should bring equipment to the Netherlands with them, since golf equipment is expensive.

Scheveningen has an 18-lane, duck-pin bowling alley with automatic pin setters. Rental shoes are available. If you have a bowling ball, bring it, since alley balls can be worn and chipped. An active bowling league exists. Cycling is a popular sport in the Netherlands, as are wind surfing and running. The land is flat, making cycling and running pleasant, and wind is always available for the surfer. An indoor/outdoor ice skating rink is open in The Hague from October to March, and inexpensive lessons can be arranged. Canals are seldom frozen long enough for much outdoor skating. Locally made and imported ice skates are available.

Several attractive and well-maintained public beaches are within reach. They are seldom used for swimming due to cool summer temperatures and treacherous currents but are covered from Easter to Labor Day with Northern Europeans in search of the sun. For serious swimming, large public and private indoor pools that also offer swimming lessons at moderate prices are available. The public pools are affordable, have large indoor swim

areas for both children and adults. Fishing is popular here and licenses are easy to obtain.

Local stores sell good sports equipment, including tennis shoes. Roller skates, scooters, and bicycles for adults and children, as well as many attractive toys for children of all ages, are available. Sporting goods are more expensive than in the U.S.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Sightseeing in the Netherlands is a pleasant, popular, and inexpensive pastime on foot, or by car, bicycle, bus, or train. Separate bicycle lanes are provided in many areas and add to the safety and enjoyment of this type of touring. Bicycle lanes often run parallel and adjacent to the sidewalk. Be wary of inadvertently walking in bicycle territory. Since this is a small country, most points of interest are easily reached.

For a major change of scenery, you must travel to the southeastern part of Holland or to a neighboring country, since the Netherlands' topography is flat or only slightly rolling. Short trips can easily be taken to nearby beaches, lakes, dunes, and woods. The many lakes, canals, and rivers provide ample opportunity for sailing and motorboating. You can rent sailboats, rowboats, and canoes at various places on the banks of these waterways. Boating and sailing are popular sports and membership in one of the numerous yacht clubs can be arranged easily. Since the climate is healthy, little need arises to seek relief except to escape the monotony of the cloudy and rainy winter months.

Entertainment

The Hague is one of the quieter seats of government in Europe, but many possibilities for entertainment exist. And if The Hague seems lacking in excitement, Amsterdam is only an hour away. Many excellent theater, concert, opera, and dance companies perform regularly in The Hague. The Residentie 2 Orkest is the local symphony and

offers season tickets and individual concerts in a new concert hall, the Dr. Anton Philipszaal, opened in 1988. The acoustics are excellent. A new dance theater, Lucent Danstheater, opened at the same time as the concert hall, where excellent Dutch and visiting dance troupes perform regularly.

Theaters, notably the Circus Theater, host many musical productions, often from England or the U.S. The Anglo-American Theater Group, a community theater company, is active, always welcomes new members, and produces shows of high quality. Tickets for the theater, operas, concerts, and other events are a little cheaper than in the U.S. and are available only a few days before a performance. When special attractions are offered, such as the Holland Festival with all its theater, music, and dance, or the North Sea Jazz Festival, both early summer events, advance reservations are essential. A number of movie theaters exist in The Hague, and movies are presented in the original language, with Dutch subtitles. American movies are popular and arrive in The Hague only a few months after their American openings.

Many restaurants of all kinds are found in The Hague. Especially popular are Indonesian restaurants that feature "rice tables," meals consisting of many courses of spicy meat and vegetables. Places serving national specialties, such as pea soup and pancakes, are also popular. Meals in hotels and restaurants are the same price range as in the U.S. Wines are more expensive. Good beer and locally produced spirits are available at every bar and restaurant.

Four events in The Hague are of special interest: the colorful ceremony opening parliament on the third Tuesday of September, celebration of the Queen's birthday on April 30, the ceremony opening the herring fishing season at Scheveningen in late May, and the arrival of Sint Nicolaas or Sinterklaas at the harbor in November. Besides

movies, the boardwalk at Scheveningen with lots of activities, a video arcade, zoos nearby in both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and amusement parks in Wassenaar and Rijswijk are fun diversions. Children's theater, a puppet museum, and the Omniservum, Europe's first space theater, also are of special interest to youngsters.

Social Activities

Social life in The Hague is much the same as social life in the U.S. People entertain in their homes, go out to dinner, play sports and card games, or go to the movies with friends. Friends are developed through people met in the office, at church, in the neighborhood, through your children, and through other friends. A number of clubs of various sorts offer another channel for meeting people. Women can join the American Women's Club of The Hague, whose membership is open to all American women living in the Netherlands. Meetings are held monthly and the club is active in local philanthropic work. It also offers excellent opportunities to travel within Holland and Europe.

The International Women's Contact Group, which started in 1979, is also active and is, as the name implies, international, offering American women the opportunity to meet Dutch women and women of other embassies.

For children, the activities of the American Baseball Foundation, the churches, schools, and scout troops give structure to afterschool time.

Getting to know the Dutch is one of the pleasures of a the Netherlands, but this requires positive effort. The Dutch are devoted to their families and to the friends they have known over many years, and are unlikely to search for friends among the foreign community. They are friendly, however, and speak excellent English, so getting acquainted is straightforward. Entertaining is mainly done at home, and dinner parties are always popular.



Street scene in Amsterdam

Courtesy of Elizabeth Glaza

Among the Dutch, it is proper and customary to invite guests for after-dinner coffee or for coffee and dessert. The Dutch entertain and enjoy being entertained chiefly on week-nights, preferring to devote the weekend to their families.

Amsterdam

Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, is one of the most important and culturally rich cities in the world. Located at the junction of the Amstel and IJ rivers at the base of the IJsselmeer, Amsterdam is the country's leading financial and commercial center and the city closest to Schiphol, one of Europe's busiest airports.

The earliest recorded date in Amsterdam's history is 1275, the date of a document granting certain tax exemptions to the city's people. During the later Middle Ages, the city grew in importance. It reached its "Golden Age" in the 17th century as a financial and cultural center of the Western World. Although the 18th and 19th centuries were a period of economic and political retrogression, completion of the North Sea Canal in 1876 favorably reversed this process and restored the city's position as a major seaport. Although many modern build-

ings can be seen on the outskirts, the center of Amsterdam retains the character of its Golden Age, due to the city's policy of preserving the facades of the stately houses, warehouses, churches, and other fine buildings of that period.

Central Amsterdam's renowned necklace of canals glistens with the beauty of the past, and offers many of the city's finest restaurants and hotels. Just outside of this inner ring stand newer housing areas, including sections such as Olympia Plein, which was built for the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam. These areas are characterized by pleasing facades, convenient shopping, and general livability. Beyond this, and often close to the highways surrounding the city, stand high-rise structures built to ease the housing demands of the most densely populated land in the world.

Although Amsterdam has many impressive buildings such as the palace, the Stadsschouwburg, the Rijksmuseum, and the Concertgebouw, it has few of the monumental royal and official buildings that mark many other capital cities. Its charm derives from its 17th century bourgeois mercantile and residential buildings, its many canals, and its hundreds of bridges that make

Amsterdam a splendid walking or biking city.

Education

The International School of Amsterdam (ISA), founded in 1964, is a private coeducational school. It offers an educational program from toddlers (age 2) through high school. About 40 nationalities are represented among the student body. The school term extends from August to June, and the curriculum is that of U.S. public and private elementary, middle, and high schools. Instruction is in English.

The school is housed in a new modern complex with classrooms, gymnasium, theater, library, auditorium, science laboratories, and areas for recreation and sports. The student population varies between 600-700. ISA is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and by the European Council of International Schools. It is located to the south of Amsterdam in Amstelveen, with excellent highway connections to all areas. The school maintains an efficient bus fleet serving many residential areas. Cost of bus service for schoolchildren is not included in the normal tuition.

Sports

Sports facilities in Amsterdam for popular U.S. sports are limited. Amsterdam has no public tennis or golf facilities; all are operated commercially or by private clubs. Individual membership in a tennis club confers the right to play daily during the April to October season. Often a long waiting list exists to become a member. For a few hundred dollars a year, you can rent indoor courts from October to April for a designated hour each week. Group instruction and special rates are available for children.

The two modern duckpin bowling alleys in Amsterdam are expensive. The city also has six large indoor swimming pools and six outdoor public pools. All offer group instruction for children.

Sailing and windsurfing are popular at numerous facilities in and around Amsterdam. Soccer is the major national spectator sport. Amsterdam boasts a well known team, Ajax, and has numerous soccer clubs with a full schedule of games from September through June. Foreign boys may be admitted to the amateur clubs. Teams play every Sunday, weather permitting. Members are also expected to attend one or more practice sessions a week, scheduled in the late afternoon or early evening.

Baseball enjoys some popularity and several Dutch amateur clubs in and around Amsterdam accept foreign boys. Games are regularly scheduled on Saturdays. As with soccer, members are expected to attend one practice or training session a week. Clubs also have softball teams for girls. Membership fees for both soccer and baseball teams are nominal, but uniforms must be purchased. Amsterdam has an American-style professional football team, the Admirals. Cycling is a popular pastime and a practical means of transportation; good cycling lanes and paths abound in the city and in nearby parks.

Entertainment

As the cultural and entertainment center of the Netherlands, Amsterdam offers a wide variety of entertainment. An abundance of theaters and concert halls exist in the city. The outstanding Concertgebouw is world famous and season subscriptions are available for a variety of performances, including those by the Nederland Philharmonisch Orkest, Dixieland bands, and chamber music groups.

The newly-opened Stopera is home to the excellent National Ballet and the Dutch Opera company. Art lovers will find a wealth of exhibits among the city's 42 museums. The most famous are the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum, located on the Museumplein near the American Consulate General. For those seeking lighter entertainment the downtown has a variety of nightclubs; as well as theaters where

American and foreign films are shown.

Social Activities

An American Women's Club is active in Amsterdam. Its main activities include monthly meetings featuring interesting speakers; trips to local towns, museums, and foreign countries; a variety of classes; and coffee get-togethers. It also distributes an informative monthly magazine.

Rotterdam

Rotterdam the nation's second largest city, with a metropolitan population of nearly 1.1 million, is 18 miles upstream from where the combined Rhine and Maas (Meuse) Rivers empty into the North Sea. It is about 15 miles from The Hague and 45 miles from Amsterdam. The surrounding countryside is low and flat, with much of the area below sea level. The lowest point in the country, nearly 30 feet below sea level, is in the eastern part of the city.

Little is left of old Rotterdam, which prospered as a major commercial city during the Middle Ages. In May 1940, protected only by the Royal Netherlands Marines Corps, it fell to German invaders and, within hours after capitulation, the city center was demonstratively destroyed by the most intense aerial bombardment known to that time. Therefore, the downtown area is almost entirely new and modern in style. In rebuilding after the war's end, Rotterdam constructed the first pedestrian-only shopping mall in the world.

The rest of the city, built largely in the half-century before World War I, lacks the ancient structures of historical and architectural interest that typify other old Dutch cities. Two of the best examples in that respect, Delft and Gouda, are close by; several other picturesque towns also are in the vicinity.

The burgomaster and city fathers describe Rotterdam as a port with



Bridge over Hollandse IJssel River in Rotterdam

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

an attached city. Its character and importance derive from its position as the gateway of the water routes to the Ruhr industrial area and southern Germany, to Switzerland, and to eastern France and Belgium. The Port of Rotterdam, the largest in the world in terms of geography (nearly 27.5 miles of river and 25,000 acres of port area) and cargo tonnage (handling 30 percent of the European Union's freight shipped by sea), is sometimes referred to as "the locomotive of the Dutch economy." Indeed, it is in a class by itself, handling nearly 60 percent as much tonnage as any other port anywhere. Over 32,000 seagoing vessels bring goods to Rotterdam each year, and more than 190,000 barges carry most of it on to other destinations.

Life revolves around the port, its man-made waterway (the Nieuwe Waterweg), and industrial appendages. The city is the home port for several major shipping lines, including the Holland-Amerika Line. It is also an important center for a number of American lines such as Lykes, Sea Land, Sea Train, and United States Lines. It is frequently visited by units of the U.S. Navy.

A big share of the tonnage handled is crude oil and refined products, and the port area is the site of the

world's largest refinery and petrochemical complex. The port and its industrial properties are noteworthy not only for their extent, but for the way in which they have been integrated with the environment to preserve adjacent water and recreational areas. Total U.S. industrial investment in the area is estimated at \$5.5 billion.

Vast amounts of grains, ores, coal, and most of the Japanese cars bound for dealers in Europe pass through the Port of Rotterdam. The city is continuing to expand port facilities, and new growth is now concentrated on the Maasvlakte, a delta built from reclaimed land at the mouth of the river. Among other projects is a huge new container terminal. The Rotterdam Maritime Museum recently opened on the waterfront, featuring indoor and outdoor exhibits.

Education

The American International School of Rotterdam was founded in 1959. It provides education from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The school, which follows the American system, emphasizes a core academic curriculum with a variety of supportive courses and an active athletic program. It is accredited by the New England Association of

Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools.

The enrollment has a distinctly international flavor; British, American (a minority), Scandinavian, Japanese, and many other nationalities are represented. Transportation is provided, at extra cost, if requested. Further information may be obtained from American International at Hillegondastraat 21, 3051 PA Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Students in grades nine through 12 usually attend the American School of The Hague.

For adults, an M.B.A. is offered by Erasmus University, an arm of the University of Rochester.

Recreation

Rotterdam offers more than commercial activity. There are several attractions in and around the city, among them Blijdorp Zoo, where the animals live in a natural environment, and where Rivierahal, Europe's largest covered zoo complex, is located; the gigantic Euro-mast tower; harbor boat tours; Ahoy, a large sports palace and exhibition center; the historic town of Delfshaven (now part of the Rotterdam metropolis, but once the port of Delft); and a variety of shopping promenades and malls.

Sailing, boating, and wind surfing are popular sports in Rotterdam, and bicycle paths are everywhere. The city has 19 public swimming pools, most of them indoors. A few stables exist, and an important European riding competition is held here each August. To play tennis, soccer, field hockey, softball, etc., it is necessary to join a sports club offering the appropriate facilities. A WCT tennis tournament with world stars is held here each year.

The Rotterdam Golf Club, an 18-hole course, was opened a few years ago. A private, nine-hole golf course is also available, where foreigners are welcome to play on a greens-fee basis. Other five-to-nine-hole courses are in the

vicinity. There are a couple of American-style bowling alleys in the city.

The World Trade Center Club and the Yacht Club (known as the Maas Club) are popular among Americans. The former is in the heart of the business district, and the latter offers a nice view of the harbor from the main tugboat pier. A social membership at the Maas Club is not expensive, and offers regular duplicate bridge evenings as well as dining facilities.

Entertainment

Movies and television programs are aired in their original languages, with Dutch subtitles. Dutch, Belgian, German, British, and French TV stations broadcast numerous, and fairly recent American and British programs via the widespread cable system.

The city's modern concert hall, the Doelen, is noted for its excellent acoustics, and offers frequent performances of classical and modern symphonic, chamber, and solo music by resident and visiting artists. The Doelen is the home of the outstanding Rotterdam Philharmonic. Chamber and sacred music recitals are held at St. Lawrence Church and at the so-called Pilgrims Church in Delfshaven, where the Pilgrims prayed before setting sail for England and America.

The country has two excellent ballet companies, the Nationale Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater, both of which have toured the U.S. They perform often in Rotterdam. There is no repertory opera company, but The Netherlands Opera Foundation annually produces a dozen operas (each in its original language), with guest singers, and tours the nation's principal cities.

Frequent performances are given by well-known pop stars and rock groups. These are usually held at the Ahoy Complex in the south part of the city, which is also the venue of boxing matches, six-day bike races, trade and consumer fairs, circuses, etc. Several legitimate theaters

exist, but plays are given only in Dutch.

The American-Netherlands Club of Rotterdam (ANCOR), a women's club whose membership is American, Dutch, and other nationalities, was organized in 1955. It maintains a lending library, has monthly meetings, occasional bridge parties, an annual dinner-dance, and organizes tours of cultural or scenic interest. A local chapter of the International Toastmistress Club also exists.

Many American business representatives belong to the American Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands, which has monthly speaker-luncheons, business seminars, a pre-Christmas cocktail party, and other functions. An informal monthly luncheon gathering of younger business representatives is also held.

Rotterdam residents are welcome to join the American Association of The Netherlands, a countrywide social organization centered on the American business community of The Hague area (which includes Rotterdam). This organization sponsors occasional speaker-luncheons, wine tastings, a golf tournament, and an annual charity ball to raise funds for American youth activities. Rotary, Lions, and other civic groups, and Boy and Girl Scouts also have chapters here.

Rotterdam has a wide variety of restaurants. Many serve typical Dutch cuisine but, increasingly, international fare is offered at a number of these, as well as in hotel dining rooms.

Utrecht

Utrecht, a picturesque city characterized by numerous sunken canals, is located in the central part of the Netherlands on the Oude Rijn River, a branch of the Lower Rhine. Situated about 35 miles west of The Hague and 20 miles south of Amsterdam, Utrecht is a transportation, financial, and industrial center that manufactures cement, machinery, processed minerals, food

products, and chemicals. The capital of Utrecht province, the city is the site of a major trade fair, and has a population of close to 230,000.

Founded and fortified by the Romans about A.D. 48, Utrecht was made an episcopal see for St. Willibrord, the Apostle to the Frisians, in the seventh century. The area around the city was ruled by bishops of the Holy Roman Empire, which resulted in frequent struggles between the prelates and the merchants of Utrecht. The city received a liberal charter in 1122, but had sporadic trouble with the bishops until 1527.

Utrecht was the center of the Netherlands' weaving industry and a major commercial city in the Middle Ages, and was incorporated by Charles V into the rest of the Hapsburg-held Netherlands. In 1577, Utrecht joined the rebellion against Philip II of Spain. On January 23, 1579, the seven provinces of the North Netherlands, called the United Provinces, formed the nucleus of the Dutch republic, drawing up a common defense in the Union of Utrecht. During the 17th century, Utrecht became a center of Jansenism, the Roman Catholic movement whose purpose was a return of people to greater personal holiness. In 1713, the series of treaties that ended the War of the Spanish Succession—the Peace of Utrecht—were signed here.

Major landmarks in Utrecht, a city rich in antiquities, include the Dom Tower of a 15th-century Catholic cathedral; numerous other medieval churches; and a 350-year-old university. Castle De Harr, near the village of Maarssen (four miles outside of Utrecht) was first built in 1165. The medieval structure is complete with towers, battlements, parapets, a moat and drawbridge. Within can be found Chinese porcelains, Flemish tapestries, and hand-carved fireplace mantles. Zuilen Castle is also nearby.

Utrecht has several museums of interest, including an archiepiscopal museum, the Dutch Railway

Museum (featuring steam locomotives and model trains), and the National Museum Van Speelklok tot Pierement, a museum dedicated to musical clocks and street organs.

Schools for Foreigners

The International School Beverweerd is located less than 10 miles from Utrecht in Werkhoven. Founded in 1934, it follows a combined U.S., Dutch, and International Baccalaureate curriculum for grades eight through 13. English is the language of instruction in the International section, although Dutch, French, German, and Spanish may be studied as foreign languages. About 80 percent of the school's graduates go on to attend college.

The school year extends from September through June. International School has a current enrollment of 66, most of whom are Dutch. There is also a planned, seven-day boarding program; about two-thirds of the students are boarders. The campus is situated on 45 acres; facilities include six buildings, 10 classrooms, sports fields, science and computer laboratories, and a 2,500-volume library.

The address of International School Beverweerd is Beverweerdseweg 60, 3985RE Werkhoven, The Netherlands.

Haarlem

Haarlem, situated in the west, on the Spaarne River near the North Sea, is 10 miles west of Amsterdam and 40 miles north of The Hague. The capital of North Holland Province, Haarlem has a population of 150,000, and is an industrial center with shipyards, machinery plants and textile mills. However, Haarlem is best known as a center of an important tulip and flower-growing region, as well as the export point for bulbs, especially tulips. Haarlem's flower market is breathtaking in color and scope. The city is also the site of a monument commemorating the legendary boy of Haarlem

who stopped a leak in the dike with his finger.

Chartered as a city in 1245, Haarlem was invaded by the Spanish during the revolt of the Netherlands in 1573. The city was the center of Dutch art during the 15th and 17th centuries; such painters as Frans Hals (1580–1666), Jacob van Ruisdael (1628–1682), and Adriaen van Ostade (1610–1685) worked here.

Haarlem has numerous historic buildings, including the 15th-century Church of St. Bavo, or Groote Kerk, which has a world-renowned organ; the Stadhuis (city hall), previously a palace of the counts of Holland, and constructed in the 13th century; many medieval gabled houses; and several museums, including the Frans Hals Museum and the Teyler Science Museum.

Leiden

Leiden (sometimes spelled Leyden) lies on the Old Rhine River, just north of The Hague. With a current population of approximately 105,000, Leiden is best known as the site of one of the world's great universities. Founded in 1575 by William the Silent, the University of Leiden is the oldest in the Netherlands. During the 17th and 18th centuries, it was a center for the study of Protestant theology, classical and oriental languages, science, and medicine. Herman Boerhaave, the famous Dutch physician, taught here. Today, the university is noted for its Asian studies, physics, and astronomy.

The history of Leiden began in Roman times. Since the 16th century, when weavers came here from Flanders, Leiden has had an important textile industry. The city was instrumental in the revolt of the Netherlands against Spanish rule late in the 16th century. In 1574, William the Silent (the founder of Dutch independence) saved Leiden from starvation and surrender during the Spanish siege by cutting the dikes and allowing the surrounding land to flood; this incident is commemorated each year on October 3

with a public distribution of bread and herring.

The city became a printing center in 1580, when a press was established by the Elzevir family. Many of the pilgrims who set sail from England for America in 1620 had lived in Leiden earlier, and Americans often come here as tourists to visit Pieterskerk, where those pilgrims worshiped. Leiden was the birthplace of painters Jan van Goyen (1596–1656), Jan Steen (1626–1679), Lucas van Leyden (1494–1533), and Rembrandt (van Rijn) (1607–1669).

Today, Leiden is an important industrial city, manufacturing food products, textiles, and medical equipment. Its historical landmarks include a fortress dating to the 10th century; two churches—the 14th-century Pieterskerk and the 15th-century Hooglandsche Kerk; many museums; and numerous buildings from the 17th century.

Maastricht

Maastricht, the oldest city in the Netherlands, is the capital of Limburg Province in the southernmost part of the country, near the borders of Belgium and Germany. Situated on the Maas River and the Albert Canal system, the city derives its name from the Latin *Trajectum ad Mosam*, meaning Maas ford. The name signifies that the river was forded at the site of the city during ancient times. With a population today of more than 114,000, Maastricht is an important industrial center, as well as a rail and river transportation point. Chief manufactured products include steel, textiles, ceramics, paper, glass, printed materials, and chemicals.

Maastricht was an episcopal see from 382 to 721, and the city's Cathedral of St. Servaas (Servatius), founded in the sixth century, is the oldest church in the Netherlands; extensive restoration work is now underway, and all but the treasury of relics is temporarily closed to visitors. In 1284, Maastricht was dominated by the dukes of Brabant and the prince-bishop of Liège, and



Gabled buildings along a canal in Amsterdam

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

was a strategic fortress for many years. Because of its location as a border town, it has been subject to frequent sieges in various wars. The Spanish captured it in 1579; the Dutch recovered it in 1632; and it fell to the French several times, notably in 1673 and 1794. Occupied by the Germans in 1940, Maastricht was retaken by Americans on September 15, 1944.

The city has many historic landmarks, including the Romanesque Basilica of Our Gracious Lady, which dates from the 11th and 12th centuries; at night the grotto at the entrance to the church is beautified by candles and shaded lighting, and it is not uncommon to see the enclosure filled with supplicants late in the evening. Other places of historic interest are the 13th-century bridge across the Maas River, separating the old and new sections of the city; the 17th-century town hall; and the recently restored area of twisting,

cobblestone streets and centuries-old buildings, which had deteriorated into a slum area but is now a charming district of galleries, shops, and good restaurants.

Of particular interest to Americans is the nearby U.S. military cemetery—the only one in the Netherlands—where 8,301 U.S. soldiers were buried. While some of those GIs were returned to the U.S. for reburial, the 65.5 acres in the Dutch countryside are granted in perpetuity as a token of appreciation by the people of the Netherlands.

Every five years since the end of World War II, a reunion of the veterans of the battle that freed Maastricht and of the later German counterattack known as the Battle of the Bulge (fought a few miles south in Belgium), is held in Maastricht. The 50th anniversary was held in 1994.

There are several museums in Maastricht, among them the Bonnefonten, with collections of ancient and modern art, archaeology, and historical artifacts; the Natural History Museum; the Africa Center; a museum of glass and ceramics; and the Santjes en Kantjes, a museum of devotional objects.

Maastricht has an airport on the motorway at Beek.

Eindhoven

Eindhoven, with a population of 191,500, is situated on the Dommel River in the southern Netherlands province of North Brabant. About 65 miles south of Amsterdam, Eindhoven is a rail junction and industrial center that produces electrical and radio apparatus, steel, and textiles.

Chartered in 1232, Eindhoven was a small town for many centuries.

The city expanded rapidly after the founding of the Philips Electrical Works in 1891. Eindhoven was taken by Allied troops in September 1944 in a major airborne operation which also involved the cities of Nijmegen and Arnhem. The city has a noted technical university, which opened in 1956.

The Regionale Internationale School, founded in 1965 with an American curriculum, enrolls students from kindergarten through grade six. The address is: Humberdincklaan 4, 5654 PA Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

Groningen

Groningen is located in northeast Netherlands 90 miles from Amsterdam. It is the capital, and bears the name of the Netherlands' northernmost province, and is the site of a famous university, founded in 1614. An important transportation and trade center, the city produces foodstuffs, furniture, machinery, and clothing. The area is also known for dairy farming and horse breeding.

Groningen, once a Roman camp, came under the power of the bishops of Utrecht in the 11th century, rising to prominence a century later by supplying ships for the Crusades. In 1284, it became part of the medieval commercial confederation of German merchants—the Hanseatic League. Groningen was taken by the Allied forces during World War II in April 1945.

Architecturally interesting, and enhanced by splendid gardens, Groningen is a picturesque city with many fine churches—in particular, the 15th-century Martinikerk (honoring St. Martin, patron saint of tourists), and the 17th-century Nieuwe Kerk—and several museums. Groningen has a current population of 167,800.

Nijmegen

Nijmegen is one of the Netherlands' oldest cities. It was founded in Roman times, flourished in the

eighth and ninth centuries under Charlemagne, and was chartered in 1184. The six peace treaties of Nijmegen, ending the Dutch war with Louis XIV of France, were signed here in 1678–79. In World War II, Allied airborne forces recaptured Nijmegen from the Germans in September 1944; they failed, however, to rescue the troops caught in nearby Arnhem.

Located in eastern Netherlands near the German border, Nijmegen has a population today of 146,450. A rail and water transportation point, Nijmegen is also an industrial center that produces paper, clothing, soap, and metal products.

Still standing in Nijmegen are a 13th-century church, a town hall dating from the 16th century, a 17th-century weigh house, and the remains of a palace built by Charlemagne. The Catholic University of Nijmegen was founded in 1923.

OTHER CITIES

Twenty miles north of Amsterdam lies the city of **ALKMAAR**. An important market town, Alkmaar is world famous as the site of the weekly Edam cheese market, held in front of the 16th-century weigh house. Chartered in 1254, Alkmaar's successful defense against the Spanish troops in 1573 was the turning point in the revolt of the Netherlands. The current population is 92,700. Edam, with a population of 19,300, is situated between Amsterdam and Alkmaar on IJsselmeer Lake. A picturesque town noted for its cheese and fisheries, Edam also attracts many tourists.

AMERSFOORT is situated on the Eem River, 25 miles southeast of Amsterdam in the central region. Development here dates to the 10th century when the area was fortified. The river, formerly called the Amer, gave the city its name, which means "ford on the Amer." Amersfoort, today a livestock and market gardening center, still has medieval street patterns, as well as land-

marks such as the 13th-century St. George's Church. The gothic Tower of Our Lady is all that remains of a church built in 1450. Educational institutions here include a Jesuit college and a school for bell ringers. Amersfoort has a government archaeological research station and regional museum. The city's population is approximately 129,000.

The garden city of **APELDOORN** lies in the east-central area, about 50 miles east of Amsterdam. Known for its sanitariums and nearby Hogue Veluwe National Park, this also is a manufacturing hub, producing chemicals, refrigeration components, pharmaceuticals, and paper products. In the vicinity is Het Loo, the summer home of the Dutch royal family. Here, queen mother Wilhelmina (1880–1962) lived following her 1948 abdication. Built as a hunting lodge, Het Loo was first used by William III in 1686. Apeldoorn has an estimated population of 155,000.

ARNHEM is a port on the Lower Rhine and the capital of Gelderland Province in eastern Netherlands. Located about 50 miles southeast of Amsterdam, it is a transportation and industrial center that manufactures textiles, metal goods, and electrical equipment. A city as early as the ninth century, Arnhem was the site of a serious defeat of British airborne troops in September 1944. The debacle was immortalized in the book and film *A Bridge Too Far*. The current population is 141,000.

BREDA, in southern Netherlands at the confluence of the Mark and Aa Rivers, is 55 miles south of Amsterdam. A transportation and industrial center, Breda produces canned foods, machinery, and textiles. Founded before the 11th century, Breda was captured by the Spanish in 1624. A famous painting by Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599–1660) depicts the surrender of the garrison. The city has a 13th-century Gothic church—Groote Kerk—and a castle that is now a military academy. The population is 163,300.

BUSSUM is a southeastern suburb of Amsterdam about 10 miles outside the capital, with roughly 34,000 residents. Today the home of the country's television studios, as well as an industrial district, Bussum was initially an extension of Naarden, a fortress town. Cocoa and chocolate have been produced here since 1840. The city acts as a resort for the Gooiland region, with its lakes and forests.

DELFT, situated in the western Netherlands just south of The Hague, is a city with a population of 97,000. It has a variety of industries, but is particularly known for its ceramics—the world-renowned china, tiles, and pottery called delftware. The delftware manufactured here in the 17th century was an imitation of Chinese and Japanese porcelain. Delft was an important pottery center from the mid-17th to the end of the 18th century but, by 1850, the industry had nearly disappeared. It was decades later that delftware again became an important product here. Delft was founded in the 11th century, chartered in 1246, and was important commercially until overtaken by Rotterdam in the 17th century. It was in Delft that William the Silent was assassinated in 1584, during the bitter struggle against Spain. Jan Vermeer was born here in 1632, and his famous painting, *View of Delft*, still characterizes the city today—a city of narrow canals and arched bridges, and picturesque, gabled houses. Historic buildings include the 13th-century Gothic Oude Kerk (old church); the Nieuwe Kerk (new church), dating from the 15th century; and a well-preserved 17th-century town hall. Delft is the site of a technical university.

DORDRECHT is located 40 miles south of Amsterdam in South Holland Province, and has a population of over 120,250. An important river port and rail junction, the city has shipyards and manufactures clothing, chemicals, and heavy machinery. Dordrecht (or Dort) was founded in the 11th century, and was the site of the meeting of the Estates of Holland that proclaimed

William the Silent *stadholder* in 1572. The city has a Gothic church—Groote Kerk—more than 500 years old, and an art museum.

The industrial city of **ENSCHEDÉ** is located 80 miles east of Amsterdam just west of the German border in eastern Netherlands. A textile and machinery manufacturing center and a rail junction, Enschede produces textiles, beer, pharmaceuticals, and rubber goods. Historically, the city was first mentioned in 1118; it was almost completely destroyed by fire in 1862, but later rebuilt. Enschede has a natural history museum and a technical university founded in 1961. The current population is approximately 144,550.

GOUDA, noted worldwide for its cheese, has been a town since receiving a charter in 1272. During the Middle Ages, it was a center for textile trade. Gouda is, according to the Dutch, "Holland's tourist heart." Each Thursday morning in summer, at De Waag and the old crafts market, visitors and residents throng the area to watch the farm-cheese weighing. Other popular tourist attractions are Sint Janskerk, with its spectacular enameled window frames, Gouda's unique four-century-old Gothic town hall, and the Catharina Gasthuis Museum. Desiderius Erasmus (1469–1536), the highly respected Dutch humanist, pursued his early studies here at Gouda before entering the Catholic priesthood.

S'HERTOGENBOSCH, the capital of North Brabant Province in south central Netherlands, is 45 miles from Amsterdam. Located at the confluence of the Dommel and Aa Rivers, s'Hertogenbosch is an industrial and transportation center with a large cattle market. Chartered as a city in 1184, and a fortress until 1876, it is the site of the beautiful Gothic St. John's Cathedral. The artist Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516) was born here.

KINDERDIJK, close to Rotterdam, is a small town of particular interest because of its windmills, many of

them dating to about 1740. On Saturdays during July and August, when wind and water permit, all mills are in operation. Another unique town in the area is Schoonhaven, with its 17th-century ramparts and its white-brick town hall, built in 1452.

Known for its widely exported gin, **SCHIEDAM** is located seven miles west of Rotterdam on the Nieuwe Maas River. With a population of about 85,000, the city has shipyards and manufactures glass, chemicals, and machinery. Schiedam's historical structures include the ruins of a 13th-century castle, a 14th-century church, and a town hall built in the 16th century.

Situated just north of the Belgian border, **TILBURG** is in southern Netherlands, 50 miles southeast of The Hague. With a population of 197,400, Tilburg's growth occurred late in the 19th century with the expansion of industry. Today, the city manufactures textile machinery, textiles, leather, and dyes. The Catholic School of Economics is located in Tilburg. The former royal residence of King William of the Netherlands serves as the city's town hall.

Seven communities merged in 1974 to form the industrial city of **ZAANSTAD**, six miles northwest of Amsterdam. Zaandam, Koog aan de Zaan, Zaandijk, Wormerveer, Krommenie, Assendelft, and Westzaan comprise the city now, with a population of 138,000. Russia's Peter the Great (1672–1725) came to Zaandam to learn shipbuilding in 1697; the house where the tsar stayed can be seen today. Other sights are 17th-century windmills, and a mill museum in the Koog aan de Zaan area. Zaanstad acts as a rail junction, in addition to being a center for the lumber industry.

The historic city of **ZWOLLE** is the capital of Overijssel Province, 50 miles northwest of Amsterdam on the Zwarte River. Its commercial traditions date to its founding in 1230. The city was a member of the Hanseatic League (a medieval com-

mercial confederation of German merchants) until its fortifications were ruined in the Anglo-Dutch Wars of the late 1600s. The Sassenpoort Gate is one section of the ramparts still standing. Critically located at the juncture of the Netherlands' principal canal systems and at a rail crossing, Zwolle maintains its commercial dominance. Economic activities here center on shipbuilding, chemicals, and industrial products. St. Michael's Church, the Church of Our Lady, and the town hall were all erected in the 1400s. Thomas à Kempis (ca. 1380–1471), the famous priest and writer, spent the better part of his life in the Augustinian Monastery of Mt. St. Agnes, three miles outside of town. Zwolle has a provincial museum and approximately 109,000 residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Netherlands is bordered on the north and west by the North Sea, on the south by Belgium, and on the east by the Federal Republic of Germany. It covers about 14,000 square miles, and is almost one-third the size of Virginia. The land is low and flat except in the southeast, where some hills rise to 1,000 feet. About one-third of its area is below sea level, making the famous Dutch dikes a requisite to land use. Continuing reclamation of land from the sea into new areas (*polders*) provides fertile land for this densely populated country.

The warmest period falls between June and September; the other months are cool or cold. Despite an occasional warm spell in summer, temperatures rarely exceed 75°F. Winter is long, often dreary, and the damp cold is penetrating.

Population

The Netherlands has a population of 15.6 million, making it Europe's most densely populated nation. The Dutch are mostly of Germanic heritage with some Gallo Celtic mixture. A proud people, they have clung tenaciously to their small homeland against the constant threat of destruction by the North Sea. In the process, they have created farmlands and cities from the sea bed. Religion influences Dutch history, institutions, and attitudes. It is closely interrelated with social and political life, though to a diminishing degree. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the Constitution. Although church and state are separate, a few historical ties remain: e.g., the royal family belongs to the Dutch Reformed Church (Protestant). Religion remains important to most Netherlanders. Slightly more than 30% of the population are Roman Catholic, 30% are Protestant and about 40% have no religious affiliation.

History

Julius Caesar found the Netherlands inhabited by Germanic tribes, one of which, the Batavi, did not submit to Rome until 13 B.C., and then only as an ally. The area was part of Charlemagne's empire in the eighth century, later passed into the hands of the House of Burgundy and the Austrian Hapsburgs, and eventually fell under harsh Spanish rule in the 16th century. The Dutch revolted in 1568 under William of Orange and, 11 years later, the seven northern provinces formed the Union of Utrecht and became the Republic of the United Netherlands.

During its "golden era" of the 17th century, the Netherlands became a great sea and colonial power. Its importance declined, however, during the 18th-century wars with Spain and France. In 1795, French troops ousted William V.

Following Napoleon's defeat, the Netherlands and Belgium became the Kingdom of the United Nether-

lands under King William I, head of the House of Orange. The Belgians withdrew from the Union in 1830 to form their own kingdom. In 1840, William I abdicated in favor of William II, who was largely responsible for the liberal revision of the constitution in 1848. During the long reign of William III, from 1849 to 1890, the Netherlands prospered. Wilhelmina, William III's 10-year-old daughter, succeeded her father in 1898.

The Netherlands was neutral during World War I, and again proclaimed neutrality at the start of World War II. Nonetheless, German troops overran the country in May 1940. Queen Wilhelmina and Crown Princess (later Queen) Juliana then fled to London, where a government-in-exile was established. They subsequently moved to Canada. The German Army in the Netherlands capitulated May 5, 1945. Juliana succeeded her mother upon Wilhelmina's abdication in 1948.

Juliana, in turn, relinquished the throne to her daughter, Beatrix, the present queen, on April 30, 1980.

Public Institutions

The Netherlands Government is based on the principles of ministerial responsibility and parliamentary government common to most constitutional monarchies in Western Europe. It is composed of three basic institutions: a) the Crown (Monarch, Council of Ministers, and Council of State); b) the States General (parliament); and c) the Courts.

Although her functions are largely ceremonial, the Queen maintains an influence in the government. It is derived from the traditional respect for the House of Orange and her personal qualities. Ministers collectively form a Council of Ministers, or Cabinet, which implements government policies and initiates legislation. The ministers are responsible to but not members of the States General (parliament), which consists of the First Chamber (Upper House) and the Second Chamber (Lower House), that meet



Bicycle parking in Amsterdam

Courtesy of Elizabeth Glaza

separately except for ceremonial occasions. In addition to their legislative authority, both chambers exercise oversight of the Council of Ministers through questioning and investigation. However, only the Second Chamber may initiate legislation and amend bills submitted by the Council of Ministers. The First Chamber's 75 members are indirectly elected by the provincial legislatures. The Second Chamber has 150 members, who are elected directly nationwide for 4 year terms on the basis of proportional representation.

Arts, Science, and Education

Education in the Netherlands is excellent. Many foreign students are enrolled in the 13 schools of higher education. The University of Leiden, the School of Economics of the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, the medical school in Utrecht, and the Technical University at Delft have played important roles in the development of other European universities. Webster University in Leiden offers an English language undergraduate degree program and an MBA program. It also has a small program in Amsterdam and

Utrecht. Extension courses from the University of Maryland and other American colleges or universities are available by correspondence.

The International Court of Justice in The Hague and the Universities of Leiden and Amsterdam offer summer courses in international law that are attended by many Americans. Music schools and art academies also enjoy excellent reputations. Culturally, the Netherlands offers a wealth of opportunities. The Rijksmuseum, the Stedelijk, and the Van Gogh Museums in Amsterdam are world famous. Boymans-van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam and the Kroller Muller Museum in Otterloo have excellent collections of modern art. The small but exquisite Mauritshuis in The Hague features 17th century Dutch and Flemish paintings. The performing arts in the Netherlands are well regarded internationally. Het Nationale Ballet, the Netherlands Dance Theater, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Residentie Orchestra, and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, have frequently toured the U.S. and Europe. In return, American music and dance troupes frequently perform in the Netherlands. The American performing arts are always well rep-

resented at the yearly Holland and the North Sea Jazz Festivals. Theater is abundantly available in the Netherlands, although in Dutch, and many avant-garde theater groups perform off-Broadway plays.

Commerce and Industry

The Netherlands has a prosperous and open economy that depends heavily on foreign trade. More than two-thirds of the Dutch Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is generated through merchandise and services trade. The Dutch are strong proponents of free trade and historically one of our staunchest allies in international economic and financial institutions. The Netherlands has a number of large multinational corporations, including Philips Electronics NV, Royal Dutch Shell, Unilever, Akzo/Nobel, DSM, Heineken and Albert Heijn Holding. More than 1,600 companies established in the Netherlands are either wholly or partly American owned. This has made the United States the largest investor in the Netherlands. The U.S. is the single most important market for Dutch products outside of Europe. The Netherlands, Japan, and the United Kingdom are the top three direct investors in the United States.

The Netherlands has for decades been among the ten largest customers for U.S. products worldwide and among the three largest customers for U.S. products in Europe. Over the years, the U.S. developed its largest worldwide merchandise trade surplus with the Netherlands. Agricultural commodities account for roughly 50 percent of U.S. exports to the Netherlands. Other important U.S. exports to the Netherlands include machinery, medical equipment, aircraft and avionics, computers and software, and business equipment.

The Netherlands has stable industrial relations. For several decades, the Netherlands has enjoyed a large current account surplus from its trade and overseas investments. It

is a net exporter of natural gas. The Dutch have developed their country's harbors at the mouth of the Rhine and Maas rivers into an European transportation hub centered on the Port of Rotterdam and supported by Schipol International Airport in Amsterdam. Excellent rail, canal, and road transportation complete the system making the Netherlands an important transshipment point for goods with destinations within the entire European continent. The single European internal market and the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) make the Netherlands an attractive distribution center for U.S. exporters.

The private sector is the cornerstone of the Dutch economy. Current economic performance is clearly better than that in other European countries with respect to unemployment and inflation. Relatively strong economic performance is attributed to the Dutch "Polder" Model, in which consensus among government, industry and trade unions results in successful and of deregulation, wage restraint, liberalization, privatization and tax reform. The government has gradually reduced its role in the economy in favor of privatization and deregulation. The State continues to dominate the energy sector, and plays a large role in public transport, aviation and telecommunications sectors. The Netherlands is firmly committed to the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU); public finances are well within the official EMU targets.

Agriculture. Both windmills and polders have been important to Dutch agriculture in the creation of arable land.

Dutch agriculture, due to severely limited availability of farmland, is primarily a conversion industry. It utilizes large ports to import feedstuffs, transforms them into dairy and meat products, and exports about three-fourths of these products to fellow members of the European Community. Livestock (including dairy) production

accounts for more than half of total production by value, followed by horticulture (mainly flowers) and arable crops. Production of milk and milk products, slaughter hogs, and vegetables are of greatest value. The U.S. enjoys a trade surplus in agricultural trade with the Netherlands. Major imports from the U.S. in order of importance typically include: soybeans, feedgrain substitutes, tobacco, fresh citrus, and high quality beef. Dutch agricultural exports to the U.S. consist mostly of beer, cut flowers, flower bulbs, cocoa products, and dairy products.

Transportation

Automobiles

The Netherlands boasts an excellent free public highway system, comparable to the interstate system in the U.S. A personal car is still the cheapest method of transportation for a family. It makes trips in Holland and Europe affordable. If sold in the Netherlands, American cars must be converted to conform to Dutch laws. Nonetheless, they are popular; service and parts are available in The Hague. The availability of super lead-free, Euro (lead-free) and leaded gasoline throughout the Netherlands makes taking an American car a practical alternative. The roads in the Netherlands are good. The Dutch drive on the right and follow other customary European traffic rules. The Dutch recognize U.S.-issued licenses. You can obtain an international drivers license upon presentation of a valid U.S. drivers license through a local automobile club. An international drivers license in itself is not a valid document for driving. It must always be used in addition to a valid drivers license.

Cars imported into the Netherlands must have license plates. The Netherlands does not issue temporary tags. A car imported into the Netherlands without plates may not be used until the Dutch registration is received. The procedure can take two to three months. Third party or liability insurance is required by law and must be obtained through a

company licensed by the Netherlands Government. Dutch insurance rates are high, but a 75 percent reduction is granted if a letter from the previous insurance company is submitted with certification that the applicant had no claims during the preceding 10 years. Smaller reductions are granted for shorter, claim free periods. These companies can write collision, comprehensive, and other types of coverage but the cost is high. You can also insure through one of the American companies authorized in Europe.

Rental cars are readily available.

Biking is a common method of transportation in Dutch society. Holland boasts an extensive dedicated network of bike paths which separate cyclists from cars. Bikes, from cheap to very expensive, may be rented at most railway stations in Holland. Either biking or using public transportation avoids the common problems of congestion and parking in the urban areas of the Netherlands.

Local

The public transportation system in the Netherlands is excellent. Trams and buses service points within cities on frequent schedules. Using public transportation avoids the problems of congested roads and the scarcity of parking. Public transportation is not expensive and you can save money by buying multiple ride tickets or monthly passes. Trams and buses do not run between 1 am and 5 am. Taxicabs, although plentiful and available by night or day, do not cruise and are expensive. Taxis line up in front of the train stations, some hotels, and after cultural events, but often one must phone for cab service. Most Dutch cities are connected by rail and most regions are accessible by other sorts of public transportation.

Regional

Schiphol International Airport is located about 45 minutes from The Hague, 35 minutes from Amsterdam, and is serviced by several U.S. airlines. There are direct flights aboard U.S. carriers to major East

Coast, Southern, Great Lakes' and West Coast cities. Many airlines fly between the principal European cities, and daily express rail service is available between The Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Brussels, and Paris. Air travel within Europe remains expensive.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The Netherlands telecommunication system is good but can lead to some frustrations for North American users. It may take as long as three weeks to establish phone service in The Hague, although the universal availability of mobile cell phones has considerably shortened this lead time. Direct-dial telephone service is available to the U.S. and throughout Western Europe, or calls can be booked through the long distance operator. Long distance and information services operators are multilingual. You can use a calling card to call numbers in the U.S. Calls placed this way are billed against a Master Card or Visa in dollars.

Radio and TV

Radio and TV are enriched in the Netherlands by programs from many of the surrounding countries. It's possible to find radio programs in French, German, and English as well as Dutch on a normal AM receiver. BBC at 648 on the AM dial offers English language news throughout the day. Good classical and jazz music stations can be found in addition to popular music, rock music and talk stations. Eight Dutch TV channels are on the air: Nederland 1, 2 and 3, Veronica, SBS-6 RTL-5 and 5 and TV West. Much of their programming is in English. English language TV shows are broadcast with Dutch subtitles, and commercials are few. Cable TV provides access to Belgian, West German, French, and British stations as well. The number of English-language channels broadcasting to Europe has increased greatly, bringing more music and American programming to the Netherlands. Cable is univer-

sally available. CNN Europe is available by cable throughout Holland. NBC World is also available in Amsterdam and Wassenaar.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Most Dutch bookstores offer a variety of books in English. International editions of Time, Newsweek, Life, USA Today, and the Herald Tribune are sold locally. Popular U.S. magazines—particularly women's magazines such as Vogue, Ladies' Home Journal, and Glamour—are sold at newsstands, but at double U.S. prices. The U.S. Army Base at Schinnen has a small bookstore that offers a mixed batch of American paperbacks, reference books of various sorts, and children's books. The American Women's Club of The Hague maintains a library of about 3,000 volumes with a special children's book section. It also carries a good range of newly released fiction and nonfiction books. In addition to these sources, most Dutch public libraries have some English language books.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Dutch doctors and hospitals are good. A general practitioner can treat the entire family, make house calls when necessary, and refer a patient to a specialist when needed. Access to specialists is restricted, however and delays in treatment are to be expected. Specialists are well trained in their fields and all specialties are represented. Good diagnostic clinics and laboratories are available. Common medical supplies may be obtained on short notice. The Dutch rely little on pain medication or tranquilizers and avoid using antibiotics unless they are clearly convinced of their necessity. Hospitals are well spaced throughout the cities, making them easy to find in an emergency. Most of the larger city hospitals are modern, with up-to-date equipment. Although dental training and techniques differ from those in the U.S., dental work, including orthodontics,

is usually good and compares favorably with U.S. prices. Eye testing and care is readily available; glasses are expensive.

Community Health

Dutch cities are as clean as our cleanest American cities. Garbage is collected once or twice a week and the water supply is good. Public eating places, butcher shops, and dairies are inspected regularly. Although most Temperate Zone diseases occur, no particular ailment is peculiar to this area. Sporadic cases of typhoid and mild epidemics of influenza occur. Some jaundice, sinusitis, and poliomyelitis exist here, as in other European countries. People with lung, bronchial, and skin disorders suffer in this climate.

Preventive Measures

All standard immunizations are available at local hospitals and medical facilities. Vitamin supplements may be useful, particularly in winter when sunshine is minimal.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Saturday
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 30.	Queen's Birthday
May 5	Liberation Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost
May/June	Whitmonday
Dec. 25 & 26	Christmas

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

United, Delta and Northwest are the American carriers currently flying to Schipol Airport from the U.S. Daily flights depart New York, Boston or Washington, D.C.

A passport is required. A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for visits up to 90 days. For further information on entry requirements for the Netherlands, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Netherlands at 4200 Linnean Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 244-5300, or the Dutch consulate in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, or San Francisco. Additional information is available at <http://www.netherlands-embassy.org> and the Netherlands Bureau for Tourism in New York at <http://www.goholland.com>.

Seat belt and child seat use is compulsory. Driving is on the right side of the road. The maximum speed limit on highways is 120 km/h, with a highway speed limit of 100 km/h posted in most urban areas. Secondary roads have a speed limit of 80 km/h. The speed limit in towns and cities is 50 km/h, with 30 km/h posted in residential areas. Drivers must yield the right-of-way to drivers from the right at intersections or traffic circles, unless otherwise posted. The maximum allowable blood alcohol level in the Netherlands is 0.5. Use of cellular telephones while driving is discouraged.

Lanes at the center of many urban two-way streets are reserved for buses, trams, and taxis. In cities, pedestrians should be very mindful of trams, which often cross or share bicycle and pedestrian paths. Motorists must be especially mindful of the priority rights of bicyclists. Pedestrians should also pay particular attention not to walk along bicycle paths, which are often on the sidewalk and usually designated by red pavement.

Americans living in or visiting the Netherlands are encouraged to register at the Consulate General in

Amsterdam and obtain updated information on travel and security in the Netherlands. The U.S. Embassy is located in The Hague, at Lange Voorhout 102; telephone (31)(20) 310-9209. However, all requests for consular assistance should be directed to the Consulate General in Amsterdam at Museumplein 19, telephone (31)(20) 664-5661, (31)(20) 679-0321, or (31)(20) 575-5309. The after-hours emergency telephone number is (31)(70) 310-9499. The U.S. Embassy and Consulate General web site at <http://www.usemb.nl> answers many questions of interest to Americans visiting or residing in the Netherlands.

Pets

No restrictions exist on importing pets. Dogs and cats must have a health certificate issued by a veterinarian in the animal's country of origin (this includes U.S. Army veterinarians stationed in the county of origin). The certificate must state in Dutch, German, French, or English that the dog or cat has been vaccinated against rabies using a vaccine approved in the country of manufacture, the manufacturer, and the type of vaccine (live or dead). The certificate must also provide a complete description of the animal (species, age, breed, gender, weight, color, and markings), the owner's name, and the owner's address. The certificate must also state that the rabies vaccine was administered at least 30 days, but not more than 1 year, before the date of arrival in the Netherlands.

Arrangements can be made through KLM to receive pets and to see that they are placed in a kennel until you can pick them up. A fee of is imposed for transport to the kennel, and kennels' charges are comparable to those in the U.S.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

As a member of the European Community, the monetary unit in The Netherlands is the euro, which is divided into 100 cent. Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 & 2 euro. Bank notes are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. The exchange rate approximates 1.15 euro to \$1 US.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material available on this country:

At Home in Holland. American Women's Club: The Hague, 1984.

Erickson, Patricia G. *Roaming Round Holland.* City of Rotterdam Information Department: Rotterdam, 1985.

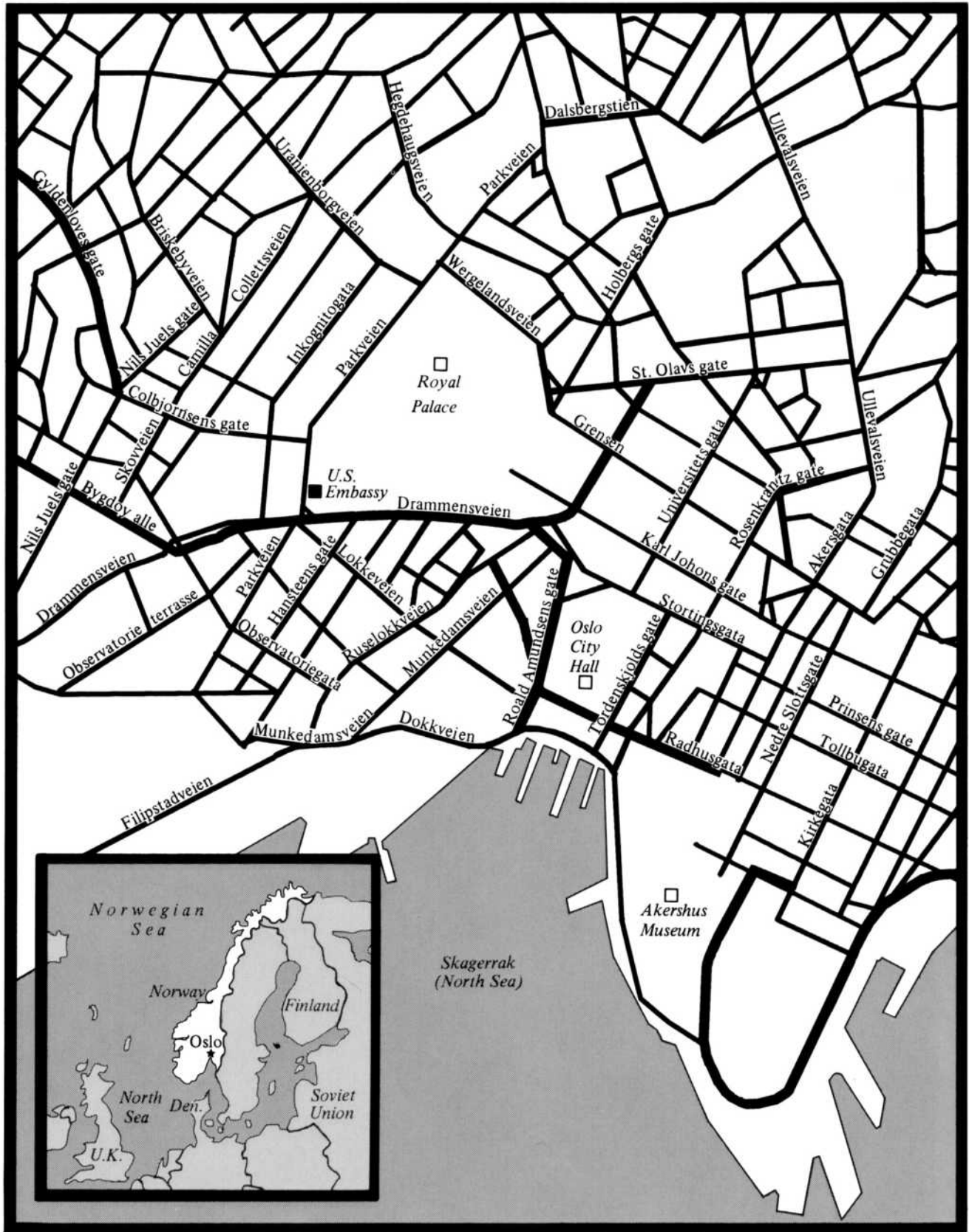
Lijphart, Arend. *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands.* University of California Press: Berkeley, 1968.

Mulisch, Harry. *The Assault.* Pantheon: 1985.

Newton, Gerald. *The Netherlands: An Historical and Cultural Survey, 1795-1977.* Ernest Benn Ltd.: London, 1978.

Schama, Simon. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age.* Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1987.

Voorhoeve, Joris. *Peace, Profits and Principles: A Study of Dutch Foreign Policy.* M. Nijhoff: Dordrecht/Boston, 1979.



Oslo, Norway

NORWAY

Kingdom of Norway

Major Cities:

Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger, Tromsø, Kristiansand

Other Cities:

Ålesund, Arendal, Bodo, Drammen, Halden, Hamar, Haugesund, Kristiansund, Lillehammer, Molde, Porsgrunn, Roros, Sandnes, Skien, Tonsberg

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Norway. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer, **NORWAY**, the world focused on this stunning country for two weeks. The breathtaking scenery from the Olympic coverage captivated the world's imagination. Norway is, without a doubt, one of the most beautiful countries in the world. The landscape includes spectacular fjords and mountain ranges, tranquil lakes and forests, bustling cities and quaint towns. For the lover of natural beauty and outdoor life, Norway is a virtual paradise.

Like its other Scandinavian neighbors, Norway enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the world. A sound industrial economy plus a

powerful boost from North Sea oil gives the country a firm financial base. The government runs a comprehensive, first-class social welfare program that includes socialized education, health care, pensions, and workmen's compensation. A combination of high taxes and an especially high tax on the oil revenues allows the government to maintain this level of service while running a budget surplus. In short, Norway has the best of both worlds—a thriving capitalist economy and a heavily socialized system to take care of the population. No other country in the world manages simultaneously to succeed at both so well.

In late 1994, Norway held its second referendum on whether or not to join the European Union (EU). The first referendum in 1972 was hotly debated and Norway narrowly decided against membership. This time, the Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, led the movement in favor of joining, arguing that Norway should choose to be an active part of an ever more unified European future. An unlikely combination of the Labor Party, environmentalists and the conservative rural population joined together to oppose membership. In a very close vote, Norwegians for the second time chose not to enter the EU. The future will show the effects

of this decision. Meanwhile, the government is hard at work trying to keep an active role for Norway in the EU even though Norway is not a voting member.

The U.S. and Norway have an enormous amount in common and the cultures overlap in many ways. Up to eight million Americans (especially in the Midwest and Pacific northwest) are of Norwegian descent. American movies, clothing styles, music, foods, book and magazines are available on every corner. A recent feature story in Norway's largest newspaper stated that Norway is more "American" than any other European country. It is true, and the signs are visible everywhere.

Still, Norway has a distinct national character that both delights and surprises. The Norwegians are a proud and determined people with a rich and unique history, and they are not afraid to stand alone and challenge world opinion over issues they care deeply about. Recent discussions of EU membership and of whaling both call this facet of the Norwegian spirit to mind. Right or wrong, this Norwegian independence is something one cannot help but admire.

MAJOR CITIES

Oslo

Oslo, with a population of about a half-million people, is Norway's capital as well as its largest city. In addition to being the seat of government, Oslo is also the business and cultural capital of the nation.

Oslo lies in the shape of a horseshoe at the head of the Oslo Fjord. The city covers an area of 167 square miles between the shoreline and surrounding hills. The horseshoe opens out onto the fjord which stretches about 60 miles between forested hills and farmlands down to the open sea. The city is spectacular during spring and summer when flowers blossom in parks, around public buildings and on almost every window ledge. Winter's landscape brings a crystalline beauty of its own.

Oslo is home to many Americans. The Consular Section has 15,000 Americans registered and there could be as many as 25,000 dual citizenship Norwegian-Americans in Norway.

Food

In general, food availability and variety in Norway are excellent. The economy offers a wide range of food-shopping options, from small bakeries and gourmet coffee boutiques to large American-style supermarkets. Most everything in the standard American diet is readily available, although it is likely to cost a lot more.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are largely imported and of very good quality. They are available year-round, but the selection can become more limited during the winter months. Local dairy products are always available and their quality is consistently excellent. In addition, one can easily find a large assortment of imported cheeses. Fresh, first-quality meat and fish are always available, but the cuts and selection differ from what one would



Akershus Fortress over Oslo's harbor

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

find in the U.S. One can buy a variety of newly-baked, wonderful breads, rolls and cakes in the ubiquitous bakeries.

A limited assortment of canned and bottled baby food is available, but it is almost exclusively mixed dinners or blended fruit. The quality is similar to American baby food, and as with everything else, the price is much higher. Infant formula is available on the local economy in powdered form only and is the type meant for newborns. There appears to be no market in Norway for the graduated formulas, with and without iron, etc., that Americans use.

Clothing

The quality of clothing available in Oslo is excellent. Prices are 30–50 percent higher than in the U.S. for comparable “top-of-the-line” items. Very few bargains are available in children's clothing items. Sales occur in July and August and again in the spring. Shoes are often very expensive and tend to come only in wide widths. A varied selection of sturdy winter boots is available, again only in the wider widths.

Downhill and cross-country ski wear and equipment are available locally but you may not find a good fit if you need an unusual size. The

quality is excellent, and frequent sales do appear for these items. Prices for skiwear and equipment are often less for European brands than in the U.S. Used ski equipment and some clothing (especially for children) are available in Oslo at various loppemarkeds (flea markets). Down jackets and coats are very expensive locally.

Dry cleaning is extremely expensive by U.S. standards. Plan to bring clothing that is machine washable and easy to iron.

Men: Men should bring wool suits, sweaters, scarves, gloves, heavy overcoats and fur-lined or other boots. Good rubber boots are available locally, but overshoes should be purchased in the U.S. Dress shirts are expensive. The local selection of ties is excellent, and prices compare with the U.S. A raincoat (preferably washable) with a zip-out liner is invaluable. Bring some lightweight apparel for warm summer days. Some people call navy blazers the “winter uniform” because so many Norwegians wear them.

Women: Women in Norway dress informally during the day but more formally for evening events than in the U.S. Winter clothes should include woollens, warm suits, sweat-

ers, scarves, gloves, heavy overcoats and fur-lined or other boots. Slacks and pant suits are often worn, but jeans are worn only for very informal occasions. Some summer days and evenings can be cool, but you should bring light clothing for the short summer season. Women will find a raincoat with a hood (preferably washable) and a zip-out lining invaluable.

Lingerie can be purchased in Norway, but prices are much higher than in the U.S. Pantyhose and stockings are fairly priced but sizes and colors may be different than in the U.S.

Children: Locally available infant's and children's clothing is of extremely good quality and is also extremely expensive.

Norwegian winter clothing seems sturdier and warmer than U.S. brands. Children's shoes and boots are wider than in the U.S. and can cost \$50–\$80 per pair. Sneakers and running shoes are available, but cost more than in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

You can get everything you need, be it supplies or services, on the local economy.

You should bring a supply of prescription medicines because it may take that much time to make arrangements at a local pharmacy for a continued supply. You should also bring a supply of special or favorite cosmetics.

Most standard services are available on the economy but expensive and sometimes slow. Beauty/barber shops are plentiful. Shoe repair and radio repair are available. Local dry cleaning takes 4–7 days, is expensive and can fall below stateside standards for delicate items like silk and leather. Fur cleaning and storage can be arranged at fur stores. Laundries provide satisfactory but expensive work. Fast service increases the price. A few Laundromats can be found, but the prices (\$6–\$8 a wash load) are exorbitant.

Religious Services

Norway's state religion is Lutheranism, and virtually all Norwegian citizens adhere to this faith at least nominally, although regular church attendance is low.

There are also a number of churches offering services in Oslo in English, including Lutheran, Catholic, Jewish, Latter Day Saints, Baptist, Christian Science, Quaker and Anglican services.

Education

The Oslo International School (OIS) offers a British-type academic program for children ages 3 to 18. OIS also offers an International Baccalaureate (IB) degree program.

Located in Bekkestua (a suburb of Oslo), enrollment is open to children of all nationalities who are in Oslo for a short period of time and are interested in English-language instruction.

The Primary and Secondary schools are comprised of three departments: Infants, Juniors and Seniors. The Infants Department offers instruction to children 3 to 7 years of age. All children are placed in classes according to their age as of September 1:

- Kindergarten—3 years of age
- Reception—4 years of age
- Year 1—5 years of age
- Year 2—6 years of age

This scheme is somewhat similar to the American education program of two years of preschool, a year of kindergarten, and the first grade.

The OIS kindergarten program is designed to help children mix and work happily with other children, gain control over actions and movements, and stimulate an interest in learning. The time is divided into story, music, rhythmic and free play both outdoors and indoors. Instruction is provided in handwork, painting, modeling and physical education.

The Reception and Year 1 and 2 programs follow the normal curriculum

for British schools as does the Junior program for children ages 7 to 10. The Junior program is comprised of:

- Year 3—7 years of age
- Year 4—8 years of age
- Year 5—9 years of age
- Year 6—10 years of age

Foundation subjects are English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Technology, Music, Art, and Physical Education. The children also have computer studies. French is introduced from the age of 9 years. During the winter, children take cross-country ski lessons as part of the physical education program. Norwegian language instruction was recently introduced.

Students enter the Secondary School at age 11 and graduate at age 18 with an IB degree, with the program consisting of:

- Senior 1 (Year 7)—11 years of age
- Sr 2 (Year 8)—12 years of age
- Sr 3 (Year 9)—13 years of age
- Sr 4 (Year 10)—14 years of age
- Sr 5 (Year 11)—15 years of age
- IB 1 (Year 12)—16 years of age
- IB 2 (Year 13)—17 years of age

Curriculum subjects include: English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, French, Art, Handwork, Music, Physical Education, Computer Studies, Drama, Classical Studies, Typewriting and Norwegian. During Years 7–9, the children take a course in each subject area. In Years 10–11 students follow a two-year curriculum leading to the "International General Certificate of Secondary Education" (IGSCE) examination. IGSCE is used by schools in over 90 countries and has been recognized as a qualification for matriculation purposes by universities in the United Kingdom and in many other countries.

Years 12 and 13 are also referred to as IB 1 and IB 2. Students in these years participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, an international pre-university curriculum. The International Baccalaureate

laureate was created to provide international schools with both an appropriate common curriculum at the upper secondary school level and a matriculation examination which has wide acceptability.

Each year various outings and trips are arranged for the Seniors, both in Norway and abroad. The students also visit theaters and exhibitions. In the month of February, Years 6–9 spend a week at winter camp.

The Oslo International School has two campuses. The Kindergarten, Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes are collocated within close proximity to the Junior and Senior school campus. Each campus has a large play area with modern play equipment. They also both have libraries with a wide variety of British and American children's literature, reference materials and other publications. The Junior and Senior school has a gymnasium with a full basketball court and gymnastic equipment. The Infants school has a small gymnasium.

Situated between the two campuses and within short walking distance is the Nadderudhallen sports complex and the Bcerum Commune (community) soccer fields, baseball fields, track and tennis courts. The Naderudhallen sports complex has a large heated swimming pool, bowling alley, and basketball courts. Children who attend the Oslo International School are often involved in sports programs at Nadderudhallen and the Bcerum Commune playing fields.

The school year begins around the last week in August and ends in the third week of June. There is no school uniform but weather dictates that students wear clothing appropriate for outdoor play throughout the school year. Students will need boots, rain coats and rain pants during the fall and spring. Down parkas, ski pants, snow boots, ski gloves and hats are required in the winter. Students go outdoors to play everyday unless the temperature goes below minus 15 degrees Celsius (about 0 degrees Fahrenheit).

Children are required to bring a packed lunch and a pair of indoor (soft-soled) shoes.

The Oslo International School has no program for children with special needs. Sporadically, special arrangements have been made for children with special needs on a case-by-case basis and within the standard classroom environment. Some individual and small-group instruction is provided to students who have difficulty in a particular subject area.

There are French- and German-language schools located in downtown Oslo. They are considered excellent. (French, 6-18 years; German, 6-15 years). Local Norwegian schools are also available.

English-language preschool education is also available at the Frogner International Preschool located in the American Lutheran Church in downtown Oslo. The school is open to children ages 3–7. The International Montessori Preschool has an excellent preschool program. There is a waiting list for admittance.

There are two types of Norwegian preschool programs: the barnehage and barnepark. The barnehage is an indoor nursery school for children aged 1–6 with hours from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. A barnehage is either privately owned or operated by a commune. The barnepark is similar but is outdoors, for children aged 1–4, and usually open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is quite difficult to enter a barnehage; preference is given to Norwegian children and there is always a long waiting list. It is less difficult to find space in a barnepark. Tuition for the barnehage and barnepark are reasonable in comparison to American day-care facilities.

The American Women's Club sponsors a Moms and Tots program for preschool children. There are other informal Moms and Tots groups within the English-speaking community in Oslo.

Sports

Norway offers excellent and varied opportunities for recreation. Sports and outdoor activities can be found to fit almost any pursuit or interest. Practically all types of equipment are available in Oslo, but except for used items (skates, skis, bikes), it is fairly expensive. You should plan to bring equipment from the U.S. for all sports except skiing and skating.

Cross-country skiing is the country's major winter sport. It is also a way of life. Alpine (slalom) skiing and snow boarding are also very popular. The number of ski resorts with good lifts increases every year. Ski resorts like Geilo and Hemsedal are packed during Christmas and Easter holidays. All around Oslo you can find lighted cross-country ski trails, which make for a wonderful evening outing. Lessons taught in English or Norwegian are available for all ages and levels, including those who have no previous experience in skiing. Skis, boots, and poles are readily available on the economy and are one of the few true bargains in Norway. Many comfortable hotels, cabins and lodges in the mountains cater to winter sports enthusiasts.

Hiking and camping are very popular in Norway. Hiking trails are marked on many maps. Norwegians love to take extended hiking trips with nightly stops in tents or cabins during the summer months. Good camping areas are available throughout the country during the warmer weather, but Norwegian camping areas (like many European camping spots) are often quite crowded by American standards.

Norway offers superb areas for riding mountain bikes on dirt/gravel roads. If you like to ride, purchase a bicycle prior to arriving as bicycles in Norway can be extremely expensive.

Fishing is also a very popular summer sport. Many good streams can be found close to the Oslo area. Fishing for cod or other saltwater fish in the Oslo fjord or on the west coast of Norway does not require a

license. Good equipment is available in Oslo. The national fishing license costs little, but you may encounter additional expenses since hotels or landowners control many of the best streams and may charge high fees for fishing rights. First-class trout and salmon fishing is at least a full day's travel from Oslo and very expensive.

September and October are the months for hunting game birds such as grouse, duck and mountain grouse (ptarmigan). September is also the time for hunting moose, deer, and reindeer. Many hunting areas are controlled and access can be expensive.

Sailing, rowing, and wind-surfing are popular summer sports. The Oslo fjord is painted white with sails by 4 pm. on summer afternoons. Boat rentals and sail-board rentals and lessons are available. Canoeing and kayaking are also popular. The one challenging golf course, 20 minutes from downtown Oslo, charges a membership fee. Greens fees apply for nonmembers. Nonmembers wishing to play on weekends must be members of some other golf club and have a valid membership card. An American golf club membership can be obtained at reduced rates.

Summer is usually warm enough for swimming in the fjords and nearby lakes. Indoor pools are available during all seasons. A heated outdoor pool at Frogner Park in Oslo is open from May to mid-September. Swimming instruction for children is offered throughout the year. Oslo has good indoor and outdoor tennis courts and badminton courts. Squash and racquetball courts are growing in number.

Active bowling teams are found in the American community. Several curling clubs encourage enthusiasts. Two stables are available. The cost is high, and you should bring riding clothes from the U.S. Many bicycle paths are open for Oslo's numerous cyclists. Bicycle rental is available at Aker Brygge.

Children arriving to Oslo will find local Norwegian sports clubs that sponsor soccer, basketball, ice hockey and ice bandy teams. Spectator sports include soccer, track and field competitions, figure and speed skating competitions, horse racing and the internationally famous ski jumping competitions at Holmenkollen.

Norway offers outstanding opportunities for the tourist and nature lover. The beautiful western fjord country can be reached by daily trains which connect Oslo year round with Trondheim and Bergen. Both routes traverse high mountain ranges and narrow valleys. Coastal steamers sail round trip from Bergen to the northern tip of the country at Kirkenes next to the Russian border. This relatively expensive round trip takes about 2 weeks. The ship stops at many points along the coast permitting many shorter side trips. The North Cape and Finnmark, Norway's northernmost areas (the land of the midnight sun and northern lights), are also accessible by air. Main roads are kept open for auto traffic in winter except over the high mountains, where snow blocks the roads from October to June.

The Oslo area is full of parks and museums, ancient rock carvings, old stave churches and lovely views of the countryside. Popular seaside towns along the outer fjord's west coast (Sorlandet) are only a few hours by rail or automobile from Oslo. A 3-7 hour train ride takes you to the highest mountain ranges for fishing, hiking and mountain climbing in summer or skiing in winter. Regularly scheduled buses and fjord ferries supplement train services to many towns and popular ski centers. Every Norwegian dreams of owning at least one "hytte" (cabin) in the mountains and one by the sea. They love to enjoy nature both in winter and summer. Cabins can be rented for vacations. These cabins cost fairly little and provide a rather primitive but charming way to experience the Norwegian countryside.

Norway has some 200 small hotels, private log cabins and camping sites available for those who do not have a hytte. Hotels are quite expensive and generally crowded. The Norwegian Tourist Association operates inexpensive lodges in all the principal mountain ranges for hikers. The lodges, situated a day's walk apart along well-marked trails, offer meals and overnight accommodations.

Entertainment

Oslo is a pleasant family town. Most Norwegians spend their weekends skiing, boating, hiking or relaxing with their families at home or at their cabins. This makes it difficult to entertain Norwegians on weekends. American families in Norway tend to follow the same pattern. Yet Oslo also offers a range of things to do and see for those less interested in the out-of-doors.

Sight-seeing attractions include the striking Viking ships, Thor Heyerdahl's raft "Kon-Tiki," Nansen's vessel "Fram," the Holmenkollen ski jump and museum, and the outdoor Folk Museum. The Vigeland and Munch museums are excellent tributes to these world-famous Norwegian artists. Many other museums offer art and scientific attractions. Art exhibits in the traditional and contemporary styles can be found in several galleries. The Henie-Onstad Art Center in nearby Sandvika presents concerts, films and art exhibits.

Winter musical events include the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's regular concerts which often feature internationally known performers. The Norwegian Opera presents a series of opera and ballet performances each season and features guest performers. The Concert Hall schedules many internationally recognized artists. Musical highlights outside Oslo include the annual Bergen International Music Festival and annual festivals in Molde and Kongsberg for jazz lovers.

Some 20 movie theaters present American, English and other foreign-language films. Films are

screened with original soundtracks and Norwegian subtitles. Norwegian children under 7 are rarely admitted to movie theaters because they cannot read. Some neighborhood theaters will admit American children regardless of their ages when accompanied by their parents.

Four theaters produce modern and classical Norwegian dramas. Plays are occasionally in English. Two English-language drama groups perform several times a year. Puppet theaters for children are popular. These programs are usually in Norwegian, but most young children can follow the story.

Oslo has an ever-growing restaurant population. Restaurants tend to be very expensive by U.S. standards. An average meal for one without beer or wine will cost about 150 Norwegian kroner (\$25) while a full meal without drinks at a first rate restaurant will average 400 Norwegian kroner (\$60). Nevertheless, an increasing number of moderately priced restaurants are opening in the Oslo area. Some of these restaurants stay open until midnight. Oslo has three McDonald's (with typically high Oslo prices), a Burger King and a Pizza Hut. Several other similar fast-food restaurants sell hamburgers, pizzas and ribs. Typical Norwegian cuisine includes reindeer meat, pickled fish specialties, codfish or salmon dishes.

Oslo has a variety of nightclubs with dance floors. Beware though: a single beer cost between \$5.00 and \$7.50! Most clubs are open until 3 a.m. and many do a thriving business.

The University of Oslo offers English-language courses on Norwegian history and culture, and several local clubs sponsor more specialized courses. Many schools and local communities provide excellent Norwegian language courses and have classes in arts and crafts or sewing taught in English. The International Forum has a broad range of activities for women

in the Oslo area, including lectures, concerts, courses, and tours to places of interest.

There are a few American social clubs in Oslo. The American Women's Club (AWC) was founded in 1934 as a social and philanthropic organization for American women living in Norway. AWC has approximately 300 members. The American Coordinating Council of Norway (ACCN) is a nonprofit council of American organizations founded in 1985. The Fourth-of-July celebration in Frogner Park is the main activity of ACCN. The American Club of Oslo is a 36-year-old club comprised of 300 members and structured to promote American business interests in Norway.

Bergen

Bergen, capital of the Vestlandet (West Land), is Norway's second largest city, with a population of 211,000. Nestled against steep hills on one side and facing the North Sea on the other, it is the westernmost city in the country, and the major shipping and fishing center.

The original town was founded by King Olav Kyrre in 1070, but was destroyed three times by devastating fires, the most recent in 1916. During the Middle Ages, it was the northern outpost of the Hanseatic League, a powerful mercantile confederacy of German towns.

Bergen is a commercial and industrial city, providing ships, steel, textiles, electrical equipment, fish, and refined oil. It is also a fascinating city of hilly, cobbled streets; high-gabled, wooden warehouses; an ancient harbor market, called Torget; good shopping, especially for handcrafted silver and furs; extensive cultural activities; and many opportunities for sightseeing.

Its historical sites include the Bergenhus Fortress, which houses the imposing Håkonshallen (King Håkon's Hall), built in 1261. The fortress was restored after being damaged during World War II. The Mariakirken, a 12th-century

church with twin steeples, is a highlight for visitors, as is the Fantoft Stave Church, which was built during that same period. Fantoft was restored and moved here in 1833 from its original site at Fortun. Not to be forgotten is "Bryggen," Scandinavia's hanseatic trade center, now on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) list of world sights most worthy of preservation. Troidhaugen, the home of composer Edvard Grieg, is a national shrine in nearby Hop.

Bergen has much to offer the tourist. In addition to skiing, salmon and trout fishing, hiking, golf, and tennis, there are sight-seeing tours by bus or boat, and trips by coastal steamers which sail to the northern tip of the country at Kirkenes, on the Russian border.

Each year, from late May and until mid-June, the Bergen International Festival of concerts, ballet, drama, and folklore draws thousands of visitors to the city. It is a major undertaking, known for the quality of its productions and for the celebrity of the international artists who are featured. The famed Harmonien, one of the world's oldest philharmonic orchestras (more than 200 years), and Den Nationale Scene, the nation's oldest theater, are here in Bergen.

The university founded at Bergen in 1948 has become one of Norway's leading educational centers. Its school of Economics and Business Administration is the only one of its kind in Norway. There also are several scientific institutes in the city.

The Bergen airport, 12 miles south of the city center, is served by domestic and international flights.

The Bergen Tourist Board is located at Slottsgt. 1, N-5023 Bergen. An information office is open in central Bergen on Torgalmenning.



View of Bergen from Mt. Floien

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Education

The Bergen American School, located at Skolegaten 1, Laksevåg, is a private institution whose enrollment is open to English-speaking children.

International School of Bergen is a coeducational, private day school founded in 1975. It offers an American/British curriculum for pre-kindergarten through ninth grade. French and Norwegian are taught as foreign languages; other elective studies include computer instruction, art, and physical education. Extracurricular activities and a variety of sports are offered.

Current enrollment at International numbers 95, with the many students from the United Kingdom. There are 14 full-time and one part-time staff members.

International School of Bergen is situated on a five-acre campus on a

lake just outside of the city. Facilities include three buildings, nine classrooms, playing fields, two gymnasiums, science and computer laboratories, a swimming pool, and a 4,500-volume library. The school's address is: Vilhelm Bjerkesvei 15, 5030 Landas, Bergen, Norway.

Trondheim

Trondheim (Trondhjem), in central Norway, was known as Nidaros when it was the country's first capital. Although it is a modern industrial and agricultural center of 137,300 inhabitants, Trondheim still bears the marks of its medieval history. It was founded in 997 and, until 1380, was the national capital. The city was occupied by the Germans on the first day of the Norway invasion, April 9, 1940, and was held through the spring of 1945. Trondheim was one of the major centers of the Norwegian resistance movement.

Its 11th-century cathedral, Nidaros, restored after being damaged several times by major fires, is the finest Gothic edifice in Norway, as well as Trondheim's principal landmark. Stiftsgården, a royal palace built in the 18th century, is also located here.

Trondheim is noted for its Academy of Sciences and for its technical institute, Tekniske Høgskole. It is a busy industrial city, but still it attracts winter sports enthusiasts, and also visitors who enjoy its warm summers (unusual in northern Europe). A nine-hole golf course at Sommerseter holds an annual midnight tournament at about the time of summer solstice (June 21 or 22).

There are art galleries and museums in Trondheim, and an abundance of good hotels, restaurants, shops, and cinemas.

Several excursions are possible in the area, including trips to



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Gamble Bybro Old Town Bridge over Nidelva River in Trondheim

Munkholmen Island in the fjord, the site of an early Christian abbey and, in earlier times, a pagan place of execution; to the Trollheimen Mountains (a 225-mile drive); to Stiklestad, where an annual festival of plays takes place in late July; or to Oppdal, Norway's "alpine" town.

Information is available from the Tourist Office at Hornemannsgården, Town Square.

Stavanger

Stavanger is Norway's fourth largest city (97,500) and the headquarters of the North Sea oil fleet. It is situated in the southwestern part of the country, on the Byfjord, and is the seat of Rogaland, the district from which Norway was made into one kingdom. It is the southernmost gateway to the fjord country.

Stavanger has several important industries, but probably is best known as the sardine canning capital of the world. It is a modern city

of large buildings, bustling traffic, beaches, shops, and streets lined with churches. Its Anglo-Norman cathedral, dating to the 12th century, is among Norway's most interesting medieval buildings, as is the Utstein Kloster (cloister), located on an island just beyond the city.

Stavanger has an American population of more than 4,000, most of them connected with the oil industry. Like Trondheim, Stavanger was occupied on the first day of the German invasion of Norway, and remained under German control for more than five years.

Sola Airport is about nine miles from Stavanger, and the city terminal is in town at the SAS Royal Atlantic Hotel.

The Tourist Information Office is located on Jernbanevej.

Education

It is possible for American children to attend Norwegian public schools,

where subjects are comparable to those taught in the U.S. Classes are in Norwegian, but children with language difficulty receive special assistance.

There are two English-language schools in the city. The Stavanger British School enrolls students from kindergarten to the seventh grade, while the Stavanger American School hold classes for pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

The International School of Stavanger (formerly the Stavanger American School), a coeducational, private institution, sponsored by oil companies, follows an American and British curriculum. French, Spanish, and Norwegian are offered as foreign languages; there are advanced placement, independent study, and remedial programs. Extracurricular and sports activities are numerous.

Total enrollment currently stands at 322; the teaching staff of 31 full

time and four part-time is almost entirely American. Founded in 1966, it is situated on 15 acres in the western part of the city. Facilities include 36 classrooms, gymnasiums and playing fields, science and computer laboratories, an auditorium, and a 15,000-volume library. The school's address is: Treskeveien 3, 4042 Hafslsfjord, Norway.

Tromsø

Tromsø, with a population of 50,500, is the largest city above the Arctic Circle. It is situated on an island and joined to the mainland by the longest bridge in northern Europe. The island is in a spectacular fjord area, on the same latitude as northern Alaska, but its climate is tempered by the waters of the Gulf Stream. In summer, it is not unusual for the temperature to reach 77°F (25°C).

As the chief seaport of Arctic Norway, Tromsø is a base for seal hunters and a starting point for many cruise ships and exploratory expeditions. The city is justifiably proud of its designation, "Gateway to the Arctic," since it has been the starting point for many Arctic explorations. A number of herring fisheries are located here, and other important industries include shipbuilding and rope manufacturing.

The city is the site of the famed Observatory of Northern Lights, and is noted also for the excellent exhibits of regional geology, fauna, and traditional Lapp activities at the Tromsø Arctic Museum. Cultural life is limited, but Tromsø supports an enthusiastic amateur city orchestra, two movie theaters, and one dramatic theater.

Tromsø University, the world's northernmost university, has been established here. Its library has a good selection of books in English; the city library maintains a small collection of English-language children's books, as well as some current best-sellers and a sprinkling of English-language publications in several fields. Newsstands sell the *International Herald Tribune* and



Tromsø Bridge and cathedral

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

some British newspapers. There is single-channel television reception.

Tromsø has no school for English-speaking children but, as in other cities throughout the country, they are eligible to attend the local, well-regarded Norwegian schools. Some parents supplement that schooling with U.S. correspondence courses from the Calvert (kindergarten through grade eight) and University of Nebraska (high school) systems. Varied adult education classes are available in the city.

Recreational possibilities, especially for winter sports and fishing, are numerous. There are lighted cross-country and downhill ski slopes, indoor tennis courts, and swimming pools. The city has a disproportional large number of restaurants for a place of its size.

The Tourist Information Office is located on Dampskipskaia.

Kristiansand

Kristiansand, in the southernmost part of Norway, is a busy commercial center and holiday resort, set in a beautiful archipelago with sheltered coves and white beaches. Its population of more than 64,800 makes it the country's fifth largest city.

Kristiansand, as a town, dates back to 1641, when it was chartered by the Danish-Norwegian king, Christian IV. It has been ravaged several times by fire, the most severe in 1892, and few of its timber buildings remain. The town square was built by Christian IV; streets surrounding it are the same width that they were in 1641. At the northeastern part of the square is the largest section of wooden homes in Northern Europe. There also are interesting museums; old churches, including Odderness Church, built in 1040; and the Christiansholm Castle (1674). Kristiansand Dyrepark (animal park) is noted for the breeding of camels—unusual in this part of the world.

The city offers a broad range of opportunities for shopping and recreation, and a good selection of restaurants and hotels. The local specialty, *kompe*—salted meat enveloped in boiled, grated potatoes—may be purchased at several street stalls. Kristiansand has two cinemas, a theater, and a symphony orchestra, whose season runs from September through May. An annual church festival is held in June.

Kjevik Airport is about nine miles from the center of town. Direct Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) connections are available to Copen-



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Bridge and city of Kristiansund

hagen and Ålborg (both in Denmark). Kristiansand has good local bus service. As the communications center for Norway's southern region, it has daily ferry arrivals from the continent, as well as a railway line that links the eastern and western parts of the country.

The Tourist Office in Kristiansand is at 31 Gyldenlovesgate.

OTHER CITIES

ÅLESUND (or Aalesund) is Norway's principal fishing center, with a fleet operating between the Baffin Islands and the Barents Sea. Ålesund is the headquarters of the Arctic sealing fleet and the site of one of Scandinavia's largest dairies. It is situated in the western fjord area, on an island between Bergen and Trondheim. Dating from the ninth century, Ålesund is a city of 36,000, noted especially for its well-preserved *Jugendstil* (art nouveau) buildings. The Sunnmore Museum in the city has an interesting collection of boats and finds from Viking settlements. The municipal park, with its statue of Rollo (the first duke of Normandy), is a gift from the citizens of Rouen, France.

ARENDAI, a southern Norwegian seaport, is 125 miles southwest of Oslo on the Skagerrak (the arm of the east-central North Sea). This town of 11,500 is known for its combination of ancient and modern streets, old wooden houses, and new concrete buildings. Landmarks include the 19th-century town hall, which houses a portrait gallery today, and Trinity Church, with its towering spire. Just outside of Arendal is the 70-foot waterfall, Rykenefoss. Arendal is a departure point for ships crossing the Skagerrak to Hirtshals, Denmark.

BODO, 50 miles north of the polar circle, is a prosperous trade center with a population of 36,000. Although it is situated on the same latitude as the northern parts of Alaska and Siberia, it is warmed by the Gulf Stream, whose currents flow along the rugged Norwegian coastline. Situated at the head of the Salt Fjord in a central location in northern Norway, Bodo is the educational, administrative, and commercial center of Nordland County, and also has become a tourist resort; cruise ships and coastal steamers call here on their way to the North Cape. A new luxury hotel has been added to the accommodations. Bodo was founded in 1816, but did not begin to grow until

shoals of herring were found off the coast in the 1860s, bringing trade and prosperity, and subsequent industry. The town was severely damaged in World War II, but has been spaciouly and carefully rebuilt. There is a Tourist Information Office at 16 Storgaten.

DRAMMEN, the county capital of Buskerud in southern Norway, is famous for the Spiraltoppen, a steep tunnel involving six spiral turns inside Bragenesåsen Hill; at the summit are a lookout and a café. The city, whose population is approximately 51,900, has several industries, including sawmills and paper mills, and factories which produce electronic equipment.

HALDEN (formerly called Fredrikshald), 50 miles south of Oslo in the extreme southeastern tip of Norway, is an ancient city. Its modern history can be traced to the 1660s (it was referred to as Fredrikshald from 1665 to 1928), when the city repelled Swedish attacks from the ramparts of its Fredriksten Fort. King Charles XII of Sweden died here in 1718. The separation of Sweden and Norway in 1905 led to the deactivation of the fort. Halden's economy depends on light industry; adjacent quarries also provide employment. Visitors to this community of 27,600 often stop at the National War Memorial, as well as at medieval Berg Church. Svinesund Bridge connects Norway and Sweden, west of Fredriksten Fort.

HAMAR is situated on the shore of Norway's largest lake, Mjosa, 60 miles north of Oslo. The town of nearly 16,000 was founded by the English pope, Adrian IV, in 1152. It was destroyed by the Swedes in 1567, and among the ruins of that destruction is a 12th-century cathedral. Today, Hamar is the seat of a bishopric; industries include dairies and a foundry. The town is also a well-known ice skating center, boasting one of Europe's finest rinks.

Situated on a fjord in southern Norway opposite Stavanger, the seaport city of **HAUGESUND** is the center

of a large herring fleet. In addition to exporting fish, Haugesund has shipbuilding yards, woolen mills, and an aluminum plant. The town achieved fame during Viking times when Harald I united Norway in a battle near here; numerous monuments commemorate this event, including Harald's grave. Hauge-sund has a small museum and art gallery. The current population is 31,000.

The city of **KRISTIANSUND**, 90 miles southwest of Trondheim, is built on three islands enclosing a harbor and connected by bridges and ferry boats. The seaport was inhabited in prehistoric times, and incorporated as a city in 1742. It was destroyed by World War II bombing in 1940, but has been rebuilt. Today, Kristiansund (not to be confused with Kristiansand) is a busy fishing port and the base for a large trawling fleet. It exports fish and has shipbuilding yards. The city itself has a charming appearance, with broad streets, brightly painted houses, and a lively marketplace. Kristiansund's current population is 18,000.

LILLEHAMMER is located 85 miles north of Oslo on the northern shore of Lake Mjosa. Situated in the picturesque valley of the Lagen, the city is surrounded by hills and has many spectacular gardens and parks. Norway's best known resort, Lillehammer is a favorite destination for visitors who love the outdoors. Sporting opportunities are many and varied and include fishing, swimming, horseback riding, and boating in summer, and skiing, ice skating, and curling in winter. Lillehammer is the center of a grain and potato-farming area. Industries here include sawmills, flour mills, and machinery factories. The population of Lillehammer is 25,000.

The port city of **MOLDE** has gained the appellation "Town of Roses" because of its superb gardens. Nestled in an inlet of the Norwegian Sea, 225 miles northwest of Oslo, this 500-year-old area endured limited destruction in a 1916 fire, and extensive damage in World War II.

In April 1940, Molde served temporarily as home of the Norwegian government; after the war the city was totally rebuilt. Industries here include textile mills, furniture manufacture, and fish exports. Varden Hill (1,335 feet high), which commands a view of 87 mountain peaks, is a prime tourist stop in Molde. Also notable is Romsdalsmuseum, with its extraordinary folklore exhibit. Perhaps most outstanding of the city's attractions, however, is Tverrfjellet Mountain's Trollkyrkja. A huge cave features a 30-foot-high waterfall that ends in a marble pool. An annual summer jazz festival is held in Molde. The city has an estimated 22,300 residents.

PORSGRUNN, with roughly 35,700 inhabitants, is an industrial city at the mouth of the Skienselva River, about 70 miles southwest of Oslo. It was settled as a customs post in 1652 and today is home of the gigantic Norsk Hydro chemical factories. The varied economy includes porcelain manufacture, shipyards, and lumber mills. Rococo-styled churches of Østre Porsgrunn and Vestre Porsgrunn were built in the mid-1700s.

ROROS is a well-known and often-visited town of about 6,000 residents in central Norway. It is 35 miles west of the Swedish border and 50 miles southeast of Trondheim. Once an old mining town, Roros boasts unique 17th-century historic buildings.

SANDNES is a major port for the neighboring hinterland at the head of the Gandafjorden in the southwest. The city's fine transportation facilities allow for an industrial base including textile mills, construction materials, and ceramic tiles. Sandnes has an estimated population of 43,300.

SKIEN, with a current population of 48,000, is one of Norway's oldest towns, and the center of a copper-mining area. Ores and lumber are exported from here. Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), the dramatist and poet, was born in Skien; his child-

hood home, Venstop, is among the local attractions.

Founded in 871, **TONSBERG** is Norway's oldest town. An ancient fortress city, Tonsberg is located south of Oslo at the northern end of Notteroy Island. A shipping town for fish and lumber, it is also a home port for whaling fleets. Paper and wood and dairy products are produced here. The population of Tonsberg is currently 9,100.

The Lofoten Islands off the coast of northern Norway, are an island chain in the midnight sun above the Arctic Circle. This spectacular string of mountainous islands with abrupt peaks composed of granite and lime are estimated to be among the world's oldest. The Gulf Stream, traveling along Norway's coast, brings moderate temperatures to this area. Svolvær (population 4,000) is the Islands' informal capital and center for commerce and codfish, its economic mainstay. Hiking and boating will allow the tourist to enjoy the wild, rugged beauty of this area. Attractions include Lofot Museum, dating from the 19th century; old Viking settlements; cave drawings dating 600 B.C.; and 180 species of birds which draw ornithologists worldwide.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located in northwestern Europe on the Scandinavian peninsula, Norway is a picturesque country bounded on the west by the Northern Atlantic and the North Sea and on the east by Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Norway covers 150,000 square miles including Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands with landscape ranging from farms and fields to forest, lakes, plateaus, glaciers, and the highest peak in northern Europe. The jagged coastline stretches 1,625 miles when measured in a straight line—and a stag-

gering 13,125 miles including the ins and outs of the fjords. While small in population, Norway is one of the largest European countries in area.

Many people expect Norway's climate to be bitterly cold. The latitude of the country certainly suggests this would be true. The Arctic Circle cuts through Norway about halfway up the length of the country. Oslo lies in the southern part of the country but is at the same latitude as Anchorage, Alaska. Hammerfest, on the northern tip of the Norwegian mainland, is the world's most northerly town. Still, the climate of cities along the Norwegian coast is much milder than might be expected at such northerly latitudes, even during midwinter, because of the warming effect of the Gulf Stream. Winter in Oslo is typically warmer than winter in New England or Minnesota, though there is often a lot more snow.

Summer in the southern part of the country can last from early May to mid-August, or in a bad year, for only a week in late June. There are about 20 hours of daylight during June and July in Oslo. (Note: in northern Norway the midnight sun shines for nearly 2 months during this period!) Summer days rarely get warmer than 75 degrees Fahrenheit, and can be quite cool—in the 50s and 60s.

Winter brings only about six hours of daylight in Oslo and none in areas north of the Arctic Circle. Snow brightens the landscape considerably, even during the shortest days. However, some people find the darkness oppressive. Norwegians seem to have found numerous ways to combat the depression of winter by keeping things cozy and bright inside, using lots of candle light for cheer and warmth, and getting outside during the short days to see the sun.

Population

Norway's population is just over 4.5 million. Since the area of the coun-

try is so vast, Norway has the second lowest population density in Europe; only Iceland has fewer inhabitants per square mile. Sixty-five percent of Norwegians live in the southern part of the country and along the coast. Norway's largest cities are Oslo (pop. 470,000), Bergen (216,000), Trondheim (140,000), and Stavanger (100,000).

Norway has one official language—Norwegian. However, there are two distinct forms of the language which officially have equal status. One form, Bokmaal, strongly resembles Danish. The other, Nynorsk (translated this word means New Norwegian), harkens back to old Norwegian dialects. The forms are very closely interrelated, and Norwegians understand both. Still, they are taught in Norwegian schools as separate subjects. In addition to the division between Bokmaal and Nynorsk, Norwegian encompasses many and varied local dialects. Norwegians spend a great deal of time discussing their language and trying to place each other's dialects. Their language is for them a point of national and cultural pride.

Most people from larger Norwegian cities speak some English and many speak it very well. Nevertheless, Norwegians truly appreciate any effort made by foreigners to learn their language. Knowledge of Norwegian can be essential for social and business contacts in the country's more remote areas.

History

Our knowledge of Norwegian history dates back to 9000 B.C. when the ice which had covered northern Europe receded and prehistoric peoples began to settle the Scandinavian area. The Viking Age, from 800–1030 A.D., was a period of expansion, exploration and conquest. The Viking inhabitants of Norway expanded east into what is now Sweden, south into England and France, and even across the Atlantic to the New World. During the latter part of the Viking Age, two major events took place which

still have an impact upon Norway today—the unification of the country into a single kingdom and the introduction of Christianity. Although Norway became the fully independent nation of today only in 1905, throughout the past thousand years, Norway has preserved a sense of national identity and unity which traces back to the Viking Age.

After the prominence of the Viking period, Norway lost much of its national stature and independence. In 1530, Norway became part of Denmark and was governed by the Danish monarch until 1814. In 1814, Denmark ceded Norway to Sweden as a result of the Napoleonic Wars. However, the Norwegians rose in protest against this agreement and demanded their national right to self-determination.

The major turning point in modern Norwegian history occurred on May 17, 1814, when an assembly of delegates from all over the country met in Eidsvoll, a town north of Oslo, and adopted a Constitution for a free, independent, and democratically-governed Norway. This Constitution, which is still in force, is based on the United States Constitution and provides for three separate branches of government.

The Swedes refused to recognize Norwegian independence, and forced Norway into a union with Sweden under the rule of the Swedish king. From 1814 until 1905, Norway remained in union with Sweden, but the Constitution of Eidsvoll was in force and ensured Norway a democratic form of government. The union between Sweden and Norway was dissolved peacefully in 1905 and Norway entered the ranks of independent states.

When Norway gained its independence from Sweden, it decided by popular referendum to retain the limited monarchy as adopted in the Constitution of 1814. The Norwegian government offered the throne of Norway to Danish Prince Carl, who took the name of Haakon VII, in tribute to previous kings of Norway.

Haakon VII became a symbol of unity during the construction of independent, modern Norway. He especially symbolized Norway's fight against the German occupation during World War II. His radio broadcasts to Norway from his exile in London encouraged his countrymen and underscored Norway's determination to regain independence.

Haakon VII reigned until his death in 1957 and was succeeded by his son, Olav V, who was also well-loved by the Norwegian people. Olav V died in 1991 and was succeeded by his son Harald, who became King Harald V. King Harald and Queen Sonja have two children, Prince Haakon and Princess Martha Louise. Because Norway is a constitutional monarchy, the functions of the King (Chief of State) are mainly ceremonial, but his influence is felt as the symbol of national unity.

Public Institutions

Norway's parliament—the Storting—runs the affairs of the country. The Storting is led by the Prime Minister and is a modified unicameral parliamentary structure with 165 members elected from 19 counties. In each county (fylke), a governor exercises authority on behalf of the national government. The city of Oslo constitutes a separate 19th jurisdiction, but shares a governor with Akershus Fylke.

The Norwegian Labor Movement is a strong force in modern Norwegian political and socioeconomic life. Successive Labor Party governments have created a social democratic state with extensive public welfare benefits, universal and comprehensive health insurance, and state-funded pension coverage. Non-socialist governments have also supported the evolving system, resulting in an egalitarian and generally prosperous society. Taxation is accordingly high, to pay for these programs.

North Sea oil, which was discovered off Norway's coast in the early 1970s, helps pay for the country's

social welfare state. Today, Norway is Western Europe's leading oil producer, pumping nearly 2.5 million barrels per day. Norway's oil supply puts it in a unique position among European countries in terms of both domestic and foreign policies. As the European Union continues to evolve, Norway will almost certainly have to reassess its position vis-a-vis the EU. Still, the Norwegians are not afraid to stand alone, and they perceive that they have a traditional life-style and culture to preserve and protect. Norway is a proudly independent nation, not surprising when one thinks back to the Viking roots of the society.

Arts, Science, and Education

Norway has made impressive contributions to western culture. Norway's unique wooden "stave" churches have survived nearly 900 years. Music, art, and literature have been enriched by Edvard Grieg, Henrik Ibsen, Gustav Vigeland and Edvard Munch. The sculpture garden of Gustav Vigeland in Oslo's Frogner Park offers an afternoon of wonder as one contemplates Vigeland's powerful and compassionate work. An essential part of expressionist painting, Munch's varied and striking works are displayed in Oslo's National Gallery and the Munch Museum. Ibsen's plays are well-loved and are performed all over the world.

In addition to the collections exhibited in the major museums, Oslo offers a number of art galleries such as Kunstnerens Hus and the Henie-Onstad Art Center which organize exhibitions of works by American and European artists. A museum of modern art houses a select collection of works by contemporary artists of the western world. Norway is also known for its love of the performing arts. The Bergen International Music Festival sponsors a two-week cultural extravaganza of classical and contemporary music, dance, and theater each year. A number of jazz festivals are held throughout Norway, and interna-

tionally known singers perform frequently.

Education in Norway is free through college and compulsory through age 16. The literacy rate is almost 100 percent. Over 41,000 students attend Norway's four universities or other institutes of higher learning. English is mandatory in the Norwegian school system from the 4th through 9th grades. Most Norwegians speak English (this is particularly true in Oslo) and can usually understand French and German in addition to the other Scandinavian languages.

The level of scientific and technical education is high in Norway. Norwegians have made significant contributions to many fields of study. Thor Heyerdahl of Kon-Tiki fame has followed in the footsteps of the famous Norwegian Arctic explorers Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen. And, of course, Norway is home to the Nobel Institute, a world famous research institution which awards the Nobel Peace Prize.

Commerce and Industry

Offshore oil exploration and exploitation, shipping, metals, pulp and paper products, chemicals, fishing, and forestry are Norway's major industries, and Norway's merchant fleet is one of the largest in the world. Large offshore oil/gas reserves will continue to play a crucial role for Norway in the twenty-first century.

The Norwegian economy is essentially stable and harbors few surprises. Growth in gross domestic product (GDP), inflation, consumption and other basic factors strongly resemble those of other developed and prosperous European countries. Over the past 20 years, the Norwegian economy has grown steadily without heavy-handed government intervention. OECD statisticians predict continued steady growth in the near term.

Norway is a very small country, with a population of 4.3 million and a GDP of just over 700 billion Norwegian kroner or \$108 billion (about 1.8 percent the size of the U.S. GDP). The economy includes a solid and growing industrial base, but the star of the Norwegian economy since the early seventies has been North Sea oil. Growth in oil production and oil price shifts have both had significant effects on the Norwegian economy in the past twenty years, mostly positive. The Norwegian government maintains control of oil production via the state-owned company Statoil and uses its revenues to fund social programs.

Norway's total export of goods and services, including shipping, equals nearly 50 percent of its GDP, with oil accounting for the lion's share. The economy is heavily influenced by world trade levels, oil prices, and currency exchange rates.

The U.S. exported approximately \$1.4 billion in goods to Norway in 1999 and approximately \$1.2 billion in services. Norway produces over 3 million barrels a day of crude oil and exports 94% of its production making it the second largest oil exporter in the world. The U.S. is Norway's largest foreign investor with \$6.2 billion in foreign direct investment at book value (two-thirds of which is in the oil and gas sector). Norway has accumulated nearly \$30 billion in the Government petroleum fund with 20 to 40 percent invested in U.S. stocks and bonds. U.S. firms are competing for over \$6 billion in defense equipment acquisitions which Norway will undertake in the next few years.

The U.S. ranked fifth among Norway's trading partners in 1999. Total annual two-way trade is about \$8 billion. The U.S. supplies primarily transportation equipment, oil and gas services and equipment, machinery, data processing and office equipment, chemicals, aircraft and defense-related items, and soybeans. U.S. imports from Norway are led by crude oil, nonferrous metals, fish, transport equipment, and pulp and paper.

Norway has now voted twice against membership in the EU, in 1972 and again in 1994. As in 1972, the November 1994 referendum was very close—a matter of 2 to 3 percentage points. Since Norway is still a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Association, Norway enjoys duty-free trade in manufactured products with the EU. However, the status of these organizations could change in the near future, since many of their members have now joined the EU.

Transportation

Automobiles

Norway is a beautiful country that begs to be explored, and it is possible and even desirable to drive to most places in the country or in neighboring countries. Since Norwegian roads are narrow and winter conditions can be extremely difficult, large American cars are less than ideal. Many people choose to bring 4-wheel-drive vehicles because they handle best in slippery winter conditions, especially in the mountains. Others choose front-wheel-drive vehicles for similar reasons.

A vehicle can be registered in Norway with little or no problem as long as it has been registered in the owner's name at least 24 hours prior to importation. Minor adjustments may have to be made to vehicles upon arrival, at owner's expense, unless the vehicle is a European car with European specifications. American specification cars with catalytic converters do not require removal of the converter, since unleaded fuel is readily available. The authorities inspect cars carefully for rust. Your car may not pass if excessive rust, especially on the frame, is found during inspection. Rust free cars can be undercoated after arrival in Norway.

Norwegian law requires drivers in Norway to purchase a minimum third party liability insurance package, and Norwegian companies offer the full range of insurance services

as in the U.S. Certification of accident-free driving can reduce your car insurance from 10% up to 70% per year. This certification takes the form of a letter (or letters) from the insurance company (or companies) with whom you have done business prior to your arrival in Oslo. The letter(s) should state the number of years of accident-free driving to your credit.

Snow tires are a necessity during Norway's long winter. The law requires that cars are safeguarded against sliding, and if a car involved in an accident is found not to have had appropriate tires for the driving conditions, the driver of that vehicle can be held fully responsible for the accident. You may use snow tires with or without studs and/or chains, but studded snow tires face some restrictions within the Oslo city limits. The law states that the car must have the same type of tire on each axle. Although the majority of Norwegians have traditionally used studded winter tires out of habit; that is changing, and good winter tires are just as effective in most conditions. Studded snow tires are not permitted at all in Oslo between mid-April and mid-October, except when the weather remains bad.

Snow tires of all shapes and sizes, studded or nonstudded, are readily available in Oslo at fairly reasonable prices. The only exception might be snow tires for unusual, old, or very large American brand cars. Some people choose to have their snow tires mounted on an extra set of rims for quicker and easier changes. You can bring snow tires with you or buy them in Norway, but you will definitely need them.

Local

Oslo's municipal transportation system works well and includes electric trains, streetcars, buses, subways, and suburban commuter trains. Although reliable and extensive, public transportation in Oslo is quite expensive. A single trip in 1999 cost about \$2.60 within the Oslo city limits. The use of monthly commuter passes or punch cards

reduces the rates. Taxis ("drosjer") operate 24 hours a day. However, they rarely stop when hailed and must be obtained by going to a "taxi stand" or by calling and requesting one. Taxis are usually plentiful, but you may have to wait during bad weather or rush hour. All taxis have meters that begin calculating your fare from the point where the taxi starts its travel to answer your call. The meter continues to run until you reach your destination. Hence, if the taxi is coming to you from far away, the charges may already be quite high before you begin your ride. Taxi drivers do not expect a tip, but a small one is always appreciated.

Traffic is relatively heavy during rush hours. Narrow roads and construction can cause some congestion. Many people use public transportation to commute to and from work. Public transportation is quick, clean, safe, and convenient and eliminates the need to find a place to park. Parking spaces in downtown Oslo can be very difficult to find. Many parking lots use automated meters that can be confusing for the uninitiated to use.

Public transportation (buses and streetcars) has the right of way over private automobiles. Many traffic lanes in cities and on some sections of the highways are reserved for public transportation. These lanes are clearly marked, and private cars should not drive in them. Cars must stop for pedestrians approaching and using crosswalks. Official vehicles (such as fire and police) are marked with the same colors as in the U.S. Norwegian law requires yielding access to emergency vehicles.

At regular intersections, traffic entering from the right always has the right of way in Norway, except on major roads marked by yellow diamond-shaped road signs. All drivers must keep a watchful eye, especially in residential areas, for traffic entering from the right. Uphill traffic always has the right of way. There are also numerous traffic circles in and around Oslo. The

rule for these circles is that once in the circle, a car has the right of way over cars entering the circle. In this instance, the right hand rule does not apply.

Finally, drivers should be aware that drunk driving laws in Norway are extremely strict and heavily enforced, with possible jail time as a penalty for even the first offense. Drinking anything over the equivalent of one beer will almost certainly put a person over the allowable blood alcohol level.

Regional

Oslo is connected to all major European centers by rail and air. Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) has direct flights between Oslo and major U.S. cities. Northwest Airlines also services Oslo through KLM via Amsterdam.

Oslo's Gardermoen Airport opened in October 1998 (replacing Fornebu) and is located about 40 minutes from downtown Oslo. Various ferries are available from Oslo to Denmark and Germany and from Kristiansand to Denmark and Holland. Well organized, sun-oriented charter flights provide excellent vacation opportunities at moderate cost, especially during winter months. Group skiing tours to the European Alps are also available.

Transportation within Norway is by bus, train, ferry, and internal airline flights. Car travel is possible in summer, but certain areas are closed by snow in winter. Road conditions vary. Mountainous areas have many narrow, winding sections of road.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraph facilities are provided by a government-operated service (Telenor). Direct dial service is available to most areas of the world, including the U.S. AT&T, MCI, and Sprint cards are available for making calls to the U.S. Use of one of these cards can result in significant savings, although Norwe-

gian direct dial long distance rates are some of the lowest in Europe, especially during off peak hours. Basic telephone charges are high. There is a metered charge by the minute for each local call. Rates for local calls are cheapest after 5 p.m. and on weekends.

Mail

International airmail from the U.S. usually takes 4 to 7 days, but return mail can be slower. Surface shipments by international mail take 4 to 6 weeks from the U.S. and are subject to Norwegian customs.

Radio and TV

American FM radios are compatible with the Norwegian radio broadcasting system but will have to run through transformers or on batteries (assuming 110v). Commercial radio is relatively new to Norway. Until 1984, there was only a single radio channel. In 1993 NRK widened its radio activities to three parallel broadcasts: P1, which chiefly provides cultural and in-depth coverage, major news programs, documentaries and reports, and classical music and jazz programs; P2, which features regional programs, light music, and some sports programs; and P3, which caters mainly to younger listeners, leaning heavily toward entertainment, pop, rock music, and sports.

A nationwide private radio corporation-P4-began broadcasting in late 1993. Radio programs are in Norwegian and are geared toward Norwegian interests. Shortwave broadcasts in English, particularly from the BBC, offer a good source of news. VOA reception is often weak. A growing number of local commercial radio stations throughout Norway offer a variety of programming formats, including Top 40, rock, and adult contemporary music in English. Note: Use of radio transmission equipment, including CB's, is not allowed in Norway.

Norway has two national television networks. The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) is an independent institution responsible for general public broadcasting in

Norway. NRK TV broadcasts more than 60 hours a week, featuring sports, news, drama, children's programs (which are dubbed to Norwegian), educational programs, music, and entertainment. About half of NRK's programs are original NRK productions. There are also several private television stations in Oslo. Cable TV and satellite TV are both available.

Much of the programming is produced locally, but there are a fair number of foreign programs also shown, including popular British and American series. All foreign language programs are subtitled in Norwegian except children's programs which are dubbed. Oslo area

homes equipped with cable TV have better reception of the local channels as well as the option to receive a wide variety of channels, including Sky Channel, Super Channel, FilmNet, CNN, Eurosport, BBC, MTV, and two Swedish channels.

Norwegian television uses the European PAL standard. It is not generally financially practical to modify U.S. sets to European specifications. To receive Norwegian broadcasting as well as cable broadcasts, one must have either a multi-system TV or a European PAL TV (Note: American VCRs will not record PAL signals, nor can they play PAL tapes. Again, a multisystem VCR is required for these purposes. Since PAL tapes of American movies are available for rent locally on just about every corner, a multi-system or PAL TV and VCR are desirable.)

U.S. sets designed to operate at 110v, 60 cycles can be adapted to 220v with transformers and used to play U.S. standard (NTSC) VCR tapes.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Popular American and British magazines are readily available at the newspaper stands (kiosks). British newspapers, the International Herald Tribune, and USA Today are also available locally. The cost of

magazines is higher than in the U.S. Most Norwegian libraries have an English book section that often contains current children's books and adult fiction and nonfiction. Many bookstores in Oslo carry American and British books, but prices are considerably higher than in the country of origin.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Norwegian public health and medical-care facilities are extensive, reasonably priced and of excellent quality. The Norwegian health delivery system differs somewhat from that of the U.S. in that emergencies are first treated at an emergency care facility (legevakt) rather than in a hospital's emergency room. Cases needing further treatment or hospitalization are then referred to hospitals or physicians. In the Norwegian system, one cannot be directly admitted to a hospital. The style of Norwegian physician care also differs from the U.S. style. Doctors tend to be abrupt by American standards and often do not offer explanations of their procedures. They also make fewer allowances for personal modesty, e.g., they do not typically provide gowns or leave the room while a patient disrobes. Most Norwegian health care specialists speak some English.

Norwegian ophthalmologists and optometrists are comparable to their American counterparts in skill, but the prices for these services are much higher in Norway than in the U.S. Opticians fill prescriptions efficiently and promptly. Most types of glasses and contact lenses are available.

Norwegian dentists vary greatly in ability and price. Orthodontic work is good and usually costs less than in the U.S. The dental school offers routine and specialized care for both adults and children through the use of licensed professionals and dental students. Oslo also has an emergency dental clinic (tannlegevakt).

Drugstores are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and until early afternoon on Saturdays. Certain pharmacies are also open nights and Sundays. Most medicines require prescriptions, although headache remedies, vitamins, cold remedies, and other patent medicines do not. Note however that even aspirin can only be bought in small quantities (one bottle of 20 tablets at a time). If you have favorite pain relief and cold medicines, you will simplify your life by bringing a large bottle of each with you. Drug quality is well-controlled and therefore excellent, and prices are reasonable. Only Celsius thermometers are available locally. Note that the doctor will want to know the temperature of your fever in Celsius.

Community Health

Sanitary conditions in Norway are among the best in the world. Strict laws govern commercial processing, cooking, handling and serving of foods. The state-run water supply system is excellent and drinkable without filtering throughout the country. Oslo is in general much cleaner than most U.S. cities of comparable size.

Norway has not had any serious epidemics in years, although the flu season can be severe. Flu, colds, and sore throat infections may be aggravated by the lack of sunshine during winter months. The cold winter weather and the low humidity in heated homes and buildings can also contribute to discomfort during illness.

The risk of contagious disease is the same as in the U.S. Seasonal episodes of mumps and chicken pox break out each year. Large-scale outbreaks of measles, mumps and rubella (German measles) are rare because so many children have been vaccinated.

Preventive Measures

No particular vaccinations are required.

Norway's climate is generally healthy. Upper respiratory infec-

tions occur more frequently during fall, winter and spring. Norwegians consider vitamin pills and cod liver oil (available locally) essential to compensate for winter's lack of sunshine and vitamin D. The water is not fluoridated. However, fluoride tablets for children can be obtained at drug stores without prescription. Fluoride rinses are also available. Your physician can give you information on the best fluoride treatment for your family.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. (2nd Sun)	Mother's Day*
Feb. 21	Birthday of king Herald V
Mar/Apr.	Holy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May 8	Liberation Day
May 17	Independence Day
June 7	Union Dissolution Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
June	Midsummer Night*
July 4	Birthday of Queen Sonja
July 24	Birthday of Crown Prince Haakon
July 29	St. Olav's Day
Sept. 22	Birthday of Princess Martha Lousie
Nov. (2nd Sun)	Father's Day*
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

At present, there is no U.S. air carrier providing direct service from the U.S. to Oslo, although certain U.S. carriers have deals with European companies to make connecting flights into Oslo. Most individuals fly to London, Copenhagen or Amsterdam and then take a foreign air carrier to Fornebu airport, Oslo. Other transportation to Norway includes overnight car ferries from Denmark and Germany to Oslo, Amsterdam to Kristiansand (in the summer months only), Newcastle to Stavanger and Bergen, and rail links from Sweden and Copenhagen.

A valid passport is required. U.S. citizens may enter Norway for tourist or general business purposes without a visa for up to 90 days.

Since March 2001, Norwegian entry visas are governed by the rules of the Schengen Agreement. Under this agreement, a visa issued for admission to most European Union (EU) countries (including non EU members Norway and Iceland) is also valid for admission to other member countries. EU members Ireland and the United Kingdom have opted not to participate in the Schengen arrangement at this time. Under Schengen visa procedures, a tourist is only permitted to spend a total of three months in the "Schengen area" within any six month period.

Tourists who enter Norway without a visa cannot usually change status in Norway in order to reside or work there. Travelers planning a long-term stay, marriage or employment in Norway should therefore seek the appropriate visa before departing the United States.

For information concerning entry requirements, travelers can contact the Royal Norwegian Embassy at 2720 34th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008-2714, tel. 1-202-333-6000, or the nearest Norwegian

consulate; and on the Internet at <http://www.norway.org>. Norwegian consulates are located in Houston, Miami, Minneapolis, New York City, and San Francisco. Information can also be obtained from the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration at <http://www.udi.no>.

Pets

Norway is a rabies-free country, and pets brought to Norway from rabies infected countries must be quarantined at the State Animal Quarantine Station in Oslo for 4 months. Total costs for bringing a dog or cat to Norway are about \$2,000-\$3,000 per animal (including quarantine). Please note that animals that have resided in EU countries for 1 year without intervening travel to other countries do not need to be quarantined.

There are separate and more flexible regulations for temporary or permanent importation of seeing-eye dogs.

Once the you receive space and import permit assurances from the State Veterinarian, you will be sent application papers, additional information, and mandatory forms (see below) provided with the import license from the Norwegian Agricultural Ministry. You must submit the requested information in the correct time frame. Have a licensed veterinarian complete an up to date health and vaccination certificate using the mandatory Certificate of Origin and Health provided by the Norwegian Quarantine Station: Annex to H 2 (dogs) or Annex to K 2 (cats). The certificate must specify that the animal shows no sign of infectious or communicable disease, that it has been vaccinated (within 3 weeks of shipment to Norway) against distemper, and that it has been blood tested for leptospirosis (*L. canicola* and *L. icterohaemorrhagiae*) with negative test results as specified on the form. Arranging for the leptospirosis test in the U.S. may take some time, since only a few labs have the facilities to analyze and evaluate the results of such tests. The certificate should also give a complete description of the

animal (sex, breed, color, and age) and should bear veterinarian license confirmation, either from the Norwegian Consul or from local police authorities or government authorities.

The animal must be checked at its arrival point by veterinary inspectors (for a fee) and will be transferred to the Quarantine Station. There is only one approved quarantine facility in Norway for dogs and cats.

Vestberg Quarantine Station Nordre Linderudsvei 45 N-1816 Skiptvedt, Norway Phone: (47) 69 80 85 80 Fax: (47) 69 80 85 90 Website: <http://home.sol.no/-vestkara/information.html>

It is located in Ostfold county approximately 70 km from Oslo. The Quarantine Station recommends that dogs be vaccinated against Kennel cough and canine parvovirus infection and cats be vaccinated against feline viral rhinotracheitis and feline calicivirus infection a minimum of 3 weeks before they arrive at the quarantine station.

The animal must also be identified with a readable tattoo or microchip implant. The identification number must be referred to on all vaccination certificates or vaccination book and on laboratory certificates. The identification number must also be referred to on the approved Veterinary Certificate. If the microchip is not of FECAVA or ISO standard, the animal owner must provide a compatible reader.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting: The Norwegian Animal Health Authority, Central Unit, at PO. Box 8147 Dep., N-0033 Oslo, Norway. Phone: (47) 22 24 19 40 Fax: (47) 22 24 19 45.

Since the Quarantine Station kennel has limited space, especially in the summer, you must give them 2-3 weeks notice. The Vestberg Animal Quarantine Station kennel is adequate, and veterinary care is good. Most owners have been

satisfied with their pet's stay. On the other hand, an isolation period of 4 months can be a problem for very old or nervous animals. Healthy and well-balanced pets over 1 year of age usually show no ill effects, but often the owners suffer during this time. The Quarantine Station will not admit animals under 6 months old. Dogs under 12 months of age require human and family contact to develop into normal, well balanced animals. The isolation of 4 months' quarantine may be detrimental at this stage.

Visits may be made for 45 minutes, twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-8 pm, after the first 2 weeks of isolation have been completed. You must call to make an appointment. After departure from the Quarantine Station, the animal is restricted from contact with other animals for an additional 2 months. Basic expenses for 4 month quarantining are currently over \$2,400 for dogs and \$1,660 for cats. This is subject to change depending upon the rate of exchange. One-half of the charges must be paid upon entry of the pet into quarantine. The remainder is due on the last day of quarantine when you pick up your pet.

Firearms and Ammunition

Under Norwegian law, a private individual must have prior written authorization from the Norwegian Government to purchase or possess firearms or ammunition in Norway.

No automatic weapons are allowed into Norway for use or sale by private citizens or visitors. Also, Norwegian law has other restrictions that pertain to types and quantities of weapons permissible in Norway.

Hunting (and fishing) licenses are required and can be obtained on payment of the proper fee to local authorities.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Norway's basic unit of currency is the crown (krone). A crown today is worth about 12 cents (8.5 crowns = \$1). Technically, each crown is bro-

ken down into 100 ore, although only the 50 ore coins are in circulation.

Local banking and exchange facilities throughout Norway are as numerous as ATMs. Norway has no regular American banks. All currencies and travelers checks are exchangeable, and full international banking services are available. No limit exists on the purchase of dollars or other foreign exchange. Banks located at airports and other terminals provide service on week-ends and evenings. Normal banking hours are 8:15 am to 3:45 pm, Monday through Friday, but banks close at 3 pm in summer.

The value-added tax (known in Norwegian as "VAT") is 23% of sale price and is paid on all goods and services, including food and clothing. This tax is usually included in the marked price of the item(s) at all retail stores.

Norway uses the metric system of weights and measures, but there is one exception: one Norwegian "mile" is equivalent to 10 kilometers. American miles are not used here. If you hear a Norwegian discussing miles, he or she probably means the 10-kilometer Norwegian kind.

Special Information

Norway remains one of the safest countries in the world, with little violent crime. Travel on public transportation, for example, is safe during any time of the day or night.

However, as in most European capitals, property crimes such as home burglaries have increased recently. This seems to be largely due to the increase in drug use. In addition, high value cars (both European and American makes) have become a particular target of professional car thieves looking to ship cars to Eastern Europe at high profit. Owners of expensive vehicles may wish to take appropriate precautions, such as installing an alarm.

Americans living in or visiting Norway are encouraged to register at

the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Norway. The U.S. Embassy is located in Oslo near the Royal Palace at Drammensveien 18; tel. (47) 22-44-85-50, Consular Section fax (47) 22-56-27-51. Information about consular services can be found in the Consular Section of the Embassy's home page at <http://www.usa.no>.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published about Norway.

General Reference Guides

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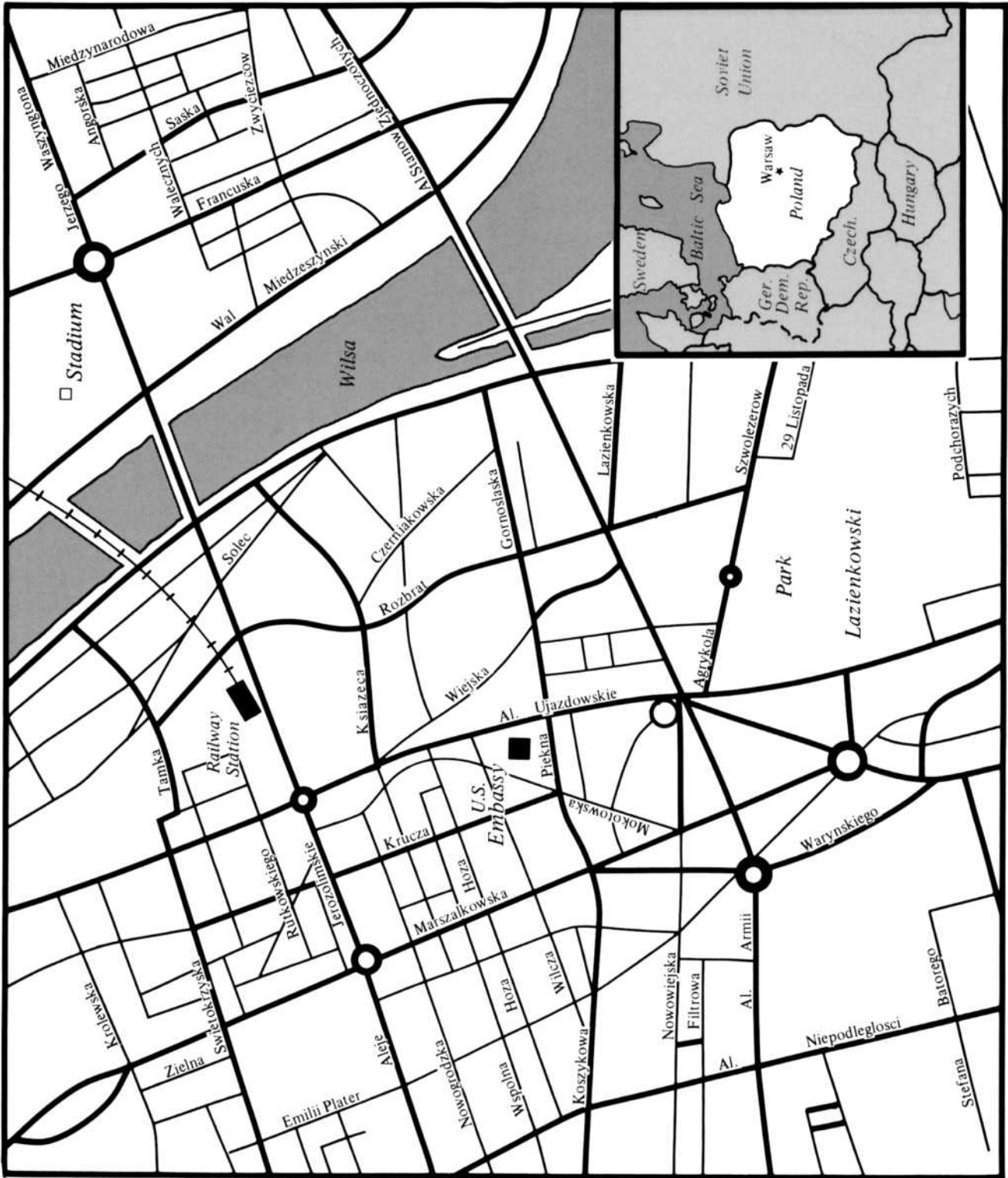
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Warsaw, Poland

POLAND

Republic of Poland

Major Cities:

Warsaw, Kraków, Poznań, Łódź, Wrocław

Other Cities:

Bielsko-biala, Bydgoszcz, Częstochowa, Gdańsk, Kielce, Szczecin

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

POLAND's geography and the national struggles marking its long history of unrest have made it a country of contradictions, ideologically and emotionally torn between East and West. The Polish people, still haunted by a century-and-a-half of partition, the holocaust of the Second World War, and life under Communist rule, are vigorous and patriotic, and eager for a better life.

Since the end of Communist party rule in 1989, Poland has undergone tremendous political and economic change. Under privatization, factories have closed. Unemployment has risen, income has dropped, and prices of consumer goods has

increased. Despite these hardships, the Polish people continue to show support to their government and commitment to their new way of life.

MAJOR CITIES

Warsaw

Warsaw, with a metropolitan population of about 1.6 million, is situated in eastern Poland on the banks of the Vistula River (in Polish, Wisła). More than 80 percent of the city was destroyed during World War II, and the extent to which it has recovered is a tribute to the spirit and patriotism of the Polish people. Many old sections of Warsaw have been rebuilt in styles reminiscent not only of the prewar period, but also of earlier eras, and a remarkable amount of new construction has taken place. Few ruined buildings or rubble remain. In winter, the lack of sunshine and the smoke from the soft coal burned for heat combine to make Warsaw somewhat drab. However, in contrast, the many parks, squares, and tree-lined boulevards come alive in spring and summer, giving the city a cheerful appearance.

Postwar Warsaw is characterized by a profusion of large buildings which

house government ministries and enterprises. Many new apartment blocks have been built, but urban housing still is in chronically short supply. Hotel space remains inadequate in spite of several good, new hotels. A new highway and bridge were completed in recent years to provide additional access for the growing population on the east bank of the Vistula. Buses and streetcars remain the principal means of public transport around the city. Service is frequent and routes extensive.

The Old Town, with its famous market square (Rynek Starego Miasta), was almost totally destroyed during World War II. It was painstakingly reconstructed in 17th- and 18th-century style from old architectural plans. On the south side of Old Town is Castle Square, dominated by a granite column with a statue of King Sigismund III Vasa. The Royal Castle, which stood on the east side of this square, has been rebuilt by the voluntary contributions of millions of Poles as a symbol of Polish national pride.

Warsaw (in Polish, Warszawa) was founded as a city in 1300, but the first settlement on the site dates to the 11th century. The city was an important trade center in the Middle Ages; it came under Polish rule in 1526, and was made the capital of

Poland in 1596. Throughout its history, it has suffered at the hands of Sweden (destroyed by Charles X Gustavus of Sweden in the mid-17th century); of Russia, by fire and massacre, and by occupation; and of Germany, by whom it was occupied during both World Wars. Warsaw endured almost total destruction from bombing in World War II. Of the 400,000 Jews who lived in the city in 1939, and who comprised nearly one-third of the population, only 200 remained at the war's end—the vast majority had been exterminated in Nazi gas chambers. Many thousands more perished in the ghetto uprising of 1943, or died during incarceration. In all, between 600,000 and 800,000 Warsaw residents died in the occupation years between 1939 and 1944.

Schools for Foreigners

The American School of Warsaw, which opened in 1953, is partly financed by U.S. Government grants. It offers instruction from kindergarten through twelfth grade, following an American curriculum and using American textbooks and standard tests. A program emphasizing individualized instruction is in use at all levels.

American School has staff specialists in reading, math, computer science, and learning disabilities. Special curricular activities include art, chorus, photography, and computer instruction. Extracurricular activities are drama, gymnastics, dance, instrumental music, computers, student council, yearbook, newspaper, and field trips. Scouting programs are offered for boys and girls.

Recreation

Citizens of Warsaw are justly proud of their many large, open parks which afford extensive opportunity for rest and relaxation. A variety of tame animal life abounds in the woods and ponds of these parks. Children can play in a number of playgrounds and fields while their parents hike along miles of fine paths, enjoy an open-air concert,

lunch at a restaurant in the park, or just relax on a convenient bench.

Fishing is possible in many rivers and lakes. Tackle, boats, and related items can be bought locally at moderate prices. Licenses are required, but membership in a group or club is not necessary.

Camping is growing in popularity, especially with families. Many excellent campsites are both in the Warsaw vicinity and in other parts of the country. The most beautiful are in the lake region near Augustów, about 155 miles northeast of Warsaw, and in the Mazurian lake region, about 185 miles to the north. These two lake belts, situated in forests, offer many lakeside cottages, boats for rent, and excellent fishing and water-skiing. Camping equipment is available locally.

Tennis and swimming are popular sports during summer, although swimming in the Vistula River is not recommended because of strong currents and pollution. Many expatriates enjoy skating at outdoor rinks or at the Torwar Stadium in winter. The Torwar management sets aside a special hour on Sunday afternoons for the exclusive use of the diplomatic and foreign business community.

Skiing is excellent at Zakopane, a noted mountain resort town, and in the Karkonosze Mountains. Both skiing and climbing are possible in parts of the Tatra and Beskidy Mountains, about 280 miles from Warsaw. Many of these areas have well-equipped shelter houses, but ski lifts are not always available.

The Baltic coast, 230 to 330 miles from Warsaw, has a wealth of sea resorts with beautiful sandy beaches although the water is too polluted for swimming. The most famous of the Polish seaside resorts, Sopot, hosts a variety of international festivals.

About 150 miles east of Warsaw is an interesting nature preserve, Puszcza Białowieska, which has the

last remaining herd of rare European bison, a virgin forest with 1,000-year-old oaks, and other attractions.

Entertainment

Cultural life in Poland offers something for just about everyone. Annual festivals include jazz in October and serious contemporary music (Warsaw Autumn) in October. Warsaw has a choice of grand opera, chamber opera, a richly-varied symphony season that usually includes one or two major visits (the Israeli Philharmonic, the Pittsburgh Symphony, Joan Sutherland), or lighter entertainment provided in the musical theater—most of which is American in origin.

Spectator events, such as ice shows, soccer, track and field, boxing, cycling, basketball, and horse racing, are held regularly.

Local museums have frequent exhibitions of art, handicraft, books, and related subjects. Warsaw's National Museum holds international exhibits. A Chopin museum is located at the composer's birthplace in Żelazowa Wola, about 40 miles from the capital. Distinguished Polish and foreign pianists give Sunday recitals there and in Łazienki Park in Warsaw during the summer.

In addition to Polish films, cinemas here show many American and other imports, usually in the original language with Polish subtitles.

Warsaw restaurants vary considerably with regard to menus, atmosphere, and decor, and several are very good. Sidewalk and indoor cafés are popular meeting places, and two or three nightclubs offer dancing. A large shopping center, with several department stores, is located on Marszałkowska Street. Close by is the central railway station.

Roadside picnics are popular during fair weather. Many picturesque forest and riverside sites are only a short distance from the city.

Kraków

The name Kraków (Cracow in English, but Polish form is more commonly used) first appeared in written records in the year 965, when the town was already an active east-west trade center. Despite the Tatar invasions, one of which destroyed the city, Kraków continued to grow, and became the capital of Poland in 1320. King Casimir the Great opened his realm to Jews and, in 1364, founded the city's Jagiellonian University, the second oldest in central Europe.

The 15th and 16th centuries marked Kraków's golden age; the Jagiellonian dynasty rejuvenated the university and encouraged the arts and sciences. While the distinguished astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543) studied at the university, Polish and Italian artists were giving the city the Renaissance flavor which characterizes it even today.

After the capital was moved to Warsaw in 1596, Sweden twice invaded and burned Kraków. Following the first partition of Poland in 1772, hard times continued for the city. For the next 150 years, first the Prussians and then the Austrians occupied Kraków. Tadeusz Kosciuszko, hero of the American Revolution's turning-point Battle of Saratoga in 1777, returned to Poland in 1784. During the next five years he became increasingly involved in his country's struggle to save itself from the Russian invaders. In 1794, Kosciuszko took an oath in Kraków's Great Square (Rynek Główny), swearing to lead the nation to the end in the fight for liberty, integrity, and independence. His heroic efforts ended in October of that year when, betrayed by Prussian entry into the conflict, he was wounded and captured by the Russians. Thomas Jefferson wrote of Kosciuszko, "He is as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known, and of that liberty which is to go to all, and not to the few or the rich alone." Kosciuszko is buried in Kraków's Wawel Cathedral.

During a short period of oppression and revolts (1815–1846), the Austrians shared their rule of the "Republic of Kraków" with the Prussians and the Russians. Under the relatively mild Austrian rule in the latter part of the 19th century, however, the city flourished as a center of Polish culture, the only place in Europe where Polish civil rights were recognized. The governor-general was a Pole, and the Polish language was used in schools, courts, and government offices. In this fertile atmosphere, Jan Matejko, Stanisław Wyspiański, Helena Modjeska (Modrzejewska), and other outstanding 19th-century artists flourished.

At the beginning of World War II, the Nazis made Kraków the capital of their general government. Prominent Krakovians were arrested and sent to concentration camps, the largest of which, Auschwitz-Birkenau (Oświęcim), stands 25 miles west of the city. Four million people, including Kraków's entire Jewish population, perished there.

Despite this massacre of its population, Kraków escaped the physical destruction suffered by other Polish cities during World War II. Although it received only a small share of postwar reconstruction funds, a new town, Nowa Huta, was built around the Lenin Steel Works in 1947 and eventually was incorporated within the city limits. This plant, until recently the largest of its kind in Poland, and the city's chemical industry have changed the face of Kraków, adding an aspect of bustling, grimy, 20th-century industrialism to the traditional calm of a thousand-year-old cultural center. The current population is around 740,000.

Recently civic and environmental concerns have emerged to demand that the city's social needs and the preservation of its unique academic, cultural, and historical character be given overriding priority in modifying and developing its industry. Active steps are now underway to preserve the city's many monu-

ments and reduce air pollution levels. With its Wawel museum, where most of Poland's greatest heroes are interred, Kraków remains a shrine of Polish identity and nationalism.

The province of Katowice, contains about 3 million inhabitants. According to official statistics, almost half of those gainfully employed in the 10 *voivodships* (administrative centers) work in industry although, traditionally, areas such as Opole, Rzeszów, and Przemyśl have been considered primarily agricultural. In Katowice, the country's most heavily populated voivodship, most workers are employed in the mines and mills. The southeastern provinces of Poland have, for many years, been centers of emigration to the U.S. and many in the area, especially the *górale*, or highlanders, have relatives in America.

Kraków lies in a shallow basin on the Vistula River, some 50 miles east of the Katowice-Gliwice industrial area. A "city voivodship" of 1,028 square miles, it is the meeting place of three geographic regions: the Carpathian uplands, the Małopolska highlands, and the Vistula lowlands.

A point of interest to Americans is Kraków's American Children's Hospital, which was built and organized with U.S. assistance. Facilities and services at this hospital are good, and adults are also treated in emergencies.

Schools for Foreigners

Polish Government schools at all levels may accept American children, but knowledge of the Polish language and parental willingness to provide supplementary schooling at home are required. Normally, children of high-school age are sent to private (or U.S. Defense Department-run) schools in Western Europe.

Kraków's large and prestigious Jagiellonian University is the home of the Polonia Institute, which offers year-round courses in Polish language, history, and culture. Private



Courtesy of Melissa Doig

Jagellonian University in Kraków

tutoring in music and language is also available.

Recreation

With its beautiful medieval monuments, Kraków is Poland's leading tourist center. The city annually draws hundreds of thousands of foreign and Polish visitors to its historic churches, museums, and palaces. A visit to the Wawel Castle and the Cathedral (scene of coronations and resting place of royalty) forms part of every Polish child's education in the country's great artistic and political achievements.

Numerous sites are also within an easy drive of the city. Both the Ojcow National Park and the

famous Wieliczka salt mines are close to downtown Kraków. Within an hour of the city is the Dunajec gorge with its well-known raft ride. The former concentration camp at Oswiecim (Auschwitz), now a museum, is also one hour from Kraków. Farther away are the Shrine of the Black Madonna Częstochowa in Katowice Province, and the palaces in Lancut and Baranów in Rzeszów *voivodship*. Prague, Vienna, and Budapest are within a day's drive of Kraków. Czechoslovak visas may be obtained in Katowice.

Spectator sports are popular in Kraków. Wisła, the city's soccer team, is one of the best in Poland, and the annual Rajd Polski (Polish

automobile rally) originates in Kraków.

Swimming, fishing, and camping in the nearby mountains, forests, and national parks are the principal outdoor activities. Ice skating, tennis, and indoor swimming are also available in the city.

Skiing is the main attraction at mountain resorts just south of Kraków. The most popular of these, Zakopane, is about one-and-a-half hours from the city. It has a good ski lift and many excellent hotels, villas, and restaurants—all set in the breathtaking scenery of the Tatras. Zakopane is usually crowded, particularly at Christmas and in March.

Farther east, about four hours from Kraków, the virgin forests of the Bieszczady offer some of the best camping in Poland, especially around Lake Solina.

Entertainment

Kraków's theater has a fine reputation, but language remains a barrier for most Americans. In addition to the Old Theater (*Stary Teatr*) and Słowacki Theater, both of which present innovative stagings, some interesting semi-professional and student playhouses are available.

The city's opera gives relatively few performances, and is no rival to Warsaw's. However, the philharmonic orchestra season is long and varied, including frequent performances with guest artists and choirs; chamber music and jazz events are also offered. A light opera company presents Broadway-type musicals. The city's Higher School of Music is probably Poland's best. Kraków's political cabaret is famous, but requires native-speaker language competence to be enjoyed.

Katowice, only one-and-a-half hours from Kraków, has one of the country's finest symphony orchestras, the Katowice Radio and Television Orchestra.

Several American or English films are shown regularly in the city's theaters, most of them in English with Polish subtitles; tickets must be purchased in advance to ensure entry. In early June, Kraków hosts an international short-film festival. An art-film theater in town features classic movies—often American or British.

Kraków is a center for the plastic arts and the home of several world-famous painters and sculptors. Numerous galleries and museums in the city have a constantly changing variety of offerings.

Kraków has a few good restaurants, including the Wierzynek, reputedly the best in Poland, and boasting a 600-year history. The Nowinna, eleven miles south of the city, also rivals any restaurant in the country. The restaurants in the Hotel Francuski, Holiday Inn, and Cracovia Hotel feature Polish and international cuisine. The Balaton serves spicy Hungarian dishes. The Pod Korza Stopka specializes in poultry dishes, and the Staropolska offers a variety of Polish specialties. In a slightly lower-price category are the Hawalka and Hermitage, featuring Polish dishes, and the Dniepr, a Ukrainian restaurant. The Francuski, Cracovia, Pod Strzelnica, and Dniepr have dancing, and the city's two nightclubs feature floor shows. At all restaurants, standards are lower than those found in the U.S. or Western Europe.

Social contact among Americans in Kraków tends to be frequent and informal. There is a small U.S. Consulate staff, a small group of Fulbright scholars and professors, and some American students enrolled at local universities. Members of the French Consulate General and the French Institute, and visiting professors and students are often included in social functions. A knowledge of Polish adds immeasurably to the enjoyment of activities in Kraków.

Poznań

Although more than half of Poznań was destroyed during World War II, the city today shows few signs of war damage. Much new building and restoration is in progress. The Opera House, Palace of Culture (formerly the Kaiser's Palace), Poznań University, and many impressive public buildings and churches give an elegant appearance to the city. The renaissance Old Square and City Hall, destroyed during the war, have been handsomely rebuilt. A large and attractive part of the city surrounding the old town center consists of turn-of-the-century buildings. Apartment houses are going up in the suburbs, but the exteriors of some are left unplastered and give a rough, unfinished appearance to these sections. Most new construction is of apartment complexes rather than detached houses.

Poznań has a population of 578,000, and is located about 120 miles east of the Polish-German border. The city is 266 feet above sea level and, although generally in the same northern continental climatic zone as Warsaw, seems to have somewhat milder weather. The Warta River, which runs through the city, is Poland's third largest waterway and carries barge traffic for half its length. The area surrounding Poznań, generally flat with a few rolling hills, contains several large lakes, some narrow streams, and forested areas.

Covering the western third of the country, the Poznań (U.S.) consular district contains 17 of Poland's 49 provinces (*województwa*). The area is about 56,600 square miles in size. The Baltic provinces of Szczecin (*Szczecińskie*), Koszalin (*Kosza-lińskie*), and Słupsk (*Słupskie*) have long coastlines with some fine beaches. The large port city of Szczecin (population 417,000) is at the point where the Odra River flows into Szczecin Bay, about 40 miles inland from the Baltic coast port of Świnoujście. Szczecin and Świnoujście together form one large port complex under a single port

administration. Koszalin and Słupsk provinces are largely rural and sparsely settled. With gently rolling terrain, many lakes, and large areas of mixed coniferous and deciduous forests, the region generally is reminiscent of northern Minnesota or Wisconsin.

The provinces surrounding Poznań comprise a rich agricultural area of flat to gently rolling terrain with many small lakes and forests. The area to the south, which includes the important industrial, academic, and cultural center of Wrocław, ranges from flat and rolling plains to the Sudeten Mountains along the Czech border.

Altitudes in the district vary from 75 feet above sea level in Szczecin to 1,100 feet in the southwestern city of Jelenia (Zielona) Góra. A few miles south of here is 5,200-foot Śnieżka Mountain, the highest point in the consular district.

The number of Americans and other foreigners in the city increases as preparations for the annual Poznań Trade Fair get under way each spring. A variety of American official, scientific, and cultural representatives visit throughout the year. A large influx of visiting Americans occurs in August, at the time of the three-week summer seminar in English.

Schools for Foreigners

A Polish Government preschool has accepted many American children, and most parents have been satisfied with this arrangement.

Private tutoring, inexpensive by U.S. standards, is available in music.

Recreation

Poznań is replete with historical monuments and museums. The Old Town is authentically restored, and the Renaissance town hall here is one of the monuments which withstood wartime devastation; built in the mid-16th century, it is among the most valuable structures of its kind in central Europe. The cathedral on Ostrów Tumski island con-

tains centuries-old relics and tombs. Other beautiful churches here date from the 12th through the 18th centuries, and museums abound throughout the city.

Several areas of touring interest are near Poznań. Kórnik, a small town about 10 miles southeast of the city, is the site of a 16th-century castle which is now a museum. It has a moat and contains an unusual picture gallery; beautiful polished floors; fine old furniture; porcelain stoves and appointments; Polish handicrafts; archaeological and nature collections; and a 100,000-volume library, including old manuscripts and prints. The museum contains not only collections from the Działyński and Zamojski families who formerly lived in the castle, but also such Polish artistic work as a magnificent collection of embroidered sashes and costumes. The park surrounding the castle-museum is planted in a variety of trees, shrubs, and hedges, and has numerous paths.

At Rógalin, near Kórnik, is an 18th-century palace which is now a museum and gallery containing valuable historical objects and paintings by 19th-century Polish artists. Rógalin also is noted for a stand of 1,000-year-old oak trees.

Other country palaces, recently restored, are within a half-hour's drive of Poznań. Some have restaurants or coffee houses. Gniezno, about 30 miles northeast of Poznań, was Poland's first capital. This 1,000-year-old city contains an ancient cathedral with paintings, sculpture, medieval tombs, and a set of bronze doors dating from the 12th century. It also has relics of St. Adalbert (in Polish, Wojciech), patron saint of Poland. St. John's Church, in 14th-century Gothic style, is also of unusual interest.

Biskupin, not far from Gniezno, is one of the largest prehistoric settlements in Europe. It dates from 700 to 400 B.C., and Poles assert that it shows the historic predominance of a Slavic culture in the region. The site, excavated and partially

restored, includes a museum with a collection of prehistoric ceramics and tools.

Roads to these places of interest are narrow, but in good condition. A personal car is the best mode of transportation, although train and bus service is available to most of the cities mentioned. Public transportation generally is crowded.

Large lakes in forest settings near Poznań provide ample opportunities to swim, fish, picnic, or camp. In some cases, these activities can be combined with visits to nearby places of interest. Arrangements also can be made to use good tennis courts.

A large municipal outdoor ice rink in Poznań is available for skating six months of the year. In addition, ice skating on the lakes is possible during the coldest periods of winter. Sledding is possible on a few hills in town and in the nearby countryside. Poznań has two heated indoor swimming pools.

Skiing is good around the tourist centers of Karpacz and Szklarska Poręba in the Sudeten Mountains southwest of Wrocław. Tow facilities are crowded, but are being expanded each year. A shortage of hotels and restaurants still exists in both places, so reservations should be made well in advance. Depending on winter driving conditions, the area is about five hours from Poznań. Although Zakopane is 300 miles from Poznań, it is a more popular ski area because of its extensive facilities.

The Baltic coast north and northeast of Szczecin offers excellent beaches and swimming. Unfortunately, in recent years pollution has posed periodic problems. The resort city of Kołobrzeg has a good hotel, and nearby beaches are wide and sandy. Summer weather is usually sunny and breezy here. Lifeguards are on duty during the season, and swimming is good. The drive from Poznań to Kołobrzeg takes about four hours and passes through some scenic countryside.

Entertainment

Poznań has an extensive opera, operetta, concert, and theater season. The opera company is uneven, but enjoyable. The Poznań Philharmonic Orchestra, a source of great local pride, has a distinguished record of performance, and often features fine Polish and foreign guest artists. The Struligrosz and Kurczewski Boys' Choirs are outstanding. The ballet troupe is considered quite good. Two dramatic theaters present a varied program of Polish and foreign works, and the quality usually is high. Local student theaters often produce experimental works. A puppet theater also is available.

Both Polish and foreign films (often excellent) are shown in the city's movie theaters, but English soundtracks are rarely left intact. American movies are popular. Movie tickets, like tickets for opera, concert, and ballet, are not expensive.

Although Poznań has some good restaurants, menu selection is often limited because of food shortages. Some nightclubs feature floor shows. A discotheque and cabaret theater also are available.

Social contact with Poles is possible, and a good knowledge of their language is an asset in Poznań—even more so than in Warsaw—for developing acquaintances. A knowledge of German is also helpful.

Łódź

Łódź, with a population of 807,000, is Poland's second largest city and the capital of Łódź Province. It is located in the central part of the country, about 75 miles west-southwest of Warsaw, and is an important industrial city and the center of Poland's textile industry.

Chartered in 1423, Łódź was ceded to Prussia in 1793, then passed to Russia in 1815, reverting to Poland in 1918. During its years of Russian domination, it was developed into a prosperous industrial center. The



Aerial view of Gdansk, Poland

© Steve Raymer/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Nazis incorporated Łódź at the beginning of World War II, renaming it Litzmannstadt and subjecting it to aggressive Germanization.

Today, aside from textiles, Łódź manufactures machinery, electrical equipment, chemicals, and metals. It is an episcopal see, and has a technical university which was founded in 1945. Its Central Weaving Museum has amassed an impressive collection of tools, machinery, and documents relating to the history of the textile industry. The city also has museums of art and archaeology, and is the site of a physics research center affiliated with Warsaw's Polish Academy of Sciences.

Wrocław

Wrocław, known as Breslau when it was under German authority, is the capital of the province of the same name in the southwestern region of

Lower Silesia. Originally a Slavic settlement, the city became the capital of the duchy of Silesia in 1163. It was sacked by the Mongols in 1241, but was rebuilt by German settlers, and passed to Bohemia in 1335. Breslau was ceded to the Hapsburgs in 1526 and to Prussia in 1742. It grew into a prosperous trade center in the 19th century. After World War II, when the city was a Nazi-held fortress, the German inhabitants were expelled.

Today Wrocław, with a population of 638,000, is a river port and railway center manufacturing machinery, iron goods, textiles, railroad equipment, and food products. Its historic sites include a 13th-century cathedral and several Gothic churches in the old island districts of Ostrów Tumski and Ostrów Piaskowy. The city houses a noted university, founded in 1811.

There are several schools of higher education here, including the Osso-

lineum, a scientific institute founded in the Ukrainian city of Lvov in 1817, and transferred to Wrocław in 1947.

Numerous museums of art, natural history, and mineralogy display impressive exhibits. International programs of vocal music and a festival of jazz are held here regularly; the latter is known as "Jazz on the Odra," in recognition of the river (in English, Oder) which flows through the city.

Wrocław is the site of a large zoo; the botanical gardens within the park exhibit a broad variety of plant life. Several small cities of historical interest are situated in the vicinity of Wrocław—Sobótka, Oleśnica, Trzebnica—as are a number of popular health and recreation resorts. There is skiing in the Karkonosze range of the Sudetic Mountains.

OTHER CITIES

BIELSKO-BIALA (in German, Bielitz) has been an important wool center since at least the Middle Ages. Situated in the far south, 190 miles southwest of Warsaw, this city of some 180,000 residents was formed in 1950 when two towns on opposite sides of the Biala River merged. In World War II, German forces took over Bielsko-Biala's mostly Jewish-owned plants. The region declined after Soviet annexation of Polish land following the war. The economy is still dependent upon the production of high-grade woolen textiles.

BYDGOSZCZ (in German, Bromberg) is the capital of Bydgoszcz Province, located about 150 miles northwest of Warsaw. It serves as a vital water-transport route and railroad junction linking Upper Silesia with the Baltic Sea. The city had its beginnings as a frontier outpost and, later, was seized by the Teutonic Knights. Bydgoszcz prospered in the 1700s after the building of the Bydgoszcz Canal, which connected the Vistula and Oder Rivers. The city received the Grunwald Cross in 1946 for its fierce resistance to Nazi attack seven years earlier. Today Bydgoszcz has a population of approximately 387,000. It has higher institutions of agriculture and engineering.

CZĘSTOCHOWA is a major religious center, located about 70 miles northwest of Kraków in the south. With a population of roughly 257,000, this is the destination for Poles making pilgrimages to the Jasna Góra monastery. The noted painting of "Our Lady of Częstochowa" (or "The Black Madonna") is displayed here, along with rare frescoes. The city began as two regions, Old Częstochowa, dating to the 13th century, and Jasna Góra ("shining mountain" in Polish), founded 100 years later. The monastery became the stronghold for Polish forces in the Swedish invasions of 1655 and 1705. This is also a major industrial city of mills and manufacturing plants.



Old Town in Warsaw

Courtesy of Melissa Doig

GDAŃSK, formerly known as Danzig, is one of the chief Polish ports on the Baltic Sea and an important industrial center. Established as the Free City of Danzig under the League of Nations, this municipality of approximately 459,000 is the capital of Gdańsk Province in northern Poland. Its shipyards were made famous by an uprising against the Communist regime in 1970, and as the site of the birth of Solidarity (Solidarność) in 1980. Gdańsk was annexed to Germany during World War II, and suffered the destruction of many of its landmarks during hostilities. Ninety percent of the city lay in rubble. The Allies unconditionally returned the city to Poland in 1945. There is an annual film festival in Gdańsk and the live productions of the Teatr Muzyczny in Gdynia, ten miles northwest of Gdańsk, are not to be missed.

KIELCE, located 90 miles south of Warsaw in the south-central region, is an industrial center and provincial capital. This railroad junction of 212,000 residents has landmarks such as a castle and 12th-century cathedral. Kielce was founded in 1173 by the bishop of Kraków. Russian and German forces battled here several times in World War I; German troops occupied the city in World War II.

SZCZECIN, known in German as Stettin, is a major Baltic port and industrial center in northwestern Poland. It has a population of about 417,000. The city was heavily damaged by repeated bombings in World War II, and taken by Soviet troops in late April 1945 after a long and devastating battle. Szczecin, which is the capital of the province of the same name, is the birthplace of Czarina Katarina II of Russia (Catherine the Great).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Postwar Poland, including the lands placed under Polish administration at the Potsdam Conference (1945), covers about 120,000 square miles, an area about the size of New Mexico. Poland ranks seventh in Europe in area and population, with an estimated population of 38,654,000.

Most of the country consists of lowland plains. In the north are the Baltic Sea coast and a broad belt of lake land. In the center are broad, low-lying plains and vast forest

belts. To the south, the land passes into chains of mountains—the Sudetic (in Polish, *Sudety*) in the west and the Carpathians in the east. These mountains combine to form the southern boundary of Poland. The Tatra Mountains, a part of the Carpathian chain, are the highest in Poland; Rysy mountain rises 8,212 feet above sea level. At the foot of the Tatras lies the town of Zakopane, a famous winter sports center.

Poland is bordered by the Baltic Sea and a small section of the Russian Federation to the north, Lithuania, Belarus, and the Ukraine to the east, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the south, and Germany to the west.

One main seaport, Szczecin, is near the German border. Poland's two other major port cities, Gdańsk and Gdynia, lie about 170 miles farther east at the mouth of the Vistula River. Many summer resorts with beautiful beaches lie along the Baltic coast (although the water is too polluted for swimming). About 200 miles north of Warsaw, surrounded by the greatest forest in the country, is a belt of lakes stretching from Olsztyn to Augustów. Good camping and fishing abound.

The main rivers are the Vistula (*Wisła*), on which Warsaw and Kraków are situated; the Odra or Oder, whose northern course forms a part of the border with the Germany; the Narew, in northeastern Poland; the Warta, on which Poznań is located; and the Bug, which partially forms Poland's eastern boundary.

Poland has a continental European climate. Winters can be severe, with heavy snows possible from December to March. Winter temperatures in Warsaw average about 32°F. The lowest temperature in recent years was recorded at -22°F. Spring is usually cold and rainy, and summer relatively cool. The highest temperature recorded recently in Warsaw was 94°F. Autumn is usually cloudy and can be quite cold. Yearly rainfall averages about 23.5 inches.

Poland has no diseases caused by climate, and mildew is not a problem because humidity is usually low. Earthquakes do not occur, and snowslides in the mountains normally are not hazardous.

Population

Poland's population is predominantly Polish. Small German, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and Jewish minorities, and even smaller Lithuanian, Czech, and Slovak colonies exist. Warsaw's population is about 1,618,000.

95 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Church attendance is high, and Catholic holy days are strictly observed by most of the people.

Government

Poland is organized as a parliamentary democracy according to the constitution adopted in 1992. Poles enjoy largely unfettered rights to free speech, press, and assembly, as well as other commonly accepted Western human rights.

Poland has a bicameral parliament, comprising a lower house and upper house. Within the legislative branch of the government, the lower house has most of the power; the upper house may only suggest amendments to legislation passed by the lower house. Both parties are democratically elected. The President may dissolve the parliament and call new elections if it fails a vote of confidence or does not approve a budget within a set period of time.

The Polish Prime Minister, currently Leszek Miller, is nominated by the President, currently Aleksander Kwasniewski, and must propose a government that could win a vote of confidence in the lower house. He chairs the Council of Ministers and serves as Poland's chief of government. There are 18 cabinet members, 3 of whom serve as deputy prime ministers, mostly drawn from the governing coalition par-

ties. There are a few ministers with no party affiliations.

Poland's president, who serves as the country's head of state, has a five-year term. The Polish president is the commander of their armed forces and may veto legislation passed by Parliament.

Poland is divided into 49 provinces, each of which is headed by a provincial governor appointed by the central government. There are also independent locally elected city and village governments.

The flag of Poland displays equal horizontal bands of white (above) and red.

Arts, Science, Education

Polish intellectual and cultural life has preserved much of its traditional vigor and creativity despite years of communist rule and the political difficulties of recent years. Historically, Poland's cultural ties have been with the West rather than with the East, although there had been sporadic attempts in the postwar years to force Polish creativity into orthodox communist and Soviet-model structures. Poland has formal cultural exchange agreements with many countries from both East and West, ensuring a fairly steady flow of Polish artists and intellectuals abroad and of foreign performers to Poland.

In the period following the proclamation of martial law on December 13, 1981, many Polish actors, directors, writers, filmmakers, and other intellectuals boycotted government-sponsored cultural activities as a sign of protest. Now, with the communists out of power, cultural life is showing greater independence. Cultural and intellectual associations are forming, and these have begun to support and invigorate creative activities.

Commerce and Industry

Poland is undergoing a profound transformation as the government rapidly introduces a free-market system to replace the centrally planned economy. During 1990, the economic reform program stopped hyperinflation, stabilized the currency, brought an end to chronic shortages of consumer goods, and produced a sizable trade surplus. At the same time, however, the economy suffered a recession, with sharp declines in industrial production and real incomes and steadily increasing unemployment. The United States and other Western countries supported the growth of a free enterprise economy by providing direct economic aid, restructuring the debt and rescheduling payments, and encouraging private investment in Poland.

By the mid-1990s, Poland's economy was one of the strongest in Eastern and Central Europe as a result of its government's fiscal policies. Most growth since 1991 has come from the emerging private sector.

Nearly 30 percent of Poland's work force is engaged in agriculture, and 51 percent in services. Unlike the industrial sector, Poland's agricultural sector remained largely in private hands during the decades of communist rule.

Production of wheat, feed-grains, vegetable oils, and protein meals is insufficient to meet domestic demands. However, Poland is a leading producer in Eastern Europe of potatoes, rape seed, sugar beets, grains, hogs, and cattle. Attempt to increase domestic feed grain production are hampered by the short growing season, poor soil, and the small size of farms.

Before World War II, Poland's industrial base was concentrated in the coal, textile, chemical, machinery, iron, and steel sectors. Today it extends to fertilizers, petrochemicals, machine tools, electrical machinery, electronics, and shipbuilding. Accordingly, exports have

become more diversified, including those to hard-currency markets; meat, coal, and copper remain important export commodities.

Poland's industrial base suffered greatly during World War II, and much of the investments in the 1950s were directed toward reconstruction. The need to rebuild existing capacities and the orthodox communist economic system imposed on Poland in the late 1940s resulted in the intense centralization of industries. Large and unwieldy economic structures operated under detailed central command. In part because of this systemic rigidity, with the emphasis on central planning, the economy performed poorly even in comparison with other economies in Eastern Europe.

A vital element of the economic reform is the privatization of state-owned enterprises. Enabling legislation was passed by the *Sejm* in July 1990. A Ministry of Ownership Transformation was been created to oversee the conversion of state enterprise into private firms and prepare guidelines for the creation of a stock market. The challenge facing the Polish government is how to privatize thousands of state enterprises, while preventing profiteering and cushioning the work force against unemployment as many large, unprofitable state firms face bankruptcy.

As a result of the economic reform program, prices for consumer goods have risen in response to market forces. Demand has been dampened by falling real wages, whose growth is tied to increases in productivity. The serious consumer shortages that were once endemic to the Polish economy have now largely disappeared.

Poland maintains a Chamber of Foreign Trade at Skyrta Pocztowa 361, Warsaw (Trebacka, 4).

Transportation

Warsaw is served by a number of airlines—LOT, Swissair, Aeroflot,

Sabena, SAS, Air France, KLM, Lufthansa, British Airways, and others—to most European capitals. Airline tickets for international travel must be purchased with hard currency.

LOT operates several daily flights from Warsaw to Kraków and Poznań. It also is possible to travel by rail or auto directly to Vienna, Prague, Munich, and Berlin.

A daily car-ferry service is available between Świnoujście (about one hour's drive north of Szczecin) and Ystaad, Sweden. The crossing takes about seven hours. Reservations should be made well in advance, especially during the summer tourist season.

Most main roads in Poland are good all-weather roads by European standards. Important towns and places of interest are served by inexpensive trains. Principal cities also are served by the national airline (LOT) at moderate fares. A country-wide network of bus lines exists, but buses are usually crowded and uncomfortable and are rarely used by Americans. Tickets for travel in Poland are reasonable and may be purchased for *złotys* (the unit of currency). Warsaw buses and streetcars can be crowded and slow during rush hours. Cabs are available at stands, or sometimes can be hailed.

Public transportation in Kraków and Poznań is not extensive and is crowded at rush hour. Most Americans in these cities travel by personal car.

Motorists must obey signs that close roads to traffic or indicate restricted areas, and should be alert to emergency vehicles with flashing lights, since these vehicles always have the right-of-way. Ambulances are beige with a red or blue cross on the side, fire trucks are red, and police vehicles usually are grey or blue with "MILICJA" printed in large letters on the doors.

An international driver's license obtained outside Poland is valid for

one year after entering the country and is recommended for all new arrivals. Polish licenses are issued based upon valid foreign permits and an oral examination conducted by a Polish traffic office. Traffic moves on the right. Motorists must exercise extreme caution while driving, since numerous horse-drawn carts, tractors with wagons, trucks, and pedestrians are constant hazards on both highways and streets. Night driving is dangerous.

Owning an automobile can be expensive here. Rough cobblestone roads subject cars to heavy wear and tear. Vandalism is a problem; foreign cars seem to be prime targets.

Although adequate work can be done on some foreign cars, repair service for American makes is hard to arrange and seldom satisfactory. No parts for American vehicles are available in Poznań or Kraków, or in the other large cities, except Warsaw. American cars must be driven to Western Europe for major maintenance. Poznań has authorized repair facilities for many major West European makes, but stocks of spare parts are limited. A fully licensed Volkswagen repair shop at Leszno, 50 miles south of Poznań, has a good supply of spare parts and performs required maintenance and periodic checks.

Polish law requires cars to have directional signals and mud flaps. U.S. officials in Poland recommend export-grade, heavy-duty shock absorbers and springs, snow tires for winter, and an engine that can run on regular gas. Emission controls are not required, and cars appear to run better in Warsaw without such controls. Major repairs to automatic transmissions must be done in Germany.

The Polish State Insurance Company (WARTA) sells third-party liability insurance (required in Poland) at nominal cost. WARTA also offers collision, fire, theft, and other special coverage, both inside and outside Poland, but rates for foreign-made cars are high. Insur-

ance is also available from a few American or Western European agencies which insure vehicles in Poland.

Most resident Americans have Polish liability coverage, and supplement it with international "green card" insurance for trips outside the country. The U.S. Embassy strongly emphasizes the importance of insurance coverage and careful driving.

Communications

Telephone and telegraph service is available to Western Europe and the U.S. Service is slower and less reliable than in America, but is adequate in emergencies. Rates within Poland are inexpensive; standard world rates usually are charged for international calls.

International mail via Polish (PTT) facilities is unreliable. Bad weather and canceled flights frequently result in turnaround times of over one month from the date a letter is mailed to Warsaw from the U.S. until a reply is received. Turnaround time for Kraków, Poznań, and other cities is even longer.

Polish radio and television have proliferated since 1993, when the government began for the first time to award broadcast licenses to private stations. Polish viewers can now choose from broadcasting all over the world with cable. Like most European countries, Poland has a state-owned national television system which broadcasts in both color and black-and-white. Polish TV frequently shows British and American films dubbed in Polish, as well as some old American TV series.

The conversion of American TV sets is costly and not always satisfactory. Sets can be rented in Poland.

Poland has hundreds of radio stations on AM and FM bands. Daytime shortwave reception of British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is good. Voice of America (VOA) English broadcasts usually can be heard without difficulty morning and evening. U.S. Armed Forces

Network (AFN) broadcasts from Germany cannot be heard most of the time in either Warsaw or Kraków. Shortwave radio is rarely listened to any longer.

Poland's print media are among the most interesting and informative in Eastern Europe. *Time*, *Newsweek*, *USA Today*, and other Western periodicals are sold at major hotels.

The American and British embassies together produce a daily English-language summary of the Polish press.

Health

Arrangements can be made for medical consultations and for treatment in local hospitals. U.S. officials, however, discourage the practice except in emergencies. Some Americans are satisfied with the available services but, in most cases, go to Western Europe for serious medical problems and major dental work. Eye care can be obtained locally.

Medical services of all types are more limited and of lower quality in Kraków than in Warsaw. However, services at American Children's Hospital are good; adults are treated in emergencies.

Air pollution is a problem in Kraków. It is caused by industries in and near the city, and by its location in a basin.

Poland's community sanitation is generally satisfactory. Flies are a problem, even though most U.S.-owned and -leased apartments and houses are screened. Rest rooms in restaurants, theaters, hotels, and other public places are usually below American standards of sanitation and cleanliness, although some upgrading has been evident in recent years with the marked increase in tourist trade.

Colds, bronchial ailments, sinusitis, and intestinal flu are common, especially in winter. A form of gastroenteritis is prevalent in spring and summer. Poland is considered a "jaundice area." Inoculation against

typhoid is desirable, especially for those who plan to travel to remote parts of the country. Gamma globulin is recommended.

Raw fruits and vegetables require careful washing or peeling. The water purity is questionable, and it is recommended that all water for human consumption be boiled for 20 minutes. Some Americans resident in Warsaw drink one brand of locally pasteurized milk which is considered safe, but which often sours within a day or two.

Clothing and Services

Heavy coats and hats are needed for Poland's winters. Ski suits or warm jackets and slacks and heavy socks are useful for outdoor activities; warm underwear is a necessity for all family members.

A good supply of shoes and boots (tennis and dress shoes, sandals, rubber rain boots, and lined winter boots for children) should be part of every wardrobe. It is difficult to purchase suitable footwear locally.

Men's woolen suits worn in the U.S. are satisfactory for winter, but some men prefer heavier suits and vests during the coldest months. Fur hats, purchased locally, are popular. For summer, lightweight suits are adequate.

Women wear woolen clothing of various weights throughout most of the year, although lighter clothing worn with sweaters or jackets is good for summer. Leotards, heavy-weight stockings, pantsuits, sweaters, warm jersey blouses, and wool slacks are suggested for the coldest months. It is advisable to bring a supply of nylon pantyhose from home; they are available locally, but sizes and colors are limited. Polish women and resident foreigners are fashion conscious.

Children need the usual wool, corduroy, and other heavy clothing. A Mid-Atlantic wardrobe, supplemented by heavy sweaters, is suit-

able for Warsaw. Flannel pajamas are desirable most of the year. Availability of children's clothing on the local market is limited, making it necessary to have a good initial supply. School uniforms are not worn.

Tailors and dressmakers are generally satisfactory in the large cities of Poland, and also are fairly inexpensive. A few do excellent work copying from fashion magazines. Yard goods, especially linen, silk, and wool, are often scarce, and quality sewing notions also are difficult to find. Shoe repair services suffer from lack of materials.

Warsaw has several good beauty shops which keep pace with the latest styles. Similar shops, although fewer in number, are also available in other major cities.

Repairs on appliances are adequate and reasonably inexpensive, but sometimes slow. Supplies of personal and household items are generally available, although brands vary. Stationery and gift wrappings are difficult to find locally, and often costly. Christmas decorations are lovely and inexpensive here.

Domestic Help

Hard-working and dependable domestic help is available, and most resident Americans employ at least one domestic. Singles often hire part-time help. Cooks who are familiar with French and American cuisine are a rarity, but some who have worked for families from the U.S. can prepare American dishes.

Salaries vary according to responsibility. The social security scheme, which covers health insurance, must be paid for by the employer; if uniforms are desired, those are also the responsibility of the employer. Meals are provided for all domestics. Some apartments and homes have domestics' living quarters. Few domestics speak English, so it is helpful to learn numbers, a few cooking phrases, and as much shopping vocabulary as possible before moving here.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 3	Labor Day
May 3	Constitution Day
May/June	Corpus Christi Day*
Aug. 15.	Assumption of the Virgin Mary
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov. 11	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Several international air carriers serve Poland. The most frequently traveled auto route is from Frankfurt to Berlin, and from there on Highway E-8 to Poznań and Warsaw. Other routes are from Nuremberg to Prague to Cieszyn (on the Polish border) and north to Warsaw, or from Vienna north through Brno to Warsaw. Check visa requirements. Travel by train through Prague or Vienna also is possible. When driving in Eastern Europe, one should add about 50 percent more time than would normally be expected, since time is lost at border crossing points, in auto servicing, and in passing through small towns and villages.

There are no quarantine requirements for pets. Health certificates and proof of rabies inoculation (within six months, and not less than six weeks before arrival) are the only necessary documentation.

Only those holding diplomatic passports may import, buy, or own firearms and ammunition.

Poland is predominantly Roman Catholic, and churches are numerous throughout the country. In Warsaw, one Catholic church has an

English mass every Sunday. The city's Methodists have Sunday services in Polish. The one synagogue has traditional services year round, and Christian Scientists and other denominations have regular services except during summer. An Anglican clergyman visits Warsaw several times a year, and holds communion services for all Christians. Interdenominational services are held on special occasions in an auditorium at the U.S. Embassy.

Kraków has more than 85 Roman Catholic churches. There also are a Lutheran and a Baptist church (services in Polish), and a synagogue (without a rabbi) which holds Sabbath services. Kraków is the headquarters of ZNAK, a club of Catholic intellectuals, some of whom speak English. Poznań has many Catholic churches, and four Protestant churches representing different denominations. No English church services are available, and Poznań does not have a synagogue.

The time in Poland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus one.

The basic unit of Polish currency is the *złoty*. Import and export of *złotys* is prohibited.

Poland uses the metric system of weights and measures.

RECOMMENDED READING

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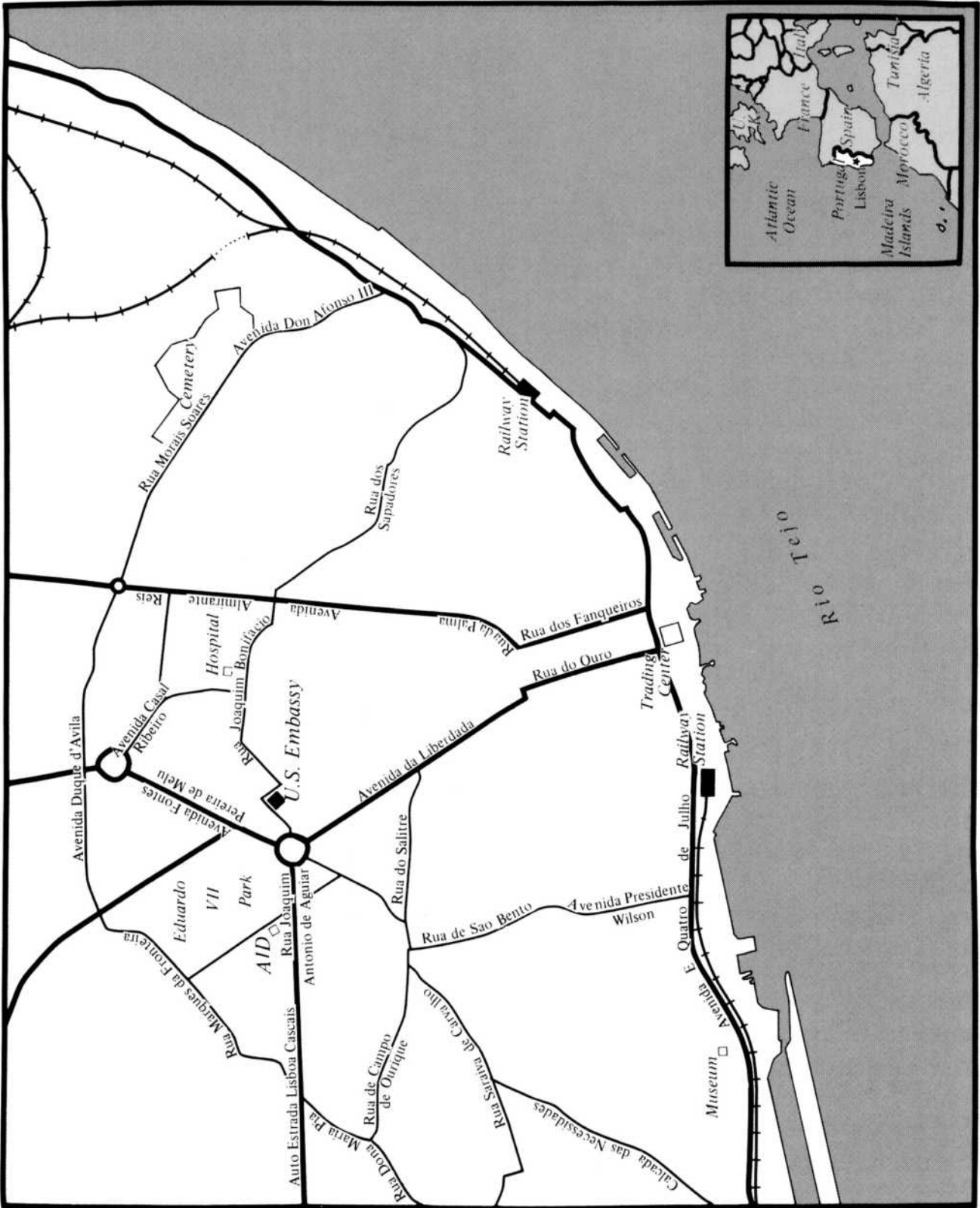
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Lisbon, Portugal

PORTUGAL

Portuguese Republic

Major Cities:

Lisbon, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Oporto, Coimbra

Other Cities:

Aveiro, Braga, Covilhã, Funchal, Matosinhos, Montijo, Setúbal, Vila Nova de Gaia

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Known in antiquity as Lusitania, **PORTUGAL** is one of Europe's oldest independent countries. It has been a sovereign state since the 12th century, when it vanquished the Castilians and the Moors who had long held the peninsula. Before that time, the area had been overrun or occupied by Celts, Romans, and Visigoths. While briefly ruled by Spain in 1580-1640, in the 15th and 16th centuries, the young Portuguese nation opened the sea lanes of the world, leading the way in explorations and discoveries, and founding an empire in America, Africa, and Asia.

Portugal became a dependent ally of Great Britain in the latter years of

the 17th century. It was occupied by France from 1807 to 1814 and, after a revolt in 1820, entered a troubled period during which it lost its long-established claim to Brazil. A republic was established a decade after the turn of the 20th century and, although Portugal sided against Germany in the first World War, it remained officially neutral (but friendly to the Allies) in World War II.

In 1961, India seized control of Portugal's provinces of Goa, Damão, and Diu. Revolts and independence movements began in several of the remaining colonies in the early 1960s. During the unsettled period after the April 1974 revolution, most of Portugal's African and Asian colonies were given or took their independence. Indonesia annexed Portugal's Timor possessions in 1976, over protest. Portugal's only remaining Asian colony is Macau, which is scheduled to return to Chinese control in 1999.

The nation has seen centuries of monarchy and, in recent times, years of dictatorship. After the "April 25" revolution in 1974, a series of six provisional governments were formed in the space of two years. By the late 1970s, the situation was much less volatile, though no party was able to draw a majority. In 1987, the Social Demo-

crats became the first party in 13 years to win an absolute majority of legislative seats; they maintained the majority in the 1991 election.

MAJOR CITIES

Lisbon

Lisbon stretches over several hills on the north side of the Tagus River. The city faces south across one of Europe's finest bays toward the Arrabida mountain range about 25 miles away. The bay's entrance is spanned by Europe's longest suspension bridge—the April 25 Bridge—with a main span of 1,108 yards.

Lisbon presents a contrasting picture of old, narrow alleyways and tiled buildings that reveal its Moorish heritage next to broad, modern boulevards, new apartment buildings, and parks. There is an abundance of trees (including palms, evergreens, and numerous deciduous varieties), and a month without flowers is a rare one indeed.

Lisbon is the cultural, commercial and administrative center of the nation. The population of Lisbon proper is approximately 663,000; greater Lisbon's population is

approximately 2,561,000. Although less populous than many other major capitals, Lisbon is nonetheless quite congested from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, a situation which is exacerbated by the narrow, winding streets, many of them one-way. Traffic is generally disorderly in town, and it is always hazardous along the main coastal road.

Food

Food is available in ample variety and quantity. Seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables are of good quality. The variety and quality of frozen goods has improved greatly with Portugal's accession into the Common Market. A large assortment of local and imported canned goods is available. Pork, lamb, and a wide variety of fish are excellent, although the shellfish is quite expensive; beef is not aged and may not appeal to American tastes; veal is periodically available. Local hams, bacon and other lunch meats are excellent.

Pasteurized fresh milk (whole, part-skim and skim) is readily available. On the coast, many people have milk delivered to their homes. Portuguese butter and cheese are excellent, and there is a large assortment of European cheeses in some markets. Sour cream and cottage cheese are not available, but there are close substitutes which are imported from France.

Freshly baked Portuguese bread is very popular with Americans. A variety of whole-grain breads is available as well as traditional types. Home bread deliveries are possible.

Clothing

Clothing requirements are much the same as for the Mid-Atlantic, except that heavy snow wear is not required. A good raincoat with a zip-out wool lining is an excellent investment. Summers can be hot, and winters can be chilly and damp. Dress tends to be formal and conservative among the older generation, but less so among the younger. A good supply of sweaters and woollens are needed in winter, as most

houses are poorly heated and stay cold and damp. Warm sleepwear and slippers are essential. Umbrellas and rainwear are necessary. The cobbled streets and sidewalks are hard on shoes, and it is difficult to find good walking shoes here. Running and tennis shoes are available, but there is not a great variety and they tend to be more expensive than in the states. There is a good assortment of swimwear available locally, ranging from the reasonably priced to very expensive designer models.

Clothing tends to be pricey in Portugal. Bargains can be found during sales or at the local markets.

Formal attire for men can be rented or tailored here at a price comparable to the Mid-Atlantic area. Formal attire for women is expensive and difficult to find off the rack.

Men: Clothing suitable for the Mid-Atlantic is suitable for Lisbon. Good quality ready-to-wear clothing can be expensive. Less expensive clothing is available, particularly in the open-air markets; however sizes tend to be smaller than in the U.S., a Portuguese large being equivalent to medium in the states. Excellent tailor-made suits, slacks, and jackets are available at higher prices than good ready-to-wear items in the U.S. Portuguese sweaters and woollens in general are a good buy.

While Portuguese shoes are attractive, many believe they do not last as long or fit as comfortably as American shoes. Large sizes can be difficult to find.

Women: Ready-made clothing is available here but tends to be short-waisted for some American figures. Designer fashions at high prices are available. Shoes are very attractive, although prices now are equal to or higher than those in the U.S. Shoes larger than a size 8 are difficult to find. Good stockings/hose are difficult to find, not usually of high quality and very expensive. Boots are reasonably priced. Lingerie, both Portuguese and from other European countries, is expensive.

Good dressmakers are available, but can be just as expensive as buying ready made clothing. Imported fabrics tend to be expensive, but Portuguese wool is attractive and reasonably priced.

It is difficult to find ready-to-wear evening clothes. Women are advised either to bring their formal attire or to bring the fabric and have it made here. Evening shoes are also difficult to find. Jewelry (both genuine and costume) is lovely and is a good buy when compared to the rest of Europe.

Children: Good quality ready-made clothing is available for children. Prices are generally much higher than in the U.S., the assortment is not nearly so wide, and is often not to American children's taste (except for very expensive clothing). Children's tennis shoes, in familiar brands, are available locally, although they are almost double in price.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: A broad selection of toiletries, cosmetics and home remedies is available in Lisbon. Since Portugal has joined the Common Market, there is an increase in the variety of European cosmetics and toiletries available for a higher price than in the U.S.

Basic Services: Dry cleaning services are adequate but expensive. Several self-service laundromats, which include dry cleaning machines, now operate in Lisbon and the suburbs. Shoe repair shops provide fine work at reasonable prices.

Religious Activities

Irish Dominican priests hold English-language Roman Catholic services in Lisbon, S. Pedro do Estoril, and Cascais. An interdenominational American Protestant church holds English-language services each Sunday in Cascais. An Anglican church in Lisbon, and its sister church in Estoril, hold weekly services in English. The Mormon Church has an active congregation

in both Lisbon and the western suburbs. There is a small synagogue in Lisbon. There are Baptist and Evangelical missionary groups headquartered in Lisbon with American missionaries and Portuguese orientation. There is religious education available for Catholic children (to which they are transported by school bus after school if they attend the American International School). Other churches offer prayer and study groups.

Education

There are a few schools to which American travelers send their children. In general, families have been pleased with the schools their children attend.

The American International School offers grades PK–12. A portion of the student body is American, with the remainder either Portuguese or third-country nationals. Students attend one of three campuses: grades 5–12 are located on the larger campus in Carnaxide (about midway between Lisbon and Estoril), grades PK–1 are located in a converted house in Sao Joao do Estoril, and grades 2–4 are located in a converted house in Monte Estoril. Bus service is provided. Teaching methods and materials are American. AP courses are offered, as is ESL, but essentially no other special education is offered. Contact the school if you have needs in this area. Most teachers are hired in the United States.

St. Dominic's School is an Irish Dominican Roman Catholic school. The school has modern facilities and is located near Carcavelos (between Lisbon and Estoril). It accepts pupils from kindergarten through grade 12 regardless of religious affiliation. The student body includes many American children as well as other nationalities. Texts and classroom methods are British and the International Baccalaureate diploma is now offered. Bus service is available. Uniforms are required.

St. Julian's School is the British school. It is located in Carcavelos, in

splendid grounds. It is based on the British system. Kindergarten through grade 13 (and the International Baccalaureate diploma) are offered. The school has both an English and a Portuguese section. Americans wishing to enroll their children in St. Julian's should apply as far in advance as possible, and even then there is no assurance that there will be space. The school has a waiting list for admission, and British children are given first preference. The school year begins in mid-September and ends in July. Uniforms are required. Bus service is not available.

The International Preparatory School is a small school which has classes from nursery school through grade 5. It is located in Carcavelos and has been used successfully in the past few years by several American families. It offers a mixed British/American curriculum.

The American Christian International Academy was founded in 1981 to provide an American education from a Christian perspective. Many families of diplomats, U.S. military, business personnel and missionaries have taken advantage of the academic emphasis at ACIA. It offers an American curriculum for grades K–8.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Universities of Aveiro, Coimbra, and Lisbon provide courses for foreigners in Portuguese literature, history and philosophy. Credits earned here cannot be transferred to an American university and vice versa.

University of Maryland Overseas offers classes irregularly.

Sports

Portugal offers a variety of sports, including soccer, tennis, golf, squash, horseback riding, polo, swimming, sailing, fishing, hunting, hiking, and softball, among others. Wind surfing, water skiing, surfboarding, and scuba diving are popular. Soccer and bull fighting are the major spectator sports, although

there is some auto racing (including a Portuguese Grand Prix) and bicycle racing.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

As would be imagined, sight-seeing trips are easily arranged. Costs are moderate in comparison to other European countries. Portugal operates state inns called "pousadas," which offer fine lodgings, often in remote areas. In the past, these were a bargain. A system of bed-and-breakfast lodgings (often in stately homes) under the auspices of the national tourist bureau has been instituted, and guests have brought back rave reviews from their stays in these homes (known as "turismo de habitacao"). The Algarve offers a wide range of accommodations, ranging from campgrounds to luxury resort complexes. Most towns have at least one hotel and a couple of pensions. There are numerous campgrounds, particularly in the north of the country.

Lisbon has lovely tree-lined and flower-filled parks, numerous children's playgrounds, a fine small zoo, botanical gardens, an aquarium, museums, galleries, cathedrals, palaces, and castles. The Royal Coach Museum is reputed to have the finest collection of royal and state coaches in the world. Day trips to Evora, Fatima, Batalha, the walled villages of Obidos, Marvao, Monsaraz and Estremoz and other sites of interest are possible. Madrid is approximately 8 hours by car, Seville is about 5 or 6, Merida (with glorious Roman ruins) about 4 hours.

Atlantic Ocean temperatures north of Lisbon seldom rise above 60°F because the Gulf Stream does not flow near enough to temper the cold waters. The Algarve's water temperatures are warmer, although still cold by American standards. Carcavelos, Estoril, and Cascais (near Lisbon) have beautiful protected beaches, but they are currently considered to be unsafe for swimming because of nearby sewage disposal. (Nonetheless, they are filled with



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Rossio Square in Lisbon

bathers.) There is presently a massive sewage cleanup program in operation, and there are promises of clean sea water within the next couple of years. Farther west and north of Lisbon are Guincho, Praia Grande, and Praia das Maças. Five miles southwest across the Tagus River on the Costa da Caparica one can find safe bathing beaches. There are many more fine beaches further from Lisbon. Most provide chair and/or cabana rental by the hour, day, or even longer.

Several hotels on the Costa do Sol near Lisbon have large fresh or treated saltwater swimming pools which non-guests may use for a fee. The Quinta da Marinha (a golf and country club), and the Cascais Country Club, to name just two, have membership fees, comparable to club fees in the U.S.

In the suburbs, there are a number of tennis clubs (and tennis lessons),

golf courses (and golf lessons), riding stables (and riding lessons), and swimming pools. Golfers should bring their own golf equipment and attire with them. Golf shops have a good selection, but their prices are very high.

Numerous health clubs have opened in the area in recent years, and with them opportunities for aerobic and other exercise classes.

Skiing is sometimes possible in mid-winter in the Serra da Estrela, about 250 kilometers northeast of Lisbon. Boots, skis, and poles can be rented. Better skiing is in the Sierra Nevada mountains near Granada, Spain.

Entertainment

Movies are a popular form of entertainment, with films being shown in their original language with Portuguese subtitles. American films usually reach Portugal about 6 months

after their debut in the U.S. Current and older films from other countries are also shown, but British and American are by far the most popular.

The rich ballet, opera, and concert seasons are enjoyed by all. The quality of performances is good, and the tickets are reasonably priced. Many employees buy season concert tickets for the Gulbenkian orchestra.

Theater performances, usually original works by Portuguese playwrights, also abound. An international amateur dramatic group, the Lisbon Players, offers several English-language dramatic productions each year.

The bullfight season runs from Easter to early October. Unlike in Spanish bullfights, the bull is not killed in Portugal, and the fight is carried on mostly on horseback. There is

one major bullring in Lisbon and one in Cascais. Many people attend out-of-town fights as well.

Dining out is a popular form of entertainment in Lisbon. On the Estoril coast and throughout Portugal there are countless restaurants ranging from luxurious to humble. Prices in all categories are now similar to those in the U.S., but prices are climbing. Lunch is usually served from about 1 to 3 pm, dinner from about 7:00 to 10:00 pm. There are McDonald's and Pizza Hut chains in Lisbon, with prices slightly higher than the U.S.

"Fado" is sung in many small restaurants in the Alfama and Bairro Alto, the older sections of Lisbon, as well as in a couple of night spots on the Estoril coast. Haunting in tone, tragic in theme, the fado is well beloved by the Portuguese and is to them what the blues are to Americans. The fado performances generally begin about 10 pm, with the best sets performed well after midnight.

Nightclubs of varying quality, discotheques and the Estoril Casino provide further night life. Cascais has many small bars which are close replicas of English pubs.

Social Activities

Among Americans: The American Women of Lisbon and the American Club of Lisbon, are two active organized women's clubs. The latter includes most of the American business community and other nationals. The annually elected Board of Directors of the former is composed of American women, but its membership is comprised of many nationalities. British and Scandinavian women are very active. Both clubs regularly schedule luncheons with featured speakers, as well as other activities.

A newly formed club, International Women in Portugal, (IWP) offers many activities and a monthly luncheon at different locales. Although international in flavor, the main language is English.

Ponta Delgada, Azores

The Azores archipelago, an autonomous region of the Republic of Portugal, is located in the North Atlantic about 800 miles west of Lisbon and 2,300 miles east of New York City. The Ponta Delgada district includes the nine-island archipelago composed of Sao Miguel, Terceira, Santa Maria, Graciosa, Sao Jorge, Pico, Faial, Flores, and Corvo. Total land area is 890 square miles; the estimated population is 244,000.

People from Portugal, the Low Countries, France and Spain were among the first settlers; present-day inhabitants reflect their physical, cultural and linguistic characteristics. The islands are of volcanic origin characterized by steep coastlines with occasional black sand beaches. Inland, the terrain is marked by extinct volcanic craters, some with lakes and picturesque hills rising to 3,000 feet. Lush vegetation and, in season, beautiful flowers cover the countryside. The climate is temperate and the Gulf Stream wards off extremes of heat and cold. Temperatures never reach freezing and rarely go above 80°F; however, humidity often exceeds 80 percent. June through September is usually good beach weather. Winter days are chilly with high winds reaching gale force. The annual rainfall is 34 inches.

In the past, the Azores were an important port of call for ships returning from the New World and those returning from India. Now, except for the cargo ships which link the archipelago with continental Portugal and the rest of the world, ships stop only for bunkering and emergency repairs. In summer, foreign cruise ships occasionally call for a day at Ponta Delgada.

The principal economic activity is agriculture. About two-thirds of the land is devoted to pasture. Dairy products, including excellent cheeses, account for a large percentage of local income as does cattle breeding. Next in importance are

canned fish, milling and feed, bakery products, sugar, tobacco, and wood. Azorean wines from Graciosa and Pico are excellent, but insufficient quantities are produced for export. Other than food processing and handicrafts (mainly embroidery, ceramics, wicker and wood-working), the Azores have little industry.

According to the Autonomy Statute approved in 1976, the Azores form an autonomous region of Portugal with an elected Regional Assembly and a Regional Government responsible to the Assembly. Portuguese sovereignty is represented by the President of Portugal. The regional Government consists of a President and ten Regional Secretaries. Since the Azores have no capital, government functions are divided among the three major cities—Ponta Delgada (Sao Miguel), Angra do Heroísmo (Terceira), and Horta (Faial). The Azores are represented in the national Assembly of the Republic by five deputies.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in the Azores, with headquarters in Ponta Delgada, oversees military operations throughout the Azores and also is the NATO representative in the archipelago. Under the Commander-in-Chief, a Rear Admiral of the Portuguese Navy, supervises the small naval detachment stationed in the islands, and an Army Brigadier (equivalent to a U.S. Major General) commands infantry and artillery units. An Air Force Brigadier commands the Air Zone which includes Lajes Field (which is formally designated Portuguese Air Base 4) on Terceira.

The U.S. military presence in the Azores began during World War I, when a squadron of destroyers was based at Ponta Delgada. In 1944, United States forces returned to the Azores, where they subsequently have maintained a continuous presence within the framework of a bilateral defense agreement signed in 1951. As at most bases, limited medical, educational, shopping, and social facilities are available. As

with many other U.S. military installations worldwide, the U.S. presence in the Azores will be affected in coming years by planned reductions in Defense Department budget and staff.

Food

In winter, the local vegetable market is restricted largely to onions, potatoes, carrots, turnips, cabbage, brussels sprouts, lettuce, and collard greens. Available fruits, usually imported from Lisbon, include apples, pears, tangerines, oranges, and lemons. Bananas and delicious hothouse pineapples are grown locally. Generally there is a fair variety of fruits and vegetables found in the supermarkets and public markets. The quality varies and can differ noticeably from U.S. standards. Seasonal shortages of fruits and vegetables on local markets do occur.

Fresh fish is available year round except during bad weather and heavy seas. Although lobster is expensive, a few other indigenous shellfish are reasonably priced. Meat cuts offered by local butchers differ from U.S. cuts. Fresh beef, pork, liver, lamb, and kidneys are available. Portuguese hams and turkeys are expensive.

Sterilized (UHT) milk and good bread and pastries are readily available. Azorean cheeses are outstanding, and several excellent varieties are made in Sao Miguel.

Excellent wines from mainland Portugal (inexpensive by U.S. standards) are readily available in local stores. Local vineyards provide vinho de cheiro, a wine of unusual flavor and aroma which goes well with the regional cuisine. Tea grown on the island of Sao Miguel is excellent.

Clothing

Temperate clothing is suitable most of the year. Lightweight tropical garments can be worn only a short time in summer. A topcoat, a zip-lined raincoat, boots, and an umbrella are useful for the rainy, cold winters. Sweaters, flannel paja-

mas, and wool robes are necessities for winter. Light weight winter clothing, appropriate for centrally heated U.S. buildings, is not adequate for the drafty and unheated buildings in the Azores. Dress is conservative but becoming more informal.

Women's dress tends toward the conservative. Pants are worn for only the most informal occasions. Dressy suits or simple, well-cut afternoon dresses are the rule for cocktails and informal dinners on Sao Miguel. An evening wrap is necessary. Local women wear fur stoles for winter evening affairs. Imported clothing is locally available, but expensive. Dressmakers are reasonably priced but difficult to find.

Supplies and Services

Basic Services: Shoe repairs are reasonably priced. Local dry cleaning is expensive and adequate, if slow.

Local hairdressers are satisfactory and reasonably priced. Men's haircuts are satisfactory and inexpensive.

Religious Activities

Many Roman Catholic churches dot the island. The one synagogue is not open at present. Other denominations include both Southern and Nazarene Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and Mormons. All services are in Portuguese.

The most important religious event on Sao Miguel is the Santo Cristo Festival. Held in Ponta Delgada every year, it peaks on the fifth Sunday after Easter. The festival attracts many people from the other islands, as well as from the United States, Canada and continental Portugal.

"Romeiros" (pilgrimages) during Lent, "Danças dos Cadarcos" at Carnival time, the Holy Ghost celebrations in May and June, and "Carvalhadas" on June 29 are some of the most interesting festivals and pageants. On Sundays during the summer, many small processions

can be seen in the villages throughout the islands.

Education

No schools offer instruction in English.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the Azores has no special facilities for foreign students. Music lessons by private tutors are given at the Regional Conservatory. Ballet lessons, exercise classes, and craft classes are available, as well as other private lessons

Sports

A beautiful golf course is located in the hills 28 miles from Ponta Delgada. The weather is usually cloudy, chilly, and windy, so bring a golfer's raincoat. Lajes also has an excellent golf course and a golf shop with American goods.

Private tennis courts and public courts are located near Ponta Delgada. Lajes also has tennis courts.

Sao Miguel has some fishing. Saltwater fish include bluefish, amberjack, marlin, tuna, and shark. Several world records have been broken by local anglers. Freshwater fishing is possible in the lakes and streams of Sao Miguel. Licenses are required.

Other popular sports include soccer, basketball, volleyball, field and roller hockey, horseback riding, and ocean swimming.

Lajes field has bowling alleys, ice skating and other sports facilities.

Portuguese authorities limit the size of sporting rifles to .22 caliber and pistols to .32 caliber. It is possible to hunt for quail, ring doves, pigeons, and rabbits on Sundays for about 9 months of the year. A trap shooting club, located about an hour's drive from Ponta Delgada, meets on weekends.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

A visit to the other islands of the archipelago is highly recommended, as each has a distinct personality and different customs, food, and even accent. Incredibly beautiful spots for picnics and camping exist everywhere, usually without the expected infrastructure, however. The islands are a photographer's and a hiker's paradise. Sao Miguel has beautiful lakes at the bottom of ancient craters at Sete Cidades, Lagoa do Fogo, and Furnas. The botanical garden and the famous hot springs of Furnas are picturesque.

Because of the distance and lack of relatively inexpensive transportation, travel to the Continent is limited. The interisland airline SATA-Air Azores calls at eight of the islands and is the usual mode of travel. Pico, Faial, Terceira, and Sao Miguel all have at least one excellent hotel. Flores, Sao Jorge, Graciosa and Corvo have good hotels. The other islands have only small pensions, usually without private baths.

For a nominal fee, you may join the local yacht club, which has swimming meets, and sailboats and wind surf boards for member use. Limited facilities are available for lessons in sailing and horseback riding.

Organized activities for young children depend on the parents' initiative. Despite a shortage of leaders, Ponta Delgada has Scout troops for boys and girls.

Entertainment

Ponta Delgada has a few regular motion picture theaters. The films are predominantly American, English, French, Italian, Spanish, and German, with Portuguese subtitles.

An interesting museum displays paintings, sculptures, and artisans' crafts. The University of the Azores at Ponta Delgada sponsors some concerts and conferences with foreign guests during winter. The

Regional Directorate of Culture occasionally sponsors guest artist that are worth seeing.

Discos are located in and around Ponta Delgada, and a few good restaurants and hotels serve continental food. Most restaurants stay open until after 11 pm. There is also a well known tavern in Ponta Delgada where the traditional Portuguese "Fado" is sung.

Social Activities

Among Americans: Most American residents of the Azores are former Azoreans who have returned to the Azores as retirees or farmers. They are totally integrated into the local society and there is no American colony as such. There is a small group of Americans in Sao Miguel, mainly retirees, who are not Luso-Americans.

Most entertaining is done in the home. Bridge and poker are popular.

International Contacts: No large colonies of foreigners live in the Azores, except for those on Flores as well as a few British, Canadian and South African retirees. During the summer months an influx of Europeans and Americans allows an opportunity for interesting social exchange.

Social and professional contacts are friendly, and the ability to speak Portuguese is essential to conduct both social and business activities.

Oporto

Oporto (in Portuguese, Pôrto), situated at the mouth of the Douro River some 213 miles north of Lisbon, is Portugal's second largest city and the seat of an important administrative district. It is a chief Atlantic port, with its outer harbor at Leixões. According to the latest census (2001), Oporto proper has a population of 302,000, and Greater Oporto, almost 1.2 million.

The surrounding area has a high concentration of Portuguese commerce, industry, agriculture, educa-

tional facilities, and centers of religious thought. There are many famous historical sites and cities, artistic monuments, attractive towns and villages, and varied scenery. Among the famous landmarks are the Torre dos Clérigos, an 18th-century tower; a beautiful Gothic cathedral called Sé; and the two-storied Dom Luis Bridge which spans the Douro.

The city began as a pre-Roman town, first as Cale and then as Portus Cale, and later was held by Visigoths and Moors. It was the capital of northern Portugal until 1174. Oporto gave its name to port wine when export trade of that product was established here in 1678.

The temperature of Oporto's coastal area varies moderately between a mean maximum of 74.5°F and a minimum of 58°F. In summer the temperature seldom reaches 80°F, and in winter seldom drops below freezing. Frosts are fairly frequent from December to March.

Oporto winters, although comparatively mild, call for heating and warm clothing. The dampness is penetrating, as are the north and east winds. Private homes, schools, and public buildings often lack central heating and can be uncomfortably cold.

Schools for Foreigners

The British community operates a school which accepts American children; its main purpose is to prepare British children for English public schools. Children from kindergarten through grade 12 are taught in small classes, with emphasis on individual attention. The French school takes children from kindergarten through grade four. The German school teaches in German through the *abitur* (secondary school graduation). A new international school opened in October 1986. This school teaches both a Portuguese and English curriculum aimed at preparing students for the international baccalaureate.

Portuguese public schools offer free education through grade six. Public



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Se Cathedral and city of Oporto from Torre

and private schools charge moderate (by American standards) fees for education in the higher grades. There is a range of good private schools in the Oporto area, most of them operated by Roman Catholic orders. Two separate organizations in Oporto are dedicated to the education of handicapped and gifted children. There are several excellent nursery schools for very young children.

The British, German, Spanish, and Italian governments support or operate cultural institutes in Oporto, with special emphasis on the study of languages. The Instituto Luso-Britânico prepares students for British university examinations, and conducts classes in English. The German Cultural Institute, affiliated with the University of Oporto, offers language and literature classes. Courses in

French language and literature are offered at the Institut Français. All sponsor frequent lectures, art exhibits, and concerts, and all have libraries. The British Association's library has a variety of current English books and reference works.

The University of Oporto, with faculties of medicine, pharmacy, engineering, liberal arts, and economics, has no special facilities for foreign

students. Americans with a university background and knowledge of Portuguese have been accepted as special students, but not as degree candidates. The transfer of credits from Portuguese to American universities is difficult, if not impossible.

Oporto has a Conservatory of Music and a School of Fine Arts, both of which accept foreign students. Private art and music teachers are also available, as are several ballet schools.

Recreation and Entertainment

Touring, hiking, and picnicking in northern Portugal are delightful. Roman and pre-Roman ruins and interesting buildings, museums, and fine scenery abound. Neighboring Spanish Galicia also offers rewarding tourist possibilities, though the narrow, winding roads often make for slow car travel. Government-built *pousadas* and *estalagens* (hostels) provide the best guest accommodations at moderate prices. Restaurants in *pousadas* and the better hotels generally serve international cuisine and are reliable. There are an increasing number of "bed-and-breakfast" establishments, many in stately homes.

Spectator and participant sports within easy reach of Oporto include soccer, basketball, roller skating, roller hockey, tennis, golf, squash, hiking, swimming, riding, boating, fishing, and hunting. Beaches are more popular for sunbathing than for swimming because of the low water temperatures; some hotels and private clubs, however, have large pools. There is boating all along the coast.

Trout are found in some streams. Snipe and quail shooting are fall and winter pastimes. Skeet and trap shooting are also available.

Some bullfights (*touradas*) are held in northern Portugal. The *tourada* during the August Festa da Agonia in Viana do Castelo always draws large crowds. So do the occasional

Sunday and holiday bullfights in Póvoa do Varzim, a beach resort just north of Oporto.

There is skiing high in the mountains, chiefly in the Serra da Estrela. Better facilities exist in the mountains north of Madrid. Riding is popular and horses are readily available. The Tennis Club da Foz and the Oporto Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club offer courts, restaurant, and other facilities to members. Membership possibilities vary, but all involve substantial nonrefundable entrance fees. Two golf courses are near Oporto. While tennis, golf, and other sports apparel and equipment are available locally, they are expensive.

Home entertainment centering around close family life remains traditional in northern Portugal. First-rate restaurants and nightclubs are few. Movies are a favorite evening entertainment, and many American films are screened. The best films of most countries get to Oporto eventually, normally with original soundtrack and Portuguese subtitles.

The music season has been revived after a slowdown some years ago. The Gulbenkian orchestra and ballet from Lisbon offer occasional performances, and some foreign cultural institutes (British, German, French) and the Ateneu Commercial stage a few musical and theatrical events.

Most Americans in the district speak Portuguese and are U.S. citizens who have returned to the land of their birth. The native-born American community is small, consisting mostly of business representatives. There is a substantial British community, largely connected with the Port wine exporting "factors" (merchants). Organizations open to membership include a Red Cross chapter, and the Ladies' Guild of the Anglican Church of St. James, as well as many other charitable institutions. Those who know some Portuguese will find volunteer organizations enthusiastic about proffered help. Clubs and sports

facilities are also sources of contact with Portuguese and British nationals.

Coimbra

Coimbra, which flourished under the Romans and the Moors, and later as the capital of Portugal (from about 1139 to 1260), is a market center and a city of small industries, 180 miles northeast of Lisbon. It is the old capital of the former Beira province, and once bore the name Conimbriga. It also is the home of the esteemed University of Coimbra, one of the oldest universities in Europe, founded in Lisbon in 1290 and moved to its present site in 1537. The University offers courses for foreigners; its faculties of law and letters attract many expatriates. Among the university's distinguished students were Portugal's great epic and lyric poet, Camões (Luis Vaz de Camoëns, 1524-1580), and the 19th-century writer, José Maria Eça de Queiros.

This city of 78,000 residents has many interesting buildings, among them a fine 12th-century cathedral, Sé Velha, and the cloistered church of Santa Cruz. The city, famous for its *fado* music and its beautiful park, overlooks the Mondego River.

It was at Coimbra in 1355 that the romantic heroine Inés de Castro was murdered; Portuguese writers over the ensuing centuries have immortalized her tragic love affair with Peter I (Dom Pedro).

OTHER CITIES

Known as the Venice of Portugal, **AVEIRO** is dominated by the Central Canal, which connects the city to the Atlantic Ocean. It is located on the Costa de Prata (Silver Coast) northeast of Lisbon, and is surrounded by salt flats, beaches, and lagoons. It is the capital of Aveiro district, and is said to be the ancient Roman city of Talabriga. Mercury mines are located in the area, and other important industries include sardine fisheries and the production

of sea salt. The museum here is a converted convent, and has a fine collection of religious art. The population of Aveiro is over 63,000.

BRAGA, 30 miles north-northeast of Oporto, is a summer resort, but is also a noted religious center. Thought to have been founded by Carthaginians, it was also a Roman city (its ancient name was Bracara Augusta), and ruins from that period are still in evidence. Braga was the residence of the Portuguese court from 1093 to 1147, and an archiepiscopal see and primacy. In its 12th-century cathedral is the tomb of Henry of Burgundy, count of Portugal and father of Alfonso I. Braga was capital of the old province of Entre-Douro-e-Minho, and the ancient capital of Lusitania. Today, the city is home to over 65,000 residents.

COVILHÃ is a prominent textile hub, located 130 miles northeast of Lisbon, in east-central Portugal. Wool and cotton cloth are the city's main products; it is also a marketing area for the Cova de Beira Basin. Covilhã is in one of Portugal's only winter sports regions; the nearby Serra da Estrela ("Range of the Stars") mountains offer skiing resorts with panoramic views. The area is known for its cheeses, especially the ewe's milk cheese, "Queijo da Serra." Covilhã's population is over 22,000.

FUNCHAL lies on the southern coast of Madeira Island in the North Atlantic, about 440 miles northwest of Morocco. The capital of the island, Funchal is also a major tourist spot. Landmarks include the Quinta da Boavista orchid house, and the Museum of Sacred Art. The Funchal Festival of St. Sylvester celebrates the year's end each December with singing, dancing, and fireworks. The city was founded in 1421 by the Portuguese navigator João Gonçalves Zarco, and has had periods of Spanish and British control. Funchal has a current population of approximately 115,000.

MATOSINHOS is a northwestern suburb of Oporto, situated 170 miles

north of Lisbon on the Atlantic coast. The artificial harbor here is the main port for northern Portugal's wine exports. It is heavily used by local canneries. The Church of Bom Jesus de Bouças contains a crucifix supposedly carved by the biblical Nicodemus who helped to bury Jesus. Matosinhos was originally called Matusiny (1258); it became a town in 1853. The population is over 26,000.

MONTIJO lies due east of Lisbon across the Tagus River. Its roughly 23,000 residents are employed in industries such as cork processing, and fertilizer and hardware manufacture. Oyster fisheries are also important. Empress Eugénie, a consort of Napoleon III, was the countess of Montijo.

SETÚBAL, 19 miles southeast of Lisbon, was once known as Saint Yves (or Saint Ubes). It is an important port on the Bay of Setúbal, and is known for its muscatel wine, corks, and oranges, and for its shipbuilding and sardine-canning industries. It served as a royal residence in the 15th century. Setúbal's current population is close to 104,000.

VILA NOVA DE GAIA is located on the Rio Douro, immediately south of Oporto, in the northwest. It is a wine-producing city of over 63,000 residents. Port is matured and blended in its many armazéns, or wine lodges. Pottery, footwear, and textiles are also made here.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Portugal, in Europe's southwest corner, is part of the Iberian Peninsula. With an area of 36,390 sq. miles, it is approximately the size of Indiana. The country is made up of the mainland and the Azores and Madeira Islands. On the north and east, Portugal is bordered by Spain; on the

south and west by the Atlantic Ocean.

The Tagus River, flowing west into the Atlantic at Lisbon, divides mainland Portugal into two distinct topographical and climatic regions. The northern part of the country is mountainous. Its climate is relatively cool and rainy. In the south there are low, rolling plains. The climate is drier and warmer, particularly in the interior.

Lying about 800 miles west of Lisbon in the Atlantic Ocean, the Azores are a chain of nine mountainous islands of volcanic origin. Their climate tends to be moist and moderate throughout the year. The total land area of the nine islands is 888 sq. miles.

The two main islands and the numerous smaller, uninhabited islands that make up the Madeira chain are located in the Atlantic Ocean about 350 miles west of Morocco. The islands are mountainous and rugged, with a mild year-round climate. Total land area is slightly over 300 sq. miles.

Mainland Portugal experiences two distinct seasons. From late October to mid-May rain is frequent and sometimes heavy. Temperatures may drop into the low 30's at night during the coldest months, with daytime highs in the 50's and 60's. Annual variations in rainfall can be considerable, with years of flooding followed by years of drought. The remainder of the year is normally sunny with minimal rainfall. Days are pleasant, with temperatures seldom exceeding 95°F, except in the southern interior of the country. Afternoons and evenings are breezy, with nighttime temperatures in the 60's and low 70's. Spells of intense heat are infrequent and last only a few days.

Population

The Portuguese, who numbered about 10.2 million in 2001, are a homogeneous people of Mediterranean stock. The original Ibero-Celtic peoples have, over the last

2,000 years, mixed with Germanic, Celtic, Roman, Arabic, and African peoples to form the population of today. The Portuguese are predominantly Roman Catholic, have a literacy rate more than 85 percent, and have a life expectancy of 76 years. “Saudade,” a feeling of nostalgia mixed with a melancholy acceptance of fate, is a concept often applied by the Portuguese to themselves.

More than 600,000 residents of Portugal’s former overseas colonies returned to the motherland in the 1970s. Portuguese citizens of African descent make up the country’s only significant minority.

Thousands of American residents live in Portugal, the vast majority of whom are returned Portuguese-born immigrants. Most Americans live in the Lisbon area, the Oporto district in the north, the Algarve province in the south, and in the Azores and Madeira. The British and the Dutch form other large expatriate communities in Portugal.

Tourism is a major industry. More than 13 million people visit Portugal yearly. Spaniards make up the largest group of tourists, followed by the British and other northern Europeans. Over 200,000 Americans visit each year.

English and French are the most widely spoken foreign languages. Although Spanish and Portuguese are quite similar in structure and vocabulary, they differ significantly in pronunciation. While the Portuguese are very gracious when foreigners attempt to speak Portuguese, they are often offended when non-Spaniards speak Spanish with them. It is prudent for Americans to speak English with the Portuguese when they are unable to converse in Portuguese.

Public Institutions

Portugal is one of Europe’s oldest independent nations, tracing its history to the 12th century when it became a kingdom following victories over the Leonese and the

Moors. In the 15th and 16th centuries Portuguese navigators led the way in overseas exploration, establishing an empire in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The Portuguese monarchy lasted until 1910, when it was overthrown and Portugal was proclaimed a republic. Sixteen years later a military coup led to the dictatorship of Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, a law professor who served as Finance Minister and later Prime Minister. Marcello Caetano followed Dr. Salazar as Prime Minister from 1968 to 1974.

On April 25, 1974, the Armed Forces Movement, formed by young military officers, overthrew the Caetano regime. Although the period that followed was marked by considerable instability, free elections were held for a Constituent Assembly in April 1975, and for the Legislative Assembly in April 1976.

A new constitution was adopted in April 1976, and revised in 1982 and 1989, which defines Portugal as “a Democratic State based on the rule of law.” The constitution provides strong safeguards for individual civil liberties. It also establishes the four main branches of the national government: the Presidency; the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers; the Assembly of the Republic; and the courts.

The most recent presidential elections held in January 2001, at which time Jorge Fernando de Sampaio, a member of the Socialist Party, was reelected. The most recent general election, in March 2002, provided the Social Democratic Party (PSP) with a majority in the Assembly; the Social Democrats have held such a majority since 1987. José Manuel Durão Baroso of the PSP became Prime Minister in 2002.

Internally, Portugal is divided into 18 districts and two autonomous regions. Municipalities within each hold elections for the selection of local officials.

Internationally, Portugal is a member of the United Nations, the Coun-

cil of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Western European Security Union, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and several international development organizations. In January 1986, Portugal was granted admission to the European Community (the Common Market). Portugal held the EC’s rotating Presidency for the first time during the initial half of 1992.

Arts, Science, and Education

Portugal’s culture reflects its rich historical heritage—a blend of Western European, Mediterranean, and North African values. Portuguese art has found expression in architecture, especially during the Manueline period (the 1495–1521 A.D. reign of King Manuel), and in epic and lyric poetry.

By law, all Portuguese children must attend 9 years of primary school. The number of public schools is increasing to meet demands in rural areas and demands for secondary and higher education. Students who qualify academically and financially may seek admission to state or private secondary and vocational schools. Diplomas from such schools are necessary for admission to one of the many state-run universities or technical institutes.

Commerce and Industry

Portugal’s accession into the European Economic Community (EC) in 1986 coincided with renewed economic activity and growth, characterized in part by increased international investment in Portugal. Money from the EC is rapidly modernizing Portugal’s outdated infrastructure but making the fight against inflation even more difficult.

The Portuguese agricultural sector employs 10 percent of the work force but produces only about 4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Thousands of vineyards produce Portugal's world-famous Port, Madeira and other wines. Other important crops include grains, tomatoes, potatoes, olives, citrus fruits, figs, and almonds. Forests cover an additional 35 percent of the country's land area and include extensive ranges of cork oak, maritime pine, and eucalyptus.

Fishing fleets that once engaged in deep-water fishing now consist largely of small craft which harvest anchovies, sardines, and tuna along Portugal's 500-mile Atlantic coast. Much of the catch is canned for export.

Industry and commerce employ approximately 30 percent of the work force and account for about 36 percent of the GDP. Major industrial sectors include textiles, footwear, leather goods, wood and pulp, paper, metal working, mining, chemicals, and automobile assembly.

About 60 percent of Portugal's work force are employed in the government and service sectors.

Transportation

Local

The Lisbon area offers public transportation services. Buses connect all parts of the city and its suburbs with frequent, regularly scheduled service. Fares are on a zone basis. One U-shaped subway line operates within the city itself, connecting the downtown area with eastern areas of the city. Passes which are valid on both the buses and the subway may be purchased. Both buses and subway trains are crowded during rush hours, from 7:30 am to 9:30 am and from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

Taxis are plentiful in the Lisbon area, and many are radio dispatched. Taxis operate on meters. Drivers are uniformly courteous and honest.

Commuter train service is available from downtown Lisbon along the coast to the western suburbs and

Cascais. A trip from downtown to Cascais takes approximately 35 minutes. A commuter train also runs from Lisbon to Sintra.

Ponta Delgada has inexpensive bus service available to most towns on the island of Sao Miguel, although buses do not run frequently. Taxis are readily available and are not expensive. Some taxi drivers speak English and are willing to hire their taxis for half-day and full-day trips.

Driving in Portugal is dangerous. Roads are congested, speeds high, and many drivers careless. In particular, the coast road from Lisbon to Cascais is considered the most dangerous stretch of highway in Europe based on accident reports. One must always drive defensively while behind the wheel in Portugal.

Regional

Many international airlines serve Lisbon, connecting Portugal via daily flights to most of Western Europe, North and South America, and less frequently with Africa and Asia. Delta Airlines initiated service between New York and Lisbon in 1992. Direct railroad connections exist between Lisbon and Madrid in Spain, where it is possible to connect with trains to the rest of Europe. Road systems connect Portugal with Spain and the rest of Europe. Lisbon is also a major port, with maritime traffic arriving from and departing to ports throughout the world.

International airlines also connect Oporto, the Azores, and Madeira with foreign countries.

Domestic airline service is available between Lisbon and Oporto, the Algarve, the Azores and Madeira. Flight delays may be encountered during the rainy season.

Regular train service connects Lisbon with Oporto in the north, and with the Algarve in the south. Auto-train services are available to Oporto at an additional cost. Train service to the eastern part of Portugal is available on the Lisbon-

Madrid line, which also offers auto-train services. Other locations throughout the country are serviced by local trains which are less comfortable than those serving the main lines.

Portugal's highway system ranges from excellent to poor. Major expressways are found in and around Lisbon, stretching both north to Oporto and south to Setubal. Short stretches of expressway are found in and near several other urban centers. Most parts of the country are connected by two-lane paved highways which are passable in all weather. Many roads are narrow and winding and are heavily travelled by automobiles, trucks, and buses. Road maintenance, particularly in the northeastern and eastern parts of the country, may be spotty at times. Drivers are urged to develop and employ good defensive driving habits wherever they may be driving in Portugal.

Both American and Portuguese car rental agencies operate throughout the country. Rental prices are comparable to the rest of Europe, but may seem expensive compared to rentals in the United States.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone and telegraphic circuits are available to Europe and almost all points of the world. Calls to most places can now be dialed direct. USA direct services are offered by AT&T and US Sprint.

Direct dial telephone service is available to most parts of the world from Ponta Delgada, although it is not available from some of the smaller islands.

Radio and TV

Lisbon: Shortwave radio reception is fair to good depending on location and set. U.S. radios can be used with a transformer. BBC and VOA English, as well as several other European shortwave broadcasts, can be heard in Lisbon. Local AM and FM stations offer a full range of

American and Portuguese music as well as extensive newscasts in Portuguese. An AFRTS station with English-language news, sports and music broadcasts in FM from the NATO facility (IBERLANT) located outside of Lisbon. Reception varies significantly from different locations in and near Lisbon. Another FM station, "Radio Paris-Lisbonne" offers music and news in French.

Portuguese National Television (RTP) has channels that regularly feature American shows and movies in English with Portuguese subtitles. Portuguese TV uses the PAL 625 system. American color TV sets cannot be used for local viewing, although they can be used with American VCR's to watch the NTSC-system videos that are available for rent. Multi-system TV's and VCR's are available. Quality European-standard electronic equipment is available locally, but at considerably higher prices than the equivalent in the U.S.

Small satellite dishes can receive European stations like Sky News, TVE, TV5, RTL and Eurosport. CNN international is also available. There is no commercial cable TV service, but many larger apartment buildings have satellite dishes that feed channels to each apartment.

Ponta Delgada: RTP Azores operates in Sao Miguel. About 50 percent of the programs are in Portuguese, and the rest are in English, Spanish, German, and French, all with Portuguese subtitles. The American station (AFRTS) at Lajes does not produce a signal strong enough for reception in Sao Miguel.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Lisbon: The *International Herald Tribune* is available within one day of publication at many newsstands, which also carry American and British news magazines and newspapers at prices higher than domestic rates. A small English weekly, *The Anglo-Portuguese News*, is aimed primarily at the large British com-

munity in Portugal. Eight Portuguese dailies and five major weeklies carry domestic and international news. The USIS library, located downtown, carries a wide selection of American books and magazines. Several local bookstores stock books in English, but at higher prices than in the U.S.

Ponta Delgada: The Consulate receives various periodicals. The *International Herald Tribune* arrives 5-15 days late. Lajes AFB carries a selection of magazines and newspapers in the base exchange. Three Portuguese dailies and two weekly newspapers are published in Ponta Delgada, but coverage of international news is limited.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Lisbon: The quality of physicians is good. Government hospitals and clinics, however, are sometimes underequipped, outdated, and poorly managed. Overcrowding can be a problem. Charges for medical services vary widely but are comparable to what one would pay in the United States. Nursing care, with the exception of acute care areas, is below that found in American hospitals.

In spite of these problems, some private Portuguese hospitals are satisfactory for medical and surgical procedures. Emergency room services have been used with satisfactory results, as have obstetrical care services.

Dental care is satisfactory. There are a number of excellent dentists who have been used with good results (including periodontics, orthodontics, and pediatric dentistry).

Ponta Delgada: Ponta Delgada offers good medical care and facilities. English-speaking physicians include such specialists as pediatricians, obstetricians and gynecologists. A local hospital and two

clinics provide adequate care and can handle acute medical emergencies. Emergency room and intensive care services are available. Problems may exist in obtaining some medications from local pharmacies, and eyeglasses are not readily available.

Community Health

Portugal is generally considered to have a healthy environment with minor health risks for those assigned here. Despite brief bouts of upset stomach and diarrhea until one adapts to the new food, no major health problems present themselves. However, certain precautions are suggested.

Damp chilly weather is common throughout Portugal during the winter months. This aggravates rheumatism, sinusitis, and bronchial and other respiratory conditions. Common colds and various strains of the flu are frequent. Other commonly encountered diseases include hepatitis A, dysentery, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and whooping cough. Tuberculosis is also more common than in most European countries.

Preventive Measures

While not required, the following immunizations are recommended: gamma globulin, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, typhoid, oral polio, and hepatitis B.

Some medications are available locally. However, it is recommended that those on prescription medications bring a good supply with them and that arrangements be made for the refill of prescriptions by mail from the United States if they are not available through local pharmacies.

Although water supplied to Lisbon and the rest of Portugal is adequately treated, the distribution system is old in parts and in varying states of repair. Following any disruption of water service in the Lisbon area, and at all times outside the Lisbon metropolitan area, tap water should not be considered safe

to drink unless it is first boiled for five minutes. Good bottled water, both carbonated and uncarbonated, is readily available at reasonable prices throughout the country.

Local meats, fish, fruits, and vegetables are safe for consumption. While meat and fish markets do not come under strict sanitary controls, nearly all stores have refrigeration equipment for meats, fish, and dairy products. Shellfish can be a source of hepatitis A, especially during the dry months. Caution is advised. Milk, butter, and cheese are generally safe and of excellent quality. Pasteurization of dairy products is now common, with the exception of what is called "fresh cheese" that is similar to "farmers cheese". Unpasteurized dairy products should be avoided as they may cause bovine tuberculosis.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Request a visa from the appropriate issuing authority. Some Portuguese embassies will issue a visa, others (including the Embassy in Washington) may indicate it is not necessary. If you do not have a visa, you will have a 90-day visitor's permit stamped in your passport on arrival.

No vaccinations are required for entry into Portugal.

Pets are not subject to quarantine. Dogs must have vaccination certificates against rabies, and both dogs and cats need a certificate of good health. All certificates must be visaed by a Portuguese consular official before the pet arrives in Portugal.

Pets will be inspected by a veterinarian on arrival. In addition, the owner will have to pay clearances, customs broker fees, and other minor charges.

No limitations are placed on dollars or travelers checks brought to Portugal; however, declaration at the point of entry is necessary to reexport foreign currency.

The monetary unit is the euro.

Banks, hotels, and shops accept travelers checks. All major credit cards, U.S. and European, are widely accepted on the Portuguese economy.

Portugal uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Feb/Mar.	Carnival*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Apr 25	Freedom Day
May 1	May Day
May/June.	Corpus Christi Day*
June 10	Portugal Day
June 13	St. Anthony's Day
Aug. 15.	Assumption Day
Oct. 5	Proclamation of the Portuguese Republic
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 1	Restoration of Portuguese Independence
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Many excellent travel books on Portugal are available in bookstores in the United States. Publications are also available from the Portuguese National Tourist Office both in the United States and in Portugal.



Bucharest, Romania

ROMANIA

Republic of Romania

Major Cities:

Bucharest, Braşov, Constanţa, Timişoara

Other Cities:

Arad, Bacău, Baia Mare, Brăila, Buzău, Cluj-*napoca*, Craiova, Galaţi, Giurgiu, Hunedoara, Iaşi, Oradea, Piatra-*neamţ*, Piteşti, Ploieşti, Reşiţa, Sibiu, Tîrgu-*mureş*

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Although surrounded by Slav and Magyar neighbors, the Republic of **ROMANIA** is mainly a Latin country which traces its origins to the Roman Empire. It has been a unitary state for less than a century, and its culture and historical traditions are a source of pride and national sentiment. Romania's high proportion of ethnic minorities and its rich and varied cultural life lend it a special appeal for folklorists and students of the fine arts.

MAJOR CITIES

Bucharest

Bucharest (in Romanian, *Bucureşti*), Romania's largest city

and its political, economic, and administrative center, has a population of over two million, including the immediate suburbs. It is situated on a wide agricultural plain in the southeastern part of the country, 40 miles north of the Danube and 156 miles west of the Black Sea.

Bucharest, probably founded late in the 14th century, was known then as *Cetatea Dambovitei*. It grew as a military fortress and commercial center along the trade routes to Constantinople. Known under its present name since the 15th century, it became the capital of Romania in 1861. During World War I, Bucharest was occupied from 1916 to 1918 by the Central Powers, the alliance formed by Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire. In World War II, following Romania's surrender to the Allies in August 1944, German planes bombed the city extensively. When Soviet troops entered on August 31, 1944, a coalition of leftist parties had already seized power.

The city lies on the *Dimboviţa* River, at an altitude of 265 feet, and enjoys a temperate climate. The skyline is low except for the 22-story *Intercontinental Hotel*. Many attractive parks and drives add an element of beauty to the city. A large part of Bucharest's architecture dates to the pre-World War II era and consists of baroque and Renais-

sance-style structures. Many of these are former homes of the old aristocracy taken over as offices for state enterprises or by foreign diplomatic missions. Construction in recent years was limited to apartment buildings, the *Metro*, and civic buildings. Now the focus is on restoration work.

French is the second most common language spoken in Bucharest, but some knowledge of English is common among educated persons under 35 years of age. Knowledge of Romanian is an important asset.

Traffic in Bucharest, moderate by Western standards, is always hectic due to the increasing number of vehicles on the road, newly found freedom to drive, and narrow streets. City dwellers enjoy walking, and pedestrian traffic is always heavy, particularly from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays. Parks and recreation facilities are crowded on weekends. Romanians usually take to the highways on weekends, beginning around noon on Saturday.

Clothing

Dress in Romania is simple and informal. Wardrobes should resemble those needed in Washington, DC.

Local ready-made clothing and shoes, including children's, differ from U.S. quality and fit and are

more expensive. Clothing can be made here by a tailoring or dress-making cooperative or, occasionally, by a seamstress. This is not always satisfactory because of the time, workmanship, and expense involved. For tailor-made clothing, the purchaser should furnish sewing notions. Materials of good quality can be bought locally, but are expensive.

Shoes can be repaired satisfactorily in Romania. Wardrobes for an extended stay should include rubber boots, children's clothes and shoes, winter clothing, including sports- and footwear (e.g., ski clothes and ice skates), and summer sportswear (for tennis and swimming).

Food

Meat and fish on the local market generally are of poor quality and are scarce. Fresh vegetables and fruits are usually available in season at local open-air markets. Milk and milk products are not pasteurized.

Supplies & Services

In general, basic services and supplies are expensive and either unavailable or only irregularly found. In many cases, such as in auto, radio, and stereo repair, the lack of spare parts hinders service. Repairs for locally purchased TV sets are obtainable.

Barbershops for men are readily available and are satisfactory. Several beauty shops are fairly good, including those at the Intercontinental and Lido Hotels in Bucharest.

Domestic Help

Many Americans living in Romania have household help. The number depends on family size. Single people and couples without children usually have only part-time help, or one full-time person who does the housecleaning and some cooking. Families, especially those with small children, often have two domestics.

Romanian domestics do not live in. Minimum monthly salaries for full-time help is about \$100 a month. Romanian labor law requires

employees to pay additional taxes: 25% social security and 4% unemployment tax.

Housecleaning help is not hard to find. Reliable baby-sitters and good cooks are more difficult to locate. English-speaking help is hard to find.

Religious Activities

The Romanian Orthodox Church is dominant in Romania, but there are also Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, Calvinist, and Unitarian churches; several synagogues; and two mosques in Bucharest. The British community sponsors an Anglican church, with services in English.

Education

The American School of Bucharest, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, has a pre-kindergarten and grades kindergarten through eight.

The American School, incorporated in the State of Delaware, is financed primarily by tuition fees and a grant from the Department of State. It is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. Its curriculum and materials parallel those currently used in the U.S. and, because of its international character, the educational experience is broadening. Current placement policy according to chronological age requires a birthdate on or before November 30. For example, a child entering the pre-school class must be four-years old by November 30.

American children above the eighth grade normally attend school outside of Romania. Several schools in the area have boarding facilities.

Recreation

Romania has many natural and historical points of interest and beauty. Travel restrictions do not exist in Romania. Signs designate certain areas as "off limits" for photography but, in general, unlimited and irresistible photo opportunities abound.

Among the many interesting places to visit in Romania are the Black Sea

coast, the Danube delta, the Moldavian monasteries, Maramureş and its wooden churches, the scenic Retezat Mountains in western Romania, and the medieval cities of Sibiu and Sighişoara. A few locations in southern Romania, from the west to the Black Sea coast (e.g., Sarmizegetusa, Adamclisi, and Histria), have ruins from Greco-Roman times. Camping enthusiasts find many sites, either in commercial cabins or by pitching tents, in attractive surroundings. Mountain climbing possibilities abound, and fishing for trout in the mountains or for a variety of game fish in the delta can be arranged. Hunting can be productive, but expensive.

Bucharest and vicinity have a few tourist spots. Just outside the city limits is a small zoo. North on the road to Ploieşti are Lake Snagov and the Caldarusani Monastery (where Vlad Tepeş—the historical prince tenuously identified as Count Dracula—was reportedly buried). To the northwest is the town of Tîrgovişte. To the west, about two-and-a-half hours by car, are the beautiful monastery of Curtea de Argeş and the scenic Vidraru Lake north of Capatineni. Near the lake, there is an old fortress once belonging to Vlad Tepeş and, on a clear day, the peaks of the Făgăraş Mountains, the highest in Romania, can be seen in the distance. All of these spots provide good picnic areas.

Some interesting museums, with fine art and history collections, and a botanical garden are in Bucharest. Also, tours to arts and crafts mills occasionally can be arranged. There are several nice parks for strolling (particularly Herăstrău Park, beyond the massive triumphal arch), but they are crowded on weekends.

Numerous spectator sports in Bucharest are available to foreigners; the most popular is soccer. Other sports are volleyball, handball, basketball, boxing, tennis, and ice hockey. Tickets are reasonable. A number of international matches are played in Bucharest each year between Romanian and foreign

teams. American teams have made a few visits.

Professional tennis lessons can be arranged for visitors at the Club Tineretului or the Bucharest Tennis Club, and admittance to the former for swimming also can be arranged. In winter, one can ice skate at the Floreasca rink and ski in the mountains near Sinaia and Predeal.

Entertainment

Local entertainment possibilities for English-speaking visitors are limited. Many inexpensive cinemas exist, but the films shown are either poor or are in a foreign language. Few American films are shown. Some good operas and ballets are seen each season, and many fine concerts and recitals are given. For those skilled in the Romanian language, the live stage is enjoyable.

Good restaurants were scarce, but new restaurants are opening and old ones seem to be improving. Selection is limited, and service is often slow. Nightclub entertainment is also improving, but still limited. Discotheques are opening all over town and are usually open from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.

Folk festivals with the various regional dances and colorful costumes can be enjoyed in the countryside. Bucharest holds a growing number of international fairs.

The American Library and Cultural Center provides some good reading material. The cultural attractions produced in the center's theater are worth attending.

Braşov

Braşov (sometimes Brashov), located in central Romania 75 miles north of Bucharest, has a population of approximately 314,000. Situated at the foot of the Transylvanian Alps, the city was founded early in the 13th century by the Teutonic Order of Knights. Braşov was a major trade and industrial center in the Middle Ages, enjoying considerable autonomy under the Hapsburg empire. It



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Street scene in Braşov

was part of Hungary until after World War I; consequently, there are large numbers of Hungarians and Germans in the city.

There are several interesting ecclesiastical buildings in Braşov, including the large 14th-century Black Church, so called because of extensive fire damage in 1689; St. Bartholomew Church (13th century); and St. Nicholas Church (14th century, rebuilt in 1751). The medieval town hall (built in 1420, and restored in 1777) and the 17th-century citadel still stand. Today, Braşov is a road and rail junction, as well as a major industrial center. The city's chief products are tractors, trucks, machinery, chemicals, and textiles. Braşov was called Stalin, or Oraşul-Stalin, from 1950 to 1960.

The Carpathian resort and winter sports center of Poiana Braşov is close by.

Constanţa

Romania's chief seaport is Constanţa, situated in the southeastern part of the country on the Black Sea. Located about 120 miles east of Bucharest, Constanţa's major exports are petroleum (brought by pipeline from the oil fields near

Ploieşti), grain, and lumber. Constanţa also handles traffic involving Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, serves as the country's major naval and air base, and is a seaside resort. Romania acquired the city in 1878 after a varied history.

Founded as the Greek colony of Tomi in the seventh century B.C., it later came under Roman and Turkish rule. Ovid, the greatest Roman poet of his time (43 B.C.–A.D.17), spent his final years in exile at Tomi, then a lonely fishing village.

Constanţa has several synagogues and mosques, an Orthodox cathedral, a statue of Ovid, and many Roman and Byzantine ruins. Also interesting are a regional archaeological museum and a marine biology station. The population is 342,000.

Timişoara

Timişoara, situated on the Beja Canal in western Romania, has a population of 324,000. About 235 miles northwest of Bucharest, Timişoara is a railroad hub and an industrial center. There are plants here that process food and tobacco, and factories that manufacture textiles, machinery, and chemicals.

Timișoara also has a university, founded in 1945, and other institutions of higher education.

Timișoara was an ancient Roman settlement, came under Magyar rule in 896, and was annexed to Hungary in 1010. An important frontier fortress, the city was held by the Turks from 1552 to 1716. It was formally restored to Austria-Hungary with the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, and passed to Romania via the Treaty of Trianon in 1920. The inner city is now surrounded by boulevards, replacing the old ramparts. Several buildings date from the 18th century, including Roman Catholic and Orthodox cathedrals and the city hall. There is also a regional museum, housed in a 14th-century castle.

Thermal springs in use since Roman times are still operated as spa facilities in Timișoara.

OTHER CITIES

ARAD is located in western Romania near the Hungarian border, 260 miles northwest of Bucharest. Situated on the Mureșul River, Arad is a leading regional commercial and industrial center, as well as an important railroad junction. Chief industries include distilleries, sawmills, and the manufacture of textiles, machine tools, locomotives, electrical goods, and leather products. Arad was under Turkish rule for more than a century (16th to 17th centuries), under Austrian domination for more than 150 years (1685 to 1849), and controlled by the Hungarians, who made it their headquarters against the Hapsburg empire from 1849 to 1920. In 1920, after World War I, Arad became part of Romania. The city has a theological seminary and a teachers' training school. Cultural institutions include a state theater, a philharmonic orchestra, and a museum. There also is an 18th-century citadel built by Empress Maria Theresa. Arad's population is about 184,000.

BACĂU is the capital and principal city of the district of the same name. It lies on the Bistrița River, 150 miles northeast of Bucharest, and has a population of 209,000. Fighter plane manufacture is the main industry; others include footwear, textile, and paper production. Because of its location near the confluence of two major rivers, Bacău has long been an important trade center. Originally a customs post, it was noted in documents as early as 1408. Today this city is a major road and railway junction. As a cultural hub, Bacău has a state theater, symphony orchestra, and museums.

BAIA MARE (in Hungarian, Nagybánya) is situated in the far northwest, 250 miles from Bucharest. Surrounded by mountains, it is shielded from northeast winds, and has a Mediterranean-like vegetation. Heavy industries, such as lead and zinc smelting plants, predominate here. Baia Mare's 14th-century clock tower, known as Stephen's Tower, overshadows the medieval quarter. Saxon immigrants founded the city in the 12th century, and called it Neustadt. Baia Mare has an estimated population of 150,000.

BRĂILA is in southeastern Romania near the Ukraine border, about 100 miles northeast of Bucharest. Situated on the lower Danube River, Brăila has an estimated population of 234,000. The city is Romania's chief grain-shipping port and also a major industrial and commercial center whose principal products are machinery, metals, foodstuffs, and textiles. Brăila's history dates to Greek times. In the 15th century, the city was burned by the Turks and again by forces of Stephen the Great of Moldavia. Brăila played an important role in the Russo-Turkish Wars of the 18th century. Today, Brăila has many landmarks, including the Cathedral of St. Michael, a theater, and an art museum.

BUZĂU is a market and trading center located about 60 miles northeast of Bucharest. It dates to the early 15th century, and is surrounded by a fertile agricultural region. Industries in Buzău include

those producing alcohol, textiles, and plastics. Approximately 148,000 people live in the city.

CLUJ-NAPOCA is located in central Romania, about 200 miles northwest of Bucharest. Situated on the Someșul Mic River in the hills of Transylvania, it is the capital of Cluj Province, and has a population of roughly 332,000. The administrative center of an area rich in agriculture and minerals, Cluj-Napoca manufactures machinery, metal products, electrical equipment, textiles, chemicals, and shoes. It also is a noted center of education, with two universities, a branch of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, a fine arts institute, a polytechnic institute, and several scientific research centers. Founded in the 12th century by German colonists, the city became an important cultural and commercial center in the Middle Ages. A Jesuit academy was founded here in 1581; Cluj-Napoca then became the chief cultural and religious center of Transylvania. Incorporated into Austria-Hungary in 1867 and transferred to Romania in 1920, it was occupied by Hungarian forces during World War II. Historical sites in the city include the 14th-century Gothic Church of St. Michael and the ruins of an 11th-century church. Cluj-Napoca also has beautiful botanical gardens.

CRAIOVA lies on the Jiul River, a tributary of the Danube in southwest Romania. Approximately 110 miles west of Bucharest, Craiova is the administrative and industrial center of an agricultural and mineral region, and also an important market for grain. Chief industries include food processing, machine building, and electrical equipment manufacturing. It is a city of about 314,000 residents. Built on the site of a Roman settlement, Craiova was destroyed by an earthquake in 1790 and burned by the Turks in 1802. Culturally, the city is the site of a university (founded in 1966) and other institutions of higher learning, a philharmonic orchestra, and several museums displaying prehistoric and Roman relics. Also of



David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

Opera house and fountain in Timisoara

interest are St. Demetrius Church (built in the 17th century and later restored) and a 19th-century palace.

GALAȚI, also called Galatz, is in eastern Romania, about 115 miles northeast of Bucharest. With a population of about 330,000, Galați is a major inland port and the home of the Romanian Danube flotilla. An important rail junction, Galați also has large iron and steel plants and shipyards. Chief exports are grain and timber. Founded in the Middle Ages, Galați became an international trading center in the 18th century, and a free port between 1834 and 1883. A cultural and educational center, Galați has an agricultural college and a technical institute.

GIURGIU, an important inland port, is situated on the Danube in southern Romania. Directly across the river is Ruse, Bulgaria, and the two are linked by a bridge. Oil pipelines from Ploiești are connected to Giurgiu. The city also has shipyards and some light industry. Genoese merchants founded Giurgiu in the 10th century and named it San Giorgio. Conquered by the Turks in 1417, Giurgiu played an important role in 16th-century wars. Parts of the old town wall, ruins of a 14th-century medieval fortress, and

an old clock tower still stand. The population is about 55,000.

HUNEDOARA is in west-central Romania, about 275 miles northwest of Bucharest. A major industrial center with iron- and steelworks, it also has iron ore and coal mines nearby. Historically, the city is noted for Hunyadi Castle, built in the 15th century on the site of a citadel. The population is currently about 80,000.

IAȘI, or sometimes Jassy, is located in eastern Romania, in the region called Moldavia. Near the Moldova border and 200 miles northeast of Bucharest, Iași's population of approximately 348,000. The city is the commercial center for a fertile agricultural region where machinery, textiles, furniture, pharmaceuticals, food products, plastics, and metal are produced. Iași was the capital of the Romanian principality of Moldavia from 1565 until 1859. It served as Romania's temporary capital during World War I. In the Second World War, Iași's large Jewish population was exterminated by the Nazis. Iași has long been a cultural center; the first book in the Romanian language was printed here in 1643 and the national theater was founded in the city in 1849. A university was established in Iași in

1860; there are also several other institutions of higher learning. Three churches—a 17th-century cathedral, the Church of the Three Hierarchs, and the Church of St. Nicholas—are all examples of the Moldavian adaptation of Byzantine architecture.

ORADEA, sometimes called Oradea-Mare, is situated near the Hungarian border in western Romania. Approximately 270 miles northwest of Bucharest, Oradea has a population of around 222,000. It is the marketing and shipping center for a livestock and agricultural region, as well as an important industrial city. The seat of a Roman Catholic bishopric as early as 1080, Oradea was destroyed in the 13th century, but rebuilt in the 15th century. Held by the Turks from 1660 to 1692, Oradea became part of Romania after World War I. Hungarian forces occupied the city during World War II. Most of the architecture in Oradea is baroque. The city is popular with tourists for the health resorts which are found nearby.

PIATRA-NEAMȚ is a northeastern district capital, situated 175 miles north of Bucharest on the Bistrița River. This cultural center of some 125,000 people has a regional natural science museum, state theater, and archaeological museum. Textiles, chemicals and canned foods number among its industries. St. Ion Church here is a classic example of the Moldavian architectural style. It was built by Stephen the Great of Moldavia in 1497–98. The Bistrița Monastery, erected in the early 15th century, is five miles west of Piatra-Neamț.

PITEȘTI, with a population of around 187,000, is located 70 miles northwest of Bucharest, in south-central Romania. Pitești is a commercial center and an important rail junction, and has both heavy and light industry. The city is famous for its wines and for several resorts in the vicinity.

PLOIEȘTI (or sometimes Ploești), the center of the Romanian petroleum industry, is situated in

south-central Romania, just north of Bucharest. With a population of around 251,000, Ploiești is a railroad hub linked by pipelines with Bucharest, and with the ports of Giurgiu on the Danube, and Constanța on the Black Sea. Reflecting its importance in the oil region of Romania, Ploiești has large refineries and oil storage installations. Founded in 1596, it was the largest oil-producing center of southeast Europe by the 19th century. The city provided substantial oil to Germany during World War II and, consequently, was heavily bombed by Allied forces in August 1943. Ploiești was occupied by the U.S.S.R. on August 31, 1944. After the war, Romania nationalized the oil industry here.

REȘIȚA (also spelled Recița) is located in the western foothills of the Transylvanian Alps, approximately 200 miles west of Bucharest. A leading mining and industrial center, Reșița produces iron, steel, machinery, metals, and chemicals. Coal and iron ore are mined nearby. Reșița was known as a mining center for precious metals during Roman times. The modern city was established in 1768, when the first foundry was built. Currently the population is close to 94,000.

SIBIU is situated at the foot of the Transylvanian Alps in central Romania. Located about 135 miles northwest of Bucharest, Sibiu has a mechanical engineering works and produces textiles, agricultural machinery, chemicals, and leather. It is also a market for farm products and cattle. Originally a Roman settlement, German colonists reestablished Sibiu in the 12th century, but the town was destroyed during the Tatar invasion in 1241. By the 14th century, Sibiu had recovered and was a leading administrative and commercial center for the German communities in Transylvania. Austrians controlled the city in the 17th century. Sibiu retains much of its medieval character and has a large German population, even though many Germans were forced to leave after World War II. Long recognized as the cultural center of Transylva-

nia, Sibiu has a philharmonic orchestra, a state theater, and a museum. The population here is about 170,000.

TÎRGU-MUREȘ, a major industrial center, is in central Romania about 165 miles north of Bucharest. Situated on the Mureșul River, Tîrgu-Mureș has sugar refineries and distilleries, and manufactures food products, chemicals, fertilizers, machinery, and furniture. It is also a market for agricultural products. Tîrgu-Mureș dates from the 12th century, and remained a part of Hungary until 1918, when Romania acquired Transylvania; consequently, more than half of the city's population is Hungarian. Its name in that language is Maros-Vásárhely. A fire destroyed most of the city in 1876, but a 17th-century citadel, several old churches, and some baroque mansions survived. The population is approximately 165,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Romania is the twelfth largest country in Europe. It occupies the greater part of the lower basin of the Danube River system and the hilly eastern regions of the middle Danube Basin. Its 91,700 square miles make it similar in size to the United Kingdom or Oregon. Some consider Romania to be a "Latin Island" because it is bordered by two seas, one real—the Black Sea to which Romania owes its 150 miles of coastline—and the other, the sea of non-Latin countries with which it shares its other borders. The Black Sea is to the east, Bulgaria is south, Serbia is west, Hungary northwest, and Moldova and Ukraine east and north.

Romania has three major geographical areas. A fertile fluvial plain stretches in a crescent from the northeast to the southwest, bounded by the Danube and Prut

rivers. Bordering this plain to the west and north are the Carpathian Mountains and the Transylvanian Alps, a number of which reach above 7,000 feet. Most of the rest of the country is comprised of the hilly Transylvanian plateau. Finally, there is the Black Sea shore with its coastal plain, and the Danube delta.

Because of Romania's geographical and topographical diversity, the climate varies from region to region. It is generally continental, with short springs that quickly give way to long, warm summers, followed by pleasant, prolonged autumns and moderately cold, but comparatively short, winters. Snowfall in the Bucharest (capital) area usually is not heavy; however, the mountains have enough snow for skiing. The average daily minimum temperature for Bucharest in February is 28.6°F, and the average daily maximum in August is 95°F. Rainfall is normally heaviest from April through July, with an average of five inches in June. Aside from the relatively low humidity, Bucharest's climate is much like that of Washington, DC.

Population

Romanians consider themselves descendants of the ancient Dacians and their conquerors, the Romans. After the Roman occupation and colonization (between 106 and 271), the Goths, Huns, Slavs, Magyars, Turks, and other invaders each, in turn, left their mark on the population. Nevertheless, contemporary Romanians take particular pride in their Roman origins and Latin language and culture which, they believe, differentiates them from their Slavic and Hungarian neighbors.

Today about 90% of the country's estimated 23.4 million inhabitants are ethnically Romanian. Most of the remaining 10%, principally Hungarians and Germans live in Transylvania, which was, until 1918, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Jews and Gypsies are spread throughout the country, predominantly in Moldavia. The Jew-

ish population was formerly larger, but emigration, primarily to Israel, has greatly reduced its numbers.

As a result of the country's ethnic diversity, Hungarian and German are important secondary languages, and various other tongues are spoken among the smaller minority groups. The Romanian language itself is related to Italian and Portuguese; the Cyrillic alphabet was replaced by the Latin in 1860. Religious affiliations tend to follow ethnic lines, with about 70% of all Romanian citizens belonging, at least nominally, to the Romanian Orthodox Church. Roman Catholics, mostly Hungarians, constitute about 3% of the population, and the 6% who are Protestant include Calvinists, Lutherans, Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Adventists.

Romanian law towards minorities is nondiscriminatory and the government allows them some cultural and linguistic freedom. The concept of Romania as a unitary national state, however, runs deep among ethnic Romanians and tension with minorities occasionally appears.

Government

Romania ceased to be a Socialist Republic on December 22, 1989, when the communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown. The government replacing the communist dictatorship, which had controlled Romania since the end of World War II, renamed the country Romania (it had previously been the Socialist Republic of Romania) and proclaimed its support for a multi-party democracy, a republican form of government, a tripartite separation of powers, a free market, and the observance of fundamental human rights. Movement toward these objectives in the years following the revolution was uneven, however, and the country continues to suffer from a difficult economic situation and experiences sharp political and social divisions.

The central government appoints prefects who serve as the chief executive official in each of the country's

40 provinces and Bucharest. Mayors of cities, towns, and rural communes are elected.

The bicameral parliament consists of a 119-member Senate and a 397-member Chamber of Deputies. The national legislature is elected on a proportional representation, party-list system through a universal, secret ballot. The Chamber of Deputies also includes 12 appointed members to represent the national minorities who do not win an elective seat in Parliament.

Romania's current chief of state is the president. The president is elected by universal, direct, and secret voting by all citizens over the age of 18; once elected, he must sever ties with any party or political organization. Decrees issued by the president, including ratifying treaties, promulgating laws, and declaring war and states of emergency, must be countersigned by the prime minister.

The prime minister is currently appointed by the president, with the approval of both houses of Parliament. The president appoints as prime minister the representative of the political party receiving a majority of votes in the national parliamentary elections. The prime minister appoints and dismisses the members of his cabinet. Appointments are subject to approval by both houses of Parliament.

The president appoints the members of the Supreme Court and the prosecutor general, with Senate approval. The Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal. The prosecutor general is the chief public prosecutor. The prosecutor general's office is divided into civil and military jurisdictions and each of the country's provinces has its own prosecutor, subject to the prosecutor general.

Primary law enforcement rests in the hands of the national police force, which investigates common crimes, patrols populated areas, and controls traffic. Each province has its own police precinct, located in the provincial capital, which super-

vises the activities of police constables stationed in every sizeable town. There are eight precincts in Bucharest with a chief of police maintaining overall supervision. The national gendarmerie, under the control of the Ministry of Interior, is a uniformed paramilitary force that is deployed in situations beyond the control of local police, such as for riot control. The gendarmerie also provides security for diplomatic embassies and facilities as well as for economically significant industrial installations. The Ministry of Interior coordinates counternarcotics responsibilities involving several agencies, including local police and customs agents. Internal security and the protection of state secrets are the responsibilities of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI), which includes among its personnel, uniformed troops. The SRI also is responsible for counterterrorism; an anti-terrorism brigade is assigned to each of Bucharest's six sectors.

The Romanian flag consists of three vertical bands in blue, yellow, and red. The emblem of the republic appears in the central yellow band.

Arts, Science, Education

The impact of folklore and tradition has had a strong influence on the evolution of Romanian culture. *Miorița* (*The Ewe Lamb*), an ancient legend about the relationship between man and nature, is considered the masterpiece of Romanian literature. The richly embroidered cultural tradition of Romania has been nurtured by many factors, much of it predating the Roman occupation. Traditional folk arts, dance, woodcarving, weaving, and decoration of costumes as well as an enthralling body of folk music still flourish in many parts of the country.

Modern Romanian literature was born in the mid-19th century and boasts such writers as Mihail Eminescu (1850–1889), Ion Creangă (1837–1889), Ion Luca Caragiale

(1842–1912), and the poet Tudor Arghezi (1880–1967). Romania has over 21,000 public libraries. Every Romanian, on average, reads five books a year.

Despite strong Austrian and German influence, the modern movement in painting and sculpture is rooted in the revolutionary period of 1830 to 1848, when the sons of wealthy Romanian *boyars* (aristocrats) traveled abroad to study in Western schools of art, particularly in Paris and Rome. Such painters as Theodor Aman (1831–1891) and Nicolae Grigorescu (1838–1907) found their themes and subjects in peasant life. Notable modern painters are Nicolae Tonitsa (1886–1940), Gheorghe Popescu (1903–1975), Ion Tuculescu (1910–1961), and Marin Gherasim (born 1937). Constantin Brâncuși produced sculpture of first rank. Graphics, book illustration, and poster design are respected arts in Romania. Romanian artists, ancient and modern, are distinguished by their fondness for bold, bright colors.

In music, Georges Enescu and Dinu Lipatti are well known. Bucharest has had opera since 1864; soprano Elena Teodorini (1857–1926) received wide public acclaim.

Serious literature is widely read, and mid-city Bucharest is sprinkled with galleries exhibiting the work of both Romanian and foreign artists. Several concerts and recitals are held weekly in season, in addition to regular performances of the Romanian opera and ballet. Theater in Romania is extremely active, and a wide selection of plays from Romania, the U.S., and other countries is presented.

Science and technology in Romania are closely connected with contemporary efforts to modernize the nation and create an industrial state. The most prestigious of the scientific societies established in the last century is the Romanian Academy, founded in 1866. Today, applied science and technology represent important areas of official emphasis, particularly in the educational and research institutions.

Research work in scientific fields is directed by the National Council for Science and Technology and the Academy of Social and Political Sciences.

Education in Romania is state supported and state controlled. Elementary education and the first two levels of secondary school are compulsory for all students. Secondary schools, called *licee*, are available for students who have passed national examinations and are preparing for advanced study at universities. Competition for entrance into the universities and for postgraduate study is intense. Major university centers include those in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași, Timișoara, and Craiova. Half of the students receive state scholarships. The literacy rate in Romania is 97%.

Commerce and Industry

Romania's economy, which used to be centrally controlled, is currently being transformed toward a free market system. A large number of formerly state-owned enterprises have been turned into limited-liability or joint-stock companies, and thousands of privately-owned businesses, mostly small service-oriented operations, have appeared. In spite of this positive trend, the country still suffers from the crippling legacy of the communist regime, and faces enormous difficulties in the process of changing old economic structures and mentalities. Industrial production has decreased sharply, foreign trade has recorded unprecedented deficits, unemployment is rampant, and inflation is spiraling. It will probably take a massive influx of Western equipment and technology, which also means Western financing to facilitate Romania's transition to a market economy.

Representing considerable natural wealth, Romania's resources include petroleum, timber, natural gas, soft coal, iron, copper, waterpower, uranium ore, bauxite, and salt. The largest share in the coun-

try's industrial structure is held by the chemical and petrochemical, iron-and-steel, and machine-building sectors. Textile, leather, and glassware manufacturing, as well as wood processing, are significant.

Romania has a total of some 37.5 million acres of agricultural land, of which 25 million are arable. About 40% of the work force is involved in agriculture. Corn, wheat, barley, and sunflower are the most important crops. Romania also has extensive areas covered by orchards, vineyards, and truck farms. Animal husbandry (mostly cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry) has good potential for producing significant quantities of meat and dairy products. Modernization of agriculture and of food processing is top on the country's priority list.

Romania maintains economic and commercial relations with most other nations. Romania belongs to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. A growing number of foreign firms (including some 45 U.S. companies) have representative offices in Bucharest.

There is a Chamber of Commerce in Romania at Boulevard Nicolae Bălescu 22, Bucharest.

Transportation

Bucharest's Băneasa Airport provides domestic air service on the state airline, TAROM (Transporturile Aeriene Române). Otopeni Airport, about 10 miles outside Bucharest, has foreign air service. Foreigners frequently use the inexpensive rail system for official and personal trips within Romania. Intercity buses exist, but are rarely used by foreigners.

The national road system is generally good. Most roads are two-lane and asphalt-surfaced, but dirt roads also are common. A four-lane highway goes from the northern city limits of Bucharest to Ploiești, and a limited access superhighway goes to Pitești. Frequent encounters with

heavy truck traffic and horse-drawn carts or farm machinery can hinder progress on Romanian roads. Rest stops for fuel and food are virtually nonexistent.

Buses and trolleys in Bucharest are plentiful and cheap, but often are crowded, and breakdowns are common. Reasonably priced taxis are difficult to obtain. Streets in Bucharest are hard-surfaced and of varying quality, with bumpy and cobblestone streets still common in many sectors. Streets become slippery when wet, particularly cobblestone routes.

Left-hand-drive automobiles are used here. The lack of foreign car parts is a major inconvenience. Parts for European cars are obtained more quickly from abroad, but most American car parts must be imported from the U.S., which takes several weeks. The most conveniently serviced automobiles are those of European manufacture.

Third-party liability insurance is mandatory. It must be bought locally and is relatively inexpensive.

Gas stations are located in most regions and are labeled PECO. To be safe, drivers should fill up when the gas gauge falls below half, since chronic gas shortages do occur.

Police cars are blue and white, are labeled "militia," and have blue lights on top. Fire trucks are red. Many ambulances are not white and they do not always use their sirens. Some have a red cross painted on the door and may use only a flashing light.

Communications

Romania has reasonably good, but slow, telephone service. The dial system is used. Long-distance domestic service is available, but 30-minute waits and bad connections are common. International calls often are faster and of better quality than domestic service. Calls from the U.S. to Romania cost approximately the same as calls made from Romania to the U.S.

International telegraph services are not always reliable.

Delivery time for mail between the U.S. and Bucharest is approximately two weeks, except for parcels, which usually take three to five weeks. Both incoming and outgoing parcels require a customs declaration.

Although Romanian radio carries music and news programs, it is not a common source of information and entertainment for visitors. Two local television channels, with some programming in French and English, make a TV set worthwhile. Romanian television carries international news, Western movies (many of them American of varying vintage), American reruns, international sports events, children's cartoon shows, and international events by satellite. For those who are interested in and understand the Romanian language, local television is a good way to learn more about Romanian politics, economics, culture, and sports.

Local publications are of interest to those with Romanian-language skills. International newspapers and magazines are seldom found, even in international-class hotels.

Health

Generally, local medical care is below U.S. standards. The Romanian Government maintains a Diplomatic Polyclinic in Bucharest for medical examinations and treatment. Patients ordinarily receive good attention at the Polyclinic for routine ailments. Emergency dental problems are referred to Vienna or Athens. Local pharmacies usually do not stock Western medical and health supplies, but the Polyclinic sometimes stocks limited supplies.

Weather and local sanitation can be a problem and aggravate health conditions. Garbage is picked up sporadically. Street sweeping and washing in Bucharest is sporadic, but sewage disposal is adequate. Winter weather is hard because streets are not cleaned of snow and

ice, and apartments and work sites are irregularly heated. In winter, soot from wood burning and soft coal aggravates some sinus problems and allergies; dust from the extensive construction in Bucharest will do the same for some people year round.

Water should be boiled and filtered before use. The 1977 earthquake disrupted the aging plumbing system which caused the water quality to deteriorate, especially during the spring rains and winter freeze/thaw cycles. Bottled drinks are considered safe.

AIDS and seropositive HIV have recently come to the forefront in Romania as a major public health problem, particularly in the pediatric population. Thus far, many of these cases seem to be attributed to the use of giving blood microtransfusions to young babies, and the reuse of contaminated syringes, particularly in the institutionalized child and/or the child with multiple hospitalizations. Research is continuing to try and help clarify this issue. The practice of microtransfusions in Romania has been banned, and disposable syringes are becoming more available, but the problem still exists. In addition, AIDS surveillance programs are being set up in Romania, as well as programs for blood donor screening for HIV and Hepatitis B.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Bucharest is served by numerous foreign airlines which use Otopeni International Airport. Flights are scheduled daily from Frankfurt, and four to six flights a week arrive from Vienna, Paris, Rome, and London. TAROM, the Romanian airline, provides service between Bucharest and New York. International shipping arrives at the Black Sea ports of Constanța and Galați. Rail connections are available from Western Europe via Budapest and Belgrade,

as well as from Eastern European countries. Travel by car from Western Europe also is possible.

A passport is required. Tourist visas for stays up to thirty days are not required. An exit visa must be obtained only in cases when the original passport used to enter the country was lost or stolen and a replacement passport has been issued by the American Embassy. For stays longer than thirty days, visas should be obtained from a Romanian embassy or consulate abroad. These should be extended at passport offices in Romania in the area of residence. Travelers can obtain visas and other information regarding entry requirements from the Romanian Embassy at 1607 23rd St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone number (202) 232-4747, or the Romanian consulates in Los Angeles, Chicago, or New York City. The Romanian Embassy maintains a web site at <http://www.roembus.org>.

Romania's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Romania of items such as firearms, antiquities, and medications. Romanian law allows foreigners to bring up to \$10,000 in cash into Romania. No amount in excess of that declared upon entry may be taken out of Romania upon departure. Sums larger than \$10,000 must be transferred through banks. No more than 1,000,000 Romanian lei (rol) may be brought into or taken out of the country. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Romania in Washington or one of Romania's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Romania are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Romania and obtain updated information on travel and security within Romania. The U.S. Embassy is located at Strada Tudor Arghezi 7-9, telephone (40) 1-210-4042. In life or death emergencies, an after hours

duty officer may be reached by calling (40) 1-210-0149. Consular services for U.S. citizens are performed in the Consular Section located at Strada Filipescu no. 26 (formerly Strada Snagov), one block from the

U.S. Embassy at the corner of Strada Batistei. The telephone number of the Consular Section is (40) 1-210-4042, and faxes can be sent to (40) 1 211-3360. An Embassy Information Office in Cluj-Napoca is located at Universitatii 7-9, Etaj 1, telephone (40) 64-193-815. This office is able to provide only limited consular information.

Pets

No regulations restrict the importation of household pets (cats and dogs). Animals with proper documentation, such as health and rabies-vaccination certificates, are quickly cleared through customs.

There is a significant population of stray dogs in and around Bucharest, and attacks on pedestrians and joggers are not uncommon. While there have not been any reported problems with rabies, travelers are advised to avoid all stray dogs.

Disaster Preparedness

Romania is an earthquake-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The *leu* is the official unit of currency (the plural is *lei*). There are 100 *bani* in one *leu*.

Romania is largely a "cash only" economy. While an increasing number of businesses do accept credit cards, travelers are advised to use cash for goods and services rendered due to an increase in credit card fraud. Vendors have been known to misuse credit card information by making illegal purchases on individuals' accounts. There are an increasing number of ATM machines located throughout major cities. Travelers' checks are of lim-

ited use, but they may be used to exchange local currency at some exchange houses.

The metric system of weights and measures is in force.

The time in Romania is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus one.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 2	Day after New Year's Day
Apr/May	Easter (Orthodox)*
Apr/May	Easter Monday*
May 1	Romanian Labor Day
Dec. 1	Romanian National Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Behr, Edward. *Kiss the Hand You Cannot Bite: The Rise and Fall of the Ceausescus*. New York: Random House, 1991.

Demekas, Dimitrios and Mohsin Khan. *The Romanian Economic Reform Program*. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 1991.

Fischer-Galati, Stephen. *Twentieth-Century Romania*, 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

Haynes, Jim, ed. *Romania: People to People*. Somerville, MA: Zephyr Press, 1992.

Jones, Harold D. *Where to Go in Romania*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1991.

Sitwell, Sacheverell. *Romanian Journey*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

RUSSIA

Russian Federation

Major Cities:

Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhniy Novgorod, Novosibirsk

Other Cities:

Samara, Vladivostok, Volgograd, Yekaterinburg

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Russia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Russia sprawls across nearly one-sixth of the Earth's land mass (about 17 million square kilometers). It embraces a varied topography and has every type of climate except tropical.

The Ural Mountains mark the traditional division between European and Asiatic Russia. To the west, Russian territory stretches over a broad plain, broken only by occasional low hills. To the east are the vast Siberian lowlands and the deserts of central Asia. Beyond are the barren Siberian highlands and the mountain ranges of the Russian Far East. Great pine forests cover half the country; south of these are the steppes (prairies), where the soil is rich and dark. A small subtropical

zone lies south of the steppes, along the shores of the Black and Caspian Seas.

Climate is varied. Winters are long and cold and summers brief. In parts of the eastern Siberian tundra, temperatures of -68°C (-90°F) have been recorded.

The Russian Federation is a multi-ethnic state that comprises more than 100 ethnic groups. The majority of the population is Eastern Slavic, but it is made up of peoples belonging to less numerous ethnic groups, including Eskimos. Although most groups are distinguished by their own language and culture, Russian language and traditions are well established, with Russian the common language in government and education.

Religion, long suppressed under the Soviet regime, now flourishes, and examples of all major and many less widely practiced religions can be found. Once an underdeveloped, peasant society, Russia made considerable economic progress under Communist rule, mainly by the force of a centralized command economy and basic industrialization. Soviet communism, already stagnant by the 1980s and ill-equipped to meet the demands of Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika, collapsed by 1991, forc-

ing Russia into a difficult transition toward a democratic state and market-based economy.

The Russian Federation continues to seek to redefine its relationships with its new independent neighbors, as well as its role in the world.

MAJOR CITIES

Moscow

Moscow's official population is approximately 9 million. It is the center of government and plays an important role in the country's political, economical, cultural, scientific, and military activity. Moscow is first mentioned in history in 1147 A.D. as Prince Yuriy Dolgorukiy's hunting camp. Due to its strategic position on a north-south trade route from Rostov to Ryazan, Moscow was the center of trade and government in what eventually became the Russian Empire.

As the Russian Empire expanded, so grew Moscow's influence and importance, until the early 18th century when Peter the Great moved the nation's capital to St. Petersburg. As Russia's second city, Moscow retained its primacy only in trade, until the leaders of Soviet Russia transferred the capital back



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

St. Basil's on Red Square in Moscow

to Moscow early in 1918. Subsequently, Moscow more than quadrupled in population and territory (878 square kilometers). In the past 20 years, the city's difficulties in housing and in supplying its large and growing population have led to calls for limits on growth and crack-downs on the huge "unregistered" population.

After a decade-long lapse, the U.S. entered into diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. in 1933. In 1991, the U.S.S.R. was formally dissolved. The Russian Federation emerged as the largest of the new independent states of the former Soviet Union. Russia has diplomatic relations with most of the world's countries, and more than 100 of these maintain missions in Moscow. News correspondents, business representatives, and students from throughout the world live in the Russian capital. There is a heavy, year-round flow of foreign tourists and official delegations. Moscow's resident American community numbers about 5,000 (including dependents), consisting of Embassy personnel, business representatives, correspondents, clergy, exchange students, and professors.

American tourists number about 100-200,000 annually. Moscow con-

tains many attractions of interest for visitors. Those open to the public include the Kremlin; monasteries and churches in and around Moscow, as well as museums, parks, permanent exhibition centers, and a variety of musical, dramatic, and dance attractions. Many small towns of interest lie within a day's drive of Moscow, including the old monastery town of Sergiyev Posad (formerly Zagorsk), Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy's home, and the Borodino battlefield, site of the greatest battle of Napoleon's 1812 invasion of Russia.

Moscow offers a rich cultural environment, and warrants the enormous local pride in its treasures and traditions. Myriad museums are devoted to the various arts, literature, music, politics, history, and sciences. Hundreds of small churches and large cathedrals throughout the city are open to visitors. In addition to the famous Bolshoi Theater, with its large repertoire of Russian and internationally famous opera and ballet, other theaters and concert halls feature popular and classical plays, concerts, recitals, and all of the performing arts. Children's theater, a puppet theater, a planetarium, and other performances geared especially to younger people are also

available. The Russian circuses with their rich history are overwhelmingly popular with children and adults alike.

On the negative side, life in Moscow can be difficult and stressful. Air pollution, severe winter conditions, language barriers, chaotic rush hour traffic, and long hours at work take their toll on even the most well-adjusted residents. Street crime is still a problem and African and Asian Americans have been victims of racially motivated attacks.

Moscow is 3 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, and 8 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

Utilities

Electric clocks and other electrical items with motors designed for 60 cycles may not work correctly; 220v 50hz items can be purchased locally, if needed.

Food

For the Western consumer, the availability of food and household products is improving. Most food and household products used by a typical American family can now be purchased.

When American brands are not available locally, a European equivalent can usually be purchased. Vendors other than Russian stores and markets include Western outlets such as Stockmann.

Some visitors do a lot of shopping at local "rynoks" These are open-air farmers' markets located in different parts of the city, typically near metro stations. Rynoks carry a large selection of fresh bread and seasonal as well as imported fresh produce. Meat is also available for purchase, but buying fresh, unrefrigerated meat is risky. Rynoks often have stalls that stock non-food items, such as cleaning products, soft drinks and liquor, health care products, pet food and paper goods at prices that are cheaper than in the other stores. In many instances the quality of the products tends to be lower. Larger rynoks also sell flowers, plants, clothing items, and



Busy Nevsky Prospekt in St. Petersburg

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

leather goods. Be aware, however, that shopping in *rynoks* can pose challenges, including the need to maneuver through crowded spaces and language problems for non-Russian speakers. Bargaining is an accepted and common practice at *rynoks* but not at conventional stores and supermarkets, where prices are marked.

Clothing

Temperatures during the year can range from -40° to $+95^{\circ}$ F. Moscow winters can be very cold, especially if one is used to winter temperatures above freezing. It is necessary to be prepared for the harsh winter climate with plenty of warm clothing and outerwear. Men and women often wait until they arrive to buy a fur hat, and many women also purchase fur coats and boots locally. Other locally available winter gear may not meet American standards and/or style. Summers are short and often cool. Sweaters and a coat

are necessary no matter what time of year you arrive.

The best type of clothing to have in Moscow is washable since clothing soils easily. Sturdy, waterproof clothing and footwear with good treads is essential. Sidewalks can be slick in winter and muddy and wet during the rest of the year. One should consider bringing enough clothing to last until replacements can be ordered through catalogs or while on leave outside of Russia.

Slippers or clogs are useful around the house in winter and spring as mud, ice, salt, and dirt can be tracked in off the streets and playgrounds. Russians usually take off their shoes when entering a home (and children are expected to), so it is appropriate to have a couple of extra pairs of slippers for guests who do not feel comfortable coming into your home with their shoes on. Slippers can be purchased locally.

Sports equipment and sportswear should be brought to Moscow when possible. There are various recreational activities at hand, including swimming, soccer, baseball, volleyball, cycling, rollerblading, etc. Traditional Russian wooden children's sleds are available for purchase in the city, but may be hard to find. Western winter sports equipment can be found around town but the prices tend to be high. Cross-country skiing, ice-skating and sledding are all common winter sports. The outdoor tennis court at Rosinka is also turned into a skating rink during the winter.

Men: Both heavy and light topcoats are desirable for spring and fall. Men wear down parkas and heavy topcoats appropriate for evening over their suits in the winter. Lined raincoats are not warm enough in the dead of winter although many people wear them in the spring and fall.

Warm gloves, warm and waterproof boots, and a warm hat are all essential. Building interiors are often too hot by American standards in winter, but in fall and spring, when there is no central heating, indoors can be uncomfortably cool. Light sweaters or vests that can be worn under suit jackets are convenient. Bring appropriate cold-weather clothes for outdoor sports. Lighter wool suits are desirable for summer wear.

Women: In general, women in Moscow wear the same style clothing as worn in the U.S. Moderately dressy suits with nice blouses and dresses are worn most often for receptions, dinners, and evenings out.

Women need a light coat, raincoat, and heavy coat. These could include anything from a mid-calf washable down coat with a hood, to fur coats, and/or a raincoat with a zip-out liner. Warm, waterproof, thick-soled boots, rainboots, warm gloves or mittens, and thermal or silk long underwear are useful. It is quite common (and completely acceptable by Russian standards) to wear sturdy boots to a dinner or reception, carrying other "inside" shoes and changing upon arrival. Sportswear, a bathing suit, and a large supply of stockings, tights, and underwear are important to bring, although they may all be obtained locally at prices higher than in the U.S.

Children: Children can never have enough hats and scarves, sets of gloves and mittens, rain boots and rain gear, as well as snowsuits, pants and boots. Locally purchased clothing may not meet American standards and/or styles and in many cases is more expensive than in the U.S.

Babies need warm winter clothing. Scarves, hats, mittens, and wool clothing for infants are available locally, but the prices are much higher than one would pay in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

European toiletries, paper goods, household cleaners, film, and basic children's toys and games are available in local shops. Be aware that prices are often much higher than in the U.S.

CDs are available for sale in kiosks around town and in music stores. There is even a CD rynec. There are numerous computer stores and a computer rynec in Moscow, but it could be more affordable to buy dual-voltage equipment, computer games and supplies in the U.S. Computer paper, ribbon cartridges and other computer supplies are available at computer stores, kiosks and large bookstores. Be advised that the locally available A4 size paper may not fit all printers.

E-mail and Internet surfing helps keep visitors in touch with the U.S. There are several providers from which to choose. Plan to spend about twice as much for an internet connection in Moscow as you might in the U.S.

A multisystem television set and multisystem VCR receiving NTSC, PAL, and SECAM (Russian) signals are useful in Moscow. Cable service is available.

Religious Activities

Most major religions are now represented in Moscow although services in English are not always available.

Education

The Anglo-American School (AAS) is supported by the U.S., British and Canadian embassies. The school accepts children from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. It is located at the Pokrovsky Hills (Hines) complex; children living in Pokrovsky Hills can walk to school. The school usually opens during the third or fourth week in August. It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Most schools in Moscow are unable to accept children with special needs. If your child has an individual educational program (IEP), or needs assistance outside the class-

room, please discuss these requirements with school officials as far in advance as possible.

Other Educational Opportunities

Piano rentals, music lessons, horseback riding, fencing, gymnastics, ballet classes, and private tutors for Russian and other languages are reasonably priced. The International Women's Club and American Women's Club both offer a variety of activities, such as yoga, aerobics, and Russian conversation groups, depending upon interest and availability of instruction.

Sports

Spectator sports include hockey, football (soccer), and basketball. A large number of international tournaments and championships are held, with increased participation by U.S. teams. Some people have participated in such diverse outdoor sports as skydiving, whitewater rafting, and wild game hunting. Your marksmanship can be tested at Moscow's shooting club; firearms, ammunition, and lessons are available at the site. There is a country club in Moscow that has a golf course. Unfortunately, this sport here is extremely expensive and the golf course is a long drive from town. There is a spring softball and baseball league for children.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Moscow contains a broad spectrum of museums, from pre-Revolutionary art treasures to science and history. Tours to the seat of the Russian Government, the Kremlin, Lenin's Tomb, and the picturesque, colorful GUM Department store on Red Square, and the homes of such revered Russians as Tolstoy, Gorky, and Chekhov may all be arranged with the assistance of local travel bureaus. Walking tours to the many architectural landmarks in Moscow are a good way to get a feel for the city. Moscow's underground metro system is justly famous. Many stations are elaborately decorated. Izmailovsky Park has become the main attraction for souvenir shop-



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Overview of Novosibirsk

ping in a frenzied bazaar atmosphere. Every weekend, local artists and craftsmen gather there to sell their wares to throngs of visitors.

In and around Moscow, sightseers will find historic palaces and museums, surrounded by gardens and parks. You can reach St. Petersburg, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Kiev, and many other interesting cities by overnight sleeper train. Other cities such as Sochi, Tbilisi, and Tashkent are only a few hours away by air.

Entertainment

The principal hotels and restaurants offer American, European, Russian, and ethnic cuisine from the Commonwealth of Independent States. The quality of food and service is generally acceptable, and new restaurants seem to be opening daily. English/Russian menus are available at many. On the whole, dining out in Moscow is more expensive than in equivalent restaurants

in the U.S. Western chains such as McDonald's, TGI Fridays, Sbarro's, KFC, and Pizza Hut continue to grow. There are several English-language publications for the foreign community that regularly print restaurant reviews and reliable guides to the better restaurants.

For the theatergoer, Moscow offers a wide range of entertainment at prices lower than in the U.S. The Bolshoi Theater offers world-famous ballet and opera programs during all but the summer months. For Russian speakers, the city also has several extraordinarily good dramatic theaters. One of the best is the Moscow Art Theater, where plays by classic Russian playwrights such as Chekhov are often performed. The city's children's and puppet theaters, including the world-famous Obraztsov Puppet Theater, are prime attractions for families. Both Moscow Circuses are highly recommended for children

and adults alike. For classical music lovers, the Moscow Conservatory has a full annual schedule of concerts and recitals featuring Russia's best musical performers. The city also has an active jazz scene. Rock music has gained in popularity in recent years, and concerts are held quite frequently around the city. Tickets to most events are inexpensive and can be bought in advance at the theater or stadium box office, at special kiosks scattered about the city, or obtained by local tour companies. Several movie theaters show first-run, Western-made movies in English or dubbed in Russian.

The American Women's Organization offers children's holiday parties.

St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg, with a population of nearly 5 million, is the second largest city in Russia. Peter the Great



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Red Square and the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia

founded St. Petersburg in 1703 and transferred the capital from Moscow to St. Petersburg in 1712 to provide Russia with a “Window on the West.” The city was renamed Petrograd at the outset of World War I, and in 1918 the capital was moved back to Moscow. On January 26, 1924, 5 days after Lenin's death, the city's name was changed to Leningrad. During WWII, the city suffered historic tragedy as over 480,000 people starved to death in the 900-day siege. In 1991, as a result of a citywide referendum, the city resumed its historical name of St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg is slightly warmer than Moscow, but it is damper since

winter winds blow off the Gulf of Finland. Snow may fall as early as October, and sunlight dwindles to only a few hours a day in the months of January and February. March is generally the rainiest month of the year. June brings the beautiful “White Nights” when the sun barely dips below the horizon. Summer weather can be quite varied, with temperatures fluctuating between the 50s and 80s.

Although the city declined in political importance with the move of the capital back to Moscow, St. Petersburg retained importance as a military-industrial and cultural center. With a highly skilled labor force and a long history of industry and com-

merce, St. Petersburg is a major producer of electric and electronic equipment, machine tools, nuclear reactor equipment, precision instruments, TV equipment, ships, heavy machinery, tractors, chemicals, and other sophisticated products, as well as consumer goods. It has one of the country's largest dry-cargo ports. It remains a major center for publication, education, and scientific research.

Since August 1991, St. Petersburg has been a reform-minded city. Its large military-industrial center, however, has been slow to adapt to changing conditions. U.S. investment in St. Petersburg has increased significantly in recent years with the opening of several major production facilities. The St. Petersburg consular district taken as a whole accounts for approximately 50% of all U.S. investment in Russia. Nevertheless, crime has increased as a result of the uncertain political and economic situations.

Both local and foreign donations have been focused at preserving and restoring the older parts of the city and outlying imperial residences, which were heavily damaged during World War II.

The older parts of St. Petersburg continue to suffer from the lack of investment over the past 8 decades.

Utilities

Electrical service in St. Petersburg (including off-compound apartments) is 220v, 50 hz. Most electrical outlets accept two round prongs; two general types are in use. Most apartments have both “German” and the smaller European-sized outlets.

Food

The growing season in St. Petersburg is short. Seasonal produce appears in the local markets for shorter periods than in Moscow. In winter, local greenhouses provide a small supply of produce; fresh fruits and vegetables are also brought from the southern parts of Russia and Europe at inflated prices. Finn-

ish supermarkets offer a selection of fruits and vegetables year-round at prices considerably higher than those in the Washington, D.C. area.

The selection of meats available in local Western-style grocery stores is more limited than in the U.S., though acceptable chicken and pork is usually available. Beef tends to be significantly inferior to that found in the U.S.

Clothing

Winter temperatures in St. Petersburg can fall to -40 °E The climate is damper than in Moscow. All visitors should pack appropriate clothing. Warm parkas, boots, long underwear, face masks, hats, etc., are invaluable during the winter months. Warm clothing for children and infants is essential.

Rain, melting snow, and dirty streets combine to make walking in St. Petersburg messy during fall and spring. Waterproof, insulated footwear or galoshes are a must. Dark-colored clothes (especially slacks and jeans) are more practical than white or light-colored clothes. Winter clothing and rainwear of all sizes are available in St. Petersburg, but prices are high.

Days are warm in summer, but by August, nights are cool. Except in the middle of summer, you will find many opportunities to wear sweaters. Summer is the time of mosquitoes, so bring plenty of insect repellent. Mosquito nets are also advisable to make sleeping more comfortable for small children.

Supplies and Services

Although most everyday items can be found in St. Petersburg, prices on certain items tend to be higher than in the U.S. Feminine hygiene products, Western name brand kitchen and cleaning supplies, cosmetics, and name brand drugs are generally more expensive than in the U.S. A common problem when buying cleaning, kitchen, and automobile supplies is having to contend with usage instructions in a language other than Russian or English.

Local drycleaning facilities are improving, but consistently acceptable service remains elusive. Reliable drycleaning is available in major hotels and through a few private services, although rates are much higher than in the U.S. Spot remover and cold-water detergents are indispensable. Avoid clothing that needs frequent cleaning.

Russian beauticians and barber-shops are satisfactory, and prices are reasonable. Appointments are recommended.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is readily available at affordable rates. You may hire Russian citizens as housekeepers or nannies for your children, since permanent day care is not always available.

Religious Activities

Within or near St. Petersburg are many active Russian Orthodox churches, several Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Baptist churches, a Jewish synagogue, several branches of the Mormon church, and various other religious organizations. There are also missionaries from many religious denominations.

Most religious services take place in Russian. Strictly foreign congregations hold services in their native languages, including English, French, and German.

Education

The Anglo-American School of St. Petersburg, a branch of the Anglo-American School of Moscow, serves students in kindergarten through grade 12. The strong American-based curriculum is enriched with instruction in local culture and history through visits to and instruction from the city's numerous museums. Kindergarten students must be 5 years old by December 31 of the year of entrance. The school is located in a former Russian kindergarten building on Petrograd Island and is able to accommodate approximately 95 students. For the 1999/2000 academic school year, approximately 90 students were

enrolled representing 18 nationalities.

Some parents have used Russian day care or kindergarten facilities. They have proven satisfactory for those few parents and children who are willing to cope with learning a new language, unfamiliar food, and rather strict discipline. During the initial months, the adjustment can be difficult. Russian facilities operate on a three-quarter or full-day basis. As they are set up for working parents, the facilities are often crowded, and significant delays can be expected in finding and getting access to a suitable facility.

Special Educational Opportunities

Those individuals with even average language skills may take advantage of public classes and lessons in all areas of interest where other students and participants are Russian-speaking nationals.

Sports

Depending on the season, you may make your own arrangements to attend football (soccer), ice hockey, figure skating, track-and-field, boxing, basketball, auto, bicycle and motorcycle racing, and swimming events. In most cases, prices are inexpensive. Soccer and ice hockey are especially popular; teams in both sports are excellent.

Swimming is not recommended in the Gulf of Finland because of the high level of organic and other pollutants. However, indoor swimming pools are available, with some restrictions. If you wish to use a public pool, you must have written permission from a Russian doctor attesting to your state of health. Fishing is popular in the Neva and the Gulf, but eating fish from the Neva is not recommended. Excursion motorboats, including hydrofoils, also ply the river and canals for sightseeing. There are good bicycle paths in some city parks and along the Gulf.

Winter sports include cross-country skiing and ice-skating. Outdoor rinks throughout the city are open

to staff members. Cross country skiing is possible at city parks outside the city center and in the Repino-Zelenogorsk resort area near the Consulate General recreation facility on the Gulf of Finland. Skates and skis are available in St. Petersburg or in Finland, although if you are an avid winter sports enthusiast, bring your own equipment.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Near St. Petersburg are former royal palace grounds that have been beautifully restored and are now open to the public. These include Peterhof, with its magnificent grounds and fountains; Pavlovsk, the most completely restored royal home; and Tsarskoe Selo, formerly Pushkin, in which are located several palaces, one of which was the home of the last tsar and his family. Other palaces, such as Oranienbaum and Gatchina, are easily accessible for day trips.

Many people usually travel to these palaces in their own vehicles, but public transportation, including summer hydrofoil service to Peterhof, is available, convenient, and inexpensive, though crowded.

St. Petersburg has about 40 museums covering a broad range of exhibits, from anthropology to zoology. First among these is the world-famous Hermitage, well-known for its collections of Rembrandts, French Impressionists, and Scythian gold. In the Russian Museum, you can see the best of Russian art through the centuries from the icons of Rublev to present-day painters. Several large cathedrals have also been opened to the public as museums, though many - such as St. Isaac's Cathedral, one of the largest in the world, and the Kazanskiy Cathedral - now function again as churches. The Peter and Paul Cathedral contains graves of Russian tsars since Peter the Great.

St. Petersburg offers a feast for the amateur and the serious photographer. There are a number of very good local photography shops which

offer color developing and printing at reasonable prices.

Finland: The Finnish border is about 140 miles away - a 3-hour auto trip in good weather from St. Petersburg. You may like to travel to border towns, such as Lappeenranta, for shopping or relaxation. Helsinki is another 3 hours from the border, for a total trip of about 250 miles.

Several flights operate daily between St. Petersburg and Helsinki. The flight is about 43 minutes. Trains between St. Petersburg and Helsinki run daily. Round-trip train fare currently ranges from \$90 to \$150. A one-way trip takes about 5 hours.

Estonia: Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is approximately 200 miles away and can be reached in 4-5 hours by car and 10 hours by train. There is one night train that runs between St. Petersburg and Tallinn. Round-trip train fare is less than \$50.

The smaller university town of Tartu is located less than 150 miles west of Tallinn and can be reached by daily buses and trains in 3-4 hours. Round-trip bus fare is \$20 and train/electrichka fares range from \$30-\$60.

Latvia: The capital, Riga, is 400 miles from St. Petersburg. A total trip by car is approximately 7-8 hours, by train approximately 11-12 hours. One train runs daily from St. Petersburg to Riga. Round-trip train fare is approximately \$85-\$145.

Lithuania: The capital, Vilnius, is approximately 460 miles away. A total trip by car is about 8-9 hours, by train 11-13 hours. Trains to Vilnius run daily. Round-trip train fare is between \$60-\$125.

Entertainment

St. Petersburg has about 30 theaters, concert halls, opera houses, and "palaces of culture" that offer a wide variety of ballet, opera, classical music, and plays. The best

known is the Mariinskiy Theater, formerly named and recognized around the world as the Kirov Opera and Ballet Theater. The Musorgskiy Opera and Ballet Theater (formerly Maliy Theater) also has a full repertoire of ballet and opera, and arranges its vacation period so that it performs throughout July and August, when the Mariinskiy is usually on vacation or on tour. St. Petersburg has two symphony orchestras, one of which enjoys a worldwide reputation. The Philharmonic Hall, named after local composer Dmitriy Shostakovich, is one of the finest in Europe. There are other concert halls and a choir hall, all of which offer programs during the September-June season.

The St. Petersburg Circus is definitely worth a visit. Light operettas are given at the Musical Comedy Theater, and there are two puppet theaters in town. The October Concert Hall and the city's several palaces of culture often have concerts that feature popular music or play host to foreign troupes. Both cultural and sporting events are staged at the Yubileyniy and several other palaces of sport.

Serious theater fans, whether or not they speak Russian, will find visits to the Maliy Dramatic Theater, Otkrytiy Theater, and the Theater on Liteiniy worthwhile. These are considered locally to be the most avant-garde of the regular theaters and include in their repertoire works by contemporary American playwrights, such as Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. The Pushkin Theater is one of the most splendidly housed in Europe.

Films shown in English or with English subtitles are a rarity - usually, Russian is dubbed over the original language. Two movie houses in St. Petersburg show first-run films in English, although only infrequently. Videocassettes in English may be rented at a few places in the city.

Social Activities

The American community in St. Petersburg - including students on

study-abroad programs, research fellows, businessmen, interns, missionaries, and volunteers - is close-knit, and informal get-togethers and spontaneous acquaintances with a wide variety of individuals from the U.S. are common.

The Marine Security Guard Detachment invites both members of the Consulate General community and private citizens from outside of the Consulate General (including Russians) to social functions at the Marine House approximately every 2-3 weeks.

In the past few years, St. Petersburg has enjoyed a significant increase in the quantity and quality of restaurants. A quick glance at the restaurant guide in the city's English-language newspaper shows restaurants that specialize in Chinese, European, French, German, Indian, Italian, Korean, Mexican, and Russian cuisine, as well as several pizza establishments. Other restaurants offer Georgian, American, and Central Asian cuisine. Many of the "Western-style" restaurants offer a mixture of Russian and international dishes.

Several of the hotel restaurants, and many of the Russian restaurants, offer floor shows. Most of the others offer some form of entertainment - from jazz combos to folk ensembles-often somewhat louder than musical entertainment to which Americans are accustomed. Service is sometimes slower than in American restaurants.

Recent years have also seen a large growth in fast-food establishments in the city, with prices comparable to those in the U.S. There are fast food shops specializing in roasted chicken, pizza, and Russian treats. The first of five Golden Arches appeared in St. Petersburg in 1996.

Possibilities for social contacts between Russian citizens and foreigners have normalized and become comparable to those in other countries. Frequently, opportunities arise for such contacts during daily work or while traveling outside the

city. St. Petersburg also has an active and growing American and international business community.

Health

General health conditions in St. Petersburg are similar to those in Moscow, although dampness probably accounts for a higher incidence of colds and respiratory ailments.

For health problems Americans and their families primarily use the American Medical Center of St. Petersburg or the EuroMed Clinic. The AMC is the only primarily English-speaking medical clinic in St. Petersburg. It is staffed with both Western-trained medical doctors and Russian doctors. AMC currently offers the services of a Western-trained dentist. Pharmacy and laboratory services are available on site. The AMC offers 24-hour doctor availability, house calls, and emergency care. All of these services are extremely expensive. American's have also used the services of special St. Petersburg polyclinics for adults and children, depending on the circumstances of the illness or injury.

While local pharmacies offer a panoply of medications, it is often difficult to find a particular brand or formulation.

The St. Petersburg water supply originates from nearby Lake Ladoga. Western health authorities have noted a high incidence of infection by the intestinal parasite giardia lamblia in travelers returning from St. Petersburg. Such evidence points to St. Petersburg as a possible site of infection. This diarrhea-inducing parasite is found in many parts of the world and can be contracted by drinking untreated tap water.

Automobiles

Unleaded gasoline is available throughout St. Petersburg. The city has a small but growing number of service stations, but replacement parts for both Russian and Western automobiles can often be difficult to obtain locally. Bring only cars in excellent condition.

The following dealers also have offices in St. Petersburg, with limited service centers: BMW, Chevy, Chrysler, Ford, Honda, Hyundai, Jaguar, Jeep, Mazda, Mercedes, Nissan, Peugeot, Saab, and Volvo. Supplies and services are expensive.

Winterizing your car is important because of low winter temperatures. Low viscosity oil and antifreeze protection to -40 °F should be provided before a fall or winter shipment. Since few vehicles will start without assistance on the coldest mornings, bring a strong battery and jumper cables.

Snow tires, or at least tires with good all-weather treads, are necessary for winter driving (November through March). If you are in Finland, the law requires snow tires during severe winter weather. Studed snow tires may be used only between mid-October and mid-April. Snow tires (and studs, when used) must be on all four wheels.

Vladivostok

Vladivostok is Russia's principal Pacific port and the largest city in the Russian Far East, with a population of about 700,000. Founded in 1860 as a military outpost, Vladivostok abruptly became the Russian Pacific naval base when Port Arthur fell in the Russo-Japanese War. The city now serves as the capital of Primorskiy Kray (Maritime Territory). Vladivostok's harbor is a major fishing and shipping hub, and the city acts as the eastern terminus of the Trans-Siberian railroad.

Before World War II, Vladivostok was well on its way to becoming an international commercial center. The Soviets closed the city to foreigners in 1958, however, and it was only declared an open city as of January 1, 1992. Currently, Vladivostok's foreign contacts and foreign population are rapidly growing as American, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese businesses and tourists move into the Russian Far East in increasing numbers.

Vladivostok has a relatively mild climate by Russian standards, moderated by its location on the Pacific Ocean. Spring is chilly until May, with occasional snow occurring in March. Summers are cool and rainy, and autumn is beautiful, with its warm temperatures and sunny weather. Winter is cold and dry, with temperatures ranging between 0 °F and 25 °F. Brisk, humid sea winds can make temperatures seem even colder.

Vladivostok is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich mean time (GMT), 15 hours ahead of eastern standard time (EST).

Utilities

Electricity is 220v, 50-hertz, AC. Outlets are primarily standard Russian two-prong (round). This size is similar to standard European, but the prongs are somewhat thinner

Vladivostok's utility systems are antiquated. Hot water outages are common in summer and fall, and occasional heating and electricity outages occur.

Food

The range and quality of foods available locally is improving, but still limited, especially in winter. Foods available locally in summer/fall include: fruits (apples, oranges, lemons, bananas), onions, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, garlic, pork, beef, eggs, fish (fresh, frozen, smoked, and salted), and shellfish. Imported soft drinks, beer, and juices are available as well as imported tinned meats, rice, and macaroni. In winter, vegetables and meats are much harder to find, and the availability of most other foods varies from week to week. Prices are relatively low by American standards.

Clothing

Although the availability and quality of clothing in Vladivostok is increasing, it remains difficult, if not impossible, to purchase Western-quality clothing locally. Inexpensive, Chinese-made clothing and shoes are becoming increasingly available, but quality is low.

Men: Men should bring wool suits, sweaters, gloves, heavy winter coats, lightweight jackets, and a good raincoat with liner. Insulated boots, scarves, and winter hats are useful in the cold winter months. Good-quality fur hats may be purchased in Vladivostok at reasonable prices. Even in the summer months, heavyweight, woolen clothing can often be worn. Business attire in Russia is similar to that in the U.S. Bring sturdy, comfortable shoes, since Vladivostok's weather can cause shoes to wear quickly. Bring a full supply of casual clothes, including bathing suits, as swimming is possible at some beaches in late summer.

Women: Bring two pairs of each style shoe you plan to wear. Women's shoes, particularly pumps, wear quickly here and cannot be easily repaired. Business attire is similar to that in the U.S. At social events, cocktail dresses are usually worn.

Children: Bring mainly sturdy, warm, washable play clothes. Zippered, one-piece nylon snowsuits are recommended, together with material to patch this type of garment. Waterproof boots with insulated foam lining, several pairs of waterproof mittens, long thermal underwear, and waterproof snow pants are all recommended. Bring scarves, woolen hats and hoods, rubber boots, warm slacks, knee socks, tights, slicker raincoats with hoods, tennis shoes, and warm sweaters. Nightgowns or pajamas, slippers, and bathrobes are also needed. Summer clothing should include washable play clothes, slacks, jeans, shorts, and bathing suits. Babies need warm winter clothing.

Supplies and Services

Bring insect repellent effective against mosquitoes and ticks. Bring any necessary over-the-counter and prescription medicines, cosmetics, and toiletries, such as shampoo, soap, and toothpaste.

Although many basic services are available in some form in Vladivos-

tok, quality is often poor and service slow. Local barbers and hairdressers can provide basic, competent haircuts for relatively low prices. Shoe repair and tailoring services are available, but of low quality.

Education

There is an international school, operated by Quality Schools International, for grades kindergarten through sixth grade. It offers a traditional American curriculum. English language schooling in Vladivostok is limited. Several city schools offer "English-language" programs that are actually carried out primarily in Russian with one or two classes a day taught in English. Local schools have adequate curriculum by American standards, but the schools lack sufficient supplies, equipment, and teaching materials. Overcrowding has forced most of the schools to adopt a two-shift daily schedule. The language barrier may make total reliance on the Russian system difficult.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are several area universities offering courses on a variety of subjects, leading to a degree. However, students must have a strong command of Russian to be accepted.

Sports

Vladivostok, Primorskiy Territory, and the entire Russian Far East offer a wide variety of outdoor activities. In Vladivostok, popular summer sports include sailing, fishing, hunting, tennis, baseball, and soccer. Winter sports include basketball, cross-country skiing, ice skating, and ice fishing. There are several public tennis courts in Vladivostok, although most are in relatively poor condition, and during the peak season (May-September), players often must wait for a court. Public basketball courts (indoor and out-door) and soccer/baseball fields are also available. There are many opportunities for Americans to participate in local sports through affiliation with various club teams or through social contacts. Sailboats and motor ves-

sels may be rented and are popular in the summer for trips to nearby islands and beaches. It is also possible to go deep-sea fishing, while shore fishing and freshwater (particularly trout) fishing are popular throughout the region. Hiking and camping are also popular, particularly in the mountains and taiga (primeval forest) north of the city. Swimming is not recommended at many of the beaches near the city due to environmental concerns and the relatively cold water. There are several sandy beaches, which offer good sites for picnics and sunbathing, within an hour's drive of the city. Scuba diving for advanced divers is available and some scuba equipment may even be rented locally.

Vladivostok's relatively snow-free winters make it necessary to travel inland for the best cross-country skiing, but deep snow can be found less than 100 miles away. Downhill skiing is available in various locations in the Russian Far East. Bring all sports equipment, including skis, skates, balls, and rackets. Equipment available locally is of poor quality.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Although the Russian Far East lacks the variety of historic sites and old cities found in the European parts of Russia, it does offer a wide variety of beautiful scenery for the adventurous traveler. The Primorskiy territory coast, marked by numerous rocky islands, steep cliffs, and isolated beaches, is accessible by chartered boat. Tour companies offer hiking and camping tours to the taiga, Kamchatka's volcanoes, and winter ski trips to Siberian ski areas. Hunting and fishing expeditions can also be arranged. The city of Khabarovsk, about 450 miles north of Vladivostok on the Amur River, is the other main center and economic hub of the Russian Far East and can be reached by overnight train or a 90-minute Aeroflot Flight.

Travel within Russia can be tiring. Frequent transportation schedule

changes, below-standard hotels, and harsh weather can combine to make an international trip more attractive. Currently, there are international flights to Korea, Japan, and China. In summer, there is a regularly scheduled passenger liner service to Japan and south Korea on Russian ships.

Entertainment

Vladivostok has limited entertainment facilities, but the number is increasing as the city develops. There are several good joint-venture restaurants in the city, with prices ranging from inexpensive to moderate. Although there are nightclubs and casinos, nightlife for the foreign community centers around restaurants and home entertaining.

Vladivostok has several small museums, including an art museum, a museum of natural history, and a military museum. Unlike many Russian cities of its size, Vladivostok has no major, permanent orchestra, theater, or circus troupe.

Visiting musical and theatrical performers, the Moscow Circus and other travelling circuses, a small local orchestra, and several small local theater groups provide cultural entertainment.

Many foreign residents bring videocassette recorders. Because there are no tape clubs in Vladivostok, bring a supply with you. You can add tapes by ordering from catalogs or by borrowing from friends. Some Russian (PAL/SECAM) videos may be purchased on the local economy, including American films and TV shows that have been dubbed into Russian. Bring a large supply of books and other reading materials with you. English-language books, periodicals, and newspapers are not available in Vladivostok, so magazine subscriptions are also important.

You may read about current events in Vladivostok on the Internet at the following sites: <http://vladivostok.com/golden-horn> or <http://www.vladnews.ru>. The former is a

Russian-language daily which has an English weekly page. The latter is an English-language internet newspaper.

Social Activities

The social life among the small American community is casual and personally arranged. The total resident American population of Vladivostok numbers about 70, not including the official American community, so contacts between Americans are frequent.

Americans have no difficulty meeting Russians through professional and social interaction. There is an International Women's Club, consisting of American, Russian, Korean, Japanese, and Indian women. Due to the relatively small size of the foreign community, contacts are frequent.

Health

You should endeavor to receive all necessary inoculations before arriving in Vladivostok. Among those required are Japanese B encephalitis vaccines (for both tick and mosquito), hepatitis B vaccine, and gamma globulin. Several of these vaccines are given as a series over several months, so advance planning is required.

Local Russian medical facilities are not recommended, except in case of emergency.

Bottled water is also readily available in the city. Other health hazards include mosquitoes, which carry a strain of Japanese B encephalitis, and ticks, which carry another strain of the same disease. Vaccinations provide complete protection, but bring mosquito and tick repellent anyway to avoid bites.

Automobiles

As Vladivostok's public transportation is limited, bring a vehicle. Japanese vehicles are common in the city, and Toyota and Nissan maintain service centers with trained mechanics. South Korean and European vehicles are slowly becoming more common. Consider a four-wheel-drive vehicle, because Vladivostok's hilly terrain

makes winter driving difficult. Snow tires are helpful in winter, but are not mandatory, as snowfall is infrequent. As protection against car theft and vandalism, bring a steering wheel lock or other theft-protection device.

Before departing, ensure that Vladivostok is listed as an entry point on your Russian visa.

Yekaterinburg

Yekaterinburg lays claim to the title of Russia's third largest city and former President Yeltsin's hometown. It is best known to Americans as the place where the last Tsar and his family were murdered by the Bolsheviks in 1918 and the location where American U-2 spy plane pilot Gary Powers was shot down in 1960. Yekaterinburg is situated in the foothills of the Ural Mountains and is nominally an Asian city, lying 20 miles east of the continental divide between Europe and Asia. Like Chicago, its closest American counterpart, Yekaterinburg is the unofficial capital of a key region in the country's heartland, the Urals.

Yekaterinburg was founded in 1723 by Peter the Great, who named it for his wife Catherine I. Tsar Peter recognized the importance of the iron and copper-rich Urals region for Imperial Russia's industrial and military development. By the mid-18th century, metallurgical plants had sprung up across the Urals to cast cannons and Yekaterinburg's mint was producing most of Russia's coins.

Today, Yekaterinburg, much like Pittsburgh in the 1970s, is struggling to cope with dramatic economic changes that have made its heavy industries uncompetitive on the world market. Huge defense plants are struggling to survive, while retail and service sectors are developing rapidly. Yekaterinburg and the surrounding area were a center of the Soviet Union's military industrial complex. Soviet tanks, missiles and aircraft engines were made in the Urals. As a result, the Soviets closed the entire region to contact with the outside world for

over 40 years during the Cold War. In 1992, thanks to lobbying efforts by local leaders, the new Russian Federation opened Yekaterinburg and the Urals to contact with the West.

The U.S. was at the forefront of Western efforts to seek to establish contacts in the Urals.

Food

The availability and quality of foods is improving here, but is still limited, especially in winter. Fresh fruits and vegetables are usually available, but selection varies seasonally. Many American staples rarely appear on store shelves. Imported liquor and wine are in short supply and expensive. Availability of items is subject to change. Yekaterinburg's water is not potable.

Clothing

Yekaterinburg has a continental climate similar to that of the American Midwest, with freezing winter temperatures and warm summers. Winter temperatures occasionally drop as low as minus 40 °F and the first snow usually falls in October. Planning for winter weather should be a high priority. Winter-weight clothing and boots are essential. Snow and ice make the sidewalks very slippery, so footwear with traction is highly recommended. Since the climate is very dry during the winter months, skin moisturizer plus lip balm are recommended items to bring.

Religious Activities

There are no religious services conducted in English in the city. Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Seventh day Adventist, Pentecostal, and Jewish services are held weekly. The Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints carry out missionary activities locally, and several of these missions also have weekly services.

Education

There is now one English-language school in Yekaterinburg, but with a

Russian curriculum. Other city schools offer one or two classes a day conducted in English. There are no international schools.

Sports

The Urals' many lakes, forests and mountains are great for hiking, swimming and fishing. Winter sports include cross-country skiing and ice skating. The Ural Mountains, however, offer only limited opportunities for downhill skiing. Yekaterinburg's most popular spectator sports are hockey, basketball, and soccer.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Urals possess beautiful natural scenery, particularly northern Tyumen's distant tundra and taiga. For Russian history and culture buffs, ConGen Yekaterinburg's consular district offers many landmarks including the childhood home museums of classical composer Tchaikovsky and mad monk Rasputin; the Nizhnyaya Sinyachika village outdoor museum of pre-revolutionary architecture; historic cities like Tobolsk; and the 400-year-old monastery at Verkhoturye, the 16th century capital of the Urals.

Travel is usually routed through Frankfurt (via Lufthansa's direct flight three times per week) or through Moscow via daily Urals Air, Transaero, or Aeroflot flights. There are also regular flights to St. Petersburg and other major cities in the former Soviet Union. Yekaterinburg's airport now features charter flights to many foreign countries, including Turkey, China, and the United Arab Emirates.

Entertainment

The performing arts are Yekaterinburg's cultural strong point. The city has an excellent symphony orchestra, opera and ballet theater, and many other performing arts venues. Tickets are inexpensive. The city's most notable museums are its fine arts museum, which contains paintings by some of Russia's 19th-century masters, and the geo-

logical museum which houses an extensive collection of stones and gems from the Urals.

Yekaterinburg's nightlife options are limited. There are a handful of expensive Western-style restaurants and bars, none of which would be worth frequenting in a more cosmopolitan city. Glitzy nightclubs and casinos have appeared to serve the city's nouveau riche clientele. Several new dance clubs have sprung up that offer a chance to rub shoulders with Yekaterinburg's more affluent youth.

Health

Yekaterinburg's health care delivery system does not meet American standards. There is no Western clinic in the city. Basic health care is marginal; dental care is inadequate. Visit a physician and dentist prior to arrival. Inoculations against all forms of hepatitis as well as tick-borne encephalitis (usually received in Russia) are especially important. The nearest Western-style basic medical care is available in Moscow, a 2-hour flight from Yekaterinburg, or in Frankfurt, a 4-hour flight away.

Currency

Yekaterinburg is a cash-only economy; credit cards are rarely accepted; travelers checks are not accepted anywhere.

OTHER CITIES

SAMARA, formerly Kuybyshev, an administrative center, is situated on the Volga River, 550 miles southeast of Moscow. It was founded in 1586. The city's position at the convergence of the Volga and Samara rivers contributed to its growth as a trade hub, as well as its status as a provincial capital. There are a number of factories here, many powered by a hydroelectric plant up-river. Samara has research and cultural organizations, and a population of nearly 1.3 million.

VOLGOGRAD, formerly Stalingrad, is best known for its valiant

stand against the German Army in a decisive battle during World War II. The city was almost totally destroyed, and the losses of human life (on both sides) numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Volgograd was known as Tsaritsyn before its name was Stalingrad; in 1961, it was given its present designation. It originated as a Russian fort against raiders in 1589, and became an important city with the advent of railroads. Today, it is a major river port and railroad junction, and has over one million residents. A large hydroelectric power station is located in the city, which is situated at the terminus of the Volga-Don canal.

NIZHNIY NOVGOROD, formerly Gorki, is a major river port and one of the chief industrial cities of the Russian Federation. Its population is over 1.4 million. Its name was changed in 1932 from Nizhniy Novgorod to honor Maksim Gorki, novelist and playwright who was born here in 1868. In 1991, its name was changed back to Nizhniy Novgorod.

The city, situated where the Volga River meets the Okra, was a frontier post in the early part of the 13th century. It was a principal trading center for Russia and the East. Nizhniy Novgorod was the capital of its principality in the 14th century, before its annexation by Moscow in 1392, and later became famous for its large, successful trade fairs. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was known as a cultural and political center.

NOVOSIBIRSK is the largest industrial center in Siberia, and a rail, river, and air transportation hub. It is the capital of the oblast whose name it bears. The Siberian branch of the world-famous Academy of Science is located here. The population is over 1.4 million.

Known as Novonikolayevsk from its founding in 1896 until it was renamed in 1925, the city became a trade center during the building of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. During the Second World War, entire

industrial plants were moved here from threatened areas of the western Soviet Union.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Russian Federation is physically the largest country in the world, covering 17 million square kilometers or 1.8 times the size of the U.S. The territory of the Russian Federation covers 11 time zones and stretches 6,000 miles from east to west. It has a population of about 147.5 million compared with the 265 million in the U.S. Politically, the Russian Federation is a union of 89 constituent republics, regions, and territories that enjoy varying degrees of economic and political independence from the central government located in the capital, Moscow.

In the 19th century, most Russians lived in small, isolated villages, with little freedom to travel. Now, Russia is predominantly urban. Traditionally, Russia's population, with the exception of the upper class, has had few modern comforts and conveniences. Enclosed by long borders, with few natural defenses, Russians have a history of xenophobia. Given Russia's long history of authoritarian governments, until recently few Russians had much experience with pluralist democracy and market-based economy. Increasingly, however, democratic institutions and market economics are finding widespread support. A dynamic private sector has given rise to a growing middle class in and around the major metropolitan centers.

Moscow is the largest city in Russia and is located west of the great Russian plain on the banks of the Moscow River at 37°73' E and 55°45' N. The city is built on several low hills varying from 25 feet to 815 feet above sea level. Moscow's short

summers are as warm as those in the northern U.S. Winters in Moscow are comparable to winters in Chicago. Snow begins in October and continues periodically through April, although snowfall in May is not unusual. Annual rainfall averages 21 inches, with the heaviest rains falling between May and October. Prevailing winds are southerly and southwesterly. Due to Moscow's northern location, daylight varies from 7 hours in December to 17-1/2 hours in June. The average temperature in June and July is 66 °F, but the summer temperatures frequently reach the low 90s. In the winter the temperature may fall to minus 40 °F, but the average December and January temperature is 14 °E Though Moscow's winter air usually is dry, the wind chill factor makes the temperature feel much colder.

St. Petersburg, Russia's second largest city and the former imperial capital, is located on a flat plain at the mouth of the Neva River on the Gulf of Finland at 55° 57' N and 30° 20' E. Established in 1703, the city is built on a series of 101 islands, and is laced by canals and various streams of the Neva. The climate in St. Petersburg is milder than in Moscow but is damp and misty. Average temperatures are 64 °F in July and 17 °F in January. St. Petersburg is famous for its "white nights" which occur in June when the sun shines for nearly 19 hours and sunset only brings semi-darkness.

Yekaterinburg, Russia's third largest city with an estimated population of 1.5 million, is located near the center of Russia, at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. It is the Russian equivalent of Pittsburgh and second only to Moscow in terms of industrial production. Founded in 1723, Yekaterinburg today is the seat of the government for the Sverdlovsk region, which contains numerous heavy industries, mining concerns, and steel factories. In addition, Yekaterinburg is a major center for industrial research and development as well as home to numerous institutes of

higher education, technical training, and scientific research.

Vladivostok, the largest city in the Russian Far East and home to the Russian Pacific fleet, is an important center for trade with the Pacific Rim countries. Closed to foreigners from 1958 to 1992, the city now is home to many foreign businesses and consulates. The climate in Vladivostok is milder than in many other Russian cities due to its location on the Pacific Ocean. Winter temperatures range between 0° and 25 °F.

Population

The majority of Russia's 148 million inhabitants is predominantly Slavic. The Federation consists of 89 subjects, including constituent republics, territories, and autonomous regions that enjoy varying degrees of economic and political independence from the central government. Moscow is Russia's largest city (population: 9 million) and is the capital of the Federation. St. Petersburg is Russia's second largest city (population 5 million). In the Russian Far East, the predominant city is Vladivostok, which is becoming an important commercial center in the Federation's trade with the Pacific Rim.

Public Institutions

Politically, economically, and socially, the Russian Federation continues to be in a state of transition. Although constitutional structures are well-defined and democratic in concept, genuine democratization continues to be a slow, but generally positive transition. The 1993 Constitution provides for an elected President and a government headed by a Prime Minister. There is a bicameral legislature, the Federal Assembly, consisting of the State Duma and the Federation Council. The President and the members of the Federal Assembly have won office in competitive elections judged to be largely free and fair, with a broad

range of political parties and movements contesting offices.

The most recent elections to Russia's lower half of the Federal Assembly, the State Duma, were held in December 1999. The last presidential election took place in March 2000. Membership in the upper house of the Federal Assembly, the Federation Council, was made elective in 1996. Each of the Federation's 89 constituent republics, regions, and territories is represented by two members, the head of the local executive branch and the chair of the local legislature. The State Duma comprises 450 seats, of which half are from single-mandate districts and half are from party lists. Both chambers participate in shaping policy and enacting legislation, though the State Duma bears the brunt of the legislative workload.

Although it is beginning to show signs of independence, Russia's judiciary remains relatively weak and ineffective compared with the legislative and executive branches of the government. Judges are now only starting to assert their constitutionally mandated powers. The country's highest court, the Constitutional Court, reconvened in March 1995, after the new 1993 Constitution entered into force. The Constitution empowers the court to arbitrate disputes between the other two branches and between the central and regional governments. It also is authorized to rule on violations of constitutional rights, to examine appeals from various bodies, and to participate in impeachment proceedings against the President. The Constitutional Court, however, may not examine cases on its own initiative and is limited in the scope of issues it can hear.

A vigorous and critical media demonstrates that freedom of the press continues to exist in Russia. However, financial constraints make it nearly impossible for the print and broadcast media to survive without the support of business or political sponsors, who, as a result, have the

power to influence public opinion. Such sponsors generally represent a sufficiently broad cross section of the Russian political spectrum to provide a variety of points of view on political developments in Russia. Russian television and radio are similarly affected, but provide a narrower spectrum of political viewpoints than the print media.

Arts, Science, and Education

Russian research, in some physical and mathematics sciences and in some branches of medicine, is of a high order. In history, sociology, psychology, political science, and, even in certain biological sciences, Marxist and Leninist preconceptions seriously retarded the development of objective scholarship. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian scientists have been allowed more academic freedom, but this freedom has resulted in a serious depletion of the country's human resources, as many Russian scientists have emigrated to other countries, creating a "brain drain."

Commerce and Industry

Russia remains in the process of developing the legal basis of a modern market economy. Since for several generations the economy was ruled by a command system that prohibited private enterprise, this task is formidable, and was exacerbated by the August 1998 financial crisis and threefold ruble depreciation. Business operating costs are relatively high, as are interest rates for business loans; and tax and accounting regulations remain murky. Interpretations of laws and regulations often vary. Reflecting this environment, foreign investment has entered Russia at a cautious pace, albeit one that seems to be accelerating again as of mid-2000, since the advent of the Putin administration has been perceived as promising greater political and economic stability. Various sources estimate cumulative foreign direct

investment in Russia through 1999 at between \$12-\$13 billion, most of which has gone into oil extraction and food and consumer goods manufacturing. Russia's government coffers have received a boost from taxes on higher oil export revenues in 1999-2000, although it remains to be seen whether this windfall can be used to leverage the broader economy and promote the restructuring that Russian enterprises must undergo if they are to become more competitive.

In downtown Moscow itself, the economic and commercial transition are more advanced than in the country at large. Western consumer goods are generally available in Moscow, although retail and wholesale outlets are fewer and farther between than in Western countries. The service sector (in everything from internet service and residential cable TV to dentistry, hotels and restaurants to department stores and fast-food delivery) is developing rapidly, fueled by the inflow of Western companies over the past decade (most of whom have retained a presence here despite belt-tightening during the economic downturn in 1998-99).

Transportation

Automobiles

Driving in Russia requires constant attention, as Russian traffic regulations and procedures differ from those in the U.S. Speed limits are seldom observed; there is little, if any, lane discipline; and defensive driving is mandatory. Many pedestrians, oblivious to oncoming traffic, cross the street at random, which presents a real hazard. Streets are dimly lit at night and pedestrians wear dark clothing that makes them difficult to see. Although trucks are not allowed inside the Garden Ring without a special pass, numerous trucks and oversized, overloaded vehicles transit the rest of the city.

In mid 1999, a new Niva or Lada cost about \$3,500, while a Volga was more and a Zhiguli less. Transac-

tion time to purchase and register a Russian vehicle is usually 7-10 working days.

All imported vehicles should be new or in first-class mechanical condition to pass the strict Russian inspection requirements for vehicle registration:

- Each automobile must have at least two headlights, each with high and low beams. Supplementary lights are permitted, including side lights and fog lights. Front parking lights must be white; rear lights must be red, not yellow or tinted.
- Front and rear turn signals are required. Front turn signal must be white or orange; rear must be red or orange.
- Each vehicle must be equipped with a first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, and emergency warning reflector triangle.

Russian gasoline comes in 82, 92, 95, and 98 octane. Unleaded gasoline is widely available, and diesel fuel, although available, is usually of poor quality. There is no need to remove the catalytic converter unless extensive travel is planned for outside the city, where unleaded fuel is not as widely available.

Front-wheel- and four-wheel-drive vehicles offer the best handling in the Russian winter. The main streets in Moscow are regularly plowed; however, some side streets and housing complex parking lots may remain covered with snow and ice throughout the winter.

The Russian government requires that cars be covered by third-party liability insurance.

Ingosstrakh is an official Russian insurance company that offers third-party liability and comprehensive-collision coverage. Policies may be arranged within 2 days. Coverage is immediately invalidated if a driver is charged with drunk driving. The policy may require that covered vehicle damage be repaired in a Russian garage.

Ingosstrakh rates are based on engine size, as measured by engine displacement. Insurance for six- and eight-cylinder cars costs more through Ingosstrakh than through a U.S. company. Ingosstrakh third-party liability insurance has two categories with different amounts of coverage. The average cost in 2000 for Ingosstrakh third-party liability insurance was \$250 for an American car.

United Services Officers Insurance Brokers, Ltd., 44 High Street, Winchester, Hants, England, offers policies, including third-party liability and comprehensive and collision coverage.

Clements and Company, 1625 Eye Street, NW, Washington, D.C., has a policy that provides coverage for transportation of vehicles from anywhere in the world to Russia. Coverage includes comprehensive collision and protection against marine, fire, and theft loss. However, it does not cover third-party liability. Clements' rate structure is based on the U.S. Bluebook value of the car, and costs may be somewhat lower than those of Ingosstrakh.

Local

The Moscow street plan is a wheel with the Kremlin and Red Square at the hub. Around the hub are three concentric circles—the Boulevard ring, the Garden ring, and the outer ring highway (MKAD). A fourth ring is under construction and should be completed by 2003. The extensive public transportation system consists of buses, streetcars, trolley buses, and the metro. This system covers the entire city, but riders should be prepared to contend with pushing and shoving. The prices for riding the public transport are constantly changing but remain inexpensive. The metro runs from about 0600 until 0100. Stations are clean and safe, and many are internationally famous for the beauty of their interior design.

Taxis can be ordered from private companies. Private cars can be hailed on the street; however, the Regional Security Office advises

against this practice. Drivers are sometimes reluctant to stop late in the evening or in bad weather, and the price must be negotiated in advance. Always ride in the back seat and never engage a vehicle that already has another passenger.

Regional

Rail and air transport networks are extensive, and service is adequate on both systems. First-class train fares are inexpensive. The overnight train to St. Petersburg is comfortable, but there is the danger of crime. The country's size makes flying to some of the more remote cities more convenient than train travel. Air traffic is sometimes unreliable due to delays caused by bad weather.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service from Moscow to the U.S. and to most European cities is not up to Western standards, but is improving. Recently, U.S.-based telephone companies such as AT&T and Sprint have established direct-dial facilities in Moscow. International calls can be placed by using telephone credit cards made available by these companies. Bring a personal AT&T, Sprint, or MCI calling card for personal long-distance calls.

Radio and TV

All media are in transition in Russia. There are now many joint venture radio stations, with English-speaking announcers who play America's top 40. For example, Radio Maximum, FM 103.7, is English speaking each morning from 6 am until 10 am. The station airs news, weather, business reports, and contemporary rock music. Open Radio on both AM 918 kHz and FM 102.3 MHz rebroadcasts Voice of America (VOA) and BBC programs, plus business and local news programs of their own. Reception of these radio stations is excellent, even on the cheaper "jam boxes." In addition, there is a wide range of excellent Russian radio stations on both AM and FM bands;

however, the Russian FM spectrum does not conform to the U.S. FM bands. To receive all Russian FM radio stations, purchase a Russian radio.

Outside of Moscow and St. Petersburg, a good short-wave radio is needed to receive the VOA and BBC broadcasts.

The Russian system is SECAM. American NTSC TV's will usually receive a black-and-white video signal but will not receive audio. Bring or buy a multisystem set that will enable the viewing of Russian programs and cable channels. A multisystem VCR is also helpful, as this enables one to watch Russian and U.S. videotapes.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

An increasing number of Western newspapers is available in Moscow. The International Herald Tribune, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, and the Economist are available at tourist hotels. Western newspapers arrive in Moscow the day after publication.

In Moscow, there are several English-language newspapers for the foreign community. Most are free and include lists of upcoming cultural events, restaurant reviews, TV schedules, and general news of the city and community. All of these papers contain news of the foreign community and coverage and analysis of Russian news and events.

Many publications are available for those who read Russian. In addition to the 2,000 newspapers and magazines that are published in Russian, there is a growing number of Western publications now available in Russian.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Moscow has three dental clinics with American-trained dentists and laboratory technicians. The Adven-

tist Dental Clinic also has a Western-trained orthodontist on staff.

When hospitalization is needed, Michurnskiy Kremlin Clinic is utilized for diagnostic and in-patient care. The facility offers the highest level of Russian medical care available and has a 24-hour ambulance service. In addition, the American Medical Center has opened a full-service clinic on a membership basis.

For cases requiring advanced diagnostic procedures, surgery, or complicated treatment not available at the Michurinskiy Kremlin Clinic, patients are evacuated to London, Frankfurt, Helsinki, or the U.S.

Community Health

Although the standard of public cleanliness in Russia does not equal that of the U.S. and Western Europe, garbage collection is relatively dependable, and sewage is treated adequately. Public restrooms are usually unsanitary. Streets and public buildings are not clean, but conditions do not pose health hazards.

Moscow's water may not be adequately treated, and drinking water should be boiled or filtered as a precaution.

The Moscow area, as is the case in many parts of Russia, has the potential for environmental hazards. No serious detrimental health effects have been demonstrated from microwaves, NPPD, or nuclear fallout.

Preventive Measures

During the winter, the air in Moscow, especially in offices and apartments, becomes very dry. This sometimes causes dry skin and aggravates respiratory problems. Dry mucous membranes of the respiratory system are vulnerable to infection and irritation. Respiratory infections are common during winter. Reliable food sources are plentiful in Moscow. These local markets and the import stores offer a wide variety of foods, including fresh, dried, and canned products.

Personal Health Measures

All immunizations should be current, including diphtheria, hepatitis A, and hepatitis B.

There are many reliable pharmacies in Moscow, and many medicines that require a prescription in the U.S. can be obtained over the counter in Moscow. Many Western medications are available in these pharmacies, but not all, and sometimes there are shortages of previously available medications. The best advice is still to bring several months' supply of any medication that is taken regularly or needed for urgent situations.

Several optical services have opened in Moscow, but bring an extra pair of glasses, plus the prescription. Those who wear contact lenses sometimes experience discomfort because of the dry, dusty Moscow air.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Currently, Delta is the only American airline that regularly flies to Moscow and St. Petersburg. However, check the latest schedules to determine what carriers and stop-over combinations are authorized.

You can drive over the routes Prague-Warsaw-Brest-Moscow or Helsinki-St. Petersburg-Moscow with prior Russian Government approval. When driving by way of Warsaw, allow at least 6 weeks to arrange the Russian-Brest entrance visa and Czechoslovak and Polish transit visas.

The overland trip should be undertaken only by experienced drivers accompanied by another passenger or by two cars traveling together. If you do not have a Russian driver's license, have a valid U.S. license and an international driver's license available. Gasoline is often difficult to find in Russia outside of major cities. Gas stations take cash only.

Road travel in Russia is not geared to high-speed, long-distance runs. Surfaces vary greatly, detours are frequent, and drivers often do not perform according to expectations. Heavy truck traffic makes passing extremely dangerous. Service facilities are seldom seen and never to be depended on for parts. A carefully planned pacing is the best approach.

Currently, Delta flies into St. Petersburg. If transiting Eastern Europe en route, check for compliance with visa requirements and be aware that flight schedules between St. Petersburg and Eastern European cities often change without notice. If arriving by car, enter from Helsinki.

Initial travel to Vladivostok is possible either by air via Moscow or across the Pacific on an American carrier. There are frequent trans-Pacific flights from Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles to Tokyo and Seoul, and biweekly flights in summer from Seattle to Vladivostok via Anchorage and Magadan. Travelers choosing to transit Tokyo must take a "bullet train" from Tokyo to Niigata (about 2 hours). Aeroflot flies twice weekly (Thursdays and Sundays) from Niigata to Vladivostok. Travelers transiting Seoul must catch the weekly (Sunday) Aeroflot flight from Seoul to Khabarovsk, then fly or take an overnight train from Khabarovsk to Vladivostok.

U.S. citizens must possess a valid U.S. passport and appropriate visas for travel to or transit through Russia, whether by train, car, ship or airplane.

Russian visas should be obtained from an embassy or consulate in the U.S. or abroad in advance of travel, as it is impossible to obtain a Russian entry visa upon arrival. Travelers who arrive without an entry visa are not permitted to enter Russia and face immediate expulsion by route of entry, at the traveler's expense. Errors in dates or other information on the visa may result in denial of entry, and it is helpful to

have someone who reads Russian check the visa before departing the United States.

Visas are valid for specific dates. An entry/exit visa reflects two dates written in the European style (day, month, year). The first date indicates the earliest day you may enter Russia; the second date indicates the last day you are permitted to be in Russia using that visa. Sometimes, the length of a visa may not correspond to the length of your planned stay. Before starting your trip, be sure your visa is valid for the dates of your planned entry and departure. Travelers who spend more than three days in the country must register their visa through their hotel or sponsor. It is helpful to make a photocopy of your visa in the event of loss, but note that a copy of your visa will not be sufficient for leaving the country, as Russian border officials always ask for the original.

The office that issued your visa must approve amendment of a visa necessitated by illness or changes in travel plans. If travelers experience entry and exit visa problems they and/or their sponsor must contact the nearest Russian visa and passport office (OVIR) for assistance. Visitors who overstay their visa's validity, even for one day, or who neglect to register their visa will be prevented from leaving until this is corrected, which usually requires payment of a fee and results in a missed flight or other connection.

Due to the possibility of random document checks by police, U.S. citizens should carry their original passports and registered visas with them at all times. Failure to provide proper documentation can result in detention and/or heavy fines. It is not necessary for travelers to have either entry or itinerary points in the Russian Federation printed on their visas.

All travelers must continue to list on the visa application all areas to be visited and subsequently register with authorities at each destination. There are several closed cities

throughout Russia. Travelers who attempt to enter these cities without prior authorization are subject to fines, court hearings and/or deportation. Travelers should check with their sponsor, hotel or the nearest Russian visa and passport office before traveling to unfamiliar cities and towns.

Any person applying for a visa for a stay of more than three months must present a certificate showing that he/she is HIV-negative. The certificate must contain the applicant's passport data, proposed length of stay in Russia, blood test results for HIV infection, including date of the test, signature of the doctor conducting the test, medical examination results, diagnostic series and seal of the hospital/medical organization. The HIV test must be administered no later than three months prior to travel, and the certificate must be in both Russian and English.

Russia issues visas (with the exception of transit visas) based on support from a sponsor, usually an individual or local organization. Generally speaking, visas sponsored by Russian individuals are "guest" visas, and visas sponsored by tour agencies or hotels are "tourist" visas. Note that travelers who enter Russia on "tourist" visas, but who then reside with Russian individuals, may have difficulty registering their visas and may be required by Russian authorities to depart Russia sooner than they had planned. Student visas allow only for one entry. The sponsoring school is responsible for registering the visa and obtaining an exit visa. It is important to know who your sponsor is and how to contact him/her because Russian law requires that your sponsor apply on your behalf for replacement, extension or changes to your visa. Even if your visa was obtained through a travel agency in the United States, there is always a Russian legal entity whose name is indicated on the visa and who is considered to be your legal sponsor. The U.S. Embassy cannot act as your sponsor. U.S. citizens should contact their tour company

or hotel in advance for information on visa sponsorship.

Persons holding both Russian and U.S. passports should be aware that if they enter Russia on a Russian passport that subsequently expires, Russian authorities will not permit them to depart using their U.S. passport. Since it may take several months to obtain a new Russian passport to satisfy Russian requirements for departure, travelers are advised to ensure that their Russian passports will be valid for the duration of their stay or that they travel on a valid U.S. passport and Russian visa.

For additional information concerning entry and exit requirements, travelers may contact the Russian Embassy, Consular Section, 2641 Tunlaw Rd., NW, Washington, DC 20007, telephone (202) 939-8907, web site - <http://russianembassy.org>, or the Russian consulates in New York (tel. 212-348-0926/55), San Francisco (tel. 415-928-6878, 415-929-0862, 415-202-9800/01) or Seattle (tel. 206-728-1910).

Russian customs laws and regulations are in a state of flux and are not consistently enforced. When arriving in Russia, travelers must declare all items of value on a customs form; the same form used during arrival in Russia must be presented to customs officials at the time of departure. As of October 2001, travelers must declare all foreign currency they are bringing into Russia. Non-residents of Russia are prohibited from taking any cash money in currency other than the Russian ruble out of the country unless it has been declared upon arrival or wired, and supported by an appropriate document. Those with stamped declaration forms may exit Russia with a sum of foreign currency no greater than the sum declared upon entry. Lost or stolen customs forms should be reported to the Russian police, and a police report (*spravka*) should be obtained to present to customs officials upon departure. Often, however, the traveler will find that the lost customs declaration cannot be

replaced. Travelers attempting to depart Russia with more money than was on their original customs form face possible detention, arrest, fines and confiscation of currency.

Travelers should obtain receipts for all high-value items (including caviar) purchased in Russia. Any article that could appear old or as having cultural value to the customs service, including artwork, icons, samovars, rugs and antiques, must have a certificate indicating that it has no historical or cultural value. It is illegal to remove such items from Russia without this certificate. Certificates will not be granted for the export of articles that are more than 100 years old, no matter the value. These certificates may be obtained from the Russian Ministry of Culture. For further information, Russian speakers may call the Airport Sheremetyevo-2 Customs Information Service in Moscow at (7) (095) 578-2125/578-2120, or, in St. Petersburg, the Ministry of Culture may be reached at 311-3496.

Russia also has very strict rules on the importation of large quantities of medication, and of some medications regardless of quantity. It is advisable to contact the Russian Embassy or one of Russia's consulates for specific information regarding this or other customs regulations.

Americans living in or visiting Russia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or at the U.S. consulate general closest to the region of Russia they will be visiting, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Russia. The U.S. Embassy is located in Moscow at Novinskiy Bulvar 19/23; tel: (7) (095) 728-5000, fax: (7) (095) 728-5084. After-hours emergencies: (7) (095) 728-5000. Also, monitor the Embassy's web site at <http://www.usembassy.ru> or e-mail at consulmo@state.gov.

Pets

All pets entering Russia must be accompanied by a certificate of good

health issued not more than 10 days prior to arrival. Veterinary care is available but technology is not very advanced. Animals with chronic problems probably should not be brought.

All pets should be given distemper, hepatitis, leptospira bactrin, parvovirus, and rabies immunizations before entering the Russian Federation. A rabies and an immunization certification stating dates must be available for customs formalities. Check with your airline concerning regulations and how far in advance you need the shots given to your pet.

There are veterinary clinics in Moscow that stock rabies, distemper, leptospira bactrin, and parvovirus vaccines for dogs and cats. Other pet medicines and supplies (worm pills, flea powder, vitamins, soap, etc.) should be brought with you.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Russian unit of currency is the ruble, composed of 100 kopecks.

The rate of exchange is relatively stable at 28-29 rubles to the dollar. Check local banks or hotels for the latest rate.

Numerous banks and dollar exchange facilities are located throughout the city.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Special Information

The importation and use of **Global Positioning Systems and other radio electronic devices** are subject to special rules and regulations in Russia. In general, mapping and natural resource data collection activities associated with normal, commercial, and scientific collaboration may result in seizure of the equipment and/or arrest of the user. The penalty for using a GPS device in a manner which is determined to have compromised Russian national security can be a prison term of ten to twenty years. In December 1997, a U.S. citizen was imprisoned in Rostov-na-Donu for ten days on

charges of espionage for using a GPS device to check the efficacy of newly-installed telecommunications equipment. He and his company believed the GPS had been legally imported and were not aware that Russian authorities considered nearby government installations secret.

No traveler should seek to import or use GPS equipment in any manner unless it has been properly and fully documented by the traveler in accordance with the instructions of the Glavgossvyaznadzor (Main Inspectorate in Communications) and is declared in full on a customs declaration at the point of entry to the Russian Federation.

All radio electronic devices brought into Russia must have a certificate from Glavgossvyaznadzor (Main Inspectorate in Communications) of the Russian Federation. This includes all emitting, transmitting, and receiving equipment such as GPS devices, cellular telephones, satellite telephones, and other kinds of radio electronic equipment. Excluded from the list are consumer electronic devices such as AM/FM radios.

To obtain permission to bring in a **cellular telephone**, an agreement for service from a local cellular provider in Russia is required. That agreement and a letter of guarantee to pay for the cellular service must be sent to Glavgossvyaznadzor along with a request for permission to import the telephone. Based on these documents, a certificate is issued. This procedure is reported to take two weeks. Without a certificate, no cellular telephone can be brought into the country, regardless of whether or not it is meant for use in Russia. Permission for the above devices may also be required from the State Customs Committee of the Russian Federation.

The State Customs Committee has stated that there are no restrictions on bringing laptop computers into the Russian Federation for personal use. The **software**, however, can be inspected upon departure; and some

equipment and software have been confiscated because of the data contained in them, or due to software encryption, which is standard in many programs.

For more information, contact: State Customs Committee of the Russian Federation, Russia 107842 Moscow. 1A Komsomolskaya Place, Telephone: 7-095-975-4070. Department for clearance of items for personal use: Telephone: 7-095-975-4095, Glavgossvyaznadzor, Russia 117909 Moscow, Second Spasnaïlovkovsky 6, Telephone: 7-095-238-6331, Fax: 7-095-238-5102.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 & 2	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Christmas (Orthodox)
Jan. 25	St. Tatiana Day
Apr. 1	Laughter Day (Fool Day)
Apr/May	Easter (Russian Orthodox)
Mar. 8	International Women's Day
May 1	Labor Day
May 2	Spring Day
May 9	Victory Day
June 12	Independence Day
Nov. 7	Day of Consent and Reconciliation
Dec. 12	Constitution Day

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SAN MARINO

The Most Serene Republic of San Marino

Major City:
San Marino

INTRODUCTION

SAN MARINO is located in northeastern Italy and is one of the world's smallest and oldest republics. The picturesque landlocked country is surrounded entirely by Italy. The small nation is largely sustained by tourism. San Marino developed around a 9th century monastery, gradually acquiring the institutions of a small state. Its independence has been challenged by various popes, ruling families, and conquerors. However, its high and isolated position, well-trained army, and strategic insignificance permitted San Marino's population to remain free from the control of the Holy Roman Emperor or the Pope. The Congress of Vienna recognized San Marino as a sovereign state in 1815. In 1862, San Marino entered into a friendship treaty and customs union with Italy. The treaty was renewed in 1939 and amended in 1971.

MAJOR CITY

San Marino

The town of San Marino is on the slopes near the summit of Mt. Titano (2,457 feet—named for the

famous Titans of Roman mythology). According to tradition, San Marino was named for St. Marinus, a 4th-century Dalmatian mason who was working at Rimini. He fled with others to Mt. Titano seeking to avoid Emperor Diocletian's religious persecution of Christians. Over 4,000 people live in the town of San Marino, the capital of the country. Farming was once the main occupation, but it has been replaced by light manufacturing. High stone walls surround the town of San Marino. Tourism and money sent by citizens abroad are the main sources of income. The government gets revenue from selling stamps and coins, which are very popular internationally with collectors. Commercial activity is centered on Borgo Maggiore, 600 feet below the town of San Marino, where there is a weekly market and an annual livestock fair. The two areas are linked by a 1.5-mile winding road and by cable-car service. There is helicopter service to Rimini, Italy during the summer.

Recreation and Entertainment

The traditional national sport of San Marino is archery, and pistol and rifle practice are also popular. San Marino lies about 6 miles from Italy's Adriatic coast, making water sports popular as well. The Sammarinese also enjoy bocce (Italian lawn

bowling), soccer, baseball, tennis, and basketball. The country also annually sponsors a Grand Prix Formula One auto racing event, although it must be held across the border in Italy because there is no suitable racetrack site in San Marino.

During the summer, some 20,000–30,000 foreigners visit the country each day. Hotels and restaurants have been built in recent years to accommodate the visitors.

The Palazzo del Valloni in the town of San Marino was rebuilt after falling victim to an accidental bombing by the British in World War II. The palace holds many of the nation's cultural archives, including famous paintings by Guernico and Strozzi, and a collection of rare coins and medals. The neo-Gothic Palazzo del Governo was built in 1894, but most other large buildings are of recent date, although many monuments have been rebuilt in an earlier style. The 14th-century church of St. Francesco in the lower part of the town is itself an architectural treasure and houses more historic paintings. The Basilica del Santo, in which the skull of St. Marinus is kept, is a 19th-century neo-classical structure that stands over the site of San Marino's original 5th-century church. The church of San Pietro next to the basilica houses the two-

niched rock that, as legend says, Sts. Marinus and Leo used as beds. The three old fortresses of Guiata (built in the 11th century and rebuilt in the 15th century), Fratta (13th century), and Montale (16th century) are situated on the three pinnacles of Mt. Titano. The vista from the three fortresses overlooks the Italian town of Rimini and the Adriatic Sea.

The Crossbowmen's Corps dates back to before 1295 and has defended San Marino's independence throughout its history. The organization performs costumed demonstrations during the summer at the Cava dei Balestieri (Crossbowman's Quarry), located by the cable car station. Public gardens near the quarry contain an outdoor sculpture gallery, with works by major contemporary sculptors such as Berti, Bini, Crocetti, and El Greco. The Museo Filatelico et Numismatico in Borgomaggiore shows every stamp and coin the republic has issued since 1877. The museum also houses Garibaldi memorabilia. San Marino provided sanctuary to Garibaldi and his associates from Italy during the 1840s.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

San Marino is Europe's third-smallest country (after Vatican City and Monaco), with an area of only 23 square miles. San Marino is located entirely inside northeastern Italy close to the coast of the Adriatic Sea. The total area is only about 30% as large as Washington, D.C. The topography is lofty, as San Marino lies in the Apennine Mountains. The high cliffs of the Fratta tower not only provide scenic views of Italy but also of the Slovenian coastline across the Adriatic Sea. The climate is Mediterranean, with mild to cool winters and warm, sunny summers. Temperatures frequently fall below freezing in the winter and

reach a maximum of 79°F in the summer.

Population

San Marino has an estimated 27,000 inhabitants. The Sammarinese are mostly of Italian ancestry, and most new immigration to the country is from Italy. The main destinations for those emigrating from the country are Italy, the United States, France, and Belgium.

Roman Catholicism is the official religion and the faith of most residents. San Marino has nine parishes, all belonging to a single diocese. Italian is the official language, and many residents speak in the regional Romagna dialect.

Government

San Marino has had its own statutes and governmental institutions since the 11th century. Today, legislative authority is vested in a unicameral parliament, the Great and General Council, consisting of 60 members who serve 5-year terms unless a majority votes to dissolve and calls for new elections.

Executive authority is exercised by the 11-member Congress of State (cabinet), composed of nine members chosen by the Great and General Council and two captains regent.

The captains regent are elected by the council from among its members for 6-month terms. Their functions are largely honorary, although they also preside over meetings of the council and the congress and are empowered to propose legislation and to represent San Marino in its foreign relations. The captains regent are assisted by two secretaries of state (foreign affairs and internal affairs) and by several additional secretaries entrusted with specific portfolios.

The Congress of State is composed of *de facto* executives who head the various administrative depart-

ments in the government. These posts are divided among the parties who form the coalition government. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has come to assume many of the prerogatives of a prime minister.

Membership in the Great and General Council is based on proportional representation and is selected from nominee lists submitted by the political parties. Voting is open to all adult citizens of the republic.

Judicial authority is turned over in part to Italian magistrates in both criminal or civil cases. Minor cases are handled by a local conciliatory judge. Appeals go, in the first instance, to an Italian judge residing in Italy; the final court of review is the Council of Twelve—judges chosen for 6-year terms (four every 2 years) from among the members of the Great and General Council.

For taxation purposes, the tiny republic is divided into districts corresponding to the country's Roman Catholic parishes. For administration, it is divided into nine sections, or "castles." The head of each castle is an elected committee led by an official known as the captain of the castle. New captains are chosen on annual holidays, April 1 and October 1, when captains regent are installed in office.

The flag is divided horizontally into two equal bands, sky blue below and white above, with the national coat of arms superimposed in the center. The coat of arms depicts the three historic tower fortresses of San Marino.

Arts, Science, Education

The educational system is modeled on Italy's. Primary education is compulsory for children ages 6–13, and San Marino has 14 elementary schools. Students pursue higher education at Italian universities. The literacy rate in San Marino for citizens ages 10 and older is 96%.

Commerce and Industry

The Italian government pays an annual budget subsidy to San Marino under terms of the republic's treaty with Italy. In return, San Marino relinquishes the following rights: free transit of imports through Italian ports; cultivation of agricultural products protected by Italian state monopoly; printing of bills and notes; operation of a commercial radio and television station; and establishment of a free trade zone.

San Marino's main industry (50% of the economy) is tourism, which provides for a high standard of living with relatively low taxes. Establishments related to tourism (hotels, restaurants, and shops) account for much of the country's employment.

Other economic activities in San Marino are farming and livestock raising, along with some light manufacturing. Livestock utilizes about 1,400 hectares (3,500 acres) and is devoted mostly to cows, oxen, and sheep. Cheesemaking is also important.

The sale of coins and postage stamps to collectors from throughout the world provides a small amount of revenue.

Transportation

There is regular bus service and seasonal helicopter service between San Marino and Rimini, Italy. An electrified railway once connected the two towns, but was never repaired after sustaining damage in World War II.

Communications

The telecommunications system is integrated into Italy's. There are

three local FM radio stations and one television station receiving mostly foreign broadcasts. San Marino has two daily newspapers: *Il Quotidiano Sammarinese*, and *San Marino Italia*.

Health

Public health institutions include the State Hospital, a dispensary for the poor, and a laboratory of hygiene and prevention. All citizens receive medical care fully subsidized by the government.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Travelers must enter San Marino from Italy. As there are no frontier formalities imposed, any person visiting San Marino must comply with Italian passport/visa regulations as follows:

A passport is required. A visa is not required for tourist stays up to three months. For further information concerning entry requirements for Italy, travelers may contact the Embassy of Italy at 3000 Whitehaven Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. Tel: 202-612-4400 or via the Internet: <http://www.italyemb.org>, or the Italian Consulates General in Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, or San Francisco.

Those tourists planning to stay other than in hotels for more than one month should register with the local police station within eight days of arrival in Italy. Visitors to Italy may be required to demonstrate to the police upon arrival sufficient financial means to support themselves while in Italy. Credit

cards, ATM cards, traveler's checks, prepaid hotel/vacation vouchers, etc. can be used to show sufficient means.

Currency is the Italia *lira*.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

January 1	New Year's Day
January 6	Epiphany
February 5	St. Agatha's Day and liberation of San Marino
March 25	Anniversary of the Arengo
April 1	Investiture of Captains- Regent (Spring)
.	*Easter Monday
May 1	Labor Day
.	*Ascension
July 28	Fall of Fascism
August 14-16	Assumption and Bank Holiday
September 3	Anniversary of the Foundation of San Marino
October 1	Investiture of Captains- Regent (Fall)
November 1	All Saints' Day
November 2	Commemora- tion of the Dead
December 8	Immaculate Conception
December 24-26	Christmas
December 31	New Year's Eve

*Variable

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SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

Major City:

Belgrade

Other Cities:

Bar, Cetinje, Kotor, Nikšić, Niš, Novi Sad, Podgorica, Priština, Subotica

INTRODUCTION

On April 27, 1992, two of the former Yugoslav republics, **SERBIA** and **MONTENEGRO**, announced that they had joined together to form a new nation. This new nation, known as the “Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,” replaces the old six-member “Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” which splintered apart after Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina declared their independence in 1991 and early 1992. The new Yugoslavia, however, has not been formally recognized by the United States, the European Community, or the United Nations.

Serbia and Montenegro became international outcasts for their role in the civil wars that devastated Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serbian nationalist militias and the Serbian-controlled Yugoslav Federal Army were accused of massive atrocities against civilians, creating large prison camps, and forcing many non-Serbs to leave homes and villages in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia through a policy of “ethnic cleansing.” The United Nations, the European Community, and the United States considered Serbia and Montenegro as the main aggressors in the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and tried to punish Serbia and Mon-

tenegro in an attempt to end the fighting. The United Nations imposed sweeping international sanctions against these republics from 1992 until 1995.

On November 21, 1995, the three presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia finally agreed to terms that would end the fighting in Bosnia after four years and an estimated 250,000 casualties. In March 1996 the International War Crimes Tribunal filed its first prosecution charges against Serbian soldiers accused of atrocities.

Editor’s Note: Much of the information in this entry reflects conditions in the cities of Serbia and Montenegro prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and the international sanctions imposed by the world community.

MAJOR CITY

Belgrade

Belgrade, capital of Serbia, is located at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube Rivers. Its altitude varies from 224 to 830 feet above sea level.

Belgrade has had a settlement since the time of the Celts in the fourth century B.C., although little evidence of that culture or of the subsequent Roman civilization remains. Few historical monuments before the late 18th century survive. Minimal evidence exists of the long period of Turkish domination, and only a few baroque buildings mark the pre-World War I Hapsburg influence. Belgrade thus lacks the atmosphere and Old World charm that is characteristic of Eastern European capitals such as Prague (Czech Republic) and Budapest (Hungary). Buildings in the central city are gray and somber, and contrast with a few modern concrete and glass high rises. Parks, tree-lined streets, and numerous sidewalk cafés lend color and charm, particularly in summer.

The fascinating contrast between old and new is evidenced by the young, fashionable Belgraders and the fur-hatted peasant men in Serbian trousers and upturned sandals, with their dirndl-skirted wives in *babushkas*. They are seen browsing together along the shopping districts in the city’s center.

Economic activity centers around government, trade, commerce, industry, and services. Factories within Belgrade produce machine tools, textiles, chemicals, agricul-

tural machinery, building materials, and electrical equipment. The adjacent agricultural area of the Vojvodina is one of Serbia and Montenegro's richest.

The climate in Belgrade is characteristically continental. The mean temperature in winter is 32°F (0°C), and in summer 70°F (21°C), with frequent highs in the 90s. Air pollution is particularly bad in Belgrade during the winter because of the low-grade coal used. Smog is heavy in low-lying areas near the main railway station.

Cultural life is active in this city of about 1.2 million (2000 est.), although less so than in major world capitals. Belgraders have a deep interest in art, and enjoy a long season of opera, ballet, concerts, and drama. The taste for popular music, especially American jazz, is particularly evident among the young. Belgraders are avid movie-goers, and many Western European and American films are shown in the original version with Serbo-Croatian subtitles. Numerous art exhibits of varying quality are presented by contemporary artists.

Education

The International School of Belgrade, a U.S. Government-supported institution, offers kindergarten through grades eight. The school was founded in 1947 and is accredited by both the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. A board of nine members, three appointed by the U.S. ambassador and six elected by parents from the international community, governs operations.

Located in a suburban area of Belgrade, the International School has 14 classrooms, a science lab, computer lab, and a 8,000-volume library. An American-style curriculum is offered with French taught as a foreign language. Extracurricular activities include field trips, school newspaper, computers, and an after-school activity and enrichment program.

The school year extends from late August to mid-June, with vacations in the fall, at Christmas, in late February, and in April.

The International School is located at Temisvarska 19, in a residential area about two miles from the U.S. Embassy. Information and applications for admission may be obtained by writing to: Director, International School of Belgrade, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520. The Belgrade telephone is (011)651-832.

International Nursery School conducts morning sessions for three-year olds and afternoon sessions for four-year olds.

Expatriate children in grades nine through 12 attend boarding schools in Italy, Germany, France, England, and Greece.

Among the special educational opportunities available to Americans in Belgrade are the three-month courses offered by Belgrade's Institute and Center for Foreign Languages. Classes in Serbian are taught daily, and there are semi-weekly classes in French, German, Italian, and Russian. Most foreign residents have found the courses excellent.

Recreation

A number of excursions can be made in the vicinity of Belgrade. About 44 miles (71 kilometers) north of the city is Novi Sad, which has an interesting fortress overlooking the city. Inside the fortress is a hotel and a good restaurant, and a number of artists have workshops there. En route to Novi Sad is the village of Stara Pazova, where Slovak ladies wear colorful dress on Sundays. The wooded hill country known as Fruška Gora, a pleasant picnic area and site of more than a dozen monasteries (including the Hopovo), is also en route.

Avala, a 2,000-foot hill, 12 miles south of Belgrade, offers a good view on a clear day. The ruins of a 15th-century Serbian fort are on the Danube at Smederevo, 25 miles east

of Belgrade. En route, it is pleasant to lunch at Grocka, where a good restaurant overlooks the surrounding vineyards.

A hydrofoil makes excursions down the Danube to Kladovo, where a dam was constructed jointly by Romania and Yugoslavia. The boat passes many interesting points, including some remains from Roman times and Smederevo Fort, and crosses the Iron Gate (Djerdap), which resembles an inland fjord.

Serbia also has some interesting monasteries dating from the 13th to 15th centuries. Visits to the monasteries of Manasija, Ravanica, Hopovo, and Krusedol make interesting outings from Belgrade; those in south Serbia, such as Sopoćani, Studenica, Peć, Gračanica, and Dečani can be visited over a long weekend. The frescoes in these monasteries are world famous.

Another fascinating day's outing is a visit to the villages of Serbia's primitive artists. Kovačica and Uzdin may be included on the same drive. Oparić is also a village of artists; they are gracious and hospitable and often invite visitors into their homes. En route to Oparić, at Svetozarevo, is a gallery of primitive art, which has one of the finest collections in the country.

Belgrade has beach areas, but health authorities warn against pollution. Boating is good on the Danube and Sava, although mooring facilities are limited. This area also has rivers suitable for kayaking.

Ice skating rinks are available locally, and skates of good quality can be bought inexpensively.

The hunter will find duck, geese, hare, partridge, pheasant, and fox in the immediate vicinity of Belgrade. Bear, wild boar, roebuck (European stag), wolf, and chamois are also in the area, but unless an invitation is extended for an official hunt, game fees are prohibitively high.

There is fishing in the Danube, Sava, and smaller rivers nearby, but catches appear to be “fisherman’s luck.” Regular spinning tackle will do, although fly is more useful. Seasonal licenses are inexpensive.

Soccer (European football) is the great spectator sport in Serbia and Montenegro. Belgrade has two large stadiums. Basketball, also popular, is played at several locations in the city. A small track just outside the city has horse and harness racing during summer.

Some joggers have found acceptable routes within Belgrade, but the traffic and pollution, particularly during winter, have led most joggers to drive to Gypsy Island (commonly referred to by its Turkish name, *Ada Ciganlija*) about three miles away, where there is an excellent flat course relatively free of pollution.

Entertainment

Movies, opera, ballet, concerts, and drama are offered in Belgrade. The opera and ballet seasons run from October through May or June; repertoires include both European and Slavic works. The International Film Festival (Fest) in February, the Belgrade Theater Festival of Avantgarde Drama (Bitef) in September, the Belgrade Music Festival (Bemus) in October, and the Belgrade Jazz Festival in November are outstanding events of the season. Orchestras and chamber music groups are excellent, and frequently present guest conductors and soloists.

Legitimate theater is offered regularly in Belgrade, with a repertoire that includes contemporary plays, classical productions, and musical comedy. These presentations are in Serbo-Croatian, so only those with a knowledge of this language can profitably take advantage of them.

A professional folk song and dance group, the *Kolo*, performs regularly throughout the year in Belgrade, and other amateur and professional groups give performances fre-

quently in major cities and, during the tourist season, in resort hotels.

Several museums in Belgrade are worth visiting. Among the best are the National Museum, which has a varied collection of French impressionist works; the Fresco Gallery, which contains copies of frescoes found in Serbia’s early monasteries; and the Ethnographic Museum, with original examples of peasant costumes, implements, and musical instruments. Several 19th-century houses have been turned into fascinating smaller museums. The Military Museum in Kalemegdan Park is one of the finest in Europe.

The American Club, located in the U.S. Embassy staff housing area, has a restaurant, two-lane bowling alley, lounge bar, the Elbrick Room for parties and videotape shows, and an auditorium for movies and other community events. Special events frequently are scheduled. Membership is open to the staffs of other diplomatic missions and to the American business community in Belgrade. The club shows feature films several evenings a week and holds a Saturday morning screening for children.

Dining out in Belgrade restaurants is a popular social activity. The prices are reasonable and the food good, although variety is limited. Several nightclubs and discotheques are available. A number of casinos are open only during the tourist season.

The American Women’s Association (AWA) is an active group open to all American women in Belgrade. It sponsors programs of interest to the membership, and organizes children’s parties and fund-raising activities for charity.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **BAR** is one of Montenegro’s major ports. Situated on the Adriatic Sea, Bar is linked by rail with Belgrade and serves as a transport source for Serbian

imports and exports. The city offers a ferry service across the Adriatic Sea to Bari, Italy. Bar has a population over 33,000.

The Montenegrin city of **CETINJE** is situated at the foot of Mt. Lovćen. During Montenegro’s brief period as an independent nation (1878–1918), Cetinje served as the capital city. The city has several attractions that are of interest to visitors. These attractions include a 16th-century monastery and a museum which houses the literary works and art collection of famous Montenegrin poet Petrović Njegoš. The city has several small industries which produce household appliances and footwear. Cetinje has a population over 20,000.

KOTOR is situated on Montenegro’s Adriatic Sea coast. The city, founded by the ancient Romans, has been occupied at various periods in history by Venetians, Hungarians, Turks, French, and Austrians. It is the oldest city in Montenegro. Kotor has many historic treasures, the most impressive of which is the Cathedral of St. Tryphon. This cathedral, along with most buildings in Kotor, was heavily damaged by a severe earthquake in 1979. Some repairs have been made, although the cathedral has not been completely restored. Kotor has an excellent Maritime Museum which contains excellent exhibits of arms collections, uniforms, navigational charts and instruments, as well as models of famous ships. The city’s population is over 21,000.

The city of **NIKŠIĆ**, also located in Montenegro, was settled by the ancient Romans. For over 400 years, from 1455 to 1877, Nikšić was controlled by the Turks. Today, it is an industrial center which produces iron, steel, distilled beverages, and wood products. One of Europe’s largest bauxite mines is located near Nikšić. Following the end of World War II in 1945, Nikšić underwent massive renovations. Modern buildings, parks, and public works projects were constructed. The city is quite large and had a population of approximately 61,000 in 2002.

NIŠ has long been a geographically significant city. Situated on the Nišava River in Serbia, about 125 miles southeast of Belgrade, it is a road junction and industrial area. Because it lies at the convergence of several river systems, Niš is considered in a vital position between Central Europe and the Aegean Sea. The second-century Greek mathematician Ptolemy noted the importance of this area in his *Guide to Geography*. Constantine the Great (ca. 280–337) was born here. Niš withstood occupations by Bulgarians, Hungarians, and, especially, Turks. The Soviets assumed control in 1944. Despite its antiquity, this community has a modern look. Badly damaged in World War II, Niš underwent post-war construction. Most of the Turko-Byzantine style is gone; a fifth-century Byzantine crypt is among the landmarks. Activity here includes commerce, a university, and a spa just east of town for cardiovascular disease victims. Niš has a number of industrial enterprises which produce beer, household appliances, electronic materials, tobacco products, and textiles. The 2000 population of Niš was approximately 175,000. Near Niš is the thermal resort of Niska Banja. Brzi Brod has remains of a Roman town.

NOVI SAD, the chief town of the Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina, lies on the Danube in northern Serbia. It was founded in the 17th century, and became a royal free city of Austria-Hungary. It was here, early in the 19th century, that a vigorous Serbian literary revival was established. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1918, the transfer of Novi Sad to Yugoslavia was confirmed, under Hungarian protest, by the Treaty of Trainon. Novi Sad is a busy commercial city, making electrical equipment, porcelain, soap, and processed food, among other products. The Gallery of Matice Srpska contains 2,500 Serbian paintings. Nearby Fruska Gora is known for its wines. The city had a population of 180,000 in 2000. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **PODGORICA** is the capital of Montenegro and the republic's largest city. In 1946, the city's name was changed to Titograd in honor of the late Communist leader of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito. In March 1992, city residents voted to change the city's name back to Podgorica. Podgorica was founded in 1326 and has been occupied at various periods in history by Turks, Austrians, Italians, and Germans. The city was almost completely destroyed during World War II, but has been rebuilt into a modern city with parks, museums, and theaters. Podgorica had an estimated population of 118,000 in 2000.

PRIŠTINA is a market center located 150 miles southeast of Belgrade. Capital of the Kosovo autonomous region in Serbia, it also has local textile, pharmaceutical, and food processing industries, and nearby mining. Priština served as capital of Serbia until the Turk conquest of 1389. Extensive building after World War II has altered the city's oriental look. The Museum of Kosovo-Metohija contains an archaeology collection and ethnography division. Priština's Albanian population is served by its own college (Priština Fakultet), and some Albanian-language newspapers and radio shows. A main tourist attraction is the Gračanica Monastery, southeast of the city proper. This structure was built by King Milutin in 1321 and is today regarded as an excellent example of Serbian architecture. A highlight of a visit to the monastery is the array of superb frescoes. In 2002, Priština had a population of approximately 194,000.

The city of **SUBOTICA**, located less than 10 miles south of the Hungarian border, is the major city along the Serbian frontier. Situated nearly 100 miles north of Belgrade, Subotica seems as much Hungarian as Serbian. Many of its citizens are of Hungarian descent. The city is the market center for the Bačka, an important agricultural district specializing in paprika. Its position on the Belgrade-Budapest railroad accounts for much of its strong

industrial base of fertilizer production, furniture manufacturing, and power generation. There are a number of educational institutions here, including advanced vocational schools. The area's history dates to at least 1381. Subotica became a part of the former Yugoslavia in 1918 and was occupied by the Hungarians in World War II. The city had a population of 100,000 in 2000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Serbia and Montenegro have a combined area of 51,955 square miles (134,563 square kilometers), which is slightly larger than Alaska. The two combined republics are bordered by Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina on the west, Hungary on the north, Romania and Bulgaria on the east, and Greece, Albania, and Macedonia on the south.

Serbia consists of rather mountainous terrain, particularly in northern regions of the republic. The northern autonomous province of Vojvodina, however, consists of rich fertile plains and is Serbia's major agricultural region. Southeastern Serbia is composed of mountains and hills. Limestone ranges and basins characterize the terrain of eastern Serbia. Serbia's northern region is watered by several rivers, including the Danube, Tisa, Sava, Drava, and Morava Rivers. The climate of Serbia is characterized by hot, humid summers and cold winters.

The topography of Montenegro is mountainous and extremely rugged. Some fertile valleys and coastal lowlands exist in southern Montenegro. Montenegro is the home of Lake Scutari, the largest lake in the former Yugoslavia. Montenegro's coastal region has an Adriatic climate with hot, dry summers and autumns. Further inland, Montenegro has relatively cold winters with heavy snowfall.

Population

The combined population of Serbia and Montenegro was estimated at 10,677,000 in 2001. Ethnic Serbs and ethnic Montenegrins are the dominant groups in their respective republics. Serbs make up 63 percent of Serbia's population. Fourteen percent of the people are of Albanian origin. Most Albanians are concentrated in Serbia's Kosovo region. Hungarians comprise four percent of Serbia's population and are centered in the northern region of Vojvodina. Serbo-Croatian and Albanian are the most common languages used in Serbia. Serbian Orthodox is the predominant religion, although Roman Catholics and several Protestant denominations are represented. Muslims are one of Serbia's largest minorities and are concentrated in southern Serbia.

In Montenegro, 62 percent of the population is Montenegrin. Muslim Slavs and ethnic Albanians make up roughly 25 percent of Montenegro's population. Most Montenegrins speak Serbo-Croatian, although Albanian is also spoken. Serbian Orthodox is Montenegro's dominant religion. However, Muslims and Roman Catholics are well-represented.

In 1997, Serbians had a life expectancy at birth of 69 years for males and 75 years for females. Montenegrins had a life expectancy at birth of 71 years for males and 79 years for females.

Government

The Constitution of Serbia and Montenegro, adopted on April 27, 1992, calls for the creation of a bicameral Federal Assembly or Parliament (Savezna Skupština). The Chamber of Citizens (Vece Gradana) has 138 members, 60 members elected for a four year term in single seat-constituencies and 78 members by proportional representation. In the Chamber of Citizens 108 members are elected from Serbs and 30 members elected from Montenegro. The Council of

the Republics (Vece Republika) has 40 popularly elected members, 20 from Serbia and 10 from Montenegro. Members of the Federal Assembly are responsible for electing a federal president. The federal president then chooses a prime minister who cannot be from the same republic as himself. The Federal Assembly must approve the president's choice for prime minister.

In March 2002, Serbia and Montenegro signed the agreement that established the loose federation between the two autonomous entities. The presidency, defense and foreign affairs will remain as a federal concern, however, each region will retain separate currencies and customs.

There are over 20 different political parties in Serbia and Montenegro, but the top two are Demokratska Stranka Srbije (The Democratic Party of Serbia - moderate nationalist) and Socialistička Partija Srbije (The Serb Socialist Party - authoritarian).

The flag of Serbia and Montenegro consists of three horizontal bands of blue, white, and red.

Commerce and Industry

On May 27, 1992, the European Community (EC) imposed a trade embargo on Serbia and Montenegro as punishment for the country's role in the ethnic conflicts in neighboring Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. All imports and exports were halted between EC member nations and Serbia and Montenegro. This embargo was particularly painful because over one-half of Serbia and Montenegro's commerce was with EC members. The United Nations launched its own trade embargo on May 30, 1992. The UN ban included the freezing of all of Serbia and Montenegro's foreign assets, an international embargo on all exports to Serbia and Montenegro except for food and medical supplies, a ban on imported goods made in Serbia and Montenegro, and a

suspension of all foreign investment and commercial contact with Serbia and Montenegro. On November 16, the United Nations authorized a naval blockade of Serbia and Montenegro in an effort to prevent any violations of the trade embargo imposed on May 30. When peace returned to the region, the sanctions were lifted in 1995.

The economic sanctions by the European Community and the United Nations had a devastating effect on the economy of Serbia and Montenegro. The lack of imported raw materials and the loss of markets for exported goods forced many industries to shut down, causing massive unemployment for hundreds of thousands of workers. Medical supplies are also in short supply despite the embargo's exemption of these items. Hyperinflation caused the prices of most goods and services to soar in 1994, and formal economic activity came to a virtual halt.

Serbia's economy is heavily dependent on both agricultural and industrial production. The fertile plains of Vojvodina produce 80 percent of the cereal production of the former Yugoslavia and most of the cotton, oilseeds, and chicory. Vojvodina also produces fodder crops to support intensive beef and dairy production. Serbia proper, although hilly, has a long growing season and produces fruit, grapes, and cereals. Kosovo province produces fruits, vegetables, tobacco, and a small amount of cereals. The mountainous pastures of Kosovo support goat and sheep husbandry.

Serbia has a well-developed industrial base, with most heavy industry concentrated in and around Belgrade. Serbian industries produce wood products, steel, textiles, and cement. Serbia is rich in copper, chrome, antimony, coal, lead, and silver. However, Serbia's mining industry is underdeveloped. Montenegro is a very poor, underdeveloped republic. Most of the economy is dependent upon the raising of goats, pigs, and sheep. Montenegro has only a small agriculture sector,

mostly near the coast, where olives, citrus fruits, grapes, and rice are grown. Montenegro had a burgeoning tourism industry, but it was halted due to the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Transportation

Serbia and Montenegro have a total roadway network of 28,583 miles (46,019 kilometers). Of this total, 16,739 miles (26,949 kilometers) are paved. Highways connect Belgrade with Ljubljana (Slovenia), Zagreb (Croatia), Skopje (Macedonia), and the Serbian city of Niš, and Serbia's southern neighbor, Greece.

Belgrade's international airport is located 11 miles (19 kilometers) west of the city. Serbia and Montenegro's official airline, JAT, has been prohibited from landing in the United States and many international cities due to the United Nations sanctions.

Serbia and Montenegro has railway links with many cities in Europe and the former Yugoslav republics. Rail lines connect Belgrade with the cities of Vienna, Munich, London, Athens, Paris, Thessaloniki, and Zürich. Zagreb (Croatia), Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Skopje (Macedonia), and Ljubljana (Slovenia) have rail transportation links with Belgrade. One rail line offers a scenic trip through Montenegro. Most train transportation from Serbia and Montenegro has been suspended due to hostilities in the region.

Communications

Serbia and Montenegro has an adequate telecommunications system. Long-distance and international calls can be placed at hotels, railway stations, post offices, and airports.

Only one English-language newspaper, *Newsday*, is published in Belgrade. All other newspapers and periodicals are published in Serbo-Croatian or Albanian.



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Street in Belgrade, Serbia

Several radio and television broadcasting services are located in Serbia. Radiotelevizija Beograd serves Belgrade and the surrounding area. Programs are broadcast in Serbo-Croatian. The northern province of Vojvodina is served by Radiotelevizija Novi Sad, which broadcasts programming in Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Romanian, Hungarian, and Ruthenian. The city of Priština, located in Kosovo province, is the home of Radiotelevizija Priština. Radiotelevizija Priština broadcasts in Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Romany, and Turkish. Montenegro has its own radio and television broadcasting network, Radiotelevizija Crne Gore. All programming on

Radiotelevizija Crne Gore is broadcast in Serbo-Croatian.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The Department of State warns U.S. citizens against travel to the Serbia and Kosovo regions of Serbia-Montenegro. Since the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade suspended operations as of March 23, 1999, U.S. citizens who plan on travelling to Serbia-Montenegro despite this Travel Warning are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Budapest, Hun-

gary, which is located at Szabadsag Ter 12, Budapest 1054; telephone [36] (1) 475-4400. U.S. citizens who plan on travelling to Kosovo should register at the U.S. office in Pristina by telephone (873-762-029-525). However, the U.S. office in Pristina cannot provide general consular services such as passport and visa issuance. Visas are not required for entry into Kosovo.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 & 2 New Year's Day
 Jan. 7 Christmas
 (Orthodox)
 March 28 State Day
 (Observed in
 Serbia only)

Apr/May Easter*
 Apr/May Easter Monday*
 Apr. 27 Constitution
 Day
 May 1 & 2 May Day
 July 7 Serbian
 Uprising Day
 (Serbia only)

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Boehm, Christopher. *Blood
 Revenge: The Enactment & Man-*

agement of Conflict in Montenegro & Other Tribal Societies. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986.

Browning, C.R. *Fateful Months.* rev. ed. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1991.

Dragnich, Alex N., and Slavko Todorovich. *The Saga of Kosovo: Focus on Serbian-Albanian Relationships.* Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn College Press, 1985.

Laffan, R.G. *The Serbs: Guardians of the Gate.* New York: Dorset Press, 1990.

Treadway, John D. *The Falcon & the Eagle: Montenegro & Austria-Hungary, 1908-1914.* West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1983.

SLOVAKIA

The Slovak Republic

Major Cities:

Bratislava, Košice

Other Cities:

Banská Bystrica, Piešťany

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Slovakia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Slovakia, the former Czechoslovakia's less glamorous partner, emerged disordered and fatigued after the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989.

The Great Moravian Empire, formed in 833, included all of present Central and West Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and parts of neighboring Poland, Hungary, and Germany. In 907, the empire collapsed as a result of the political intrigues, and by 1018 the whole of Slovakia was annexed by Hungary and remained so for the next 900 years. When the Turks overran Hungary in the early 16th century, the Hungarian capital moved from Buda to Bratislava.

The formation of the dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1867 gave Hungary autonomy in domestic matters, and a policy of enforced Magyarization ("Hungarianization") was instituted. Slovak intellectuals cultivated closer cultural ties with the Czechs, who were themselves dominated by the Austrians. The concept of a single Czecho-Slovakian unit was born for political purposes, and, after the Austro-Hungarian defeat in WWI, Slovakia, Ruthenia, Bohemia, and Moravia united as Czechoslovakia. After the 1938 Munich agreement that forced Czechoslovakia to cede territory to Germany, Slovakia declared its autonomy within a federal state.

A second Czechoslovakia was established after the war, but after the communist takeover in February 1948, the administration once again became centralized in Prague.

The fall of communism in Czechoslovakia during 1989 led to a resurgence of Slovak nationalism. In June 1992, the Slovak parliament voted to declare sovereignty and the federation dissolved peacefully on January 1, 1993.

Although it is now holding its own in a rebuilding Eastern block, there is a refreshing absence of Prague-style glitz and glamour. The capital,

Bratislava, is small and cheerful with a surprisingly accomplished cultural life; the High Tatras are as rugged a range as any in Eastern Europe and the peasant traditions of rural Slovakia are still evident in the villages. You will find the Slovaks to be extremely warm, friendly people prepared to go out of their way to help you enjoy their country.

MAJOR CITIES

Bratislava

The capital of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava, lies on both banks of the Danube River at the foothills of the Low Carpathian Mountains. Its southern district borders on the Hungarian Republic and Austria shares its western border. Vienna is 65 kilometers from Bratislava, Budapest 200 kilometers, and Prague 321 kilometers. The city has a population of 451,616 inhabitants.

Archaeological finds support evidence of man's presence on the territory of Bratislava since ancient times. The Celts were present during the 4th and 5th centuries. The Slavs arrived in the area during the 5th and 6th centuries. In A.D. 833 the Great Moravian Empire came into being, and Bratislava is first

mentioned in historical sources in A.D. 907 as the city of "Brezalzus-purc."

During the 10th and 11th centuries, Bratislava gradually became the seat of government for the Hungarian State and was largely under Hungarian influence. Its advantageous position helped Bratislava to become the capital of the Habsburg part of Hungary in 1536. As the capital, Bratislava was the coronation town for the reigning Hungarian kings and queens. St. Martin's cathedral was used as a coronation church until 1830 and during this period of almost 300 years, 11 rulers (including Maria Theresa) and eight royal consorts were crowned there.

The period of the late 18th and first half of the 19th century is known as the Slovak National Revival and saw significant historic events and movements toward a new Slovak identity. Important among them were the first efforts to codify literary Slovak made by the Bratislava Seminary through its leader, Anton Bernolak. Finally, Ludovit Stur, the leading personality of the Slovak national movement, succeeded in codifying the modern Slovak language. The 1830s were marked by the development of manufacturing in Bratislava and the introduction of modern transport. Steamships, also capable of sailing upstream, appeared on the Danube. In 1840, horse-drawn trains ran on rails as far as Trnava and later also to Sered. Ten years later, passengers traveled by train to Pest (now part of Budapest).

On the first of January 1919, Bratislava became a part of the newly-constituted Czecho-Slovakia and was duly proclaimed the capital of Slovakia. It began to use the name of Bratislava instead of Pressburg, its name under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. On March 14, 1939, at the same time that Bohemia and Moravia became a protectorate incorporated into the German Reich, Slovakia declared itself independent, and the Slovak Parliament elected Jozef Tiso, a Catholic priest, as its president. During the

following six years, Slovakia existed as a puppet state of Hitler's Germany. A codex that sharply discriminated against its Jewish population was instituted, and subsequently thousands of Jews were deported to extermination camps. On August 29, 1944, Slovak resistance fighters began an insurrection, the Slovak National Uprising, against the pro-Nazi government in Bratislava and the German troops stationed in Slovakia. The uprising, centered in the town of Banska Bystrica, lasted two months before it was put down at a terrible cost in lives and property. An American mission was sent to aid the uprising most of its members were captured by the Nazis in December 1944. In early 1945, Soviet Forces broke through German defenses, and on April 4th they reached Bratislava. After 1945, but particularly in the 1960s, Bratislava became the center of numerous independence efforts of the Slovak people. These resulted in the signing of the Constitutional Law on the Czecho-Slovak Federation in 1968 at the Bratislava Castle. However, in the wake of the restoration of totalitarian rule that followed the 1968 Soviet-led invasion, Slovakia was left with a government and parliament whose real powers were severely limited. After the 1989 Revolution, discussions with Czech and Slovak officials were instituted to find a mutually acceptable formula that would divide powers between the two states but maintain a common Czechoslovak state.

Finally, on January 1, 1993 Slovakia was declared a free and independent state. After centuries of Hungarian and Soviet repression, Bratislava today is a dynamic city with a youthful population and a rich, picturesque history. There is a general air of modernization taking place. Individuals, however, are impatient for visible improvements in their personal standard of living. Reconstruction and renovation of old buildings in the historical district are a part of daily life here. The city will have to deal with major problems like local, public, and personal transportation, parking lots,

and housing construction. In spite of all these temporary inconveniences, Bratislava is a pleasant place to live in.

Utilities

Slovakia has dependable electricity and water.

The voltage for electricity is 220v. Small appliances using 220v are available locally.

Food

Bratislava has several grocery stores whose stocks vary according to the season, but it is possible to find most things locally. During the spring and summer there are several large markets, and many small vegetable and fruit stands and two markets in the city where it is possible to find locally produced fruits and vegetables. It is common to see Western European products available all over these places, even in the small grocery stores. Bread and sweets abound in the small shops and are very good. Cosmetics are available on the local market.

Additionally, fresh foods can be purchased in Hainburg, Austria across the border all year round at high prices.

Clothing

Apparel worn in Bratislava is much like that in the Northeastern United States. Most Slovaks dress conservatively. The younger people dress in a more avant-garde style. "Informal" is the most widely used term for social functions and generally means a suit for men and a cocktail dress or suit for women. Wardrobes should include warm winter clothing: a warm coat, scarves, hats, gloves, and low-heeled warm boots. Shops are opening in Bratislava regularly and provide a reasonable selection of Western European clothing and locally manufactured clothing.

Supplies and Services

European manufactured toiletries are available in Bratislava in ample supply at Baumax (hardware store), Tesco (department store), and other

shops such as Billa, Dominos, and smaller shops all over Slovakia. American brand-names are more unusual, and cosmetics, while available, are limited in variety. It is recommended to include often used cosmetics, feminine and personal supplies, and medicines, in your household goods. Cigarettes and name-brand liquors are available in the duty free stores and in local shops at reasonable prices. Good quality household cleaning supplies are available in Tesco, and cleaning supplies stores (drogerias) as well as in many smaller shops.

Bring U.S. postage stamps.

Parents with babies should bring everything required if they prefer certain American manufactured items. There is a large IKEA in Bratislava which stocks good quality children's furniture and baby furniture. The baby store "Super G Market" also has a good selection of furniture and clothes for babies. European manufactured baby foods are in ready supply and good quality. Dinos and Maxa are food warehouses, where you can purchase in bulk, dairy products, toiletries, beverages, canned and frozen food.

Paper napkins, paper plates, plastic cups can be purchased locally.

Beautiful glassware and crystal is available locally.

Generally, basic supplies and services are inexpensive when compared to the United States. Service can be slow and sometimes spare parts and materials are difficult to find.

Local beauty shops located in the large hotels. Haircuts, perms, treatments, etc. are generally less expensive than in the U.S. Good quality European hair products are used, but methods and techniques used by hairdressers may differ somewhat from those in the West. Facials, manicures, pedicures, and massages are plentiful, good quality, and at low prices.

Good quality fabrics for clothing are manufactured in Slovakia and are available at very reasonable prices. Men's suits can be tailor-made at very good prices. Shoes can be hand-made locally. Shoe repair is available and at low cost, although quality varies.

Currently there are three dry-cleaning stores in town.

Domestic Help

Help for cleaning, cooking, shopping, childcare, gardening, household repairs, driving, etc., is widely available. Payment and fees are negotiable, and are very reasonable compared to prices in the West.

The employer must be willing to train the employee so that the work can meet his or her standards. English-speaking help is hard to find. Most Slovaks are not familiar with Western appliances, or cleaning products, so care should be taken to train employees in their use. If possible, try to retain the domestics of your predecessor, as they will be used to dealing with Americans, and training will be easier.

Household help costs between 60 and 80 SK per hour in Bratislava, less in surrounding towns. Slovak insurance for social security and taxes costs about 38% of the earned salary. Some employers agree to pay the salary plus the monthly insurance costs.

There are two agencies in Bratislava that find and train domestic help, but the prices are usually higher than hiring an employee directly. Other good resources for finding domestic help are the International Women's Club of Bratislava or the expat community.

Religious Activities

Slovakia's population is largely Roman Catholic and there are many Catholic services conducted in Slovak in Bratislava. The next largest denomination is Lutheran. Several other Protestant denominations as well as Jewish and Eastern Orthodox congregations are also present.

There are several international churches conducting services in English, including Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Apostolic, and the Church of the Brethren.

Education

The International School of Bratislava, a US-accredited private institution which opened in September 1994, offers English-language instruction for students from five years through 15 years of age, as well as a professionally developed and staffed preschool for children ages three and four. The school operates under the control of Quality Schools International, a private nonprofit organization, operating schools in 13 Newly Independent States. Children who reach the age of five before October 31 of the enrollment year are eligible for kindergarten. The school has 125 students enrolled for 1998 - 99.

The school term is from early September to mid-June. The curriculum includes English, mathematics, cultural studies, science, art, music, drama, foreign languages, and physical education. Special activities include dance, gymnastics, and swimming. The school is located within a large children's center called the Juventa. The area used by the school includes seven classrooms, a library, and a cafeteria. The sport facilities include soccer and baseball playing fields, a swimming pool, an outdoor basketball court, and a playground area.

The British International School is a non-U.S. accredited private school, which was opened on September 1997. The school offers English-language instruction for students from six years through 15 years of age, and has a kindergarten from three-five years old. Currently the school has 80 students from different nationalities.

The British International School term is from early September to mid-June. The curriculum includes mathematics, art, music, cultural studies, gymnastics, and swimming. The school is located in Karlovy Vez. This school has a computer labora-

tory, a cafeteria, and includes five classrooms.

Some American parents have placed their children in Slovak schools. Slovak kindergartens and elementary schools are accommodating to American children wishing to attend; almost every district in Bratislava has a kindergarten and an elementary school. They offer a sound academic curriculum, most have music and sports programs, and English is being taught starting in the first grade in many schools. The experience of attending a local school can be rewarding if children are prepared to endure the time necessary and the extra work involved in learning the Slovak language.

Special Educational Opportunities

City University of Washington State, USA, opened a campus in Trencin, Slovakia three years ago. Instruction is in English and an undergraduate program leading specifically to a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration as well as a graduate-study program leading to a Master's

Degree in business administration (MBA) is offered. Comenius University has a program for teaching foreigners the Slovak language. Private language tutoring is widely accessible. The University of Maryland European Division offers a variety of courses in Vienna. Their offerings include many weekend seminars of historical and cultural interest.

Sports

There are many hiking paths around Bratislava, which are heavily used by people out for a stroll, hikers, and runners. Cycling is popular here, and there are some bike paths where children can ride safely. Outdoor tennis courts have become more abundant here, and several Americans have purchased weekly time on a court for the May-October season at a very reasonable price. Indoor courts are more difficult to find, but a few exist and are available during the winter. A nine-



Aerial view of Bratislava, Slovakia

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hole golf course opened near Bratislava in October 1995, with future plans to construct a complete 18-hole golf course.

There are several indoor pools offering swimming all year round. Some have used the fitness rooms of two hotels in town. There are fitness centers and gymnasiums available at various locations around the city. There is a Hash House Harriers running group, which has a marathon twice a year. Aerobic lessons are becoming popular. Classes are given in Slovak and occasionally in English.

Both cross-country and downhill skiing is possible all over Slovakia and in locations close to Bratislava. The Carpathian Mountains provide the full range of possibilities with high, steep runs in the Tatras and Fatras, and gentle sloping runs in the low Carpathians. The most popular spectator sports are soccer and ice hockey.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Slovakia is a beautiful country to visit, although knowledge of the language greatly facilitates getting around, as many Slovaks do not speak English. There are many lakes for boating (motor boats are

forbidden) and swimming, mountain streams and large rivers to hike along, and numerous fascinating caves to explore. Slovakia has more castles per capita than any other country in Europe. Other historical monuments also abound. Entire towns are constructed of traditional wooden houses, and cathedrals are filled with treasures from the past.

Entertainment

The Slovak National Theater presents a full range of high quality opera and ballet performances annually. The Slovak Symphony offers an annual subscription or you can buy tickets on an individual basis. Their performances are excellent. The summer months in Bratislava are alive with the concerts of the well-known series, "Cultural Summer," being performed all around the city. There are several movie theaters in Bratislava, and most popular American films are in English.

Social Activities

Many opportunities exist in Bratislava to make contact with the expatriate community. Embassy personnel, business representatives and journalists often entertain each other at informal dinners, receptions, and theater performances.

The Bratislava American Chamber of Commerce also provides a venue for economic and commercial personnel to pursue business contacts.

The International Women's Club offers numerous activities and opportunities for foreign women living in Bratislava to get acquainted with each other and with English-speaking Slovak women. Various interest groups within the club provide opportunities for women to tour cultural facilities, participate in arts and crafts-making, practice foreign language skills, and participate in a variety of sports and other activities.

In general, social relationships with Slovak citizens are not difficult to establish, particularly if one possesses the language skills. The Slovaks are very warm and receptive to someone reaching out to make friends.

Special Information

Americans are popular and generally welcomed by all segments of society in Bratislava. There is a low incidence of violent crime; however, reasonable precautions should be taken. Incidents of pickpockets are increasingly frequent in the downtown and other tourist areas.

Košice

Košice is located in the East Slovak Region on the Hornád River, near the borders of Hungary and the Ukraine. A major market for the surrounding agricultural area and a transportation center, Košice has a population of 235,000. Košice is also a principal industrial center whose modern factories produce steel, machinery, petroleum, cement, and ceramics. Other industries include breweries, distilleries, and food-processing plants.

The city was originally a fortress town, was chartered in 1241, and was an important trade center by the Middle Ages. Frequently occupied by Austrian, Hungarian, and Turkish forces, Košice passed from Hungary to Czechoslovakia via the

Treaty of Trianon in 1920. Landmarks in Košice include the 14th-century Franciscan monastery and church, the Gothic Cathedral of St. Elizabeth (built in the 14th and 15th centuries). It is the most outstanding historical building in all of Slovakia. Other buildings of prominence are the 18th-century town hall, an Ursuline convent, the Forgács Palace, and a Gothic Dominican church and monastery.

The city's several museums house collections of technology, historical and prehistorical artifacts, feudalism, coins, and records of the Communist movement in East Slovakia. The State Philharmonic Orchestra makes Košice its home, and here also are located the Municipal Theater and the Hungarian Theater.

Other city attractions are the botanical gardens and a large sports arena. Skiing is popular at nearby Jahodná. Krasna Horka, 40 miles from Košice, has an interesting medieval castle which was later rebuilt in Renaissance style and is a museum today. In Jasov, 22 miles away, there is a medieval monastery and nearby stalactite caverns. Presov is known for its fortification ruins.

OTHER CITIES

BANSKÁ BYSTRICA, site of the Slovak National Uprising in August 1944, is a city of 78,300 residents in the Central Slovak Region. This historical town lies on the Hron River, about 100 miles northeast of Bratislava, and is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Slovakia. It prospered in the Middle Ages from the mining of silver and copper. The oldest of Banská Bystrica's many remaining medieval buildings is a Romanesque church which dates to the 13th century. A castle, surrounded by fortifications, dominates the main square. Other Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance buildings, most of which are in the square, are now preserved as museums and galleries. During World War II, many of Banská

Bystrica's men and women lost their lives in brutal battles with occupying forces, and tributes to their resistance are seen throughout the city in monuments and memorial plaques.

PIEŠŤANY, situated in the picturesque valley of the River Váh, 45 miles north of Bratislava, is Europe's foremost center for the treatment of inflammatory joint diseases. The first mention of its thermal springs dates from early in the 12th century, and for hundreds of years it has enjoyed a reputation for arthritic treatment and orthopedic rehabilitation. Modern medical treatments have further enhanced its renown. So popular is this spa that there is an express bus service to Piešťany from Vienna. The city, with a population of 31,000, offers a busy cultural life and a wide variety of opportunities for recreation. There are concerts, theatrical events, and art exhibitions, and a music festival sponsored annually in June and July. An international motorcycle race is also held in Piešťany.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Slovakia, located in the very heart of Europe, has an area of 29,418 square miles (49,030 square kilometers), slightly smaller than the State of West Virginia. To the west, Slovakia borders with the Czech Republic, to the southwest with Austria, to the southeast with Hungary, to the north with Poland, and to the east with the Ukraine. The terrain includes the high Carpathian Mountains (The Tatras) in the north, the low Carpathian mountains in the center, the foothills to the west, and the Danube River Basin in the south. Slovakia is mostly mountainous; approximately 80% of the territory is 750 meters or more above sea level. The highest

point is Gerlach Peak, 2,655 meters above sea level.

Slovakia is a land of beautiful, wide valleys, which were created by the Vah, Nitra, and Hron Rivers. Most of the land is drained by the Danube, the largest river in Slovakia, which empties into the Black Sea, and its tributaries (Morava, Vah, Hron and others). A smaller part of Slovakia is drained by the Dunajec River, a tributary of the Visla, which empties into the Baltic Sea. The longest river in Slovakia is the Vah, which is 234 miles (390 kilometers).

In the eastern part of the country lie the woodlands of the Carpathian Mountains. Further south along the Danube River lies another important woodland section called the Podunajska Plain, the bread basket of Slovakia. In the woodland regions, oak, birch and spruce grow abundantly up to the tree line. Mountain pine and alpine vegetation grow above the tree line. Because the country lies on the crossroads of several different plant systems, unique flora abound. The entire territory of Slovakia is rich in fauna and most animal species live in the mountainous woodland regions.

The climate in Slovakia is a mixture of continental and ocean climates and has four distinct seasons. The mountain regions affect the weather much more than the geographical location of the country.

The warmest and driest regions are the southern Slovak plains and the Eastern Slovak lowlands where the average temperature is 10°C and average annual precipitation is approximately 500 mm. In the High Tatras, the average temperature is 3°C and annual precipitation is 2,000 mm. The coldest month is January; the warmest is July. During winter the temperatures in the mountain valleys are substantially lower than on the mountain peaks, and temperature inversions are quite common. Bratislava has a warm and moderately dry lowland climate with average temperatures

ranging from -1 degree C to -4 degrees C in January and from 19.5 degrees C to 20.5 degrees C in July. Annual rainfall varies from 530 to 650 mm. Bratislava ranks among the warmest places in Slovakia, and strong winds help to remove excessive air pollution and improve the air quality.

Population

Slovakia has a population of 5,390,657. The ethnic breakdown of the population is 85.6% Slovaks, 10.8% Hungarian, 1.5% Romanies (or Gypsies), 1% Czechs, and the remaining 1.6% is made up of Ruthenians, Ukrainians, and Germans. The average density is 106 inhabitants per square kilometer. The official language is Slovak. The majority of the population is Roman Catholic. Lutheranism is the second most practiced religion, and a significant part of the population of Eastern Slovakia is Greek-Catholic and Orthodox. Other smaller religious groups such as the Jewish community are active in Slovakia.

Public Institutions

On January 1, 1993, the Slovak Republic, formerly part of Czechoslovakia, became an independent and democratic state. The partition of the former federation was accomplished democratically and peacefully. On September 1, 1992 the Slovak Parliament passed the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, creating the necessary framework for the democratic development of society. Its political system is based on the three fundamental branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial. Slovakia's unicameral Parliament, the National Council of the Slovak Republic, has 150 deputies.

The official head of state is the President who is elected by popular vote through a secret ballot for a five-year term. The President appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and the other members of the government. The National Council of the Slovak Republic is

the only constitutional legislative body. Its deputies are elected by secret ballot for a four-year term. The main political parties are as follows:

HZDS - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
 SDK - Slovak Democratic Coalition
 SDL - Party of the Democratic Left
 KDH - Christian Democratic Movement
 DU - Democratic Union
 SNS - Slovak National Party
 EWS - Coexistence-Hungarian (Spoluzitie) National Movement
 SMK - Party of the Hungarian Coalition

Slovak citizens have the right to vote at the age of 18 years.

The judicial branch is comprised of courts on three levels: the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic, regional courts and district courts, with a Constitutional Court to decide constitutional issues. There is also a system of military courts. Judges of the Supreme Court, district, and regional courts are elected by the National Council, while the President appoints those of the Constitutional Court. A new government coalition formed after the September 1998 parliamentary elections has declared its top priorities to be righting the economy, fighting crime and corruption, and Slovak integration into the EU and NATO.

Arts, Science, and Education

Slovakia boasts a variety of cultural, artistic, and craft traditions. A stay here would not be complete without seeing the variety of brightly colored ceramics produced by local tradesmen and artists. Beautifully hand-embroidered tablecloths and linens abound, as well as wooden toys, hand-made dolls, painted wooden eggs, and a variety of other enchanting folklore objects.

Opera has a long tradition in Bratislava, and the Renaissance-style

Slovak National Theater maintains a lively schedule of performances annually from September through June. Just opposite the theater, in the neo-Renaissance and neo-Baroque building called the Reduta, the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra performs an annual series of concerts, also from September through June. Tickets to both the opera and the symphony are readily available at reasonable prices. The summer months are filled with the music of outdoor concerts, drama performances, and puppet shows, most of which are free, during the annual July-August Cultural Summer concert series. A number of movie theaters in Bratislava show English language films.

There are many historical monuments of various architectural styles in the Slovak Republic. Slovakia lists 16 historical towns and 158 historical monuments. Listed historical towns are: Bratislava, Svätý Jur, Nitra, Trenčín, Trnava, Banská Bystrica, Banská Stiavnica, Kremnica, Žilina, Bardejov, Kežmarok, Košice, Levoča, Spišská Sobota, Spišské Podhradie, and Prešov.

In the last half of the nineteenth century an interest in preserving the Slovak national identity began to emerge. A cultural institution, the Slovak National Foundation (Matica Slovenska) was established in 1863. Later, in 1893, the Slovak Museum Society was also founded in Martin, and in spite of the extremely difficult conditions imposed by the Austro-Hungarians, museum collections were brought together. Today the Matica Slovenska maintains the Slovak National Literary Museum, the National Cemetery, and the A. S. Pushkin Literary Museum in the city of Martin. There are also a variety of open-air museums where traditional Slovak life has been preserved and in the town of Cicmany, a tranquil mountain village, residents continue to live in beautifully kept, typical, dark wooden houses decoratively painted in white folklore designs.

Presently there are 15 institutions of higher education in the Slovak Republic. The oldest university is Academia Istropolitana which was founded in Bratislava in 1467. The Mining and Forestry Academy of Banská Stiavnica is the oldest institution of its kind in Central Europe. Comenius University, located in Bratislava, has an independent unit called the Institute for Language and Academic Preparation, where foreign students are prepared for all Slovak universities in the Slovak language. There are fifty university faculties in Slovakia and university-level education is open to anyone who can pass an admissions test. Education in Slovakia is compulsory for ages 6-16.

Among the new facilities is City University Bratislava which uses Distance Learning teaching methods: books, audio and videotapes, and computer software. Methods used are based on similar correspondence courses used at The Open University located in the UK. A second, and different, City University, headquartered in Bellevue, Washington, USA, has established a branch campus locally in the city of Trenčín, a picturesque city in the northern part of Slovakia on the River Váh. Instruction is in English with most of the faculty coming from America. American professors conduct courses in several of the universities in Slovakia. American students in Slovakia pursue academic work under the auspices of various foundations and privately funded programs.

Commerce and Industry

After the "commanders" of the command economy lost their power in 1989, Slovakia (then still a part of former Czechoslovakia) set out on a course of serious economic and political reforms. Much like in every other economy in transition, reforms have brought many gains but also a lot of pain. Slovakia successfully privatized most of its small enterprises and is concluding a not-so-transparent privatization of

large enterprises. Retail prices have been going up but are still fairly low compared to the prices in the USA due to the low price of labor. Inflation is the lowest in Central Europe (ca. 6%), currency (Slovak Crown - SK) is fairly stable, unemployment ca. 13%, and the GDP grew ca. 8% in 1998. It is premature to say, however, that after several years of impressive reforms, Slovakia is facing macroeconomic problems and much restructuring remains to be done at the microeconomic level. Private enterprise plays an important role in employment and amounts for ca.70% of the country's income.

Though the economic situation is reasonably favorable, foreign investment has been growing at a slower pace than in other Eastern European countries. This is often attributed to Slovakia's relatively unstable political climate. Slovakia's neighbor, Austria, is the largest investor, followed by Germany and the Czech Republic. The USA comes fourth. Slovakia's principal trading partners are Europeans - both those in CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Agreement) and those in the EU.

Slovakia is dependent on oil and gas imports from Russia and foreign machinery and factory equipment imports. Slovakia also imports some food products, cars, electronics, clothing. Exports consist mainly of semi-finished products, market goods, machinery and equipment. Since iron and steel products play a crucial role in Slovakia's exports, the economy fluctuates with the economies of the countries that import these commodities (mainly within the EU). Slovakia's key advantages both in terms of competitiveness and foreign investment are its well-educated, highly skilled work force and relatively low wage rates. On the other hand, the country suffers a shortage of domestic capital needed for economic revival. Slovakia has its eyes set on joining the OECD and the EU.

Commercial ties with the USA are good. American companies are

becoming increasingly active in setting up joint ventures, holdings, offices and other forms of partnerships and investment in Slovakia. The American Business Center, American-Slovak Enterprise Fund, and American Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia with 120 members in 1998 are also very active in providing assistance to U.S. business and promoting U.S.-Slovak business ties.

Transportation

Automobiles

The public transportation system in Bratislava. In addition, neighboring cities like Vienna, Prague and Budapest, as well as towns and historic sites in Slovakia are within easy driving distance of Bratislava.

The Slovak Republic has strict standards on automobiles. To register, all cars must pass an inspection designed to assure that vehicles meet emission standards, are road worthy and have certain safety features. Two such safety features that are often missing from American-made cars are fog lights and mud flaps for the rear tires.

European specification cars are easier to maintain and register, but American specification cars are allowed in the country. Local dealers, such as Honda, Ford, Volkswagen and BMW, maintain inventories of only European specification spare parts.

High quality fuel, oil and antifreeze are available locally, but prices are more expensive than in the United States.

All car owners must purchase local liability insurance. The rate of this insurance depends upon the size of the engine, with costs ranging from \$100 to \$200 per year for most standard cars. Owners should investigate purchasing collision coverage from an American company that writes policies for automobiles in the Slovak Republic. Rental vehicles are available in Slovakia, although the rates for American

sized vehicles can be quite high, particularly when taking the car outside of the country.

Local

Local mass transportation is excellent, widespread and inexpensive. Most trams and buses run from 6:00 am to 12:00 midnight. A bus or tram ticket is the equivalent of 25 cents per trip and three-month passes cost \$30. Cabs are readily available and the cost per mile is equivalent to less than taxis in the United States.

Regional

The roads throughout Slovakia and its neighboring countries are generally good. Major highways and roads are salted and plowed frequently during snowy and icy weather. There are excellent controlled-access highways leading into central Slovakia and to Budapest and Prague. As with the rest of Europe, driving is on the right-hand side of the road. Most countries in the area have imposed or will impose in the near future a "road tax" that must be paid to drive in the country. For Hungary this tax is paid at border crossings when entering the country. Austria and The Czech Republic require the purchase of highway stickers good for one year, as does Slovakia. The cost for a sticker in Austria is \$65, for the Czech Republic is \$15 and Slovakia is between \$10 and \$20 depending on the size of the engine of the vehicle. Other means of transportation are also excellent. Vienna International airport, with direct flights to many parts of the United States and to most major cities in Europe, is conveniently located 45 minutes by car from Bratislava. The Bratislava airport can also be used for commuter flights to other cities within Slovakia and to Prague and Budapest. Trains to other parts of Slovakia and to neighboring cities and countries are frequent and inexpensive.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The national telephone system is adequate and is being upgraded. International direct dialing is available from residences and at the Post Office. Rates to the U.S. from residences are about \$1.80/min and are considerably more expensive from the Post Office. Many call-back services exist which cost about 60 cents per minute for a call to the U.S. AT&T and MCI services are also available though more expensive. Fax services are available in a few shops in the city. Cellular phone services are available from Eurotel, Inc. and Globtel Inc. Cellular phones are not compatible with European protocol and generally cannot be changed. Internet is offered by local companies and the annual rate is approximately \$194.

Mail

Slovak mail service is currently not completely reliable for parcel mail. Parcels have arrived opened or very overdue and occasionally they have just disappeared.

TV and Radio

Radio in the region provides entertainment and information formats. BBC World News and Blue Danube Radio (Vienna) provide news and entertainment in English on the FM dial. Car radios that have digital tuners must be switchable to European standards (100 kHz increments) to receive all FM stations (U.S. standard is kHz). Local television is limited to three Slovak, two Austrian and two Hungarian stations. Cable TV is available in some parts of the city, but most residents use 3ft satellite dishes and receivers to tune in to European satellite services. These services, cable and satellite, offer a handful of English-language channels-CNN, TNT, Sky News, Eurosport, etc., and several German channels. Enhanced services are available with the use of decoders and service memberships. Basic satellite service hardware purchased locally costs \$200 to \$500.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Local publications are of interest to those with Slovak language skills. The Slovak Spectator, an English-language newspaper, is written and produced in Bratislava by an English-speaking staff. The International Herald Tribune is widely available in large hotels and some bookstores.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The U.S. Embassy Regional Medical Officer recommends that local hospitals not be used by any U.S., except for emergency services in cases in which it is inadvisable to transport the patient to the hospital in Hainburg, (a border town approximately 20 minutes from Bratislava) Austria. Additionally, the RMO recommends that chronic medical conditions be managed by Austrian physicians.

Competent dentists practice in Bratislava, but many Americans do not consider them equal to the best American dentists. Americans are usually satisfied with minor dental work done locally. Local ophthalmologists and opticians are dependable. Glasses may be obtained locally and at U.S. military hospitals in Germany for somewhat lower prices than in the U.S.

Your should plan bringing a supply of prescriptions with you or filling them though mail-order pharmacy services in the U.S.

Community Health

General sanitation in Bratislava is good. The water is fluorinated and safe to drink. Some Americans use water distillers if they live outside of the city limits of Bratislava. Bottled water is widely available for sale. Parents should bring fluoride-fortified vitamins or fluoride tablets for their children, as once the water is distilled or filtered/ boiled, it loses its fluoride content. Streets and sidewalks are relatively well-kept due to daily sweeping. People prac-

tice basic cleanliness. Garbage collection is regular, and sewage disposal is good. Many roadside ditches are currently being dug in Bratislava and in towns and villages around Slovakia, in order to lay sewage lines, bury television and telephone cables, etc. The dirt and ditches are annoying but temporary.

In winter months, the city and rural streets are plowed sporadically during heavy snowfall. Sidewalks are often not cleaned of ice and snow. Main roads in Bratislava are generally in fair condition in winter, and highways in Slovakia are adequate.

Preventive Measures

Immunizations should be current upon arrival. Additionally, a series of three injections preventing tick-borne encephalitis is recommended in this region.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Most choose to fly to Vienna, due to its proximity to Bratislava. Several American carrier service Vienna's Schwechat airport with code sharing arrangements with European airlines. Delta, United and North-western are three airlines that fly into Vienna. There are usually several flights daily from the East Coast of the U.S. using one of the American carriers.

There are no special restrictions on the free passage of individuals and goods among countries in Central Europe, other than those that are generally known - drugs, contraband weapons, etc.

A passport is required. A visa is not required for stays up to thirty days. For stays longer than thirty days a visa must be obtained prior to entry at Slovak embassies or consulates abroad. Visas cannot be obtained at border points upon arrival. Travelers to the Slovak Republic can obtain entry information at the

Embassy of the Slovak Republic at 3523 International Court N.W., Suite 250, Washington, DC 20007, telephone (202) 965-5160/1, Internet <http://www.slovakemb.com>.

Americans living in or visiting Slovakia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia and obtain updated information on travel and security within Slovakia. The U.S. Embassy is located at Hviezdoslavovo nam. 4, telephone (421)(7) 5443 0861, (421)(7) 5443 3338, fax (421)(7) 5441 8861, web site: <http://www.usis.sk>.

Pets

Rabies shots must be current, not less than one month and not more than one year old, for entry of a pet shipped by air to Vienna. A valid International Certificate of Health must be issued by a veterinarian within ten days before your arrival in Vienna. As long as your pet has the above documentation, no quarantine restrictions are required. Veterinarian services are available in Bratislava, and most of the veterinarians speak English.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Slovak Crown (Koruna) is the official currency. One koruna contains 100 halier. Notes of 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, 1000, and 5000 Korun exist. Coins in circulation are of 1, 2, 5, 10 Korun, and 10, 20, and 50 halier.

Dollars can be exchanged at banks and official exchanges all over Bratislava and Slovakia. Credit cards are widely accepted in stores, restaurants, and hotels, in Bratislava. Many automated teller machines accept Most, Plus and Cirrus debit cards.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Slovakia.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	Slovak Republic Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	Labor Day
May 8	End of World War II
July 5	St. Cyril & St. Methodious Day
Aug. 29	Slovak Nation. Uprising Day
Sept. 1.	Slovak Consitution Day
Sept. 15.	The Day of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day

Dec. 24	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	St. Stephen's Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Encyclopedical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. *Slovakia and the Slovaks: A Concise Encyclopedia*. Goldpress Publishers: Bratislava 1994.

Piroda. *Slovakia: Walking Through Centuries of Cities and Towns*.

Stredoslovenske vydavatelstvo Banska Bystrica and Tlaciarne BB: Banska Bystrica 1995.

Kirschbaum, Joseph M. *Slovakia: A Nation at the Crossroads of Central Europe*. Robert Speller and Sons, Publishers Inc.: New York 1960.

Kischbaum, Stanislav J. *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival*. St. Martin's Press: New York 1995.

Oddo, Gilbert L. *Slovakia and Its People*. Robert Speller and Sons, Publishers: New York 1960.

Zendzian, Paul F. and Vadkerty, Madeline *Bon Appetit, Dobru Chut, Bratislava: A Guide to 70 of the Best Restaurants in Bratislava*. Brunswick Legal Publishers: Brunswick, Maine U.S.A. 1995.

SLOVENIA

Republic of Slovenia

Major City:

Ljubljana

Other Cities:

Maribor, Rogaška Slatina

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Slovenia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Slovenia is one of the youngest countries in central Europe. With 2 million inhabitants in a country about the size of Israel, Slovenia is strategically located at the crossroads between western and central Europe from west to east, and between central Europe and the Balkans from north to south.

Although the Slovene people have occupied their lands for over a thousand years, they have always been dominated and ruled by foreigners. Most notably, the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled these lands for centuries and had the greatest impact on the shaping of Slovene culture and character. From 1918 to 1941, Slovenia joined its Slavic cousins Croatia

and Serbia to form the new state, the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, which eventually transformed into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia under the reign of a Serbian monarch. With the onset of World War II, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia collapsed and the Axis Powers of Germany and Italy divided and occupied Slovenia until 1945. After World War II, Marshal Tito and his Communist partisans firmly took control of Yugoslavia until its final disintegration in 1991.

Slovenia's road to democracy and independence was neither easy nor without risk. In September 1989, the General Assembly of the Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia boldly adopted an amendment to its constitution that gave the people of Slovenia the right to secede from Yugoslavia. In April 1990, parliamentary elections were held and a new anticommunist coalition, DEMOS, obtained a majority in Parliament. Milan Kucan was elected as President of the four-member Presidency of Slovenia. Then, on December 23, 1990, more than 88% of the electorate voted for independence. With this public mandate, on June 25, 1991, the Slovenian Parliament adopted a new constitutional charter on sovereignty and declared independence from Yugoslavia. (The Republics of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia fol-

lowed suit.) In response to Slovenia's declaration, the Yugoslav Government ordered its army to secure and seal the Slovene borders. However, after 10 days of hostilities and confrontations, Slovenia successfully defended its territory and the Yugoslav army withdrew.

Once its independence and sovereignty were secure, Slovenia began a diplomatic campaign to gain international recognition. The United States officially recognized Slovenia on April 7, 1992, and Slovenia became a member of the United Nations on May 22, 1992. A year later, Slovenia became a member of the Council of Europe. Currently, a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Slovenia is also aggressively pursuing NATO membership and has concluded an Association Agreement with the European Union in 1997. The EU invited Slovenia to negotiate on full EU membership, which will likely become a reality early in the new century.

A visit to the American Embassy in Ljubljana will not only expose you to the rich cultural history and charm of this Alpine people, but will bring you to the center of a middle-income country rapidly converging with the rest of Europe.

MAJOR CITY

Ljubljana

Slovenia was one of the inner provinces of the Hapsburg Empire until the demise of Austria-Hungary at the end of World War I. A major earthquake destroyed most of the buildings in the city around the turn of the century, so many public and private buildings in the city center are done in the secession style of the late imperial period. Together with the medieval castle on the hill and the Ljubljanica River which meanders through the old town, the Slovenian capital has a distinct Old World flavor.

Ljubljana and its outlying suburbs number nearly 300,000 inhabitants. The city has doubled in size since World War II, yet has benefited from a planning policy that encouraged industrial development in other parts of the Republic.

As the center of a small republic which places a high value on its culture, Ljubljana is home to a more intense cultural life than its size would suggest. In addition to several museums and theaters, the city has its own opera and ballet, two symphony orchestras, a cinema society, and writers club. Yet, because of the beauty of the Slovenian countryside and the proximity of the Adriatic coast and surrounding mountains, inhabitants frequently go out of town on weekends, often taking advantage of their easy access to Italy and Austria. Most Slovenians are deeply attached to the countryside, and skis and walking boots are a common sight on the

Utilities

The electricity supply is 220v, 50 cycles. Appliances rated for 110v or 120v at a maximum charge rate of 10 amperes (about 1,000 watts) may be operated by using a stepdown transformer of 220v to 110v connected to each outlet. Voltage stabilizers are not usually required for sensitive electronic equipment.

Food

The Slovene market provides exceptional quality foods. There are no food shortages. There are several food stores/supermarkets where many imported food items such as Uncle Ben's Rice, Corn Flakes, and peanut butter are available, with new items being added to the shelves periodically. Open markets offer plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The variety of fresh fruits and vegetables may be limited during winter months, but summer months offer greater variety at reasonable prices. Beef, pork, chicken, turkey, and fish are available as are canned, frozen and a wide variety of baby food. Prices are typically higher than in the U.S. Cleaning supplies are plentiful but more expensive than in the U.S.

Slovene beer and wine are very good and not expensive. Slovenia is filled with vineyards of high quality and variety. Vodka, scotch, gin, and other liquors are available but are expensive.

Clothing

Good quality clothing is available, but the prices are high compared to U.S. prices. Limited items can be purchased at the military exchange stores in Italy. Prices and products on the Italian and Austrian economy are also higher than in the U.S.

In general, a wardrobe suitable for Northeastern U.S. weather should be satisfactory. Boots, heavy winter coats, raincoats, and umbrellas are a must throughout fall and winter months. Light summer clothing is needed for July and August, with light sweaters, suits, light raincoats required for spring and early summer.

Supplies and Services

Basic toiletries, cosmetics, tobacco products, medicines, and household supplies are available either from local stores, duty-free shops, or through mail order. Local stores sell mainly European brands.

Ljubljana has good, reasonably priced tailors and dressmakers. Local drycleaning and shoe repair

services are also available. There are several excellent beauty and barbershops which provide service at prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Repair facilities for many makes of newer automobiles, audio and video equipment, and household appliances are available.

Domestic Help

Part-time domestic help can be hired at an hourly rate of approximately \$5.00. Transportation is also paid by the employer. It is not easy to find qualified people for these jobs since Slovenes consider domestic work to be part of the family responsibility. Most domestic helpers tend to be refugees or immigrants from other countries. There is no requirement to pay Social Security Tax for part time domestic employees.

Religious Activities

Ljubljana's churches are all Roman Catholic, except for one Eastern Orthodox church and one Protestant church. Catholic services in English or French are held Sundays at 11 am at the Franciscan Church in Ljubljana. The rabbi from Zagreb holds occasional services for the tiny Jewish community in Ljubljana since there are no functioning synagogues in the country now.

Education

Ljubljana has a private school founded by Quality Schools International (QSI) and a Slovene International School sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Instruction in both schools is in English. QSI opened a school in Ljubljana providing an American curriculum for children ages 4 to 13 in September 1995. Students who attend the QSI will easily reenter the U.S. school system. There are plans to establish a half-day program for 3-year old children in the near future. School bus transportation is not offered by any of the schools. Correspondence courses for high school classes are available at QSI through the University of Nebraska. The Slovene International School curriculum leads to a baccalaureate degree.



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View of Ljubljana, Slovenia

They have 70 students in their Danila Kumar elementary school, and 50 in their Gimnazija Bežigrad (high school). Their nursery program accepts only 15 children aged 3 and above. The French school in Ljubljana accepts students aged 3-16. With the exception of preschoolers, students are expected to speak French fluently to enter their program. Slovenian Childcare Centers accept foreign children for their full-day preschools, however, instructions are entirely in Slovene.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Ljubljana accepts enrollment of foreign students. Before being admitted into a special field of study, students must take an intensive year-long Slovene language course. Private instruction in art, music and Slovene language can be arranged.

None of the schools that offer instruction in English can accommodate students with special education needs. Physical access to schools is also difficult for students with disabilities. Building codes do not reflect U.S. standards.

Sports

Slovenians are very active in all forms of sports. There are several well-equipped sports centers, many

health spas, tennis courts, swimming pools and bowling alleys throughout the country. Membership dues to these facilities are reasonable. Spectator sports like ice hockey, basketball and soccer are also available. Sporting equipment can be purchased locally or through the exchange stores in Italy.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Ljubljana is a skier's paradise with almost four dozen ski resorts nearby. Mountain and hill climbing are popularly supported through associations. The seaside is only a 2-hour drive from Ljubljana. Swimming is also popular in the Bled and Bohinj lakes and Krka and Kolpa rivers. Hiking and climbing are excellent both summer and winter. Boating and windsurfing, kayaking, canoeing, and rafting are among the most popular sports. Lake and river fishing and hunting are excellent, but licenses are very expensive compared to U.S. prices. Cycling is a favorite sport among all ages. A 27-hole course at Bled, an 18-hole course at Mokrice, a 9-hole course in Lipica, and a new layout in Rogaska Slatina offer their services to golfers.

Entertainment

Ljubljana enjoys a very rich cultural life. It is blessed with a graceful

Opera House which was opened in 1892 as the Provincial Theater, as well as with several concert halls and theaters throughout the city. Nearly 800 cultural events a year take place at Cankarjev Dom, the national theater center composed of excellent acoustics. Although performances by Slovenians are most prominent, there are guest performances by philharmonic orchestras from various European capitals and from the U.S. There are several movie theaters where the majority of films are shown with their original sound track and Slovene subtitles. Ljubljana also houses excellent music clubs for jazz, rock, and pop music. Discos, bars, and pubs add to the entertainment scene of Ljubljana. Several Slovenian TV channels show American movies and TV shows in English.

The International Summer Festival of music, theater and dance, held principally at the open-air theater of the Krizanke, runs from mid-July through August.

As a university town, there is a lively student community, and a multitude of bars and discos that cater to young people. Nightlife is very active during the university terms, and young people can be found gathering until the wee hours on most weekends.

Ljubljana has many museums, including a National Gallery of Art. There are numerous smaller art galleries throughout the city, displaying the works of Slovene artists, along with guest artists from various countries.

In the countryside, restaurants were traditionally part of an inn, called a gostilna. Families would gather at these charming gostilnas for long meals, generally heavier than Americans are accustomed to (schnitzel, sausage, and potatoes). Now there are restaurants scattered throughout the city, including Italian, Chinese, and Mexican. There are many pizza parlors and several McDonald's restaurants. Ljubljana boasts the world's largest

Dairy Queen, right in the center of town.

Social Activities

Social life among Americans is informal. Since distances are so short to various attractive spots within and outside of Slovenia, most people take advantage of the weekend to travel. Slovenians are friendly and informal in their social dealings. Entertainment at home is not very common within the Slovenian community, hence most entertainment hosted by the Slovenians takes place in restaurants.

There is a Slovenian International Ladies Association, SILA, which was established in 1993 for the purpose of encouraging social, cultural and educational exchange. Membership is open to all Slovene and foreign women for a small fee. SILA organizes regular meetings, trips, lectures, cultural events, sports activities, language classes, cooking lessons, an annual ball during February and the annual charity bazaar during November.

OTHER CITIES

Set between the Pohorje and Slovenske Gorice Mountains in the far northwest, **MARIBOR** (in German, Marburg) is one of Slovenia's foremost resort areas. The principal political hub of northern Slovenia, Maribor is also a major industrial center. Heavy industry provides the economic mainstay for the region, especially engineering and aluminum industries, and motor vehicle assembly. In addition, this is the heart of a productive agricultural district that cultivates apples and grapes. History here can be traced to a Roman settlement, while the town itself began in the mid-12th century. It was known as a base of German culture, as well as a Christian bulwark. Completion of the Vienna-Trieste railway in the 1840s was a tremendous stimulus for growth. The area was stifled by Germanization during World War II; Yugoslav partisans liberated Maribor in 1945. Notable for tourists are

the 12th-century cathedral, St. Madeline Church, and a monument recalling the plague of 1680. Maribor has a recently opened university. The city's population is about 108,000. Nearby is the historical village of Ptuj. Mariborsko Pohorje is a popular ski resort.

ROGAŠKA SLATINA is best known as Slovenia's oldest and largest spa town, offering plenty to do and see for the history buff as well as the health seeker. Rogaška Slatina has been inhabited since Roman times. The first written mention of the spring, on which the spa was built, is in a manuscript dated 1141. Legend says that the magnesium-rich Slatina spring was discovered by the winged horse Pegasus, who was sent by Apollo to drink there. The spring became famous at around 1665 when a feudal lord, the Croat Peter Zrinjski, was said to have received miraculous healing from the waters. By the turn of the 18th century, 20,000 bottles of Slatina spring water were being sold in Vienna.

Today, the Rogaška Health Resort is considered to be one of the top centers of its kind in the world. Visitors can enjoy a number of traditional and holistic healing treatments, preventative or curative, that cover conditions in all fields of medicine, including gastroenterology, cardiology, dermatology, gynecology, physiotherapy, kinesiotherapy, psychotherapy, balneotherapy, aromatherapy, arterial surgery, cosmetic surgery and more.

Within the resort, sports and leisure opportunities include: fitness trails, sports fields, tennis and squash courts, hiking, biking, thermal mineral pools, saunas, solariums, fitness studios, ski slopes, theater performances, daily concerts and dances, and a casino.

For those not seeking major treatments, at the Pivnica, a circular glass building attached to the Hotel Donat, you can "hire" a glass to drink from one of 11 fountains containing hot and cold mineral waters.

The Hotel Donat also offers an indoor mineral pool.

The non-spa visitor will find just as much to do and see in the city and its surrounding area. There are a great number of well-marked trails for hiking and biking. Organized tours are available to the Carthusian Monastery of Pleterje, the Kajfez Castle, or the Atomske Toplice, another thermal spa. These locations can be visited on your own as well. Golf enthusiasts will enjoy the nine-hole golf course in nearby Podcetrtek.

An easy side-trip for the day is a trek to Rogatec, just 7 km to the east of Rogaška. The town dates back to Roman times and holds two beautiful Baroque churches and the remains of two castles.

Cultural sites in Rogaška Slatina include the Museum of Graphic Art, which houses the collection of 16th – 19th century etchings and drawings donated by Kurt Müller. Frequent concerts take place throughout the town and resort, including an annual song festival.

A final popular attraction is the local crystal factory and shop. Group tours are available to watch as workers produce some of the world's finest crystal, including Waterford. A gift shop offers reasonable prices for crystalware.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Slovenia is a central European country with a surface area of 12,153 square miles. Austria borders it to the north, Hungary to the northeast, Croatia to the south and southeast, and Italy to the west. To the southwest, Slovenia has a 28-mile coastline on the Adriatic Sea.

There are basically six topographies: the Alps, including the Julian

Alps, the Kamnik-Savinja Alps, the Karavanke chain and the Pohorje Massif to the north and northeast; the pre-Alpine hills of Idrija, Cerknjo, Skofja Loka and Posavje spreading across the entire southern side of the Alps; the Dinaric karst (a limestone region of underground rivers, gorges, and caves) below the hills and encompassing the "true" or "original" Karst Plateau (from which all karst regions around the world take their name) between Ljubljana and the Italian border; the Slovenian Littoral, 28 miles of coastline along the Adriatic Sea; the "lowlands," comprising about one-fifth of the territory in various parts of the country; and the essentially flat Pannonian Plain to the east and northeast.

Slovenia is predominantly hilly or mountainous; about 90% of the surface is more than 700 feet above sea level. Forest, some of it virgin, covers just under half of the country, making Slovenia one of the greenest countries in the world. Agricultural land (fields, orchards, vineyards, pastures, etc.) account for 43% of the total.

Slovenia is temperate with four seasons, but the topography creates three individual climates. The northwest has an Alpine climate with strong influences from the Atlantic and abundant precipitation. Temperatures in the Alpine valleys are moderate in summer but cold in winter. The coast and a large part of Primorska as far as the Soca Valley has a Mediterranean climate with warm sunny weather much of the year and mild winters. Most of eastern Slovenia has a Continental climate with hot summers and cold winters. The average temperature in July is 68-75°F in the interior while on the coast it is around 82-85°F. Ljubljana sits in a valley, and often has fog or rain covering the city.

Slovenia gets most of its rain in the spring (May and June) and autumn (October and November). January is the coldest month with an average temperature of 30°F, and July is the warmest, with an average tempera-

ture of 70°F. The mean average temperature in Ljubljana is 50°F. Average annual precipitation is 31 inches in the east and 117 inches in the northeast, on account of heavier snowfall.

Major rivers are the Drava, Sava (which meets the Danube in Belgrade), Soca, and Mura.

Population

Slovenia has a population of some two million, which is about 90% Slovene, with sizable Italian and Hungarian minorities. Slovenes are descendants of the Southern Slavs who settled in what is now Slovenia and parts of Italy, Austria, and Hungary from the 6th century AD. Other groups identify themselves as Croats (2.7%), Serbs (2.5%), and simply "Moslems" (1.3%). There are also 8,500 ethnic Hungarians and 2,300 Gypsies, largely in Prekmurje, as well as 3,000 Italians in Primorska.

The Italians and Hungarians are considered indigenous minorities with rights protected under the constitution, and they have special deputies looking after their interests in Parliament.

Ethnic Slovenes living outside the national borders number about 400,000, with the vast majority (almost 75%) in the U.S. and Canada. Cleveland, Ohio, is the largest "Slovenian" city outside Slovenia, Slovene minorities also live in Italy, Austria and Hungary.

The population density is 300 people per square mile, with the urban-rural ratio split almost exactly in half. The five largest settlements in Slovenia are Ljubljana (270,000), Maribor (108,000), Celje (40,000), Kranj (30,000), and Koper (25,300). The population is aging. Currently, 15% of Slovenia is over 60 years of age, and by 2000 the figure will rise to over 25%.

About 80% of Slovenes are Roman Catholic. An archbishop sits in Ljubljana, and there are bishoprics at Maribor and Koper. Eastern

Orthodox Christians, Moslems, and Protestants are represented in small percentages.

Public Institutions

Slovenia is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional republic. Power is shared between a directly elected President, a Prime Minister, and a bicameral legislature with constitutional provision for an independent judiciary.

Slovenia has been a member of the UN since May 1992 and the Council of Europe since May 1993. In 1998-99, it served as a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council. On February 1, 1999, it became an Associate Member of the European Union (EU). Slovenia is also a member of all major international financial institutions: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Slovenia also belongs to 40 other international organizations, among them the World Trade Organization, of which it is a founding member.

The supreme legislative body in Slovenia is the Parliament, which is composed of two chambers, the National Assembly and the National Council (a kind of "upper" chamber with the right to veto some decisions of the National Assembly). The President of the Republic is elected in general elections for a 5-year term. The President is the formal supreme armed forces commander in time of war, but otherwise his constitutional powers are relatively limited. The President of the National Assembly and Prime Minister are elected by the National Assembly for a 4-year term. Seats in the National Assembly are decided by proportional representation, although this may change to a first-past-the-post voting system early in the new century.

Major political parties include the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS), the People's Party (SLS), the Social Democratic Party (SDS), the Christian Democratic Party (SKD), the

Associated List (ZLSD), the Pensioners Party (DeSUS), and the National Party (SNS). There are also a few dozen very small political parties which currently have no representation in Parliament.

In classic political terms, few fundamental philosophical differences exist between “left” and “right” in the area of public policy. Slovene society is built on consensus, which has converged on a social-democrat model. Instead, political differences have their roots in the roles that groups and individuals played during the years of Communist rule and the struggle for independence. As evidence of this, the coalition that emerged from the 1996 general elections spans the political spectrum, joining a nominally “leftist” Liberal Democratic Party and a “rightist” Peoples Party. Also a part of the coalition is the post-communist Pensioners Party. The parliamentary opposition is similarly fragmented.

Judges exercise judicial authority and their appointment is for life. Judges are not appointed but elected by the National Assembly on the recommendation of the Judicial Council, and may be dismissed only if they infringe the Constitution or commit a major breach of the law.

The courts are divided into the courts of general jurisdiction and special jurisdiction. Specialized courts exercise judicial power only in special legal fields, within special jurisdiction provided by Statute (e.g., the Labor and Social Courts—specialized in deciding on individual and collective labor disputes and on social disputes, i.e. on disputes in areas of social security).

Courts of general jurisdiction are organized on four levels: district, regional, high, and Supreme. The Office of Public Prosecutor is an independent state body, but it consults closely with the government, in most cases with the Ministry of Justice. The organization of the Public Prosecutor's office parallels that of the courts of general jurisdiction.

The Constitutional Court is the highest body of judicial review. The Court has nine members (judges) elected by the National Assembly on the nomination of the President of the Republic. A judge is elected for a term of 9 years and is not eligible for reelection.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) active in Slovenia include: Amnesty International, the UN Association of Slovenia, the Helsinki Monitor, Information (the documentation center of the Council of Europe in Slovenia), the Red Cross of Slovenia, Caritas (a Catholic charity), UNICEF, and GAEA 2000 (an ecological and refugee NGO).

Arts, Science, and Education

The Reformation brought literacy and general culture to the Slovenes in the 16th century. Where before only a small number of religious persons could read and write Latin, the introduction of the printing press made the Slovene language available to the masses—a political as well as a cultural milestone. Primož Trubar's *The Catechism* was printed in 1551. In 1584 the first translation of the Bible into Slovene by Jurij Dalmatin was published, and the first Slovene grammar by Adam Bohoric. Although the subsequent Counterreformation crushed the religious gains made by the Protestant Reformation, the linguistic seed of Slovene nationhood had taken root. To this day, October 31, Reformation Day, is celebrated as a national holiday.

Drama and poetry were also instrumental in developing the Slovene language in the 18th and 19th centuries. The poems of Valentin Vodnik and the plays of Anton T. Linhart expressed the libertarian spirit of the French Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

The great educational reforms introduced by Austrian Empress Maria Theresa in the late 1700s resulted in mass literacy of the Slovene people. As a result, poet France

Preseren, a lawyer and freethinker, brought to Slovene poetry all the principal classical poetic forms; he spiritually kindled the sub-Alpine province with the fighting spirit of the European Romantics and thus articulated the national consciousness. A century and a half after its creation, his “Zdravljica” (*The Toast*) became the national anthem of the Slovene State.

Other influential writers were Ivan Cankar and Oton Zupancic. Both contributed to the cultural and spiritual development as well as the political life of the Slovene people. Cankar, a master of symbolic sketches and somewhat Ibsen-like plays about the disintegration of provincial values at a time of industrialization and the advance of capital, was also an enthusiastic essayist. Zupancic, whose explicitly modern approach to poetry and powerful personality made him for many years the standard for other poets, also supported the national resistance from the start of World War II.

The Slovene capital of Ljubljana has a variety of theaters: drama, opera, and ballet companies of the Slovene National Theater (Ljubljana), the Municipal Theater, Slovene Youth Theater, and other amateur theaters. There are also drama, opera and ballet companies in Maribor, Slovenia's second largest city, and professional theaters perform in Celje, Kranj, and Nova Gorica (as well as in Trieste in Italy). An international agreement guarantees the Slovene minority their own artistic creativity.

Music is an important part of the Slovene culture. Some documentary evidence suggests that the Slovenes first brought their own musical culture with them to their new homeland in the 6th century. Monasteries, churches, and schools provided melodic and harmonic choral and liturgical singing. By the end of the middle ages, church music had reached a relatively high level based on the polyphony prevailing in European centers of the time.

In the 18th century, the first Slovene opera was written, "Belin" by J. Zupan and EA. Dev. In 1701, Ljubljana received its Academia Philharmonicorum, the forerunner of today's Philharmonic. Europe's leading composers and performers of the day - Joseph Haydn, Ludwig von Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Niccolò Paganini, Johannes Brahms, Bedrich Smetana, Antonin Dvorak-were honorary members, and frequently appeared on the Philharmonia stage. Its conductors-guest and permanent-included Gustav Mahler, Pablo Sarasate, and Eugene d'Albert.

Choral singing is also deeply rooted in Slovene culture and very popular. The meeting of choirs at Sentvid by Sticna each year brings together several thousand singers. Representatives of alternative music and culture, groups like Laibach and Borghesia, are specifically a Slovene phenomenon.

The most important Slovene fine art can be seen in national institutions such as the National Gallery and the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana, and in numerous smaller galleries and exhibitions throughout Slovenia. At Ljubljana's Academy of Fine Arts, Slovene painters keep pace with the world's creativity, as do sculptors, successors to the traditions of Bernkeker, Zajc, Kalin, Savinsek, and many others. An International Graphics Biennial was initiated in 1955 under the auspices of the Modern Gallery, expanded in 1987 to an International Graphic Arts Center.

Architecture is also an important aspect of the Slovenian culture and character. Slovenia's most famous architect, Joze Plecnik, developed a master plan for the reconstruction of Ljubljana after much of its city center was destroyed in an earthquake in 1895. His works included the famous bridge of Tromostovje (Three Bridges), Ljubljana's busiest and most beautiful bridge; the National and University Library; the open market by the Ljubljanica River; Zale Cemetery, the Garden of All Saints; the adaptation of Kri-

zanke for the summer theater; the Churches of St. Francis in Siska and St. Michael on the Marsh; and the central stadium. Credit for Ljubljana's architectural charm is also due to modern architect Max Fabiani, who conceived the beautiful Secession Park in the city center.

Any discussion of Slovene culture must take into account such important institutions as the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts and the University. The Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts was founded just before World War II (1938), but its deep roots reach back to the 17th century, to the Academia Operosomm. The University of Ljubljana, founded in 1919, was Slovenia's only educational institution until the founding of its second university in Maribor in 1975.

The first well-known Slovene scientist was the social historian, Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641-1693), a member of the British Royal Society. In 1689, he published in 3,500 pages a richly illustrated work, "In Praise of the Duchy of Carniola," which thoroughly presented a central part of Slovenia to Europe and remains an important reference source to the day.

The first scientific academy operated in Ljubljana in the period from 1693 to 1725. In 1762, almost 100 years before Pasteur, the physician Marko Plencic recognized microorganisms as the cause of contagious diseases. The mathematician Jurij Vega developed logarithms in the 1700s while the greatest Slovene physicist, Jozef Stefan, discovered the law of heat radiation in 1879. In 1923, Ljubljana-born Friederik Pregl received the chemistry Nobel Prize for his work on organic chemical microanalysis.

After World War II, numerous basic research institutes were established in Slovenia: physics, chemistry, electromechanical, and others. The Physics Institute, named after Jozef Stefan, has become one of Slovenia's premier research institutes with approximately 550 scientists. Its founder and first director, physicist

Anton Peterlin, went abroad in 1960 and became one of the top scientists in the field of large molecules and polymerization. The Stefan Institute keeps abreast of the world's main developmental trends in at least 10 fields. As such, it is a natural venue for scientific and environmental programming, conducting all nuclear and environmental research in Slovenia. It is also actively involved in international exchange.

Today, with a total of 27,000 students and 1,300 faculty members spread among 20 separate faculties, three academies, three specialized schools, and other associated research institutes, the University of Ljubljana remains preeminent. The Economics Faculty's MBA program has profited from a 30-year relationship with the University of Indiana.

The University of Maribor has 12,500 students and 550 professors and has been particularly interested in expanding its cooperation with American educational institutions.

In addition, six freestanding institutes of higher education that grant diplomas have recently been established, with three already fully operational. Two other institutions, the privately operated GEA College and the MBA Center at Brdo, both have excellent international reputations.

The board of education is engaged in a major overhaul of the Slovene school system, including instituting new standardized exams, curriculum reform, educational technology and foreign language teaching, to better match it to the country's projected economic needs.

Commerce and Industry

With less than 2 million inhabitants, Slovenia's economy produced \$19.64 billion in goods and services. Slovenians per capita earn \$9,899, which is one of the highest among

all transitional countries in central and Eastern Europe. The country has a reliable and modern telecommunications system, relatively good public utility infrastructure, a well-developed and modern industrial base, and an educated and productive workforce.

Due to its strategic location, Slovenia has embarked on an ambitious road construction plan that will crisscross the country in two directions: from east to west, linking Milan-Ljubljana-Budapest; and from north to south, linking Munich-Ljubljana-Zagreb. Under this plan, the Slovene traffic network will be entirely modernized by the year 2005. A planned railway from Hungary to the Slovene Port of Koper is another important transportation plan, thereby giving Central Europe a new access to the Adriatic coast.

The Slovene economy is extremely diverse. Manufacturing, which has made considerable progress in recent years, provides almost 30% of the gross domestic product. It is followed in importance by trade, business and financial service, transport, and agency business. Tourism is directly responsible for only around 3% of the gross domestic product, but it is extremely important, both for its general effect on the Slovene economy and for the balance of payments. In 1997, Slovenia's tourism industry provided a US\$1.2 billion contribution to the current account.

Small businesses have been the engine of Slovenia's economic growth in recent years. The number of registered companies has grown to almost 52,000 (36,700 were active at the end of 1997). Ninety-five percent of all companies are small, with up to 50 employees. Large companies with more than 250 persons account for 2% and medium-sized companies, roughly 4%.

Industrial production in Slovenia is diverse, with some 6,800 industrial companies in all branches, employing close to 240,000 persons and making roughly 1,690 different

groups of industrial products. Primary production includes: electrical machinery and equipment, metal workings in the production of vehicles and machinery, textiles and leather products, wood products and foodstuff, iron and glass, and pharmaceuticals and furniture.

Per capita exports in 1997 amounted to \$4,220; considerably higher than other southern, central, and eastern European countries, reflecting Slovenia's exceptional openness. The total exports of goods and services in 1997 reached \$10.5 billion, of which exports of goods contributed \$8.4 billion. Slovenia has enjoyed virtual balance in the current account since 1992.

Slovenia has a number of important foreign trading partners in the EU, notably Germany, Italy, and Austria. In 1997, Slovenia negotiated an Association Agreement with the EU and expects to become a full member by the turn of the century. Slovenia is also a member of CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Agreement) and has signed 30 free trade agreements with a number of countries including Macedonia, Croatia, Israel, Turkey, and the Baltic States.

The tax system has to a large extent been harmonized with arrangements in other European countries. Profits are taxed at a level of 25%. Individual income tax rates range from 17%-50%. There is a compulsory social security contribution from employees (22.1% of gross pay) and employers (an additional contribution of 19.9%). A new law on value added tax and another on excise duty tax has been adopted, effective July 1999. A general tax level of 19% and a reduced rate of 8% are anticipated.

The process of privatization (or ownership transformation of a formerly socially owned firm) was formally concluded in Slovenia at the end of 1997. The first dividends were paid to the new shareholders in 1995, and shares of an increasing number of companies are traded on the Ljubljana stock exchange.

U.S. policy supports strengthening bilateral economic ties, particularly trade and private business investment, which contribute to Slovenia's development. Some 50 American companies, including some of the largest Fortune 500 firms, have established a presence in the country. The U.S. has supported Slovene application for membership in such international economic organizations as the World Bank and IMF. Official U.S. Government economic assistance through the Support for Eastern European Democracy (SEED) was relatively limited and focused on financial markets. The program officially ended in September 1997. Although some follow-on activities continue, technical assistance is provided largely without official AID intermediation.

The Ljubljana stock exchange was established in 1989 as the first stock exchange in Eastern Europe. Until the recently ended mass privatization of Slovenian economy, the stock exchange did not play an important role. Market capitalization has grown strongly in recent years, a trend that should continue as the culmination of the privatization program brings increasing supply to market.

Transportation

Automobiles

Like in most of Europe, compact or smaller cars are preferred because of their ease in parking, fuel economy, and resale value. Any standard-make European or Asian-make car is suitable. There are a great number and variety of mechanical repair stations for most types of cars. Chrysler and Ford are the two American car companies represented in Slovenia. Unleaded gasoline is readily available.

All cars brought into the Republic of Slovenia must have a factory-installed catalytic converter; an older car that cannot be equipped

with a catalytic converter cannot be used.

Registration fees are about \$200 for a compact/small car and \$300 for vans, depending on type of engine. Slovene law requires that cars be equipped with a European first-aid kit, triangle emergency breakdown marker (available locally), a set of spare fuses and bulbs. On trips to nearby Croatia, a rope for emergency vehicle towing is also required. Additional obligatory equipment for winter includes: tire chains; small shovel; small bag of sand; and, a blanket. Snow tires, or radial tires, are recommended for winter driving.

A U.S. drivers license accompanied by a diplomatic identity card serves as a valid drivers license in the Republic of Slovenia.

Locally purchased third-party-liability insurance is required for all vehicles. Every car shipped to Slovenia must pass a technical inspection prior to purchase of this insurance and temporary insurance must be purchased to cover this interim period. This temporary insurance costs between 7,000 and 15,000 SIT (\$42 and \$92), depending on the size of the engine.

Traffic moves on the right. Road signs and traffic rules are similar to those used throughout Europe. During winter, roads are adequately cleared of snow and ice. Traffic within city limits can get surprisingly heavy at times but is generally light compared to most major U.S. cities. On major freeways, traffic delays are unusual except during the summer vacation period, July through September, when long delays can be experienced, especially at border crossings.

Local

The public bus system in Ljubljana is excellent. Because of the shortage of parking downtown, many commute by bus. In general, buses run from 6:00 a.m. to midnight. A one-time ticket costs 140 SIT (\$.85); tokens which are sold in any post office or kiosk are 80 SIT (\$.50).

Taxis are available either by telephone or at taxi stands. Bicycles are also widely used for in-city commuting.

Regional

There is train and bus service throughout Slovenia and to neighboring countries. The road system is excellent, though the highway system is still under construction in some areas. Ljubljana has one international airport (Brnik) with flights to and from major European cities.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Within Slovenia, telephone calls are very inexpensive but calls to other countries are much more expensive than in the U.S. Several international companies provide international callback services at reasonable prices. There is no provision for calling card use in Slovenia.

Mail

The international mail in Slovenia is reliable.

Radio and TV

There are several Slovenian television channels: one national TV station with two channels and several private TV stations. A regular antenna will pick up local stations that carry English-language TV shows and films, with subtitles in Slovene. Most areas have access to cable TV, which provides over 30 channels, including CNN, TNT, BBC, and the Discovery Channel. There are numerous radio stations, both public and private.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Slovenia has four daily newspapers: Delo (Work), Dnevnik (Daily), Vecer (Evening), and Slovenska novice (Slovenia News). Some three dozen weeklies, biweeklies, and monthlies cover topics as diverse as agriculture, finance, and women's fashion. There are no locally published English-language newspapers, though Vitrum publishes a good political and business newsletter

called Slovenia Weekly and a magazine devoted to tourism, leisure and the arts called Flaneur.

The International Herald Tribune provides same-day delivery service. Other English-language newspapers and magazines are available at newsstands.

Internet

Among the frequently accessed sites in Slovenia are: <http://www.ijs.si/slo>, A Guide to Virtual Slovenia, and <http://www.arnes.si>, Academic and Research Network of Slovenia.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

In general, medical services in Slovenia are excellent. The principal medical institution is The University Clinical Medical Center in Ljubljana. It is a diagnostic, therapeutic, research center that also serves as an educational base for the School of Medicine of the University of Ljubljana.

Dental facilities are adequate. Slovene dentists do not routinely practice preventive care as is common in the U.S.

Community Health

Tap water is potable. Sterilized long-life and fresh milk is available. Raw fruits and vegetables are safe to eat using the precautions one would normally follow in the U.S. Sewage and garbage disposal treatment is adequate.

Antibiotics, allergy medication and all other prescription medication are available at local pharmacies. Regularly used prescription medication can be renewed through the mail system using the diplomatic pouch service. Some over-the-counter medicine is available locally.

Preventive Measures

For those persons who engage in outdoor activities, a vaccine to pre-

vent tick-borne encephalitis is recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Travel to Ljubljana is very easy, by air, train, bus, or car from any of the major European cities. Since no American air carrier flies direct from the U.S. to Ljubljana, connections are made in Vienna, Frankfurt, or Zurich. Slovene Adria Airways flies to most major European cities.

A valid passport is required for entry into Slovenia. A visa is not required for a tourist/business stay up to 90 days. For further information on entry requirements for Slovenia, travelers may contact the Embassy of Slovenia at 1525 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, Tel: (202) 667-5363, or the Consulate General of Slovenia in New York City, Tel: (212) 370-3006. The website of the Slovenian Embassy in the United States is <http://www.embassy.org/slovenia/>.

Americans living in or visiting Slovenia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana to obtain updated information on travel and security within Slovenia. The U.S. Embassy is located at Presernova 31, Ljubljana 1000, Tel: (386)(1) 200-5500 or Fax: (386)(1) 200-5535. The Embassy website address is <http://www.usembassy.si>

Pets

All dogs and cats entering Slovenia must be accompanied by a certificate of good health bearing the seal of your local board of health and signed by a veterinarian. This certificate must be issued not more than 10 days prior to the animal's arrival. A veterinarian meets the animal at the airport upon arrival and checks all these health papers before allowing entry through the customs. There is also a 3-week in-house quarantine period. The quar-

antine period ends after a stool examination and an inspection by a veterinarian.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency unit of the Republic of Slovenia is the tolar, abbreviated "SIT," which is divided into denominations of 10,000, 5,000, 1,000, 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, and 10, with coins in denominations of 5, 2, and 1 SIT. The currency is relatively stable, with current exchange rates of approximately US\$1=SIT 160.

Unfortunately, most ATM machines in Slovenia only accept cards from Slovene banks, which prohibits foreigners from using their ATM cards while here. Occasionally, the ATM machine at the airport will accept a foreign card, but it only works sporadically. Credit cards are increasingly accepted, as more and more establishments obtain permission to use them. The metric system of weights and measures is used.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 & 2	New Year's Day
Feb. 8	Slovenian Cultural Holiday
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
April 27	Resistance Day
May 1 & 2	Labor Day
June 25	Slovenian National Day
Aug. 15.	Assumption Day
Oct. 31	Reformation Day
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Independence Day

*variable

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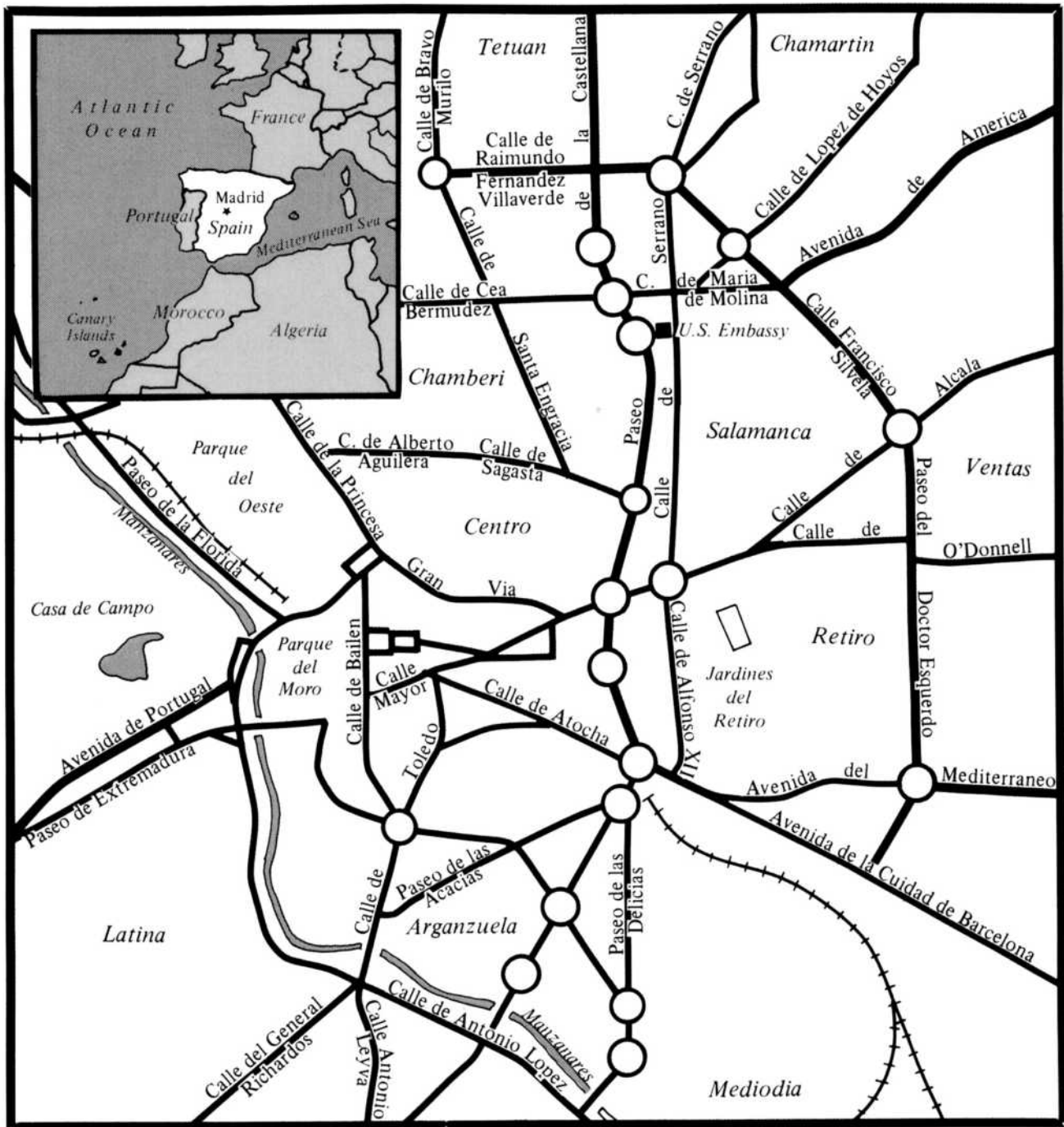
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Madrid, Spain

SPAIN

Kingdom of Spain

Major Cities:

Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Bilbao, Valencia, Málaga, Saragossa

Other Cities:

Badajoz, Badalona, Burgos, Cádiz, Cartagena, Castellón de la Plana, Córdoba, Gijón, Granada, La Coruña, León, Logroño, Murcia, Oviedo, Pamplona, Salamanca, San Sebastián, Santander, Toledo, Valladolid, Vigo, Zamora

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated February 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SPAIN, after nearly four decades of dictatorship, is now enjoying an official parliamentary democracy under the leadership of King Juan Carlos I, who acceded to the long-vacant throne in 1975. Serious political disputes have arisen in the ensuing years, and continuing tension in the Basque region has threatened national stability, but basic freedoms are guaranteed and the general popularity of the government is a recognized fact.

1992 was a banner year for Spain. The summer Olympics were held in Barcelona; Expo '92, a world's fair, took place in Seville, and Madrid was designated the cultural capital of Europe for 1992. Nationwide

observances marked the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America and the contributions of Jewish and Arab cultures to Spain were celebrated.

Ernest Hemingway described Spain as "the country I love most, after my own." The timeless beauty of the land is reflected best in its architectural monuments built by the many civilizations that have formed its history. Spain's musical heritage has always been important to its people, from the classical composers to folk music and the distinctive flamenco tradition. Spaniards, despite their centralized government, display great regional diversity, and cling to the customs which have given them a unique quality among their European neighbors.

MAJOR CITIES

Madrid

Madrid, the capital of Spain, is in the center of the Iberian Peninsula at an elevation of 2,150 feet. The city sits on a large plateau bordered by the distant mountain peaks of the Sierras of Guadarrama and Gredos and by the mountains of Toledo. Madrid is located in the northern part of the region of Castile La Man-

cha (also known as New Castile)—the territory of Spain inhabited by the fictional Don Quixote of Miguel de Cervantes. The plateau region is high and dry, and the soil is rocky and sandy. A short distance from Madrid, the topography changes: The valleys become greener and the soil more fertile. The topography of Madrid and its environs resembles the foothill regions of the Rocky Mountains at about the same altitude as Salt Lake City. The current population is almost 2.9 million.

A modern and cosmopolitan city, Madrid is the seat of Spanish culture and tradition. Characterized today by tall, modern buildings and wide, traffic-filled boulevards, the city still retains some of its history in the old buildings and narrow streets of the central section.

For a city of its size, Madrid has few large industries. The Spanish Government is the largest single employer. The trucking industry, local construction companies, and various light manufacturing firms are major local employers.

As the seat of government and the location of the head offices of most of the country's businesses, Madrid has a large number of administrative and clerical workers. The general level of education in the city is high.



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Leaning Columbus Towers in Madrid, Spain

Madrid has a large community of foreign residents. About 30,000 Americans are registered with U.S. consulates throughout Spain, the largest group of whom live in Madrid. Most are permanent residents. About 700 American employees and family members comprise the U.S. Mission. A large number of American tourists visit Spain, but most do not register with the U.S. Embassy. April through November is the busiest tourist season.

Food

Fresh food is plentiful and the variety is excellent in Spain. Meat and poultry, fish and shellfish, cheese and other dairy products, and fresh fruits and vegetables—both domestically grown and imported—are of high quality and, in some cases, priced lower than in Washington, D.C. Fresh food markets are scattered around the city. There are large and small supermarkets and small family-run grocery stores everywhere.

Clothing

As in most capitals of Europe and large, cosmopolitan U.S. cities, public appearance is very important to the Madrilenos, many of whom dress with care even for their daily shopping expeditions. At the same time, casual wear is as varied on the streets of Madrid as in any large

city, and tailored jeans are the preferred mode of dress of many Madrilenos, especially young people. Madrilenos are highly fashion conscious, as the abundance of international and local designer shops in Madrid's better shopping areas demonstrates. Both winter and summer office clothing worn in Washington, D.C., is appropriate in Madrid, although dark colors tend to prevail here. In summer, sport shorts are worn primarily at the beach and are rarely seen on the streets.

Good-quality ready-made clothing for the entire family is available locally, but at higher prices than in the U.S. Handsome Spanish-made leather shoes and boots for both women and men are also available in most standard sizes at prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Men: Suits and conservative sports coats and dark slacks are acceptable business attire for men. Men wear dark business suits for evening entertainment.

Women: Women wear tailored suits and dresses interchangeably during the day, both in offices and on the street. Skirt lengths are fashionable and a matter of personal preference. In the evenings, business suits and conservative dresses are worn. Long

dresses are uncommon except at a few formal functions. Quality nylon stockings and pantyhose are best purchased in the U.S. Excellent quality women's accessories, such as leather handbags and gloves, can also be purchased locally.

Children: Children's play clothes available in Madrid stores are attractive but prohibitively expensive.

Supplies and Services

A wide variety (and most international brands) of toiletries and cosmetics are sold locally but are more expensive than in the U.S. Individuals who prefer particular brands should bring a good supply of them or be prepared to pay the slightly higher European prices.

Many home medicines and drugs are available in a European or Spanish equivalent in local pharmacies, and in some cases under brand names familiar to Americans as well. Most first-aid necessities and other basic home remedy items (aspirin, vitamins, cold medicines) are sold throughout the city.

Tailoring and dressmaking shops are found in most locations throughout the city. Home service is available. As everywhere, quality is usually commensurate with price. The city has many boutiques where high-fashion clothing for men and women is available. Prices are usually higher than in the U.S.

Local laundries are expensive, and delivery time can be lengthy. Local dry-cleaning is good and available everywhere. Prices are high, about 50% more than in the U.S. Cleaning usually takes 2 or 3 days with an extra charge for express service.

Shoe repair in Madrid is good and reasonably priced. Hairdressers for men and women are numerous and excellent, and, as in big cities everywhere, prices range from reasonable to very expensive.

Religious Activities

Catholic churches are found throughout the city, in almost all

neighborhoods. Houses of worship that offer services in English include Catholic churches, several Protestant churches, a Jewish synagogue, and a mosque.

Education

The American School of Madrid (ASM) is a coeducational day school providing instruction in English at preschool, kindergarten, primary, and secondary levels. Spanish language classes are offered at all levels. ASM offers Advanced Placement courses and is currently in the process of becoming affiliated with the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, with the intention of offering the full IB diploma beginning September 1995. ASM is located in Pozuelo de Alarcon, a residential suburb on the west side of Madrid. Morning and afternoon buses transport students. Curriculum and teaching methods follow the American pattern; the school is accredited to the Middle States Association, and transfer credits are readily accepted by U.S. schools.

Many of the 600 students at ASM are children of American businesspeople in Madrid. Spanish students and students of other nationalities also attend. Boarding facilities are not provided.

ASM requires copies of a prospective student's academic record from the past 3 school years and reports of recent standardized test scores. Once these are received by the school, the final application process can begin. For further information, contact the Office of Admissions, American School of Madrid (international telephone 341-357-2154, fax 341-358-2678). The American School of Madrid's mailing address is Apartado 80, 28020 Madrid.

In addition to ASM, several British-run schools in Madrid offer instruction in English following the British educational system.

Many neighborhood nursery schools are available, including a number of British schools. The International Primary School offers a curriculum

based on American and British study programs for children from nursery school through grade 6. Madrid also has a Montessori school and educational opportunities for children with learning disabilities. There are also German, French, and Italian schools in Madrid.

Spanish elementary and secondary education is directed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science. Under the educational reform law of 1970, a more flexible system theoretically gives each student the right to advance according to ability. Primary school, called Educacion General Basica, is obligatory and consists of 8 years of schooling from ages 6 to 13. High school, Bachillerato, is 3 years of schooling from 14 to 16 years of age. Those students desiring a technical education go directly from Educacion General Basica to technical schools. For students going on to universities, 1 year of pre-university education (Curso de Orientacion Universitaria) is required. Public primary and secondary schools are few; many parents send their children to private schools. A number of Catholic religious orders run private schools in Madrid. Both public and private school instruction is in Spanish; American students who are not fully fluent in Spanish may experience difficulties.

Special Educational Opportunities

To make the most of a stay in Spain, knowledge of Spanish is essential. Good private tutoring and language schools are available.

English-language courses in Spanish history and art are available. Most Spanish universities offer Spanish-language summer courses for foreigners in Spanish language, history, literature, and culture. The Complutense University of Madrid offers such courses all year long. Tuition costs are reasonable.

Sports

Madrid and its suburbs offer limited opportunities for sports comparable to those of other major cities. Golf, tennis, swimming, shooting, horse-

back riding, and skiing are available, mostly in private clubs.

A number of clubs provide tennis, squash, golf, and swimming. Most are expensive by U.S. standards. The most exclusive club is the Real Club Puerta de Hierro, which has a 27-hole golf course, tennis courts, a swimming pool, riding stables, and a polo field. The attractive clubhouse offers bar and dining service, a large club room, and some living quarters. The club is accessible only by car. The Ciudad Deportiva del Real Madrid Club de Futbol y Tenis offers excellent tennis and swimming facilities. This club also sponsors the Real Madrid soccer team. Monthly dues and hourly rates are substantial. Memberships are individual; family members must pay guest rates.

A small shooting club, the Sociedad Tiro de Pichon, is close to Madrid and is popular with skeet and target shooting enthusiasts. Fees are prohibitive.

The most popular Spanish spectator sports are basketball and soccer. Bullfighting is considered more art and culture than pure sport but is extremely popular throughout Spain. Other spectator sports worthy of note are motor sports and cycling, horse racing, and jai alai, a game held to be Basque in origin.

Running is a sport with a growing number of Spanish enthusiasts, although Madrid's chronic traffic and parking problems do not lend themselves to recreational jogging along city streets.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Commercial sight-seeing tours to nearby places of interest are available daily.

Spain's Royal Automobile Club (RACE) has the best information and maps for motoring trips in Spain. The club provides service to members of the U.S. AAA without payment of additional fees. RACE fees are nominal.

From Madrid there are numerous historic and picturesque towns and villages to visit that make interesting weekend or day trips. Spain also offers Paradors, a chain of state-owned hotels, many housed in historic monasteries, castles, and other enticing settings.

A number of locations on the city's outskirts offer riding. The mountains north of Madrid offer mountain climbing and hiking. Several Spanish clubs organize climbs and maintain mountain huts. Serious climbers should bring equipment.

Excellent facilities can be found for fishing (trout, salmon, black bass, and great northern pike) and hunting (partridge, duck, hare, wild boar, deer, rabbit, and mountain goat). The Spanish fish with wet flies much more than dry and also use spoons and spinners. Suitable equipment can be obtained locally. Nylon filament fly lines are available locally, but bring tapered line from the U.S. European reels are less expensive than in the U.S.

Most shotguns on the local market are double barreled, either side by side or over and under. Good-quality Spanish shotguns are inexpensive. Excellent quality shotguns made by world-famous Spanish gunsmiths are sold but are not available at bargain prices.

Inexpensive bus and train service is available in season to ski areas in the Guadarrama mountains north of Madrid (about an hour's drive). Other excellent ski resorts can be found in Aragon, the Pyrenees, and the Sierra Nevada chain in the south. Ski equipment can be rented at most Spanish resorts, but quality varies. Ski equipment, boots, and clothing can be bought in Madrid, but all good-quality equipment and clothing are imported and expensive.

Entertainment

Madrid movie houses show Spanish, American, and other foreign films. While the majority of foreign films are dubbed with a Spanish soundtrack, many are also shown in

the original language, or "version original."

Madrid has a lively theater scene. Productions of the Madrid theaters are quite good, and Spanish literature aficionados will discover a constant reviving and staging of the classics.

During the season, there are several subscription concert series in Madrid's new concert hall complex, including weekly concerts by the National Symphony Orchestra of Spain. Several chamber music groups give concerts during the winter and spring season. The opera season is January through July. Season tickets to the opera are so scarce that, in recent years, they have been distributed through a lottery. Despite the scarcity of tickets and the enormous popularity of opera, the most expensive tickets for individual performances are often available at the box office just before performance time. Madrid is a frequent stop on the tour itineraries of most well-known international performing arts groups, and the calendar is filled throughout the year, especially during the summer and during Madrid's Autumn Festival.

Restaurants are plentiful and varied in every price range. Several restaurant/clubs feature "tablao flamenco" with flamenco dancing and singing.

Historical sights and museums provide almost endless diversion. The world-famous Prado Museum is considered one of the finest painting galleries in the world and features works by the best Spanish painters as well as by artists of the most important foreign schools, particularly Italian and Flemish, from the 14th to 19th centuries. Spanish painting from the 19th century can be seen at Prado Annex, El Cason del Buen Retiro.

The renowned Thyssen-Bornemisza collection of art is now housed in the restored Villahermosa Palace near the Prado. This formerly private collection, now the property of Spain,

contains masterpieces from 500 years of Western art, including one of Europe's best sampling of American painting of the 19th and 20th centuries. Nearby is the Reina Sofia Museum of Contemporary Art, which houses a permanent collection of Spain's modern masters, including Picasso's famous work "Guernica."

Other fine museums are the homes of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and the painter Sorolla; the Archaeological Museum; the Romantic Museum; the Museum of Decorative Art; the Lazaro Galdiano Museum; Cerralbo, the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan; the Museum Las Descalzas Reales; the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts; the Municipal Museum; and the Royal Tapestry Factory.

Madrid and the surrounding cities make excellent subjects for photographers. Holy Week processions are held in many Spanish towns, but those in Seville are noted for their color, brilliance, and religious enthusiasm. The Spring Fair in Seville in April has festivities that last almost a week. During this period, however, Seville is very crowded, and lodgings are expensive and hard to find.

One of Spain's most popular fiestas is held in Valencia, March 17–19. Large allegorical wood and papier-mache sculptures known as "fallas" are built in the streets. Prizes are awarded to those judged best. At the end of the fair, on the night of March 19, the sculptures are burned in huge bonfires to the accompaniment of spectacular fireworks. The Fair of San Fermin in Pamplona, July 6–12, is famous. It is here that young men run through the streets chased by fighting bulls.

Madrid has a number of "verbenas" (carnivals) held in the open in specially designated locations. The feast of St. Anthony takes place on June 13; others are the Verbena de Paloma and the Verbena de la Carmen. Each carnival is devoted to a different saint and district. The fes-

tivals are popular with Spaniards and provide interesting entertainment. Local fairs take place in many towns on special feast days, and most include dances and bull fights.

Social Activities

Social activities in Madrid tend to be defined by fluency in Spanish. Clearly, persons with an ease of fluency will make Spanish friends more easily among their neighbors and professional contacts. Madrid has an American Club composed of resident Americans and Spaniards and third-country business representatives and professionals. The club holds luncheons with speakers, round tables, dances, theater nights, and other events.

As an international city, Madrid is composed of people of all nationalities, so many opportunities are available to meet other foreign nationals. Sporting clubs, cultural and business groups, and various other associations offer opportunities to establish international contacts.

Barcelona

Barcelona was founded by the Carthaginians in about 680 B.C. It is Spain's second largest city, with a population of nearly 1.5 million (it claims first place in terms of metropolitan area population and is one of the world's most densely populated cities). It also is the country's leading industrial trade center, and the largest port. A referendum in 1979 approved Spanish and Catalan as Catalonia's official languages. Most inhabitants of Catalonia understand and speak both languages, but the regional government has been increasing the use of Catalan, which had been banned from official use and in the schools for 40 years under Franco.

Situated on a plain between the Llobregat and Besós Rivers, and lying between the mountains and the sea, Barcelona's climate is temperate and usually pleasant, although relatively high humidity makes the



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

City of Barcelona and harbor

warm summer and cold winter days more pronounced. Winter and early spring months often bring heavy rainfall, but snow and freezing temperatures are rare.

Barcelona is Spain's cultural center. It is a modern, beautiful city, with new buildings, broad avenues, and bustling traffic. The old city has narrow, winding streets, where some Roman walls are still visible. There are many historic landmarks, including the Cathedral of Santa Aulalia (built in the 14th and 15th centuries), the city hall, and the *Lonja* (exchange).

There are more than 8,000 registered Americans in the district. American tourism is heavy, particularly during summer.

Education

Many good schools are available in the Barcelona area; however, in most of them, instruction is in Spanish and Catalan, and students must be fluent in these languages. In higher grades, a curriculum very different from that in the U.S. is followed. Entry may be complicated by difficulty in validating previous study for acceptance in the Spanish system. Most American children attend the Benjamin Franklin International School, the American

School of Barcelona, the Kensington School, the Anglo-American School, or St. Peter's School.

The Benjamin Franklin International School, established in September 1986, provides an American education for students aged three through 18 years. Students are prepared to continue their studies in both Spanish and/or American universities. The current enrollment is 280; one-third are American.

The school is a nonprofit organization governed by a board of trustees and a board of governors and is affiliated with the European Council of International Schools and the State Department Office of Overseas Schools among others. It receives consulting services from the Superintendent of the Unified School District of Carmel, CA, and from the Director or ASM.

The school uses advanced North American educational techniques, modern U.S. textbooks, audiovisual support systems, and special educational materials. The director and most of the teaching staff are American, with the exception of those teaching subjects requiring foreign national teachers. Facilities include a 5,000-volume library, science and computer labs, and an art room.

Ninety percent of its graduates go on to attend college.

American School of Barcelona, established in 1962, provides an education from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Incorporated in the State of Delaware, the school is a nonprofit, coeducational institution operated by an elected board of governors. An officer of the U.S. Consulate General here serves on the board. The principal, 50% of the faculty, textbooks, and curriculum are American. An additional 30% of the faculty are native English speakers; the remaining 20% are Spanish nationals who teach selected Spanish curriculum classes. In addition to normal academic subjects, Spanish, Catalan, music, art, and physical education are taught at all levels. Sports include baseball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. Ceramics, art, choral, and computer classes are offered as extracurricular activities. Students are given yearly achievement tests, and seniors interested in university studies in the U.S. are given the college entrance examination and advanced placement tests. Ninety percent of graduates attend college. The current enrollment is 400. American School's mailing address is: Pasaje Font del Lleo, s/n, Barcelona.

The Kensington School, founded in 1966, is a privately owned, coeducational school which offers a British public school academic program for children aged five through 18. The school administers the college entrance examination and advanced placement tests to students interested in a U.S. university education. French and Spanish are taught as foreign languages, beginning at age 10. Laboratories and athletic facilities are available. Bus service is provided for a fee.

The Anglo-American School, located at Castelldefels, a small coastal resort about 10 miles from Barcelona, is a coeducational, international school which provides instruction in English from kindergarten through the ninth grade. The school, which follows the British

educational system, was founded in 1956. Spanish is taught as a foreign language. Bus service is provided. The mailing address is: Paseo de Barbi 152, Castelldefels Playa, Barcelona.

St. Peter's School, a privately owned, coeducational academy established in 1964, provides instruction from the nursery school level through age 14, or the equivalent of ninth grade. Following the British educational system, all classes are taught in English, with instruction in Spanish as a foreign language until age 11. After that time, all classes are in Spanish, with English as a foreign language. Bus service is available; uniforms are compulsory.

In addition, several other schools are popular in the American community, particularly those for younger children, although they do not provide instruction in English. Among them are St. Paul's, and the French, German, and Swiss schools.

Private language lessons in Spanish and Catalan are offered by the Institute of North American Studies and other private schools. The University of Barcelona offers a popular course for foreigners which begins in October and consists of classes in the language, history, and culture of Spain.

Recreation and Entertainment

Barcelona has a broad historic and cultural tradition. Impressive museums and ecclesiastical structures are found throughout the city, particularly in the old town, and the artistic and architectural heritage of Catalonia is distinct. The Jewish quarter of Girona flourishes here. Barcelona and its environs offer many opportunities for an active sports life. Golf, tennis, swimming, water-skiing, sailing, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, and winter sports are found in the city or within a few hours' drive.

Many opportunities are available in the area for weekend tours and sight-seeing activities. The area has

large amusement parks on Montjuich and Tibidabo, the hills which cradle the city. Montjuich was the site of the 1929 World's Fair.

Barcelona offers a variety of fine entertainment, including opera, ballet, and many excellent concerts. Local theaters present plays, light opera, and musical comedy. Motion pictures are popular, but most films are dubbed in Spanish. The Institute of North American Studies offers a movie in English occasionally, as well as many other fine artistic and musical presentations. Many interesting local festivals, both religious and secular, are held throughout the year. The Gothic Quarter is well known for its small, narrow, winding streets and picturesque shops.

Americans can join many clubs in Barcelona. Among the most active is the American Women's Club which sponsors a number of social events. The American Society of Barcelona was founded in 1974. An active Navy League chapter exists here.

Seville

Greater Seville (population 701,000) is the largest and most important city in Andalucía, Spain's richest agricultural region. Its history spans many centuries, beginning with colonization by the Phoenicians through occupation by the Romans (third century B.C.), Vandals (fifth century), Visigoths (sixth century), and Arabs (eighth century). The Moorish occupation ended in 1248 when the city was taken for the emerging modern Spanish nation by King Ferdinand II of Castile.

During the colonial period of the Americas, Seville had a monopoly on New World trade and was the center of the intellectual and economic life of Spain. Today, even centuries after the Christian conquest of Seville, the city reflects a harmonious blend of Western European and Middle Eastern cultural patterns and bloodlines.

The central city is characterized by tiny plazas and narrow, winding streets. Some streets in the Barrio de Santa Cruz, a quarter where the Moorish and Jewish residents were forced to live after the reconquest, can be traversed only by foot or horse cart. In that picturesque area, preserved as a national monument, one finds the more "typical" Sevillian atmosphere, where most homes and shops are fitted with elaborate wrought iron gates and windows that look into patios filled with potted flowers and ferns. Elsewhere, public parks and gardens enhance the city's array of massive architectural forms.

Seville lies on the banks of the Guadalquivir River, 35 miles from its mouth on the Atlantic Ocean, and 26 feet above sea level. It has been an important commercial port for centuries, and is the country's only inland harbor for oceangoing vessels.

The city is the site of one of the finest educational institutions in Spain, the University of Seville, whose courses in literature, history, and Spanish-American relations are of special interest.

Seville is not a city of foreign colonies. Practically no American business community exists here, although American firms are well represented by local Spanish agents.

The climate is hot and dry in summer, pleasant in spring and fall, and damp and chilly in winter. From June to September, the temperature often exceeds 100°F and, on winter nights, sometimes fall below freezing. Temperatures can vary as much as 20 degrees between day and night.

Education

Good private schools are available in Seville for Spanish-speaking children from kindergarten through high school. Some children are enrolled in local private schools; however, Americans are experiencing difficulty registering in the better schools as demand for

enrollment exceeds space. Some parents have found that Spanish public schools do not provide adequate individual attention, since classes tend to be large (40 to 50 students).

The University of Seville is one of the finest in Spain and offers a wide variety of liberal arts and professional programs. The courses in Spanish literature, history, and Spanish-American history and relations are of particular interest. An American liberal arts junior college, Columbus International, operates in Seville. The city has several English-language reading centers which charge nominal membership fees. English-language books are available in the main bookstores.

Recreation and Entertainment

Among the outstanding buildings in Seville are the great Gothic cathedral, third largest in the Christian world, with its famed Moorish-Spanish bell tower, La Giralda; the Alcázar, Moorish royal palace; the Royal Tobacco Factory, made world famous through Bizet's opera *Carmen*, and now used to house part of the University of Seville; and the Archives of the Indies, where the most important documents relating to the discovery and colonization of the Americas and the Philippines are preserved.

Southern Spain offers many interesting places to visit on weekends. The beaches along the Atlantic Coast can be reached by car in less than two hours. The internationally popular resorts of the Costa del Sol are about three to four hours away by car. The ski slopes of Granada can be reached by a four-hour car trip. In addition, many small towns and cities of Andalucía are rich with history of the Moorish occupation and the colonization of the New World. Most highways are adequate.

Tennis, swimming, hunting, and horseback riding are the main sports in Seville, but facilities are available only under the auspices of one of the sports clubs.

Seville has many good movie houses offering current U.S. and European films dubbed in Spanish. During winter and spring, cultural events include concerts, plays, and dance recitals. The city sponsors several cultural festivals during the year which offer fine entertainment at reasonable prices. Sevillian cultural life, however, centers on the family and church, and the city can be best described as quiet, charming, and somewhat provincial.

Several discotheques and nightclubs in Seville offer modern and flamenco dancing. Bullfights and soccer (*fútbol*) are extremely popular, and the local sporting events are first-quality.

Seville has five radio stations and two television channels. U.S. TV sets must be converted to European standards.

Holy Week processions are held in many Spanish towns, but those in Seville are noted for their color and religious enthusiasm. The Holy Week ceremonies (*ferias mayores*) are characterized by processions of robed and hooded members of the city's numerous religious brotherhoods, accompanied by elaborate religious floats carried by teams of stevedores.

During these periods, the city is crowded, lodgings are hard to find, and prices are double or higher.

Within two weeks of Holy Week, the annual April Fair (*Feria de Abril*) is celebrated. It consists of six days of festivities, including daily horse parades, a trade fair, a carnival, a number of circuses, a series of bullfights, and dancing and socializing in *casetas* (small houses) until early morning.

Seville has an American Women's Club composed of both Spanish and American members. The club devotes itself to fund raising and charitable works as well as to luncheons, tours, and other activities.

Bilbao

Bilbao, capital of the Province of Vizcaya, has a population of 354,000; inclusion of the adjacent metropolitan area brings that figure to almost one million. Bilbao is in the narrow Nervión River valley, about 10 miles inland from the Bay of Biscay. In many ways, it resembles comparable industrial cities in mountainous areas of the U.S., such as Pittsburgh, with the added charm of "old Bilbao" and its crowded, maze-like *siete calles*.

Bilbao's latitude is roughly that of Boston, but moist winds off the bay bring relatively cool summers and mild winters with mostly above-freezing temperatures. Rainfall averages 55 inches a year. Because of temperature inversion and smoke from the factories, the skies are frequently overcast, and air pollution is recognized as a serious problem.

Bilbao is the largest city in Euzkadi, or Basque, country. Ethnically, culturally, and linguistically, the Basques consider themselves distinct from the rest of Spain. Their origins are unknown and, unlike other Spaniards, they were barely influenced by the Romans, and unconquered by the Moors. It is believed that they may be descendants of a late Paleolithic civilization. They are generally a serious, hard-working, religious people with close family ties. Although only a small portion of the urban population still speaks the ancient tongue, most Basques proudly maintain their individuality.

Education

Bilbao has a number of private *colegios* (schools providing education through high school) operated by Catholic religious orders. Instruction is in Spanish, which means a difficult adjustment for an American child without a good knowledge of the language. A summer or semester of intensive Spanish tutoring privately, or at the small Berlitz school in Bilbao should prepare an American child for this educational experience. *Colegios* are not coedu-

cational. The school year follows the U.S. academic schedule.

The American School of Bilbao, in the suburb of Berango, offers an American curriculum in English from kindergarten through eighth grade. Organized by the American community in 1967 as a nonprofit coeducational institution, the school now seeks the majority of its students from the local community, since several large American firms have left the Bilbao area. Currently most of the 266 students are Spanish. The principal is American and teachers are qualified English-speaking instructors. Bus service is provided. A parent-teacher organization organizes activities. The U.S. State Department provides a small subsidy to the school. The mailing address is: Apartado 38, Las Arenas, Vizcaya.

Gaztelueta, near Las Arenas, is one of the better private Spanish-language boys' schools. It offers many extras, such as sports and music, as well as a sound education along lines of the Spanish *bachillerato*, including instruction in English.

Girls may attend the Irish Nuns School in Lejona. The school offers the Spanish *bachillerato* and instruction is in Spanish. Normally a waiting list precedes admission.

Students with adequate language preparation may be interested in the French and German schools. The Instituto Francés offers the *bachillerato elemental* for boys and girls in Spanish and French. The German School, also coeducational, offers a secondary education in German, as well as the Spanish *bachillerato* in Spanish and German.

The school day in Spanish schools starts about 9 a.m. and ends between 6 and 7 p.m. American textbooks and correspondence study programs can be used to supplement studies at a *colegio*. Nearly all private schools offer bus transportation and organized athletic programs.

Two universities are located in Bilbao: the prestigious Jesuit-run University of Deusto which has commercial, law, philosophy, and science faculties and an institute of language studies; and the newer (1980) University of the Basque Country, which combines older, well-known faculties of economics and engineering of the former University of Bilbao, with newer faculties on a campus in the suburb of Lejona. To enroll in Spanish universities, students coming from the U.S. will need various documents, some of which should be validated at the Spanish Embassy or a consulate in the U.S.

Interested adults can take lessons in Spanish cooking, decoration, crafts, and literature.

Some universities offer summer courses for foreigners, including the prestigious Summer University of Menendez Pelayo in Santander. Private tutors are available to give Spanish-language classes, but at a high price. Several good art schools and galleries are available for painting enthusiasts.

Recreation and Entertainment

Bilbao has limited sports facilities. Opportunities for golf, tennis, and swimming are available, but the climate does not lend itself easily to a great deal of outdoor activity. The city has a riding stable and boat mooring facilities. Spectator events include soccer, *jai alai*, and bull-fights in summer.

Skiing is good in the French Pyrenees, and both Spanish and French ski resorts are within a four-to-six hour drive. Candanchu, Formigal, and Baqueira-Beret are Spanish resorts similar to U.S. ski areas. Smaller, less expensive ski areas are within a two-hour drive at La Rioja, Santander, and Burgos.

Hiking and mountain climbing are popular sports with the Basques, and many clubs promote weekend and longer trips.

Inland fishing for trout and salmon is popular, especially in Oviedo and Santander. In season, some hunting is possible for birds, small game, and even an occasional wild boar.

The Bay of Biscay provides opportunities for swimming and boating, although possibilities for sailing and water-skiing are limited. Several beaches may be reached within 15 to 25 miles of Bilbao. Since most, however, are near polluted rivers and streams, few are completely safe for swimming. A favorite swimming spot of resident Americans is the extensive beach area of Laredo in the Province of Cantabria, 75 miles from Bilbao. A number of Bilbao residents have bought new summer condominium apartments on the Laredo shoreline. Sea-fishing enthusiasts can join a yachting club in Legueitio, 37 miles from Bilbao.

Bilbao has many movie theaters. All foreign films are dubbed in Spanish. Spanish plays and musical comedies are presented at fiesta time. Concerts are held during late fall, winter, and early spring. The Bilbao Symphony Orchestra and the new Euskadi Symphony Orchestra, based in San Sebastián, offer regular concert series. The Philharmonic Society, *Conciertos Arriaga*, and the Bank of Bilbao sponsor top-quality visiting artists.

After the *Semana Grande* in late August, Bilbao has a brief season of *zarzuela* (Spanish operetta) and opera. The Opera Society offers a cycle of six operas featuring world-renowned artists. Choral music is a local specialty offering frequent concerts and occasional visits by internationally known choral groups. The *Sociedad Coral de Bilbao* offers high-quality performances and welcomes foreigners.

The American community in Bilbao is small, and few special activities are organized for Americans. The American International Women's Club meets once each month and organizes charitable, social, and cultural activities. The American School of Bilbao Parent-Teacher

Organization sponsors frequent social events.

Valencia

The picturesque city of Valencia is located in eastern Spain on the Turia River, 175 miles east of Madrid. With a population of about 739,000, Valencia is Spain's third largest city. Situated in a fertile garden region near its busy Mediterranean port of El Grao on the Gulf of Valencia, Valencia is an important industrial and commercial center. Textiles, metal products, chemicals, furniture, and *azulejos* (colored tiles) are produced here.

Historically, Valencia was a Roman city as early as the second century B.C. It belonged to the Moors from the eighth through the 13th century. The legendary El Cid, Spanish conqueror and national hero, ruled the city from 1094 to 1099. Valencia was taken by James I of Aragón in 1238, and then rose to a cultural and intellectual importance rivaling that of Barcelona. The university was founded in 1501 and, during that century, Valencia achieved scholarly and literary eminence.

Today, Valencia is a popular winter resort, surrounded by fragrant orange groves. The old part of the city features blue-tiled church domes and narrow streets, while the modern section has tree-lined avenues and promenades. Landmarks include La Seo (a cathedral built in the 13th to 15th centuries) and its Gothic bell tower; the Torres de Serranos, 14th-century fortified towers built on Roman foundations; La Lonja, the Gothic silk exchange; and the Renaissance palace of justice. There is also a superb art gallery in the Convento de Pio V.

One of Spain's most popular fiestas is held in Valencia from March 17 through March 19. Large allegorical wood and papier-mâché sculptures known as *fallas* are built in the streets, with prizes awarded to the best. At the end of the fair, on the night of March 19, the sculptures are burned in huge bonfires to the

accompaniment of a stupendous fireworks display.

Málaga

Málaga, the birthplace of Pablo Picasso, lies on the fabulous Costa del Sol in southern Spain. Situated on the Bay of Málaga, it is one of the most important ports on the Spanish Mediterranean; from here, major exports are made of wine, olive oil, and almonds. The sweet Málaga wine produced in the surrounding region is known worldwide. Málaga's mild climate and beautiful beaches, make it one of Andalucía's busiest and most popular resorts.

The city was founded in the 12th century B.C. by the Phoenicians, and later belonged to the Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths, and Moors. It became an important seaport for the kingdom of Granada in the 13th century, falling to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain in 1487. Early in the 19th century, the city was briefly under French occupation.

Today, Málaga has a population of 532,000. The city is mostly modern, but also has several historic buildings, including a 16th-century cathedral, a citadel, and the ruins of a Moorish fortified castle.

Saragossa

The leading city of the Aragón region is Saragossa (in Spanish, Zaragoza). Located in northeast Spain, 185 miles from Madrid, Saragossa has a population of 605,000, making it the fifth largest city in the country. Situated in a fertile, irrigated agricultural region, it is an important commercial and communications center that manufactures wood products, foodstuffs, and paper.

An early Roman city, Saragossa was originally named Caesarea Augusta by Emperor Augustus. The Goths conquered the city in the fifth century, and Moorish forces took it in the eighth century. The Moors



Courtesy of Ellen Bowden

Street in Valencia

defeated Charlemagne in his bid to gain control of Saragossa in 778. Alfonso I of Aragón conquered the city in 1118 and made it the capital of his kingdom. Later, in the 19th century, Saragossa played an important role in the Peninsular War.

Today, the city is a cultural center rich in Moorish-influenced art. Its university, founded in 1533, now has nearly 35,000 students. Landmarks include two cathedrals—La Seo, built in the 12th through 16th centuries and formerly a mosque; and El Pilar (built in the 17th century), containing frescoes by Antonio Velazquez (1723–1794) and Francisco José de Goya (1746–1828).

OTHER CITIES

Situated in a fertile agricultural region, **BADAJOS** has a population of 136,000. Located in southwestern Spain near the Portuguese

border, Badajoz is 200 miles from Madrid. Food processing is the main industry here; the city is also actively involved in trade with Portugal. Historically, Badajoz was a fortress city that came to prominence in the 11th century as the seat of the Moorish empire. Badajoz's numerous attacks through the centuries were the reason for its strong fortifications. Landmarks in the city include a 13th-century cathedral and the ruins of a Moorish citadel.

BADALONA is a northeastern suburb of Barcelona, located five miles outside the city on the Mediterranean. This industrial center's estimated 209,000 residents are employed in chemical, textile, leather goods, and liquor manufacture. Limited agricultural processing is also conducted. The 15th-century monastery of San Jerónimo de la Murtra is the city's most striking landmark. A local museum contains Roman relics.

BURGOS, 130 miles north of Madrid, is situated in Old Castile on a mountainous plateau, at an altitude of 2,800 feet. With a population of about 163,000, Burgos is a trade center with a large tourist industry. As one of the ancient capitals of Castile, Burgos is known for its historic tradition and outstanding architecture. The city was also the birthplace of the Spanish hero, El Cid (1040–1099), who is buried here in the cathedral. Burgos was founded about 855, and was first the seat of the county of Castile and later the capital of the Castilian kingdom under Ferdinand I. The city's cultural importance diminished when the royal residence was moved to Toledo. However, Burgos was the capital of Franco's regime during the civil war of 1936 through 1939. The cathedral, begun in 1221, is one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in Europe. Constructed in white limestone, its lofty, filigree spires dominate the city's skyline.

CÁDIZ is situated in southwestern Spain, on a promontory just off the mainland on the Bay of Cádiz. With a population of 140,000, the city exports wine and other agricultural items, and imports coal, iron, and foodstuffs. Industries include fishing and shipbuilding. Cádiz is a clean, white city with palm-lined boulevards and parks. The Phoenicians founded a town here about 1100 B.C. and the port became a tin and silver market. In the third century B.C., it was taken by the Romans and flourished until the fall of Rome. The discovery of America revived Cádiz; many ships from America unloaded their cargoes here, and Christopher Columbus sailed from Cádiz on his second voyage across the Atlantic in 1495. When Seville's port was partially blocked by a sandbar in 1718, Cádiz became the official center for New World trade. However, as Spain lost its colonies in America, Cádiz again declined in importance. Landmarks in the city include a 13th-century cathedral, originally built in Gothic style, but rebuilt in Renaissance form. Cádiz has several museums and an art gallery. Bartholome Murillo (1618–1682) fell from a scaffold to his death here while painting the *Marriage of St. Catherine*; the painting hangs in the church of the former Capuchin convent.

CARTAGENA is the site of the country's main Mediterranean naval base and the finest harbor on the east coast. The city is situated 28 miles south of Murcia, and has roughly 180,000 residents. Cartagena has smelting works, and manufactures glass and esparto (grass) fabrics. Its importance as a port diminished early in this century with the development of other large coastal cities. The Carthaginian general, Hasdrubal, founded Cartagena in the third century B.C. It flourished under the Romans as Carthago Nova. The Moors ruled the area from 711 to 1269, when it was taken by James I of Aragon. Philip II (1527–1598) made Cartagena a major naval port. Landmarks include a medieval Gothic cathedral and the ruins of the Castillo de la Concepción castle,

constructed over Roman foundations in the 12th century. Iberian, Greek, and Roman artifacts can be seen in an archaeological museum here.

CASTELLÓN DE LA PLANA (also called Castellón) is a seaport and provincial capital. Located 40 miles northeast of Valencia in the east, the city has an estimated population of 142,000. Paper, porcelain, and wool are among manufactures here; tourism is a growing industry. Landmarks include the Gothic Santa María Church, with its detached belfry, and a town hall, built in the 17th century. Castellón de la Plana was founded on nearby La Magdalena Hill. In 1251, its residents petitioned to have it moved to its present site on a plain near the Mediterranean. The city became the capital of Castellón Province in 1833.

CÓRDOBA (also spelled Cordova) is located on the Guadalquivir River, 175 miles south of Madrid. Historically, Córdoba flourished under the Romans before passing to the Visigoths and Moors. In the eighth century, it became the seat of an independent emirate which included most of Muslim Spain. Córdoba was renowned as a Muslim and Jewish cultural center and was one of the greatest and wealthiest cities in all of Europe. Its noted mosque, begun in the eighth century, is among the finest examples of Muslim architecture. Known for its gold, silver, silk, and leather artistry, the city reached its peak under Abd ar-Raham III, but then declined and was conquered by Ferdinand III of Castile in 1236. In 1238, the mosque became a cathedral. Córdoba never regained its former splendor. The city's modern industries include brewing, distilling, textile manufacturing, and metallurgy. The population today is approximately 313,000.

The defeated Spanish Armada took refuge in 1588 in **GIJÓN**. Today, the city is one of Spain's major seaports, located on the Bay of Biscay. With a population of 267,000, Gijón is an industrial and commercial cen-

ter producing steel, iron, chemicals, glass, tobacco, and foodstuffs. It exports large amounts of coal and iron. A pre-Roman settlement, Gijón was recaptured from the Moors in the eighth century, and flourished under the early Asturian kings. Noteworthy landmarks here include Roman baths; palaces built in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries; a 15th-century church, and many mansions dating back at least 300 years.

A major tourist center, **GRANADA** is in southern Spain, about 180 miles from Madrid. Situated at the foot of the Sierra Nevada, Granada has a population exceeding 244,000, and attracts many visitors because of its art treasures and rich history. It also is a trade and processing point for an agricultural center that is rich in minerals. Originally a Moorish fortress, it became the seat of the Kingdom of Granada in 1238. The Moorish influence in Granada gave the city great splendor, making it a center of commerce, industry, science, and art. Granada is the site of the Alhambra, the famous Moorish citadel and royal palace that dominates the city from a hill. The summer residence of the Moorish rulers—Palacio del Generalife—has beautiful gardens. The city's 16th-century cathedral contains the tombs of Ferdinand and Isabella.

LA CORUÑA, with a population of 242,000, is an Atlantic summer resort in northwestern Spain. A distribution center for the surrounding farm area, La Coruña has an important fishing area, as well as shipyards and metalworks. The city reached its height late in the Middle Ages as a textile center and port. It was the departure point of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and was sacked by Sir Francis Drake 10 years later. A 13th-century church, and the Roman Torre de Hércules, now a lighthouse, are landmarks today. Glazed window balconies (*miradores*) are characteristic of La Coruña. Just north of the city is the port of El Ferrol del Caudillo (population 87,700), the site of the most important naval base in Spain, built in the 18th century.

LEÓN is located in northwestern Spain at the foot of the Cantabrian Mountains, about 175 miles from Madrid. The capital of the province of the same name, León, with a population of over 138,000, is an agricultural and commercial center. Originally a Roman city, León was reconquered from the Moors in the seventh century by Alfonso III of Asturias. León replaced Oviedo as Asturias' capital in the 10th century and flourished until the 13th century when the city of Valladolid, to the northwest, became the favored residence of the kings. León still has a medieval atmosphere and a number of historic buildings which attract tourists. The Spanish Gothic cathedral (built during the 13th and 14th centuries) is noteworthy.

The trade center of **LOGROÑO** lies on the Río Ebro, 155 miles northeast of Madrid in the north-central region. This is an agricultural and wine-growing area, known for its Rioja wine. Saw milling and textiles number among Logroño's industries. The city has old and new quarters, and ruins of an ancient wall. Landmarks include three churches, a bridge dating to the 12th century, and the Instituto, an art-reproduction museum. Logroño originated in the Roman era. Much of its growth took place in the Middle Ages because it was on the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela. The city has approximately 128,000 people.

MURCIA is situated on the Segura River in southeast Spain, about 200 miles from Madrid. Just inland from the Mediterranean coast, Murcia lies in one of Spain's finest garden regions. For many years, the silk industry was important in the city, but has declined. Food processing and other light industries are currently part of the economy, as well as the mining of lead, silver, sulfur, and iron in the neighboring region. The city rose to prominence under the leadership of the Moors and served as the capital of the independent kingdom of Murcia. Landmarks include a Gothic cathedral (built in the 14th and 15th centuries) and the episcopal palace. The city, whose current population

is close to 357,000, also has a university founded in 1915.

OVIEDO is one of Spain's most important industrial centers. A city of approximately 200,000 residents, Oviedo is located in northwestern Spain less than 25 miles south of the Bay of Biscay. Oviedo is situated near the Cantabrian Mountains mining district; among the products manufactured here are gunpowder, firearms, and textiles. Established about 760, Oviedo was the capital of the Asturian kings, flourishing in this role during the ninth century. When the capital was moved to León early in the 10th century, Oviedo declined. Landmarks include a cathedral, built in 1288, that contains the tombs of the Asturian kings. Camara Santa, next to the cathedral, houses its sacred relics and treasures, and is known throughout Spain. Oviedo also has a university, founded in 1604.

PAMPLONA is probably most recognized outside of Spain for the part it plays in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. This northern Spanish city is the site of the Fair of San Fermin and, described in Hemingway's novel, the feast is characterized by the running of bulls through the streets to the arena. The tradition continues today, and the event becomes increasingly more dangerous as daring young men participate in this age-old event. Pamplona is also an important communications, agricultural, and industrial center that produces chemicals and kitchenware. As an ancient Basque city, Pamplona was repeatedly captured between the fifth and ninth centuries; however, none of its conquerors—including Charlemagne—controlled it for long. In 824, the Basque kingdom of Pamplona (later called Navarre) was founded and the city remained its capital until 1512. Surrounded by old walls, Pamplona has a Gothic cathedral (built in the 14th and 15th centuries) and a university, founded in 1952. The population is about 183,000.

SALAMANCA is a city of 159,000 residents in west-central Spain,

about 110 miles northwest of Madrid. Situated on the Tormes River at an altitude of 2,600 feet, it has food processing and other industries. Salamanca is an ancient city, captured by Hannibal in 220 B.C. The establishment of the University of Salamanca by Alfonso IX of León in 1218 brought the city world acclaim, making Arabic philosophy available. The university is the repository of many important manuscripts. The city was also the center of Christian Spanish cultural life and theology during the late Middle Ages and throughout the Renaissance. Salamanca displays many forms of architecture, among them a Roman bridge, an old Gothic cathedral, and a new cathedral that combines Gothic, plateresque, and baroque styles. Its Plaza Mayor has been described as one of the finest squares in the country. There are many beautiful palaces here, especially the Casa de las Conchas, so named for the scallop shells on its facade.

SAN SEBASTIÁN is located in northern Spain at the mouth of the Bay of Biscay, just southwest of the French border. Situated in the Basque region at the foot of Mt. Urgull, San Sebastián has approximately 180,000 residents. Once a summer residence of Spanish royalty, the city is still a popular warm weather resort. Its industries include fishing, steel works, and paper making. San Sebastián was nearly destroyed in 1813, during the Peninsular War, when it was the scene of a fierce battle between Wellington's forces and the French. The San Sebastián Pact, which hastened the fall of the Spanish monarchy, was signed in the city in 1930.

SANTANDER is one of Spain's important ports, as well as a summer resort. Located in northern Spain on the Bay of Biscay, Santander has a population today of about 184,000. Following the discovery of America, Santander became one of the busiest ports in northern Spain, and was the site of a former royal summer palace. Santander's industries include ironworks and shipyards, largely developed

through the exploitation of nearby mines. In 1941, the city's business district and the 13th-century cathedral were destroyed in a fire, but have since been rebuilt. Santander is the site of an internationally known summer university. The Altamira Caves near Santander contain some of mankind's oldest, best-preserved prehistoric paintings.

TOLEDO is one of Spain's most important cities from a historical and cultural viewpoint and often is called the soul of the country. Located in central Spain, 50 miles south of Madrid, it is situated on a granite hill surrounded on three sides by a river gorge. Toledo's origins are pre-Roman and its ancient name was Toletum. Conquered by the Romans in 193 B.C., the city became an archiepiscopal see dominated by powerful ecclesiastics. As capital of the Visigothic kingdom, Toledo was the site of several major church councils. It enjoyed its greatest prosperity under Moorish rule, 712–1085, becoming the center of Moorish, Spanish, and Jewish cultures. An important product of the city was the Toledo sword blade, introduced by Moorish artisans and famous worldwide for strength, elasticity, and craftsmanship. Silk and wool textiles were other important products. While commercial importance declined in the 16th century, Toledo gained prominence as the spiritual center of Spanish Catholicism. It was also the center for mysticism, symbolized by the artist El Greco (1541–1614), whose name has become synonymous with the city. Today, with a current population of over 61,000, it has changed little since El Greco painted his *View of Toledo*. It is surrounded by Gothic and Moorish walls, and its chief landmark is the *alcazar*, the fortified palace which was originally a Moorish structure. The Gothic cathedral here, one of the finest in Spain, houses many of El Greco's paintings. Several other buildings in Toledo have paintings by this celebrated master, whose given name was Kyriakos Theotopoulos (El Greco, the Greek, was a sobriquet).

VALLADOLID, in north-central Spain, 80 miles north of Madrid, is a communications and industrial center, as well as an important grain market. With a current population of about 319,000, Valladolid's origin is obscure, but the city has played a large role in Spanish history. The Christians took Valladolid from the Moors in the 10th century. It became prominent in the 12th and 13th centuries, and replaced Toledo as the residence of the Castilian kings in the 15th century. Famous for its festivals and tournaments, Valladolid was the scene of the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1469. Christopher Columbus died here in 1506. The city declined when Madrid was named the country's capital in 1561; it served briefly as capital from 1600 through 1606. Today, Valladolid is an important cultural center; its university, founded in 1346, has a large library with valuable manuscripts. Landmarks include Columbus' house and the house where Miguel de Cervantes wrote the first part of *Don Quixote*.

VIGO, situated in northwestern Spain on an inlet of the Atlantic Ocean, is one of the country's most active ports. A center for tuna and sardine fishing, Vigo has shipyards, canneries, petroleum and sugar refineries, and several light industries, as well as a naval base. In 1702, galleons containing American gold and jewels were destroyed in the bay by the British and Dutch. Several galleons sank, and it is thought that much of the treasure is still at the bottom of the bay. The current population is 286,000.

ZAMORA is a communications and agricultural center on the Duero River in northwest Spain, 25 miles from the Portuguese border and 125 miles from Madrid. Situated in a strategic position, Zamora was contested several times during the Middle Ages. Today, visitors can still see some of the medieval fortifications, as well as a 12th-century Romanesque cathedral. The residential count is over 55,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Spain is composed of portions of the Iberian mainland, the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands, and the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African coast. The nation totals 194,880 square miles, slightly smaller than the area of Nevada and Utah combined.

Spain's most striking topographical features are its elevation and its internal division by mountain and river barriers. The peninsula rises sharply from the sea, with only a narrow coastal plain except in the Andalusian lowlands. Most of the peninsula is a vast plateau broken by mountains, gorges, and broad, shallow depressions. Spain has few bays, virtually no coastal islands, and a scarcity of natural harbors. A knowledge of the geography of Spain is important to an understanding of the nation's history.

Madrid's climate is predominantly dry, sunny, and agreeable. Because of its elevation (about 2,000 feet above sea level) and its proximity to mountains, Madrid often experiences wide variations in temperature. These weather changes (and chronic air pollution) may aggravate respiratory ailments. In winter, temperatures may sometimes drop slightly below freezing, and many winter days can be uncomfortably cold (although not nearly as severe as in the northern U.S.). Summers are quite warm, with average midday temperatures of 95°F to 100°F common, but some say the dry heat of Madrid is not uncomfortable. Except at the height of summer, evenings and nights are cool. Daily mean temperature ranges from 50°F to 68°F during 8 months of the year. Rainfall is scarce, except during a brief rainy season in October and November. Snow, uncommon in Madrid, usually becomes rain and slush by early afternoon.

Mildew is rare, and the city is fairly free of winged pests. Flies are sometimes noticeable because of the lack of window screens in many homes and apartments. Cockroaches, ants, and wool-eating moths can be minor problems in some locations, but local products are available to prevent damage.

Population

Peninsular Spain, the Balearic Islands, and the Canary Islands have a population of about 50 million (2001 estimate). Population density is comparable to New England's and is much lower than that of most European countries.

Madrid has over 4.7 million persons in its metropolitan area, and Barcelona has over 2.8 million. Barcelona, the second largest city, is Spain's principal commercial and industrial city and a major regional center within the European Community (EC).

The 48 provinces of peninsular Spain are divided geographically and ethnically into 15 so-called Autonomous Regions. The Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands make up the remaining two Autonomous Regions.

Castile-Leon

The territory roughly encompassed by the northern part of the kingdom of Castile, known previously as Castilla la Vieja. The cities of Burgos, Leon, and Valladolid are the most populous centers in the region.

Castile-La Mancha

South of Madrid and previously known as Castilla la Nueva, the region also formed part of the old kingdom of Castile. Toledo, the capital of Visigothic Spain, is the most prominent of the region's population centers.

La Rioja

A small region in northern Spain best known for its production of red wines.

Madrid

The region established to encompass the national capital and its metropolitan area.

Galicia

The northwestern region of Spain is inhabited by the Gallegos, whose Celtic culture has much in common with that of Britain. The principal city is La Coruna. The cathedral in Santiago de Compostela has been world famous as a destination for Christian pilgrims for a millennium.

Asturias

A small mountainous region in northern Spain, which served as a refuge for Spanish Christians during the height of the Muslim conquest of the peninsula.

Cantabria

A picturesque mountainous region on Spain's north coast.

Pais Vasco

The region in north central Spain inhabited by the Basques, known for their unique language, culture, and history of national pride and identity. Most of Spain's mining and heavy industry is located in the area. Strong regionalist sentiment prevails in the Basque country, and a small but intense minority demands independence from Spain.

Navarre

Formerly an independent kingdom with ethnic and historical ties to both the Basque region and southern France.

Aragon

Formerly the heart of one of the two major independent kingdoms in Spain. Zaragoza is its major city and capital.

Catalonia

Centered around Barcelona, the area is famous for its strong regional identity; commercial history; accomplishments in art; and unique language, Catalan, a mixture of Spanish and French. World-renowned artists of Catalonia include Picasso (who was actu-

ally born in Malaga but spent much of his early life in Barcelona), Dali, Miro, and Gaudi.

Valencia

Located farther south along the Mediterranean coast, the region is justly known for its oranges and rice and as the home of paella, the Spanish rice and seafood dish. The coast of Valencia is a major resort destination for European package tourism. Valencia is the principal city and seaport in the area.

Murcia

A small, sparsely populated single-province region on the southern Mediterranean coast.

Andalucia

Southern Spain is famous for flamenco music and its distinctive culture and architecture derived from more than seven centuries of Islamic civilization. Seville is the largest city in southern Spain and well known for its Holy Week religious festivities and its Spring Fair. Other cities in Andalucia are Granada, home to the famous Alhambra Palace, and Cordoba, site of La Mezquita, the centuries-old cathedral/mosque.

Extremadura

Spain's dry, parched southwest, best known as the birthplace of many of the "conquistadores" of the New World.

Public Institutions

Spain is a parliamentary democracy. King Juan Carlos I succeeded Francisco Franco as Chief of State in November 1975, in accordance with the provisions of the Franco-era Fundamental Laws, but the monarchy was later confirmed in the 1978 Spanish Constitution.

Spain's Constitution, ratified by public referendum on December 6, 1978, provides for a freely elected bicameral legislature, a government responsible to Parliament, the full range of basic civil rights and freedoms, an independent judiciary, the creation of autonomous government

in Spain's various regions, and the institution of the monarchy.

The head of government is the President of Government, or Prime Minister, who presides over the Council of Ministers, composed of officials who head the government ministries or hold ministerial rank.

The legislature, or "Cortes," consists of the lower chamber or "Congress of Deputies," which is popularly elected at the provincial level, and the upper chamber or Senate, which combines both directly elected seats and seats filled by voting in regional parliaments.

Spain is divided into seventeen regional units or "comunidades autonomias." Each region maintains its own governing bodies, including a chief executive or president and legislatures. The level of authority or control that each body has differs for each region.

Arts, Science, and Education

Spain is justly proud of its museums, cultural institutions, and historic buildings, which abound throughout the country. Madrid boasts the world-renowned Prado Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection of art, and the Reina Sofia Museum of Contemporary Art, along with the Royal Palace and other cultural sites. Barcelona has its own Picasso and Romanesque museums and collection of Thyssen art and many other provincial cities have artistic, cultural, and historical treasures representative of Spain's long history. The Spanish Museum of Modern Art in Cuenca houses some of the best paintings and sculptures of Spain's "Generation of the 1950s and 1960s."

Granada, with its grand heritage of Islamic art and civilization, and imperial Toledo are in fact cities preserved as museums. Sagunto (near Valencia) and Merida (near Badajoz) have well-preserved 2,000-year-old Roman amphitheaters and fortresses. Some of the oldest and

best preserved paintings of prehistory are found in the Altamira Caves near Santander (now open only on an appointment basis).

Spain is a nation of festivals. Among Spain's more notable religious festivals are Holy Week in Seville (usually April) and Las Fallas in Valencia (March). Other festivals pay homage to local customs as well as to the patron saint, such as the festival of San Fermin in Pamplona (with the famous running of the bulls through the city streets) in July. Still others, such as the Seville Fair (April) and the Sherry Festival at Jerez de la Frontera (September), popularize local life-styles, cultural heritage or the most important agricultural product of the region.

Madrid and Barcelona have active cultural calendars featuring performances throughout the year by top Spanish and foreign performing artists and groups. Both cities have scores of theaters, with mainstream and more innovative productions staged throughout the year. Opera is an important element of the cultural scene. There are excellent local flamenco, folk dance, and Zarzuela (operetta) performances, especially in summer. Both cities attract top foreign artists, including touring pop and rock groups. There are scores of cultural festivals throughout the country. Granada, for example, hosts an annual international music festival in early summer; Santander, an international piano competition in midsummer; and Barcelona, an international choir festival in late summer. Madrid's annual Autumn Festival is a highlight of the city's life.

All major U.S. films open in the principal theaters of Spain within a couple of months of their initial U.S. release. Many European films reach Madrid before opening in U.S. cities. The popularity of movies is evidenced by the thousands of theaters throughout the country and by the numerous important film festivals that are staged annually in Spain. One of the most important is the San Sebastian International Film Festival, also known as the "Produc-

ers' Festival," since mainly producers and directors attend.

Spain's educational system has been strained by rapid economic development, overenrollment, and social pressure. An all-inclusive educational reform law was passed in 1970. New universities have been created; the Madrid and Barcelona technical schools (university level) have merged to form polytechnic universities, bringing the number of Spanish state universities to 31 (32 with the summer University of Santander). Spain also has several private universities. New courses of study have been instituted that give the university student a diploma after 3 years of general study and the traditional "licenciatura" after 2 or more years of specialized study.

Over 60 U.S. universities operate summer or full-year programs in Spain. American-style junior colleges operate in Seville. Two university programs in Madrid offer a complete 4-year B.A. degree. Some American students complete language studies or special research through the assistance of the Instituto de Cooperacion Iberoamericano or the U.S.-Spanish Fulbright Commission for Educational Exchange. The Spanish scientific community, led by the Higher Council for Scientific Research, works closely with the American scientific community in a range of mutually rewarding and important research projects.

Commerce and Industry

The success of the Spanish economy following accession has converted Spain into one of the most ardent advocates of greater European integration. The opening of Spain to Europe sent a strong message to foreign investors that the country was a good base for exports to the EC. The impressive growth of the late 1980s was largely spurred by the inflow of over \$60 billion in foreign investment, mostly European.

The traditional image of Spain is that of a rural country producing

wine, olives, and citrus fruits. Agriculture, however, accounts for only 4% of gross domestic product (GDP). Industry, by contrast, accounts for 31%. Moreover, Spanish industry in the last decade has shifted from heavy industry, in declining sectors like steel or shipbuilding, to light industry and assembly.

The services sector accounts for 65% of the economy. Banking has been relatively profitable due to protection afforded the sector, and the EC single market will spur more efficient operations. Tourism brought \$19 billion into Spain in 1992 and is one of the important sectors of the economy. The emphasis is slowly shifting from low-cost package vacations to upscale tourism.

Future growth is most likely to occur through the telecommunications, environmental and aviation sectors.

In order to comply with EU environmental regulations, Spain will invest an estimated \$33 billion in industrial clean-up, sewage treatment, water and air pollution control, and water and soil treatment. In the aviation sector, the EU's liberalization policy has added new local regular airlines to cope with the increased demand for air transport services.

The foreign trade sector has boomed since Spain's accession to the EC. Solid growth of the economy and the inflow of foreign investment spurred the import of capital goods, while overall imports rose as the peseta appreciated.

In the next few years, Spain is expected to continue in efforts to reform labor laws and decrease the unemployment rate (14% in 2000) while adjusting to the economic policies of the European Union.

Spain adopted the euro as its national currency in February 2002.

Transportation

Spain has a well-developed transportation system in nearly all areas

of the country. Intercity flights connect all major cities, and the busy Madrid-Barcelona air corridor is served by shuttle flights arriving and departing throughout the day. A high-speed train connects Madrid and Seville, reducing travel time to just over 2-1/2 hours. The line will be extended to Barcelona before the end of the decade. There is excellent bus and train service throughout the country, both intercity and suburban. With the help of grants from the EC, Spain has built a modern national highway system, which is continuing to grow as more and more segments are opened and the system reaches into the more distant parts of the country.

Local

Public transportation in major cities is excellent. Bus routes serve most neighborhoods and suburban locations and are crowded with passengers during the workday. Madrid and Barcelona have extensive subway systems, although, in Madrid, the subway does not reach the western suburbs. In major cities, all taxis are metered and are plentiful at all times of the day and night. Public transportation costs less than in most U.S. cities. Street parking in Madrid is difficult, if not impossible, in most of the city center, although underground public parking garages are available almost everywhere.

Traffic in Madrid and Barcelona is faster-paced than in U.S. cities. Pedestrians should use designated crossing areas when crossing streets and obey traffic lights. Night driving on Fridays and Saturdays in urban areas may be dangerous due to drivers under the influence of alcohol. Night driving in isolated rural areas can be dangerous because of farm animals and poorly marked roads. Rural traffic is generally heavier in July and August as well as during the Christmas and Easter seasons.

Regional

There is good air and rail service between most major Spanish cities and places of interest. Rail fares are reasonable—first-class fares are

significantly higher—with special fares available for same-day returns. Airfares are usually slightly higher than in the U.S. Excellent bus service is usually available between most cities in Spain, but quality does vary. Rental cars are available, with or without a driver.

The Spanish National Railroad (RENFE) runs express trains (known as the Talgo) between all major cities in Spain. These trains have comfortable seats and dining facilities. Trains, with sleepers, serve selected cities in Spain and connect with trains serving all of Europe. The high-speed AVE serves Madrid and Seville.

Travel agencies in Spain's larger cities frequently offer domestic and international package tours at lower rates than those charged by airlines. Agencies will also procure rail tickets, charging the same as the carriers. Spanish airlines sometimes assess a fee for changing or canceling reservations.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

All types of domestic and international communications are available in Spain. The country enjoys excellent direct-dial domestic and international telephone service, although touch-tone phone service is still limited to portions of larger cities.

All telephone service in Spain is charged by units of use. Long-distance calling charges within Spain and to other European countries are high, and transatlantic rates to the U.S. are significantly more expensive than U.S. rates to Spain (although Spanish rates are dropping). Calls to the U.S. can be made using U.S. credit cards at rates lower than the Spanish long-distance rates. It is suggested that Individuals apply for a telephone credit card, such as those issued by AT&T, Sprint, or MCI, prior to arrival.

Radio and TV

The Spanish radio dial is crowded with stations, many broadcasting in FM stereo. Programming is dominated by talk radio and top 40 hits. Some stations feature Spanish music, and Spanish National Radio has an excellent classical station. A shortwave radio is useful for receiving the broadcasts of VOA and other European broadcasters.

There are national, regional, and local television channels, both government and commercial. There is no significant cable television in Spain, although one pay-TV channel does exist. Television programming varies, and all programming, including films and special events, is broadcast in Spanish.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

In addition to the Spanish press, newsstands in major cities throughout the country usually carry day-old foreign newspapers. *The International Herald Tribune* and the European edition of the *Wall Street Journal* are on sale on the day of publication, and the European editions of U.S. news magazines are readily available. British newspapers arrive the following day. Many newsstands in central Madrid carry the Sunday editions of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times* a few days after publication.

There are no public lending libraries in Spain. USIS operates research centers in Madrid and Barcelona for Spanish scholars interested in selected U.S. topics. The Embassy's Commercial Library has a small collection of reference materials to support U.S. exports and U.S.-Spanish business cooperation. Spain's National Library and the many specialized libraries and archives throughout Spain are usually open only to certified scholars. There are several bookstores in Madrid that sell English-language books, most published in Britain, at prices significantly higher than in the U.S.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Madrid and Barcelona have general practitioners and specialists in all fields. Many local doctors understand and speak English and are U.S. trained. Generally, rates for persons not covered by Spanish social security are higher than in the U.S. Some of the U.S.-quality dentists speak English, but they are in high demand and charge prices commensurate with their reputation and ability. In general, medical care in Bilbao is adequate, and several physicians and dentists are U.S. or U.K. trained. Many of the local hospitals are clean, but only a few offer facilities comparable to those in the U.S. One privately owned hospital, the Clinica V. San Sebastian, is comparable to U.S. hospitals in equipment and facilities.

The Clinica Quiron in Barcelona is a 50% U.S.-owned hospital with a large English-speaking staff and levels of care and equipment comparable to U.S. standards.

Most commonly prescribed medications are available in Spain, often at lower cost due to Spanish government subsidies. Similarly, most U.S.-brand nonprescription cold remedies are also available.

Community Health

Sanitary conditions are good in Spain's large cities. Street cleaning and municipal garbage removal, although occasionally interrupted by labor disputes, are normal. Modern apartment buildings supply soft hot water day and night and sufficient heat during winter. Soft coal burned for winter heating leaves pollutants not normally found in the air in U.S. cities. These pollutants and the predominant use of lead-based automobile fuel can and do aggravate allergies and may increase susceptibility to respiratory ailments. Air pollution and smog are serious problems and may at times reach menacing and bothersome levels in major cities such as Madrid.

Both fresh pasteurized and reconstituted milk and dairy products that meet U.S. specifications are available on the Spanish economy. Meats and poultry, fish and shellfish, and fresh fruits and vegetables are available all year locally. Cuts of meat differ from those in the U.S., and popular American steak cuts such as sirloin and T-bone may not always be available. Lamb, veal, pork, and chicken are popular throughout Spain and are of good quality. Fresh seafood from Spain's north coast is sold throughout the country and is excellent.

Infants and children up to age 13 need to take supplemental sodium fluoride tablets, as fluoride is not added to the water supply in Spain.

Preventive Measures

The most prevalent local illnesses are upper respiratory infections, gastroenteritis, influenza, measles, chicken pox, hepatitis, mumps, and whooping cough. No rabies has been reported for many years. Typhoid and tuberculosis are both still present in all regions but are far less prevalent than in the past. Keep immunizations current for tetanus.

Dry heat, common to most apartment buildings in winter, and extremely dry summers may cause skin irritations or aggravate allergies. Some of these problems may be alleviated by using a humidifier. Commercial skin moisturizers and humidifiers are available at Spanish stores and pharmacies.

Tap water is normally safe for drinking in Spain's major cities, although many visitors prefer to drink bottled water. However, occasional breaks in city water systems due to construction or old age require special precautions (i.e., boiling water and treating it with 2 drops of Clorox per quart, or buying bottled water). Nonpotable water signs are sometimes encountered in restroom facilities during travel to small towns and villages.

Because the water supply in Madrid is not fluoridated, fluoride drops or

tablets are recommended for children from birth to age 13.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport is required, but a visa is not required for tourist or business stays up to 90 days. Individuals who enter Spain without a visa are not authorized to work. For further information concerning entry requirements for Spain, travelers should contact the Embassy of Spain at 2375 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 728-2330, or the nearest Spanish consulate in Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, or San Juan. The web site of the Spanish Embassy in the United States is <http://www.spainemb.org>

Students planning to study in Spain should be aware of a recent change in Spanish immigration laws, which require applications for student visas to be submitted a minimum of 60 days before anticipated travel to Spain.

It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Spain in Washington, D.C. or one of Spain's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements. This is especially important if you are attempting to send any medications to Spain through postal channels.

Americans living in or visiting Spain or Andorra are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Madrid or at the U.S. Consulate General in Barcelona where they may obtain updated information on travel and security within Spain or Andorra. The U.S. Embassy in Madrid, Spain is located at Serrano 75; telephone (34)(91) 587-2200, and fax (34)(91) 587-2303. U.S. citizens who register in the Consular Section at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate listed below

can obtain updated information on travel and security within Spain or Andorra. Additional information is also available through the U.S. Embassy's Internet homepage at <http://www.embusa.es/index-bis.html>.

There is a U.S. Consulate in Barcelona, at Paseo Reina Elisenda 23-25; telephone (34)(93) 280-2227 and fax (34)(93) 205-5206.

There are also Consular Agencies in the following locations:

Malaga, at Avenida Juan Gomez Juanito #8, Edificio Lucia 1C, 29640, Fuengirola, telephone (34)(952)474-891 and fax (34)(952) 465-189, hours 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

La Coruna, at Canton Grande 16-17, telephone (34)(981) 213-233 and fax (34)(981) 222-808, hours 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Las Palmas, at Edificio Arca, Calle Los Martinez de Escobar 3, Oficina 7, telephone (34)(928) 222-552 and fax (34)(928) 225-863, hours 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Palma de Mallorca, Ave. Jaime III, 26 Entresuelo, 2-H-1 (97), telephone (34)(971) 725-051 and fax (34)(971) 718-755, hours 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Seville, at Paseo de Las Delicias 7, telephone (34)(954) 231-885 and fax (34)(954) 232-040, hours 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Valencia, at Doctor Romagosa #1, 2-J, 46002, Valencia telephone (34)(96)-351-6973 and fax (34)(96) 352-9565, hours 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Pets

A certificate of good health from a veterinarian duly notarized by a Spanish Consulate must accompany each pet. Airlines require the certificate of health to be dated less than 10 days prior to departure. If the Sanitary Inspector of Customs believes an animal may have a contagious disease (despite a certificate

of good health), the animal will be quarantined for 40 days. If it is then found to be in good health, it will be returned to owner.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Official currency as of February 2002 is the euro. The exchange rate is about 1.08EUR=US\$1 (May 2002).

Spain uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan. 6	.....	Epifania Del Senor (Epiphany)
Mar. 18	.....	St. Joseph's Day
Mar/Apr.	.....	Jueves Santo* (Holy Thursday)
Mar/Apr.	.....	Viernes Santo* (Holy Friday)
Mar/Apr.	.....	Easter*
May 1	.....	Fiesta De Trabajo (Labor Day)
May 2	.....	Fiesta De La Comunidad De Madrid
May 15	.....	San Isidro
July 25	.....	Saint James Day
Aug. 15	.....	La Asuncion De la Virgen
Oct. 12.	.....	Fiesta Nacional de Espana
Nov. 1	.....	Todos los Santos (All Saints' Day)
Nov. 9	.....	La Almudena
Dec. 6	.....	Dia de la Constitucion
Dec. 8	Inmaculada Concepcion
Dec. 25	Christmas

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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Stockholm, Sweden

SWEDEN

Kingdom of Sweden

Major Cities:

Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö, Uppsala

Other Cities:

Gävle, Halmstad, Helsingborg, Jönköping, Karlstad, Kristianstad, Landskrona, Linköping, Norrköping, Örebro, Västerås

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Sweden. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Long isolated in the far North, **SWEDEN** is a unique society: beginning in 1932, the Social Democrats, the trade union movement and Swedish business built a comprehensive social welfare structure in which every third Swedish worker is a government employee. Nearly 90 percent of industrial production is in private hands, however, and the Swedish economy is strongly oriented toward foreign trade. Neutral since the time of the Napoleonic Wars, Sweden maintained an activist foreign policy that emphasized multilateral diplomacy. The Swedes spoke of a "Swedish Model"—a "third way" equidistant between the capitalist West and the Communist East. But while about

85 percent of the work force still belongs to trade unions and social benefits still astound Americans, much that once characterized Swedish domestic and foreign policy is changing fast.

Since the end of the Cold War the Swedes have taken a primary role in the Baltic region, taking the lead in the Council of Baltic Sea States and actively supporting their Baltic neighbors. Sweden joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) and has placed hundreds of combat troops under NATO command in Bosnia. Sweden is a member of the UN Security Council through 1998.

A change with lasting consequences for Sweden was the decision to join the EU in January 1995. Trade policy is now negotiated in Brussels and Sweden coordinates foreign and security policy with other EU states. Nonetheless, Sweden is one of only three EU countries that did not join the common currency, the Euro.

Within Sweden itself, the severe economic downturn of the early 1990s saw real unemployment peak at 14 percent, compared to a postwar average of under 3 percent. The non-socialist government elected in 1991 reduced some taxes and the growth of social programs was stopped. But when unemployment remained stubbornly high, the vot-

ers in 1994 and again in 1998 turned again to the familiar Social Democrats. Swedish economic planners now face the greatest challenge to meeting the goal of full employment since the Depression. Social policy has also grown more complicated with the pluralization of Swedish society.

With a visit to Stockholm you will find a sophisticated city environment surrounded by beautiful countryside. Stockholm lies near a unique archipelago with thousands of islands accessible by private boats or ferries. The cost of basic goods and services in Sweden is high, but state subsidies put a wide range of cultural and recreational activities within reach of everyone.

MAJOR CITIES

Stockholm

Stockholm is Sweden's largest city. Founded in 1250, it has been Sweden's principal city since the time of King Gustav Vasa in the early 1500s. The ancient walls have long since disappeared, and many of the old houses have been renovated. The medieval city plan can be seen in the narrow, winding cobblestone streets and small squares of Gamla

Stan (Old Town). Reminders of Sweden's period as a great power in the 17th and 18th centuries are the Royal Palace and the House of Nobilities. Other historic landmarks are the Stock Exchange, the Foreign Ministry, the Royal Opera House, and the old Riksdag or Parliament building. The burial place of Sweden's nobility, the Riddarholmen Church, dates from the city's beginnings. Central Stockholm has a turn-of-the-century appearance, but modern apartment houses rise on Stockholm's outskirts. In the suburbs are many municipal housing projects; large, utilitarian apartment houses interspersed with grass and play areas.

Food

Stockholm regularly ranks among near the top in surveys of the most expensive cities for business travelers, and new arrivals face a series of surprises the first time they pay for some familiar item. By watching costs and adjusting spending habits, however, individuals can enjoy the high standard of living for which Sweden is also well known. The Swedish Government has used tax policy actively over the past 50 years as a tool for directing public consumption. As a rule of thumb, you can count on goods and services that are considered good for society to be relatively inexpensive in Sweden and those that are deemed detrimental to be costly. Public transport, education, the performing arts, and public recreation are relatively inexpensive. The price of alcohol, tobacco, and parking tickets are legendary high. Maintaining a private car costs more than it does in Washington, DC, but maintaining a boat costs less. Books, records, and CDs cost double what they do in the U.S., but more than 100 libraries in Stockholm lend them by the month for free. In general, shop for clothes, cosmetics, and durable goods before arrival.

One high cost expenditure that is impossible to avoid is food. High-quality food of every type is available in Stockholm. Fish and meat of all varieties are available on the local market, although meat cuts

differ from those in the U.S. Fresh fruits and vegetables are imported to the Swedish market from around the world. Throughout the winter, supplies of bananas, apples, pears, plums, grapes, pineapples, lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, broccoli, carrots, mushrooms, and endive are available. Excellent dairy products, including a large variety of cheeses are always available, and canned goods of every description can be purchased. Swedish frozen foods include orange juice, peas, spinach, broccoli, chicken, fish, and prepared dishes. Supermarkets are similar though generally smaller than those in the U.S.

Swedes keep traditions that often are centered around the preparation of special foods: crayfish in August, fresh lamb in September, goose on St. Martin's Day, lutefish and Jansson's Temptation at Christmas. In recent years, new immigrants have brought with them both foods and food stores, and new traditions have sprung up. For example, many observe the old custom of pea soup and pancakes on Thursdays; others now line up to meet the air shipment of fresh tropical fruits at the Thai grocery store.

Clothing

Men: Men need medium weight suits, an overcoat, raincoat, hat, warm gloves and scarves, and overshoes or boots. American-style suits, shirts, ties, socks, and underwear are available on the local market but at much higher prices than in the U.S. Tailor-made suits are available in Stockholm at prices comparable to the U.S. Sports gear and casual wear are widely available. All types of shoes are available at prices higher than in the U.S.

Women: Women need a good supply of warm dresses, slacks, sweaters, and coats, since they are worn about 9 months of the year. Boots or galoshes are worn regularly between November and April. Lined boots and galoshes, as well as good quality rain, and snow outfits are readily available in Stockholm, but are more expensive than Stateside

prices. Warm gloves, scarves, and caps covering the ears for winter are also available locally. Well cut and tailored dresses, suits, and coats are in the medium- to high-price range.

Although summers are not usually hot, bring summer clothes for the short summer season and for travel. Swedish shoe lasts are different from those in America, and some women have difficulty finding shoes that fit. Fashionable European shoes are widely stocked.

Good fur coats, ready-made or made-to-order, are not considered a luxury in Sweden. They are available at relatively moderate prices throughout Scandinavia.

Children: Children's clothing is available in wide variety. American blue jeans and sneakers are popular but expensive. Rain gear, clogs, boots, and winter outerwear are a relatively good buy locally. Narrow shoe sizes are difficult to find.

Supplies and Services

Almost everything is available in Stockholm but generally at higher prices. Stores stock many familiar brands, but you may wish to bring a supply of special cosmetics, hair preparations, and drugstore items.

Commercial dry-cleaning, shoe repair, and services in general are readily available, but at a higher price and with a longer wait than in the U.S. Hairdressing services are similar to those in the U.S.

Domestic Help

Daytime babysitters can be difficult to find for preschool children. Some families hire an au pair to help with the children and housework. Foreign domestic help traveling to work in Sweden must possess an employment visa in advance. In some cases, domestic help employed from a third country may be eligible for Swedish health benefits while residing in Sweden.

Daycare centers, Montessori schools, and parent-owned cooperatives are available; but often there is a waiting list.

It is difficult, but possible, to find domestic help in Sweden. Most such workers are foreign, salaries are high, and anyone planning to have a full-time live-in maid must be familiar with the working conditions for domestics established by Swedish law. These include a minimum wage and restrictions on access to public assistance by third-country nationals. Some people hire cleaning personnel by the hour, and extra help at receptions and dinners can be arranged.

Religious Activities

Until the year 2000 all Swedish citizens automatically become members of the Church of Sweden at birth if one of their parents is a member. In 2000, church and state will separate. Nearly 90% of the population belongs to the established Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Sweden; but regular church attendance is low: only 5% of the overall population are active churchgoers. The many church buildings are well maintained through support from taxes and income from land holdings. Services are usually held in Swedish. English services are also conducted at the interdenominational Immanuel Church, the Anglican Church of St. Peter and St. Sigfred, St. Jacob's Church, and the Roman Catholic Church of St. Eugenia. In addition, Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Moslem, Mormon, Methodist, Baptist, Mission Covenant, and Pentecostal churches are located in Stockholm. Services are usually in Swedish, although it is also possible to find services conducted in French, German, Spanish, and English.

Education

Most American children in the elementary grades attend the International School of Stockholm or the British Primary School. Both are English-language, coeducational schools. The school year has two terms beginning late August and January. School ends in mid June. Both schools may have waiting lists for admission.

The International School of Stockholm was founded in 1952 and is

located in downtown Stockholm. It is accredited by the European Council of International Schools and The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The International School curriculum combines elements of American and British School curricula. ISS has kindergarten through grade 9 and accepts children ages 4-15. Maximum class size is 25 in the lower school and 20 in the upper school. Facilities include a gym, computer class, music and art rooms. American standardized tests are given each year. For further information, contact: The Principal, Stockholm International School, Johannesgatan 18, 111 38 Stockholm, Sweden, tel: (46) (8) 412 40 00, fax: (46) (8) 8-10 52 89.

The British Primary School, founded in 1980, is located in Djursholm, a residential suburb north of Stockholm. The school enrolls children in the British equivalents of preschool and kindergarten through Grade 6. Each department offers an educational program designed specifically to meet the academic and social needs of the students. There are currently around 200 students, the largest representations are British and American. The majority of its teachers, coming from both Britain and the United States, are permanently based in Sweden. They are supported by specialists in EFL, French, Swedish, Music, and PE. The building includes a gymnasium, music room, library, computer studies room, art and pottery room, and a science area. For further information, contact Principal, British Primary School, Ostra Valhallavagen, 182 62 Djursholm, Sweden, tel: (46) (8) 755 2375, fax: (46) (8) 755 2635.

The English School is an independent school approved by the National School Board for grades 1-9. The school's educational program follows a modified Swedish curriculum with most subjects taught in English. Swedish is taught 6 lessons per week at two different levels, corresponding to the student's knowledge of the subject. For further information, contact: Principal, The Engelska Skolan, Valhallavägen 9,

114 22 Stockholm, Sweden, tel: (46) (8) 673 29 10, fax: (46) (8) 673 29 15.

American children in grades 10-12 often attend the Kungsholmen Gymnasium just west of the city center. Courses are offered in three lines of study in English: The International Baccalaureate, the Social Science line, and the Natural Science line. The International Baccalaureate Line admits students by examination and is aimed for students bound for competitive colleges in Europe and the U.S. Instruction is in English, and compulsory courses are Swedish, English, French, history, psychology, social science, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, music or drawing, and physical education. Electives are German, Russian, or Spanish. Fewer subjects are required in the Social Science Line and the Natural Science Line, but both have a college prep curriculum. For more information, contact: Kungsholmen's Gymnasium, International Section, Hantverkargatan 67-69, 112 38 Stockholm, Sweden, tel: (46) (8) 693 53 00, fax: (46) (8) 693 53 01.

Another educational option for children in high school is the Sigtunaskolan Humanistiska Laroverket, coeducational boarding school in Sigtuna, approximately 27 miles from Stockholm. The school offers a 3-year program in English leading to the International Baccalaureate degree. The school enrolls 200 day students and 300 boarding students. It is popular with Swedish families whose children have begun their education in English while living abroad. For further information, contact: Sigtunaskolan Humanistiska Laroverket, Manfred Bjorkquists alle 6-8, Box 8, 193 00 Sigtuna, Sweden, tel: (46) (8) 592 571 00, fax: (46) (8) 592 572 50.

Swedish public schools also accept American children, but Swedish is the language of instruction. Foreigners are given special tutoring. Children in Sweden begin school at age 7, and classes are held Monday through Friday.

Children with learning disabilities often find education difficult in Stockholm. Many of the disabilities recognized in the United States are either not recognized or are little understood here. If your children have learning disabilities or attention deficit disorder, contact the school directly to determine whether the school is capable of dealing with your child. Get any commitments from the school in writing.

Special Educational Opportunities

One out of every three adult Swedes is enrolled in an adult education program of some kind. Courses range from arts, crafts, and music to academic subjects and vocational training. Classes are held throughout the day and evening, and tuition costs are generally subsidized. Instruction is in Swedish.

The Swedish language is also taught in adult education programs in a variety of formats. These range from intensive full-time classes intended for immigrants who need to achieve fluency as quickly as possible to evening conversation groups designed especially for the diplomatic community.

Sports

Sweden is truly a sporting nation. One in every four Swedes belongs to one of 20,000 local sports clubs representing 61 different national associations. A year-round program of sports for all ages is organized in every commune (municipality). With a little effort and some basic Swedish, American family members can participate in these activities. Dozens of mass sports events are held each year, where the emphasis is on participation. In March, 12,000 cross-country skiers participate in the 90 kilometer "Vasaloppet" commemorating a 16th-century turning point in the formation of the Swedish state. The streets of Stockholm are cordoned off in May for the "Tjejtrampet," billed as the world's largest women's bicycle race with 6,000 participants. There is a regular calendar of recreational runs, from children's fun runs to the

Stockholm Marathon; the "Lidingöloppet" attracts over 25,000 men and women to its arduous cross-country trail.

Public indoor swimming pools are popular in the winter months. The most modern facilities have waves, currents, and waterfalls in addition to the standard "bastu" (sauna) and solarium. Many indoor pools are closed in the summer, with the expectation that people will take part in the brisk swimming offered by the Baltic Sea and Lake Malaren, whose waters reach 62°F in the summer.

Hiking, cycling, and walking are popular. Scenic paths follow the water in town and the forests and park areas in the outskirts of town. The "Kustlinien" is a bicycle path that runs from the center of Stockholm 120 miles both north and south. It is linked among the islands of the archipelago by 31 different ferry companies. Hunting in Sweden is limited to those invited by proprietors of game land. Duck, hare, deer, and moose are plentiful. Hunting rifles and shotguns can be purchased locally after first obtaining a license.

Many game fish can be found in and around Stockholm, and salmon rivers are convenient to the city. Salmon fishing in streams and rivers is tightly controlled, but in recent years, it has become common for anglers along Stockholm's waterfront to pull in fine salmon with no fees to pay. Trout are found in streams near the mountain range along the Swedish-Norwegian border; fishing rights there are not restrictive. All types of fishing tackle can be purchased locally. In Stockholm, fishing is permitted without a license, a unique privilege that has been enjoyed in the capital since the 17th century. The catch includes Baltic herring, pike, perch, cod, salmon, and trout depending on the time of year.

Tennis (which is primarily an indoor game in Sweden), squash, health club, badminton, golf, and bowling facilities are available.

Club memberships are expensive if not prohibitive. Nationwide, "Friskis & Svettis" offers popular and reasonable aerobics classes. Horseback riding may be enjoyed all year; bridle paths are well maintained, and several stables have indoor rings. Greater Stockholm is well equipped with cross-country ski trails (many lighted) and downhill beginners' slopes with lifts. The closest ski resort with a ski lift is in Salen, Dalarna, about a 5-hour drive from Stockholm. Ice skating is available on many public rinks and lakes; enthusiasts take part in long-distance skating on the waterways leading out to the Baltic.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

In only a few places in the world is boating so generally enjoyed. The season is short (May 15-September 15), but the Stockholm archipelago is beautiful and easily accessible for either sailing or motorboating. A unique Swedish legal custom, "Allemansratt," establishes conditions for camping and hiking on private property without disturbing the owners. There is a lively market for secondhand boats, and boat clubs are located all over Stockholm, although most have a waiting list. An easy way to get on the water is to enroll in one of the several boating courses and sailing camps organized for the public during the summer. Kayaking is popular.

Sight-seeing tours by bus and boat are available through tourist offices and along the waterfront. Nearby destinations include: Uppsala, a university town and site of a restored medieval cathedral, and Old Uppsala where Viking burial mounds are located (1-1/4 hours by car; 1 hour by train); Saltsjobaden, a seaside resort on an inlet of the Baltic (half-hour by car or train); Gripsholm Castle, a large fortress containing Sweden's national portrait gallery (1 hour by car, 3 hours by steam ferry across Lake Malaren); Skokloster Castle, built at the close of the Thirty Years' War and outfitted with late 17th-century furnishings and armaments (about 1-1/4 hours); Drottningholm Castle,



Skyline of Stockholm, Sweden

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

with its beautiful gardens and 18th-century opera theater (20 minutes by car or 45 minutes by boat); and Sigtuna, ancient Viking capital, site of several of the earliest churches in Sweden and of original 17th-century buildings (1 hour by car).

For longer trips, the walled Hanseatic city of Visby on the Baltic island of Götland, is an overnight boat ride or a 1-hour flight away. Many summer resorts on Sweden's west coast, including Bestad, hold international tennis matches. Lapland, north of the Arctic Circle, captivates visitors with its primeval beauty under a midnight sun. It is also possible to visit the crystal and glass factories in southern Sweden. In Småland, factories are located in the towns of Kosta, Boda, and Orrefors, which are 200 miles south of Stockholm and near the island of Öland, another popular summer resort area. The mountain regions along Sweden's border with Norway

attract skiers in the winter and hikers and whitewater rafters in the summer. Sweden's heartland, Dalarna, lies amid lakes and forests about a 4-hour drive north of Stockholm. The area is famous for its well-preserved folk culture, including the carved wooden horses that have become a symbol of Sweden overseas. Many tourists visit Dalarna to participate in the mid-summer celebrations, but regional cultural events, such as music and dance festivals are held throughout the year.

Charter flights (usually to warm weather resort destinations) are popular and are one of the best bargains in Sweden. Resort packages may include a 1- or 2-week visit, hotels, and meals at prices less than that of regular airfare. Another convenient excursion opportunity is a weekend trip to Finland, Russia, Estonia, or Lithuania on regularly scheduled ferries that leave from

Stockholm. The shipping companies vie with each other to provide amenities on these crossings, whose profits derive mainly from tax-free sales on board.

Entertainment

Stockholm has the Royal Opera and two symphony orchestras with performances from September to June. The Royal Dramatic Theater and more than 30 other theaters feature outstanding modern productions in Swedish. An English-speaking professional theater performs four plays a year. In summer, the opera performs period pieces at Drottningholm Court Theater, the world's oldest (1766) theater still in use. Stockholm's newest stage is the domed civic center known as Globen. Many well-known American entertainers making a European tour include a Globen performance. The facility also hosts international sports events, such as

the Stockholm Open Tennis Tournament in the Fall.

Swedes are avid moviegoers. More than 200 films are released in Sweden each year. They are shown in the original language with Swedish subtitles. Sweden supports the production of about 20 feature films a year through the Swedish Film Institute. Stockholm offers a variety of restaurants, nightclubs, bars, and discotheques similar to other European capitals. Jazz clubs, in particular, are a well-established tradition in the Old Town and the artists' quarter of Soder. Spectator events in Stockholm include trotting races, horse-races, regattas, tennis, soccer, ice hockey, high-speed ice skating, ski jumping, wrestling, boxing, swimming, and international athletic meets.

Social Activities

Social life in Stockholm depends to a great extent on individual effort and interests. The following clubs offer activities for Americans:

American Citizens Abroad in Sweden. This club provides a forum for Americans living outside the United States. Citizenship, taxation, social security, voting, education and health care are among the many nonpartisan issues that ACA addresses.

The American Club. For members of the business community, including Swedes doing business in the U.S. Monthly luncheons, periodic bridge and golf tournaments, and dances are held.

American Women's Club in Sweden. Membership open to all American women in Sweden, many of whom are married to Swedes. The Club has evening circles for those unable to attend functions during the day.

Club USA. A Social club for the younger set (20-35) of Americans and Swedes in Stockholm that holds social events once a month.

English-Speaking Community Club. Membership open to all

English-speakers in the Stockholm area. Cultural, recreational activities, and study clubs are organized for all age groups.

International Women's Club. For all English-speaking women: luncheons, bazaars, study groups, dances and tours.

Göteborg

Göteborg is Sweden's major seaport to the west, and its maritime traditions are more than 300 years old. When the foundations of the present city were laid in 1619, Dutchmen did the planning and building; and Germans, Britons, and Scotsmen helped the Swedes to pave the paths and roads of commerce through the city. Viking fleets gathered off the mouth of the Gota River as late as the 10th century to trade at big markets. The canals through the town originally formed the actual harbor area.

Göteborg's harbor is the biggest in Scandinavia, and the city ranks 35th among the world's largest seaports. About 85 regular shipping lines include Göteborg in their traffic schedules. A ship arrives or departs, on the average, every 15 minutes. The amount of cargo loaded or unloaded is estimated at 20.5 million metric tons per year. Frequent ferry connections link Göteborg with Jutland in Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands.

The city is well laid out and clean. Many parkways and lovely parks with bright summer flowers add much to its charm. Gentle hills surround the city, inviting the hiker to stroll among the woods and lakes.

Göteborg (or Gothenburg) is the home of about 15,000 enterprises and more than 300,000 employees. Some 720,000 people live in the immediate area (450,000 in the city proper), and about the same number visit here each year. Approximately 3,000 U.S. citizens live in or near Göteborg.

Recreation and Entertainment

During summer, thousands of Göteborg's inhabitants move to the country. After the dark, sunless winter, everyone is eager to enjoy fully the short summer, and coastal beaches and rocks are crowded with sunbathers. The west coast's numerous summer resorts and beaches offer an abundance of recreational activities. Göteborg has a few large, modern, indoor swimming pools, most of which are open year round. Besides swimming, some pools offer gymnastic rooms, sun rooms, steam baths, and massage. Göteborg also has the largest indoor stadium in Scandinavia and a modern, centrally located amusement park, Liseberg, open during summer.

Göteborg's tennis clubs offer numerous indoor and outdoor courts. Squash also is a favorite local sport. Skating is a popular winter sport enjoyed on the many area lakes. Skiing is only occasionally possible because of the lack of snow in this region; the winter sports enthusiast usually goes to northern Sweden or Norway.

The most popular sports on the west coast are boating and sailing, followed by fishing, golfing, and horseback riding.

Charter travel is surprisingly inexpensive in this area, and in most parts of Sweden. In winter, trips to warmer areas are favored.

Göteborg has three fairly large theaters. The City Theater (Stadsteatern) and the Folk Theater (Folkteatern) usually present plays. The Grand Theater (Stora Teatern) specializes in opera, operetta, and ballet. All productions are in Swedish. Concerts are presented each year from September to June in the Concert Hall (Konserthuset) and during summer in the Liseberg Concert Hall. American entertainers touring Sweden often include Göteborg on their schedule.

Movie theaters show American, English, Swedish, and other productions with original soundtracks;

Swedish subtitles are supplied as needed. Numerous restaurants offer a wide range of prices. Göteborg is particularly known for its excellent seafood. Several outdoor restaurants are open during summer, as are numerous sidewalk cafés.

Malmö

Malmö located on the Öresund Strait opposite Copenhagen, Denmark, is Sweden's third largest city. A fortified seaport with a population of about 235,000, Malmö is 300 miles south of Stockholm, in the Skåne region of southern Sweden. It is a major naval and commercial port, as well as an industrial center whose principal products include textiles, clothing, metal goods, processed food, and cement.

The city was founded in the 12th century and was an important trade and shipping center. For most of its history, Malmö was a Danish possession until it passed to Sweden in 1658. Historical buildings include Malmöhus Castle, begun in 1434, and now a museum. The city hall, built in 1546, and St. Peter's Church, constructed in the 14th century, are also noteworthy.

Uppsala

Uppsala, Sweden's center of scholarship and history, is situated on the Fyrisån River in eastern Sweden, about 50 miles northwest of Stockholm. It's population is 164,750. The city developed close to Gamla Uppsala, which was the country's capital in the sixth century. An archiepiscopal see was established here in 1270. The city's cathedral, built in that era, is considered the finest Gothic church in Sweden; it is the usual coronation place of Swedish kings, as well as the burial place of several of the country's noted citizens.

Uppsala is the site of the oldest university in northern Europe, the University of Uppsala, founded in 1477. Since its reorganization in 1595, it has been ranked among the world's great educational institutions;



Public square in Malmö, Sweden

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library holdings include two-and-a-half million volumes, 32,000 manuscripts, and more than 700,000 foreign dissertations. Uppsala is also the home of the Royal Society of Sciences, the Gustav Institute of High-Energy Physics and Radiation Biology, and the Victoria, Linnaean, and Upplands museums.

Ancient pagan burial mounds (from the city's historic pre-Christian era) lie just beyond Uppsala.

OTHER CITIES

GÄVLE, 75 miles northeast of Västerås, is a seaport city that exports iron ore and wood pulp. Industries include textile mills and chemical plants. Chartered as a city in 1446, Gävle has a population today of 92,000.

HALMSTAD, 45 miles north of Helsingborg, is a seaport on the Kattegat. With a population of nearly 77,000, Halmstad has a steel plant, paper mills, shipbuilding yards, fisheries, and breweries. Landmarks include a 14th-century church.

HELSINGBORG (also spelled Hälsingborg) is a seaport in southern Sweden on the Oresund Strait.

Connected by ferry to Helsingør, Denmark, Helsingborg is 275 miles southwest of Stockholm. A commercial and industrial center, it manufactures processed copper, rubber, electrical goods, textiles, and refined sugar. The city has been a trade center since the ninth century. During the Danish-Swedish conflicts of the 17th century, Helsingborg became part of Denmark; it was returned to Sweden in 1710 and was rebuilt. The modern industrial development of Helsingborg began in the mid-19th century. The current population is about 118,500. Historical sites include a castle (built between the 12th and 15th centuries), the Church of St. Mary (13th to 15th centuries), and numerous half-timber houses.

JÖNKÖPING is a historic, old city in the south, situated 175 miles southwest of Stockholm. Chartered in 1284, it was twice burned by its own residents during wars between Sweden and Denmark. The 1809 treaty between the countries was signed here. Present-day Jönköping dates from the early 17th century. The making of matches is the principal industry; paper and textiles are also made. Landmarks include the Old Town Hall, the Court of Appeal (built in 1655, Sweden's second oldest), and Christina Church. This county capital of 118,000 resi-

dents has a county museum. Jönköping is linked to Sweden's main rail lines, and has water connections with the Kattegat (part of the North Sea) and the Baltic through the Göta Kanal.

KARLSTAD lies on Tingvalla Island in Lake Vänern, about 170 miles west of Stockholm. Forest products and heavy industry are the economic mainstays here. An extensive export-import trade is also significant. Karlstad was named in honor of Charles IX, who granted it a charter in 1584. The area had been known as Tingvalla (Thingvalla), after the *ting*, or meetings of the legislature held here. In 1905, the treaty ending the union of Sweden and Norway was signed in the city. Karlstad, with an estimated population of 74,000, has large parks and wide avenues. Few structures predate a disastrous 1865 fire; one is the Östra Bron (or East Bridge, finished in 1770). The University of Karlstad opened in 1970.

KRISTIANSTAD is a seaport in southern Sweden, about 50 miles northeast of Malmö, on the Baltic Sea. Founded in 1614 by Christian IV of Denmark, Kristianstad's history was divided between Denmark and Sweden until 1678, when the city was ceded to the Swedes. With a current population of 69,000, Kristianstad is a trade center in an agricultural region. It has flour mills and slaughterhouses, as well as food processing and textile plants.

LANDSKRONA is just a few miles south of Helsingborg. Also a seaport on the Oresund Strait, Landskrona's industries include shipbuilding, metalworking, food processing, and tanning. First mentioned in 1412, Landskrona was the site of a Swedish victory over the Danes in 1677. The current population is 36,500.

LINKÖPING, with a population of some 134,000, is a rail junction and manufacturing center. It is located 110 miles southwest of Stockholm in the southeastern region. This was a prominent commercial, cul-

tural, and religious hub in the Middle Ages. Many diets, or assemblies, were held in Linköping during the reign of Gustav I Vasa. The 1598 victory here of the Vasas over King Sigismund III (1566-1632) secured the Swedish throne for the Vasas and the Protestants. The beheading of four of Sigismund's supporters in the main square two years later became known as "the Linköping Massacre." The building of the Göta and Kinda canals and the Stockholm-Malmö railway made this an industrial center. Landmarks in Linköping include a 15th-century cathedral and a 13th-century castle. A university was founded here in 1970.

NORRKÖPING is a seaport at the head of the Bråviken, a narrow inlet of the Baltic Sea. Situated in eastern Sweden about 90 miles south of Stockholm, Norrköping's population is approximately 123,000. The city was founded in 1350, chartered in 1384, and burned by the Russians in 1719 during the Northern War. Today, Norrköping is a commercial, industrial, and transportation center. Its industries include those producing paper, rubber, furniture, radio and television sets, and processed food. Among the historical structures are Hedvig's Church, built in the 17th century.

ÖREBRO is one of Sweden's oldest cities. Situated on the Svart River, 100 miles southwest of Stockholm in the south-central area, its population is approximately 125,000. The city's economy is based on shoe and biscuit manufacture. Örebro has a modern look because it was rebuilt after an 1854 fire. Some of its impressive historic edifices include a restored Swedish Renaissance castle, used both as a museum and governor's residence; the *Kungsstugan*, or King's House, dating to the 15th century and one of the country's best-preserved wooden buildings; and a 13th-century Gothic church. Örebro played a significant role in Swedish history. The national hero, Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson (1390-1436), lived here, and the 16th-century church reformers, Olaus and Laurentius

Petri, were born in the city. Many crucial diets, or assemblies, took place in Örebro, especially that of 1810. At that time, French marshal Jean Bernadotte was elected king of Sweden as Charles XIV John. Örebro enjoys good rail and boat connections, and is at the junction of national highways.

VÄSTERÅS is a port on Lake Mälaren in eastern Sweden, about 70 miles northwest of Stockholm. Founded in 1100, it became one of the country's great medieval cities; a 13th-century cathedral and a 14th-century fortified castle remain. Västerås was the venue of the 1527 parliament which formally introduced the Reformation into Sweden. Today, Västerås is a major inland port, shipping iron ore, lumber, and iron goods. The center of the Swedish electrical industry, the city also produces machinery, glass, and metalware. The current population is 128,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Sweden is bounded on the west by Norway and an arm of the North Sea, on the north by Norway and Finland, and on the east and south by the Baltic Sea. The country is long and narrow, encompassing an area of 174,000 square miles, a little larger than France or the state of California. In the northwest are mountains, and lakes abound throughout Sweden. To the south and east are forests, fertile valleys, and plains. Along Sweden's rocky coast, interspersed with bays and inlets, are many islands, the largest of which are Gotland and Öland. Despite its northern latitude, Sweden's climate is not excessively cold due to the proximity of the Gulf Stream and the Baltic Sea. The mean annual temperature is 48°F. Stockholm is situated at approximately the same latitude as Juneau, Alaska. During most of December

and early January, the sun does not rise before 9 am and sets as early as 2:30 pm. Snow usually falls in January, February, and March. The average temperature range for January is 27°F–30°F (Washington, D.C. is 27°F–43°F). Spring comes late, with snow possible even in May. By June, daylight is almost continuous, and the vegetation is luxuriant. In July, the average temperature range is 57°F–72°F (Washington, D.C. is 68°F–88°F). Many firms close down for the month so that the entire staff can take vacation. The average annual rainfall in Stockholm is 22 inches, compared with 39 for Washington, D.C. New arrivals often have the impression that the statistics should be reversed, and for good reason. It doesn't rain more in Stockholm, but it does rain more often: 164 days a year compared with 113 for Washington, D.C.

Population

Sweden's population is roughly 8.6 million, and almost 83 percent live in urban communities. Sweden's small Same (Lapp) population numbers about 17,000. About 10 percent of the population are immigrants, with Finns in the majority. Turks, Greeks, and Yugoslavs composed much of the first immigrant wave in the 1960s and 1970s. More recent refugee groups come from the Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe and most recently from Bosnia. Stockholm has a population of 670,000—1.5 million, including the suburbs.

Public Institutions

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government. The unicameral Parliament (Riksdag) is the sole governing body. The Prime Minister is the political chief executive. Direct parliamentary elections take place every 4 years. Sweden has one of the world's highest percentage of women in parliament: in 1998, 149 of 349 members were women.

Arts, Science, and Education

As exemplified by the annual Nobel Prize ceremonies, Sweden is a leading nation in the field of education and has 33 institutions of higher learning. Among these are the world-renowned Karolinska Institute of Medicine; universities in Uppsala, Lund, Stockholm, Goteborg, Umea, and Linkoping; three technical institutes; and specialized professional schools for dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary sciences, agriculture, forestry, economics, social work, art, music, journalism, and library science. Stockholm University administers the Institute for English-speaking Students, which is divided into three sections: International Graduate School (IGS), Stockholm Junior Year, and Swedish-language courses. The emphasis is on Swedish-language and literature, economics, social and political sciences, and international affairs. An American degree is required for admission to the IGS, itself a non-degree program. Academic subjects, Swedish language, and arts and crafts are offered in 11 nationwide adult education programs. These are subsidized by the government and open to foreign residents at modest cost. Several courses are also offered for English-speaking foreigners on Swedish history, culture, and computer science. Stockholm and its environs are rich in museums, galleries, and historical sites.

Commerce and Industry

The development of a skilled and disciplined labor force led by creative entrepreneurs provided the basis for Sweden's transformation from a poor, rural society into a highly productive industrial economy. The transformation, completed by the early 1930s, was fueled by an abundance of forest products, iron ore, and waterpower. Untouched by the ravages of World War II, Sweden's industries produced and exported the machinery, vehicles, ships, and other products and raw

materials that paid the bill for the present elaborate Swedish social welfare system. This system is now under examination as Sweden adapts to its new European Union membership and the heightened competition this status brings. Sweden exports 30% of its gross domestic product. The U.S. is Sweden's third largest trading partner, after Germany and the U.K. The Swedish labor force of 4.3 million workers is highly skilled, and 87% belong to trade unions. In most families, both husband and wife work; and females comprise 48% of the work force. Women are paid approximately 80% of what men earn, and men predominate in highly paid white-collar positions.

Transportation

Automobiles

If vehicles are purchased new in Sweden, modifications do not have to be made to meet Swedish standards; and such vehicles can be sold tax-free two years after purchase. Virtually all automobile makes are represented in Stockholm including Volvo, Saab, Ford, Chrysler, and Toyota.

All automobiles must have an annual inspection. Depending on the make, model, and year, the automobile may require minor modification to pass inspection. The Swedish inspection is rigorous and focuses particularly on the exhaust emission system for leaks and a high percentage of carbon monoxide. Be sure any car you bring into Sweden is in good condition so that inspection problems can be minimized.

When you import a car into Sweden, you will have to pay a customs processing fee of about SEK 150 (about \$20) and an inspection and registration fee of about SEK 900 (about \$120). Additionally, there is a refundable fee of about \$500 that must be paid "upfront"—refunds are processed usually within one month.

The foregoing restrictions do not apply to the purchase of a used vehi-



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View down Rosenlunds Canal, Goteborg, Sweden

cle in Sweden. You may purchase and sell a used car at any time.

Because of road salt and gravel used on the roads in winter, it is a good idea to undercoat your car. Winter tires are advisable (and may become mandatory) from early November through mid-April.

Sweden has reciprocal agreements with some other countries that allow you to use those licenses. The minimum driving age in Sweden is 18. Sweden has very strict drunk-driving laws. Driving after drinking even a very modest amount of alcohol is a serious offense that carries a mandatory fine, loss of license, and a jail sentence.

You must purchase third-party liability insurance from a local Swedish company. Collision insurance can be purchased from several American or Swedish companies. You may want to check with your current auto insurer to see if it

offers coverage in Sweden. If you have a letter from your current insurer stating your number of accident-free years, you may be able to obtain a reduced rate from a Swedish insurer.

Local

Greater Stockholm has an extensive network of buses, trains, and subways. For those living downtown, commuting to work by public transportation is convenient and relatively inexpensive. Those living in the suburbs often commute by car. The use of public transportation is actively encouraged by Swedish authorities, and parking is limited and expensive. Cabs are plentiful and not much more expensive than in the D.C. area. Bicycles are very popular, and throughout the city and suburbs there are extensive bicycle paths that allow one to ride free from motor traffic.

Regional

Arlanda airport is about 25 miles north of Stockholm. Bus or taxi transportation for the 45-minute drive into the city is easily arranged on arrival. A rail connection from downtown to the airport is under construction and should be finished in 1999.

The train system in Sweden is excellent, but travel by train is relatively expensive. Round trip from Stockholm to Goteborg, for example, is about \$140. There are also bus connections from Stockholm with all major Swedish towns. Bus travel is relatively inexpensive. For example, round trip from Stockholm to Goteborg is \$45.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Sweden has a modern, reliable telecommunications system with direct dial service to the U.S. Rates are

lower than elsewhere in Europe, and the trend is toward the cost-based rate structure used in the U.S. Bring an AT&T, MCI, or Sprint phone card. Internet and on-line service connections are widely available at reasonable prices. There are no restrictions on personal computers, which are available locally at reasonable prices.

Mail

International airmail from the U.S. is generally delivered in Stockholm within a week. Surface delivery letters take approximately 4-5 weeks to arrive by international mail; packages take about 68 weeks.

Radio and TV

Short-wave VOA broadcasts can be received morning and evening. BBC shortwave can be heard almost 24 hours daily. Radio Sweden broadcasts daily in English in Stockholm on the FM band and currently offers some programs from National Public Radio and the BBC. Swedish TV's two independent networks together broadcast 137 hours of news programming each week and about 7 hours of English programming a day. U.S. programs with Swedish subtitles on these channels average 12 hours a week. Other foreign-made programs in the original language account for another 28 hours of weekly programming. The independent, commercial broadcasting networks are more oriented toward entertainment than the state-owned networks. Nearly 45% of the Swedish population has access to cable TV. Cable subscribers may choose from CNN, MTV, Discovery, Lifestyle, Screensport, and Worldnet from the U.S.; the BBC, Super Channel, Skynews, Skynet, and Eurosport from Britain. Programming is also available from Germany, France, Norway, Finland, Russia, and Sweden. Satellite dishes are available from a number of vendors. VHS video is popular and there are many rental outlets.

Swedish TV uses the PAL system. American TV uses the NTSC system. Other than with NTSC videos, a U.S. TV cannot be used in Sweden.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Same day editions of most leading European newspapers, including the *International Herald Tribune*, are available at newsstands or by subscription. *The Washington Post* and *New York Times* are usually available for next-day purchase at high prices. International mail subscriptions are available for most news magazines. Stockholm bookstores have a great variety of American and British magazines, books and paperbacks. Stockholm's public libraries also contain ample selections of English-language materials, including children's books.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Sweden is justly famous for its comprehensive quality health care system, and Stockholm is well provided with modern hospitals and dental facilities. Nevertheless, securing medical care often proves frustrating for American's in Stockholm, who find themselves among a small minority not covered under the state medical insurance system. The national health facilities are available on a fee basis, but it takes time and personal commitment to learn how to access the health care you will need. Stockholm also has private health practitioners, clinics, and hospitals that operate along lines familiar to Americans.

Community Health

Public health standards are high and monitored closely; few special precautions are necessary. You will need to adjust to the experience of living at 60° North, where winters are long and dark, summers short and intensely light. Many areas of Sweden are densely wooded and the incidence of Lyme disease is comparable to the Northeastern USA. Colds and flu are the most common ailments here. Rheumatism, bronchial ailments, and sinus trouble may be aggravated during winter. Humidifiers can be purchased locally. Stockholm takes pride that its waters and lakes, which make up

13 percent of the area within the city limits, are fit for swimming.

Preventive Measures

Most medicines for colds, sinus conditions, and allergies require a prescription if purchased at a Swedish pharmacy. Flu shots are available in the fall. Children can take fluoride supplements, available locally. Some people chose to be inoculated against tick-borne encephalitis; wear suitable clothing when camping or hiking.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 - Jan. 6 Epihpany
 - Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter*
 - Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 - May 1 Swedish Labor Day
 - May/June. Ascension Day*
 - May/June. Pentecost*
 - May/June. Whitmonday*
 - June Midsummer Eve*
 - Sept. 2 Labor Day
 - Nov. 1 All Saints' Day
 - Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 - Dec. 26 Boxing Day
- *variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Stockholm has daily, direct connections with the U.S, through American, Delta, and United airlines.

A valid U.S. driver's license may be used while visiting Sweden, but the drivers must be at least 18 years of age. Driving in Sweden is on the right. Road signs use standard international symbols and Swedish text. Many urban streets have traffic lanes reserved for public transport only. Emergency services (equivalent to 911 in the U.S.) for traffic accidents and emergency roadside assistance can be reached by calling 112.

A valid passport is required. Tourist and business travelers do not need visas for stays of less than 90 days. Since March 2001, Sweden entry visas are governed by the rules in the Schengen Agreement. Under the Agreement, all the European Union countries (except Ireland and the United Kingdom), as well as the European Economic Area countries of Norway and Iceland, have opened their borders to one another. A visa issued for a visit to one of these countries is normally valid in all of the other countries as well. For further information on entry requirements, contact the Royal Swedish Embassy at 1501 M. Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005, tel: (202) 467-2600, or the Swedish Consulate General in New York at (212) 751-5900 or check their homepage at <http://www.webcom.com/sis>.

No vaccination or health certificates are required.

Americans living in or visiting Sweden are encouraged to register at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm and obtain updated information on travel and security within Sweden. The U.S. Embassy is located at Dag Hammarskjöldsvag 31, telephone (46)(8) 783-5300, fax (46)(8) 660-5879 and after-hours telephone (46)(8) 783-5310.

Pets

Sweden has strict quarantine regulations for all pets. A four month quarantine is required upon arrival in Sweden, except for those animals that have lived for a least one year in and EU country and are brought directly from that country to Sweden. All pets are subject to veterinary examination at entry and will be admitted only if healthy.

A quarantine kennel for dogs is located outside Stockholm in Vallentuna. Cats can be quarantined in Stenungsund or Lidköping, both outside of Goteborg. Space availability in these kennels is very limited and a six month waiting list is not unusual. The kennel cost is about 15,000 SEK for a cat (\$1,950) and about 25,000 SEK (\$3,250) for a

dog, plus veterinary charges. Visits after the first month may not be permitted.

Once space has been secured you must apply for the required import permit. The most important provision of the permit is that space in the quarantine kennel has been secured. If any pet is shipped to Sweden without the proper permits, it will remain at the airport for 48 hours until arrangements can be made for shipment back to the originating country.

Firearms and Ammunition

The following non-automatic firearms and ammunition may be brought into Sweden: Handguns: No handguns and no ammunition.

Hunting Rifles: 2 (includes shotgun but no elephant guns); with 200 rounds each, and 2,000 rounds of skeet loaded shotgun shells.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official monetary unit is the Swedish krona (plural: kronor-SEK); 100 ore = 1 krona. Bills are in denominations of 1,000, 500, 100, 50, and 20. Coins are in denominations of 10, 5, and 1 kronor, and 50 ore. Banks and international newspapers have current rates of exchange.

You can access your American checking account with an ATM card on the Cirrus or Plus system; ATM machines are common. It is common to open a local personal kronor checking account or post office (PostGiro) account to pay local bills. Credit cards are widely accepted.

Sweden has a value-added tax (VAT) of 25% on merchandise, 12% on food and 18% on hotel and restaurant services.

Sweden uses the metric system of weights and measures.

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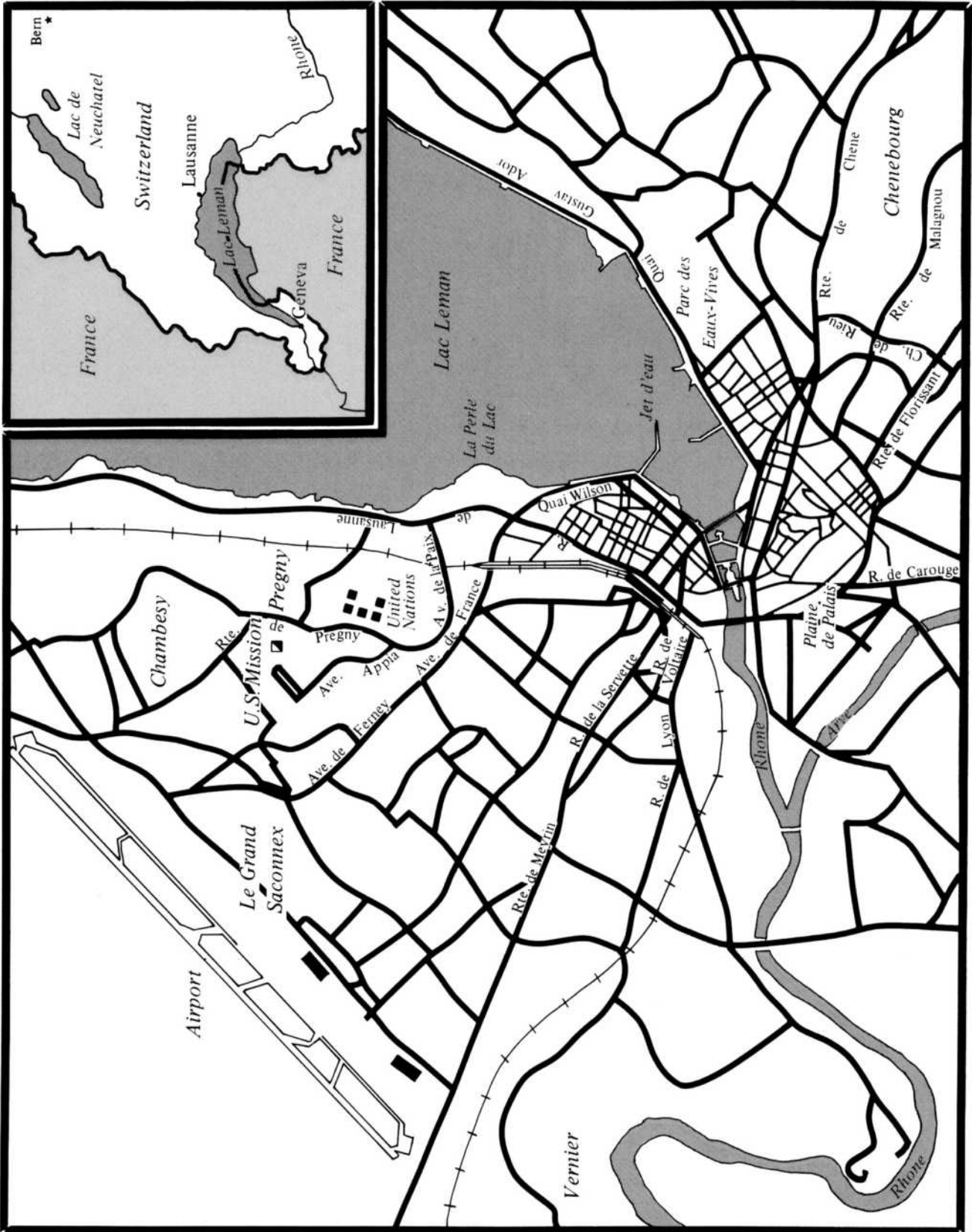
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Geneva, Switzerland

SWITZERLAND

Swiss Confederation

Major Cities:

Bern, Geneva, Zurich, Basel, Lausanne, Winterthur

Other Cities:

Aarau, Arosa, Biel, Chur, Fribourg, Gstaad, Locarno, Lucerne, Lugano, Montreux, Neuchâtel, Saint Gall, Schaffhausen, St. Moritz, Thun, Zug

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated December 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SWITZERLAND is all the travel brochures say it is and more. The country's natural beauty, the courtesy of its people, and the stability of the Swiss way of life make living here interesting and relaxing.

Rugged mountains dotted with ski resorts, lakes set in rolling farmlands, and arcaded towns crisscrossed by narrow cobblestone streets are some of the sights that you will be pleased to discover. Swiss cities, while retaining the charm of their age, offer a wide range of modern facilities and cultural opportunities. The Swiss people are proud of their national identity, yet they represent a stimulating variety of cultural and lin-

guistic backgrounds. The nation itself, while traditionally neutral, is active on the international scene.

If you are interested in getting to know Switzerland and the rest of Europe, you will find ample opportunity. A visit here is a pleasant and rewarding experience.

MAJOR CITIES

Bern

Bern is a charming city built around a bend in the Aare River. Its "Old Europe" atmosphere is evident in arcaded walks along cobblestone streets, towering cathedrals, fountains, clock towers, and bustling open markets. Yet at the same time Bern offers modern shopping facilities and ever-expanding suburbs with new apartment buildings.

The city lies in west-central Switzerland, with the Alps to the south and the Jura Mountains to the northwest. Bern has a population of about 123,000 (December 2000 estimate) and is the seat of the executive and legislative branches of the Swiss Government. There are approximately 30,000 Americans living in Switzerland, mostly con-

centrated in the major cities of Zurich, Geneva, and Basel.

Food

Shopping facilities are very good, although much more expensive than in the U.S. Markets and specialty shops, such as bakeries, milk/cheese shops, grocery stores, and butcher shops are entirely satisfactory. Several supermarkets exist, and a shopping center (mall) can be reached in about 15 minutes by car from Bern. However, shopping hours are not as convenient as in the U.S., with stores closing at 6 or 6:30 pm except for one weekday evening when the stores in downtown Bern are open until 9 pm. On Saturdays shops stay open until 1 or 4 pm depending on each individual store or town.

Fresh fruits and vegetables, chocolates, dairy products, breads and pastries, dried soups and sauces, and jams and preserves are excellent. Butter and meat are of good quality, although some meat cuts differ from those in the U.S. Many varieties of canned goods are sold locally. Frozen foods are available in an increasingly wide selection. In general, Swiss prices are about 60% higher than in the U.S. Some foods are only available in the few stores that feature imports, for example, maple and other flavorings, Knox gelatin, baking soda, molasses, and

syrup. Good baby food products are available.

Clothing

Bring clothes suitable for a temperate U.S. climate. It is advisable to bring complete winter clothing, good foot gear for hiking, and good raingear for changeable weather.

For social occasions, Swiss dress informally, though still conservatively. Younger Swiss are much more casual than older Swiss. Women's styles can range from jeans, slacks, and pant suits to dresses; while men range from jeans and sweaters to jackets.

Good-quality men's, women's, and children's clothing can be purchased in Switzerland, but prices are much higher than in the U.S. Men's tailoring is excellent but dressmakers are hard to find. Shoes are of excellent quality; however, individuals with narrow or extra-wide feet should bring a good supply because these widths are extremely hard to find. Made-to-measure shoes are available.

Both English-speaking schools require smaller children to wear slippers indoors and white-soled gym shoes in gym. The International School of Berne (ISB) requires black gym shorts and red shirts.

Supplies and Services

The usual consumer goods, toiletries, cosmetics, and household supplies are sold in Switzerland but prices are much higher than in the U.S. One should bring highly specialized drugs, as it is sometimes difficult to find the exact equivalent.

Community services are good. Laundry, dry cleaning, shoe repair, equipment repair, and beauty and barber services are all available and good, but the cost for these services is much higher than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Bern has many Protestant denominations, the dominant one being Reformed Church. Other groups include a Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints, a Christian Science church, a Seventh-Day Adventist church, and others. The city also has several Roman Catholic churches, a Jewish synagogue, an Islamic center, and a Russian Orthodox church. Most services are conducted in German. One of the Catholic churches, however, has one Sunday Mass in English. In addition, a small Anglican church near the U.S. Embassy serves as the parish church for the U.S., British, and Canadian Protestant communities. All of its services are in English.

Education

Most American children attend either the International School of Berne (ISB) or The British School of Bern. The British School goes from preschool to grade 6 and the ISB from preschool through grade 12.

English-speaking teachers staff ISB and the British School. Both schools are modern with adequately sized rooms, a library, and an outside play area. ISB also has a gym, computer lab, science lab, and an arts center. Both schools provide bus services at parental cost to many areas of Bern. Letter system grades, teacher comments, and parent conferences are used at both schools, and standards of achievement compare favorably with those in the U.S. The British School uses a trimester system, with 2-week holidays at Christmas and Easter, a 1-week fall vacation, and the traditional Swiss 1-week "ski holiday" in February. Summer vacation is from the last week of June to the last week of August. The ISB has a quarterly calendar, and its holidays are about the same as those of the British School. But holiday calendars are not synchronized, so that students at one school may be on holiday when the other school is in session.

The ISB is a nonprofit, coeducational private school run by a Board of Directors of up to nine persons elected by the Parents Association. It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of Independent Schools and successfully completed its 10-year re-accredita-

tion in 1994. Its 180 to 210 students come from the diplomatic corps and multinational business and industry, with over 30 nations represented.

The curriculum is international in nature. At the high school level, students may pursue the International Baccalaureate program. This is broader and deeper than most U.S. high school curricula. Instruction is in English, but French and German are offered as foreign languages in grades 1 to 12. English as a Second Language instruction is available for students whose mother tongue is not English. The school has a comprehensive special education program for learning disabled students and for highly gifted students. It is an optimal Match school working very closely with the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University.

The school's testing program includes the International Baccalaureate, the College Board SAT and Achievement Tests and standardized Educational Records Bureau testing. The school is supported by a grant from the Office of Overseas Schools of the Department of State. More specific information may be obtained from that office.

Founded in 1988, the British School is an independent, nonprofit day school located in Muri, a suburb of Bern. The school provides a modern British curriculum. The teaching allows each child to develop to his/her particular need through both same-age and cross-age groupings. Present enrollment is approximately 45 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 6. American parents with children at the school have, on the whole, been very satisfied with their involvement and the care and attention given to their students.

The English Speaking Play-group takes children from 3 to 5 years old who speak English or, in limited numbers, who wish to learn English. Activities include singing, art, music and movement, stories, and poems as well as supervised

games and play. The groups have a maximum of 12 children. There is also an English Montessori School in Bern for children 3 to 6 years old. The L'École Française de Berne also provides a preschool for ages 2-1/2 to 5 years old.

Occasionally it is possible to enroll in a Swiss neighborhood nursery school; classes are conducted in Swiss German.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University in Bern, one of the largest in Switzerland, offers courses in seven areas of study to undergraduate and graduate students. English literature classes are given in English, all others in German. Specific information on this and other universities may be obtained from each institution or from the Central Office of the Swiss Universities, Sonneggstrasse 26, 8006 Zurich.

The American College of Switzerland at Leysin (a campus of Schiller International University), is about 1-1/2 hours away from Bern by car. It is a fully accredited (by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools) 4-year college in Switzerland. It offers five programs leading to a B.A., B.S., or M.B.A. degree. More information may be obtained from the Office of Admission, 1854 Leysin, Switzerland.

The Zurich Campus of City University of Bellevue, Washington, is 1 to 1 1/2 hours from Bern by car, and slightly closer by train. It is an accredited English-speaking college and offers both undergraduate and master's programs in business administration. More information can be obtained from the college at the Educational Programs of City University, AG, Raemi Str. 71, 8006 Zurich.

Webster University of St. Louis in Geneva, 1-3/4 hours from Bern by car, offers both undergraduate and master's of arts programs. Further information can be obtained from the college at the Center for International Reform John Knox, 27



Courtesy of MaryBeth Mailloux

4 bears (Bern's heraldic symbol) in the "bear pit"

Chemin des Crets de Pregny, 1218 Grand-Saconnex/Geneva.

Franklin College in Lugano, 5 hours from Bern, is an accredited English-speaking college offering A.A., B.A., and M.B.A. degrees. More information can be obtained from the college, 6902 Lugano, Switzerland.

There are also several campuses of the European University specializing in a B.A. or M.A. in business with instruction in English. Information can be obtained at Route de Fontanivent CH-1817, Fontanivent-Montreux, Switzerland.

There are also several noted hotel schools, including one run by Schiller University. For information, write Hotel Europe, CH-6390, Ergelverg, Switzerland.

Night classes in Bern are offered in a wide variety of subjects including business skills, hobbies and crafts, sports, home economics, and the arts. All classes are in German. Several language schools have group lessons taught in German, but private lessons with English-speaking instructors are available. The International School of Bern offers beginning and intermediate courses in German and French; and the English-speaking social clubs have

ongoing conversational classes in both languages. Music lessons are offered at the Bern Conservatory, as well as by private teachers.

Sports

Many opportunities are available for individual sports. Tennis, hot-air ballooning, windsurfing, sailing, rafting, hang gliding, golf, riding, skiing, skating, boating, fishing, hunting, swimming, climbing, and hiking can all be enjoyed in or near Bern. Lessons are given in many of these sports. Although no public tennis courts exist, there are several private clubs where lessons are offered by licensed instructors, some of whom are English speaking. Several riding stables in and around Bern offer indoor instruction to groups and individuals. Sailing lessons are given on nearby Lake Thun, and mountaineering is taught by the Swiss Alpine Club. The lessons are nearly always in German and/or French.

Skiing is Switzerland's major sport. There are many ski areas near Bern, and all have English-speaking ski instructors. Both group and private lessons are cheaper than in the U.S.

The nearest golf club is a 25-minute drive from Bern. A number of excel-

lent golf courses can be found throughout Switzerland.

Hunting is an expensive sport, and a difficult annual examination must be passed to obtain a license. The Swiss are avid shooters, and rifle and pistol ranges are widespread. Stream fishing for trout, graylings, and pike is popular and fishing equipment is available, but a license must be obtained and strict rules adhered to.

A public outdoor swimming pool near the U.S. Embassy is converted into an ice-skating rink during winter. Occasional ice hockey matches are held there. Other public swimming pools are located throughout Bern and the surroundings.

The most popular spectator sports are ice hockey, soccer, track and field events, and ski competitions. Horse shows and bicycle and motorcycle races and rallies also take place in or near Bern.

Sports equipment is generally more expensive than in the U.S. Good used equipment is also available at the beginning of each ski season.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Bern is centrally located for travel to all parts of Switzerland by car or train. The city is within a few hours' driving distance of France, Italy, Germany, and Austria. Magnificent scenery and charming restaurants and hotels add to the local color.

Countless opportunities exist for camping and hiking near Bern and all over Switzerland. The city is surrounded by wooded areas that are perfect for picnics. Bern itself boasts a botanical garden, a rose garden overlooking the old town, an outdoor zoo with play areas for children, the famous bear pits, and a local children's amusement park.

Bern has several museums and a number of small art galleries, plus occasional exhibitions and fairs. Outstanding museums are also found in other Swiss cities.

No restrictions are placed on photography except where posted, such as in military areas.

Entertainment

The variety of entertainment in Bern is impressive though little cosmopolitan night life exists.

About 20 film theaters show American, French, German, and Italian movies. Many American movies are shown in Bern in English (subtitles are in German and French). The City Theater offers operas, plays, ballets, and operettas, while smaller theaters offer plays and cabarets. Guest performances by Swiss and international classical and jazz musicians are common. An excellent international jazz festival takes place every spring. Lectures, travelogues, etc., are given frequently. Most of the performances are presented in German, although some nightclub acts are in French. Bern has four nightclubs, several bars, and many restaurants featuring Swiss specialties. In general, Swiss law prohibits young children from attending film theaters at night.

The principal local festivities are Swiss National Day (August 1), the Onion Market, held on the last Monday in November, and Sammi Klaus Day (December 5). The Onion Market features hundreds of market stalls selling onions and handicrafts. The Fasnacht (Carnival) celebration is held in late winter at the beginning of the Lenten season.

Social Activities

English speaking clubs in Bern are The American Women's Club, The International Club of Bern, and The Swiss-American Society. The International Club of Bern includes men and women from the international community. It sponsors a yearly ball, dinners, lectures, and some food preparation classes. Clubs often have programs specifically for children as well as events for families. The International Teens of Bern, a club for teens 14 years and older, has been active in recent years. Boy Scout and Cub Scout units are also available, but often

depend on family member involvement.

Geneva

Geneva (Genève in French, Genf in German) is a part, but a somewhat atypical one, of Switzerland. With its metropolitan population of 409,000 (175,000 in the city proper) and its teeming international organizations, it is the center of more intergovernmental activity per capita than any other city in the world. The diplomatic community (members of national missions and intergovernmental organizations and their families) exceeds 22,000; international governmental and nongovernmental agencies with headquarters or major offices in Geneva total 100; and approximately the same number of nations maintain permanent missions in the city.

The main focus of international activity is the Palais des Nations—once the home of the League of Nations and now the seat of the United Nations' European Office. The close to 5,000 annual meetings which take place at the Palais make it the world's busiest international conference center.

Geneva is often a front-page headline during a summit conference or a high-level political meeting. But even when Geneva diplomacy is not making headlines, it is still working steadily to improve international relations.

Major activities in Geneva include the development of programs for combating disease; for expanding trade; for helping refugees and migrants seeking lives free of tyranny, strife, and hunger; for training people in industry and agriculture; and for utilizing weather and communications satellites to the fullest. Representatives of the U.S. and the Soviet Union meet in Geneva for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). Arms control and disarmament is another major part of continuing Geneva diplomacy; the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament

(CCD)—the world’s main multilateral disarmament negotiating forum—holds annual sessions in Geneva and considers treaties on all matters of weaponry.

The following are among the major intergovernmental organizations headquartered here: International Labor Organization (ILO); World Health Organization (WHO); International Telecommunications Union (ITU); World Meteorological Organization (WMO); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); U.N. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); and Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM).

The major nongovernmental organizations in Geneva include: International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies; World Council of Churches; World Jewish Congress; International Commission of Jurists; World Scout Bureau; European Broadcasting Union; Pan-African Institute for Development; and International Organization for Standardization.

United States Mission

The U.S. Permanent Mission to International Organizations is headed by a permanent representative with the rank of ambassador. U.S. delegations are staffed by mission officers, by delegates from the Department of State and other U.S. Government departments and agencies, and from the private sector.

The principal objectives of the U.S. Mission include promoting U.S. policies in international organizations and developing contacts with other foreign missions; serving as a channel of communication between international organizations and U.S. Government departments and agencies with similar interests; providing substantive and administrative support to U.S. delegations; reporting Geneva developments and making policy recommendations to



Courtesy of MaryBeth Mailloux

Buildings along Geneva waterfront

the U.S. Government; assisting the media in staying informed on U.S. policies.

The City

Geneva is located on the Rhone (Rhône) River where it emerges from Lake Geneva (Lac Léman) in the extreme southwest corner of Switzerland. The *Canton* of Geneva is surrounded on three sides by France, and is connected to the rest of Switzerland by a narrow strip of land that runs along the west side of the lake. Lying on gently rolling hills along both banks of the Rhone at an altitude of 1,200 feet, Geneva is dominated on the northwest by the Jura Mountains and on the south by the Salève, a long, low mountain that forms a distinctive landmark. Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe, is visible on clear days. The other ranges of the Alps—the Haute Savoie in France and the Swiss Alps on the Valais—rise steeply at the opposite end of Lake Geneva, 50 miles away.

Geneva’s temperate climate is variable because of the city’s location. The weather is generally pleasant from April to December. Winters are often damp with overcast skies, but are never severe. Although nearby mountains are snow-covered throughout the winter, Geneva

itself gets little snow. Temperatures rarely drop below freezing during the day. Summers are generally mild and pleasant with a few hot spells. Frequent rains fall in spring and early summer; temperatures are cool and crisp in both spring and autumn. The normal seasonal weather is affected from time to time by two winds characteristic of many parts of Switzerland: the *bise*, a north wind that blows from Lake Geneva and brings a chilling cold in winter and clear skies and pleasant temperatures in summer; and the *föhn*, a south wind that is often oppressively warm and humid.

The bridge to understanding the real spirit of Geneva is the realization that it is an international city. It is not only a geographical crossroads of Europe, but also a crossroads of international minds. Much of its population is comprised of diplomats and international civil servants who come to Geneva for a few years’ assignment and frequently end up staying forever. It is a peaceful city and its name is symbolic of peace.

Geneva, more than any other city of its size, is polyglot. French is the language of everyday dealings, but German, Italian, Spanish, English, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and

Arabic are also spoken commonly in its streets. Probably every language can be heard sooner or later in the corridors of the Palais.

Geneva's History

Historically, Geneva is of great interest. Founded in the first century B.C. by a Celtic tribe, it became an outpost of the Roman Empire and an important episcopal see. After the empire collapsed, Geneva served as a pawn in dynastic and church politics of the feudal period until the 14th century, when it achieved independence. Its first official links with the Swiss Confederation were in the form of alliances in the 16th century with Fribourg and Bern, undertaken to protect the city's independence. Shortly thereafter, the Protestant Reformation spread to Geneva and, after the arrival of John Calvin in 1536, the city was governed by a Calvinist theocracy. It became the chief center of Reformation doctrine on the continent and a haven for Protestant refugees from all over Europe. The Reformation and the period of Calvinist rule have had deep and lasting effects on the city's political, cultural, and economic life. French Protestant refugees, incidentally, introduced watchmaking into Geneva, thus establishing Switzerland's highly important export industry.

Another significant phase in Geneva's history was its association with the French liberal movement in the 18th century. Before the French Revolution, Rousseau and Voltaire lived in and near Geneva for long periods. Through their contacts and writings, they propagated liberal ideas that had profound repercussions throughout the Western world and on Geneva's own political development. In 1814, the city joined the Swiss Confederation, thus completing the territorial area of present-day Switzerland. During the past century, Geneva has progressed into a prosperous and flourishing center of commerce, tourism, and international politics.

Geneva's general appearance belies its long and distinguished history.

While the Old City, a section on the left bank of the Rhone, is composed largely of buildings dating from the 16th to the 18th centuries, Geneva is mostly a modern city, reflecting growth in population and expansion in commerce and other affairs of the past century. It seems smaller than it is. From the center of town one can walk to most of its important landmarks within 10 minutes.

From the Old City and its maze of picturesque, narrow streets crowded with antique shops, visitors can stroll along a lakeside promenade for a view of Mont Blanc or the Jet d'Eau, an incredible "fountain" created in 1886 by an engineer in charge of Geneva's water supply. The water rushes from the base of the fountain at a speed of 125 miles per hour, with an output of 110 gallons per second.

More than 100,000 American tourists and other temporary visitors pass through the city annually. In most years, at least 1,000 American delegates participate in conferences held in Geneva. About 200 American business firms are represented in Geneva; many use the city as a center for their European and worldwide operations.

Education

Geneva has numerous private kindergartens with instruction in either English or French. Children of elementary and high school age can attend French-language public and denominational schools that compare with the best American institutions. Private international schools most frequently used by U.S. Government personnel include: the International School (with branches on both the Left and Right Bank); College du Léman (Right Bank) in nearby Versoix; and the Lycée des Nations (Right Bank). Students include children of international civil servants, international business staffs, and Genevans. The school year follows the U.S. pattern, beginning in September and ending in June.

These schools offer music lessons at extra cost and have active athletic

programs, including ski workshops and trips. Their libraries and laboratory facilities are adequate.

Both undergraduate and master of arts programs are taught in English at Webster College. Webster also offers limited, but varied, courses in history, economics, and political science. Further information can be obtained from the Center for International Reform John Knox, at 27, Chemin des Crets de Pregny, 1218 Grand-Saconnex/Genève.

Superior higher-education facilities for those fluent in French are available at the University of Geneva and the Institute des Hautes Études Internationales. Entering students must have a college degree and proficiency in French. Fluency is tested before final registration. A seminar in French language, history, and literature is offered to foreign students who attend as auditors, or who can obtain certificates if they have a working knowledge of French. About 150 American students are enrolled at the university, and 40 attend the institute each academic year.

Good private French classes are available. Two of the better known courses are Migros and Cours Commerciaux de Genève. The U.N. offers courses in French and in many other languages.

Recreation

Geneva is ideally located for convenient travel to other important cities and places of interest in Switzerland and its neighboring countries. Bern, the capital, is 98 miles away. Zurich, Switzerland's largest city, is 168 miles away. Most places in Switzerland are within a few hours' travel by train, or a day's drive by car. One-day boat excursions to Lausanne, Montreux, and other Swiss cities along Lac Léman, or one-day auto trips to Évian, Annecy, and Chamonix in France are popular. Almost every important city in Western Europe is within a two-day drive.

The Service des Loisirs sponsors 16 leisure centers in Geneva. These

offer activities from alpinism (mountain climbing) and spelunking (cave exploring) to cooking, languages, and sports. Private centers also are engaged in activities that range from guitar lessons to the study of tropical fish.

Geneva boasts beautiful parks which often contain play equipment for children. Among the many children's amusements are excellent circuses, a delightful puppet theater, and frequent small fairs with amusement rides. Organized activities for children include special skiing trips, class trips to other countries, ice skating, scouting (both American and Swiss), ballet and modern dance, musical instruction, judo, soccer, and Little League and Pony League baseball. Summer day camps and athletic clubs are also available.

Spectator sports include ice hockey, soccer, boxing, squash, basketball, bicycle racing, horse racing, ski competition, rugby, and sailing.

Geneva is a skier's paradise, with good slopes just 40 minutes away. Cross-country skiing is popular and can be enjoyed in the city's immediate environs. Other recreational opportunities include boating, tennis, squash, hiking, swimming, mountain climbing, fishing, cycling, horseback riding, bowling, ice skating, and basketball. Expensive public golf courses are located in Divonne and Évian in France, and Geneva has a private club. Several private tennis clubs are available, but obtaining membership may be difficult.

Of the excellent swimming pools around the city, two are open year round. The U.N. health club has a small, private beach on Lac Léman, where guests are often welcome. However, the lake is polluted in some places and is cold even for summer swimming.

Entertainment

Most entertainment available in the U.S. also is available in Geneva. The city has many movie theaters, and American and British films often

are shown in their original versions. Children under 16 can attend only specially designated films.

Local stage productions are in French, except for plays presented by the Geneva English Drama Society and the Players Theatre (international). Good entertainment is offered at the Grand Theatre, but tickets are sometimes difficult to obtain, as they are sold by subscription. Other excellent programs include concerts, symphonies, soloists in recital, opera, ballet, and jazz. For the art lover, fine exhibitions are shown at the many small galleries throughout the city. Geneva has good archives, including the Museum of Art and History, and museums with natural history and ethnographic collections.

Fine restaurants abound. Most serve French or international cuisine; others feature native Swiss cooking or foreign specialties. Restaurant prices vary widely, but generally are high. Nearby France has many fine dining establishments in all price ranges. There are a number of expensive nightclubs in Geneva, mainly for after-dinner entertainment.

Most collections in Geneva's many libraries are in French. English books are available in city libraries, the library at the Palais des Nations, and at the American Library in the American Community House. The latter has a large current collection of books in English, a small basic reference room, and a fine collection of children's material. Books in English are expensive here. English-language paperbacks are available at most book shops and large department stores.

Geneva's annual *Escalade* is held over a weekend in mid-December. It commemorates the Duke of Savoy's ill-fated attempt to scale the walls of Geneva on the night of December 11, 1602. The city celebrates the Duke's failure with parades, torchlight marches, country markets, folk music, and brigades on horseback in period costume.

Americans are eligible for membership in several clubs, notably the Geneva English Speaking Club, the American Women's Club, and the American International Club of Geneva. The U.N. Women's Guild is another club that meets and works with women of all nationalities. Teenagers find less organized social life in Geneva for their age group than is often found elsewhere. Age limits on films are strictly enforced.

Newcomers to the city will benefit from the informative *Guide to the English Speaking Community in Geneva*. It can be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Philippe Reverdin, Boulevard des Promenades 21, 1227 Carouge, Geneva. Also, the American Women's Club offers a course called *Geneva for Beginners*.

Geneva affords many opportunities to meet other nationals, but meeting the Swiss is more difficult. Joining a special interest group is a good way of making acquaintances, although there does not seem to be a unifying aspect to life in Geneva. Varying international organizations, the natural reticence of the Swiss, and the constant flow of visitors make any strong sense of community spirit elusive.

Zurich

Zurich (in German, Zürich), is located at the north end of Lake Zurich, and is surrounded by verdant hills, with residential areas extending along the lake on either side. To the south, the snow-capped Glarus Alps can be seen on clear days. The city is situated in the Swiss central plateau which stretches from the Alps to the German border.

Zurich, with a metropolitan population of 1.2 million, is Switzerland's largest city. It is the center of finance, commerce, and industry in the German-speaking section of Switzerland, and also the hub of the country's printing and publishing industry. The population of the city proper is 338,000.

The old part of town reflects a long historical past. Occupied as early as the Neolithic period, Zurich became a free imperial city in 1219, and joined the Swiss Federation in 1351. The city was a center of the Swiss Reformation, and the residence of Ulrich (Huldreich) Zwingli, the 16th-century religious reformer. A huge bronze statue of Zwingli is erected below the Grossmünster cathedral near the center of the city. The great Irish novelist, James Joyce (1882-1941), who wrote a major part of *Ulysses* in Zurich, is buried here.

Zurich is the site of the famous Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (founded in 1860), and of the country's largest university (founded in 1833). There are also several excellent museums.

About 7,500 Americans reside in Zurich's U.S. consular district, which covers an area with a total population of 3.3 million.

Education

Zurich has three private, nonprofit schools which are attended by English-speaking children. The Inter-Community School, based on British and American systems, but geared toward an international enrollment, has been in operation since 1960. Its new and modern facilities were opened in 1972 at Strubenacher 3, 8126 Zumikon (a Zurich suburb), and include a fine library and an auditorium/gymnasium, in addition to its 38 classrooms and science laboratories.

Inter-Community School's strong academic program is enhanced by extracurricular activities and special provisions for those with learning disabilities. The study of German is required. The current enrollment is about 500. There are no boarding facilities.

American International School of Zurich, a coeducational, secondary day school, provides university preparation for students from the international community. It is located in the suburb of Kilchberg, and is easily reached by car or pub-

lic transportation. The school building is a large converted villa, surrounded by open land overlooking the lake, and with a view of the Alps. The enrollment of 190 is predominantly American. Specific information is available by writing to the director at Nidelbadstrasse 49, 8802 Kilchberg, Switzerland.

The International Primary School, also in Kilchberg, is a small school with classes from nursery level through grade seven. The student body numbers 150. German is a required subject at all levels. The school's address is: Seestrasse 169, 8802 Kilchberg ZH, Switzerland.

Recreation and Entertainment

Boating and sailing are available on Lake Zurich, and golf and other sports can be played in various spots throughout the metropolitan area. The city is centrally located for travel and within weekend driving distance of France, Italy, Germany, and Austria. Magnificent scenery and charming hotels add to the color.

Zurich has an opera company, a symphony orchestra, a number of chamber groups, and a famous German theater, the Schauspielhaus. Local groups occasionally produce plays in English, and first-run movies, often in English, are shown. The numerous cabarets in the city and near the Quai Bridge are popular with those who have some understanding of the German language.

Zurich has an abundance of hotels and restaurants, from deluxe to quite inexpensive. There also are nightclubs and jazz spots, attracting both local clientele and tourists. One of the city's interesting festivals is the Sechseläuten, a spring event which features a parade by members of the various professional guilds in traditional dress.

Shopping facilities are varied and of the highest quality. The city's most elegant area of shops is concentrated in the area around the Bahnhofstrasse, which spreads south from the railway station (Haupt-

bahnhof). A tourist bureau is located in the rail terminal.

Basel

Basel (in French, Bâle) is situated in northwest Switzerland astride the Rhine. It is a charming blend of old and new, and a city with a special atmosphere of friendliness that is rarely found to such a degree anywhere else in the country.

The Rhine splits the two sections of the city—Greater Basel on the left bank, which is the commercial and academic section, and Lesser Basel on the right, the industrial area. Chemicals, silk making, and publishing are the major industries in this German-speaking, Protestant city of 166,000 (metropolitan area, 428,000). An older version of the city's name, still seen occasionally, is Basle.

Founded by the Romans as Basilia, Basel became a free imperial city in the 11th century. It was the site of the celebrated (Roman Catholic) Council of Basel (1431-49), which fell into heresy. The city joined the Swiss Confederation in 1501, and accepted the Reformation two decades later. Basel is one of Europe's oldest intellectual centers; its university was founded in 1459. Desiderius Erasmus, the Dutch philosopher, is numbered among its famous scholars, and he is buried in the city's 11th-century *Münster* (cathedral).

Among Basel's museums is one of the finest in Europe, the Kunstmuseum, which houses the works of distinguished artists such as Hans Holbein, Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Henri Matisse, and others. One of its galleries has a notable collection of modern works. Basel has a magnificent zoo—some 4,000 animals and 600 different species live in a beautiful park in the center of the city.

Basel is a tourist center also, with fine hotels and restaurants, good theater and music, excellent shopping (watches, in particular), and opportunities for travel in the sur-



Courtesy of MaryBeth Mailloux

Playing chess on a street in Lausanne

rounding countryside, which is replete with woodlands, orchards, resorts, and quaint villages. Riverboat excursions are popular during summer.

Switzerland enjoys a fine reputation in the field of education, and many excellent international schools are in operation in the various *cantons*. In Basel, the International School on the Schulstrasse provides an Anglo-American education for children from nursery level through the ninth grade. Languages are stressed from an early age, and German is a required subject for all students.

Lausanne

Lausanne, on the northern shore of Lac Léman (Lake Geneva), has been the capital of Vaud *Canton* since 1803. Rising on steep hills from the lakeshore, it is a noted resort and the business center of western Switzerland. Precision instruments and

metalworking, and the production of beer and fine chocolate are among the local industries.

Though it bills itself as “Switzerland’s city of the future,” Lausanne is an old city. Originally a Celtic settlement called Lausonium, the area has been inhabited since at least the fourth century. Modern growth actually began in 1906, when the Simplon Tunnel opened, putting Lausanne on the critical Paris-to-Milan route. The resident population is about 115,000, a number swelled during the long tourist season.

Lausanne has a beautiful, restored Gothic cathedral, the Cathédrale de Notre-Dame. It was consecrated by Pope Gregory X in 1275. The Swiss regard the cathedral’s rose window as a national treasure. A late-17th-century city hall and castle are also noteworthy. Lausanne is the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and site of the Federal Palace of Justice.

At the village of Ouchy, Lausanne’s port, elegant old hotels and homes overlook the lake, where boat excursions are offered throughout the summer months. Nearby Montreux is the home of a renowned international jazz festival. Several prominent Europeans have made this region their home; Rousseau, Voltaire, Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens, and Edward Gibbon are a few. Ouchy was the temporary residence of Lord Byron and Shelley in 1816.

Lausanne’s tourist office is located at 60 avenue d’Ouchy, two blocks from Lake Geneva.

Education

Brilliantmont International School, a coeducational school (boarding, for girls) for grades nine through 12, was established in 1882. It offers American, British, and International Baccalaureate certification, and its U.S. accreditation is by the

New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Brillantmont's total enrollment of 160 is one-quarter American; four members of the teaching staff of 32 also are American. Although English is the primary language of instruction, French, Spanish, German, and Italian are also taught. Special programs include English as a second language and instruction for those students who have dyslexia. There are a variety of extracurricular activities and sports offered.

Brillantmont is located five minutes from the center of Lausanne on a four-acre campus that features 14 buildings, science and language laboratories, and double or triple boarding rooms. Brilliantmont's address is: Avenue Secretan 16, 1005 Lausanne, Switzerland.

Institut Chateau Mont-Choisi, founded in 1885, is a girls' boarding school for grades eight through 12. The school uses a U.S. curriculum with classes in English and French, and offers German, Spanish, and Italian as foreign languages. Extracurricular activities include gymnastics, dance, and sports such as riding and swimming.

Institut Chateau's current enrollment in the American section is 41; 10 are American. The teaching staff consists of 20 full-time and 10 part-time instructors, four of whom are American. All students are boarders and participate in a planned, seven-day program.

Institut Chateau is located less than two miles from the center of Lausanne in a suburban area. The three-acre campus includes six buildings, 16 classrooms, science laboratory, tennis court, swimming pool, and a 2,000-volume library. The school's address is: Boulevard de la Forêt/Chemin des Ramiers 16, 1009 Pully/Lausanne, Switzerland.

The Commonwealth-American School was founded in 1962 and offers instruction for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Enroll-

ment numbers 180; 32 are American. The school is located in a suburb of Lausanne and the facilities include two buildings, 13 classrooms, and science and computer labs. The library holds 6,500 volumes. For more information contact the director at 73 Avenue C.F. Ramuz, 1009 Pully, Switzerland.

Lausanne rivals Geneva as the intellectual and cultural center of French Switzerland. Its university, founded in 1891, originated as a theological academy in 1537.

It is possible to enroll in university classes in Lausanne if French fluency has been accomplished; only English literature classes are conducted in English.

Winterthur

Winterthur is an important cultural and industrial center, about 10 miles northeast of Zurich. Switzerland's main technological school, Technikum, is located here, as are a renowned art gallery (Reinhart Gallery) and symphony orchestra. Winterthur is also home to a music festival. The city dates to the late 10th century, when it was founded by the counts of Kyburg. It passed to the Hapsburgs in 1264, became an imperial city in 1415, reverted to the Hapsburgs in 1442, and became part of Zurich in 1467.

Winterthur is a major railroad junction and base for the leading Sultzer Brothers engineering company. Diesel engines, locomotives, cotton textiles, and clothes are manufactured here. Noteworthy buildings in the city include the Town Church of St. Laurenz (1264-1515), the town hall (1781-83), and the relatively modern Assembly Hall (1865-69). Winterthur's estimated population is about 88,000. It is surrounded by garden suburbs.

OTHER CITIES

The manufacturing city of Aarau lies on the Aarau River, 23 miles west of Zurich. With about 16,000

residents, this is the capital of Aargau *Canton*, and a major bell production center. Other manufactured goods include textiles and scientific instruments. Aarau dates to the 11th century. It recognizes its heritage with the medieval castle, a fine library containing much on the nation's history, and several museums. Aarau has been part of the Swiss Confederation since 1805.

The small village of **AROSA** lies deep in the eastern Alps, 75 miles southwest of Zurich. The spectacular mountain scenery provides the setting and the livelihood for its people, as this is a main tourist destination and health resort. Known for its over 40 *wanderwegs*, or walking paths, Arosa is also popular in winter for skiing. The lower lake, with public swimming, the main street's shopping area, and the outskirts (curiously called Inner Arosa) with their peaceful meadows, are all considered picturesque. The village is located at the end of roads and railways. It so prides itself in its quiet atmosphere that driving has been banned during the night. Nearby Hornli Mountain lures climbers, as do other smaller peaks in this mile-high region. Area hotels provide somewhat costly accommodations; more popular are chalet, room, and apartment rentals. Arosa's population is about 2,400.

BIEL (in French, Bienne), 17 miles northwest of Bern on Lake Biel, is Switzerland's only officially bilingual city. The majority of its 49,000 people speak German, while one-third use French; Biel is located on the country's language border. It has been inhabited since the Roman era, with a charter from 1275. Its allegiance shifted from Basel to Bern until it joined Bern *Canton* in 1815. Still standing from medieval times are the Church of St. Benedict, noted for its stained glass, and the town hall, built in 1534. Iron Age artifacts can be viewed at the Museum Schwab. Biel's industry is based on machinery and watchmaking.

Probably Switzerland's oldest town, **CHUR** is the capital of Graubünden *Canton*. Located in eastern Switzer-

land about 15 miles from the Austrian border, Chur is surrounded by mountains. A guardian of Alpine routes since 15 B.C., the city was first mentioned as an episcopal see in 600. It became an imperial city in the 15th century and the capital of the *canton* in 1820. Medieval relics and Roman towers remain in central Chur. The city offers direct connections to the major ski resorts in the area. A train excursion passes through the picturesque village of Filisur, crossing a high bridge over Landwasser River. Greifenstein Castle and La Chanzla, a huge rock with a 33-foot painting of the devil, are located near Filisur. Chur's current population is about 33,000.

FRIBOURG (in German, Freiburg), the nucleus of Swiss Catholicism, is situated 18 miles southwest of Bern on the Saane River. The seat of a bishopric and a Catholic university, this city houses hundreds of art works in its many churches, chapels, and monasteries. Fribourg's oldest section, called the *Bourg*, towers over the riverside; Gothic houses combine with remnants of towers and gateways to lend a medieval air to the surroundings. St. Nicholas Cathedral's famous organ, the Franciscan Church, the former Augustinian Church of St. Maurice, as well as several convents, are among the city's treasures. Fribourg was founded in 1157 by Berthold IV, duke of Zähringen, and was accepted into full membership in the Swiss Confederation in 1481. Reconstitution of the Confederation by Napoleon in 1803 made Fribourg the capital of a *canton* of the same name. Heavily dependent on industry, Fribourg has a foundry, electrical equipment factories, breweries, and chocolate plants. The Musée d'Art et d'Histoire houses various art pieces. This city of 33,000 is situated on important railway lines and is also a bus center.

The typically Swiss town of **GSTAAD**, surrounded by glaciers, lakes, forests, and mountains, is situated in the Saane Valley, 33 miles east of Lausanne and 32 miles south of Bern. One of Switzerland's pre-

mier winter resorts, Gstaad offers skiing in both winter and summer. There are opportunities here for other sports activities, including ice skating, curling, and horseback riding; there is also an indoor swimming pool. Gstaad, at an altitude of nearly 3,500 feet, has a population of close to 2,500.

LOCARNO is a small city of 15,000 in Ticino *Canton*. The Germans call it Luggarus, but most of the residents are Italian-speaking, and the German name is seldom heard. Locarno, tucked into the northern shore of Lake Maggiore, has a warm climate which has made it famous as a winter and health resort. The town's administrative buildings once were the castles of the dukes of Milan, who took possession of the area in 1342. Locarno has been part of the Swiss Confederation since early in the 16th century.

LUCERNE (in German, Luzern), is central Switzerland's beautiful "old world" city and summer resort. It lies on the northwest end of Lake Lucerne, the *Vierwaldstättersee* (Lake of the Four Forest *Cantons*). The fine hotels of Lucerne are filled to capacity throughout the summer season, as tourists flock from all parts of Europe to enjoy the scenery, the historic places, and the superb, although expensive, shopping. Among Lucerne's main attractions are its famous covered bridges, the 14th-century Kapellbrücke, and the 15th-century Mühlenbrücke; the Glacier Gardens, with the stone Lion of Lucerne; the eighth-century Hofkirche; the exquisite Jesuit church; and the interesting museums. Lucerne, which joined the Swiss Confederation in 1332, was a stronghold of Catholicism during the Reformation. Its current population is 58,000.

LUGANO is situated in southern Switzerland in Ticino *Canton*. A commercial center in the Middle Ages, it was taken in 1512 from the duke of Milan by the Swiss Confederation. Italian in character, and in spoken tongue, it has become a popular resort on Lake Lugano, between Switzerland and Italy, and

has been called the "Rio de Janeiro of the old continent." It is the site of the lovely Roman Catholic cathedral of San Lorenzo, and a 15th-century monastery, Santa Maria degli Angeli. Lugano's population is approximately 26,000.

The well-known resort of **MON-TREUX** is located in western Switzerland on the east end of Lake Geneva, 15 miles southeast of Lausanne. A lively, cosmopolitan city of 22,000, Montreux offers a temperate climate. As an artistic and intellectual center, the city has an extensive program of plays, concerts, and balls, climaxed in September by an internationally acclaimed music festival. Excursions are possible to nearby Glion, a winter sports center and resort, and to the winter resort of Caux. St. George's School, a girls' boarding facility for grades five through 13, is located in the resort village of Clarens. Founded in 1927, it offers an American and British education; current enrollment is close to 120. St. George's mailing address is: 1815 Clarens, Switzerland. Also near Montreux, in Chesieres, is Aiglon College, a coeducational boarding school for grades six through 13. Founded in 1949, and with a current enrollment of 250, the school provides a British curriculum. Aiglon College's address is: 1885 Chesieres, Switzerland.

NEUCHÂTEL is a city of 40,000 residents in western Switzerland, about 25 miles west of Bern. It is situated in the Jura Mountains, on the shore of Lake Neuchâtel, the largest lake entirely within Swiss boundaries. A university was established here in 1272, and today the city is the administrative center of the *canton* of Neuchâtel as well as a commercial center (watches, jewelry, appliances), set amid forests and vineyards, and surrounded by interesting little villages. Archaeologists have found remains of ancient Celtic lake dwellings here.

SAINT GALL (Sankt Gallen, in German) is located 39 miles east of Zurich in northwest Switzerland. This city of 70,000 developed in 621

around a Benedictine monastery founded by the Irish monk Gallus. Known for its textile trade and the headquarters of the Swiss embroidery trade, Saint Gall is a leading industrial center that also produces glass and metal goods. Situated between Lake Constance and the Säntis mountain range, Saint Gall is a natural gateway to Austria and Germany as well as a garden city with a long history as a cultural center. The city's greatest treasures are its many historic buildings, including the baroque cathedral and the churches of St. Laurenz and St. Mangen. New structures here include the new market district, the municipal theater, and the city hall. There are numerous parks, and the library contains many notable manuscripts. Festivals and trade fairs are held annually in Saint Gall from spring through fall. The Swiss Agricultural and Dairy Fair draws over 400,000 visitors to the city every year.

SCHAFFHAUSEN is the capital of Schaffhausen *Canton*, 23 miles north of Zurich in the far north of Switzerland. The Rhine River flows by this city of 33,000, providing critical hydroelectric power for economic development. Nearby Schaffhausen Falls, on the Rhine, cascade from a height of 65 feet, drawing tourists from all over Europe. The Protestant Münster, or cathedral, is thought to have inspired the great German poet Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) to write his "Das Lied von der Glocke" ("The Song of the Bell"). The people of Schaffhausen today are predominantly German-speaking.

Protestants, employed in manufacturing or in local hydroelectric plants. The area was first known as Villa Scaffhusun in 1045, but development actually began after Count Eberhard III established the Benedictine Monastery of All Saints here a few years later. Although Schaffhausen had been nominally a free imperial city since the early 11th century, it endured domination by the Hapsburgs from about 1330 until it purchased its freedom 85 years later. In 1501, the Swiss Confederation admitted Schaffhausen

as a full member. Many centuries-old buildings remain here. The huge Munot Fort (1564-85), the parish church, two town halls, and the Haus zum Ritter—Knight's House—are foremost among landmarks. The Knight's House, erected in 1485, is decorated with frescoes by Tobias Stimmer.

ST. MORITZ is the noted winter resort and playground of international society. It is situated in the *Canton* of the Grisons in eastern Switzerland, at an altitude of 6,000 feet. Centuries before it gained fame as a fashionable resort, it was renowned for its thermal baths. St. Moritz has a population of nearly 6,000.

THUN (in French, Thoune) is a city of about 40,000 people on the Aare River, 15 miles southeast of Bern in the central region. This is the hub of the Bernese Oberland, producing machinery, cheese, pottery, and watches. Tourism also plays an important economic role in Thun. The 12th-century Scherzliggen Church, the town hall, and a medieval castle number among tourist favorites. The Zähringen-Kyburg castle here contains a tower and living area, and is now a museum. Thun, founded in the 10th century, was part of the Burgundy kingdom until 1190, when it passed to various dukes and counts, and finally to Bern in 1384.

ZUG, population 23,000, is the capital city of one of the smaller Swiss *cantons* and is located 18 miles south of Zurich. Zug is a city of contrasts. Its policy of low taxations has made it an attractive place of business for international financiers and for such companies as Nutrasweet and Lego. The modern buildings and new shopping mall are located near the train station. Five minutes from this corporate area is the old town, with its Postplatz, timber-framed houses, octagonal stone fountain, Zytturm (Time Tower), and late-Gothic church, St. Oswald's. Lake Zug is located nearby and provides opportunity for water sports and hiking. The res-

taurants in the area serve fish caught fresh from the lake.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Switzerland covers an area of 15,944 square miles, which is approximately twice the size of New Jersey. A quarter of the country consists of glaciers, mountains, and lakes; another quarter is covered by forests. Because of the varied topography (from an altitude of 633 feet above sea level in the Ticino canton to 15,203 feet—the Monte Rosa peak—in the Alps), climate and vegetation vary from Mediterranean to arctic. Bern does not have great extremes of hot or cold weather. Rain is common in summer as well as winter, with snowfalls in Bern occurring with more regularity in recent years. Humidity is high during spring and fall. Winter brings some warm spells, and all-day fog and cloudy weather are common. Often a 30-minute drive will get you out of the clouds and into sunshine. The Föhn, a dry south wind that passes over the Alps changing the air pressure, has an enervating and otherwise unpleasant effect on some people. Sinus problems are often aggravated by the dampness. The average high temperature in July is 30°C (88°F), and the average low for that month is 6.1°C (45°F). In February, the thermometer reaches 5.4°C (42°F) and dips to about -10°C (12°F).

Population

Switzerland's population is approximately 7.2 million (December 2000 estimate). More than three-fourths of the people live in the central plain, which stretches between the Alps and the Jura Mountains from Geneva to the Rhine.

Switzerland has three official languages: German, French, and Italian. Romansch, based on Latin, is

principally spoken by a small portion of the people in the Graubunden canton. The Swiss version of German is spoken by about 70% of the population. Spoken Swiss German differs substantially the German spoken in Germany and Austria. It frequently varies from canton to canton, even from town to town. High German is the written language and is also used in most TV and radio shows, on the stage, and in university lectures. French is the first language in the cantons of Fribourg, Jura, Vaud, Valais, Neuchâtel, and Geneva. Italian is the first language of the Ticino canton and in some areas of the Graubunden canton. English is a common foreign language for most educated Swiss.

The percentage of Protestants to Catholics among the Swiss is about equal. Confessional differences run across linguistic lines—there are both German- and French-speaking cantons that are predominately Protestant or Catholic. The Italian-speaking Ticino canton is Catholic.

Switzerland's cantons differ in history, customs, and culture, as well as in size and natural setting. As a national group, the Swiss are generally serious-minded, forthright, and conscientious. Living patterns are similar to those in the U.S., although the Swiss are more formal and conservative than Americans. Their practicality is reflected in their architecture, furnishings, clothing, and food.

Public Institutions

Switzerland has a federal government structure with a bicameral legislature. Members of the National Council, the lower house, are directly elected in districts apportioned by population. Voting is by a complex proportional representation system. The upper house, the Council of States, is composed of 46 members, 2 members from each canton (three are divided into "half-cantons" with 1 member each), who are elected by methods individually determined by the cantons. Executive power rests in the seven-member

Federal Council, a unique Swiss political institution. Members of the Council are elected individually by both houses of the legislature for 4-year terms, though in practice Councilors are reelected as long as they wish to serve. The President of the Federal Council is also the President of the Swiss Confederation. The office is filled by the Council members in rotation for 1-year terms. Each Federal Councilor heads one of the seven executive departments.

The four major political parties are the Free Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic Party, and the Swiss People's Party. There are over a dozen other significant national or regional parties.

Switzerland's cantons historically precede the Confederation, which was established when three cantons joined together against the Hapsburgs in 1291. Within the Federal system, each canton has its own constitution and active political life. Cantonal governments have primary responsibility for law and order, health and sanitation, education, and public works and are almost exclusively responsible for the implementation of Federal law. The Federal executive branch ensures internal and external security, upholds the cantonal constitutions, and maintains diplomatic relations with foreign nations.

Under the Swiss judicial system, a single national code exists for civil, commercial, and criminal law. The only Federal court is the Federal Tribunal, which has final appellate jurisdiction. All courts of first instance, and all prosecutors, are cantonal.

Military service is compulsory for physically able male adults and includes basic training and decreasing mandatory annual service until age 42 (longer for officers). Switzerland can rapidly mobilize approximately 400,000 soldiers. After delivery of the 34 recently purchased F/A-18 fighter aircraft, Switzerland will have approximately

360 aircraft in its inventory. A December 2001 referendum allowed citizens to vote on whether or not to decrease spending and manpower for the army (which is one of the largest in Europe), considering that the country has not been involved in battle since the 1798 invasion of Napoleon and has maintained neutral status since 1515. An overwhelming majority voted to maintain the force as a key factor in protection of the nation's neutrality.

Despite its prized neutrality status, Switzerland voted in March 2002 to accept UN membership. Membership in the European Union, however, has been rejected by Swiss voters.

Geneva is the seat of many international organizations, including the European Office of the U.N., several of its specialized agencies, and non-governmental organizations such as the International Red Cross. Bern serves as host city to the Universal Postal Union.

Arts, Science, and Education

Switzerland is well endowed with cultural institutions. The opera and theater play an important part in the life of the urban elite. In Bern, most stage performances are in German, some in Swiss dialect, and some in French. Operas are usually in the original language. English-language amateur and professional stage productions are to be found occasionally in the larger cities.

Music education is important and standards are high. Many musical groups perform in Switzerland, and the Geneva-based Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is world famous. Many cities, including Bern, have orchestras. Bern also has a Conservatory of Music with frequent concerts by students, which are open to the public.

Switzerland has a high literacy rate. Two Federal technical insti-



Courtesy of Susan Rock

Nydegg Bridge over the Aare River in Bern

tutes and eight cantonal universities produce exceptionally qualified professionals in all fields. A highly developed system of apprenticeship training develops an unusually qualified labor force of technicians and craftsmen.

Commerce and Industry

The Swiss economy is a highly developed free enterprise system, heavily export-oriented, and characterized by a skilled labor force. About 40% of the Gross National Product is earned abroad, of which 80% is from the sale of export products. Principal industries include machinery and metal working, chemical and pharmaceutical products, watches, and textiles. Other important business activities include tourism, international banking, and insurance.

The worldwide economic recession of the early 1990s has pushed Switzerland's traditionally insignificant unemployment rates up, but they remain well below average West European levels. About 20% of the Swiss labor force is made up of foreign workers. There are well-developed trade union organizations in most industries and trades, but strikes are very rare due to a unique peace agreement concluded decades ago between labor and management.

Swiss attitudes toward property ownership and investment are stricter than those in the U.S. Real estate purchase by a nonresident or a company not incorporated in Switzerland is subject to individual review by cantonal authorities and is permitted in only certain specified—usually recreational—areas.

Although a member of the European Free Trade Association

(EFTA), Switzerland trades mostly with the European Union (its largest single trading partner is the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)). It has had a free trade agreement in industrial products with the European Union (EU) since 1973. In 1992 Switzerland voted against membership in the European Economic Area (EEA). Membership in the EEA or EU is unlikely for the foreseeable future because of requirements that would demand changes in Switzerland's constitutional order, their procedures for direct democracy, and their autonomy in international actions.

Transportation

Local

The Swiss Federal Railway system is entirely electric and connects the main cities and towns. Trains are clean and run on schedule; fares are reasonable, with special round-trip

and holiday rates. It is possible to buy a yearlong pass on the entire Swiss railroad network including the public transportation systems of all major cities. Porters are infrequent, charge a minimum of two Swiss francs and expect a small tip for handling baggage. Self-service luggage carts are available at all major train stations as well as airports.

Bern has excellent train and highway connections with all points in Europe.

Most points not accessible by train can be reached by passenger buses operated by the postal system. There are over 100 mountain funiculars and aerial tramways in Switzerland, and regular steamer services operate on major lakes in spring and summer.

Local transportation systems—trams, buses, trolley buses, and taxis—are convenient and efficient. Taxi fares are comparable to those in Washington; all taxis have meters, and drivers expect a 10–15% tip.

Fire engines are red, police cars white or black, ambulances white with blue lights, and official postal vehicles gold and black.

Swiss roads are good though often narrow and winding. A network of freeways exists, with additions and expansions in progress. Many mountain passes are closed by snow in winter, but road tunnels and railway car ferries operate through the St. Gotthard and Lotschberg passes. Road directional signs are excellent and all traffic moves on the right. An annual SwF 40 autobahn sticker is required.

Regional

Geneva and Zurich are major European flight centers. Daily flights to the U.S. are available from both cities on American carriers. Bern has a small airport in the suburb of Belp with service in Switzerland to Basel and Lugano and in Europe to Amsterdam, Brussels, Elba, Frank-

furt, London, Munich, Paris, and Vienna.

A direct train between Bern and the Kloten (Zurich) International Airport takes 1-1/2 hours; Bern-Geneva by rail is about 1-2/3 hours. Airport railroad stations are integrated into both Zurich and Geneva air terminals; luggage carts may be taken by escalator to trainside or airline check-in.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telecommunications systems are excellent. Direct dialing is possible to all parts of Switzerland, Western Europe, the U.S., and Canada. Major U.S. phone companies' cards are also available and offer U.S. rates. Callback services are available and competitive.

Radio and TV

Swiss radio broadcasts in the three principal Swiss languages with a few programs in Romansch. Programming is of good quality with more talk programs than in the U.S. Broadcasts from other European countries—such as AFN Stuttgart, VOA, Radio Luxembourg, and BBC—are available through cable radio in many areas.

Cable television is available with transmissions from two British channels as well as from Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and CNN. The modest monthly charges are sometimes included in leases for apartments or houses. Satellite programming is available with the proper equipment.

As in most of Europe, radio and TV in Switzerland are run by a public corporation. Children's programs are broadcast every day and special programs are sometimes relayed from the U.S. by satellite. News and sports coverage on both radio and TV are good.

Newspapers and Magazines

Newspapers are available in the three national languages. There are over 100 dailies and periodicals in

Switzerland. They represent differing political viewpoints and come from various areas of the country. Several weekly and monthly Swiss magazines cover news, women's fashion, television programs, and various hobbies. French, German, and Italian periodicals are also available at local newsstands.

The International Herald Tribune, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, and international editions of *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek* are available at local newsstands or by subscription. Prices are much higher than in the U.S. or the U.K. Several bookstores have English-language departments.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Swiss medical facilities are excellent. Dental work is expensive, so travelers may want to have major dental work done before arriving in Switzerland.

Community Health

Swiss public services are similar to those in other highly developed countries.

The Swiss place a strong emphasis on environmental responsibility and recycling. In most jurisdictions, a fee is charged by volume for garbage collection. Trash is placed in bags purchased in grocery or hardware stores and must carry a surcharge sticker, also available in grocery and hardware stores. Paper and metal are collected periodically, with the schedule distributed in the newspaper at the beginning of the new year. Bins for the recycling of glass bottles, plastics, and aluminum are located at stores and other convenient locations.

The manufacture and sale of adulterated food and beverages are prohibited. Official cantonal inspectors enforce controls. They inspect water, milk, and meat on a regular basis, as well as other foods and containers on a random basis. Sterilization of food containers is good.

Preventive Measures

Switzerland has no endemic contagious diseases. Special measures to treat water or food are not necessary, and no special medical or therapeutic treatment needs be taken before arrival.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 2	St. Berchtold's Day
Jan. 6	Epiphany
Feb. 2	Candlemas
Feb. 14	St. Valentine's Day
Feb.	Mardi Gras*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar. 19	St. Joseph's Day
Apr. 1	April Fool's Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
May/June	Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 1	Confederation Day
Sept. 5	Jeune Genevois (Geneva)
Oct. 25	UN Day
Oct. 31	Halloween
Nov. 1	All Saint's Day
Nov. 2	All Soul's Day
Nov. 5	Guy Fawkes Day
Nov. 11	Armistice Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception
Dec. 26	Stephanstag (St. Stephen's Day)
Dec. 31	Restoration Day (Geneva)

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

If traveling to Switzerland by car, one must have international third-party liability insurance and the green insurance card (Carte Internationale d'Assurance). Without

this card, one must buy insurance at each European border crossing.

A passport is required for travel to Switzerland. A visa is not required for U.S. citizens for stays of up to 90 days in either country. For more information on entry requirements for both countries, travelers may contact the Embassy of Switzerland at 2900 Cathedral Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 745-7900, or the nearest Swiss Consulate General in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, or San Francisco. Additional information for both countries is available at <http://www.swissemb.org>.

U.S. citizens may register and obtain updated information on travel and security within Switzerland at the locations below:

The U.S. Embassy in Bern is located at Jubilaeumstrasse 93, Telephone (41)(31) 357-7011, FAX (41)(31) 357-7280.

The 24 hours emergency telephone number is (41)(31) 357-7218. The U.S. Embassy website at <http://www.us-embassy.ch> answers many questions of interest to Americans visiting and residing in Switzerland.

The U.S. Consular Agency in Zurich is located at the American Center of Zurich, Dufourstrasse 101, 8008 Zurich, telephone (41)(1) 422-2566, FAX (41) (1) 383-9814.

The U.S. Consular Agency in Geneva is located at the American Center Geneva, 7 Rue Versonnex, 1207 Geneva, telephone (41)(22) 840-5160, fax (41)(22) 840-5162.

U.S. Consular Agencies offer limited consular services to U.S. citizens.

Pets

Dogs and cats may be brought to Switzerland with a veterinary certificate of good health and rabies vaccination. The vaccination must be given no less than 30 days and no more than 1 year prior to date of entry.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

One does not need to bring Swiss money. Airports and railway stations all have exchange offices and all hotels will change American money and travelers checks.

Money, travelers checks, and other money instruments may be imported and exported freely.

The Swiss franc (ChF), divided into 100 rappen or centimes, is the basic unit of currency. The abbreviated notation ChF precedes the amount. The Swiss National Bank issues the currency, supervises its circulation, and handles discount and clearing operations for commercial banks. No currency restrictions exist in Switzerland. Exchange is US\$1=ChF1.57 (May 2002).

U.S. dollars and travelers checks may be imported and exported freely, and international currencies can be bought or sold at free market rates in local banks. All Swiss banks accept U.S. Treasury checks, travelers checks, cashier checks on U.S. banks, and dollars.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general guide to material currently available on Switzerland.

General

All About Switzerland. Swiss National Tourist Office.

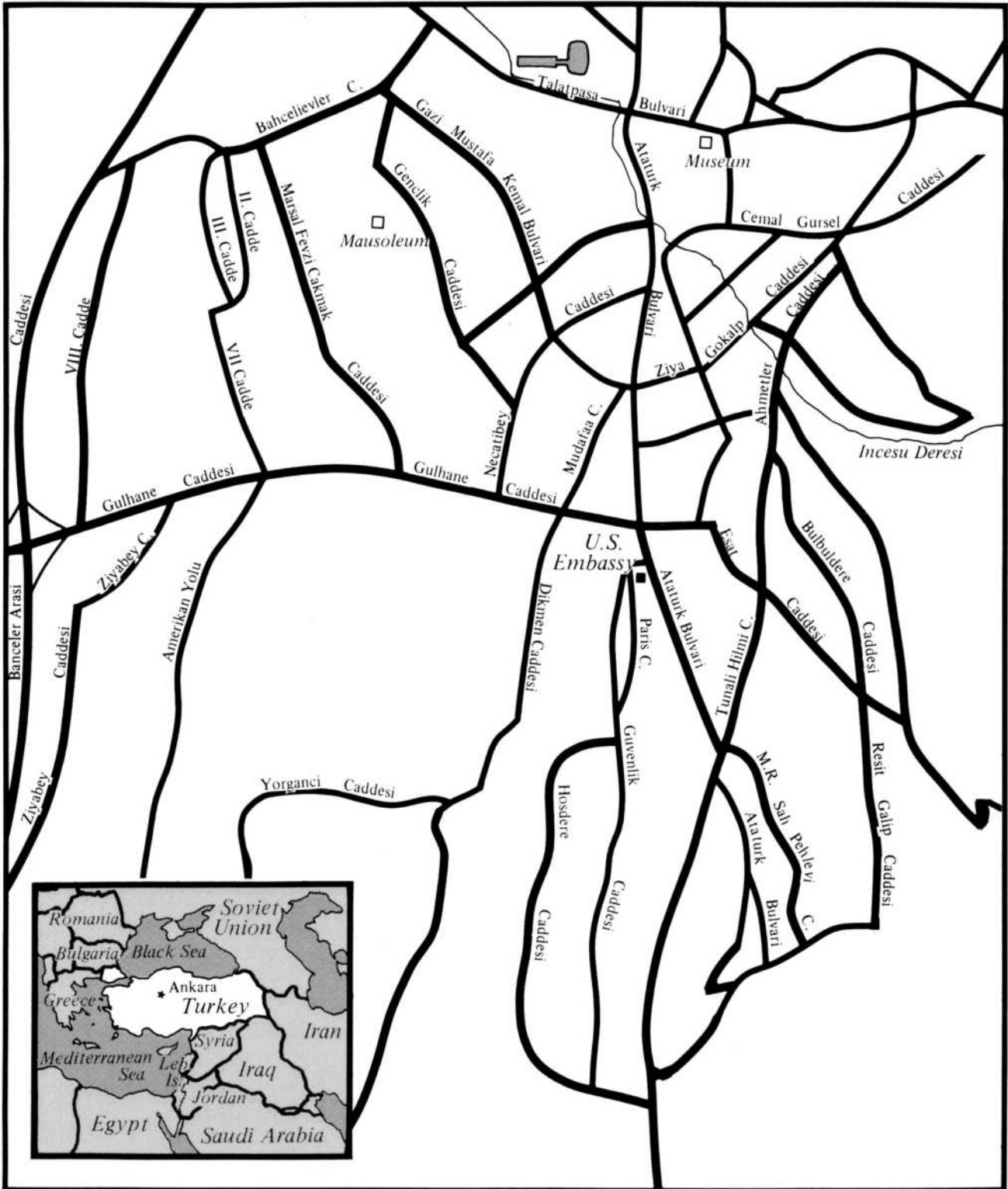
Christensen, Benedicte V. *Switzerland's Role As an International Financial Center*. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 1986.

Dicks, Diane, ed. *Ticking Along Too, Stories About Switzerland*, Bergli Books Ltd.: 1990.

Fodor's Switzerland. New York: David McKay, latest edition.

Hilowitz, Janet E., ed. *Switzerland in Perspective*. Westport, CT:

- Greenwood Publishing Group, 1991.
- Kane, Robert S., *Switzerland at its Best*, Passport Books: 1989.
- Off the Beaten Track: Switzerland, Out of the Way Places to Tour and Explore*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990.
- Switzerland Country Guide*. New York: Berlitz, latest edition.
- Switzerland—A Phaidon Cultural Guide*, with over 600 color illustrations and 34 pages of maps. Prentice-Hall, Inc.: 1985.
- History, Politics, Cultural History
- Hughes, Christopher. *Baedeker. Guide to Switzerland*: 1981.
- McPhee, John. *Place de La Concorde Suisse*, Farrar Straus Giroux, New York: 1983.
- Milivojevic, Marko & Pierre Maurer, eds. *Swiss Neutrality and Security, Armed Forces, National Defense and Foreign Policy*, Berg Publishers: 1990.
- Sauter, Marc R. *Switzerland from Earliest Times to the Roman Conquest*. Thames & Hudson Ltd.: 1976.
- Treichler, Hans Peter. *L'Aventure Suisse*, Migros Press.
- Vuilleumier, Marc. *Immigrants and Refugees in Switzerland*. Pro Helvetia Arts Council of Switzerland: 1987.
- The following listed "Pro Helvetia" brochures may be obtained from the Swiss Embassy in Washington, D.C.:
- Alfred Wyler: *Dialect and High German in German-Speaking Switzerland*.
- Bernhard Wenger: *The Four Literatures of Switzerland*.
- Craig, Gordon, A. *The Triumph of Liberalism*. New York: MacMillan, 1989
- Dieter Fahrni: *An Outline History of Switzerland. From the Origins to the Present Day*.
- Dominique Rosset: *Music in Switzerland*.
- Jean-Pierre Pastori: *Dance and Ballet in Switzerland*.
- Marc Vuilleumier: *Immigrants and Refugees in Switzerland. An Outline History*.
- Oswald Sigg: *Switzerland's Political Institutions*.
- Piere Dominice, Matthias Finger: *Adult Education in Switzerland*.



Ankara, Turkey

TURKEY

Republic of Turkey

Major Cities:

Ankara, Istanbul, Adana, Izmir

Other Cities:

Antalya, Bursa, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, Kayseri, Kirikkale, Konya, Maraş, Mersin, Samsun

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

No other nation spans two continents, incorporating such topographical diversity, so many strata of archeological wonders, and as much disparate, natural beauty as **TURKEY**. The northern Black Sea shores are cool and green, interspersed with lush rain forests and alpine mountains, while the hot, southern coasts are lined with magnificent rocky mountains reaching down to beaches varying from pebbled to smooth, white sand. The flat Anatolian plateau is interrupted here and there by lakes and hills or low mountains. The eastern portion of the country has alkaline volcanic lakes and is characterized by desert-like sparseness and impressive, stark mountains.

Amidst this natural setting are nestled countless artifacts, proof of the extraordinary role this land has played throughout history—from biblical Mount Ararat, a pilgrimage site for climbers in search of Noah's Ark, to the incomparable vitality and bustle of Istanbul. To come upon the natural "fairy chimneys" of Cappadocia, whose distinctive stone hills were carved out to create dwellings, churches and monasteries, some still ornate with age-old frescoes, or to crawl through the underground troglodyte cities nearby, is to imagine a civilization like none other. To see the exquisite riches of the ancient Hittite civilizations and the imposing amphitheaters of old is, simply, to delight in the history of man.

To live in Turkey is not just to be tempted by the infinite sites to explore or seas to sail. It is to indulge in the delectable cuisine, to shop, bargaining for carpets, kilims, and copperware and, always, to be challenged and surprised. Turks are among the world's most gracious, hospitable people (except when driving). Yet, Turkey has a schizophrenic society where old and new, west and east, and numerous ethnicities and religious strains struggle to live harmoniously—a struggle that has become second nature to a Turk. Infinite proverbs and polite phrases, known to all Turks, serve

as a universal tonic when times are bad and shared salutations in happy moments. They indicate a bond between the common good and the will to develop and persevere as a nation despite all the difficulties and divisions the country confronts.

Turkey's importance has not diminished with the end of the Cold War. As successor to the vast and influential Ottoman Empire, the modern republic of Turkey lies in a position strategic to the interests of many nations, including the United States, whose futures depend to some greater or lesser extent on Turkey's future. Turkey borders the Middle East, the newly independent states of the Caucasus and Central Asia, eastern Europe and the Mediterranean; its international influence is substantial. Domestically, Turkey struggles with chronically high inflation, an overlarge public sector and the need to support and capture a large unofficial economy; the country endeavors to balance the aspirations of its citizens of Kurdish descent and its conflict with the separatist terrorists of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), and to contend with difficult neighbors on all sides. Turkey's politics and economy are complicated and intriguing.

Ataturk, the founder and father of modern Turkey, coined the still popular saying, "Ne mutlu Turkum diy-

ene”—“Happy is he who says I am a Turk.” A foreigner will never fully comprehend what it means to be a Turk, nor will he ever feel he has learned all this country has to offer. It is a fascinating place with endless challenges for the outsider. The first thing a newcomer to Turkey is likely to hear is “Hos Geldiniz”—“Welcome.” Most find it a pleasure to respond sincerely with the traditional, “Hos Bulduk”—“Pleased to be here.”

MAJOR CITIES

Ankara

Turkey’s capital, Ankara, is located in the western portion of the Anatolian plateau at an altitude of 3,000 feet. It has a population of over 2.9 million and is situated at the bottom and up the sides of a deep bowl formed by bare, low mountains. The climate is pleasant; its rare extremes of hot and cold are moderated by the year-round dryness of the air and, in summer, by a mild breeze. Smog, though considerably improved in recent years with increased use of natural gas rather than lignite coal, gives the city a drab appearance for much of the winter.

Ankara was a provincial town when Ataturk established the capital along with the new Republic there in 1923. The city is modern, with wide boulevards intersecting at large circles often congested with bustling traffic. The architecture of the many government office buildings is generally a stark, concrete block style. Pleasant, tree-shaded streets with attractive gardens are disappearing rapidly as the city struggles to keep up with its influx of population. Single-family homes are rare today, having been replaced by a steadily increasing number of large apartment buildings. Nevertheless, modern Ankara has some pleasant parks, many with playground equipment for children. (Sidewalks, where present, are often uneven and discontinuous,

making the use of strollers less convenient than backpacks for carrying babies.) Compared to other cities in Turkey, Ankara is quite livable; where it lacks charm, it gains convenience. Perhaps its most redeeming features are the steep hills upon which Ankara is built, providing for countless, panoramic views all over the city.

Ulus, the old city built around the ancient Byzantine citadel situated atop a steep hill, is dramatically different from the rest of Ankara. Its steep, winding streets, mosques, and small houses give it a quaintness and appeal that is lacking in the new parts of the city. Here you may still come upon an Anatolian peasant woman colorfully clad in traditional clothing, kneeling on the cobblestones while she rhythmically beats freshly shorn wool with a stick. The smell of newly baked bread emanates from crooked, high windows adorned with dangling, red peppers. Shops’ wares—copper and plastic, carpets, antiques, electrical paraphernalia and handmade baskets—overflow into the narrow streets, showing a lackadaisical disregard for contrasts of old and new. Ulus will remain the heart of Ankara, no matter how fashionable or modern other areas of the city become.

Roughly 1,000 Americans live in Ankara, including military and civilian employees of the U.S. government, exchange students and professors, business representatives, spouses and dependents. Except for business representatives from western Europe, the rest of the foreign community is primarily diplomatic (composed of 113 diplomatic missions). American visitors to Ankara more often come on business than as tourists.

Food

For daily household needs local markets offer a good selection of food products and fresh produce. Neighborhood groceries (known as *bakkals*) sell most staples and offer store-to-door delivery. Availability of fresh produce varies seasonally. Stores similar to supermarkets in

America recently have opened in Ankara. Generally, most needs can be met on the local market, but imported goods are often expensive and shopping may take several stops, since specialty items often are stocked inconsistently.

Ankara has several restaurants that have become favorites in the foreign community. They range from Turkish to Italian, Chinese and international cuisines. Small kebab joints abound and American-type fast food places are beginning to catch on in Turkey. Ankara’s fourth McDonald’s has just opened.

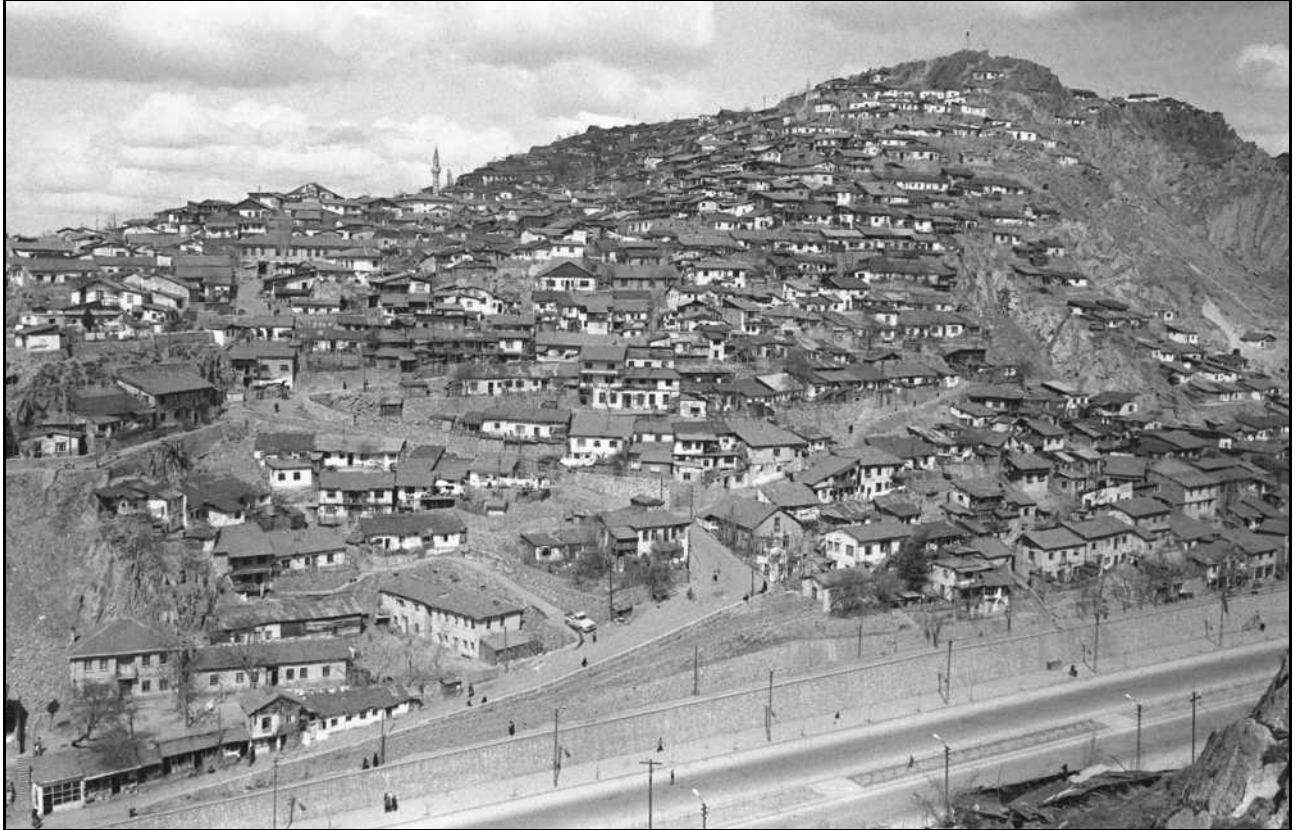
Clothing

Wardrobes can be supplemented easily by buying on the local economy. Clothing stores or tailor-made items of good quality are readily available. Taste in clothing in Turkish circles is similar to American taste, although Turkish women often wear dressier and more formal clothes to many social affairs.

Plan family wardrobes for Ankara’s four-season climate. The summer months bring hot days and cool evenings. Men generally wear lightweight suits during the hot months. Shorts and sleeveless tops are more and more frequently seen on the streets, but women may feel less conspicuous in skirts and shirts with short sleeves. Swimming is a popular pastime during the hot summer months. Winter months can be cold and windy, requiring clothes similar to those needed for Washington, D.C. winters. Good rain gear, winter boots and gloves, and comfortable walking shoes are useful. It is a Turkish custom to remove shoes upon entering the home; many Americans adopt this practice, in which case slippers are needed to wear indoors during cold months and to offer guests who remove their shoes when they visit.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, cosmetics, personal hygiene products, tobacco items, fabrics, toys, small appliances, housekeeping supplies, entertaining needs, household repair items and various other commonly-used



Aerial view of Ankara, Turkey

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

items are available, though sometimes limited in selection and quality, on the Turkish economy.

Local tailors, dressmakers, hair stylists, shoemakers, dry cleaners and other assorted services are available. Quality of work may vary, but overall, results have been very acceptable.

Religious Activities

Interdenominational Protestant worship services are held each Sunday at the Department of Defense Dependents (DoDD) School. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints also meets each Sunday at the school. Roman Catholic services are held at the French Embassy chapel, Italian Embassy chapel, and the Vatican Embassy chapel. Some Americans attend the Church of St. Nicolas, of the Worldwide Anglican Communion, which is located on the British Embassy compound. The Ankara Baptist

Church holds services each Sunday in a member's home. Most of these groups have active auxiliary organizations.

A congregation of Turkish Sephardic Jews has a synagogue in the old part of Ankara.

Education

Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) operates a school system for grades Kindergarten (mornings only) through 12. The school is at the American Support Facility (ASF) in Balgat. Dependent children of employees of all U.S. government agencies in Ankara are eligible to enter the elementary and high schools. Other non-Turkish students may be admitted on a space-available, tuition-paying basis. The school's address is:

George C. Marshall School
 Unit 7010
 APO AE 09822

Telephone: 90-312-287-2532, fax: 90-312-285-1791

The annual academic tuition rates are established by DoDDS in Washington, D.C. Registration for eligible children is ongoing throughout the summer. Children can be registered when they arrive in Ankara.

The school curriculum is similar to that of public schools in the U.S. In addition to the regular curriculum, courses sometimes can be arranged to meet students' special needs. To enter kindergarten a child must be age five on or before October 31st of the year they enroll. To enter the first grade a child must be age six on or before October 31st of the year they enroll. Admission to the various grades in the high school is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the preceding grade or its equivalent.

The faculty is recruited in the U.S. under the Department of Defense

Educational System. At the present time about 90% of the faculty have Master's degrees; the remainder have Bachelor's degrees. The teachers have had an average of eighteen years of experience and about half of the school's faculty has been in Turkey over ten years.

In addition to the usual facilities, the school has a large gymnasium and an outdoor track, soccer field, and playground, well-equipped special purpose rooms for art, music, general science, biology, chemistry, physics, mechanical drawing, industrial arts and home economics. There is no school lunch program; most children bring bag lunches from home. The high school has an active program of extracurricular activities, including interscholastic sports, journalism, band (instruments furnished), choral groups, and host nation activities.

The high school is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The school uses the A-B-C-D-F grading system. There is a Parent-Teacher-Student Organization and a School Advisory Council.

The British, French and German Embassies operate study groups (schools), that enroll students of other nationalities. The British and French Schools go through the equivalent of the primary grades and have three terms per year. The German School extends through the equivalent of grade 10.

The British Embassy Study Group provides a British-style education based on the Common Entrance Examination syllabi for entrance to private schools in the U.K. The Study Group's present building, set on the grounds of the British Embassy, was built in 1964. The premises contain classrooms, a well-stocked library, computer resource room, hall/gymnasium and administration offices. There is an active Parent Teacher Association. Entrance priority is given first to British students and next to native English speakers.

Bilkent University Prep School is a private Turkish school taught in English. The school is expanding by one grade level per year and will have pre-grade six "prep" class through grade 12 by fall term 1997. Class size is limited to 20 students. The curriculum has a structure similar to the English National Curriculum but departs from it occasionally to suit the multi-cultural student body. The International General Certificate of Secondary Education curriculum is offered in grades nine and 10 and the International Baccalaureate curriculum in grades 11 and 12. Bilkent Prep's facilities include a sports hall, a band room and a general music room, two fully equipped science labs, audio visual rooms, a computer lab, ceramics and art rooms as well as ample classrooms. There is also a cafeteria which provides lunch.

There are a few excellent preschools taught in English, including the British Embassy Study Group which accepts children during the term in which they turn three years old, and the International Preschool.

College degree programs are available from Turkish universities, many of which are taught in English. Part-time attendance is not common in Turkey. Incirlik Air Base in Adana oversees University of Maryland and City College of Chicago extension programs in Adana and Ankara.

Sports

Sports in and around Ankara include tennis, softball, bowling, flag football, basketball, jogging, hunting, handball, squash, racquetball, weight-lifting, aerobics, fishing, swimming, ice skating and skiing. The DoDD School at the ASF in Balgat has a gym, weight room and racquetball court which are available after school hours for use by the American community. The Hash House Harriers have an active contingents in Ankara. They gather each Wednesday evening and Sunday afternoon to run somewhere in or around the city and

occasionally travel to other parts of the country for additional fun on the run.

The Hilton and Sheraton Hotels offer year-round swimming pool/health club memberships. Sports International is a new sports and fitness club located near Bilkent University. The facility, built by a U.S.-Turkish joint venture, is well-maintained and impressive: it has both indoor and outdoor pools, numerous tennis courts, fitness equipment, a gymnasium and separate aerobics room, nutrition and fitness counseling, social areas, a restaurant and a cafe, saunas, solariums, a steam room, and a large child care/play area. Membership fees are high, although membership in a comparable fitness club in Washington, D.C. no doubt would be more expensive. There are other small fitness clubs located throughout the city offering workout equipment and aerobics classes.

Fairly good skiing is available in areas not too far from Ankara. The slope closest to the city is Elmadag, which offers a small T-bar lift, a nice lodge and restaurant, plus a small hill for sledding. Kartalkaya, near Bolu, about three and a half hours north of Ankara, offers several beginner and intermediate runs and has two large hotels. Uludag, near Bursa, is a popular, more upscale skiing spot with many good hotels and lifts. More adventurous skiing is available at Mt. Erciyes near Kayseri and near Erzurum in eastern Turkey. Ice skating and ice hockey are available at a large, modern, indoor ice skating rink in Ankara.

There are good freshwater fishing spots within three to five hours drive from Ankara. The rivers and streams of eastern Turkey, although difficult to reach, provide excellent trout fishing. Other freshwater fish such as giant catfish, carp, pike and bass, lurk in various corners of Turkey. At this time a fishing license is not required; however, there are specific fishing seasons. A hunting license is required for all game. Duck, geese, partridge, wild boar,

wolf and numerous smaller game exist in many areas. Turkey also has its own species of quail and wild turkey. Often local forestry stations impose a substantial, additional fee for hunting in their jurisdictions.

Sports equipment such as tennis rackets and balls, softball gear, wetsuits and snorkels, are expensive and difficult to get in Turkey. The government of Turkey permits limited importation of shotguns and rifles.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

There are fine beaches on the Sea of Marmara, near Istanbul, along the Aegean coast north and south of Izmir, along the Mediterranean coast, and at resort areas on the Black Sea.

More and more areas of Turkey are being set aside for camping. Many national parks and forestry camps have been developed in the past few years near popular beach resorts and tourist sites. Most campsites are well-suited for tents. Many Americans bring camping equipment with them and find camping an enjoyable way to vacation in Turkey.

Ankara has a few, small, neighborhood parks, some with simple playground equipment. Unfortunately, you are not allowed to walk on the grass and the children's equipment is often broken and located on cement or hard-packed dirt. Since there is virtually no shade in the parks, the hot summer sun often prohibits playing on the metal equipment, and in winter the parks are muddy. The large Youth Park (Gençlik Park) in the center of the city contains restaurants and promenades, a boating lake, a children's playground, and a permanent midway with rides and attractions reminiscent of a country fair. Eymir Lake, affiliated with Middle East Technical University, offers a pleasant place to walk and picnic, and limited boating facilities. The current fee is about \$40 per year for a family permit to the lake. Golbasi Lake is just outside of Ankara and

accessible for walks and rowboat rental without a permit.

The old part of town, Ulus, has several ancient monuments which reveal the remarkable contrast of old and new in Ankara. The Byzantine citadel perches atop one of the two hills on which Ulus was built. Although the outer citadel walls have been destroyed or have fallen in ruins, the inner fortress still stands. The Roman baths date from the third century A.D. Little remains, but the baths still retain much of the essence of the original structure. Julian's Column near Ulus Square dates from the fourth century. It is thought that the monument was erected to commemorate a visit by Emperor Julian the Apostate to Ankara.

The Temple of Augustus was built in the late first century B.C. About five hundred years later, it was made into a Christian church and then in the fifteenth century one of its walls was used as a support for the roof of the Hacı Bayram Mosque. The walls of this marble temple are still standing and bear the famous inscription in both Greek and Latin, "The Achievements of the Deified Augustus," a political autobiography of the Emperor.

Within the walls of the citadel is the Alaeddin Mosque, built in 1178 and renovated several times during the Ottoman Empire. Inscriptions on its finely carved, walnut pulpit that remain from its origins indicate it was built by the Seljuk Turks. Another Seljuk mosque, the Aslanhane Camii, or Lion House Mosque, built in 1289, still has its original structure and is noteworthy for its period wood- and tile-work.

Ankara houses two of the country's finest museums: the Ethnographic Museum which contains an extensive collection of old Turkish costumes, calligraphy, wood carvings, copper, brass, ceramics and pottery, and the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations which has the world's finest collection of Hittite artifacts. The Anatolian Civilizations

museum is housed in a 15th century "karavansaray" adjacent to the citadel.

Konya, ancient Iconium, is a four hour drive from Ankara. It was the capital of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and contains many monuments dating from that period. Here also are the tombs and the chapter-house of the Turkish Islamic mystic, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, founder of the 13th century order of dervishes widely known for their ethereal dancing. Every December many travel to Konya to see the festival of the Whirling Dervishes held in commemoration of their founder's death.

Kayseri is also a four hour drive from Ankara. Situated at the foot of Mt. Erciyes, it is rich in Seljuk architecture and decorative arts, most of which lie within its well-preserved medieval fortress. Near Kayseri is the area known as Cappadocia with a surreal landscape from the erosion of the soft layer of tufa stone. The countryside is a mass of stone waves that rise into pinnacles known as *peri bacalari* or "fairy chimneys." Early Christians carved these cones into homes, monasteries and churches, some still magnificently ornate with frescoes. The nearby underground cities of Derinkuyu and Kaymakli are but two of numerous troglodyte habitats in the area. These subterranean cities are fantastic to see, with their extensive ventilation shafts, round millstone-like doors and rooms that extend as deep as ten stories; it is believed that they were inhabited as early as pre-Christian times, and up until 1839 when locals sought refuge from the besieging Egyptian army.

Amasya, on the banks of the Yesil Irmak (Green River), is about five hours northeast of Ankara. The city is dominated by a massive cliff with the tombs of Pontic Kings carved into its face and ruins of the ancient fortress built when the kingdom was founded. Throughout the town are well-preserved examples of Seljuk and Ottoman architecture.

The Black Sea town of Amasra is about four hours by car from Ankara. Safronbolu, en route to Amasra, is known for its fine examples of Ottoman architecture, many of which recently have been renovated. Black Sea towns offer simple hotels and camping areas near pleasant, quiet beaches. Bolu, on the way to Istanbul, is about a three hour drive northwest of Ankara. Nearby is Lake Abant where you may fish, boat or swim. A hotel overlooking the lake provides good accommodations.

Istanbul is now five or so hours drive from Ankara, depending on how fast your car will go—or how fast you will let it go. The new super toll highway linking the two cities is complete except for the tunnel through the mountain at Bolu. Once the tunnel is complete, the drive will be quick and painless, given decent weather. As it is, the area around Bolu can be congested and dangerous with trucks and foolhardy drivers daring blindly to pass them. Some still prefer to fly to Istanbul, get a sleeper car on the overnight train, or travel by intercity buses—especially the smoke-free, double-decker buses with dining and toilet facilities.

Entertainment

The Turkish State Opera and the Turkish State Conservatory are located in Ankara. The Presidential Symphony Orchestra offers two performances a week during its regular season. Several theaters present decent plays in Turkish. Occasionally touring foreign companies visit. USIS and the cultural departments of other embassies, especially the French and the British, sponsor musical and theatrical performances. Tickets for all of these are very modestly priced. The Turkish American Association sponsors concerts, lectures, movies and art exhibitions.

In addition to Turkish films, local movie theaters present American and European movies with Turkish subtitles.

Social Activities

There are numerous opportunities for activities within the American community in Ankara. Activities for children and teenagers generally revolve around the DoDD School. Active Boy and Girl Scout programs and youth sports programs involve many children and adult volunteers to run them.

The Ankara Women's Club provides monthly social and cultural programs for its members. The Ankara Professional Women's Network was founded as a forum for women who work or would like to work in Turkey and hosts periodic lectures and seminars. It aims to create a network of support readily accessible to foreign women who wish to work in Ankara; obviously, efforts to negotiate a bilateral work agreement are of great interest. The U.S. Embassy's Community Center, based in a small apartment in one of the embassy-leased buildings, is run on a member-volunteer basis and offers mother-toddler, bridge players', and cooking groups and other events members organize. The Community Center is open to the greater American community, and others on an associate member, space available basis. The ERA hosts occasional TGIF parties, Block Parties, Happy Hours and other seasonal events such as the winter Holiday Bazaar and a Fourth of July party. The greater American community and other guests are invited to these events.

Friends of ARIT was formed in 1983 by Americans in the Ankara community interested in the art, history and archaeology of Turkey to help promote the work of the Ankara Branch of ARIT (American Research Institute in Turkey). Friends of ARIT frequently sponsors lectures given by visiting or local scholars, informative tours around Turkey's archaeological sites, and benefit dinners. The ARIT library has a specialized collection of books and periodicals on archaeology in Turkey.

Many of the organizations mentioned above also offer opportunities

for meeting Turks and other foreign nationals. There are several avenues for contributing to and volunteering for charitable organizations, including the Turkish-American Women's Cultural and Charitable Society, an active volunteer group with an international membership. The Cocuk Sevenler Dernegi (Child Lovers' Society) gives volunteer help to orphans in the Ankara area, and also has an international membership. The need for volunteer work is great, newcomers are always welcome, and any contribution is appreciated. The Turkish-American Association cosponsors an annual ARIT lecture series on archaeology. It also organizes guided tours for its members to areas of archaeological and scenic interest.

Istanbul

The mention of Istanbul evokes romantic images of the imperial sultans, janissaries and harems of the Ottoman Empire, of Byron and Keats who immortalized through verse the glories of Byzantium, of the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and the Orient Express. Istanbul has never been a monolithic Turkish city, but rather a cosmopolitan blend of nationalities. In 1906, only 44% of its 870,000 residents were Turkish or Arab Moslems. In the period from 1839-1880, large numbers of European workers and tradesmen settled in Pera on the European side of the Bosphorus, north of the Golden Horn, where they built hotels, houses and palaces and demanded a higher standard of city services. The remainder were a pastiche of Greeks, Armenians, Jews and foreigners from all over Europe. Old Stamboul, south of the Golden Horn and heavily Moslem, languished and suffered from the terrible destruction of the city's frequent fires. The European residents of Pera brought in urban planners from Germany and Italy who replaced traditional wooden structures with buildings made of stone. This created a European oasis in Istanbul, a distinction from the rest of the city that remains today.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Ayasofye Mosque in Istanbul

Many middle- and upper-class members of contemporary Istanbul society are pro-western and consider themselves European. The city is a unique synthesis of east and west upon the exotic echoes of ancient Byzantium and old Constantinople. Simultaneously, it is a bustling, modern, industrial city of 8 million people. There is no end to the fascination of Istanbul. Those fortunate enough to be assigned to a tour of duty here should find it an enriching experience.

Food

Istanbul markets offer a wide selection of excellent, seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables. Each neighborhood has its own *bakkal* (small grocery), as well as fresh fruit and vegetable markets. Beef, lamb, mutton and chicken are available from local butchers. Fresh fish is available in season. There are a growing number of large supermarkets, which carry a wide range of local

and imported foodstuffs. Turkish bread, baked throughout the day, is excellent. Local pastries, bottled fruit drinks, and other local foodstuffs are plentiful.

The overall quality of food in Istanbul is excellent. There are numerous restaurants throughout the city, ranging from tiny kebab shops to luxurious fish restaurants along the Bosphorus. Istanbul has a growing number of fast-food restaurants, including McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Wimpy's, and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Clothing

Turks' taste in clothing is similar to that of Americans, but Turks generally wear dressier and more formal clothes to social affairs. Clothing stores feature current women's fashions in every price range, although at prices above those for comparable clothing in the U.S. and with a limited range of sizes. Local

fabrics are available for those who sew or wish to hire a dressmaker. Many items can be made locally at reasonable prices. Locally made leather wear is a particularly good buy. Since the temperatures in Istanbul resemble those of Washington, D.C., clothing for all seasons is needed. Homes are generally maintained at cooler temperatures in Istanbul than in the U.S. Raincoats and boots are necessary because of winter rain and mud. Shoe selection is limited.

Men: Sportswear, shirts, sweaters, and other items may be purchased locally. The quality of these items ranges from acceptable to excellent; prices are higher than in the U.S. for comparable quality goods. Some local tailors are satisfactory for suits and jackets.

Women: Women should bring at least a couple of dresses or suits appropriate for receptions or din-

ners. Turkish women often wear black; a dark dress or suit would be useful. Long evening dresses are worn infrequently; but one or two suitable for the occasional black tie dinner might be needed. A long wool or velveteen skirt is worthwhile for cold winter evenings.

Children: Some children's clothing and shoes are also available locally in Turkish stores, but prices are high, even for Turkish-made items.

Supplies and Services

Foreign and local toiletries and cosmetics are available on the local market, but at substantially higher prices than in the U.S. Pharmaceuticals are often in short supply on the local market. Miscellaneous household supplies and gadgets are available locally. Bookstores sell English-language newspapers, magazines and books but at prices higher than in the U.S.

Shoe, watch, radio, phonograph, and automobile repair facilities are available. The quality of work varies. There are several excellent dry cleaning shops, though quality varies.

Religious Activities

Religious groups represented in Istanbul include Anglican, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Gregorian, Armenian, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish. Each has its charitable organizations and societies. Two social welfare centers originally founded as branches of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations are directed by Americans but are now registered as local institutions with Turkish names.

Several Roman Catholic churches are located throughout the city and offer services in English. The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit is directly across the street from the Hilton Hotel, and services in English are also held at the Church of St. Anthony in Beyoglu and in the Chapel of the Little Sisters of the Poor (in Sisli). The Anglican Community holds services at the Crimean Church near the Consu-

late, and once a month on the grounds of the British Consulate General (also not far from the U.S. Consulate). Protestant services in English are held in the Interdenominational Union Church (Dutch Chapel). The Jewish Community is mostly Sephardic; synagogues are Orthodox.

Education

English-language schooling for American dependents in Istanbul is available through grade 10. Schooling is available beyond this level, but the schools either do not readily accept American students or are inadequate.

American children from kindergarten through grade 10 usually attend the Istanbul International Community School (IICS), an autonomous school originally affiliated with Robert College. The school is directed by an American headmaster and follows a combined American/International curriculum. A school board representing parents is responsible for educational, financial, and personnel policies. The school is working towards a European Council of International Schools accreditation. Students from IICS have been readily accepted by schools in the U.S. and Europe. Standardized achievement and aptitude tests are given at all grade levels. The school is a member of the Educational Records Bureau and the Educational Testing Service, and is a test center for the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT). The school's curriculum includes science, computers, mathematics, art, music, physical education, French, and Turkish. The school has a library of about 5,000 volumes. The school does not provide lunch. IICS receives grant assistance from the State Department Office of Overseas Schools. Information on the school is available from the annual school fact sheets prepared by that office.

School opens in late August and closes in late June, providing about 180 days of instruction. The calendar is similar to that of American schools, but with two-week vaca-

tions at Christmas and in the spring. Average yearly enrollment is 150 to 170 students representing 20 or more nationalities. Class size seldom exceeds 20 students.

There are long waiting lists of students seeking admission to IICS.

Sports

Istanbul offers a variety of sports facilities and activities. The ENKA Sports Club in Istinye has a full range of sports facilities, including tennis courts, Olympic-sized swimming pools, and indoor racket courts. However, membership fees are very expensive. Robert College in Arnavutkoy has a tennis court. The British Consulate General also has a tennis and squash court and Americans can become members of this club. The Hilton Hotel and some of the other five star hotels have tennis courts and gym facilities, but memberships are expensive. There are also a variety of sports clubs which offer free-weight or universal-gym weight training and/or aerobics classes.

Istanbul affords swimming opportunities at the sea of Marmara and the Black Sea; however, some areas are less polluted and safer for swimming than others. Some hotels have swimming pools. Again, memberships are very expensive. Opportunities for lap swimming are rare in Istanbul.

Istanbul entertains many boating fans. The best known of several yacht clubs is the Moda Club, located on the Sea of Marmara. Privileges at this club, including boat rentals, are for members only but foreigners may join. Sailing on the Bosphorus can be dangerous because of unpredictable winds and very strong currents, so it is not recommended for novices. Rowboats and runabouts are popular for sport fishing, and water skiing. Some Americans have brought motors from the U.S. to avoid paying high prices for those imported into Turkey. Locally produced boats and small motor craft, although usually expensive, may be purchased or rented.

Bird and duck hunting in the vicinity of Istanbul are fair, but game resources are depleted early in the season. Hunting season is from September to April. Small game within one or two hours drive of Istanbul include European quail, wild pigeon, woodcock, and duck. Wild boar are also hunted in Turkey.

Horseback riding is not very popular in Istanbul and facilities are limited. There is, however, a small riding academy. The academy offers lessons in riding and jumping for persons of all ages at reasonable rates (instruction is in Turkish). Bring safety helmets.

Uludag (near Bursa) and Kartalkaya (near Bolu on the Ankara road) offer good accommodations for skiing enthusiasts. Modern ski tows are in operation, and ski equipment may be rented inexpensively. Cross-country skiing trails are available, but rare. IICS sponsors a ski trip every winter to Uludag for its students, their parents, and other interested adults in the American community.

Istanbul has two nine-hole golf courses. Entry fees are expensive. Caddies charge reasonable fees but are not always available. Clubhouses serve refreshments. Squash courts are available to members of the British Consulate Club and their guests. Some fencing and ping-pong are available at the Hilton Tennis Club. Pickup basketball, volleyball, softball, and touch football games are organized occasionally. An ice-skating rink is located in the Galleria shopping mall near the airport. Fame City, a complex of video games and arcades, is also located in the Galleria.

Some individuals jog along the Bosphorus, but exhaust fumes and pollution take some of the joy out of this sort of activity. There are, however, fitness trails and jogging paths in the Belgrade Forest and in some wooded park areas of the city. The Hash House Harriers find weekly occasion to do their thing and encourage participation by all.

Soccer is the national mania; tickets to major games are scarce, but readily available for other games. Turkey's national team plays a confederation of middle European teams at home and abroad. There are professional basketball and volleyball teams, and the games are well-attended.

Children's Recreation

Istanbul has practically no children's sports facilities, although a few playgrounds and parks are in or near the city, such as Yildiz Park and Gulhane Park. Scouts and Brownies are very popular. Troops are organized through IICS. Other children's activities, such as an annual ski trip, are also organized through IICS.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

It is impossible to exaggerate the magnificence of the museums and variety of collections in Istanbul. Topkapi and Dolmabahce Palaces, and the Aya Sofya and Sultan Ahmet Mosque are but a few of the famous, grand monuments and treasures Istanbul has to offer. The Kariye museum, restored by Dumbarton Oaks, has some of the finest examples of Byzantine mosaics and frescoes in the world. The Archeological Museum has an extensive collection and the Museum of Ancient Oriental Art houses rare artifacts from Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, and Hittite civilizations. Strolling through various quarters of the city or shopping at the incomparable covered bazaar are popular weekend pastimes.

Excellent sight-seeing tours are organized by the Turkish-American University Association and American Research Institute in Turkey. Lectures, films, and other cultural events are also sponsored by these groups, along with their annual fund-raising activities. Ferries crisscross the Bosphorus and the Marmara on regular runs. Some boats can be chartered. Touring outside Istanbul and around Turkey reveals abundant historical and scenic sites. Many posted to Istanbul enjoy a popular "mavi yolculuk," or

"blue cruise" along the Aegean and Mediterranean coastlines and the Black Sea.

Ample opportunities exist for outdoor activities. A series of automobile camping sites has been established along well-traveled routes. The planning and implementation of hiking expeditions require individual initiative, as few organized groups or facilities exist. The many hotels are reasonably clean and uncrowded making Istanbul a good location from which to plan weekend getaways. There are historical sites of great interest in every direction and many are within a few hours drive or less from the city. Travel possibilities are practically limitless.

The Belgrade Forest, a park built around Istanbul's reservoir north of the city, has excellent picnic facilities. Permission has been obtained for Scouts and other groups to camp overnight within the park.

Entertainment

The Ataturk Cultural Center, located at Taksim Square in downtown Istanbul, is the center of the city's cultural life. The Center's cultural season runs from October to early June and includes opera and ballet as well as other productions. Plays are performed at several theaters throughout the city. The Istanbul orchestra has an annual concert program. The annual Istanbul Festival of Culture and the Arts takes place from mid-June until mid-July and is the highlight of the musical entertainment year. This international festival includes participants from many countries that have diplomatic representation in Turkey. Exciting music, dance, and theater events permeate the city and are reasonably priced.

Most of Istanbul's many movie houses show foreign films with Turkish subtitles. Each spring the city hosts the Istanbul International Film Festival which brings some of the best new foreign films to local screens.

Istanbul has many excellent restaurants ranging from kebab shops located throughout the city to more expensive fish restaurants on the Bosphorus to very expensive restaurants with European cuisines. Turkish cooking is varied, colorful, and delicious.

Istanbul also has an abundance of night clubs, taverns, discos, neighborhood bars, fast-food restaurants, casinos, cozy restaurants, tea gardens, waterside cafes, museums, exhibitions, art galleries, shopping malls, department stores, English-language bookstores, and Bosphorus cruises.

Although Istanbul is a remarkable, cosmopolitan city, increasingly congested traffic makes it difficult and time consuming to get out and do things, especially during messy winter days. Most programs (including English and American movies) on Turkish television have been dubbed in Turkish; occasionally these English-language programs are simulcast in the original language on one of the Turkish radio stations.

Social Activities

Most Americans in Istanbul are either of the U.S. government civilian, business, or institutional community. The latter includes teachers and others, many of whom have had broad and varied experiences in Turkey. Both the American Women of Istanbul and the International Women's Club sponsor a number of cultural, social, and charitable events throughout the year. Children's social contacts are largely organized through the IICS and Consulate-sponsored events.

Organizations such as the Turkish-American University Association (particularly the women's group), the Propeller Club, and Rotary Club provide excellent opportunities to meet Turks. Tours organized by local agencies also offer these opportunities. The non-Turkish speaker may find himself somewhat limited in his contacts. Nonetheless, Turks are very patient, friendly and hospi-

table, and many speak English, German, or French.

Istanbul has a large consular corps and foreign business community. The Propeller Club is a good introduction to foreign and Turkish business representatives. The International Women's Club of Istanbul holds monthly meetings and sponsors a variety of activities. The American Girls Dershane (originally a YMCA project), the Vehbi Koc Vakfi American Hospital and other charities afford those who are interested a chance to assist local groups and to meet members of the Turkish and international communities.

Adana

Adana is 30 miles from the Mediterranean Sea, a five to seven hour drive from Ankara and eight hours by car from Damascus. The fifth largest city in Turkey with a population of over one million, it is a wealthy provincial capital on the rich delta plain of the area once known as Cilicia. Adana is a rapidly expanding agricultural and industrial center. The old town center lies along the banks of the Seyhan River. As in many Turkish cities, this original hub is surrounded by newer residential areas and fringed with squatter settlements. New Adana lies to the north, between the railroad and Cukurova University, on the lake formed by the Seyhan Dam.

Adana has been inhabited since prehistoric times. Excavations at Tarsus and Mersin (within an hour's drive of Adana) have exposed layers of civilizations going back to Neolithic times, possibly as early as 6000 B.C. Numerous powers have dominated and settled Adana as they fought their way across Anatolia. Alexander the Great passed through the area when he destroyed the Persian Empire and conquered the Middle East. After Alexander's death, Adana became part of the Seleucid State. The area was conquered by the Romans after centuries of Greek rule. Reminiscent of Roman rule is a stone bridge built

by Hadrian across the Seyhan River that is still in use today. In 1132 A.D., Armenians took over Adana and it became a center of Armenian culture. In 1515 it was captured by the Turks. It remained a part of the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War I.

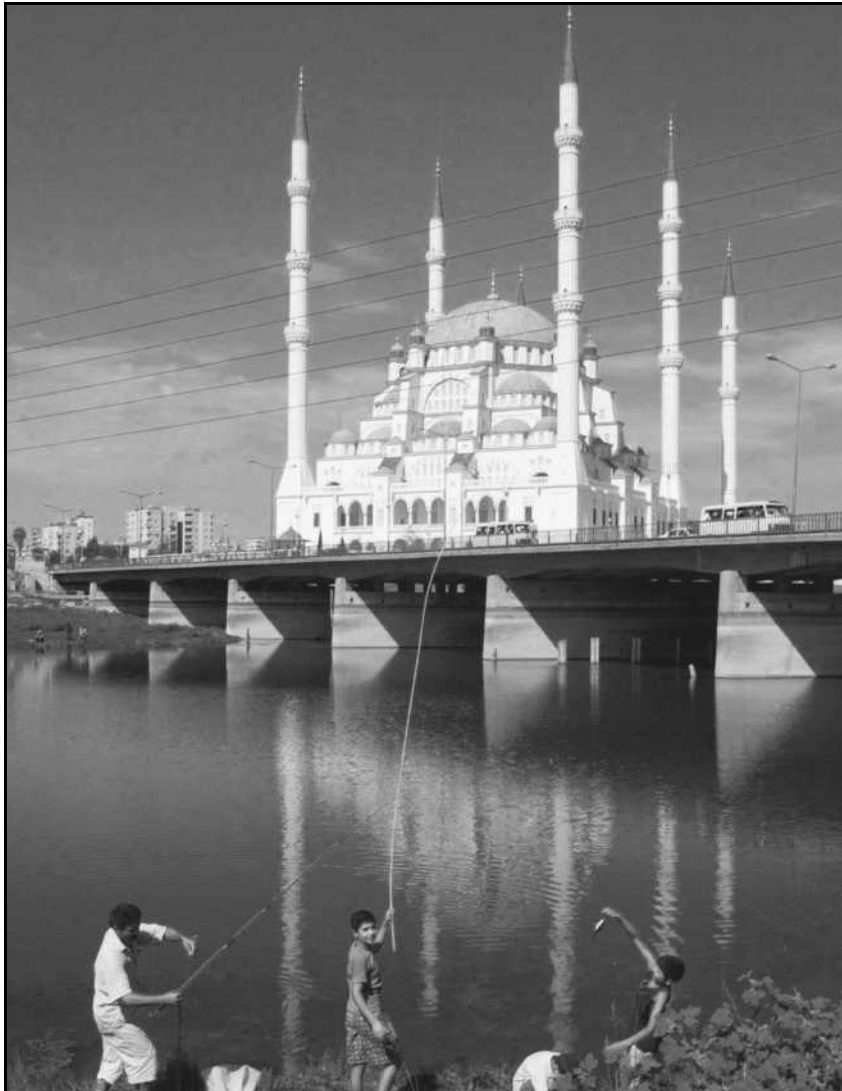
Adana's summers are hot and humid with very little rainfall. In winter the temperature rarely falls below freezing, yet rains that last for days make it seem colder. Fall and spring are magnificent with sunny days and pleasantly cool evenings. When compared to the U.S. the climate of Adana resembles that of the cotton growing areas of Mississippi and Texas. The Cilician plain (now called Cukurova) has been described as the "Texas of Turkey," where cotton and citrus fruits are the principal crops, and wealthy farmers and textile manufacturers dominate the region's economy.

Adana is connected with the rest of Turkey by a good system of roads, and with Ankara and Istanbul by daily air and train service. Coastal steamers call at nearby Iskenderun and Mersin en route to Turkish ports and Northern Cyprus. Travel on secondary roads is difficult during the rainy seasons, but feasible throughout the rest of the year. Transportation within the city includes both motor and horse-drawn vehicles.

Most of the American community is made up of U.S. Air Force and attached U.S. government civilian personnel stationed at Incirlik, a Turkish air base nine miles east of the city. About 500 American families reside in Adana proper. Given the large local Kurdish population, Kurdish is widely spoken in the eastern provinces. Many Turks in the area also speak some Arabic or another European language, but English is the most common second language for businessmen.

Food

Food supplies on the local market vary widely according to the season. In the fall and winter months, meats, fruits and vegetables are



Sabancı mosque in Adana, Turkey

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

plentiful. Local beef and lamb are inexpensive and easy to find although quality may vary. Fruits and vegetables are seasonal but abundant, inexpensive, and of excellent quality. Local pastries and bread are quite good.

A liquor store at Incirlik carries wine, beer, spirits and liqueurs. Spirits are rationed to five bottles per person per month. Good Turkish wines are available on the local market.

Clothing

In the intense summer heat, lightweight cottons and washable fabrics are most comfortable. Sports attire and swimming suits are useful for

picnics and beach parties. During the winter, warm clothing is necessary since seasonal rains bring damp cold. Indoor clothing needs to be warmer than normally worn in U.S. homes since the apartments are heated less; medium-weight coats are sufficient for outdoors. Raincoats, boots and umbrellas are also necessary during the winter rainy season. Ready-made clothing of suitable quality and style is usually available. Adana has good tailors and dressmakers. Good local fabrics are also available.

During the summer and warm months of spring and fall, local custom is going tieless and coatless in short-sleeved shirts. Summer suits

or sports coats are normally worn only for evening social functions. At daytime social functions, Turkish women wear attractive dressy suits and afternoon dresses. Women customarily go without stockings during the hot summer months. Most foreign women feel self-conscious on the streets in shorts or sleeveless clothes. At dinners and cocktail parties, well-to-do Turkish women wear European fashions either purchased abroad or made by local dressmakers after European fashions. Evening wear is usually dark or black. Turkish businesswomen wear attire appropriate for the season and similar in style to that worn by American businesswomen.

During both summer and winter, children need clothing that will survive the many washings necessary after play in alternating dust and mud. This means many changes of light cotton clothes in the summer and numerous sweaters and overalls in the winter.

Supplies and Services

Community services are adequate. Good barbering is available both at Incirlik and in Adana proper. Several beauty shops in town are satisfactory. Adequate dry cleaners exist locally and at Incirlik.

Religious Activities

The USAF Chapel at Incirlik offers Catholic and Protestant services. There is also a Catholic Church in downtown Adana. Jewish, Mormon and other denominational services occasionally are held at Incirlik. Adana has a small Jewish community and a synagogue.

Education

Children of U.S. government personnel attend the dependent school at Incirlik on a tuition basis. The school, fully accredited by the North Central Association, offers kindergarten through high school. Pre-school is available at Incirlik for three- and four-year-olds.

Sports

A gymnasium, swimming pool, tennis courts, handball and squash

courts, a nine-hole golf course, and a bowling alley at Incirlik are open to American citizens.

Ample opportunity for hunting (license necessary and available to diplomats only) and fishing exists within a day's drive of Adana. Wild boar are found near Tarsus and migratory waterfowl gather in the salt marshes south of Adana. Trout fishing is available in the mountains near Kahramanmaras.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Recreation for most Americans revolves around picnicking and swimming. The nearby beaches and mountains provide relief from the heat on weekends. Beaches along the Mediterranean are undeveloped and beautiful. A few campgrounds have been established as part of the national program to attract tourists to Turkey. Several moderately-priced hotels with excellent beaches are within a two hour drive of Adana.

Adana is literally surrounded by undeveloped archeological sites. Ruins of medieval castles and cities from Greek to Armenian eras are within easy driving distance over good but heavily traveled roads. The Adana district is rich in historical sites, many dating back to Hittite times. The town of Tarsus, about 25 miles west of Adana on the Mersin Road, is renowned as the birthplace of St. Paul the Apostle.

Entertainment

There is little cultural activity in Adana. Occasional local theater productions are in Turkish. Numerous indoor and outdoor movie theaters feature Turkish, European and some American films. Foreign films usually have Turkish subtitles. The movie theater at Incirlik offers American movies, including a Saturday children's matinee. The best food served in local restaurants is Turkish, although some European dishes are offered. There are several nightclubs that offer dancing, food and snacks, and a variety of musical entertainment. Several clubs, hotels and restaurants patronized by

Adana officials and business representatives are also enjoyed by Americans.

Social Activities

A large number of Americans posted to Adana reside in the village of Incirlik outside the base. Aside from cocktail and dinner parties at home, the social activities of the American military community center around the facilities at Incirlik.

Entertainment within the Turkish community consists largely of dinner parties during the fall, winter and spring to which Americans or other foreigners are frequently invited. In the summer months, Turkish wives and children move to Istanbul or to the mountains to escape the heat and humidity, and social life in Adana is virtually suspended. Even though many of the locals speak English, any effort made to speak Turkish is welcome and appreciated. The Turkish-American Association affords excellent opportunities for making Turkish friends. It is staffed by a locally-hired director and is located at No. 27, Bes Ocak Caddesi, Resat Bey Mahallesi.

Special Information

There are English-speaking Turkish doctors in the city of Adana who have had training in the U.S. or Europe, but their equipment is limited and certain medicines are sometimes not available on the local market. Necessary surgery, eye examinations, and diagnostic work should be taken care of before coming. Those planning to reside in Adana for some time should be inoculated against typhoid, polio, tetanus, cholera and diphtheria. Gamma globulin shots also should be considered. Because of the hot weather in the summer and humidity in both summer and winter, persons with arrested TB or sinus conditions should consult a doctor before coming to post. Dental care also is available from western-trained local dentists, many of whom speak excellent English.

The rapid urbanization of the area has had negative effects: noise, dirt,

inadequate sewage disposal systems, and severe traffic jams. Malaria outbreaks unfortunately have become more frequent in the past several years. This is due to an increase in breeding places resulting from expanded irrigation in rural areas, poor drainage in the city itself, and the development of the anopheles mosquito resistant to conventional insecticides. Many people take malaria prophylactics. Hepatitis is endemic.

Izmir

Izmir, with an estimated metropolitan population of 2.1 million, is Turkey's third largest city and the unofficial capital of Aegean Turkey, the country's scenic and fruitful southwestern region. With a fine harbor midway down the western coast, it is Turkey's second busiest port. Its hinterland, rich in tobacco, cotton, fruits, and vegetables, makes it even more important than Istanbul as an export center. In recent years, Izmir has also become the country's second industrial area. The city boasts of being "the pearl of the Aegean." Increasing numbers of foreign tourists are finding that it is surrounded by some of the world's loveliest scenery.

Historically, Izmir was better known under the Greek form of its name, Smyrna. It has been an important center for over 3,000 years, seeing the passage of Lydians, Ionian Greeks, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Saracens, Seljuks, Tartars, Crusaders, Venetians, and Ottomans. A modern Greek invading force was driven from Izmir into the sea in 1922, and the city was subsequently incorporated into the Republic of Turkey. The surrounding area abounds in relics of earlier times, especially of classical antiquity, but in Izmir itself, the only relics of earlier eras are the foundations of the earliest Greek city, a part of the Roman agora, a hilltop castle of indeterminate age, some handsome Ottoman mosques, and a few streets of rapidly disappearing 19th-century buildings.

Not only the monuments, but also the people of old Smyrna, have given way to the new. Until World War II, the population was largely non-Turkish—Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and “Leventines” (Italian, French, British, Dutch, and German nationals whose families had lived in Smyrna for generations). Today, the population is almost entirely Turkish, a large part of it first or second generation Izmiris whose families were Turkish refugees from Greece or Bulgaria or migrants from interior Anatolia. If Izmir is still the most “Western” of Turkish cities, it is so because of its location, its wealth, and its general vitality, as well as the consequence of its history.

Izmir extends along the U-shaped head of a bay which runs east-west and is surrounded mostly by high hills. The major part of the city is on the southern shore. Closest to the center is the Konak quarter, which is both the traffic hub and the main shopping district. In appearance and atmosphere, this is the most picturesque part of Izmir; it has much of the character of an old Near Eastern marketing center.

North of this area is the quarter of Alsancak, most of which is quite modern. It is a level area with well-designed streets, modern apartment blocks, and stores and warehouses. Alsancak is the district where most Americans live and spend the greater part of their time. The U.S. Consulate is at one end of this area, and the best hotels at the other. Here also are the best apartment buildings, shops, restaurants, the fair grounds (Culture Park), the cathedral, and the offices of the Turkish-American Association.

Like most rapidly developing cities in older countries, Izmir is a city of contrasts. Beneath the attractive and almost serene skyline, seen from a distance, are all the problems of contemporary urban blight—from housing shortages to air and water pollution—much aggravated by a population that has not yet made the adaptation from rural to metropolitan living. For all

its problems, however, Izmir remains a thriving, vital city. Minor frustrations in daily living abound, but the climate, scenery, history, and a friendly population more than compensate for them.

American associations with Izmir go back to the early 19th century, when American traders, shippers, missionaries, and teachers first settled in the then predominantly foreign city. Apart from the U.S. Consulate General, and a long tradition of good will, the only remainder of this earlier association is the American Girls’ School, a fine secondary school for Turkish girls which is largely managed and staffed by Americans. At a later date, oriental tobacco was exported from Izmir to the U.S. in large quantities. This remains an important trade today, and every major American tobacco company has its permanent representative in Izmir.

By far the largest number of Americans to visit Izmir in recent years have been military personnel. The U.S. Air Force maintained a base at Cigli (now the site of the city’s civil airport) for many years. This base was relinquished in 1970, and almost half of the American military and their dependents left. A smaller military presence remains, however.

Izmir is the site of two important NATO commands, Headquarters Landsoutheast and Headquarters Sixth Allied Tactical Air Force. Serving these commands is a U.S. Air Force logistical support organization, known as 7241 Air Base Group.

In the future, it seems likely that new Turkish-American ties in Izmir will develop through tourism and industrial investment and development. The total American population of Izmir (military and civilian) is over 2,000.

Education

Children of U.S. Government employees in Izmir attend the Department of Defense schools in Alsancak. These schools, operated

by 7241 Air Base Group primarily for the American military, include an elementary section and a high school, covering grades one through 12. They offer courses and extracurricular activities normally found in public schools in the U.S. Qualified American teachers are employed. The high school is fully accredited. There are no boarding facilities.

The Izmir-Amerikan Kiz Lisesi at Goztepe (Izmir) is a girls’ church-related day school, accredited by the Turkish Ministry of Education. The American/Turkish curriculum for the 1,200 enrolled students is mainly college preparatory. Classes are held in grades seven through 12. An American headmaster is the administrator. The school address is: Inonu Caddesi 476, Goztepe, Izmir, Turkey.

Recreation

Touring is the foremost attraction of a visit to Izmir. An enjoyable outing is a drive (over fairly good roads and through magnificent scenery) to one of the picturesquely located ancient city temple sites for a picnic and a few hours of walking and climbing among the ruins. Sometimes rocky climbs and overgrowth make walking difficult, but it is an activity enjoyed by young and old. In summer, it is often possible to include some swimming in such an excursion.

The roster of place names is enough to excite any amateur historian’s imagination. Within an hour or so are Ephesus, Sardis, Teos, and Claros; within two to three hours are Priene, Miletus, Didymae, and Aphrodisias. Requiring overnight stays, but within easy reach, are Hierapolis (Pamukkale), Termessos, Halicarnassus (Bodrum), Antalya, Perge, Side, and Aspendos and Troy and Assos.

Acceptable tourist hotels and restaurants are found at or near most of the touring sites. Camping is also possible at many spots.

European football (soccer) is the great spectator and participant sport in Izmir. In summer, sea bath-

ing is the most popular outdoor activity for Americans. The local season runs only from the beginning of July to the end of August, but those accustomed to cooler waters find the Aegean pleasant from the end of May through October. Pollution makes the inner Bay of Izmir unfit for bathing, but good swimming is found between 45 and 90 minutes' drive to the south, west, or north. The favored sand beaches suitable for children are at Çeşme (75 minutes west), Gumuldur (60 minutes south), and Kuşadası (90 minutes south). Swimming is also possible along some of the rockier parts of the coast, and some areas provide good snorkeling and scuba diving.

Most resort hotels make bathing facilities available for the day at a small cost. Elsewhere, facilities are rustic and informal. A sturdy windproof tent is a useful item for changing, as is a large canvas beach umbrella for sunning in isolated areas. Fitted rubber or plastic bathing shoes are desirable.

The Bay of Izmir—indeed, the whole Aegean coast—is ideal for sailing. The sport is new to the area, with the result that boats are hard to find during the summer, either for sale or for rent. For those willing to rough it, small wooden coasters with minimal facilities can be rented, with crew, for cruises along the coast and to the nearby Greek islands. Favorite areas for sailors are the lower Bay of Izmir, Bodrum, and Marmaris.

Sea fishing is good, but seasonal. The Izmir area has good hunting in fall and winter. The favorite game are wild boar, partridge, duck, and woodcock. Private hunting parties are usually pleased to take along Americans. Primitive accommodations must be expected.

The Izmir Tennis Club and the Büyük Efes Hotel Tennis Club both admit nonpermanent resident Americans for reasonable fees. Horseback riding facilities are available at the nearby suburb of Buca (nominal fees). The closest ski-

ing area is a day's drive away at Mount Ulu Dag, near Bursa; rates are below those of European counterparts.

For those whose favorite activity is walking, Izmir is disappointing. The lack of sidewalks, constant construction, and heavy traffic make walking difficult everywhere but on a few streets (including the waterfront) in Alsancak. Numerous places for hikes or strolls exist, however, within an hour's drive.

Entertainment

Entertainment in Izmir is largely an individual activity. Concerts of Western music are rare; no opera exists; and the occasional plays performed by the State Theater are in Turkish. A Little Theater group presents about five plays each season, primarily in English, but occasionally in French. The Izmir Symphony performs weekly from October to June.

All movies, even imported ones, have Turkish soundtracks. The annual Izmir Fair provides "amusement park" entertainment from August 20 to September 20. Nightclubs with floor shows are numerous, but only two or three are appropriate for foreign clientele. The 7241 Air Base Group operates a post motion picture theater with a fair selection of American films. The Turkish-American Association and the French and German cultural centers sponsor occasional classic films, concerts, recitals, and exhibits.

In the Turkish-American building, the United States Information Service (USIS) has a good reference and lending library of English-language books and periodicals. The Air Force maintains, for its personnel, a well-stocked library of English-language books and periodicals, including a special section devoted to Turkey and the Middle East.

Although English and French are spoken in Izmir, a knowledge of Turkish is almost essential for genuine intercultural exchange and for

any travel outside the city. Real social contact (except at the household domestic, shopkeeper, and tourist-establishment level) may be difficult for Americans because of language barriers and cultural and economical differences. This does not mean that relations are in any way unfriendly or strained—quite the contrary—but merely that real communication is established only with the relatively thin stratum of educated and "Westernized" Turks in the city, or with other foreign residents. Acceptance is quicker, and hospitality warmer, than one could expect to find in Europe. It is often the Turk who seeks out the American, rather than vice versa. The use of even limited Turkish is an effective icebreaker, and a knowledge of French or German will open up a range of contacts.

Some opportunities exist for voluntary and charitable services.

OTHER CITIES

ANTALYA (formerly called Adalia) is the main tourist resort on the Turkish Riviera. Situated 250 miles southwest of Ankara on the Gulf of Antalya, this Mediterranean port has a population of 509,000. Besides tourism, the local economy is based on fruit and timber production. Established in the second century B.C., Antalya was the departure point for the apostle Paul on his first missionary journey. The city was a Byzantine bulwark in the Middle Ages. The old town, enclosed by fortified walls, is set on the summit of a low cliff. Travel writers presented this district with their Golden Apple award in 1985 for its successful restoration. Architectural features from the past have been retained in the midst of a busy leisure center. A hotel and several restaurants on the waterfront accommodate the tourist trade. Antalya has panoramic vistas over the Bey Mountains.

BURSA, in the northwest, is the capital of the province whose name it bears. It is a commercial and industrial center (noted especially

for textiles) in an agricultural region. Its current population is approximately 1.1 million. Bursa was founded at the end of the third century by Prusias I, the king of Bithynia, and was named Prusa ad Olympium. It was captured in 1075 by the Seljuk Turks, less than 20 years later by the Crusaders and, early in the 13th century, was passed to the Byzantines. In 1326, the city was taken by the forces of Orkan I, and became the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Many baths, caravanserais, and mosques remain from that period.

ESKIŞEHİR, the capital of the eponymous province in the west-central part of the republic, lies in a rich agricultural area. It is home to a population of about 450,000. Chief among its monuments are the Ptolemaic temple in the city and, nearby, a Christian monastery dating from the 10th century.

GAZIANTEP is an ancient Hittite city in the southern province of the same name. It was the center of resistance against French occupation of the region in 1920-21 and, although taken by the French, it was soon returned to Turkey. It was for this heroic resistance that the city, formerly Aintab, was given its present name, derived from *Gazi*, meaning "warrior for the faith." In earlier centuries, it was a strategic place in war against the Crusaders. Gaziantep has a current population of about 702,000.

KAYSERI (also called Kaisaria), in central Turkey, is situated at the foot of Erciyas Dagi peak. As Caesarea Mazaca, it was the chief city of ancient Cappadocia. It was founded as a modern city in the fourth century, and became important as a trade center. Kayseri is a large marketplace for Turkish carpets, and now has a population estimated at 491,000. At Kanesh, in the immediate area, is an archaeological site which dates to the third millennium.

KIRIKKALE is the principal city in Kirikkale District, located 38 miles east of Ankara. The introduction of

steel mills to the city in the 1950s spurred rapid growth. Today, these factories are among Turkey's largest. Chemical plants were opened here in the 1960s. Plans have been announced for the erection of an oil refinery. Kirikkale is also a local market for livestock products and cereals from the Kizil River valley area. The city has an estimated population of more than 205,000.

KONYA is a city of approximately 611,000 residents in south-central Turkey. It is an agricultural and livestock center, but is known also for the carpets and silks it produces. Konya's ancient name was Iconium. As a religious center, it was the seat of the Order of Whirling Dervishes, and the tomb of the order's leader, the mystic Celaleddin Rumi, is preserved here, as are many of the ancient city walls.

MARAŞ (also called Kahramanmaraş), located at the base of the eastern Taurus Mountains, 275 miles southeast of Ankara, has a population of over 180,000. It is a commercial and light industrial center; carpets and embroideries are among its products. The city is close to the southern opening of three principal passes through the mountains. It has always been a strategically important trade center between inner Anatolia and upper Syria. Maraş was under Muslim control from 700 to 1197, when it was captured by Crusaders. It became Turkish in the 16th century. The area is connected to the rest of Turkey by road and rail.

MERSİN, a city of close to 500,000, lies on the Mediterranean in southern Turkey. It is a seaport and rail terminus, exporting minerals and agricultural products. It is located 40 miles west-southwest of Adana. Excavations in the area have revealed the remains of a settlement which existed in 3600 B.C.

SAMSUN, the largest Turkish city on the Black Sea, has roughly 332,000 residents. It is situated 200 miles northeast of Ankara, between the mouths of the Kizil and Yeşil rivers. A major port, Samsun

exports tobacco, wool, and cereals. The city also is a metropolitan hub for the outlying agricultural region. The Greeks first developed the city in the seventh century B.C., naming it Amisus. It was the most successful Milesian colony on the Black Sea, after Sinop, and thrived until the invasion and conquest of the Romans in 71 B.C. The Seljuk Turks named the city Samsun after taking it in the 12th century. The Turkish war of independence began here with the beginning of the organization of national resistance, on May 19, 1919. May 19 University, named for this date, opened here in 1975. Samsun has air, rail, and road connections to other Turkish cities.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Aside from Russia, Turkey is the largest country in Europe. Its 296,185 square miles lie between the Aegean, Black and Mediterranean Seas. It stretches about 950 miles from west to east and 400 miles north to south.

Thrace, the European portion of Turkey, ends at the Bosphorus Strait, and across it, Anatolia—and Asia—begin. Anatolia is a high plateau bounded on the north by the Pontic Mountains, the Taurus Mountains on the south, and stretching to the peak of Mount Ararat (nearly 17,000 feet) among the Caucasus Mountains in the east. Mountains ranges give way to narrow coastal plains on the northeast and south, and to treeless valleys between rolling hills and low mountains in the center.

The climate varies a great deal across Turkey. Precipitation is highest on the Black Sea where, in Rize, an average of 98 inches of rain falls each year. Ankara averages only 14 inches (chiefly accumulating from November to May) and Antalya on the south coast gets about 28 inches.

Istanbul has an average of 25 inches of annual precipitation. The plateau region has hot, very dry summers where temperatures in July range from the mid-70s to the low 90s. The skies are almost always clear and cloudless during the day and nights are cool. Winters in this region are generally windy and cold (the mean temperature for January is 30°F). Around the Marmara Sea and Istanbul, the average temperature in July is 83°F and 35°F in January. The south coast has long summers that are often hot and humid both night and day in the midsummer months (average temperature in mid-August is 94°F), but very pleasant in spring and autumn. Winters in the south are usually fairly mild. The north coast Black Sea region tends to have cooler summers and warmer winters than the other coastal areas.

Turkey's variety of climates allow for the production of a large diversity of crops from subtropical bananas, figs, tobacco, cotton and citrus fruits to cereal grains on the plateau and tea on the wet Black Sea coast.

Population

According to the 1997 census, Turkey's population has reached over 62.6 million with an annual growth rate of 1.2%. If current conditions persist, the population will double in 33 years. Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara are Turkey's largest cities and incorporate nearly a third of the country's population. The growth rate of Istanbul is 5% per year and is indicative of the alarming pace of migration from village to city and from the east and southeast to southern and western cities. Cities are increasingly surrounded by squatter settlements that create great urban difficulties.

The 1923 Lausanne Treaty helped define the nature of Turkish society. It gave a special status to three religious minorities in Turkey—Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Syriac Christians, and Jews, most of whose ancestors had been accepted as refugees by the Ottoman Empire in

1492 after they were expelled from Spain. The Treaty, which Turkey still respects, defined all others in Turkey, the vast majority, simply as Muslims. It recognized neither ethnic nor sectarian divisions in this ethnically and religiously heterodox state.

Over 99% of Turks are Muslims; the vast majority are Sunni, but there is a significant population of Turkish Alevis (whose beliefs are akin to those of Shia Muslims but whose religious practices are much less rigid), and among the Sunnis, a large number are attached to mystical Sufi brotherhoods. It is noticeable, especially in the large cities, how minimally the strictures of Islam affect the lives of some Turks. Many drink alcohol, do not restrict their diets and rarely, if ever, attend prayer. In the cities, women can be seen in attire that fully covers them, head to toe, walking alongside relatively scantily clad women wearing the latest in western fashions. Inhabitants of rural areas are much more conservative. The Islamist Refah party, whose popularity has been on the rise, is challenging Ataturk's secularist ideal. The potential repercussions of this challenge are the subject of hot debate among the intelligentsia of Turkey.

Despite the official nonrecognition of ethnic identity as a legitimate organizing principle, many Turkish citizens are becoming increasingly aware of their ethnic origins. Recently, a myriad of private television and radio stations have carried vivid accounts of conflicts involving Muslims in Bosnia, Chechnya and Azerbaijan. This media coverage along with the reestablishment of ties with the Turkic peoples of the newly independent states in the Caucasus and Central Asia have contributed to the awakening in many Turks of long dormant feelings of connection to ancestral homelands.

By some estimates, the population of the Turkish Republic at its inception included people from as many as 80 different ethnic backgrounds; but as the Republic's founder Atat-

urk maintained, one and all are "Turks." Turkish is the only official language, but some citizens continue also to speak the language of their ethnic origin. The government long insisted on the exclusive use of Turkish as a tool to build and unite the nation. Turks of Kurdish origin constitute Turkey's largest ethnic and linguistic subgroup and number as many as twelve million. Turkey's southeastern region is majority Kurdish, though more than half of the Kurds in Turkey now live outside of this area. Since 1984, the Southeast has been an area of great unrest due to clashes between Turkish government forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a separatist terrorist group seeking to establish an independent Kurdish state encompassing much of southeastern Turkey as well as parts of Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

History

Mustafa Kemal, a Turkish World War I hero, later known as "Ataturk" or "Father of the Turks," founded the Republic of Turkey in 1923 after the collapse of the 600-year old Ottoman Empire. At its peak, the Ottoman Empire stretched from southern Spain and Morocco in the east to Saudi Arabia and Iran in the west, and almost to Vienna in the north.

The Empire weakened over time as it failed to keep up with European social and technological developments and came under pressure from other powers. The rise of nationalism within the Empire impelled numerous groups to seek independence, leading to the Empire's fragmentation. This process culminated in the Empire's disastrous participation in World War I as a German ally.

Defeated and shorn in the postwar settlements (Treaty of Sevres) of much of its former territory, parts of modern-day Turkey were occupied by forces of the victorious European states. Turkish nationalists, who rallied under Ataturk's leadership, expelled invading Greek forces from Anatolia after a bitter war. They

repudiated the Ottoman structure, and abolished the temporal and religious ruling institutions of the old Empire (the Sultanate and the Caliphate).

In its place, Ataturk established a republic with secularism, nationalism, modernization and a European orientation as its guiding principles. Social, political, linguistic, and economic reforms and attitudes introduced by Ataturk before his death in 1938 continue to have strong influence in Turkey today. The Turkish Grand National Assembly, Turkey's parliament, opened in 1920. Ataturk was its first speaker. The Turkish Republic was formally established in 1923. Ataturk announced the goals of "Peace at Home, Peace in the World," a slogan which has defined Turkish foreign policy ever since.

Turkey stayed neutral through much of World War II, entering on the Allied side shortly before the war ended. Demands by the Soviet Union for military bases in the Turkish Straits, combined with difficulties faced by Greece after World War II in quelling a Communist rebellion, prompted the U.S. to declare the Truman Doctrine in 1947. The doctrine enunciated American intentions to guarantee the security of Turkey and Greece and resulted in large-scale U.S. military and economic aid. Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 after participating with United Nations forces in the Korean conflict.

Public Institutions

One-party rule under Ataturk's leadership gave way to multi-party democracy in 1950. Domestic political crises sparked military interventions in 1960, 1973, and 1980, but in each case the military returned power to civilians in a relatively short period of time. Civilian governments have ruled continuously since 1983.

The present structure of the Turkish state was established by the military-sponsored 1982 Constitution,

which has been amended twice by civilian governments. There are executive and legislative branches, and an independent judiciary. There are more than 20 political parties today, 5 of which are represented in Parliament. Recent changes to the Constitution added 100 members to the previously 450-member Parliament, and lowered the minimum voting age from 20 to 18. Elections must be held at least every five years. A nonpartisan president serves one 7-year term. A constitutionally-mandated National Security Council, composed half of members of the Turkish General Staff and half of Cabinet ministers, advises the government on security issues.

Turkey remains the world's only secular democracy in a Muslim country. The government worked hard in the last year to update its commercial and economic legislation to European standards to prepare Turkey for greater integration with the European Union; a customs Union went into effect on January 1, 1996. Turkey is increasing its ties with the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, especially those with a shared Turkic culture and history. Turkey continues to play an important role in efforts to resolve regional conflicts in Iraq, the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Balkans, and Cyprus. It has long been a NATO member, and lies astride what could become key pipeline routes to transfer oil and natural gas from the Caucasus and Central Asia to Western markets.

Arts, Science and Education

Turks maintain a high regard for the arts, both for their own traditional heritage and for creativity beyond their borders. While Istanbul is by far the more sophisticated city, Ankara enjoys an active cultural arena of its own. Ankara has eight state-owned theaters, one of which is dedicated to opera and ballet (and includes a modern dance company).

The state companies are energetic and creative given their tight budgets, and their performances are well worth the nominal fee for tickets. A number of private theaters offer other forms of entertainment. Both Ankara and Istanbul have annual performing arts festivals that host a great variety of artists, both local and from abroad. Istanbul's International Festival of Culture and the Arts brings renowned artists from across the globe to perform in its many theaters. Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir each has a symphony orchestra that gives regular concerts.

Turkish folk dancing and singing performances can be seen throughout the country. The numerous ethnicities in Turkey make for a colorful array of dances and songs. Each December brings a week-long festival in Konya where the Mevlevi order of dervishes, known as the "Whirling Dervishes," twirl in long, white robes and hats to the ethereal music of the Turkish flute.

The Ankara and Izmir Turkish-American Associations (TAAs) schedule cultural presentations by American and Turkish artists as well as lectures, tours, hobby clubs, discussion groups, and film showings. Of special interest among the activities carried on by other binational cultural centers in Ankara is the French Cine Club, which regularly screens recent French films. The British, German, and Italian cultural centers also sponsor concerts, lectures, and performances by national artists. Museums, binational centers, and galleries hold art exhibits in major cities.

Archeological excavations are underway in various parts of Turkey. Gordion (within 100 kilometers of Ankara), Sardis, and Aphrodisias are among centers of archeological work on ruins dating from Hittite through Ottoman times. Among these enticing sites are Ephesus (Efes), Bergama, and Troy in Western Turkey.

Turkey has made great strides in establishing a modern educational



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Bridge over Bosphorus Straits and Istanbul

system since the Ottoman religious school system was abolished in the early years of the republic. Primary and secondary public education is free, coeducational, and compulsory between ages seven and 12. In the large cities, the system offers primary, secondary, and university education, but some villages still lack even a primary school. Most major cities have private secondary schools with curriculums in English, French, or German. The adult literacy rate in Turkey is about 85%.

Turkey has 54 universities and a number of technical schools. The first private university, Bilkent University, was established in 1986 using English as its medium. Both Baskent University of Ankara and Koc University in Istanbul were established in 1993 and are also in English. Admission to universities is based on competitive examinations. As in many countries, chil-

dren of upper and middle-class families more frequently receive the secondary school education necessary to pass university entrance examinations.

Ankara University, Hacettepe University, Middle East Technical University (METU), Gazi University, Bilkent University, and Baskent University, all in Ankara, offer degrees in a broad range of fields including the humanities, science, engineering and, at Ankara University, agriculture. Several offer degrees in medicine.

Istanbul has seven major universities. The most prominent are Istanbul University and Istanbul Technical University, Koc University (noted above), and Bogazici (Bosphorus) University, the oldest English-medium university, established in 1971 when the former Robert College was turned over to the Turkish government. USIA recently

has granted money to Bogazici to establish a J. William Fulbright Chair of American Studies. To facilitate the success of this program, Bogazici will be given an extensive American Studies library collection. Robert College continues as a separate, now secondary, institution supported by the U.S. government and private sources.

Commerce and Industry

From the establishment of the republic until the early 1980s, Turkey had an insulated, state-directed economy. The early 1980's, however, brought an economic turnaround based on increased reliance on market forces, export-led development, lower taxes, integration with the world economy, and privatization. These reforms gave Turkey the highest average annual growth rates over the past decade of any OECD country.

As the economy recorded impressive gains, however, its perennial economic problems—large public sector deficits and high inflation—continued to worsen. By 1994, Turkey was in an economic crisis: 150% inflation, high unemployment, and a 6% drop in GNP. After 13 straight years of growth, the private and public sectors put investments on hold. The government was forced to implement an economic austerity program. The resulting currency depreciation boosted exports and produced a healthy current account surplus. Turkey had no problem meeting its substantial foreign debt payments in 1994, though at the cost of a spiraling domestic debt burden.

Turkey's effort to implement structural reform measures has been only partially successful. Steps such as privatization of money-losing state enterprises, improved efficiency of tax collection, and streamlining of the social security system are necessary to alleviate pressure on the state budget and promote stable and sustainable growth.

In December 1999, Turkey received a \$4 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund to begin programs for disinflation and structural reform. Inflation dropped from 69 to 39% as a result of these actions. However, delays on key structural reforms, particularly in the banking sector, eroded market confidence.

Turkey's long-term potential, however, is bright. Its dynamic private sector and the customs union with the European Union (EU) are powerful forces for growth. The fundamentals that made Turkey the fastest-growing country in the OECD during the 1980's have not changed and, in many respects, have even improved.

Agriculture accounted for 15% of GNP in 1999. Its output was essentially unchanged from 1993. Industry is responsible for about 29% of GNP while services accounted for

56% of GNP, up by over 10% since 1994.

Agriculture employs 38% of the labor force in the production of crops such as grains, cotton, hazelnuts, tobacco, fruits and vegetables. Turkey is unusual in that it is not only basically self-sufficient in food, but it is able to export as well. It is an important market for U.S. tobacco, soybeans and soybean products, rice, wood logs, cotton for quality blue denim, tallow for making soap, and breeding and feeder cattle.

The best commercial prospects for U.S. exporters and investors are in energy, telecommunications, environment, transport and textiles.

The Turkish government is encouraging foreign companies to invest in the power sector. Electrical energy demand in Turkey is also growing rapidly. The government estimates that electricity consumption was about 140 billion kw/h in 2001 and expects that usage to double by 2010. Turkey will require approximately \$3-\$4 billion in annual investment to increase its current installed power generation capacity of 28,000 megawatts to 80,000 MW, which the government predicts it will need by 2020.

The future is also bright for suppliers of autogeneration, transmission and distribution, and renewable energy technology.

In 1991, a Ministry of Environment was established increasing the attention paid to environmental issues. New regulations regarding sewage, medical waste and power plant emissions, among others, will add to the growth of this sector. Major projects are under development for air quality control, solid waste disposal, and municipal waste water treatment and water provision.

The textile sector is Turkey's largest manufacturing industry and its largest export sector. Sales in western Europe—its most important market—have been limited by quo-

tas. These restrictions are to be removed under the customs union that came into effect in January, 1996. The global phaseout of textile quotas called for in the Uruguay Round also increases the potential of this sector. Projects to expand and modernize are already underway.

Other principal growth sectors are tourism, automobiles and electronics.

Transportation

Local

The cardinal rules of safety to survive Turkish driving are: drive very defensively, avoid driving at night, and never let emotions affect what you do.

Turkey's main highways are generally well-paved and properly maintained. However, there are traffic hazards such as slow moving farm equipment and animals, overloaded trucks, buses, and cars passing on hills, and vehicle repairs made on the roadway. When driving in Turkey's countryside, it is wise to expect the unexpected. The construction of new super highways on some frequently traveled routes (e.g., from Ankara to Istanbul), has improved cross-country driving considerably. Winter snows and ice require caution in city and highway driving, and even a light rain can cause surfaces to become extremely slippery. Traffic moves on the right. Turkey uses the same international system of road signs as in the rest of Europe.

City streets are crowded with all sorts of vehicles. Streets are narrow and traffic congestion is an increasing problem, especially in Istanbul and Ankara. Although traffic moves on the right, "dolmuses" (shared taxis traveling set routes), regular taxis, and often others, too, do not always observe this rule or other traffic regulations such as red lights or one-way roads. This eccentricity can be confusing and dangerous.

In the highly congested city of Istanbul, a high percentage of traffic-

related deaths are pedestrians. The highest risk group for pedestrians is children and adolescents—totaling about 40%. Statistics released by the Istanbul Traffic Police, for example, indicate that evening rush hour (5-8 p.m.) is the most dangerous time on local highways. Not surprisingly, it is also the time of day when drivers are the least attentive. In 1995, Ankara and Istanbul provinces accounted for almost half of the total vehicle accidents in Turkey; Ankara 43,517, Istanbul 74,905, countrywide total 233,803. 1996 figures are even higher with 156,000 accidents in the first six months.

A number of defensive measures can and should be taken to increase the odds in your favor for accident-free driving:

Always wear seat belts.

Children should ride in the back seat with seat belts on and/or in a child safety seat.

Drive defensively, defensively, defensively.

Dusk is a particularly dangerous time on intercity highways because most drivers delay turning on their headlights until well after dark. Oncoming traffic can be very difficult to see.

Don't be afraid to use your horn to get the attention of pedestrian's and other drivers.

Use four-way flashers to warn drivers behind of slowed/blocked traffic to avoid being hit from behind.

Watch out for trucks and buses that take the right-of-way without signaling, whether they are entitled to it or not.

During rain and snowstorms, drivers must be extremely attentive and situationally aware. Accidents increase dramatically during storms and particularly at night.

Pay particular attention to all of the following which are common in Ankara, Istanbul and others parts of the country:

Passing on the right and cutting in front of other vehicles from the right side.

Unexpected stops or turns without signaling, for no apparent reason and stopping in unexpected locations to pick up or let off passengers by cars, buses and trucks, including main highway entrance ramps, intersections, and along major highways.

Pedestrians seemingly completely oblivious to oncoming traffic who continue to walk or run in front of vehicles to cross streets and main highways.

Trucks parked at night without lights on the highway rather than on the side of the road.

Disabled vehicles parked without warning signs.

Tractors, horse carts and farm vehicles traveling without lights at slow speed on highways.

In the countryside, the use of stones rather than warning signs to mark accidents, breakdowns, and road work.

Road surfaces that are much smoother and provide less traction than normal.

Vehicles backing up (in reverse) on exit ramps and on main highways.

Animals on highways. In the countryside, watch for herds of sheep, goats and other animals on roads.

Drivers that drive in the middle of the road and yield to no one.

Drivers that overtake on blind curves.

At night, cars without lights or lights missing.

Oncoming drivers who play inscrutable light games, flashing and flashing whether you have your "brights" on or not.

Tire-shredding potholes.

Tailgating drivers.

Drivers that attempt to pass while you are passing another vehicle.

Unmarked intersections (i.e., no stop signs), primary road has right of way, but proceed with caution.

Watch for temporary checkpoints and traffic stops particularly at night. These are usually set up for one of three reasons: (1) routine license and registration checks, (2) during times of high terrorist threat, to watch for certain individuals, (3) DWI checks, which are normally done late at night and on weekends in areas with restaurants and clubs. Often, vehicles with diplomatic, consular or Turkish General Staff (TGS) license plates will be waved through once the police see that a foreigner is driving. In case you are stopped, be prepared to show your Turkish identification card or passport and U.S. driver's license and vehicle registration. (Note: If you are involved in an accident—even when not found at fault—a Breathalyzer or blood test is almost always mandatory. If you are not considered responsible for the accident, positive test results will not be used against you by the police. However, they may be used by an insurance company as grounds to deny an accident claim.) The unofficial "protocol" for military and Jandarma checkpoints in the eastern provinces is to turn on the vehicle's inside lights and dim the headlights while stopping for inspection. Roll down the driver's side window in vehicles with tinted glass. This makes it easier for soldiers to safely identify and check the vehicle and its occupants. During this type of inspection, remain calm, do not make any quick movements and obey instructions.

You should always have your vehicle registration, insurance policy, and driver's license (or copies) in your car. If there is an accident, you will need all three.

Vehicle Equipment

A first-aid kit and a reflective warning triangle are mandatory in all vehicles. You may want to carry: a fire extinguisher, locking gas cap, an inexpensive camera with flash to document accidents, chalk to mark accident scenes, tow rope or cable, jumper cables, snow chains (required on some roads and bridges during storms), special reflective tape inside the trunk lid (or rear hatch) and on door jams that can be illuminated by approaching vehicles, PTT Jetons and phonecards for telephone calls, spare directional and headlamp bulbs.

Increased Driver Awareness during Ramadan

The Moslem holy month of Ramadan is celebrated in Turkey between the months of January and February. During Ramadan, many people fast between the hours of sunrise and sunset. The fast includes not taking food, water, tea/coffee, and no smoking. This temporary lack of food and stimulants while fasting during Ramadan has in the past had a deleterious effect on levels of alertness, particularly for persons driving trucks, buses, taxis and cars. Consequently, it is important for all employees and family members to be particularly aware of this potential danger and alert to other drivers. Practice defensive driving, particularly during this month of the year. The holidays or "Bayrams" that follow Ramadan result in a dramatic increase in intercity vacation traffic and the highest accident rates of the year.

Here's a taxi safety tip: Always ride in the rear of a taxi, never in the front. In the event of an accident, the risk of serious injury is generally reduced by more than 50%.

Please note that the following are English approximations of Turkish.

Important Road Signs

- Dur Stop
- Tek yon One way
- Girilmez No entry (in general)
- Tasit Giremez No vehicle entry
- Giris Entrance
- Cikis Exit
- Park yapilmaz/
edilmez No parking
- Parketmek yasaktir No parking
 - Sehir merkezi City center
 - Arac cikabilir Vehicles exiting
 - Askeri bolge Military Zone
 - Hastane Hospital
 - Yaya gecidi Pedestrian Crossing
 - Tirmanma seridi Climbing Lane (on hills for slower vehicles)
 - Yol calismasi Road work
 - Yol tamiri Road repair
 - Yol yapimi Road construction
 - Servis Yolu Temporary road (detour)
 - Agir Tasitlar Sagdan gidiniz Trucks use right lane
 - Dinlenme Alani Rest area
 - Servis Aiani Service area
 - Uzun arac Long vehicle
 - Tirmanma sagdan Slower vehicles use right lane
 - TEM "Tem Oto Yolu" Transit European Motorway (Turkish Interstate)
 - AS. iZ Military Police (Askeri inzibat)

Key Motoring Terms

- Benzin Gas/petrol
- Kursunsuz Lead free gas
- Mazot/motorin Diesel
- Tehlikeli Madde Dangerous materials (propane, gas, etc.)
- Lastikci Tire repair
- Sanayi bolgesi Repair shop zone
- Otogar Bus station
- Kar Snow
- Buz Ice
- Kaza raporu Accident Report
- Kismet Fate

- Allah korusun May God protect me (sign on many trucks)
- Dikkatsiz Careless
- Duzensiz Disorder/erratic

Cities have municipal bus systems that are cheap and extensive but do not necessarily adhere to any set schedule. Dolmuses and minibuses also run along bus routes for a slightly higher fee. Taxis are plentiful, convenient and metered. Dolmus and taxi fares are fixed.

Regional

The Turkish State Railways provides rail service to many points within Turkey and has routes connecting to Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Direct rail service is offered from major European cities to Istanbul. Railway service is usually slower than bus service, but dining and sleeping cars on domestic lines help make the trip comfortable.

Delta Airlines provides regular passenger and freight services to Istanbul. Turkish Airlines (THY) flies to many points in Turkey, Europe and the Middle East with daily flights connecting Istanbul, Ankara and Adana. The airport in Istanbul is the country's primary international airport. Antalya's airport is also a hub, especially for tourist groups in the summer. More than 20 airlines connect Turkey with all parts of the world.

Turkish Maritime Lines provides ferry service for passengers and automobiles between Europe and Asia in Istanbul (to cross the Bosphorus) and at Canakkale (to cross the Dardanelles). Turkish Maritime Lines also provides service to Adriatic, Aegean and Mediterranean Sea ports. There is a ferry that travels from Venice to Izmir.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The lines and service are generally very good but occasionally outages do occur in inclement weather.

Calls to the U.S. can be placed using AT&T, MCI or Sprint phone cards. Calls to the U.S. are currently about \$5.00 for the first minute, \$1.59 every minute thereafter using AT&T, or about \$1.70 a minute if placed directly through local PTT with no initial connection charge. Call-back services are also available. Figures shown are based on weekday rates and, as in the U.S., weeknight and weekend rates are considerably cheaper. Calls to other countries besides the U.S. are cheaper using the local PTT than U.S. companies.

Radio and TV

Both privately-owned and state-owned radio and television stations broadcast in Turkey. Turkish Radio and Television (TRT, state-owned) operates four radio and five television networks. Most of the population, however, tunes into the half-dozen most popular, privately-owned television channels.

There are at least 72 FM radio stations and about 635 TV stations operating in Turkey. Eight of the TV channels are nationally-televised networks. Cable television is also available and broadcasts several foreign channels including BBC, CNN International, Eurosport, and German, Italian and French stations. Some private radio stations are owned by newspapers, some by businessmen. These stations broadcast an assortment of formats, from Turkish and western pop to classical. Voice of America and BBC radio can be heard in most of Turkey via short- and medium-wave bands. VOA Europe programs are broadcast on an FM station in Istanbul 24 hours a day.

TV channels operate on the European standard of 625 lines. Color system is PAL.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir have many shops selling foreign news publications including the *International Herald Tribune*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*. Several general-interest U.S. magazines, as well as many British, French, German, and Italian publications are widely sold. The *Turkish Daily News*, weekly *Probe*, and weekly *Briefing* are published in English and are available in major Turkish cities.

Ankara has Turkish government libraries and American, British, French, German and Italian government cultural services which are open to the public. USIS in Ankara has a library as does USIS in Istanbul. Istanbul also has several foreign cultural centers.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Turkish hospitals vary greatly. The private, new hospitals in Ankara have the most modern facilities and equipment.

Community Health

Bottled spring water is available in restaurants and grocery stores. Tap water should be boiled for three minutes after filtering to remove particulate matter. Local wine, bottled soda, fruit juice and beer are considered safe to drink. Most local dairy products, including milk, yogurt, and cheese are safe to consume; however, care must be taken when purchasing perishable products from local shops as many do not have adequate refrigeration.

Locally-produced beef, lamb, and poultry can be of good quality, but should be purchased from refrigerator-equipped, sanitary shops and cooked thoroughly before eaten. In smaller towns lamb may be the only meat available. Fresh fish and seafood are available in major cities in winter but difficult to find in summer months except by the sea. Refrigerated transport of fish may

be unreliable in the summer. Fresh vegetables and fruits are excellent, but should be washed thoroughly and soaked in a mixture of water and bleach prior to eating raw. Raw salads in local restaurants should be avoided.

Turkish cuisine is excellent and should be enjoyed during a tour in Turkey. In the larger cities restaurants offer both international and local specialties. New arrivals often experience mild stomach upsets before adjusting to local conditions; and even old-timers have periodic stomach problems, especially during the warmer months.

Preventive Measures

Tuberculosis does not pose a risk in Turkey, but child care providers should be screened with a chest x-ray before they are employed. Rabies is prevalent in Turkey and people are cautioned against handling stray animals. If bitten, a post-exposure rabies vaccination is given. Recommended immunizations for adults and children include typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis A, and hepatitis B; it is advised that children have all the recommended childhood immunizations. Immunizations should be obtained prior to arrival.

Air pollution is a problem in Ankara and Istanbul, but is more pronounced in Istanbul. Ankara's air problems have decreased significantly since the introduction of natural gas; however, increased vehicular pollution and the natural bowl configuration of the city, still bring a large number of poor air quality days. Most complaints about irritating air quality in Ankara regard the burning of trash within residential areas and the constantly dry, dusty environment.

Istanbul has a more serious air pollution problem that is the worst in winter. The pollution can constitute a health hazard, especially to children, smokers, and those with chronic respiratory disorders. Sulfur dioxide levels often far exceed

healthy limits established by the World Health Organization.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and visa are required. Holders of all types of passports can purchase a 90-day sticker visa at the port of entry for \$45, if they are traveling to Turkey as tourists. For further information, travelers in the U.S. may contact the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey at 2525 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone: (202) 612-6700, or the Turkish consulates general in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, or New York. Information may also be found at Internet address <http://www.turkey.org.Overseas>, travelers may contact a Turkish embassy or consulate. Holders of official and diplomatic passports on official business must obtain a visa from a Turkish embassy or consulate before arrival in Turkey. Holders of official and diplomatic passports on private travel may receive a visa free of charge from a Turkish embassy or consulate, or obtain one upon arrival at the port of entry for \$45. All those who are planning to stay more than three months for any purpose are required to obtain a visa from a Turkish embassy or consulate. Such travelers must also apply for a residence/work permit or Turkish ID card within the first month of their arrival in Turkey. For example, this would include anyone who plans to spend more than three months doing research, studying, or working in Turkey.

All travelers are advised to obtain entry stamps at the first port of entry on the passport page containing their visa before transferring to domestic flights. Failure to obtain entry stamps at the port of entry has occasionally resulted in serious difficulties for travelers when they attempt to depart the country.

The PKK retains a residual presence in certain parts of southeastern Turkey. The following provinces are under a state of emergency: Hakkari, Sirnak, Tunceli, and Diyarbakir. The following additional areas are considered "sensitive areas" or one level below state-of-emergency status: Van, Siirt, Mus, Mardin, Batman, Bingol, and Bitlis. The southeast provinces of Adana, Adiyaman, Antakya (Hatay), Elazig, Gaziantep, Kahraman Maras, Kilis, Malatya, Icel, Osmaniye and Sanliufra are not under a heightened state of alert. Mount Ararat is a special military zone and access permission must be obtained from the Turkish Government.

Visitors to the emergency and sensitive areas of southeastern Turkey are advised to travel only during daylight hours and on major highways. The Turkish Jandarma and police forces monitor checkpoints on roads throughout the southeastern region. Drivers and all passengers in the vehicle should be prepared to provide identification if stopped at a checkpoint. Travelers are cautioned not to accept letters, parcels, or other items from strangers for delivery either in or outside of Turkey. The PKK has attempted to use foreigners to deliver messages and packages in or outside of Turkey. If discovered, individuals could be arrested for aiding and abetting the PKK - a serious charge.

Turkey customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Turkey of items such as antiquities (very broadly defined) or other important artwork and cultural artifacts. At the time of departure, travelers who purchase such items may be asked to present a receipt from the seller as well as the official museum export certificate required by law. Smuggling of large quantities of other items, such as cigarettes, out of Turkey is also a punishable offense. Contact the Embassy of Turkey in Washington or one of Turkey's consulates in the United States for specific informa-

tion regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Turkey are encouraged to register at the nearest Consular Office, at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, the U.S. consulates in Istanbul or Adana, or the Consular Agency in Izmir. Updated information on travel and security within Turkey is available while registering, or on the Embassy website at <http://www.usemb-ankara.org.tr>.

The U.S. Embassy in Ankara is at 110 Ataturk Boulevard, tel: (90)(312) 455-5555, fax (90)(312) 468-6131. Visa information is available at (90)(312) 468-6110. The Internet address is <http://www.usemb-ankara.org.tr>. Non-emergency e-mail messages about consular matters may be sent to ca-ankara@state.gov.

The U.S. Consulate in Istanbul is at 104-108 Mesrutiyet Caddesi, Tepebasi, tel: (90)(212) 251-3602, fax (90)(212) 252-7851. Istanbul-specific information can also be accessed via the Consulate's website <http://www.usconsulate-istanbul.org.tr>. Non-emergency e-mail messages about consular matters may be sent to ca_istanbul@state.gov.

The U.S. Consulate in Adana is at the corner of Vali Yolu and Ataturk Caddesi, tel: (90)(322) 459-1551, fax (90)(322) 457-6591.

The U.S. Consular Agent in Izmir is at Kazim Dirik Caddesi 13/8, Atabay Is Merkezi, Daire 805, Pasaport, Izmir, 35210, tel: (90)(232) 441-0072/2203, fax (90)(232) 441-2373. A variety of information on visa procedures, American citizen services, road safety, etc. is also available on the mission's web site, <http://www.usemb-ankara.org.tr>.

Social Customs & Laws

Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating Turkey's laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled,

arrested, or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Turkey are strict and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines.

Below are some of the laws foreign travelers should be aware of:

Insulting the State: It is illegal to show disrespect to the name or image of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish Republic, or to insult the Turkish government, flag, or security forces.

Proselytizing: Although there is no specific law against proselytizing, some activities can lead to arrest under laws that regulate expression, educational institutions, and religious meetings. The Department of State's Annual Report on International Religious Freedom contains additional information on religious freedom in Turkey. The report is available on the Department's website, <http://www.state.gov>.

Cultural Artifacts: Turkish law has a broad definition of "antiquities" and makes it a crime to remove any from the country. Offenders are prosecuted. Under Turkish law, all historic sites such as fortresses, castles and ruins, and everything in them or on the grounds or in the water, are the property of the Turkish government. While many sites do not have signs cautioning the unwary, official silence does not mean official consent. One may buy certain antiquities, but only from authorized dealers who have been issued a certificate by a museum for each item which they are authorized to sell. If one has acquired a possible antiquity without having obtained the necessary certificate, competent museum personnel should evaluate it before its removal from Turkey.

Pets

Pets may be brought into Turkey without quarantine provided they have certificates showing inoculation against rabies within the past six months, and freedom of commu-

nicable disease within 48 hours of the time of departure for Turkey. These documents should be prepared by a veterinarian, notarized by a notary public in the country in which the veterinarian is authorized to practice, and authenticated at a Turkish embassy or consulate.

Some people have found it difficult to keep dogs as pets in Ankara and Istanbul. Apartment living presents obvious difficulties, and it is unwise to allow a dog to run free in the streets. The city authorities periodically round up, poison or shoot stray animals, sometimes including licensed animals running free at the time.

Disaster Preparedness

Several major earthquake fault lines cross Turkey. A number of Turkish cities including Istanbul, Izmir, and Erzincan lie on or near fault lines, making these areas particularly vulnerable to earthquakes. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>. Detailed information on Turkey's earthquake fault lines is available from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) at <http://www.usgs.gov>.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Local banks offer checking and savings accounts and exchange facilities, but they are not often used by American's because of the complexity of local banking laws. Travelers checks are acceptable in Turkey and in all nearby countries but sometimes difficult to cash. Turkish *lira* (TRL), the official unit of currency, is used for purchasing goods and services on the Turkish economy.

Transfer of Turkish lira from one part of Turkey to another is easily done using Turkish postal money orders. Most banks also are able to transfer funds electronically.

The rate of exchange for the Turkish lira has fluctuated greatly throughout the past several years;

during the past year the rate of inflation has been around 90%. The exchange rate is approximately 1,391,946.77 TRL to US\$1.

Turkey uses the metric system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Turkey observes both civil and religious holidays. While dates for civil holidays are determined by the Gregorian calendar, religious holidays are set by the Muslim/lunar calendar, resulting in observance on different days each year.

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Apr. 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day (Milli Egemenlik ve Cocuk Bayrami)
- May 19 Ataturk Memorial Youth and Sports Day (Ataturk'u Anma Genclik ve Spor Bayrami)
- Aug. 30 Victory Day (Zafer Bayrami)
- Oct. 29 Anniversary of the Founding of the Turkish Republic (Cumhuriyet Bayrami)
- Ramazan Bayrami (Ramadan begins)*
- Kurban Bayrami (Ramadan ends)*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The

- Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.
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UKRAINE

Major Cities:

Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Lviv

Other Cities:

Dnepropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kerch, Kherson, Kirovograd, Lutsk, Mukachovo, Nikolayev, Poltava, Sevastopol, Simferopol, Uzhgorod, Vinnitsa, Zaporozhye, Zhitomir

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Ukraine. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

A country whose slogan is "Ukraine has not yet died" might not seem the most uplifting destination, but do not let that deter you. The country rewards visitors with hospitable people, magnificent architecture and kilometers of gently rolling steppe. Ukraine is a major player in the region's economy, though for every smoggy industrial city there are dozens of villages with picket fences, duck ponds and overloaded horse carts, where time seems to stand still.

Ukraine has its share of the thoroughly modern, but even the capital, Kiev, is replete with Gothic, Byzantine, and Baroque architect-

ture and art reminders of the many foreign overlords who have left their mark on the country. Nearly every city and town has its centuries-old cathedral, and many have open-air museums of folk architecture, caves stuffed with mummified monks, and exquisite mosaics wherever you look.

For decades, the Western World perceived Ukraine as simply a part of Russia. But borscht, painted eggs, and many of the famous Cossack dance traditions originated in Ukraine. Ukrainian history began with the rumble of hooves—Scythians dominated the steppes north of the Black Sea from the 7th to the 4th centuries B.C.E., initiating centuries of outside political and cultural domination. Following the Scythians, a series of invaders, including Ostrogoths, Huns, and the Turko-Iranian Khazars, ruled areas of present-day Ukraine.

The first people to unify and control the area for a long period were Scandinavians, known as the Rus. By the late 10th century, the city was the center of a unified state that stretched from the Volga west to the Danube and south to the Baltic.

By the 15th century, the region became popular with runaway serfs

and Orthodox refugees. These people came to be known as Kazaks (Cossacks), a Turkic word meaning outlaw or adventurer. Ukrainian Cossacks eventually formed a state that was to a significant degree self-ruling, but 20 years later the state was divided between Poland and Russia.

Following WWI, and after prolonged fighting involving Russia, Poland, and various Ukrainian political and ethnic factions, Poland retained portions of western Ukraine and the Soviets took the rest. Ukraine officially became part of the U.S.S.R. in 1922.

When Stalin took power in 1927, he made a test case out of Ukraine for his ideas about "harmful" nationalism. In 1932-33 he engineered a famine that killed as many as 7 million Ukrainians. Execution and deportation of intellectuals further depopulated the country. WWII brought further devastation and death, with 6 million perishing in the fighting between the Red Army and the German forces.

Ukrainians are extremely proud of their country's long history. Since the late 19th century, Ukrainians have dreamed of a sovereign Ukrainian State, a dream that became a reality in the immediate aftermath

of the failed Soviet coup of August 1991.

In a referendum held December 1, 1991, the people of Ukraine endorsed independence. The U.S. recognized Ukraine's independence on December 25, 1991; and the first American Ambassador arrived in Kiev on June 8, 1992.

Ukraine is a country in transition as it leaves behind its Communist past to build a new political and economic system and develops its links with Europe and the West.

MAJOR CITIES

Kiev

Kiev, a scenic city of some 2.5 million people situated on the Dnipro River, is the bustling capital of Ukraine. Ancient Kievan Rus' was a center of trade routes between the Baltic and the Mediterranean. The city of Kiev and the power of Kievan Rus' were destroyed in 1240 by Mongol invaders, and lands of the Kievan Rus' were divided among principalities located to the west and north: Galicia, Volynia, Muscovy, and later, Poland, Lithuania, and Russia. Once a powerful player on the European scene, Ukraine's fate has in modern times been decided in far-off capitals. As a result, modern Ukrainian history, for the most part, was defined by foreign occupation.

Kiev suffered severely during World War II and the Stalinist era; many irreplaceable architectural and art treasures were destroyed and the city center systematically demolished. Extensive restoration has revived much of historical Kiev.

The city hit the headlines in April 1986, when the nuclear reactor at nearby Chernobyl exploded. The prevailing winds spared the city any significant rise in background radiation levels. Produce in the local markets is inspected before being

sold. Daily radiation testing done by the U.S. and the Ukrainian Government does not reveal any elevated levels of background radiation in the city.

Despite repression, centuries of foreign domination, political turmoil, and ecological disaster, Ukraine's spirit and national identity have never died. On August 24, 1991, after the aborted coup in Moscow, Ukraine proclaimed its independence. As of early 2000, Ukraine has diplomatic relations with 163 countries, and Kiev hosts 92 Missions. News correspondents, business representatives, and students from all over the world reside in the capital. The flow of foreign tourists and official delegations is year round. The resident American community consists of Embassy personnel, business representatives, clergy, professors, Peace Corps volunteers, and students.

Enthusiasts of art and architecture will have a field day in Kiev. The Cathedral of St. Sophia, where the princes of Kiev were crowned in the years of Kiev's grandeur, has intricate mosaics and frescoes dating back to the 11th century. The Cathedral of St. Michael's Monastery (built 1108-1113) has recently been rebuilt, after being destroyed by the Soviets. The Pecherska Laura, the Monastery of the Caves, a short bus or trolley ride from the center of town, has two 11th-century cathedrals on its grounds, in addition to its world-famous catacombs. Closer to the center of town stands the Golden Gate, a structure, which dates back to 1037. This recently refurbished fortification defined the western limits of the city in centuries past. Several blocks away stands the magnificent Cathedral of St. Volodymyr.

Theater buffs will find much to choose from. Most performances are in Ukrainian or Russian. The renovated Kiev Opera House presents very good opera as well as a broad repertoire of ballets. The Kiev Young Theater is very popular and stages innovative plays in Ukrai-

nian or Russian. The Russian Dramatic Theater features a repertoire of classics. There are also many musical concerts, ranging from classical to jazz and pop.

The modern center and remains of the old city are both on the hilly west, or right bank of the Dnipro River. The main street, the Khreshchatyk, runs along the bottom of a ravine toward the Dnipro. Running parallel about half-a-kilometer west, is Vulytsya Volodymyrska, the main street of the Old Kiev area. Woods and parks cover most of the western bank slopes along the Dnipro River. The capital's newer sections lie on the eastern bank. Large apartment developments and industrialized regions characterize this area.

Shopping in Kiev is always rewarding as a cross-cultural experience. Western products are increasingly available. Several state-run stores carry Ukrainian pottery, embroidery, and handicrafts. More expensive Ukrainian crafts are available throughout the city, in particular at stalls on Andrievskyj Uzviz, and at several of the churches and monasteries souvenir shops. Quality and quantity vary from shop to shop.

A growing number of supermarkets stock Western food, alcohol, clothing, beauty and health items and electrical appliances. Prices compare to those in the West, but stock availability is unpredictable.

Careful advance preparation is necessary to ensure proper coordination of train, plane, and hotel reservations. Domestic rail and air services are relatively good. Tourist facilities and accommodations are limited outside major cities.

Utilities

The two-pronged outlets are slightly smaller than general European outlets. Since electrical supplies are difficult to find, bring adapters and heavy-duty extension cords.

Food

The selection of food is more limited than in the U.S. However, most fruits, vegetables, and meats are available year round.

Many Western-style minimarkets have opened in the last few years, where European brands predominate. Most minimarkets and neighborhood markets are small and carry a limited range of products making it necessary to visit multiple sites to complete your shopping. Euro Mart and Cash and Carry, are Ukraine's answer to warehouse shopping. Prices are reasonable, but supply can be erratic and is geared toward local tastes. Bulk purchasing of wine, beer, and sodas for entertainment makes Euro Mart and Cash and Carry an attractive alternative for Americans. Billa, an Austrian-owned supermarket, looks very much like any U.S. supermarket and is equipped with a butcher, baker, and fresh produce section.

Local farmers' markets are a shopper's delight in spring, summer, and fall offering a range of fresh and dried fruits, fresh and marinated vegetables, meat, poultry, cheese, butter, sour cream, eggs, honey, nuts, home remedies, caviar, and flowers. Although Ukrainian produce is seasonal, imports make up a large part of produce for sale at markets that Westerners frequent. The meat is not aged and cuts differ from those in the West, but it is inspected and quite good. Local bread is good, inexpensive, and available twice daily at local bakeries. It is of heavier texture than in the U.S. and not sliced. Dairy products available in the markets are made from whole cream and rich in flavor. However, imported tetra packed milk, from skim to whole, is readily available.

Clothing

Clothing needs for Kiev are similar to that needed in the northeastern U.S. Winters, however, are more severe and longer, and summers are shorter, slightly cooler, and less humid. Temperatures average 16°F

(-8°C) in midwinter and 87°-17° (30°C) in midsummer. Although selection is limited and prices high, European/American-style clothes are available in local stores and through new foreign outlets such as Benetton and Hugo Boss. Shoe repair is readily available and satisfactory. Local tailors also sew clothes for less money than you would pay in the U.S., although material selection and tailoring results vary.

Everyone needs a warm coat with a hood or a separate warm hat, several pairs of woolen and waterproof gloves, and appropriate shoes. Bring a good supply of shoes and boots for all types of weather (tennis, dress shoes, rubber rainboots, and lined, thick-soled winter boots for children and adults). It is also helpful if most of your wardrobe is washable, as clothing soils easily in Kiev. Drycleaning is available locally. Most, but not all, fabrics can be processed. Suede and leather cleaning may not be available.

Men: Both heavy and light topcoats are desirable for spring and fall. Warm waterproof gloves, overshoes, and sweaters are also necessary. Woolen suits worn in the U.S. are satisfactory for winter here, but most men may prefer heavier suits and sweater vests during the coolest months. Lighter weight suits are desirable for summer wear.

Several pairs of good walking shoes, a good warm jacket, hat, sweaters, and durable washable apparel are recommended for casual wear.

Women: Slacks, skirts, blouses, and sweaters are ordinary daily wear. Most Ukrainian women dress up rather than down. During fall and winter women wear woolen clothing of several weights. Synthetics and blends, preferably washable, are worn in summer. A raincoat with removable lining and a heavy wool or down coat are necessary; fur and sheepskin are both worn frequently. Thermal underwear, good walking shoes, boots, and warm comfortable

casual clothes should all be part of your basic wardrobe for Kiev.

Children: Children need washable, sturdy, wool, corduroy, and other heavy clothing. A zippered nylon snowsuit is recommended. Waterproof boots with insulated foam lining, several pairs of waterproof mittens, long thermal underwear, both heavy- and lightweight pajamas, and snow pants all come in handy. Since children's clothing available locally is not of Western quality and limited in quantity, bring a good supply of clothing and shoes for children or plan on catalog shopping.

Supplies and Services

Most basic services are available locally; however, the quality of service varies from poor to excellent depending on the kind of service requested and the business used.

There are several good beauty shops, photo developers, and picture framing shops. Tailors and dressmakers are generally satisfactory. Shoe repair services are good. There are one or two English-speaking vets who will make house calls for reasonable fees. Auto service centers can handle most repairs and routine maintenance satisfactorily.

Domestic Help

Employing a Ukrainian to help with the household, babysitting, and sometimes cooking is common. Payment and fees are negotiable and reasonably priced.

Finding good housekeepers and babysitters may take time and perseverance. English-speaking help is hard to find. Cooks who know American cuisine are hard to find.

Religious Services

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Catholic Church hold regular services in Kiev. Catholics of the Byzantine Rite hold Divine Liturgy at two outdoor locations in the city. Roman Catholic Mass is celebrated in Polish, Ukrai-

nian, Russian, and English in two churches downtown. The Baptist community and 3 Synagogues (Orthodox congregations) in the Podil neighborhood and an Orthodox and a Reform congregation downtown also hold religious services.

A variety of other churches also offer services: Assembly of God, the nondenominational Campus Crusade for Christ, Episcopalian, Interdenominational, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the Salvation Army. Many of these churches offer English-language services.

Education

The Kiev International School (an American institution) is a nonprofit, independent, coeducational day school that offers an educational program from prekindergarten (3-year-old class) through high school for students of all nationalities. It has a complete 4-year secondary program. Advanced Placement (AP) courses accepted for university credit are offered at the high school level. A college counselor on staff will assist students as they prepare to enter a university. The school administers the ITBS, PSAT, AP, SAT I, and SAT II tests and is a certified ETS test site. The school year is divided into three terms: early September to mid-December; early January to early April, and early April to mid-June.

The school is governed by the Board of Directors of Quality Schools International, the membership of which is formed as set forth in the bylaws of Quality Schools International. An Advisory Board, composed of 6-10 who reside in Kiev, assists the school in its operation. The school operates with the approval of the Ukrainian Government.

The school offers a performance-based, mastery learning educational program with a curriculum similar to that of U.S. public and private schools. Instruction, leading

to individual mastery, takes advantage of small class sizes and the diverse educational backgrounds of the students. Instruction is in English. Ukrainian/Russian studies, Hindi studies, and French are a part of the curriculum.

The 30 full-time and 9 part-time faculty members in the 1999-2000 school year included 21 U.S. citizens, 13 host-country nationals, and 5 of other nationalities.

Enrollment at the opening of the 1999-2000 school year was 210 (pre-kindergarten through grade 12). Of the total, 20% were U.S. citizens, 24% were host-country nationals, and 56% were of other nationalities.

The school rents two buildings, one for grades one through secondary that is an annex to a Ukrainian public school building. A second site for prekindergarten through 5-year-old kindergarten is 2 blocks away.

Located on the east bank of the Dni-pro River, **Pechersk School** offers the full range of International Baccalaureate Programs. The school received authorization from the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization in November 1998 to officially participate in and offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programs in grades 6 to 10. In May 1999, the International Baccalaureate Organization authorized the school to offer the prestigious IB Diploma Program, which has now been implemented in grades 11 and 12. IB Diploma graduates earn priority status at major universities throughout the world. The school is currently seeking official authorization for the IB Primary Years Program, which is being offered in prekindergarten through grade 5. The language of instruction is English. French, Russian, and Ukrainian are offered as foreign languages from kindergarten up. For American and Canadian students, the school offers the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and also prepares stu-

dents of any nationality for Tests of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

The school opened in 1995. The school is nonprofit and is governed by a Board of Governors with 6-10 current parents.

The school has grown substantially since 1995 and now has 99 students. The school hosts 21 nationalities of which Americans comprise the largest single group with 27 students.

The school has a well equipped science laboratory, a state-of-the-art library media center, assembly hall, modern computer laboratory, regular classrooms, and a special needs and ESL room. There are ample outdoor play and recreational areas and the school uses a full-size gymnasium in an adjacent Ukrainian school. All of the school's computers are networked and have access to a dedicated Internet line.

The staff includes 15 full time teachers and 10 part-time teachers, including 7 U.S. citizens, 6 Canadians, to host-country nationals, 2 South Africans, and 1 from Wales.

Special Educational Opportunities

Few educational opportunities exist in Kiev through Ukrainian educational institutions, libraries, and traditional education channels. Private language and musical instruction is available.

Sports

Popular spectator sports include international soccer at the Dynamo Stadium or at the Central Republic Stadium. At the Sports Palace you can see wrestling, boxing, ice hockey, and ice skating. There are various sports clubs offering a wide variety of personal workout regimes, but clubs with Western equivalent facilities are very expensive. The Marine Security Guard Detachment hosts softball in the summer and fall months. Other small groups play volleyball and basketball at the International



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Potemkin steps up from the port of Odessa

School gymnasium. During the summer months sailing at the nearby Hydro Park is popular, as are river cruises along the Dnipro. The Kiev area also has excellent opportunities for jogging, cycling, hiking and cross-country skiing.

Downhill skiing is possible during the winter months in the Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine. Several ski trips are organized throughout the season.

Bring all your own sports equipment and clothing, because at times these items may be difficult to find locally.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Kiev, with its churches, museums, art galleries, libraries, historic places and parks, is a sightseer's dream. The city can be explored by

foot, on public transportation, or by boat on the Dnipro River. Cruises down the Dnipro River to towns such as Kaniv, where National Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko is buried, or longer cruises to the Black Sea and to the Mediterranean are available.

Outside Kiev, favorite Ukrainian vacation spots include the Crimean Peninsula, which has picturesque mountains and a stunning coastline. Crimea's Yalta, in particular, attracts tourists to its beaches and historic sites. The beautiful Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine are also a frequent travel destination. Accommodations vary, but are generally adequate.

Entertainment

Culturally, Kiev is a rich city. The Kiev Taras Shevchenko Opera House boasts a very good opera as well as a broad repertoire of ballets.

Innovative plays may be seen at the Ivan Franko Theater and the Kiev Youth Theater. The classics are performed at the Russian Dramatic Theater. The musical scene varies as well, from symphony concerts to jazz clubs and folk music.

Walking tours to the many architectural and historical landmarks are a good way to get a feel for the city. One essential stop is Babi Yar, the memorial to Kiev's Jews and other Ukrainians who were slaughtered by the Nazis during World War II. Visit Andriyivsky Uzviz, a cobblestone street lined with vendors of Ukrainian crafts, arts and souvenirs, which descends to Podil from St. Andrew's Church. Buildings on Andriyivsky Uzviz now house artist's studios, galleries, cafes, and theaters. This picturesque street is also the site of the annual spring Kiev Day festival in May. Flea mar-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Odessa Opera House

kets also dot the city with treasures waiting to be found.

The principal hotel restaurants and others offer ethnic Ukrainian cuisine. Many restaurants throughout the city also offer the full range of ethnic cuisine from Chinese to Mexican. Major hotels also have cafes, bars, and souvenir gifts hops.

If you are wandering about the city you will find any number of cafes and bars to stop in for refreshments.

There are few English-language books, including travel guides, available, so you are encouraged to bring your own. A Sunday reader's book club meets on a monthly basis to discuss books of mutual interest. Many also use AMAZON.com and other Internet services to purchase books.

There are two movie theaters that show English films. With the aid of a satellite dish, viewing of CNN, BBC, Sky News, and other channels with English programming is possible.

Social Activities

Ample opportunities exist in Kiev for making contact with the American community. Economic and commercial personnel can pursue their business contacts through the American Chamber of Commerce.

The International Women's Club of Kiev (IWCK) offers numerous activities and opportunities for women from many nations to get acquainted. Social relationships with Ukrainian citizens are not difficult to establish, particularly if one speaks some Ukrainian or Russian. There is no prohibition on establishing social relationships with Ukrainian citizens. On the con-

trary, reaching out to make Ukrainian friends is encouraged.

Kharkov

Kharkov is located east of Kiev near the Ukrainian border with Russia. Founded in 1656, Kharkov is one of Ukraine's principal transportation centers. It is linked by railway with Ukraine's other major cities and with the cities of other former Soviet republics. A modern highway system links Kharkov with Kiev and the rest of the country. Another highway connects the city with the Russian capital, Moscow. The city itself is served by a modern subway station.

Kharkov has a well-developed industrial base. Industries in Kharkov produce a wide variety of products, including machine tools, tractors, bicycles, steam turbines, locomotives, generators, and agricultural machinery. Some light

industry exists in the city and is centered around the production of consumer goods and food processing.

Many important educational institutions are located in Kharkov. The largest university in Kharkov is Gorky University. The city is also home to several research institutes and numerous agricultural, polytechnic, and engineering schools.

During World War II, Kharkov was a major battleground between German and Soviet troops. As a result, most of the city was completely levelled. Kharkov was rebuilt after the war and resembles many major cities of the former Soviet Union. The city has block after block of concrete apartment buildings, large government buildings, and broad tree-lined streets. In 1991, Kharkov had a population of approximately 1,622,000, second only to Kiev.

Recreation and Entertainment

Recreation in Kharkov is centered around tours of the city’s historical sites. Visitors are allowed to tour Kharkov’s many historical monuments. Two cathedrals, the Pokrovsky Cathedral and the Uspensky Cathedral, are open to visitors. The Uspensky Cathedral is easily recognizable by its beautiful bell tower and position atop a hill.

Kharkov has two museums that are of interest to visitors. The Fine Arts Museum offers many fine examples of Ukrainian and Russian art. Also, Kharkov’s Historical Museum contains many fine exhibits that illustrate the city’s past. Both museums are easily accessible by tram or bus.

Odessa

The city of Odessa, with a population of 1,104,000 (1991 est.), is located 275 miles (443 kilometers) south of Kiev. The city’s location on the Black Sea makes it one of Ukraine’s major ports. Odessa is a major transportation center with excellent railway connections to

other Ukrainian cities, as well as Moldova and Romania. The city, with its well-developed industrial base, produces consumer goods, machinery, fertilizers, paints, dyes, and machine tools. A large oil refinery is also located near Odessa.

Recreation and Entertainment

Odessa was a cultural center during the 18th and 19th century. During World War II, the city was heavily damaged and many of its architectural treasures destroyed. Some of these structures have been rebuilt. Although Odessa’s beauty has faded over the years, the city still has much to offer. The city, with its beautiful sandy beaches, is a favorite resort area for tourists. Odessa has several museums, the most notable of which is an archaeological museum. Tourists also visit Odessa’s beautiful Opera House, which was constructed in 1809. The famed Russian composer and conductor, Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky, conducted an orchestra here. Outside of Odessa, a Greek Orthodox monastery with several catacombs built underneath is frequented by tourists.

Lviv

The city of Lviv is one of the major cities in western Ukraine. The city’s name was changed from Lvov in 1992. Founded in the mid-13th century, Lviv has been attacked and occupied at various times in history by Poles, Cossacks, Swedes, Austrians, Russians, Germans, and Soviets. Today, Lviv is an administrative, cultural, and transportation center. The city is a major railroad connector for Kiev and other Ukrainian cities. Lviv has a large industrial base. Major industries in the city produce buses, bicycles, machinery, processed foods, and consumer goods. In 1991, Lviv had an estimated population of 803,000.

Recreation and Entertainment

Lviv offers many opportunities for sight-seeing. One area of particular interest is Rinok Square, which contains Gothic- and Renaissance-style houses dating back to the 16th century. Many of these homes are elegant and in beautiful condition. Lviv has a rich religious heritage and many of the city’s churches are open to visitors. Lviv’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, constructed in 1270, contains many beautiful carvings, statues, and frescoes. The Church of the Assumption, with its exquisite icons and sculptures and a frieze of biblical scenes on one of its exterior walls, is one of Lviv’s most beautiful churches. Other churches worth a visit include the Armenian Cathedral, the Church of the Virgin of the Snows, and St. George’s Church, which is filled with many fine examples of Ukrainian Baroque art.

In addition to churches, visitors also enjoy touring Lviv’s many interesting museums. Ukrainian folklore can be viewed at the Ethnographical and Handicraft Museum. Another museum, the Museum of Ukrainian Art, displays beautiful icons dating from the 14th to 18th centuries.

OTHER CITIES

DNEPROPETROVSK is located in eastern Ukraine along the banks of the Dnieper River. The city was founded in 1793 and has developed into a major center for iron and steel manufacturing industries. Dnepropetrovsk’s industries also produce chemicals, plastics, footwear, clothing, food, agricultural machinery, and mining equipment. In 1989, the city had an estimated population of 1,179,000.

The city of **DONETSK** is situated southeast of Dnepropetrovsk. Donetsk developed in the early 1900s as a coal mining and steel producing center. These industries are of primary importance today.

Several light industries have also developed in Donetsk. These industries produce processed foods and refrigerators. The city has several educational institutions and theaters. Donetsk's population in 1983 was estimated at 1,055,000. Current population figures are unavailable.

KERCH is located on the eastern side of the Crimean Peninsula. The city is very old, founded in the sixth century B.C. by the Greeks. Kerch developed into a major trading center. Today, the city's location on the Sea of Azov has facilitated the growth of a profitable fishing industry. The city's population was 162,000 in 1982. Current population figures are not available.

Situated on the banks of the Dnieper River, **KHERSON** is one of Ukraine's major shipbuilding centers. The city has other industries in addition to shipbuilding. These industries include an oil refinery and a textile processing plant. Kherson is also the home of several agricultural institutes. In 1989, Kherson had an estimated population of 355,000.

KIROVOGRAD, with a population of 269,000 (1989 est.), is located in a fertile region of Ukraine. The city was founded in 1765 and has developed over the years into an agricultural center. Kirovograd also has a well-developed food processing industry.

The city of **LUTSK** is located in northwestern Ukraine. Lutsk was founded in 1000 A.D. and has been controlled at various periods in history by Poland and Russia. The city has several industries which produce trucks, food, and scientific instruments. Vestiges of the city's ancient past are evident, including three monasteries dating back to the 16th to 18th centuries. Lutsk had a population of 161,000 in 1983. Current population figures are unavailable.

MUKACHOVO is a city whose origins can be traced back to 903 A.D. The city has a large industrial base. Industries in Mukachovo are centered on food processing and timber production. Mukachovo is a favorite tourist destination. Attractions in Mukachovo include a Russian Orthodox church constructed of wood and a 14th century castle. The city had an estimated population of 84,000 in 1985. Current population figures are not available.

NIKOLAYEV is a city whose location only 40 miles (65 kilometers) from the Black Sea has facilitated the creation of a large shipbuilding industry. Other industries have developed in Nikolayev. These industries produce consumer goods, construction machinery, and chemicals. Nikolayev was once an important Soviet naval base and today is one of Ukraine's primary ports. The latest population estimate for Nikolayev was 480,000 in 1984.

The origins of **POLTAVA** can be traced back to the eighth or ninth century. Poltava was the scene of an important battle in 1709 when Russian troops, under the command of Peter the Great, repelled an attack by a large Swedish army. The city was almost completely destroyed during World War II, but has been rebuilt. Today, the city is a processing center for the agricultural products grown near Poltava. Industries in Poltava produce leather goods, canned foods, textiles, machinery, and clothing. The city is the home of several agricultural and medical research institutes. Poltava is a modern city with several beautiful theaters and parks. The population of Poltava was estimated at 290,000 in 1983. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **SEVASTOPOL** is located in the southwestern Crimean Peninsula. Sevastopol is one of Ukraine's principal seaports and served as an important Soviet naval base for many years. The city was destroyed during the Crimean War of 1853–1856 and later during

World War II. The city has been rebuilt and is the home of thriving food processing and shipbuilding industries. Sevastopol's many historical monuments, archaeological sites, and health resorts are of interest to visitors. The city's Historical and Archaeological Museum of Khersones contains displays of Greek artifacts. Current population figures are unavailable.

Northeast of Sevastopol is the city of **SIMFEROPOL**. Simferopol is one of the principal industrial centers on the Crimean Peninsula. Industries in the city produce cigarettes, wine, clothing, footwear, consumer goods, processed foods, and machine tools. The city is home to several educational and research institutions. Simferopol offers beautiful terraced parks, theaters, and museums. Visitors to Simferopol often tour the ruins of the ancient Greek settlement of Neapolis. These ruins, located approximately one mile from Simferopol, have been undergoing excavation since 1827. Tours allow visitors to view marble and bronze statues, weapons, burial sites, mausoleums, and gold ornaments that have been uncovered by archaeologists. The city had a population of 331,000 in 1985. Current population figures are not available.

UZHGOROD is located in extreme western Ukraine near the border with Romania. Founded in approximately 903 A.D., Uzhgorod is an industrial center. Furniture, wine, wood products, and machine tools are produced in the city. Tourist attractions in Uzhgorod include a 16th-century castle, an Art Gallery that sells gifts and souvenirs, and the city's large marketplace. Current population figures for Uzhgorod, which had a population of 102,000 in 1983, are unavailable.

The city of **VINNITSA** is located roughly 150 miles (240 kilometers) south of Kiev. The city was founded in 1393 and lies in the midst of a fertile agricultural region. Industries related to agriculture, including food processing and the production

of fertilizers, are vital to Vinnitsa's economy. Other industries in the city produce machinery, footwear, and clothing. Vinnitsa has a museum containing local artifacts, and a music theater. The city was nearly destroyed during World War II, but has been rebuilt. In 1986, Vinnitsa had a population of approximately 375,000.

ZAPOROZHYE is located in eastern Ukraine on the banks of the Dnieper River. The city is primarily an industrial center for iron and steel. A number of small industries in Zaporozhye produce electrical components, chemicals, and soap. A large hydroelectric plant on the Dnieper River provides electricity for Zaporozhye and the surrounding area. Several educational institutions are located in the city. Zaporozhye had a population of 835,000 in 1983. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **ZHITOMIR**, with a population of 292,000 (1989 est.), is noted for its production of musical instruments. The city has a small textile industry, breweries, and a wood processing plant. Zhitomir is a transportation hub and is connected by rail with Kiev and other major Ukrainian cities.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Ukraine's area of 233,088 square miles (603,700 sq. km) is slightly larger than France. Ukraine is mainly a vast plain with no natural boundaries except the Carpathian Mountains in the southwest, the Black Sea in the south, and the Azov Sea in the southeast. The Dni-pro River with its many tributaries unifies central Ukraine economically. The mouth of the Danube River provides an outlet for Ukrainian trade with the Balkans, Austria, and Germany.

Ukraine has a complex geology with a rich variety of scenery and impressive contrasts in topography. Central and southern Ukraine is primarily steppe (prairie) with very fertile black soil exceptionally well suited for grain farming.

In the east, the industrial heartland of the Greater Donbas or Donets Basin contains large reserves of mineral deposits. Western Ukraine has many picturesque mountain resorts.

Enhancing the topography of Ukraine are two mountain ranges. On the western border are the Carpathians, very popular for winter sports. The Crimean Mountains divide the Crimean Peninsula, creating a semitropical area on its southernmost tip. The Crimea is a popular tourist destination.

The Ukraine climate is similar to the wheat-producing regions of Canada and is characterized by abundant precipitation and cloudy skies, especially in fall and winter. Snow can start as early as October and not end until April. The mean temperature in summer is 87°F (30°C) and in winter 16°F (-8°C). Although summers are short, the temperature can soar to the 90s making it uncomfortable, since most buildings lack air-conditioning. Winters seem especially long because of so many sunless days.

Population

The population of Ukraine is 50.5 million of which approximately 73% is ethnically Ukrainian and 22% ethnically Russian. The remaining population consists of many minorities, the largest of which is Jewish (1.35%) followed by Belarusian, Moldovan, Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, Armenian, Greek, Bulgarian,

and others. Ukraine's population is 68% urban. Eastern Ukraine, with its heavily industrialized cities, is more urbanized than western Ukraine.

Ukrainian is an Eastern Slavic language, closely related to Russian and Belarusian. Ukrainian became the official language in 1989. Much of the population in eastern Ukraine speaks Russian as a first language, but Ukrainian is the first language in western Ukraine. Official Government documents are always in Ukrainian, and official meetings are usually conducted in Ukrainian. The political world and local media operate bilingually. Conversations in which one party speaks Ukrainian while the other speaks Russian are common.

Ukraine was the cradle of the Kievan Rus State. According to legend, it was in Kiev that Prince Volodymyr (Vladimir in Russian) introduced Christianity to Kievan Rus in 988. Some 85% of the Ukrainian population are Orthodox Christians, 10% are Greek (Uniate) Catholics, 3% are Protestant (mainly Baptists), and 1.3% are of the Jewish faith.

Public Institutions

Ukraine continues a difficult and slow transition from an authoritarian Communist system to a more democratic society. Ukraine is governed by a directly elected president and a unicameral parliament, the "Verkhovna Rada" (Supreme Council), half of which is elected by proportional representation and half in single-mandate districts. The President appoints the Prime Minister (subject to parliamentary approval) and controls government operations.

Leonid Kuchma was elected President in July 1994 and again in November 1999. The parliament, which was elected in March 1998, is divided between party-based political factions and a group of independent deputies. In January 2000, 11 factions joined to form a pro-government majority, though its sustainability was unclear. The largest single faction is the Communist Party of Ukraine. The next parlia-

mentary elections are scheduled for 2002.

The Constitution, adopted in 1996 and modeled on those of Western European democracies, provides a good legal framework for protecting civil and human rights. Actual practice, however, does not always conform to constitutional requirements, and many areas of life are still regulated by Soviet law and practices.

Arts, Science, and Education

Ukrainians have made a spirited effort to preserve their cultural traditions and customs. You can visit village museums that display traditional crafts and homes of the last century. Folk dancing and music festivals are often held.

The theater and music scene is lively. Theater performances are in Ukrainian or Russian. The Kiev Opera House is home to very good opera and ballet companies. The National Symphony and other musical groups are quite active. Opera, theater, and symphony tickets are generally inexpensive.

Ukraine has a rich folk art tradition that features hand-painted eggs ("Pysanky") and beautifully embroidered linen or cotton runners called "Rushniki." Contemporary art includes painting and sculpture representing both modern and traditional schools. Icons are on display in museums; contemporary copies are skillfully done according to strict artistic and religious standards and can be purchased in galleries.

Educational policy formerly favored the study of science and technology, but there are efforts under way currently to upgrade the humanities, social sciences, MBA, and economics programs. Education is compulsory for ages 7-17. University-level education is generally open to anyone who can pass admission exams.

American professors conduct courses in American literature, history, economics, and other subjects at institutes of higher education under the Fulbright Program. In addition, some Americans at the predoctorate level conduct research in Ukraine under the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) program. Still other American scholars in Ukraine pursue scientific and other academic work under the auspices of private programs.

Commerce and Industry

Ukraine has great agricultural potential and was once known as the "Breadbasket of Russia." Ukraine is also rich in natural resources. Despite a wealth of natural resources, the Ukrainian economy has stagnated since independence. All sectors of industry have experienced severe production declines since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Most small businesses have been privatized.

However, there has been little large-scale privatization. Economic reform has been halting because of over-regulation, high taxation, corruption, and an ineffective commercial law system. Economic reform was pursued in halting fashion in 1996-99. Following the 1999 reelection, President Kuchma appointed a largely pro-reform government.

Market-oriented reform was introduced in 1992 and 1993 at a measured pace. In recent years, the Government succeeded in taming the hyperinflation of the early 1990s. A new currency, the hryvnia, was successfully introduced in 1996.

Transportation

Automobiles

Traffic regulations and procedures in Ukraine differ significantly from those in the U.S. Drivers often neglect to use signal lights, speed, and drive recklessly in urban areas. Pedestrians do not have the right of

way; exercise extreme care when crossing streets in large Ukrainian cities. Cars are frequently pulled over for violations, both real and imagined.

Winters in Ukraine are snowy and dark, with severe ice accumulations common along the city streets; therefore, front-wheel-drive-vehicles provide the best handling. Only the main streets of Kiev are plowed regularly; but, side streets and housing complexes may remain covered with snow and ice throughout the winter.

Make sure that your car is equipped with a rear-window defroster and snow tires. An automobile shipped to Kiev should be equipped with all the cold weather heavy-duty options available.

Unleaded fuel is widely available. A functioning catalytic converter is now required to register a vehicle.

Ukrainian law requires every vehicle registered in Ukraine to be covered by third-party-liability insurance issued by a Ukrainian insurance company. The annual fee varies from 8.1 UHR to 16 UHR with a total coverage of 2,000 UHR. Several Ukrainian insurance companies offer this option.

Local

Public transportation in Kiev is efficient and inexpensive, but crowded. The city's network of buses, trolley buses, streetcars, and the subway (Metro) covers the entire city. Riders should be ready to contend with a good deal of pushing and shoving during the morning and evening rush hours.

Privately operated minibus lines operate on many of the better traveled bus, trolley, and streetcar routes. Minibus fares are slightly more expensive than public system fares, but they never take more passengers than they have seats. The driver collects fares as you enter.

The transit system operates from 5:45 a.m. to 1 a.m. Monthly passes for the entire system or one-use tickets are sold at kiosks throughout the city. Although prices are the same throughout the city, different color tickets are used for different types of vehicles. Bus, trolley, and streetcar single tickets must be punched on a gadget located along the sidewall of the car. Punching your ticket is on the honor system. Surprise inspections are designed to check if everyone has paid, with a small fine collected on the spot if you are found without a properly punched ticket or a monthly pass.

Entrance to the Metro system is through turnstiles operated by blue plastic tokens, purchased in the station, or by monthly passes shown to the Metro attendant before entering the subway. All instructions and Metro stop information are in Ukrainian in the Kiev Metro system.

Although some taxis cruise the city, private cars often provide taxi services. New taxi companies have opened with nice, new cars and English-speaking dispatchers. These taxis operate with a meter, and a small tip is greatly appreciated. Cruising taxis may refuse fares; the main reason being the destination desired by the traveler being different than the route the taxi driver is taking. After a taxi or car stops, state the required destination; if the driver agrees, negotiate a price before you enter the vehicle. Language skills are a necessity when dealing with cruising taxis as many streets are being renamed, and buildings are not clearly marked, so you may have to direct the taxi. Extra precautions should be taken in the evenings, when it is advisable to use only a clearly marked taxi instead of a cruising private vehicle.

Regional

Ukraine's railroad and air transportation networks are extensive, and service is adequate. The rail system features three types of tick-

ets; first class, which is a two-person compartment; second class, with four passengers; and third class, which is general seating.

First- and second-class overnight train rides are quite comfortable except for the lack of ventilation and generally dreadful toilets. Dining cars may or may not be available, and the food is of poor quality. However, hot water for beverages is available.

No U.S. airlines offer direct service to Kiev. Numerous airlines provide service to Western Europe and other destinations: Air France, Lufthansa, British Airways, Swiss Air, KLM, Austrian Air, MALEV (Hungarian), LOT (Polish), CSA (Czech), Egypt Air, Turkish Air, Aerosweet, Air Ukraine, and Ukraine International.

The road system in Ukraine provides access to all cities, towns, and most villages, though many roads are of poor quality. The traveler must plan the trip carefully since information and Western standard lodging are not available along the highways.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service from Ukraine to the U.S., Europe, and to most of the world is available. Local calls within Kiev, which are placed at home or from telephone booths, can experience static and crossed lines.

Ukraine has a limited number of long-distance lines, so expect busy signals during holidays and peak periods. Calls from outside Ukraine can expect the same busy periods. AT&T is currently available in Ukraine. Sprint or MCI are not currently available. Callback services are available, but Ukraine Telecom has threatened to make this service illegal. Calls can be booked through the international operator. Booked calls can take 30 minutes or longer to be completed.

Mail

International mail can be slow and unreliable. International mail services like Federal Express, UPS, DHL, and others are available. All of these companies have offices in Kiev.

Internet

Various companies in Kiev offer Internet access accounts. Usually only dial-up accounts are available to apartments. Direct links are limited due to lack of spare telephone lines in either the neighborhood or apartment building. AOL is available in Kiev, but modem speed is a slow 1,200 max due to the poor quality of the telephone lines. The AOL local number charges an hourly fee above and beyond the monthly fee.

Radio and TV

You can purchase a multisystem TV through mail-order houses, such as Ostermann or Peter Justesen. Most newer multisystem TVs and VCRs also have power supplies that will accept 90240 VAC electrical power. Japanese and other foreign sets are on sale at several hard-currency stores. The prices are high by Western standards. Except at the Panasonic and Sony stores, foreign merchandise sold in Kiev carries no warranties.

Local programming is available in Russian and Ukrainian. With satellite receivers you can view various European channels that include French, Polish, Spanish, Arabic, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Greek, Turkish, English, Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian broadcasts. Many channels broadcast English language TV programs, sports, and movies.

Radio programs on Kiev's stations begin early in the morning. Much of the programming is musical, mainly Europop, Ukrainian choral, folk, and rock.

Bring a good shortwave radio to receive Voice of America, BBC World Service, and Radio Liberty. Since early 1992, VOA and Radio

Liberty are also carried on the AM dial.

Ukraine has three national stations (UT 1, UT 2, UT 3) in Ukraine. UT 1 and UT-2 broadcast in Ukrainian, and UT-3 broadcasts in both Ukrainian and Russian. According to public opinion polls, UT-1 (Ukrainian Television-1) has the lowest rating of all national Ukrainian TV stations. It broadcasts movies, largely pro-government political programs and news. UT -1 is criticized for being the government's mouthpiece.

UT-2 is on a shared frequency. It carries government programming from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. The rest of the time is taken by "Studio 1+1," an independent TV production studio that carries some of the most interesting Ukrainian programs, including high-quality newscasts, talk shows, entertainment, and movies.

UT -3 is shared by Inter TV, the third most powerful television station in Ukraine (nongovernment). The station broadcasts Russian Public Television (ORT) and airs some of its own programming. The overall rating of Inter is rather high. Municipal TRK Kiev and some other local stations air their programs from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily, except weekends.

STB, a private channel founded in 1997, is quite eclectic. Musical programs and soap operas are combined with a very strong information block. "Vikna" news is considered by many as one of the few reliable sources of news.

ICTV, a private channel cofounded by the San Francisco-based Story-first Communications and a Ukrainian Radio and Television concern, is an entertainment rather than a political channel. Its political coverage appears only on the "Vista" news program.

Novyi Kanal, a private channel founded July 1998, carries mostly movies, with brief news summaries.

Among the other commercial TV companies there are TV Tabachuk, Gravis, TET, and others, all of which place their programs on the above networks.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

A small but growing number of foreign newspapers and magazines such as the Wall Street Journal, International Herald Tribune, Financial Times, Newsweek, Time, and The Economist are available in hotel lobbies for hard currency, usually the day after publication. Prices are high even by Western standards, and availability is unpredictable.

The Kiev Post, a free English-language paper published weekly, carries local, national, and some international news. It is readily available in restaurants and anywhere English speakers congregate. A weekly entertainment and life style magazine, What's On, is also readily available.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

You should send a supply of your favorite over-the-counter minor pain remedies, cold medications, antacids, vitamins, and children's vitamins with fluoride and cough syrup. A home first-aid kit is also recommended.

At certain times of the year, particularly during winter months, air pollution is a problem in Kiev. This raises the risk of respiratory tract irritation, especially for children and persons with allergies or asthma. High pollen counts in the spring and summer compound the air pollution problem. Persons with known environmental allergies should bring an ample supply of appropriate medications.

Health care is available to manage a normal pregnancy. However, it is not recommended to deliver in Kiev,

as maternal and neonatal care is not adequate.

Local medical care is improving slowly but is difficult to access. Dental and orthodontic care with Western standards is available for acute as well as prophylactic care at a reasonable price.

American Medical Center, a for-profit medical clinic with branches throughout eastern Europe, has opened in Kiev and is staffed by an American physician. Care can be obtained at a subscription rate or on a fee-for-service basis. They also have an American dentist with Western dental equipment.

Community Health

The standards of cleanliness in most public buildings, taxis, and trains fall far short of Western standards but pose no threat to your personal health.

Background radiation levels are a natural concern because of the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station located 80 miles northwest of Kiev. At the time of the accident, Kiev was not exposed to heavy radiation because the prevailing winds were blowing in the opposite direction. The U.S. Embassy and U.S. Government specialists monitor radiation levels in the air, water, soil, and produce of Kiev carefully and regularly. To date background radiation levels are regularly lower than radiation levels within the U.S. and world standards of safety.

Tap water samples are taken regularly, and local water is not considered safe to drink due to the presence of coliform bacteria and the intestinal parasite giardia lamblia. Water should be filtered and boiled, distilled, or bottled for both cooking and drinking.

Automobile accidents and the lack of a trauma center pose the greatest threat to your health. When traveling in any vehicle, children should always be in some type of restrain-

ing car seat. Bring them as they are not available locally.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

To enter Ukraine, the traveler must have a Ukrainian visa valid for his/her point and date of entry. Immunization and inoculation certifications are not required at the border.

All antiques and items of value that you bring with you should be declared immediately upon arrival to avoid problems when you leave.

A passport valid for sixth months beyond date of travel and a valid single or multiple entry visa is required. Visas may be obtained in advance from the Embassy of Ukraine, located at 3350 M. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, tel. (202) 333-0606 or 333-7507. Visas can also be obtained from the Ukrainian Consulate in Chicago, located at 10 E. Huron St., 60611, tel. (312) 642-4388 or the Ukrainian Consulate in New York, located at 240 E. 49th St., New York, NY 10017, tel. (212) 371-5690. A copy of the visa application for Ukraine can be obtained on the Ukraine Embassy's Internet site <http://www.ukremb.com/>.

Note: Travelers who intend to visit Russia from Ukraine must also have a Russian visa. The Russian Embassy in Ukraine is located at Prospekt Kutuzova 8, Kiev, tel: (38) (044) 294-7797 or (38) (044) 294-6816.

Americans living in or visiting Ukraine are encouraged to register at the Consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Kiev and obtain updated information on travel and security within Ukraine. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy is located at #6, Pimonenko St., tel. (380) (44) 490-4422, fax 236-4892. The U.S. Embassy is located at 10

Vulitsa Yuria Kotsubinskoho, 254053 Kiev 53, tel. (380) (44) 490-4000; after-hours 240-0856; fax 244-7350. Mail using U.S. domestic postage should be addressed to U.S. Embassy Kiev, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20521-5850.

Pets

All dogs and cats entering Ukraine must be accompanied by a certificate of good health bearing the seal of the relevant local board of health and signed by a veterinarian. This certificate must be issued not more than 30 days prior to the animal's arrival. A rabies certificate must accompany the animal through the airports in Europe. Travelers should check any applicable restrictions with the airline and additional landing points they are using before traveling.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The currency of Ukraine is the hryvna.

Ukraine is a cash economy. When bringing U.S. dollars into Ukraine, ensure that bills are in good condition because those that are worn, torn or written on may not be accepted. Credit cards and traveler's checks are gaining wider acceptance in larger cities. American Express traveler's checks may be cashed at some Ukrainian banks. Credit card and ATM fraud is becoming more prevalent and money scams are rampant. It is highly recommended that visitors and permanent residents refrain from using personal checks, credit cards or ATM cards if at all possible. If a credit card is needed, usage is permitted in better hotels, Western-style restaurants, international airlines and selected stores. Customs regulations prohibit sending cash, traveler's checks, personal checks, credit cards, or passports through the international mail system. Customs authorities regularly confiscate these items as contraband. Changing U.S. dollars for Ukrainian hryvnia or another currency is legal

only at banks, currency exchange desks at hotels and licensed exchange booths.

Most goods and services in Ukraine are subject to a 20% VAT tax. Airport taxes are included in the ticket price. To export any antique items and/or works of art, the permission of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine must be obtained. It is rarely granted. In addition to samovars, paintings, and rugs, this restriction applies to collections or separate works of fine, applied, and folk art; archaeological and numismatic items; musical instruments; gold, silver, and precious stones; hand-woven carpets; manuscripts; books published before 1966; and furniture made before 1964.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Special Information

As in any large Western city, pickpockets, simple muggers, and purse-snatchers operate in Kiev. American visitors and residents should take the same precautions against street crime that they would in any large American or foreign city. Property crimes include car vandalism and theft and residential and office burglaries.

Violent property crimes, including carjackings and armed residential invasions, attacks in hallways, elevators of residences have occurred but are rare.

Despite the country's difficult economic straits, Ukraine has been largely free of significant civil unrest or disorder. Political demonstrations and rallies to mark significant anniversaries and holidays, as well as to address specific political and economic issues, are a normal part of life in Ukraine. Although these have been largely peaceful, as in any foreign country it is advisable for American visitors and residents to avoid such demonstrations. To date, there have been no recorded acts of international

terrorism committed on Ukrainian territory.

In general, Ukrainian law enforcement authorities provide adequate assistance to American citizens and firms victimized by crime. However, Ukrainian police continue to suffer from low pay and a shortage of such basic assets as vehicles, fuel, computers, and communications equipment. Police forces are also understaffed, and English-language capability is rare, even among officials who work on crimes involving foreigners. As a result, reporting a crime to the police can be a difficult and lengthy process. Subsequent follow-up to determine the status of a case requires time consuming visits to police stations. The U.S. does recommend that Americans visiting or residing in Ukraine report any crimes to the nearest local police station. Reporting a crime is also advisable even if some time has elapsed since the crime occurred, because criminals often repeat the same crime within the same general locale.

During the past year the U.S. has received a number of reports involving incidents of harassment and intimidation directed against American businesspersons and interests. Physical threats have been recorded against American investors or facilities.

Finally, when utilizing local service sectors, such as banking, medical, legal, and security services, business persons and firms should limit personal data and information provided to only that which is absolutely necessary. There are reports that persons working in these sectors provide information to criminal gangs, which they then use to plan burglary or extortion attempts. In general, business addresses and phone numbers should be provided instead of home addresses and phone numbers whenever possible.

The Embassy's current crime and safety report is available on-line via the internet/worldwide web at the

official website for the American Embassy in Kiev: [HTTP://WWWUSEMB.KIEVUA](http://WWWUSEMB.KIEVUA)

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's day
Jan. 7 & 8	Christmas (Orthodox)
Mar. 8.	International Women's Day
Apr/May.	Easter*
May 1& 2.	Labor Day
May 9.	Victory Day
May/June.	Holy Trinity*
June 28	Constitution Day
Aug. 24.	Independence Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country

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London, United Kingdom

UNITED KINGDOM

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Major Cities:

London, Belfast, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Cardiff

Other Cities:

Aberdeen, Armagh, Bristol, Coventry, Dover, Londonderry, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newry, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, St. Andrews, Sheffield, Southampton, Swansea

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The **UNITED KINGDOM** of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch. Its origins and traditions are found in each of its four component parts—England, Scotland, Wales, and the six counties which occupy the northeast section of Ireland. England was first unified under a Saxon king in the ninth century. Wales eventually became part of that kingdom, as did Ireland before the end of the 13th century. In 1603, James I of England, who also ruled as James VI of Scotland, united the English and Scottish dynasties. In 1707, the Treaty for the Union of England and Scotland provided that the two countries “should be forever united

into one kingdom.” One parliament (the Parliament of Great Britain) served as the supreme authority in both countries.

In 1801, the Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, joining the two parliaments, established the present-day U.K. In 1922, however, the 26 counties of southern Ireland became a self-governing, independent entity (the Republic of Ireland, or Eire).

MAJOR CITIES

London

London is one of the largest cities in Europe, the U.K.'s seat of government, and the center of commerce, education, and arts. Like all cities, London attracts people of all backgrounds who come for many reasons, both to visit and to live. As a city which has been preeminent for centuries, it is full of a rich and varied history.

The name London has no specific meaning. It was originally used to describe the city of London proper, still referred to as “the City,” and now the financial and banking center of London. Today, the heart of the city consists of “the City” and

the Borough of Westminster, also known commonly as the “West End.” With the steady growth of the capital since the Middle Ages, surrounding districts were absorbed into the huge metropolis of today. The latest census (1994) showed that London had a population of nearly 7 million in an area of 157,944 hectares.

Greater London actually consists of 32 semi-independent boroughs (plus “the City”). Each has dozens of business, residential, and cultural centers of its own. Greater London has followed extensive coordinated post-war reconstruction programs, including successful intensive efforts to clean facades of famous surviving buildings.

Food

London markets have a large selection of foods. Out-of-season fruits and vegetables are imported from around the world, and because of the diverse foreign community in London, ingredients for cuisines from nearly anywhere in the world can be found here. Supermarkets stock fresh, frozen, and packaged goods, nearly always at prices substantially higher than those in the U.S. British foods, eating habits, kitchen equipment, and terminology are different from U.S. counterparts.

Clothing

Mediumweight fall and winter clothing is needed about 9 months of the year. Lightweight clothing is worn in summer. Be prepared for rain and cool weather at whatever time of year you arrive, as even summer has many cool days.

London department stores and specialty shops offer ready-made clothing for all family members in most quality ranges, but clothing costs considerably more than in the U.S., except during the January sales. The fashionable shopping districts offer a full range of designs from conservative to avant-garde.

Shoes in narrow and wide sizes are hard to find, particularly men's sizes larger than 12. Other sizes are available in many styles and makes but are expensive. People walk a good deal in London. Good walking shoes are essential.

Attire in London for office, theater, shopping, sporting events, and social occasions is in darker colors and more conservative styles than in the U.S. Casual attire often means a coat and tie. Instructions to wear "lounge suit," "day dress," "town coat," "tenue de ville," "informal," and "business suit," indicate the requirement for dark business suits for men and cocktail dresses for women. Formal, black tie, dinner jacket, tuxedo, and smoking jacket mean long gowns for women (or short, dressy gowns, depending on current fashion) and black tie for men.

Several shops in London rent formal wear. They stock appropriate attire for every formal occasion, from the Queen's Garden Party and Derby Races to opening nights at the theater.

Men: Collar sizes are the same as in the U.S., but it is hard to find long-sleeved shirts in larger collar sizes.

Women: Women in London usually wear long dresses or skirts for evening affairs, including informal receptions, and cocktail and dinner parties.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

House of Parliament and Big Ben in London

Supplies and Services

Almost anything is available from London's plentiful shops and stores. Stores compare favorably with those found in large U.S. cities. Household items, cosmetics, and toiletries of most varieties are available. Drugstores carry a complete range of medicines, medical preparations, and health aids. All prices are high.

Neighborhood shopping areas are scattered throughout greater London. Some American-type shopping malls opened in the 1980s. Virtually all shopping areas (the High Streets) offer common services: laundry and dry-cleaning, hair-

dressers and barbers, gas stations, drugstores (chemists), hardware stores (iron mongers), travel and ticket agencies, restaurants, flowers hops, gifts hops, banks, libraries, newsstands (news agents), bookshops, jewelers, and the ever-present pubs, to mention a few.

Religious Activities

All major religions are represented in London. The Church of England is the established church, but various Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and other faiths have houses of worship in the London area. The American Church in London (Protestant) offers independent, interdenominational services specifically intended for Americans resi-

dent in London. It has Sunday school classes, fellowship meetings, Bible study, and youth groups. The Saturday Times lists the times of services for the following Sunday.

Education

The London area has several schools offering American-curriculum instruction from nursery school through high school.

Parents must decide whether to keep their children in the U.S. system or introduce them into the British or international systems. It is generally agreed that the British educational system is good for children in their early years, when they can adapt easily, but that older children will find the adjustment more difficult.

Three of the most widely recognized national curriculums are the U.K. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSEs) and "A" levels, the U.S. Graduation Diploma, and the International Baccalaureate (IB). There are criticisms of all three systems. The downside of the British curriculum is that it forces students to specialize quite early in their education. The opposite is said of the Graduation Diploma or the IB.

The British GCSE curriculum allows for specialization at age 16, when students choose two or three subjects for study up to Advanced Level ("A" level). The next 2 years of intensive study are viewed as preparation for university work.

The IB is administered by International Baccalaureate Offices in Geneva and London. There is a panel of examiners working together from many countries and cultures. The baccalaureate fulfills university entrance requirements in more than 40 countries. This qualification is aimed at providing a broad education with sufficient flexibility of subject choice to suit individual interests and abilities. Universities all over the world are coming to respect the IB, and, in the U.S., an IB candidate is sometimes

eligible to go straight into the second year of a degree course.

It is wise to start considering schools as soon as you know you are coming to London. You might want to write directly to the school of your choice. They will send you a registration packet. If you have selected a school, contact the school and ask to preregister your child until you can complete and return the registration packet.

Following are some of the American and international schools used most often by American families, because of their good academic standards and their proximity to neighborhoods where Americans live:

American School in London: ASL is a private, coeducational day school, accredited in the U.S., offering instruction from nursery school through grade 12. The school is located in central London. There is a school bus service, and public transportation is good. No school uniform is required. Entrance requirements include school records for 3 1/2 years, forms of recommendation, and a candidate questionnaire for grades 5 to 12. Senior-year applicants require SAT or PSAT scores. Extracurricular activities are music, drama, and sports.

American School in London
2-8 Loudoun Road
London NW8 ONP
Tel. 44 171 722-0101

The American Community School: ACS is a private, coeducational day school which provides a progressive education from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for children of all nationalities using an American curriculum. There are two geographically distinct campuses: one northwest of London, one southwest. Entrance requirements include an interview, previous school records, and testing for high school students. The IB is offered. Extracurricular activities include drama, music, sports, and crafts.

American Community School -
Surrey Campus - Heywood

Portsmouth Road
Cobham, Surrey KT11 1BL
Tel. 44 932 67251

American Community School -
Middlesex Campus
Hillingdon Court
Vine Lane
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 OBG
Tel. 44 0895 59771

Marymount International School: Marymount is a day and boarding school for girls in grades 7 to 12. It is one of a group of European Marymount Schools established by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, a Roman Catholic foundation. It is accredited in the U.S. The international student body represents many religious affiliations. Students follow the American curriculum until age 16 when they may choose the IB rather than the high school diploma. Entrance requirements include previous school records, character and social references, and an interview. Extracurricular activities are educational tours, music, drama, and sports. Bus service is available for day students.

Marymount School London
George Road
Kingston Upon Thames
Surrey KT2 7PE
Tel. 44 181 949-0571

The American School in Switzerland, England: TASIS schools are found in Switzerland, Greece, France, and England. TASIS England is a coeducational boarding and country day school for children in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It is accredited in the U.S. Boarders attend from grades 7 to 12. The curriculum followed is American. Entrance requirements include three teacher recommendations, official transcript, and an interview, unless distance prohibits that. Extracurricular activities are drama, music, clubs, and field trips.

TASIS England American School
Coldharbour Lane
Thorpe, Surrey TW20 8TE
Tel. 44 932 565252

Southbank—The American International School: Southbank is a coeducational day school for students in grades 6 to 13. The school designs an individual study program for each pupil based upon previous education, needs, interests, and potential. Pupils can study for GCSE, the high school diploma, or the IB. High priority is given to the acquisition of proficiency in a second language. The school is located north of Holland Park in London's West End, well served by public transportation. Entrance requirements include an interview, previous school records, and a letter of recommendation. Extracurricular activities are music, drama, travel, and sports.

Southbank—The America International School
36–38 Kensington Park Road
London W11 3BU
Tel. 44 171 229–8230

London Central High School: London Central is a Department of Defense School (DoDDS), 35 miles northwest of central London. It is accredited in the U.S., and offers a program for grades 7 to 12. It has advanced placement courses, study enrichment courses, and programs for somewhat handicapped students. Entrance requirements include previous school records and a health certificate. Extracurricular activities include music, theater, publications, and student council.

London Central High School
High Wycombe Air Station
Daws Hill Lane
Buckinghamshire
Tel. 44 494 455188

West Ruislip DOD Elementary School: This DoDDS school for children in kindergarten through grade 6 is about 13 miles northwest of central London. There are special education and hearing-impaired programs. There are two bus pickup points for children living in central London. Entrance requirements include previous school records.

West Ruislip DOD Elementary School
RAF West Ruislip

Ickenham Road
Ruislip HA4 7DS
Tel. 44 8956 32870

State-operated schools: With few exceptions, State secondary schools provide a general education to the age of 16 under the system known as "comprehensive" education. Some schools have the facility to provide advanced education to age 18.

The large size of most state secondary schools makes it possible to offer many combinations of subjects; the disadvantage is that your child's special needs may be overlooked. The British system is not well designed to accommodate transfers between schools, much less between countries. Courses and programs vary from school to school, and the newcomer must catch up on missed work.

For information on state schools, contact:

Department of Education
Headquarters
Sanctuary Building
Great Smith Street
SW1P 3BT
Tel. 44 171 925–5000

You must be able to tell them where you are living so they can give you information on schools in your area.

Private Schools: These schools usually offer only the most academic line of education and select those students who are likely to succeed. Be prepared for a competitive entrance process. Private schools (called public schools in the U.K.) are generally smaller than state schools.

Because of the large number of private schools in the London area, you are urged to contact one of the following educational consultants for more specific information:

Gabbitas Thring Educational Trust, Ltd.
Broughton House
6 Sackville Street
Piccadilly, London W1X 2BR

Tel. 44 171 734–0601

Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS)
26 Buckingham Gate
London SW1E 6AJ
Tel. 44 171 222–7274 or 222–7353

For information on Catholic state schools, contact:

The Catholic Education Service
41 Cromwell Road
London SW7
Tel. 44 171 584–7491

Special Educational Opportunities

Each London Borough council offers a comprehensive selection of part-time, day, and evening courses for adults at locations throughout the city. The cost is minimal, and the selection is endless. Registration is in September, but places are sometimes available later in the year. The publication, *Floodlight*, with a full listing of courses, is on sale in bookstores and news agents in August. Local libraries have copies. There are innumerable courses on cooking, flower arranging, fine arts, and nearly anything else of interest.

Many American colleges and universities offer undergraduate and graduate programs here. Quality of programs varies, and costs range from moderate to expensive. Transfer of credits to and from other institutions can be a major problem. It is highly recommended that families seeking university education investigate costs, programs, and transferability before making their decisions.

The Educational Advisory Service of the Fulbright Commission, at 62 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2LS, publishes a list of American colleges and universities in the U.K. They also have the largest collection of U.S. university/college catalogs, and have three full-time advisers.

Sports

You can participate in virtually every popular sport in London, outdoors and indoors, team and indi-

vidual. Borough-run facilities are free or very inexpensive.

Spectators can enjoy both professional and amateur games year round. The annual Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race brings thousands to the footpaths along the Thames. The Henley Regatta, held in July, is host to rowing entries from all over the world. Horse lovers find pleasure at the major races of the year—Epsom Downs, Ascot, and Derby.

The most popular sports are soccer and rugby in winter, cricket and tennis in summer, and horse and golf events year round. TV coverage of these events is extensive. Tennis at Wimbledon, cricket at Lord's, football (soccer) at Wembley, and dog shows at Olympia are a few of the highlights of a sports program that is full, continuous, and of international caliber.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

London is well known as a sightseer's paradise. Whatever personal interests you have, London's museums, art galleries, libraries, historic places, pageantry, and parks are bound to fulfill them. Sightseers can explore the city by bus, on foot, and by boat on the Thames. A full calendar of daily events is available in several weekly publications.

Entertainment

Culturally, London is one of the richest cities on Earth. It has symphony orchestras, chamber music ensembles, and pop and rock concerts. The theater in London is unrivaled. World-famous British, American, and international artists are often on stage. Productions routinely move from Broadway to London and vice versa. There are year-round offerings of opera, ballet, and symphonic music at the Royal Opera House, the Sadler's Wells Hall, the Barbican and South Bank Centers, and the Royal Festival Hall. In addition to top-quality resident companies, famous continental and American groups often visit.



Tower of London

Courtesy of Peter Gareffa

Central London offers a wide range of first-run films at theaters, film clubs, and art theaters. Going out to the movies is as easy and informal as in the U.S.

Restaurants, cafes, and tearooms of every size and price range abound here. Food ranges from fast food fare to exclusive English and international cuisine. Pubs and afternoon tea are two English traditions that should not be missed.

Museums and art galleries in London contain some of the most comprehensive collections of objects of artistic, archeological, scientific, historical, and general interest ever to exist in one city. The most notable are the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, National Gallery, Tate Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Imperial War Museum, Museum of London, Wallace Collection, British Museum of Natural History, Geological Museum, and Science Museum.

The British seem to go out of their way to provide entertainment for children. This is especially true during summer and at Christmas. Some of the popular outings are special theater productions, pantomimes and puppet shows, the zoo, concerts, and film festivals.

Social Activities

The American Club, composed of American and British business representatives, has good eating facilities. It sponsors activities such as special film showings, golf tournaments, celebrations of American national holidays, entertainment of distinguished visitors, and the promotion of fellowship between its members and the local community. The American Women's Club provides social and community service activities.

Although we share a common language and a special relationship with Great Britain, it is wise to remember that it is still a foreign country. To expect attitudes and conventions to be the same as those in the U.S. will make the transition to life in Britain frustrating. It is tempting to feel that the "settling in" process will be faster and easier in Britain than in other countries, but most people find it takes just as long as in other countries.

Private social and political clubs are a prominent social feature. Many have flourished for longer than 100 years. Largely frequented for their social advantages, all have their own premises, including licensed restaurants. Entrance fees and subscriptions vary. Most men's and



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Parliament buildings in Belfast, Northern Ireland

women's clubs are exclusive, but members can entertain friends in a comfortable atmosphere.

The English Speaking Union is open to men and women who are citizens of the U.S. or Commonwealth countries. It has a dining room and offers a range of activities.

Focus Information Services, founded in 1982 by a group of American women familiar with international relocation, aids foreigners in adapting quickly to life in the U.K. They offer guidance on education and career opportunities, and provide foreigners with a chance to meet people of similar interests. There is a membership fee for seminars, but anyone may phone for general help.

Belfast

Northern Ireland is a province of the U.K., created by the partition of Ireland in 1921. About the size of

Connecticut, it has about 1.7 million people—some 297,000 in Belfast.

Although part of the U.K., Northern Ireland has its own distinct identity, a product of its history and the mixing of Irish, Scottish, and English traditions. Its beautiful rolling green countryside—underpopulated by European standards—is dotted with historic monuments, from stone-age tombs to great 19th-century houses. Right in the middle is Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the British Isles. Northern Ireland has strong ties with the U.S. It claims 13 U.S. Presidents with ties to the province, and many families have relatives living in the U.S. Consular presence dates back to 1796. More than 24 U.S. manufacturing companies are located in the province, employing 10% of the industrial workforce.

Belfast was one of the U.K.'s first great industrial cities, making its reputation in the 19th century on

shipbuilding, linen, and textiles. It is beautifully situated in the Valley of the River Lagan, which flows into a long bay called Belfast Lough, and is surrounded by hills. The city's name derives from two Gaelic words: "beal," a river mouth, and "fierste," hurry or haste.

The central part of the city was badly affected by the violence of the 1970s, but in recent years buildings have been restored, shopping greatly improved, and many new restaurants opened. The center of Belfast has been turned into a pedestrian mall, which draws crowds of shoppers. Although most of the city's substandard housing has been replaced by attractive public housing, several parts of the city are blighted by the economic and security effects of the "The Troubles." The rest of Belfast and its tranquil suburbs seem remote from the violence, but security forces are often evident. Generally, positive signs of progress can be seen and citizens have a resil-

ient “business-as-usual” attitude. Political events in 1994 and 1995 have fostered much hope for resolving “The Troubles.”

Northern Ireland has a temperate oceanic climate similar to that of the Pacific Northwest, but seasonal changes are less pronounced. Weather is often overcast and rainy (relieved by “sunny intervals”). It must be noted that most of the rain is merely a light mist. Because of Belfast’s northern latitude, the number of daylight hours varies greatly between summer (about 18 hours in June) and winter (about 8 hours in December). The sunniest weather is in May and June. Light snow falls occasionally in January and February, but temperatures seldom remain below freezing for more than a day.

Food

It is not necessary to bring anything except specialty foods. Daily food needs are bought primarily at one of the many local supermarkets that are well stocked with local and imported products and seasonal fresh items. A large selection of American groceries and frozen foods or reasonable substitutes are available on the local economy. Local prices are higher than in the U.S., but conveniences include a milkman, butcher, and vegetable or egg person available for daily household delivery. Most popular brands of hard liquor, wines, liqueurs, and mixers are available at local stores. Beers (European and American) and a wide variety of American soft drinks are also available. It must be noted that the Northern Irish excel at bread making, and bakeries are varied and abundant.

Clothing

Clothing styles are the same as in the U.S.; what is proper in the U.S. is acceptable in Belfast.

Men: Woolen clothing can be worn most of the year. Tropicalweight and wash-and-wear suits are seldom needed, but they may be useful on trips to southern parts of the British Isles and Europe. Ready-made or custom-made suits can be

purchased both locally and in London, though not cheaply. Local suits are tailored somewhat differently than American suits and may not be to your liking. Rainwear is needed but can be purchased locally.

Women: Attractive, well-made women’s clothing, very similar to American fashion, is available in Belfast. The prices are considerably higher than American-bought merchandise, but the quality is generally excellent.

Children: Children’s clothing follows U.S. styles, with emphasis on casual slacks and jeans for both boys and girls. Shorts are worn by children for summer play, weather permitting. Children’s dresses, slacks, and shirts are available, but prices are higher than in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, medical prescriptions, cosmetics, personal supplies, tobacco, and other sundry items are carried locally.

All basic services such as tailoring, dry cleaning, laundry, shoe repair, beauty shops, etc., are found in Belfast.

Religious Activities

Churches abound in Belfast. The major denominations are Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland (Episcopalian), and Methodist. Other faiths represented include Lutheran, Christian Scientist, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Baptist, and Jewish.

Education

No American or international school is available in Belfast. However, numerous excellent primary and secondary level schools offer high academic standards and good extracurricular activities. Relative emphasis on subjects is not the same as in American schools, nor are transfers from one level of education to another. Tuition-free elementary and secondary schools similar to U.S. public schools are available, but Foreign Service families usually prefer to send children

to preparatory or grammar (university preparatory) schools that are more like private schools in the U.S. Students who pass certain tests or who achieve high academic standards do not have to pay grammar school tuition. The school year extends from the first week in September through the end of June.

Recommended preparatory (primary) schools (ages 5–11) are:

Fullerton Preparatory School
(preparatory school for Methodist College: coeducational)
Lisburn Road
Belfast 9

Inchmarlo School
(preparatory school for the Royal Belfast Academical Institution; boys only)
Cranmore Park
Belfast 9

Hunterhouse College (girls only)
Finaghy
Belfast 10

St Brides Primary School
Derryvolgie Avenue
Belfast 9

Recommended grammar (secondary) schools are:

Methodist College (coeducational)
1 Malone Road
Belfast 9

Royal Belfast Academical Institution
(boys only)
1 College Square East
Belfast 1

Richmond Lodge (girls only)
85 Malone Road
Belfast 9

Victoria College (girls only)
Cranmore Park
Belfast 9

Dominican College (girls only)
Fortwilliam Park
Belfast 15

Lagan College (integrated, coeducational)

63 Church Road
Castlereagh

Belfast Royal Academy (coeducational)

Cliftonville Road
Belfast 14

Belfast has schools for children with special educational needs.

Preschool children under age of 4½ can be placed in a variety of programs including mother/toddler play-groups run by several of the churches (no fees); private nursery schools (parents pay fees); education and library board nursery schools or nursery classes attached to schools (like U.S. kindergartens—no fees); or private play-groups (no fees).

Special Educational Opportunities

Queens University Belfast, known for its school of medicine, offers courses in most fields of study. Queens University and the Rupert Stanley College of Further Education offer a variety of adult education courses.

Sports

Belfast is an excellent city for sports enthusiasts, who can enjoy many sports inexpensively. The city environs have 10 golf clubs. Many clubs offer squash, tennis, badminton, yachting, and sailing. Several public leisure centers offer swimming and aerobics; Queens University has a complete physical education center. The country offers horseback riding; stag and fox hunts; fishing (salmon and trout); and geese, duck, snipe, and small game shooting. A few good beaches are within easy access, but the water is cold. Spectator sports include horse racing, soccer, rugby, cricket, Gaelic sports, motorcycling, and auto racing. Belfast also offers several bike and running races.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Northern Ireland offers opportunities for biking, “pony-trekking,” water skiing, camping, sign posted walks and nature trails for hiking, and mountain climbing. All parts of Ireland, including the magnificent West Coast, are easily reached by car. Driving is on the left side of the road. Traveling by car is the most efficient and agreeable way of getting to see the area. The road network is good with 70 miles of motorway for those in a hurry, about 1,500 miles of dual carriageway and “A” roads, and very low traffic density. The two main motorways striking out west from Belfast skirt Lough Neah to the south (M1) and north (M2). Over 46 parks and playing field sites are currently under the control of the Belfast Parks Department. The National Trust administers several attractive historical and wilderness sites in Northern Ireland.

Belfast has a museum, castle, theaters, art galleries, antique shops, zoo, and botanical garden. The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum is about 20 minutes by car from Belfast city center. One-and-a-half hours’ drive from Belfast is the Ulster-American Folk Park. Air, rail, and ferry services connect Northern Ireland to Scotland, England, and Wales, though fares are high.

Accommodations (hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses, self-catering cottages) are plentiful and of high standard, and, whatever you are planning to do, there are several choices of places to stay, varying in price from moderate to expensive. The booklet, *All The Places To Stay*, published annually, lists all accommodations approved by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Dublin, a 3-hour drive from Belfast or about 2½ hours by train, offers excellent theater, a variety of restaurants, and a cosmopolitan environment. Shopping is more varied in Dublin, especially for women’s clothing, though generally more expensive.

Entertainment

Belfast is experiencing a cultural and culinary renaissance. The Grand Opera House and Ulster Hall attract national and international touring companies regularly, bringing opera, ballet, and theater. Frequent concerts are given by a good local symphony orchestra. Several good theater companies present plays, including those about the contemporary situation, in a number of modern theaters. The Lyric Theatre is of particular note. Each November a cultural festival, second only to Edinburgh in the U.K., brings 3 weeks of entertainment to the city. Occasional fairs and exhibitions are held at local centers. Cinemas and a film club at Queens University offer first-run and classic films. The Northern Ireland Arts Council is deeply involved in promoting a stimulating variety of arts throughout Belfast.

Many good restaurants, taverns, and cafes are common in Belfast. Some restaurants offer “pub grub” and other simple menus, while a number of French, Italian, Indian, and Chinese restaurants provide good meals at reasonable prices. Also a number of tea and coffee shops can be found.

Crafts are in abundance throughout Northern Ireland. A wide range of factories with shops offer daily tours of their works.

Social Activities

Besides those retired in Northern Ireland, fewer than 500 Americans live in the Belfast area. All are well integrated into the local community. The province has no specifically American organizations, except for the Ulster-American Woman’s Club, which is quite active.

Northern Ireland people are very hospitable, and almost all areas of society are open to contact. Social life is built mainly around a private circle of friends and acquaintances and tends to develop among family, professional, club, and school lines. Social functions are similar to those found elsewhere, such as cocktail parties and dinners. You can also

join any number of special-interest clubs or groups (golf, bridge, hiking, stamp collecting, etc.) or the Rotary Club.

Edinburgh

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland and one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. The visual focal point of the city is Edinburgh Castle, which sits upon a high rocky hill in the city center. Much of the city's Georgian and Victorian architecture is carefully preserved in virtually its original appearance. The city's population of 444,000 is swollen by hundreds of thousands of visitors from all parts of the world, particularly during summer months and the Edinburgh International Festival which begins about August 15 each year and lasts 3 weeks.

Food

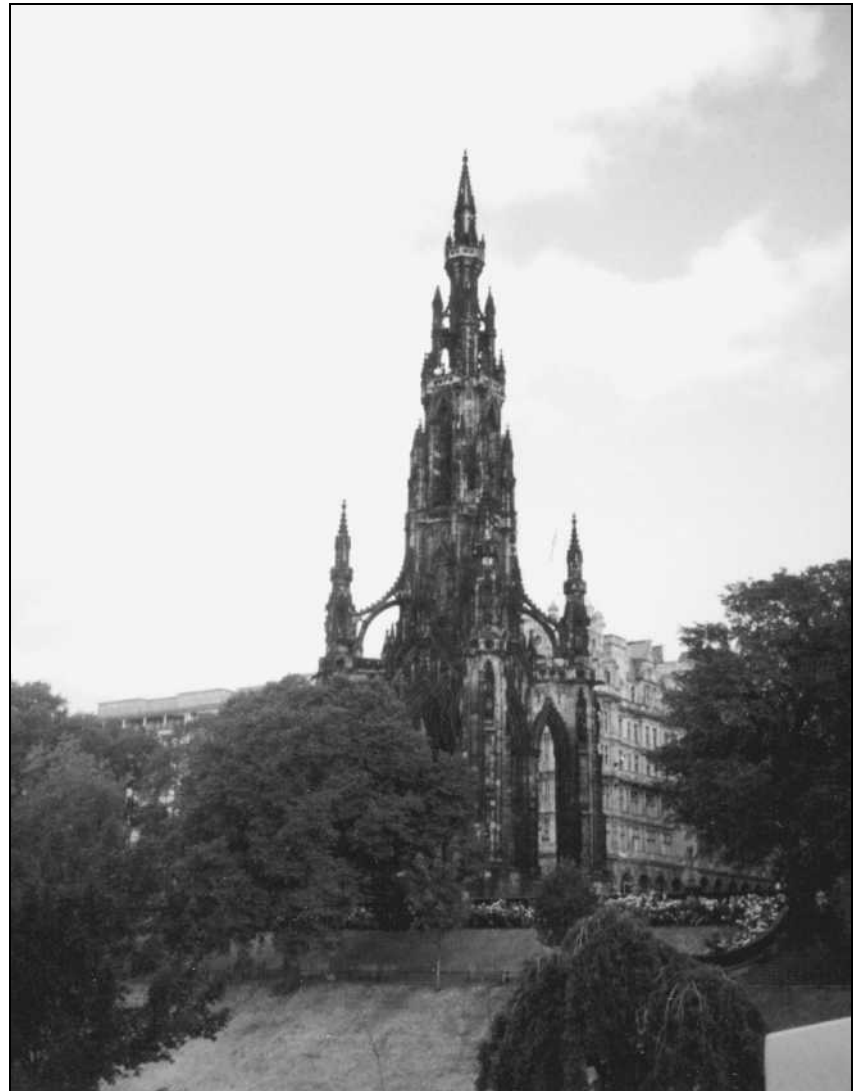
The variety of food products available presents no problem to the American resident and there are a number of Safeway supermarkets in town. Food prices are about the same as in the U.S. Local meats are of good quality but generally more expensive than in the U.S. Bakery products are good and prices are reasonable. Milk is of excellent quality and perfectly safe. American baby foods are available locally.

Clothing

All types of clothing are sold locally. Prices of some high-quality cotton dresses, shirts, and lingerie are the same as in the U.S. but generally of better quality. Extra-tall or large sizes can be difficult to find.

Men: Ready-made men's suits are widely available. Materials and quality are excellent.

Women: A wide range of clothing is available of both British and continental manufacture and styling. Women's suits in the medium-price range are nicely tailored and styled. Summerweight clothing is not necessary in Edinburgh, but a few items may be useful for those rare days when the temperature rises above 70°F. Medium-quality nylon



Walter Scott monument in Edinburgh

Courtesy of Peter Gareffa

hose compare favorably with American brands. Sweaters, woolen dresses, and winter coats are necessary for daytime wear and available at good prices. Since houses tend to be cooler, a type of wool heavier than in the U.S. can be useful in Edinburgh. Hats and gloves are occasionally required for formal daytime occasions. Suits are appropriate for luncheons and informal cocktail parties. Women's high-quality shoes are at least as expensive as in the U.S.

Children: Good quality clothes are available for children. Bring or buy locally warm clothing, underwear, and overshoes for preschool children. Private schools require special

uniforms that must be purchased locally.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, medicines, and other sundries commonly used for housekeeping, household repairs, and entertaining are available at local stores.

All basic services are available in Edinburgh.

Beauty shops provide service and prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Most denominations common in the U.S. have places of worship in Edin-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh

burgh. The Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) is the established church. The Catholic and Episcopal Churches are also well represented. In addition, Methodist, Mormon, Christian Scientist, Baptist, and Jewish places of worship are available. Sunday school and youth fellowship groups are organized on much the same basis as in the U.S.

Education

There is an excellent educational system operating in Edinburgh from primary through university levels. Many parents send children to day nurseries from the age of 3 until they begin the equivalent of first grade at the age of 5. Many preschool nurseries and private day schools are available within a reasonable distance of residential districts. In addition to coeducational schools, separate schools are available for boys and girls. Private schools are generally better academically than the State (city-run) schools.

Because of the distance to most private schools, parents need to provide transportation each day or join a carpool. Edinburgh has no school bus service. Many older children take city buses to school. Fees at private schools are high, and most require pupils to wear locally pur-

chased uniforms. Tuition does not cover lunches and outside activities.

Scottish schools place heavy stress on the three "Rs" from the time the 5-year-old begins school. At the end of the first year of school, the 5-year-old (who would have been in kindergarten in the U.S.) is expected to read, write, compose simple stories, and do double-digit addition and subtraction. With continued emphasis on basic subjects, Scottish children in junior and senior high school are usually well ahead of their American counterparts in these areas, often as much as 2 years in some subjects. Moreover, there is much earlier emphasis on mathematics, the sciences, and languages. Therefore, be prepared for a rather difficult transition period as older children work to catch up with Scottish classmates. Nevertheless, students who have done well in American schools usually do well in Scottish schools after they make the transition.

Not only the curriculum, but the entire system of education, is different in Scottish schools. A student can graduate from school at age 16. At this time, the student has had 11 years of education and completed a series of difficult exams called "O" (ordinary) levels. These exams

mainly cover subjects of his or her choice. The student has specialized in these subjects and prepared for exams during the last 2 years of school. American students who have not had most of the final 2 years (ages 14 and 15) in Scottish school may find it difficult, but not impossible, to pass these exams and receive a Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE).

In Scotland, students wishing to attend a university will study another 1 or 2 years to prepare for a series of more difficult exams called "highers." Successful completion of these exams is required for entrance to all Scottish universities and are accepted by most universities in the rest of Britain. Scottish students wishing to enter universities may take a narrower series of "A" (advanced) level exams. These are the same kind of tests as those given in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and throughout the Commonwealth for students hoping to enter British universities. The "higher" exams are only given in Scotland.

Students older than 14 who arrive here may find it difficult to complete high school in a Scottish school unless they are willing to work hard. Nevertheless, American students have done very well in the local school system in the past. Entrance to private day school is by negotiation with headmasters.

The North Sea oil industry brought a large number of American families to Scotland in the 1970s, especially to the area around Aberdeen, 120 miles north of Edinburgh. Due largely to transition difficulties between American and Scottish systems of education, the American School of Aberdeen opened in 1972. It has an enrollment of 387 students, including military dependents from Edzell. It has two campuses and covers from primary grade through high school.

The American School of Edinburgh opened in September 1976 with 15 students. It now has 30–40 students at any one time, with about 30 teachers, the majority of whom are

part time. The age of students ranges from 16–19 years old. It patterns itself on the American educational system, but does not have U.S. accreditation and operates mainly on a format of informal tutorials with only a few students in each class. It is, however, registered with the Scottish Education Department. Currently, no students from the U.S. attend. The school also administers standardized tests, such as the SAT for students interested in attending U.S. universities.

Special Educational Opportunities

There are 12 universities in Scotland. Three of these are in the Edinburgh metropolitan area—Heriot-Watt, Napier, and Edinburgh. Edinburgh University is one of the best academic institutions in Britain.

Edinburgh University and the Lothian Regional Council offer excellent evening adult classes in a wide range of subjects including a good selection of languages. Classes are usually from October until May. Three foreign cultural offices—the French Institute, the Italian Institute, and the Danish Institute—offer language classes in conjunction with the University of Edinburgh. Classes in Scottish traditional dancing and other folk art are held regularly in Edinburgh by the Scottish Country Dance Society.

Sports

Many fine private and public golf courses are available. The climate allows golf year round. The immediate Edinburgh area has 28 courses. Temporary memberships are available in all but the most select clubs.

Edinburgh has a number of tennis clubs and good squash courts. Several indoor swimming pools are open to the general public at nominal fees. The Meadowbank Sports Center and the Royal Commonwealth Pool were built to Olympic standards to accommodate the 1970 and 1986 Commonwealth Games. You can purchase golf clubs, fishing tackle, and other sports items locally.

The cool climate limits outdoor swimming to only a short time in summer. A number of fine beaches within easy reach of the city are suitable for picnicking, sun bathing, and swimming.

Skiing is possible around Glencoe and at Aviemore in the Cairngorms. They can be reached by car in about 3 hours and by train in about 4. Special ski trains are available when snow conditions are good. Many ski lifts operate in that area. Equipment can be rented.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Simple tourist accommodation is available in all cities and towns along main routes out of Edinburgh. Glasgow is only 1 hour away by train or car. A day trip to the Trossachs and to Loch Lomond is possible by car or tour bus. You can arrange trips with equal ease to the Borders. St. Andrews is interesting with its university and famous golf courses. It can be reached from Edinburgh during summer with ample time for lunch and a game of golf. Gleneagles, where the Scottish Open is played each year, has a world-famous (but expensive) hotel and four fine golf courses. Another pleasant weekend trip is to the area around Pitlochry, noted for its scenery and fishing. This could be coupled with a trip to Inverness and Loch Ness. A short trip to the north of Edinburgh presents a good view of the famous Firth of Forth Rail and Road Bridges. These are on the way to Dunfermline with its medieval abbey and home of Andrew Carnegie.

Many interesting castles, palaces, and homes are within a 1-day drive of Edinburgh. The price of gasoline is higher than in the U.S., but U.S. Government employees are reimbursed for the tax paid.

Entertainment

There is an active cultural life in Edinburgh with opera, orchestras, plays, top name artists, and exhibitions taking place throughout the year. The movie theaters show current U.S. films, and there is also a

Film House showing international films.

During the Edinburgh International Festival you can see operas, leading ballet companies, symphony orchestra concerts of international caliber, and plays with outstanding casts. During the main Festival, the Fringe presents cabaret and late night musical and drama productions.

The International Film Festival features a number of first showings with leading performers present on opening night. There is also a Jazz Festival during this time in the summer.

Edinburgh boasts several excellent art museums. The Scottish National Library, Edinburgh Public Library, and two university libraries offer a wide selection of books, research materials, and an excellent music library.

Major hotels offer shows and dancing throughout the year. Other hotels and restaurants have more informal Friday and Saturday night dinner dances. During the tourist season, major hotels have regular Scottish nights. These are called Ceilidhs (pronounced “kay-lee”), which include traditional Scottish dancing, singing, and music.

The city has many public houses or pubs. Some offer musical entertainment, jazz, and even country-western music. During the school year, the universities offer a wide variety of entertainment.

Social Activities

Social contact with other Americans is available through the American Women’s Club of Edinburgh. A large U.S. community lives in the Aberdeen area, where there also is an American Women’s Club.

The city has a reasonably active social life. Cocktail and small dinner parties are a way of life in winter. The English Speaking Union has a branch in Edinburgh which provides a focal point for association

with local Scots. Also, Scottish country dance clubs teach regional dances and, at the same time, provide a means of social contact.

Birmingham

Birmingham lies in Warwickshire, central England, near the coal and iron deposits of the “black country.” Now the second largest city in England, with a population of over 1 million, it is the chief center of hardware manufacturing and of the motor components industry. Birmingham was a market town trading in leather and wools when it was seized and burned by royalists in the civil wars. It revived at the advent of the industrial revolution, and the population grew with the expanding manufacture of metal products and guns. Birmingham’s franchise came with the Reform Bill of 1832, and progressive city government has been the pattern since that time.

The city initiated a slum-clearing scheme in the 1870s, and was the first town with a municipal bank and water-supply service. After suffering heavy damage during World War II, Birmingham was extensively rebuilt. Architectural sights include the Town Hall, built in 1832–1834, and modeled after the Temple of Castor and Pollux in Rome; the Victoria Law Courts; the University of Birmingham in suburban Edgestaston; the 13th-century Church of St. Martin, which was rebuilt in 1873; the cathedrals; and some of the older markets.

Birmingham’s more recent developments include the National Exhibition Centre, and the Aston Science Park, housing high-technology industries.

Culturally, Birmingham belies its reputation as a grimy industrial city—its library contains one of the world’s finest Shakespearean collections, and its art museum is noted for its pre-Raphaelite holdings. There also is a museum of science and industry.



Adam Woolfitt/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

City Chambers & George Square in Glasgow, Scotland

Glasgow

Glasgow is Scotland’s largest city and principal port. Situated in Lanarkshire on the River Clyde, one of the world’s chief commercial estuaries, it is a city of approximately 680,000 residents. Its many industrial companies include those for engineering, printing, chemicals, and aeronautical engines. In recent years, it also has developed as a conference site.

Glasgow was founded late in the sixth century by St. Kentigern Calso (also known as St. Mungo). It became an ecclesiastical center and seat of learning in the Middle Ages. The city grew as a port and commercial hub in the 18th and 19th centuries with the American cotton and tobacco trade. Perhaps because of its heavy concentration of industry, it is now blighted by some of the worst slums in Europe, although an urban renewal effort begun in the 1950s has had some ameliorating effect.

Glasgow’s sights include St. Mungo’s Cathedral (13th-century Gothic), the Institute of Fine Arts, the Burrell Collection Museum, the renowned University of Glasgow (founded in 1451), the University of Strathclyde (1964), and Glasgow Green, the oldest park in the city.

The Scottish National Orchestra makes its home here, as do the Scottish Opera and the Scottish Ballet. In 1990 Glasgow was designated as a “European city of culture.”

Liverpool

Liverpool, in Lancashire, near the mouth of the Mersey River, is England’s major port for Atlantic commerce, and was once one of the great trading centers of the world. Colonized by Norsemen in the latter part of the eighth century, it received its first charter in 1207, and soon became a dispatch point for shipping men to and from Ireland, as evidenced by its now largely Irish population. Its first wet dock was completed in 1705; the city docks, on both sides of the river, today are over 38 miles long. Although known for its thriving industries, Liverpool has only recently recovered from the devastation and casualties suffered in the German bombing raids of 1940–1941. An economic downturn in the 1980s brought high unemployment to Liverpool. Recent business developments are attempting to make the city prosperous once more.

The city’s outstanding building is undoubtedly the Cathedral Church of Christ, begun in 1903 but not completed until 1980. A Gothic-

style structure, it is the largest church in the country and the fifth largest in the world. Among the many other important buildings are the classical St. George's Hall, Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral, Victoria Building of Liverpool University, and Philharmonic Hall. Liverpool had one of England's first public libraries, established in the mid-19th century; its Brown, Picton, and Hornby libraries now form the largest municipal central libraries in Europe.

Inhabitants of Liverpool (currently numbering 474,000) are known as "Liverpudlians." The city was once the home of the Beatles, the rock group which emerged in the early 1960s and dramatically influenced the world of modern music.

Leeds

Leeds, in the lower Aire valley of Yorkshire in northern England, is the informal "capital" of the nation's industrial district, serving as a junction of rail, water, and air transportation routes. Leeds has produced woolen goods since the 14th century, and currently is the center for wholesale trade in clothing. Other industries here include engineering and chemical firms, and manufacturers of locomotives, heavy machinery, farm implements, airplane parts, furniture, and leather goods.

Leeds was incorporated in 1626 and became a city in 1893. Its current population is 724,000.

Notable among the city's landmarks are the parish church of St. Peter's; 17th-century St. John's Church; the Cathedral of St. Anne; the nearby Cistercian house, Kirkstall Abbey, dating to 1152; Adel Church, a Norman structure; and the University of Leeds, founded in 1904. Another interesting building (acquired by Leeds in the 1920s) is Temple Newsam, the birthplace of Lord Darnley (1545–1567), second husband of Mary Queen of Scots and claimant to the English throne.



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Government buildings in Cardiff, Wales

Manchester

Manchester, the leading textile city of England and the publishing and printing center of the north, is located in Lancashire on the Irwell River, 30 miles northeast of Liverpool. Its population of 431,000 is engaged in industry and commerce.

Known as Mancunium by the Romans, who occupied the area in A.D. 78, Manchester's earliest charter dates to 1301; its charter of incorporation was granted in 1838, and it became a city 15 years later. A center of the industrial revolution, it was the site of the first application of steam to machinery, and of the first English passenger railroad.

The Peterloo Massacre, which occurred in Manchester in 1819 when a cavalry charge on a peaceful demonstration killed more than 600 people, gave a significant boost to the growing reform movement of the 19th century. The "Manchester School," a group of economists advocating free trade, was active in the city at that time.

The world-famous liberal newspaper, *The Manchester Guardian* (now called *The Guardian*), was founded here in 1821. The city is also known as the birthplace of British statesman David Lloyd George.

Among Manchester's principal places of interest are the 17th-cen-

tury Chetham Library; the Rylands Library; a 15th-century cathedral; and the university founded as Owens College in 1851 and which, since 1903, has been called Victoria University of Manchester. The city is the home of the Hallé Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Exchange Theatre, the Royal Northern College of Music, and several fine art galleries.

Cardiff

Cardiff, in Glamorganshire, is the capital city of Wales, the principal city which forms England's western peninsula. It is one of the world's greatest coal-shipping ports, and its numerous other industries include iron and steel works, car component manufacturing, paper mills, and fishing. Cardiff Castle was built on the site of a Roman fort in 1090, and the parish church of St. John dates to the 13th century.

Cardiff's name is *Caerdydd* in Welsh, which is one of the Celtic languages. Welsh is spoken by about 20% of the population (in addition to English), and both official and voluntary measures have been adopted in the past quarter-century to further revive its use. Support for bilingual education is reflected in the increasing number of students learning Welsh as part of their school curricula. Radio and television programs in Welsh are broadcast regularly. Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, spoke at length in the language during his investiture as prince of Wales in 1969.

Officially recognized as the capital of the principality, Cardiff is the chief urban center; the others are Swansea and Newport which, like Cardiff, are in the south.

There is a university here, the University of Wales; a National Folk Museum; the Cardiff College of Music and Drama; and a new conference and concert hall, St. David's. Cardiff has an approximate population of 300,000.

Much of Wales' cultural activity is centered in Cardiff, although other

cities and towns also are active in professional activities in the fields of literature, music, and drama. The Welsh National Opera, formed in 1945 and based in Cardiff, has gained international repute.

Sports and recreation are popular here. Association football and rugby have wide appeal; the National Stadium at Cardiff Arms Park is one of Britain's most modern rugby structure.

OTHER CITIES

ABERDEEN, a stronghold of royalist sentiment in the religious wars of the 17th century, is Scotland's third largest city, with a population of 219,000, and the principal European center for offshore oil exploration. It is also an ancient university town and was the Scottish royal residence from the 12th to the 14th century.

ARMAGH is the religious center of Northern Ireland, and diocesan headquarters for both the Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church. Many of its public buildings and Georgian townhouses are the work of Francis Johnston, who also left his mark on Dublin. Armagh, a leading intellectual center from the fifth through the ninth centuries, is today a quiet city of 15,000 residents.

BRISTOL is the capital of England's west country, and famous for the prominent role it played in American colonization. It was from Bristol that John and Sebastian Cabot sailed to America in 1497. The city also was the birthplace of William Penn. Bristol, now a city of 399,000, was a royal borough before the Norman Conquest. It is an important shipping center, known for its Clifton Suspension Bridge, a 702-foot span over the Avon River. The University of Bristol was founded in 1909.

COVENTRY is a manufacturing city in central England, located 18 miles southeast of Birmingham,

near the Avon River. Lady Godiva (1010–1067) made her legendary ride through the streets here. With her husband, the Earl of Mercia, she founded a monastery in the mid-11th century that brought wealth and trade to the city. Bicycle manufacture began in Coventry in 1868; it developed into a motor vehicle industry that is still an important employer. Other industries include engineering and machine-tool companies. The German Luftwaffe destroyed most of downtown Coventry in World War II air raids; rebuilding began immediately after the war. St. Michael's Cathedral, probably the city's most famous example of reconstruction, was designed by Sir Basil Spence. The old spire and nave have been left standing, next to the new cathedral. An important education center, Coventry is the site of the University of Warwick and Lanchester Polytechnic, among other institutions. The city's population is an estimated 303,000.

DOVER, the channel port on the Strait of Dover in southeastern England, was chief of the ancient Cinque Ports, which also included Hastings, Hythe, Romney, and Sandwich. Important since Roman times, it has been a stronghold in many eras of British history. During World War II, Dover was battered continually by German gunfire. Its current population is approximately 107,000.

LONDONDERRY, Ulster's well-preserved ancient city, dates from the year 546. It was subjected to attack many times during its tumultuous history, and withstood a 105-day siege by the forces of James II in 1688–89. The city, formerly called Derry, was a U.S. Navy base in World War II. It sits on a hill overlooking the Foyle estuary, about 95 miles northwest of Belfast and has a population of approximately 47,000.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, in Northumberland, is an important trade and coal-shipping center on the River Tyne. It stands on the site of the Roman military encampment

of Pons Aelii, on Hadrian's Wall. Traces of the town walls and towers, attributed to Edward I (1271–1307), still stand. King's College, located in this city of 284,000, is affiliated with the University of Durham. The people of Newcastle-upon-Tyne are referred to as "Geordies"—some say because of the support given to George I and George II in the 18th century, but more probably a nickname derived from the "geordie" safety lamp designed for local miners by George Stephenson.

NEWRY (in Irish, An Tlúr) is the seat of Newry and Mourne District, in Northern Ireland. It lies on the River Clanrye, near Carlingford Lough, about 30 miles southwest of Belfast. The first Protestant church in Ireland, St. Patrick's (1578), was built here. According to legend, St. Patrick planted the original yew tree—symbol of immortality—in the region. Newry grew around a Cistercian abbey begun by St. Malachy (1094–1148) about 1144. It was frequently attacked from the 13th through the 17th centuries, because of its vulnerable position between the hills. Industries in Newry include linen and cotton spinning and weaving, waterproof clothing manufacture, and granite quarrying. Newry's population is close to 29,000.

NOTTINGHAM, with an estimated population of 282,000, is one of England's primary route centers. Situated about 100 miles northwest of London, it is also a major cultural hub of the central region. Two prominent theaters here include the Theatre Royal (1865), and the Playhouse (1963). The poet Byron (1788–1824), and the writer D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930) are among the literary figures associated with the city. The legend of Robin Hood is commemorated in Nottingham by a statue on Castle Green. Industries in Nottingham include pharmaceutical, tobacco, and bicycle manufacturing. Most employment is in the service sector. The Anglo-Saxons settled the region in the sixth century, naming it Snotingaham, meaning the "ham," or village, of Snot's people. The site of three par-



Buckingham Palace in London

Courtesy of Mira Bossowska

liaments between 1330 and 1337, it was also in Nottingham that Charles I (1660–1649) raised his standard in 1642, starting the English civil war.

PLYMOUTH houses the British Navy's important Davenport Dockyard. With some 256,000 residents the city is situated 190 miles southwest of London, near Plymouth Sound. Long a vital port city, Plymouth was the embarkation point for the fleet that devastated the Spanish Armada in 1588. Sir Walter Raleigh (1552–1618) sailed from here to colonize Virginia. The dockyards, dating from 1690, provide the Royal Navy with barracks, an engineering college, and a hospital. Plymouth withstood extensive damage in World War II; reconstruction was completed by 1962. Today, the city boasts noted commercial, shopping, and civic centers.

PORTSMOUTH, the birthplace of Charles Dickens, is situated in Hampshire, southern England. It is an important naval base whose dockyards were established in 1494, and also is a noted seaside resort. In 1940, the city suffered extensive German bombing. George Meredith (1828–1909), English writer and critic, is another of Portsmouth's

famous sons. Its current population is 189,000.

ST. ANDREWS is a noted North Sea golfing resort town in the Fife region of eastern Scotland. It is the place where Scottish kings were crowned, and whose renowned university is the oldest in Scotland (1411). St. Andrews was Scotland's ecclesiastical capital until the Reformation. Its population is about 16,000.

SHEFFIELD is the center of England's cutlery industry, and is located 68 miles northeast of Birmingham in the South Yorkshire region. This industrial city of some 530,000 residents also manufactures steel, chemicals, and paints. Cutlery production began here in the early 18th century, with the steel industry starting about one hundred years later. The University of Sheffield dates to 1905.

SOUTHAMPTON, a chief shipping center for passenger and merchant vessels, lies on an estuary of the Test River in the southern English county of Hampshire. Roman and Saxon settlements once flourished on the site of the city. In 1620, the Pilgrims embarked from Southampton on their voyage to America; a

Mayflower Memorial is erected within the city walls. The current population is roughly 212,000.

SWANSEA (in Welsh, Abertawe), located on Bristol Channel, is about 30 miles northwest of Cardiff, Wales. This city of 189,000 residents is the birthplace of the poet Dylan Thomas (1914–1953), who saluted the area in his writings. Swansea grew from a market town to an industrial center in the early 1700s; the economy still includes industries such as nearby lead/zinc and nickel works. Oil refining was introduced here in 1921. The city attracts customers from all of southwest Wales to its shopping and service facilities. Tourists come to Swansea for its beaches along Swansea Bay and the Gower Coast.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The islands comprising the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (U.K.) lie off the northwest coast of the European Continent. The English Channel, the Straits of Dover, and the North Sea separate the islands from the Continent. At the closest point, they are only 17.8 miles from the French coast. The capital city of London is in the southeast and lies on nearly the same latitude as Winnipeg, Canada. The U.K. has a total land area of 94,217 square miles, roughly the size of Oregon.

The British Isles have a complex geology with a rich variety of scenery and impressive contrasts in topography. Highland Britain contains the principal mountain ranges, which vary from 4,000 to 5,000 feet and occupy most of the north and west of the country. Lowland Britain, almost entirely composed of low, rolling hills and flatlands, lies to the southeast.

Prevailing southwesterly winds make Britain's climate temperate and equable year round. Average daily temperatures are 40°F in winter and 60°F in summer. Extreme temperatures are rare, but changeable weather patterns cause wide temperature ranges on any given day. Humidity in summer ranges from 50 to 80%. Average annual rainfall is 30–50 inches, usually distributed evenly throughout the year. Persistent cloud cover limits sunshine to an average of about 6–7 hours a day in summer and 1–2 hours a day in winter.

Population

The estimated population of the U.K. in 2000 was 59.8 million. In addition to the ethnic groups indigenous to the British Isles, the past few decades have seen the arrival of large numbers of Indians, Pakistanis, and West Indians. Britain's population density is about 246 persons a square kilometer, with England being the most densely populated at 383 persons a square kilometer and Scotland the least populated at 65 persons a square kilometer. Britain's population is largely urban and suburban.

Britain is a cultural melting pot. In its early history, Britain was subjected to many invasions and migrations from Scandinavia and the Continent. The Romans occupied Britain for several centuries. The Normans, the last of a long succession of invaders, conquered England in 1066. Under the Normans, the pre-Celtic, Celtic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and Norse influences were blended into the Briton of today.

Celtic languages still persist in Northern Ireland and Wales, and, to a lesser degree, in Scotland. But, English, derived from Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French, has long been the predominant language.

Religious freedom is guaranteed in the U.K. There are two official state churches: the Church of England and the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland. The Church of England, established during the 16th-century

Reformation, is the major religious denomination. Other major denominations include Baptist, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Methodist, Moslem, Roman Catholic, Sikh, and Unitarian.

Public Institutions

The U.K. is a Parliamentary state with a constitutional monarchy. The state's origins and traditions are found in each of its four component parts: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. England was first united under a Saxon king in the ninth century. Wales eventually became part of that kingdom, and Ireland joined it before the end of the 13th century. In 1603, James I of England, who also ruled as James VI of Scotland, united the English and Scottish dynasties. In 1707, the Treaty for the Union of England and Scotland provided that the two countries "should be forever united into one kingdom." One Parliament (the Parliament of Great Britain) served as the supreme authority in both countries. In 1801, the Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland (joining the Irish Parliament with the Parliament of Great Britain) established the present-day U.K. In 1922, however, the 26 counties of southern Ireland became a self-governing, independent entity—The Republic of Ireland, or Eire. Meanwhile, the Government of Ireland Act in 1920 enacted a Constitution for Northern Ireland that preserved the supreme authority of the U.K. Parliament and provided Northern Ireland with limited authority to deal with domestic "transferred" affairs. These arrangements remained in force until 1972 when, following several years of political instability and violence in Northern Ireland, a period of direct rule was introduced.

In July 1974, the Northern Ireland Act was introduced. It provides that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is to be responsible to the U.K. Parliament for delegated services. Responsibility for the administration of Northern Ireland departments rests temporarily with Ministers in the Northern Ireland

Office. Although one state, the U.K. has adopted flexible methods of government. England, Wales, and Scotland have different legal, judicial, and educational systems. For most domestic matters they have different government departments. In Scotland, these departments are headquartered in Edinburgh and grouped under the Secretary of State for Scotland, a member of the British Cabinet. To a large degree, the administration of Welsh affairs is delegated to the Welsh Office under the Secretary of State for Wales, who also holds Cabinet rank.

The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (which are Crown dependencies and not part of the U.K.) have their own legislative assemblies, systems of local administration and law, and courts. Nonetheless, they maintain a special relationship with the U.K. because of their proximity and historical connections with the Crown. The U.K. Government is responsible for their defense and international relations.

The U.K. Constitution is formed by statute, by common law, and by precepts and practices known as conventions. These have never been codified and are not directly enforceable in a court of law but have a binding force as rules of the Constitution. The Constitution is not contained in any document and can be altered by an Act of Parliament or by general agreement to vary, abolish, or create a convention. Therefore, it can readily adapt to changing political conditions and ideas.

The organs of Government established by the U.K. Constitution are readily distinguishable, but their functions often intermingle and overlap. They are:

The Legislature, which comprises the Queen and Parliament (the Houses of Lords and Commons);

The Executive, which includes the Cabinet and other Ministers of the Crown who are responsible for initiating and directing national policy; government departments, which

are responsible for administration at the national level; local authorities, who administer services at the local level; and public corporations that may be responsible for nationalized industries and services; and

The Judiciary, which determines common law and interprets statutes. It is independent of both the Legislature and the Executive.

Arts, Science, and Education

Artistic and cultural activity in Britain ranges from the highest professional standards to a variety of amateur performances and events. The arts also represent a major sector of economic activity, contributing an estimated \$9 million a year to Britain's balance of payments.

Public and private art galleries offer a tremendous selection of Old World masters and contemporary artists. Festivals, such as the Edinburgh International Festival, attract world attention and participation. Devotion to the arts is rooted in the U.K.'s rich cultural heritage. This devotion has led to maintenance of many museums, concert halls, and theaters that provide a wide variety of classical and popular works.

In the last four decades, popular interest in the arts has increased steadily. This development is reflected in the profusion of amateur dramatic and musical societies, the growth in book and record sales, and the large attendance figures at major art exhibitions.

Scientific and technological innovation is aggressively pursued by various government departments, universities, learned societies (six of world renown), professional institutions, public and private councils, industry, and international scientific exchanges.

The government spends up to 2.7 billion pounds a year on civil research and development, distributing these moneys through five research councils and several uni-

versities. A long-term government goal is to encourage private industry to support more research, particularly in projects nearly ready for commercial use. Public corporations, independent trusts, and foundations and learned societies also support research projects.

Parents in Britain are required by law to see that their children receive efficient, full-time education, at school or elsewhere, between the ages of 5 and 16. Almost 93% attend public schools.

The higher education system in the U.K. comprises 83 universities. These include the Open Universities that were established to provide higher education for students with or without formal qualifications for obtaining a university degree. Higher education grew rapidly in the 1970s. Today, one in four young people begins university and college education.

Commerce and Industry

Although small in land area and accounting for just over 1% of the world's population, the United Kingdom has the fourth largest economy in the industrialized world and serves as one of the world's leading trading partners. About 60% of Britain's trade is with other member countries of the European Union (EU), to which the U.K. has belonged since 1973. Britain's two-way trade in goods and services with the U.S. amounted to \$82.5 billion in 1993. The United States and the U.K. are also the largest foreign investors in each other's country. By the end of 2000, the U.S. had invested more than \$230 billion in the U.K.

In the U.K., production is heavily oriented toward the service sectors, just as in the U.S. It can be broadly subdivided as follows: primary (consisting of agriculture and energy), 9%; secondary (manufacturing and construction), 30%; and tertiary (service industries, including government), 61%. Energy had been

the fastest growing sector in the economy as the North Sea oil-fields were under development. However, North Sea production has about peaked. Manufacturing, long in decline, has revived as economic growth has carried firms back into profitability. Nevertheless, manufacturing is clearly secondary to the expanding service industries, such as catering, hotels, and financial services.

Housing has also become increasingly important in the U.K., as more people have sought to purchase their own homes. Today, over 70% of British houses are owner occupied, while 25% are rented from the government.

Personal incomes in Britain have improved dramatically in recent years, although they still lag behind the U.S., Japan, and some other EU countries. Before the EU expanded from 12 to 15 members, based on equivalent purchasing power per capita, the living standards in the U.K. ranked seventh.

Transportation

Local

The U.K. offers comprehensive, modern rail, air, and sea transportation. Inland travel is quick and efficient by public and private transportation systems. British Rail passenger services are concentrated on the high-speed, intercity lines, and commuter service around large cities, especially London and the southeast. Motorail services carry both passengers and cars.

Subway service in London is fast and frequent but closes at midnight and is subject to delay, with even a little snow. The present system is comprehensive, but stretched to near its capacity. It offers easy transfer to British Rail and buses.

All major urban and suburban areas have bus service. Intracity buses are painted red; long-distance lines are green. Bus route maps are furnished free by government-operated bus lines. Carrier-owned buses

serve major air and sea terminals. Minibuses service some suburban areas.

Taxis cruise the streets of all major cities in large numbers. They are easy to find, except in rush hour or in the rain. Taxis are metered and charge a flat rate per mile; surcharges are paid for evening, weekend, and local holiday travel and for extra passengers. Many cab companies have telephone pickup services. Intracity trips average 5–9 pounds (tip is optional). Taxis may be found in taxi ranks (stands) in front of large hotels, or may be flagged down on the street when the yellow rooftop light is on.

In London, black London cabs pick up passengers on the streets, from taxi ranks, or can be called by phone. They are licensed, and, as each driver must pass an extensive test on London streets and important locations, they are very reliable. London cabs are metered. Unlicensed “minicabs” are also available in London, but they must be booked and are not allowed to “cruise” for fares on the streets. They are unmetered and passengers should agree to a charge before departure. Minicabs are usually less expensive than black cabs.

Belfast: Belfast offers travel by bus, train, and taxi. Public transportation is not too busy during rush hour, and the system operates regularly. Intracity transportation provides adequate, inexpensive service. The Ulsterbus service covers all Northern Ireland outside Belfast, and their express coaches also serve the Irish Republic.

Edinburgh: Scotland has an excellent network of roads and motorways for driving between the cities or out into the countryside. In some remote areas of the Highlands only single-lane roads exist. They can be extremely hazardous and virtually impassable during the winter months. Caution is necessary in driving through areas where grazing sheep may attempt to cross the road. Most people find a car desirable for sight-seeing, shopping, and

business. But in the city centers, due to heavy traffic and parking problems, it is often desirable to use public transportation.

Both high-grade and low-grade petrol (gas) can be purchased at numerous filling stations. Unleaded petrol is becoming more readily available throughout Scotland in the larger cities and towns. Many gas stations can be closed on Sundays.

Regional

London is a hub of international travel, with air and sea routes to nearly all corners of the globe. Britain is served by ferry and hovercraft which link it to the Continent’s road and rail system. The Channel Tunnel (Chunnel) officially opened in May 1994 and began full transportation service of passengers, cars, and commercial lorries via high-speed rail to France during 1995.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh has frequent airline, rail, and bus services to other parts of Scotland and the U.K. Regular airline shuttle service from Edinburgh’s Turnhouse Airport to Heathrow and Gatwick Airports in London allows the traveler to make connecting flights to nearly any part of the world. Daily flights are scheduled from Turnhouse direct to Dublin and the Continent. Bus service to major British cities is frequent, reasonably fast, and inexpensive. Trains provide fast, more comfortable service, and include convenient night-sleeper service between Edinburgh and London.

Hovercraft and other car and passenger ferries operate regularly to and from the European Continent.

Belfast: Belfast has good bus and train service to most parts of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. There is convenient ferry service to Stranraer in Scotland as well as ferries to the Isle of Man and to Liverpool. Belfast has two airports. The Belfast International Airport (Aldergrove—18 miles from the center of Belfast) has numerous daily London-Belfast flights, and regular service to other British and interna-

tional destinations. The Belfast Harbor Airport (4 miles from city center) has services to London, other airports in Great Britain, and some flights to other cities in Europe.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

A direct-dial telephone system serves London and most of the U.K. The U.S. and Western Europe can be reached by direct dialing. Charges for home telephones and domestic and international calls are significantly more expensive than in the U.S.

Internal and international telegraph service is available and efficient.

Belfast local- and long-distance telephone service is good. Telegraph is available through several commercial companies. Edinburgh telephone and telegraph services are excellent. Telephone service is direct dial. It links Edinburgh to all cities in the U.K., most of Western Europe, and to the U.S.

Radio and TV

Television is broadcast through the state-owned British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)—channels 1 and 2—and the commercially financed Independent Television Network (ITN)—channels 3 and 4. A fifth channel is in the discussion stages. Both BBC and ITN operate nationwide, with regional variations. All four channels operate in the UHF range.

Network programming is standard throughout the country in both content and timing. Considerable program flexibility is provided to allow for locally produced shows and news reports between network programs.

Cable and/or satellite TV are also available in many parts of London. There are many stations to choose from; they are on the air 24 hours daily and include 3 movie channels, 3 sports channels, CNN, SKY, and

several family- and children-oriented channels.

Radio programming on AM, FM, and SW bands is excellent. BBC radio provides listeners with five national channels, including a new, 24-hour news channel. Broadcasts present all types of music, news, commentary, adult education programs, and works of artistic and intellectual interest. Independent commercial stations provide general entertainment and news. Broadcasts from Europe can also be received clearly. Reception of the Armed Forces Network broadcasts on radio and TV is possible.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The British press caters to a wide variety of interests and political views. Ten morning papers—*The Times*, *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Daily Mirror*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, *Sun*, *Daily Star*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Independent*—are national. The total average daily circulation exceeds 2 million. Eight national Sunday papers—*Sunday Times*, *Mail on Sunday*, *News of the World*, *The Observer*, *The Sunday People*, *Sunday Express*, *Sunday Mirror*, and *The Sunday Telegraph*—have a total average weekly circulation of more than 3 million copies.

The news media is served by three large British news agencies—Reuters, the Press Association, and the Exchange Telegraph Company. UPI and AP have affiliates in London, as do most major U.S. newspapers. Many suburban daily papers contain news of local interest.

Britain has more than 4,500 periodicals and several prominent journals of opinion. Literary and political journals and those specializing in international and commonwealth affairs are published monthly or quarterly.

Publication of trade, technical, business, scientific, and professional journals has become a major aspect of the British publishing industry. These journals cover hundreds of

subjects, many in great depth. In addition to circulating in Britain, these publications enjoy international distribution. They are an important medium for selling British goods overseas.

Periodicals published in England circulate throughout the U.K. Scotland has three monthly illustrated periodicals (*Scottish Field*, *Scotland's Magazine*, *Scot's Magazine*), a weekly paper devoted to farming interests (*Scottish Farmer*), several literary journals (the most famous is probably *Blackwood's*), and many popular magazines. In Northern Ireland, weekly, monthly, and quarterly publications cover farming, the linen industry, building, motor-ing, politics, and social work.

European editions of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *International Herald Tribune* are readily available at newsstands and book-shops. A large number of bookshops in London carry American magazines such as *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Saturday Review*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and the *New Yorker*.

Britain is served by a complete network of public libraries. About half the libraries lend a variety of phonograph records, and a growing number are adding loan collections of artworks, either original or reproduction. Nearly all libraries have children's departments and most also act as centers for film showings, adult education classes, lectures, exhibitions, drama groups, recitals, and children's story hours. They are a very useful resource for information on the neighborhood they serve.

Books of all types are available in bookshops and department stores.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The U.K. has excellent medical facilities in all major cities. London, Belfast, and Edinburgh have medical training centers offering the full range of services. All U.K. residents

are entitled to medical care under the National Health Service (NHS). Medical practitioners are allowed to maintain private (fee-for-service) practices in addition to NHS practices, and many do so. A relationship may be established with a local physician as a private patient in much the same manner as in the U.S. Many British physicians accept payment under U.S. health insurance plans.

Belfast offers a high standard of medical care, including an emergency "cardiac ambulance" staffed by coronary specialists. Specialists are available at the Royal Victoria Hospital, which is the major teaching facility of Queen's University Medical School, the City Hospital, the Ulster Clinic (mainly private care), and smaller hospitals scattered across Northern Ireland.

Edinburgh has long been famous for its medical schools, and the quality of local facilities is uniformly excellent.

Community Health

Living conditions in the U.K. are generally excellent; no major health hazards exist. Community sanitation standards are high and community environmental services are superior. Colds and other upper respiratory infections are common, but no more so than in comparable climates in the U.S.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport is required. Tourists are not obliged to obtain a visa for stays of up to six months in the United Kingdom or to enter Gibraltar. Those wishing to remain longer than one month in Gibraltar should regularize their stay with Gibraltar immigration authorities.

Further information on entry requirements may be obtained from the British Embassy at 3100 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington,

DC 20008; tel.: (202) 588-7800. Inquiries may also be directed to British Consulates in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. The web site of the British Embassy in the United States is <http://www.britainusa.com/consular/embassy/embassy.asp>.

British customs authorities may strictly enforce regulations regarding the import or export of certain items, including material deemed likely to incite racial hatred, firearms and personal defense items such as mace or knives. It is advisable to contact the British Embassy in Washington or one of the United Kingdom's consulates in the U.S. for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Air travelers to and from the United Kingdom should be aware that penalties against alcohol-related and other in-flight crimes ("air rage") are stiff and are being enforced with prison sentences.

Americans living in or visiting the United Kingdom may register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in London, or at the U.S. Consulates General in Edinburgh or Belfast and obtain updated information on travel and security within the United Kingdom.

The U.S. Embassy is located at 24 Grosvenor Square, London W1A 1AE; Telephone: in country 0207-499-9000, from the U.S. 011-44-207-499-9000 (24 hours); Consular Section fax: in country 0207-495-5012; from the U.S. 011-44-207-495-5012. The embassy web site is <http://www.usembassy.org.uk>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh, Scotland, is located at 3 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BW; Telephone: in country 0131-556-8315, from the U.S. 011-44-131-556-8315. After hours: in country 0131-260-6495, from the U.S. 011-44-131-260-6495. Fax: in country 0131-557-6023; from the U.S. 011-44-131-557-6023. The web site is

<http://www.usembassy.org.uk/scotland>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Belfast, Northern Ireland, is located at 14 Queen Street, Belfast BT1 6EQ; Telephone: in country 01232-328-239; from the U.S. 011-44-1232-328-239. After hours: in country 01232-241-279, from the U.S. 011-44-1232-661-629. Fax: in country 01232-248-482, from the U.S. 011-44-1232-248-482.

There is no U.S. consular representation in Gibraltar. Citizen services questions should be directed to the U.S. Embassy in London. Passport questions can be directed to the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, located at Serrano 75/Madrid, Spain; telephone (34)(91) 587-2200, and fax (34)(91) 587-2303.

Pets

There is a concerted effort on the part of the U.K. Government to prevent the entry of rabies into the U.K. All dogs, cats, and other mammals entering Britain must undergo 6 calendar months' quarantine in government-approved kennels. No exceptions are made to this rule. If you desire to import a pet, write 6-10 weeks before departure to:

Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
Hook Rise South
Tolworth
Surrey KT6 7HF

Application forms will be sent by return mail.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The pound is divided into 100 pence (pennies). All transactions are made by using coins in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 pence, and one pound, and bills in denominations of 5, 10, 20, and 50 pounds.

The British pound is on a floating rate of exchange against the U.S. dollar. It currently falls in the range of £.684=\$1.00 (May 2002).

The British use the avoirdupois weight system. Most items are mea-

sured in ounces and pounds. Human weight, however, is expressed in stones (1 stone= 14 lbs.). Many food items are imported from other EU countries, so most grocery stores mark items in both the metric and the avoirdupois systems. The imperial gallon is one-fifth larger than the American gallon. Road distance and speed are measured in miles, not in kilometers.

No monetary controls are imposed for importation or exportation of British or foreign currencies.

Travelers checks are widely accepted throughout Great Britain. Credit cards are widely used in Great Britain and are readily available from several sources. Most large stores and restaurants accept major credit cards.

U.S. ATM bank cards connected to major systems, such as Plus or Cirrus, are accepted by U.K. bank cash machines for pounds at a favorable exchange rate.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

England & Wales

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar. 1 St. David's Day
 (Wales)
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 Apr. 1 April Fool's Day
 Apr. 21 Queen's
 Birthday
 Apr. 23 St. George's Day
 (England)
 May
 (1st Monday) May Day*
 May
 (4th Monday) Spring Bank
 Holiday*
 Aug.
 (4th Monday) Summer Bank
 Holiday*
 Oct. 31 Halloween
 Nov. 5 Guy Fawkes
 Day
 Nov.
 (Sun closest to

Nov. 11) Remembrance
 Day*
 Nov. 11 Armistice Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 Boxing Day

Northern Ireland

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar. 17 St. Patrick's Day
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter
 Tuesday*
 May
 (1st Monday) May Day*
 May
 (4th Monday) Spring Bank
 Holiday
 July
 (2nd Friday) Orangemen's
 Day
 Aug.
 (4th Monday) Summer Bank
 Holiday
 Oct. 31 Halloween
 Nov.
 (Sun closest to
 Nov. 11) Remembrance
 Day*
 Nov. 11 Armistice Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 Boxing Day

Scotland

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Jan. 2 Bank Holiday
 Jan. 25 Burn's Night
 (birth of Robert
 Burns)
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
 May
 (1st Monday) May Day*
 May
 (3rd Monday) Victoria Day*
 Aug.
 (1st Monday) Summer Bank*
 Holiday
 Sept.
 (3rd Monday) Autumn
 Holiday*
 Nov.
 (Sun closest to
 Nov. 11) Remembrance
 Day*
 Nov. 11 Armistice Day
 Nov. 30 St. Andrew's
 Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas

Dec. 26 Boxing Day
 *variable

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CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

**Volume 4:
Asia, the Pacific, and
the Asiatic Middle East**

**Cumulative Index
Volumes 1-4**



CITIES OF THE WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

CITIES OF THE WORLD

A Compilation of Current Information
on Cultural, Geographic, and
Political Conditions in the Countries
and Cities of Six Continents, Based on
the Department of State's
"Post Reports"

In Four Volumes

**Volume 4:
Asia, the Pacific, and
the Asiatic Middle East**

Cumulative Index Volumes 1-4





CITIES OF THE WORLD SIXTH EDITION

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PREFACE

Cities of the World represents a compilation of government reports and original research on the social, cultural, political, and industrial aspects of the nations and cities of the world. Most of the country profiles included here are based on official personnel briefings issued as *Post Reports* by the U.S. Department of State. The *Post Reports* are designed to acquaint embassy personnel with life in the host country. Consequently, the reports concentrate on cities in which the U.S. government has embassies or consulates. To increase coverage of other important cities, the editors have added information on a large number of cities—31 of which are new to this edition—not reported on by the Department of State.

Since the fifth edition of *Cities of the World*, the Department of State has issued 62 new or revised *Post Reports*, all of which have been incorporated into this sixth edition. Selected data in *Post Reports* not revised by the Department of State since the last edition of *Cities of the World* have been updated by the editors with revised statistics acquired through independent research. In addition, articles have been written on thirty-three countries for which no *Post Report* exists.

Readers familiar with the fourth edition of this publication will notice that with the fifth edition the page size was enlarged to accommodate more information. This sixth edition includes new photographs selected by the Gale editors. The photographs depict scenes found in a city and countryside and, in many cases, reveal the cultural flavor of the area as well. As in the prior edition, many chapters feature a map of that country's capital or major city, with a superimposed locator map indicating the nation's geographic location in relation to its regional neighbors.

Volumes in This Series

This series includes four volumes:

- Volume 1: Africa;
- Volume 2: The Western Hemisphere (exclusive of the United States);
- Volume 3: Europe and the Mediterranean Middle East;
- Volume 4: Asia, the Pacific, and the Asiatic Middle East.

In all, this set provides coverage of over 2,000 cities in 193 countries.

Format and Arrangement of Entries

Cities of the World is arranged alphabetically by country name. Its chapters are divided into two basic sections, Major Cities and Country Profile, each of these with several subdivisions. A Major City listing might comprise information on Education, Recreation, and Entertainment. Other Cities, smaller cities and towns which are designated as other than major, are discussed in brief paragraphs at the end of the Major City section. Country Profile sections are subdivided into: Geography and Climate; Population; Government; Arts, Science, Education; Commerce and Industry; Transportation; Communications; Health; Clothing and Services; Local Holidays; Recommended Reading; and Notes for Travelers. Thus, *Cities of the World* presents not only basic information, but also comprehensive data on local customs, political conditions, community services, and educational and commercial facilities.

Contents and Index

The Contents and Index in each volume provide easy access to these reports. Listed under each country in the Contents are the cities that appear in its Major Cities section, as well as listings for the Other Cities and Country Profile sections. A Cumulative Index, combining the four individual volumes is found at the end of each volume. The Index is arranged alphabetically by city name, including listings for both major and minor cities that are mentioned in each volume; as well as by country name with names of cities indented below.

Acknowledgments

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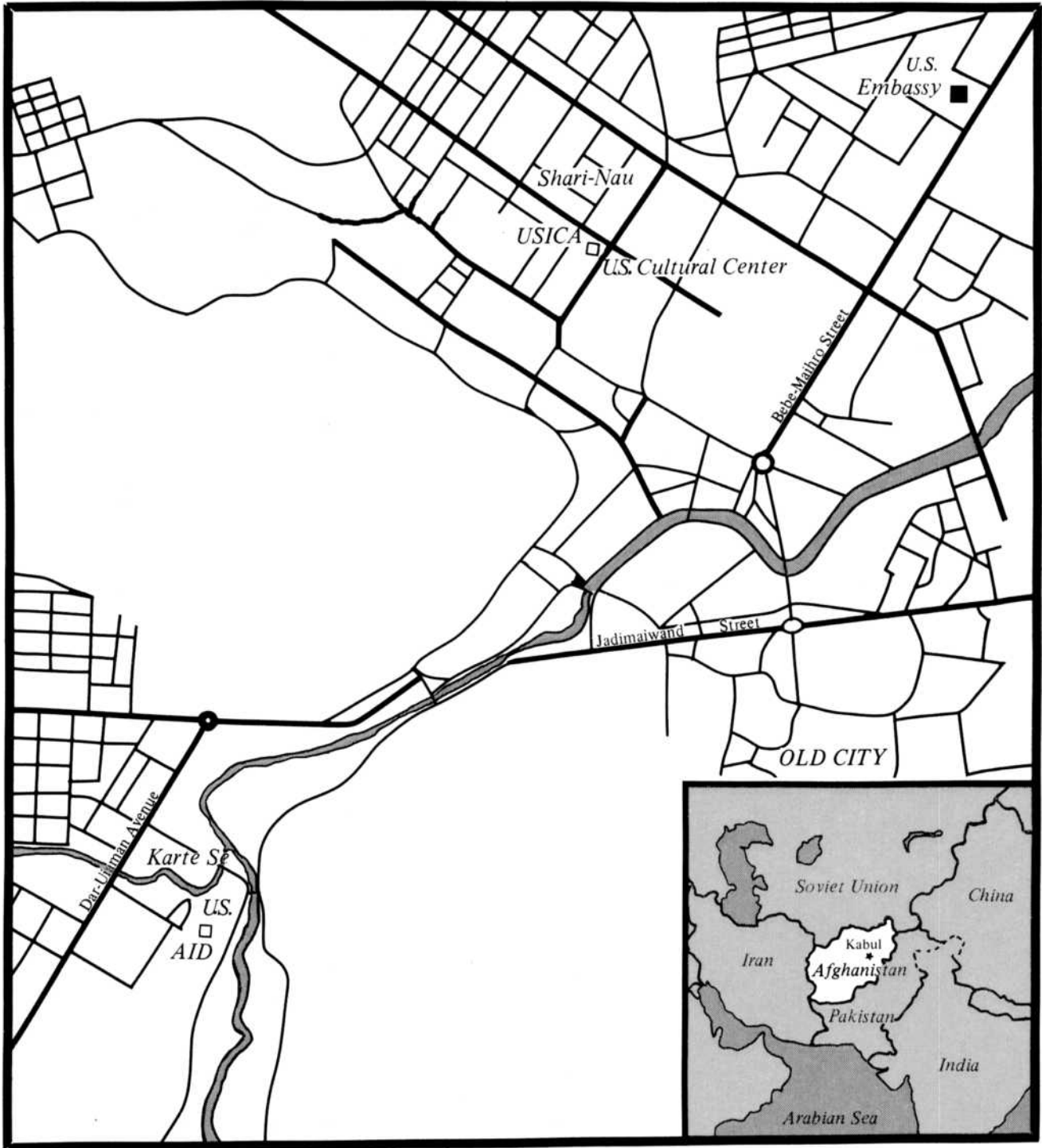
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The editors invite comments and suggestions concerning *Cities of the World*. Please write to: Editors, *Cities of the World*, The Gale Group, Inc., 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535; fax (248) 699-8074; or call toll-free (800) 877-4253.

CITIES OF THE WORLD

Volume 4:

**Asia, the Pacific, and
the Asiatic Middle East**



Kabul, Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Major City:

Kabul

Other Cities:

Bāghlān, Ghazni, Herāt, Jalālābād, Kandahār, Mazār-i-Sharīf

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Afghanistan. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

AFGHANISTAN, the landlocked country whose borders are touched by Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, China, Pakistan, and Iran, often has been called the crossroads of central Asia. It once formed part of the empires of Persia and of Alexander the Great. Throughout the centuries, it has been a base for forays into India, and has bowed to a succession of princes and petty chieftains struggling for control of its strategic trade and invasion routes.

Modern Afghanistan did not evolve until 1747, when principalities and fragmented provinces were consolidated into one kingdom by Ahmad Shah Durrani. All of the country's

successive rulers, until a Marxist coup in 1978, were from Durrani's tribe. Soviet military assistance to the new government eventually led to large-scale invasion of Afghanistan's capital city, but the regime failed to validate either Soviet conquest or authority in other parts of the nation. Soviet military occupation ended in February 1989 and Afghanistan endured a bloody civil war between the Afghan government and various factions of the fundamentalist Muslim guerrillas between 1992 and 1996. During the civil war, over 50,000 people lost their lives during the mujahidin infightings on Kabul's streets.

In 1995 and 1996, students from religious schools in the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan--the Taliban--spread throughout the country, proclaiming hostility to the West and establishing a reordering of society based upon a strict interpretation of Shari'a, or Islamic law.

After the September 11 attacks on the United States, carried out by members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda forces who were sheltered by the Taliban, the U.S.-U.K.-led coalition launched a military offensive on Kabul and major Afghan cities, toppling the Taliban regime. Afghan society and infrastructure,

already decimated after two decades of war, must be rebuilt.

MAJOR CITY

Kabul

Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, is situated on a high, barren plateau some 5,800 feet above sea level, and surrounded by rugged, treeless mountains. Commanding the main approach to the historic Khyber Pass between Afghanistan and what is now Pakistan, the city lies in the eastern section of the country, 140 miles from the Pakistan border. The Kabul River which winds through the city is, except for an interval in early spring, little more than a partially dry, but always polluted, stream.

The climate of the city is varied. During winter, temperatures sometimes fall below 0°F and, in January and February, snowfalls can be heavy. In summer, daytime temperatures often soar to 100°F, but fall rapidly after sunset.

Kabul is in a low-rainfall area, and almost all precipitation occurs between November and May. The remaining months are virtually dry. Strong afternoon winds, accompa-



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Aerial view of Kabul, Afghanistan

nied by dust storms, occur frequently in summer. Severe earthquakes are rare, but tremors are common. In March 2002, however, an earthquake in the northern Baghlan province (about 100 miles north of Kabul), killed thousands and was felt as far east as Pakistan.

Kabul's history can be traced to the seventh century, although its importance was long obscured by the ancient cities of Ghazni and Herāt. It came to prominence early in the 16th century as the capital of the Mogul kingdom. The tomb of Babur the Great, founder of the Mogul empire in India (1482–1530), is in Kabul, in a beautiful garden near Noon Gun Hill.

There are old city walls in Kabul, the mausoleum of Timor Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah Durrani who moved the capital of Afghanistan from Kandahar to Kabul, and the Arg or palace built to operate the Bala Hissar citadel, or seat of the rulers of Afghanistan.

Great Britain's desire to control the routes to India precipitated the first of the Anglo-Afghan Wars, and it was at Kabul that British forces were ambushed and nearly annihilated. The city was occupied again in 1879 during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, a struggle that

established Afghanistan's borders with British India and Russia. After 1940, Kabul grew as an industrial center.

Afghanistan's capital city is the site of Kabul University (founded in 1932), which was closed in 1992 due to war. The Taliban reopened it in 1995, but women were banned. The medical school was the only institution to make an exception to the ban on women: only female doctors could treat female patients. With the defeat of the Taliban, 4,000 students have taken entrance exams for a new semester, and 500 of them are women. There have been donations of books from abroad.

There are several other schools in the city, including Kabul Polytechnic Institute, which has been in operation since 1951. The Institute of Arabic and Religious Studies has headquarters here, and maintains satellite centers in other cities throughout the country. The Afghanistan Academy of Sciences (1979) also is located in Kabul, as are several research institutes and a museum. As of June 2002, it is unknown to what extent these institutions are operational.

As a result of war with the Soviet Union, civil war, the destruction wrought by the Taliban, and the

2001-2002 bombing campaign, the infrastructure of Kabul largely has been destroyed, including roads, the telephone system, electricity, and water sanitation. However, international relief organizations are engaged in reconstruction efforts.

The people of Kabul have begun to sift through the rubble of destroyed buildings, selecting usable bricks and building materials for the construction of new schools and other facilities. It is estimated that as many as 60 percent of Kabul's buildings are damaged or destroyed. Gravel from them is being used to patch roads.

Signs of a rejuvenated Kabul were beginning to emerge in 2002. Stylish haircuts are now available for around \$3.50, men are wearing hats instead of turbans, and men are shaving, forbidden under the Taliban. New restaurants have opened, and there are stalls selling such varied items as fruit, snacks, balloons, and laptop computers.

Rents are high, and items on the black market are very expensive--scotch whiskey sells for around \$100 a bottle, British soccer jerseys sell for \$50 each, and pornography is both available and expensive.

However, the increase in market activity has also brought theft, assaults, and murder, which are now more prevalent than under the Taliban.

Recreation and Entertainment

Buzkashi (like rugby on horseback), is the national sport. In *buzkashi*, riders struggle for possession of a goat, calf, or sheep carcass, and scores are counted when one of the teams is able to fling the animal's body into a designated circle on the field. At the end of March 2002, the first movie made in Afghanistan since the Taliban came to power was shown in Mazari-i-Sharif: *Chapan-daz* is an Afghan production, shot, edited, and released in the country, featuring the sport of *buzkashi*. Indian movies are also popular.

Other pastimes that have returned in 2002 are dog fighting, camel fighting, motorcycle stunts, and karaoke. Soccer began to be played in Kabul's sports stadium in December 2001, a venue that had previously been used for executions.

Such western novelties and food items as bubble-gum, soda, cookies, and juices have been arriving from Iran, Uzbekistan, China, Russia, Egypt, Turkey, and India.

OTHER CITIES

BĀGHLĀN is located in northern Afghanistan, about 125 miles north of the capital. The city, capital of Bāghlān Province, was a producer of cotton and beet sugar. The population for Bāghlān was estimated at 117,700 in 2002.

In December 2001, the Northern Alliance forced Sayed Jaffar, a local warlord, from power in Baghlan province.

In March 2002, an earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale struck Baghlan, killing at least 1,800 and injuring thousands. Baghlan's rich agricultural region was also the victim of a plague of locusts in the spring of 2002.

Located 92 miles southwest of Kabul, **GHAZNI** is the capital of the province with the same name. It was a center for trading wool, fruit, and corn, and was famous for its embroidered sheepskin coats. The city's most famous ruler was Mahmud of Ghazni who conquered regions in the area and made Ghazni the capital of a kingdom extending from the Tigris to the Ganges rivers. The kingdom was overthrown in 1173 by Mohammed of Ghor. Two impressive ancient minarets jut into the sky in Ghazni. The population was estimated at 39,000 in 2002.

In March 2002, Taliban and al-Qaeda rebels remained in Ghazni province. Dueling factions of Tajiks, Hazaras and Pashtuns are refusing to surrender their weapons.

In May 2002, a radio station went into operation in Ghazni, broadcasting from 6 to 8 pm at night. Two women have been hired to read the news and announcements, and listeners leave messages at the station requesting songs to be played. However, as of June 2002, there were no telephones and no electricity in the city.

A commercial center, best known for carpets, **HERĀT** is the capital of Herāt Province. The city is situated in the western part of Afghanistan, over 450 miles west of Kabul. It is known for magnificent huge earthworks and defense walls. There are also tombs, palaces, and mosques here. Herāt was once on the trade route from India to Persia, Mesopotamia, and Europe. It was severely damaged by the Mongols in 1221 and 1383; rebuilt, it prospered as an independent Afghan kingdom. Its population was estimated at 166,600 in 2002.

Thirty percent of the population left Herat during the 2001-2002 military campaign. Since it began to subside, one local warlord who seized a great deal of power in Herat is Ismail Khan, who courted hard-line conservatives in Iran. Iran is reconstructing the road from Herat to its border, while the United States is cleaning out the area's canals. Khan has appointed mullahs and archconservatives to high positions, and has opened an office for the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. His army numbers 50,000 to 60,000.

JALĀLĀBĀD (also spelled Jelalabad) is the capital of Nangarhār Province in eastern Afghanistan. It is situated 70 miles east of Kabul, on the route from Kabul via the Khyber Pass to Peshawar, Pakistan. The city, with a population that was estimated at 158,800 in 2002, was a trade center with sugar processing facilities and handicraft shops. There were large gardens and tree-lined avenues, as it served as a winter capital. Two festivals that were held were the Mushaira or Poet's festival devoted to Jalalabad's

orange blossoms, and Waisak, a religious festival.

Jalalabad has been in existence as a city since the second century BC, and Akbar, regarded as the greatest Mughal ruler of India, started the town in its modern form in the 1560s. It came under Afghan rule in 1834, and was later occupied by the British in the Anglo-Afghan wars.

Eleven km south of the city is Hada, a sacred spot of the Buddhist world, where pilgrims have come to worship at its many temples. These were maintained by monks and priests in large monasteries. It is said that the Buddha visited Hada.

Jalalabad is also a military center, with an airfield. The University of Nangarhar was opened here in 1963.

As of January 2002, the road from Kabul to Jalalabad was unsafe, as there have been robberies, car-jacking, thefts, and murders.

The capital of Kandahār province, **KANDAHĀR** is situated 300 miles southwest of Kabul, halfway between Kabul and Herat. It is the second largest city in the country with a population that was estimated at 339,200 in 2002. Kandahār was the site of the successful Afghan uprising against Persia between 1706 and 1708, and was the first capital of modern Afghanistan, founded by Ahmad Shah Durani in 1747. The most sacred shrine in Afghanistan is the Kaherqa Sharif shrine in Kandahar, which contains the cloak of the prophet Mohammad. Also, the Chel Zina monument is noted for its 40 stairs leading to a chamber carved into rock, which was built by Babur, the founder of the Moghul empire. Other shrines in the city include Haratji Baba, Baba Wali, and the bazar Charsuq, which is composed of four arcades.

Kandahar was the site of fierce fighting in 2001, and the Taliban only surrendered the city in December. It is estimated that 80 percent

of the population of southern Kandahar left in 2001.

Music, which had been banned under the rule of the Taliban, returned to Kandahar after the military campaign, as singers returned from exile in Pakistan. In the marketplace, cassette tapes are played at high volume, which are sold alongside radios, televisions, and video players. Pet birds, which were also banned under the Taliban, are now sold in the marketplace. During the rule of the Taliban, there were seven schools in Kandahar that enrolled 5,000 boys. As of March 2002, 137 co-ed schools have opened in the Kandahar district, and more than 30,000 children are enrolled, one-fourth of them girls.

Because Kandahar is almost entirely Pashtun, it does not suffer from the ethnic fighting in northern Afghanistan that has emerged in 2002.

Kandahar International Airport was established as the American base in the war. It is surrounded by mine fields and and barbed wire. Taliban and al-Qaeda suspects are kept there in a high-security area. There are 3,500 military personnel based at the airport.

Located in northern Afghanistan, **MAZĀR-I-SHARĪF** is the capital of Balth Province, 190 miles northwest of Kabul. The population here was estimated at 239,800 in 2002. The city was named for the shrine of the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Mohammad, Hazarate Ali, who was assassinated in 661 and buried near Baghdad. Legend has it that his followers feared that his body would be desecrated, so they put his remains on the back of a white camel which wandered until it fell and died. The body was buried on this spot, and knowledge of its existence remained unknown until 1136, when Seljuk Sultan Sanjar ordered a shrine to be built upon the spot. Genghis Khan destroyed the building, and the grave remained unmarked until 1481. None of the 15th-century decoration remains, but efforts have been made to

restore the building's beauty. Mazar-i-Sharif means "The Noble Grave."

In March 2002, Mazar-i-Sharif was one of the sites of New Year celebrations at the beginning of spring (Nowroz), the most elaborately celebrated festival in Afghanistan. The city was a major trading center famous for Turkman carpets, high-quality cotton, and lambskins.

Since the Taliban fled the city, the airport has opened, and its runway has been repaired. Girls are attending classes. Medical equipment has been flown in for a new hospital run by Jordanian soldiers, which has been treating thousands of patients. A new police force of 600 members was drawn up.

However, a wave of revenge attacks by ethnic Hazara and Uzbek soldiers was taking place in early 2002, targeting Pashtuns. The attacks included robbery, rape, and murder. The Taliban, who were dominated by Pashtuns, persecuted Hazara civilians and their Shi'a religion. As of April 2002, there were 104 illegal checkpoints in Mazar-i-Sharif, manned by soldiers who were supposed to be replaced by civilian police. The two dominant warlords in Mazar-i-Sharif who are struggling for control of the city are General Abduraashid Dostum, an Uzbek commander, and Attah Mohammad, a Tajik veteran of the Northern Alliance.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Afghanistan, a landlocked country of about 260,000 square miles in area (about the size of Texas), is bounded on the north by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan of the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.); on the east and south by Pakistan; on the west by Iran; and on the extreme northeast by

China. Its topography consists of irrigated land, small but fertile river valleys, deep gorges, deserts, high plateaus, and snow-covered mountains. The eastern portion of the country is divided by the towering mountain ranges of the Hindu Kush and Pamirs, with peaks rising above 24,000 feet.

The principal rivers drain to the southwest into the Helmand and Arghandab valleys and then into a desolate, marshy area, called Seistan, on the Afghan-Iranian border. Other rivers, including the Kabul, flow southeast into the Indus River. The Amu Darya (or Oxus of ancient times) forms a large part of the northern boundary with the C.I.S.

Afghanistan's climate comprises a cold, snowy winter and hot, dry summer. Extreme temperature changes occur from night to day, season to season, and place to place. During summer in Kabul (altitude 5,800 feet), the temperature may be 50°F at sunrise, but reach 100°F by noon. In the Jalālābād plains (90 miles from the capital and at an elevation of 1,800 feet) and in southwestern parts of the country, summer temperatures can reach 115°F.

The chief characteristic of Afghanistan's climate is a blue, cloudless sky, with over 300 days of sunshine yearly. Even during winter, skies usually remain clear between snowfalls. Since rainfall is scarce from May to November, this period can be extremely dry and dusty.

Population

The 2002 population was estimated at 24,405,000. Many Afghans have fled the country because of the continuing strife—Afghan refugee population in Pakistan is approximately 3.7 million and, in Iran and the west, an additional 1.6 million. There have been many spontaneous returnees, but the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees began assisting refugees to repatriate in February 2002. As of April, more than 350,000 had returned to

their homes. There are still approximately 400,000 internally displaced persons within the country. Also, many Afghans are still fleeing the country due to a lack of relief aid, banditry, and insecurity in remote areas.

Afghanistan's varied culture reflects its strategic location astride the historic trade and invasion routes that lead from the Middle East into central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. The largest ethnic group is the Pashtun (Pathan), comprising about half of the total population. Other sizable groups are the Tajik, Uzbek, Turkoman, and Hazara.

Dari (Afghan Persian) and Pushtu are the principal languages, but Turkic dialects are used extensively in the north. English is the most widely spoken foreign language; many educated Afghans speak Russian, German, or French as well.

Islam is the official religion and Muslims comprise 99 percent of the population of which 84 percent are Sunni Muslims and 15 percent are Shi'a Muslims. The Hazara, Kizilbash, and mountain Tajiks generally belong to the minority Shi'a sect. The Taliban attempted to destroy the presence of other religions in society; eight foreign aid workers were placed on trial for the crime of trying to convert Muslims to Christianity, a capital offense.

Since the fall of the Taliban, conditions for women have improved. Some have stopped wearing the head-to-toe cornflower-blue *burka*, however, many still shroud themselves in it, especially in rural areas. Some women are now wearing the *hejab*, or ankle-length black coat and chiffon veil, in deference to Islamic tradition and modesty. Under the Taliban, men and women were not permitted to mingle, and women could not venture outside of the home without being accompanied by a male relative. Women were prevented from obtaining education and from practicing most professions. In 2001-2002, that



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Mosque in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan

situation was in the process of being reversed.

Being devout Muslims, most Afghans do not drink alcoholic beverages or eat pork.

History

Afghanistan has had a turbulent, interesting history and has withstood countless invasions. In 328 B.C., Alexander the Great entered what is today Afghanistan—but was then a part of the Persian Empire—and captured several cities, including Herát, Kandahár, Kabul, and Balkh. The 300-year rule of his Greek successors was followed by that of Turkic Kushanis and various Buddhist groups. A lively Greco-Buddhist culture flourished around Bámián. In the year 652, Afghanistan fell to conquering Arabs, who brought with them Islam.

Arab hegemony gave way to renewed Persian predominance which continued until 998, when Mahmud of Ghazni, a Turkic ruler, assumed control. Ghazni became the capital. After Mahmud's death, Afghanistan was controlled by various princes until the invasion of the great Mongol leader, Genghis Khan, in the early 13th century. This

resulted in the destruction of Herát, Ghazni, Balkh, and other Afghan cities. Marco Polo passed through Afghanistan later in that century.

About 1400, the area came under the control of Tamerlane, the Mongol emperor. During the late 15th and early 16th centuries, Afghanistan was ruled by Babur the Great, founder of the Mogul dynasty in India; Babul's grave is in Kabul.

Afghanistan, as an independent kingdom, was founded by Ahmad Shah Durrani, a Pushtun prince, who was crowned in 1747. From that date until the coup in 1978, the country was governed by his direct or collateral descendants.

The history of Afghanistan was influenced by several European countries during the 19th century. To counter Russian dominance in both Persia and central Asia, Great Britain fought the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42), occupying much of Afghanistan in the process. In the face of Afghan resistance, the British were forced to withdraw in 1842, suffering a massacre. The Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) brought Abdur Rahman Khan to the throne as emir. He created a central government in Afghanistan and introduced many modern elements



Street in Kandahar, Afghanistan

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

into the country; the borders with Pakistan (then British India) and Russia were established during the emir's reign.

Several 20th-century Afghan leaders, such as King Amanullah (who ruled from 1919 to 1929), supported modernization programs. The Noor Mohammad Taraki and successive regimes announced numerous reforms which called for sweeping changes, but which were rejected by traditional Afghan society.

Government

On April 27, 1978, the government of former President Mohammad Daoud was overthrown in a quick, violent, and bloody coup. Daoud and many of his family members were killed in the fighting or murdered in its aftermath. A Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (D.R.A.) was proclaimed by the new leftist-oriented leadership under Noor Mohammad Taraki. He, in turn, was overthrown

and murdered by his rival within the fledgling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDPA), Hafizullah Amin. The Soviets installed a regime when it became clear that they could no longer control Amin, and when the countrywide opposition to the brutal Taraki/Amin regimes threatened to overwhelm the government in power. In December 1979, the U.S.S.R. introduced more than 80,000 troops, unseating Amin, who died in unclear circumstances. The Soviets found themselves in a long, ongoing civil war between the Afghan government and fundamentalist Muslim guerrillas or mujahidin. In 1988, a United Nations mediated agreement provided for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the establishment of a neutral state, and the repatriation of refugees. The U.S. and the Soviets pledged to serve as guarantors of the agreement but the Afghan rebels rejected it. After the Soviets left the country, the rebels and the government began a civil war and the rebels elected a government in exile. In

1990, the U.N. announced the existence of "zones of tranquility" in order to begin the voluntary repatriation of refugees, however, the rebel government opposed this plan as giving tacit approval of the Kabul government.

President Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, who took office in 1987, faced several attempted coups. The survival of what was a Soviet-supported government surprised many people. Relations with the West had improved and the population seemed weary of the more than a decade of civil war that left two million dead and much of the country in ruins.

In April 1992, the rebels captured Kabul and ousted Najibullah, along with his communist government. A coalition of Islamic rebels assumed power and installed guerrilla leader Sibghatullah Mojaddidi as president on an interim basis for two months. In June, Islamic religious and ethnic leaders chose Burhanud-

din Rabbani as interim president for several months. Rabbani was re-elected in December 1992 to an 18-month term. Rabbani's election was met with violence by rebel Islamic factions.

Once the rebels took charge and established the new Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the sale and consumption of alcohol was banned and women were ordered to wear head scarves. Most of the fundamentalist rebels also believed women should not hold government office.

In 1995-96, students from religious schools in the western region of Afghanistan, the Taliban, asserted their control over Afghan society, imposing adherence to a severe reading of Islamic law. They destroyed vestiges of other forms of worship, including two 1500-year-old Buddhist statues that were blown up in Bamiyan.

Until 2001, the Taliban sought diplomatic recognition and better relations with the West. To do so, they destroyed the country's opium crop, which cut the production of heroin worldwide in half. The United States demanded the surrender of Osama bin Laden, whom it wanted for the attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, if it was to grant diplomatic status to the Taliban. The Taliban refused. The United States was able to negotiate harsh U.N. sanctions against the Taliban in December 2000, and from that time on, the Taliban further isolated themselves from the rest of the world by being increasingly hostile to the West.

Resistance fighters in Afghanistan, otherwise known as the Northern Alliance, were forced into a north-east section of the country. Two weeks prior to the September 11 attacks on the United States, the Northern Alliance's military leader, Ahmad Shah Masoud, was assassinated.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S.-U.K.-led coalition waged a full-scale air war against the Taliban,

later followed up by the presence and fighting of special forces on the ground.

Mullah Muhammad Omar, the reclusive leader of the Taliban, and Osama bin Laden, have not been found as of June 2002.

In November 2001, delegates from four Afghan factions met in Bonn, Germany, to sign an agreement on a transitional government. A power-sharing interim cabinet led by Pashtun tribal commander Hamid Karzai was set up (which included two women), and Karzai took office on December 22.

King Muhammad Zahir Shah, who was king from 1933 until 1973, has claimed that he does not wish to restore the monarchy. However, he returned to Afghanistan from exile in Italy to preside over a *Loya Jirga*, or traditional gathering of tribal elders and other leaders, to be held in June 2002. Every village in Afghanistan will be consulted to put forth one or more representatives to go to regional gatherings, which will then select the 1,500 people to attend the *Loya Jirga*. The transitional government established by the *Loya Jirga* will be entrusted with the job of creating a constitution and setting the schedule for free and fair elections to be held within two years.

As the military campaign of 2001-2002 subsided, looting, rape, and ethnic killings have taken place, especially in Pashtun villages in northern Afghanistan, driving thousands of civilians from their homes.

Tribal warlords or *jihadi* have asserted their authority in the cities and villages of Afghanistan, establishing quasi-fiefdoms, killing many civilians and engaging in other crimes. Attempts to reassert regulation of virtues and vices have returned in some locales. One reason given for the few numbers of casualties resulting from the intense bombing of the Tora Bora mountains in December 2001, was that the U.S.-U.K.-led coalition's local "allies" at the time—the war-

lords—may have alerted al-Qaeda and former Taliban fighters in the region, giving them time to flee their caves. One warlord, taking pay from the coalition, called in U.S. fighter pilots to attack rival tribal leaders, under the guise of the convoy being that of al-Qaeda. There is widespread fear that regional fighting could become the mark of the post-Taliban era. The major cities of Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar-i-Sharif are all bases for rival warlords and their militias.

Landmines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO), left over from the civil war of the 1990s, are more of a danger after the bombing campaign. There are approximately 50-100 victims of landmines and unexploded ordnance every week.

Arts, Science, Education

Many of Afghanistan's artistic activities are concentrated in handicrafts. The National Museum in Kabul is rich in Greek and Buddhist history. Archaeological research teams from France, Italy, Germany, the former Soviet Union, Japan, and the United States have made a number of new discoveries, but are no longer active.

In 1999, the estimated literacy rate was 31.5% of the total population--47.2% for males, and 15% for females.

Prior to the rule of the Taliban, officially compulsory education began at seven years of age, continued for eight years and was free at state-run schools. Secondary education was available at age 15 and lasted four years. Under the Taliban, girls over the age of 8 were forbidden from attending school. The type of schooling given to boys under the Taliban was based on a strict reading of Islam.

The country's main institutions of higher learning are Kabul University and the Polytechnic College, also located in the capital; the latter was built jointly with Afghan and

Soviet funds. There are universities in the provinces of Nangarhar, Balkh, and Herat.

Commerce and Industry

Afghanistan is primarily an agricultural country, with about 80 percent of the population engaged in this sector of the economy. Only about 15 to 20 percent of the total land is economically useful. Some of the country's principal cash crops were wheat, rice, barley, cotton, sugar beets, sugarcane, oil seeds, and a wide variety of vegetables. Raisins, nuts, and many kinds of fruits also were produced. During the 1990s, Afghanistan's poppy production accounted for the world's largest production of opium. A program to prevent the resurgence of opium production is being financed by the United States and other Western countries.

Mineral resources consist of natural gas, coal, copper, talc, barite, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron, and salt, as well as some precious and semi-precious stones, notably marble and lapis lazuli. None of these extensive resources has been fully developed except natural gas. Other leading export commodities have been dried fruits and nuts, cotton, carpets and rugs, fresh fruits, and *karakul* (Persian lamb) skins. Most of Afghanistan's exports were previously sent to C.I.S., India, Germany, United Kingdom, and Belgium/Luxembourg. Imported are food, petroleum, fertilizers, basic manufactured goods, and vehicles. C.I.S. and Eastern Europe provided most of the imports.

After the Soviet military invasion, all western countries cut off development aid. Almost all aid was then provided by the Soviets and the Moscow-based Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Even after the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, the West did not resume foreign aid. The United Nations-sponsored "Operation Salaam" was established to provide for relief,

rehabilitation, and resettlement of Afghan refugees.

Oxfam International, which was well-established in the country prior to the 2001-2002 military campaign, has been active since then in the economic rebuilding of Afghanistan. It has urged the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to cancel their \$33 million debt to the country. Afghanistan also owes \$8.8 million to the International Monetary Fund. The United States and the world's other wealthiest nations are beginning a \$4.5 billion aid program to rebuild Afghanistan.

The International Committee for the Red Cross, the Afghan Red Crescent Society, and various U.N. agencies are actively involved in rebuilding Afghanistan, beginning with securing emergency relief, food, potable water and sanitation, health care, and education. In addition, funds have been appropriated for orthopedic centers in Afghanistan, as there are thousands of amputees and other disabled persons, many of whom have been the victims of landmines.

Transportation

Ariana Afghan Airlines is the national carrier. Commercial flights have not yet resumed to Afghanistan. Afghanistan has no railroads. The country also has no navigable rivers.

Ninety-five percent of Afghanistan's 30,000 miles of highways have either been destroyed or badly damaged by years of warfare and neglect. Land mines are buried on the sides of many roads. The roads are hard to police: in November, four journalists were shot and killed on the road from Sarobi to Kabul. Bandits have control over traffic on the roads. The largest piece of the \$4.5 billion in international aid that has been pledged to Afghanistan over the next two years, \$1.2 billion, has been dedicated to rebuilding highways.

One of the world's highest tunnels is found in Afghanistan, at Salang,

which links the north to the south of the country. It is a 11,000-foot-high and 1.6-mile pass through the Hindu Kush mountains, built by the Soviets in 1964. It was reopened in January 2002, after not having been open since 1997.

Communications

International communications are difficult. Local telephone networks are not operating reliably. International organizations and other entities rely on satellite telephone communications even to make local calls. There is no commercial satellite telephone service available locally. Those who wish to make domestic or international calls need to bring their own satellite telephone. Injured or distressed foreigners might face long delays before being able to communicate their needs to colleagues or family outside Afghanistan. Internet is not available through local service providers.

In January 2002, the first independent newspaper in post-Taliban Afghanistan issued its first edition. The Kabul Weekly featured articles in English, French, Dari, and Pashtun.

Health

Medical facilities are few and far between throughout Afghanistan. European and American medicines are generally unavailable, and there is a shortage of basic medical supplies. Basic medicines manufactured in Iran, Pakistan and India are available. Travelers will not be able to find Western-trained medical personnel in most parts of the country. An emergency hospital in Kabul with some Italian staff can provide limited services. There are also some international aid groups temporarily providing basic medical assistance in various cities and villages. For any medical treatment, payment is required in advance. No commercial medical evacuation capability from within Afghanistan exists.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via CDC's Internet site at <http://www.cdc.gov>

Clothing and Services

An adequate wardrobe for hot, dry summers and cold, dry winters (as well as for brief spring and fall rainy seasons) should be brought to cover the duration of a stay here.

Winter-weight apparel is needed for December through February. Snowfalls are frequent; boots are a necessity for snow and mud conditions, and warm clothing is called for, especially wool sweaters. Excellent imported woolen materials are sold here, but the quality of tailoring varies widely.

For women, washable summer clothing is useful. Long cotton skirts, or those made from other washable fabrics, are popular in Kabul. Long wool skirts and sweaters are popular winter evening wear. Boots and warm outerwear are needed in the cold months. Coats of *karakul* and *poshteen* (suede lined in either sheared lamb or fur) can be purchased in Kabul. A good supply of shoes for all occasions should be brought into the country.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Special Note: The U.S. Department of State strongly warns against all travel to Afghanistan. The security threat to all American citizens in Afghanistan remains high.

A passport is required. The Interim Authority of Afghanistan requires American citizens to obtain a visa for entry into the country. The government has not been able to re-

open all of the country's former diplomatic missions. In the interim, the government is allowing the issuance of a single entry visa to persons entering on sanctioned international relief flights at Kabul International Airport. Commercial flights have not yet resumed to Afghanistan. Information on entry requirements can be obtained from the Embassy of Afghanistan located at 2000 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, telephone 202-416-1620, fax 202-416-1630.

Afghan customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Afghanistan of items such as firearms, alcoholic beverages, religious materials, antiques, medications, and printed materials. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C. or one of Afghanistan's other diplomatic missions for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available. Consular assistance for American citizens in Afghanistan is extremely limited. U.S. Embassy officials in Kabul likely will not be able to obtain official information or assistance from Afghan authorities for Americans who face difficulties in Afghanistan nor will American officials be able to travel to provide personal assistance to Americans who face problems outside of the capital.

Although the Embassy is located at Bebe Mahro (Airport) Road, Kabul, it can provide no passport or visa services. Emergency consular services to U.S. citizens who travel or remain in Afghanistan are severely limited. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, will provide most consular services to American citizens. Americans who travel to or reside in Afghanistan are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, or the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, Pakistan,

and obtain updated information on travel and security within Afghanistan. These missions can be contacted as follows:

U.S. Embassy Islamabad, Diplomatic Enclave, Ramna 5, Islamabad, telephone (92-51) 2080-0000, Consular Section telephone (92-51) 2080-2700, fax (92-51) 282-2632;

U.S. Consulate Peshawar, 11 Hospital Road, Cantonment, Peshawar, telephone (92-91) 279-801 through 803, fax (92-91) 276-712.

Islam is the official religion of this country, and most Afghans are of the Sunni Muslim sect. Under the Taliban, Christian missionary work was considered a capital offense. As of December 2001, there were a total of two Jews in Afghanistan, Ishak Levin, and Zebulon Simentov, who have been in a feud with one another for years. They both share the only surviving synagogue in Kabul. In the late 19th century, as many as 40,000 Jews lived in Afghanistan, many of whom had fled from Persia, now Iran. By the middle of the 20th century, about 5,000 remained, but most emigrated after the creation of Israel in 1948. The Soviet invasion of 1979 drove out almost all the rest.

The time in Afghanistan is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus four.

Afghanistan's monetary unit is the *afghani*, comprised of 100 *puls*. Because of the poor infrastructure in Afghanistan, access to banking facilities is extremely limited and unreliable. Afghanistan's economy operates on a "cash-only" basis for most transactions. Credit card transactions are not operable. International bank transfers are not available. No ATM machines exist.

The metric system is officially in force, but traditional methods of weights and measures also are used. The *pau* (15 ounces) is the unit of measure for most foods; a *seer* is 15.7 pounds, a *kharwar* 80 *seers*, or about 1,254 pounds; and a *jerib* is .482 acres.

The U.S. Embassy was closed in January 1989, and reopened in Jan-

uary 2002. The Embassy is located at Bebe Mahro (Airport) Road, Kabul.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

March 8	Women's Day
March 21	Nau-roz (New Year's)
April 27	Revolution Day
.	*Ramadan
May 1	Workers' Day
.	*Id ul Fitr (end of Ramadan)
August 19	Independence Day
.	*Id ul Adha (Feast of Sacrifice)
.	*Tenth of Moharram (Death of Prophet's Grandson)
.	*Birth of the Prophet
August 31	Pushtoonistan Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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ARMENIA

Republic of Armenia

Major City:

Yerevan

Other Cities:

Arzni, Ashtarak, Echmiadzin, Kumayri

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Armenia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Armenia is one of the great cradles of human civilization. The archeologists tell us that wine was invented in its sheltered valleys, and, perhaps, even the wheel. According to Armenia's librarians, more than a decade before the Emperor Constantine turned Rome into a Christian Empire, Armenia's King Trdat declared his kingdom Christian, making Armenia into the world's very first Christian state.

Certainly, Armenia is home to one of the world's oldest and most durable continuous cultures. Its 3,000 years of history tell a powerful tale of conquest, foreign domination and resurgence. And throughout it all,

the country's remarkable people have sustained a clear sense of national, ethnic, and religious identity.

A member of the Soviet Union from 1921-1991, a newly independent Armenia is working hard to fulfill the promise of democracy and a market economy. The 1999 Parliamentary elections, for example, showed real improvement over the previous election. But, despite progress, the transition from the Soviet system has been painful. In addition to the natural hardships faced by all command economies undergoing reform, Armenia faces blockades and sanctions resulting from a complex conflict with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh Region.

Following independence, Armenia was virtually without electric power for 2 years. Its well-developed economy-one of the richest in the Soviet Union-was simply crushed. Recovery has been slow.

Now, however, the worst is over. The dram, the national currency, is currently enjoying relative stability. Oil and gas supplies are flowing steadily. Moreover, with U.S. help, the power sector has been reorganized to dramatically improve efficiency. As a result, the lights

have been on in Yerevan for the past two years.

With traditional resilience, the country is slowly climbing out of the abyss, even though high tensions with Azerbaijan keep Armenia's borders with that country and with Turkey closed. Although the traditional economic base has been shattered, small businesses are opening all over the capital, and, to a lesser extent, in the provinces. Consumer goods are available in local markets, kiosks and stores. The metro is running; car traffic is rolling all day long. If normal life still lies in the future, some hope, at least, has returned to the present. Much, however, is contingent on creating a durable political resolution to the volatile Nagorno-Karabakh situation.

Given this dramatic backdrop, Yerevan remains an intensely busy post. The Armenians, among the best-educated people in the entire CIS, are competent and energetic. Personnel assigned to this post can expect many exciting responsibilities at work. Moreover, given the very real nature of the challenges here, there is a genuine sense of making a difference.

MAJOR CITY

Yerevan

Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, is in the west-central part of the country in the Ararat Valley, a plateau 1,000 meters (3,000 feet) above sea level. This fertile plain is ringed by an impressive range of mountains, which are capped with snow for most of the year. With the exception of the relatively flat center city, Yerevan is a town of steep hills and winding cobblestone byways. The tree-lined downtown streets retain some old-fashioned charm, as do sections of the surrounding hillsides. These are clustered with stone villas and small houses in various states of repair. There are many bars and restaurants in the safely walked center. And, in the summer especially, outdoor cafes and fountains abound. Much of the greater metropolis, however, is characterized by Soviet-style high-rise architecture, which lacks any aesthetic appeal. But Armenia's often spectacular countryside is never more than a 30-minute drive from any part of town. It should be noted that all official Embassy housing is currently in the relatively pleasant city center.

The ancient city is the cultural as well as the administrative center of the nation. There are universities, a fine, functional Opera House and many pleasant museums. With about a million people it is home to roughly a third of the country's entire population.

On clear days (and there are many) the mountains ringing Yerevan create a dramatic backdrop. Mount Ararat of Noah's Ark fame, a 16,000-foot peak crowned with eternal snow, commands the southwest horizon across the Turkish border. To the north looms Mount Aragats, Armenia's highest mountain, a rugged snow-capped peak of 13,000 feet.

Utilities

Electricity is 220v-50hz. There are frequent, sometimes extremely powerful, spikes. Bring surge protectors and uninterruptible power supplies (UPSs) for computers and any other expensive or delicate electrical equipment. European-style round-prong sockets are used in all housing. Bring adapter plugs for appliances with auto power-switching properties. Non-power-switching electrical appliances with 110v-60hz input require a transformer. Some appliances like electric clocks cannot be adapted in this way, others, like turntables may require special parts from the manufacturer for full adaptation.

Outlets are not usually grounded, so extra care should always be exercised around appliances. Hand-held equipment-hair dryers, shavers-requires extra caution.

Food

For most of the year there is a good supply of inexpensive raw fruits and vegetables at the open-air markets. In summer there is an abundance of delicious local apricots, cherries, and other fruits. The dead of winter sees a dramatic reduction of selection and an increase in price for fresh produce. Still, by Western standards, prices are not high. Winter crops like cabbages, beets, potatoes, onions, carrots are readily available all the time at cheap prices. And salad greens, fresh herbs and even tomatoes can almost always be had for a price. Oranges, bananas and apples can also be obtained year round. The best places for fruits and vegetables (price and selection) are the GUM fresh market on Tigran Mets Avenue and the Central Market on Mashtots Ave. Small markets and vendors abound in the city.

Fresh pork, lamb, beef, chicken and a limited variety of freshwater fish are available year round. Eggs are available, too. Low and reduced fat UHT shelf milk and full-fat powdered milk can be purchased as well, although supplies of low-fat are sporadic. Pasteurized fresh milk is available, but the quality is low.

Dried fruits like raisins, apricots, dates and figs, as well as many kinds of salami and cured meat, can be found in abundance. A few varieties of whole-bean coffee are available. The Cafe de Paris on Abovian Street (near Tumanian Street) has fresh-roasted beans. And there is plenty of instant coffee in shops and kiosks. Also available are pasta, flour, rice, beans, lentils, a limited variety of European and Australian cheeses, local sour cream, walnuts, hazelnuts, mushrooms, yogurt, and butter. A variety of Western soft drinks, candy, cigarettes, ice-cream bars and a few brands of imported and local beer are available.

There are a few supermarkets in Yerevan, but the inventory is sometimes disappointing and quirky and they are far from Western standard. A shopping trip might include a run through all of them to find something you need. Frozen food is available at these stores, but the selection is extremely limited and there are no frozen vegetables.

The following stores are popular these days: Partez, Europe, Cash and Carry, Yeritsian and Sons, Bravo, Urartu, and the Hayastan Super Market at the Druzbah Metro stop. For meat "The Rooster" butcher on Pushkin Street is popular. The state-run GUM market is a good place to shop, but is a little intimidating at first. One will find there most of the goods carried in the supermarkets, and at much better prices.

Other than some cereal products, baby foods are not generally available. Cake mixes are not available. Pop Tarts and other breakfast bars are not available. Pet food is available, but limited as to type and very expensive. Kitty litter is not available. Beer is available but limited in variety. Wine is available, but limited in variety. Nestle breakfast cereals are available, but are limited in choice and are now selling for \$6 a box. Low-fat versions of food are not available. Peanut butter, pancake syrup, and chocolate syrup are not available.



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View of Yerevan, Armenia

Clothing

The supply of ready made clothes available here is limited and often not to American taste. There are some ultra-expensive designer boutiques, however. And medium quality hand tailoring is available.

The sun can be quite strong, especially in the mountains, so hats, sun block, and good sunglasses are needed. Bring some effective winter gear. It does not stay cold, but temperatures can get very low. Long underwear will be needed some days. Keep in mind that many local buildings are poorly heated.

Washable fabrics should be chosen where possible. Although drycleaning services are available here, they are pricey and not as versatile as those in the U.S.

Sturdy walking shoes are a must; walking is a good way to get around in Yerevan.

Supplies and Services

It is strongly suggested that you bring a supply of laundry detergent and fabric softener with you. But what you bring by way of supplies is mainly a matter of preference, not absolute necessity. Most household goods are available here, from cleaning supplies to paper goods. But... they seldom bear a familiar brand name and often the quality is odd or very low. Russian-made toilet paper and Barf Detergent (an Iranian brand name) are good cases in point. Prices can also be quite high for some things, such as laundry detergent. Here you might see some familiar brands, such as Tide, but make sure it is for a machine. Hand detergent is common.

The following services are available and adequate: haircutting, shoe repair, taxi, tailoring, dressmaking, upholstery and draperies, auto repair, locksmith, picture framing, etc. In short, most average needs can be met.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available and runs about \$100 per month for day help (\$1 per hour). Houses do not have special facilities for live-in maids.

Religious Activities

Most churches in Yerevan are Armenian Apostolic, but there are some services for other denominations. A partial list of contacts follows.

Anglican: (Episcopalian) Monthly service in English. Contact: Philip Storventer, St. Zhoravants Church. Tel: 40-79-85, Office: 52-71-27

Catholic: The Mekhitarist Center, daily services (mornings) with Sunday Mass at 10:00 am. (Catholic Armenian rite Mass is held primarily in Armenian with readings usually in English.) Address: 7 Alikhanian St. (opposite the Chinese Embassy) Contacts: Father Serafino (speaks English, French, Italian, Armenian), Father Elia (speaks Armenian, Italian) Tel: 56-

18-88, 58-98-37 E-mail: mca@acc.am

Church of the Latter-Day Saints: Services 10 am or 12 noon at 43 Pushkin St. Five different congregations and a youth group. Contact: Margie Anderson. Tel: 27-0349 or Elder Hadley Tel: 34-43-97 or Elder Reading Tel: 58-33-23.

Seventh Day Adventist: No English Service. There is an Armenian congregation of 300 and a young adult group. Contact: ADRA office. Tel: 39-27-09.

Interdenominational Bible Study and Fellowship: (In English) Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 am. at the Drummond home, Address: 39A Aigestan St. (Near Peace Corps Office) Contact: Peter or Jekke Drummond. Tel: 57-44-27.

Synagogue: Address: Nar-Dos St. 23, Yerevan. Contact: Rabbi Gersh-Meir Bourstem (Chief Rabbi of Armenia) Tel: 57-19-68 Fax: 374 3 90-69-14. e-mail: avnyer@mbox.amlink.net

Education

There is only one school in Armenia suited to the needs of the international community, and it is very well regarded. The QSI International School of Yerevan is an independent coeducational day school that offers an educational program from pre-school through grade eight for students of all nationalities. In addition, the school has the capability of coordinating correspondence education for the higher grades through a well-respected program operated out of the University of Nebraska. The school was founded in 1995 by Quality Schools International (QSI), which has 17 schools operating worldwide, many of them in the CIS. The school year comprises three trimesters. These extend from the first week in September to the second week in December; from the first week in January to the third week in March; and, lastly, from the first week in April to the second week in June.

The school is governed by the QSI Board of Directors. The board's composition is set forth in the bylaws of QSI. Additionally, an advisory board, composed of from six to ten members, assists the school in its operation. All members of the advisory board reside in Armenia. They are appointed by the president of QSI in concert with the director of the QSI International School of Yerevan.

The school offers an outcome-based educational program with a curriculum similar to that of U.S.-based public and private schools. Instruction, leading to individual mastery, takes advantage of small class sizes and the diverse educational backgrounds of the students. Instruction is in English.

The school also coordinates extra-curricular activities such as ballet, karate woodcarving, jewelry making, sculpting, puppet making, etc. Swimming instruction at a pool operated by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRCC) is available.

There were four full-time faculty members in the 1997-98 school year, two of whom were U.S. citizens.

The school is located in the 650 square meter second floor of the CARITAS Switzerland building on Ashtarak Highway. The building will also house the school's administrative offices and the director's quarters. The facilities will be adequate for the projected enrollment for the next 3 years, and there is sufficient play and exercise space for the students, both indoors and out. The school has its own athletic field and weekly access to the IFRCC gym and pool. There are currently no facilities for handicapped or special needs students. Bus service will be provided.

In the 1998-99 school year, the school's income was derived from regular day school tuition. Annual tuition rates were as follows: Pre-school (3-4-year-olds) \$5,300; Kindergarten, \$8,300; grades one through eight, \$10,800. The school

also charges an annual capital fund fee of \$1,600 per year or a capital fund deposit of \$4,000 for all 5 year and older students. Accreditation: Full accreditation is expected by 1999. Currently, the school's financial system and curriculum have both received accreditation. The school has been accepted into candidacy for full accreditation by two bodies: The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation. The Self Study and School Improvement Plan have been completed and the Accreditation Team visited the school in February 1999. The school holds a Provisional Certificate from the Department of Defense.

Contact: QSI International School of Yerevan, c/o American Embassy, Yerevan, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20521-7020

E-mail: gsiy@arminco.com World Wide Web URL: <http://www.arminco.com/gsiy> International telephone and fax: 371-407656

Local mobile phone: 8-21-407656

Sports

A few sport activities are also available in Yerevan. The Armenian soccer team plays at the Hrazdan stadium in season. There are tennis courts and amateur tournaments. For a fee, the gymnasium, sauna and indoor pool operated by the International Federation of the Red Cross are accessible year round. (The IFRCC facility is about 20 minutes from the Embassy.) And the Defense Attaches Office operates a small, but well-appointed gym and sauna in the Chancery. And there is a growing number of private health clubs in the city. Aerobic exercise classes are available.

Fishing is an attractive prospect in Armenia, a country with more than 100 mountain lakes, and countless clear fast rivers. Also, Lake Sevan is only about 50 miles from Yerevan. It is one of the world's largest mountain lakes, is a popular summer tourist spot, and the home of vast

numbers of fish-including brown trout. Fishing slower moving streams for carp is also popular.

The Tsakhadzor Ski Resort is a popular destination in both summer and winter. The chair lift operates year round and the overnight accommodation at the House of Writers is decent, albeit far from luxurious. There is skiing in the winter (cross country and downhill) and hiking and picnicking in the spring, summer and fall. The resort is about an hour's drive from Yerevan. Snowshoeing is also possible in many mountain areas for much of the year.

There are pristine camp recreation areas all over Armenia. Some notable ones are found on the slopes of Mt. Aragats, as well as in Hankavan, Dilijan and to the south near Yeghegnadzor.

And for those who like to jog around in strange places, that venerable running society the Hash House Harriers has an active chapter in Yerevan. The group, which is open to all, organizes camp outs from time to time.

Sightseeing

Yerevan is an excellent base for exploring Armenia's many ancient churches, monasteries, and natural wonders. Some of the oldest Christian monuments in the world can be found in Armenia. The architecture is fascinating and the settings dramatic; the mountainous Armenian landscape is unforgettable. Many people like to hike, climb and camp. The countryside is safe for overnight camping.

The Cathedral at Etchmiadzin, built in 301 A.D., is the spiritual center of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Located about 30 minutes from Yerevan by car, Etchmiadzin Cathedral can be visited for Sunday services. Tours on other days require special arrangement. The church, its grounds, and museum contain a fine collection of ancient religious artifacts.

There is much to see in Armenia. Take a trip to Mt. Aragats to see the soaring walls of the once impregnable fortress of Amberd. Or visit the Roman mosaics at the pagan temple of Garni. And do not miss the huge chambers hewn out of solid rock at the cave monastery of Gegard; or any of the scores of other churches, monasteries and ruins that hide in the country's rough, wild landscape.

Entertainment

The city of Yerevan itself has a surprising amount to offer. There is opera, ballet, and a world-class symphony. The symphony performs twice a week much of the year and tickets are very inexpensive.

The Armenian Song Theater is also splendid, as is the Chamber Ensemble. The National Art museum on Republic Square is a must see, as is the Matenadaran Manuscript Library, which houses illuminated tomes from ancient times in Armenian, Greek and Latin.

A visit to the open-air art market held near the opera house every weekend is a must, as are periodic trips to the Vermsage, the large crafts market located in the park near Republic Square.

Victory Park, overlooking the city, is a favorite place for runners and joggers, especially during the warm weather. And there is a small amusement midway in the park complete with a working Ferris wheel and other rides. There are also rowboats to rent on the park pond, which is ringed by several small cafes.

The American University of Armenia has several English-speaking clubs to which members of the American community are welcome. Several persons currently get personalized instruction from world-class musicians. The South Caucasus Study Group organizes many interesting talks and excursions. Topics range from history and archeology to natural history and biology.

Recently, a number of restaurants have opened in the city. Local interpretations of Russian, Chinese, Continental, Italian, Indian, Persian, Turkish and American (burgers and pizza) can be found. There are also, of course, many quality establishments serving Armenian cuisine. And there are scores of kabob houses, some of which have a good reputation for wholesomeness. In addition, outdoor cafe society is a vital part of the city life. During the long warm season (April to November) scores of pleasant establishments serving inexpensive coffee and pastries can be found tucked into the green patches around the city.

And, if such is your taste, small casinos abound in Yerevan. No one can vouch for their honesty or safety, however. Lastly, a few adequate bars and pubs popular with the expatriate crowd can be found. A high-tech disco has recently opened at the Armenia Hotel-now being managed by Marriott.

And there is an indoor-outdoor jazz bar and restaurant (Poplavok) by a lake in the center of the city. The music is excellent.

OTHER CITIES

ARZNI, 13 miles north of Yerevan, is noted for its mineral spring and baths, which are set in a park of pine and chestnut trees. The sanatorium was built in 1925. Regular bus service operates between Arzni and Yerevan.

ASHTARAK is on the southern slope of Mount Aragats, about 12 miles northwest of Yerevan. The surrounding area has been inhabited from prehistoric times and the villages of the area have many archaeological sites of interest.

ECHMIADZIN is a pleasant 12-mile drive from Yerevan. Mount Ararat, now in Turkey, can be seen on a clear day. It was on the peak of Mount Ararat that Noah is said to have landed after the Flood, and the

mountain remains an important part of Armenian legend.

KUMAYRI, formerly Leninakan, was completely destroyed in the 1988 Armenian earthquake. It was founded by Armenian refugee artisans from Turkey in 1837. The city of 123,000 was noted for its textile industry and theater life. Kumayri is currently being rebuilt, with completion expected soon.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Armenia is located in southwestern Asia, just east of Turkey. It covers a total land area of 29,800 square kilometers, which is slightly larger than the state of Maryland. Armenia is a landlocked country bordered by Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan-Naxçıvan Enclave, Georgia, Iran and Turkey.

The climate is highland continental. It is dry, with an average of 550mm (21.6 inches) in annual rainfall. In the Ararat Valley, where Yerevan is located, there is far less rain, with an average range of from 200mm to 250mm (7.9 to 10 inches).

Seasonal extremes are pronounced in the Ararat Valley. Temperatures can approach the record summer high of 42°C (107.67) or plunge toward the record winter low of -30°C (-227). Mean temperatures are more temperate, however. July readings give an average high range of from 25°C (77°F) to 30°C (86°F). The January low range averages from -5°C (23°F) to -7°C (19°F). Autumns are long and golden; Armenia enjoys around 2700 hours of sunshine each year. Drought, however, is a perennial problem.

The country rests on a high mountainous plateau cut by fast flowing rivers. The over-grazed hills boast little true forest, but many of the steeper slopes are dressed with

scrub and second growth. Good soil is found in the Arax River Basin. And sheltered valleys across the country host fruit orchards and vineyards. The scenery along the highways is often dramatic, with high mountains shadowing green pastures ribboned with clear, cold streams.

Twenty percent of Armenia's land is given over to pasture and 17% to agriculture. Three thousand and fifty square kilometers is under irrigation.

At 4,095 meters, Mount Aragats is the highest point in the country.

The interesting geology consists mostly of young igneous and volcanic rocks including obsidian. Armenia is honeycombed with geologic faults and remains seismically active. The effects of a severe earthquake centered in Spitak in 1988 are still being felt socially and economically, particularly near the epicenter.

(See Health and Medicine for a discussion of the precautions recommended for the hot dry climate and the possibility of earthquake.)

Population

Armenia's population is officially 3.7 million, based on the 1989 census, but is probably substantially less, around 3 million, due to large scale emigration in the difficult years between 1988 and 1995. One-third of the population lives in Yerevan. Armenia retains significant Yezidi Kurdish and Russian minorities, and smaller numbers of Greeks, Ukrainians, and others. Some 300,000 ethnic Azeris fled Armenia in 1988-90, mostly from rural areas, and an approximately equal number of Armenians took refuge in Armenia from Baku and other Azeri cities.

Conditions in Armenia were so difficult from 1991 to 1993 that there was a vast emigration to the U.S., Europe, Russia and other Newly Independent States. True figures are not available, but the current

population probably stands between two-and-a-half and three million.

Armenians have their own highly distinctive alphabet and language. Ninety-six percent of the people in the country speak it, while a solid majority of the population know Russian as well. Armenia was totally literate; 99% of the population could read and write Armenian and or Russian in Soviet times. Current literacy figures are not available, but the economic crisis has dramatically affected education.

Most adults in Yerevan can communicate in Russian. Russian is still taught in school, although quality has declined sharply. English is increasing in popularity, but is spoken rarely outside of educated circles. Cyrillic script can still be seen on many older street and building signs. Ninety-four percent of the population claims membership in the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Caucasian hospitality is legendary and stems from an ancient tradition. Social gatherings center around sumptuous presentations of course after course of elaborately prepared, well-seasoned (but not spicy-hot) food. The host or hostess will often put morsels on a guest's plate whenever it is empty or fill his or her glass when it gets low. After a helping or two it is acceptable to refuse politely or, more simply, just leave a little uneaten food. A cleared plate or an empty glass will get filled.

On the whole, Armenia is a safe country, close-knit and with little violent crime.

Foreigners can travel freely throughout the country and be confident of a friendly welcome. Note that Armenians are intensely curious about foreigners, particularly in rural areas. This curiosity will generally manifest itself in open-handed hospitality and ready assistance to the traveler, but can sometimes become intrusive, requiring considerable diplomatic skill to extricate oneself. Stone-throwing by local urchins or vandalism of cars is

rare, but can be a problem, particularly when the foreigner is distinctively non-Armenian. Best defense is a friendly greeting in Armenian to the adults on entry to a new village.

Attitudes toward women are still shaped by Middle Eastern links and a pattern of male domination. Though violence against foreign women is rare, women traveling or dining without male escort should dress conservatively and avoid eye contact or other behavior that might attract unwanted attention.

Government

Armenia- "Hayastan" in Armenian- is a republic. On 5 July 1995, the current constitution was adopted through a national referendum.

With the adoption of the constitution ten provinces plus the capital were designated. They are as follows: Aragatsotn, Ararat, Armavir, Gegharkunik, Lori, Kotayk, Shirak, Syunik, Tavush, and Vayots Dzor, plus the capital city of Yerevan.

The head of state is the President, in whom much power is vested.

The head of government is the Prime Minister, who is appointed and dismissed by the President. The President also appoints and dismisses the members of the Government, but at the proposal of the Prime Minister.

The unicameral legislative branch is known as the National Assembly, which now has 131 members. Under an election law passed in 1999 two methods are used to choose what is now a professional full-time Assembly; first, a proportional party-based system, and, second, a simple head-to-head majority mandate. Currently, 56 deputies are elected under the proportional party-focused system and 75 are elected under the majoritarian candidate-focused system.

After the presidential election of 1998 a new set of political parties began to coalesce out of the ashes of

the previous administration. The largest plurality was for a time the "Yerkrapah" faction, a nationalistic association of Nagorno Karabakh veterans. But it has since been integrated into the Republican Party, which is headed by Defense Minister Vasgen Sarkissian. Moreover, just before the May 30, 1999, election the Republicans allied themselves with the People's Party. The People's Party is headed by Karen Demirchian, former First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party. This powerful election alliance, the Unity Bloc-which includes Yerkrapah, the Republicans and the People's Party-won a decisive majority of National Assembly seats in the May 30, 1999, election.

The opposition is formed by several parties; notably, the Communists, the Dashnaks (a century-old nationalist party with strong ties to the Armenian Diaspora) and the National Democratic Union.

The country's legal apparatus is founded on a system of civil law. Currently, the National Assembly is very busy passing legislation in virtually every field. The system of new legislation being born is considered one generally favorable to free market business development and is in line with accepted democratic principles.

The judicial branch is headed by the Constitutional Court, which is composed of nine judges. These are appointed by the president. The term of office is for life, but a judge may be dismissed by the president. The president also appoints and dismisses the chief prosecutor.

Under international guidance the judiciary underwent a thorough legally mandated reform and retraining process. And it is now working with a completely rewritten set of legal codes that see it acting with increasing independence.

Moreover, in the past year, there have been important structural changes to the judiciary. What is more, constitutional amendments to even further increase judicial inde-

pendence are being given consideration. But new laws on the judicial system, the role of judges, advocate service and the enforcement of court judgements have already been passed. Judges have been appointed to the newly created trial courts (Courts of First Instance) and the Court of Appeals. However, it will take a lot of political will to continue to make further reforms encouraging judicial independence.

Many international organizations are represented in Armenia. The United Nations is very active, as is the EU and some national governments. In addition, there are scores of non-governmental organizations. These serve a variety of needs, ranging from humanitarian aid to democratic as well as economic development.

An important national issue is the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, a predominantly Armenian region within Azerbaijan, which declared independence in 1988. After a war lasting six years, a fragile ceasefire has held since 1994. Achieving regional stability by finding a durable settlement is a high-priority mission goal. In addition, this unresolved confrontation is an exacerbating factor in the country's severe economic crisis due to the embargo imposed by Azerbaijan and Turkey. (See Commerce and Industry for more details.)

Lastly, no discussion of public institutions would be complete without mentioning the vast Armenian diaspora, both in the U.S. and Europe. It has become a bridge to the outside world for many Armenians, particularly with the advent of the Internet, and influences the direction of the country with resources and ideas. In addition, the Diaspora has been very active in humanitarian efforts in Armenia.

Arts, Science, and Education

Education

Yerevan is the country's intellectual as well as its administrative center.

Yerevan State University, the State Medical Institute and the State Engineering University are located in the capital. The latter maintains fairly strong programs in math, engineering and architecture.

The American University of Armenia has graduate programs in Business and Law, among others. The institution owes its existence to the combined efforts of the Government of Armenia, The Armenian General Benevolent Union, USAID, and the Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California at Berkeley. Many of the country's most successful young entrepreneurs are graduates of this institution.

The extension programs and the library at AUA form a new focal point for English-language intellectual life in the city. English-language instruction plays a large part in the AUA curriculum and many members of the American community here, including spouses of U.S. Mission employees, teach English at the university.

Arts

As might be expected from so literate a society, Yerevan is a city of culture. The Matenadaran Library contains a priceless collection of ancient manuscripts, chiefly Armenian, but also Persian, Arab, Latin, and Greek.

The city's National Art Gallery has more than 16,000 works that date back to the middle ages. It houses paintings by many European masters. The Modern Art Museum, The Children's Picture Gallery, and the Saryan Museum are only a few of the other noteworthy collections of fine art on display in Yerevan. Moreover, many private galleries are now opening. They feature rotating exhibitions and sales.

Armenia was a crossroads of the ancient and medieval world. The country is home to hundreds if not thousands of fascinating archeological sites. Medieval, Iron Age, Bronze Age and even Stone Age sites are all within a few hours drive from the city. It can be compared to Greece or

Italy in terms of the numbers and quality of its historic sites. There is much to be learned and seen.

The world-class Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra performs at the city Opera House. In addition, there are several chamber ensembles and the Serenade Orchestra is also known for its high standards. In season, grand opera is performed. Fine music can also be heard at the State Music Conservatory and at the Chamber Music Orchestra Hall.

In addition, there are many drama theaters in Yerevan hosting plays in Russian as well as Armenian.

Yerevan's Vernisage (arts and crafts market)-held each weekend in the park just off Republic Square-is home to hundreds of vendors selling a variety of crafts, many of superb workmanship. From inlaid wooden backgammon sets, to the hand-knotted wool carpets that are signature to central Asia, the selection is astonishing. Obsidian, which is found locally, is crafted into an amazing assortment of jewelry and ornamental objects. And there is also an excellent selection of fine jewelry; Armenian gold smithy enjoys a long tradition. Soviet relics and souvenirs of recent Russian manufacture-nesting dolls, watches, enamel boxes, etc.-also may be found at the Vernisage. There is another popular weekend art market in the park across from the Opera House that focuses mainly on paintings.

Carpet emporiums abound in the city.

Science

In Soviet times Armenia boasted very high numbers of specialists and scientists in proportion to its population. There were many important academic institutes located here. Much of the basic research has stopped, however, due to the country's impoverished condition. For this reason many of the country's scientists have left or found more practical ways to make ends meet.

This breakdown has had an interesting consequence. Many of the English-speaking Foreign Service nationals employed at the U.S. Mission in Yerevan are drawn from this distinguished pool of intellectuals. They serve conscientiously in positions far beneath their level of training. These highly educated, self-starting Armenian partners add a great deal to the strength of the U.S. Embassy here. Yerevan has perhaps the best workforce in the entire NIS.

Commerce and Industry

Armenia's once thriving industrial economy largely collapsed with the demise of the Soviet Union. Only now is it slowly starting to recover. Once the small landlocked country was no longer an integral part of the economic structure of the Soviet central system, it lost its sources of supply as well as its markets. Historically, Armenia provided machine-building tools, textiles, and much of the Soviet military's high-tech equipment-lasers, navigation systems, etc. Energy and raw materials were supplied from other republics in a centralized system. Today, few industries from that time operate. And those that continue to run do so at greatly reduced capacity.

On top of this, the conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh has resulted in a closed border with Turkey (a natural trading partner). And Azerbaijan, which was once a main supplier of energy, is now a bitter enemy. Moreover, the expense of the occupation in Azerbaijan drains the Armenian treasury.

Over the last 5 years (1995-99) things have improved relative to the darkest days of early independence. At that time, from 1992 to 1994, Yerevan was virtually without electric power. The people survived mainly through an intensive program of international aid. The critical situation with electricity has changed owing to many of the following factors: improvements in

power management, such as metering and transmission, have been made; gas supplies are coming in through Georgia; and the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant is up and running. However, the above-mentioned chronic factors hindering Armenia's development-Nagorno-Karabakh, lack of markets and sources of supply-are still very much applicable.

Armenia's problems notwithstanding, many of its macro-economic indicators are strong. Inflation was brought down to comparatively tolerable levels during 1996 (5.9%). And it stood at 20% for 1997. In 1998 there was actually a negative inflation rate (-1.3%) (deflation). And, so far for 1999, the annualized rate of inflation stands at 11%.

The dram has enjoyed relative stability in this environment. Currently, it stands at 545 dram to the U.S. dollar. Moreover, the dram weathered the Russian financial crisis of 1998 quite well. One can expect it to remain basically stable with, perhaps, a weakening trend against the dollar. Official GDP grew at 7% in 1998.

These days, Armenia's biggest source of foreign exchange is from its trade in precious stones. There is a thriving jewelry industry, which includes the manufacture of finished jewels as well as the polishing of rough diamonds bought from South Africa. Some textiles are still produced as well, particularly leather goods. There is also a trade in high-value agricultural produce-apricots and grapes. And it must be mentioned that the country is justifiably famous for its brandy production. Some electronics manufacturing continues. And a few projects involving software development have been launched as well-one of Armenia's assets is its highly trained and educated labor pool.

Natural resources include deposits of gold, copper, molybdenum, zinc and alumina.

Also, Armenia's richness of history may be viewed as a sustainable

resource. Tourism has real potential, including archeological and ecological tourism. Armenia is traditionally considered to be the first Christian state; its conversion pre-dates that of the Roman Empire. As a result there are important monasteries and churches that date to the earliest centuries of the first millennium AD. But Armenia was also part of the cradle of civilization and important Bronze and Iron Age sites are also found here. These archeological sites, although undeveloped from a tourism perspective, are second to none in importance. Moreover, their mountain settings are often dramatic and beautiful.

Although agriculture plays an important role in the economy, Armenia still imports much of its food. Most of the raw material for its industry-hides, cotton, rough diamonds-is also imported. Consumer goods are brought in from the U.S., the United Arab Emirates, the other Newly Independent States, Russia, Eastern and Western Europe, Iran and-by way of Georgia and Iran-from Turkey.

Armenia still engages in some old, Soviet-style barter, but this is being slowly phased out.

To the extent that practical considerations allow, the government is planning and executing an aggressive restructuring of most major sectors of the economy. Transportation in the areas of roads, air and rail, is being moved forward. The energy sector has been given the highest priority. And the water system is being addressed as well.

With some exceptions, privatization is also well under way. Over 80% of small businesses are private, and over 60% of medium and large enterprises are private. The phone system has been privatized and the country's premier accommodation, the Armenia Hotel, has recently been privatized as well. It is being managed under contract by U.S.-based Marriott. In 1998 the government overcame strong opposition to privatize the world-famous brandy enterprise. And ninety percent of

the country's land, including virtually all of the farmland, is in private hands.

An expanding service sector is emerging in the capital, fueled in part by the substantial amount of aid pouring into the country. The many new shops and restaurants benefit everyone posted here.

In the main, the government appears to have a good understanding of what is needed for economic development. There is a liberal trade regime. Foreigners can own any kind of property or business except land. Investment is encouraged. World Bank and IMF advice is taken seriously.

Transportation

Automobiles

A car is very desirable, but is not an absolute necessity in Yerevan. Four-wheel drive is needed if you want complete year-round mobility, but a sturdy standard car will do for Yerevan and many other destinations.

Buying a new car locally is an option. You can buy a new Lada Niva (a tough little Russian-made 4x4) for from \$5,000 to \$6,000. Small sedans, like Lada Zhiguli's, run a little less; big sedans, like Volgas, run a little more. There are many places to buy new Russian-made cars. It is also possible to import a car from Dubai or Russia duty free. Also, Mitsubishi Motors has established a well-run dealership in Yerevan that features both sport utility vehicles and sedans.

Used car prices are extremely variable. Buyers will undoubtedly need the help of a local person to shop Yerevan's weekend auto market where new and used models are sold. The good news is that getting a local car repaired is easier and cheaper. The bad news is that with a Russian-made car the chances that repairs will be needed are greatly increased. It should also be noted that these cars are well below U.S. safety standards.

There are no restrictions on what kind of car you can bring in. There are legal pitfalls if you buy locally, but they are easily avoided. If you buy a car here make sure to check that the registration (the technical passport) matches the vehicle in both the engine number and the body number. Also, get a dated bill of sale that names the price and the parties concerned. This may be hand written. Once the title is transferred into your name by the local authorities—a complex process that involves paying a three percent transfer tax on the value of the vehicle.

Note: Car theft is not a great problem in Yerevan, but stereo theft is known. Removable faceplates and other stereo security systems are advised.

Although engine oil can be obtained here, it is of variable quality, and name brands are sometimes counterfeited and substandard product substituted.

There is no unleaded fuel at all in Armenia so POVs should be modified to accept leaded fuel. This mainly entails removing the catalytic converter if you want to prevent this expensive part from being poisoned by the lead. A permission letter from EPA is required if this is done in the U.S.

Gasoline is available throughout the country, mainly from tanker trucks parked along the road or gas kiosks. Yerevan and larger towns boast an ever-growing number of clean, modern and even luxurious gas stations. On the roadside the quality of fuel is variable and occasionally poor enough to cause problems. Gas stations, however, seem to deliver reasonable quality. Gasoline currently costs about \$1.50 per gallon. Gas prices are marked per 20 liters. Currently, gas sells for about 3500 dram (seven dollars) per 20 liters.

Roads

The streets of Yerevan are very beaten up in places, but are mostly in adequate repair. National high-

ways vary in quality. Main routes are usually passable for moderate cruising speeds with occasional bad spots, but secondary routes are sometimes quite degraded. Drivers must remain alert for potholes, however, on all roads. As in most of the developing world, the road culture is aggressive and undisciplined. In winter, snow is cleared on main routes, but secondary roads are ignored. Constant jay-walking and poor lighting at night adds to the danger in cities and villages. Yerevan's roads are a place for skilled, confident drivers.

Local

Public surface transportation in Yerevan is crowded and the equipment is old. There are trams, buses, trolley buses and even a funicular. Taxis are available and not overly expensive. Two dollars is the average fare for a ride within the central downtown area. The taxis are not metered and passengers must negotiate, so expect to pay a stiff premium if you can't negotiate in Armenian or Russian. Tips are appreciated, but are not expected.

There are *Marshrutnoi* (minibus) taxis as well. They run specified routes at varied rates ranging from 50 to 200 drams (10 to 40 cents). As mentioned earlier, there is a central metro line in Yerevan. The price of a token is 40 drams (8 cents). This is also the cost of a bus or tram ride.

There are inter-city buses and minivans and also very few trains. The trains are unreliable and are not used by U.S. Mission employees. Most of those posted here move about by private car, on foot, or, on occasion, by charter bus.

Regional

Most internal long-distance travel is accomplished by car, minivan, or bus. The trains are very bad both internally and to nearby neighbors. For example, the train to Tbilisi, Georgia takes 14-18 hours, runs an erratic schedule, is uncomfortable and is targeted by thieves. (The same ride by car takes from 5 to 6 hours.)

Bad relations with Turkey over Nagorno-Karabakh have closed that nearby land border. And, because of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, travel to Azerbaijan is impossible from Armenia. Moreover, official Americans cannot travel to Nagorno-Karabakh itself without special permission; the road to N-K, however, is open and considered good. The highway to Tbilisi is also open. The Armenian leg is good, but the Georgian side tends to be beaten up and slow going. It is a 6-hour drive maximum. Surface routes through to southern Armenia and Iran are open most of the year. However, official Americans cannot cross the border into Iran.

The regional roads are passable for most of the year, but in the dead of winter some routes close from time to time due to snows in high mountain passes.

Currently, there are no regular commercial in-country flights operating. However, for special purposes it is possible to charter a helicopter from Armenian Airlines.

Travel to nearby and neighboring countries is generally accomplished by air. The UN World Food Program operates an eight-seat commuter plane between Yerevan, Tbilisi, and Baku on which members of the official community can purchase seats when available. In addition, there are regularly scheduled flights on Armenian Air, the national carrier, to many regional cities, including Ashgabat, Dubai, Tbilisi, Istanbul, Sofia, Tehran, Beirut, Aleppo, and Tashkent. It also flies to several cities in Europe (Paris, London, Athens, Frankfurt, Zurich and Amsterdam) as well as to several in Russia (Moscow, Kiev and Samara). The schedule is variable; most flights are weekly, while others, such as those headed for Tbilisi, leave at least three days a week.

There are flights to Moscow every day on either Aeroflot or Armenian Air. This would be a convenient route both into and out of Yerevan, as Moscow is a good-sized hub, but the arbitrary actions of immigration

officials in Russia have caused problems for some travelers, even those in transit. Theoretically, holders of multiple-entry Armenian visas are allowed three days of transit time in Moscow without a Russian visa, but this appears to be poorly understood by officials there. Moreover, price gouging by Russian taxi drivers has made road travel between Moscow's airports exorbitant. Such cross-city travel is often a requirement in order to change planes. Very cheap, if very uncomfortable, transit travel by bus is an option, however. That notwithstanding, routing through Moscow is strongly discouraged.

Currently, five carriers operate out of Yerevan: Aeroflot, Armenian Air, British Air, Swiss Air and Vnukovo, a Russian carrier.

Communications

Telephone

The quality of the telephone lines is sometimes very bad. Service can be interrupted and it may take several tries to complete a call.

For modem users the data transmission speed on some of these city lines is sometimes very low. Improvements are underway, however, following the privatization of the phone company. Some city lines have been made digital allowing for decent voice and acceptable data communication. Cellular telephone service is also now available in Yerevan.

Internet

Armenia's information policy is open and Yerevan does have several Internet providers. Currently, America Online has a local dial-up number that functions fairly well, even on some city lines. AOL members who wish to keep their accounts should check for the latest Yerevan access number(s) before departing for post. Note that there is currently a \$6 /hour network access surcharge for Armenia's AOL users. There are also local ISPs with rates that are competitive to AOLs. One of the better known is Arminco. Also, the Yerevan Physics Institute

provides dial-up accounts. The service on the local ISP's is, like AOL, mostly adequate for home E-mail. World Wide Web surfing is also possible at the fairly low but manageable speed of about 1.0 (one) KPS- this includes AOL. Interestingly, some Internet cafes have appeared in the city lately.

Enhanced speed, giving faster access to the World Wide Web, is possible with leased lines or a radio modem. These services can run into hundreds of dollars a month. Also, there is fairly high-speed Internet access at the Hotel Armenia I Business Center. The rates are relatively steep, however. And the Armenia I charges roughly a dollar for every E-mail sent. Predictably, the Internet scene is changing all the time.

Radio and TV

There are several FM radio stations in Yerevan that play a variety of music-including Western-during the day. For English-language TV the best local option appears to be AA TV This is a line-of-site microwave "cable" system (not all residences have line of site). Installation is \$100 (this includes a \$50 refundable deposit on the antenna). The most popular option for expatriates is the \$20 per month 24-channel deal, which includes many English-language channels such as Discovery, The Movie Channel, TNT and Cartoon Network, MTV Europe, BBC, VH1, CNBC and National Geographic, and a few others. Note that not all 24 channels are in English.

There is local Russian and Armenian programming over VHF broadcast bands. In addition there are many broadcast satellites whose footprints cover Yerevan. Most of the programming is in languages other than English, but, with the proper dish and tuner, CNN International is available, as are NBC Europe, Euro News (with a digital tuner/decoder) BBC World Service and more.

Some Americans have paid to have satellite dishes and tuners installed in their residences. The cost is

\$300\$1,500. Employees often sell this equipment to incoming personnel. All the equipment required to receive satellite transmissions is available in Yerevan, and there is a reliable local contractor who can install it. Costs, however, must be born by the employee, both for hardware and installation.

Newspapers, Magazines, Books, and Technical Journals

There is only one local weekly paper publication that provides Armenian news in English: Noyan Tapan. However, there are more electronic options. The SNARK news service provides a daily paid E-mail subscription as do Armenpress and Azg.

The PAO Information Resource Center is a first class facility that maintains a healthy collection of current periodicals for on-site review (50 subscriptions). There are 1,000 books in the library as well as an up-to-date reference collection in hard copy and on CD. Many data bases are available. In the IRC a leased-line Internet connection may be used free of charge on a reservation basis for research and news gathering.

In addition, some Western periodicals in English may be reviewed at nearby English-language American University of Armenia Library.

Health

Hospitals

Malatia Medical Center, a general hospital with an intensive care unit and internal medicine department that meets minimum Western standards for cleanliness and, to some extent, technology. In sum, most average medical problems can be handled locally. If time allows, complex or unusual problems require medical evacuation to London for treatment.

Some dental clinics with acceptable standards have recently been identified. These clinics can provide routine cleaning, do simple procedures

as well as give emergency response. For complex dental work evacuation is still an option.

An English-speaking ophthalmologist has also been identified and is available for referrals. No suitable specialist in obstetrics has yet been identified.

Community Health

The city water supply is poorly treated, and tap water must be briskly boiled for 5 minutes before drinking.

A species of scorpion, which presents no serious health risk, is the source of much discussion. The truth is that for people without an allergic reaction the bite of this animal does not present a danger of death or serious injury. However, the bites of these creatures are often very painful and can cause prolonged swelling at the site of the bite as well as some systemic effects, such as nausea. These creatures have been found in some houses, particularly those in lower areas subject to moisture, but are really an outdoor pest. Store boots and shoes properly if you go camping and shake them out. Warn children not to turn over rocks. And, if you garden yourself, be careful.

A more serious outdoor danger arises from snakes. There are four species of poisonous snake in Armenia: the desert rattlesnake, the Asian rattlesnake, *vipera lebetina*, and *vipera dorevsky* (English common names unknown). Fifty-percent of all bites occur in children 12 years old or younger during the summer months of July and August. Camping is a popular recreation in the Foreign Service community here. Wear high boots and heavy long pants for treks and keep a sharp eye out. Children should be discouraged from playing in thick grass in high summer-even in some less developed parts of the city. Most large hospitals have antivenin.

Alcoholic beverages from state stores are considered safe, but throughout the CIS adulteration of bootleg alcohol (often sold in kiosks)

with poisonous wood alcohol is known. Armenia is famous for its brandies: buy them, and all alcohol, from reputable sources and check the state seal carefully.

Preventive Measures

There is a very serious microbial condition known as Brucellosis that can be contracted from some hoofed animals. One vector is unpasteurized milk from goats or cows. There have been outbreaks of this disease in Yerevan. Homemade Armenian cheese from village producers is the culprit. This rustic salty cheese should be purchased from quality stores and state-run markets, not from street vendors. It should be inspected for state seals. Cheese made in state factories is generally considered safe, as is imported cheese. Be cautious about unfamiliar cheeses at parties or eateries, particularly in the country. Yogurt and sour cream from state factories is considered safe. Again, be careful of village produce.

Giardia, a water-born intestinal bug, has from time to time been detected in city water. To be absolutely safe tap water should be boiled for 5 minutes before consumption. Local sparkling mineral waters like Bjni and Jermuk are considered safe, as are the bottled non-sparkling waters.

Malaria has been reported in some rural areas, especially along the Azerbaijan border. If traveling to the countryside check with the Health Unit for an update on the situation. Prevalence is low, but travelers to these areas should use insect repellent, cover up, and, if possible, avoid outside activity at dawn and dusk.

New arrivals should be aware that strenuous exercise at Yerevan's near mile-high elevation can take one by surprise, particularly if one leaves the relatively low-lying city center for the mountainous suburbs.

Armenia is notoriously dry. Humidifiers are supplied by GSO upon request. Order one for sleeping quarters. Also, stay well

hydrated in winter by drinking plenty of water or juice to help avoid upper respiratory complaints. These are common in Armenia.

Hats and sun block are a necessity for any prolonged activity outside in the summer.

Immunizations

Required immunizations for Yerevan include Typhoid, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. People who expect to be out in the country, or whose activities could put them in the way of a dog bite, might want to consider a preventive rabies series, although the disease is not reported.

Medicines

Familiar brands of Western style over-the-counter and prescription pharmaceuticals are not generally available in Yerevan, although some European products are to be found here. Substitutions are possible, but you have to know what you are looking for. Aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen are available. Bring a full supply of prescription medicines, favorite over-the-counter medications, and health supplies such as corn plasters or Ace Bandages. Arrange with a U.S.-based pharmacy to mail in continuing prescriptions.

Other Measures

Armenia is in an earthquake zone. Without being overly dramatic and with the full understanding that the possibility of an earthquake at any given place and time is statistically remote-it would nonetheless be prudent to review some materials on how to prepare for and how to behave during a seismic event. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has prepared an excellent fact sheet on the subject. Find it at the following World Wide Web address: <http://www.fema.gov/library/quakef.htm>

Basic precautions are to check for hazards in the home, identify safe places in each room and have disaster supplies on hand.

NOTES FOR TRAVELLERS

Five carriers currently serve Yerevan: Armenian Air, Aeroflot, British Air, Swiss Air and Vnukovo. (Vnukovo is not used for official travel). Since Aeroflot and Vnukovo flights come through Moscow-and there have been problems there-Armenian Air, British Air and Swiss Air are the only carriers generally used to get from Europe. American carriers are used, however, to get to those European cities where the flights to Armenia originate.

There are flights to Yerevan from Amsterdam, Athens, Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Paris and Zurich. These are not daily flights. On average, each city gets served two times per week. Armenian Air changes schedules with little notice. Currently, Northwest/KLM and Austrian Airlines are negotiating to provide service to Yerevan. The agreements are still pending, however. Scheduling flights to Yerevan via Moscow is discouraged due to a variety of transit problems.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Passport and visa required. For further information on entry requirements contact the Armenian Embassy at 2225 R St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008 tel. (202) 319-1976; the Armenian Consulate General in Los Angeles at 50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Suite 210, Beverly Hills, CA 90211, tel. (310) 657-6102 or visit the Armenian Embassy's website at <http://www.armeniaemb.org>.

Be aware that certain items are proscribed for export and should not be purchased and removed from Armenia without the permission of the

Ministry of Culture along with payment of a 100% duty. This includes old carpets, old manuscripts, and antiques. (Anything older than 50 years is subject to this levy and/or may be banned from export altogether.)

Pets

You may import pets to Armenia. No quarantine is imposed. Currently, a valid rabies certificate and a health certificate are required. Pets should be given a full range of inoculations before arrival. Be sure to check with all the airlines you use about requirements in transit. Be advised that pets must accompany passengers in the cabin on some Armenian Air flights. The cargo holds on the Russian jets it flies from some cities are not properly heated or pressurized for pets. Pets obtained here should be inoculated by one of the local veterinarians. Bring any specific medications for your pet.

Currency, Banking, Weights & Measures

The dram is the official currency. It is internally convertible. Currently, one U.S. dollar equals 545 dram. This rate is fairly stable, but the trend has been to weaken slowly against the dollar.

Armenia is a cash-based economy. Banks are not generally used. There is one international bank, HSBC, which operates a few VISA ATMs around town. (One is in the Armenia Hotel.) The HSBC Bank is located next to the Armenia Hotel on Buzand Street. If you are bringing U.S. cash to Armenia, make sure it is in good condition. Torn or marked bills might be refused, as might bills older than 1989.

American Express Travelers Checks are accepted at the largest of the hotels, but there are added fees.

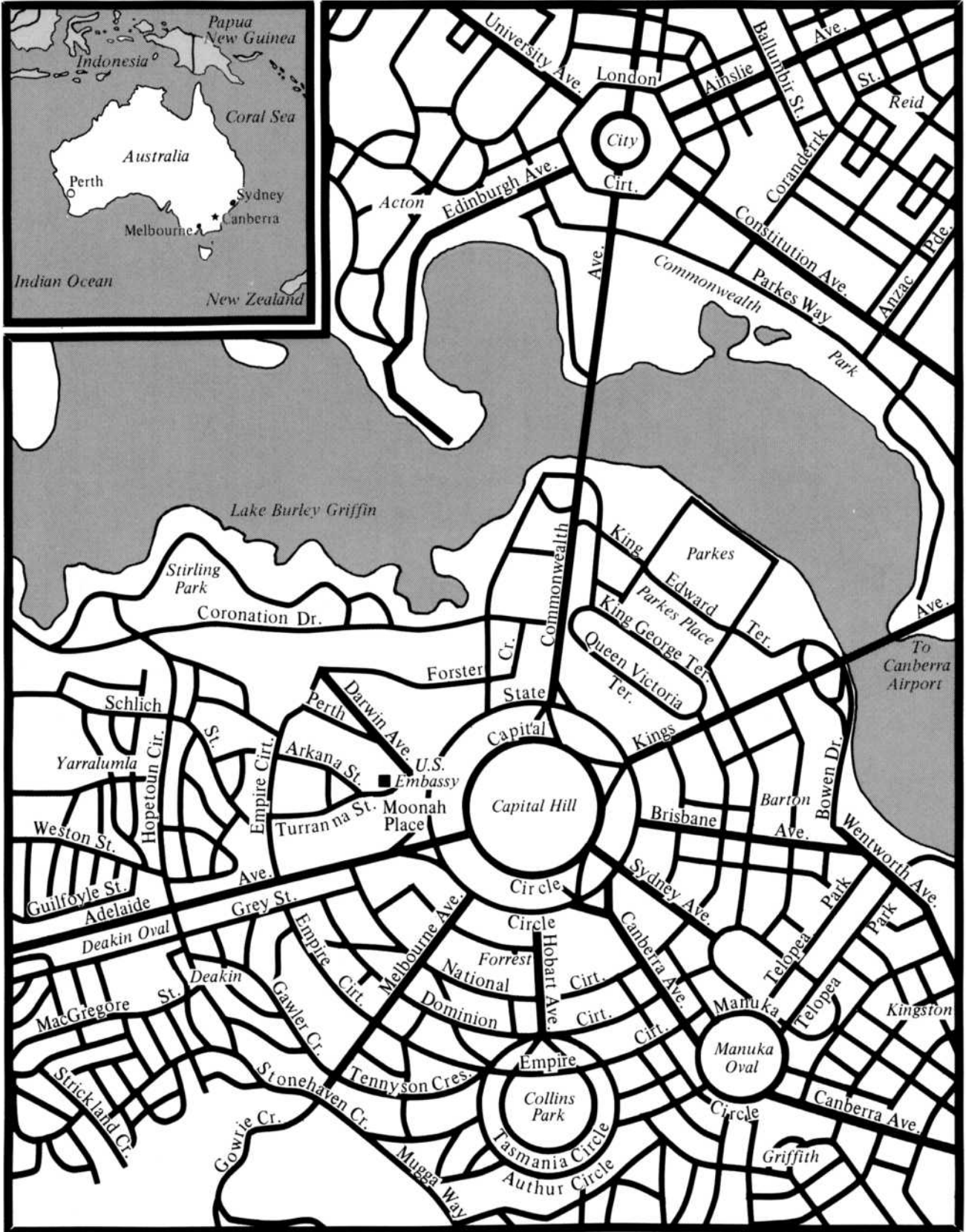
There are many money exchanges throughout Yerevan. They operate 7 days a week. By law all transactions must be in Armenian drams.

The metric system of weights and measures is used here. Fabric is bought by the meter, potatoes by the kilo, gasoline by the 20-liter container, and distances are measured in kilometers.

Americans who are living in or visiting Armenia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Armenia and obtain updated information on travel and security within Armenia. The U.S. Embassy in Yerevan is located at 18 General Bagramian Street, telephone 011 (3741) 151-551 and fax 011 (3741) 151-550. The consular section is open from 9:00 AM until 5:30 PM, with time reserved for American citizen services from 2:00 PM until 5:30 PM Monday through Friday

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 & 2New Year's Day
 - Jan. 6Christmas
(Orthodox)
 - Apr. 7Day of Beauty & Mother's
 - Apr. 24Genocide Memorial Day
 - Apr/MayEaster*
 - May. 1Labor Day
 - May. 9Victory and Peace Day
 - May. 28First Republic Day
 - Jul.5Constitution Day
 - Sep. 23Independence Day
 - Dec. 31New Year's Eve
- *variable



Canberra, Australia

AUSTRALIA

Commonwealth of Australia

Major Cities:

Canberra, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Adelaide, Hobart

Other Cities and Areas:

Alice Springs, Darwin, Fremantle, Geelong, Gold Coast, Newcastle, Tasmania, Wollongong

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

AUSTRALIA, the land "Down Under," is an island continent about the size of the United States mainland. Geologically, it is one of the oldest continents; in civilization, the most recent. Its 19.2 million people (2000 est.) enjoy a high standard of living in a country which is still in the process of developing its great natural resources.

Australia holds considerable interest and appeal for Americans: its culture, similar to that of the United States; its unique geology, flora, and fauna; its distinctive literature and history; and the striking contrast between the highly civilized foreground of the coastal cities and the outback of the bush. Its climate var-

ies from tropical to temperate, and the contrasts in its landscape are from rolling plain to alpine height.

Australia and the U.S. share common goals and similar approaches to most major foreign policy questions. Their frequent exchanges of views on world affairs in general, and the Asian-Pacific area in particular, are characterized by a high degree of mutual confidence and understanding.

MAJOR CITIES

Canberra

The national capital, Canberra (an aboriginal word meaning "meeting place"), is in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) in the southern tablelands of New South Wales. It is 1,900 feet above sea level with much of the surrounding mountainous terrain above 3,000 feet. Built to be the seat of the Federal government, Canberra is one of the most carefully planned and rapidly growing cities in Australia. It is often called the "garden city" because of its millions of trees and shrubs. The city is striving to become the nation's political, administrative, commercial, educational, and scientific hub. It is also a growing tourist center. Its

lake, national buildings, parks, and wide avenues attract over 500,000 visitors a year. In the heart of the city is man-made Lake Burley Griffin. Always an integral part of the city's master plan, the lake (11 km long with a 41 km shore line) was completed in 1964. Planned community shopping centers are in each suburb. Modern new buildings attest to the fast growth of the capital.

Wheat and dairy products are produced in the ACT; the surrounding tree-studded upland country is used for the most part for sheep grazing. Development is strictly controlled, and Canberra is affectionately called the "bush capital." To the south are the Snowy Mountains hydroelectric development and Mount Kosciusko (about 7,810 feet), the highest point in Australia. The highlands are timbered mainly with native eucalyptus and radiata pine planted by the Forestry Commission. The Molonglo River flows through Canberra, but much of the city's water supply comes from the Cotter River dam about 12 miles away.

Canberra's climate is sunny year round with only short periods of rain or overcast skies. Summers are warm, with temperatures occasionally above 37°C (98°F), evenings are usually cool. Winters are cold, with

early mornings often below freezing but warming up during the day. It almost never snows. January is the hottest month; July the coldest.

Food

There is an excellent range of food products at local markets and stores. Beef, lamb, pork, veal, chicken, fish and shellfish are of good quality and available year round, as are a wide range of fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products. All types of baby formulas and most canned goods, including baby foods, are available. Some Stateside favorites are unavailable.

There are American-style supermarkets in major shopping areas for one-stop shopping, and in addition smaller grocery/convenience stores are found in each suburb.

There are also butcher shops, news-agents, and markets for fresh fruit and vegetables in many suburbs. No post exchanges, commissaries, or group-purchasing arrangements exist in Australia.

Clothing

Most clothing needs can be met in Australia, but the range of sizes and choice of styles are not as great as in the USA. Good quality clothing is available but more expensive than in the United States. Department and discount stores stock reasonably priced clothing. Availability of sizes and reduced selection are more a consideration than is price. It is difficult to find shoes in narrow widths, or in extra wide or large sizes.

Men: Dress in Australia is similar to that in Washington, D.C. Many American men wear medium-weight suits of wool or woolen-synthetic mixtures year round. Heavier suits are worn in winter with comfort, particularly in Canberra. Sport coats are also worn. Lighter weight suits are comfortable in summer. Bring a light-to-medium-weight top-coat and/or raincoat.

Casual attire is very much the same as in the United States. Track suits are popular. A warm jacket is

needed for winter, but there is little need for a heavy parka except for skiing. Hats are needed for sun protection.

Women: Clothing styles are current, and influenced by U.S. and European designs, as well as some excellent Australian designers. Good quality women's clothing is available but more expensive than in the USA, and the selection and size range are more limited. Tall sizes in women's clothes are not widely available but some shops carry petite sizes. Clothing needs are very similar to the USA—casual for the most part, but more formal for office and official events.

Warm clothing is needed for colder months in Canberra. Clothes that can be layered are very useful. Most houses are chilly in winter so bring warm clothes for indoor wear. Many wear wool sweaters; some, thermal underwear. A light to medium-weight coat is sufficient. Australians wear hats of all kinds to protect against the sun in all seasons. A wide range of women's sunhats is available.

Dressmakers are difficult to find as well as expensive. Good quality lingerie is available. Hosiery is available but quality and sizes are different. A wide variety of fabrics are available but fabrics, sewing materials and patterns are also more expensive.

Children: Bring clothing for all seasons, although heavy winter clothing is not necessary unless skiing trips are planned. Snow is a rarity in Canberra, though winter nights are often below freezing.

Most public schools through grade 10 have a school uniform, which children are encouraged to wear. Therefore, a large wardrobe is often not necessary. Sneakers are popular in Australia and are often worn to school. For attendance at private schools, black or brown oxford-type lace-up shoes are required; they may be purchased locally. Almost all private schools require students to wear the school uniform, which for

older students often includes blazer (or suit) and tie in winter. After school clothing is much the same as is worn in the U.S. Jeans are popular but the name brands are expensive, so bring a supply.

Clothing for infants and preschool children is available, and at reasonable prices in the larger stores. Some U.S. brands are stocked but are expensive.

Supplies and Services

Some American-brand cosmetics, including Revlon, Elizabeth Arden, Lancome, Clinique, and Helena Rubenstein, are sold locally but are expensive. Paper products are available (albeit expensive), and the range is much greater than a few years ago. Table and bed linens are available in a limited range, sizes are slightly different, and high quality items are more expensive. Personal items for men, such as shaving supplies, etc., are sold locally; this includes several makes of electric razors. (If you bring an electric razor from the U.S., make sure it will run satisfactorily on the local current.)

Bring all needed baby furniture if practicable. Items such as bassinets, playpens, cribs, carriages, and high chairs are available but more expensive than in the U.S., as are large outdoor and indoor toys and play items.

Laundry and dry cleaning services are good. Dry cleaning services vary from 1 day to 1 week; 60-minute dry cleaners are also available. Coin-operated laundromats are available, and a few of these include coin-operated dry cleaning equipment.

Hair salon services are good, but hair dye colors are not the same even though they include name brands. Bring your own or have someone send from the U.S.

Religious Activities

Most faiths are represented in Canberra.

Education

Australian schools are a blend of British and American systems. The school year is the reverse of that in the U.S. It usually starts at the beginning of February and closes for a 6–8 week summer vacation in early to mid-December. There are short breaks of approximately 2 weeks at the end of each term in March/April, June/July and September/October.

Grade placement for children transferring from the Northern Hemisphere can sometimes be a problem. Each family and school assess each student individually, with placement related to the age of the student, and academic level. Some will advance half a grade, others will stay on in the same grade as in the USA. It is important to hand-carry up-to-date school records.

Australian schools through the secondary level fall into two broad categories: government-funded and operated public schools and private schools.

Public Schools: Schools are located in most suburbs of the city. In Canberra, children attend Preschool at age four, Primary School for Kindergarten through Year 6, and transfer to High School for Years 7 through 10. Students in Years 11 and 12 attend secondary colleges. Education is compulsory through age 15, but most students continue through Year 12. One secondary college in Canberra offers the international baccalaureate program for those students who are academically talented.

All five year olds and children turning five on or before April 30 in any year, enroll in Kindergarten at the beginning of that school year in early February. Public schools request a small parent contribution to cover the cost of special resources, sporting equipment and library books. Many primary schools in the ACT offer before and after school care.

Uniforms are not compulsory in public schools but most primary

schools have a uniform and actively encourage students to wear it. High schools have a dress color code. All public schools are coeducational and nonselective.

Private Schools: Most private schools are church-sponsored by either the Catholic or the Anglican Church of Australia, although membership in the sponsoring church is not a requirement for admission. It can be difficult to enroll children in private schools, as waiting lists may be long. Some private-school fees are expensive; however the educational allowance is adequate to cover most costs. Some of the private schools provide educational facilities from kindergarten through grade 12, others follow a structure similar to that of the public schools.

Testing: In some states, teachers rely heavily on examinations to grade students. In the ACT, Year 10 and Year 12 Certificates depend on a system of continuing assessment of student progress, including performance, tests, and written work. In addition, Year 12 students who study a certain quota of accredited courses and pass the Australian Scaling Test (AST) receive a Tertiary Entrance Statement which is recognized for entrance to tertiary institutions.

The U.S. College Board achievement tests can be taken in Australia. In Canberra, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and Achievement Tests are usually given twice a year.

Preschool: Preschool facilities, both privately run and government-sponsored, are available in most areas for four-year olds. The public preschools are generally located near the primary schools but operate separately with some parental help. There are Montessori, Steiner, French-Australian and Chinese-Australian preschools. In some areas there is a waiting list for preschool admission, especially in private schools. Play-groups are plentiful for children under 4 years.

Special Education: Canberra has several schools for children with

special educational needs from preschool through high school. Alternatively, students may be enrolled in small units attached to regular schools, or they may be mainstreamed. All public schools have some provision for needs of children with special skills and abilities as well as for children with learning or behavioral difficulties.

Higher education opportunities. There are two universities in Canberra—the Australian National University (ANU), an internationally recognized institution with a strong research orientation and large graduate program, and the University of Canberra (UC), with a full range of professional degree programs, including teacher and nursing degrees. Entry to both is competitive, but overseas students are accepted subject to satisfactory academic qualifications and availability of places. At present, both universities require U.S. educated students to have a U.S. High School diploma and a minimum of 1050 to 1100 in SAT scores, with much higher scores for entry to some degree courses. No “subsidized” fees exist for overseas students as for Australian students. Books, room and board are extra. Books, including school textbooks, are expensive.

Further educational opportunities are available through the Canberra Institute of Technology, which is a large multi-campus provider of a wide range of tertiary education and training courses. The CIT is part of the Australian TAFE (Tertiary and Further Education) system which is government-funded and provides vocational education and training programs to persons in the workforce, those who left school and members of the community. CIT offers more than 300 courses from certificate to diploma, through nine teaching schools. Fees vary by course. CIT opened a new hotel-management school in 1995, run in conjunction with Cornell University of New York. Planned to be a world-class provider, fees are substantially higher than regular CIT course programs.



Skyline of Brisbane, Australia

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Non-degree or diploma-level instruction is available in many subjects—through the Technical and Further Education Program at CIT, the Centre for Continuing Education at the ANU and many local secondary colleges. Costs are reasonable. Sports, computer training, arts, crafts, business courses, languages and homemaking skills are among the many subjects covered. Both evening and day instruction is available.

Recreation and Social Life

Once considered the “bush capital,” Canberra is now a thriving, cosmopolitan city without the traffic, pollution and major crime problems of many larger cities. It has been well planned, has excellent recreational amenities, and is becoming a significant stop for international tourists. There are frequent festivals, fairs, and exhibitions, the Royal Canberra show, a thriving symphony orchestra and philharmonic society, and frequent touring companies. The

Floriade festival in September/October is becoming recognized internationally.

Sports

Canberra is a very sports-minded city. Cricket, football, tennis, golf, swimming, and bowls are all popular. Also available are ice and field hockey, basketball, ballooning, rifle shooting, softball, horse riding, volleyball, cycling, fishing, ice skating, skiing, croquet, polo, squash, baseball, bushwalking (hiking), rowing, sailing, and soccer. Five versions of football are played—rugby league, Australian rules, rugby union, soccer and gridiron (American) football. The Canberra Raiders Rugby League team has a place in local culture similar to the Washington Redskins, and won the National Competition in 1994.

Dress for the various sports is similar to that in the U.S. and quality sports equipment is available but at higher-than-U.S. prices. Children’s

bicycles and sports items are available.

There are several public golf courses available as well as clubs that offer membership privileges.

Tennis, mostly hard court, is popular. Limited numbers of public courts are available but small clubs are inexpensive to join. Squash courts are also available.

The Australian Institute of Sport (A.I.S.) in Bruce is a world-class training facility with residential programs for athletes of many sports. Indoor and outdoor stadiums are located there and their swimming and other facilities are available for some public use.

Lake Burley Griffin in the center of the city is the focus of many water activities. There are several sailing clubs with races held each Saturday and Sunday during summer. The rowing clubs participate in regular rowing regattas, and dragon boat races have become a popular annual event for amateur teams. A tourist boat regularly provides cruises around the lake—some with meals. Powerboats are not permitted on the lake.

Some streams are stocked with rainbow and brown trout. Lake Burley Griffin is stocked annually with both species, which may be taken only with a line and rod. Good ocean fishing is available on the south coast of New South Wales, about 100 miles from Canberra. A fishing license is not necessary in the Territory or in New South Wales but both size restrictions and bag limits apply.

Swimmers have a choice of a number of pools in the city (indoor and outdoor) and a number of natural pools on rivers outside the city. Most offer swim lessons for children. Canberra is a 2-hour drive from the ocean and good, if chilly, surf beaches.

Most school children join one or more of the many sports clubs operating for children, which practice

once or twice weekly, and compete on weekends. In addition the YMCA and YWCA cater to children 8 years of age and older. Activities include basketball, volleyball, squash, judo, trampoline, gymnastics, yoga, etc. Also active are various church groups, scouts, girl guides, and the Canberra Police and Citizen's Youth Clubs.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Canberra area has a wide range of options for every member of the family. In the city, the major sites include the new and old Parliament Houses, the High Court, Questacon (the Science and Technology Centre), the National Gallery of Australia, the War Memorial and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Royal Australian Mint, the Australian National Library, and Regatta Point—a display center to explain Canberra's planned development. Also close by are a Dinosaur Museum, the National Aquarium and Australian Wildlife Sanctuary, the National Museum, Cockington Green (a miniature English village) and a number of other tourist attractions.

For those who like the outdoor life, there is Namadgi National Park plus many nature reserves and recreation areas for bush-walking, bird-watching, camping and barbecues. The Tidbinbilla game reserve, the NASA tracking station and a dry alpine slide are each about 45-minutes drive from Canberra. Many picnic spots with facilities at lake-side areas are available, as well as picnic grounds in the city, often equipped with free electric grills or firewood. There are also about 10 wineries to visit near the city. The only real problem with outdoor activities is the large number of flies in summer months, which can be bothersome.

There are many seaside resorts on the coast, 100-200 miles from Canberra, which are accessible by paved road. The beaches are beautiful and the drive, scenic. Accommodations are heavily booked during summer holidays.

Good skiing at about five resorts, as well as on cross-country trails, is available about 100-130 miles from Canberra in the Snowy Mountains. The ski season tends to be short. Equipment can be hired in Canberra, Cooma or at the ski resorts. The Snowy Mountains, location of the large Snowy Mountain hydroelectric development, is also an attractive area for summer recreation with camping, picnic and fishing areas, water sports, a llama farm, riding (both day or longer trail-rides) and other activities.

Entertainment

Except for opera, for which it is necessary to go to Sydney or Melbourne, it is possible to enjoy a wide range of cultural activities in Canberra very easily and relatively inexpensively. The Canberra Theatre Center, which has a theater seating 1,200 and a smaller playhouse, sponsors a full range of live theater with both local and touring companies and performers. The Canberra Repertory Group is one of several groups producing high-quality plays. The Canberra Symphony Orchestra and Musica Viva arrange a number of subscription concerts annually. Active music clubs and a number of other societies offer a wide variety of cultural and intellectual programs. The Canberra School of Music presents a number of concerts and recitals of near-professional caliber in Llewellyn Hall. Movie theaters show American, British, Australian, and continental films. Movie theater tickets are more expensive than the U.S.

Canberra has a casino, and a few nightclubs together with several discos and restaurants with live entertainment/dancing. There are more than 300 restaurants providing a wide range of ethnic cuisines. In addition, most Canberrans belong to social or sporting clubs which provide inexpensive restaurants for members as well as recreational facilities and slot/poker machine gambling.

Social Activities

Most social and official occasions enable Americans to mix freely with

Australians. Americans residing in Canberra include US Government employees and their families, research fellows at ANU, American spouses of Australian officials, and business representatives. Spouses of the Embassy's American personnel meet regularly and the Australian American Association has a range of events. Canberra's social life varies with the wishes of the individual. Active, outgoing individuals find little effort is required to be accepted by Australians or American coworkers. Living in Canberra is similar to living and working in any modern, Western city.

Brisbane

Brisbane, with a population of about 1.6 million (1999 est.), is the capital of Queensland. It is 13 miles from the coast and 80 miles north of the New South Wales border. Situated on the Brisbane River, it is virtually at sea level and the city area covers 471 square miles.

Brisbane is surrounded by hills and nestled near beautiful Moreton Bay. The landscape rises from the river banks through hilly suburbs and on to the 3,000 foot peaks of mountain ranges less than 30 miles away. Ten miles of meandering river, parks and gardens and a unique blend of historical buildings and sophisticated architecture combine to create the charm that is Brisbane.

Brisbane was first settled in 1823 and has been the capital of Queensland since the foundation of the State in 1859. In the last ten years the city has developed rapidly and is now an attractive, modern urban center of over one million people. The city's population remains predominantly of British origin. However, the non-Anglo Saxon group has grown considerably since World War II as a result of the Australian immigration program. It includes Dutch, Italians, Greeks, Germans, East Europeans, Chinese and Vietnamese. Approximately 9,000 Americans also live in Queensland, most of those in the south east corner of the State in and around Brisbane. A large number of these are



Aerial view of Melbourne, Australia

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ex-servicemen who married Australians during World War II.

During the last decade, the face of Brisbane has changed markedly. There is the new Queen Street Shopping Mall, the new Queensland Cultural Centre Complex, State Library and Museum and a host of new international hotels.

Brisbane's other main advantage is as a gateway to Australia's popular tourist playgrounds in the sun, on the beach (not more than 2 hours drive to the north or south), in the tropical rainforest hinterland and agricultural farms. Brisbane is 483km (300 miles) south of the Tropic of Capricorn and 22 km (13 miles) up the Brisbane River from the Pacific Coast at Moreton Bay.

A number of U.S. business firms are locating in Queensland bringing engineers, technicians and supervisory personnel. The number of

American tourists coming to the State continues to increase with the introduction of discount airfares on the Pacific routes and the attraction of the Great Barrier Reef, the beaches and the Australian outback. Queensland has three international airports at Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns.

Queensland boasts a subtropical climate and is one of Australia's sunniest capitals enjoying an average of 7.5 hours of sunshine a day.

Summer: September-May—Average temperature ranges from 66°F to 86°F.

Winter: June-August—Average temperature ranges from 42°F to 66°F.

Queensland has summer rainfall and dry winters. Many of the older homes are well designed to be cool in summer and do not need air-con-

ditioning. As there is also usually no central heating, these houses can be quite chilly during the short winter.

Clothing

As Queensland winters are short and fairly mild, dress appropriate for a Washington, D.C., spring/summer/fall will be appropriate year round for Queensland.

Supplies and Services

City Shopping: The main shopping streets in the city are the grid formed by Elizabeth, Queen and Ann Streets crossed by Edward, Albert and George Streets. The Queen Street Mall is located between Edward and George Streets and is the city heart for commerce, busy shoppers and workers. It features an information booth, outdoor restaurants, shaded seating and plenty of places to rest. Several large department stores in the city area offer most goods found in US department stores.

Suburban Shopping: Spacious drive-in suburban shopping complexes offer convenient air-conditioned shopping, including large supermarkets, clothing, electrical, and hardware stores, coffeeshops and delicatessens.

General Shopping Hours: In the city—8.15 am to 5 pm except on Fridays 8.15 am to 9 pm; Saturdays 8.15 am to 4 pm; on Sundays many (but not all) shops in the downtown area are open 9 am to 4 pm. In the suburbs—8.15 am to 5 pm except on Thursdays 8.15 am to 9 pm and Saturdays 8.15 am to 4 pm. Most larger stores are now open until 9 pm on weekdays.

Some small suburban "corner" stores have flexible hours and open from 7 am to 7 pm and often later. There are day and night chemists (drugstores) in the city and in most suburban districts.

Transport

The transport system in Brisbane is reasonably efficient with regular bus, train and ferry services. Taxis are also readily available for hire.

Education

State schools are considered very good at the elementary levels; some state high schools are also considered good. Students who have come from US schools with high academic standards may be advised to move ahead one grade in Queensland schools.

Churches play an important part in education in Brisbane and run most of the private schools.

School uniforms are generally worn at all junior schools, however they are not compulsory. The high schools normally require students to wear a uniform.

School holidays are of approximately 2 weeks duration with 6 weeks in December to January. Because of the school calendar, many families arriving from the northern hemisphere find a December/January transfer convenient.

Entertainment

Brisbane’s Queensland Cultural Centre is situated on the south bank of the Brisbane River and was completed in 1988. The complex houses the Queensland Art Gallery, the Queensland Museum, the State Library of Queensland and the Performing Arts Complex. The latter has a Concert Hall and Lyric Theatre each with seating for 2,000 people. The Brisbane Entertainment Centre, which opened in 1986, has seating for 13,000.

Because of the presence of both the Queensland Cultural Centre and the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, touring groups of international repute increasingly include Brisbane on their Australian schedules, including ballet, opera, chamber groups, larger ensembles and popular music groups. The Queensland Symphony Orchestra gives regular concerts and has internationally known guest stars. Live theatre is very popular in Brisbane and the Queensland Theatre Company performs first class productions regularly.

Many larger concerts and shows are held at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre at Boondall, some 30 minutes drive from the center of the city, which can seat approximately 13,000 people.

Restaurants: Brisbane restaurants are many and varied, ranging from large international class to small ethnic cuisine restaurants. Queensland’s seafood and tropical fruits are a major feature in many restaurants.

Tipping: Tipping is not compulsory in Queensland, nor is it a widespread practice. It is usual, however, to tip hotel porters, restaurant service and taxi drivers if they have helped with luggage.

Radio/Television: For home entertainment, national and commercial radio networks offer a variety of programs. Five all-color TV stations, including one noncommercial channel, broadcast a mixture of US, BBC and Australian programs. The fifth channel offers a wide range of multi-cultural programs. The TV system is PAL and is not compatible with the U.S. system.

Library: The State Library of Queensland consists of a reasonably well-stocked central library housed in the Queensland Cultural Centre, with several suburban branches. The Brisbane City Council also offers a well-stocked library to Brisbane residents, with branches in many suburbs.

Sports

Brisbane’s mild climate is extremely favorable for all forms of sporting pastimes and special events.

Australia’s favorite sports—cricket, Rugby Union, Rugby League and Australian Rules football—are all readily available in Brisbane.

In the city, tennis, golf, squash, cricket, badminton, bowling, lawn bowls, rugby, soccer, baseball, swimming, and flying are available. Deep sea and surf fishing are popular throughout the State, and the Great

Barrier Reef provides spectacular snorkeling and scuba diving. Water skiing and small boating are popular on the Brisbane River and inland lakes. Sailing and rowing competitions and regattas are held on the river and big boat enthusiasts may cruise the beaches of nearby Moreton Bay or the Pacific Ocean.

Camping or hiking (bushwalking) can be enjoyed in the rainforests or on the Darling Downs about 2 hours from Brisbane. There are camping sites with full facilities in all the National Parks in Queensland.

Waterfowl shooting in the Brisbane Valley is popular with hunters. Brisbane has an artificial ice skating rink, but skiing and other winter sports are not available.

Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast is only one and a half hours drive south from the city and offers miles of golden beaches, good surfing, water slides, fun attractions, shopping and restaurants.

One hour to the north, the Sunshine Coast offers quieter relaxation on equally beautiful beaches.

Horse racing is well catered for in Brisbane and there are regular trotting and greyhound racing meetings.

Most sporting equipment is available in Brisbane. Depending upon quality preferred, it may be expensive. Bring an initial supply with you. No particular taboos or special requirements exist for sports attire except that whites are required for lawn bowls and cricket.

As Brisbane was host to the Commonwealth Games in 1982, special sporting facilities were built such as the covered Chandler Swimming & Sports Centre and the QE II Sports Stadium.

Social Activities

Business and sporting clubs and organizations such as the American Chamber of Commerce, State Chamber of Commerce and Indus-

try, Rotary, Lions and the Australian-American Association offer excellent points of contact.

Melbourne

Melbourne is the capital city of the State of Victoria at the southeastern corner of the Australian continent and has a population of approximately 3.4 million (1999 est). The city sprawls on gently rolling terrain on the shores of Port Phillip Bay about 50 miles from the ocean. It is bisected by the Yarra River.

Melbourne's latitude of about 38 degrees south corresponds to that of Washington, D.C., and San Francisco; but the climate is more changeable, with warm days and cool nights. Although temperatures rarely drop below freezing, cold evenings and morning frosts do occur in the winter months. The usual summer pattern is a week of gradually rising temperatures culminating in a few hot days suddenly broken by the "cool change", which drops the temperature sharply and starts the cycle all over again. At any time of year the climate is highly changeable with rain, sunshine, heat, and cold sometimes all occurring in the same day. Because of the mild but variable climate, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania are well suited for a wide range of flowers and trees that bloom all year round. South Australia and Victoria are noted for their good wines. All three states are rich farming and livestock-producing areas. Victoria, and especially Melbourne and its nearby districts, is a major industrial area. There are several other important industrial areas in South Australia.

Melbourne is a major port city and rail hub, as well as a major center of industry, business, and finance. Its parks are magnificent, its streets are ample, and it is an easy city to get acquainted with and in which to move around. Because of its size and given the high number of cars per capita in Australia, traffic is a growing problem.

The center of the city, however, has numerous car parks and the local

transportation system of trains, trams, and buses is extensive. Taxicabs are clean, reliable, and easy to obtain.

The city has an impressive skyline. A recent construction boom resulted in a large increase in modern office and apartment buildings in the 15 to 50-floor category.

Australia's post World War II program of immigration has brought to Melbourne many "new Australians" from western and southern European countries. These have injected a continental influence that is noticeable in many ways in delicatessens, restaurants, shops, sports, music and cultural programs, as well as in the frequency with which foreign languages are heard.

Since the late 1960's there also has been a substantial influx of Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Lao and Indonesians which has broadened the city's ethnic and cultural base even further.

Nearly 75 percent of the approximately 20,000 Americans in the consular district are located in the Melbourne metropolitan area, with the rest scattered throughout the district.

Food

In Melbourne there are many supermarkets comparable to U.S. stores, such as Safeway. Imported items from the U.S. and Europe are available, but at higher prices than in the U.S. In addition, because of the large foreign population in Melbourne, there is an immense variety of delicatessens, butchers, and green-grocers specializing in Italian, Greek, Eastern European and Asian produce. Also some neighborhoods have country-style markets which are open several days a week. The largest, the Victoria market, sells everything from fresh fruits and vegetables to live chickens and sides of beef and lamb. Local seafood is excellent and varied, including good fish, oysters and crustaceans. The large saltwater crayfish, known as "rock-lobster" in

the U.S. is very expensive but worth it.

Many supermarkets such as Safeway are open until midnight, but there are several Coles supermarkets operating 24 hours a day. Smaller supermarkets may close around 7 pm. Almost all stores close at 5 pm on Saturdays. City Center shops are open Sunday 10 am-5 pm. "Milkbars" usually exist in the small neighborhood areas. Not only milk, but also other dairy products and "emergency" food items are available at these small stores all weekend. Some grocery stores and butchers will take telephone orders and deliver either free or for a very small charge. For large shopping orders, there is a "half case" outlet next to the parking lot at Prahran Market just off Chapel Street and Malvern Road (see Melway). Similar stores exist in various suburbs; these are listed in the Melbourne telephone directory.

Education

The school year in the state of Victoria runs from late January or early February through early December. The year is divided into four terms with two to three week intervals between terms. The first term ends about Easter, and the other breaks are usually in late June and early October.

In Melbourne most American children attend private nondenominational or church-related schools which are generally considered to be academically superior to the public schools (known in Australia as "state schools"). There is a great variety of these schools, but most American students have attended only a few of these. Sometimes pre-admission examinations are required, but most schools reserve a number of places for the children of temporary consular or business residents, who are admitted without any special formalities. Admission, which depends on the child's scholastic record and existing vacancies in various grades, is most easily obtainable at the beginning of the school year in late January or February.

Students at most private schools wear school uniforms. A substantial initial outlay of approximately 300 U.S. dollars is usually needed to equip a child with the school basics, including regulation shoes, blazers, ties, socks, and gym equipment.

Differences between the American and Australian educational systems are most pronounced at the secondary level, particularly in the last two years of high school. Subjects are roughly comparable up until year ten, although there is probably a smaller choice of subjects in Australian schools.

At least two high schools and a small number of private schools in Melbourne have introduced the international baccalaureate, an internationally recognized high school diploma equivalent to most European secondary school leaving certificates. The international baccalaureate usually requires students to pursue a rigorous course of study in a number of academic areas. Many American universities grant advanced standing to students who obtain the international baccalaureate.

Recently the state of Victoria introduced a new high school diploma which requires students to follow a special course of study in both years 11 and 12. It is known as the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and is being introduced over a period of years beginning in 1990. A controversial issue with many secondary and university educators in Australia, the VCE was introduced to allow more flexibility in subject matter for students in the last two years of high school. In addition to the regular course of study, it requires students to undertake a number of independent study projects, which are graded within the high school; but there is also a major external examination which students take upon completion of year 12 to obtain the VCE.

It should be emphasized that the VCE is intended to comprise a two-year study unit in years 11 and 12. Therefore, students planning to

attend high school in Melbourne in either of these two years would be well advised to obtain specific information from the schools of their choice regarding their special circumstances.

A good grade in the VCE and good high school grades would normally enable a student to gain admission to most American universities.

Clothing

Clothing prices in Australia are high by U.S. standards.

No matter when one arrives in Melbourne there is always the question of what weight clothes to put on—and by the time a decision is reached, the weather has changed completely! Generally speaking, the sweater, light coat or jacket which can be removed is a successful formula, whether it is winter, spring or autumn. Even in the summer either a long-sleeved cotton or a sleeveless dress with light sweater or short-sleeved jacket will be useful.

In the winter months (June-August), skiing is possible about 160 miles from Melbourne, so some “winter” clothing would be appropriate to wear for weekends on the slopes or just looking.

Melbourne has been known to experience all four seasons in one day. There is quite a lot of wind most of the year. In summer, Melbourne has a typical Mediterranean climate, except that the summer is as changeable as the rest of the year, so that hot weather alternates after four or five days with a cool change, and then back again. The following is a rough estimate of temperatures (in degrees Fahrenheit):

- Winter—June 21st through September 21. Daytime averages 57 degrees, nights in low 40's, rarely down to 32 degrees (if so, only for an hour or so); considerable rain and wind, no snow.

- Spring—September 22nd through December 21. Weather very changeable with some beautiful days about 75 to 80 degrees then

a spell of colder weather again; daytime average 67 degrees; can be windy.

- Summer—December 22 through March 21. A few hot days around 100 degrees with sudden changes to moderate weather. Nights generally cooler. Daytime average 77 degrees; breezes.

- Autumn—March 22 to June 21. Best weather; not much wind; average daytime 65 to 70 degrees. Nights around 60 degrees.

(These dates are obviously the reverse of seasons in the Northern Hemisphere which seems to be more easily understandable and logical to North Americans; the Australians tend to use the beginnings of the respective months, rather than the 21st in referring to their seasons.)

Sports

Australians are outdoor sports enthusiasts and Australia is noted for fielding “world class” sports teams. In Melbourne, golf and tennis are the most popular participant sports and are played year round. Sailing, swimming, fishing, surfing, and skin-diving are also popular. Good ski slopes abound in the mountains about 160 miles east of Melbourne. Australian-rules football is a spectacle which attracts huge crowds in the winter season, as does cricket in the summer. Soccer is increasing in popularity with the influx of “new Australians” from European countries. There is a growing national professional basketball association (similar to the American NBA) and amateur basketball and baseball are played at schools or various club organizations. Melbourne has both private and public golf courses and the best of these, such as the Royal Melbourne Golf Club, are among the world's finest.

Sports equipment of all kinds is available locally, including many well-known brands from England, Germany, Japan, and the U.S. The broad range of different types of equipment makes it difficult to com-

pare local and U.S. prices, but most sporting goods, including golf carts and tennis gear, are much cheaper in the U.S.

Tennis clubs are numerous and excellent; both grass and composition courts are available. Some tennis clubs admit children. There are several yacht clubs on Port Phillip Bay.

Deep sea, lake and river fishing are possible in this vast consular district. Small boats may be chartered in Melbourne or the suburbs for any type of fishing. Trout fishing is especially good in Tasmania. Hunting (or "shooting" as it is called in Australia) of ducks, birds, and some animals is possible in many areas. Target shooting can be arranged through one of the various rifle clubs.

Australian regulations no longer allow the importation of firearms of any sort.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

There are many one or two-day trips to be made near Melbourne. Plans, maps and general tourist information for short or long tours may be obtained from the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV), which provides road and other services for its members similar to those provided by the American Automobile Association, and from Victour.

We also recommend Blair's Guide to Victoria.

Roads outside the major cities are generally two-lane and are well maintained and provided with services such as wayside stops and gas stations.

Among the outstanding attractions in Melbourne are the attractively landscaped Royal Botanical Gardens. Because of the climate here, all tropical, sub-tropical and temperate zone trees, plants and flowers can be grown. Most are informatively labelled. The National Gallery, part of Melbourne's new Arts Center, has a

choice Far Eastern collection, as well as splendid representation from other parts of the world. There is an excellent group of Australian Impressionist paintings. The several National Trust Houses in and around Melbourne are well worth a visit. The National Museum has an excellent scientific collection.

In addition to a well-stocked zoo in Melbourne where one can find a good section of Australian fauna, as well as new and imaginative areas being built for animals from all over the world, there is an excellent wildlife sanctuary at Healesville about 40 miles northeast of Melbourne in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. There one can see the shy lyre bird, emus, wombats, and opossums, walk among tame kangaroos and wallabies, see koala at close range, and watch the duck-billed platypus in a specially-constructed tank.

Taking the back road to Healesville one can get a splendid overall panorama of Melbourne from Kangaroo Ground War Memorial Tower, just 10 miles north of the City. (For kangaroo viewing go on to Sir Colin Mackenzie Sanctuary at Healesville referred to above.)

Phillip Island, about 85 miles southeast of Melbourne, is a popular summer resort where seals, fairy penguins, koalas and other wildlife can be seen in their natural habitat. Many people make at least one overnight trip to watch the fairy penguins march in from the sea at dusk.

The Dandenong Ranges, about 20 miles east of Melbourne are attractive to explore on short day trips. Gippsland, an area of wooded hills and rolling dairy country beginning just southeast of Melbourne, is relatively little-known as a tourist attraction, but drives through this nearby area provide many opportunities to see flora and fauna of Victoria in its natural state.

Further to the southeast, about 150 miles, is Wilson's Promontory, the southern extremity of the Australia-

lian mainland. It comprises 116,000 acres of National Park which makes an ideal spot for walkers and swimmers. Flats and lodges of varying bed capacities are also available for hire at Tidal River within the Promontory. Arrangements for the rental of these accommodations are made through Tourism Victoria. There are also several small towns nearby where one can find adequate motel accommodations.

Facilities for campers with tent or trailer are good in all populated areas of Australia. Most campsites have toilet and shower blocks with hot water and laundry facilities. Trailers can be rented on the spot as well. Skin divers will find ample opportunity to pursue their hobby. To recapture the flavor of the gold rush era, day trips are possible to Ballarat and Bendigo, two old Victorian mining towns an hour's drive west and northwest of Melbourne, respectively.

The beaches inside Port Phillip Bay run over 50 miles from Melbourne down the Mornington Peninsula; the nearest ocean surf beaches are just outside the Bay about 1 1/2 hours' drive. The drive along the Peninsula, inside or out, is quite lovely with varied views. Sharks do appear along some of these beaches, but are less of a problem here than elsewhere in Australia. Many of the more popular public beaches have "shark watch" personnel as well as lifeguards on duty.

An interesting day or weekend trip by car by to Lake Eildon, about 90 miles northeast of Melbourne. This is Victoria's biggest man-made lake which was built to irrigate a vast area of northern Victoria, reaching as far as the Murray River. Set in the Upper Goulburn River Valley, Lake Eildon has an area of 50 square miles and picturesque 320-mile shoreline. It is ideal for water sports. Houseboats can be rented for a weekend or longer for great family vacations. In this area there is also a chance to see native wildlife.

Auto trips to the Australian Alps to see the Snowy Mountain hydroelec-

tric power project take about six hours and good overnight accommodation is available.

The Great Ocean Road along the southern coast of Victoria to the west is a delightful way to get to South Australia. Special scenic attractions are the "Twelve Apostles" and Loch Ard Gorge, stark rock formations set in the midst of surging tides. Inland from the cliffs and beaches are the rain forests of the Otway Range with their tall, stringy-bark eucalyptus trees and tree ferns. Over the South Australian state border are volcanic lakes, limestone caves with recent exciting finds of extinct marsupial lions and giant kangaroos. The inland marshes are full of black swans, egrets and ducks. Further to the north, Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, is a beautiful city set in an amphitheater of wooded hills. The new music and art center is the focus for the Adelaide Festival which attracts talent from all over the world.

Returning from Adelaide, or a special trip on its own, a stop in the Grampians, low ranges of rocky mountains in Western Victoria, is especially worthwhile during springtime when there is a vast array of wildflowers carpeting the area.

Entertainment

Melbourne has many theaters whose productions include many musicals and plays from Broadway and London, sometimes with imported casts or stars, but more often with excellent local talent. There are also several repertory companies which present regular seasons runs up to five or six weeks for each play. The Victorian Arts Centre has lavish facilities for concerts, theater, opera and dance on a par with the Kennedy and Lincoln Centers.

Melbourne has an excellent symphony orchestra with a regular season. There are also several music societies which regularly present good opera, ballet and symphony concerts. The Melbourne Arts Festi-

val, modeled after Italy's Spoleto Festival, takes place in September. In addition, many times during the year there are visiting orchestras, chamber music groups and soloists. A series of outdoor "Music for the People" concerts is given by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in the summer months at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. Top jazz, rock and roll, and country and western bands from the U.S. and Europe perform regularly.

Several film societies present old and new films on a monthly basis. Some have special film festivals of a week or so duration. Also, special programs featuring returns of old favorites are very popular. This is, of course, in addition to the usual run of contemporary films presented on a public basis throughout all of Greater Melbourne. There is a Melbourne Film Festival in May with films from all over the world.

In Melbourne there are five TV stations; many AM and several FM radio stations. Classical music and news programs are available throughout the day and evening as well as the usual "top ten" tunes.

The Melbourne Cup horse race in November is considered to be Australia's outstanding race meeting of the year and is a major holiday and social event. The Davis Cup playoffs or finals often are held in Melbourne in December. The Australian Tennis Open is held in January. The Royal Agricultural Show is held in September. The annual Moomba carnival, celebrated each year in March, is sponsored by the City of Melbourne, with many varied exhibitions during a week-long program. Memorial events include observance of the battle of the Coral Sea in May and ANZAC Day in April.

Social Activities

Social activities vary according to responsibilities, desires and opportunities within a personal or family pattern.

The Australian-American Association (AAA)—Its aim is to promote close ties between Australians and

Americans. Coral Sea Week (now known as Australia-America Week) has been celebrated together for many years, either at balls, dinners, luncheons or all-day picnics. Other occasions follow a similar pattern.

The American Club of Victoria—Its principal purpose is to mark the main American holidays. It organizes for its members a Memorial Day Service at a church followed by a reception at the Consul General's residence. For Americans and their Australian guests, the Club arranges a Thanksgiving Dinner at a local hotel.

The American Women's Auxiliary to the Royal Children's Hospital—Its main objective is the raising of funds to support a ward, and to help pay for materials and equipment, in the Hospital. Members may also do volunteer work in the hospital canteen or with the children themselves. The Club also serves as a welcoming group for Americans coming into the community, particularly American businessmen's wives.

The Auxiliary is open primarily to women of the Consulate General. The main social activities of this group are monthly luncheons with speakers, a rummage sale once a year and a Fourth of July Ball (usually held on the 5th).

There are men's clubs in and around Melbourne; some offer honorary memberships. There are the usual service clubs for men as well.

Some Americans have joined the American Branch of the Australian Red Cross and some participate in the activities of the English Speaking Union. Melbourne also has Rotary, Lions, Toastmaster, Kiwanis, and Apex Clubs.

Perth

Perth, with a population of about 1,364,000 (1999 est.), is the capital of Western Australia, the largest of the Australian States.



View of Perth from King's Park.

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Perth entered into a stage of modern development during the economic expansion of the 1960s and early 1970s. Prior to then, Perth was one of the most isolated cities in the world, separated even from Australia's Federal capital by more than 2,100 miles. Road, rail, ship, and air services now provide a constant and quick interstate and international link. Modern communications and technology provide the instantaneous information demanded by a modern community.

Foreign capital, much of it from Japan, China, South East Asia, and the U.S., is spurring this economic growth and Perth has become a commercial and industrial complex in its own right. Perth's function as an administrative center for the vast hinterland remains all-important.

Perth is an attractive, modern city in the midst of residential expan-

sion. Large areas of natural bush have been bulldozed to meet the demands of growth, and freeways connect the towering office blocks of the central business district and the suburbs. Flanked by thousands of new homes, roads and highways radiate out from the city center. Attractive residential areas front the Swan River and the Indian Ocean.

White, sandy beaches are accessible from most parts of Perth.

All the consumer goods and the modern comforts of life are available in Perth, but they are expensive. Many goods are manufactured in the eastern States and reflect the high cross-country transport costs.

U.S. firms are well represented through branch offices, subsidiary companies and agencies. Their interest is primarily in the oil and

gas, and alumina mining areas. Approximately 7,000 Americans live in Western Australia.

Perth has one of the best climates in Australia. It is the sunniest of the State capitals, receiving an average of 8 hours sunshine a day. It has the wettest winters and the driest summers, with an average rainfall of 33 inches. Temperatures average about 73°F in summer and about 55°F in winter. In summer a number of days of above 100°F temperatures are to be expected, but low humidity and evening sea breezes make most summer nights comfortable. With winter rainfall and a lack of central heating, winter can feel chilly.

Food

Perth supermarkets are similar to their U.S. counterparts and are stocked with most varieties of food-stuffs required by the American consumer. Meats, fresh fruits, and

vegetables are plentiful and reasonably priced. Paper products and cleaning supplies are expensive.

Clothing

Perth is a relaxed city and clothing is similar to that of southern California. Sundresses, slacks, jeans, T-shirts, and shorts are all in evidence as are smart luncheon dresses, tailored suits, and, sometimes, hats. For work most men still wear coat and tie, even in hot weather. Evening attire is similarly varied, ranging from long gowns to short cocktail dresses.

Perth has a budding fashion industry. Clothing of all types, including many international brands, are available in Perth stores; however, the cost is greater and the selection smaller than in the U.S. The same is true for underwear and children's clothing.

Supplies and Services

Several large department stores in the downtown business district offer most goods found in U.S. department stores. Also, spacious suburban centers offer convenient shopping in air-conditioned malls. These shopping centers and downtown stores close at 5 pm on weeknights and Saturday, except Thursdays, on which there is "late-night shopping" until 9 pm. The downtown mall and larger suburban centers are open on Sundays. Convenience stores stay open longer but charge higher prices.

Stores are well stocked. With the growth of the State's population, more goods are being produced in western Australia instead of being shipped from eastern Australia or overseas. Consumer prices in Perth are higher than for the eastern U.S. and higher than the U.S. average.

Religious Activities

Religion in Perth is predominantly Christian. Of the population, 26 percent are Anglican, 25 percent Roman Catholic, and 5 percent Uniting. All churches hold regular services and Sunday school and offer religious instruction to their members. Judaism is the chief non-

Christian religion; the Jewish community is active. Recent immigration from Indochina, the Middle East, and the U.S. has broadened religious philosophies, there are now several Moslem mosques as well as churches of Seventh-day Adventists and the Latter-Day Saints.

Education

Educational opportunities, both formal and informal, are available to suit practically all interests. Four major universities provide tertiary and post graduate degrees. Technical, vocational and recreational learning centers abound as Perth services both the burgeoning population of Western Australia as well as several countries of Southeast Asia.

Perth churches play an important part in education and operate the major private schools.

Sports

Sporting facilities are excellent for tennis, golf, sailing, and all water sports. Horse racing, trotting, and dog racing are popular year round. Car racing, Australian rules football, and cricket are also popular spectator sports. Many sporting associations and public facilities are available for golf, tennis, lawn bowling, surfing, boating, and sailing. Membership is obtainable and inexpensive. Fishing, water skiing, biking, hiking, ten pin bowling, and rollerblading are also popular. Indoor rinks also make it possible to pursue ice skating and ice hockey. Baseball, softball, basketball, and soccer are also very popular.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Good highways can speed the motorist to most areas of the State. The West Australian outback has some magnificent and rugged scenery. With the onset of spring, the wildflowers bloom in abundance, blanketing the State in blossoms.

Entertainment

Entertainment facilities in Perth are much like those one would

encounter in a U.S. city of similar size. The library system consists of a well-stocked central library with numerous suburban branches. The State library also provides an information service.

Perth's principal museum, the Western Australian Museum, is devoted mainly to natural history, but it also has an interesting collection from pioneering days. It runs a children's center during the school holiday. The Western Australian Art Gallery has an interesting collection by many Australian artists. The city also has several private galleries. The port city of Fremantle has an excellent maritime museum.

Perth's concert hall and entertainment center attract artists of international renown. Excellent theaters on the University grounds as well as the refurbished His Majesty's Theater offer all forms of entertainment from classical to popular.

The city has five color TV stations, nine AM radio stations, and five FM stations. Numerous movie theaters show movies throughout the city and suburbs.

The Festival of Perth, held annually in February, attracts artists, plays, and exhibits from all over the world.

Social Activities

Western Australians are known for their friendliness. Sporting clubs and organizations such as Rotary and Lions offer excellent points of contact. The Australian-American Association and the American Women's Club provide opportunities for social involvement. Large organized social affairs are more formal than in the U.S. and long dresses or formal cocktail attire is worn.

The backyard barbecue is an institution in Perth because of the great weather and many invitations can be expected.

Sydney

In many ways Sydney is like San Francisco, with old homes perched

alongside modern apartment buildings on hills overlooking picturesque bays and coves. It has an international seaport with a scenic harbor, dominated by a famous bridge, and the world-famous opera house. In other ways, the city resembles Los Angeles, with its pleasant climate and informal outdoor life. The mean temperature in Sydney ranges from 56°F in winter to 74°F in summer.

Sydney is the capital of the State of New South Wales. It is also Australia's largest city (about 4 million people, 1999 est.), and is situated on the magnificent harbor of Port Jackson. It was the first European settlement in Australia, settled in 1788 as a penal colony. Sydney was named for Thomas Townsend, the first Viscount Sydney, Secretary of the Home Department, responsible for colonial affairs when New South Wales was founded.

The city grew rapidly with the arrival of free settlers; establishment of wool and wheat industries in New South Wales; gold rushes; building of road and rail networks focusing on Sydney Harbor; and the development of commerce, industry, and banking. The growth was largely unplanned, and the winding narrow streets and jumbled buildings add to Sydney's charm while aggravating traffic problems.

The city is built on an undulating low land south and west of Port Jackson and some steeply scarped sandstone plateaus north of the harbor and along the coast. The higher areas are 487–682 feet above sea level. The harbor has many bays, inlets, and coves with about 180 miles of shoreline. Most of the shoreline has been developed, but some areas have been set aside for parks, recreation areas, and reserves. Harbor Bridge, a single span steel arch known as the "coat hanger," and an underwater tunnel connect the north and south shores.

Food

As in Canberra, most foods are readily available. Supermarkets, as well as specialty shops, are found in

the city and suburbs. Some "American" food staples, such as Crisco, Bisquick, corn meal, and Mexican specialties, can occasionally be found in more expensive "international food" sections of stores.

Clothing

Sydney has a milder climate than its sister cities to the south. However, personnel often travel to the other areas of Australia. We suggest bringing some clothing suitable for tropical climates to the north and for the southern winters. For Sydney, clothing suitable for San Francisco is appropriate most of the year, though summers tend to be hotter and muggier.

Education

All public or government schools in Sydney are controlled by the New South Wales Department of Education. Non-government schools are usually church-sponsored, but they must follow courses and conform to the examinations of the State government system. Uniforms are usually required.

The school year begins in February and is divided into four terms; a break of approximately 2 weeks occurs between each term (April, July, September), with the long vacation (summer holidays) occurring in December/January. Both public and private schools follow this yearly pattern with only minor variations.

Grade placement is usually determined by the student's age, previous experience, and overall academic ability.

Free passes for use on public transport on buses and trains are provided for all children traveling more than 1 mile if they are attending the nearest appropriate school. This service is also provided to children attending private schools with no restriction on distance but with restrictions as to the outer limits on the transport system.

Sports

Sydney's outdoor sports facilities are equalled by few cities of its size

in the world. Beaches on the ocean north and south of the harbor entrance offer swimming, surfing, and beach sports from October through March. The harbors and rivers in the area are favorites for sailing and water skiing. The shark menace has been widely publicized, but no one has been attacked in the harbor for over 10 years, and beaches and offshore waters are patrolled.

Sydney is a sailor's paradise. The harbor is filled with small boats every weekend. Sailboats and power boats can be purchased locally, but prices are higher than in the U.S. prices.

Skiing is growing in popularity, though the season is limited to June-August and sometimes September. Ski resorts are 6 hours or more from Sydney by car. You can rent equipment.

The city is full of magnificent golf courses, both public and private, and tennis courts are numerous. Squash is a popular local pastime and squash courts are available at many clubs and at several large commercial facilities. The leading spectator sports are cricket and rugby football. Baseball also has been popular for many years, particularly in the western suburbs of the city, and a regular amateur league has teams throughout Australia. Basketball is growing rapidly in popularity. Indoor rinks also make it possible to pursue ice skating and ice hockey.

Hiking (bush walking) is popular, as is amateur prospecting in some of the old gold or opal fields in the interior of the State.

Saltwater fishing is good, and several streams and lakes offer freshwater fishing. Hunting most animals and birds is controlled, and hunters are often confronted by animal rights activists.

Touring and Outdoor Activities:

A number of pleasant picnic spots exist both within and near the city.

One of the favorites is the Royal National Park, about 30 miles south. Sydney has an excellent park system. Most suburbs have park and playground areas for children that are owned and controlled by local councils. You can reach the Sydney Zoological Gardens at the Taronga Park by car, bus, or ferry. The zoo, in a beautiful setting overlooking the harbor, is world famous for its collection of Australian fauna. A world-class aquarium is located at Darling Harbor, and another one in the North Shore suburb of Manly.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Art Gallery of New South Wales, and the Australian Museum offer interesting and educational exhibits and are close to the city center. The magnificent Blue Mountains are less than a 2-hour drive to the west, and beaches on the south coast are popular vacation or weekend trips.

Entertainment

Sydney has many movie theaters, including large downtown and neighborhood first-run cinemas. Most films are English or American, but foreign-language films are also shown. Most films are seen here soon after release.

The legitimate theater retains its hold on the affection of Sydney-siders, and at least five or six stage productions are usually going on simultaneously. Productions include reviews and musicals, as well as drama and experimental plays. Some small, independent theaters in the suburbs have had successful productions and have become locally well known.

Australian ballet and opera companies have regular seasons in Sydney. Sydney's world-famous Opera House at Bennelong Point was opened by Queen Elizabeth on October 20, 1973. It contains concert halls, restaurants, and theaters, as well as the opera theater, and is the focal point for cultural entertainment in Sydney. Both the ballet and opera maintain international standards and have successfully tour abroad. Public support is wide-

spread and bookings should be made in advance. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra has a 6-month season and often has foreign guest soloists or conductors. World-class touring orchestras, chamber music groups, and soloists appear frequently.

Outdoor fairs include the Royal Easter Show and the Autumn Sheep Show. Other important events are the City of Sydney Festival in January, ANZAC Day Parade and commemoration ceremony in April, and the Australian-American Friendship Week in May. No unusual guidelines, etiquette requirements, or photographic restrictions apply to these activities.

Social Activities

Social contacts of Americans range from informal home visits to more formal meetings and an occasional full-dress ball. Except for small gatherings, however, few functions consist exclusively of Americans. Several Australian-American organizations are active in Sydney. The most prominent organization for promoting bilateral relations is the Australian-American Association (AAA), which sponsors an annual Friendship Week Ball, 4th of July activities and other social functions during the year.

The American Society and its affiliate, the American Women's Club, also have large and active memberships and welcome new arrivals to their ranks. The Society holds an Independence Day Celebration, an annual picnic, and other social events keyed to traditional American holidays, or to benefit worthy causes.

An American Legion chapter is active in Sydney. Another successful local organization is the American Club, a downtown eating club, a majority of whose members are now Australians.

The social club is a prominent feature of Sydney life. Clubs cover every form of activity from golf and tennis to lawn bowls, ethnic societies, and rugby league clubs. Since

slot machines are legal on club premises in New South Wales, many of the larger clubs have used this income to subsidize club activities and have low membership fees and lavish facilities—including indoor swimming pools, nightclubs, moderately priced meals, and such auxiliary activities as sports tournaments and charter group travel arrangements. Until recently, club life was predominantly a male phenomenon. But now women are admitted to full or associate membership in most institutions.

Sydney is a cosmopolitan city, and contacts with third-country nationals are frequent in the course of normal official or social activities.

Adelaide

Adelaide, founded in 1837, is the capital and principal city of South Australia. It was named for the consort of Britain's King William IV, and was the first city in Australia to be incorporated (1840). Now a thriving municipality of over 1 million inhabitants, it is a business and commercial center which supports a large export trade (Port Adelaide is only seven miles from the city), and which boasts a relatively new complex for the performing arts, the Adelaide Festival Centre. The Centre hosts Australia's premier performing arts festival. Adelaide is also the site of the annual Australian Formula One Grand Prix.

The city lies on the River Torrens, in an amphitheater of wooded hills. Its numerous parks and gardens provide the setting for an interesting mixture of colonial architecture and large, modern buildings. The University of Adelaide, more than a century old, is located here, as is Flinders University of South Australia, which was founded in 1966. Adelaide is noted for its many churches, including St. Peter's Anglican Cathedral. The South Australian Museum contains the world's largest collection of aboriginal artifacts.

One of the major tourist attractions in Adelaide is the huge Central



Sydney Opera House.

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Market, the largest produce market in the Southern Hemisphere. Shopping centers, where aboriginal arts and crafts may be purchased, and good hotels and restaurants have helped to increase business and tourism in the city. The South Australia Government Tourist Bureau conducts tours of the city and its environs and also of the Barossa Valley wine-producing district, where a vintage festival is held in odd-numbered years.

Warm-weather sports are particularly popular in Adelaide's climate. There are many cricket fields and tennis courts (Davis Cup matches are held here). Among the other popular sports are lawn bowls, golf, racing, water sports and, in the winter, football.

From Melbourne, the Great Ocean Road along the southern coast of Victoria to the west is a delightful way to get to South Australia, and on to Adelaide. Inland from the

cliffs and beaches are the rain forests of the Otway Range with their tall, stringy-bark eucalyptus trees and tree ferns. Over the South Australian border are volcanic lakes and limestone caves, with recent finds of extinct marsupial lions and giant kangaroos. The inland marshes are full of black swans, egrets, and ducks. The trip is fascinating, and lures many tourists to this part of the Australian continent.

Hobart (Tasmania)

Hobart is the capital of historic Tasmania, Australia's southernmost state. Named for Lord Hobart, a British colonial secretary, the city was known as Hobart Town for nearly 40 years after its incorporation in 1842. For a brief period, it also was called Hobarton. What is now the capital city originated as a penal colony on the site of one of the present suburbs, Risdon, but the settlement soon was moved across

the Derwent River. In 1812, it became the seat of state government.

The island state of Tasmania located about 150 miles to the south of Melbourne across the Bass Strait, is an outdoor adventurers dreamland. There are over 2000 km of walking tracks on the island and 18 national parks, with mountains, rivers and lakes that are never too far from the fabulous beaches on the coastline. The patient, observant hiker may get to see some of the abundant wildlife on Tasmania including wombats and wallabies, pademelons and platypus, kangaroos and quoll, and of course, the Tasmanian Devil. Fishing is plentiful and ocean life includes a large number of seals, dolphins and whales.

Dozens of guided and self-guided walking tours lead through Victorian-era streets and seaside towns to tell the stories and legends of the

earliest European settlers, most of whom were British convicts and the families of British security officials. Several prison buildings are now museums with artifacts, exhibits and presentations to share the history and experience of these people. Before the arrival of the British, however, Tasmanian Aborigines lived in isolation on the island for nearly 10,000 years. Their unique experience is shared at the Tiagarra Centre on Devonport's Bluff.

For a more refined experience, Tasmania has dozens of shopping markets that offer a variety of goods from antiques to arts and crafts. Excellent wines, cheeses, and chocolates, as well as local specialties such as leatherwood honey, are tempting treats. And in the evening, you can take in a concert at the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra's Federation Concert Hall.

The population of Tasmania is about 470,000 (2000 est.) Tasmania can be reached by plane or ferry from Melbourne.

Hobart is the home of the University of Tasmania and of the State Library, which houses an excellent museum and fine art galleries. There are many designated historic sites in the city, as well as botanical gardens of note.

Fishing, swimming, golf, lawn bowls, and squash are among the numerous sports available in this temperate climate. Spectator sports feature especially the annual Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, originating in Sydney the day after Christmas. There is ample opportunity for entertainment in Hobart, which has a legal gambling casino, plus concerts, movies, legitimate theater, and a wealth of hotels and restaurants.

The metropolitan population of Hobart is over 194,000 (1999 est.).

OTHER CITIES

From its rough and tumble beginnings as a small desert town, **ALICE SPRINGS** has grown just enough to include all the modern facilities a traveler could want while keeping true to the rustic Outback heritage of the town. Alice Springs is located right in the center of Australia on the banks of the Todd River, which is usually dry. The second largest town in the Northern Territory, it is called the capital of the Outback with a population of over 27,000. It became most popular as a tourist site after the release of the 1956 film romance, *A Town Like Alice*.

Originally named Stuart, the town was founded in 1871 as construction began there for the overland telegraph station built to relay messages between Darwin and Adelaide. The waterhole located just east of the telegraph station buildings was named Alice Springs in honor of the wife of Sir Charles Todd, the Postmaster General of South Australia. The locals began to use the name for their town and officially renamed the place Alice Springs in 1933. The Alice Springs Telegraph Station and the waterhole are still popular sites to visit.

For those looking for a moderate outback adventure, Alice Springs offers a variety of opportunities to explore. Hikers will enjoy the Ayers Rock, a two-mile red monolith, and the nearby Olgas, a huge group of domes of lavender conglomerate rock. Overnight or weekly dude ranch trips out of Alice Springs are similar to those in the Western U.S. Camels are widely available for excursions or you may choose to tour the area from a hot air balloon. Visitors can stay at one of two major Caravan Parks, which offer accommodations that range from simple camp sites to deluxe villas with fully modern facilities.

The Alice Springs Desert Park is a combination national park, zoo, research center and aboriginal cultural center. The park offers 1.6 km

of trails through three typical desert habitats as well as a wide range of interactive exhibits and presentations designed to share an appreciation for the land and people of the Australian outback. The National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame, featuring the accomplishments of women who made pioneering discoveries in all fields, is also located in Alice Springs.

If you're in Alice Springs in September, you won't want to miss the world famous Henley-on-Todd Regatta. The event attracts many local and international participants who have found ingenious ways to race their homemade boats on a river without any water.

Trips to Alice Springs should be in the winter months, since the dry center of Australia can be very hot in the summer.

Situated on the north coast near the Timor Sea, **DARWIN** is the capital of the Northern Territories. With roughly 88,000 residents (1999 est.), it has one of Australia's finest harbors and is one of the country's most modern cities. Darwin is the service center for the sparsely inhabited hinterland; the economy also relies on government business. This is a vital transportation and communications hub, served by an international airport. The area was founded in 1839 by a surveyor on the HMS Beagle, scientist Charles Darwin's (1809–1882) research ship. The expanding air service industry accounted for much of the area's growth in the 1930s. The Allied armies in Northern Australia were headquartered here during World War II, when Darwin was heavily damaged in bombing raids. A 1974 cyclone decimated the city, but it was rebuilt with government aid.

FREMANTLE, a suburb of Perth, is located on the Indian Ocean at the mouth of the Swan River in southwestern Australia. Founded in 1829, Fremantle is the terminus of the Trans-Australian railroad as well as the seaport for Perth. The city is a fishing and passenger port

and the chief commercial port in the area. Fruit, flower, wheat, and wool are exported, and steel, oil, and phosphates are imported. East Fremantle and North Fremantle are suburbs of the city which has a current population of more than 25,000. Fremantle gained worldwide recognition as the site of the 1987 America's Cup yachting race.

GEELONG, Victoria's second largest city, has an estimated population of over 156,000 (1999 est.). It is an important port, located on Corio Bay, 50 miles southwest of Melbourne. A large percentage of the nation's wool crop is marketed here; shipping and manufacturing are also major employers. Many schools and laboratories, as well as a large library, have made Geelong a center of education. The city set aside 40 percent of its area for parks, and lies in the middle of a coastal resort area. Geelong's name is taken from the Aboriginal *jillong*, meaning "the place of the native companion," a reference to a long-legged bird.

GOLD COAST, 50 miles south of Brisbane, is a resort complex that straddles the Queensland/New South Wales border. Building restrictions here were lifted in 1952, causing a massive construction boom. Beach resorts abound in Gold Coast, where the population of approximately 391,000 (1999 est.) expands dramatically at holidays. Tourist attractions include a fauna reserve and a bird sanctuary.

NEWCASTLE (formerly called King's Town) lies on the Tasman Sea, 100 miles northeast of Sydney. Iron and steel industries, mining, and textile manufactures are the main economic activities here. Newcastle was founded in the early 19th century as a penal settlement and became a city in 1885. The city has port facilities and a channel. The War Memorial Cultural Centre was established in the 1950s. Newcastle's current population is nearly 479,000 (1999 est.) and is Australia's sixth largest city.

The seaport of **WOLLONGONG** is 40 miles south of Sydney. With over

263,000 residents (1999 est.), this is the nucleus of the Illawarra dairy region. Bulli coal deposits have lured many heavy industries to the city, and the artificial harbor of Port Kembla is the home of a fishing fleet. Wollongong has road and rail connections to Sydney. The University of Wollongong and a technical college are located here.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Australia is a large, comparatively dry, and sparsely inhabited continent, almost as large as the 48 contiguous U.S. states. Australia, the only continent that consists of a single nation, is also the only inhabited continent which is isolated from all others (total coastline exceeds 22,000 miles). Average elevation is about 985 feet, which makes it the flattest continent on earth. This is among the prime reasons for sparse annual rainfall—16.5 inches, which is less than two-thirds the world average (26 inches). Further, the rain falls mainly on coastal regions: Forty percent of the surface gets less than 10 inches per year, and annual evaporation exceeds annual rainfall on about three-quarters of the land. Overall runoff is less than half that of the Mississippi basin; Australia has no navigable rivers of any commercial significance.

In general, the country is warmer than the U.S. (the northern one-third is in the tropics, the rest in the temperate zone). Temperature extremes are much less pronounced. Sydney's average daytime temperature is 59 degrees Fahrenheit in the coldest month (July), and 81 degrees in the warmest month (January).

Population

Most of Australia's 19.2 million people live in the south and southeast coastal areas (temperate zone). The

states of New South Wales and Victoria contain about 60 percent of the population. Australians are mainly city dwellers: about 63% percent reside in the eight capital cities, with about 38% in Sydney or Melbourne.

About 80% of Australians are of British or Irish descent. After World War II, Australia began to encourage immigration from other European countries also, and these immigrants and their descendants make up most of the balance. Approximately 23 percent of Australians were born overseas (9 percent in the UK, Ireland, or New Zealand), and about 20 percent to homes where English is not the dominant language. Immigration from Asia has increased in the last twenty years, especially from Vietnam, Cambodia, and China. Fifty percent of current immigrants come from Asia, and Asian-Australians are projected to account for 10 percent of the total population within a generation. In 1992, the population's annual rate of growth was estimated to be 1.37 percent; a little less than half of that stemmed from immigration. The government promotes pluralism, ethnic tolerance, and social diversity, describing this policy as multiculturalism.

Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders total about 260,000 (approximately 1.5 percent of the population). Most of them live in northern coastal regions and the interior, but there are also significant aboriginal communities in metropolitan Brisbane, Sydney, and other Australian cities.

Government

Australia is divided into six states and two territories: Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra). All eight regional jurisdictions are represented in both houses of Parliament. Australia also governs external territories such as Norfolk Island in the Pacific (about 1000 miles northeast of Sydney), as

well as the Cocos (Keeling) and Christmas Islands in the Indian Ocean (about 1600 miles northwest of Perth).

In fiscal terms, Australian state and territorial governments mainly depend on grants from the federal government, for they do not tax personal incomes or corporate profits. Nevertheless, the states and territories have broader administrative authority than states of the U.S., for they manage various functions that Americans usually associate with local government (e.g., police, schools, and hospitals). In Australia, local governments provide relatively minor services (e.g., water supply, recreation facilities).

Canberra, the capital, is about 180 miles southwest of Sydney. During nation-building ferment of the 1890s, it became clear that partisans of Sydney and Melbourne could not reach agreement on either city as the permanent capital. The site of Canberra, the compromise, was selected after the six states federated in 1901. Chicago architect Walter Burley Griffin designed the basic plans, and construction started in 1913.

The Commonwealth (federal) government and the six state governments operate under written constitutions which mainly draw on the British (Westminster) tradition of a Cabinet government that is responsible to a majority in Parliament's lower chamber, the House of Representatives. The federal constitution, however, also contains some elements that resemble American practice (e.g., a Senate in which each state has equal representation).

The head of state is Queen Elizabeth II, the reigning British monarch, but she exercises her functions through personal representatives living in Australia (i.e., the Governor-General of Australia and the Governors of the six states). All seven are Australian citizens and are appointed at the recommendation of the respective head of government (i.e., the Prime Minister or

the Premier of a state). Most of their duties are ceremonial, and they mainly act on the advice of Cabinet ministers. Democratically elected representatives thus exercise effective rule, and in recent years there has been considerable debate about proposals to abolish the monarchy and establish a republic.

Voting is compulsory, and seats in the 147-member federal House of Representatives are allotted to the states and territories according to population. Members of the House are elected to three-year terms from specific "divisions" (districts) by means of a preferential voting system, but the Prime Minister may recommend new national elections before the three years have elapsed. (The Governor-General traditionally follows such advice.)

The Prime Minister and other Cabinet ministers are all serving members of Parliament. By tradition, most are members of the House of Representatives, which is the focus of intense debates and a highly structured competition that pits the government against the opposition. Party discipline is strict; almost all controversial proposals are debated and enacted along party lines. It is rare for a member to cross the floor (i.e., vote against party views), and anyone who does so risks expulsion from the party or rejection for "preselection" in the next electoral cycle. (Australia does not have primary elections. A candidate for the House of Representatives is nominated during a meeting of the party's local members.)

Each of the six states elects 12 federal Senators who serve for six years, but their terms overlap—so that half these seats are at issue every three years. In addition, each of the two territories elects two Senators who serve three-year terms. The upper house thus has 76 members in all.

Drafters of the constitution intended that the Senate mainly serve to represent the states and protect their rights. But because of strict party discipline and complex

electoral methods—at-large voting involving proportional "quotas" and sequential tallies that take account of second and subsequent preferences marked on the ballot—Senators mainly represent the interests and policies of political parties, with relatively minor variations that attest to regional concerns. Senators may serve as ministers, and in recent years about one-third of the overall number have come from the upper house.

The Senate cannot originate or amend tax or expenditure bills, but has the constitutional authority to reject them or propose changes. In all other respects, the two houses have equal standing. Under complex conditions specified in the federal constitution—in essence, extended deadlock between the House and Senate—both houses may be dissolved simultaneously, so that ensuing national elections would involve all seats in Parliament. This is unusual and has occurred only six times.

All major parties support the U.S.-Australia alliance and stress the importance of close relations between Australia and the United States. This long-standing and stable pattern is essentially unaffected by the outcome of national elections.

The governing Australian Labor Party (ALP), which maintains close ties to the trade union movement, has held office since 1983. During that period, the government has carried out major restructuring of the economy (e.g., floating the Australian dollar, cutting tariffs by substantial amounts, reducing and simplifying regulations that affect business). Liberalizing trade and enhancing economic integration with Asia-Pacific countries are major tenets of the ALP.

The opposition Liberal-National Coalition agrees with the ALP on the need to liberalize trade and enhance economic ties, and it likewise favors a free-market approach to economic growth. The Coalition, however, stresses individual rights, personal autonomy, and managerial

initiative, while favoring a more rapid shift toward enterprise contracts that would replace detailed federal and state regulations on pay levels and fringe benefits. Its junior partner, the National Party (formerly called the Country Party), is closely associated with conservative social values and the interests of farmers.

Two minor parties—the Australian Democrats and the Western Australia “Greens”—are represented only in the Senate but have political and media effects which are disproportionate to their numbers. The Democrats tend to be somewhat to the left of Labor, stressing good government, public-sector services, and social equality. The Western Australia “Greens” take a special interest in environmental matters and often express concern about the effect of large social institutions (e.g., government bodies, corporations, and trade unions) on individuals and local communities.

The High Court of Australia equates to the U.S. Supreme Court. It has the power of constitutional review, as well as general appellate jurisdiction over other federal courts and the courts of the various states. The federal court system is less extensive than in the U.S., for Parliament has invested state courts with substantial authority to enforce federal statutes.

Arts, Science, and Education

Education is compulsory through age 15. Reflecting the government’s drive to expand educational access, the number of Australians finishing high school has risen from 34 percent in 1983 to over 70 percent today. Approximately 66 percent of students attend government schools; the rest attend private schools. The number of students completing the Australian equivalent of a college education (i.e., at a university, teachers’ college, college of advanced education or technical school) is, growing annually. The Australian government supports

two significant organizations that encourage Australian and American scholarship and academic exchanges: the Australian Fulbright Commission and the Australian Centre for American Studies.

In science, Australia holds a significant place in radio astronomy, geology and marine sciences. Its observatories constitute the principal center of radio astronomy research in the Southern Hemisphere. It is also an important base for monitoring U.S. space flights and satellites with two critical NASA Space Tracking Stations. With the Great Barrier Reef on the country’s northeast coast, Kakadu National Park in the far north, and the unusual array of flora and fauna, Australia is considered by many naturalists and environmentalists to be a giant ecological laboratory. Australia’s proximity to Antarctica has also fostered considerable scientific research in the area of the South Pole.

Private and community events organizers, as well as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), annually bring to Australia internationally-acclaimed performing artists who tour Australia’s principal cities. The major cities have symphony orchestras and lively professional theaters with productions ranging from the classics to the avant garde. National and foreign opera, ballet and theater companies perform in sites outside their headquarter cities on a regular touring basis. Some Australian companies such as the Australian National Ballet have received international acclaim.

Australia’s art scene is dynamic. Government-supported galleries in Canberra and the state capitals have important collections of Australian and overseas artists. Commercial galleries in the larger cities display top-quality work as well. Traditional and contemporary aboriginal art is popular with local and foreign collectors. Adelaide, Perth, Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra host annual or biennial arts festivals. They include all of the arts

and attract world-famous writers, musicians, singers, actors and dancers. Activities in the arts and politics are well-covered by newspapers and magazines. Australia’s publishing scene is lively. Novels, travel books and more “academic” publications by local authors are plentiful. Bookshops are usually well stocked, yet books, even paperbacks, are substantially more expensive than in the U.S. because of Australian arrangements with British publishers.

Commerce and Industry

Australia’s free enterprise economy combines a strong private sector with a relatively larger sector of state-owned or licensed businesses than is the case in the U.S. Railroads, utilities and many services are owned by state and federal governments. The push towards micro-economic reform and increased competition, however, has seen a gradual shift towards privatization of many of these services. For example, while the major telecommunications operator, Telecom, is government owned, recent deregulation of the market has seen two other operators take a significant market share. Deregulation of the airlines in 1990 has resulted in a major industry reshuffle. Ansett and Qantas (which took over former domestic-only carrier Australian Airlines in 1993) now compete directly both domestically and internationally, resulting in less expensive fares and greater services than previously. Nevertheless, airline prices still remain considerably higher than in the U.S. The privatization of QANTAS is now being completed through share offering. Other utilities and services (such as the natural gas infrastructure and the major airports) are subjects of the government’s extensive privatization plans.

Base wages are determined by a federal Industrial Relations Commission and, increasingly, by enterprise (collective) bargaining at the workplace level. After peaking at 12 per-

cent during 1990-91 recession unemployment is currently declining (6.4% percent in 2000).

A decreasing number of agricultural products are subject to marketing controls or stabilization arrangements. Australian agriculture is highly mechanized and efficient. It is based mainly on winter grains and extensive livestock ranching, with a limited acreage of row crops. The main agricultural products are wool, wheat, and meat, although sugar, dairy products, cotton and fruit, are also important. Livestock, which includes roughly 117 million sheep, holds greater relative importance in Australia than in the U.S.

In 2000, cattle prices increased by about 22% and were projected to continue to increase by about 6% for 2001 and 2002. In the same year, wool prices increased by about 21% high. Export income from wool accounts for about 6% of total export earnings (1994 data; in 1953 the figure was 50 percent). About one-third of world supply of wool is produced in Australia.

Distance, sparse population, and lack of navigable rivers make overland and air transportation vital. Australia has an extensive road and rail infrastructure network, relative to the population, with major arterial routes between each state capital (regional roads are of variable quality). Air transport, including air freight, has expanded into a leading industry: Australia leads the world in freight-ton miles per capita and is second only to the U.S. in passenger miles per capita.

Australia depends largely on ocean transport for bulk export, with an array of modern, deep water ports to handle its important minerals export trade. Significant reforms of labor practices over the past years have resulted in quicker ship turnaround times and more efficient stevedoring methods, but most industry groups argue that further reforms are necessary. International shipping is provided largely by foreign-owned lines, which contributes to Australia's high balance



Hobart Harbor and wharf.

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

of payments net services deficit. Sea ports are well integrated with land transportation infrastructure.

Australia ranks among the world's leading trading nations, even though it has a relatively small population of only 19.2 million people. Primary products comprise about 60 percent of total merchandise exports. Of that, minerals and fuels account for 28 percent, and agricultural goods (both processed and unprocessed), around 30 percent. But the real growth sector is in elaborately transformed manufactures, which formerly made up an almost negligible percentage of Australia's merchandise exports.

While Australia is still considered a large importer of transformed goods and an exporter of primary commodities, its contribution to the global manufactures market is becoming significant.

Expansion of the minerals industry has been rapid over the past decade, despite uncertain minerals prices. Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal and continues to be a major player in the liquefied natural gas and iron ore markets—Japan is Australia's largest coal and iron ore market, for use in Japanese steel mills. Production of most other

metals, including gold, the titanium minerals and alumina, is major—in some cases world-leading.

Shifts in Australia's overseas trade pattern have occurred since World War II. The U.K. now is much less important to Australia as a trading partner than formerly. Asian countries are now the prominent markets for Australian products and accept 60 percent of merchandise exports. Japan is Australia's number one export market, taking 25 percent of merchandise exports in 1994 (mainly coal, iron ore, meat and gold). The U.S. is Australia's primary import source, with merchandise imports totalling almost \$11 billion in 1994 (22 percent of total import value—this compares to 12 percent in 1955). Australian exports to the U.S. were worth \$3.4 billion in 1994. The U.S. is the only major trading nation to consistently hold a bilateral trade surplus with Australia.

Australia exports a wide range of goods to the U.S. Major categories include beef, aircraft and associated equipment, computers and parts, and crude petroleum and oils. Major imports from the U.S. are computers, aircraft and equipment, measuring and checking equipment and telecommunications equipment.

The latter category represents a growing business opportunity for U.S. exporters, as Australia is currently experiencing a boom in mobile telecommunications, along with the start-up of pay-TV services.

Historically, Australia relied on high tariffs to protect domestic industry. In addition, special restrictions have applied to dairy and some other agricultural products, as well as to textiles, clothing, footwear and automobiles. The current Labor government has set about reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers to increase Australia's integration into the global trading arena. Australia has petitioned the U.S. to liberalize its restrictions on the entry of Australian meat, steel and sugar. The Australian government and rural organizations continue to voice their displeasure over the U.S. Export Enhancement Program (EEP) and the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

The Australian government has established foreign investment guidelines that encourage inward investment. Restrictions on foreign investment remain in mining, urban real estate, the media and civil aviation. In the natural resource sector, the government requires foreign investors to give Australian companies the opportunity to participate in major projects, normally requiring that at least 50 percent Australian equity and 50 percent of board-voting strength be held by Australian interests. In other areas, nonresidents, foreign-controlled businesses, and Australian companies in which foreign interests have a substantial shareholding, must notify the government before acquiring a substantial interest in an Australian company.

Around 30 percent of direct foreign investment stock in Australia comes from the U.S. U.S. investment is particularly prominent in autos, petroleum and minerals development, agricultural machines, construction and earthmoving equipment, chemicals, food processing, and oil refining. Australia is the

fourth most important country for direct investment from the U.S., after Canada, the U.K., and Germany.

Australia's economy definitely looks promising. Throughout the decade of the 1990s, the country boasted an annual economic growth rate of about 4% per year, the second-fastest rate in the developed world (behind Ireland). Which has placed the economy at the best it's been in over thirty years.

The July 2000 introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) seemed to cause a decrease in the construction industry, but over the course of a year, the service sectors reported strong growth (e.g. communications, 8 percent; property/business services 9 percent, finance services 5 percent) as did mining (10 percent), metal products (7 percent) and non-metallic mineral products (24 percent). The 10% GST is levied on most goods and services (with the exception of basic foods, education, health, and some other sectors). Several other sales taxes were abolished with the acceptance of the GST. The overall effect of these changes seems to have been to raise the inflation rate from its average 2.5% to 6% at the end of 2000. However, the rate is expected to return to normal by the end of 2001.

Transportation

Local

Bus service in Canberra is good, though limited in evenings and on weekends and holidays. Other major cities have a good system of commuter trains, buses, streetcars, and harbor ferries. Public transportation is efficient though crowded during rush hours.

Taxi

Taxi service in all major cities is good. Tipping is not expected unless the driver helps with baggage. Rent-a-car services are available in all cities. Rates are higher than those in the US. Railway porters have a set charge for each piece of luggage

handled, varying slightly from city to city.

Regional

Australia's size makes air travel the most convenient method of in-country travel. Several international airlines operate regularly in and out of Australia. There is an extensive but expensive domestic air network with an impressive safety record.

Numerous foreign shippers call at various ports. All State capitals are on the coast and most overseas liners can berth within 1 mile of the business district.

Rail service is good between major cities but other rail routes are erratic. Bus service is available between most cities and is less expensive than either air or rail.

Road conditions in Australia vary greatly. Few four-lane highways exist, and these are mainly for short stretches on the approaches to the larger cities. Most highways typically are two-lane asphalt or crushed stone; some have a third lane for passing on hills and other dangerous points. Country and secondary roads often are unsurfaced and become impassable after heavy rains.

Communications

Telephone

Telephone service within Australia and worldwide is excellent. An Australia-to-U.S. call is easy to place. Direct dialing and itemized billing are available but must be requested when ordering telephone service as they are not automatically installed. Fax facilities are excellent.

It is not advisable to have cordless/cellular phones in personal effects as they may be confiscated by Australian Customs. Phones coming into Australia must be registered with Telecom before entering Australia. Permits are very expensive.

Radio and TV

AM and FM radio stations reach the entire country. Shortwave broadcasts, including VOA, can be picked up but reception is unreliable. TV programs are similar to those in the U.S. with many American programs and films shown. All TV channels broadcast in color using the PAL system which means that U.S. made TVs cannot be used without modification. TV modification from NTSC (U.S.) to PAL is expensive, not always satisfactory, and will render the set unusable in the U.S. until it is converted back to NTSC.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Australia's metropolitan press consist of two daily papers in Sydney and two in Melbourne; one each in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Hobart and Perth; and two national daily newspapers. Each state capital has at least one Sunday paper. Many daily papers are published in provincial areas. Triweeklies, biweeklies and weeklies are published in other cities and towns throughout the country. Australia has a flourishing periodical press. U.S. newspapers are not available locally; however, *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *International Herald Tribune* are available at a limited number of news agents.

Newsstands carry *Time Australia*, the Asia-Pacific edition of *Time*, as well as *Who* magazine (People). *Newsweek* and *Fortune* have been incorporated as part of the *Bulletin* magazine. Numerous bookstores in each capital city carry such American magazines as *Fortune*, *Saturday Review*, *Scientific American*, *Harper's Bazaar*, the *New Yorker*, the *New Leader* and European magazines such as *Paris Match*, *Realities*, *Punch*, the *Observer*, the *New Statesman* and *Encounter*. Airmail delivery or locally printed editions of the more popular magazines listed above means that issues are up to date. Subscriptions normally would be necessary for only the specialized publications.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Also readily available are well-qualified doctors, surgeons, and specialists as well as good hospitals and laboratory facilities. It is not necessary to go outside Australia for medical care except in rare instances which require a trip to a specialist in the US.

Canberra has one general hospital, one Catholic hospital, and one private hospital which cater to all sections of the community. They are well equipped and provide the usual pathology and X-ray services and outpatient care. The city has many general practitioners and a variety of specialists. Good dentists, several opticians and ophthalmologists are available. Dental fees vary with the type of work required. Laboratory fees are expensive.

State capitals generally have several large and well-equipped hospitals. Many excellent doctors, surgeons, and specialists of all kinds practice in these cities. Competent oculists and opticians are readily available although eyeglasses, lenses and contact lenses are more expensive than in the U.S. All residential areas have a large number of general practitioners competent to handle all general ills not requiring a specialist. Gynecologists and pediatricians are excellent. Hospital accommodations are sometimes limited and, except for emergency care, should be reserved as far in advance as possible. Dentists use modern methods and equipment. Good orthodontic, periodontic and endodontic care are available. Pharmaceutical services are provided by chemist shops (drugstores) in all suburban and city shopping areas. Chemist shops are well stocked with prescription and patent medicines, and some provide 24 hour service and free delivery.

Community Health

No unusual health problems or hazards exist. Sewage and garbage disposal services are similar to those in

the U.S.; incinerators are used in most large apartment buildings. Water supply is ample for household use and normally enough for watering lawns. Water is soft and safe (drawn from a mountain reservoir in the mountains near Canberra) and is chlorinated and fluoridated. Safe pasteurized and homogenized milk is available.

Flies are pests throughout Australia in warm weather. In midsummer, the native bush fly is a constant annoyance outdoors, but it disappears in cold weather. People with gardens find snails and slugs a great nuisance. Zipper type garment bags are useful to protect fine and seldom-worn clothing from moths and silverfish.

Preventive Measures

No serious endemic diseases exist and no special health precautions are necessary. Sabin polio vaccine is available; take the series either before or after arrival, especially children under 2 years, as well as a measles, mumps, and rubella shots. The usual children's diseases (measles, mumps, chickenpox) occasionally reach epidemic proportions. Mild outbreaks of influenza, gastroenteritis, and other seasonal diseases are common. Sinusitis, colds, and other minor respiratory illnesses, as well as asthma and allergies, are common. Children should be immunized against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and Haemophilus influenza B. Adults should keep tetanus and booster shots current. Yellow fever immunizations are currently required for personnel who have previously resided in tropical Africa or Brazil. No unusual health hazards exist. No known cases of rabies have occurred in Australia in recent years.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Australia is served by a number of airlines including United which

flies daily nonstop from the U.S. West Coast. Travelers must use the airline that holds the appropriate city-pair contract fare. Flying time for the roughly 7,000-mile nonstop trip from the west coast is about 14 hours.

U.S. citizens may travel to Australia on a valid U.S. passport with an Australian visa or, if eligible, on a valid U.S. passport and an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA), which replaces a visa and allows a stay of up to three months. The ETA is free of charge and is available from airlines and many travel agents. American citizens who overstay their ETA or visa, even for short periods, may be subject to detention and removal. More information about the ETA and entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of Australia at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 797-3000, via the Australian Embassy home page on the Internet at <http://www.austemb.org/>, or from the Australian Consulate General in Los Angeles, tel (310) 229-4840.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via CDC's Internet site at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

Australian customs authorities enforce very strict regulations concerning the temporary importation from all countries of items such as agricultural and wood products, as well as very strict quarantine standards for other products, animals and pets. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Australia in Washington or one of Australia's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements, or see <http://www.aqis.gov.au>.

Americans living in or visiting Australia are encouraged to register at the nearest U.S. consulate and obtain updated information on

travel and security within Australia.

The U.S. Embassy in Canberra is located at Moonah Place, Yarralumla, A.C.T. 2600, telephone (61)(2) 6214-5600, fax (61)(2) 6273-3191, home page <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov>.

NOTE: Registration, passports, and other routine citizen services for Canberra and the rest of the Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T.) are provided by the U.S. Consulate in Sydney (please see contact information below). The Embassy may be contacted for emergency services (i.e. the arrest, death or serious injury of American citizens) within the ACT or Queanbeyan.

The U.S. Consulate General in Sydney serves New South Wales, Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory and is located on Level 59, MLC Centre, 19-29 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000, telephone (61)(2) 9373-9200, fax (61)(2) 9373-9184, home page <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov/sydney/>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Melbourne serves Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and the Northern Territory and is located at 553 St. Kilda Road, P.O. Box 6722, Melbourne Vic 3004, telephone (61)(3) 9526-5900, fax (61)(3) 9525-0769, home page <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov/melbourne/>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Perth serves Western Australia and is located on Level 13, 16 St. Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000, telephone (61)(8) 9202-1224, fax (61)(8) 9231-9444, home page <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov/perth/>.

You can import dogs and cats to Australia from the U.K. (including the Channel Island, Northern Ireland, and the Isle of Man), the Irish Republic, Hawaii, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Norfolk Island, and New Zealand without major difficulty. In all cases, animals must have been solely in the country of export for 6 months before export (or since

birth) and during that period must not have been in an port quarantine kennel. They must be accompanied by prescribed documents, including health certificates.

Animals from other areas can also be imported; however, the owner must comply with a lengthy and costly quarantine period.

Charges are made for inspection of animals on arrival in Australia and for accommodation in kennels at quarantine stations. These charges are reviewed periodically. All quarantine regulations are rigidly enforced.

Exporting of Wild Birds: Persons wishing to import their pet birds to the U.S. should be aware of the Wild Bird Conservations Act which limits imports of exotic bird species to ensure their populations are not harmed by trade, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture quarantine requirements.

Individuals who reside outside the U.S. continuously for at least one year may import a maximum of two pet birds (not on endangered species list), per year.

Arrangements for 30 day quarantine of pet birds into the U.S. may be made through the Agriculture Section.

Australian and American dollars may be freely exchanged. However, under the Australian banking (foreign exchange) regulations, a person departing from Australia is allowed to take only A\$250 in notes, A\$5 in coins and the equivalent of A\$250 in foreign currency notes. Any excess can be arranged through banking facilities by letters of credit, travelers checks, or drafts. The rate of exchange fluctuates slightly from day to day.

These accounts are freely convertible into U.S. dollar drafts or travelers checks. Bank credit cards are available and useful, particularly when traveling within the country. Employees who obtain bank savings accounts or other investments may

be subject to Australian income taxes on the income earned from such deposits. Contact the Financial Management Office or Administrative Office for more information.

No restrictions exist on bringing dollar currency or travelers checks into Australia. U.S. currency and checks drawn on American banks are freely negotiable.

Australia uses the metric system.

Disaster Preparedness

Australia is located in an area of low seismic activity. Although the probability of a major earthquake occurring during an individual trip is remote, earthquakes can and do occur. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov/crisismg.html>, and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>

	Celebrated (except Perth)*
Aug. 31	White Rose Day (memorial for Princess Diana)
Sept. 1	Wattle Day
Sept. 3	Flag Day
Oct. (1st Mon)	Queen's Birthday Celebrated (Perth)*
Oct. (1st Mon)	Labor Day (Canberra and Sydney)*
Nov. (1st Tues)	Melbourne Cup Day (Melbourne)*
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve
	*variable

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Morgan, Sally. *My Place: An Aborigine's Stubborn Quest for Her Truth, Heritage, and Origins*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990.

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LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 26	Australia Day
Mar. (1st Mon)	Labor Day (Perth)*
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Labor Day (Melbourne)*
Mar. (3rd Mon)	Canberra Day (Canberra)*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Saturday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 25	ANZAC Day
May 1	May Day
May/June	Corpus Christi*
June (1st Mon)	Foundation Day*
June (2nd Mon)	Queen's Birthday

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Baker, Richard W. (ed.). *The ANZUS States and Their Region: Regional Policies of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*. Praeger: 1994.

Blainey, Geoffrey. *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History*. Melbourne: Macmillan, 1968.

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AZERBAIJAN

Republic of Azerbaijan

Major City:

Baku

Other Cities:

Gyandzha, Mingechaur, Nakhichevan, Shemakha, Sumgait

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **AZERBAIJAN** declared its independence from the former Soviet Union on August 30, 1991. Formerly known as the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, its independence was recognized by the United States on December 25, 1991. The country administers the Nakhichetan Autonomous Republic, which has an Azerbaijan ethnic majority but is separated from the rest of Azerbaijan by Armenia. It also administers the Nagorno-Karabakh region, which is predominately Christian Armenian but is within Azerbaijan's borders. Ongoing civil strife between Armenia and Azer-

baijan over control of Nagorno-Karabakh has, at times, turned violent.

MAJOR CITY

Baku

Baku (also spelled Baky), with over 1.7 million residents (1997 est.), is the capital of Azerbaijan. Located on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, Baku is the country's largest city, chief port, and main industrial center. Oil, first discovered in the eighth century, is the basis of Baku's economy. The oil field here was the world's largest in the early 1900s and, until the 1940s, was the Soviet Union's largest. Although Baku's oil field has been all but exhausted, drilling continues in the surrounding areas, as well as offshore. Pipelines connect these areas with Baku's oil refinery and processing plants. Other industries include shipbuilding, the manufacture of oil industry equipment, and electrical machinery.

Baku traces its history back to at least 885 A.D., but it is probable, based on archaeological evidence, that the area was inhabited several

hundred years before Christ. Peter the Great conquered it in 1723, but 12 years later it was returned to Persia. In 1806, Russia managed to gain control and, in 1920, Baku became the capital of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic.

Recreation and Entertainment

The Caucasus region, with its mountainous terrain, offers many winter sports. Fishing and swimming are popular, although some areas along the Caspian Sea have suffered considerable environmental damage from the exploration of offshore oil and gas reserves. Sihov Beach is popular with Baku residents. A trip to scenic Lake Gyogyol, in the mountains of southwest Azerbaijan, is well worth the time. This resort area is located at 4,500 feet above sea level.

Visits to the nearby wine growing regions and to Lenkoran, a subtropical city with experimental gardens, are possible from Baku. About 44 miles from Baku is the Kobustan Museum-Reserve where caves used by man 10,000 years ago can be visited. Cave drawings can be seen.

Baku, built on a hillside overlooking the Bay of Baku, has an attractive waterfront park. Restaurants, tea

houses, sports facilities, and an open-air theater are found there. A ride on the funicular (cable railway) to the highest location in the city, Kirov Monument, gives the visitor a view of the entire city and bay.

The picturesque old town, or castle district, forms the core of Baku. The district features the fortress of Icheri-Shekher with its narrow streets and old buildings. Icheri-Shekher's walls still survive, as does the 12th century tower of Kyz-Kalasy (Maiden's Tower). Also in this area is the museum Shirván-Sháh's, a former palace, part of which was built in the 11th century. The oldest religious site, the Synyk-Kala Minaret and Mosque, also dates from the 11th century.

Baku is Azerbaijan's major cultural and educational center. The city has several museums; the Azerbaijan State Art Museum, with 7,000 exhibits; the Academy of Sciences' Museum of the History of Azerbaijan, which contains 120,000 displays on the history of the Azerbaijani people; and the State Museum of Azerbaijan, which specializes in Azerbaijani literature. The Museum of Azerbaijani Carpets and Applied Folk Art has exhibits featuring carpets, embroidery, ceramics, jewelry, and other related art.

Music has played an important role in Azerbaijani life. Opera and ballet performances are popular and are staged throughout the year by the Mizra Akhundov Opera and Ballet Theatre, the Muslim Magomayev Philharmonic, the Samed Vurgun Russian Drama Theatre, and the State Puppet Theatre.

Transportation

Roads are extremely poor in Baku. Driving hazards such as open manholes, debris, and potholes are common. Drivers pay little heed to traffic regulations, signals, lanes, or other drivers. Drivers often travel at extremely high rates of speed and accidents are frequent. Driving within Baku should be considered

extremely hazardous. Outside of the city, where roads are present, conditions are similar. They are often in poor repair, unlit, and lack lane-marking, traffic signs, and warnings. Many rural roads are unpaved and rarely traveled.

OTHER CITIES

GYANDZHA, formerly known as Kirovabad and Yelizavetpol, is located along the Gyandzha River in western Azerbaijan. The city has a population of 294,000 (1997 est.) and is the country's second largest city. Gyandzha was established in the fifth or sixth century, but was destroyed by an earthquake in 1139 and rebuilt four miles east of the original settlement. Surrounded by a fertile farming area, the city has several industries that are agriculture-related. Other industries include the manufacture of machinery and instruments. Agricultural and teacher-training institutes are located here.

MINGECHAUR, located in the central part of the country, has 97,000 residents (1997 est.). The Mingechaur Reservoir, built in 1953 on the Kura River, provides hydroelectric power and water for irrigation. The city's major industry is a large cotton textile mill.

NAKHICHEVAN, with a population of 60,000, is the capital of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic. According to Armenian lore, the city was founded by Noah. Various archaeologists have dated the city back to 1500 B.C. Nakhichevan was once a noted trade and handicrafts center, but now is known for its wine, dairy products, furniture, and leather.

The town of **SHEMAKHA** is about 80 miles west of Baku in the foothills of the Caucasus. It served as a major trading center and the capital of the Shivran shahs before they moved to Baku. Earthquakes have destroyed many historic sites in

Shemakha, but visitors can still see the Seven Domes Royal Mausoleum (Yeddi Gumbez), which served as a burial place for royalty, and the Djuma Mosque, which was built some time in the 10th century. The ruins of the Guistan fortress, from about the 11th or 12th century can be seen as well. Shemakha was once a major stop on the Silk Road and is still well-known for its carpet industry. Demonstrations of traditional weaving techniques are now presented to visitors at the modern carpet-weaving factory.

SUMGAI is 22 miles northwest of Baku. An industrial center specializing in chemicals and metals, the city has numerous factories. Its industries produce aluminum, synthetic rubber, fertilizers, detergents, petrochemicals, and steel-related products. Sumgait's population is 273,000 (1997 est.).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located in eastern Transcaucasia, the Republic of Azerbaijan is slightly larger than Maine and contains 33,744 square miles. Its borders include Russia and Georgia on the north, Iran on the south, Armenia on the west, and the Caspian Sea on the east.

The Caucasus Mountains form a natural northern border. Almost half of the country consists of lowlands, some of which are below sea level. The two main rivers are the Kura, which flows from the northwest to the Caspian Sea, and its tributary, Araks, which flows along Azerbaijan's border with Iran. Much of the farmland (70 percent) is irrigated.

Central and eastern Azerbaijan has a dry, subtropical climate with mild winters and long, hot summers. The

average summer temperature in Baku is 81°F; January temperatures average 34°F. The southeastern section of the country has a humid subtropical climate. Cold winters and hot, dry summers are characteristic of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic. Heavy snowfalls, making travel impossible for three or four months of the year, are common in the more mountainous areas during winter.

Population

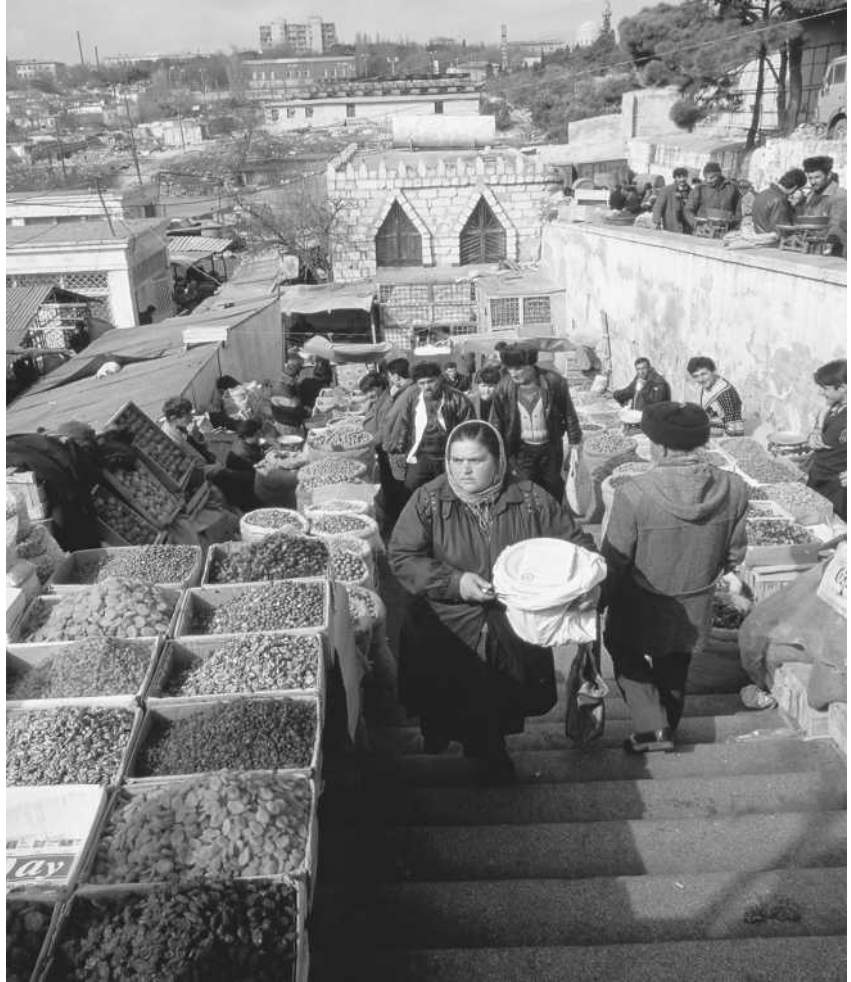
Azerbaijan's population is estimated at 7.7 million (2000 est). The majority of people (90%) are Azerbaijanis of predominately Turkish descent. Russians and Armenians make up 4.5% of the population; almost all live in central Azerbaijan or near Baku.

Approximately 93% of the people are Muslim, mostly of the Shiite sect (70 percent); the remainder are Sunni. The Muslim Board of Transcaucasia, which has spiritual jurisdiction over all Islamic sects in Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, is located in Baku. The rest of the population is Christian—divided almost equally between Russian Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox.

Azerbaijani is the official language of the country and is spoken by 82 percent of the people.

Government

Azerbaijani sovereignty was declared in September 1989 and the Supreme Soviet (parliament) announced the country's independence from the Soviet Union on August 30, 1991. The Communist Party disbanded the next month. In a referendum held in December 1991, over 99 percent of the voters favored independence. On March 2, 1992, Azerbaijan was admitted to the United Nations and on April 30, the country officially adopted the name Republic of Azerbaijan.



Marketplace in Baku, Azerbaijan

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The executive branch of the government consists of the president and a 21-member Council of Ministers. The 360-seat Supreme Soviet (parliament) is the highest legislative body. In October 1991, the Supreme Soviet established another legislative body, the National Council. The 50-member (20 percent are also members of the Supreme Soviet) National Council meets in continuous sessions.

The judicial system is headed by a Supreme Court. Civil law is the basis of the legal system.

The flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan consists of three equal horizontal bands of (top to bottom) blue, red, and green. Centered in the red

band is a white crescent and an eight-pointed star.

Arts, Science, Education

Azerbaijan has a long history as an educational center. The educational system is extensive and illiteracy has been practically unknown. In 2001, the government adopted the use of the Roman alphabet, to replace the Cyrillic script that had been imposed by Stalin in 1939. The new alphabet affects all aspects of life, from official government documents to newspapers, magazines and billboards. The change was seen as an opportunity to move forward from a Soviet past and

strengthen ties with the Western world. Many citizens are already familiar with the Roman alphabet, since it is taught in primary schools, and as a country focused on education, it seems likely that the change will not cause too much trouble.

Education is free in Azerbaijan. In 1997, there were over 4,400 primary schools with about 719,000 students enrolled and over 35,500 teachers. There were also 819,600 students enrolled in secondary schools with about 85,000 teachers. The Azerbaijan Polytechnic Institute and the State University in Baku support at least 27,000 students. Other institutions of higher learning include the Medical University, Technological University, the Economic Institute, and the Oil and Chemistry Academy.

Commerce and Industry

Although Azerbaijan is not as industrialized as its Transcaucasia neighbors, Armenia and Georgia, its overall economy is the best of all the former Soviet republics. The future outlook, however, is clouded by the continuing civil unrest in Nagorno-Karabakh and the government's failure to enact needed economic reforms. Azerbaijan suffers high unemployment and a low standard of living. Foreign investment would offer a needed boost to the economy but Azerbaijan's current problems make such investment unlikely in the near future.

The economy is heavily dependent on industry and mining. Oil, gas, petroleum products, oil field equipment, steel, iron ore, and cement are the chief heavy industries. Major oil fields are located in the Apsheron Peninsula, where Baku and Sumgait are located, and around the cities of Siyar, Neftechala, and Ali-Bayramli. Pipelines connect the oil fields with Baku, where the refineries and processing plants are located. Large oil reserves have been discovered off-

shore, in the Caspian Sea, but are mostly unexploited. Azerbaijan's main exports are oil, gas, chemicals, and oil field equipment, mostly to the other ex-Soviet Union republics.

The chief crop is cotton, which is used in textile production. Other major crops include grain, rice, and grapes.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan is located at 370601 Baku, ul. Kommunisticheskaya 31/33.

Transportation

Azerbaijani Airlines services several in-country cities, Russia, Georgia, Istanbul, and Turkey. Turk Hava Yolari is the only Western airline with flights into and out of Azerbaijan.

Travelers on airlines among the countries of the Caucasus may experience prolonged delays and sudden cancellations of flights. In addition to routine delays, flights are often overcrowded with passengers without seats standing in the aisle, along with excess unsecured cabin luggage. Even basic safety features such as seat belts are sometimes missing. Air travel to Azerbaijan on international carriers via the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, and Turkey is generally more reliable.

Train travel in the Caucasus region is not secure. Public transportation in general is overcrowded and poorly maintained. The U.S. Embassy strongly discourages use of the Baku Metro.

Bus travel is not recommended either because they are rundown, overcrowded, and are often driven in an unsafe manner.

A reliable subway system operates in Baku, but it is often overcrowded.

Taxis are inexpensive, easy to flag down, and relatively efficient.

Communications

Local telephone service is poor by Western standards. Service is in the process of being updated.

Baku has several radio stations which broadcast in Azerbaijani, Russian, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Shortwave radio is a good means of staying in touch with world news.

There are four TV stations in Baku. One station broadcasts in Azeri, two are relayed from Russia, and one from Turkey.

There are over 300 newspapers printed in the country. Several English-language newspapers and journals are available in the major hotels, many days late and very expensive.

Health and Medicine

Medical care, considered very good before the breakup of the Soviet Union, does not meet Western standards. Health care and social services are free to all citizens by the government. But the state-run hospital system is limited and there is a lack of basic supplies and modern equipment. Emergency treatment for travellers may be free, but you will need to pay for medicines and other supplies.

There are a few drug stores in Baku with basic medicines, but it is best to bring an ample supply of any prescription or over-the-counter medications you may need.

Community Health

Eastern Azerbaijan has been called one of the most ecologically devastated regions in the world. The area around Baku and Sumgait suffers from serious pollution due to oil, gas, and chemical industries. Extensive environmental damage has resulted from the exploitation of offshore oil and gas reserves in the Caspian Sea.

Sanitation services are regular, but garbage is dumped into inadequate storage facilities. Water is not potable and must be boiled prior to drinking. Plumbing and water delivery services are substandard. Food storage practices are poor; great care must be taken during purchase and preparation of all fresh foods.

There is an increasingly high rate of vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio, measles, mumps, diphtheria, whooping cough, hepatitis, and gastroenteric diseases. Inoculations should be current before arriving in the region.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 20	Day of the Martyrs (Day of Sorrow)
May 9	Celebration of War Veterans Day
June 15	Day of National Salvation
Aug. 28	Republic Day
Oct. 9	Army & Navy Day
Oct. 18	National Independence Day
Dec. 31	Day of Azeri Solidarity
.	Kurban Mayram / Id al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice)*
.	Novruz Bayram*
.	Ramadan Bayram (End of Ramadan)*

*variable, based on Islamic calendar

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

As a result of conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh area of Azerbaijan, twenty per cent of Azerbaijani territory (in the southwest along the borders with Iran and Armenia) is occupied by insurgent forces. A cease-fire has been in effect since 1994, although reports of armed clashes along the cease-fire line and along the border with Armenia continue. Anti-personnel mines are a danger in areas close to the front lines. It is not possible to enter the self-proclaimed "Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh" from Azerbaijan. Travelers contemplating entering Nagorno-Karabakh are advised that because of the existing state of hostilities, consular services are not predictably available to Americans in Nagorno-Karabakh. Travelers, therefore, are cautioned to avoid travel to Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding occupied areas.

A passport and visa are required to enter Azerbaijan. Travelers with valid Georgian visas are permitted to enter Azerbaijan for a stay up to five days. Thereafter, they must include a letter of invitation from an individual or organization in Azerbaijan when applying for a visa. For additional information on visa requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of Azerbaijan, 927-15th Street, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005; telephone (202) 842-0001.

Americans are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security within Azerbaijan. The U.S. Embassy in Baku is located at Prospect Azadlig 83. The telephone numbers are (9) (9412) 98-03-35, (9) (9412) 98-03-36, or (9) (9412) 98-03-37.

Currency

Azerbaijan is mostly a cash economy country. Traveler's checks and credit cards are accepted only in some hotels and a few restaurants and supermarkets. The local currency is the *manat*. U.S. dollars are required in most hotels and preferred in many restaurants

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country:

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Azerbaijan Economic Review. International Monetary Fund, 1992.

Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States 1992. London: Europa (distributed in the U.S. by Gale Research), 1992.

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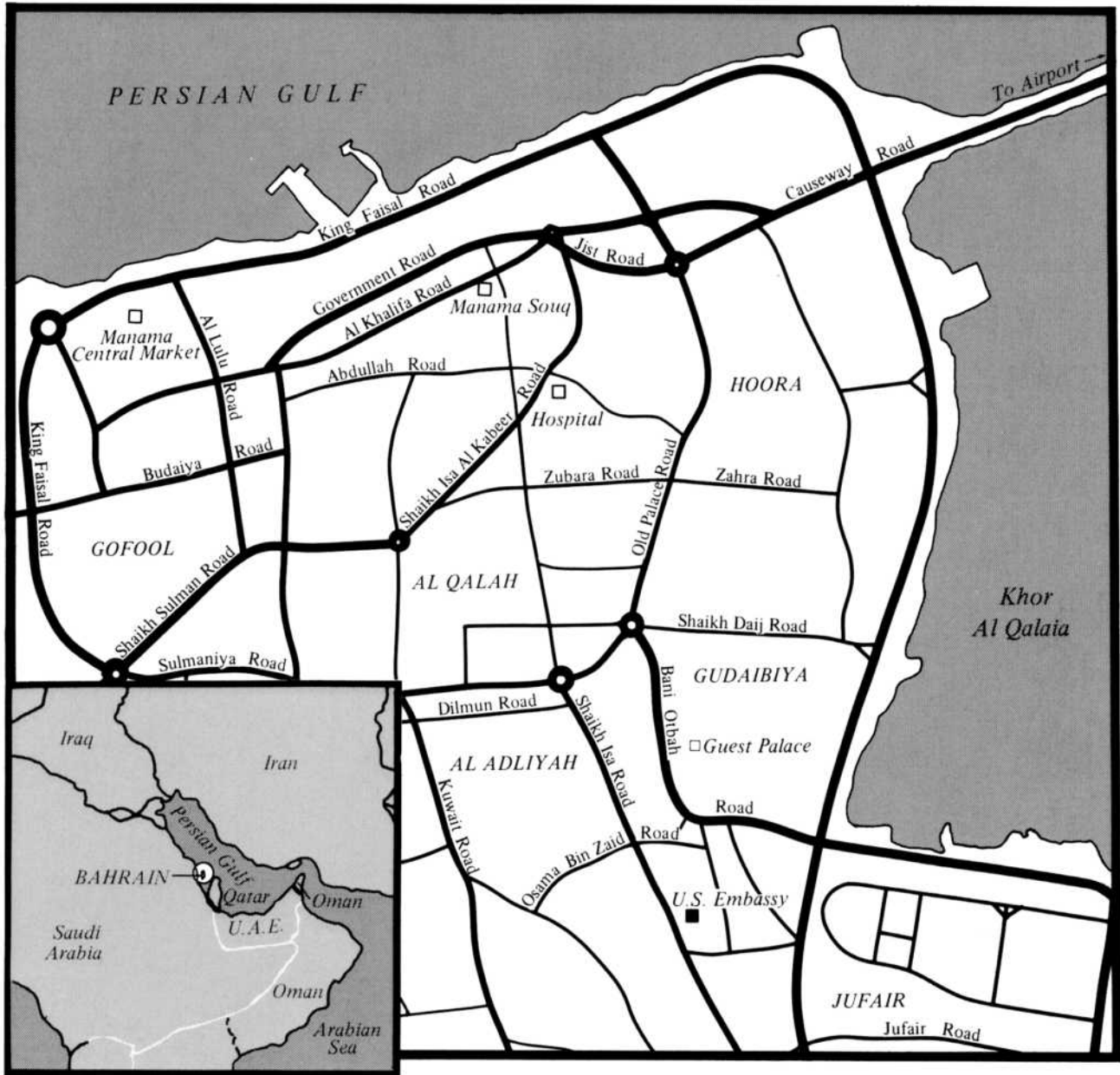
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Kazemzadeh, Firuz. *The Struggle for Transcaucasia 1917-1921*. Westport, CT: Hyperion Press, 1981.

Katz, Zev, ed. *Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities*. New York: Free Press, 1975.

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Manama, Bahrain

BAHRAIN

State of Bahrain

Major City:
Manama

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2000 for Bahrain. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Site of some of the oldest civilizations in the world (thought by some to be the site of the Garden of Eden), Bahrain is packed with archaeological digs, historical museums, dhow-building yards, and back-street souqs.

As modern as central Manama may be, the basic rhythms of life in the island's many villages remain remarkably traditional. By the same token, where there is tradition in the Gulf there is Islamic conservatism: Women cover themselves from head to foot.

Traditional craftwork continues in Bahrain: Dhows (fishing boats) are built on the outskirts of Manama;

cloth is woven at Bani Jamrah; and pottery is thrown at A'ali. A few goldsmiths still operate in the souq. One of the mainstays of Bahraini culture is the drinking of traditional Arabian coffee. You cannot go far without finding a coffee pot in a shop or a souq. Traditional Arabian street food like shawarma (lamb or chicken carved from a huge rotating spit and served in pita bread) and desserts such as baklava are also ubiquitous. While a bit thin on Arabic food, Bahrain has a bonanza of Indian, Pakistani, Thai, and other Asian specialties.

Bahrain's main island has almost certainly been inhabited since prehistoric times. The archipelago first emerged into world history in the 3rd millennium BC as the seat of the Dilmun trading empire. Dilmun, a Bronze Age culture that lasted about 2000 years, benefited from the islands' strategic position along the trade routes linking Mesopotamia with the Indus Valley.

Eventually Dilmun declined and was absorbed by the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. The Greeks arrived around 300 BC, and Bahrain remained a Hellenistic culture for some 600 years.

After experimenting with Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Manicheism, in the seventh century

many of the islands' inhabitants converted to Islam.

In the 1830s, Bahrain signed the first of many treaties with Britain, who offered Bahrain naval protection from Ottoman Turkey in exchange for unfettered access to the Gulf. Oil was discovered in 1932, and large-scale oil-drilling soon followed. Oil money brought improved education and health care to Bahrain. It also brought the British closer: The main British naval base in the region was moved to Bahrain in 1935.

In the 1950s, the waves of Arab nationalism that swept through the region led to increasing anti-British sentiment. Bahrain proclaimed its independence on August 14, 1971.

As the price of oil went through the stratosphere during the 1970s and 1980s, the country grew by leaps and bounds. Despite the Gulf-wide economic downturn of the late 1980s, Bahrain remained calm and prosperous.

Bahrain's reputation as a relatively liberal and modern Arabian Gulf State has made it a favorite with travelers in the region and an excellent introduction to the Gulf. While their neighbors staked everything on oil, Bahrainis diversified their economy and created some of the

region's best education and health systems. Years of British influence have made English widely spoken. Development has been swift, but it hasn't swallowed up everything.

MAJOR CITY

Manama

Manama is a cosmopolitan city of about 144,000. Central Manama is undergoing extensive urban development, featuring new banks, hotels, offices, and six-lane, divided highways on land reclaimed from the sea during the past 15 years. The growth has resulted in moderately increased traffic congestion and the distinct beginnings of urban sprawl. Yet the city is livable, and many consider it the preferred location in the Gulf. The discomfort of the outdoor summer weather and the real, as well as psychological, isolation of living on a small island community cause frustration for some.

Utilities

Electricity is 220v-240v, 50 hertz. Because voltage fluctuates, delicate electrical equipment such as stereos should have voltage regulators. These are available locally, but at high prices.

Food

Clean, modern, U.S.-style supermarkets are numerous. Excellent prawns and fish, superb dates, good eggs, fresh chickens, and fresh dairy products, including pasteurized milk, are grown or produced on the island. Depending on the season, fresh fruits and vegetables are also available. The latter is supplemented by an abundance of imported fresh fruit and vegetables. Beef, mutton, lamb, veal, pork, poultry, cheeses, other dairy products, cereals, and canned or dry goods are all imported, primarily from the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, and Europe, and are readily available in the island's supermarkets and shops. Prices, however, are often high. Smart shoppers spend time in



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Business district of Manama, Bahrain

the cheaper, covered central market in downtown Manama.

Clothing

Fabrics and sewing supplies are plentiful and moderately priced. Tailors are good at copying patterns and models, but most do not create or design clothing. Local stores offer expensive ready-made clothing of varying quality and limited selection from Europe and the U.S.

Bahrain has no official clothing taboos. As guests of a society that traditionally is very strict among its own members, especially the women, visitors are expected to dress modestly. Shorts, short dresses, and bare shoulders are inappropriate outside the home. Skirts and dresses for women and long pants for men are recommended for general wear. Sneakers for tennis and other sports are locally available but at high prices.

Men: Take cool, lightweight suits for summer wear and many cotton shirts. Sweaters and a moderate supply of light winter clothes are necessary. Winter nights can be as chilly as 45°F. Since winter is also the rainy season and some streets are unpaved, boots and galoshes are useful to negotiate the many puddles that linger after heavy rains.

Women: Shoe shopping presents a problem, especially for women. Only the latest European styles are available at local boutiques. Because of the heat and humidity, natural clothing fibers (especially cotton) are best during summer. Double-knits and synthetic materials are very uncomfortable during the hot season.

Children: Children's shoes and clothing are available but are usually expensive. Shoes are of poor quality, and children's galoshes are hard to find.

Supplies and Services

Almost everything is available in Bahrain, but is invariably more expensive. Laundry soaps and bleaches, though fairly expensive, are readily available locally. Small appliances, linens, utensils, tools, cosmetics, soaps, and perfumes are available but are also expensive. Specific brand names may not be available, but suitable substitutes abound. Color film is expensive. It may be processed locally or in the U.S. Dog, cat, and bird foods are available locally. Kitty litter, dog collars, leashes, and toys are usually available, but are expensive, and the selection is limited.

A large variety of personal and professional services are available in Bahrain, from picture framing to motor vehicle rust-proofing, legal and tax counseling, to insect extermination. However, costs exceed those of comparable services in the U.S.

Shoe repair shops provide reasonably priced and satisfactory work. Dry-cleaners are adequate for materials not requiring special treatment. Men's suits are cleaned and pressed for \$5. For women's silk clothing, however, reliable dry-cleaning may be \$7 for a dress.

Beauty shops are found throughout Manama. Their work is good and at prices comparable to those in the U.S. Barbershops are also common and fairly inexpensive.

Repairs for automobiles, radios, and electrical appliances are usually satisfactory. Long delays sometimes occur due to a prevailing lack of spare parts.

Finished carpentry products are inferior to and more expensive than U.S. products. Residential furniture is expensive.

Domestic Help

Most middle-class Bahraini families and Westerners in Bahrain employ domestic servants. Going rates (as of 1999) for domestic servants are as follows: Full-time cooking and cleaning \$160-\$350/month Part-time cooking and cleaning \$2.65-\$3/hour. Part-time gardener \$70-\$100/month Babysitter (American teenagers) \$2.50-\$3/hour.

Religious Activities

Bahrain allows freedom of worship. Although most Bahrainis are Muslims, several Christian churches serve the foreign community. Both Protestant and Catholic services are held every Friday and Sunday on the navy base (NSA). Protestant Sunday school is available for kindergarten through adult levels at the National Evangelical Church in Manama. Sacred Heart (Roman Catholic), St. Christopher's (Anglican), and the Church of the Latter-

day Saints, as well as Syrian Orthodox churches, have active congregations. Most churches hold services on Friday to correspond to the local Sabbath, but Sunday services are also held. Many churches have nurseries to care for children during services, and services are conducted in a variety of languages. Bahrain's Jewish community is too small to sustain a synagogue.

Education

The Bahrain School is an international school of about 1,000 pupils representing 50 nationalities for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The school is operated by the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, Europe (DODDSEUR). In addition to a standard American curriculum, it offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) program that is recognized in more than 40 countries for university entrance. American colleges will generally give one year's advance placement for IB diploma holders. The Secondary School meets the accreditation standards of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (NCA). Under DODDS regulations, children of U.S. military personnel are accorded priority in admission, while other students, including children of U.S. civilian agency personnel, are accepted on a space-available basis. The Bahrain International School Association (BISA) is the local governing body, but management authority is held by DODDS.

The school year runs from early September through late June. The school week conforms to the Muslim week, Saturday through Wednesday, with a Thursday to Friday weekend. The school day is from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for all grades.

Group registration is held before the beginning of the new school year. Thereafter, parents may register their children in the school's administrative office upon arrival in Bahrain. Children must be accompanied by a parent or sponsor at registration and must present all records from prior schools, passport

number, and immunization records. Placement tests are also required upon registration.

The Habara School and the Nadeen School offer a pre-nursery and beginning primary school syllabus to a predominantly British and American enrollment aged 2-7 years, at a cost of about \$500-\$600 a term (i.e., \$1,500-\$1,950 per school year). Half-day summer play school is available for kindergarten and primary-school-age children. NSA also operates a year-round day care center for children.

Other schools, including St. Christopher's (British) and one with a French curriculum, are also available.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Bahrain offers bachelor's degrees in business, science, education, engineering, art, and health sciences. The language of instruction is Arabic.

The University of Maryland is a U.S. institution that offers undergraduate courses through the Bahrain School and on a part-time basis for adults wishing to begin or continue work toward an associate's or bachelor's degree. Additionally, seminar classes are scheduled at various times. These classes are one semester hour of credit that requires 16 hours of classroom instruction.

The Bahrain Government and some private schools offer Arabic-language, secretarial, business management, and computer classes. Several schools offer hands-on computer courses.

The Bahrain Arts Society offers classes in drawing, painting, and poetry. The Music Institute provides instruction in a variety of musical instruments to adults and children at reasonable cost. As funds permit, the Embassy also maintains an Arabic-language program. Classes are also available through the Bahrain Ministry of Education or various schools and individuals. Ballet, ice

skating, karate, aerobics, and yoga classes are available. Most of the five-star hotels also have thriving health clubs for men and women.

Recreation and Social Life

Summer is difficult for children and parents because the intense heat and humidity preclude outdoor activities. Bring games, handicrafts, hobby supplies, and beach toys. An outdoor grill and equipment for light camping are useful in winter.

Power boating and sailing are popular with many Westerners in Bahrain. There are four sailing clubs on the island. Used pleasure boats and sailboats are sold, but at high prices when available. Groups rent Arab dhows for a day of water sightseeing, swimming, fishing, and picnicking. Only saltwater fishing is done; take your own gear, as it is expensive there. Scuba diving is popular, and the sea floor around Bahrain is interesting in parts; but the water is often murky. Rental costs are prohibitive. U.S.-certified scuba diving classes are available, and two clubs offer courses at reasonable tuition.

The BAPCO (Bahrain Petroleum Company) Club at Awali permits some foreigners in the business and diplomatic communities to hold memberships (about \$300 yearly) to use its beach, bowling, dining, and swimming facilities. All the major hotels in Bahrain (Meridien, Hilton, Sheraton, and Holiday Inn) offer memberships in their swimming pool, health club, and tennis facilities, but the cost is high. Several private clubs (AlBandar and the Marina) offer membership to foreigners and have attractive, well-located facilities. There is a small indoor ice-skating rink open to the public. Horseback riding and riding lessons are available.

Attending the weekly horse races at the racetrack about 5 miles south of Manama is a pleasant way to spend a winter afternoon. Races are run using an excellent stock of Arabian horses and are free to all who wish to attend. Betting and alcoholic beverages are prohibited at the racing grounds.

A new sporting era has dawned in Bahrain. The Riffa Golf Club has created an 18-hole course on more than 150 acres. What was once a desert is now a green oasis of sporting excellence.

Local travel agents offer a range of tours, usually 3-7 days, to places in the Middle East, India, the Far East, or Europe. These package trips are popular among Westerners. In addition, excellent half day tours in Bahrain are available through private tour companies. Camping is possible in the central part of the island during the winter and spring. Private groups frequently arrange dhow trips into the Gulf during the non-winter months.

Many interesting archeological and historical sites are in Bahrain. This is the largest ancient necropolis in the world with more than 100,000 grave mounds, ancient forts, temples, and city sites going back to the Dilmun era, circa 2500 BC. The Bahrain National Museum has an excellent display of both ancient Bahrain and the more recent Arab traditions. Two restored houses can be toured and traditional craftsmen still work in some villages. At Jasra is a handicraft center where visitors can watch traditional Arab artisans plying their craft. Finished pieces can be purchased at the gift shop.

Several air-conditioned movie theaters show recent films in English, French, Italian, Arabic, and Hindi at modest admission prices. Several video rental outlets carry the latest U.S. and European films and most Westerners own video equipment.

Many good but expensive restaurants feature international cuisine and music groups. The major hotels schedule well-known entertainers for brief engagements in the fall, spring, and winter. Some medium-priced restaurants specialize in tasty Chinese, Thai, Turkish, Arabic, and Indian foods. American fast food is available at high prices from Kentucky Fried Chicken, Hardee's, Burger King, BaskinRobbins, Dairy Queen, McDonald's, Chili's, Pizza Hut, Dominoes Pizza, Fuddrucker's,

Hole-in-One Donuts, and Subway for deli-style sandwiches. Much entertaining is done at home.

Bahrain has a well-developed tradition of club life directed mainly at the sporting community. The BAPCO Club, Dilmun Club, Yacht Club, and British Club have extensive recreational facilities. High fees at the Marina Club make membership unattractive; however, pier and mooring facilities are available at various other locations on the island.

The American Women's Association is a focal point for American community activities, and the American Association arranges monthly luncheon meetings, an annual picnic, and other social events.

Bahrain abounds with attractive special interest clubs: the Historical and Archeological Society, Natural History Society, drama groups, the Garden Club, bridge groups, tennis league, and cross country and motor groups, plus some possibilities for Americans to enjoy rugby, soccer, and cricket.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The State of Bahrain is an archipelago of 33 small, low-lying islands in the Persian Gulf, halfway down the east coast of Saudi Arabia and about 15 miles from the Saudi mainland. Total land area is about 300 square miles.

Five of the six principal islands are linked by a causeway system. Bahrain Island, where the capital city of Manama is located, is the largest. It is about 30 miles long and 10-12 miles wide. A four-lane causeway links Manama with the island and town of Muharraq, site of the newly expanded international airport. Bridges also connect Sitra, Nabih Saleh, and Um al-Nassan Islands to

Bahrain Island, which is linked to the mainland of Saudi Arabia by a causeway to Dhahran and Al-Khobar.

Bahrain, with a desert climate, is one of the world's hottest areas. Its hottest and most humid weather is from June through September. Most buildings and all Embassy staff housing are air-conditioned. The weather is pleasant from November through May, but the combination of poor soil drainage and few storm sewers can result in its infrequent rainfall leaving muddy city streets and puddles.

A narrow strip of land along the northern and northwestern coasts of Bahrain Island is cultivated with date palms, alfalfa, and vegetables. A desert, punctuated by a north-south plateau, extends south of the cultivated area. Surrounding this plateau is a rolling basin surrounded by overhanging bluffs sloping

into the sea. The ground is hard and infertile with a gravel surface until the spring when a pale, soft green covering appears on the desert following the winter rains. It provides a welcome contrast to the summer's aridity.

Population

Bahrainis are Muslims. With an estimated 666,000 people, of whom 38% are non-Bahrainis, the population is divided between the Shi'a community and the ruling Sunnis. The Shi'a community is principally split between ethnic Arabs and Iranians. Indians, Pakistanis and other Asians comprise the majority of resident foreigners. Bahrain has a large Western community, which includes about 6,000 British and approximately 3,000 Americans. The majority of the indigenous population is under 25 years old.

Bahrainis are cosmopolitan people noted for their hospitality, moderation, and tolerance. Although many still wear traditional Arab dress, others have adopted Western attire. Modern Bahraini culture is the lat-

est in a succession of civilizations dating back thousands of years. The island of Bahrain was called Dilmun in the Babylonian and Sumerian eras, Tylos in the Seleucid era, then Awal, and finally Bahrain.

Government

The extended Al-Khalifa family has ruled the State of Bahrain since the late 18th century. It dominates Bahrain's society and Government. The constitution confirms the Amir as hereditary ruler, with the assistance of a Prime Minister and an appointed Cabinet.

Britain conducted Bahrain's foreign relations and ensured its defense through a treaty relationship from the mid-19th century until 1971, when Bahrain declared its independence. The mercantile and adaptive spirit of the Bahraini people enabled Bahrain to establish public schools, an effective and efficient modern bureaucracy, a Western legal system, and a sophisticated economy at an earlier stage than its Arabian Gulf neighbors. Bahrainis continue to welcome foreign contributions to the economic and social life of the country.

Since independence, Bahrain has joined the U.N., the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Gulf Cooperation Council was formed in 1981 to coordinate developmental, educational, commercial, and security affairs among its six Arab Gulf State members.

Arts, Science, and Education

The first public school in Bahrain opened in 1919, and its literacy level remains high by regional standards. Bahrain was the first country in the area to introduce co-education in public schools. Many Bahrainis are well educated and well traveled. Many have studied at the American University of Beirut or in England, Egypt, or in the U.S. English is widely spoken, especially

in the business community. Knowledge of Arabic is not essential, but the ability to communicate in Arabic opens many doors in Bahrain and increases social access for Westerners.

Bahrain has a national university and a college of health sciences. The regional Arabian Gulf University is also located in Bahrain. Its medical school opened in the fall of 1984. The campus is a modern architectural marvel, with separate facilities for men and women.

Bahrain features a number of talented artists whose works are displayed and sold at frequent exhibitions.

The role of Bahraini women is changing. Their position in society is expanding and developing. Many opportunities in both education and business that had never before been open to Arabian Peninsular women have become available. Some women still wear the "abaya," a traditional black cloth covering the whole body, outside their homes. Other Bahraini women dress in the latest European fashions, drive cars, and occupy positions of responsibility, including mid-level Government posts.

Commerce and Industry

Bahrainis have an ancient tradition of trade, travel, and receptivity to cultural influences from abroad. They are cosmopolitan and accept many Western customs.

Much of Bahrain's current prosperity can be traced to the discovery of oil in 1932, the first find on the Arab side of the Gulf. Bahrain does not have a large oil reserve and, therefore, has sought to diversify its industrial base. Banking, communications, oil-related services, general commerce, and industries, including aluminum smelting and downstream product production, have broadened the base of economic activity in the country.

Approximately 90 American firms capitalize on the geographic, service, and environmental advantages of having regional offices in Bahrain.

Despite modernization, traditional enterprises have not disappeared. Handmade Arab dhows ply the seas as they have for more than 1,000 years. From the sea come a variety of fish, including delicious shrimp. Expensive natural pearls, once the economic mainstay of the island, are still found in limited commercial quantities. Bahrainis take great pride in their quality and color. A limited number of craftsmen continue to make traditional baskets, cloth, and pottery. Also available in local markets are a variety of imported handicrafts from Middle Eastern and South Asian countries.

Transportation

Automobiles

All family members who are at least 18 years old and intend to drive in Bahrain should take along a valid U.S. driver's license. Local authorities permit U.S. license holders to drive for one month until a permanent Bahraini license is obtained.

Bahrain's climate and roads shorten a car's life span. Many people find a used car adequate in this small country. Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors products are available in Bahrain. European and Japanese autos are still cheaper than U.S. models. The local market for used cars is active.

Although it is difficult to drive large cars in many parts of Manama, they are very common. A mechanically simple car is preferable since maintenance/repair can be expensive, and spare parts are often in short supply. Local third-party insurance is required and is available for less than \$100 for most cars. Full coverage costs about 5% of the value of the car.

Gasoline prices are comparably lower than U.S. prices. Unleaded gasoline is available.

Rental cars are available locally, from about \$397 to \$550 a month, depending on condition and the comfort options requested.

Local

A network of roads connects Manama with other villages on Bahrain Island and to the three neighboring islands. Most major roads in the northern third of Bahrain are four-lane and well maintained. In the older parts of Manama and Muharraq, many streets are narrow and twisting or in poor condition. Congested areas of pedestrians, hawkers, and cars make driving difficult and dangerous, particularly in the market ("souq") area. Roundabouts (traffic circles) are found at most intersections. However, even with Bahrain's 140,000 registered vehicles congesting the streets, the drive to work from most residential areas takes no more than 15-20 minutes. Taxis are readily available, but most are not metered and fares are subject to intense negotiation.

Buses operate regularly, but are often crowded and sometimes require lengthy waiting periods in extreme heat. They are not air-conditioned and are not considered a suitable alternative to taxis by most Westerners.

Regional

Bahrain International Airport's ultramodern new terminal is one of the busiest in the Gulf. Approximately 22 carriers serve Bahrain with connections to other Middle Eastern destinations, Europe, Africa, and the Far East. There are no direct flights between Bahrain and North or South America. Bahrain also has a modern and busy port. It offers direct and frequent cargo shipping connections to the U.S., Europe, and the Far East. The four-lane causeway linking Bahrain with Saudi Arabia is open to vehicle traffic, affording access to most parts of the mainland. Only males are permitted to drive in Saudi Arabia.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Bahrain has one of the most efficient telephone networks in the Middle East. A radio and telecommunications station links the Gulf, via INTELSAT, to the rest of the world with good connections. A call to the U.S. usually takes only a few seconds to place and costs about \$1.29 a minute. Reduced rates (\$1.04 a minute) are in effect between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. daily, and all day Friday. INET services are available, in addition to AT&T and MCI "Dial America."

Mail

Bahraini international mail is also a quick and safe method of corresponding with the U.S.

Radio and TV

Several TV stations can be received clearly in Bahrain. Channel availability is strictly dependent on each housing compound, and the selection varies widely. The Bahraini Government-owned station has both Arabic- and English-language services. The latter airs from 5 to 11 p.m. and includes a 30-minute English-language newscast, as well as American series, movies, cartoons, and British and Indian programs. BBC World Service Television from Hong Kong is broadcast over open TV channels. CNN is available on a pay-for-service channel, as are a large number of other stations broadcasting American films and TV shows. Another English-language station is transmitted by ARAMCO from neighboring Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. This station presents mostly rerun American programs, but also offers several recently taped sports events on Thursday and Friday afternoons. Programming is provided only during the late afternoon and evening and is entirely English. With a suitable antenna, you can pick up four other stations, including Qatar, Dubai, and Kuwait. The English-language newspapers carry tentative schedules for some stations.

All local TV stations use the European scan (PAL/SECAM 625 lines). American NTSC TV's are not compatible and will not work. In addition to regular programs, an active video rental market offers many current movies.

ARAMCO also maintains an excellent AM/FM radio service. ARAMCO presents popular, classical, country-western, and rock music on two wavelengths. Radio Bahrain has an AM/FM stereo service with strong signals broadcasting modern and classical music, topical programs, and English newscasts on two channels. English programming from Qatar and Dubai is also received. The latest news is broadcast on shortwave and medium wave by VOA's Middle East and African services during the morning and evening, by the World Service of the BBC, and by Armed Forces Radio and Television Services (AFRTS). A dependable shortwave receiver is desirable due to atmospheric conditions around Bahrain, which frequently cause poor reception, especially of VOA. Equipment must be adjustable to the local 220V, 50-cycle power. An all-channel TV antenna that also serves for FM stereo might be the best buy, and it is available locally.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Gulf Daily News and Bahrain Tribune are two daily English-language papers that are published in Bahrain and directed toward the English-speaking community. The English-language Gulf News is available daily from the U.A.E. The International Herald Tribune usually arrives a day after publication and costs about \$2 per issue.

International newsmagazines such as Time, Newsweek, and The Economist are available uncensored locally at several bookstores. Women's magazines, mostly British, and hobby and sports magazines are found on many newsstands. These are expensive, so it is preferable to subscribe to magazines. Bookstores have a limited selection of

titles and are more expensive than in the U.S.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The oldest hospital in Bahrain is the American Mission Hospital, run by the Mission of the Reformed Church in America, and the newest is the International Hospital. Emergency services are also available at the Bahrain Defence Force Hospital in Riffa, and Awali Hospital. Routine dental care is available at local Bahraini medical facilities, but it is advisable to have a thorough checkup and treatment of serious problems before leaving the U.S.

Community Health

The Government of Bahrain provides free public health care to all Bahrainis and foreigners through six hospitals and a network of clinics throughout the island. Most health care provided at the facilities is professional, competent, and modern. However, doctors and staff cannot always handle large numbers of people.

The most common insects are mosquitoes, cockroaches, flies, ants, and meal mites. Flies are troublesome during the spring, late summer, and early fall. Insecticides are available in local stores. Rats and mice are also found, particularly near uncollected and decaying garbage heaps throughout the city. Cleanliness and precautions such as storing food in airtight containers are advisable. Brownish-green lizards (geckos) are useful, silent friends who populate the upper reaches of house walls. Common in many parts of the world, they bother no one except the squeamish and feed on insects that find their way into houses despite screening and the use of insecticides.

Fleas, sand ticks, and wood ticks are prevalent in Bahrain and are a problem for pets. There is no heartworm in Bahrain. Veterinarians are available and competent, but expensive.

An extensive drainage system is currently under construction in Bahrain. Some houses still have septic tanks that can occasionally overflow.

When enjoying beach activities or indulging in water sports, wear either plastic or canvas shoes and avoid stepping on sharp pieces of shell, buried pieces of metal or glass, sea urchins, stonefish, and cone shells that can sting painfully and sometimes dangerously. Sea snakes, jellyfish, stingrays, and sharks are found in Bahrain waters but rarely pose a threat close to shore. Minor ear infections are sometimes contracted through swimming in polluted water and should receive prompt medical attention. Seek advice on the location of clean and safe swimming areas. Irritation to ears and eyes may also be caused by the draft from fans and air conditioners or the dust and sand carried in strong winds.

Preventive Measures

Health precautions include preventing sunstroke and heatstroke, which are real risks during the summer and fall. Outdoor activities must be carefully planned and exertion kept to a minimum during the daytime in that period.

In the summer, good health is best maintained by drinking a lot of liquid, getting plenty of sleep, and taking extra salt on food, or, if preferred, salt tablets, with a physician's guidance. The high summer humidity can be troublesome to those with asthmatic or bronchial ailments.

Summer colds are often brought on by sudden changes of temperature due to extensive air-conditioning in buildings and cars. Avoid direct drafts from air conditioners.

Some medications are not available in Bahrain. Take an initial supply from the U.S. that can be refilled through mail.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Customs, Duties & Passage

Passports and visas are required. Two-week visas may be obtained for a fee upon arrival at the airport. Prior to travel, visitors may obtain from Bahraini embassies overseas five-year multiple entry visas valid for stays as long as one month. Visitors who fail to depart the country at the end of their authorized stay are fined. An exit tax is charged all travelers upon departure. Residents of Bahrain who intend to return must obtain a re-entry permit before departing. For further information on entry requirements, travelers can contact the Embassy of the State of Bahrain, 3502 International Drive, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 342-0741; or the Bahrain Permanent Mission to the U.N., 2 United Nations Plaza, East 44th St., New York, N.Y. 10017, telephone (212) 223-6200. Information also may be obtained from the Embassy's Internet home page at <http://www.bahrainembassy.org>.

The following items are strictly prohibited: firearms and ammunition or other weaponry, including decorative knives; cultured, bleached, or tinted pearls and undrilled pearls produced outside the Arabian Gulf, pornography or seditious literature; and habit-forming or hallucinatory drugs. Videocassettes will be inspected and viewed on arrival and should not be shipped in hand or checked baggage.

Travelers should note that the local definition of pornography is considerably stricter than in the Western world.

Magazines such as Playboy are likely to be confiscated at the airport. Adults may import two bottles of alcohol, and the duty-free shop at Bahrain's International Airport is open to arriving as well as departing passengers.

Americans living in or visiting Bahrain are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manama and obtain updated information on travel and security within Bahrain. The U.S. Embassy is located at Bldg. 979, Road no. 3119, Zinj District (next to Al Ahli Sports Club). (The mailing address is P.O. Box 26431, Manama, Bahrain.) The telephone number is 973-273-300. The Consular Section fax number is 973-256-242. The Embassy maintains an English language hotline providing information on current travel conditions in Bahrain at telephone 973-255-048. The Embassy's website, which includes consular information, is <http://www.usembassy.com.bh>. The workweek in Bahrain is Saturday through Wednesday.

Pets

The Bahrain Minister of Commerce and Agriculture issued a Ministerial decree in 1984 that banned the importation of dogs, cats, and monkeys into Bahrain from countries where rabies is found.

Bahrain is rabies free and certain rules have to be met when importing a pet. Within one month of your departure date, obtain a veterinary health certificate that identifies the pet, states the origin and name of the exporter; verifies that the animals/birds were examined prior to shipment, confirms that the animal is free from all contagious diseases (as well as ecto-parasites), and is fit for travel. The following vaccination certificates must accompany the animal when it arrives in Bahrain:

Cats: Rabies, Feline Enteritis
Dogs: Rabies, Distemper, PARVOV

If an animal is not permitted entry into Bahrain, it is the responsibility of the owner to pay for its return.

Firearms and Ammunition

Firearms and ammunition are not to be imported into Bahrain under any circumstances.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Citibank is the only American bank currently established in Bahrain that provides full commercial banking services (individual Bahraini dinar, U.S. dollar checking and savings accounts, fund transfers). Citibank and several other banks, as well as commercial money changers, accept U.S. Treasury dollar checks or travelers checks and will disburse either U.S. dollars or Bahrain dinars at the established rate, often with a surcharge. However, banks usually do not cash personal checks.

The exchange rate is: US\$1.00 = Bahrain Dinar (BD).377 (or 377 fils); BD1=US\$2.65. The Dinar is pegged to the US\$; it will not fluctuate.

Bahrain officially adopted the metric system of weights and measures in December 1977.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Bahrain does not have personal or sales tax. An active resale market in Bahrain is open to those seeking to sell personal property, including automobiles. Bahrain has a free exchange of currency. Money changers will quickly convert dollars or travelers checks to virtually any currency desired.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

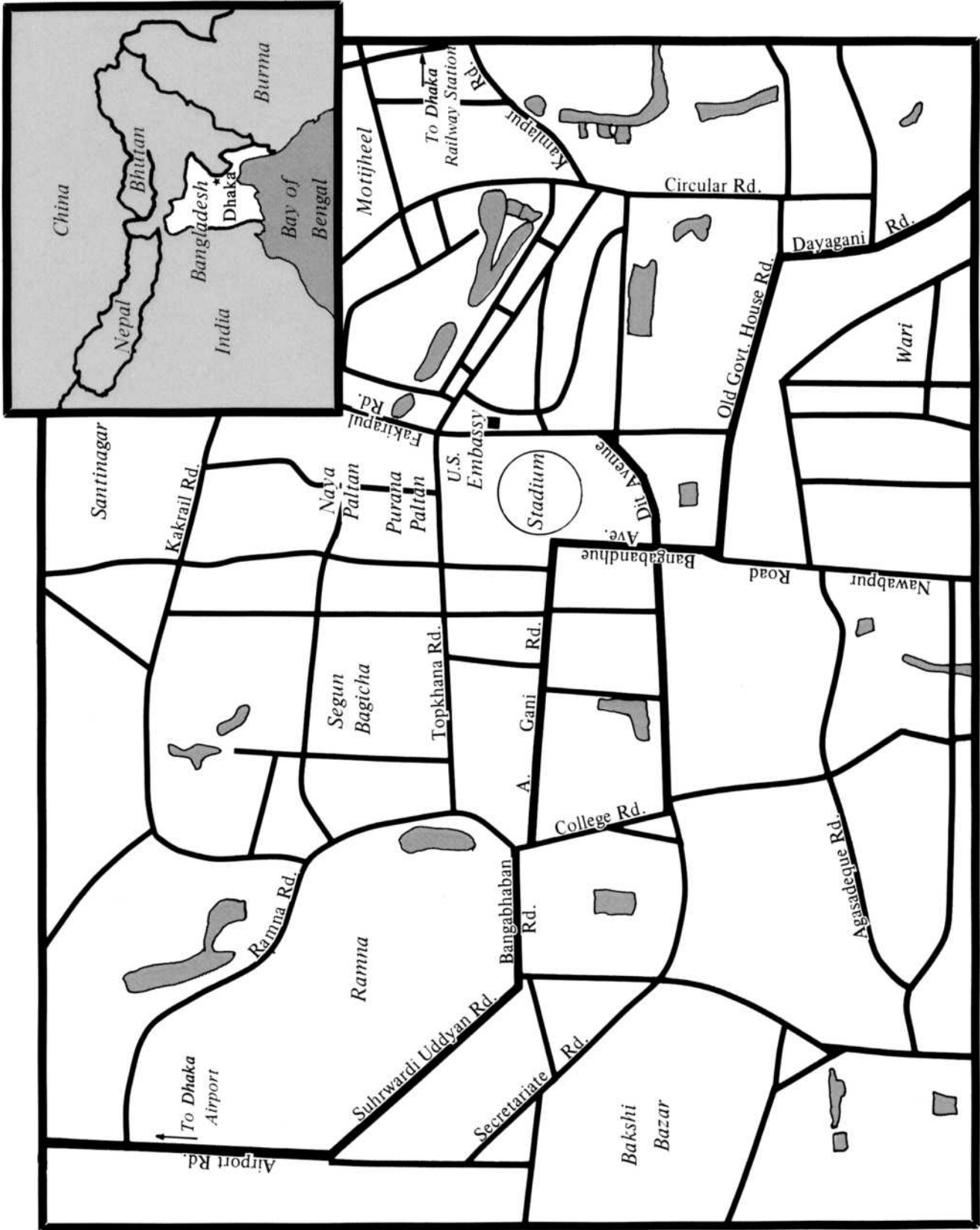
Jan. 1 New Year's Day
Dec 16 & 17 National Day
. Eid Al-Adha*
. Islamic New Year*
. Ashura*
. Prophet's Birthday*
. Eid al Fitr*

*variable, based on Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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- Nakhleh, Emile A. *Bahrain: Political Development in a Modernized Society*. Lexington Books: Lexington, 1976.
- Owen, R. *The Golden Bubble: Arabian Gulf Documentary*. Collins: London, 1986.
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Dhaka, Bangladesh

BANGLADESH

People's Republic of Bangladesh

Major Cities:

Dhaka, Chittagong

Other Cities:

Barisal, Comilla, Dinājpur, Faridpur, Jessore, Khulna, Mymensingh, Narayanganj, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Sirājganj, Sylhet

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

BANGLADESH, on the Bay of Bengal between India and Burma, is the most densely populated, yet one of the least developed and poorest countries in the world. Its needs are many, and its resources few. Marked by famine, floods, an astronomical birthrate, and a tenuous economy, it is struggling to improve the welfare of its citizens.

Physically, Bangladesh is semi-aquatic. The land, basically flat, is broken by the delta system of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, and thousands of lesser waterways, tributaries, and streams course through the country. Tea plantations and bamboo jungles add diversity to the landscape.

MAJOR CITIES

Dhaka

Dhaka, the capital, has developed over centuries as a city of culture, commerce, and government in the Bengal region. Buddhist and Hindu domination ended in the 13th century and was followed by 500 years of Muslim economic and cultural influence. In the 17th century, under Moghul rule, Dhaka occupied the role of capital city and was an important trade and commercial center. During the European domination of the 19th and 20th centuries, particularly during the British raj, Dhaka served as a district headquarters, although Calcutta was the chief seaport and industrial center of Bengal. It was not until independence in 1971 that Dhaka again achieved capital status. From a population of less than 2 million in 1971, it has grown to approximately 7 million today.

Divided into districts, Dhaka lies in the south along the banks of the Buringanga River. The once splendid buildings and residences have deteriorated into shops and small dwellings. The majority of Dhaka residents live in this area. Most of the modern public institutions and commercial development are con-

centrated in Dhaka center. However, due to increasing congestion some businesses are spreading to more newly developed areas. On a narrow strip of high ground north of the city, the upper-class areas of Banani, Gulshan, and Baridhara Model Towns have developed.

Food

Locally, you may purchase meat, fish, shrimp, eggs, fresh vegetables, and fruit. For the coolest 6 months of the year, a wide variety of vegetables are available, although the size and quality are not up to U.S. standards. Individuals should soak all vegetables in chlorine for 30 minutes. All meat must be frozen 7 to 14 days or cooked very well to avoid diseases. Several types of leaf lettuce, green beans, cauliflower, broccoli, green pepper, celery, and tomatoes are only in the market during the coolest part of the year. During the hottest 6 months, vegetables are limited to potatoes, onions, eggplant, cucumbers, carrots, cabbage, and a variety of local greens and squashes.

Several varieties of tropical fruits are available locally in season, including mangoes, pineapples, bananas, papayas, lychees, and guavas. Oranges, apples, and grapes are imported from India or Pakistan. Packaged food items can be

found on the local market but at considerably higher prices.

Home gardens can provide a variety of foods to your diet. For those who don't have a yard in which to plant a garden, large flowerpots on the roof can be used to plant vegetable seeds. Tomatoes, carrots, beets, snow peas, cabbage, broccoli, lettuce (leafy varieties), and herbs can be grown. Much attention needs to be given to a vegetable garden in order to keep the insects and crows from consuming the fruits of your labor.

Clothing

An umbrella is good protection against the rain or sun. Bring a large supply of summer clothing and shoes for all occasions. Loose-fitting cotton clothes are more comfortable than synthetics for the high humidity that prevails throughout much of the year. Clothes wear out due to frequent washing and required changes.

Because black rust permeates everything and mildew is prevalent 9 months of the year, clothing and leather items must be given special attention. Plastic garment bags are not recommended. Use old sheets, etc., to cover stored clothes and to act as dust covers on open clothing racks. Local tailors can make basic men's, women's, and children's clothing. Success is most often achieved when a garment copy is supplied. Bring a good supply of fine cotton fabrics and sewing notions and have clothes made locally. Tailors cannot use paper patterns, but include them if you sew yourself. Local fabric and notion selections are limited in quality, color, and selection.

Wool clothing and sweaters can be worn a few weeks during the cool season and for traveling to neighboring India and Nepal. Clothing customs vary with the season; lightweight suits are worn by men more often during the cooler months.

Men: Local safari suits or sport shirts and slacks are worn to work most of the year. Ties are appropriate in most offices. During the cool

season, lightweight suits are often worn. Sweatsuits are handy for the cooler months.

All-cotton shirts and slacks are most comfortable for 9 months of the year. Blends, however, are tolerable for work in the air-conditioned office and for cooler weather. Bring an adequate supply of shoes for work and sports, including sandals and thongs for poolside use. Sweaters and other lightweight wool clothing are used during the cool months and for travel. Include a good supply of cotton underwear, socks, and proper athletic wear for a variety of sports.

Women: Bring lightweight, comfortable clothing for home or office wear. Mid-calf-length dresses or sleeved blouses with skirts are most common; pants with long blouses are also appropriate. Bring washable fabrics; dry-cleaning is available but not reliable.

Modest attire with covered back and shoulders and mid-calf skirts is appropriate for occasions that include Bangladeshis. A lightweight shawl or jacket to cover shoulders is often sufficient to use with more typically U.S. summer styles; jackets are handy for air-conditioned rooms as well. Sundresses and shorts can be worn at home, at the home of an American friend, or at the American Recreation Club. Two-piece swimwear is acceptable at private clubs. It is important, however, to be covered when you are traveling between home and your destination.

Many discover the practical comfort of the "shalwar kamiz," a traditional costume with cool, loose-fitting pants and a long tunic or blouse. It may be purchased locally in cotton or silk or tailored for you in a fabric of your choice.

Children: Good-quality, ready-made clothing for children is not available. Clothing for boys is particularly hard to find. Bring a good supply and keep in mind how quickly children grow. Bring a large supply of tennis shoes and sandals.

Consider the warm weather and include sundresses, shorts, T-shirts, cotton underwear, a large supply of socks, and several bathing suits. Sweatpants, jeans, and sweaters are necessary for winter and travel. Dressy clothes are seldom needed. A typical school outfit includes shorts, T-shirts, and tennis socks for both boys and girls.

Besides umbrellas, you might want to bring a lightweight rain slicker, galoshes, or gumshoes. However, the heat during the rainy season may render such items impractical. The galoshes might be more practical for children who might play outside after a storm. Bring nonskid shoes and slippers, as the floors in most houses are a noncarpeted tile. Costumes for Halloween and school plays are useful items, but costumes can easily be made by the local tailors.

Bring all clothing for infants. Rubber pants with diapers encourage skin rashes; try improved products available in the U.S. Bring diapers and good-quality pins and rubber padding. Some cotton clothing, but not the best quality, can be found locally.

Supplies and Services

Bangladesh has strict import laws. Many items may be found on the local market but at very high prices.

Dhaka has several beauty parlors. Bring your own hair-coloring products; henna is available here and has been popular among the Americans. Dry-cleaning services are inexpensive but not very reliable. Picture framing is also reasonable; however, proper matting material is not available. Film processing is adequate and reasonably priced. Local tailors can sew basic styles or copy an existing garment successfully and inexpensively; local fabric selection and notion supplies are limited. Basic vehicle repairs are done locally, though parts are sometimes difficult to find.

Religious Activities

The Constitution of Bangladesh grants all religions the freedom to



Three-wheel taxis in Dhaka.

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

preach, practice, and propagate their faith. Catholic and Protestant congregations have been established for generations in Dhaka.

Most Roman Catholics from the American community attend English-language Masses held on Saturday at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ramna or on Sunday at Banani Seminary in Banani. Many priests are U.S. citizens (Holy Cross Fathers). First communion and religious education classes are also held.

An interdenominational Protestant church holds English-language services every Friday morning in Gulshan. This interdenominational congregation sponsors an active group for all youth from grades 6 through 12. The Anglican church, St. Thomas' New Centre, has English-language services twice weekly. Seventh-day Adventists,

Latter-day Saints, Mennonites, Bahai, and Assemblies of God are also represented in Dhaka.

Education

The American International School Dhaka (AIS/D) is a coeducational day school for students of all nationalities from preschool (4 years old) through grade 12.

The school is divided into three sections, elementary school, middle school, and high school, with a student population of approximately 500. AIS/D is administered by an American superintendent and two principals and governed by a 10-member school board comprising parents of students enrolled in the school. Three positions on the board are direct-hire U.S. Embassy employees, two are other Americans, and four are other nationalities. AIS/D is accredited by the Middle States Association of Col-

leges and Schools and the European Council of International Schools.

The school occupies a 4-acre campus in Baridhara, a suburb of Dhaka. The modern, air-conditioned building consists of a library; 47 classrooms, including 2 art, 2 music, 5 science, and 3 computer rooms; a gymnasium; a multipurpose room; and an auditorium. School grounds encompass a softball/soccer field, volleyball and basketball courts, a 25-meter swimming pool, and a playground area.

A library of 25,000 volumes is available for students and their families. The facility is available on a fee basis to expatriate employees of any organization that sponsors children attending the school. All instructional and art materials are furnished by the school. AIS/D operates its own fleet of 15 modern buses for transporting students to

and from school. Transportation is also provided for all after-school activities.

The curriculum is based on the American model. Numerous specialty teachers are employed: art, music, physical education, computers, English as a Second Language, resource specialist, French, Spanish, and south Asian studies. The school's scholastic standards are high, and graduates attend many fine universities worldwide. AIS/D can accommodate some students with minor learning difficulties, but it does not have a special education program. Parents of children with special needs must contact the school before accepting a posting in Dhaka.

A strong extracurricular program is maintained for students of all ages. Each quarter, after-school activities are offered for a small fee. On average, 30 different activities are scheduled each quarter. The school participates in the South Asia Inter School Association (SAISA) and sponsors athletic teams including swimming, track and field, basketball, volleyball, and soccer. In addition, the school's PTA sponsors a weekend soccer program and scouting opportunities. PTA activities depend on parent volunteers.

Students travel in and out of the country to participate in SAISA events and educational field trips. A summer session is available but is recreational in nature. The academic year begins in mid-August and ends in early June.

Parents wishing to enroll their children should write: Superintendent, American Embassy (AIS/D), Dhaka, Bangladesh, Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-6120. There is an application fee and a yearly capital fee. Tuition rates for 1995-96 were as follows: Preschool, \$2,700; Kindergarten-Grade 3, \$6,850; Grades 4-5, \$7,250; Grade 6, \$8,550; Grade 7, \$8,450; Grade 8, \$8,800; Grade 9, \$9,000; Grade 10, \$9,400; Grade 11, \$9,000; Grade 12, \$9,500.

Alternative schooling is very limited in Dhaka. Several other preschools are available.

High school students may choose to attend a boarding school in the U.S. or one of two schools in India. The schools in India are missionary founded and of high quality. Woodstock begins and ends in June with a 3-month break from December 1 to March 1. Kodaikanal follows a more typical American calendar. For additional information, write directly to the schools:

Woodstock School
Mussoorie, U.P.
India

Kodaikanal School
Kodaikanal, Post Box 25
Tamil Nadu 624101, India
Fax: (91) 4542-41109

Special Educational Opportunities

The Heed Institute in Dhaka offers lessons in Bangla scheduled for half-day sessions. French may be taken at the French School and Alliance Française. Trenton State College periodically offers graduate courses for the faculty of AIS/D in which members of the community may also enroll. AIS/D recently began a few short courses for adults at the school. Such courses include computer and swimming classes.

Sports

The American Recreation Club is an extremely attractive compound covering about half a city block and located in Gulshan Model City. It includes two lighted, hard-surface tennis courts; one air-conditioned squash court; swimming and wading pools; volleyball and badminton areas; a basketball court; two playgrounds; and (in 1996) a weight/aerobics room. Inexpensive squash and tennis lessons are available, but we suggest you bring all of your own equipment and sportswear, as local availability of such goods is sporadic.

Club amenities also consist of a restaurant and bar, a large multipurpose room, a cabana by the pool, a

video rental facility (U.S. specifications), and a fine catering service. Special activities are featured monthly, sports tournaments are held frequently, and the weekly Thursday highlight of Pizza Night is a popular event. The club is open for breakfast on weekends and holidays. Monthly dues apply.

The Kurmitola Golf Club is located on the Dhaka Cantonment near Gulshan. In addition to an 18-hole golf course, the facility has a swimming pool and a restaurant/bar open daily. Membership fees are high and fluctuate from year to year. There is restricted access to the golf club for nonmembers. Members must pay an additional monthly fee. Lessons are available, usually from a caddie since the club has no pro on staff. No rental clubs exist. Bring all equipment including clubs, balls, and pull-cart if desired.

The Sheraton and Sonargaon hotels also provide recreational opportunities. Memberships are available for the health club, tennis, and swimming facilities. Fees are moderately high.

Numerous opportunities for adult team sports are available. Currently, active teams exist for slow-pitch softball, volleyball, basketball, rugby, tennis, and soccer. Hashers race throughout the year. Aerobics classes are also available. Activities vary depending upon expatriate interest.

Bicycles may be used in residential areas, but traffic is congested, and it is quite dangerous for children learning to ride.

Boating and fishing are limited, but it is possible to either buy or rent a country boat. Large boats can be hired at Sadarghat in Old Dhaka or Narayanganj, approximately 10 miles from Dhaka. Groups often go on boating parties.

Cox's Bazar, which is south of Chittagong, is the only usable ocean beach in Bangladesh. Swimming in local rivers and ponds is not safe.

There are several clubs operated by other foreign embassies and international groups. Most of the clubs have tennis courts, squash courts, and swimming pools. Several of these clubs have open nights when members of other clubs are welcome to attend. Each of the clubs sponsors various social events throughout the year for the expatriate community.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Interesting buildings and sights in Dhaka include the High Court, Dhaka Museum, Lalbagh Fort, Armenian Church, and Nawab's Palace. The Star Mosque, known for its lovely blue star external ornamentation, and the Baital-Mukarram, built in the style of the Kaaba at Mecca, are two of the most notable of the several hundred mosques throughout the city.

The zoo and botanical gardens provide interesting diversions from the crowded city streets. The narrow, winding streets of the Chowkbazaar section of Old Dhaka have picturesque bazaars and shops. The main riverfront of the city, Sadarghat, lies on the bank of the Buriganga River; a visit to the ferry terminal is a good starting point to see Old Dhaka.

Many people limit their travel outside and around Dhaka due to traffic congestion and lack of public services. During monsoon season, bridges are often washed out, which restricts land travel, making people rely on the airline and train companies, which are not always reliable.

Approximately 10 miles from Dhaka is Narayanganj, the center of the jute trade in Bangladesh and a thriving river port. A number of Moghul and Buddhist ruins are within 25 miles of the city. A river trip to Khulna is an enjoyable 3-day outing from Dhaka. The beautiful scenery and the active life of the Bangladeshis along the river's edge can be viewed from the calmness of the boat's deck.

Cox's Bazar, 94 miles south of Chittagong, has a 75-mile, unpopulated

beach along the Bay of Bengal. The Bangladeshi Government encourages the development of Cox's Bazar as a tourist resort; three modern, modest hotels are there. Round-trip flights from Dhaka are available at relatively reasonable rates.

Sylhet, with 78,000 acres and 132 tea estates, offers a pleasant and relaxing change from city life. Rangamati, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, is a tribal area recently opened to expatriates. It is a nice place to visit, where you can take quiet walks and visit some of the tribal villages. A visit to the Sunderbans is pleasant if you like roughing it. The Sunderbans claims to be the largest mangrove forest in the world. It might be your one chance to see the famous Bengal tiger (but don't count on it!).

Round-trip flights from Dhaka leave daily for Calcutta. There is currently a direct flight to New Delhi on British Airways four times a week.

Daily flights to Bangkok leave Dhaka. Bangkok is a busy city and a nice diversion from Dhaka. Flights to Katmandu leave Dhaka five times a week, offering cooler weather in Nepal and an opportunity to trek in the Himalayas. On Thursdays and the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, there are direct flights to Rangoon.

Entertainment

There are no acceptable recreational facilities for picnicking, hiking, or hunting within easy reach of Dhaka. There are no theaters that offer movies in English. Recreation is limited in variety and consists largely of self-generated dinners or receptions. Everyone makes use of the limited facilities and activities available—primarily the American Recreation Club, school, and private residences. Reception rooms in the two hotels can be rented at a high cost.

Western cultural presentations are limited. USIS and other diplomatic agencies, including the British Council, Alliance Française, and

German Cultural Center, occasionally sponsor plays, lectures, films, and musical programs. Plays are presented throughout the year by the Dhaka Stage theater group and AIS/D. The Dhaka Chorus and AIS/D present concerts during the year.

A number of restaurants serve Asian dishes. Italian and Indian restaurants are also available. The Sonargaon and Sheraton hotels have several restaurants that offer a greater variety of entrees.

The National Museum, Shilpakala Academy, and Osmani Hall host exhibitions and cultural performances. You may enjoy folk music, dance festivals, plays, poetry readings, art exhibitions, and recitals.

Other sponsoring groups include the Art Council of Bangladesh, the Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts, the College of Music, the College of Arts and Crafts, Nazrul Academy, and foreign cultural missions (USIS and the British Council, German Cultural Institute, and Alliance Française). The Dhaka Museum includes collections of 10th- and 12th-century Hindu and Buddhist sculpture, folk arts and crafts of tribal groups, painting, ancient coins, and Moghul arms and jewelry.

Social Activities

Organizations within the American community include the ARA and the Dhaka American Women's Club (DAWC). Currently, a complete Boy Scouting program is available, as are Brownies for girls. Several organized play groups for small children are active.

All women are invited to join the DAWC. In addition to charitable work and community service, the DAWC organizes excursions and activities. A monthly newsletter, the *Bangladasher*, is also published by the club.

A number of expatriates, who can best be met through the cultural, special interest, and sports activities, live in Dhaka. The U.N. Women's Association (UNWA) offers



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Street scene in Chittagong.

an associate membership to women who are not spouses of U.N. employees. There is an active Dhaka International Garden Club. The Dhaka Stage theater group welcomes volunteers for its productions. Dhaka has several international service clubs. Individual and team sports competitions provide a good opportunity to meet the large expatriate community. The Dhaka Chorus sings each week and gives two concerts a year. Duplicate bridge and mah-jongg groups meet weekly.

Chittagong

Chittagong is located 12 miles from the mouth of the Karnaphuli River in southeast Bangladesh, near the Bay of Bengal and about 125 miles south of Dhaka. It is situated in one of the regions of heaviest annual rainfall in the world. Bangladesh's chief port, with modern facilities for oceangoing vessels, Chittagong is also an important rail terminus and

administrative center. Exported items include jute, tea, skins, and hides, while cotton and other fabrics, machinery, and construction materials are items imported.

During the 1960s, oil installations were set up offshore. Chittagong has an oil refinery and blending plants, as well as other industries that include cotton and jute processing mills, tea and match factories, engineering and chemical works, iron and steel mills, and fruit canning, leather processing, and shipbuilding facilities. Power for the local industries is supplied by the Karnaphuli hydroelectric project.

The city has a current population of nearly 2 million (1991 est.), and has landmarks that include Hindu temples, Buddhist ruins, and several examples of Mogul art. There are a university, founded in 1966, and several arts and professional colleges.

Historically, Chittagong was known to the civilized world in the early centuries (A.D.). The port was used by Arakan, Arab, Persian, Mogul, and Portuguese mariners; the latter called the city Porto Grande. Chittagong was originally part of an ancient Hindu kingdom and was conquered by a Buddhist king of Arakan in the ninth century. It became part of the Mogul empire in the 13th century, was retaken by the Arakans in the 16th century, and was recaptured by the Moguls a century later. The British East India Company took control in 1760. Chittagong's port facilities were damaged during the Indo-Pakistani War in 1971.

OTHER CITIES

BARISAL is an important river port in southern Bangladesh on the Ganges River delta, 90 miles south

of Dhaka. With a population of approximately 188,000 (1991 est.), Barisal is a transshipment point for jute and rice, as well as a market for fish and betel nuts. Jute, oilseed, flour, and rice mills are also located here. The city has three colleges affiliated with the University of Dhaka. A phenomenon named the “Barisal guns” occurs in the city; these are unexplained sounds that resemble thunder or cannons, and are believed to have a seismic origin.

COMILLA, 50 miles southeast of Dhaka, lies on an affluent of the Meghna River. Situated on the main railroad and highway linking Dhaka and Chittagong, Comilla is an administrative center and collection point for hides and skins. The city also has a cottage industry in cane and bamboo basketry. The site of three colleges affiliated with the University of Dhaka, Comilla has a population exceeding 155,000 (1991 est.) and is one of the most densely populated areas of Bangladesh.

DINĀJPUR is the headquarters of the eponymous district, located about 190 miles northwest of Dhaka. Employment here is provided by mills, farms, and a power station. Dinājpur’s northeastern section contains the old city, with the former house of the maharajah. The University of Rājshāhi is associated with two government colleges here. An estimated 138,000 people live in Dinājpur (1991 est.).

FARIDPUR, named for the Muslim holy man Farid Shar and the site of his shrine, is in southern Bangladesh, about 50 miles west of the capital. With a population of about 50,000, Faridpur is an administrative center, railway terminus, and market town for rice and jute. Two colleges affiliated with the University of Dhaka are located here.

JESSORE lies on the Bhairab River, 90 miles southwest of Dhaka. An administrative headquarters, the city has approximately 154,000 residents (1991 est.). Landmarks here include shrines of Muslim saints and the Rajbāri of Chanchra.

Supposedly, Jessore’s name is taken from *yaśohara*, or “glory depriving”; Gauer was the pre-eminent city at the time, until Jessore surpassed it in importance. A library, a stadium, and four government colleges are located here.

KHULNA, whose population is 1 million (1991 est.), is located near the Ganges delta about 125 miles southwest of Dhaka and 77 miles northeast of Calcutta, India. The city is one of Bangladesh’s chief ports and the trade and processing center for the products of the Sundarbans—a swampy, forested region. Rice, jute, and other agricultural products are processed here, and there is also some shipbuilding and textile manufacturing in Khulna. Timber and forest products are exported.

MYMENSINGH (also spelled Maimansingh) is in north-central Bangladesh, on an old channel of the Brahmaputra River. Rice, jute, sugarcane, oilseeds, tobacco, mustard, and pulse (edible seeds of leguminous plants) are traded in Mymensingh. The city was once known for the manufacture of glass bangles, and now its industries include jute pressing and electrical supply factories. Mohan College, affiliated with the University of Dhaka, is located here. There is also an agricultural university, a veterinary training institute, and the Institute of Radiation Genetics and Plant Breeding. Formerly called Nasirabad, the city today has a population close to 202,000 (1991 est.).

NARAYANGANJ (also spelled Narayungunj) is the river port for Dhaka and one of Bangladesh’s busiest trade centers. Located at the confluence of the Bakhya and Chaleshwari Rivers, the city’s population is estimated at 296,000 (1991 est.) Dhaka and Narayanganj together comprise Bangladesh’s principal industrial region. Narayanganj is also a collection center for hides and skins, and a receiving point for imports from and exports to Calcutta, India. Industries in the city range from jute presses, cotton and textile mills, and ship repair

facilities, to leather, glass, footwear, and undergarment manufacturers. The famous shrine of the Muslim holy man Kadam Rasal is located nearby.

PABNA is in western Bangladesh on the Ichamati River, about 75 miles northwest of the capital. Known for its handmade products and hosiery, Pabna is the site of the Hindu temple of Jor Banga. With a current population of close to 112,000 (1991 est.), Pabna has a college affiliated with Rajshahi University.

RAJSHAHI is in west-central Bangladesh on the Ganges River, about 130 miles southwest of Dhaka and 40 miles west of the Indian border. Formerly called Rampur Boalia, the city is the administrative center for a region that produces nearly all of the country’s silk. Industries in Rajshahi include oil pressing plants, match factories, and sawmills. The Varendra Research Museum, a silk institute, and a university (founded in 1953) with several affiliated colleges, are also located here. Rajshahi has a population of over 430,000.

RANGPUR, in northwest Bangladesh on the Little Ghaghet River, is 175 miles north of Dhaka. Situated in a tobacco growing district, Rangpur manufactures cigarettes and cigars and is noted for its cotton carpets. With an estimated population of 549,000 (1991 est.), Rangpur has a college that is affiliated with Rajshahi University.

SIRĀJGANJ, located about 68 miles northwest of the capital in the north-central region, is a principal jute center. The first jute mills in the Bengal were opened here. Sirājganj became a city in 1869; it has three colleges and a population of about 108,000 (1991 est.).

SYLHET, situated just south of the Indian border and 125 miles northeast of Dhaka, is the administrative center for a region that cultivates rice and tea and has extensive limestone quarrying. Industries within the city include tea factories and a

well-known cane facility. Sylhet is a center of Islamic culture and is the site of several tombs of Muslim holy men. Three colleges affiliated with the University of Dhaka are located in Sylhet. The city's population is close to 117,000 (1991 est.).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Bordered on three sides by India and sharing a border with Myanmar (Burma), Bangladesh is located in south Asia on the northern edge of the Bay of Bengal. Approximately 120 million people inhabit an area the size of Wisconsin.

Bangladesh consists primarily of low-lying plains that never rise more than 35 feet above sea level. The delta region of 55,598 square miles is formed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and smaller tributary rivers. Changes in topography occur only in the northeastern hilly tea-growing regions of Sylhet and the southeastern forest regions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The capital, Dhaka, is less than 25 feet above sea level.

Bangladesh has three main seasons. The mild (70°F) season, from mid-October to the end of February, is characterized by clear sunny skies and cool (50°F) evenings. This is when cyclones are least likely, making travel in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar ideal.

The hot season, from March until the end of May, has little rain. The early part is pleasant (75°F), but as the monsoon approaches, hot (95°F) temperatures and high humidity make life extremely difficult.

The monsoon season is June to mid-October. At the beginning of the monsoon, the continuous rains cool the atmosphere. Temperatures are milder (85 to 90°F), but it is the

oppressive humidity that makes the climate uncomfortable.

Tropical cyclones that emerge from the Bay of Bengal with high winds and tidal waves hit Bangladesh an average of 16 times a decade. Travelers must be prepared for flooding and cyclones, particularly in the coastal areas, throughout the monsoon season. Unpredictable weather patterns during the monsoon season greatly affect living conditions and agricultural crops throughout the country.

Population

The population of Bangladesh is estimated at 131.3 million (1991 est.) with an annual growth rate of 2%. Bangladesh is the most densely populated agricultural country in the world. The areas around the capital city, Dhaka, and around Comilla are the most densely settled. The Sunderbans, an area of coastal tropical jungle in the southwest, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts on the southeastern border with Myanmar and India are the least densely populated areas. Population growth is a concern of the Bangladeshi Government.

About 35% of the population is under 15 years of age. The literacy rate is 63% for males and 49% for females. Life expectancy is 60 years, and unemployment and poverty are considerable. Over 35% of the population lives at or below subsistence level; the average per capita income is approximately US\$1,570 (2000 est.).

Urbanization is proceeding rapidly, and it is estimated that only 30 percent of the population entering the labor force in the future will be absorbed into agriculture, although many will likely find other kinds of work in rural areas. Unemployment and underemployment will remain substantial problems.

Bangladesh, like all modern countries, has a mixture of people of varied origins. The great majority of the Bangladeshis are of mixed Aryan-Dravidian stock; however,

many families can also track their ancestors back to the Middle East and central Asia. These Bengalis inhabit most of the broad plains of Bangladesh. The original tribal people, with less than 1 percent of the population, migrated hundreds of years ago from Burma, Thailand, Assam, and other areas in Southeast Asia. They possess oriental features and live mainly in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and along the northern borders of the Dinajpur, Mymensingh, and Sylhet Districts. Bangladeshis are mostly Muslim; Hindus comprise a 16 percent minority. The other religions in Bangladesh, Buddhists, Christians, Baha'is, and animists, number only 1 percent. Islam was declared the state religion in 1988 and affects all aspects of life in Bangladesh.

Although English is spoken in some urban areas and among the educated, Bangla (also referred to as Bengali) is the official language. English is no longer used for instruction in public primary or secondary schools; it is used sporadically in judicial proceedings, businesses and universities. Technical writing is in English.

The statutes of Bangladesh conform to Islamic laws, but the system of law in the courts derives from English common law. In rural areas, where most of the people live, interpretations of conservative Islam and local customs predominate. Freedom of religion is guaranteed; however, minorities do not have the same access to upward mobility as Muslims.

The people of Bangladesh are friendly. Crowds are everywhere. The vast numbers of people sometimes overwhelm a newcomer. The tradition of secluding women creates a largely male population to be seen on the streets and in the marketplace in older sections of Dhaka and the villages. With the expanding garment industry, however, more women are working and in public view.

Public Institutions

The region encompassing Bangladesh, the delta of two major river systems, has been a center of commerce and culture since the beginning of recorded history. Bangladesh attained its independence in 1971.

British rule over modern Bangladesh ended in August 1947, when India and Pakistan became independent nations. The serious political, linguistic, historical, cultural, and economic differences dividing East and West Pakistan were temporarily masked by enthusiasm for independence from the British. Although East Pakistan (Bangladesh) had a larger population and was the chief foreign exchange earner, government power was centered in West Pakistan. As Islamic brotherhood as a rallying cry lost its appeal, Bangladeshi identity in East Pakistan began to take precedence over Muslim identity.

In March 1971, the leader of the East Pakistan Awami League, which stood for Bengali nationalism, was arrested for political activities and unwillingness to compromise on the issue of provincial autonomy. Other Awami League leaders fled to India and established a government in exile. Civil war began. Millions crossed the Indian border, and hundreds of thousands were displaced in Bangladesh. Approximately 35,000 were killed in 9 months. A beleaguered Pakistani Army fought the Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army).

The refugee pressure in India in the fall of 1971 produced new tensions. Indian sympathies were with East Pakistan. In November, India intervened on the side of the Bangladeshis. On December 16, 1971, Pakistani forces surrendered, and the new nation of Bangladesh was born. The U.S. extended diplomatic recognition on April 4, 1972, and the People's Republic of Bangladesh became a member of the U.N. in September 1974.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh is governed under the provision of a written Constitution. The Constitution created a strong executive Prime Minister, an independent judiciary, and a unicameral legislature on a modified Westminster model. The Constitution adopted as state policy the Awami League's four basic principles of nationalism, secularism, socialism, and democracy.

There are 30 to 40 active political parties in Bangladesh. Only four parties have more than 10 members elected to the current parliament.

Arts, Science, and Education

Bangladeshis take great pride in their rich and subtle language, Bangla, and in its long tradition of literature, poetry, and music. Assertion of their national identity and language became a prime rallying point during the Bangladeshis' struggle for independence from West Pakistan and remains a dominant theme in all sectors of life and culture.

Bangladeshi artistic expression is best expressed in its handicrafts: inlaid woodwork, brass, and pottery. Bangladeshi folk embroidery, "nakshi kantha," depicts realistic and stylized scenes or designs and may be found intricately stitched and greatly detailed or in rustic and simple form. Representational art shows a distinct traditional Moghul influence. Modern painters can also be found.

Music and song are greatly appreciated in Bangladesh in both folk and classical forms. The songs of the "bauls," the traditional wandering folk minstrels, are especially popular. The bauls sing simple and lively songs that tell tales and describe mystic inspiration, playing rudimentary stringed instruments and drums, with the singer dancing and interacting with his audience. Also popular are songs of revered Bengali poets. Moghul traditional court music forms the basis for modern

classical counterparts, using instruments such as the sitar, a stringed instrument, with percussion accompaniment of the tabla. Classical dance is similar to the stylized forms of Northern India. Bangladeshi pop music consists of songs from Bangla and Hindi films and is ubiquitous throughout Bangladesh, as it is throughout the subcontinent.

The educational system in Bangladesh includes 5 years of primary education, 5 years of secondary education, and 2 years of college (U.S. senior high equivalent), which results in an intermediate arts degree. The final 2 years of higher education for a bachelor of arts or science degree are equivalent to a U.S. associate of arts degree. Formal education in Bangladesh ends at this level, although some students may pursue a graduate-level master's degree (equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree). The quality of public education is low due to lack of facilities and supplies. Attendance for school-age students is 70% in primary education and 18% in secondary education. In 1996, only about 3% of the GDP was allocated to education.

Commerce and Industry

Bangladesh's economy is primarily based on agriculture. Despite devastating floods in 1998, successive record harvests have led to a slight rebound in the economy. Agriculture accounted for 26% of GDP in 2000 and is the primary occupation of about 70.0% of the population.

Major industries include jute and leather goods and cotton textiles. Others are sugar, iron and steel mills, fertilizer plants, and a small number of food-processing plants. Natural gas deposits are being exploited, but Bangladesh does not have many other natural resources. A growing garment industry is located throughout Bangladesh for assembling garments for export.

Aid from the U.S. and other donors is about 60 percent of the domestic

development budget. In addition to the U.S., major donors are the World Bank/International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Japan, Canada, Australia, Saudi Arabia, and Western Europe. Most of Bangladesh's exports—raw jute and jute goods, leather, frozen seafood, and tea—go to the U.S., Italy, the U.K., Germany, and Japan. Bangladesh imports most of its food grains, machinery, petroleum, vegetable oils, and fertilizer from Japan, the U.S., Singapore, Hong Kong, and China. Over 80 nongovernmental voluntary aid agencies (NGO's), in addition to official agencies, operate in Bangladesh.

The USAID program in Bangladesh is one of the U.S. Government's largest. It focuses on reducing poverty by reducing the rate of population growth, increasing agricultural productivity, and building democratic institutions. The Bangladeshi Government places a high priority on these development goals.

Transportation

Bicycle rickshaws, baby-taxis (small three-wheeled motorized vehicles), and buses provide public transportation. A private vehicle for personal use around Dhaka is useful. Driving is on the left, but both right-hand- and left-hand-drive vehicles may be used. Only leaded gas and diesel fuel are available in Bangladesh. Compact or intermediate-sized cars are best suited for the congested road conditions. Many city streets are narrow, rough, and crowded with buses, trucks, rickshaws, pushcarts, animals, and pedestrians. Air-conditioning is strongly recommended.

A few car rental agencies are available; prices are high but include both insurance and driver.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Phone services are inadequate. Though efforts are slowly underway

to upgrade the telephone system, including expanding domestic and international capacity and installing digital exchanges, the government-run service currently has only about 580,000 lines to serve 130 million people.

Four private companies now are operating cellular service. Several Internet service providers now exist in Dhaka.

Radio and TV

Bangladesh currently has one local TV station broadcasting in Dhaka and to relay stations around the country. TV is government controlled, and telecasts are 7 hours daily with extended hours on Fridays. Programs include a 10 pm English newscast. A few popular U.S. and British serials and movies may be seen following the late-night news. In the morning, the BBC (7 am to 8 am) and CNN (8 am to 11 am) are broadcast.

Bangladesh TV uses the PAL TV system (625-line color). A PAL or multi-system TV and video recorder are necessary to view local TV or rental tapes from local private video shops. An American TV (NTSC system) will work with a VCR but will not receive local programs.

Radio is the primary communications medium in Bangladesh. Radio Bangladesh broadcasts a wide schedule of AM programs and also programs in FM through the TV system. Occasionally you are able to pick up signals of Western music on the FM station, including BBC transmissions. A high-quality short-wave radio is needed to receive broadcasts of Voice of America, Radio Australia, and the Armed Forces Radio and Television Network.

Health and Medicine

Preventive Measures

Before arrival in Bangladesh, individuals should ensure that all of their immunizations are current. In addition to the standard childhood

immunizations, the following immunizations are strongly recommended: hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningitis, rabies, and typhoid fever. Immunizations are available at post, but postponing the immunizations until arrival will delay for several months the onset of disease immunity.

Malaria prophylaxis is no longer recommended within Dhaka but is required for travel outside the city. Either mefloquine or the chloroquine/Paludrine combination is recommended.

Dhaka's water supply is contaminated. All water used for drinking, brushing teeth, and washing fruits and vegetables must be boiled for 1 minute. Servants should be instructed carefully and supervised frequently in the boiling procedure.

The water in local restaurants is often not boiled. Drink only bottled water without ice cubes. Restaurants allow you to bring your own drinks.

It is possible to shop for meats, fish, and fresh fruits and vegetables locally. Fruits and vegetables must be carefully soaked in Clorox. Cook meat from local markets thoroughly and determine the freshness of fish before eating.

Occasional gastrointestinal upsets are unavoidable. With normal precautions, serious amebiasis, bacillary dysentery, and intestinal parasites can be kept at minimal levels. Respiratory and superficial skin infections are common. Even the smallest of wounds should be carefully cleaned.

By taking necessary precautions, most people in Dhaka remain healthy. Most problems are not exotic tropical diseases; rather, they are the same pattern of colds, allergies due to unhealthy and polluted local conditions, and childhood illnesses encountered at home.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 21	Martyrs' Day
Mar. 26	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Bengali New Year*
Aug. 15	Day of Mourning
Nov. 7	Revolution Day
Dec. 16	Victory Day
.	Muharram*
.	Id
.	e-Milladunnabi*
.	Janmashami*
.	Shab-e-Quadr*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id-al-Adha*

*variable, by Islamic and Hindi calendars

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Routes via London or Amsterdam are on an American carrier. Through London, British Airways flies to Dhaka 4 days a week, Biman Bangladesh Airlines flies 5 days a week and Emirates flies to Dhaka 4 days a week. If you route through Amsterdam via New York or Boston, there are flights to Dhaka arriving on Monday and Thursday on KLM.

Northwest or United Airlines may be flown from the west coast via the Pacific to Hong Kong, Bangkok, or Singapore. Daily connections to Dhaka are available from these cities via Dragon, Thai, Singapore, or Biman Airlines.

A passport and onward/return ticket are required. A visa is not required for a tourist stay of up to 15 days. Visas (landing permits) are available for a fee upon arrival by air. Further information on entry requirements can be obtained from the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 3510 International Drive, N.W., Washington,

D.C. 20008, telephone 202-244-0183, fax 202-244-5366, web site <http://www.bangladeshembassy.com> or from the Bangladesh consulates in New York, 211 E. 43rd Street, Suite 502, New York, NY 10017, telephone 212-599-6767, or the Bangladesh Consulate in Los Angeles, 10850 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1250, Los Angeles, CA 90024, telephone 310-441-9399, web site <http://www.bangladeshconsulatela.com>.

Americans living in or visiting Bangladesh are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka and obtain updated information on travel and security within Bangladesh. The U.S. Embassy is located at Diplomatic Enclave, Madani Avenue, Baridhara, Dhaka, telephone (880-2) 882-4700 through 22, fax number (880-2) 882-4449. For emergency services during business hours, call (880-2) 882-3805. For emergency services after hours, call (880-2) 882-4700 and ask for the Duty Officer. The Embassy's Internet home page is <http://www.usembassy-dhaka.org/state/embassy.htm>. Their workweek is Sunday - Thursday.

Pets

Bangladesh has no quarantine requirements for pets. Have your pet fully inoculated (rabies, distemper, etc.) and bring vaccination certificates and certificate of good health properly executed by a veterinarian. If pets accompany the traveler as excess baggage, no customs formalities are required. No established kennels are available. Veterinarians are available, although their competence varies. Bring a leash and all other pet supplies, including a good quantity of medicated flea shampoo and deworming medicine.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Bangladesh currency is in denominations of takas and paishas (one-hundredth of a taka). The exchange rate fluctuates frequently but not by a great amount. The current exchange rate is approximately

US\$1 = Taka 57 (July 2001). Currency notes are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 500 takas.

The metric system is used in Bangladesh. Occasionally the old system of weights and measures of seers, mounds, tolas, and bighas is used. The old system is rarely seen in Dhaka.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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BHUTAN

Kingdom of Bhutan

Major Cities:

Thimphu, Paro

Other Cities:

Punakha, Tongsa

INTRODUCTION

BHUTAN is a land of great beauty and mystery. Situated in the Himalaya Mountains, this tiny kingdom was largely isolated from the rest of the world for centuries. However, the late 20th century marked an end to Bhutan's isolation. The absorption of Tibet, Bhutan's major trading partner, by China in 1959 and India's annexation of Bhutan's neighbor, the Kingdom of Sikkim, in 1975, prompted the Bhutanese to realize that they could no longer remain isolated while surrounded by two powerful neighbors. Under the guidance of its leader, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Bhutan joined the United Nations in 1971. Three years later, the country was opened to foreign tourists for the first time.

Today, Bhutan remains largely unknown to most Westerners. It is a land of unspoiled alpine valleys and beautiful mountain peaks dotted with *dzongs* (fortresses). Centuries of isolation allowed Bhutan to develop a rich religious, cultural, and artistic heritage. As more of Bhutan becomes accessible, new locations and new experiences are opening to visitors.

MAJOR CITIES

Thimphu

Thimphu, located in west-central Bhutan, is the nation's capital. Once a sleepy rural community, Thimphu is now the country's center of government, religion, and commerce. Nestled in a fertile agricultural valley, Thimphu is a trading center for the rice, corn, and wheat grown in the area. Industrial activity in and around Thimphu is extremely sparse. Most industrial production is centered on lumbering. A large sawmill is located in Thimphu. In 1966, a large hydroelectric plant was built in Thimphu. This plant produces power to the surrounding region. The city has no major airport, but is served by a small airstrip. The population of Thimphu is about 30,000 (1993 est.).

Recreation

Recreation in and around Thimphu is centered on government-sponsored walking tours. Because many of Bhutan's monasteries, sacred mountain peaks, and *dzongs* are off-limits to foreigners, the number of accessible sites in Thimphu and other areas is extremely limited. However, beautiful attractions are available in Thimphu. One example is a *chorten* (shrine) in honor of one

of Bhutan's earlier rulers, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. The shrine, which has several floors, is adorned with paintings depicting various Buddhist deities. It was constructed in 1974 and offers a beautiful view of Thimphu.

Thimphu's most beautiful building is Tashichhodzong (Fortress of the Glorious Religion). Constructed in 1641 and renovated in the late 1950s, Tashichhodzong is an example of Bhutan's unique architectural style. Traditionally, Bhutanese structures are built without the use of architectural plans or nails. Tashichhodzong contains 100 rooms, including a throne room for the king, and is filled with beautiful paintings and sculptures. The structure is also the home of Bhutan's largest monastery. In the summer, when monks reside at Tashichhodzong, foreigners are not allowed to enter.

Entertainment

Entertainment opportunities popular in the West, such as nightclubs and theaters, are non-existent in Bhutan. As a result, most entertainment in Bhutan revolves around shopping for Bhutanese handicrafts and souvenirs. Two stores in Thimphu, the Dorji Gyeltshen Shop and Senghay Budha, offer beautiful scarves and shawls. These stores also sell long robes of wool or silk.



Aerial view of Thimphu, Bhutan

© Alison Wright/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

These robes, known as *kho* (for men) and *kira* (for women), are the native dress of Bhutan. A government-owned Handicrafts Emporium sells a wide variety of Bhutanese jewelry, handicrafts, sculpture, table linen, and *thang-kas* (religious scrolls).

For those interested in stamp collecting, the government's Philatelic Office sells Bhutan stamps. Bhutanese stamps are considered exquisite by many collectors and are highly popular souvenirs.

Bhutan's National Library, located in Thimphu, operates a bookstore which sells a few English-language publications. Brass replicas of Buddhist statues are also sold here.

Paro

Bhutan's second largest city, Paro, is located 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of Thimphu. The city, constructed in the 1970s, is relatively new and exhibits beautiful white-washed buildings adorned with Buddhist symbols. As in Thimphu, all buildings are constructed without the use of nails or architectural plans. Bhutan's only major airport is located here and the city has some beautiful temples. Throughout the city, lamas can be seen in solemn prayer. The presence of the lamas makes Paro a very peaceful, tran-

quil city. Paro has approximately 10,000 residents.

Recreation

Several walking tours are available for those who wish to view the temples, *dzongs*, and monasteries in Paro and the surrounding area. Paro is the home of the Paro Dzong. This fortress is the official residence for several monks and serves as a Buddhist headquarters for Paro and the surrounding region. The building, constructed in the 1600s, was nearly destroyed by fire in 1907. The structure sustained heavy damage and many priceless statues, artifacts, and religious scrolls (*thang-kas*) were lost. Only one *thang-ka* was saved and can be viewed by the public during special festivals. The Drukgyel (Victorious Druk) Dzong located in a valley near Paro, offers a beautiful view of Mt. Chomolhari. Much of this *dzong* was destroyed by fire in 1954. Another popular attraction has been the Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery, nestled on a cliff 2,952 feet above Paro. This monastery, however, was destroyed by fire in 1998.

One of Paro's principal attractions is the National Museum. This five-story building offers beautiful and informative displays of Bhutanese costumes, masks, jewelry, weapons,

stamps, books, and textiles. Of particular interest are statues carved from butter, priceless religious scrolls, and an enormous carving of the Tree of Life. This carving, which pays homage to Buddhism's four sects, is located on the top floor of the museum.

OTHER CITIES

The town of **PUNAKHA**, located in west-central Bhutan, was established in 1577 and served as the capital of Bhutan. Punakha's primary attraction is the Punakha Dzong, a fortress located at the confluence of the Pho Chu and Mo Chu Rivers. This fortress serves as a winter retreat for monks living in central Bhutan. Punakha Dzong has been severely damaged by fires and earthquakes over the centuries. In recent years, the fortress has been threatened by high water levels on the Po Chu and Mo Chu Rivers. The town's population has been estimated at 1,100 residents.

TONGSA, a town situated in central Bhutan, is the ancestral home of Bhutan's royal family. The town is noted for the large Tongsa Dzong, which used to guard the only east-west route through Bhutan. Today, Tongsa Dzong is occupied by several government offices and is a home for a large group of Buddhist monks. Tongsa has approximately 5,000 residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Kingdom of Bhutan is a small country nestled in the Himalaya Mountains. It occupies an area of 18,147 square miles, approximately the size of Vermont and New Hampshire combined. Bhutan is landlocked, surrounded on the north by China and on all other sides by India. The northern part of the

country is extremely mountainous, containing some of the most rugged terrain in the world. The central part of Bhutan has fertile valleys and arable land. Southern and eastern Bhutan contain densely forested foothills.

Each region of Bhutan exhibits a different climate. The mountainous northern regions are extremely cold with perpetual snowfall. Central Bhutan's climate is more temperate, with warm summers, cold winters, and moderate rainfall. Warm, humid temperatures and heavy rainfall characterize the climate in southern and eastern regions of the country.

Population

The population of Bhutan is estimated at 2,049,000 (2001 est.) and can be divided into three ethnic groups. The most numerous group are the Sharchops. They are often considered the earliest inhabitants of Bhutan and predominantly settle in eastern regions of the country. Western regions of Bhutan are inhabited by Ngalops, an ethnic group of Tibetan origin. The Sharchops and Ngalops comprise about 50 percent of Bhutan's population. Thirty-five percent of the population are Nepalese who emigrated to Bhutan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They are farmers and live in southern areas of the country. Over 85,000 Nepalese were expelled to Nepal in the early 1990s, and live in refugee camps monitored by the United Nations. The remaining 15 percent of Bhutan's population are small minorities of indigenous or migrant groups.

The official language of Bhutan is Dzongkha, although Nepali is predominant in southern regions of the country. English is widely used in schools, colleges and by government officials.

Buddhism is the state religion and is practiced in nearly two-thirds of the country. Southern Bhutan is predominantly Hindu. The Bhutanese government promotes religious freedom and celebrates all

major Buddhist and Hindu religious festivals.

The life expectancy in Bhutan in 2001 was approximately 53 years for males, 52 years for females. Bhutan's literacy rate is 42%.

History

Very little is known of Bhutan's early history. It is believed to have been inhabited as early as 2000 B.C. Bhutan's recorded history began in the eighth century A.D. with the introduction of Tantric Buddhism. From the 12th to the 17th century, Tibet ruled Bhutan. Under the tutelage of Tibetan lama, Ngawang Namgyal, Bhutan developed an intricate and comprehensive system of laws that served as a check against the ambitions of various ecclesiastical and civil administrators. This system worked effectively until Namgyal's death. Without the presence of a strong leader, Bhutan dissolved into a 200-year period of political chaos as numerous regional governors and local administrators vied for power. By 1907, the management of Bhutan's civil affairs were controlled by Sir Ugyen Wangchuck, who became Bhutan's first hereditary king. In an attempt to stabilize the political situation, King Ugyen invited the British to establish a presence in Bhutan. Bhutan and Great Britain signed a friendship treaty in 1910. The British government agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of Bhutan, but reserved the right to guide Bhutan's relations with other countries. After the British relinquished their control of the Indian subcontinent, Bhutan signed a treaty with the new Indian government in 1949. The provisions of the treaty were nearly identical to those made with Britain 40 years earlier. The main difference was that India agreed to pay yearly compensation to Bhutan for portions of its territory annexed by the British in India in 1864. The treaty between these two nations is still in effect.

Government

Since 1907, Bhutan has been ruled by a monarchy. Each Bhutanese monarch has brought political stability to the country and implemented numerous reforms. In 1926, the son of Bhutan's first monarch, Jigme Wangchuck, created Bhutan's first public school and repaired monasteries that had been damaged after fires, earthquakes, and centuries of wear and tear. Jigme Wangchuck was succeeded in 1952 by his son, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. Jigme Dorji implemented many positive changes during his reign. He supported the creation of Bhutan's postal system, built modern roads, launched long-range economic planning, welcomed trained medical personnel into Bhutan, and dissolved the kingdom's ancient serfdom system. In 1953, King Jigme Dorji instituted a constitutional monarchy and created a National Assembly. The National Assembly, or *tshogdu*, has 151 members and meets twice a year. All Bhutanese citizens 25 years or older are eligible for election to the Assembly. Once elected, each representative serves a three-year term. The king established the Royal Advisory Council in 1965, which is responsible for advising the king on governmental matters and regulating the policies of the National Assembly. In 1968, a Council of Ministers was formed and given the authority to implement government policy. The Bhutanese government does not allow the formation of political parties.

Upon his death in 1972, King Jigme Dorji was succeeded by his son Jigme Singye Wangchuck. For the most part, the present monarch has continued the governmental changes implemented by his father. King Jigme Singye's most notable contributions to Bhutan are the development of the country's telephone system, the construction of numerous factories and hospitals, and the building of over 100 schools. In September 1990, government forces ruthlessly crushed pro-democracy rallies in southern regions of Bhutan.

The flag of Bhutan is divided diagonally with yellow on the left over orange on the right. A white dragon is located in the center.

Arts, Science, Education

There is no compulsory educational system in Bhutan and only half of the children attend school. The educational system consists of seven years of primary schooling followed by four years of secondary school. In 1993, there were 235 primary schools with 1,859 teachers and 56,773 students. For those who complete a secondary education (junior high and high school), the majority of Bhutanese university students receive higher education in India.

Commerce and Industry

Bhutan is an agrarian society, with over 90 percent of the population engaged in farming and animal husbandry. The main crops are corn, rice, millet, wheat, oranges, apples and potatoes. Bhutan is also the world's largest producer of cardamom.

The industrial capacity of Bhutan is small. Chemical, cement, and food processing factories have been developed. Homemade handicrafts also comprise part of Bhutan's industrial sector.

Bhutan has a wealth of untapped natural resources. These include forests, rivers with excellent hydroelectric potential, and rich deposits of limestone, marble, graphite, copper, lead and coal.

Over 90 percent of Bhutan's trade is with India, although timber, cardamom and liquor are exported to Singapore, the Middle East and Western Europe. Principal exports are agricultural products, timber, cement and coal. Textiles, cereals and consumer goods are Bhutan's primary imports.

Bhutan's estimated per capita gross national product (GDP) was \$420 million in 1995. The paper currency, the *Ngultrum*, was introduced in the early 1970s. Coinage is known as *Chetrum*. Indian currency is also legal tender in Bhutan.

Transportation

In 1996, there were more than 805 miles (1,296 kilometers) of roads, 260 miles (418 kilometers) of which were paved. Fairly good roads connect Bhutan with India. The Bhutan Government Transport Service and about 30 private operators provide bus service. Within most of the country, however, travel is by foot or pack animal.

The national airline is Druk Airlines (Royal Bhutan Airlines). It is based at an international airport near Paro and provides service to Calcutta, Dhaka, Katmandu, New Delhi, and Bangkok.

Communications

Telephones are available in Thimphu and Paro. International calls can be made from hotels in the city. However, it often takes over an hour for connections to be completed. In remote locations, wireless telephones are the only reliable communication device.

Bhutan has excellent postal and teleprinter services. An international microwave link connects Bhutan's capital, Thimphu, to Calcutta and Delhi. International telegraph and telex communication is available.

There were approximately 28,000 radio receivers (1994 est.) in Bhutan. Although Bhutan does not have its own television station, broadcasts are transmitted from India and Bangladesh. In 1989, however, the Bhutan government ordered the destruction of all television antennas and satellite receiving dishes, claiming that it wanted to protect Bhutan's national culture.

There are 39 radio stations for internal government communications. However, the Bhutan Broadcasting Service offers shortwave programming in Dzongkha, Shar-chopkha, Lhotsam and English.

Health and Medicine

Medical facilities in Bhutan are limited. Some medicine is in short supply. Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost thousands of dollars or more. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services.

Cholera, typhoid fever and malaria are health concerns throughout the country.

Diligent water purification and food preparation methods must be exercised when visiting Bhutan. Immunizations for tetanus, typhoid, polio and hepatitis are recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Tourists are admitted only in groups by pre-arrangement with the Tourism Authority of Bhutan, P.O. Box 126, Thimphu, Bhutan, tel. (975-2) 23251, 23252; fax (975-2) 23695. Entry is available only via India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Thailand. The border with China is closed.

Visitors to Bhutan are required to book through a registered tour operator in Bhutan. This can be done directly or through a travel agent abroad. The minimum daily tariff is regulated and fixed by the Royal Government. The rate includes all accommodations, all meals, transportation, services of licensed guides and porters, and cultural programs where and when available.

A passport and visa are required for entry into and exit from Bhutan. All visitors, including those on official U.S. Government business, must obtain visas prior to entering the country. There are no provisions for visas upon arrival.

For additional entry/exit information, please contact the Bhutan Mission to the United Nations (Consulate General), 2 UN Plaza, 27th floor, New York, NY 10017, tel. (212)826-1919, fax (212)826-2998, or via the Internet at <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/bt.html>.

There is no U.S. Embassy or Consulate in Bhutan. Although no formal diplomatic relations exist between the United States and Bhutan, informal contact is maintained through the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi. Updated information on travel and security in Bhutan may be obtained at any U.S. consulate or embassy in India or Bangladesh. Americans living in or visiting Bhutan are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi. They may also obtain assistance from the U.S. consulates in India or, to a more limited degree, from the U.S. Embassies in Dhaka, Bangladesh or Kathmandu, Nepal.

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is located at Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri 110021, tel. (91)(11)419-8000, fax:(91)(11)419-0017. The Embassy's Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/in1/wwwh-main.html>

The U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai (Bombay) is located at Lincoln House, 78 Bhulabhai Desai Road, 400026, tel. (91)(22) 363-3611/ Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/mumbai/>

The U.S. Consulate General in Calcutta is at 5/1 Ho Chi Minh Sarani, 700071, tel. (91)(033)282-3611 through 282-3615. The Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/in4/wwwh-main.html>

The U.S. Consulate General in Chennai (Madras) is at Mount Road, 600006, tel. (91)(44) 827-3040. Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/chennai/>

The U.S. Embassy in Dhaka is located at Diplomatic Enclave, Madani Ave, Baridhara, Dhaka 1212, tel. (880) (2) 882-4700-22, fax (880)(2) 882-3744.

The U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu is located at Pani Pokhari, Kathmandu, tel. (977)(1)411179, 410531, fax(977)(1)419963. The Internet home page address is <http://www.south-asia.com/USA/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 25..... Traditional Day of Offering
- June 2..... Coronation Day of His Majesty the King
- Aug. 8..... Independence Day
- Nov. 11..... Birthday of His Majesty the King
- Dec. 17..... National Day
- Parinirvana*
- The First Sermon of Lord Buddha *
- Thimphu Drubchen*
- Thimphu Tshechu (3 days)*
- Dashain*
- Descending Day of Lord Buddha*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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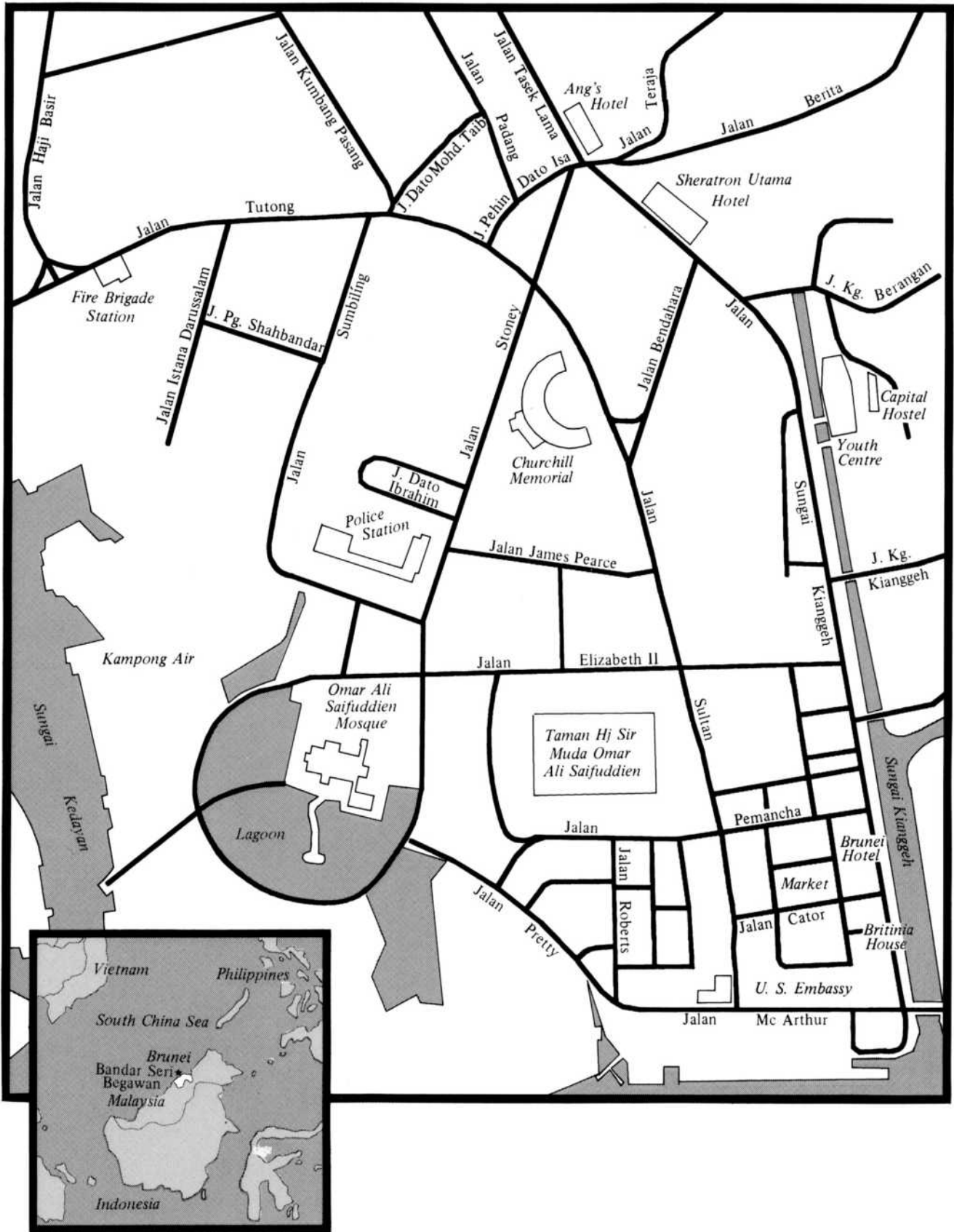
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Sinha, A.C. *Bhutan: Ethnic Identity & National Dilemma.* New York: Apt Books, 1991.

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Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei

BRUNEI

Brunei Darussalam

Major City:

Bandar Seri Begawan

Other Cities:

Jerudong, Kuala Belait, Seria

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1992. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The oil- and gas-rich state of **BRUNEI**, on the northern coast of the island of Borneo, is one of Asia's oldest kingdoms. Early Chinese records refer to it variously as "Polo," or "Puni." The present sultanate dates to 1514, and the conversion to Islam; during this era, Brunei was the center of a vast empire which stretched far north to the Philippines. By the end of the 19th century, however, most of its power had been lost in the colonial expansion of South-East Asia.

Brunei Darussalam, the country's official name (Abode of Peace), was a protectorate of the United Kingdom from 1888 to 1984, when it gained full autonomy. For a quarter of a

century before independence, it had been a self-governing constitutional monarchy, with the British assuming responsibility for foreign affairs and defense.

MAJOR CITY

Bandar Seri Begawan

The capital and main center of population, approximately 75,000, (and site of the only international airport) is Bandar Seri Begawan at the northeastern corner of the main part of the State. Downtown area consists of shops, banks, government offices, and hotels. Several places of interest are situated along the bank of the Brunei River.

Food

Subject to seasonal variations and occasional shortages, a wide variety of foods is available in Brunei. Fresh fish, fruits, and vegetables are available locally. Canned and frozen vegetables from the U.S., Europe, and Australia are sold at supermarkets. Frozen meat and poultry are imported from Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, or the U.S.

Fruit is limited to definite seasons. Apples, peaches, pears, oranges, grapes, and plums are imported seasonally from Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. Buy local fruits such as bananas, papayas, pineapples, and grapefruit at outdoor markets and supermarkets.

Sterilized milk and powdered milk are available in Brunei. Fresh milk is available but expensive.

Any local foods, as well as various Western foods, can be catered.

Soft drinks, such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, 7-Up, Sprite, Orange, etc., are available and are inexpensive. Sales of alcoholic beverages are currently prohibited.

Clothing

An extensive summer wardrobe is the only type of clothing necessary for Brunei. Order ladies clothing via mail facilities, but ready-made clothing is available in Brunei. Sizes are limited and fit may be difficult. Ordering usually takes several weeks. Sports attire varies.

Men: Lightweight summer suits are appropriate for office wear; slacks and sport shirts for casual wear. Acceptable dry-cleaners exist. Tails and morning dress are not worn in Brunei. English and U.S. men's shoes, underwear, shirts,



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque in Bandar Seri Begawan

neckties, socks, and ready-made suits are available but are expensive, and the selection of sizes, styles, and quality varies.

Women: Conservative dress is the rule. Bring cotton summer dresses, slacks, skirts, blouses, and pantsuits for all occasions. Shorts are not worn publicly but can be worn at poolside or at beaches. Skirts and blouses, dresses, and pantsuits are worn to the office. Stores selling women's clothing offer various ready-made dresses, skirts, and ensembles at medium-to-high prices, but sizes, selection, fit, and quality are limited.

Lingerie and stockings are available at reasonable prices, but selection is

limited. Formal hats and gloves are seldom worn. European shoes of limited sizes are available at varying prices.

Children: Clothing and shoes for children and babies are available at reasonable prices. A wide variety of fabric is available at reasonable cost. Local dressmakers and tailors have been used with varying degrees of success, but good tailors are expensive.

Supplies and Services

Toilet articles and cosmetics are available but are much more expensive than in the U.S.

Most common brands of American and British cigarettes, some Ameri-

can brands of cigars and pipe tobacco and smoking accessories are available at prices comparable to, or lower than, U.S. prices.

There are local bookstores but prices are 50 to 100 percent higher than those in the U.S., and the selection is not good.

Several beauty shops in Brunei are available and moderately priced.

Religious Activities

Both Roman Catholic and Anglican Church services are conducted in the downtown area of the city at their respective facilities.

Education

Brunei has no American schools. The International School has an essentially British curriculum and provides an adequate education from kindergarten through grade 6.

The school operates from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm. But if your child is having difficulty in a subject, bring some additional study materials to assist you in working with your child, as the British system here does not encourage parental involvement as an American school would. Other schools open to expatriate children are Mission schools and the Chinese school, which is also adequate through the elementary grades. A good boarding school is available in Singapore.

Space at all schools is limited. There is a long waiting list.

Sports

Tennis, swimming, badminton, table tennis, billiards, soccer, golf, basketball, sailing, windsurfing, bowling, and squash are available in Brunei. There are two golf courses—one at Pantai Mentiri near Bandar Seri Begawan and the other in Seria, which manages the Brunei Shell Recreation Club. Obtain permission to play at both courses in advance. A member of the club must accompany guests. Memberships are available at Pantai Menter.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, a symbol of Brunei's adherence to Islam, is one of the most magnificent in Asia. It is an edifice of classical Islamic architecture consisting of gold mosaic, marble, and stained glass. Its minaret, which has a lift inside and distinctive gold dome, rises to 166 feet and 160 feet.

Linked to the mosque and built in the middle of the lagoon is an elegant concrete boat that resembles a 16th-century royal barge.

The mosque has been the country's most important feature since its completion in 1958.

The official residence of the Sultan of Brunei is the Istana Nurul Iman in Bandar Seri Begawan, which was completed in 1982, and believed to be the largest royal palace in this part of the world.

The Sultan of Brunei, as Prime Minister, has offices located in the Istana, which has become a symbol of national pride. In keeping with ancient Brunei, trading the Ruler's Istana is the seat of Government, and the Council of Cabinet Ministers meets under the presidency of His Majesty.

The Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Aquarium, housed in the Churchill Memorial Building, has various species of tropical fish found in Brunei waters.

The Lapau (Royal Ceremonial Hall) and the Dewan Majlis (Parliament House) form a sprawling complex featuring a blend of traditional Malay and Western architecture.

The Lapau, which contains the Patarana (Throne), where numerous solemn ceremonies are held, is beautifully decorated in exquisite gold motifs. In the Lapau on August 1, 1968, the Sultan was crowned the 29th Sultan of Brunei.

The famed and centuries-old Kampong Air (water village) is composed of several villages housing 38,000

persons. It is an extensive collection of houses on stilts in the Brunei River. The Government provides a wide range of facilities that include schools, clinics, a Post Office, and electricity and water supplies. A boat cruise along the Brunei River is a pleasurable experience and a must for all tourists. Single women should always be accompanied.

The Arts and Handicraft Center is situated on the bank of the Brunei River, facing Kampong Air, and, thus commands a panoramic view. It offers a wide selection of locally made silverware, brasserie, and bronzeware crafted and inspired by the rich Malay cultural heritage. The silver, brass, and bronze are hammered and crafted by hand into a variety of articles, such as jugs, trays, gongs, boxes, napkin rings, spoons, threads, bracelets, etc. There are also an assortment of beautifully woven baskets and mats of bamboo and pandan. Brunei, during the 15th century, was a dominant power in the region under its ruler Sultan Bolkiah, the 5th Sultan of Brunei, whose mausoleum rests on the bank of the Brunei River at Kota Batu, near the Brunei Museum.

The Brunei Museum is of unique eastern architecture and is situated on the picturesque bank of the Brunei River. It is about 4 miles from the town center and has a large collection of exhibits, including brassware, bronzeware, Chinese porcelain and ceramics, historical records, and artifacts of the cultural heritage of this country.

The beaches at Brunei are fine golden sands with scenic picnic spots. However, rusted debris and broken glass pose serious threats to badly littered areas where the waters are calmer. The beaches facing the South China Sea are substantially cleaner, but bites from sandflies and stings from jellyfish are often a nuisance.

Although the above activities are interesting and diverting for a few weeks, they provide no relief from

Brunei's climate, both atmospheric and cultural.

Entertainment

Brunei, as an entertainment center, is undistinguished. Occasionally, the music society and other diplomatic missions sponsor concerts, but legitimate theater, opera, and ballet do not exist in Brunei. The one local movie theater is not a place for family diversion. There are no night-clubs. Art exhibits are held occasionally at the Brunei Museum and foreign missions.

Dining out is one of the most popular forms of recreation and entertainment in Brunei. Restaurants are plentiful but expensive. An international hotel, the Sheraton, has dining rooms, a bar currently not used to serving alcoholic beverages, and a coffee shop. Other establishments regularly offer specials on food from foreign countries.

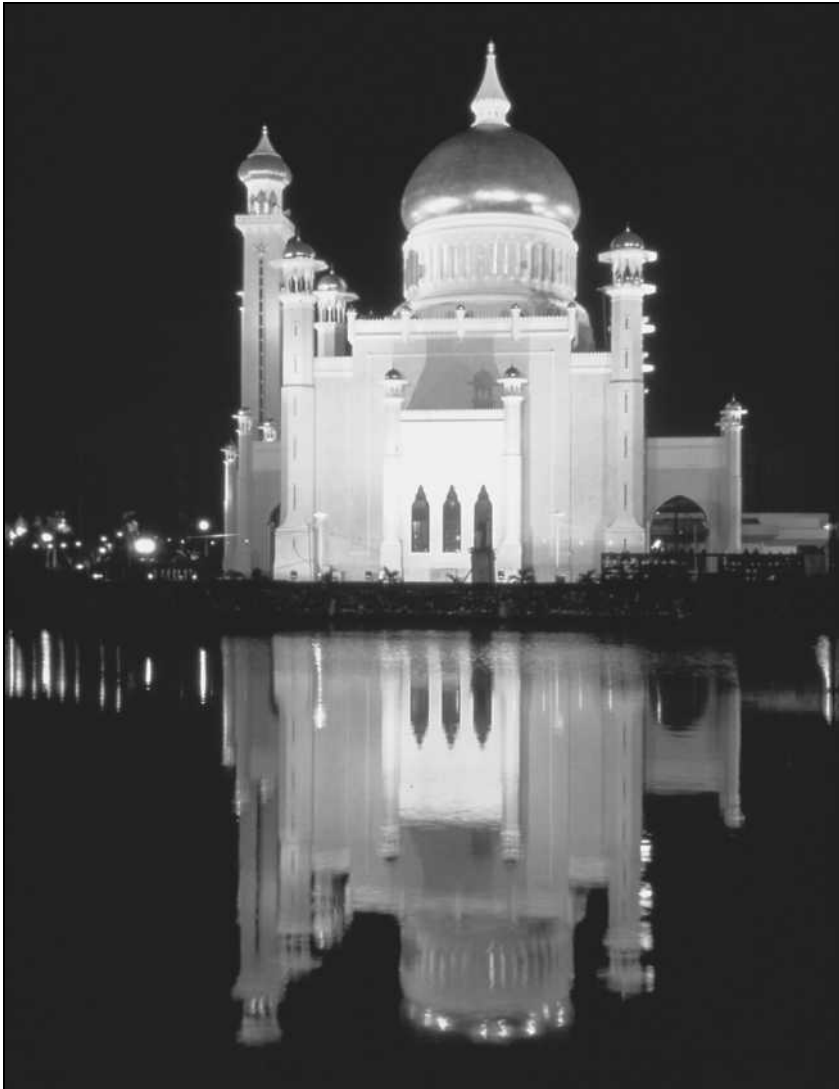
Videotaped movies are available in Brunei for the VHS system. Quality of recordings is poor. TV and radio services are broadcast in English, Malay, and Chinese on the Brunei channel. Two Malaysian TV channels can also be received.

Social Activities

Many foreigners belong to one or more of the various sports and recreation clubs available in Brunei, such as the yacht club or tennis club. Social life is restricted to home entertainment among members of the diplomatic and business communities.

OTHER CITIES

A short drive to the northeast of the capital, **JERUDONG** is known as "the playground of the Sultan." The biggest attraction is the new amusement park which opened in 1994 to celebrate the Sultan's birthday. The park covers 104 hectares with a wide variety of thrill rides and amusements from roller coasters to a calmer carousel. A children's park includes playgrounds, mazes and swings. A large auditorium offers



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Night view of Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque in Bandar.

musical entertainment, which has included two concerts in 1996 given by Michael Jackson. The Musical Fountain in the park offers a 20-minute high-tech laser, music and light show every night. Behind the park is Jerudong Beach, which offers a lovely site for swimming. Admission to the park and all rides is free.

Jerudong Park, a grand polo stadium complex with a beautiful equestrian center, a golf course and facilities for trapshooting and croquet, is where the Sultan goes for recreation. However, since entry to the park is by invitation only, you may only get a chance to see it through special tours.

There are several fine hotels in this area and tour packages are offered through various agencies.

KUALA BELAIT is a river port situated west of Seria, near the South China Sea. The city is a district capital surrounded by oil fields. There is a government vocational school here, and a coastal road runs eastward toward Bandar Seri Begawan. Kuala Belait's population is approximately 25,000.

SERIA is a major oil center of some 24,000 residents, located on the South China seacoast about 40 miles southwest of Bandar Seri Begawan. This is also the headquarters of Brunei's only oil and gas cor-

poration, Brunei Shell Petroleum. The oil produced in the region has supplied most of the funds used in the country's growth.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Brunei occupies 3,459 miles on the northern coast of the island of Borneo and is 350 statute miles north of the Equator at 5° N, 115° E. It comprises two separate areas: the capital area and a thinly populated enclave to the east, consisting mostly of jungle. Separating the two is a salient of the Malaysian State of Sarawak, which on the landward side surrounds both parts of Brunei. The north shore is on the South China Sea.

From the 14th to the 16th century, Brunei was the center of a powerful empire covering most of the northern part of the island of Borneo and extending north through the Philippines to Manila.

By the 19th century, much of Brunei's empire had been whittled away by piracy, wars, and the spread of European nations into the Far East. By the end of the 19th century, Brunei was a British protectorate, and, in 1906, the British Resident system was introduced. The discovery of major oil fields in the western end of the State in the 1920s brought economic stability to Brunei and created a new style of life for the population.

Constitutionally, Brunei was regulated by an agreement with Britain that was concluded in 1959 and was amended in 1971. By this agreement, the State was internally self-governing, with Britain looking after only foreign affairs and having a consultative role in external defense. In 1984, Brunei resumed full sovereign status and assumed responsibility for its own defense and foreign affairs. The country has

joined the U.N., the Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN), and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Brunei is a small oil and gas-producing state. The oil and gas fields are centered in the towns of Seria and Kuala Belait, 67 miles southwest of the capital. Other large towns are Tutong, which is midway between Bandar Seri Begawan and Kuala Belait, and Bangar in the Temburong District.

The country is mainly primary and secondary tropical rain forest with only a narrow coastal strip from Kuala Belait to Bandar Seri Begawan cultivated. The rain forest produces as much as 146 inches of rain to the interior but only about 108 inches a year is recorded on the coast. The climate is equatorial with uniform temperatures and high humidity.

Brunei has no personal income tax, and the people enjoy, among other things, free education and medical care.

Population

Of a total population of approximately 331,000, 64 percent are Malays, 20 percent are Chinese, and 16 percent are non-Malay indigenous people, mainly Ibans and Dusuns, as well as several other minor tribal groupings. Europeans make up a small percentage of the population.

Malay is the official language, but English is spoken almost everywhere in the State. The Chinese community speaks Hokkien; other languages and dialects include Hakka, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Hindi.

Public Institutions

Brunei is a traditional Islamic monarchy, with supreme political power vested in the Sultan. He is assisted and advised by the four councils: the Privy Council, the Religious Council, the Council of Cabinet Ministers

and the Council of Succession. All members are appointed by the Sultan. The Sultan presides over the cabinet as Prime Minister and also holds the positions of Minister of Defense and Minister of Finance.

Brunei's legal system is based on English common law, with an independent judiciary, a body of written common law judgments and statutes, and legislation enacted by the Sultan.

Arts, Science, and Education

Brunei has 177 primary schools and 29 secondary schools (including non-Government schools). Children begin school at age 5, and education is available for 10 years (6 years for primary and 4 years for lower secondary). However, no programs or facilities exist for disabled children or for handicapped children.

Brunei's education system has been extended since 1985 by the foundation of the nation's own university—the University of Brunei Darussalam. Currently, the University has four faculties—Education, Science, Arts, and Social Science and Management.

The small population and the need to build up generalist skills rapidly is reflected upon the University's decision to concentrate initially on only these few selected disciplines. The development of degree courses such as Law, Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, and Accounting were not deemed economically justifiable, since they are readily available overseas. The University's academic staff is mainly non-Bruneian.

Other institutions at tertiary level include an agricultural training center and various technical institutes. These are designed to meet skill shortages.

Many schools for expatriate children are located in Brunei, including the International School, where instruction is in English, and missionary schools. Currently, school-

ing is available from kindergarten through grade 6. The International School is considering opening a grade 7 class, but this is still in the planning stage.

Commerce and Industry

Oil and natural gas, the economic backbone of the country, represent 9% of the total exports of Brunei and 56% of its gross domestic product. Some 31% of Brunei's petroleum and 6 million tons of liquefied natural gas are exported to Japan annually.

Apart from oil and gas, forestry is playing an increasing role in the country's economy. The Government is also placing greater emphasis on agricultural development to enable the country to reduce its dependence on the importation of foodstuffs.

Transportation

Local

Most Bruneians own cars and as a result, public transport and taxis are not in great demand, although buses operate between the major centers. Chauffeur driven or rental cars are available for hire through major hotels or the airport.

Taxis are not metered and fares, though negotiable, are expensive. The fare from the airport to Bandar Seri Begawan varies from about US\$12 to US\$29, depending on taxi availability and the driver's whim.

Water taxis are the most common form of transport in Kampong Air, Brunei's renowned water village. Regular water taxis and boat services ply the routes between Bandar Seri Begawan, Bangar, Limbang (in Sarawak), Labuan, and some towns in the Malaysian State of Sabah. But single women should be accompanied when using these services.

Regional

Air transportation is commonly used for destinations outside Brunei. Several international airlines

and the national airline, Royal Brunei Airlines, serves Brunei.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone calls are free (except by public phone booth). Long-distance telephone, FAX, and telegraph service to the U.S. is good but expensive. Use of public phones requires the pre-purchase of a calling card, because the phones are not coin operated.

Radio and TV

The government-owned Radio Television Brunei (RTB) broadcasts daily on AM and FM from 6:30 am to 10 pm, with programs in English, Malay, and Chinese. Programs are varied and international news is reported twice a day—at 12:15 pm and 9:15 pm.

One local TV channel and two Malaysian channels are received. Brunei programs, which have included some award winning documentaries, comprise about 40 percent of programming. Other ASEAN countries, Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. import the remaining 60 percent. CNN headline news is broadcast 6 days a week, from 7 to 7:30 pm via Malaysian TV. Ownership of satellite dishes is strictly regulated.

The TV system is PAL as opposed to the NTSC system used in the U.S.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Western publications are available. Occasionally, censored copies of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available at local vendors. The ASEAN edition of *Reader's Digest* is also available. Other U.S. magazines appear on the newsstands about a month late and at a price two or three times their U.S. price. Many outdated magazines are available at newsstands. One English-language newspaper, the *Borneo Bulletin*, is published weekly in Brunei. International newspapers available daily include the *Straits Times* (Singapore), the *New Straits Times* (Malaysia), the

Asian Wall Street Journal, and the *International Herald Tribune*.

A limited selection of American and British books on various subjects is available in selected bookshops at 50 to 100 percent above publisher prices. The library downtown has a collection of books in English.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Health services are free for Brunei citizens with a nominal charge for permanent residents and expatriates. Health care is a three-tier system, with health clinics providing primary care, health centers providing secondary care, and district hospitals providing tertiary and specialized care.

The most important medical facility in Brunei is the 550-bed central referral hospital in Bandar Seri Begawan known as Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha Hospital (RIPAS Hospital). This hospital, built at US\$95 million, provides diagnostic and therapeutic facilities for the entire country.

Most doctors and dentists in the country are non-Western expatriates. For specialized care, patients are sent abroad.

Routine dentistry is available. Opticians and optometrists are available, and there are many doctors in private practice.

Bring an extra set of glasses or contact lenses, if needed, from the U.S. If you or a family member are taking long-term medications or allergy injections, bring a supply and arrange beforehand for regular refills.

Community Health

Respiratory infections, colds, coughs, sore throats, etc., lead the list of common complaints. Middle-ear and external-ear infections, sinusitis, and bronchitis are not uncommon.

Sanitation of human waste has improved over the years. However, other waste carried by contaminated water often runs in the open storm drainage system, resulting in chronic unpleasant odors. Some town and residential areas are marred by indiscriminate dumping of waste and garbage. The Municipal Department provides garbage collection services for about US\$9 a month to most residential areas. Although scheduled regularly, this service is often intermittent.

Preventive Measures

Clean fruits and vegetables well before eating. Cook meat thoroughly. Insect control is rudimentary. Malaria suppressants are not necessary in Brunei.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Feb. 23	.....	National Day
May 31	.....	Armed Forces Day
July 15	.....	HM the Sultan's Birthday
Dec. 25	.....	Christmas
	.....	Prophet Muhammad's Birthday*
	.....	Israk Mikarj*
	.....	Ramadan*
	.....	Revelation of the Holy Koran*
	.....	Chinese New Year*
	.....	Id al-Fitr*
	.....	Id al-Adha*
	.....	Islamic New Year*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

Most travel to Brunei is by air. Several airlines provide direct, nonstop flights to Brunei on most weekdays from Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Thailand, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. Some of the more popu-

lar international airlines serving Brunei are Singapore, Thai, Malaysian, and Philippines Airlines. The most direct route from the U.S. to Brunei is via the west coast, with connections made at any Asian cities serving Brunei.

U.S. passport-holders may take advantage of Brunei's participation in the Visa Waiver Pilot Program (VWPP), which allows visitors to Brunei for business or pleasure to obtain visas upon arrival for up to 90 days at no charge. The existing airport tax upon arrival/departure is Brunei dollars 12. For further information about entry requirements, travelers may consult the consular section of the Embassy of Brunei, 3520 International Court, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; Tel: (202) 342-0159 (<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/bn.html>).

Brunei customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning the temporary import or export of items such as firearms, religious materials and alcohol. For non-Muslims, very limited amounts of alcohol for personal consumption are permitted (i.e., 12 bottles of beer and two bottles of wine/spirits). It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Brunei in Washington for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Brunei has a mandatory death penalty for many narcotics offenses. Under the current law, possession of heroin and morphine derivatives of more than 15 grams, and cannabis of more than 20 grams, carries the death penalty. Possession of lesser amounts carries a minimum twenty-year jail term and caning.

Americans living in or visiting Brunei are encouraged to register in person or via telephone or fax at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan and obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. The U.S. Embassy is located on the 3rd floor, Teck Guan Plaza, Jalan Sultan, in the capital city of Bandar Seri Begawan. The U.S.

mailing address is American Embassy, PSC 470 (BSB), FPO AP, 96507. The telephone number is (673)(2)229-670, fax number (673)(2)225-293 and e-mail address amembbsb@brunet.bn. The after hours number for emergency calls is (673)(8) 730-691.

Pets

Travelers coming to Brunei with pets must request entry for the pet by writing to:

Veterinary Officer
 Veterinary Clinic
 Ministry of Agriculture
 Bandar Seri Begawan
 Brunei Darussalam

Include in the letter, all particulars about the pet and a health certificate. The clinic requires at least 2 weeks' notice before the pet's arrival.

Quarantine is not required for pets arriving from England, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and other parts of Borneo. If arriving from other parts of the world, the pet is quarantined for about 2 weeks. No fee is imposed for incoming pets, but an outgoing fee of US\$1 is charged for each pet. Pets must arrive in Brunei as cargo.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit of Brunei is the ringgit (dollar), which is issued in notes of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, 1,000, and 10,000. The coins are in the denominations of 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents. Currently, US\$1 is equivalent to about B\$1.70. The exchange rate fluctuates daily.

The Brunei dollar is at par with the Singapore dollar, and the currencies are interchangeable in both countries.

Brunei uses the metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline is sold by the liter; temperatures are cited in degrees Celsius; and distances are measured in kilometers.

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telephone with the U.S. Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan and obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. The U.S. Embassy is located in Teck Guan Plaza, Third Floor, Jalan Sultan, in Bandar Seri Begawan. The mailing address is American Embassy PSC 470 (BSB), FPO AP, 96534; the telephone number is (673)(2) 229-670; the fax number is (673) (2) 225-293.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Beccari, Odoardo. *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo*. London, 1904. The best natural history of Borneo.

bin Mohamad, Mahatir. *The Malay Dilemma*. The famous book-length essay by the author who is now the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Brooke, Sylvia and H.H. *Queen of the Headhunters*. London, 1936. An eccentric but quite interesting account by the wife of one of the White Rajahs.

Brown, D.E. *Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate*. Brunei Museum, 1970.

Chalfont, Lord Alun. *By God's Will*. A flattering portrait of the Sultan of Brunei penned by Lord Chalfont, one of the few authors to have gained the royal confidence.

Crisswell, Colin N. *Rajoh Charles Brooke—Monarch of all He Surveyed*. Oxford University Press: 1983.

Finlay, Hugh, and Peter Turner. *Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei: A Travel Survival Kit*. Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 1991.

Harrison, Tom. *World Within, A Borneo Story*. Singapore, 1984. A fascinating account of the Iban people by an officer who recruited

- them to fight the Japanese in World War II.
- Krausse, Sylvia C. Engelen and Gerald H. *Brunei*. Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Press, 1988. An annotated bibliography.
- Leake Jr., David. *Brunei—The Modern Southeast-Asian Islamic State*. A former sub-editor of the Borneo Bulletin, Brunei's only English-language newspaper, Leake examines Brunei's history and its future. Hundreds of anecdotes and insights into the Brunei Malay character. Written after the author was expelled from Brunei.
- MacDonald, Malcolm. *Borneo People*. Oxford University Press: 1985. The best account of the racial and tribal group make up of North Borneo written by a former British High Commissioner from Singapore.
- McArthur, M.H.S. *Report on Brunei in 1904*. Athens, OH, 1987.
- Pringle, Robert. *Rajas and Rebels*. Offers another account of the Brookes.
- Ranjit, Singh. *Brunei, 1839–1983: The Problems of Political Survival*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
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- St. John, Spenser. *Life in the Forests of the Far East*. London, 1862. A classic mid-19th century description of the environment, people, and customs of Borneo.
- Sidayao, Corazon Morales. *The Offshore Petroleum Resources of South-East Asia, Potential Conflict Situations and Related Economic Considerations*. Oxford University Press: 1980. Title is self-explanatory.
- . *The Supply of Petroleum Reserves in South-East Asia, Economic Implication of Evolving Property Rights Arrangements*. Oxford University Press: 1980. Title is self-explanatory.
- Singh, Rajit. *Brunei 1839–1983: The Problems of Political Survival*. Oxford University Press. The only available account in book form of political developments in Brunei in this century and particularly since the Second World War.
- Tregonning, K.G.P. *British North Borneo*.
- Turnbull, C.M. *A History of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei*. Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1989.
- Weaver, Mary Ann. "In the Sultan's Palace." *The New Yorker*. October 7, 1991. A whimsical account of Mary Ann Weaver's 6 weeks in Brunei. Charming and humorous accounts of the befuddled Bruneian bureaucracy.
- Zaini Haji Ahmad, Haji. *The People's Party of Brunei: Selected Documents*. Petaling Jaya: Institute of Social Analysis, 1988.

CAMBODIA

Major City:

Phnom Penh

Other Cities:

Angkor, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Saom, Kampot, Koh Kong, Kratie, Pursat, Siem Reap

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated October 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

CAMBODIA is a shattered nation that is struggling to find peace and stability. For nearly 25 years, Cambodia has been torn apart by civil war, genocide, and an invasion from neighboring Vietnam. Cambodia's troubles began in 1969 when American planes bombed North Vietnamese bases in eastern Cambodia during the Vietnam War. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge, a radical Communist group, overthrew Cambodia's pro-Western regime. Immediately after its victory, the Khmer Rouge evacuated all cities and towns. Virtually the entire population was sent into the countryside to clear jungle and till the land. Approximately two million Cambodians died from executions, disease,

or starvation at the hands of the Khmer Rouge. Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1978 and drove the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979. The Khmer Rouge and three non-Communist groups formed a military coalition to force Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. The Vietnamese fought against the Khmer Rouge and its coalition allies until September 1989, when it announced that it had withdrawn all of its forces from Cambodia. Following the withdrawal of the Vietnamese, the coalition disintegrated and a bloody civil war erupted between the Khmer Rouge and the three non-Communist groups. Several international attempts to end the fighting were unsuccessful until October 1991, when a United Nations peace plan was signed in Paris by the Khmer Rouge and the three non-Communist groups.

In March 1992, the United Nations sent its first contingent of peacekeeping troops to Cambodia. The mission of the United Nations troops during 1992 was to disarm all warring factions, repatriate 375,000 Cambodian refugees living in camps in Thailand, and prepare the country for democratic elections. However, the Khmer Rouge refused to disarm and launched attacks against civilian targets and United Nations troops. Opponents of the Khmer Rouge have also refused to

give up their weapons. By early 1993, several thousand refugees had returned to Cambodia but many others have stayed in Thailand out of fear that the civil war may resume. At press time, the Khmer Rouge continued to ignore the peace agreement it signed in October 1991. Also, attacks by Khmer Rouge guerrillas on United Nations peacekeepers increased in number and ferocity. Several U.N. soldiers had been killed or taken prisoner since their arrival in Cambodia in early 1992. The United Nations had nearly 19,000 soldiers in Cambodia in February 1993.

MAJOR CITY

Phnom Penh

Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia since the mid-15th century and the country's largest city, has a population of approximately 1 million. The city lies at the confluence of the Mekong River, the Bassac River, and the Tonle Sap, and consists of four urban districts and three suburban districts. Phnom Penh is a sprawling city, with a mix of wide, tree-lined boulevards and narrow dirt roads, large French-colonial houses, apartment buildings, and small wooden thatch-roofed dwell-

ings. The city is laid out in a rough grid system, with odd numbered streets running basically north/south and even numbered streets running east/west. However, streets are not always numbered sequentially, and a map is frequently helpful in locating streets and addresses. The *Phnom Penh Post*, a local English-language newspaper published semimonthly, prints a useful city map in each issue. The streets have been renamed and renumbered several times in recent years, and to avoid confusion, people frequently use both the old and the new street names and numbers when giving directions or listing addresses. Most of the posted street numbers reflect an old numbering system.

Ninety percent of Cambodia's population live in rural communities, but in recent years, an increasing number of residents have relocated to the capital city, most to try and make a better living and some to attend school or receive technical training. Like all of Cambodia, Phnom Penh is a city struggling to overcome the ravages and neglect of civil war and the city's basic infrastructure is in various states of disarray and disrepair. Phnom Penh is hot and humid year round, with a rainy monsoon season from June to October, cooler at the turn of the year and hot from February to May. September and October are the months of heaviest precipitation.

Food

Food shortages are not a problem in Phnom Penh, and a variety of locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables are always available. There are four markets that stock supplies of imported meat, both fresh (imported from Australia and New Zealand) and frozen (imported from the U.S.). Available types of meat vary but usually consist of various cuts of beef, pork, and chicken. Prices for imported meat are higher than in the U.S. Locally produced meat is available but is not recommended as there are no standards for quality control or hygienic handling or processing. Locally produced milk should be avoided, but

imported fresh pasteurized milk is sometimes available at two markets, and four markets stock UTH milk, dried milk, and canned condensed milk. Imported western-type foods are available at several markets, but selection and availability vary. Imported processed baby food is available at two markets.

Clothing

Cambodian culture and custom dictate modesty in dress, particularly for women. Very short skirts and shorts should be avoided, although sleeveless tops are acceptable for women (shoulders should be covered when visiting temples and wats). Many Cambodians wear western-style clothing, particularly in Phnom Penh, but traditional skirts and sarongs are also common. Clothing appropriate for a tropical climate is worn year round, and most occasions call for casual attire.

Local markets stock a wide supply of inexpensive secondhand western clothing, including an abundance of children's clothing. Clothing can also be made locally at very low cost (the material—cotton, silk, polyester—is more expensive than the labor), and local tailors are adept at copying favorite articles of clothing. Good quality shoes are difficult to find. Leather shoes and sandals, for adults and children, can be custom made locally at relatively inexpensive prices.

During the raining season, rubber boots, a long, lightweight raincoat, and a rainhat are desirable. Umbrellas are also a necessity during the rainy season.

Men: At work, men are most comfortable in short-sleeved dress shirts and cotton pants. Long-sleeved dress shirts and neckties are appropriate for more formal occasions. Cotton material is available locally and dress shirts can be made inexpensively. Personnel should bring tropical-weight suits for formal occasions, although for most situations shirt and tie is adequate. Formal entertaining is rare in Cambodia.

Women: Women are most comfortable at work wearing at or below the knee lightweight skirts and dresses, or appropriate slacks. Shorter styles are acceptable for Westerners but are not customary in Cambodian culture. Tight, scanty, or otherwise revealing clothing should be avoided. In Cambodia's tropical climate, natural fiber clothing, especially cotton, is usually the most comfortable. Sandals or other casual shoes are appropriate for work; for more formal occasions, pumps or dress sandals are appropriate. At more formal functions, women should wear skirts or dresses rather than dress pants. Women should not wear black or white to Cambodian weddings (these colors are worn at funerals).

Supplies and Services

Necessary toiletries, cleaning and household supplies can be purchased locally, although selection and brand names are limited. Most available products are imported from Thailand, and some European and a few American brands are available.

Local tailors are adequate and inexpensive. Fine quality is sometimes limited by sewing machines that are very basic and frequently manually powered. Some minor shoe repairs can be done locally, and leather shoes and sandals can be custom made at inexpensive prices. Good quality repair services can be hard to find. Poor quality, dry-cleaning services are available at two hotels. Beauty- and barbershops are widely available locally, at very low prices by American standards, although services are generally limited to haircuts. There is also a more expensive French salon located at the Cambodiana Hotel.

Religious Activities

Religious facilities in Phnom Penh include two Muslim services (conducted in Arabic), a weekly Catholic mass, and several Protestant services. The Anglican Church of Christ Our Peace and the Assemblies of God both hold English-language services. Buddhist services, conducted in Khmer, are also



View of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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readily available. There are no Jewish or Eastern Orthodox services currently available in Phnom Penh (although there is an Eastern Orthodox chapel located at Norodom and 352 streets).

Education

There are two suitable primary/secondary schools located in Phnom Penh. The International School of Phnom Penh, founded in 1989, is an independent coeducational school that offers an educational program from preschool through grade 10 for students of all nationalities. The school year comprises four terms extending from August through June. The curriculum is an internationally based program focusing on the academic needs of students from more than 30 countries. All instruction is conducted in English. The school is housed in four separate buildings on three interconnected

compounds and includes 12 classrooms, a library, an outdoor eating area, and a theater. A basketball and volleyball court and an elementary playground comprise the outdoor facilities. The school is governed by a 7-member board, elected annually by the Parents' Association, which is automatically conferred on the parents or guardians of children enrolled in the school. About 98% of the schools income is derived from school tuition and fees.

The Ecole Francaise, operated as part of the French school system under the direction of the French Foreign Ministry, offers an educational program from kindergarten through age 15 (approximately equivalent to U.S. grade 10). The academic program emphasizes basic skill development, and American personnel who have young children

in attendance feel that at the primary level the school is comparable to schools in the U.S. school system. All instruction is conducted in French. The Ecole Francaise does not have lunch facilities and students go home for 2 hours in the middle of the day. Tuition fees are about \$2,000 per year.

Sports

Because of Cambodia's hot and humid weather, sports enthusiasts should take proper precautions to avoid heat stroke, sunburn, and dehydration. Tennis, swimming, boating, volleyball, soccer, and running are among the locally available sports. The International Youth Club has several hard packed tennis courts that can be reserved in advance. They also have an Olympic-sized swimming pool and a weight room equipped with a variety of free weights, weight

machines, and stationary bicycles. There are plans to build a squash court in the next year.

There are several types of individual and family memberships (in various price ranges) available at the International Youth Club; non-members and guests are required to pay a small entrance fee. There is also a smaller swimming pool at the Cambodiana Hotel (entrance fee for non-hotel guests), and the Hotel is in the process of building a small fitness center.

The National Olympic Stadium has two soccer fields, several volley ball and basketball courts, and a 400-meter dirt running track. Facilities are rudimentary, but are free and open to the public. To avoid traffic, dust, smog, and curious stares, most runners prefer to run at the Olympic Stadium rather than through the streets of Phnom Penh. The Hash House Harriers, an expatriate running club, meet weekly for group runs and socializing.

Boating and fishing can be done on the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. Small, rudimentary fishing and motor boats can be rented at reasonable cost by the hour or the day (usually a driver is included in the rental cost). Local boats are not equipped with life preservers or other safety equipment. Some basic fishing tackle can be purchased locally, but anglers will be better off if they bring gear with them. For gardeners, Cambodia's lush tropical climate encourages rapid growth of a wide range of fruits, vegetables, and tropical flowers.

Spectator sports include volleyball and soccer tournaments, and Thai kick-boxing matches. Occasionally, boat and swimming races are held on the Mekong and Bassac Rivers, usually in conjunction with a local holiday or festival. Cyclo races have recently become an annual event.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Travel by air is possible to some locations in Cambodia, and in many cases is required due to unsafe or

impassable road conditions. Cambodia has eight usable airports, with daily flights to Siem Reap and the temples at Angkor Wat, and several weekly flights to Battambang (Cambodia's second largest city, located to the northwest of Phnom Penh), Stung Treng, Ratanakiri, and several other destinations. A newly available "high speed" boat service offers daily trips up the Mekong River to Kompong Cham and Kratie. Package boat tours are also available to Mekong Island, situated in the Mekong River near Phnom Penh. Visitors can see a variety of local handicraft demonstrations, visit a small zoo, and have lunch on local cuisine.

The white sand beaches at Sihanoukville, located on Cambodia's coast on the Gulf of Thailand, are approximately a 3-1/2 hour drive from Phnom Penh. Koh Kong Island, located just off of Cambodia's western coast in the Gulf of Thailand, is being developed as a tourist destination. Flights are available from Phnom Penh, and the Island can also be reached by boat from Sihanoukville.

Day trip destinations from Phnom Penh include Udong, Cambodia's capital from 1619 to 1866, located 24 miles north of Phnom Penh; Tonle Bati and Ta Prohm and Yeay Peau Temples, located 20 miles south of Phnom Penh; temples at Phnom Chisor, located 33 miles south of Phnom Penh and 13 miles south of Tonle Bati; and Koki Beach, which is not really a beach at all but a popular Khmer destination—especially on Sundays—located on the Mekong River, 7 miles east of Phnom Penh.

Entertainment

Formal and organized entertainment in Phnom Penh is limited. The French Cultural Center shows movies in French and sponsors a monthly schedule of lectures. Several times a year they bring classical musicians or theater performances to Phnom Penh. The Phnom Penh Players, an amateur acting group, put on two plays a year. Cambodian dance perfor-

mances are held occasionally. Performances, ceremonies, and races are also held in conjunction with most Cambodian national festivals. There are a number of nightclubs in Phnom Penh that offer dancing (most clubs play a combination of Cambodian, Thai, and western rock music).

Social Activities

The international community in Phnom Penh is small, and it is easy to meet and get to know people of all nationalities. Although opportunities for formal socializing and entertainment are minimal, opportunities for meeting host country nationals and nationals of other friendly countries include the International Youth Club, the Hash House Harriers, socializing at local restaurants and bars, and the Women's Forum (an international group that meets monthly for brunch and socializing).

Special Information

Undetonated land mines are a hazard that travelers outside of Phnom Penh should beware of. Bombs and mines were laid throughout Cambodia during the 1970s, and many of these still remain. As skirmishes between the Khmer Rouge and the Royal Government Army continue, new mines continue to be laid everyday, even in areas previously cleared and deemed safe. At the end of 1993, it was estimated that there remain 6–9 million mines yet to be cleared. Countrywide, there are nearly 100 casualties per day from mine blasts, and mine accidents rank among malaria and tuberculosis as Cambodia's greatest public health hazards. As a result of mine accidents, Cambodia has a higher percentage of amputees than any other country in the world.

OTHER CITIES

Located about 200 miles north of Phnom Penh, **ANGKOR** offers some of the countries most beautiful archeological sites. The Angkor was once the capital of the Great Khmer Empire, which reigned from the 9th



View of Angkor Wat, Cambodia

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to 15th centuries AD. The ruins of 100 or more temples and buildings are hidden beneath a stunning rain-forest canopy. Sandstone carvings on the sides of the temples tell their stories. Local tour guides can help you interpret them. One of the most magnificent sites is Angkor Wat, the temple complex built between 879-1191AD to honor the Hindu god Vishnu. The complex covers 500 acres and boasts a number of soaring towers, beautiful courtyards and galleries, and a large moat meant to symbolize the ocean surrounding the world. The Wat contains one of the largest bas relief sculptures in the world, which depicts scenes from Hindu legends.

Nearby is Phnom Bakheng Hill, the first “temple mountain” at Angkor. The temple there originally had 109 towers supporting a seven level structure, meant to symbolize the seven heavens of Hinduism. According to Hindu mythology, this temple mountain represents Mount Meru, the center of the universe.

Visitors may need to stay in Siem Reap, a town located only a few miles away from Angkor. Package tours, ranging from 2 to 5 days in duration, can be arranged through several travel agents in Phnom Penh. Prices include all ground and air transportation, hotel and meals, admission fees at all temples, and an English-speaking guide. Trips can also be arranged individually. Round-trip airfare to Siem Reap is approximately \$100 (daily flights are now available from Phnom Penh), and there are government-set fees to visit the temples.

BATTAMBANG is located in western Cambodia along the banks of the Sangker River. It is approximately 160 miles (258 kilometers) northwest of Phnom Penh. The city is situated in the heart of large rice growing region and has developed into a major marketing center. Before 1975, Battambang was the site of productive textile and cigarette manufacturing industries. These industries were heavily dam-

aged by the Khmer Rouge. Two ancient Khmer temples, Prasat Sneng and Prasat Banon, are located near Battambang. These temples date back to the 11th and 12th centuries, respectively. Within the city, the Pothiveal Museum contained many beautiful examples of Khmer art. The present condition of Prasat Sneng, Prasat Banon, and the Pothiveal Museum is unknown. With a population of approximately 195,000 in 2002, Battambang is Cambodia’s second largest city.

One of central Cambodia’s largest cities is **KAMPONG CHAM**. It is located roughly 45 miles (75 kilometers) northeast of Phnom Penh. Kampong Cham is situated near a heavily forested region of Cambodia where several varieties of trees, particularly rubber trees, are found. Several large rubber plantations have been constructed near the city. Kampong Cham’s location on the Mekong River has led to the development of a productive fishing industry. The soil around Kampong

Cham is extremely fertile and supports the growth of corn, cassava, beans, tobacco, sugarcane, cotton, rice, and potatoes. An 11th century Buddhist shrine, Wat Nokor, is located on the outskirts of the city. Kampong Cham has a population of over 35,000. Current population figures are unavailable.

KAMPONG CHHNANG, with a population of approximately 56,000, is situated on the Tonlé Sap River and is the home of a large fishing industry. The city is central Cambodia's transportation hub and is linked by rail, road, and river ferry with Phnom Penh. The residents of Kampong Chhnang and the surrounding region are noted for the creation of beautiful Cambodian pottery.

KAMPONG SAOM is Cambodia's major port city. The city was constructed in 1960 with French assistance. By 1966, Kampong Saom had developed into a modern city with parks, schools, and hospitals. The city was heavily damaged during years of civil war and all port facilities were closed by the Khmer Rouge. All port facilities were reopened in late 1979. In 1984, Kampong Saom's port handled 2.5 tons of cargo per day.

The coastal city of **KAMPOT** is located in southern Cambodia near the border with Vietnam. Kampot is located in a rich agricultural region and is a trading center for the rice, bananas, coconuts, and pepper grown near the city. Kampot is also noted for the population of durian, a tropical fruit whose seeds are roasted and eaten like chestnuts. The city is connected by road and rail with Phnom Penh. Road conditions near Kampot are extremely poor. Kampot was heavily damaged by the Khmer Rouge and many areas of the city need to be rebuilt. Kampot has a population of approximately 19,000.

The name **KOH KONG** refers to the province, the town, and the island located in southwest Cambodia near the border of Thailand. The main attractions of the island are

the white sand coves and lush tropical forests. Though the island has not been fully developed for tourist stays, day trips can be made for those interested in swimming, diving, or backpacking around the island. The village boarder town on the mainland offers several hotels, restaurants, and even a few night clubs for an active nightlife.

KRATIE (also spelled Kracheh) is northeastern Cambodia's largest city. The city is situated along the Mekong River in the heart of a fertile agricultural region. Rice, vegetables, bananas, potatoes, sugarcane, corn, and cotton are grown near the city. The area around Kratie is heavily forested and is an excellent source of hardwoods such as teak, mahogany, and rosewood. Vestiges of Cambodia's proud history, such as the monastery of Phnom Sambok and the ancient city of Sambor, are located on the outskirts of Kratie. The city has a population of nearly 20,000. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **PURSAT** (also spelled Pouthisat) is located on the Pursat River in western Cambodia. The region around Pursat is one of Cambodia's largest rice-growing regions. Corn, potatoes, bananas, cotton, and vegetables are grown near Pursat. Other economic activity in the city revolves around distilling and trading in horns and hides. Pursat has an estimated population of 42,000 in 2002.

SIEM REAP is one of northwestern Cambodia's largest cities. The city is Cambodia's largest producer of pharmaceuticals. Located north of Siem Reap are the remains of Angkor Wat, an ancient temple city complex constructed in the 12th century. The largest religious edifice in the world, Angkor Wat is considered the greatest architectural work in Southeast Asia. Siem Reap has a population of approximately 142,000 in 2002.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Kingdom of Cambodia covers an area 181,040 sq. km. (69,900 sq. mi.), approximately the size of Missouri. It is bordered on the northwest by Thailand, on the north by Laos, and on the east and southeast by Vietnam. Cambodia has a short coastline on the Gulf of Thailand.

The country terrain is largely flat, low-lying plains that are drained by the Tonle Sap (Lake) and the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. The Mekong River flows 189 miles through Cambodia; in places it is up to 3 miles wide. The rich sediment deposited during the rainy season when the Mekong River swells and floods each year adds to the very fertile growing conditions that exist throughout the Upper Mekong Delta. The Tonle Sap, located in western central Cambodia, connects with the Mekong River at Phnom Penh via a 60 miles long channel.

During the dry season when the water level of the Mekong is low, water flows southeast out of the Tonle Sap into the Mekong River. However, during the wet season when the level of the Mekong rises, an extraordinary phenomena takes place. The swollen Mekong River actually causes the flow of the Tonle Sap to reverse, forcing water to drain back into the Tonle Sap and over time causing the Lake to more than double in size. As a result of this unique occurrence, the Tonle Sap is one of the richest sources of freshwater fish in the world. The central lowlands are characterized by seemingly endless, flat rice paddies, fields of reeds and tall grass, and fields of cultivated crops such as corn, tobacco, sesame, and tapioca. Sprinkled throughout are tall sugar palm trees and occasional wooded areas. Rice is grown in 90 percent of the cultivated land. However, only two-thirds of the land cultivated before 1970 is cultivated

today, largely as a result of dangerous land mines and a lack of equipment and irrigation.

There are heavily forested areas located away from the Lake and Rivers and mountainous areas in the southwest (the Cardamom Mountains), the south (the Elephant Mountains), and the north (the Dangrek Mountains). Most of the country lies at an elevation of less than 100 meters above sea level. The highest elevation, Phnom Aoral (60 miles northwest of Phnom Penh) is 1,813 meters. The mountainous areas are largely forested, with virgin rain forests in the southwest, evergreen and mangrove forests along the coastal strip, and towering broadleaf evergreen forests in the north. Much of the north and northeast is covered by a thick jungle of vines, bamboo, palm trees, and assorted other ground plants. The southwest provinces support large (although old) rubber plantations.

Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia since the mid-15th century and the country's largest city, has a population of approximately 1 million. The city lies at the confluence of the Mekong River, the Bassac River, and the river flowing from the Tonle Sap and consists of four urban districts and three suburban districts. Phnom Penh is a sprawling city, with a mix of wide, tree-lined boulevards and narrow dirt roads, large French-colonial houses, apartment buildings, and small thatch-roofed wooden dwellings. Many residents have relocated to the capital from rural provinces, most to make a better living and some to attend school or to learn English. Phnom Penh is a city struggling to overcome the ravages and neglect of civil war, and most of the city's basic infrastructure is in disarray.

Upon leaving Phnom Penh, the scenery immediately becomes very rural. Cambodia's second largest city, Battambang (population approximately 200,000), is located 175 miles to the northwest. Approximately 3 hours (by road) to the southwest of Phnom Penh is the

port of Sihanoukville on the Gulf of Thailand, with white-sand beaches. In the far northeast, Ratanakiri province is the home of Cambodia's ethnic minorities.

The climate in Cambodia is consistent throughout the country—hot and humid. There are two distinct seasons: a cooler dry season that last from November to May, and a hotter rainy season lasting from June to October. The country has an average annual rainfall of between 50 and 75 inches with the southwestern mountains, the area with the highest rainfall, receiving nearly 200 inches per year. October–December are the coolest months of the year, when temperatures can fall to the mid to upper 60°F (25–27°C). April is the hottest month, when temperatures regularly exceed 100°F (40°C). The average relative humidity is 81 percent. Although the heat and humidity, particularly during April and May, can be uncomfortable and fatiguing, all U.S. Embassy housing and offices are equipped with air-conditioning. During the rainy season, periodic flooding is a problem, as are increased mosquitoes, silverfish, and vermin infestation. High levels of humidity and moisture encourage damage caused by mildew and rust.

Population

The population of Cambodia is approximately 12 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.25% (2001 est.). Cambodia is the most homogeneous of the Southeast Asian nations, with ethnic-Khmers comprising nearly 90% of the population. There are small percentages of ethnic-Chinese and ethnic-Vietnamese, and a small Cham Muslim population that was nearly wiped out by the Khmer Rouge during the 1970s. Cambodia's ethno-linguist minorities (hill tribes), numbering fewer than 100,000, reside in the country's mountainous regions and are concentrated primarily in the northeast. As sporadic fighting continues between the Khmer Rouge and Royal Government forces, a fluctuating population of Cambodi-

ans seek refuge in Thailand. Years of violent and bloody civil war have taken their toll on the population and are reflected in the demographics of the country. Nearly 65 percent of the population are women, and 40% (4 million) is under age 15.

Cambodia's population is mostly rural with approximately 80 percent employed in agriculture or fishing. Nearly 90 percent of the population resides in the central lowlands. The average population density in Cambodia is 61 people per square kilometer.

The official language of Cambodia is Khmer, and it is spoken throughout the country. Unlike Thai and Vietnamese, Khmer is a nontonal language with many disyllabic words. The Khmer language descends from Sanskrit and borrows a number of words from Pali. It is not directly related to either Thai or Vietnamese. For over a century during the period of French colonization, educated Cambodians also learned French. Today, however, the second language of choice is fast becoming English. Young people crowd English-language classes and practice their language skills with foreigners at every chance they get.

Buddhism is the state religion in Cambodia, and the vast majority of Cambodian people are Buddhist. Cambodians practice Theravada Buddhism, an earlier form of the religion that originated in India. Every male Buddhist is expected to become a monk for at least a short period of his life. Under the Khmer Rouge, the practice of Buddhism (and all religion) was forbidden. Monks were executed, and nearly all of the country's 3,000 wats (Buddhist temples) were severely damaged or destroyed. In recent years, despite a critical lack of resources, great emphasis has been placed on restoring and rebuilding the wats.

Cambodia's small Muslim community was nearly annihilated by the Khmer Rouge. There are several mosques in Phnom Penh, however, and in a number of villages to the

north and east along the Mekong River.

Public Institutions

The Kingdom of Cambodia is struggling to overcome decades of civil war, isolation, and massive destruction by the Khmer Rouge of its population, infrastructure, and national identity and culture. Historically, however, the Khmer nation has been both powerful and influential throughout the region. From the 9th to the 14th century, the Khmer Empire successfully ruled much of the area that is today Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. During the 14th and 15th centuries the power of the Khmer Empire waned, and a succession of Kings alternately fought with neighboring Vietnam and Thailand. In 1863, Cambodia signed a treaty of protectorate with France, and over the course of the next century became established as a French colony. Cambodia, under the leadership of King Norodom Sihanouk, declared independence from France in 1953. Shortly thereafter King Sihanouk abdicated the throne to his elderly father in order to be elected prime minister and then Chief of State. Sihanouk severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. in 1965. In 1970, when Sihanouk was temporarily out of the country, his cousin, General Lon Nol staged a coup d'état, and replaced Sihanouk as chief of state. Sihanouk established a government-in-exile operated out of Beijing, and became a figurehead leader of the group known as the Khmer Rouge. Meanwhile under Lon Nol, extreme levels of government greed and corruption led to violent fighting and the deaths of several hundred thousand Cambodians between 1970 and 1975.

On April 17–18, 1975, the Khmer Rouge invaded Phnom Penh and systematically and methodically emptied the city of all residents. Over the next 4 years, the Khmer Rouge attempted to implement a totally agrarian-based self-sufficient society, forcibly relocating Cambodia's citizens to rural work camps to work in the fields and per-

form manual labor. Under the genocidal leadership of the Khmer Rouge, nearly 1 million Cambodian people were tortured and executed and almost an entire generation of educated and professionally trained citizens was methodically annihilated. Widespread starvation, disease and despair contributed to the massive numbers of deaths that occurred during the 1975–79 reign of the Khmer Rouge regime. During this period, the country's basic infrastructure—systems of transportation, communication, education, health, economics, and government—was destroyed.

In January 1979, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and forced the Khmer Rouge westward to the Thai border, and installed a new communist government headed by Hun Sen and Heng Samrin, two former Khmer Rouge leaders. For more than a decade Vietnam presided over the chaotic situation in Cambodia, plagued by continued guerrilla warfare with the Khmer Rouge, widespread famine, international isolation, and political, social, and economic instability.

Amidst international pressure and a declining economic situation at home, Vietnam ceased its occupation of Cambodia in 1990, and a year later the 1991 Paris Peace Agreements promised to end 13 years of Cambodian civil war and establish the country as a democracy. The Cambodian peace agreement called for the deployment of the largest and most costly peacekeeping force in the history of the U.N. The U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was created and charged with custodial administration of the country until a democratically elected constituent assembly could form a new government and ratify a national constitution. In May 1993, Cambodia held its first free and open elections (in which the Khmer Rouge refused to participate), with 95 percent of eligible voters registered to vote, and of those 90 percent casting a ballot.

The National Assembly, the leading legislative body, is made up of 120

elected members representing three major political parties. The Royalist FUNCINPEC party (the French acronym for Cambodian National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia) and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) share a majority of power in the National Assembly (with the two co-prime ministers, H.R.H. Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen representing those two political parties), and the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) has a smaller presence.

The main goals of the new government are national reconciliation to rebuild the country and to restore peace and stability where chaos has existed. A major obstacle confronting Cambodia is a severe lack of resources. Over the past two decades the country's infrastructure was nearly completely destroyed, and Cambodia is now faced with reestablishing basic levels of transportation, communication, food and water supplies, and government services. Poverty is a serious problem, and living standards and social indicators in Cambodia place it among the poorest countries in the world. Cambodia's new leaders have been working hard to reestablish ties with the international community and formulate a policy for foreign relations. A big part of this has been seeking desperately needed international aid and assistance. To date, Japan, France, Australia and the U.S. have been the major contributors. A key to the new government's success will be its ability to strengthen Cambodia's economy and improve living standards throughout the country.

The Kingdom of Cambodia is divided into 21 provinces that are broken down into districts, communes, and villages. Seats in the National Assembly are allocated proportionally by province.

Arts, Science, and Education

Cambodia, a country with a rich history of traditional architecture,



Man on a bicycle on a Cambodian street

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

music, dance, and handicrafts, suffered near cultural devastation under the Khmer Rouge regime. Pagodas and temples, museums, libraries, and theaters were routinely ransacked and destroyed. Between 1975 and 1979, the rich history and culture that had accu-

mulated over thousands of years in the form of buildings, sculptures, paintings, and manuscripts was ruthlessly wiped out.

Today, the country is struggling to restore, rebuild, and resurrect its cultural institutions. Historically,

Cambodia is perhaps best known for its unique and impressive architecture that climaxed during the Angkorian period (the 9th to the 14th century). At that time, Khmer art and architecture were widely influential throughout Southeast Asia. The most magnificent exam-

ple of Khmer architecture can be seen at the world famous temples of Angkor, including Angkor Wat, the Bayon, and Angkor Thom. Although attacked and ransacked by the Khmer Rouge, these spectacular temples remain one of the architectural splendors of the world. With international assistance, a variety of conservation efforts are underway to protect and preserve these national monuments.

The National Museum of Khmer Art and Archaeology, located in Phnom Penh, has some of the finest examples of Khmer art and sculpture. Pagodas around the country are in various states of refurbishment and repair, and the Royal Palace and its surrounding compound including the Silver Pagoda—with its floor covered with 5,000 silver tiles—has undergone an impressive renovation and has sections that are open to the public for tours.

Cambodia's classic dance, with its graceful and controlled movements and colorful silk costumes, is performed to the accompaniment of traditional string and percussion instruments and vocalist. Under the Khmer Rouge, 90 percent of Cambodia's classical dancers were killed, and it is only recently that the government reestablished a national dancing troupe. Theater in Cambodia recently received a severe setback when the Bassac Theater, a historic site in Phnom Penh and Cambodia's national theater, caught fire and was destroyed. The country currently has no funds to replace or to rebuild the theater and is hoping for international assistance to help restore this culturally significant site.

Like most institutions in Cambodia, the educational system suffered greatly under the Khmer Rouge. By 1979, the educational system ceased to exist. In addition, the country was left with a severe lack of trained teachers, most of whom were executed during the Khmer Rouge regime. School buildings, books, supplies, and printing facilities were all destroyed. However, a major effort in the 1980s to reestab-

lish a national school system resulted in the opening of nearly 4,700 primary schools and 440 secondary schools throughout the country. There are now over 2 million primary school students and 190,000 secondary school students, as well as a small university and technical school population in Phnom Penh. However, quality of education remains low. Primary school graduates risk lapsing into illiteracy, and secondary school graduates lack the required level of knowledge, particularly in the fields of mathematics, science, and foreign languages, to gain college admission.

One of the major problems facing the educational system in Cambodia is a continued shortage of competent and qualified teachers. For example, approximately one-third of all primary schoolteachers themselves have only a primary school education. In addition, teaching salaries are so low that new teachers are discouraged from entering the field (the World Bank recently calculated that average teacher salaries cover only half the cost of a typical household's monthly rice consumption). Educational resources of all types are lacking; only 4 percent of the projected 1994 national budget was allocated for education. Adult literacy in Cambodia is believed to be around 35 percent, a slight decline from where it was 25 years ago.

Commerce and Industry

Cambodia's economy, even before the widespread destruction and devastation brought on by the Khmer Rouge, was one of the least developed in Southeast Asia. Although with assistance from the international community, the economy has improved, Cambodia remains a poor, underdeveloped country, and its economy continues to suffer from decades of civil war and internal corruption. The average per capita income is approximately US\$1,300 (2000 est.). Future economic development and

growth will depend heavily on international aid and assistance and foreign investment.

Agriculture, including rice farming, livestock, forestry, and cultivation of other crops, is a primary part of the economy, involving 75% percent of the labor force. Agriculture accounted for about 37% of GDP in 1999. Excellent rice harvests in 1999 contributed to Cambodia's better-than-expected economic growth. With its large amount of arable land, ample rainfall, and close proximity to the major ASEAN markets of Thailand and Vietnam, agriculture will continue to have strong growth potential for the economy.

Industry and manufacturing remain low. Mining activities (for clay, dolomite, gold, limestone, pagodite, phosphate, quartz, sapphire, ruby, silica sand, and other precious stones) are also low. Although Cambodia's natural resources include a variety of gemstones, the largest gemstone mines are currently not under government control, and their output remains largely unreported.

Since 1993, Cambodia has received major assistance from the IMF, World Bank, ADB, UNDP and other bilateral and multilateral donors that is earmarked for economic reform. Cambodia has already made considerable progress by improving control of the forestry industry, which had been plagued with management corruption and illegal logging operations. Timber and firewood are the main forest products (Cambodia does not have a large quantity of teak or other valuable hardwoods).

Cambodia is a member of ASEAN and the Asian Free Trade Area. Cambodia has begun the process of accession to the World Trade Organization.

Transportation

Local

In Phnom Penh and throughout Cambodia, vehicles drive on the

right-hand side of the road as they do in the U.S. However, in most locally available automobiles the driver's seat is on the right side of the vehicle. Traffic conditions in Phnom Penh can be confusing and dangerous, primarily because traffic regulations are rarely enforced. Few Khmer drivers have had any type of formal driving instruction and most do not have a license. The streets are shared by large cargo trucks, cars, a plethora of motos, bicycles, cyclos, a few ox-pulled carts, and pedestrians. The absence of stop signs at even major intersections adds to the confusion and danger of driving in Phnom Penh. Additionally, some informal but significant "rules of the road" may prove initially confusing to American drivers. For example, in Cambodia, the meaning of another car flashing its headlights is "you are in my driving path and I am not yielding my right of way to you."

Traffic conditions at night can be particularly challenging. Street lights in Phnom Penh frequently do not work, and in any case are only present on a few major roads. The roads are dark, and many cars, motos, cyclos, and bicycles travel at night without any lights. During the rainy season when roads frequently become flooded, drivers should beware of potentially slippery conditions and hidden potholes.

"Moto taxis"—small motorcycles that accept passengers to sit behind the driver—are widely available and are used regularly. Cyclos—large tricycles with a passenger seat in front and a peddler or driver behind—are also a widely used form of transportation. Both of these forms of transportation are inexpensive (usually costing between 20¢ and \$1; prices are negotiable) and are readily available. Cars with drivers can be hired by the hour or by the day; rates are reasonable.

Regional

Transportation facilities available within Cambodia are limited. There are five National Highways linking Phnom Penh to other provinces. The conditions of these roads, the only

main roads in the country, vary considerably and in some cases they are not passable even with a four-wheel-drive vehicle. In 1990, it was estimated that only about 20 percent of the roads in Cambodia were covered with asphalt and were in passable condition. Missing or damaged bridges also creates travel difficulties as ferry services are frequently not available. To date, the government has not allocated significant budget resources for repairing the country's roads, and little attempt has been made to find private funding for road construction and repair. The highway system is being rebuilt in stages with the help of foreign assistance projects and loans, as they become available.

The Khmer Rouge continue to mine bridges, including those recently restored and rebuilt. Incidents of banditry, robbery, and kidnapping by Khmer Rouge and government soldiers has made road travel to many destinations additionally dangerous and unreliable. Private taxi service can be arranged to some destinations outside of Phnom Penh, subject to the same dangers as previously described.

Travel by air is possible to some locations, and in many cases is required due to impassable roads, damaged bridges, and unsafe travel conditions. Cambodia has 8 usable airports with daily flights to Siem Reap (and the temples at Angkor Wat), and several weekly flights to Battambang (Cambodia's second largest city, located 175 miles to the northwest of Phnom Penh), Stung Treng, and a few other destinations. Flights to the northeast of Cambodia fly only once per week, and there is no road access to this part of the country. Organized trips to visit the temples of Angkor Wat (accompanied by an English-speaking guide) are available through local travel agencies; trips ranging from 2 to 5 days can be arranged, although prices are expensive. There are daily flights from Phnom Penh to Bangkok (a one hour flight), where connections to other international carriers can be made. Daily or

weekly flights to other international destinations, including Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, and Kuala Lumpur, are also available directly from Phnom Penh.

Cambodia has two rail lines, both originating in Phnom Penh, and a total of 367 miles of government owned single, one-meter-gauge track. Guerrilla activities continue to disrupt service, and the railroad is not safe for travel by American by Americans for either official or personal travel.

Likewise, Cambodia has 169 miles of navigable inland waterways for boats drawing up to 1.8 meters of water. Although several cities are theoretically reachable from Phnom Penh by boat, due to high incidents of banditry and generally unsafe conditions of equipment and lack of life preservers and safety devices, transportation by boat is generally not recommended.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

In Phnom Penh and throughout Cambodia, local telephone service consists of individual mobile telephones carried by the small (but growing) percentage of individuals who can afford them. There are only a few businesses and almost no homes with installed telephone lines, and they are difficult to get. Motorola telephones cover an area 18 miles around Phnom Penh where the antenna is installed. Samart telephones service a wider area of the country including Siem Reap, Sihanoukville, and Kompong Cham.

Phnom Penh does have a limited local telephone system, but overseas calls are frequently easier to make than local ones. There are a small but growing number of pay phones located in Phnom Penh, and local emergency telephone numbers have recently been established.

Because many businesses and most individuals do not have telephones, communication frequently requires

a hand-delivered message or personal visit.

Radio and TV

Post receives shortwave radio broadcasts in English from the BBC, VOA, and Radio Australia. Radio France International, a French station, can be received on FM radio. Local TV programs (news programs, sitcoms, dramas, movies) are broadcast in Khmer, the official language of Cambodia. Occasionally, programs in French, Thai, or English are shown. The French channel CFI is retransmitted over Phnom Penh by the French cultural center. A small regular TV antenna is sufficient to receive it. A Thai company also operates a TV channel out of Bangkok. Cable TV (including Star TV that transmits BBC 24 hours per day, and CNN) can be viewed in several local restaurants and hotels.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Reasonably current news magazines are available, including international editions of *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, and *The Economist*. English-language books are difficult to find in-country, but there are several well-stocked English-language bookstores in Bangkok.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Although there are several well-trained Cambodian medical specialists in Phnom Penh, local hospitals are poorly equipped and inadequately staffed. Locally available medications and sterilization techniques are for the most part inadequate.

Community Health

A rudimentary and unsophisticated public health system exists in Cambodia, with hospitals established in most provinces and districts. In Phnom Penh there are nine hospitals (including both public and private facilities). However, throughout the country health services remain inadequate. The Min-

istry of Health recently began trying to rebuild a national health system, but resources are scarce and there remains a critical lack of trained doctors and nurses. In 1993, there were only 986 trained physicians in all of Cambodia, and due to very low civil service salaries there is little incentive for medical professionals to enter the public health sector.

Despite existing difficulties, the health sector has made significant progress in the past 2 years, and this trend of improvement is expected to continue. International aid and assistance has accelerated, largely in the form of direct assistance to individual facilities at the local level, and the availability of medications and supplies has increased throughout the country. Priorities facing the Ministry of Health include reestablishing functioning primary health services through a district-based health system approach, strengthening national programs aimed at the principal communicable diseases afflicting the country (including tuberculosis, malaria, immunizable childhood diseases, AIDS, diarrheal diseases, malnutrition, acute respiratory infections, and adequate birth space), and improving the capacity of the health system to perform functions and to manage resources efficiently (the public health system has become very decentralized in its management, which accounts for widely varying levels of service and unevenly distributed assistance throughout the country).

Sewage and garbage disposal facilities are generally inadequate but improving. Currently, the city of Phnom Penh has only 15 serviceable garbage trucks, and rubbish collection is notoriously bad due to a lack of government funds. Recently however, the Phnom Penh Municipality signed a tentative contract with a French company to improve the garbage collection and disposal in the city. To pay for the new services, the city has proposed new taxes for households and businesses.

Preventive Measures

Sickness is a significant problem, but with proper attention to methods of prevention and general sanitation, and by keeping immunizations current, many common diseases can be avoided. Malaria suppressants should be taken regularly when traveling up-country, but are not required within the confines of Phnom Penh where the risk of malaria is minimal. Recommended inoculations include typhoid fever, cholera, Japanese encephalitis, Hepatitis A and B, measles, mumps, rubella, and a post-childhood polio re-booster. All pets should be inoculated against rabies. To reduce the risk of mosquito-borne diseases, it is advised that insect repellent be used at night, and protective clothing be worn during the dusk to dawn hours.

Tap water in Cambodia is not potable, and for drinking purposes most people use readily available and reasonably priced bottled water. Tap water can be used if it is boiled first for 10 minutes and then filtered. Iodine is also effective in purifying water. Tap water can be used for washing and bathing. Fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant all year round, but they must be thoroughly cleaned and soaked in an iodine or chlorine solution and then rinsed with purified water before consumption. Where possible, fruits and vegetables should be peeled. All meat and seafood must be well cooked before eating. Locally produced milk should be avoided, but UTH whole milk, dried milk, canned condensed milk, and occasionally imported fresh milk is available.

The climate in Cambodia is hot and humid year round, and care must be taken to avoid prolonged sun exposure, sunstroke, heatstroke, and dehydration. Regular use of sunscreen is recommended, and individuals will appreciate having UV protective sunglasses, and a hat or sun visor. Dehydration can be a problem, particularly among children, but it can easily be prevented

by consuming proper amounts of water throughout the day.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The normal flight pattern from Washington, D.C. to Phnom Penh leaves from Dulles International Airport and flies to the U.S. west coast, and from there flies to Bangkok with one stop over (usually in Taipei, Taiwan). It is necessary to change planes in Bangkok to fly to Phnom Penh; no U.S. carriers currently fly to Cambodia.

A passport and visa are required. Tourists and business travelers may purchase a Cambodian visa, valid for one month, at the airports in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Both require a passport-sized photograph.

There is a \$20 local entry fee (payable in U.S. dollars), and an \$8 departure tax for all international flights. There is no restriction on the amount of currency that can be imported into the country, but amounts in excess of \$10,000 must be declared. Current information about entry/visa and other requirements may be obtained from the Royal Embassy of Cambodia, 4500 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20022, telephone number 202-726-7742, fax 202-726-8381. Overseas inquiries may be made at the nearest embassy or consulate of Cambodia.

All U.S. citizens in Cambodia are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh where they may obtain updated information on travel and security within Cambodia. The U.S. Embassy is located at no. 16, Street 228 (between streets 51 and 63), Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The telephone number is (855-23) 216-436 or 218-931; fax (855-23)-216-437. A recording of security information is available twenty-four hours a day at telephone (855-23) 216-805.

Pets

Pets are permitted entrance into Cambodia. All pets should have standard vaccinations and certificates Contact the airlines for shipping information. There is an established veterinarian in Phnom Penh.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The official currency of Cambodia is the riel; there are approximately 2500 riel to the dollar (June 1994). Paper riel notes are issued in 100, 200, and 500 denominations. There are no coins in use. The U.S. dollar serves as a widely used unofficial currency and is accepted virtually everywhere in the country. Many times prices are given in U.S. dollars instead of riels. All monetary transactions in Cambodia are conducted in cash; credit cards are accepted only at the Cambodiana Hotel and at some airlines. U.S. travelers checks can be exchanged at local banks (for a fee), but they are not accepted by local merchants or businesses as a form of currency.

Cambodia uses the metric system for all weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Victory Day
Jan/Feb.	Chinese & Vietnamese New Year*
Apr.	Khmer New Year *
Apr/May	Royal Ploughing Ceremony*
Apr. 17	Independence Day
Apr/May	Vesak Baucha*
May 1	Workers Day
June 1	Children's Day
June 19	Memorial Day (Revolutionary Armed Forces founded)
June 28	Memorial Day (Revolutionary People's Party founded)

Sept. 24	Constitution Day
Sept/Oct.	Prachum Ben*
Oct. 30	King's Birthday (3 days)
Oct/Nov.	Water Festival*
Nov. 9	Independence Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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- Welaratna, Usha. *Beyond the Killing Fields: Voices of Nine Cambodian Survivors in America*. Stanford University Press: Stanford, California, 1993.

CHINA

People's Republic of China

Major Cities: Beijing, Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Shenyang, Chengdu, Nanjing, Chongqing, Harbin, Wuhan

Other Cities: Anshan, Cheng-chou, Chengdu, Fuzhou, Guilin, Guiyang, Hangzhou, Lüda, Suzhou, Tianjin, Xi'an, Yangshuo, Zibo

Regions: Macau, Tibet

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Reports dated December 1999 (Hong Kong) and December 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

CHINA has the longest continuous historical and cultural tradition of any country on earth. The civilization which took shape in the Yellow River Valley of North China in the second millennium B.C. eventually came to dominate all of East Asia, including Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. The products of that civilization bear the unmistakable stamp of the vast nation which today is the home of nearly one-fourth of the world's population.

The process of change in a society structured by more than 3,000 years of civilization has not been an easy one, and China in the 20th century has been exhausted by political, eco-

nomie, and intellectual chaos. The Chinese Communist Party assumed control of the mainland in 1949, after almost a generation of war and social upheaval and, on October 1 of that year, formally proclaimed establishment of the People's Republic of China.

In the intervening years, and during the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, diplomatic relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) were interrupted. In the late 1960s, steps were taken toward relaxing tension between the two countries, and on March 1, 1979, the United States and the P.R.C. exchanged ambassadors and established embassies in Beijing and in Washington, DC.

MAJOR CITIES

Beijing

Beijing is on the northern edge of the North China Plain. To the west and north are hills, rising to 11,000 feet, 60 miles to the west, while flat, fertile farmlands stretch to the south and east. In 2000, Beijing's population was approximately 12,033,000.

Beijing's modern architecture is undistinguished, but pockets of splendid old buildings—notably the Forbidden City of the Ming and Qing Dynasties—still preserve the charm of premodern Beijing. In the past 25 years, many new multistory buildings have been built along the broad east-west access, which passes through Tiananmen Square. In all sections of Beijing, new high-rise office buildings, hotels, shopping complexes, and apartment houses are either under construction or recently completed. The city is constantly changing, although certain sections are still largely characterized by narrow streets fronted by gray walls, beyond which gray roofs with slightly upturned gables mark courtyards and residences, intersected with blocks of brick apartments for workers. The city has three ring roads (some sections are raised highways) that allow for easier access around the city and to the outskirts. The six-lane airport expressway has recently been completed. While a fourth ring road is under construction, it is not expected to alleviate worsening overall traffic congestion, caused by a proliferation of taxicabs and privately owned vehicles on city streets.

Food

With the increasing availability of Western products and their Chinese

counterparts, it is now possible to find locally most of the components of a typical American diet. The drawbacks to the local scene are mainly price and lack of convenience: imported goods are still quite expensive, and food shopping outside the major hotel supermarkets is very time consuming. A summary of what is and isn't available is listed below.

All kinds of meat are available, both fresh and frozen, including beef, pork, and lamb. There are various delicatessens around town, as well as a German butcher who offers Western cuts. Frozen chickens (both whole and cutup), turkey, and duck are available at the Friendship stores and other outlets. Fresh and frozen seafood comes in many varieties, including such delicacies as scallops, squid, and some imported fish such as rainbow trout and salmon; prawns are available locally, but the quality varies. Also widely available are various cold cuts and sausages (some imported, some made locally) such as hot dogs, ham, and bacon as well as liver pate and caviar. Imported cheeses (at very high prices), deli meats, and fresh baked goods are also available widely at several hotel delicatessens and bakeries.

Dairy products are readily available. Fresh pasteurized, homogenized milk is sold almost everywhere for about 12 Yuan per liter. UHT (long-life) milk (low-fat and skim as well as full-fat) is widely available as well, imported mainly from Australia. A Swedish-Chinese joint venture company produces a heavy cream similar to *creme fraiche*, yogurt (plain and limited selections of flavors), cottage cheese, and sour cream. With the exception of yogurt, however, these items are expensive. Butter, margarine, and cheddar-style cheese are all available, in both locally made and imported varieties. An Italian cheese store that recently opened offers locally made fresh ricotta, mozzarella, and soft Italian cheeses, and lately, fresh pasta.

Fresh produce is abundant, and the availability of a wide variety of

fruits and vegetables has increased dramatically over the past few years. Local produce markets dot the city, with some around the diplomatic compounds catering to Westerners and their tastes.

Produce available year-round includes cabbage, potatoes, onions, cucumbers, beets, carrots, garlic, bean sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, corn, eggplant, lettuce, green peppers, spinach, and string beans. The popularity of "hothouse farming" has made available such diverse items as fresh white and cremini mushrooms, Italian parsley, okra, zucchini, Japanese eggplant, and beautifully ripe tomatoes. Boutique fruit stands offer the likes of mangoes, lemons, imported apples, cherries, and Asian pears in addition to bananas, watermelon, peaches, lychees, strawberries, persimmons, pineapples, plums, mandarin oranges—all of which are available at different times of the year.

Frozen vegetables are available at several stores, although at considerably higher prices than in the U.S. Canned tomatoes, peas, asparagus, mushrooms, and carrots, as well as a variety of canned fruits are available; their quality may vary, but their prices are consistently high. If you cook a lot of Italian food, bring your own tomato paste as no acceptable substitute is available, and imported cans are expensive. A variety of juices are regularly available either fresh, canned, or in cartons: orange, grapefruit, pineapple, tomato juices, guava, grape, and various juice blends. All are expensive compared to prices in the U.S.

Some other items available in Beijing stores are grains (several varieties of rice, cornmeal, oatmeal, macaroni, spaghetti, millet), spices (bay leaves, cinnamon, coriander, noniodized salt, pepper, curry powder, chili powder, sesame seeds and paste, anise), chicken and duck eggs, nonegg noodles, sandwich bread, walnuts and pine nuts, granulated sugar, cooking oils, cookies, jams, honey, ice cream, rice vinegar, catsup, beer, wine (both imported

and Chinese), soda water, mineral water, imported spirits, and many Western brands of candy and gum.

Clothing

In July and August, the weather turns hot and humid similar to that of Washington, D.C., and rain showers are frequent. Autumn is the best time of the year, with warm, pleasant clear days and little wind. December through March is cold, extremely dry and windy, with occasional snow. Beijing spring is mostly dry, with frequent strong winds that stir up heavy dust storms. Prepare your wardrobe with these extremes in mind. In winter most buildings are overheated, but restaurants frequently have little or no heat.

The Chinese, both men and women, wear long winter underwear and trousers with a padded tunic in winter. A light open-necked shirt is the usual dress in the summer. Foreigners' clothing is informal and reflects prevailing fashions in Europe or the U.S. Daytime requires sturdy, practical, and washable items. Bring your deck shoes, tennis shoes, or hiking boots for climbing the Great Wall (it's steep).

Warm clothing, including boots, is needed during winter. Synthetic fabrics are a problem because they collect excessive electricity in the dry winter months. Static spray is a great help in controlling static electricity in clothing, and some consider it essential. Local department stores carry limited selections of men's underwear, sports and dress shirts, polo shirts, socks, and sweaters and down jackets for men, women, and children. A number of Western designers contract with Chinese firms to produce high-style items. Some of the items, often seconds, appear in the free markets at prices that are bargains compared to their U.S. equivalents.

For older children, Chinese clothing is adequate but has a distinctly Chinese look. Clothing for school should include sweatsuits for physical education class and sneakers. Dresses and trousers are available locally, though the styling may not be West-



Great Wall of China near Beijing

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

ern. Shoes of cloth and rubber are inexpensive and come in all sizes, but quality is poor.

Supplies and Services

Local toiletries and cosmetics differ widely from what Americans are used to, and Western products, available at selected shops, are limited in selection and quantity and priced exorbitantly. Bath oils and lotions, moisturizers, and creams are popular because skin becomes exceedingly dry and itchy in the dry winter climate. Dandruff shampoos and hair conditioners are also useful.

There are a few hotel laundry and dry-cleaning facilities. Service time varies, and cleaning is marginally satisfactory. Shrinkage of woolen suits is not unknown, and clothing has been lost or damaged. Simple tailoring and dressmaking can be done locally. Tailors can copy clothes from pictures, and with a fitting session or two, they do adequate work. Good silk, wool, linen, blended suit

fabric, and brocades (inexpensive by U.S. standards) are available, but cotton, men's shirt, and wash-and-wear fabrics can be hard to find. Many people have been pleased with the clothes they have had made here.

There are men's barbers and women's beauty/barber salons in the hotels and the International Club, and if you speak Chinese, you can go to the generally improving local salons. Prices range from inexpensive to expensive. The Chinese have their own supplies, but some women may prefer to use their own hair spray, conditioners, coloring, shampoo, and equipment such as rollers.

Religious Activities

Catholic Mass is offered in English every Saturday night at the Canadian Embassy and every Sunday at the Philippine Embassy. A Catholic Mass is also offered Sunday morning at two Chinese cathedrals in Beijing; the churches are indepen-

dent of Rome, and the service is in Latin.

Nondenominational Protestant services in Chinese are held Sundays at two local Protestant churches and in English at the Sino-Japanese Center.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds meetings in the homes of members.

Informal Jewish services are held for the major holidays, as are Passover Seders. These services are coordinated by longtime residents of Beijing. Weekly services are not available.

Information on religious services is available from American Citizen Services, American Embassy.

Education

With the rapid growth of the foreign community, Beijing has experienced a deficit of educational opportunities for children.



Rickshaw on a street in Beijing, China

Courtesy of Thomas Musthaler

Three new schools, all with programs limited so far to elementary and middle school grades, have also opened recently in Beijing: the Western Academy of Beijing (WAB), the New School for Collaborative Learning (NSCL), and the Beijing Singapore International School (BISS). The WAB and BISS both attract mostly children whose native tongue is not English, with extensive English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. The WAB's curriculum, developed by the European Council of International Schools (ECIS), is more British in its orientation as well.

It must be stressed that none of the schools in Beijing are equipped to handle children with anything but mild learning disabilities. If your child has special educational needs, be sure to have these assessed before you make the decision to come to Beijing.

International School of Beijing: Jiang Tai Road, Dongzhimenwai, Beijing 100004, People's Republic of China Tel: 86-10-6437-7119 Fax: 86-10-437-6989

The International School of Beijing, jointly sponsored by the governments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the U.K., and the U.S., was

established in 1980 as the successor to the American Educational Association and the former Australian, Canadian, and British schools. ISB is an independent, coeducational day school offering a program ranging from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for government dependents and other citizens of the founding nations. As space is available, qualified children of citizens of other countries are also admitted. The school year extends from mid-August to mid-June.

Organization: The school is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors, 6 of whom are appointed by the sponsoring embassies, and 5 of whom are elected by the International School Association of Beijing. All parents of children who are registered for attendance in the school and members of the Board of Directors are automatically members of the Association.

Curriculum: The curriculum is based on, but not limited to, American models. Language arts and mathematics are emphasized. Social studies, science, computer studies, Chinese, French, art, music, drama, physical education, and health education are also taught. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is also offered to

students in grades 11 and 12, along with several advanced placement courses. All grades meet in regular classes, from self-contained elementary (pre-kindergarten through grade 5) through middle school (grades 6 to 8) to high school (grades 9 to 12). All students study about China within the regular subjects and through special field experiences. There are limited programs for ESL, resource, and English enrichment.

Accreditation: The ISB is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Faculty: There are about 80 full-time and 16 part-time professional staff members, many of whom are American.

Enrollment: Enrollment is about 1,000 students (50% Pre-K through grade 5, 25% grades 6 to 8, 25% grades 9 to 12).

Facilities: The school operates in 2 modern and 10 new buildings with 48 classrooms, 4 science labs, 5 music rooms, 2.5 art rooms, 3 computer labs, a learning Media Center, and a multipurpose room with stage, 14 language rooms, 8 resource and ESL classrooms, 2 gymnasiums, shower rooms, and 2 food-serving kitchens. It is located partly on the compound of the Lido Hotel Company Ltd., and partly on land leased from the Chinese Government. With the addition of 10 new buildings to the campus during the summer of 1994 to add needed enrollment capacity, the outdoor/play/sports places were cut back somewhat.

A new school facility for 1,500 students on a new 40-acre site is in the construction stages. Until the site is complete, students in grades K through 2 will attend a new "satellite" campus a short distance away from the Lido campus, accommodate the growing student.

Finances: About 95 percent of the school's income is derived from regular day school tuition. Annual tuition rates for 1996-1997 were as

follows: Pre-K: \$7,500; K-grade 5: \$11,870; grades 6 to 8: \$12,710; grades 9 to 12: \$14,030; capital fee: kindergarten—\$1,500, grades 1 to 12—\$3,000. A mandatory building fee of \$15,000 per student (refundable under certain terms and conditions upon withdrawal) was introduced for the 1996-97 school year to raise funds for the new campus. (All fees are quoted in U.S. dollars.)

The New School of Collaborative Learning: Shangdi West Road, Haidian District, Beijing 100085 PRC

The New School of Collaborative Learning is a cross-cultural international school sponsored by the Alliance for International Collaboration and Development (AICD), an American nonprofit educational corporation. Established in 1994, it offers, in English and Chinese, a program ranging from preprimary through 9th grade. An alternative school in the heart of Beijing's intellectual district, NSCL emphasizes immersion in Chinese and American cultures and languages and self-motivated learning through individualized education. The school sees its location in China as a positive benefit and seeks to have its students take full advantage of the unique opportunities afforded by this location. Administrators are actively involved in Chinese educational reform, with NSCL serving as a model school for the Haidian Reform Initiative.

Organization: The school year extends from the beginning of September through mid-June. The school is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of both American and Chinese educators, private sponsors, and parents. The administration has a Head of School, a Director of Education, a Director of Administration, and a Director of Outreach Programs.

Curriculum: The curriculum has been designed with the ongoing assistance of educators from Sidwell Friends School of Washington, D.C., and the bilingual program follows

that of the Chinese American School of San Francisco. The best of both American and Chinese teaching is brought to the instruction of mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. Western and Asian art, music, physical education, computer training, and a program of community service complete the curriculum. Wherever possible and appropriate, an active learning/integrated learning approach is used.

Accreditation: The NCSL is applying for accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Faculty: There are team teachers at every level.

Enrollment: During its first year, the school enrolled 25 students on three levels: primary, elementary, and middle school. The school in its second year enrolled approximately 60 pupils.

Facilities: The school operates in a new educational facility on 30,000 square meters, which includes the site for a track and a Chinese garden. It will share facilities with a Chinese elementary school until enrollment expands to fill the entire building. The school's 12 classrooms include a library and an assembly room. The track is soon to be completed. A science and library building and gymnasium are to be built in the next 3 years.

Finance: In the 1994-95 school year, about 95 percent of the school's income came from regular day school tuition. Annual tuition rates for 1995-96 are Pre-K: \$7,000; Primary I: \$8,000; Primary II: grades 3 and 4: \$10,000; grades 5 to 9: \$11,000.

Preschool Options: There are a variety of preschool options in Beijing, with two Montessori schools, several private preschool programs, and the American Community Preschool (ACP).

Adult Educational Opportunities

A number of interested students in Beijing have arranged to study the Chinese language or Chinese traditional art and music at Chinese institutions and universities. Occasionally American universities offer U.S.-led extension courses in Beijing. These latter opportunities vary with the composition of the American community at post at a given moment.

Sports

China presents limited participant sports and recreational opportunities.

Cycling, hiking, tennis, golf, and ice skating are enjoyed by some. Several private tennis clubs, in addition to the various embassy courts, have both indoor and outdoor (lighted) tennis courts with varying hourly fees. The International Club holds tournaments each year for members of the foreign community. Though local tennis equipment is generally adequate, tennis enthusiasts should bring a supply of balls.

Biking is a very popular mode of transportation in Beijing. Individuals find cycling a convenient way to exercise and sight-see at the same time. Chinese bicycles are heavy and have no gears, but are sturdily made and comfortable, and some people use them to commute to work. Recent to the marketplace are an increasing variety of made-for-export mountain bicycles and accessories, available at about 50 percent of the cost in the U.S. Since Beijing is flat, gears are not really necessary, but bicycles with gears have their advantages, especially for bike trips outside the city or on windy days. Imported bikes are subject to theft, so a good locking system is recommended.

Sports facilities include several golf courses in Beijing, and the cost is relatively affordable. There are roughly 6 weeks of ice skating in Beijing every year, with outdoor, unimproved rinks at the Summer Palace and Beihai Park.

Spectator sports in Beijing include basketball, volleyball, ping-pong, badminton, soccer, gymnastics, and hockey, but tickets are very hard to get.

Health clubs are now available in many of the better hotels, including such facilities as indoor swimming pools, tennis and squash courts, a range of aerobics equipment and weight machines, and sauna, steambath, and locker facilities. Membership fees vary, as does the equipment or facilities in each club, but there is generally something for everyone, from the hardcore to the occasional club goer, in terms of facility and budget.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Sight-seeing in and around Beijing and the rest of the PRC is a favorite activity.

Private groups also offer sight-seeing, but arrangements are often difficult. For a variety of reasons—the language barrier, frequent delays, logistical difficulties—travel in China is a real adventure, more fun to accomplish in groups than on one's own. Fortunately, there are many fascinating sights in the PRC, which make the challenge of travel worth the effort, but travel is rarely relaxing or restful, and transportation and lodging costs are rising rapidly as well.

Entertainment

There are lots of interesting activities going on all over Beijing—symphonies, operas, acrobatics, theater groups, and sporting events. However, hearing about events in time to get tickets is often difficult. Events are often not publicized ahead of time, or ticket distribution is unknown.

There is a Chinese film series (with English subtitles) with weekly showings at a nearby hotel and a foreign film program at a downtown hotel, although the foreign films are not all that current.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong is Cantonese for “fragrant harbor,” a name inspired either by the incense factories that once dotted Hong Kong Island or by the profusion of scented pink Bauhinias, the national flower.

The island is a dazzling melee of human life and enterprise. Its animated nature seems all the more perplexing when you add in the mix of nationalities, languages, customs, and fashions. People came to this city for many reasons—to find a better life or to find freedom from restrictive governments—and enough have stayed to turn a once-quiet trading village into one of the world's busiest international business centers.

From the harbor the city's latest architectural wonders stand against a green-mountain backdrop, while on the other side of the island beaches and quieter villages slow the pace considerably. Hong Kong has the best shopping in the world. Although the thought of crowded streets and mind-boggling choices can be daunting, no place makes big spending easier than this center of international commerce.

It was in the late 1970s that Hong Kong began to focus on the issue of its future. The colony's officials and business people realized they could no longer put off the question of what would happen to the New Territories, which makes up more than 90 percent of Hong Kong's land area. The New Territories were leased to Britain by China in 1898, for 99 years. That lease was set to expire on July 1, 1997.

After months of negotiations, both sides agreed in 1984 to Beijing's proposal for a Joint Declaration making Hong Kong a Special Administrative Region, with its own distinct laws, freedoms, and way of life. On July 1, 1997, Hong Kong reverted to Chinese sovereignty amid intense interest from the international community.

So far, the transition has been smooth. Hong Kong has grown steadily more prosperous. While an estimated 387,000 citizens had emigrated over the past few years, many have been coming home as their confidence returns.

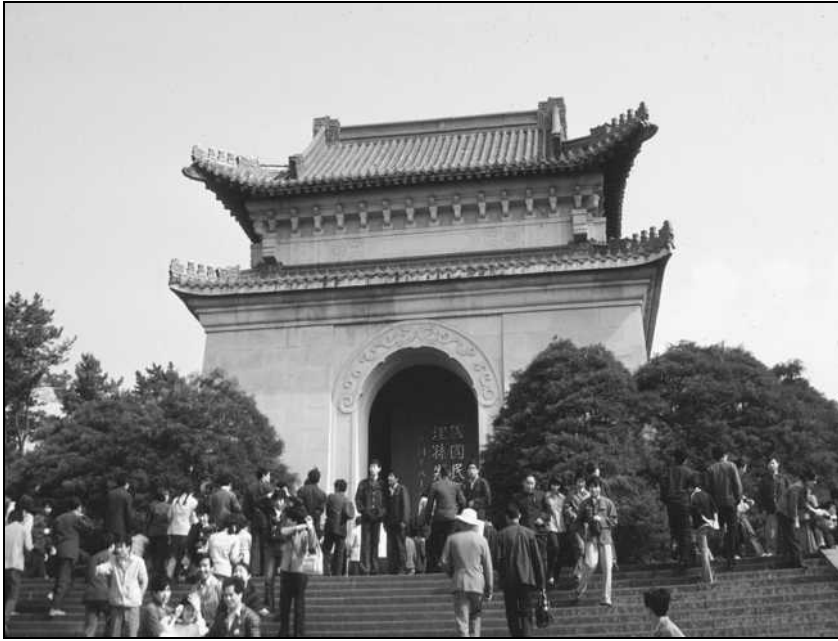
Landscape

The landscape is one of contrast, marked by a mix of old and new types of architectural design. It is quite apparent from the old churches and government buildings that are a few stories high to the high-rise skyscraper office and apartment buildings that cover the landscape from the harbor's edge and climb dramatically to the Peak.

The developed areas consist of high-density, high-rise office buildings and apartments. Hong Kong has experienced a very ambitious building program during the past decade, and more is planned for the future. Incorporated into this scheme are plans to ensure that park areas remain part of the landscape. This setting complements the steep green hills that surround the city and provide a pleasantly spectacular visual background.

Utilities

Electrical current is 220v, 50 cycle, AC. Power is dependable with little voltage fluctuation. Transformers are required for 110v appliances. Employees may purchase additional transformers locally. Synchronous 60-cycle appliances, such as electric clocks, record players, and tape recorders, will not function properly on 50 cycles without modification. American and Continental European plugs will not fit into the three-prong U.K. standard sockets used in Hong Kong,* but adapter plugs are available. Hong Kong has a wide variety of 220v appliances available at prices comparable to those in the U.S. Color TVs, video players, stereo components, and electric clocks with built-in converters for either 50 or 60 cycles and voltage adjusters from 120v to 220v are also readily available.



Sun Yat Sen Mausoleum in Nanjing

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Food

Food markets and supermarkets in Hong Kong provide a wide variety of fresh, processed, canned, and frozen foods catering to both the Western and Asian diet. It is possible to find almost everything here that one buys in the U.S. However, certain items will carry a premium price tag, and what is on the shelf today may not be there tomorrow. Food shopping in Hong Kong is perhaps best and most economically accomplished in the European fashion rather than American, i.e. going to different shops and markets for different foods. However, the larger outlets of the two major supermarket chains (Wellcome and Park N' Shop) are stocked to European tastes and carry standard products. American products are beginning to be seen on the shelves with more regularity. Credit cards are accepted at Wellcome and Park N' Shop. Most meats in the supermarket are imported from the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand. Phone/fax orders and delivery are available. Local markets sell fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, fish, and seafood at prices somewhat less than in supermarkets. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are imported from both the northern and south-

ern hemispheres and are available most of the year in Hong Kong. Specialty shops are popular in Hong Kong, providing an ever increasing selection of imported gourmet food and beverage items from around the world. Condiments and spices for Asian cooking are available in supermarkets and gourmet shops, as well as from vendors in the local markets. Coffees and teas from all over the world are sold here. Bakeries produce a variety of pastries, breads, and rolls. There are good quality butcher shops in addition to supermarket meat counters. Local dairies provide pasteurized milk and dairy products including yogurt, sour cream, and cottage cheese. Butter and cheeses are imported. Even health food stores have found a niche in this cosmopolitan city.

Clothing

General: With its increasing prosperity, Hong Kong has become very fashion conscious in recent years. In central Hong Kong and the shopping arcades of Kowloon, more and more fashion boutiques, including the finest of European import houses, cater to the affluent tastes of this economically flourishing territory. The sophistication of conser-

vative big-city business attire predominates, and Hong Kong "dresses up" not only for the office but also for teas, lunches, and dinners. On the other hand, designer label "casual wear" is also very common all over Hong Kong; and jeans and sneakers identify the tourist and resident alike, whether sight-seeing or bargain shopping.

A varied wardrobe, similar to what you would wear in Washington, is appropriate for Hong Kong. Definite seasons call for summer lightweight garments most of the year with mediumweight or lightweight wool for the Hong Kong winter. The winter although short, December through March, can be cold with temperatures averaging 15°C (59°F).

Three other general comments:

1) during the humid months, cotton is highly preferable to synthetic fabric for clothing as well as undergarments; 2) getting around Hong Kong requires considerable walking, uphill as well as down, therefore special attention should be given to comfortable footwear for all activities; and 3) if you wear an unusual or especially large size, you may have difficulty with some items such as shoes or underwear.

Men: Men need lightweight suits from April through November and lightweight wool suits for the cooler months.

American and British summer and winter suit materials are stocked locally, and getting a suit made to order is still one of the best deals in Hong Kong. Prices will vary depending on your tailor and the quality of material being used. Custom-made shirts are also quite popular and also vary in price according to design and material. Shoes can also be custom made to suit your taste. Most of the popular brands of shoes used for leisure activities are available at reasonable prices. You can also find many outlets that stock popular sweaters and ties. Hats are seldom worn for formal occasions, but you will see all the familiar logo



Street scene in Hong Kong.

David Johnson. Reproduced by permission.

caps and styles as you walk around Kowloon and Hong Kong.

Women: Women should bring a supply of summer cottons and other lightweight dresses. Women who plan to work in Hong Kong should bring suits and other professionally appropriate outfits such as one would wear in Washington. Although dry cleaning services are readily available, the costs are similar to the U.S., so many prefer to use wash and wear apparel.

Materials such as cotton and varieties of silks and woollens are stocked for tailor-made dresses, suits, and coats. Some fabrics are inexpensive, but tailoring of women's clothing is not and the finished product often leaves much to be desired.

An increasing number of shops carry imported American and European ready-to-wear sweaters, dresses, suits and coats but prices are higher than in the U.S. unless found at bargain factory outlets or markets. Locally manufactured clothing is also available but is very limited in sizes above U.S. size 12. Evening wear, both informal and formal, is more difficult to find and is more expensive in Hong Kong than in the U.S.

Lingerie, including British and U.S. brands, is available; however, it is

more expensive than in the U.S. Cotton undergarments, which are preferred due to heat and humidity, are not easily found. The supply of U.S. or British hosiery items is very limited and very expensive; tall or queen-sized hosiery is virtually unavailable.

Lightweight coats or lined raincoats are often worn during the cooler months; unlined raincoats are desirable for the warmer, rainy season. If you have a fur jacket or stole, you will probably have an opportunity to wear it in the winter.

Some ready-made American and European shoes are available but expensive and usually come in wider widths. Narrow shoes and sizes above 7-1/2 are difficult to find. Once here, you may enjoy having shoes made by Hong Kong shoemakers whom many consider to be good. Because of the need for comfortable walking shoes and the level of fashion seen in the main shopping/business district, "smart-casual" (a British term) shoes are recommended.

Sports clothes, including bathing suits, are sold here but generally in small sizes and with price tags higher than in the U.S. Locally made, inexpensive knits are also available in the street markets. Women do not generally wear shorts

on the streets in Hong Kong, but slacks and pantsuits are often worn. White is still the only color acceptable on most tennis courts.

Children: Children dress just as in the U.S. Parents can enjoy the fact that heavy winter wear is not needed and blue jeans are standard streetwear. Hong Kong street markets are full of clothing for toddlers and young children. Many children's shops have attractive clothes but prices are high.

With the exception of sports shoes, children's shoes cost more than in the U.S. and the choice is limited. It is hard to find shoes of correct size, proper fit, and desired styles. Orthopedic shoes are not readily available.

Supplies and Services

As with food and clothing, almost anything you want is available in Hong Kong; however, unless it is made locally, it may be hard to find, and, it will most probably be more expensive than in the U.S. American, British, French, and German toiletries, cosmetics, and hygiene products are available in Hong Kong, but are expensive. You may wish to bring an ample supply of cosmetics. French perfumes, however, can be purchased at a reasonable price as compared to prices in the U.S. Pharmacies in Hong Kong are good; however, bring any needed prescriptions with you. Most household products are available in several brands.

Hong Kong is renowned for its toys, but you have to be careful that what you purchase complies with U.S. safety standards. Toys "R" Us has two outlets in Hong Kong and Kowloon and carries approved brands that comply with U.S. standards, although the prices are higher than you will find in the U.S. In shopping for toys locally, you must remember that there is a great difference in quality between export quality and local quality. Both kinds are available on the local market.

There are many excellent bookstores in Hong Kong but be pre-

pared for prices considerably higher than in the U.S. Most people mail order their reading material. It should be noted, however, that paperback editions of best sellers are often out in Hong Kong long before paperback. International magazines and newspapers are readily available.

Men's and women's hairdressers are located throughout Hong Kong and have generally high standards at reasonable to expensive prices. Many use the facilities located in major hotels located near the at which appointments can be made. Hong Kong has reliable dry cleaners, many using American methods and materials. The price is similar to that charged in the U.S. and several pick up and deliver. Good laundries are also available. Shoe repair services operate on the street, in stairways, or in alleys. The service is fair and reasonably priced. Car maintenance and repairs are moderately priced for locally-sold models. Parts and service for American cars are more difficult to obtain.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is available in Hong Kong but has become quite costly. Full-time Chinese cooks are almost a thing of the past and very expensive. Any live-in Chinese help is a rarity and extremely costly. Although part-time help is available, it is also expensive and difficult to arrange. Most families looking for domestic help choose to hire Filipina domestics who live in and are reasonably priced. By law, minimum wage for overseas domestic helpers (Filipinas, Thais, etc.) for 1998 was set at HK \$3,860 per month. Additionally, the employer is required to provide either all food or a food allowance (usually about HK \$400/Mo.), housing, uniforms, medical insurance, and one round trip to the home country every 2 years for home leave. By law, these domestics have eleven local holidays, 1 week of annual leave after 1 full year of successful performance, and home leave (2 weeks) every 2 years. All domestic helpers should have a medical examination including chest x-ray, blood serological,

and stool examination. All costs are borne by the employer.

Religious Activities

Religious services are held in English by the following denominations: Assemblies of God, Bahai Faith, Baptist, Christian Missionary Alliance, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Church of England (Episcopal-Anglican), Iglesia de Cristo, Jewish (Orthodox and Reform congregations), Latter-day Saints, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian/ Congregational, Quakers, Roman Catholic, Seventh-day Adventist, United Pentecostal, and others. Various Buddhist sects also have English speaking congregations in Hong Kong.

Education

Hong Kong International School. The vast majority of American school-age children attend the Hong Kong International School (HKIS). It is recognized as one of the leading international schools and provides a U.S.-style education and U.S. curriculum. HKIS is sponsored by and operated under the auspices of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (USA). It is registered with the Office of Education of the Hong Kong Government and is associated with other American overseas schools in the Far East. Its accredited status by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges of the U.S. reflects its conformity with American educational standards. Half the staff is composed of trained teachers recruited in the U.S. through the Lutheran school system and appointed for a minimum of 3 years. The remainder of the staff, also professionally trained and experienced, consists of members of the American and European community in Hong Kong plus a few Chinese instructors.

HKIS serves a religiously diverse community. Although religious instruction is mandatory, course offerings may be selected that encompass Christian or Bible subjects as well as a variety of non-Christian topics such as existentialism and oriental religions. Chapel is voluntary for students in grades 7-

12. For kindergarten through grade 6 there are weekly chapel services and 20-minute religious instruction classes.

Of its approximately 2,000 students, slightly more than half are U.S. citizens, while fewer than 100 are dependents of U. S. Government employees. Instruction is in English with emphasis on academic or college preparatory courses. Some advanced placement courses are offered. More than 90% of graduates enroll in American colleges and universities. In the recent years, HKIS has made great strides to include programs for special needs children. However, there is currently no school in Hong Kong, including HKIS, which is staffed or equipped to handle students with severe learning, physical, or emotional disabilities. Parents with special educational needs for their children should consult directly with the school to see how those needs can best be met.

The elementary school (K-5) in Repulse Bay is an air-conditioned "open space" facility consisting of six clusters of over 4,000 sq.ft. each. There is also a gymnasium, library, and swimming pool. Educational approaches range from self-contained classrooms to independent learning and team-teaching situations. The middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12) are located together at Tai Tam, several miles from Repulse Bay. The multi-million dollar facility features an open air campus similar to schools found in many parts of the U.S. with classrooms, separate science laboratories, computer lab, music rooms, a cafeteria, gymnasium, swimming pool, audio visual center, bookstore, library, and guidance offices.

Sixth grade through High School students participate annually in an "Interim Program" which consists of a week of cultural explorations in Hong Kong or overseas. These programs are a prerequisite for graduation. The school offers approximately 37 interim trips each year with about 20 students enrolled in each. The cost of these



View of Shanghai, China

Courtesy of Cliff Brackett

trips must be borne by the parents. For example, the least expensive trip is US\$350 (for 6th grade), and the most expensive is a High School trip for US\$1,600. Parents/children are allowed to indicate their preferences but sometimes are not placed in their top choice.

A full program of American-type extracurricular activities is offered, including a broad selection of clubs, drama, choral and band groups, publications, scouts, and sports: badminton, baseball, basketball, bowling, cross-country, field hockey, gymnastics, rugby, soccer, squash, swimming, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and water polo. Inter-scholastic competition includes meets with other schools in Hong Kong as well as the International School Bangkok (ISB) and the Taipei American School (TAS). HKIS also hosts an invitational basketball tournament each December that attracts schools from other Asian cities. Some emphasis is placed on inter-cultural programs. Mandarin is taught in elementary school and is offered as an elective in middle school and high school. French and Spanish are offered in grades 6-12.

The school year normally runs from the third or fourth week in August until mid-June.

Since the school is normally at capacity enrollment, it is vital that application forms be requested and forwarded well in advance. Application forms can be requested, in writing, from the Admissions Office, Hong Kong International School, 6 South Bay Close, Repulse Bay, Hong Kong. It is particularly important that parents discuss well in advance any instances in which a student has poor academic records or special needs.

English Schools Foundation (ESF) (British Curriculum). This is an alternative to HKIS. Before an application can be submitted, the student must be a resident of Hong Kong. Admittance and decision as to grade level placement are based on age, the results of an entrance examination in English and mathematics, an interview and availability of space. A medical examination is also required. The city is zoned and children attend the ESF schools according to where they live. ESF schools previously used by Consulate General families and located in Mid-Levels where many employees are housed include Glenealy Junior School and Kennedy Road Junior School for children 5-10 and Island School for children 11-17.

Other specialized school options include the Chinese International

School and Singapore International School, both providing bicultural English-Mandarin programs; the French International School which has both French and English streams; the German-Swiss School which has both German and English streams; the International Christian School which is based on Taiwan's American-based Morrison Academy; and the American International School, a Catholic Church sponsored school in Kowloon. Kellett School, the only private British Primary school in Hong Kong, is another alternative considered by American families. Good preschools are available on Hong Kong Island but are quite costly.

School websites:

Hong Kong International School
<http://www.hkis.edu.hk>
 English Schools Foundation
<http://www.esf.edu.hk>
 German Swiss International School
<http://home.netvigator.com/~gsis>
 Chinese International School
<http://www.hk.super.net/~cis>
 Parkview International Pre-school
<http://www.hk.super.net/~pips>
 Carmel School Hong Kong
<http://www.carmel.edu.hk>

Special Educational Opportunities

Adult education courses conducted in English are available at both Hong Kong University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The courses cover literature, history, journalism, philosophy, architecture, pottery making and many other subjects. Entrance as a full-time student either to the University of Hong Kong or to the Chinese University is very difficult. The entrance examinations are based on a British educational background, and the universities generally only admit students who are permanent residents of Hong Kong, except as non-credit auditors. Elsewhere, there are excellent opportunities to study many phases of Chinese culture, especially Cantonese. Instruction in modern dance, ballet, voice, instrumental music, Western and Asian painting, and sports are available. The YWCA English

Speaking Members Department, Island School, Towngas, Electric Co., and the American Women's Association also offer a good variety of adult education courses. Language classes are taught at the Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institute, and the Italian Cultural Society. The YMCA and YWCA offer adult language courses in Cantonese and Mandarin.

Recreation and Social Life

Recreation and social activities are plentiful in Hong Kong but one needs to be willing to seek out opportunities, especially for sports, since public venues are extremely crowded and private facilities (clubs) are beyond the financial means of most Consulate General personnel. In addition, waiting lists for membership in most clubs exceed the average tour in Hong Kong. On the other hand, facilities for entertainment and cultural activities are quite extensive and affordable.

Sports

Most sports facilities such as golf, tennis, squash, riding and swimming pools are available through private clubs only. The Consulate General has a tennis court located on the grounds of the Consul General's compound on Barker Road and a swimming pool located at the Shouson Hill compound which are available to employees and families.

The recent opening of two public golf courses in Hong Kong has made it affordable for non-club members to hit the links. Also, the Macau Golf and Country Club (one hour away by hydrofoil) features a challenging and fun course; and within a two hour bus or boat ride from Hong Kong, there are six courses in China that offer affordable golfing packages.

Sailing and yachting are popular and possible year round. Joining a sailboarding, kayak or rowing club often provides the opportunity for sport without the expense of a recreational club. There are some very nice beaches in the territory. Beaches on Hong Kong Island, espe-

cially on the South Side of the island, tend to be quite crowded. There is also a concern about pollution, and beach-goers need to pay attention to environmental reports in the media on pollution ratings. The more remote beaches in the New Territories and on Outlying Islands are more appealing; these beaches are reached by ferries, private "junks," and/or on foot.

If you are a runner or tri-athlete, there are numerous associations to join as well as several Hash House Harriers groups that meet weekly. There are many events sponsored by such groups throughout the year for competitors. One of the more popular means of recreation and exercise for both Chinese and expatriates is walking and hiking. The opportunities are endless and the territory has a multitude of very well-marked and maintained paths and trails that meet the needs of the leisurely stroller, the family on an outing, the casual hiker, and the ardent mountain trekker.

Tenpin bowling has been popular among Consulate General personnel.

Some Americans participate in the activities of the Hong Kong Softball Association which includes men's and women's softball teams. Because of the summer heat the softball teams are active only from September through April, and games are played at night. Some Americans entered teams in the Dragon Boat Festival held annually in June and for the 100 km Trail-walker event held in November. Popular spectator sports include soccer, cricket, rugby, softball, tennis, basketball, and horse racing (October-May).

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Outlying Islands of Cheung Chau, Ping Chau, Lamina, and Lantau, which are accessible by ferry, offer hiking and browsing opportunities for day trips. Overnight "vacation rentals" are also available at reasonable prices. Macau is an interesting place to spend a day or

weekend. This 400-year-old Portuguese colony (until December 1999), 40 miles west of Hong Kong, is a place of old and gentle Mediterranean charm on the one hand, and a city on the move on the other; bright lights, large construction sites and new high rises are rapidly changing its skyline. It is the oldest European settlement in Asia. Travel by high-speed ferry takes just about an hour. Cuisine, a mixture of Portuguese, English, and Chinese styles, is tasty and interesting. Antique shopping is another good excuse to make the trip to Macau. Hong Kong is a crossroads to most destinations in Asia. Vacations in Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines are popular. Many use Hong Kong as a door to tourist travel in China. Travel agents are plentiful and are eager to assist you with package deals and self-determined itineraries.

Hong Kong itself has many interesting sights for tourists and photographers. Tourist agencies offer excellent tours. Among the more interesting excursions are the water tours of the island, tours of Kowloon, the New Territories, Hong Kong Island, the fishing village of junks and sampans at Aberdeen, and the ride to the top of the Peak by funicular cable car (Peak Tram). There are also heritage tours and opportunities to visit local housing areas and schools. Ocean Park is one of Hong Kong's most popular recreational attractions. Facilities include the world's largest aquarium, an ocean theater, a zoo, flower and water gardens, and oriental and Western restaurants. Middle Kingdom, a cultural village, portrays customs, costumes, architecture and entertainment from 13 dynasties of China. A visit to Ocean Park makes a pleasurable and interesting outing for the entire family. Water World, which is located adjacent to Ocean Park, has water slides and pools galore. A visit to Water World is a great way to escape the heat of summer.

Entertainment

Eating is the most popular form of entertainment in Hong Kong. About



Junks in Hong Kong harbor

Courtesy of Ellen Bowden

1.5 million people eat in restaurants daily, the highest per capita rate in the world. The range of restaurants runs from world class to street vendors. All types of Western restaurants are available, and the choice of Asian cuisines is practically endless.

A variety of performing arts programs are presented throughout the year, including symphony concerts, recitals, ballet and dance performances, drama, and Western opera. The Hong Kong Cultural Center, the Academy for the Performing Arts, the Hong Kong Arts Center and City Hall are the centers of Hong Kong's cultural life. The Hong Kong Cultural Center includes a 2,085-seat concert hall, a 1,724-seat grand theater, and a flexible 300- to 500-seat studio theater for experimental drama. It is the home of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. The Cultural Center complex also houses the Hong Kong Museum of Art, with its collections of Chinese arts and antiquities, ethnographic materials and archaeological finds, and the Hong Kong Space Museum. The Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts (APA) is a professional degree granting institution providing training, education, and research in the performing arts and related fields. Students from the APA

Schools of Dance and Drama give public performances throughout the year in the APA's theater. The Hong Kong Arts Center features a multi-purpose theater, a recital hall for music performances and films, and art galleries. It is a multidisciplinary center, featuring contemporary work in the performing, visual, and cinematic arts. The Center also offers classes in painting, ceramics, and other art forms for children and adults. The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is the nucleus of Hong Kong's musical life. It has an 11-month season from April through February and season subscriptions are available. Guest artists of world renown appear regularly with the orchestra.

Other performing arts groups that perform at Hong Kong's cultural venues include the Hong Kong Repertory Theater, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Dance Company, City Contemporary Dance Company, the Hong Kong Ballet, and the Chung Ying Theater Company. The American Community Theater (ACT) is Hong Kong's most active amateur theatrical group and produces several plays a year. It has an international membership and stages American theatrical productions, including musicals. The most active and best known choral groups are the Bach

Choir, the Hong Kong Singers, and the St. Cecilia Singers. These non-professional groups present one or two cantatas, operettas, or musicals a year. Free lunch time concerts and recitals are held each Wednesday in St. John's Cathedral (Episcopal), which is located one-half block from the Consulate General. The program includes both sacred and secular music.

Social Activities

All travelers have the opportunity for a very active social life as they enjoy the wonderful restaurants of Hong Kong, theaters, school activities, wine tastings, food fairs, night spots.

The American Women's Association (AWA) has about 1,600 regular and associate members; by charter the membership is at least 51% American regular members with international members as associates. The Association has a number of popular monthly activities and several special membership luncheons/meetings/programs during the year. It supports many community projects and offers a wide variety of both social and charitable activities. Joining AWA is a good way to meet Americans outside the Consulate General and also to get to know women of other nationalities. The English Speaking Members' Department of the YWCA located near the Consulate General offers their members a vast number of day and evening activities including lectures on Asian Affairs, seminars on family issues, bridge, tennis, exercise, cooking and language classes, computer and other skill development sessions, and a variety of arts and crafts offerings. Their "At Home in Hong Kong" program is highly recommended for newcomers to the territory. The Rotary Clubs, American Chamber of Commerce, Lions Clubs, Toastmaster and Toastmistress Clubs, the American University Club, League of Women Voters, Hong Kong, (an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the U.S.), and many other groups where individuals can meet local residents and expatriates are available. The Brownies, Cub Scouts,

Girl Guides, and Little League baseball are active in Hong Kong. A public children's library is in City Hall. HKIS sponsors summer sports and skills programs. Various churches also have youth activities. The Welfare Handicrafts, Mother's Choice, the Red Cross, YMCA, and many other welfare agencies—some branches of U.S. organizations—offer a variety of opportunities for both men and women for volunteer service. Both civic and professional associations are numerous.

Geography and Climate

Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, covers an area of 404 square miles, about six times the size of Washington, DC. Hong Kong is a bustling, vibrant, very Chinese, and very international city. This colorful mix of East and West, old and new, is alive with an overwhelmingly entrepreneurial spirit. To the 6.8 million residents, the city represents the dream of prosperity and the opportunity for personal betterment. One has to admire the incomparable tenacity of the Hong Kong people—their strength of purpose and devotion to work and family are striking. The SAR consists of Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories, and various surrounding islands.

Hong Kong was a British colony from 1841 until June 30, 1997. On that date, which coincided with the expiration of the 99-year British lease on the New Territories, it became a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. Under a unique “one country, two systems” formula agreed to by Britain and China in the Joint Declaration of 1984, Beijing has granted Hong Kong people the right to govern Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy in all areas except defense and foreign affairs. In practice, this means that life in Hong Kong after the transition to Chinese sovereignty has changed very little.

From the small fishing villages of 150 years ago, Hong Kong has grown into one of the most impor-

tant trading, industrial, and financial centers in Asia. Official representatives of most major countries reside in the territory, along with a host of international bankers, lawyers, and business people who participate in Hong Kong's booming trade and industry. Hong Kong Island, the site of most of the territory's governmental, commercial, and financial activities, is about 32 square miles in area. The island's population and business centers are located across the harbor from Kowloon and extend from Pok Fu Lam to North Point, encompassing the Central, Mid-Levels, Wan Chai, and Causeway Bay areas of Hong Kong. The Consulate General office and official housing for American staff are located on the island. The seaward, or south side of Hong Kong Island, is made up of a rugged shoreline with high cliffs and sheltered bays. The interior is rough terrain with steep hills and small valleys. The highest area, known as the Peak, is 555 meters (1,830 ft.) above sea level and has a breathtaking view of the scenic harbor and Kowloon on one side and the offshore islands and South China Sea on the other. The Kowloon Peninsula is directly across the harbor from Hong Kong Island. It is separated from the New Territories by groups of hills, the highest of which rises to more than 3,000 feet. The Kowloon area, with its major subdivisions of Mong Kok and Tsim Sha Tsui, is the leading industrial area of Hong Kong, as well as a major residential area and tourist center with many hotels and shops. The major railway station, Hunt Hom, serving Guangzhou, is also located in this densely populated area. The New Territories comprises an area of 355 square miles between Kowloon and the Chinese border and also includes some 235 small offshore islands. This area accounts for most of the territory's agricultural activity and a growing portion of its industrial and residential sectors. The topography is mostly steep hills and marshes, but many places are used for small farms. The only major agriculture on the offshore islands is on Lantau Island, the largest. The

remaining islands are small, and, if inhabited, are primarily fishing bases. The rustic character of the New Territories has been transformed in recent years with the construction of major satellite towns such as Sha Tin and Tuen Mun, where large numbers of Hong Kong residents live.

Hong Kong's climate is governed by the monsoons. Although the territory lies within the Tropics, it enjoys a variety of weather because of these seasonal winds. The winter monsoon blows from the north or northeast from September to mid-March, and the summer wind blows from the south or southwest from mid-March to September. During the summer monsoon, the weather is hot and humid; during the winter monsoon it is cool. Average temperatures range from 58°F in February (with lows in the 40s) to 82°F in July (with highs in the 90s). The mean relative humidity ranges from a low of 67% in November to 84% in May; many days the humidity approaches 100%, accompanied by heavy clouds. Late fall is the most pleasant time of year, generally with dry and sunny weather and high temperatures of 70° to 75°F. The average annual rainfall is 95 inches.

Population

Hong Kong's population at the end of 1998 was approximately 6.8 million, with the overwhelming majority being ethnic Chinese. Most were born in Hong Kong, with others coming from China or other countries in Asia. The rest of the expatriate community includes mainly government officials and business people representing many nationalities. About 50,000 U.S. citizens (including 11,500 dual nationals) are resident in Hong Kong, representing a major foreign presence in the territory. The other major expatriate groups are from Canada, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. The official languages of Hong Kong are Chinese and English. Cantonese is the most common Chinese dialect spoken, and English is widely used in government and business. Most people

follow traditional Chinese beliefs. The two main religions are Buddhism and Taoism. About 600,000 or 10% of the population are Christian. Hong Kong has about 50,000 followers of Islam, most of whom are Hong Kong Chinese. The Hindu community, which has been part of the territory since its earliest days, has increased to 12,000. Hong Kong's Jewish community numbers about 1,000.

Public Institutions

Hong Kong has retained almost the entire administrative structure put in place by the British. The Hong Kong Government is staffed by an effective civil service numbering more than 184,000 people.

Some 30 executive bureaus organized along functional lines constitute this administrative framework. The executive-led government is headed by the Chief Executive (who replaced the British Governor); he was selected by the Hong Kong people in late 1996 and serves for a five-year term. He is advised by the Executive Council, prominent local residents whom he appoints. The 60-member Legislative Council, whose powers are limited, consists of a mixture of directly and indirectly elected members. Beneath these bodies, the Urban Council is responsible for various local matters like recreation and sanitation for Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, while the Regional Council performs the same function for the New Territories. At the lowest level, 19 District Boards cover the entire territory, serving as grassroots advisory bodies for monitoring public opinion regarding government policies.

Environment

Due to its small size and location in the Pearl River Delta, Hong Kong's environment is strongly influenced by the rest of China. A closely-packed city, Hong Kong suffers from smog on a regular basis. Air quality is continuously monitored by the government, and a report on the air quality is announced daily. The range is usually 60 to 80 or "moderate" which means fair. An index of

over 100 (which occurred in the summer of 1997) is unhealthy. Air pollution from diesel vehicle emissions remains a priority concern. In November 1997, the Hong Kong government launched a trial of liquefied petroleum gas vehicles to address this problem, but it is unlikely that there will be a major shift away from diesel vehicles in the next 3-5 years. Quality of inshore water, particularly around the beaches, is also deteriorating. This will not improve until the major government infrastructure program to treat all raw sewage and waste before discharge into the ocean is completed around 2004.

Fresh water, mostly piped from China, is treated at several water treatment plants located in Hong Kong before being used. The quality of water meets current World Health Organization requirements. However, some people choose to use distilled water or use filters to remove sediment from water sources at home.

Arts, Science, and Education

Hong Kong has a rich cultural life that embraces the arts and traditions of both East and West. A variety of performing arts is presented, including symphony concerts, recitals, ballet and dance performances, drama, Western opera, and Chinese traditional stage arts. There are two professional orchestras, three full-time dance companies, a handful of professional drama groups, and scores of amateur orchestras, choirs, dance groups and drama clubs, plus overseas artists and groups who visit the territory throughout the year. Long-established performing companies like the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Repertory Theater, and Hong Kong Ballet offer annual subscriptions for their performances. The primary venues for arts events are the Hong Kong Cultural Center, with a 2,085-seat concert hall and a 1,724-seat grand theater, the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts, the Hong Kong Arts Center, City Hall, and the three major town halls in ShaTin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun.

The annual Hong Kong Arts Festival in February/March brings a wide array of well-known local and overseas groups and is the highlight of the cultural year. The Festival of Asian Arts is a biennial event featuring performing arts from Asian and Oceanic cultures. The International Arts Carnival in the summer aims to introduce children and young people to the performing arts. The annual Hong Kong International Film Festival is one of the world's major noncompetitive film festivals. The Fringe Festival in January/ February is an open platform for the arts. Hong Kong has several museums and small galleries. The Hong Kong Museum of Art houses a collection of Chinese bronzes, ceramics, and paintings and stages major international loan exhibitions of Chinese and Western art. Its branch museum, the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, is devoted exclusively to Chinese tea ware. Both the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong have museums exhibiting Chinese art and cultural artifacts. The Tsui Museum of Art displays a privately-owned collection of Chinese fine art. Galleries at the Hong Kong Arts Center emphasize contemporary and Western arts. Small commercial galleries sell works by Chinese and overseas artists.

The Hong Kong Museum of History focuses on local and Chinese history. The Hong Kong Space Museum has visitor participatory exhibits and a planetarium to introduce visitors to astronomy and space science. Exhibits at the Hong Kong Science Museum cover basic science principles, mathematics, earth science, life science, the applications of technology, and high-tech areas such as computers and robotics.

Education is highly valued by the Government and people of Hong Kong; no other element takes a larger share of the government budget. Full-time education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15. Instruction is mainly in Chinese in primary school and in Chinese and English in secondary school.

Ten degree-granting institutions are supported by the Hong Kong government's University Grants Committee. They all follow the British three-year system. The University of Hong Kong, founded in 1911, uses English as the language of instruction. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, a federated university composed of four colleges, uses both English and Chinese in teaching. Both universities offer academic as well as professional courses and include graduate and extension programs. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, opened in 1991, offers first and advanced degrees primarily in science, engineering and business management. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the City University of Hong Kong offer degree and diploma courses combined with work and vocational training programs. The Hong Kong Baptist University and Lingnan College Hong Kong offer degree programs, primarily in social sciences, business, and liberal arts. The Hong Kong Institute of Education was formed in 1994 by merging four colleges of education. It provides pre-service teacher education for primary and secondary school teachers. It enrolled its first degree program students in 1998. The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts offers comprehensive multidisciplinary professional training for performing and related technical and media arts, leading to diploma and first degree. The Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong provides the adult population with opportunities for further education in non-degree and degree programs.

Commerce and Industry

Hong Kong is a leading international manufacturing, trading, and financial center, as well as a strategically located regional entrepôt, especially for products originating from or destined for the People's Republic of China. Hong Kong maintains a free and open trading regime, and the government pursues a policy of minimum interference in the economy. These factors, together with Hong Kong's skilled and industrious work force and a

legal framework that encourages business initiative, have contributed to the territory's success and have helped transform it into the world's 8th largest trading economy. An important Asian financial center, Hong Kong plays a leading role in regional banking, shipping, and communications. The local currency, the Hong Kong dollar, is freely convertible and fluctuates in a narrow band around 7.8 to the U.S. dollar. There is complete freedom of capital movement. At the end of 1998, 172 fully licensed banks operated in the SAR (14 are subsidiaries of U.S. Banks). U.S. firms are the third most numerous in the insurance industry with 22 wholly owned. Taxes are low. The current salary and corporate tax rates are 15% and 16%, respectively. There are no taxes on royalties, interest, or capital gains. Hong Kong imposes no import tariffs. Excise taxes are levied for revenue purposes on tobacco, cosmetics, alcoholic beverages, ethyl alcohol, methyl alcohol, and some petroleum products. Reflecting the growing importance of services in the economy, Hong Kong's visible trade is increasingly in deficit (\$17.7 billion in 1996 and \$20.5 billion for 1997).

With few natural resources, the territory must depend on imports. Principal imports consist of food, textile yarn and fabrics, iron and steel, plastic molding materials, consumer products, paper, and machinery. Principal exports consist of textiles and apparel, watches and clocks, electronic components, and other light industrial products. The value of domestic exports alone was equal to 14.6% of Hong

Kong's gross domestic product (GDP) in 1998 (a declining percentage as labor intensive production moves across the border into China). Tourism constitutes a major industry for the economy with 10.4 million visitors passing through the territory in 1997 and 9.6 million in 1998.

The U.S. is the territory's second largest trading partner (after the PRC), with 14.4% of total trade. In

1998, the U.S. was the second largest market for domestic exports with a 29.1% share. The U.S. supplied 7.5% of imports and was the number two destination for re-exports with 22.4%. Principal imports from the U.S. are electrical machinery; computer and office machines; telecommunications, sound recording and reproducing equipment; plastic, meat, vegetables, and fruit. Principal domestic exports to the U.S. are textiles, apparel, electrical machinery, photographic equipment, watches and clocks, computer and office machines, textiles, yarn and fabric. Currently, about 1,100 U.S. firms operate here and U.S. direct investment was estimated at \$20 billion in 1998. The American business community is well represented by the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Transportation

Driving in Hong Kong is on the left (right-hand-drive). Automobile insurance is expensive; however, substantial discounts can be obtained based on the length of accident-free or "no-claim" driving documented by presenting a letter from your previous insurance companies).

Parking throughout the territory, especially in the downtown areas, is extremely limited and costly (approx. US\$3/HR). Parking fees often exceed the cost of travel by taxi. The Consulate General will assist you in registering your car and in obtaining a valid Hong Kong driving license. Driving tests are not required for those presenting a valid license from the U.S. or from other countries whose licenses are recognized by the Hong Kong Government.

Public transport (buses, taxis, subways, ferries, and trams) is readily available and reasonably priced. Carpools, shared taxis, or public transport are the most commonly used modes of transport between home and work.

Local. The MTR (Mass Transit Railway) subway system connects Hong

Kong Island with Kowloon and nearby portions of the New Territories. Since opening in February 1980, it has become a highly efficient, reasonably priced mode of transportation. The Island Line, which connects much of the harbor side of Hong Kong Island to the existing system, opened in 1985. Streetcars (trams) operate only in urban areas of Hong Kong Island. Bus service, including minibuses, covers almost the entire island, Kowloon, and the New Territories. Buses and streetcars are quite crowded during peak hours. Taxi service is relatively inexpensive and generally available at all hours. Radio-dispatched taxis are available.

The Peak Tram is a very popular tourist attraction, providing a breathtaking view of Hong Kong and Kowloon as you climb to its terminus on the Peak. At the Peak, the view is spectacular and there are many shops and restaurants. The Peak is also served by bus, mini bus and taxi for easy transport back to the City or other locations on Hong Kong Island.

An extensive network of roads exists throughout the territory; however, most are narrow and many are steep and winding because of the terrain. Traffic, which moves on the left, is heavy, but well regulated. There are three cross-harbor tunnels connecting Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. For those with a more romantic bent, the Star Ferry operates a very efficient and inexpensive passenger service between Central on the Hong Kong side and Ocean Terminal in Kowloon. Ferries also operate from numerous points on Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula to many of the outlying islands.

Regional. In July 1998 Hong Kong's venerable Kai Tak Airport was replaced by a new airport at Chek Lap Kok just north of Lantau Island. An impressive road, bridge, and tunnel link connects the airport to Hong Kong Island. In addition, a high speed rail link speeds passengers to the Central business district

in Hong Kong. Departing passengers can obtain boarding passes and check their baggage at the new terminus in Central. Air service in and out of Hong Kong is excellent. About 50 airlines operate over 700 scheduled flights per week to Hong Kong. The U.S. carriers currently offering non-stop flights to Hong Kong are United and Northwest.

Hong Kong Harbor, one of Asia's busiest, handles more than 8,000 incoming ships a year, principally cargo ships but also a large number of cruise ships as well as U.S. Navy ships on port call. Trains run between Kowloon and Guangzhou (Canton), China. Hydrofoil and air transportation between Hong Kong and Guangzhou are also available, with connections there to other cities in China. Helicopter, hydrofoil and ferry transport between Hong Kong and Macau operate frequently throughout the day and evening.

Communications

Telephone, Fax, and Internet. Excellent local and international telephone and computer services are available throughout Hong Kong. Hong Kong was one of the first Asian cities to install fiber optics (replacing copper) throughout its telephone and communications infrastructure. Other services, such as Internet, mobile phones, call waiting, call forwarding, and pagers, are available from Hong Kong Telecom and other local vendors. Many employees have found it convenient to utilize a U.S. calling card. Internet service costs vary depending upon which of the over 100 Internet Service Providers (ISPs) available in Hong Kong an employee decides to use. CompuServe and America On Line are also available in Hong Kong.

Mail. International mail service is reliable, and transit time to the west coast is 3-5 days.

Radio and TV. Hong Kong has 13 radio channels: seven operated by government-affiliated Radio Television Hong Kong. Cantonese, English, and Mandarin programming includes classical and popular

music, BBC World Service, local news, and public affairs. Transistor radios and short-wave receivers are available in abundance at reasonable prices in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong uses the PAL 625 system for television broadcasts; a multi-system television set, readily available in Hong Kong, is the most convenient option. American NTSC sets are not compatible. Two local television stations each provide one Cantonese and one English channel. Most English-language programs are U.S. or U.K.-produced and present a variety of entertainment, including various U.S. news programs tailored for the Far East. Satellite and cable TV are available in many areas with such offerings as CNN, BBC, and HBO. The Consulate General commissary has a tape (NTSC format) rental program, and there are numerous video rental stores throughout Hong Kong that rent both video cassettes and laser disks. The most popular local cassette format is VHS-PAL System.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals. Hong Kong has vibrant media. It has one of the highest newspaper readerships in Asia, and is the world's largest center for Chinese-language publications. American, British, and other European periodicals are readily available in Hong Kong. American magazines and technical journals are expensive but are available. Both Time and Newsweek have Far Eastern editions on the newsstands weekly. There are two local English-language morning dailies, the South China Morning Post and the Hong Kong Standard. In addition, the Asian Wall Street Journal, the International Herald Tribune, and USA Today are available. There are numerous bookstores carrying a good selection of paperbacks and magazines, but prices are higher than in the United States.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities. The quality of medical care in Hong Kong is high. Hong Kong is the medical evacuation center for posts in China and

Manila. Medications, from the UK and U.S., are readily available. The cost for medical (especially dental) care is high in comparison to U.S. prices. Dentists and physicians on the Consulate General's referral list speak English and are trained in the U.K., Australia, or the U.S. Nursing care is good. Although the majority of pregnant women elect to stay in Hong Kong for delivery, the Health Unit supports the M/MED world-wide policy which recommends that pregnant women return to the U.S. for delivery.

Community Health. Although the territory has more than doubled the reservoir capacity in the past few years, water shortages still occur when rainfall is below normal. Water sources are reported to be potable, adequately chlorinated and fluoridated. Water from taps can, at times, be discolored due to pipes in buildings. Filters can be purchased locally to improve the quality of the water. In September 1997, Hong Kong reported 290 patients with AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) and 2000 HIV positive patients. The blood supply in Hong Kong is screened for the HIV virus and other communicable diseases by the Red Cross. Individuals requiring blood or blood products are advised to contact the Health Unit. Tuberculosis remains one of Hong Kong's major community health problems. However, an active anti-TB program has succeeded in reducing the morbidity and mortality rate.

Preventive Measures. Individuals are encouraged to have immunizations updated before traveling to Hong Kong. The yellow fever vaccine can be received (inconveniently) at a local clinic. Japanese B encephalitis vaccine is available only in Hong Kong. Children 6 years old and under are encouraged to have annual blood lead levels screenings for the prevention of lead poisoning. Do NOT put them in air freight. The following immunizations will be reviewed and updated as needed: typhoid, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, HIB, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B.

Keep your immunization records with your passport. Individuals requiring daily medications are encouraged to bring an adequate initial supply. Don't pack your medications in your sea freight or checked luggage.

Notes for Travelers

Passage, Customs & Duties. Hong Kong is served by many of the world's major airlines including leading U.S. carriers. United and Northwest offer several flights a day including nonstop service from the west coast of the U.S. and Minneapolis-St. Paul and, seasonally, to Chicago. Continental Airlines provides services via Guam. Traveling via the Pacific can take a rest stop en route in several cities in the continental U.S., as well as Honolulu, Tokyo, or Guam.

Passports and evidence of onward/return transportation by sea/air are required. A visa is not required for tourist visits by U.S. citizens of up to 90 days. An extension of stay may be granted upon application to the Hong Kong SAR Immigration Department. U.S. citizens must have passports with at least four months' validity for entry into Hong Kong. A departure tax of \$80 HK (approximately \$10.30 US), must be paid at the airport, unless this has been included in the traveler's airfare. Visas are required to work or study in Hong Kong. With approval from the Hong Kong Civil Aviation Department, airlines began collecting an insurance surcharge from passengers in November 2001. The insurance surcharge ranges from \$30 HK (\$3.80 US) to \$40 HK (\$5.10 US) depending on the airlines. Effective November 5, 2001, travel agents in Hong Kong which are members of the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) are allowed to charge a service fee of \$5.00 HK (approximately \$0.64 US) per sector for each air ticket issued. Public transportation from Hong Kong's International Airport at Chek Lap Kok to Central Hong Kong (about 25 miles) is readily available, as are taxis. Travelers should exchange sufficient money for transportation at the airport

exchange facility located immediately outside the baggage claim area. For the most current information concerning entry and exit requirements, travelers can consult the Hong Kong SAR Immigration Department, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong (tel. (852) 2829-3001, fax (852) 2824-1133, Internet Home Page: <http://www.info.gov.hk/immtd/>), or the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2300 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20008, tel. (202) 328-2500. Internet home page: <http://www.china-embassy.org>, or the Chinese consulates general in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, or San Francisco. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Chinese embassy or consulate.

A Hong Kong driver's license may be issued without a test to individuals who hold a valid U.S. driver's license, provided they have resided in the United States for not less than six months. American visitors who do not plan to stay in Hong Kong for more than twelve months can drive in Hong Kong on their valid U.S. driver's license.

Americans living in or visiting Hong Kong are encouraged to register at the U.S. Consulate General and to obtain updated information on travel and security conditions within the Hong Kong SAR. Americans can register on-line at <http://www.usconsulate.org.hk>, in person at the Consulate General or by fax or mail. The U.S. Consulate General is located at 26 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong. The mailing address is PSC 461, Box 5, FPO AP 96521-0006, tel. (852) 2523-9011, fax (852) 2845-4845; Internet: <http://www.usconsulate.org.hk>.

Pets. Dogs and cats imported from any country other than the UK, Ireland, Australia, or New Zealand must remain in quarantine for 1-4 months, depending on country of origin. One month is the standard quarantine period for pets imported from the U.S. if they are accompanied by appropriate certificates attesting that they come from

rabies-free areas and that their inoculations are current. Pets that have been in the United State for 6 months or longer are sometimes granted immediate entry if certain, very specific veterinary and documentary requirements are met. Quarantine regulations are rigidly enforced. Boarding fees for animals for the quarantine period are expensive and are calculated according to the weight of the animal.

The Hong Kong Government requires that all animals arrive under an airway bill via air-freight, not as accompanied baggage. Airlines will require you to present a special import permit before accepting your pet as Hong Kong-bound cargo. You should apply for this special import permit in advance.

This application must include the appropriate fee in Hong Kong dollars by check or local bank draft to the Hong Kong Government and be sent to: Senior Veterinary Officer, Agriculture and Fisheries Department Room 819, 8/F 393 Canton Road Kowloon, Hong Kong. Tel No.: (852) 2733-2142, Fax No.: (852) 2311-3731 24 Hour Interactive Inquiry: (852) 2733-2452.

The current fee schedule and an up-to-date form can be found at the Hong Kong Government web site: <http://www.info.gov.hk>.

The Hong Kong Government requires that all dogs brought into the territory receive a microchip identification device immediately upon entry. A tiny, encapsulated microchip is injected under the skin between the neck and the shoulders using a single-use needle. This device, which can be read by a scanner held close to the dog, is linked to ownership and vaccination records stored in government computers.

Animals under quarantine can only be housed in government kennels or the private Pok Fu Lam Kennel. It is extremely difficult to secure space at the government kennels. Reservations for the private kennel should be made well in advance.

Pok Fu Lam Kennels 698 Victoria Road Hong Kong, Tel. No.: (852) 2551-6661.

Local veterinarians and international moving firms can also provide excellent airport-to-kennel service.

Firearms and Ammunition. Possession of personally owned weapons is prohibited under the laws of Hong Kong. This restriction applies to the possession or importation of any firearms, sporting weapons (including spear guns, harpoons, etc.) or ammunition.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures. The local currency is the Hong Kong dollar, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar and is freely convertible to other currencies. The value in relation to the U.S. dollar fluctuates slightly according to market conditions (usually around 7.8). Any currency may be brought into the territory.

For longer stays you may want to open a local checking account as most local shops and stores accept personal checks. A local account is also useful since many clubs, grocery stores, and service stations require payment by automatic monthly withdrawal from a local bank account. Automated teller machines on the Plus and Cirrus networks abound and accept most debit cards and credit cards. Major credit cards are accepted by most stores and restaurants.

Hong Kong is a major financial center and can provide most services that are typically found in the U.S. Checking accounts, savings accounts, travelers checks, and foreign exchange facilities are readily available. Minimum balances are common, and you should be aware of this before opening a new account. The time to clear checks drawn on banks in the U.S. is about four days.

Hong Kong has converted to the metric system, but pounds, inches and gallons still compete with grams, meters and liters. Local markets continue to use the catty, which

is roughly 1-1/4 pounds. Temperature is recorded in Celsius.

Guangzhou

Guangzhou (formerly Canton), the capital of Guangdong Province, is the gateway to southern China. Over 2,000 years old, Guangzhou is now the center of one of the world's fastest growing economic regions: the booming Pearl River Delta.

Lying just south of the Tropic of Cancer, Guangzhou is 1,150 miles south of Beijing and 80 miles northwest of Hong Kong. With a subtropical monsoon climate, the long summers are hot and humid. August is the hottest month, with an average temperature of 82°F. January, with an average of 55°F, is the coolest. Average annual rainfall is 77 inches; April and May are the rainiest months.

Metropolitan Guangzhou encompasses an area of over 4,500 square miles, with a population of over 3 million plus at least 1 million migrant workers. The city proper has an area of 21 square miles and an official population estimated over 3.8 million. In recent years, Guangzhou's industrial, commercial, and residential areas have greatly expanded, particularly to the south and east of the old city core. The surrounding Pearl River Delta is a fertile agricultural region supporting two rice crops yearly. Other agricultural mainstays are jute, sugarcane, oil-producing plants, pigs, chickens, ducks, and fish.

Goods from Guangzhou are marketed in nearly all countries. Light industrial manufacturing, including textiles, shoes, toys, furniture, and exportable consumer products, accounts for most of these exports. Principal heavy industries include shipbuilding, sugar refining equipment, and tool and motorcycle manufacturing.

Bustling food markets and busy restaurants are a big part of the Guangzhou street scene. Cantonese cuisine is renowned and local res-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Tiananmen Square and gate in Beijing

taurants are packed daily with patrons. Local markets thrive and stores are stocked with both Chinese and foreign products. Brightly decorated storefronts and brisk trading in noisy markets contribute to the lively atmosphere. Buildings trimmed in lights and neon signs and billboards illuminate the city at night.

Food

A fair range of fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats is available most of the year, and these can usually be found at the famous Qing Ping market. There you can also stock up on Chinese herbal medicines, have a dog, cat, or some exotic animal slaughtered fresh for supper, and feast on a meal of snake, turtle, or scorpion.

Staple products and canned goods can be purchased from the duty-free Daily Living food store or at Park 'N Shop, a Hong Kong-based supermarket chain with several branches

in Guangzhou, including one about a mile from Shamian Island. Some small shops near the Consulate are beginning to stock Western staples. Selection is often limited, and many employees make regular shopping trips to Hong Kong. Fresh milk (USDA standard), ice cream, breads, and a very limited selection of cheeses and cold cuts are available (at high prices) from the White Swan delicatessen next door to the Consulate.

Liquor and wine can be ordered from Hong Kong or purchased at Daily Living. China brews some good beers; those and some U.S. brands are readily available.

Environmental pollution and public sanitation are serious problems in Guangzhou. Fruits and vegetables must be thoroughly washed. All drinking water outside major hotels should be considered suspect. Unpeeled fruits and vegetables that are not to be cooked should be

soaked in a bleach solution, then rinsed before eating. Although the variety of vegetables available is limited, the produce is organically grown without the use of night soil, so it does not have to be soaked in a sterilizing solution.

Clothing

Because the climate of Guangzhou is hot and humid most of the year, lighter weight natural fiber garments and shoes are needed. Cottons, silks, and lightweight suits are best. During the cooler, rainier months, a light topcoat, raincoat, or sweater is essential. However, for a few weeks of the year the weather turns quite cold, and heavier sweaters and a winter coat are necessary.

Buying shoes and clothing on the local market is possible if you are petite. Sizes are generally too small for larger-than-average foreigners. Fabric is available and some tailoring and dressmaking can be done locally.

Some adequate children's clothes can be found on the local market.

Supplies and Services

Laundry and dry-cleaning facilities are available major hotels, as are barber and beauty shops. Service is good and prices are reasonable. Haircuts at local area barbershops are inexpensive, but the quality of service is not always up to Western standards. Hygiene is also a consideration. The White Swan's salon offers facials and other beauty treatments.

Simple shoe repair can be done locally; more difficult repairs are easily handled in Hong Kong.

Religious Activities

The Guangzhou International Christian Fellowship holds ecumenical religious service at the American School for the expatriate community. The Guangzhou Chinese Catholic Cathedral and the Shamian Island Catholic Church hold Masses in Latin, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Protestant services in Cantonese are held at Christ Church, across the street from the Consulate, and at Dongshan Church and Zion Church. Huaisheng Mosque holds services at noon on Fridays.

Education

The American School of Guangzhou (ASG) is located in the Tianhe district. ASG is fully accredited in grades K to 12. In 1995-96, the school had approximately 200 students from more than 20 countries. The teaching staff is recruited from the U.S., supplemented by several locally hired, accredited American teachers. The school offers an American curriculum, with classes in art, music, Chinese culture, and physical education. All instruction is in English, with an ESL program for nonnative English speakers. ASG's principal is Dr. Nancy Stephan.

ASG address:

American School of Guangzhou
PSC 461 Box 100
FPO AP 96521-0002
Tel: 86-20-758-0001
Fax: 86-20-758-0002

Two church-supported schools are operating in Guangzhou.

Guangzhou has several preschools accepting children from 2 to 5 years old. Half-day (morning) English-language preschools are located at the China Hotel, Garden Hotel, and Ramada Pearl Hotel. Fees of a few hundred dollars a month apply. Other international preschools plan to open in the future.

A Chinese-language, local government-sponsored preschool and kindergarten for children 3 to 5 years old operates half-day or full-day programs on Shamian Island. Care is very good. The school provides meals, or parents may provide their own. Most children without Chinese-language ability are able to adapt easily and interact with the Cantonese-speaking children. The language of instruction is Mandarin, though teachers often lapse into Cantonese. Full-day and half-day fees apply.

Sports and Outdoor Activities

Ping-pong, badminton, tennis, and tai chi are popular local sports. There are several health clubs near the Consulate and in the major hotels, some of which include swimming pools and squash and tennis courts. The city has several large, modern bowling facilities, as well as good quality indoor roller skating and ice skating rinks operating year round. Basketball and soccer games have been organized at local universities. Horseback riding is available.

Every other Saturday, joggers and walkers may join the local Hash House Harriers at various suburban locations. Guangzhou has several large parks, though they tend to be crowded on weekends. Nearby Baiyun Mountain Park has hiking trails. Guangzhou's sports complex, located near the American School, has hosted events for the Asian games, professional tennis matches, the 1995 world weightlifting championships, and the 1992 women's soccer World Cup. An 18-hole golf course is located in the northern

part of the city. Shenzhen boasts a championship golf course; other golf clubs are planned.

Shamian Island is a reasonable location for jogging and is also home to an excellent tennis facility with nine indoor and outdoor lighted, hard-surface courts.

Touring

Traveling in China can be difficult (especially if you do not have some Chinese-language ability) but also rewarding. Popular trips from Guangzhou include Guilin, Macau, Hainan Island, and Kunming. A weekend of shopping and dining in Hong Kong can be expensive, but getting there is convenient via plane, overnight boat, high-speed catamaran, bus, or train. The train ride is about 2 hours one way; the bus takes about 3-1/2 hours. One can also drive as far as Shenzhen, leave the car in a parking lot, and use Hong Kong's public transportation the rest of the way. Bicycles can be rented for touring the city, and mountain bikes can be purchased at local factory outlets for outings to area villages and rice farms.

There are direct flights from Guangzhou to dozens of Chinese cities and many international destinations, including Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Entertainment

Theaters in Guangzhou occasionally show ballets, symphonies, and plays by touring musical or theatrical groups. Occasional concerts feature Chinese or foreign pop performers. Local movie theaters show dubbed films and some English-language. Private lessons in Cantonese and Mandarin language, music, traditional painting, and calligraphy for adults and children are easy to arrange.

Shopping and browsing are a favorite pastime in Guangzhou. The famous (some would say infamous) Qing Ping market, which sells many live and exotic animals for consumption, is just north of Shamian Island. The antique market, one of

China's best, is also within walking distance of the Consulate. Beijing Road has dozens of upscale clothing and jewelry stores. The semiannual Canton Trade Fair provides an opportunity to examine and purchase products, including baskets and silk carpets, from all over China.

Social Activities

The growing international business community informally organizes fund-raisers and parties. The American School is a social gathering point, especially for those with children. The Guangzhou Women's International Club is one of the most active groups in the expatriate community, organizing a wide variety of events for its members and guests. The American Chamber of Commerce branch in Guangzhou holds monthly breakfast meetings, and occasional lunches and dinners, at the major hotels. Nightclubs and karaoke clubs have become popular night spots, creating new opportunities for Chinese and foreigners to socialize.

Eating Out

Guangzhou is famous for its cuisine, and eating out is a favorite pastime for local and foreign residents. Restaurants serving Cantonese cuisine abound, though many do not have menus in English. For those in search of a change, try one of the Sichuan or Beijing-style restaurants. There is a growing number of other Asian restaurants, including Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, and Thai. Western cuisine is unavailable except at the major hotels. Of course, Guangzhou has not been excluded from the invasion of Western fast-food establishments: Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Special Information

Before coming to Guangzhou, individuals should take care of all potential medical problems, including dental and eye care. Trips to Hong Kong for medical attention are costly.

In cases of accident or sudden illness, local medical facilities have

been used, but they are not recommended for routine care and are considered to be a last resort option. Hospital outpatient clinics are busy and there are few private doctors. One local dental clinic comes close to meeting U.S. standards.

Shanghai

Although Shanghai is a young city by Chinese standards, with 13 million residents, it vies for the title of the most populous city in the world. The Shanghai metropolitan area (including the suburban counties) is China's most important industrial, commercial, and financial center, accounting for 5 percent of the Gross National Product. The Shanghai-ese, as the city's residents are known, speak their own distinctive dialect and are recognized as being among the country's most able businessmen. Today, Shanghai is a hub for several Chinese industries, including iron and steel, shipbuilding, textiles and garments, electronics, clocks, bicycles, automobiles, aircraft, pharmaceuticals, computers, publishing, and cinema. Shanghai is China's largest port and most important foreign trade center. Shanghai itself accounts for 8 percent of all Chinese exports but handles nearly two-thirds of China's total exports through its ports. Once the world's third-largest port, Shanghai remains China's principal shipping center. Shanghai is the most cosmopolitan of Chinese cities and its shops, restaurants, and night life reflect this. Shanghai-style food (seafood) is distinctive and elegantly presented. There are numerous night clubs, discos, and karaoke bars, but cultural entertainment for the expatriate family (movies, music, theater, etc.) is very limited.

Shanghai is acknowledged as the busiest and most exciting shopping center in China. From antiques to pottery, clothing to cotton goods, rugs, furniture, and jewelry, shoppers will find something for every taste in Shanghai's 24,000 stores, supplemented by shopping streets and free markets.

Food

Thanks to the construction of new joint-venture shopping complexes, shopping for food in Shanghai is now almost as convenient as shopping in a supermarket in the U.S., although the cost is considerably higher and the selection more limited. Shanghai has numerous open-air markets where fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, fowl, and fish and seafood are available. Most fresh produce is available year-round. The prices in these markets, where most Chinese shop, are much lower than in the upscale supermarkets. Locally produced and imported soft drinks (Coke, Sprite, Fanta), soda water, tonic water, and beer are available. In addition, a limited selection of local and imported liquor and wines is available at a duty-free shop at reasonable prices. However, at commercial outlets, whereas soft drink and beer prices are comparable or cheaper than those in the U.S., prices for liquor are somewhat higher.

Clothing

Shanghai has four seasons, with weather slightly warmer than that of Washington, D.C. Except for joint-venture enterprises and places frequented by tourists, few other buildings in Shanghai are heated or air-conditioned. China exports numerous items of clothing, including wool sweaters and down clothing, which are available locally at reasonable prices. Prices of cashmere sweaters have increased substantially in the past few years, but are still below those in the U.S. Children's clothing is plentiful and inexpensive. In planning your Shanghai wardrobe, remember that the summers are hot and humid, while the winters can be cold and damp, with temperatures sometimes dropping below freezing. Most items of clothing can be purchased locally, although not always in the larger sizes. This is especially true for shoes, so be sure to bring an adequate supply.

Supplies and Services

Personal care and household cleaning and paper supplies can be purchased locally. Local equivalents are

available but inferior in quality, while imported ones are considerably higher in price. Locally produced American brands are mid-range in price and quality.

Religious Activities

Shanghai has Catholic and Protestant churches, Buddhist/Daoist temples, and Islamic mosques. The Catholic Patriotic Church is independent of Rome. Catholic services are conducted in Chinese, except for a small Sunday morning service for expatriates that is conducted in English. Protestant services are conducted in Chinese, although simultaneous interpretation/earphones are provided at the Sunday service of the International Community Church. Judaism is not one of the five religions recognized by the Chinese Government and no synagogues exist.

Education

Utilizing a twin-campus design, the Shanghai American School offers a comprehensive educational program on both the east and west sides of Shanghai. Each campus includes pre-kindergarten through 12th grade on 25 to 30 acres, with approximately 30,000 square meters of building space. The west campus, completed the fall of 1996, is located in Zhu Di Township, about 3 km north and west of the Hong Qiao Airport. The east campus, completed the fall of 1997, is located in Pudong at the Shanghai Links residential community, approximately 18 km east of the Bund. The Shanghai American School can be reached at 86-21-6221-1445 (telephone) or 0-86-21-6221-1269 (fax).

Sports

Sports facilities are limited to a members-only golf club and several municipal tennis court complexes. Several hotels (as well as joint-venture housing complexes) offer health club memberships, most of which include indoor/outdoor pools, tennis/racquetball courts, weight/fitness rooms, and bowling alleys. There are occasional pickup softball, volleyball, and basketball games with members of the university and business communities.

Touring and Related Activities

Since Shanghai is an industrial and commercial center, sight-seeing in the city is relatively limited. The city has several picturesque temples and gardens, the oldest (Ming Dynasty) being in the recently renovated Old City Temple area, which has also been reconstructed in the Ming style. The countryside around Shanghai is flat and lends itself to hiking and long bicycle rides, although current traffic congestion and poor road conditions make this a bit of a trial. Short trips to the historic and scenic cities of Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Nanjing offer additional sight-seeing opportunities at relatively limited expense. Note, however, that travel outside of Shanghai is regulated. Travel by public transportation outside a 24-mile radius of Shanghai requires 48-hour notification to the Shanghai Foreign Affairs Office.

Social Activities

An active Expatriate Association sponsors monthly luncheons, sight-seeing, cultural activities, and social events such as the annual Christmas Ball. There is also a large and growing American Chamber of Commerce and a professional women's organization, both of which have monthly lectures and get-togethers centering on business-related activities. However, organized family-oriented social and recreational activities are very limited and most expatriates entertain at home.

Special Information

Like many large cities in developing countries, Shanghai has a problem with water and air pollution. The water has a high concentration of minerals and metals. Bottled distilled water is available for purchase locally. Those who suffer from hay fever and sinus- or bronchial-related allergies will find these conditions aggravated by the high level of suspended particulates (dust and coal dust) and carbon monoxide in the air.

Shenyang

Shenyang is the political, military, and economic capital of northeast China, the region once known as Manchuria. The northeast, composed of the provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, is home to over 100 million people.

A frontier land settled in the late 1800s, the northeast has for the past century been a strategic battleground and center of intrigue between Russia, Japan, Korea, and the forces of Chinese nationalism.

The two pillars of Manchuria's economy are heavy industry and agriculture. The region is home to some of China's largest state enterprises, including the massive Anshan Steel Works, the First Auto Works, and the Jilin Petrochemical Corporation. Efforts to reform ailing state enterprises remain a problematic but critical part of the nation's overall drive to achieve economic development with social stability. Jilin is China's largest exporter of corn and tobacco. Heilongjiang is known as "the king of soybeans," and Liaoning's apples, peaches, and pears are exported throughout Asia. In addition, ginseng from southern Jilin's Changbai mountain range has fortified Chinese traditional medicines for years.

The northeast is an extremely diverse part of China. Geographically, the region stretches from the magnificent natural harbor at Dalian, through the heavily populated Manchurian plain, east along the spectacularly rugged Sino-Korean border, and north to the wetlands and forests that characterize the Sino-Russian border.

The region is ethnically diverse as well, a unique blend of Han Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, and Korean culture. In fact, the southern quarter of Jilin Province contains the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, known as "China's Korean Corner" and home to nearly 1 million ethnic Korean Chinese.

The city of Shenyang itself is a heavily polluted, industrial metropolis of about 5 million people in the midst of unprecedented economic growth. It is home to several of the region's largest state enterprises, but also contains several prominent universities and cultural attractions. For example, Shenyang is home to a smaller version of Beijing's Forbidden City, used by the Manchus before they captured the imperial capital in the 17th century and established their own dynastic rule. The founder of the Qing (as they called themselves) line is also buried in Shenyang.

The region's climate is mainly influenced by the continental landmass of central Asia. Shenyang's winter is a little longer than Beijing's and compares to that of Chicago without the Windy City's raw winter winds and is much drier. Traveling south to the ice-free port of Dalian on the southern tip of the Liaodong peninsula, the extremes of weather become less pronounced.

Food

Pork, chicken, duck, mutton, some seafood (frozen fish and shrimp), and beef are normally available, but quality varies and only chicken is available in American-style cuts.

A variety of vegetables and fresh fruits, including excellent strawberries and peaches, are available in the market in season. Recently, at least three to four fresh vegetables and two to three fresh fruits have been available throughout the year.

Some imported foodstuffs are available, but many locally available substitutes are acceptable. Some imported beers, wines, and liquors are available at prices comparable to those in the U.S. Local beer is available.

Clothing

Shenyang has a short, warm summer sandwiched between an extended spring and fall. The winter is long and cold, comparable to the northern Midwest in the U.S. Most buildings are heated but not to U.S. standard.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, cosmetics, and household cleaning products are available locally but differ widely from similar American products. Shenyang's winters reduce the usual problems with cockroaches and insects found in developing countries, but moth infestation is a big problem.

Shenyang does not have the large international hotels found in China's major tourist centers. As a result, the usual services found in such establishments are generally unavailable. Barbers and beauticians at the few hotels provide a utilitarian if not high-fashion service. Local dry-cleaning services are of variable quality.

Winter outer garments and sweaters can sometimes be purchased locally. A wide range in size, style, and color of other garments is nonexistent.

Religious Activities

One nondenominational Protestant church in Shenyang conducts services in Chinese. Mass at the Chinese Catholic Church is in Latin. No synagogue exists, but Shenyang does have one mosque and several Buddhist and Daoist temples. Protestant services for foreigners are conducted at China Medical University and at Riverside Gardens.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Shenyang has some interesting parks and monuments. Nanhu and Lu Xun Parks provide good jogging paths during the less crowded times of day. Consulate General families have enjoyed picnicking at Dongling, the imperial tomb of the first Qing emperor, during the warmer months.

Entertainment

Three local TV stations broadcast in Chinese every evening, in color. One English-speaking channel, Star Plus, offers a variety of old movies and TV series. There are also up-to-date sportscasts on Star Sports. Liaoning Radio has recently begun offering a nightly English news pro-

gram, and VOA, BBC, Radio Australia, and others can be picked up by shortwave radio.

Special Information

The facilities at local clinics are modest by U.S. standards. Individuals with serious medical problems should be evacuated to Hong Kong.

Chengdu

Chengdu is the capital of China's most populous province, Sichuan, and the traditional center of government and transportation in southwest China. The Chengdu consular district is made up of the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guizhou, as well as the Xizang Autonomous Region, more commonly known as Tibet.

As Chengdu serves as the air transport hub of southwest China, air service is provided to all major Chinese cities. Centrally located, Chengdu is between a 2- and 2 1/2-hour flight to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Lhasa. There is also a twice weekly flight to Hong Kong, which is Chengdu's sole international connection at this time. Chengdu also has rail service to all major destinations.

Chengdu has a moderate climate with fairly mild winters, early springs, rainy summers, and warm autumns. Though not uncomfortable in terms of temperature, there is a near-perpetual overcast. This condition is attributable to Chengdu's location in the Sichuan basin, one of the world's most productive agricultural plains. Pollution, caused primarily by the burning of coal in winter, is also an irritant.

Chengdu has been a governmental and cultural center since at least 400 B.C., undergoing numerous name changes over the years. During the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) it was known as the "City of Brocade," becoming so prosperous that it gained the nickname "Storehouse of Heaven." Under the Five Dynasties, the local warlord planted

so much hibiscus on the city walls (since destroyed) that it was known as the "City of Hibiscus."

Present-day Chengdu has a population of 8.7 million, of whom about 3 million live in the city center. There has been a great deal of new and unimaginative high-rise construction over the past few years as is the case with most of China's major cities. Nonetheless, the city maintains a great deal of charm with several nice city parks and areas where old-style buildings have remained. These older smaller buildings have been central to the renaissance of small private businesses. In Chengdu's alleys, one can amble for hours, on foot or bicycle, going from small shop to small shop.

Chengdu's role as a regional center of government, transportation, and culture, as well as of electronic and other industries, has brought increasing numbers of foreigners. The tourist trade continues to increase, and one now frequently encounters American and other tourists, as well as expatriates employed as English teachers.

Food

Chengdu is acknowledged as the center of authentic Sichuan cuisine. Several good Sichuan restaurants and countless "xiaochi" or traditional snack restaurants exist. The major hotels have Western restaurants. Chengdu has two fast-food restaurants.

There are a number of Chinese-produced canned and dry goods on the market. Some Western products, such as instant coffee, artificial creamer, and powdered whole milk, are widely available, and one can usually find American peanut butter and Australian dried pastas. Other than yogurt, fresh dairy products are not found. UHT milk is available but expensive (15 to 20 yuan per liter). Pork, beef, shrimp, and chicken are available, but quality and presentation vary.

On the positive side, there is an impressive array of fruits and vege-

tables available year round. There is a proper joint-venture bakery that sells French bread, wheat bread, croissants, cakes, and pies. Some foreign liquors are available, but the wine selection is almost exclusively Chinese. Hotel shops and major department stores also stock a small variety of Western goods at higher than U.S. prices.

Clothing

Clothing and shoes of unreliable quality are available at both small stores and large department stores. Although winter temperatures are not extreme, it is nonetheless a damp and penetrating cold. Long underwear may be needed in the winter months.

Supplies and Services

Procter and Gamble hair care items and detergents are widely available, but not their toothpaste and other toiletries.

Barber and beauty facilities are available in hotels and elsewhere. These are adequate but not quite up to Western standards. Simple and inexpensive shoe repair is available. Personnel have used local tailors/dressmakers with varying results. The major hotels do dry-cleaning.

Religious Activities

Chengdu has two Protestant churches and one Chinese Catholic cathedral. All services are conducted in Chinese. Mass is said in Latin. There are two mosques. There is no synagogue nor are there any informal organized Jewish services.

Education

There are no Western schools in Chengdu.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Most people ride bicycles both for practical and recreational purposes. Within Chengdu, a bicycle is actually more convenient than a car. Chinese-made bicycles can be purchased locally at reasonable prices. Basic one-speed bikes, tricycles, multispeed bikes, and export-stan-

dard mountain bikes are all available.

There are some close-by sights, such as the Du Fu Thatched Cottage, that make for a nice cycling outing. Sights of interest within a several hours' drive are Emei Shan, Le Shan, Dujiangyan Irrigation Works, and the Wolong Panda Reserve.

Entertainment

Occasionally there are visiting Western song or dance troupes brought in under the auspices of cultural exchange programs. There is almost no locally available English-language reading material.

Special Information

Calling cards with your name in English on one side and your Chinese name on the other are a must in both business and social circumstances. They can be obtained in Chengdu within a few days. The quality of those done in Beijing or Hong Kong is much better, but harder to arrange.

Nanjing

Nanjing (Nanking), the provincial capital of Jiangsu (Kiangsu) Province in eastern China, is a city of ancient culture that has several times, during 10 dynasties, been the capital of the country. Its history spans 2,400 years. The Treaty of Nanking, signed here in 1842, was the pact that opened China to foreign trade.

Industry has developed considerably since 1950, and Nanjing is now a production center for iron, steel, chemicals, machine building, optical instruments, textiles, and foodstuffs. The city is one of China's intellectual centers, having 18 universities and several other institutions of higher learning. Nanjing's population is over 2.4 million.

The Nanjing Bridge over the Chang Jiang (Yangtze) River is one of China's most spectacular spans. It is a double-deck bridge handling

both rail and motor vehicles, making Nanjing a major transportation center for north-south traffic.

Scenic and historic spots abound throughout Nanjing. On the Purple Mountains east of the city is the Zijin Shab Observatory of the China Academy of Sciences, with its extensive collection of ancient astronomical instruments. Also here are the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum and Ming Xiaio Tombs, both national historical monuments, and the Linggu Si (Soul Valley Temple). The Lantern Festival in the central marketplace and the zoo near the city gates are popular attractions. Lovely lakes and luxuriant greenery add to the charm of this famous tourist city.

Chongqing

Chongqing (Chungking), built on a rock promontory at the confluence of the Yangtze and Chia-ling Rivers, was once the headquarters of the Chinese National Armies and the political capital of the nation. In 1937, shortly before the capture of Nanking in the Second Sino-Japanese War, national administrative offices were moved here, where they remained until 1945. The city was also an American air base during World War II (1944-1945).

Chongqing is a misty, mountain city, encircled by rivers on three sides. Natives call it "fog city" because there are about 200 foggy days a year. It was opened in 1890 as a treaty port, and is the trade center for much of western China. It has textile mills, chemical plants, steel and cement factories, and several other smaller industries. Chongqing's population is 2.83 million.

Two of the city's interesting natural features are its north and south hot springs parks, Beiwenquan and Nanwenquan. The zoo, with its exhibits of rare animals and birds, and the beautifully landscaped Goose Peak Park are popular tourist spots. The Research Institute of Traditional Chinese Painting,

where the area's top artists work and reside, is also located here.

Harbin

Harbin (Ha-erh-pin) is one of the great trade marts and communication centers of the Far East. Located on the Sung-hua, or Sungari, River, almost at the exact midpoint of Manchuria, it is the capital of Heilungkiang (Black Dragon) Province, and has an estimated population of 2.9 million. Food processing, tractor and ball bearing manufacture, and wire and cable factories are its main industries.

Harbin was only a village until 1896, when the Russians contracted to build the Chinese Eastern Railway branch of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Wide avenues and European-style architecture are evidence of the strong Russian influence on the town in the years between the start of rail construction and the surrender of the Russian concession in 1924. A major influx of White Russian refugees after 1917 gave Harbin the largest European population in the Far East, but most of those who had fled the revolution left after the Chinese Communists rose to power.

The town was captured in 1932 by Japanese forces invading Manchuria, and fell again, in August 1945, to the Soviets. The Chinese Communists eventually took possession, and developed Harbin into a major industrial city.

Wuhan

Wuhan is a consolidation of three Han cities in Hubei (Hupei) Province of east central China. Wuchang, Hankou, and Hanyang came under one administration in 1950 and these cities, as a unit, now flourish as a commercial and industrial center and the transportation hub of central China. The city lies on the spot where the Han and Yangtze rivers meet, and is home to 5.2 million people.

It was in the place that is now Wuhan that the revolution against imperialist China took form in 1911.

Many industrial enterprises and commercial ventures have helped to build Wuhan into one of China's most important cities. Tea, silk, cotton, rice, oils, soap, timber, and steel are among the diverse products that are transferred through the bustling city port. Also, tourists are attracted to Wuhan to view the temples, the scenic landscape, and the ancient musical terrace called Guqintai.

OTHER CITIES

ANSHAN is an industrial center of about 1,450,000 residents, situated 350 miles northeast of Beijing. The site of some of China's main iron and steel facilities, the city also relies on cement and chemical production. Iron smelting here dates to 100 B.C. and progressed until Manchu emperors shut down the operations. The Japanese, who occupied the vicinity early in the 20th century, resumed production. The steel works were founded here in 1918. Anshan was the scene of intense fighting in the Chinese civil war (1946-1949), with both sides taking control of the district 11 times. The city was rebuilt following the war and is now twice as large in area as it was sixty years ago. Two parks are noteworthy in Anshan. Tang-gangzi Park, a few miles south of the city limits, has two historic homes—one that belonged to a Manchu warlord, and another to the last Qing emperor. The park's hot springs and sanitarium attract visitors from many parts of the country. The other park, Eryijiu Park, boasts three huge lakes and several walkways.

CHENG-CHOU (formerly spelled Zhengzhou and Chengchow), located about 40 miles southwest of Beijing in the east-central region, is the capital of Honan Province. This is a crucial railroad junction for both north-south and east-west

lines. Cheng-chou has been inhabited since about 1500 B.C., and flourished as the terminus of the New Pien Canal from the seventh through the 10th centuries. The railway has been important to the city from the arrival of the Peking-Han-k'ou line 80 years ago. A tower in the center of town commemorates a 1923 workers' strike that began in Cheng-chou and extended along the rail line. The Communists changed the area from a strictly commercial and administrative center to an industrial hub when they took over in 1949. Today there are textile and flour mills, tobacco factories, locomotive repair plants, and a thermal generating station. Nearby countryside is irrigated by a pumping station erected in 1972. A major improvement project saw the planting of thousands of trees to cut down on the sand that was blown through the city by strong gusts. Cheng-chou's population is an estimated 2.1 million.

CHENGDU (also spelled Ch'eng-tu) is one of China's ancient cities. It dates back to the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), and in early times was an imperial capital. Chengdu is the administrative seat of China's most populous province, Szechwan (Sichuan), where the beautiful Shu embroidery is produced. Noted for its famous cuisine, and for its annual flower fair, the city is also the transportation and cultural center of southwest China. Chengdu was the site of an American air base in 1944-1945, during the Second World War. The city is located on the irrigation system of the Min River and is the center of a fertile region. It is the site of a university and technical college, and has a population of approximately 5.3 million. No western schools exist in Chengdu; preschoolers attend local Chinese kindergartens. Older children use Calvert correspondence courses. Martial arts and painting classes are available for children.

FUZHOU (also spelled Foochow), the capital of Fujien Province in southeast China, is a seaport on the

Minjiang River midway between Hong Kong and Shanghai. This city of 1.4 million residents is known for its handicraft industries which produce horn combs, umbrellas, and lacquers. It became famous also for the export of black (Bohea) tea, named for the Chinese hills where it is grown. Fuzhou dates back to 202 B.C., in the Han Dynasty. The early city walls remain, and in the adjacent hills are many beautiful examples of architecture, among them the spectacular White and Black Pagodas. Fuzhou was one of the first ports opened to trade in 1842 by the Treaty of Nanking.

GUILIN (also spelled Kweilin), a city of spectacular scenic beauty, lies on the Lijiang River in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous province. The Chinese call it a "city of culture" because of the great numbers of celebrated artists and intellectuals who congregated here during the Japanese aggression. It is an ancient community, founded during the Qin Dynasty of the third century B.C. Silk is a major export of Guilin. During World War II, an American air base was established here, first in 1944 and, after a devastating attack by the Japanese, again in 1945. Today, Guilin is a city of more than 400,000. It has light industry as well as all of the by-products of urban life—dust, noise, and traffic congestion.

GUIYANG (formerly spelled Kueiyang) lies on the Nan-ming Ho River, 200 miles south of Chongqing. With a population nearing 2,500,000, it is a provincial capital and industrial center. Industries here include iron, coal, and bauxite production, as well as the manufacture of mining equipment and automobile tires. Guiyang experienced great economic progress during the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), when highway, railroad, and communications construction began. The city has a teacher-training college, medical school, and university.

HANGZHOU (also spelled Hangchou and Hangchow) is located on the north bank of the lower reaches

of Qiantang River. One of China's scenic spots and a major tourist center, it is said to have been called "the world's most beautiful and splendid city" by Marco Polo. Hangzhou is particularly famous for Xi Hu (West Lake), a mirrorlike body of water encircled by hills, and surrounded by terraces with flowers, trees, and pavilions. In addition to being the capital of Zhejiang Province, it is one of China's major silk-producing centers. Hangzhou silk is internationally famous. Light industry has also developed considerably in recent years. The city has 1.78 million residents.

LÜDA (also spelled Lüta, formerly called Dalian) is a leading port in the northeast, located on the south coast of Liao-tung Peninsula, about 300 miles from Beijing. The Russians first developed the region in 1898, calling it Dalny, but lost the city to the Japanese after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. Shipbuilding and other industries were introduced by the Japanese and have been growing since. The industrial base of Lüda is varied, including oil refining, paper and fertilizer production plants, and steel factories. Tourism here has a great economic impact. This is one of China's foremost summer resorts, known for its beaches and many hotels. The city has an engineering college. Lüda's population is an estimated 1,630,000.

SUZHOU (also spelled Soochow) is China's historic garden city and one of the oldest towns in the Chang Jiang River basin. It is a center for tourism, and many of its historic parks have been restored and reopened to the public. The Great Pagoda was built here in the year 1131. Suzhou is also famous for its silks and embroidery, a centuries-old tradition. Since 1950, the city has expanded its textiles and chemical industries, but its most famous products remain handicrafts. Sash has a current population of over 1.2 million.

TIANJIN (also spelled Tientsin) is a river port about 75 miles south-

east of Beijing, and a major commercial and industrial city. It also is an educational center of long standing, and the site of the more recently inaugurated (1960) Hupei University. For centuries Tianjin was a military post, having become a garrison town in the second year of the Ming Dynasty. It was occupied for a few years by the British and French in the middle of the 19th century, and was seized during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. The city then came under direct control of the central government, and is one of only three Chinese cities which are thus administered. Tianjin has a metropolitan population of over 9 million.

XI'AN (also spelled Hsi'an and Sian), one of the most historically interesting of all of China's cities, is situated in the center of the Guanzhong Plain in east-central China. It is a significant origin of Chinese civilization and, as early as the third century B.C., was a focal point for international exchange between China and other countries. It was the starting point of the famous "Silk Road," the overland trade route to the West. Xi'an served as the capital of 10 dynasties over a period of 1,000 years. Many notable tombs and other ancient relics are preserved here and at Pei-lin, south of the city. In Xi'an's more recent history, it is also remembered as the scene of the communist kidnapping of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in 1936. The population of Xi'an is approximately 3.1 million.

YANGSHUO, a southern suburb of Guilin, is a market center and county seat on the Li River. It is known for its mountain scenery; tourists come to this small town regularly on the noted Li River boat tours. Four mountain peaks assure a dramatic setting for photographers: Dragon Head Hill, Crab Hill, House Hill, and Green Lotus Peak. Shopping and hotel accommodations are limited but the government tourist office here has been called the country's most helpful. There are boat and bus connections to Guilin; bicycles can be rented in Yangshuo.

The industrial city of **ZIBO** (also called Chang-tien) is located in a rich coal field, 175 miles south of Tianjin in the eastern region. As it is known today, Zibo was formed in 1949, when the counties of Tzuch'eng and Poshan merged. Historically, the city can be traced to the second century B.C.; the extensive mid-20th-century development started with completion of an important railway passing just north of town. Textile manufacturing and food processing are growing in significance. Zibo has an estimated population of 2,775,000.

REGIONS

Since 1999, **MACAU** has been officially designated as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, an agreement which allows the region a high degree of autonomy in just about every aspect of government except in foreign affairs and defense. The region is made up of two islands and a peninsula reaching off the Guangdong mainland into the South China Sea. The population is about 440,000 (2000 est.) Since it is a separate government entity, you will need a separate passport to enter and you should make certain that your China passport allows multiple entries for your return trip. The extra effort could be well worth it, since there is much to see and do in Macau.

One of the most famous historic sites is the Ruínas de São Paulo, the ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral, originally built in 1602 and rebuilt after major destruction from an 1835 typhoon. A museum in the former nave of the cathedral reportedly holds the tomb of the Cathedral's builder, Jesuit Father Alessandro Valignano, and an arm bone of St. Francis Xavier. On the hill overlooking the cathedral there are ruins of the fort that once protected the settlement of the cathedral, as well as a second museum and a metrological observatory.

There are seven major temple complexes in Macau. The oldest, A-Ma, is dedicated to the seafarers' goddess and dates from the early 16th century. The Kun Iam Tong complex is dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. It was founded in the 13th century, but some of the present structure was built around 1627. It is the largest and wealthiest of the temples and contains several special halls dedicated to the Three Precious Buddhas, the Buddha of Longevity and Kun Iam herself.

Macau has several modern attractions as well. One of newest is the Macau Tower, a 338m tower which houses an entertainment and convention center. Located on the coast of the Nam Van Lakes, the tower is the 10th largest in the world. There are a total of ten casinos in Macau, mostly located in the Lisboa tourist complex. The Macau Cultural Center, opened in 1999, consists of two auditoriums for seminars, lectures and other cultural events and a second building housing three museum areas with exhibits on Macau culture, history and arts. There are ten other museums throughout Macau.

For nature lovers, Macau offers a variety of hiking trails and walking tours throughout the area. There are also 15 showcase gardens, the oldest one being the St. Francisco Garde, which was started in 1580 by the Castilian friars of the Franciscan order which founded a convent at the area.

Getting around is fairly easy, since there are buses throughout the region as well as plenty of taxis. If you'd like, you can try one of the three wheeled pedicabs along the waterfront.

Known as the "rooftop of the world," **TIBET** has long been considered a place of great beauty and mystery. Some of the mystery developed as China periodically restricted or prohibited travel to the area. There are an estimated 2.6 million people in Tibet (2000 est.). Since 1965, Tibet has been designated as an Autonomous Region linked to China, and though travel is still somewhat com-

plicated, the scenery and culture are worth the trouble.

Lhasa, the “city of the gods,” is the capital of Tibet and sits at an altitude of about 12,000 ft. The Potala, home to several past Dalai Lamas, is a main attraction. Built in the 7th century, this UNESCO World Heritage site now houses a unique museum which includes underground labyrinths and dungeons, large decorative statues of Buddha, and chapels decorated with human skulls and thigh bones. The tombs of past Dalai Lamas are also located in Lhasa, as is the Jokhang Temple.

Tibetan monasteries are located in Gyantse and Sakya. The one in Sakya contains a collection of religious relics that may be viewed by visitors with some restrictions by the monks.

Naturally, one of the most popular sites in Tibet is Mt. Everest. At 29,035 ft, it is the world's highest peak. In Tibet, the name of the mountain is Qoomolangma, which means “mother goddess of the universe.” Its European name was given to honor Sir George Everest, the British surveyor-general of India who first accurately recorded the height and location of the mountain in 1865. Before then, it was known to the Western world as Peak 15. The Qoomolangma Nature Preserve surrounds the Tibetan base of the mountain and offers a variety of programs to protect and preserve the local environment and culture. A hike to the Everest Base Camp, the most famous starting point for trekkers, will take more than a few days of strenuous climbing. Or, you can find a tour with a 4-wheel-drive vehicle that takes you there for a visit.

It is possible to make travel arrangements to Tibet from outside of China. Once in China, travelers wishing to visit Tibet must join a group, which can be arranged by almost any Chinese travel agency. The travel agency will arrange for the necessary permits and collect any fees. The Chinese government requires foreigners (including U.S.

citizens) wishing to visit Tibet to apply in advance for approval from the tourist administration of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. More information is available from the Chinese Embassy or one of the Chinese consulates in the United States, or, while in China, from the U.S. Embassy or nearest U.S. consulate general. (Please see the above section on Entry Requirements.) Recently, some Americans with long-term Chinese visas have experienced difficulty obtaining permits to visit Tibet

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Occupying an area of about 3.7 million square miles, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is the third-largest country in the world, after Canada and Russia. It shares borders with North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam. Hong Kong and Macau are situated on China's southern coast. Two-thirds of China's area is mountainous or semidesert; only about one-tenth is cultivated. Ninety percent of its people live on one-sixth of the land, primarily in the fertile plains and deltas of the east. The country lies almost entirely in the Temperate Zone. Only the southernmost portions of the Provinces of Yunnan and Guangdong, and the Shuang Autonomous Region of Guangxi, lie within the tropics. A monsoon climate is a major influence in the south, but the north and west have a typical continental climate, except that winters are extremely dry and summers quite rainy.

During summer, warm, moist, maritime airmasses bring heavy rains to eastern China, and hot, humid, summer weather is typical. Winter offers a sharp contrast when cold, dry Siberian air-masses dominate and often penetrate to the southern

provinces. Little precipitation falls during the colder months; clear days with low humidity and low temperatures are the norm. During late winter and early spring, strong north winds sweep across northern China, and hazy days, caused by dust storms, are common.

Population

A little more than 21% of all the world's people live in China. The Chinese Government estimates that the Chinese population has reached 1.26 billion. Population density varies strikingly, the greatest contrast being between the country's eastern and western halves. The high mountains, plateaus, and arid basins of the Tibetan Highlands and the Xinjiang-Mongolia Region comprise slightly more than half of China's area but contain only about 5% of the total population. In the eastern half of China, population density generally ranges upward from 130 people per square mile. Major heavily populated areas—those in excess of 520 people per square mile—coincide with level-to-rolling alluvial plains on which intensive agriculture is centered.

Most Chinese inhabitants are of Mongoloid descent, and ethnic distinctions are largely linguistic and religious rather than racial. The Han people comprise about 92% of the population; the remaining 8%—about 50 groups—are termed “minority nationalities” by Beijing. Although non-Han peoples are relatively few in number, they are politically significant. Most inhabit strategic frontier territory, and some in the southwest, Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia have religious or ethnic ties with groups in adjoining nations. However, the preponderance of non-Han groups in many parts of western China is lessening, because Han Chinese have entered these regions in increasing numbers since 1950.

Although unified by tradition, written language, and many cultural traits, Han Chinese speak a score of mutually unintelligible tongues.

Most Han Chinese use the northern dialect, commonly called Mandarin, or one of its variants; a national vernacular based on the Beijing variant of this dialect (“putonghua”) is in general use.

Religion plays a more significant role in daily life in southern China than it does in the north, but many mosques, temples, Daoist shrines, and churches have been reopened since the Cultural Revolution, and a great deal of restoration work is being done on ancient Buddhist temples. Ideology guides artistic expression and social behavior less than it used to, but despite artistic experiments with modern themes and techniques, China remains an austere and authoritarian state.

The dress of the average Chinese is increasingly colorful and stylish, particularly in urban areas. Chinese cuisine can be among the best and most varied in the world. The number of good restaurants is growing, and Western food is available in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, where private restaurants have sprung up to compete with those in the major hotels.

Public Institutions

The 48-million-member Communist Party of China (CCP) dominates or influences virtually all sectors of national society. Party policy guidance is implemented through utilizing the party structure present in all important government, economic, and cultural institutions. Nearly 70 percent of government employees are party members, and the percentage is even higher in the more senior ranks. Party control is the tightest in government offices and in urban settings; it is considerably looser in the rural and national minority areas where 80 percent of the Chinese people live and work.

The party is headed by a Politburo, which currently has 21 members. The Politburo itself is headed by a seven-member Standing Committee. The General Secretary, a member of the Politburo Standing Committee, heads the Secretariat,

which is responsible to the Politburo and helps handle the day-to-day work of the party center and its relations with regional and local party committees. The Politburo, aided by the Secretariat, also oversees the work of the Organization, International Liaison, Propaganda, and United Work Front Departments.

The Politburo is chosen by the Party Central Committee, which is elected every 5 years at a Party Congress. The Central Committee meets twice a year in formal plenary session and at other times holds informal work conferences on important topics. In addition to the Central Committee, the Party Congress also elects a Central Discipline Inspection Commission and a Central Advisory Commission. Provincial and local party groups are patterned on the central model.

A Party Central Military Commission, consisting of about a dozen top-level members, oversees the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The direct subordination of the PLA to the party underlines the special status and political importance of the PLA.

The party also uses such mass organizations as the Young Communist League, the Women’s Federation, and the labor unions as conduits for policy directives. Disrupted by the Cultural Revolution, these organizations have been rebuilt and revitalized.

The National People’s Congress (NPC) is formally the state’s highest organ of power. A new NPC is elected every 5 years and meets in plenary session for about 2 weeks once a year to review and adopt major new policy directions, laws, the budget, and major personnel changes. The NPC Standing Committee and the deputies who participate in the NPC’s specialized committees meet every 2 months for 10-day sessions to review and approve the lion’s share (90%) of Chinese legislation. The State Council, an executive body corresponding to a cabinet, is nominally

subordinate to the NPC, but in reality is the key player in the government structure and is charged with policy implementation. Members of the State Council include the premier, vice-premiers, state councilors, ministers, and heads of various commissions and special agencies. A court and a procuratorial system are also subordinate to the NPC.

The Chinese Constitution promulgated in 1982 guarantees freedom of speech, press, and assembly, but the government interprets the Communist Party’s “leading role” as circumscribing those rights. Outright opposition to the government is not tolerated. Self-censorship is common. Nevertheless, criticism of official corruption and even ad hoc, small-scale protests against petty grievances have been allowed to take place. Foreign books and periodicals—and Chinese translations of those materials—are available in libraries and bookstores. Commercial Internet service has also been available since mid-1995, but the government has pledged to monitor and censor content.

Arts, Science, and Education

The Chinese Government’s modernization-drive and its policy of “kaifang” (opening to the outside world) have combined to create a period of tremendous cultural ferment. Not since the early years of this century has China tried to assimilate such a rapid influx of foreign ideas. At the same time, conservative members of the old guard and bureaucrats—those wary of the onset of modernity, who cling to the past—still occupy key positions of power, thus creating a continuing tension between the new and the old, between the urge to rejoin the international community and the wish to protect China from its dangerous influences.

The impetus to modernize China culturally and economically stems, in part, from the desire to see China regain the position of influence it once held in Asia. The civilization

and culture that developed in the Yellow River Valley of North China in the second millennium B.C. eventually came to dominate virtually all of East Asia, including Japan and Korea. Since 1949, however, many aspects of traditional Chinese culture have disappeared from the land of their origin or have been severely altered by the socialist transformation of China.

Prior to the violent suppression of the Democracy Movement in June 1989, China's international cultural exchanges had been flourishing. The PRC has signed formal cultural agreements with many nations, including the U.S. Private sector exchanges, such as those carried out by People to People, Sister City and Sister State programs, and U.S. universities, are too numerous to count. Hundreds of performing and visual artists; scholars of politics, economics, law, and literature; and interested citizens representing a full spectrum of professions came to China from the U.S. every month. Thousands of Chinese, too, traveled to the U.S. under government and private auspices to enhance their expertise and make contacts in the international cultural community. Since the Tiananmen incident Western cultural influence has been viewed skeptically by Chinese officials, and they have been very selective in their support for international exchange.

The cultural life of China takes place under the watchful eye of a variety of organizations, including the Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, the Ministry of Culture, the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, and the local offices of these national organizations. During the past 10 years, China has restored many cultural institutions damaged by the Cultural Revolution and rehabilitated many artists and writers. However, the government's once-substantial support for the arts has been sharply reduced in the last few years because of budget constraints and a policy of decentralization. Many cultural organizations, art

schools, and performing arts groups have been told to become self-supporting. The full effect of the new policies is not yet apparent as cultural institutions must now grapple with financial and artistic problems they have not faced since before 1949.

Under the policy of opening to the outside world, international cultural exchanges are flourishing. Many countries, including the U.S., have signed formal cultural agreements with China, but it is the private sector that has shown the most rapid growth. Privately arranged cultural exchange activities are now too numerous to count. Through them, numerous foreign performers and teachers of art, music, dance, and drama visit China; art exhibits are exchanged; and many Chinese artists go abroad. This has had a profound impact on Chinese arts, but this Western influence is not without controversy. The interest of Chinese artists in Western literature and art is upsetting to those with traditional ideas. Some avant-garde or politically sensitive works continue to be banned and their authors silenced.

The Chinese cultural scene also includes a large number of art and history museums throughout the country. The museums include many important and exceptionally beautiful pieces. Particularly noteworthy are the museums in Liaoning, Xian, and Shanghai, along with the Beijing Historical Museum and the Palace Museum, which houses art treasures of the Qing Dynasty.

The Chinese film industry is at the forefront of Chinese creative arts. Mawkish socialist dramas have given way to serious films examining and questioning the political and ideological basis of Chinese society. A prominent group of young directors, known as the "5th Generation," has won international awards for its work.

For those who like to purchase artwork and handicrafts, China offers a wide variety. Antique ceramics, scrolls, carvings and hardwood fur-

niture are available, but prices are high, and objects predating the 19th century cannot be taken out of the country. Export of antiques is subject to close scrutiny by the Cultural Relics Department, which must approve any item before packers are permitted to pack it. Modern copies are widely sold, though the quality varies. Contemporary Chinese painting—both traditional watercolors and oils—is receiving increasing international recognition. The handicraft industry has flourished under the economic reforms and offers many regional specialties: Guizhou batik, Suzhou embroidery, carved chops, paper cuts, porcelain figurines, cloisonné, cinnabar, carved lacquer, wicker work, basketware, and others.

In an effort to overcome the ravages of the Cultural Revolution, China has made a large and continuing investment in science. Most scientific efforts are devoted to immediate developmental needs: defense, industrial technology, agriculture, and public health, but important advances are being made in basic science research. From 1949 to 1960, PRC science was heavily dependent on support from the Soviet Union, where many Chinese scientists and technicians were trained. In 1978, China decided to adopt Western technology and expertise for its modernization effort and sent thousands of scientists and teachers to Japan and the West (to the U.S. in particular) for training in science and technology specialties. Despite the ideological break with the U.S.S.R., science in China continues to be organized largely along Soviet lines, with research concentrated at the various institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Chinese scientists now participate actively at international conferences, and thousands of Chinese scientific periodicals are published. The largest U.S. bilateral science and technology exchange program, by far, is with China, and the largest Chinese program is with the U.S.

Compulsory education is mandated in China for the first 10 years of



Bicycle parking lot in China

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

schooling, although many students drop out of every grade, particularly in rural areas. The literacy in China is about 82%. The current emphasis in Chinese educational policy is on improving secondary, technical, and vocational education and on extending educational opportunities to remote areas and undereducated populations. China is investing in teacher training to address a shortage of qualified secondary school educators. An educational television network and a TV university are broadcast throughout the country.

To develop a highly educated elite with the technological and managerial skills necessary for modernization, China has sent thousands of students abroad—two-thirds of them to the U.S. Chinese-Foreign/Foreign-Chinese publishers have embarked on a massive book translation program. The study of English is booming in China, and interest in the U.S. is intense. The

Voice of America has 150 million listeners in China.

Commerce and Industry

China's economy has grown at an average annual rate of about 9 percent since 1978. In that year, about 270 million Chinese lived in conditions of absolute poverty, while official PRC figures stated that the number had dropped to 70 million people by the end of 1994. Although growth has accelerated into double digits in recent years, the Chinese economy is marked by significant regional disparities. Heavy state-owned industries are concentrated in the northeast and Shanghai. Once poor agricultural regions in southern China, particularly Guangdong and Fujian Provinces, have emerged as dynamic light industry and trade bases. While rural areas near the coast and

urban centers have in many cases joined in the country's rapid industrial growth, interior and western provinces lack the infrastructure to support rapid growth. The low tax base of the central government has constrained needed investment in the interior for roads, railways, electric power, and other infrastructure.

Agriculture remains key to China's economy, with roughly 80% of the population living in rural areas. China is the world's leading producer of many food crops, including rice, wheat, and sweet potatoes, and is also a major producer of many other crops such as soybeans and peanuts. Major cash crops include cotton, tobacco, and oil seeds. Reform policies encouraging peasants to diversify into vegetable farming, poultry and fish breeding, and animal husbandry have boosted the variety and quality of the Chinese diet.

The need to provide food for over a billion people, as well as industrial crops like cotton for rapidly expanding industries, is an unrelenting challenge. China has already achieved relatively high per-acre yields, but only about 10 percent of China's land is arable and is frequently ravaged by droughts and floods. After a series of record harvests in the early 1980s briefly propelled China into the ranks of net food exporters, grain production dipped slightly. Rising domestic demand has forced China to again increase grain imports from the U.S., Canada, and Australia. Beijing hopes to boost grain production through increased investment, wider dissemination of scientific techniques, and some added incentives to peasants, but limited government financial resources will constrain these options.

China's modernization drive has benefited from a rich natural resource base. China's coal reserves are virtually inexhaustible, but transportation bottlenecks and air pollution are major drawbacks to China's dependency on this fuel. China is the world's sixth-largest oil producer, but production at some of the largest oil fields has peaked and is beginning to decline. Offshore drilling by Western oil companies has so far produced mixed results. China probably has large untapped oil reserves in the far west, but developing these fields and transporting the oil to markets will require large investments.

China's other mineral resources include iron, tin, tungsten, and many rare earths. China produces a full range of industrial products, from light industrial consumer goods to satellite launch systems. Chinese products lag behind Western standards in quality and design, however, and there is considerable demand for imported consumer durables as well as high-technology products. The policy of "reform and opening" has promoted the growth of joint ventures, which produce a variety of products for both the domestic market and export.

While growth has been both rapid and impressive, it has also outstripped supplies of energy and raw materials. Efficiency has suffered from bottlenecks in transportation and telecommunications. Energy and transport bottlenecks in particular will persist through the 1990s, with electricity supplies likely to be an important concern for many enterprises.

Foreign trade has grown rapidly since China opened to the outside world. At the end of the last decade, textiles overtook oil and coal as the main foreign exchange earner. In 1995, exports of mechanical and electrical products exceeded textile exports for the first time. Other leading exports include footwear, toys, travel goods, plastic articles, and steel products. China imports grain, timber, essential raw materials, high-technology goods, petroleum, aircraft, and machinery.

While reforms have brought about tremendous growth and societal changes, concerns about social stability have inhibited the implementation of potentially painful reforms needed to sustain China's rapid economic growth. China will face enormous social and economic challenges during the remaining years of this century.

Transportation

Local

A well-developed rail system exists in the densely populated eastern half of the country. Passenger service, including sleeping car accommodations, is available between all major cities. Domestic air service is extensive, and routes are now serviced almost entirely by jets, many of them American made. On less important routes, one finds a mixture of Russian-built turboprops and Chinese or Russian propeller planes. Transportation costs are high.

Taxi stands with English-speaking dispatchers are widely available in Beijing, and taxis of all shapes and sizes congregate in areas fre-

quented by Westerners in the hopes of getting a fare or can be hailed on the street.

In Beijing, most taxis are metered and charge about \$1.45 at flag-down and \$0.36 per kilometer. The fares are set, and passengers need not worry about being overcharged unless they enter a taxi without a meter in it. Receipts may be requested for payment. Taxi drivers normally do not expect tips, since tipping technically is illegal in China.

Regional

China follows a right-hand drive pattern, but a number of unique practices can make driving confusing for foreigners. Main roads are wide and in good repair, but the numerous pedestrians and bicycles make driving hazardous and often stressful. It snows in Beijing and Shenyang, but the streets are quickly cleared.

Nonstop international air service links Beijing with Japan and many cities in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. Northwest has recently begun nonstop service to Detroit.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Many improvements in telephone service have been made in recent years. The Chinese telephone system is quickly becoming a system meeting U.S. standards. An example of this is the addition of IDD lines. However, the new arrival may experience some frustration when dealing with the Chinese system. The monthly rate for basic service is comparable to that in the U.S.

International calls may be made to most parts of the world and English-speaking operators are on duty 24 hours daily. Connections to the U.S. and other countries are good, and the cost is comparable to that in the U.S. Both AT&T and Sprint offer access to the U.S. telephone system via a direct-dial num-



View of Nanjing from Yangtze River Bridge

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ber that can be accessed from apartment telephones and many public telephones in Beijing.

Domestic and international telex and telegraphic service is quick and reliable but can be expensive.

Computer Telecommunications

Beijing is undergoing a telecommunications revolution. In June 1995, commercial vendors began offering full Internet access at 9,600 baud data rates. Service providers are user unfriendly, but with perseverance, it is possible to establish an electronic mail link through the Internet. Lines, however, are unreliable, and frequent interruptions are common. Despite these problems, given the current rate of development, it is likely that Internet connections from other parts of China will soon be available as well.

Radio and Television

In addition to Chinese-language programming, local AM and FM radio stations now have daily news and feature programs in English, and regularly broadcast Western classical and pop music. A short-wave radio will provide you with the opportunity to listen to VOA, BBC, Radio Australia, and other English-language broadcasts.

Two to five TV channels can be received in most cities, with virtually all programs in color. While most programs are in Chinese, the national network, CCTV, and municipal stations in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou broadcast English-language news programs six evenings a week. Popular American television programs are occasionally broadcast in Chinese.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Since 1981, the Chinese authorities have been publishing the English-language *China Daily*, which appears 6 days a week. This newspaper contains local and international news, business reports, a sports page with scores from around the world, and several local features.

The *International Herald Tribune*, the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and some other American and European periodicals can be purchased in some hotels and bookstores in many major cities.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

While there are no expatriate hospitals, there are two expatriate

clinics. The International Medical Center is a joint venture with a tie to the International SOS Assistance. There are several expatriate physicians at this clinic, which is open 24 hours. The Asia Emergency Assistance evacuation company also has a clinic near the Ta Yuan diplomatic compound. Like everything imported into China, the care at these clinics is expensive. They have had problems importing vaccines and medicines, and only time will tell if these problems will be solved.

The dental facilities in Beijing are adequate for minor procedures such as routine fillings. There are two small expatriate dental clinics in Beijing, but their capabilities are limited. Individuals should have their routine dental work done before coming to Beijing. While there are several U.S.-trained orthodontists in Beijing, there are some concerns about infection control, and customer satisfaction has been mixed at best.

Most hospitals in China will not accept medical insurance from the United States. Travelers will be asked to post a deposit prior to admission to cover the expected cost of treatment. Many hospitals in major cities may accept credit cards for payment. Even in the VIP/Foreigner wards of major hospitals, however, American patients have frequently encountered difficulty due to cultural and regulatory differences. Physicians and hospitals have sometimes refused to supply American patients with complete copies of their Chinese hospital medical records, including laboratory test results, scans, and x-rays. All Americans traveling to China are strongly encouraged to buy foreign medical care and medical evacuation insurance prior to arrival. Travelers who want a list of modern medical facilities in China can e-mail the United States Embassy's American Citizen Services unit at AmCitBeijing@state.gov and request a list by return e-mail.

Ambulances do not carry sophisticated medical equipment, and

ambulance personnel generally have little or no medical training. Therefore, injured or seriously ill Americans may be required to take taxis or other immediately available vehicles to the nearest major hospital rather than waiting for ambulances to arrive. In rural areas, only rudimentary medical facilities are generally available. Medical personnel in rural areas are often poorly trained, have little medical equipment or availability to medications. Rural clinics are often reluctant to accept responsibility for treating foreigners, even in emergency situations.

Preventive Measures

Everyone should be current in their basic immunizations. In addition, the following are recommended for China: hepatitis B, Japanese B encephalitis (if staying more than 30 days), hepatitis A or gamma globulin, rabies for posts other than Beijing, and typhoid vaccines.

Overall, China is a healthier place than most countries in South Asia or Africa. Cholera, typhoid fever, and dysentery are not common, and most childhood diseases like measles and diphtheria are rare. Malaria prophylaxis is not needed except in Hainan Island and in areas near the Vietnam border.

Hepatitis is a major problem in China (types A, B, and E). Japanese encephalitis is still a threat during mosquito season. Since vaccines for these diseases require several series to provide full protection, please start them as soon as possible. Air pollution is bad in China and especially so in Beijing and Shenyang. Anyone with a chronic respiratory problem like asthma should not come to China. In the winter, severe dryness aggravates mucous membranes, and colds are common. Travelers should consult their doctor prior to travel and consider the impact seasonal smog and heavy particulate pollution may have on them. Humidifiers are essential for winters in Beijing and Shenyang. Because of the high population density of people, pigs, and water-fowl, China is a breeding ground for

influenza. Annual influenza vaccination is recommended, especially for those with chronic illnesses. Upper respiratory infection is the most common disease seen at the Medical Unit.

Most roads and towns in Tibet, Qinghai, parts of Xinjiang, and western Sichuan are situated at altitudes over 10,000 feet. Travelers should seek medical advice in advance of travel, allow time for acclimatization to the high altitude, and remain alert to signs of altitude sickness. HIV has become a significant concern in China. Travelers should always ask doctors and dentists to use sterilized equipment and be prepared to pay for new syringe needles in hospitals or clinics.

Water must be boiled for drinking, and it is full of sediments and minerals. A water distiller is highly recommended for Beijing and Chengdu. Night soil is still used for vegetables, and all vegetables should be soaked in a chlorine solution. The fluoride level in China is low, and a supplement is necessary for young children.

Please bring plenty of over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen (Tylenol), cold medicines, and skin lotions or creams. These items are available locally but are more expensive. An extra pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses is recommended. The dusty atmosphere is especially hard on contact lenses.

Families with small children are advised to bring a cold mist vaporizer, which is helpful in dealing with the winter respiratory illnesses of the young. A heating pad may also be useful.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport and visa are required to enter China. Americans arriving without valid passports and the appropriate Chinese visa



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Temple of Eight Immortals in Xi'an

are not permitted to enter and will be subject to a fine and immediate deportation at the traveler's expense. Travelers should not rely on Chinese host organizations claiming to be able to arrange a visa upon arrival.

Visas are required to transit China. Persons transiting China on the way to and from Mongolia or North Korea or who plan to re-enter from the Hong Kong or Macau Special Administrative Regions should be sure to obtain visas allowing multiple entries. Permits are required to visit Tibet as well as many remote areas not normally open to foreigners.

For information about entry requirements and restricted areas, travelers may consult the Embassy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) at 2300 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, or telephone (1-202) 328-2500, 2501 or 2502. For a list of services and fre-

quently asked visa questions and answers, travelers can view the Chinese Embassy's web sites at <http://www.china-embassy.org>, or visa@china-embassy.org. There are Chinese Consulates General in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. Americans traveling in Asia have been able to obtain visas to enter China from the Chinese visa office in Hong Kong and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Seoul, South Korea.

Americans who overstay or otherwise violate the terms of their Chinese visas will be subject to fines and departure delays and may be subject to detention. Travelers should note that international flights departing China are routinely overbooked, making reconfirmation of departure reservations and early airport check-in essential. Passengers must pay a RMB 100 airport user fee (approximately \$12 US) when departing China on inter-

national flights and RMB 60 airport fee (approximately US \$7.20) for all domestic flights.

Chinese customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from China of items such as antiquities, banned publications or vehicles not conforming to Chinese standards. Information concerning regulations and procedures governing items that may be brought into China is available through the Chinese Embassy and Consulates in the United States. Students may bring into China only a limited number of items that are considered necessary for study and daily life. Some U.S. citizens residing in China have been required to pay customs duty on certain high-value items when departing China because procedures were not followed when the items were originally brought into China.

Americans in China who are not staying at hotels, including Ameri-

cans who are staying with friends or relatives, must register with local police. Americans who are questioned by police should immediately notify the U.S. Embassy or the nearest consulate. Foreigners detained for questioning may not be allowed to contact their national authorities until the questioning is concluded. Foreigners detained pending trial have often waited over a year for their trial to begin. Americans are rarely granted bail. Criminal punishments, especially prison terms, are more severe than in the United States. Persons violating the law, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Criminal penalties for possession, use, or trafficking of illegal drugs are strict, and convicted offenders can expect severe jail sentences and fines. Non-American foreigners have been executed for drug offenses. Several Americans currently incarcerated in China have been implicated in financial fraud schemes involving falsified banking or business documents, tax evasion schemes and assisting alien smuggling, including selling passports.

In the past, protesters detained for engaging in pro-Falun Gong activities have been deported quickly from China. Several of these protesters alleged they were physically abused during their detention. In addition, they alleged that personal property including clothing, cameras and computers had not always been returned to them upon their deportation. Chinese authorities report while they have deported these foreigners quickly after public demonstrations in favor of the Falun Gong, future adherents who intentionally arrive in China to protest against Chinese policy may receive longer terms of detention and possibly face prison sentences.

Chinese authorities have seized documents, literature, and letters that they deem to be pornographic, political in nature, or intended for religious proselytism. Persons seeking to enter China with religious materials in a quantity deemed to be greater than that needed for personal use may be detained and

fined. Chinese customs authorities may seize books, films, records, tapes, and compact disks to determine if they violate Chinese prohibitions. Individuals believed to be engaged in religious proselytism or in conduct Chinese officials consider immoral or inappropriate have been detained and expelled.

PRC authorities occasionally confiscate passports and levy exit bans against persons involved in commercial or other disputes. The U.S. Embassy or Consulate General will make inquiries with local authorities to ensure that the U.S. citizen's rights under the U.S. - China Bilateral Consular Convention are honored. The individual usually is not taken into custody, but is sometimes confined to a hotel or other facility until the dispute is resolved. The U.S. Embassy or Consulate General will issue another passport to any U.S. citizen who applies for one under these circumstances; however, even with a new U.S. passport, Chinese authorities will often block departure by refusing to provide a visa for exit purposes.

U.S. citizens other than tourists at major hotels are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy or at one of the U.S. Consulates General in China. They may also obtain updated information on travel and security within the country at the Embassy or Consulates General. It is possible to register from the United States via the Internet through the U.S. Embassy's home page at <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn>.

Beijing: The U.S. Embassy in China is located at 2 Xiu Shui Dong Jie, Beijing 100600, telephone: (86-10) 6532-3431, 6532-3831, and after-hours: (86-10) 6532-1910; fax (86-10) 6532-4153. The U.S. Embassy web site address is <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn> and the e-mail address is AmCit-Beijing@state.gov. The Embassy consular district includes the following provinces/regions of China: Beijing, Tianjin, Shandong, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Shaanxi,

Qinghai, Xinjiang, Hebei, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, and Jiangxi.

Chengdu: The U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu is located at Number 4, Lingshiguan Road, Section 4, Renmin Nanlu, Chengdu 610041, telephone: (86-28) 558-3992, 555-3119; fax (86-28) 558-3520; after-hours (86-0) 13708001422. This consular district includes the following provinces/regions of China: Guizhou, Sichuan Xizang (Tibet), and Yunnan, as well as the municipality of Chongqing.

Guangzhou: The U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou is located at Number 1 South Shamian Street, Shamian Island 200S1, Guangzhou 510133; telephone: (86-20) 8121-8418; after-hours: (86-139-0229-3169; fax: (86-20) 8121-8428. This consular district includes the following provinces/regions of China: Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, and Fujian.

Shanghai: The U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is located at 1469 Huaihai Zhonglu, Shanghai 200031 telephone: (86-21) 6433-6880, after-hours: (86-21) 6433-3936; fax: (86-21) 6433-4122, 6471-1148. This consular district includes the following provinces/regions of China: Shanghai, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang.

Shenyang: The U.S. Consulate General in Shenyang is located at No. 52, 14th Wei Road, Heping District, Shenyang 110003, telephone: (86-24) 2322-1198, 2322-0368; after-hours: (86-0) 13704019790; fax (86-24) 2322-2374. This consular district includes the following provinces/regions of China: Liaoning, Heilongjiang, and Jilin.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Chinese currency (yuan) may not be brought into or taken out of China. Travelers checks, Hong Kong dollars, and U.S. currency may be exchanged at international airports, hotels, and government shops operating exclusively for foreigners.

Most exchange points require an official exchange certificate to

reconvert RMB to U.S. dollars. Be sure to save all receipts, therefore, when you change money upon arrival.

China's weights and measures are based on the metric system. However, a common unit of weight is the "jin," which is equivalent to one-half kilo.

Pets

Beijing: Starting May 1, 1995, the Beijing Municipal Government has implemented new regulations strictly controlling the registration of dogs in urban areas (limitations on size and breeds).

There are no similar restrictions against cats; however, there is a 1,000 RMB fee (\$118) payable at customs, and a general rule holding that only one pet per employee may be imported. Cats also need proof of a rabies shot (within the last year) and a certificate of good health dated no more than 30 days before arrival. While Chinese regulations call for a 1-month quarantine for cats in Chinese-designated facilities, health officials at the airport so far are allowing owners to "quarantine" the cat at home, but admonish owners to keep the cat indoors at all times and inform owners that during the month health officials have the right to come to the apartment to "inspect" the cat. No cat owner so far has reported such inspection visits.

The China Travel Service will not send unaccompanied pets from Hong Kong. You must make arrangements to ship your pet on a direct air route to Beijing.

Guangzhou: Official Chinese policy varies by locality. Most hotels will not accept dogs or cats.

Shanghai: Dogs cannot be let out on the streets of Shanghai and are limited to the grounds of your house or apartment complex. Dogs and cats must have valid rabies and health certificates accompanying them and will be inspected on arrival by local health officials. Authorities currently do not impose a quarantine. After arrival, dogs

must be registered with the Public Security Bureau, which will then issue individual identification cards. Cats are legal and do not have to be registered but are governed by the same regulations outlined for dogs. No facilities are available in Shanghai for boarding your pets. Pets should be shipped to Shanghai as check-in baggage.

Shenyang: Dogs and cats are available in the marketplace.

Chengdu: Pets are prohibited in Chengdu. There are no local kennels or veterinarians.

Disaster Preparedness

Some areas of China frequented by Americans, notably Yunnan Province, are prone to earthquakes. Coastal areas of Hainan, Guangdong, Fujian, and Zhejiang provinces are subject to typhoons during the summer rainy season. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>. Travelers should check weather conditions for cities and areas in China prior to departure. Winter weather and summer typhoons often cause the closure of airports in some parts of the country.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1 & 2 New Year's Day
- Feb. Chinese New Year*
- Feb. Spring Festival*
- Apr. Qing Ming*
- Mar. 8 Women's Day
- May 1 Labor Day
- May 4 Youth Day
- May/June Dragon Boat Festival*
- July 1 Communist Party Foundation
- Aug. 1 People's Liberation Army Day

- Aug. 25. The Daughter's Festival (Chinese Valentines Day)
- Sept/Oct. Mid-Autumn Festival
- Oct. 1 P.R. China's Birthday
- Oct. 2 National Day
- *variable

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Recommended Reading for Hong Kong

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Books

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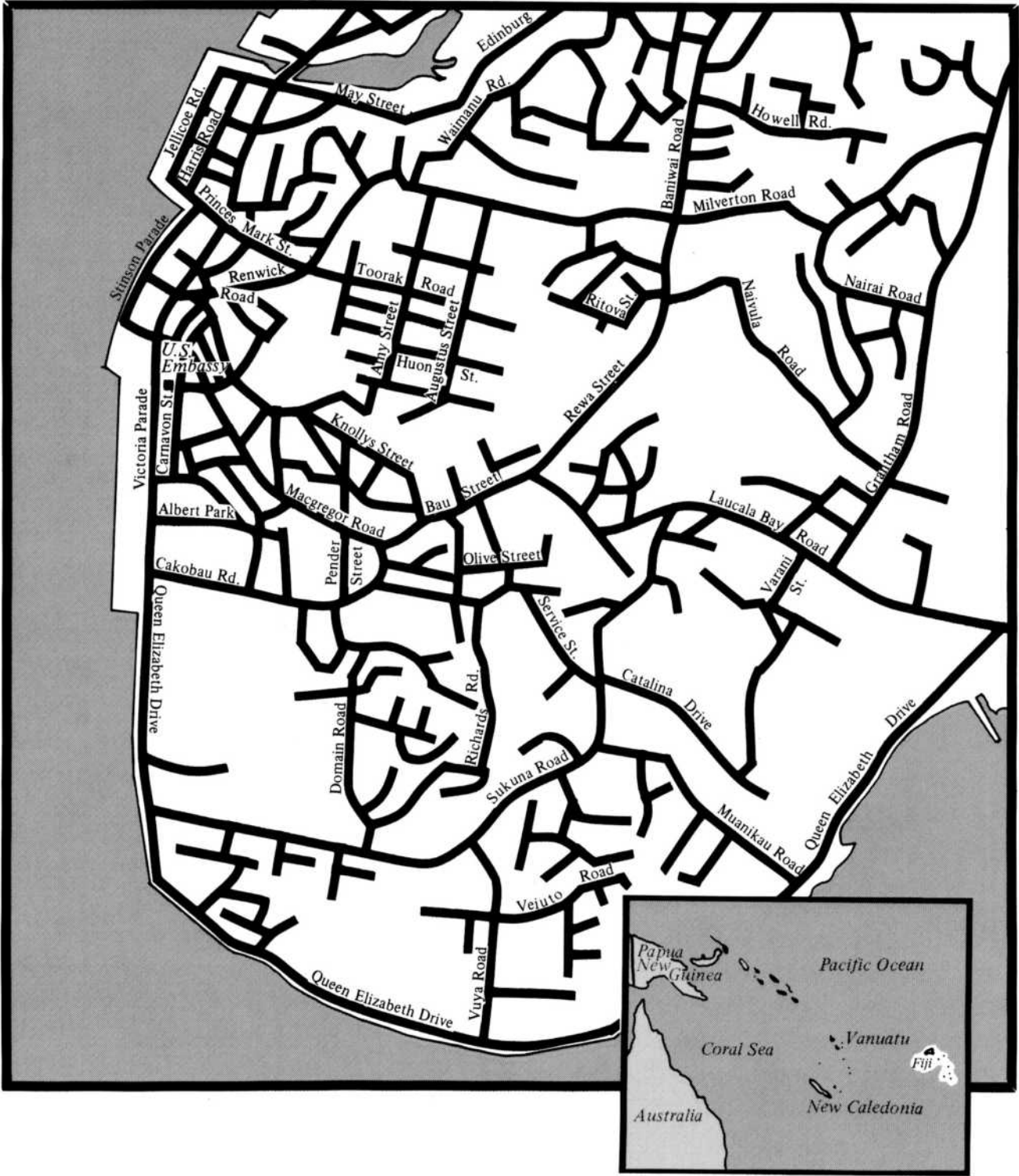
Recommended Web Sites

Department of State <http://www.state.gov>

Consulate General Home Page http://www.usia.gov/posts/hong_kong.html

Hong Kong Government Official Information Site <http://www.info.gov.hk>

Hong Kong Tourism Association http://www.hkta.org	Canadian Academy http://canada.canacad.acjp/canacad/welcome.html	Hong Kong University of Science and Technology http://www.ust.hk
American Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong http://www.amcham.org.hk	Morrison Academy-Taichung http://www.xc.org/mk/schools/morrison	Lingnan College http://www.ln.edu.hk
Hong Kong Telecom http://www.netvigator.com	Brent School http://www.wco.com/brent	Open University of Hong Kong http://www.ouhk.edu.hk
Hong Kong International School http://www.hkis.edu.hk	University of the Sacred Heart http://www.u-sacred-heart.acjp	University of Hong Kong http://www.hku.hk
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German Swiss International School http://home.netvigator.com/-gsis	City University of Hong Kong http://www.cityu.edu.hk	Hong Kong Standard http://www.hkstandard.com
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Suva, Fiji

FIJI

Republic of Fiji

Major City:

Suva

Other Cities:

Lautoka, Levuka, Nadi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Fiji. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Fiji is a tropical archipelago with all the advantages and disadvantages associated with island geography. The country offers beautiful scenery, friendly people, interesting work and excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation. It also features a full complement of tropical conditions, including heat, humidity, rain, mildew, tropical diseases (but not malaria), significant political issues and a shortage of urban amenities to which Americans are accustomed.

Fiji is the crossroads of the Pacific, a center for transportation, trade and regional organizations. The Embassy has responsibilities in three other independent countries-

Tonga, Tuvalu and Nauru-and three French overseas territories. Officers with regional responsibilities can expect substantial official travel.

Racial tensions between the indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities exist and have been exacerbated by two military coups in 1987 and an attempt& coup and unconstitutional change of government in 2000. Although these problems have led to isolated incidents of violence, Suva, for the most part, and the rest of the country continue to retain a friendly atmosphere. A good standard of public courtesy prevails in spite of the communal differences. Those willing to make the effort will be able to make friends in all of Fiji's assorted racial communities.

For the person who appreciates its attractions, Suva can be a pheasant assignment. Adherents of scuba diving, snorkeling, boating, golf and tennis will find their leisure hours well occupied when it isn't raining. Suva's shops are well stocked, so shortages of basic goods are seldom a problem. But Suva is not Sydney; nor is it a holiday destination as you might imagine. It is small and urban, and functions primarily as a commercial and government center. Visitors whose preferences run to theater, television, shopping, concerts or other forms of city-life

entertainment may find Suva somewhat dull.

MAJOR CITY

Suva

The capital, Suva, is the chief port and only sizable city in Fiji (population approximately 166,000, metropolitan area approx. 300,000). It boasts a natural harbor and lies on a peninsula on the southeastern coast of the main island of Viti Levu ("Great Fiji"). Suva's business center is adjacent to the wharf and harbor frontage; a light industrial park is on the north along the shore; and a complex of government buildings and government housing extends south. On the surrounding low hills are scattered residential areas, including the better sections of Tamavua, Domain and Muanikau. Another popular residential area, Lami, lies along the coast to the west. Across the harbor from the city rises an amphitheater of rugged mountains. Suva's airport is 26 kilometers (15.6 miles) to the east on the Rewa River, just past the small, outlying town of Nausori.

Newer residential housing consists of concrete, ranch-style or two-story houses with surrounding gardens.

Some older houses have verandas, often identified with tropical colonial outposts. Most houses have corrugated tin roofs.

Throughout the city, lush tropical growth is supplemented by municipal and private plantings of hibiscus, poinsettias, orchids, gardenias and varieties of tropical trees such as bananas, papayas, coconuts, palms, mangoes and breadfruit. Islands in Suva Harbor provide small swimming beaches, but the nearest sand beach frontage is 56 kilometers (35 miles) away at Pacific Harbour.

The city's shops are generally small and owned mostly by Indo-Fijians. Most greengrocers are Chinese. The Suva Central Market is the largest public market in the South Pacific and offers a large quantity and variety of fruits and vegetables in season. Suva has a number of large department-type stores and associated supermarkets, including the American company, Cost-U-Less, a warehouse-type store that opened in Nadi and Suva in 1998. A small number of business people, a few missionaries, some teachers and a few Americans married to Fijians comprise the small American community. The Europeans of Suva are divided among a small group of old families dating from Fiji's earliest colonial days and a more transient population of expatriates (Australians, British, and New Zealanders) in the civil service, business, and education.

Utilities

Water quality is generally good but may decline with excessive rain, breaks in the water main or disruption in treatment schedules. Electricity is relatively reliable, though current can fluctuate, and outages do occur. Current is 220v-240v 50Hz, AC. Electrical outlets are three-pronged, and adapters are available locally. Transformers are available locally but are expensive. Bring small appliances that will run on 50 Hz current.

Food

Frozen, fresh, and canned foods from Australia and New Zealand are available in a reasonable variety and regular supply. The American store Cost-U-Less provides a limited selection of American products. Food supplies are not as varied or of the quality found in the U.S. The cost of living, including food prices, is higher than in Washington, D.C.

Seasonal tropical fresh vegetables and fruits are plentiful and excellent.

Temperate-zone fruits such as apples, pears and oranges, and vegetables such as broccoli, celery, beets and leeks are imported and usually available, though expensive.

Baby food is available, but of poor quality. Bring a blender or food grinder to provide for your baby's needs. Australian, but not U.S., formulas are available. Sterilized and pasteurized milk is available, as is powdered milk. Butter and cream are also available. Locally produced sour cream, cottage cheese, and yogurt are available. Eggs are plentiful. American coffee is readily available, either ground or instant, but expensive. Australian coffee in instant form is readily available and is comparable in price to U.S. coffee.

Most beef and all pork sold in Fiji are locally produced and are acceptable. Imported beef, lamb and veal are also available, but are expensive. Fresh fish, sweet-water crabs, clams and smoked fish are sold in the central market and specialized stores. Local frozen poultry is available and reasonably priced. Frozen turkeys and fresh and frozen local fish are available.

Many people buy the locally produced beer, which is excellent. Locally bottled (under franchise arrangements) soft drinks and mixers are good. Australian- and U.S.-produced diet beverages are available in limited quantity and are expensive.

The traditional Fijian diet, different from what most Americans are used to, consists mainly of starchy root crops, green leafy vegetables, seafood and coconut products. Fresh ingredients for Chinese and Indian dishes are available.

Clothing

Clothing in Fiji is more expensive and generally of poorer quality than clothing bought in the U.S. Plan to bring most of what you will need. Dress is casual. At work women wear lightweight dresses or blouses and skirts. Men wear long trousers and short or long-sleeved shirts.

Women dress smartly, but casually, and seldom wear pants. At more formal functions, men wear a shirt and tie while women wear simple evening or cocktail dresses. Hats are rarely worn and are never required, since neither Fijian nor Indian women wear hats as part of their dress. (Traditionally, Fijians regard the head as sacred and refrain from touching the head of another person or putting anything on their own.)

Dressmakers are inexpensive by U.S. standards and have a good selection of fabrics, but the quality of the work is variable.

The climate necessitates frequent changes of clothing. Therefore, the most suitable type of clothing for both men and women is that which is cool, e.g., cotton, and easily washable. Drycleaning facilities and adequate laundry facilities are available, but quality varies. Cardigan sweaters are useful in the evening during cooler months, or when attending air-conditioned movie theaters and restaurants.

Infants' clothing is available, but is of limited variety. A dressmaker can sew satisfactory children's clothing, which can be supplemented by clothes ordered from the US. Schoolchildren wear uniforms made locally.

Bring an adequate supply of shoes for your tour. Shoes available locally

are of poor quality and often do not fit well.

This is especially true of sport shoes. In deciding on quantity, bear in mind that with frequent rainy days, shoes will wear out more rapidly than they would in a drier climate. Fair-quality children's sandals are available locally; the International School uniform specifies black sandals.

Also bring non-tropical clothing for travel to New Zealand, Australia or back to the U.S.

Supplies and Services

The larger local stores stock adequate supplies and varieties of toiletries and cosmetics, but prices are higher than in the US. and American products are usually not available. Bring a supply of your favorite toothpaste, shampoo and cosmetics, as they may not be available locally.

Most household items are sold locally at much higher prices than in the U.S. Dishes, glassware, cookware, and plastic and paper products are expensive and of poor quality by U.S. standards. If you have children, bring a supply of toys, including some gifts, since those available locally are expensive and of limited supply and variety. Many people use mail-order catalogs to purchase such items. Gift wrap paper and cards are also in short supply and very expensive.

Baby bottles, disposable diapers and other infant supplies are stocked, but cost much more than American equivalents. American-made bottles and nipples are not sold in Fiji.

A large range of Japanese and some European electronic and photographic equipment is available locally. American TVs and VCRs, which are formatted in the NTSC system, will not receive local TV broadcasts or play local videotapes, which are formatted in the PAL system. Some people overcome this problem by purchasing multi-system TVs and VCRs, but they are expensive. Video cassettes (in the

PAL system) can be rented at local shops. However, such tapes are often of very poor quality, which may damage or reduce the life span of your VCR. Generally, VHS tapes are more widely used than Beta. Many 240v household appliances, ranging from mixers and food processors to washing machines and microwave ovens, are available in Suva but are more expensive than those available in the U.S.

In addition to garbage collection, the Suva City Council provides grass-mowing services, garden debris removal and drain cleaning services along the roads. Dry-cleaning and shoe repair services are available. Routine electrical, plumbing and mechanical repairs are adequate. With auto repairs, some patience is required. Barbers and beauticians are inexpensive and adequate.

Domestic Help

Well-trained domestics are hard to find. Cooks are difficult to find, but most servants can prepare breakfast and lunch if they are sufficiently trained. Most live-in maids prefer to cook their own meals and will often ask to install a small stove in their quarters.

Most servants are paid about F\$60-\$90 per week (current rate of exchange is about F\$2.10 = US\$1.00), plus quarters. They work a 5, 5-1/2, or 6-day week, with 2-4 hours off in the middle of the day. Domestics need at least some training to ensure that they understand what you want them to do. Most local maids are happy to take care of children, but training is required in this area as well.

Religious Activities

English-language services are held in many Suva churches, including Anglican (Episcopal), Wesleyan, Seventh Day Adventist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Latter-Day Saints, Pentecostal, Roman Catholic and the Assembly of God. Most churches have charitable organizations affiliated with them. Hinduism, Islam, and other world religions are also represented in Fiji. Suva has a

small Jewish community. However, no synagogue exists.

Education

Suva has several preschools or kindergartens that take children from age 3 for 3 to 5 days a week, 4-6 hours per day. Fees are reasonable and the preschool training appears to be adequate.

Most Americans attend the International School of Suva (ISS), which encompasses both elementary and secondary levels. Preschool classes opened in 1996-97. The school offers the International Baccalaureate Program. ISS is accredited by ECIS, the European Council of International Schools. It is not accredited by any American association.

Other Suva schools that might be considered minimally adequate at the elementary level include Yatsen School (run by the Chinese community), the Catholic Stella Maris and Marist Brothers Schools, the government-operated Suva Grammar School (grade 4 through high school), and the Holy Trinity Anglican Primary School.

Schools in Fiji other than the ISS are very crowded. All schools maintain strict teacher-pupil ratios and cannot guarantee placement.

Schools in Fiji, like those in many other southern hemisphere countries, begin their school year at the end of January and end in November. ISS divides terms into quarters. For others, the school year is divided into three terms. Summer vacation occurs from the end of November through the end of January.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the South Pacific (USP) began offering undergraduate degree courses in 1969. In the mid-1970s, it established master's and doctoral programs. These programs are available to the 11 member countries and have recently become available to overseas graduate students, including Fulbright grantees from the U.S. From an aca-



Local produce market in Suva

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

demographic point of view, families with college-age children would be wise to have them study outside Fiji, since USP's methods and standards of instructions differ significantly from those of U.S. colleges and USP degrees are not easily recognized in the U.S.

The University's Extension Service offers a variety of academic, cultural and practical courses for those working full time, as well as students who cannot enroll for residential or part-time studies. Adults may participate in day or evening classes in Pacific cultures and languages. The USP Extension Service, with French and Japanese Government sponsorship, offers language-training programs. The Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT) offers some evening courses.

Sports

The people of Fiji are keen sportsmen and women, and there are many sporting activities available. However, sporting goods, clothes and shoes are expensive and sometimes unavailable. Bring them with you or plan to purchase them from the States through mail-order catalogs.

Boating and water sports enthusiasts will find Suva's waters and boat-

ing facilities quite good, weather permitting. The lack of beaches in the Suva area makes ownership of a small boat attractive. Small sailboats and motorboats made locally are available at prices higher than those in the U.S. The local purchase of an imported boat is expensive because of high customs duties. Motors, fishing tackle, and snorkeling, scuba, and water skiing equipment are available in limited range and at high prices. Motorboats and snorkeling gear can be rented. Deep-sea fishing is available, but expensive. Fresh water fishing is possible along the interior rivers, but you will need a guide.

Scuba diving is popular in Fiji with two active dive clubs organizing day and weekend trips. Commercial dive operators offer trips near Suva, at several island resorts and on live-aboard and charter dive vessels. U.S.-recognized instruction is offered in Suva and at some resorts. Fiji's coral reefs are among the world's most beautiful. Dive sites range from shallow coral gardens suitable for beginners to challenging open water diving that will satisfy the most experienced hard-core fanatic. The omnipresent sharks are well-fed and generally non-aggressive; most divers quickly get used to their presence. A limited

selection of equipment is stocked locally, but prices are higher than U.S. levels. It is best to bring all equipment, including at least two tanks per diver. Underwater photographers should bring all their own gear. Diving safety standards in Fiji are reasonable, but the generally low standard of medical care and transport renders any accident more serious than in the U.S. or the Caribbean. There is only one decompression chamber in the country, located in the city of Suva.

Golf is a popular sport in both the expatriate and local communities. Suva has an 18-hole golf course at the Fiji Golf Club, which is only 10 minutes from the Embassy. The course condition is poor, especially due to frequent rain, but playable and very convenient. Membership is relatively inexpensive; as of September 2000 it was US \$150 per year. A Robert Trent-Jones designed championship course (that is also frequently wet) is available at Pacific Harbour, about 30 miles west of Suva. Annual fees there are US \$140 per couple and US \$93 per individual member. The best course in Fiji of international standard is located at the Sheraton Denarau Resort near Nadi, about 3 hours by car from Suva. Membership there is more expensive, at about US \$925 per year, which allows a maximum of 60 games annually. Carts are not available at the Suva course. Golf equipment is sold locally, but selection is limited and expensive so bring your own. Membership is not required to play at any of Fiji's courses. Green fees are reasonable by American standards, as are caddy fees.

Other popular sports are squash, tennis and lawn bowling. Tennis is very accessible and popular. Both lawn and synthetic courts are available. Local selection of tennis and squash equipment is limited, so bring your own. Two health/exercise clubs are available: Polaris and the Rabuka Gym. Suva has an Olympic sized pool, though water quality can be a problem. An organized swimming club for children meets at the pool and swimming lessons for both

children and adults are offered periodically.

Spectator sports include soccer, cricket, rugby, volleyball and basketball.

No hunting is done in Fiji.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Suva's small Fiji Museum, located in Thurston Gardens (the local botanical garden) has good Fiji and South Pacific ethnographic collections. Orchid Island, west of Suva, and the Fiji Cultural Center at Pacific Harbour also offer interesting glimpses of traditional Fijian village life, handicraft making and traditional ceremonies. Fijians make decorative woodbark cloth with geometric designs called "Masi" (Tapa). They also are accomplished at wood carving and mat weaving.

Fiji has a very well developed tourism sector. Information on services and facilities is readily available. Cruises to the outer island of the Fiji group can be arranged at reasonable cost on small inter-island vessels that service the country. These trips can take from several days to one or several weeks, with stops at many small copra loading points. Long weekend or holiday trips to the beaches and hotels on the southwest coast of Viti Levu can provide a pleasant break from Suva's more urban atmosphere. Hiking is possible along a nature trail, with waterfalls at Colo-i-Suva just 7 kilometers from the city, though crime has been a problem at times. "Blue Lagoon" cruises to the Yasawa Islands northwest of Viti Levu, a stay at the off island resorts in the Yasawas, or a weekend at Toberua Island near Suva can give comfortable exposure to the traditional idyllic South Pacific island image. Rivers Fiji offers river rafting and kayaking as well as sea kayaking. There are a number of ecotourism opportunities.

Entertainment

For many, the great drawback to living in Suva, aside from the frequent

rain and the isolation of island life, is the relative lack of cultural, social, intellectual or simply diverting activities for a person who is not sports-minded. The Fiji Arts Council sponsors performances by touring artists, usually under the auspices of other governments, but they are very infrequent. The drama group of the Fiji Arts Club puts on several productions each year utilizing local dramatic talent. Other sections of the club offer arts and crafts, photography, music and dance. The fine arts group organizes shows of members' work.

The American Women's Association holds monthly luncheons for its members, frequent social events for couples and holiday parties for children. In addition the International Women's Association has a monthly morning tea with a speaker; the Corona Society does many good works; and the Rucksack Club sponsors several trips each month to explore Fiji's interior, coastline and islands.

One six-screen, very modern multiplex cinema theater and three other movie theaters in Suva show European, American, and Hindi films. Movies often reach Suva within a couple of weeks of release in the U.S., especially if they are action flicks. Movie prices are low (about US \$2.25).

Dining in Suva is improving, but is limited by its population. There are several good Chinese restaurants, an excellent Indian restaurant and a very good Japanese restaurant. There are also several restaurants offering good Continental cuisine. Several establishments offer good seafood and a number of small pizza restaurants and snack bars exist. The pizza is very mediocre. Those who travel to Tahiti or New Caledonia can enjoy good French cuisine.

Rock and reggae music are popular in Suva, with a number of good local bands. Two of the town's several discos are upscale enough to be widely patronized by government officials and expatriates. Hotels occasionally

hold "island night" dances with live bands. Urban Fijians have carried their traditional love of music and dancing into the city with them, making the nightclub scene surprisingly lively.

Fijian rituals are often colorful. The best known is the fire-walking ceremony of the islanders of Beqa (pronounced Bengga). The "Meke" (traditional dancing and singing) is performed occasionally at Suva hotels and regularly at the larger coastal resorts. Indians also perform ritual fire walking, but this is more religious in nature.

Photography is a popular hobby in Suva and several well-stocked photography stores exist. Film is expensive to purchase and develop here. Black-and-white film and color prints can be processed in Suva at costs much higher than the US. Bird-watching is also a popular hobby in Fiji because of the many varieties of birds that flourish in the islands.

The larger towns in Fiji celebrate various festivals. Suva hosts the week-long Hibiscus Festival in August, which includes parades and native dances. Similar events on a smaller scale are held in Lautoka, Nadi, and Sigatoka.

Using a camera at Fijian events is permitted but requires some care. Fijians can become upset if amateur photographers disrupt the dignity of their traditional ceremonies. Standing up, even in front of your seat, is particularly frowned upon. You may take as many pictures as you wish from a seated position.

Social Activities

Since the American community is small, few social activities are planned exclusively for Americans. The American Women's Association sponsors some activities and a fair amount of non-representational entertaining is done by individuals.

Clubs play an important part in the social life of many local residents. A few clubs are for men only, with an occasional day when women are

permitted. Others are essentially private drinking clubs. Except for a few hotel cocktail lounges and some squalid public bars, the bars of the various clubs are the center of much of the local social life, especially for men. Most of the sporting clubs (open to women) have a yearly formal or semi-formal dance and occasional "island night" dances. Hobby-oriented clubs, such as the shell collectors club, hiking clubs, diving clubs, etc., offer opportunities for social contacts.

The Fiji Women's Club offers a wide selection of social and volunteer activities and international contacts for women.

OTHER CITIES

LAUTOKA, the second largest city in Fiji with a population of about 36,000 (1996 est.), lies on the dry, west coast of Viti Levu. It is a major center of the country's sugar industry. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has a huge mill here that ships raw sugar to New Zealand. Residents are Indian shopkeepers, workers, and artisans. Lautoka is a base for interisland cruises. A number of water sports-oriented beach resorts are located nearby. Local administration is conducted by a town board.

LEVUKA is located on Ovalau Island just east of Suva. It is a seaport and an historic town that was once the capital of Fiji. The population is approximately 1,400.

NADI (also spelled Nandi) is a village on the west coast of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu. It lies at the mouth of Nandi River and has an international airport. Nadi is a duty-free port. About 9,000 people live in Nadi (1996 est.).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Tourist literature on Fiji refers to "300 islands in the sun." Of the 320 islands and islets that make up the Fiji group, only about 150 are permanently inhabited. The total land area of the country, 18,272 square kilometers (7,055 square miles), is about the size of the State of Hawaii. The largest island, Viti Levu, 10,386 square kilometers (4,101 square miles), is about the size of the Big Island of Hawaii. Viti Levu has a mountainous interior penetrated by few roads. Most agricultural land and all towns are near the sea or along the river valleys. The highest point, Mt. Victoria, rises 1,323 meters (4,341 feet). Twenty-eight other peaks exceed 914 meters (3,000 feet). Vegetation on the windward side of the islands is luxuriously tropical, while grasslands prevail on the leeward sides.

The climate is warm and humid. Suva, on the eastern "wet" side of Viti Levu, averages 120 inches of rain annually. The western and northern sides of the island are drier and sunnier. Temperatures in Suva range from the high 60s in the winter, to the mid 90s in the summer.

Most of Fiji's sugarcane, the nation's primary crop, is grown on the western side. Nadi (pronounced Nandi), site of the international airport, lies on the western side, benefiting from the better weather and visibility. Many of Fiji's tourist resorts, some ranking among the best in the world, are in the West.

The wet summer season lasts from December through March. The cooler, drier winter season falls between May and October. Although temperature changes are noticeable, the average number of days of rainfall in Suva varies little from month to month. Humidity during summer is usually high, often

reaching 90% and above. Fiji is in the hurricane zone. The last hurricane to hit Suva directly was Cyclone Kina, in January 1991. In March 1997, Cyclone Gavin swept through northern Vanua Levu and the northwestern part of Viti Levu, devastating several outer island-groups. Southeast trade winds blow steadily from March to October, with variable winds during the Southern Hemisphere summer. Mildew and corrosion present constant problems. The use of air conditioning, dehumidifiers and "hot closets" reduce the danger of mildew damage to clothes, video tapes and other possessions.

Non-malarial mosquitoes are numerous, particularly in the summer. An epidemic of mosquito-borne dengue fever, which reoccurs every few years, occurred in early 1998. Poisonous insects, snakes and sea life are not common, though scratches and cuts, particularly those suffered while swimming or diving, need to be treated promptly as they can easily become infected.

Fiji lies near a major fault line and has suffered major earthquakes. Although the last severe quake was in 1953, small tremors are occasionally felt. In November 1998, quakes registering as high as 4.3 occurred on the island of Kadavu, southeast of Viti Levu.

Population

Fiji's population was estimated at 776,000 at the end of 1997. According to official figures, ethnic Fijians now outnumber Indo-Fijians. The Fijians are descended from Melanesian voyagers who arrived in the islands hundreds or thousands of years ago. Most of the Indo-Fijian population is descended from indentured laborers who arrived in the late 19th century to work on sugar cane plantations and stayed on when their indentures expired.

Emigration among the Indian population, already an established trend, accelerated after the 1987 military coups. Many emigrants were professionals and managers, resulting in

serious consequences for human resources and the economy. As many as half of Fiji's doctors and lawyers emigrated in the 18 months following the first coup. According to the last census, official population estimates for December 31, 1997 are as follows: Fijian 51%, Indian 42.5%, Others 6.5%.

The "others" category includes part Europeans (the local term for persons of mixed Fijian and European ancestry), Rotumans (Rotuma is an outlying island whose population is Polynesian), other Pacific islanders, Chinese and Europeans (whites).

Fiji straddles an ethnic line between Melanesia to the west and Polynesia to the east. As a result, Polynesian influence is prevalent in Lau, the eastern islands of the Fiji group. Fiji's diversity is also reflected in its many religions. The indigenous Fijian population is mainly Methodist, with strong minorities of other Protestant groups and Roman Catholics. Fijians, like most Pacific islanders, are devoted to their religion and maintain a strict Sabbath. Many Chinese are Roman Catholic. The majority of Indo-Fijians are Hindu; the remainder are Muslims, Sikhs, or Christians.

English, Fijian and Hindi are the three languages of the islands, with English being the official language of the government and the media. The older Chinese speak Cantonese as well as English. Despite the use of English in the country's schools, it is estimated that outside of the major urban areas, only 20% of Fiji's population can speak English fluently.

Fiji's several ethnic communities have maintained their unique cultural patterns, giving the country an attractive, multi-cultural atmosphere. Although various ethnic groups support separate churches, many schools are integrated.

Public Institutions

A decade after two military coups in 1987, Fiji made significant progress

toward the restoration of democracy with the approval of an amended Constitution in 1997, which encouraged multi-ethnic government while protecting traditional indigenous Fijian cultural and land interests. Under the amended Constitution, which included a strengthened bill of rights, the Prime Minister and the President could be of any race. For the first time, in addition to communally allocated seats, open seats were created that were not allocated to any racial community in the Lower House.

Democratic elections were held in May 1999, the first under Fiji's revised, more democratic Constitution, resulting in a change in government. The Labor Party-led coalition headed by Mahendra Chaudhry, was elected with a large parliamentary majority. Chaudhry was Fiji's first Indo-Fijian Prime Minister.

However, in May 2000, an armed group of militant ethnic Fijian nationalists, joined by a few military officers, seized the Prime Minister and his Cabinet in the Parliamentary complex and held them hostage for 56 days. Following continued political turmoil, the army usurped governmental authority, forced the resignation of President Ratu Mara, abrogated the 1997 constitution and installed an Interim Prime Minister and Cabinet. A commission to formulate a new constitution has been established by the Great Council of Chiefs and elections are promised by August, 2001. Fiji is likely to remain an undemocratic state for at least two or three years.

Fiji has a wide variety of nongovernmental, fraternal, and charitable organizations such as Rotary, Lions, Jaycees, YMCA/ YWCA, Red Cross, Girit Council, Muslim League and women's groups. Some such organizations are communally based; others are multiracial.

Arts, Science and Education

As a small, primarily agricultural country, far removed from any metropolitan center, Fiji has limited self-generating cultural activities or major scholarly centers. The Fiji Arts Council, with government support, sponsors a number of local arts and crafts clubs. The Fiji Arts Club presents five or six quality productions each year. Dancing, singing and various Fijian and Indian religious and secular celebrations and ceremonies are a colorful and authentic continuation of a long tradition.

The University of the South Pacific (USP), established in 1967 in Suva, contributes to the intellectual life of the regional community. Founded as a regional university for the English-speaking areas of the South Pacific, USP concentrates on educating professionals and teachers. Institutes of Marine Science, Natural Resources, and Research; Education and Extension in Agriculture; Social Sciences Administration; and Pacific Studies are expanding USP's scope of research and teaching. USP's School of Agriculture is located in Samoa, and the School of Law is in Vanuatu.

The small, but excellent, Fiji Museum has a good collection of traditional Fijian artifacts, as well as displays from throughout the Pacific. Art and other exhibitions by local or visiting artists provide some cultural diversions.

Commerce and Industry

Fiji is primarily an agricultural country, dependent on sugar and, to a lesser degree, other agricultural commodities for export income. In recent years, tourism has been the fastest growing foreign-exchange earner in Fiji and may well become the most important industry in future years. Gold is mined in the interior of Viti Levu, although production varies with market price. Timber, particularly Caribbean

pine, is an important export due to a major forestation project begun by the government in 1972. Major stands of mahogany, planted 30 or more years ago, are maturing and ready for harvest. Some light industry, including marine repair facilities, a brewery, flour mills, several rice mills, a cooperative dairy plant capable of producing both fresh and ultra-high temperature (UHT) milk, a steel-rolling mill, and a household paint factory have been established. Sugar and tourism constitute the mainstays of the economy, accounting for more than half of the nation's foreign exchange earnings.

Fiji imports from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the U.S. the UK, and Southeast Asia. It is a member of the International Sugar Organization and exports sugar to the European Community under the Cotonou Convention.

Land in Fiji is either Crown land (owned by the government, 10%), freehold land (7%), or native land (83%). As in most of the Pacific, native land is held in common by extended family groups. Some land was alienated from these groups before Fiji became a British possession in 1874 and it is now freehold. Once Fiji became a colony, native land was protected and no further significant land sales were allowed. The native land is controlled by the Native Lands Trust Board, which administers the land for the family groups. Substantial areas of native land, however, are mountainous with only forestry as a potential commercial activity. Immigrant groups (mainly Indians) have had difficulty buying land and, as a result, have become tenant farmers or have entered commercial fields. Most agricultural land is currently leased for a period of 30 years, after which it reverts to the traditional land-owning group unless negotiations succeed in establishing new lease arrangements. Much of Fiji's land remains under-utilized. As leases expire, Fiji faces a dilemma. Ethnic Fijian landowners are increasingly eager to farm their own land or are demanding high lease rates. Consequently, many Indo-

Fijian farmers face the prospect of becoming displaced.

Fiji's largest commercial firms are, for the most part, owned by expatriates or naturalized European-Fijians. Business methods are predominantly Australian, New Zealand and British.

The undemocratic change of government in May 2000 had a devastating effect on the economy. GDP declined by over 10 percent. Tourism declined nearly 40 percent, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs. The garment industry has faltered in the face of sanctions by Australia and New Zealand, costing many more jobs. In all, it is estimated that 7,000 jobs were lost in the four months following the May crisis. The 2000 sugar harvest was not immediately affected. However, the EU is reassessing its preferential sugar pricing for Fiji in light of the loss of democracy. Fiji also may lose preferential markets for its textiles. Such changes in preferential pricing would have devastating impacts on the sugar and garment industries. A serious contraction of the economy is expected in 2000 and beyond.

Transportation

Automobiles

You will want a personal vehicle. Travel on the main island of Viti Levu is mostly by road and moves on the left. The maximum speed limit is 80 kph (50 mph).

Fiji operates on the metric system and traffic moves on the left. Before shipping an American car by sea freight, consider the advantage of buying a right-hand drive car in Fiji. Vehicles manufactured in Japan and Australia are available. All imported cars must be inspected (called a warrant of fitness in Fiji) if it was previously registered in a foreign country. Do not attempt to convert a left-hand drive vehicle to right-hand drive in Fiji.

Adults (ages 18 and over) must have a Fiji driver's license. A valid US

license or a license issued by any other foreign country may be used for 6 months only. Third-party insurance is mandatory, but inexpensive. Bring "no-claim" letters for a discount, which will bring the cost down.

Resale of locally purchased cars is unrestricted. Applicable customs duty must be paid by the seller.

Given that unleaded gas is now readily available in Fiji, there is no longer any need to remove the catalytic converter from vehicles imported from the U.S.

Local

Suva has sufficient paved streets for the number of cars in the city. A generally good paved road circles most of the main island of Viti Levu. From Suva to Lautoka, following the southern and western coasts, the coastal road is called the Queens Road. Many of Fiji's tourist hotels are located along this stretch. From Lautoka to Suva, following the northern and eastern coasts, the road is called the King's Road and includes a 30-mile stretch of rough gravel road along the northeast coast. It takes about 50 minutes to drive to the Pacific Harbour Beach and Golf Resort to the west of Suva, and about 3 hours to drive from Suva to Nadi and the international airport.

Avoid driving out of the main cities and towns at night. Stray livestock occasionally wander in the road and have caused fatal accidents in the past.

Public transportation by bus is frequent and inexpensive, but the bus fleet is aging. Taxis are plentiful, equipped with meters and inexpensive. Most, however, are in poor condition and it is common for taxi drivers to speed and otherwise drive in an unsafe manner. Motorcycles and bicycles are rare in Suva. Frequent rain and hilly terrain make them impractical.

Regional

Air Pacific, Fiji's international flag carrier, and other regional airlines

have international flights that connect Fiji with Los Angeles, Honolulu, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, American Samoa, Samoa, Tuvalu, Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands), New Caledonia, Tahiti, Vanuatu (formerly the New Hebrides), and Japan.

International airlines serving Fiji from the U.S. are Air Pacific (in a code share with American Airlines from Los Angeles) and Air New Zealand (in a code-share with United Airlines from Honolulu). U.S. government travelers must travel on one of these code-share flights. Currently, no American flag carrier serves Fiji directly.

Air Pacific, Fiji Air and Sun Air operate routes within Fiji. They provide several daily flights between Suva and the international airport at Nadi, and also service the islands of Vanua Levu and Taveuni. Air Fiji and Sunflower fly to smaller airports in the Fiji group and Tuvalu, and Turtle Airways connects various resort areas by small amphibious aircraft. There is a helicopter service.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is good. Fiji is served domestically by Telecom Fiji Ltd, while international communications are provided by Fintel, Ltd. Telephone connections with Australia, Canada, the U.S., Europe, and most of the rest of the world are excellent, but do experience occasional "fade out" and disconnection. Regional communications to the neighboring and smaller islands is somewhat less reliable and can vary in quality depending on the time of day and prevailing climatic conditions. E-mail and Internet communications are available through Telecom Fiji Internet Services, but are expensive, slow and subject to disconnection. Telephone Calling Cards are available as well as mobile (Vodafone) telephone services and voice mail. International and domestic telegram services,

including Western Union, are available 24 hours and are reliable. Though Fiji's communication services are good and generally keep up with emerging technologies, prices are high by US. standards.

Mail

International airmail takes up to two weeks to and from the U.S. Packages sent by international surface mail are transported via sea and can take up to 3 months to arrive. No censorship exists and packages pass through customs without delay. However, there have been complaints, though rare, about packages being stolen from the Fiji mail system.

Correspondents in the U.S. however, should be cautioned to put sufficient postage on letters and to clearly mark them "AIRMAIL" to ensure they are handled as airmail and not as surface mail.

Radio and TV

Fiji has one commercial TV station, which offers one free channel and two cable channels: Sky Entertainment and Sky Sports.

Two radio stations operate in the country. The government-owned Island Network Corporation broadcasts nationwide in three languages: Hindi, Fijian and English. Established in 1954, it is run by the Fiji Broadcasting Commission and broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It directly rebroadcasts foreign news from BBC and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). It also uses prerecorded and packaged music and current affairs programs to supplement local productions. FM 96 is commercially run and has a 24-hour, all-music format geared to younger listeners. It also broadcasts in three languages, and has brief news programs. It derives its world news output from the BBC, ABC, and VOA. FM 96 has transmitters in Suva and Lautoka.

Japanese short wave radios are available locally. Reception from Australia and New Zealand is good, but the same cannot be said for VOA or BBC.

Newspapers, Magazines and Technical Journals

Currently, the country has three daily English-language newspapers, The Fiji Times, The Fiji Sun and the Post. Locally published monthly magazines include Pacific and The Review. Hindi and Fijian language newspapers are published weekly by the Fiji Times. Up-to-the-minute news on Fiji can be found on the Internet at www.fijilive.com, a website run by The Review magazine.

Overseas papers are not readily available. Australian and New Zealand papers usually arrive several days late. The New Zealand editions of Time and Newsweek are sold locally at newsstands or by subscription. Some American magazines are available locally (House and Garden, Vogue, etc.), but arrive late and are expensive.

The Suva City Library has a small, dated selection of fiction and nonfiction.

The University of the South Pacific has a good library and limited bookstore. A small and expensive selection of paperbacks is available at bookstores in town.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Most medicines are available at the many drugstores around town. Local doctors are competent to care for common ailments.

Most routine laboratory tests are performed by their staff or are sent to the main laboratory at the national hospital (Colonial War Memorial (CWM) Hospital) in Suva. Some tests, previously sent overseas, can now be tested at the two new private pathology laboratories in Suva. The Health Care Pacific Hospital (a new private hospital) houses one of the two private pathology labs. The Plaza Imaging facility provides private ultrasound and basic X-ray services in Suva. Special X-rays, ultrasound, CAT

scans and echocardiogram services are available at CWM in Suva.

A 60-bed private hospital (Health Care Pacific), associated with Colonial Insurance Company, opened in mid January 2001. It offers outpatient and inpatient services, operating theater services and a modern state-of-the-art pathology laboratory staffed by local and overseas specialists.

Due to the political crisis in Fiji that began in May 2000, professional people such as doctors, nurses, accountants, dentists and medical technicians are leaving the country. According to the president of the Fiji Medical Association, it is estimated that by January 2001 there will be a manpower loss of up to 30% not only among private practitioners, but also local and expatriate doctors currently staffing the main government hospital in Suva.

A cut in salaries in 2000 due to the political crisis has prompted even more nurses to resign and emigrate. As a result there is a move to hire ward assistants (nurses aides) to look after the basic nursing care of patients in the hospitals. In addition, many of the most qualified local nurses have been recruited from the Ministry of Health to staff the new private hospital (Health Care Pacific). This nursing shortage is likely to greatly affect the quality of care for patients in the government hospitals and community health centers in the country.

The Suva Colonial War Memorial Hospital is not recommended for treatment except in an emergency for the stabilization of a patient either in the coronary or intensive care units prior to an evacuation. The original hospital buildings are old and have only slowly been renovated and painted. The newer extension houses the Accident and Emergency Units, all specialty clinics, operating theatres, acute care wards, critical care units, the main laboratory, the pharmacy and lecture theatres for the medical students. The hospital does not meet sanitation standards of American

facilities. It is understaffed and the local training of medical and nursing personnel is not comparable to that found in the U.S. Nonetheless, the hospital is the best facility to cope with immediate treatment of serious medical emergencies until medical evacuation can be arranged. Most cases of serious illness or pregnancy are evacuated to Honolulu.

A new Children's Hospital (a new addition to CWM), which opened in April 2000, is a very clean and spacious facility and includes a neonatal unit, outpatient and inpatient services for children, a pharmacy and neonatal training facilities.

There are several American doctors currently working on contracts for the Fiji School of Medicine in Suva. They specialize in pediatrics, general surgery and research.

Dental care and orthodontic services are available in Fiji. There is only one qualified orthodontist in Fiji who is based in Lautoka on the western side of the island, 220 km. from Suva. He is good and inexpensive. Although several private dentists can provide routine care and are comparatively inexpensive, sanitation may not be up to U.S. standards.

Replacement eyeglasses are available in Fiji, and there are a few qualified ophthalmologists who offer limited eye diagnostic services. However, it is recommended that eye problems be taken care of before arriving in Fiji. Contact lens users should bring a supply of solutions with them, as supply and selection are limited.

If you require regular prescription medicine, make arrangements for refills to be sent to you from an American pharmacy.

Pharmaceuticals in Fiji are imported mainly from Australia and New Zealand, with a few imported from the U.S., Canada and India. Intravenous fluids are imported from Baxter Company in Australia. Insulin is imported from Lilly Com-

pany. Most antibiotics are imported from Alpha Med in Australia. Vaccines are imported from New Zealand and Australia. Fiji has no capacity to test the quality of these imported drugs, other than screening drugs for expiration dates and any unusual characteristics such as color or shape. Questionable drugs are sent overseas for testing. American over-the-counter medicines are generally not available. Bring a supply of anything you regularly use, or arrange for it to be sent to you.

Community Health

Sanitation in Suva is good by developing world standards. The general health of the population is also good. Filariasis and dengue fever exist in the islands. Infectious hepatitis is common but infectious disease rates are generally low. Leptospirosis has been the cause of several deaths in Fiji lately and preventive measures have been taken to educate the public on how to prevent contracting this disease. Tap water in Suva is usually potable, but not always. Boiling drinking water is recommended, especially during periods of heavy rainfall. The post provides water distillers at all residences. Most restaurants are safe. Homes in several residential areas use septic tanks rather than the sewer system. Garbage disposal is adequate. Vermin and insect pests, which thrive in this hot, wet climate, are always a problem that requires vigilance.

Lizards, lawn toads and mosquitoes are numerous but harmless, except in the case of the mosquitoes during dengue fever outbreaks. Bring a supply of insect repellent for use outdoors. Take care in choosing an appropriate repellent for children. Malaria does not exist in Fiji or in the island countries to the east of Fiji. Typhoid outbreaks can occur, but are quickly contained and rarely seen in Suva. Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise, as are the number of HIV positive cases, especially among young people.

Preventive Measures

Only the usual State Department immunization requirements are

necessary. Gamma globulin shots are recommended before you come. Yellow fever and typhoid vaccines are available in Fiji for preventive measures if needed for regional travel. There is no malaria or yellow fever in Fiji.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Customs, Passage & Duties

Proof of sufficient funds, an onward/return ticket, and a passport valid for at least three months beyond the date of departure from Fiji are required for entry to Fiji. A visa is not required for tourist stays up to six months. Yachts wishing to call at the Lau group of islands need special permission granted at the first port of entry into Fiji. Fiji collects a departure tax, payable in local currency. For more information about entry/exit requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Republic of Fiji, 2233 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., No. 240, Washington, D.C., 20007; telephone (202) 337-8320, or the Fiji Mission to the United Nations in New York. This is particularly important for travelers planning to enter Fiji by sailing vessel.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available. According to Fijian law, a criminal detainee may be held for a maximum of 48 hours before charges are brought. INTERPOL normally advises the U.S. Embassy of the detention or arrest within 24 hours of the incident. Nevertheless, U.S. citizens who are detained are encouraged to request that a consular officer at the U.S. Embassy in Suva be notified

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Suva. The Embassy will also be able to provide updated information on travel and security in Fiji. The U.S. Embassy in Fiji is located at 31 Lof-

tus Street in the capital city of Suva. The telephone number is (679) 314-466, and the fax number is (679) 302-267.

Pets

It is relatively easy to import pets from Australia, New Zealand or England. For pets originating from other countries, the procedures can be extremely cumbersome and expensive, e.g. long-term quarantine in England and Australia, or 6 months of quarantine in Hawaii, to be followed by 3-month quarantine in Fiji. However, a recent arrival's positive dealing with the Quarantine Department indicated that there has been a change in policy, resulting in less restrictive procedures. Depending on the type of pets, quarantine restrictions differ. Generally, however, importation requirements of dogs and cats originating from the mainland U.S. are: Directly from mainland U.S with 3 months of quarantine in Fiji. Via Hawaii with one month of quarantine in Hawaii, followed by 1 month of quarantine in Fiji.

Nonetheless, the process remains protracted and complicated.

The following breeds of dogs are prohibited from importation into Fiji: Dogo argentino, film brasileiro, Japanese tosa, pit bull terriers (including American pit bull terriers), rottweilers, staffordshire terriers or crosses of any of the above.

Firearms and Ammunition

The importation of firearms is prohibited. No exceptions are made.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official unit of currency in Fiji is the Fiji dollar. One U.S. dollar in September 2000 equaled Fiji dollar 2.10. The rate is determined daily and fluctuates slightly. Fiji currency is divided into cents, with 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cent and 1 dollar coins; and 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 dollar notes.

Many commercial banks in Suva maintain exchange facilities. Personal Fiji dollar checks may be

cashed at any of these banks and will be accepted at most Fiji hotels and shops. U.S. dollar traveler's checks and greenbacks may be used to purchase Fiji dollars at any of the exchange facilities.

Fiji uses the metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline is bought by the liter, and the temperature is measured in Celsius.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

All purchases in Fiji are subject to a 10% value added tax (VAT) placed on all goods and services.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Holy Saturday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
June (2nd Sat)	Queen's Birthday celebrated*
Aug.	Bank Holiday* Prophet Mohammed's Birthday*
Oct.	Fiji Day* Diwali*
Nov.	Prince Charles' Birthday celebrated*
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Adrian. *Peasants in the Pacific. A Study of Fiji Indian Rural Society.*

Brown, Stanley. *Men From Under the Sky.*

- Derric, R. A. *A History of Fiji. Suva. Colony of Fiji.*
- Lonely Planet Publication. *Fiji, Ravel Survival Kit.*
- Oliver, D. *The Pacific Islands.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Nayacakalou, R. R. *Leadership in Fiji.* Oxford: Oxford Press.
- "Tradition and Change in the Fijian Village Suva." *Fiji Times.*
- Pacific Islands Year Book.
- Ratu, Sir Rabuka, Sitiveni, *Autobiography - No Other Way.*
- Ratu, Sir Kamisese Mara. *The Pacific Way.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Siers, James. *Fiji in Color. Fiji Celebration.* London: Collins.
- Shapham (editor). *Rabuka of Fiji.* Central Queensland University.
- Tarte, Daryl. *Island of the Frigate Birds* (Mostly about Banaba and Nauru).
- Tompson, Peter. *Kava in the Blood.*
- Trumbul, R. *Tin Roofs and Palm Trees.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Williams, Thomas. *Fiji and the Fijian.* Fiji Museum, Suva.

GEORGIA

Republic of Georgia

Major City:

Tbilisi

Other Cities:

Batumi, Kutaisi, Rustavi, Sukhumi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Georgia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Georgia is an ancient land, rich in history. It is the site of Colchis where, legend has it, Jason found the Golden Fleece. A Christian country since the fourth century, Georgia has been a crossroads and, at times, a battlefield for Assyrians, Arabs, Mongols, Persians, Turks, Russians, and others.

A new Georgia has emerged from the collapsed Soviet Empire. In today's Georgia, Western engineers are building oil pipelines where the Silk Road once ran. Fully occupied with nation building, Georgians are anxious to draw on the American experience to build a viable democracy and free market economy.

Tbilisi lies along the Kura River across a series of steep hills; its winding, tree shaded streets are at the heart of a charm that made Tbilisi one of the most livable cities in the former Soviet Union. Although it is just the size of West Virginia, Georgia enjoys some of the most spectacular natural beauty in the world. Mountain, desert, vineyards, sub-tropical groves and the fabled Black Sea Coast are within a few hours of each other. A visit to Georgia is a ticket into the very eye of history.

MAJOR CITY

Tbilisi

In 458 AD, the capital of Georgia was moved from the small, nearby town of Mtskheta to its present location, Tbilisi. The founder of Tbilisi, King Vakhtang Gorgasali, named the city Tbilisi (from the Georgian word "tbili," meaning warm) after discovering hot sulfur springs. Many hot sulfur baths are still in use today.

Tbilisi has a population of approximately 1,400,000 and is spread out over 135 square miles. Adding to Tbilisi's natural beauty is the Mtk-

vari River (also called the Kura in Russian) which flows through the city center. Tbilisi is neither European nor Asian but an exotic mixture of both, as illustrated by the architecture, houses of worship, open-air markets, sulfur baths, and different nationalities living together in common courtyards.

Utilities

The electrical current in Tbilisi is 220 volt/50 Hz.

Personal computer users should bring a high quality surge suppressor and an uninterruptible power supply (UPS).

Food

While many fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy products, and spices are seasonally available, supply, selection, and quality also vary seasonally. Generally, pork, beef, veal, lamb, imported whole chicken and leg quarters, and fish (freshness is not guaranteed) are available in the local open markets. The art of carving is not practiced by local meat vendors: meat is cut off the carcass and not trimmed to Western standards. Cutting utensils, storage bags, and a meat grinder are essential in preparing meat for cooking or freezing. Likewise, those interested in freezing or

canning fruits or vegetables should bring all supplies required.

Yogurt, sour cream, eggs (bring egg cartons), butter, and local cheeses are available but textures and tastes vary. The joint venture stores have imported dairy products but the supply is unreliable.

A variety of fresh and dried spices is available year-round. Raisins, apricots, figs, and dried beans are also available but must be cleaned well before use.

Clothing

At present only a few small private shops offer a limited supply of Western-style clothing. It is advisable to bring all clothing and shoes to post as well as a supply of mail order catalogs. The climate in Tbilisi is similar to that in Boston or Washington; thus, clothing for a full range of seasons is needed.

Washable, lightweight cotton fabrics are appropriate for the late spring and summer months. Winter clothing is required for the cold months of November through March.

Locally available shoes are mostly imported from Turkey and Italy. Many Western-style shoes can be found but at unusually high prices. Sizes are generally erratic. To have clothing made locally, personnel should bring all fabric and sewing notions.

Supplies and Services

Although Tbilisi has several new supermarkets, items can be quite expensive and inventory is erratic. Bring a good supply of toiletries, cosmetics, hair care products, sanitary supplies, tobacco, home medicines, common household needs, household repair items, candles, cleaning equipment and products, laundry detergents, napkins, and postage stamps. In addition to all clothing and baby supplies, bring children's art supplies, books, and toys. A durable stroller is a must because the roads and sidewalks are extremely bumpy. Disposable dia-

pers, available only in small sizes, are obtainable but at somewhat higher prices than in the U.S. Other items to consider are clothes hangers, European plug converters, photographic supplies, flashlights (large and pocket-sized), batteries, computer supplies, battery operated lights, stationery supplies, pet supplies, and hobby supplies.

Tailoring, dress making, shoe repair, dry cleaning, beauty shops, and barber shops are available locally. It is advisable to take all beauty supplies to the barber or hairdresser because most of the shops do not exercise Western hygiene standards. The joint venture dry-cleaners do a fine job and shoe repair service is good. Tailoring and dress making are also done with care, and prices are reasonable.

Domestic Help

Reasonably priced domestic help, English-speaking nannies, and drivers are available. Few Georgians have had any exposure to Western cleaning techniques and products and thus require training.

Religious Activities

Places of worship for various faiths conduct services in Hebrew, Russian, Georgian, and Armenian. Additionally, the Salvation Army offers English-language Protestant worship services for the international community. Also, some Americans have opened their homes to sponsor church services, Sunday school, and Bible study.

Education

Quality Schools International (QSI), a non-profit institution which opened in September of 1995. QSI offers high quality education in English for elementary students from ages four through thirteen. Several Embassy families currently have children attending this school. The school's curriculum includes English (reading, grammar, composition, keyboarding, and spelling), mathematics, cultural studies (history, geography, economics, etc.), sci-

ence, computer literacy, art, music, physical education, and Russian or Georgian language. In the 1997-98 school year, the school had an enrollment of approximately thirty-one students. QSI also offers extension courses for older children through the University of Nebraska.

School-age children and adults may take private or group lessons in tennis, art, dance, music, horseback riding, gymnastics, and ice skating. One should, however, have some background in Russian or Georgian or make arrangements for an English-speaking instructor.

Sports

Small groups do get together with the international and local community to play softball, volleyball, or tennis, to run or hike, to practice aerobics or gymnastics, and to ice skate or fish at Tbilisi Sea, Bazaleti, or JINVALI Lakes. Staff interested in any of these activities should bring proper equipment and attire. For spectators, the most commonly held international competitions in Georgia are wrestling, chess, and soccer.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The city of Tbilisi possesses many interesting historic sites. The Old City has preserved its intricate maze of its narrow meandering streets and lanes. Steep cobblestone streets often end in stairs leading up the mountain; courtyards are encircled by wooden balconies; domes of ancient churches and bath-houses catch the eye. Nearby is the 13th century Metekhi Church and the monument to Vakhtang Gorgasali, the founder of Tbilisi. Dominating Old Tbilisi are the ruins of the Narikala Fortress and the gleaming statue of Mother Georgia.

One of the greatest benefits of living in Tbilisi is the proximity to the Caucasus Mountains. Opportunities to ski in winter and hike in summer are found only two hours away by car in Gudauri, which



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Aerial view of Tbilisi, Georgia

offers a four-star hotel. The seaside of Batumi on the Black Sea is a drive of 6-7 hours.

Hotel accommodations are generally still of the Soviet style. Camping is possible throughout the country, even near the capital city.

Entertainment

Excellent operas, ballets, recitals, concerts, dramatic plays, pantomime, and marionette

theater are popular forms of entertainment during various seasons. Tickets are generally inexpensive. Quality movie theaters do not exist, but the Embassy shows movies on select Friday nights. Restaurants now in operation offer Italian, German, Chinese, Mexican and Georgian food. The Western standard, five-star Sheraton Metechi Palace Hotel offers a cafe, restaurant, piano bar, and discotheque. Nightclub entertainment is limited but small, informal, gatherings at home with friends from the active international and local communities occur often.

The International Women's Association offers numerous activities and opportunities for women from many nations to get acquainted. The Club meets once a month at the

Sakartvelo Restaurant and offers many social and volunteer activities. .

OTHER CITIES

The city of **BATUMI** is in the extreme southwestern corner of Georgia. Batumi's location on the Black Sea coast has led to its development as a major Georgian seaport and shipyard. The city is home to a major oil refinery, which receives oil via a pipeline from Baku, Azerbaijan. Several industries are located in Batumi. These industries produce furniture, machinery, and zinc-plating. Batumi is situated in a rich agricultural region where citrus fruits and tea are grown. Many popular resorts are located on the outskirts of the city. Batumi's major tourist attraction is the Batumi Botanical Gardens, which feature a wide array of flora and fauna. Batumi has an estimated population of 137,000.

KUTAISI is situated on the Rioni River in western Georgia. It is one of Georgia's largest industrial cities. Industries in Kutaisi manufacture furniture, textiles, clothing, processed foods, mining machinery, trucks, and consumer goods. Nota-

ble tourist attractions near Kutaisi include the remains of a first-century A.D. Bagrat church and fortress and the Sataplia Nature Reserve, which offers informative displays of dinosaur fossils and tours of several limestone caverns. With an estimated population of 240,000 in 1997, it is Georgia's second largest city.

The city of **RUSTAVI** is situated on the Kura River approximately 16 miles (26 km) southeast of Tbilisi. Rustavi is primarily an industrial center and is the home of large steel and iron works. Synthetic fibers and fertilizers are produced by a major chemical factory in the city. In 1995, Rustavi had an estimated population of 160,000.

SUKHUMI is a major resort city. Tourists from Georgia and other former Soviet republics flock to Sukhumi for its warm weather and sandy beaches. Several small industries are located in the city. These industries are involved in wine-making and canning the fruit grown near Sukhumi. The city has a population of approximately 122,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Georgia is situated on the eastern bank of the Black Sea and bordered by the Caucasus Mountains to the north. Its neighbor to the east is Azerbaijan, and to the south are Turkey and Armenia. Georgia is at a crossroads of European and Asian commerce, culture, and religion.

Georgia is 69,900 sq. km., slightly larger than West Virginia. Starting in the east, Georgia's landscape is largely semi-desert. In the western portion lie the permanently snow-covered peaks and glaciers of the Caucasian Mountains, with summits as high as 5,000 meters. The

subtropical climate near the Black Sea coast nourishes citrus fruits. Numerous rivers, including the Kura and the Rioni, wind through Georgia's mountains and valleys. Many of these rivers are used for hydroelectric power generation.

Protected by the Black Sea and Caucasus Mountains, Georgia's climate is relatively mild. Seasonal temperatures range from winter daytime highs of 32°F - 35°F to summer daytime highs of 86°F - 93°F. Summers have relatively low humidity. Spring daytime highs average in the high 60°F to the mid 70°F.

Population

Georgia's population, according to the 1989 Soviet census, is 5.5 million, of which some two-thirds are ethnic Georgians. Over 80 other nationalities reside in Georgia, including Armenians, Russians, Azerbaijanis, Ossetians, Greeks, Abkhazians, Ukrainians, Jews and Kurds.

Within Georgia are two autonomous republics, Abkhazia and Adjara. During the Soviet period, the region settled by Ossetians was also granted autonomous status.

Georgian is a proto-Caucasian language of the Iberian-Caucasian family and is spoken throughout the country. Most urban Georgians speak Russian; it is somewhat less common in the country-side.

Christianity was spread throughout Georgia in the 4th century. Today, the majority of Georgians identify themselves as Georgian Orthodox, an autocephalous church (i.e. one with its own patriarch) similar to Greek and Russian orthodox churches. The unusual Georgian Orthodox cross, with its downward-bowed crosspiece, is ascribed to Saint Nino of Cappadocia, who introduced Christianity to Georgia. According to legend, upon entering Georgia she took two vine branches and, with strands of her own hair,

bound them together in the form of a cross.

Islam is practiced among sectors of the population of Tbilisi, in villages near the Azeri and north Caucasus borders, and in the autonomous republic of Adjara in the southwest. The Jewish population in Georgia dates back twenty-five centuries. Roman Catholicism is practiced by some Georgians, mostly in the west. Reflecting Georgia's religious diversity, one small area in Old Town Tbilisi has five different places of worship: a Georgian Orthodox Church, a Roman Catholic Church, a mosque, a synagogue, and an Armenian Orthodox Church. Hospitality is one of the most notable characteristics of the Georgian people. Georgians receive guests as a "gift from God." The hospitality is particularly well represented by the "Georgian Table." The table is stacked with many traditional dishes, such as Georgian flat bread; "khachapuri" (a cheese pie); lamb, pork or beef shishkebab; roast pig; chicken or turkey in a walnut sauce; and accompanying "tkemali," a spicy plum sauce. The traditional drink of Georgia is wine; grapes are grown throughout the country, especially in the region of Kakheti. "Churchkhela" is a special dessert made with walnuts or hazelnuts dipped into a paste made from boiled grape skins. A unique feature of the Georgian table is the "tamada," or toastmaster. Chosen by the male members of the table, the tamada offers a series of traditional toasts for the guests during the meal.

The family unit is important for Georgians. Many nuclear families live together with parents or grandchildren, often because of the housing shortage. Tradition has passed down a strong sense of obligation for family members to look after one another.

Public Institutions

Georgia became one of the fifteen republics of the Soviet Union in

1921. The Communist Party dominated the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic for over seventy years.

As the Soviet Union began to disintegrate, Georgia became one of the first republics to declare its independence. The first post-Soviet government, headed by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, was strongly nationalistic. Although democratically elected, Gamsakhurdia did not observe democratic norms. Following a coup, the Gamsakhurdia government was replaced in March 1992 by a State Council headed by former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. After an initial period of political turmoil, Georgia held elections for Parliament in October 1992. Mr. Shevardnadze was elected Head of Parliament and Head of State.

Georgia adopted a new constitution in August 1995. The constitution provides for three branches of government: the Executive (President), Legislative (Parliament), and Judicial (Supreme Court). In November of that year, Presidential and parliamentary elections were held. International monitors described them as "generally free and fair." Eduard Shevardnadze was elected to a 5 year term. The unicameral Parliament has four political parties: the Citizens' Union of Georgia which holds 110 seats and is the governing party; the Adjara-based Revival Union Party; the National Democratic Party; and the People's National Democratic Party.

Arts, Science, and Education

Georgians are proud of their centuries-long cultural and academic traditions, many of which continue to the present day. Georgians are particularly talented musicians. The Georgian folk song continues an age-old polyphonic style, and even singers who have never met each other can create complex harmo-

nies. A traditional dinner always includes Georgian folk songs.

In three handsome state theaters in Tbilisi, one can see opera, symphony concerts, ballet, and drama. Tbilisi's most famous theater company, the Rustaveli Theater, has performed throughout Europe and took its performance of *King Lear* to the 1996 Edinburgh Festival. There are also several other theaters, including a marionette and children's theater, where all performances are in Georgian.

Tbilisi is home to several of Georgia's finest history museums and art galleries.

The Fine Arts Museum contains remarkable examples of ancient textiles and jewelry, and the Ethnographic Museum is an unusual open air exhibit depicting life at various times in all the regions of Georgia. In Tbilisi and throughout the country, travelers encounter marvelous examples of Georgian ecclesiastical and secular architecture.

Georgia's educational system is currently faced with both pressures to reform to meet contemporary needs and with extremely difficult financial problems. Georgian students attend school from age six and continue through graduation from high school. Georgians are highly educated and place great value on education. Literacy rates approach 100%, with almost all Georgians bilingual in Georgian and Russian and many speaking a third and fourth language. English is increasingly widely spoken in Tbilisi, and Georgians are usually eager to practice English with Americans.

Commerce and Industry

The Georgian economy is primarily agricultural. Immediately after independence in 1991, the Georgian economy contracted dramatically, due in large part to the sudden requirement to obtain energy supplies at world prices. By 1994, eco-

nomics output stood at about one-third of its level in 1990 and hyperinflation raged. In late 1994, with the assistance of the IMF, the Government of Georgia introduced an economic reform program aimed at curtailing inflation and creating conditions for economic growth. This economic recovery continued in 1996. However, much of the country's Soviet-era industry is either closed or operating below capacity. The country needs substantial productive investment to modernize its industry and infrastructure.

Successful economic reform relies heavily on technical assistance and funding provided by the international community, including the United States. The character of assistance programs to Georgia has shifted from humanitarian food and medicines to longer-term support for economic restructuring, especially in the critical energy sector.

Georgia's international trade is increasing, albeit from a very low base. The current account deficit is financed by significant lending. Georgia is preparing its application to join the World Trade Organization and has chosen a relatively open trading regime. The government also welcomes foreign investment. A variety of mid-size joint ventures have sprung up that include U.S. and German partners, and Tbilisi receives frequent visits from investors interested in Georgia's business potential. Georgia's principal trading partners are Turkey, Russia, and Western Europe.

Small enterprises have now been almost completely privatized, as has housing. Georgia is engaging in the difficult task of privatizing large, residual state holdings and hopes to find foreign investors interested in some of these enterprises. Considering the distance the economy has come since introducing economic reforms in 1994, Georgia's economic

Transportation

Automobiles

Travelers should consider the following factors when selecting a vehicle for local use: the fuel quality is inconsistent, parts for non-Russian vehicles are largely unavailable, and vehicle servicing is well below Western standards. A few dealerships, such as Mitsubishi, operate in Tbilisi but do not stock spare or replacement parts. Roads inside and outside the capital are not well maintained. Some staff prefer four-wheel drive vehicles that allow more ground clearance. Russian-made and used German vehicles are available locally. Prices are competitive but quality is inconsistent. Cars and drivers can be privately rented for outings. Some long term visitors hire a personal car and driver at rates significantly lower than the cost of owning and operating a personal vehicle.

Local

In Tbilisi, an inexpensive underground metro system connects outlying districts to the city. However, power outages can strand metro riders between stops, hundreds of feet underground. Overcrowded buses and trolley buses serve the inner city, and taxis can be hailed throughout the city. The best mode of transportation is often by foot because Tbilisi is relatively small.

Regional

Two train stations provide service to other regions of the country and to the countries of the former Soviet Union. The trains do not meet Western standards, and schedules are not dependable.

Tbilisi opened a new airport in 1996. Commuter airplanes fly on an unpredictable schedule between Tbilisi and four of Georgia's main cities. International flights ferry passengers to cities outside of Georgia. The airlines serving Georgia which reflect Western standards are Turkish Air, British Airways, Austrian Air and Swissair. Aeroflot provides regular flights between Tbilisi

and other cities within the former Soviet Union.

Communications

Telephone

Most people in the city have private telephones. Service sometimes is problematic but costs are reasonable. Domestic telegraph, fax, and wireless services are available with reasonable prices. Cellular telephone service is also available in Tbilisi. Most public telephones in the city are not in working order.

Mail

Georgian international mail service is very slow. Federal Express and DHL are available in Tbilisi but can be very expensive.

Radio & TV

Cable television is available in Tbilisi for a reasonable monthly fee. English-speaking programming includes CNN, Cartoon Network, TNT, ESPN, SKYNEWS, and NBC SUPER CHANNEL. Spanish, Italian, French, German, and Russian programs are also available on cable. Georgia uses the PAL format for all television broadcasts.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical facilities in Tbilisi are government operated and include specialized hospitals, medical institutes, and outpatient polyclinics. One of the largest hospitals, Republican Hospital, serves not only Tbilisi but also outlying areas of the country. None of the facilities practices Western standards. There is a shortage of medicines, but the situation is improving slowly with supplies coming in from Turkey and Germany.

Under the Soviet system, everyone was immunized. At present, however, a shortage of vaccines has caused epidemics of diphtheria, measles and mumps. Also due to the lack of vaccines for animals, rabies

has been on the increase. Last year there were over 25 human cases of rabies in Georgia.

Several private medical emergency/referral services are available which provide twenty-four hour ambulance service and direct referral to specialists.

In the past year, a private medical clinic, OMS, has opened. It is staffed by a western trained doctor and medic.

Community Health

The most common health problems encountered with Embassy personnel are the usual health problems found in the United States, mainly those causing upper respiratory distress. Those with allergies have increased problems during the spring when the trees are flowering.

The most common intestinal problems are giardia and food poisoning. Post provides water filters which attach to the water source in the kitchen and supply potable water. Many people also purchase Brita filters to filter out the large amount of sediment in the water. Care should be

taken in eating raw fruits and vegetables. As in most overseas posts, it is recommended that fruits and vegetables not peeled or cooked be washed and then soaked in a chlorine solution. Purchasing meat and dairy products in the open market can be risky in the summer due to lack of refrigeration. Meat should always be well cooked.

Preventive Measures

Update immunizations before coming and bring at least a three to six month supply of prescription and frequently used over-the-counter drugs. Limited emergency dental care is available but it is very important to get a dental checkup and complete all dental work before leaving the U.S.

Prescription glasses are not available locally so it is helpful to bring an extra pair or make arrangements

to have glasses sent if necessary. Bring a copy of your prescription with you.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Christmas (Orthodox)
Jan. 19	Epiphany
Mar. 3	Mother's Day
Apr. 9	Memorial Day
Apr. 16	Recollection of Deceased
May 26	Independence Day
Aug. 15	Mariamoba (Assumption)
Aug. 24	Constitution Day
Aug. 28	Day of the Virgin
Oct. 14	Svetitskhovloba
Nov. 23	St. George of Iberia Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and visa are required. U.S. citizens may receive a visa upon arrival at Tbilisi Airport, the Port of Poti, and the Red Bridge ("Tsiteli Khidi") crossing on Georgia's border with Azerbaijan. Americans intending to enter Georgia at other points-of-entry must obtain a visa beforehand at a Georgian embassy or consulate abroad. Armenian and Azerbaijani visas are no longer valid for transit through Georgia. Travelers to Georgia must fill out a customs declaration upon arrival that is to be presented to customs officials when departing the country. (Please see also the section on Georgian Customs regulations.) For further information, please contact the Embassy of Georgia at 1615 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20009, tel. (202) 387-2390, fax:

(202) 393-4537; Internet: <http://www.georgiaemb.org>.

Travelers to Georgia must fill out a customs declaration upon arrival that is to be presented to customs officials when departing the country. Travelers are advised to declare all items of value on the customs form. Failure to declare currency and items of value can result in fines or other penalties. If your customs form is lost or stolen, please report the loss to the police to obtain a certificate to show to customs officials when you depart the country.

Traveler's should be aware that Georgia's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning the temporary importation into or export from Georgia of items such as alcohol, tobacco, jewelry, religious materials, art or artifacts, antiquities, and business equipment. Only personal medicines with a doctor's statement can be imported without the permission of the Georgian Department of Healthcare.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Georgia are strongly encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi, where they may obtain updated information on travel and security within Georgia. The U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi is located at 25 Atoneli Street, tel. (995)(32)98-99-67 or (995)(32)98-99-68, fax: (995)(32)93-37-59. The Embassy web site address is located at: <http://www.georgia.net.ge/usembassy>

Complex visa requirements in Russia make it more desirable to fly to Tbilisi from Western Europe, usu-

ally from London, Zurich, Frankfurt, Vienna, or Istanbul.

Air travel connections to Tbilisi are difficult to arrange outside of Georgia. A number of charter flights serve Tbilisi each week, but it is difficult to get information on these flights outside of Georgia.

Pets

In compliance with the World Health Organization (WHO), Georgian authorities require that pets entering or departing Georgia must have a health certificate stating the pet is in good health, is free from infectious disease, and has had a rabies inoculation not less than 10 days and not more than 30 days before departure. The certificate must be validated by the appropriate medical authority in the country where travel begins.

U.S. airlines require that animals must be in a kennel and transported in the reserved animal area in the hold. Note that the few veterinarians in Tbilisi have a shortage of supplies and vaccines. Boarding kennels are unavailable. All pet vaccinations should be up-to-date. Pet owners should bring all pet supplies that may be required.

Firearms & Ammunition

U.S. citizens may not import firearms into Georgia; however, hunting weapons may be brought into the country for a two-week period based on valid Georgian hunting licenses. Membership in the Georgian Society for Hunting is also required.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Lari is Georgia's official currency. Only Lari-based transactions are legal. Georgia has several reliable banking facilities which can transfer currency into and out of Georgia.

The Sheraton Metechi Palace Hotel is the only business venture that accepts travelers checks and major credit cards for dining and lodging. The Guest House "Betsy" also accepts credit cards.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on Georgia.

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Burney, Charles, and David Marshall Lang. *The Peoples of the Hills: Ancient Ararat and Caucasus*. Praeger, 1972.

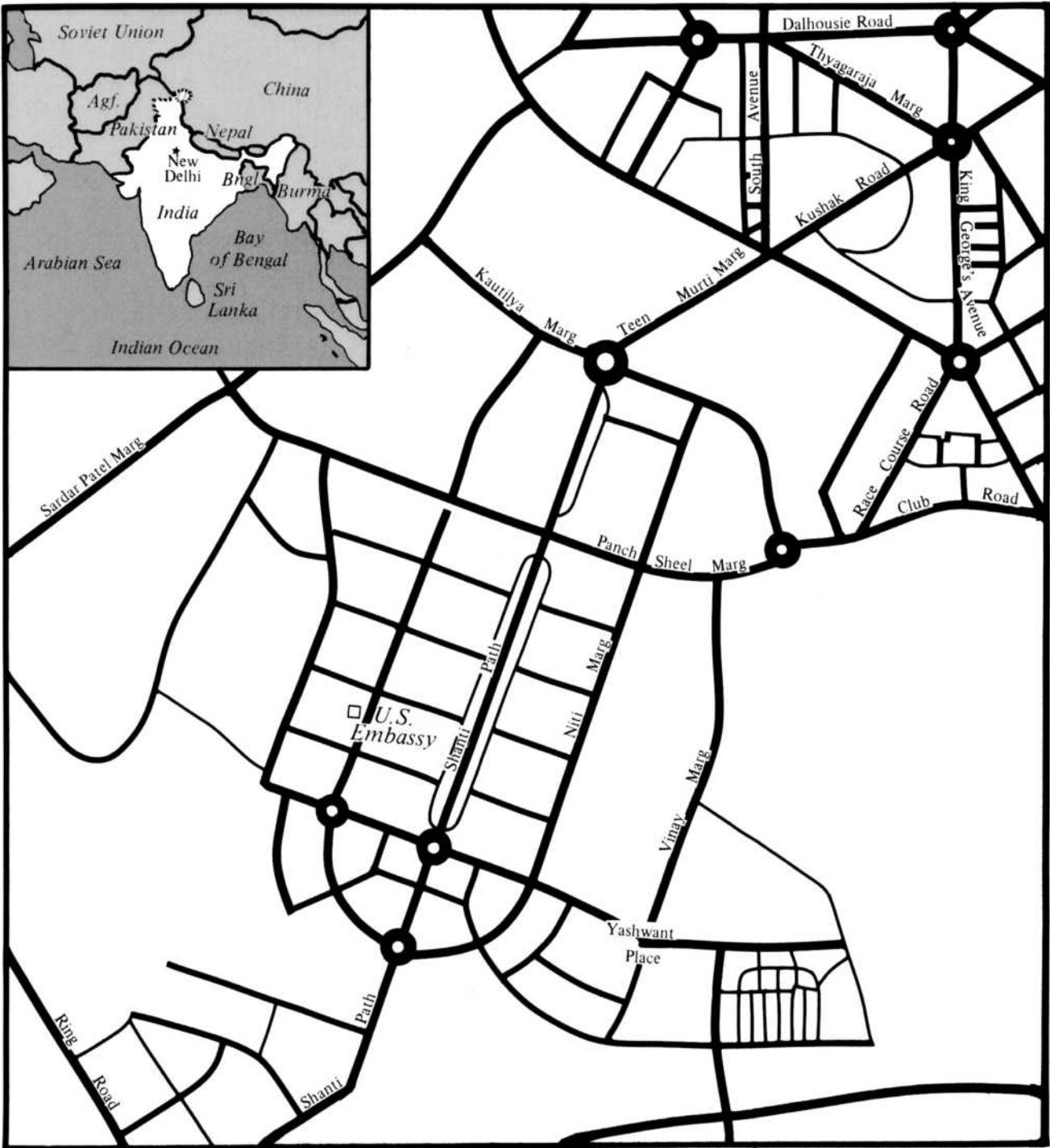
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New Delhi, India

INDIA

Republic of India

Major Cities:

New Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai (Madras), Mumbai (Bombay)

Other Cities:

Agra, Ahmadabad, Bangalore, Baroda, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Indore, Jaipur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Madurai, Nagapur, Pune, Surat, Varanasi

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

INDIA challenges and fascinates any newcomer. India is a land of contrasts—4,000 year old Indus Valley seals in the National Museum, Indian teens browsing among the latest Western fashions to the beat of rock music at Benetton's, elephants draped in red and gold plodding up music-filled driveways of five-star hotels amid lights and gyrating wedding guests, bazaars filled with ultra-soft pashmina shawls and silk saris edged in gold, cows dozing on the center divider of busy urban avenues, white-water rafting on the chilly Ganga (Ganges River), bookstores with Anglo-Indian literature and American novels, delicious makhani dal (red

bean dish) and masala dosa (South Indian crispy potato-filled pancake), graceful maharaja palaces offering tourist specials, bird sanctuaries with wintering flamingos and cranes from Siberia, more than a dozen recognized regional languages with English widely spoken from north to south, and one of the wonders of the world—the Taj Mahal in Agra.

India requires patience and flexibility. First-time travelers overseas—as well as veterans—can expect a certain amount of culture shock. The English language is used in ways which may perplex native speakers. Local customs concerning timeliness and sanitation are relaxed. Indians may give the answer they think a questioning foreigner wants to hear, rather than the truth. Gentle persistence on issues of importance to you yields dividends.

Schooling, support, and social activities are good and plentiful. “*Achcha*” (fine) or “*T.K.*” (o.k.), accompanied by a head bobble, is the most common reply to a question. So, “*Na-must-ay*” (hello) and “Welcome to India!”

MAJOR CITIES

New Delhi

New Delhi is located in north-central India beside the old city of Delhi on the Yamuna River. The capital of modern-day India traces its roots to King George V's triumphant tour of India in 1911. While encamped on the outskirts of Delhi, the King announced that the capital of British India would be shifted from Calcutta to a new city to be built beside the ancient city of Delhi.

Older residential areas feature broad, tree-lined streets and large bungalows with spacious yards. Houses in newer residential areas are more modern, but yard space is often at a premium and streets are congested. The commercial heart of New Delhi is Connaught Place, where state emporia sell local crafts. Jan Path, famous as the capital's souvenir center, has everything from cheap curios to exquisite pieces of art. Luxurious five-star hotels have good restaurants and shopping malls. An occasional cow meanders down avenues, reminding visitors that this is India.

The old city of Delhi is a vivid contrast to the spacious, orderliness of



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Tomb of Mughal Emperor Humayun in New Delhi

New Delhi. Jama Masjid and the majestic Red Fort lie amid narrow, crooked streets teeming with humanity, vehicles, produce, and animals. Chandni Chowk in the heart of Delhi is jammed with shoppers, vendors, conveyances, temples, mosques, and small shops selling everything from spices to expensive jewelry. Qutab Minar, a 13th-century minaret over 240 feet high, stands amid ruins outside the city limits. New Delhi is filled with massive forts, palaces, and grand tombs built over the centuries by Delhi's various rulers.

Food

Every neighborhood in New Delhi has at least one market that sells fresh fruit, vegetables, cut flowers, and dry goods, oils, eggs, some canned or bottled items, milk, soft drinks, lotion, shampoo. There are also chemists (pharmacy), bakery, and sometimes a meat shop with chicken and/or mutton. The most

popular markets among foreigners are Modern Bazaar, Khan Market, and INA Market.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are seasonal and the selection may not be as large as in U.S. supermarkets. The winter season is best for price and variety—many stock up by freezing or canning. Potatoes, onions, tomatoes, carrots, limes, lemons, cucumbers, eggplant, at least one variety of squash, coriander, bananas, orange or tangerine, apples (sometimes stored from last season), and coconuts are always available. Frozen peas are available year round. Seasonal varieties include peas, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, red and white radishes, kohlrabi, green peas, spinach, lettuce, string beans, parsley, varieties of squash, sweet potatoes, turnips, breadfruit, avocados, melons, many varieties of mangoes, limes, pomegranates, tangerines, oranges, grapes, papaya, grape-

fruit, pineapple and occasionally small peaches, short thin celery, and apricots. Dried fruits, cashews, walnuts, almonds, and pine nuts are usually available in the market.

Mutton, goat, pork, and chicken are available in several cuts. Buffalo undercut can be used as beef in recipes. Fresh sea fish and shellfish are available, but should be eaten only in the cooler months. Baby food in the local market is limited to powdered milk in tins and an occasional box of cereal mixed with dried fruit.

Clothing

In general, the adult Indian dresses more conservatively than Americans. Indians wear Western dress more and more as the years go by—especially the men. Men wear shirts and slacks, suits, bush or safari suits (the short or long-sleeved shirt is worn outside the same-color pants), or a kurta-pajama (long

tunic over draw-string pants). At home, a man might wear an under-shirt with lungi (3 yards of material tucked in at the waist).

The accepted national dress for women is the sari, which can be worn in a number of ways. Usually it is a combination of 6 meters of often elaborately bordered silk, cotton, or polyesters wrapped over a drawstring full-length petticoat and a form-fitting choli blouse which leaves the midriff exposed. The sari is worn for formal occasions, accompanied by quality jewelry of gold, silver, and precious stones. The other outfit Indian women wear frequently is the salwar kameez, a two-piece suit made up of decorative knee length tunic over drawstring pants, sometimes worn with a scarf (“dupatta”).

Although Indian women are not hesitant to show their mid-section—some even have open backs—they usually feel self-conscious in pants and a tucked-in blouse. Most would not wear shorts even in the privacy of their own homes. (See Special Information for more information on Indian sensitivities on dress.)

New Delhi’s climate alternates between extremely hot summers, humid monsoons, and surprisingly chilly winters. Lightweight, loose yet covering cotton clothing is suitable for eight months of the year. Sweaters, jackets, wool skirts, wool suits, sweat suits, hats, scarves, and even gloves will be welcome during the winter. Excursions to the north or to hill stations require warm clothing including heavy sweaters and coats. American-style underwear and sports socks are not available locally. Light raincoats or Windbreakers may come in handy. Umbrellas are needed in the monsoon season.

Washable fabrics are the most convenient for maintenance, but dry-cleaning services are also available. Cotton, silk, and wool are the most comfortable fabrics to wear. Quality woolen and knit fabrics are generally not available. India’s distinctive

cottons and silks, however, are among the bonuses of life here.

Local footwear consists mainly of sandals (“chappals”), which have straps over the instep and big toe. Ready made shoes often lack quality, comfort, and durability—and they can be expensive. Cobblers repair shoes at little cost. Shoes wear out more quickly in this climate. Bring several pair of comfortable walking shoes, good work shoes, and sport shoes for recreation and exercise.

Men: Lightweight suits are practical for most of the year, but warmer suits (wool) are needed in December and January. High-quality local silk ties are beautiful and inexpensive. Men occasionally wear locally tailored bush or safari suits for summer or winter wear. Local tailor-made shirts and suits vary greatly in quality and fit, and can be more expensive than ready made. Most Americans prefer to bring tennis shorts, knit shirts, golf clothes, and swim trunks. Shorts for at-home wear can be tailored locally, but may cost more than U.S. ready made shorts. Men’s sandals, available in many styles, are comfortable during the summer heat.

Women: Casual dresses, suits, and pants suits are suitable for most daytime occasions. Cotton dresses and cotton underwear are coolest in the hot weather. Women may want to bring pantyhose as comparable pantyhose are difficult to find on the local market, but it is acceptable to go without hose, particularly during the warm weather. Shorts and strapless tops are not worn on the public streets.

Children: At the American Embassy School in New Delhi students dress casually. Jeans, slacks, shorts, T-shirts, shirts, light jackets, tennis shoes, sweat suits, and sweaters are worn by both girls and boys. Teenage girls also wear the salwar kameez and dresses on occasion.

Sweaters and warm jackets are worn daily in December and Janu-

ary. Warm clothing will be needed for the middle school and high school sport conventions which take place in Pakistan, for school or family outings to the hill stations or up north, and for the winter months. Light colors are cooler in hot weather, but dark colored clothes are practical for active children—the red soil is difficult to wash out.

Sandals, worn by both girls and boys during summer, are widely available locally. Socks and tennis shoes tend to wear out quickly.

Teens can buy the latest fashions in jeans, sweaters, shirts, and cotton skirts from sidewalk vendors or in classy shops.

Supplies and Services

Local dry cleaning is available with varying results. Shoe repair is good, inexpensive, and available in the marketplace.

Tailoring services vary in quality and price. Copying existing clothing achieves the best results, but tailors will work from pictures, too.

A beauty shop and a barbershop are located on the enclave compound. Some of the hotels have complete health club facilities, including massage and sauna. For excellent private massages, specialists will come to the home on a regular basis. Prices are inexpensive for these services.

Religious Activities

A Jewish synagogue conducts services in Hebrew at the Judah-Hyam Hall.

Christianity in India dates back nearly 2000 years. Most Christian churches have services conducted in regional languages, as well as in English.

Catholic churches conducting Mass in New Delhi include the Carmel Convent School, the Holy See Embassy, St. Dominic’s, Sacred Heart Cathedral, and the Holy Family Hospital.

Protestant churches include the Bible Bhawan Bethany Assembly, the St. James Church of North India, Centenary United Methodist Church, Cathedral Church of the Redemption, New Delhi Christian Fellowship at the Taj Mahal Hotel, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Free Church, the Delhi Bible Fellowship at Triveni Auditorium, and the Green Park Free Church.

Moslems worship in Arabic in mosques ("Masjid") all over Delhi.

Sikh temples ("gurdwara") ring with readings in Punjabi.

International prayers are read in English and Hindi from the holy books of all religions meetings in the Baha'i House of Worship.

Hindu and Jain temples ("mandirs") abound; the language is Hindi.

Education

The American Embassy School (AES) is a private nonprofit, coeducational day school, conveniently located on a 12-acre site just behind in New Delhi. Instruction by American, Indian, and third-country national teachers follows the American educational system from pre-school through high school. AES is on a par with the best schools in the U.S. The school is divided into three sections: Elementary (ECEC-5), Middle School (6-8), and High School (9-12). The school year runs from early August through May. Students with U.S. citizenship may be admitted any time during this period.

About 35 percent of the 1000 students are American, the balance are 47 different nationalities. About 98 percent of AES graduates attend universities in the U.S. and in other countries. The school is a designated testing center for the College Entrance Examination Board, American College Testing Program, Secondary School Admission Test, and Graduate Management Admission Test and Graduate Record Examination. The school is accredited by the Middle States Associa-

tion of Secondary Schools and Colleges. Selected Advanced Placement courses are offered. Courses are also offered that satisfy the requirements of the International Baccalaureate diploma. Many extracurricular activities are offered including softball, soccer, swimming, hockey, basketball, baseball, tennis, camping, photography, dramatics, cheerleading and student publications. School-sponsored trips to places of interest outside Delhi are available to students in grades 6 to 12. AES provides daily school bus transportation to most neighborhoods in New Delhi, and a late bus is available for those engaging in after school activities.

Apply for admission to AES as early as possible. Write to the school at the following address:

Director
American Embassy School
Chandragupta Marg
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi - 110 021
India

Include a record of academic achievement (official transcript of high school credits or official elementary school report card) and health record. In some cases, interviews with school officials, appropriate testing, and physical examinations may be required. A child who is 3 years old on or before September 1 is eligible for admission to the Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC). However, AES does not ensure space in this program. To enter a child in this program, parents should write to the school as soon as their assignment is firm. A child who is 5 years old on or before September 1 is eligible for admission to kindergarten; a child who is 6 years old on or before September 1 is eligible for the first grade. For information regarding a child with a specific learning disability, contact the school prior to coming to post. AES offers remedial education classes, but only for the mildly learning disabled. They do not offer services for severely handicapped children. There are some ramps throughout the grounds, but

the school is not equipped to handle children who require special accommodations due to physical handicaps.

New Delhi has a range of pre-schools, both Montessori and traditional, which attract both Indian and foreign diplomats' children. They offer quality education at lower cost than the ECEC of AES. Some American children attend these schools, which provide contact with children in other communities.

Parent groups associated with the school include Home and School Association (HSA) and Parent Teacher Student Administrators (PTSA, pronounced "pizza"). All parents of children at AES automatically belong to HSA. All participants in the high school program are also eligible for PTSA family memberships for a small fee.

USIS has a large library at the American Center which is open to Americans and Indians alike. The USIS collection concentrates on all aspects of the U.S.

AWA operates a growing library near the Co-op, which is open 16 hours a week and has a good collection in fiction and nonfiction.

AES runs an elementary library and a high school library. Parents may also use the library.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Delhi School of Music offers private instruction in a full range of instruments of Western music, e.g. piano, violin, cello, and guitar.

Private instruction in Indian music, both instrumental and vocal, and in Indian dance are readily available at moderate cost. Piano teachers are also available. Those interested in art and handicrafts can take courses in painting, ceramics, batik, tie-dye, and fabric design.

The National Museum occasionally gives courses on the history of Indian art.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Taj Mahal in Agra

Sports

Among the sports activities to be enjoyed in and around Delhi are golf, tennis, bowling, badminton, horseback riding, polo, swimming, fishing, and softball. Spectator sports include horse racing, polo, cricket, soccer, field hockey, and school sports.

The Delhi Gymkhana Club and the Chelmsford Club offer swimming, tennis, squash, and billiards. The Delhi Golf Club has a good 18-hole course and a small 9-hole course, complete with peacocks in the trees. Many golf clubs in Delhi offer pay and play—the Delhi Golf Club is the best (although hard to get into), but a new course in Noida across the Yamuna River is popular.

For horseback riding, the Delhi Riding Club gives instruction from beginning to advanced levels, and the Presidents Estate Polo Club offers both riding and polo playing.

Both single-glider rides and gliding instruction are available at the Delhi Gliding Club. Several major hotels offer memberships to their swimming and health clubs.

Within the community, one can also find the Delhi Football League (soccer) and Hash House Harriers (joggers). A vast wooded park area near the U.S. Embassy offers several running/jogging paths ranging in distance from 2.5 to 5 miles. Groups within the community get together for basketball, soccer, and volleyball.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Sightseeing opportunities range from those in immediate neighborhoods to extensive tours of other parts of India and neighboring countries. Costs may be higher than expected, especially when traveling with a family, and the quality of accommodations varies. Delhi has many historical monuments, reli-

gious buildings, and shrines open to visitors.

Excellent sight-seeing guides which are updated every year or two, include *India, a Travel Survival Kit*, *Fodor's India, Nepal and Sri Lanka*, and the *AWA Glimpses of India*.

Ancient and historic sites are everywhere. Once the home of viceroys and now the official residence of the President of India, Rashtrapati Bhawan overlooks a 2-mile long mall down Rajpath to India Gate.

There are many sites that one can visit: Qutab Minar and the nearby mosque constructed from demolished Hindu and Jain temples; the Mughal Gardens of Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament House and the Secretariat; the Red Fort with Shah Jahan's court, the Pearl Mosque, and the evening Sound and Light Show on its history; Raj Ghat, Mahatma Gandhi's cremation memorial grounds; Chandni Chawk

and the spice and silver bazaars; Hauz Khas village and Moslem ruins; Feroz Shah Kotla grounds with an Ashoka pillar on the Jamuna River bank; Humayun's tomb and gardens; Lodi Gardens with tombs and pathways; the huge 14th-century fortress city of Tughlakh; Suraj Kund, a pre-Islamic site; Purana Qila; the 1857 Mutiny Memorial on Delhi's Northern Ridge; the Jantar Mantar observatory; the Viceroy's Church; Safdarjang's Tomb; and Jama Masjid in old Delhi.

When visiting religious sites, remember to dress accordingly. Visitors may be asked to cover their heads, remove shoes, and/or wait until devotions are completed.

During the hot season, it is good to combine the out-of-doors touring with a trip to one of the many museums—National Museum, Crafts Museum and Village Complex, Mahatma Gandhi Museum, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, National Museum of Natural History, Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum, and National Gallery of Modern Art. State museums are closed on Mondays.

Children particularly enjoy the Delhi Zoo with Indian birds and animals, Apu Ghar Amusement Park, and Shankar's International Doll Museum. The Rail Transport Museum offers the opportunity to circle Delhi on a train in a couple of hours. During cool months, the city's parks and gardens are filled with all-seasonal flowers and offer pleasant picnic spots.

For out-of-town trips, transportation is available by car, train, tour bus, or plane. AWA Out-of-Town Tours frequently offers special trips throughout India and to neighboring Nepal and Thailand. Other popular trips are to Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The first trip out, however, should be to see the Taj Mahal at Agra. Travel by train early in the morning—visit the Taj, the Agra Fort, and Fatipur Sikri—then return at



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Men drinking tea in New Delhi

night by train. Near Agra is the Bharatpur bird sanctuary.

Rajasthan has a number of palaces and fortresses cities on the tour map—the pink city of Jaipur is 180 miles away or 5 hours by car; and a trip to Udaipur's Lake Palace, Jodhpur, and Jaisalmer would make a week-long trip by car or train. The major pilgrimage site on the Ganges River, Varanasi (Banaras), is 450 miles from Delhi and is accessible by car, plane, or train.

White-water rafting on the Ganges River, north of Rishikesh, has become a popular 3–5 day family outing or school trip.

Two areas for skiing are Auli, Uttar Pradesh and Solang in Himachal Pradesh's Kulu Valley. With an incredibly beautiful panorama of India's major Himalayan peaks, Auli offers the basics. Accommodation is very cheap. Skis, poles, boots, and goggles cost \$4 to rent, and are in poor repair. No ski lift is available, and it takes 2 long days to get there. Solang has a ski lift—for those taking a course or who obtain permission from the Manali Mountaineering Institute, who owns the lift. Rental equipment is cheap. Accommodations include a nearby lodge, run by Himachal Pradesh

tourism, and guest houses in Manali. Kulu Valley also offers heliskiing. For \$1,000 for 4 days, a European-flown and maintained helicopter will lift skiers from a luxury hotel parking lot to 18,000-foot mountains where one can ski down deep powder slopes for hours without seeing a tree or another skier.

Visitors to Corbett National Park, 183 miles from Delhi, can see tigers, leopards, hyenas, deer, peafowl, and elephants. Hill stations offering relief from the summer heat are Mussoorie, 170 miles away, and Simla, 225 miles. There are many excellent game reserves and bird sanctuaries. Bring binoculars and a good camera. Fishing spots within driving distance of Delhi are available.

Photography is prohibited at airports, dams, bridges, and military installations. Still cameras, not video cameras, may be used to photograph certain historical monuments, but the rules may be changing. At the entrance to historical or tourist sites, a posted sign or guide will explain the current policy. In some cases, a fee is charged to carry in a camera. Obtain the consent of any local individuals to be photographed. If someone asks to be photographed in their ethnic outfit

or with their elephant or cobra, be prepared to pay a tip—this is their livelihood.

Entertainment

New Delhi has many auditoriums, concert halls, stadiums, and luxury hotels with grand ballrooms. Indian and Western music, drama, dance, exhibitions and lectures are plentiful, especially in the cooler season. Traditional Indian festivals are celebrated in Delhi, as well as all over the country. These festivals offer exceptional photo opportunities.

The All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society holds regular lecture meetings and exhibitions of contemporary Indian art. Many restaurants feature Indian musicians. In addition to Indian music, local hotels and auditoriums occasionally feature performances by foreign jazz groups, ballets, and Shakespearean plays. Cultural centers of various embassies regularly offer special programs. The Delhi Music Society sponsors an international concert season. The Delhi Diary, a small weekly magazine, carries a current listing of events in New Delhi.

Tickets are available for these annual events: Republic Day parade, Beating Retreat, Ram Lila (drama), Suraj Kund Mela (fair), and the melas staged by the AWA, the Canadians, and the Australians.

Amateur performers have wonderful opportunities here. The Delhi Symphony Orchestra performs regularly and is always looking for musicians. The Delhi Community Players, an international group of theatre lovers, presents one or two dramas or musicals each season. AES an active program of dramatic and musical presentations by students. The AES High School Chorus and the Delhi Christian Chorus always welcome new members.

Films are regularly shown at the British High Commission, the Max Mueller Bhavan (Goethe Institute), the Alliance Francaise, and the India International Centre. A few Indian theaters show English-language foreign films.

For those who enjoy dinner and dancing, most large hotels in New Delhi feature Western-style dance bands and discotheques.

Social Activities

Americans in New Delhi can lead an active social life. In addition to the Indian and international events, Americans generate many activities themselves. Most of these activities also attract Indian and international participation.

AWA offers opportunities for Americans to share activities in the American community and to explore and enjoy living in India.

Scouting in New Delhi has an active program for boys (age 7–18) and for girls (kindergarten through grade 6)—camping, white water rafting, hiking, exploring, crafts, drama, and community service projects. Scouts should bring their current records and equipment. Uniforms, packs, and sleeping bags may be ordered or locally tailored. Adult leaders, merit badge counselors, and helpers are always needed.

In addition to after school activities organized by AES (soccer, volleyball, swimming, basketball, and track), PTSA sponsors Saturday night Open Gym for high schoolers and a foreign film festival during Language Week.

The best opportunity to meet Indians is at receptions and dinner parties. India is a warm, open society. Indians invite Americans to their homes and readily accept American invitations. Older children of Indians and Americans are often included in invitations.

Sports clubs, churches, business associations, international organizations, and American groups offer occasions for meeting people outside the American community. The Rotary and Lions Clubs have local chapters.

Americans may apply for associate membership in the Canadian High Commission Recreation Association and for a 2-year courtesy card from

the Australian High Commission Social Club.

Delhi Network is an informal organization which invites women, especially foreigners new to Delhi, to a monthly coffee morning where information on life in Delhi is shared.

The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce welcomes Americans and Indians to their varied and interesting programs.

The Women International Club (WIC) and the Delhi Commonwealth Women Association (DCWA) have 50 percent Indian membership. WIC has a very active social and cultural program for members. The DCWA turns its energies to the funding and running of the DCWA Clinic and small school for the poor.

The Outreach Committee of the AWA operates a recycling program and has a listing of Indian organizations welcoming volunteer help.

Special Information

Indians dress modestly. To respect Indian sensitivities when in public, Western women should wear skirts below the knees or longer or relatively loose dark slacks, avoiding sleeveless blouses, tight pants, and shorts. Young women and teenage girls, especially those dressed in tight or short Western dress, may attract pinches and other undesirable attention. Western men should avoid going shirtless; trousers are preferable to shorts. These suggestions are especially important when visiting rural areas or tradition-bound urban areas.

Short-term visitors, especially those planning trips outside the major cities, should keep the weather in mind when arranging their travel.

Calcutta

By Indian standards, Calcutta is a new city. It was established by Job Charnock in 1690 as the trading center in Bengal for the East India Company. The site of the city was

occupied at that time by three villages, one of which had been developed by Portuguese traders as early as 1530. Development of the city has been shared not only by the English and the Indians, but also by Greeks, Portuguese, Dutch, French, Swedes, Jews, Armenians, and Persians—all of whom have contributed to its history.

Calcutta, once a trading center for the East India Company and the capital of British India from 1772 to 1912, is today India's second largest city with 13 million people. Capital of the state of West Bengal, Calcutta is situated in eastern India on the Hooghly River about 80 miles north of the Bay of Bengal. The city is built on marshland and experiences periodic flooding.

About half of Calcutta's inhabitants are Bengali Hindus and a significant percentage are Anglo-Indians, Moslems, and other communities (Sikhs, Parsees and Christians). The largest single element is from the U.K. and now numbers only 266 residents. The American community is estimated to be about 217. Principal languages of the city are Bengali, Hindi and English.

Overpopulation and associated problems—poverty, poor sanitation, and lack of housing—are evident everywhere. Despite facing problems of high unemployment, overcrowding and poor infrastructure, Calcutta, as a city, shows remarkable resilience. The friendliness of Indians of all classes provides many contacts and experiences that together can make a tour in Calcutta pleasant and memorable.

Food

In-season fruits and vegetables are plentiful. Bananas, oranges, and limes are always available. In winter, cauliflower, broccoli, red cabbage and squash are specialties. All fruits and vegetables must be washed and treated with a disinfectant solution.

Excellent and inexpensive beef and mutton is plentiful in the market.

Pork and poultry (poor by U.S. standards) are also available. Better cuts of these meats are usually purchased at higher prices from specialty shops or vendors who deliver.

Fresh fish is reasonably priced in season. Shrimp, crabs, and lobster are available seasonally at slightly high prices. Rice, eggs, sodas, and baked goods are available locally.

Locally available powdered milk is expensive.

Clothing

Men: During the warmest part of the year, short-sleeved shirts or locally made bush shirts are worn.

Wash-and-wear or other lightweight suits in cotton or blends are appropriate. Mohair, wool, or blend medium-weight suits are good for the cool season. Local dry cleaners are adequate, but the quality of service is irregular. Vacations in the hill stations call for a coat, raincoat, jacket, and/or sweater.

Calcutta has many country and sports clubs. Those interested in tennis, swimming, golf and riding should bring appropriate attire.

Women: Washable, inexpensive, and easy-care cotton dresses are worn for most daytime occasions during the 9 warm months of the year. During this time, evening wear is casual. During the cool months, cottons, lightweight wools, wool, synthetic fabrics, and silks are worn. A lightweight coat, sweaters, and knitwear are good for vacations in the hills.

Local tailors can make clothing from patterns or pictures with the local cottons, cotton-blends, and silks.

Bring lightweight, sturdy summer footwear. Flat, low-heeled shoes are necessary for the rough terrain. Relatively inexpensive sandals are available in small sizes only, others can be made to order, but quality is inconsistent. Cobblers can copy shoes that you own or work from pictures.

Children: Bring at least an initial clothing supply for children, especially underwear, swimsuit, tennis shoes, and school shoes. Bring a small supply of winter clothing for cool winter days or visits to hill stations. Children who attend boarding school in hill stations will need a full supply of winter clothing and warm blankets.

Local baby supplies are not up to U.S. standards; bring cotton or disposable diapers and rubber pants. Outerwear can be made locally with local fabrics.

Religious Activities

Calcutta's largest religious groups are the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists.

The Jewish Synagogue is located near the Calcutta Cathedral.

Calcutta has several Anglican churches in addition to the Cathedral of St. Paul. Presbyterian services are held in St. Andrew's Church of Scotland. The largest of the Roman Catholic churches is St. Thomas' on Middleton Row. Other denominations represented are Methodist, Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Christian Scientist, Assembly of God, and Quaker. Many church services are in English.

Education

Schooling in Calcutta above the lower elementary grades is poor by U.S. standards. Many American students to the Calcutta International School (CIS), which accepts students from nursery school through Grade 12. CIS follows the British curriculum but satisfies most American requirements. Grades 10–12 are geared to the British A-level equivalent, requiring American students to do additional coursework before entering most U.S. colleges and universities.

The Mongrace Montessori School, is excellent for preschoolers (age 3 and over).

The school calendar varies among the schools, but most continue throughout the year, with a 1-



Hand-pulled rickshaw in Calcutta

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

month-long break in December to January and a 6-week break during the summer months of May and June.

Sports

Many sports are available—golf, tennis, swimming, horseback riding, rowing, squash, soccer, cricket, polo, horse racing, and field hockey. Squash is played on European-sized courts with imported English squash balls (softer than American balls). A swimming pool is at several private clubs.

Medium-quality tennis and squash rackets are available. Squash balls are difficult to obtain. Local tennis balls are of poor quality. Golfers may use either English- or American-sized golf balls.

Most Americans pay to join a private club for the social life and sports facilities. The Tollygunge Club, about 30 minutes from central Calcutta, has a swimming pool, golf, tennis, horseback riding, monthly movies, and a snack area.

The Saturday Club has tennis courts, a swimming pool, library, restaurant, and lawn. The Calcutta Swimming Club has a large outdoor swimming pool, dining room, and bar. Both clubs accept single women as members.

The Bengal Club offers its older, conservative membership a quiet atmosphere for business luncheons and dinner parties. The Calcutta Club is most prestigious among Bengalis. The South Club and International Club are popular with tennis players. The Rowing Club uses a small lake in south Calcutta, and the Royal Calcutta Golf Club is the oldest Golf Club outside the U.K.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

A drive on the Grand Trunk Road along the Hooghly River reveals glimpses of bygone splendor in Calcutta. Boat rides are available at Diamond Harbor and Kakdwip, a 2-hour drive from Calcutta.

The ocean resorts of Puri and palpur lie about 300 miles southwest on the Bay of Bengal and may be reached by overnight train. Hotel accommodations are moderate to poor. Visitors may swim and surf. Also on the Bay of Bengal and only 4 hours from Calcutta by road is Digha, which has limited accommodations.

The temples and caves of Bhubaneswar, Puri, Konarak, and other historic towns are 275 miles southwest of Calcutta in Orissa. The largest collection of Siberian tigers in the world is in the wildlife preserve

there. Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, is about 700 miles northwest of Calcutta and is about 1 hour by air. The hill station town of Darjeeling is a hour's flight or an overnight train ride from Calcutta.

Permits are required to visit Sikkim, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and the scenic Andaman Islands, a 2-hour flight from Calcutta. Good snorkeling, scuba diving, moderately priced hotels, and tours are available. Some rental snorkeling and scuba gear is available. The peak holiday season is November through April.

Entertainment

Calcutta has good hotel restaurants with international cuisine and live dance bands. Americans also dine at several good Indian and Chinese restaurants.

Several movie theaters regularly feature European and American films, but facilities are poor.

Calcutta is known as the creative capital of India. Bengalis are lively, talkative, and outgoing people. During the cool season, Calcutta comes alive with Indian poetry, music, drama, painting, sculpture, and dance programs. The Calcutta School of Music presents occasional chamber music concerts. Visiting vocal, instrumental, and dance artists perform several times a year.

The Birla Planetarium has daily lectures and demonstrations, except on Mondays. The Zoological Gardens with its white tigers, and the Agri-Horticultural Society are located in Alipur. There are also the Botanical Gardens in Alipur.

Social Activities

Many clubs are available for membership. The Lions and Rotary Clubs welcome men of all nationalities. Many organizations welcome the participation of foreign women in their educational and charitable activities, including local orphanages and Mother Teresa's institutions.

Chennai (Madras)

Chennai (known as Madras until 1997), the capital of Tamil Nadu, lies on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, about 900 miles north of the Equator. With a population of 6.4 million, Chennai is the fourth largest city in India and the major industrial, business, and cultural center of South India. Founded by the British in the early 17th century as their first trading and military post in South Asia, Chennai has continued to grow with very little planning. Modern concrete buildings are often flanked by small shops, thatched huts, and vacant lots. Major streets bustle with bicycles, scooters, handcarts, oxcarts, buses, and long-distance trucks. The general pace of life is slower than in Bombay or Calcutta. Chennai, however, experiences poor sanitation and overcrowding. About 80 percent of the people in South India are still engaged in agriculture, but engineering and consumer industries are beginning to attract more activity.

Chennai is one of India's more pleasant major cities and is spread out over 50 kilometers.

The population is mostly Hindu, with large Muslim and Christian minorities. The traditional jibba, veshti and lungi are worn by many men; professional and businessmen wear Western dress. South Indian women typically wear saris, although the north Indian tunic sets are gaining popularity. South India is famous for Carnatic music and classical dance in the Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, and Kuchipudi styles.

English is spoken by about 5 percent of the people in South India. Tamil is the primary language in Chennai.

Food

Many fruits and vegetables are available—corn, eggplant, beans, carrots, potatoes, cabbage, squash, avocados, mushrooms, artichokes, yams, manes, bananas, peaches, pears, apples, grapes, oranges

(sweet limes), guavas, limes, tangerines, and pineapples. Cashews, peanuts, walnuts, and coconuts are also available.

Beef, chicken, mutton, lamb, pork and, occasionally, veal are available. The cost of all meats, except lamb and chicken, is less than in the U.S. Turkey is also available, but the quality is poor.

Fresh seafood (fish, lobster, crab, shrimp) is available and reasonably priced. Eggs are plentiful and their quality is good. UHT Long-Life milk or powdered milk is used by many foreigners for both drinking and cooking. Good quality cream is available locally. Fresh milk, cream, and powdered milk are available locally, but the supply is undependable. Fresh milk should always be boiled. Baby food and formula are also available locally, but the quality is questionable.

Clothing

American men usually wear short-sleeved dress shirts or bush shirts and slacks in the office, although a sports coat or suit may be necessary for an important appointment or official function. American women's office dress is similar to that worn in U.S. offices during the summer.

Materials for women's summer clothing are excellent, inexpensive and easily available in Chennai, although elastic, thread and zippers are not of the highest quality. Several changes of dress may be necessary daily. Frequent laundering, tropical sunlight, and perspiration combine to shorten the life of clothing. Since there is little seasonal change, cottons are worn year around. Indian dress (two-piece pajama outfits and saris) is popular for casual as well as formal wear. Chennai is a center for a great variety of export-quality handloom silks and cotton textiles. Many women bring a good supply of summer dresses from the U.S. and add locally-made garments to their wardrobes. Also, there are excellent local tailors who can copy almost anything, though these tailors have

trouble with designing or copying from pictures.

Bring several swimsuits and other sport clothes, including shoes for tennis and jogging and riding. Shoes with Western styling and quality are difficult to find, though both inexpensive dress and casual sandals are available locally. A good supply of undergarments is also recommended as local versions are not designed or sized to American tastes. Keep in mind that cotton is the most comfortable for the Chennai climate.

Supplies and Services

Most medicines and drugs are available, although the brand names differ and quality control is inadequate. Travelers are advised to bring their own supply. Most medicines cost less than those in the U.S. Vitamins are available, though not in combination supplements. Chennai water supply does not have fluoride added. Vitamins with fluoride added are recommended for children.

Hairdressers and barbers are adequate and inexpensive. Dry cleaning facilities exist but are of low quality.

Education

The American International School in Chennai (AIM) opened in August of 1995. Designed to enhance the educational and social experiences of expatriate children in Chennai (formerly Madras), AIM is independently operated under the auspices of the U.S. Consulate, Chennai, with the permission of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. It is governed by a Board of Directors drawn from the parents of the children attending AIM.

AIM follows an American international curriculum taught by expatriate and Indian teachers.

Some elementary-age children have attended KFI - The School. Established with the intention of exploring the educational implications of the teaching of philosopher J. Krishnamurti, KFI - The School is run by

the Krishnamurti Foundation and accepts students from nursery school age through U.S. 10th grade. Its student body is 90 percent Indian; its curriculum is religious based. Parents find this alternative very agreeable, but admissions are difficult to obtain particularly for foreign children. Applications are taken once a year in April for June. Class size is limited to 25 per grade level.

By American standards, other schooling options in Chennai are inadequate. Other schooling options are available in the city however enrollment is restricted and entrance standards are very rigid. Facilities lack resources, with outdated textbooks, class rooms and buildings badly in need of repair. Although the curriculum is in English, many of the students have only marginal English speaking skills.

A preschool has recently opened in conjunction with the American International School. Other American preschoolers attend local Montessori schools. Maria Montessori visited Chennai many times during her professional career and left her marks in the city. Traditional Montessori methods are very popular in many local pre schools.

Special Educational Opportunities

Private instruction is available in classical south Indian dancing, instrumental music, philosophy, and yoga. Several famous yoga instructors reside in Chennai.

In Chennai, colleges are affiliated with the University of Chennai. Few admissions are granted to foreigners.

The Government College of Arts and Crafts offers instruction in painting, sculpture, and handicrafts. Interested persons may arrange private lessons from staff members.

Sports

Americans occasionally join the Madras Club, the Cosmopolitan

Club, or the Madras Gymkhana Club. All have swimming pools and tennis courts where whites are customarily worn. The Cosmopolitan Club and Madras Gymkhana have marginal golf courses.

Bring sports equipment, such as golf clubs, tennis rackets, and balls. Good equipment for volleyball, hockey, badminton, and soccer is available locally.

Laws in the southern states make the sport of hunting almost impossible. Do not import weapons into India.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The ancient rock carvings at Mamallapuram (also called Mahabalipuram) and the temple cities of Kanchipuram are worth a visit. Facilities for sight-seeing are improving yearly. Adequate overnight accommodations exist in hotels, clubs, guesthouses of business concerns, or government-run tourist bungalows.

The beach in Chennai is not considered usable for health reasons. Many Americans use a resort area 35 kilometers south of the city for swimming and sunbathing. You can rent a beach house for weekends and holidays. However, be aware of the powerful undertow, and avoid leaving the beach line. Individuals who plan to use the beach should bring a sufficient supply of sunscreen.

Entertainment

On weekends a group of expats might organize pick up, softball and volleyball games. The Chennai Hash House Harriers organize biweekly runs around the city for individuals and families.

The Government Arts Gallery has a small collection of contemporary art; exhibits by individual artists are displayed periodically. The Government Museum exhibits a world-famous collection of early and medieval temple sculpture and an outstanding collection of bronze art.

There are a number of good restaurants in Chennai—in private clubs, deluxe hotels, and a few Chinese and Indian restaurants.

Social Activities

Several informal groups meet regularly for bridge, mahjong, snooker, Scottish Dancing etc. There are two women's groups which are popular with the expatriate community. The Overseas Women's Club (OWC) is open to foreign passport holders and concentrates on fund-raising to support local charities but also provides some support and orientation to newcomers. The OWC has recently published a book called "At home in Madras, a Handbook" which is an excellent resource for persons setting up residence in Chennai (formerly Madras). The International Women's Association (IWA) is an Indian/International organization which provides a social network. Activities and programs are centered around cross cultural exchanges, friendship and goodwill between India and the expatriate community in Chennai. Monthly programs include topics on philosophy/religion, health/ecology, current events, tours/travel, cooking swapshop, book discussions and arts/handicrafts.

Social life is centered in the home for Indians and Westerners alike. Consumption and importation of alcohol is tightly controlled. Certain clubs, restaurants, and hotel permit rooms may serve Indian liquor and wines.

South Indians are hospitable, easy-going, and pleasant. Entertaining at home consists of dinner parties and buffet suppers, occasional cocktail parties, and large receptions. Many Indians do not serve alcohol.

Third-country nationals in Chennai are largely members of the consular corps and business community from the U.K., Japan, Germany, Russia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka. About 20 honorary consuls reside in Chennai. The Consulate General of France is located in Pondicherry, a former French territory.



Gateway of India, arch in Bombay, India

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Special Information

British Airlines and Lufthansa have direct flights from Europe to Chennai. For long flights, a midpoint layover is recommended. Other major international airlines fly into India through Bombay and New Delhi. Transiting Bombay is not recommended.

Mumbai

Government of Maharashtra changed the name of the city of Bombay to Mumbai in December, 1995.

With a population of more than 16 million, greater Mumbai now outranks Calcutta as the largest urban area in India. Mumbai is India's most western city, and yet the most representative of India's diverse populations.

Mumbai occupies two islands on the west coast of India in Maharashtra state. The eastern side looks out over a great natural harbor, unri-

valed elsewhere on the subcontinent, that provides 75 square miles of sheltered, deep water.

At the southern end of the city lies the sweeping, 3-mile curve of Back Bay, fringed by a boulevard whose lights—brightly gleaming at night—are known locally as the Queen's Necklace.

The downtown business area is flanked to the north by a belt of thriving markets or bazaars that sell everything from essential foodstuffs to luxury items. Beyond the bazaars, Mumbai is a hodgepodge of densely crowded tenements, slum areas, factories, cotton mills, railway lines, and crowded streets.

Mumbai provides about one-third of India's income tax revenue and two-fifths of the country's total revenue from air and seaborne trade. It has the country's busiest stock exchange and the largest concentration of industries. More U.S. banks and manufacturing companies are

located in Mumbai than in any other city in India. By far India's busiest port, Mumbai handles twice the tonnage of Calcutta and Cochin. The Indian film industry, whose capital is Mumbai, produces more movies than any other place in the world.

Nearly 70 percent of Mumbai residents are Hindu. Muslims account for another 15 percent. The remainder is composed of Christians (mainly Catholics), Buddhists, Jains, Jews, Parsees and Sikhs—often influential minorities, though few in number. Most of the estimated 5,000 Americans in the Mumbai consular district are of Indian ancestry.

Americans have few language problems in Mumbai. English is widely used in government and business circles. Service personnel often have a poor understanding of English, speaking instead Marathi or Gujarati. Most domestic employees

speak some English and Goan or Konkani.

Food

Most basic food items are available locally. Beef has become increasingly scarce since the ascension to Maharashtra state power of a Hindu nationalist party, the BJP, in 1994. Mutton, pork, ham, and chicken are readily available. A broad variety of fresh seafood is available in the dry seasons, including many kinds of fish, prawns, lobster, and crab. A good variety of vegetables is found in plentiful supply year round—tomatoes, green peppers, potatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, beets, beans, onions, carrots, cauliflower, spinach, and okra. Lettuce and celery are available. Many wonderful fruits are available at different times of the year—papaya, mangoes, pineapples, oranges, tangerines, grapes, peaches, pears, plums, apples, and strawberries. Prices of fruits and vegetables can be as much as 80 percent less than the would cost in the U.S.

Many canned and dry goods can be found on the local market. White flour, whole-wheat flour, sugar (very coarse), confectioners sugar, tea, coffee (ground or beans), juices, jellies, gelatins, crackers, potato chips, excellent nuts, dried beans and lentils, and locally bottled soft drinks such as Pepsi, Coca-Cola, 7-Up, orange soda, club soda, and tonic water are all available. Local dairy products such as fresh milk, cream, yogurt, ice cream, and cheese are available. However, the fresh milk and cream are generally not considered safe unless they are boiled before use. It is safer to use long-life milk, which is available locally. Specialty items such as pate, cheese, and olive oil can be found, as can many American products (Tang and Hershey’s Chocolate Syrup), but the prices are high.

Clothing

Because of the heat and humidity in Mumbai, lightweight, washable clothing is a must. There are very few air-conditioned buildings. Even in the coolest months, polyester blends are uncomfortably warm.

Clothing, including underwear, made of 100 percent cotton is best. Bring clothing for cooler climates for travel to the mountain and desert areas of India and for planned or unexpected trips to Europe, the U.S., or other parts of the globe in winter.

Sports attire is informal in Mumbai, but whites are generally used on tennis courts.

Men: Cotton dress shirts and sports shirts are available in Mumbai, but the quality is not quite the same as in the U.S. Bring a supply of ties, socks, cotton underwear, and shoes. Good sandals and slippers are sold locally, but dress shoes are not satisfactory. Bring athletic shoes, bathing suits, and clothing for sports activities (tennis, volleyball, squash). Some better quality men’s clothing can be purchased in Benetton. Good quality athletic shoes are not available locally. Casual waterproof shoes are helpful to have to wear during the monsoon.

Women: For other times, inexpensive, lightweight cotton dresses, blouses, skirts, shorts, and slacks are available locally. On Fashion Street, an open fair-market dealing in seconds, dresses and skirts are sold for \$2-\$3. Better quality clothing can be found at shops like Benetton.

Ready-made Indian suits (salwar kameez) and saris in beautiful design may be worn for casual and formal occasions. Silk saris can be tailored into dresses and suits. Accessories such as belts, scarves, and costume jewelry are inexpensive. Shoes and sandals are available, but the quality is not as good as in the U.S. Leather purses in a multitude of colors and styles are sold at reasonable prices.

Children: Children’s clothing should be lightweight and washable. Bring a supply of cotton underwear, bathing suits (and other swimming necessities), and shoes. Cotton T-shirts and shorts are available, but bring a supply. Also, bring rubber boots and umbrellas. Infant

supplies are sold locally, but are not up to Western standards.

Supplies and Services

Shopping in Mumbai is interesting. The city has many handicraft shops that specialize in crafts from many parts of India, especially Kashmir and Gujarat—gemstones, embroidery, leather goods, antiques, carved screens, brass, gold items, and carpets.

Gasoline is about \$3.60 a gallon for 93 octane. Eighty-seven octane, as well as unleaded gasoline is also available. Gasoline quality is good but not as good as in the U.S.

Beauty salons and barbershops are adequate and inexpensive.

Dry cleaners exist, but quality is questionable. If you must have something cleaned, make arrangements through one of the five-star hotels.

Tailors and dressmakers are inexpensive. They can easily copy already existing items (rather than sewing from pictures or patterns). Tailors are not as speedy as in Hong Kong or Bangkok, nor is the finished product as skillfully made, but one can usually find a tailor who does adequate work. Good-quality fabrics are available here, but notions (thread, buttons, fasteners, etc.) are below American standards.

Religious Activities

Mumbai has Hindu temples, Moslem mosques, Christian churches, and Jewish synagogues. Among Christian denominations represented are Roman Catholic, Methodist, Church of Christ, and Episcopalian (Church of England). Services are conducted in English, Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi.

Education

The American School of Mumbai (ASB) offers classes from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. ASB is an American-sponsored school and receives grants from the Department of State. It is the only one of the many English-medium schools to use the American system. The

school year runs from mid-August to late May.

The school staff numbers about 30, including a principal, full-time teachers, special staff, and several aides. The student body is composed of about 200 students, 30% American and the remainder other foreign residents of Mumbai. The elementary school is located across the street from the consulate; the middle and high schools are approximately one block from the consulate. The school is currently in the process of purchasing property, and will soon start building a new school. The new school is expected to be ready for occupancy and classes in the fall of 1999.

ASB's high school program is operated as an independent course of study with the University of Nebraska correspondence program. ASB modifies the University of Nebraska program by scheduling the students into as normal a school program as possible.

Most parents send their children to ASB at least through grade 8.

Other English-medium schools in Mumbai operate under the British system. Mumbai International School, Cathedral School, and John Cannon are well known. The schools are competitive and children are under great pressure to perform well. Admission is difficult, particularly in the lower grades. Few American-type extracurricular activities are available. The school year begins in early June and ends in early April.

Sunflower School and Casa Bambino are two nursery schools located in the residential areas near the U.S. Consulate General. Both accept children sooner than ASB does. Though classes are crowded, in recent years American children have been attending Casa Bambino.

Special Educational Opportunities

Teachers of Hindi are available. Classes are available locally in pottery, Indian cooking, weaving, art,

computers, fabric painting, and many other subjects are also available. Coaches are available for tennis and golf.

Sports

Basketball teams play weekly, and tennis is popular. Most sports activities in Mumbai are centered around various private clubs.

Breach Candy Swimming Bath Trust, has two saltwater pools, a lap pool that is partially covered, and an outdoor pool in the shape of pre-partition India. Applicants must have a European sponsor to join. Fees for two years for a family of two total about \$925. The children's park and playground may be used at Breach Candy free of charge. Visitors may use the pool area for \$3.00 per person.

The Willingdon Sports Club is Mumbai's most prestigious private club. Foreign businessmen and diplomats must have a sponsor, but are admitted under special provisions. Fees for two years total about \$6,300 in 1996. The only club with a golf course in Mumbai, it also has tennis, badminton, and squash courts, a swimming pool, a library, several restaurants, and gardens often used for large parties.

Mumbai Gymkhana is located in the downtown area near USIS and offers tennis, swimming, badminton, and squash. The total cost for belonging to this club for two years, irrespective of family size, is about \$9,125 in 1996. Married women cannot be members, but can use the facilities as their husbands' dependents. This club is very popular with Mumbai's young professional crowd.

The Royal Mumbai Yacht Club, located near the Taj Mahal Hotel and the Gateway of India, has sailboats for members to use during the October-May sailing season. Members of Washington, D.C.'s Army Navy Club are allowed to use the club and the sailboats at no cost. The Colaba Sailing Club also has sailboats and is less expensive.

Amateur Riders' Club is adjacent to the race course and has riding facilities. It is especially nice for young people who wish to take riding lessons.

Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, and Masonic Lodges are active in Mumbai.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

There are fascinating sights in and around Mumbai. Newcomers can begin by taking one of the several half-day or full-day city tours arranged by the Government of India Tourist Office. A tour of Victorian architecture of the city and a boat ride from the Gateway of India to Elephanta Caves is worthwhile. There are also many Hindu, Jain, and Moslem shrines to see.

Other daytime outings include trips to the Buddhist temple caves on a jungle-covered hillside at Kanheri, the Portuguese fort city of Bassein, and the Kanala bird sanctuary with a fort perched atop a jungle-covered hill.

The three hill stations of Lonavala, Matheran, and Mahabaleshwar make pleasant weekend excursions. Lonavala has the Karla and Bija Buddhist temple caves and two interesting old hill forts. Matheran has pleasant views, walks, and bridle trails. Mahabaleshwar is the coolest of all, with attractive views and walks.

Goa, about a 45-minute flight from Mumbai (about \$100.00 round-trip), has clean beaches, luxury resort hotels, and historic Portuguese towns. Reservations usually must be made well in advance. Aurangabad, 30 minutes from Mumbai by plane, has the temple caves of Ajunta and Ellora and an old fort at Dalalabad. And a trip to the Taj Mahal at Agra is a must for anyone stationed in India.

Entertainment

Mumbai is a cosmopolitan city and dining out in the many Chinese, French, Italian, and Indian restaurants is a popular activity. Hotels

often have discotheques and dance bands in their restaurants. Many new nightclubs have opened throughout Mumbai.

Mumbai is a center for Indian and western classical music. Well-known Indian and international artists perform in Mumbai's concert halls.

Art and archeology exhibits can be found at the Jehangir Art Gallery and the Prince of Wales Museum. The Museum Society sponsors slide lectures by international and Indian scholars. The Mumbai Natural History Society organizes weekend bird-watching trips and publishes magazines, bird guides, and books on flowering trees. English-language plays by professionals and vintage American and English films can be seen. American action-style films are frequently shown in local theaters.

The USIS and British Council libraries, Alliance Francaise, and Max Mueller museum are open to everyone. Inexpensive paperback books published in India, U.S., and U.K. are available in the several nearby, moderately well-stocked book stores.

Social Activities

A small, active American Women's Club holds monthly meetings.

An active social life with international contacts is possible in Mumbai. Indians are hospitable people and friendships develop rapidly. Americans are welcome to join the American Alumni Association and the Indo-American Society. Both offer opportunities for contact with Indians interested in the U.S. Indus International is a popular women's organization that features study groups and trips to interesting parts of India. Many business people join the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce.

The Hash House Harriers, an international running group, sponsors a run the last Sunday of each month, an occasional weekend trip to Goa

or a hill station, and the Hash Bash (party) every fall.

OTHER CITIES

AGRA is situated on the right bank of the Yamuna River, 125 miles southeast of New Delhi. An important commercial center and rail junction, this city of over 1.2 million is known for its glass products, shoes, carpets, and handicrafts. The present city was established by Akbar, who built a stone fort here in 1564; it was a Mogul capital until 1658. The city frequently changed rulers during the decline of the Mogul empire until it was annexed by the British in 1803. It served as capital of the North-West Provinces from 1835–62. Agra has many magnificent forts and castles and is home of Agra University, but its main attraction is the Taj Mahal. When the fifth Mogul emperor, Shah Jahan, learned of the death of his wife, Queen Mumtaz, he ordered the Taj Mahal to be built in her memory. Often called a monument of love, its polished white marble walls are decorated with millions of inlaid precious and semi-precious stones. Construction began in 1632 and took 22 years and over 20,000 workers to complete.

AHMADABAD (or Ahmedabad) is one of India's most beautiful cities, and is known best as the site of the beginning of Mahatma Gandhi's efforts in the country's independence movement. It was here that Gandhi was arrested in 1933. Ahmadabad, with a population of more than 4.2 million, is an important rail terminal, as well as an industrial center known for its cotton mills. It is located on the Sabarmati River, nearly 300 miles north of Bombay. Ahmadabad is the capital and cultural center of Gujarat State. It has many magnificent tombs and mosques, and is sacred to the Jains, who have over a hundred temples here. Ahmadabad is also the home of Gujarat University, founded in 1950.

BANGALORE is 180 miles west of Chennai. It is the home of a university, of the National Aeronautical Research Institute, and of the University of Agricultural Sciences. It once had a large British civil and military post. Bangalore is the capital city of Karnataka State, and has a population of approximately 5.6 million. Founded in 1537, Bangalore today is one of South India's major transportation hubs and industrial centers. There are aircraft and electronics industries and textile mills; coffee is traded. Known as a retirement city, Bangalore has wide streets and numerous parks. Kolar Gold Fields, with a population of 144,400, is 35 miles east of Bangalore. It is known for its gold mines.

The city of **BARODA** lies on the Viswamitn River between Bombay to the south and Ahmadabad to the north. Situated in a fertile area, Baroda is a major marketing hub for millet, cotton, and tobacco. Hand-loomed cloth interwoven with silver is made here. It is also a prominent rail center. Formerly the capital of the princely state of Baroda, the city became part of the Indian Union in 1947; merged with Bombay State in 1948; and became part of the new state of Gujarat in 1960. Historic landmarks include a palace dating back to 1721. Medieval Indian sculptures and paintings may be seen at the Museum and Picture Gallery. There is a medical college and an university, founded in 1949 here. A well-planned city with wide avenues and beautiful parks and buildings, Baroda's population is over 750,000.

The city of **BHOPAL** is situated in central India in an agricultural region surrounded by rolling hills and dense forests. Founded in 1728, this industrial city of about 1.4 million people is 466 miles south of New Delhi. Items produced in Bhopal include electrical goods, jewelry, and cotton cloth. Bhopal is best known, however, for the tragedy that occurred in December 1984. The deadly gas, methyl isocyanate, escaped from the Union Carbide pesticide plant on the outskirts of the city. It passed over the towns of

Jaiprakash and Chhola and drifted toward Bhopal. It was the worst industrial disaster ever, killing more than 2,500 people.

The capital of Orissa State, **BHUBANESWAR** is situated 140 miles southwest of Calcutta, in eastern India. The city boasts numerous shrines, built between the sixth and 12th centuries, that are examples of the finest of Hindu architecture in the country. At one time, there were 700 temples in Bhubaneswar; today, 500 still stand. The Great Temple, built to the sun god in the seventh century, is decorated with detailed carvings. Today, the city is a developing administrative center, with a population of over 225,000. Utkal University, founded in 1943, and Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, founded in 1962, are located in Bhubaneswar.

Situated on the Noyil River at an altitude of 1,400 feet, **COIMBATORE** is the third largest city in Madras State in southwestern India. In 1866, Coimbatore was made a municipality and the headquarters of its district. It is a major commercial and industrial hub based on the hydroelectric complex on the Pykora River. Coimbatore is the largest cotton-milling center south of Bombay. A majority of its residents are Hindu and speak Tamil. The renowned Hindu-Dravidian-style Temple of Perur is located here. The Nilgiri Hills, known for their tea and coffee, are nearby. A railway connects the city with Madurai and Tuticorin, and air service links it with Cochin, Bangalore, and Chennai. The population in Coimbatore exceeds 1.4 million.

HYDERABAD, a city of 5.4 million inhabitants, is located in Andhra Pradesh State. Once part of the Mogul Empire, the area is known as Nizam's Dominions, after the sovereigns who ruled the region for many centuries. Hyderabad lies on the Musi River, about 300 miles north-northwest of Chennai, and is a city of paper factories, pottery works, sugar refineries, and carpet and textile mills. The University of Hyderabad was founded in 1918. Some of

its ancient structures include Char Minar, built in 1591, and the Old Bridge, built in 1593. Warangal is 90 miles northeast of Hyderabad. The 12th-century capital of Telugu Kingdom, Warangal is known for its carpets, silk, and textiles, and has a population of 336,000.

INDORE is located in northwestern India, about 320 miles northeast of Bombay. The city, on the Bombay-Agra Road, is the center of the Malwa Region, which offers a pleasant climate, fertile land, and consistent rainfall. Indore has cotton mills and several other light industries; cotton, peanuts, millet, wheat, and barley are grown in the region. Indore's educational facilities include a medical college, a technical institute, and a plant experimentation station; Daly College, once exclusively for royal princes, now offers open enrollment. Two palaces and the old British Residency still stand here. The city has a population of approximately 1.6 million.

JAIPUR, the capital of Rajasthan, is situated in northwest India, about 150 miles southwest of New Delhi. Founded in 1727, the city was the capital of the former Indian state of Jaipur. It is a commercial center, known for its ivory and enamel work, and for glassware and marble carvings. The name is sometimes seen spelled Jeypore. Among the city's many tourist attractions is a fabulous maharajah's palace, which occupies one-seventh of the municipal area. Currently, Jaipur has over 2 million residents, and is known as the pink city, from the color of its houses. The city of Ajmer is 85 miles to the southwest of Jaipur. Founded in 145, Ajmer today is a trade center with cotton mills and nearby marble quarries. This city of almost one million has a Jain temple, the tomb of a Muslim saint, and a palace among its historic sites.

KANPUR (Cawnpore) is a rail junction, and the most important industrial center of the Uttar Pradesh State in northern India. Situated on the right bank of the Ganges River,

about 250 miles southeast of New Delhi, Kanpur is known for the massacre of British soldiers and European families during the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. It now is a city with a population of 2.6 million. A technological institute is located in Kanpur. The city of Allahabad is located farther south on the Ganges River at the junction of the Yamuna. A holy city long sacred to Hindu pilgrims, Allahabad today is an administrative, transportation, and legal center that trades in sugar and cotton. Historic sites in this city of 1.5 million include Jama Masjid (Great Mosque). There is also a university, founded in 1887.

The commercial and cultural center of the middle Ganges Valley, **LUCKNOW** is the capital of Uttar Pradesh State. It lies 48 miles northeast of Kanpur and 270 miles southeast of New Delhi, on the Gumti River. Lucknow is a major wholesaling center, handling food products. There are also financial and banking opportunities here. Lucknow once served as the capital of the princes of Oudh. A number of interesting mosques, palaces, and other buildings are reminders of their reign. The most fascinating is the white marble Great Imambara, built in the late 1700s. The city is known for its zoological gardens, parks, and National Botanical Gardens. The city is the site of Lucknow University, several government research centers, and a variety of colleges. The majority of Lucknow's approximately 2.2 million inhabitants are Hindus; there is also a small Muslim community.

Situated near the Vaigai River, **MADURAI** (formerly called Madura) is in southern India, about 280 miles southwest of Chennai. In the middle of a cotton-growing region, the city's industries concentrate on cotton spinning and textile weaving. An old city, Madurai was the headquarters of the Pandya Dynasty from about the third century B.C. until the A.D. 10th century. Madurai was controlled by Great Britain from 1801 to 1947. Of the outstanding shrines, temples, and palaces located here, the Great

Temple is one of the largest Hindu temple complexes. It is visited daily by thousands of pilgrims; parts of the complex are open to non-Hindus as well. The population here is estimated at 1,187,000.

NAGAPUR, a transportation hub and industrial center, is located on the Nag River in central India, about 425 miles northeast of Bombay. Founded in the 18th century, Nagapur passed to the Marathas after 1743 and to the British in 1853. Today, it is a city of more than 2 million whose industries include flour milling, fruit canning, printing, and dyeing. Nagapur also manufactures pottery, glass, brassware, textiles, and iron and leather goods. Amravati is a city of 261,400 situated 85 miles southwest of Nagapur on a branch of the Purna River. An important cotton center, Amravati is the site of the Great Stupa, dating to the second century A.D. Andhra Dynasty.

PUNE (also called Poona) is situated on the Bima River, 75 miles east-southeast of Bombay. It is a rail and road junction, as well as a city of beautiful public gardens and numerous palaces and temples. There are extensive military headquarters here and in its suburbs. Pune has 3.7 million residents.

SURAT, with a population exceeding 2 million, is 150 miles north of Bombay, near the mouth of the Tapti River. During the 18th century, this ancient city was the largest in the country. It was the site of serious conflict between Portuguese, Dutch, and British traders while it was the principal European trading port. Surat is no longer a prominent port, but it is a major commercial city for trading, cotton and silk milling, handloom weaving, and a variety of crafts.

Situated on the Ganges River, **VARANASI** (formerly called Benares and Banaras) is 375 miles northwest of Calcutta in northeastern India. To Hindus, this city is the most sacred place on earth. They believe dying here guarantees a Hindu release from endless

rebirths; and by worshipping at the river, a Hindu acquires special merits during the present life. Over one million pilgrims visit Varanasi's 1,500 temples every year. Most of the temples have been built in the past 200 years due to the earlier destruction of the ancient complexes. Noted shrines include the Great Mosque of Aurangzeb, the most prominent structure situated on the highest ground; the Golden Temple, dedicated to Biseswar (Shiva); and the Durga Temple, favored by tourists for its swarms of monkeys. Industries in Varanasi include the manufacture of brocade, silk, and brassware. The city has a population of approximately 1.2 million.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

India—"Bharat" to most Indians—is the seventh largest country in the world, with an area approximately one-third the size of the U.S. India is bordered by China, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma) and Sri Lanka. To the west, south, and east, India is surrounded by the sea—respectively, the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Bay of Bengal. The Lakshadweep Islands off the southwest coast and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, 750 miles off the southeast coast in the Bay of Bengal, belong to India.

India stretches more than 2,000 miles from Jammu and Kashmir in the north to the southern tip of Tamil Nadu. It is 1,800 miles from Gujarat in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east. The topography is dominated in the far north by the majestic Himalayas, which include the world's highest peaks. From the Himalayan foothills to the Vindhya Range in central India spreads the vast, fertile, heavily populated Gangetic Plain. The sacred Ganges (Ganga) and the

Yamuna rivers dissect the Plain. South of the Vindhya Range lies the Deccan Plateau. The Western and Eastern Ghats lie along the southern coastlines.

The climate in India ranges from Arctic-like conditions in the high Himalayas, to blast furnace heat in many parts of the country during the summer, and heavy monsoon downpours during the rainy season. At other times, the weather can be mild and delightfully pleasant. New Delhi is at an altitude of 700 feet above sea level in north central India. The weather in the capital is most pleasant during the temperate months of October–November and February–March, periods characterized by cool nights and warm days. While the winter months of December and January are usually fairly temperate too, the temperature can become surprisingly cold at night. From April through mid-July daytime temperatures often top 100°F. The nights cool off somewhat, but are still hot. From mid-July to September, the occasional monsoon rains create high humidity and high temperatures.

Throughout the year severe air pollution is a problem in New Delhi. During the monsoon season, mosquitos breed in standing water, spreading malaria, Japanese B encephalitis, and dengue fever. Mold, dust, and bacterial infections are common. Cockroaches, termites, moths, and flies are common pests.

Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), India's financial capital, is a port on the Arabian Sea in the western state of Maharashtra. On a map, Mumbai appears as a peninsula (actually two islands) off the west coast of India. A great natural harbor provides 75 square miles of sheltered deep water.

Mumbai has a tropical climate with three distinct seasons. The heat and high humidity of April, May, and October make life quite uncomfortable. The monsoon season, June to September, brings a welcome relief although the humidity remains high. An average of 77 inches of rain

falls during the monsoon. Late November through February is cooler, although the days are still hot and sunny.

Calcutta, the capital of the state of West Bengal, is situated on the Hooghly River about 80 miles north of the Bay of Bengal. Because the city is built on near sea-level marshland, Calcutta and its suburbs suffer from poor drainage and periodic flooding, especially during the monsoon, June to October. From November through February, temperatures are pleasant, however the city suffers from considerable air pollution during these months. The heat begins in March, and occasional “nor’westers” bring welcome cool winds and rain from the Himalayas through May. Then the overcast sky of the monsoon brings relief from the glare of the sun, even though the temperature remains high.

Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu, lies on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, about 900 miles north of the Equator. Until 1997, the city was known as Madras. Chennai has a medium-sized artificial harbor and a wide sandy beach that extends for several hundred miles along the coast. The surrounding countryside is a largely flat, coastal plain devoted to rice cultivation. It is green and fertile during part of the year but dry and dusty during the rainless spring and early summer months.

The climate is tropical throughout the year. December and January are relatively cool months. The weather heats up drastically from March through June. Unfortunately, as the temperature rises, so does the humidity. Chennai is unique among the consular cities—it experiences a late monsoon from August through November. Pre-monsoon rains bring slight relief in July, and the temperatures decrease slowly until the cooler season returns in November. During the hottest months, sea breezes occasionally lessen the discomfort.

Chennai averages 48 inches of rain annually, although droughts occur

when the monsoon fails. Most rain falls from October through December, but frequent showers can occur from May to September. Occasionally, cyclones strike the coast. Mildew damage occurs throughout the year. All U.S. Government houses have air conditioners in every room to help combat this fungus, as well as for comfort.

Population

India is the world’s second most populous country with an approximate population of 1,017,650,000. If current population growth trends continue, India’s population will likely surpass China’s in the next 20 to 30 years. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates are located in the following cities (with rough population estimates from 2000): Delhi (including New Delhi), 12.4 million; greater Mumbai, 18 million; greater Calcutta, 12.9 million; and Chennai, 6.6 million.

India is a predominantly rural country; more than three-fourths of the people live in villages. Nevertheless, India’s cities are huge and continue to expand with the annual migration of hundreds of thousands of rural residents. The strain on the cities to provide basic services to these burgeoning populations is outstripping their resources. The result is predictable—the quality and reliability of the water, power, transportation, and communications infrastructure have deteriorated in many urban centers.

India is a cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious mosaic unequalled in the world. The nation’s 25 states and several union territories are largely established on ethnic and linguistic lines. Hindi has been designated as the national language; it is in widespread use throughout the north and is increasingly understood in other parts of the nation, especially in large urban centers. English also continues as a language link between educated people from different parts of the country. Shopping and getting around in any of the urban areas can be easily done in English. Communication in

rural areas can also be pursued in English, but some understanding of Hindi or the local language is a definite advantage.

Although largely a Hindu nation (nearly 80% of the population), India has a huge Muslim population (approximately 12%)—the world’s second largest, after Indonesia. Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and others make up the balance. Religion in India often provides identity and defines a way of life. Marriage, clothing, diet, employment, and location of housing can be dictated by religious considerations. Most women and some men dress in their traditional clothing, though modern fashions tend to blur ethnic lines in cities.

Most Indians have dietary restrictions; many are vegetarian, and some avoid eggs and dairy products. Many fast on a particular day of the week. Among those who do eat meat, Hindus do not eat beef and Muslims avoid pork. In cities, Indians generally eat late, often as late as 10 or 11 p.m.

Caste identification remains strong today, even among some non-Hindus. Having evolved over thousands of years, castes or family clans now number in the hundreds and are roughly divided by the Government of India into the *Forward Castes* (priestly, princely, and business), *Backward Castes* (agrarian and tradesmen), and *Scheduled Castes and Tribes* (formerly untouchables). Despite long-standing government affirmative action programs, most members of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes remain at the bottom of India’s social and economic ladder. Socially, an Indian is expected to marry within his own caste.

Dating and public display of affection between males and females are rarely seen. Arranged marriages are the norm, though there are exceptions, especially among the urban middle class. The traditional joint family is common, and a bride typically moves into her in-laws’ home. Traditionally, an Indian family is not considered complete until

there is a male heir to care for his parents in their old age and to light their funeral pyres.

Public Institutions

India is a democratic republic made up of 25 states and 7 union territories. Its 1950 constitution is mainly derived from the British parliamentary system. The constitutional head of State is the President, although his duties are mainly ceremonial. He resides in *Rashtrapati Bhavan* in New Delhi, formerly the residence of the British Viceroy. Executive power is held by the Prime Minister and his appointed Council of Ministers (the Cabinet) from the majority party or a coalition in Parliament.

Legislative power is vested in the bicameral Parliament, which is made up of the *Rajya Sabha* with, up to 250 appointed and indirectly elected members, and the *Lok Sabha*, with up to 550 directly elected members.

The judicial system is headed by a Supreme Court appointed by the President.

The political structure of the state governments is similar. The Governor, who is appointed by the President, is ceremonial head of the government, while the Chief Minister and his cabinet, who come from the majority party or coalition in the State Assembly (Legislature), exercise executive authority.

National political parties include the Congress (I) Party, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Janata Dal, Communist Party of India (CPI), and Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM). In addition, there are several important regionally-based political parties, including *Telugu Desam*, *All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam*, *Dravida Munetra Kazhagam*, *Akali Dal*, and *Samajwadi Janta Dal*.

Many philanthropic organizations exist in India. The Rotary and Lions Clubs, the Red Cross, the YWCA and YMCA, the Boy Scouts and Girl

Guides—to name a few. The National Cadet Corps selects young men and women from all over the country to train at a military camp in New Delhi each year.

Arts, Science, and Education

The cultural heritage of India is one of the richest and most ancient in the world. India absorbed immigrants and invaders with their varied cultures. Although as a nation, India is less than 50 years old (1947); it has an ancient civilization spanning more than 4,000 years.

Indian architecture and sculpture have served primarily religious functions, mainly in temple carvings and tombs (Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam). The pinnacle of Moslem Mughal architecture was reached in the 17th century when Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal at Agra as a tomb for his favorite wife.

Beginning with the sacred Vedas, Sanskrit literature developed over 2,500 years and is now alive in the epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, originally handed down orally. Indian philosophy, which analyzes the soul, *karma* (action or duty) and salvation, is divided into many schools of thought (e.g., Schools of *Yoga*).

Indian music comprises a wide variety of instrumental and vocal traditions, among which are classical, religious, popular, theatrical and modern. The internationally famous Ravi Shankar still performs on his sitar, accompanied by tabla drummers.

The classical traditions of Indian dance are at least 2,000 years old and have evolved into dance dramas which dramatize Hindu religious stories through stylized gestures which are highly symbolic and emotionally suggestive.

Education is primarily the responsibility of the state governments. Although free in most states for

children between the ages of 6 and 14, education is not compulsory. Secondary schools offer instruction in Hindi, English and the appropriate regional language. Higher education is provided in colleges, universities and technical institutes. Social education programs promote adult literacy. In the nearly 50 years since independence, India has built a university education system which is second in size only to that of the U.S., with 200 universities and more than 6,300 colleges.

Commerce and Industry

With a population growth rate of over 2.1 percent per year and a real gross national product (GNP) growth rate since the early 1950s averaging below 4 percent, India has made modest progress in improving the standard of living for most of its population. Per capita income is U.S.\$2,200.

Agriculture accounts for 27% of India's GDP, involving 62% of the work force. The services sector, which includes trade, hotels, banking, transport and communications, now accounts for 52% of GDP and is the largest and the fastest growing sector of the economy.

India has traditionally found it difficult to export sufficient goods to offset import needs. India's leading exports include textiles and garments, leather products, gems and cut diamonds and, in recent years, manufactured goods. Principal imports include petroleum, capital goods, iron and steel, chemicals, fertilizers and edible oils. With over \$5.2 billion in two-way trade, the U.S. is India's largest trading partner followed by Russia, the European Community, and Japan. The U.S. is the largest foreign investor and the largest source of joint ventures in India.

Jute and cotton textiles remain the most important industrial sectors, but steel, heavy industry, and chemicals have gained in importance. India now manufactures a variety of

finished products, including consumer durables such as TVs, washers, stereos, electronics equipment, computer software, and automobiles for domestic use and export. Mineral resources (coal, iron ore, bauxite, manganese) are substantial but have been only partially tapped. Despite industrial development, chronic problems of unemployment and underemployment remain.

Transportation

Fuel

Diesel fuel and 93 octane petrol (gasoline) are readily available throughout the country. Diesel costs one-third as much as petrol. Lead free petrol is available on the open market in New Delhi and other large metropolitan cities. It is not readily available throughout India.

Rental Cars

When one rents an automobile for travel in India, it usually includes a driver. Air-conditioning costs more. Using rental services through a hotel more than doubles the cost, but this insures an English-speaking driver. One can also rent a car without a driver through Budget and Hertz.

New Delhi

New Delhi is probably the easiest Indian city in which to drive with its wide boulevards and flower-filled traffic circles.

Mumbai

Public transportation is available. Taxis are inexpensive (about 50 cent one-way between home and work) and readily available during daytime hours though often not late in the night. However, they are small and uncomfortable. Local buses and trains are extremely crowded and unclean.

Calcutta

The road conditions are poor. During the monsoons, streets flood and can stay flooded for 2 or 3 days.

Local transportation includes the subway, buses, taxis, three-wheelers, and rickshaws. Buses are over-

crowded and service is irregular. Metered taxis are available at all major hotels and shopping areas. The rates are low; however, most taxi drivers prefer to negotiate a flat rate. Tipping is optional. The city subway provides service that is comfortable, safe, and uninterrupted by traffic congestion.

Rental vehicles are available, but it is very difficult to get an English-speaking driver.

Local

Public transportation in Indian cities includes trains, buses, taxis, auto rickshaws (three-wheeled scooters), and cycle rickshaws. Horse-drawn Tongas are still seen in some cities and towns. Taxis and auto rickshaws, usually yellow and black, are not air-conditioned, but are inexpensive. Meters are often not set at the current rate, but drivers will produce a current rate card if asked to substantiate the higher rate. Taxis charge higher rates late at night.

VIP automobiles are given more leeway on the roads than are emergency vehicles. They usually come equipped with flashing lights, sirens, and are often accompanied by hand and gun-waving security vehicles. (There are also VVIPs and VVVIPs.) Ambulances may have a small flashing light, but not a siren. Police vehicles (jeeps, motor scooters, buses) are marked POLICE in English or Hindi. Fire engines have sirens.

Public transportation between cities is done by bus, train, or plane. India has an extensive rail system. State corporations run the bus companies which network throughout the country. Luxury tour buses can be rented.

Regional

India's highway system extends to most parts of the country. During the monsoon, roadways can become flooded due to sudden downpours. Traffic is diverted, potholes and sinkholes appear, and power and telephone service goes out. If one plans to do a lot of traveling in India

by personally owned vehicle, a 4-wheel drive utility vehicle with right-hand drive would be very useful.

Cars are driven on the left and most vehicles are right-hand drive. Operating a left-hand drive vehicle outside city limits can be dangerous. The driver will need someone in the passenger seat to tell when to pass or when another vehicle or animal is coming head-on in the left lane.

Driving is a challenge when sharing the road with the vehicles of varied speeds and sizes—trucks, buses, auto rickshaws, Indian-made Marutis, bullock carts, bicycles, handcarts, bicycle rickshaws, motor cycles, wandering livestock, taxis, pedestrians, and the occasional elephant or camel. Accidents are frequent and can be very serious, especially to unprotected passengers and pedestrians. Emergency medical services for road accident victims are usually poor or nonexistent.

The road conditions throughout the country differ from state to state. India has installed a new system of traffic signs, listing destinations and distances in English, Hindi, and local language on one sign. Bypasses are being installed around major cities. Petrol pumps are readily available throughout the country with 93 octane petrol and diesel fuel.

No matter how challenging the new ways of the road may seem, Indian drivers are tolerant of unusual behavior on the roadways. The key to driving in India is patience and flexibility.

Regional Air

India has separate domestic and international terminals at the major airports. To enter the airport, one must have a current airplane ticket or an official airport pass. Check-in procedures take 1-2 hours for domestic flights, and 2-3 hours for international flights. Most international flights arrive and depart in the middle of the night. Arriving passengers can expect to spend 15

minutes to 2 hours to get their baggage.

United Airlines currently offers daily round-the-world service from New Delhi, with flights in both directions to and from London and Hong Kong. Delta flies into Mumbai from Frankfurt seven times a week.

Direct flight connections link various Indian cities with Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. Indian Airlines, Vayudoot Airlines, and new private air carriers offer service throughout India. Domestic travel by air is expensive. A round trip from Delhi to Goa, a distance of 500 miles, costs \$360.

No American carriers operate in and out of Calcutta. The city is served by a few foreign carriers, and their services are limited. Over-nighting in Bangkok or Singapore is unavoidable. Calcutta is connected with major Indian cities by Indian Airlines.

The international airport departure tax is Rs. 300 a person; and to neighboring countries the tax is Rs. 150.

Regional Railroads

India has one of the largest railway systems in the world. Although train stations can be a challenge, train travel is very enjoyable and probably the best way to see the country. Reservations should be made well in advance. And trains are no longer the bargain they once were. Indian rail offers 1st and 2nd class, sleepers, chair car, compartments, vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals, and air conditioning. Passengers carry their own toilet paper and drinking water.

Rail and air travel in India require a lot of planning, patience, and flexibility. Occasionally a train, plane or bus will be delayed or pre-poned (an Indian-English word meaning earlier than scheduled).

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and international telephone service is available in India. Service is often disrupted, especially during monsoons and a heavy workload can delay repairs and installations. In general, the phone system functions adequately but requires patience, persistence, and low expectations.

Telephone numbers in India currently may be 6-digit or 7-digit numbers. Most homes have only one extension, usually placed by the front door or in the kitchen.

USA-Direct is now available in India for collect and credit card calls. Many Embassy employees have an AT&T credit card for international use. However, having the long-distance phone call originate in the U.S. incurs the least expense. Commercial telegraph, public FAX, and international telex services are available in India, but are, often unreliable.

Radio and TV

Electronic media in India is controlled by the Government of India. All India Radio (AIR) broadcasts mainly in various Indian languages, with occasional Western music and news programs in English. A good shortwave radio is necessary to receive Voice of America (VOA) and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Doordarshan, the local government-run TV, telecasts in color on the PAL system. One or two channels can be seen in major cities. Limited daily news is supplemented by a world news roundup on Friday nights. Classical Indian music, melodramatic Hindi movies/serials, political debates, and educational instruction are interspersed with cricket matches, edited coverage of Parliament, and old English-language movies.

CNN came to India in 1991 during the Gulf War. In 1992 the satellite broadcast Star Network (BBC news, sports, MTV, movies and entertainment in English and other Asian

languages) was introduced. The availability vary considerably from neighborhood to neighborhood.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

India has wonderful bookstores and a lot to read in English. Besides the local language newspapers, many nationally circulated English language dailies are sold in the major cities. *The Times of India*, *The Indian Express*, *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* are only the tip of the iceberg. *The International Herald Tribune*, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*, all printed in Singapore, are available 1 day after publication. A few other foreign newspapers are available. Asian editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*, as well as the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, are available within a few days of publication. *India Today*, *Business India*, *Delhi Diary* (tourism), *Femina*, and many other magazines are of high quality and address a variety of subjects.

A variety of fiction and nonfiction books are sold in local bookstores, especially mysteries, science fiction, current best-sellers, and books on India by American, British, and Indian authors. Locally published paperbacks are inexpensive; imported ones are the same cost as in the U.S. or England. Hardbacks may be more expensive than expected. The American Women's Association in New Delhi has an excellent lending library located on the housing compound adjacent to the U.S. Embassy.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities (New Delhi)

Many name-brand prescription medications manufactured by U.S. and other multinational pharmaceutical companies are available locally, often at a cost far less than in the U.S.

(Mumbai)

Local dental care is satisfactory, and orthodontic treatment is available.

(Calcutta)

Prescription glasses are available locally. Local dentists offer good, general services at reasonable prices, but have specialized dental work done in the U.S. if possible.

Calcutta's humidity and pollution have a drying effect on hair and contribute to a variety of skin rashes.

Services in India

Qualified English-speaking specialists, many trained in the U.S. and Europe, are available in India for consultation and patient care.

Routine prenatal care is available, but all pregnant women are strongly encouraged to return to the U.S. to deliver. Basic dental services are available in India and are less expensive than in the U.S. Dental services in Calcutta are somewhat limited. Root canals, crown and bridgework, and orthodontic care in New Delhi are of high quality and inexpensive. High-quality, low-cost optical services are available throughout India.

Community Health

In most of India, public sanitation falls far below Western standards. Open sewers abound. Insect control programs have been under-funded. Tap water is considered unsafe throughout India and adequacy of water fluoridation varies with locality and other factors. Fresh produce is considered contaminated. Regulation of food handling and preparation in restaurants is nonexistent. Intestinal parasites, bacillary dysentery, malaria, hepatitis, dengue fever, meningitis, Japanese B encephalitis, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and rabies are important health concerns. Automobile accidents can be catastrophic due to inadequacies in the medical care delivery system. AIDS is a growing public health problem. Air pollution is an acute problem in many urban areas.

Preventive Measures

Adjusting to a new living and work situation, a new school system, and a tropical environment creates

stresses as well as rewards. Culture shock can cause insomnia, headaches, irritability, and a variety of other symptoms. A program of proper rest, exercise and nutrition can be very helpful in managing these conditions and in making your overseas tour an enjoyable one.

Respiratory illnesses and allergies are common due to dust and heavy pollution. Conditions here aggravate respiratory ailments and allergies. Adults or children prone to these illnesses may want to consult with a physician before considering this assignment.

Caution must be exercised concerning food and water. Commercially bottled beverages, including beer, soft drinks, and mineral water can be considered safe. Otherwise, water must be made safe for drinking by boiling or chemicals. Commercially bottled mineral water is available at restaurants and in the local market.

Meat (chicken, beef, and pork) should be well cooked. Fish should be cooked, not eaten raw. All fruits and vegetables that are eaten raw must be thoroughly cleaned and soaked for 15 minutes in disinfectant solution.

Malaria is endemic in India, and chloroquine-resistant malaria is found in New Delhi and other urban centers. Detailed recommendations for malaria prevention are available 24 hours daily by calling the CDC Malaria hotline at (404) 332-4555.

Tuberculosis is still a common problem in India. Children and adults should have a TB skin test annually.

AIDS is a health risk in India. Use of condoms and avoidance of high-risk behaviors are encouraged. Specific information may be obtained by calling (800) 342-AIDS.

Up-to-date immunizations are a must. Routine childhood immunizations should be up to date, including Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT); Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR); Polio (either OPV

or IPV), and Hemophilus b Conjugate Vaccine (HbCV). In addition, the following immunizations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A Vaccine is recommended for those traveling to India.
- Oral typhoid vaccine is recommended.
- Hepatitis B Vaccine is recommended for travelers who expect to stay longer than 60 days, or who may be at a high risk.
- Rabies vaccine is recommended in India for those who spend a lot of time outdoors, joggers, bicyclists, and frequent travelers to rural areas.
- Japanese B Encephalitis (JBE) vaccine is recommended.
- Dengue fever, a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes, is present throughout India. No specific treatment and no vaccines are available.
- Those arriving in India from Africa should have a valid yellow fever vaccination. The WHO-approved facility at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi can give this vaccination to those who need it.

Last, but perhaps the most important, while driving or riding in an automobile in India, buckle the seat belt.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

All American citizens require a passport and visa for entry into and exit from India for any purpose. All visitors, including those on official U.S. government business, must obtain visas at an Indian embassy or consulate abroad prior to entering the country. There are no provisions for visas upon arrival. Those arriving in India without a visa bearing the correct validity dates

and number of entries are subject to immediate deportation on the return flight. The U.S. Embassy and consulates in India are unable to assist when U.S. citizens arrive without visas. For further information on entry requirements, please contact the Embassy of India at 2536 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 939-9849 or 939-9806 or the Indian consulates in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, or Houston. The Internet address of the Embassy of India is <http://www.indianembassy.org/>. Outside the United States, inquiries should be made at the nearest Indian embassy or consulate.

Permission from the Indian Government (from Indian diplomatic missions abroad or in some cases from the Ministry of Home Affairs) is required to visit the states of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, parts of Kulu district and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh, border areas of Jammu and Kashmir, some areas of Uttar Pradesh, the area west of National Highway No. 15 running from Ganganagar to Sanchar in Rajasthan, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the Union Territory of the Laccadive Islands.

Indian customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from India of items such as firearms, antiquities, electronic equipment, currency, ivory, gold objects, and other prohibited materials. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C. or one of India's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting India are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi or at one of the U.S. consulates in India. They may also obtain updated information on travel and security in India and request a copy of the booklet, "Guidelines for American travelers in India."

-- The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is located at Shantipath, Chanakyapuri 110021; telephone (91) (11) 419-8000; fax (91) (11) 419-0017. The Embassy's Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/delhi.html>.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai (Bombay) is located at Lincoln House, 78 Bhulabhai Desai Road, 400026, telephone (91) (22) 363-3611; fax (91)(22)363-0350. Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/in3/wwwhmain.html>.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Calcutta (now often called Kolkata) is at 5/1 Ho Chi Minh Sarani, 700071; telephone (91) (033) 282-3611 through 282-3615; fax(91)(033)(282-2335). The Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/in4/wwwhmain.html>.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Chennai (Madras) is at Mount Road, 600006, telephone (91) (044)811-2000; fax (91)(044)811-2020. The Internet home page address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/chennai/>.

Pets

No quarantine of pets exists in India. Whether accompanying the owner or being shipped unaccompanied, the following documents must be available at the time of arrival:

- A current health certificate with the pet's name, breed and sex, stating that the animal is in good health, fully vaccinated, and free from contagious diseases (including for a dog: Aujosky's disease, distemper, rabies, leishmaniasis, and leptospirosis; for a cat: rabies and distemper).

- A rabies vaccination certificate which must be either: (a) a nerve tissue vaccine taken more than 30 days but not more than 12 months before arrival of the pet in India, or, (b) a chicken-embryo vaccine taken more than 30 days but not more than 36 months before the arrival of the pet in India.

- A distemper vaccination certificate.

- A parrot should have a certificate stating negative results from a compliment fixation test for Psittacosis within 30 days prior to arrival.

Hotels in India do not allow pets. Occasionally, a hotel will grant an exception to those with a small pet. Some kenneling facilities are available in India, but at present are inadequate for the health and care of the animal.

Bring an adequate supply of flea collars, heartworm pills, and any required medication.

Dog licenses are required and can be obtained from the local municipality for a nominal fee. Dogs can be registered with the Kennel Club of India through its northern India branch.

Secretary
Northern India Kennel Club
H-9, Green Park Extension
New Delhi
Telephone: 667-692

Veterinarian services in India are marginal. One or two excellent veterinarians practice in New Delhi, but in general they tend to administer multiple medicines without adequate examination.

When deciding whether to ship a pet to India, consider the heat, humidity, and availability of living space. Pets here seem to develop a variety of skin rashes. Shipping an animal into India during the peak summer months can be hard on it.

Currency

The official currency is the rupee which is divided into 100 paise. Rupee notes come in the following denominations: 10, 50, 100, and 500. Coins come in the following denominations: 10, 25 and 50 paise, and 1, 2, and 5 rupee.

The rate of exchange is Rs. 48.98=US\$1 (May 2002). The exchange rate is free floating, changing daily.

All currency and travelers checks in excess of \$10,000 carried into India must be declared at Customs upon arrival. An unlimited amount of other currencies, drafts, travelers checks, or letters of credit may be brought in. Foreigners must usually pay hotel bills and domestic air fares in hard currency.

India uses the metric system of weights and measures. Mileage markers are in kilometers, and frequently in miles also. Smaller distances are gauged in meters. Weights are in kilograms (kilos) and grams. Liters are used to measure liquid amounts. One inch equals 2.54 centimeters or 25.4 millimeters.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 26	Republic Day
Mar	Holi/Doljatra*
Mar/April	Good Friday*
Mar/April	Easter*
Aug. 15	Indian Independence Day
Oct. 2	Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday
Nov. 14	Children's Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
.	Id al-Zuha*
.	Muharram*
.	Mahavir Jayanti*
.	Baisakhi*
.	Buddha Purnima*
.	Khرداد Sal*
.	Janmashtami*
.	Onam*
.	Dussehra and Durga Puja*
.	Guru Nanak Jayanti*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Bakri-Id*
.	Diwali*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published in and about India. Some of the following books are published and sold only in India. However, they can be mail ordered from: Prof. Jerry Barrier, South Asia Books, Box 502, Columbia, MO 65205, Tel. (314) 474-0116.

Periodicals

India Today. Published in India, available in New York.

Newspaper

Express India. An Asian Weekly from the Nation's Capital, Washington, D.C. (1500 Mass Ave NW, Suite 400, Room C, Washington, D.C. 20005.)

General

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INDONESIA

Republic of Indonesia

Major Cities:

Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan

Other Cities:

Ambon, Bandung, Kupang, Palembang, Semarang, Surakarta, Ujung Pandang, Yogyakarta

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Indonesia. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Man has woven a rich brocade of cultures among the far-flung islands of the world's largest archipelago. Most of Indonesia's inhabitants trace their descent from Malay seafarers who left the Asian mainland long before the time of Christ. Chinese pearl fishermen and Indian holy men brought their influences—Hinduism survives on Bali, a storied setting of temples and rice paddies where an endless pageantry of festivals and dances placates attentive spirits. Arab mariners introduced Islam. The Dutch monopolized the rich spice trade of the Moluccas and with them brought Christianity.

Indonesia's 3,000 islands stretch almost 5,000 km (3,100 miles) into the Pacific Ocean. Richly endowed with natural resources and hosting a phenomenal array of distinct cultures, for centuries they have been a magnet to Chinese and Indian traders, European colonizers, wayward adventurers, and intrepid travelers.

It is generally believed that the earliest inhabitants of the Indonesian archipelago originated in India or Burma. In 1890, fossils of Java Man (*homo erectus*), some 500,000 years old, were found in east Java.

Later migrants ("Malays") came from southern China and Indochina, and they began populating the archipelago around 3000 BC.

By the 15th century, a strong Moslem empire had developed with its center at Melaka (Malacca) on the Malay Peninsula. Its influence was shortlived, and it fell to the Portuguese in 1511. The Dutch East India Company, based in Jakarta, took control of Java by the mid-18th century. The Dutch took control in the early 19th century, and by the early 20th century, the entire archipelago was under their control.

Burgeoning nationalism and the Japanese occupation in World War II weakened Dutch resolve. Indone-

sia declared independence in 1945, which the Dutch recognized in 1949.

Today, Indonesia is a vibrant, multi-ethnic nation comprised of more than 300 ethnic groups in the midst of an enormous democratic transformation after years of authoritarian government.

MAJOR CITIES

Jakarta

Jakarta—the capital, chief port, and commercial center of Indonesia—and its suburbs cover some 350 square miles. Over 11 million people live within this area. As seat of the central government, Jakarta is the center of political life, with the Presidential Palace, national government offices, Parliament, and the Supreme Court all located in the city center.

The main ethnic groups in Jakarta are Sundanese, who predominate in the surrounding province of West Java, and Javanese. However, the city is a melange of all main groups from throughout the archipelago, including a substantial Chinese population and tens of thousands of expatriates.

In the 16th century, Jakarta, called Sunda Kelapa, was the chief port for the Sundanese (West Javanese) kingdom of Pajajaran. Later, the Sultan of Bantam changed the name to Jayakarta, "Glorious Fortress" in the Sundanese language. At the end of the 16th century, Dutch and Portuguese traders struggled for a foothold on Java. Since it was difficult for foreigners to pronounce Jayakarta, the name was changed to Jakarta. Eventually, the Dutch won possession of Java and established a fortified trading post at Jakarta, which they renamed Batavia. For three-and-a-half centuries after the Dutch arrival, Batavia was the focal point of a rich, sprawling commercial empire called the Netherlands East Indies. In older sections, Dutch-style gabled houses with diamond-paned windows and swinging shutters are still found. The canals, narrow downtown streets, and old drawbridges will remind you of the city's Dutch heritage and early settlers.

Eventually, more modern sections of the city were built some 8 miles inland. Indonesia became a sovereign State on December 27, 1949; the next day Batavia was renamed Jakarta. The city has grown rapidly in population from about 600,000 in 1940 to over 11 million. Physically, Jakarta has changed much in the last decade. A modern center with hotels, restaurants, and tall office buildings now has grown up amidst the crowded "kampungs" often with banana groves and rice paddies reminiscent of rural Java. Infrastructure, roads, electric power, and water supply are vastly improved, and new housing and apartments have gone up. With Jakarta's expanding boundaries, most Americans and other foreigners live in newer suburbs, such as Kebayoran, 5 miles from downtown. Air pollution and traffic congestion are increasing problems.

Like most Asian commercial cities, Jakarta has a large population of Chinese origin, many of whom have Indonesian citizenship. They constitute the country's largest non-Indo-

nesian ethnic group. Many have lived in Indonesia for generations and no longer speak Chinese, but most maintain Chinese traditions and family ties. Most Chinese in Jakarta operate businesses. Their district, Kota (or Glodok), has a distinctly Chinese flavor.

Over 25,000 foreigners live in the Jakarta area. Over 60 nations now maintain diplomatic or consular missions. The U.S., Russia, Germany, The Netherlands, Japan, and Australia operate the largest. Over 6,000 Americans reside in Jakarta—members of U.S. Government agencies, the U.N. and private, nongovernmental agencies, business representatives, and missionaries. Jakarta is the main stop for an increasing number of U.S. business visitors and many American, European, and Australian tourists visit Jakarta each year, usually on their way to tourist areas such as Bali or Yogyakarta.

Jakarta's average temperature ranges from 72°F to 87°F. It seldom varies more than a few degrees all year. The average humidity, 82 percent, rises to 83 percent or 84 percent during the wet season. It rains about 125 days a year for an average of 70 inches. Although heavy rains occur during the wet season (November through March), they do not compare to the heavy, monsoon downpours that characterize the rainy season in other tropical countries. Although monotonous and enervating, the heat will not oppress you as do the summers in Tokyo and Washington, D.C.

Western-style clothes predominate in Jakarta, but many still wear Indonesian attire. English is understood by many higher level Indonesian officials, business representatives, and professionals, particularly the younger generation. However, some knowledge of Bahasa Indonesia, the national language, is needed by foreigners for everyday communication. The older, Dutch-educated Indonesians can speak Dutch, especially those who grew up under The Netherlands colonial rule.

Food

Most food can be purchased in Jakarta. There is a good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables (locally-produced and imported), beef, pork, chicken and fish available in local markets and grocery stores. An increasing amount of western convenience foods and snack items are available in local stores, albeit at prices higher than in the U.S. Imported brands of toiletries are expensive but available here. Otherwise, with a little initiative, you will be able to find everything you need in Jakarta.

Clothing

General: Men, women, and children wear cotton and other lightweight clothing year round. Due to frequent, hard washing, clothing does not last as long as in the U.S. Launderers generally do satisfactory ironing and pressing. Adequate drycleaning costs considerably less than in a major U.S. city. Shoes wear out sooner than in U.S. due to the dampness and rough terrain. Locally made men's and women's shoes are adequate to good, but large sizes are sometimes difficult to find. There is a very wide range of price and quality available locally. Imported shoes for both men and women are available at many shops and department stores, but larger sizes are rare even in imported shoes. Several places in Jakarta sell moderately priced made-to-order shoes. Athletic shoes are more readily available in larger sizes, especially at outlets for the many name brands that are manufactured locally. For children and young teens, sandals, cloth shoes, and tennis shoes are available.

Imported fabrics are available locally but are expensive. Indonesian batik, with its distinctive patterns, is popular for dresses and sportswear. Prices for batik vary widely depending on the quality and intricacy of design. Take advantage of inexpensive tailoring to have clothing made. Tailors and seamstresses do not work from patterns, but can copy based on a picture or a sample item. Bring some warm

clothing for travel to Tokyo, Hong Kong, or the U.S. in winter months.

Men: Many men wear batik shirts (long and short sleeves) for social affairs. Indonesians consider long-sleeved batik shirts formal attire. Batik shirts can be purchased ready-made or tailor made. American sport shirts are usually worn only for casual affairs and at private parties. Bring an adequate supply of shoes. Only a few exclusive, expensive shops sell Western styles and sizes. Some have found sandals, desirable for informal wear. Bring your own golf shoes or buy them in Tokyo, Hong Kong, or Singapore for better quality and more reasonable prices. For evenings in the mountains, men will need a light jacket or sweater. Bring sports clothes, including tennis or golf shorts and swimming trunks.

Women: Office wear for women is similar to that in Washington, D.C., during summer. Since offices, cars, and most indoor places are completely air-conditioned, most lightweight summer fabrics, including knits, are suitable. Some women wear nylon hose. Casual dresses or long pants are suitable for nearly all daytime occasions. Evening wear is usually casual. Special occasions are dressy or formal. Both long and short casual dresses are appropriate for informal events.

A wide variety of fabrics, both local and imported, is available locally. Women who wear smaller sizes will not have trouble finding attractive and affordable clothing locally, but larger sizes are rare. Bring some shorts and sleeveless shirts. Shorts are worn primarily for golf and tennis. Also bring swimsuits, tennis and golf clothes, and sports clothing.

You can often use a wool sweater and slacks during the cool mountain evenings. Ready-made maternity clothes are not available. Most women bring an ample supply of underwear. Women rarely wear hats and gloves; they are not required at churches or for calling. Bring plenty of shoes and sandals. Some prefer closed (canvas-type)

shoes for shopping and sightseeing during the rainy season. Bring your regular size if you know your feet don't swell in hot weather.

Children: At JIS, all children in grades 7 thru 9 must wear uniforms (available for purchase at the school) and tennis shoes for physical education classes. Most children wear shorts at home and at the pool. Local shops sell children's shoes, but a proper fit may be difficult to obtain. Western-style clothes are popular with young people in Jakarta. Jeans and denims are sold everywhere.

Supplies and Services

Most basic toiletries are available locally, but if you rely on a particular U.S. brand, you should pack a supply. Bring special medicines or vitamins and reorder them by mail.

Drycleaning is generally deemed adequate. Shoe repair facilities are fair. Prices are less than in the U.S. A few beauty shops are recommended; some are small and simple, others are more luxurious. They offer the usual services at low, reasonable prices. Color rinses, perm; and dyes are available but expensive. You provide your own perm and dye supplies. Major hotels and shopping areas have barbershops. The usual services are reasonable.

Generally, radio, TV, and household appliance repairs do not meet U.S. standards. However, several shops perform adequate repair services; parts are usually imported and expensive. Good quality batik floor cushions and draperies can be custom made at reasonable prices. Picture framing is inexpensive and quality and selection varies.

Jakarta has many dressmakers, but prices and competence vary greatly. Some will visit your home for fittings. Establish a dressmaker's competence before providing an expensive piece of fabric. Tailors are available and, again, their competence and prices vary greatly. They make shirts, shorts, and suits.

Domestic Help

As in most of Asia, household help is not a luxury, but a necessity—not to provide a life of ease, but to help a family live a normal life and maintain a good level of security. You must take extra precautions when preparing food and must thoroughly scrub and peel vegetables before cooking, or soak them in disinfectant and rewash them in bottled water if you eat them raw. Marketing can be time consuming, although the preponderance of Western-style supermarkets makes shopping easier, albeit at a higher price. In many households, the cook shops for food in local markets at a considerable savings to the family. Domestic staff cannot shop in the commissary.

Aside from being practical, household help is customary in this part of the world. Even Indonesians of moderate circumstances have them.

The number of household help needed and their salaries differ according to individual households, with varying emphasis on their responsibility and ability. Below are examples of staff responsibilities. Salaries are paid in Rupiah and are considered quite affordable by western standards.

Cook: Plans the meals with you; informs you of what is on the market and does shopping; keeps a kitchen account book, which you should check; cleans the kitchen; and does the dishes.

Maid/Houseboy: Serves at table, mixes drinks, and cleans living and dining rooms; may also prepare meals on the cook's day off or if she or he is the only servant in a small household.

Nanny: Takes care of children, cleans their room, mends their clothing, and sees that it comes back from the launderer in good condition. May help with general housework if the family is small.

Driver: Acts as chauffeur, purchases gas and oil, and keeps your car in good operating condition.

Gardener: Tends the lawn, shrubs, flowers, etc. Most common is a combination gardener/watchman who watches the house during the day while he tends the yard.

Night Watchman: Guards your house.

Many families employ one or more “all in one” helpers who combine the functions of cook, maid/houseboy, and nanny. Domestic staff in Indonesia depend on their employers. The employer customarily provides uniforms and/or clothing, a Lebaran or Christmas bonus (1 month's salary if the employee has worked at least a year, prorated for shorter periods), and some employers provide uniforms and/or clothing as well as some basic food stuffs and some medical expenses. Additionally, employers must provide a bed (including the mattress), sheets, pillows, and towels for each employee that lives in. A bed, mattress, and pillow (at minimum) purchased locally costs between \$25 and \$35. Sheets and towels are very expensive on the local market.

All household staff should have a preemployment physical examination and annual stool tests and chest x-rays. As of February 2000, the range in cost for full physicals was \$8-\$20; x-rays were \$15. Domestic employees who are dismissed by you for any reason other than wrongdoing should be given severance pay at the rate of 1 month's salary for each full year worked and a prorated portion of a month's salary for employment periods of less than full years. If the employee resigns, you are not obliged to give severance pay but may want to give “service pay,” something like a thank-you bonus. Prevailing practice in business is to give one-half a month's salary after 5 years of employment. But should you choose to give “service pay,” the amount is at your discretion. Some staff require constant supervision, especially on cleanliness, market prices, storage and use of food supplies, and personal effects.

Religious Activities

In Jakarta, churches of several denominations hold regular services in English: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, interdenominational Protestant, Lutheran, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are also two active Christian youth groups: Friday Night Live for teens and pre-teens and International Christian Youth for high school students. There is an informal Jewish network that plans observations of high holidays and holds some social events.

Education

American children from kindergarten (prep-1) through grade 12 living in Jakarta generally attend Jakarta International School (JIS). Enrollment for the 2000-2001 school year was 2,526. Currently more than half of the 227-member teaching staff is American. The high school is fully accredited by the Association of Western Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. All instruction is in English.

JIS has three campuses, two of which are elementary schools, in two locations. For elementary level students, campus assignment is based primarily on area of residence.

Pattimura is located in Kebayoran Baru and houses prep-1 through grade 5. Completely reconstructed in 1986, Pattimura now consists of 23 classrooms, a library with more than 20,000 volumes, a computer lab, a theater, a gymnasium and special rooms for art, music, ESOL and reading. All indoor facilities are air-conditioned.

Pondok Indah Elementary (PIE) is located in Cilandak, behind but not connected to the Middle and High School campus. PIE houses prep-1 through grade 5. Located on 9 acres, it includes 47 classrooms, a library with more than 30,000 volumes, two computer labs, a science lab, gymnasium, theater, cafeteria, covered play area, swimming pool and expansive fields for outdoor recre-

ation. All buildings are air-conditioned.

Cilandak houses the Middle (grades 6-8) and High School (grades 9-12), in addition to the administrative offices. The 23-acre campus includes 115 classrooms, two libraries totaling more than 37,000 volumes, nine computer labs, two theaters, two gymnasiums, tennis courts, sports fields, a swimming pool and cafeteria.

The JIS elementary curriculum gives students a solid foundation in basic skills. The school offers up-to-date programs in math and science, using discovery and inquiry methods, and places a strong emphasis on language arts. Students have specialist teachers for music, art, computers, library and physical education. In grades 3, 4, and 5, students also have specialist teachers for Indonesian language and culture.

The Middle School curriculum includes a balanced emphasis on basic skill development and content. A variety of teaching methods is employed. The school's program of studies and daily schedule provide a gradual transition from the largely self-contained school structure of the elementary school to the departmental organization found in the high school. Students receive instruction in English/language arts, mathematics, history/social studies, science, and physical education. There is also a variety of exploratory and elective options in the areas of visual and performing arts, computer education, practical arts and modern languages. Each 7-8th grade student also must complete required courses in computer applications, Indonesian language and health.

The High School curriculum offers a modified American curriculum as well as the International Baccalaureate (IB), fulfilling admission requirements for American universities as well as those of other countries. Normally, six subjects are taken each year, including a sequential progression of courses in

English, mathematics, science and social studies. The following foreign languages are offered: French, Spanish, German, Dutch, Japanese, Korean and Indonesian. One semester of Indonesian language and geography is required for JIS High School graduation. Electives include music, drama, fine arts, practical arts, business, computer studies, physical education, year-book, and journalism. Advanced courses are offered in selected areas in order to prepare students for Advanced Placement (AP) exams and the IB diploma.

To supplement the academic program, JIS provides a variety of extracurricular activities designed to encourage physical well-being, intellectual interchange and participation in social activities. Boys and girls can participate in a varied after school sports program. There are also special interest clubs such as photography, chess, handicrafts, etc. Community leagues in soccer, basketball, baseball and competitive swimming are available.

At the high school level, JIS participates in the Interscholastic Association of Southeast Asia Schools (IASAS), a regional organization that offers competition in sports, as well as cultural events. Club activities are available at all levels, as well as Boy and Girl Scout Programs.

The school year begins in mid-August and ends early in June. There is a three-week vacation between semesters and a one-week break during second semester. The school observes Indonesian holidays. School hours are:

Prekindergarten(Prep Junior):
7:30 a.m.–noon
Kindergarten (Prep Senior):
7:30 a.m.–noon
(1st semester) 7:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m.
(2nd semester) Grades 1–5: 7:30 a.m.–1:45 p.m. Grades 6–12: 7:30 a.m.–2:40 p.m.

A catering service sells sandwiches and hot lunches on campus. Ice



Street scene in Sumatra

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

cream, bottled drinks, and various snacks are also available at the student stores on campus.

School uniforms are worn only for physical education; however, clothing should be clean, neat and comfortable. Shoes must be worn at all times for health reasons.

JIS does not have the facilities to deal with children who have serious learning, emotional or physical disabilities. Parents of prospective students are advised that the school is able to serve only those mildly learning disabled students who are able to function in the regular program with minimal support. If a child is receiving special services, such as LD instruction, remedial teaching, speech/language therapy or seeing any educational specialist outside the regular classroom, parents are advised to contact the school and discuss the child's situation before making a decision to come to Jakarta.

There are several other schools in Jakarta, including schools following the British, French, and Australian educational curricula, as well as a Montessori school. The Australian International School (AIS) is a smaller, relatively new school in southern Jakarta that offers special

needs programs. Children with special needs are mainstreamed, with full-time Indonesian classroom assistants assigned as necessary. A special needs coordinator works with the children individually several times per week. Speech therapy is sometimes available, though not guaranteed. School facilities are basic, but class sizes tend to be small. The school offers classes from preschool through grade 12, operating on the Australian school calendar which means that the school year goes from January-December. For more information, contact the school at AIS@bitnet.id, or phone 6221-780-5152.

Students wishing to enroll in prep I (kindergarten) at JIS must reach their 5th birthdays prior to October 31 of the current school year.

Preschools: There are several good English-language preschools at post. Many families of young children take advantage of part- or full-time preschools, including Bambino, Tutor Time, Discovery Center and Jakarta Montessori School. JIS has a preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds; however, most Embassy families find the JIS program to be too expensive.



Skyline of Jakarta, Indonesia

© Larry Lee Photography/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Special Educational Opportunities

Indonesian language training is available through a number of local resources, including the Lembaga Indonesia-Amerika (Yayasan LIA) and ICAC. The Indonesian Heritage Society offers various opportunities to study Indonesian culture in depth through its study groups, lecture series, and museum volunteer program. Although several Indonesian colleges and universities exist, all instruction is in Indonesian.

Sports

Jakarta hosts a variety of recreational and sports facilities, from fitness clubs to golf driving ranges to tennis courts to riding stables.

AERA provides a variety of activities to enhance the morale of American families. Facilities include dining areas, a Western-style bar with large-screen TV, a pool table, video games, NTSC video rental, a satellite dish, tennis courts, swimming pool, a fitness center, and multipurpose rooms used for fitness and children's classes and available for special-purpose rental.

The club conducts a summer camp for elementary school-aged children, organizes activities for adults and children, and hosts programs for American holidays and other special occasions. It also provides catering services for members. Membership fees include a reason-

able initiation fee and monthly dues. Charges for food, video rentals, etc., are payable on a monthly basis.

There are several other clubs that expatriates join, including the Jakarta American Club (not affiliated with the Embassy or the AERA Club) and the Mercantile Athletic Club. Several large hotels make their facilities available on a daily or membership basis. In addition, the Mission housing pool includes some apartment complexes and housing complexes that have swimming pools, tennis courts, and other amenities.

Golf. Golf enthusiasts can choose from 18- and 9-hole golf courses and driving ranges. Some are open to casual players, but others require memberships. Membership and green fees are moderate. Courses are generally well maintained and are open from sunrise to sunset. Most have pro shops, snack or meal service, locker room facilities, and instruction. Golf equipment is available locally but is more expensive than in the U.S.

Tennis: Most clubs have tennis courts, including the AERA Club, the Hilton, the Senayan Sports Complex, and JIS. Several housing compounds also have tennis facilities. Although tennis equipment and balls are available locally, prices are generally higher than in the U.S.

Swimming: In Jakarta, most clubs, hotels, and apartment or townhouse complexes have swimming pools. Many hotels charge daily fees for use of the pool. Ancol and Pondok Indah offer public swimming and water park facilities. These tend to be crowded on weekends and public holidays. Saltwater bathing is available at beach resorts and nearby islands. Beach lovers should note, however, that the closest beach is some 3-1/2 hours by car from Jakarta. Pelabuhan Ratu (Samudra Beach) on the Indian Ocean, south of Jakarta, is about 4 1/2 hours by car, and Anyer, Carita, and Sombola, on the Sunda Straits west of

Jakarta, are about 3-1/2 hours by car. Pulau Seribu or Thousand Islands is a system of small islands in the sea north of Jakarta. There are several basic but pleasant resorts that offer scuba, snorkeling, swimming, and various sports.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Snorkeling and scuba diving: Snorkeling and scuba diving are available both near and far from Jakarta. Several islands of the Thousand Islands area have popular sites for viewing coral, highly colored tropical fish, and other sea life. Some are reachable by boat in several hours. Pulau Putri and other islands have beaches and full tourist facilities, including cottages for rent. Scuba courses are available, and informal groups organize trips to the islands. For travel further afield, several other islands and resorts offer both activities, including Sulawesi, Sumatra, Lombok, Bali, Kalimantan, Maluku and Papua. Most dive shops / tour operators rent tanks and weights. Most also sell equipment, but it is expensive compared to U.S. prices. It is advisable to bring your own regulator and BCD.

Horseback Riding: Several high-quality English-style equestrian facilities offer regular lessons for all levels, including jumping and polo; costs of lessons are cheaper than the equivalent in the U.S. Horses can be leased long term, which is the best arrangement if you plan to ride more than a couple of times a week.

Photography: Picturesque villages, colorful native dress, street scenes, mountains, and beaches provide a variety of photo opportunities. Film and slides, mostly Japanese and U.S. brands, are available locally at reasonable prices. Local processing of color film is good and reasonably priced.

Sightseeing In and around Jakarta: There are several museums, including the National Museum, which houses a large collection of Indonesian antiques, cultural displays, and one of the

world's finest Asian porcelain collections; the Museum of the Armed Forces; Museum Wayang, which houses a collection of puppets representing various regions and eras in Indonesia; Museum-Tekstil, containing a collection of Indonesian textiles; the Adam Malik Museum, containing some of the late statesman's collection; the Ceramic Museum; and the Jakarta Historical Museum.

Taman Mini, located about 13 miles southeast of Jakarta, has several theme museums, exhibits of traditional houses of the 27 regions in the country, amusement rides, an orchid garden, and various other attractions. Taman Impian Jaya Ancol is located in the north of Jakarta and has a water park, an amusement park, an art and handicraft market, and Seaworld. Many consider visiting the various market areas as a sightseeing trip in itself. Jakarta also has a zoo and planetarium. Newcomers often enjoy city tours arranged by major hotels and travel agencies. The Indonesian Heritage Society has an Explorers Club that organizes regular tours to a wide variety of local landmarks and historic areas. It is an interesting way to see the city and meet new friends.

To learn about Indonesian culture, take trips outside the city. The Puncak Hills and the nearby town of Bogor offer a pleasant climate and scenery change. In Bogor, the famous Botanical Gardens feature a 275-acre park with a zoological museum, scientific library, and laboratory. The orchid collection is a special attraction. Puncak Pass, on the road to Bandung, is 5,000 feet high. Jakarta residents often rent cottages in the Puncak on weekends. A Safari Park, where you can drive through and view wild animals, is located here. There is also a children's zoo on the premises.

Bandung, a 4-hour drive from Jakarta or a pleasant train ride, offers good hotel accommodations and pleasant mountain views. Several modern artists live and work in Bandung; one of Indonesia's art

schools is here. About 15 miles north of Bandung is the Tangkuban Prahua Volcano.

Yogyakarta and Solo are interesting cities on Java. Yogyakarta is of historical and cultural interest—here are some of Indonesia's best-preserved Hindu and Buddhist monuments and temples, among them the famous Borobudur Temple. At the magnificent Prambanan Temple, between Yogyakarta and Solo, a Javanese dance-drama is performed twice a month at full moon during the dry season. Both Solo and Yogyakarta are Javanese cultural centers and offer a variety of events and shopping opportunities. Good hotels are available.

The Island of Bali is one of the most popular vacation spots for tourists. It has beautiful beaches and striking volcanic scenery. Accommodations range from four-star hotels to simple guest houses and bungalows. Balinese culture is particularly interesting. As Islam swept through Indonesia, many Hindus fled to Bali, where Hindu and Indonesian culture and customs mix in an interesting fashion. The island abounds in cultural activities and performances and shopping opportunities. Bali is about 1 hour and 20 minutes by air from Jakarta.

Although rioting in January of 2000 caused some damage to the tourist industry, the Island of Lombok continues to be popular. Considered similar to Bali of 30 years ago, this still-unspoiled island has lovely beaches and is famous for its weaving and pottery. There are flights from Jakarta, via either Bali or Yogyakarta.

The Island of Sumatra offers Lake Toba, a beautiful volcanic lake in the north; Padang, central Sumatra's largest city and center of the Minangkabau people (a matriarchal society); Palembang, site of a refinery and large oil installations; and an elephant training center near Lampung in southern Sumatra. Visiting many of these places requires a car, but travelers must be wary of poor road condi-

tions and hazardous local driving. Some travel agents and hotels offer packages that include tours onsite with a rented vehicle and driver.

Entertainment

Jakarta offers a large variety of restaurants ranging from international-standard restaurants, generally housed in major hotels, to moderately priced, family-style restaurants, to most popular American fast-food restaurants. A 10% government tax and 11% service charge is included in the bill at nicer restaurants.

The city offers a variety of nightlife, including clubs both in major hotels and as independent establishments. There are several discotheques that offer both live and recorded music.

Expatriates frequent several Jakarta cinemas; they are air-conditioned, clean, and wide screened. American films are shown in their original English language version with Indonesian subtitles. Admission is usually about \$2.50. American movies shown here tend to be several months old and are subject to government censorship.

Americans occasionally attend Indonesian dances, music performances, and puppet shows. Local artists frequently hold exhibits throughout the city. Several amateur theater groups present English language plays and musicals. There are classical music evenings and an occasional ballet. Stage plays are rare, but the number of rock concerts is increasing.

Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM), the Jakarta Cultural Center, has an enclosed theater, an open-air theater, a cinema, exhibition rooms for art shows, and a planetarium.

There are no real public libraries here, and although popular English-language books are available in several bookstores, prices can be double what they are in the U.S. The British Council, ICAC, and AWA operate small lending libraries, and parents of JIS students can use the high school library. The AERA Club

operates small, informal used book exchanges. Many families order books from Internet bookstore sites.

Social Activities

Most social life centers around private homes and includes cocktail parties, buffets, dinners, and card parties. Heavy traffic patterns frequently determine the timing and frequency of such entertaining.

AWA organizes social and charitable activities for women and their families. Monthly meetings are held with guest speakers or other activities. Twice a year, AWA sponsors major craft bazaars, which are very popular. It publishes *Introducing Indonesia*, an excellent guide to expatriate living in Indonesia, as well as the *Jakarta Shoppers Guide* and other useful books. It also maintains a center that houses a thrift shop, a used book section, a lending library, and a servants registry. The organization also organizes group tours within and outside of Indonesia.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia, commonly known as AMCHAM, is an association of businesspeople abroad and is concerned with U.S. trade, investment, and community services. AMCHAM holds monthly luncheons with guest speakers and sponsors some social activities.

With a large international community, social activities include Indonesians, Americans, and other expatriates of many nationalities. A great deal of entertaining occurs among international representatives and Indonesians. The Women's International Club (WIC) has members from many nationalities. It was organized in 1950 to promote friendship and understanding among different nationalities. It sponsors social activities and classes and is active in social welfare programs. It sponsors an annual Christmas Bazaar that is very popular with both expatriates and Indonesians.

ICAC is a nonprofit organization that provides workshops, activities, professional counseling services, a

lending library, a small craft shop, and a newcomers resource center. It conducts orientation programs quarterly and smaller luncheons and discussion groups to help newcomers meet each other and begin their adjustment to Jakarta.

The International Allied Medical Association (IAMA) is an informal group of English-speaking health professionals interested in keeping up with current developments in the medical field. Monthly meetings with guest speakers are held.

The Indonesian Heritage Society is an organization of volunteers interested in learning about the history, art, and culture of Indonesia. Volunteers assist in the museums of Jakarta and sponsor a public lecture series and smaller study groups.

A multinational community chorus, the PPIA choir, presents concerts twice a year and is open to all. In addition to these groups, there are many other organizations based on specific interests and needs, such as Rotary and Lions Clubs.

Surabaya

Surabaya, with a population of about 2.7 million, is Indonesia's second largest city and provincial capital of East Java. Surabaya is on the northeastern coast of Java opposite the nearby Island of Madura. The city itself is thickly settled along the Brantas River Estuary. The area around the city to the west and south is marshy, coastal plain. In recent years, the abundant rice cultivation in the south has given way to steady development of industrial sites. The southern plain gradually rises to a range of volcanic mountains, the nearest of note is about 31 miles south of the city.

Surabaya's climate is very hot and humid with an average humidity of 75 percent, rainfall of 60 inches, and an average temperature of 81°F. The rainy season begins in November and ends around April. The rest of the year, particularly June through October is drier. The periods when

the monsoons change direction (usually March–April and November–December) are characterized by harsh rains and often result in some flooding in East Java and in greater Surabaya. The months of July and August are the most comfortable of the year.

At the turn of the century, Surabaya was the leading port of the Dutch Indies. The city exported rubber, tobacco, teak, kapok, sugar, and fibers. Despite the impact of World Wars, the 1930s depression, the 1945–49 resolution, and subsequent periods of civil turbulence, Surabaya remains a major agricultural-industrial center and is Indonesia's second largest port. Since 1968 Surabaya has progressed rapidly. It is the commercial hub for the second largest market in the country, and the province of East Java has one of the best development records in Indonesia.

The city's present population is almost entirely indigenous Indonesian (primarily Javanese and Madurese), with a small but visible ethnic Chinese minority, an ethnic Indian community of perhaps a thousand, and a few hundred other foreigners, including Japanese, Koreans, Europeans, and Americans. About 180 Americans live in the greater Surabaya area, primarily engaged in business. The Indonesian-American friendship association (PPIA) sponsors English language courses, college counseling, and cultural programs. The number of American tourists visiting Surabaya is rising, but most tourists visit Bali and Yogyakarta.

Food

An increasing number of Western-style supermarkets ease the grocery shopping experience in Surabaya. And though you can generally get everything on your list (from olive oil to Swiss Miss instant cocoa), you may have to visit two or more stores and/or wait a matter of weeks for that hard to find item to turn up again on the shelves. A wide variety of local seafood, chicken, beef (often tough and dry), pork (including bacon) and mutton are available. In

addition, sausages, lamb and a better quality beef are imported from neighboring New Zealand and Australia but are more expensive. Most dairy products are also imported: cheddar, mozzarella, Edam, Gouda, Parmesan, Camembert, Brie, and feta cheeses are available.

Entertainment

Surabaya offers a wide variety of restaurants, including Western, Indonesian, and other Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.) cuisine. Surabaya also has several nightclubs and discos. Film is available locally. Local printing and developing service is inexpensive and satisfactory. Surabaya has several air-conditioned theater complexes that show subtitled American films, including first-run movies. The video system in this country is PAL, and the format in Surabaya is primarily VCD, followed by DVD. VHS choices are extremely limited. Surabaya has a small museum and a large zoo with Komodo dragons, a nocturnal animal exhibit, outstanding bird and ape collections, and an excellent aquarium of tropical fish. The Taman Remaja Amusement Park, open daily, has several rides and games for small children.

Social Activities

Social life in Surabaya is centered around the home and generally informal. Dinner parties at home and at hotel restaurants are the most common forms of entertainment. Several local firms provide catering services for private parties. Two international organizations, the Expatriate Women's Association of Surabaya (EWAS) and the Women's International Club (WIC), meet regularly.

Medan

Medan was formerly the capital of the Island of Sumatra, Indonesia's second largest island. It is now capital of only North Sumatra Province, which borders the Straits of Malacca. In 1910, this relatively new city moved to its present location, a few miles inland from the

city of Belawan-Deli. The Medan municipality still includes the port of Belawan, where rubber, palm oil, coffee, and tea are exported, and consumer and industrial goods are imported. It is Indonesia's largest port in value of exports.

The city is set on a lush green plain, surrounded by rice paddies and palm trees. The Bukit Barisan mountain range, which runs the length of Sumatra, can be seen to the south. Only 82 feet above sea level, just north of the equator, Medan has a climate which is generally hot and humid. The heaviest rains fall from September through December most years. The Medan community has grown from 77,000 in 1940 to some 1.8 million (2000 est.). These figures include about 250,000 Chinese, 15,000 Indians, 200 Europeans, and 60 Americans. The Western community recently has been decreasing in size due to Indonesianization of expatriate positions in the petroleum industry and a relocation of some of the remaining workers outside Medan. Medan today is the largest banking and commercial community in Indonesia, next to Jakarta.

Medan is a sprawling city of *kampungs*, (native Indonesian villages), with a crowded Chinese sector and an Indian (Tamil) district. Some areas with elegant old government office buildings, parks, and peaked tile-roofed houses reflect the early Dutch colonial heritage. A few tall buildings and new houses with modern curved roofs are springing up. Traffic is chaotic, with swarms of fume-spewing motorized *becaks* (pedicabs), motorcycles, bicycles, cars, buses, trucks, and jaywalking pedestrians. A one-way street system has helped traffic, but it makes the city a puzzle for the newcomer.

Education

The Medan International School has classes from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Founded in 1969, this coeducational school has instruction in English, and the school uses American textbooks. Information about Medan International may be obtained by writing

them at P.O. Box 191, Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia.

Secondary-age students must be educated away from the city. Most American children attend the Medan International School through the eighth grade, then transfer to Jakarta International School or the Singapore American School, although both schools offer grades one through 12. Neither school offers boarding facilities, and arrangements must be made with a private family or a private hotel. The address of the Singapore American School is 60 King's Road, Singapore 1026, Republic of Singapore. Jakarta International School's address is J1. Terogong Raya 33, Jakarta 12430, Indonesia.

Recreation

In the mountains, about 105 miles southwest of Medan, is lovely Lake Toba. It is 55 miles long and 18 miles wide, and is dominated by the Island of Samosir. The elevation at the water's edge is almost 3,000 feet, and mountain peaks rise along the shore. Sight-seeing tours to Samosir Island and the Batak villages can be made by boat. There are several hotels in the tiny town of Prapat that offer reasonable food and lodging.

About one-and-a-half hours southwest of Medan, through tropical forests and up a series of hairpin curves, is the highland area of Brastagi. At an altitude of 5,000 feet, the weather is even cooler than at Lake Toba. Live volcanos afford striking scenery. Golf, horseback riding, and hiking are possible.

Roads are slowly improving in northern Sumatra, but travel to more remote areas usually requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Tennis, swimming, softball, cricket, squash, golf, badminton, bowling, and horseback riding are possible in Medan, but some facilities are not up to U.S. standards.

Several health clubs and fitness centers of varying size and equipment are available. The Medan

Club has three tennis courts and a squash court for use by members. The Deli Golf Club, about 40 minutes from downtown, has an 18-hole course.

The playing field areas in Medan have little playground equipment, and are used primarily for soccer by the Indonesians. On occasion, expatriate community members organize a Sunday softball game on one of these fields. There are no picnic areas or beaches in the city's vicinity. The nearest beach is at Pantai Cermin, some 31 miles away, but it is shallow, muddy, and made even less attractive by poisonous sea snakes. Sailing is not common; good skin diving areas are far from Medan.

Entertainment

Entertainment is limited in the Medan area. The city's movie theaters rarely offer English-language films but few Americans patronize them. Chinese, Kung Fu movies and Indian films are standard local fare.

Color broadcasts are shown on local television; most programming comes from Jakarta. Programs are generally limited to news, sports, Indonesian cultural shows, some children's cartoons, or dated English films. The broadcast system is PAL. There are no English-language radio programs, so it is necessary to have a shortwave radio in order to keep up with U.S. and world news.

The United States Information Service (USIS)-sponsored library has English-language books, primarily classics, references, or textbooks, and shows weekly U.S. news summaries on videotape. The British Council has a library with 6,000 books for leisure reading, as well. All local newspapers are in Indonesian, although the English-language *Singapore Straits Times* and the *Jakarta Times* or the *Jakarta Post* can be home-delivered. Asian editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available in local book shops.

Medan has a new cultural center complex, but presentations are infrequent.

Chinese restaurants are the most popular of the few dining establishments in Medan. One of the international class hotels, the Tiara, offers reasonably good European food, but Indonesian and Indian restaurants do not serve good-quality meats. Prices vary from moderate to expensive for non-Indonesian food.

Several nightclubs are open, but Americans and Europeans rarely patronize them.

OTHER CITIES

AMBON, with a population of 313,000, is the capital of Maluku Province on the Banda Sea in eastern Indonesia. This important seaport was founded by the Portuguese in 1574. Early in the 17th century, the Dutch and English settled in the area, and fought over it for 200 years. The "massacre of Amboina" took place in 1623 and involved the killing of many English settlers by the Dutch. Japanese forces held the city during World War II from 1942 until 1945. A few examples of Dutch colonial architecture remain today. Fort Victoria, still an active military post, and the former Dutch governor's home, both stand in the heart of Ambon. The Museum Siwalima is in the eastern suburb of Karang Panjang. It houses a number of artifacts, including Chinese ceramics, objects of magic, and skulls.

BANDUNG, is a city of 2.4 million, and the fourth largest municipality in the country. Located at a rail junction 75 miles southeast of Jakarta, it is a bustling city, with many factories, hospitals, government departments, and schools. A well-known textile center, Bandung is the center of Indonesia's quinine industry, using the cinchona grown in the nearby plantations. Founded in 1810, it is the center of Sudanese cultural life. Bandung was the site of a World War II Japanese prison camp. Surrounded by mountains

and volcanoes, Bandung is a tourist resort known for its cool and healthy climate. Bandung is also an educational and cultural center. A textile institute, a technological institute, a state university, two private universities, and a nuclear research center are located here. The city was the site of the Bandung Conference in 1955, a meeting between 29 Asian and African nations to promote cultural and economic cooperation. Bandung Alliance School, featuring a U.S. curriculum for grades one through six, and Bandung International School, featuring a combined curriculum for pre-kindergarten through grade eight, are located here.

KUPANG is the capital of East Nusa Tenggara Province. It is situated on Kupang Bay at the tip of Timor Island. It was settled by the Dutch early in the 17th century. Kupang has a population over 400,000.

PALEMBANG, situated about 300 miles northwest of Jakarta in South Sumatra, is Indonesia's richest city. Large oil refineries and a petrochemical complex employ many of the provincial capital's 1.4 million residents (2000 est.). Other industries are shipbuilding and iron and rubber production. Long a trade center, Palembang lies on the Musi River, which links it to principal Asian ports. The area was the capital of a Hindu Kingdom in the seventh century; the Dutch and British came a thousand years later. Landmarks here include the Great Mosque, built in 1740; the provincial parliament building; and the Rumah Bari Museum. Statuary, sculptures, weapons, and crafts are on display in the museum. A university was founded in Palembang in 1960.

SEMARANG, the capital of Central Java Province, is a seaport city and one of the major commercial centers in Indonesia. It is located on the north coast, 225 miles east of Jakarta. The manufacture of textiles and machinery and shipbuilding and fishing are the economic mainstays here; exports include



The Great Mosque in Sumatra

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sugar, coffee, and rubber. It came under Dutch control as early as 1748, and was occupied by the Japanese during World War II from February 1942 until September 1945. Many steamship companies maintain offices in this city of approximately 787,000 residents (2000 est.). Depongoro University, founded in 1957, is located here, along with Semarang International School, which features a U.S. curriculum for nursery school through sixth grade. The student body numbers forty-one. Semarang International is located at Jl. Raung 16, Candi, Semarang, 50232, Jateng, Indonesia.

SURAKARTA (also known as Solo) is located in central Java Province

50 miles southeast of Semarang, and is connected to Jakarta and Surabaya by rail. This city of approximately 516,500 residents (1995 est.) is the trade center for the surrounding region that produces sugar, tobacco, and rice. Surakarta is particularly known for its handicrafts, which include gold work and batik cloth; it also manufactures textiles, furniture, machinery, metal products, leather work, and cigarettes. In addition, Surakarta is a cultural center recognized for its gamelan music and for its shadow plays called wayang. Landmarks in the city include a Dutch fort, built in 1799 to resemble a Dutch town; and the walled palace of the sultan that is almost a city in itself. There is a private university in Surakarta, as

well as an extension facility of the Islamic University of Indonesia that has a library and a museum.

UJUNG PANDANG (formerly called Makassar) is the business center of Sulawesi, situated 900 miles east of Jakarta on the Makassar Straits. Improvements in the city's harbor have expanded the export trade which includes gums, resins, coffee, and rattan. In the center of town is the grave of the national hero, Prince Diponegoro of Yogyakarta (1785–1855). He was a Javanese leader in the war against the Dutch in the late 1820s. The dungeon where the Dutch held him for 27 years is still standing; Indonesians make pilgrimages to both sites. Ujung Pandang was a principal port for the Goa Kingdom when the Portuguese arrived in the 16th century, followed by the Dutch. The fall of the kingdom in 1667 came with the conquest of the old *benteng*, or fort, which was rebuilt as Amsterdam Castle. This now is considered an excellent example of 17th-century Dutch fortress construction. The Ujung Pandang Provincial Museum has several displays in the fort, including costumes, coins, and musical instruments. The city's population is an estimated 1.1 million (2000 est.).

YOGYAKARTA (also spelled Jogjakarta) is located in central Java Province, 175 miles southwest of Surabaya. Situated at the foot of Mount Merapi, Yogyakarta was founded in 1749 and was once the capital of a sultanate. It was also the site of a revolt against the Dutch in the early 19th century, and played an important role in the Indonesian independence movement from 1946 to 1950. Today, Yogyakarta is Java's cultural center known for drama and dance festivals, as well as for its handicraft industry. The city is an important tourist center and has beautifully preserved Hindu temples and monuments. The Borobudur Temple (26 miles to the northwest) is one of the finest Buddhist monuments in central Java, dating from about the ninth century. The shrine was left to crumble in the jungle rot and peri-

odic earthquakes of the area for over a thousand years until it was rediscovered in the 19th century and restored under a \$23 million U.N.-sponsored beautification project. The walled palace of the sultan of Yogyakarta served as Indonesia's provisional capital in 1949–1950, and now houses Gadjah Mada University. Islamic University of Indonesia and several colleges are also located here. Yogyakarta's population is over 500,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography And Climate

The Republic of Indonesia encompasses the world's longest archipelago. From the tiny island of Sabang in the northwest to Papua (formerly Irian Jaya or West Irian) in the east, over 17,000 islands, stretch some 3,400 miles along the Equator. The total land area covers about 736,000 square miles. The main islands, in terms of population and importance, are Java, Sumatra, Bali, Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi (Celebes), Papua, and the Maluku. The landscape is highly varied with mountain peaks and volcanoes, some rising to over 15,000 feet. In central Papua, snow covers some peaks all year.

The tropical climate varies with location, season, and altitude. Jakarta lies in the lowlands. The climate is monotonous and enervating with heavy rainfalls, low winds, high temperatures, and high humidity. Spanning the Equator, Indonesia experiences no real seasons. However, a wet season begins in November and lasts until March, followed by a dry season from April to October. Days and nights each last 12 hours.

The tropical climate and rich soil support abundant flora and fauna. Mangrove swamps and marshes flourish along the coast; tropical rain forests cover most of the ter-

rain up to 3,000 feet; and abundant subtropical vegetation, such as oak, pine, and hardwoods, thrives at higher altitudes. The abundant forest cover and favorable climate have stimulated a diverse animal life.

Many endangered and unique animals, such as single-horn rhinoceroses, orangutans, saltwater crocodiles, Komodo "dragons," Sumatran tigers, giant monitor lizards, and anoa, the pygmy buffalo of Celebes, still find a home in Indonesia. Many species of snakes, insects, and birds abound.

Population

Indonesia's 219 million people (2000 estimate), make it the fifth most populous—as well as the most populous Moslem-country in the world. Some 63% live on overcrowded Java and the adjacent islands of Madura and Bali. Some 65% are under age 25; about 85% live in rural areas. Indonesia has over 300 ethnic groups. Roughly 45% of the population are Javanese. Other large ethnic groups include the Sundanese (West Java), Madurese, Balinese, Bataks (North Sumatra), Minangkabau (West Sumatra), coastal Malays, Dayaks (Kalimantan), Ambonese (Maluku), Makasarese-Buginese (Sulawesi), and Chinese.

Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia), a form of Malay, is the official language. Many Indonesian leaders speak English. Some 87% of the population are Moslem. Islam originally came to Indonesia via Persia and India. It is less austere than the Middle Eastern variety and in some areas encompasses Hindu and pre-Islamic Indonesian customs and beliefs.

European and American Christian missionaries have been influential in certain parts of Indonesia, especially in northern Sulawesi, the Moluccas or "Spice Islands," North Sumatra, the lesser Sundas (Flores, Timor, Sumba), and Papua. Currently both Catholic and Protestant minorities exist. Many ethnic Chinese are Catholic. The island of Bali is predominantly Hindu. The

annual population growth rate is 1.6%. To reduce the growth rate, the government sponsors family planning. About 50% of eligible couples on crowded Java and Bali have enrolled.

Public Institutions

Indonesia is a unitary republic, divided administratively into 32 provinces. (The former province of East Timor gained independence following a referendum in August 1999.) The provinces are further subdivided into regencies, subdistricts, and municipalities. Since the collapse of Soeharto's authoritarian "new order" regime in May 1998, the country has embarked on the road to democratization and decentralization. Under the transitional presidency of B.J. Habibie, freedom of expression was restored and political laws were rewritten paving the way for the June 1999 parliamentary elections, the first free and fair elections held in more than 40 years. Out of the 48 parties that contested the election, the largest 6 vote winners were the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) with 34%, GOLKAR with 22%, the National Awakening Party (PKB) with 13%, the Unity and Development Party (PPP) with 11%, the National Mandate Party (PAN) with 7%, and the Crescent and Star Party (PBB) with 2% of the vote. Several smaller parties won seats in the current Parliament (DPR), but, under law, will be required to merge in order to contest the next election in 2004.

In October 1999, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), the constitutionally highest governmental body, elected Abdurrahman Wahid (a.k.a. "Gus Dur") to a 5-year term as the country's fourth president. "Professionalizing" the military, which played important political, economic, and social roles under past governments, is a current goal, and so are justice sector reform and a fight against corruption. Both the MPR and DPR have become very active, with the MPR addressing constitutional reform and the DPR exerting considerable

influence on government policy and the budget.

The government is implementing new laws on regional autonomy aimed at devolving political and economic control to the regions. Success in this effort is seen as crucial in addressing grievances that have helped spawn separatist movements in some provinces including Aceh and Papua (formerly Irian Jaya). Most internationally known commercial, social, and philanthropic organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross, Rotary, Lions Club, and Scouts are represented.

Arts, Science, and Education

The arts in Indonesia reflect the perception and creativity of a people surrounded by great natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage. Art, like religion, is woven into patterns of daily life. It is an integral accompaniment to celebrations and religious rites, as well as a principal source of leisure time enjoyment. Various Indonesian art forms are based on folklore but others were developed in the courts of former kingdoms or, as in Bali, are part of religious tradition.

The famous dance dramas of Java and Bali derive from Hindu mythology and often feature fragments from the Ramayana and Mahabharata Hindu epics. These highly stylized dances with elaborate costumes are accompanied by full "gamelan" orchestras comprising instruments similar to the xylophone as well as drums, gongs, and occasionally, stringed instruments and flutes.

One of the most fascinating types of Indonesian performing arts is the "wayang," art puppet performance, accompanied by gamelan. Two main types of wayang exist: The "wayang kulit" features flat leather shadow puppets, and the "wayang golek" uses wooden hand puppets. In both forms, the puppets are used to narrate a story usually based on one of

the Hindu epics, but they frequently offer veiled comments on contemporary political figures and events.

Transportation

Automobiles

Personal cars for work, shopping, social occasions, and trips to the mountains or seashore add a great deal of convenience and independence to life here. Please consider the following before deciding to ship or purchase vehicle locally.

Only sedans and station wagon-type vehicles may be imported, but the government has allowed the import of some smaller SUV's, like the RAV 4, and occasionally small engine Jeeps or other SUV type vehicles and minivans on a case-by-case basis. Buses, vans, sports cars, and luxury vehicles (4,000cc engine capacity and those above the highest priced Indonesian vehicle) are generally not allowed for import.

The most commonly imported and locally available automobiles are Toyotas and other Japanese models, and to a lesser extent European and Australian models; few American models are imported due to high prices (the Indonesian Government considers most luxury vehicles), limited parts, and lack of repair facilities. Automobile resale values vary and are less favorable for large U.S. models. Smaller cars are easier to handle, as streets and highways are narrow and traffic is heavily congested.

As of February 2000, a locally assembled Toyota Corolla SE with automatic transmission and air-conditioning costs \$18,918.

Importing a car into Indonesia requires two separate permits and approvals from the Government of Indonesia: (1) Preliminary approval (PPI) before your car is shipped/ordered/or purchased; (2) Customs approval (PP-8) when the car arrives.

Auto insurance is available locally. You might also consider U.S. insur-

ance coverage available through various companies before deciding. By law, you must have third-party coverage in an amount equal to Rp 1,000,000. Full comprehensive coverage is recommended. Collision insurance is strongly recommended, as most Indonesians are financially unable to pay for damages.

Driving in Indonesia, traffic moves on the left. Right-hand drive is recommended but not required. A left-hand-drive car is less hazardous in Jakarta than on the busy, narrow two-lane (or one and one-half lane) roads leading from Jakarta to mountain and beach resorts. Driving in Indonesia requires care and vigilance to avoid accidents. Many long term visitors hire a full-time or part-time driver.

Travelers can drive in Indonesia using either an Indonesian drivers license, obtainable on presentation of a valid U.S., foreign, or international license, or an international drivers license validated by the Government of Indonesia. Keep in mind this license must be renewed annually. If you do not have a valid license, you must take written and driving tests for a fee.

The state-owned Pertamina Company sells gasoline and diesel fuel through its outlets throughout the country. Unleaded fuel (called Super TT) is Rps 1,400 a liter. Higher octane leaded is Rps 1,300; lower octane leaded is Rps 1,000; and diesel fuel costs Rps 600 a liter. A few stations sell unleaded gasoline. However, unleaded fuel is now available in some major cities and on the toll road to Bogor and Puncak.

Adequate asphalt roads connect major cities in central and east Java. A standard shift is preferable, and air-conditioning is necessary. Heavy-duty springs and shock absorbers, undercoating, and rust-proofing are recommended. If your car has tubeless tires, bring at least one spare with a tube for emergencies.

Local

By Western standards, public transportation in Jakarta is overburdened and inadequate. Buses in particular are not maintained properly and are considered so unsafe, Embassy personnel rarely use them. Several taxicab companies operate fleets from the major hotels in Jakarta, in the suburb of Kebayoran (which houses many Embassy employees), and have reliable reservation services. Use metered taxis to avoid haggling over fares and overcharging. "Bajajs" (motor-driven, three-wheeled vehicles) also operate and can be used for short distances. However, Bajaj and taxi drivers speak little English and often know only the names of major streets.

Surabaya. "Becaks" (pedicabs) are the most commonly used means of local public transportation for short trips. Various types of three- and four-wheeled vehicles supplement the city bus system, but Consulate General personnel rarely use any of these motorized public vehicles. Metered taxi service is available.

Regional

The rainy season often causes the generally poor roads to become impassable. Otherwise, trucks, buses, animal carts, becaks, and pedestrians congest the roads. Depending on the season and local road conditions, you can possibly drive from Jakarta to the eastern tip of Java (about 800 miles) in 2 or 3 days. From there your car can be ferried across to Bali. The Indonesian State railway system serves major cities in Java. Accommodations, standards, and service vary from air-conditioned comfort to steerage. Limited rail and road networks on Sumatra make traveling difficult.

Garuda Indonesian Airways, Bouraq, Merpati, and several other local airlines provide air service to major cities and outlying islands in Indonesia, including Denpasar on the island of Bali. Garuda also flies to major Asian, European, and Australian cities. Numerous daily flights to and from Singapore, 1

hour and 20 minutes from Jakarta, exist. The international airport is some 20 miles from downtown Jakarta. Several daily flights from Medan serve Jakarta and Singapore. One flight a day goes to Penang, Malaysia. Several weekly flights within Sumatra service Padang, Banda Aceh, and Pekanbaru. An almost hourly shuttle service connects Jakarta and Surabaya.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

A 24-hour satellite-telephone service connects Indonesia with the U.S. Reception on international calls is usually good, but local phone service is only fair. Cables and central exchange equipment are often saturated and sometimes inadequately maintained. In-country direct dialing is available throughout Indonesia.

If you have a telephone charge card from a U.S. company, use it during your stay for cheaper rates on calls to the U.S. Many long-distance companies provide reduced rates upon request for calls made with their calling cards.

Radio and TV

Commercial television was allowed by the government to begin operations in 1989, after many years of government television only. Indonesian broadcast television is in the PAL (European) format. Programming varies greatly, from locally produced dramas and game shows to U.S. sitcoms and dramatic series with Indonesian subtitles. There is daily English news on Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), the government network. The local cable and satellite television services offer CNN, BBC, CNBC, Star News, and Australian news programs to subscribers, as well as HBO, Cinemax, ESPN, Discovery, National Geographic, C-Span, Worldnet, and Star TV, and other educational and entertainment channels. Subscribers can receive up to 50 channels, in various Asian and European languages as well as

English. Rates are comparable to those in the U.S. Jakarta has abundant TV, radio, and stereo equipment sales and repair services, although prices on new equipment can be high.

Vendors sell or rent DVDs, VCDs, laser disks, and PAL videotapes. Locally sold or rented videotapes are censored. Local power is 220v, 50-cycle, AC but fluctuates widely. A voltage regulator, available locally, is recommended to protect audio and video equipment. U.S.-standard NTSC videotapes are rented by the AERA Club, so U.S.-standard televisions and VCRs are useful to view these videos.

Radio keeps most of the population informed and entertained. In addition to hundreds of small commercial stations throughout the country, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), the government radio network, broadcasts nationwide via relay stations. RRI Jakarta broadcasts news and commentary in English for about an hour in the early mornings and evenings. Dozens of AM and FM stations broadcast in Jakarta, including several with English programming and Western popular music. Most are stereo. Since all newscasts come from RRI and all stations relay it, the top of the hour begins with the same voices on all radio stations at once. Some personnel might also want to have a shortwave radio receiver for VOA, BBC, and Radio Australia. Shortwave reception is generally good.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The British Council, the Women's International Club, and the Indonesia-America Friendship Society (PPIA) operate lending libraries with minimal membership requirements and collections of approximately 20,000 books. The library facilities of the Jakarta International School (JIS) are available to students and their parents. Anyone in the international community may use the library's facilities on the school premises, but only families with students attending JIS

may borrow books. Each elementary school library contains more than 20,000 books, and the high school library has almost 40,000.

English-language sources of news in Jakarta are readily available. Three English-language dailies are published in Jakarta. The most widely read is the Jakarta Post, followed by the Indonesian Observer and the Indonesia Times. The International Herald Tribune, the Asian Wall Street Journal, and USA Today are sold in many major hotels. The Tribune is available for home delivery. A wide variety of international magazines in English are available commercially.

Many hotels and bookstores have a selection of English-language books at prices some 50% higher than those in the U.S. The American Women's Association (AWA), the International Community Activity Center (ICAC), AERA, and the commissary all operate small bookshelves recycling used books. Bring basic reference works, particularly for children, and leisure reading material.

Surabaya. The Jakarta English-language newspapers and many international newspapers and magazines are also available commercially. PPIA offers free memberships for a small English-language lending library.

Internet. A wide variety of home connections to the internet, including through high-speed digital lines, TV cable, and dialup services, are available at reasonable monthly prices. Cable modems are available for rent at less than \$10/month. Additionally, there are large numbers of internet cafes throughout all major urban centers where customers can connect for nominal fees.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

If you take chronic medication, bring your own. This includes birth control pills, vitamins, blood pres-

sure medication, and thyroid or estrogen hormones. Local pharmacies carry a range of products of variable quality, availability, and cost. Some chronic medications may be bought here, but make that decision after you arrive. Establish a supply source before coming.

Local medical facilities are used selectively for specialty consultation and emergency hospitalization. Elective surgery is not recommended in Jakarta. Patients with problems that cannot be handled in Jakarta are evacuated to Singapore. The hospital used (whether local or regional) depends on the condition and urgency of the problem.

Indonesian facilities to handle high-risk obstetrics and neonatal care are very limited.

Dental care, such as cleaning, repairs of dental cavities, and root canal and bridge work, can be performed in Jakarta. Complicated dental problems can be referred to specialists in Singapore. There are orthodontists who work in Jakarta, though the quality of their work is quite inconsistent.

Jakarta has optometrists and selected ophthalmologists of reasonable quality. Lens work is satisfactory, but bring an extra pair of glasses with you.

Local physicians are used selectively, with variable satisfaction. No American or European doctors currently practice in the city. Hospitals are generally of a significantly lower standard than in Jakarta. Surabaya is not equipped to support significant ongoing medical problems, and persons posted in Surabaya must be aware of this. Concerns and plans regarding dental and optometry care and chronic medications should be considered and resolved prior to arrival. Local pharmacies carry a range of products of variable quality, availability, and cost.

Community Health

Community sanitation and public health programs are inadequate

throughout Indonesia and subject to frequent breakdowns. Water and air pollution and traffic congestion have rapidly increased

with the growth of major cities. Almost all maladies of the developing world are found here. Residents are subject to water- and food-borne illnesses such as typhoid, hepatitis, cholera, worms, amebiasis, and bacterial dysentery. Mosquito-borne dengue fever exists throughout Indonesia. Malaria is endemic in metropolitan Jakarta, Medan, the Puncak, Surabaya, and southern Bali and in a few other locations. Respiratory difficulties are common and are exacerbated by the high pollution levels. Asthma problems are generally worse during a tour here, as are any other respiratory or skin allergies.

Preventive Measures

Recommended immunizations for children include all of the standard pediatric immunizations of diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and hemophilus B, plus hepatitis B, hepatitis A, typhoid, and preexposure rabies for toddlers. Adults should be current on all recommended immunizations. Malaria prophylaxis is recommended for travel to endemic areas outside major cities. Additionally, use of screens, clothes that cover the body, and insect repellent for children and adults is important to decrease exposure not only to mosquitoes carrying malaria but also to those carrying dengue fever, a disease that is present in both urban and rural areas.

Because of evidence of hydrocarbon and other chemical contamination in Jakarta. All water used for consumption should be bottled. Bottled water is also supplied in Surabaya. Factory-bottled soft drinks and juices are generally safe. Milk sold in sealed containers is generally safe. Standard recommendations for preparing fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats apply here. Washing, soaking, and peeling and/or thoroughly cooking are mandatory to minimize insecticide residue and

bacterial and parasitic contamination. A wide variety of foods are available in local markets and supermarkets, and it is possible to eat a well-balanced diet.

Car accidents are the primary causes of severe injury to foreigners living in Indonesia. Defensive driving and use of seatbelts are encouraged, and use of motorcycles is strongly discouraged. The U.S. maintains a list of available blood donors, but Rh negative blood may be difficult to obtain in an area with very few Westerners. Therefore, it is important to know your blood type and recognize that this may be a problem.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb.	Chinese New Year*
April.	Nyepi*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May/June.	Ascension of Christ*
July 23	Children's Day
Aug. 17.	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Muharran*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Waisak*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Galungan**
.	Kuningan**

*variable

**Galungan & Kuningan are Hindu Balinese Holidays. Balinese use Caka Year, which is 210 days per year, not 365. Therefore, these holidays are celebrated twice in one Gregorian year.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The usually traveled route to Indonesia from the U.S. is by air via

the Pacific. This route in particular is advantageous to families traveling with children or pets since it eliminates the forced stop overnight in Singapore. Since the trip from the U.S. to Jakarta is so long and tiresome, you may wish to make a rest stop along the way.

A passport valid for six months beyond the intended date of departure from Indonesia is required. A visa is not required for tourist stays up to two months. As of November 2000 the Government of Indonesia has been discussing implementing visa requirements for foreign travelers. Travelers should reconfirm entry requirements before traveling. For additional information about entry requirements for Indonesia, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 775-5200, fax (202) 775-5365.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available. When U.S. citizens are arrested or detained, formal notification of the arrest is normally provided to the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta in writing, a process that can take several weeks. If detained, U.S. citizens are encouraged to attempt to telephone the nearest U.S. consular office.

Americans living in or visiting Indonesia are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where they may obtain updated information on travel and security within the country.

The U.S. Embassy is located in Jakarta at Medan Merdeka Selatan 5; telephone:(62)(21)3435-9000; fax (62)(21)3435-9922. The Embassy's web site is located at <http://www.usembassyjakarta.org>. The consular section can be reached by e-mail at jakconsul@state.gov.

The U.S. Consulate General is in Surabaya at Jalan Raya Dr.,

Sutomo 33; telephone: (62)(31) 567-2287/8; fax (62)(31)567-4492; e-mail consularsuraba@state.gov.

There is a Consular Agency in Bali at Jalan Hayam Wuruk 188, Denpasar, Bali; telephone: (62)(361)233-605; fax (62)(31) 222-426; e-mail amcobali@indo.net.id.

Pets

Except for a prohibition against importing birds, pets are admissible into Indonesia. All animals must have a certificate of health issued by a veterinarian. Owners must produce evidence that within 6 months to 30 days before arrival the pets were inoculated against rabies. No quarantine is required. There are two ways to bring pets to Jakarta. The first method is as accompanied baggage (excess baggage) since the pet travels with you on the same flights. Your pet can be immediately cleared through Customs if all documentation is in hand and is valid. The airline determines the excess baggage costs and these are a personal, non-reimbursable expense.

The second and often most expensive method of shipping a pet is as airfreight.

In the freight system, the pet is transported unaccompanied by the owner. Animals are loaded into pressurized holds along with other cargo. Fees for this type of shipment vary according to your country of origin, the number of pets, and the airline handling the transport. You can find airfreight forwarders through your local yellow pages, the worldwide web or through your veterinarian. Some airlines limit pet transport to only certain portions of the year due to high temperatures. Upon arrival in Jakarta it will take about 3 hours to clear your pet through Indonesian Customs.

Do not route your pet (alone or accompanied) via Australia, where it will be confiscated and destroyed. Persons bringing pets through Hong Kong or Singapore must have prior authorization from those governments to do so. This authoriza-

tion is required regardless of the carrying airline and must be obtained directly from the governments of those countries. Instructions for applying for this authorization can be obtained at any British (for Hong Kong) or Singaporean embassy. The desired transit time must be stated on the authorization. If pets arrive without the authorization (even if only in transit), they will be quarantined at your expense or destroyed.

Firearms and Ammunition

Personal weapons in Indonesia present a problem due to the difficulty of obtaining import licenses and certificates of registration.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit is the rupiah. The rate of exchange changes constantly (as of February 2001, Rp 9,440 = US\$1). The international metric system of weights and measures is used in Indonesia. Gasoline and other liquids are sold by the liter (1.0567 liquid quarts); cloth, by the meter (39 inches); and food and other weighted items, by the kilogram (2.2 pounds). Distance is measured by the kilometer (0.625 miles); speed, in kilometers per hour (40 kph =25 mph).

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property Restrictions

Direct consumer taxes and service charges, such as those imposed on hotel and restaurant bills, gasoline purchases, and airport departure, are paid.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: U.S. citizens involved in commercial or property matters should be aware that the business environment is complex. In many cases, trade complaints are difficult to resolve.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Indonesia is located in an area of high seismic activity. Although the probability of a major earthquake occurring during an individual trip is remote, earthquakes can and will continue to happen. General infor-

mation about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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IRAN

Islamic Republic of Iran

Major Cities:

Tehrān, Esfahān, Shirāz

Other Cities:

Ābādān, Bakhtaran, Bandar Abbas, Hamadān, Kerman, Mashhad, Qom, Tabriz, Yazd, Zāhedān

INTRODUCTION

The Middle Eastern nation of **IRAN** is located at a strategic crossroads between the Western and Eastern worlds. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has isolated itself from most of the world in an attempt to protect itself from non-Muslim values and influences. The country's support of international terrorism and its desire to export the Islamic Revolution to its more moderate Middle Eastern neighbors has made Iran an international outcast. Since the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution, in 1989, Iran has made tentative attempts to establish new ties with the West. Years of isolation and a devastating war with Iraq during the 1980s decimated Iran's economy. The moderate, pragmatic government of Ali Hashemic Rafsanjani recognized the need for Western technology and financial assistance to rebuild the economy, but it had to move cautiously in order not to offend Iran's powerful Islamic clergy. In 1997, a moderate candidate, Mohammed Khatami, was elected president. Since Iran's constitution limits the president's powers, the election did not change Iran's foreign policy.

MAJOR CITIES

Tehrān

Tehrān, the capital of Iran, is located at the foot of the Elburz Mountains (Reshteh-ye Alborz). The city, whose origins date back to the fourth century A.D., has served as Iran's capital since 1788 and has developed over the years into a modern transportation, cultural, and industrial center. Tehrān is linked by road with other major Iranian cities and is accessible by air to cities in Asia, Europe, and the Persian Gulf region. The city is home to many of Iran's major educational institutions, including the University of Tehrān, the Arya Mehr University of Technology, and the National University of Iran. Tehrān is a primary industrial center. Industries in Tehrān produce a wide variety of products, including automobiles, cement, textiles, pharmaceuticals, sugar, electrical equipment, and pottery. Rapid industrialization during the late 20th century has led to a dramatic increase in air pollution. Tehrān enjoys a favorable climate, with cool winters and warm summers. In 1995, Tehrān had an estimated population of 6.8 million.

Recreation and Entertainment

Western-style entertainment, such as movies or nightclubs, are virtually nonexistent in Tehrān. However, the city has many museums and mosques that are of interest to visitors. The Ethnological Museum offers visitors an informative look at Iranian life during the 19th and early 20th century. The museum contains excellent displays featuring articles used by average Iranian villagers, including jewelry and amulets, household dishes, and tools. The Ethnological Museum also offers a display of a 19th century Iranian village, with mannequins adorned in native dress.

For those interested in history, Tehrān's Archeological Museum contains art, sculpture, and artifacts from every century and dynasty in Iranian history. Among the exquisite articles in the museum are porcelain vases and bowls, armaments, bone tools, bronze and brass jewelry and perfume-burners, and beautiful rugs.

One of Tehrān's most interesting mosques is the Sepahsalar Mosque. This mosque has eight minarets which offer excellent views of Tehrān. The interior of Sepahsalar Mosque is adorned with beautiful tile work and contains a large

library filled with many ancient manuscripts.

Tehrān has over 19 parks, gardens, and squares which offer visitors a welcome respite from the hectic pace of the city. Tehrān's parks and gardens are often filled with Iranians playing badminton and soccer, or picnicking with family members.

Although some hotels and restaurants were closed or destroyed during the Islamic Revolution, several remain which serve Western cuisine. Many Iranian dishes are also quite good and are reasonably priced. The main staple of Iranian dishes is rice, although vegetables, yogurt, meat, cheese, and bread are also used.

The streets of Tehrān have many shops which offer many items of interest to tourists. Persian carpets, which are among the finest in the world, are popular souvenirs.

Esfahān

The city of Esfahān (also spelled Isfahan) is located in west central Iran approximately 210 miles (340 kilometers) south of Tehrān. From the 16th to 18th century, Esfahān served as the capital of Iran. Today Esfahān is one of Iran's largest and most important cities. The city has developed into a major industrial center for textiles, rugs, and tiles. Most heavy industry in Esfahān is centered around petroleum refining and steel making. During the spring and summer, the city receives cool breezes from the north which help to moderate temperatures. Esfahān had a population of 2.6 million in 2000.

Recreation and Entertainment

Esfahān is one of Iran's most beautiful cities and offers many sight-seeing opportunities. The city has many mosques, mausoleums, and minarets that are open to visitors.

Esfahān's largest mosque is the Friday Mosque (Masjid-i-Jami). Begun in the 11th century, construction of



Street in Shiraz, Iran.

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the Friday Mosque continued for several centuries. Because the mosque was constructed over several centuries, it offers visitors a glimpse of architectural styles from various centuries of Persian culture. The Friday Mosque is considered one of Iran's most beautiful structures. Located about 500 yards from the Friday Mosque is the Ali Mosque (Masjid-i-Ali). The Ali Mosque has a facade that is covered with exquisite decorations. A notable feature of the Ali Mosque is a group of arches topped with a cupola. The cupola is inscribed with a poem honoring one of Iran's Shahs as well as 13 verses from the Koran. The Shaikh-Lutfallah Mosque, with its intricately patterned dome and gorgeous mosaics, is another beautiful example of Persian architecture.

The city has several mausoleums which are of interest to visitors. The Mausoleum of Darb-i-Imam has a large cupola covered with beautiful mosaics. The mausoleum is easily recognizable by a stone lion with a human face which resides in a courtyard in front of the mausoleum. The Mausoleum of Baba Qasem was completed in 1340 as the final resting place of a theologian from the Sunni Sect of Islam. In 1928, Baba Qasem's body was removed from the tomb because he

was considered a heretic by Iran's Shi'ite majority. The mausoleum is a beautiful structure and is adorned with white mosaic tiles on a blue background. The Mausoleum of Baba Rokn-ed-din is another popular site for sightseers. This mausoleum was constructed in 1629 and presented as a gift to the citizens of Esfahān by Shah Abbas. The Mausoleum of Babau Rokn-ed-din is noteworthy because of its unusual pentagonal shape.

Esfahān's beautiful minarets (prayer towers) are also worth a visit. The Sareban Minaret is one of the most attractive minarets in Esfahān. It is 144 feet high and divided into three sections, with each section beautifully decorated with inscriptions, brickwork, or stalactites. North of the Sareban Minaret is the Minaret of the 40 Daughters. This minaret is a brick structure adorned with intricate geometric patterns. The Minaret of the 40 Daughters is somewhat smaller than the Sareban Minaret.

In addition to sight-seeing, Esfahān offers wonderful shopping opportunities. The city's bazaar allows visitors to watch carpet weavers, silversmiths, and coppersmiths practicing their crafts. The silver, brass, and copper jewelry, hand-

printed cloth, pottery, and Persian rugs sold at the bazaar make excellent souvenirs.

Many visitors also enjoy strolling through the city's spacious central square, with its lovely trees and manicured gardens.

Shirāz

Shirāz, located in south central Iran, is an industrial and commercial center. Several manufacturing industries are located in Shirāz. These industries produce textiles, fertilizers, sugar, and cement. The city is famous for its wine and Persian rugs. Shirāz is considered Iran's literary capital and is the birthplace of Sa'di and Hafez, two of the country's greatest poets. The city has a favorable climate, with mild winters and pleasant temperatures from March to October. In 2000, Shirāz had a population of approximately 1,113,000.

Recreation and Entertainment

Like many other Iranian cities, Shirāz is quite old. As a result, there are many historic mosques and mausoleums that are worth a visit. One of the oldest mosques in Shirāz is the Old Friday Mosque (Masjid-e-Jame). This mosque was begun in 894 A.D. but was added onto throughout the centuries. Beautiful mosaics adorn the structure. One of the unique aspects of the Old Friday Mosque is the miniature temple which graces the mosque's courtyard. This temple, known as the *Khoda Khanen* (The Lord's House), was constructed in the 14th century and contains a copy of the Koran. No other mosque in Iran has a temple of this kind. Another mosque, the New Friday Mosque, is the largest in Iran with an area of 215,000 square feet. Constructed in the 13th century, it is easily recognizable by its gilded cupola.

The mausoleums of the Persian poets Hafez and Sa'di are located in Shirāz and are open to visitors. The Hafez Mausoleum is situated in a

lovely garden filled with orange trees and cypresses. The tomb of Hafez is covered with rosettes and verses from his poems. Another collection of Hafez's poems is inscribed on an alabaster tablet located near the tomb. The Sa'di Mausoleum, with its turquoise dome and high portico, is a beautiful structure. An artificial pond near the tomb offers a spot for peaceful contemplation. Another mausoleum, the Mausoleum of Shah Cheragh, is a pilgrimage center for Shi'ites. Therefore, it is not open to non-Muslim visitors. The mausoleum has many beautiful mirrors and has a distinctive pear-shaped dome.

Shirāz has many bazaars which offer wonderful shopping opportunities. Souvenir hunters can purchase authentic Persian carpets, tablecloths, gold and silver jewelry, glass and ceramic wear, and wood carvings.

OTHER CITIES

ĀBĀDĀN is situated in extreme southwestern Iran near the border with Iraq. Founded in the eighth century, Ābādān's location near the Persian Gulf led to its development as a trading center. The discovery of oil near Ābādān in the early 20th century brought new wealth to the city. Oil refineries, pipelines, and port facilities were quickly constructed. Ābādān was attacked by Iraq in 1980 during the early stages of the Iran-Iraq War. The city was bombed repeatedly throughout the conflict. Most of the city, particularly its oil refineries and port facilities were destroyed. Some of the facilities have been repaired and oil refining has resumed, although at vastly reduced levels. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **BAKHTARAN**, located in western Iran, is nestled in the midst of a fertile agricultural region. Formerly known as Kerman-shah, the city has served as a trading center for the barley, corn, wheat, oilseeds, rice, and vegetables grown nearby. Bakhtaran is home to

several industries, which produce sugar, textiles, carpets, tools, and electrical equipment. Bakhtaran has a population over 540,000.

BANDAR ABBAS is located on the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. The city is an important port for Iranian exports such as petroleum and agricultural products. The climate in Bandar Abbas is extremely hot and humid during the summer, but cooler in winter. The city has an estimated population over 210,000.

Situated at the foot of Mount Alvand in west-central Iran, **HAMADĀN** is an important trading center for fruits and grains grown near the city. The city is famous for its production of Persian rugs and leather goods. Hamadān is an ancient city and some vestiges of its historical past remain, including the mausoleum of Esther and Mordecai and a stone lion constructed during the reign of Alexander the Great. Avicenna, an Arab philosopher, was born and buried in Hamadān. The city has an estimated population over 272,000.

KERMĀN is located on a sandy plain in southeastern Iran. Founded in the second century, the city is an industrial center noted for the production and distribution of beautiful carpets. Other industries in Kermān produce textiles and cement. The city has several mosques that are of interest to visitors. Kermān's climate is generally cool and it is not unusual for the city to experience sandstorms during the spring and autumn. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **MASHHAD** (also spelled Meshed) is the site of two important Muslim shrines, the Shrine of Imam Ali ar Rida and the Shrine of Caliph Harun ar Rashid, which are visited by nearly four million pilgrims annually. Mashhad is situated on an ancient trading route between Iran and the silk markets of China. Today, the city is northeastern Iran's largest export center for carpets and agricultural products. The city has attractive parks, court-

yards, avenues, mosques, and libraries which are of interest to visitors. In 2000, Mashhad had a population of approximately 2,378,000.

Located only 92 miles (147 kilometers) south of Tehrān is the holy city of **QOM**. Qom, with its numerous shrines and tombs of Islamic saints, is the destination of many Shi'ite pilgrimages. The most notable shrine in Qom is the Shrine of Fatimah, which was erected in honor of the sister of an Islamic leader. The city is home to the largest theological college in Iran. Qom has also developed into an industrial center for the production of textiles, cement, pottery, brick, and petrochemicals. A large oil refinery is also located near the city. Qom is situated in a rich agricultural region and is a distribution center for the cotton, wheat, fruits, barley, and vegetables grown near the city. The city is linked by road and railway with Tehrān and other Iranian cities. Qom has a population of approximately 650,000.

TABRIZ is located in extreme northwestern Iran near the country's border with Russia. With a population of approximately 1,624,000 (2000 est.), Tabriz is Iran's fourth largest city. The city has a well-developed industrial sector. Industries in Tabriz produce a wide variety of products, including agricultural machinery, textiles, carpets, motorcycles, dried fruits and nuts, soap, and leather goods. Rail, air, and bus transportation connects Tabriz with Tehrān. Tabriz is a modern city with beautiful tree-lined avenues and lush public gardens. The city has several mosques, most notably the blue-tiled Blue Mosque. Tabriz is prone to severe earthquakes and has received damaging shocks over the centuries. In February 1997 a devastating earthquake rocked northwest Iran, killing over 500 and leaving more than 35,000 homeless.

The city of **YAZD** is located in Iran's arid central region. Yazd, founded in the fifth century A.D., is an ancient city and has many mosques and mausoleums that are of interest to

visitors. One mosque in particular, the Friday Mosque (Masjed-e Jom'eh), has the tallest minarets of any mosque in Iran. Many of Yazd's mosques are beautifully decorated with intricate designs and inscriptions. The city is located in the heart of a fertile agricultural area which produces fruit, barley, wheat, almonds, and cotton. Yazd is most noted for its silk weaving and carpet manufacturing. The area surrounding Yazd is rich in minerals, which has led to the development of a substantial mining industry. Yazd is a transportation hub and is connected by road and rail with Tehrān and other major Iranian cities. Yazd has a population of over 223,000.

ZĀHEDĀN, a city of approximately 220,000 residents, is situated in southeastern Iran. The city serves as a point of departure for trips to many of the smaller towns in the region. Industrial capacity in Zāhedān is rudimentary, at best. Factories in the city produce mostly bricks, ceramics, processed food, or local handicrafts. Current population figures are unavailable.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Islamic Republic of Iran is located in the highlands of southwestern Asia. It comprises an area of approximately 636,293 square miles, slightly larger than Alaska. Iran is bordered on the north by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and the Caspian Sea, on the east by Afghanistan and Pakistan, on the west by Iraq and Turkey, and on the south by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. The topography of Iran consists mainly of desert and mountains. The central, eastern, and southern parts of the country contain great salt flats (*kavir*) and desert. These areas are virtually uninhabitable. Most of Iran's population lives in the northern and northwestern areas of Iran. Two

mountain chains dominate the landscape. The Zagros Mountains originate in northwestern Iran, extend southward to the Persian Gulf coast, and skirt eastward along the Gulf of Oman. The second range, the Elburz Range, extends along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea.

Most of Iran exhibits a desert climate, although areas along the Caspian seacoast are more temperate. Summers are usually long, hot and dry. High humidity is prevalent along the Caspian Sea and Persian Gulf coasts. Spring and fall are usually of short duration. Winter, especially in mountainous northern regions, is harsh with extremely cold temperatures.

Iran suffers from chronic water shortages. Eastern and southern portions of Iran receive negligible precipitation. Northern and western parts of the country receive annual rainfall of only eight to ten inches.

Population

As of 2000, Iran had an estimated population of 65,870,000. A number of ethnic groups are represented in Iran. The majority of Iranians are Persians (51 percent). Approximately 25 percent are Azerbaijani. Small minorities of Arabs and Kurds also reside in Iran. Iran's official language is Farsi, spoken by 58 percent of the population. About 26 percent speak Turkic languages, especially people in northwestern and northeastern parts of the country. Kurdish and Luri are spoken in western parts of Iran and Baluchi in the southeast. Arabic, English and French are also spoken.

Approximately 89 percent of the population are Shi'ite Muslims. Another 10 percent belong to the Sunni Muslim sect of Islam. Small non-Muslim minorities exist in Iran. These include Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians, and Baha'is.

Life expectancy at birth 68 years for males and 71 years for females (2001 est.).

History

Iran, known as Persia until 1935, has a history that dates back to the pre-Christian era. In 549 B.C., Cyrus the Great united Persians and Medes into one Persian empire. Under Cyrus, the Persians created a wealthy and powerful empire. They conquered Babylonia in 538 B.C. and established a dominant position in the Middle East. However, in 333 B.C., the Persian Empire was attacked and conquered by Alexander the Great. The Persians regained their independence under the Sassanians in 226 A.D.

For several centuries, Persia was invaded and occupied by numerous foreign powers. In the seventh century A.D., the Arabs conquered Persia, bringing with them their Muslim faith. Turks and Mongols overran and occupied Persia at various intervals between the 11th and 16th centuries. In 1502, a group known as the Safavids established control of Persia. Under the leadership of Shah Abbas, Persia enjoyed an era of unparalleled peace and prosperity. In 1795, the Safavids were succeeded by the Qajars. The Qajars ruled Persia until 1925.

The early 20th century in Persia was marked by a series of uprisings against the Qajar Dynasty. In 1906, Shah Muzaffer-ud-Din granted the first constitution in Persian history. This constitution gave people a voice in the political process for the first time. This concession, and others, were not enough to calm the anger of the people. In 1925, the Qajar's were overthrown during a coup attempt. A young Persian army officer, Reza Khan, seized power. He named himself king and took the title Reza Shah Pahlavi. During his reign, Reza Shah sought to modernize the country and develop its oil industry. During World War II, Nazi Germany had established a strong commercial presence in Iran. The United States and Great Britain demanded that the Germans be expelled from Iranian soil. When these demands were not met, they invaded Iran in 1941. Reza Shah was forced to abdi-

cate the throne in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. In 1942, Iran, Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. signed a treaty in which the British and Soviets agreed to respect Iran's territorial integrity and defend the country against foreign aggression. In return, the Iranians agreed to allow Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. to deploy troops in the country. At the end of World War II, the Soviets reneged on the agreement and refused to withdraw its troops. However, after intense American pressure, the Soviets pulled their troops out of Iran in 1946. This marked the beginning of a close relationship between the Pahlavi Dynasty and the United States.

In 1951, the Shah was ousted from power and a new government formed. It was led by Dr. Mohammad Mossadigh, a longtime opponent of the Shah. Mossadigh sought to end all foreign influence in Iranian domestic affairs. The United States and Western European nations strongly urged that Shah Reza Pahlavi be returned to power. In 1953, Mossadigh was overthrown and arrested by the Shah's army. Reza Pahlavi was returned to the throne. In 1961, the Shah launched an ambitious program to modernize Iran. He instituted land reforms and encouraged massive amounts of foreign investment. These reforms, coupled with money from Iran's vast oil reserves, began a period of unprecedented period of modernization and growth.

Despite the prosperity, a growing undercurrent of political turmoil emerged. Many groups within Iran resented the Shah's authoritarian rule, which was enforced by his brutal secret police force. In particular, Reza Pahlavi angered Iran's powerful religious leaders. They charged that the Shah's modernization program was a rejection of Islamic values and traditions. Reza Pahlavi responded to the criticism with even harsher political repression. One of the Shah's most vocal critics, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, was arrested by secret police agents and imprisoned. In 1964, Khomeini was

forced to leave Iran and eventually settled in France.

In 1978 domestic violence, led by religious clerics, exploded throughout Iran. Iran's cities were the scene of violent demonstrations and riots against the Shah's programs and Western influence in Iran's internal affairs. Bloody battles were waged between Iranian civilians and troops loyal to the Shah. In an attempt to end the violence, Pahlavi declared martial law in 12 major cities. This decision only made the Iranian people angrier. By early 1979, it became clear that Reza Pahlavi's days in power were numbered. On January 16, 1979, the Shah left Iran for exile in Egypt. Before his departure, Reza Pahlavi created an interim government led by prime minister Shahpour Bakhtiar.

Ayatollah Khomeini returned triumphantly from France on January 31, 1979. He declared that Bakhtiar's government was invalid and named his own provisional government. On February 11, 1979, the Shah's best troops, the Imperial Guard, were defeated. Many officials and secret police agents from the Shah's government were hunted down, imprisoned or executed.

The Islamic Republic of Iran was proclaimed on April 1, 1979. The government was dominated by religious clerics and all domestic policies were based on strict Islamic principles and traditions. The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic was extremely anti-American and dedicated to spreading the Islamic Revolution to the rest of the Middle East. On November 4, 1979 Iranian militants seized the American embassy and took hostages. The militants demanded the return of the Shah from exile and intended to put him on trial. However, on July 27, 1980, the Shah died in Egypt after undergoing treatment for cancer. Despite American and international pressure, the hostages remained captive. After a series of frustrating and fruitless negotiations, President Carter authorized a military attempt to rescue the hostages. The mission was a complete



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Mosque and other buildings in Tehrān

failure and resulted in the deaths of several U.S. servicemen. After months of intense negotiations, an agreement was reached. The hostages were freed on January 21, 1981.

On September 22, 1980, Iraq invaded Iran in a dispute over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. For nine years, the two countries fought a long and savage war. Both sides suffered heavy casualties and severe damage to their oil producing facilities. In August 1988, Iran and Iraq agreed to a UN-sponsored ceasefire. Peace talks began shortly after. In 1990, a peace agreement was signed, Iraqi troops were withdrawn from Iranian soil, and prisoners of war exchanged.

In 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini offered a one million dollar reward for the killing of Salman Rushdie. Rushdie wrote a book, *The Satanic Verses*, that Khomeini and others deemed blasphemous to Islam. Rushdie was forced to go into hiding. Although Khomeini died on June 4, 1989, the threats against Rushdie's life continue.

Relations between the United States and Iran remain extremely tense. The United States has accused Iran's government of con-

tinued state sponsorship of terrorism. Since Khomeini's death, Iran is slowly emerging from years of self-imposed isolation and seeking new contacts with the rest of the world.

In 1997, a moderate candidate, Mohammed Khatami, was elected president. In April 1998, the mayor of Tehrān, Gholamhossein Karabashi (a political ally of President Khatami), was denounced by political conservatives and arrested on corruption charges. Protesters demonstrated against the arrest, which revealed the growing division between the moderates who won elections in 1997 and the conservatives who have controlled the country since 1979.

Government

Religious clerics wield unrivaled political power in Iran. The government of the Islamic Republic is headed by a Spiritual Leader of the Islamic Revolution. This position is held by a cleric who is highly regarded by the Iranian people. Ayatollah Khomeini served in this capacity until his death in 1989. He was succeeded by Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei.

The Spiritual Leader selects six clerics to serve as a Council of

Guardians. These men serve as commanders of the armed forces, appoint judges, and determine the competency of presidential candidates.

Iran's Islamic constitution provides for the appointment of a president and prime minister. The president is elected to a four-year term and controls the executive branch of government. The president, in turn, nominates a candidate for prime minister. The prime minister is responsible for coordinating government decisions. The candidate for prime minister is subject to approval by the National Assembly. The National Assembly, or Majlis, is composed of 270 members elected to a four-year term. All legislation approved by the Assembly can be vetoed by the Council of Guardians. Elections for the Majlis were last held in April 1996. The results of the election indicated that moderate candidates favoring better relations with the West won a majority of the seats. The election results were viewed as a setback for Iran's hard-line Islamic militants.

All judicial matters are the province of the Supreme Court and a four-member High Council of the Judiciary. These men are entrusted with the enforcement of all laws and for establishing judicial and legal policies.

In 1982, an Assembly of Experts was created. This body consists of 83 members who are elected to eight-year terms. The Assembly of Experts is responsible for choosing the Spiritual Leader and interpreting the constitution. All candidates for election to the Assembly of Experts are subject to approval by the Council of Guardians.

The flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran consists of three equal horizontal bands of green (top), white, and red; the national emblem (a stylized representation of the word "Allah") in red is centered in the white band. "Allah Akbar" (God is Great) in white Arabic script is repeated 11 times along the bottom of the green

band and 11 times along the top edge of the red band.

Arts, Science, Education

Since 1943, primary education is mandatory for all children for five years. The great majority of primary and secondary schools are run by the state. Tuition and textbooks for elementary students are provided at government expense for the first four years. Small fees are charged at state-run secondary schools.

Iran has about 44 universities with 15 located in the capital, Tehrān. Many of Iran's universities were sites of violent unrest during the Islamic Revolution. Many universities were closed in 1980, but have been gradually re-opened since 1983. A new university, The Free Islamic University, was opened in April 1983. In recent years, college education in Iran has stressed vocational and agricultural programs.

In 1997 about 9.2 million primary school students and nearly 8.8 million secondary level students.

In 1994, an estimated 72 percent (male 78%, female 64%) of Iranians, age 15 and over, could read and write.

Commerce and Industry

Under the Pahlavi dynasty, Iran experienced tremendous industrial and economic growth. Much of this growth was disrupted by the 1979 Revolution. Also, massive corruption, mismanagement, and ideological rigidities have created product shortages and high inflation. Iran's main industry is oil production. However, the large oil refineries at Ābādān and Bandar Khomeini and the main tanker terminal at Kharg Island were destroyed or severely damaged during the 1980–88 war with Iraq. These facilities are slowly being repaired. In addition to oil, Iranian industries produce petro-

chemicals, textiles, vegetable oil and other food products, carpets, cement and other building materials, and fertilizer.

Iran has abundant agricultural resources. Her principal crops are wheat, rice, barley, nuts, cotton, sugar beets, and fruits. Wool is also an important product.

Petroleum accounts for 90 percent of Iran's exports. Other exports include carpets, fruits, nuts, and hides. Iran's primary imports are foodstuffs, military supplies, machinery, metal works, pharmaceuticals, and technical services. Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Turkey, Britain, Spain, and the Netherlands are Iran's primary trading partners.

The unit of currency is the *rial*.

Transportation

In 1995, Iran had approximately 87,000 miles (140,100 kilometers) of roadway. An estimated 26,500 miles (42,700 kilometers) were paved highways. Approximately 1.56 million cars and 589,000 commercial vehicles were in use in 1995. Conditions of secondary roads vary from good to poor.

Iran had an estimated 4,500 miles (7,300 kilometers) of railroads in 1996. The main line links Tehrān to the Caspian Sea and Persian Gulf.

There are several flights between Iran and Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Public transport is frequent, reliable and relatively safe. Bus services offer competitive, inexpensive rates. Trains are efficient and inexpensive as well.

The Shatt-al-Arab was one of Iran's principal waterways. However, it was heavily damaged in the 1980s during the Iran-Iraq War. The Shatt-al-Arab contains two of Iran's principal ports, Ābādān and Khorramshahr. Both ports were virtually destroyed during the fighting. Iran's other ports are located along the

Gulf of Oman and Persian Gulf coasts. These include Bandar Abbas, Bandar Beheshti, Bandar Bushehr, and Bandar Khomeyni.

Iran's main international airport, Mehrabad Airport, is located just west of Tehrān. Shirāz International Airport is located only nine miles (15 kilometers) from Tehrān. A new airport opened near the city of Isfahan in July 1984 and began receiving international flights in March 1986.

The national airline is Iran Air (Airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran). International flights are available to the Persian Gulf area, Tokyo, London, Paris, Athens, Beijing, Kuala Lumpur, Karachi, Rome, Vienna, Lagos, Bombay, Istanbul, Frankfurt and Geneva.

Communications

There were an estimated 14.3 million radios and 3.9 million televisions in use in 1995. Iran's main radio station is the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Regional broadcasts can be heard in Farsi, Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, Kurdish, Bandari, Baluchi, Turkish and Urdu. Foreign broadcasts are available on shortwave frequencies in English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Farsi, Armenian, Urdu, Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish.

Television broadcasts are aired on the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Programs are produced in Tehrān and transmitted to 28 stations across the country.

Iran's press is tightly controlled by the government. Strong criticism of the government, senior religious clerics, or public morality is forbidden. Many of the newspapers and periodicals published during the Shah's rule have been banned.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport and visa are required. The Iranian Interests Section of the Embassy of Pakistan is located at 2209 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Washington, DC. 20007; tel 202-965-4990, 91, 92, 93, 94, 99, fax 202-965-1073, 202-965-4990 (Automated Fax-On-Demand after office hours). Their Internet web site is <http://www.daftar.org> (click on "English"). U.S. passports are valid for travel to Iran. However, the authorities have often confiscated the U.S. passports of U.S.-Iranian dual nationals upon arrival. U.S.-Iranian dual nationals have been denied permission to depart Iran documented as U.S. citizens. To prevent the confiscation of U.S. passports, the Department of State suggests that dual nationals leave their U.S. passports at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate overseas for safekeeping before entering Iran, and use their Iranian passports to enter the country. To facilitate their travel if their U.S. passports are confiscated, dual nationals may, prior to entering Iran, obtain in their Iranian passports the necessary visas for the country which they will transit on their return to the United States, where they may apply for a new U.S. passport.

Alternately, dual nationals whose U.S. passports are confiscated may obtain a "Confirmation of Nationality" from the U.S. Interests Section of the Embassy of Switzerland, which is the U.S. protecting power. This statement, addressed to the relevant foreign embassies in Tehran, enables the travelers to apply for third-country visas in Tehran. Dual nationals finding themselves in this situation should note in advance that the Swiss Embassy would issue this statement only after the traveler's U.S. nationality is confirmed and after some processing delay. Dual nationals must enter and leave the United States on U.S. passports.

Iranian authorities may permit travelers to bring in or to take certain goods out of Iran. However, U.S. travelers should refer to the section of this Consular Information Sheet regarding U.S. Government economic sanctions and the importation and exportation of restricted items in order to avoid any violation of the Iranian transactions regulations.

All luggage is searched upon traveling into and departing from Iran. Tourists can bring in and take out the following non-commercial goods, if they are recorded on the tourist's goods slip upon arrival at customs: personal jewelry, one camera, an amateur video camera, one pair of binoculars, a portable tape recorder, a personal portable computer, first aid box, and a camping tent with its equipment. Iranian authorities allow the departing passenger to take an unlimited amount of Iranian goods and foreign goods up to \$160 (US), and their personal non-commercial equipment. Air passengers may also take one carpet up to 6 square meters from Iran. The U.S. government only allows the importation of up to \$100 worth of Iranian-origin goods, except there are no sanction restrictions on the quantity of Iranian-origin carpets and foodstuff. Iranian authorities prohibit the export of antique carpets and carpets portraying women not wearing the proper Islamic covering, antiques, original works of art, calligraphic pieces, miniature paintings, different kinds of coins, and precious stones. They likewise prohibit the export and import of alcoholic beverages, weapons, ammunitions, swords and sheaths, military devices, drugs and illegal goods. It is advisable to contact the Iranian Interests Section in Washington, DC for specific information regarding customs requirements.

On May 6, 1995, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12959, 60 Federal Register 24757 (May 9, 1995), which generally prohibits exporting goods or services to Iran, re-exporting certain goods to Iran, making new investments in Iran and dealing in property owned or

controlled by the government of Iran. Except for carpets and foodstuffs, the importation of Iranian-origin goods or services into the United States has been prohibited since October 19, 1987. The Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury, provides guidance to the public on the interpretation of the above. For additional information, please consult the Licensing Division, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), U.S. Department of Treasury, tel. 202-622-2480 or check the OFAC home page on the Internet at <http://www.treas.gov/ofac> or via OFAC's info-by fax at 202-622-0077. For information regarding banking compliance, please contact OFAC's Compliance Programs Division at tel. 202-622-2490.

There is no U.S. embassy or consulate in Iran. The Embassy of Switzerland serves as the protecting power of U.S. interests in Iran. The U.S. Interests Section at the Swiss Embassy is located at Africa Avenue, West Farzan Street, no. 59, Tehran. The local telephone numbers are 878-2964 and 879-2364, fax 877-3265. The workweek is Sunday through Thursday. Public service hours are 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. The Interests Section does not issue U.S. visas or accept visa applications. The limited consular services provided to U.S. citizens in Tehran, Iran include:

- (a) registering U.S. citizens;
- (b) answering inquiries concerning the welfare and whereabouts of U.S. citizens in Iran;
- (c) rendering assistance in times of distress or physical danger;
- (d) providing U.S. citizens with passport and Social Security card applications and other citizenship forms for approval at the U.S. Embassy in Bern, Switzerland;
- (e) performing notarial services on the basis of accommodation; and
- (f) taking provisional custody of the personal effects of deceased U.S. citizens.

Currency

In addition to the U.S. Government economic sanctions on trade and investment restrictions, travelers should be aware that most hotels and restaurants do not accept credit cards. Cash-dollars (not traveler checks) are accepted as payment. In general, hotel bills must be paid with cash-dollars. ATM machines are not available. Foreign currency must be declared at customs upon entry into the country, and the amount is entered in the passport. This amount can then be changed at the bank.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Feb. 11. Victory Day
- Mar. 20 Oil Nationalization Day
- Mar. 21-24. No Ruz (First Day of Spring & New Year)
- Apr. 1. Islamic Republic Day
- Apr. 2. Revolution Day
- Ashura*
- Birthday of Imam Husayn*
- Ramadan*
- Id al Fitr (end of Ramadan)*
- Twelfth Imam's Birthday*
- Martyrdom of Imam Ali*
- Death of Imam Ja'afar Sadiq*
- Birthday of Imam Reza*
- Martyrdom of Imam Husayn*
- Mawlid an Nabi (birth of the prophet)*
- Birthday of Imam 'Ali*
- Lailat al Miraj*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Alaolmolki, Nozar. *Struggle for Dominance in the Persian Gulf: Past, Present & Future Prospects*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1991.

Amjad, Mohammed. *Iran: From Royal Dictatorship to Theocracy*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1989.

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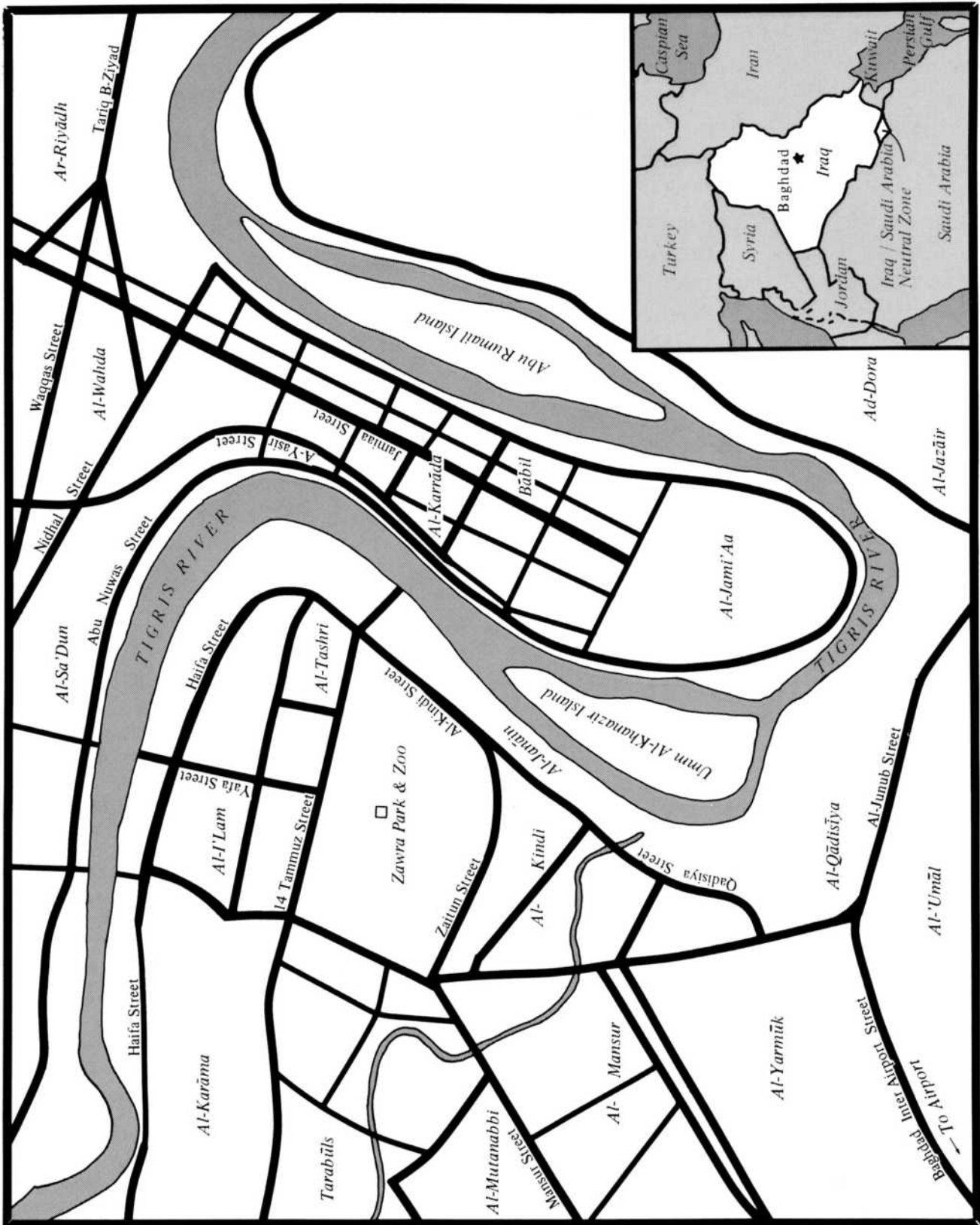
Sackville-West, Vita. *Passenger to Teheran*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.

Sanders, Renfield. *Iran*. New York: Chelsea House, 1990.

Tames, Richard. *Take a Trip to Iran*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1989.

Turner, Stansfield. *Terrorism and Democracy*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1991.

Zonis, Marvin. *Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.



Baghdād, Iraq

IRAQ

Republic of Iraq

Major Cities:

Baghdād, Al Baṣrah, Al Mawṣil

Other Cities:

An Najaf, Arbil, Kirkūk, Ar Ramādi, Nimrud, Nineveh

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Iraq. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

IRAQ is the cradle of civilization, the country of the *Thousand and One Nights*, and the land of the two great rivers of history, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Known to the ancient Greeks as Mesopotamia ("in the midst of the rivers"), Iraq was enlarged after World War I to include the northern mountainous district of Kurdistan.

Modern Mesopotamia is still a fascinating juxtaposition of the old and the new. While signs of progress are visible everywhere, so are the manifestations of past glories. Excavated sites of vanished empires—Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Greek, Parthian, Ottoman, and Islamic—

remind every visitor of the incredible heritage of which modern Iraq is a part.

Editor's Note: Most of the city and country profile information contained in this entry reflects the conditions in Iraq prior to the outbreak of hostilities from the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the subsequent withdrawal of Iraqi troops as a result of the multi-national military attack that ended on February 27, 1991, and the continued economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

MAJOR CITIES

Baghdād

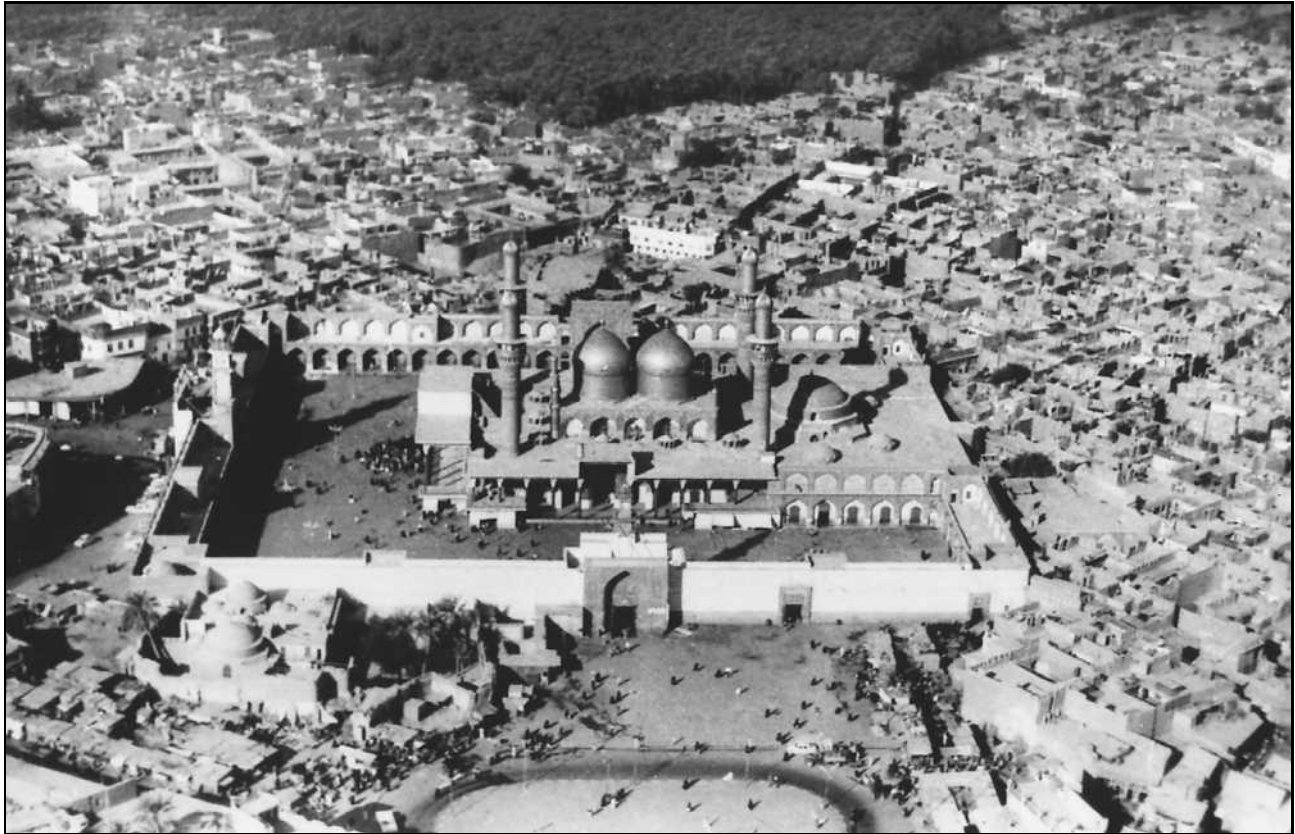
The history of Baghdād begins in the eighth century. It was founded by Caliph Mansur, and was known as the City of Peace. During the time of Charlemagne, it flourished under the Abbassid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, after whom its present-day main street was named. The old walled city, with a diameter of 3,000 yards, was completely destroyed, first by the Mongols, later by Hulagu Khan in 1258, and again by Tamerlane in 1400. Baghdād became a frontier outpost of the Ottoman Empire from 1638 to

1917, finally emerging as the capital of the Kingdom of Iraq in 1921. The city was the scene of the 1958 coup that overthrew the monarchy and established the Iraqi republic.

Baghdād of the 19th century can best be observed in the *souks* or bazaars, which have changed little in the last 100 years, except for the goods they offer the shopper. Among the things that can be found are silver and gold jewelry, copper and brass trays and coffee pots, Persian carpets, Kuwaiti chests, and hordes of people.

Baghdād is a sprawling city of about 4.9 million people (2000 est.). It bustles with vehicular traffic like all other capitals of oil-producing states. Yet, residential areas are still quiet with some remnants of mud villages interspersed with modern villas. The villas themselves are surrounded by high walls within which grow pleasant gardens with fruit trees, grass, and flowers.

Baghdād is rich in archaeological remains, and several museums are located in the city. There are three universities in Baghdād; the largest is the University of Baghdād, founded in 1958. Baghdād International Airport is 12 miles from the city.



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Aerial view of Baghdād

Clothing

Only two types of clothing are required in Baghdād: an extensive summer wardrobe and warm winter clothing for the chilly November to March season. Bring garment bags to protect clothing from dust and insects.

Sports attire varies. White is required for tennis at the local clubs. Bathing suits deteriorate rapidly, so several should be brought to Iraq.

Raincoats and boots or rubbers are needed for the whole family, especially children, during the very muddy, wet winter months. Boots can be bought locally.

In general, most imported clothing items are restricted in availability and selection, and are expensive; locally made clothing is of poor quality.

Men need cool, lightweight suits, and many shirts. Suits and ties are worn throughout the year in the office. In summer, it is often necessary to change shirts during the day. Sports shirts and slacks are worn during the leisure hours; shorts should be worn only at home.

Women require a wardrobe of lightweight suits; cool, washable dresses; slacks; shirts; and blouses. Inexpensive cottons are advisable due to frequent laundering. There is no taboo against wearing reasonably low-cut dresses. Dry cleaning is satisfactory. Stockings usually are not worn during summer. In winter, wool suits, dresses, slacks, sweaters, and warm bathrobes are essential. Coats, stoles, and warm wraps are required for winter evenings; light wraps are necessary for spring and fall.

Women's shoes are available locally but quality is poor and they are expensive. Low-heeled sandals,

flats, and sneakers are used for ordinary day wear, depending on the season, with emphasis on sturdiness.

Children's clothing should be washable. Warm clothing is needed for winter in unheated rooms with cold tile floors. In summer, most children wear cotton clothing. Because much time is spent at swimming pools, several bathing suits are needed for each child. Children's tennis shoes, sandals, and flip-flops are available at a reasonable price.

Supplies and Services

Toilet articles, cosmetics, over-the-counter medications, household items and other related items are scarce or unavailable.

The better tailors and dressmakers in Baghdād can usually follow a pattern with desired results, but they are not designers and are very expensive.

Simple shoe repairs are possible, but repair work on women's shoes is unsatisfactory. Dry cleaning is available and is of acceptable quality. Several beauty shops in Baghdad have experienced stylists at reasonable prices. Barbershops are less satisfactory, but are adequate.

Education

Baghdad International School offers an international education in English to children of foreign diplomats and expatriates from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1969, the coeducational, day, proprietary school is governed by an independent board of directors that includes both appointed and elected members.

The school is chartered by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia under an agreement with the government of Iraq. It is not accredited and there are no facilities for special education, learning disabilities, or gifted. If the child receives supplementary work at home, the school curriculum is considered adequate for the early elementary grades. A variety of extracurricular activities centering around sports and dance may be chosen. Enrollment currently totals over 50 representing many different countries. The school year runs from September to early June.

Baghdad International School is located six miles west of the city on an 11-acre campus. The air-conditioned school has a media center, auditorium, cafeteria, science laboratories, athletic fields, and a 16,000-volume library. The school's mailing address is P.O. Box 571, Baghdad, Iraq.

Other schools in Baghdad provide education in other languages.

Recreation

The flat desert terrain of Baghdad and vicinity is aesthetically unappealing, but some relief is afforded by drives to nearby places of interest. Many foreigners combine picnicking with archaeological exploration on weekends and holi-

days. Extensive travel within Iraq is limited by the desert, the summer heat, the lack of good roads (except between major cities), and, above all, travel restrictions.

A new road has been under construction from the Kuwaiti border to Baghdad and then west to Jordan. Driving time from Baghdad to Al Basrah is about six hours; to Al Mawşil about four hours. Truck traffic on the existing roads is often heavy. All diplomatic personnel must obtain government permission for most travel outside Baghdad. Difficulties encountered in travel contribute to the isolation of Baghdad.

Picnic excursions outside Baghdad in cool weather may include visits to the ruins of Babylon (45 miles, long-time capital of the Babylonian Empire), Ctesiphon (18 miles, vaulted banqueting hall of the Sasanian Kings), and Samarra (87 miles, short-lived ninth-century capital of the Abbassid Caliphate). Visits to the Shia holy places of An Najaf and Kerbala are an easy one-day excursion. The upper Euphrates River, with its unique water wheels, is worth a weekend trip.

The sites of Hatra, Nineveh, Nimrud, and Khorsabad are also of archaeological and historical interest. When travel to northern Iraq is permitted, visits to Christian and Yazidi villages there are also rewarding, as are visits to the mountains of the Kurdish areas.

The northern resort areas of Iraq have been rebuilt and expanded. The higher elevations and colorful local culture in the Kurdish region combine to make this area one of prime tourist interest. Security restrictions may prevent foreigners from visiting this area.

The cities of Amman (Jordan), Istanbul (Turkey), and Kuwait City (Kuwait) offer a welcome change, but air travel is expensive and auto travel is time-consuming. However, good roads do exist to these points, and the journeys, if time allows, are rewarding.

The bazaars of Baghdad should be explored and visits to the city's monuments and museums are rewarding.

Tennis, softball, cricket, bowling, swimming, and squash are available in and around Baghdad. Several of the city's luxury hotels offer memberships entitling one to use their athletic facilities which usually include swimming, tennis, squash bowling, weight rooms, and sauna. Hunting is forbidden and guns may not be imported. Boating, water-skiing, and windsurfing are possible at several Iraqi lakes but these destinations require travel permission.

Many foreigners belong to the Alwiyah Club. Members of the foreign community informally organize activities which include running, drama, music appreciation and bridge. Social life is restricted to home entertainment among members of the diplomatic and business communities. Home entertainment equipment such as stereos, record collections, and videotape equipment can be brought to Iraq. Videotaped movies are available in Kuwait for both the VHS and BETA systems.

Baghdad, as an entertainment center, is undistinguished. Opera, ballet, and the legitimate theater do not exist, but some English-language films are shown in the local cinemas. Nightclubs, although in operation, do not have a wide selection of entertainment. Some local restaurants are frequented by foreigners in Baghdad. The Iraqi Symphony Orchestra gives a few concerts during the winter season.

Iraq's national tourist agency, the General Establishment for Travel and Tourism Services, is located at Al-Kodwa Square, Khalid bin Al-Waleed Street, Baghdad.

Al Basrah

Iraq's only port is Al Basrah (also spelled Basra, Bassora, Bussora, and Busra, and known in the *Arabian Nights* as Bassorah), located in

the southeastern section of the country on the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, 300 miles south of Baghdād. Al Baṣrah has become a prosperous city due to its location near the oil fields and 75 miles from the Arabian Gulf; it was the site of a great deal of Gulf War fighting. Petroleum products, grains, dates, and wool are exported from Al Baṣrah. Many oil refineries have been constructed in the city since 1948.

Founded by the Caliph Umar I in 636, Al Baṣrah was a cultural center under Harun ar-Rashid, but declined with the decay of the Abbassid caliphate. For many years, the Persians and the Turks fought for possession of Al Baṣrah. The construction of a rail line linking Al Baṣrah and Baghdād and the building of a modern harbor restored the city's importance after World War I. Occupied by the British in World War II, it was an important transshipment point for supplies to Turkey and the former U.S.S.R.

A branch of the University of Baghdād is located in Al Baṣrah. The population of Al Baṣrah is over 700,000.

Al Mawṣil

Al Mawṣil, with a population of about 1,034,000 (2000 est.), is located on the Tigris River in northern Iraq, opposite the ruins of Nineveh, and 225 miles north of Baghdād. The largest city in northern Iraq and the country's third largest city, Al Mawṣil is important for its trade in agricultural goods and exploitation of oil. Most of the city's inhabitants are Arabs, although the surrounding area is mostly populated by Kurds.

Historically, Al Mawṣil was the chief city in northern Mesopotamia for 500 years before being devastated by the Mongols. During its occupation by the Persians in 1508, and by the Turks from 1534 to 1918, the city remained extremely poor. Under British occupation from 1918 to 1932, Al Mawṣil again became the chief city of the region. Turkey disputed its possession by Iraq in

1923–1925, but it was confirmed by the League of Nations in 1926. The city's oil wells were seized during the Arab revolt of April 1941, but were soon retaken by the British.

A trading center for grain, hides, wool, livestock, and fruit, Al Mawṣil produces cement, sugar, nylon, and bitumen. The city has numerous mosques, shrines, and churches; its university was founded in 1967. Nearby are the ancient ruins of Nineveh and the partially excavated cities of Tepe Gawra, Calah, and Dur Sharrukin.

OTHER CITIES

The holy city of **AN NAJAF** is located in south-central Iraq on a lake near the Euphrates River, about 100 miles south of Baghdād. With a population over 130,000, An Najaf is the site of the tomb of Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammad the Prophet. An object of pilgrimage by the Shi'ite Muslims, the tomb is a starting point for the pilgrimage to Mecca. The city is also called Mashad Ali in honor of Ali.

ARBIL (also spelled Irbil) is a commercial and administrative center in northern Iraq, between the Great and Little Zab Rivers, about 200 miles north of Baghdād in a rich agricultural region. The ancient Sumerian city of Urbillum, or Arbela, formerly occupied this site; it eventually became one of the great Assyrian towns. As the capital of its province, Arbil today is a major grain producer. The railroad that ends in Arbil connects the city with Kirkūk and Baghdād. Arbil is currently built on an artificial mound on top of an old Turkish fort. The population was estimated at 2,368,000 in 2000.

Iraq's oil industry is centered in the city of **KIRKŪK**, located in the northeast part of the country about 150 miles north of Baghdād. The city, with a population of approximately 535,000, is connected by pipelines to ports on the Mediterranean Sea. Kirkūk is also the market

for the region's produce, including cereals, olives, cotton, and fruits. The city is also home to a small textile industry. The surrounding agricultural region also raises sheep. Present-day Kirkūk is situated on a mound that contains the remains of a settlement that dates back to 3000 B.C. Most of the residents of Kirkūk are Kurds. Kirkūk is the terminus of a railroad from Baghdād.

AR RAMĀDI (also called Rumadiya; in Arabic, Ramadi) lies on the right bank of Euphrates River, 60 miles west of Baghdād. It is the starting point of a highway that crosses the desert to Mediterranean towns. Ar Ramādi was the scene of battle during World War I in which the British, under the rule of Maude, defeated the Turks. The population was estimated well over 80,000.

The ruins of the ancient city of **NIMRUD** lie about 37 km southeast of the city of Mosul, south of Nineveh. In the time of the Assyrian empire it was known as Kalhu, or Calah, as it is mentioned in Genesis of the Old Testament. It served as the capital of Assyria under Assurbanipal II in 879BC and was destroyed by the Medes of Northern Persia at about 612BC. Archeological excavations have uncovered many of the walls and several artifacts from the king's palace, called the Northwest Palace. A site museum is now located there. On the southeastern side of the city lie the remains of the royal arsenal, Fort Shalmanesar.

The ancient city site of **NINEVEH** is located on the Tigris River, just opposite of Mosul. Today, however, the name refers to the larger administrative district for the area, which has a population of about 1.6 million (1991 est.). The ancient city served as the capital of the Assyrian Empire from about 704-681BC and was somewhat known as the hub of the civilized ancient world. It was taken over by the Medes of Northern Persia at about 612BC. As capital, the city of Nineveh was the site for the magnificent palaces of Sennacherib and Assurbanipal. Recent

archeological excavations have uncovered a great deal of the ancient city, including a section of wall about 7.5 miles long and sculptures from the palaces. The original city's protection wall contained 15 gates, each named for an Assyrian god. At least two of these gates, Shamash and Nergal, have been reconstructed. One of the most incredible finds was the Assurbanipal library, which includes over 20,000 cuneiform tablets. The Iraq Department of Antiquities has roofed the sites and has established the Sennacherib Palace Site Museum for visitors.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Iraq is situated on the Asian Continent, northeast of the Arabian Peninsula. It lies between 38° and 29°30' north latitude, and 38° 30' and 51°30' east longitude, from its northwestern tip to its southeastern extremity. Iraq is bounded on the north by Turkey, on the east by Iran, on the south by Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf, on the southwest by Saudi Arabia and Jordan, and on the northwest by Syria.

Iraq's 171,554 square miles are divided into four major geographical areas. The main one, having almost 75 percent of the population, is the alluvial plain or delta lowlands. Stretching from north of Baghdād, the capital, past Al Baṣrah to the Gulf, this area is watered by the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which rise in the Armenian Mountains of eastern Turkey. The rivers approach to within 40 miles of each other near Baghdād, diverge before joining to form the Shatt al-Arab north of Al Baṣrah, and then flow together with the Karun into the Gulf. An estimated 25 billion cubic feet of silt a year is carried downstream by these rivers to add to the delta.

As well as being the legendary locale of the Garden of Eden, the region contains the ruins of Ur, Babylon, and countless other ancient cities. The plain is quite flat—average altitude is 75 feet—and encompasses about 7,500 square miles of marshland to the north of Al Baṣrah. In spite of the fertility of the area irrigated by the rivers, over three-fourths of it is arid desert.

The second area is the western plateau, an extension of the Arabian Peninsula, which marks the region to the west and south of the Euphrates, extending into Jordan and Syria. Comprising more than half of Iraq's total area, it is home to only one percent of the population. The land here is not sandy; it is primarily dust and gravel. Sand dunes exist, but they are not dominant. The average altitude is about 400 feet. Irrigation is limited to sparsely scattered wells. The most heavily populated part of the area is in a depression in the plateau west of the Euphrates between Hit and Najaf, running in a southerly direction from Ar Ramādi to Kerbala. The depression is divided into two basins, Habbaniya in the north and Abu Dibbis in the south.

The third geographical area is the Jazīra, or island, formed by the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates and their tributaries. Both undulating plains and flat country are found in the region, as well as a basalt chain—50 miles long and 4,800 feet high—west of Al Mawṣil.

The fourth area consists of the mountains to the east of the Tigris in the north of Iraq, which rise from 700 feet near the river bank to nearly 12,000 feet on the Iraq-Turkey-Iran border. This is an extension of the Alpine system which runs southeast through the Balkans, the Taurus Mountains of southern Turkey, northern Iraq and Iran, and into Afghanistan, finally ending in the Himalayas. East of Kirkūk and Arbil, the land is very rocky until the Plains of Sulaimaniya are reached.

Baghdād is located almost in the geographical center of Iraq. Just north of the city, the alluvial plain begins, extending southward through the marshlands to the Gulf. Climatically, the Baghdād area is comparable to the extreme southwestern United States and northern Mexico, with hot, dry summers, cold (but rarely freezing) winters, and pleasant spring and fall seasons. Maximum daytime temperatures in summer (May through September) occasionally reach as high as 130°F, but are generally between 115° and 120°F. The low humidity (5–25%) and 20°F drop in temperature at night result in more comfortable weather than that found in tropical humid regions.

Population

About 75 to 80 percent of the approximately 23.2 million Iraqis are of Arab stock. The largest ethnic minority are the Kurds, who comprise 15 to 20 percent of the population. Although the Kurds are mostly Muslims, they differ from their Arab neighbors in language, dress, and customs. Other distinctive ethnic communities include Assyrians, Turkmans, Chaldeans, and Armenians.

About 97 percent of the population is Muslim; Iraq is the only Arab country in which most Muslims are members of the Shi'ite sect. There are also small communities of Christians, Jews, Mandaean, and Yazidis.

Arabic is most commonly spoken and is the country's official language; English is the most commonly used Western language.

Government

Iraq's role in the Middle East has undergone several significant changes since World War II. The July Revolution of 1958 ended Hashemite rule in Iraq, the country's participation in the Baghdād pact (now called CENTO), and its traditional ties with the West.

Foreign policy, which followed a neutralist line under Qasim from 1958 to 1963, was identified with the cause of Arab unity after the Ba'ath (Renaissance) Party came to permanent power in 1968. Iraq entered into a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union in 1972, and the Ba'ath and Communist parties formed a Nominal coalition with a Kurdish party. In 1979, the Communist Party was removed from the coalition.

Iraq is governed by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), consisting of nine of civilian and military members and chaired by the President. The RCC enacts legislation, which is then ratified by the National Assembly. The RCC's President (chief of state and supreme commander of the armed forces) is elected by a two-thirds majority of the RCC. The current president is Saddam Hussein, who took office in July 1979. A 29-member Council of Ministers (Cabinet), appointed by the RCC, has administrative and some legislative responsibilities. A 250-member National Assembly was elected on June 20, 1980, in the first elections since the end of the monarchy; the last election was held in March 1996 (only candidates loyal to Saddam Hussein were allowed to run). No real opposition party exists. A new constitution was drafted in 1990 but not adopted. Iraq is divided into 18 provinces, each headed by a governor with extensive administrative powers.

Iraq's judicial system is based on the French model, which was introduced during Ottoman rule. It does not serve as an independent branch of government as in the United States. There are three different courts: civil, religious, and special. The Court of Cassation is the last court for appeals. National security cases are handled by the special courts. Iraq is essentially a one-party state and the press is limited to a few newspapers published by and expressing the views of the government.

After years of precarious relations with Iran over control of the Shatt-al-Arab Waterway that divides the two countries, war erupted in September 1980 when Iraqi planes bombed Iranian airfields and Iran retaliated. Ground fighting began and Iraqi troops crossed the border but were driven back in May 1982. In 1984, both countries attacked tankers in the Persian Gulf, including an Iraqi attack of the *U.S.S. Stark* which killed 37 U.S. Navy personnel. Warfare ended in August 1988 when a United Nations cease-fire resolution was accepted. In August 1990, Iraq attacked and invaded neighboring Kuwait; declared it a province and precipitated an international crisis. The United Nations called for economic sanctions in Iraq. When Iraq did not withdraw its troops from Kuwait by the U.N. deadline of January 16, 1991, a multi-national force (including the United States) launched an attack on Iraq. In February after cease-fire attempts were rejected by both sides as unacceptable, the multi-national coalition began a ground offensive with the aim of liberating Kuwait. Iraqi troops offered little resistance and were quickly defeated. On March 3, Iraq accepted defeat and agreed to ceasefire terms.

After the war, internal revolts against Saddam Hussein's government by the Shi'ites in southern Iraq and Kurds in the northern provinces were suppressed by Iraqi armed forces. One to two million Kurds fearing for their safety fled across the border into Iran and Turkey. To help solve this refugee crisis, other countries stepped in to establish "safe havens" for Kurdish population within Iraq and many Kurds returned.

After the war, the United Nations imposed economic sanctions on Iraq and mandated the dismantling of certain Iraqi weapons and missile programs. In 1996, the United Nations brokered a deal with Iraq that would allow it to sell a limited quantity of oil to pay for critical civilian needs. In late 1997, Saddam Hussein expelled ten Americans

who were working as weapons inspectors for the United Nations, thus obstructing the disarmament process. The United States sent 30,000 troops to the Persian Gulf to prompt Iraq into submitting to the United Nations' resolutions. Tensions mounted and a military confrontation seemed imminent. In February 1998, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan went to Iraq and persuaded the Iraqi government to cooperate.

The flag of Iraq is made up of red, white, and black horizontal bands. In the central white band are three green stars arranged horizontally. The words *Allah Akhbar* ("God is Great") in green Arabic script were added between the stars during the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

Arts, Science, Education

Iraq's cultural life is centered in Baghdād, arguably the second most important Arab capital after Cairo. Once confined to a small group of the more Westernized and well-to-do Iraqis, cultural participation by ordinary citizens and official patronage has increased. The most vigorous activity is in fine arts. The Iraq Museum of Modern Art has organized an extensive permanent collection of the work of Iraqi artists. In Western classical music, the government-subsidized Iraq National Symphony and its chamber ensemble offer about eight different programs during the winter months. A number of special presentations are sponsored by foreign embassies and cultural institutions. Occasional Arabic language dramatic productions are given at the National Theater and at the Mansour Theater.

In keeping with Iraq's ambitious national development program, the government before the Gulf War awarded thousands of scholarships to many U.S. and other foreign universities, with heavy emphasis on engineering and the sciences. Iraqis are proud of their rich scientific heritage from Islamic and pre-Islamic



Street in downtown Baghdad, Iraq

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

times, and the government wanted to increase modern manifestations of this heritage. Six years of primary school is compulsory and there are plans to extend it to nine years. Secondary education is available for six years. Public education is free; private schools were abolished in 1970s. Adult literacy is currently estimated to be 58% (1995 est.).

Archaeology attracts the interest of many members of the foreign community. A number of archaeological digs are in progress, and the Iraq Department of Antiquities has undertaken major restorations of some principal sites. Iraq's superlative collections of Mesopotamian antiquities are on display at the excellent Iraq Museum.

Commerce and Industry

The long war with Iran (1980–1988) resulted in considerable debt and

post-war reconstruction funds were needed to repair industrial and oil installations, as well as, damage to the physical infrastructure around the southern city of Al Başrah. Economics, especially the shortage of hard currency, was the driving force behind Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. However, the war over Kuwait resulted in severe economic damage to Iraq—considerably more than the years of war. The loss of trade, investment, economic assistance, and the many foreign workers who left the country because of the war resulted in economic problems that have persisted for many years.

Iraq has a state-controlled economy with a small private sector. The economy is heavily dependent on oil and refined products; 95% of export earnings come from this source. Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world and was the second largest Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

(OPEC) producer after Saudi Arabia. Since 1972, the government has gradually nationalized all the oil fields in the country, in keeping with the policy that the country's resources, particularly oil, should not be under foreign control. Since 1999, Iraq was authorized to export unlimited quantities of oil to finance humanitarian needs including food, medicine, and infrastructure repair parts. Oil exports fluctuate as the regime alternately starts and stops exports, but, in general, oil exports have now reached three-quarters of their pre-Gulf War levels. Per capita output and living standards remain well below pre-Gulf War levels.

Manufacturing and agriculture play much smaller roles in the economy despite their great potential. All heavy industry is government-owned and includes iron, steel, cement, pharmaceuticals, and fertilizers. There is a trend to allow private ownership of light industrial concerns such as food processing

and textiles. Iraq has a large, skilled work force. Much fertile, irrigated land is available for agricultural purposes and 30% of the work force is involved in agriculture. Iraq is one of the world's largest producer of dates; barley and wheat are the other major agricultural products.

Iraq's gross domestic product (GDP) is approximately \$57 billion, or \$2,500 per capita (2000 est.). The United Nations trade embargo established in August 1990 and the war has blocked or disrupted Iraq's trade with other nations.

The address of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce is Mustansir Street, Baghdad, Iraq.

Transportation

During the Gulf War, many roads, railways, bridges, and ports were destroyed or damaged. Immediately after the war the only surface link to other countries was through Amman, Jordan. The Iraqi government has given the repair of roads and bridges a high priority. Baghdad is served by a limited number of international airlines as well as Iraqi Airways, the national carrier.

Iraq has intercountry rail transportation. Rail lines connect Baghdad with major cities such as Al Baṣrah, Arbil, and to Al Mawṣil, where Istanbul (Turkey) and Europe can be reached via Aleppo (Syria). The Oriental Express travels to and from Baghdad via Turkey and Syria.

Local transportation includes taxis and buses. Americans seldom use either. Taxis, operated by both companies and private individuals, are usually available, but are difficult to find after 8 p.m. Taxis may be hired for trips out of Baghdad. Many taxis are American-made and many are not equipped with meters. Fares must be negotiated, but is easily managed once the recognized standard rates are known. Even for taxis with meters, fares should be agreed on in advance. Tipping is not expected. Some established foreign-

ers without cars make contact with a taxi company in their vicinity and use it exclusively, paying their bills by the month. This can become quite expensive for more than a short-term arrangement.

The bus system operates on most of the main streets; however, most buses are in poor condition.

A car is essential in Baghdad, especially for a foreigner living in an outlying residential district. Markets for food and household goods are far apart, and distances between home, office, and friends can be great. Certain car colors are prohibited (black, olive, beige, tan), as are all cars with diesel engines.

An international or U.S. driver's license will expedite issuance of an Iraqi license. International driver's licenses must specifically list Iraq in order to be valid here. Third-party insurance is compulsory. Major roads have international traffic signs; driving is on the right-hand side of the road.

Communications

Iraq has a dial telephone system. Long-distance service, although poor, is normally available within the country and to nearby capitals. Satellite connections to overseas countries are usually satisfactory, although delays can be encountered in placing a call. At times, as a war-related economic move, Iraq has discontinued long distance, direct-dial service. Long distance calls must then be placed through operators and usually only placed for phone numbers on an approved list.

International airmail letters to or from the U.S. usually take eight to 12 days, although if selected for review by the censors, letters can be delayed as much as three weeks. Air Mail is more reliable than surface mail. Telex is available at the major hotels and telegrams may be sent from the telegram office in Baghdad.

Radio reception is fair. Domestic service is available in Arabic, Kurdish, and several minority languages, while external service is available in many languages. It is possible to tune in to Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Monte Carlo (Monaco), and other shortwave programs. A good shortwave set capable of worldwide reception is worthwhile. There are 16 medium-wave and 30 short-wave transmitters in the country. Baghdad has two TV stations, both government-operated. With the exception of a few English-language serials and films, its limited programs are in Arabic only (usually about eight/nine hours a day).

The state-sponsored *Baghdad Observer* is the only English-language paper readily available. Few Western publications are available. Occasional copies of *Time* and *Newsweek*, censored, are seen at local vendors. A subscription to European versions of these magazines, although expensive, is much more dependable. The *International Herald Tribune*, printed in Paris, can also be subscribed to via international mail. The delay on these publications is about five days.

Only a limited supply of books and technical journals is available. The British Council library, however, has a wide selection of fiction and nonfiction, and the International Children's Center (ICC) has a library, although not extensive, of children's books. The U.S. Interests Section maintains an informal lending library.

Health and Medicine

Baghdad has several small private hospitals where Westerners may be hospitalized in emergencies. These hospitals, however, do not offer the comprehensive medical, surgical, or diagnostic care of a large American medical center; most foreigners use medical facilities abroad.

Many well-trained and qualified doctors in nearly all the medical and surgical specialties practice in Baghdad. However, these doctors are severely overworked and are limited by the lack of development of hospitals, money in a war situation, laboratories, and well-trained nursing staffs.

Although adequate routine dental care is available, complex dental problems are usually hard to solve locally. Children requiring orthodontia should have the process initiated prior to arrival. Satisfactory follow-up care for orthodontia can be obtained in Baghdad.

No adequate diagnostic facilities exist for allergies. Those with severe or disturbing allergies should have diagnostic sensitivity procedures performed prior to arrival. Iraq's climate could severely aggravate allergies. If therapeutic allergy serum for desensitization is necessary, an adequate supply should be kept on hand.

If you require special or unusual medicines, bring your own supply. Medications are scarce and hard to find; U.S. brands are unavailable.

Sanitation is below U.S. standards; there are indiscriminate dumpings of waste and garbage. One city garbage collection per week services residential areas.

Baghdad's central water system provides adequate potable water, which is filtered in the home for drinking. The water is obtained from the Tigris River. The city water in Al Mawşil, Al Başrah, and Kirkük is also safe to drink. It is unsafe, however, to drink untreated water in the villages.

Periodic fumigation with DDT or equivalent spray helps eliminate insect pests. The Baghdad city and health authorities have several large trucks which irregularly spray major portions of the city to reduce the number of flies and mosquitoes.

The foreign community is commonly subject to gastro-intestinal upsets. Respiratory infections and colds also are common, and often severe. They are frequently of prolonged duration and may progress to bronchitis, pneumonia, or pleurisy. These complications should be promptly and adequately treated. Children are subject to the usual childhood diseases, but generally do well in Baghdad. Hepatitis and sand fly fever are local hazards.

Skin and eye infections prevalent among the local population must be guarded against by proper habits of personal hygiene. Parasitic diseases such as hydatid cyst, amoebic and bacillary dysentery, and worms are prevalent. Bilharzia may be prevented by avoiding bathing, washing, or wading in irrigation ditches and slow-moving streams. Malaria and Baghdad boil (Cutaneous Leishmaniasis) are relatively uncommon now.

The dust-laden air may severely aggravate sinus and other respiratory tract complaints, and may cause acute irritative conjunctivitis. Baghdad also experiences smog, due mainly to brick factories and oil refineries built close to the city.

The long, hot summer can be debilitating. Since the dryness evaporates perspiration rapidly, fluid loss can be extensive. Salt tablets are helpful to those who perspire profusely. Insect bites, heat rash, and temperature extremes may be discomforting to some. Insect repellents are advised.

Like other desert areas, Iraq is an entomologist's paradise. Many varieties of insects are found year round. Sand flies are a particular nuisance during the late summer and early fall, and houseflies are plentiful throughout the year. Precautions must be taken against cockroaches, ants, and termites. The insect population of homes is kept to a minimum by small, harmless lizards which keep mainly to the upper walls and seldom bother humans. In the Middle East, they

are regarded as bringing good fortune to the home.

U.S. health authorities recommend immunization against cholera (except for infants under six months), typhoid, tetanus, polio, and gamma globulin. The usual pediatric immunizations also should be updated.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Jan.6	Army Day
Mar. 21.	Spring Day
July 14.	Republic Day (1958 Revolution)
July 17.	Ba'ath Revolution Day (1968 Revolution)
Aug. 8.	Peace Day
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Ashura*
.	Mawlid al Nabi*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Muharram*
.	Lailat al Miraj*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

No American air carriers serve Baghdad, other airlines, including Iraqi Air, Air France, Lufthansa, and Swissair offer frequent direct flights from several European capitals. Iraqi Air prohibits hand baggage (including brief cases) on most flights.

Passports and visas are required. On February 8, 1991, U.S. passports ceased to be valid for travel to, in or through Iraq and may not be used for that purpose unless a special validation has been obtained. Please see paragraphs on Passport Validation and U.S. Government Economic Sanctions. For visa infor-

mation, please contact the Iraqi Interests Section of the Algerian Embassy, 1801 P Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, telephone 202-483-7500, fax 202-462-5066.

Without the requisite validation, use of a U.S. passport for travel to, in or through Iraq may constitute a violation of 18 U.S.C. 1544, and may be punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment. An exemption to the above restriction is granted to Americans residing in Iraq as of February 8, 1991 who continue to reside there and to American professional reporters or journalists on assignment there.

Iraq has strict customs regulations. Upon arrival, a traveler must declare any foreign currency, audio-visual equipment, satellite and cell telephones, personal computers and especially modems. There may be difficulty in obtaining a permit to take these items out when leaving Iraq. The Iraqi authorities may request the surrender of such equipment for depositing at the border (there might be difficulties in reclaiming it when leaving Iraq). Videotapes may be confiscated. Carrying firearms and pornography is forbidden. Any news publications may be regarded as hostile propaganda and confiscated. Charges of disseminating propaganda detrimental to Iraq might follow. So-called "friendly" requests for foreign periodicals and newspapers should be flatly refused. Usually cars are very thoroughly checked. Offering gifts to inspectors may result in charges of bribery, which could lead to serious consequences. Generally, export of gold, foreign currency, valuable equipment, antiquities and expensive carpets is forbidden.

All foreigners (except diplomats) are requested to take an AIDs or HIV test at the border. Sanitary conditions at the Ministry of Health border stations are questionable. You may wish to bring your own needle or try to postpone the check until your arrival in Baghdad. You may wish to have the test done ahead and carry a valid certificate.

The U.S. does not have diplomatic relations with Iraq, and there is no U.S. Embassy in Iraq. The Embassy of Poland represents U.S. interests in Iraq; however, its ability to assist American citizens is limited.

Pets

A veterinarian's certified statement of good health and a rabies inoculation is necessary for all pets brought into Iraq. Import licenses are obtained after entry. Pets are most easily brought into the country when they accompany the owner. Adequate veterinary care is available locally but animal medicines are in short supply. Commercially prepared pet food is not available and other pet supplies are very scarce.

St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad holds services in English, and is open to all members of Protestant denominations. There is no resident minister, and activities are limited to the weekly services. There are several Catholic churches, and English-language masses are offered at St. Raphael's. English-language services are also offered at a Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit of Iraq is the *dinar* (ID), which is divided into 1,000 *fiils*. All private foreign exchange transactions are government-controlled through the Central Bank of Iraq. Travelers checks and foreign currency are not limited, provided they are declared upon entry. Rafidian Bank, Iraq's sole commercial bank, is the only one authorized to accept foreign currency or travelers checks.

Comprehensive U.N. sanctions on Iraq, imposed following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, prohibit all economic and financial transactions with the Government of Iraq, persons or entities in Iraq unless specifically authorized by the U.N. Since 1998, foreigners traveling in Iraq may legally exchange foreign currency in money exchange kiosks

or bureaus (run privately or state banks). Payments for hotel, renting a taxi, etc. must be paid in foreign currency. No ATM machines exist.

The metric system of weights and measures is used in Iraq. The use of any other system is legally prohibited.

The time in Iraq is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus three hours.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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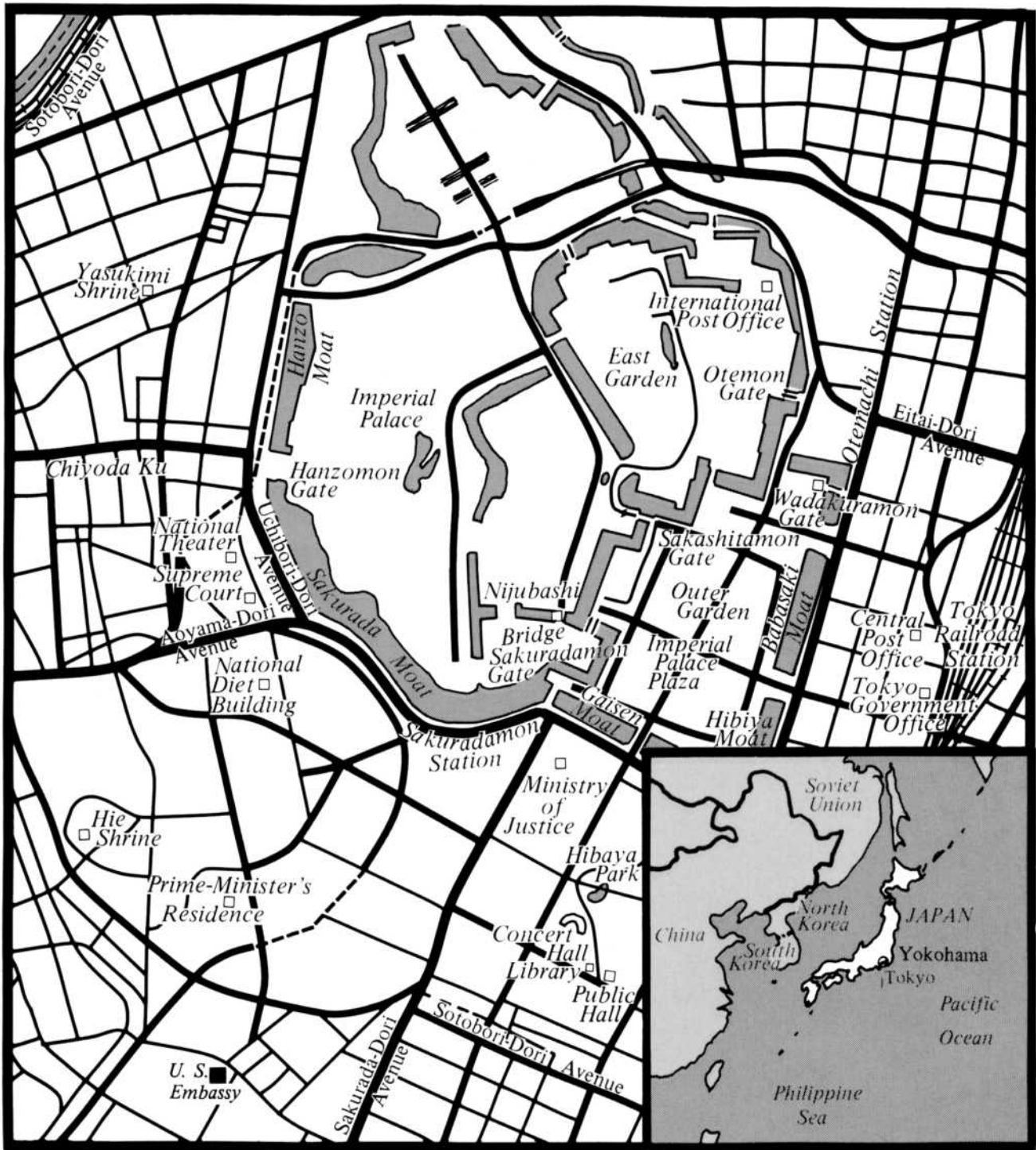
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Tokyo, Japan

JAPAN

(including Okinawa)

Major Cities:

Tokyo, Yokohama, Ōsaka, Kōbe, Kyōto, Nagoya, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Sapporo, Nagasaki

Other Cities:

Chiba, Gifu, Hamamatsu, Himeji, Kagoshima, Kanazawa, Kawasaki, Kita-kyūshū, Kumagaya, Kumamoto, Kurashiki, Miyazaki, Niigata, Nishinomiya, Okayama, Sakai, Sendai, Utsunomiya, Yokosuka

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Japan. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

For a country that lived in self-imposed isolation until 150 years ago, Japan has not hesitated to make up for lost time.

It is a place of ancient gods and customs but is also the cutting edge of cool modernity. High-speed trains whisk you from one end of the country to another with frightening punctuality. You can catch sight of a farmer tending his paddy field, then turn the corner and find yourself next to a neon-festooned electronic games parlor in the suburb of a sprawling metropolis.

Few other countries have, in the space of mere generations, experienced so much or made such an

impact. Industrialized at lightning speed, Japan shed its feudal trappings to become the most powerful country in Asia in a matter of decades. After defeat in World War II, it transformed itself to a wonder economy, the envy of the globe.

In the cities you will first be struck by the mass of people. In this mountainous country, the vast majority of the 126 million population live on the crowded coastal plains of the main island of Honshu. The three other main islands, running north to south, are Hokkaido, Shikoku, and Kyushu, and all are linked to Honshu by bridges and tunnels that are part of one of Japan's modern wonders—its efficient transport network of trains and highways.

Outside the cities, there is a vast range of options from the wide open spaces and deep volcanic lakes of Hokkaido, blanketed by snow every winter, to the balmy subtropical islands of Okinawa. You will seldom have to travel far to catch sight of a lofty castle, ancient temple or shrine, or locals celebrating at a colorful street festival. The Japanese are inveterate travelers within their own country and there is hardly a town or village, no matter how small or plain, that does not boast some unique attraction.

Rampant development and sometimes appalling pollution is difficult to square with a country also renowned for cleanliness and appreciation of nature. Part of the problem is that natural cataclysms, such as earthquakes and typhoons, regularly hit Japan, so few people expect things to last for long.

And yet, time and again, Japan redeems itself with unexpectedly beautiful landscapes, charmingly courteous people, and its tangible sense of history and cherished traditions. Most intriguing of all is the opaqueness at the heart of this mysterious hidden culture that stems from a blurring of traditional boundaries between East and West. Japan is neither wholly one nor the other.

MAJOR CITIES

Tokyo

Tokyo, the capital of Japan and one of the world's largest cities in terms of area, is at the head of Tokyo Bay on the Kanto Plain, the largest level area in the country. The city proper covers 221 square miles and has a population of 8.5 million. The 796-square-mile metropolitan area occupies sea-level stretches along

the bay and rivers, as well as hilly areas farther inland which include suburban cities and towns, and several small villages; total population of this area is now more than 14 million.

Tokyo developed originally around a feudal castle built during the 16th century. Toward the end of that century, a great feudal lord named Tokugawa Ieyasu ruled this castle and the surrounding area. In 1603, after a series of civil wars, he established himself as *shogun*, or military dictator, of all Japan, and administered his rule from Edo, which later was called Tokyo. Under succeeding rulers of the Tokugawa dynasty, the city grew in importance and became the leading commercial center of the area.

Tokyo has been, for all practical purposes, the capital of Japan since 1603, although the imperial court in the ancient capital of Kyōto maintained nominal authority until 1868. The court moved to Tokyo, and a Western-style government was established in the late 1860s.

Besides being the seat of government, Tokyo is the industrial, commercial, financial, communications, and educational center of Japan. It has over 7,900 factories or plants with 30 or more employees, 102 four-year colleges and universities, and 28 daily newspapers. It is Japan's most international city, with more than 122,500 foreign residents, of whom over 14,000 are Americans. Most foreign companies doing business in Japan have their headquarters here.

Tokyo is a vital metropolis of striking contrasts—of confusion and calm. Business and residential properties are side by side, giving the city a patchwork-quilt impression. It has lovely parks and shrines, broad thoroughfares, modern office buildings and hotels, expressways, and department stores similar to those in other large international cities. Beyond all this, however, lies another world of narrow streets, markets, theaters, restaurants, and Japanese-style

houses that make Tokyo a unique city.

Utilities

Electricity in Tokyo is single phase 100 or 200 volts, 50 cycles (HZ) electric current. Most U.S.-manufactured appliances will operate satisfactorily as long as they will tolerate 50 cycle electric current. Electric timing devices and clocks that are designed for standard U. S. 60-cycle electric current may not operate properly on 50-cycle electricity. Most appliances manufactured for Tokyo use require 100 volt, 50 cycle electric current.

Food

Most food items available in the U.S. can be obtained on the local market at higher prices.

The New Sanno Hotel also has a small shoppette. Throughout the city one can conveniently locate greengrocers, convenience-type stores, and large modern supermarkets.

Clothing

General: Bring a four-season wardrobe for all family members. Winter clothing is advised for the cold and damp winter months. Summer in Tokyo can be very hot and humid. Raincoats and umbrellas are essential.

Local department and specialty stores carry a variety of Western-style clothes and imported items from the design centers of the world for both men and women but are generally available in sizes unique to the Japanese physique and are very expensive. Excellent quality silks, woolens, and various synthetics are available.

Shoes for men, women and children are available locally but it is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to find the proper size. Shoe sizes are shorter and wider than in the U.S.

If you need special sizes or particular brands in clothing and shoes in order to be properly fitted, bring them with you. Office dress as well as sports and casual attire follow

Washington or U.S. standards. Social functions are not extremely dressy. Simple good taste is the best criterion.

Men: The accepted attire for dinner parties, unless otherwise stated, is a business suit.

Women: An afternoon dress, a simple long dress, or long skirt and top are suitable for the frequent cocktail parties, receptions, and buffet dinners. Formal attire is a floor-length dress. Bring at least one full skirt (either long or short) that would be appropriate for dining in Japanese restaurants or homes where guests sit on tatami mats on the floor.

Children: A variety of children's clothing is available; sizes are not a big problem but prices are high.

Supplies and Services

The following items are available at higher prices: toiletries for men and women, cosmetics, feminine personal supplies, tobacco items, home medicines and drugs; common household items, including minor repair materials; and entertainment supplies such as candles, napkins.

All basic services—laundry, drycleaning, barber and beauty shops, shoe, and automobile repair—are available.

Domestic Help

The number and type of domestics varies with the obligations and living pattern of the employee. The hourly rate for part-time domestics is approximately Y1,000. Salaries for full-time domestics vary but generally you can expect to pay \$1,000-\$1,500 per month.

Domestics are covered by Japanese national health insurance but are not covered by unemployment insurance. Many employers assume partial obligation for doctors' bills and for the placement of a domestic in another position when they leave Japan. Those who sponsor non-Japanese domestics are responsible for assuring their departure from



Asakusa/Sensoji Temple Gate in Tokyo

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Japan if not placed with a qualified sponsor.

Part-time maids are available as babysitters when those services are needed. Teenagers charge from Y500 per hour depending on age and experience while part-time maids charge Y1,000 per hour.

Religious Activities

English-language services are available in the Tokyo and Yokohama areas for members of most denominations. Religions represented include Roman Catholic, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, Episcopal, Mormon, Christian Scientist, Lutheran, Interdenominational, Jewish, and Interdenominational Charismatic. The churches offer a variety of fellowship for all age groups and combined programs to provide services for the benefit of the foreign community in the area.

Education

Tokyo has a wide selection of excellent schools that provide education

comparable to that available in the best schools in the U.S. and elsewhere. The school styles range from open classroom to more structured approaches; sports, music, drama, and other outside activities are provided in varying degrees. Graduates from the schools in the area have no difficulty being accepted by the best U.S. colleges and universities. To accommodate the requirements of children with special needs, parents should be certain to communicate directly with the schools regarding individual educational needs and programs available. The school year is from September to June. It is essential to communicate with the schools as early as possible since competition for spaces is keen. Most schools begin accepting applications for the upcoming school year in November of the current year. Most of the private schools maintain waiting lists. Upon acceptance, many schools require an early commitment on the part of the family and may require a non-refundable deposit. The schools in the Tokyo

area most frequently used are listed below. Each is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

A physical examination is required by most of the schools.

The American School in Japan (ASIJ) (1-1, Nomizu 1-comme, Chofushi, Tokyo 182-0031, tel: 0422-34-5300, fax: 0422-34-5308; web address: www.asij.ac.jp; e-mail: enroll@asij.ac.jp) is an independent elementary and secondary school accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. It is an overseas member of the National Association of Independent Schools of the United States and is affiliated with the International Schools Service. Of the 1,400 students, 67% are American, 15% are Japanese and the rest third-country nationals. The curriculum is similar to that of the best U.S. college preparatory schools. In addition, Japanese language and area studies are offered in all grades. The facilities include

an indoor swimming pool, two gymnasiums, theater, laboratories, libraries, and cafeteria. The emphasis is on individualized instruction through the modular schedule in the secondary schools and through employment of team teaching as a means of greater flexibility in the elementary school. The number of graduates who enter colleges is about 98%.

The school is at Chofu in Tokyo's western suburbs. The school provides bus service from all areas of Tokyo including a stop at the apartment compound, with commuting time running slightly under an hour each way. Train service to within 10 minutes walking distance from the school is also available.

American School in Japan Nursery-Kindergarten (3-5 age group) (15-5, Aobadai 2-chome, Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042; e-mail: nk@asij.ac.jp). In addition to the kindergarten on the Chofu campus, ASIJ operates a nursery kindergarten Meguro that is about 20 minutes from the housing compound. It accommodates 115 students of several nationalities. The normal school day includes teacher-directed work and activities (music, library, films), rest periods, snack, and outdoor play.

International School of Sacred Heart (3-1, Hiroo 4-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0012; fax: (3) 3400-3496; tel: (3) 3400-3951; web address: www.iac.co.jp/~issh3/; e-mail: issh@gol.com) is an elementary and secondary institution with a student body of about 588 students directed by the Catholic Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, it is a school for girls; however, boys are accepted for kindergarten. Around 50 different nationalities are represented in the student body and about 40-50 graduates are admitted to U.S. and Japanese colleges and universities each year. The school plant includes laboratories, gymnasium, and library; sports facilities also are provided. The



Courtesy of Motoko Huthwaite

Buddhist cemetery adjacent to high rise buildings in Tokyo

school is on the Sacred Heart University campus in central Tokyo.

Nishimachi International School (14-7, Moto Azabu 2-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0046; tel: (3) 3451-5520; fax: (3) 3456-0197; web address: www.nishimachi.ac.jp; e-mail: info@-nishimahi.ac.jp) offers instruction from kindergarten through grade 9. It is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Enrollment is about 400 with an international student body. The curriculum allows easy progression into the international high schools in the Tokyo area. Centrally located in Tokyo, the school has a gym (but no field), a large library, plus a strong Japanese language and active cultural activities programs. It generally requires early application for admission since there is usually a waiting list, particularly in the lower grades.

Seisen International School for Girls (12-15, Yoga 1-chome, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158-0097; fax: (3) 3701-1033; tel: (3) 3704-2661; web address: www.scisen.com; e-mail: sisnfo@jap.com) is a girls' elementary and secondary school accredited by the Western Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges and operated by the Catholic order, the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of

Jesus. Boys are accepted for kindergarten. Enrollment is around 645, representing 60 nationalities. The emphasis in the secondary school is college preparatory with an extracurricular program of arts, drama, journalism, music, and sports. Some 94% of graduates enter college. The school is in Tokyo, convenient to public buses, subways, and trains.

St. Mary's International School (6-19, Seta 1-chome, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158-8668; fax: (3) 3707-1950; tel: (3) 3709-3411; web address: www.smistokyo.com; e-mail: jutra@twics.com) is sponsored by the Catholic order, Brothers of Christian Instruction. It is an elementary and secondary boy's school accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges with an enrollment of 900, representing some 70 nationalities. The school has a preschool (5 years), but there is a waiting list. The secondary school curriculum is college preparatory, and participation in sports and extracurricular activities including music, arts, drama, and journalism is emphasized. The international Baccalaureate program is offered in the high school. The facilities include a gymnasium, indoor pool, laboratories, library, and cafeteria. Almost all graduates enter American colleges. Bus ser-

vice is provided by the school. In addition, train, subway, and public bus service to the school is excellent.

Tokyo International Learning Community (6-3-50 Osawa, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181-0015, Tel: 0422-31-9611; fax: 0422-31-9648; web address: www.tilc.org; e-mail: tilc@gol.com) Established in 1987, Tokyo International Learning Community was set up by concerned parents and professionals in Tokyo's English-speaking community to support the education of students with special needs.

Its staff now consists of four full-time teachers and over 10 other staff members, including an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a speech pathologist, and a psychologist. Based in a seven-room school building in Mitaka, Tokyo International Learning Community has an Early Childhood program for children from newborn to 5 years old with developmental disabilities or difficulties, and their families, as well as an Upper School Program for elementary, middle- and high-school students.

There is a support group for parents of children with special needs. A program for students enrolled in other international schools who are diagnosed as having a learning disability is also available. Services are offered in central Tokyo as well as the Mitaka campus.

Special Educational Opportunities

Exceptional opportunities exist in Tokyo for higher education and for training in Japanese arts and crafts. Each institution has its own admission requirements; courses can be followed as part of a degree program or for enrichment.

Sophia University, a Jesuit institution, has an international division that offers accredited courses in English and comparative cultures, leading to bachelor's and master's degrees. Both part-time and full-time study is possible, and all courses are in late afternoon or evening.

Temple University Japan, established in the early 1980s, is a branch of Temple University of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In the fall of 1987, the school moved into a new building in Shinjuku, which include such facilities as classrooms, a library, a language laboratory, and an auditorium. Temple offers bachelors degrees in the liberal arts and masters degrees in teaching English as a second language and business administration. Classes take place days and evenings.

International Christian University is about 20 miles from the center of Tokyo. It is an interdenominational school offering courses in English in all of its divisions-humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and languages. The Bachelor of Arts degree requires competency in Japanese, which can be acquired at the university by taking an intensive program. Night courses are not offered.

The University of Maryland, in cooperation with the Armed Forces, offers night courses at the undergraduate and some graduate levels. Although these courses are offered primarily to military personnel, Embassy staff members also are eligible. Courses currently are given at Camp Zama and Yokota Air Force Base. The commuting distance is from 1 to 1-1/2 hours from Tokyo by train.

Many opportunities exist for participation in adult classes in painting, sumie painting, ikebana (flower arrangement), woodcarving, doll making, pottery, and other Japanese crafts. Lessons in Japanese and Chinese cooking, music, and dancing can also be taken.

Sports

The Japanese are sports lovers and participate in virtually every sport popular in the West in addition to their own. The foreigner is welcomed, either as an active participant or as a spectator, and sports are effective avenues for establishing social and informal contacts with the Japanese people.

The most popular spectator sport of Western origin in Japan is baseball; the Tokyo pro teams play to sellout crowds nearly every day in season, and the annual Japan World Series championship team often gives visiting American teams stiff competition. Ranking in spectator popularity is the traditional Japanese wrestling or sumo. Fans include foreigners and Japanese alike, and tickets to the major tournaments held throughout the year are hard to find. Local television broadcasts both baseball and sumo events. Other popular spectator sports include soccer, rugby, gymnastics, swimming and diving competitions, and the Japanese martial arts exhibitions and matches. In addition to judo and karate, the arts include kendo (fencing with bamboo swords), Aikido (self-defense emphasizing physical conditioning and mind over matter), and Japanese longbow archery. You can study any of the martial arts in Tokyo under the most famous instructors. Judo instructions are available to Mission employees on the compound.

Golf is very popular in Japan. The courses are excellent and playable year round. Public courses are relatively few, and membership in the private Japanese clubs is prohibitively expensive. The military has three 18-hole golf courses at Tama, Zama, and Atsugi, all from 1 to 1-1/2 hours' drive from downtown Tokyo. Membership is open to all Mission employees and their families, and dues are reasonable. Non-members can play by paying a nominal greens fee.

Golfers bringing a letter certifying their handicap at a previous golf club will be considered by the handicap committee for an "in-Japan" handicap.

The city has few public tennis and badminton courts. Private clubs have long waiting lists and are expensive.

Many Japanese recreational centers and clubs feature table tennis.

The major hotels have swimming pools and clubs; memberships are available but costs are relatively high. In the complex of the Olympic sports facilities are two Olympic-sized pools and a high diving area open to the public. The New Sanno Hotel has an outdoor pool.

Beaches and water in the Tokyo area are polluted. However, nice but crowded beaches are located along the coast south of Tokyo near Kamakura on the Miura Peninsula, on the picturesque Izu Peninsula about 80 miles from Tokyo, and the eastern coast of the Chiba Peninsula about 60 miles from Tokyo. These areas abound in picturesque fishing villages and dramatic scenery.

The Tokyo YMCA has a basketball court, swimming pool, and facilities for volleyball and gymnastics. Also, Tokyo's Olympic Gymnasium facilities for these sports are open on a limited basis to the public. Bowling is popular in Japan, and Tokyo has many centers.

Several indoor ice skating rinks in the city are open year round and outdoor skating is popular on lakes and rinks outside Tokyo during winter.

The mountain resort areas of Nikko and Hakone have facilities for sailing and water-skiing. Commercial marinas, like Enoshima on Sagami Bay, rent sailboats. Skiing is excellent in Japan. Many ski areas are to the north and northwest of Tokyo (3-6 hours by train), with areas for beginners and experts. Accommodations range from luxurious lodges to skier dormitories. Equipment can be rented, but large ski boots are difficult to find.

Mountain climbing is also popular; you can join several hiking clubs. Good hiking over mountain trails is within 2 hours by train from Tokyo.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Japan's rugged and beautiful terrain offers a great deal to outdoor enthusiasts. Most scenic areas,

including nearby Nikko and Mt. Fuji, have been incorporated into an extensive national park system. Hiking trails and good camping facilities abound. Hundreds of low-priced hostels exist, many in isolated places. The hostels are open to people of all ages, single or married.

Much of Japan is easily accessible from Tokyo on Japan's excellent rail transportation system. The historic Kyoto-Nara area, with its hundreds of shrines and their typical Japanese gardens, can be reached by Shinkansen (super express trains) in about 3 hours. Shinkansen to Kyushu, southern Japan, takes about 7 hours. Northern Japan is a day's journey by train. Domestic airlines will take you to most major cities in Honshu, Shikoku, Hokkaido, and Kyushu or Okinawa within a few hours. Travel by air, rail and car tends to be expensive.

Within hours by car or rail from Tokyo are the many hot-spring mountain resorts of the Hakone Range near Mt. Fuji, beautiful Nikko National Park with its famous shrines of the Tokugawa Shoguns; and northwest of Tokyo, Nagano Prefecture, popular winter sports center. These resort areas offer excellent recreational facilities and fine Western and Japanese-style hotels.

Shimoda, at the tip of the Izu Peninsula (about 3 hours from Tokyo by express train), is of historic interest as the site of the first American Consulate in Japan, opened by Townsend Harris in 1856.

Nearby Tokyo is Kamakura, which is also of great historical interest with its many 12th- and 13th-century shrines and temples and the famed Great Buddha. Added incentives to travel are the many colorful festivals that take place throughout Japan, especially during the summer. Timing a trip to coincide with a festival or witnessing some of the many festivals held in Tokyo can add greatly to your experience.

In all the major cities and many of the others are Western-style hotels

with facilities ranging from acceptable to adequate. A stay in a Japanese-style inn or Ryokan can be most interesting. Ryokans are usually more expensive than firstclass Western-style hotels, but the attentive service given guests is almost unequaled anywhere in the world. The guest must be prepared, however, to sleep on tatami mats and eat Japanese food.

Entertainment

Tokyo is one of the entertainment capitals of the world. It offers an infinite variety of nightlife from the most deluxe and expensive clubs and spectacular music hall revues to jazz coffeehouses and working-class restaurants. Restaurants are everywhere. Hardly a street in the city does not have at least one Japanese restaurant specializing in tempura (shrimp, fish, and various vegetables deep fried in oil), sushi (raw fish or shrimp in a small rice mold wrapped in a special kind of seaweed), and sukiyaki, perhaps the best known Japanese food among foreigners. Many nice restaurants feature international cuisine or regional specialties (Chinese, French, American, Russian, Italian, Korean, or Spanish). Tokyo also has a variety of fast-food chains, both Japanese and such American favorites as McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Shakey's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Pizza Hut. Recent casual restaurant additions include Outback Steakhouse and TGI Friday's. Prices in the restaurants range from moderate to extremely expensive. One of the best ways to sample the restaurants in Tokyo is at lunchtime when a meal costs half as much when served in the evening.

Tokyo is the center of the Kabuki and Noh theaters. Two major theaters in Tokyo present Kabuki, and usually at least two productions are playing at any one time. Several productions of Noh and the classical Japanese comedy, Kyogen, are shown every week. The famous Bunraku Puppet Theater of Osaka visits Tokyo regularly.

Tokyo has nine symphony orchestras that perform year round, several ballet and opera companies, and many chamber groups and individual artists. With these choices, and with the constant stream of visiting foreign orchestras, ballet and opera companies, and individual artists, it has become one of the world's music centers. However, ticket prices are expensive.

Tokyo Weekender and Tokyo Classified, periodic publications especially for foreign residents or tourists in the city, present useful information on what is happening in music and the theater in Tokyo and describes various events going on throughout Japan.

Tokyo is also the center of Japan's contemporary art life. Several museums have fine collections of Japanese and Western arts, and innumerable small galleries present showings of Japanese and foreign artists. The major department stores often sponsor art exhibitions. The Tokyo Museum of Modern Art each year has several large foreign exhibitions of international significance.

The Western Theater in Tokyo attracts much interest and activity. Most foreign plays are translated and presented in Japanese. The Tokyo International Players, an international English-language amateur group, produces several plays and readings during their October-May season. American and other foreign movies, shown with Japanese subtitles, are quite popular in Tokyo. They are, however, expensive. The English-language press carries detailed schedules. American movies are shown on Sunday afternoons and evenings at the New Sanno Hotel.

Photography is a popular hobby for both still and video enthusiasts. The Japanese are avid picture takers, and most foreigners follow suit. Excellent Japanese cameras and accessories are sold at the exchanges at reasonable prices. American film is sold locally and at

the exchanges, although Japanese film is also of high quality.

Social Activities

The Tokyo American Club is a large, long-established club to which many in the business community belong. It has a restaurant and swimming pool. Fees are prohibitive.

The New Sanno Hotel, open to US Government civilian employees, has three restaurants and a snack bar, a cocktail lounge, a swimming pool, and offers dancing, night-club shows, special events, and movies.

Social life is comparable to the social life enjoyed in most large U.S. cities. Acquaintances and friends are developed through contacts in the office, at clubs, churches, and through friends.

Although opportunities are numerous for making Japanese friends in Tokyo, it does require a positive effort in most cases. This is partly explained by the size of the city, the language barrier, and differences in cultural background and personality between Westerners and Japanese. Although the Japanese are not surprised when Westerners remain aloof in the foreign colony, they are delighted when a foreigner makes an effort to learn about their way of life, e.g., by studying their various art forms, by traveling Japanese-style, etc. One good way to make daily contact with the Japanese more meaningful is to learn some of the language and customs. In addition, a great number of organizations and activities bring people together for both business and pleasure, such as the American Chamber of Commerce, the Japan-America Society, the Royal Asiatic Society, the International House, international friendship clubs, and the Japanese alumni associations of many American colleges and universities. Many organizations directed either toward community welfare or cultural exchange provide excellent opportunities to meet both Japanese women and women of other nationalities, i.e., the College Women's Association of Japan,

the Japan-American Women's Club, the International Ladies Benevolent Society, the International Social Service, and the Tokyo - Washington Women's Club. The latter club meets several times a year and offers monthly or biweekly meetings of various small interest groups such as golf, bridge, chorus, ink painting, flower arranging, and doll making.

Classes in Japanese arts and crafts are also readily available throughout the city and serve both to broaden your circle of friends and your knowledge of the culture of Japan. These classes are not offered solely for foreigners, since the formal study of various aspects of Japanese culture has traditionally been popular for Japanese as well.

An excellent way to make Japanese friends is to offer classes in English conversation. These classes are not difficult to arrange. Another way to make Japanese friends is to participate in the American Orientation Program sponsored by the Fulbright Commission for Japanese scholarship students going to the U.S. to study.

Yokohama

Yokohama is Japan's second largest city, with a population of 3.3 million, and is part of the Kanto metropolitan area centered near Tokyo. Yokohama was one of the first Japanese ports to open to Western trade, and today is one of the world's busiest shipping ports, with a cosmopolitan flavor and a large international population. Despite being a large, industrial city, Yokohama retains a pleasant atmosphere and is relatively close to a number of sightseeing and recreation areas, such as the ancient capital of Kamakura, the hot spring resorts at Hakone, and Mount Fuji.

Yokohama's climate is essentially the same as Tokyo's, with hot, humid summers and mild winters.

The United States Foreign Service Institute has a field school in Yokohama, established to provide lan-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission

City street in Kyoto

guage and area-studies training. The center is in a converted residence (the former American Consulate) on the Bluff, a ridge overlooking the harbor and the city, about a five-minute walk from Harbor View Park and the Foreign Cemetery.

The school's neighborhood, called Yamate. It features several parks and historic sites related to the opening of the port to foreign trade and the early foreign community in Yokohama. This neighborhood hosts a commercial center with a wide variety of stores, restaurants and entertainment.

Japanese Language and Area Training Center

FSI Yokohama is an overseas field school of the State Department's Foreign Service Institute, offering intensive, full-time language instruction to U.S. Government

civilian and military officials, their spouses, and in some cases diplomats from third countries.

FSI Yokohama's excellent teaching staff is small but highly experienced. The faculty has created many texts and reference materials in-house, and continues to innovate in both teaching methods and course content. In recent years, the school has adopted a number of computer-based interactive teaching materials. Instructors can help students in finding opportunities to use Japanese outside the classroom as well, through local sport or hobby groups, travel and language exchanges. The school has a library of language texts and reference works, books in English about Japan, Japanese literature in the original and in translation, and videotapes in Japanese.

Taking advantage of its location in country, the school arranges frequent field trips to places of interest to students for their ultimate assignments in Japan. These may include government offices, political party conventions, newspapers and TV stations, Japan Self-Defense Force facilities, factories or museums. The class may take overnight field trips out of town to experience some of the variety of Japanese society, particularly the more traditional culture found in rural areas. Many students also do a week-long practicum, working on a volunteer basis in a Japanese business or institution to gain experience in practical use of the language and in social interaction. A series of guest lectures, in both English and Japanese, offers further insights into Japan's politics, economy and society.

Other, optional events, such as attending a sumo match or traditional Japanese theater, are open to students' families as well.

Food

Local grocery stores, however, are more convenient and have a better selection of fresh foods such as produce, meat, fish, and baked goods. Local stores also carry premium imported items such as cheeses and wines, but at high prices.

The Honmoku area offers a number of Japanese- and Western-style restaurants, including several family restaurants. Farther afield, you can find restaurants serving just about any kind of cuisine in and around downtown Yokohama.

Clothing

Japanese clothing prices vary from near U.S. prices to much higher, depending on the item and outlet, and larger sizes may be hard to find.

Supplies and Services

Most things are usually found nearby, although it sometimes takes more of a search than in the U. S., and prices may be higher. Yokohama has a growing number of large U.S. specialty retailers (e.g., Toys R Us, Sports Authority) within a 30-minute drive from student housing, although the selection of goods differs somewhat from the same stores in the US.

Services such as drycleaning, hair styling, and photo developing available.

Phone service is good but expensive. Pre-paid phone cards, however, offer calls to the U.S. for as little as 15¢ per minute. Home e-mail and Internet service is available at a cost, and quality is comparable to that in the U.S. In Japan, however, even local calls are metered, so extended Internet use will result in a high phone bill. Cell phones are available locally at reasonable rates.

Religious Activities

In addition to numerous Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, the

neighborhoods are home to several Catholic and Protestant churches. Most of the churches serve international congregations and offer services in English.

Education

Children in kindergarten through sixth grade usually attend the R. E. Byrd DODDS Elementary School at the Negishi Housing Area (PSC 472 Box 12, FPO AP 96348-0005). It is a small school, less than 200 students total, in a modern facility on a quiet residential street.

Middle and high school students usually attend St. Maur International School (83 Yamate-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama 231-8654 Japan, www.stmaur.ac.jp) or Yokohama International School (258 Yamate-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama 2310862 Japan, www.yis.ac.jp). Both are coeducational day schools, and both are about a 30-minute walk from the student housing area. St. Maur is operated by the Sisters of the Infant Jesus, a Catholic order, and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. YIS is an independent nonsectarian school, and is accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Schools.

Both the international schools include kindergarten and elementary grades as well. There are several pre-kindergarten options, but most are fairly expensive. The Byrd School offers one year of pre-kindergarten, but class size is limited and space might not be available for children of non-DOD families. The two international schools offer pre-school classes, and some families have sent children to local Japanese pre-schools.

The Yokohama area offers a wealth of opportunities for instruction in both traditional Japanese and Western arts, crafts, music, drama, and sports. Many of these classes can be found within walking distance of student housing. Extension programs of U.S. universities are offered on the larger military bases, but long commutes make participa-

tion difficult for those living in Yokohama.

Recreation and Social Life

The Yamate neighborhood offers good routes for walking, jogging, or bicycling. Neighborhood playgrounds are within a block or two of all student housing. A municipal sports center has a weight room, basketball and volleyball courts, and classes for martial arts and other sports, usually for a small per-visit fee. A public park has an outdoor pool open in summer with a reasonable entry fee.

A commercial sports club offers year-round swimming as well as a weight room, aerobics classes and other facilities. Rates are around ¥6,000 to ¥10,000 per month, depending on the hours and days of use. The Yokohama Country and Athletic Club offers more extensive indoor and outdoor sports facilities, but membership fees are high.

The Negishi housing area has a library which has a large selection of English-language books for children and adults. Yokohama boasts a wide variety of museums, concert halls, theaters, and cinemas. Cinemas are much more expensive than in the U.S., but video rentals are close to American prices. American movies are often available in English with Japanese subtitles.

Yokohama in general and the area around FSI in particular have a large international population, and local Japanese residents tend to be very open to foreigners. Most students and family members, even those who speak little or no Japanese, have few problems making friends.

Ōsaka & Kōbe

One of the world's greatest commercial cities, Osaka sits at the center of the Kansai region, Japan's traditional heartland and its second largest economic center. It is Japan's third largest city with a population of nearly 3 million. From the 3rd century A.D., Osaka (then called



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Waterfront of Kobe, Japan

Naniwa), with its bay and magnificent river system, has been the hub of inland traffic for the Kansai region and the center of Japanese trade. Over the past 3 decades, Osaka has lost its position as Japan's premier commercial and industrial city to Tokyo. But Osaka and the Kansai region still rank as one of the most important economic regions in the world, and its economic output exceeds that of most European countries and equals that of Canada. Osaka is home to many of Japan's most famous companies, including Matsushita (Panasonic), Sharp, Sanyo, Suntory and Minolta. The approximately 85,000 manufacturing enterprises in Osaka prefecture alone employ nearly 1 million people and produce over \$220 billion worth of good annually.

Thirty minutes to the west of Osaka is the cosmopolitan port city of **Kobe**, noted for its foreign influence. Another major city Hiroshima, site of the first atomic bombing and the headquarters of the Japanese

car maker, Mazda, now one-third owned by Ford Motor Company.

Kōbe lies on a narrow strip of land along the famous Inland Sea. It faces an excellent harbor on the south and is bordered by the steep, pine-clad Rokko Mountains on the north. The altitude ranges from sea level to some 600 feet within Kōbe proper, and rises abruptly to 3,000 feet in the mountains behind the city. In the bay is Port Island, the world's largest man-made island.

An industrial city and one of the busiest ports in the world, Kōbe is a cosmopolitan city noted for its foreign influence. In recent years, coastal reclamation has enlarged the industrial and port areas. Manufacturing centers around shipbuilding, steel, textiles, and electronics.

One of the first seaports to be opened to foreign settlement more than a century ago (1868), Kōbe remains a highly cosmopolitan city.

The population of 1.4 million includes an international community of Koreans, Chinese, Indians, French, British, Germans, and Americans. Over 1,000 Americans live in Kōbe, many of whom commute to work in Ōsaka.

Western-style hotels, modern trade shows on Port Island, restaurants serving international cuisine, and colorful festivals add to the city's unique atmosphere. Parks and gardens accentuate the natural beauty of Kōbe, particularly during azalea time in May and the blooming of the chrysanthemums in late autumn. Some of the Western-style houses built more than a century ago in Kitano, the old foreign district, are open for walking tours.

Between Kōbe and Ōsaka is Takarazuka. It is the site of a popular hot-spring resort and family amusement park.

Utilities

No shortages of or problems with electricity, gas, or water occur in Japan, absent an event like the Kobe Earthquake in January 1995. Telephone service is excellent, and direct dialing is available for international calls. Electricity in the Osaka area is 100 volts/60 cycles.

Typical Japanese outlets accommodate a plug with two, equally-sized flat prongs.

Food

The local market is filled with fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs, breads, meats, fish, and dairy products, and its use requires no more sanitary caution than one would apply in the U.S. All of these items are expensive. Many stores in Kobe also carry foreign-brand foodstuffs, albeit at higher prices than in the U.S. or the country of origin. A local buyer's club also permits the purchase of international foods.

Osaka is known as a "kuidaore" (food-loving) city. Both Western-style and Japanese restaurants are abundant.

These range from affordable shops and sushi bars to exclusive, members-only establishments.

There is the opportunity to experience a broad range of the dining spectrum.

Clothing

Fashion tastes in Japan increasingly are influenced by American trends, but Japanese-particularly in this area-tend to be fashion-conscious in a conservative way. Americans who dress similarly will be well received. Clothing and shoes purchased locally are expensive, and size also presents a problem.

Supplies and Services

Almost everything is available in Japan, but prices range from high to exorbitant. If you favor certain brands or need special medicines or a regular supply of some item (e.g., contact lens cleaner, toiletries, or hot cooking sauce), it may be better

and cheaper to ship them from the U.S.

Laundry and drycleaning services are excellent, as are barber and beauty shops. Women's hair coloring may not match colors available in the U.S., so bringing samples may help. Repair facilities for American-made appliances and automobiles are often inadequate; repairs for Japanese products are adequate and easily available but expensive.

Domestic Help

Domestic help is hard to find, and wages are high. Day help can be obtained from an agency, but at nearly \$300 per day. Live-in cook/servants charge about \$1,800 a month, plus a month's bonus twice a year. Employees must also provide plane fare to the home country once per year.

Religious Activities

English-language services for followers of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths are held in Kobe. Catholic and Anglican/Episcopal Churches, with Japanese-language services, are 10 minutes away in Nishinomiya.

Education

English-speaking students have a choice of four schools in the Osaka and Kobe areas.

Canadian Academy, a coeducational facility founded in 1913, teaches kindergarten through high school and also offers boarding facilities for boys and girls grades 7-12. The curriculum is based on the typical college preparatory system in the U.S. The school has an extensive array of extracurricular activities. The language of instruction in all subjects is English. Address: Koyo-cho Naka 4chome, Higashinada-ku, Kobe, 658-0032, Telephone +81 (78) 857-0100, Fax +81 (78) 857-3250.

Osaka International School, founded in 1992, also offers a wide curricula and a number of extracurricular activities with a college preparatory emphasis. A school bus for all ages can be taken from near the housing compound. Address: 4-16,

Onohara Nishi 4-chome, Mino-shi, Osaka 562-0032, Telephone +81 (727) 27-5050, Fax +81 (727) 27-5055.

Marist Brothers International School, for boys and girls from kindergarten through grade 12, was founded in 1951 and is located in western Kobe. The curriculum is based on the U.S. college preparatory system. The language of instruction in all subjects is English. Children can go from Nishinomiya (east of Kobe) to Marist by public transportation: Address: 2-1, Chimori-cho 1-chome, Suma-ku, Kobe 654-0072, Telephone +81 (78) 732-6266, Fax +81 (78) 7326268.

St. Michael's International School, a primary school for boys and girls, is an Episcopal school for children of all nationalities and faiths. It is built on the site of the old English Mission School in the center of Kobe. A school bus stop is available about 2 kilometers away from the compound. Address: 17-2 Nakayamate dori 3-chome, Chuoku, Kobe 650-0004, Telephone +81 (78) 2318885, Fax +81 (78) 231-8899.

A number of Japanese nursery schools accept foreign children. In Kyoto, the Kyoto International School, for boys and girls in grades 1 through 8, serves a diverse foreign community of a number of nationalities. Most of the parents are teachers, research scholars, artists, or missionaries. Address: 317 Kitatawara-cho, Naka-dachiuri Sagaru, Yoshiyamachi-dori, Kamigyoku, Kyoto 602-8247, Telephone +81 (75) 451-1022, Fax +81 (75) 451-1023.

Special Educational Opportunities

Many Americans here enjoy classes and tutoring in traditional Japanese art forms such as flower arranging, cooking, dancing, pottery making, music, brush painting, and calligraphy, as well as in Japanese sports such as judo, kendo, karate, and aikido. Prices for lessons, however, are typically high.

Sports

Sports facilities are available, but are more crowded and expensive than in the U.S.

A number of pools, tennis courts, and health clubs in the area are open on either a membership or a pay-as-you-go basis. Typical costs are a one-time membership fee of about \$100, and about \$100 a month thereafter.

Public golf courses and driving ranges are crowded and rather expensive. Private golf clubs are numerous but beyond the financial reach of most U.S. visitors. However, occasionally invitations are sent to play in golf tournaments organized by the Japan-America societies and other American-affiliated groups.

Excellent beaches are a few hours' drive or a ferry ride away from Kobe. The Osaka-Kobe area has numerous bowling alleys and roller and ice skating rinks. Winter skiing areas are located a 2-hour train ride or 3-hour car ride away. The Rokko Mountain National Park in Kobe has extensive hiking trails, and a smaller mountain hiking area is a 10-minute walk from the Nishinomiya compound.

Zoos, aquariums, amusement parks, and museums of all types are available for family outings.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Local festivals are held in the consular district throughout the year. Public and private museums regularly feature special exhibits. Department stores also sponsor fairs showcasing food items and crafts from different Japanese prefectures. Kyoto is an international cultural treasure and a popular touring destination. Shops in Kyoto and elsewhere are well-stocked with wood block prints, china, porcelain, scrolls, screens, etc. Its centuries-old festivals and innumerable temples and shrines bring visitors back again and again.

Nearby Nara was founded in A.D. 710 and contains some of the oldest

and most famous art treasures in Japan, including the Great Buddha of the Todaiji Temple, housed in the world's largest wooden building. Hundreds of tame deer freely roam Nara Park and are very popular with children.

To the west of Kobe is Himeji, site of the most spectacular castle in Japan. It has been the site of many Japanese samurai movies, including the American TV program, "Shogun." To the west and south lies the Inland Sea, whose quiet shores and scenic islands are within easy reach of the compound by bridge and ferry.

Two of Japan's most famous scenic spots are in the consular district: Amanohashidate on the Japan Sea and Miyajima Shrine near Hiroshima. Also in Hiroshima is the Peace Park and Museum. See also Tokyo, Touring and Outdoor Activities.

Entertainment

Movie houses throughout Osaka and Kobe show first-run American and foreign films, while at prices two to three times higher than in the U.S. Auditoriums in Kobe and Osaka offer concerts by world-famous classical and popular artists as well as symphony orchestras, ballet, and opera. Osaka is also the home of Bunraku, the famous traditional Japanese puppet theater, and Kabuki and Noh performances are also presented. The spring tournament of sumo, the historical sport popular among foreigners and Japanese alike, is held annually in Osaka. A unique all-girl troupe in Takarazuka, a 30-minute train ride from the compound, performs Western-style musicals on a constantly changing bill.

Social Activities

Most Americans entertain in their homes. Kobe and Osaka have many nightclubs and restaurants suitable for entertainment in a variety of price ranges. The Kansai Chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) maintains an office in Osaka and meets periodically for luncheons and dinners in Osaka and Kobe. The George Wash-

ington Society, a gathering of American residents in the Kansai, celebrates George Washington's birthday with a formal ball and the Fourth of July with a picnic.

Japanese enjoy Western entertainment and accept invitations to American homes. Both formal and informal contacts between Americans and Japanese are extensive. The Japan-America Societies in Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto, and Hiroshima sponsor a variety of lectures, luncheons, and parties that offer an excellent opportunity to establish friendships. The Japan-America Women of the Kansai (JAWK) meets bimonthly and organizes a number of programs to increase friendship and understanding between women of the two countries as well as to raise money for charitable organizations. Rotary International, Lions International, and the Jaycees have chapters in almost every city and like to meet with official Americans. Japanese-American sister city affiliation committees promote a number of exchanges. The Kobe Women's Club meets weekly from September to May for art programs, excursions, bridge, and other activities. Twenty-three official and 45 honorary consulates general and consulates are in the Osaka-Kobe area, as are foreign business representatives of all nationalities.

Kyōto

Kyōto is about an hour's drive from Osaka over an excellent highway, and is one of the world's most famous and beautiful cities. It was the capital of Japan from 794 (when it was called Hei-an-kyo) until 1868 and, although it was superseded as the administrative seat of government for brief periods during those years, it remained the ceremonial capital. And since Kyōto was spared the bombs of World War II, it is the city richest in historical remains and cultural assets in Japan.

Modeled after the ancient Chinese capital Ch'an An, and surrounded on three sides by forested mountains, Kyōto has long inspired scholars and artists. Its centu-

ries-old festivals and innumerable temples and shrines bring visitors back again and again. Nijo Castle, the residence of the first Tokugawa *shogun*; Kinkaku-ji, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion; the Shinto shrine with its lovely cherry-blossom gardens; and Gosho, the ancient imperial palace, are but a few of Kyōto's treasures. Japan's history is still very much alive in Kyōto today, but the charm of the cultural heritage is only one aspect of the city.

The visitor is aware of the old and new, which initially seem to contradict one another, but soon he realizes that ancient shrines and temples and quiet gardens and traditional handicrafts blend with the modern life of Kyōto in beautiful harmony. All of these contribute to the unique atmosphere of the city.

Many English books are available at local stores as a help to guide visitors through this fascinating city. Since Kyōto has been thriving primarily on the tourist industry, other industries are less important, except for electronics and silk-weaving.

Kyōto's population is 1.5 million.

Education

Kyōto International School, for boys and girls in pre-kindergarten through grade eight, serves a diverse foreign community of at least eight nationalities. Most of the parents are teachers, research scholars, artists, or missionaries. An American/British curriculum is followed.

Recreation

Sports facilities are available but very crowded and expensive.

Public golf courses in the Ōsaka-Kōbe district are crowded and expensive, and private clubs are even more costly. Tennis, health clubs, and swimming are available, as are playing fields for soccer, rugby, and field hockey. Social clubs have been organized by members of the foreign community, but membership fees are quite high.

Excellent, but crowded, beaches are only a few hours away. Boating and water-skiing enthusiasts find many opportunities to enjoy their sports. The area has numerous bowling alleys and roller and ice skating rinks. In the winter, skiing areas are two hours away by train. Also, there are limitless hiking trails in the Rokko Mountain National Park.

Zoos, an aquarium, amusement parks, and many different types of museums are found in this area.

In the district is Nara, center of the nation's spiritual heritage and the ancient capital of the earliest known Japanese dynasty. Founded in the year 710, it contains some of the oldest and most famous art treasures in the country, including the Great Buddha of the Todaiji Temple, housed in the world's largest wooden building. The massive five-story pagoda of Kofuku-ji and some beautiful Buddhist shrines and statues can also be visited. Hundreds of tame deer freely roam Nara Park.

Two of Japan's most famous scenic spots are also in this area: Amanohashidate on the Japan Sea and Miyajima near Hiroshima.

Souvenir and curio hunting is a popular diversion, and shops in these three cities are well stocked with woodblock prints, china, porcelain, scrolls, screens, and the like.

Many movie houses show first-run American and foreign films. Fine auditoriums offer concerts and recitals by world-famous artists; the Ōsaka music festivals are held three weeks annually in a splendid 3,000-seat auditorium. Ōsaka is also the home of *Bunraku*, the traditional Japanese puppet theater. Legitimate stage productions in English are few, but a unique all-girl troupe in Takarazuka performs Western-style musicals on a constantly changing bill. Theatergoers enjoy *Kabuki* and *Noh* plays as well as other forms of traditional Japanese theater. A *sumo* (Japanese wrestling) tournament is held every spring.

Since nightclubs are quite expensive, most Americans in the area entertain in their homes. The Japanese happily accept such invitations.

Rotary, Lions International, and the Jaycees have chapters in almost every city in Japan, and are active in the Ōsaka-Kōbe area. Also represented are Japan-America societies, the Japan-America Women of the Kansai, the YMCA and YWCA, the Kōbe Women's Club, and the Japan League of Women Voters.

Nagoya

Nagoya City is the capital of Aichi Prefecture and center of commerce, industry, and culture in central Japan (the Chubu Region). The city has over 2 million people, ranking fourth in population among Japan's cities. It is located between Tokyo and Osaka and sits astride Japan's major east-west highway and railway systems.

Nagoya and the surrounding region make up an industrial powerhouse. Economic activity in this region is such that even if separated from the rest of Japan, it would still have one of the world's largest economies. This is the center of Japan's automobile and auto parts industries. The country's largest carmaker, Toyota Motor Corporation, has its headquarters and virtually all of its Japan operations in Aichi and other car and truck manufacturers are either headquartered or have plant facilities in the region. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Kawasaki Heavy Industries, along with other aerospace companies, are located in or near Nagoya.

Other industries, ranging from machine tools to fine ceramics, are located here and form part of the Chubu Region's vast economic base. Some of this manufacturing output is exported out of the Port of Nagoya, the busiest in export volume of all of the country's ports. Nagoya Bay is large enough to accommodate some of the world's largest ships; every year, about 38,000 ships enter the bay to dock at

Nagoya's port. In 1999, foreign trade volume in and out of all of the regional air and maritime ports was almost \$142 billion.

Nagoya and its residents have long been associated with commerce and merchandising. Located along the historical transportation routes between eastern and western Japan (e.g., between Edo, or Tokyo, and Osaka), the town prospered from its trade with both regions. Among the important early regional industries were textiles, steel-making, and ceramics, traditional economic activities whose imprint is still evident today. The first of Japan's Tokugawa shoguns, Tokugawa Ieyasu (who was from the area of Nagoya), recognized the town's strategic importance in the early 17th century and built an imposing castle in its center. Ruled over first by one of his sons and then by other Tokugawa successors, Nagoya grew both in economic and political importance during the long, and virtually warfare-free, Tokugawa era. Over time, the city and the surrounding area became the commercial and industrial hub that it remains today. The castle built by the shogun, leveled along with the rest of the city during World War II, was rebuilt and remains the premier landmark in and symbol of the city.

Regional civic and business leaders are pushing ahead with several large scale 21st century projects in and around Nagoya. Already in place is a giant new commercial development, JR Central Towers, which opened in downtown Nagoya over the city's main train terminal in March 2000. The year 2005 looms large both as the deadline for completion of the new Central Japan International Airport and as the year the region will host the 2005 World Exposition. The airport is a \$7.2 billion project to be built on landfill in Ise Bay about 35 kilometers south of Nagoya. Plans for the World Exposition (EXPO 2005) have been scaled back from the original conception but the project is still an enormous undertaking with a projected investment of about \$1.4 bil-

lion by the Japanese government, local governments, and the private sector. The estimated number of visitors to the March through September EXPO is upwards of 18 million. The EXPO, which will have an environment based theme, will be held on existing parkland near a forested area adjacent to Nagoya. There are also several huge highway and railway construction projects planned for the region. The most heavily trafficked highways between Nagoya and Tokyo (the "Tomei") and between Nagoya and Osaka (the "Meishin") both have new partner routes planned for construction early in this century. In addition, Nagoya-based Central Japan Railways is going ahead with development of the "Linear Chuo Shinkansen," a futuristic "maglev" (magnetic levitation) train that could run at speeds as high as 500 kilometers per hour, connecting Tokyo and Nagoya in 40 minutes.

Utilities

Electricity in Nagoya is 100v, 60 cycles, so many U.S.-made electric appliances can be used without adjustment. However, televisions, radios, VCRs, and clocks intended for use in the U.S. will not work well in this area because of frequency and/or timing problems. A VCR, for instance, might work for playback only but not record well because the timing would be askew. Electric sockets are compatible with regular two-prong, U.S. plugs, but three-prong sockets with grounding are rare.

Food and Clothing

Shopping for groceries and other goods in Japan follows a simple rule of thumb: you can get most anything you want if you are willing to pay for it.

Nagoya, like all large Japanese cities, has world-class department stores, specialty food shops selling an ample selection of imported goods, wine and liquor stores, and fashionable boutiques. Those are all predictably expensive. But Nagoya also offers less costly shops that may be in less convenient locations or provide a somewhat lower stan-

dard of packaging or presentation but still offer high-quality goods. Also, large, lower-cost, high-volume retailers, American stores among them, are increasingly in evidence in the Nagoya area and these firms are adding to the variety of goods sold and increasing price competition.

Recreation & Entertainment

Nagoya provides an especially strong encounter with the Japanese and their way of life. Contacts in and around Nagoya are less likely to speak English, so Japanese language skills are going to be tested every day. Local and regional news, whether on television or radio or in the regional newspaper, is going to be in Japanese, further testing language skills.

Among the best features of life in Nagoya are the city's own cultural attractions, its location in the midst of some of Japan's greatest historic sites, and its natural setting with both seacoast and mountains nearby. Few of the ancient temples and shrines that once dotted the city exist any longer but those that do, such as Atsuta Shrine, are well worth a visit.

Tokugawa Ieyasu, who had such an important role in the city's history and his descendants are featured in the Tokugawa Museum, a splendid collection of weapons, armor, artworks, and other artifacts from that era in Japanese history. Tokugawa's castle, restored in the 1950s, is a great structure that visitors can enter and explore inside. The Nagoya Boston Museum has an impressive collection of treasures from ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome along with more modern works of art on display; the works are on long-term loan from the Boston Museum.

The new Aichi Performing Arts Center is a huge complex with a concert hall, theaters, and museum space. The city also has numerous parks, among which is Higashiyama Koen, with a beautiful Japanese garden as well as a great zoo.



Fountain in Nagasaki's Peace Park

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Using Nagoya as a base, some of Japan's greatest historic sites are within easy reach. Kyoto, for instance, is about an hour and a half away by car and 45 minutes away by train, a fairly easy day trip. Ise Shrine in Mie Prefecture, among the best-known and most beautiful of Japan's shrines, can also be reached in less than 2 hours. Takayama in Gifu Prefecture, where an ancient part of city remains intact and where traditional Japanese craft-making is still preserved, is probably too far for a day trip but can easily be visited in a weekend. There are also old post towns set in the mountains that are around Nagoya to the north and west. The mountains are an attraction themselves; some of Japan's tallest peaks are not far from Nagoya, making hiking and skiing easy to do for those posted here. If you want to ski, bring your boots, clothes, and other equipment; there

are plenty of ski slopes in the nearby mountains.

Nagoya has a well-deserved reputation for being very hot and humid in the summer. Winters are cool to cold, but are milder with each passing year. These days it snows only rarely, perhaps one snowfall in Nagoya itself each winter.

Education

Nagoya's only English-speaking school is the Nagoya International School (NIS), which offers a U.S.-based education program. The school has over 300 students in kindergarten through grade 12 college preparatory curriculum. The post educational allowance covers tuition and some other educational expenses. NIS is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. A large proportion

of the faculty has advanced degrees. Facilities dating back from the later 60s and early 70s are well-maintained. A new gymnasium and arts center was dedicated in 1999. The school's location is about 30 minutes from the eastern part of the city where the principal officer lives and about 45 minutes from the more central area where the two other American officers have their homes. Both areas are served by buses operated by the school. The principal officer serves as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Special Information

Nagoya has a number of quality hospitals with English-speaking personnel. There are a number of U.S.-trained doctors and dentists who are well-acquainted with the Consulate and its staff and are very helpful. There are also English speaking druggists.

Hiroshima

Hiroshima is in the center of the National Park Inland Sea of Seto and is the largest city of West Honshū. As the target of the first atomic bomb on August 6, 1945, Hiroshima is known throughout the world. Ninety percent of the city was destroyed that day, and the estimated loss of life is as high as 200,000.

Hiroshima was rebuilt in the post-war years. Peace Memorial Park, with the Cenotaph, Atomic Dome, and Peace Memorial Museum, draws thousands of visitors annually; the park was created in a section of the city which had been gutted by the atomic explosion. Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island, one of the three most scenic views in Japan, is 14 miles west of Hiroshima.

Prominent among local enterprises are the automotive industry, represented by Toyo Kogyo K.K., Japan's third largest car manufacturer; and the shipbuilding companies of Mitsubishi Heavy Industry, Ltd., and Hitachi Engineering Co., Ltd.

The current population of Hiroshima is over one million.

Education

Hiroshima International School, located in a suburban/rural area, offers coeducational classes for kindergarten through grade eight. The school was organized in 1962 by business people, missionaries, and families attached to the Hiroshima Radiation Effects Research Foundation (U.S.-sponsored).

International's curriculum is based on U.S. and British educational systems; all students receive instruction in Japanese, and other languages are also taught (including English as a foreign language).

Fukuoka

Fukuoka City, capital of Fukuoka Prefecture, is the cultural, economic, and educational center of Kyushu Island with a population of

1.3 million people. The city is the heart of the region's \$410 billion economy, which is larger than that of Australia and almost equal that of South Korea. The Island encompasses 10% of Japan's GNP and the region represents Japan's fourth economic center behind the Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya region. In addition, the region boasts an economic growth rate above the national average and increasing integration into the regional Asian economy. Already known as Japan's "Silicon Island" because of the semiconductor industry that accounts for over 30% of Japan's total chip output, Kyushu is also developing into a major car-manufacturing center. It will soon produce 10% of Japan's car output, based on roboticized state-of-the-art auto technology.

Fukuoka City also is the heart of the Island's dynamic hi-tech research and development, which is noted as a leading world center for research in advanced computer chips, nuclear fusion, and robotics. With its long tradition of openness to the outside world and receptivity to foreign ideas and products, Fukuoka City has developed into Japan's test market for fashion design and new products.

Culturally and politically, Fukuoka has led Kyushu's advancement in promoting some of the nation's most active sister-city programs and Japan-America Society activities. Fukuoka City's universities are highly active in expanding student and cultural exchanges, particularly with Asia. In addition, Fukuoka City's leading officials are exploring ways in which the City, region, and people may play a more constructive role in the development of the Asian-Pacific Region.

In this context, the Kyushu region is known as the "Gateway to Asia," maintaining close economic, cultural, and political ties with Japan's Asian neighbors. Fukuoka City has established the Asian Cultural Awards to honor contributions to the understanding of Asian culture and thought by both Western and Asian scholars. It has also initiated

an Asian-Pacific Mayors summit to encourage networking by local leaders in order to work cooperatively in developing solutions to common problems. The City has also established regular meetings with counterparts in Korea to promote understanding and cooperation. Reflecting Fukuoka City's increasing prominence in Asia, Asia Week, a weekly magazine published in Hong Kong named Fukuoka City the "Most Livable City in Asia" for the second time in 1999. Fukuoka also hosted the G-8 Finance ministers meeting in July 8, 2000, prior to the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit of G-8 meeting in Okinawa on July 21-23. The city hopes to become an important international economic, cultural, and political center in the future.

Few regions in Japan can match Kyushu's historic consciousness, and fewer yet have the deep sense of self identity and pride seen in the people of Kyushu. According to tradition, it is here that the Sun Goddess Amaterasu descended from heaven to establish the nation of Japan, and it is here where Japan's first emperor was born. Kyushu led Japan out of feudalism in 1868, and its local heroes have played major roles in shaping modern Japan.

The consular district-which contains over 15 million people comprises the seven prefectures of Kyushu Island and Yamaguchi Prefecture on the main island of Honshu. Other major cities in the district include Kitakyushu, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, and Kagoshima.

Two key US. military facilities, Sasebo Naval Base and the Marine Corps Air Station at Iwakuni, are located in the consular district. The foreign missions are also established in Fukuoka and the Kyushu region.

Utilities and Equipment

Electricity in Fukuoka is 100v, 60 cycles; AC (different from Tokyo's 50 cycles), so most U.S.-made electric appliances can generally be used without difficulty. Overseas calling

services are available, and are considerably cheaper than the Japanese long-distance carrier.

There are a number of FM radio stations in Fukuoka. These stations broadcast at a different frequency than those in the U.S., however, so a radio capable of receiving the Japanese FM band is required. Similarly, regional television channels broadcast at a different frequency.

Newer televisions allow automatic programming of channels. English on the sub-channel, including news programs. Cable TV is available at commercial rates at post. Video rental stores (VHS) are common in Fukuoka, but selection varies.

Food

American-type foods are available locally, and health and food product safety standards are comparable to those in the U.S. Fresh meat, seafood, fruits, and vegetables, as well as staples, packaged foods, and coffee are sold in Japanese markets, although at higher prices than in the U.S. Beef prices are exceptionally high by American standards.

Baby food is available but difficult to find on the local economy. Good quality milk, butter, and margarine are available locally. A selection of cheeses from Europe, the U.S. and New Zealand are sold at Japanese outlets at higher than U.S. prices. Fruits and vegetables are more expensive than those in the U.S.; however, they are also fresher.

Clothing

As with other major cities in Japan, current American and European fashions are available at the larger department stores but at higher prices (for name labels, two to three times the U.S. price is the norm). Also, finding U.S. sizes is often a problem. Military exchanges offer some relief, but stocks are limited and trips to the bases are expensive and time consuming. Mail-order catalogs are a commonly used source of clothing.

Fukuoka's winters are usually mild (it usually snows one or two days

per year) although the proximity to the Korean Peninsula occasionally results in a sudden cold snap. Summers in Fukuoka are similar to those in Washington, hot and humid. Bring a four-season wardrobe. As with the rest of Japan, residents of Fukuoka dress conservatively.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, cosmetics, tobacco products, commonly used home medical supplies, and virtually all household supplies can be found in Japanese shops but at high prices. Cribs, playpens, strollers, diapers, and other products for babies are available but, again, are expensive locally.

Local shoe repair, dry cleaning, laundry, barbers and beauty shops are more expensive than in the US. Dealers representing the major U.S. automobile manufacturers have offices in Fukuoka. Nevertheless, parts for American and other foreign autos are expensive and harder to find. In terms of servicing and size, most employees choose to purchase a used Japanese car, which can be purchased at post.

Domestic Help

Cost of a full-time servant, including food and transportation, is about Y175,000 per month. Part-time domestic help costs Y10,000 daily, including transportation. It is also customary to pay semi-annual bonuses (June and December), that usually amount to a month's pay each time.

Religious Activities

Roman Catholic, Latter-day Saints, and Protestant churches (including Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal) in the city hold services in Japanese to which Americans are welcome. English-language Protestant and Roman Catholic services are also available. Fukuoka does not have a Jewish congregation.

Education

Founded in 1972, the Fukuoka International School (FIS) is a pri-

vate, coeducational day and boarding school that offers an educational program from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for English-speaking students of all nationalities. The school year comprises two semesters extending approximately from September 1 to June 18.

A Board of Directors and Board of Trustees govern the school. The school is a member of the Japan Council of Overseas Schools and the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools. A basic college preparatory U.S. curriculum is updated regularly to keep it current with trends in the U.S. as well as in other international schools in Japan. The curriculum includes English as a Second Language (ESL) program, Japanese-language classes, and computer classes. FIS is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The 2000-2001 school year consists of 1 headmaster, 18 full-time and 9 part-time staff members, including 11 American citizens, 8 host-country nationals, and 5 third-country nationals. Enrollment at the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year was 173 students. Korean, American, and Japanese are the largest nationalities represented at the international school, but British, Australian, Canadian and other nationals also are part of a very culturally diverse student community.

A new two-story physical plant with a gymnasium was constructed in 1990/91. A dormitory was built in the 1994/95 school year. The current facility consists of 11 classrooms, a science lab, a music room, a language laboratory, physics, science and computer rooms, an art room, an office, principal's room, a kitchen, a student lounge, and a 5,100 volume library. The dormitory provides rooms for 24 live-in students.

In the 2000-2001 school year, nearly all of the school's income was derived from regular day school tuition and registration fees. Annual tuition rates were as follows: pre-kindergarten: \$8,341; kindergarten-grade 6: \$9,082; grades 7-

8: \$9,916; and grades 9-12: \$10,658. There is a one-time registration fee of \$1,853 and annual facility fee, \$463. Unless special arrangements are made with the school's treasurer, tuition is payable at the beginning of each semester. (All fees are quoted in U.S. dollars-107/¥1.) Local business and government support for the Fukuoka International School is strong.

Fukuoka International School 18-50, Momochi 3-comme, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka, Japan 814-0006 Tel: 81-92-841-7601. Fax: 81-92-841-7602

Sports

For the avid jogger/runner there is Ohori Park, modeled after China's famed West Lake in Hangzhou. Ohori Park has a specially paved two-kilometer jogging path along with bicycle and walking paths along the scenic lake. Rowboats are available for rental on the lake from spring to autumn. There are numerous road races and marathons held year around in Fukuoka and Kyushu. The October Fukuoka City Marathon attracts a large number of participants of all ages from the region.

Bowling is popular in Fukuoka along with ice and in-line skating. Swimming is also a popular pastime, with numerous facilities around the city. Swimming lessons for children and adults are offered year around at reasonable prices at facilities. There is also a man-made beach facing Hakata Harbor. Hikers enjoy the trails at the Citizen's Forest.

A full range of sports activities is offered in Fukuoka, particularly in the martial arts. The "budokan," or sports center, offers kendo, judo, laido, karate, and other types of Asian martial arts courses.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Kyushu is noted as Japan's leading center for porcelain and ceramic production. Imari and Arita, in nearby Saga Prefecture, are home to Japan's most famous porcelain makers Imaemon and Kakiemon.

There are numerous pottery areas and antique shops in and around Fukuoka City. The region also is noted for its historic and scenic spots. Fukuoka City has numerous excavation sites such as Korokan, an ancient site underscoring Fukuoka's historic importance as a major trading center for the region. Nagasaki City is a well-known tourist destination, noted for its historic setting and tragic wartime experience. Kyushu is also famous for its "onsen," or hot spring. Yufuin and Beppu in neighboring Oita Prefecture, as well as Kumamoto and Kagoshima, are popular destinations. Hiking is another popular activity in the region.

The Fukuoka Dome, Japan's largest retractable sports stadium, hosts international concerts, sports programs, and trade promotional events. The Daiei Hawks professional baseball team plays at the Dome. Fukuoka City is the center for the arts as well as shopping, Nagasaki hosts the Huis Ten Bosch Dutch theme park, Miyazaki has the world's largest indoor swimming complex, and Kitakyushu has the Space - World Amusement Park. All locations are accessible by train or car.

Entertainment

Fukuoka City hosts the spectacular annual Dontaku (May) and Yamakasa (July) festivals, which attract national attention. "Yatai" or outdoor food vendors, are also popular, serving a variety of local cuisine, including "Hakata ramen" noodles.

Current American films in English with Japanese subtitles attract large audiences. In April 1996, AMC opened a 13-theater complex in the new Canal City Hakata mall complex in downtown Fukuoka. Fukuoka is now a major stopping area for internationally known performers, since the opening of several large entertainment facilities. Jazz, country and western, western, and Japanese classical music concerts are popular in Fukuoka. Kumamoto hosts a major Country and Western music concert each October, "Coun-

try Gold," which attracts famous performers from the U.S. and Japan. In Fukuoka, there are also restaurants such as the Blue Note which feature live jazz and popular music. The November Sumo wrestling tournament also adds to Fukuoka's visibility and appeal.

Fukuoka has a wide range of excellent Japanese and Western restaurants. Although more expensive than those restaurants in the U.S., the quality is high.

Social Activities

Opportunities for meeting Japanese from all walks of life are virtually unlimited. Fukuoka's residents are noted in Japan as being friendly and hospitable to guests. Although growing, the foreign community is small, and a minimal knowledge of Japanese is essential.

Sapporo

Sapporo is a modern city of 1.8 million people and the capital of Hokkaido, the northernmost major island of Japan. The city is the governmental and commercial center of Hokkaido, which is the size of Austria and has a population a bit larger than that of Finland or Denmark (5.7 million).

Sapporo is renowned for its winter events and sports facilities. The city has hosted the Winter Olympics (1972), many other world-class skiing events, and holds the world's largest Snow Festival each year in February.

Within easy driving of the city are breathtaking volcanic lakes and gorges, white water rivers, mountains dressed with cedar, pine, birch, and aspen, and spectacular views of both the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan.

Sapporo is located in a snow belt and has a "subarctic" climate. But, despite over 20 feet of snow each year, winter temperatures are moderate, seldom dropping below 20° at night and staying just below freezing during the day. Spring is short

but pleasant and summer is delightful, with temperatures in the 70s-15 to 20 degrees cooler than in Tokyo or Osaka.

The special attachment the people of Hokkaido have for Americans is unique. In the early 1870s when the Japanese Government began a crash program to develop Hokkaido, Japanese officials called on President Grant for advice. Grant responded by recommending his own Secretary of Agriculture, Horace Capron, as a candidate to organize a group of American and foreign experts to assist in the opening Hokkaido. After accepting the Japanese offer, Capron left his post in the U.S. and worked for the Government of Japan for 5 years as a senior advisor in charge of developing Hokkaido. The American educators, engineers, and agricultural experts who joined Capron are remembered fondly in Hokkaido even today; and are honored with statues and museums in and around Sapporo.

Utilities

The electric current in Sapporo is 100v, 50-cycle, AC. Except for appliances with synchronous motors, such as electric clocks, phonographs, and tape recorders, standard American electrical appliances run well. Cable and satellite television are available for a reasonable monthly fee.

Food

You can get most foods, including delicious Hokkaido crab and other seafood delicacies, on the open market. Department stores, supermarkets, and specialty food shops sell a variety of foodstuffs; however, most food prices in the local markets are considerably higher than they are in Washington, D.C.

Clothing

Bring an adequate supply of clothing. Though department stores carry a variety of clothing and shoes, sizes are limited, and prices are very high. Local tailors and dressmakers are good but extremely expensive. Fashion for men is fairly

conservative, i.e., dark suits for business.

In the long winters here, lined, knee-high snow boots, warm gloves, caps and warm winter clothing, including snow suits for children, are necessities. If you plan to ski, snowboard, or skate, bringing the necessary equipment from the U.S. could cut costs by more than 50%.

Supplies and Services

Sapporo has nearly every kind of specialty shop and repair facility. Barbers and beauticians are adequate. Drycleaning is available though somewhat more expensive than in the U.S. Local auto mechanics are competent, but parts for foreign-made cars must be specially ordered and are expensive.

Domestic Help

Live-in domestic help is almost impossible to find and very expensive. Hourly maid services are available. A cook and a maid staff the consul general's home.

Religious Activities

Sapporo has Catholic and Protestant churches and Baha'i and Islamic communities. Some services and activities are conducted in English. There is no synagogue, but a small group of Jewish residents gather to celebrate Passover and other observances.

Education

The Hokkaido International School is the only English-language school in Sapporo and offers courses from kindergarten through grade 12, with a student population of about 170 children. Though small, the school has improved considerably since moving into an impressive new building built with the aid of the Hokkaido Government in 1995. HIS is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Recent graduates have been accepted by such universities as Cornell and the University of Virginia.

Sports

Hokkaido is a sports fan's paradise. In the winter one can ski, ice skate, and cross-country ski; in the summer one can play golf (very expensive compared to the U.S.) and tennis, hike, camp, boat, and swim (both in summer and in winter at indoor public pools near the Consulate General and at various resorts). Hunting for bear, deer, pheasant, duck, and rabbit is available. However, obtaining a hunting license is a difficult and complicated procedure.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Jozankei, a hot-spring resort, lies on the banks of a swiftly flowing stream in a beautiful valley, 17 miles southwest of Sapporo. Jozankei has many large hotels, some with Western-style accommodations. Noboribetsu hot springs is about 80 miles southeast of Sapporo. Its outstanding feature is a valley filled with sulfur pools known as the Valley of Hell.

The Ainu Village at Shiraoi, about 1 hour south of Noboribetsu, is one of the few places in Hokkaido where you can see an exhibition of Ainu customs and culture.

Lake Toya and Lake Shikotsu were formed by ancient volcanic eruptions. Both offer pleasant mountain scenery and opportunities for hiking and boating. They are 2-3 hours' drive from Sapporo. For a long weekend or holiday, Akan National Park in the eastern part of the island offers the famous lakes of Akan, Kutcharo, and Mashu as well as pleasant drives through beautiful mountain and forest scenery. Sounkyo Gorge, about a 5-hour drive from Sapporo, is also famous for its scenery.

Entertainment

Sapporo is a modern city with excellent restaurants, first-class hotels serving international cuisine, modern theaters featuring American movies in English with Japanese subtitles, a zoo, a municipal symphony orchestra, a modern art

museum, and well-stocked department stores.

Social Activities

Hokkaido has a small but growing American business community. There is an American missionary community and the number of American English teachers in Hokkaido is increasing. Aside from these groups, social activities among Americans are limited.

Social and recreational opportunities here for a foreigner not willing to plunge into the Japanese culture and language are much more limited than in cosmopolitan cities with larger foreign communities.

Only a limited number of Sapporo citizens can carry on a conversation in English, but many people are eager to befriend foreigners. A basic speaking knowledge of Japanese is essential in broadening friendships.

Nagasaki

Nagasaki, capital of the eponymous and westernmost prefecture of the Japanese archipelago, faces China across the China Sea. One of Japan's most prosperous commercial cities, it also is the site of early Christianity in the country. The Jesuit, St. Francis Xavier, arrived in Nagasaki in 1549 bearing Christianity.

Nagasaki was insignificant until 1571, when Portuguese traders first arrived, and thereafter became a port of call not only for Portuguese ships, but for Spanish and Dutch as well. The city was the only port of contact kept open to the outside world between the mid-17th and mid-19th centuries, the long interval when Japan enforced its isolationist policy.

Chinese temples and Western structures are among the many historical sites in Nagasaki. On Dejima (Deshima), an artificial island, is a scale model of the quarters where representatives of the Dutch East India Company once lived. In the

central city is the authentically reconstructed Urugami Cathedral, built by a French missionary with help from Japanese Christians—it was totally destroyed in the second atomic bombing of August 9, 1945, which leveled one-third of the city and killed an estimated 40,000 people; nearly as many more were critically injured. Peace Park and the Statue of Peace, at the core site of the bombing, are memorials to that devastation.

Nagasaki today is a center of shipbuilding, fishing, and coal mining industries, as well as the heart of a large agricultural area. It has grown considerably as a tourist attraction, and boasts Japan's first seaborne airport, built in 1975. The city was used as a setting for the novel by John Luther Long which later became the Puccini opera, *Madame Butterfly*.

The current population of Nagasaki is approximately 442,000.

OTHER CITIES

CHIBA, the seat of Chiba Prefecture, is situated on the eastern shore of Tokyo Bay. Once a poor fishing village, it is now a prosperous commercial city of 887,000 residents. Large-scale industry and the opening of major railway lines have contributed heavily toward the development of the city, which is now the 13th largest in Japan. Chiba dates to 1126; it evolved around a castle built by a local warlord but, when the castle burned two centuries later, the clan collapsed and the community was all but deserted. It was only after the Meiji Restoration of the mid-19th century that Chiba again began to achieve significance.

The city of **GIFU** is located 19 miles north of Nagoya in central Honshū. It lies on the edge of the Nobi Plain at the foot of the Japan Alps. Situated in a region that once had 516 earthquakes in one year, not many of this ancient city's old buildings survived the 1891 earthquake. The

fertile farmland on the Nobi Plain enables residents to grow rice and vegetables. Gifu is noted for its paper products which include fans, umbrellas, and lanterns. It also manufactures cutlery and textiles. Tourists in Gifu enjoy boating on the Nagara River in the evening to see the cormorant (aquatic birds) fishing. The use of tame cormorants to catch fish is an old technique called *ukai*. The population of Gifu is 407,000.

HAMAMATSU, with a current population of 582,000, is situated in southern Honshū, about 56 miles southeast of Nagoya and 145 miles southwest of Tokyo. Historically an old castle town, Hamamatsu today is an industrial city whose chief products include musical instruments, motorcycles, compact automobiles, tea, and textiles. Allied forces bombed the city in May and June 1945.

HIMEJI is located on Honshū Island, 50 miles west of Ōsaka. It is a commercial city whose old craft industries produce leather, toys, and dolls. Since World War II, Himeji has acquired new integrated iron and steel works, a large petrochemical complex, and heavy engineering plants. The city, whose population exceeds 453,000 is one of the many towns built by Japan's feudal lords. Japan's most spectacular castle is located here; it commands a view of the city from a hill. Completed in the early 17th century, it is called "Egret Castle" because of its resemblance to the white bird and has been the site of many Japanese samurai movies.

KAGOSHIMA is a seaport city situated in a well-protected harbor on the southern coast of Kyūshū. Historically important as a castle town, Kagoshima was the site where the first Christian missionary, St. Francis Xavier, landed in 1549. The city was bombarded by British warships in 1863, destroyed by fire in 1877, damaged by a volcano eruption in 1914, and severely bombed by Allied forces during World War II from June through August 1945. Today, Kagoshima is an important port,

the site of a naval yard, and since 1961, the home of a major Japanese rocket base. The center for the manufacture of Satsuma porcelain ware, Kagoshima also produces silk and cotton clothing, wood products, and tinware. There are two universities in Kagoshima; the city has a current population of 552,000.

KANAZAWA is situated near the coast of west-central Honshū, about 80 miles north of Gifu. A historic city, Kanazawa became an industrial and cultural headquarters after 1580. Its power deteriorated with the decline of feudal political units in 1871 and the growth of modern industry on the opposite coast of Honshū. Kanazawa is best known for manufacturing Kutani porcelain and Kaga silk. Recently added products include textiles and textile machinery. The present city, with a population of about 428,000, was built around the Maeda Castle, which was destroyed in 1881 by fire. Kanazawa is home to the country's renowned landscape garden, Kenrokuen. The sacred Hakusan Mountain of five peaks can be seen and easily reached from here.

KAWASAKI, with a population of 1.2 million, is one of the nation's 10 largest cities. Lying on the west coast of Tokyo Bay, it is a major industrial center surrounded by an extensive farming area. The city was severely damaged during World War II. Kawasaki is the site of a renowned temple called Kawasaki Daishi, and of an exhibit garden of typical Japanese folk houses—both spots are widely visited by tourists.

KITA-KYŪSHŪ is another city with more than one million residents. It was formed in 1963 by the amalgamation of the five northern Kyūshū cities in Fukuoka Prefecture. It is the center of the prefecture's production, and is one of the cities which has grown dramatically with Japan's development as a major industrial nation. Among Kita-kyūshū's many and diverse industries are shipbuilding; coal shipping; iron, steel, glass, and chemical factories; fishing; and the production of specialized textiles. A

well-known technical institute is located here. International School Kita-kyūshū, coeducational day school, was founded in 1990. Serving students pre-kindergarten through grade eight, the enrollment is 13. A U.S. curriculum is followed; both English and Japanese are used for instruction. The address is Yahata Higashi-ku Takami 2-chome Shinnittetsu Shijo Kaikan, Kita-kyūshū.

KUMAGAYA, with a population over 150,000, lies on the Ara River, about 40 miles northwest of Tokyo in central Japan. Many of its residents work in Tokyo even though Kumagaya is a commercially vibrant city. While silk reeling was the traditional industry, heavy industries have been established here today.

An important 17th-century castle town, **KUMAMOTO** today is a market center for the surrounding agricultural region. It is situated on the west coast of Kyūshū on an extensive plain near the Shira River. The city was founded in the 16th century at the site where a magnificent castle was built, and became a stronghold during feudal times. Although it was partially destroyed in 1877, the remains of the castle are still visited by tourists. Pilgrims are attracted to Kumamoto's Buddhist temple as well as the city's several shrines. Industries in the city include food processing, textiles, and chemicals. Kumamoto has two universities and a current population of 662,000.

KURASHIKI, with 417,000 residents, is located 10 miles west of Okayama—so close that the two cities blend into one population center. Kurashiki was a rice-trading center in the Edo period (1603–1867), and many of the warehouses used then for storage line the streets of the modern city. Textile manufacturing is the main industry today. Among Kurashiki's cultural facilities are Ohara Museum, with a fine collection of Western art; a folk-craft museum, built from old rice warehouses, and containing exhibits of pottery, woodwork, Japanese

papers, and rush mats; and archaeological and historical museums.

MIYAZAKI, with a population of 287,000, is located on the Hyuga Sea in southeast Kyūshū, 150 miles southeast of Fukuoka. The Oyodo River traverses the city, and the nearby volcano, Sakurajima, occasionally spews its ash. Inhabited for nearly 8,000 years, the city has managed to retain some of the elements from its past. There is virtually no heavy industry in Miyazaki; the resultant clean air, along with secluded parks, tree-lined boulevards, and an accessible riverfront have made the city a popular tourist and resort center. Miyazaki is the site of the great Shinto shrine—Miyazaki-jingu—dedicated to Japan's first emperor, Jimmu; the shrine also houses an archaeological museum. Ageless Japanese traditions may be found throughout the city. At the Miyazaki Cultural Center, the fine arts of calligraphy, koto music, tea preparation, and flower arrangement are taught by masters. Several summer festivals are held each year in Miyazaki. The city accessible by all forms of transportation. A runway expansion at Miyazaki Airport is expected to handle some diversions from the Tokyo and Ōsaka airports. A university was founded here in 1949.

Situated in west-central Honshū, the major seaport of **NIIGATA** lies on the estuary of the Shinano River, about 30 miles north of Nagaoka. Divided into two sections by the river, the city has an industrial side and a residential side which features shopping areas and Niigata University. Niigata was established by the Nagaoka clan as an outpost in 1616. It became the capital of Niigata Prefecture in 1870. The city has a population of over 500,000.

Located on the island of Honshū, **NISHINOMIYA** has a population of approximately 413,500. It is situated between Kōbe and Amagasaki on Ōsaka Bay. The city is known for its manufacture of saki, an alcoholic beverage of fermented rice usually served hot. Kōbe Women's College is located here.

OKAYAMA is a seaport city of 627,000 and capital of Okayama Prefecture on western Honshū. It developed from a *jokamachi*, or castle town, founded in 1573, and is now a market hub in an area that is devoted to large-scale mechanized farming. One of Japan's most beautiful parks, Okayama Korakuen, lies nearby on an island in the Asahikawa River. The park, and a popular youth festival held at the Saidaiji Temple in the city each February, are major attractions in Okayama.

SAKAI is a satellite city on Ōsaka Bay in west-central Honshū. It developed mainly after World War II, and now stands 14th on the list of Japan's large cities, with a population exceeding 800,000. It is a center of industrial importance, producing machinery, automobile parts, and chemicals. In the 16th century, Sakai was a leading port, or *minatomachi*.

SENDAI, the *Mori-no-miyako*, or city of trees, is located in Mayagi Prefecture of northern Honshū, about 180 miles north of Tokyo. It is a center for branch offices of many government agencies and major corporations. The largest city in the Tohoku district, it has a population over 1 million, and is the site of Tohoku University; several technical schools also are located here. The Japanese National Railways and other rail lines converge in the city. Sendai is known for Sendaihira silk, and also for the production of beautiful Sendai cabinets and other wood products. The famous Tanabata festival is held here in early August. Close to the city is a hot-spring resort called Aiku Spa.

UTSUNOMIYA is the capital of Tochigi Prefecture, situated about 60 miles north of Tokyo. Previously, it was called Ikebenogo; once the road leading to northeastern Japan was opened, it was also known as Otabashi Station. About 1059 it was named Utsunomiya. A processing center for the grain and tobacco grown in the region, Utsunomiya also manufactures knit goods, wood products, and paper. The ruins of

Utsunomiya Castle may be seen on the south side of the city. Utsunomiya has a population of over 425,000 and is home to Utsunomiya University.

Located in Kanagawa Prefecture, on Honshū Island, at the southwest end of Tokyo Bay, **YOKOSUKA** is about 20 miles south of Yokohama and 40 miles south of the capital. In 1868 the city became an important naval base. Its only major industry is shipbuilding. Yokosuka developed into a city by 1907 and slowly expanded into the nearby towns and villages. Japan's first modern lighthouse is located at Cape Kannon, which is east of the naval base. There are a few small fishing villages along the nearby coast. The city has a population of more than 450,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Japan, a country of islands, extends along the eastern or Pacific coast of Asia. The main islands, running from north to south, are Hokkaido, Honshu or the mainland Shikoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa, which is about 380 miles southwest of Kyushu. About 3,000 smaller islands are included in the archipelago. In total land area, Japan is slightly smaller than California.

About 71% of the country is mountainous, with a chain running through each of the main islands. Japan's highest mountain is world famous Mt. Fuji (12,385 feet). Since so little flat area exists, many hills and mountainsides are cultivated all the way to the top. Situated as it is in a volcanic zone along the Pacific deeps, frequent low intensity earth tremors and occasional volcanic activity are felt throughout the islands. Hot springs are numerous; some have been developed as resorts.

Temperature extremes are fewer than in the U.S. since no part of the interior is more than 100 miles from the coast. At the same time, because the islands run almost directly north-south, the climate varies. Sapporo, on the northern island, has warm summers and long, cold winters with heavy snowfall. Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, on the southern part of the largest island of Honshu, experience relatively mild winters with little or no snowfall and hot, humid summers. Fukuoka, on the island of Kyushu, has a climate similar to that of Washington, D.C. with mild winters and short summers. Okinawa is subtropical.

Spring, with its profusion of cherry blossoms and other flowering trees and shrubs, and autumn, with its gold and flaming red trees and lovely fall flowers, are the most pleasant seasons. The hot, humid summers are difficult in the cities, but the sandy beaches along the coast and the many fine mountain resorts provide pleasant relief. The rather mild and dry winters are not as severe as the U.S. East Coast; it rarely snows or rains in the Tokyo area at this time of year. The climate causes no more of a problem with mildew, mold, moths, mosquitoes, or other pests than is experienced in Washington, D.C.

Population

Japan's population, currently some 125 million, has experienced a phenomenal growth rate during the past 100 years as a result of scientific, industrial, and sociological changes. High sanitary and health standards produce a life expectancy exceeding that of the U.S.

The Japanese are a Mongoloid people, closely related to the major groups of East Asia. However, some evidence of a mixture with Malayan and Caucasoid strains is present. The latter is still represented in pure form by a very small group of Ainu in Hokkaido, the remains of the Caucasoid people who inhabited Japan in prehistoric times, and who perhaps formed a portion of a cir-

cumpolar culture extending across Siberia to European Russia.

The Japanese usually are described as group-oriented rather than individually oriented. Geography is the main reason for this group orientation. Many people confined in a small land area poorly endowed with natural resources traditionally work together for the good of the whole.

In premodern Japan the extended family or clan system provided security for the component families. Industrialization and urbanization broke up this type of family system, but the paternalistic tradition has continued through government social welfare agencies and, to a greater degree, through large companies that provide more fringe benefits than their Western counterparts.

The Japanese are always conscious of their uniqueness as a people. They are proud of their country, its great natural beauty, distinct culture, and the important role it plays in the modern world. Because the Japanese are polite and cautious in approaching social situations, they often impress foreigners as being shy and reserved, but beneath this they are always interested and curious to learn about foreign ideas and attitudes.

Japan's communication with the rest of the world, from commerce to the arts, has been hampered by a language barrier. Japanese is a difficult language with a complicated writing system. Relatively few non-Japanese are completely bilingual. Although English has been for many years the international language of Japan, and the study of English is compulsory in Japanese junior and senior high schools, the Japanese have as difficult a time with English as non-Japanese speakers do with Japanese. The average person can speak only a few words, and business representatives and government officials are constantly trying to improve their command of the language. Instruction in English conversation is in

great demand, and it is a common experience for an American to be stopped on the street by someone who just wants to practice a few sentences of English.

Japan is an urban society with only about 7% of the labor force engaged in agriculture. Many farmers supplement their income with part-time jobs in nearby towns and cities. About 80 million of the urban population are heavily concentrated on the Pacific shore of Honshu and in northern Kyushu. Metropolitan Tokyo with approximately 14 million, Osaka 2.6, Nagoya 2.1, Kyoto 1.5, Sapporo 1.6, Kobe 1.4, and Kitakyushu, Kawasaki, and Fukuoka with 1.2 million each account for part of this population. Japan faces the same problems that confront urban industrialized societies throughout the world: overcrowded cities, congested highways, air pollution, and rising juvenile delinquency.

Shintoism and Buddhism are Japan's two principal religions. Buddhism first came to Japan in the 6th century and for the next 10 centuries exerted profound influence on its intellectual, artistic, social, and political life. Although still important, it is a relatively inactive religious form today. Monasteries and temples, large and small, dot the landscape but usually play only subdued background role in the life of the community. Most funerals are conducted by Buddhist priests, and burial grounds attached to temples are used by both faiths.

Shintoism is founded on myths and legends emanating from the early animistic worship of natural phenomena. Since it was unconcerned with problems of afterlife that dominated Buddhist thought, and since Buddhism easily accommodated itself to local faiths, the two religions comfortably coexisted, and Shinto shrines and Buddhist monasteries often became administratively linked. Today, many Japanese are adherents of both faiths. From the 16th to the 19th century Shintoism flourished, eventually seeking unity under a symbolic imperial

rule. Adopted by the leaders of the Meiji restoration, it received state support and was cultivated as a spur to patriotic and nationalistic feelings. Following World War II, state support was discontinued and the Emperor disavowed divinity. Today, Shintoism plays a more peripheral role in the life of the Japanese people. The numerous shrines are visited regularly by a few believers and, if they are historically famous or known for natural beauty, by many sightseers. Many marriages are held in the shrines, and children are brought after birth and on certain anniversary dates; special shrine days are celebrated for specific occasions, and numerous festivals are held throughout the year. Many homes have "god shelves" where offerings can be made to Shinto deities.

Confucianism arrived with the first great wave of Chinese influence into Japan between the 6th and 9th centuries. Overshadowed by Buddhism, it survived as an organized philosophy into the late 19th century and remains today as an important strain in Japanese thought and values.

Christianity, first introduced into Japan in 1549, was virtually stamped out a century later; it was reintroduced in the late 1800s and has spread slowly. Today, it has 1.4 million adherents, which includes a high percentage of important persons in education and public affairs.

Beyond these three traditional religions, many Japanese today are turning to a great variety of popular religious movements normally lumped together under the name "new religions." These religions draw on the concept of Shinto, Buddhism, and folk superstition and have developed in part to meet the social needs of elements of the population. The officially recognized new religions number in the hundreds and total membership is reportedly in the tens of millions.

Public Institutions

Japan's parliamentary government constitutional monarchy-operates within the framework of a constitution that took effect on May 3, 1947. Sovereignty is vested in the Japanese people by constitutional definition, and the Emperor is the symbol of the state, "deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power."

Japan has universal adult suffrage with secret ballot for all elective offices, national and local. The government has an executive responsible to the legislature and an independent judiciary.

The seven major political parties represented in the National Diet are the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the Clean Government Party (Komeito), the Liberal Party (LP), the Japan Communist Party (JCP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the Conservative Party (CP).

Arts, Science, and Education

Japan's educational system is based on 6 years of elementary and 3 years of middle or junior high school. Schooling is compulsory and free. More than 97% of children finishing middle school go on for 3 years of upper or senior high school. Japan has over 1,174 universities, colleges, and junior colleges and over 3 million college students, making it second only to the U.S. in the proportion of its college-age population that are students. Nevertheless, the most prestigious Japanese universities can accept only a fraction of the applicants. About half of the Japanese university students study in the Tokyo area. Before senior high school and college, students must take extremely rigorous competitive entrance examinations. The most difficult college entrance examinations are for national universities like Tokyo and Kyoto.

Despite the difficulty of the written language, Japan has one of the world's highest literacy rates. It is a country of readers, ranking second only to the U.S. in book publishing. Japan's unique culture includes centuries-old graphic and performing arts.

Modern theater forms and modern graphic arts are very popular, and Japanese artists and designers are among the world's best. Institutions like Tokyo's National Theater continue to preserve and encourage traditional art forms. Flower arranging (ikebana), one of the unique cultural heritages, originated in the 1300s with the advent of the tea ceremony; today Japan has 3,000-4,000 ikebana schools with millions of followers. The tea ceremony (chanoyu), perfected in the 16th century, fascinates both participants and spectators by its simplicity and elegance, designed to create peace of mind in both the performer and the partaker. Kabuki, one of the most colorful forms of traditional Japanese entertainment, a bustling, exaggerated drama accompanied by music and song, and Noh, a form of Japanese court dance characterized by use of masks, are performed regularly in cities throughout Japan. Martial arts which include judo, karate, kendo, aikido, and Japanese long-bow archery draw on Zen philosophy and traditionally have as their objective the achievement of self-discipline and inner peace. Martial arts performances can be seen regularly in the leading cities.

Commerce and Industry

Japan's industrialized free market economy is the world's second largest, after the U.S. Together the two countries comprise over 30% of global output. Japan's economy provides the Japanese people with a high standard of living: per capita GDP in 1999 was \$24,075.

With only one-sixth of its land arable, Japan produces roughly half of the food required for its population. Food self-sufficiency rates continue

to fall, however, with the Agriculture Ministry predicting a rate of 40% by 2005. Fish is a staple of the Japanese diet, and Japan maintains one of the world's largest fishing fleets. It currently ranks third among the top fishing countries, accounting for almost 6% of global fishery production. Demand for imported food has increased yearly as Japanese dietary preferences change toward meat, bread, and dairy products. Japan imported over \$47 billion in foodstuffs in 1997.

Japan's natural resources can supply only a fraction of the raw materials needed by industry. For example, Japan imports more than 80% of its primary energy supply. Foreign trade is therefore vital; reliable sources of raw materials and stable export markets are essential to continued economic prosperity. With close government-industry cooperation, a strong work ethic, and a mastery of high technology, Japan's industries have risen to become household names and world leaders in the production of autos, electronics, and machinery.

The U.S. is Japan's leading trade partner; Japan is our third largest foreign market, and the largest for U.S. agricultural products. Japan's exports to the U.S. are primarily motor vehicles, machinery, and electronic products. The bulk of U.S. exports to Japan are agricultural products, raw materials, and high-technology products, such as aircraft and computers.

Transportation

Automobiles

A personally owned vehicle is not absolutely essential in view of the excellent public transportation systems in Tokyo and throughout most of Japan.

All vehicles must be registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To obtain registration, you must provide proof of ownership (factory invoice or bill of sale) and a valid insurance policy. Third-party insurance is compulsory. Premiums for

third-party insurance differ by the age of owner and capacity of engine displacement and are currently ¥60,340 for age 26 with 1,500 cc-2,500 cc.

Many people purchase a used car for use while in Japan since these vehicles are in good supply and available at relatively reasonable prices. Traffic moves on the left and most cars are right-hand drive. Gasoline costs more than in the U.S.

Japanese streets and roads are generally congested with cars, trucks, buses, motorbikes, and bicycles. Japanese cars are small by American standards but are advantageous in the narrow streets and limited parking areas. Driving is complicated by the fact that many road signs are written in Japanese kanji, and most Tokyo streets are not numbered or marked at all. Maps are essential for getting around in the city. Rental cars are available, but the charges are exorbitant.

Apply for a Japanese driver's license issued by the Public Safety Commission. In order to have your U.S. driver's license converted to a Japanese driver's license, you must appear in person at the licensing office and submit official documents to prove that you had been in the US. for a minimum of three full months during the time your U.S. driver's license was effective.

The Japanese driving licensing office will check the issuance date and expiration date on your US. driver's license and also check the issuance date, embarkation/disembarkation stamp dates, date of entry permit on your passport and compare the two. They will accept your application if it reflects that you have been in the U.S. for 3 months anytime your US. driver's license was effective.

If your U.S. driver's license was renewed recently, and you were not physically present for 3 months in the US. before your initial arrival date to Japan, you will be required to submit an original document

issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles of the State where your license was issued that lists your previous driver's license records. The authorities will compare the DMV records with your passport entry/exit stamps and issuance date in an attempt to verify your physical presence in the U.S. for 3 months in total.

Necessary items to apply for a Japanese driver's license:

1. Japanese translation of your U.S. driver's license.
2. Diplomatic/official and tourist passport(s) or any official document that will certify that you have been in the U.S. for 3 months (e.g., expired passports, school records, letter from prior employer, copies of travel orders indicating a stateside tour.)
3. One photo (size must be 3 cm x 2.4 cm).

Yokohama: Most students, especially those bringing families to Yokohama, find it worthwhile to have a car for shopping trips and sightseeing on weekends. Others get by without a car, relying on travel by foot, bicycle, motorcycle, taxi, or the region's excellent public transportation network. Used cars are available fairly cheaply.

Roads are usually congested, and expressway tolls are high. Parking in downtown areas often costs around ¥500 per hour, although shopping centers usually discount parking for customers who spend over a certain amount. Bus lines offer frequent service to downtown Yokohama and to the nearest train stations. The rail network offers extensive and efficient, though not cheap, service from Yokohama throughout the Kanto area.

Sapporo: Reasonably priced used cars are available in Sapporo. Four-wheel drive is useful, particularly outside the city in winter. Since Japanese drive on the left, right-hand drive cars make passing and turning hazardous.

Okinawa: The limitations of public transportation make a car essential on Okinawa. A small car is appro-

priate for the many narrow and congested roads. Compared to elsewhere in Japan, cars here tend to be less costly to maintain, and probably easier to sell on departure. Cars deteriorate rapidly on Okinawa due to the humid climate and salt air, and regular steam cleaning and undercoating are advised. Spare parts for many foreign cars, including some of the more popular American models, are limited and expensive. Good used cars can be purchased from departing American personnel or from local used car dealers. Financing and insurance are available from American firms here. Insurance rates are considerably higher than in the U.S.

Public buses are a clean, safe and reliable, though expensive option. Taxis are numerous and less expensive than in Tokyo.

New cars are readily available but not recommended. Although Okinawa has a Ford dealer, repairs and spare parts for U.S.-made cars, including American-made Japanese models, are difficult to obtain. Reliable used Japanese cars can be purchased for about \$2,000-\$3,000, but may be expected to require substantial upkeep and repair expenditures during a 3-year tour. The high humidity, heavy with salt from the ocean, and blowing coral dust are hard on metal, and cars rust quickly.

Local

The public transportation systems of Japan's major cities are among the most modern in Asia and include excellent trains, extensive subway systems, and buses. All cities have an abundance of taxis. As in all heavily populated areas, transportation facilities are overtaxed, particularly during rush hours. Japan Railway (JR) electric trains link the major parts of Tokyo with outlying towns and cities, and the subway system crisscrossing Tokyo is the most inexpensive transportation in the city. Osaka has a JR loop line, and subway systems are also located in Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Sapporo. Bus service links subway and

loop train lines in Tokyo and is the system of local transportation in cities and towns throughout Japan. Signs and directions in subway and railway stations in the major cities usually appear in English as well as Japanese, making subway and rail travel relatively simple for the non-Japanese-speaking traveler.

Cruising taxis are plentiful. Taxis are safe and clean, though not inexpensive. Most taxi drivers do not speak English, so have directions to your destination written in Japanese. Most hotels have these instructions at the front desk to assist their guests in returning to the hotel. Taxi doors are operated by the driver, opening and closing automatically. Taxis are metered; the charge in Tokyo is Y660 for the first 2 kilometers plus Y80 for each additional 274 meters. There are additional charges for slow movement in traffic and late-night service. Consumption tax is added to the total fare amount. It is not customary to tip taxi drivers.

Regional

Most of the country is served by the JR system. The Shinkansen (popularly known as the bullet train) is a familiar sight speeding across the Japanese countryside connecting Tokyo and many of the larger cities throughout Japan. These and other express and local trains combine to form a vast rail network that is heavily used. Sleeping, dining, and first-class (green) coaches are available on the main lines. Trains maintain strict schedules, and the personnel are polite and efficient. Porters or redcaps are available at all principal stations although they are extremely few in number. Their charges range from Y200 to Y300 per piece of baggage or more if the baggage is extremely heavy.

Most of the major international airlines and a number of steamship companies provide service to Japan. Domestic air travel is quite extensive. Several domestic airlines operate to all the major cities in Japan; airbus service has been instituted between Tokyo and several cities. The airport used for domestic travel

is Haneda, 23 kilometers from Tokyo. Rapid monorail or bus service is available from Haneda to downtown Tokyo locations, and taxis are plentiful. The taxi fare is around Y6,500.

The new Tokyo International Airport at Narita, about 77 kilometers from Tokyo, is used for all international flights (except those of China Airlines, the Republic of China national carrier that operates from Haneda). Surface transportation from Narita into the city is commonly via limousine bus directly to the Tokyo City Air Terminal (TCAT) or by taxi. Train service is also available, but its use is not recommended for the newcomer due to the complicated connections. Transit time by bus and taxi can be time consuming, at least 1-1/2 hours, often more, depending on traffic conditions on the heavily congested highways serving the airport from central Tokyo. The airport limousine bus fare is Y3,000, and taxi fare is approximately Y27,000, including toll charges.

Many express toll roads are excellent. Almost all roads are paved. The main roads are generally in good condition, the secondary roads are more inclined to be narrow and winding.

Communications

Telegraph and Telephone

To obtain the lowest possible rates, bring a telephone credit card from AT&T, MCI, or SPRINT. These carriers also provide International Long Distance service from any phone within Japan.

International telegrams can be sent from any Kokusai Denshin Denwa (KDD) office in any leading city, any local telegraph or telephone office, and most hotels.

Mail

Postal rates for ordinary letters addressed within Japan are Y80 and for ordinary postcards Y50. International postal rates to the U.S. for airmail letters are Y110 for

the first 25 grams; postcards Y70, aerogram Y90, and printed matter up to 20 grams Y80 plus Y40 for each additional 2 grams.

Radio & TV

The Far East Network (FEN) is an affiliate of the U.S. Armed Forces Radio Network. FEN broadcasts 24 hours daily in English with the latest news, music, and sports events (AM 810).

Japanese radio stations present a variety of classical and popular music on both AM and FM. Japanese FM radios operate on a lower frequency spectrum of 76 MHz to 90 MHz rather than the U.S. frequencies of 88 MHz to 108 MHz. It is impossible to convert a U.S. receiver for Japanese frequencies; so if you wish to receive most Japanese stations, you will need to buy a domestic receiver.

TV in Japan has reached the highest levels of technical sophistication. TV is broadcast in stereo, bilingual multiplex, high-definition, and direct broadcast satellite (DBS). Of the many channels available, two government non-commercial channels (NHK) broadcast high quality programs that include public service, sports, and music events. The program content of the commercial networks varies little from channel to channel with a large emphasis on entertainment, musicals, and quiz programs. They do broadcast in stereo.

Movies and U.S. TV series are often transmitted with a unique bilingual soundtrack. Several hours of bilingual programming, including live news broadcasts are transmitted daily.

Residents often have access to satellite TV companies, including "Direct TV" and "Perfect TV" as well as the Japanese broadcast stations.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Five English-language daily newspapers are published in Tokyo—the Japan Times, the Daily Yomiuri, the Mainichi Daily News, the Asahi

Evening News, and the U.S. Army's Stars and Stripes. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Japan's major financial daily, has a weekly English-language edition. Home delivery is available for all of these newspapers. The Asian Wall Street Journal, published in Hong Kong, is also available daily.

American magazines arrive from a few days to a month after publication. The most popular periodicals are available in Stars and Stripes bookstores, military exchanges, major hotels, or by subscription. Asian editions of Newsweek and Time are published in Tokyo and are promptly available by subscription or at major newsstands.

Large Japanese bookstores and bookstores in major hotels carry a wide selection of English-language books. Books also can be purchased at the Sanno Hotel.

Health & Medicine

Medical Facilities

Many English-speaking Japanese physicians, with U.S. post-graduate training, as well as Western doctors, maintain private practices in Tokyo. Local hospitals and clinics range from older facilities to very modern medical centers. Language continues to be a frustrating barrier in many facilities.

Completing the following "to do" list will make your transition to Japan easier:

* Do not pack prescription medications in your check-in luggage. Hand carry your prescription medications.

* Individuals enrolled in a preferred provider organization (PPO) or health maintenance organization (HMO) will find it difficult to use this coverage overseas. Individuals that are members of a PPO or HMO should consider changing insurance policies before arriving to Tokyo.

* Bring a hot-steam humidifier(s) for dry winter weather.

* Bring a dehumidifier(s) for the hot and humid summer weather.

* Bring flashlights and emergency firstaid kit(s) for your home and car.

* Enroll in a first aid and CPR course.

* Visit your dentist for cleaning and dental check-up before arriving to Tokyo. Dental care in Tokyo is expensive.

Okinawa: The Adventist Medical Center provides an alternative for dental and medical care at Camp Lester. It is a modern, well-run facility staffed by American or American-trained missionary physicians and dentists from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Full payment in yen at the time of service is expected.

Osaka-Kobe: There are excellent medical resources in Osaka-Kobe. Physical exams can be done at Kobe Kaisei Hospital. Serious medical problems are referred to appropriate medical specialists.

Sapporo: Sapporo has two university hospitals for emergency and routine care.

Community Health

General health conditions in Japan are similar to those in the U.S. The city water supply, in all major cities, is potable. Sewage and garbage disposal facilities are adequate. The country has no special pest or vermin problems.

Air pollution has been a problem in Tokyo over the years, but an active anti-pollution program has reduced the problem significantly. Nevertheless, the summer heat and humidity will exacerbate respiratory ailments such as asthma.

In recent years, tuberculosis (TB) has been on a sharp increase in Japan. Employees and eligible family members are encouraged to have annual TB skin testing (PPD).

Preventive Measures

Endemic diseases are not prevalent and no particular preventive measures need be taken beyond updating routine immunizations. The water is not fluoridated.

No immunizations are required to enter Japan.

OKINAWA

Okinawa is the largest of the Ryukyu Islands, a chain that extends from Kyushu to Taiwan. Okinawa Prefecture (which includes the southern part of the archipelago) derives its name from the main island. Naha, the prefectural capital, is also located on the main island. The island of Okinawa is 70 miles long and on average 7 miles wide. It has over 1 million inhabitants, including about 50,000 U.S. military personnel and their families. Another 200,000 people live on the outlying islands. Naha is 800 miles southwest of Tokyo, 350 miles northeast of Taipei, and 750 miles north of Manila.

Although it is part of Japan, Okinawa has a distinct history and identity. It was once an independent kingdom, with a language and culture of its own, and paid tribute to the Chinese emperors. Even today, it differs from mainland Japan as climate, diet, customs, and other aspects of life shade into those of Southeast Asia. Okinawa officially became a part of Japan in the 1870s, and many of the Japanese emigrants to Hawaii and South America at the turn of the century actually came from Okinawa.

The island was the scene of the last major U.S.-Japanese battle of the Second World War, a battle in which about one-third of the Okinawan population was killed. From 1945 to 1972, Okinawa was under U.S. administration. The war and occupation left the Okinawan people with strong reservations about the use of military force. It is a source of friction that this small, crowded island is home to a large concentra-

tion of U.S. and-to a much lesser extent-Japan Self Defense Forces.

Climate

Okinawa's climate resembles that found along the South Carolina coast. Winters are comfortable but cool at night and at the shore. Spring and fall are delightful. Summers are long, hot, and humid. Okinawa often experiences typhoons or strong tropical storms in the fall and occasionally heavy weather in the spring. Accordingly, most buildings are low and built of concrete.

Whenever annual rainfall is less than the normal 80 inches, water rationing is necessary. As of late 2000, there had been no rationing since a 21-day period in the winter of 1994.

Okinawa has a full complement of semitropical insects and reptiles, including the habu, a very aggressive, poisonous species of snake. Although Okinawan field workers and small animals are occasional snakebite victims, no consular personnel have experienced problems with snakes in recent memory. Prudence, however, especially at night, is the watchword; 200 to 250 snakebites are reported annually. Ants, spiders, fleas, ticks, rodents, and other small pests have from time to time caused minor problems. Small lizards called geckos are a standard part of the exterior and interior landscapes.

History

Ryukyuan history has had its legendary heroes, fine artists and patrons of the arts, sages, diplomats, philosophers, the rise and fall of dynasties, and alternating periods of foreign domination and vigorous independence. Written records, beginning about A.D. 600, mention several unsuccessful attempts by China and Japan in the seventh century to require tribute and submission from this diminutive Oriental state.

The first significant date in Ryukyuan history is 1187, when Shunten, the son of a Japanese hero and an Okinawan princess, established himself as king of Okinawa. Out of respect for his legendary father, Shunten gave Japan titular jurisdiction over the islands, thus providing a basis for later Japanese claims to the Ryukyus. Under the dynasty of Eiso, who reigned from 1260 to 1299, the unified kingdom made rapid strides in cultural development, achieved economic order, and enjoyed internal peace. Tradition also ascribes to his reign the introduction of Buddhism into Okinawa.

During the first half of the 14th century, the kingdom collapsed and the island reverted to feudalism. In 1372, King Satto, usurper of the Shuri throne, reunified the kingdom, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ming dynasty, and brought in Chinese traders and teachers. Under his rule, Ryukyus became enterprising, prosperous sea traders, voyaging as far as Korea and the Indies. During this period, the people also became students and imitators of Chinese art, philosophy, and craft.

Okinawa's "golden age" began in 1477 with the reign of King Sho-shin, whose successors carried on the grand tradition until 1609, when the good fortune came to an abrupt, disastrous end. Japan, having suffered defeat in Korea, invaded the defenseless island as punishment for Okinawa's refusal to aid the *shogun*. During the next few years, King Shonei was held hostage while the Japanese exploited the island and monopolized the trade with China. In 1611, Shonei was permitted to return to Okinawa, but only after acknowledging the suzerainty of the Lord of Satsuma and pledging that the Ryukyus would always remain a dependency of Japan.

The next two centuries marked a continuous struggle for economic survival. The Satsuma clan dominated Okinawa, controlling its foreign affairs, many aspects of its

internal administration, and its overseas trade, particularly trade with China. The people were left to make their living from the meager resources of the countryside. By chance, the sweet potato was introduced in 1606, and sugarcane in 1623. These became major crops and alleviated, to some degree, the Okinawans' struggle for survival in that era.

In 1853, Americans arrived in Naha harbor under the command of Commodore Matthew C. Perry, whose objective was to establish a base in the Ryukyus in order to open Japan to foreign trade and commerce. In 1854, Perry proposed that the U.S. assume territorial jurisdiction over Okinawa to prevent other nations from seizing it, and to provide a continuing base for American shipping in the event negotiations with Japan failed. His proposal was rejected by Washington. Perry successfully carried out his mission to Japan in March 1854, and his interest in the Ryukyus rapidly waned. However, before his departure for the U.S., he sought to preserve American interests in Naha against outside intrusion. He drafted a covenant of friendship between Okinawa and America, and the compact was signed on July 11, 1854.

Japan began to exert greater control over the Ryukyus and, in March 1879, the king abdicated. Tokyo proclaimed Okinawa a prefecture and appointed a governor and other officials to administer the islands.

Okinawa remained a prefecture of Japan, eventually with elected representatives in the Japanese national Diet, until shortly before the end of World War II in 1945. U.S. military forces invaded the island on April 1 of that year. In the Battle of Okinawa, which lasted almost three months, American casualties totalled 12,000 dead and 35,000 wounded. Japanese losses approached 100,000. A high percentage of the Okinawan civilian population lost their lives, and the Battle of Okinawa has remained a major determinant of Okinawan attitudes towards the presence of

either U.S. military forces or the Japanese Self-Defense Forces on Okinawa.

The U.S. administered the Ryukyus (except for the Amami Oshima Islands, which were returned to Japan in 1953) under the provisions of the Treaty of Peace with Japan until May 15, 1972; America then returned the administration of the islands to Japan in what is referred to as the Okinawa Reversion. The island reverted to its former status as a prefecture of Japan, and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and Status of Forces Agreement and Japanese national laws became applicable to Okinawa.

Public Institutions

As a Japanese prefecture, Okinawa elects a governor and legislative assembly every 4 years. Local branches of conservative and reformist political parties vie for power, with the electorate divided roughly between the two broad persuasions. Anti-base sentiments and desires for base reductions are widespread among the Okinawan people, but anti-Americanism is very rare. Individual Americans rarely encounter expressions of hostility.

Okinawa receives the largest part of its income from the Japanese central government as transfer payments; tourism contributes about 12%; and direct, military-related spending accounts for about 6% of prefectural income. The U.S. military presence is less important to Okinawa's prosperity than it once was, and some Okinawans argue that in fact it hinders the island's development prospects.

The conduct and stationing of U.S. military personnel on Okinawa are subject to the US. Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). All four services are represented. These forces assist in the defense of Japan according to the terms of the Mutual Security Treaty and have regional responsibilities that take them throughout the western

Pacific area on exercises and training missions.

U.S. Military

American life on Okinawa is heavily influenced by the presence of 50,000 U.S. military personnel and their families. The military bases offer a full range of American-style conveniences, shopping, education, and leisure activities. Some neighborhoods just outside the larger bases resemble similar communities in the U.S., with shops, restaurants, car lots, and bars catering to service members.

Although many Americans make an effort to experience Okinawan culture, most focus the vast majority of their activities on base and within the American community. This is partly attributable to the fact that, despite many years of association with Americans, relatively few Okinawans can converse easily in English. The decline of the dollar against the yen has also made it more expensive to venture off base for shopping or entertainment. At the same time, few Americans-most of them on short assignments-acquire a working competence in Japanese.

The U.S. Navy operates a hospital, and the Air Force a clinic, but the cost for civilians for nearly all forms of treatment is higher than at local hospitals. Off-base, only one hospital-Adventist Medical Center-has an English-speaking medical staff. For dental care, the only reasonable option is at an off-base clinic, such as Adventist's, because civilians are a low priority at military facilities and prices are far higher than off base.

Utilities

Electricity on Okinawa is 100 volt, 60 cycles, with American standard wiring. American appliances such as fans, microwaves, radios, lamps, TVs and VCRs usually operate without problem.

Although some TV programs on Japanese stations are bilingual, a U.S. bilingual set will not work. A special FM receiver can be pur-

chased locally for about \$100. Locally available rental videotapes are VHS. Telephone calls to the U.S. are relatively inexpensive, but internet service is somewhat costlier than in other countries since local calls are charged by the minute. During water shortages, water is rationed, and the tap water is not potable.

Food

Dairy products such as milk, cottage cheese, and sour cream are ultra-pasteurized for extended shelf life but still sometimes spoil prior to their expiration date. Japanese grocery stores offer a better selection of high-quality produce but at much higher prices. There is no need to import anything except perhaps ethnic or specialty cooking ingredients and spices. American and other wines and liquors are available.

Clothing

Bring clothing suitable for the Carolinas, including warm jackets. Clothes can be purchased at the exchange (akin to Walmart or Sears in selection, but with slightly higher prices), at local shops catering to foreigners (where prices are very high), or through catalog mail orders. Bring special sizes or brand names, or plan to shop by mail. Japanese adult clothing is expensive and comes only in small sizes. Dry-cleaning and laundry service is available on the military bases through Japanese concessions, so prices are the same as at off-base facilities.

Men: Normal US. leisure clothing is fine, bearing in mind that Japanese tend to dress conservatively.

Women: Cotton and other lightweight dresses and accessories are suitable for summer wear. Afternoon and evening wear is similar to that worn in the U.S., though depending on the occasion, more variety and less formality is seen. Scarves, jackets, and wraps are practical during the cool months. Lightweight wool suits and dresses are worn, as well as coats, jackets, and sweaters.

Children: Children dress as they would in the U.S. As with adults, shopping for children's clothing is best accomplished through local stores, and mail order. The supplies available on the island are adequate, but the range of choice in both style and price is often limited. Kids have the most luck in Japanese department stores, although prices are higher than in the U.S.

Religious Activities

Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox, and Muslim services are offered on the military bases. Protestant services offered off-base in English include Episcopalian, Lutheran, Baptist, Evangelical, and other denominations. There are a number of Catholic churches off-base, but not all offer masses in English.

Education

Several English-language school choices are available for children. The Department of Defense operates two senior high schools, two middle schools, and several elementary schools, offering a standard kindergarten through grade 12 American public school curriculum, athletic program, and after school activities, as well as a range of special education facilities.

The Okinawa Christian School is U.S. accredited and Protestant affiliated, and offers a kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum with American teachers and texts. It functions as the de facto international school here for students who do not have access to DOD schools, but want an English-language education; nearly half of the students come from non-Christian homes. The school is located in Yomitan village, a fair distance from the Consulate General residential areas; busing is available.

New Life Academy, which is not U.S. accredited, offers a kindergarten through grade 6 academic curriculum with a Christian focus. It is located in Okinawa City near Kadena Air Base.

Several Montessori pre-schools and kindergartens for children age 2-6 have been used by recent employees. All of the military bases have day care facilities for younger children, but waiting lists are long and military dependents are given preference. Some off-base care facilities include teaching components.

Special Educational Opportunities

The following universities offer undergraduate and graduate degrees on Okinawa through military base education offices:

* Central Texas College: Associate of Applied Science (business management, child development, computer technology, legal assistant, other)

* University of Maryland: Associate of Arts (accounting, Japanese studies, management, other); Bachelor of Arts (Asian studies, business management, English, history, psychology, sociology, other); Master of Education (counseling and personnel services); teaching certification (secondary teaching)

* Michigan State University: Master of Science (community service)

* University of Oklahoma: Master of Arts (economics); Master of Human Relations; Master of Public Administration

* Troy State University: Master of Science (educational leadership, management).

Sports

Okinawa offers a variety of excellent facilities for anyone interested in taking up or playing a personal sport. Okinawan bullfighting (bloodless, between two bulls), Japanese professional baseball games during spring training, and marathon running are options. There is an active Hash House Harriers organization, with several runs/walks weekly.

The military bases offer a selection of youth activities: Cub/Boy Scouts, Brownie/Girl Scouts, soccer, peewee

basketball, Little League baseball or t-ball, touch football, dance, gymnastics, cheerleading, etc.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Although many of the Okinawan beaches consist of ground coral mixed with sand, they are still one of the main attractions of a tour here. The better beaches on Okinawa charge an admission fee, but the military beaches are free. Wonderful islands just an hour away and accessible by ferry boats are great for snorkeling and diving. The northern half of Okinawa is sparsely populated and features a beautiful coastline of mountains and coral reefs. Unfortunately, all historical sites with the exception of ancient castle ruins were leveled in the 1945 battle. Shuri Castle, home of the most recent Okinawan monarch, has been rebuilt and is a major tourist attraction, as are other, older castle ruins. A large botanical garden and many well-maintained parks make Okinawa a family-friendly place.

Okinawa is a small, crowded island far from the mainland, so island fever can be a serious problem, especially given the prohibitively high cost of traveling off island. Northwest Airlines operates a ticketing office on Okinawa, but connections must be made in Tokyo or Osaka.

Entertainment

Japanese movie theaters show recent foreign films in the original language with Japanese subtitles, but admission is quite expensive. Video rental shops offer wide selections. A military TV station with standard U.S. programming, three Japanese TV commercial stations, and one Japanese public TV station, may be picked up off-site with roof antennas. The military also operates AM and FM radio stations. Numerous cable TV packages are available but more expensive than such services in the U.S.

Other eating establishments are found off-base at higher prices and include numerous steak houses,

Mexican, Korean, Chinese, Indian, Thai, Italian, French, Argentine, pizza, fast food, and Japanese restaurants. Prices are slightly lower than in Tokyo for comparable meals. Bars and discos abound,

though some refuse to cater to non-Japanese. American musical groups sometimes visit Okinawa, but these activities receive limited English-language publicity. Several large and impressive concert halls offer cultural events throughout the year.

Social Activities

The 50,000 military personnel and family members on Okinawa focus most of their activities on the bases. Contacts with most Americans, DOD personnel and others come from work, church, or through children's school activities. There is a small expatriate community and international women's clubs where English is spoken are active. Other international contacts are more difficult, though not impossible, without Japanese language ability.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Northwest and United Airlines offer several flights daily from the U.S. to Tokyo. American, Delta, and Continental Airlines also provide service. Flight time varies from 9 to 14 hours, depending on the route.

All international flights (except China Airlines, which operates between Japan and Taiwan out of Haneda) arrive and depart from the Tokyo International Airport at Narita. American airlines, Northwest and United are served at terminal 1. Continental Airlines and Delta Air Lines are served at Terminal 2. Clearance at Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine (CIQ) is fast and courteous.

Public transportation via airport limousine bus is recommended; it can be taken to a number of downtown hotels, including the Okura

and ANA. Train routing is complicated and taxi fares are prohibitive. Person using public transportation facilities into Tokyo are encouraged to limit accompanying baggage to two pieces plus one carry-on in view of limited baggage space available on the carriers.

Travelers arriving from the U.S. need no special immunizations. Those arriving directly from other areas of the world must make certain they have appropriate inoculations to enter Japan.

A valid passport and an onward/return ticket are required. A visa is not required for tourist/business stays up to 90 days. For information about the Japanese visa waiver for tourists, Japan's strict rules on work visas, special visas to take depositions, and other visa issues, travelers should consult the Consular Section of the Embassy of Japan at 2520 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. (202) 238-6700, or the nearest Japanese consulate. In the United States, there are Japanese consulates in the following cities: Agana (Guam), Anchorage, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Portland (Oregon), Saipan (Northern Marianas), San Francisco and Seattle. Additional information is available via the Internet on the Embassy of Japan home page at <http://www.embjapan.org/>.

U.S. citizens transiting Japan should ensure that their passports and visas are up to date before leaving the United States. Many Asian countries deny entry to travelers whose passports are valid for less than six months. It is not usually possible to obtain a new U.S. passport and foreign visa during a brief stopover while transiting Japan. Airlines in Japan will deny boarding to Americans who seek to transit Japan without the required travel documents for their final destinations in Asia.

It is illegal to bring into Japan some over-the-counter medicines com-

monly used in the United States, including inhalers and some allergy and sinus medications. Japanese customs officials have detained travelers carrying prohibited items, sometimes for several weeks. Some U.S. prescription medications cannot be imported into Japan, even when accompanied by a customs declaration and a copy of the prescription. Japanese physicians can often prescribe similar, but not identical, substitutes. Lists of Japanese physicians are available from the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo through its web site, from U.S. consulates in Japan, and from the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of American Citizens Services. Persons traveling to Japan carrying prescription medication that must be taken daily should consult the Japanese Embassy in the United States before leaving the U.S. to confirm whether they will be allowed to bring the particular medication into Japan. Japanese customs officials do not make on-the-spot "humanitarian" exceptions for medicines that are prohibited entry into Japan.

U.S. citizens resident in or visiting Japan are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo or one of the five U.S. Consulates in Japan, where they may also obtain updated information on travel and security within Japan. Registration forms are available via the home pages or by fax from the U.S. Embassy or one of the U.S. Consulates. Online registration is available for the areas served by the Embassy and our Consulate in Naha, Okinawa through the respective web sites. Travelers and residents can also sign up for an e-mail Community Security Update newsletter through the Embassy web site at <http://www.tokyoacs.com>. Alien registration formalities required under Japanese immigration law are separate from U.S. citizen registration, which is voluntary but allows U.S. consular officials to better assist American citizens in distress. Registration information is protected by the Privacy Act.

The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo is located at 1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420 Japan; telephone 81-3-3224-5000; fax 81-3-3224-5856. Recorded visa information for non-U.S. citizens is available at the following 24-hour toll phone number: 0990-526-160. The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo's web site is <http://www.tokyoacs.com>. Please see also the U.S. Commercial Service in Japan's web site at <http://www.csjapan.doc.gov>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe is located at 2-11-5 Nishitenma, Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8543; telephone 81-6-6315-5900; fax 81-6-6315-5914. Recorded information for U.S. citizens concerning U.S. passports, notarials and other American citizens services is available 24 hours at 81-6-6315-5900. Recorded visa information for non-U.S. citizens is available at the following 24-hour toll phone number: 0990-526-160. Its web site is <http://synapse.senri-i.or.jp/amcon/>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Naha is located at 2564 Nishihara, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2101; telephone 81-98-876-4211; fax 81-98-876-4243. Its web site is <http://www.congennaha.org>.

The U.S. Consulate General in Sapporo is located at Kita 1-Jo Nishi 28-chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo 064-0821; telephone 81-11-641-1115, fax 81-11-643-1283. Its web site is <http://usembassy.state.gov/sapporo/>.

The U.S. Consulate in Fukuoka is located at 2-5-26 Ohori, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0052; telephone 81-92-751-9331; fax 81-92-713-9222. Its web site is <http://usembassy.state.gov/fukuoka/>.

The U.S. Consulate in Nagoya is located at the Nishiki SIS Building, 6th Floor, 3-10-33 Nishiki, Naka-ku, Nagoya 460-0003; telephone 81-52-203-4011; fax 81-52-201-4612. The U.S. Consulate in Nagoya offers only limited emergency consular services for U.S. citizens. The U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe handles all routine matters. A consular officer from the U.S. Consulate

General in Osaka-Kobe visits the U.S. Consulate in Nagoya on the second Wednesday of every month. During those visits the consular officer provides consular services to U.S. citizens by appointment. To make an appointment for consular services in Nagoya, please contact the U.S. Consulate in Nagoya at the number listed above. The U.S. Consulate in Nagoya's web site is <http://usembassy.state.gov/nagoya>

Pets

All dogs and cats imported into Japan are subject to a minimum quarantine of 14 days to a maximum of 180 days at the Animal Quarantine Facility of the arrival airport (Shin-Chitose, Narita, Haneda, Kansai, Fukuoka, Kagoshima, Naha airports).

Upon arrival, you must present two types of documents to the Animal Quarantine Office at the airport: 1. Health Certificate issued or endorsed by the government agency, indicating that your pet is rabies- or leptospirosis-free. 2. Rabies Vaccination Certificate, including the date, type and validity of the vaccination. The vaccination must be administered over 30 days prior to entry into Japan and still be within the valid period. You will also need to fill in an import quarantine application form at the Animal Quarantine Office.

When your pet is not hand carried, the importers need to notify the Animal Quarantine Services in charge of the importing airport from 70 to 40 days prior to the arrival. Advance information about the pet should include the following: species of animal, total number, sex, age, weight and country of origin, estimated date of arrival, name and address of consignee and consignor, date and port of embarkation, flight information, and any remarks you would like to put for their information.

The owner of the dog/cat is not required to be present in order to apply for quarantine inspection. Such application may be made by proxy. The Quarantine Service

charges a detention fee for pets, which includes boarding, food and care while in quarantine, at a rate of around Y2,000-Y2,500 per day for a cat and Y3,000-Y3,500 for a dog, depending on the size. In relation to your pet import, other costs such as transportation fee to kennel custom clearances and import tax will be involved.

Importing pets from countries other than the U.S. may have different requirements. Please contact the Animal Quarantine Office at Narita at 81-476-32-6664 or <http://www.animal-quarantine-service.go.jp>.

Firearms and Ammunition

Local law prohibits the purchase and/or importation of personally owned firearms.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency in Japan is the yen. Bills are in denominations of Y10,000, Y1,000. Coins are Y500, Y100, Y50, Y10 and Y1. Japanese currency floats on international markets so exchange rates can vary dramatically. In calendar year 2000, the exchange rate has averaged about Y107 to the U.S. dollar.

The use of credit cards is not widespread, particularly outside major cities. While there are ATMs in Japan, most are not open 24 hours a day or do not accept a U.S.-based card.

Japan uses the metric system of weights and measures.

Disaster Preparedness

Japan is faced with the ever-present danger of deadly earthquakes and typhoons. Japan is one of the most seismically-active locations in the world; minor tremors are felt regularly throughout the islands. While responsibility for caring for disaster victims, including foreigners, rests with the Japanese authorities, one of the first things a traveler should do upon arriving in Japan is to learn about earthquake and disaster preparedness from hotel or local government officials. Additional details

on self-preparedness are available via the Internet on Embassy Tokyo's web site at <http://www.tokyoacs.com>

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. (2nd Mon)	Coming of Age Day (Adults Day)*
Feb. 3	Beginning of Spring
Feb. 5	Martyr Day
Feb. 11	National Foundation Day
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Mar. 3	Doll's Festival (Girl's Festival)
Mar. 14	White Day
Mar. 21	Vernal Equinox
Apr. 29	Green Day
May 1	May Day
May 3	Constitution Day
May 5	Children's Day (Boy's Festival)
July 7	Star Festival
July 20	Ocean Day
July/Aug.	Obon (Commerates deceased ancestors)
Sept. 16	Respect for the Aged Day
Sept. 21/22	Autumnal Equinox
Oct. (2nd Mon)	Sports Day
Nov. 3	Culture Day
Nov. 23	Labor Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 23	Emperor's Birthday
Dec. 25	Christmas

*variable

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KAZAKSTAN

Republic of Kazakstan

Major City:

Almaty

Other Cities:

Astana, Chimkent, Karaganda, Pavlodar, Semipalatinsk

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **KAZAKSTAN** celebrated its tenth anniversary of independence in 2001. Kazakstan is the ninth largest country in the world, but has a relatively small population of 15 million. In 2000, the Government of Kazakstan completed its move to the new capital Astana. The U.S. Embassy is still located in Almaty, which remains the country's largest city, business center and transportation hub. Many Americans also travel to Atyrau and

Aktau, cities in the heart of Kazakstan's oil producing region on the Caspian Sea

As in several other former Soviet republics, ethnic conflict has erupted into violence. In Kazakstan, the conflict is between the Kazakhs and Russians. The Kazakhs represent 53% of the population; Russians 30%.

MAJOR CITY

Almaty

Almaty (Formerly Alma-Ata) was the capital of Kazakstan from 1929 to 2000. It is the largest city with over 1.3 million residents. Almaty (apple place) is located just north of the Trans-Alay Alatau Mountains, near the border with Kyrgyzstan. The city is situated at an altitude of 2,300–3,000 feet above sea level.

Modern Almaty was founded by the Russians in 1854 and was settled by a variety of ethnic groups, but mainly Russians and Ukrainians.

In the 1930s, the population increased dramatically after the construction of the Turkish-Siberian Railroad. Industrial development followed and the capital is now a major industrial center.

Education

The Almaty International School is a private, coeducational institution for children from preschool to grade eight. The University of Nebraska provides correspondence courses for grades nine through twelve. The school's curriculum is similar to U.S. schools.

Recreation and Entertainment

The mountainous area in which Almaty is located offers much of interest to the tourist. Chalets on the mountain slopes may be rented. Mountaineering, skiing, and winter sports are available. In the mountains, 12 miles from Almaty, is the Medeo Winter Sports Complex, where many skating records have been set.

Visits to other areas of Kazakstan should be made by air; the distances are great. Lake Balkhash is a 45-



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Building in Almaty, Kazakhstan

minute flight from Almaty. Part freshwater, part seawater, the lake is 400 miles long. Near Karaganda is Baykonur, which was the site of a Soviet space center. Space flights, with cosmonauts aboard, were launched from here.

Almaty is a pretty city with well-thought out urban planning. Trees line the wide streets and there are many parks for the residents to enjoy. The city's natural beauty is enhanced by the nearby mountain range. Built in 1907, the former Russian Orthodox Cathedral is the only historical building of note. Made of wood, it is the second highest such building in the world.

Kazakhstan's academic and cultural life is centered in Almaty. Located here are 15 institutions of higher learning, including Kazakh State University, with 13,000 students, and many research organizations. Several museums have been established, including the Kasteyev Kazakh State Art Museum containing 20,000 exhibits and a library of 30,000 volumes, and the Central State Museum of Kazakhstan, with 90,000 exhibits. The State Public Library, founded in 1931, has almost 3.5 million volumes in its collection. The city also has a botanical garden.

Cultural performances are offered by the Abay Opera and Ballet Theatre, Avez Drama Theatre, Lermontov Russian Drama Theatre, and the Uighur and Korean Theatre of Music and Drama. Reflecting the ethnic diversity of Almaty, performances are given in several languages.

OTHER CITIES

With a population of 313,000 (1999 est.), **ASTANA** became the capital of Kazakhstan in 1997. Officially, the move of the government from Almaty to Astana was due to Almaty's susceptibility to earthquakes and its proximity to the Chinese border. However, the government also hopes that relocation of the capital will both boost the economy in the northern regions and ease ethnic divisions between the predominantly Russian north and the Kazakh south.

Though much work is yet to be done in building the city as a more prosperous capital, Astana is set to become the most important cultural and scientific center of Kazakhstan. The L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian University and Akmola State Medical Academy are located in Astana, as

is the Kazakh Scientific-Research Institute of Grain and Agricultural Products. In the past few years, several major hotels have been built and the city now offers a modern trade center; Zhastar, a sports and entertainment complex; Kinderdorf, a children's park; two drama theatres; and a branch of the Union of Writers and Artists of Kazakhstan. A memorial to the famous Russian poet A.S. Pushkin is also located in Astana and construction of a national museum and library is already underway.

The surrounding Central Region offers a variety of sight-seeing excursions. Lake Balkash, is one of the largest lakes in the world and is half saltwater, half freshwater. The Bayan-Aul National Park has rock drawings, stone sculptures, and hiking opportunities around clean, sparkling lakes.

CHIMKENT (also spelled Cimkent) is located in southern Kazakhstan by the Turkestan-Siberian Railroad line, approximately 75 miles north of Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Established in the 12th century, Chimkent is now a major industrial, cultural, and rail transportation center. The city has a population of 404,000.

Founded in 1856, **KARAGANDA** has a population of 596,000 and is Kazakhstan's second largest city. It is a sprawling city, containing more than 300 square miles. Large coal deposits, major iron and steel works, and a railway link have contributed to the city's growth and importance. Karaganda has five institutions of higher education, including a university established in 1972.

PAVLODAR, with a population of 349,000, is 180 miles northwest of Semipalatinsk. Located in a fertile farming region, since the mid-1960s it has developed into a major industrial center with several heavy industries and an oil refinery.

SEMIPALATINSK, located in the northeastern section of the country near the Russian Federation border,

has a population of 342,000. Founded in 1718, the gates of the old fort still exist. Semipalatinsk's growth has been due to its location at the junction of trade, caravan, and railway lines. The city is known for its food processing and meat packing industries. In the late 1980s, its factories produced one-third of Kazakstan's consumer goods. Residents of Semipalatinsk have been plagued with health problems that some attribute to nuclear fall out. In a forty year span, 1949–1989, 500 nuclear devices were detonated at the nuclear test site here.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Kazakstan is the second largest (after the Russian Federation) of the former Soviet republics. At 1,049,200 square miles, it represented 12 percent of the former U.S.S.R.'s total land area and is approximately four times the size of Texas. The country borders the Russian Federation to the north; China to the east; the Caspian Sea to the west; and Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to the south.

The country has a diversified landscape. Lowlands account for more than one-third of its territory, mountainous regions for one-fifth, and the rest consists of hilly plains and plateaus. There are also several sparsely inhabited desert regions. Khan-Tengri Peak on the Kazakstan-Kyrgyzstan border is the highest point.

The area around Almaty is subject to earthquakes and mud slides. Earthquakes in 1887 and 1911, along with a serious mud slide in 1921, resulted in much destruction. A dam, built in 1966, has reduced considerably the chances of another catastrophic mud slide.

Most of Kazakstan's climate is continental with hot summers and cold winters. However, the different elevations result in wide variations in temperature and precipitation. In Almaty, daytime temperatures in July average 81°F; in January the average is 23°F.

Population

The estimated population of Kazakstan is approximately 16,820,000 (2000). Kazakhs (a Turkish people with Mongol features) make up 46 percent of the population; Russians, who live mainly in the north, comprise 35 percent; and Germans, residing mostly in the northeast, three percent. More than 100 other ethnic groups live in the country.

Deaths of Kazakhs during the U.S.S.R.'s collectivization programs and purges plus the immigration of many ethnic groups has resulted, until recently, in the Kazakhs being a minority in their own country. Much of the German immigration resulted from forced deportation by Stalin as German troops invaded Russia in the early 1940s. Recently, many Germans living in Kazakstan have migrated to Germany.

Russians were sent to Kazakstan to work in the industrial sector and to suppress Kazakh nationalism. The large Russian population has led to ethnic conflict with the Kazakhs. There were riots in December 1986, in 1989 when Kazakh was declared the official language, and again in 1991 when Kazakhs became leery about Russian Federation designs on the mostly Russian inhabited area along the northern border. Independence and the resulting fall of Kazakstan's Russians as the more privileged class have led to an increase in ethnic tension.

Russian was the official language for many years, but in 1989 a law was passed declaring Kazakh the official language. Russian is still commonly used. Uighur, German, and Korean are spoken by small portions of the population.

Most Kazakhs are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi school. Kazakstan has 60 mosques and 230 Islamic religious communities. An Islamic institute is located in Almaty. The major Christian denomination is Russian Orthodox, attended by the Slavic minorities. Protestant churches, mainly Baptist, are also found.

Government

Kazakstan's declared its sovereignty in October 1990, and its independence on December 16, 1991, one of the last two Soviet republics to do so. The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic then adopted the name Republic of Kazakstan, and United Nations membership followed on March 2, 1992. The Kazakh Communist Party disbanded seven months later.

Kazakstan is a constitutional republic with a strong presidency. The president is the head of state and the commander in chief of the armed forces. Nursultan Nazarbayev, an ethnic Kazakh and former leader of the Communist Party, was elected as president in 1990 and reelected in 1999. The prime minister chairs the Cabinet of Ministers and serves as Kazakstan's head of government. There are four deputy prime ministers, 14 ministers, and 11 chairmen of state agencies. Kasimzhomart Tokayev, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been Prime Minister since 1999.

Kazakstan has a bicameral parliament, comprised of a Lower House (the Mazhilis) and upper house (the Senate). The 77-seat Mazhilis is popularly elected by single mandate districts, with 10 members elected by party-list vote. The Senate has 39 members. Two senators are selected by each of the elected assemblies (Maslikhats) of Kazakstan's 16 principal administrative divisions. The president appoints the remaining seven senators.

Political parties have traditionally played little role in local politics, where personal and family ties are

more important. Several new parties formed and were registered in 1999 following passage of a constitutional amendment that created 10 new seats in the Mazhilis attributed by party-list voting.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is free and compulsory between the ages of seven and 14. More than 60 percent of primary and secondary students are taught in Russian. However, since Kazakh was established as the official language in 1989, there have been attempts to increase the number of schools using it as the language of instruction. There are 55 institutions of higher education, including three universities—Karaganda State University, Kazakh State University, and the Technical University at Karaganda Metallurgical Combine.

Commerce and Industry

Kazakstan has vast quantities of a variety of natural resources. Almost one-fifth of the coal mined in the former Soviet Union was from here and the country has major oil reserves, much of it not yet exploited. A focus on oil production and increased prices in the world market provided a much needed boost to the economy in 2000. In that year, the GDP grew nearly 10%.

Foreign investments in oil and mineral exports have been significant for the industry with over \$12 billion in investments since 1993. The Tengiz oil field, developed by the TengizChevroil joint venture, established by the Government and Chevron in 1993 and subsequently expanded to include ExxonMobil and Lukarco, is the flagship foreign investment project in Kazakstan. Kazakstan's current oil production is not that vast, almost 800,000 barrels/day, but offshore oil discoveries in the North Caspian Sea look promising.

Kazakstan has become a major regional grain exporter, supplying markets in Russia, Iran, China and other Central Asian countries. Important agricultural crops are grain, meat, and cotton.

With unemployment at about 12.8% in 2000, the government is taking an active role in seeing that foreign firms give preference to Kazakstanis in their employment practices. The government has also tightened its policy on foreign labor, which has made it more difficult for foreign companies to obtain work permits for expatriate employees.

Transportation

Several airlines have frequent flights to and from Kazakstan.

Railroad service is also available within Kazakstan and neighboring major cities.

Roads are in poor repair, especially in rural areas. The road between Almaty and Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan is especially treacherous at night or during poor weather. Americans and other travelers have been killed in traffic accidents on that road, and travel at night is not recommended. Street lighting, especially on side streets, may be turned off at night. Drivers often ignore lane markings. Potholes are common, and they are often dangerously deep. Pedestrians frequently dart out in front of cars. Visitors should use special caution if driving at night. Defensive driving is a must because many local drivers do not follow traffic laws. Accidents involving severe injury and/or death are common. Traffic police have reportedly stopped cars to seek bribes on main city streets and at periodic checkpoints on major highways.

Travelers should be particularly careful when using public transportation and taxis. Buses tend to be very crowded and can be unsafe and unreliable. Due to the danger of theft or assault, travelers should be selective regarding which taxi they contract and always avoid entering

a cab that already contains persons other than the driver.

Communications

Telephone service is considered fair to good. Phone service to the other former Soviet republics is by land line or microwave; to other foreign countries, by the Moscow international gateway switch.

Kazakh Radio broadcasts in several languages: Kazakh, Russian, Uighur, German, and Korean. State TV broadcasts informational programs and films in both Kazakh and Russian languages, with filler shows about Kazakh music and dance. In the cities, independent television stations are popular. Their main fare is poorly-dubbed pirated American films and cartoons. They also focus on local news shows. Talk shows with interesting discussions but uninspiring production values are also popular. Televised classified advertising is also a favorite among the people.

Kazakstanis are avid newspaper readers, but the print media is in poor financial health. Most newspapers have drastically reduced their circulation due to the cost and difficulty in obtaining paper. The government supports freedom of the press. Investigative reporting and political commentaries are popular. English-language and German-language newspapers and magazines are available at newsstands in major hotels and the airports.

Health

Medical care has declined since independence and does not meet Western standards. There is a severe shortage of basic medical supplies, including disposable needles, anesthetics, and antibiotics. U.S. citizens in frail health are strongly advised not to visit Kazakstan.

Several regions of the country have high rates of infant deaths, birth defects, and illness. Most severely affected are the areas around the

Aral and Caspian Seas, which suffer from pesticide damage; the area around Semipalatinsk, which was a nuclear test site; and in industrialized cities, which have pollution from their factories.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A valid passport and visa are required. The Kazakstan Embassy in Washington, D.C., issues visas (based on an invitation from an individual or organizational sponsor in Kazakstan). The U.S. Embassy in Almaty does not issue letters of invitation to citizens interested in private travel to Kazakstan. All travelers, even those simply transiting Kazakstan for less than 72 hours, must obtain a Kazakstan visa before entering the country. Travelers may also be asked to provide proof at the border of their onward travel arrangements. Travelers transiting through Kazakstan are reminded to check that their visas allow for sufficient number of entries to cover each transit trip and to check the length of validity of the visa. Crossing the land border to and from the neighboring Kyrgyz Republic can result in delays or demands from border officials to pay fines. For complete information concerning entry requirements, U.S. citizens should contact the Kazakstan Embassy at 1401 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 232-5488. The Kazakstan Embassy may also be reached by Email:kazak@intr.net, and at their home page: <http://www.kazakhstan-embassy-us.org>.

Several border areas with China and cities in close proximity to military installations require prior permission from the government to enter. In 2001, the government declared the following areas closed to foreigners: Gvardeyskiy village, Rossavel village, and Kulzhabashy railway station in Zhambyl Oblast; Bokeyorda and Zhangaly districts in Western Kazakstan Oblast; the

town of Priozersk and Gulshad village in Karaganda Oblast; and Baykonur, Karmakshy, and Kazakly districts in Kyzylorda Oblast. Americans traveling within Kazakstan have on occasion reported local officials who demand documentation authorizing travel within their area of jurisdiction, despite appropriate registration in Almaty or Astana. Americans should report any trouble with local authorities to the U.S. Embassy in Almaty.

There are local Kazakstani registration requirements. All travelers staying for more than three business days must register with the Office of Visas and Registration (OVIR). OVIR offices are located in Almaty, Astana and all other major cities. Visitors who do not register may have to pay fines upon departure. All visitors who plan to stay more than 30 days must also present to the OVIR office within 30 days of arrival a certificate indicating a negative HIV test conducted no more than one month before registration. Evidence of an HIV test performed abroad is acceptable. Testing may also be done at the Center for the Prevention and Control of AIDS (7 Talgarskaya Street, Almaty).

Tenge, Kazakstan's currency, can be exported in amounts up to \$10,000 without written certification on the origin of funds. For legal requirements on the export of tenge, travelers should consult with local Customs officials. In practice, travelers have been erroneously charged duty on tenge exports or asked to surrender tenge before departing the country. Kazakstani customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning export from Kazakstan of items such as antiquities. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakstan in Washington for specific information at 1401 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 232-5488.

Americans living in or visiting Kazakstan are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy Consular Section in Almaty and obtain

updated information on travel and security within Kazakstan. Registration with the Embassy is different from Kazakstani OVIR registration. It can help the U.S. Embassy contact you in case of an emergency, and it can streamline replacement of a lost or stolen passport. The U.S. Embassy in Almaty is 11 hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time and is located at 99/97A Furmanova Street, tel. 7-3272-63-39-21, after-hour emergencies 7-3272-50-76-27, fax 7-3272-50-62-69, and e-mail: consularalmaty@state.gov.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Kazakstan remains largely a cash economy. Traveler's checks and credit cards are not widely accepted, except at large hotels and restaurants catering to international visitors. U.S. dollars can easily be exchanged for the local currency (tenge) at local and authorized currency exchanges, but all denominations of U.S. dollar bills must have been issued after 1990 and be in good condition (not worn or torn and without any writing or marks).

Disaster Preparedness

Kazakstan, especially the mountainous southeast region, is an earthquake-prone country. The U.S. Department of State has ranked the earthquake threat level within Almaty as a Level 4 (the highest level assigned). Building practices within Kazakstan do not generally meet U.S. seismic standards. In addition, local authorities do not have sufficient resources to respond to a large-scale disaster. American citizens traveling to Kazakstan are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy Consular Section to assist in contacting them in the event of an emergency. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Christmas (Orthodox)
Mar. 8	International Women's Day
Mar. 22	Nauryz Meyrami (Traditional Spring Holiday)
May 1	Labor Day/ People's Unity Day
May 5	Constitution Day
May 9	Victory Day
Aug. 24	Flag Day
Aug. 30	Constitution Day
Oct. 25	Republic Day
Dec. 16	Independence Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Allworth, Edward, ed. *Central Asia: One Hundred Twenty Years of Russian Rule*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989.

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Bodger, Alan. *The Kazakhs and the Pugachev Uprising in Russia 1773–1775*. Bloomington, IN: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 1988.

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Larin, Veniamin. *Kazakhstan*. Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Pub. House, 1980.

Olcott, Martha Brill. *The Kazakhstan*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1987.

Warner, Warren. *Kazakhstan: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*. Houston, TX: R. and M. Cullen, 1989.

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KIRIBATI

Republic of Kiribati

Major City:

Tarawa

Other Cities:

Abemama, Butaritari

INTRODUCTION

The main wave of Micronesian settlement to the islands now known as **KIRIBATI** came from the Samoa Islands sometime between the 11th and 14th centuries, but the Samoans were probably not the first settlers. European contact began in 1537, when Kirimati (Christmas Island) was sighted by the Spanish. Commercial activity by the English began in the early 19th century. By the 1850s and 1860s, trade ships were visiting the islands regularly. The British declared a protectorate over the Gilbert and Ellice island groups in 1892. During World War II, the Japanese occupied the Gilberts until 1943. In 1974, the Ellice island group split away and became the independent nation of Tuvalu. Self-government for the Gilberts was established on July 12, 1979, and the islands became the independent Republic of Kiribati.

MAJOR CITY

Tarawa

Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati, is actually a small atoll with government offices located on south

Tarawa at Betio, Bairiki, and Bikenibeu. Tarawa lies among the nation's western island group between the larger islands of Maiana and Marakei.

Tarawa has a population of about 28,000. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, Tarawa's population increased ten-fold. An estimated 40% of the country's entire population lives on Tarawa, and overcrowding of the island is a major concern. The government has begun a resettlement program to eventually relocate almost 5,000 people from the densely populated western atolls (especially Tarawa) to the sparsely populated or uninhabited Line Islands and Phoenix Islands. During 1988–93, some 4,700 people were resettled on the Teraina and Tabuaeran atolls in the eastern Line Islands.

Most of the country's roads are located on Tarawa. The Nippon Causeway, completed in 1987 with Japanese assistance, replaced ferry service between the town of Bairiki and Betio (an islet) on Tarawa. A series of similar causeways linking north and south Tarawa are under construction.

Betio is the main port for western Kiribati and is equipped to handle containers. The Pacific Forum Line

links Tarawa with other shipping routes. The airport at the town of Bonriki on Tarawa handles international flights.

An industrial center was established in 1990 at Betio with aid from Great Britain. Manufactured items include clothing, shoes, furniture, leather goods, and kamaimai (coconut liquor). The Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific, located at Bairiki, provides technical assistance for agriculture and nutrition programs.

Recreation and Entertainment

Tourism is underdeveloped because of a lack of regular transport. Tarawa has a visitors' bureau, and there is a hotel on Betio. However, the government has singled out Kirimati, in the eastern Line Islands, for tourist development. The government is encouraging ecotourism, game fishing, and the promotion of historic battle sites of World War II. The Japanese constructed a fortress on Betio, which was the site of a 1943 battle resulting in 4,000 Japanese, 1,000 American, and no Kiribati casualties. Soccer is a popular recreational sport, and traditional singing and dancing are practiced. The National Library and Archives in Tarawa has 50,000 volumes. Items are in storage at the National

Archives in anticipation of the formation of a national museum to be built in Tarawa.

OTHER CITIES

Robert Louis Stevenson was one of the most famous temporary residents in **ABEMAMA**. He came to the island in 1889 with his wife. As the story goes, she was so taken by the place that she took it upon herself to design a flag for the island, which featured the picture of a shark wearing a crown. Of course, the flag was never officially used. The atoll is one of the Gilbert islands with a population of about 3,200 (1990 est.). With the exception of two major resorts, it remains fairly undeveloped. As such it provides an opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty of the island and experience the original I-Kiribati culture. Nature lovers should try to catch a sight of the unusual tiny yellow "barking" frog that is believed to be helpful in controlling the mosquito population. Abemama is about 50 mi. southwest of Tarawa and can be reached by air or boat.

The lush, green island of **BUTARITARI** (formerly Makin Island) is worth a visit for the adventuresome who don't mind a little rain. Also located in the Gilbert Islands, Butaritari has a population of over 3,700 (1990 est.) and receives about 157" of rain a year. Several war relics, included downed aircraft can be seen around the island as what remains from a 1942 US Marine operation. The American film, "Gung Ho," basically retells the story of this operation, starring Ronald Regan. Visitors will want to find an opportunity to sample fried breadfruit while on the island, since this particularly variety does not exist anywhere else. A large, beautiful lagoon with coral reefs can be explored from the island.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The islands of Kiribati are situated around the intersection of the International Date Line and the Equator. Scattered over 2 million square miles are 33 islands with a total land area of 277 square miles. Kiribati has more sea area per person than any other country. There are three main island groups: the seventeen Gilbert Islands, the eight Line Islands, and the eight Phoenix Islands.

The islands are coral atolls built on submerged volcanic chain and seldom rise more than 13 feet above sea level. Kirimati (Christmas Island), in the Line Islands, is the largest atoll in the world, with an area of 481 square miles. The atoll was used as a nuclear test site by the British from 1957 to 1962, and by the US in 1962.

Kiribati has an equatorial climate, with high humidity during the November–April rainy season. Although the islands lie outside the traditional South Pacific tropical storm belt, there are occasional gales and even cyclones. Annual rainfall varies from 40 inches near the Equator to 120 inches in the extreme north and south. Daily temperatures range from 77°F to 90°F, with very little fluctuation during the year. The islands have prevailing easterly trade winds.

Population

Kiribati has a population of approximately 87,000, unevenly distributed among the islands. Some 40% of the population is concentrated on Tarawa, while some of the islands of the Phoenix and Line groups are uninhabited. Since the 1980s, the government has resettled people from Tarawa to Teraira and Tabuar-ean in the Line Islands because of overcrowding.

Nearly all of the country's population is Gilbertese or Micronesian. Polynesians (mainly from Tuvalu) account for less than 0.5%, and Europeans and people of mixed races, 0.6%.

Nearly all the population is Christian, the largest sects being the Kiribati Protestant Church and the Roman Catholic Church. Religious minorities include Seventh-Day Adventists, Church of God, Assemblies of God, Mormons, and Baha'is. Christianity is an integral part of social interaction.

The main languages spoken are Gilbertese (I-Kiribati) and English. The official language is English, but it is seldom used on the outer islands. I-Kiribati is an Austronesian language related to many other in the South Pacific.

Government

Kiribati became an independent democratic republic within the Commonwealth of Nations in 1979.

Kiribati has a unicameral chamber legislature called the Maneaba ni Maungatabu House of Assembly). There are 41 members: 39 are directly elected for four years; the Attorney-General is an ex-officio member; and there is one representative of the Banaban community (inhabitants of Ocean island). The president is head of both state and government, and is also directly elected. The president appoints a cabinet from the incumbent members of the Maneaba, with which he shares executive power.

In 1994, Teburoro Tito, head of the Maneaban Te Mauri Party, was elected president.

The judicial system consists of the High Court, a court of appeal, and magistrates' courts. All judicial appointments are made by the president.

Though political parties do exist, they are more similar to informal coalitions in behavior. They do not have official platforms or party

structures. Most candidates are considered as independents.

Kiribati's flag shows a blue and white heraldic representation of the Pacific waters, with a golden sun rising on a red background. There is a golden frigate bird in flight over the sun.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15. For many residents, a primary-level education is all that is needed to succeed in a subsistence community. Secondary school students take the New Zealand School Certificate. Tarawa Technical Institute conducts courses in technical and vocational subjects. A nurses' training center operates at the hospital in Tarawa. The Marine Training Centre trains about 200 students each year for working on foreign merchant shipping lines. There is a state-operated college for primary school teachers, and a satellite center of Fiji's University of the South Pacific at Tarawa.

Commerce and Industry

The people of Kiribati depend on the sea for their livelihood. Individuals fish for their family's food, and commercial fishing is also important. A hatchery provides bait fish to domestic commercial fishing vessels. The government also sells fishing licenses to foreign fishing vessels, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force patrols the vast sea area to discourage poaching. The economy relies on foreign aid supplied by the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Japan, and Australia. Foreign aid typically accounts for 25–30% of the domestic economy. Money sent home by men working overseas on oceangoing vessels accounts for a significant portion of the cash economy. The economy was once reliant on phosphate exports from the island of Banaba until production ceased in 1979. Since then

Kiribati has relied on fishing, subsistence agriculture, and exports of copra (dried coconut meat). Coconuts are one of the few natural resources on the islands, due to poor soil quality and occasional droughts.

Tourism is one of the largest domestic activities. Between 3,000 and 4,000 visitors per year provide \$5–\$10 million in revenue. Attractions include World War II battle sites, game fishing, ecotourism, and the Millennium Islands, situated just inside the International Date Line and the first place on earth to celebrate every New Year. The government is also promoting Kirimati (Christmas Island) in the Line Islands as a tourist destination for game fishing and bird watching.

With a per capita GDP of about \$850 (2000 est.), Kiribati is one of the poorest nations in the world.

Transportation

Kiribati has about 400 miles of roads, mostly on Tarawa. The Nippon Causeway opened in the 1980s, connecting Betio and Bariki. Other causeways linking north and south Tarawa were built in the 1990s. There is no rail, river, or lake transport, but canoes travel across the lagoons frequently. Motorcycles are the most popular land vehicles.

Roads in Tarawa, while satisfactory in some areas, are generally in need of repair. After heavy rains, some road sections experience temporary flooding. Vehicle traffic proceeds at a relatively slow rate. Drinking and driving is a common practice, especially on the weekends. Kiribati was a former British protectorate, and cars drive on the left side of the road.

The main islands have airstrips that are served from Tarawa. Passenger ferries also go to many of the smaller islands.

Communications

Radio Kiribati, operated by the government, is the country's only radio station, transmitting in I-Kiribati and English and broadcasting a few imported Australian shows. Tarawa has an earth station to transmit and receive satellite communications. Kiribati is on the Peacesat network, which provides educational transmissions from Suva, Fiji.

There is no commercial press; all publications are government- or church-sponsored. The government publishes the weekly *Atoll Pioneer*; *Te Itoi ni Kiribati* is published by the Roman Catholic Church; and *Te Kaotan te Ota* is published monthly by the Protestant Church.

Health

The Central Hospital in Tarawa, with 160 beds, is the main health care facility. There are four medical districts, each with its own medical officer and staff. Each inhabited island has its own medical dispensary, and a medical radio network links all the islands.

Tuberculosis is the most serious health problem on the islands. Other problems include leprosy, filariasis, and dysentery. Vitamin A deficiency, causing night blindness and xerophthalmia, occurs often among children in Kiribati. There was a cholera outbreak in the 1970s.

As the role of cash in the economy has grown, the level of nutrition has declined. Malnutrition, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular problems have increased among urbanized islanders, because many have given up the traditional nutrient-rich diet for store-bought rice, canned food, and sweets. Inhabitants of the outer islands have largely avoided these nutritional problems.

All water should be regarded as a potential health risk. Visitors should therefore refrain from drinking any water that is not bottled, boiled or otherwise sterilized. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit should be peeled before eating.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A valid passport and visa are required. Visa requirements include one application form, two photos and a fee. There is no Embassy of Kiribati in the United States. For information on entry requirements, please contact the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Kiribati, Suite 503, 850 Richards Street, Honolulu, HI 96813, telephone (808) 529-7703; fax (808)521-8304. For visa or other information, travelers may consult the Consular Section of the nearest British embassy or consulate. The British Embassy in the United States is located at 3100 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20008. The telephone number is (202) 588-7800.

The Republic of Kiribati's customs authorities strictly prohibit the importation of firearms, ammunition, explosives and indecent publications. Strict quarantine laws govern the import of any part of plants, fruits, vegetables, soil, as well as animals and animal products. Visitors are not allowed to export human remains, artifacts

that are 30 or more years old, traditional fighting swords, traditional tools, dancing ornaments or suits of armor. For more information, please contact the British Embassy.

Americans living in or visiting Kiribati are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Majuro, whose consular district includes the Republic of Kiribati. U.S. citizens may also obtain updated information on travel and security within Kiribati from the Embassy. Officers of the U.S. Embassy in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, are concurrently accredited to Kiribati and make periodic visits. The U.S. Embassy does not have a street address in Majuro. The Embassy is located on the ocean-side of the island's road, near the Church of the Latter-Day Saints and Gibson's Express, "Long Island." The U.S. Embassy's mailing address is P.O. Box 1379, Majuro, MH 96960-1379. The telephone number is (692) 247-4011. The fax number is (692) 247-4012.

Currency

In Kiribati, the Australian dollar is the legal currency. Travelers' checks and all major currencies are

accepted by banks and may also be exchanged for local currency at some local hotels. Visa and MasterCard are accepted at most hotels

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 18.	Health Day
July 12	Independence Day
Aug.	Youth Day*
Dec. 10	Human Rights Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Journal Films. *Kiribati*. Produced by Juniper Films, 1989.

KOREA, NORTH

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Major Cities:

Pyongyang, Hamhung, Chongjin, Wonsan

Other Cities:

Haeju, Hyesan, Kanggye, Kimch'aek, Najin, Namp'o, Sinuiju

INTRODUCTION

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or **NORTH KOREA**, is one of the world's last hard-line Communist nations. Since its creation in 1948, North Korea has been extremely hostile toward Western nations, especially the United States, and has isolated itself from most of the world. The fall of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 has deprived North Korea of many important allies and trading markets.

Since the end of the Korean War in 1953, North Korea has pursued, both through violence and peaceful negotiations, reunification with neighboring South Korea. On September 17, 1991, North Korea was granted a seat in the United Nations along with South Korea and five other nations. The North Koreans had previously been barred from membership because of their opposition to a separate seat for South Korea. The two countries signed an historic nonaggression pact on December 13, 1991. The pact called for a relaxation of trade and travel restrictions and allowed the construction of telephone and postal services between North and South Korea. The accord has allowed the reunification of families

separated since the end of the Korean War. On December 31, 1991, North Korea and South Korea signed an agreement that banned the production of nuclear weapons by either country. The new openness between the two Koreas has renewed the hope that a political reunification of the Korean peninsula will eventually occur.

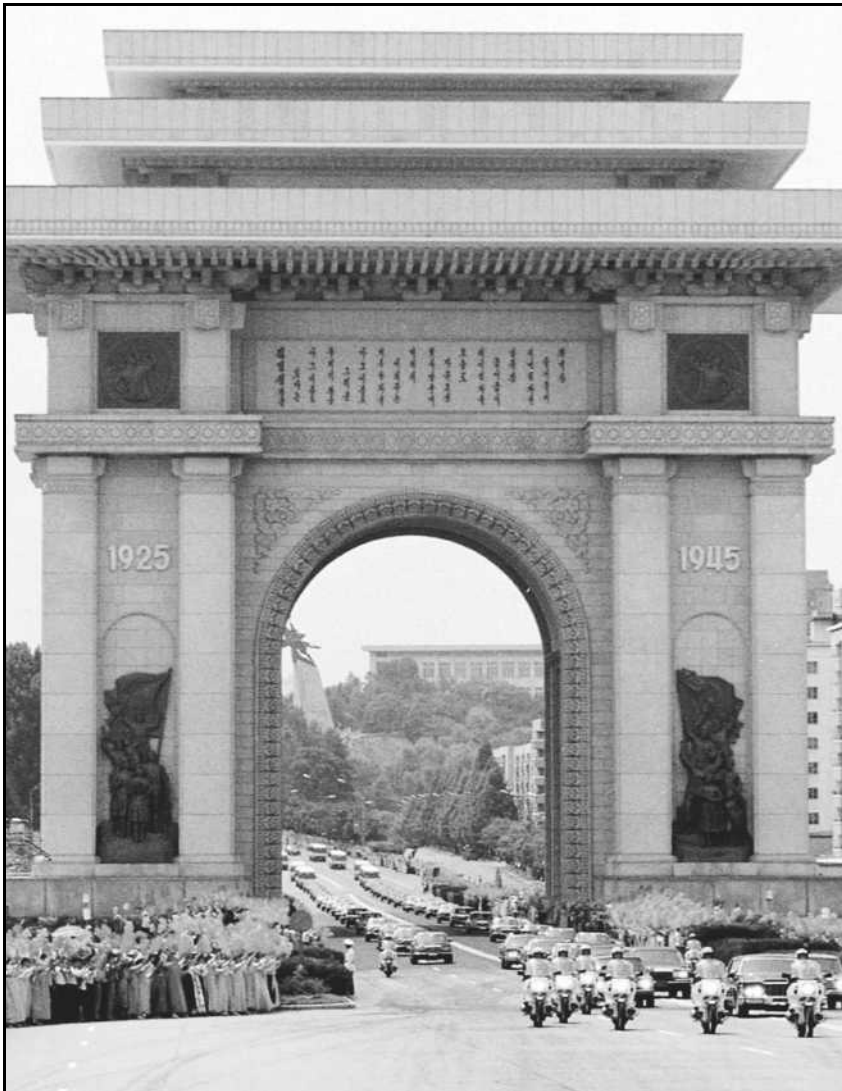
MAJOR CITIES

Pyongyang

The capital city of North Korea, Pyongyang, is located on the Taedong River and is roughly 30 miles (48 km) from the Yellow Sea. Although North Korea is very mountainous, Pyongyang is situated on a flat, open plain. Because it receives no protection from mountains or hills, Pyongyang is buffeted by bitterly cold winds during the winter. Temperatures during the winter are generally very cold, averaging 17°F (-8°C) in January. The temperature in Pyongyang is rather pleasant during the summer with highs around 70°F (21°C).

Pyongyang is an ancient city, its origin dating back to 1122 B.C. In that year, a Chinese-born scholar named Kija established a kingdom with

Pyongyang as its capital. The city quickly became a center for agriculture and textile manufacturing. Pyongyang was controlled by Kija and his successors for nearly one thousand years. In 108 B.C., Pyongyang was attacked and captured by Chinese armies. Under the Chinese, the city became an important trading center. By 427 A.D., Pyongyang became the capital of the Koguryo, a culturally advanced and warlike people. The Koguryo kingdom controlled Pyongyang until 668, when they were attacked and conquered by the Silla kingdom. The Sillas ruled in Pyongyang until 918, when the city was captured by the Koryo dynasty. The Koryos established Kaesong as their capital and made Pyongyang a secondary capital. The Mongols attacked the Koryos and seized control of Pyongyang in 1392. The city again changed hands in 1592 following an invasion by Japan. In 1627, Pyongyang was destroyed when the Manchus overran Korea and defeated the Japanese. Following the Manchu invasions, Korea was closed to all foreigners. When foreigners were allowed to return nearly 200 years later, Pyongyang became a major religious center for Christian missionaries. In 1895, the city was a battleground for the warring armies of China and Japan. Pyongyang was decimated. When Korea became a colony of Japan in



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Gate of Triumph in Pyongyang, North Korea

1910, the Japanese rebuilt Pyongyang and established several industries in the city. During the Korean War (1950-1953), Pyongyang was totally destroyed for the third time in its history. Following the war, the city was rebuilt with the help of Chinese and Soviet financial aid.

Pyongyang is North Korea's largest city, with an estimated population of 2,484,000 in 2000. The North Korean government has touted Pyongyang as a workers' paradise and a model for socialist progress. The city has block after block of modern apartment buildings, tree-lined streets, handsome boulevards, theaters, parks, and a zoo. Most of North Korea's libraries and muse-

ums, two modern sports stadiums, and several opera houses and cultural centers are located in Pyongyang. The city has several lavish statues and monuments honoring North Korea's leader, Kim Il-sung. Among them are a 60-foot tall bronze statue that, when flood-lit at night, is visible for miles. From 1986-1988, the North Korean government spent between \$4 and \$7 billion on the construction of luxury hotels, sporting facilities, and athlete villages in Pyongyang in an unsuccessful bid to jointly host the 1988 Summer Olympics with Seoul, South Korea. This construction boom nearly bankrupted the country and many of the building projects were never completed.

Although Pyongyang has many of the trappings of a modern, vibrant city, it is often described by visitors as drab and lifeless. The streets of Pyongyang are often devoid of cars, bicycles, pets, and people. Those who are on the streets go about their business without smiling or making eye contact. Apartments are often very cramped, some with only one toilet for every two floors. The lives of Pyongyang residents are tightly regimented. Individual expression and creativity are discouraged.

Western entertainment, such as movies or dancing, is nonexistent in Pyongyang. Hotels, inns, restaurants, barbershops, beauty parlors, public baths, tailor shops, and laundries are owned and controlled by the State. Restaurants open at noon and generally do not remain open late in the evening. Only a simple meal is offered by restaurants. Diners may choose between a rice meal, rice mixed with another grain, or a noodle dish. Very few restaurants offer meat or eggs, as these are scarce and very expensive. In the few existing barbershops, each barber is expected to give about 20 haircuts each day. Beauty parlors and laundries are reserved for the wives of high government officials.

Pyongyang is one of North Korea's major industrial centers, its factories powered by coal from the nearby deposits along the Taedong River. The city's industrial base is comprised of iron and steel mills, sugar refineries, rubber factories, textile mills, and ceramics factories. Chemicals, processed food, and electrical equipment are also produced in Pyongyang.

Pyongyang serves as the major hub for North Korea's railway system. The city has a very modern, clean, and efficient subway system. Subway stations are adorned with beautiful chandeliers, marbled walls, and mosaic murals of Kim Il-sung. North Korea's international airport, Sunan Airport, is located approximately 10 miles (6 km) north of Pyongyang. Sunan Airport handles international flights to Moscow and

Beijing as well as domestic flights from Pyongyang to North Korea's other major cities.

Most of North Korea's major educational institutions are located in Pyongyang. The city's largest university, Kim Il-sung University, was founded in 1946 and is located on the outskirts of Pyongyang overlooking the Taedong River. Admission to Kim Il-sung University is widely regarded as one of the highest honors to be attained by a North Korean youth. The university's departments include mathematics and dynamics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, economics, philosophy, law, Korean language and literature, and foreign language and literature. Pyongyang is also the home of the Pyongyang Pedagogical University. This university is responsible for training teachers for technical schools and universities. Pyongyang Pedagogical University offers postgraduate courses, research facilities, and a library. The university library is North Korea's central repository for educational publications and materials. Copies of all publications and materials relating to the study of education and textbooks are kept here for educational research purposes. North Korea's principal medical school, Pyongyang Medical College, is also located in the capital.

Hamhung

The city of Hamhung is located northeast of Pyongyang in east-central North Korea. In 1960, Hamhung was merged with the port of Hungnam, a small village on the Sea of Japan coast. Together, Hamhung and Hungnam comprise North Korea's second largest urban area. The combined population of Hamhung and Hungnam was estimated at 670,000 in 2000.

Hamhung was established as an important government center during the Yi dynasty (1392-1910). Hungnam developed as a very small fishing village. In 1928, a major hydroelectric plant was built near Hamhung. This power plant sparked new industrial develop-

ment with the construction of a large fertilizer plant. Other industries soon followed, among them oil refineries, food processing plants, chemical industries, a textile plant, and machine plants. Hamhung became an important industrial center. The city was nearly leveled completely during the Korean War. However, most of the industries were rebuilt in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Today, Hamhung and Hungnam form the backbone of North Korea's chemical industry. The city is home to the Hamhung State Historical Museum. Hamhung has three major colleges, a medical college, the Chemical Industry College, and the Chemical Research Institute.

Chongjin

Chongjin, located on the northeastern coast, is North Korea's third largest city. In 1986, Chongjin had a population of approximately 530,000. The city is the major port and distribution center for eastern North Korea.

Chongjin originated as a small fishing village. However, during the years of Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945), the Japanese established oil, steel, and iron ore manufacturing industries in Chongjin. Railroads were built connecting Chongjin with iron mines along the Tumen River near the North Korean border with the People's Republic of China. The Japanese also constructed modern port facilities at Chongjin. The city soon became a major conduit for manufactured goods from Korea to the Japanese home islands. Following the end of Japanese rule in 1945, the North Koreans modernized and expanded Chongjin's steel industry, railroads, and port facilities. Currently, Chongjin is North Korea's primary steel producing center. The North Koreans have also established other industries in the city. These industries are involved in the production of chemicals, textiles, and machinery. Because of Chongjin's location as a port city, shipbuilding has also evolved as a major industry.

Wonsan

Located 80 miles (130 km) east of Pyongyang, Wonsan is one of North Korea's principal ports and the site of a major naval base. The city developed during the Yi dynasty as a trading center and port known as Wonsanjin. In 1914, the railroad connecting Wonsan with Seoul (now in South Korea) was constructed. On the east coast, the Wolla rail line, running from Wonsan to the extreme northeastern port of Najin, was constructed in 1928. In 1941, North Korea's major east-west railroad connecting Wonsan and Pyongyang was completed. These railroads, which have all been modernized, make Wonsan a major railway hub.

Fishing is one of Wonsan's major economic activities. The presence of a warm and cold current in the waters off Wonsan attracts a great number of species. Fish caught include pollack, octopus, anchovy, sardines, flatfish, sandfish, herring, and mackerel. The abundance of fish near Wonsan has led to the development of a thriving fish processing industry. The city is also the home of other major industries, including shipbuilding, brickyards, locomotive works, chemical plants, textile mills, and a large oil refinery. Many of these industries were destroyed during the Korean War, but have been rebuilt and modernized. Wonsan has over an estimated 350,000 residents.

OTHER CITIES

HAEJU is situated in southwestern North Korea on the coast of the Yellow Sea. The city is one of North Korea's most valuable ports, particularly because it is the only port that remains unobstructed by ice during the winter months. Because of Haeju's location on the Yellow Sea, fishing is an important economic pursuit. The city serves as an export center for agricultural products grown nearby. A copper refinery, cement manufacturing plant, and several chemical plants are

located in and around Haeju. The city's population in 1993 was approximately 229,172.

The city of **HYESAN** is located in extreme northern North Korea along the border with the People's Republic of China. It's population in 1993 was approximately 178,000. By virtue of its location near the Paektu Mountains, which offer abundant forests of larch, spruce, and pine, Hyesan manufactures lumber and paper products. The city's location on the Yalu River makes it an important transportation center. Winters are extremely cold in Hyesan, with temperatures plummeting as low as -44°F.

KANGGYE, a city on North Korea's northern frontier, is an important transportation center. The city is connected via railroad and roadway with Pyongyang. Kanggye is located in a region where graphite, zinc, copper, and coal are abundantly available. Consequently, mining and mining-related industries are an important part of Kanggye's industrial base. Other industries in Kanggye manufacture ceramics and process timber. According to latest estimates, Kanggye had approximately 223,000 residents.

The city of **KIMCH'AEK** is located in eastern North Korea on the shores of the Sea of Japan. Originally known as Songjin, the city's name was changed in 1952 in honor of a fallen North Korean war hero. Kimch'aek is an important seaport which exports lumber and agricultural products. Also, rich deposits of graphite, magnesite, zinc, and iron are located near Kimch'aek. Mining and mining-related industries are important components of the city's economy. Kimch'aek's location on the Sea of Japan has encouraged the development of fisheries and fish processing industries. Kimch'aek has a population over 281,000.

Located in extreme northeastern North Korea is the city of **NAJIN**. Najin is an important transportation center and port city. An important rail line links Najin with

Wonsan, Hamhung, and Chongjin. The city's coastal location has led to the development of a large shipbuilding industry. The waters off Najin offer an abundance of fish, particularly herring, codfish, and pollack. The latest population estimate for Najin is 34,000.

NAMP'O, located approximately 30 miles (50 km) southwest of Pyongyang, is one of North Korea's primary western ports. Situated at the mouth of the Taedong River, Namp'o is a center for both international and domestic trade. Imported goods arrive at Namp'o and are shipped down the Taedong River or by railway to markets in Pyongyang or other major cities. The city has a well-developed industrial base centered on gold and copper refining, shipbuilding, and glassmaking. In 1980, Namp'o had roughly 241,000 residents. Current population figures are unavailable.

The city of **SINUJU** is located in northwestern North Korea near the mouth of the Yalu River. The city is highly industrialized and is an important producer of chemicals, electrical equipment, textiles, and consumer goods. Hydroelectric power for these industries is supplied by the Sup'ung Dam. By virtue of its location across the border with the People's Republic of China, Sinuiju is a major trading center. Railways, roads, and air routes link Sinuiju with Pyongyang. In 1981, Sinuiju had roughly 200,000 people. Current population figures are unavailable.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

North Korea occupies the northern half of a mountainous peninsula. The country's geographic area is approximately 46,540 square miles, slightly smaller than Mississippi. North Korea is bordered by the People's Republic of China and Russia

on the north, on the east by the Sea of Japan, on the west by the Yellow Sea, and on the south by South Korea. Hills and mountains cover almost the entire country, with narrow valleys and small plains in between. The major mountain ranges are located in the north-central and northeastern sections of North Korea and along the eastern coast. On the eastern coast, the hills drop sharply down to a narrow coastal plain, whereas on the west coast the slope is more gradual, forming broad, level plains. North Korea has no active volcanoes and does not experience severe earthquakes.

North Korea has several major rivers, most of which flow westward into the Yellow Sea. These rivers include the Yalu, Taedong, Chongch'on, Imjin, and the Yesong. The east coast has several swift-flowing rivers. Only two, the Tumen and the Songchon Rivers, are large. North Korea's rivers flow strongly during the summer, fed by seasonal rainfall and melting snow in the mountains, but the volume drops considerably during the dry winter months.

Population

Koreans are a racially and linguistically homogenous people. In 2000, North Korea's population was estimated at approximately 21,690,000. Although there are no indigenous minorities, a small community of approximately 50,000 Chinese reside in North Korea. Traditional Korean religions are Buddhism, Confucianism, Shamanism, and Chondokyo, a religion peculiar to Korea combining elements of Buddhism and Christianity. However, religious activity in North Korea is practically nonexistent. Several government-sponsored religious groups exist to provide the illusion of religious freedom. North Koreans are encouraged to embrace *juche*, a state ideology which espouses self-reliance and national identity, as a substitute for organized religion.

Life expectancy in North Korea is approximately 68 years for males and 74 years for females (2001 est.).

History

According to legend, the god-king Tangun founded the Korean nation in 2333 B.C., after which his descendants reigned over a peaceful kingdom for more than a millennium. By the first century A.D., the Korean Peninsula, known as Chosun ("morning calm"), was divided into the kingdoms of Silla, Koguryo, and Paekche. In A.D. 668, the Silla kingdom unified the peninsula. The Koryo dynasty succeeded the Silla kingdom in 918. The Yi dynasty, which supplanted Koryo in 1392, lasted until the Japanese annexed Korea in 1910.

Throughout most of its history, Korea has been invaded, influenced, and fought over by its larger neighbors. Korea was under Mongolian occupation from 1231 until the early 14th century and was devastated by a large number of Chinese rebel armies in 1359 and 1361; Hideyoshi launched major Japanese invasions in 1592 and 1597. To protect themselves from such frequent buffeting, the Yi kings finally adopted a closed-door policy, earning Korea the title of "Hermit Kingdom." Although the Yi dynasty paid nominal fealty to the Chinese throne, Korea was, in fact, independent until the late 19th century. At that time, Japanese, Chinese, and Russian competition in Northeast Asia led to armed conflict. Having defeated its two competitors, Japan established dominance in Korea. The Japanese colonial era was characterized by tight control by Tokyo and by ruthless efforts to replace the Korean language and culture with those of the colonial power. Japan formally annexed Korea in 1910.

Japan occupied the entire Korean peninsula until the end of World War II. After the surrender and withdrawal of Japanese forces in 1945, the Allies divided Korea into two occupation zones. Soviet troops occupied areas north of the 38th

parallel. Territory south of this line was controlled by American forces. The Soviet Union and the United States engaged in a series of conferences in an attempt to agree on a new government for the entire Korean peninsula. These efforts were fruitless. In September 1947, the United States submitted the question of Korea's future to the United Nations General Assembly. The General Assembly ruled that U.N.-supervised elections should be held in both occupation zones. Elections were carried out under U.N. observation in the south, and on August 15, 1948, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) was established. The Soviets refused to hold elections and decided to create a Communist state in the northern zone. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared on September 9, 1948. The governing body for this new state was the Korean Workers' Party, under the leadership of Kim Il-sung.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces invaded South Korea. The United States and sixteen U.N. member nations sent troops to defend South Korea. North Korean forces were initially successful, driving the U.N. forces back and nearly conquering all of South Korea. However, after a surprise landing at Inchon, South Korea, U.N. forces gained the upper hand and drove North Korean troops back to the North Korea-China border. The Chinese sent thousands of troops across the border, forcing U.N. troops back down the Korean peninsula. A bloody conflict was waged for control of Korea. On July 27, 1953, an armistice was signed at Panmunjom by China, North Korea, South Korea, and the United States. No formal peace agreement officially ending the war has ever been signed between the two warring factions. Therefore, the border between North Korea and South Korea remains one of the most volatile regions in the world.

Government

North Korea is a Communist state dominated by the Korean Workers' Party. Kim Il-sung, ruled North Korea at its creation in 1948, wielding unrivaled power. Often referred to as the "Great Leader," Kim was president of North Korea and general secretary of the Korean Workers' Party. Following his death, his son, Kim Jong Il, inherited supreme power. Kim Jong Il was named General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party in October 1997, and in September 1998, he was reconfirmed Kim Jong Il as Chairman of the National Defense Commission, a position which was then declared "highest office of state."

The North Korean constitution provides for the establishment of a Supreme People's Assembly. The Supreme People's Assembly is authorized to approve or amend laws and to formulate domestic and foreign policy. The Assembly is also charged with approving state economic programs and state budgets, establishing or changing administrative subdivisions, granting amnesties, and electing judges to the Supreme Court. Delegates are elected to a four-year term. Citizens seventeen years or older can vote and be elected to the Assembly. The Assembly elects a president and the Central People's Committee. The Central People's Committee directs the Administrative Council, which implements policies created by the Committee.

Despite this elaborate constitutional process, the Korean Workers' Party is the sole political authority in North Korea. It elects a Central Committee, who in turn elects a Politburo. The senior members of the Administrative Council are all members of the Central Committee and the majority are also members of the Politburo.

A three-tiered court system is composed of the Supreme Court at the top, provincial courts in the middle, and people's courts at the bottom. Judges are usually members of the Korean Workers' Party or are con-

trolled by the Party. They are trained in judicial procedures for three months before assuming office. Trials are usually open to the public. The accused is guaranteed the right to defend himself and to have counsel, but there are only Government defenders.

The courts of first instance are those established at city, county, and district levels. Presided over by judges elected for two-year terms, they can try civil as well as criminal cases. Assessors, who are vested with authority equal to that of judges, participate in the proceedings. Decisions are by majority vote of the one judge and two assessors. Provincial courts also hear appeals or complaints resulting from the decisions of the lower courts. In practice, however, appeals reaching the provincial courts are said to be infrequent.

The Supreme Court is empowered to supervise the operation of the lower courts in the enforcement of civil and criminal law. Its judges are elected by the Supreme People's Assembly for a term of three years. The court is expected to render judgments in accordance with the basic policies of the Government and the Party.

The flag of North Korea consists of horizontal stripes of blue, red and blue separated by narrow white bands. The red stripe contains a white circle within which is a red five-pointed star.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is a monopoly of the State, which uses it for well-defined political, economic, and nationalist purposes dictated by the Korean Workers' Party. Education is designed to indoctrinate the entire population in Communist ideology. Also, the educational system intends to imbue the population with pride in its own history and culture and to create a supply of skilled workers, technicians, and scientists to meet the regime's eco-

nomical goals. A strong emphasis on working while learning, or the integration of theory and practice, permeates the educational system, and all students are required to engage in productive labor along with their studies, both in their specialties and in other areas, for nominal pay. This is a means whereby the regime is reimbursed for educational costs.

The North Korean government stresses the elimination of Confucian methods of learning by rote and emphasizes instead full use of practical experiments in the laboratory, in the field, and in work experience. Excursion trips to military installations and old battlefields, industries, and other points of interest are among the techniques used. Speech and composition contests, debate meetings on scientific subjects, exhibitions of the arts, contests on new inventions and new designs, story-telling and poem recital meetings, music auditions, art contests, athletic meets, and motion picture appreciation gatherings are among the devices used by the schools to keep students interested and occupied in practical ways. Students are also assigned to such group projects as rabbit raising, fire prevention, and assisting the public health services.

The curriculum of North Korea's educational system includes a heavy emphasis on Communist ideology and combines Korean studies with Marxist-Leninist principles. Principal subjects include scientific subjects, such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology; and social science subjects.

North Korea has an adult education system that is designed to provide ideological and technical training and to reduce illiteracy. Adult education classes are conducted at factories or through correspondence schools located at some colleges and senior technical schools.

Eleven years of education are required for North Korean children and are provided at government expense. Students receive one year of preschool, four years of primary

school beginning at age six, and six years of secondary school. In 1986, there were approximately 9,530 primary and senior middle schools. North Korea has an estimated 280 institutions of higher education and three universities.

All students are required to study English as a second language beginning at age fourteen. The literacy rate in North Korea is approximately 99%.

Commerce and Industry

The economic system of North Korea was inspired by the model used in the former Soviet Union. The means of production are socialized, and the allocation of natural resources are centrally determined by the State. The State owns and operates industry, banking, agriculture, mining operations, and domestic and foreign trade. State control of economic affairs is unusually tight even for a Communist country because of the small size and homogeneity of society and the strict rule of Kim Il-sung.

Agricultural productivity is centered around State-controlled (collectivized) farms. Despite the use of improved seed varieties, expansion of irrigation, and the heavy use of fertilizers, North Korea has not yet become self-sufficient in food production. Four consecutive years of poor harvests, coupled with distribution problems, have led to chronic food shortages.

The economy of North Korea is heavily industrialized. Industrial workers account for nearly 64% of the work force. Textiles, food processing, machine building, military products, mining, metallurgy, and petrochemicals are major industries. North Korea has abundant hydroelectric resources and is rich in minerals, especially uranium, zinc, coal, lead, iron ore, graphite, manganese, copper, and gold. Minerals and mineral ores are North Korea's primary exports. Since 1995, Japan and China have been

major trading partners, followed by South Korea and Germany.

North Korea has about \$520 million in exports, but relies on \$960 million in imported goods (1999 est.). In comparison, South Korea exports \$172.6 billion and imports, \$160.50 billion (2000 est.). The fall of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 has deprived North Korea of its main trading partners and increased the country's isolation in the world community. In 1991, dozens of factories were forced to close due to fuel shortages. This is seen as a further sign of North Korea's worsening economy.

On August 24, 1992, North Korea's last principle ally and trading partner, the People's Republic of China, established diplomatic and trade relations with South Korea. Both countries pledged to eliminate all economic and political barriers. North Korea has been forced to seek financial aid, trade links, and foreign investment from the West. On October 20, 1992, North Korea approved legislation that promotes foreign investment in the country. Foreign investors will be allowed to open joint business ventures with North Koreans and establish privately owned companies within government-created enterprise zones. The legislation is viewed as North Korea's first positive step toward a new openness with the rest of the world.

Transportation

Damage to the transportation facilities during the Korean War was particularly severe in North Korea. The country lost 70 percent of its locomotives, 90 percent of its locomotive sheds, 65 percent of its freight cars, and 90 percent of its passenger cars. The restoration of rail transportation received high government priority, since the greater part of imported goods enter the north by rail. The postwar rehabilitation program, in addition to restoring destroyed railroad tracks, called for the restoration of railroad bridges and the reconstruction of

tunnels. Normal traffic was restored to the country by the early 1970s. Today, North Korea has a well-developed railway system. Travel and the shipment of manufactured goods and raw materials is mostly done by rail. In 1989, North Korea had approximately 3,050 miles (4,915 km) of railroad track. International passenger rail service is available from Pyongyang to Beijing and Moscow.

Motor transportation plays a secondary role in the movement of freight and passengers. Very few North Koreans own cars. Also, seasonal factors make motor transportation impractical. Since most roads are unpaved, early snows in the winter and rainfall during the summer make roads impassable. Modern highways link Pyongyang to the cities of Namp'o, Wonsan, and Kaesong. As of 1989, North Korea had approximately 18,630 miles (30,000 km) of roadway.

International airline service to Beijing, Hong Kong, and Moscow are available. There are domestic flights from Pyongyang to the cities of Chongjin, Wonsan, and Hamhung.

Communications

Telephone communication with North Korea is virtually impossible. Direct or operator assistance calls cannot be made to North Korea from the United States.

The Korean Central Broadcasting Committee supervises radio programming. Radio Pyongyang broadcasts are transmitted over loudspeakers into factories and municipal centers. Programs include news, weather, music, drama, literary recitations, some light entertainment, analyses of international affairs, and glorification of Kim Il-sung and the Korean Workers' Party. Shortwave frequencies carry foreign broadcasts in Russian, Chinese, French, English, Japanese, Spanish, Arabic, and German.

North Korea had an estimated 291,000 televisions and 4.2 million radios in use in 1990. The main television station is located in Pyongyang, with stations at Munsudae and Kaesong. Foreign films, news, music, and dance and cultural programming is shown daily. Television service is available throughout most of North Korea.

Foreign language publications are available in Pyongyang. Those published in English include: *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, *Foreign Trade of the D.P.R.K.*, *Korea*, *Korea Today*, *Korean Women*, *Korean Youth and Students*, and *The Pyongyang Times*. The types of books published in North Korea include essays, short stories, plays, literary criticism, textbooks, children's books, poetry, and novels. A large proportion of all titles are devoted to a glorification of Kim Jong-il.

Health and Medicine

Persons with medical problems should be aware that, because of continuing economic hardship, the level of medical care falls far below U.S. standards, and medical care for Americans who become ill or injured in North Korea, including emergency medical evacuation, is generally not available. Hospitals in Pyongyang and other cities often lack heat, medicine, and even basic supplies, and suffer from frequent power outages. Hospitals do not have food for patients. Functioning telephones are not widely available, making it difficult to summon assistance in a medical emergency. Americans should not bring personal medications to North Korea without written authorization from the North Korean Embassy in a third country or the North Korean Mission to the United Nations in New York. Absent such permission, persons requiring regular medication should not travel to North Korea. Hospitals will expect immediate U.S. dollar cash payment for medical treatment.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The United States does not maintain diplomatic or consular relations with North Korea. The U.S. Government therefore cannot provide normal consular protective services to U.S. citizens in North Korea. On September 20, 1995, a consular protecting power arrangement was implemented, allowing for consular protection by the Swedish Embassy of U.S. citizens traveling in North Korea. In this capacity, the Swedish Embassy in the capital city Pyongyang endeavors to provide basic consular protective services to U.S. citizens traveling or residing in North Korea who are ill, injured, arrested or who may die. Since 1998, four U.S. citizens have been detained by North Korean authorities. Consular access has not always been granted readily, and there have been allegations of mistreatment while in custody, as well as the requirement to pay large fines to obtain release. U.S. citizens should therefore evaluate carefully the implications for their security and safety when deciding whether to travel to North Korea.

U.S. passports are valid for travel to North Korea. North Korean visas are required for entry. The U.S. Government does not issue letters to private Americans seeking North Korean visas, even though in the past such letters have sometimes been requested by DPRK embassies. Prospective travelers to North Korea must obtain in advance a Chinese visa valid for at least two entries prior to their arrival in the region. A valid Chinese visa is essential for both entry into China en route to North Korea, as well as departure from North Korea by air or land to China at the conclusion of a visit or in an emergency. Travel across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea is not permitted. U.S. citizens who arrive in North Korea without a valid U.S. passport and North Korean visa may be detained,

arrested, fined or denied entry. Payment for travel costs by Americans in North Korea must be made in U.S. dollars at inflated prices. Payment may be required as well for the costs of security personnel assigned to escort foreign visitors.

U.S. citizens traveling to North Korea should carry only valid U.S. passports bearing the proper North Korean visa. Under no condition should U.S. citizens bring with them to North Korea any document that identifies them as citizens or residents of either the Republic of Korea (South Korea) or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). There is currently no way to replace a lost or stolen U.S. passport in North Korea.

There is no North Korean embassy or consulate in the United States. U.S. citizens and residents planning travel to North Korea must obtain North Korean visas in third countries. For information about entry requirements and restricted areas, contact the North Korean Mission to the United Nations in New York. Address inquiries to the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations, 820 Second Avenue, New York, New York 10017, tel: (1-212) 972-3105; fax: (1-212) 972-3154, or contact the North Korean embassy in a country that maintains relations with North Korea.

U.S. citizens traveling to North Korea usually obtain their visas at the North Korean Embassy in Beijing, China, which will only issue visas after authorization has been received from the North Korean Foreign Ministry in Pyongyang, the capital city. Prior to traveling to the region, travelers may wish to confirm with the North Korean Embassy by telephone at (86-10) 65321186, 65321189, 65325018, 65324308, or 65321154 (fax: 65326056), that authorization to issue visas has been received from Pyongyang.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry photo-copies of their passport

data and photo pages with them at all times so that, if questioned by DPRK officials, proof of U.S. citizenship is readily available to DPRK authorities and Swedish protecting power officials.

All needed vaccines should be administered prior to traveling to North Korea. Vaccine recommendations and disease prevention information for traveling abroad are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's International Travelers' Hotline, which may be reached from the United States at 1-877- FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747), via its toll-free autofax number at 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via the CDC Internet site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/>. In addition, travelers should bring food with them to North Korea as the few restaurants available to foreigners are often closed for lack of supplies and in any case have limited menus that lack variety and nutritional adequacy.

DPRK authorities may seize documents, literature, audio and video tapes, compact discs, and letters that they deem to be pornographic, political, or intended for religious proselytizing. Persons seeking to enter North Korea with religious materials in a quantity deemed to be greater than that needed for personal use can be detained, fined and expelled. Information concerning laws governing items that may be brought into North Korea may be available from the North Korean Mission to the United Nations or from a North Korean embassy or consulate in a third country.

The Embassy of Sweden, which acts as U.S. Protecting Power, is located at: Munsu-Dong District, Pyongyang. The telephone and fax numbers, which are frequently out of order due to poor telecommunications in the DPRK, are: Tel: (850-2) 381-7908; Fax: (850-2) 381-7258. U.S. citizens contemplating living in or visiting North Korea are encouraged to register in person, by telephone or fax with the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China, and to obtain updated information on travel and

security within North Korea. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing is located at 2 Xiushui Dongjie, Beijing 100600; telephone: (86-10) 6532-3431; after hours: (86-10) 6532-1910; fax: (86-10) 6532-4153; e-mail AmCit-Beijing@state.gov. It is also possible to register from the United States via the Internet through the U.S. Embassy's home page at <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn>.

Security

The activities and conversations of foreigners in North Korea are closely monitored by government security personnel. Hotel rooms, telephones and fax machines may be monitored, and personal possessions in hotel rooms may be searched. Photographing roads, bridges, airports, rail stations, or anything other than designated public tourist sites can be perceived as espionage and may result in confiscation of cameras and film or even detention. Foreign visitors to North Korea may be arrested, detained or expelled for activities that would not be considered crimes in the U.S., including involvement in unsanctioned religious and political activities or engaging in unauthorized travel or interaction with the local population. Since 1998, four U.S. citizens have been detained by North Korean authorities. Consular access has not always been granted readily, and there have been allegations of mistreatment while in custody, as well as the requirement to pay large fines to obtain release.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 & 2 New Year's Day
- Feb. Sollal (Chinese New Year)*
- Feb/Mar. Taeborum (Lantern Festival)*
- Feb. 16 Kim Jong-il's Birthday
- Mar. 1 Anti-Japanese Uprising Day
- Mar. 8 International Women's Day
- Apr/May Buddha's Birthday*
- Apr. 15 Kim Il-sung's Birthday
- May 1 May Day
- June 1 Children's Day
- June 6 Young Pioneers of Korea Day
- June 25 Fatherland Liberation War Day
- July 27 Victory Day
- Aug. 15 Liberation Day
- Sept/Oct. Ch'ilsok (Harvest Moon Festival)*
- Sept. 9 Independence Day
- Oct. 10 Korean Workers's Party Day
- Nov. 3 Kwangju Student Uprising Day
- Nov. 7 October Revolution Day
- Dec. 27 Constitution Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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Cummings, Bruce. *The Two Koreas: On the Road to Reunification*. New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1991.

Hayes, Peter. *Pacific Powderkeg: American Nuclear Dilemmas in Korea*. New York: Free Press, 1990.

Merrill, John. *D.P.R. Korea: Politics, Economics, & Society*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

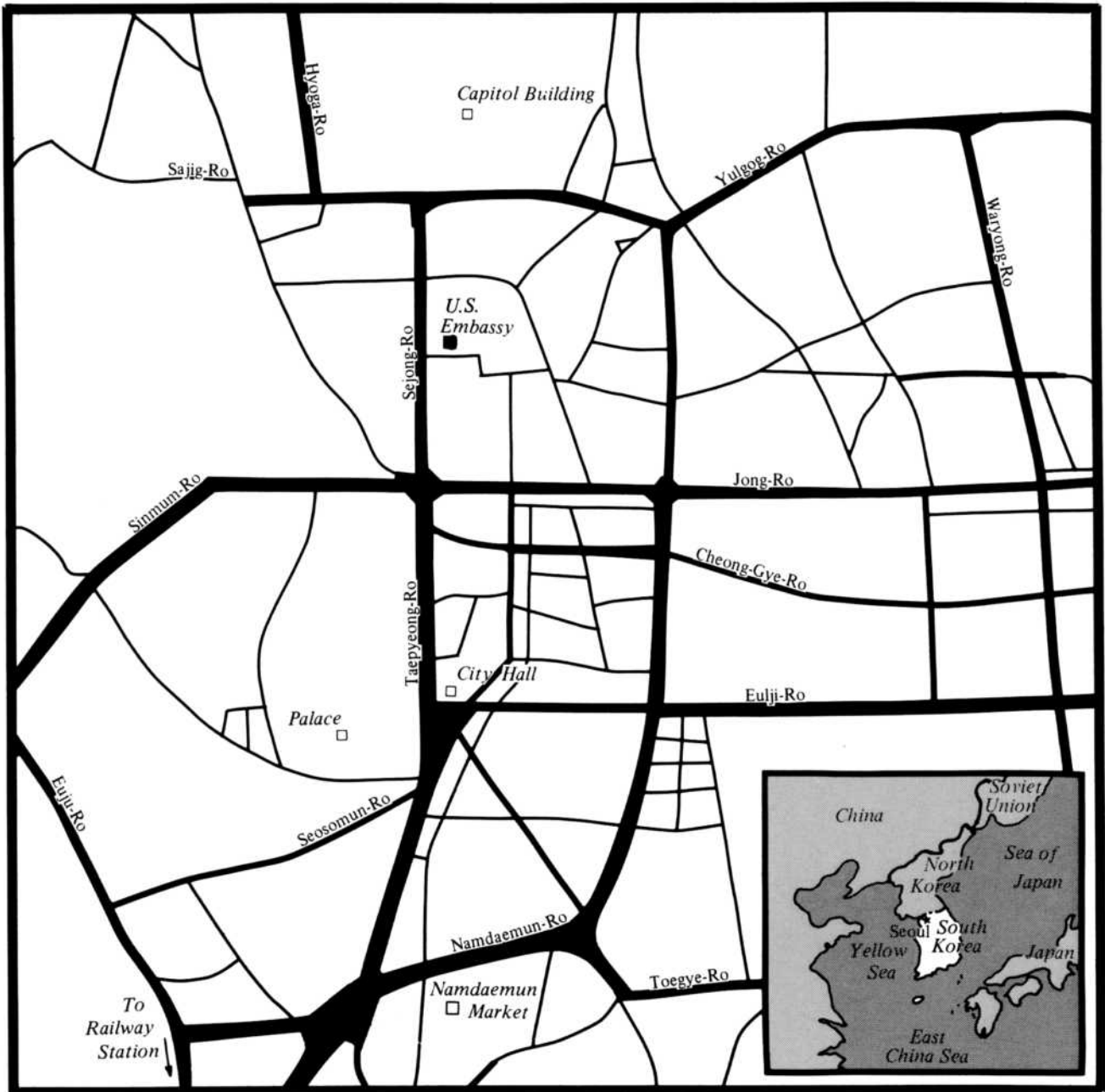
Mosher, Stephen W., ed. *Korea in the 1990s: Prospects for Unification*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications, 1991.

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Nash, Amy. *North Korea*. New York: Chelsea House, 1990.

Suh, Dae-Sook. *Kim Il-Sung: The North Korean Leader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

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Seoul, Korea (South)

KOREA, SOUTH

Republic of Korea

Major Cities:

Seoul, Pusan, Taegu, Kwangju

Other Cities:

Cheju, Inchön, Kwangju, Kyöngju, Masan, Panmunjön, Suwön, Ulsan, Yösu

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for South Korea. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "The Land of the Morning Calm," a country with a people obsessed with nature, and with mountains in particular. Wherever you travel, you will see them out in the open air, clad in the latest adventure fashions.

According to the Koreans, the first of their kin was born in 2333 B.C.E. Less aesthetically-minded scientists believe Korea was first inhabited around 30,000 B.C.E., when tribes from central and northern Asia migrated to the peninsula. Under constant pressure from China, these tribes banded together to found a kingdom in the 1st century C.E. By 700 C.E. the Silla Kingdom of Korea was at its cultural stride, proliferat-

ing the country with palaces, pagodas, and pleasure gardens. But in the early 13th century, the Mongols reached Korea and pursued a scorched-earth policy. When the Mongol Empire collapsed, the Choson Dynasty succeeded, and a Korean script was developed.

In 1592 Japan invaded the country and was followed by China. The Koreans were routed, and the Chinese Manchu Dynasty established itself. Turning its back on a hostile world, Korea closed its doors to outside influence until the early 20th century, when Japan annexed the peninsula. The Japanese occupied Korea until the end of World War II. After the war, the U.S. occupied the south of the peninsula; the U.S.S.R. occupied north. Elections to decide the fate of the country were held only in the south, and when the south declared its independence, the north invaded.

By the time the war ended, 2 million people had died, and the country had been officially divided. After a few years of semi-democracy in the south, martial law was declared in 1972. The next 15 years roller-coasted between democracy and repressive martial law, hitting a low in 1980, when 200 student protesters were killed in the Kwangju massacre. By the late 1980s, the country was at a flash point, student pro-

tests were convulsing the country and workers throughout Korea were walking off the job to join them. Among the demands were democratic elections, freedom of the press, and the release of political prisoners. The government did not budge until President Chun suddenly decided to grant everything the protesters asked for.

Korean society is based on the tenets of Confucianism, a system of ethics developed in China around 500 B.C.E. Confucianism emphasizes devotion and respect-for parents, family, friends, and those in positions of authority. Many Koreans attribute their country's remarkable success in recent decades to this attitude. In modern Korean society, Confucianism is most noticeable in relations between people. The Five Relationships prescribe behavior between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, old and young, and between friends. If you fall outside any of these relationships, you do not effectively exist.

South Koreans have turned their hand to all art forms. Traditional music is similar to that of Japan and China, with an emphasis on strings. Traditional painting has strong Chinese and calligraphic elements, with the brush line being the most important feature. Most tradi-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Food vendor outside subway station in Seoul

tional sculpture is Buddhist, and includes statues and pagodas. Seoul is also a showpiece of modern and traditional architecture, including the city gates and the Choson-era Kyonbok Palace.

The Republic of Korea represents a fascinating blend of the past and present. The Korean people are proud of their long history and unique cultural traditions, and they remain committed to preserving their heritage into the next millennium.

Korea and its capital, Seoul, offer a wide range of both cultural and recreational opportunities. By providing a lifestyle that includes a combination of both the unique and familiar, Korea will prove to be a fascinating place to live, work or travel.

MAJOR CITIES

Seoul

Seoul has a population of more than 10 million people. It is located in the northwest part of the Republic, about 30 miles south of the DMZ, which separates North and South Korea.

The name derives from "Sorabol," the capital of the Shilla Kingdom. Seoul was established as the capital in 1392 by the first emperor of the Yi Dynasty. At that time, Seoul was surrounded entirely by the four hills that now simply form the boundaries of the downtown area. Today, the urbanized area extends well beyond those boundaries. The Han River flows through the southern part of the city and into the Yellow Sea.

As mentioned earlier, Seoul is the repository for Korea's history and culture. Part of the city's charm is the juxtaposition of traditional characteristics with modern life. For example, three of the major palaces in the city, Kyongbok, Changdok, and Toksu are all located in downtown Seoul within walking distance of the Embassy and the Compounds I & 11 residential areas. A walk in almost any city neighborhood will reveal not only concrete, high-rise apartments, but also small parks and traditional homes. Shops range from those high-dollar establishments catering to the expatriate community, to local "mom and pop" stores and streetside vendors peddling traditional snacks.

Seoul was a major casualty of the Korean war, with 80% of the city razed. Since that time, modern

buildings have sprung up everywhere, and factories and industrial areas have mushroomed throughout the city and beyond. Hosting the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Summer Olympic Games boosted Seoul's image as a major venue for international conferences (hotels, tourist services, etc.). Seoul now looks forward to cohosting the soccer World Cup in 2002.

Utilities

Apartments and houses are wired for 110/120 volts, 60 cycles. Electricity is reliable, so regulators are not required.

Food

Local markets provide an alternative to grocery shopping. Large supermarkets, usually located in the basement level of major department stores, have a wide selection of local produce and meats, as well as imported items—the latter being quite expensive. Residents also have a choice of patronizing the high-end delicatessens and foreigner's shops, which offer a wide array of items. Neighborhood vendors will be less expensive, but their standards of handling and cleanliness may not meet U.S. standards. Although there have been no reports of serious illness from eating locally purchased produce, it is always wise to carefully clean all fruits and vegetables, and to handle meats/poultry/fish with appropriate care and common sense.

Liquor is readily available in Korea. Korea's local beer (OB and Crown) is reasonably good. Imported wines are available at various delicatessens and shops throughout the city; expect to pay an extraordinarily high price.

Clothing

In addition to dressing for a relatively conservative environment, employees should come prepared for the four very distinct seasons that Korea offers: from hot, humid summers to cold, dry winters. Fortunately, Korea exports a wide array of clothing items. It is easy to supplement a wardrobe here. Many American/European

designer names can be located in the markets of Seoul (Itaewon, Namdae-mun, Tongdae-mun). These items are usually “seconds,” however, and you need to be on the look-out for glaring flaws. Larger sizes (be it with clothing or shoes) can be difficult to find, although there are plenty of tailors and shoemakers in Itaewon who can happily create whatever designs you have in mind. Items that are easy to find are: wool and acrylic sweaters, knit shirts, leather goods, sport shoes, raincoats, jackets, parkas.

Men: Dark suits are appropriate for summer and winter wear. Those with definite preferences or who are hard to fit should bring a good supply or arrange to receive mail-order catalogs to replenish their wardrobes as necessary. Many have suits and shirts made on the local economy; service and standards are usually high, and prices are exceptionally reasonable.

Women: Women in Seoul dress more conservatively than they do in the U.S. In deference to local customs, American women usually wear clothing that is not conspicuously bare-although attitudes toward fashion styles are changing, showing too much skin is still considered uncouth.

Modern styles and attractive clothing are readily available and reasonably priced. Availability, however, will depend on what local factories are producing at that time. Larger sizes can also pose a challenge. In response to that, there are good seamstresses available, and many employees have had clothes made. As always, mail-order catalogs are a big help.

Children: Various kinds of children's clothing are available at local markets and are reasonably priced. However, some parents find shopping for infants and pre-teens difficult. Shopping for teenagers will not pose any problems-stylish brand-name items made for export are readily available and at good prices.

Supplies and Services

There are numerous beauty shops and barbershops on the local economy as well. However, the latter establishments may not have a staff fluent in English; bring a friend to help out, at least initially.

Domestic Help

The days of inexpensive domestic help are long gone. Most domestic help are not Korean, but rather hail from the Philippines, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.

Religious Activities

Yongsan Military Base has services for the following faiths: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Jewish, and non-denominational. Roman Catholic Mass is also offered in Spanish. American and European missionaries, as well as military chaplains, can provide religious services and Sunday School services.

Seoul has several churches throughout the city, some of which provide English-language services. There is a Mosque near Itaewon market. Other faiths represented are: Seoul Union Church (interdenominational), the International Union Church of Seoul, and the Seoul Memorial Baptist Church. In addition, services are available for the Anglican, Greek Orthodox, Christian Science, Seventh-day Adventist, Latter Day Saints/Mormons, Catholic and Lutheran faiths.

Education

Seoul American Middle School. The middle school program covers students in grades six through eight. The programs and enrollment are similar to those of the DoDDs elementary and DoDDs high schools. Seoul American Elementary School (SAES) (DoDDs). The elementary school program covers kindergarten to grade five. Children must be 5 years old by October 31st of the school year to enroll. SAES follows the U.S. curriculum but has many extracurricular activities. Enrollment is 1,500 students. Unlike many of the private schools in Seoul, it offers an extensive educational, physical, and behavioral

specialist program. There is also a talented/gifted program. After school care is available through the School Age Services (SAS) program.

program for children 3-4 years old. Seoul American High School (SAHS) (DoDDsj). The high school program covers grades 7 to 9. Enrollment is approximately 1,000. The school follows the U.S. curriculum and offers a variety of extracurricular activities. Approximately 80% of graduates pursue higher education. There are programs available for students with special needs.

Seoul Foreign School. The campus consists of two elementary schools (one American and one British), a middle school and a high school. SFS American elementary school provides program for children from Junior-K through grade 5. Children must be 4 years old by September 30 in order to enroll in the half-day JK program. All other programs are full day. SFS British elementary school follows the British system and accepts children from 3 to 12; it works closely with SFS middle school and children can automatically transfer. SFS Middle and High Schools follow the US. curriculum and offer a wide range of programs and activities-SFS has its own pool and auditorium. The high school also offers the international baccalaureate. SFS has extremely high academic standards and caters to high achievers. It does not offer programs with special needs. The school is very popular with the international community and should be contacted as soon as possible to secure a place. For new students there are application and registration fees totaling USD 500, which are due at the time of application.

SFS provides programs from kindergarten through grade 12. JK students must turn 4 by December 31 of the school year. SIS follows the US. curriculum and offers a wide range of programs and activities however, it does not provide programs for children with special needs. The school also has a large



Naksonjae Palace and garden in Seoul

Courtesy of Motoko Huthwaite

ESL (English as a Second Language) department catering to children who do not speak English as their native language.

Special Educational Opportunities

A multitude of educational opportunities is available at post for spouses and dependents. Many take advantage of the opportunity to complete undergraduate or graduate degrees, as well as to learn Korean.

There are several avenues of educational opportunities available through the military base. The University of Maryland and Central Texas College offer undergraduate level programs. For example, the University of Maryland offers courses in Asian Studies, Business, Computer Studies, English, Government/Politics, History, Management Studies, Psychology, Sociology, and Technical Management. Alternatively, the Central Texas

College offers Associate Degrees in Applied Management, Automobile Maintenance, Business Management, Computer Science, Food Service, Hotel/Motel Management, Law Enforcement, MicroComputer Technology, and Office Management.

Additionally, Troy State University offers graduate degree programs. In general, the school year for these institutions is divided into five 8-week semesters, with classes meeting 2 nights weekly for 3 hours.

The Moyer Recreation Center is a U.S.-military facility that offers classes in arts and crafts. Power tools and photography supplies/equipment are also available for personal projects. Check the military newsletters for scheduling.

Nursery Schools and Child Care. There are a few good preschools in Seoul, using both Montessori and social learning concepts.

Sports

Koreans are sports enthusiasts, and nearly all participate in some form of athletics, including golf, tennis, skiing, hiking, and mountain climbing. Korean spectator sports include soccer, baseball, tennis, and hockey. Foreigners are welcome to attend the competitive sports events held at Seoul City Stadium. In season, the Seoul gymnasium has boxing, wrestling, basketball, or volleyball events.

Golf is extremely popular among Koreans. New golf courses are plentiful, and several are located a short distance outside the city. They are attractive and challenging, but quite expensive.

Ice-skating is available all through the year at an indoor rink in Seoul. It is best to bring your own skates. Korean hockey, figure, and racing skates are available, but they are not of the best quality and often do not fit American feet.

Skiing is a popular sport in Korea. There are several resorts within a 3-4-hour drive of Seoul. However, many families drive themselves. Since natural snowfall near Seoul is unreliable, the closer ski resorts rely on man-made snow, enabling them to operate effectively for the whole season. All areas operate poma lifts and chair lifts, which are kept in good condition. Ski equipment can be rented at local resorts, although it will be expensive. Avid skiers may wish to bring their own equipment. It is possible to purchase equipment here, but the selection may be limited and expensive. A good selection of ski clothes can be made or purchased to order at the local markets, e.g., Itaewon. Ski helmets are not readily available in Seoul—skiers are advised to bring their own.

Courses in the traditional Korean martial arts of Tae Kwon Do and Hap Ki Do are readily available.

Hiking around Seoul is popular or Seoulites, especially in the spring and fall. The mountains and hills near the capital offer relatively easy

climbs and good photo opportunities.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Korea has a rich, varied culture. As mentioned earlier, there are palaces, parks, museums, and historical sites scattered throughout Seoul. Beyond the cities' limits, regional capitals host exhibits and festivals, and offer even more opportunities for the adventurous traveler.

Families with small children will be interested in the amusement parks and similar facilities geared for younger interests. Lotte World is a huge indoor amusement/shopping complex, and a zoo is located at Seoul Grand Park, located at the southern edge from the city. Everland is a family entertainment area with a modern theme park, zoo, outdoor and indoor water parks and winter sledding about an hour's drive from downtown Seoul. Near the provincial capital of Suwon—a tourist destination in its own right—is the highly popular Korean Folk Village. At the Folk Village, traditional dress, buildings, and folk traditions are re-created, making a pleasant day trip.

There are other travel options on the peninsula. For example, the southern city of Kyoungju, is noted worldwide for its historical importance as the capital of the Shilla Dynasty. Cheju Island, 60 miles off the south coast, offers waterfalls and fishing villages, as well as being a popular honeymoon choice for Korean newlyweds. For the mountain climber, the east coast of Korea offers a myriad of opportunities, most notable of which is Mount Sorak.

Entertainment

Seoul offers a wide range of choices for entertainment, from the very expensive, black-tie event to much more reasonable options. Plays, operas, ballet, and orchestral performances are held frequently throughout the year, and at venues around the city. Local artists, as well as “big-name” international



View of Seoul, South Korea

© Wolfgang Kaehler/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

artists, perform in Seoul. The National Theater, Sejong Cultural Center, and Seoul Arts Center and the LG Arts Center produce regular programs and schedules of their offerings, as well as ticket prices.

Popular movies find their way to the local Korean theaters. First-run American movies are shown with Korean subtitles. The theaters are clean and quite modern, and prices for shows are commensurate with U.S. prices, if not a little less expensive.

There are ample avenues for the thespian in the family; the Yongsan Players is an active amateur theater group sponsored by the mili-

tary. The Yongsan Chamber Music Society, which has Korean and American professional and amateur members, gives concerts. Shutterbugs will find many fascinating photo opportunities in Korea.

Seoul offers countless restaurants, bars, and coffee shops, to suit everyone's taste and pocketbook. There are some publications that detail some of the more prominent establishments (see Recommended Reading); they provide a good “jumping off point” for exploring the city.

Social Activities

The American Women's Club is active in Seoul as is the Seoul International Women's Association



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Harbor at Pusan, South Korea

(SIWA). The United Services Organization (USO) and American Red Cross (ARC) also offer volunteer opportunities. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and a new Teen Center for older children offers a variety of family options. Supervised gatherings include barbecues, picnics, swimming, local tours, theater parties, and other activities.

Koreans generally enjoy socializing with Americans. Please refer to Recommended Reading for books that deal with some of the cultural nuances of entertaining, gift giving, etc. In addition to the massive U.S. military presence in Korea, there is likewise a huge expatriate community of third-country diplomats and businesspeople. Finding venues to meet these groups can be a challenge, but well worth the effort in getting different points of view about life on the peninsula.

Pusan

Located about 330 kilometers from Seoul at the southeastern tip of the peninsula, Pusan is Korea's second largest city, its main seaport, and a major industrial center. In July 1950, Korean War refugees increased Pusan's population tenfold, from 200,000 to 2 million.

Today Pusan has nearly 4 million inhabitants.

Automaking, shipbuilding, electronics, footwear, and textiles currently are the main export industries of the district. Aerospace and tourism industries are growing rapidly.

The ocean moderates Pusan's weather, giving it the mildest climate on the Korean peninsula. Although Pusan has four distinct seasons, its winters are usually warmer than Seoul's and its summers are cooler and drier. However, heavy rains and typhoons which come in late summer often hit the southern areas harder than in Seoul, sometimes causing serious damage.

Tourist attractions in and near Pusan include Kyongju, the capital of the ancient Shilla Kingdom; many centuries-old Buddhist temples, fortresses, and Confucian schools; several well-developed beach resorts; and the Hallyo Waterway National Park, a rocky, island-studded 100-kilometer stretch of Korea's south coast that can be visited by hydrofoil or ferryboat.

There are daily flights from Pusan to several Korean and Japanese cit-

ies, including Seoul and Tokyo. Pusan is 1 hour from Seoul by plane; 4 hours by train; and 5-6 hours by car. Ferryboat service also links Pusan to Cheju Island, and to the Japanese ports of Shimonoseki and Osaka.

Food

A wide variety of foods can be purchased in Pusan, although some items are rather expensive. There is a good selection of fresh fish, fruits, and vegetables in local markets. Also, fish is available at the large waterfront fish market.

The tap water quality varies, so boiling is advisable. Bottled distilled water and carbonated water are plentiful but not cheap.

Pusan offers a great variety of Korean, Japanese, Korean-style Chinese, and Western restaurants ranging from cheap noodle houses to expensive tourist hotel restaurants. Pusan is well known for Japanese-style seafood restaurants, where such delicacies as sushi and broiled eel are fresh and authentic, but expensive. Good Western bakeries and American ice cream franchises are more recent arrivals.

Supplies and Services

Almost any consumer goods or services are available on the economy in Pusan, although luxury goods and some imports, such as petroleum products, are expensive.

Pusan's department stores, specialty shops, and open-air markets offer a wide selection of Korean-made consumer goods. Good values are available in clothing, luggage, and leather goods, furniture, brass, porcelain, silks, and other textiles, lacquerware, amethyst, and smoky topaz.

Local labor and services are generally of good quality, but expensive.

Health and Medicine

Pusan has several modern, full-service private hospitals, including two (Baptist and Maryknoll) that have foreigner clinics and American doctors and dentists. There are many

U.S.-trained Korean doctors and dentists. There are also fine doctors trained at Korean medical schools, some of whom speak English well.

Transportation

Pusan has serious traffic problems, with inadequate roads to accommodate the heavy volume of trucks and buses and the growing number of private cars. Public transportation, which includes a subway, is improving but is very crowded.

Religious Activities

Chapels at Hialeah hold regular Catholic, Protestant, and Latter-day Saint services. English-language Protestant services, as well as a wide range of Korean-language Protestant, Catholic, and Buddhist services, also are available off post. Pusan's small expatriate Jewish community is served by a U.S. Army rabbi based in Seoul.

Education

An international school, with a curriculum based on the British system, serves the Pusan expatriate community. In February 1994, the school had six full-time teachers and 60 students, including 30 Americans. Dependents of U.S. diplomats assigned to Pusan are authorized to attend. The school is for preschool through junior high grades, ages 3-13. To enter grade 1, the equivalent of American kindergarten, a student must be 5 years old by December 31.

Special Educational Opportunities

Although the University of Maryland has a branch at Hialeah, only a few courses are offered. Other American universities have more extensive English-language course offerings in Seoul. Several very good Korean universities in the Pusan area offer a full range of undergraduate and graduate-level courses and welcome qualified foreign students. Although the language of instruction is normally Korean, graduate textbooks are often in English.

Sports

Mountain hiking is Pusan's most popular athletic activity. Snow is insufficient for skiing. Coastal sailing is severely restricted for military security reasons. Golf is available at military golf courses, two of which, at Jinhae and Taegu, are about a 1-hour drive from Pusan. Otherwise, golf on the economy is prohibitively expensive.

The USIS, municipal, and university libraries all have English-language collections. Same-day delivery of English-language daily newspapers from Seoul is affordable.

Entertainment

Pusan's symphony orchestra gives periodic concerts, and Pusan's municipal cultural center occasionally hosts attractions from Seoul or foreign countries. Several movie theaters show foreign films, usually with original soundtracks and Korean subtitles.

Pusan has several Korean-language television and radio stations.

Social Activities

English is spoken widely among Pusan's relatively small professional class, especially by the young. Korean working contacts are often eager for social contact. All-male group drinking excursions remain popular, but traditional tendencies for socializing to be segregated by gender and to be done outside the home are gradually weakening. Flower arranging, bonsai tree cultivation, the Korean tea ceremony, Chinese calligraphy, traditional music, martial arts, mountain hiking, Korean chess, go, Buddhism, and Christian churches are among the many foci of local social organizations. Many of these welcome interested foreigners.

The international expatriate community offers many diverse working and social contacts and a broad range of informally organized activities. These activities generally are centered on the International School and on the International Women's Association.

Taegu

Taegu, a city of over 2 million people, is located about 200 miles southeast of Seoul. It is about 50 minutes by air from Seoul, 3 hours by train, or about 3½ hours by car. The city is situated in a large plain surrounded by mountains. The climate is similar to that of Seoul, but is often somewhat colder in the winter and hotter in the summer. It can be windy and dusty.

Taegu has five large universities and is known as an educational and cultural center. Citizens tend to be more conservative than their counterparts in Seoul. Taegu is in the center of the apple- and grape-growing region of Korea. Its economy has traditionally been dependent on textiles, though recently the auto parts and machinery industries have expanded rapidly.

Local markets, with reasonable care in selection, are the best source for seasonal fruits and vegetables and some fish. Two of the larger department stores in the city also stock a variety of supermarket items, but at premium prices.

AFKN television and radio reception is good in Taegu. Three Korean television stations also broadcast. Shortwave radio reception is good.

Local university hospitals have modern facilities and clinics. A Catholic Hospital is also available. A few dentists in the city have U.S. training.

Good beaches are about a 2-hour drive from Taegu on the east coast of Korea, near Pohang. Pusan is also 2 hours away. Kyongju, an historical area dating from the Silla period, is 1 hour away by car. There are many other interesting historical sites easily accessible from Taegu. Hiking and picnicking are favorite pastimes here.

Kwangju

The provinces of Cholla-Namdo and Cholla-Pukto. About 6 million people live in the two provinces; 1.2

million in Kwangju, the capital of Cholla Namdo, and about 500,000 in Chonju, the capital of Cholla-Pukto. Chonju and Kwangju are connected to Seoul and Pusan by a limited access, toll highway. Kwangju is about 4 hours from Seoul and about 3½ hours from Pusan. A four-lane super highway exists between Kwangju and Taejon.

Multiple flights go to and from Seoul daily, and there is air service to Pusan and Cheju. No air service is provided to Taegu. Several express trains travel to and from Seoul every day; one-way travel takes about 3½ hours. Seoul bus service is frequent, but conditions are only fair.

Theaters in Kwangju City show a few foreign films with original soundtrack and subtitles in Korean. A civic auditorium stages Korean pop and classical concerts. The new Kwangju Art Center houses two state-of-the-art theaters, an art gallery, a theater for traditional Korean music, an outdoor amphitheater, and a restaurant and coffee shop. Nearby are the Kwangju National Museum and the Kwangju Folk Art Museum. The Kumho Cultural features individual performing artists from time to time. It also has a small tea room.

Two enclosed sports arenas hold basketball, volleyball, and other indoor sports events. The city's large outdoor sports arena is used for political and civic events and soccer and baseball games. Several private country clubs offering 18-hole golf courses are located within 40 minutes from downtown Kwangju. There is a 9-hole public golf course at Kwangju Air Base.

Kwangju has several first-class hotels, with Western, Chinese, and Japanese restaurants. Prices are expensive. The hotels also have conference facilities, and there has been an increase in the number of events held in Kwangju in recent years.

Beaches nearest Kwangju are of poor quality. The one exception is the beach at Mokpo, but it is small and crowded during the summer season. Within a 2-hour drive, however, there are several nice beaches. There are also bridges to two islands, Chindo and Wando, which have recreational areas with hiking and swimming facilities. Temples and other cultural and scenic spots abound in the two provinces. Mountain climbing and hiking are excellent. In Cholla-Pukto, about 2 1/2 hours from Kwangju, Muju Resort offers skiing, swimming, and golfing.

Korean TV reception is good in Kwangju. Two Korean networks offer a full schedule of variety shows, dramas, and some U.S. shows run with Korean soundtracks. However, AFKN-TV can no longer be received,

Medical facilities are adequate. Kwangju has three large hospitals and numerous clinics. Although there are no American doctors in Kwangju, many doctors have been trained in the U.S. or Europe and speak English. Adequate medical care is available for emergencies.

The city sprays heavily in the summer to help prevent the spread of encephalitis. Cholera is now uncommon, but there still are regular outbreaks of diphtheria. Individuals should keep their inoculations up to date.

Schools for English-speaking children are not available in Kwangju. Children must attend school in other parts of the country, or out of the country.

OTHER CITIES

CHEJU, the capital of the island province of the same name, is located 120 miles south of Kwangju off Korea's southern coast. Called the "Hawaii of Korea," the island is a major tourist spot, and the city is its service center. Along with its international airport and myriad

accommodations, Cheju has a large port and light industries. Among the city's attractions are the Cheju Folk Museum; the Samsonghyöl (Cave of Three Spirits), which is said to have been the cradle of the island's three ancestral families; the Yongduam (Dragon Head Rock), a 30-foot high basalt rock head; and a wood and rock park on the outskirts. Cheju grew as a seaport after 1913; the port facilities were built following World War II. The current population of Cheju is roughly 259,000.

INCHŎN, located in northwest South Korea on the Yellow Sea, is the country's second largest port. Protected by a tidal basin, Inchön has an ice-free harbor and is the port and commercial center for Seoul. The city's economy is heavily dependent on the shipping and transshipping of goods, and is one of the country's main industrial centers. Products manufactured in Inchön include iron, steel, coke, light metals, chemicals, fertilizers, and textiles. In addition, fishing is an important industry. The tidal flats off the coast of Inchön have developed large salt fields. Historically, Inchön was opened to foreign trade in 1883. Formerly called Jinsen by the Japanese as well as Chemulpo, Inchön is famous as the site of the landing of U.S. troops on September 15, 1950; a statue of Douglas MacArthur in Chayu Park commemorates this event. It was from Inchön that the subsequent U.N. drive northward was launched. Inchön's population today is approximately 2.3 million.

KWANGJU, in southwest South Korea, is an agricultural and commercial center built on the site of an ancient market. The capital of South Cholla Province, Kwangju has rice mills, and industries that produce rayon, cotton textiles, and beer. Situated in the Yongsan River lowland, the city is a railroad hub with more than one million residents. Kwangju is connected to Seoul and Pusan by a limited access toll highway and is four hours south of Seoul and three-and-a-half hours west of Pusan. Ancient tombs and

temples are located in the hills around Kwangju. The city of Tamyang, 7.5 miles north of Kwangju, is known for its bamboo wares. They are sold every five days at a market. The city also has a bamboo museum. The provincial town of Namwon is to the northeast. It is the home of Chunhyang, the heroine of Korea's famous story of love and conjugal fidelity.

KYŎNGJU, situated 205 miles southeast of Seoul, has been called one of the world's 10 most historic cities. Often described as a museum without walls, the city was the birthplace of Silla culture in 57 B.C., and served as the dynasty's capital until A.D. 935. Spared the destruction of war, there are many pagodas, shrines, temples, and tombs that survive today. The town's most popular temple—Pulguksa—dates from 535 and is an example of Korean Buddhist architecture. Sökkuram Grotto, home of a stone Buddha, is a well-known historic site. Several of the region's largest royal tombs may be found in downtown Kyöngju's Tumuli Park. Korea's most revered and best-known monument is probably Chömsöngdae Observatory, the country's oldest secular building, constructed in 634. Outside of Seoul's National Museum, the Kyöngju National Museum houses the country's finest exhibits of Silla culture. Kyöngju, with a population of more than 274,000 (1995 figure), is a four-and-a-half hour train or bus ride from Seoul; there is no direct air service. On the outskirts of Kyöngju is Pomun Lake Resort, with deluxe hotels, extensive shopping, and recreational facilities.

MASAN, situated 26 miles west of Pusan, is one of the most important commercial hubs in South Kyöng-sung Province. With a population of 500,000, the city has a thermoelectric plant, and machine and chemical factories. Masan serves as the market center for the agricultural regions of the Kimhae plain, as well as a service center for the hinterland. The port, now a free export zone, was instrumental in the region's expansion early this century. It was closed in 1908 because

of its strategic military location, but was reopened in 1967. Masan has road and rail connections to Pusan, and a junior teachers' college, which opened in 1968.

The village of **PANMUNJÖN** lies just south of the 38th Parallel. Truce negotiations during the Korean War began at nearby Kaesong, north of the 38th Parallel, but in October 1951, were moved to Panmunjön, where the truce was signed on July 27, 1953. Daily tours are arranged only by the Korean Tourist Bureau.

SUWÖN, located just south of Seoul is an 18th-century walled city, famous for its elaborate gates and its replica of a Korean folk village. The capital of Kyonggi province, Suwön is an important communications point and a local agricultural center. With a population of over 755,500, Suwön has large silk and rayon textile mills.

ULSAN is the site of the mammoth Hyundai automobile plant, in the center of a special industrial district. The city lies on the eastern edge of the T'aebaek-sanmaek Mountains, 35 miles northeast of Pusan. Shipbuilding and aluminum and fertilizer factories are among this open port's industries. Ulsan was transformed from a market center and fishing town to an industrial metropolis in the early 1960s, when road and rail links to Korea's major cities were finished. The population is an estimated 967,000.

YÖSU is a port in the extreme south, located 60 miles southeast of Kwangju on the Yösu Peninsula. Korea's navy was headquartered here from 1392 to 1910. This is now a fish exporting area of 183,600 residents, though industrial development in the Yochon Industrial District is also important. Yösu is linked to Seoul by rail and road and has regular connections to other seacoast cities.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located on a peninsula squarely between China and Japan, Korea is a mountainous and ruggedly beautiful land of diverse geographical features. The Republic of Korea encompasses 34,247 square miles, or an area roughly the size of the State of Indiana. Seas form three of its boundaries: to the east is the Sea of Japan (or East Sea); to the south, the narrow Korean Straits, and to the west, the Yellow Sea. The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) forms the northern boundary, separating the Republic of Korea from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK/North Korea).

The capital city of Seoul lies some 30 miles south of the DMZ. In addition, there are the regional capitals for various provinces in the country. There are also several important seaports in Korea. Pusan, about 300 miles southeast of Seoul, is Korea's main seaport. Inchon, about 40 miles west of Seoul, is the second most active port. The cities of Pohang, Ulsan, and Chinhae are also key sites in commerce.

Korea's climate is marked by four very distinct seasons. The winters are dry and cold, with snow usually appearing in January. The advent of the cherry blossoms heralds spring—a season that can also be somewhat unpredictable. A brief monsoon season and high temperatures combine to make city life rather humid in the summertime. Autumn is easily the best time of year in Korea, when both the cities and the countryside benefit from clear skies and vibrant fall foliage.

Only 19% of the country is flat enough to be arable, and that land is farmed intensively. In addition, there has been a steady shift away from the farm and into urban areas. Two-thirds of Korea's population now live in its cities.

Population

Korea is one of the world's most densely populated countries. Government figures from 1999 estimate South Korea's population to be 46.8 million, and the city of Seoul's is figured to be more than 10 million. The average age of the population has increased slightly, but the numbers who have first-hand memory of the Japanese occupation or the Korean war continue to decline.

Since 1945, exposure to Western influences has increased dramatically, bringing with it a corresponding evolution in lifestyles, thought, and behavior. Western-influenced attitudes and dress are now common throughout Seoul, but the traditional ideals still hold considerable sway, particularly in the countryside.

Religious freedom is one of the tenets of Korean law. Buddhism (23%) and Christianity (25%) show the most adherents. Others combine practices from Confucianism and Shamanism in their faith.

The Korean language is very distinct from Chinese, but shares a similar grammar and word order with Japanese. The Department of State classifies Korean as a "super-hard language." Han-gul, the phonetic alphabet, is used almost exclusively in all facets of daily life, with occasional Chinese characters finding their way into various publications. Although not a tonal language (such as Chinese or Vietnamese), Korean relies heavily on the Confucian idea of rank and status within society, using various forms of address, expressions, and grammatical nuances to convey those ideas. However, as with any language, a working knowledge of the Korean script and basic phrases will certainly be ample for most residents.

In Korea, the first name is the family name, followed by a given name. Married women continue to use their maiden names but add the prefix "Mrs." Only when associating with Westerners will women occa-

sionally identify themselves by their husband's surname. Koreans seldom address one another by their first names. It is very common practice here to exchange business cards upon introduction.

Traditionally, Korean homes were built of brick or stone around a courtyard, and had three to four bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. Bedrooms had charcoal-heated floors called "ondol." Windows were of glass, and sliding doors between rooms in the homes were latticed frames of wood covered with rice paper. Today, very few can claim to live in such housing. Most city dwellers live in high-rise apartments or in homes of cement block with tile roofing.

Traditional Korean food consists primarily of rice, soups, and the ubiquitous "kimchi," which is a mixture of pickled vegetables, red pepper, and garlic. Grilled meats, such as barbecued beef and ribs ("bulgogi" and "kalbi," respectively) are always popular. As with most of Asia, rice figures prominently in the Korean diet, not just as an essential part of one's meal, but also in traditional drinks. It is used to make "makkoli" (a light rice wine) and "soju" (a considerably stronger libation).

A brief Political History. Throughout most of its history, Korea has been invaded, influenced, and fought over by its larger neighbors. To protect themselves from such buffeting, the Yi Dynasty kings finally adopted a closed-door policy, which earned Korea the title of the "Hermit Kingdom." Although the Yi kings showed nominal fealty to the Chinese throne, Korea was, in fact, independent until the onset of Japanese colonialism in the early 20th century. Japan actually annexed Korea in 1910, beginning an era of almost total control from Tokyo. This era was marked by an effort to replace the Korean language and culture with those of Japan. Japanese colonial rule continued until the end of World War II.

With the defeat of the Japanese in World War II, the peninsula was divided along the 38th parallel. Soviet troops accepted the surrender of the Japanese in the North, and U.S. troops accepted it in the South. This division was cemented when the U.S.S.R. refused to allow a U.N. Commission to enter the North and supervise free elections. Thus, the Republic of Korea was established only in the South. The U.S.S.R. established a separate government in the North, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.), headed by Kim Il Sung.

In June 1950, the D.P.R.K. launched a massive invasion of the Republic of Korea, which was halted at the Naktong River near the southeastern city of Pusan, and then reversed by the historic U.S. Marine landing at Inchon that September.

Three years of bloody fighting followed, with massive numbers of troops from the People's Republic of China aiding the North, and troops of 16 U.N. member nations assisting the South. The truce signed on July 27, 1953 established a demilitarized zone along the 38th parallel.

A peace treaty has never been concluded. U.S. military forces remain in the Republic of Korea today to help enforce the Armistice and to deter aggression, pursuant to the Mutual Security Treaty concluded between the U.S. and the Republic of Korea in 1954. While an uneasy peace has been maintained on the peninsula since the Armistice, large armed forces confront each other across the DMZ and incidents continue to occur.

The Republic of Korea has had a stormy domestic political history. After 1948, short interludes of instability punctuated three long periods of authoritarian rule under Presidents Syngman Rhee (1948-1960), Park, Chung Hee (1961-1979), and Chun, Doo Hwan (1980-1987).

In 1987, a new constitution was drawn up in concert with all political parties. In the December 1987

election, a split between major opposition figures allowed Roh Tae-Woo of the Democratic Justice Party (DJP) to become Korea's first directly elected President since 1971, with just 36% of the vote. In the April 1988 legislative elections, the opposition parties together gained control of the National Assembly for the first time. In January 1990, however, the ruling DJP and two of the opposition parties merged to form the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP), which gained control of more than two-thirds of the seats in the Assembly.

In December 1992, Kim Young-Sam, former leader of one of the opposition parties that had merged to create the ruling DLP, was elected as the first civilian president in three decades. In his first year in office, President Kim implemented sweeping political and economic reforms, which signified a fundamental policy break from the previous administration, and which ended the political careers of several key officials from that administration.

President Kim Dae-Jung's historic election in 1997 represented the first time in Korean history that an opposition leader reached the highest office in the land. An internationally recognized human rights and democracy advocate, President Kim has made political and economic reform, together with the promotion of democracy and human rights, the watchwords of his Presidency. He has also reached out to North Korea with his policy of engagement, and, thus far, progress in expanding private-sector North-South contacts and cooperation has been great. He has also successfully pursued summit diplomacy with the U.S., Japan, China, and Russia, as well as other countries in Asia.

Public Institutions

Under the constitution, the Government is divided into three branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial. The President administers the country with the assistance of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, whom he appoints. All provincial and local

officials are appointed and work under the administration of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court, three appellate courts, three district courts, and one family court. In addition, the military services have special courts.

The one-house National Assembly has 299 members. Three-quarters of the Assembly members are elected from single-member districts, while the others are chosen via a nationwide representative system. Each party receives one proportional seat for every three seats won in the election districts. The constitution provides for direct presidential elections every 5 years and National Assembly elections every 5 years.

Arts, Science, and Education

Korea's 5,000 years of history have produced a rich and vibrant artistic heritage. The handiwork seen, for example, in ceramics, woodworking, architecture, needlework, and calligraphy showcases the high level of craftsmanship evident here. Indeed, Korea has designated several artisans as "Living National Treasures," to honor their contributions to the arts and crafts of Korea, and to pass their skills on to the next generation.

Museums and galleries located primarily in Seoul, but also scattered throughout the country, display the works of the Koguryo, Paekche, and Shilla Dynasties. These displays reflect the different impacts of regional interests and conflicts-e.g., Chinese influence during the Koguryo, Buddhist influence during the Shilla. Later on, the Yi Dynasty (C.E. 1392-1910) illustrated the Confucian mores.

Traditional music in Korea is quite distinctive, and is used primarily in religious rituals, combined with prayer and dance. Concerts showcasing traditional court and temple music are quite popular. The art of "Pan'sori," where a lone singer relates a story, often lasting for up

to 8 hours, is also unique to the region.

Traditional dance is usually court, temple dance, or folk dancing, with highly stylized moves and musical interpretations. Again, festivals and performances highlighting these dances are popular.

Korean research and development activities are centered in the scores of research institutes located in Seoul and elsewhere. These include the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIS), the Korea Institute of Industrial Economics and Technology (KIET), the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI), the Agency for Defense Development (ADD), and the Korea Educational Development Institute (KEDI).

Education at all levels is a highly emphasized facet of Korean life. School children take their studies seriously, and there is enormous pressure from the family and friends to succeed. Government and private investment in education is heavy, particularly in technical schools and colleges, both of which have expanded exponentially in the last decades.

Numerous institutions of higher education were originally established through missionaries' assistance: Ewha Women's University (Methodist), Yonsei University (interdenominational), Soongjun University (Presbyterian), and Sogang University (Jesuit). Of these, the most prestigious is Seoul National University (SNU). These institutions introduced Western culture to Korea during the early part of the 1900s, and many national leaders have since received their education from them.

Commerce and Industry

Korea is one of the largest of the U.S. trading partners, and, currently, our sixth largest export market, surpassing those of Australia, Brazil, China, France, and Italy.

Imports to Korea are returning to pre-crisis (1997) levels, with strong growth expected throughout 2000. Concurrently, Korea also has been described as one of the toughest markets in the world for doing business, a place where firms must do their homework and take nothing for granted.

In response to the late-1997 economic crisis, the administration is implementing structural reforms, especially in the financial and corporate sectors aimed at putting the Korean economy on a more open, market-oriented basis. With the rapid improvement in the nation's economy, however, the pressure to press on with reform and restructuring has abated somewhat.

Despite these challenges, there are many outstanding export possibilities for U.S. goods and service providers, and new opportunities continue to abound. For instance, Korea will be Asia's third largest e-commerce market by 2002. Korea's e-commerce market is forecast to grow to almost \$10 billion by 2003, making Korea the 10th largest e-commerce market in the world. The number of Korean Internet users is now estimated to be about 10 million more users than exist in Australia, Taiwan, Italy, Sweden, Netherlands, and Spain, and rapidly gaining on Canada and the U.K. The Korean market for U.S. non-memory-integrated circuits and microassemblies continues to expand. Korea imports more integrated circuits than it does gas and oil.

In sum, Korea is undergoing a fundamental and revolutionary period of change. Although barriers remain, it is clear that Korea is gradually evolving into a more competitive, more transparent, more user-friendly business environment. U.S. exporters realize the strategic importance of being active in this key market and contribute to the vibrant commercial environment that is Korea.

Transportation

Automobiles

Given the narrow streets and crowded traffic conditions here, small, maneuverable vehicles that are easy to park are best. Vehicles shipped to Korea should not be crated, and all-risk maritime insurance is recommended. Before driving a vehicle, you must have third-party, property damage, and liability insurance, which can be purchased locally.

To obtain a local drivers license, a valid drivers license issued elsewhere (U.S. or foreign) is needed. Otherwise, the local drivers test, which is considered difficult, must be taken. A Korean license is valid for 5 years and is renewable. The fee for both initial issuance and renewal (as of 1999) is 3,500 won.

Traffic accidents in Korea are a serious problem. The Republic of Korea has one of the world's highest traffic fatality rates per number of cars on the road, well over 10 times the rates in the U.S. and Japan. Pedestrian casualties are also high. There are many streets with unmarked crosswalks, and many crosswalks that are marked yet not observed by drivers. Pedestrians often exacerbate traffic problems by jumping into the street to hail taxis. Motorcycles make the situation even more hazardous, with a marked tendency to drive wherever there happens to be room-which can even include the sidewalks.

Local

Local bus transportation in Seoul is inexpensive (for example, W600 per ride on a city bus, regardless of distance) and offers an easy alternative for getting around town. However, schedules per se are nonexistent and buses can be extremely crowded during the rush hour. Routes are printed on the sides of buses-but in Korean script. A basic knowledge of the local language will be a great help in navigating your way around.

Seoul has a fast, safe, and inexpensive subway system, which is easy

to understand. Routes handle both major city stops and areas well beyond the city boundaries. As with any large city, the subway is crowded at rush hour.

Local cabs are convenient and reasonably priced; all taxis are metered so bargaining is not necessary. Tipping is also not expected. Taxis can be hailed from anywhere on a street, although there are some taxi stands near the larger hotels. When hailing a cab, beckon with your hand facing down. Cabbies will not pick up a rider if they do not wish to go to that destination; they will also be disinclined to pick up fares during their shift change (usually late afternoon).

Deluxe cabs are clearly marked. Geared primarily for foreign tourists, the meter starts at W3,000, and the drivers are said to have a grasp of Japanese and some English-language skills.

Regional

Both highways and city streets are often heavily congested with cars, taxis, and buses. Construction projects are continuous. There are good roads from the airport into Seoul proper, and also to points south and east.

Intercity bus transportation is available throughout Korea. Modern, air-conditioned coaches provide inexpensive transportation to major cities. Schedules are available at both the Seoul Express and Nambu Bus Terminals.

The Government owns and operates the entire railway system and continues its efforts to modernize and expand railroad facilities. The well-developed system has first-class coaches available at reasonable fares. There is train service to all major cities. Night express trains have Pullman sleeper cars, and long-distance trains have a dining car. Licensed vendors are authorized to come aboard to sell refreshments.

Sea transport is essential to Korea because there are no open land bor-

ders. Shipping services are well developed, and almost all major foreign shipping lines regularly call at ports here. Usually, these are cargo or cargo/passenger ships. The principal ports are Pusan, on the southern tip of the peninsula, and Incheon, northwest of Seoul.

Many international airlines operate in Korea, and Korean carriers (Asiana and Korean Airlines) fly domestic routes. The schedules are convenient and the airfares are usually quite reasonable.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The Republic of Korea has made great strides in both its telephone and telecommunications services. Cellular phone service is available with many carriers and options to choose from. A wide variety of Internet services is available and prices are comparable to those found in the US. Prepaid phone cards are available, the price per minute back to the U.S. ranges from 8 to 10 cents a minute.

Radio and TV

Korean radio stations offer a wide variety of good musical programs—particularly classical—on both AM and FM stations. In addition to these local Korean channels, the Armed Forces Network Korea (AFN-K) broadcasts news, music, sports, and some US. radio programs. Voice of America programs and National Public Radio are available as well. Some employees use shortwave radios to pick up the BBC, CBC, Deutsche Welle, and others.

Cable TV, some with foreign programming, is widely available. The four Korean television networks offer a variety of programming, with a few either in English or with the benefit of subtitles for foreign viewers. The AFN-K-TV transmits a choice of CNN newscasts and U.S. television programs. The NTSC system is used in Korea, so a U.S.-make television set can receive local broadcasts. Hong Kong's Star TV

Network is also available. There are plenty of locally run video shops, which also carry popular releases.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Korea Times and the Korea Herald are the two English-language newspapers published in Seoul, with an obvious emphasis on Korean news. The U.S. military newspaper, the Pacific Stars and Stripes, is published daily in Japan and shipped to Seoul. All these publications are available for home delivery/subscription. In addition, the International Herald Tribune (Asia edition), and the Financial Times are now printed locally. Asian Wall Street Journal, and USA Today arrive a day late.

Most popular American magazines and recent paperback novels are available at the post exchange.

In addition to these options, the Kyobo Building is well known for its wide selection of English-language titles. Although prices may be higher than in the U.S., the selection is usually quite good.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medically speaking, Korea is an advanced country. Hospitals are usually well equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic equipment. Many Korean physicians have trained and practiced in the US. Specialized care is available at Korean hospitals, as well. High-quality dental care, both general and specialized, is available in Seoul at costs comparable to those in the U.S. U.S.-trained orthodontists are available. Optical services, including American board-certified ophthalmologists, are available at major university-affiliated hospitals at reasonable costs.

In general, specialized medical needs can be handled, but there may be cultural differences that can affect overall satisfaction with services. You may find Korean medical

practices (bedside manners) somewhat different from what you are accustomed to: be prepared to discuss your medical needs and medical history. In Korea, it is normally regarded as the patient's responsibility to inform the doctor of any potential medical concerns. Don't wait until you are asked; you may not be.

Korean doctors do not always volunteer information about their diagnosis or treatment options. When asked, they are usually reluctant to give the patient such information.

Korean doctors rarely tell the patient the nature of the medicines prescribed. The name of the medication, too, will most likely not appear on the package. You may wish to ask your doctor the name and type of medication he is prescribing before having the prescription filled at the pharmacy; the pharmacist may simply refer such questions to the doctor. In Korea there is no primary care system; all doctors are specialists. Be prepared to pay, in cash, at the completion of each visit.

Community Health

Seoul has air pollution levels that are considered moderate by U.S. standards. Hazardous levels are episodic and seasonal, not continuous. Photochemical pollution or smog results from the action of sunlight on motor vehicle exhaust producing ozone. This type of pollution predominates in summer. In winter, particulate and sulfur oxides, which result from coal-fired heating and industrial processes, predominate. Overall levels of winter pollution have decreased in Seoul by 50% in the last 5 years largely due to the switch to natural gas for heating and in industry. However, summertime smog has increased due to the increased number of vehicles in Seoul.

Respiratory problems are the major cause of clinic visits. The cold, dry winters are responsible for recurrent sinusitis, bronchitis, otitis media, and pneumonia. The best protection against these winter illnesses is humid air. Sturdy, cool-

mist humidifiers are the best way to replace the moisture in the air. Humidifiers are available locally. Locally purchased fruits, meats, vegetables need extra cleaning to be on the safe side.

Preventive Measures

Gastrointestinal illnesses are not generally a problem, but the incidence of Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and tuberculosis is rising. Anyone traveling to other parts of East Asia (e.g., China and Thailand), should get two series of Hepatitis A and three series of Hepatitis B vaccinations as they are prevalent in those regions. Long-term visitors may want to be checked annually for TB status.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage Customs & Duties

A passport is required. Visas are not required for tourist or business stays up to thirty days. For longer stays and other types of travel, visas must be obtained in advance. Changes of status from one type of visa to another (from tourism to teaching, for example) are normally not granted in South Korea. Individuals who stay in Korea longer than the period authorized by Korean immigration are subject to fines and may be required to pay the fines before departing the country. Individuals who plan to stay longer than the period authorized must apply to Korean immigration for an extension in advance.

For further information on entry requirements, please contact the Embassy of the Republic of Korea at 2320 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 939-5660/63 or the Korean Embassy Internet home page at <http://www.mofat.go.kr/main/etop/html>. South Korean consulates are also located in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Guam, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, San Francisco, and Seattle. The Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs

and Trade has a web site with a directory of all Korean diplomatic missions worldwide at http://www.mofat.go.kr/en_missions.htm.

Americans living in or visiting South Korea are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Seoul and obtain updated information on travel and security within South Korea. The U.S. Embassy is located at 82 Sejong-Ro Chongro-Ku, Seoul, telephone (82-2) 397-4114 fax (82-2) 738-8845. The U.S. Embassy's web page can be found at <http://usembassy.state.gov/seoul>.

Pets

The 10-day quarantine period for dogs and cats entering Korea from the U.S. has been removed, but importing pets is still subject to the following conditions: Dogs and cats from rabies free areas, such as Hawaii, will be released on the day of arrival into Korea. Puppies and kittens less than 90 days old from anywhere will be released on arrival day if accompanied by a valid animal health certificate. Dogs and cats more than 90 days old from rabies areas, such as the US., will be released upon the day of arrival, if accompanied by a valid animal health certificate that shows that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies at least 30 days prior to departure from the US. (and less than 1 year since the previous vaccination.)

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The official currency unit is the won, issued in denominations of 1,000, 5,000, and 10,000 won notes. Coins are 10, 50, 100, and 500 Won. U.S. dollars are accepted in the Itaewon shopping area and in some other locations that deal with tourists. As of May, 2001, the exchange rate is approximately W1,300=US\$1. This rate fluctuates almost daily. Travelers checks can be purchased at various local banks, including Citibank.

No limit is placed on the amount of foreign currency you can bring into Korea, provided you declare it. Cur-

rency exchange facilities for American currency or travelers checks (not personal checks) are available at Incheon International Airport. Won, the local currency, cannot be imported. There is a departure tax of approximately Won 10,000 for all passengers.

Security Information

Civil defense air raid drills are usually conducted on the 15th of each month. The drills are always announced in advance in English newspapers and AFKN. The alerts last about 20 minutes. During that time, all local business activities cease, and traffic comes to a complete standstill. If indoors, you remain there until the all-clear siren sounds. If you are on the street, you must go indoors or into an underpass or subway station for the duration of the drill.

Seoul is one of the world's largest cities and has criminal activities normally associated with large urban areas. Robberies and pick-pocketing/purse snatchings, especially those targeting foreigners, are frequent. Incidents of sexual harassment and molestation of foreign women have occurred. Home burglaries and car thefts are more common, but have not affected Embassy personnel. Police are considered capable and well trained.

Isolated acts of violence have been directed at U.S. facilities in the past. It is a function of political dissidence, and the organizers are mainly from a small but active group of radical university students. During periods of increased tension on university campuses, usually in the spring and autumn, Americans are advised to avoid universities and political rallies. The great majority of Korean people consider themselves to be friends of the U.S. Government and the American people.

Seoul is only 30 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone, one of the most heavily fortified and tense borders in the world. However, with the exception of incidents along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and occa-

sional attempts by North Korean agents to infiltrate the South, peace has prevailed on the peninsula for 50 years. However, should it ever be necessary, the Embassy and U.S. Forces Korea have worked together for plans to evacuate noncombatants from the peninsula. The Consular Section, American Citizen Services, has the most current information on Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) exercises.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	Solar New Year's Day
Jan/Feb.	Lunar New Year
Jan. 3	Folklore Day
Feb. 26	Taeborum
Mar. 1	Independence Movement Day
Mar. 10	Labour Day
Apr. 5	Arbor Day
May 1	Labor Day
May 5	Children's Day
May 19	Buddha's Birthday
June 6	Memorial Day
June 15	Tano
July 17	Constitution Day
Aug. 15	Liberation Day
Sept. 20-22	Chuseok (Harvest Moon festival)
Oct. 3	Foundation Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
*variable	

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the materials published on this country. The

Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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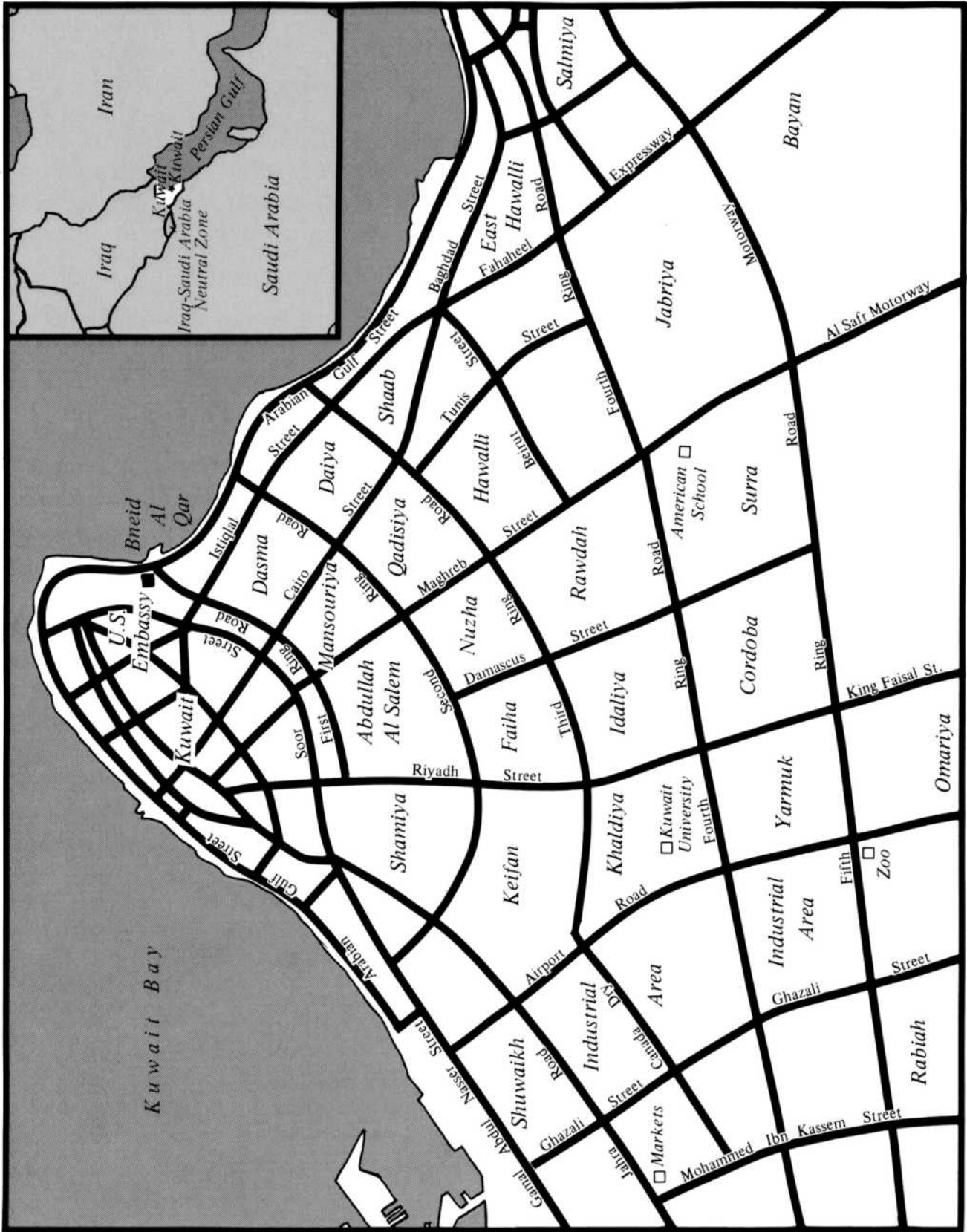
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Kuwait City, Kuwait

KUWAIT

State of Kuwait

Major City:

Kuwait City

Other Cities:

Ahmadi, Al-Khiran, Jahra

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Modern **KUWAIT** was settled early in the 18th century by desert nomads from Saudi Arabia, but archaeological evidence suggests habitation for more than 3,000 years. Its name is derived from the word "kut," meaning small fortress, which was built by the Sheikh of the Bani Khalid in 1672. Today, the country is one of the wealthiest and most progressive in the Middle East. It has been fully independent since 1961, when the British ended a six-decade protectorate sought by the Kuwaitis, who had spent a century under the threat of Turkish and Arabian tribal domination.

Oil, first exported in 1946, is the mainstay of the economy. Oil pays

for free medical care, education, and social security; there are no taxes, except customs duties.

The 1990 Iraqi invasion and subsequent Persian Gulf War brought Kuwait into the world's spotlight. The seven-month occupation by the Iraqis left the country with destruction and rebuilding costs in the billions of dollars. Buildings were not only damaged but also looted by Iraqis; oil wells bombed; and communication, power, and water supply connections severed. Up to a decade will be needed to rebuild and repair the damage.

MAJOR CITY

Kuwait City

Greater Kuwait City extends 15 miles along the Bay of Kuwait and a similar distance down the coast of the Arabian Gulf, where a succession of smaller towns comprise with it a growing metropolitan area where most Kuwaitis live. It is the most important city in the State of Kuwait. The old city outgrew its mud walls with the advent of the country's oil prosperity in the late 1950s, though a few gates have been preserved as historical monuments. The city has continued to expand

along the coast, and new suburban communities have grown up adjacent to it. In contrast to the flat, arid countryside are ever-changing colors of the sea and green areas of trees, flowers, and grass in the city and the older suburbs. Its population in 2000 was estimated at 1,187,000.

Food

Subject to seasonal variations and occasional shortages, a wide variety of foods is readily available in Kuwait. Good fresh fish, fruits, and vegetables are available on the local market. Canned and frozen vegetables from the U.S., Europe, and Australia are sold. Frozen meat and poultry are imported from Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, or the U.S. Pork products are prohibited. The Kuwait Danish Dairy offers a large selection of ice cream, yogurt, cream, sour cream, and milk with different degrees of fat content. All items are reconstituted and quality is good. Soft drinks are available.

Each district of Kuwait has grocery stores and a larger cooperative shopping center complex. One American-type supermarket also exists.

The sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in Kuwait.

Clothing

Although summers are long and hot in Kuwait, winters are chilly and occasionally rainy. The same type of clothing worn in Washington, D.C. (without snowsuits and snow boots) is suitable. Summer clothing is worn for about 7 months of the year. You will need more than the usual amount of clothing necessary in the U.S. Wash-and-wear clothes do not last as long as in the U.S. since they must be washed frequently in the summer. (Water tanks on the roof produce hot water during summer.) During November-March, fall, winter, and spring clothing, including topcoats and rainwear, is worn.

A wide variety of fabric is available at reasonable cost. Local dressmakers and tailors have been used with varying degrees of success, but good tailors are expensive.

Lightweight summer suits for office and evening wear, and slacks and sport shirts for casual wear, will meet summer dress requirements. Acceptable dry-cleaners can be found. Tails and morning dress are not worn in Kuwait. Medium to lightweight American fall, spring, and winter suits are appropriate for cooler months. English and continental men's shoes, underwear, shirts, neckties, socks, and ready-made suits are available, but they can be expensive, and the selection of sizes, styles, and quality varies.

Conservative dress is the rule. Bring summer cotton dresses, slacks, skirts and blouses, and pantsuits for all occasions. Shorts are not worn publicly but can be worn at poolside or on private beaches. Sleeveless dresses or blouses are not suitable for street wear; wear short jackets or shawls to cover bare shoulders. For evening wear, cocktail dresses with sleeves are appropriate. Kuwaiti women are fashion conscious, and London and Paris designs and skirt lengths will be seen at most evening parties. In winter, pantsuits, slacks, dresses, skirts, blouses, and coats are worn. Stores selling women's clothing offer a variety of European-made

dresses, skirts, and suits at medium to high prices.

Lingerie (some American-made) is available at reasonable prices, but selection is limited. Most women prefer to wear cotton or cotton blends. Stockings are available at reasonable prices. Formal hats and gloves are seldom worn. European shoes are available at varying prices. Dress or casual sandals do not last long, but reasonably priced local replacements are available.

Clothing for children and babies is available at reasonable prices. Shoes for children are available but are extremely expensive and tend to be of inferior quality. Narrow sizes are almost impossible to find, and shoe repair is substandard. Winter coats, jackets, or windbreakers are needed. Mandatory school uniforms (navy blue slacks or skirts with blue or white shirts) must be purchased locally. No slipovers or T-shirts can be worn in Kuwaiti schools. Navy blue cardigan sweaters are accepted for in-class wear during cooler months. For outdoors, a lightweight, flannel-lined windbreaker for fall and spring and a heavier jacket/coat of your choice for winter is sufficient to get through the year. Physical education uniforms are white shorts and plain white T-shirts for boys, and navy blue shorts and white blouses for girls. These must be purchased locally and are worn for gym only.

Supplies and Services

It is said that everything is available in Kuwait, if you look long and hard enough, but supplies are often limited, and particular items may be out of stock at any given time. Despite minimal import duties, prices are high, as overhead and profit margins are large and transportation costs great. Adequate stocks of toiletries, cosmetics, shaving supplies, medicines, and household entertainment needs are available.

Most common brands of American and British cigarettes and some American brands of cigars, pipe tobacco, and smoking accessories

are available at prices comparable to, or lower than, U.S. prices.

Several satisfactory women's beauty shops exist. A shampoo and set costs \$15 and up. Haircuts range from \$15 to \$42. Men's haircuts cost from \$10 to \$20, and styling is about \$25.

Religious Activities

Both Roman Catholic and Protestant church services are conducted in Kuwait City and in the oil town of Ahmadi, a 45-minute drive south. In Kuwait City, interdenominational Protestant services are held at the National Evangelical Church on Sunday evenings. The Roman Catholic Church, with daily services, is located near the Sheraton Hotel. St. Paul's Church (Anglican) is located in Ahmadi. Its rector holds monthly services in various homes in Kuwait City.

Education

American children attend the American School of Kuwait (ASK), established in September 1964 as a joint Embassy and American business effort. Enrollment (K-12) has exceeded 900. The student body, which represents 35 countries, is about 30% American. Virtually all teachers except Arabic language and Islamic studies teachers are certified American teachers. The school provides instruction for kindergarten through grade 12. The curriculum is that of a U.S. general academic, college preparatory public school. It does not offer separate classes for native and nonnative speakers of English. Religious instruction is offered for Muslim students. Arabic, French, and Spanish are taught as foreign languages with Arabic being mandatory from grade 4. French is an elective from grade 9. High school Advanced Placement courses are offered. Most graduates go on to colleges and universities in the U.S. or other countries.

ASK is housed in two campuses, one for grades K-5 and one for grades 6-12. It has a gymnasium, theaters, a playground, a swimming pool, and labs for art, computers, ESL, music,

reading, science, and special education. The school sponsors an activities program for students of all ages for the payment of an additional activities fee. The school year is divided into two semesters of 18 weeks each. The school year begins in August/September and ends in June.

Some American children also attend the Universal American School (UAS). UAS received full accreditation in November 1985 and like ASK is a member of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The school provides instruction for kindergarten through grade 12. The curriculum is also that of a U.S. general academic, college preparatory public school. Approximately 85 percent of the faculty is American. Enrollment exceeds 600 students. The school does not offer separate classes for native and nonnative speakers of English. Religious instruction is offered for Muslim students. Advanced Placement courses are available for juniors and seniors.

UAS has a media center (audiovisual), laboratories, a playground, art room, and a gymnasium. The school year is divided into two semesters of 18 weeks each. The school year begins in September and ends in June.

The American International School, a private independent college preparatory day school, offers education from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The International Baccalaureate program and the Advanced Placement program are available for students in grades eleven and twelve. The current enrollment of over 800 students is served by a faculty 80 percent recruited from North America.

Among Kuwait's numerous private schools are several on the British model and a French school. Several private English-speaking pre-schools are also available.

Special Educational Opportunities

No special facilities exist for advanced or for emotionally, physically, or mentally handicapped American children. Limited help exists for children with learning disabilities. Tutors for catchup work are hard to find. Courses at Kuwait University are taught in Arabic and English depending on the faculty. The Voltaire Institute, attached to the French Embassy, offers instruction in French.

Sports

Soccer and basketball are the only major sports in which Kuwaitis participate regularly. Competition in soccer is between Kuwaiti and other national teams, and is not open to U.S. employees and their families. Ice hockey teams have been formed and include skaters from the U.S., Sweden, and Canada. Activities that one can enjoy are swimming, fishing, snorkeling, tennis, horse-shoes, squash, darts, scuba, golf, water skiing, and sailing, although care must still be taken in water sports due to unexploded ordnance. Many people play tennis, even in midsummer. Bowling leagues function during most of the year. Softball teams have games scheduled from September to April. An ice skating rink is available, and horseback riding is popular.

If foreigners are discreet, photographs can be taken in Kuwait. Some Kuwaitis, especially women, object to being photographed. Local police might warn against picture-taking in the suq (market). In certain areas, including military compounds and ports, photography is prohibited, and in a few cases, film has been confiscated. Muslims regard all things pertaining to their religion as sacred; this applies to mosques, and you should therefore seek permission to enter or take photos of Kuwait's many mosques. No objections arise when photographing at private parties or outings where only friends are present.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Many touring and outdoor activities were curtailed after the Gulf War because of the presence of unexploded ordnance throughout the country.

The Tareq Rajab collection is privately owned and open to the public at the Rajab Museum in Jabriya. This collection is Islamic with emphasis on ceramics, early Korans and historical documents, and the tracing of the trade routes through jewelry. The Bedouin jewelry collection (mainly silver) is one of the most extensive in the world.

One of the most unique cultural places in Kuwait is the Sadu House, the center for traditional Kuwaiti bedouin weavings. On certain days visitors can watch the women weave. The house also offers a short film on the history of bedouin weaving, a research lab, and a number of exhibition rooms.

Green Island, enclosing a large lagoon, is constructed out into the sea. A fun place to bring children, it features an observation point, paddleboats, and a scaled-down ruined castle surrounded by a moat. Another fun place for children is the recently reopened Kuwait Zoo.

Khiran Resort, about 45 minutes outside of Kuwait City, also reopened recently. A typical beach resort, it offers bungalows and villas for rent, a swimming pool, a playground, a cafeteria, beachfront, recreation areas, and special bicycles for rent.

The Kuwait Towers, Kuwait's most identifiable landmark, serve as an excellent vantage point overlooking the rest of the city. The top sphere has a snack bar with a revolving observation area; there is also a fancy (non-revolving) restaurant.

Three of Kuwait City's gates and a section of the mud wall remain as a reminder of the Wahhabi and Saudi invasion of Kuwait over 65 years ago. The wall, constructed in 1920, remained standing until 1957.

About a half-hour drive from Kuwait City is a group of private shipbuilding establishments on the edge of Kuwait Bay. Here wooden dhows are still constructed with simple tools by skilled craftsmen.

Al Jahra lies about 78 miles west of Kuwait City and was the scene of a famous 1920 battle between Kuwait and Bedouin forces. On Fridays a large and active camel market is held in the center of town. Nearby is the Red Palace, an old fortress of the village.

Another popular Friday activity is the Friday suq, a Kuwaiti-style flea market with a traditional open market flavor.

Indoor gardening is a satisfying outlet for apartment dwellers. Most have found that anything that will grow and flourish in the ground can be coaxed to thrive indoors as well. Nurseries and flower shops are abundant. Potting soil is expensive. Prudent care and programming can assure continuous enjoyment of some kind of flowering plant year round. Limits to indoor gardening are dictated only by light available within a given area and your imagination and perseverance. Excellent investments for the prospective outdoor and indoor gardener are the Sunset books of *Desert Gardening*, *Gardening in Containers*, and *House Plants*.

Outdoor gardening is practical during winter since the weather is cooler and damper.

Entertainment

Kuwait has few indigenous cultural activities accessible to non-Arabic speakers. Musical and artistic groups periodically come to give performances to residents of all nationalities. Public lectures in English are provided occasionally by guest lecturers at Kuwait University. Most cultural activities are do-it-yourself. An amateur theater group performs about four times a year; an amateur choir meets weekly and performs occasional concerts.

Kuwait has no professional orchestra. Many public movie houses in Kuwait show mostly Indian and edited English-language films. Bridge is a popular pastime.

Eating out is also a popular form of recreation and entertainment in Kuwait. Restaurants are expensive. All international hotels (Sheraton, Kuwait International Hotel, Holiday Inn, SAS Hotel, and Meridien) have dining rooms plus coffee shops. These establishments regularly offer specials on food from foreign countries.

Many people find that various fast food places (Kentucky Fried Chicken, Arby's, Baskin Robbins, Wendy's, Hardee's, Pizza Hut) are excellent and maintain good food and health standards.

Social Activities

The American Women's League is an association of women who are U.S. citizens or are married to U.S. citizens. Social in nature, since fund-raising for charitable causes is not deemed necessary by the Kuwaiti Government, the league holds monthly meetings throughout fall, winter, and spring and features general-interest programs. Occasionally, it organizes barbecues, outings, fashion shows, and other similar activities.

Kuwait is an excellent place to begin or continue tennis instruction; prices are comparable to those in the U.S. Bike riding is limited because paved areas on the compound are minimal, and traffic is hazardous on public roads.

Younger children have few adjustment problems in Kuwait, even though the range of activities for them is limited. There is, however, an active Little League, as well as scouting for both girls and boys. Teenagers find life more confining. The school provides limited non-coed social and extracurricular outlets. On weekends and evenings, social life is limited to shopping, movies, video, TV, and swimming (in season). TV programs include a few hours of English-language

shows; 30 minutes of cartoons each evening are the high point of the sunset hour for the younger set. Sesame Street, in Arabic, appears daily. The swimming season, however, extends from the beginning of April through October, and the compound swimming pool is a social and recreational center for dependents of all ages during summer.

Most entertaining is informal. Buffets are the most common form of dinner party. Sit-down dinners are a hazard unless you know your guests, as Arabs are casual about accepting invitations or sending regrets. The formally set table frequently may have several empty places—or may be squeezed to add two more—by the time dinner is served. Cocktail buffets are a common way of handling large groups.

Kuwait's traditionally family-oriented, cosmopolitan society offers opportunities to form excellent professional and personal relationships. In addition, both Arab and other expatriate communities are active socially.

Special Information

Kuwait is a modern, progressive, and in many ways a Western-appearing country. The religious heritage of Islam, however, has given Arabs a different culture and a strict code of ethics. Although they differ from those in the West in many respects, the rules of common sense and politeness will enable a visitor to enjoy Kuwait.

Hospitality is the basic rule of life in the desert, and this custom has been carried forward. Avoid overly admiring or praising the private belongings of your host, or the host may feel compelled by the dictates of his culture to make a gift of the object you admire. You should not refuse an offer of food or drink unless it is necessary. Shopkeepers sometimes offer tea or coffee to shoppers while they are browsing.

Males should not inquire or appear curious about women members of an Arab family. Western women should dress modestly and be dis-

creet whenever they go outside their homes.

During the Holy Month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from all food and drink from sunrise to sunset. During the day, it is not permissible for anyone (including non-Muslims) to eat, drink, or smoke in public.

OTHER CITIES

AHMADI, situated in eastern Kuwait off the Persian Gulf, offers a contrast to the dry regions of the nation. The pleasant gardens, villas, and tree-lined avenues lure Kuwaitis here to enjoy its peace and tranquility. An industrial and self-sufficient city of 305,000 residents (1985 census), Ahmadi was established as Kuwait's oil town. It developed around the oil industry which provided houses and other facilities for its employees. Crude oil is shipped from Ahmadi's port. Due to rapid growth, Ahmadi will more than likely be merged with the nearby capital in the future.

Situated about 50 miles south of Kuwait City, **AL-KHIRAN** was once an uninhabited desert area visited only by a few swimmers fond of its clear waters. In 1981 urbanization of the city began and its sandy coast was revamped into a modern tourist resort offering a wide range of facilities. This new town has been designed to eventually accommodate 115,000 residents.

One of Kuwait's oldest towns, **JAHRRA** (Al-Jahra) is situated eight miles west of the capital. Archaeological findings in Jahra suggest that it flourished during pre-Islamic times. Traditionally an agricultural city, Jahra's urban development has replaced most of its farm land with modern buildings. Some farms may still be found in the eastern part of the city, but new projects and commercial endeavors are being developed by the government. One of Kuwait's most outstanding tourist landmarks is the Qasr Al-Ahmar (Red Palace). It commemorates the

1920 battle of Jahra. The palace serves as a exhibition center as well as hosting festivals. The city has an approximate population of 280,000 (1985 census).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Kuwait is located in the northeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bounded on the north and west by Iraq, on the South by Saudi Arabia, and on the east by the Arabian Gulf. With an area of about 7,780 square miles, it is slightly smaller than New Jersey.

The country is a sandy, riverless desert interspersed with small hills. Vegetation is sparse. Kuwait's climate is typical of the region. Summer (April-October) temperatures often exceed 120°F, although daytime temperatures of 110°–115° 120°F are more common. Mean annual rainfall is 4-5 inches and occurs mostly during December and January. Short autumn and spring seasons (November, February, and March) are delightful. During winter (December and January), clear, sunny days are common, but it is often cold enough to require a light winter coat in the mornings and evenings. In the early morning the frost point is occasionally reached. Sand and dust storms occur throughout the year, especially between March and August. Periods of high humidity occur, but during the hottest months (June, July, and August), humidity levels range between 45 percent and 50 percent.

Population

Foreign nationals comprise approximately 55% of Kuwait's population of 2 million (2001 est.). The largest foreign groups are Egyptians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indians, Syrians, Lebanese, and Filipinos. The largest Western community is Americans (about 6,200), followed

by British, French, Germans, and Canadians are also represented. Kuwaiti citizens include recently settled Bedouin and long-established townspeople with antecedents in central Arabia, Iraq, and Iran. This variety of origins is reflected in religion: about 45% of Kuwaitis are Sunni Muslims; about 40% are Shi'ite Muslims. Although Sunnis comprise the ruling elite, many Shi'a have acquired great wealth and the influence money brings. Other religions practiced include Christianity, Hindi and Parsi.

Arabic is the official language, but English is widely understood and spoken. The literacy rate, estimated at more than 78%, is one of the highest in the Arab world, and exceeds Population growth is 3.5%.

Kuwait's standard of living approaches that of the most developed Western states in many respects. Most families own a car. Homes of wealthy Kuwaitis are large and, in some cases, palatial. While there are pockets of relative poverty, Kuwait's generous system of government social programs guarantees a minimum standard of living that is high by Third World standards.

Public Institutions

Kuwait, independent since 1961, is a constitutional hereditary emirate, ruled by emir's drawn from the al-Sabah family, which has ruled Kuwait since 1756. Succession as emir is restricted by the 1962 constitution to descendants of the late Mubarak al-Sabah "the Great." The emir selects the prime minister in consultation with senior members of the ruling family. By tradition, the emir's successor, the crown prince, also serves as prime minister. The ruling family's selection of a crown prince is subject to parliamentary approval. Kuwait's emirs have traditionally governed in consultation with members of several commercially powerful families and other influential community leaders. With the emergence of Kuwait as an economically wealthy state,

based initially on its vast oil resources and subsequently on its overseas investments, actual power was increasingly centered in the hands of the ruling Al-Sabah family.

Kuwait's National Assembly, the seat of Kuwaiti legislative power, has served both to institutionalize traditional consultative participation with the ruling family and to act as an outlet for popular expression. Its 50 popularly elected deputies are chosen by an electorate composed of the approximately 82,000 adult male Kuwaiti citizens who can trace their Kuwaiti ancestry back to 1920. (Kuwait has not granted suffrage to females or "second class" male Kuwaiti citizens.) The entire Cabinet sits in the Assembly *ex officio*.

The judicial system includes courts of the first degree (magistrates, civil, domestic and commercial courts), a Misdemeanors Court of Appeal, a High Court of Appeal and a Court of Cassation. Kuwait has a civil law system with Islamic law playing a significant role in personal matters. According to the Kuwait constitution, however, Islamic law is not the only source of Kuwaiti law.

Officially, political parties are banned. Nonetheless, political activity finds an outlet in social clubs and religious societies as well as through family or neighborhood fora, known as "diwaniyyas." A number of political "groupings," both secular and Islamic, act as political parties during elections and in the National Assembly. Labor unions are permitted in several sectors but, since they are financed by the Government, seldom act independently.

The government has recently begun to advocate extending the right to vote and hold public office to women. However, in 1999, the Assembly rejected an emiri decree granting women's rights.

Kuwait's democracy, albeit limited, is much more open and participatory than are the regimes of its



Aerial view of Kuwait City, Kuwait

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neighbors. In a single generation, oil-related wealth has brought vast change to the once poor, isolated members of the society. The large expatriate population has also exposed Kuwaitis to numerous social and cultural forces. With its high per capita income, Kuwait has distributed its wealth among the population through education, medical care, housing, and guaranteed employment for citizens.

Arts, Science, and Education

A traditional Arab sheikhdom, Kuwait has a cultural life of its own. Kuwait has several artists who work in their own homes or in government-sponsored art studios and who give occasional public showings.

Arab and Western music is heard on radio and TV and in public settings in connection with special events. Western music is also presented at various times during the year, primarily by performers sponsored by Western embassies, cultural centers, or major international hotels.

Kuwait has made great strides in its pursuit of scientific knowledge. Most scientific subjects are offered at the undergraduate level at

Kuwait University, while research is carried on at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and in projects funded by the Kuwait Fund for the Advancement of Science (KFAS).

Education is free for all Kuwaiti children. Most foreign dependents attend private schools that charge rates approved by the Ministry of Education. At the university level, Kuwaiti nationals attend Kuwait University free, while other nationalities pay a fee. Scholarships are available for many students from other Islamic and Arab countries. Kuwaiti students scoring in the upper *)% in sciences and upper 70% in arts courses during their secondary schooling years are eligible to study abroad at the governments expense, and many other Kuwaitis do so at their own expense. In 1995, over 12,000 students were enrolled at Kuwait University. In 1992, about 4,000 were studying in the U.S. on scholarship or privately funded programs.

Commerce and Industry

Modern Kuwait was founded about 1740 by desert nomads from Saudi Arabia, but archaeological evidence indicates habitation for over 3,000

years. Because of its Gulf location, fishing, pearl diving, and trading became the most important occupations. Oil was discovered in 1938, but production was insignificant until after World War II. Since 1950, the country has developed rapidly. Today, Kuwait's prosperity depends on oil and income generated by oil revenues invested primarily in the U.S. and Europe. The oil sector provides more than 90%% of Kuwait's export earnings and a comparable proportion of total government revenues. Many other commercial and economic activities serve the petroleum industry and its employees.

Existing industries include water-desalination plants, oil refineries with desulfurizing plants, an LPG plant, an ammonia plant, a chemical fertilizer factory, cement, brick, and concrete block production, bottling plants, and various light industries.

Kuwait has the world's highest per capita imports. The local market reflects Kuwait's free trade outlook. The United States is Kuwait's second largest trading partner, after Japan, owing to Kuwait's purchases of American aircraft, industrial equipment, cars, air-conditioners, and other durable consumer goods. The U.S. also exports substantial services to Kuwait. A wide range of products from the U.S., Europe, neighboring countries, and the Far East are also available. Kuwaiti importers choose their goods almost entirely by price and local demand, not by national origin.

Transportation

Local

Driving is on the right; roads and highways are excellent, and several major highways exist. Most principal roads are divided highways with four to six lanes. Excellent all-weather highways lead south and west to Saudi Arabia. The accident rate in Kuwait is one of the world's highest, due to excessive speed, lax enforcement, and a lack of basic training of many drivers. Practice defensive driving to avoid accidents.

Visitors can use international driving permits issued by their respective countries within the time limit of their visas; however, the visitor must have liability insurance. It is illegal to drive in Kuwait without a license and car registration documents. If you are stopped and cannot produce them, you may be taken to a police station and held until they are presented on your behalf.

If you are in an accident, Kuwaiti law mandates that you must remain at the scene until the police arrive.

The use of seat belts in the front seats is mandatory in Kuwait. Speed limits are posted. Making a right turn on a red light is not permitted unless there is a special lane to do so with a yield sign. Parking is not allowed where the curb is painted black and yellow. Digital cameras for registering traffic violations, including speeding, are in use on Kuwaiti roads.

Driving while under the influence of alcohol is a serious offense, which may result in fines, imprisonment, and/or deportation. Repeat traffic violations or violations of a serious nature may also result in the deportation of an expatriate offender.

When a driver flashes his/her high beams in Kuwait, it is meant as a request to move your car into a slower lane to allow the driver with the flashing beams to proceed ahead.

Kuwait has one of the highest rates of cellular telephone ownership per capita in the world. Although using a cellular telephone while driving is not yet illegal, a law requiring the use of a hands free accessory with the cellular telephone while driving is expected to be enacted.

Local emergency service organizations may be contacted by dialing 777. Ambulance crews do not respond as quickly as in the United States and are often not trained paramedics.

The government-owned Kuwait Public Transportation Company

operates bus service throughout the Kuwait City metropolitan area on 50 different routes and is widely used by the low-income expatriate labor force. Two types of taxi service are available: (1) orange taxis work a fixed route and pick up passengers anywhere along that route and may be shared, and (2) call taxis are available at major hotels and pick up passengers at other locations on telephonic request. Unaccompanied women should not use taxis after dark.

Regional

For destinations outside Kuwait, air transportation is commonly used, and adequate connections can be made to most points. Kuwait is served by a number of international airlines. For travel to the U.S. from Kuwait, the traveler can connect with American carriers in several major European cities. No train service operates from Kuwait.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service is good and costs about US\$100 annually. Long-distance telephone service to Europe and the U.S. via satellite is excellent. Trunk calls can also be placed to most countries; reception is good. A 3-minute call to the U.S. costs about US\$11, and US\$3.50 for each additional minute. Most businesses and hotels, including the Kuwait International Hotel, have a fax machine.

U.S. carriers such as AT&T, MCI, and Sprint are not allowed to offer services within the country by order of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Communication.

Kuwait currently has three licensed Internet Service Providers. Internet access prices remain, however, since the Ministry of Communications retains control of both local telephone service and marine cable and satellite telecommunications in and out of Kuwait.

Radio and TV

TV (KTV) has been broadcasting since 1961, and began color transmission in 1974. It is government controlled and operates on PAL 62 lines standard. KTV currently broadcasts on two channels. Channel 1 is exclusively Arabic, but includes a few non-Arabic programs dubbed or subtitled in Arabic. Channel 2 is almost exclusively foreign-language programs, about 90 percent of which are in English with Arabic subtitles. Channel 1 begins transmission each day at 4 pm (earlier on Thursdays and Fridays), while Channel 2 begins daily at 5 pm. Both channels finish transmitting at about midnight, later on Thursdays. Each channel carries one-half hour of news nightly—at 9 pm in Arabic on Channel 1 and at 8 pm in English on Channel 2. Many American programs are shown on KTV, chiefly on Channel 2. They consist mainly of cartoons, family situation comedies, police stories, and wildlife programs. An increasing number of better quality U.S. made-for-TV serials are also beginning to appear on KTV.

Kuwait Radio broadcasts daily in English, Urdu, Persian, and Arabic. Western rock is popular, and classical music is played regularly on the FM station. Voice of America, BBC, and other foreign radio services can be heard and reception is good.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Kuwaiti press has traditionally had the reputation of being the most active and unfettered in the Arab world. Kuwait has two English-language daily newspapers. Five dailies and numerous weekly, biweekly, and monthly periodicals are published in Arabic. The *International Herald Tribune*, the *Wall Street Journal* (European edition), and the international editions of *Time*, *USA Today*, and *Newsweek* are available in Kuwait within a day or two of publication. Many other English-language periodicals and newspapers are available, but from 1-3 months after publication.

American and British books on a variety of subjects are available at selected bookshops at 50 to 100 percent above publisher prices. No public libraries carry collections in English, although a small British Council library offers membership at a fee.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Several local hospitals can provide basic emergency or routine care.

Families with infants may wish to bring a full supply of preferred nutritional supplements and vitamins, many of which are unavailable in Kuwait. Local water is fluoridated but does not supply the currently recommended one part per million of fluoride ion. Use of water filters does not alter the fluoride content, but if you choose to use bottled water, you may wish to bring a supply of fluoride drops.

Bring an extra set of glasses or contact lenses, and have a prescription ready for refill of glasses or contacts. If you or a family member are taking a long-standing medication or allergy injection, bring a supply and arrange beforehand for regular refills.

Community Health

Respiratory infections, colds, coughs, sore throats, etc., lead the list of common complaints. Middle ear and external ear infections, sinusitis, and bronchitis are not uncommon. Dust aggravates the respiratory tract, complicating ordinary infections. Allergic and asthmatic persons may also have increased problems due to dust. May through September is hot and dry, increasing the incidence of urinary tract stones, heat stroke, and exhaustion. Common-sense measures are effective in preventing these conditions. High dry heat can cause serious problems of dehydration if preventive measures are not undertaken. Gastrointestinal infections are not common.

Preventive Measures

Fruits and vegetables should be cleaned well before eating. Meat should be well-cooked. Fly and insect control is rudimentary. Obtain immunizations for typhoid, polio, and tetanus. Have the basic series given in the U.S. Gamma globulin should be given every four months for prevention of hepatitis. Malaria suppressants are not necessary in Kuwait. No immunizations are required, but it is recommended that childhood immunizations be updated. Additional recommended immunizations are meningococcal and the Hepatitis B series.

To prevent sunburn, bring along a strong (SPF of at least 15) sunblock lotion. Local pharmacies carry some sunscreens, but the complete range may not always be available. Protective clothing is also a must, and a sun hat is useful during summer months.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Kuwait is usually by air. There are direct, nonstop flights to Kuwait on most days of the week from London and Paris, with less frequent flights to Bangkok, Rome, Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Athens, Geneva, New Delhi, and Bombay. Some of the more popular international airlines serving Kuwait are Lufthansa, British Airways, Air France, KLM, Kuwait Airways, Emirate Air, Air India, Gulf Air, and Olympic Airways. The most direct route from the U.S. east coast to Kuwait is via the Atlantic with connections made at any of the European cities serving Kuwait. This is the safest and surest way of travel.

Passports and visas are required for U.S. citizens traveling to Kuwait. For further information on entry requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Kuwait at 2940 Tilden St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 966-0702, or the Kuwaiti Consulate in New York

City, telephone (212) 973-4318. Information also may be obtained from the Consulate's Internet home page at <http://www.undp.org/misions/kuwait>.

Alcohol, pork products, and pornography are illegal in Kuwait. Religious proselytizing is not permitted. Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, including Americans, charged with criminal offenses or placed under investigation, or involved in financial disputes with local business partners, are subject to travel bans. These bans, which are rigidly enforced, prevent the individual from leaving Kuwait for any reason until the matter is resolved. In purely financial disputes, it may be possible to depart the country if a local sponsor authorizes funds equal to the amount in dispute.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and enroll in the Embassy's emergency alert network in order to obtain updated information on travel and security in Kuwait. Initial registration may be done on-line at <http://www.usembassy.gov.kw/registration-main.htm>. The U.S. Embassy in Kuwait is located at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Street, Plot 14, Block 14, Bayan, Kuwait. The mailing address is P.O. Box 77, Safat 13001, Kuwait. The primary telephone numbers are 965-539-5307 or 539-5308. The after-hours number is 965-538-2097. Additional information may also be obtained through the Embassy's Internet web site at <http://www.usembassy.gov.kw>.

Pets

Pets may be brought, but obtain a veterinarian's certificate of good health and rabies vaccination before the animal is sent and have them with you when your pet arrives. No restrictions are placed on entry of pets and no quarantine is required. The climate is severe for pets. Veterinary services in country are limited, so have your U.S. veterinarian recommend medications that your pet may need. Pet food and kitty litter are readily available.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency is the Kuwaiti dinar (KD), which is issued in notes of 20, 10, 5, 1, ½, and ¼ KD. The Kuwaiti dinar is divided into 1,000 fils and currently is equivalent to about US\$3.87.

Foreign banks are not permitted in Kuwait. Travelers checks can be cashed without difficulty.

Kuwait uses the metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline is sold by the liter; temperature is cited in degrees Centigrade; distances are measured in kilometers.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Feb. 25 Kuwait National Day
- Feb. 26 Kuwait Liberation Day
- Id al-Adha*
- Hijra New Year*
- Mawlid an Nabi*
- Lailat al-Miraj*
- Lailat ul-Bara'h*
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

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KYRGYZSTAN

The Kyrgyz Republic (formerly the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic of the former U.S.S.R.)

Major City:

Bishkek

Other Cities:

Dzhalal-Abad, Osh, Przhevalsk, Tokmak

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **KYRGYZSTAN** declared its independence on August 31, 1991, during the collapse of the Soviet Union. Formerly known as the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, its independence was recognized by the United States on December 25, 1991 and an embassy was opened in Bishkek the following February. The country was admitted to the United Nations on March 2, 1992. Of all the former Soviet republics, Kyrgyzstan has been the most reform-minded, politically and economically. However, the country has severe economic problems, along with continuing ethnic and clan-based conflict.

MAJOR CITY

Bishkek

Bishkek is located in the extreme northern part of Kyrgyzstan, 10 miles from the border with Kazakhstan. It's population in 2000 was approximately 662,000. A 30-minute drive from Bishkek, and one climbs into the foothills of the Ala-Too range of the Tien Shan, or "Heavenly" mountains. Bishkek has lovely tree-lined walking parks and wide streets (although one must watch for open manholes).

Food

Shopping for food on the local economy requires knowledge of local sources, perseverance, and a high tolerance level for crowds and less than hygienic conditions.

Those who prefer to do their own shopping on the local market find the best source of basic foodstuffs to be found in the large open-air food bazaars such as the Osh or Alamedin bazaar. During summer and fall there is a plentiful supply of fruits (apples, oranges, local berries, melons, pears, peaches, tomatoes and imported bananas) and vegetables (cabbage, beans, loose leaf lettuce, onions, cucumbers, radish, squash, beets, spring onions, summer

squash, pickled vegetables and, of course, potatoes). During the winter and early spring months the selection shrinks dramatically leaving only basic root vegetables and a very limited selection of high priced imported fruit.

There are a number of small private shops which import canned goods from Western Europe for sale to the expatriate community. Prices tend to be high but these shops do provide variety during the winter months. Noticeably lacking in even these shops are fresh dairy products. Post continues to experience difficulty in finding reliable sources of long-life milk products. Staff members usually purchase long-life milk in shops in the neighboring capital of Almaty (a seven- to-eight hour round trip drive from Bishkek). Almaty also provides a much larger selection of Western food products, albeit at high prices.

Purchase and preparation of meat products are of particular concern to staff members. There are no western style butchers and most meat is sold in open air, unrefrigerated bazaar stalls. Usually a large piece of meat must be purchased and cut down into smaller pieces at home. Great care must be taken to thoroughly cook all meat products to eliminate the risk of bacterial contamination. Beef, mutton, pork, and

a limited selection of chicken, (and horse, if desired) meat products are available year round. Frozen chicken from Holland and the United States can also be found in the markets.

A selection of soft drink products including Coke, Sprite, Fanta is available. Currently the products are imported from Turkey by a joint venture Coke representative company. This company plans to begin bottling operations in Kyrgyzstan in 1996. A selection of European beer is available on the local market as well as Kyrgyz champagne and cognac products.

Local sources of sugar, flour, salt, baking soda, and macaroni are adequate but the quality of these products may not be suitable for American tastes. Local salt is not adequately iodized.

There is an abundance of local spices but they are sold in bulk and the purchaser must provide his/her own container. The markets also have an abundance of locally-pickled cabbage, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes. There is excellent rice available locally in bulk.

Items which are difficult to find locally include coffee (other than instant), cleaning products (though a Proctor & Gamble representative has recently opened a retail store in the city which sells P&G products such as TIDE), personal care products (some available through the P&G store), paper products (to include toilet paper, tissues, paper napkins, paper towels, note paper, computer paper, construction paper for school supplies, wrapping paper for gifts, gift cards, etc.), women's nylon stockings, chemical products to fight insect infestation (cockroaches, flies, mosquitoes, pet care flea/tick products), school supplies (pens, pencils, notebooks), batteries, English language books and magazines, contemporary music tapes and CDs.

Clothing

The choice of shoes and clothing in Bishkek is limited. The type of

clothing worn in the northeast of the U.S. is appropriate in Bishkek. Winters are cold, snowy and icy. However, Bishkek does have many crystal clear winter days. Late spring, summer, and fall are generally pleasant with long stretches of sunny temperate weather. Midsummer can be very hot (mid-90s). Temperatures average 30°F (-2°C) in midwinter and 80°F (22°C) in midsummer.

A warm coat with a hood or a separate warm hat, several pairs of woolen and waterproof gloves and appropriate shoes are recommended. A good supply of shoes and boots for all types of weather, such as tennis, dress shoes, rubber rain boots, hiking boots and lined, thick-soled winter boots for children and adults is also recommended. Drycleaning is available in Almaty, Kazakstan (4 hours away). Commercial laundries are not available. Washable clothing is most practical.

Both heavy and light topcoats are desirable for spring and fall. Warm waterproof gloves, overshoes, and sweaters are also necessary. Woolen suits worn in the U.S. are satisfactory for winter in Bishkek, but some prefer heavier suits and sweater vests during the coldest months. Lighter suits are needed for summer.

Versatile clothing for luncheons, receptions or the theater is essential. Slacks, skirts, blouses and sweaters are ordinary daily wear. Most Kyrgyz women wear skirts or dresses, not slacks. Women are rarely seen in shorts. Women wear woolen clothing of several weights during fall and winter. Cottons, synthetics and blends, preferably washable, are worn in the summer. Raincoats with removable linings and a heavy coat are necessary.

Children need washable, sturdy wool, corduroy and other heavy clothing. Waterproof boots with insulated foam lining, several pairs of waterproof mittens, long thermal underwear, both heavy and light-weight pajamas, and waterproof snowpants all come in handy. Since

children's clothing available locally is not of Western quality and limited in quantity.

Supplies and Services

Laundry service provided in hotels is hard on clothes. Drycleaning is available in Almaty, Kazakstan.

Tailoring and dressmaking is available in Bishkek. Service varies from place to place, and it is best to frequent shops or dressmakers recommended by others with similar tastes. The choice of fabrics available in Bishkek is limited.

Local barbers and beauty shops are plentiful. Although relatively inexpensive, techniques and methods used by hairdressers differ from those in the West. Some European hair products are available in a few stores. Special hair products generally are not available.

Religious Activities

Religious services are held in several mosques, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Jewish Synagogue, the Presbyterian (Korean), Baptist and the Seventh Day Adventist churches in Bishkek. Several missionary groups are in Bishkek including the Hare Krishna, the Church for Unification and other nondenominational faiths. Some offer services in English.

Education

The Bishkek International School, a private institution which opened in September, 1994, offers English language instruction for elementary students from 5 years through 13 years of age. The school operates under the control of Quality Schools International, a private nonprofit organization, which operates schools in Yemen, Albania, Kazakstan, and Ukraine. The school typically has an enrollment of less than 10 students.

The school term is from early September to mid-June. The curriculum includes English, mathematics, cultural studies, science, art, music and physical education.

Some American parents have placed their children in local Russian language schools. If children are prepared for the extra work involved in learning Russian and if parents are prepared to devote the time to give children extra help, the experience can be rewarding.

Sports

Many sports are available in Bishkek and the surrounding countryside. A large outdoor swimming pool is available in the summer, and a modest indoor pool is sometimes available in the winter. A limited number of tennis courts are available in good weather. An indoor tennis court (converted basketball court) is available for rent in the sports palace during the winter. Some spectator sports such as soccer and wrestling are available.

Downhill skiing is possible in the mountains, about a one hour drive from Bishkek. Ski weekends are organized to the slopes with chalets.

Horseback riding is available in Bishkek. Trekking through the mountains of Kyrgyzstan by horseback and on foot are popular ways to see the beautiful areas of the country during the spring, summer and autumn. Fishing, hunting and white-water rafting are other popular sports in Kyrgyzstan.

In general, bring all your own sports equipment and clothing as items are difficult to find and/or unavailable locally.

Recreation Shopping

Bishkek offers wide range of local products of interest to staff members. Kyrgyz rugs are unique in their design and construction. Local jewelers produce beautiful designs utilizing semiprecious stones and local rocks. Craftsmen also produce stone boxes with inlaid designs from types of rock found throughout the country. Kyrgyz musical instruments, local wool felt hats and ethnic clothing, and pottery are also of great interest to expatriates. There are a large number of expert painters and sculptors in Kyrgyzstan.

Prices for quality Kyrgyz artwork and crafts are still reasonable.

Entertainment

Bishkek has several cultural activities. The Bishkek Opera and Ballet Theater offers autumn and winter performances. The Philharmonic provides classical, modern symphony and Kyrgyz orchestral and traditional performances. The Philharmonic was built in 1980. The gigantic statue in front depicts the 1,000-year-old epic hero Manas atop his magic steed Ak-Kula slaying a dragon. The Kyrgyz Drama Theater and the Russian Drama Theater perform classic productions.

Bishkek has many beautiful parks and monuments. Walking tours to the many architectural and historical landmarks are a good way to get a feel for the city. Within three blocks of the Embassy are the Museum of Fine Arts, the National Library, the Opera House, the National Museum, the Circus (a Kyrgyz troop of horse riders and acrobats have just begun a one year tour with the Barnum and Bailey Circus in the U.S.), the Frunze Memorial House-Museum, the Zoological Museum and the Monument to the Great Patriotic War.

Directly in front of the U.S. Embassy is Erkindik Prospect (Erkindik means "freedom" in Kyrgyz) It is a one mile long walking park lined with huge oak trees. One can stroll Erkindik Prospect through an outdoor sculpture garden, past the Drama Theater, along the Art Gallery in the Park, by the Tea House and continue in the large walking park for 30 minutes until you reach the Train Station. This walk provides a pleasant break in summer and winter.

Markets (rynoks) provide a colorful feature to Bishkek life. The largest market is the Osh market, named for the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan. The Osh market features the greatest variety and least expensive fruits, vegetables, meats and souvenirs in Bishkek. On the weekends, cats, dogs and birds are sold at the Osh market. The Alame-

din market is a smaller market located near the U.S. Embassy. On the weekends, the "Push" Market, so-named because you have to push to get through the market, offers the greatest selection of merchandise in Bishkek, the latest from the popular shopping trips to India, Turkey and the Middle East.

Two Chinese, one Korean, two Turkish and one pizza restaurants are the eating establishments most frequented by the international community in Bishkek. Ethnic Kyrgyz food such as shashlik, plov and manti is served in a few restaurants, but primarily from stands on the streets. One should be careful when deciding to try the local cuisine from street vendors.

The two main hotels in Bishkek have bars, cafes and souvenir gift shops.

Movie theaters, for the most part, show films in Russian. Some Western films also play in theaters, but they are dubbed in Russian. Kyrgyz television programming includes some interesting cultural events and historical documentaries.

Social Activities

The American community in Bishkek numbers around 125 and is composed primarily of USAID contractors and a few businessmen/women. Embassy personnel, as well as contractors, entertain each other informally at dinner, receptions or theatrical performances.

On an informal level, individuals organize visits to areas of interest and short trips for rest and recreation. Members of the international community get together for volleyball, softball, and touch football.

The International Women's Club is a social organization for women of the foreign community of Bishkek. The organization is nonpolitical, nonreligious and wishes to promote friendship and understanding between their members and the people of Kyrgyzstan. The group was founded in May, 1995 to give English-speaking women a chance

to get together socially and to meet new women in the foreign community. Currently the club has over 50 members representing 15 countries. The club has meetings twice a month on Thursdays; new arrivals to Bishkek are always welcome. Meetings are held in homes and restaurants.

Canadian citizens are numerous in Bishkek due to the Kyrgyz-Canadian joint venture gold mining company. Many international visitors with international organizations such as the IMF, UNICEF, UNDP and British, Dutch, German, and European Community assistance organizations are active on the social scene. Social relationships with Kyrgyzstani citizens are not difficult to establish, particularly if one possesses Russian or Kyrgyz language skills. There is no prohibition on establishing social relationships with Kyrgyzstani citizens. On the contrary, reaching out and making Kyrgyzstani friends is encouraged.

Special Information

Americans are popular and generally welcomed by all segments of society in Bishkek. The level of violent crime is not high by American standards; however, theft, burglaries, and even mugging is on the increase because of the declining economy. Westerners are likely to become targets as they are associated with wealth.

Because of energy deficits and broken, unreplaced street lamps, Bishkek is poorly lit after dark. The precautions necessary in any large Western city should be taken in Bishkek after dark. One should avoid walking alone at night, especially where there are few people.

Many apartment buildings have poorly lit entrances through courtyards or in the rear of the building. A pocket flashlight is essential for nighttime activities. Some bars and restaurants are frequented by the local "mafia." It is better to avoid these facilities.

Travel by train from Bishkek to Moscow and other locations is not

recommended due to an increase in crime on the trains. Bus travelers have had backpacks slashed.

Normal precautions, such as not exposing money or dressing ostentatiously, are recommended.

OTHER CITIES

DZHALAL-ABAD, with a population of approximately 74,000, is located in southwest Kyrgyzstan near the border with Uzbekistan. Surrounded by an agricultural area, the city's main commercial enterprises are food processing plants and other light industries.

OSH is near the Uzbekistan border, only 30 miles from the Uzbek city of Andizhan. A large number of ethnic Uzbeks live in the Osh region. Agriculture and mining are the most important enterprises. Silk, cotton textiles, and food processing are the main industries. Many Muslims make a pilgrimage to Osh to visit Takht-i-Sulaiman, a hill mentioned in Islamic lore.

PRZHEVALSK (formerly Karakol) is located in northeast Kyrgyzstan on the eastern boundary of Issyk-Kul. The city is in the center of an agricultural region. A resort area, it is also a transportation hub—as a port for water transportation on the Issyk-Kul and as a commercial transport center with routes to the north and east.

TOKMAK is an industrial town, located just east of Bishkek. The building of a railway in 1938 contributed to the city's development. Tokmak has a population of 72,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located in Central Asia, it is about the size of the State of Nebraska, with a total area of 198,500 square

kilometers. It is 900 kilometers east to west and 410 kilometers north to south. Kyrgyzstan is bordered on the Southeast by China, on the north and west by Kazakhstan, and on the south and west by Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Bishkek (formerly Frunze), the capital, and Osh are the principal cities.

Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous country with the Tien Shan and Pamir mountain ranges dominating 65% of the country. The average elevation is 2,750 meters, ranging from 7,439 meters (24,409 feet) at Pik Pobedy (Mount Victory) to 394 meters in the Fergana Valley of the south. Kyrgyzstan's estimated 6,500 distinct glaciers are thought to hold 650 billion cubic meters water. The alpine regions provide rich pastures for sheep, goats, cattle, horses and yaks. Agriculture is conducted in the Chui River valley of the north and in the Fergana valley in the south. Over half the cultivated area is irrigated. Cotton, sugar beets, silk, tobacco, fruit, grapes and grains are grown. There are gold, coal, antimony, lead, tungsten, mercury, uranium, petroleum and natural gas deposits. Industries include food processing, the manufacture of agricultural machinery and textiles. The country is lightly forested; woods cover only about 3.5% of the country. However, forests in southern Kyrgyzstan include the largest wild nut (walnut) groves on earth.

The local climate is cold in the winter and desertlike hot in the summer. In January, evening temperatures can be in the teens (Fahrenheit); daytime temperatures often rise to above freezing, enough to start melting ice and snow. Summer temperatures can rise above 90 degrees by the end of May. The air is dry year round.

Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, is situated in the extreme northern region of the country.

Population

In 2000, the population of Kyrgyzstan was approximately 4,600,000, of whom 52.4% were ethnic Kyrgyz. Russians make up 18%

of the population, Uzbeks 12.9%, Ukrainians 2.5% and Germans 2.4%.

Because of the country's mountainous terrain, the population tends to be concentrated in a relatively small area. About two-thirds of the population live in the Fergana, Talas and Chui valleys. The Chui valley, where the capital Bishkek is located, is the major economic center, producing about 45% of the nation's gross national product. Virtually all ethnic Uzbeks live in the southern area of the country, the Fergana valley. As a result, the Fergana region is more orthodox Muslim and traditional than the north.

The Kyrgyz language is a Turkic-based language with Mongol and Altaic elements. Kyrgyz did not become a written language until 1923, at which time an Arabic-based alphabet was used. Kyrgyz was changed to a Latin-based alphabet in 1928 and to a Cyrillic-based one in 1940. Most Kyrgyz living in the cities speak Russian. In rural areas, more Kyrgyz is spoken.

Arts, Science and Education

The Arts, Science and Education have suffered tremendously from lack of funding for the last four years. Public school teachers, especially in the rural areas, are seldom paid and usually in products rather than salary. Fuel shortages and the lack of funding to purchase fuel have forced many schools to operate without heating. Books and other learning materials are in short supply. At the university level, new private universities are operating entirely on revenues raised by tuitions and public universities likewise are charging tuitions to cover costs. Some universities are affiliated with foreign universities, including several American universities.

Education was one of the strongest features of the old regime, and many areas of strength still exist, especially in the sciences. The Academy of Science still operates. The

recent introduction of Internet communications is expanding the ability of Kyrgyz scientists to work with scientists from other regions of the world. Ecological and environmental concerns of the country are observed by new NGOs which monitor the condition of Lake Issyk-Kul and measure fallout on Kyrgyz territory from Chinese Lop Nur nuclear tests.

Commerce and Industry

While a Soviet republic, Kyrgyzstan was dependent on transfer from Moscow for 12% of its GDP and had developed an industrial structure tightly integrated into Soviet structures and heavily weighted toward the defense industry. Consequently the breakup of the Soviet Union has had severe consequences for Kyrgyzstan's economic output. For this and other reasons, Kyrgyzstan has been in the forefront of economic reforms. Privatization was begun earlier than in other Central Asian states and is now proceeding steadily with U.S. assistance. Collective and state farms have been broken up and investment is being sought to develop gold mining and hydroelectric power.

Kyrgyzstan has stabilized its economy with a stable national currency—the Som—which has traded at around 10 to 11 som per U.S. dollar, and a low inflation rate. Exports began to pickup in 1994 and continued to grow in 1995. The former CIS countries remain major trading partners but China is now the largest market for Kyrgyzstani exports and trade patterns continue to diversify away from traditional trading partners. The banking and financial sector remains weak and tourism, which has great potential, remains undeveloped.

Agriculture accounts for over 40% of GDP with wool, cotton and hides being important products. Since independence the country has not been self-sufficient in grains and has needed to import wheat, rice and animal feeds. Herds have decreased sharply in recent years.

The production of fruits, vegetables and cotton has increased. The agricultural sector is in the midst of a major transition and it will be several years yet before this important sector stabilizes. Aside from mining, food processing and textiles based on locally produced raw materials offer the best prospects for industrial growth.

Unemployment is high in Kyrgyzstan and standards of living for Kyrgyzstanis have dropped dramatically since independence.

Transportation

Traffic regulations and procedures in Kyrgyzstan are similar to those in the U.S. However, driving habits of local drivers mean that one must use caution when driving and when crossing streets as a pedestrian.

Winter evenings in Kyrgyzstan are dark and cold with severe icing on city streets. Only the main streets of Bishkek are plowed regularly; side streets and housing complexes remain covered with snow and ice throughout the winter.

Local

Public transportation in Bishkek is inexpensive, but overcrowded. The city's network of buses and trolley-buses covers the entire city. Riders should be ready to contend with a good deal of pushing and shoving during the morning and evening rush hours. Passengers enter the bus from the rear doors and exit/pay through the front doors. The city has no streetcars or subway.

Many taxis cruise the city and private cars often provide taxi services. There are taxi stands at some busy corners in central Bishkek. After a taxi or car stops, the required destination should be stated; if the driver agrees, a price should be negotiated before entering the vehicle. Kyrgyz or Russian is a necessity when dealing with taxis. Extra precautions should be taken in the evenings, when it is advisable to use only clearly marked taxi rather than a private vehicle.

Regional

Kyrgyzstan's rail and air transportation system is limited and service is marginal. The rail system runs from Bishkek east to Lake Issyk-Kul and to the north to connect with rail lines for Uzbekistan, Russia and Kazakstan. Trains are unclean, overcrowded, dangerous and have no ventilation.

Air travel from the Bishkek International Airport (Manas airport) is often unreliable due to delays, sudden cancellations, or lack of fuel, particularly in winter. The successor to Aeroflot in Kyrgyzstan, Air Kyrgyzstan, operates regular service throughout the country and on a limited basis to Tashkent, Uzbekistan and a few cities in Russia. There are regular charter shopping flights to the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, India and Thailand. A German charter flies several times per month to three cities in Germany.

The road system in Kyrgyzstan provides access to all cities, towns and most villages. However, north-south travel in Kyrgyzstan is impossible from December through March due to heavy snow in the mountain passes. In all seasons, the traveler should plan her/his trip carefully since information, food, water, lodging and fuel are often not readily available. In winter, the traveler must be well prepared with food, water, heavy clothing and fuel as roads can close quickly due to ice and snow, leaving the traveler stranded for hours.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service from Kyrgyzstan to the U.S. and to most European cities is inadequate but improving. Local calls often have serious static interference. Calls requested through the operator may require a wait. International calls to the U.S. cost about \$1.00 per minute. The phone system in Bishkek uses the "pulse" rather than the "tone" method as commonly found in the U.S.

Newspapers, Magazines and Technical Journals

No foreign newspapers and magazines are available in hotels or in newspaper kiosks. However, copies of the *International Herald Tribune* can be ordered and delivered from Singapore by air through Almaty.

Radio and TV

Television and radio programming in Bishkek provides regular news broadcasts and basic information about Kyrgyzstan and international affairs. Broadcasts rely heavily on educational documentaries, films, and concerts. One station broadcasts from Bishkek, two stations provide broadcasting from Moscow in Russian and one broadcasts in Turkish from Turkey.

Radio programs on Bishkek's radio stations begin early in the morning. Much of the programming is musical. A good shortwave radio is required to receive Voice of America, BBC World Service and Radio Liberty. VOA is broadcast on an AM station in Bishkek at Sam.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local medical practice in general is not up to the standards of Western medicine. Pharmaceutical supplies and drugs are in short supply. Routine laboratory work is problematic due to lack of supplies or working equipment.

Community Health

Air pollution in Bishkek continues to increase. Utility smokestacks have no scrubbers. Residents of the suburbs burn coal or wood for heat and cooking, which adds to the haze trapped in the Bishkek valley. Persons with respiratory problems will notice increased sinus/allergic difficulties.

A high pollen count in the spring sometimes compounds air pollution problems. Persons susceptible to hay fever should bring an ample supply of medications and tissues as local supplies are uncertain.

Pests such as cockroaches and ants can be a nuisance in some apartments. Mosquitoes can be an annoyance in the summer. Travelers should bring an ample supply of insect repellent, traps, and fly swatters, as these items are not available locally.

Fruits and vegetables bought locally should be washed with a chlorine disinfectant.

The standard of cleanliness in many public buildings, restaurants, taxis, airports, and train stations fall short of Western standards. The few toilet facilities found on the roads while traveling are usually avoided for the cleanliness of nearby trees.

Drinking tap water is not recommended. Parents should bring fluoride fortified vitamins or fluoride tablets to add to the water supply for their children as once water is distilled, it loses its fluoride content. Locally produced carbonated mineral water is available, but it has a high sodium content.

The number of restaurants available in Bishkek is limited. Local markets have a good variety of fruits and vegetables in the summer, with winter produce consisting of potatoes, carrots, onions, cabbage and beets. Meats are hung in the market without refrigeration. No meat is packaged. A few small stores have opened with imported canned and packaged meats and vegetables.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and visa as well as an invitation are required. For further information regarding entry requirements, contact the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic at 1732 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, telephone (202)338-5141, fax: (202) 338-5139, or on the Internet at <http://www.kyrgyzstan.org>. Americans are required to register

their passports with the Office of Visas and Registration, of the Kyrgyz Internal Affairs Ministry, within five business days of arrival in the Kyrgyz Republic. There are fines for failure to register and fines for late registration. This requirement does not apply to official delegation members and bearers of diplomatic passports.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passport with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and citizenship are readily available. To this end, the American Citizen Services Unit of the Consular Section at U.S. Embassy Bishkek provides free-of-charge certified photocopies of the passports of U.S. citizens who register with the Consular Section.

In accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and certain bilateral treaties, a consular officer from the U.S. Embassy must be given access to any U.S. citizen arrested in the Kyrgyz Republic. U.S. citizens who are arrested or detained should ask for the U.S. Embassy to be contacted immediately.

Americans living or visiting the Kyrgyz Republic are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security in the Kyrgyz Republic. The U.S. Embassy in Bishkek is located at 171 Prospect Mira, 720016 Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. The phone number is 996-312-551-241, fax 996-312-551-264.

Pets

All dogs and cats entering Kyrgyzstan and Kazakstan must be accompanied by a certificate of good health bearing the seal of the relevant local board of health and signed by a veterinarian. The certificate should not be issued more than 10 days prior to the animal's arrival. A rabies certificate is needed. Travelers should carefully check with the airlines to ensure that the airline has room on all portions of the trip to Almaty to ensure

that the pets arrive at the same time as the owner.

There are some competent local vets in Bishkek, but in general, veterinary care is at a level similar to that of the U.S. in the 1950s. Few vets have access to up-to-date vaccines from reliable companies. Refrigeration of vaccines is frequently ignored, thereby putting the vaccine's effectiveness at risk.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Kyrgyzstan is no longer a part of the Soviet centralized banking system and has established its own independent system. The Kyrgyz Republic is a cash-only economy. The banking system is not well developed and there are no automated teller machines. One or two hotels or banks may, on occasion, accept travelers checks or credit cards but fees can be quite high for travelers checks, as much as 20%. U.S. bills dated earlier than 1990, or bills that are worn, torn or stained are usually not accepted in Kyrgyzstan. Several years ago the country introduced its own currency, the som. The rate of the som to the dollar in December, 1995 was 11Som to US\$1.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Disaster Preparedness

The Kyrgyz Republic is an earthquake-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 7 Christmas (Russian Orthodox)
- Mar. 8 Women's Day
- Mar. 21 Noruz (Persian New Year)
- May 1 Worker's Day

- May 5 Constitution Day
- May 9 Victory Day
- June 13 Commemoration Day
- Aug. 31 Independence Day
- Dec. 2 National Day
- Id al-Adha*
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on Kyrgyzstan. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Game, The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*, New York, 1992.

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Vientiane, Laos

LAOS

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Major City:

Vientiane

Other Cities:

Luang Prabang, Paksé

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Although **LAOS** has been known as the Lao People's Democratic Republic only since December 1975, recent archaeological discoveries in Southeast Asia have provoked increased interest and reassessment of the nation and its place in Asian history. The ancient culture that flourished along the upper Mekong River had made basic advances in agriculture, pottery, metallurgy, and the polishing of stone tools made by 3,000 B.C. These people also spread their culture north into China and south-eastward into Indonesia, the Philippines, and even to Australia. The numerically dominant Lao people began entering present-day Laos before A.D. 1,000 from southern China. This migration accelerated

after the Mongol destruction of their kingdom of Yunnan in 1253.

Today, Laos is a nation of pronounced ethnic, linguistic, and geographical diversity. Because it is strategically located, it receives an abundance of interest and a large amount of assistance from other nations. One of the world's poorest countries, Laos faces daunting tasks in every field of economic development.

MAJOR CITY

Vientiane

Vientiane is the political, administrative, and commercial center of Laos. The capital of Laos, it is the largest city in the country, with a population of 534,000 (2000 est.). The name is a French version of the Lao *Vieng Chan*, or "City of Sandalwood." It was once the ancient capital of the rich and powerful kingdom of Muong Lan Xang Hom Khao, the "Land of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol."

Vientiane is a provincial town in appearance and atmosphere. It is situated on the left bank of the Mekong River, at the edge of a large plain which extends some 40 miles

north of the city. To the north and east, the foothills visible from Vientiane are the rugged uplands of the Annamite cordillera, which cover most of the country.

Utilities

Short power failures occur almost daily because the lines are old and poorly maintained. Voltage fluctuates at times and sensitive electronic equipment is subject to damage. Voltage regulators are not available locally. Minor repairs to stereo equipment and small appliances can be done. More complicated repairs must be done in Bangkok.

Food

The local markets offer a large variety of fruit, vegetables, rice, eggs, poultry, pork, fresh fish, and beef. Fruits and vegetables vary with the season; adequate quantities of good quality are available year round. Chicken and pork are fine; beef is tasty but tough. Because local selection is limited, some Westerners shop in Bangkok to supplement their food supply.

Clothing

Dress in Vientiane is generally casual because of the tropical climate. Cottons or cotton blends are worn year round; nylon and other pure synthetics are uncomfortable during the hot season. From



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission..

Wat That Luang in Vientiane, Laos

November to February, when the temperature averages 60°F, spring or fall clothing is appropriate.

The climate and an active social life define wardrobe requirements. Clothing wears out quickly because of more changes during the day and frequent laundering. Tailors and dressmakers of limited capability are available, and clothing needs can be made to order in Vientiane or Bangkok. A variety of materials can be purchased locally.

Raincoats, umbrellas, and rubber boots are needed for the rainy season. Special attire should be brought from home for active sports. Sweaters and jackets are useful in cool weather.

American men in Laos find that suits (including safari styles) are needed only for official functions, and these should be lightweight and washable. Men wear short-sleeved shirts and washable slacks for business, leisure, and most social functions. For the rare occasion when formal attire may be needed, a tuxedo or white dinner jacket and black slacks will suffice at any time of the year.

Women's wardrobes should include washable dresses of cotton blends, or lightweight knits, for office work or for social events. Cottons are most suitable for casual wear, but any cool, washable fabric that does not cling will be comfortable. Shorts are useful at home and for sports,

but are not worn on the street. Pantsuits are acceptable in offices and, in appropriate styles and fabrics, may be worn for all but formal occasions. Lightweight wools and synthetics are suitable in the brief cool season.

During the cooler months, the usual dress for parties is a long-sleeved blouse and long skirt, long dress, or pantsuit. Hats and gloves are not worn.

Supplies & Services

Laundry is done in the home. No bona fide dry cleaning exists in Vientiane; Americans living in the city take their better clothing to first-class Bangkok hotels for cleaning, which is very expensive.

A few beauty shops in Vientiane offer haircuts, permanents, and manicures. Hair coloring can be applied, but it is recommended that coloring kits be brought to the country with you. Even Bangkok beauty shops have limited hair coloring supplies. Several barbershops are located in the downtown area, and their services are reasonably priced; often, however, resident Americans have their hair cut during trips to Bangkok.

Shoes can be repaired locally, usually with satisfactory results.

Several men's tailor shops make suits, slacks, and shirts to order, with acceptable results. Prices are reasonable, but material must be supplied by the customer. Most American women in Vientiane use dressmaker services in Vientiane and Bangkok; prices and results vary. In general, custom-made clothes are reasonable, but not up to the highest U.S. standards.

Religious Activities

Currently, no formally organized English- or French-language Protestant or Jewish religious services are held in the country. Protestant clergymen occasionally visit Vientiane to conduct services; the city has three small Lao Protestant churches. Mass is celebrated daily in Lao, French, and English at the

Roman Catholic Cathedral in Vientiane.

Domestic Help

Domestics are readily available in Vientiane. The hot climate, lack of centralized shipping facilities, and the language barrier make it necessary to hire domestic help.

The number of employees employed depends on preference and life-style (also on the size of living quarters). Most Americans living in Laos find that a combination maid/cook adequately satisfies requirements for shopping, food preparation, entertaining, house cleaning, and laundry. Most residences have quarters for at least one domestic; however, few if any live in. They use the quarters during the day for eating, bathing, and rest periods. Salaries are negotiated between employer and employee, but are quite reasonable by American standards.

The majority of domestics have little command of English, and misunderstandings are frequent. Patience is required.

Prospective domestics should have physical examinations before starting work and periodically thereafter. Exams can be taken at one of the local hospitals for a small fee. Be sure your employees seek medical attention when needed. Many of the employees in Vientiane have been employed in American households for some time and are well versed in health and food requirements. Nevertheless, their activities should be routinely monitored to ensure compliance.

Education

The Vientiane International School is registered with the Lao Ministry of Education and is a member of the International School System. The school curriculum and schedule are patterned on the U.S. system, but with an international flavor. Children from all nationalities are represented, with the Americans and Australians predominating. Instruction is in English; French and Lao are also taught. Classes are from grades pre-K through eight.

The principal and all teaching staff are accredited.

There is also a French school which goes to grade twelve.

Recreation

Facilities exist for golf, tennis, squash, volleyball, swimming, and badminton.

Bicycling is a popular and pleasurable pastime, particularly during cooler weather. Vientiane is flat and easy to get around in by bicycle. Bicycle rallies are occasionally organized and are very popular.

Of particular interest to visitors are the That Luang Monument and the Sisaket and Phra Keo Temples. The National Museum provides interesting insights into recent Lao history. On weekends, many Lao and foreigners make picnic excursions to the Nam Ngum dam or to one of several waterfalls within a few hours of town.

Laos has many natural and historical attractions that can be visited with tours sponsored by local travel agencies. Among the most important tourist destinations are Luang Prabang, the old royal capital, with its many beautiful temples; Xieng Khouang, site of the Plain of Jars; Pakse, famous for its handwoven silks and cottons and for the beautiful Khmer ruins at Wat Phu; Saravane, known for the Bolevans Plateau and its natural surroundings; and Savannakhet, a gateway to the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Vientiane is served by Lao Aviation, Thai Airways, Air Vietnam, and Aeroflot. Less than two hours away by air, Bangkok is readily accessible for shopping, sight-seeing and vacationing.

Bangkok is a major air stop for connections to other cities in Southeast Asia, and to world capitals. From there, direct flights are available to Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Yangon (Myanmar), Singapore, Manila (Philippines), Hong Kong, Australia, and Europe. Thailand has many popular resorts: the beaches of

Phuket and Koh Samui are world famous; and Chiang Mai, Sukothai, and Lopburi are famous for historical monuments.

Pattaya is a popular beach resort two hours' drive south of Bangkok on the east coast of the Gulf of Thailand. Accommodations are available at hotels or private cottages. Boats can be rented for trips to the islands off the coast. Beach resorts are located at Bang Saen on the east coast, and at Hua Hin on the western shore, where there is a good golf course.

No definite restrictions are placed on photography in Laos with the exception of the Wattay Airport and on military installations, where no photos are allowed. Courtesy and discretion should be exercised at all times in photographing people, particularly uniformed security guards or policemen and in taking pictures of any government building or installation. Children welcome having their photograph taken and often follow Westerners around when they observe them taking pictures.

Entertainment

American films are shown weekly at the American Embassy compound, while French films and duplicate bridge nights are organized by the Alliance Francaise. The American and Australian Embassies maintain small libraries. A wide selection of books, including best-sellers, is available in Bangkok.

A limited number of restaurants in Vientiane serve Western, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, and other cuisines.

A few discos have opened and are frequented by both Lao and Westerners.

Many of the Lao festivals, known as *bouns*, celebrate seasonal changes and important dates in the life of Buddha. The Lao New Year, known as *Pi Mai*, lasts for three days and is celebrated in April. It is the most festive and widely celebrated holiday. The annual long boat races on

the Mekong River between Vientiane and Nong Khai, Thailand are well worth seeing. Permission is required, but Americans have been invited to attend in recent years with few problems.

The *baci* ceremony is one of prayers and good wishes. It is uniquely Lao, and is celebrated elsewhere only in northeast Thailand. It can be performed on various occasions, such as Lao New Year, a wedding, farewell, welcome, or the birth of a child. The *baci* ceremony follows a precise pattern, and is conducted by an elderly man (*mohpohn*) who is highly respected for his wisdom and ceremonial skill. Shoes are removed and the participants sit on the floor during the ceremony. Of brief duration, usually less than an hour, it is normally followed by a traditional Lao meal and dancing. It has no Buddhist significance, but derives from native animist beliefs pre-dating the arrival of Buddhism centuries ago. Photography is permitted at a *baci*.

Entertainment in Vientiane depends largely on individual tastes, initiative, and ingenuity. Home entertaining among foreign residents is extensive; dinners, cocktail parties, and barbecues are the usual forms of social activity. The Western community in the capital is small, and people socialize regularly with members of the diplomatic and private communities. It should be noted, however, that home entertainment by the Lao is rare.

OTHER CITIES

The port city of **LUANG PRABANG** lies on the Mekong River, 130 miles northwest of Vientiane. For over two centuries, beginning in 1353, this was the capital of the Lan Xang Kingdom. The city acquired the name Luang Prabang about 1563, and became the capital of a new kingdom in 1707. Over 20 Buddhist pagodas stand in what had long been the nation's religious center—the Phu Si pagoda allegedly

enshrines Buddha's footprint. Luang Prabang is a small, backward community where goldsmithing, lacquering, and silversmithing has flourished. The population is over 46,000.

PAKSÉ (also spelled Pakxe) is a distribution center for the southern panhandle of Laos, located at the convergence of the Xédôn and Mekong rivers. Industry here includes sawmills, brick and tile manufacture, and an ice plant. Electricity arrived in the district only in 1970, when the Selabam Dam was completed. Irrigation of the region was another benefit from the dam. Paksé, until 1966 Laos' main port of entry, has road connections to the Thailand and Cambodia borders. The population of Paksé is over 50,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, a landlocked nation, shares a common frontier with five countries: Burma to the northwest; China to the north; Vietnam to the east; Cambodia to the south; and Thailand to the west.

The total land area covers about 91,425 square miles, and is approximately the size of Oregon. Close to six percent of the country's surface, particularly in the north and east, is covered with dense jungle or rugged mountains; mountainous topography is characteristic of all of Laos outside of the Mekong River Basin. Some mountains rise over 7,000 feet; the highest point in the country is 9,249 feet above sea level. Except in limited areas, soil is poor; most of the forested area is not exploitable.

Vientiane, the capital, is also the largest city. Other population centers are, like Vientiane, on or near the banks of the Mekong River.

They are: Luang Prabang, the former royal capital, and the towns of Ban Houei Sai; Savannakhet; Paksé; Sayaboury; and Thakhek.

The Mekong River, with its headwaters in Tibet, flows more than 2,600 miles to its mouth in southern Vietnam. One of the world's great rivers, it forms the country's western boundary for the greater part of its length and is the cradle of Lao culture. The only significant population center in Laos far removed from the Mekong is Vieng Say in Sam Neua Province; it is a new town, established by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party during its struggle with the former Royal Government of Laos. The Lao government has been encouraging the establishment of other new towns and villages in the country's interior.

Laos has a monsoon climate with three overlapping seasons. The rainy season extends for five months, from June through September. In October, the rains start to taper off and the cool season begins in November, and lasts through February. March, April, and May are hot and humid. In April, the hottest month, temperatures in Vientiane normally range between 72°F and 93°F, and in January, the coolest month, between 57°F and 83°F. However, temperature extremes of 103°F (April) and 39°F (January) have been recorded. Vientiane's climate is more varied, drier and cooler than that found in Singapore; Jakarta; Indonesia; or Bangkok, Thailand.

Dust, during the dry period, and mud in the wet season, are common but tolerable obstacles. It is not unusual for the Mekong River to overflow its banks in late August and early September. With the construction of dikes, however, the incidence of flooding in Vientiane has decreased.

Tropical flowers flourish in the Laos climate, as well as a wide and fascinating variety of insects and reptiles. The most common pests are mosquitoes, ants, and termites.



Street market in Vientiane, Laos

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Population

Laos has the smallest population of any Southeast Asian country except Brunei. The population, composed of many ethnic groups, is estimated at 5.6 million (2001 est.). This sparse population is spread out unevenly; the greatest concentration is in the Mekong Valley, especially in the Vientiane Plain and the Savannakhet Basin. Eighty-five percent of the population lives in the countryside. Laos has an extraordinary ethnic diversity. About 68% of the population is composed of ethnic Lao (known as *Lao Loum*), a people of Thai stock who are believed to have migrated originally from southwestern China during the 13th century, in the wake of the onslaught of Kublai Khan's forces. The *Lao Loum* dominate the country politically, culturally, and economically.

The rest of the Lao population is divided into a welter of ethnic groups, some sizable, some tiny. These groups include mountain tribes of Thai stock found in northern Laos, the Hmong (Meo) tribesmen of Tibet-Burman origin, and a number of other mountain tribes of Malayo-Polynesian background who inhabit the hills of central and southern Laos. Although no one is quite sure of the exact number of tribes or ethnic groups, the government estimates 68 different groups.

Vietnamese and Chinese represent less than one percent of the population (most left the country after 1975). There are also small groups of Thai, Cambodians, Indians, and Pakistanis. The ethnic Lao and the population of northeast Thailand share the same language, and historically have had a close social and commercial relationship. Many peo-

ple in Laos have relatives in northeast Thailand and, in numerous cases, a claim to Thai citizenship. There is also a small European community in Vientiane, most of whom are from the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.) and Eastern Europe. However, there are increasing numbers of Australians, Swedes, Japanese, French, and North Americans working for UN agencies. Improved relations with the West and a growth in foreign investment should contribute to an increase in the number of Westerners living in Laos.

History

Laos was first united in 1353 by Fa Ngum, a Lao prince. He brought the scattered Lao princedoms together to form the Kingdom of Lan Xang (Kingdom of a Million Elephants). The Lan Xang covered much of

present-day Thailand as well as Laos. Fa Ngum also established Buddhism as the state religion. Dynastic struggles and conflicts with neighboring kingdoms precipitated a decline of power that began in the 16th century and by the 18th century the Siamese and Vietnamese kingdoms were competing for control of Laos.

For much of the 19th century, the country was under Thai suzerainty and was split into three parts: Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Champassak. In 1893, France established a protectorate over Laos, but in the process, a large area of what had been Lan Xang, on the west bank of the Mekong River, became part of Thailand. The Franco-Siamese treaty of 1907 defined the present Lao boundary with Thailand.

Under pressure from Japanese occupation forces during World War II, King Sisavang Vong of Luang Prabang declared his independence from France and in September 1945 a new Kingdom of Laos was formed along with the principalities of Vientiane and Champassak. French troops reoccupied the area but in August 1946 recognized Lao autonomy. In 1949, France formally recognized the independence of Laos within the French Union and Laos remained under French rule until 1953 when the country was granted full independence.

From 1945 to 1975, Laos was involved in the bloody conflict that raged throughout Indochina. In 1972, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) was proclaimed by Lao Communists. A cease-fire was signed in February 1973 and a coalition was set up in April 1974. The Pathet Lao, sparked by communist victories in Indochina in 1975, steadily assumed complete control.

On December 2, 1975, a group led by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party abolished the Kingdom of Laos and established the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Government

Laos is a communist country. Power is monopolized by the Marxist-Leninist Lao People's Revolutionary Party, the only legally recognized party in the country. The party is small in number, estimated at about 40,000 members and compared to other Communist parties, highly secretive. Party and state are intermingled in Laos; members of the party politburo hold the important government positions.

In 1991, the National Assembly adopted the first constitution to be effective in the country since 1975. The new constitution describes the governing authorities of the country, which include the National Assembly, which is elected by the Lao citizenry; the President of the Republic, who is elected and subject to removal by the National Assembly; and the executive government, headed by the Prime Minister, who is appointed and subject to removal by the President with National Assembly approval.

Since the 1970s, Laos has maintained a close relationship with Vietnam, Cambodia, and the former Soviet bloc countries; while at the same time remaining hostile to the West. However, beginning in the late 1980s, Laos has sought to improve its relations with other countries; economic issues have been the impetus for this dramatic change in policy.

The flag of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is blue, with two horizontal red stripes at the top and bottom; a large white circle is centered.

Arts, Science, Education

Probably the best known form of Lao art is the architecture, ornamentation, and sculpture of the Buddhist pagodas, called *wats* in Lao. Often, an incident from Buddha's life is portrayed. Bas-relief sculpture in wood, finished in gold leaf against a red background, deco-

rate the door panels, archways, and gable ends of the structures.

The architecture of Lao homes reflects the country's pastoral and agrarian traditions. Houses raised on stilts permit livestock to shelter beneath them, and the height allows the occupants to catch the evening breezes and to avoid floods in the rainy season.

Handwoven fabrics and fine embroidery appear in both modern and traditional dress. Appliqué, handloomed fabric, and embroidery characterize the dress of the ethnic minorities.

Lao authorities are attempting to encourage traditional musical forms. These include both the *lam-vong*, or circle dance, and other dances performed by fine arts groups at festivals and ceremonies.

The Lao Government has reorganized the country's educational system. Schooling is compulsory for five years. Primary school begins for children aged six years, followed by three years of secondary school, with an additional three years of high school.

In the past, most secondary education was in French. The government has emphasized that instruction at all levels will be in Lao. Laos has teacher-training institutes and medical schools.

The predominant religion of Laos is Theravada Buddhism. To the Lao, Buddhism is not only a religion—it is a way of life. The mountain tribesmen are principally animists, but some of them have adopted Buddhism, while at the same time retaining many of their old beliefs. The two forms of worship coexist easily. It is not unusual to see spirit shrines alongside Buddhist temples.

Lao, the national language, belongs to the Thai linguistic family. It is a difficult tongue, and has six tones. Diverse dialects are spoken in different regions of the country. Like most languages of Southeast Asia,

Laos has adopted many words of Indian origin into its vocabulary. About 80 minority languages are spoken in Laos, primarily by tribal groups living outside the Mekong Valley. French, formerly the language of government and higher education, is slowly losing its importance. However, many government officials still speak French. Increasingly, English is gaining favor as a common language; Russian is also spoken by a number of Lao.

Commerce and Industry

Over 80% of the population earns its income from agriculture, mostly subsistence farming. Rice, corn, coffee, cotton, and tobacco are grown here. Barter is the principal method of exchange in the countryside; the money economy is limited mainly to cities and towns and along major transportation routes. In most areas, poor transportation facilities and other factors limit production levels to meeting the country's own needs, although the economy produces a small surplus of some agricultural, forest, and mineral commodities for export.

The industrial base is quite limited. Industrial plants include a small foundry; saw mills; rice mills; plywood, furniture, match, and cigarette factories; and other small-scale local enterprises. Cottage industries range from the weaving of silk and cotton textiles to shoe making, clothing, and metalwork. Handicraft production includes pottery, jewelry, silver working, and basketry.

Laos imports most of its manufactured products. Government approval is needed to use foreign exchange for imports, but an active free market exists. With the introduction of the New Economic Management Mechanism in 1985, major economic reforms have been enacted: government regulations have been relaxed, free market prices are allowed, farmers may own land, state firms now exercise greater control in authority but

have lost their subsidies and pricing advantages, and trade restrictions have been lifted. Consumer goods, mostly from Thailand, are now available in the more populated areas of the country. As a landlocked country, Laos has been primarily dependent on the cooperation of Thailand to facilitate the transshipment of imported and exported goods. The Lao Government is now trying to develop, with Vietnamese assistance, alternate transit routes to Vietnamese seaports.

Major exports include timber and forestry products, tin, coffee, and hydroelectric power which is sold to Thailand. Foreign investment in Laos remains low, although the government actively encourages it and has increased ties to the West.

Laos is one of the poorest countries in the world due to its over-dependence on agriculture and its lack of a skilled labor force. Both of these factors present significant problems for the future.

Laos has relied heavily on foreign assistance from the former Soviet bloc nations, which has decreased in recent years. Improved relations with the West is now a priority in order to offset the loss of aid from those countries. Projects financed by Western foreign aid include: expansion of hydroelectric power generation facilities; building of roads, bridges, and port facilities; and the improvement of communications. Most Western assistance has been concentrated on infrastructure and agricultural development projects.

A number of business concerns, mostly Thai but including some from the U.S., Japan, and Europe, have invested in manufacturing, mineral extraction, and service industries. As the government refines its economic reforms and improves banking and communication procedures, foreign investment will increase.

The Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry can be reached at P.O. Box 1163, Vientiane, Laos.

Transportation

Vientiane is served by five international airlines: Thai Airways, Air Vietnam, Lao Aviation, and Aeroflot (C.I.S.), and China Southern. Bangkok is the nearest city served by an American carrier, and many people make onward connections from there.

Foreigners may enter and leave the country by air at Vientiane's Wattay Airport, by ferry at Thadeau's ferry crossing, or at Thanaleng shipping port.

Laos is landlocked, mountainous, and sparsely populated—factors which have hindered the development of its transportation system. The country has no railroads, and roads are mostly unpaved and poorly maintained. Public transportation in Vientiane is poor and unreliable. Taxis are available, but meters and fixed rates do not exist. Taxis fares generally depend on the passenger's ability to bargain, and on the distance traveled. Drivers speak little or no English. They pick up as many passengers as the vehicle will hold, although it is possible to engage a taxi privately for a higher fare. Many taxis are old and poorly maintained, and drivers may be reckless.

Several bus routes in the city, and for intracity travel, are available. *Samlors* (tricycle rickshaws) can be engaged for rides within the city limits. Recently motorcycle driven rickshaws (*tuk-tuks*), imported from Thailand, have appeared on the streets of Vientiane. *Samlor* or *tuk-tuk* fares are bargained.

Traffic is light and undisciplined. Ill-trained drivers operate poorly maintained vehicles on crowded, potholed streets. While in theory traffic moves on the right, pedestrians and bicycles use all parts of the streets, so most cars do the same. Animals roam the street as well, including cows, goats, all fowl, as

well as cats and dogs. Cyclists pay little or no heed to cars and bicycles are rarely equipped with functioning lights or reflectors. Driving is particularly dangerous at dusk and at night.

Defensive driving is necessary. Helmets should be worn when riding motorcycles, and gloves and sturdy shoes are strongly recommended.

Seasons of rain and dust cause roads to deteriorate rapidly, consequently placing stress on cars. Vientiane has limited facilities for maintenance and body work. Spare parts for foreign-made cars can generally be obtained from Bangkok, but parts for American-manufactured vehicles are normally ordered from the U.S. Permission is usually granted to drive cars to Bangkok or Udornthani (Thailand) for repairs.

The Lao Government requires proof-of-ownership documents before it will register a vehicle. There is no registration fee for those on the diplomatic list, but other foreigners are required to purchase tax stickers, license plates, and registration cards. The cost of the tax sticker varies with the size and make of the car. Unleaded fuel is not available.

All persons operating motor vehicles in Laos must have valid Lao licenses. U.S. or international permits must be surrendered at the time of application, but will be returned upon departure from the country. The U.S. Embassy in Vientiane suggests that all Americans coming to Laos obtain international permits so that they will not have to give up their U.S. licenses.

Communications

Overseas telephone service is available on a 24-hour basis through the local Posts, Telephone, and Telegraph (PTT) facility, but is not reliable. Calls to the U.S. are frequently inaudible, if one is able to get through at all. The PTT telegraph facility is slow and expensive. A three-minute call to the U.S. costs about \$15. Calls must be "booked"

in advance and there may be a two to three hour wait for your call to be completed.

International mail service is not considered completely dependable. Registered mail service is not available. Transit time to and from the U.S. is approximately two weeks.

Several radio stations broadcast on medium wave (AM) in Vientiane. The most important of these is the Lao National Radio. Most broadcasts are in Lao, but government news is given in English, French, and other languages.

Television is available in Vientiane via satellite from the former Soviet Union. Two TV channels can be received from Thailand. None broadcast in English.

Shortwave programs are received from Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and American Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS); other foreign broadcasts can be picked up on shortwave receivers.

Two daily Lao-language papers are published in the capital—*Vientiane Mai* and *Pasason*. Khao San Pathet Lao, the official government news agency, prints daily bulletins in English and French.

Arrangements may be made for personal subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals. English-language books are not available for purchase locally, but can be bought in Bangkok.

Health

Medical and dental facilities and the availability of medicines in Vientiane are extremely limited. It is imperative that all possible medical and dental care be completed before entering Laos. The official U.S. community has consultation access to the regional medical officer in Bangkok, who visits Laos on occasion. Bring or arrange to have sent any special medications required; also bring a supply of non-prescription health aids, such as

aspirin, cold and allergy medications, antiseptic solutions, and Band-aids.

Community health services, including basic programs such as sanitary waste disposal, are inadequate by U.S. standards. Most houses occupied by Americans use septic tanks. The long rainy season and high water table cause frequent malfunction of these and other waste-disposal systems. Neither the municipal water supply in Vientiane nor water from wells is potable without filtration and boiling.

Raw fruits or vegetables which are peeled before they are eaten require only simple cleaning. Fruits eaten whole should be washed and soaked in a germicidal solution. Locally bought leafy vegetables, such as lettuce and watercress, cannot be made completely safe for raw consumption. Eating in a few local restaurants is relatively safe if one is careful to select well-cooked foods and bottled beverages.

Tuberculosis, hepatitis, rabies, and many tropical parasitic diseases are endemic here. Malaria and other mosquito-borne viral diseases do not currently constitute a hazard, but dengue fever occurs sporadically.

Immunizations for visitors to Laos are a source of medical controversy. Some doctors advocate immunization for a wide variety of diseases. It is recommended that visitors consult with their physicians. Consider shots against the following: hepatitis-B, encephalitis, and possibly typhoid. No cholera inoculations are necessary and unless you travel outside the city of Vientiane anti-malaria medicines are not needed. Children should have the normal variety of immunizations, including the three-shot rabies preventives series and a tetanus booster. With added awareness, and with prompt attention to small problems before they become serious, health difficulties can be prevented or significantly minimized during a stay in Laos.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1.	New Year's Day
Jan.	Bun Pha Wet*
Jan. 20.	Army Day
Feb.	Magha Puja*
Feb.	Tet*
Mar.	Boun Khoun Khao (Harvest Festival)*
Apr.	Boun Pimai (Laotian New Year)*
Apr.	Pi Mai (Lunar New Year)*
May	Visakha Bu-saa (Buddha's Birthday)*
May	Bun Bang Fai (Rocket Fesitval)*
May 1.	Labor Day
June 1	Children's Day
June/July.	Khao Phansaa (Buddhist Lent)*
July 19.	Independence Day
Aug.	Haw Khao Padap Din (Remembrance of the Dead)*
Sept.	Boun Ok Phansaa (Buddhist Lent ends)*
Oct.	Bun Nam (Water Festival)*
Nov.	That Luang Festival (Full Moon Festival)*
Dec. 2.	Lao National Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Flights connect Vientiane to Bangkok, Yangon, Hanoi, and Moscow. Bangkok is the nearest city served by a U.S. airline. Almost all

travelers must arrive in Vientiane by air.

A passport and visa are required. Visas are issued upon arrival in Laos to foreign tourists and business persons with two passport size photographs and \$30 at Wattay Airport, Vientiane; Friendship Bridge, Vientiane; and Luang Prabang Airport. Visas on Arrival are not available at the Chong Mek border crossing. Foreign tourists are generally admitted to Laos for 15 days with a Visa on Arrival or for 30 days with a visa issued at a Lao embassy. The Department of Immigration in Vientiane will only extend tourist visas for one day. It is sometimes possible to get an extension for an additional 15 days by submitting an application through a tour agency. Foreigners who overstay in Laos risk arrest, and they will be fined \$5 for each day upon departure.

Foreign tourists planning on entering Laos at any international checkpoint where Visas on Arrival are not available must obtain a visa in advance. In the United States, visas and further information about Lao entry requirements can be obtained directly from the Embassy of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2222 S St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. 202-332-6416, fax 202-332-4923, Internet home page: <http://www.laoembassy.com>.

U.S. citizens should not attempt to enter Laos without valid travel documents or outside official ports of entry. Unscrupulous travel agents have sold U.S.-citizen travelers false Lao visas which have resulted in those travelers being denied entry into Laos. Persons attempting to enter Laos outside official ports of entry risk arrest or more serious consequences.

Immigration offices at some of the less used border-crossing points are not well marked. Travelers should make sure that they complete immigration and customs formalities when they enter Laos. Travelers who enter Laos without completing these formalities may be subject to

fine, detention, imprisonment, and/or deportation.

Customs officials may inspect baggage by nondiplomatic visitors upon either arrival or departure or both, but it is usually just a cursory inspection.

According to the Lao Tourist Police, all foreign tourists are required to use the services of a licensed Lao tour company -- unassisted tourism is not permitted. However, this regulation does not appear to be strictly enforced.

Foreign tourists have been informed by the Lao Tourist Police that any group of more than five foreign tourists must be accompanied by a licensed Lao tour guide. Violation of this regulation can result in detention, deportation, and fines of \$200 to \$2000.

Ministry of Trade and Tourism regulations prohibit any person who is not a licensed Lao tour guide from performing the functions of a tour guide -- including explaining Lao culture and custom to foreign tourists. Lao and Thai nationals accompanying American friends to Lao tourist sites have been detained and fined by Lao Tourist Police who suspected that they were acting as unauthorized tour guides.

Lao citizens who wish to have a foreign citizen -- including a family member -- stay in their home must obtain prior approval from the village chief. The foreigner may be held responsible if the Lao host has not secured prior permission for the visit. American citizens are strongly advised to ensure that such permission has been sought and granted before accepting offers to stay in Lao homes.

Lao authorities require that hotels and guesthouses furnish information about the identities and activities of their foreign guests. Lao who interact with foreigners may be compelled to report on those interactions to the Lao Government. Persons traveling outside of the main tourist areas may be required to

register with local authorities and may be questioned by security personnel.

Lao security personnel may place foreign visitors under surveillance. Hotel rooms, telephone conversations, fax transmissions, and e-mail communications may be monitored, and personal possessions in hotel rooms may be searched.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Laos are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy where they may obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. The U.S. Embassy is located at Thanon Bartholonie (near Tat Dam), in Vientiane; from the United States, mail can be addressed to U.S. Embassy Vientiane, Box V, APO AP 96546; telephone (856-21) 212-581, 212-582, 212-585; duty officer's emergency cellular telephone (856-20) 502-016; Consular Section fax number (856-21) 251-624; Embassy-wide fax number (856-21) 512-584; Internet home page: <http://usembassy.state.gov/laos/>.

Pets

Pets brought into Laos must be accompanied by certificates of good health and have had anti-rabies vaccinations. Upon arrival, contact with local animals should be kept to a minimum. Veterinary services are poor, with few vaccines or medications available. Proof that an animal was imported must be shown before officials will allow it to leave the country. It is recommended that pets be carried on board the plane as carry-on baggage, if possible.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The time in Laos is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus seven.

The official Lao currency is the *kip*. The *kip* is neither a recognized international monetary unit, nor is it exchangeable outside Laos. Its use within Laos is also limited, since most transactions in which foreigners participate are in dollars or in Thai *baht*, both of which are

freely exchangeable throughout Laos. *Kip* is usually used for small purchases at the market.

There are no automatic teller machines in Laos. Credit cards are accepted only at some major hotels and tourist-oriented businesses. Credit card cash advances can be obtained at some banks in Vientiane. Although it is illegal to do so, the U.S. dollar and Thai baht are both widely used for larger transactions. U.S. dollars are required by the Lao Government for the payment of some taxes and fees, including visa fees and the airport departure tax.

Weights and measures in Laos are based on the metric system, except for gold and silver, which are measured in *baht* (15 grams) or *taels* (30 to 35 grams).

Special Circumstances

The Lao Government prohibits sexual contact between foreign citizens and Lao nationals except when the two parties have been married in accordance with Lao Family Law. Any foreigner who enters into a sexual relationship with a Lao national may be interrogated, detained, arrested, or jailed. Lao police have confiscated passports and imposed fines of up to \$5000 on foreigners who enter into disapproved sexual relationships. The Lao party to the relationship may also be jailed without trial. Foreigners are not permitted to invite Lao nationals of the opposite sex to their hotel rooms; police may raid hotel rooms without notice or consent.

Foreign citizens intending to marry a Lao national are required by Lao law to obtain prior permission from the Lao government. The formal application process can take as long as a year. American citizens may obtain information about these requirements from the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane. The Lao Government will not issue a marriage certificate unless the correct procedures are followed. Any attempt to circumvent Lao regulations governing the marriage of Lao

citizens to foreigners may result in arrest, imprisonment, a fine of \$500-\$5000, and deportation. Foreigners who cohabit with or enter into a close relationship with Lao nationals may be accused by Lao authorities of entering an illegal marriage and be subject to the same penalties.

Foreign citizens who wish to become engaged to a Lao national are required to obtain prior permission of the chief of the village where the Lao national resides. Failure to obtain prior permission can result in a fine of \$500-\$5000. Lao police frequently impose large fines on foreign citizens a few days after they hold an engagement ceremony with a Lao citizen based on the suspicion that the couple probably subsequently had sexual relations out of wedlock.

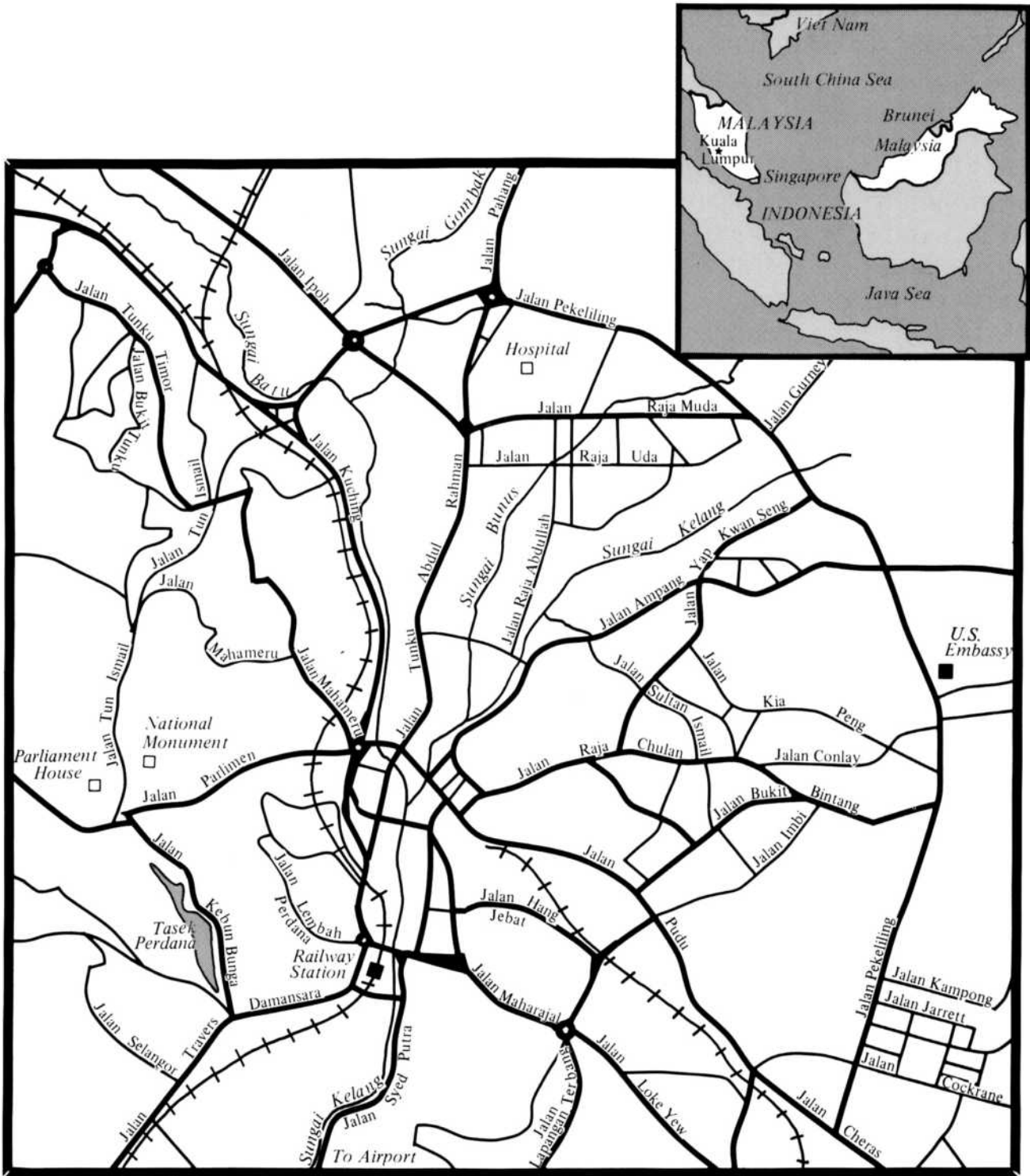
Religious proselytizing or distributing religious material is strictly prohibited. Foreigners caught distributing religious material may be arrested or deported. The Government of Laos restricts the import of religious texts and artifacts. While Lao law allows freedom of religion, the government registers and controls all associations, including religious groups. Meetings, even in private homes, must be registered and those held outside established locations may be broken up and the participants arrested.

Taking photographs of anything that could be perceived as being of military or security interest -- including bridges, airfields, military installations, government buildings or government vehicles, may result in problems with authorities, including detention or arrest and confiscation of the camera. Tourists should be cautious when traveling near military bases and strictly observe signs delineating the military base areas. Military personnel have detained and questioned foreigners who innocently passed by unmarked military facilities.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

- Adams, Nina S. *Laos: War and Revolution*. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.
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- Larteguy, Jean. *The Bronze Drums*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967.
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- Pratt, John Clark. *Laotian Fragments*. New York: Avon, 1974.
- Stanton, Shelby L. *The Rise and Fall of an American Army*. New York: Dell, 1985.
- Stuart-Fox, Martin. *Laos: Politics, Economics, and Society*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1986.
- Yost, Charles W. *The Conduct and Misconduct of Foreign Affairs: Reflections on U.S. Foreign Policy*. New York: Random House, 1972.



Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

MALAYSIA

Major Cities:

Kuala Lumpur, George Town

Other Cities:

Alor Setar, Ipoh, Johor Baharu, Kota Baharu, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Terengganu, Kuantan, Kuching, Melaka, Seremban

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated October 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a colorful amalgam of traditional and modern influences. Situated between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, it has drawn on China, India, Western Europe, Polynesia, and the Arab world to create a unique multilingual and multicultural nation.

British stewardship of the Malay States began in Penang in the late eighteenth century. After Japan's temporary conquest during World War II and a major Communist insurgency during the 1950's, sovereignty was transferred peacefully in 1957 to an independent federal government. Since independence, the Federation has expanded to include the former British colonies of Sabah

and Sarawak on the island of Borneo and changed its name from Malaya to Malaysia to recognize the importance to the country of Chinese, Indian, and aboriginal peoples as well as the ethnic Malays. Singapore was a part of the Federation from 1960-1968.

For over a century Malaysia had enjoyed economic prosperity based on large-scale rubber and tin production. Over the past twenty years production of oil and gas has fueled Malaysia's rapid economic growth. Manufacturing, especially of electronics components, has recently assumed the chief position among Malaysia's exports.

The prosperity brought by tin, rubber, and later natural energy and electronics is supplemented by a stable system of public administration and public services. The culture, variety, and people make it a challenging and interesting country in which to live and work.

MAJOR CITY

Kuala Lumpur

Kuala Lumpur lies within the Federal Territory, an area of 244 square kilometers surrounded by the state

of Selangor. It is near the middle of the west coast of peninsular Malaysia, 400 kilometers northwest of Singapore and 40 kilometers inland. Its population is approximately 1.3 million (2000 census). Within metropolitan Kuala Lumpur are located all the major offices of the Malaysian Federal Government; the city also serves as the commercial center of the country.

Food

Kuala Lumpur has several supermarkets, minimarkets, and other local markets that sell fresh produce and imported items. While the variety is large, most imported items cost substantially more than in the U.S. Excellent tropical fruits and vegetables, which often form part of menus here, include both the familiar and the exotic, such as bananas, mangoes, mangosteens, jackfruit, papayas, and the notorious, uniquely-scented durian.

Local seafood of good quality includes prawns, crabs, and a variety of fish. Local beef, mutton, pork, and poultry are also available. Many Americans prefer frozen or chilled beef and lamb imported from Australia and New Zealand. U.S. beef is available but expensive.

Many canned, bottled, frozen, and packaged foods are imported, as are most paper products. Shoppers can

usually find the desired item or brand or a good substitute, but anything imported is expensive. Most stores stock baby foods, including formula, cereals, and strained foods. These items are more expensive here than in the U.S. Strained baby foods carry freshness dates. Not all brands of American-made formula are available and not all formula containers are dated for freshness, so arrange for shipment of any special brand recommended by a pediatrician.

Clothing

Malaysians are increasingly style-conscious; many are fully aware of the latest trends in Western fashions. However, Westerners should be conscious of relatively conservative dress codes in certain circumstances, especially among Malays. Use discretion in selecting attire to avoid inadvertently causing embarrassment to your host or guests. This is particularly important for women. Traditional dresses for Malay women have ankle-length skirts and long sleeves.

Generally speaking, Malaysia's hot, humid climate calls for light clothing, except at hill resorts, where sweaters or light jackets may be needed, especially at night. Extensive use of air conditioning, often supercooled, in offices, hotels and restaurants in Kuala Lumpur and other cities, needs to be taken into account in selecting attire. Hence there are occasions when transitional clothing such as lightweight sweaters, linen jackets for women, and suit jackets or blazers for men, should be worn for comfort. Rainstorms in Kuala Lumpur can be heavy, often occurring in the afternoon or early evening, but usually are brief. Because of the heat, umbrellas are used instead of raincoats.

Clothing and shoe stores in Kuala Lumpur offer a wide selection of items. However, adult sizes tend to be smaller than in the U.S., and large sizes can be hard to find. Prices are comparable to those in the Washington area. It is possible

to find shoemakers who will make shoes to order at reasonable prices.

Many reasonably priced tailors are available, and most of them stock good supplies of imported and domestic materials. Attractive, locally-produced batik ties and shirts are reasonably priced. Cotton long-sleeve batik ranges from \$12 to \$40; silk batiks are more expensive and can exceed \$100 each. Shoes larger than size 10 are difficult to find.

Women wear lightweight dresses with either long or short sleeves, or light skirts and blouses. A number of dressmakers offer an extensive selection of materials. In general, custom-tailored clothes are better than ready-made clothes which can be expensive, poorly tailored, and of inferior quality.

There are many shoe stores in Kuala Lumpur, but shoes larger than size 9 and narrow widths are hard to find.

Clothing requirements for children are simple. Schools require uniforms, but they can be made inexpensively here. Summer-weight clothes are worn all the time, except at the hill resorts. Tennis shoes and thongs are popular for all casual activities. I.S.K.L. uniforms include regulation shirts, which must be purchased at the school, and navy blue pants or skirts which can be made inexpensively by local tailors or purchased locally. High school students can wear navy blue or white slacks or long shorts. Girls may also wear navy blue or white skirts. Bring a basic supply with you. No denim is allowed. Some students wear light weight sweaters to school because of the air conditioning.

Supplies and Services

Malaysia is becoming an increasingly consumer-oriented society, and numerous shopping malls cater to the needs of Malaysia's growing middle class and the many expatriates living in Kuala Lumpur. Almost any product you would want to buy, or a reasonable substitute,

can be purchased in Kuala Lumpur, but prices are higher than in the U.S. Most standard household and medical supplies and toiletries are readily available, but tend to be more expensive here than in the U.S. Some items are in constant supply, while others appear and disappear unexpectedly.

Familiar brands of American and English cigarettes and Dutch and English cigars are sold locally, as are various pipe tobaccos, but American brands are hard to find.

Basic Services: Tailoring, dress-making, and shoe repair are all easy to obtain. Dry-cleaning services are available, but treatment for special-care fabrics is not always available. Beauty shops and barber shops abound. Those in the international-class hotels are convenient and provide the most acceptable service. However, many people try the numerous unisex styling salons found in the shopping malls or the small barber shops clustered in alleyway shophouses run by Malay, Indonesian and Indian barbers.

Religious Activities

Malaysia is officially an Islamic country. However, non-Moslems are free to pursue their own religious beliefs and worship as they please. A variety of religious organizations serve the local Chinese, Indian, and expatriate communities. To avoid unintentionally giving offense, try to become familiar with the standards of behavior appropriate for interacting with members of each of the major Malaysian ethnic groups.

For Christians, local Anglican, Lutheran, Mormon, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Roman Catholic denominations hold English-language services. The Presbyterian congregation serves as the principal expatriate international Protestant church, welcoming attendance by all worshippers without regard to previous affiliation. The nearest synagogue is located in Singapore.

Education

The International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL) is the only school in Kuala Lumpur which provides elementary and secondary education for foreign students using American elementary and college preparatory curricula. ISKL has been accredited by the Western Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

The school offers classes from pre-school (ages 3–4 years) through grade 12. Students transfer to equivalent grades in the U.S. Enrollment is generally about 1400. Students from a total of 46 countries attend ISKL. More Americans attend than any other nationality; Americans make up about 15% of the student body. (The Japanese are second at about 15%) ISKL offers a full college-preparatory program as well as a variety of extracurricular activities and intramural sports. Graduating seniors have a high acceptance rate at the colleges to which they apply in the U.S. The school provides bus transportation but no boarding facilities. Each year the faculty and students present several stage productions. The playing field is used not only for school events, but also for community softball games on Sunday-afternoons, football games sponsored by the American Association, and other community events. ISKL follows the standard American school year, but celebrates Malaysian instead of American holidays.

The school is now divided into two campuses located several miles apart (one for pre-kindergarten through grade 5, the other for grades 6-12). The upper school (grades 6-12), includes a gymnasium, swimming pool, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, an outdoor playing field, an open-air snack bar, air-conditioned classrooms, a library, and an auditorium.

For more information, write to the ISKL administrator at the following address:

International School of Kuala Lumpur
PO Box 12645 50784 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia.

The private Alice Smith School uses a mainly British curriculum. It offers instruction from kindergarten through the equivalent of grade five. For more information, write to: Alice Smith School, Jalan Bellamy, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Garden School, although similar to the Alice Smith School in its use of a British curriculum, differs in that it offers instruction through the secondary level. For more information, write to: The Garden School, 251 Jalan Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Special Educational Opportunities

With the exception of the International Islamic University, local 4-year colleges and universities normally are not open to foreigners, and in any case an increasing number of courses are being taught in Bahasa Malaysia instead of English. Some private 2-year colleges will accept foreigners, but check to be sure credits can be transferred to a recognized U.S. school. Other classes in various Malaysian arts and handicrafts are offered periodically in the community. For further information on these classes, check *Selamat Datang*, an information book published by the women's division of the American Association. *Selamat Datang* contains extensive information on such topics as local customs, food, tourism, shopping, churches, schools, and clubs.

ISKL has an extensive ESL program. It also offers special classes for children with reading difficulties and limited facilities for other learning disabilities. No other special educational facilities are available for the handicapped.

Sports & Clubs

Opportunities to join local clubs are limited and require some persistence and patience. Arrangements vary from club to club, but usually involve a deposit of approximately \$1,000 which may or may not be refundable, sponsorship by club members, and an interview. For many years, local clubs were the

main focus of organized social life and athletic activities among the expatriate community. Some of the best clubs in Kuala Lumpur now are either closed to new members, have long waiting lists, or require fees that are prohibitive. However, always inquire about temporary membership at any clubs in which you are interested.

Kelab Darul Ehsan offers "term" and fully transferable memberships. Non-golf term membership costs about \$1,200 per year. Membership including golf costs about \$2,000 per year. The club has indoor and outdoor tennis, squash, badminton, an exercise room, swimming pool, golf course, and restaurants. Many of the larger hotels have modern health clubs open to local residents. One that is especially convenient is the "Sweat Club", located adjacent to the MiCasa Hotel, off Jalan Tun Razak. The Sweat Club offers a full range of health club exercise facilities, including an aerobics studio, exercise machines, a swimming pool, tennis courts and a squash court. Full membership costs around \$400, "off-hour" membership is about \$120; monthly dues cost about \$40.

The Royal Selangor Golf Club, on Jalan Tun Razak, is no longer offering individual short-term memberships. Corporate memberships of \$8,000 per individual might be available, however.

The Subang Golf Club, located near the international airport 30 minutes from downtown, has facilities for golf, swimming, tennis, dining, and slot machines. Foreign applicants are restricted to temporary memberships. The two year temporary membership has a three month waiting list; entry fees are around \$4,000 with monthly dues. The Hilton Hotel Racquet Club has two tennis courts and five squash courts on the roof of the downtown Hilton Hotel. Members are entitled to use the Hotel's pool. Annual dues are over \$900 for family memberships; over \$600 for single memberships. Members are entitled to one hour of

court time per day. Court time must be booked at least two days in advance, and booking is difficult for certain times of the day.

The Lake Club, located near the Parliament Building on the other side of town, has temporary memberships with an initiation fee of about \$1,200. The club has several grass and synthetic tennis courts, squash courts, a large pool complex, a library, several restaurants, and movie presentations on the weekends.

The Selangor Polo and Riding Club offers riding instruction for children and adults as well as polo for experienced adults. School horses are available for lessons, and members may board their own horses at the club. The club has a bar and schedules occasional activities in connection with tournaments and other special events. Entry fees for subscribing members are around \$600; with monthly dues for families or single members. A refundable riding deposit of about \$200 is required for family memberships; \$100 for single members. Lessons range in price. A temporary membership for up to 2 months is available.

The Selangor Yacht Club, located an hour away in nearby Port Kelang, owns several sailboats that members can rent at moderate rates. Mooring and landing facilities are also available. The club operates a bar and restaurant featuring a selection of Western and Eastern dishes. The club, which has about 200 members, sponsors weekly sailboat races. Membership is now open and requires sponsorship by two members, a modest initiation fee, and monthly dues. Temporary memberships for up to a year are available and require, in addition to two sponsors, a low, refundable deposit and monthly dues are required. The Royal Selangor Flying Club, at the military airport 6 kilometers from the center of the city, provides its own planes for private flying instructions and for members' use. Meals are available. Fees for plane rental, which vary according to the

type of plane and whether or not a professional pilot is needed.

Kelab Golf Angkatan Tentera (the Armed Forces Golf Club) is located near the Royal Selangor Flying Club on the Air Force Base just south of town. It features a short, but challenging, nine-hole golf course. The clubhouse includes a bar and small restaurant. Only 50 expatriates can be members at any one time, and a wait of 4–5 months is customary before a membership application is accepted. Entry fees, which include first quarter dues, are about \$650. Monthly dues apply.

The Royal Port Dickson Yacht Club is located 1½ hours away from Kuala Lumpur on a beach along the Straits of Malacca. Facilities include a restaurant, five tennis courts, four squash courts, a swimming pool, billiards, boat rentals, equipment for windsurfing and water skiing, and an active yacht basin. When membership applications were last accepted, initiation fees were \$600, and applicants needed two sponsors and were interviewed by a membership committee. Three month temporary memberships are currently available.

The Hash House Harriers, a 45-year old association of cross-country running enthusiasts, and its associated splinter groups, organize runs through oil palm and rubber plantations. Membership rates are reasonable, but expect a wait to enter as a regular member.

Several other clubs have more open membership arrangements. The Selangor Club, also known as “the Spotted Dog”, is located downtown facing several of Kuala Lumpur's more picturesque colonial structures across a large public green. Housed in a renovated colonial building featuring Tudor styling, it has long been a landmark in Kuala Lumpur. The club uses the green for national tournaments and its own sporting events including cricket, soccer, field hockey, squash and tennis. Besides four grass tennis courts, the club facilities include a restaurant and ballroom. Bridge

lessons are available. All membership applications must be sponsored by two members. Temporary memberships are available, but expect a wait of one year before memberships can become permanent.

Public facilities, such as swimming pools, tennis courts, and playgrounds for children, are limited. The ISKL pool is open to pupils and their families during certain hours of the day. The schedule is posted at school.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Short trips to outstation areas offer a change of scenery and diversion from the pace of city life, but only the highlands offer any relief from the city's hot, humid climate. Hazardous driving conditions outside of Kuala Lumpur deter many potential travellers, but the rewards of the change of scenery and natural beauty of the country make it worth the effort. In general, the roads are well maintained but winding and overcrowded.

The Awana Golf Club, and Genting Highlands complex, about a one-hour drive from Kuala Lumpur into the Pahang mountains, includes several hotels and a golf course, and offers a cool change to the lowlands.

Fraser's Hill, about 100 kilometers north of Kuala Lumpur and 2½ hours away by car, sits at an altitude of 1,370 meters, and is reached by a narrow, winding mountain road. The resort offers a nine-hole golf course, a few new tennis courts, squash courts, and walking paths through the jungle. The weather is refreshingly cool despite high humidity and intense sunlight during the daytime. Sweaters or light jackets should be worn at night. Besides accommodations at a new hotel, the resort rents numerous houses and bungalows, each with full furnishings and its own staff. Make reservations at least 3 weeks in advance for the hotel and 6 months in advance for bungalows. For major holidays, some families book a year in advance.

Higher at 1,450 meters and farther north than Fraser's Hill, **Cameron Highlands** offers the same basic change in climate. It lies about 240 kilometers north of Kuala Lumpur, about five hours away by car. Cameron Highlands offers hotels, bungalows, restaurants, and an 18-hole golf course, all at reasonable rates. There are also several hiking trails through the mountain forest. Flowers and excellent local produce, such as strawberries, can be purchased in the area, which is also known for numerous tea plantations that dot the hillsides.

A round trip can be made in one day by car to **Port Dickson**, one hundred kilometers southeast of Kuala Lumpur, (about 1½ hours drive each way). Port Dickson, a seaside resort, consists of the town itself and a series of sandy bays stretching 17 kilometers south along the coastal road. Facilities are available for swimming, fishing, water skiing, windsurfing, tennis, and golf. Unfortunately, many areas of the beaches are no longer scenic and have pollution problems. Despite this, clean and picturesque coves can still be found.

Several rest houses and hotels provide meals and accommodations. Company-owned bungalows can be rented for a weekend or several days at reasonable cost, but they have become harder to find.

Malacca, situated about 150 kilometers southeast of Kuala Lumpur, a two hour drive by highway, (longer if the scenic coastal drive is taken), is one of the more interesting and picturesque places in Malaysia. The city's architecture reflects its long history as a seaport city-state and later as a colonial stronghold of the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, who held it from 1824 until Malaysia's independence in 1957. Though prices for antiques have climbed in recent years, window shopping in Malacca for Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch, and British antiques is always enjoyable. Malacca is a good place to take visitors.

Like Malacca, **Penang** offers many opportunities for camera enthusiasts and sightseers. An island city off the northwest coast of Malaysia, Penang boasts beautiful beach hotels, an inclined railway to the top of Penang Hill, ferries to the mainland, small antique shops, and numerous temples, mosques, and British colonial buildings.

Flights from Kuala Lumpur take about an hour. Penang can also be reached in 7 hours by car on a route that takes the traveller through the principal tin mining region of the country and near Kuala Kangsar, the site of the Ubidiyah Mosque, one of the most beautiful in Malaysia.

Singapore lies about an hour away by air or 7 hours by car or train off the southern coast of the peninsula. It offers a wide range of shopping and sight-seeing opportunities, and a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Both car and boat must be used to reach **Taman Negara**, the National Park, which is in the middle of the peninsula 6 hours from Kuala Lumpur. It offers camping or bungalow facilities, and trails in virgin jungles give hikers excellent opportunities to see Malaysia's flora and fauna in their natural habitat. Caution should be taken to avoid leech and insect bites during certain times of the year.

On the island of **Borneo**, also known as Kalimantan, the states of Sabah and Sarawak and the Sultanate of Brunei, have unique history, some modern resorts, and give the truly adventurous a chance to glimpse aboriginal culture, jungles, and mountains.

East Malaysia can be reached in 2 hours on flights across the South China Sea.

The East Coast, accessible by plane or car, offers beautiful, white-sand beaches and numerous examples of Malay culture and handicrafts. The drive to the nearest East Coast city, **Kuantan**, takes 4 hours. **Kuala Trengganu** and **Kota Baru** and are an additional several hours

north along the coast. Roads are fairly good. The pace of life is considerably more relaxed than in Kuala Lumpur. Several resorts, including a Club Med, have opened along the coast in recent years.

A number of small, secluded islands off both coasts have hotel accommodations. Many are ideal for scuba diving and snorkeling, particularly those off the East Coast, such as **Tioman Island**, one hour from Kuala Lumpur by air, which is lovely, but seasonal (March to September). Off the West Coast, **Pangkor Island** resorts are increasingly popular year-round. By car, it is a 4½ hour drive to Lumut followed by a short ferry ride to the island.

Around Kuala Lumpur are several interesting places to visit, such as the National Museum; Batu Caves, a limestone formation north of the city; Chinatown; bird and butterfly parks, an orchid garden, a pewter factory and a local handicraft center. Tours to visit local places of interest in the vicinity are available through the hotels.

Entertainment

A number of air-conditioned theaters in metropolitan Kuala Lumpur show a good selection of American films, but many films are censored. Local cinemas also show a variety of Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, and Malaysian films, occasionally with English subtitles. Ticket prices are reasonable, but these theaters are not frequented much by the expatriate community.

Although the city has no professional theaters, the major hotels do have occasional dinner theater presentations, amateur theatrical events are staged at ISKL, and local professional productions are occasionally presented at various venues.

Dining out is a favorite pastime. The cuisine offered by local restaurants reflects the rich diversity of Malaysia's population; literally hundreds of restaurants, coffee shops, and open air food stalls spe-

cialize in Malay, Indian, Western, and any of several types of Chinese food. Except at hotel restaurants, dining out is fairly inexpensive. Restaurants are sanitary, and while not up to U.S. standards by any means, are acceptable for most people. The food can be exciting to taste and, at open air restaurants or stalls, exciting to watch being prepared. For those who seek other kinds of excitement, the city also has several discos and a number of bars and nightclubs. Visiting musicians perform at several concerts each year.

Penang and East Malaysia have several organized festivals and pageants that may appeal to the enthusiastic traveler. Most festivals in Kuala Lumpur are celebrated in a low-key manner. A parade marks Independence Day; banners and arches are erected for Hari Raya, which marks the end of the Islamic month of Ramadan; and a Quran-reading contest occurs each year during Ramadan.

At Chinese New Year, lion dancers and fire crackers can be seen and heard throughout the Chinese sections of the city. During the Indian festival of Thaipusam, hundreds of thousands of devotees come to Batu Caves just north of the city to pay homage to Krishna. Many of the devotees carry ornately decorated kavadis, some attached to their bodies with hooks through the skin. Smaller, but still elaborate, versions of the Thaipusam festivities take place in Penang and elsewhere throughout the country.

Social Activities

The American Association of Malaysia, which is open to all resident Americans, conducts charity and social programs, luncheons, and trips to Bangkok and around Malaysia. The AAM also sponsors the annual George Washington Birthday Ball, a the Memorial Day picnic, and a community 4th of July Celebration. The women's division meets monthly and offers a variety of classes and other activities.



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Petronas Twin Towers in downtown Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Lincoln Resource Center, while primarily for Malaysians, welcomes Americans interested in meeting Malaysians and joining the dialogue. The center also features a library of books, journals, films, and video cassettes specializing in American social studies and the humanities. Similar facilities are offered by the British Council, the Goethe Institute, and Alliance Francais.

Special Information

The States of Sabah and Sarawak in East Malaysia maintain separate customs and immigration offices, so travel to the Borneo States must be treated as an international journey. All long-term residents of Malaysia

must obtain national identity cards (ICs).

George Town

George Town is the capital of Penang, a Malay state on the Strait of Malacca. Penang consists of Penang Island where George Town is located and a narrow strip of land along the coast on mainland peninsular Malaysia. George Town has a population of over 180,000 (2000 census), and is Malaysia's leading port. The British were first attracted to George Town's natural harbor as the spot to anchor their warships in defending British East India Company posts. As trading in the area developed, Chinese, Indi-

ans, Arabs, and many others settled harmoniously alongside the indigenous Malays.

George Town boasts two mosques; several historic churches; Chinese, Siva, and Sri Mariamman temples; and Buddhist pagodas. The temple of Kek Lok Si, in the suburb of Ayer Itam, is reputed to be the largest and finest temple in Southeast Asia. The Botanical Gardens and Fort Cornwallis, a historic landmark that marks the spot where Captain Francis Light first set ashore on Penang Island over 200 years ago, are other places of interest. Several religious and/or cultural festivals are held in George Town every year. Street markets are popular, selling interesting things to eat, drink, wear, or use in the home. Penang Island is known as a resort area.

Education

Dalat School, which offers a U.S. curriculum for grades one through 12, is located six miles from the center of the city, on the north shore of the island. Founded in 1928, the school has boarding facilities; enrollment is around 200 with a little over 100 boarders. Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the school is sponsored by the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The staff includes specialists in reading, computers, and learning disabilities; also available are a counselor, psychologist, nurse, and chaplain. The school year runs from the end of August to June, with a six-week vacation in December and January. The campus of Dalat School is situated on eight acres. Facilities include 22 buildings, 13 classrooms, a 10,000-volume library, and six dormitories. The school's address is: Tanjung Bunga, 11200 Penang, Malaysia.

OTHER CITIES

ALOR SETAR (also spelled Alor Star) is the capital of Kedah State in the northwestern region of Malaysia, about 50 miles north of George Town. The city, with a population of approximately 115,000

(2000 census.), lies near the Kedah River. A railway links Alor Setar with Kuala Lumpur to the south and the Thai railroad system to the north. Once a bustling inland port, the city today is fast becoming an important shopping and trading center. The Zahir Mosque in Alor Setar is one of the most beautiful in the country. The city also has a state museum that houses some ancient artifacts, and has an interesting section on early Chinese porcelain ware.

The capital city of Perak State, **IPOH** has an estimated population of over 566,000 (2000 census). It is situated in western Malaysia, midway between George Town and Kuala Lumpur in the tin-producing Kinta Valley. With a hot, rainy, tropical monsoon-type climate, the city's average annual rainfall exceeds 80 inches. Limestone and tin are produced here by both modern and ancient methods. Ipoh has a thriving market and railroad. Known as "the city of millionaires," it has a lovely park, Japanese Gardens, and Chinese cave temples for tourists to visit. The city was occupied by the Japanese from 1942 until the end of World War II. The coastal town of Lumut is 55 miles southwest; its modern naval base has contributed to its fast growth. Known for its shell and coral handicrafts, Lumut is the site of the annual Sea Festival.

JOHORE BAHRU (also spelled Johore Bharu and Johore Bahru) is located in the southern Malay Peninsula, just opposite Singapore and about 175 miles southeast of Kuala Lumpur. The capital of Johore State, the city has a population of more than 384,000, most of whom are Chinese, and is connected with Singapore by a stone causeway across Johore Strait.

Johore Bahru is the seat of the sultan of Johore, and his residence, Bakit Serene, houses priceless art treasures. The beach resort of Desaru is just east of Johore Bahru on the South China Sea. There are luxury-class hotels here, an 18-hole golf course designed by Robert

Trent Jones, and plans for further expansion.

Johore Lama is 18 miles from Johore Bahru. Of historic interest, it is the site of a restored fort originally built in 1587.

To the west is the town of **Pontian** and a famous fishing village with homes on stilts near the water's edge. It is known for its seafood restaurants.

Northwest of Johore Bahru is **Ayer Hitam**, known for the ceramics produced at the Aw pottery works. The quiet town of **Kota Tinggi**, 35 miles north, is known for its waterfalls.

Johore Bahru is accessible by a fine network of road, rail, and air services. The airport at Senai connects it to all major Malaysian cities.

KOTA BAHARU (also spelled Kota Bharu) is situated on the Malay Peninsula, about 380 miles northeast of Kuala Lumpur on the South China Sea. Historically, the city was seized by Japan on December 10, 1941, as part of the offensive against Singapore during World War II.

Today, Kota Bahru, the capital of Kelantan State, is a modern city, with an important power station, and a population of over 234,000 (2000 census). Kota Bahru is connected to almost all major cities in Malaysia and Singapore by roads, rail, and air; Kuala Lumpur is a 45-minute flight away.

The city's cultural center, Gelanggang Seni, offers performances of *gasing* (top-spinning), kite-flying, *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet theater), and *silat* (Malaysian art of self-defense). Native handicrafts may be purchased in the central market.

Landmarks in Kota Bahru include the State Mosque, completed in 1926; Merdeka Square, which honors Malay warriors who died during World War II; and the Istana Jahar, or State Museum, built during the reign of Sultan Muhamad IV and

completed in 1899. The city has many hotels and beach resorts in the area.

KOTA KINABALU was formerly known as Jesselton and is the capital of Sabah, Malaysia in East Malaysia (formerly North Borneo). Situated on a small inlet of the South China Sea, Kota Kinabalu was founded in 1899, and in 1947 became the capital of British North Borneo, replacing Sandakan. It is a relatively new town, built on the ruins of the original city, which was razed during World War II.

With a population of approximately 113,000 (1980 census), the city is the chief port of the state, connected to the interior by road and rail. Rubber is exported from Kota Kinabalu's port. The Kinabalu International School is located three-and-a-half miles from the city. Founded in 1973, this coeducational, day school employs a British and Australian curriculum for kindergarten through grade six.

Kota Kinabalu has an international airport, about four miles from the city. Daily air service operates between all of Sabah's major towns—Kota Kinabalu, Labuan, Sandakan, Lahad Data, and Tawau.

Other cities of interest near Kota Kinabalu include **Penampang**, nine miles away, which reveals a cross-section of Sabah's exotic flora, fauna, and sociocultural life. The village of **Semporna**, on the south coast, is known for its cultured pearls (Sabah is the only state in Malaysia that produces pearls). **Tuaran**, about a half-hour drive from Kota Kinabalu, is known for its *tamu* (market). A colorful *tamu* is also held every Sunday morning at **Kota Belud**, 48 miles north. **Kudat**, 150 miles from Kota Kinabalu, is noted for its natives—the Rungus. **Sandakan**, the former capital of North Borneo, is on Sabah's east coast, 240 miles from Kota Kinabalu. It is a modern city sprawled along the sea's edge, with a population of over 350,000.

KUALA TERENGGANU (also spelled Kuala Trengganu) is located on the South China Sea in central Malaysia. About 175 miles north-east of Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu is the capital of Terengganu State. With a population over 250,000 (2000 census), it is both a port and the site of an important weaving industry. Situated on the Terengganu River, the city is also the home of the sultan of Terengganu.

South of the city are numerous fishing villages—**Kemaman**, **Kemasik**, and **Kuala Dungan**. **Rantau Abang** is where the famous giant leathery turtles are found. They return to this area to lay their eggs and can be seen from May to September, with the peak months being July and August.

KUANTAN, the capital of Pahang State, is rapidly developing as an important port and seaside resort. Situated on the east coast of the central Malay Peninsula on the South China Sea, Kuantan is just north of the mouth of the Pahang River. The area was a strategic point in the Japanese invasion of the peninsula, and was seized during December 1941 and January 1942.

Today, this city of over 283,000 (2000 census) offers miles of beautiful, clean, sandy beaches, ideal for fishing, swimming, and boating. Kuantan is noted for its authentic craftsmanship in woodcarving, batik printing, brocade, and pandan leaf weaving.

The numerous villages near Kuantan are known for their rich cultural traditions. **Beserah**, six miles north of Kuantan, is a serene fishing village. Cherating, 30 miles north, is the site of Asia's first Club Med, but is also known for its native charms. At **Pekan**, 28 miles south, the Royal Palace, Istana Abu Bakar, stands out as a modern architectural design in this charming town of small, old-fashioned shops. It is also the site of a four-day cultural and sporting festival celebrating the sultan's birthday. Kuantan is accessi-

ble by air and road from Kuala Lumpur 125 miles to the southwest. There is regular bus service as well as outstation taxis.

KUCHING is the capital and financial center of Sarawak in East Malaysia, formerly Northwest Borneo. Situated on the Sarawak River, Kuching is the state's largest city and a river port where sago flour and pepper are exported.

Founded in 1839 by James Brooke, the city has Anglican and Roman Catholic cathedrals and a museum of Borneo folklore. The world-famous Sarawak State Museum here houses one of the finest collections of Sarawak tribal weapons, tools, art, and artifacts. The law courts, the clock tower, and Fort Margherita are some of the best-preserved and most beautiful examples of British colonial architecture in this area. Kuching's Masjid Besar (State Mosque) was completed in 1968; the city also has several historic Chinese temples.

Interesting places near Kuching include **Santubong**, 20 miles away, a seaside village known for its swimming and fishing. From the seventh through 13th centuries, this town was an important trading village for the Chinese dynasties of the period. Kuching's population is approximately 152,300 (2000 census).

The historic city of **MELAKA**, formerly Malacca, is situated on the Strait of Malacca about 90 miles south of Kuala Lumpur. The oldest town in Malaysia, founded about 1400 by a Malay prince, Melaka was one of the leading commercial centers of the Far East until the 17th century. Traders introduced Islam to Malay through Melaka. The city was captured by the Portuguese in 1511 and by the Dutch in 1641. Using the city more as a fortress than as a trading port, the Dutch retained control of Melaka until 1824, when it was transferred to Great Britain.

Today, Melaka has little economic importance, but retains some Portu-

guese and Dutch buildings, as well as a Portuguese-Eurasian community. With a population about 270,000 (2000 census), most of the city's inhabitants are Chinese, who have acquired many Malay customs. It is a mecca for antique hunters, but if an antique is purchased to take out of the country, permission must be sought from the director general of Museum Negara. Melaka can be reached from Kuala Lumpur by express buses or cabs. Domestic flights are also available.

SEREMBAN is situated between Kuala Lumpur and Melaka in southern Malaysia. Linked by rail with Port Dickson on the Strait of Malacca, Seremban is the commercial center for the surrounding rubber-growing region. Tin mines are also located near the city which, as the capital of Negeri Sembilan, has a population over 133,000.

Of interest are Lake Gardens and the State Museum which features a Malay house built without the use of a single nail. Negeri Sembilan is traditionally a matriarchal state, where women inherit rights over property and land to the exclusion of men. West of Seremban is the royal town of **Sri Menanti**, where the Istana, or ruler's palace, is located.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Peninsular Malaysia, slightly smaller in size than Michigan, extends south for 800 kilometers from Thailand's Isthmus of Kra to Singapore and the Indonesian Archipelago. Sabah and Sarawak, the states of East Malaysia that together are about the size of Kansas, lie 600 kilometers to the east across the South China Sea. These two states, former British colonies on the northeast coast of Borneo, stretch for 1000 kilometers to the southern islands of the Philippines.

Malaysia's land area covers 336,400 square kilometers. A central mountain range with peaks rising to 2100 meters divides peninsular Malaysia. Scenic coastal plains lie on either side of the mountains; most of the population lives in the plains and foothills of the western coast along the Straits of Malacca. The eastern coast, along the South China Sea, has beautiful white, sandy beaches but fewer people. Between the two coasts lie the mountains and an often impenetrable jungle. Primary forest covers 60% of Malaysia and contains a variety of flowering plants and immense, but now diminishing, timber reserves. Vegetation, even in the cities, is lush and tropical. Forest wildlife includes gibbons; tigers; elephants; mouse deer; countless species of birds, monkeys, and insects; and, in Sabah and Sarawak, the orangutan.

The weather in Kuala Lumpur varies little throughout the year. daily minimum and maximum temperatures remain fairly constant averaging 24°C (75°F) and 32°C (90°F). Average annual rainfall of 250 centimeters keeps the humidity high. Kuala Lumpur's location in a valley compounds not only the humidity but also the smog problem brought on by increasingly congested streets. Longtime foreign residents sometimes complain of the enervating effect of the unchanging climate.

Although Kuala Lumpur is not subject to typhoons or cyclones, brief rainy seasons occur each year and bring scattered flooding to the metropolitan area. One to two months of relatively dry weather usually precede the rainy seasons, although afternoon and evening thunder showers occur regularly in Kuala Lumpur throughout the year. The east coast and East Malaysia experience longer rainy seasons, and more widespread flooding occurs as a result.

Malaysia, an entomologist's paradise, abounds in insect life of all kinds, including beautiful jungle butterflies and incredibly large cockroaches. Insects do carry dis-

ease in Malaysia. Mosquitoes and other bugs can be bothersome; dengue, cholera, and malaria are endemic in parts of the country, but with the exception of dengue, rarely affect the expatriate population in Kuala Lumpur or other major cities.

Population

In 2000, Malaysia's estimated population was approximately 21.8 million, with about 83% in Peninsular Malaysia and 17% in East Malaysia. In 1991, the Federal Territory, consisting primarily of the city of Kuala Lumpur, had a population of over 1.1 million. Malaysia's population is growing at over 2% per year.

The population of Malaysia includes several ethnic groups; the largest group, the Malays, make up about 58% of the population. Almost without exception, Malays follow the state religion of Islam and speak the national language of Bahasa Malaysia (formerly called Malay).

Chinese, most of whose ancestors came to Malaysia from southern China during the 19th and early 20th centuries to work in the tin mines or to set up small businesses, make up about 27% of the population. Today, most Chinese live in urban areas and work in trade, business, and finance. The most common Chinese dialects are Cantonese and Hokkien; however, Mandarin is also widely understood as it is the language of instruction in Chinese schools.

Malaysians of Indian descent make up another 8% of the population. Their ancestors came from the Indian subcontinent as laborers on the rubber plantations and as civil servants in the British colonial government.

Non-Malay indigenous groups, Eurasians, and Europeans make up the remainder of the population. Most of the non-Malay indigenous peoples are concentrated in East Malaysia, where they are an important social and political force.

About 84% of the population speaks Bahasa Malaysia. The literacy rate for the country as a whole is approximately 84%; the rate in East Malaysia is somewhat lower than in Peninsular Malaysia. English is still widely spoken, particularly in urban areas. English proficiency declined in the 1980s, when the government promoted the use of Bahasa Malaysia in schools, government, and business. In recent years, however, the government has promoted English language skills.

Public Institutions

Malaysia has a parliamentary system of government based on free, multi-party elections. A free market economy, abundant natural resources, and a well-educated population have helped Malaysia become one of the most prosperous of the developing countries. Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy, nominally headed by the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, or paramount ruler. The ruler is elected for a five-year term from among the nine hereditary rulers of the peninsular Malay states. The ruler also is the leader of the Islamic faith in Malaysia, as are the rulers in their own states.

Malaysia's Constitution was promulgated in 1963 when Sabah and Sarawak joined the Federation of Malaya to form Malaysia. The Constitution has been amended frequently since its original enactment. Executive power is vested in the Cabinet, led by the Prime Minister. The Cabinet is chosen from among the members of parliament as in the British system of government. All of Malaysia's Prime Ministers since independence have been the leaders of the country's predominant political party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO).

The bicameral Parliament consists of the Dewan Negara (the National Council or Senate) and the Dewan Rakyat (the People's Council or House of Representatives). Of the 69 members of the Senate, the Paramount Ruler appoints 43 and each of the 13 state legislatures elects

two. All Senators sit for 6-year terms. Members of the House, the more influential of the two bodies, are elected in single member constituencies by universal adult suffrage. General elections must be called at least once every 5 years. The House has 180 members, of which 133 are from the states of Peninsular Malaysia and the island of Labuan and 47 are from Sabah and Sarawak. Legislative power is divided between the Federal Parliament and the elected assemblies of Malaysia's 13 states, with state governments retaining power over several important areas, including land use and religion.

The Malaysian legal system is based on English Common Law. The Supreme Court, the highest court in Malaysia, reviews decisions referred from the High Courts and has original jurisdiction in constitutional matters and in disputes between states or between the Federal Government and a State. Below the Supreme Court are two High Courts, one for Peninsular Malaysia and one for East Malaysia. Islamic, or Syariah, law applies nationwide to Moslems. Islamic courts come under the jurisdiction of the individual states, and ultimate appellate authority rests with the ruler of the state concerned.

The titular heads of 9 of the 13 states in Malaysia are the hereditary rulers, the others being Governors appointed by the Federal Government. Effective executive power rests in the hands of the Chief Minister of each State, and the members of their State cabinets, selected from the members of the State assemblies.

Arts, Science, and Education

Intellectual life in Malaysia is not limited to the country's seven universities. In addition to public lectures and seminars given in the national language at the universities, there are various other professional and service organizations whose activities are open and which

welcome foreigners as members. Examples are the Malaysian Nature Society, the Malaysian Association for American Studies, and the Malaysian Culture Study Group.

The National Museum in Kuala Lumpur houses exhibits on Malaysian culture and history. The city also has a National Art Gallery and several small private art galleries that regularly put on exhibits of local and internationally recognized artists. Major hotels and foreign missions frequently sponsor exhibitions and musical and dramatic performances. Several amateur groups also present dramatic and/or musical performances relating to the major cultures represented in Malaysia.

The Museum of Asian Art at the University of Malaya exhibits an excellent collection of ceramic art. Lessons are available in Kuala Lumpur in Asian art and music.

Commerce and Industry

Manufacturing has accounted for 33% of GDP in 2000. Principal manufactured products include semiconductors, consumer electronic and electrical products, textiles, and apparel. Malaysia is the world's third-largest producer and one of world's largest exporters of semiconductors. The U.S. is the primary trading partner for these products, taking about 26% of Malaysia's electronic products in 2000.

The agricultural sector employs about 15% of the work force. Malaysia is the world's largest producer and exporter of palm oil (about half of the world's supply). Malaysia is also a significant producer of natural rubber, cocoa and tropical timber.

An increasing variety of American companies are involved in Malaysia, such as Esso, Motorola, Intel, Texas Instruments, Mattel, Colgate-Palmolive, RJR Nabisco, Citibank, American International Assurance

(AIA), Johnson and Johnson, and Baxter Healthcare. In 1992, an Embassy survey of U.S. companies in Malaysia indicated that U.S. firms held nearly \$7 billion in assets in Malaysia at the end of 1991, chiefly in the petroleum (65% of total investment) and the microelectronics and manufacturing (32%) sectors.

The United States is Malaysia's third most important trading partner (after Singapore and Japan).

Transportation

Buses and minibuses are dangerously overcrowded except late at night and can be unreliable at all times. Taxis are numerous, metered, and inexpensive, but hard to find at peak hours or when it is raining. Drivers usually speak enough English to reach a destination and to follow directions, but language problems are still frequent and some drivers do not know the city well.

Kuala Lumpur's narrow and winding streets, built a century ago to handle hawkers and trishaws, are now very crowded. While several new "circular" roads have been built recently to help alleviate the overcrowding, and more new highways are under construction, traffic remains heavy, especially at peak hours. Multilaned highways often merge into narrow two lane roads in the center of town and cause added congestion.

Malaysia's west coast has a well-developed system of roads between major cities. Paved and fairly well-maintained, these primarily two-lane roads are usually congested because of heavy use by buses, intercity taxis, and trucks carrying timber and other commodities. A paved coastal road follows the east coast. Its traffic is not as heavy as that on the west coast, but the main trunk roads occasionally suffer from lack of repair. A good road across the peninsula connects Kuala Lumpur with the east coast. Other cross-peninsular routes exist farther south; in the north a new east-west



Street scene in Malaysia

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

highway cuts through the jungles and mountains and links the two coasts. Although the roads on both coasts are scenic and you can drive to Singapore, Penang, and other distant cities, most employees prefer to fly to these cities and avoid the congested, often hazardous traffic. By car, Singapore and Penang are 6 to 8 hours from Kuala Lumpur. A new Malaysia/Singapore divided highway stretches from Singapore to the Thai border.

Train travel is inexpensive. Many employees find it quaint, even rustic, but occasional delays occur. Daily train service connects Kuala Lumpur with Penang and Singapore. From Penang, the international express operates to Bangkok daily, but reservations must be booked in advance. The trip to Singapore takes from 6 to 10 hours, depending on the type of train. First-class accommodations with air conditioning are available, as are sleeping compartments on night trips. Subang International Airport is 20 kilometers from Kuala Lumpur. Regular jet service operates between major cities in the region with connections to Western Europe and the U.S. Because American carriers do not yet offer direct passenger service to Kuala Lumpur (although United has plans pend-

ing), travelers to and from post use Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, Hong Kong, or Bangkok to change from either Northwest Orient Airlines or United Airlines to foreign carriers. Taxis are available at the airport. Fares are based on a zone system.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Direct-dial facilities exist to most of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and the U.S. The telephone system is only occasionally overloaded.

Telephone service to the U.S. is available 24 hours daily. A 3-minute overseas call to any point within the U.S. through the Malaysian telephone company is about \$9 for person-to-person and \$6 for station-to-station; each additional minute costs around \$2. Persons with an AT&T Calling Card can reach the U.S. via AT&T's "USA Direct" service by dialing 800-0011. Such calls cost about \$3.70 for the first minute and \$1.48 for each additional minute, plus a service charge of \$2.50. Sprint and MCI have similar calling plans and can be accessed in Malaysia. Calls from the U.S. are usually cheaper than those placed from Malaysia. The Malaysian telephone company, Telekom Malaysia, has recently introduced a service

which enables callers in the U.S. to dial a special toll-free number which will connect them to the Malaysian telephone system so they can make a collect call to someone in Malaysia.

Telegrams may be sent from main telegraph offices, post offices, and hotels, by phone. The minimum charge is over \$4 for 22 words; the address counts as regular wording. Each additional word costs \$0.20. FAX facilities are also available, and are often a cost-effective way to communicate.

Radio and TV

English-language programs share time with broadcasts in Malaysian, Chinese, and Tamil on both radio and TV in Malaysia. Voice of America and BBC can be received with some interference, but Radio Singapore and Radio Australia are usually clear. There are three television channels, two of which are run by the Malaysian government. In addition to local productions, Tamil movies, and Chinese movies and soap operas, the stations show a variety of American, British, and Australian programs. Weekday broadcasting usually begins at 4:00 p.m. and lasts until midnight. Programming begins earlier in the afternoon on weekends and in the morning on local holidays.

Malaysia uses the European PAL TV system.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Numerous magazines and newspapers are published in East and West Malaysia, most in Malaysian, Chinese, and Tamil. Several are published in English, and some English-language newspapers in Kuala Lumpur serve a national market. Most foreigners read the *New Straits Times* (morning), the *Star* (morning), and the *Malay Mail* (afternoon), which give limited coverage to U.S. and international news and sports and more extensive coverage to local news and to other more sensational topics. The *Asian Wall Street Journal* and Asian editions of *USA Today*, *Time*, *News-*

week, and *Reader's Digest* are sold locally. A few other selected U.S. periodicals arrive by air close to the time of their release in the U.S. or by surface mail several weeks or months later. The *International Herald Tribune*, printed in Singapore, usually arrives in Kuala Lumpur in mid-afternoon on the day of publication and always has good coverage of U.S. news and sports. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* and *Asiaweek* give excellent coverage of Asian news.

The Lincoln Resource Center, the library of the U.S. Information Service, has the best collection of American books in the country. It also has an extensive reference section, periodical section, and videotape collection. The International School also has a good library but it does not include recent best sellers.

American and British hardback and paperback books are sold in hotels and numerous bookstores, but they are usually expensive.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Many local physicians have received at least part of their training in Australia, the U.K. or the U.S.

American citizens are advised to go to Subang Jaya Medical Center in an emergency. A private facility, this hospital resembles a standard western hospital in operation with an emergency room staffed 24 hours daily. Tawakal Hospital, has 24 hour emergency room service and is convenient if time is critical. The General Hospital, which should be used only in an emergency as an alternative to Subang or Tawakal hospitals, also has a 24 hour emergency room. Other hospitals have emergency rooms that are not open or staffed by doctors around the clock. Three other hospitals in the area, Pantai, Assunta, and University, are used to a lesser degree.

Several dentists operate private clinics in the city and can meet rou-

tine dental needs including orthodontic care. Orthodontia tends to be cheaper than in the U.S., but treatment may differ from U.S. practices.

No special facilities provide services for the handicapped except for special instruction given by the International School on a limited basis for children with reading disabilities and some other learning difficulties.

Community Health

Tropical fatigue can last for 6 weeks after arrival. The climate can be debilitating over an extended period because of rainfall, high humidity, uniformly high temperatures, and lack of seasonal variations.

Colds, bronchial disturbances and sinus conditions are common and tend to linger longer than they do in the U.S. Air conditioning probably contributes to this problem since many restaurants and shops are uncomfortably overcooled in relation to the outside temperature. Exhaust fumes from numerous and inadequately maintained motor vehicles combine with smoke from burning brush piles to cause discomfort for those with respiratory conditions.

Dengue fever, including the hemorrhagic variety, exists throughout Malaysia, and expatriates are occasionally affected in Kuala Lumpur. Cholera cases, which are reported less frequently, occur principally in rural areas. In the past, Americans have contracted hepatitis A and dengue fever. Chloroquine-resistant malaria exists, mostly in rural areas, and the number of reported cases has increased. Open drainage ditches and stagnant water at construction sites facilitate breeding of mosquitoes in the city. Malaria suppressants are recommended for extended travel in rural areas outside of Kuala Lumpur. The recommended dose is 500mg of Chloroquine per week and 200 mg of Paludrine daily.

Food poisoning rarely occurs, but a few Americans experience mild

forms of dysentery or diarrhea after eating in the local open-air food stalls and, occasionally, the better restaurants.

As in any tropical country, skin rashes, fungi, and parasites are common. There are also several varieties of snakes, some of which are poisonous.

Drinking water is potable in the urban area of Kuala Lumpur. In outstation areas, water should be boiled or chemically treated. Most medical items and drugs can be purchased locally, but some drugs available over-the-counter in the U.S. require prescriptions in Malaysia, and pharmacies may not have a licensed pharmacist on duty at all times.

Preventive Measures

Before coming to Post, you should be inoculated against tetanus, hepatitis B, immune globulin, and should take an oral dose of typhoid vaccine. Take a tuberculin test so that any change during your stay can be investigated. Children and young adults should be inoculated against diphtheria and take the oral polio vaccine. Yellow fever immunization is required for everyone arriving from Africa and Latin America or other infected areas. Exposure to the intense tropical sun should be gradual to avoid serious sunburns.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1. New Year's Day
- Jan/Feb. Thaipusam*
- Feb. 1. Kuala Lumpur City Day
- Feb. Chinese New Year (2 days)*
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- May 1. Malaysia Labor Day
- Apr/May Wesak*
- May 1. Labor Day

- June (1st Sat) Birthday of HM the King, Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong
- Aug. 31 Malaysian National Day
- Oct. Diwali*
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- Ramadan*
- Hari Raya Haji/Id al-Adha*
- Hari Raya Puasa/Id al-Fitr*
- Muharram*
- Mawlid an Nabi*
- Nuzul al Qur'an*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport valid for at least six months is required to enter Malaysia. American citizens do not need a visa for a pleasure or business trip if their stay in Malaysia is 90 days or less. For more information on entry requirements, contact the Embassy of Malaysia, 2401 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone: (212) 328-2700, or the Malaysian Consulates located in New York, telephone (202) 328-2700, or Los Angeles, telephone (213) 892-1238. See also the Malaysian Government home page on the Internet at <http://www.jaring.my>. Overseas inquiries should be made at the nearest Malaysian embassy or consulate.

Malaysia's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Malaysia of items such as firearms, religious materials, antiques, medications, business equipment, currency, ivory, and other items. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Malaysia in Washington or one of Malaysia's

consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements. Customs officials encourage the use of an ATA (Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission) carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples, and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes. ATA Carnet Headquarters, located at the U.S. Council for International Business, 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, issues and guarantees the ATA carnet in the United States. For additional information call (212)354-4480; send an e-mail to atacarnet@uscib.org, or visit <http://www.uscib.org> for details.

Malaysia strictly enforces its drug laws. Malaysian legislation provides for a mandatory death penalty for convicted drug traffickers. Individuals arrested in possession of 15 grams (1/2 ounce) of heroin or 200 grams (seven ounces) of marijuana are presumed by law to be trafficking in drugs.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Malaysia are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur and to obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. The U.S. Embassy is located at 376 Jalan Tun Razak 50400, Kuala Lumpur. The mailing address is P.O. Box No. 10035, 50700 Kuala Lumpur; Telephone (60-3)2168-5000. The fax number for the U.S. Embassy is (60-3)242-2207; the fax number for the Consular Section is (60-3)248-5801. Internet home page: <http://usembassymalaysia.org.my/>; e-mail address: klconsular@state.gov.

Pets

Pets shipped from non-Commonwealth countries must be quarantined for one month upon arrival in Malaysia. Current vaccination records must be available at time of entry.

The Subang International Airport quarantine kennel is a 30 minute drive from Kuala Lumpur. The kennel costs about \$1.20 per day to board cats and \$1.60 for dogs.

Excellent veterinary care is available locally. Several tropical canine diseases, for which treatment is not fully successful, are peculiar to Malaysia. Ticks and fleas can be a serious problem in some sections of the city. American pet foods are available, although more expensive than in the U.S.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Malaysian ringgit is freely convertible. The exchange rate, which fluctuates daily, was US\$1.00 = RM3.80 as of May 2002.

Malaysia has adopted the metric system, and government efforts to enforce its use have done away with a host of old measuring units, including pounds, katis, taels, and piculs.

RECOMMENDED READING

Nonfiction

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MALDIVES

Republic of Maldives

Major City:

Malé

Other Cities:

Baa Atoll, Seenu Atoll

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Maldives. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **MALDIVES**, an independent chain of islands in the northern Indian Ocean about 417 miles southwest of Sri Lanka and 300 miles from the southernmost tip of India, was a sultanate under British protection until 1965. Its experience with foreign influences has been limited and, until recently, its principal economic link was through ties with Sri Lanka. During its years as a British protectorate, it was administered under the sovereignty of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). In June 1985, the Republic of Maldives became a full member of the Commonwealth.

MAJOR CITY

Malé

Malé, the capital the Maldives, is an island about one-and-a-half square miles in total area, occupying a central position in the archipelago. Land is slowly being reclaimed on the island's north side. All government offices, the four main government schools, and the single hospital are also here. The commercial district has a wide variety of small shops selling curios, antiques, sea shells, and other goods. Many of the imported items are transported by the 40 vessel Maldivian merchant marine fleet. Malé also has an attractive park, Sultan Park, and a museum with artifacts from the Arab, Dravidian, and Sri Lankan cultures which have influenced the history of this island republic.

Malé's population is about 68,000 (2000 est.). The city is densely populated and there is very little public open space. It is feasible to walk to places within the small urban area. The city is a free port; no duties are levied on articles brought here by visitors, but certain items must be declared at customs. Since the Maldives is a Muslim country, no pork products or liquor may be imported. Tourist islands in the

chain, however, often offer pork and liquor for sale to tourists only.

The Maldives international airport—Malé International—is situated on Hululé Island, adjacent to the capital city; there also are three domestic airports.

Education in government-run schools is free in the republic, but is not compulsory. Western-style education based on the British Commonwealth curriculum exists in Malé only to the high school level; studies beyond high school must be pursued abroad. Most teachers are experienced Maldivian and Sri Lankan nationals. The medium of instruction is both Divehi and English.

Clothing

Warm clothing is never required. Cotton dresses, trousers, skirts, and lightweight tropical suits are the most comfortable year-round attire. Some ready-made clothing, notably shirts, jeans, trousers, dresses and blouses, T-shirts, underwear, rubber sandals, and infants wear, are increasingly available, but only in small sizes and often expensive for the quality. A variety of high-quality synthetic materials is available and relatively inexpensive. Pure cotton cloth, which suits the climate best, is available.



Malé Harbor

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

The correct dress for men in offices is trousers with either a shirt and tie or a bush shirt; shoes are preferred to sandals. Women wear slacks, or dresses with knee-length hemlines and short sleeves to offices in Malé.

Food

Most necessary items can be found on the market, although in varying degrees of availability. Many types of inexpensive fresh fish appear daily (except Friday), but the most common are tuna, bonito, and *seer*. It is possible to arrange occasional supplies of spiny lobster and turtle meat. Poultry and eggs are always available. Fresh meat is available, but dairy products are not.

Fruits such as papayas, limes, bananas, and coconuts are always on the market; one variety of mango is available in season. Tropical yellow vegetables usually can be obtained; potatoes and onions are found intermittently. Fresh green vegetables are imported and available year round.

Good-quality white loaf bread is baked daily. A variety of canned and bottled goods gradually is becoming more common in shops. Nespray powdered milk and tinned cheese, cream, and condensed milk are

nearly always sold locally. Frozen meat is available, as is ice cream. Coca-Cola and 7-Up in cans and other soft drinks are available. Beer, wine, spirits, and other drinks containing alcohol are not sold commercially because of local religious customs.

Supplies & Services

The Maldives has a few laundries and no dry cleaning shops. Shoe repair facilities are fair. Imported, high-quality goods are expensive and scarce. Spare parts for household articles must be imported. Electricians' and plumbers' services are available and are of fair quality. Hairdressers and barbers charge moderate rates. Inexpensive domestic help is available, but experienced, well-qualified servants are scarce. Language and customs differences can create problems.

Recreation

Malé has one or two good restaurants. Four hotels, an Italian restaurant, and the tourist island restaurants provide some diversion in entertainment. Sports such as swimming, scuba diving, windsurfing, and sailing are readily available.

The Maldives are renowned for their beautiful beaches.

The Ministry of Tourism is located in the Ghaazee Building, Malé 20-05, Republic of Maldives.

OTHER CITIES

BAA ATOLL is located north of Malé with a population of about 9,600 (2000 est.). The atoll is actually made up of about 50 different islands. At least five of them have major tourist resorts. The others are undeveloped, but open to visitors looking for a relaxing place to hike or swim. In fact, some of the resorts will organize day trips to the various islands. Divers and snorkellers will enjoy the pristine coral reefs around the islands and perhaps a chance see the mantas and whale sharks that share the waters. Several shops display and sell locally made laquerware and hand woven garments, particularly the "feyli," a traditional wraparound skirt. From the island of Goidhoo, history buffs can learn about the 1602 shipwreck of the French ship "Corbin." Legends say that several castaways and exiles once made Goidhoo their homes.

SEENU ATOLL (also known as Addoo Atoll), is a small, heart-shaped island at the southernmost edge of the Maldives. Diving and snorkeling are popular in the area, where a long outer fringe of reefs are complimented by a number of caves and overhangs that provide homes for turtles and nurse sharks. Mantas may also be seen in the waters. Divers can also see the remains of the "British Royalty," a ship torpedoed by the Japanese in Addoo harbor and later sunk by the British. On land, there is one major resort and travelers can bike through the streets of Hithadhoo, the islands capital, or browse through the many shops located there.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

A chain of 19 atolls with a total area of 115 square miles, the Maldives extends a distance of 500 miles north to south.

The atolls comprise 1,190 coral islands, 199 of which are inhabited. The islets are small (none larger than five square miles in area) and seldom exceed an elevation of five or six feet above sea level. The tropical vegetation varies from grass and scrub to dense woods of fruit trees or coconut palms.

The climate is hot and humid, with little daily variation; the average temperature is 80°F and the relative humidity 80%. Most of the area is subject to the southwest monsoon (June to August) and the northeast monsoon (November to March); the annual rainfall averages 100 inches in the north and 150 inches in the south. Living conditions are not healthful in this warm, wet environment.

Population

The population of the Maldives is 310,400 (2000). Average annual growth rate is 3%. Approximately 200 of the Maldives' 1,200 islands are inhabited. The population is scattered throughout the islands, but most heavily concentrated in Malé. Almost 75% of Maldivians live in rural areas. The nation is ethnically divided into admixtures of Sinhalese, Dravidian, and Arab. The Islamic faith was adopted by the Maldivian people during the 12th century. It is now the official religion; nearly 100% of the population are Sunni Muslims. Divehi is the official language, with English as a second tongue. The literacy rate is 93%.

Government

The Maldives has a republic form of government. A popularly-elected unicameral national legislature (*Majlis*) consists of 50 members who serve five-year terms. There are two elected members from each atoll and the capital Malé and eight members who are appointed by the president. There are no political parties, so each candidate must run on the basis of personal qualifications.

The president is nominated for a five-year term by a secret ballot of the Majlis, which requires confirmation by national referendum. President Mumoon Abdul Gayoom was elected in 1978 and reconfirmed by referendum in 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1998.

The legal system is based on Islamic law, with English common law applied in commercial matters. An appointed chief justice is responsible for the administration of the former. No organized political parties exist.

The Maldives is a member of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as the following international bodies: Asian Development Bank, Colombo Plan, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Islamic Development Bank, Nonaligned Movement, and the World Bank.

Three countries have diplomatic representation in Malé: India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The Maldives has representation abroad in more than 10 foreign cities, including Bangkok, Thailand; Brussels, Belgium; Tokyo, Japan; Vienna, Austria; and Washington, DC.

The flag of the Republic of Maldives is green with a white crescent, surrounded by a red border.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is free, but only 65% of school-age children are enrolled. Until 1976, all 16 existing schools were located in Malé; most were primary schools.

Three types of formal education are offered: traditional schools (*mak-thabs*), which emphasize knowledge of the Koran (Qur'an); Divehi-language primary schools; and English-language primary and secondary schools, which teach a standard curriculum. The only higher education facility available is a teacher-training institute; most college-age students go abroad for schooling.

Commerce and Industry

The Maldives is one of the poorest and most undeveloped countries in the world. But in recent years, the economy of the Maldives has improved steadily. The gross domestic product (GDP) was \$594 million in 2000, or about \$2,000 per capita. Tourism and fishing are the most important sectors of the economy.

Tourism alone accounts for 20%-30% of GDP and over 60% of foreign exchange earnings. In 2000, there were 84 resorts in operation, with plans for expansion. Over 400,000 visitors were recorded in 2000.

The fishing industry employs 25% of the labor force and accounts for 60% of all exports. Considerable quantities of fish are exported to Japan. Dried fish is exported to Sri Lanka, where it is a delicacy. Canned tuna and dried fish exports accounted for about 53% of all marine product exports. This is quite an accomplishment considering that the use of nets is illegal. All fishing is done by line and pole. The fishing fleet usually consists of a number of small, flat-bottomed boats. Though, fishermen are now permitted to use outboard motors instead of just sails and oars.

The vegetation of the islands is coconut palms with some scrub. Cultivation of crops is virtually impossible, and nearly all food to supplement the basic fish diet has to be imported; Japan, the U.S., and Thailand are major trade partners.

One of the major problems facing the Maldives is a dwindling supply of fresh water and inadequate sewage treatment. Another environmental problem is associated with the reported rising of the world's sea level, which will gradually erode the coral foundation of the islands. Considering that none of the islands are more than six feet above sea level, the sea level is of great importance. Houses built from coral are now forbidden; cement must be imported for construction.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry is located in the Ghaazee Building, Malé 20-05, Republic of Maldives.

Transportation

Five international airlines serve Malé International; also, charter flights are available from Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. Domestic flights are operated by Air Maldives Airways. Malé International is on Hululé Island and there is ferry service to all main islands.

There is little need for transportation on any of the islands since they are so small. All areas on Malé can be reached on foot. There are only a few hundred passenger cars in the Maldives. Limited taxi service is available in Malé; taxis cannot be hailed.

Transportation between the atolls depends mainly on local sailing boats.

Communications

International direct-dial phone calls and fax services are generally available and all 199 inhabited islands of the country have been provided with access to telephone services. Dhiraagu, the partially government owned telecommunications service

provider, also provides Internet services. Mobile phone usage is increasing rapidly. There are over 10,000 mobile phone users in the Maldives with services available on 31 inhabited islands and 80 resorts islands.

Radio broadcasting on the Voice of Maldives began in 1962. Broadcasts are in Divehi and English. Television Maldives is the country's lone TV station. One Indian Ocean INTELSAT station serves the country.

There are two daily publications in Malé that are in Divehi and English: *Aafathis* and *Haveeru*. All publications must be approved by the government, those not sanctioned are banned.

Health

Clinical medical care in Malé is available at the government hospital, which also has two national dental assistants, one trained in Britain and one in Sri Lanka. Although the hospital itself is a superior small facility with excellent nursing care, most surgery or serious illnesses cannot be handled. Singapore is the nearest place giving first-class specialized care.

Malé has no piped public water supply or sewage network. Ensuring an adequate water supply is a continuing and growing problem for the government. Sweet water is obtained from household wells and rain catchment; the well water is for general use and the rain catchment is for drinking. Houses rented to foreigners have individual compound septic tanks.

As in other tropical countries, the main health problems of the population are infectious diseases. Malaria, tuberculosis, filariasis, and leprosy are found; gastroenteritis, ear infections, measles, and skin diseases are common. It is necessary to boil and filter drinking water, and wise to avoid eating raw vegetables and unpeeled fruits. The incidence of mosquito-borne diseases is high.

Cholera and yellow fever vaccinations are required of arrivals from affected areas. Immunization against tetanus, typhoid, and poliomyelitis is recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport, along with an onward or return ticket and sufficient funds, is required for entry. A no-cost visit visa valid for 30 days is issued upon arrival. If a traveler stays in a resort or hotel, the Department of Immigration and Emigration routinely approves requests for extensions of stays up to 90 days with evidence of sufficient funds. Anyone staying over 60 days without proper authorization faces heavy fines and deportation. All travelers (except diplomats and certain exempted travelers) departing the Republic of the Maldives must pay an airport departure tax.

Arrival by Private Boat: Travelers arriving by private yacht or boat are granted no-cost visas, usually valid until the expected date of departure. Vessels anchoring in atolls other than Male must have prior clearance from the Ministry of Defense and National Security. The clearances can be obtained through local shipping agents in Male. Maldivian customs, police and/or representatives of Maldivian Immigration will meet all vessels, regardless of where they anchor. Vessels arriving with a dog on board will be permitted anchorage, but the dog will not be allowed off the vessel. Any firearms or ammunition on board will be held for bond until the vessel's departure.

Specific inquiries should be addressed to the Maldives High Commission in Sri Lanka at No. 23, Kaviratne Place, Colombo 6, telephone (94) (1) 586-762/500-943, or the Maldives Mission to the U.N. in New York, telephone (212) 599-6195.

Maldivian customs authorities prohibit the importation of non-Islamic religious materials, including religious statues. Personal Bibles are permitted. The importation of pork and pork by-products is restricted. Dogs are not permitted, but visitors may bring their cats. (Many hotels and resorts do not allow pets; travelers should confirm a particular hotel's policy prior to arrival.) Items such as alcohol and religious items will be kept and held for bond until the traveler departs. Pornographic materials are banned, and they will be destroyed upon arrival in the country. A complete summary of custom regulations is available at <http://www.customs.gov.mv/>

There is no U.S. Embassy in Republic of Maldives, but the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka is also accredited to the Maldives. The former U.S. Consular Agency in Male closed on August 9, 1995. Americans living in or visiting the Maldives are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Sri Lanka and to obtain updated information on travel and security within the Republic of Maldives. The U.S. Embassy is located at 210 Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka. The Embassy's telephone number during normal business hours Monday through Friday is (94) (1) 448-007. The Embassy's after-hours and emergency telephone number is (94)(1) 448-601. The Consular Section fax number is (94)(1) 436-943. The Internet address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/srilanka>. The e-mail address for the Consular Section is consularcolombo@state.gov.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit used in the Maldives is the *rufiyaa*, which is equal to 100 *laaris*.

The Maldives operates on both the metric and imperial systems of weights and measures.

The time in the Maldives is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus five hours.

Special Circumstances

Public observance of any religion other than Islam is prohibited. All Maldivian citizens living in the Republic of Maldives are Moslem, and places of worship for adherents of other religions do not exist. Religious gatherings such as Bible study groups are prohibited; however, a family unit of foreigners may practice its religion, including Bible readings, privately within its residence. It is against the law to invite or encourage Maldivian citizens to attend these gatherings. Offenders may face jail sentences, expulsion and/or fines.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 7 National Day
- July 26 & 27 Independence Day
- Aug. 12 Huravee Day
- Nov. 3 Victory Day
- Nov. 11 & 12 Republic Day
- Dec. 10 Fisheries Day
- Ramadan
- Id al-Fitr*
- Id al-Adha*
- Hijra New Year*
- Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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Gray, A., ed. *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*. New York: B. Franklin, 1964.

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MARSHALL ISLANDS

Republic of the Marshall Islands

Major City:

Majuro

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Marshall Islands. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Comprising over a thousand flat coral islands of white sand beaches and turquoise lagoons, the Marshall Islands beckon visitors with all the promise of a tropical paradise. There are pristine diving and lush tropical greenery, and the Marshallese people retain many of their pre-colonial crafts and traditions, especially on the outer islands. You can still watch outrigger canoes zipping around the lagoons, though these days you are as likely as not to find a VCR in that little grass shack and Coke replacing coconut milk as the drink of choice of many islanders.

Marshallese society has always been stratified, and despite increasing Westernization and the intro-

duction of a moneyed economy, social status still comes as much from one's kinship as it does from one's own achievements. Chiefs continue to wield a great deal of authority over land ownership and usage.

In travels between the islands, early inhabitants learned to read the patterns of the waves and the positions of the stars, and they made stick charts to record and pass on their observations to less-experienced navigators. By tying flat strips of wood together in imitation of the wave patterns and attaching cowry shells to the sticks to represent particular islands and atolls, the experienced navigator could memorize the patterns for when he was out at sea the charts were not actually taken on the journeys.

The first Micronesian navigators arrived in the Marshall Islands sometime between 500 and 2000 B.C.E. Little is known of their origin or culture.

In 1494 Micronesia was ceded to Spain. The Marshall Islands, however, were off the main trade routes and consequently received little attention from early European explorers. In 1525, Alonso de Salazar of Spain became the first European to sight the islands, but Spain did nothing to colonize them. After another 200 years devoid of

Europeans, the islands received a visit from English captain John Marshall (from whom they later took their name) in 1788.

Traders and whalers began to visit the islands en masse in the early 1800s, until encounters with the "friendly" native Marshallese began to turn sour. Ship after ship putting into port at various atolls in the Marshalls quickly weighed anchor after the death of their captain or crew members.

Germany annexed the Marshalls in 1885 but did not place government officials on the islands until 1906, leaving island affairs to a group of powerful German trading companies. Japan took over in 1914 and colonized the Marshalls extensively.

In 1973 the Marshall Islands withdrew from the Congress of Micronesia, seeking political independence. In 1979, the Marshalls' constitution became effective.

The flip side to the paradise picture is that many of the Marshallese still struggle with the effects of 20th century's technology. Two atolls—the Bikini Atoll in particular—served as testing sites for atomic bombs through 1958. And yet, despite these hardships, you will find the Marshallese exceptionally welcom-

ing and their culture and identity alive and well.

MAJOR CITY

Majuro

Majuro is the political and economic center of the Marshall Islands. The inhabited islands along the southern side of Majuro Atoll have been joined over time by landfill and a bridge to form a 30-mile road from Rita, on the extreme eastern end, to Laura, at the western end. Both villages were so code-named by U.S. forces in World War II after favorite pinups Rita Hayworth and Lauren Bacall.

The main downtown business and shopping area is located in Rita and extends 4 miles to the southeast corner of the atoll, home of a second shopping center, the Capitol building, and government offices. The downtown area includes the islands of Djarrit, Uliga, and Delap (DUD). Newcomers cannot identify where one area ends and another begins, but it is not necessary for finding one's way. A single paved main street parallels the lagoon, and a smaller unimproved road follows the oceanside as far as the government office area. Schools, offices, shops, restaurants, hotels, and the hospital are along the street. No longer a village, Majuro is a small town - compact, offering far more Western amenities than one might expect in the middle of the Pacific, a place where people know one another and you cannot get lost.

The DUD area contains approximately 12,000 to 15,000 people living in mostly crowded housing, many without water and sewer facilities. Since land is in short supply and controlled by each clan, graves of family members occupy a central place in front of many dwellings.

Marshallese homes typically have no furniture, only pandanus sleeping mats, which are rolled out at

night. Cooking facilities, kerosene cookers, or pit fires are often outside and may be shared by more than one family. The lagoon and ocean have traditionally been used as toilet facilities. Such use continues, despite the population increase, and causes health problems at the Rita end of the lagoon.

The population density lessens as you drive westward, and the environment becomes more suburban. The housing standard improves; green grass, coconut, and breadfruit trees are abundant. The area has a few neighborhood shops, selling individual cigarettes, some canned foods, soft drinks, and snack food.

Utilities

Electrical current is 110 v, 60 cycles. The power is stable, although fluctuations are frequent and surge protectors are a good idea for any sensitive electronic equipment. Announced outages of a few hours each are necessary at times to complete system maintenance.

Food

Majuro retail stores offer a surprising variety of consumer goods despite the country's remote location. The two largest grocery stores in Majuro are Robert Reimers Enterprises and Gibson's. Both stock a large variety of American grocery products, including packaged and canned goods, frozen meats, vegetables, ice cream, bread, fresh vegetables, and a good supply of dairy products. These two stores have a good selection of household items as well as clothing, sewing notions, cards, toys, nonprescription drugstore items, and office supplies. A limited supply of baby food and formula is available, as are disposable diapers.

Most goods are imported from California, New Zealand and Australia. Food products look a little different, for example, the cuts of meat available are not what we are accustomed to but most people agree that you can find almost anything you need. You have to plan ahead and buy when you see something that you think you may want to use in

the future and freeze it if it's perishable. Depending on the item, most food is priced higher than in the U.S. Fresh vegetables are very expensive and not always of good quality.

Imported rice is a staple in the Marshallese diet. Imported chicken is the major meat; some fish is available, but most local families who catch fish only take enough to feed their own families. Until recently the only locally grown fruits and vegetables were coconut, pandanus, papaya, bananas, and breadfruit. Recently the Taiwan government started a farm in Laura, which has produced wonderful vegetables such as tomatoes, corn, and peppers, which can be purchased in the local grocery stores.

Clothing

Majuro's tropical climate is best appreciated while wearing cotton. Synthetics may be comfortable in air-conditioning, but outside the office, they are uncomfortable in the heat and humidity.

Local stores offer few cotton garments and little of U.S. style and quality, except for a vast array of Majuro T-shirts, which are popular with local and visitors alike.

Men: The local dress code is basic. Around town, men wear T-shirts or Hawaiian aloha shirts (open-neck sport shirts usually worn untucked), long pants (shorts are acceptable in certain situations) and sandals, athletic shoes or, occasionally, conventional shoes.

Women: Local women wear long muumuus with short sleeves and rubber sandals. Few women wear American-style clothes; pants and shorts are not usually worn. Women's thighs and shoulders should be covered. Marshallese women swim in their muumuus, which are made of silky polyester that dries quickly.

Most women wear skirts and blouses or dresses. Either is also suitable for evening wear. Because of the climate, stockings are not worn and sandals, casual and

dressy, are the norm. Fancy or revealing cocktail dresses are out of place in Majuro. Long skirts and dresses are fine for evening wear.

Foreign women normally wear clothing similar to what they wear at home during hot weather, with the exception that women do not wear shorts, except those at least knee length, in public. Foreign women may wear pants to go to town or to an evening function. Women may wear a bathing suit into the water, but should wear a skirt or a wrap around their lower torso while on the beach.

Children: Several of the private schools in Majuro require uniforms, which are locally made and available at a modest cost. Otherwise, children wear T-shirts, shorts, rubber sandals (known as “zorries”), and bathing suits. Athletic shoes are occasionally worn and are best ordered from the U.S. Boys wear long pants to church and girls wear dresses. Dress clothes are not needed. Climbing coconut trees, playing on coral sand and rocks, swimming, clothed Marshallese style, and banana and coconut stains take their toll on children's clothes.

Supplies and Services

Majuro has two hardware stores, Ace and True Value, which have lately been well supplied with basic items. Fishing tackles and rods are expensive; fishermen should bring their own and buy lures here. Most items will be more expensive, so if you anticipate needing something and have the room to ship it, then do so; you will save money in the long run. The NAPA auto parts store has an uneven inventory but may have what you need or will order it. Tires may be ordered and shipped in.

A few basic services are available in Majuro. There are a few beauty shops providing haircuts and simple styling. Repair services for appliances and electronics are limited. There is one drycleaner. Majuro has only a few reputable car repair shops, so be sure to ask for recommendations when you arrive as to

where the best service can be obtained.

Religious Activities

The first Christian missionaries arrived in the Marshall Islands in 1857, and Christian religions continue to play an important part in Marshallese life. Churches provide a particularly important social setting, with gatherings throughout the week. A single village may have competing churches that create tension within the community over membership and status. The Bible, translated into Marshallese, is used as a reading textbook, and many children have Old Testament names.

Many religious denominations still support missionaries in Majuro, Ebeye, and the outer islands. Several small, private religious elementary and high schools exist throughout the Marshall Islands. Denominations represented include Unified Church of Christ (Protestant), Roman Catholic, Assembly of God, Seventh-Day Adventist, Independent Baptist, Mormon, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'i, and the Salvation Army program. The Unified Church of Christ and the Assembly of God churches have a theological college in Majuro.

In Majuro, Assumption Roman Catholic Church and the Assembly of God Church offer weekly services in English. Other services are in Marshallese, although most of the missionaries in every denomination are English speaking.

Education

The two private schools in Majuro most used by foreigners are the Majuro Cooperative School and Assumption Catholic School. Both schools use American textbooks and follow an American curriculum. Home schooling is always an option and is used by many Americans living in Majuro.

Recreation and Social Life

Recreation in Majuro is almost entirely of an aquatic nature. Fishing is popular with Marshallese and foreigners alike. Small boat reef

fishing, throw netting, and surf casting are popular. Larger outboard boats are available for deep-sea fishing for marlin, tuna, and other gamefish that abound in the Marshall Islands. Although no commercial charter boats are available, you can arrange for private charter or to be included in a day's fishing trip on a small boat.

The warm, clear waters are home to vast communities of fish, coral formations, and abundant tropical marine life, all easily accessible to snorkelers and divers. Sailing, windsurfing, swimming, boogie boarding, occasionally surfing, and picnicking at the beach are popular activities. The local dive shops fill air tanks, rent equipment, and offer scuba lessons, and have a small inventory of diving gear for sale.

Majuro has one large indoor athletic facility, which is used for sporting events and large assemblies. There are many outdoor basketball courts, two public tennis courts, a baseball field, and one bowling alley. Foreigners enjoy walking, bike riding, and jogging, but because of the narrow roads this can be dangerous. Rust is a problem with bicycles, and you should bring locks and patch kits for making repairs.

Evening entertainment in Majuro is limited. There are several good restaurants to go for dinner, several bars that offer live music are open at night, and there is one movie theater with three screens.

Marshallese live simply and entertain rarely, except for singular events, the most common being a “kemem,” or child's first birthday celebration. These are socially important events to which large numbers of people are invited. Food preparation for a kemem takes several days. Marshallese women usually do not accompany their husbands to events, public or private, but that situation is changing slowly. It is awkward for a Marshallese to decline an invitation, so you never can be sure if an invited guest will attend. An RSVP is not usually understood.

Most of the foreign social activity consists of friends meeting at homes or at a restaurant. Many foreigners live in modest housing and have limited ability to entertain the way they are accustomed. The tiny diplomatic community, the retiring nature of the Marshallese, the small number of foreigners, and the lack of social events, public or private, are all factors that at times emphasize the sense of isolation in Majuro. Be creative, entertain yourself, and be willing to meet others.

Bring mail-order sources for all your hobbies, reading, and audio needs.

Majuro is a casual town, where people know one another and first names are used immediately. Marshallese custom places no importance on punctuality. The concepts of planning and preparation are unfamiliar.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Marshall Islands are located in the eastern part of the geographic region known as Micronesia, or "Little Islands," a myriad of more than 2,100 coral atolls and volcanic islands scattered across 3 million square miles of the western Pacific Ocean.

The Marshall Islands lie between latitude 4-14°N. and longitude 160-173°E. The 29 coral atolls and 5 single islands of the Marshall Islands form two parallel groups extending northwest and southeast—the Ratak ("Sunrise") Chain and Ralik ("Sunset") chain. Total land area of all of the Marshall Islands is 70 square miles. Marine resources are abundant, but poor soil provides little opportunity for agriculture, except for the harvesting and drying of coconut meat into copra, the only revenue opportunity for outer islanders.

Each atoll is a cluster of small, low-lying islands, none more than a few meters above sea level, circling a lagoon. The development of a coral atoll begins with coral growth around the edge of a high, often volcanic mountain. Growth continues as the mountain slowly sinks beneath the sea, leaving behind a circular reef that grows into small islands, islets, and open reef surrounding a lagoon.

Most atolls have free-flowing water across most of the reef, with one or two openings for boats to enter the lagoon. The islands of most atolls are not contiguous, with stretches of open reef extending for miles between islands. As the distances between islands in an atoll can be many miles, travel from island to island within an atoll can be difficult.

The capital of the Marshall Islands is Majuro, which lies 2,300 miles southwest of Honolulu and nearly 2,000 miles southeast of Guam. Majuro lies west of the international dateline, making it 17 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

Linking the islands of the southern side of Majuro Atoll runs the longest paved road in Micronesia, the islands having been artificially joined over the years by a 32-mile continuous road.

The climate of the Marshall Islands is tropical, with high humidity, and an average year-round temperature of 81 °F. Trade winds pick up in October or November and blow strongly from January through April, with winds varying from 12 to 22 knots. The trades, often bringing overcast skies, have a cooling effect, although the lagoon can become rough, compared to the placid days of glassy water, so frequent in summer.

Typhoon (tropical hurricane) season is from December through March. Tropical depressions form in the Marshall Islands and increase to typhoon strength as they move further west with the prevailing trade winds, making the Marshall Islands

less susceptible to a full strength typhoon than most islands in the Pacific.

In Majuro, January, February, and March are traditionally the driest months, with rainfall averaging 6-8 inches a month. September through December are the wettest months, with 12-14 inches of average monthly rainfall. The temperature remains stable year-round, averaging 84°F in the day and 76°F at night.

The Marshall Islands enjoy clean air, clear ocean water, sunshine, and adequate amounts of rainfall, with the exception of the heavily populated areas of Majuro and Ebeye, where city living has taken its toll on the environment. Water shortages occur at any time when rainfall has been below normal, but in Majuro, shortages will occur most toward the end of the dry season in March. The use of water catchment devices is being promoted throughout the Marshall Islands. The outer islands rely more on a subsistence economy, occasionally experiencing food shortages due to seasonal variations.

Population

An ethnically homogeneous population of Marshallese populates the Marshall Islands, whose origins, as determined through research of the language, appear to be in the Malayo-Indonesian area. The population shares a single language and culture, with some dialect and sub-cultural differences between the two island chains.

The total population of the Marshall Islands as of the 1999 census was 50,840 people. That was an increase of 7,460 people since the 1988 census. Majuro and Ebeye are the two urban population centers. Over 50% of Marshallese live on Majuro Atoll. Out of the total population, 19% live in the island of Ebeye in Kwajalein Atoll and 3% on the outer islands of Kwajalein Atoll. With just 0.14 square miles, Ebeye Island is the most densely populated area in the Marshall Islands, with an equiva-

lent population density of 66,750 persons per square mile. The city of Majuro and Ebeye offer amenities, such as electricity, modern Western lifestyles, and employment opportunities (albeit limited) that continually draw younger Marshallese from the outer islands. On the outer atolls the lifestyle is mostly unchanged and untouched by modern development. Fewer than 3% of the population are foreigners. Countries other than the U.S. are beginning to send diplomatic representatives to the Marshall Islands. Taiwan and Japan have embassies in Majuro. The Marshall Islands is a young population, where 43% of the population is under 15 years of age and 15% is under 5. The working age group of 15 to 65 years old is 55% of the population.

The population has doubled in the last 26 years. With limited land and economic opportunities, controlling population growth has become a major goal of government authorities.

The urban areas of the Marshall Islands, where lifestyles move away from the traditional culture, are experiencing increasingly severe problems with youth suicide, alcoholism, sexually transmitted diseases, juvenile delinquency, and disregard of parental influence.

The social structure in the Marshall Islands is based on membership in a "bwij," a system of extended families or small clans. All members of the bwij work together for the common good, sharing food, housing, property, and resources. The leader of a bwij is the "alap," who acts as manager. Each bwij forms part of a larger group, led by an "iroij," or chief. It is traditionally the chief's responsibility to allocate resources among all his people and to resolve disputes.

Land is a scarce resource in the Marshall Islands and forms an important base for the establishment of social structure. Marshallese own all land; none may be sold to foreigners, although it may be

leased to foreigners if all those holding an interest in the land agree. Ownership of land defines social status and family identity. Land rights are inherited through membership in a bwij, which is determined through the female line. Inheritance of titles is also matrilineal.

The traditional Marshallese method of dividing property, crops or catch, and income is one-third for the iroij, one-third for the alap, and one-third for the "dri jermal," or common people who make up the bwij. This customary method of allocation is now creating social, economic, and legal difficulties within Marshallese society, as the country becomes increasingly westernized and moves from a subsistence economy to a money economy.

Major disputes arise over iroij titles as they command not only great prestige, but, with the advent of U.S. aid and lease payments, great wealth as well.

The Marshallese have a relaxed and casual attitude to life and informal dress is normal. Marshallese have strong family relationships, and thus, family needs and desires take precedence over non-family matters. Most Marshallese can expect family or extended family support at any time. This social network allows relatives from the outer islands, whether invited or not, to join family members in Ebeye or Majuro, and be assured of a home and food, even if the newcomer does not plan to work or make a contribution to the host family. Many young people prefer the U.S.-influenced lifestyles of Majuro and Ebeye to the remote and quiet living of an outer island. As the population density of both centers increases, there are no indications that this trend will change in the future. There are no statistics to document how many Marshallese are actually living in the U.S. but many do and more leave for the U.S. every day. Because of the relationship between the U.S. and the RMI, Marshallese are allowed to live and work in the U.S. at will.

Public Institutions

The Marshall Islands were claimed by Spain in 1592, but were left undisturbed by the Spanish Empire for 300 years. In 1885, Germany took over the administration of the Marshall Islands and located trading stations on the islands of Jaluit and Ebon to pursue the flourishing copra (dried coconut meat) trade. Marshallese High Chiefs continued to rule under indirect colonial German administration.

At the beginning of World War I, Japan assumed control of the Marshall Islands, first under civil and later naval administration. Their headquarters remained on Jaluit.

In early 1944, U.S. Marines and Army troops with naval air support took control from the Japanese following intense fighting on Kwajalein and Enewetak Atolls. In 1947, the U.S. as the occupying power entered into an agreement with the U.N. Security Council to administer the Micronesia area as the "Strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands." The area included what is now the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. During the lengthy negotiations leading to the present political entities, the various peoples voted to pursue their separate courses rather than join as one country.

On May 1, 1979, the U.S. extended recognition both to the Constitution of the Marshall Islands, a document that incorporates both American and British constitutional concepts, and to the establishment of the Government of the Marshall Islands.

After 13 years of negotiation, on June 25, 1983, the Government of the Marshall Islands and the Government of the U.S. signed the Compact of Free Association. The people of the Marshall Islands approved the compact in a U.S. observed plebiscite on September 7, 1983. The U.S. Congress subsequently reviewed the compact and included

several amendments that were accepted by the Government of the Marshall Islands. President Reagan signed the compact into law on January 14, 1986. The compact entered into force in the Marshall Islands on October 21, 1986. The UN voted to terminate the trusteeship with respect to the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia in December 1990.

The status of free association recognized the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a self-governing state with the capacity to conduct foreign affairs consistent with the terms of the compact.

The compact places full responsibility for defense of the Marshall Islands with the U.S. The basic relationship of free association continues indefinitely, while the economic and defense provisions of the compact are subject to renegotiating at the end of 15 years. Congress provides most of the compact funding through the U.S. Department of the Interior.

A major subsidiary agreement of the compact allows the U.S. continued use of the US. Army installation at Kwajalein, an atoll consisting of 90 islets around the largest lagoon in the world. The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) uses the facility on a lease agreement with the Government of the Marshall Islands. DOD controls 11 islands within Kwajalein Atoll.

Another major agreement of the compact provides for settlement of all claims arising out of the nuclear testing programs that the U.S. conducted at Bikini and Enewetak Atolls from 1946 to 1958.

The legislative branch of the government is made up of the Nitijela (Parliament) with an advisory Council of Iroij (high chiefs). The Nitijela has 33 members from 25 districts that are elected for concurrent 4-year terms. Members of the Nitijela hold the title of Senator.

The executive branch is under the leadership of the President, who is

elected by the Nitijela from among its membership. The President selects the other 10 members of his cabinet from the Nitijela. The first president of the republic was elected in 1979.

The Marshall Islands has four court systems: the Supreme Court, High Court, District and Community Courts, and the Traditional Rights Court. Most trial cases are heard before a judge. Jury trial is used only in unusual circumstances because of the difficulty in finding unbiased jurors within such a small population. Jurisdiction of the Traditional Rights Court is limited to cases involving titles, land rights, or other disputes arising from customary law and traditional practices. The Council of Iroij, representing traditional authority, advises the Cabinet on matters concerning customary law.

Arts, Science, and Education

The Marshall Islands has 77 public elementary schools and three public secondary schools. There are 26 private elementary schools and 13 private secondary schools. Forty-eight Head Start centers throughout the country provide preschool training. Head Start is available to 35% of the 3- to 5-year-olds in the Marshall Islands. In 1999, 84% of elementary school age children and 69% of the secondary school age children attended classes.

Test scores reveal that the education system needs to be improved. Though there is a 19 to 1 ratio of students to teachers, the quality of education is of great concern. Nearly half of the teachers in the Marshall Islands have only a secondary school diploma as their highest qualification. Scores on the entrance tests to the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI) in February 2000 required 73% of those applying to take remedial training of up to 2 years before being allowed to enroll in traditional college credit courses. CMI provides 2-year degree programs in liberal arts and sciences,

teacher education, nursing and allied health, business and computer science, and vocational and occupational education and training. Remedial programs are available to prepare students to enter CMI's degree programs, and it has an adult education program to provide an opportunity for obtaining a high school diploma. CMI is in partnership in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which is U.S. federally funded. The University of the South Pacific (USP) provides post-secondary education through extension programs in Majuro. Students are able to complete full majors and degrees without having to attend classes on USP campuses. USP provides training in conjunction with a U.S. federally funded Head Start Program for pre-school certificate and a diploma in early childhood education and community nutrition.

The Marshall Islands women are respected throughout Micronesia for the quality of the woven handicrafts they produce from coconut and pandanus fibers. Intricate and delicate baskets are decorated with many small shells; fans, mats, belts, handbags, and hats are woven to be decorative as well as practical. Most of the weaving is done by women on the outer islands who ship their goods to Majuro for sale at local handicraft stores. Men carve and assemble small replicas of the wooden sailing canoes that were once the only means of travel in the Marshall Islands. They also make modern stick charts, illustrating the principles of wave shape and change, which were used by Marshallese navigators to travel throughout the island chains.

The Marshallese have an oral tradition of song and legend, which is closely held and not shared with foreigners. With the increasing move toward a Western society, many fear that much of this tradition will soon be lost.

The Alele Museum is a private, non-profit corporation that operates a small museum with photos and objects of traditional Marshallese

culture and history It has an extensive microfilm inventory of documents relating to the history of the Marshall Islands and the Trust Territories. It actively encourages preservation and documentation of the Marshallese cultural heritage.

A Marshallese festive occasion always includes a song or two, sung by men and women in harmony, sometimes a cappella sometimes with a ukulele. As individuals, the Marshallese people are quiet and somewhat reticent, but they will spontaneously form a group and give an enthusiastic vocal performance at almost any event.

The "jepta" dancing performed by groups of youth and adults at their respective churches highlights the Christmas celebration. A month of late-night practices culminates in Christmas night dancing, each group in their own costume, performing variations of traditional dances.

Commerce and Industry

The government is the largest employer in the country, employing about one quarter of the workforce. The gross domestic product is derived mainly from U.S.-funded expenditures. Direct U.S. aid under the Compact of Free Association accounted for two-thirds of the Marshall Islands' 2000 budget of US \$100 million.

Per capita gross domestic product during 1999 was about US \$1,500, a figure that to understand the standard of living. The economy is a mixture of a small subsistence sector and a modern urban sector. The modern sector is largely a service-oriented economy located in Majuro and Ebeye, sustained by expenditure of the Marshall Islands Government and the U.S. Army installation at Kwajalein Atoll (USAKA). Wages, salaries, and other benefits to employees from these two sectors accounted for more than half of the gross domestic product in 1999.

The modern private sector consists of wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, banking and insurance, construction and repair services, professional services, and a small amount of copra processing. Despite its small size, however, copra cake and copra oil are by far the largest exports, standing at US \$1 million in 1999. The Marshall Islands have 22,000 acres of coconut plantations, and copra production has been the most important single commercial economic activity for the past hundred years. Unfortunately, the world market for coconut oil is currently in decline and diminishes the value of the Marshall Islands' largest export commodity.

The minimum wage is US \$2 an hour, which places the Marshall Islands at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis its potential Pacific and East Asian competitors. Skilled workers are few. The U.S. dollar is the official currency.

Outer islanders in an otherwise subsistence economy make copra and weave handicrafts as their sole source of income. These limited revenues fund what few items they can afford, such as soap, lantern fuel, and clothing. Most imports are consumed on Majuro and Ebeye.

Agriculture, marine resources, and tourism are top government development priorities. The Marshall Islands has no large-scale fishing operations. Sale of fishing rights to the Japanese, Taiwanese, and Koreans is a source of income, and the Marshall Islands is the recipient of aid, particularly from Japan to ensure the continuation of these rights. The U.S. and Japan are the Marshall Islands' major trading partners; retail trade with Australia and New Zealand is increasing. The Marshall Islands receives additional aid from the government of Australia.

Transportation

Automobiles

Majuro enjoys the longest paved road system in all of Micronesia:

from Rita, at the eastern end of Majuro Atoll, to Laura, the village on the far western end, a distance of about 30 miles. The island is so narrow that when driving the length of the island there are very few places where you are unable to see the lagoon and ocean at the same time. There are no street names and no addresses. As is typical in small towns all over the world, locations are identified by their occupant, their former occupant, or the nearest landmark. There are very few traffic signs, and there are no stoplights. Local police are working hard to enforce good driving habits but almost anyone who pays the fee required can acquire a drivers license. Drivers must be extra cautious as children and animals dart into the street day and night. There are no sidewalks, so the narrow roads are shared with pedestrians, and one must be alert as people and cars seem to come out of nowhere. Because there are so many vehicles, traffic is becoming a problem especially in the mornings, at noon, and at 5 o'clock. The speed limit in most areas is 25mph, but at times it's impossible to maintain even that rate of speed. Gasoline costs about twice as much as in the U.S.

Taxis are the main means of transportation for the Marshallese people. A person can ride in one direction anywhere from the end of Rita to the bridge (approximately 7 miles) for 50 cents. If a person were to travel from Rita to Long Island (at the other side of the bridge) the charge would be \$1.50. It becomes more costly to travel from town to the airport and beyond.

Taxis are not always convenient, especially on Long Island. At night it is very difficult and possibly dangerous to get a taxi into town from Long Island. What makes it dangerous is that there are few streetlights and people waiting on the side of the road to hail a taxi are not clearly visible. Drunk drivers are more likely to be driving at night so standing by the side of the narrow roads after dark is not a good idea. When using the taxi service you must share the car with as many

people as the driver chooses to pick up. That means that there are many stops made from when one gets in, to the final destination.

The convenience of having a personal car is immeasurable. Buying a new car locally is a possibility; buying a used car in Majuro, as in the U.S., can be a gamble.

It is a requirement of the Marshall Islands that vehicles be licensed. The weight of the vehicle determines the charge, but for the average car, the fee is \$35. Law requires that vehicles be inspected yearly. Inspection stickers are issued when the car is licensed, although this law is not strictly enforced. The licensing fee includes the fee for the inspection sticker. Liability insurance is required and must be obtained before the vehicle is licensed. The cost for minimum coverage locally is less than US \$200. Persons planning to drive in Majuro should have a current Marshall Islands driver's license. This driver's license will be issued for \$20. No test is required but you will probably be asked to present your U.S. driver's license when applying.

Local

Those who don't have their own vehicles move about town using the local taxi service. Individuals can license cars or vans of all descriptions as taxis. Taxis cruise the road picking up passengers who hail them from the roadside. Riders are picked up until the car is full and then dropped at their various destinations. The fare schedule is simple, with downtown transfers costing 50 cents and longer rides costing \$1.50. Students and children pay only 25 cents, but, as a result, may be ignored as they wait for a ride. The ride may be hot and the car rickety and you may have to wait for a taxi to drive by, but the operators are honest, and the service proves to be convenient.

To find a nice public sandy beach where you can spend the day swimming and snorkeling, you must drive to Laura. The road is paved

and the drive is a pleasant one. It can take as much as an hour to drive the approximately 20 miles, but there is much to see along the way, as the scenery is beautiful. Laura is a small village, different from downtown Majuro, with more land and fewer inhabitants.

Chartered boat trips can be arranged and are a wonderful way to get away from the city. Just a few islands up the reef from Majuro you will find islands that are almost completely uninhabited. Perfectly clear warm water and beautiful sandy beaches are there to explore. Most island inhabitants welcome guests but you must ask first.

Travel to the other atolls in the Marshall Islands is by boat or plane. Air Marshall Islands (AMI) provides service to the 26 grass airstrips located on various other atolls. Travel within an atoll is by small, outboard boats, as the islands on an atoll are connected only by long sections of open reef. Arno, 12 miles away and the atoll closest to Majuro, is the only outer island accessible from Majuro by small boat in a single day. Because of the travel impediments and lack of any guest facilities, the most frequent foreign visitors to the outer islands are those on occasional sailboats passing through on cruises of the Pacific.

Regional

Both Majuro and Kwajalein Atolls have airports that accommodate large jet aircraft. Continental Micronesia provides jet service between Honolulu and Guam, via Majuro and Kwajalein. Aloha Airlines provides service between Honolulu and Kwajalein via Majuro.

Majuro has excellent shipping links to the West Coast of the U.S., Hawaii, Australia, Japan, the South Pacific, and to other parts of Micronesia. Regular shipping service is provided by PM&O Lines, Matson Navigation Company, NYK, and Forum Lines. Tiger Lines and Saipan Shipping provide transship-

ment facilities out of Guam and Saipan. The ports in Majuro and Ebeye provide containerized cargo handling, warehousing, and transshipment operations.

Communications

The Marshall Islands National Telecommunications Authority (NTA) provides telecommunications services for the Marshall Islands. NTA provides access to domestic and international telephone service, local cellular telephone service, and Internet services. Residential, one party line charge is \$12 per month with a one time \$35 connection fee. As in the U.S. you can subscribe to enhanced services such as Caller ID, Call Waiting, etc. Charges for these enhanced services are nominal.

Mobile cellular telephone service is \$25 a month with a one-time \$35 service connection. Users may avail of 60 free minutes of airtime allowed per month (not including long distance time) and \$0.10 per minute airtime charge after the first 60 minutes. Cellular phones are usually available for purchase on the island.

Internet service is costly compared to the U.S. NTA charges \$40 a month plus \$3 an hour of use. There is an initial \$15 installation fee.

Mail

The Marshall Islands is a U.S. domestic mail zone and receives international mail service through the U.S. Postal Service. Because of the close ties with the U.S. system Majuro has been assigned a two-digit state abbreviation which is MH. The ZIP Code for Majuro is 96960.

U.S. domestic rates apply to and from the U.S. Although the Marshall Islands issues its own stamps, the postal system in Majuro has accepted U.S. postage stamps on single pieces mailed to the U.S.

First-class letter mail arrives by air 610 days from the East Coast. Pack-

ages sent Priority Mail also arrive about the same time, or slightly longer. Non first class mail, including parcel post and magazines sent second class, arrive by ship within 2-4 months.

In Majuro mail is delivered only to a post office box. Outer island mail requires a first class stamp; parcels are charged as freight and delivered by local plane or ship.

Radio and TV

The Marshall Islands has two radio stations. V7AB, AM 1098, is run by the Ministry of Interior and Outer Islands Affairs, broadcasting news, announcements, the Nitijela meetings when the Nitijela is in session, and popular and Marshallese music. Some news and announcements are in both Marshallese and English. WSZF, FM 104, is run by the Baptist Church and broadcasts religious music and programs. Real time news can be heard on the hour on FM 104 from the BBC; however, the reception for the BBC is poor.

Cable TV is available in Majuro through Marshalls Broadcasting Company. Initial installation is \$30 with a monthly charge of \$29.99 for one TV and \$10 a month extra for each additional TV that is hooked up. For an additional \$10 a month a Philippine station can be accessed. There are about 11 stations in all. Real time news can be received on CNN, CNBC and BBC. At this time almost everything seen here is shown approximately two weeks after its U.S. showing. A TV schedule is not published but many shows are broadcast with some regularity so one is able to predict when some shows will be aired. Movies are shown both day and night and most are suitable for all audiences. There are many video stores on the island and the selections available are quite good.

Newspaper, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The Marshall Islands Journal is an independently published weekly newspaper and is the only printed source of local news. It is issued

every Thursday at a cost of 50 cents and provides coverage of local events in both Marshallese and English.

A few magazines and paperback books are available at local stores but the selection is poor, usually out of date, and the price is high.

The Majuro public library located in the Alele Museum building is small and limited. The College of the Marshall Islands makes its library available to anyone who would want to use it.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical care in Majuro is not up to U.S. standards. The Majuro Hospital is staffed with doctors from many countries around the Pacific. There are no American doctors at this time at the Majuro Hospital. There is one private clinic operated by a doctor from the Philippines. The 177 Clinic is the medical facility serving those affected by the nuclear testing. At present, there is a doctor from the U.S. manning this facility. Although the 177 Clinic is there to serve this exclusive group of people, if scheduling permits you may be able to request an appointment with this doctor. The Youth to Youth in Health has a clinic in Majuro catering to the young community.

Obtaining medicine is often a problem. Many times the hospital is not able to stock an adequate supply, so they are frequently out of some of the most basic medicines. You cannot depend on being able to have a prescription filled here so bring regularly needed medications with you or make arrangements to have them sent from the U.S.

Routine laboratory work is available. More complicated tests are sent to Honolulu for evaluation.

Dental care is available for simple dental work, checkups, cleaning,

and x-ray but again, not up to U.S. standards. Majuro has no facilities for optical care. Bring spare eyeglasses, and sunglasses. Selections of contact lens solutions are limited.

Try to bring with you any medicine or medical supplies you anticipate needing on a regular basis. Simple things like bandages and antibiotic cream, aspirin, Motrin, Tylenol and cold medicines are usually obtainable from the two largest stores on the island. You cannot always count on finding your favorite brands so it would be a good idea to bring a small supply of your favorites to use until you find out if they are available here.

Community Health

Ebeye Island in Kwajalein Atoll, the second-largest population center in the Marshall Islands, has an expanding health center for its large population. All other outer island communities are served by 64 health centers staffed with modestly trained health assistants who utilize small dispensaries and are connected by marine high frequency radio to the main center in Majuro. Boats or planes evacuate medical emergencies from the outer islands to Majuro. In Majuro there is also a church based health clinic in Laura, a non-government operated clinic run by the Baptist Church and one run by Mission Pacific.

Common infectious and communicable diseases in the Marshall Islands include amoebiasis, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, gastroenteritis, gonorrhoea, influenza, leprosy, scabies, syphilis, and tuberculosis. Water supply, sanitation, personal hygiene and overcrowding are among factors related to the infectious and communicable diseases. Tests for HIV/AIDS in 1997-1999 found no positive cases. However, tests in 1996 detected one positive HIV case. With the increasing level of prostitution and the large number of foreign fishing boats calling at Majuro, the risk of HIV and AIDS being introduced to this area becomes more of a possibility each day.

The most prevalent noncommunicable disease in the Marshall Islands is diabetes, which is now a major health problem. Hypertension and heart disease are also on the increase. Poor eating habits, the consumption of large amounts of alcohol and tobacco, and the lack of exercise contribute heavily to these major health problems.

Preventive Measures

All should follow standard State Department immunization guidelines, including inoculation for Hepatitis A & B.

Sunburn is a problem year round. Everyone is urged to use sunscreen and wear sunglasses and protective clothing. Coral cuts are a common occurrence and no matter how small are slow to heal and susceptible to infection. Wounds should be cleaned, treated with antibiotic cream and kept bandaged until completely healed. Prevent cuts to feet by wearing shoes while in the water and out. Everyone is urged to drink plenty of fluid in order to stay hydrated.

Eating in major restaurants is safe. Be careful when eating at private or public events, because food is commonly not refrigerated properly and could be prepared in less than sanitary conditions. Most meats, fruits and vegetables are imported from the U.S., Australia and New Zealand and are safe. Local vegetables, pork, chicken and fish are also safe. Some reef fish contain toxins, and the varieties that are safe to eat vary from atoll to atoll. If you catch your own fish, check with a local fisherman to see if it is safe to eat. When purchasing products at any store be sure to check the expiration dates on the packages as it is common to find many that are still on the shelf long beyond their shelf life.

The normal tropical rodents and small lizards are present, but not in excess. Cockroaches and ants can become a problem. Flies and a few mosquitoes are a nuisance, but often the trade winds keep them away. The Majuro Water and Sewer

Company, which is government-owned, provides the water and sewer system in Majuro. The public water system relies primarily on a rainwater catchment system, which is located at the airport runway and in the wells in Laura. Public water is normally available three days a week for 14 hours per day. Individual homes must have their own catchment and storage tanks to provide round-the clock water.

A 1999 census reported that 61% of all households in the Marshall Islands used flush toilets and 25% used pit latrines or no toilet facilities at all. A great part of the population continues traditional customs, using the ocean and lagoon reefs for elimination and personal hygiene, contributing significantly to local pollution. Public garbage collection exists but unfortunately, vast amounts of trash are dumped oceanside or lagoonside by residents, creating, among other problems, unsightly pollution in many areas.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Mar. 1 Memorial Day
- May 1 Constitution Day
- July
- (1st Fri) Fishermans' Day*
- Sept. 5 Labor Day
- Sept.
- (last Fri) Mani Day*
- Oct. 21 Independence Day
- Nov. 4 Thanksgiving Day
- Nov. 17 Presidents' Day
- Dec. 25 Christmas

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Majuro is via jet from Honolulu or Guam. Continental Micronesia arrives in Majuro from Honolulu on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. From Majuro the plane goes on to Kwajalein and then Guam with stops in Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Chunk. The plane returns to Honolulu from Guam on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with stops in Kwajalein and Majuro. Aloha Airlines flies from Honolulu to Majuro arriving in Majuro on Friday evenings. Aloha then flies on to Kwajalein and returns through Majuro on Saturday morning back to Honolulu.

Unaccompanied baggage takes about 3-4 weeks by air from the U.S. During peak passenger seasons, lack of freight space on incoming flights can cause delays. Surface shipments arrive in 2-3 months from the East Coast. Shipments are through Los Angeles or Honolulu from points east of the Marshall Islands. West of the Marshall Islands there are also good connections, with vessels coming from Guam, Manila, and Hong Kong.

Visas are not required for U.S. citizens. A valid passport, sufficient funds for a stay, and an onward/return ticket are required for stays up to 30 days (and may be extended for up to 90 days from the date of entry). A departure fee is required. A health certificate is required if arriving from infected areas. An AIDS test may be required for visits over 30 days. (U.S. test are accepted.) For further information on entry requirements for the Marshall Islands, please contact the Embassy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, 2433 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. The telephone number is (202) 234-5414. Also, please see the home page for the Embassy of the Marshall Islands at <http://www.rmiembassyus.org/>.

Americans living in or visiting the Marshall Islands are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Majuro. The U.S. Embassy does not have a street address in Majuro. The Embassy is located on the ocean-side of the island's road, near the Church of the Latter-Day Saints and Gibson's Express, "Long Island." The U.S. Embassy's mailing address is P.O. Box 1379, Majuro, MH 96960-1379. The telephone number is (692) 247-4011. The fax number is (692) 247-4012. The U.S. Embassy home page on the Internet is <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/majuro/>.

Pets

Importation of dogs and cats is allowed. However, there is a quarantine period for a minimum of 120 days. Animals are also required to have a health and rabies certificate, both for transiting Honolulu and to enter the Marshall Islands. Rabies is not present in RMI. Therefore, strict regulations must be followed. If pets are being sent unaccompanied, all airlines are obliged to deliver arriving dogs and cats to the Airport Animal Quarantine Holding Facility until their onward flight to the Marshall Islands. However, if the flight delay is over 24 hours (approximately), the pet(s) will be transported to the Animal Quarantine Branch facility in Aiea, Hawaii, where they will remain until their scheduled flight. (If the animal must be transported to the Aiea facility, there will be charges for this service to include a \$35 registration fee per animal. Additionally, one cannot pay by credit card or cash; a certified check must be sent to the facility prior to any boarding arrangements. If your pets will be detained in Hawaii, it is best to call the Animal Quarantine Branch for details: Tel: (808) 483-7145; Fax: (808) 4837161. The Marshall Islands have no kennels or veterinary services, so one must be prepared for any illnesses that their pet(s) may come down with.

The following requirements must be followed in importing pets into the country: A permit must be obtained

from the Department of Agriculture, Quarantine Section, which costs \$10. The permit is valid for one shipment only. A copy must accompany the shipment and be surrendered to a Quarantine Officer on duty upon arrival of shipment into the RMI. The importation of animals into the RMI requires presentation of an international animal health certificate, attesting that the animal(s): a) were examined within 48 hours of shipment, found to be in good health, and showed no sign of any infectious disease; b) have been effectively vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, and canine Parvovirus at least 1 month and not more than 3 months before shipment; c) have been effectively treated against echinococcosis-hydatidosis, round, hook, and whipworms within 3 days of shipment; d) have been effectively treated against, and found on examination to be visibly free of, Ectoparasites within 3 days of shipment; e) showed no clinical sign of rabies on the day of shipment, and were kept from birth or for 6 months prior to shipment in the exporting country where no case of rabies was officially reported during the 2 years immediately preceding the importation of the animals concerned; f) have been vaccinated with an inactivated rabies virus more than 30 days prior to entry into the RMI; and g) for animals originating from a country where rabies occurs or is reported to occur or where rabies vaccination is routinely practiced, such animals must be confined for a period of not less than 120 days in an approved quarantine facility in a rabies-free area prior to entry to the RMI; or h) should meet the requirements of the State of Hawaii or the Territory of Guam.

Upon arrival in the RMI, imported animals shall immediately be taken under the control of a Quarantine Officer to the quarantine premises previously approved by the Chief of Agriculture where the animals shall remain until they are released by a Quarantine Officer.

Animals imported not in compliance with the permit requirements may be re-exported or destroyed upon arrival.

The quarantine Section of the Department of Agriculture can be contacted through the following: Tel: (692) 625-3206; Fax: (692) 625-3821; E-mail: rndadm@ntamar.com.

Firearms and Ammunition

Importation of firearms is officially prohibited. No opportunities for recreational firearm use exist in the Marshall Islands.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The U.S. dollar is the official currency of the Marshall Islands. Credit cards are accepted at a few establishments. Travelers checks are acceptable, but ask before making purchases. Non-diplomatic passengers pay a US \$20 departure tax at the airport.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

Carucci, Lawrence. *Nuclear Nativity: Rituals of Renewal and Empowerment*. Northern Illinois University, 1997.

Feeney, Thomas J. *Letters from Likiep*. S. J., D.D. Pandick Press: New York, 1952.

Hempensatall, Peter J. *Pacific Islanders Under German Rule*. Australian National University Press, 1978.

Hezel, Francis X. S.J. *The First Taint of Civilization*. University of Hawaii Press: Honolulu, 1983.

Hezel, Francis X. S.J. *Strangers in Their Own Land, Century of Colonial Rule*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1995.

Kluge, RE *The Edge of Paradise. America in Micronesia.* Random House: New York, 1991.

William Lay and Cyrus M. Hussey. *Mutiny on Board the Whaleship Globe.* Corinth Books: New York, 1963.

Micronesia: A Travel Survival Kit. Lonely Planet Publications: California, 1995.

Niedenthal, Jack. *For the Good of Mankind.* Micronitor Publishing 2001.

Oliver, Douglas. *The Pacific Islands.* University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1989.

Trumbull, Robert. *Tin Roofs and Palm Trees.* University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1977.

Weisgall, Jonathan M. *Operations Crossroads,* Naval Institute Press, 1994.

Internet Sites

Marshall Islands Visitors Authority
e-mail: tourism@ntamar.com

RMI Country Homepage:
www.rmiembassyus.org

Bikini Atoll Homepage:
www.bikini-atoll.com

Yokwe-Eok Marshallese Web site:
www.yokwe.com

Alele Museum: www.members.tri-pod.com/alelemuseum

PATA Micronesia:
www.patamicronesia.com

Robert Reimers Ent./Marshalls Dive Adventure: www.rreinc.com

Outrigger Marshall Islands Resort:
www.outrigger.com

Continental Micronesia:
www.flycontinental.com

Destination Micronesia Homepage:
www.destmic.com

Marshall Islands Stamp Center:
www.unicover.com/HPRLRMS.HT

MICRONESIA

Major City:

Kolonia

Other Cities:

Chuuk Atoll, Kosrae

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

After forty years as a United Nations Trust Territory, the Federated States of Micronesia in 1986 emerged as a sovereign nation. The Embassy in Kolonia has the unusual opportunity of shaping this new diplomatic relationship and overseeing US Government activities across a broad expanse of the Pacific. The 607 islands that comprise the Federated States are among the most untouristed, unspoiled sites in the world.

MAJOR CITY

Kolonia

Kolonia, the capital of the state of Pohnpei, is a town of approximately

10,000 which occupies seven square miles at the northern end of Pohnpei Island.

Food

A basic selection of food is available, but high prices and very limited choices. Three fairly large supermarkets are operating in Kolonia along with a few small general stores whose food stocks vary with cargo ship arrival. The selection approximates that of a Seven-Eleven: basic canned goods, cleaning supplies, condiments, and some dairy products, frozen vegetables, and frozen meat and poultry. Locally baked bread is adequate and is supplemented by imported frozen loaves. Steak, hamburger, pork, and chicken are imported from the US, and while of lower quality than found in a normal supermarket, are fully acceptable if the purchaser takes care to inspect it for freezer burn or thawing/refreezing. Fresh tuna and small "reef fish" are for sale in the public market and mangrove crab is frequently offered. Some canned baby foods are available, but the selection is not large. The high humidity wilts crackers and cereals, although chips purchased in metal tins keep well.

Dairy supplies are improving. Imported butter and margarine are in good supply. Ice cream is very popular on Pohnpei, and the stores are careful to keep this in stock. No fresh milk is to be found, but there is an ample supply of California and

Australian ultra-high temperature (UHT) milk. A modest number of cheeses are in stock.

Kolonia has only a slim selection of fresh fruits and vegetables. Although Pohnpei is lush, cultivation of these crops is rare. Local agriculture revolves around yam, taro, banana and sakau cultivation (the popular local narcotic drink). Sweet potatoes, plantain, pineapple, and green onion can usually be found, while the only fresh green vegetables consistently available are cucumber, Chinese cabbage, bell pepper, and eggplant. Arrangements can also be made with local farmers and the Pohnpei Agricultural and Technical School (PATS) to provide fresh vegetables on a fairly regular basis.

Supply of soft drinks is very good, and Kolonia can boast a respectable variety of imported beers on the shelves. Wine is scarce and expensive, and is stored under inhospitable conditions.

The FSM permits import of fresh produce. Agriculture inspectors tend to admit without problem foods brought from the US mainland in the original packages, e.g. shrink-wrapped, plastic-packaged vegetables and meats. The traveler's assurance that the items originated in the US will usually suffice. Loose vegetables and fruits are usually confiscated. Meat and poultry



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Street in Kolonia, Micronesia

may be imported from the US mainland, Hawaii and Guam.

Clothing

Style of dress is very casual. Office attire for men is slacks, with a pull-over sport shirt or short-sleeve buttoned shirt. Women wear blouses and skirts or sun dresses. Micronesians consider exposure of women's thighs to be indecent, so short shorts and tight-fitting slacks should not be worn as everyday attire. Bermuda shorts are okay. Standards are changing, however, and expatriate women runners wear jogging shorts on the street without problems. Given the heat and humidity, we strongly recommend that personnel purchase light all-cotton clothing. Lightweight poplin pants and cool shorts are good purchases for casual wear. No dry cleaning nor professional laundry is available on island.

Footwear is also very casual, with sandals and plastic thongs the norm. Good cheap thick-soled

thongs can be purchased locally. Lightweight fabric and woven leather shoes are also good choices. The climate makes wearing of hosiery by women impractical.

Since there is little seasonal variation, the same type of attire may be worn year-round. Clothing supply in Kolonia is disappointing, and personnel should bring a full tropical wardrobe with them or plan on making purchases en route, in Honolulu or Manila. Colorful local embroidered skirts and a small but attractive selection of dresses from Bali are sold in local stores, so women will have better luck in local purchases than men.

Children's clothing can be bought locally, but prices are high and selection is poor.

Supplies and Services

Stocks vary from month to month with each arrival of a cargo ship. Store managers are not always consistent in their orders, and are not

inclined to maintain large inventories. Local stores sell sundries, cleaning supplies, and other household items, but the selection is very small and supply unpredictable. Prices for these items may be two to three times the US price.

A few pounds of boric acid will be an excellent investment in cockroach control. Pohnpei cockroaches have no immunity to insecticides, and any commercial spray will be effective. Mosquitoes are not a problem in Kolonia. Mosquito coils and netting (15-20 yards for two persons) will come in handy on trips to outlying islands.

Local dressmakers provide simple repairs and make curtains. Local laundromats are available but not a dry cleaning service. A few beauty shops are in operation.

Religious Activities

Catholic and Protestant services are held in English and Micronesian languages. Americans normally

attend either the Saturday evening English mass at the Catholic Mission or Sunday morning English nondenominational Protestant service. Individual Protestant denominations represented include Congregationalist, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, Assembly of God, and Mormon. The Mormon church is particularly well-represented in missionary activities. The Baha'i faith has a mission in Kolonia.

Education

The Seventh Day Adventist School offers kindergarten through high school instruction in English, and has well-kept facilities with US textbooks and US volunteer missionary instructors. Education is best in grades one through six; above that level, the school falls short of the facilities and faculty required to give students an American-equivalent education. Host country and expatriate children alike attend. Extracurricular activities, including sports, are a part of the program. Since places in the school are limited, it is advisable to contact the school in advance to reserve a spot. The Catholic Mission and the Baptist Church operate schools, and standards are said to be adequate. The public schools do not meet US standards. All dependent children currently at post are elementary school age or younger.

Special Educational Opportunities

Although Kolonia hosts the College of Micronesia-FSM, its facilities are poor and most classes are likely to be insufficiently rigorous for American students. The College also offers courses in Pohnpeian and Japanese. Programs for the handicapped are lacking.

Sports

Micronesia offers outstanding opportunities for divers and snorkelers. The marine life is unspoiled, and local dive shops give reasonable prices on equipment rental and air refills. Certification classes are offered only once or twice a year, so prospective divers should try to

become certified before arrival. Chuuk Lagoon, 425 miles to the west, is world-famous for its diving. More than 100 sunken planes, ships, and submarines are at the bottom of the lagoon, accessible to divers, the result of US Navy bombing raids in World War II. Tuna is abundant in waters off Kolonia, and game fish such as marlin and mahi-mahi are also to be found. Anglers should bring ocean rigs or handlines. Due to unpredictable, often slack winds, only a few sailboats are on the island.

Swimming in the warm, clear water is popular, but the absence of local beaches means that persons must take a boat out to the nearby reef.

For joggers Kolonia offers interesting terrain for early morning and evening runs. The heat of the day makes midday exertion difficult. A basketball league plays on Sundays in the winter months. Baseball is an island-wide passion, and volleyball is also very popular. There are two tennis courts on island, although the public courts are in considerable disrepair.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The 800-year-old ruins of Nan Madol lie in the south of the island, amid a maze of man-made channels overhung with tropical foliage. The ruins are the remnants of the palace of the Saudeleurs, the ancient chiefs of Pohnpei, and is the island's most noteworthy site. Nan Madol is accessible only by boat. Kepirohi Falls, seventy feet high, is a beautiful sight with a fresh water pool at the base for swimming. Visitors take picnic lunches there and to Liduduhniap Falls, a short drive from Kolonia. Cross-island camping treks through the jungle-like interior are possible, led by guides. Never venture into the interior without a guide.

A favorite activity is spending the weekend on Black Coral or Hags Island Villa (formerly Joy Island). These are tiny privately-owned islands just off Pohnpei's northern and southern coasts. For a small fee

per night, persons receive padded mats, kerosene lamp, and use of a covered wooden cottage. Cooking is by campfire. A small store on the island supplies some essentials, but visitors must bring food, beverages, and cookware. Six miles offshore is Ant Atoll, accurately described by a local writer as "the tropic isle of romantic novels." Permission can be obtained to camp on this palm-shaded island with its white sand beaches.

Entertainment

Kolonia has no movies, theaters, or concerts. A few well-stocked video rental stores are located in Kolonia, and this is the main form of entertainment.

Social Activities

Social life for travelers to Kolonia exists largely within the expatriate community, and consists of casual home dinners, Sunday brunch at the Village Hotel, and shared boating and atoll expeditions. For host-country nationals, socializing is primarily a family and clan event, and invitations to Americans are very rare. But a personable American will find that opportunities arise to become more familiar with the people and partake of generous Micronesian hospitality.

OTHER CITIES

CHUUK ATOLL is a collection of 15 large islands and 80 islets. The district center is on Weno, where visitors can experience island life and culture by browsing through the shop-lined streets. A lovely view of Weno and the lagoon can be seen from the Sapuk Lighthouse, built by the Japanese in the 1930s as a watchtower against the Americans. The abandoned houses of the lighthouse guards are still standing nearby.

Scuba divers wont want to miss a trip to the area, which includes the Truk Lagoon Underwater Fleet. More than 60 submerged vessels and several downed aircraft can be seen in this lagoon, which has

become known as the world's largest underwater museum.

Hiking enthusiasts will enjoy a number of trail locations. Tonachau Mountain Iras (229 meters) is believed to be the home of the god Souwoniras and his divine son. The area also contains the Wichon Men's Meeting House, where Weno chiefs are said to have met with Poomey, the eldest of the six brothers who were the first chiefs of Chuuk. The Wichon River and Falls include a bathing pool. Numerous petroglyphs are etched in the basalt above the falls. Nefo Cave is about 10 feet wide, 6 feet high and 78 feet long and contains a gun used by Japanese soldiers to guard entry to the north pass.

KOSRAE is a one of the least developed areas in the Federated States, and so offers a unique chance to enjoy the natural beauty and native culture of the area. The main island is about 42 sq miles with natural features including rainforest areas, a pristine coral reef, and a coast that includes sandy beaches and mangrove swamps. The Blue Hole in the Lelu harbor, traditionally used as a burial place for royalty, offers divers and snorkellers the chance to see coral heads, lionfish, stingrays and barracuda. Lelu Harbor also contains the remains of an American search plane, two Japanese boats and the remains of a whaling ship. Lelu Hill includes caves and tunnels used by the Japanese in WWII.

Hikers may enjoy Mt. Finkol, the highest peak in Kosrae (2,064 ft). The hike requires a guide and the hiker must be in good physical condition. The tour takes about seven to eight hours and offers a spectacular rainforest experience. The Mt. Oma hiking trails feature a wide variety of tropical fauna, flora and cascading waterfalls. Tours are offered for short hikes of about 45 minutes or longer trips of six or seven hours. The Menke Ruins hiking trails pass by the temple of the Goddess of Breadfruit, Sinlaku. Legends say that this is where she spent her last days before fleeing to

Yap, before the arrival of the missionaries in 1852. The story tells that Sinkalu saw a brilliant light coming over the horizon of the sea that frightened her, causing her to flee. The Christian missionaries arrived by ship the next morning. This story of the coming of "the light" was part of the early Christian conversion of the natives. A guided tour takes about two hours.

Two waterfalls worthy of note are the Sipyen and Saolong. Both offer bottom pools where swimming is allowed.

For the history minded, the Kosrae State Museum contains ancient artifacts and restored photos of Kosrae history and culture. The Lelu Ruins, the remains of the ancient capital city of the Kosrae rulers, include huge basaltic slabs arranged in 20 ft walls, and the remains of several street paths, living areas, and tombs.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Federated States of Micronesia consists of four states, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, and covers a wide expanse in the Caroline Islands chain. FSM waters begin just north of the equator and stretch from 136°E to 166°E longitude. Palikir, the capital, is located on Pohnpei Island (previously known as "Ponape") in the Central Pacific at latitude 6° 54' N, longitude 158° 14' E. The post is 3106 miles from Honolulu, 2363 miles from Manila, and 1070 miles from Guam, the closest American territory.

"Micronesia" denotes "small islands," an apt description for the geography of the FSM. Although there are 607 islands within the one million square mile boundaries of the nation, total land area is a modest 270.8 square miles. Only 65 of the islands are inhabited. Pohnpei

Island, with 133 square miles of land area, is the largest island in the country and is the site of the U.S. Embassy. Geologically, Pohnpei readily shows its volcanic origins with many hills and cliffs, as well as striking basalt outcroppings such as Sokehs Rock at the entrance to Kolonia Harbor.

Pohnpei Island is lush and thickly forested with tropical foliage. Pohnpei is one of the wettest spots on earth, with an annual rainfall in Kolonia of 200 inches per year. The interior receives as much as 400 inches. January through March are the less rainy months, with steadier rain coming in the summer and fall. High winds may occur in the latter part of the year, but damaging tropical storms generally bypass Pohnpei. The temperature averages a pleasant 81 degrees year-round. Evenings are mild, in the low 70s, and daytime temperatures seldom exceed the upper 80s. Temperatures do not noticeably vary throughout the year. Humidity is high, averaging 89%, and causes rapid growth of mildew and mold in unair-conditioned environments. Air quality is excellent, free of pollutants. Some of the other islands of the FSM, such as Kosrae, are "high islands" like Pohnpei, characterized by hilly terrain and fertile soil. Many other islands are low-lying coral atolls a few feet above sea level covered with coconut palm and scrub vegetation.

As a tropical city, Kolonia has the expected complement of pests: ants, termites, roaches, and centipedes. All of these can be kept under control by regular cleaning and spraying. Geckoes populate the houses and provide a natural insect control service. The island has no venomous snakes, and is malaria-free and rabies-free. Wild deer live in the interior and are hunted by the local population.

Population

Estimated 2000 population of the Federated States is approximately 133,140. Pohnpei State has approx-

imately 34,976 inhabitants, 10,000 of whom reside in Kolonia.

Although most peoples of the FSM share a Micronesian heritage, languages and cultures differ among and within the different states. There are four major languages, Yapese, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, and Kosraean, all part of the Austronesian family. Eleven other languages and dialects are also spoken within the country, including two Polynesian languages. The many linguistic gaps are bridged by English, which is widely spoken and is the official language of the country.

The years of American administration have seen an influx of Western culture that has eroded the traditional cultures of the societies, although traditional leaders and cultural patterns still are influential, especially in the state of Yap. As a rule, the smaller "outer" islands away from the state capitals preserve traditional ways. Due to its scarcity, land is the ultimate denominator of social status in Micronesia. Parcels are passed down through the generations, thus reinforcing the importance of the family to Micronesian society. Social activity in Micronesia revolves around the family and the extended clan, to a degree difficult for outsiders to appreciate.

The Micronesian islands have been fertile fields for missionary activity, with the result that almost all FSM citizens are Christian. A full range of denominations is represented. Kolonia is served by Catholic, Protestant, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, and Seventh-Day Adventist churches, as well as a Baha'i mission. Religion is an important part of the culture, and clergymen are well respected by the inhabitants.

The outside world had little contact with the islands until the mid-19th Century, when American whalers and missionaries entered the region. Spain claimed the Caroline and Mariana Islands in 1885 and retained them until 1899, when Germany purchased most of the island chains in the aftermath of

the Spanish-American War. Germany, in turn, lost its possessions to Japan in 1914 at the beginning of World War I. The League of Nations formally extended a mandate to Japan in 1920, thus confirming the Japanese conquest, and a new era of colonization. Intensive crop and copra production began, and the islands became exporters of many agricultural products. In 1945, control passed to the United States Navy, which administered the area until formation of the Trusteeship under UN auspices in 1947. The FSM, together with the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Northern Mariana Islands, comprised the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. On November 3, 1986, the Trusteeship era came to a close when the Trusteeship was terminated for the FSM and the Compact of Free Association came into effect. The FSM is now a fully self-governing, sovereign nation in Free Association with the United States.

Public Institutions

The terms of this relationship are contained in the Compact of Free Association, valid for 15 years. The Compact confirms the FSM's authority to manage its domestic affairs and conduct foreign affairs in its own right. The United States retains full authority and responsibility for security and defense issues. Other sections of the Compact outline governmental, legal, and economic relations between the two countries. The Compact is also in effect between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and as of October 1, 1994, between the United States and the Republic of Palau.

The Federated States governmental structure is modeled on the United States. The national government is headed by a President and Vice President; the President appoints cabinet members, who administer national affairs. The other two branches, Congress and the Supreme Court, function much as the American institutions, albeit with fewer personnel. The Congress is unicameral, and legislators serve

either two- or four-year terms. Two-year senators are elected from districts apportioned on the basis of population. Four-year senators are elected at large, one from each state. The President and Vice President are chosen from the ranks of the at-large senators by a majority vote of Congress. No political parties exist.

Each state is headed by a governor, elected for a four-year term, balanced by a state legislature and a state supreme court. Although this structure parallels the American system, the states have substantially more power than their American counterparts. Compact fund distribution reflects this: 87% of annual Compact assistance is earmarked for the states, the remainder to the national government.

Arts, Science, and Education

The FSM participates with other Micronesian nations and with US territories in the College of Micronesia. This is an umbrella organization which maintains individual institutions throughout the region. Kolonia is home to the College of Micronesia (COM-FSM). COM-FSM offers a two-year academic program leading to an Associate of Arts degree. The focus of its program is teacher training, but studies are offered in a number of other subjects. Outside of the formal educational structure, the FSM is host in any given year to several visiting researchers, particularly in the fields of anthropology, marine resources, and agriculture. Cultural and artistic institutions in the Western sense do not exist in Kolonia, although wood carving and choral singing are popular local forms of artistic expression.

Commerce and Industry

More than half of the population earns a livelihood from subsistence fishing and cultivation. Of those working within the monetized econ-

omy, 60% are employed by government. Palikir, as the national capital, has an even higher proportion of government employees, drawn from all four states. Micronesian technical and legal specialists are in short supply, so many professional positions are filled by American contract employees. One of the three Supreme Court Justices, the FSM Deputy Attorney General, and Pohnpei's Attorney General, for example, are United States citizens.

Estimated gross domestic product (GDP) was \$263 million in 1999, (per capita GDP = \$2,000).

The FSM is working to strengthen local production and exports in the Compact period. Currently, the business sector in the FSM is modest, and centers on small retail establishments selling imported goods. Potential for development of agricultural exports is good in the states of Kosrae and Pohnpei, which produce excellent citrus and world-renowned pepper, respectively. Yap and Chuuk have large fish transshipment facilities, and Chuuk and Pohnpei are exploring possibilities for canning plants. The untouched islands of the FSM are desirable tourist destinations, but this sector remains small in scale. The nation encompasses rich tuna fishing waters. Its multilateral fisheries pact with the U.S. and several bilateral fishing treaties provide a steady flow of tuna licensing fees.

The Compact of Free Association provides the Federated States with \$1.3 billion in US economic assistance over a 15-year period, in addition to a number of US federal programs and grants for which the FSM remains eligible. A \$20 million Investment Development Fund was also provided by the United States as a means of encouraging joint ventures. The national government has implemented an ambitious National Development Plan to enhance infrastructure and expand local production and social services.

Transportation

While taxis are available in Kolonia, a personal vehicle is essential. Twenty-five miles of road on the island are paved, thus daily driving presents few challenges. Outside of town, the roads are partially paved (21 miles). Most vehicles on island are Japanese. Reliable repair service is available.

Transportation between Kolonia and the other states and neighboring countries is by Continental Air Micronesia jet. Protestant Missionary Airlines runs weekly propeller flights to the nearby islands of Mokil and Pingelap. Travel to outer islands is also accomplished by government-owned "field trip" ships, which ply regular routes out of the state capitals.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephones are available on Pohnpei Island. Connections with the United States are excellent and cost about \$2.50 - \$3.00 per minute (\$2.00 per minute on Sunday). AT&T calling cards are accepted in the FSM, but cost more than using the local service. Kolonia can be dialed directly from the United States, using the sequence 011-691-320- (local number). Telex communications are equally reliable, and are billed at about \$2.50 - \$3.00 per minute outgoing.

Radio and TV

A local AM and an FM radio station broadcast music and occasional news, primarily in Pohnpeian. A short-wave radio is needed to stay in touch with world affairs. Radio Australia comes in clearly, and Voice of America, Armed Forces Radio, and BBC are not hard to raise. Kolonia has a cable television company, which broadcasts copies of Los Angeles and San Francisco TV tapes with a one-week delay in addition to HBO, Disney Channel and VH-1 channels. They also broadcast CNN and ESPN live. Basic monthly rate is \$20.00 (\$10.00 extra for HBO or Disney). The broadcast system is

the same as the United States, so no special set is needed.

Newspapers, Magazines

The Guam Pacific Daily News is sold in one outlet; copies are received one to three days after publication date. No bookstores are found on island.

Health and Medicine

Medical facilities

Health care facilities in the FSM consist of hospitals on each of the four major islands and a few scattered clinics. These facilities sometimes lack basic supplies and medicines, and the quality of health care is variable. Doctors and hospitals may expect immediate cash payment for health services.

Community Health

While great improvements in the quality of the water supply were made from 1992-1994, individuals are cautioned not to drink the tap water. Local standards of community health are variable, and sanitation practices in stores and restaurants are in general far below American standards. Public health measures are few. Tuberculosis, leprosy, and venereal disease are common, but post personnel who have no intimate contact with the population have no cause for concern. There is no AIDS in Pohnpei, but two cases have been reported in other states of the FSM.

Preventive Measures

If you have no distiller, boil water for 10 minutes before drinking. Some Americans choose to take their chances with occasional gastrointestinal distress. No local milk is available, but there is a steady supply of potable ultra-high temperature (UHT) milk from California and Australia. Vegetables should be rinsed with treated water.

Travelers should have up-to-date immunizations. Since hepatitis B is endemic in the Pacific islands, some personnel have chosen to be vaccinated against this disease at their

own expense. This disease is transmitted solely by blood exchange and sexual contact; nonetheless, the possibility, however remote, of an emergency blood transfusion has prompted a few persons to seek out the vaccine. Gamma globulin shots are recommended. There are two pharmacies on island. The pharmacies can have refills shipped in. It is advisable that families bring a good supply of over-the-counter remedies, since local stores may fail to have even common items, or if available, sell them at high prices.

The island is free of malaria and rabies, as well as other insect-borne diseases. Pests encountered are seldom dangerous. Exceptions are venomous centipedes, which inflict painful stings, and jellyfish, which sometimes drift through local waters.

NOTE FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Proof of citizenship, sufficient funds, and onward/return ticket are required for tourist visits up to 30 days. Visits are extendible for up to 60 days total from the initial entry; this extension is sought after arrival in Micronesia. An entry permit may be needed for types of travel other than tourism; the necessary forms may be obtained from the airlines. There is a departure fee of five U.S. dollars. A health certificate may be required if the traveler is arriving from infected area. Travelers are advised to enter and leave the FSM on a valid U.S. passport. The U.S. Embassy in Kolonia does not issue passports; passports for persons living or traveling in the FSM are issued by the Honolulu Passport Agency. For more information about entry requirements of the Federated States of Micronesia, travelers may consult the Embassy of the Federated States of Micronesia, 1725 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20038, tel: (202) 223-4383 or via the Internet at <http://www.fsmembassy.org>. The Feder-

ated States of Micronesia also have consulates in Honolulu and Guam.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting the Federated States of Micronesia are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy in Kolonia, where they may also obtain updated information on travel and security within the country. The U.S. Embassy in Kolonia is located on Kasalehlie Street (the main downtown street). The mailing address is P.O. Box 1286, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia 96941. The telephone number is (691) 320-2187. The fax number is (691) 320-2186.

Pets

The FSM permits imports of dogs and cats from the United States and other countries on the "rabies-free" list. For import of animals from other countries, write the mission for information. The dog or cat must have the following: certificate showing the animal's country of origin; certificate of rabies vaccination; certificate showing that the animal has been dipped for parasites within the past five days; certificate affirming that the animal is free from any signs of infectious or communicable disease.

If transiting Honolulu, the pet will have to be in quarantine for the stopover. Pet-owners should avoid Guam, which also quarantines pets, but which has no facilities or procedures for caring for them. Contact the airline for information on procedures and fees. Other animals may enter only upon issuance of a quarantine permit.

As of early 1995, two veterinarians reside in the FSM. Services, including spaying, can be performed. Owners should bring flea collars, worm medicine, vaccine if needed, and any other desired accessories.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The national currency is the US dollar. Kolonia has branches of the Bank of Hawaii and Bank of Guam. Weights and measures follow the American system.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 New Year's Day
 Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
 Mar/Apr. Easter*
 May 10 Constitution Day
 July 12 Micronesia Day
 Oct. 24 United Nations' Day
 Nov. 4 Independence Day
 Dec. 25 Christmas
 *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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MONGOLIA

Major City:

Ulaanbaatar

Other Cities:

Choybalsan, Darhan, Erdenet, Hovd, Shbaatar

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Genghis Khan's warriors galloped out of Mongolia's fertile grasslands and windswept deserts to sack both Peking and Moscow. But the far-flung empire they built crumbled, and Manchu overlords tamed the once ruthless horsemen by fostering Buddhist Lamaism. Half of Mongolia's males were monks when a Russian-aided revolution overthrew Chinese rule in 1921.

Today only two monasteries remain in operation. Other changes profoundly alter the nation's ways. Growing industry calls former herdsmen to new skills ranging from flour milling to movie making. In the developing nation, Russia and China vie for influence. But

most Mongols still wander north of the sandy Gobi with their herds of sheep, cattle, camels, and goats. They sleep in felt-covered tents, drink fermented mare's milk, and hold 30-mile cross-country horse races.

MAJOR CITY

Ulaanbaatar

Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, is located in north-central Mongolia, some 420 miles (675 kilometers) from the Chinese border at Erlian (by train), and 180 miles (290 km) from the Russian border at Ulan Ude. Its altitude and continental location make Ulaanbaatar the world's coldest capital city.

Ulaanbaatar ("Red Hero") has been so named since the Socialist revolution in 1921. It was formerly called Urga and Ikh Huroo ("Big Circle") when it was the center of the government of its last non-Communist ruler, the living Buddha Bogda Khan. Of the many monasteries extant in 1920, only one remained open during the Communist period.

The present city of some 666,000 inhabitants is typified by wide streets, large, concrete government

structures, movie theaters, cultural facilities, and apartment buildings. The focal point of Ulaanbaatar is Sukhbaatar Square, which is surrounded by Government House, art shops, the new stock exchange, the central Post Office, and two cultural halls, as well as Ulaanbaatar's main thoroughfare, Enkh Taivan Gudumj (Peace Avenue). The Hotel Ulaanbaatar and the Ministry of Foreign Relations are close by. Sukhbaatar Square is dominated by a statue of this Socialist Revolutionary hero, who is buried in a tomb modeled on Lenin's Tomb in Moscow's Red Square. It is a popular place for wedding photos, and easily accommodates 100,000 people.

To the north and south lies the Bogda Khan mountain range, which is trisected in Ulaanbaatar by the Tuul and Selbe Rivers. Train travelers from Russia will pass through the valleys of the Selenge, which ends in Lake Baikal, and Orhon Rivers, passing through rolling steppe country, covered by wild flowers in the early summer, and larch trees in the valleys and hollows. Those traveling on to China by train will soon enter the Gobi Desert, a predominantly flat steppe of scrubby grassland and roving sheep and camel herds.

An average of 236 days of the year are sunny—blue skies and sunshine



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Gandan Monastery in Ulaanbaatar

make even the coldest temperatures seem pleasant.

Utilities

Severe fuel shortages and problems with central heating and electrical systems may cause seriously reduced heating levels and power outages in Ulaanbaatar and the cities of Darham and Erdenet during the winter months of November through April. Smaller towns in the countryside may have no heat or electricity at all during these months.

Food

Food supplies, such as imported canned goods, eggs, and meat can be purchased in local dollar stores on an irregular basis but are expensive. Local supplies of other food stuffs are limited.

Shipped foodstuffs available have included oranges, apples, bananas, grapes, potatoes, sweet potatoes,

eggplant, cabbage, carrots, tomatoes, onions, garlic, green beans, bell peppers, cucumbers, and watermelon.

Meat is available at the butcher shop at the Bayangol Hotel in downtown Ulaanbaatar.

Clothing

Because temperatures in Mongolia range from summertime highs of 90°F to wintertime lows of -30°F to -40°F, a wide range of clothing is necessary. Winter clothing needs are especially critical in order to avoid hypothermia. Every family member needs a warm coat, a warm hat, heavy gloves or mittens, a scarf, and boots. Fur coats, leather hats, cashmere sweaters and gloves, camel hair sweaters, cashmere scarves, and sheepskin lined boots are sometimes available in Ulaanbaatar. Quality varies. Summer rains warrant boots, umbrella, and a waterproof coat. Heavy snow is

uncommon in the city, but for trips to the countryside, arctic boots, moon boots, or “pacs” are highly desirable. Thermal underwear, sweaters, a down vest, down booties, wool socks, silk underwear, and wool socks should be brought. If traveling to Ulaanbaatar in the late summer, include some of these items in your airfreight.

A heavy wool topcoat or dress parka for winter and a lighter topcoat for spring and fall are desirable. Warm gloves, boots, and sweaters are essential. Some buildings are uncomfortably warm in winter, while others are barely warm. During unheated months, cold temperatures may still be a problem. Sweaters, vests, and lightweight long underwear that can be worn under daytime wear are all useful.

Plan on wearing the same clothing you would in Washington, D.C. Good shoes and nylons under skirts,

dresses, and suits are common. Although Mongolians tend to be formal dressers, a certain relaxation in styles is occurring in Ulaanbaatar. Slacks are increasingly common. Wool clothing for the winter, and cotton clothing for the summer are worn. A warm, fairly dressy overcoat (down or fur) and wool overcoat are sufficient for nonsummer seasons. Washable woolens and silks are recommended.

Bring clothing for outdoor activities, warm boots, thermal socks, warm gloves or mittens, and thermal underwear. For summer, bring sportswear and a bathing suit.

Bring warm, washable, sturdy playclothes. Zippered snowsuits, arctic boots, mittens, waterproof mitten covers, face masks, thermal underwear, warm socks, underwear, scarves, hats, rain boots, tennis shoes, warm slippers, sweaters, and waterproof pants are recommended. Bring warm pajamas and a robe. Summer clothing should include jeans, shorts, and extra sneakers. Babies also need winter clothing. It is difficult to purchase quality clothing for children in Ulaanbaatar.

Supplies and Services

Since nearly everything is unavailable in Ulaanbaatar, you should plan on bringing all products you normally use, such as toiletries, cosmetics, prescription drugs and medicines, paper products, and household and kitchen cleaning supplies. Bring a large supply of hand/face lotion, sunscreen, and lip balm. Detergent, dish soap, and bar soap made in China are usually available in dollar shops, but may not be acceptable by U.S. standards. Bring a large supply of items that can be given as gifts, as there are a great number of adult birthday exchanges, and gifts are freely exchanged at New Year's.

Local dry-cleaning facilities are inadequate for valuable items. Dry-cleaning may be taken to Beijing.

Men and women use the local hairdressers and barbers. Patrons provide their own hair care products.

The two operating hotels and the Cultural Palace have public restaurants. Privately owned restaurants are also in business. A restaurant offers cultural programs of folk singing, dancing, and music on a monthly schedule. Two of the restaurants will cater events both on and off their premises.

Religious Activities

There are a number of Buddhist monasteries, and informal Christian services are held weekly.

Education

Several foreign schools are now operating in Ulaanbaatar. A new International School opened in September 1992 with grades kindergarten through grade 3. The school plans to add a grade each year.

Sports

No sports facilities are available for unlimited use by post personnel. There are three tennis courts operated by the Mongolian Government, but they have not been used, except by special invitation. The Sports Hall has a Universal Machine and the Lenin/St. Petersburg Club has weights. Several pools are available in Ulaanbaatar.

Members of the international community sometimes organize hikes, fishing trips, and picnics on an ad hoc basis.

Horseback riding is possible for members of the Mongol Horse Society (membership fee is approximately \$10 a year). Some American students attending the university in Ulaanbaatar have joined a swimming club at an indoor pool.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

During the warmer months (May to October), tours may be taken to other parts of Mongolia. These trips are usually arranged through Zhuulchin, the Mongolian tourist bureau. A trip to the Gobi costs about \$200 round trip for transportation and about \$180 for a night's stay in a ger. Each ger will accommodate 1 to 3 people. A trip to the

tourist camp outside Ulaanbaatar, Terelj, costs \$100 for the hotel per person. By special request, Zhuulchin will attempt to make the 160 km round trip to Terelj and back in 1 day.

Ulaanbaatar offers a variety of museums and sites that may be visited. These include the Gandan monastery, Bogda Khan palace, the winter residence of Mongolia's last khan, the Central Museum with its dusty but outstanding collections of dinosaur bones, and the Fine Arts Museum, in which exquisite panel embroideries are on display.

Weekends are nice for trips to the country, where you can walk, climb rocks, birdwatch, fish (a license is necessary), picnic, and enjoy the fresh air. With proper clothing, outdoor activities can be enjoyed all year. The country has nearly limitless areas for camping. In summer months, it is wise to wear long pants to avoid flea bites. Fleas that infest the Mongolian marmot are known to carry bubonic plague.

Excellent cross country skiing and sledding are possible about 20 km from Ulaanbaatar. Because of the dryness and extreme cold, there is not much snowfall in the vicinity of the capital. Fishing, kayaking, and boating (small rubber boats only) may be done on the Tuul River near Ulaanbaatar.

Big game hunting is available in Mongolia, but it must be arranged through Zhuulchin Tours and is expensive.

Photographers find the extraordinary light and exquisite scenery make Mongolia an excellent place to enjoy their hobby. Color film is available locally, but is quite expensive.

Entertainment

Excellent ballet, opera, and symphonic programs are presented in Ulaanbaatar, both by local companies and by visiting performers. The folk song and dance troupe performs three times a week. The Mongolian Circus has a permanent venue



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View of Ulaanbaatar Mongolia

where visiting circuses may be seen. Tickets are inexpensive and easy to obtain. One of the local restaurants offers cultural programs on a monthly schedule.

Movie theaters show films dubbed in Mongolian. TV programming has been in Mongolian and Russian; some English programming may also be available, as USIA has installed a World Net link at the TV station.

Social Activities

Social life is generally casual, with most informal entertaining done at home. Picnics and holiday activities are popular.

An International Club, established in 1991, occasionally sponsors activities. Visitors to Ulaanbaatar are able to attend functions on a temporary basis. An International Women's Club was established in May 1992. It meets the first Tuesday of each month.

Special Information

While tugriks are used for some transactions, hard currency may be used in most shops and in the Sunday market. Hard currency may be hard to come by, however, so travelers should bring cash and coins to Post. American Express or Barclays' Travelers Checks can be cashed at the Central Bank. Although banks, restaurants, and hotels will accept travelers checks and sometimes Diners Club and Amex credit cards, you will not be able to obtain a cash advance against a credit card. Currency can be exchanged by cashing travelers checks at the bank or at the dollar shops using the "parallel exchange rate." U.S. dollars may be transferred to a personal account at the Central Bank of Mongolia through its associated bank, American Express Bank, or through Chase Manhattan Bank in New York.

OTHER CITIES

Located approximately 390 miles (625 km) east of Ulan Bator, **CHOYBALSAN** is one of Mongolia's major industrial cities. Choybalsan, known as Sainbeisn Hree until 1923, was once an important religious center. The city also benefited greatly from its location on Mongolia's main trading route with Manchuria, Siberia, and China and quickly became a major trading center. The town was renamed Bayan Tmen in 1923 and given its present name in the early 1940s in honor of revolutionary war hero, Horloyn Choybalsan. The city has roughly 39,000 residents. Today, Choybalsan is eastern Mongolia's leading industrial center, producing about 50% of the region's gross industrial output. The city has a diverse industrial base that includes a flour mill, a meat-packing plant, and a wool-scouring mill. Other factories in the city produce foodstuffs, building

materials, and carpets. A coal mine near Choybalsan produces nearly 600,000 tons of coal a year. Most of this is consumed by the city's large electric power plant. Choybalsan is easily accessible by a major east-west highway which links the city with Ulan Bator and the western city of Hovd. An eastern branch of the Ulan Bator Railway links Choybalsan with Borzya, Russia.

The city of **DARHAN** (also spelled Darkhan), located 136 miles (219 km) northwest of Ulan Bator, is Mongolia's second largest city. Darhan is situated in a valley near the Hor Gol River and is nearly surrounded by mountains. The average mean temperature in Darhan is approximately 28°F (-2°C). In 2000, Darhan had a population of 90,000. Darhan is a relatively new city, financed and constructed in 1961 by the former Soviet Union and several Eastern European nations. The city quickly became a major industrial center specializing in the production of construction materials such as reinforced concrete, bricks, synthetic fibers, and wood and steel products. Other factories in Darhan produce consumer goods, carpets, foodstuffs, clothing, sheepskin, and textiles. The city's industries remain productive due to the ample reserves of coal, marble, limestone, sand, and clay located near Darhan. A huge power plant, fueled by coal from the Sharin coal mine, provides energy for the city's industries. In addition to industry, Darhan is the site of an important science institute. This institute, the Research Institute of Plant Growing and Land Cultivation, is dedicated to the improvement of agricultural production and farming techniques in northern regions of Mongolia. Cultural entertainment in the city is provided by the Darhan Music and Drama Theater.

ERDENET, with an estimated population of 58,200 (2000) is located in a mountain valley 230 miles (371 km) northwest of Ulan Bator. The city was founded in 1976 following the construction of a huge copper-molybdenum processing plant. This plant, funded by both the former

Soviet Union and Mongolia, is the largest of its kind in Asia and produces 90% of Mongolia's total mining output. In addition to copper and molybdenum processing, several factories manufacture carpets, foodstuffs, and processed timber. Erdenet is connected via railway with Ulan Bator and is also accessible by air and a paved highway.

With a population of roughly 27,900 (1999 est.), **HOVD** is the major economic center of western Mongolia. The city is located on the Buyant River and is nearly surrounded by the Mongolian Altai Mountains. The origins of the city date back to the early 1800s when Hovd served as a strategic outpost for Mongolia's Manchu rulers. Merchants, eager to trade with the Manchu, soon arrived in the city. Over a span of one hundred years, Hovd developed into a thriving trading center for agricultural products, butter, and wool. These products are still actively traded today. During the twentieth century, several factories were built in Hovd. These industries include a woodworking factory, a food processing plant, and a wool-scouring mill. An agricultural college is located in Hovd and, in the past, the school has hosted international geological expeditions. One of Hovd's major attractions is the Local History Museum, which provides exhibits illustrating the ethnic groups and natural resources of Mongolia's western region.

The small city of **SHBAATAR** (also spelled Schbaatar or Skhbaatar), located near Mongolia's northern border with Russia, is 160 miles (258 km) north-northwest of Ulan Bator. Named for revolutionary war hero, Damdiny Sukhbaatar, Shbaatar is home to several small industries. These industries produce distilled beverages, matches, flour, and building materials. The Ulan Bator Railway connects Shbaatar with Ulan Bator and Naushki, Russia. In 1999, Shbaatar had 22,900 residents. A more recent population figure is unavailable.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Mongolia, a large, sparsely populated country located between China and Russia, has an area of just over 600,000 square miles—slightly smaller than the combined area of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Louisiana. The capital, Ulaanbaatar, is over 4,000 feet above sea level. Because of the elevation and distance from any ocean or sea, Mongolia has a continental climate. Marked seasonal, even daily, changes in temperature, numerous high pressure systems, and severe cold occur during much of the year.

The country is divided into three basic zones: the Gobi, a vast, dry grassland in the east and south; the low Hangai mountains of the north; and the high Altai mountains of the west and northwest. Mongolia's largest lake is in Hovsgol Aimag, in the Altai, where elevations range up to 15,000 feet. There are three major river systems: the Tuul, which runs through Ulaanbaatar; the Orhon, into which the Tuul flows and which, in turn, flows into Lake Baikal; and the Selenge, in the northeast.

Population

One-fourth or more of Mongolia's roughly 2.7 million people live in the capital city—many in "ger tent settlements" around the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar. Other cities are Erdenet, the site of a large copper mine, and Darhan. Both cities are north of Ulaanbaatar and served by the rail line that runs from Beijing to Moscow through Mongolia.

About 33% of the population is under the age of 15. The literacy rate is high, but unemployment has become a problem, particularly for young men.

Most Mongolians living in Mongolia belong to the Khalka Mongol ethnic

group. A number of smaller, Mongol ethnic groups reside in scattered areas of Mongolia. About 3 million other Mongols, primarily of the Chahar ethnic group, reside in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region of China. Buryat Mongols live in north Mongolia and in the Buryat Autonomous Region of Russia, east of Lake Baikal. Another Mongol ethnic group resides in the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic of Russia. Kazaks make up about 6% of the population and live mainly in the far west.

Public Institutions

Mongolia has 18 "aimags" (provinces) and three autonomous cities (Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet, and Darhan).

A new constitution, signed in February 1992, provided for a reorganization of the local government structure.

The primary legislative body, the State Great Hural, was elected in June 1992. A unicameral body, it has 76 members elected by secret ballot of the citizens for 4-year terms. The Hural will enact, amend, and supervise the implementation of laws; determine fiscal policies; set dates for elections of the Hural and the President; appoint the Prime Minister and other officials; and engage in other activities.

The President, subject to direct election for a maximum of two 4-year terms, is the head of State. He has veto power over legislation; he can propose, in consultation with the majority party or parties, names for Prime Minister; he can propose dissolution of the government, or instruct the government and issue decrees, which must be signed by the Prime Minister; he represents Mongolia in foreign relations, may enter into treaties subject to ratification by the Hural; he may propose legislation; and he serves as commander-in-chief and heads the National Security Council.

The State Great Hural appoints the Prime Minister who heads the gov-

ernment. If the Prime Minister resigns, the government is dissolved.

Independent judges are nominated by a General Council and confirmed by the President, and, in the case of Supreme Court judges, the State Great Hural. There are specialized courts for criminal, civil, and administrative matters, which are not subject to Supreme Court review. The Supreme Court does have power to act as court of first instance for certain criminal and other actions, examine lower court decisions by appeal, examine questions transferred to it by the Constitutional Court or Prosecutor General, provide official interpretations of all laws, except the Constitution, and make judgments on other matters assigned by law. Trials are open, in the Mongolian language, and with right to counsel.

The Constitutional Court's members are appointed by the State Great Hural for 6-year terms. The nine members are nominated by the Hural (3), the President (3), and the Supreme Court (3). The Court interprets the Constitution, acting upon the request of the President, Prime Minister, Hural, Supreme Court, Prosecutor General, or on its own motion. In addition to reviewing the conformity of treaties and legislative acts with the Constitution, the Court may invalidate any that are not in conformity with the Constitution. It may also examine breaches of law by the President, Prime Minister or other Minister, the Prosecutor General, and members of the State Great Hural or Supreme Court.

Aimags each have local legislative hurals in 4-year terms. Each aimag enjoys some rights of self-government. Governors for aimags and Ulaanbaatar City will be appointed by the Prime Minister, and will, in turn, appoint governors of the "soums" (subunits of the aimags, roughly equivalent to counties), and various districts of Ulaanbaatar. Local hurals will legislate local issues.

The new constitution was the outgrowth of earlier events. In the first half of 1990, Mongolian citizens held mass demonstrations in the capital, demanding an end to 70 years of Communist rule and the Socialist system. The government acquiesced, and the first free elections were held in July 1990. Although the Communist Mongolian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (MPRP) won the majority of seats in the national legislature, the reform movement gathered strength. Together with the MPRP, it formed a unity government, which undertook political and economic reforms, culminating in the new constitution described above. In February 1992 to symbolize the changes, the star at the top of the Mongolian flag was removed, and the state seal was changed to a modernist flying horse design.

Mongolia now claims 13 political parties, including the Mongolian Democratic Party, the Social Democrats, the Party of National Progress, the Free Labor Party, and the Green Party, as well as the MPRP.

Arts, Science, and Education

Eight years of education are compulsory, although dropout rates have recently increased. The literacy rate is about 97%.

In addition to the schools operated by the state, private schools are now permitted. In 1991, seven graduate institutes, one trade school, and one technical school began holding classes.

Commerce and Industry

Formerly, most supplies for Mongolian industry were obtained from the various republics of the former U.S.S.R. and members of COMECON. Following the cataclysmic changes in the U.S.S.R. and Mongolia, the quantity and diversity of many supplies, particularly explo-

sives, petroleum and petroleum products, wheat and other food-stuffs, have been insufficient.

Mongolia's own industries include production of cashmere, skins and leathers, furs and animal hair, coal, copper and minerals, and other raw materials.

Natural resources include coal, copper, molybdenum, iron, phosphates, tin, nickel, zinc, wolfram, fluor spar, gold, and uranium. Joint ventures with Western companies in oil exploration and gold mining are under negotiation.

The growing season for this high, dry, northern country is quite short, but wheat, oats, barley, fodder, and some vegetables are grown. The principal industry, however, is livestock production, in which about 45% of the population is engaged.

One major problem Mongolia faces in expanding trade ties with foreign countries is the shortage of bulk transport facilities. One railroad line traverses the country, having a broad Russian gauge track, which necessitates the substitution of wheels at the Chinese border. This rail route allows for shipments to Tianjin, China, in one direction, and to Moscow or Vladivostok in the other. Both Russian and Chinese rail lines are subject to lengthy delays in shipment. International air routes are via Beijing and Moscow, but the amount of freight that may be forwarded by this method is limited by space and high shipment costs.

Mongolia is actively seeking trading partners in the West and receives aid through a group of donor countries known as the Mongolian Assistance Group. A stock exchange recently opened in Ulaanbaatar, and privatization of publicly held companies and the establishment of private businesses should improve Mongolia's prospects for earnings over the middle term.

Transportation

Local

Ulaanbaatar and its environs are served by buses and trolleys. Prices are low, but the buses are generally very crowded and pickpockets are a problem.

Driving in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar can be extremely difficult due to poorly maintained streets, malfunctioning traffic lights, inadequate street lighting, and a shortage of traffic signs. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of vehicles on the road in recent years, but the knowledge and skills of the driving population has not kept pace with the influx of automobiles. There are few taxis in town and there is no regulation of the industry. Most people simply wave down a vehicle and negotiate a price with the driver. There are no car rental companies currently operating in Mongolia, but it is sometimes possible to hire a car and driver. A small donation (US\$1-US\$2) to the driver is expected.

There are few paved roads outside of the capital and driving can be hazardous, particularly after dark.

Regional

Transportation to other cities is by train for communities that abut the tracks, or by air and long-distance bus. Occasionally, you can rent automobiles.

Road conditions in Mongolia vary greatly. One major highway is predominantly paved, but the narrow road has no lane markings. Other roads are dirt. In most rural locations, there are no roads, but tracks across country. Rain makes many routes impassable.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Ulaanbaatar is fair. Busy lines and crossed lines are common, and phones may ring when no one is calling. A call may be made to any location within Ulaanbaatar at no charge. An account

must be established to book calls outside of Ulaanbaatar.

Phones for international calls are available at the Central Post Office and at the Ulaanbaatar Hotel. Delays of 2-12 hours are common in completing international phone calls. Improved international service occurred in late 1993. The country code for Mongolia is 976 and the city code for Ulaanbaatar is 1. Direct dial to the U.S. is available from some phones, but is still difficult.

Radio and TV

BBC, VOA, and Radio Moscow programming are somewhat available, although reception can be affected by weather and sunspot activity. Local programming is in Mongolian and Russian, but some English-language programming is offered occasionally. Mongolian TV programming is SECAM.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

An English-language newsletter, the *Mongol Messenger*, is published weekly. It has news of ongoing events, cultural opportunities, and interviews with Mongolian officials. No international English-language newspapers and periodicals are currently available locally.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local hospital facilities may be used for a fee, but often the most basic medicines, equipment, and supplies are unavailable, and sanitation standards do not meet U.S. specifications. The U.S. Embassy recommends that health problems be treated outside Mongolia—either in Beijing or Hong Kong.

Community Health

No unusual health problems or hazards exist. Tap-water may be rusty and is boiled and filtered for drinking and cooking, but dishes may be washed without ill effect. In warm months, flies and mosquitoes are a nuisance. Avoid flea bites in the

summer by wearing long pants and socks in the country (fleas may carry plague germs). The German Embassy maintains a list of blood donors from the international official community.

Preventive Measures

Rabies, hepatitis B, gamma globulin, typhoid, tetanus, and Japanese B encephalitis immunizations are recommended. Boil water for 10 minutes and filter before drinking or cooking.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Most Americans visiting Ulaanbaatar travel through China and on to Ulaanbaatar by train or airplane. It is possible, but not recommended, to travel via Moscow. A short stay in Beijing is recommended, to allow for a break, especially important for train travelers, who face another 40 or more hours in transit before arriving in Ulaanbaatar. Winter train travelers should carry warm clothes, a cup and spoon and instant soup mixes, and one or more good books to enjoy on the train. A "mini booklight" is also a good idea. Five flights are offered between Beijing and Ulaanbaatar each week by Mongolian Airlines (MIAT) and Air China (CAAC). Flight time is about 2 hours.

Bring warm clothing with you. Snowflakes have been seen in the air, even in July. Airfreight from the U.S. can take up to 4 months to arrive due to limited space on flights from Beijing.

A valid passport and entry/exit visa are required. While it is recommended that visitors obtain the appropriate entry/exit visa prior to travel, visas may be obtained at the international airport in Ulaanbaatar and at train stations on the Russian and Chinese borders. Two photographs and a US\$50 processing fee are required. Visitors planning to stay in Mongolia for more

than 30 days are required to register with the police at the Citizens' Information and Registration Center. Visitors who stay longer than the time permitted by their visa may be stopped at departure, denied exit, and fined. A departure tax must be paid at the airport on departure. For current information on visa issuance, fees, and registration requirements, travelers should contact the Embassy of Mongolia at 2833 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, telephone: (202) 333-7117 or <http://www.MongoliaNet.com>.

Travelers arriving or departing Mongolia through China should also be aware of Chinese visa regulations. American citizens are not permitted to transit through China without a visa. For more information, see the Consular Information Sheet for China or contact the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2300 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, Tel: (202) 328-2500 or <http://www.china-embassy.org> or the Chinese consulates general in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, and Houston.

U.S. citizens residing in or visiting Mongolia are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy, located in Micro Region 11, Big Ring Road, Ulaanbaatar, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Mongolia. The telephone number is (976)-1-329-095, and the Embassy web site is <http://www.us-mongolia.com>.

Pets

No quarantine period is required for cats and dogs in Mongolia. Bring a health certificate and proof of vaccinations. If the pet weighs less than 16 pounds, including carrier, it may be brought into the passenger compartment on most flights. Pets are not accepted for baggage compartment travel on flights from Beijing to Ulaanbaatar. Arrangements must be made for the Beijing tran-

sit, since pets are not allowed in Chinese hotels.

Neither adequate veterinary service nor pet food is available in Ulaanbaatar. Bring all grooming aids and a supply of commonly used animal medicines. There is a Department of Health where a health certificate may be obtained upon departure for reentry into the U.S.

Be cautious about taking your dog into the countryside. Local fleas may carry bubonic plague.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The local currency is the Mongolian tugrik. There are two exchange rates, the "official" rate, used by diplomatic missions and foreign businesses, and the "parallel" rate, used by individuals. The parallel rate is more favorable. U.S. dollars are generally accepted in most hotels and restaurants in Ulaanbaatar and other major tourist locations, despite an existing law that requires all commercial transactions to be conducted in tugriks. Some places even refuse to accept tugriks. Travelers may find it useful to carry some cash in tugriks, and visitors to areas outside of Ulaanbaatar should certainly do so. Traveler's checks denominated in dollars are accepted at some hotels and may be converted to dollars or Tugriks at several banks. Credit cards can be used at a variety of hotels, restaurants, and shops, almost exclusively in Ulaanbaatar. Cash advances against credit cards are available at one commercial bank, and international bank wire transfers are also possible.

Banking services are available at the State Bank of Mongolia and at the Trade and Development Bank. Individuals may open foreign currency or tugrik accounts. Exchanges from tugriks to dollars may be limited by frequent shortages of hard currency.

Mongolia uses the metric system.

The U.S. Embassy is located in Micro Region 11, Big Ring Road,

Ulaanbaatar. The telephone numbers is (976-1) 329-095. Americans who register at the U.S. Embassy may obtain updated information on travel, security, and health problems within the country.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb.	Tsagaan Sar (Lunar New Year)*
Mar. 1	Women's Day
Mar. 18	Men's Day
Mar. 18	Soldiers' Day
June 1	Mother and Child Day
July 11-13	National Naadam Festival (Independence Days)
Nov. 26	Constitution Day/ Proclamation Day

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Yangon, Myanmar

MYANMAR

Union of Myanmar

Major Cities:

Yangon, Mandalay

Other Cities:

Amarapura, Bassein, Bhamo, Henzada, Mogok, Moulmein, Myitkyina, Pyè, Sandoway, Sittwe, Tavoy

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 2001 for Myanmar. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

For over half a century Myanmar (formerly Burma) has been bloodied and bowed by dictators, militia governments, and rebel factions. Successive dictators have tried (but failed) to extinguish any notion of democracy by arresting entire parliaments, suppressing any dissenting voices, and by using forced labor to prop up a failing economy.

As Myanmar moves into the 21st century, it is attempting to abandon its isolationist and socialist politics for economic pragmatism. The ruling junta is trying to perfect the juggling act of wooing foreign investment while simultaneously maintaining its vice-like grip on power. Revolutionists are split

between maintaining the revolutionary rage and settling for food on the table.

The 11th-century Burman kingdom of Bagan was the first to gain control of the territory that is present-day Myanmar, but it failed to unify the disparate racial groups and collapsed before a Tartar invasion in 1287. For the next 250 years, Burma remained in chaos, and the territory was not reunified until the mid-16th century.

In 1852 Burma became a part of British India, and the British built a colonial infrastructure and developed the country into a major rice exporter. Indians and Chinese arrived with the British to complicate the racial mix. In 1937, Burma was separated from British India, and there was nascent murmuring for self-rule. In 1948, Burma became independent and almost immediately began to disintegrate as hill tribes, communists, Moslems, and Mons all revolted.

In 1987, massive confrontations between prodemocracy demonstrators and the military resulted in a military coup. The new leader promised elections in 1989, but the junta prevented the elected party leaders from taking office.

The Union of Burma was renamed the Union of Myanmar in 1989 in order to reflect the multi-racial make up of the country.

Agitation for reform and real democracy is still being fought on the streets of Yangon. Old guard revolutionists insist that independence can only be won through maintaining embargoes and upholding the sanctions on tourism, whereas more practical proindependent supporters find themselves agreeing that "opposing foreign aid and investment and opposing tourism is like breaking the rice bowl of the man on the street."

Because of the government's clampdown on outside influences, it is one of the least Western-influenced countries in the world. Many people mistake this for quaintness, but no one should be blinded to the political realities that created this situation.

Myanmar has some magical sights, incredibly friendly people, and offers a glimpse of a bizarre Orwellian society that has withdrawn from contact with the late 20th century.

MAJOR CITIES

Yangon

Yangon (formerly Rangoon) is a British and Indian creation. Although Myanmar villages existed near the great Shwedagon Pagoda for many centuries, modern Yangon dates from about 1852, when it was designated the capital for British-held Lower Myanmar. British firms were brought in to develop the economy of the new colony, and Indian workers and business representatives followed in great numbers. The Myanmar remained a minority in Yangon until after independence in 1948, and even today Yangon's atmosphere is far more multiracial than that of other Myanmar cities. Yangon's population is a mixture of Myanmar, Indians, Karens, and Chinese, with a few non-Myanmar ethnic groups.

The golden Shwedagon Pagoda, dominates the Yangon skyline and landscape. Located within the city are Royal Lake and Inya Lake, the shorelines of which are dotted with large, handsome houses in varying states of repair. Many of Yangon's public buildings are attractive. Streets were widened and public parks spruced up after the 1988 military takeover.

Utilities

Electrical power in Myanmar is 220v, 50-cycles. Brownouts, blackouts, and voltage fluctuations are common. Telephone service is sporadic.

Food

Imported canned goods are sold locally. Supplies are not reliable, and prices are extremely high. Fresh beef, lamb, pork, chicken, and seafood are sold but must be carefully prepared. Most fresh food items are bought in the local market. Excellent crab, shrimp, fish, and pork are available year round. Fresh vegetables available include cabbage, string beans, carrots, potatoes, squash, beets, spinach, onions, okra, eggplant, cucumbers, toma-

atoes, lettuce, cauliflower, and sometimes broccoli and snow peas. Some people bring seeds for home vegetable gardens. Excellent rice is available and inexpensive. Avocados, watermelons, mangoes, papayas, pineapples, pamelos, mangosteens, strawberries, oranges, sweet limes, and tangerines can be purchased in season. Bananas and limes are sold year round.

Many items can be bought in Bangkok while out of the country, but they can be expensive and airfare is high.

Clothing

Clothing should be light, summer type fashion and washable. Very few items of Western clothing are available in shops. Bring what you need with you and use mail orders for replenishment. Bangkok is the only nearby source for ready-made clothing and footwear. Tailor made wear of excellent quality is available in Bangkok and Hong Kong. Yangon has a few acceptable dressmakers, and a limited selection of Myanmar silk and cotton is available. Those expecting to participate in sports such as golf and tennis should bring appropriate clothing and footwear with them. Bring swimwear.

Men: Most wear shirts without ties or safari suits to the office. Occasional "informal" receptions call for a business suit. Social functions are "casual," with sport shirts and slacks prevailing.

Women: In the evening, dresses and skirts are worn for both casual and informal social functions. What is appropriate for social events in the U.S. will be suitable in Myanmar, except for short skirts and dresses.

Around Yangon, skirts and modest attire are expected. Some women wear nylon hose in the cooler season. Hats are not worn. Light evening wraps, shawls, or sweaters are occasionally needed during the cool season or for trips to Upper Myanmar. Umbrellas are necessary

for the monsoon season and are sometimes used for sun protection. Raincoats are not practical in the tropical heat.

Children: Although the international school has no uniform dress code, dress, in general, should be in line with the Myanmar sense of modesty. Girls wear dresses, skirts, slacks, jeans. Boys wear long pants, jeans, and shorts. Shorts are needed for physical education by both boys and girls.

In high school, girls are not allowed to wear shorts to school except for physical education. They wear dresses, skirts, slacks, and jeans. Boys are allowed to wear the longer length shorts plus slacks and jeans. Sneakers, sandals, and thongs are common footwear; bring a good supply of children's shoes along with you.

Supplies and Services

Local dressmakers and tailors are satisfactory. Services are reasonable, and quality ranges from fair to excellent. Local sewing supplies such as thread, elastic, zippers, buttons, snaps, and interlining are of poor quality, and the supply is limited.

Laundry is usually done in the home by a maid. Good dry cleaning is available. Some personnel carry their dry cleaning along on occasional trips to Bangkok, Singapore, or Hong Kong and have it done there.

A few hairdressers are available, but styling, cutting, and cleanliness are below par. Bring any special preparations needed for hair care. Electrical appliance repair is poor; spare parts are not available.

Domestic Help

Servants' wages are reasonable. For a family, the staff usually includes a cook/bearer who cooks, serves meals, and cleans; a wash nanny to do washing and ironing; and a gardener. A driver is also helpful, particularly if children must be taken to school. A family with small children may also need a nanny to care



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Swedagon Pagoda with gilded stupas in Yangon

for the children. The employer traditionally assumes responsibility for the health and welfare of servants, and often of their families.

Religious Activities

Yangon has Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Armenian, and Seventh-day Adventist churches, a Jewish synagogue, and a Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall. English services are conducted regularly.

Education

The International School of Yangon (ISY) is a private, coeducational day school that offers an educational program from prekindergarten through grade 12 for students of all nationalities. The curriculum is that of a standard college preparatory U.S. elementary, middle, or high school. Students at the elementary level (grades 1 to 5) have daily classes in English (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), mathematics, social studies (geography, history, and social science), and science. These classes are usually

taught by the homeroom teachers. Students at the middle-school level (grades 6 to 8) begin a transition to high school. They study the same subjects as in elementary school, but may be taught by different, subject specialist teachers. Students at the high school level (grades 9 to 12) earn credits each semester in order to accumulate at least 21 credits over 4 years and earn a high school diploma. Music, art, computer studies, and physical education are offered at all grade levels. English-as-a second-language, is offered to students in grades 3 to 12.

Students in the upper grades have the opportunity to study French and Spanish as foreign languages. The testing program includes the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (grades 3-8) and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (grades 9-11). The PSAT, SAT, and TOEFL exams are regularly offered.

College Entrance: 95% of ISY graduates attend a 4-year college.

Recent graduates have matriculated at Bradley University, University of San Francisco, King's college, Ithaca College, Duquesne University, Syracuse University, Tufts University, Purdue University, Colorado School of Mines, Texas' Women University, University of Houston, State University of New York, Hamilton College, Fordham University, Queen's University, McGill University, Carnegie Mellon University, Duke University, Cornell University, Bucknell University, University of Pacific, Tulane University, Colorado College, University of California Santa Cruz.

ISY is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and by the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools.

There were 46 full-time and 3 part-time faculty members at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year, including 30 U.S. citizens, 15 host country nationals, and 4 third-country nationals.

Enrollment at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year was 342 (pre-kindergarten through grade 12), including 40 U.S. citizens, 108 host country nationals and 194 children of other nationalities.

The school is governed by a 9-member Board of Management. Eight members are elected for 2-year terms by the Parents Association, the sponsors of the school. Membership in the association is automatically conferred on the parents or guardians of children enrolled in the school. One member of the Board of Management represents the U. S. Ambassador. ISY is in practice sponsored by the U.S. Embassy. The school is nonprofit and nonsectarian. It is unofficially permitted to operate by the Myanmar Government.

The school consists of six buildings on a 4-acre site in a residential area of Yangon. It has a well-equipped library, two music rooms, 2 art rooms, 2 computer rooms, 2 science laboratories and a multipurpose room. All indoor facilities are air-conditioned. There is a playground, a playing field, and 2 basketball/volleyball courts. No boarding facilities are available.

Annual tuition rates for 2000-2001 are as follows: prekindergarten; \$1,706, kindergarten; \$5,640, and grades 1 to 12, \$7,890. These fees are payable in U.S. dollars only. There is a registration fee of \$1,000, payable by each new student. In addition, a capital fee of \$4,000 per new student (grades 1-12) is levied. The capital fee for kindergarten is \$1,000. If a child has paid \$1,000 in kindergarten, he/she will be asked to pay the remaining \$3,000 when he/she enters first grade. Fees are payable by semester.

The school year is divided into two semesters. In 2000-2001, the dates are August 9-December 22 and January 15-May 30. Classes meet Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. After-school activities often extend the day to 3:30 p.m. or later.

Special Educational Opportunities

Art classes are available by excellent Myanmar artists, but bring your own supplies. Local special meditation centers accept foreigners as students. Private tutoring can also be arranged for various foreign languages and for piano and guitar lessons. Inexpensive guitars are available locally but are of poor quality, and pianos can be rented but their quality ranges from fair to poor.

Burmese-language classes are available as are private tutors are available.

Sports

Yangon's climate and facilities make outdoor sports possible and enjoyable except during the 2-3 months of heavy monsoon. Almost every sport is available in Yangon.

From November to March, softball is a major part of the sports scene. The AERA sponsors a slow-pitch league with men's and women's divisions, and the international and Myanmar communities field teams. There are also T-Ball and softball leagues for children ages 5-13. Bring shoes, gloves, and caps. Metal cleats are not permitted. The leagues play their games on the weekends and provide a spectator sport for the whole community.

In May, volleyball succeeds the softball season at the AERA Club. The game is enjoyed by most of the American and international community.

Tennis is very popular among the American and international community. Tennis is played mainly at American homes or compounds with courts. Good tennis racquets are sold locally. Tennis shoes wear out rapidly on the cement courts. Excellent instruction is available at reasonable fees.

Two 18-hole golf courses, the Myanmar Golf Club and the Yangon Golf Club, are located 10 miles and 16 miles, respectively, from downtown. Clubs, gloves, and bags are not

available, but golf balls are sold occasionally at the course. Golfers should bring umbrellas, canvas shoes, and moisture-proof shoes as the courses are very wet during the rainy season. Instruction is inexpensive and good.

The Yangon Sailing Club on Inya Lake provides small sailboats, 12-foot Sharpies and 14-foot Raters, for members. Old hands are willing to help beginners. Races are held weekly.

The Yangon Riding Club is located at the Kyaikkasan Grounds about 3-4 miles from downtown Yangon. English riding instruction is available from Myanmar riding masters. The horses and livery are not the best however. Another riding Club is situated downtown by the Mingala Market. It is not recommended for beginners as the horses are not well trained.

Myanmar travel regulations severely limit available hunting areas, and permission to import firearms is extremely difficult to obtain. Bird watching opportunities are good, but vary seasonally and by location. Despite travel restrictions in more remote areas, dry-season viewing is good at the Moyhingyi bird sanctuary, Hlawgar Reservoir near Yangon, at Pagan, and at the Botanic Gardens at Maymyo, among other places.

Individual hobbies and interests are more important here than in the U.S. A quilting and sewing group of ladies gather on a regular basis. Bring all hobby supplies as little is available locally. The International School has a good library for a school of its size; the British Embassy library also has some children's books. Families should include a supply of children's books in their effects. Bring along a TV and VCR (VHS type) for additional home entertainment.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Travelers, except those on tourist visas, who wish to tour up country must submit their plans to the Min-



Temples atop a mountain in Mandalay

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

istry of Foreign Affairs 10 workdays in advance. Government approval can sometimes be obtained and arrangements made for large groups to rent riverboats for a day's trip.

Because Yangon is not typical of Myanmar, visits to other points of interest are recommended. Mandalay, the last capital of the Myanmar kings, still retains historical and cultural interest. It is reached by plane (55 minutes). Air schedule reliability varies. Travel by car to Mandalay takes 14-16 hours over poor roads. It is a 14-17 hour trip by overnight train—the rail bed is rough.

Many places of historic, cultural, and artistic interest are in Mandalay or within easy driving distance. Ancient and modern pagodas dot the landscape, particularly in Sagaing, across the Irrawaddy River, and Ava and Amarapura, all former Myanmar capitals. Photography buffs can find many interesting scenes.

Maymyo, a British hill station and summer capital before independence, is in the mountains 42 miles northeast of Mandalay and provides a welcome relief from Mandalay heat. Maymyo has an excellent 18-

hole golf course, and tennis is also popular in the area.

Pagan, the ancient capital during the golden era of Myanmar history (C.E. 10th-13th centuries), is the site of hundreds of pagodas, many in ruins, but many still preserved as religious and cultural monuments. It may be reached by a daily flight from Yangon (1-1/4 hours). For hardy adventurers, Pagan can be reached by river steamer from Mandalay (12 hours).

The other hill station of Kalaw and the Shan Plateau town of Taunggyi have cooler temperatures than Yangon and Mandalay and offer lovely mountain scenery and colorful market/bazaars. Taunggyi may be reached by plane (1 hour, 20 minutes) from Yangon, plus a 45-minute bus ride. Kalaw, approached on the same plane ride, requires 2 hours by bus. Inle Lake lies slightly to the south. Its villages and pagodas, which are built on the lake are a favorite tourist spot. Sandoway, on the Arakan coast, is Myanmar's finest accessible beach and is popular with both Myanmar and Westerners. Regular flights, 4 days a week, are available to Sandoway (45 minutes). However, during the beach season the Tourist Agency makes a special arrangement with the Air-

ways Corporation to accommodate passengers, and flights are available daily but schedules are irregular.

Another seaside resort is Chaung Tha in the Bassein District. This place is conveniently accessible by road. One can drive in either private or rented vehicles. The journey takes approximately 7 hours and is open daily during the summer season. During the rainy season the road is rough. This seaside beach was recently opened by the host government and is popular with Myanmar and foreigners. Accommodations are available and fairly modest.

Regional places of interest outside Myanmar include Bangkok, Penang, Angkor Wat, Kuala Lumpur, Bali, Cameron Highlands, Jakarta, Singapore, Calcutta, New Delhi, and Kathmandu. Sightseeing in Yangon should include the numerous pagodas as well as local shops and bazaars and the various artisans who hand-fashion Myanmar goods. Children enjoy the zoo. An interesting circular train trip around Yangon takes 2 hours.

During the year several colorful festivals are held, such as the Festival of Lights and the 4-day Water Festival (when everyone gets drenched). Other interesting cultural events are the Indian fire-walking ceremonies, the Myanmar pwes (plays), Myanmar dancing, and puppet shows.

Myanmar is a Buddhist country, and visitors are expected to show respect to the Buddhist pagodas and Buddhist monks, easily identified by their saffron robes. Visitors to pagodas must remove shoes and socks before entering roofed walkways on grounds leading to the pagodas.

The photographer will find many interesting scenes in Myanmar. Local processing of black and white and color film is good. Batteries and other camera accessories are not normally available locally.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

A street scene in Myanmar

Entertainment

Six movie theaters in Yangon feature Myanmar, Indian, European, Chinese, Japanese, and American films. Projection equipment is good, but theaters are hot and uncomfortable, and the doors are locked during the shows, which in case of fire, would be extremely dangerous.

Social Activities

The American community in Yangon consists mainly of Embassy personnel and teachers at the school and their dependents. A few Americans are assigned to Myanmar by various U.N. agencies and NGOs. The total American community, including children, does not exceed 180.

Much of the community's social life centers around the AERA Club facilities, the Australian Club and the British Club. Numerous hotels around town also offer an alternative to the Clubs. These facilities are supplemented by extensive home entertaining.

Yangon's two golf clubs and the sailing club provide pleasant surroundings for meeting Myanmar and third country nationals. The International Cultural Group, an organization of Myanmar women and Embassy wives, sponsors a wide

spectrum of activities with an international flavor. The U.N. Women's Association offers a way to make contact with a wide variety of expatriates and local women.

Mandalay

Mandalay was founded as a new royal capital (replacing Amarapura) in 1860, and the picturesque palace walls and side moat still are near the heart of the city. Even though Mandalay did not long endure as the last royal capital—it was taken over by the British when they annexed all of Upper Myanmar in 1886—it remains a major center of the country's cultural and religious life.

Moreover, with its location on the Irrawaddy River near the geographic center of Myanmar, and its urban population which is close to 535,000, Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city, is the most important administrative, commercial, and political city in the northern section of the country. Situated over 400 miles north of Yangon, the climate is both hotter and drier than that of the capital. Mandalay was heavily damaged during World War II, when shelling destroyed the royal palace and several pagodas.

Life is relatively relaxed in Mandalay, more attuned to the pace of the horse cart than to the automobile. Few Westerners live in the city. There are no bright lights, but for people who can forgo some of the Western amenities and adjust to its slower tempo, Mandalay has a certain quiet charm and hospitality. It provides an intimate glimpse into an Asian society.

There are many places of historic, cultural, and artistic interest in Mandalay or within easy driving distance. The city is noted for the Arakan pagoda, which is built around an ancient shrine. Ancient and modern pagodas dot the landscape, particularly in Sagaing, across the Irrawaddy River, and in Ava and Amarapura, which were all former royal capitals. Photography buffs can find many interesting scenes. A group of sacred buildings called the Seven Hundred and Thirty Pagodas was built during the reign of King Mindon, 1853–1878. Maymyo, a British hill station and summer capital before independence, is in the mountains 42 miles northeast of Mandalay, and provides a welcome relief from Mandalay's heat. Maymyo has an excellent 18-hole golf course, and tennis is also popular in the area.

Modest accommodations in hotels or government-owned circuit houses are available at some tourist spots. Trips to other parts of Myanmar, and overnight stops between Yangon and Mandalay or Kalaw present some difficulties.

OTHER CITIES

AMARAPURA is located on the Irrawaddy River in central Myanmar, just south of Mandalay and 325 miles north of Yangon. Founded in 1782, Amarapura was the capital of Myanmar from 1783 to 1823 and, again, from 1837 to 1860, and is considered one of the country's oldest centers of civilization. The city's royal palace, magnificent temples, and fortifications are in ruins. Today, with an estimated popula-

tion exceeding 150,000, Amarapura is a silk-weaving center with various handicraft industries.

BASSEIN is located in southern Myanmar, about 85 miles west of Yangon. Situated at the western edge of the Irrawaddy Delta, it is accessible by large vessels and is one of Myanmar's chief ports. A rice-milling and export center, with 145,000 residents, Bassein also handles teak and bamboo. A fort was established here by the British in 1852. The city was occupied by the Japanese during World War II.

BHAMO, situated in northeastern Myanmar on the Irrawaddy River, is the head of navigation on the river. Important for its ruby mines, Bhamo is also the market town for the surrounding hill region. Located 175 miles north of Mandalay, Bhamo was historically significant as a center for overland trade with China. During World War II, the Stillwell Road linked Bhamo to Ledo, India. The population is estimated at more than 25,000.

HENZADA is the capital of Henzada District, 75 miles northwest of Yangon. It is connected by rail with Bassein. Henzada is the center of rice and tobacco cultivation.

MOGOK, about 65 miles north of Mandalay, is a small town known as the centuries-old center of the country's ruby trade.

MOULMEIN, the country's third largest city, is located in southeastern Myanmar almost directly across the Gulf of Martaban from Yangon. Moulmein has a population of 220,000 and, as a river port and commercial center, it has shipyards and teak mills. The chief town of British Myanmar, Moulmein is one of the few places where trained elephants are still used in lumber mills.

MYITKYINA is located on the Irrawaddy River in northern Myanmar, near the Chinese border, and about 240 miles north of Mandalay. The most important town in northern Myanmar, Myitkyina is a trade



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Local restaurant in Yangon

center for teak and jade, as well as the extreme northern terminus of a railroad line from Yangon. It was captured by Allied troops in August 1944 after a 78-day siege, marking a turning point in Myanmar's liberation from the Japanese. The population is estimated at more than 20,000.

PYÈ (also called Prome) is located on the Irrawaddy River in south central Myanmar, about 240 miles south of Mandalay and 150 miles north of Yangon. Pyè is one of the oldest cities in Myanmar, founded in the eighth century; it became part of British Myanmar in 1852. Today, Pyè has an estimated population of more than 80,000, and is a commercial town and port, with railroad connections to Yangon. Visitors can see the ruins of ancient Pyè near the modern city.

SANDOWAY, on the Arkan coast, is the finest accessible beach in Myanmar, and is popular with both the Myanma people and Westerners. Daily flights are available during the tourist season, which usually lasts from November through May.

SITTWE, formerly called Akyab, is located on the Bay of Bengal, 325 miles northwest of Yangon. Originally a small fishing village, it

became a port for exporting rice after being occupied by the British in 1826. Sittwe has a population of approximately 108,000. Sittwe is an important port and rice-milling center.

TAVOY, situated on the left bank of the Tavoy River, is about 160 miles west of Bangkok, Thailand. The city is an important port and exports tin ore.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Myanmar (also known as Burma), with an area of 262,000 square miles (slightly smaller than Texas), is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia. Yangon (also called Rangoon), the capital (population about 5.5 million), is Myanmar's largest city. Mandalay (population 700,000) is second. Myanmar's population is about 49 million.

Yangon is Myanmar's most important port for both domestic and foreign trade. Located on the Yangon River, 30 miles north of the Gulf of Martaban, it serves not only ocean-

going freighters and tankers but also river steamers and country craft that ply Yangon's major waterways. The city is built on flat lowland bounded on three sides by the Pazundaung Creek and the Yangon and Hlaing Rivers. The surrounding countryside consists of rice paddies, patches of brush, and occasional rubber plantations.

Located in the Southeast Asian monsoon belt, Yangon has a tropical climate with three distinct seasons: monsoon, cool, and hot. During the monsoon season, mid-May through mid-October, Yangon receives most of its 100-inch plus average annual rainfall. Temperatures are moderate (75°F-90°F), but relative humidity is high. During the monsoon, dampness and mildew can cause serious damage to clothing, furniture, books, records, electrical appliances, and leather goods.

In mid-November, after a brief period of warm, humid weather, the cool season begins from then until March, weather is pleasant (60°F-90°F) with lower humidity and almost no rain. Days are sunny and clear; nights are cool. In March, temperatures and humidity rise until the monsoon begins in mid-May. During the March-May hot season, the weather is hot and humid, usually rising in the day to over 100°F. As at most tropical posts, insects and snakes are numerous year round.

Population

Most of Myanmar's 42 million people are ethnic Myanmas. Shans, Karens, Kachins, Chins, Mons, and many other smaller indigenous ethnic groups form about 30% of the population. Indians and Chinese are the largest foreign groups. Although Burmese is the most widely spoken language, other ethnic groups have retained their own languages. Many people in Yangon speak English. The Indian and Chinese residents speak various languages and dialects of their homelands: Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Bengali, Mandarin, Fukienese, and Cantonese. The variety of racial

types, languages, customs, and other cultural manifestations creates a cosmopolitan atmosphere. About a hundred non-U.S. Government Americans and 60 U.S. Government employees and dependents live in Myanmar. Yangon's diplomatic community includes employees of the U.N. and its specialized agencies and officials from 26 embassies.

Public Institutions

The Union of Myanmar consists of 14 states and divisions. Administrative control is exercised from the central government at Yangon through a system of subordinate executive bodies.

The people of Myanmar continue to live under a highly repressive, authoritarian military regime. The international community widely condemns that regime for its serious human rights abuses. The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), Myanmar's ruling military junta since 1997, has made no significant changes in the governing policies of its predecessor, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which seized power in 1988. Elections for a civilian government were held in May 1990. Although the National League for Democracy (NLD) won over 80% of the parliamentary seats, the military refused to cede power to the civilian government. Instead the SLORC and the SPDC have attacked the coalition of winning parties and their leaders through intimidation, detention and arrests. The military government appears determined to ensure a dominant role for the military services in the country's future political structure.

Arts, Science, and Education

The population of Myanmar includes seven major ethnic groups and a number of smaller groups. Almost 70% are Burmese, a Tibeto-Mongolian people. The myths, traditions, and religions derive largely from India and have mixed with folk

traditions of Myanmar's varied peoples to form a unique Myanmar culture. The merger of Hindu and Buddhist influences is seen in the ruins of Pagan and in the dramatic fine arts of today, which include music, dance, puppetry, painting, tapestry, and sculpture.

Myanmar's long and continuing isolation has degraded its scientific resources and capacity. Although medical schools continue to produce medical personnel with basic knowledge, the public health system has deteriorated because of under funding and neglect. Two major technical universities (plus a military science and technology school) have engineering programs, but facilities and resources are old and outdated.

Myanmar has 105 institutions of higher learning, including 16 universities, 4 professional institutes, 9 degree-granting colleges, 10 intermediate colleges, and 19 education colleges under the Ministry of Education. Other ministries administer institutes of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, animal husbandry and veterinary science, agriculture, and forestry. Many of the universities and colleges, however, have been closed for lengthy periods during the 1990s. More than two thirds of the university population is now in distance learning programs. Instruction is in English or Burmese, depending on the subject. Few foreigners attend Burmese institutions of higher learning. Those who are admitted generally attend the University of Foreign Languages and study some aspect of the Burmese language. A university for the propagation of Theravada Buddhism has opened and encourages enrollment by foreigners interested in Buddhism.

Commerce and Industry

Myanmar is a resource-rich country with a strong agricultural base. It also has vast timber and fishery reserves and is a leading source of gems and jade. Tourist potential is great but remains undeveloped because of weak infrastructure and Myanmar's pariah state international image, due to the junta's

human rights abuses and oppression of the democratic opposition.

Long-term economic mismanagement under military rule has prevented the economy from developing in line with its potential. Myanmar experienced 26 years of socialist rule under Dictator General Ne Win from 1962-1987. In 1988 the economy collapsed and prodemocracy demonstrators took to the streets. The military junta that assumed control, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), violently put an end to the civil unrest and pledged to move toward a market based economy. Although significant economic reforms resulting in strong private sector growth were enacted in the early 1990s, the state remains heavily involved in economic policy and additional, much needed reforms have not been forthcoming. The benefits of economic liberalization have not been widely shared. The vast majority of Burmese nationals subsist on a standard of living not much different from 10 years ago. Also, rampant inflation caused primarily by public sector deficit spending has eroded economic gains for many persons.

After the military junta disavowed the results of the 1990 parliamentary election, which was won overwhelmingly by the National League for Democracy led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the U.S. imposed a host of broad-reaching sanctions against the regime. The U.S. opposes the extension of international financial assistance to Myanmar, prohibits military sales, suspended economic aid and commercial assistance programs, banned the issuance of U.S. visas to members of the military elite, and downgraded our representation in Yangon from Ambassador to Charge. In 1997, by Executive Order, the President banned new U.S. investment in Myanmar. In addition to Federal sanctions, 26 state and local governments have enacted selective purchasing laws that penalize companies doing business in Myanmar. A number of other countries, including the EU, Canada, Australia, Japan and

Korea have enacted some form of sanctions against the regime.

Myanmar remains a primarily agricultural economy with 43% of GDP derived from agriculture, livestock and fisheries, and forestry. Manufacturing constitutes only 9% of recorded economic activity, and state industries continue to play a large role in that sector. Services now constitute nearly 19% of GDP. According to official figures, GDP growth averaged over 5% annually throughout the 1990s. However, inflation exceeded 30% in many of those years. Myanmar runs a growing annual trade deficit, and foreign exchange reserves are in short supply.

The government continues to monopolize key sectors, including international rice and timber sales. Efforts to privatize state industries have been largely halted in recent years. In the past few years, the military has strengthened its hold over the economy through the activities of Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd. (MEHL). These two military conglomerates control a large portion of private sector activity, including a number of key joint venture corporations. The military suspended independent audits of MEC and MEHL in 1999.

Under the military junta (renamed the State Peace and Development Council in 1997), the move to a market economy appears to have favored crony capitalism. A handful of companies loyal to the regime have enjoyed policies that promote monopoly and privilege among few. For example, the National Entrepreneurs, about 20 construction companies that signed on to develop farmlands, were given special vehicle import permits and discounted interest rates on commercial loans in FY 98/99. Companies not in league with the military leadership have found it preferable to keep a low profile.

Economic growth slowed considerably after FY 96-97. Foreign investment approvals declined by 98% in

FY 98-99, due in part to the effects of the Asian financial crisis. The economy continues to suffer from severe macro-economic imbalances due primarily to faulty economic management. The official exchange rate overvalues the Burmese kyat by 54 times the market rate, causing serious distortions in economic accounts and official data. The government maintains a loose monetary policy, cutting the interest rate three times in the past 2 years to prime the economy despite rampant inflation. Interest rates are sharply negative in real terms. General Maung Aye, Commander in Chief of the Armed Services, has executed growing control over trade and regulatory policy via the Trade Policy Council, an extraministerial committee overseeing economic policy. Since 1998, trade policy has become more restrictive. Due to various disagreements with Thailand, the Myanmar-Thai border has been shut down for months at a time on several occasions.

During the past 10 years of military rule, socioeconomic indicators have shown scant improvement. According to the World Bank, per capita income is about \$300. The number of families in absolute poverty is nearly 23%. Only 60% of the population have access to safe drinking water. Malnutrition, infant and maternal mortality all remain miserably high. The military government has dedicated fewer and fewer resources to health and education. Government expenditures on these two sectors combined total only 1.2% of GDP. In contrast, 40% of the government ministries budgets is dedicated to defense.

Singapore is the largest investor in Myanmar, with concerns concentrated in hotels and tourism and light manufacturing, such as beverages and tobacco. Thailand is another large investor. Western investment in Myanmar has focused largely on the extractive industries of oil and natural gas, and mining. The single largest foreign investment in the country is the \$1.2 billion Yadana natural gas pipeline from the offshore Yadana

natural gas reserve to Thailand. That investment is operated by Total Fina of France, and is jointly owned with UNOCAL of the U.S., PTT of Thailand, and Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE). A second offshore natural gas pipeline to Thailand, the Yetagun pipeline, is still under construction. It is operated by Premier Petroleum of the UK and is coowned by a consortium involving Nippon of Japan, PTT of Thailand, Petronas of Malaysia, and MOGE.

Myanmar exports primarily commodities, with pulses and beans, prawns and seafood, teak and hardwoods, sesame seeds, corn and rubber accounting for 50% of annual export earnings. In recent years, the production of pulses and beans, a largely free-market crop, has soared. Rice production and trade, which is heavily regulated by the state, has not shown similar gains. Uncut teak logs remain a top export.

Foreign trade has expanded since most trade was privatized and cross-border trade was legalized in late 1988, but Myanmar continues to operate a large trade deficit. Myanmar's chief trading partners are Singapore, Japan, Thailand, China, and Bangladesh. The U.S. has a minor trading relationship with Myanmar. However, Myanmar's exports of garments and textiles to the U.S. has more than doubled in the past 2 years, reaching \$186 million in FY 98/99.

Labor unions have been forbidden since the 1988 military takeover. Myanmar is under investigation by the International Labor Organization (ILO) for its forced labor practices.

Transportation

Automobiles

Cars older than 10 years may not be imported. Smaller cars and four-door cars have a better resale value. Fuel-injected vehicles are not recommended. Air-conditioning is a must. Cars shipped to Myanmar

should have good tires and a good battery, since replacements are difficult to find, take time to receive, and are costly to ship.

Those shipping a car should bring a factory handbook and a supply of spare parts, including spark plugs, fan belts, ignition kits, oil and air filters, wiper blades, and a carburetor kit. Repair parts are not always available in Yangon but can be ordered or obtained from Bangkok, Singapore, Tokyo or the U.S. Local mechanics vary in ability from poor to good. Many are skilled in "make do" repairs that keep vehicles operating when parts are not available.

Local

Buses are unsafe and overcrowded. Taxis are available, not necessarily safe, and rates must be negotiated.

Regional

Mingaladon Airport, about 13 miles (30 minutes) from the Embassy in downtown Yangon, has domestic and international flights. Airlines servicing Myanmar are Myanmar Airways (UB), Thai Airways (TG) and Silk Air (MI), plus 4-5 smaller airlines with regional flights. UB and TG have daily flights to and from Bangkok, but flight confirmations usually cannot be made from the U.S. because of the lack of a computer system.

Internal air service is available but risky. Only Mandalay Air and Yangon Air are approved for USG travelers. Travel by car and train is possible in the dry season, but roads and rail tracks are subject to wash-out in the rainy season. Gasoline available outside of Yangon is leaded and 80-82 octane.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

International, in-country and local telephone service in Myanmar is unreliable and expensive. For example, an International call to the U.S. ranges between \$4.50-\$7 per minute depending where the call is made, i.e., hotels charge the most to make a call. Calls to neighboring

Asian countries average \$2.00 per minute. However, the general condition of the country's outdated telecommunications infrastructure is poor, and desperately needs upgrading to meet the demands of a capital city. The current system that services Yangon barely copes with current demand. Additionally, the heavy monsoon rains that fall between May and September only make matters worse. Unfortunately, there are no known plans by the government to modernize its telephone infrastructure to improve telephone service within Myanmar.

However, according to the government-controlled Myanmar Times, GSM cellular telephone service is scheduled for implementation. This same newspaper article reads that Myanmar Public Telephone (MPT), will be selling the cellular handsets for approximately \$1,500 each. Airtime is not included.

Facsimile service is available at major hotels. Fax service has proved relatively reliable considering the condition of the telephone transmission lines. International fax messages are charged the same rates as an international call.

E-mail service is available locally for home or business use for roughly \$2 per hour. The initial cost for E-mail in one's home or office is roughly \$250. This fee includes modem and software.

Mail

The international mail system is slow: 2 to 3 weeks for letter mail, plus pilferage and censorship are common.

Radio and TV

Shortwave radio reception in Myanmar is satisfactory. Multiband portable receivers can pick up VOA, BBC, Radio Australia, and other international broadcasts. Radio Myanmar is the only station in Myanmar. It broadcasts in English 2-112 hours daily and is limited to brief international news and music.

Myanmar has limited TV service with broadcasting of about 5 hours

each night, and on weekends, an additional 2 hours in the morning, and 3 hours in the afternoon. Locally produced programming is in Burmese, with a short satellite news segment and a feature entertainment program in English. Broadcasting is in the U.S. NTSC system and usually in color.

Videotapes are very popular in Yangon and there are numerous video stores eager for your business. However, the tape quality from these shops is poor, but the tapes are inexpensive to rent. Tapes from the Local rental shops use both NTSC and the PAL format.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

One English-language daily newspaper, The New Light of Myanmar, offers limited international news, highly censored local coverage, and much propaganda. The Myanmar Times and Business Report is published weekly and offers thinly veiled propaganda and some economic, cultural, and social news. The monthly Today magazine provides stories and information useful for foreign visitors and residents in Myanmar. The International Herald Tribune, Time, Newsweek, Far Eastern Economic Review, and Asia Week are sold locally for hard currency at a few selected locations, but are occasionally censored when stories refer to Myanmar.

Yangon has a few used book shops, which carry outdated English-language books and periodicals. The American Center Information Resource Center has a collection of historical books on Myanmar and materials on the U.S. The British Council and Alliance Française also have libraries. Unfortunately, Internet is still not available in Myanmar, so online ordering is not possible.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Yangon hospitals are crowded. Sub-optimal in sanitation, physical plants are in poor condition and emergency equipment is sparse and primitive in nature. Regional evacuation points are Bangkok and Singapore depending on severity of patient's condition.

There are two expatriate clinics in Yangon:

(1) SOS International is situated at The New World Inya Lake Hotel, #37, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road. It offers the following core services: 24-hour alarm center; family medicine practice and outpatient facility; pharmacy; X-ray facility; specialist consultations and referrals; 24-hour emergency medical unit; emergency medical evacuation. It is staffed by one expatriate doctor and three local doctors. Recently, however, SOS International has advised that they are reducing operations and cutting staff.

(2) Pacific Medical Center is situated at #81, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road. They also have a pharmacy; Lab; X-ray facility and dental clinic. It is staffed by three local doctors and specialists for consultation when required. It opens for 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. from Monday to Saturday.

Dental care is available in Yangon, but in general, it is substandard. Significant dental problems for which treatment cannot be delayed are sent to Bangkok. Travel and minimum per diem are provided when justified. A recent exam and all necessary dental work should be completed before arrival in Yangon. Yangon has two dental clinics run by a foreign-trained orthodontist.

Community Health

Local sanitation and health conditions are poor. All water must be boiled and filtered to make it potable. Fecal-oral disease transmission is a major public health concern in Myanmar.

Local dairy products are not considered safe. Most Americans buy canned or powdered milk from the commissary. Local fruits and vegetables should be scrubbed and soaked in a Clorox solution. Local restaurants do not maintain U.S. levels of sanitation.

The health of servants is important in maintaining family health. Pre-employment physicals, immunizations, and constant health supervision are strongly recommended.

Preventive Measures

The only required immunization for entry into Myanmar is yellow fever, and then only if coming from endemic areas of South America or Africa. Immunizations recommended for Myanmar (in addition to those given in the U.S.) are: hepatitis B, Japanese B encephalitis, typhoid, rabies, and Hepatitis A. All can be received at post.

Bacillary and amoebic dysentery are prevalent. A variety of intestinal roundworms and other parasites commonly infect people. Careful food preparation, strict personal hygiene, supervision of the cleanliness and health of servants, and avoidance of local restaurants help reduce opportunities for infections.

Myanmar's increasing prevalence of tuberculosis (a result of overcrowding and taxing of public utilities), makes use of public transportation, movie theaters, restaurants, etc., unduly hazardous. Increased contamination during the early part of the very heavy monsoon season gives rise to increases in many diseases each June and July. Because of the presence of several varieties of poisonous snakes and endemic rabies (beware of stray dogs), antivenom and rabies vaccines are available in the Medical Unit.

Malaria is a serious problem in the rural areas of Myanmar, but transmission occurs very rarely in Yangon. No drug prophylaxis is necessary in Yangon or most of the usual tourist sites in the country. Prophylaxis is necessary in some

areas. Dengue, another mosquito-borne disease, occurs throughout the country, including Yangon, and protective measures to avoid mosquito bites should be used. The peak season of dengue hemorrhagic fever is June-July and again in November-December. Health Unit supplies mosquito nets, repellents and Malaria Prophylactic Medications.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 4	Independence Day
Feb. 12	Union Day
Mar.	Full moon of Tabaung*
Mar. 2	Peasants' Day
Mar. 27	Armed Forces Day
Apr.	Thingyan (Water Festival)*
Apr. 17	Myanmar New Year
Apr/May	Full Moon of Kason*
June/July	Full moon of Waso*
July	Buddhist Lent begins*
July 19	Martyrs' Day
Sept/Oct.	Full Moon of Thadingyut*
Oct.	Buddhist Lent ends*
Oct/Nov.	Full moon of Tazaungmon*
Nov.	Tazaungdaing (Full Moon festival)*
Nov. 13	National Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Diwali*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Id al-Fitr*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties
Most arrive in Yangon by air. American carriers must be used for as

much of the journey as possible. The most commonly used transfer point is Bangkok, where an overnight stop is usually necessary. Only Thai Airlines and Myanmar International Airways fly to Yangon from Bangkok.

Travel to, from and within Myanmar is strictly controlled by the Government of Myanmar. A passport and visa are required. Travelers are required to show their passports with valid visa at airports, train stations and hotels. There are frequent security roadblocks on all roads and immigration checkpoints in Myanmar, even on domestic air flights.

Upon entry into Myanmar, tourists are required to exchange a minimum of \$200 (U.S.) for Foreign Exchange Certificates (FEC). The FEC office is located between Immigration and Customs. The face value of the FEC, issued in denominations from one to 20 dollar equivalents, is equal to the U.S. dollar, but its actual value fluctuates. Any amount over \$200 (U.S.) may be exchanged back to U.S. dollars. The first \$200 (U.S.) cannot be exchanged back into U.S. dollars. These procedures are subject to change without notice.

The military government rarely issues visas to journalists, and several journalists traveling to Myanmar on tourist visas have been denied entry. Journalists, and tourists mistaken for journalists, have been harassed. Some journalists have had film and notes confiscated upon leaving the country.

Information about entry requirements as well as other information may be obtained from the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar, 2300 S Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone 202-332-9044/6, or the Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the U.N. 10 East 77th St., New York, N.Y. 10021, telephone 212-535-1311. Overseas inquiries may be made at the nearest embassy or consulate of Myanmar (Burma).

Unrestricted travel exists to the main tourist areas of Pagan, Inle Lake and the Mandalay area. The military government restricts access to some areas of the country on an ad hoc basis. Those planning to travel in Myanmar should check with Burmese tourism authorities to see if travel is permitted. However, some tourists traveling to places where permission is not expressly required have reported delays due to questioning by local security personnel. Reportedly, 10 of the 14 Burmese states and divisions are polluted with anti-personnel land mines.

Customs officials may confiscate prohibited items such as firearms (including air-powered guns and toy guns), ammunition, and certain books, photographs and magazines that might be considered offensive.

On all outgoing shipments, the number of boxes/vans and weight is checked against the same information listed in the documents when a traveler entered the country. Discrepancies either up or down, which cannot be explained, may result in your outgoing shipment being delayed in customs.

Permits are required for export of teak/rattan furniture, antique lacquerware or wood carvings, and jewelry. Itemized lists and receipts for such purchases should be retained.

U.S. citizens living or in or visiting Myanmar are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security within the country from the Embassy. The U.S. Embassy is located at 581 Merchant Street, Yangon, tel. (95-1) 282055 and (95-1) 282182; fax (95-1) 256018

Pets

Pets are not quarantined if accompanied by a health certificate and proof of rabies vaccination. Pet food and supplies are available most of the time in local supermarkets. Local veterinarians are sometimes competent but often lack medicines; when supplied, they are of unfavourable quality.

miliar brands. E-mail consultations with a stateside vet are invaluable. Clipping service is not available; dog owners should bring their own clippers.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

There are two Burmese currencies, Kyat (pronounced "Chat" (rhymes with Shot)) and Foreign Exchange Certificates (FECs). Kyat are the most prevalent and widely accepted, with the value fluctuating on a daily basis. FECs are essentially "dollar equivalency" currency and are valued at a fixed rate of one FEC/\$1.00.

There are no restrictions on the amount of dollars, traveler's checks or other foreign currency brought into Myanmar.

Local currency checking accounts cannot be opened by foreigners in Myanmar. Business transactions are generally on a cash basis. Not all major credit cards can be used in Myanmar, and generally only large international hotels in Yangon and Mandalay accept them. There are no automatic cash machines in the country to access currency from overseas, and it is not possible to cash a personal check drawn on a foreign bank.

Although money changers sometimes approach travelers to offer to change dollars into Burmese kyat at the market rate, it is illegal to exchange currency except at authorized locations such as the airport, banks and government stores.

Foreign Exchange Certificates (FEC) are required by foreigners for the payment of plane tickets, train tickets and most hotels. Burmese kyat are accepted for most other transactions. It is possible to purchase FEC with some credit cards at the Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank in Yangon or any place that exchanges foreign currency.

In Myanmar, the weight utilized for gold is called tical. One tical equals 58 ounces, or 1 ounce equals 1.72 ticals. At the local market all foodstuffs are weighed in viss and ticals.

One viss equals 3.6 pounds, and there are 100 ticals to a viss. Liquid capacity for gasoline (Burmese call it petrol) is measured by the U.K. gallon. One gallon equals 4.5 liters

Special Information

Burmese authorities require that hotels and guesthouses furnish information about the identities and activities of their foreign guests. Burmese who interact with foreigners may be compelled to report on those interactions to the Burmese Government.

Taking photographs of people in uniform or any military installation is discouraged by Burmese authorities, and it could lead to arrest or the confiscation of cameras and film.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published in this country.

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- Burma Net: www.burmanet.org
- Democratic Voice of Burma:
www.communicate.no/dvb
- Burma Project:
www.soros.org/burma.html
- Free Burma:
www.sunsite.unc.edu/freeburma
- Free Burma Coalition:
www.danenet.wicip.org/fbc
- Free Burma.Org:
www.freeburma.org
- State Peace and Development Council Website:
www.myaDmar.com
- Internet News Groups**
- soc.culture.burma
- soc.culture.asean
- soc.rights.burma
- apc.reg.burma

NAURU

Republic of Nauru

Major City:

No official capital; government offices in Yaren District

INTRODUCTION

The original inhabitants of **NAURU** came from a mixture of people from Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia. Nauru remained fairly isolated until the early 19th century, when it became a base for American whalers. In the late 19th century the island came under German administration, which discovered the island's immense phosphate reserves and developed them. In 1914 Nauru was surrendered to Australia. Nauru was made a League of Nations mandate of the British Empire in 1919, and was occupied by the Japanese and bombed by the Allies during World War II. In 1947 it became a trust territory of the United Nations, administered by Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Nauru became the world's smallest independent republic on January 31, 1968. Nauru's economy relies entirely on exports from phosphate mining. A century of mining, however, has left the landscape barren, and phosphate reserves are all but exhausted. Profits from the phosphate industry have been invested abroad for when the phosphate runs out. Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom have agreed to compensate Nauru with \$73 million for the loss of the island's topsoil that occurred from phosphate min-

ing during the years of the League of Nations mandate and United Nations trusteeship.

MAJOR CITY

Since it is so small, Nauru has no major city. The **YAREN DISTRICT**, on the southwest part of the island, is the main distribution area for goods and the center of the island's government. In 2000, the estimated population was 10,000. Many residents go shopping in Yaren once a week. The government-owned Nauru Phosphate Corp. is the primary employer. Others work in public administration and education. There is a marina. Nauru's own airline, Air Nauru, has scheduled flights to Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane), Pohnpei and Guam in Micronesia, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Manila in the Philippines.

Recreation and Entertainment

Nauru lies in the middle of some excellent fishing grounds, with water depths rapidly plunging to 2,000 feet just off the edge of the island's shores and reefs. The island's waters are becoming popular with Australian anglers, who come looking for marlin, sailfish, wahoo, yellowfin tuna, and dolphin-

fish. The ocean floor's precipitous dropoff makes it possible to catch large game fish within 1,000 feet from the shore. The best months for fishing are from April to December.

Nauru has virtually no tourism. There is only one hotel in the country, the Menen Hotel, which is perched on the edge of the ocean. For many years the hotel has served as the meeting place for residents and visitors. The hotel was recently renovated and expanded to international standards, and now features bars and restaurants, a gaming room, and tennis courts. The Parliament House, the seat of Nauru's government, is in the Yaren District.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Nauru is an oval-shaped coral island with an area of just under 8.2 square miles in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. Nauru is one of the smallest nations in the world, and its nearest neighbor is the Kiribati island of Banabar, some 180 miles away. The island has a coastline of about 18.6 miles.

There is a relatively fertile belt of soil 500–1,000 feet wide that encircles the island. From the lowlands, coral cliffs rise to a central plateau some 200 feet above sea level. Buada Lagoon, in the southern end of the central plateau, covers 300 acres and is a permanent (often brackish) lake.

Nauru's position just 37 miles south of the equator gives the island a hot and humid tropical climate, but the landscape is arid and desolate.

Population

The population of Nauru is approximately 12,000 (2001 est.) Most Nauruans live along the coastal fringes in one of the traditional districts. The majority of the inhabitants are Nauruans, a mixture of Micronesian, Melanesian, and Polynesian origins. The remainder are Chinese and immigrants from Kiribati and Tuvalu, Australian and New Zealander employees, and some Filipino contract workers. The majority of the population is Protestant, while over one-third is Roman Catholic. Nauruan is the predominant language, but English is widely spoken and understood.

Government

Nauru adopted its constitution on January 29, 1968, and amended on it on May 17, 1968. The country was established as a republic with a parliamentary system of government. The president is head of state as well as head of government. The president is elected by the parliament from among its members every three years. The president serves as prime minister, appointing four or five members of parliament to form the cabinet. Cabinet ministers, including the president, take charge of the various government departments and are held accountable by parliament. The unicameral parliament consists of eighteen members, who are elected every three years by resident Nauru citizens over the age of twenty. A speaker and a deputy speaker are chosen from the parliament's mem-

bers. A Supreme Court was established by the constitution and a District Court and a Family Court also operate. In most cases, the highest court of appeal is the High Court of Australia.

Nauru's flag has a blue background divided horizontally by a narrow gold band, symbolizing the equator. Below the band is a white 12-pointed star, representing the island's 12 original tribes.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 16. The government subsidizes the schools, and some schools are run by the government while others are operated by the Roman Catholic Church. The government provides higher education through competitive scholarships to attend university overseas, usually in Australia. There is also an extension center of Fiji's University of the South Pacific.

Commerce and Industry

Despite the lack of agriculture, the per capita income of Nauru is among the highest in the world, and the standard of living is much higher than on other Pacific Islands. Nauru's economy has been based on the export of phosphates (a mineral used to make fertilizers). Nauru is the only remaining producer of the three historic phosphate-producing islands of the South Pacific. The other two were Banaba (in the Gilbert Islands of Kiribati) and Makatea (French Polynesia). Phosphate exports have given Nauruans one of the highest living standards in the world. There are no naturally-occurring fruits and vegetables, just a few coconut palms and scrub bushes imported by visitors. Food is not scarce, however, and plenty of fresh fish is caught on the island to make up the dietary mainstay along with canned meat and vegetables.

Transportation

Nauru International Airport is located about half a mile northwest of Yaren District's center. Traffic moves on the left in Nauru. The main road circling the island is paved, but the remaining roads are unpaved. Animals and pedestrians walking in the road make night driving on unlit secondary roads hazardous. There are fewer than 2,000 motor vehicles, and a school bus service is the only form of local transport. The only railway is a 2.4-mile shuttle used to carry phosphates.

Communications

A ground satellite station has provided telecommunications service with the outside world since 1975. There is also a local telephone exchange to handle local calls. Radio Nauru and Nauru Television are operated by the government. The *Central Star News* is a private newspaper published twice a month. *Nauru Bulletin* is a weekly published by the Department of Island Development and Industry.

Health

Nauru has two hospitals, with over 200 beds, and about ten resident physicians. Tuberculosis, leprosy, diabetes, and vitamin deficiencies have been the main health problems, partly due to a Westernized diet. Cardiovascular disease is a major cause of illness and death.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 31	Independence Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 17	Constitution Day
Oct. 26.	Angam Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport, visa, onward/return ticket, and proof of hotel bookings (or sponsorship from a resident of Nauru) are required for tourists. Tourist visas are issued for a maximum of thirty days. Travelers transiting with valid ticket/onward destination do not require a visa, provided that the first connecting flight departs within three days of arrival in Nauru. Business visitors must have a visa and a local sponsor. Nauru collects a departure tax that must be paid in cash and in Australian dollars. For more information on entry/exit requirements,

travelers may wish to contact the Nauru Consulate General in Melbourne, Australia at telephone (613) 9653-5709, fax (613) 9654-4738.

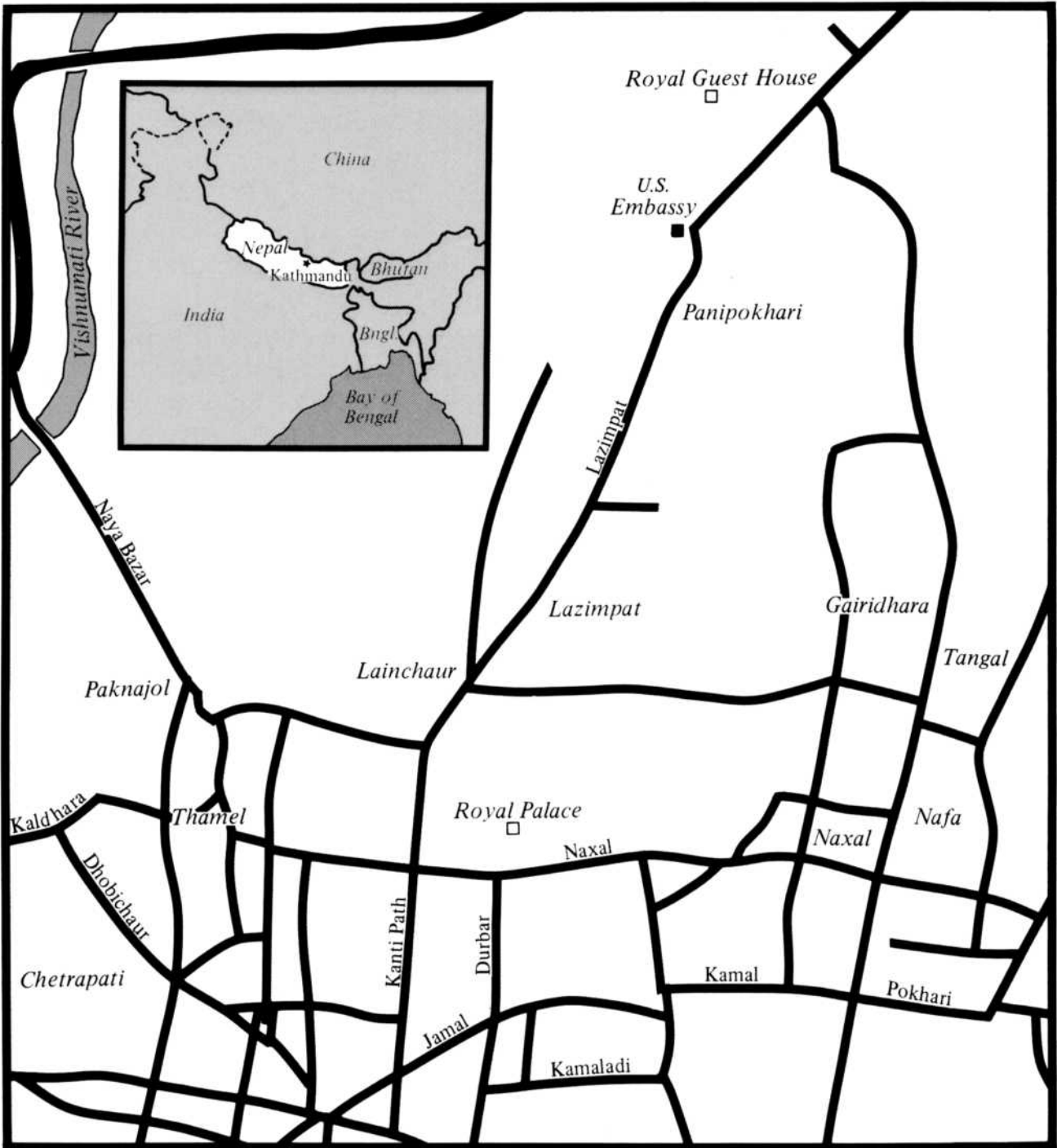
Nauru's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Nauru of items such as foodstuffs, animals, and pornographic materials. It is advisable to contact the Nauru Consulate General in Melbourne, Australia for specific information regarding customs requirements.

There is no U.S. Embassy or diplomatic post in Nauru. Assistance for U.S. citizens in Nauru is provided by the U.S. Embassy in Fiji, which is located at 31 Loftus Street in Fiji's

capital city of Suva. The telephone number is (679) 314-466; the fax number is (679)300-081. Americans may register with the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji and obtain up-to-date information on travel and security in Nauru from the Embassy. Information may also be obtained by visiting the Embassy's home page at <http://www.amembassy-fiji.gov>.

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Kāthmāndu, Nepal

NEPAL

Kingdom of Nepal

Major Cities:

Kāthmāndu, Pokharā, Hetauda, Tulsipur

Other Cities:

Bhairawa, Bhaktapur, Birātnagar, Birganj, Lumbini, Paṭān, Rampur

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Nepal. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The mosaic of Nepal's history and culture was protected for centuries from the forces of change that defined the world's international relationships. Its resources began to develop to meet the demands of modern nationhood only after 1951, when the borders were opened to foreigners. The U.S. has played a major part in assisting this development and continues to influence the course of progress in a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation.

Politically, Nepal is neutral in most of the world's disputes, and its foreign policy reflects the position of a small and landlocked country located between two giants, India and China.

Challenges to Nepal's development are formidable and unique, given its high mountains, fast and flooding rivers, undeveloped natural resources, and its previous isolation.

Impressive changes have occurred nonetheless in the fields of transportation, communications, education, and commerce. Nepal must accommodate its enormous geographic and ethnic diversity while managing economic development. Its rapidly growing population is deeply and genuinely attached to ancient customs and traditional attitudes.

The central government is committed to the concept of development and is encouraging growth of a national consciousness and pride in the nation's heritage. A major challenge of the American Mission in Nepal is to assist the country's efforts to become a modern nation while retaining its unique cultural heritage.

A visit to Nepal not only is an introduction to a land of centuries-old cultures relatively untouched in many ways by the outside world but is also an opportunity to explore ancient kingdoms in the shadow of the world's highest mountains.

MAJOR CITIES

Kāthmāndu

Kāthmāndu, the nation's capital, is situated in a beautiful valley of about 225 square miles, at an altitude of nearly 4,500 feet, and at the confluence of two rivers. The city is completely surrounded by high hills and, during much of the year, the snow-covered Himalayan peaks can be seen. The valley was once a lake bed and the soil is extremely fertile. Where sufficient water is available, the soil can produce three crops a year.

Kāthmāndu was originally known as Kantipur, or City of Glory. Its modern name is derived from an important temple, Kath Mandir, built in the heart of the city, reportedly with the wood of a single tree. Some of the principal landmarks are the royal palace; the Tundikhel, a large parade ground; and Durbar Square, a fascinating collection of intricately carved temples.

The historic 17th-century Hanuman Khoka Palace and its temple complex, once the residence of the Malla Kings, dominates the old city. Several of the palace's courtyards are open to the public, as is the nine-story Basantapur Tower, with

magnificent views of the city. The palace has a gallery and a museum that contains relics of former royal dynasties.

Typical Kāthmāndu houses are of three- or four-story brick construction, many with ornately carved wood trim. The bazaars are a typical Asian assemblage of people, vegetable stalls, tiny shops, and free-roaming cattle.

Utilities

Kathmandu's electric power is 220v, 50cycle, AC. Power fluctuations and failures that can damage electrical appliances occur often. Transformers are required for 110v appliances. Bring extra transformers to meet your equipment needs. Transformers available on the local market are expensive.

As electrical power is 50 cycles, many U.S. appliances with electric motors such as tape decks (with DC motors) and vacuum cleaners will not operate properly even with a transformer, because the motor speed will be reduced. Some 60-cycle appliances can be modified to work at 50 cycles. Consult your owner's manual or a service representative. Heating appliances such as griddles or coffee makers are not affected by cycles and will work fine with a transformer.

The municipal water is not potable and must be filtered and boiled prior to drinking. Most houses have both a ground-level water storage tank and a roof-mounted supply tank. Water pressure is low by American standards, as the water supply is gravity fed. Water shortages occur during the dry season, and water delivery is available on an as-needed basis from Mission sources.

Food

A variety of fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables is available locally. Meats include pork, poultry, buffalo, and goat. Beef, fresh and frozen fish, and seafood from India are sold in Western-oriented "cold storage" stores. Rice, potatoes, and eggs are plentiful. Fresh fruits and veg-

etables are available seasonally. Fruits include apples, bananas, oranges, tangerines, papayas, mangoes, watermelon, grapes, coconut, pineapple, and grapefruit. Vegetables include asparagus, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, radishes, cucumbers, tomatoes, peas, onions, eggplant, various squashes, lettuce, local spinach, and fresh spices.

A good selection of canned goods, oils, butter, flour, sugar, and other baking items is available in the markets.

Most breads and pastries are made at home, but a number of good local bakeries are here. Although respectable Indian brands of ice cream are sold locally and are safe for consumption.

Clothing

Summer clothing is worn from April to November. Lightweight tropical suits are worn in the office and women wear short-sleeved or sleeveless cotton or other lightweight washable dresses, skirts, or pantsuits.

During winter, woolen clothing is needed, especially at night. Good use can be made of stoles, sweaters, slacks, and warm long-sleeved dresses. By midday it is often warm enough to shed an outer garment, although at night some choose to wear a heavy winter coat. Warm sleeping wear is essential during the winter months. Flannel sheets and down comforters are popular winter bedtime accessories.

Limited suitable ready-made clothing is available in Kathmandu. Bring clothing for tennis, swimming, and hiking. A lightweight raincoat and umbrella are needed during the monsoon season (June-October).

Women dress simply and informally. Appropriate dress for luncheons, dinners, and informal receptions is required. A few full-length summer and winter dresses are needed.

Bring a generous supply of shoes. Unpaved, rough, and muddy surfaces cause shoes to wear out rapidly. If you intend to hike, bring a pair of good-quality hiking shoes and socks. (Most camping and hiking equipment is available for rent in Kathmandu, and local reproductions of Western-manufactured equipment are for sale.) Good-quality dress shoes for men and women are hard to find in Kathmandu, and the larger sizes are impossible to find. Bring a good supply of children's clothing for warm and cold weather. Include sweaters, flannel pajamas, and a heavy jacket for winter.

Supplies and Services

Kathmandu has several good beauty- and barbershops. Most Westerners patronize the major hotels for this purpose. Excellent facials and massages are offered at major hotels at reasonable costs.

Drycleaning is available. Laundry almost always is done at home by a servant. Local tailors are frequently used. The results usually are acceptable after you have found a tailor to your liking. Woolen and cotton materials are available in Kathmandu, mostly of Indian and Chinese manufacture, though some of British origin also are available. Choice of colors and prints are sometimes limited. Some ready-made clothing is available (usually of Indian, Hong Kong, Japanese, or Thai manufacture, but sometimes European), but styles and sizes are limited. Several quality boutiques cater to Western tastes, and prices in these markets usually are comparable to those in the U.S.

Both large and small supermarkets carry a variety of local goods and imported items. You can find almost anything, including sports equipment and electrical appliances (expensive), cosmetics, nylons (bring your own), clothing, fabrics, children's toys, cassette tapes and CDs (all kinds of music, but as usual, quality varies), and much more.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Kathmandu Valley monastery and snowcapped Himalayas

Since most imported items are more expensive than in the U.S., bring enough of those items you use most.

Kathmandu has a limited number of experienced and trained repair people; available spare parts for cars, trucks, appliances, radios, and phonographs also are limited.

Local bookstores are reasonably stocked with English-language books, including recent novels, many of the classics, histories (mostly regional), travel book, and trekking guides, photographic essay; on Nepal, how-to books, folk tales, anthropology, politics, philosophy, religion, and a growing number of children's books, games, and puzzles. The American Women of Nepal (AWON) operates a 6,000-volume public library.

Domestic Help

Household servants are commonly employed in Kathmandu. Staff may include a cook, housekeeper, gardener, nursemaid (for babies and young children), driver (if you do not wish to risk the local traffic yourself), and day guard. Finding good cook is particularly difficult. In addition to basic wages (currently \$50-\$80, month for an experienced cook, less for housekeepers, gardeners, or nursemaids), extras include

uniforms (usually some form of local dress), a food allowance, a bonus equivalent to 1-month's salary before the Dasain holidays (the largest Hindu celebration of the year, usually in October), medical expenses, transportation, and various other discretionary benefits. It is common for servants to request loans from employers. Employers do not universally agree and repayment arrangements vary for those that do.

Religious Activities

Although traditionally religiously tolerant, Nepal is officially a Hindu state. The law forbids proselytizing and conversion of Hindus to other religions. Christian missionaries, first admitted in 1950, are involved in medical and educational work.

A full-time ordained minister serves the interdenominational Protestant community. Sunday worship services, Sunday school classes, and auxiliary fellowships are available. Roman Catholic Masses are conducted by American Jesuit and Mary knoll priests at least once daily and several times on Sunday at various locations in Kathmandu. Anglican/Episcopalian Holy Communion Services are held about six times a year at the British Embassy. A small, international Baha'i com-

munity holds regular meetings and conducts children's classes. No organized Jewish community exists in Kathmandu, and no regular Jewish services are conducted, but the Israeli Embassy holds occasional holiday services. Other religious groups do not have formal facilities, although occasionally ministers of other faiths visit Kathmandu. Some religious groups gather informally in homes, depending on members present in Kathmandu.

Education

Lincoln School, a private coeducational day school founded by USAID in 1954, provides an educational program from kindergarten through grade 12 for students of all nationalities. Enrollment averages 250 students and usually represents more than 30 nationalities. Approximately a third of the students are American and up to a quarter Nepali or Tibetan.

The school is governed by a nine-member board of directors elected for 2-year terms by the Lincoln School Association, which is made up of all parents and faculty. The school is administered by an American-recruited and -trained principal who directs 30 full- and part-time teachers, 20 Nepalese teaching assistants, and several native language teachers. Facilities include 21 classrooms, an auditorium, gymnasium, library/instructional center, computer center, music room, outdoor reading areas, and a 2½ acre athletic field.

The school year extends from late August to mid-June.

The Lincoln School curriculum is based on the U.S. public school system of education but more recently encompasses an internationalized curriculum to reflect the needs of the diverse student body. Instruction is in English. Kindergarten is a comprehensive school preparation program. Grades 6 to 8 are departmentalized, with students moving from one subject teacher to the next for languages, mathematics, social studies, science, and computers. A variety of

extracurricular activities also are offered, either by teacher specialists or regular staff. The high school students follow a similar program but are even more mobile according to their broader curriculum needs. Nepal studies, including language and culture, is offered, and the trek program takes students in grades 5 to 12 into mountain villages for up to 14 days in the fall or spring. Students in all grades bring their lunch from home, as the school does not have a kitchen.

Lincoln School has an extensive Advanced Placement (AP) academic program in the high school in English, U.S. and world history, math, numerous sciences, and art. Students who successfully complete these courses and score a 3 or better on the final examination receive college credit for their work. Lincoln does not offer an International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma.

Kathmandu has a British school, a French school, and a Norwegian school for those who do not wish to enroll their elementary schoolchildren in Lincoln School. There also are a number of preschool or nursery school options available at any time.

Special Educational Opportunities

Several international language schools offer language training in Nepali, while other embassies and missions sponsor training in French, German, Japanese, and Chinese. Private instructors give courses in history and culture, as well as private lessons in music and Nepali dancing. Lecture programs and cultural tours are provided on a regular basis by International Community Service (ICS), a British expatriate support organization. Several American colleges offer programs in Kathmandu.

Sports

The pleasant year-round climate of Kathmandu, combined with the social and cultural climate of an international community, permits a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities.

The Phora Durbar recreation center, situated on several acres of land in the center of town, in addition to swimming offers three hard-surface tennis courts, an outdoor basketball court, baseball/softball diamond, and volleyball court. The snackbar serves breakfast and lunch every day, dinner many evenings, and pastries, popcorn, and other snacks throughout the day. The facility also houses a video club.

Kathmandu has a few private tennis courts and two golf courses (bring your own equipment). Golf memberships are expensive.

Private and hotel health club memberships also are available. Major hotels offer summer "sauna-and-swim" packages to families and individuals, as well as year-round exercise opportunities.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Kathmandu Valley is a sightseeing fantasy land, but the dirt and garbage in the larger towns and cities can interfere with otherwise pleasurable experiences. Tourists can visit the seven national museums scattered throughout the Valley, a small national zoo, botanical gardens, and local art galleries; or wander through Kathmandu's old city and shop at the colorful markets and experience the Newari architecture and temples up close. The other two main cities of the Valley, Patan and Bhaktapur, are marvels of traditional Newari architecture and were once home to kings of the Malla Dynasty. For more organized and in-depth cultural queries, ICS offers lectures, music programs, and hikes through outlying towns and villages to view places and faces mostly unchanged over the centuries. On the hills ringing the Valley are many foot trails that lead to breathtaking views of the Himalayas just north of the Valley.

Sightseeing outside of the Valley might take you north on a trek, organized by one of the many competent local agencies, into the middle hills (6,000-10,000 feet) if you

want to meander gently under the Himalayas, or high up into the mountains themselves. Treks suited to all tastes, abilities, and incomes are available, many of which you can organize independently at very little cost. It is an excellent way to experience Nepali village life. If you plan to trek, it is best to bring your own camping equipment (tents, sleeping bags, mats, hiking shoes, rucksacks, canteens). All types of equipment are available for rental or (except for tents) purchase from the many local shops, but buyers must remember that in most cases the items were manufactured in the back room or around the corner. Bring your own shoes, as locally available ones do not last.

If you opt to go south to the warmer jungle climate of Nepal's Terai, you might visit one of the jungle camps located in the Royal Chitwan National Park, a Government of Nepal-sponsored wildlife preserve, where the one-horned rhinoceros co-exists with the Royal Bengal tiger, the leopard, the elephant, and the tourist. Hunting is severely restricted. Licenses are required for firearms. Excellent fishing is available in the Narayani and Rapti Rivers in the Terai. Permits are not necessary, but bring your own equipment.

Another choice for adventure sightseeing could take you rafting gently down one of Nepal's rivers during the winter months or over some of the wildest white-water routes during the wet months.

Countless local agencies will arrange the rafting/camping trip most suitable for you. Nepal's many festivals offer a colorful and lively change of pace throughout the year and are a delight for the photographer. Photographic supplies, including black-and-white and color print and slide film, cameras, and lenses are available in the local photo shops. One-hour developing services are abundant, and many are quite good.

Kathmandu is a gardener's paradise. Things grow well here and

quickly, even through the winter season when night temperatures often fall below freezing. If you enjoy a garden, you will have great personal satisfaction in Kathmandu. Although most households employ a gardener, you can continue your pursuits (less the heavy work) at your leisure. Gardening tools are available in Kathmandu but are Nepali style. Seed catalogs are available, and local seeds are excellent for local varieties of flowers and vegetables.

Many people in Kathmandu own personal computers. Several good computer hardware stores repair and clean equipment and sell paper, disks, and software, but bring enough parts and extras to fit your own computer. A number of computer schools offer short-term courses in programming, spreadsheets, and word processing. Internet and e-mail is commercially available through local servers. Prices are higher than in the U.S. but are decreasing almost monthly.

Entertainment

Many cuisines are available for those who enjoy dining out, from Nepali, Tibetan, and Indian, to Italian, Thai, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and American. Quality varies. Prices except for liquor are reasonable. Many restaurants offer live and local entertainment (traditional dances, instrumentals, and Nepalese/Indian ghazals). Others offer beautiful garden settings or views of the Himalayas.

Kathmandu nightlife offers several discotheques, hotel restaurants with dancing and live entertainment, and the occasional visiting cultural program. Several casinos offer to separate you from your money 24 hours daily.

Many Americans participate in an active amateur dramatic group, the Himalayan Amateurs (HAMS), providing periodic dinner/drama entertainment.

Local movie theaters feature only Nepali- and Hindi-language films. Video rentals (PAL system) are

available throughout Kathmandu in English, although quality varies.

Social Activities

Because the Nepalese are so friendly and the international community is so accessible, it is easy to meet Nepalese and third country nationals. International contacts can be made through the International Club, membership in which is available to all duty-free personnel in Nepal, and at such organizations as the Lions, Rotary Club, Junior Chamber of Commerce, church groups, the amateur theater group, and by volunteer work at hospitals or charitable organizations.

Another place to meet people is at Phora Durbar, the American Mission Association recreation facilities. Membership includes third-country diplomats and others with duty-free status in the Kingdom. The recreation area sponsors community tournaments for tennis, volleyball, and other games.

Volunteer work through the Active Women's Organization of Nepal (AWON) is a rewarding way to meet people of all nationalities and to participate in social development activities in Nepal. The organization manages a thrift shop, a health clinic for the poor, a 6,000-volume public library, and a girl's scholarship program. Profits are contributed to local charities.

Parents of Lincoln School students automatically are members of the Lincoln School Association, which brings parents together for various school activities throughout the year.

Entertaining at home is a pleasant and often used way to meet people and see friends in a casual atmosphere.

Pokharā

Pokharā, with a population of over 46,000, is situated 96 miles from Kāthmāndu and is connected by air as well as by two land routes. The old Rajpath Highway is a 12 hour

drive (via Hetauda and Butwal), while the road via Mugling takes six to eight hours. Daily flights connect Pokharā with Kāthmāndu, except during monsoon season when schedules depend on the weather; it is a 25 minute flight. Pokharā, the third largest city in Nepal, is the center of trade between the high mountain and middle hill people. The skyline of the town is dominated by the 23,000 foot Machapuchare ("the fish-tail mountain").

The Pokharā valley is one of the picturesque spots of Nepal. The beauty of the valley is enhanced by such famous lakes as Phewa, Begnas, and Rupa, which have their perennial source in the glacial region of the Annapuran range of the Himalayas. During the dry months of the year, Pokharā offers spectacular views of the Himalayas. Pokharā is a major departure point for treks into the Himalayan foothills.

Several very good hotels are available in Pokharā at reasonable prices; running water and electricity are available year round. From March to September, the temperature ranges from 69°F to 95°F with occasional showers. The monsoon rains begin about mid-June and last until September. From October to February, the temperature ranges from 35°F to 68°F with clear weather.

Pokharā has limited shopping facilities. Food, clothing, and other necessities are available, although in less variety than in Kāthmāndu. There is a missionary-run hospital with several doctors, but most Americans are treated in Kāthmāndu.

Communications are provided by international mail and cable. In an emergency, Nepalese Government facilities are used to relay messages by radio. Telephone lines connect Pokharā and Kāthmāndu, but calls must be made through telephone exchange offices.

Many tourists visit Pokharā, either to stay and enjoy the scenery or in passing when going on treks into

higher elevations or on the way to India.

Hetauda

The population of Hetauda is more than 40,000. The city is located on a major paved road connecting Kāthmāndu with the Indian border, close to a jungle area. Hetauda is a one-hour drive from Raxual, India, which serves as the primary entry surface point into Nepal.

Royal Nepal Airlines serves the Sumira airstrip, 40 minutes from Hetauda, daily. Service can be very irregular during the monsoon season. Travel time by the old Rajpath Highway to Kāthmāndu is about five hours. Travel to Kāthmāndu can also be made via Narayanghat and Mugling on a longer, but paved, route and requires only four hours.

A government hospital is located at Hetauda and a missionary hospital is located at Raxual at the Nepal/Indian border. Communication is by international mail, telephone, and Government of Nepal cable facilities.

Hetauda is situated above the Terai and, although summer is hot, that season is milder than on the plains. Winters are very mild, with flowers blooming year round. The entire Himalayan range, including Mt. Everest, is visible.

Some hunting is available in the nearby jungle. There is an elephant camp in the Chitwan district, and many opportunities for fishing and trekking exist.

Tulsipur

Tulsipur is located in Dang district in the Rapati Zone of western Nepal. Tulsipur is accessible by road from the Indian border and from Nepalgunj in the far west all year. With the completion of the Tulsipur-Ghorahi-Lamahi road (paved) in 1982, access is easy and assured. The East-West Highway provides year-round access to Kāthmāndu by road (12–13 hours). Com-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Himalaya Mountains near Pokhara

mercial flights from Tulsipur to Nepalgunj and to Kāthmāndu are generally reliable, except during monsoon season.

In spite of this isolation, and concomitant logistics problems, most basic commodities (rice, kerosene, salt, sugar) are normally available. Tulsipur bazaar has an ever-increasing variety of fresh fruits and vegetables in season, and meat and poultry are generally available. Canned, packaged, and bottled goods suited to American tastes must be brought in from either Kāthmāndu or India.

Running water is normally available for living quarters the year round. Electricity is available and is run by generator. Residential arrangements are adequate by American standards, but are by no means luxurious.

No recreational facilities other than trekking, horseback riding, and possibly volleyball are available in the town. Most health problems requiring diagnosis and treatment are done in Kāthmāndu.

March through September are extremely hot months in Tulsipur, with monsoon rains bringing some relief during July and August. Octo-

ber through to March brings a pleasantly warm climate, with cool nights.

OTHER CITIES

BHAIRAWA is located in the central Terai, close to the Indian border. Roads connecting Bhairawa to Pokharā and Kāthmāndu are occasionally closed because of rock slides during the monsoon season. There is air service to Kāthmāndu. Bhairawa has adequate health facilities, but most medical treatment of Americans is done in Kāthmāndu. Communications are provided by international mail and cable. In an emergency, Nepalese Government facilities are used to relay messages by radio. Radio communication has been established between the Agricultural Farm and the Department of Agriculture, Kāthmāndu.

BHAKTAPUR (also called Bhadgoan) is one of the oldest cities in the Kāthmāndu Valley. Located nine miles from the capital city at the eastern end of the valley, Bhaktapur is known as a center of medieval art. Its five-story Nyatapola Temple is an excellent example of Nepalese architecture. The temple's stairway is flanked by a series of

animal pairs, humans, and gods, each supposedly 10 times as strong as that below it. In the center of the old city is the art gallery, which contains Buddhist and Hindu tantric art; the 15th-century Royal Palace; and a replica of the 15th-century Pushupatinath Temple. Adjoining the art gallery is the Golden Gate of Bhaktapur. Near the city is the ancient Pujahari monastery; its central courtyard contains rich wood carvings and a noteworthy peacock window. This enclosure has been renovated and restored. Bhaktapur (which means “the city of devotees”) was founded in the ninth century, according to legend. Its industries include pottery and weaving. The city’s population is over 130,000.

BIRĀTNAGAR, situated in southeastern Nepal about 150 miles from Kāthmāndu, is one of Nepal’s important manufacturing cities. Furniture, stainless steel, processed rice, and oilseeds are produced here. The population is more than 130,000.

BIRGANJ is located in the Terai on the Indian border, about 105 miles south of Kāthmāndu. The city has a population of over 43,000 and is a market town for agricultural products. It is also a manufacturing town producing textiles, sugar, flour, jute, and shoes.

LUMBINI is situated in a remote area south of Pokharā, in the western Terai. This is supposedly the birthplace of Buddha, and there are many religious shrines here. The broken Ashokan Pillar, remnants of a monastery, and images of Buddha’s mother are among preserved areas. Extensive excavation work is being conducted in Lumbini.

PAṬĀN is located three miles southeast of Kāthmāndu and, with a population of more than 117,000, is the second largest town in the Kāthmāndu Valley. Once called Lalitpur, meaning “the city of beauty,” it was the capital of the independent Malla kingdom. Today, Paṭān is a major center of Buddhist art and craftsmanship; many craft shops

are in the market area. The old section of Paṭān provides visitors with many examples of temple architecture, most dating from the 17th century. Krishna Mandir, Bhimsen, Taleju, and Shiva are some of the temples that may be seen in this area of the city. The old royal palace is also open to tourists. Nearby is Hiranya Varna Mahabihar, one of the most ornately decorated Buddhist temples in the country. The five-storied temple of Kumbeshwar is also interesting; ritual bathing takes place in the courtyard yearly. The spring water here is said to originate in the sacred lake of Gosainkund and the Mahabouddha Temple.

RAMPUR is located in a valley some 140 miles from Kāthmāndu. Royal Nepal Airlines offers regular commercial service to Bharatpur, seven miles from Rampur, over an all-weather road. Rampur has no doctors or hospitals, although both can be found in Bharatpur. Most medical treatment is obtained in Kāthmāndu. No telephone lines connect Kāthmāndu and Rampur. International mail and local telegraphic services are available, but are unreliable. Rampur has virtually no shopping facilities; the nearest bazaar is in Narayanghat near Bharatpur. Clothing, some food, and other necessities must be purchased in Kāthmāndu. Because of the extremely poor road conditions in the area, only four-wheel-drive vehicles should be used. The climate is pleasant from October to March, ranging from the mid-40s(F) at night to the 60s during the day. From April to June, it is extremely hot with occasional rains, and during the monsoon season (June to October), it is hot and humid. The Tiger Tops jungle resort is only 15 miles from Rampur, and is accessible by road except during the monsoons.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Kingdom of Nepal is roughly the size and shape of Tennessee, with an area of about 55,000 square miles. The country is wedged between China to the north and India to the south, east, and west.

Nepal’s geography is perhaps the most varied of any nation in the world. From the plains and lowlands of the south (about 150 feet above sea level), the terrain rises in a mere 100 miles to the dramatic heights of the world’s highest mountain range, the Himalayas, which include Mount Everest (Sagarmatha) at 29,028 feet. Ten other mountains exceed 24,000 feet, and more than 200 peaks exceed 21,000 feet.

Geographically, the country may be divided into three roughly parallel strips, each running generally east and west. The Terai region, the southernmost strip about 15 miles wide, covers about 20 percent of the total land area. It is an extension of the Gangetic Plain of north India—flat open country blending to forested hills, and once noted for its heavy jungles and big game, including tiger, rhinoceros, elephant, wild boar, and crocodile. The central region, sometimes called the “hill area,” is about 60 miles wide, ranges from 3,000 to 12,000 feet above sea level, and covers approximately 60 percent of the land area. It includes the Valley of Kāthmāndu, with its encircling “hills” up to 9,000 feet in height. The northern region consists of the high mountain area, 12,000 to 29,000 feet, forming the majestic panorama of the perpetually snow-covered Himalayan range. The region is about 25 miles wide and accounts for nearly 20 percent of the total land area.

The climate in Kāthmāndu, the capital, is generally pleasant. During the fall and winter season (October

to March), temperatures range from 28°F to 75°F. This season is characterized by morning fog, sunny days, and cold nights. It may rain occasionally, but Kāthmāndu has had no snow since 1939.

The spring season (March through May) has a temperature range from 40°F to 90°F, with intermittent rain, warm days, and usually comfortable nights. Near the end of the spring season and before the rainy season begins, dust gathers heavily throughout the Kāthmāndu Valley, covering everything with its film and creating a haze that obscures the mountains.

The monsoon season begins in June and continues until late September. Temperatures in the rainy season range from 55°F to 90°F, rainfall is from 30 to 60 inches. Rain showers occur daily.

Population

Nepal's population of 23 million is growing at an annual rate of 2.5%. Approximately 45% of the population live in the Terai Region on 20% of the total land area, and the remaining 55% live in the central or hill regions. The Kathmandu Valley, home to the nation's capital, is growing rapidly and is the most densely populated area, accounting for about 10% of the total population (or 2 million), with Kathmandu proper at about 800,000.

Agriculture absorbs 90% of the economically active workforce and includes animal husbandry, forestry, and fishing. The remainder are occupied in business, industrial, and service sectors. Per capita income is approximately US \$210.

Nepal is a multiracial, multilingual country. Major ethnic groups that make up Nepal include Newar, Tamang, Sherpa, Rai, Limbu, Thakali, and Tibetan. Within the different groups, people are further differentiated socially by caste or occupational group. In the hill and Terai regions, people of both Indo-Aryan and Mongoloid stock can be found, and many are a mixture of

the two. The northern mountain region is inhabited by the Sherpas of mountaineering fame, as well as by large numbers of Tibetans.

The official language is Nepali, although more than 18 other languages and many dialects are spoken throughout the country. Nepali, derived from Sanskrit, is related to the Indian languages of Hindi and Bengali. The written script (Devnagari) is the same as Hindi. Nepali is spoken by most Nepalese in the Kāthmāndu Valley. The Newars, the original inhabitants of the Kāthmāndu Valley, still constitute over half of the Valley's population and work as artisans, business people, professionals, government officials, and farmers. The old cultural and architectural monuments of the Valley are almost entirely of Newar origin. The Newars have their own language, Newari, a Tibeto-Burman language not related to Nepali; however, most Newars in the Valley also understand Nepali. Many government and business people speak English.

Most Nepalis profess Hinduism, the official religion. The King is believed to be a manifestation of Lord Vishnu, the Protector and Preserver. Religion is important in Nepal, and the Kāthmāndu Valley alone has more than 2,700 religious shrines, some more than 2,000 years old. Temples, stupas, and pagodas vary in size and type, with some of austere simplicity and others of rich architectural beauty. A significant Buddhist minority lives peacefully with the Hindu majority, so that Hindu temples are sacred to Buddhists, and Buddhist shrines are important to the Hindus. Buddhist and Hindu festivals are occasions for common worship and rejoicing.

Public Institutions

For about 100 years, up to 1951, Nepal's Government was in the hands of hereditary Prime Ministers of the Rana family, and the King was a figurehead without real power. After 1947, the people of Nepal, in part sparked by India's

independence movement, began to show open resentment to the autocratic Rana rule. Agitation increased for a government more responsive to changing times.

Relations between King Tribhuvan and the Rana Prime Minister deteriorated, and in November 1950, the King escaped from his palace prison and took asylum in India. An armed revolt to overthrow the Rana regime then flared throughout the country, with an armistice being signed the following February. King Tribhuvan returned amid popular rejoicing, and non-Ranas for the first time assumed key positions in the government. Shortly thereafter, the last Rana Prime Minister resigned, marking the end of Rana rule.

The late King Mahendra approved a new constitution in February 1959, under which Nepal's first multi-party parliament was elected. After a brief period of parliamentary rule, the King proclaimed in December 1960 that the experiment in parliamentary democracy had failed. He took full personal control of the government, dissolved the parliament, and banned political parties.

In 1962, the government proclaimed a new constitution, which established a "partyless panchayat system" of government consisting of various councils (panchayat) of increasing power, with ultimate power vested in the King. Subsequently, the constitution has been amended several times in response to the country's developing political demands. King Bihendra in 1979 ordered a referendum to decide whether to retain the panchayat system with suitable reforms or to reintroduce a multiparty system, following widespread discontent spearheaded by university students.

The panchayat system won a disputed election by 2.4 million votes to 2.1 million, and the constitution was amended to establish the direct election of members of the Rastriya Panchayat (national legislature) and expand freedoms of speech, publication, and assembly. In 1990,

in response to nationwide agitation for a return to a multiparty system of government, King Bihendra agreed to lift the ban on political parties; to further revise the constitution; and to hold general elections. These elections took place in May 1991, constituting the first free multiparty elections under the new constitution. In all, there have been three free elections in the first 9 years of this constitution.

Arts, Science, and Education

Nepal in 1950 had 321 primary schools enrolling about 8,000 students; 11 secondary schools with 1,500 students; and one small college and a technical school with a combined student body of 250. The country then had no educational facilities for girls, and the few who were educated were either privately tutored or had studied in India. Literacy was negligible.

When Rana rule ended, Nepal undertook to establish a system of universal primary education, greatly supported and developed through USAID efforts. The most recent statistics, from 1994, indicate that 40% of the Nepalese adult population is literate (male: 55%; female: 25%). Approximately 65% of the Kāthmāndu Valley population is literate. The figures reflect the increased importance attached to education: 21,100 primary schools with 3,195,000 students (of whom 1,260,000 were girls) and 81,500 teachers; 4,800 lower secondary schools with 680,000 students and 15,750 teachers; 2,200 secondary schools with 414,000 students and 11,100 teachers; and a higher education system of 10 institutes comprising Tribhuvan University. The University directly administers and supports 65 campuses, approximately half of which are outside the Kāthmāndu Valley. The total number of students of all university campuses is approximately 100,000. The University has four research centers: the Center for Nepal and Asian Studies; the Center for Economic Development and Adminis-

tration; the Research Center for Applied Science and Technology; and the Center for Educational Reforms, Innovations, and Development.

Severe strains developed within the educational system with such a rapid expansion. In 1970, the Palace appointed a task force to redesign the education system, resulting in the National Education System Plan (NESP) that came into effect in 1971. The educational structure was reorganized in accordance with the NESP to broaden the availability of education to the rural areas, increase its access to women, and meet manpower requirements. In 1975, primary education was made free (but not compulsory), including the provision of classrooms, teachers, and educational materials. Private schools are permitted and have been expanding rapidly.

Under the new plan, Nepal's educational structure is divided into two levels, the school level and the higher education level. Institutes in each subject of higher education have been established under the supervision and control of Tribhuvan University.

The widespread desire for education puts great pressure on the government to increase the number of schools and teachers. In spite of the NESP, quality varies widely, with higher quality schools located in population centers. Under the NESP, however, intense efforts have been made to equalize educational opportunity. Although Nepal is still a long way from universal education, great strides are being made.

In the arts, Nepal, and particularly the Kāthmāndu Valley, is a living museum. Pagoda-style architecture may have originated in Nepal and moved northward to China and Japan. Hundreds of temples are ornately carved; old Nepalese bronzes are exquisite; and older, elaborately carved wooden Newari homes reflect the skills of the Valley woodworkers. The King has established a Royal Nepal Academy, where traditional Nepalese dance

and music performances may be seen. Occasional exhibitions of paintings by the country's artists are held at the Nepal Association of Fine Arts. In the past few years, several galleries have opened that regularly exhibit local artwork.

Science is in its infancy in Nepal, although Tribhuvan University has graduate departments in chemistry, zoology, physics, and botany. As a step toward the development of science education, in 1983 His Majesty's Government constituted the Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology to promote the study and research of science and technology. Fulbright and National Science Foundation scholars are helping to improve science and mathematics education.

Commerce and Industry

Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with more than 40% of the population below the Government's poverty line, and little industrialization or private sector growth. Some progress has been achieved with technical and economic assistance, principally from India, Germany, Japan, China, the U.S., the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. Malaria is under control in the fertile lowland areas, thereby increasing the potential for agricultural productivity. Roads, although in poor condition, link Kāthmāndu to India and Tibet, and additional roads are being constructed linking major urban centers. Several hydroelectric projects have been completed, and more are being proposed and built. A national and international communications network, including a satellite earth station, has been completed, and small industries such as cotton and jute textiles, cement, cigarettes, and shoes have been operating for years. Commercial attention is directed at development of Nepal's major economic resources: hydroelectric power and tourism.

The economy is essentially agrarian. Agriculture provides about two-thirds of the country's income, with rice the main food crop and jute now grown as the main export crop.

Foreign trade plays a key role in the economic development of Nepal. Currently, Nepal has trade agreements with 16 countries and trade relations with about 60 others.

One-third of Nepal's exports—mainly agricultural products and timber—go to India, and a third of Nepal's imports come from India—mostly textiles and other manufactured goods. Nepal signed a trade agreement with India in 1996, which effectively places it within a free trade area with India. Increased exports of ready-made garments have made the U.S. one of Nepal's leading export markets. Carpets

account for about half the exports, going mainly to Europe. Tourism is also a major industry.

Transportation

Automobiles

A personal vehicle is strongly recommended but not absolutely necessary. Toyota and Mitsubishi have the largest dealership systems in Kathmandu; Nissan, Honda, and Subaru are represented but have more limited direct dealer service available. If you ship a car from the U.S. or Japan, consider spare parts. If you ship a used vehicle, make sure it is in excellent condition and has a new or good battery and new tires, since these are expensive and hard to obtain in Nepal. Current Nepali law forbids the import of a car more than 5 years old by anyone who is not on the diplomatic list.

Do not bring large American cars because of the narrow streets of Kathmandu, and because spare parts for American cars are not readily available. Consider a four-wheel-drive vehicle for most travel outside the Kathmandu Valley. Do not bring a vehicle with low ground clearance, even for strictly local driving within the Valley. A right-

hand drive vehicle is best for safety reasons, as Nepalis drive on the left in the British and Japanese manner, but U.S.-style, left-hand drive vehicles are permitted and used without serious problems by assigned employees.

A Nepalese drivers license is required in Nepal and may be obtained on presentation of a valid U.S. drivers license.

Local

The Kathmandu Valley has hard-surface roads but also has many dirt roads and jeep tracks. Most streets and roads are narrow and bumpy with blind corners, and congested with ever-increasing numbers of pedestrians, porters, carts, cows, buses, taxis, trolleys, pedicabs, bicycles, and motorbikes. Foreign residents seldom use buses as taxis, and pedicabs are plentiful and convenient, except after dark. Indian and Chinese bicycles are widely used and can be purchased locally at reasonable cost. Used Western-made mountain bikes sometimes can be purchased, although many prefer to bring their own bikes. Air pollution has increased dramatically in the last several years due to the substantial increase in motor vehicles and brick factories within the Valley. Air-filter breathing masks, therefore, are becoming increasingly popular among bikers and walkers.

The national road system linking the major towns within Nepal is improving but still limited, with some of the fewest miles of paved and improved hardpacked road; compared to population density of any country in the world (about 5,000 miles in 1997). Most of the primary internal Nepali destinations such as Pokhara, Biratnagar, Birgunj, and Janakpur are connected to the capital by paved road. The East-West Highway provides a good paved road throughout the Terai, except west of Nepalgunj. Most of the more famous mountain trekking destinations are accessible only by plane, as are some of the more remote lowland destinations.

It is necessary to go on foot to reach many places in rural Nepal. Use of porters is a traditional and practical method of transporting goods to and from many places in the country.

Kathmandu is connected to the Indian border by two all-weather roads. Another, mostly fair-weather road, links the capital with Tibet. Tourists should check the current regulations regarding travel to Tibet, as they are subject to frequent change. Tourists in 1997 could travel to Tibet by obtaining a visa at the border.

Regional

Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) has an extensive route structure within Nepal, encompassing more than 30 airfields nationwide. RNAC is a government-owned corporation. Several private airlines also operate domestic routes. They use smaller (and newer) planes and frequently offer lower prices for similar trips. Air travel is the only practical means of transportation (save walking) to many areas these airlines service. For domestic routes, RNAC depends on Avro, Twin Otter, and other STOL (short takeoff and landing) aircraft. In the tourist season (October–April), RNAC and domestic private airlines offer a 1-hour "Mountain Flight" from Kathmandu and Pokhara that gives a close-up view of the major Himalayan peaks, including Mount Everest.

Ten regional or international airlines serve Kathmandu as of June 1999. These include RNAC, Singapore Airlines, Indian Airlines, Thai International, Biman Bangladesh, Burma Airways, Pakistan International, Druk Air, Air Qatar, Dragonair, and Austrian Air. Kathmandu enjoys three times a day service to and from New Delhi, daily service to and from Bangkok, 6 days a week service to and from Calcutta, and 3 days a week connections with Singapore. Kathmandu also is linked to Dhaka, Rangoon, Karachi, and Hong Kong with several flights a week. Connections for ongoing international flights to Europe and the U.S. are made generally through

Bangkok or New Delhi. RNAC flies from Kāthmāndu to London via Dubai, as does Air Qatar through Doha. Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Singapore are the gateways for flights to Japan and the U.S. west coast.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Kāthmāndu has an automatic telephone exchange. The cost is modest, and service is generally good, as are long distance connections within Nepal. International telephone service is available via satellite, and direct-dial calls to the U.S. and elsewhere are routine. A call to the U.S. costs about \$4.50 per minute. Cellular telephones became available in 1999 but are very expensive.

Facsimile service in Nepal is available locally in all major hotels.

Internet access and e-mail service is available through local commercial sources. Rates generally are higher than in the U.S. but are coming down.

Radio and TV

Kāthmāndu has 20-channel cable TV service available in many, but not all, parts of the city. Stations broadcast a mix of English and Hindi programming. Service accessibility is increasing continuously. Set-up minimum charges and monthly rates are quite reasonable by U.S. standards, usually about \$25-\$40 and \$5, respectively. CNN, BBC, HBO, ESPN, Cinemax, Star Movies, and Star Sports are among the English offerings. TV satellite dishes can be purchased locally.

Cable and local TV broadcasts are on the PAL system. Videotapes available for rent at the American Recreation Center are NTSC, while the British Library next door offers PAL tapes. Bring a multisystem TV and VCR, as local equipment is quite expensive. Radio Nepal broadcasts in English at certain times daily. Reception of VOA, BBC, Indian, and Pakistani stations, and

some from the Far East, sometimes is possible with a shortwave radio.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Several English-language daily newspapers are published in Kāthmāndu. The Rising Nepal and The Kāthmāndu Post are read widely. A total of 450 vernacular newspapers circulate in Nepal. English language Indian newspapers also are available, as are international editions of Time and Newsweek. The international editions of the International Herald Tribune, USA Today, The Economist, and The Asian Wall Street Journal can be purchased locally or are available by subscription from Singapore.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

It is also recommended strongly to have mail-in prescription service in your personal medical insurance.

If you wear glasses, bring at least two pairs and a copy of your current prescription. Contact lenses can be worn here, although only limited local replacements are available.

Although a number of well-trained, excellent Nepali physicians are in Kāthmāndu, local hospitals are poorly equipped and considered inadequate by Western standards. Therefore, for anything but the gravest emergency, serious medical problems requiring hospitalization demand evacuation; in some cases, this may be to the U.S. Kāthmāndu is considered medically inappropriate for obstetrics either complicated or routine.

There are several private clinics used by the international community in Kāthmāndu with doctors and medical staff trained in Europe or in the U.S.

Dental health care is available through a private dental clinic. The dental clinic is staffed by two American dentists and a hygienist and is operated on a fee-for-service basis

with a fee structure similar to that in the U.S. Orthodontic care is available.

Community Health

The general lack of basic public sanitation and sewage management poses major health problems in Kāthmāndu and all parts of Nepal. This leads to many illnesses within the Nepali community and is, potentially, a source of disease transmission to the expatriate community. Understanding the problem, however, and taking necessary precautionary measures, such as water purification and proper food handling techniques, help to ensure personal good health. The opportunities for outdoor physical activities in this pleasant climate also contribute to good physical well-being. Air pollution contributes to respiratory problems in the Kāthmāndu Valley.

Preventive Measures

Infectious diseases are a major health problem in Nepal, whether it is a simple respiratory infection, parasitic bowel infestation, or a more serious medical problem such as tuberculosis. Common medical problems among Americans include respiratory infections, allergies, diarrheal diseases, and skin diseases. Although some malaria (falciparum and vivax) still is present in the lowlands (Terai), the government's malarial control programs since the 1960s have transformed an area that once endured the reputation of being one of the worst malarial areas in the world to one where people work and play in relative safety from the malarial parasite. Antimalarial prophylaxis still is necessary for those living in the Terai, or those visiting during most of the year, however. To date, chloroquine-resistant strains of falciparum have not been identified, and chloroquine (Aralen) is the recommended prophylactic. As Kāthmāndu is at 4,500 feet, malaria is not a problem in the city or valley, nor is it a problem anywhere in the middle hills or mountain areas.

Have your immunization status current before departing. Recom-

mended vaccinations (in addition to the usual childhood shots such as DPT, polio, MMR, and HIB) include: rabies (human diploid cell), typhoid, meningococcal (A and C) bivalent vaccine, Hepatitis A and B, and Japanese-B Encephalitis.

All water must be filtered and boiled before consumption. All fresh vegetables, whether purchased in the local market or grown at home, must be soaked and sterilized using a chlorine bleach solution. Iodine is not as effective for protection against parasites and other intestinal agents. Local milk must be boiled before use.

The many pharmacies in Kāthmāndu carry a wide range of pharmaceuticals (most available without prescription), although few American-manufactured drugs are available. Most drugs are manufactured by Indian subsidiaries of European or American pharmaceutical firms and have not passed the rigorous quality controls of Western-manufactured drugs. Bring those brands or items you prefer or arrange for a supply from the U.S.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The normal route from the U.S. east coast to Kāthmāndu is over the North Pole via Tokyo to Bangkok, then to Kāthmāndu after an overnight stay caused by airline connections. The adventuresome still can cross the Atlantic and pass through Europe to India, but connections between India and Nepal can be troublesome. Flights routinely are canceled and New Delhi Airport accommodations are spartan.

Travelers occasionally report immigration difficulties in crossing the Nepal-China border overland in either direction. U.S. citizens planning to travel to Tibet from Nepal may contact the U.S. Embassy in Kāthmāndu for current information on the status of the border-crossing

points. Travelers may also wish to check with the People's Republic of China Embassy in Nepal for current regulations for entry into Tibet.

Passport and visa required. Tourist visas can be purchased upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kāthmāndu and at all other ports of entry. All foreigners flying out of the country must pay an airport exit tax, regardless of the length of their stay. Travelers may obtain further information on entry/exit requirements by contacting the Royal Nepalese Embassy at 2131 Leroy Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 667-4550 or the Consulate General in New York at (212) 370-3988. The Internet address of the Embassy of Nepal is http://www/newweb.net/nepal_embassy/

Americans living in or visiting Nepal are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Nepal and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Nepal. The U.S. Embassy is located at Pani Pokhari in Kāthmāndu, telephone (977) (1) 411179; fax (977) (1) 419963. U.S. citizens may also register by e-mail by accessing the U.S. Embassy's home page at <http://www.southasia.com/USA>. The home page also provides updated information regarding security in Nepal, Embassy services, and travel in Nepal.

Pets

Nepal has no quarantine requirements, but Customs does require a current rabies shot and a certificate of health. Get the full range of inoculations to protect your pets. Veterinary service is available in Kāthmāndu with several licensed veterinarians.

Firearms and Ammunition

Only diplomatic-list personnel may import firearms to Nepal.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency is the Nepali rupee, divided into 100 paisa. One

rupee equals about 1.6 cents. The abbreviation for rupee is Rs. before the sum, or often NC after the sum to distinguish from Indian currency, which is sometimes expressed as IC. The official rate of exchange in December 1999 was US\$1=Rs68.5, but it can fluctuate daily. Nepali currency notes are issued in denominations of Rs. 1,000, 500, 100, 50, 25, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1. Nepali coins range from 5 rupees down to 1 paisa.

Nepal has its own system of weights and measures, but the metric system is widely used in Kāthmāndu.

Disaster Preparedness

Nepal is an earthquake-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 11	Unity Day
Jan. 29	Martyrs' Day
Feb/Mar.	Shivaratri*
Feb. 19	Democracy Day
Mar.	Holi*
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar. 9	Fagu Purnima
April	Varshaprati-pada (New Year)*
May	Buddha Jayanti*
Aug.	Teej Women's Festival*
Oct.	Asthami Jayanti*
Oct 17	Armed Forces Day
Nov. 8	Queen Aishworya's Birthday
Dec. 16	Constitution Day
Dec. 28	HM the King Birebdra's Birthday
	Diwali*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

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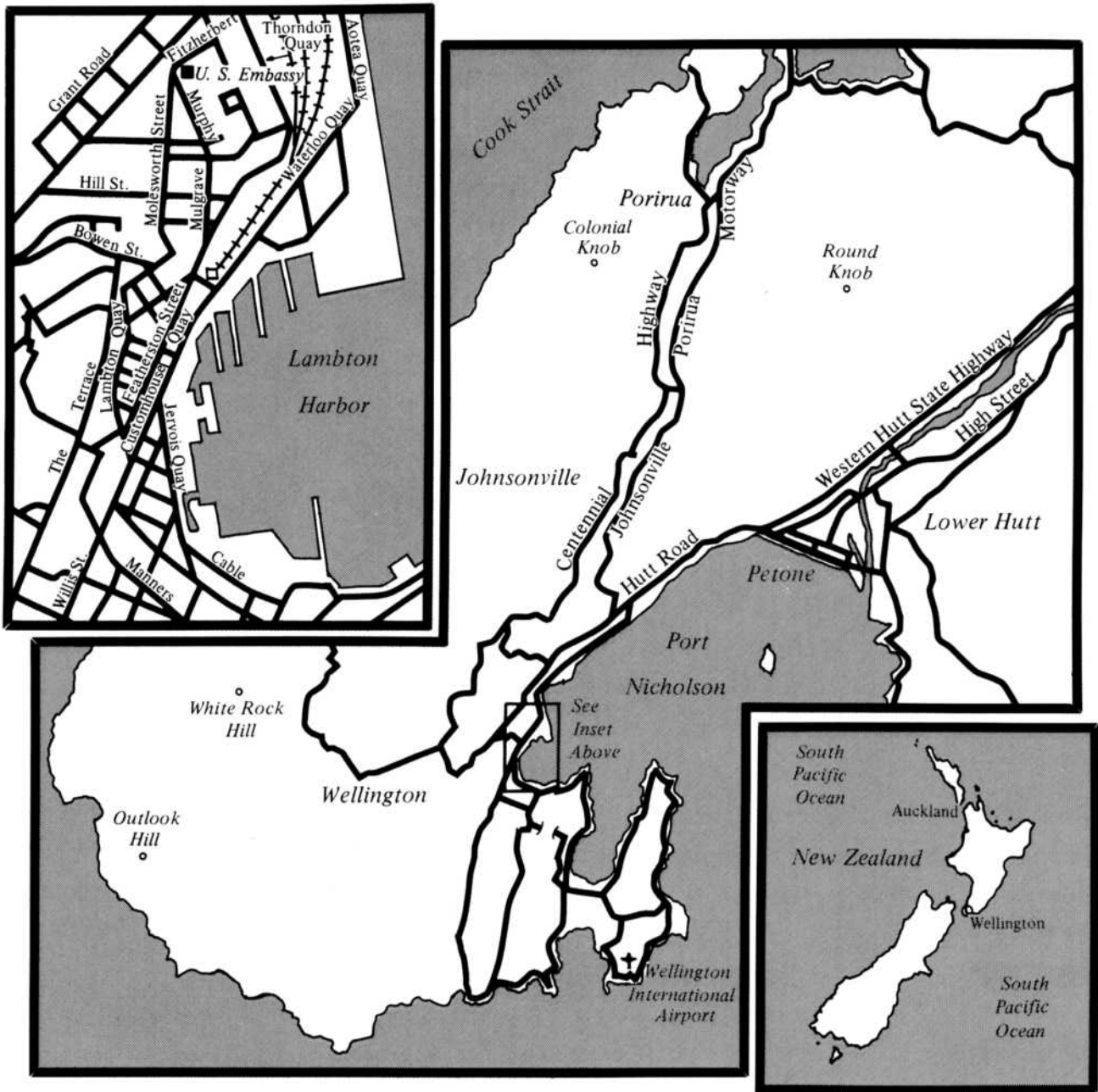
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Wellington, New Zealand

NEW ZEALAND

Major Cities:

Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin

Other Cities:

Gisborne, Hamilton, Hastings, Invercargill, Napier, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Timaru, Whangarei

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

NEW ZEALAND, which lies in the South Pacific just west of the international date line, is a fresh and vigorous country that delights the senses with its towering mountains and swift, clear rivers, its green pastures and deep lakes, and its glaciers and geysers and hot springs. The splendid scenery is one of the most rewarding aspects of this South Pacific nation.

Although New Zealand participated in the Paris Peace Conference that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles, and ratified the treaty on September 2, 1919, it is comparatively new on the stage of world affairs. Until 1935, the view was held that, in foreign policy, the British Empire

should be regarded as a unit and that, ideally, it should speak with one voice. From 1936 onward, however, New Zealand began asserting an independent position on matters of international concern. New Zealand is a member of the United Nations and other international organizations. Since 1985, the country has maintained an anti-nuclear stance. All nuclear powered or armed ships are prohibited from entering New Zealand ports.

MAJOR CITIES

Wellington

Wellington is a city of superb views whose motto, *Suprema a Situ* (Supreme by Situation), is apt. Many Americans find it somewhat reminiscent of San Francisco or Seattle. It has a population estimated at 326,000 (2000). Located where the North Island tapers to its end in the Cook Strait, Wellington's land has been pushed up and twisted into a pattern of ridges and gullies. Settlement dates from 1840, when the first shiploads of settlers arrived under the auspices of the London-based New Zealand Land Company. The city was named for the Duke of Wellington and became New Zealand's capital in 1865. Well-

ington's Port Nicholson Harbor has many moods, but when the sun is shining and the air is still, it is breathtakingly beautiful. The city and its suburbs extend like a huge amphitheater across the green hills surrounding Port Nicholson.

Wellington's aggressive terrain has a climate to match, and the threat of earthquakes is ever present. Windy Wellington is a term of abuse applied by some visitors unprepared for the city's gales but a term of affection from residents who have long since come to terms with the vagaries of the local weather.

Except for a small area of flat land in the city center, most of it reclaimed, Wellington clings to the steep hillsides. There is no room for expansion, except upwards. Residential areas spread across the hillsides, providing many residents with spectacular views of the city and harbor below. The downtown area is dominated by many modern commercial office buildings and by the Parliament Buildings, especially the Executive Wing of Parliament known as the Beehive.

Located near the geographical center of the country, Wellington is a principal overseas shipping terminal, even though it has direct international air connections only with Australia. Wellington houses the

head offices of all government departments and many national organizations.

Food

You can purchase most familiar foods in Wellington. Although Wellington has several fairly large supermarkets that resemble those of American chains, visits to the smaller stores and specialty shops, such as the greengrocer, the butcher, and the delicatessen, are often desirable.

Staple items are in adequate supply, but items such as canned goods and imported food items are expensive. Fresh meats are abundant and relatively inexpensive. Some Americans buy fresh meat from butchers.

Dairy products are excellent and cost less than in the U.S. Fresh pasteurized milk is completely safe for infants, and you can buy it in dairy stores and supermarkets or through home delivery. Skim milk and cow's milk substitutes are also available.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are plentiful and reasonably priced if bought in season. Some supermarkets have good supplies of these items, but greengrocers usually have better selections, although at higher prices. Frozen fruits and vegetables are usually limited and are more expensive than in the U.S. New Zealand laws prohibit the importation of frozen, refrigerated or uncooked meat, poultry, eggs and egg products, and of pet food containing raw lamb or sheep meat.

Clothing

You can wear warm clothing comfortably most of the year.

Men wear springweight suits about 3 months of the year and heavier suits the rest of the time. Temperatures may occasionally call for a topcoat, but a raincoat is essential. A topcoat with a zip-in liner is useful. Umbrellas are sometimes impractical because of Wellington's high winds but are highly useful at other times. You may purchase shirts, suits, topcoats, raincoats, and sport coats locally, and, with the current

exchange rate, they are reasonably priced. However, selections may be limited by quality and/or size.

The selection of women's clothing is not as limited as menswear. In Wellington, summer cottons are practical for only 2 or 3 months of the year. Long-sleeved dresses of any weight, suits, heavier dresses, slacks, sweaters, and skirts are comfortable the rest of the time. Good rain gear is essential, and the same types of coats suggested for men are recommended. Wellington evenings are cool, and women need wraps or stoles most of the year. Even when the weather permits the wearing of lightweight apparel, most women carry a light wrap or sweater to guard against sudden temperature changes. Skirts with a variety of dressy blouses and tops are useful for dinner parties.

Clothing for children and infants is expensive and limited. School uniforms that must be bought here, satisfy much of the clothing needs of most school-age children. Boys and girls at all secondary schools and most private primary schools wear uniforms that include a raincoat, shirt or blouse, pants or skirt, cap, socks or stockings, sweater (jersey), and blazer. Some public primary schools (ages 5–12) do not require uniforms. Away from school, children and teenagers wear essentially what they would wear in the U.S.

Bring a good supply of play clothes and dress clothing. For boys up to 12 years old, you can combine white shirt, tie, and sweater with school pants for dressy events. During most of the year, a jacket and a lightweight coat are useful. Children need cardigans or sweaters and warm pajamas for winter.

Supplies and Services

Most toiletries and cosmetics are available, but imported perfumes and cosmetics are expensive. Common first-aid medical supplies and medicines, miscellaneous household items, e.g., cleaning equipment, repair materials, clothespins, tools, etc., are readily available.

Some American cigarette brands, including some filter-tipped brands, are sold locally. New Zealand is a wine-producing nation and produces some excellent wines. New Zealand brews excellent export beers. You can obtain a few brands of American wine, bourbon, and beer from local suppliers, but choice is limited.

Barbers and beauty shops are plentiful and do good quality work; prices are comparable to those in the U.S. Appointments are necessary at most shops. Tipping is not customary.

Dressmakers and tailors are skilled but are heavily booked and quite expensive.

Some dry-cleaners use American equipment and methods, but their work may not always be good, especially on suede and leather. Commercial laundries are adequate but hard on clothes. Doing your own laundry is preferable.

Religious Activities

Virtually all religious denominations can be found in the Wellington area. There are Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Jewish, and Latter-day Saints congregations, as well as smaller groups.

Education

Like the U.S., New Zealand's public school system is secular. Children start school at age 5 and must attend until age 15. Tuition is free in public schools, but charges are made for some books and supplies. In schools requiring uniforms, the cost may be as much as NZ\$300–NZ\$500 per child. Students who commute by bus pay a reduced fare.

Most private schools are usually denominational (Anglican, Roman Catholic, or other). About one in nine New Zealand schoolchildren attends private school. Tuition, uniforms, and other charges vary, and at some schools, children must buy books and other supplies.

Kindergartens are available for pre-schoolers. Subsequent school levels are designated Primer 1–4 for students 5–6 years old; Standard 1–4 for ages 7–10; and Form I–VII for ages 11–17. Primer 1 through Standard 4 are primary grades; Forms I and II, intermediate; and Forms III–VII, high school or college.

At the end of Form V, students take nationally administered school certificate examinations in as many as six subjects. If successful, they then go on to Sixth Form.

A University Entrance Examination for students completing Form VI was conducted for the last time in 1985. Beginning in 1986, each secondary school issues a diploma on the basis of internal assessment. Students who scored well on the UEE (1985) or were awarded diplomas (1986 and thereafter) may, after completing Form VI, go directly to a university or remain in the secondary system for Form VII, at the end of which they take the Bursary or Scholarship Examination. Success in those examinations entitles a student to a government stipend during his or her university career.

Because of specific prerequisites for entry into U.S. universities, American students may have to supplement their New Zealand high school courses. A few American students have felt that New Zealand schools discourage individual initiative and have chosen to finish their high school work in the U.S.

The standard of education at universities in Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton, and Palmerston North is similar to that in the U.S. through the BA level. However, facilities for graduate study are not equal to those in the U.S.

The typical university undergraduate takes six courses a year and earns a bachelor's degree after 3 years, although some courses of study are longer. Unsupervised individual study is the norm. Courses may vary from those

offered by average American universities.

The school year differs from that in the U.S. For primary and secondary schools, the year begins in early February and ends in mid-December with a 2-week vacation in May. In late August, primary schools have a 2-week vacation and secondary schools, a 3-week vacation. Except for upper-level classes at Victoria University of Wellington, universities do not operate on the semester system but treat the full academic year as a single unit. Opening in late February or early March, universities have essentially the same vacations as secondary schools. Formal lectures at most universities end in mid-October, but exams extend well into November.

In grading, examinations are emphasized over daily classwork. A passing grade is 50, and marks above 70 are rare. Numerical grades thus cannot be taken as equivalent to U.S. grades.

New Zealand schools strongly emphasize sports and usually have excellent athletic facilities.

Special Educational Opportunities

Special education services are available for pupils whose educational requirements cannot be met by an ordinary school. The policy in New Zealand is to educate these pupils in ordinary classes as far as possible and to provide separate classes and schools only where necessary. Most students enrolled in the special education services are primary pupils aged 5–12, but emphasis is now being placed on developing services for preschool children and secondary pupils.

Selected schools provide special classes for students who are intellectually and physically handicapped, visually handicapped, hearing impaired, or emotionally disturbed. Classes are run in hospitals, and speech and reading clinics offer part-time tuition for selected pupils. Special day schools are provided for intellectually handicapped

and some physically handicapped students.

The Department of Education administers six residential schools for pupils who cannot be cared for in special classes—two for hearing impaired, two for mentally handicapped, and two for maladjusted pupils. The Department also has an advisory service on special education for hearing impaired children and a psychological service. The Department maintains a close association with voluntary groups such as the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind and the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society.

Recent experience has indicated that special education services in Wellington are not comparable to those available in the Washington area for either primary or secondary level pupils.

Sports

New Zealand is a sportsman's paradise. Golf courses are plentiful and popular. Tennis and squash courts are accessible and inexpensive. Four indoor tennis courts are available in Wellington. Because Wellington offers only four indoor tennis courts to the public, most players join private clubs that are less expensive than in the U.S. Jogging is very popular among men and women. A Marathon Clinic is available. New Zealand is the current amateur world champion in men's and women's softball, and softball clubs for all skill levels abound.

Sports attire for general outdoor activity is similar to that in the U.S., except that on the golf course, women wear skirts rather than slacks. Shorts worn with knee socks are acceptable for male golfers. Whites are often mandatory for tennis and squash at private clubs. A wide variety of sports equipment is available, including golf clubs, tennis rackets, and scuba gear, but at higher prices than in the U.S.

For hunters, the following animals are found in varying degrees of abundance: wapiti (elk); chamois

(Austrian antelope); thar (Himalayan mountain goat); red, fallow, Virginia, sambur, and sika deer (Japanese); wild pig; goat; and opossum (Australian marsupial). Except for wapiti, game can be killed year round. A license is not needed, but permits are required to hunt on most lands. Upland game shooting, which requires a license, is available. Commercial hunting and farming of big game animals has drastically reduced the once-abundant herds. However, successful hunts are possible for those willing to walk into deep forests under difficult conditions.

Deep-sea fishing is good; trout fishing is popular. Rainbow and brown trout were introduced into New Zealand in 1877 from California and have flourished in many lakes and streams. Fishing season in most districts opens October 1 (earlier for some South Island areas) and extends to April 30 in most South Island and North Island areas. Fishing is allowed all year on Lakes Rotorua and Taupo. A limit of 10 fish, minimum length 14 inches, is imposed at Lake Taupo. Fishing is permitted from 5 am to 11 pm. Some areas are open to fly casting only.

Skiing is popular, despite the fact that the nearest slope is 220 miles from Wellington. Both the North and South Islands have good skiing most years. Although the facilities are adequate, they are not what many U.S. skiers are accustomed to.

Rugby football is New Zealand's national game, and the New Zealand team, known as the All Blacks, has earned international respect for its ability over more than 60 years.

New Zealand has gained international recognition in cricket, soccer, golf, lawn bowls, track and field, rowing, sailing, motor racing, and distance running.

The largest spectator sport is horse-racing, and hundreds of race meetings are held each year in various towns and cities throughout the country. New Zealand-bred horses

are known throughout the world for their strength and stamina and are much sought after as breeding stock in other countries.

All water sports are popular in New Zealand. Within an hour's drive north of Wellington are a half-dozen sandy beaches used in summer for sunbathing and swimming. During summer, water temperatures are slightly warmer than at beaches on the Oregon, Maine, or northern California coasts, but much cooler than beaches on the southern California or South Atlantic coasts.

New Zealanders have a keen interest in pottery making and weaving. Day and evening classes are available.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Flowers blossom in the garden year round and grow in profusion in spring and summer. Camelias, rhododendrons, fuchsia, azaleas, and roses flourish, as well as many native New Zealand, Australian, and South African species.

New Zealand's natural scenery is a most rewarding aspect of the country. The North Island is justly proud of its mountains, bays, and farm country. And the South Island, with its Alps, fjords, lakes, waterfalls, and glaciers is equally but differently scenic.

Hiking and walking possibilities abound on both islands. Several hiking (tramping) clubs in Wellington sponsor outings on weekends and holidays. Many excursions by bus (or bus and air) are offered at reasonable prices. The cost includes meals and lodging.

Four times daily a ferry carries passengers and cars on a 3-hour trip across Cook Strait from Wellington to the South Island. Return fare for an adult passenger is around NZ\$60 and for a medium-sized car is NZ\$250. Air service is frequent and expensive. The South Island exhibits spectacular mountains and beautiful coasts along its 1,500-mile

periphery, most of which are accessible by car.

Entertainment

Public entertainment and night life are limited. Most restaurants and hotels usually stop serving dinner between 10 pm and 11 pm. Reservations are necessary in most restaurants; relatively few places cater to the walk-in public.

Some restaurants not licensed to sell alcohol have Bring Your Own (BYO) licenses. BYO restaurants provide wine glasses and charge a NZ\$1–NZ\$2 corkage fee per bottle. The sale of alcoholic drinks, including beer, at public bars is prohibited after 10 pm or 11 pm. Licensed hotels may serve liquor after hours to *bona fide* hotel guests. Tipping is not customary in hotels and restaurants.

Cabarets, which sponsor dancing, have no other attractions, except for a few that also offer dining. During winter, many business, charitable, and professional groups sponsor annual balls. Many are open to the public.

American, Australian, British, and occasionally other foreign films are shown in Wellington's theaters and are a principal source of entertainment.

Professional theater productions are staged during the season. Touring companies sometimes feature American musicals. Several intimate repertory theater groups, and many amateur theatrical organizations also perform. Concerts by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, chamber music groups, and soloists are frequent. The New Zealand Opera Company offers several productions each year; performances are often superior.

Social Activities

The Association of American Women (AAW) is open to women employees and dependents.

The New Zealand-American Association (NZAA), an organization consisting primarily of New Zealanders

with particular ties to the U.S., has a wide variety of activities, including holiday celebrations, sports events, lectures, and cultural events. The NZAA Ladies Auxiliary invites women employees and dependents to its monthly ladies' coffee mornings.

Many voluntary groups providing aid to the handicapped either solicit or are receptive to help from Americans, particularly those with special qualifications or experience. Scout activities are available for boys and girls. These groups are also receptive to offers of assistance.

Auckland

Auckland is located on a narrow isthmus between two harbors that opens into the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea. With a population of over 1 million (for the metropolitan area), it is the commercial and industrial center of New Zealand and a main port of entry for ships and planes. Auckland is home to many immigrants and visitors from Pacific Island nations and has been described as the world's most populous Polynesian city.

Auckland's International Airport is at Mangere, 13 miles from the Consulate General. Bus and taxi service is available to the center of town. Overseas ships dock in downtown Auckland.

Downtown Auckland is modernizing rapidly. A large number of office buildings and several large hotels of international standards have been built in the last few years. The downtown area is surrounded by many attractive residential areas and many satellite cities and boroughs. Most homes are not modern by U.S. standards either in architecture or in equipment, but most are comfortable, and many have magnificent views. North Shore homes are newer; many have been built since 1961 when the harbor bridge was completed.

Auckland offers education, medical care, and a standard of living comparable to those in Wellington.

Auckland's temperatures are cool in winter and warm in summer. Average annual rainfall is 50 inches; hours of sunshine per year average 2,140. Occasional storms are accompanied by fairly high winds, but they are not a great hazard. Because of high humidity and dampness in most houses, mildew is a threat, especially to leather goods. During summer, flies, mosquitoes, and other insects are troublesome, because most houses are unscreened. Moths and silverfish are a threat to woolens.

About 6,000 Americans reside in this U.S. consular district, and as many as 900 American visitors are in the consular district at any given time.

Food

Meat and dairy produce, including pasteurized milk, are abundant. Many fresh fruits and vegetables are also available. Supplies of frozen and canned vegetables are limited. Since canned baby foods are expensive, a blender is useful in making baby food at home. A meat grinder is also useful. Coffee and tea is sold in various grades and blends.

A few prepared meals are available. Local flour, vegetable shortening, and yeast are different from American products. Local breads are good. Items that are not sold include certain herbs and seasonings, double-action baking powder, Karo syrup, American tomato ketchup and chili sauce, meat tenderizers, Bisquick, and Sanka. The selection of such items as cake mixes is not as widespread as in the U.S. Local mayonnaise does not suit American taste.

New Zealand wines have improved dramatically in the last few years and are generally quite acceptable as table wines, particularly white wines. If you wish to serve American wines, which are seldom available, you must arrange to import them.

Clothing

Auckland winters are not so severe as those in most parts of the U.S. In the Auckland metropolitan area, it

never snows or freezes. However, the wind chill factor frequently offsets moderate temperatures. Few homes are centrally heated, but most are insulated. Summer temperatures seldom reach levels that most Americans would consider hot, but conditions are often warm enough to require summer clothing. Summer evenings can be quite cool.

Clothing sizes, qualities, and prices in New Zealand differ from what most Americans are accustomed to.

Men do not require a heavy overcoat but do need a light topcoat and especially a good raincoat. Medium-weight suits are usually sufficient for winter, and lightweight suits are sufficient for summer.

New Zealand shirts are cut differently from American shirts. They offer a normal range of neck sizes but few sleeve lengths. Lightweight wash-and-wear suits are not available. A few good hand tailors are available. New Zealand men seldom wear hats. Men should bring clothing for the sports that interest them, including tennis whites and lightweight waders for fishing. Local athletic equipment and footwear are limited and expensive.

Mediumweight wool dresses, especially with long sleeves, and knitted and tailored suits are worn from fall through spring. A fur cape or stole or an evening sweater or shawl is necessary. A good supply of light summer clothes is desirable.

Bring clothes for informal, leisure, sports, and formal evening wear. Formal day occasions require hat and gloves, and formal evening functions can require long dresses. Lingerie, hosiery, and accessories are available. A raincoat, or several for variety, is essential. Bring a warm woolen or quilted dressing gown.

A wide range of good imported woolen, silk, and American cotton fabrics is available, but some accessories for dressmaking, such as seam and sleeve boards, are in limited supply or different from Ameri-

can types. A few good dressmakers are available.

Footwear should include several pairs of crepe-soled shoes for use during rainy weather and a good pair of walking shoes.

Uniforms are worn in most schools and must be bought here. Boys of up to high school age wear short trousers above the knee. Ready-made clothes, especially for children under 8 years, are expensive and limited in variety and supply.

Supplies and Services

Supplies: Most cosmetics and toilet articles, including some American brands made in New Zealand or Australia, are available but are expensive.

Medical and household supplies are generally available.

Such basic services as dry-cleaning, laundry, shoe repair, beauty shops, appliance repair, and other repair services are often less than adequate and are expensive. Mail, milk, and newspapers are delivered daily. Trash is collected weekly.

Auckland is covered by a regional bus service that extends to the outlying suburbs and satellite towns. Service is good during the morning and evening rush hours but is not frequent at other times. A ferry service operates frequently between the foot of Queen Street in downtown Auckland and Devonport across the harbor. Commuter train service is limited. Although the cost of gasoline is high, more than 60% of New Zealand's work force use private transportation to commute to work. An automobile is indispensable in Auckland.

Religious Activities

Most religions and sects are represented in Auckland; there are Church of England (Anglican), Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, and Jewish congregations.

Education

Schools are available from kindergarten through university level. Children may attend kindergarten several half-days a week from the age of 3. Kindergartens usually have a waiting list of at least 8 months. Children may begin school at age 5 and are automatically accepted at primary school. School is compulsory between ages 7 and 15. Some private and public schools provide transportation for day students. Facilities for athletics and other activities are adequate in all schools. Private schools vary considerably; public schools are free, but parents must buy books and school supplies.

The University of Auckland offers degrees in arts, science, commerce, law, and medicine. Music and art classes are provided in private schools, and art classes are provided in public schools at primary and secondary levels.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of Auckland, Auckland Technical Institute, and many secondary schools conduct extensive programs of adult education in commerce and the trades for hobbyists and those who work about the home. Auckland's public libraries and the library of the University of Auckland provide a good if limited coverage of all major fields.

Sports

Aucklanders spend much of their time outside, and opportunities for outdoor activity abound. Most homeowners take pride in maintaining their lawns and gardens.

Many fine beaches are in and near Auckland. The city has five large swimming pools. Heated pools offer year-round activity.

Waitemata Harbor, with its irregular coastline and many islands, is a paradise for boating enthusiasts. About 4,000 sailboats of all classes participate in the Anniversary Day Regatta races.

The area offers several excellent golf clubs and two public links.

Grass and asphalt tennis courts are located in all sections of the city. Except for a few courts at schools, all are either private or club owned. Organized midweek tennis for women is available at all clubs. Squash is popular.

Waitemata Harbor and Hauraki Gulf have numerous fish. The Bay of Islands, Coromandel Peninsula, and Tauranga, in the Bay of Plenty, are centers for big game fishing. Lake Taupo and several other lakes are noted for their abundance of rainbow trout, and fishing is permitted year round. Many trout streams and rivers exist. Although trolling is permitted in the lakes and spinning in some sections of the major rivers, only fly casting is allowed in the streams.

Many places in New Zealand provide hunting for deer, wild pig, duck, and rabbit. Slide-action (pump) and semiautomatic shotguns must have magazines pinned (not plugged) to limit total capacity to two rounds, one in the magazine and one in the chamber. This regulation is now under review, however, so owners of such guns should inquire before shipping them. Firearms owners and users are licensed by the police.

Good hiking trails are found in the mountains (particularly the Waitakere Ranges) near Auckland. Hiking or tramping clubs are popular. Rain gear is essential; good quality, reasonably priced, and lightweight gear is available locally. Heavy-duty shoes are less useful than medium- or lightweight shoes. Other camping gear (tents, bags, etc.) is available but expensive.

Bowling on the green is a popular sport, and clubs exist in all parts of the city. Currently, only four American-style bowling alleys are available in New Zealand (one is in Auckland).

Halfway between Wellington and Auckland at Mount Ruapehu, snow skiing occurs through the winter.



Skyline and harbor of Auckland

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission..

Auckland offers ample opportunities for water-skiing and surfing.

Many good potters exist, and dyeing and weaving are popular.

Principal spectator sports include horse racing, autoracing, rugby, soccer, cricket, and tennis.

Sports attire for men and women is similar to that worn in the U.S., except that New Zealanders adhere more closely to the traditional forms of sports dress. Sports equipment is available but expensive.

Entertainment

Auckland offers many first-class movie theaters downtown and many suburban ones. Most films are American or British, with French, Italian, and Swedish films shown occasionally.

Auckland has a professional repertory theater. Occasional plays or musicals are staged by touring over-

seas companies. The Grand Opera Society usually features one or two productions a year. The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Auckland Regional Orchestra, and various other groups perform frequent concerts and recitals.

The city has a museum containing many interesting relics of Maori and European life and an art museum.

Local events of interest include an annual agricultural and pastoral show, gymkhanas, and Maori concerts. The 3-week Auckland Festival held each May offers plays, concerts, recitals, art exhibitions, and a film festival.

Many good restaurants and one or two nightclubs exist; most are closed on Mondays. Several hotels offer good meals. Traditionally, tipping is not practiced.

Radio reception is good and local stations offer a fairly broad selec-

tion of programs. American and other rock music is popular with local disc jockeys. Each of Auckland's two TV channels, both government enterprises, broadcast 10-12 hours per day, 7 days a week.

Social Activities

Auckland's American community is not so cohesive as those in some countries. Most American residents have been here for many years and have integrated into New Zealand society. However, many Americans do belong to the American Club and/or the American Women's Club. They are composed almost equally of Americans and New Zealanders who have lived in or have an interest in the U.S.

Christchurch

Christchurch, the capital of the Canterbury Provincial District on South Island, is the center of New Zealand's most productive wheat and grain region. It is situated on

the east coast of South Island on the Avon River, at the base of Banks Peninsula. Christchurch was founded in 1850 by a group of Anglicans, and named for the old Oxford College attended by John Robert Godley, the leader of its first settlers. It now is an industrial city of 307,000 (urban area), and a center for many large businesses, including tanneries and meat-packing plants.

Christchurch Cathedral (Anglican), a Gothic structure built over a period of 40 years, from 1864 to 1904, and the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament (Roman Catholic), of Classic Revival architecture, are among New Zealand's most outstanding ecclesiastical buildings. The city is also the site of Canterbury College (founded in 1873), and the noted School of Arts, dating to 1882. Queen Elizabeth II Park in Christchurch was the site of the 1974 Commonwealth Games and the 1981 World Veterans Games—it is a large complex of sports grounds, pools, and athletic courts. The Town Hall, acknowledged as the finest in New Zealand, opened in 1972, and provides extensive conference facilities for South Island.

Other notable places in the city are Canterbury Museum; the Botanic Gardens, laid out more than one hundred years ago; and McDougall Art Gallery. The Bridge of Remembrance, built as a First World War memorial, crosses the Avon River. Also near the river are the Canterbury Provincial Government buildings, dating from the mid-19th century, and the only remaining administrative structures of their kind in New Zealand.

Hagley Park, the largest area of public grounds, extends over many acres of woodlands and formal gardens. Together with the city's Victorian buildings and lawn-fringed houses, it intensifies Christchurch's reputation as "the most English town outside of England."

The airport at Christchurch, which gained international status in 1950, was opened in 1936 as the first

municipal airport in the Southern Hemisphere.

There are recreational facilities throughout the city, both public and private. Much of Christchurch's social activity centers around club life.

Christchurch serves as a natural gateway for touring South Island. A combination fly-drive tour of the area might include a visit to a nearby sheep farm; the resort town of Queenstown, situated on the north shore of Lake Wakatipu in a mountain setting; and the small town of Te Anau located at the entrance to Fjordland National Park. One of the fjords—Milford Sound—is the foremost attraction on South Island, with more than 300,000 tourists visiting annually.

Dunedin

Dunedin, New Zealand's fifth largest city, was founded by Free Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) settlers in 1848. They laid out the city around an octagon, rather than the traditional square, and this central area is a major point of interest even today. Known as the "Edinburgh of the South," Dunedin is famous for its late 19th century architectural styles and its Scottish festivities.

Dunedin was the base for the ships of Admiral Richard Byrd's Antarctic expeditions between 1928 and 1935, and a memorial stands here in his honor.

The city is situated at the head of Otago Harbor, a Pacific Ocean inlet, and is the major port for the Otago area. A South Island urban center with a population of 109,500, Dunedin produces chemicals, soap, furniture, and fertilizers; shipyards and breweries are also among its industries. Wool and dairy products are shipped from here in large quantities.

Otago University, with respected medical and dental schools among its many departments, was established in Dunedin in 1869. It is

among the several points of interest on both city and peninsular tours; others include the Queen's Gardens, Larnach Castle, the Cenotaph, Glenfalloch Woodland Gardens, Prospect Park, and Lookout Point.

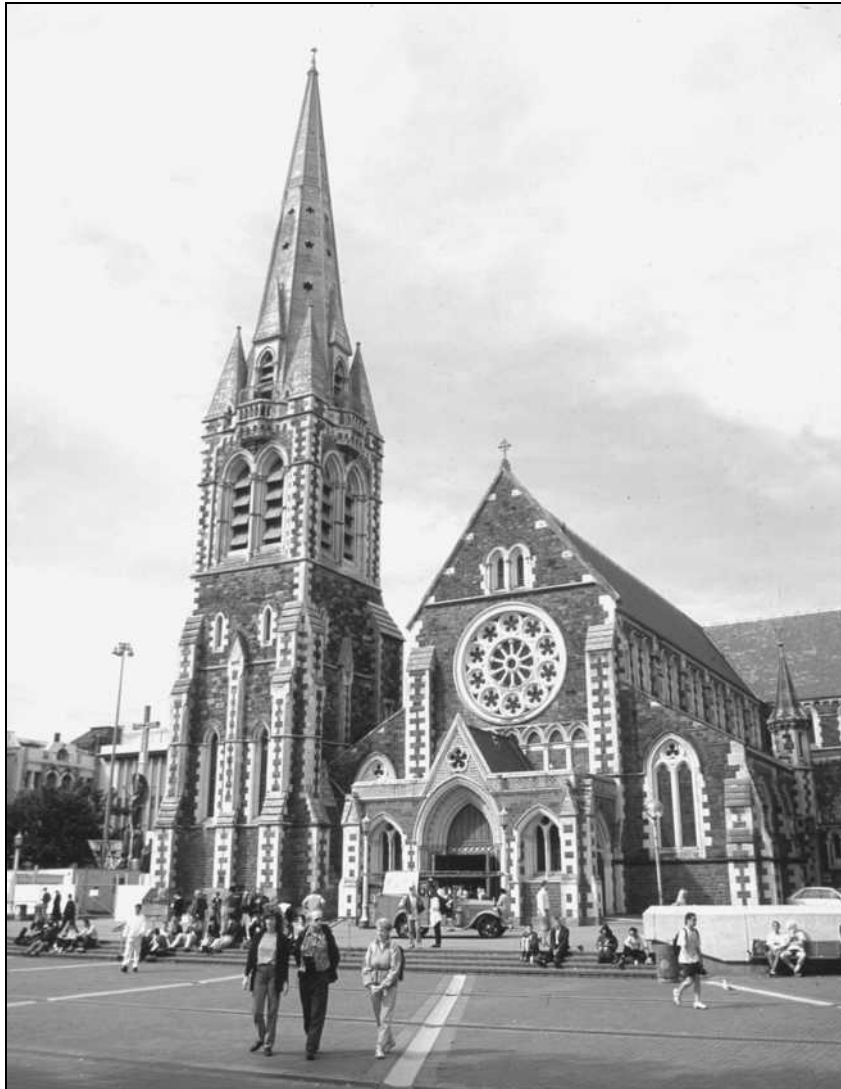
OTHER CITIES

GISBORNE is a seaport city of more than 30,000 residents on the eastern shore of North Island. Lying on Poverty Bay in the East Cape area, it is known for its fine beaches and beautiful scenery, and is fast becoming a popular resort. Grapes, maize, and citrus fruits are grown in abundance around Gisborne.

HAMILTON is New Zealand's largest inland city. It lies on the banks of the Waikato River in central North Island, and is the hub of a prosperous dairy farming and sheep-raising area. With a population of over 170,900 (2000 est.) in its urban area, it ranks sixth in population in the country. The University of Waikato was established here in 1964.

HASTINGS is a city of more than 36,000 near Napier, and the district which encompasses both cities and the area in between is generally considered one urban center. The total population of the combined area has grown to approximately 108,000. Hastings proper is the commercial center of a pastoral region. Orchards, vineyards, and grazing flocks add to the singular beauty of the surrounding landscape.

INVERCARGILL, the southernmost city in New Zealand, is situated on an estuary of Foveaux Strait, the channel which separates South and Stewart islands. It is a busy, modern city of 48,000 (1987 est.), with a well-defined Scottish atmosphere—many of its streets are named for the rivers of Scotland. Invercargill, founded in 1856, is the administrative center of Southland Province. Queen's Park, Rose Gardens, Waihopi Scenic Reserve, and



Christchurch Cathedral

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

Bluff Harbor are among its scenic areas.

NAPIER, on the east coast of North Island, is a modern seaside city of over 50,000 residents. After a devastating earthquake in 1931, the town was rebuilt in the Art Deco style. The city is noted for its beautiful, two-mile-long Marine Parade, an esplanade lined with Norfolk pines. The Kiwi House on the parade exhibits the wingless kiwi bird, the national emblem of New Zealand. The botanical gardens and Napier proper can be seen in panorama from Bluff Hill overlooking Hawke Bay—this lookout is one of the city’s interesting tourist spots.

PALMERSTON NORTH, with a population of about 75,800 (2000 est.), lies on the Manawatu River on North Island, about 80 miles north-east of Wellington. Although the center of a dairy farming region, it also produces pharmaceuticals, electrical equipment, and knitted goods. Massey University, a well-known agricultural school, was founded nearby in 1964.

ROTORUA, where many of New Zealand’s noted Maori settlements are located, is a city of 54,900 residents on Rotorua Lake in north-central North Island. Often called “New Zealand’s Yellowstone,” it is one of the nation’s most famous resorts,

featuring thermal springs, deep craters, caverns, the legendary Mokoia Island, exotic pine forests, hunting and fishing and, especially, the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, with its fine examples of carving and other arts and crafts. Of particular interest are the Maori concerts and traditional *hamgi* (pit-cooked meals) held nightly at several locations.

The port city of **TIMARU**, with a population of approximately 28,000, lies on the east coast of South Island, about 90 miles southwest of Christchurch. Timaru is a commercial hub, whose exports include frozen foods.

WHANGAREI, with a population of over 40,000, is one of New Zealand’s fastest-growing cities. It is situated about 85 miles north of Auckland, on North Island, and is the urban center of a livestock-raising area. The waters of its harbor are noted for deep-sea fishing, and among its scenic spots is beautiful Whangarei Falls. The city’s Clapham Clock Museum contains over 400 clocks from around the world. To the north are the extensive Kauri forests and the picturesque Bay of Islands, as well as Kaitaia, the far north’s principal city.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

New Zealand is located in the South Pacific, some 1,200 miles southeast of Australia. The country consists primarily of three islands that extend nearly 1,000 miles from north to south. New Zealand’s total area, 103,736 square miles, is slightly smaller than that of Colorado. All but 1% of its area is in the two main islands: the North, 44,281 square miles, and the South, 58,093 square miles that are separated by Cook Strait. Stewart Island, south

of the South Island, covers 670 square miles.

Although it has several large plains, New Zealand is mainly a mountainous country, with many rivers and lakes. The highest peak, Mount Cook, rises over 12,000 feet in the Southern Alps, a massive range stretching almost the length of the South Island. The North Island has several intermittently active volcanoes.

New Zealand lies in the Temperate Zone and has a generally mild, invigorating climate. The surrounding ocean tempers the climate, with the result that seasons do not vary as much as in most of America. Spells of cool, damp weather occur in the summer from December through February. Rainy winter days of June, July, and August are interspersed with days of brilliant sunshine and crisp, clear air. The chart shows statistics on climatic ranges for New Zealand's three main centers: Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch.

Areas outside the main islands are: the Chatham Islands, located 500 miles off the east coast of the South Island; several sub-Antarctic groups with no permanent habitation; and the Three Kings, a small, uninhabited group off the northernmost tip of the North Island. Farther away are the Cook Islands and Niue, two self-governing associated states, and Tokelau, a group of three atolls that New Zealand administers. New Zealand claims the Ross Dependency in Antarctica, but the U.S. does not recognize this claim.

In addition to the U.S. Embassy in Wellington, the U.S. has a Consulate General in Auckland and a Consular Agency in Christchurch. The U.S. Naval Support Force Antarctica/Detachment Christchurch—better known as Operation Deep Freeze—has a permanent complement of about 60 Navy and Air Force personnel and about the same number of New Zealand staff. It provides extensive logistic support to the U.S. Antarctic Research Program operated by the National

Science Foundation that also maintains an office in Christchurch. Five civilian astronomers employed by the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington operate an astrometric observatory on Black Birch Mountain near Blenheim on the South Island.

October, November, and December are usually particularly windy months. Winds of 60 mph are not unusual, especially in the Wellington area, and on rare occasions they exceed 100 mph. Earth tremors are sometimes noticeable but rarely cause damage. New Zealand lies in an area of active earthquakes and volcanism ringing the Pacific Plate. A major fault line runs through Wellington.

Population

New Zealand's population in 2000 was estimated at 3,700,000. Maori, descendants of the early Polynesian settlers, make up about 10% of the population. Most of the balance is of British descent, and immigrants continue to arrive in modest numbers from the U.K., Australia, Europe, North America, some of the Pacific Islands, and Asia.

About 75% of New Zealand's population lives on the North Island, and Auckland's urban area, with 1 million inhabitants, is the largest population center. The population of the greater Auckland area is more vast than that of the entire South Island. Wellington, including the Hutt Valley and other adjacent areas, is the next largest and numbers 326,000. The Christchurch area, population 307,200, is third largest and is followed by Dunedin, 109,500; and Hamilton, 149,000.

Throughout New Zealand, the influence of the Maori culture is evident in the names of streets, towns, rivers, and mountains, as well as in art, literature, and music. Historically, Maori have accommodated reasonably well to the European culture that arrived after them and quickly dominated the country, but recent years have seen a resurgent Maori identity characterized by

increased assertion of Maori rights guaranteed under the Treaty of Waitangi that ceded sovereignty from the Maori chiefs to the British Crown. The Waitangi Tribunal has been charged with hearing disputes over land and resource rights and recommending settlements to the government.

Public Institutions

New Zealand is a parliamentary democracy based on the British model but with important modifications. The Governor General performs the ceremonial role of head of state, representing Queen Elizabeth II. Parliament consists of one Chamber, the House of Representatives, with 97 Members: 93 representing the general population and 4 Maori members representing those who claim to be Maori by descent and have asked to be included on the Maori electoral rolls. The highest vote winner in each of the 97 electorates is elected to Parliament. The parliamentary term is 3 years; an election may be held at any time, but only two early elections have been held since World War II. Voting is not compulsory, but all voters must register at age 18. About 90% of the electorate has voted in general elections held since World War II. New Zealand has had universal male suffrage since 1879 and women's suffrage since 1893.

The executive branch of the government is the Cabinet, led by a Prime Minister as head of government. The current Cabinet includes 18 other ministers, each of whom oversees one or more ministries or departments of government. Each of these is headed by a career civil servant who usually bears the title of chief executive officer.

Two political parties, the National Party and the Labour Party, have dominated Parliament and the nation's political life since 1935. The present National Party Government was elected in October 1990. The Labour Party originated with the trade union movement. Its support is strongest in urban areas. It gov-



Downtown Christchurch viewed from post office

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

erned from 1935 to 1949, from 1957 to 1960, and from 1972 to 1975. The National Party's traditional strength has been in the rural areas, but it has been successful at times in appealing to urban-based workers and business leaders.

Minor parties occasionally attract substantial numbers of votes, but traditionally have obtained little representation in Parliament. The New Zealand Democratic Party, the New Zealand Party, the Christian Heritage Party, and the New Labour Party all receive about 1 to 2% public support each.

New Zealand communist parties are legal but are riven by ideological fissures. They enjoy little popular support and have never been represented in Parliament. Several leaders of the Socialist Unity Party, a small pro-Moscow Communist group, hold leadership positions within the trade union movement.

New Zealand is a unitary state whose government at Wellington makes and directs all national policy. Provincial (or state) administrative entities do not exist. Some 540 local bodies, including city, borough, and county town councils; regional authorities; and boards that deal with electric power, harbors, pest

control, and other special functions, are being replaced with a smaller number of united councils and regional authorities.

New Zealand is a comparatively new country on the stage of world affairs. Although New Zealand participated in the Versailles Conference and was a founding member of the League of Nations, successive governments until 1935 held the view that in foreign policy the British Empire should be regarded as a unit and that, ideally, the Empire should speak with one voice. From 1936 onward, however, New Zealand began to assert an independent position in foreign affairs. In 1942, New Zealand's first diplomatic mission was opened in Washington, followed by one in Ottawa later that year and another in Canberra in 1943. An American Legation was opened in Wellington on April 1, 1942. A Department of External Affairs was created in 1943 to manage New Zealand's relations with foreign countries.

New Zealand now has diplomatic or consular posts in more than 30 countries and has accredited representatives to more than 60 countries and to the U.N., European Economic Community (EEC), and the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development (OECD). Strong ties of tradition and sentiment link New Zealand with the U.K. and the Commonwealth. New Zealand is an active participant in Commonwealth affairs and also a strong supporter and active U.N. member.

The U.S. suspended its security guarantees to New Zealand under the ANZUS mutual security treaty when the latter barred visits by nuclear-powered or armed warships to its ports. The treaty remains in effect but is now active only between the U.S. and Australia, the third party to the agreement. New Zealand works closely with the U.S. in scientific research in Antarctica and on international trade issues.

Arts, Science, and Education

New Zealand's larger cities offer a great deal of activity in the visual and performing arts, both amateur and professional. Instrumental and choral groups hold frequent dramatic and operatic performances and concerts. Overseas artists often visit the country. Officers and their dependents have many chances to participate in amateur artistic activities. The larger centers also have art galleries (mostly private), museums, and zoos.

The government is an important source of support for the arts. It maintains such institutions as the National Art Gallery in Wellington and does much to promote music through the government-owned Radio New Zealand (RNZ). RNZ administers and supports the National Symphony Orchestra and arranges tours that bring its music to the most remote parts of the country.

Scientific activity is largely in the hands of the universities and Crown Research Institutes, which have a large and varied program. Many scientific associations are active, including the New Zealand branch of Britain's famous Royal Society.

The primary school system is satisfactory. Although secondary schools are of high quality in some respects, they may not prepare some children adequately for American universities. The U.S. Embassy has prepared a comprehensive comparative analysis of the New Zealand and U.S. secondary education systems, which is available from the Embassy and also from the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and the Family Liaison Office (FLO) in the Department of State.

Universities at Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Palmerston North, and Hamilton offer undergraduate facilities comparable to those in the U.S. The normal undergraduate program leading to a bachelor's degree lasts 3 years. Several teacher-training colleges and technical and business schools exist. Most universities offer evening courses at the university level as well as adult education classes.

Commerce and Industry

A remote island nation, New Zealand is heavily dependent on foreign trade. But the pattern of New Zealand's export commodities is changing. The largest contributors to annual growth are expected to come from forestry & logging, financial & insurance services, communications, construction, non-metallic mineral products and electricity, gas & water.

The U.K. was for many years New Zealand's principal market. With Britain's entry into the European Community, however, New Zealand was obliged to diversify its export markets and has succeeded to a considerable degree. The U.S. is New Zealand's largest export market.

Apart from an aluminum smelter, a steel mill, an oil refinery, and a growing forest-products industry, most industry is classified as light. A wide variety of consumer goods is manufactured, mainly for the domestic market. Manufactured

exports, mostly to Australia, have shown encouraging growth. Exports of forest products and mineral sands have also increased. There are several energy-based industries, including a synthetic gasoline plant that uses natural gas from the Maui field. Despite active exploration, petroleum has only been discovered in small quantities.

The government plays a direct role in economic life. Railways, electric power, airlines, and communications systems are nationalized. Marketing of meat and dairy products is subject to the control of boards with government participation. Approximately 65% of the labor force is involved in service sectors, 25% are in industry and 19% in agriculture.

Per capita GDP is estimated at \$17,700 (2000 est), which translates into a reasonable standard of living for New Zealanders. Income is evenly distributed, with no extremes of poverty and wealth. Systems of social security, national health, and old-age benefits are comprehensive.

Transportation

Local

Ample public transportation serves residents of New Zealand's larger cities. Buses and taxis are available at reasonable fares. Commuter trains run from Wellington to Lower Hutt and Tawa.

New Zealand generally has good main roads. Two-lane paved surfaces are common in well-traveled areas. Secondary roads, especially in farming or isolated areas and on the west coast of South Island, are often not paved.

Regional

International airports are in Wellington, Auckland, and Christchurch, although Wellington cannot accommodate 747 model aircraft. All in-country service is provided by Air New Zealand and small local carriers. International airlines

serve New Zealand from many countries.

Train service between Auckland and Wellington takes about 12 hours. Trains make several stops along the 400-mile route, allowing passengers a chance to relax and eat. Car rental companies in New Zealand charge an average daily rate of about NZ\$86, plus 21¢ per kilometer for a medium-sized vehicle.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local phone service is good. Phone calls to the U.S. need not be booked in advance, except at Christmas. You can dial most areas in the U.S. direct, and connections are usually excellent. A 3-minute call to the U.S. costs about NZ\$9.18 plus NZ\$8 per call (person to person) or NZ\$9.18 (station to station). Special rates are available in the late evening (New Zealand time) and all day Saturday. International service to other parts of the world is equally good.

Fax service to and from the U.S. is excellent; commercial fax services are widely available.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

American magazines appear at local newsstands several weeks after publication, and the *International Herald Tribune* is available by mail—5 days late. The Pacific edition of *Time* is printed in New Zealand and that of *Newsweek*, printed with *The Bulletin*, in Australia.

The USIS library in Wellington and Auckland carry a good stock of U.S. periodicals, the Singapore edition of the *International Herald Tribune*, and several U.S. newspapers, plus the usual supply of books and reference materials.

In the principal cities, morning and evening newspapers are published 6 days a week, except on certain holidays. Three national newspapers are published on Sunday. Local

news coverage is good, but international coverage is limited.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

New Zealand has a socialized medical system, and, although medical services are considered excellent by world standards, they are not equivalent to those in the U.S. Americans are accustomed to more intensive diagnostic testing and to easier access to specialists. Some of the latest techniques and medicines are not yet available in New Zealand due to the high cost of equipment. Medical costs range from nil to minimal (currently about NZ\$27 for a visit to a general practitioner). Prescriptions are filled at nominal cost.

One of the primary differences between the U.S. and New Zealand medical systems is that in New Zealand it is almost impossible to see a specialist without a referral from a general practitioner.

Hospital facilities for surgery and inpatient care are considered adequate. For normal pregnancies, obstetrical care is provided by a general practitioner with follow-up care provided by nurses from the Plunket Society, a voluntary agency subsidized by the New Zealand Government, which cares for mothers and children.

Public hospitals have only a few private rooms.

Dental care is adequate. Orthodontists are located in Wellington and in Auckland. New Zealand orthodontists use treatment methods and techniques that differ from those of their U.S. counterparts, making it difficult to continue treatment begun in the U.S. Periodontic treatment is available.

The services of opticians and oculists are satisfactory and available at reasonable rates.

Community Health

Except for Hepatitis B no endemic diseases exist. All preschool children in New Zealand are vaccinated against Hepatitis B.

New Zealand's damp climate may trouble persons suffering from asthma, arthritis, rheumatism, and sinusitis. Colds and flu are frequent, partly as a result of frequent weather changes. BCG vaccination (against tuberculosis) of all 13-year olds is performed in the majority of North Island schools but is voluntary. Because the vaccine will cause a positive reaction when tine tests are administered, parents may wish to have their children exempted from vaccinations.

Preventive Measures

Milk is pasteurized. All urban water supplies are chlorinated, and it is safe to eat raw fruits and vegetables. Inoculations are not required for entry into New Zealand. Except for the pre-exposure rabies and Japanese B Encephalitis vaccines, you can obtain all other shots required for travel to points outside New Zealand. Oral polio vaccine is available locally.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1 & 2	New Year's
Jan. 22	Anniversary Day (Wellington)
Jan. 29	Anniversary Day (Auckland)
Feb. 6	New Zealand Day
Feb. 6	Waitangi Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 25	ANZAC Day
June 4	Queen's Birthday
Oct. 22	Labor Day
Nov. 16	Canterbury Anniversary
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

When traveling from the Northern Hemisphere, remember that the seasons are reversed in New Zealand so pack accordingly. When coming to New Zealand from the west coast of the U.S., travelers lose a day crossing the international dateline. For instance, a passenger who leaves Los Angeles by air on the evening of April 14 will arrive in Auckland on the morning of April 16. For air travel from the U.S., a rest-stop may be arranged in Honolulu.

U.S. citizens eligible for a visa waiver do not need a visa for tourist stays of three months or less. For more information about visa waivers and entry requirements contact the Embassy of New Zealand, 37 Observatory Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 328-4800, the Embassy's home page at <http://www.nzemb.org>, or the Consulate General of New Zealand in Los Angeles, telephone (310) 207-1605.

New Zealand's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from New Zealand of certain items, including firearms and agricultural products. Handguns may not be brought into the country, and a permit for other firearms must be obtained from the New Zealand police immediately after arrival. Tourists have also faced police inquiries as a result of importing or brandishing toy weapons. The Ministry of Agriculture of New Zealand has stringent requirements for the entry of food and agricultural products. Travelers are required to declare any items that come under agricultural quarantine restrictions as stated on the customs form at the port of entry. Heavy fines have been levied against those attempting to bring in undeclared prohibited items. For more information, contact the New Zealand Customs Service at <http://>

www.customs.govt.nz and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at <http://www.maf.govt.nz>. It is also advisable to contact the Embassy of New Zealand in Washington, D.C. at (202) 775-5200, or one of New Zealand's consulates in the United States, for specific information regarding customs requirements.

New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture officials board many incoming international flights and spray the cabins with a nontoxic insect spray before passengers disembark. This is a routine procedure.

Agricultural inspectors will question new arrivals and may examine their luggage to ensure against the entry of agricultural diseases and pests. Everything made of wood, paper (including books), leather, and straw will be inspected carefully and may be held for disinfecting.

Under New Zealand law, all arriving passengers are required (without exception) to complete an agricultural questionnaire, which is contained in the Passenger Declaration Form.

All footwear in your baggage should be soil-free, especially if the footwear has been worn on farms or in areas where animals are held.

To guard against the accidental introduction of pests and diseases, some agricultural items are restricted from entry into New Zealand.

Americans living in or visiting New Zealand are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Consulate General in Auckland by mail, phone, fax or in person, where they can obtain updated information on travel and security.

The U.S. Consulate General in Auckland is located on the third floor of the Citibank Centre, 23 Customs Street East, between Commerce and Queen Streets. The telephone number is (64)(9) 303-2724. The fax number is (64-9) 366-0870. See also the Consulate Gen-

eral home page via the Internet at <http://www.usembassy.org.nz>.

The U.S. Embassy is located at 29 Fitzherbert Terrace, Thorndon, Wellington; the telephone number is (64)(4) 462-6000. The fax number is (64)(4) 471-2380. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Wellington closed on May 15, 1996. All routine consular services and most emergency services are provided by the Consulate General in Auckland.

Pets

You may import dogs and cats only via Australia and the U.K. The quarantine requirements of those countries are:

Australia

4-month quarantine in Hawaii followed by 1 month's residence then 4-month quarantine in Australia.

U.K.

6-month quarantine followed by 3 month's residence.

Imported dogs and cats are not quarantined in New Zealand.

You may import aviary birds from Australia only.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

New Zealand dollar is broken down into 100 cents. Coins in circulation are 5¢, 10¢, 20¢, and 50¢ pieces. Bank notes in use are \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100.

The New Zealand Government's foreign currency regulations do not permit currency transactions on the open market. However, you may purchase local currency with dollar instruments at banks, hotels, and certain stores. Only banks are permitted to reconvert local currency into U.S. dollars. Banks require a 1 day's notice for such transactions.

New Zealand uses the metric system of weights and measures.

Disaster Preparedness

Some heavily populated parts of New Zealand are located in an area

of very high seismic activity. Although the probability of a major earthquake occurring during an individual trip is remote, earthquakes can and will continue to happen. General information regarding disaster preparedness is available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov/crisismg.html>, and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) home page at <http://www.fema.gov>.

RECOMMENDED READING

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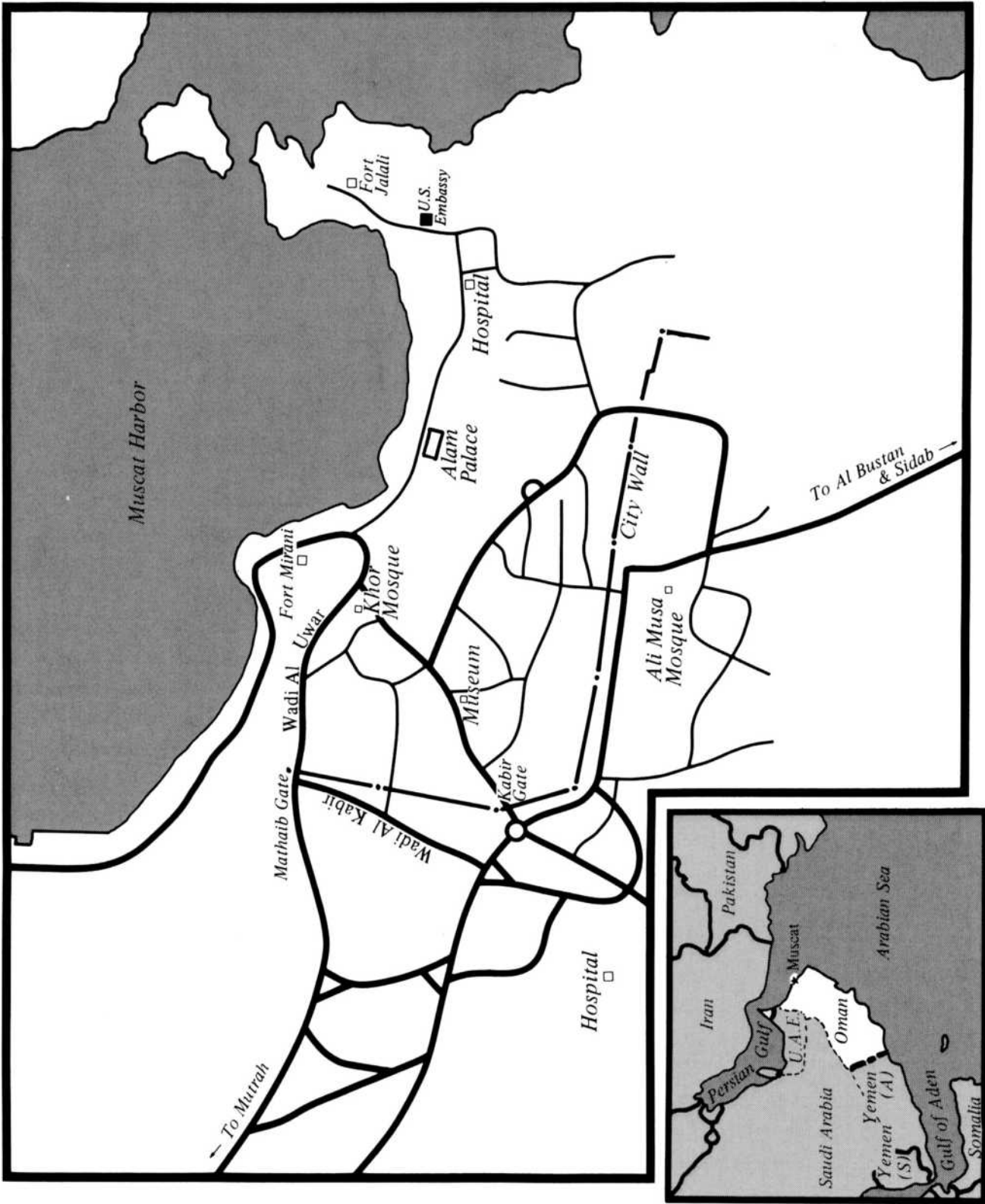
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Muscat, Oman

OMAN

Sultanate of Oman

Major City:

Muscat

Other Cities:

Matrah, Salālah

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

OMAN, known as Muscat and Oman before 1970, was once the most powerful of all the Arabian states. At the beginning of the 19th century, it controlled Zanzibar and much of the coast of Persia and Baluchistan, and it was only in 1958 that the last of its vast holdings, the town of Gwadar, was ceded to Pakistan. It does, however, maintain control of the Strait of Hormuz, through which flows much of the oil for the West.

The early history of Oman is obscure, but it is known that it was one of the first countries converted to Islam by Amir ibn al-As in the seventh century, during the lifetime of Mohammed (or Muhammad). In 1508, the Portuguese conquered

parts of Oman's coastal region, and that country's influence dominated the sultanate for more than a century (with a short interruption of Turkish seizure). Oman today is an absolute monarchy, which has survived periods of insurgency and tribal revolt, and which is intent on developing its economy and upgrading its social and educational standards. It maintains close relations with Great Britain, and is a reliable ally of the United States.

MAJOR CITY

Muscat

The Muscat (Masqat) capital/commercial area (including the cities of Ruwi and Qurum), with an estimated population of 635,000, consists of a series of towns and neighborhoods strung along the Gulf of Oman for more than 50 miles. Only one of these is old Muscat, the original seat of government and still the site of one of the sultan's palaces.

Old Muscat lies between the sea and stark, brown cliffs that rise to a height of 1,500 feet. The harbor is dominated by Forts Mirani and Jalali, built by the Portuguese in the 15th and 16th centuries. The wind-

ing streets and the wall surrounding the old city have retained much of their medieval style and flavor.

About three miles from Muscat is Oman's retail commercial center, the city of Matrah. It is also the site of the country's major seaport, Port Mina Qaboos.

Just beyond Matrah is Ruwi Valley. Because of Muscat's limited land area, most government ministries and commercial enterprises have established themselves here. This section also has become the site of much residential construction.

The expansion of the capital area in recent years has brought rapid development to places beyond Ruwi as well. The suburbs of Qurum and Madinat Qaboos are becoming important residential areas. Many ministries are located in the latter.

Despite new road construction and the opening of a limited-access highway from Qurum to Matrah, congestion is a problem in the capital area and, during peak hours, traffic often slows or comes to a halt.

Food

Numerous grocery stores in Oman offer a reasonably wide range of products, although seasonal variations and occasional shortages occur. Quality and freshness are



View of Muscat

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

generally below U.S. standards; food is relatively expensive.

Clothing

Cotton summer clothing can be worn throughout the year. However, blends of cotton and polyester retain heat, and are comfortable only in the cooler season. One or two outfits for occasional cool winter evenings are recommended.

Although more items are becoming available locally, do not expect to buy needed clothing here, especially shoes. Some Americans have been successful in locating local tailors, but get recommendations before trying one.

Westerners find that lightweight slacks with shirt and tie (skirts and blouses for women), or single-knit safari suits are appropriate for office wear. Lightweight suits are needed for some business events or evening wear.

Women wear caftans, street-length cotton skirts, dresses, or dressy slacks to social functions in the evenings. The caftans and skirts are also recommended for *souk* shopping or beach cover-up, and simple cotton versions may be purchased locally at reasonable prices. Only a limited supply of appropriate footwear is available. Children's cloth-

ing, particularly shoes and swimwear, is in extremely short supply.

Omani men commonly wear a long straight robe called a *dishdasha*, usually white but sometimes pastel. For ceremonial occasions, the *dishdasha* is worn with a decorated belt adorned in front with a large, curved knife in an ornate, silver sheath called a *khanjar*. Affluent Omanis wear the *dishdasha* with a gold-trimmed black robe called a *bisht*. The head covering is either a small, embroidered cap or a loosely wound turban (*musarr* or *emama*).

The women of Oman generally wear brightly patterned blouses and pantaloons, covered by long, head-to-toe black capes. Some of them wear the traditional face veil, but most use no face covering. A face mask, common to women of the Batinah coast, is rarely seen in the capital area. Jewelry, usually silver, is worn in profusion.

A few Omani social customs involving dress include swimwear being worn only at hotel pools; women should wear skirts of reasonable length and avoid shorts, sundresses, and sleeveless outfits; and men should wear slacks and shirt to work and in public, never shorts or shirtless.

Supplies & Services

Most toiletries, cosmetics, nonprescription drugs, and household and entertainment items are available. However, specific brand names may not be available.

Several women's hair stylists and a few barbers are satisfactory. One or two dry cleaners do acceptable work, but shoe repair facilities are limited. The cost of services generally compares to, or exceeds, U.S. prices.

Education

The American British Academy, founded in 1987, is a coeducational day school sponsored by the American Embassy. Grades are from pre-kindergarten to grade 12.

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of both British and American academic programs. The school offers the International Baccalaureate program, which is recognized in many countries for university entrance.

Several private English-speaking nursery schools accept children from three years of age. Space is limited and the schools usually have waiting lists, but most parents have been able to place their children in a satisfactory school.

Recreation

With the exception of outings sponsored by the Historical Association, few organized touring and sight-seeing activities are available in Oman. However, the country's interesting archaeological, historical, scenic, and cultural sights appeal to photographers and artists. Many towns have fortresses in excellent condition. Interesting sights within a day's drive of Muscat include the ancient capitals of Rustaq, Nizwa, and Sohar. Colorful Arab bazaars, called *souks*, are found in all but the smallest villages.

Four first-class local hotels have swimming pool facilities open to nonresidents for a yearly fee. Among other facilities offered at the hotels are lighted tennis courts and air-conditioned squash courts. One hotel has a bowling alley, another

has six; some have a sports club with an equipped gym and a sauna.

Soccer and field hockey are the only organized sports which Omanis regularly play. The most popular form of recreation is water sports. Swimming, snorkeling, water-skiing, windsurfing, and skin diving are available. Collectors are rewarded with an abundance of beautiful sea shells. Many beaches lie along the coast, and others are accessible by boat.

Oman offers both deep-sea and surf fishing. The sea abounds in a wide variety of fish, both large and small.

Camping and hiking are also popular; the hot weather eliminates the need for tents, particularly if mosquito netting is used.

Entertainment

Europeans and Americans frequent restaurants at the airport and at the large hotels. There also are numerous Indian restaurants as well as two Chinese, an Italian, a French, and a few Arab restaurants where Westerners meet. The hotels often provide entertainment and music for dancing.

Local movie theaters feature Indian films. Omani television has one or two English programs a week, and occasionally presents an English film.

The American Women's Club meets monthly, offering a wide range of social activities to its members. An amateur drama group occasionally produces plays, and the Muscat Singers give concerts.

For the American and European community in Muscat, the main social activity informal dinners or gatherings, primarily with other members of the non-Omani community, as well as taking advantage of the "specials" frequently offered at the major hotels. Omanis attend both formal and informal gatherings, but most Omani men are not accompanied by their wives.

The Department of Tourism is part of the Ministry of Commerce and

Industry. The mailing address is P.O. Box 550, Muscat, Oman.

OTHER CITIES

MATRAH (also spelled Mutrah and Muttrah), just west of Muscat on the Gulf of Oman, is the country's principal port and commercial center. There is an important fish market in the city, and shipbuilding is significant. Caravans to the interior begin here, carrying commodities such as fruits and fish. Oman's oil terminal is located three miles outside of town; the city opened its modern port facilities in the late 1970s. The population is more than 129,000.

SALĀLAH is the trading hub of the Dhofar area in the south, about 80 miles east of the border with the Republic of Yemen. The explorer Marco Polo (1254–1324) depicted Salālah as a prosperous city in the 13th century. It had been renowned since ancient times for its frankincense. The sultan of Oman took over the vicinity in the 1800s. Government construction has included a hotel and a hospital. A paved road links the city to the north; there also is an international airport, completed in 1978. The population in Salālah is approximately 10,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Oman occupies the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered on the north by the United Arab Emirates, on the northwest by Saudi Arabia, on the southwest by the Republic of Yemen, and on the southeast by the Gulf of Oman. With an area of slightly more than 100,000 square miles, it is about the size of Colorado.

Oman has three distinct topographical features. The first consists of

two flat, relatively fertile coastal strips up to 20 miles wide—one in the north stretching from Muscat to the border with the U.A.E. (United Arab Emirates), and one surrounding the southern coastal town of Salālah. The second feature includes two mountainous regions—one in the north, with elevations ranging from several hundred feet to the craggy peaks of Jebel Akhdar at 10,000 feet, and the other bordering the Salālah plain in the south. Both are deeply scarred throughout with dry stream beds called *wadis*. The third feature is sandy wasteland, mainly in the Rub'Al Khali (the Empty Quarter) along the border with Saudi Arabia; this area is almost devoid of inhabitants.

Oman's climate is one of the hottest in the world. Temperatures reach 130°F in summer months, from April to September, and rarely drop below 65°F in the cooler season, from October to March. Rainfall averages only four or five inches annually, and occurs from December to March or April. Nevertheless, humidity averages 65 to 80%. Summer monsoons create a more tropical climate in the south.

Population

Oman's population numbers over two million, of whom 1.6 million are Omanis. Omanis are a people of two dominant ethnic stocks—the Qahtan, immigrants from southern Arabia, and the Nizar, from the north. Its long history of trading, and its former colonies on the coasts of Africa and the Indian subcontinent have produced a population of extraordinary range and diversity. Arabs predominate, but communities from India and Pakistan also inhabit Oman.

Arabic is the official and most widely spoken language, but Hindi, Urdu, Swahili, and local dialects are also used. English is spoken by many officials in the Omani Government and by the majority of merchants dealing with the expatriate community.

Most Omanis are Ibadhi or Sunni Muslims, and there is a small but influential Shi'a minority. There is also a small Hindu population.

More than 50% of the population is engaged in fishing or subsistence farming. Literacy is about 35%.

Omanis are reserved, but friendly. They have a strong sense of hospitality and often share coffee, tea, dates, or *halwa* (a sweet, honey-colored dessert) with guests. Although many Omanis observe prohibitions against alcohol and tobacco, they are seldom offended by their offer. Most abstain from eating pork.

A number of social customs are observed in Oman including using only the right hand when eating, never asking questions concerning another's family members, always dressing in modest attire, and never allowing the sole of the foot to be exposed towards a host. It is polite to accept the refreshments offered to visitors, which is a national custom.

Government

The Sultan of Oman, Qaboos bin Said, is an absolute monarch who rules with the aid of his ministers. The sultanate has no constitution, legislature, or legal political parties, although an appointed Consultative Council was formed in October 1981, and in 1991 he replaced that body with one whose members were nominated by traditional leaders from each district of the country.

Except for decrees from the sultan and recently established police and commercial courts, the legal system is based almost exclusively on the Shari'ah (The Koranic laws and oral teaching of Muhammad). Jurisdiction is exercised by *qadis* (men versed in the religious code). Petty courts have been established to deal with minor matters such as traffic offenses. In less populated areas and among the Bedouin, tribal custom often is the only law, although a system of primary courts is making inroads into the interior. In 1987, a "flying court" service was initiated to serve these isolated areas.

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into *wilayats* (districts). These are presided over by *walis* (governors), appointed by the minister of the interior, who oversees all administrative tasks in the area and provides the main link between the people and the central government.

Oman is one of the Gulf region's most stable countries and Sultan Qaboos has proven an able and popular monarch. While maintaining a low profile during the Persian Gulf War, the country allowed Western military organizations use of its air bases.

Oman became a member of the United Nations in 1971. The country is also a member of the Arab League, Gulf Cooperation Council, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and several other international bodies.

The flag of the Sultanate of Oman is red, white, and green. The vertical red band on the staff is embossed with a white emblem consisting of a sheathed dagger superimposed on crossed swords, and the rest of the flag has horizontal bands of white and green divided by a red stripe.

Arts, Science, Education

The Omanis have long been renowned for their craftsmanship in everything from silver- and goldsmithing to boatbuilding. Oman is perhaps most famous for its national symbol, the *khanjar*—an ornate, curved dagger embossed in silver and still worn in the interior and on special occasions. Other handicrafts include weaving, pottery, and boat-building, with the famous Omani *dhows* still being handmade in Sur.

Traditional art forms such as singing and dancing are seen mostly in the interior. Western culture has made inroads, mostly in the capital area, but Islamic and Omani culture and customs still prevail.

Oman has greatly stressed the importance of scientific and technical advance, especially since the accession of Sultan Qaboos in 1970. In 1986, Sultan Qaboos University opened its doors to both men and women students. There are five colleges within the university: Education and Islamic Sciences, Agriculture, Engineering, Science and Medicine, and Arts. It boasts modern facilities and a highly qualified staff, including American and European professors. Many Omanis also go abroad each year to further their education, often to the U.K. or U.S.

Education is not compulsory. Students may start primary school at six years of age and finish at age 12. Six years of secondary education follows. Less than 25 years ago, Oman had 16 primary and no secondary schools. By 1998, there were 411 primary schools with about 313,000 students. Teachers are primarily Egyptian, Jordanian, and Sudanese.

Commerce and Industry

Although Oman is a relatively small oil producer at 850,000 barrels of crude per day, oil revenues account for 90% of the nation's total export revenues, and 77% of total government revenues (2000 est.). Oman was the last of the Arab Gulf states to become a major producer of oil for export; it is also not a member of Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), but has complied with OPEC policies.

However, analysts have predicted that Oman's oil reserves will last for only about 18 years. With this in mind, the government hopes to diversify its economy by developing natural gas sales.

Since the accession of Sultan Qaboos in 1970, Oman has concentrated on development of an infrastructure. The country now has an excellent highway system, modern airports at Seeb and Salalah, and deep-water ports at Mina Qaboos and Raysut. Large industrial

projects underway include a copper mining and smelting operation, an oil refinery, and cement plants. An industrial zone at Rusail will be the showcase for a variety of new light industries. At the same time, the government is seeking to develop the agriculture and fisheries sectors, from which about 60% of the Omani population still derive their livelihood.

Oman's prosperity was originally concentrated in the area surrounding Muscat, but an increasing number of government services are available to the inhabitants of the interior. Virtually everything in the Omani economy is imported. The U.S. trade relationship is minor. The United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates are Oman's most important import sources; major export destinations are Japan and South Korea.

Like other countries in the region, Oman relies on imported labor to carry out its development plans. The expatriate work force is estimated at over 400,000. The majority of foreign nationals in Oman work in construction, trade, or agriculture; and the majority of expatriates are Indian or Pakistan nationals. The government has made a substantial investment in education and as a result Omanis are now employed in occupations once held only by expatriates.

In recent years, the government has attempted to diversify the economy and to emphasize private industry. Because of its limited population (and therefore a small market for goods), the intent is for industry to provide materials for export. A number of incentives have been provided by the government and foreign investment is being encouraged. While there continue to be large numbers of British and subcontinental technical advisers and managers, some Americans are finding positions in both the government and the private sector.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry can be reached at P.O. Box 550, Muscat; the Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry, at P.O. Box 4400, Ruwi, Muscat.

Transportation

Oman's major general-cargo port is the 1.5-million-ton capacity Port Mina Qaboos, located in Matrah. Although Oman does not receive direct service from American shipping lines, it does receive regularly scheduled foreign-flag service from the U.S. east coast. Port Mina Qaboos has far less congestion than other ports in the Gulf.

Seeb International Airport is served by 18 international carriers. British Airways, Kuwait Airways, UTA, Pakistan International, Air India, Saudia, Gulf Air, MEA, KLM, Air Lanka, Thai International, Sudan Airways, Biman Bangladesh, Air Tanzania, Egyptair, Kenya Airways, Royal Jordanian, and TWA provide service to many major cities. British Airways and Gulf Air provide direct flights to London. The other carriers connect Muscat with Africa, Asia, and major Middle East cities. Connecting service is available from New York and Washington, DC on Gulf Air and TWA. An international airport also is located at Salalah. Gulf Air and Oman Aviation operate daily domestic routes to serve other towns in the country. Permission to fly to Salalah must be obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Bus service is available for the 25-mile trip from Muscat to Seeb Airport, and to Sohar, Nizwa, Rustaq, and several other towns in the interior. The bus trip from Muscat to Salalah takes about 12 hours.

There are taxis at the airport and at the larger hotels in Muscat. Finding an unengaged taxi at other locations in the city can be difficult. Fares are generally high; there are no meters so fares should be negotiated in advance. Most taxi drivers do not speak English. Omanis and third-country workers reduce the cost by sharing taxis with other riders.

Local bus service is available, but public transportation routes operate only along major thoroughfares

and none go into the area where most Americans and Europeans live. Fares are based on distance traveled. Women seldom use local buses. Visitors should not use the bus system.

Cars may be rented by the day or week. Both an international and valid national driver's license are necessary.

Private cars provide the only practical and dependable means of transportation within the country. Because the city is spread out over a large area and public transportation is inadequate, a car is a necessity. Air conditioning is a necessity.

Oman's more than 3,000 miles of paved roads include four roads from the capital area to the U.A.E. (United Arab Emirates) border, and others to Nizwa, Ibra, Rustaq, Salalah, Sur, and other interior towns. An additional 750 miles of graded roads may be traveled by standard passenger cars, but all other roads and trails require four-wheel-drive or high-wheel-base vehicles. Driving is on the right. Right-hand-drive vehicles are not allowed to be registered. There is no railway system here.

Communications

International telephone and telegraph facilities are available, although delays occur. International direct dialing is available. The local telephone system is quite good. Depending on the area, new subscribers may wait up to three months for telephone installation. Telex service is available at major hotels and at the Public Telex Office in Ruwi. Fax is widely used in place of mail service.

International airmail is generally reliable, and arrives in five to eight days from the U.S. However, newspapers and magazines are subject to censorship—mainly to restrict entry of pornography and items considered politically offensive—and may take considerably longer for delivery.

The local FM radio station broadcasts in English from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Standard broadcast-band reception is limited mostly to nearby Arab countries broadcasting in Arabic, but also includes about six hours a day in English from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in London, relayed from Masirah Island in the Arabian Sea, off the coast of Oman. A shortwave receiver is the only way of ensuring regular Voice of America (VOA) or other English-language reception. A wide range of receivers may be bought locally.

Television programs, most of them in color, are aired from 3:00 p.m. to about 11 p.m., but often run beyond midnight. Most programming is in Arabic, although a few American TV programs and one movie with Arabic subtitles are shown weekly on an irregular basis. A 15-minute English-language news program airs daily at 8 p.m.

English-language periodicals that are regularly available a few days after publication are *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Economist*, *Events*, and *Middle East International*. London daily newspapers, such as the *Express* and the *Times*, are available in Oman about three to four days after publication. The *International Herald Tribune* arrives between one and three days after publication.

The *Oman Daily Observer* and the weekly *Times of Oman* (both in English) can be bought at newsstands. Also available is the daily *Khaleej Times* from the U.A.E.

Health and Medicine

Most resident Americans in Muscat use Al Khoula Hospital (surgical/maternity) or Al Nahdha Hospital (medical) for emergencies or for simple treatment. Those with serious ailments usually go for treatment in Europe. The Royal Hospital has recently opened and is available for obstetrical/maternity care, as well as other types of treatments. There

are several private clinics (one staffed with Swedish physicians, a second with British) that resident Americans also use for medical care.

For minor problems or treatment, Oman has several qualified physicians with advanced training in the U.S. or in the United Kingdom. These doctors, however, have long hours and a heavy work load in the Omani Government hospitals, and are not always available.

Some local medical facilities that have modern equipment often lack qualified personnel. Hygiene, in many cases, is inadequate. Oman's dental facilities generally fall below U.S. standards. However, Oman has two qualified dental facilities: a French facility that provides routine care and a British facility that provides care comparable to U.S. standards. Orthodontic care and oral surgery are available.

Oman's sanitation level is low by American standards. Incidence of bacillary dysentery, infectious hepatitis, and intestinal worms exists, although the frequency has diminished sharply in recent years, especially in the capital area.

Malaria exists; there is a 5% chance of contracting malaria in the capital area; 20% in other areas of Oman.

Many Omanis also suffer from poliomyelitis, meningococcal infection, trachoma and tuberculosis. Dust conditions aggravate respiratory ailments. Typhoid is still common.

Oman has no municipal sewage system, and the roughly constructed septic tanks are a constant threat of contamination to the water supply. Garbage is collected regularly from open cubicles in various locations throughout Muscat. Flies are somewhat controlled by periodic spraying. Mosquitoes and other insects, especially cockroaches, are common, as are rats in some areas.

Americans are strongly advised to maintain inoculation schedules for typhoid, tetanus, and poliomyelitis

prevention. Gamma globulin also is recommended. Malaria suppressants (Chloroquine) should be started two weeks before arrival, and continued for the duration of the stay and for four weeks after departure, and ending with a final two week course of Primaquine. Drinking water should be filtered and boiled, and uncooked vegetables and fruits soaked in water containing bleach or Milton (available locally). Close supervision of domestics' hygiene and kitchen routines is necessary.

Sanitation standards at the leading restaurants catering to expatriates, and in the restaurants of major hotels, appear to be adequate.

Most drugs are available locally, but often not the American equivalent. A six-month supply of regularly prescribed medication is advised for long-term visitors.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs and Duties

A valid passport and visa are required. Omani embassies and consulates issue two-year, multiple-entry tourist and/or business visas to qualified American citizens. "No objection certificates" for entry into Oman may also be arranged through an Omani sponsor. Certain categories of visitors may qualify to obtain a visa upon arrival at a port of entry. Evidence of yellow fever immunization is required if the traveler enters from an infected area. For further information on entry requirements, contact the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman, 2535 Belmont Road N.W., Washington, D.C., telephone (202) 387-1980, 1981 or 1982.

Travelers entering Oman may not carry with them, or bring into the country in accompanied baggage, firearms, ammunition, or pornography; all are subject to seizure if found. No more than one bottle of liquor is permitted per non-Muslim

adult. Unaccompanied baggage and shipments of household goods are subject to inspection. Books, videotapes, and audiotapes may be reviewed prior to being released to the owner. A copy of the packing list is required to clear effects through customs. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Washington for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Omani employers often ask that expatriate employees deposit their passports with the company as a condition of employment. Although customary, this practice is not required by Omani law. The U.S. Embassy in Muscat advises Americans to exercise caution in agreeing to employer confiscation of passports, since this operates as a restraint on travel and could give undue leverage to the employer in a dispute.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Oman are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security within Oman. The U.S. Embassy in Oman is located on Jameat A'Duwal Al Arabiya Street, Al Khuwair area, in the capital city of Muscat, P.O. Box 202, Medinat Al Sultan Qaboos 115, Sultanate of Oman, telephone (968) 698-989, fax (968) 699-189. The Embassy's e-mail address is aemctns@omantel.net.om, and its web site can be visited at <http://www.usa.gov.om/>.

Pets

Pets entering Oman require an import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Department of Animal Health, before shipment. Forms may be obtained from the Ministry through one's sponsor and must be submitted with a copy of the pet's rabies vaccination record and a health certificate. Vaccination against rabies is required no less than one month and no more than six months before the travel date. There are additional vaccination requirements for dogs and cats less than 30 days old. A second health certificate dated 48 hours

before the pet travels is also required. Pets may be subjected to a six-month quarantine, although this is usually not required when importing the pet from a rabies-free country. Pets must be manifested as cargo on an airway bill when transported by air.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The unit of currency is the Omani rial, divided into 1,000 baizas. The rial is pegged to the American dollar. American and American-affiliated banks include Citibank, Grindley's (Citibank), National Bank of Oman (Bank of America), and the Bank of Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait (Chemical Bank).

The metric system of weights and measures is used. Highway signs are in both Arabic and English, and give distances and speeds in kilometers.

The time in Oman is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus four.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Nov. 18 National Day
- Nov. 19 Birthday of HM Sultan Qaboos
- Id al-Adha*
- Hijra New Year*
- Mawlid an Nabi*
- Lailat al Miraj*
- Ramadan*
- Id al Fitr*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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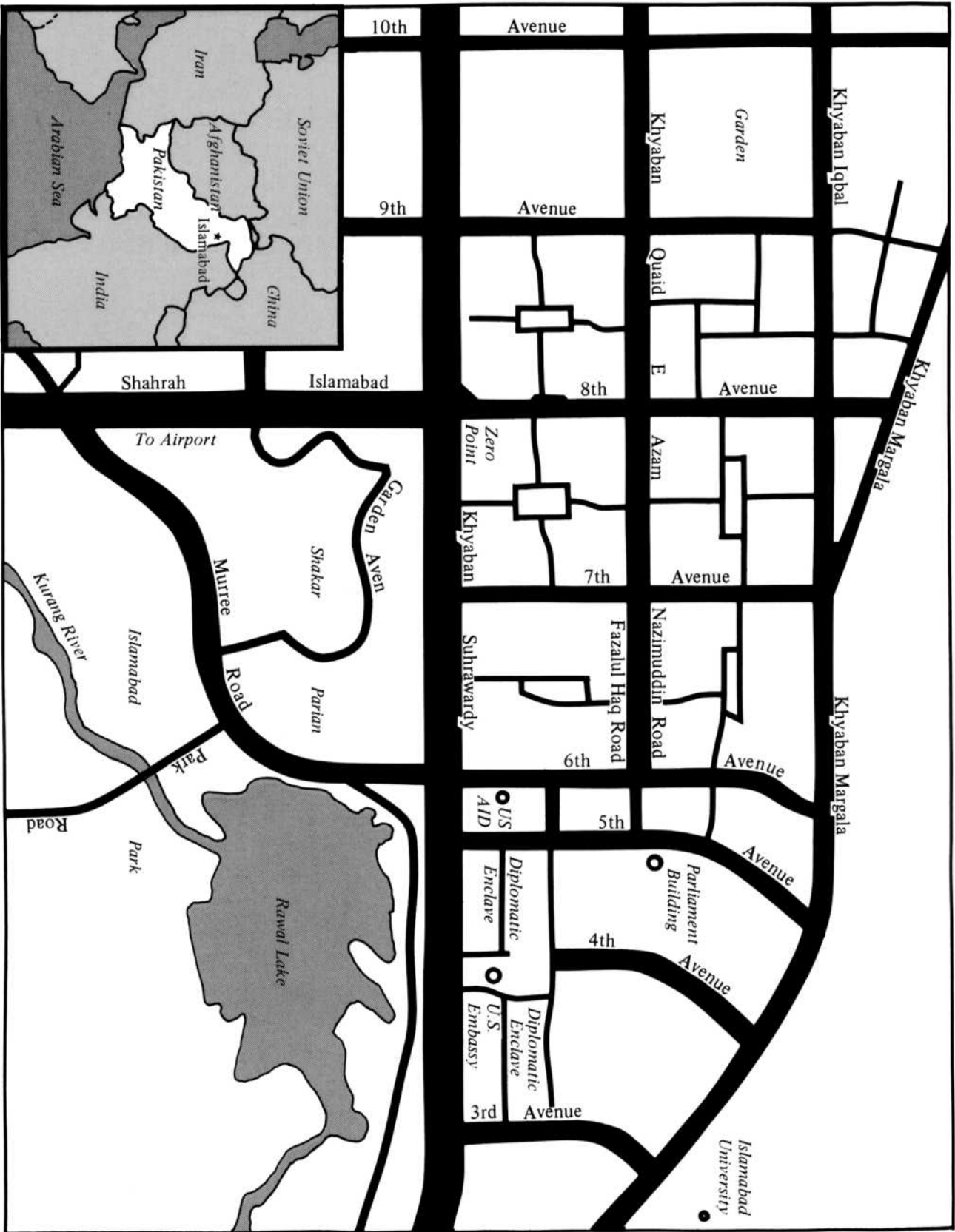
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Islamabad, Pakistan

PAKISTAN

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Major Cities:

Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar

Other Cities:

Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Hyderabad, Multan, Quetta, Sargodha, Sialkot, Sukkur

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Pakistan. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

For 3,000 years, the trade routes that cross the Indus Valley linking the Middle East, India, and the Orient have attracted countless invaders and settlers from as far away as Greece and Mongolia. In one way or another, they all have contributed to the rich cultural diversity of the country that for five decades has been known as Pakistan. In 1947, millions of Muslims from India made their way to a new homeland. Since then, the heritage of Islam has been the cohesive factor enabling this ethnographic amalgam to survive and grow. Pakistan's fascinating culture is complemented by a spectacular and variegated landscape stretching from the second highest peak in the

world to the shores of the Arabian Sea. The spectacular mountainous areas are a result of the collision of the Indian subcontinent with Asia.

MAJOR CITIES

Islamabad

Islamabad is a new capital, built on a specially selected site near the older cantonment town of Rawalpindi. It consists primarily of government offices, foreign diplomatic missions, and residential areas for senior government servants and employees of foreign missions, and has a population of some 350,000. The busy bazaars and back streets common in other South Asian cities are absent, but the loss of local color is offset by Islamabad's convenient layout. Broad avenues, many lined with trees, divide Islamabad into self-sufficient quarters, each with a central shopping area and a few neighborhood markets. Islamabad is considerably greener, quieter, less crowded, and dusty than most cities in this part of the world.

Rawalpindi, 10 miles away and still the major city in the capital area, is typical of the cantonment towns built by the British in India and Pakistan during the mid-19th cen-

tury. These towns served as residential and operations centers for the British Army. Rawalpindi, located on the Grand Trunk Road that ran from Kabul to Calcutta, developed as a transportation, communications, and administrative center. The city remains an important military base and is the site of the General Headquarters of the Pakistani Army and Air Force. Rawalpindi has many narrow back streets that wind through bustling bazaars as well as the broad, tree-lined thoroughfares established by the British.

Until recently, Rawalpindi's importance rested on its strategic location for military operations. Aryan-speakers fought over it in 1400 B.C., and Alexander the Great arrived in 326 B.C. It was completely destroyed by the Mongol invasion in the 14th century. The area was part of the Moghul Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries. Later, the Sikhs conquered and controlled the area, establishing the largest Sikh military cantonment at Rawalpindi in the 18th century. The Sikhs laid down their arms in 1849 to the British 53rd Regiment, which then established its northern command headquarters in Rawalpindi. The town became one of the largest cantonment stations of the British Empire. In 1960, Rawalpindi became the interim capital of Paki-

stan until Islamabad was constructed and government offices moved there.

Utilities

Since electricity in Pakistan is 220v, 50 cycles, all U.S.-made appliances require transformers. Adapters to convert U.S.-type plugs to fit Pakistani outlets for dual voltage appliances or lamps can be purchased on the local market.

With in-town housing there are frequent power outages, especially in period of "load shedding" during winter and summer months. There are also frequent fluctuations in voltage. Therefore, voltage regulators are recommended for sensitive equipment such as personal computers, stereos, TVs, VCRs, and microwaves. They are available locally.

Pakistan's power requirements for TV sets are also 220v, 50 cycles and 625-line PAI European standard. Quality TV sets (PAI or multi-system) of English, Dutch, and Japanese origin, comparable to those in the U.S. are available for purchase in Islamabad and in Peshawar. Only PAL and multi-system TVs and VCRs can be used with tapes available at local video rental shops.

Electric typewriters may need cycle adaptation. It is easier to bring a battery operated clock than to adapt an electric one. Many 220v appliances, can be purchased in Islamabad and Peshawar. The price of items in these stores is less than those found on the open market.

Water in Pakistan is not potable.

Food

Most newcomers miss some American food items but find a fairly large range of quality food available in Islamabad supermarkets. Locally grown fruits and vegetables are of high quality and are cheaper than in the U.S. Many imported goods are available in Islamabad, although sometimes higher in price than similar items found in the Islamabad commissary. Pakistan is a Muslim country and pork and alcoholic

products cannot be found in local markets. Wild boar is available locally, if you prefer a "gamey" taste to your pork. There is one local brewery in Pakistan which sells an "export" quality beer for Christian Pakistanis and foreigners.

Many Americans shop in local markets and stores for chicken, beef, veal, lamb, mutton, goat, seafood, eggs, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Some local meats such as beef do have a "gamey" taste and may be slightly tougher than that to which Americans are accustomed. Local chicken is almost always tougher than that found in the U.S. Meats including chicken may be bought locally at prices cheaper than those in the commissary. Bakeries sell a variety of baked goods, croissants, pastries, French bread, sliced wheat or white sandwich breads, and oversized hot dog and hamburger buns. Fresh milk is never available, but long-life (UHT) milk is available locally. Yogurt and tofu are also available on the local market. Locally bottled soft drinks are both cheap and available, but the quality is uneven and the taste is sometimes not good.

Quality and availability of fruits and vegetables vary according to the seasons. Bananas, apples, mangoes, plums, cherries, pomegranates, strawberries, peaches, plums, citrus fruits, lychees, grapes, raisins, prunes, and watermelons are of good quality but seasonal. Lettuce and tomatoes are found seasonally, and when grown locally they are very good. Other local vegetables found in season are carrots, cabbages, eggplants, turnips, cucumbers, cauliflower, artichokes, parsley, green beans, green peas, onions, potatoes, spinach, bean sprouts, mushrooms, scallions, Chinese cabbage, pumpkins, peppers, and mustard and turnip greens. The variety of vegetables tend to diminish during the rainy season.

Produce is inexpensive in season, yet the duration of the season is limited. Some employees and family members have brought canning equipment and supplies and some

people freeze freshly squeezed orange juice, which is cheaper in season than the frozen varieties available in the commissary. Kitchen gardens are common here, so vegetable and flower seeds should be brought along with gardening supplies. Local seeds produce well, but U.S. varieties of herbs, lettuces, radishes, peppers, and greens fare even better.

Poor refrigeration and unhygienic handling of meat, seafood, produce, and other food items continue to be of concern in Islamabad. Most seafood is transported by air from Karachi in baskets filled with ice. Oftentimes these baskets are left to sit outdoors, allowing the ice to melt and the seafood to thaw. It is more difficult to guarantee good seafood during the summer months and care should be taken to purchase food items from established shops. All produce should be washed thoroughly and meats should be fully cooked.

Paper products bought in the local markets, including toilet paper, disposable diapers, feminine sanitary products, personal care products, and other paper items, are considerably higher in price than those found in the U.S. American tobacco products are available locally and usually at lower prices than in the U.S.

Clothing

Islamabad's weather is basically of two types: 6 months of hot summer (100°F, half dry and half monsoon rains) and about 4 months of winter (temperatures sometimes near freezing at night and 40°-60°F in the daytime). In between these seasons are about 2 months with warm days (about 80°F) and cool nights (about 40°F). As a result, you need a larger supply of light clothing than warmer winter wear, but both are necessary.

Acceptable dress for the workplace is similar to that in the U.S. For a woman, however, the necessity to wear modest clothing should be considered. During the winter months (mid-December to mid March), most

men wear long-sleeved shirts and tie. During the warmer summer months, however, short-sleeved shirts are worn.

The national dress is called a "shalwar kameez" and is a long tunic top worn over a pair of Pajama-type pants. It takes about 5-1/2 yards of material to make a shalwar kameez. Pakistani men, women, and children all wear this outfit. A good number of American women also follow this custom, especially in the hot summer months. Local tailors will make the shalwar kameez for about \$5-7.

A good tailor can copy Western clothing even from a photograph, but most tailors cannot sew from a pattern. Lightweight cottons are available in colorful profusion in summer and there is a limited supply of somber-colored light wool, sturdier cotton, and polyester in winter. Not all the local fabrics are colorfast though, and calicos, stretch fabrics, felt, and knits are unavailable. Imported silks are available. Cotton clothing is advisable for summer, as synthetics are often sticky in the hot, humid weather. Light wool and polyester is best for winter.

It is difficult to find shoes to fit American feet or tastes, although some people have been pleased with shoes they've had copied from shoes brought from home. Shoe repair is unpredictable. Bring an adequate supply of all types of shoes. This is especially important if you plan to take part in the many available sports activities. If hiking is a hobby, a good pair of hiking boots is a must.

Clothes that require dry-cleaning are not recommended. Although dry-cleaning facilities in Pakistan are improving, they are still largely unsatisfactory. While some people consider it inadvisable to send clothes made of silk or delicate fabrics to be dry-cleaned in Pakistan, others have had no problems.

Winter jackets and accessories are useful for trips to northern areas.

Many Americans in Islamabad make at least one trip to Murree during the winter to play in the snow.

Bring an adequate supply of lingerie, underwear, nylons, socks, washable sweaters for winter, sport clothes (e.g., tennis outfits). Do not forget washable lightweight raincoats, umbrellas, and swimwear (suits, goggles, caps, etc.).

However, one can find in Pakistan a large quantity of export quality ready made cotton clothing available in Islamabad and Lahore stores at prices considerably lower than U.S. department store prices. These include jogging suits, casual shirts, tops for women and children, as well as cotton, gabardine, and denim pants for boys and young men.

Men: In Pakistan men dress conservatively. Men do not wear shorts in public (although some men do while jogging), nor do they appear without a shirt. Even small boys will be embarrassed by the stares and titters they receive if they go shirtless in public.

Women: Women should not bring an abundance of halter tops, sundresses, shorts, etc. Pakistan is a Muslim country and these types of clothing are not acceptable in public. Women must dress modestly in public (including inside your own house if you have male servants). Women do not wear short skirts, shorts, or sleeveless or low-cut blouses. In addition, dress codes vary depending on the city. Islamabad is somewhat liberal in its acceptance of Western dress. When shopping at the bazaars in Rawalpindi, however, women are expected to dress modestly and usually wear the shalwar kameez with the dupatta (the long scarf draped over the shoulders).

Children: Bring plenty of clothing for babies and children, as local Western-type clothing is expensive and not always sturdy. This will, then, allow you time to determine which local suppliers are trustwor-

thy. Children's sleepers are nice for the winter nights. School dress in Pakistan is casual, similar to that worn in the U.S. except that there is a dress code based on Muslim sensibilities. Skirts for girls, and shorts for both boys and girls, must be at least knee length and shoulders must be modestly covered (e.g., no sleeveless tops, but short sleeves are acceptable). This dress code affects only the middle and high school-aged children. However, more mature-looking elementary girls are expected to adopt this dress. Jeans, casual slacks, and sweatsuits are staples in winter, and they are available locally. Girls, however, may wish to purchase these items in the U.S., since the Pakistani varieties do not always fit well. Students at ISI celebrate Halloween by wearing costumes and U.N. Day by wearing their national dress. If there is a style of dress typical of your region of the U.S., bring it with you.

Supplies and Services

Don't replace 110v appliances if you think you want to buy 220v here. Indeed, some people continue to use their American appliances exclusively. Most items can be found locally or can be ordered from the U.S.

Car parts are expensive locally, if they are available at all. Bring common extra parts. Slow delivery time for mail orders makes it important to have enough baby and children's clothes. Shoes are also difficult to find locally.

Children's toys and games sold locally are rudimentary and may be unsafe by American standards. Plastic dolls, balls, simple puzzles, etc., are easy to find. Elaborate games and educational toys are not. Imported toys such as Barbie dolls or Transformers are expensive. A limited selection of children's books are available. Local handicrafts make nice gifts, particularly for women and girls. Embroidered clothes, purses, scarves, jewelry, brass and copper articles, marble and inlaid work are all popular.



Staffan Widstrand/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Aerial view of Karachi, Pakistan

Bring useful miscellaneous items: bicycles (available locally but expensive and, except for the Chinese-made, of poor quality), parts and tires for U.S./European bikes.

Since most families have their washing done at home by a "dhobi" (laundryman), there is no need for commercial laundry facilities in Pakistan.

Color film can be developed and printed in Pakistan (usually with 24-hour service for prints and 7-day service for transparencies or enlargements) at prices below those in the U.S. The quality of processing varies but is generally good. It should be noted, however, that slide development in Pakistan is limited to Fujichrome and Ektachrome. Bring Kodachrome mailers from the U.S. Black and white film is available locally but printed on matte-finish paper only. B&W glossy prints are not available.

Domestic Help

Most American households employ at least one domestic employee, with the majority of families employing two or three. The quality of domestic staff in Pakistan varies depending on the length of service and the prior contact the domestic

has had with expatriates. Most domestics who have worked with foreigners have a working knowledge of English. Many claim that they are English speakers but experience has proven that they do not always understand instructions. Pakistan's labor force is extremely rigid. A cook will cook, and a dhobi washes and irons. (However, the latter will not sew on a button nor notify the employer when a button has been removed.) Most domestics will do only what they are asked to do and nothing more. Most domestics require instruction and close supervision until they have become familiar with their new employer.

The following types of domestic employees are available: a cook or cook-bearer who does the shopping, cooking, serving, some cleaning, and general supervising of the house; a nanny (ayah) who cares for young children; a bearer, who does most of the housework, helps with serving, and washes dishes; a sweeper who cleans bathrooms, verandas, walks, and driveways (usually part-time, but necessary because most indoor servants will not clean outside areas, floors, or bathrooms, as these are considered low-class chores); a gardener (mali); and a twice-a-week laundryman (dhobi).

Average monthly salaries for domestic employees are: cook - \$135; bearer - \$90; cook-bearer - \$110; dhobi - \$36; sweeper - \$30; mali - \$40; ayah - \$105. (These are U.S. Dollar equivalents, but domestics are paid in rupees.) In addition to their salaries, domestics are usually provided living quarters (at least for the main employee), a bed (charpoy), uniforms, tea, sugar, and milk (or tea money), time off (average 4 days a month), and an annual bonus (sometimes split into two bonuses). Most employers pay for medical examinations and routine medical expenses. Workmen's compensation for domestic staff is available locally at low rates.

Religious Activities

Pakistan is 97% Muslim, but religious minorities are free to practice their faiths. Proselytizing is subject to restrictions. Pakistan has about 1.6 million Christians, many of whom live in the Punjab. A number of Embassy employees also have Christian servants, especially cooks. Christian congregations may be a mixture of foreign nationals and Pakistanis. Services are in both Urdu and English.

Islamabad has an Apostolic Nunciature, a Roman Catholic church, and two interdenominational Protestant churches: The Protestant International Church (PIC), and St. Thomas (Church of Pakistan) which has an Episcopalian format. Rawalpindi has a Catholic cathedral and other Protestant congregations. Also in Islamabad is a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon). Jewish services are held in private homes available in the area. International Bible Study groups also meet in homes.

Education

The International School of Islamabad (ISI) is sponsored by the Department of State. ISI offers an enriched American curriculum to students of all nationalities in grades K-12. The school also has a nursery program for children who are four years of age. The school is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and

Schools. ISI is divided into elementary (grades K-5), middle school (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12).

Total Americans in the school are 30%, Pakistanis are 18%, and nationals of 44 other countries comprise the remaining 52% of the school's population. The school year is based on a semester system which begins in the third week of August and ends the first week of June. ISI offers Advanced Placement courses but there is no IB program at ISI.

The elementary program includes specialists in art, music, PE, and host nation cultural studies. The secondary program offers instruction in science, math, social studies, foreign language (French or Spanish), English (including English as a Second Language), and electives (art, technical drawing, accounting, computer science, debate, publications, creative writing, choir, band, drama, photography). Advanced placement courses are offered in English, biology, chemistry, American history, mathematics, French and Spanish, and independent study may be arranged. Three computer labs containing approximately 60 Apple Macintosh computers and an excellent library housing almost 22,000 books, magazines, and periodicals form the backbone of the instructional program.

Full-time teachers at ISI number 49. Most of the teaching faculty are educated in the U.S., hold U.S. certificates, and have many years of teaching experience in the U.S. and/or other overseas schools. Of the 14 full-time high school teachers, 12 hold master's degrees. There are 11 Americans on the high school faculty.

The \$3 million, 20-acre ISI campus (composed of three red-brick classroom quads, a gymnasium, and auditorium) was completed in 1986 and is located in the educational sector of the city between Islamabad and Rawalpindi, about ten miles from most employee residences in Islamabad. The campus also

includes an open-air theater, a physical education center, swimming pool, track, tennis and squash courts, playing fields, music room, science labs, cafeteria, and separate libraries for elementary and secondary school. A full hot lunch program is offered. The school has several buses, and children are bused to and from school.

The ISI American High School diploma is awarded at the end of grade 12 to students who have satisfactorily met the course requirements and total of 23 credits. The following credits must be completed: English (4), math (3), science (3), social studies (4) - including 1 credit each in U.S. and world history, physical education (2), foreign languages (2), electives (5), and students must demonstrate computer literacy. A student is required to have a minimum of six classes per day. The school day is divided into eight periods, with one period for lunch.

Activities are held within the school day and after school. Included are drama, photography, student council, pep club, National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, Model U.N., French Club, Key Club, and a yearly trek in the mountains of northern Pakistan. In addition, the ISI supported Satellite Center organizes a variety of after school and weekend activities. Active Scouting programs also attract many ISI students.

Athletic activities include basketball, soccer, field hockey, swimming, track, volleyball, and intramural activities. ISI students participate in four sports conventions or tournaments and one cultural convention with other international schools from Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

ISI's music program, including both band and chorus, is open to students in grades nursery to 12. Several musicals and plays are presented annually by the school's music department.

Children who have attained the age of five years by October 1 are eligible for admission to the kindergarten. Children with birth dates between October 1 and December 31 may be admitted if the school determines that the child is ready.

ISI administers the PSAT, NMSQT, SAT, ACT, and Achievement Tests of the College Board. The SAT mean scores for the Class of 1995 were as follows: entire class - verbal 452, math 547; native English - verbal 459, math 478. Some 98% of the Class of 1996 are attending 4-year colleges and universities. Some students of the Classes of 1995, 1996 and 1997 are currently attending The Johns Hopkins University, Northwestern University, Cornell University, Hofstra University, Babson College, Michigan State University, University of Texas, Luther College, Queens College, Marymount College, Smith College, Richmond College, The George Washington University, California Institute of Technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and The College of William and Mary.

The International School of Islamabad's local address is Sector H 9/1, Post Box No. 1124, Islamabad, Pakistan. From the U.S., use this address: Superintendent's Office International School of Islamabad (ISI), Unit 62202, APO AE 09812-2202.

Some American children attend other schools. A nursery school at the British Embassy compound is used by some Americans. There is usually a waiting list.

Some other private nursery schools in Islamabad are used by Americans (including a Montessori nursery). These are less expensive than ISI and closer to residences, but they do not offer transportation, nor can they offer the range of facilities and specialists, such as music and PE teachers, that ISI can offer.

Some Americans also choose the British School for their elementary age children. The school offers education only up to age 10, after which



Parliament Square in Islamabad, Pakistan

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

the British usually opt for boarding schools in England. Bear in mind that the school, educational philosophy, and vacation schedules are somewhat different from American schools.

Islamabad also has a small French school and a Japanese school.

Special Educational Opportunities

Few formal educational opportunities for adults are available. However, an Asian Study Group has monthly meetings on such topics as Asian literature, religion, music, dance, carpets, films, etc. In addition, the Asian Study Group sponsors many lectures, films, and cultural programs and frequently organizes trips to points of historical interest. The hiking and photography groups are very active.

Sports

The USEA operates the American Club in Islamabad located on the U.S. Embassy compound. For those Americans not employed by the U.S. Government or who are citizens of other nations, membership is available with some limitations and fees.

The American Club has four tennis courts (two clay and two hard) with two full-time tennis instructors, an

Olympic-size swimming pool, a children's pool, a Universal equipped exercise/weight room, a volleyball court, a basketball court, a softball diamond, a soccer field, a children's playground, and a circumferential path used as a track. Also, there is a community and youth center which is reserved for various activities. It has a pool table, a foosball table, a ping pong table, VCR, and TV.

The tennis courts are lit for night use and tournaments are held throughout the year, both within the club and in the international community. Bring your own tennis equipment and clothes. The club sells tennis balls and restrings rackets. Rackets and balls are available on the local market, tennis shoes are generally inexpensive but of low quality (unless imported).

In the hot weather the pool is a favorite place to relax and enjoy meals poolside or in the Terrace Cafe. Swimsuits are not available here and sunblock is available only in the Commissary. The pool is open for the warm summer months, usually March to late October.

The American Club sponsors softball leagues for adults and youths which are very popular. A snack bar operates at the ball field during

games. Bleachers are covered for spectators. Indoors, the International community has a weekly dart league.

The Islamabad Club offers an 18-hole golf course, tennis and squash courts, and horseback riding. Membership fees are reasonable. Capitol Stables offers horseback riding and lessons (bring a helmet, riding pants and boots - British type).

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Hunting for wild boar is available, while partridge, grouse, pigeon, and duck are scarce in the area.

Fishing is possible at nearby lakes. Trout fishing is enjoyed primarily in the northern locations, such as the Kaghan Valley. The best trout streams seem to be a long drive away over poor roads and require at least a long weekend. However, the scenery is always a reward in itself. Bring your own tackle. Rawalpindi has one tackle shop with a limited supply of equipment.

Pakistan has no developed Alpine ski areas nor is there ice skating or ice hockey. Hiking and bird watching on weekends are popular in the nearby Margalla Hills. Trails abound in these rugged hills at the edge of the city. The Asian Study Group organizes hikes with varying degrees of difficulty. Within the city, international running groups have a weekly "hash" that is both social and athletic.

A number of interesting car trips are possible from Islamabad. The old British hill stations of Murree and Nathiagali have snow in winter and are cool in summer. Murree at 7,500 feet above sea level is a 2 hour drive on a winding road. The altitude offers some relief from the hot summer weather in Islamabad. Accommodations at the few hotels may be hard to obtain during the tourist season, and are far below U.S. and European standards, except for the new five-star Pearl Continental at Bhurban. It takes another hour to reach Nathiagali at 8,200 feet. Fine views of snow-

capped mountains are possible from many points.

For the adventurous, the valleys of Swat and Kaghan have mountain streams with good fishing. Hiking and climbing are excellent in all the hill locations. A few hotels and rest houses may be found. Because of the distance from Islamabad, a long weekend is generally needed.

Camping may be prohibited in some areas, but it is often possible to tent on the grounds of a rest house. Get permission to camp wherever you stop. Always bring food and water, as local supplies may not be acceptable. You should not camp alone in any part of the country.

Near Islamabad it is not difficult to drive into the Margalla Hills and to Taxila, one of the subcontinent's most important archeological sites. The ancient city sites, only 25 miles from Islamabad, were inhabited more than 2,000 years ago. The museum at Taxila has fine examples of Gandhara sculpture from the Buddhist period.

Entertainment

The movie theaters in Islamabad usually show Urdu-speaking films.

A limited amount of entertainment is available in Pakistan, since many Pakistani activities center around the family. The Folk Heritage Center has a yearly festival, Lok Mela, that is well worth attending. Occasional meena bazaars and industrial exhibitions may be interesting. There are a number of restaurants in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, serving Continental, Pakistani, Chinese, Afghan, Tex Mex and Persian cuisine.

The Pakistan Arts Council and foreign missions sponsor musical performances and plays. The Rawalpindi Amateur Theatrical Society (RATS), an international group, has one or two productions a year and sponsors periodic play readings. The plays and musical events of the International School are well attended.

The Asian Study Group also conducts trips within Pakistan. This group has evening meetings of cultural interest, covering carpets and textiles, religion, archaeology, and other aspects of life in the subcontinent.

Apart from schools, most children play at other children's homes. There are few external facilities for youth recreation. The aforementioned is also true for teens.

Social Activities

Social life is informal and centers around the home or the American Club. Informal dinners and buffets are the most common entertainment. Parties within the American community are frequent, especially around holiday seasons. Traditional parties at Christmas, New Year, and Independence Day and for special occasions are sponsored by the American Club. Musical groups give performances during the year.

The American Women's Club (AWC) is open to all American women, women who are married to Americans, and women from the British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand communities. The AWC offers a chance to meet Americans and other women outside the diplomatic community. The AWC sponsors social service projects, and along with other diplomatic groups, supports the Diplex, a small thrift shop.

Many Pakistanis enjoy entertaining Americans and appreciate return invitations. It is not unusual for a husband to attend without his wife, and it should not disturb the host if no advance warning is given. Should you visit a home where women are secluded, it is important for the female guests to pay their respects by visiting the women's area of the house. If you receive an invitation to a wedding celebration, you may want to ask for details as to what you will encounter. A city wedding may be an elaborate affair in a hotel, but a country wedding could mean a long walk on rough paths to a village.

Rawalpindi

Rawalpindi, 10 miles away from Islamabad and still the major city in the capital area, is typical of the cantonment towns built by the British in India and Pakistan during the mid-19th century. These towns, with a few broad tree-lined streets and sturdy brick buildings, served as residential and operational centers for the British Army along the Grand Trunk Road, that ran from Kabul to Calcutta. Rawalpindi developed as a transportation, communications, and administrative center. The city remains an important military base and is the site of the General Headquarters of the Pakistani Army and Air Force.

Besides the main thoroughfares established by the British, Rawalpindi has many narrow back streets that wind through bustling bazaars. About 928,000 Pakistanis live in Rawalpindi, a large proportion originally from other parts of the country. In the city today are locomotive works, an iron foundry, oil refinery, and textile mills.

Until recently, Rawalpindi's major importance rested on its strategic location for military operations. Aryan-speakers fought over it in 1400 B.C., and Alexander the Great arrived in 326 B.C. The city was completely destroyed by the Mogul (also written Moghul and Mughal) invasion in the 14th century. Later, the Sikhs conquered and controlled the area, only to lay down their arms (1849) to the British 53rd Regiment, which then established its northern command headquarters in what was to become one of the world's largest cantonment stations. Rawalpindi became primarily a civilian city in 1960, when it was chosen as the interim capital of Pakistan. The American Embassy moved here from Karachi in 1966, and remained until quarters were established in Islamabad in 1973.

The majority of American children in the capital area attend the International School of Islamabad, which is supervised by an American and staffed by qualified American, Paki-

stani, and third-country national teachers. Its curriculum, from nursery through grade 12, parallels that of U.S. schools.

Karachi

Karachi is Pakistan's largest and most cosmopolitan city. As the center of Pakistan's economic, commercial, and communications activity, it links areas inside the country with the rest of the world through both its port and its busy international airport.

Located northwest of the mouth of the Indus River, Karachi separates the blue waters of the Arabian Sea from the brown sands of the Sindh Desert and is the gateway to the fertile region of the Punjab, the historic Northwest Frontier, and to Afghanistan. A four-lane highway connects Karachi with Hyderabad, located 2 hours northeast on the Indus River, and continues as a narrow road 800 miles north to Lahore (a 2-3 day trip).

Karachi's excellent harbor is the source of both business and pleasure. It serves as the center of Pakistan's seaborne trade, which consists largely of textile goods, and also as a place to boat and fish. Unlike other Pakistani cities, Karachi has a short history. A hundred years ago, it was a small fishing village with a ditch called "Karachi joku." When the Suez Canal opened for international shipping in 1865, the British needed a nearby seaport. They developed the harbor and built the fishing village into a city of close to 300,000 people. However, up to partition in 1947, Bombay, now in India, served as the major harbor for the eastern region of former British India. Following independence, Karachi, as Pakistan's only major harbor, took on new significance and rapidly expanded to its present population of about 10 million people. Though Karachi has few of the architectural and historical attractions that distinguish Lahore, Peshawar, or other areas, it is the main commercial, financial, and industrial center in Pakistan. Teeming with the undisciplined traffic of

a variety of vehicles, Karachi is a vibrant place in which to live and work.

Utilities

Pakistan's electric power is 220v 50 hertz, but fluctuations between 200v and 250v are common. Voltage spikes and power outages are frequent and irregular. Appliances made for U.S. current will require a step-down transformer, and some appliances with DC motors or requiring specific rpm output, such as some tape recorders, record players, and clocks, will require conversion to 50 cycles. Parts for such conversion are scarce in Karachi. Residential power outlets vary. Common varieties include the British three-prong, grounded or the round, two-prong, ungrounded style. Parts and labor for rewiring plugs are more readily available than adapters. Water supply is frequently inadequate.

Food

Food stores in Karachi sell dry and frozen goods but are not up to Western standards of quality or variety. Imported goods are available in uncertain quantities at higher prices.

Local dairy products such as milk, yogurt, and ice cream have occasionally been found to be contaminated. Many employees use long-life products from the commissary and make home-made yogurt and ice cream.

Fresh meat, including lamb, mutton, goat, beef, and veal, is available in local markets at very reasonable prices. American cuts are not available, however, and quality is below Western standards. Local meat must be cooked thoroughly to prevent parasitic infection. Seafood is readily available. Snapper, king mackerel, promfret (a pan or grill fish), shrimp, and crab are relatively expensive staples.

Clothing

Local taste and tailoring in men's clothing are similar to that in the U.S. Coats and ties may be worn year round in the office, although

they are not required. During the long, hot summer, entertainment is usually casual and either short-sleeved or sport (bush) shirts are worn.

Women's dress is similar to that in the U.S. but more modest. In the office, within the Western community, and at social affairs with Western-educated Pakistanis, anything which would be acceptable in the U.S. would be appropriate. On the street, however, and in the bazaars or in rural areas, women are advised to wear skirts with hemlines below the knees and to avoid low necked or sleeveless dresses, or tight, revealing pants. Shorts are not appropriate. More suitable bazaar or street wear is pantsuits, slacks, or calf-length skirts; arms and shoulders should be covered. Cocktail dresses or pants outfits are worn for evening entertainment.

Karachi's winter is delightful, but unfortunately, lasts only about 8-10 weeks. From December to late February, temperatures vary from 50°F at night to 80°F in the daytime.

Summer weather is quite hot and humid and usually lasts from the end of February to November. A larger supply of light clothing is needed than in Washington. All cotton and drip-dry fabrics are the most comfortable; synthetic fibers are sticky in the hot, humid weather.

Because the winter is short and not very cold, winter suits, dresses, and coats are rarely worn, but a sweater or evening wrap is useful. Attractive shawls are available locally and are often used to keep the chill off during winter evenings. The most practical winter fabric is washable synthetic knit, but regular wash-and-wear and summer clothing may be worn throughout the year.

Except for locally embroidered things for women and children, local ready-made clothing is not satisfactory. Local dressmakers and tailors can make better clothing to order for women and girls than for men and boys, although men's casual

wear or "bush suits" are well made and attractive. Tailoring and dress-making services are available to make, alter or repair clothing. Quality of work varies, but with a little trial and error you can usually find a good tailor. Some tailors can copy from pictures, but a few have Western-style patterns and most do best by copying an existing piece of clothing. Fabrics available locally include plain wash-and-wear, washable woolen and cotton prints, and silks, all of which must be checked for color fastness.

In any case, bring an adequate supply of lingerie, underwear, hose, socks, washable sweaters, and bathing suits and caps. Bring baby supplies such as rubber pants, diapers or Pampers, underwear, and pajamas. Get as many washable things as possible, and avoid "dryclean only" clothing if possible.

Bring an adequate supply of shoes. Locally made sneakers and sandals are cheap and reasonably good. Other shoes are available, but many find the style, fit or quality unacceptable. Some people have had trouble finding properly fitting children's shoes.

Supplies and Services

See Islamabad.

Domestic Help

The comments on domestic help covered under Islamabad apply to Karachi, except that rates run somewhat higher in Karachi.

Religious Activities

Christian churches in Karachi include: Holy Trinity Church, Brooks Memorial, and St. Andrew's (all Protestant); and St. Patrick's Cathedral, St. Anthony's Church, Christ the King, and Stella Maria Chapel (Catholic). All have Sunday and Friday services and school (Saturday for Seventh Day Adventists). No Jewish services are held in Karachi.

Education

Virtually all American children attend the Karachi American

School (KAS), which offers nursery and kindergarten, elementary and junior and senior high school education. The school is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools based on American teaching methods and curriculum. The school has 48 full-time teachers, 31 of them Americans, and uses U.S. materials. The student body of approximately 360 includes roughly equal numbers of Pakistanis, third-country nationals and Americans. Parents of new students to KAS should be aware that the academic program is rigorous and that pupils coming from other school systems have found it challenging. There is no special education program. The Karachi American Society, a parent organization, elects a seven-member Board of Directors who develop school policy. The school year runs from mid August through May.

New students should have a thorough physical examination within six months prior to admission and should bring with them all previous school records.

Address questions (official mail only; must be 16 oz. or less) about the school to: Superintendent, American Consulate General/KAS Unit 62403, APO AE 09814-2403 Tel. (92) (21) 433557 FAX: (92) (21) 437305.

The Convent of Jesus and Mary offers instruction by Roman Catholic nuns for boys and girls in the primary grades and secondary level schooling for girls only. The school year is July-December and January-May, and studies are patterned on the English school system. The British Overseas School offers instruction in the nursery and primary grades. It admits a limited number of non-British students.

Karachi Grammar School, using the British curriculum, is one of the oldest day schools in the subcontinent, and caters to English-speaking students. It has about 1,500 pupils of many nationalities - most Pakistani, but a few Americans, and its three departments (kindergarten,

primary, and secondary) cover ages 5-18. The secondary department prepares students for the entrance requirements of English and American universities. Its school year consists of three terms: mid-January through mid-May; mid-June through mid September; and mid-September through mid-December.

The Karachi American School preschool starts at age four, the British Overseas School (BOS) accepts 3-year-olds and the Alliance Francaise (English Program) accepts two-year-olds. The BOS program is 4-1/2 hours long; KAS is three; and the Alliance Francaise is 2-1/2. All are daily morning programs. The BOS and Alliance Francaise are located in Defense and Clifton, respectively. The Goethe Institute runs a German language nursery and the Alliance Francaise also has a French language school. Other local nursery schools exist, including numerous Montessori schools.

Adult education is unavailable at the university level. Foreign language programs are available at the Goethe Institute, Alliance Francaise, and Friendship House.

Sports

Saltwater bathing is excellent throughout the year, except during the June-August monsoon, when surf at nearby beaches rises dangerously, undertow is powerful, and poisonous jellyfish abound. Some consider it a bit cold for bathing during the short winter months. Beach huts (less than an hour's drive from town) may be rented on Hawkes Bay or Sandspit beaches by people who have the time and patience to find a suitable but and go through the negotiating process.

Freshwater pools are available on a membership basis at the Sindh Club, Gymkhana Club, the Pearl Continental Hotel, the Avari Hotel, KLM pool at Midway House near the airport, the Marriott, and the Sheraton. The Karachi Recreation Association (pool, tennis courts, squash courts, walking/running course, gymnasium and weight

room) operates out of Karachi American School and is open to Americans for membership, whether they have children in the school or not.

Small boat sailing is good most of the year and especially in the summer with the monsoon winds. The Karachi Yacht Club offers excellent small boat sailing opportunities. This private club races primarily fourteen foot Enterprises, but similar size boats partake as well. Because of the club's roughly 40% ex-pat membership, there is usually a boat for sale at any given time. Boat prices run \$3,000 and up but can be paid for on monthly installments or simply rented by the day.

A 27-hole course is available at the Karachi Golf Club, although the membership cost is high.

Entertainment

The Pakistan American Cultural Center (PACC) occasionally puts on an English language play. Infrequent music concerts are sponsored by local choral groups and the various cultural centers. Occasionally, the latter import professional artists. Most Americans bring or import tape recorders, record players and accessories, and borrow or dub each other's tapes. VCRs have become a popular source of entertainment. Video rental shops are located throughout the city, but quality varies. A multi-system VCR is suggested, as U.S. tapes are usually VHS format while locally available tapes are UK-PAL format. Those wishing to take advantage of this source of entertainment should ship a VCR and compatible TV in their household effects.

Karachi has a moderate variety of restaurants, concentrated around the major hotels and the boat basin. The American Club caters to the American palate.

Lahore

Lahore is a city of 5 million people, 800 miles north-northeast of Karachi (1-1/2 hours by jet), and 170

miles south-southeast of Islamabad (35 minutes by jet). Lahore lies 17 miles west of the Indian border, 700 feet above sea level, in the middle of the Great Punjab Alluvial Plain. It is Pakistan's second largest city after Karachi.

Lahore has been the capital of several empires in the subcontinent, with a history going back at least 1,000 years. The old city and its environs have many examples of the art and architecture of the Moghul empire, such as the Lahore Fort, Badshahi Mosque, Emperor Jahangir's Tomb, and the Shalimar Gardens. The city was the capital of the Sikh empire in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. One pleasant legacy of British rule (1849-1947) is Lahore's wide, tree-lined streets. Extensive suburbs have repeated this pattern.

Today, Lahore is the capital of Pakistan's largest and most populous province. The Punjab, heartland of Pakistan, produces 69% of Pakistan's agricultural output. It is a major governmental, political, media, cultural, and economic center. Two of the country's largest engineering firms are located in Lahore, as is the headquarters of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and the Pakistani railway system. In addition, hundreds of industrial firms produce textiles, steel products, carpets, processed food, shoes, electric motors, and a wide variety of consumer goods. Lahore has the country's two largest printing plants; newspaper circulation is the largest in the country. Six English dailies and two English weeklies are available.

Lahore has two major universities: the University of the Punjab and the Pakistan University of Engineering and Technology, along with many training institutions. The private Lahore University of Management Sciences is a leading business school. The Lahore Museum, the oldest in the country, has outstanding examples of the nation's heritage.

The city is on the Ravi River, one of the five great rivers from which the Punjab (Persian for "five rivers") takes its name. The climate is delightful from November to April. December and January are dry and almost cold with night temperatures occasionally dropping to near freezing.

Summer starts with dry, very hot days in May and becomes humid from June through August, with daytime temperatures regularly reaching 100°F for weeks and occasionally soaring to 114°F. Activities slow down markedly during summer. Monsoon showers give some relief from the hot summer breezes and dust storms, but increase the humidity to uncomfortable levels. Temperate weather returns at the beginning of October. Air quality is noticeably affected by industrial pollution, dust, and pollen in summer and smoke in winter.

Utilities

Electric power failures and scheduled outages occur frequently in Lahore. In the winter, "load shedding" is scheduled daily. The power may build up to 250-280v, and the usual step-down transformers offer U.S.-made appliances limited protection. Voltage regulators with automatic cutouts should be used for VCRs, stereos, and small appliances. These regulators are available locally in a wide variety of models. Telephone service is erratic; wrong numbers and crossed lines are frequent. Calling the U.S. direct is possible if the telephone has that facility or, if not, by booking a call via the operator.

Food

With the exception of chicken, meat is not sold in shops or restaurants on Tuesday or Wednesday in Lahore. Meat and meat cuts are different from those in the U.S. Meat must be well cooked, since markets often have no refrigeration.

High quality seasonal fruit and vegetables are available, including bananas, oranges, grapes, tangerines, mangoes, pomegranates, apples, peaches, melons, apricots,

potatoes, green beans, carrots, onions, tomatoes, green peppers, broccoli, okra, ginger, cucumbers, eggplants, and peas.

Clothing

Dress in Lahore outside the office is much more conservative than in Islamabad. American women generally wear Western clothes to work. Conservative Western dress is often acceptable outside the office, but many foreign women feel more comfortable in a shalwar kameez (Pakistani national dress) or slacks with a loose, thigh-length, long-sleeved blouse with a high neck. Either western or Pakistani dress is acceptable at evening functions, except that long dresses or skirts are rarely worn. Clothing for social functions, particularly weddings, is sometimes quite dressy. Sandals are popular for daytime and evening wear.

All-cotton clothing, including underwear, is most comfortable in hot weather. Dry cleaning service is unreliable, and clothing wears rapidly due to the need for frequent washing. Women should be well covered all year round. Tight-fitting or low-cut clothing, sleeveless or halter tops are not acceptable in Lahore. Western style ladies wear is not available in local stores, nor is there variety in children's clothes.

If you intend to use local tailors, bring a supply of buttons, interfacing, zippers, thread, and especially elastic. Locally made items of this type are often not satisfactory. Tailoring is cheap but not always of good quality. Tailors usually do not follow patterns, but can copy clothing. A woman's blouse costs about \$10 to make, pants \$15. Men's pants can be made for \$20 and a suit for \$70 to \$90.

Domestic Help

Help is plentiful, but good servants are scarce and becoming more expensive. Current monthly estimates are: cook \$100-120; bearer \$80; gardener \$60-70; laundryman \$20-30; nursemaid \$80.

Religious Activities

English-language religious services are readily available at Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Seventh-Day Adventist churches. The International Christian Fellowship, an interdenominational English language congregation that meets in the Chapel of Forman Christian College, also conducts services. Also, there is a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon). No Jewish services are available in Lahore.

Education

Most American children attend the Lahore American School (LAS) operated by the Lahore American Society. LAS has about 450 students in all grades, divided among American, Pakistani, and third-country students. It is fully accredited and certified by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. It follows a standard American curriculum and calendar (mid August to end of May) for kindergarten through grade 12. A nursery class is also available. The majority of faculty is American. The high school program is college preparatory, with 25 credits required for graduation: 4 credits of English, 3 of science, 2 of foreign language, 3 of social studies, 3 of mathematics, 3 of physical education (including health), and 7 credits in electives. The college placement record of LAS is excellent. For specific information write to: Superintendent, Lahore American School, c/o Principal Officer AmConsul Lahore Unit 62216, APO AE 09812-2216. Tel. 870895/873603.

The French and German Cultural Centers in Lahore offer language instruction.

Sports

Facilities for sports include golf, swimming, riding, tennis, squash, hunting, and fishing. Two local clubs offer combinations of golf, tennis, and swimming. Membership fees vary, but membership is not required to play golf. English riding instruction is offered at the Lahore Polo Club, and men's rugby by the Lahore Rugby Football Club. Amer-

icans may use the Lahore American School's pool and basketball courts for a nominal charge whenever school sports are not scheduled. Spectator sports include cricket, field hockey, world-class polo, and rugby.

Some sports equipment, when locally available, is reasonable in price, but not always of high quality. Excellent locally made squash rackets may be bought here but bring a supply of golf and tennis balls. Hobby materials are generally unavailable or expensive.

Entertainment

Dinners and parties in private homes are the most common form of entertainment.

Lahore is often said to have the best restaurants in Pakistan, offering Continental, Chinese, and Pakistani cuisine.

Ample opportunities exist to study area history and culture and to acquire folk products and art objects. Shopping, especially for Oriental/Pakistani rugs, is a favorite event.

Local cinemas are rarely attended by Americans. Video cassettes in the PAL mode, of varying quality, are readily available for rent at reasonable prices on the local market. If you decide to bring a VCR, the most suitable is the VHS-type that can show three systems (PAL, SECAM, and NTSC). The American, British, and French Cultural Centers regularly show films.

PTV, the Lahore government-run television station has a 10-minute nightly news program in English. There may also be a rerun of an English or U.S. program. A second, privately owned and operated channel began operation in 1991. STN runs many U.S. and British reruns and several hours of CNN programming around the clock. Pakistani television is on the PAL system which is not compatible with the standard U.S. system. Indian television may also be viewed in Lahore. No local FM radio exists, and

English language short-wave reception is only fair. Pre-recorded cassette tapes are readily available. CDs are difficult to obtain.

The American Women's Club is active and provides opportunities for meeting people as does the International Women's Club.

In 1977 the Government of Pakistan passed legislation dramatically restricting the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Some hotels have "bars" where foreigners and non-Muslims with the proper permits can purchase a limited selection of alcoholic beverages, but at exorbitant prices.

Peshawar

Peshawar, an ancient city in the heart of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), lies 15 miles east of the famous Khyber Pass, 35 miles from the Afghanistan border, and close to the Pakhtun tribal agencies. Peshawar is a city of approximately 1,000,000 and is situated on a flat plain surrounded on three sides by mountains. The city is divided into three parts: the Old City, Cantonment area, and University Town. The Old City is a typically crowded central Asian town, with a colorful bazaar teeming with people and every kind of moving vehicle. Houses of mud bricks line the narrow twisting streets. By contrast, the Cantonment has a suburban atmosphere with spacious houses set back from quiet, tree-lined avenues. Much of the Cantonment area is occupied by military installations of the Pakistan Army and Air Force. University Town, to the west of the airport and south of the university campus is the modern section of the city, with development dating from the late 1950s. The NWFP and Peshawar host well over a million Afghan refugees, many of whom have established businesses in the Old City.

Pakhtun Culture

Pakhtuns are the dominant ethnic group of the NWFP. Although cultural mores are slowly changing,

particularly in Peshawar, Pakhtun culture is conservative, religious, and largely concerned with the notion of honor. The "Pakhtun Code of Honor" (Pakhtunwali) is usually defined in terms of three basic, and much romanticized, concepts: "melmastia" - hospitality to every guest, not only providing food and shelter but also protection; "badal" - revenge under any circumstances; and "nanawati" - obligation to protect or forgive an offender when he submits himself at the doorstep of the man from whom he is seeking forgiveness. However, Pakhtunwali is a much wider code than these three concepts. Any action taken to protect the honor, as seen by Pakhtuns, is a part of Pakhtunwali. Consequently, Pakhtun men are greatly protective of their women and their women's honor. Although education is slowly preparing Pakhtun women for a more public role, few Pakhtun women work outside of the home or participate actively in public affairs. The Pakhtun Code of Honor is especially strong in the tribal areas, the western third of the province that is not under provincial administration and where traditional rules of tribal justice are applied.

Food, Clothing, Supplies and Services

Fresh meat (no pork products), vegetables, and fruits are available year round. Frozen meat is also available locally, although a greater variety is found in Islamabad. Frozen fish and seafood is also available through local vendors.

Local tailoring shops produce western-style clothes and dresses at reasonable prices. Locally purchased thread is not strong or preshrunk; a supply of good quality thread is recommended for those who plan to sew or have garments made. Quality, durable shoes and hiking boots are not available locally.

The electrical current is 220v, 50 Hz. Computers, stereo components, VCRs, radios, televisions, and other sensitive electronic equipment require voltage regulators (available locally) due to frequent voltage fluctuations.

Laundry, dry-cleaning, film developing, and barber and hair dressing facilities are available in Peshawar. Slide film is not locally available, nor is slide developing reliable. Several book stores sell office supplies, maps, magazines, and a wide variety of hard cover and paperback English books.

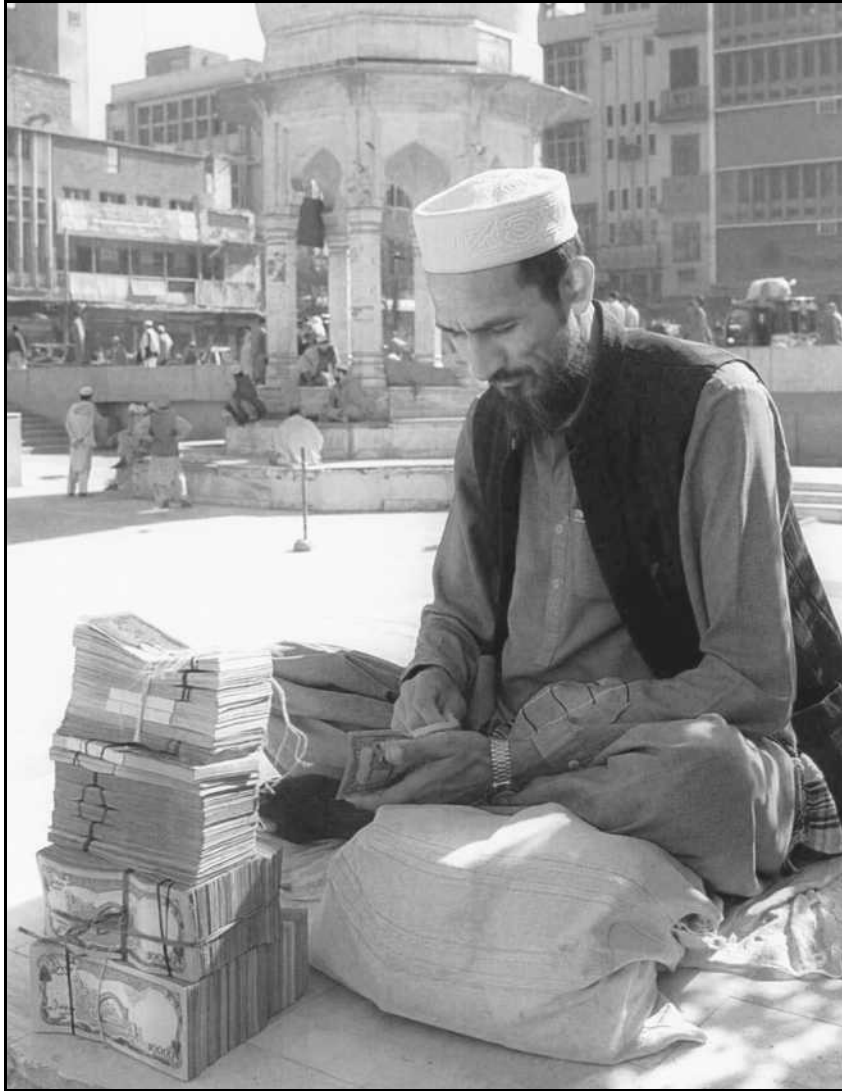
Religious Activities

Peshawar has Protestant and Catholic churches but no synagogues. Services are conducted in both English and Urdu. Numerous mosques serve the Sunni, Shia, and Ismaeli communities.

Education

The International School of Peshawar was established in 1987. Offering classes from kindergarten through grade 8, ISP enrollments currently average 60 students a year from the American and European expatriate communities. All classes are taught in English by certified teachers, and standard American textbooks are used for all subjects. The school year begins mid-August and ends the last week of May. Classes are conducted Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with a 2-1/2-week mid-year break at Christmas. The American school has no boarding facilities nor special education programs.

Other children have commuted to Islamabad to attend the International School of Islamabad (ISI) or the Murree Christian School, located 30 miles northeast of Islamabad. Murree provides boarding facilities for children of all ages and has been used extensively in the past by foreign families in Peshawar. ISI does not have boarding facilities and attendance at this school requires the cooperation of an American family in Islamabad to board the child during the week. Other possibilities include the Woodstock School about 150 miles north of Delhi, in Mussoorie, India, U.S./European boarding schools, or various home study programs as used by a number of families.



Currency dealer in Peshawar, Pakistan

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Sports

Peshawar has three clubs: the Peshawar Golf Club with an excellent 18-hole course; the Peshawar Club with its swimming, squash, and year-round tennis on grass courts; and the Peshawar American Club with two clay tennis courts, a swimming pool, as well as basketball and volleyball courts. The single international class hotel in Peshawar recently has opened a health club and also has a pool. A variety of other sports or exercise activities, including volleyball and aerobics classes, have been organized by volunteers in the expatriate community and are generally available to interested participants. Places for hunting, fishing, and

trekking are available in nearby Swat and Chitral. Arrangements can also be made for horseback riding.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The Khyber Pass, a romantic, historical landmark 15 miles away on the main road to Afghanistan, is the pass through which conquerors of the subcontinent have come and fought over for centuries. Tourists can take advantage of a periodically scheduled steam train safari to the Khyber Pass after obtaining the required permits. The village of Darra Adam Kehl, 25 miles from Peshawar, is the site of "tribal gun factories," where handmade rifles

and shotguns are manufactured by and for the Pakhtun tribesmen. Ten miles beyond the factories is the Kohat Pass, less well-known, but more spectacular than Khyber. Currently, visits to these tourist areas are restricted because of armed conflict in nearby Afghanistan and tribal unrest.

Chitral, the northernmost mountain district in the NWFP, is accessible by scheduled air service from Peshawar, and by Jeep for about 6 months a year. Chitral offers dramatic views of 26,000-foot Tirich Mir (the "King of the Hindu Kush"), fine trout fishing, interesting visits to the exotic Kalash mountain valleys, and native polo matches among a friendly, hospitable people. Other scenic areas include the Swat and Kaghan valleys, northeast of Peshawar, where trout fishing is also available.

The Northwest Frontier Province is also home to a number of significant archaeological sites related to the 2,400-year-old Buddhist Gandhara civilization. Most important is the Buddhist monastery at Takht-I-Bhai, near Mardan, a site still revered by Buddhists. The Peshawar Museum houses what is considered the finest collection of Gandhara civilization statuary, including the famous "Starving Buddha."

Entertainment

Few English films are shown publicly and most foreigners do not frequent local cinemas. The American Club, however, has a large number of NTSC VCR movies for rent. Several local video shops rent PAL videos. VHS VCRs using the PAL, SECAM, and NTSC systems are recommended. Tapes in the Beta format are limited and not available at the Peshawar American Club.

Restaurant selection is limited to one or two good Pakistani restaurants, two Chinese restaurants, several Afghan establishments, and the Pearl Continental and Khan Club Hotel restaurants, which serve continental cuisine. The Peshawar American Club has the most popu-

lar restaurant in town among the foreign community and, perhaps, the liveliest members-only bar in Pakistan. In accordance with local law, however, Muslims and Pakistani citizens may not be served alcohol. Recommended hotels in Peshawar are the Pearl Continental and several good guest houses that have recently opened in University Town. Rooms are sometimes available at the American Club for official travelers, and the Golf Club has recently opened a limited number of rooms for guests.

Peshawar is famous to shoppers of the world for its Afghan carpets, tribal jewelry, lapis, and furniture. More than a hundred Afghan carpet stores offer a wide variety of Afghan carpets, kilims, and other woven products. In the Old City Sarafa bazaar, one can find tribal jewelry, old coins, war medals, lapis, and other semi-precious stones, as well as modern Pakistani gold jewelry. Peshawar's furniture makers craft excellent wood furniture to order at relatively inexpensive prices. Several outlet stores are operated by the volunteer agencies marketing handicrafts made by Afghan refugees.

The two main shopping areas in Peshawar are the Saddar Bazaar in the Cantonment and the various bazaars found in the Old City. Although Saddar has several gift shops and carpet stores, most visitors to Peshawar prefer to shop in the colorful, exotic environs of the Old City. Shops usually open between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and remain open until dark. Except for a few meat and grocery shops, businesses remain closed on Fridays.

Special Information

The people of Peshawar and the NWFP observe conservative social standards. Both men and women should dress modestly. Men should not wear running shorts and T-shirts in public. Women should cover up and, in particular, not wear shorts, tight clothing, sundresses, etc., in public. Women should avoid eye contact with men passing them

on the streets. Behavior around mosques, especially during prayer time, should be discreet.

Peshawar and the surrounding tribal areas can be fraught with unexpected dangers to uninitiated newcomers. Visitors should travel only with U.S. Government Agency officials, volunteer agency representatives, or with a reputable travel guide. Personal information and trip schedules should be given only to authorized government and hotel officials. The Government of Pakistan must approve all visits to Afghan refugee camps and tribal areas, including the Khyber Pass. Such visits are normally limited to daylight hours, and special permits are required. Do not leave vehicles unattended while traveling in the NWFP. Night travel on NWFP roads can be hazardous and is not recommended. Although the indiscriminate bombings which were a hallmark of terrorist campaigns in Peshawar at the height of the Afghan conflict have largely disappeared, Afghan-related violence in the city continues to be a problem and could threaten the security of expatriate residents and visitors.

OTHER CITIES

Ruled by the Afghans in the early 19th century, **BAHAWALPUR** joined Pakistan in 1947. It is situated about 225 miles southwest of Lahore, near the Sutlej River. The city trades in soap, cotton, and pottery. The population here is over 400,000.

FAISALABAD (also known as Lyallpur) is located in a cotton and wheat growing area about 175 miles southeast of Islamabad. With a metropolitan population of over 1.9 million, Faisalabad is an important commercial center, particularly for grains and cloth. Manufactures include textiles, textile machinery, bicycles, hosiery, flour, sugar, vegetable oil, soap, and pharmaceuticals. Founded and named for Sir James Lyall in 1892, but now usually called Faisalabad, the city is the

site of Punjab Agricultural University (founded in 1961), several colleges affiliated with the University of Punjab, and numerous experimental farms and cattle-breeding stations.

The capital city of Gujranwala District, **GUJRANWALA** has a population of approximately 1.2 million. It is situated 42 miles north of Lahore. The city trades in grain, and manufactures copper and brass utensils. Formerly the capital of Sikh power in its early period, Gujranwala is the birthplace of Ranjit Singh.

HYDERABAD, with a population of more than one million, is located in southern Pakistan on the Indus River, near the Indian border. Long known for its silk, gold, and silver embroidery, and its enamelware and pottery, Hyderabad is now an industrial city with chemical engineering, food processing, cotton, cement, cigarette, glass, and match factories. Founded by Ghulam Shah Kalhora in 1768, the city was designed by his son, Sarfaraz Khan in 1782. Hyderabad was the capital of the emirs of Sind and was occupied by the British East India Company when Sind became a British protectorate in 1839. The University of Sind, founded in 1947, is located here; there are also several other colleges in the city. Numerous mosques, palaces, and the arsenal are found in the city's fort. Umarnot, a town in the Thar Desert near Hyderabad, was the birthplace of the Mogul emperor Akbar.

MULTAN, situated on the Chenab River in east central Pakistan, is about 280 miles south of Islamabad. The city is an important road and rail junction, an agricultural center, and a market for textiles, leather goods, and other products. Industries here include metalworking, flour and oil milling, and the manufacture of cotton textiles, shoes, carpets, and glass. Pottery and enamelwork are some of the city's noteworthy handicrafts. Multan is one of the Indian subcontinent's oldest cities, deriving its name from an idol in the temple of the sun god.

Multan is thought to have been conquered by Alexander the Great about 325 B.C., and visited by the Chinese Buddhist scholar Hsüan-tsang in 641. The city was taken by the Arabs in the eighth century, captured by Muslim Turkish conqueror Mahamud of Ghazni in 1005, by Tamerlane in 1398, ruled by the emperors of Delhi from 1526 to 1779, and by the Afghans until 1818. In 1818, Multan was seized by Ranjit Singh, leader of the Sikhs. The British held Multan from 1848 until Pakistan achieved independence in 1947. Landmarks include a surrounding wall and fort enclosing the tombs of two Muslim holy men, and an ancient Hindu temple. More than a million people live in Multan.

QUETTA is located in west-central Pakistan, near the Afghanistan border and about 450 miles southwest of Islamabad. The city is situated on a plain enclosed by high mountains at an altitude of 5,500 feet, and has a population of close to 600,000. Quetta's name comes from the Pushtu word for fort—*kawatah*. The city commands the entrance through the strategic Bolan and Khojak Passes into Afghanistan, and is a trade center for Iran, Afghanistan, and much of central Asia. Chief items traded here include fruits, vegetables, hides, and wool. Cottage industries in the city produce textiles, foodstuffs, and carpets. Coal and chromite are also mined nearby. Historically, Quetta was occupied by the British during the First Afghan War, 1839–1842, and following the Second Afghan War in 1876. It became prominent as the seat of British resident Sir Robert Sandeman, and was a strongly fortified British military station. In June 1935, a severe earthquake nearly destroyed Quetta, but the city has since been rebuilt. Quetta has a military staff college, founded in 1907, and a geophysical observatory. It is also known as a summer resort town.

SARGODHA is located in east Pakistan, about 105 miles northwest of Lahore. The metropolitan area has a population of approxi-

mately 455,000. A railroad and industrial hub, Sargodha produces soap, flour, textiles, and chemicals. There is a grain market here.

The birthplace of philosopher-poet Muhammad Iqbal, **SIALKOT** is in eastern Pakistan 120 miles from Islamabad. A rail junction and a major trade and processing center, Sialkot has a population of about 420,000. Bicycles, surgical instruments, sporting goods, rubber products, and ceramics are manufactured here. Textile weaving is also an important industry. Landmarks include a fortress built in 1181 by Muhammed of Ghor and the mausoleum of Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh religion, who died in 1538.

The city of **SUKKUR** lies in a hot, desert region, about 240 miles northeast of Karachi, near the Indus River. It is a commercial hub, manufacturing leather, cement, cigarettes, and textiles. Barley, rice, wheat, and millet are grown nearby. Major trade is conducted with neighboring Afghanistan. The town was built up by the British in 1843 when they established a garrison. Sukkur's population exceeds 300,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Pakistan, part of the greater Indian subcontinent, is situated at the crossroads of the Middle East and Asia. The country covers an area about the size of the states of Washington, Oregon, and California combined. It is bordered by Iran and Afghanistan on the west; China on the north; the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir on the northeast; India on the east; and the Arabian Sea on the south. Pakistan lies between latitudes 24 and 37 degrees north (e.g., from the southern tip of Florida to the southern border of Virginia).

The major political divisions of the country are the Provinces of Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, Northwest Frontier, and the federally administered Northern Areas, Tribal Areas, and Azad Kashmir. The provinces roughly correspond with the country's major geographic, ethnic, and linguistic regions.

There are five distinct geographic regions: The Thar Desert and Lower Indus Valley, located in the southernmost province of Sindh, consists largely of arid valleys and rocky hills that extend into neighboring India. Farming is successful only in the irrigated areas nearest to the Indus River.

The Balochistan Plateau is a broad, arid tableland that lies between 1,000 and 3,000 feet above sea level in the western province of Balochistan. The plateau is encircled by rugged mountains and covers nearly one-half of the country's territory.

The Indus Basin features the largest contiguous irrigation system in the world. "Punjab," the name of the province in which much of the basin is located, means "five waters" in Persian, referring to the five major rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej) in the basin. The province of Punjab comprises the northeastern quarter of Pakistan.

The Northwest Frontier is a region of barren mountains sheltering rich irrigated valleys. The provincial capital of Peshawar is situated on an ancient trade route that leads through the Khyber Pass and into Afghanistan.

The Far North offers Pakistan's most spectacular scenery with towering snowcapped mountains, deep narrow valleys, and glaciers. The world's second highest mountain, K-2, is located in the Far North, as are a dozen other peaks of more than 25,000 feet elevation, including Nanga Parbat, Gasherbrun, and Rakaposhi.

Seasonal temperatures vary widely in these five regions. With the

exception of the Far North, summers are hot throughout the country with temperatures ranging from 90°F to 120°F and little nighttime relief. Trade winds provide some relief during the hot and humid summers in Karachi and a brief cool season comes between December and February. In Lahore, Islamabad, and Peshawar, a distinct winter season brings daytime temperatures of 60°F or less and cold nights. Islamabad and Peshawar may have light frosts. Spring and fall are delightful seasons in these three cities. Altitude governs climate in the Far North, with pleasant summers in the lower regions and perpetual snow in the higher mountains.

The average annual rainfall varies from 6 inches in Karachi, 15 inches in Peshawar, and 18 inches in Lahore, to about 30 inches in Islamabad. Most rain falls during the summer monsoon from July to September, although parts of the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier experience a moderate winter rainy season as well.

Population

Pakistan is a relatively poor country with a rapidly growing population. Annual per capita income is approximately \$470. The population is currently estimated at 135 million, making Pakistan the seventh most populous country in the world. Conservatively estimated to be growing at an annual rate of 3.0 percent, one of the highest rates in the world, Pakistan's population could double in 27 years.

One of Pakistan's major problems is illiteracy; only 38% (1994) of the adult population is literate with the rate being significantly lower for women than men. About 47.5% of Pakistan's labor force is engaged in agriculture, while 10.9% works in industry. Pakistani society traditionally assigns a subordinate role to women with the result that 65% of boys ages 6 to 11 and only 33% of girls attend primary school. Women are reported to be only 13.1% of the labor force, but this does not include

the large number of women engaged in agricultural and household work. Substantial disparities exist in living conditions between urban areas and the countryside where over two-thirds of Pakistan's people live.

Pakistan's population is unevenly distributed throughout the country. More than 1.5 million Afghan refugees have sought refuge in its borders while employment abroad has taken 2 million Pakistanis away. Population density in parts of Sindh and Punjab is well above the average distribution of 381 persons per square mile. The barren uplands of Balochistan is the least inhabited area of the country.

Internal migration, particularly from rural to urban areas, has begun to alter the ethnic and linguistic character of each of the Provinces, but it is still generally true that Sindh is the home of the Sindhis who speak Sindhi; Balochistan is the traditional home of the Balochi-speaking Baloch; Punjabi is the language of the Punjab, home of Pakistan's largest and most influential ethnic group; and the Northwest Frontier is the tribal homeland of the Pushtu-speaking Pathan. The most notable exception to this pattern is seen in the urban areas of Sindh. Immediately after independence, a significant number of Muslim "muhajirs" or refugees of various ethnic backgrounds poured into these areas from India. More recently, internal migration has brought many job-seeking Pathans to Karachi. In addition, the movement of large numbers of Pathans and some Punjabi farmers into Balochistan over the past decades has made the Baloch a minority in their own Province. The remote valleys of the Far North are inhabited by a few smaller ethnic groups, such as the Gilgitis, Kashmiris, and the people of Hunza.

Urdu is the official language of Pakistan. Although it is the first language of only 7% of the total population and 25% of the urban population, educated Pakistanis are usually conversant in Urdu. The status of English has declined some-

what as a result of "Urduization" efforts by the government, but it is still used extensively in business and government.

Although geographically, ethnically, linguistically, and socially Pakistan is the picture of diversity, its religious homogeneity is an important unifying factor. Members of the Sunni sect constitute the largest number of the Muslims in Pakistan; most of the rest are Shia Muslims. Several hundred thousand Ismaelites live in Karachi and the northern areas. Religious minorities include Christians (1.6 million, 80% of whom live in Punjab), Hindus (1.6 million, 80% of whom live in Sindh), and Parsis (7,000, most of whom live in Karachi).

Public Institutions

The land that is now Pakistan is the site of one of the world's oldest civilizations. As a western gateway to the Indian subcontinent, this area has seen successive waves of people move down through the passes from central Asia and the Iranian Plateau, bringing new ethnic strains and a wide variety of cultural contributions. Over the past 3,000 years, it has been ruled or invaded by Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Kushans, Mongols, Afghans, Turks, Moghuls, Sikhs, British and others.

Pakistan came into being in August 1947 as a result of the Muslim League's determination, once the British rulers departed, to have its own state in the Indian subcontinent, separate from the Hindu majority. The partitioning of British India led to the migration on a massive scale of Muslims to Pakistan and Hindus to India. In the process, hundreds of thousands died and the legacy of partition remains a source of bitterness between India and Pakistan to this day.

In 1947, Pakistan faced a unique and ultimately unsolvable problem of ethnic and geographic division. The new nation was divided into two parts more than 1,000 miles from each other and on opposite sides of the Indian subcontinent.

Slightly less than half the people inhabited West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan) and the rest occupied East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in the humid delta region of the lower Ganges in East Bengal. The two halves of the country differed greatly in language, customs, and daily life and were held together only by a common religion and mutual distrust of the Hindu majority in India.

In its early years, Pakistan faced frequent political crises. The death in 1948 of its founder and first Governor General, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, and the 1951 assassination of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan deprived the country of two of its most able leaders. From 1951 to 1958, a succession of unstable governments did little to improve internal conditions. In 1958, the Army Commander-in-Chief, General Mohammed Ayub Khan, overthrew the civilian government and seized power as president. Ayub governed Pakistan for 10 years, first under martial law, and after 1962 under a constitution that provided strong executive powers and limited representative government. Ayub relinquished the presidency in early 1969 to Commander-in-Chief General Mohammed Yahya Khan, who dismissed the government, abrogated the constitution and ruled under martial law. In December 1970, however, he permitted Pakistan's first free nationwide elections to select members for both the National Assembly and provincial legislatures.

The election results profoundly affected the future of Pakistan. In the West, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gained a majority. In the East, The Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman scored an overwhelming victory, one so great that the party gained a majority of all seats in both East Pakistan and in the National Assembly. A period of intense political maneuvering followed, with the main issue being the degree of autonomy to be accorded East Pakistan. This period ended abruptly in March 1971, when the

Army arrested Mujibur Rahman in Dhaka and attempted to suppress his followers. Resulting disorders in East Pakistan grew into a widespread insurrection, during which 10 million refugees fled into neighboring India. Growing tension between Pakistan and India over developments in East Pakistan led to the outbreak of war in December 1971. India invaded East Pakistan and after a short campaign, West Pakistan's forces in the East surrendered. Then the former East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

From 1971 to 1977, Bhutto was in power, first as president, and then, following the construction of a new constitution in 1973, as prime minister in a parliamentary system. Following national election, in early 1977, a major confrontation emerged between Bhutto's PPP government and a multi-party coalition called the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). Subsequently, Prime Minister Bhutto was removed in a bloodless coup led by Chief of Army Staff, General Zia-ul-Haq. Bhutto was eventually convicted of conspiracy to commit murder and hanged.

From 1977-1985, Pakistan remained under martial law with Zia serving both as President and as Chief Martial Law Administrator. Finally, in response to domestic and international pressures, Zia allowed a return to democracy. Non-party elections to the National and Provincial Assemblies were held in 1985. The new government, led by Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo, enjoyed the support of legislators associated with the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) who provided Junejo comfortable majorities in the National and Provincial Assemblies. Groups of independents and opposition forces were also formed. Local elections were held in 1987 under civilian government auspices.

In August 1988, growing tensions between President Zia and PM Junejo led Zia to dismiss Junejo's government and call for new non-

party elections. Zia's death in a plane crash, along with U.S. Ambassador Arnold Raphel later that month, however, altered the political environment. Senate Chairman Ghulam Ishaq Khan assumed the presidency and guided the nation through the elections in November of that year. The election was won by the Pakistan People's Party led by Z.A. Bhutto's daughter, Benazir Bhutto, which assumed power in December, 1988.

Although the largest party in Parliament, the PPP lacked a majority. Bhutto's administration struggled for most of its tenure and on August 6, 1990, the President, acting under the constitution, removed the Bhutto government. A caretaker regime held national and provincial elections in October 1990 which brought a coalition to power under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, who became Prime Minister in November 1990.

Sharif's government was dismissed in April 1993 by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, but it was later restored by the Supreme Court. The resulting constitutional crisis was resolved by the resignation of both the Prime Minister and the President. In elections held in October 1993, the PPP-led coalition won and Benazir Bhutto became Prime Minister again.

In November 1996, President Farooq Leghari dismissed Bhutto's government on the grounds of corruption and abuse of power. In the February 1997 elections, the PML won a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly and Nawaz Sharif once again became Prime Minister.

In October 1990 U.S. military assistance to Pakistan was halted and new economic aid was suspended after President Bush was unable to certify to Congress that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear explosive device. This prohibition, still in effect, is the result of the Pressler Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act. One of the results of the suspension is a significant reduc-

tion in assistance and U.S. military direct-hire and contract personnel in Pakistan.

Arts, Science, and Education

An Islamic presence in the subcontinent introduced new outside elements of creativity. The period of Moghul rule, particularly, was marked by great achievements in architecture, examples of which are still world famous. In Lahore, the palace-fortress called the Red Fort, begun at the time of Emperor Akbar, and the Badshahi Mosque (one of the largest in the world), erected during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, are fine examples of Moghul buildings. Also at Lahore is Shalimar, the Garden of Bliss, a good example of a formal Moghul garden.

Because Islam prohibits pictorial likeness of the human form in art, representational art did not develop substantially among the Muslims in the subcontinent until the Mid-20th century, when declining Moghul influence and increasing Western contact resulted in less restrictive art forms. Abstract paintings and designs more in keeping with Muslim sensitivities have always been prevalent and are still popular today.

Recently, Pakistani artists, usually the young, have begun experimentation in many different media. As a result, art shows in most of the larger cities are becoming more common, and a new interest, especially in painting, is increasing. Most notable artistic expression is found in Pakistani handicrafts. The feeling for form, design, and color is best displayed in pottery, carpets, hand-woven textiles, articles made of marble, inlaid woodwork, and brass, copper, and silverware.

Strong literary traditions exist in Urdu as well as in the regional languages (Sindhi, Punjabi, and Pushtu). The largest share of popular academic and standard literary publications are in Urdu, the

national language. Technical subjects and more advanced writings in the social sciences are in English.

A wide variety of music, ranging from folk to classical to Western popular styles, is enjoyed throughout Pakistan. Pakistani folk music, particularly melodies and rhythms of mountain tribes and rural areas, is most appealing to Westerners. Country-Western, jazz and rock, although not encouraged, are also gaining popularity, especially among young people. The Government of Pakistan patronizes and encourages artistic expression, intellectual pursuits, and Islamic culture through radio, television, universities, art councils, art galleries, and academic and professional associations (Pakistan Historical Society, Pakistan Philosophical Congress, Association for the Advancement of Science, Pakistan Writers' Guild, etc.). The government-sponsored National Council of the Arts aims at coordinating all cultural, artistic, literary, and intellectual activities in the country.

The government of Pakistan works continuously to improve the quality of the country's educational system, but reform efforts are hampered by lack of financial resources and qualified personnel, outdated instructional materials and techniques, and a reluctance among some elements of Pakistani society to participate fully in the education of the nation's youth. In general, education is controlled by the provincial governments, with strong inputs from the Federal government.

The Federal and Provincial governments are working together to combat illiteracy, which is one of the most serious obstacles to economic and social development. According to comprehensive 1991 figures, the most recent available, the overall literacy rate was 34.8% (male 47.3% and female 21.1%). It has been estimated that by 2000 the overall literacy rate will have improved to 43.6% (male 56.2% and female 29.8%). Education planners consider this improvement insufficient

and are developing new programs to reduce illiteracy. These include model programs in each province and in the Capital district, and another program, called "User of Koranic Literacy for Promotion of Female Literacy," which takes advantage of the ability of many women to read the Koran in Arabic as a tool to learn to read Urdu.

Urdu is the national language and is emphasized in the official curriculum, although regional languages are used in primary school classrooms in some areas. Government authorities have stressed that English should receive prominence as a second language. English is taught at the upper levels and in private schools, and excellent knowledge of English is required for the top levels of government service and the study of science and medicine. Students also study Arabic and regional languages such as Sindhi, Punjabi, Pushtu, and Baloch.

The government is accelerating the universalization of primary education, and encouraging private sector involvement in the educational system. Improvements are also underway in technical and vocational education. In the fields of secondary and higher secondary, greater emphasis has been placed on scientific and technical education. Although expansion is under way at all levels, the educational system is not able to cope with rapid population growth. Enrollment levels are low, compared to other countries at Pakistan's stage of development. Similarly, the proportion of the budget allocated to education is very low. By the year 2002, the government expects to enroll all children in primary education (up from 73% at present) and half the children in secondary education (up from 32%).

Universalization of free primary education is being accelerated, and the private sector's participation in educational development is encouraged. Many Pakistanis who can afford the cost of private schools choose to send their children to these institutions, rather than public schools. In some areas, private

institutions are setting a standard of high quality which the public schools have yet to attain. The Government is attempting to make improvements in technical and vocational training facilities. In secondary and higher secondary education, greater emphasis is being placed on science and technical education, and many schools are introducing computers into their instructional programs.

There are 24 universities in Pakistan. Some of the more prominent private universities are the Agha Khan Medical University and Hamdard University in Karachi, and the Lahore University of Management Sciences in Lahore. The prestigious Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad conducts all its programs at the graduate level. The Allam Iqbal Open University, also in Islamabad, offers courses through radio, television, and correspondence. Universities are monitored and financed by the University Grants Commission. Several universities follow the American semester system. Tuition at the public universities is negligible and meets virtually none of the cost of higher education. The private universities, on the other hand, charge high fees, but also offer financial assistance to deserving students.

It must also be emphasized that during any given year there are approximately 10,000 Pakistani nationals studying abroad at American colleges and universities.

Commerce and Industry

Pakistan's per capita income of U.S. \$470 is the highest in the subcontinent, but it is still a poor country by world standards. The relative prosperity of the industrialized regions around Karachi and Lahore contrast sharply with the poverty of semi-arid Balochistan and the mountainous Northwest Frontier Province. The largest sector of the economy is service, which constitutes 49% of the gross domestic product (GDP). The economy also

relies heavily on the agricultural sector, which contributes about 24% of the GDP. Agriculture employs over half of the work force, and provides, directly or indirectly, over half of the export receipts. Cultivation of the rich alluvial soil of the Indus River Basin has always been the chief economic activity of the country. The major crops are wheat, cotton, rice, and sugarcane. However, despite developments in agriculture Pakistan still must import many major food items including wheat, consumable oil, and sugar.

Growth in the industrial sector, which accounts for about 18% of the GDP, has declined in recent years largely due to inconsistent economic policies of successive governments. However, significant progress has been made in diversification of manufacturing. Major industries include cotton textiles, fertilizer, cement, food processing, vegetable ghee, sugar, and steel. Although significant quantities of natural gas are present in Pakistan, and several major dams on the Indus River system provide a good deal of hydroelectric generating capacity, the country continues to rely on massive levels of imported oil to meet its energy requirements. In recent years, periodic power blackouts known as "load shedding" have been considerably reduced by sizable foreign investment under the Government's Private Power Policy.

Pakistan's balance-of-payments position remains weak. In recent years the dollar value of exports has stagnated at U.S. \$8.5 billion level. Substantial inflows from abroad, not only in the form of remittances from Pakistanis working in the Persian Gulf and in Europe, but also foreign assistance, have contributed to easing the imbalance. Chief exports include rice, leather goods, carpets, and cotton yarn and textiles. Major imports are petroleum, machinery, consumable oil, wheat, iron, and steel. Pakistan's principal trading partners are the U.S. and Japan.

Transportation

Automobiles

Since driving is on the left-hand side of the road, right-hand drive cars are safer, although both left-hand and right-hand drive vehicles are used. Islamabad, with its wide avenues and four lane roads, lends itself to the use of left-hand-drive vehicles. However, in other areas, because of heavy congestion and narrow streets, use of a left-hand drive car can be dangerous. A number of road hazards, both animate and inanimate, place great reliance on sound suspension, horns, and good brakes. Persons whose cars have the new small emergency spare tire should consider investing in a full size rim and spare tire. Flats are frequent and reliable repair facilities are not always close at hand.

Car maintenance is adequate. Except for Japanese vehicles, spare car parts are scarce and expensive. Cars most commonly found in Pakistan are Toyota Corollas, Coronas, Cressidas, and Land Cruisers; Honda Accords and Civics; and Mitsubishi Pajeros (though Pajeros are not recommended for Karachi where they are a favorite target of thieves).

It is possible to order a new car from Japan. These cars are right-hand-drive vehicles, which cannot be imported into the U.S. without costly safety and emissions alterations because they do not meet U.S. standards. The good news is that they cost at least 40% less than an equivalent model that is manufactured for the U.S. market.

To receive a Pakistani driver's license, you must have a valid U.S. driver's license. Temporary licenses are not sufficient. International driver's licenses are not recognized by the Government of Pakistan. Legal driving age in Pakistan is 18 years for any type of vehicle.

Local third-party liability insurance is mandatory. Costs vary depending on the size of the engine: up to 1,000 cc, the premium is about \$16 a year;

1,000-2,000 cc, about 21 a year; and over 2,000 cc, about \$24 a year. Comprehensive and collision insurance is also recommended, available locally, and less expensive than in the U.S. Bring a certificate from your U.S. insurance company, or from another country, showing a 5-year claim-free record to obtain substantial premium reductions. Some keep their U.S. insurance or, if possible, insure with an overseas specialist (Lloyds or Clements). Arrange for transit insurance, marine and rail policy, to include final destination when shipping your car.

Gasoline and diesel are available throughout the country and the price is fixed by the Pakistani Government. Octane ratings lower than in the U.S. allow low-compression, six-cylinder engines to run better. Regular gasoline averages 80 octane, and super gasoline averages 87 octane. Occasionally, 100-octane gasoline is available. Regular gasoline lacks additives that make U.S. gasoline more efficient in high-compression engines. Presently, the price of "super" gasoline is about 42¢ per liter, and diesel prices are about 21¢ per liter.

Local

Public transportation includes buses, vans, taxis, horse-drawn tongas, and motor scooter rickshaws. Buses are overcrowded, of questionable safety, and are generally not used by Westerners. Taxis are unsafe due to the poor conditions of the vehicles and the unsafe driving practices of the drivers. Motor rickshaws are available in most cities except Islamabad. They are slow, poorly protected from the weather, and dangerous because of erratic driving habits. Most public transportation is not suitable for official Americans.

Regional

Pakistan is served by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and a number of international carriers. However, no U.S. carriers offer service to or from Pakistan although United Airlines recently entered into a "code share" arrangement

with several other international carriers. Karachi maintains the nation's largest airport with service to and from a variety of destinations on both PIA and other international airlines. Air service is more limited in Islamabad with flights on only three carriers: PIA, Saudi, and British Airways. British Airways offers thrice weekly direct service from London. Inter-country travel is facilitated by PIA which flies to all major cities in Pakistan. However, these flights are often crowded and overbooked so take care to confirm your flight in advance.

Rail travel is also possible, though not advised. An express train from Karachi to Lahore takes about 20 hours; Rawalpindi is an additional 6 hours. Train travel can be dangerous due to a high accident rate and frequent incidents of crime.

Road transportation between major points is possible, but roads are usually crowded and in poor repair. Travel by car from Karachi to Lahore takes 2 days. However, travel outside of Karachi and into the Sindh interior must have prior approval of the Government of Pakistan due to severe law and order problems. Travel by land is therefore not advised. The drive from Lahore to Islamabad normally takes 4 hours on the modern express Motorway which was inaugurated in December 1997. The drive from Islamabad to Peshawar takes about 3 hours. Again, driving is dangerous on main trunk routes, with few clean rest stops available.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Telephone service in Pakistan is adequate. Direct-dial service connects all major cities in the country, and international direct dial service is available from Pakistan to most foreign countries including the United States. Phone bills should be monitored closely to assure that you are billed only for calls placed from your phone.

Station-to-station calls to the U.S. cost Rs. 52 (U.S. \$1.26) per minute. International direct-dial may be accomplished from your residence. International calls may also be booked with the local operator, but it takes time and the call is limited. During the rainy season the telephones are sometimes out of order; however, service is normally restored within one day.

E-mail and Internet services are also available at reasonable rates. FAX service to the U.S. costs Rs. 52 per minute.

Mail

International airmail service to and from the U.S. is available and many use international aerograms.

Radio and TV

There are two television stations in Pakistan: Pakistan Television (PTV) is countrywide, and Shalimar Television Network (STN) is available in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad/Rawalpindi. PTV carries news, musical programs, documentaries, dramas, and sports in Urdu or other local languages. It also carries old American sitcoms and movies from time to time. News in English is broadcast at 7 p.m. daily. PTV is not regarded as an entertainment or recreation source for Americans. STN has started partial productions, airs acquired programs from many sources and carries CNN broadcasts for 8 hours per day. Acquired programs include British and American sit-coms, Urdu and English films, and Public Diplomacy-supplied documentaries on science, art, and wildlife. All programs on PTV and STN are censored to remove anything which might be objectionable.

Satellite dishes have become common here. With a dish, one can pick up CNN, Star (Hong-Kong based system featuring, BBC, MTV, sports and entertainment), and several Chinese and Arabic channels. Dishes and receivers are readily available and reasonably priced (currently from \$150 to \$500).

All television programming in Pakistan is 625 PAL standard. The American Club in Islamabad maintains a wide variety of movies in NTSC format for rental. Audio tapes are widely available in local stores but are also of uneven quality. CDs are readily available, but selection is still limited and prices are cheaper than in the U.S.

Quality English, Dutch, or Japanese television sets can be bought on the local market, but prices are sometimes higher than in the U.S. The most satisfactory sets are multi-system sets which can handle PAL and NTSC signals. Personnel can purchase multi-system VCRs at reasonable prices in Pakistan, especially in Peshawar. Prices are comparable to those available in the U.S. Converting NTSC systems to PAL is not advisable.

Most Americans bring a VCR and TV from the U.S. A multi-system TV which handles PAL as well as NTSC is advisable. Pakistan has a country-wide radio system. Most of the programming is in Urdu or other local languages. There are three short English language news broadcasts daily. Music aired is Pakistani.

A good short-wave radio can be helpful for wider coverage of world events. VOA, BBC, and other nations' broadcasts have special programs in English for this region. An outside antenna will improve reception, and a radio with push-button capability to lock-in a station makes shortwave hunting easier.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Pakistani newspapers in English are readily available in major cities and may be home delivered. The International Herald Tribune and USA Today are flown in from Hong Kong and cost about \$1.75 a copy. Hotel newsstands and bookstores carry international editions of Time and Newsweek. However, while books are government subsidized magazines are not which tends to make them rather expensive. Subscriptions from the local news dealer may be available for home or

office delivery. Single copies of American magazines and comic books may also be found at newsstands and bookstores.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Pakistan has limited but usually adequate hospital facilities. Laboratory and X-ray facilities are available, but service, equipment, and cleanliness are not consistent with U.S. standards.

Bring your own supply of any medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, used on a regular basis, and make arrangements for resupply by mail. Pharmacies throughout Pakistan can fill some prescription needs and have a large variety of non-prescription drugs, some manufactured locally and some imported. Locally purchased drugs may cost less than in the U.S. Some non-prescription items are available at the commissaries. If you have specific questions about what to bring, write to the Regional Medical Officer.

Expectant mothers are advised not to deliver in Pakistan.

Although dental care is available in Pakistan, most employees prefer to have dental evaluation and treatment in the U.S. Orthodontia service is limited.

Standard prescriptions for glasses can be filled inexpensively, but no safety glass is available and standards are uncertain. Americans send eyewear to the U.S. for the filling of prescriptions. Have glasses checked before coming to post and bring a spare pair.

Islamabad: Civilian hospitals in the Islamabad/Rawalpindi area are adequate although not up to American standards. However, emergency surgery and trauma cases can be sent to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad.

Karachi: Hospital facilities especially the modern and well-equipped Agha Khan Hospital in Karachi are occasionally used for inpatient emergency care and radiologist and laboratory services. Individuals requiring elective surgery, diagnostic tests not available in Karachi, or treatment for serious illnesses may be evacuated to London or Singapore.

Although dental care is available, have dental evaluation and treatment before reporting to post. Orthodontia service is limited. Fluoride tablets are provided for children.

Individuals taking any long-term medications are advised to bring an adequate supply from home.

Lahore: The Shaikh Zayed Hospital is used in emergencies and has a few British or U.S. trained doctors, but is not up to U.S. standards. Inpatients often need round-the-clock supervision by family or friends.

Peshawar: There are hospitals in Peshawar, but standards are far below those found in the U.S. Persons living in Peshawar often choose to drive to Islamabad to get their health care.

Community Health

Americans are commonly plagued by diarrhea of multiple causes and upper respiratory infections. Because of its higher standards of sanitation and living conditions, frequent immunizations, and preventive medicines, the American community is fairly well isolated from malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, rabies, and polio. However, they still occur and reasonable precautions are necessary.

Sanitation throughout Pakistan is a constant problem, although overall health conditions where Americans live are generally good. The public water supply is unsafe everywhere and drinking water must be filtered and boiled. Sewage systems are antiquated or inadequate. Refuse collection is erratic. The burning of cow dung, leaves, and garbage often produce irritating dust and smoke.

Refrigeration and sanitary packaging of foodstuffs in public markets are rare. To avoid enteric disorders, wash all fresh produce in chlorine solution or cook it thoroughly before eating.

Preventive Measures

Check your immunization record. If you are entering (or reentering after a trip) from South American or African countries, you will need a yellow fever immunization (more easily obtained in the U.S. than in Pakistan). For your own protection, also have typhoid, tetanus, and hepatitis A and B immunizations. Rabies is endemic in Pakistan, and it is recommended that anyone planning to stay in Pakistan should have the preventive rabies immunization series. Malaria prophylaxis is recommended and should be initiated 2 weeks before arrival in Pakistan. Do not neglect your immunizations or booster shots.

It is recommended that you include first-aid supplies in their luggage or airfreight. First-aid supplies should include the following items: first-aid manual, thermometer (for small children include a rectal thermometer), tweezers, scissors, Band-aids, gauze pads, gauze roll, tape, triangle bandage, ace bandage, skin cleanser (alcohol, Betadine, peroxide), aspirin and/or acetaminophen (Tylenol), antacid (Maalox, Gelusil, Mylanta), anti-diarrheal (Pepto Bismol, Kaopectate), antibacterial ointment (Bacitracin, Neosporin), sunscreen, insect repellent (Deet), dry-skin lotion, and calamine lotion.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

There are some direct flights to Islamabad, but you should check your itinerary carefully. One PIA direct flight from London stops in Tehran. Anyone flying to Pakistan via the Pacific must have a Chinese visa, if the plane stops in China,

even though the traveler is only in transit and does not leave the plane.

Carry with you your valid American driver's license (a temporary one will not do), insurance papers, automobile registration if you are shipping a car, and special medicines.

A passport is required. The visa requirement may be waived for American Citizens not of Indian origin who arrive for a visit of less than 30 days. Please check with the Pakistani embassy or consulate before arrival. Information on entry requirements can be obtained from the Embassy of Pakistan, 2315 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC, 20008, telephone (202)939-6295 or 6261, Internet home page: <http://www.pakistan-embassy.com>. Travelers may also contact one of the Consulates General of Pakistan located at 12 East 65th St., New York, NY 10021, telephone (212)879-5800, fax (212)517-6987, or 10850 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1100, Los Angeles, CA 90024, telephone (310)441-5114, fax (310)441-9256. If a traveler plans to stay longer than 30 days in Pakistan, he or she must register with the local police station and obtain a residence permit. This permit must be returned to the same office for an exit visa when the traveler is preparing to leave the country. Airlines may require travelers departing the U.S. to present multiple photographs and complete copies of passports and other travel documents. Tourist facilities are available in the principal population centers of the country.

American citizens living in or visiting Pakistan are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in Pakistan and obtain updated information on travel and security within Pakistan. They are located at the following addresses:

The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad is located at Diplomatic Enclave, Ramna 5, telephone (92-51) 2080-0000; consular section telephone (92-51) 2080-2700, fax (92-51) 282-2632, website <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/>

islamabad or www.usembassy.state.gov/pakistan.

The U.S. Consulate General in Karachi is located at 8 Abdullah Haroon Road, telephone (92-21) 568-5170 (after hours: 92-21-568-1606), fax (92-21) 568-0496, website <http://www.usembassy.state.gov/pakistan> or www.usembassy.state.gov/posts/pk2/wwwhamcn.html.

The U.S. Consulate in Lahore is located on 50-Empress Road near Shimla Road or Sharah-E-Abdul Hamid Bin Badees, (Old Empress Road), telephone (92-42) 636-5530, fax (92-42) 636-5177, website <http://usconsulate-lahore.org.pk/>. Email address: amconsul@brain.net.pk

The U.S. Consulate in Peshawar is located at 11 Hospital Road, Cantonment, Peshawar, telephone (92-91) 279-801 through 803, fax (92-91) 276-712, web site <http://brain.net.pk/~consul/>.

Pets

No regulations restrict importation of household pets (dogs, cats, birds); however, health and vaccination certificates may need to be presented. Certificates should be issued no more than two weeks prior to arrival in Pakistan. Rabies shots must have been given within four weeks preceding arrival. The easiest way to bring a pet into the country is to bring the pet along as accompanying air baggage. Special rules apply to the importation of pet monkeys. Be sure to check with all airlines for their specific requirements.

Rabies is endemic in Pakistan, heartworm is present, and ticks are plentiful, even in the city. Vaccinate your pets as applicable for rabies, distemper, leptospirosis, hepatitis, parvo, and feline leukemia. Bring an ample supply of special medicines for your pet, including heartworm medicine, deworming medicines, flea/tick and mange/scabies preparations, pet vitamins, rawhide bones, and grooming needs. Ship bird seed and gravel, as the

commissary only stocks dog and cat food and kitty litter.

There are a few veterinarians in Pakistan, but services and facilities are below U.S. standards. Fatal anesthesia overdosing during surgery is one risk to pets. There is one kennel of limited quality in Islamabad. There are no kennels in Karachi or Lahore. People with older animals or pets not in excellent health might want to consider leaving them behind. Between the climate and veterinary care, a tour in Pakistan can be hard on a family pet. Animals are not allowed in hotels in Pakistan.

Firearms and Ammunition

Only personnel with diplomatic or consular titles are authorized to import firearms.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The currency of Pakistan is the rupee (Rs), which is divided into 100 paise. The rate of exchange in late 1999 was about 51 rupees to the dollar. Paper money is used in notes from Rs. 1 to Rs. 1,000. Coins are in short supply.

Travelers are restricted in the amount of rupees they can bring into and out of the country. In Pakistan the rupee is the only currency that can be used.

Pakistan uses the metric system but be prepared to figure in miles and yards as well. Gasoline is sold by the liter (1.0567 quarts), cloth by the meter (39 inches), food by the kilogram (2.2 pounds), and distance is measured by the kilometer (0.625 miles).

Special Information

In 1956, Pakistan was proclaimed an Islamic Republic; Islam is, therefore, part of Pakistan's national identity. Some understanding of Islam and the social pattern it encourages is essential for Americans living in Pakistan.

In general, good taste and common sense will tell you how to avoid

offending your Muslim acquaintances, but a few specific points may be helpful. For example, men shake hands with men without hesitation, but it is a good idea to wait for a woman to extend her hand first in greeting.

The custom of "purdah," strict seclusion and veiling of women, is gradually disappearing as more educated Pakistani women take their places in public life. Purdah is still observed, especially in small towns and rural areas, where women may still wear the traditional black veil and coat (burkah). Even among the unveiled, a certain reticence persists about socializing outside the home. In many cases, this is reinforced by the husband's attitude. A Pakistani guest may commonly appear at a dinner party without his wife whether or not she observes purdah.

This tradition also accounts for the advice that women should cover-up when in public areas. The crowd in the bazaar, for instance, is unaccustomed to seeing bare arms and short sleeves on a woman, and can lead to unwanted jostling and touching. Staring is culturally common, and while at times discomfoting it should not be considered threatening.

Propriety is particularly important when visiting a mosque. Shoes are always removed for visits to mosques and holy places.

The public consumption of alcohol is banned in Pakistan. Foreigners registered in international hotels can get a permit to be served alcoholic beverages. These drinks are expensive. In their own homes, Americans are free to follow their usual customs concerning liquor. One should not offer alcohol to a Muslim Pakistani. It is thoughtful to have an adequate supply of soft drinks and juices for your Pakistani guests.

Devout Muslims will not eat or touch pork; some cannot bear the sight of it. To avoid embarrassment, do not serve pork or foods contain-

ing pork when Muslim guests are present. Some Muslim servants object to cooking pork. Dogs are considered unclean by some Muslims. Family pets should be confined when Pakistanis are in your home. It is a good idea to keep your dog away from maintenance workers when they are in your house.

Ramadan is a religious period observed by abstaining from eating, drinking, or smoking from sunrise to sunset for one month. You will want to refrain from daytime entertaining of your Pakistani friends during this month and should be considerate of your servants' physical limitations.

Photographs should be taken with discretion to avoid giving offense. Always obtain permission before photographing people, particularly women. For security reasons, it is also forbidden to photograph military installations, airports, and bridges.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Mar. 23. Pakistan Day
- May 1. Labor Day
- Aug. 14. Independence Day
- Sept. 6 Depfense Day
- Nov. 9 Allama Muhammad Iqbal Day
- Dec. 25. Christmas Day
- Dec. 25. Quaid-e-Azam Birthday
- Muharram*
- Ashura*
- Id al Adha*
- Ramadan*
- Id al-Fitr*
- Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

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PALAU

Republic of Palau

Major City:

Koror

INTRODUCTION

Some areas of **PALAU** were settled in 1000 BC or even earlier, likely by Malays from Indonesia, Melanese from New Guinea, and by some Polynesians. Spain, Portugal, and England all laid claim to the islands at various times. In 1783 the English vessel *Antelope*, under the command of Captain Henry Wilson, was shipwrecked on one of the Rock Islands between Koror and Peleliu. With the help of the Koror high chief Ibedul, Wilson and his crew stayed for three months to rebuild the ship. Afterwards, more foreign explorers sailed through Palauan waters and the islands were open to further European contact. Germany acquired the islands around the beginning of the 20th century and then handed them over to Japan. After the defeat of Japan in World War II, the US took control over what were then called the Marshall, Caroline and Marianas Islands. The islands became part of the United Nations' Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, with Palau administered as one of the three island groups' six districts. Palau became independent with the ratification of a Compact of Free Association with the United States that came into effect on October 1, 1994.

MAJOR CITY

Koror

Koror, on Koror Island, is the capital of Palau and has a population of about 12,000. Most Palauans and nearly 90% of Palau's 2,800 foreign residents live in Koror. The island of Koror covers only 3.5 square miles and is the center of commerce with most of the country's hotels, shops, and eating establishments. There is an ongoing migration to the capital city. A two-lane concrete bridge links Koror with the large island of Babeldaob (Babelthuap). The Koror state government provides public bus service. Beyond Koror the main road is paved up to the airport with coral and dirt roads connecting the other states. Palau's only deepwater harbor is at Malakal in Koror, and the international airport is 6 miles from the capital. Koror's economy is driven by tourism, particularly for Palau's scuba diving and snorkeling opportunities. A new capital is under construction in eastern Babeldaob, about 12 miles north-east of Koror.

Recreation and Entertainment

Palau has some of the world's most impressive dive sites, with miles of unexplored barrier reefs. The waters

provide many spectacular vertical drops, especially along the Rock Islands. Snorkeling, sea kayaking, sailing, and fishing are also popular. Blue holes, underwater caves, World War II wrecks, and diverse marine life attract tourists. Jellyfish Lake is an inland marine lake that is cut off from the rest of the ocean. The lake teems with jellyfish, and snorkelers can swim among them because they have no sting.

Tropical forests cover much of the islands, and other areas have mangrove forests and even grassland savannas. Palau has 50 species of resident birds, and the marine waters have over 1,500 species of fish and over 700 species of coral and anemones. There are also salt-water crocodiles, giant clams, and dugongs (closely related to the manatee).

Ancient village sites on the Rock Islands and the grand terraces on nearby Babeldaob date to 1000 BC. Babeldaob is Palau's biggest island, some 27 miles long and 15 miles across at its widest and it is covered in dense foliage. The terrain is varied with steep mountains, freshwater lakes, and sand dunes. There are 37 stone monoliths known as *badru-lchau* that testify to the island's early civilization. Other remnants of Palau's early history are located at Imeungs in the southwest of the



Museum Bai in Koror, Palau

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island. The ruins of stone foundations and pillars are all that remain of the ancient community.

During World War II, fighting between US and Japanese forces took place on Koror, as well as on the nearby islands of Peleiu and Angaur. Peleliu is the southernmost of the Rock Islands, and in 1985 it was designated a US National Historic Landmark. Abandoned tanks, helmets, and bomb casings are still strewn about the island.

The Palau National Museum has over 1,000 relics from the islands' past, including shell money and traditional weapons. Traditional Palauan culture is noted for its intricately carved wooden storyboards and delicate weavings. The *bai* or public meeting center, offers insights into traditional Palauan society

through the painted carvings that tell a story on interior posts, beams, and gable ends. Palauan culture today has a blend of traditional, Japanese, and American influences. Koror has several open-air cocktail lounges, some offering live entertainment or karaoke.

Koror annually hosts several festivals and special events. The Youth Day Fair on March 15 features open-air concerts and sports competitions. The Palau Sport Fishing Association holds its annual fishing derby during the last week in April or the first week in May. Senior Citizens' Day on May 5 features dance competitions, handicrafts exhibitions, parades, and floats. The Palau Arts Festival falls on July 9, Constitution Day. There are also Independence Day celebrations on October

1. The third week in November is Tourism Awareness Week.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Palau is a scattered group of islands in the westernmost part of Micronesia. The country's territory includes some 340 islands east of the Philippines that stretch out over an area 125 miles in length. The total land area of the islands is 170 square miles. Babeldaob, the largest island, covers 153 square miles.

Palau's islands include four topographic types: volcanic, high lime-

stone, low platform, and coral atoll. The Palau barrier reef encloses a lagoon on the western side that contains a large number of small elevated limestone islets known as the Rock Islands. Babeldaob and Koror have the highest elevations, at 713 feet and 2,061 feet, respectively. Several northern islands, such as Arakabesan and Malakal, are volcanic formations. There are tall mountains, lush and thick jungles, caves, waterfalls, spacious beaches, and rocky shores. The waters are clear enough in some places to see depths of 300 feet.

Palau has a maritime tropical climate, with little temperature variation by season or time of day. The average temperature is 82°F during the cooler months. High humidity and heavy precipitation occur throughout the year. The heaviest rainfalls occur between May and January. Typhoons and tropical storms occur from July through November.

Population

Palau has a population of about 19,000. The states of Koror and Airai contain about 80% of the population.

Most Palauans are Micronesian, with a mixed Polynesian, Malayan, and Melanesian background. About 10% of the population is Filipino. There are also smaller numbers of other Micronesians, Chinese, and people of European descent.

Most of the population is Christian (Catholics, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Assembly of God, the Liebenzell Mission, and Latter-Day Saints). About one-third of the population observes the Modekngei religion that is indigenous to Palau.

English is the official language in all of Palau's sixteen states. Palauan is also an official language in thirteen states. Sonsorolese is an official language in the state of Sonsoral, as is Tobi in the state of Tobi.

Angaur and Japanese are also spoken in the state of Anguar.

Government

Palauan villages were and still are ordered around 10 clans that are organized matrilineally. Once, a council of chiefs from the 10 ranking clans governed the villages, and a parallel council of their female counterparts held a significant advisory role in the division and control of land and money.

In 1978 Palau opted for a separate negotiation with the US regarding future political status, due to the expiration of the UN Trusteeship. On July 9, 1980, the Palau constitution was ratified, and its first constitutional elections were held.

Independence came on October 1, 1994 with the entry into force of the Compact of Free Association with the United States. Palau was the last Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands territories to gain its independence. Under the Compact, the U.S. will remain responsible for Palau's defense for 50 years. Otherwise, Palau is a sovereign nation and conducts its own foreign relations. Since independence, Palau has established diplomatic relations with a number of nations, including many of its Pacific neighbors. Palau was admitted to the United Nations on December 15, 1994, and has since joined several other international organizations.

Today, Palau is a democratic republic with directly elected executive and legislative branches. Presidential elections take place every four years, with the presidential and vice-presidential candidates running on separate tickets.

The Palau National Congress (Olbiil era Kelulau) has two houses. In the Senate there are nine members elected through a nationwide vote. In the House of Delegates there are 16 members, one chosen from each of Palau's 16 states. All of the legislators serve four-year terms. Each

state also elects its own governor and legislature.

In keeping with tradition, Palau has established a Council of Chiefs as an advisory body to the president. The Council is made up of the highest traditional chiefs from each of the 16 states. The Council is consulted on matters concerning traditional laws and customs.

The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court, National Court, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Land Court. The Supreme Court has trial and appellate divisions and is presided over by the Chief Justice.

Palau's flag is a yellow circle on a light blue field. The circle is slightly off center toward the hoist.

Arts, Science, Education

Elementary education is compulsory between the ages of six and fourteen and is provided by the government. The Palau High School in Koror is the country's only public high school and accounts for about two-thirds of secondary school enrollment. Postsecondary education is provided by the College of Micronesia's Micronesian Occupational College in Koror.

Commerce and Industry

Tourism is Palau's main industry, accounting for roughly half of the nation's GDP. The greatest attractions to the country are scuba diving and snorkeling among the islands' rich marine environment, including the Floating Garden Islands to the west of Koror. In 1997, the number of visitors was about 67,000, almost three times the actual population of Palau. The greatest number of tourists come from Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S.

Agriculture is mainly on a subsistence level, the principal crops

being coconuts, root crops, and bananas. Tuna fishing is also potential source of revenue.

Construction is the most important industrial activity, contributing over 9% of GDP. Several large infrastructure projects, including the rebuilding of the bridge connecting Koror and Babeldaob Islands after its collapse in 1996 and the construction of a highway around the rim of Babeldaob, boosted activity at the end of 1990s.

The government alone employs nearly 30% of workers. One of the government's main responsibilities is administering external assistance. Under the terms of the Compact of Free Association with the United States, Palau will receive more than \$450 million in assistance over 15 years. The first grant of \$142 million was made in 1994. Further annual payments in lesser

For such a small nation, the general economy does fairly well. Per capita GDP stands at over \$7,000 (1998 est.), which makes it one of the wealthier states in the Pacific Islands. However, the country is heavily reliant on imported foods, fuel, and machinery. Imports in 1999 totaled about \$126 million, whereas exports only brought in about \$14 million.

The remaining economic challenge confronting Palau is to ensure the long-term viability of its economy by reducing its reliance on foreign assistance.

Transportation

Continental Micronesia flies to Palau daily via Guam, the international air service hub for the Micronesia region. There are also three weekly flights to Manila, Philippines. The only asphalt roads are on Koror, Airai, and Melekeok. Palauans rely on small private watercraft for transportation throughout the country.

Side roads in Koror and on the Island of Babeldaob are in poor condition. Maximum speed limit is 25 miles per hour, but slower in congested areas, and passing of slow moving vehicles is prohibited.

Communications

Worldwide telephone, facsimile, telex, IDD, Internet/e-mail service, and operator-assisted dialing services are available. Phone cards are available at PNCC Office and calls can be made from most hotels in Palau.

WSZB is Koror's AM radio station, and there are also two FM stations. Island Cable TV Palau provides 12 channels, including CNN.

Tia Belau is the bi-weekly local newspaper. The government produces the *Palau Gazette*. *The Pacific Daily News* is delivered daily from Guam. Mail to and from Palau uses standard U.S. postal rates and postage.

Health and Medicine

Hospital services are provided by the 60-bed MacDonald Memorial Hospital in Koror. Koror also has the Belau Medical Clinic and the Seventh-Day Adventist Eye Clinic. Smallpox immunization is required for travelers not originating in the U. S. or its territories. Cholera and yellow fever immunizations are required for those arriving from infected areas.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A valid passport or proof of U.S. citizenship and onward/return ticket for a stay up to 30 days are required. A visa is required for stays longer than 30 days. The necessary forms for obtaining an entry permit can be

obtained from airline or shipping agency servicing Palau. For more information about entry requirements of Palau, travelers may consult with the Representative Office, 1150 18th St., N.W., Suite 750, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 452-6814.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Palau are encouraged to register at the U.S. Embassy. They may also obtain updated information on travel and security within the country at the Embassy. The U.S. Embassy is located in Koror, Palau. There is no street address. The Embassy is located in an area known as Topside, about one and one quarter miles north of the post office and downtown area of Koror on the main road towards the airport. The mailing address of the U.S. Embassy is: P.O. Box 6028, Koror, Palau 96940. The telephone number is (680) 488-2920. The fax number is (680) 488-2911. The Embassy does not issue passports; that function is performed by the Honolulu Passport Agency.

Firearms & Ammunitions

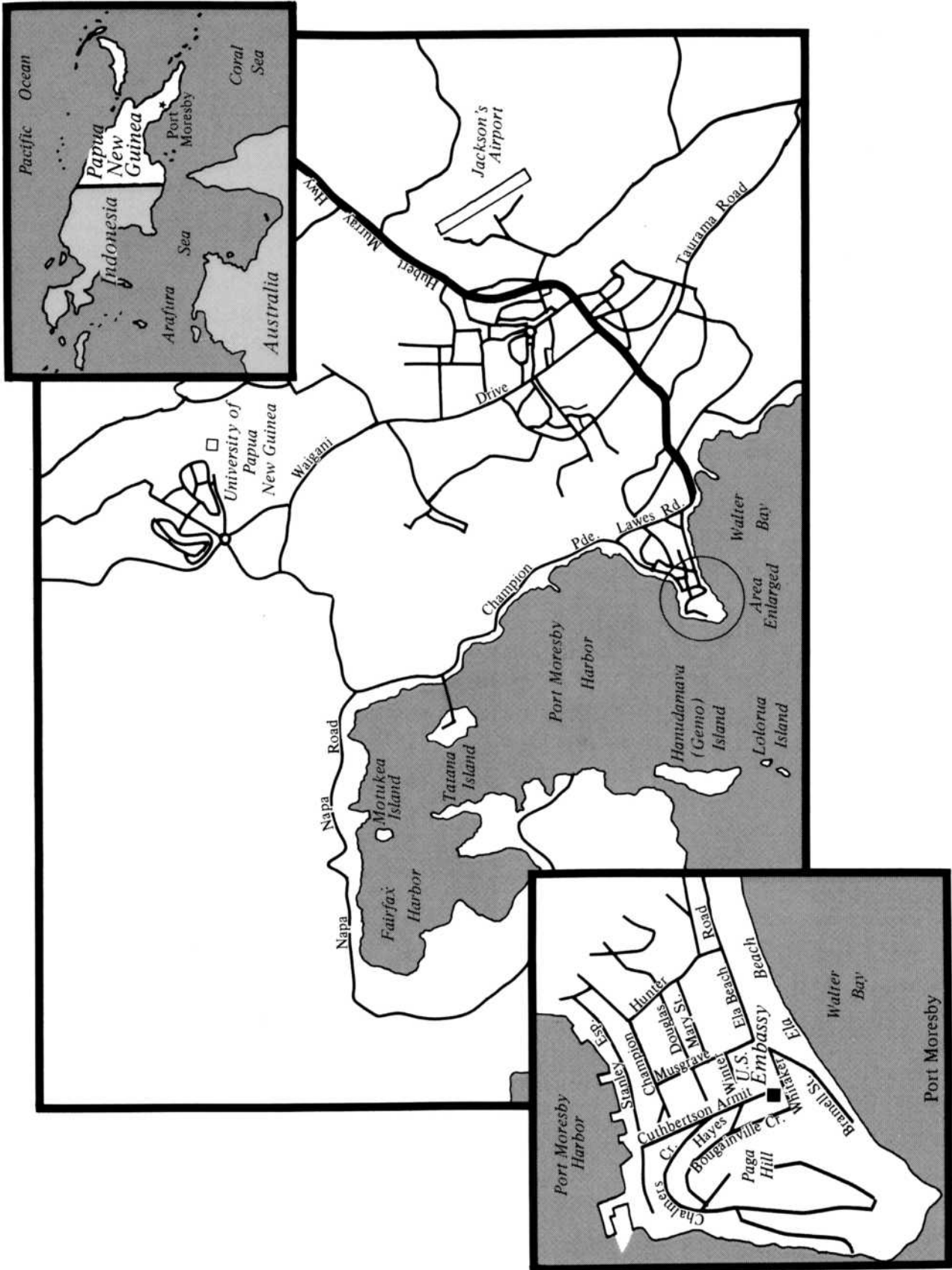
Firearms of any kind are strictly prohibited in Palau. The penalty for possession of a firearm or ammunition is up to fifteen years imprisonment.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 9	Martyrs' Day
Mar. 15	Youth Day
May 6	Senior Citizens' Day
May 31	President's Day
July 9	Constitution Day
Oct. 1	Independence Day
Oct.24	UN Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
	*Variable

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Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Independent State of Papua New Guinea

Major City:

Port Moresby

Other Cities:

Goroka, Kerema, Lae, Madang, Rabaul, Wewak

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Papua New Guinea. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

PAPUA NEW GUINEA "The Land of the Unexpected" is one of the last windows into the Stone Age. It is a country of striking contrasts where more than 1000, diverse tribes coexist with a modern economy based on world-class copper and gold mines.

It is the largest and most diverse of the Pacific Island nations. Covering a land area of nearly 180,000 square miles, it is nearly twice as large as the United Kingdom, and the size of Oregon and Idaho combined.

The geography is dramatic and tremendously varied. The country boasts great outcroppings of mountains ranging in height up to 15,000 feet, as well as vast river systems

and some of the world's most extensive swamps. A number of Papua New Guinea's islands border the Coral and Solomon seas. The coastal waters contain live coral reefs, some rivaling Australia's Great Barrier Reef in all but size.

Much of the country's appeal lies in its people. The more than 3.7 million inhabitants are sparsely scattered throughout the country, with concentrations in a number of towns as well as in the highlands. Physical characteristics vary widely, and over 800 distinct languages have been identified, some spoken by as few as 30 to 40 individuals. This diversity, which has been the subject of intense anthropological and linguistic research, also poses unique political challenges as the government attempts to strike a balance between local autonomy and national authority, which will permit orderly political and economic development.

Independent since 1975, Papua New Guinea retains an Australian flavor and a large expatriate population in its modern sector. The tropical climate is ideal for snorkeling, scuba diving, and sailing.

Living in this island nation presents rare opportunities to observe a traditional society coping with major social, cultural, and political trans-

formations, while striving to maintain the splendor of its history.

MAJOR CITY

Port Moresby

Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, is a sprawling town with a population of over 300,000 (1998 est.) located on hilly terrain on the southern Papua coast. Because it lies within a small rain shadow, the city's geography and climate differ substantially from other parts of Papua New Guinea. During the dry season (June-September), hills in the city dry up and turn brown. However, the climate, although hot, is usually pleasant: low humidity (60%), steady trade winds, daytime highs of 80°F, and nighttime lows in the high 60s°F.

During the rainy season, which coincides with the southern summer (October-May), daytime highs frequently reach the low 90s°F; 80% humidity is normal. However, lengthy afternoon rain showers cool things off, and nights are usually in the low to mid 70s°F. At this time of the year, the landscape in Port Moresby is green.

The old center of town is located, lies on a peninsula that helps protect the large harbor from the Coral Sea. A number of modern high rise buildings punctuate the skyline, contrasting with the traditional Motuan villages on stilts along the shoreline. The city's shipping docks and a yacht marina are located along the shore.

Next to the city center are Touaguba and Ela Makana Hills, sites of Port Moresby's best housing and the location of all the Embassy housing. Both benefit from cool ocean breezes and spectacular views of harbor and sea. Centered on a small business district by the harbor, over the years, Port Moresby has expanded via suburban developments some 11 kilometers inland. Boroko, the main shopping area, and adjacent Gordons are the largest middle-class areas of Port Moresby. Both are located 6 to 8 kilometers inland. Jackson's Airport, which can handle 747s, is 11 kilometers from downtown via a newly constructed highway.

Papua New Guinea's capital center is the suburb of Waigani, 8 kilometers from downtown. A six-lane boulevard leads to several modern high rise buildings that house government offices. Waigani is also the site of an 18-hole golf course and several diplomatic missions.

The Parliament House, National Museum and a small theater for live performances are also in Waigani, as is the Prime Minister's official residence. The University of Papua New Guinea, and the National Botanical Gardens, home of one of the world's largest orchid collections as well as a fine sample of Papua New Guinea's exotic birds, is nearby.

Utilities

Electricity is 240v, 50hz. Power can be erratic; surges and spikes are common. Employees are advised to bring voltage protectors and surge suppressors. Those who own computers should bring an uninterruptible power supply. The water supply is usually dependable.

Food

Although some imported items are significantly more expensive than in the United States, most foods used by American or Asian families are regularly available in Port Moresby. Supermarkets and pharmacies resemble their counterparts in Australia rather than those of other developing countries.

A wide variety of meats, fish, canned goods, fruits, vegetables and frozen goods is available. Quality in general is high, with the exception of imported fresh fruits and vegetables which are sometimes offered in poor condition. Most food items are imported from Australia, although limited items imported from the United States are also found in the stores. Locally produced fruits, vegetables, fish, seafood, chicken, eggs and beef are also available. Bread is baked locally. Fresh and UHT "long life" milk, both imported, are widely available. A wide range of good quality dairy products, including ice cream, is always available. Major supermarkets maintain delicatessen sections stocked with a good selection of sausage and cheeses. Coffee produced in Papua New Guinea is high quality and flavorful. However, instant coffee is imported and decaffeinated is not available in the local market. There is a bottling plant in Port Moresby and a wide variety of soft drinks are always available.

Wines available locally are primarily from Australia and New Zealand.

In general, prices of imported and processed foods are 1.5 to 2 times more expensive than in the United States. Locally produced fruits, vegetables and sea food, however, are quite inexpensive. Some all-American items which are not quite the same locally and which employees may wish to bring with them are chocolate chips, peanut butter, decaffeinated coffee and special convenience foods, like canned pumpkin or pudding mixes. Candles are expensive and not good quality.

Clothing

Lightweight, summer clothes are most useful in this tropical climate. Cotton clothes and underwear are most comfortable for activities out of doors. Locally available shoes, clothing and fabrics are limited in choice, expensive and generally not good quality.

Fashion tends to the practical and casual. During the wet season, an umbrella is most useful. Raincoats are too hot. However, raincoats, ponchos, sweaters and light-weight jackets are useful for travel in the highlands, where temperatures are significantly cooler. Light sweaters or wraps are also useful in Port Moresby after sundown during the cooler months. Hats and sunglasses are necessary even for short periods in the sun.

Men: During the day, short-sleeved, open neck shirts with slacks are customary. Tropical formal wear includes a summer-weight suit and tie, or long-sleeved white shirt and tie with slacks. Tropical informal attire (for most social events) is an open-neck sport shirt worn with slacks. Tropical floral print shirts, like those widely sold in Honolulu, are currently fashionable for informal evening wear.

Women: Lightweight dresses and short-sleeved summer suits are worn to the office. Many women find pantyhose uncomfortable in the tropical heat and do not wear them. Slacks, walking shorts, and cotton skirts and dresses are acceptable for street wear and travel. Cotton underwear and sleepwear are most comfortable. Tropical formal evening wear is generally street-length cocktail dresses or suits. Tropical informal evening wear can be summer dresses or summer evening slacks and shirts.

Children: Primary and secondary students wear uniforms to school. Shorts, blue jeans, and t-shirts worn with sandals or athletic shoes are universally popular. Girls may want cotton dresses for dressier occasions. Children too should have hats and sunglasses.

Supplies and Services

Toiletries, cosmetics, medicines and common household articles normally used by American families are available locally. Many are U.S. brand names made by Australian subsidiaries. However, prices for toiletries are high and brands of cosmetics sold in the United States are not available. Bring a supply if they have special preferences. Hardware stores are well stocked, and kitchenware and household linen is available, although more expensive than in the United States.

Most medicines are available, but sold under brand names common in Australia. Ask your doctor for the generic name of the medication they will need in Port Moresby. Common medicines are sometimes considerably cheaper than in the United States.

Most basic services are available at varying levels of reliability. Dry cleaning and shoe repair are available, but expensive. There are good unisex hair salons which offer competent service at prices similar to those in the U.S. Garage and appliance repair services are spotty in quality and parts can be expensive.

Domestic Help

Female domestic servants who do general housework, laundry and child-minding are available, although those who are English speaking and well-trained are not easy to find. Competent cooks are very scarce. Families with small children usually rely on their domestic help for babysitting services. Current weekly wages for domestic help, working five days a week, range from \$140 to \$200 a month.

Religious Activities

Most major Christian denominations are represented in Port Moresby. Anglican, Assembly of God, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Methodist, Mormon and Jehovah's Witnesses churches all have weekly services. Congregations include Papua New Guineans and foreigners. Ministers and priests are both

expatriate and Papua New Guinean. Services are in English, pidgin or Motu. An Islamic congregation also meets weekly. There is no Jewish synagogue, or Hindu or Buddhist temple.

Education

Schools used by children of post personnel in Port Moresby include the Port Moresby International School (kindergarten through grade 12), the Ela Beach School (primary grades), and the Murray International School (primary grades). The schools employ national and expatriate teachers, many of whom are spouses of expatriates working in Papua New Guinea. The curriculum is similar to that followed in Australia. All three schools have extensive playing fields and sports programs. The Port Moresby International High School offers an International Baccalaureate program in grades 11 and 12. The school year begins at the end of January and ends in mid-December. It is broken into four terms approximately ten weeks in length, with a long vacation in December-January.

Sports

Sports available to everyone include golf, tennis, scuba diving, bush walking, jogging, softball, swimming, waterskiing, windsurfing, squash, snorkeling and sailing. Soccer and rugby are popular spectator sports. Little League Baseball is available to both boys and girls. Parents willing to help coach are always welcome.

Karate and dance schools take all ages. Diving lessons are offered on a regular basis. There are occasional theater productions by university, regional and amateur groups. The amateur theater group is open to new members. There are occasional choral presentations by church-based choirs. Exhibitions of contemporary and traditional art are organized at the National Gallery and Museum, which has a good permanent collection of traditional art as well as a small collection of live domestic birds and animals. The beautifully kept National Botanic Gardens feature an orchid exhibi-

tion and a walkthrough aviary and provide safe and beautiful picnic facilities for a small fee. There are several restaurants throughout the city, featuring both Asian and Western cuisine. Many expatriate residents are members of clubs, which run restaurants, bars and sporting facilities. The Port Moresby Yacht Club operates a marina in the city center. Another boat mooring facility is available for a fee a short distance out of town. There are also some secure night spots which offer discotheques, bars and slot machines.

There are no movie theaters, although a local hotel offers recent releases every Sunday night in a theater atmosphere. However, video tapes can be rented and satellite television is available.

Special Information

Crime is a serious problem in Port Moresby, and consists of everything from bag snatching and car jacking to armed robbery and rape. Much of the crime is committed by young men and boys who, if they have access to weapons, easily become violent. Widespread abuse of alcohol and marijuana aggravates the problem. Hijacking and highway robbery is common and makes road travel outside the towns dangerous. The few criminals notwithstanding, there have been no incidents of terrorism in PNG. Nor is xenophobia, or racial or religious animosity common.

OTHER CITIES

GOROKA, located in the central highlands 300 miles northwest of the capital, is a provincial headquarters with 22,000 residents. The center of European settlement in the region, the city has an animal husbandry station. Goroka's mile-high elevation contributes to its expanding tourist business. There is an airport here, as well as a major truck route heading east.

The port of **KEREMA** lies on Kerema Bay on the Gulf of Papua, in

south-central Papua New Guinea. This became a regional seat in 1958 when the district (now provincial) headquarters was transferred from Kikori. Kerema has a fish-processing factory; rubber and coconuts are grown near the city. There is a road link to Malalawa and an airstrip. The population is approximately 4,000.

LAE is situated on Huan Gulf on New Guinea Island, approximately 200 miles north of Port Moresby. During World War II, it was occupied by the Japanese, and became a major supply base. The city suffered heavy bombings by Allied planes in that period, and was eventually occupied in September 1943 by the Australians. Today, Lae is a commercial center, and a base for air transport lines in the area gold fields. Lae has an estimated population of 80,000.

MADANG (formerly called Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen), with some 27,000 residents, is situated on Astrolabe Bay, on the country's eastern coast. The area is a center for the timber industry based in the Gogol forest. It also is a communications point for offshore islands, as well as a distribution hub. Agricultural products are exported from Madang; industries include engineering workshops and timber milling. This was the administrative center for a German colony abandoned because of malaria in 1899. Madang was the objective of an Australian drive along the coast in World War II. It was captured by Australian and U.S. forces in April 1944. A lighthouse in the harbor commemorates coast watchers who helped the Allies in the war.

RABAUL, situated on Simpson Harbor in the northeastern part of New Britain Island, was a major Japanese air force base after occupation in 1942 and, as such, was headquarters for the projected invasion of Australia. The city, surrounded by volcanoes, was damaged by the eruption of Matupi in 1937 and, consequently, the administrative government of the Trust Territory of New Guinea was moved to

Lae. Rabaul had been the capital of German New Guinea in the early years of this century and, from 1920 to 1941, was the principal town of the Australian mandate. It is still a major port and has a population of nearly 18,000.

WEWAK is located on the country's northern coast, about 75 miles west of the mouth of the Sepik River. It was a Japanese base in World War II, bombed heavily by American forces in 1943. The Allied advance along the northern coast bypassed the city. Wewak is a port of call for coastal and Australian shipping. The economy is hindered by the primitive back-country conditions. The discovery of gold in the Sepik area in the 1930s led to the community's founding. The fields have since been abandoned. With over 23,000 residents, Wewak has an international airport and road links to Maprik and Paguwi.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Papua New Guinea lies in the southwest Pacific, just south of the equator and about 100 miles north-east of Australia. The largest of the Pacific Island nations, it includes the eastern half of the island of New Guinea which it shares with Indonesia and numerous offshore islands, the largest of which are New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, and Manus. Their combined surface area is 286,248 square miles, slightly larger than the state of California.

The main island comprises 85% of Papua New Guinea's total land area. A complex system of mountains extends from the eastern end of the islands to the western boundary with Indonesian Irian Jaya. Precipitous slopes, knife-sharp ridges, great outcroppings of mountains rising to heights of almost 15,000 feet, and broad upland val-

leys at altitudes of 5,000-10,000 feet characterize this area. Most of the terrain is covered by dense jungles of tropical rain forest. Large rivers comprising the world's twelfth largest riverine network flow to the south, north and east; few are navigable except by small boats in the lower reaches. The largest river, the Fly, which begins in the mountains of western Papua, flows over 700 miles, and can be navigated for 500 miles.

Between the northern and the central range of mountains lies the Central Depression, which contains the Sepik, Ramu, and Markham River valleys. Lowlands and rolling foothills of varying widths stretch along most of the coasts. Huge stretches of wetlands are common in the poorly-drained coastal areas. On the southwest littoral, the great delta plain of the Daru coast forms one of the world's most extensive swamps, exceeding 100,000 square miles.

The archipelagic areas of Papua New Guinea include three major islands—New Britain, New Ireland, and Bougainville—as well as a great variety of smaller, often very isolated island groups. The islands contain many volcanoes, both active and dormant; rich agricultural zones; and considerable mineral wealth. Thousands of coral reefs make the surrounding waters a mecca for marine biologists and scuba divers, while several of the smaller island groups, including the Trobriands and Manus Island, were the sites of classic anthropological studies.

Papua New Guinea lies wholly within the Tropics, and its climate is monsoonal. The “wet” northwest monsoon season extends from December to March and the “dry” southeast monsoon from May to October. Average annual rainfall is high, ranging from 80 to 100 inches for most districts. Although many areas have a wet and dry season, these terms are relative. Even in the so-called dry season, 2-4 inches of rain per month fall in most areas. Many areas receive more than 200



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Marketplace in Papua New Guinea

inches, but a few, like Port Moresby, lie in a rain shadow and receive 40 inches or less annually.

Although tropical, temperatures are not extreme. Most lowland, coastal, and island areas have a daily average temperature of 81°F, and seasonal variations are slight. In the highlands, temperature varies with altitude. At 6,000 feet, the average temperature is 61°F; daytime temperatures rise to 90°F and nighttime temperatures fall between 40°F and 50°F. Lowland humidity is uniformly about 80% with very little seasonal variation. Humidity fluctuates more in the highlands where temperatures are lower.

Papua New Guinea's rugged geography has hindered the development of adequate transport and communication facilities. The lack of this infrastructure continues to inhibit the development of some of the interior areas. It also has a negative impact upon the entire process of

social, political and economic integration.

Population

Papua New Guinea's population grows at about 2.3% per year and was estimated in 1998 at approximately 4.6 million. It is one of the most heterogeneous populations in the Pacific, including several thousand villages, most with only a few hundred people. Divided by language, customs, and traditions, some of these communities have engaged in tribal warfare with their neighbors for centuries. The isolation created by the mountainous terrain is so great that some groups, until recently, did not know that neighboring groups lived only a few kilometers away. Nearly 800 identified languages (20% of the world's languages) are spoken in Papua New Guinea.

Melanesian Pidgin is the lingua franca. An English cognate, Pidgin

is relatively easy for Americans to learn and understand. English, the official language, is spoken by a rapidly increasing group of educated people.

Population density varies widely from the nearly uninhabited forests of Western Province, which has an average population density of 1 person/sq. km., to the relatively crowded Western Highlands, which reports 40 persons/sq. km. Although there is considerable urban drift to the cities of PNG, there are no recent statistical studies of the phenomenon. The UN Population Fund estimates that current growth rates are no higher than those measured in a 1980-90 study which showed 4.6% annual growth for Port Moresby and 2.7% annual growth for Lae on the north coast.

Though decreasing in size, there is still a relatively large expatriate community in PNG. About 10,000 Australians, 2,000 British, 3,000

New Zealanders, 2,000-2,600 Americans (mostly missionaries), and 5,000 Filipinos make up the bulk of an expatriate population estimated at 22,600. This number is decreasing as the government pursues a program to have Papua New Guineans take on jobs now held by expatriates.

Culture

Papua New Guinea is a young nation, made up of hundreds of smaller cultural groups, which speak nearly 800 separate languages. First loyalties are to family and clan. Strong attachment to the idea of a nation or obedience to government imposed regulations is common for the most part only among the educated elite. For most Papua New Guineans, the interface between traditional and modern economic and government systems is the "wantok system." Wantok means literally "one talk," i.e., common language. It includes clansmen, relatives and friends who speak the same language. The wantok system involves people in an intricate network of rights and obligations extending well beyond the primary family. For a person who has prospered materially, the wantok system creates an obligation to assist other group members with gifts, money or jobs. To a Westerner, and occasionally to a Westernized Papua New Guinean, the wantok system may seem regressive or an impediment to modernization. However, most Papua New Guineans still regard it as part of the basic scaffolding of their social system. Forced to choose between obligations to the extended family and to their employers, many Papua New Guineans will choose the family first, which poses a problem for foreign managers.

Generally speaking traditional society in Papua New Guinea is male dominated and, in some areas, polygamous. Melanesian society generally does not have hereditary chiefs. Villages and clans are dominated by a Big Man, someone who has attained power and influence through demonstrated ability and

the acquisition and sharing of property. Although most Papua New Guinea microsociety feel that important matters should be decided by consensus, it is the Big Man who shapes the consensus. In Port Moresby, these structures are hidden, but they do exist and are important. Members of Parliament and senior government officials at both national and provincial levels often are Big Men in their own microsociety or are close relatives of Big Men. Women are traditionally expected to be subservient to their male relatives; to be seen and not heard. Fewer girls than boys attend school and the rate of literacy for women is lower than for men. Bride price, which traditionally cemented social obligations between families and clans, is frequently abused in the modern economy, particularly in areas where cash incomes are high. This makes it hard for young men to get wives legally and reduces marriage in some cases to the purchase of women. Nevertheless, with increased education and economic opportunity, the gap between male and female is slowly closing.

As in many other developing countries, there is a steady flow of economic migrants from the rural areas to Papua New Guinea's few cities. Jobs, particularly for those with little education, are generally not available, and basic needs, which in the village are either produced by the family or gathered from the forest, are expensive. Most rural migrants to the cities live in shanty towns, called "settlements," which have few, if any, public services and where crime breeds and criminals take refuge.

Public Institutions

Papua New Guinea became self-governing on December 1, 1973. The Australian Government progressively transferred political and administrative responsibilities, and Papua New Guinea gained full independence on September 16, 1975.

The Constitution provides for a national government consisting of a

Parliament and an independent Judicial system. The Parliament is a single-chamber legislature based on a modified Westminster system whose members are elected for 5-year terms under a system of universal adult suffrage. The last national election was held in June 1997.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is Head of State; she is represented in Papua New Guinea by a Governor General who must be a citizen of Papua New Guinea and is required to act under the advice of the National Executive Council. Executive power is vested in the Cabinet (National Executive Council), led by the Prime Minister (Head of Government).

The National Executive Council is made up of members of the National Legislature (Parliament) who are chosen by the leader of the political party or coalition of parties that holds the most seats in the Parliament. Party influence is weak and members of Parliament are often elected on the basis of their prominence in local communities rather than their party affiliation. Consequently, ideologies are not sharply drawn between parties, and voters frequently cross party lines. As a result, the governments since independence have been formed by different, highly fluid coalitions. Votes of no confidence are common, and debate is often vigorous.

The country is divided into 19 provinces plus the National Capital District (NCD-Port Moresby). A constitutional amendment in 1995 significantly changed the administration of the provinces. It both centralized the political control of the provinces-by appointing as governors the regional members of the national parliament and providing most provincial funding through the national government-while decentralizing to the provinces the responsibility of providing most government services for the people, such as health and education. Implementing the new system has proven to be more difficult than originally envisioned, and many

coordination problems are still being worked out.

Arts, Science, and Education

There is a system of state and private schools in Papua New Guinea which provides primary through tertiary education. However, education is neither compulsory nor free, and overall school facilities are not sufficient to meet the rapidly growing numbers of children who require education. Failure to provide education appropriate to fill the demand for skilled workers has created large groups of early school leavers among the PNG population who do not have sufficient skills to find jobs, but who have just enough education to make them dissatisfied with village life. Expatriates in Papua New Guinea and well-to-do Papua New Guineans either enroll their children in private institutions or send them abroad for schooling.

Approximately 72% of Papua New Guineans are literate. English is introduced into the school curriculum no later than second grade, and all those who complete the sixth grade or better can speak and read English. Reforms introduced in primary education in 1994 divide early education into elementary, grades prep through two, and primary, which carries the student through grade eight. Secondary schools are divided into lower secondary, grades nine through ten, and upper secondary, grades eleven through twelve. National examinations are given at grade six and grade ten. Students who cannot pass those exams, or whose parents cannot afford to pay for continued schooling, must leave school. As of 1996, a little over 90% of school age children started primary school. However, only 33% of those could expect to go on to lower secondary, and only 10% of those in lower secondary, will be able to complete 12th grade. The school reforms, which aim for universal primary education by 2004, hope to enable at least 50% of all primary school graduates to go on to lower secondary. However, shortcomings

in budgets and administration in recent years make it unlikely that the target will be met by that date.

A correspondence system, known as the College of Distance Education (CODE) covers grades 7 through 12 and is available to children who cannot find places in the high schools. As of 1996, about half the number of those enrolled in high schools were enrolled in CODE courses. There are also 14 centers for the disabled throughout PNG, which are operated by Non-Government Organizations with some support from the Government of Papua New Guinea.

There are over fifty tertiary institutions, the most important of which are the University of Papua New Guinea at Port Moresby (liberal arts, law, medicine, and business administration), the Papua New Guinea Institute of Technology at Lae, and the University of Papua New Guinea at Goroka (teacher training and business education).

Private international schools operated under the aegis of the International Education Agency (IEA) and staffed primarily by expatriate teaching staff, are found in the main population centers. Of these there are about 22 primary schools and eight high schools in the country.

Papua New Guineans express their rich cultural heritage in wood carvings, pottery, bark painting, dancing, costuming, and personal ornamentation. Oral tradition and legends, which are often surprisingly similar despite the diversity of peoples and languages, have also played an important role in the culture. They form the basis of traditional village social structure and are reenacted in song and dance. They are also depicted in carvings and bark paintings that are closely associated with clan customs and ceremonies. Magic and ancestor worship also play an integral part in everyday village life. The PNG Government promotes indigenous art and is actively sponsoring a revival of older forms of cultural expression. Artists now also work in such

modern mediums as textiles and lithographs.

Port Moresby's excellent National Museum and Art Gallery has a large permanent collection of traditional arts. The National Library also has an extensive collection of books and video tapes on aspects of life in Papua New Guinea, both traditional and modern, which Embassy personnel can borrow. The National Research Institute has a variety of publications, tapes, and records of traditional songs, stories, and legends. Other groups, including the National Theatre company, Raun Raun Travelling Theatre, and National Arts School, present cultural events periodically.

Several art shops in Port Moresby sell artifacts collected from all over the country. Hundreds of dancers from various villages, wearing elaborate headdresses and body decorations, perform annually at the world famous Highlands Sing Sing, held alternately in Mount Hagen and Goroka. The annual Hiri festival is held in Port Moresby each September with a week of traditional dancing, singing, sailing, and canoe racing. The latter commemorates old trading voyages that set out from the region when the southeast trade winds were blowing and returned with the northwesterly monsoons.

Commerce and Industry

The World Bank classifies Papua New Guinea as a middle-income country based on its estimated 1995 per capita GNP of \$1,160. However, although capital intensive exploitation of natural resources (copper, gold, oil, timber), along with tree crops (coffee, copra, palm oil, cocoa), generates significant export revenues, at least 80% of the population reside in isolated villages, engaged in subsistence agriculture and smallholder cash-crop production. Non-export private-sector activity is mainly distributive rather than productive. Thus, the living standards and standard social indicators (such

as literacy, infant and maternal mortality, and life expectancy) of the vast majority of the people are akin to those in low-income developing nations. The minimum weekly wage in 1998 was slightly less than \$11.00.

Traditional villages are still home for most of the population, but education and exposure to Western culture are leading more young people to leave the village to look for work in towns. Unfortunately, economic growth in the non-mining sector has not kept pace with population growth over the past decade. The relatively small urban-based manufacturing and service sectors are unable to provide jobs for the increasing numbers of youths who leave their villages. Consequently, centers such as Port Moresby, Lae and Mount Hagen have large, growing, squatter settlements.

In an effort to slow migration and bring villagers into the money economy, the Government encourages agricultural development. Agricultural extension services and price-support programs have encouraged the planting of export crops. In addition, the Government has supported projects including large sugar, oil palm, and rubber plantations, which are now slowly being privatized. Development of locally-owned commercial fishing and sustainable forestry ventures is also a goal.

Economic growth continues to be hampered by the geography of the country. The extremely rugged terrain inhibits road construction; and the capital and most populous city, Port Moresby, is accessible only by sea or air. In the center of the country, the Highlands Highway links the port of Lae to major towns and mining and petroleum sites in the Highlands. Additional road development has been slow since independence and maintenance of existing roads has been poor, though improving this is a major goal of the Government's development program. Some third-tier airlines and helicopter companies complement the national airline, Air Niugini, in providing cargo and passenger service

to over 400 airports and airstrips throughout the country. Coastal and inter-island shipping is expensive and often not equipped to carry passengers.

Papua New Guinea is heavily dependent on imports for manufactured goods and exports raw materials and agricultural products. In 1997 Papua New Guinea imported \$1.5 billion in machinery, transportation equipment and other manufactured goods, rice and processed foods, fuels and chemicals. Its principal suppliers are Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Malaysia. During the same year, it exported \$2.2 billion in gold, copper ore, oil, timber, palm oil, coffee, and cocoa. Its major markets are Australia, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Korea and China. U.S. trade with Papua New Guinea is limited. In 1997 U.S. goods, dominated by machinery and aircraft, accounted for about 8 percent of PNG's total imports. During the same year, the United States purchased about 3 percent of PNG's total exports, primarily oil, coffee and cocoa.

Historically, the mining and petroleum sector has contributed 25% of PNG's GDP and between 65 to 80% of export earnings. While production from older major ventures, including the Ok Tedi Copper Mine, the Porgera Gold Mine and the Kutubu oil fields, has begun to decline, new projects are under development or active exploration. The Lihir Gold Mine, one of the largest gold mines outside South Africa, commenced production in 1994 in New Ireland Province. A new oil field was also opened at Gobe in the Gulf and Southern Highlands Provinces in 1998.

U.S. companies have been active in the development of PNG's mining and petroleum sector. Chevron owns part of the Kutubu and Gobe Joint Ventures and operates those fields. The company also is spearheading a major natural gas development project. Battle Mountain Gold owns an interest in the Lihir Gold Mine. Other American companies are

exploring for oil, gas, and minerals in PNG. U.S. firms also supply services and supplies to the mining and petroleum industries. U.S. financial institutions have been involved in financing for most major resource development projects in PNG. The Bank of Hawaii has been operating in PNG since 1997.

Transportation

Automobiles

Port Moresby consists of several suburbs spread over a large area. This, combined with inadequate public transportation, makes a privately-owned vehicle a necessity. Vehicles can be imported, but all common Japanese models, Australian Ford, and Hyundai are sold and serviced in Port Moresby.

Traffic moves on the left, and right-hand drive cars are required by law. The 3-year Papua New Guinea driver's license is obtained by presenting a valid U.S. driver's license. Third-party liability insurance is mandatory. It currently costs K120.00 (\$56.00) per year. Two insurance agencies in Port Moresby provide coverage at K1,050.00 (\$494.00) per year plus 3% sales tax. Letters from former insurers indicating no insurance claims over the past 5 years can sharply reduce insurance fees.

Gasoline currently costs approximately \$1.64 per gallon. Vehicle repairs and service are expensive, often slow, and the quality of work is uneven. All sales outlets service the brands they sell, but repairs on cars not sold in Port Moresby can be hard to obtain. Considerable delay and expense can be incurred if spare parts must be imported.

Four-wheel drive vehicles are not necessary for driving in Port Moresby. Bicycles are not practical due to the extremely hilly terrain and narrow roads.

Local

Use of a private car is essential in Port Moresby. No adequate, reliable public transportation system exists.

Public Motor Vehicles (PMVs-small buses or 15-passenger vans) offer unscheduled daytime service for 50 toea (\$.24) to most parts of the city, but they are often unreliable and unsafe. Cars are available for hire, but cost more than they do in the U.S. Taxis are unsecure and not recommended.

Except for the Highland's Highway beginning in Lae, and roads around most major towns, no extensive road system exists in the country. Road networks between Port Moresby and the interior have been prevented so far by barriers of mountains, swamps and jungles. The longest road from Port Moresby extends just over 200 miles to the northwest. Another road extends 200 miles east, and a third stretches 45 miles north into the mountains past Sogeri. None of the roads reaches a town of over 1,000 inhabitants and highway banditry is common. Paved roads stop approximately 20 miles from city limits.

Papua New Guinea has no rail network. Intercoastal shipping exists but is not designed for passenger travel.

Regional

Most people travel between the main population centers by air. The national airline, Air Niugini, provides daily service to most major towns. Planes are usually full, even though domestic and international air fares are among the highest in the world. Third-level air carriers fly to more isolated towns and villages that have grass airstrips.

Air Niugini and Qantas offer several flights a week to Australia. Currently two flights a week also are available to Manila, Singapore and Honiara.

Communications

Telephone, Fax and Internet

The telephone system in Papua New Guinea is relatively efficient. Australia and most main areas of PNG can be dialed directly.

Mail

Local and international mail service is reliable. Within country, mail is delivered only to a post office box or counter, not to individual companies or residences. Mailing a letter within country costs K.25 (\$.12) for up to 50 grams. Airmail letters to the U.S. cost K1.00] (\$.47) per 20 gram. Airmail parcel rate to the U.S. is K30.50 (\$14.341 per kilogram).

Radio and TV

Radio is the most accessible communications medium in PNG where rugged terrain prevents newspapers from reaching the more remote communities and television is beyond the reach of the vast majority of citizens. Most radio stations broadcast news several times a day and most programs are in English.

There are three radio broadcasters in Papua New Guinea: the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), NauFM and Radio Kalang. NBC manages the majority of the radio broadcasting operations in the country. It operates a national non-commercial AM network that, during the evening, also broadcasts in short-wave in local languages from 19 provincial stations located throughout the country. NauFM operates two stations. It broadcasts in English featuring popular music and is targeted at a young, professional audience. As Yumi FM, it also broadcasts in Tok Pisin, a service that targets an older and more traditional audience. Radio Kalang is a commercial FM station which offers music, news and commentary.

Radio Australia, BBC, and VOA signals can be picked up on a short-wave radio. Reception is usually good with an outdoor antenna. Short-wave sets purchased locally cost about 25% more than comparable sets sold in the U.S. The local cable company also makes four Australian radio stations available to cable TV subscribers for a regular monthly charge.

The national TV station, EM-TV, broadcasts news, old American and Australian programs and movies, as well as some local programming. It

receives news via satellite from its parent network in Australia. Satellite TV can be rented at a fee of K56 (\$25.00) per month. It currently offers 14 channels, including CNNI, Cinemax, ESPN, the Discovery Channel, four Australian channels, and a local movie channel.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Two English-language newspapers, the Post-Courier and The National, are published 5 days a week in Papua New Guinea. A few magazines, technical journals, and various weeklies are also published, including the Pidgin language Wantok and the English-language The Independent. Coverage is usually unbiased and accurate, although the international news is not extensive.

Australian newspapers and magazines, regionally oriented journals, and a few general interest American magazines are available at news stands. Paperback books are also available, but the selection is poor and prices are high.

The National Library in Waigani has a good collection of nonfiction, periodicals, and children's books. It also has research facilities and a lending service of some 6,000 films and 400 video cassettes, including documentaries about Papua New Guinea. The library at the University of Papua New Guinea has an extensive but outdated selection of books and audio materials. It, too, is open to the public.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Port Moresby General Hospital can handle most routine cases, however, service and hygiene are inadequate by U.S. standards. The hospital is chronically short on staff and overcrowded, while most of the employees are undertrained or untrained. Thus, personnel are advised to use the private medical clinics in Port Moresby that are staffed by Western-trained doctors. Local pharma-

cies stock a full range of medicines to meet most medical requirements. Some lab tests must be performed in Australia, causing delays which can be lengthy.

Specialized surgery and treatment for more unusual or difficult medical problems are not available in port Moresby. Cases requiring special treatment are normally evacuated to Cairns, Brisbane or Sydney, Australia. Psychiatric treatment is not available in Port Moresby.

Competent, private dentists practice in Port Moresby. General treatment is available, but costs are higher than in the U.S.

Community Health

Tap water should not be considered safe for drinking in Papua New Guinea. Garbage is collected at residences twice a week by the City Council Works Department. Sewage disposal facilities are adequate, though a fair amount is dumped into the Coral Sea 3 miles offshore from Port Moresby, so the area is not safe for swimming. Local food container and beverage sterilization facilities are considered to be adequate. Milk is safe. Meat, fish and poultry do not require special handling, but should be thoroughly cooked. Local seafood should never be eaten raw. Local vegetables and fruits should be well scrubbed and soaked in a Clorox solution.

Preventive Measures

Many of the communicable diseases found in Papua New Guinea also occur in the United States, however, some conditions are found more frequently in PNG. Intestinal problems occur, but dysentery is not common. Chloroquine-resistant malaria is endemic at lower elevations in all areas outside Port Moresby. Port Moresby has a relatively low incidence of malaria, however cases do occur, and precautions such as antimalarial tablets (Mefloquin is most commonly used) should be taken beginning 2 weeks before coming to PNG, taken during the stay in country and for 6 weeks after leaving. Because of the nocturnal feeding habits of the Anopheles

mosquito, malaria transmission occurs primarily between dusk and dawn. Personal protection measures are very important. Use of a repellent cream or spray when going out in the evenings is recommended, especially during the rainy season. Visitors should get current information from traveling into remote areas of PNG.

As in all tropical climates, sunburn, prickly heat, and various fungal infections are easy to contract. All cuts and scratches should be treated immediately with a good antiseptic to prevent infection. Snake bites can be a danger, so grass surrounding residences must be cut regularly to discourage their presence. Care should be taken when visiting uncultivated areas. Large spiders are seen occasionally, but are seldom dangerous.

For 8-9 months of the year, the climate in Port Moresby is warm and dry with some dirt and dust in the air. During the remaining 3-4 months of the year, it is hot, humid and rainy. Flu and colds can occur during the sudden change from dry to wet season and vice versa. Persons with a history of sinus allergies or asthma may find their symptoms exacerbated by the environment. Mold and mildew are a problem here, though somewhat less than in other equatorial posts due to the relatively dry weather. Air conditioned storage is recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to Papua New Guinea is by air. The most direct route from the United States is via Sydney, Australia. United Airlines is the only American carrier which flies to Australia. Transportation between Sydney and Port Moresby is available from Qantas four days a week and between Cairns and Port Moresby seven days a week. Air West also provides regular service from Cairns. In order to make these con-

nections it is necessary to overnight in Australia. Connections to Port Moresby are also available twice a week by Air Niugini from Manila and Singapore.

Customs clearance usually requires a minimum of five working days. Unaccompanied baggage takes about two to three weeks to reach Port Moresby by air from the United States. Surface shipments average 4 months in transit. Most surface shipments are trans-shipped at either Hong Kong, Singapore or Sydney. Customs clearance for household effects usually requires a minimum of five working days.

A valid passport, onward/return ticket, and proof of sufficient funds for the intended visit are required. Tourist visas are required for stays up to 60 days. (Visas are issued upon arrival at Jacksons International Airport in Port Moresby). Business visas require passport validity of at least one year from the date the visa is issued, two application forms, two photos, a company letter, biographical data, a recent annual report of the parent company and a fee for multiple entries. An AIDS test is required for work and residency permits (U.S. test accepted).

American citizens who remain in Papua New Guinea beyond the period authorized by immigration authorities may face fines and penalties. Papua New Guinea collects a departure tax. The departure tax is normally incorporated into airline fares at the time of ticket issuance.

For more information about entry and exit requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Papua New Guinea, 1615 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Suite 300, Washington DC 20009, Tel. 202-745-3680, or visit the Embassy's website at www.pngembassy.org.

Travelers may also wish to obtain entry permission from the Government of Australia for transit or other purposes (see section on Medical Facilities) before traveling to Papua New Guinea. American citi-

zens no longer need a visa to travel to Australia as tourists but must obtain an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) through their travel agent. For further information about Australian visas or the ETA, contact the Embassy of Australia in Washington, D.C., at 1-800-242-2878 or at the Embassy of Australia's website at <http://www.austemb.org>.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby and obtain updated information on travel and security within Papua New Guinea. The U.S. Embassy is located at Douglas Street, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. This address should be used for courier service deliveries. The Embassy is located adjacent to the Bank of Papua New Guinea. The mailing address is P.O. Box 1492, Port Moresby, N.C.D. 121, Papua New Guinea. The U.S. Embassy's telephone number is (675) 321-1455; fax (675) 321-1593. Americans may submit consular inquiries via e-mail to: consularportmoresby@state.gov.

Pets

All pets, except those originating in Australia or New Zealand, are prohibited entry into Papua New Guinea unless they have been quarantined for six months in either Australia or New Zealand. Pets originating in New Guinea, however, can be acquired in Port Moresby.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Papua New Guinean and American currency may be exchanged freely through the banks. The Papua New Guinea kina and toea (100 toea = 1 kina) are the only legal currency in the country. No restrictions are placed on the amount of currency a person can bring into Papua New Guinea. Travelers may not export

more than K5,000 kina without special permission.

The exchange rate floats freely. As of December 1999, the rate was US\$1 = K2.85.

Jackson's International Airport at Port Moresby has banking and exchange facilities. Persons not traveling on a diplomatic passport are required to pay a departure tax of K30.00 (\$14.00). Most hotels, restaurants and shops accept major U.S. credit cards. Papua New Guinea uses the metric system.

Disaster Preparedness

Papua New Guinea is located in an area of high seismic activity. Although the probability of a major earthquake occurring during an individual trip is remote, earthquakes can and will continue to happen. In addition, there are two active volcanoes near the town of Rabaul on New Britain. General information regarding disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) home page at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Saturday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
June	Queen's Birthday Celebrated*
July 23	Remembrance Day (ANZAC)
Sept. 16.	PNG Independence Day
Sept. 21.	St. Michael's Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
	*variable

SPECIAL INFORMATION

The Department of State has issued the following public announcement concerning safety in Papua New Guinea:

Although reliable statistics are difficult or impossible to obtain, violent crime is a serious threat in many areas of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The visitor to PNG can minimize the potential to become a victim of crime by taking appropriate precautions, for example, by taking part in organized tours run by reliable and experienced operators. This primer provides basic guidance for those who will be visiting PNG for a short period. Persons who plan to stay in PNG for more than a week or two should get in touch with the Embassy or long-time residents for additional guidance.

There are several universal ways to stay out of trouble: do not increase your vulnerability by drinking heavily or staying out after midnight; do not patronize disreputable bars; do not proposition women; do not visit squatter settlements or other economically distressed areas; do not display money or valuables; and do not verbally abuse, cheat or tempt PNG citizens. Wear modest clothes, jewelry and watches so as not to draw attention to yourself. Limit your conversations with members of the opposite sex to those persons you know or have business with.

Persons arriving at the Port Moresby Jackson's International Airport should arrange, if possible, to be met, particularly if their flight arrives at night. If no one meets you, it is possible to take a courtesy bus to the Gateway, Islander Travelodge or Port Moresby Travelodge Hotels and contact your sponsor from there. The terminal itself is not a danger zone, but thefts and assaults have occurred in the terminal parking lot. If picking up a rental vehicle, obtain a street map and review it in the office before

leaving. Do not travel by car outside Port Moresby at night, even on major highways. If you encounter a roadblock which does not appear to be manned by uniformed police, or notice a disturbance on the road ahead, turn around immediately, if possible, and use an alternative route. Police vehicles are sky-blue with red insignia.

Do not leave cash or high-value belongings in hotel rooms. Do not leave room keys on hotel counters when going out; drop them in the slot, if provided, or hand them to a clerk. Lock sliding glass doors or windows when going out.

Up-scale restaurants and stores usually have their own security guards. It is still advisable, however, to remain watchful when entering or leaving. Ask the staff to assign someone to escort you to your car if you feel uncomfortable (particularly at night). Avoid carrying a purse or briefcase in public. Do not leave anything of even minor value in sight within a parked car.

Sexual assaults are primarily crimes of opportunity. PNG women rarely wear shorts, pants or miniskirts; therefore, female visitors are advised not to wear revealing clothing in public such as swimsuits, sundresses, or similar apparel

Most expatriates avoid using public motor vehicles (PMVs) or taxis to get around, relying instead on their sponsor or a rental vehicle for transport. Visitors should inquire of colleagues or hotel employees before undertaking trips to unfamiliar neighborhoods.

Carjackings, rock-throwing and attempts to stop cars occur occasionally. Keep an eye on persons in the vicinity of your vehicle at all times, particularly when stopped at intersections or crosswalks.

Most hotels and private residences in Port Moresby have secure parking lots, i.e., fenced areas entered through gates opened by remote control or security guards. Try to

avoid parking outside secure areas at night.

Individual travelers to the PNG highlands need to exercise substantially greater caution than those taking part in organized tours. The Highlands provinces -- Enga, Chimbu, and Eastern, Southern and Western Highlands -- can be volatile. Political disputes, inter-clan fights and sudden altercations (for example, at sporting events) occur frequently. Criminals have been known to set up roadblocks on segments of the Highlands highway, which runs from Lae to Mt. Hagen, Mendi and Tari. Visitors should inquire locally concerning security before driving between towns. An extensive secondary airline network provides frequent service within the Highlands.

Due to the risk of roadblocks, avoid traveling outside of Port Moresby, even on paved highways, at night.

Driving carefully is important because many PNG citizens respond emotionally and violently to a serious incident or an injury involving relatives or fellow villagers. Such reactions can endanger the life of the person perceived to have inflicted the loss, whether or not that person would be found legally responsible by a court. Drive defensively at all times, but particularly in the afternoons and evenings of "pay Fridays," when the likelihood of encountering inebriated drivers or pedestrians is greatest. Killing a dog or pig is almost certain to trigger a demand for monetary compensation, so exercise caution when driving through rural areas. Finally, it is unwise to provoke PNG drivers by cutting them off or gesturing rudely.

Short-term visitors who take the precautions outlined above are likely to find their stay in Papua New Guinea interesting, enjoyable and rewarding. The vast majority of PNG citizens are friendly, live peacefully and are eager to learn about life in other countries. Attention to personal security will enhance your confidence in under-

taking personal and professional contacts, leading in turn, to a deeper understanding of Papua New Guinea and its people. Unfortunately, crime is a serious problem in Papua New Guinea, perhaps even more for Papua New Guineans than for visitors. The US Embassy emphasizes that there is no way to guarantee personal safety during a visit to PNG, only to minimize the chances of becoming a victim.

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country.

Books

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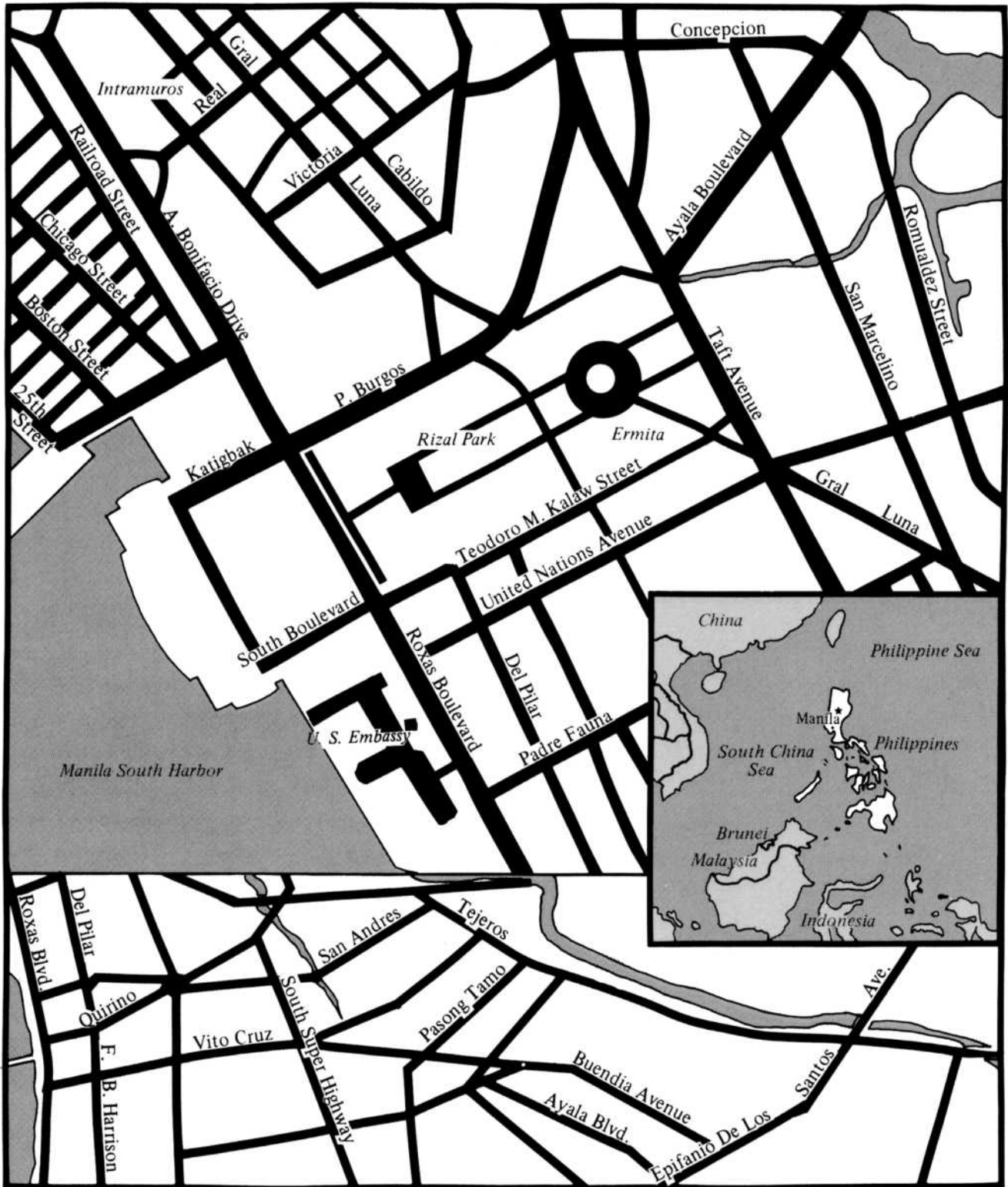
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- Anderson, Robin and Bob Connolly. *Joe Leahy's Neighbours*. Pacific Video Cassette Series No. 19. Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies: Port Moresby.
- Anderson, Robin and Bob Connolly. *Black Harvest*. Pacific Video Cassette Series No. 25. Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies: Port Moresby.



Manila, Philippines

THE PHILIPPINES

Republic of the Philippines

Major Cities:

Manila, Quezon City, Cebu City, Baguio, Davao City

Other Cities:

Bacolod, Batangas, Butuan, Iligan, Iloilo City, San Pablo, Zamboanga

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated August 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of the **PHILIPPINES**, though Asian, bears the imprint of European and American influence. Not only is the Philippines one of the largest English-speaking countries in the world, it is the only Christian country in Asia.

This Pacific island nation was under Spanish control for nearly 400 years after it was first visited in 1521 by Ferdinand Magellan on his expedition around the world. The country eventually was named *Islas Filipinas* for the child who was to become King Philip II of Spain.

After close to a half-century of American rule, the Philippines gained its independence in 1946.

The country made great strides in achieving a national identity and a political and strategic importance in Asia.

Because of the country's strategic importance, the U.S. had for many years maintained military bases there, mainly Clark Airbase and Subic Bay Naval Base. However, disagreements over the military treaty covering the bases led to a U.S. withdrawal of forces in 1992. The departure of U.S. troops poses questions about Philippine and Southeast Asian defense, as well as the future of the Philippine economy.

MAJOR CITIES

Manila

Metropolitan Manila, located on the main island of Luzon, is the capital and the major city along the coastal lowlands of Manila Bay and the Pasig River. The bay forms one of the largest and finest landlocked harbors in the Far East, and is Manila's outstanding feature. It is rimmed by distant mountains and islands, dotted by ships, and frequently framed by flamboyant sunsets. Roxas (formerly Dewey) Boulevard, which follows the shore-

line for several miles, quickly becomes a familiar landmark. It is lined with modern office buildings, embassies, hotels, restaurants, the Philippine Cultural Center complex, and large apartment houses. This boulevard, along with the modern commercial and residential areas of suburban Makati, typifies the contrasts which exist in Manila: on one side of the street is a five-star hotel, on the other, a shanty town of squatters built on land reclaimed from Manila Bay.

The architectural styles of Manila manifest the influence of 400 years of Spanish domination, nearly 50 years of American rule, and modern trends developed in buildings erected or reconstructed since World War II.

The social habits of people in Manila are superficially Occidental and the society is cosmopolitan. Western clothes predominate, but there is some adherence to local traditional dress. The majority of Filipinos speak English.

Manila was established as a fortified colony by López de Legaspi in 1571, and was developed by Spanish missionaries. It became an important commercial center under Spanish rule. The city was taken by the English in 1762, but was recaptured for Spain two years later. The

United States won control in the Battle of Manila Bay (August 1898), during the Spanish-American War. World War II took a heavy toll on the city, reducing to rubble much of the 16th-century Spanish architecture of the old walled city, Intramuros; only the Church of San Agustín was spared. The devastation wrought is considered second only to that of Warsaw. The Japanese, who had occupied the city from 1942, were ousted in 1945. Manila Cathedral, the seat of the Catholic archdiocese, was rebuilt in 1958, as was almost the entire city during the post-war years. Manila proper, known as the "Pearl of the Orient," is now a modern metropolis with a population of 1.6 million (2000 est.).

Most streets in the city are of concrete or asphalt, but many are constantly in a state of disrepair; side streets are often narrow and hazardous. Road surfaces deteriorate rapidly during the rainy season, and are marked by potholes of all sizes. Traffic is congested, especially during rush hours. Driving is not orderly. Air pollution is a continuing problem.

More than 150 American business concerns are located in Manila, and many more have agencies or representatives here. The oldest foreign-based American Chamber of Commerce has offices on the Paseo de Roxas, Manila's famous shoreline boulevard. The expatriate community includes more than 150,000 Chinese and a large number of Americans, Spaniards, Japanese, Indians, British, Germans, Swiss, and people of other nationalities. The tourist trade has increased in recent years but, still, fewer Americans stop in Manila than at other Far East spots. Most U.S. visitors here are on business.

Greater Manila's population, which includes Quezon City, Pasay City, Caloocan City, and Pasig, is estimated at almost ten million. Although the official capital of the Philippines is Quezon City, 13 miles from downtown Manila, its development remains in the planning

stages and only a few government agencies are located here.

Clothing

Cotton and other lightweight clothing is worn year round in the Philippines; however, woolen clothing, including topcoats, is needed for visits to Baguio or travel to Hong Kong, Taipei, or Tokyo during winter. Sweaters and shawls are useful in air-conditioned rooms and at night in the cooler months. Nylon clothing is usually too warm and uncomfortable during very hot months. Cotton or cotton/synthetic mixtures are recommended.

Manila is a style-conscious city, and the latest European and American fashions are followed. There are some variations in Cebu City but, in general, members of the diplomatic and business communities are well dressed.

Clothes wear out quickly because of the climate and frequent laundering. Shoes deteriorate more rapidly during the rainy season and because of poor sidewalk conditions. Unless you store clothing in air-conditioned rooms or dry closets, air it occasionally to prevent mildew.

Women find that cotton, cotton-blend, or linen dresses are worn and acceptable everywhere and, depending on style, are suitable for almost every occasion. Shorts and slacks should be worn only for sports or at home. Cocktail dresses of silks, brocades, laces, chiffons, and fine linen also are popular and comfortable. Dressmakers can make all types of women's clothing from the casual to *haute couture*; prices and results vary accordingly. Ready-made women's shoes in sizes larger than 8 are difficult to find, but shoes can be made to order inexpensively.

Men wear tropical worsted and Palm Beach-type suits during the cooler months and, if they anticipate a full social schedule, will need black-tie attire. Washable suits are convenient and practical, but dry cleaning is readily available. Dacron and cotton blends are most useful. After arrival, most men

enjoy the practical comfort of the *Barong Tagalog*, a traditional Filipino shirt. It is loose fitting, usually made of sheer material with embroidered collar, cuffs, and front, and is worn outside the trousers both day and evening.

White daytime shirts of porous summer-weight fabric are needed. Short-sleeved shirts are acceptable in offices, and cotton sport shirts are most useful for leisure hours. Long-sleeved shirts are needed in Baguio. Locally made men's shoes are not of the best quality and U.S. made shoes are quite expensive.

Children wear the same type of clothing in the Philippines as they do in the U.S. They spend much of their time out-of-doors, and need many changes of washable, durable, play clothes. Teenage styles generally follow American fads.

Any special dress considerations for children attending school in the Philippines can be easily met after arrival. Lightweight rainwear is a necessity for small children. Students attending Brent School in Baguio need warmer clothing than is called for in Manila.

Laundry is customarily done at home by the *lavandera*, in a household which employs more than one domestic, and by the all-around maid in a small or single-person household. Dry cleaning is available at prices comparable to those in the U.S., and quality is good.

Food

Several large well-stocked supermarkets are in Manila and the suburban areas. Open markets throughout the country sell fresh fruits and vegetables; use caution when buying perishables since markets may not be refrigerated or sanitary.

Supplies & Services

The beauty salons and barbershops range from adequate to luxurious in Manila; in the other major cities, shops are simple and work is passable. Dressmaking, tailoring, shoe repair, and other personal services



Aerial view of Manila, Philippines

© Paul Almasy/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

can be easily found and, on the whole, the work is satisfactory and the rates are reasonable.

Religious Activities

Catholics number more than 80% of the Philippine population, and have many churches in all localities. Catholic orders from Spain, Belgium, Canada, the U.S., and other countries are active here. In the capital, Protestant churches include the Union Church of Manila (nondenominational), Holy Trinity Anglican Episcopal, International Baptist, Lutheran, and Seventh Day Adventist. Manila also has a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, a Unitarian congre-

gation, and a Jewish Community Center. The Saturday newspapers list worship times and places.

Domestic Help

Employing household help is the norm rather than the exception in the Philippines, not only among foreigners but also middle-income and well-to-do families.

In Manila, competent household help is easy to find, although sometimes a short trial period is necessary before settling on someone suitable. Under proper supervision, domestics are clean, honest, loyal, cooperative, and good with children. Careful and patient instructions

must be given, since their understanding of English cannot be taken for granted.

Filipino domestics are not covered under the national social security system. However, low-cost health insurance is available for domestics, and it is expected that the employer provide it. Local laws apply to, and provide for, such benefits as regular days off, payment of medical fees, adequate dismissal notice, etc. Complete physical examinations of prospective domestics and annual checkups are strongly recommended.

Education

The International School, located in nearby Makati, is a nonsectarian, college-preparatory, and general academic day school for boys and girls of all nationalities from kindergarten through grade 12.

International, formerly called the American School, was founded in 1920 by American and British residents of Manila. It was incorporated as a private, independent institution, and is registered under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines on a nonprofit, non-stock basis. In 1970, the name was changed to reflect the increasing internationality of the student population.

Instruction is in English. The curriculum is that of U.S. general academic and college preparatory schools. Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Latin, and Pilipino are offered as foreign languages.

International is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and its credits are accepted by American colleges and universities. High school students may earn both U.S. and International Baccalaureate diplomas. Academic standards tend to be more rigorous than those in the U.S. The school participates in, and is a center for, several American testing programs: Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT), College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), National Merit Scholarship Pro-

gram (PSAT/NMSQT), and American College Test (ACT).

Students are encouraged to participate in the wide variety of sports and other extracurricular activities offered after class hours. International is a member of the Philippine Secondary School Athletic Association. There is active intramural competition.

Brent School of Manila was opened in August 1984. Its mother school is Brent School in Baguio City, which was founded in 1909. Located on the campus of the University of Life in Manila, this unit started with a population of 305 students enrolled in kindergarten to grade 10. An integral part of the original school in Baguio, it is doubly accredited with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Philippine Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities. Brent School-Manila is an international, coeducational, day school related to the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. Brent is a small academic community that provides an atmosphere of high academic standards, Christian values, and discipline. The primary aim is to meet the educational needs of the children of the international community from kindergarten to high school, and specifically to prepare students for admission to the leading colleges and universities of all nations.

The curriculum is American with British adaptations, and is designed to provide each student with background necessary for college life. Special requirements for Filipino students are also met. Small classes permit greater dialogue between faculty and students, and pursuit of individual ideas and interests of the students is facilitated.

Sports and extracurricular activities are offered, though on a smaller scale than the International School.

Several preschools are attended by American children in Manila. Concepts vary from Montessori to social learning. All of the preschools offer a variety of activities and instruc-

tion for the child. The schools often have small classes and offer a clean and stimulating environment. The general age for acceptance in pre-school is around two-and-a-half years of age or diaper trained. There are a few exceptions to this rule.

Special Opportunities

The University of the Philippines (a half-hour drive from downtown Manila with various branches throughout the city) and the University of Santo Tomás are accredited with American colleges, especially for junior/senior level courses. Other private institutions of higher learning are also open to college-age students living in Manila. However, the Philippine system provides only 10 years (six elementary and four secondary) of preparation before college, and this must be taken into consideration prior to enrollment. Most American students choose to go to U.S. colleges because of this difference. Both discipline and scholastic requirements are less rigorous in Philippine universities, and libraries, laboratories, and other facilities are below the standards of American schools.

Very few programs are available for the handicapped child or for children with learning disorders.

Recreation

The tropical weather of the Philippines provides almost year-round opportunities for touring and outdoor recreational activities. These are somewhat curtailed, however, in the heat of April and May, and during the rains and typhoons from July to September.

Sight-seeing in Manila is highly diversified. Within the city itself, there are interesting historical sites, ancient churches, a zoo, a botanical garden, beautiful parks, and a number of small but significant museums, such as the Museo and the Ayala. The Philippine National Museum, which was almost totally destroyed during World War II, once again features permanent exhibitions, mostly scientific in nature, and periodic exhib-

its of Philippine art and artifacts. The number of small galleries of local art, predominantly modern in trend, is increasing. The Art Association of the Philippines promotes an interest in the field through seminars, lectures, and exhibits of local works.

Malacanang Palace, former home of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, is now a museum, housing memorabilia from Malacanang's history as the center of Philippine government, and especially memorabilia of the Marcos era. Casa Manila, situated in the heart of Intramuros (meaning within the walls), is a model of a 19th-century upper-class urban home. Intramuros contains several other places of interest including two churches, Plaza Roma with its statue to the three martyred priests, and Fort Santiago, with the Rizal Museum. Intramuros itself is a unique combination of the Orient and the Occident: an Old World medieval fortress encircled by walls of oriental materials in a tropical land. Even in their crumbling state, the walls remain today as a monument, a relic of the Spanish era of Philippine history.

Opportunities for weekend and day trips which appeal to sightseers, hikers, picnickers, and camera enthusiasts are plentiful. It is necessary to travel a considerable distance from Manila Bay for safe, unpolluted swimming. Beach resort areas are increasing, however, with the building of modern hotels and restaurants. These areas are a two-to-four-hour drive from Manila.

The closest approach to big game in the Philippines is the wild *carabao* (water buffalo). Deer is next, with open season from January to May. Wild pig is found in almost every mountain region of the country. Snipe is the most popular game bird among hunters. The hunting season for jack snipe runs from September to February. Many varieties of migratory birds, plus dove, wild chicken, partridge, quail, and other game birds are plentiful.

Among the saltwater fish available are: sea bass; barracuda; Spanish mackerel; pompano; tuna, which includes bonitos, yellowfins, skip-jacks, albacores, and bluefins; the leather jacket; sergeant fish; and swordfish. Huge marlins have been caught in Philippine waters. Freshwater fish include the giant eel, the murrel, carp, *gurami*, tilapia, and catfish. Unfortunately, inaccessibility of the areas, restrictions on use of firearms, and lack of hotel accommodations impede hunting and fishing.

Nowhere in the world is there greater profusion or wider diversity of shells than in the Philippines. Because of the uniform warmth of the tropical currents that flow around the islands, shells here have richer colors and more imaginative patterns than in any other region. A great many of the world's rarest and most highly prized specimens of marine shells have either been picked up on Philippine beaches at low tide, trawled, or dredged from the surrounding waters of some of the islands—notably Cebu, Mindanao, Sulu, Palawan, and Samar. The archipelago has been called a "mollusk paradise," and is reputedly the richest shell-collecting region in the world. Some coral forms are growing scarce, and it is illegal to export coral from the islands.

The following places of interest are usually visited at least once during an extended stay in the Philippines:

Tagaytay Ridge, about 35 miles, or an hour's drive, south of Manila. The ridge is 2,000 feet high and enjoys cool breezes throughout the year. It commands a dramatic view of rugged mountains and valleys, as well as of Lake Taal and Taal Volcano. This volcano is the lowest known in the world, and inside its crater is another lake which is again centered by a tiny peak. Few views equal the scenic beauty of Tagaytay Ridge. Overnight accommodations or meals can be obtained at the Taal Vista Lodge.

Pagsanjan Gorge and Rapids can be reached in a



Skyscrapers in the Philippines

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

two-and-a-half-hour-drive from Manila. The trip up-river is made on a native *banca* (small dugout canoe) to Pagsanjan Falls through a gorge. The walls rise perpendicularly about 300 feet and are covered by luxuriant tropical growth. The return trip provides the excitement of shooting the rapids. The entire journey normally is made as a day's outing, with a picnic lunch at the falls or at one of the numerous lodges or restaurants along the river.

The Bamboo Organ at Las Pinas, a site about a 30-minute drive from Manila. This remarkable and unique organ, made of over 100 dry bamboo tubes in 1814, still has flute tones which have remained virtually unchanged in close to two centuries. The organ was completely renovated in Germany in 1975. Las Pinas Church, also renovated, is a perfect setting for this unique organ. An organist provides demonstrations. The annual Bamboo Organ Festival, held in February, features musicians from around the world.

Bataan and Corregidor, evoke memories of the gallant, but futile, stand of Philippine-American forces against the Japanese during World War II. Bataan is a peninsula jut-

ting out to the China Sea, and can be visited by car in a day's outing. Corregidor, an island at the mouth of Manila Bay, can be reached by tour boat.

Los Baños, about a one-hour drive from Manila, and famous for its hot springs. The University of the Philippines' Colleges of Agriculture and Forestry and Forest Products Laboratory, and the International Rice Research Institute—the only such institute in Southeast Asia—are located here.

Baguio, a beautiful resort situated in the mountains at approximately 5,000 feet in altitude. It has a pleasantly cool climate all year, and is the most popular vacation spot in the Philippines, especially for families. Only 155 miles north of Manila, it can be reached by car in five hours or by plane in about one hour. During the rainy season, travel to and from Baguio is interrupted by landslides on the road and poor visibility at the airport.

Banaue Rice Terraces, north of Baguio, known locally as the "Eighth Wonder of the World." The view presents an entire chain of mountains terraced to their highest peaks for the cultivation of rice. These terraces were carved out of

the mountainsides by the Ifugao Indians thousands of years ago. Because of road conditions, tourists normally hire a car with an experienced driver for the seven- to eight-hour trip, driving to Bontoc or Banaue the first day, and returning to Baguio either the second or third day. Some break the trip to or from the terraces with an overnight stop at Mount Dana Lodge, about a three-hour drive from Baguio, where a delightfully cool night can be spent at one of the Philippines' most modern guest houses. The Banaue Hotel has good accommodations.

Hundred Islands, which actually are 400 islands, islets, and rocks in Lingayen Gulf, and of particular interest to fishermen, skin divers, campers, and sightseers.

Mount Mayon, famous as the world's most nearly perfect volcanic cone. Rising 8,000 feet from the plain of Albay, it is near the city of Legaspi, which is accessible by car (a 10-hour drive), bus, or plane. To climb Mayon takes about three days, and the climb is not easy. The area of Bicol, which Mount Mayon "crowns," provides activities for everyone including beaches, adventure tours, caves, and shopping. Tiwi Hot Springs, 25 miles from Legaspi, is one of several thermal springs in the area.

The entire archipelago that comprises the Republic of the Philippines is full of private, rustic, white sandy beaches (such as Boracay) or classic, secluded, high-class beach resorts such as El Nido. For scuba divers, snorkelers, sailors, and just beach lovers, the Philippines offers an array of locations from which to choose.

Sports

Manila offers many opportunities for participation in sports. Facilities for golf, tennis, swimming, bowling, riding, scuba diving, basketball, softball, and sailing are available. Lessons, particularly in golf and tennis, can be obtained at reasonable fees.

Golf was introduced to the islands at the turn of this century, and has become one of the most popular sports. Several golf clubs and links in and around Manila attract players; there are practice driving ranges in the city.

The best known of the clubs is the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, with two 18-hole courses on a 320-acre estate. Wack Wack has hosted international championships and attracted outstanding golfers from around the world. In addition, the following clubs are conveniently located in and around Manila: Muni Golf Links, Capitol Hills Golf Club, Manila Golf Club, University of the Philippines Club, Intramuros Golf Course, and Alabang Golf and Country Club.

Several private clubs and hotels have pools for the use of members. Tennis and *pelota* (a cross between *jai alai* and racquetball) are popular in Manila, and courts for these sports are available at private clubs. Several modern bowling alleys also are in the Manila area.

The Manila Yacht Club welcomes foreigners interested in sailing. It sponsors active one-design and cruiser-class races, and a regular, international competition with the Hong Kong Yacht Club. Sailing lessons are offered. Boats cost much less than in the U.S.

Basketball, boxing, cockfights, horse racing, track meets, and *jai alai* (the Basque game somewhat similar to handball) are popular spectator sports. Visiting sports stars give occasional exhibitions. Equipment and appropriate sports attire are not always available on the local market.

Entertainment

Movies are popular among Filipinos, and several first-class, air-conditioned theaters exist, particularly in the new suburban areas. First-run American and European films may be seen, as well as Filipino, Japanese, and Chinese films. Movies do not have long runs, however, sometimes showing only for

three days. Admission prices are reasonable.

The magnificent Cultural Center of the Philippines on Roxas Boulevard has a 2,000-seat auditorium and a smaller theater with 450 seats. The Folk Art Theater, used for concerts, bazaars, and pageants, is a covered, open-air building, where many local and foreign musical artists perform. The Cultural Center also includes the Philippine International Convention Center.

The Manila Symphony Society, with guest conductors, presents several concerts and at least one opera or operetta annually. A number of other active local orchestra groups and choral societies also perform.

The Bayanihan Dance Group, which has made several successful world tours, and several other folk dance and ballet groups present performances throughout the year.

The Thomas Jefferson Library (U.S.-sponsored) and the American Historical Collection (located in the U.S. Chancery Annex) have good libraries for public use. Private clubs maintain lending libraries. The public libraries, and those at various schools and universities, are seldom used by the foreign community.

Fiestas play an important role in Philippine life. They are a combination of religious symbolism and social life, and are held in the various *barrios* to commemorate feast days of patron saints and in remembrance of unusual local events. Almost all are based on Catholic tradition, but many also hark to earlier pre-Christian times. The fiestas are often colorful, lively, and spectacular. May is the height of the season for flowers, and numerous festivals are planned for that month.

The Philippines offers ample subject matter for photographers. Film is readily available on the local market. Printing and developing facilities for all types of film also are available locally.

Many good restaurants in all price ranges, serving Filipino, American, Chinese, Indian, Thai, Middle Eastern, Japanese, and continental food, are located in Manila. Prices vary depending on the restaurant, but are usually less than their equivalent in the U.S. Nightclubs and cocktail lounges abound, especially in the downtown areas.

The large American community provides many opportunities for social activities. In addition to school and church groups, memberships are available in several civic organizations, including the American Chamber of Commerce, Masonic Lodge and Shrine, Eastern Star, Elks, Fraternal Order of Eagles, American Association of the Philippines, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Rotary International, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Toastmasters Club, YMCA, YWCA, and American Women's Club of the Philippines. Boy and Girl Scout chapters are active, as is the International Little League of Manila. All children have the opportunity to join school-sponsored programs.

Private clubs attract many Americans. Among these are the Manila Polo Club; the Manila Boat Club, on the Pasig River in Santa Ana; the Manila Yacht Club, with clubhouse and sheltered basin on Roxas Boulevard; the Manila Overseas Press Club; the Casino Español, with chiefly Spanish membership; Manila Club, primarily British; Manila Symphony Women's Auxiliary; the Manila Theater Guild; and the All Nations Women's Club.

Also, there are numerous charity and welfare organizations which welcome volunteer help.

Quezon City

Quezon City was the nation's capital from 1948 to 1976, and remains officially listed as such, but its development during those years was mainly in the planning stages, and only a few government agencies

are located here. Thirteen miles from downtown Manila, the area formerly was a private estate named for Filipino statesman Manuel Luis Quezon.

Now grown to a center with over 2.2 million residents, Quezon City is the site of the main campus of the University of the Philippines, founded in 1908. Several theaters and concert halls are located here, among them Areneta Coliseum, Abelardo Hall and Guerrero Theatre (connected with the university), the British Council Center, and the Goethe Institute. Art exhibits are mounted in a number of galleries, and are an integral part of greater Manila's cultural life.

Quezon City bustles with business and recreational establishments. Although its proximity makes it a geographical extension of Manila proper, it retains a unique identity within the metropolitan area.

Cebu City

Cebu City, with a population of more than 700,000 (metropolitan population 1.7 million) boasts of having had the earliest sustained contact with the Western world. Cebu City was the initial seat of Philippine Christendom—Ferdinand Magellan's cross, raised here in 1521, is among the many points of interest. Others include the Basilica of San Agustín, which houses an ancient religious relic, the image of Santo Niño; and the museum of the University of San Carlos, where precious artifacts from Cebu City and Mindanao are kept.

The city, commonly referred to only as Cebu, is on the island of the same name in the Visayas, those islands which comprise the Central Philippines between Luzon and Mindanao. Cebu Island is long (140 miles), narrow (22 miles at the widest point), and densely populated, with a central spine of craggy hills. The city itself is widespread and has a bustling, congested business district around the port. Because of the destruction during World War II,

the once-Spanish character of Cebu City is a recollection which finds form only in some old houses down back streets, in the exteriors of several churches, and in an 18th-century triangular fort. Colo Street is the oldest street in the Philippines.

Although most of the city was rebuilt between 1945 and 1947, it suffers today from deterioration, since many buildings were hastily constructed of low-quality materials. A large part of Cebu City consists of narrow passageways lined with crowded, frame structures. However, the number of modern office buildings, wide avenues, and substantial contemporary houses is rapidly increasing. Traffic is a hectic mixture of "jeepneys," taxis, cars, motorcycles, horse carts, and motorized tricycles.

An increasing number of people are migrating into the city from elsewhere in Cebu province, and from the neighboring islands of Bohol and Leyte, in search of work. Large numbers of Chinese are engaged in wholesale and retail trade, and there is a small Indian community. The Cebuano version of the Visayan (or Bisayan) language is generally used; Visayan is also spoken in the rest of the central Visayas and in most of Mindanao. Almost everyone in Cebu City proper understands a certain amount of English; the better-educated and business people speak it well. Spanish and Chinese are still spoken by the *mestizo* (mixed blood) groups.

The Western community is loosely defined. Most foreign businesses have Filipino managers. The American business community is small. The largest single group of Americans is the Protestant missionaries. There are also some Catholic missionaries, medical and various students, spouses of Filipinos, and a sprinkling of Europeans and Asians.

Cebu City, about 10° north of the equator, is some 350 miles from Manila. The climate is hot and humid during the entire year, with rainfall less evenly distributed by

season than it is in Manila. The hottest weather is generally from March through June. Nights are usually pleasant from August through February, with the daytime high temperature ranging between 85° and 94°F. Cebu City is considered to be just off the typhoon belt, but has occasionally been hit by storms of considerable force.

Religious Activities

Cebu City is a center for Protestant missionary activities, and English-language services are held by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (an amalgamation of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and others), the Missouri-Synod Lutheran, several Baptist groups, the Philippine Independent Church (a separate Philippine church in communion with Episcopalians), a variety of evangelical groups, Mormons, and Seventh-Day Adventists. Cebu City also offers Catholic masses in both English and Visayan. In Baguio, there are regular English-language services provided by Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Christian Science, Lutheran, and United Church of Christ congregations. The latter is a united church staffed by Presbyterians and Evangelical United Brethren. Baptists and Lutherans sponsor many missionaries in and around Baguio.

Education

Except for families with young children, schooling in Cebu City is cause for concern. A number of alternatives are available for elementary education. Most foreign children attend Cebu International School, a private institution founded by the American community in 1924. English instruction, using primarily American textbooks, is offered from kindergarten through grade 12. The staff is Filipino. Students coming from American schools can expect both scholastic and social adjustments. Tutors can be found for additional scholastic help, which is usually needed.

Several Catholic schools for boys and girls provide alternatives to

International, but few foreign residents attend them. Admission is by competitive examination. Classes tend to be large, learning is by rote, and competition in all aspects of school life is intense. Although in the best of these schools most instruction is in English, Pilipino is increasingly used in the lower grades, and the general level of English appears to be diminishing. Elementary school comprises kindergarten through grade six, followed by four years of high school (no junior high). Most foreign students find that these schools do not meet their long-term needs. St. Teresa's College and the College of the Immaculate Conception are considered the best schools for girls. The top boys' school, Sacred Heart, a Jesuit institution, requires the study of Chinese at all levels.

High school alternatives are local Catholic schools, considerably more satisfactory for girls than for boys; correspondence courses; or boarding school. The only boarding school of international caliber in the Philippines is Brent School in Baguio. Tutors can be found to assist with correspondence courses. There are adequate nursery schools in Cebu City.

Special Opportunities

Cebu City has a number of colleges, universities, and "diploma mills." One of the better educational institutions in the Philippines, the University of San Carlos (which is older than Harvard), is operated by German, Dutch, and American priests of the Society of the Divine Word. Undergraduate and graduate courses are offered in a variety of subjects. The University of the Philippines has a small branch in Cebu City, although its current graduate offerings are mainly in the fields of business and commerce. Cebu City is a major center for medical education, and a number of Americans and other foreigners attend school here. St. Teresa's has a college department (comparable to a junior college/finishing school) which enrolls American girls upon successful completion of the Philippine College Entrance Examination.

Special education for handicapped children or those with learning disabilities is not available.

Recreation

Although Cebu City experiences constant debilitating heat, outdoor activity is possible all year. Public sports and recreational facilities are extremely limited, so Americans rely on a variety of private clubs: the Cebu Country Club, Club Filipino, Montebello Hotel, Liloan Beach Club, and Casino Español.

There are two excellent private 18-hole golf courses at the edge of the city. Golf lessons are inexpensive. Three hotels have freshwater swimming pools, available for a membership fee. A number of small private tennis clubs, one or two of which have lighted courts, are available. *Pelota* is popular, and several clubs and private individuals have courts. Whites are worn for both tennis and *pelota*. Badminton is available at one club. The city has a number of bowling alleys (mostly duckpin). Local running clubs and other organizations sponsor races. Basketball is a popular spectator sport, and opportunities exist for playing in amateur leagues.

The seas around Cebu are clear, warm, and fish-laden. Beaches, mainly privately owned, are found both in Cebu City and Mactan, about a 45-minute drive.

Numerous coral islands and sandbars are located in the straits between Cebu and Bohol. Scuba diving opportunities are unparalleled. Attractive sea shells can still be found, but commercial shell collectors are rapidly reducing the supply. Although the area is good for small boating, no docking facilities currently exist.

Other than an often-bouncy but scenic car ride around the circumference of Cebu Island (which would take about two days) or to Mactan Island, no land touring is available. Trips to nearby islands can be rewarding, although public facilities are not up to American standards. Shipping lines run regular services

to Manila, as well as many neighboring ports. Some offer cabins, but most have only deck passage; the ships are crowded, dirty, and unsafe. Philippine Airlines offers service to many cities in the Visayas.

Entertainment

Entertainment possibilities are limited. Cebu City has about 20 movie theaters, of which only a few are acceptable. Most movies are in Tagalog, but some American films are shown. Eight to 10 restaurants serve reasonably good food, and there are a number of nightclubs or discos.

Cebu City has only one good public library, the United States Information Agency (USIA) facility. Among college libraries, only that at San Carlos University is adequate; it has a good Filipiniana collection. No children's collections, other than the small one at Cebu International School, are available. Although several stores carry reasonable selections of popular paperbacks, more serious reading matter or children's books are rarely available. Books deteriorate rapidly in this climate and anything of value should be brought to Cebu City with awareness of the risk involved. Local newspapers are inadequate for national or international news. While Asian edition of the *Wall Street Journal* is now available on the day of publication, the *International Herald Tribune* arrives one to three days after publication. *Time* and *Newsweek* may be bought at newsstands or hotels.

Four TV channels have frequent color broadcasts, with some American reruns. Shortwave radio reception is not always clear, but Voice of America (VOA), as well as Radio Australia and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), can be heard. Local radio programming is mostly disco and rock music, but several local FM-stereo stations broadcast more subdued music. Private satellite receivers are becoming popular among Filipinos.

Baguio

Baguio, the "summer capital," is located about 155 miles north of Manila, in the hills of northern Luzon, the main island of the Philippines. The countryside here is mountainous and rugged, with scrub growth and pines covering the slopes. Scenery and a cool climate are Baguio's chief assets. The area, however, is subject to earthquakes. More than 1,600 people died during an earthquake on July 16, 1991.

Built primarily by the Americans in the early 1900s, Baguio is a modern and thriving small-town community which has become one of the foremost vacation spots of not only the Philippines, but also of the entire Far East. A large number of well-to-do Manilans and Philippine government officials have summer homes in Baguio. Schools, business firms, and other organizations maintain summer camps and homes here for their employees.

The main economic activity is tourism. The resident population of Baguio is over 250,000, but this figure triples during the tourist season. Poor squatters make up over 50% of the population; the rest are business representatives, retired families, school teachers, missionaries, and the wealthy who can afford to commute, for weekends and extended vacations, between Baguio and Manila or other large cities.

The foreign colony is small, consisting mainly of Spaniards, Indians, Chinese, and Americans. The small Chinese community is complete with its own school and churches.

The American/European colony consists of missionaries, business representatives, teachers, miners, and their families. The Voice of America's (VOA) Philippines Relay Station is located in Baguio. English is spoken well by 75% of the local population. It is estimated that more than 3,000 Americans visit Baguio each year.

The U.S. Embassy residence in Baguio was the site of surrender

ceremonies, in September 1945, of General Yamashita to the American Forces.

Around the city, in mountain villages, live the Igorots (a generic term for various tribes). Igorots are mountain tribesmen with loyalty first to their own societies. They manage to eke a scanty subsistence from the mountainsides, and to supplement this by weaving and wood carving. Their native costumes (loin cloths and jackets for the men and bright-colored straight skirts and blouses for the women) are of interest to the foreign residents and tourists.

The Baguio business center consists of a central market, where local produce is sold, and many small shops and restaurants which line the four main streets. Around this area are found civic buildings; the impressive cathedral; lovely Burnham Park, named for the Chicago architect who designed the city; the St. Louis School of Silver; and the Easter School of Weaving.

Baguio is situated at an altitude of 4,600 feet above sea level. The climate varies between the dry and (very) wet seasons, each lasting about six months. The dry season begins in December and continues until June. Temperatures vary from the low 80s in the daytime to the 50s and 60s at night. This interval ends in June when the rains, which are light in May, become heavy. Baguio averages 176 inches of rainfall a year, with a record fall of 355 inches and a low of 99 inches. July and August are the rainiest months, averaging 42 inches each. The rains begin tapering off in September and are light in October and November.

Education

Brent School, founded in 1909 under the auspices of the Episcopal Church, is the only doubly accredited, coeducational, nonsectarian, day and boarding school in Southeast Asia. Its accreditation is with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in the U.S. and with the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Uni-

versities. The campus offers an invigorating and healthful climate which is conducive to study year round.

Brent's curriculum is representative of the best practices to be found in public schools in the U.S. and abroad. The school provides a seminar approach to learning. There is individually guided education and close personal contact between students and faculty. An active creative and performing arts program is a feature of the school, and participation in individual and group sports is encouraged. In-depth cultural studies, curriculum-related field trips, and specialized brief courses contribute to an educational program combining the richness of Western heritage with the experience of life in an Asian culture.

Special Opportunities

Both Baguio Colleges Foundation and St. Louis University have junior college-level courses, but all credits are not transferable to American colleges, and educational standards are considered low. No adequate facilities for post-high school education are available except correspondence courses. A few facilities are available for learning the local language. Ilocano if the local dialect, but most Filipinos speak English. Private tutoring in Spanish is available. Many local residents speak Pilipino, which has been declared the national language in the Philippines.

Recreation and Entertainment

There are good beaches at Lingayen Gulf, 32 miles from Baguio, and at Poro Point, 36 miles away. Fishing is excellent at Hundred Islands, a three-to-four-hour drive from Baguio.

Burnham Park, the "Central Park" of Baguio, has sprawling lawns around a lagoon, and walks lined with *agoho* (Australian pine) and eucalyptus trees. Adults and children alike are attracted by boating facilities, a roller skating rink, an athletic bowl, well-shaded picnic grounds, bicycling, and scooter

rides. A botanical garden with a natural area features a rich collection of Philippine flowers. A children's playground is a special attraction here.

The Crystal Caves are about 35 miles (one hour by car) from Baguio, and face the China Sea. This area is popular among visitors.

Americans patronize the two or three theaters in the city offering English-language movies, although they are screened somewhat later than U.S. showings.

No operettas, concerts, museums, or hobby club facilities are available. There are several local restaurants in Baguio, but some Americans prefer to eat only in their homes or at the Baguio Country Club, since unboiled water and unsanitary conditions may exist elsewhere.

Radio reception in Baguio is good. Direct television reception is good with an outside antenna. Four local VHF channels are on the air and a cable system is available in some parts of the city.

Baguio, with its scenic beauty, is a natural for photographers. The few local festivities, including parades and Igorot dances, as well as the festivals in the lowlands, provide interesting material for photographers. Color film can be processed in Manila, Hawaii, or Australia. Black-and-white film is processed in Baguio.

Almost all American contact with social activities are centered around the Baguio Country Club. Activities hosted at the country club and those sponsored by church and school organizations afford contact with Filipino residents, foreign nationals involved in mining, forestry, and missionary work, and Americans who have retired to Baguio.

Davao City

Davao City (officially, the City of Davao) lies on a channel leading from the Gulf of Davao on the Pacific side of Mindanao, the south-

ernmost and second largest island in the Philippines. It is geographically one of the largest cities in the world, covering 98,785 acres (244,000 hectares), and comprising mostly agricultural land. The metropolitan population is about 1.2 million (850,000 in the city proper), making it the largest city on Mindanao, although most of the people live in rural districts and on farmlands.

Davao City was founded in 1849 and, during the first half of the 20th century, developed as a Japanese colony. It served as a Japanese naval base for more than three years during World War II.

Davao City's latitude (about 7° north of the equator) and sea-level altitude result in a year-round, hot, tropical climate somewhat relieved by almost constant sea/land breezes. The average annual rainfall is about 80 inches a year. The mean daily maximum temperature is 89°F, and the mean daily minimum, 73°F. Davao City is outside the typhoon belt.

The area and city are engaged primarily in large-scale production of copra, bananas and abaca, logging, and plywood manufacturing. The city is focused upon the support of these activities and is experiencing economic and population growth. In recent years, Davao City has become a trading center serving the gold mining activities underway in a nearby province.

Mindanao was the "frontier" of the Philippines, and it retains much of the spirit of a pioneering city. Davaowenos are predominantly Cebuano speakers, revealing the origins of a city whose farmers and business representatives migrated from the Visayan Islands in the central Philippines. The region also includes large numbers of migrants who came from Luzon as well as small groups of both Christian and Muslim ethnic tribes. A large and influential Chinese-Filipino community is part of Davao City's overall population profile. The city is experiencing a steady increase in its

American community, which mostly comprises missionaries.

Education

English-language instruction is available at one or two private schools for children in preschool and kindergarten. Westerners usually rely on two or three of the best local schools for elementary and high school instruction. Some Americans in the district rely upon home instruction, using the Calvert system, or send their children to either International School or one of the boarding schools in Baguio.

Recreation and Entertainment

Swimming at the nearby beaches or the Davao Insular Hotel, and golf at either of two courses, are the primary outdoor sports in Davao City. Tennis, hiking, and picnicking are also enjoyed. Some members of the American community own boats, and opportunities abound for deep-water fishing and skin diving off the nearby islands. Because of the lack of good highways, travel to other interesting areas and cities on the island must be done by air.

Davao City does not offer a variety of entertainment. Amateur dramatic groups present performances and American participation is welcomed. A few nightclubs provide a diversion. Several excellent restaurants serve American, Chinese, and Filipino food.

Social life for the American community centers around home, church, and civic groups, and includes contact with both Filipinos and foreign residents. Most Americans belong to at least one local club, such as the Davao Beach Club, Apo Golf and Country Club, or Rotary. Membership, by invitation, usually is easily arranged.

OTHER CITIES

BACOLOD, the capital of Negros Occidental Province in the Visayan Islands, is a thriving, affluent city of 429,000 in the center of a vast

sugar-producing area. It is a modern urban area, with shopping malls, commercial districts, and art centers. A university was established here in 1957. The popular Mambucal summer resort is nearby.

The seaport of **BATANGAS** is the capital of the province of the same name. Situated in southwestern Luzon, it is near the mouth of the Calumpan River, on the northwest coast of Batangas Bay. The city is connected with Manila, which is about 58 miles to the south, by road and coastal shipping. Batangas trades in corn, sugar, and coconuts. The population here exceeds 240,000.

BUTUAN, the capital of Agusan Province, is situated in the northeastern part of Mindanao on the Agusan River. It is a port and trading center for copra and abaca. Magellan first proclaimed Spanish sovereignty over the Philippines here in 1521. Butuan has a population of about 270,000.

ILIGAN lies on the southeast shore of Iligan Bay in Mindanao. It is the chief port on the north coast and the site of a tin plate mill. The city was the scene of uprising in the Philippine Revolution of 1896. The population is about 285,000.

ILOILO CITY, both a commercial and cultural center, is the capital of its eponymous province, and lies on the southeastern part of Iloilo Strait, in one of the most populous areas of the entire archipelago. It is officially the City of Iloilo but, like so many other places in the Philippines, the simpler version of its name is commonly used. Iloilo City is a prosperous manufacturing and commercial center which has been a port for foreign trade since 1855. A Spanish settlement, it was frequently raided during the 16th and 17th centuries by the Moros (Moors). Although it suffered during the Japanese occupation in World War II, most of its old churches and buildings from the Spanish era are still intact. Iloilo City's population is estimated at 366,000 (2000 est.).

Located 17 miles southwest of Santa Cruz on Luzon, **SAN PABLO** is the largest town in the province of Laguna. It became a city in 1940 and has an estimated population of 208,000. San Pablo is a major rail and highway center in a valley near several small crater lakes. Copra is shipped from here.

ZAMBOANGA is a noted port and trade center in the province of Zamboanga del Sur, on the western tip of Mindanao. It is set at the foot of a mountain range, and its pleasant tropical climate and beautiful parks have earned for it the apt description, "city of flowers." Established in 1635 as a Spanish stronghold, Fort Pilar, the town grew and flourished during the years before World War II, when the Philippines were under U.S. control. Today, the city has a population over 600,000. A decided Moros influence remains in the area, and the local market has a wide array of Muslim artifacts and textiles.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Philippines comprise some 7,100 islands, of which only 880 are inhabited. The two major islands are Luzon to the north, and Mindanao to the south. These and the central Visayas group are represented by the three stars in the Philippine flag.

Although generally mountainous, with peaks up to almost 10,000 feet, the country has extensive fertile coastal and central plains and rolling uplands. Large, rich valleys, traversed by rivers, lie between mountain ranges. The Philippines has many volcanoes, some of them active. The spring 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo was one of history's major volcanic explosions and its resulting atmospheric effects had worldwide implications. The rugged and irregular coastline, some 21,600

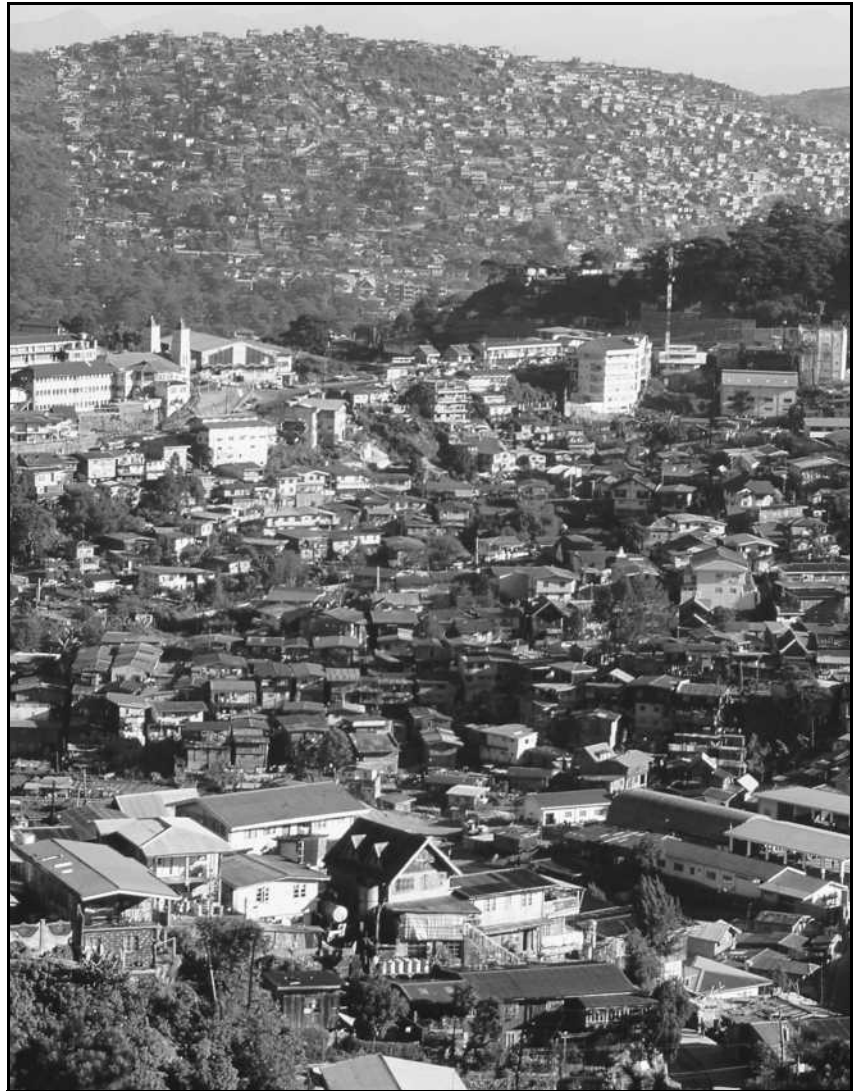
miles long, provides numerous harbors of all sizes. In comparison, the coastline of the continental United States is only 12,000 miles in length.

The Philippines ranks fifth among the world's countries in ratio of forest to tableland. Interesting plant life is abundant throughout the islands. The *sampaguita*, a small, multi-petaled, and exceedingly fragrant blossom is the national flower. Orchids grow in profusion—some 1,000 varieties are known.

Many interesting species of animals and birds are found in the forests and mountains. The *carabao*, or water buffalo, is indigenous.

The Philippine climate is mostly hot and humid. Manila is situated at sea level on the island of Luzon, 15° north of the equator. Three seasons are defined: the hot, dry period from March through May, ending with violent thunderstorms and torrential rains; the wet season from June into November, with daily rains during July, August, and September; and the cool, dry interval from November to February. Manila has an annual mean temperature of 80°F. The average monthly maximum temperature ranges from 86°F to 93°F, and the monthly minimum temperature from 69°F to 75°F. Average relative humidity spans a scale from 69% in April to 84% in August and September.

Typhoons, common in the Philippines during the rainy season, bring high winds and heavy rains. In November 1991, a typhoon, designated Thelma, hit an area about 340 miles southeast of Manila resulting in at least 6,500 deaths. Manila sometimes feels the full impact of these violent storms, although more often they miss the city because it is sheltered by mountains. In the rainy season, frequent floods cause delays in transportation and possible damage to automobiles. However, recent flood-control projects are alleviating this situation.



View of Baguio, Philippines

© Robert Holmes/Corbis. Reproduced by permission..

Minor earth tremors occur frequently. In 1969 and 1970, major earthquakes hit Manila, with some casualties and damage. In 1976, a devastating earthquake, followed by strong tidal waves, struck southwestern Mindanao. In January 1982, an earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale battered northern Bicol Peninsula and, in August of the following year, another hit Ilocos Norte; both of these caused extensive loss of life and property damage. In 1991, an earthquake in Baguio claimed 1,600 lives.

Population

The Philippines is inhabited by more than 80 million people of vary-

ing races, traditions, cultures, and religious beliefs who speak 87 different dialects. Culturally, the people are of three main classifications: the Christian group, comprising over 90% of the population, who inhabit the lowlands; the Muslims, comprising 4%, in the southern island of Mindanao and Sulu archipelago; and the third group, composed of the mountain people—Igorot, Ifugao, Negrito, Mangyan, etc.—living in the mountainous interiors of the islands. Some of the latter societies remain largely untouched by civilization.

The Philippines is a melting pot. The dominant race is Malay, but many Filipinos are of Chinese,

Spanish, or American descent. About 83% of the people are Roman Catholic. The remaining 9% of the Christian element belong to the Philippine Independent Church (*Aglipayan*), the indigenous *Iglesia ni Christo*, and various Protestant faiths.

Traditionally, Filipinos are noted for their friendliness and hospitality, but the past several years have witnessed a growing spirit of nationalism and some expression of anti-Americanism, particularly in Manila. However, the majority of Filipinos still welcome American friendship, and personal relationships develop more easily here than in most Asian nations.

The Filipinos have a natural reverence for women. Filipinos enjoy a status unmatched in other Oriental countries; at home and in the community, they share equal footing with Filipino men. Filipinos have strong family ties. Fiestas play a major role in their lives.

Although Tagalog is the predominant language, Pilipino (a mixture of Tagalog and other dialects) and English are the official languages. The latter is used in Manila for business, commerce, and higher education. Leading newspapers, magazines, and many television and radio programs are in English.

The use of Pilipino is increasing rapidly in schools and communications media. Nevertheless, Americans have no real language problems except, perhaps, when traveling in the more isolated areas of the country, where some knowledge of Tagalog is helpful. An adjustment becomes necessary to attune the American ear to the Filipino manner of speaking, with equivalent difficulty to be expected on the Filipino's part in understanding the American cadence.

Government

The Philippines has experienced much governmental turmoil in recent years. After 20 years of President Ferdinand Marcos' authoritar-

ian rule, Corazon Aquino was elected to the presidency in 1986. Aquino faced formidable problems, not the least of which was dealing with dissidents in the military and surviving six serious military coups. Some dissidents accused Aquino of catering to the elite of Philippine society and ignoring the poor. Several factors contributed to a sense of instability among the Filipino people: increasing economic problems, debate concerning U.S. use of military bases in the Philippines, and the perceived notion that Aquino was an indecisive and ineffective leader. Prevented by the constitution from running for a second term, Aquino backed the eventual winner, Fidel Ramos, who was elected to a six-year term in May 1992.

Ramos, however, had to deal with quite a bit of trouble concerning political corruption, a weak economy, and ongoing internal threats from Islamic extremists. He lost the election of 1998 to Joseph Estrada, his vice-president. Estrada eventually faced impeachment from charges of massive corruption and plunder. Amidst relatively peaceful rallies and demonstrations, Estrada stepped-down to be replaced by his vice-president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, in January 2001.

The Philippines changed from an American-style presidential system to a modified parliamentary system during and after President Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law from 1972 to 1981. However, after the election of Aquino, a new constitution was drafted and approved in a plebiscite in 1982. Under this constitution, an American-style presidential system was restored. The powers of the three branches of government (the president, the legislature, and the judiciary) are balanced with no one branch predominating.

Executive power is vested in the president who is elected by direct universal suffrage and is limited to one term of six years duration. The president appoints a Cabinet which oversees day to day affairs of the government. Legislative power

resides in a 24 member Senate with members elected from a nationwide constituency, and the 250 member House of Representatives. Of the number 200 are elected from individual local constituencies and 50 appointed by the president. The judicial system consists of a 15 member Supreme Court and various lower courts.

Government in the Philippines is unitary, not federal. The central government supervises administrative details for the provinces, cities, and towns, but these local jurisdictions choose their own officials and manage most of their own affairs.

Administratively, the 72 provinces are divided into 12 regions. Metropolitan Manila, which includes the city proper, Quezon City, and other jurisdictions, has its own legal status. In the south, with its substantial concentrations of Muslim Filipinos, and in northern Luzon, with its substantial numbers of cultural minorities, the government is implementing a constitutionally mandated program of regional autonomy.

The flag of the Philippines consists of equal horizontal bands of blue and red; next to the staff is a golden sun with three stars on a white triangle.

Arts, Science, Education

The Philippines has over 40,000 public and private primary, intermediate, secondary, and collegiate schools. Among the institutions of higher education are the University of the Philippines, the University of Santo Tomás, and other nationally chartered centers of higher learning. The scope of private education is impressive—171 government and 636 private colleges and universities. Although it is occasionally argued that some schools fall below the standards of learning elsewhere, the mere presence of so many schools is an achievement which few other developing nations can match. An educated electorate

is part of the Filipino's concept of democracy. Until recent years, much of the intellectual and cultural life of the country revolved around the universities. Today, expanding libraries, museums, concert halls, book shops, and art galleries provide alternate experiences.

As the Far East's only predominantly Christian country, Western ideas and values have strongly influenced Philippine art. The art world is active and diversified. Folk-dance groups enjoy the same popularity as Western modern and classical ballet companies. Two symphony orchestras in Manila have concert seasons, and drama clubs (several with international membership) perform throughout the year. Exciting and venturesome examples of modern architecture are represented in some new buildings in the Manila area.

A large scientific community is active in the Philippines. The National Science Development Board has under its jurisdiction the National Institute of Science and Technology, the Nuclear Research Institute, the Coconut Research Institute, and the Textile Research Institute. The Nuclear Research Institute operates a one-megawatt reactor, producing isotopes for medical use, and carries on research in other areas.

Philippine scientists work with their counterparts from all over the world in the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, which has developed new strains of "miracle rice." Another important international project is the country's affiliation with INTELSAT through two PHILCOMSAT satellite earth stations. These installations at Tanay make it possible for the Philippines to carry direct telecasts worldwide events.

Commerce and Industry

The once-promising Philippine economy declined in the early 1990s due to a variety of factors. The shut-

down of U.S. military operations resulted in the loss of thousands of civilian jobs, as well as more than one billion dollars that the bases injected into the economy. Prolonged drought and inadequate infrastructure also contributed to the country's stagnant economic growth. Growth resumed in 1993 and 1994, and inflation declined.

The economy retains many of its traditional characteristics. Almost 40% the labor force is employed in agriculture and many earn their living in the related activities of processing, transportation, and trade in agricultural products. Efforts are being made to encourage and decentralize industrial development, which is presently concentrated around Manila. In the south, Iligan City with its hydroelectric dam and steel complex, and Davao City and Cebu City are developing into industrial areas. Export-processing zones are located in Bataan, Cebu City, and Baguio, and others are planned in the provinces.

A large debt burden, and population pressure make agricultural development, industrial sector expansion, and increased export earnings critical to future development. Chief Philippine exports include coconut products, garments, and electronics. Key crops include rice and corn, primarily for domestic consumption; sugar, coconut products, abaca, pineapple, bananas, and forest products such as lumber, plywood, and veneer for export.

The private sector dominates the Philippine economy. Government economic agencies determine the policy framework within which the private sector functions and the principal directions of the economy through the Investment Priorities Plan. Economic nationalism is a potent force in the Philippines, and some government trade and investment policies reflect this sentiment. The public sector also has responsibility for much needed economic infrastructures, such as power generation, roads, and port and air terminal facilities.

A few wealthy families, which are now developing modern management practices, are very influential in the private sector. The Filipino-Chinese community is also a major force in businesses. Americans traditionally have been the principal foreign investors in the Philippines. But Japanese, European, and other Asian investments and financial interests have become increasingly important.

Unemployment in metropolitan Manila is about twice as high as in rural areas and underemployment throughout the country is a serious problem. Creating new jobs to reduce underemployment and provide employment for new workers is one of the Philippines most pressing problems. A competitive wage scale and a well-trained, English-speaking labor force are important attractions for employment-generating investment.

Trade unions have had a long history in the Philippines. However, unions are divided among a vast array of rival labor federations whose disunity seriously undermines the economic and political influence of the labor movement. The number of strikes has declined recently, but some unions pursue strikes for ideological more than economic reasons.

Transportation

Travel by air to practically any part of the world can be arranged from Manila. American-flag cargo ships, with limited passenger capacity (usually 12), have infrequent trans-Pacific sailings from Taiwan to the U.S. west coast via Hong Kong and Japan but, for all practical purposes, surface travel between the U.S. and the Philippines is not convenient.

Airlines connecting Manila with other points in the Far East include Air France, China Airlines, Cathay Pacific, KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines), Korean Airlines, Northwest, Pakistan International, Philippine Airlines, Qantas, Sabena, SAS (Scandinavian Airlines) Thai Air-

ways International, Japan Airlines, and Air Egypt. Northwest has daily scheduled flights to the U.S.

Philippine Airlines (PAL) makes scheduled flights to cities and important towns throughout the country. It is possible to arrange a one-day round trip to some places.

Inter-island ships sail almost daily, with calls at major ports within the country. Although the accommodations cannot be considered first class, those traveling on the ships find their voyages adventurous and enjoyable. Ships are often crowded and overbooked; at times ship travel may be hazardous because safety regulations may be unenforced.

Modes of city transportation vary, but taxis are most commonly used by Americans who do not have personal vehicles. Many taxi companies and individual owners and operators provide service throughout the large cities and their suburbs. Mostly, small Japanese cars are used. Many taxis are old, dirty, poorly maintained, and driven recklessly; many do not have air conditioning. Street crime in Manila often involves taxis, so care should be taken when hailing one. The most reputable taxis are found in front of hotels and other large businesses and have meters that work; fares are reasonable. A small tip is usually given.

Bus service is available throughout Manila and suburban areas. Fares are cheap and schedules frequent. However, buses are seldom used by Americans, as they are considered neither safe nor comfortable by U.S. standards. Pickpockets are quite active on the buses here. Buses are also handled recklessly, and drivers often race from one street corner to another vying for passengers, and sometimes vary the established route.

"Jeepneys," colorful vehicles built on Jeep frames, are plentiful in Manila and suburban areas. They carry up to a dozen people and are frequently overcrowded. Fare is nominal to most points in Manila; this means of

transportation, however, cannot be relied on to follow regular routes. Most vehicles have side curtains, but passengers should expect to get wet when it rains. Since "jeepneys" are preferable to city buses, Americans occasionally use them.

For an occasional "fun trip," there is the horse-drawn *carretela* or *calesa*. One should bargain with the driver (*cochero*) to set the price of the trip. These horse-drawn vehicles are banned from the main thoroughfares of Manila, as they constitute a serious traffic hazard for motorized vehicles.

Two major highways lead out of Manila, one going north to Angeles and Baguio, and one heading south. Although the roads have four-lane sections near Manila, mainly they are two-lane highways.

Train travel is not recommended, considering the unsafe condition of roadbeds, substandard cleanliness of cars, and frequent pilferage of belongings.

Although it is possible to go to almost any point on Luzon Island by bus, few Americans do so for the same reasons as given for Manila city buses. Sarkies Bus Tours may be the exception. The company has clean, air-conditioned vehicles traveling regularly between Manila and several cities, including Baguio and Banaue.

Driving in the Philippines, as in most places where traffic is highly congested, requires considerable care and patience in order to avoid accidents. Some people find it desirable to employ a full-time chauffeur for this reason, and to ensure against the danger of pilferage or theft of an unattended car.

Communications

Although local telephone service is common in the Philippines, it is far from reliable. Storms, and even showers, disrupt the service, and telephone instruments often are unusable for no apparent reason. Frequently, repairs take an inordi-

nate amount of time. Long-distance service to the U.S. is excellent—when telephones are functioning properly. Some international connections are scheduled for certain hours of the day. Although not always dependable, service between Manila and all major Philippine cities is also available.

International telegraph and cable service is provided by several companies, including RCA, ETPI, and Globe Mackay. Mail leaves for, and arrives from, the U.S. via American-flag carriers seven days a week. Transit time is usually five to six days.

Radio and television programs in the Philippines resemble those in the U.S. They are commercial and highly competitive. Many are in English. Popular American series are carried in English on TV, but many locally produced shows are in Tagalog. Local news and public affairs programs are usually in English. Movies are also popular on television, both in English and Tagalog.

Currently, the Philippines has over 300 radio stations, with about 45 of these in the metro Manila area. Radio stations carry news, music, and commercials. Music varies from the classics to rock. Many Manila stations broadcast in FM stereo, featuring a wide variety of pop and classical music. Radio/TV stations carry international and U.S. news, but these reports are inclined to be sketchy and lacking in depth. Anyone interested in comprehensive information should have a shortwave receiver. A shortwave radio will pick up broadcasts from Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Radio Australia.

The Philippines has over 25 TV channels, about five of them (plus two cable channels) in the Manila area. All Manila stations are color-equipped. TV channel allocations are the same as those in the U.S.

Eight major English-language daily newspapers are printed in the Philippines. The *Manila Bulletin* is the largest of the three English national dailies. Other English newspapers and periodicals specialize in current business and trade affairs. The *Asian Wall Street Journal* and *International Herald Tribune* are available at newsstands and at major hotels.

More than 10 locally published weekly magazines are in English. Some have multi-interest, short articles (*Focus Philippines* and *Panorama*) and others carry articles for a specific audience. Most pieces are light features on human interest and other apolitical subjects but, occasionally, there is in-depth analysis of current events.

The Far East editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are available by subscription or direct purchase at local newsstands. A limited supply of most American magazines, four to six weeks late, and paperback books can be purchased at local newsstands.

Health and Medicine

For most medical and surgical problems, Manila's facilities are considered satisfactory. Makati Medical Center, a 300-bed hospital opened in November 1968, has modern equipment and facilities comparable to those in a large U.S. community hospital. Many of its staff physicians and surgeons are American-trained. Other good hospitals include Manila Medical Center, Manila Doctor's Hospital, and St. Luke's Hospital in neighboring Quezon City.

Since a large number of Filipino doctors and nurses have received advanced training in the U.S., most specialties are found. A few excellent expatriate doctors practice in Manila.

Despite the availability of U.S.-trained Filipino doctors and dentists in Manila, dental work and

medical problems should be taken care of before departure for the Philippines.

There are several U.S.-trained physicians in Cebu City. For most illnesses and emergency medical problems, the facilities are considered adequate. Cebu Doctor's Hospital, opened in 1972, comes closest to meeting Western standards for cleanliness and equipment, and is preferred by most of the American community. Chong Hua and Perpetual Succour Hospitals are also acceptable. Routine dental care is available here, but orthodontic treatment and oral surgery must be done in Manila. If you use regular medication, arrange with a U.S. pharmacy to make routine shipments.

Several U.S.-trained physicians in Davao City are used extensively by the American population of that city. The Ricardo Limso Medical Center is where most of the recommended physicians admit patients. Although it does not have some of the more sophisticated equipment found in most American hospitals, the facility is considered adequate for many medical problems, including emergency surgery (e.g., appendectomy). Elective surgery or sophisticated diagnostic procedures should be performed elsewhere.

In general, common diseases may be treated in Baguio. The two hospitals considered adequate are Notre Dame de Lourdes and Pines City Doctor's Hospital. Treatment at better hospitals is recommended for illnesses requiring a prolonged hospitalization or major surgery.

The following general health advice refers to Manila, but actually applies to the entire Philippines:

The general level of sanitation is lower than that in the U.S., but is high in comparison with many other developing countries. An increase in the population of metropolitan Manila since the time of liberation has greatly overtaxed the water supply, sewage and garbage disposal, street cleaning, and utilities.

Caution must be exercised regarding the municipal water supply. At times, particularly during the dry season, pressure is low in the mains, and water in certain areas of the city cannot be considered potable. Some of the residential villages have their own deep wells and pumps, and make it a practice to monitor the purity of their water. As a general precaution, however, water used for drinking and daily dental care should be boiled.

Some open sewers still exist in Manila, and practices in the area of waste disposal, food handling, and market sanitation in some areas may not be adequate from a public health standpoint. Manila continues its effort to improve hygienic conditions in the city, and to educate its people in public health and sanitation measures. However, the program has not reached all levels of society, and caution must be exercised. Cockroaches, ants, mosquitoes, fleas, termites, rats, and mice are quite common in the Philippines. They can be controlled through home efforts and the use of commercial exterminators.

Laws require the reporting of communicable diseases. There are isolation hospitals for the treatment of typhoid, cholera, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, etc. Incoming ships and airplanes, and their passengers, are subject to quarantine inspection.

Occasional gastrointestinal upsets and colds are almost unavoidable in the Philippines. Through normal precautions and care, it should be possible to avoid serious diseases such as cholera, typhoid, bacillary dysentery, and intestinal parasites. Inoculation against typhoid, tetanus-diphtheria, poliomyelitis, and cholera is advised. Susceptible children should be vaccinated against measles, mumps, hemophilus B, and rubella, following the usual recommended schedules.

Gamma globulin is available for hepatitis prophylaxis. Tuberculosis is common in the Philippines, and periodic skin tests are recommended. It is important that all

household help and drivers have physical examinations at regular intervals.

While the areas in and around Manila, Baguio, and Cebu City are malaria-free, there is incidence of the disease in some of the rural, undeveloped parts of the country. Visitors traveling in these areas should take appropriate preventions. Chloroquine-resistant malaria may be encountered in some places.

Penicillinase-producing *Neisseria gonorrhoea* (PPNG) is common here. This type of gonorrhoea is resistant to penicillin and must be treated by other means.

Respiratory infections and irritations are also common because of atmospheric pollution and the vagaries of air conditioning.

Normal precaution must be taken in eating fresh fruits and vegetables. It is wise to eat local produce only after peeling, soaking, scrubbing, and cooking. A certain amount of salt in the daily diet is desirable.

Boiling for five minutes is the recommended method for sterilizing water. Bottled beverages sold here are usually plentiful and safe. In general, it is safer to drink bottled beverages or hot tea or coffee, rather than water, in public places. Powdered, reconstituted milk is widely used. Fresh milk and dairy products, other than Magnolia brand, are not always considered safe, even though pasteurized. Meats from local markets should be well cooked, and the freshness of fish determined before eating.

Many fine restaurants in Manila are patronized by Americans. These are quality establishments and may be patronized with reasonable confidence. However, it is not wise to eat raw food, especially raw seafood, even at the best places. Care should be taken in consuming local dairy products, and children should not be allowed to eat ice cream or other food bought from street peddlers. Ice is always suspect. It should also

be noted that alcohol does not kill bacteria.

Visitors must remember to avoid overexertion and excessive fatigue. The tropical environment is enervating, and recovery from exercise may not be as prompt in the Philippines as in a temperate climate. Serious burns may follow relatively short exposure to the sun. Heat rash responds best to frequent cool showers, air-conditioned rooms, loose clothing, and all measures to reduce perspiration. Superficial skin infections are extremely common in the tropics. Even the smallest wound should be carefully cleaned with an antibiotic disinfectant and covered.

Most standard medicines are stocked in the larger pharmacies in major cities, although brand names may be different and unfamiliar. Many major multi-national drug companies have factories and representatives in the Philippines.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 25	Freedom Day
Apr. 9	Araw ng Kagitingan (Valour Day)
Mar/Apr.	Maundy Thursday*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May.	Flores de Mayo*
May 1	Labor Day
June 12.	Independence Day
Aug. (last Sun)	National Heroes Day*
Sept. 21.	Thanksgiving
Nov. 1	All Saints' Day
Nov.2.	All Souls' Day
Nov. 30	Bonifacio Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 30	Rizal Day
Dec.31.	Last Day of the Year

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Several air routes are traveled from the U.S. west coast to the Philippines; the most commonly used are those via Honolulu and Guam to Manila, or via Seattle or Anchorage, through Tokyo to Manila.

Travel within the archipelago is possible by boat, plane, bus, or car. Few tourists rent a car to drive, as the road system is crowded and drivers are undisciplined. Driving off the national highways and paved roads is particularly dangerous, especially at night. To avoid overcrowded or unsafe transport, caution is urged in planning travel by older, inter-island ferryboats or other public conveyances.

U.S. citizens are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa upon presentation of their U.S. passport, which must be valid for at least six months after entry, and a return ticket to the U.S. or onward ticket to another country. Upon arrival, immigration authorities will annotate the U.S. passport with an entry visa valid for 21 days. If you plan to stay longer than 21 days, you will have to apply for an extension at the Philippine Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, Magallanes Drive, Intramuros, Manila, Philippines. There are special requirements for the entry of unaccompanied minors. Additional information concerning entry requirements may be obtained from the Embassy of the Philippines, 1600 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 467-9300 or from the Philippines Consulates General in Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, or San Francisco.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting the Philippines are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manila, located at 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila City; tel. (63-2) 523-1001. The Consular American Citizen Services fax num-

ber is (63-2) 522-3242 and the ACS web page is <http://usembassy.state.gov/posts/rp1/www3004.html>.

The U.S. Consular Agency in Cebu provides limited services for U.S. citizens. The Consular Agency address is: Third Floor, PCI Bank, Gorordo Avenue, Lahug, Cebu City; tel. (63-32) 231-1261.

Pets

A pet (animal or bird) may be brought to the Philippines if accompanied by a health certificate, documentation of rabies inoculation, import permit from the Philippine Bureau of Animal Industry, and certificate of tax exemption. The validation of an animal's health certificate by a Philippine embassy or consulate is not sufficient documentation to permit landing or free entry; the import permit and tax certificate are the only papers acknowledged by Philippine officials. Without proper clearance, the animal will be held at customs in quarantine.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The official currency unit is the *peso*, which is divided into 100 *centavos*.

Visitors should also be vigilant when using credit cards. One form of credit card fraud involves the illicit use of an electronic device to retrieve and record information, including the PIN, from the card's magnetic strip. The information is then used to make unauthorized purchases. To limit your vulnerability to this scam, never let your card out of your sight. Major problems have occurred at large department stores and some hotel restaurants.

The metric system of weights and measures is standard in the Philippines, but English units (pounds, gallons, and yards) often are used.

The time in the Philippines is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus eight.

Disaster Preparedness

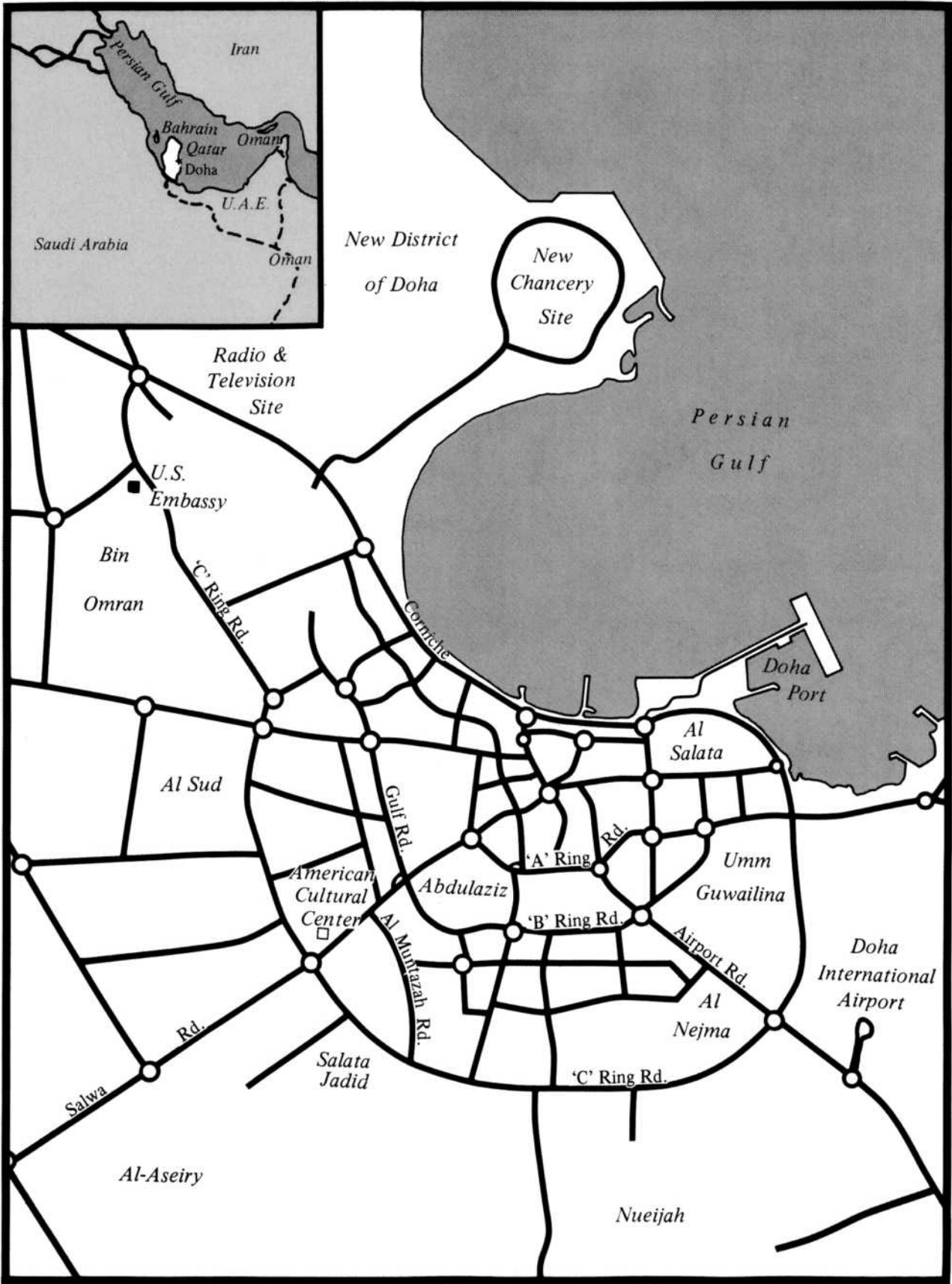
The Philippines is a volcano-, typhoon- and earthquake-prone country. During the rainy season (May to November) there are typhoons and flash floods. Flooding can cause road delays and cut off bridges. Typhoons in the vicinity of the Philippines can interrupt air and sea links within the country. Volcanic activity is frequent, and periodically the Government of the Philippines announces alerts for specific volcanoes. Earthquakes can also occur throughout the country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>

RECOMMENDED READING

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Doha, Qatar

QATAR

State of Qatar

Major City:

Doha

Other City:

Umm Said

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated March 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

QATAR, a fully independent sovereign Arab state on the western shore of the Persian Gulf, was a protectorate of the United Kingdom for 75 years before proclaiming its autonomy in 1971. It had been inhabited for many centuries, as early as 4,000 B.C., and had existed under the dominance of Bahrain and the occupation of the Ottoman Turks. At the beginning of World War I, Great Britain expanded custody of Qatar, promising to protect it from all aggression by sea, and to lend its good offices in case of land attack.

High-quality oil was discovered in 1939, but exports were delayed by the second World War. During the 1950s and 1960s, gradually increasing oil income brought economic prosperity, social progress, and the beginning of modern industry. In 1968, Qatar attempted to form a federation with neighboring Gulf countries, Bahrain and the Trucial States (the present United Arab Emirates). Attempts to agree on the terms of the union failed. In September 1971 Qatar decided to become a separate entity known as the State of Qatar. (The name sounds like "catter.")

MAJOR CITY

Doha

Doha's 2000 population is about 355,000 and growing. Most have arrived in the past 15 years, as the city has expanded at an incredible rate. Although generally well maintained by municipal authorities, the city has grown faster than its basic infrastructure, resulting in a large number of ongoing renovation projects (roads, sewers, telephone cables, etc.).

Privately funded residential and office building construction is found throughout the city. Notwithstanding this large-scale development around the capital, a shortage of reasonably priced, Western-style housing persists. The majority of new living units are large, poorly designed (and expensive) European-style "villas," with high perimeter walls and very small interior gardens.

Once a sleepy seaport, Doha has come a long way since the oil boom of the mid-1970s. The modern skyline now includes a number of multistory buildings that contrast sharply with the flat, rocky plains surrounding the city. Many of the older buildings are being torn down and replaced, especially in the old "souk" area of the city center.

Streets in the old section of the city are narrow and congested, but a system of wide, high-speed parkways links the newer, suburban areas. Very few open spaces are found in the city center, but a 7-kilometer-long park system along the waterfront Corniche offers agreeable vistas and a place to walk or jog and is a popular gathering spot in the cooler months. In addition, a limited number of public parks and museums are located around the city, including the attractive Doha



Aerial view of Doha, Qatar

© Christine Osborne/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

Zoo, the National Museum, Doha Fort, Khulaifat Park, Muntaza Park, the Airport Park, and Aladdin's Kingdom, a Western-style amusement park. Mosques appear in every neighborhood; one is never more than a few blocks from an impressive example of Muslim architecture.

Food

With the exception of fresh fish, some chicken, and seasonal, locally grown produce (cucumbers, tomatoes, melons, etc.), all food consumed in Doha is imported. Although poor supermarket inventory management results in frequent shortages, overall selection among the various retail outlets is good. U.S.-style one-stop shopping may be impossible, but one can usually find everything one needs to feed an American family. Several modern supermarkets offer a vari-

ety of fresh and frozen meat, frozen poultry, canned goods and frozen foods, some from the U.S. but most from Europe, the Middle East, and Australia.

A wholesale produce market on the outskirts of the city sells imported fruits and vegetables at Washington, D.C., area prices. An adjoining fish market offers a good selection of fresh, reasonably-priced fish and shellfish. Dairy products, including fresh and "shelf life" milk, cheese, yogurt, cream, and butter, are available at most local retail outlets. Both imported and locally manufactured soft drinks are available at reasonable prices. Local bakeries produce various types of bread, rolls, pies, and cakes; however, the quality is not quite up to U.S. standards.

Alcoholic beverages are available but carefully rationed and controlled. Using a ration card issued by the British Embassy, one can only purchase liquor once per month up to QR 500 (about \$137) per family. Prices include importation duty and are very close to U.S. retail prices for similar items.

Clothing

For 4 to 5 months of the year, Doha's temperatures exceed those of the hottest August days in Washington, D.C. Cotton and other cooler fabrics for both women and men are essential during this period. For 2 to 3 months in winter, it is cool enough for light jackets and woolen clothing in the evenings. Good-quality clothing is about twice the cost in Doha as in the U.S. By contrast, the local fabric market is reasonably priced, and local dressmakers and tailors can be hired to custom-make cloth-

ing items for significantly less than retail outlets charge for premanufactured items. However, the abilities of local tailors and dressmakers vary widely, and custom-made clothing can be a hit-or-miss proposition.

Men: Because many offices and homes are centrally air-conditioned, lightweight suits and jackets are comfortable for office and evening wear. For informal occasions, slacks and sport shirts are appropriate.

Dress shoes and some fashionable men's clothing are available in Doha. English and continental shoes average \$200 to \$300 a pair. American shirts, ties, socks, underwear, and pajamas are available, but again at very high prices. Continental suits are sold for \$700 to \$900 and sport coats for \$350. Occasionally, a reasonably priced suit or jacket is found at one of the local shops, though apparel stocked locally is inferior by U.S. standards. Even if the price is right, fit and size can present problems. Tailor-made suits and shirts are more affordable, but great care must be exercised in choosing a tailor and explaining the design requirements.

Women: Although Qatari women wear the traditional, ankle-length black cloaks (abayas), Western women wear regular Western dress. Knee-length and mid-calf-length dresses and skirts are preferable, as very short dresses, shorts, and tank tops are considered in poor taste and offend the host country's religious and cultural principles. Many women have dresses or skirts made locally.

American shoes are typically not available in Doha. European shoes in the latest styles can be purchased, but many Americans have difficulty finding the correct size, and prices are very high. The rough outdoor terrain is very damaging to shoes, and replacements will be needed more often than in the U.S. Shoe repair work is available but not always of good quality.

Children's clothing is available, but quality and style are uneven, and all items are much more costly than in the U.S.

Supplies and Services

Ample supplies of toiletries, cosmetics, shaving supplies, and home medications, mostly European brands, are available at higher than U.S. prices. Pharmacies carry a wide range of prescription and nonprescription drugs, first-aid supplies, and birth control products.

British, French, and some American cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and smoking accessories are available locally at prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Dry cleaning is available at several retail outlets. A man's business suit typically costs about \$6, a woman's suit about \$4.50. Business hours for dry-cleaning establishments are short, sometimes only a few hours per day.

Hairdressing salons for men and women are adequate by Western standards. A man's haircut costs \$3 to \$10, depending on the shop patronized. A shampoo and set, without a cut, costs about \$20.

Religious Activities

Islam is the only officially sanctioned religion in Qatar, and it is illegal to display crosses and other religious symbols on buildings or in public areas. Likewise, churches and other official places of worship are banned. Unofficially, a variety of Christian worship services are held in private schools and homes, including Catholic, Protestant, and Anglican services. There is a Christian burial ground near Dukhan, about an hour west of Doha.

Education

Expatriate schools are available for the American, British, French, Lebanese, Indian, Egyptian, Bangladeshi, Iranian, and Pakistani communities. In 1988, Doha's American International School (AIS) was founded as an independent, coeducational private school. AIS offers

an American-style educational program for students of all nationalities, from kindergarten through grade 12. AIS receives grant money from the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools (A/OPR/OS). It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. The school operates on a quarter term system from the beginning of September to the middle of June. The school runs at full capacity with 400 students, about half of whom are American citizens. A new school building has been in the planning stages.

Other local schools include the Doha English Speaking School (DESS), a British-style grade school, and Doha College, a British high school. These schools are sponsored by the British Embassy and follow traditional British educational models, preparing students to pass the qualifying exams that control access to the better public and private schools and colleges in the U.K. Despite differences in goals and methods, the British schools can prepare American children to enter U.S. public schools with their age groups. Supplemental courses in areas beyond the British curriculum, such as U.S. history, must be arranged privately. The schools operate on a trimester basis from September to late June.

For further information, contact:
 American International School
 P.O. Box 22090, Doha, Qatar
 FAX: 011-974-806311
 Tel: 011-974-806770

Doha English Speaking School
 P.O. Box 7660, Doha, Qatar
 FAX: 011-974-875921
 Tel: 011-974-862530

Doha College
 P.O. Box 7506, Doha, Qatar
 FAX: 011-974-685720
 Tel: 011-974-887379

Sports

Organized athletic events are typically limited to soccer, although a few other sports make an occasional appearance. For those who can afford to join private clubs, a variety of sports are available, including

wind surfing, sailing, weight lifting, volleyball, etc. Fishing and boating are popular but expensive. A few bowling alleys are available, both for league play and individual play.

A new championship golf course just north of Doha will open soon. Due to the costs of maintaining grass greens and fairways in the harsh desert climate, membership fees and greens fees are expected to be very high. Two older golf courses already operate in Qatar, both with dirt fairways and oiled sand greens (browns). One is a 1-hour drive west of Doha, and the other is a 40-minute drive south. Membership at either club is less expensive, but may require a wait of several months. A few private tennis and squash clubs operate in Doha. A local rugby club is open to all reasonably skilled players. There is also a scuba club in Qatar.

A number of private clubs with sports facilities, some at hotels, offer individual and family memberships. Typically, these clubs offer swimming, squash, tennis, and weight room facilities. Membership fees are relatively high. The Al-Messilah compound also has a small weight room, a large (25 meter) swimming pool, two squash courts, two tennis courts and several children's playgrounds. These facilities are free to Al-Messilah residents and their guests.

Aside from the occasional tennis or squash match, soccer football is the only local spectator sport. Local and regional teams compete frequently on Doha's various public and private soccer fields.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The principal outdoor activity in Doha is the weekend beach trip. The beaches which are easily reached over good roads are too noisy and litter-strewn for most Americans. The more attractive beaches in the North and West are also more remote: most are 1–2 hours away from the city and accessible only by 4 wheel-drive vehicles. The remote

beaches offer better privacy and family enjoyment for Westerners. Beachgoers travel in convoys and bring all necessary supplies with them, including food, drinking water, tents, firewood, etc.—all beaches are “primitive” (no shade, fresh water, rest rooms or concessions of any kind). At the Inland Sea south of Umm Said, sand dunes extend to the water's edge, sheltering mile after mile of beautiful, deserted beaches. However, a trip to the Inland Sea is three hours each way, much of it over salt flats, gravel flats and loose sand. It requires substantial planning and a minimum of 3–4 well-maintained 4-wheel-drive vehicles. Due to the distance involved, many visitors to the Inland Sea camp out overnight and return to Doha the next day.

Doha's National Museum is among the finest of its type in the Gulf. The facility is a treasure chest of bedouin artifacts, crafts, jewelry, and other works associated with the history of the Qatari people. It also has an aquarium and lagoon, in which local sea life and traditional fishing boats are displayed.

Arabian oryx can be seen at the Doha Zoo and on a farm at Shahaniya. These extremely rare animals were captured elsewhere on the Arabian peninsula to form a breeding herd in Qatar and to help save the strain from extinction.

Entertainment

Doha has no western-style bars or nightclubs; public drinking and dancing are prohibited. Private restaurants in the major hotels and in private clubs offer alcoholic beverages to members and paying guests only. All other liquor is sold via a local ration system controlled by the British Embassy. Most evening entertainment is either alcohol-free or takes place in private homes.

Doha has two cinemas, but they show South Asian and Arabic movies almost exclusively.

An amateur, English language theater group produces several plays

every year, including one or more musical productions. There are a few private choral, instrumental and dance groups in Doha, but no city choir, dance troupe or orchestra. The National Folklore Troupe, established to preserve Qatar's traditional music and dance, presents public performances on holidays and for special events. Qatar occasionally hosts an international sporting event, such as the Qatar Tennis Open in January.

Social Activities

Opportunities for charitable volunteer work exist but are limited. Local social services enjoy massive government support. Charities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been virtually nonexistent in the past, but interest in this concept is growing—Qatar's first NGO, Friends of the Environment, has just been established.

Although Qatar is still a traditional society, opportunities exist to establish rewarding personal relationships with Qatari nationals, both men and women. Cross-cultural ties have been strengthened by the large number of young men who have been sent abroad for higher education. The size and variety of expatriate communities also present excellent opportunities for staff members to develop personal and business relationships.

OTHER CITY

UMM SAID (also called Musay'id) is an important port situated 25 miles south of Doha on the Persian (Arabian) Gulf. For over 20 years, it was the country's only deep water port. Revenue from material exported and imported here was critical in the development of the country from the city's founding in 1949. The Qatar Petroleum Company constructed a tanker terminal in the area, including an artificial deep water port. The company's headquarters was built here, as well. A deep water port was opened in the capital in the 1970s, lessen-

ing the importance of Umm Said. The city has a population of over 6,100 (1986 est.).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

A sovereign Arab State on the western shore of the Arabian Gulf, Qatar occupies a 4,200-square-mile peninsula somewhat smaller than Connecticut, as well as several small offshore islands. The Qatar Peninsula projects north into the Gulf for about 100 miles and has a maximum width of about 55 miles. Halul, a permanently settled island, is an important storage center and tanker terminal for three offshore oil fields.

Doha, the capital city, is situated on the east coast, as are the country's larger towns.

In the south at the neck of the peninsula, Qatar borders the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Riyadh, the Saudi capital, lies 250 miles due west beyond the Jafura Desert.

The port of Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates, is about 150 nautical miles southeast. The vast Rub' al-Khali Desert (the Empty Quarter) extends to the shallow inlets, reefs, and shoals of the Gulf.

The nearest seaward neighbor is Bahrain to the north. Although Bahrain's capital, Manama, is 100 miles from Doha, only 20 miles separate the two countries at the narrowest part of the channel that runs between them into the Gulf of Salwa.

The eastern (Iranian) shore of the Gulf is 120 miles beyond Qatar's northern tip. The nearest Iranian port, Bushire, lies about 250 miles from Doha. The Iraqi Port of Basra, on the northern shore of the Gulf, is 350 miles away. The southern Strait

of Hormuz, 310 miles from Doha, provides access to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Thus, Qatar occupies a central position in the Arabian Gulf.

The overall outline of the peninsula was not defined on European maps until well into the 19th century, though Karsten Niebuhr briefly described the peninsula in his *Voyage en Arabie*, published in Switzerland in 1780. The historical appearance of Qatari place-names on European maps suggests strongly that, until recent times, international navigators were familiar only with the northern end of the country and the eastern pearling banks.

Qatar's terrain is monotonously flat, except for the Dukhan anticline in the west and some low rock outcroppings at the northern end of the east coast. Blown sand covers much of the south, and shifting dunes predominate in the southeast. The Dukhan anticline rises from the west coast as a chain of separate hills of up to 325 feet in height, about 35 miles long and 3 to 5 miles wide, covering the country's onshore oil fields.

Natural vegetation, including semi-permanent pasture, is limited to areas surrounding wells, depressions, and short drainage courses active only after the winter rains. Most flora is confined to the northern half of the country. Elsewhere, the featureless terrain is relieved only by sparse patches of camel thorn and isolated date palm plantations.

The coastline is uneven and rises gently on both sides of the peninsula. Sandy reefs abound in the surrounding shallows. Extensive salt flats at the landward end of the peninsula, between Salwa on the west coast and Khor al-Odeid in the east, support the local belief that Qatar was once an island, separated from what is now the Saudi Province of al-Hasa.

Qatar lies outside the area of the annual monsoons. Its seasons are similar to those of the Temperate Zone, although usually much hotter. The winter months from December through February are cool, considering that Qatar's latitude is about the same as that of Miami, Florida. Intense heat persists at least from May through September. March, April, October, and November normally provide the most agreeable climatic conditions. Humidity ranges from 32% in midsummer to highs of 96 to 100% in the fall and early winter. Rainfall is usually very light and averages less than 3 inches per year, mostly in the winter months. Almost no rain falls from May through October. Frequent high winds, especially from March through August, can fill the air with fine dust and create a brownish haze on the horizon.

The prevailing desert wind ("shemal") comes from the north during the spring and summer months. This constant, rather strong wind can be irritating, especially for allergy sufferers. In late summer, when the shemal dies, the humidity rises, making the climate even more unpleasant. It is not uncommon for building windows to fog up and drip moisture during the months of August and September.

Population

The population of Qatar (including large expatriate communities comprising other Arabs, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indians, Baluchis, Filipinos, Sri Lankans, Iranians, and Westerners) is estimated at almost 750,000 people. Some 2,600 Britons, 2,000 other Europeans, and 3,500 Americans reside here. About 80% of the total population is concentrated in and around Doha.

The indigenous Qataris, who total around 100,000, can be traced to three main migratory movements: 1) overland, in the 1760s, by members of tribes already concentrated in Kuwait and along the shores of the Saudi Province of al-Hasa; 2) by tribal elements during the period of

the Wahhabi expansion from al-Hasa at the end of the 1700s; and 3) by sea from neighboring Gulf shores.

Those involved in the overland influx were almost entirely bedouin in origin. Their interest in the peninsula hinged on rainfall and grazing factors. Coastal wells and suitable sites for pearling and fishing ports controlled the pattern of immigration by sea from other regions of the Gulf.

Qatar appears in fifth century A.D. writings as a seafaring community, and Qataris continued to look to the sea for their communications and livelihoods until the advent of oil. The surrounding deserts and seas isolated them from their neighbors. Pearling and fishing represented the only sources of wealth. The elderly still recall a time when Qatar's 400 pearling ships constituted one-third of the entire Gulf fleet and when the pearl beds of the peninsula, Bahrain, and the lower Gulf coast were recognized as the world's most prolific. But the development of the cultured pearl by the Japanese in the 1930s almost destroyed this trade, which had flourished since Babylonian times.

Islam is the official and predominant religion of the population, indigenous and migratory alike. Most Qataris are Sunni Muslims of the Wahhabi sect; Sunnis are the more numerous and orthodox of the two main Islamic streams, and Wahhabism is the fundamentalist, puritanical school prevalent in Saudi Arabia, though more moderate in Qatar. The state is committed under the provisional constitution to "endeavor to install proper Islamic religious principles."

The official language is Arabic, although most senior Qatari officials are fluent in English, and much of the commercial and government business may be conducted in English.

Many native-born Qataris are only a generation removed from a very

simple village life. The most obvious traditional customs are the universal wearing of the "thobe" or "dishdash" and the infrequent public appearance of women. When they do appear outside their homes, virtually all Qatari women wear ankle-length black shawls ("abayas"), and many women still cover their faces or wear a face mask ("batula"). While alcohol is forbidden for Muslims, non-Muslims are allowed limited quantities under a strictly controlled licensing arrangement with the British Embassy. Qataris are somewhat shy but very polite and hospitable. Qatari social functions (such as teas and weddings) are segregated with the men and women attending separately, sometimes on different days. Most restaurants, from traditional to fast food, contain a "family section" separate from the more public areas of the establishment.

Public Institutions

Qatar became a British protectorate after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. The other Gulf emirates had come under British protection 100 years earlier. The British role in Qatari affairs was never comprehensive. In 1971, Qatar announced its intention to terminate the special treaty arrangements with Britain and to assume all responsibility for internal and external affairs.

A provisional constitution was promulgated in 1970. It specified that the rulership would be hereditary within the family of Al Thani, whose ancestry has been traced to the Bani Tamim, one of the ruling tribes of ancient Arabia. In the 18th century, members of this tribe had moved 200 miles north from the Jabrin Oasis to the western shore of the Gulf. The 1970 constitution provided for a Council of Ministers (cabinet), appointed by the Emir (head of state) to assist in the discharge of duties and the exercise of powers. It also provided for the establishment of an Advisory Council to assist the Emir and the cabinet.

In a 1999 move towards democracy, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani allowed for the election of a Central Municipal Council by universal suffrage. The same year, he appointed a committee to draft a new Constitution.

The major change will be the addition of an elected Advisory Council (Parliament). Until now, this council has had an emir-appointed membership. Through this change, citizens will be given greater opportunity to make decisions within their own government. However, the emir must always issue final approval of any legislation initiated through the parliament.

Recently, the emir has also established a new, separate position of Prime Minister. Traditionally, this office was held by the emir. The current Prime Minister is Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the emir's brother.

There are no political parties or labor unions in Qatar.

Five courts (the Higher Criminal Court, the Lower Criminal Court, the Civil Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Labor Court) operate on the basis of codified laws under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. In addition, the Shari'ah Court applies religious law, based on the precepts of the Qur'an. The division between the secular and religious spheres of law is still being defined.

Arts, Science, and Education

The National Museum, dedicated June 23, 1975, contains collections illustrating the development of the state of Qatar and the way of life of its people. Intended to serve as a repository of the culture and traditions of the peoples of the Gulf, the museum occupies the restored, former Emir's palace. Prized exhibits include an aquarium, a bedouin camp, and several examples of dhows, the wooden ships that have

sailed on the Gulf and the Indian Ocean from the earliest times. These are moored in an artificial lagoon dug out of reclaimed waterfront land.

Excavation of ruins and buried cairns on the west coast and elsewhere by Danish and French archaeological expeditions between 1956 and 1982 have yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation. The finds are mainly of the Stone and Iron Ages and include artifacts dating from about 4000 B.C.

The Doha Public Library houses a collection of thousands of ancient Arabic manuscripts, as well as modern works and a small collection of books in English. Qatar also has a system of branch and school-affiliated libraries.

A public school system was established in 1956, and adult education was introduced a year later. Adult teaching centers offer basic literacy courses. Outside the public system are American, British, French, Indian, Lebanese, Pakistani, Iranian, and other private schools serving the various expatriate communities as well as some Qataris. Qatar University, established in 1977, enrolls full-time and part-time students (four-fifths women) in five departments: education, humanities, Islamic studies, science, and engineering. All public education in Qatar is free through the university level, and full scholarships are provided by the Ministry of Education to qualified Qatari students wishing to study abroad. Many educated Qataris are graduates of U.S. universities.

Active cultural centers in Doha include the British Council, the French Cultural Center, the Indian Cultural Center, and the USIS-operated American Cultural Center.

Commerce and Industry

From 1949, when the first cargo of crude was exported, the economy of

Qatar has depended on one resource—oil. In 1974, when oil revenues rocketed to \$1,928 billion (a 500% increase over 1973 earnings) the pace of economic development increased dramatically.

Qatar's oil income has since fluctuated with changes in production levels and world prices, but it remains the mainstay of the local economy. The oil sector accounts for about 80% of Qatar's export earnings and some 66% of government revenues. In recent years, production has been steady at approximately 400,000 barrels per day. The state has full control over oil production and marketing, and the Qatar General Petroleum Company (QGPC), the state-owned oil company, is one of the largest employers in the country.

At present production rates, and without application of enhanced oil recovery techniques, Qatar could deplete its oil reserves in about 25 years. However, vast offshore natural gas reserves are under development and will anchor the economy for the foreseeable future. The North Field, one of the world's largest natural gas fields, with estimated reserves of 380 trillion cubic feet, lies just off the northern tip of the Qatar Peninsula. Development projects involving billions of dollars have attracted investment from American, Japanese, French, and other international companies. In addition to gas production, much of the investment centers on construction of facilities for liquefaction the gas and shipping the liquefied natural gas (LNG) to overseas markets.

The first phase of the North Field development, funded mostly by foreign investment and orchestrated by a state-owned company known as Qatargas, will be completed in 1997. Subsequent production phases will be added later, and some are already underway. To support the development plans, a huge natural gas liquefaction plant and shipping facility is nearing completion at Ras Laffan, about one hour north of Doha.

Starting in 1969, when construction began on a fertilizer plant, Qatar embarked on an ambitious industrialization scheme. Not surprisingly, all heavy industrial projects have relied on indigenous petroleum and natural gas reserves for either fuel or feedstock. For the execution of most of these projects, the government has formed joint ventures with foreign partners under which the foreign company acquires a minority ownership while providing technical, managerial, and marketing expertise. This arrangement has been employed in establishing petrochemical, fertilizer, and steel factories and is now being used for gas development.

Thus far, the government and its foreign partners have generated most of the economic activity in Qatar. The private sector has largely limited its participation in the larger ventures to trading and construction contracting. Early in 1988, however, the government began cautiously encouraging privatization of certain activities in the areas of education, public health, and water/electricity.

Qatar has not emerged as a regional business center. Service industries and banking, while active, have focused on the domestic economy. The tourist trade is increasing but still represents only a small segment of the economy.

Per capita GDP is about \$20,300 (2000 est.).

Transportation

Local

Private cars provide the only practical and dependable transportation in Doha. Taxis may be hailed at the airport, at the main hotels, or as they cruise the streets, but they have no telephone call-out service and are poorly equipped (e.g., with no seat belts or air-conditioning), and the drivers tend to speak only Arabic. They are more or less reliable, usually have functioning meters, and are relatively cheap. A

more expensive alternative is a local limousine service, which more closely resembles taxi service in the U.S. "Limousines" are late-model Chevy Caprices, driven by English-speaking drivers, and are equipped with air-conditioning, rear seat belts, functioning meters, and telephone/radio dispatch equipment. Prices for this higher grade of service are comparable to taxi fares in New York and other large U.S. cities. Reasonably priced rental cars are available from Avis, Hertz, Budget, and other franchises.

Regional

Travel within the country is solely by car. Vehicle travel to neighboring countries is not recommended for safety reasons (long, desolate driving distances and the lack of shoulders or emergency lanes) and because of frequent border crossing difficulties. Air transportation links to neighboring countries are extensive, fairly well managed, and much more convenient. Planes are often overbooked, and travelers are advised to reconfirm reservations and arrive at the airport well in advance of posted flight times. Doha is served by Gulf Air, Emirates Air, Qatar Airways, Saudia, KLM, Air France, Air India, British Airways, Iran Air, Pakistan International Airlines, Egypt Air, and most other non-Gulf Arab airlines. No U.S. airline serves Doha directly, although several "code share" flights are available to and from European transit points. Current code share flights to and from the Gulf include selected flights on Gulf Air (American Airlines), Emirates Air (United), and KLM (Northwest).

Communications

Telephones and Telegraph

Telephone service in Doha is excellent. An unlimited number of local calls can be made for a nominal line charge of about \$30 per month. However, the local phone company makes up for any lost revenue by charging very high rates for long-distance service (calling the U.S. from Qatar costs about \$2.50 per

minute, twice as much as calling Qatar from the U.S.)

Telegram and telex facilities are readily available, but these have mostly been eclipsed by fax machines.

Mobile phones are expensive but very popular with the Qatari nationals. Personal pagers (known as "bleeps") are also pervasive and are much less expensive.

Internet service is run by the partially state-owned Qatar Telecom (Q-Tel). Access is primarily for business use.

Radio and TV

Qatar TV (QTV) broadcasts in color in Middle Eastern PAL format on two channels, English and Arabic. The English-language channel often shows American programs, but all broadcasts are heavily censored. English-language news is broadcast at 8 pm and includes up-to-the-minute film footage via commercial satellite service. The telephone company (Q-TEL) operates a limited cable TV service that includes CNN, the BBC, and several English-speaking European channels. Cable service is expensive, and all broadcasts are censored.

Radio programming on the English-language station of the Qatar Broadcasting Service (QBS) is excellent, with 19 hours a day in FM stereo. English-language news is broadcast several times daily, and a variety of programs are aired, including classic rock, contemporary rock, jazz, classical music, country music, children's shows, and a number of informational talk shows. Shortwave radio owners can pick up VOA, BBC, and other foreign radio signals.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Qatar has its own English-language daily, the *Gulf Times*, which carries many major world news and feature syndicates. The *Times* weekend edition carries several popular American color comics. A selection of

state-supported and semiprivate publications are also available, but almost all are in Arabic. Many U.S. and British magazines are sold in Doha, including the *International Herald Tribune*. Photos and texts considered politically or morally objectionable are regularly censored before distribution. While low sales volume publications are marked up 300% over the original price, high-volume items (e.g., *Time*, *Newsweek*) are more reasonable.

The American Cultural Center has a small library. The British Council maintains a library, but its offerings are limited, and, as noted above, the National Library has relatively few volumes in English.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Medical and dental health facilities in Doha either belong to the Ministry of Public Health or are privately owned and operated. Public Health Ministry services include a general hospital with modern facilities, a women's obstetrics hospital, and a number of neighborhood primary care clinics. An increasing number of private clinics, staffed by foreign doctors, have opened in recent years. Several private dental clinics are also available. Although access to public facilities is currently provided free of charge to all expatriates, these clinics can be noisy and crowded, and waiting times can range from 1 to 4 hours, depending on the time of day and the number of patients to be seen. Most Americans prefer to pay a reasonable fee at the private clinics, which are quicker and more convenient. All public facilities and most private ones are segregated; separate waiting areas and treatment rooms are provided for male and female patients.

Emergency treatment is available at the local hospital, which runs a U.S.-style Emergency Medical Service. Most local physicians are

Egyptian trained, although some are European- or American-trained. Judged by Western standards, local nursing care ranges from fair to poor.

Obtain eyeglass prescriptions before traveling to Doha. If the need arises after arrival, lenses and frames are available locally at prices comparable to those in the U.S.

Most pharmacies in Doha have standard European medical supplies and drugs, though relatively few U.S. brands are stocked.

Community Health

Doha itself is one of the cleaner cities in the Gulf, but some goods are imported from high-risk areas. For this reason, proper food care and hygiene standards must be rigidly followed. Food sold at major supermarkets is of good quality and is examined by local health inspectors. Expired products are almost always removed from the shelves promptly.

The general state of public health in Qatar is fair to good. The Ministry of Public Health's veterinary section inspects animals before slaughter. The Doha municipality has a rodent control program, available when needed. The municipality also arranges for free daily garbage collection. Despite these efforts, the control of flies and other insects remains a problem, especially in the cooler months. On the positive side, Qatar has relatively few mosquitoes and no mosquito-borne diseases.

Preventive Measures

Bring typhoid, gamma globulin, tetanus toxoid, and TB skin testing up to date before arrival. Due to the crowded conditions and a continuing influx of expatriates from affected areas, outbreaks of cholera or typhoid are always possible. Children should have up-to-date DPT, polio, and MMR shots.

Tap water comes almost exclusively from desalination plants. Routine tests reveal that the water is suitable for drinking, though filtering is

advised, particularly in the summer months. Inexpensive bottled water is manufactured in Qatar and the U.A.E.; more expensive varieties come from Europe. Bottled water contains fluoride, but tap water does not. Parents may wish to administer fluoride supplements to children under age 16.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Most travelers fly an American air carrier to Europe and then continue via a non-American carrier to Doha, sometimes with a stop in Bahrain. The most common transfer points are London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Frankfurt.

Travel to Doha from the continental United States takes 18-20 hours. Many travelers take an overnight rest stop at a European transit point en route.

Although it is possible to drive overland from Europe or nearby Middle Eastern States, this is not recommended. Long driving distances and strict customs/immigration requirements in neighboring countries make this a tedious and problem-ridden endeavor.

Passports and visas are required. American citizens may obtain a tourist or business visa at the airport in Doha upon arrival. These visas are valid for 14 days and may be extended for an additional 14 days. However, American citizen travelers will be able to clear Qatari immigration more quickly and be granted a longer stay in the country by obtaining visas prior to arrival. For further information, travelers may contact the Embassy of the State of Qatar, 4200 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20016, telephone (202) 274-1600, fax (202) 237-0053, or the Consulate General of the State of Qatar, 4265 San Felipe Street, Suite 1100, Houston, Texas 77027, telephone (713) 968-9840, fax (713) 968-9841. Addi-

tional information is available on the Internet at <http://www.traveldocs.com>.

Qatari customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning importation into Qatar of items such as alcohol, narcotics, pork products, firearms, or anything deemed pornographic by Qatari authorities. While importation of religious material for personal use is acceptable, importation of religious material for the purpose of proselytizing is not. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the State of Qatar in Washington, D.C., or the Consulate General of the State of Qatar in Houston for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens, particularly those of Arab descent, are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship is readily available.

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Qatar are encouraged to register at the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Qatar and obtain updated information on travel and security within Qatar. The U.S. Embassy is located in the Al-Luqta District on 22nd February Street, P.O. Box 2399, Doha, phone (974) 488-4101. For after hour emergencies, American citizens may call (974) 488-4101 extension 6600 to reach the duty officer.

On the Internet, you may reach the Embassy web site at <http://www.usembassy.org.qa>. The Embassy observes a Sunday through Thursday workweek. Many businesses and government offices in Qatar observe a Saturday through Wednesday workweek.

Pets

Pets entering Qatar require an import permit from the Ministry of Agriculture. Cats with proper documentation are allowed to enter with no difficulty, but some breeds of dogs, especially large dogs, are not admitted. Application forms for

import permits may be obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture through a sponsoring employer. A copy of the pet's health certificate and vaccination record must be submitted with the application.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The local currency is the Qatari rial (QR), worth about U.S. 28 cents and divided into 100 dirhams. The official rate of exchange is a fixed rate of US\$1 = QRs 3.64.

More than a dozen commercial banks operate in Qatar. The state imposes no restrictions on the import, export, or exchange of currencies. Travelers checks may be cashed locally without difficulty. Some ATM machines give cash for international credit cards and CIRCUS debit cards.

The metric system is used for weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
June 27	Anniversary of the Emir's Succession
Sept. 3	Independence Day
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Hijra New Year*

*variable, based on Islamic calendar

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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SAMOA

*Independent State of Samoa
(formerly Western Samoa)*

Major City:
Apia

INTRODUCTION

Polynesians migrated from Southeast Asia to the Samoa Islands more than 2,000 years ago. Polynesian historical accounts go back to AD 1250. The Samoa Islands may have first been settled by migrants from what is now Fiji or Tonga. The first contact with Europeans began as whalers, pirates, and escaped convicts landed on the islands. In 1722, the Dutch sailor Jacob Roggeveen recorded spotting the islands. Contact with Europeans was infrequent until the arrival of English missionaries under Rev. John Williams in 1830. Between 1847 and 1861, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany competed to align themselves with various Samoan royal families. The entanglements resulted in a civil war in 1889. In 1900, the colonial powers created a political boundary along the 171st meridian that divided the Samoan people. Under that convention, the United States annexed Eastern Samoa and Germany took Western Samoa. Eastern Samoa became the US territory known as American Samoa. New Zealand occupied Western Samoa in 1914 at the start of World War I, and from 1919 until 1946 New Zealand administered the area as a mandate of the League of Nations. From 1947 until 1961, a

series of constitutional advances brought Western Samoa from dependent status to self-government. A constitution was produced in 1960 and it came into effect with independence on January 1, 1962.

The country dropped the “Western” from its name in 1997.

MAJOR CITY

Apia

Apia, with a population of 33,000, is Samoa’s capital and only major town. Apia is located on the northern coast of the island of Upolu. The country’s largest industry is the Samoa Breweries plant that lies to the west of Apia. The Western Samoa Trust Estates Corporation has developed a hybrid high-yield variety of cocoa on a plantation 3 miles from the city. Faleolo International Airport west of Apia handles the majority of arrivals to Samoa. The main interisland transport in the Samoas is provided by Samoa Air and Polynesian Airlines. There is also daily service to Pago Pago, American Samoa. The number of passenger cars in Apia and around Samoa significantly increased in the 1990s, and the city now has a

number of traffic lights. Apia Harbour is the only port of entry for Samoa.

Recreation and Entertainment

The most popular sport in Samoa is rugby, which is played almost year-round throughout the islands. Apia Park, the site of the 1983 South Pacific Games, is used mainly for rugby, soccer, and field hockey. Lawn bowling, netball, squash, tennis, boxing, wrestling, and American football are popular sports. Cricket is played throughout Samoa’s villages. Samoan cricket (kilikiti) is a modification of the British form, in which the bat resembles a traditional war club and teams number 30–40 per side. The Royal Samoan Country Club features an 18-hole course. Jazzercise, weight training, and aerobic classes are also available in Apia.

Samoa’s biggest commercial center is the Maketi Fou, a central market that operates around the clock. Assorted meat, fish, and produce are sold there, but the market is also a place where people meet and mingle. The Palolo Deep National Marine Reserve near Apia’s wharf is a superb site for snorkeling and picnics. The Philatelic Bureau of the Post Office offers collectors a wide selection of Samoa’s stamps. Com-

memorative and mint coins from the Treasury are available from the Treasury Department in the Central Bank.

The *fale* is a traditional oval thatched-roof structure without walls that serves as a home or a meeting house. *Fale* accommodations are available to visitors in Samoa. Foreigners who visit a traditional village will endear themselves to the people if traditional Samoan rules of etiquette are followed. There are many places in the Samoas, especially in the interiors of islands or on remote beaches, where no formal accommodation and not even village accommodations will be available, making camping the only option. In Samoa, there are four official camping areas, all on Upolu: O Le Satapuala Resort, Tafatafa Beach, Lotofaga Beach, and Return-to-Paradise Beach.

Apia has several historical monuments and colonial buildings along its waterfront. The Catholic Cathedral was constructed between 1885 and 1905, and was the most prominent building along the city's skyline for many years. The clock tower in the center of the city was built as a monument to Samoans who were killed in World War I. Apia also has a World War II monument and a memorial to missionary Rev. John Williams. The Mulinu'u Peninsula at the western end of Apia has German, British, American, and Samoan monuments. The tombs of two former Samoan chiefs are also located on the peninsula. In the cool hills above Apia lies Vailima, the estate of Robert Louis Stevenson. The house lies some 650 feet above sea level and is (in name only) the official residence of the ruling Samoan head of state. The home was recently renovated to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Stevenson's death in 1894. Stevenson's tomb is at the summit of nearby Mt. Vaea.

The Nelson Public Library contains a wide assortment of books pertain-

ing to the South Pacific that are difficult to find elsewhere.

A *fiafia* is traditional Samoan theater or music. The *fiafias* performed today often cater to tourists. The *fiafias* offered in Apia are usually elaborate shows of singing and dancing offered by the larger hotels, the most famous of which is at Aggie Grey's Hotel.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Samoa is a group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, about one-half of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand. The main islands are Savai'i and Upolu, separated by the 11-mile Apolima Strait. There are also several smaller islands, of which only Manono and Apolima are uninhabited. The islands have a total land area of 1,104 square miles, or slightly smaller than the state of Rhode Island. Samoa's exclusive marine economic zone covers approximately 50,000 square miles.

The islands are volcanic, with coral reefs surrounding most of them. The rugged ranges rise to 3,608 feet on Upolu and 6,094 feet on Savai'i. Apolima is a volcanic crater whose wall is pierced by a passage that connects its harbor with the sea. Manono rises to a height of 230 feet, and is composed chiefly of coral sand. The islands have active volcanoes; severe eruptions occurred on Savai'i during 1905–11.

The climate is tropical, but temperature ranges are not considerable. The hottest month is December and the coldest is July; the average daily temperature is 81°F. The highland areas of Savai'i and Upolu are cooler year-round. The dry season runs from May to October, while the wet season lasts from November to April. Rainfall averages 113 inches

per year. Leeward shore areas such as Apia are drier than the windward shores and the Manu'a Islands, which can receive up to 200 inches of rain. Samoa lies in the middle of the Pacific's notorious cyclone/typhoon belt.

Population

Samoa has an estimated population of 235,000, with a population density of about 195 people per square mile. Over 70% of the population lives on Upolu. There has been massive emigration to New Zealand, Australia, and the United States (especially Hawaii). Many Samoans also live in American Samoa. Samoans are the second-largest branch of Polynesians, and account for over 90% of the population. Most of the remaining Samoans are of mixed Samoan and European or Asian descent. Europeans, other Pacific islanders, and Asians make up less than 1% of the total. Over 99% of the population adheres to some form of Christianity. About half the population associates with the Congregational Christian Church of Western Samoa, a successor to the London Missionary Society. Other faiths include Congregational, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Latter-Day Saints, and Seventh-Day Adventist. Samoan is the universal language, but Samoan and English are official. Samoan is a Polynesian language similar to Maori, Tongan, Hawaiian, and Tahitian.

Government

During the 19th century, Great Britain, the United States, and Germany were in competition to gain control over the Samoa Islands. The three countries began to align themselves with rival Samoan factions, culminating in a civil war in 1889. After a brief reconciliation in 1898, in 1900 the governing powers split up the islands and made Western Samoa a German protectorate. New Zealand occupied the territory during World War I, and it administered the



Local market in Apia

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

islands as a mandate of the League of Nations during 1919–46. In 1946, the territory was made a trusteeship of the United Nations, and New Zealand formally committed to promote the development of Western Samoa toward ultimate self-government. Legislative elections began in 1957, and a constitution was adopted in 1960. On January 1, 1962, Western Samoa became an independent nation.

Executive power is in the hands of the head of state. Chief Susuga Malietoa Tanumafili II has lifetime tenure, becoming sole chief of state in 1963. Upon his death, a new chief of state will be elected by the Legislative Assembly to serve a five-year term. The prime minister is appointed by the chief of state with approval of the Legislative Assembly, and the cabinet is appointed by the chief of state with the prime

minister's advice. The unicameral Legislative Assembly (Fono) consists of 49 seats; 47 are elected from territorial districts by ethnic Samoans districts while the other two are chosen by non-Samoans on separate electoral rolls. Universal suffrage was extended in 1990.

Only matai (chiefs or head of family) are able to run for the Legislative Assembly. There are more than 25,000 matais in the country, about 5% of whom are women.

The prime minister is chosen by a majority in the Fono and is appointed by the chief of state. The prime minister's choices for the 12 cabinet positions are appointed by the chief of state, subject to the continuing confidence of the Fono.

The judicial system is patterned after practices in British courts.

Samoa custom is taken into account in certain cases. The Supreme Court has full civil and criminal jurisdiction for the administration of justice in Samoa.

Samoa's flag is a red field with a blue canton. The canton contains five white five-rayed stars representing the Southern Cross constellation.

Arts, Science, Education

Village schools provide four years of primary education. District schools draw the brighter pupils from village schools and educate them through the upper primary level. In the Apia area, urban schools provide a lower- through upper-primary curriculum. A major educational goal is to make Samo-

ans bilingual, with English as a second language. The language of instruction in secondary schools is English.

The University of the South Pacific School of Agriculture has a campus on the outskirts of Apia. The University of Samoa has courses in the arts and sciences. New Zealand provides extensive scientific and technical aid to Samoa.

Commerce and Industry

The economy is based primarily on agriculture, which accounts for about half of the gross domestic product, two-thirds of employment, and about 90% of exports. The bulk of export earnings comes from the sale of coconut oil and copra. Tourism has become the most important growth industry. Remittances from overseas workers and foreign aid are also important sources of foreign exchange. Production of taro, the primary food export crop, dropped 97% in 1993/94 when a fungal disease threatened the country's basic food crops. Samoa has one of the highest unemployment rates and lowest wages in Oceania.

Transportation

Most major roads are tar-sealed, but secondary roads are predominantly dirt and gravel, and may be overgrown. A four-wheel drive vehicle is recommended for travel on these roads. Travellers should be aware that vehicle safety regulations are rarely enforced and traffic violations occur routinely. Night driving is dangerous and not recommended.

Most of the paved roads are on the northern coast of Upolu. Buses and taxis provide public transport, but buses may run irregular schedules. Diesel-powered launches carry passengers and freight around the islands. Small motor vessels maintain services between Apia and Pago Pago, American Samoa. Cargo and passenger connections to New Zealand are made every two weeks.

Scheduled oceangoing vessels connect Samoa with Australian, Japanese, UK, and North American ports. Apia is the main port on Upolu, and Asau is a deep-water port on Savai'i. Polynesian Airlines flies daily from Apia to Pago Pago, where there are connecting flights to New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. Air Samoa and Samoa Aviation provide internal air service between Upolu and Savai'i.

Communications

Internal and overseas telecommunications services are available; the islands have one Intelsat satellite earth station. The government-controlled Samoan Broadcasting Service in Apia transmits radio programs on two stations in Samoan and English and provides direct broadcasts from the Fono. There is no domestic television service, but broadcasts are received from American Samoa. The *Samoan Times* is the only daily newspaper; *Samoa Weekly*, *Samoa Observer*, and *South Sea Star* are bilingual weeklies.

Health and Medicine

Health care facilities in Samoa are adequate for routine medical treatment, but are limited in range and availability. A national hospital is located in Apia and district hospitals are available on Savai'i and Upolu

The increase in obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular problems in recent decades is linked to the growing popularity of a Western diet high in processed starches, canned food, and sweets.

Medical Facilities

Health care facilities in Samoa are adequate for routine medical treatment, but are limited in range and availability. A national hospital is located in Apia and district hospitals are available on Savai'i and Upolu. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for

health services. U.S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the United States. The Medicare/Medicaid program does not provide payment for medical services outside the United States. Travelers to Samoa may wish to consider obtaining typhoid immunizations before arrival, because immunizations are not currently available to the public in Samoa. Supplemental medical insurance with specific overseas coverage including provision for medical evacuation may prove useful. Information on health matters can also be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through its international travelers hotline at (404) 332-4559 or via the CDC home page on the Internet: <http://www.cdc.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Mar. (2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day
June 1-3	ANZAC Independence
May/June	Whitsunday/Pentecost*
May/June	Whitmonday*
Aug. 7	Labor Day
Oct. (2nd Sun & Mon)	Children's White Sunday
Nov. 7	Arbor Day
Nov. 24	Women's Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Boxing Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve
	*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and an onward/return ticket are required for travel to Samoa. Visas are not required for a stay of up to 30 days. Further infor-

mation about entry requirements may be obtained from the Samoa Mission to the United Nations at 800 2nd Avenue, Suite 400J, New York, NY 10017, telephone (212) 599-6196, fax (212) 599-0797.

Samoa's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Samoa of items such as fruit, pets, firearms, and drugs. It is advisable to contact the Samoan Mission to the United Nations for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at the Embassy. The U.S. Embassy in Samoa is located in the John Williams Building, Fifth Floor, Beach Road, Apia. The Embassy is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every morning and by appointment at other times. The Embassy's mailing address is U.S.

Embassy, P.O. Box 3430, Apia, Samoa. The telephone number is (685) 21-631. The fax number is (685) 22-030. Americans may obtain updated information on travel and security for Samoa at the U.S. Embassy or by visiting the Embassy's home page at <http://travel.state.gov/samoa.html>.

Currency, Banking & Weights and Measures

The Samoan *tala* (ST) is broken into 100 *sene*. Notes are available in denominations of 100, 50, 20, 10, 5 and 2 tala. Coins are in denominations of 1, 2, 4, 10, 20, and 50 sene and 1 tala. The exchange rate is about 3.34ST=US\$1 (January 2001).

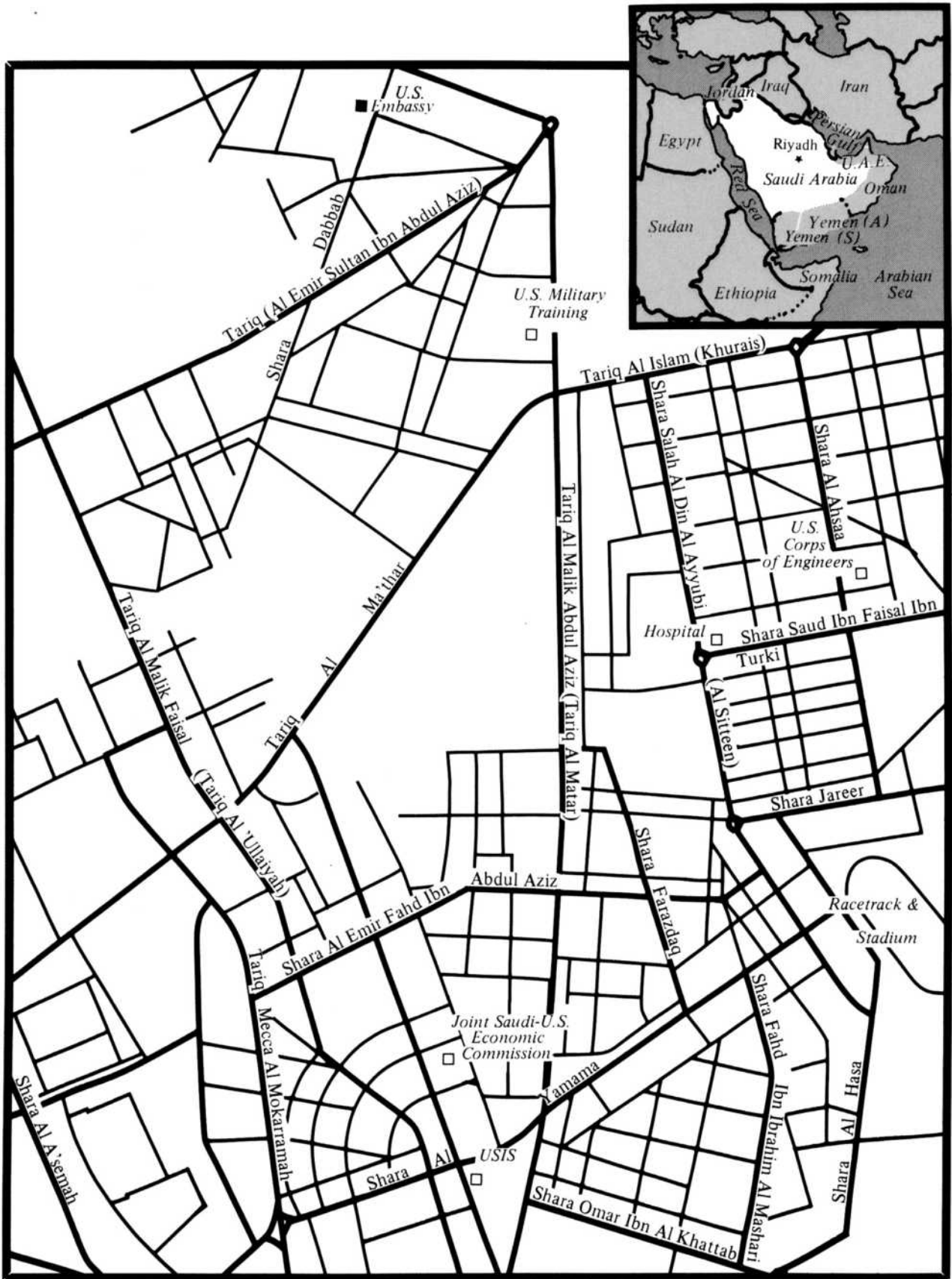
Credit cards are accepted on a limited basis. Travellers checks are generally accepted in major hotels, banks and tourist shops.

Disaster Preparedness

Samoa is located in an area of high seismic activity. Although the probability of a major earthquake occurring during an individual trip is remote, earthquakes can and will continue to happen. General information regarding disaster preparedness is available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov/crisismg.html>, and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) home page at <http://www.fema.gov>.

RECOMMENDED READING

Swaney, Deanna. *Samoa: Western & American Samoa—a Travel Survival Kit*. Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1994.



Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

SAUDI ARABIA

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Major Cities:

Riyadh, Dhahran, Jeddah, Makkah, Al-madinah

Other City:

Hofuf

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated May 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SAUDI ARABIA, a country of romance and legend, awakens memories from Lawrence of Arabia or scenes from some dimly remembered Hollywood epic. It has, indeed, a colorful past, an exciting present, and a bright future.

Saudi Arabia is about one-third the size of the U.S., comprised mostly of gravel and sand desert. Water from deep wells makes farming possible in some areas. Saudi Arabia has 25% of the Earth's proven oil resources and is the world's largest oil exporter. Islam, the only religion legally practiced in Saudi Arabia, plays a dominant part in the country's history and daily life. Because

it is the birthplace of the prophet Mohammed and the site of the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina, Saudi Arabia is considered Islam's Holy Land. It is in this context that Islamic legal traditions take precedence over all other government regulations.

For thousands of years Arabs have roamed the desert tending their herds and flocks, tilling the soil where water was plentiful, and trading goods brought by camel caravan, but the unified nation of Saudi Arabia has been in existence for little more than 50 years. The landscape is one of contrast—the visitor to Saudi Arabia will be rewarded with a visually enriching experience—an interesting blending of old and new. Oil income has enabled the country to modernize rapidly, but many of its desert customs and traditions still play an important role in day-to-day business transactions.

Saudis are a cultivated people with an ancient and glorious heritage. If you adapt to their ways, slow down, and follow their customs, you will find that living in Saudi Arabia is a rich experience.

MAJOR CITIES

Riyadh

Riyadh, the capital city with a population of over four million and an annual growth rate of 8%, is near the geographic center of Saudi Arabia. It is about 770 miles east of Jeddah and 280 miles west of Dhahran. Riyadh is connected to both cities by good highways and frequently scheduled Saudia Airlines flights. An express train runs from Riyadh to Dammam daily.

Riyadh has definite seasons with a wide range of temperatures and low humidity. From May through October, temperatures can reach 120°F to 130°F. From November through April, temperatures are mild and pleasant during the day with night temperatures sometimes falling as low as 30°F to 40°F in January and February. Some winter clothing is essential. Rainfall is minimal, but when it does occur, it is usually a downpour and city streets are quickly flooded.

About 13,000 Americans have registered with the Consular Office in Riyadh. Those not with the U.S. Government are with private business concerns or on contract with



Skyline of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

© Wolfgang Kaehler/Corbis. Reproduced by permission.

the Saudi Government. They are scattered throughout the city and its environs in single villas or compounds.

Food

Virtually all food items may be found in Saudi Arabia, except pork and alcohol products.

Several large supermarkets and a variety of specialty shops carry a full range of American and European food items as well as fresh produce and fish, frozen items, good meats, and fresh milk. There is a large open-air fruit and vegetable market where fresh produce, eggs, and chicken are reasonably priced.

Clothing

Men: During the 5-month hot season most men wear lightweight suits with short-sleeved shirts to work. Sport jackets are popular for

casual wear and evening social occasions. Formal wear is sometimes needed, but a dark suit is usually acceptable. Wool and heavier suits and jackets are worn in winter, and a lightweight jacket may be necessary for early morning and evening hours.

Men should dress in a conservative fashion when in public. Shorts, sleeveless shirts, or offensive T-shirts should not be worn downtown.

Men's clothing is available locally, but is expensive. Tailors will make suits for under \$200, not including fabric which is available locally at fairly reasonable prices.

A good variety of shoes is available locally, but not always in larger sizes. If your feet are difficult to fit,

you should bring plenty of shoes with you.

Women: Clothing made of natural fibers (cotton, linen, silk, and light weight wools in winter) are the most comfortable regardless of the time of year. Layered clothing is practical, especially in winter when morning temperatures are cool but rise rapidly during the day. Bring sandals, sun hats and/or head scarves.

Women should dress conservatively when in public—long dresses below the knee, sleeves below the elbow, a modest neckline, and no trousers. Wearing tight or revealing clothing is unacceptable in public and risks unpleasant confrontation with the Saudi religious police, the Mutawa. Non-Muslim women are not required to wear an abaya, a black cloak that covers the wearer from head to foot, however, many western

women, particularly in Riyadh, choose to wear an abaya and carry a head scarf in order to avoid harassment by the religious police. However, even with the abaya and scarf, harassment still occurs.

There are many women's clothing stores in Riyadh, ranging from the bargain variety to designer shops. Prices are high and there are no facilities for trying on items. Clothes can be returned, but only for an exchange, not a refund.

There are many dressmakers, but unless work is done in a private home, fittings are not permitted. If work is being done in a shop, you must take your measurements with you or an item to be duplicated. Dress patterns are not available locally, but most dressmakers can duplicate an existing item or copy a photograph or drawing quite easily. A wide range of fabrics is available in all price ranges.

Children: Children's clothing is available but expensive. Inexpensive clothing from the Far East can be found, but it is often of poor quality and sized to fit only smaller children.

The dress code for the Saudi Arabian International School (SAIS-R) Elementary School requires girls to wear blouses or dresses with sleeves. Boys should wear shirts with sleeves and appropriate pants. Through grade 3, boys and girls may wear loose-fitting short pants to school, provided the pants extend at least to the knee. In junior high, girls should wear blouses or dresses with sleeves or loose-fitting pants and tops. Boys should wear shirts with sleeves and long pants. Boys and girls may only wear sweat pants or shorts for physical education classes.

Supplies and Services

Riyadh has a wealth of shops and shopping malls. Almost everything is available from tropical fish and tanks to designer clothing. A full selection of American and European cosmetics, perfumes, and toiletries are available, but are more expen-

sive than in the U.S. If you take long-term medication, bring a supply to last until you locate a local source. Most prescription medicines are in stock at local pharmacies. If bringing medication with you, have a copy of your prescription available for Saudi customs inspectors.

Adequate laundry and dry cleaning services are available. There is a dry-cleaning service available through one of the major hotels.

Barbershops and hair stylists for men are located throughout Riyadh. Prices compare with those in the U.S. Public beauty shops for women are not permitted in the Kingdom.

Basic shoe repair is available and adequate.

Religious Activities

Only Islamic services are permitted in Saudi Arabia. However, discreet Christian services are held in various private group meetings. No open advertisements or notices may be distributed regarding their existence.

Education

The Saudi Arabian International School of Riyadh-American Section (SAISR-AM) for kindergarten through grade 9 has an enrollment of 1,800 students representing more than 50 nations. SAISR-AM is licensed by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. It is governed by a seven-member school board elected by the parents. The curriculum is American and instruction is in English. About 90% of the teachers and administrators are Americans or Canadians. The school term is from late August until the end of May with a 3-week Christmas vacation and about a 10-day spring break, not necessarily at Easter.

The school has three libraries with a total of 40,000 volumes, science labs, five fully-equipped computer laboratories, and a large, covered sports area. SAISR-AM offers art, band, music, typing, study skills, mechanical drawing, computer sciences,

English as a Second Language (ESL), French, and Arabic. Sports include boys' and girls' basketball, volleyball, softball, and soccer.

Learning Strategies classes supplement the regular curriculum for students who need additional help with organizational skills in grades 2–5. After school study labs are also offered to students in grades 3–5 who require minimal levels of remediation. A variety of after school enrichment activities are offered in grades 1–9, and often include drama, cooking, space camp, and yearbook. The number of students per class varies between 13 and 20, depending on enrollment, and all students are tested to determine classroom placement prior to beginning classes.

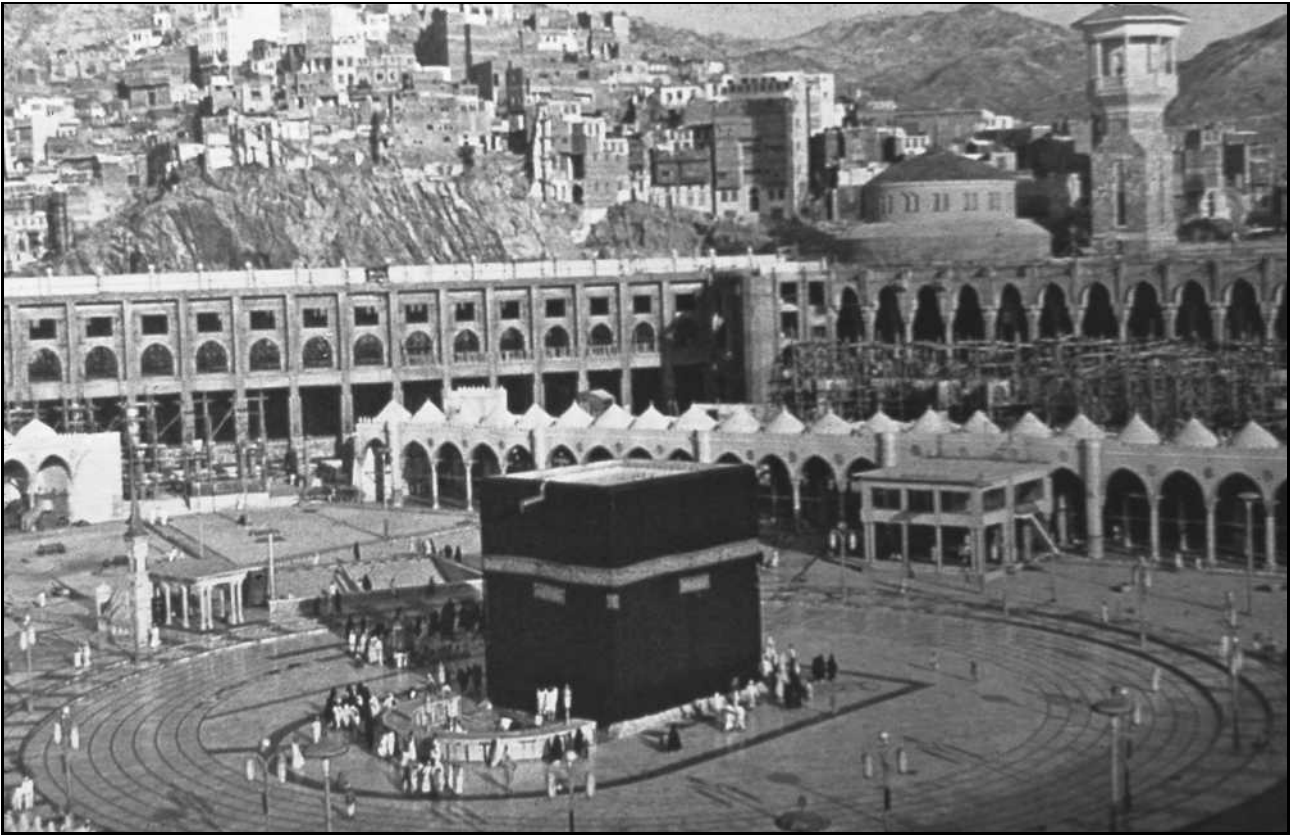
The school does not offer a comprehensive special education program. Programs for students with special needs are severely limited in terms of facilities, material, staffing, and community services for referrals. Students who have physical, emotional, or learning problems that cannot be appropriately remediated given the school's limitations will not be allowed to attend SAISR-AM. The school reserves the right to discontinue a student's enrollment if problems beyond the scope of the school program are discovered after initial acceptance.

The Saudi Arabian International School-British Section, for children from kindergarten through grade 8, is an alternative to the SAISR-AM. The school year extends from late September through the end of June. There is generally a waiting list. Small French and German schools also operate in Riyadh.

Sports

Tennis, swimming, and camping are the most popular outdoor sports in Riyadh. Two tennis leagues sponsor tournaments throughout the year, and several tennis pros in the city give lessons.

Several bowling alleys are located in Riyadh and some have women's



Aerial view of Mecca, Saudi Arabia

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hours. Horseback riding lessons are available at the Equestrian Club.

Two 18-hole golf courses are located on the outskirts of the city and the Intercontinental Hotel has a course in town. Fairways are shaped from sand, and golfers carry an astroturf tee mat. The greens are oiled sand.

Most public spectator sports are open to men only. The horse racing season is from October through April, and the camel races take place in March and early April and are sometimes open to women.

All health clubs and/or sports facilities for women have been closed.

A bicycle is useful for both recreation and as a quick means of transportation. A limited selection of bicycles at high prices are available locally; therefore, it is recommended that you bring a bike.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Camping and day trips in the desert are popular during the cooler weather, from November through March. You can buy tents and camping equipment locally.

Among the more popular sites within an hour's drive from Riyadh are Diriyah, Al-Kharj, and the camel trails. Diriyah is the ruined capital of the Al-Saud state established in 1726 and destroyed in 1818 by a punitive expedition of troops sent by the Ottoman Empire. Diriyah is currently being restored by the Ministry of Education's Department of Antiquities.

The Al-Kharj agricultural area, about one hour from Riyadh, is green with date palm groves and farms. The town itself is dominated by a castle built by Abdul Aziz. The camel trails are located along the escarpment southeast of Riyadh. Climbing the trails to the top of the escarpment is worth the beautiful

view of the surrounding hills, sand dunes, and river beds.

Hunting for fossils and desert diamonds (quartz crystals formed by fusion of sand particles by lightning) is another weekend pastime. These activities require the use of a four-wheel drive vehicle. Persons interested in desert recreation should consult the book, *Desert Treks from Riyadh*, available locally. The book charts out day and weekend trips and more extensive excursions for the adventurous.

Social Activities

American Community Services (ACS), located on the U.S. Embassy annex in a wadi near the Diplomatic Quarter, is an organization offering a great variety of activities to American expatriates in Riyadh. It has tours, both in and out of the country, seminars, classes (cooking, square dancing, survival Arabic, computer skills and many others), and provides a base for many support groups. Family counseling is also

available at ACS. ACS also shows movies on Thursday nights and runs a summer day camp for children.

The American Women of Riyadh (AWR) is open to all American women in Riyadh and meets monthly at the Embassy, featuring a guest speaker.

Musical and theatrical groups meet regularly and perform during the year. These events are not advertised publicly, but only by word of mouth. CLO usually has information about the Riyadh Choral Society, the Concert Band, Theater-Goround, and others.

Riyadh has several amusement parks and a zoo for children. Unfortunately, these are not open to women. Occasionally the school will organize a tour for the children and include the mothers.

There are many parks with playground equipment on the Diplomatic Quarter. They are not always well maintained and due to the number of picnicking Saudi families on weekends, are not generally available for use.

Various ethnic restaurants (Lebanese, Saudi, Thai, Turkish, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Philippine, and Continental) abound in Riyadh as do many American fast-food restaurants: Hardees, McDonald's, Burger King, TCBY, Taco Bell, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Dairy Queen, Pizza Hut, and Baskin-Robbins. The major hotels also have restaurant facilities. However, only those establishments with a family section will allow women - and many have restrictions on women unescorted by a male family member.

There are no cinemas in the Kingdom.

Dhahran

Dhahran is situated on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, about 280 miles from Riyadh and about 1,000 miles from Jeddah. To

the east in the Persian (Arabian) Gulf, lies the independent island state of Bahrain, accessible by a 15-mile causeway.

The term Dhahran is an Arabic word meaning two hills. It originally referred to a geological formation sighted from Bahrain in 1932 by American geologists and which looked promising for oil exploration. At this formation, the first producing oil well, number 7, was drilled in 1938. The site is today part of the Base Camp for Saudi ARAMCO, now one of the world's largest oil companies.

Dhahran is not actually a town but rather a geographic location, which includes a scattered collection of self-contained compounds in the center of the Al-Khobar-Dammam metropolitan area. These include the American Consulate General, the Dhahran International Airport, the King Abdul Aziz Royal Saudi Air Force Base, the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, and regional offices of the Ministry of Petroleum and of PETROMIN, the Saudi Government's petroleum distribution system.

Dhahran has over 50,000 people, most of them Saudi ARAMCO employees and their dependents living on the Base Camp or in the growing Doha Camp residential neighborhood. The Saudi ARAMCO Base Camp resembles, in many respects, a prosperous suburban community in the western U.S. with many of the facilities and standards of an American life style.

Al-Khobar, a thriving commercial center about 11 miles from Dammam, is the capital of the Eastern Province. Dammam has a population of about 130,000; Al-Khobar has a population of about 80,000. The two form a continuous metropolitan area. An estimated 1.6 million people reside in the Eastern Province, which is, in area, the largest of Saudi Arabia's 14 political subdivisions.

The resident American population of the Eastern Province was about

19,000 in mid-1996. Over half work for Saudi ARAMCO or for petrochemical joint ventures in Jubail, 75 miles north of Dhahran. Construction firms employ other Americans as contractors to the Saudi defense forces, the province's two universities, and various joint partnerships between Saudi and American companies. Most Americans live either on company compounds or on commercially operated housing compounds designed for foreigners. Others reside in individual homes scattered throughout the tri-city Dammam/Al-Khobar/Dhahran area, at Jubail, or in Saudi ARAMCO camps at Ras Tanoura and Abqaiq.

Food

A wide variety of food is available locally, and fresh fish, lamb, chicken, eggs, milk products, and some vegetables are produced locally. Most foodstuffs are imported, however, and food costs are somewhat higher than in Washington, D.C. Several large U.S.-style supermarkets are located in Al-Khobar, and you can find American brands.

Clothing

Merchants in both Al-Khobar and Dammam stock clothing from the U.S., Europe, and Asian countries. You can find shirts, lightweight suits, sweaters, and ties for men. Women can purchase stockings, lingerie, bathing suits, novelty, sports and lounging clothes, blouses, and dresses. Clothing supplies, however, for men and women are not constant or available in all sizes. Prices can be high and there are no facilities for women to try on clothes before purchasing.

Men: Lightweight clothing is suitable most of the year. Sportswear and business suits are acceptable at all times. In general, cotton or other natural fabrics are the most practical. Topcoats and overcoats are not required in Dhahran.

Standard summer wear for social occasions is a short-sleeved dress shirt, tie, and slacks with a blazer or summer weight suits. From Novem-

ber to April, medium-weight suits are generally worn. Cool, light-weight walking shoes with rubber soles are necessary in Saudi Arabia; leather soles wear out quickly in the sand.

Women: Women should wear non-revealing, loose-fitting clothes in public places. Long caftans are available locally and comfortable in the climate. Natural-fiber fabrics are most practical. Bring plenty of sandals, head scarves, and/or sun hats.

Entertaining at home is usually casual, although there are occasional formal dances and dinner parties. Many Saudi women dress elegantly for home entertaining, wearing expensive Paris creations. Very few days, even in winter, are cool enough to wear wool fabrics comfortably all day. Heavy and dark cottons or lightweight knits are most suitable for daytime wear. It turns much cooler in the evening, and woolen dresses, cotton knits, and silks are appropriate. A winter coat is not essential, but an in-between season coat is useful, as are sweaters and cardigans.

Saudi Arabian religious and social customs prescribe that Muslim women cover themselves completely in public. Western women, therefore, should dress conservatively when shopping in downtown Al-Khobar or Dammam and suburban markets. At a minimum, dresses should have a high neckline, sleeves that cover the elbow, and should be well below the knee. Many western women wear long-sleeved, floor-length cotton, shirtwaist dresses while shopping. Alternatively, slacks with a long over-shirt can be worn. Tight-fitting slacks and dresses, miniskirts, and shorts should not be worn in public places. To do so risks attracting unpleasant public attention and even arrest or reprimand by the Saudi religious police.

Children: School-aged children dress much as do their U.S. counterparts. Adolescent girls should wear conservative clothing similar to

their mothers' when going downtown to Al-Khobar or Dammam. Light-to-medium-heavy wool clothing for outdoor wear is needed when winter winds turn chilly and temperatures sometimes drop to near freezing at night. During the cool months children will need a medium-weight jacket or Windbreaker, prices are high and children's sizes are particularly difficult to find locally.

Supplies and Services

Standard toiletries, cosmetics, cigarettes, and tobacco are sold in Al-Khobar. You can also buy detergents, packaged water softeners, household cleaning equipment, and supplies locally.

Fabrics for both men's and women's clothing is readily found in Al-Khobar and Dammam. Tailors in these cities and in Bahrain can make both men's and women's clothing. They are adept at copying garments, although you may have to wait 2–4 weeks.

Shoe repair is fair to good for men's shoes and reasonably priced but poor for women's shoes. Two commercial laundries provide adequate services as do local dry cleaners.

Barbershops are located in Al-Khobar, at Saudi ARAMCO, and at the USMTM/NCO Club. The latter also has a good beauty shop, as does Saudi ARAMCO.

Religious Activities

Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country, and only Islam is allowed to be practiced. However, discreet arrangements exist to meet the needs of other religions.

Education

The Dhahran Academy, managed by the Saudi Arabian International School system, is an American school recognized by the Department of State's Office of Overseas Schools. It provides schooling for children from kindergarten through grade 9. Present enrollment at the Academy exceeds 1,250 children of 37 nationalities, of whom 26% are American. Most of the teaching staff

are recruited from the U.S. Two smaller private schools offer English-language, pre-kindergarten classes.

High school-aged children must be sent to boarding schools outside of Saudi Arabia. Numerous high school institutions are located in Europe, including those operated by the Defense Department's Division of Overseas Defense Dependents Schools (DODDS); DODDS also operates a high school in Bahrain, which has a boarding facility.

Sports

Swimming, boating, and picnicking are possible at three good beaches on Half Moon Bay. Fishing and snorkeling are generally good. Enthusiasts should bring skin diving, water-skiing, and fishing gear. Tennis rackets, bowling shoes, golf clubs (preferably old ones, as the sand will take its toll), and beach equipment are helpful. Camping in the desert is popular, so bring sleeping bags and other camping gear.

Tennis courts are open by invitation at Saudi ARAMCO. The King Fahd University also has tennis courts, but for men only. Saudi ARAMCO has facilities for racquetball, squash, and a bowling alley.

Some local hotels also have tennis or sports facilities open to the public for a fee, but men and women must use them at different times. Those seeking participation in team sports will find basketball and softball leagues. Saudi ARAMCO sponsors a world-class Little League softball team.

Usual sports attire is worn on the courts. Women should remember to dress modestly on the way to or from sports facilities or other compounds. Men are also discouraged from wearing shorts or bathing suits when not in a sports facility.

For children, Boy, Girl, and Cub Scouts, and Brownie troops are organized by the Dhahran Academy and by Saudi ARAMCO.



Old town, Souk Al-Alawi, in Jeddah

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Special interest clubs exist at Saudi ARAMCO. These include art, cooking, computers, natural history, and photography. Photographers need to be alert to local sensitivities about what can be photographed. Seek guidance before setting out with your camera.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Dhahran is situated in the middle of a modern high-speed highway network that permits easy travel to Riyadh and to other major towns in the Eastern province. Hofuf, an ancient Arab town in one of the world's largest oases, is only 2 hours away. There is a traditional mud-walled fort, a typical Arab market, a colorful Thursday camel market, and some unique caves. Qatif, another oasis about 20 miles away, has a bustling Thursday morning outdoor market and a 16th century Portuguese fort which is now a bath house.

In contrast, the new Jubail Industrial City, some 70 miles north of Dhahran, is a magnificent example of modern industrial planning. It contains 15 primary petrochemical industries, planned residential communities, and a large industrial port. Both the Royal Commission in Jubail and Saudi ARAMCO in Dhahran have modern, well-

designed exhibition centers open to the public.

The Dhahran area also has two large amusement parks with rides and games for children. Bahrain, linked to Saudi Arabia by the 15-mile King Fahd Causeway, is about one hour away by car. Bahrain, with its nightclubs, museums, and beaches, offers a pleasant change of pace from Dhahran.

Entertainment

There are no public theaters, concert halls, or movie theaters in Dhahran. Saudi ARAMCO shows movies, and amateur dramatic groups present an occasional stage play or musical. A local group sponsors several performances each year by professional classical musicians brought from Europe.

As is the case in all of Saudi Arabia, no nightclubs or bars are located in the Eastern Province, but several local hotels and restaurants serve excellent Middle-Eastern, Oriental, and Continental cuisine. A growing number of American-style, fast-food eating places are located in Al-Khobar.

Hotels and restaurants that have family rooms allow men and women to eat together. If the restaurant has no family room, only men may

patronize it. The Dining Hall/Snack Bar at Saudi ARAMCO is an American-style restaurant.

Shopping in Al-Khobar is a frequent diversion. Gold and silver jewelry in the traditional Bedouin styles, oriental carpets, and Middle-Eastern or south-Asian brass curios are popular buys. Two well-stocked toy stores exist in Al-Khobar. Several book stores exist, but English-language selections are limited. Tapes and video tapes exist, but are censored to remove scenes regarded as objectionable.

American TV sets receive only AFRTS broadcast, but European (PAL) system sets connected to a rotor antenna will receive English-language telecasts from stations at Saudi ARAMCO, Bahrain, Qatar, and sometimes Dubai. Most TV programming begins in the mid-afternoon and ends between 10 pm and midnight. Programming on these stations is of an international character with some U.S. and British programs included.

Saudi ARAMCO also operates four FM radio stations that play a variety of music.

Social Activities

You can make social life in Dhahran as active as you wish to make it. Besides the large American community, over 9,000 British, several hundred Canadians, and smaller communities of French and Germans live in the Dhahran area. Moreover, many Saudis and other Middle-Easterners speak English, and are comfortable with Americans.

Saudi hospitality is generous and expansive. An International Women's Group, as well as an American Airport Wives Club, meets monthly. By joining the American Businessmen's Association, male newcomers are able to meet their American counterparts. The Association holds periodic evening dinners to which wives are invited.

Jeddah

Located on the Red Sea, Jeddah is the country's chief port and is about the same latitude as Calcutta, Hong Kong, and Honolulu. What began as a little fishing village in ancient times grew into an important trading center as a result of its strategic position on the Spice Route, linking Southern Arabia with the lands to the North. The future of the settlement was assured in 641 A.D., when shortly after the advent of Islam, the Caliph Othman chose it as the principal port for Mecca. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 consolidated Jeddah's position as a major center of trade in the Middle East. Many of the great merchant houses seen today date from this period. The old city was surrounded by a wall from 1511 to 1947. Today, only replicas of the city gates remain.

With an estimated population of two million, Jeddah is a thriving commercial center. It becomes even busier during the Hajj, the last month of the Muslim year, when about one million Muslim pilgrims from all over the world arrive en route to Mecca, 45 miles away.

About 6,000 Americans live in the Jeddah district. Most work for American firms such as Raytheon, Litton, Daniel International, Lockheed, and Mobil under contract to the Saudi Government. Americans also work in international and Saudi companies. Many live in separate company or private housing compounds, although some live in houses and apartments scattered throughout the city.

Due to the huge expatriate work force in Saudi Arabia, the city has a cosmopolitan character. In addition to Americans and West Europeans, thousands of Lebanese, Indians, Sri Lankans, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Syrians, Palestinians, Egyptians, and Filipinos provide the labor for the vast infrastructure, which has been built with oil revenues.

Food

Modern, well-stocked supermarkets carry a complete assortment of Western and other imported goods as well as local products. Because of the national diversity of the labor force, you will find an unusually wide variety of food items. Fruit and vegetables are plentiful both locally produced and imported. Fresh milk and other dairy products are available.

Fresh fish and shrimp are widely available. Beef, lamb, veal, and chicken are plentiful and of good quality. Chicken is either locally raised or imported from France. Some U.S. frozen chicken and turkey can be found. Bread is excellent and inexpensive. Other items are more costly than in the U.S. Pork is not available locally.

Clothing

Men: Men should dress modestly in public at all times. They should not wear clothing revealing bare arms or legs such as tank tops or shorts, nor should they wear visible gold jewelry or religious symbols. It is possible to wear summer clothes year round. Evenings in January and February may require a sweater.

Short-sleeved sport shirts and slacks are appropriate for casual wear. Tennis shoes are recommended for Red Sea swimming as protection against the sharp coral.

Suits and dress clothes in general are best purchased in the U.S., but sports clothes, shoes, and ties are available locally at reasonable prices.

Women: Women should wear clothing with sleeves at least to the elbows, reasonably high necklines, and skirts well below the knees. If pants are worn, a loose-fitting top should cover the hips. Professional, conservative, loose-fitting business attire is appropriate, although suits are not generally worn due to the climate. Hosiery is a matter of personal preference, but not generally worn to work. Bear in mind that offices and homes are well-cooled,

although outside is warm and humid.

On the beaches of the Red Sea, women can wear beach attire only when well outside of the city or on private beaches.

Some boutiques feature European clothing, but choices are limited, prices are high, and there are no facilities for trying on articles. Fabric is plentiful, but mainly polyester in bright colors and bold prints. Cottons are harder to find.

Children: Most children's wear is available, but quality varies and prices fluctuate. Short shorts, midriff blouses, tank tops and sleeveless tops are not appropriate attire for school. Baby clothes and diapers are available.

Supplies and Services

Most personal and household needs can be met here. A full selection of perfumes, cosmetics, medicines, and toiletries are available. Many prescription medicines are stocked, but bring a supply of any prescribed medicine in case it is not sold here.

Dry cleaning is reasonable and dependable. Leather shoe heels wear out quickly and shoe repair is not of satisfactory quality.

Tailors in the city do a reasonable job of copying existing garments.

Religious Activities

Only Islamic services are permitted in Saudi Arabia.

Education

The Saudia-Saudi Arabian International School (S-SAIS), owned by Saudia Airlines, offers an American curriculum. It spans pre-kindergarten through grade 9, although it is attempting to add year 10 for the school year 1996-97.

Teachers are mostly recruited in the U.S., but some American dependent teachers are hired locally. Special teachers are available for physical education, music, band and orchestra, art, and remedial reading; and English and math for advanced stu-

dents. The school's administrative staff includes a superintendent, a curriculum coordinator, and counselors.

The school has a general science lab, combination auditorium-gymnasium, homemaking lab, computer rooms, a resource center for remedial math and English, and a media center. The library has a current collection of 14,500 volumes in the main campus school and 15,000 books in the primary school.

Extracurricular activities include softball, basketball, soccer, swim team (semiprivate), and intramurals twice a week. Varsity sports include track, volleyball, softball, and basketball. Other activities such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts are also available.

The school term lasts from late August through early June, totaling the 180 school days required in most U.S. schools. In addition to winter and spring breaks, there is a post-Ramadan break and a Hajj break when these occur during the school year.

The Continental School follows a British system and accepts children from ages 3 to 16. The school year follows the British system, the first term being September through December, the second term January through March, and the third term from April through early July. Children are accepted on a space-available basis, and it is difficult to obtain space for students over age 13.

Another British school, Jeddah Prep, accepts children up to age 13. Small French and German schools are also in operation.

Arabic nursery schools are numerous but not acceptable for Americans. Some satisfactory American- and British-managed nursery schools are available. Costs are about \$10 per morning.

Sports

Organized sports leagues for both adults and children include volley-

ball, softball, two running clubs, tennis, squash, basketball, little league baseball, bowling, cricket, and rugby. Except for these leagues and occasional soccer matches (open to men only), no regular spectator sports exist in Jeddah.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The area around Jeddah offers many points of interest—the Red Sea with its beautiful coral reefs, the lonely desert vistas, nearby oases, and the foothills.

Taif, in the mountains, is only a 2-hour drive from Jeddah. Located 6,000 feet above sea level, its cooler climate offers welcome relief in summer. The King and his ministers maintain summer homes and offices there to escape the searing heat of Jeddah and Riyadh. An excellent paved road winds its way up the escarpment and provides a panorama of surrounding mountains. A weekend at the Sheraton or Intercontinental Hotel in Taif makes a pleasant change.

Coastal waters around Jeddah provide exceptional deep-sea fishing. Shark, amberjack, barracuda, tuna, grouper, red snapper, sea bass, and an occasional sailfish are caught in nearby waters. If you are interested in deep-sea fishing, bring a good rod and reel. You can rent boats in Jeddah harbor, although the cost is high. Some residents enjoy sailing and boating and own wind surfing or light sailing vessels. Jeddah has two sailing clubs.

A protected inlet known as The Creek (Abhor Creek), about 30 minutes north of the city, is a popular spot for boating, swimming, snorkeling, diving, shell collecting, and picnicking.

Underwater scenes of the Red Sea are among the most beautiful in the world, making snorkeling and skin diving popular. An extraordinary variety of fish, in a stunning background of coral formations, provides a glimpse of an entirely different world. Snorkeling requires only tennis shoes, fins, snorkel, and mask.

You can buy these locally at prices slightly higher than in the U.S.

Scuba diving is also popular. You can dive in the Red Sea 9 months of the year without a wetsuit. Compressed air is readily available at a reasonable cost. Tanks, wet suits, regulators, and buoyancy compensators are available locally. If you are interested in scuba diving but not certified, instructors give lessons regularly at various locations around Jeddah. Rental diving equipment is also available, and a diving club is located in Jeddah.

Overnight desert camping trips, especially in winter, are popular. The desert provides a pleasant contrast to the bustling city and has a beauty of its own. Wadi Fatima and Wadi Khulays, oases not too far from Jeddah on the road to Mecca, offer scenic spots in the cooler months. Further away, Waba Crater, an explosion crater 1.8 miles across and 1,000 feet deep, is a unique destination for overnight camping.

Entertainment

Western forms of public entertainment do not exist in Jeddah. Since there are no cinemas, theaters, or operas, the Western community produces its own. It has two theater groups—a light opera group and a concert committee that features visiting artists and a choral society. The British Consulate General Cinema Club offers a weekly full length recent movie.

Dining out is a favorite pastime. The hotels have wonderful buffets at reasonable costs and international restaurants abound in Jeddah.

Shopping in the Jeddah souks (markets) for Arab handicrafts, old and new, is another favorite pastime. Oriental rugs, gold jewelry, and Bedouin silver are the most popular purchases.

Social Activities

Social activity in Jeddah revolves around the home, since no public entertainment or clubs exist. Buffet and sit-down dinners are typical forms of entertainment.

The American Ladies of Jeddah, a community-wide American Women's Club, meets monthly and sponsors recreational, social, and welfare projects. The group publishes a monthly newsletter. Additionally, the International Women's Group, a large organization open to all nationalities meets monthly.

Square dancing, Scottish dancing, and bridge are popular with the international community.

The Saudi Arabian Natural History Society meets monthly and features a speaker and a slide show on some aspect of Saudi Arabian natural history.

Makkah

Makkah (Mecca, to the Western world), one of Islam's greatest shrines, is certainly counted among Saudi Arabia's major cities but, by its very nature, it defies exact classification in that non-Muslims are forbidden to enter. It lies in the western part of the country, the Hijaz (or Hejaz), about 50 miles from the Red Sea coast, in a narrow valley surrounded by low hills. It is a modern city of more than 900,000 residents, and is the capital and administrative center of the province which bears its name.

The major industry of this holy city is tourism—but of a religious nature. Each year during the *Hajj* (Dhu al-Hijja), in the final month of the lunar year, more than a million worshipers from all over the world pour into Makkah for the pilgrimage which every Muslim hopes to make once in his lifetime.

Muhammad (whose name is also seen written Mohammed, or Mohamet) was born in Makkah in 570. His spiritual experiences led him to preach as a prophet here, but he eventually was forced to go to what is now Al-Madinah (Medina) to establish an Islamic state; he died there in 632. It was Muhammad who originated the practice of praying toward Makkah.

Modern Makkah is the site of the Great Mosque with its black-draped Kaaba. Here, also, is Umm Al-Qura University, which houses the faculty of Islamic studies among its other departments. There are schools and hospitals and a number of large bazaars.

Al-Madinah

The second most sacred city of Islam after Mecca, Al-Madinah (also referred to as Medinah or Medina) is located in western Saudi Arabia's Hejaz Province, about 215 miles north of Makkah. Along with agricultural products, the city's economy thrives on the pilgrim traffic and the businesses associated with it.

The city is no longer contained within walls; today there are wide avenues with luxury shops, coffeehouses, and over 40 hotels. Al-Madinah's roughly 500,000 residents have access to an airport and several roads. The Islamic University is located here.

Al-Madinah, formerly known as Yathric, was the terminus of Muhammad's journey from Makkah. He lived here until his death in 632. In 1924–25 the Hejaz Province was conquered by Ibn Saud and became part of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

OTHER CITY

HOFUF (also called al-Hufuf), in eastern Saudi Arabia, is about 200 miles east of the nation's capital. Its residents, mostly Muslim Arabs, make up half of the al-Hasa oasis' population. In Hofuf, the old Qaisariya bazaar coexists with modern office buildings. Hofuf's Western look is the result of the destruction of the old town walls, and of town planning. The nearby oil industry has aided in the city's commercial expansion. Farm products of the oasis are marketed here. The House of Sa'ud initially occupied Hofuf in the late 1700s. The Ottoman Turks made it their headquarters in eastern Arabia in 1871,

but were driven out by Ibn Saud in 1913. Hofuf's population is estimated at over 150,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Saudi Arabia lies in the area known as the Middle East—the meeting place of the continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe. It occupies much of the Arabian Peninsula and has a land area of about 830,000 square miles. The vast uninhabited Empty Quarter, al-Rub'al-Khali, is about the size of Texas and is the largest single body of sand in the world. The principal cultivated areas are in the Asir highlands in the Southwestern Province and in the Hasa Eastern Province along the Arabian Gulf.

The country is divided administratively into thirteen provinces, including the Hijaz, the Asir, the Nejd, the Al-Hasa, and the Northern Province, each headed by a governor or emir. The topography varies from vast stretches of sand to rugged mountain ranges. From the Gulf of Aqaba south to Yemen lies a dry, narrow, coastal plain bordering the Red Sea. East of the plain a narrow chain of mountains rises to 9,000 feet. This entire region, traditionally called the Hijaz, is now known as the Western Region. The same mountain chain rises to 12,000 feet and becomes more rugged in the south near Yemen. This portion, known as the Asir, has more rainfall than any other part of the country. Its dense population, villages, terraced farms, and green forests are more reminiscent of Africa than the Desert Kingdom.

The Nejd, the heartland of Saudi Arabia, is the ancestral home of the Al Sa'ud, the Kingdom's ruling family. This area contains the heaviest concentration of nomadic Bedouins who still lead their flocks of sheep, goats, and camels across the arid

land in search of pastures. But the Bedouin are modernizing and water trucks are now common sights near their tent encampments.

The Eastern Province, Al-Hasa, although largely desert, contains most of the nation's oil fields. Besides oil, two large oases, Qatif and Hofuf, support substantial agricultural production. Most activity and population are centered around the market city of Al-Khobar; Dhahran, site of the Saudi ARAMCO complex; and the busy port of Dammam.

Riyadh's climate has a greater difference between winter-summer temperatures than elsewhere in the Kingdom. Riyadh has practically no humidity, making summers especially dry and dusty. Dust, the single most disagreeable factor in Riyadh's climate both for housekeeping and for allergy sufferers, is a year-round problem. Annual rainfall averages 2-4 inches, usually concentrated in a few torrential rainfalls in early spring. Winters produce moderate daytime temperatures from November through February. Evenings are sometimes cool enough to require residential heating.

Jeddah, the commercial center, has a tropical climate—mild in winter and hot and very humid in summer. Summer lasts 8-10 months, with temperatures moderating in November. Relief from the heat often comes at sunset when sea breezes arrive. Except on the few occasions when it rains, the sun shines daily. Winter is comparable to the spring and summer seasons of resorts on the Mediterranean Sea.

Dhahran's climate, like that of Jeddah, is very humid, 60 to 90%, with summer lasting from April through October. The average maximum shade temperature in July and August is 110°F with "in sun" temperatures up to 150°F. From December to April, it is cooler and pleasant with indoor heating required at times, especially in the areas north of Dhahran.

Rainfall in both Jeddah and Dhahran is sparse, about 3-4 inches a year concentrated in a few heavy showers during fall and spring. Because of the high humidity, care should be taken in both Jeddah and Dhahran to store items in air-conditioned areas to prevent mildew.

Throughout Saudi Arabia, winds blow sand and dust into cars and homes, marring finishes and damaging unprotected equipment. Occasional full-fledged dust/sandstorms last 1-4 days and can aggravate respiratory problems.

Insect pests are not much of a problem, although flies can be bothersome during the cooler months, particularly in the desert. Mosquitoes are abundant at certain times of the year. Roaches, ants, and termites do invade the home, but insecticides control them well. Snakes are seldom seen but, along with scorpions, do exist and have been found on the compounds.

Population

In 2000, Saudi Arabia's population was estimated to be over 22 million. Until the 1960s most of the population was nomadic or semi-nomadic. Urbanization has advanced quite rapidly, and today about 95% of the population is settled.

Saudis are ethnic Arabs, but there has been some intermingling with Turkish, Iranian, Indonesian, Indian, and African peoples due mostly to pilgrims who immigrated and settled in the Hijaz along the coast of the Red Sea.

Many Arabs from nearby countries are employed in the Kingdom, as well as significant numbers of expatriate workers from North America, South Asia, Europe, and the Far East.

Arabic is, by royal decree, the official language of business. In the spoken language there are several regional variations in dialect. A knowledge of Arabic is helpful but not essential, since in urban areas and among middle- and upper-class

Saudis, English is widely used and most shopkeepers speak and understand English. English is acknowledged as a second language and is taught in secondary schools. Despite the government's emphasis on English, many older people and policemen or taxi drivers do not speak or understand it.

Islam is the official religion, and the government considers it a sacred duty to safeguard the two greatest shrines of Islam, the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Great Mosque of Mecca, with the cubed, black-draped Kaaba at its open-air center, is the major focal point of Islam. It is the Kaaba toward which all Muslims pray. Travel by non-Muslims into the cities of Mecca and Medina is prohibited.

Two Islamic religious observances during the year change the pace of daily life dramatically. Ramadan, the ninth month of the lunar year, is the period when Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, and smoking from sunrise to sunset. Non-Muslims are also required to refrain from eating, drinking, and smoking in public. At sunset each day, fasting ends as Muslim families gather to feast and to exchange greetings. Following Ramadan is Id Al-Fitr, a time of feasting, gift giving, and visits to homes of family members.

The second religious observance is the Hajj, the pilgrimage to the holy cities prescribed as a religious duty for Muslims. Every Muslim who can bear the expense is required to make the Hajj once during his or her lifetime. Each year, as the holy days of Hajj approach, several million Muslims from many nations arrive in Jeddah by land, sea, and air en route to Mecca and the Plain of Arafat, where the religious rites take place. They are joined by Saudis and resident expatriate Muslims in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, making the Hajj the largest gathering of humanity at one time in the world. The last days of Hajj celebrate the feast of the sacrifice, Eid al-Adha.

Although many aspects of life in Saudi Arabia are becoming Westernized, traditional customs can make living in the Kingdom difficult. Flexibility and patience are necessary in dealing with everyday affairs as observance of local customs is usually of greater importance than one's diplomatic status.

Many social events are only for men, and, among the more conservative Saudi men, female family members are never mentioned in conversation. Although many Saudi women are educated in the West, and a great many of them are enterprising businesswomen or professionals, most of their social functions are for ladies only. Only occasionally will a Saudi woman attend a mixed function. However, it is useful to keep in mind that with over 70 diplomatic missions and many thousands of expatriates and Americans resident in the Kingdom, opportunities for socializing in a more western setting are numerous.

Saudi women appear veiled in public, wearing the "abaya," the traditional black cloak that covers the wearer from head to foot. Americans in Saudi Arabia should respect local traditions and customs and take care not to offend sensitivities. Women should wear long dresses, well below the knee, with long sleeves and avoid trousers. Non-Muslim women are not required to wear an abaya, but should dress conservatively (loose fitting dresses that cover well below the knee with long sleeves and a high neckline) when in public. However, some western women, particularly those living in the Riyadh area and in the more conservative central region, wear an abaya when in public places, and carry a head scarf in order to avoid harassment by the religious police known as the Mutawwa'in. However, even with the abaya and scarf, harassment still occurs.

The Mutawwa'in (members of the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice), literally translated as "enforcers" and sometimes referred to as "religious

police," comprise a special agency of the Saudi Government with specific powers to enforce religious stricture. Whatever may be written or whatever even a Mutawwa'in leader may say, individual Mutawwa'a attempt to enforce their own versions of modesty.

Under Saudi customs, it is prohibited for unmarried persons of the opposite sex to be together in public unless they are family members or close relatives. Public displays of affection, holding hands and kissing are also prohibited. Some Mutawwa'in try to enforce the rule that men and women who are beyond childhood years may not mingle in public, unless they are family or close relatives. Mutawwa'in may ask to see proof that a couple is married or related. Women who are not accompanied by a close male relative sometimes are not served at certain restaurants, particularly fast-food outlets. In addition, many restaurants no longer have a "family section" in which women are permitted to eat. Due to these restrictions, dating in the traditional sense can be problematic for single travelers.

Local custom prohibits photographing Arab women, and the Saudi Government requests that you not photograph poor areas or beggars. Excessive use of a camera may attract unfavorable attention, so take photographs discreetly. Photography of airports, ports, industrial, or military facilities is not permitted.

Except for American business representatives and official visitors, few Americans visit Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Government does not issue tourist visas and even business visit visas are difficult to obtain. Hajj visas (good for 30 days) are issued only to Muslims.

Public Institutions

The original area of Saudi Arabia ruled by the Al-Saud was the Nejd, the central and more tribal part of Saudi Arabia. During the first 30 years of the 20th century, the

regions of the Hijaz, the Asir, and the oil-rich Eastern Province (the Al-Hasa) were brought under Saudi rule. Today, Saudi Arabia is a traditional Islamic monarchy ruled by a King chosen from the direct descendants of Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

The Council of Ministers performs executive and legislative functions, examines proposed legislation, and makes recommendations to the King. It is composed of heads of ministries, separate agencies, and other advisers appointed by the King, who is also Prime Minister. Once a recommendation is made and a course of action is decided upon, the King issues a royal decree, turning the decision into law.

Saudi Arabia's legal system, the "Shari'ah," is the body of Islamic jurisprudence derived from the Koran and from traditions of the Prophet Mohammed. It governs both civil and criminal law. Interpretations of the law are made by the Ulema, men learned in traditional jurisprudence. In cases not covered by the Shari'ah, administrative decisions are made by civil officials. Local commercial councils issue decisions based on customary commercial law or practice. The Board of Grievances, which has some of the functions of a national appeals court, hears civil and commercial cases. Every Saudi citizen has the right to have grievances heard by the King.

Saudi Arabia is divided into 14 administrative districts. The governors, or emirs, of these subdivisions report to the Minister of the Interior and often directly to the King. Lesser emirs, who function at a district or city level, report to the Interior Ministry or provincial governor. Some communities, including Jeddah, have municipal councils whose members are appointed by the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs.

Commerce and Industry

Saudi Arabia's first producing oil well was completed in 1938, but full-scale commercial production did not begin until after World War II. Today, Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil exporter. Most oil is shipped in tankers through the Arabian Gulf or through the Petroline pipeline to the Red Sea. The primary company developing the country's oil resources is the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi ARAMCO), formerly the Arabian-American Oil Company, now a wholly owned Saudi entity.

Oil accounts for 90% of export earnings, 75% of all government revenues, and 40% of the GNP. Income from the Hajj, once the mainstay of the government, continues to grow. Services provided to pilgrims now cost more than the income generated, but the pilgrimage is still a major stimulus to economic activity in the Hijaz or Western Province.

Saudi Arabia has no labor unions, but Saudi labor laws provide for worker protection. The supply of skilled Saudi workers is increasing due to improved technical education and training but still remains in short supply. Expatriates fill the gap with an estimated four-five million foreigners residing in Saudi Arabia. Most manual labor is performed by Filipinos, Sri Lankans, Bangladeshis, Egyptians, Indians, and Pakistanis. Middle- and upper-level technical and professional personnel, especially in commerce and construction, include Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians, Palestinians, and Jordanians as well as Filipinos and Pakistanis. Large numbers of Westerners occupy technical, professional, and managerial positions.

The government continues to develop new petrochemical industries such as paints, fertilizers, and plastics. Despite increased industrial and agricultural production, Saudi Arabia still relies heavily on imports. Increasingly high customs duties have been imposed to limit the flow of imported goods. Still, the

Kingdom has achieved basic self-sufficiency in some agricultural staples, including wheat and dairy products.

The U.S. is Saudi Arabia's largest trade partner, barely edging out Japan, but European and other Asian countries are also becoming increasingly tough competitors. Major U.S. civilian exports are automobiles and parts, barley, telecommunications equipment, cigarettes, trucks, rice, air-conditioners, and aircraft.

Transportation

Local

The national bus company, Saudi Arabian Transport Company (SAPTCO), operates service within major cities. Buses have separate compartments for women and the bus stops are segregated by gender.

Taxis, also called limousines, are expensive and not always reliable. Taxi drivers may speak limited English.

Regional

Major airline carriers servicing the Kingdom are Saudia (the national airline), TWA, British Airways, Air France, Lufthansa, and most other European and Middle Eastern airlines. Direct flights are available from most major European cities. Saudia flies between New York to Riyadh via Jeddah five times a week during the summer season and two times a week during the winter season. TWA has flights three times a week between New York City and Riyadh through Cairo. Only Saudia is permitted to make domestic flights. Numerous airlines service Bahrain, a one-hour drive from Dhahran.

Saudi Arabia has more than 5,000 miles of paved roads with modern highways linking major cities. Riyadh is a 10-hour drive from Jeddah and a 4-hour drive from Dhahran. Scattered service stations en route provide gasoline and repair service. These are not, however, the Western equivalent of rest stops.

A railroad operates between Damman, on the Arabian Gulf, and Riyadh. The trip averages 4-5 hours with two stops en route. There are two trains daily on weekdays and one train daily on weekends. Private, air-conditioned compartments are available for groups of up to five people.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

A fax machine is very helpful for the transfer of information, especially for women who do not always have the mobility to which they are accustomed.

It is possible to have access to the popular communication bulletin board services and communication networks through a subsidiary of Saudi PTT. Charges are based on the time for which the line is used and the amount of data sent. Thus, if you are bringing a computer you may wish to consider including a modem for this or for using a computer fax program.

General phone directories are available in Arabic, but are not widely distributed. Telephone service between Riyadh, Taif, Dhahran, Jeddah, and other major cities in Saudi Arabia is good. Direct, long-distance international dialing is available. The cost to dial the U.S. via Saudi PTT is about U.S. \$2.25 per minute. Connections are excellent, but it is much cheaper to have friends and relatives call you from the U.S. or to call using a calling service.

Commercial telegrams may be sent from any city in the Kingdom.

Radio and TV

In Riyadh and Jeddah, the English service of the Saudi Radio system broadcasts news, music, features, and talk shows 6 hours daily. The Saudi Radio Service in Dhahran does not broadcast in English, but Saudi ARAMCO has four FM stereo stations featuring country, easy listening, classical, and pop music as well as Associated Press news sum-

maries. Neighboring Bahrain has English service on FM, offering 14 hours daily of music, news, and features.

Shortwave reception is not always good, but VOA and AFRTS provide music, news, sports commentary, and features. VOA broadcasts 11 hours daily in English to the Middle East. BBC reception is good 18 hours a day.

Saudi TV operates two channels: one in Arabic and the other in English, both broadcast on the European standard, ME/SECAM. The English-language channel shows many American and British programs as well as a variety of children's programs and cartoons. All programs are censored, and few current TV programs or movies are shown because of the Kingdom's strict moral codes.

Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) is available in Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran and offers a variety of American sitcoms, sporting events, movies and news.

In Riyadh the United States Employees Recreation Association (USERA) offers a 5-channel cable TV service for a nominal yearly fee. Program broadcasting currently consists of two satellite feeds from Armed Forces Radio Television Service (AFRTS), CNN International, and two local Saudi channels. AFRTS offers a variety of American sitcoms, sports events, movies, and news. Satellite Cable service is also available for an additional monthly fee. Programs are broadcast in several different system formats—PAL, SECAM, and NTSC3.58, limiting the utility of American standard TVs.

Dhahran has access to the Saudi ARAMCO TV system, which uses the PAL European system. American-standard TVs cannot receive this transmission. In addition to American movies, serials, and programs, Saudi ARAMCO TV carries a delayed version of Saudi TV's English newscast. Bahrain TV operates an all-English channel that can

be clearly received all year round in Dhahran, offering 6-8 hours daily (longer on weekends) of American and European movies, shows, and serials as well as regular news. The U.A.E. and Qatar also have all-English channels that can be received in Dhahran much of the year. You can use a roof antenna to pick up telecasts from Kuwait and Oman.

A Saudi TV channel in English is received on SECAM. Multi-system TVs are available locally at a reasonable price.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

International editions of magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *Economist* reach newsstands only a few days late. *The International Herald Tribune*, *London Times*, *USA Today*, and three locally published English newspapers (the *Riyadh Daily*, *Arab News*, and the *Saudi Gazette*) are available in Riyadh. Foreign publications are always censored.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Good dental care is available in both Jeddah and Riyadh, although it is more expensive than in the U.S.

Pharmacies carry a wide selection of drugs. The drugs are generally European brands or American drugs listed by their European names and of a different dosage than that used in the U.S. If you are on a regularly prescribed medication (contraceptives, antihypertensives, cardiac drugs, medication for migraine headaches, etc.) or have a favorite brand, bring an adequate supply.

Saudi Arabia has strict penalties for violators of its narcotics laws. Prescription drugs in small quantities, clearly labeled, should cause no difficulties. Problems arise when they are in large quantities, unlabeled, or lack documentation, such as a copy of the prescription, or when

they are deemed illicit by Saudi authorities. Many drugs sold in nearby countries without a prescription are considered illegal here. Individuals are arrested for possession of these drugs.

Preventive Measures

Meningococcal AC vaccine is required for travelers from the U.S. All persons who are arriving in Saudi Arabia should receive this immunization to avoid having to receive it at the port of entry. Certain other immunizations are required when arriving from surrounding countries. Typhoid, tetanus, oral polio, Hepatitis B, and DPT immunizations should be up to date. The incidence of Hepatitis A is low, and gamma globulin is no longer given regularly. However, Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for those who do not have antibodies. Malaria is only found in the southwestern section of the country and regular prophylaxis is not required.

Schistosomiasis is ever present, and all travelers should avoid swimming in freshwater lakes. Brucellosis is endemic; all dairy products consumed should be pasteurized. Although the city water in Riyadh is usually potable, bottled water is preferred for consumption. You need not soak fruits and vegetables, but thoroughly clean all produce. In the major cities, the restaurants patronized by Westerners are safe. Bottled water is readily available.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travelers usually arrive in Saudi Arabia by plane at one of the three international airports—King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, King Abdul Aziz International Airport in Jeddah, or Dhahran International Airport in Dhahran. All three of the airports are serviced by a great number of airlines in addition to the state-owned airline Saudia.

Travel to Makkah (Mecca) and Medina, the cities where the two holiest mosques of Islam are located, is forbidden to non-Muslims. American Muslims who are not resident in Saudi Arabia but who plan to participate in the annual Hajj pilgrimage to the holy cities of Makkah (Mecca) and Medina should pay close attention to the following:

All travel plans should be made through a travel agent in order to book accommodations in advance. Hajj visas are required and are valid only for travel to the two holy cities. Onward travel to Riyadh or other cities in Saudi Arabia is not permitted.

Foreign Muslim residents of the Kingdom may perform the Hajj once every five years. Advance approval must be obtained from an immigration office with the approval of the Saudi sponsor.

Passports valid for at least six months and visas are required for entry. Visas are issued for business and work, to visit close relatives, and for transit and religious visits. Visas for tourism are issued only for approved tour groups following organized itineraries. Airport and seaport visas are not available. All visas require a sponsor, can take several months to process, and must be obtained prior to arrival. Women visitors and residents are required to be met by their sponsor upon arrival. Women traveling alone, who are not met by sponsors, have experienced delays before being allowed to enter the country or to continue on to other flights.

Visitors to Saudi Arabia generally obtain a meningitis vaccination prior to arrival. A medical report or physical examination is required to obtain work and residence permits.

Residents working in Saudi Arabia generally must surrender their passports while in the Kingdom. The sponsor (normally the employer) obtains work and residence permits for the employee and for any family members. Family

members of those working are not required by law to surrender their passports, though they often do. Residents carry a Saudi residence permit (Iqama) for identification in place of their passports. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates General in Saudi Arabia cannot sponsor private American citizens for Saudi visas.

Foreign residents traveling within the Kingdom, even between towns in the same province, carry travel letters issued by employers and authenticated by an immigration official or a Chamber of Commerce office. Police at all airports and dozens of roadblocks routinely arrest and imprison violators.

Residents in Saudi Arabia who are departing the country must obtain an exit permit prior to leaving and an exit/reentry permit if they intend to return to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi sponsor's approval is required for exit permits. A married woman residing in Saudi Arabia with her husband must have her husband's approval to receive an exit permit. The father must approve the departure of any children. The U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulates General cannot sponsor private U.S. citizens for an exit permit under any circumstances. Temporary visitors normally do not need an exit permit but may be prevented from departing the country if they are involved in a legal dispute.

Saudi customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning importation into Saudi Arabia of such banned items as alcohol products, weapons and any item that is held to be contrary to the tenets of Islam. This includes non-Islamic religious materials, pork products, and pornography. Saudi customs and postal officials broadly define what is contrary to Islam, and therefore prohibited. Christmas decorations, fashion magazines, and "suggestive" videos may be confiscated and the owner subject to penalties and fines. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington or one of Saudi Arabia's consulates in the United States for specific informa-

tion regarding customs requirements.

Penalties for the import, manufacture, possession, and consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs are severe. Convicted offenders can expect jail sentences, fines, public flogging, and/or deportation. The penalty for drug trafficking in Saudi Arabia is death. Saudi officials make no exceptions. Customs inspections at ports of entry are thorough. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates General have no standing in Saudi courts to obtain leniency for an American convicted of alcohol or drug offenses.

Besides alcohol products and illicit drugs, Saudi Arabia also prohibits the import, use, or possession of any item that is held to be contrary to the tenets of Islam. The private ownership of weapons is prohibited. Imported and domestic audiovisual media and reading matter are censored.

Americans living in or visiting Saudi Arabia are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh or the Consulates General in Dhahran and Jeddah. U.S. citizens who register at the U.S. Embassy or the U.S. Consulates General may obtain updated information on travel and security within Saudi Arabia and can be included in the warden network.

The U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is located at Collector Road M, Riyadh Diplomatic Quarter. The international mailing address is P.O. Box 94309, Riyadh 11693. Mail may also be sent via the U.S. Postal Service to: U.S. Embassy, Unit 61307, APO AE 09803-1307. The Embassy telephone number is (966) (1) 488-3800, fax (966) (1) 488-7275.

The U.S. Consulate General in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, is located between Aramco Headquarters and the old Dhahran Airport at the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals highway exit. The international mailing address is P.O. Box 38955, Doha-Dhahran 31942. Mail may also be sent via the U.S. Postal

Service to: Unit 66803, APO AE 09858-6803. The telephone number is (966) (3) 330-3200, fax (966) (3) 330-0464.

The U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, is located on Palestine Road, Ruwais. The international mailing address is P.O. Box 149, Jeddah. Mail may also be sent via the U.S. Postal Service to: Unit 62112, APO AE 09811-2112. The telephone number is (966) (2) 667-0080, fax (966) (2) 669-3078 or 669-3098.

Special Information

Saudi authorities do not permit criticism of Islam or the royal family. The government prohibits the public practice of religions other than Islam, although private worship by non-Muslims generally is permitted. Non-Muslims suspects of violating these restrictions have been jailed.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The Saudi Arabian monetary unit is the riyal (SR), which is divided into 100 halalahs. Notes are issued in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, and 500. Coins are in 5, 10, 25, and 50 halalah denominations but they are being phased out. The riyal is quoted in dollars but based on Special Drawing Rights (SDR). As the SDR/dollar rate varies, the official riyal/dollar rate is revalued at intervals to keep within a narrow range around US\$1=SR 3.75.

The riyal is readily convertible and is one of the world's most stable currencies. Most foreign currencies can be converted against it.

Commercial banks are located in all the major cities. Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran have many banks that were formerly foreign-owned but have been converted into joint stock companies with majority ownership by Saudi interests; e.g., Citibank has a minority interest in the Saudi American Bank.

Saudi Arabia is still a cash-oriented society, although acceptance of checks and major credit cards is growing.

The metric system is the official standard of measurement, although Saudi Arabia still uses older Arab weights and measures. Saudis use the Muslim lunar calendar, which is about 12 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar used in most other countries. Consequently, exact dates of official local holidays change each year.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

.....	Id al-Adha*
.....	Hijra New Year*
.....	Ashura*
.....	Mawlid an Nabi*
.....	Lailat al Kadr*
.....	Id al-Fitr*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

Note: Saudi Arabia prohibits importation of some of these books.

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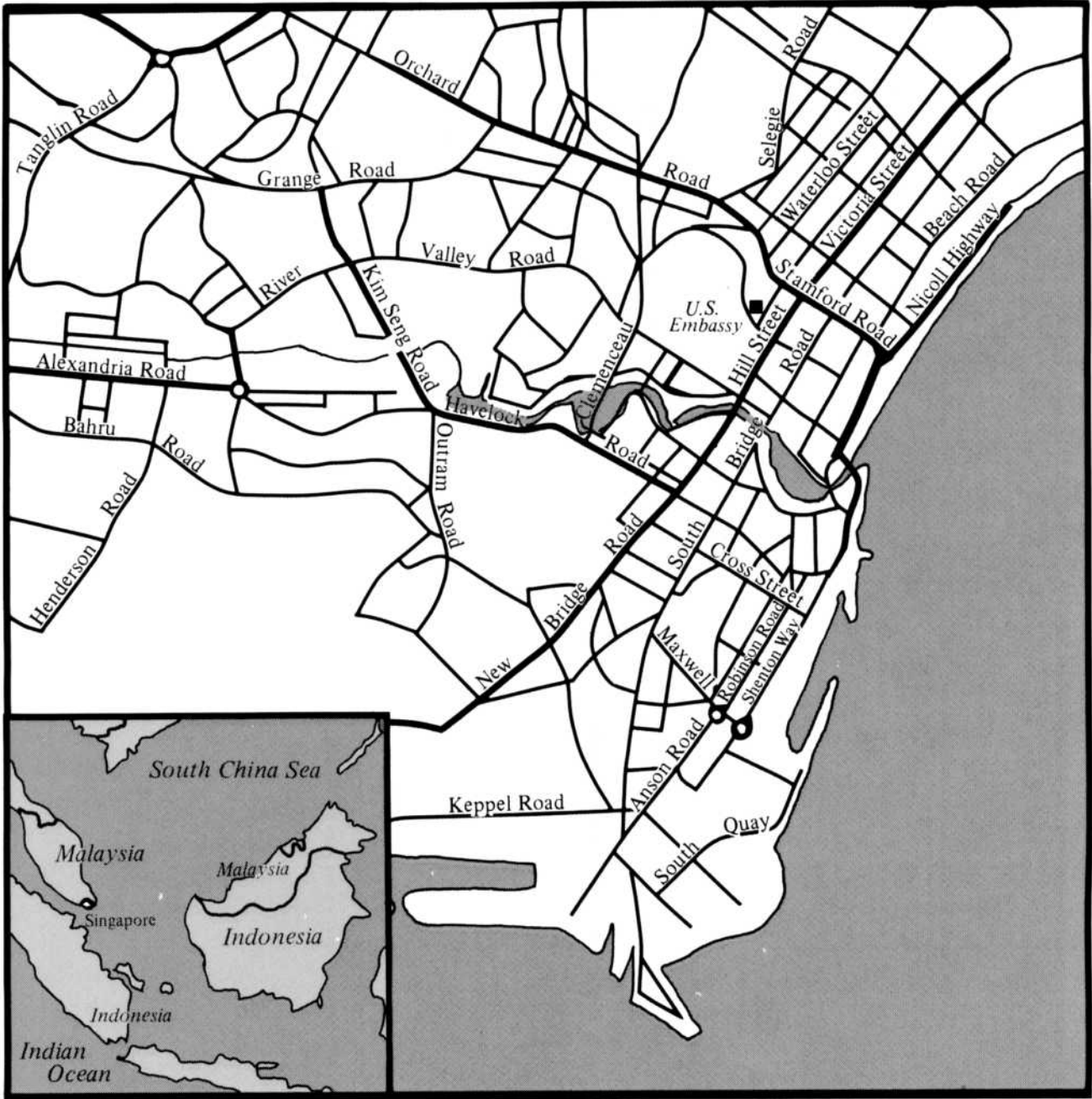
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Singapore, Singapore

SINGAPORE

Republic of Singapore

Major City:
Singapore

Other City:
Jurong

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Singapore. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Since the dynamic, modern metropolis of **SINGAPORE** attained its independence in August 1965, its capable leadership has been molding it into a model of social and economic progress and multi-racial harmony. A former British colony, and later a self-governing member of the British Commonwealth and (for two years) of the Federation of Malaysia, the Republic of Singapore remains a major port of the East, and one of the world's great commercial centers.

Singapore ranks with Japan and Brunei as one of the most prosperous countries in Asia. One of the busiest and cleanest ports in the world, it throbs with activity. It is a

melting pot of Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Western cultures, each endeavoring to maintain its own identity and rich heritage.

MAJOR CITY

Singapore

Singapore is both a city and a republic. The entire country is almost entirely urban and suburban in nature and, because of this, the distinction between Singapore and Singapore City is disappearing. Therefore, all national information applies to the city as well.

The modern city was established in 1819 by Sir Stamford Raffles of the British East India Company. Centuries earlier, it had been known as Temasek, or "Sea Town." According to legend, its current name was given by a prince of the Srivijaya (Hindu-Malayan) empire who, upon landing at Temasek, saw an animal resembling a lion; hence, Singa Pura, or Lion City.

The settlement begun here by Raffles attracted enterprising merchants and industrious immigrants from throughout the Malay peninsula and the islands of the Indonesian archipelago. Soon came the

Chinese, Indians, British, Arabs, and Ceylonese whose descendants comprise today's Singaporean population.

Separate areas were designated for the many and varied ethnic groups who came to seek new and better lives and, although there has been considerable assimilation and resettlement, Singapore retains areas where traditions of the past continue. Narrow roads, vibrant street activity, mosques and temples, and unique sights and sounds all add to the color and fascination of this exotic city. The harbor, the parks and gardens, and the colonial heart of Singapore create still another, but equally interesting, aspect of this Southeast Asian melange.

Singapore, which became part of the Straits Settlements (British crown colony) in 1826, was made a separate British colony in 1946. It was a Malaysian state from 1963 to 1965, when it established its independence as a republic. During World War II, Singapore was under Japanese occupation for three-and-a-half years.

Clothing

Lightweight trousers, shirt (long- or short-sleeved) and tie are appropriate office wear. Many men keep a jacket and tie on hand only for more formal events. Suitable fabrics for

trousers and suits are lightweight dacron, cotton blends, or other washable fabrics.

Ready-to-wear shorts, worn for sports, and trousers are available in Singapore. Some men have their clothing tailor-made at about the same cost as a better quality ready-to-wear suit in the U.S. Workmanship is generally good.

A variety of British and U.S. men's items, such as shirts, socks, underwear, handkerchiefs, ties, and accessories, are sold in Singapore. U.S. items are usually more expensive here—size 34 waist and above are not easily obtained. U.S.-made shoes, however, are not available. Some men, especially those with small feet, have found locally acquired shoes comfortable and well fitting; lasts tend to be wider than U.S. styles. European shoes also are available, but costlier. American sizes nine and above are scarce and at times difficult to find.

Cool and washable cottons and cotton blends are the best fabric choices for women in Singapore's heat and humidity. Frequent laundering is necessary, and clothes fade and wear more rapidly here than in the U.S. Clothing that requires dry cleaning is not recommended, as few facilities meet U.S. standards. Light colors are cooler for day, although both dark and light colors are worn. Short- or long-sleeved and sleeveless dresses can be worn, depending on air conditioning and personal preference.

In the office, women wear dresses or pantsuits; a sweater is useful because of the air conditioning. Casual, summer daytime wear is appropriate for other everyday activities. Singaporeans dress conservatively but stylishly and are not usually seen in bare-shoulder or bare-midriff dresses during the day. Shorts and pants are worn for most sports; shorts are considered inappropriate on the street or for shopping, but culottes, knee-length shorts, or slacks are popular. Skirts and blouses are comfortable for golf;

tennis outfits for tennis and squash are available or can be made.

Leather, patent leather, linen, and silk shoes are worn as in the U.S. Low-heeled sandals are most comfortable, as closed shoes may be warm. Ready-made shoes are available, but sizes eight or larger and narrow widths are available only in expensive European imports. Shoes can be made, but often with disappointing results. If proper fit is a problem for you, bring a good supply. Remember, feet might swell in tropical heat.

All schools, including the American School, require locally made uniforms for children. Play clothes for outside activities and some dress clothes for parties and church should be brought from home.

Generally, available ready-to-wear clothing includes some U.S. brands, but parents usually rely on local ready-made play clothes. Children's dress clothes can be made here inexpensively.

Food

Several major supermarkets in Singapore are comparable to small U.S. supermarkets. Most families also have a grocer who takes daily telephone orders and delivers goods to the home. These items cost more than in the supermarket but, for many, the service is timesaving and convenient.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant. Local, tropical varieties, as well as those imported from either the Northern or Southern Hemisphere, depending on the season, are available. Oranges and apples shipped from the U.S. and elsewhere are of high quality. Orange juice is expensive. Canned goods are imported from Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, the People's Republic of China, the U.S., and Europe. A limited variety of frozen foods can be purchased. Baby foods and formulas, both U.S. and Australian brands, are available but more expensive than in the U.S.

Fresh milk and other dairy products are imported from Australia and are expensive. Most resident Americans buy reconstituted, canned, or powdered milk at considerable savings.

Good meat is imported from Australia and New Zealand. Australian beef has a slightly different taste and texture, as the cattle are grass-fed rather than corn-fed. Domestic chickens are less expensive than other meats and are of good quality.

Food spoils quickly in this hot, humid climate. Airtight containers (which are available here) prolong freshness and keep ants and weevils out of flour, sugar, crackers, and cookies.

Supplies & Services

Singapore offers many types of repair services. Local craftsmanship ranks higher in quality and considerably lower in cost than that in the U.S. In the Eastern tradition, china, furniture, shoes, etc., are repaired time and again; nothing that can be salvaged is discarded.

Quality dry cleaning varies, and even a firm one has come to trust may eventually prove undependable. Prices are high.

Singapore has commercial laundries, but an *amah* (a domestic) will probably do the washing at home. *Amahs* are thorough, but not always gentle; they are among the reasons that clothes fade and wear out quickly.

Many beauty shops offer services comparable with those of an average quality U.S. shop. Some stylists and services are excellent, and most women eventually make satisfactory arrangements.

Most electronic equipment can be repaired locally; workmanship is reliable. U.S. equipment is more expensive to repair than Japanese and European brands.

One of the few genuine bargains in Singapore—picture framing—is of good quality and inexpensive. Non-

reflecting glass and acid free matting are available.

Religious Activities

Most major Christian religions are represented here. English services are held at Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Anglican, Mormon, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Christian Scientist, or Seventh Day Adventist churches. One Sephardic synagogue conducts "Baghdad-tradition" services, which is not easily understood by most American Jews.

It is the custom for those visiting mosques and temples to remove their shoes before entering. Modest dress is expected.

Domestic Help

Household domestics are difficult to find. Increasingly, both Americans and Singaporeans are employing foreigners—Filipinos, Indonesians, Thais, Sri Lankans, Indians, Bangladeshis, and Malaysians—which often means cumbersome and expensive hiring arrangements, as they must be approved by the government before they are permitted to work or enter the country.

Americans here often employ at least one general domestic called an *amah*, whose duties usually include cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing and, sometimes, baby-sitting.

Singles or those without children need only a part-time *amah* who works a few days a week.

Some families employ more than one domestic, in varying combinations of cook, *amah*, cook/*amah*, gardener, etc. These may be live-in or live-out, and either full- or part-time.

Monthly wages vary from S\$300 for a part-time *amah* to S\$600 for a full-time live-in cook/*amah*. A foreign maid is paid less than a Singaporean maid. In addition to basic salary, a food allowance is usually paid. For a Singaporean or foreign *amah*, the employer makes a monthly payment based on salary to the Central Provident Fund (CPF),

a form of social security. No CPF payment is required for a domestic who is employed less than 14 hours per week. The employer usually gives an annual bonus of one month's salary to Chinese employees at Chinese New Year, to Malay employees at Hari Raya Puasa, and to Christian employees at Christmas.

Education

Since 1956, the Singapore American School has provided an U.S.-style education to the international community. The aim of the school is to educate and equip children of any race, religion, or nationality with academic, social and interpersonal skills to help insure success in adult life. A wide range of electives and extracurricular activities are offered.

Nonprofit and community supported, the Singapore American School has children from over 40 nationalities in attendance, although more than 60 percent of the student body are U.S. citizens. The current total enrollment is over 2,000. Classes for preschool (three year olds), pre-kindergarten through grade eight are at the Ulu Pandan Campus, grades nine through 12 use the King's Road Campus.

The school year consists of two semesters, with vacations at Christmas and spring break. Full accreditation is given by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

In addition to the intramural program, the school is the venue for many Singapore American Community Action Council (SACAC) programs, which include American football, gymnastics, baseball, and T-ball.

Through grade eight, the classrooms are designed for multi-age groupings with a continuous educational progress program. The high school compares to a comprehensive U.S. high school, but does not offer an extensive vocational education program. The program of study is

mainly, though not exclusively, college preparatory.

The address of Singapore American School is 60 King's Road, Singapore 1026, Republic of Singapore, (high school); 201 Ulu Pandan Road, Singapore 2159, Republic of Singapore (elementary school).

The International School of Singapore opened in September 1981 and is committed to a complete academic program stressing the basics of education. A standardized testing program, using both American and British materials, insures that students are progressing at a rate that compares to that of their peers in their homeland. English is the dominant language but, for the large number of non-English speaking students, a separate program—English as a Second Language—is offered. This program enables students of any nationality to participate in class with little difficulty. The school's educational program helps students successfully complete O- and A-level examinations as well as the Scholastic Achievement Test, which prepares them to enter American colleges and universities.

International School is located 15 minutes from downtown Singapore. Facilities include two campuses, 54 classrooms, cafeteria, playing fields, science laboratories, computer room, and a 6,000-volume library. The school is completely air-conditioned. International's mailing address is Preston Road, Singapore 0410.

Two excellent schools, the United World College of Southeast Asia and the Dover Court Preparatory School, offer a British curriculum and are highly accredited.

The United World College of South East Asia is an international day and boarding school for students in grades six through 12. It seeks to foster international understanding through education and also to provide schooling adapted to today's special needs. Its pupils represent some 40 different nationalities, but

share a common academic and activities curriculum. Equivalence agreements exist with most countries represented at the school, so that departing pupils may obtain admission to universities of their choice in their own countries. Some 1,350 students are generally enrolled; about 50 are American.

United World College was designed as the first of a number of international schools that offer students of different nationalities a two-year course of study before entering a university or starting a career. Course work is geared to the British school system, but a record of study credits is maintained for all American students and for others who may require it during grades nine through 12. Arrangements are made for students considering application to U.S. universities to take the Scholastic Aptitude and Achievement Tests set by the College Entrance Examination Board.

The school year, beginning in September, comprises three terms. An eight-week vacation begins in early July, and two shorter vacations of about two weeks each are taken in December and late March.

Queries should be directed to the school at Pasir Panjang, P.O. Box 15, Singapore 9111, Republic of Singapore.

Dover Court Preparatory School is an international boarding and day preparatory school for children in pre-kindergarten through grade nine. Current enrollment numbers some 900 students; Americans represent a small percentage.

Classrooms are large, light, airy, and well equipped. The buildings are set in 12 acres of park land, and the school has ample playing areas. A tennis court and facilities for swimming, athletics, and football are available.

The school year, comprised of three terms, begins in September and ends in July. A limited number of boarding facilities are offered to

children of all nationalities from ages six through 13.

A Child Guidance Center at the Dover Court site provides individual therapy. The center offers a full psycho-educational testing program and individual therapy for children who have learning disabilities or emotional and behavioral problems. There are some boarding facilities.

Further information is available from the school at Dover Road, Singapore 0513, Republic of Singapore.

Another institution with a British curriculum is the Tanglin Trust Schools located six miles from the city center, near the National University of Singapore. The coeducational, day school for children ages three to 11 has a definite British focus; no Americans attend. The address is Portsdown Road, Singapore 0513, Republic of Singapore.

Singapore universities enroll some foreign students. The Chinese Language and Research Center, located on the Nanyang Campus of the National University of Singapore (NUS), is popular with Chinese language specialists. American students cannot enroll in degree programs.

The National University of Singapore has a non-credit, evening lecture series on a variety of subjects. The Vocational Industrial Training Board offers a number of practical courses such as boat handling, interior decorating, Japanese flower arranging, silk screen printing, photography, and woodworking; these are open to Americans upon application.

Courses in Chinese cooking, yoga, painting, *mah-jongg*, etc., are available through the YWCA. The American Women's Association, the Pan Pacific South-East Asian Women's Association, the Chinese Women's Association, and other groups offer similar programs.

Language-study programs are available. The Alliance Française offers a complete range of courses in

French. Both the NUS and the Vocational Industrial Training Board teach several languages in evening classes. NUS offers full-time Mandarin instruction. A commercial language center features up-to-date language equipment.

Recreation

Opportunities for touring and sight-seeing in the Singapore area are nearly limitless. Some of the most interesting places are:

The Botanical Gardens. Singapore is famous for these gardens, where the first rubber saplings of South-east Asia were brought from South America and planted. Today, thousands of exotic tropical plants flourish, including rare orchid hybrids. Black swans float on a tranquil lake. It is a gorgeous park and well worth a Sunday afternoon's stroll.

The Mandai Orchid Gardens, truly a land of orchids. In these gardens alone are thousands of colorful hybrids, many of which have won acclaim in international flower shows, but commercial shipments often strip the gardens of their flowers.

Jurong Bird Park, the world's largest and most colorful aviary, inhabited by thousands of feathered creatures, including dozens of rare species. Electric tram cars take visitors around the park, and to the world's tallest man-made waterfall as well.

Singapore Zoological Gardens, one of the most modern zoos in existence. Here, most animals live in a natural setting—a promontory with lawns, trees, and shrubs. An electric train takes visitors around the gardens.

Mount Faber—Sentosa Island. If one wishes to escape from Singapore proper, the cable car at Mount Faber can be taken to the Island of Sentosa. Mount Faber is 385 feet above sea level, the perfect spot to watch the sun go down and lights come up in the city. Telescopes are provided for an excellent view of the harbor, the Southern

Islands and, on a clear day, the Indonesian Archipelago. Sentosa is a lush unspoiled island with a natural forest and a quiet village. Features include a superb 18-hole golf course on the sea, the world's first coralarium, and a swimming lagoon and picnic area. The Surrender Chamber is also located on this island; this is a replica of the site of the original surrendering of Singapore by the Japanese Occupation Forces to the Allied Forces after World War II.

The range of sight-seeing in Singapore also includes Tiger Balm Gardens, which features grotesque plaster and stone figures representing demons, grottos, and scenes from Chinese myth and legend. Chinatown lies in and around New Bridge Road and, although many of the old shop houses are being demolished, visitors can still see medicine men and fortune tellers on the sidewalk. There are more than 500 Chinese and Indian temples in Singapore, notable among them the exotic Sri Mariamman Hindu temple on South Bridge Road, the Sultan Mosque, and the Buddhist Temple of One Thousand Lights. Other interesting places to visit are Chinese and Japanese Gardens, Van Kleef Aquarium and the Kranji War Memorial. A small National Museum features a limited study of the natural history of the region and houses an impressive jade collection. The National University of Singapore maintains a small but excellent collection of Oriental ceramics which presently is on long-term loan to the National Museum. The National Art Gallery presents exhibits by local and international artists.

As a duty free port, Singapore offers many imported items below European prices. Movie cameras, calculators, watches, household appliances, sporting equipment, and leather goods are some products which may be purchased at discount, although prices can vary widely between establishments. Good, but expensive, jade and antiques from Burma, China, and Thailand may be purchased in some

of the elegant shops in the Tanglin Road area. In the North Bridge Road, Arab Street, and Serangoon Road districts, crafts such as Chinese figurines, rattan and cane furniture, batik, and silk are available. The best places for casual shopping are the large shopping centers on Orchard and Tanglin Roads and People's Park on New Bridge Road.

In general, Americans in Singapore rely on Malaysia for weekend excursions or more extended trips. The Malaysian macadam, two-lane roads are good, although narrow, and frequent congestion often results in extended delays on the causeway into Malaysia. Rest houses, run by the government, are inexpensive, usually clean and comfortable (if unglamorous), and are found throughout Malaysia. Dining facilities provide Chinese, Indian, and Malay food, as well as simple Western dishes.

The Safari Park, north of Singapore in Johore State, Malaysia, features wild animals roaming freely in an enclosed area. Visitors drive through the park in cars to observe the animals in their natural habitat.

Malaysia's east coast, up to the northern border, has roads that are passable during dry months. However, in the rainy season, allowances must be made for flooded road conditions. A few streams and rivers still have unreliable ferry systems, although modern bridges are presently being constructed. A three-hour drive up the east coast will lead to Mersing, where visitors can stay at the rest house, rent boats, and visit the uninhabited paradise-type islands with clear blue water, palm trees, and white beaches.

Instruction or participation in most sports is available, but may require membership in a club. Golf, bowling, tennis, squash, rugby, soccer, softball, swimming, sailing, horseback riding, scuba diving, judo, yoga, and ice skating are among those available here.

The Singapore Swimming Club has a large saltwater pool, and badminton is also available. The American Club is noted for its bowling lanes, and offers opportunities to join leagues; the pool here is small, but excellent for children. Tennis, squash, and racquetball facilities are available. The Cricket Club features tennis (eight grass courts), squash, and cricket.

Golf is popular. The Singapore Island Country Club has four excellent courses at two separate locations, but membership is expensive and the waiting period is usually several years. Other golf clubs are the Warren, Changi, Seletar, Koppel, Sembawang, Jurong, and Tengah. These are nine-hole courses, less expensive, and with shorter waiting periods for membership. Non-members can play on weekdays by paying greens fees.

The Singapore Tennis Center, with nine outdoor and three indoor courts operating on the principle of U.S. tennis centers, is open to the public for hourly and seasonal rental.

The Singapore Sports Council operates several swimming pools, a dozen or so squash courts, more than 30 tennis courts, and a short seven-hole golf course. All are open to the public for a nominal fee. The YMCA and YWCA offer tennis, squash, martial arts such as karate and Tai Kwon Do, yoga, and other sports and recreational activities for a nominal charge.

Boating is popular; sailboats and motor-boats are available, as are opportunities for water-skiing and scuba diving. Surprisingly, beaches are poor and scarce; the best are located offshore and in Malaysia, and can be reached only by boat. Singapore has several yacht clubs, including the Republic of Singapore Yacht Club, the Singapore Sailing Club in Changi, and the Singapore Armed Forces Yacht Club. Dinghies and motor-boats are available for daily and monthly charter at most clubs for nominal fee.



Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

Industrial port of Singapore

Malaysia is no longer good hunting country, and game conservation efforts are being made. Wild pig is about the only game bagged, despite occasional reports in the press of tigers and rogue elephants. Import and licensing of firearms is strictly controlled, and a permit for possession is obtained only after considerable delay.

Some surf fishing is done off the Malaysian coast. Taman Negara National Park, north of Kuala Lumpur, is well stocked for stream and river fishing. The park is accessible only by river.

Because of the heat and the beating sun, hiking is not an enjoyable sport here; however, a men's cross-country running club meets in the evening. Jungle hiking is quite pleasant in the cool hill country of Malaysia.

Farther up the east coast are beaches and good accommodations. From May to September, one can see the sea turtles which come up at night to lay their eggs on most of the beaches along the east coast. However, in Malaysia, as elsewhere in the world today, some of the beaches are polluted.

Two popular spots on the west coast are Malacca, the old Dutch and Por-

tuguese trading center, once the hub of trade before Singapore was founded in 1819; and Port Dickson, a beach resort which has fishing, swimming, sailing, and water-skiing facilities. Both are five to six hours by car from Singapore and have good accommodations.

Trips to Kuala Lumpur and Penang take more than two days, except by air. Also, a longer journey is required to visit one of the hill stations in Malaysia. Fraser's Hill (about two hours' drive from Kuala Lumpur) and Cameron Highlands (five hours' drive), have a definite colonial atmosphere. A resort with high-rise hotel and gambling facilities is located at Genting Highlands (one hour). A visit to any of these places provides a refreshing climatic change, since they are 10 to 15 degrees cooler than Singapore. They offer golf and hiking.

Entertainment

Several air-conditioned, first-run movie theaters show most recent American, British, and Chinese films. High quality but less popular art films are shown at the Goethe Institut. Some private clubs and film societies offer members a wide spectrum of classic, popular films. A number of commercial video-tape rental shops exist (PAL system). All films and videos are censored.

The government-sponsored Singapore Symphony Orchestra made its debut in early 1979 and features both guest conductors and soloists. Instrumental and choral groups, and solo musicians also give public recitals. Popular artists and groups frequently appear at various hotels and in large outdoor concerts. Musical programs are contributed by Singapore's various ethnic groups, ranging from Western ensemble to traditional Malay *kronchong* (orchestra) music. Those who wish to participate in musical activities have many opportunities to do so.

A number of capable amateur groups present plays. Impresarios sponsor an occasional one-man show or small theatre troupe. Traditional Chinese opera and Indian and Malay dances are popular in Singapore.

The Singapore National Library, considered one of the best in the area, has more than 400,000 English-language books, plus a smaller number in the other official languages. The National University of Singapore's extensive library facilities may be used with permission granted on individual application. Small libraries are maintained in the American Club and the Tanglin Club for members' use, as well as a number of small specialized collections scattered throughout the city.

Singapore has many well-stocked bookstores. A good selection of both American and British paperbacks are available at prices somewhat higher than in the U.S. Selection is good at Singapore's many record and tape stores, but new releases are not always available.

Dining is a pleasure here. Singapore has a variety of inexpensive restaurants and, with concerted attempts to lure tourists and the resultant hotel boom, the number of good eating places has multiplied. Variety in style, quality, and price is infinite—from outdoor stalls to elegant continental dining.

Every type of Chinese, Indian, Malay, and Indonesian food is available in Singapore. The food at outdoor night markets and also at daytime food stalls near Telok Ayer Market is excellent, and visitors need not worry about unhygienic preparation. Curries and Indian vegetarian food can be found, and there also are establishments where *Nonya* food—a unique mixture of Chinese ingredients and Malay cooking—is served. Western food is also available. The local Tiger beer is excellent, and Singapore is one of only a few places in Asia where water can be consumed safely.

Opportunities abound to devote time to charity. Many institutions for orphans and for the handicapped welcome volunteers.

The Singapore American Community Action Council (SACAC), created in 1973, works with the American schools here to combat drug abuse and promote a healthy home environment by providing counseling and sponsoring activities for singles, families and young people.

The American Women's Association (AWA) is a large and active organization whose monthly meetings usually feature a speaker. The AWA sponsors many trips, courses, and activities, and provides outreach opportunities for volunteers.

The American Business Council, a large group of resident Americans representing most of the U.S. companies in Singapore, discusses business matters through specialized committees.

Singapore offers an interesting and varied social life; an individual's work and personal wishes determine the degree of involvement. Singaporeans are friendly and sociable; opportunities to meet members of the large and growing multi-national business community are numerous.

The Singapore Tourist Promotion Board is located at Raffles City

Tower 36-04, 250 North Bridge Road, Singapore 0617.

OTHER CITY

JURONG, in the western section of Singapore, is one of the largest industrial sites in Southeast Asia. Jurong is not a separate city, but is known as an "industrial town." Over 3,000 companies are situated in 20 industrial estates, employing almost 70 percent of the country's work force. Industries include ship-building yards, a steel pipe factory, and an oil refinery. The National Iron and Steel Mill is the city's industrial center. Jurong has a short history, dating only to the early 1960s. Singapore's secession from the Malaysia federation in 1965 slowed the suburb's growth. Jurong Bird Park, with the world's largest walk-in aviary, and the Chinese and Japanese Gardens—the Japanese being one of the largest such gardens outside of Japan—are among tourist spots. The Singapore Science Center, located here, covers physical and life sciences, specifically for younger visitors. Jurong Town has a university, and all social amenities.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Singapore is a small and almost entirely urbanized island (225 square miles at high tide). It lies 85 miles north of the equator, off the tip of the Malay Peninsula, from which it is separated by the Straits of Johore. A causeway, with both a road and a railway, crosses the three-quarters of a mile to the Malay mainland. Relatively flat (highest elevation 581 feet), the maximum distance from east to west is 26 miles and from north to south, 14 miles. The Republic of Singapore consists of Singapore Island and 54 smaller islands.

Vegetation is lush and tropical. Seasons are nonexistent. Here in the "Land of Eternal Summer," the mean high is 82°F and the mean low, 77°F. For its location, however, Singapore is not as hot as might be expected and, at times, it is surprisingly cool because of sea breezes.

Humidity is high (average 70%) and annual rainfall is 96 inches. Wet and dry seasons are somewhat indistinct, but November through February are wetter than the other months and tend to be cooler. Over a period of time, the climate can be oppressive. Depending on the length of one's stay, the lack of climatic variation coupled with the difficulty of leaving the island may cause psychological weariness. For this reason regular exercise and frequent vacations are important here.

Even in a clean city like Singapore, the tropical climate seems to foster diseases; germs and viruses thrive here. Many people who have scant history of illness complain of recurring colds and other infections. Enthusiastic air conditioning probably contributes to respiratory problems. Many restaurants and shops are uncomfortably overcooled.

Humidity makes mildew a problem—books, records, leather items, or anything that is not used or aired regularly or stored in air conditioning is vulnerable. Closets and bureau drawers take on a musty odor that is difficult to eliminate. Rust is also a problem; metal items that are not painted or tropicalized begin to rust in a short time.

Singapore, like every other tropical area, has its share of cockroaches, water bugs, small pesky ants, and termites. Flies are almost nonexistent. Mosquitoes can be annoying despite strenuous efforts to control them, but malaria is not a problem.

Population

Singapore's population is almost 4.3 million (2001 est.). The average annual growth rate is 3.5%. Most of the population (77%) is ethnically

Chinese; Malays comprise 14% of the population; and Indians 7.9%

A fascinating melange of cultures fulfills the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board promise of "Instant Asia." Because of the multi-racial character of the society, there are many sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of the East.

Chinese, English, Malay, and Tamil (the language of southeastern India) are official languages. Most Chinese are descendants of immigrants from China's southern provinces, and their main dialects are Hokkien, Teochew, and Cantonese. The government is stressing the learning of Mandarin by all Singaporeans, particularly the Chinese. English is used for administration; about 75 percent of Singapore's citizens speak and understand at least rudimentary English. A knowledge of one of the other tongues is not necessary, but Chinese and Malay can be useful—the latter, especially, for traveling in Malaysia.

Singapore is a secular state with considerable religious tolerance. The main religions are Taoism, Islam, Buddhism (mostly Mahayana), Christianity (almost equally divided between Catholic and Protestant), and Hinduism. Two holidays of each of the major groups in Singapore are set aside for national observance. Sikhs, Jews, Zoroastrians, and Jains are also represented.

The cultural patterns are equally rich in variety. In a multi-racial society, each ethnic group stresses its traditions to preserve its individuality. For example, *Thaipusam*, a Hindu religious observance, is dying out in India, but is celebrated with fervor in Singapore. Chinese New Year, in January or February, is a two-week festival marked by feasting and home celebration. Muslims celebrate *Hari Raya Puasa* and *Hari Raya Haji* with equal enthusiasm.

Multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural—herein lies some of the fascination of Singapore. Except for Muslim or Hindu dietary restric-

tions, which generally must be honored when entertaining Malays or Indians, few taboos differ markedly from those in America.

Government

Singapore's parliamentary democracy government is based on full adult suffrage. Voting is compulsory.

Parliament's 83 members are elected for a maximum of five years. Members usually speak English but may speak in any of the four official languages, and simultaneous translation is provided.

Before the constitution was amended in 1991, Singapore's largely ceremonial president was elected to a four-year term by the Parliament. The amended constitution retains the term length, but the president is now elected by the people. In addition, the president gained control over the spending of the country's significant monetary reserves and over certain civil service appointments. In 1996, however, the Parliament enacted governmental reforms that curtailed the president's veto power. Ong Teng Cheong was elected in 1993 in Singapore's first popular presidential election. The current president is Sellapan Ramanathan (1999).

The president appoints as new prime minister the member of Parliament with the most support. The cabinet is also chosen by the president, but with the advice of the prime minister. Most governmental affairs are handled by the prime minister and cabinet. Lee Kuan Yew had been the only prime minister in the country's history when he left office (1959–1990). Goh Chok Tong succeeded him.

The three major political parties are the People's Action Party (authoritarian), the Workers' Party of Singapore (social-democratic) and the Singapore Democratic Alliance.

Singapore's government has long been known as restrictive, with social stability often taking prece-

dence over individual liberty. Examples of this government authoritarianism include: the management and control of all television and radio broadcasting, control over news publications, and maintaining the power to interfere with the activities of opposition political parties. The government's policy of flogging criminals received international attention in 1993 when an American was sentenced for vandalism and receiving stolen goods.

Singapore is a land of the entrepreneur, a free port, and a significant importer of food and agricultural products. However, as the major trading center for Southeast Asia, it trades or transships 75 percent of its imports to neighboring markets. The government is committed to a mixed policy allowing a high degree of free enterprise, but also is heavily involved in commerce and industry. In addition, an extensive social development program of education, housing, medical care, and social welfare has been instituted. One of the most impressive achievements is low-cost public housing. Some 86 percent of Singapore's population live in high-rise apartments built by the government.

The flag of Singapore consists of red and white horizontal divisions; in the upper left canton are a white crescent and five white stars.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is not compulsory, but primary education is free for the children of Singapore citizens, and is universally available. The government endeavors to provide at least 10 years of education for each child. Literacy is at 93.5% (1999).

In line with the government policy on bilingualism, each child must learn two languages, English and a choice of one of the other official languages—Chinese, Malay, or Tamil. Thus, the multi-lingual aspect of Singapore is being preserved.

The cost of secondary education is nominal. The government promotes technical and vocational education at the secondary level to enhance employment opportunities for the younger generation. The Vocational and Industrial Training Board (VITB) was established in 1979 to provide vocational training and to conduct continuing education and training. It offers about 50 courses to approximately 20,000 students in applied arts, commercial, industrial, and service skills at its 15 training institutes.

Singapore has six institutions of higher learning: the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological Institute, Singapore Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, the Institute of Education, and the College of Physical Education.

The NUS offers courses leading to bachelor degrees in eight faculties; namely, arts and social sciences, law, science, medicine, dentistry, engineering, architecture and building, accounting and business administration. Graduate degrees are available in most faculties. The Nanyang Technological Institute conducts practice-oriented engineering courses at university level. The Institute of Education, in conjunction with the NUS, offers graduate-degree programs in education.

Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic are two institutions that provide courses mainly at technician level. These institutions offer courses comparable to those at U.S. junior colleges.

Each year, a large number of Singaporean students go abroad to the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or Great Britain for higher studies.

Government policy is to preserve and nurture the traditions of the various ethnic communities. Hence, the arts in Singapore are as varied as its cultural heritage. Amateur organizations regularly use dance, drama, and musical performances to reflect the diverse cultures of var-

ious ethnic groups. In addition, foreign troupes and companies and popular recording artists have performed to full houses and appreciative audiences. The Cultural Affairs Unit of the Ministry of Community Development, and, to a lesser extent, the National Theater Trust, are the principal impresarios, with sponsorship from the government, diplomatic missions, the business community, and foundations.

The premier cultural event is the Festival of Arts, held biennially since 1977. The month-long festival features outstanding local, regional, and international productions, representing all facets of the performing arts. The Houston Ballet, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Magic Theater of San Francisco, and jazz greats Ellis Marsalis, Billy Taylor, and Herbie Mann are some of the American groups that have participated in previous festivals. The Ministry organizes annual jazz, drama, and choral festivals.

The Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO), a full-time professional orchestra, performs regularly at the Victoria Concert Hall and occasionally gives outdoor performances at parks and community centers. The Symphony's season is divided into four quarterly series, each consisting of six to eight pairs of concerts. The SSO also performs familiar favorites concerts, featuring lighter music. The Orchestra often features renowned conductors and soloists as guest performers.

The National Museum offers handsome displays of Singapore's social and culture history, and an audiovisual show to bring it all up to date. The National Museum Art Gallery, which houses a permanent collection of contemporary works by local and Malaysian artists, regularly organizes short-term exhibitions by Singaporean artists, and hosts quality exhibitions from abroad. The Young People's Gallery displays students' arts and crafts and holds workshops for schoolchildren.

The Singapore Science Centre, established in 1970, is rated as one

of the most outstanding institutions of its kind in the world. Its five exhibition galleries contain over 500 exhibits, many of them "participatory," which are regularly updated. The center has research facilities and hosts public lectures and scientific conferences. Its Omni-Theater, opened in 1987, houses a 274-seat omniplanetarium where images are projected onto a curved viewing area, extending over the audience's heads and beyond their peripheral vision, giving the illusion of a ride through space.

Commerce and Industry

Singapore is one of the world's smallest nations and also one of the most prosperous. Factors responsible for this prosperity include: a strategic location; availability of skilled, well-paid labor; tax and other financial incentives; and up-to-date telecommunications.

Singapore is a free trading country and a significant importer of food and agricultural products. The government is committed to a policy of free enterprise but is involved in commerce and industry.

During the past 20 years, Singapore's economic growth has been rapid. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was \$26,500 in 2000, one of the highest in Asia. The commercial and industrial structure has diversified from a primarily entrepôt trading base to include a wide range of manufacturing services and financial activities. Today, Singapore ranks as a significant oil refining center, one of the world's busiest ports, and a major financial, communications, transportation, and medical services center.

The government is making a concerted effort to move the economy away from labor-intensive manufacturing to a more high tech and service orientation. The service sector accounts for 70% of the GDP, with 35% of the workforce involved; industry is 30% of the GDP with over 20% of the workforce involved.

Singapore's economic policies are attractive to foreign investors and have led to a significant multinational business presence here. The U.S. is the largest foreign investor in Singapore, accounting for about 54% of investment commitments. U.S. interests are primarily in petroleum refining, offshore oil exploration, diversified manufacturing, and electronics. The activities of U.S. firms also include shipping, banking, hotels, insurance, importing, and exporting. The resident American community numbers over 7,000.

The European Union and Japan are next in line in terms foreign investors. The U.S., Japan and Malaysia are Singapore's major trading partners. Trade with Indonesia is also substantial. Entrepôt trade, Singapore's traditional role in the region, now provides a smaller percentage of the Gross National Product (GNP), but has continued to increase in value.

Singapore imports mainly capital goods and raw materials for industry, and exports a variety of locally manufactured products, crude rubber, electrical machinery, and finished textile goods.

The American Business Council of Singapore is located at 354 Orchard Road, #10-12 Shaw House, Singapore 0923; the telephone number is (65) 235-0077. The Singapore Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry is at 03-01 Chinese Chamber of Commerce Building, 47 Hill Street, Singapore 0617; telephone: (65) 338-9761.

Transportation

Singapore, a hub of air and sea transportation, is served by more than 40 airlines and about 250 shipping lines. Air flights link neighboring countries, and distances are thought of in terms of air miles (e.g., Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 204; Jakarta, Indonesia, 557; Bangkok, Thailand, 897; Manila, Philippines, 1,481; Hong Kong, 1,607). Air travel between Singapore and other cities in the region is expensive by U.S.

standards. United and Northwest have connecting flights from the U.S. via either Hong Kong or Tokyo. Singapore's Changi International Airport is one of the best airports in the world.

The Singapore terminus of the Malayan National Railroad has service to Kuala Lumpur and Penang, and connections through to Bangkok and other points in Thailand. Service is good, and cars are clean and sometimes air-conditioned. Second- and third-class travel is recommended to only the hardiest of souls. The trip from Singapore to Penang takes 20 to 22 hours.

Taxis are plentiful, except during rush hour and when it rains. Taxis are affordable, clean, and safe. Bus service is frequent and cheap; however, many buses are not air conditioned.

MRT, the underground rapid transit system, is one of the world's best. Recently completed, the central city is well served by this inexpensive, fast transportation.

Singapore's major roads and streets are, by Asian standards, excellent. They are continually being widened to accommodate increasing traffic. A causeway connects Singapore with western Malaysia, which also has a good road system and many interesting places to visit. However, extended delays are encountered on weekends and holidays, and driving in Malaysia is frequently hazardous.

As a result of increasing traffic congestion on the island, several restrictive measures have been imposed in an effort to control private ownership of automobiles. Road taxes have been raised, an Area License Scheme placed into effect, and a surcharge imposed on cars over 10 years old. These road taxes are levied on motor cubic-centimeter capacity.

Driving is on the left, and right-hand-drive cars are used universally. A Singapore driver's

license may be obtained on presentation of a valid license and a passport. Third party liability insurance is mandatory.

Small cars are easier to maneuver in Singapore's traffic and on Malaysia's narrow roads. European, Japanese, and Australian models are available. U.S. made cars are practically nonexistent in Singapore. The used car market is substantial.

Auto repairs generally cost about the same as in the U.S. Spare parts for U.S. manufactured cars are not available.

Cars may be rented daily, weekly, or monthly.

Communications

Telephone service is better in Singapore than in other major Southeast Asian cities. Direct dialing is available to most major cities. It is easy to call the U.S. from Singapore; connections are usually excellent and rates are relatively inexpensive. Commercial telegraph service to the U.S. is available and reliable.

International mail service is efficient. Airmail between Singapore and the U.S. is less than a week in transit. Mail within Southeast Asia is sometimes less dependable.

The state-owned Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) operates nine radio channels and broadcasts daily on AM and FM from 6 a.m. to midnight, with programs in English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil on separate frequencies. Programs are varied and news is reported on the hour. A 24-hour FM (stereo) popular music station broadcasts in English. Voice of America (VOA) morning and evening newscasts can be heard on shortwave; British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) "World Service" broadcasts are relayed on FM 24 hours a day. Listeners can also receive a 24-hour FM (stereo) popular music station from a nearby Indonesian island that broadcasts in English and Indonesian.

Three Singaporean (government controlled) and three Malaysian color television channels are received here. Weekday telecasts begin in late afternoon and end about midnight. Sunday and holiday telecasts begin at 9 a.m.; Saturday telecasts start at 1 p.m. Programming is in English, Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay. Many American programs are shown, including popular series and documentaries, although they are generally a year or so old. Channel 12, which shows cultural, educational, and informational programs (mainly in English), begins transmission at 7:30 p.m. daily for four hours.

The TV system is 625 PAL; American sets will not operate in Singapore without expensive, and sometimes unsuccessful, alterations. TV rentals are available. TVs, video players, and all types of radios can be purchased locally at reasonable prices.

Three English-language daily newspapers are published in Singapore: the *Straits Times*, the *Business Times*, and the *New Paper*, an afternoon tabloid. International news coverage in the *Straits Times* is excellent. The *International Herald Tribune* and *USA Today* are printed in Singapore via satellite and are available on newsstands the same day of U.S. distribution. The *Asian Wall Street Journal* and the *Far Eastern Economic Review* are not sold in Singapore. In 1987, the government accused both of interfering in local politics and sales were curbed. Later, the publications ceased distribution altogether. International editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* are on the stands every Thursday, and the Asian edition of *Reader's Digest* is also available.

American magazines are available on newsstands, but are a month or so late and cost two or three times their U.S. price; highly specialized and most general interest magazines are not available. Often U.K. or Australian magazines are more readily available.

Health and Medicine

Facilities are adequate for most health problems. For outpatient care, Americans usually go to doctors at commercial clinics. Competent specialists in almost every field can be found in Singapore. Most doctors have been trained in Singapore, England, Australia, the U.S., or Canada. Adequate pediatric and obstetric services also are available.

Most Americans use Mt. Elizabeth, Gleneagles, Mt. Alvernia, American Hospital, Thomson Medical Center, Youngberg Memorial Adventist, or Jurong Hospitals. All are well managed and efficient. Excellent dental and ophthalmologic care is available. Prescriptions can be filled locally.

Singapore is probably the cleanest city in Asia. Sewage and garbage disposal is never a problem. Daily trash collection is efficient. Water is potable and normally in good supply, although rationing may be imposed during prolonged drought.

The government keeps up a constant battle against mosquitoes and other insects. Flies have been all but eradicated. Ants and cockroaches are more of a problem here than in temperate climates.

Americans have found the typical overseas precautions in food preparation unnecessary in Singapore. Locally packaged food causes no ill effects. Most local restaurants, including hawker stalls, are safe.

Singapore has few health hazards. Malaria has been eradicated, although it may be picked up in Malaysia or Indonesia. Dengue fever is more of a problem. It, too, is transmitted by mosquitoes and is enervating, lasting two or three months. Occasionally, there is a case of cholera, but such cases are few and are immediately isolated.

Children sometimes contract tropical fevers of unknown origin which may last from one to three days but,

in general, Singapore provides a good environment for young children. Serious dysentery is rare. Respiratory ailments, however, are quite common. The heat and humidity increase the incidence of skin problems; treatment should be sought at the first sign of trouble, since infections spread quickly.

The yellow fever shot is the only vaccination required for entry into Singapore, and only for those arriving from infected areas. Cholera and smallpox immunizations are not necessary.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Singapore is about halfway around the world from Washington, DC, and is served by numerous air and shipping lines. Two American carriers, Northwest and United, provide service between the U.S. and Singapore.

A valid passport is required. U.S. citizens do not need a visa if their visit is for business or pleasure and their stay is for 90 days or less. The Government of Singapore generally allows Americans to enter with less than six months of validity remaining on their passport, but some neighboring countries, particularly Indonesia, do not. Specific information about entry requirements for Singapore may be sought from the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore at 3501 International Place, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. (202) 537-3100. Please see also the Singapore Government home page on the Internet at <http://www.gov.sg/>.

Singapore customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Singapore of items such as firearms, illegal drugs, certain religious materials, chewing gum, videotapes, CD's, and software (for censorship or pirating reasons). It is advisable to contact the Embassy of

Singapore in Washington, D.C. for specific information regarding customs requirements. Singapore customs officials encourage the use of an ATA (Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission) carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples, and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes. ATA carnet headquarters, located at the U.S. Council for International Business, 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036, issues and guarantees the ATA carnet in the United States. For additional information, please call (212) 354-4480, or send e-mail to atacarnet@uscib.org or visit <http://www.uscib.org> for details.

Visitors should be aware of Singapore's strict laws and penalties for a variety of actions that might not be illegal or might be considered minor offenses in the United States, including jaywalking, littering and spitting, failure to flush at public toilets, and the importation, sale or personal use of chewing gum. Singapore has a mandatory caning sentence for vandalism offenses. Caning may also be imposed for immigration violations and other offenses. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs are strict, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and fines. Singapore has a mandatory death penalty for many narcotics offenses. Commercial disputes that may be handled as civil suits in the United States can escalate to criminal cases in Singapore and result in heavy fines and prison sentences. There are no jury trials in Singapore. Judges hear cases and decide sentencing. The Government of Singapore does not provide legal assistance except in capital cases.

Pets

The Immigration Department of the Government of Singapore requests six weeks' notice of intent to import a cat or dog. Dogs and cats are quarantined for a minimum of 30 days from the date of arrival and regardless of certificate of rabies immunization will be given a rabies vaccination upon arrival. Other ani-

mals are classified differently. Quarantine facilities are modern and adequate. Visiting hours are liberal, and pet owners may see their animals at the Animal Quarantine Station, 51 Jalan Buroh, Jurong Town, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday. The station is closed on Sundays and public holidays.

Firearms & Ammunition

Stringent controls are imposed on the importation of firearms. Licenses are issued only to members of the Singapore Gun Club or the Singapore Rifle Association.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

The Singapore dollar currency is based on the decimal system.

Singapore uses the metric system of weights and measures.

The time in Singapore is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus eight.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb.	Chinese New Year*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
May	Wesak*
Aug. 9	Singapore National Day
Oct/Nov.	Diwali*
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Hari Raya Puasa/Id al-Fitr*
.	Hari Raya Haji/Id al-Adah*

*variable

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SOLOMON ISLANDS

Solomon Islands

Major City:

Honiara

Other Cities:

Auki

INTRODUCTION

People have inhabited the **SOLOMON ISLANDS** since at least 1000 BC. The Spanish explorer Alvaro de Mendaña y Neyra of Peru first visited the islands in 1567, seeking the legendary Isles of Solomon. The name “Solomon Islands” and the promise of gold helped lure settlers to the region starting in 1595. The first European settlers were killed by the islanders and by disease. Other attempts to colonize the islands failed. Missionaries arrived in the mid-1800s. The United Kingdom declared a protectorate over the southern Solomons in 1893, which gradually encompassed the entire archipelago by 1900. Commercial coconut farming began in the 20th century. During World War II, most planters and traders were evacuated to Australia. The Japanese occupied the islands during the war, and they were almost constantly a scene of combat. As a result, abandoned war equipment littered the islands, some of which remains today. After the war, the islands returned to British rule, but nationalistic movements emerged. US forces remained on the islands until 1950. The post-war generation moved closer towards self-determination, and an elected governing council was created in 1970. The Solomon Islands

became independent on July 7, 1978.

MAJOR CITY

Honiara

Honiara is located on the island of Guadalcanal, the site of bloody fighting between US and Japanese forces during World War II. Honiara derives its name from *nahoniara*, or “place of the northeast wind.” The adjacent high mountains deflect rain away, so it has a relatively low amount of rainfall compared to the rest of the island. The city itself was established after the war on the site of the original American military base that was constructed of Quonset huts between Kukum and Point Cruz in order to utilize existing roads, waterfront facilities, and buildings.

Honiara, with a population of 53,000, is the major commercial center of the Solomon Islands and has a developed port and support services. The town originally was confined to the narrow east-west seashore area, but it later grew to cover inland areas and several ridges that were once World War II battle sites. Some of the newer communities along the ridges started

out as squatters’ camps. Construction in Honiara still occasionally unearths human remains or even live munitions from the war.

There is a bomb disposal unit that detonates unexploded wartime munitions about 8 miles outside the city. A mile-long stretch of Honiara along Mendaña Avenue (between the Mendana Hotel and Chinatown) is the nation’s primary commercial and business district, with government offices, the port facility, the main shopping area, hotels, banks, restaurants, and churches. The Central Market there is the nation’s main food market, with produce arriving from all areas of the country.

Recreation

Soccer, rugby, volleyball, softball, and cricket are played at sport grounds in or around Honiara. Tennis and squash are played at clubs in Honiara, and boxing matches are held in Kukum. The Solomon Islands’ only golf course is located at Ranadi, less than 3 miles from Honiara. The golf course is located next to the remnants of a US wartime airstrip. Scuba diving and snorkeling are popular tourist activities.

The Central Bank in Honiara has a display of traditional local currency that includes money made from feathers, dolphin teeth, shells, and

clams. The governor general's residence and a memorial to the US soldiers killed at Guadalcanal are also in Honiara. The Botanical Gardens contains an orchid garden, a creek, and a greenhouse used for growing herbs.

Guadalcanal saw heavy combat during World War II, as the US and Japanese fought for control over Henderson Field, the islands' airstrip. One of the most furious sea battles ever fought took place off Savo Island, near Guadalcanal in August 1942. The naval battles between Guadalcanal and Savo during 1942–43 sent dozens of ships to the ocean floor and the channel became known as Iron Bottom Sound. Many were beached or sank close to shore, and these are possibly the most accessible shipwrecks in the world. They now provide many popular dive sites near Honiara for both experienced and beginner divers. Two popular dive sights are at the mouth of the Bonegi River, and feature sunken Japanese transport ships encrusted in coral and teeming with tropical fish.

About 12 miles from Honiara, divers can also explore an American B-17 bomber lies that lies intact under 50 feet of water. The scattered remains of aircraft, artillery, tanks, guns, and vehicles from the war also attract US and Japanese servicemen to revisit battlefield sites on Guadalcanal (such as Bloody Ridge, Tenaru, and Red Beach) and New Georgia. Six of the original Quonset huts built by the US still remain in Honiara, just west of the Mataniko River. The provincial government of Guadalcanal still uses the buildings. Honiara's Central Hospital is still known by its wartime designation of "No. 9."

South of the capital is Skyline Ridge, the site of the decisive American victory at the Battle of Mataniko River. The Skyline Memorial there honors all the US troops that served in the Solomon Islands. There are Japanese memorials atop Mt. Austen and east of the airfield at the mouth of Alligator Creek (Ilu River). The Vilu Village War

Museum, 15 miles west of Honiara, has a wide range of war artifacts, including Japanese and American aircraft.

The National Museum and Cultural Center in Honiara contains exhibits covering archeology, dance, currency, weaponry, and body ornamentation. The cultural center is in a park-like setting of traditional leaf houses that exhibit the different building customs of Solomon Islanders.

OTHER CITY

AUKI is the provincial capital on the island of Malaita. The island (population 87,000, 1992 est.) is home to many Melanesian tribes, each with different languages and customs. Auki serves as a central location from which to explore many villages and experience a variety of cultures. One of the most popular modes of exploration is a motorized canoe tour. A one hour tour will take you to Langa Langa Lagoon, where very little has changed over the centuries for the natives who worship sharks as deities. Natives will often share a performance of the traditional warriors' welcome dances or witch doctor rituals. Some may demonstrate the ancient art of making shell-money or the local custom of fortune telling. The ancient custom of shark calling is also practiced here. Day trips and tours of other local villages can be arranged. Auki is also the site of the Bush Cultural Village, a unique area where visitors can arrange to see cultural demonstrations.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Solomon Islands is a chain of six large and numerous small islands in the South Pacific, about 1,200 miles northeast of Australia

and 300 miles east of Papua New Guinea. The largest island is Guadalcanal, covering some 2,047 square miles; other major islands are Makira, San Christobal, Vella Lavella, Choiseul, Rennell, New Georgia, and the Santa Cruz group. The topography varies from rugged mountains on Guadalcanal to low coral atolls. The highest peak is Mt. Makarakomburu on Guadalcanal, at 8,127 feet. The climate is tropical, with hot northwest equatorial winds bringing heavy rainfall from December to March. From April to November, the islands are cooled by drier southeast trade winds. The annual average temperature is 81°F; annual rainfall is 120 inches.

Population

The population in 2000 was estimated at 470,000 with a density of only 39 persons per square mile. Population density varies significantly from island to island, as most mountainous and heavily wooded areas are inaccessible. Most of the population is concentrated along coastal areas. Melanesians account for about 93% of the population; Polynesians, 4%; Micronesians, 1.5%; Europeans, Chinese, and others, 1.5%. Melanesians tend to live on the larger islands, while Polynesians inhabit the smaller islands and the atolls. Honiara is the Solomon Islands' most ethnically diverse area, with people of Melanesian, Polynesian, Gilbertese, European, and Chinese origins. Christianity is the principal organized religion; the leading sects are Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, United (Methodist/Presbyterian), and Seventh-Day Adventist. Melanesian pidgin English in much of the country is *lingua franca*, and English is spoken by 1–2% of population. There are also 120 indigenous languages.

Government

In 1893, the British government established a protectorate over Guadalcanal, Malaita, San Christobal, and the New Georgia group. The remainder of the islands were



Street scene in the Solomon Islands

© Wolfgang Kaehler. Reproduced by permission.

under German control. Some of those islands were transferred to the United Kingdom in 1900 and the area became known as the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. During World War II, many battles between Japan and the United States were fought on or near the islands. The impact the war made on society gave impetus to a pro-independence movement in the 1950s.

In 1970, the Solomon Islands' first general election was held, and a new constitution was introduced in 1974. On June 22, 1975, the islands officially ceased being a protectorate, and by 1976 the government was acting on its own.

The Solomon Islands became a member of the Commonwealth in July 1978. Under its independence constitution of 1978, the government is a parliamentary democracy

with a ministerial system and a unicameral National Parliament. The parliament has 47 seats. The prime minister is selected from the parliamentary majority party. The head of state is the British monarch, represented by a governor-general.

'The judicial system is a blend of British and traditional systems and consists of the High Court, magistrate's courts, and local courts.

The flag consists of two triangles, the upper one blue and the lower one green, separated by a diagonal gold stripe; on the blue triangle are five white five-pointed stars arranged in a quincunx.

Arts, Science, Education

Education is not compulsory, and many schools charge fees. Christian

missions (mainly Anglican) supported by government grants, continue to provide some primary schooling. In 1994, there were about 60,500 primary school students, but only 7,800 secondary school students. Higher education is available at the Solomon Islands Teacher College, the Honiara Technical Institute, and the University of the South Pacific Solomon Islands Center.

Commerce and Industry

The economy relies on the exports of copra, timber, and fish. At least 50% of the workforce depends on subsistence agriculture, fishing, and forestry for at least part of their livelihood. Cocoa, spices, and palm oil are also important export commodities.

The islands are rich in undeveloped mineral resources such as lead, zinc, nickel, and gold. In 1998 Ross Mining of Australia began producing gold at Gold Ridge on Guadalcanal. Minerals exploration in other areas continues, and there are hopes for further gold production.

Tourism could prove to be an important service industry for Solomon Islands, especially for marine activities such as diving. However, limitations of public roads and transportation systems are the biggest deterrents to building on tourism.

Foreign aid accounts for about 13% of Solomon Islands GDP. Principal aid donors are Australia, Japan, and the Republic of China and New Zealand.

Transportation

There are no railways, but the islands do have about 800 miles of roads and another 500 miles of private logging and plantation roads. Shipping services link the Solomon Islands with other Pacific islands, Australia, Japan, and Europe. Honiara and Rini Cove are the two main ports. Government vessels provide interisland transport and handle about one-third of the country's shipping. Henderson Field on Guadalcanal is the main civil airport.

Solomon Airlines has provided flights between the islands and to nearby Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu; however, the service was suspended in Fall of 2001 by Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) for not meeting safety requirements. Service may return once safety codes are met.

In the Solomon Islands, vehicular traffic moves on the left. Surfaced roads are found only around Honiara, located on Guadalcanal Island. These surfaced roads are two lane, not well marked, and are poorly lit at night. The remaining roads in the Solomon Islands are made of coral or gravel or are dirt tracks. Travelers must take care when driving off

main roads to avoid trespassing on communal land.

Communications

About 6,000 telephones operate on the islands, and radiotelephone service provides overseas links. The government operates five radio transmitters; there are no television broadcasts but satellite television from Australia is available at some hotels. Local weekly papers include *Solomons Star* and *Solomons Voice*.

Health

Hospitals and pharmacies in the Solomon Islands are limited to population centers and missions. The nearest reliable medical facilities are in Australia or New Zealand. Medical conditions resulting from diving accidents may require medical evacuation to Australia or New Zealand.

Malaria, tuberculosis, and hookworm are still health problems. Some urban children suffer from malnutrition due to a steady Western diet of processed starches and sugar. An outbreak of Dengue fever occurred in Spring 2002.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
May/June.	Whitsunday/ Pentecost*
May/June.	Whitmonday*
June	Queen's Birthday Celebrated*
July 7	Independence Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Dec. 26	Thanksgiving Day

*Variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

U.S. passport holders do not require visas to enter the Solomon Islands. Passports, onward/return tickets and proof of sufficient funds are required. Visitor permits are granted upon arrival at Henderson International Airport in Honiara. Visitors may enter any number of times provided the total period in the Solomon Islands does not exceed 90 days in a 12-month period. The Solomon Islands government strictly enforces immigration laws, and travelers may face fines and other penalties if they remain in the country beyond the authorized period.

Persons arriving on yachts should call the nearest immigration office to complete arrival forms for issuance of visitors permits. Travelers who anticipate the possibility of transiting or visiting Australia are advised to obtain an electronic travel authority (ETA) or visa for Australia before leaving the United States. The ETA is available to eligible U.S. citizens at time of ticket purchase through travel agents and airlines. For more information about entry requirements, travelers may contact the Solomon Islands Mission to the United Nations at 800 Second Avenue 4th Floor, New York, NY 10017-4709; Tel: (212) 599?6192.

The Solomon Islands' customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from the Solomon Islands of items such as firearms and ammunition, sexually explicit material and certain prescription drugs. Other items may be subject to quarantine regulations or import duty. The Solomon Islands' government prohibits the export of military artifacts from World War II. It is advisable to contact the Solomon Islands' Mission to the United Nations for specific informa-

tion regarding customs requirements.

There is no U.S. Embassy in the Solomon Islands. However, there is a U.S. Consular Agency in Honiara. The Consular Agent, who has general information and forms (such as passport applications for forwarding to Port Moresby) may be contacted at B.J.S. Agencies Limited in Honiara, Tel (677) 23426; Fax (677) 21-027. Primary assistance for U.S. citizens is provided by the U.S. Embassy in Papua New Guinea, which is located on Douglas Street, adjacent to the Bank of Papua New Guinea, in Port Moresby. Use this address for courier service deliveries. The mailing address is P.O. Box

1492, Port Moresby, N.C.D. 121, Papua New Guinea; tel (675) 321-1455; fax (675) 321-1593.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and to obtain updated information on travel and security from the Embassy. Information may also be obtained from the Consular Agent in Honiara. American citizens may submit consular inquiries via e-mail to consularportmoresby@state.gov.

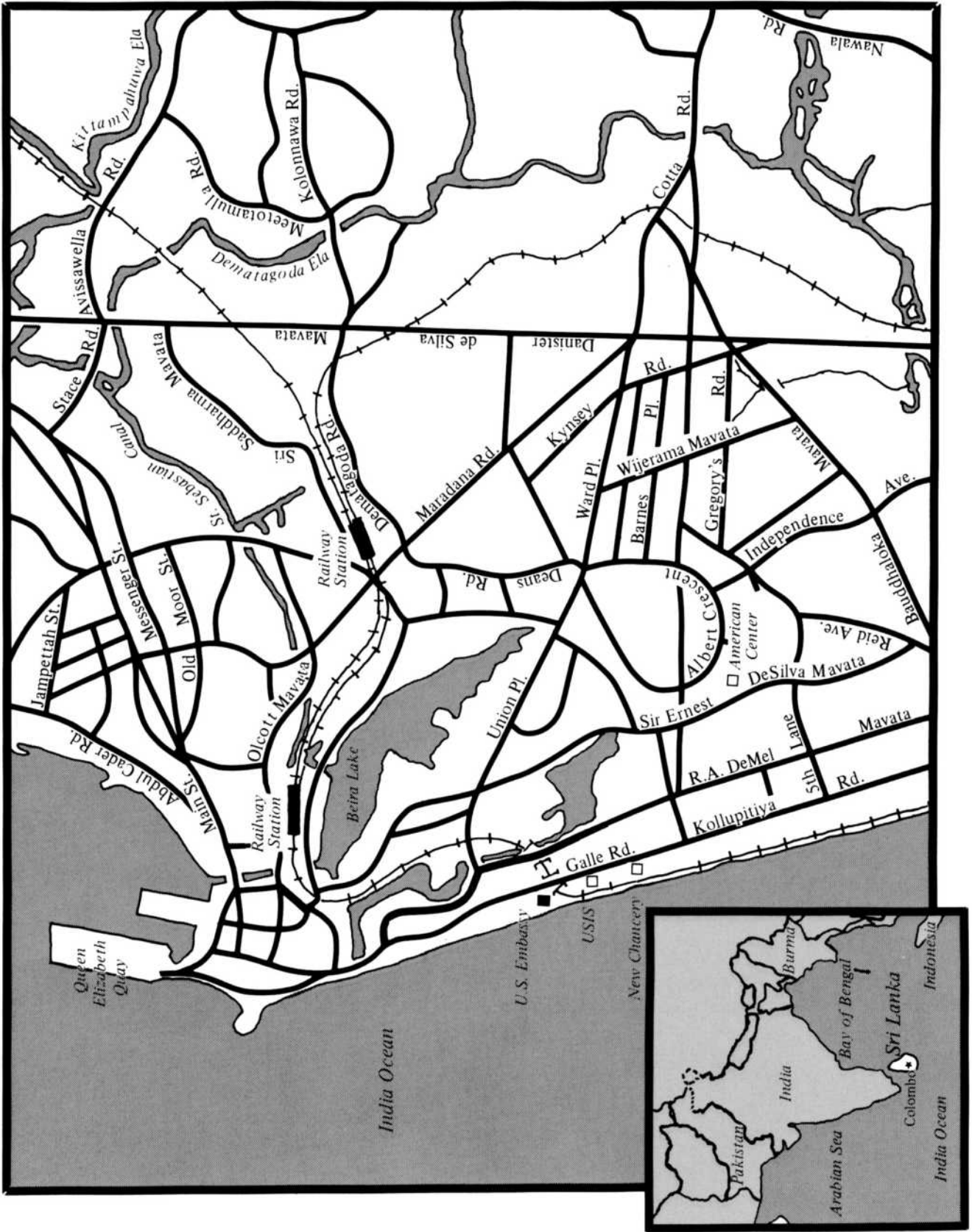
Disaster Preparedness

The Solomon Islands lie in the South Pacific cyclonic trajectory, and is vulnerable to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and sudden tidal

movements. The Pacific Cyclone season extends from November through March. General information regarding disaster preparedness is available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov/crisismg.html>, and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) home page at <http://www.fema.gov>.

RECOMMENDED READING

Harcombe, David. *Solomon Islands*. Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1993.



Colombo, Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Major Cities:

Colombo, Kandy

Other Cities:

Anuradhapura, Galle, Jaffna, Matara, Negombo, Ratnapura, Trincomalee

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report for Sri Lanka. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

SRI LANKA has often been described as a tropical paradise. The vegetation of the coastal belt is lush and dramatic, and the mountainous areas of the interior are spectacular. Pleasant sea breezes temper the coast's tropical climate through most of the year; the hills and mountains in the island's center are cool at night. Arab traders of long ago knew the island as Serendib, which is the origin of the word serendipity, reflecting the unexpected pleasures of the land.

Sri Lanka, once known as the British Crown Colony of Ceylon, became independent in 1948, although it remained under dominion status. Its 1972 constitution proclaimed it

an independent republic, and changed the country's name. Finally, in 1978, a new constitution officially declared the island the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

MAJOR CITIES

Colombo

Colombo, the capital city, lies on a flat coastal plain on the southwestern side of the island. It grew up around the harbor, which has been expanded by a breakwater. The main business section is near the port in what is known as the Fort (the old fort walls no longer remain). The buildings in this area are typically British and Dutch colonial, and the streets are generally congested. Parking is a problem. The *Pettah*, or traditional bazaar, adjoins the main business area. It consists of narrow, crowded streets and small shops and stalls.

The original Sinhalese name, Kalantotla (meaning Kelani ferry) was corrupted to Kolambu by Arab traders, and was changed to Colombo by the Portuguese.

Main residential sections of the city are south and southeast of the busi-

ness area and are generally pleasant. Flowering trees line the streets, and old mansions with lovely gardens lend an exotic tropical air. Cinnamon Gardens is a wealthy residential and recreational area.

The country's first free trade zone is near Colombo International Airport, Katunayake. Its success prompted the establishment of additional zones at Biyagama, 15 miles from the capital, and near the southern port of Galle.

Colombo's port is one of the world's largest man-made harbors. It is a popular port of call for passenger ships and has become a major cargo transshipment hub.

The population of Sri Lanka's capital was estimated at 645,000 in 2000.

Colombo is known for its gem cutting and ivory carving. Other industries include food and tobacco processing, metal fabrication, engineering, and the manufacture of chemicals, textiles, glass, cement, leather goods, clothing, jewelry, and furniture. An oil refinery is located nearby.

Historically, Colombo has been known for over two thousand years, in its early days as an open anchorage for oceangoing ships of

Greco-Roman, Arab, and Chinese traders. Muslims settled here in the eighth century, and the Portuguese arrived in the 16th century, building a fort to protect their spice trade. The Dutch, also interested in the spice trade, gained control of the city in the 17th century. Colombo passed to the British in 1796, and it became capital of the Crown Colony of Ceylon in 1802. Colombo replaced Galle (Point de Galle) as the country's chief port in the 1880s, becoming a major refueling and supply center for merchant ships on the Europe-Far East route. During World War II, Colombo served as an Allied naval base, and became the capital of independent Ceylon in 1948.

Clothing

Clothing worn in Washington, DC, during the hottest summer weeks is suitable year round in Colombo, although men's office attire is more casual than that in Washington, DC. A short-sleeved shirt, with or without a tie, or a bush suit are most frequently worn by expatriate men here. A sports jacket or suit are suitable for business calls.

For up-country wear, light wool suits, wool slacks, sweaters, and flannel shirts may be needed. In Nuwara Eliya, the privately owned Hill Club requires men to wear jackets and ties to dinner and will provide these items for a small rental fee for those who arrive without.

Locally made shirts, shorts, ties, and socks are generally unsatisfactory, and should be brought from the U.S. Local tailoring of bush shirts, suits, and trousers is good, but fabric is generally not as satisfactory as that available in the U.S.

Women's office attire is the same as that worn in a southern American city during the summer months. As in the U.S., many of the air-conditioned offices can be cool. Women are not expected to wear hosiery at any functions, but this is a matter of personal choice and comfort. Casual clothing for women can be made locally either with imported or local batik material.

Sewing fabrics, with the exception of some batiks and polyesters, are limited. A good supply of wash-and-wear fabric, thread, zippers, buttons, trim, elastic, etc., should be brought from home.

Children's clothing needs are simple but, whenever possible, should be brought or ordered from the U.S. The fit of shoes is a particular problem, except for sandals.

Garment bags are useful for clothing protection. Extreme dampness during the monsoon season can cause clothes and shoes to mildew unless kept in air-conditioned rooms. Lightweight shoes and sandals are particularly desirable here. Sports shoes should be brought from home.

Clothing will not last as long here as in the U.S. The tropical climate and frequent laundering shortens the useful life of most items. Underwear, particularly with elastic, tends to wear out quickly.

Food

A variety of seasonal, fresh tropical fruits and vegetables is available at reasonable prices. Some vegetables are similar to those in temperate climates but may not have a familiar flavor. All raw or unpeeled vegetables and fruits must be soaked in disinfectant to reduce the danger of amoeba or other parasite infestation. Milton, a satisfactory brand-name disinfectant, is sometimes available. Clorox also may be used.

Because the local market is unpredictable, and food quality is not usually up to U.S. standards, most families prefer to have a stock of imported foods and frozen meats on hand, particularly basic cooking items.

Supplies & Services

In general, local dry cleaning is mediocre, although some Colombo hotels offer fairly good service. Because of the limited dry cleaning services and the warm climate, lightweight washable clothing

(including men's suits and ties) is preferable.

Dressmakers are available at reasonable fees for making women's and children's clothing and men's shirts. Normally, dressmakers prefer to work in their customers' homes and do not supply their own sewing machines or notions. Shoe repair is done by hand and is adequate and inexpensive. Shoes, particularly sandals, also can be made inexpensively.

In Colombo, many beauticians are familiar with Western styling. European or Australian products are generally used.

Religious Activities

English is spoken in many of the larger Colombo churches: Roman Catholic, Church of Sri Lanka (Episcopalian), Scots (Presbyterian), Baptist, Methodist, Christian Science, Mormon, and Dutch Reformed. No Orthodox churches are available. Sri Lanka has no synagogue. In Kandy, English services are held in Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, and other churches. Most have Sunday school programs. Many churches also have services in Sinhala and Tamil.

Footwear and headgear should be removed before entering Buddhist shrines. Photographing statues of the Buddha is acceptable, but posing beside them is not. Discreet dress in public places is appreciated.

Domestic Help

Most Americans here employ domestic help, usually a combination cook-houseperson, or a cook and a houseperson and a part-time gardener. Total wages for these domestics average about \$100-\$150 a month. Uniforms and medical bills are added expenses. A nursemaid (nanny) charges about \$60 a month. Occasionally, a driver also is hired (about \$50 monthly).

A single person ordinarily would have a combination cook-houseperson and a part-time gardener. Some singles employ sewing nannies and

laundry people on a weekly basis at an added cost of \$10 to \$20 a month.

Education

Younger children of most foreigners resident in Colombo attend the Overseas Childrens School (OCS). At present, the school has an enrollment of over 450, representing more than 40 nations. Americans represent eight to 12% of the student. Originally established to cater to the needs of the British business community, this school has strong Western orientation, with most of the textbooks in the primary and middle school now coming from the United Kingdom and the United States. OCS, offering classes from nursery through 12th grade, has 75 teachers, of whom more than one-third are expatriates, with most being British and American.

The school, which at one time operated on an extremely limited budget, has made remarkable academic and financial strides since 1981. The school is self-funding from fees. In addition, it receives grants from the U.S. State Department's Office of Overseas Schools. It is located on a five-acre campus; more expatriate teachers are being recruited; teacher evaluations and training and curriculum development receive priority attention; and the supply of books, computers, and other teaching aids is expanding. The school is an active member of the Near East/South Asia Council of Overseas Schools and also of the European Council of International Schools and the Association for Advancement of International Education.

Students completing school at OCS can be expected to compete favorably with their peers for entrance into college, with International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma graduates likely to have access to the top colleges. Transfer students are generally not accepted into grade 12 unless they have successfully completed grade 11 in an IB program elsewhere.

The school offers French, Spanish, and Sinhala as the main foreign

languages in grades seven through 10, and students are able to follow mother-tongue courses for the IB diploma in grades 11 and 12. OCS also offers an extensive English course as a second-language program for nonnative speakers. OCS follows a two-semester school year starting at the beginning of September and ending in June. Parents should bring as detailed records as possible from their children's previous school(s), and a health record is required at the time of admission. Placement at grade level is based on an internally administered test.

Although the school provides guidance by learning and disability specialists, the physical layout of the campus makes it impossible for the school to accept children whose physical handicaps confine them to a wheel chair. Although the school does not require a specific uniform attire, a dress code exists, and students should look presentable. For physical education, white shorts and a T-shirt (available from the school) are required.

OSC has a good sports program and numerous other extracurricular activities.

Overseas Children's School's address is: Pelawatte, P.O. Box 9, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka.

A few American children attend the Colombo International School (CIS), a private British curriculum school with over 800 students. CIS was founded in 1982 and offers classes for students ages two to 18. The teacher student ratio is 1 to 9.

CIS offers the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and achievement test classes to prepare students for admission to U.S. universities.

Extracurricular activities are an important part of school life, and sports, music, and drama are included in the school program.

The address of the Colombo International School is 28, Gregory's Road, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.

Universities in Sri Lanka offer courses leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Buddhism, Oriental studies, arts, science, law, engineering, agriculture, and medicine. Instructions are in Sinhala, Tamil, or English, depending on student demand. Courses are based on the British university system, which concentrates on a major subject and allows few outside studies. Although foreigners are officially welcomed, few if any Americans have attended in recent years.

Recreation

Colombo is the only large city in Sri Lanka. Bombay and Madras, the closest large cities abroad, are about one to two hours away by air. New Delhi can be reached by air via Madras or Bombay. Plane service is not available directly between Colombo and New Delhi. The Maldiv Islands are easily accessible by air and offer many resorts.

Sri Lanka has many interesting places for weekend outings or longer holiday trips. The principal spots in the hill country are Kandy, about 70 miles away (two-and-a-half hours by car, altitude 1,674 feet); Nuwara Eliya, about 110 miles away (five hours by car, altitude 6,185 feet); and Bandarawela, about 125 miles away (five hours by car, altitude 4,017 feet).

The Cultural Triangle of Sri Lanka's ancient cities is well worth seeing. Sigiriya (three-and-a-half hours from Colombo by car) is a rock fortress with famous frescoes. Sightseers also will enjoy the ancient ruins at Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa (five to six hours by car) and the Yala and Wilpatu wildlife sanctuaries (seven and three hours respectively, by car).

Perhaps the most awesome and forbidding region of Sri Lanka is Horton Plains, hard to reach but well worth the effort. Located about an hour's drive from Nuwara Eliya, Horton Plains is part of the Peak

Wilderness Sanctuary. One of the major attractions here is World's End, considered by many the finest view in all of Sri Lanka. For those who enjoy trout fishing and hiking, this is the place. Also, the Sinharaja Forest is one of the few tropical rain forests left in the world.

Hotel accommodations at tourist destinations outside Colombo are excellent. The government operates a large number of rest houses and, in certain areas (notably Nuwara Eliya, Horton Plains, and the game parks), bungalows are available for rent. The rest houses vary widely in quality; all are reasonably priced.

The Colombo Zoological Gardens has a fine and large collection of animals, birds, and reptiles housed in a beautiful setting. A special feature of the zoo is an exhibition of trained elephants every evening.

Sri Lanka has beaches on both east and west coasts; but the east coast beaches may not be accessible due to ethnic conflict. Swimming is unsafe at certain times of the year because of the strong currents generated by the monsoons. Scuba diving is good during the season. The most popular beaches on the west coast, which are safe from about November to May, are Mt. Lavinia (20 minutes from the city) and Bentota (about a one-hour drive). Hikkaduwa, near Bentota, features a coral garden.

Sports commonly found in other tropical areas are also found in Sri Lanka. The most popular sports available to foreign residents are tennis, golf, and swimming. Others are snorkeling, scuba diving, soccer, cricket, rugby, badminton, squash, fishing, and sailing. Instruction in karate is also available. Many of the sports require club membership.

Some of the clubs open to membership are the Royal Colombo Golf Club, Nuwara Eliya Golf Club (rated among the best in South Asia, in the mountains at 6,200 feet), Royal Colombo Yacht Club, Colombo Rowing Club, Otter Aquatic Club, Colombo Motor Yacht

Club, Gymkana Club, and the Colombo Swimming Club. In addition, the hotels offer yearly pool memberships. The Galle Face Hotel has a saltwater pool, and the Intercontinental, Lanka Oberoi, Hilton, Ramada Renaissance, and the Taj Samudra offer memberships in their sport centers.

Entertainment

A few movie theaters show Western movies, but most films are Indian or Sinhalese. Amateur dramatic groups and symphony, chamber, and choral groups give regular performances. Occasionally, entertainers from foreign countries (including the U.S.) also perform. Indian movie and dance concerts are fairly frequent.

Colombo has a few nightclubs, a range of restaurants serving ethnic foods (Italian, Chinese, French, Korean, German, Japanese, and Indian), and several hotels. Menu selection, culinary expertise, and musical entertainment are limited. Both Eastern and Western menus are available at major hotels.

The American Women's Association conducts charitable and social activities, and introduces new arrivals to other Americans and to local customs and shopping. All resident American women may join the association. Branches of the YMCA, YWCA, and the Salvation Army are also active. Some American women join the International Women's Club, which has tennis courts as well as social activities.

The national tourist agency—Ceylon Tourist Board—is located at 78, Steuart Place, P.O. Box 1504, Colombo 3.

Kandy

Kandy is the capital of the hill country. It is 1,674 feet above sea level, and 72 miles from Colombo. The average temperature here is 77°F, with pleasantly warm days and cool nights. Kandy is a mountain resort and the market center for an area producing tea, rubber, rice and

cacao. The main part of the city overlooks a scenic artificial lake built by Kandy's last king in 1806.

Kandy is noted for local handicrafts such as reed and lacquer work and silver and brassware. The population here is over 100,000.

Clothing

Although Kandy is cooler than Colombo, the same type of clothing is generally appropriate for both. A sweater may be necessary in the evening, especially in December and January. Ready-made clothing, except for batiks, is not readily available in Kandy. Tailoring is good, but some fabrics are available.

Food

Staples are generally available here. The local beef is quite good. Chicken, ham, pork, and bacon—available at Cargills, Elephant House, and almost all grocery stores—are also good. The imported food generally is expensive.

Supplies & Services

Some foreign and local toiletries, cosmetics, perfumes, etc., are available. A limited supply of medicines can be found at Cargills and at Lanka Medicals. Shoes, as well as most mechanical and electrical items, can be repaired. Beauty shops and dry cleaning facilities offer adequate services. Domestic help is available and is well trained. Salaries for domestic help are generally lower than in Colombo.

Kandy has a general hospital, seldom used by Americans, and the Lakeside Medical Center (a Seventh Day Adventist institution), which has acceptable facilities. Local specialists may be called in for consultation at the center or seen at the Channeled Practice Services, a facility permitting government physicians to have private patients. The Japanese have built and equipped a teaching hospital on the campus of the School of Medicine at Peradeniya. This provides additional services and facilities. For major medical and hospitalization problems, facilities are better in Colombo.

Recreation

The Temple of the Tooth, visited by Buddhist pilgrims from all over the world, is in Kandy. The sacred tooth relic of the Buddha is said to have been brought to Sri Lanka early in the fourth century, hidden in the hair of an Indian princess. The temple, which is Sri Lanka's holiest Buddhist shrine, was bombed in early 1998. The government accused the Tamil Tigers of committing the bombing.

Kandy, the island's chief city in medieval times, was the final stronghold of the Sinhala kings and the last place to fall under foreign rule. Things to see include the kings' audience hall, the four *devales* (temples), the artificial lake constructed by Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe (last king of Kandy) in 1806, the elephants' bathing place in Katugastota, the botanical gardens and university at Peradeniya, and the Kandyan Art Association.

The most spectacular religious festival, the Esala Perahera, generally takes place in July or August, depending on the astrologically auspicious moment, and ends on the day following the night of the full moon. By the last night, as many as 80 to 100 elephants, caparisoned in velvet, satin, and silk with silver ornaments, move in the procession. Chief of all elephants is the Maligawa (district where Kandy is located) tusker, bearing a replica of the casket which holds the sacred tooth relic. Temples in the Kandy area are Lankatilaka Vihare, Gadalendeniya Vihare, Galmadawa Vihare, and Degalkoruwa Vihare.

In Kandy, active sports may be enjoyed either at the Garden Club, which has tennis courts, or at the Hotel Suisse, which opens its pool and tennis courts to membership by monthly subscription and entrance fee. Newer hotels, e.g., Citadel, Mahaweli Reach, and Topaz, also have similar pool facilities. Nuwara Eliya, 48 miles (three hours) from Kandy, in Sri Lanka's beautiful tea country at an elevation of 6,000 feet, has an 18-hole golf course. Rugby,



Buddhist monks in Kandy, Sri Lanka

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

soccer, and cricket matches are held in season.

Occasionally, English-language movies are shown in Kandy cinemas. French movies with English subtitles can be seen at the Kandy branch of Alliance Française. Classic American movies, shown periodically at the Kandy American Center, are open to a limited number of Americans. Occasionally, movies also are shown at the British Council Library.

Concerts by local or foreign artists, sponsored by various Kandy organizations, are scheduled about every two months. A local dance band plays on alternate nights at two Kandy hotels. The Kandy Lake Club is a gambling casino.

There are a few nice picnic spots near the city, particularly the Victoria Dam area. Mountains, beaches, and wildlife parks are from three to seven hours from Kandy by car.

OTHER CITIES

Situated 106 miles northeast of Colombo, **ANURADHAPURA** is near the Aruvi River. The city was founded in 437 B.C. and was the capital of the ancient Sinhalese

kings of Ceylon for four centuries. Today, it is one of the world's leading Buddhist centers. An ancient pipal tree here is thought to have grown from a piece of the Bo Tree at Buddha Gaya (in India), under which Guatama Buddha attained enlightenment. Interesting sites include a palace, ruins of a rock-hewn temple, large stupas, and other relics.

GALLE (formerly Point de Galle) is located at the extreme southern end of Sri Lanka on the Indian Ocean. With a population of over 168,000, Galle is an agricultural market center, exporting tea, rubber, coconut oil, cloves, and other products from the surrounding region. Known as early as 100 B.C. as a trade center for the Chinese and Arabs, Galle became important under Portuguese rule, 1057–1640, when it was the island's chief port. Under the Dutch, it was the capital of Ceylon from 1640 to 1656. The Dutch built a fort here to guard the harbor and it still stands today. The city came under British rule in 1796, and its commercial importance continued until the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. It further declined when the British built the modern harbor at Colombo in 1885.

JAFFNA is situated on a peninsula in the northernmost part of Sri Lanka. Separated from India by the

Palk Strait, Jaffna and the peninsula are densely populated. There are approximately 130,000 inhabitants here, most of whom are Tamil-speaking people. Tobacco, rice, coconuts, palmyra palm, and vegetables are grown in the region, and fishing is an important occupation. Industries include those for salt, cement, chemical, and tobacco production, as well as textile weaving and gold filigree work. Elephants, peppers, and other commodities are traded. Remains of the ancient Tamil culture, as well as traditions from the Portuguese and Dutch occupations in the 17th and 18th centuries, are found here.

Located in southern Sri Lanka, on the Indian Ocean, **MATARA** is 24 miles east of Galle. It has a population of more than 125,000. Matara is centered in a region rich with coconut palms and cinnamon trees. An old Portuguese fort is among the sites located here.

NEGOMBO, with a population of over 120,000, is located on the west coast of Sri Lanka at the mouth of the Negombo Lagoon, just north of Colombo. The city is a fishing center and a market for coconut products and cinnamon; handicrafts include ceramics and brassware. Many 17th-century Dutch buildings still stand in Negombo. Sri Lanka's international airport is located just outside the city.

Situated in southwest-central Sri Lanka, **RATNAPURA** is 42 miles southeast of Colombo. It is the center of the precious-stone industry. The Buddhist temple, Maha Saman Dewale, is nearby. Ratnapura has a population of over 40,000.

TRINCOMALEE is situated on Sri Lanka's east coast, on the Bay of Bengal. With a population exceeding 52,000, Trincomalee has one of the world's finest natural harbors. Exports traded here include tea, hides, and dried fish. A railroad terminus and an important road junction, Trincomalee (sometimes written Trinkomali) is also known for its coconut and rice plantations, and some pearl fishing. Early Tamil

settlers from south India built the Hindu Temple of a Thousand Columns in Trincomalee, but it was destroyed by the Portuguese in 1622. On its site, the Dutch built Fort Frederick in 1676. Captured by the British in 1795, the city was British naval headquarters in the Pacific theater during World War II. U.S. planes used its airfield for operations against the Japanese in Burma and Malaya (now part of Federation of Malaysia).

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Sri Lanka is a pear-shaped island in the Indian Ocean—18 miles from India at its closest point. The country, roughly the size of West Virginia, is 270 miles long and 140 miles wide at its extremities, and comprises 25,332 square miles. It lies in the tropical zone between 5° and 9°N and between 79° and 82°S.

Sri Lanka has many spots of scenic beauty and historic interest. Topographically, the island consists of two main sections: the mountainous south-central region which rises to more than 8,200 feet above sea level, and the low-lying northern, eastern, and southwestern coastal plains. Dense vegetation covers a large part of Sri Lanka, particularly the southern and western coasts. Rubber and coconut trees grow in the midlands and lowlands, and there are vast tea estates in the highlands.

Sri Lanka has a varied effect on Westerners who remain on the island a considerable time without a break. People who like hot weather and are active in sports usually enjoy themselves and keep physically fit and mentally alert. Those accustomed to seasonal changes find the tropical climate monotonous and enervating. The climate, except in the mountains, is hot and humid. In Colombo, the capital,

temperatures rarely rise above 90°F or drop below 70°F. Humidity is always high, often in the 90s. In the mountainous districts, the average temperature is about 60°F during the day but, at night, it cools off rapidly, sometimes dropping to near freezing in places like Nuwara Eliya (at an altitude of 6,200 feet).

The monsoons produce two main rainy seasons. The southwest monsoon lasts roughly from mid-May into early fall. During this period the southwestern part of the island, including Colombo, receives much of its average annual rainfall of 100 inches. The northeast monsoon lasts from about October or November through February. The northern and eastern parts of the island receive virtually all of their average annual rainfall of 60 inches at this time.

Monsoon showers range from gentle to torrential in the Colombo area. December through March are usually the driest months. Because of the massive Mahaweli hydroelectric and irrigation scheme, water shortages and interruptions of electricity during the dry months are less frequent than in the past.

Colombo's climate compares to the hot, humid summers in Washington, DC. Even during the cooler period (December and January), most Americans depend on electric fans or air-conditioning to keep comfortable.

Population

The population of Sri Lanka is 19.4 million (2000 est.) and, although it has more than doubled over the past 30 years, the overall growth rate is slowing. Currently it stands at 87%; this is somewhat understated since it takes into account outward migration to the Middle East.

Ethnically, 74% of the population is Sinhalese and speaks Sinhala, the national language; 18% is Tamil (people of South Indian origin) and speaks Tamil, an official language since 1978. About 70% of the Tamils are "Ceylon Tamils"—citizens

whose ancestors have lived in Sri Lanka for many generations and who have full voting rights. Most live in the northern and eastern provinces, but many Ceylon Tamils live in Colombo and throughout the island. The other 30% of the Tamil population are the so-called "Indian Tamils," whose ancestors were brought from South India in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to work on tea and rubber plantations. Most were disenfranchised in Sri Lanka by legislation passed in 1948. Because India also refused to recognize them as citizens, the Indian Tamils were considered stateless.

A 1964 agreement with India provided for repatriation of many to India and the granting of Sri Lankan citizenship to others on a 60-40 ratio. In 1988, Sri Lankan citizenship was extended to 230,000 stateless Indian Tamils.

Other minority groups include Sri Lankan Muslims (including both Moors and Malays and totaling 7% of the population) and Eurasians. Most Sinhalese are Buddhists, most Tamils are Hindu, and Moors and Malays are Muslims. Christians constitute 8% of the population, most of whom are Roman Catholic. Christians can be found in both the Sinhalese and Tamil communities.

Racial tension between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities erupted into violence in 1983 and continued in varying degrees of intensity until 1995, when the government and Tamil rebels announced a cease-fire. The peace only lasted a few months, however, before Tamil rebels renewed their attacks on government installations. Since 1983, over 51,000 people have been killed, and more than 300,000 Tamils have fled the island.

Government

The 450-year foreign presence on the island (Portuguese, Dutch, and British) has influenced Sri Lanka's government, jurisprudence, and administration. Sri Lanka became independent in 1948 after being a British colony for over 100 years. It

initially opted for dominion status in the Commonwealth, like nearby India and Pakistan. But, unlike India and Pakistan, it retained dominion status only until 1972 when the island was formally proclaimed a democratic republic and a unitary state with the office of governor-general converting to a ceremonial presidency. During that period, real power was vested in Parliament and in a prime minister under the British pattern. The 1972 constitution proclaimed Sinhala the official language (with some provision for the use of Tamil) and Buddhism the foremost religion (with religious freedom guaranteed to all).

Following the overwhelming 1977 electoral victory of the United National Party (UNP), a decision was made to revamp the constitutional system more along continental than British lines. The result was the 1978 constitution which established an executive (and active) presidency, abolished the upper house of legislature, and established a system of proportional representation as the basis for future parliamentary elections. The constitution also elevated Tamil to the status of an official national language.

An executive president, elected for a six-year term, serves as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, chief of state, and head of government. The position is based largely on the French model. The president appoints and heads a cabinet of ministers who are responsible to a 225-seat unicameral legislature. The president's chief lieutenant is the prime minister, who is the leader of the ruling party in Parliament.

Communal tension in Sri Lanka has remained high since July 1983, when the worst communal violence in the country's post-independence history occurred. Following the killing of 13 members of an army patrol (all Sinhalese) by Tamil terrorists fighting for a separate Tamil state in the north and east, Sinhalese mobs took to the streets of Colombo

and then throughout Sinhalese-majority areas, attacking Tamils and their property. Hundreds of Tamils were killed in the ensuing violence and tens of thousands were left homeless, as mobs attacked Tamils and their property throughout much of the island. The riots led to a burgeoning of Tamil militant groups in the north and east and to continued military and political confrontation between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil militants.

By mid-1987, the situation had reached an impasse. The government's policy of pressing the insurgents militarily, although attempting to negotiate with Tamil moderates, had not succeeded. In an attempt to break the deadlock, Sri Lanka brought India directly into its communal dispute. Under a July 29, 1987, accord signed by the President and the Indian Prime Minister, Sri Lanka made many concessions to Tamil demands, including devolution of some powers to the provinces, merger (subject to later referendum) of northern and eastern provinces, and official status for the Tamil language. India agreed to establish order in the north and east and to cease assisting Tamil insurgents.

A key element of the accord soon fell apart. The major Tamil militant group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), within weeks declared its intent to continue its armed struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam. The 50,000-strong Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) found itself engaged in a bloody police action against the LTTE. After two-and-a-half years of conflict between the IPKF and LTTE, with over 1,000 deaths on each side, the situation had not completely resolved. By late 1989, the Indian troops were being withdrawn, but the army and LTTE continued to have confrontations.

In 1995 a cease-fire between the Tamil rebels and the Sri Lankan government was announced, with government promises to send an \$816-million aid package to the

northern part of the island. The peace process fell apart after a few months, when additional demands by the rebels went unfulfilled. After Tamil terrorists attacked two gunboats and an army base, the government went on the offensive by blockading the Tamil stronghold of Jaffna and attacking rebel positions. By the end of 1996 the death toll from almost 15 years of civil war had surpassed 50,000.

Presidential elections were held in December 1988 and Ranasinghe Premadasa won with just over 50% of the votes cast in an election marked by considerable violence instigated mostly by the radical revolutionary Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). Despite JVP violence, a parliamentary general election was held in February 1989. President Premadasa's United National Party won 125 of the 225 seats in Parliament in the first national election held under the system of proportional representation, which had been established by the 1978 constitution.

The JVP began asserting itself in mid-1987, capitalizing on opposition in the Sinhala community to the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, it launched an intimidation campaign. Using terrorist tactics, including assassinations, strikes, and other weapons of intimidation, it brought the country to a virtual standstill several times in 1988 and 1989. Several thousand people died in JVP-instigated violence and much property, particularly government-owned property, was destroyed. The deaths included government officials, members of political parties who supported the Accord, and innocent civilians. The government fought back, killing another several thousand people suspected to be JVP party members, supporters, or their families. In late 1989, the JVP party leaders had virtually all been killed or arrested, and the JVP threat appeared to have failed.

On May 1, 1993, President Premadasa was killed in a May Day Parade bombing. Prime Minister Wijetunga succeeded him, and

called for early elections in August 1994. Voters, however, chose a leftist coalition led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga became president. She was reelected in 1999.

Sri Lanka's legal system reflects the interplay of cultural influences. The criminal law is fundamentally of British origin. The basic system of civil law, a legacy of the Dutch, is Roman-Dutch; but personal law (marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc.) is unique to each ethnic community. Thus Hindus, Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists have their own family codes. The judiciary is based on the British model.

Sri Lanka's judiciary consists of a Supreme Court which is also authorized to give advisory opinions, a Court of Appeals, a High Court, and a number of subordinate courts. The Supreme Court, composed of a chief justice and six to 10 associate justices, has original jurisdiction on all constitutional matters, as well as on such other matters as election petitions, breach of parliamentary privilege, protection of fundamental rights, and other matters over which Parliament has legislative power.

The Sri Lanka Administrative Service is a direct descendent of the highly regarded colonial Ceylon Civil Service. Each ministry has a secretary, usually a career civil servant, who provides continuity as ministers and governments change. The country is divided into 25 districts, each headed by a government agent (GA) responsible for regional government activities. In colonial days, the GA was virtually overlord of a district; today, democracy has brought an increased concern for mass public opinion and socially responsive administration. An innovation of the government elected in 1977 was the introduction of a system of district ministers, senior members of Parliament usually not from the district, who oversee development efforts in the region.

Sri Lanka is a member of the United Nations, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as the following international bodies: Asian Development Bank, Colombo Plan, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Group of 77, International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), Nonaligned Movement, World Bank, and World Tourism Organization. The Sri Lankan capital is the home of the international headquarters of the Colombo Plan, a program to aid the economic development of Asian nations, which was launched at a conference in Colombo in 1950. The address is 12 Melbourne Avenue, P.O. Box 596, Colombo.

Sri Lanka maintains diplomatic relations abroad in over 30 foreign countries, including Iraq, the People's Republic of China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, Germany, Kenya, India, and the United States. There are over 30 foreign embassies in Colombo, including those of Australia, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, the Holy See, Japan, the Maldives, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The outer two-thirds of the flag of Sri Lanka has a dark red background with a gold lion, sword, and bo leaves (from the former Kingdom of Kandy). The inner third of the flag has vertical green and saffron bands (for the Muslims and Tamils). The flag is bordered and divided in gold.

Arts, Science, Education

Sri Lanka's artistic and intellectual life is lively in some areas. There are eight universities, one open university, and two university colleges; both arts and sciences are taught. Facilities include four medical schools. The Institute of Aesthetic Studies is a department of the University of Kelaniya, near Colombo.



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Street in the commercial district of Colombo

Instruction includes art, crafts, music, and dance.

The Ministry of Education operates 21 teacher training colleges; of these, four train instructors to teach English as a second language and 17 cover other areas. The Ministry of Higher Education directs 13 polytechnics and eight junior technical institutes. Curricula and direction at all educational levels are increasingly related to Sri Lanka's development.

The Natural Resources, Energy, and Science Authority, established in 1968 as the National Science Council, implements central government science policies. The Sri Lanka Institute of Scientific and Industrial Research (CISIR) is an autonomous, non-profit, industrial research institute, established by the government in 1955.

The Tea Research Institute established in 1925, the Rubber Research Institute (1910), and the Coconut Research Institute (1971) are all government non-profit organizations.

Private schools teach Eastern and Western dance and music. The country has several theaters, a major museum, and many special-

ized societies. Few art galleries exist, but interest is active in painting, batik, jewelry, sculpture, and indigenous handicrafts. A national dance troupe performs, and interest in a national theater, and national culture in general, is strong.

An active and healthy interest also flourishes in Western music, art, and drama. English-language plays are performed by a few amateur groups in Colombo, and drama groups welcome foreign members. Concerts of Eastern and Western music also are given occasionally, and Colombo has an amateur symphony orchestra; many foreigners have joined this latter group. Visiting artists regularly perform with the orchestra or give solo performances.

Commerce and Industry

Compared with the many developing countries in the region, Sri Lanka's economic potential is high. The island has rich agricultural and mineral resources and is surrounded by a bountiful sea. Population pressures are less severe than in neighboring areas, and the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is about \$3,500 (2000 est.).

Agriculture accounts for about 21% of the GDP and employs about 38% of the population. Tea, rubber, and coconuts are the principal crops and the source of about 50% of export earnings. Rice is the major domestic food grain crop; improved seeds and yields have significantly reduced the need for rice imports.

Industrial production has grown substantially in recent years and now accounts for about 20% of the GDP. Garments, many of which are assembled in the free trade zone located just outside Colombo, account for most of Sri Lanka's exports of manufactured goods. Roughly 75% of the apparel exported is sent to the U.S. Other industrial exports include refined petroleum products and precious and semi-precious gems.

Services (i.e., transportation and tourism) and remittances from Sri Lankans working abroad are of increasing importance to the economy. Colombo's efficient port has become a major cargo transshipment hub and a significant foreign exchange earner. Tourism, which has been hurt by the security situation, remains an important source of employment and one of the best hopes for future economic growth.

The United National Party government has undertaken to reverse many basic economic policies followed by all previous governments since independence. Most significantly, the government has reduced its rice subsidy program and is placing greater reliance on the private sector in promoting economic development. The country relies on considerable international assistance from both multilateral and bilateral aid donors. Increased foreign investment, the huge Mahaweli irrigation development scheme now beginning to yield results, the successful free trade zones, and the growth of the tourist industry, have helped to reduce the country's serious unemployment problem. However, the economy has suffered in recent years due to the continuing ethnic conflict and political instability.

Sri Lanka has chronic, current account and government budget deficits. Foreign aid has helped to cover these gaps somewhat, but foreign borrowing also has been significant. External debt is estimated at about \$9.9 billion (2000 est.).

Import liberalization, part of the 1977–78 economic reforms, eliminated the scarcities and black-market activities which once plagued the island. The government's economic priorities are now to bring prices under better control, diversify and expand exports, increase national savings, and maintain the quality of life of its people. Although shortages of basic food items no longer occur, imported products on the local market are often expensive.

The address of the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka is P.O. Box 1375, Second Floor, YMBA Building, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka is located at the People's Bank Bldg., 220 Deans Rd., Colombo 10.

Transportation

Air Lanka offers domestic service. Charter planes and helicopters are also available. The railway system, also a government enterprise, provides a reasonably satisfactory means of reaching a few points of interest on the island. First-class travel, although somewhat rigorous, should be used whenever possible; second-class accommodations frequently are the best available. The government-owned bus system, which is overcrowded and poorly maintained, normally is not used by foreign residents. Private buses offer little improvement.

Rental vehicles with a driver, although relatively expensive, may be engaged for excursion trips. Satisfactory and inexpensive three- and four-wheeled metered taxi service is available in Colombo.

Despite such problems as heavy traffic (bicycles, bullock carts, other vehicles, and pedestrians), lack of

spare parts, and indifferent servicing, most resident Americans rely on automobiles for transportation within and outside Colombo. Sri Lankan roads are generally narrow and inadequately maintained. The island has an extensive network of paved surfaces.

Small, right-hand-drive cars are recommended because of the narrow roads. The highest rated gasoline is about 93 octane. The most popular cars include Peugeot, Volkswagen, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Ford, (Australia, Germany, U.K.), and British Leyland. Parts and servicing are most readily available for Japanese vehicles. Heavy-duty tires and batteries, air-conditioning, tropical radiators, and extra undercoating against rust are worthwhile investments. Catalytic converters on newer models should be removed, since lead-free gasoline is not available.

As in England, traffic moves on the left side of the road. Sri Lanka permits import of left-hand-drive vehicles, but for safety and resale value, it is wise to import only right-hand-drive vehicles.

Third-party liability insurance is compulsory in Sri Lanka. Insurance policies are available only through the government-owned and -operated Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation and the National Insurance Corporation.

Communications

Local telephone service often is interrupted by breakdowns caused by age and weather conditions. Long-distance and international direct-dial services are available to all points in Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Australia, Japan, Europe, and the U.S., provided an advance deposit has been made. Telegraph and cable service, available day and night, is satisfactory. Telex facilities are available at most good hotels.

Airmail service to and from the U.S. is generally satisfactory. The average transit time is eight to 10 days.

Radio broadcasting operates 17 and one-half hours daily, seven days a week. Programs offered by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation cover local and international subjects and include a substantial amount of Western music, especially on FM. Programming and schedules follow British format, and some British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) programs and news features are relayed on local channels. Broadcasting is in English, Sinhala, and Tamil on shortwave, AM, and FM frequencies. Many interesting and informative programs are presented. Reasonably good worldwide radio reception is available on shortwave.

Sri Lanka initiated television transmission in 1978 and now has two stations. Each station operates from 5 p.m. until after 11 p.m. The programs on both channels consist of locally produced shows in English, Sinhala, and Tamil, and reruns of U.S. and U.K. serials in English. Regular, nightly news programs are broadcast in all three languages at different times.

Sri Lanka uses the PAL system of color TV; therefore, U.S. sets cannot operate here. Color sets are available locally through the duty-free complex; however it is a time-consuming process and purchases require Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry approval. Prices compare favorably with those in the U.S.

Most Americans bring videotape equipment to Sri Lanka. Many belong to local tape clubs which rent tapes (VHS/PAL system only) at reasonable prices.

Colombo newsstands sell current international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek*. The *International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, and *Asian Wall Street Journal* also are available.

Library facilities in Colombo are limited, but improving. The American Center library is designed to meet the needs of Sri Lankan students and academics. The Colombo municipal library system has

approximately 123,000 titles in English at any one time, and subscribes to some 400 English-language journals and newspapers. The British Council's large, 52,000-volume library includes a good selection of fiction. It subscribes to about 150 periodicals and newspapers. The Colombo Swimming Club operates a small library offering book selections to both children and adult members. A modest number of expensive current paperbacks are available at the large hotel bookshops.

Mildew, termites, and silverfish are a serious threat to books not kept in air-conditioned rooms. Valuable volumes should not be brought to Sri Lanka.

Health and Medicine

Privately owned hospitals, with 24-hour English-speaking Sri Lankan-trained physicians on duty, have outpatient departments, intensive care units, operating rooms, and diagnostic facilities. However, the hospitals are not up to American standards and are utilized rarely, except for routine lab work. Medical problems requiring sophisticated treatment are sent to the nearest adequate medical facility (in Bangkok).

The U.S. Embassy maintains a health unit in Colombo for official personnel and dependents. Some limited care is occasionally provided to unofficial Americans on a fee-for-service basis.

Private physicians are the primary source of medical assistance. Specialists from the government hospitals assist when needed. Some specialists are board-certified in the U.K. Fees for medical care and treatment are reasonable.

All dental work should be done prior to arrival in Sri Lanka. Local dentists have been consulted, with satisfactory results, by some members of the American community. However, dental care is substandard,

and no major dental work can be done.

Pharmaceutical supplies are not always available locally, so one should have an adequate supply of first aid materials, aspirin, or other necessary items; this includes vitamins and birth control pills.

Gastrointestinal disease is the major health problem here. Hepatitis A is common in the local population. Diarrhea is the most common illness among Americans living in the subcontinent, mainly because of contaminated food and water. City water is not potable and should be filtered and boiled for 10 minutes before using. One should thoroughly cook all meat and wash and disinfect all fruits and vegetables.

Sri Lanka has many kinds of insects. Mosquitoes carry malaria, Japanese B encephalitis, dengue fever, and filariasis. Flies carry filth that cause such endemic diseases as cholera and typhoid. Those coming here for an extended stay should bring a good supply of insecticides, pest strips, insect repellents, and fly swatters. Snakes, both poisonous and nonpoisonous, are found in Sri Lanka. Yards and lawns around the houses must be maintained by keeping grass cut and clearing leaves, which helps to deter nesting of snakes.

Parents with small children must exercise special caution as to safe play areas outdoors. The U.S. Embassy health unit maintains a stock of snake bite serum, which, if needed, is best administered in a hospital setting.

Malaria prophylaxis must be started two weeks before arrival in Sri Lanka. Also, make sure immunizations are up to date, especially those for gamma globulin, rabies, meningitis, and hepatitis B.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Several international airlines fly into Sri Lanka's Katunayake Airport about 20 miles northwest of Colombo (one hour by car). At present, no American carriers provide service. Air Lanka is the national airline.

A passport and an onward/return ticket and proof of sufficient funds are required. A no-cost visit visa, valid for 30 days, will be granted at the time of entry into Sri Lanka to bona fide tourists and business travelers. Visitors staying more than 30 days for any purpose must pay residency visa fees. Yellow fever and cholera immunizations are needed if arriving from an infected area. All travelers departing Sri Lanka (except diplomats and certain exempted travelers) must pay an airport tax, in cash. Sri Lankan law requires all persons, including foreigners, who are guests in private households to register in person at the nearest local police station. Individuals who stay in private households without registering may be temporarily detained for questioning. This requirement does not apply to individuals staying in hotels or guesthouses.

American citizens are advised not to travel north of a line drawn from Puttalam on the west coast through Anuradhapura in the central north and Nivaveli (just north of Trincomalee) in the east. Areas north of this line contain many land mines, making travel off paved roads very dangerous. In addition, the LTTE rather than the Government of Sri Lanka is effectively the civil administration in many sections of the north. Official travel by U.S. Government personnel to this area is restricted, and their unofficial travel is prohibited. Travel in the east in the area south of the Anuradhapura-Nivaveli line (including Trincomalee, Batticaloa and points south) poses significant safety risks. Roads are often sub-

standard, and police, medical and other emergency help is severely limited or not available. Communications within the eastern areas are also limited, with no cell phone accessibility and very limited land-line telephone access. Because of these considerations, the U.S. Embassy may not be able to provide consular services in a timely manner to American citizens who travel to the north and east.

Sri Lankan customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Sri Lanka of items such as firearms, antiquities, business equipment, obscene materials, currency, gems and precious metals. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington, D.C., or one of Sri Lanka's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Sri Lanka are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Colombo and obtain updated information on travel and security within Sri Lanka. The U.S. Embassy is located at 210 Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka. The Embassy's telephone number during normal business hours Monday through Friday is (94)(1) 448-007. The after-hours and emergency telephone number is (94)(1) 447-601. The Consular Section fax number is (94)-(1)-436-943. The Embassy's Internet address is <http://usembassy.state.gov/srilanka>. The e-mail address for the consular section is consularcolombo@state.gov. The Embassy in Colombo also covers the Republic of the Maldives. U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to register at the Embassy upon arrival in Sri Lanka or by e-mail.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Sri Lanka's monetary unit is the *rupee*. Strict currency controls require customs declaration of all foreign currency brought into and taken out of the country and severely limit local importation of foreign goods. Indian, Nepalese,

Pakistani, and Sri Lankan *rupees* are forbidden to be imported into or exported out of the country.

Sri Lanka operates on the metric system in calculating weights and measures.

The time in Sri Lanka is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus five-and-one-half hours.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 14	Tamil Thai Pongal Day
Feb. 4	National Day
Feb/Mar.	Maha Sivarathri Day*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Apr.	Eve of Sinhala & Tamil New Year*
Apr.	Sinhala & Tamil New Year*
May 1	May Day
May 22	National Heroes' Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id-ul-Fitr
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Wesak*
.	Divali*

* variable

The Poya Day (Full Moon Day) of each month is also considered a holiday.

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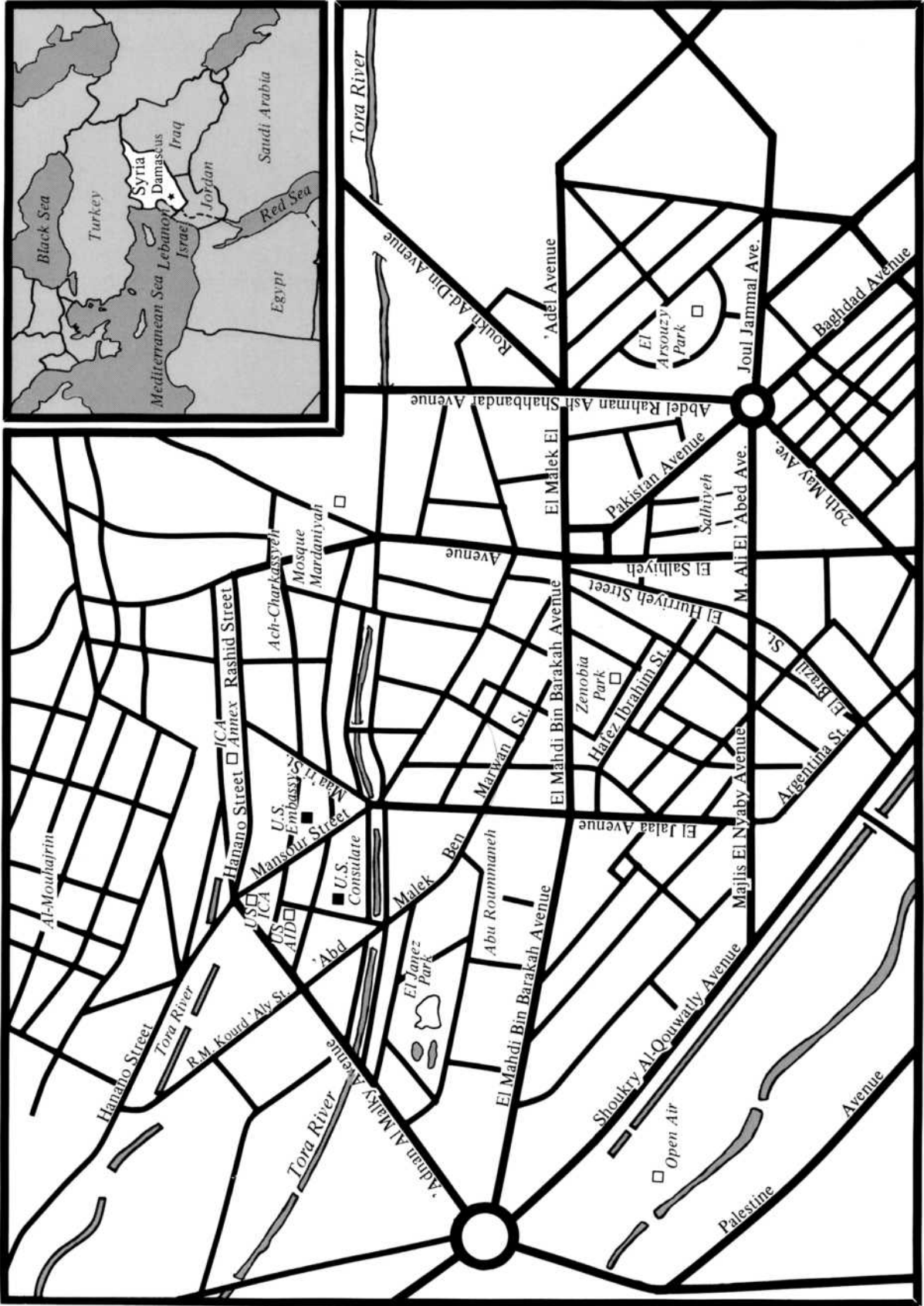
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Damascus, Syria

SYRIA

Syrian Arab Republic

Major Cities:

Damascus, Aleppo, Latakia

Other Cities:

Deir-ez-Zor, Der'ā, Hama, Hasakeh, Homs, Raqqa, Tartūs

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Archaeologists estimate that **SYRIA** is part of a civilization that may have existed as long ago as the third millennium B.C. Syria was occupied successively by Canaanites, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Arameans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Nabataeans, Byzantines, and, in part, Crusaders before finally coming under the control of the Ottoman Turks. Syria is significant in the history of Christianity; Paul was converted on the road to Damascus and established the first organized Christian Church at Antioch in ancient Syria, from which he left on many of his missionary journeys.

The Syrians, after a long and turbulent existence under wars and occupation, proclaimed independence in 1941, and established autonomy a few years later when British and French troops were withdrawn from within Syrian borders. The country, made a French mandate in 1920 by the League of Nations, had been under the control of France's Vichy Government until British and French troops occupied it early in World War II. In 1958, Syria merged with Egypt as part of the United Arab Republic, but withdrew from that agreement in September 1961.

Syria has been directly involved in the Middle East unrest of the last 30 years. Its troops have aided Egypt in attacks on Israel (1973); have battled Christian forces in Lebanon (1976 and 1981); and have fought Israeli troops inside Lebanon (1982). More recently, the Syrian government sided with Iran during its long war with Iraq (1980–1988); became the first of the Arab countries to denounce the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (1990); and used their considerable influence to help free U.S. hostages held in Lebanon (1991).

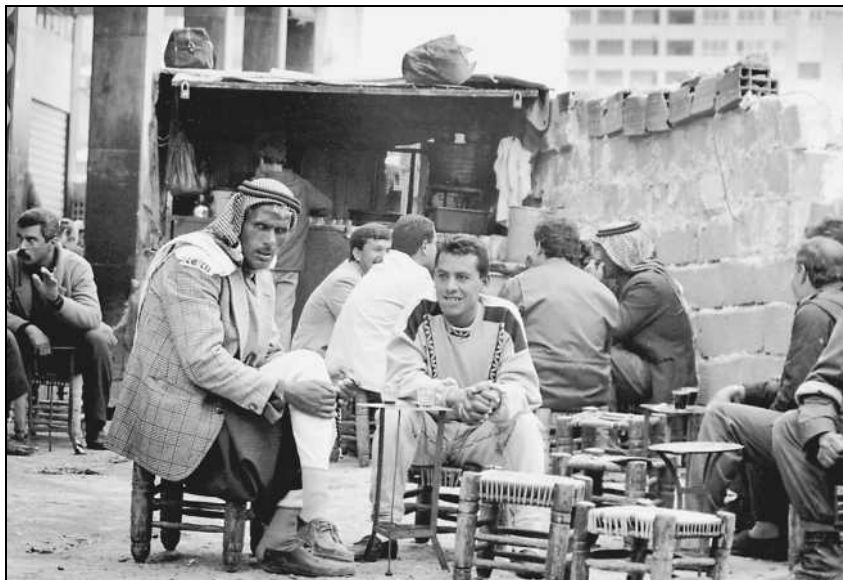
Life throughout Syria is a tapestry of modern and ancient aspects. The country possesses a rich and varied cultural heritage and meaningful economic potential.

MAJOR CITIES

Damascus

The origins of Damascus lie under the millennia of sands that have covered its secrets from the time of the Garden of Eden. According to local mythology, Eden sat astride the Barada River and was a fertile land blessed with a mild climate. Its claim to be the oldest, continuously-inhabited city is reinforced by its central location in relation to ancient civilizations and its acknowledged importance on the earliest trade routes. Damascus has a splendid covered bazaar. The Hamidiyyah Souk (bordered by Mahmat Pasha, the Street called Straight) is mentioned in the Bible as a thriving ancient marketplace.

Damascus is a city of sharp contrasts, with Roman arches shading Ottoman architecture on the same street featuring international five-star hotels. In the Old City, the narrow streets twist and wind around ancient gates and arches past fascinating homes and mosques. From the open stalls, shouts announcing new products and great prices compete with braying donkeys, passing street vendors and large crowds of people seeing the souk again or for a first time. Car horn cacophonies are



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Muslim men at an outside cafe in Damascus

standard musical fare in major metropolitan areas and Damascenes are proficient in this artform. With comforting regularity, the prayer calls mark the passing of time; the schedule adjusted, by tradition, for the moon and the weather.

Business hours and days are based on religion and culture. Friday is the official day of rest for the predominantly Muslim community; Jews observe the Sabbath; and Christians take Sunday off. Many shops open around 09:00 and close for several hours around lunch (14:00 to 17:00). The work day may end at 20:00 or later. These hours do not apply before or during the Eid holidays.

Food

Excellent fresh fruits and vegetables in season are available in vegetable souks and in small neighborhood shops. Damascenes love their food and Syrian food is among the best in the Middle East. Prepare to learn to cook with new spices and methods. Spices are available and fresh, so don't ship old spice - reward your taste buds with sharp and distinct fresh spice flavors.

There are a few butchers in most neighborhoods and the quality of

meats can be good. There is beef, chicken, goat, lamb, turkey, and veal in the marketplace. There are two pork butchers who will provide sides of pork. You will need to learn which cuts you want and enjoy experimenting with fresh meats. Some shops have begun to carry baked and smoked hams, bacon and prosciutto to satisfy the foreign community's demands. These products are imported and expensive.

Fresh fish is available in limited quantities and varieties. It is useful to know your fish before buying as most is brought on ice from the coast. Several salesmen come around the neighborhoods with their trucks laden with fish and shrimp. Once you make contacts, the fishmongers will help you choose. Frozen fish appears in the shops from time to time. Canned fish (i.e., anchovies, crab, salmon, sardines, smelts and tuna) can be found imported from the Far East.

Dairy products are abundant. Butter, whipping cream, creme fraiche, cream cheese, and long-life whole, low fat, and skimmed milk are always available. Yogurts and ice creams come in both the local and imported varieties, and butter is made in Syria, both salt-free and lightly salted. Many shops import

butter and cheeses from Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, and Bread is the staple of most cultures' diets and Syria is no exception. People consume the flat Arabic bread, French style baguettes, white flour and multi-grain buns and loaves. The Armenian bakers make a crusty Russian style wheat loaf. Most of these use no preservatives or salt, therefore they do not keep well.

Syrian sweets are world famous. Bakeries make large varieties of delicious pastries including baklava, macarons, meringue, cookies and cakes with almonds and pistachios, creams and cheeses, honey and other sweeteners (rose-water, for example).

Alcoholic beverages (liquor, beer and wine) are available through the local duty-free stores. Quite a variety is imported by these organizations. Syria and Lebanon produce wines and beers and certain liquors that can be purchased in most corner grocery stores.

Syrians enjoy smoking the argileh (water pipe) and use either the dark black tobacco made famous in Latakia and throughout Persia or the fruited brown tobacco found in the Gulf States.

Syria produces a large variety of soft drinks under license from Royal Crown and Crush, to all the carbonated mixers (tonic, soda, bitter lemon, etc.) Fruit drinks are popular and produced locally. There are tetra-pack boxes of orange, grapefruit, lemon, pineapple and mango juice in liter and quarter liter sizes, with and without sugar added.

Clothing

Damascenes are very social and enjoy dressing for any occasion. Styles vary from the very conservative to the resplendent. Clothes that are imported from the West can be very expensive, but are available. There are many styles of clothes that Syria imports. Local production is growing and Syria is a producer of cotton and other cloth products.

Men: Social life is informal. Gentlemen wear dark suits for most formal occasions and coat and tie is the accepted evening wear.

In the summer season, lightweight suits are desirable for office wear. It does get hot, even with air-conditioning in the work place. Winter is cold enough to warrant wool or wool blend suits. Damascus has reasonably good dry-cleaning services and only the most exotic clothing might be at risk.

Women: In Arabic culture, one can never go wrong with a more conservative outfit for different occasions. Nevertheless, Damascus is quite cosmopolitan and women enjoy wearing ornate cocktail dresses for evening and formal events. Several dressy outfits, short or long, should satisfy most needs. The ladies wear dresses or pantsuits for daily wear and it behooves you to remember the season and weather.

In summer, cotton and linen blends are probably the most comfortable for inside (climatized) and outside. Slacks are acceptable and popular with the younger Syrians for day wear. Shorts, tank-tops, and other revealing dress is not suitable for street wear (except maybe in the beach cities) and will make you much more uncomfortable than the weather. Your winter wardrobe should include a wool coat and a raincoat for the rainy season. Sweaters and medium weight wools are probably the most comfortable from November to March. Syrian women wear furs; if you bring one to Damascus, bring all the necessary supplies for cleaning and storage as these are difficult to find.

Bring comfortable walking shoes to Syria; walking is a social event and everybody walks. Women's shoes are available in the market but sizes may be difficult to find and styles are not always comparable to those in the U.S. American brand lingerie, panty hose and stockings are not imported. European lingerie is expensive and sizes vary from what you may be used to at home.

Children: All of the observations above apply to children's clothing. Children's clothes should include durable playwear and tennis shoes (sneakers) for school and home. Students at the Damascus Community School dress very much like the kids they see on TV; a lot like those you find at your local school or mall. Preschoolers find the largest variety in the market from which to choose and infant clothing is reasonably priced. You can keep up with their growing spurts by shopping locally.

Supplies and Services

American toilet articles and cosmetics are expensive, when available, in Syria. Gentlemen without brand preferences have little difficulty obtaining necessary items in the local markets. American products for women are rarely available, though European substitutes can usually be found

Most drugs and medications are available in Damascus, either in the generic lines or in specific European labels, and are almost always less expensive than in the U.S. Nevertheless, if you have specific medical requirements, you should check with your doctor and bring sufficient supplies until you become familiar with the local pharmacies. Contact lens solutions and supplies should be brought with you.

Damascus offers a good selection of dress makers and tailors. Quality and the speed of production vary widely and, as with any service sector, it is best to know your provider. Nevertheless, this enterprise gets generally high marks. Shoe and boot makers and repair shops are also available. Handmade riding boots cost about \$150 and men's loafers run from \$50 to \$100.

There are plenty of beauty and barber shops that are up on the latest European styles and provide full services including shampoos, cuts, sets, permanents, manicures, pedicures, and massages. The cost of these services is very reasonable

Religious Activities

The majority of Syrians are Sunni Muslim and there are many mosques that serve both the Sunni and the small Shi'a communities. Damascus has many cultures and religious traditions and was a home to the earliest Christian and Islamic communities. There is one Jewish synagogue, several Roman Catholic churches, even more Orthodox (Eastern) churches, including Armenian, Greek, Russian, and Syrian Orthodox, several Protestant churches including Anglican (Episcopalian), Baptist, Communitarian, and Presbyterian. Mormons maintain a house of prayer and a community center in Amman, Jordan. Most Far Eastern religions are not represented (have no official presence) in Damascus

Education

The Damascus Community School (DCS), organized in 1950, provides English language based education from Pre-K through 12th grade. The student base (290 pupils in 94-95) included 21 nationalities drawn from the diplomatic and business communities as well as the local community. 60% of the student body is Syrian. Teachers are primarily U.S.-certified Americans and overseas hires. There are 35 full time teachers hired from overseas, 10 local hires and a support staff of 15, including office personnel. The school is accredited by the Middle States Schools Organization and belongs to E.M.A.C. (Eastern Mediterranean Activities Council.) School transcripts from DCS serve as a basis for enrollment in U.S. schools.

School programs include computer sessions for all grade levels, liberal arts electives including drama, journalism, music and dance. Pupils can choose either Arabic or French language programs for the foreign language requirement. DCS offers English as a second language (E.S.L.) for foreign students.

The campus is located in a pleasant residential area and is centrally located. The campus' central courtyard is landscaped and comfortably

laid out for social interaction. The playground areas include a soccer field, basketball court and two jungle gym areas for the younger students. The school cafeteria provides, for a fee, daily hot lunches and a variety of snacks and drinks. The school opens in late August and maintains a 180-day schedule equivalent to the standard U.S. public school schedule. For enrollment at DCS a student is required to furnish a birth certificate, transcripts or previous school records; health certificate and/or medical records including vaccination and immunization schedules, two current photos and proof of residence in Damascus, Syria.

Sports

The Sheraton, Meridien and Ibla Cham Hotels all offer memberships, for a fee, to their pool and tennis complexes. All have resident trainers and coaches. Sheraton's compound has six hard surface courts, a large pool, a children's pool, and a children's playground. The Meridien has four soft surface (clay) courts, and a large pool and gardens. Locally owned and managed, the Ibla Cham has eight hard surface courts, two pools and an equestrian paddock with rental horses available to the public. For tennis players, it is best to bring balls, racket strings and handle wraps as they are very expensive, when available.

There are several riding clubs in the city, generally for more advanced riders. Horses can be purchased and stabled at these clubs for a fee. Riding wear and boots are made in the souk and are not expensive: However, saddles, tack, medicines and other gear should be shipped from the States.

Golf is not played much in Syria and the two courses are more than five hours away from Damascus. The Cham Palace has a bowling alley that is open to the public. Fishing opportunities are very limited except on the coast. Camping is permitted by the Syrian Government and is popular with many in the diplomatic community. There are won-

derful, undeveloped, areas throughout the country that campers regularly visit.

Runners can look forward to joining the Hash House Harriers based in the British Embassy Club. Running is becoming a popular sport with Syrians and joggers are out daily in the larger parks around the city. The Canadians have organized a mini-marathon (Terry Fox Run) for the past two years.

Sports equipment of all types, including shoes, is all imported and quite expensive. Sizes and styles are very limited

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Syria, a cradle of civilization and squarely on the crossroads between East and West, has something for everyone.

Bosra, on the Syrian-Jordanian border and two hours south of the city, features possibly the best preserved Roman amphitheater anywhere. A medieval Arab citadel surrounds the theater. Ramparts of this fort have protected the Roman architecture since the 12th century. This site hosts a musical arts festival each September. The area was an important agricultural center to the Romans. A recently discovered, Pompeii-like, volcanically covered, Roman city has excited the archeological and historical communities with some wonderful finds.

Krak des Chevaliers, described by Lawrence of Arabia as the Vatican of the Middle East, is two hours north of Damascus overlooking a large valley and the pass from Homs to the coast. This Crusader fortress, built on a promontory originally developed by the Emir of Homs in 1031 AD, is a classic example of the siege defenses of the Middle Ages. Well preserved and massive, the castle complex supported a community of over 4,000 knights and retainers and had a rock-hewn stable large enough for 500 horses. Crusader knights occupied it from 1110 AD and deeded it to the Hospitaliers who finally

capitulated to the Mameluke Sultan Baibars in 1271. The villages around the Krak are predominantly Catholic to this day.

Kuneitra, up on the Golan Heights, was the site of some of the fiercest fighting between Syria and Israel in both the '67 and '73 wars. The village has remained untouched since being placed under UN supervision in 1974. Several diplomatic missions have staged concerts and picnics on its fertile plain where one can see snow-capped mountains and skiers on the Israeli-occupied side of the Golan.

Maloula, less than an hour from Damascus, is the site of the early Christian convent dedicated to St. Takla. The Syrian icons and paintings are particularly interesting, and still produced here. Maloula has the distinction of being uniquely bilingual with Aramaic (the language of Jesus Christ and the New Testament writings) still spoken by a large portion of the population.

Palmyra, an oasis that served the silk and spice trade from Nineveh, Babylon, Persepolis and points east of the Mediterranean, has the distinction of being mentioned in the Old Testament books of Kings and Songs of Solomon. Its biblical name, Tadmor, recalls its importance as an early center of trading and culture. The name appears in the annals of Roman conquests and the Emperor Valerian was so taken by the city, when he visited in the third century, that he granted it free city-state status and renamed it Palmyra Valeriana.

Three hours from Damascus on the road to Baghdad, these ruins are an extraordinary example of the synthesis of Roman, Syrian and Persian cultures. At its peak it boasted a population of over 50,000. Tadmori tycoons controlled trade throughout Anatolia and Syria in the Eastern Empire. Witness to their power and fame lies in the valley of tombs just north of the ruins of Palmyra. Queen Zenobia, who rebelled against Rome and expanded the "Palmyran kingdom"

to Egypt and eastern Asia Minor, drew the wrath of the Emperor Aurelian who destroyed Palmyra in 273 AD. He returned to Rome with Zenobia in golden chains and paraded her through the city. On the Aurelian Arch in Rome, one can still see the humiliation of Palmyra's queen. The city's importance waned and it was bypassed by history after this period. Its extensive oasis provides a walk through history along hard paths beneath the date, fig and pomegranate trees.

Sednayah, the Santiago de Compostela of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, is a picturesque village built around an old monastery that was a popular pilgrimage point during the Crusades. Christians considered it an essential stop on the way to Jerusalem and accrued plenary indulgences for the visit.

Many more sites and sights, too numerous to mention, make Syria a travelers' wonderland. Several worth mentioning include an ancient, beautifully painted and well-preserved synagogue, Dura Europos. It is one of the many interesting sites on the high plains of the Euphrates valley area. Crusader and Arabic fortresses dot the coastal plain, which are as impressive and massive as the Krak des Chevaliers. Roman ruins that are a day's march from each other feature well-preserved mosaics and unusual architectural syntheses.

Campers often choose to set up their tents near these sites and use the long weekends to explore little known and undeveloped areas. Hikers find many areas that provide a feast for their eyes as well as a feat for their feet. In the spring and fall many walking clubs take advantage of the Ghuta, an agriculturally developed oasis near Damascus, to enjoy the blossoms or the fruits of the lush orchards. Picnic and camping sites are not developed or equipped. You should plan to bring any camping or picnic gear that will make these outings more pleasant.

Outside Syria

Travel by car or plane is reasonably easy and inexpensive. Amman is four hours away by car. The Nabatean ruins at Petra, Roman ruins at Jerash, Jerusalem and Israel are only a few of the possibilities. Direct, short flights to Athens, Cairo, Dubai, Istanbul, Larnaca, Sanaa, and Vienna make tourism a relatively affordable hobby from Damascus.

Entertainment and Social Activities

Cultural life in Syria is multifaceted. The Syrian Government is in the process of building a multi-function arts complex that will include an opera house and a concert hall. Presently the Damascus Symphony performs at several different venues including the Asad Library auditorium. Some diplomatic missions sponsor artists and performers from their respective countries and a few have year-around schedules. The Russian Embassy has a once-a-month musical program that has featured classical quartets, classical and modern pianists, and full orchestras. USIS brings a variety of performers representative of the American music scene. Hotels sponsor travelling troupes. The Syrian Government's festivals in Aleppo, Bosra and during the Damascus Fair supplement the fall schedule. Most of these have a token fee or request a donation of \$2.00 to \$5.00.

Several formal dances or balls are held throughout the year, the highlight being the Marine Corps Birthday Ball that is well attended by the community. The oil companies sponsor a country and western night that includes foods flown in from the States and a live band.

Movie theaters in Damascus feature Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian films as well as American, French and Italian. Most are in the original language and subtitled. Prices are inexpensive.

Life in Damascus can run late and is often organized around sumptuous meals. Food is a reflection of culture and civilization, and Damascus

has had over 7,000 years to develop its extensive and delicious cuisine. Arabic food, especially Lebanese and Syrian, are a gourmand's delight with flavor-filled sauces of creams and spices covering vine-ripened eggplant and zucchini stuffed with lamb, onions and pine-nuts. Restaurants of all categories and price ranges abound. There are few Oriental (Chinese and Japanese) restaurants in the city. The predominance of foreign food is either French or Italian. The hotels compete to provide bountiful buffets and schedule weeks featuring the foods of other countries, such as German week during Oktoberfest and a summer Fiesta Mexicana.

The American Women in Damascus (AWD), holds monthly meetings that feature programs on regional archeology, cultural life in Damascus, etc. This group often sponsors special activities including gourmet cooking presentations, handicrafts, card competitions (such as bridge, belot), exercise classes, old-city tours, and several fund-raising events throughout the year.

Ahlan wa Sahlan, sponsored by the wife of Syrian Vice President Khaddam, is another international group that is very active in Damascus and strives to include most foreigners in many social and cultural activities. Group meetings and locations are announced each month and programs include arts displays, music performances, haute cuisine demonstrations and tastings, and introductions to Syrian agroindustries including viticulture. There are nominal fees for membership in either of the above.

Aleppo

Aleppo, with a population of more than 2.2 million, is the second largest city in Syria. It played an important role in Islamic defenses during the Crusades and has competed with Damascus for predominance in area politics since the days of the Roman Empire. The citadel, an ancient fortress rising out of the center of town, dominates the view of the city. It casts its shadows on

the colorful bazaar that competes only with the souk in Damascus for variety.

Tourists use Aleppo as a base for visiting many “dead cities” of northern Syria dating back to Ugarit and Hittite ages. Ebla, an iron age center searched for by archaeologists for centuries and found recently, is just south of the city. Early Christian ascetics, such as Simon Stylites, made their base a few kilometers north of Aleppo.

The Aleppo Museum is second only to the National Museum in Damascus for collections in Ugarit, Hittite, early Greek and Roman artifacts from Syria. T.E. Lawrence and Agatha Christie sat on the balconies of the Baron Hotel, still open and popular, and wrote while sipping tea and admiring the sunsets. This train stop, now in the center of a congested part of downtown, is featured in “Murder on the Orient Express.”

Aleppo was a flourishing trade center during the 16th century, but its importance declined with the use of sea routes to India and the later opening of the Suez Canal. Twice, it was nearly destroyed by earthquakes—first in 1822, and again eight years later. Aleppo was the state of French mandate which united with Damascus in 1925 to form the state of Syria.

Located in the semi-desert region of northwest Syria, Aleppo is a commercial center where grains, cotton, and fruit are grown. A market for wool and hides, Aleppo manufactures silk, printed cotton textiles, cement, and dried fruits and nuts, especially pistachios.

Aleppo has an international airport and is connected to Damascus and Latakia by rail, as well as with Turkey and Iraq.

The University of Aleppo (founded in 1960), Aleppo Institute of Music (founded in 1955), and Muslim theological schools are located in the city. Landmarks include the 12th-

century Byzantine Citadel and the Great Mosque, built in 715.

Education

International School of Aleppo is a coeducational, day, company-sponsored school for children in kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1976 and sponsored by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, the school offers a modified U.S. curriculum to about 100 students. Of the 49 staff members, 10 are American.

The school year runs from September to June, with a two-week vacation at Christmas and a one-week spring break. International School is located in a southwest suburb of Aleppo. Facilities include three buildings, 22 classrooms, science laboratories, playing fields, tennis courts, and a 3,000-volume library. The address of International School of Aleppo is: P.O. Box 5466, Aleppo, Syria.

Latakia

Syria's principal port, Latakia, lies on the Mediterranean Sea. It is situated in the center of a rich agricultural region. Since the completion of its deep-water harbor in 1959, it has exported cereals, raw cotton, asphalt, bitumen, fruit, and Latakia tobacco, which has been cultivated since the 17th century. Sponge fishing, vegetable oil milling, and cotton ginning are among the city's industries.

Historically, Latakia was the ancient Phoenician city of Ramitha, and later prospered as the Roman city, Laodicea ad Mare. It was captured by the Crusaders in 1098, and flourished in the 12th century. The city was part of the Ottoman Empire from the 16th century until World War I. Latakia was the capital of the Territory of the Alaouites from 1920 to 1942. Its current population exceeds 300,000.

Near Latakia is the site of the Canaanite city of Ugarit, which has produced many interesting artifacts now on display in the Damascus

Museum. Ruins of a Crusader castle are also a short distance from Latakia. Beaches abound here, but chemical pollution from the port is widespread, and care must be used in selecting a swimming place.

OTHER CITIES

DEIR-EZ-ZOR (also spelled Dayr-ar-Zawr and Dayr al-Zur) is located in eastern Syria on the Euphrates River. A prosperous farming town with a cattle-breeding center, an agricultural school, and salt rock mines nearby, Deir-ez-Zor is also a hub for trans-desert travel, and has an airport. The modern city was constructed by the Ottoman Empire in 1867 to halt the incoming Arab tribes of the Euphrates region. France occupied Deir-ez-Zor in 1921, making it the seat of a large garrison. Taken by the British in 1941, it became part of independent Syria in 1946. The population is approximately 150,000.

DER'Ā (also spelled Dar'ā), the chief city of the Hawrān region, is located 65 miles south of the capital, near the border with Jordan. There is no industry here, but the city is a market center and rail junction. Der'ā has Greco-Roman era ruins, as well as a 13th-century mosque. A pivotal battle was waged here in 636 that led to the decimation of the Byzantine forces and the Arab conquest of Syria. The population of Der'ā is well over 50,000.

HAMA lies on the Orontes River, about 75 miles south of Aleppo. With a population over 250,000, Hama is the market center for an irrigated farm region that grows cotton, wheat, barley, millet, and maize. Famous old waterwheels, some as great as 90 feet in diameter, bring water from the Orontes for irrigation. Hama is a road and rail center, with an airport nearby. The city manufactures cotton, silk, and woolen textiles, towels, carpets, and dairy products. Historically, Hama was settled as early as the Bronze and Iron Ages. It was often mentioned in the Bible as Hamath, the

northern boundary of the Israelite tribes. As part of the Persian Empire, Hama was conquered by Alexander the Great. It also was part of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires. Following World War I, Hama became a constituent of the French Levant States (League of Nations) mandate and, in 1941, part of independent Syria. Landmarks here include the remains of a Roman aqueduct that is still in use, and the Great Mosque of Djami al-Nuri, which was a Christian basilica until 638.

HASAKEH (also spelled Hasakah and Hassaka) lies on the Khābūr River, 340 miles northeast of Damascus. This is a major road junction and hub of a large irrigated farming district. Assyrian refugees from Iraq settled here during the French mandate of Syria in the early 1930s. The population of Hasakeh exceeds 75,000.

HOMS is located in west-central Syria, about halfway between Damascus and Aleppo, and near the Lebanon border. Situated on the Orontes River, it is a commercial center situated in a fertile plain where grapes, wheat, barley, and onions are grown. Items manufactured in the city include petroleum products, flour, fertilizer, processed foods, and silk, cotton, and woolen textiles. With a population of over 480,000, Homs is also a road and rail junction. Historically, Homs was called Emesa and was the site of a great temple to the sun god Baal. The city came into prominence in the third century when a priest from the temple became the Roman emperor Heliogabalus. Homs was part of the Ottoman Empire from the 16th century until after World War I, when it was part of the French mandate of the League of Nations.

RAQQA (also spelled Raqqah or Rakkah) is the capital of the governorate of the same name, situated on the left bank of the Euphrates River, 100 miles southeast of Aleppo. The ancient Greeks were the first known inhabitants of the Raqqa area, calling it Nicephorium.

A number of palatial homes were built here in early Arab times, when it was a base of operations against the Byzantines. Modern development began with the construction of the nearby Tabaqah Dam on the Euphrates in 1968. There is a museum in Raqqa featuring finds from area archaeological digs. A government team of archaeologists has excavated and restored edifices from the 'Abbāsid period here. The population of Raqqa is roughly over 87,000.

TARTŪS (also spelled Tartous) is the country's second port, with a population over 55,000. Located 42 miles south of Latakia on the Mediterranean, Tartūs dates to at least the fourth century. The city's museum, built by the Crusaders and formerly called the Cathedral of Our Lady of Tortosa, is considered a fine example of crusader architecture of the period. The ruins of the Castle of the Templars are in the older district. Tartūs is also the hub of a fertile agricultural area and is a fishing port.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Syrian Arab Republic is at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea and at the northern end of the Afro-Asian Rift Valley. It abuts Turkey on its northern border; Iraq on its east; Jordan on the south; Israel, Lebanon and the Mediterranean on the west. Syria's area, approximately 185,000 sq. km. (71,500 sq. mi.), comprises several distinct climatic conditions. The western coastal plain is a narrow, fertile stretch of land that is the most humid area of the country, with milder winters and summers than the rest of the country. Due east in the Orontes River valley, the northern extension of the Afro-Asian rift, is a rich agricultural area that continues into the Bekaa Valley to the

south. East of the Orontes valley begins the desert region.

The largest cities of Syria: Damascus, Homs, and Aleppo are located on the eastern side of the mountain spine created by the rift. Further to the east is the Syrian Desert with its ancient oasis-city, Palmyra. In the northeast, the Anatolian Mountains serve as a natural barrier between Syria and Turkey, and Syria and Iraq. Here is found the Jazira Valley watered by the Euphrates River that is the grain belt of Syria. The oil fields of Syria are also in this area.

Damascus, the capital and one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world, rests at around 700 m. (2,300 ft.) above sea level on the Barada River in the southwestern section of the country. Climatic conditions in Damascus are comparable to those of cities in the southwestern United States. There are four seasons in the city with spring, winter and fall generally lasting eight to twelve weeks apiece. Summers can be long, dry, and hot. Short winters can be cold and rainy, with occasional snow. Average annual rainfall in Damascus has been 255 mm. (10 in.) in the past decade.

Temperatures in the city range from lows of 0°C (32°F) at night to highs of 20°C (68°F) during the day in the winter, and in the summer from 16°C (60°F) to 38°C (100°F). Though snow falls infrequently in Damascus, it does snow in the mountains near the city and some roads are impassible during these storms. The climate variation in Syria allows a robust agriculture with year-round availability of fruits and vegetables, most staple grains, and cotton.

Population

Syria's population is estimated at 16.7 million (2001 est.), with approximately 60% in the urban centers and the remainder comprising a strong agrarian rural minority. Population in the Damascus metropolitan area is estimated at around four million; Aleppo, the sec-

ond largest city, has 1.5 million people; and Homs 400,000.

Roughly 90% of the citizens are Arab. Other minorities include Armenians, Circassians, Kurds, and Turks. Around 74% of the populace is Sunni Muslim. Alawis and other Muslim sects account for 16% and the Christians 10%. There is a small and dwindling community of Jews in Syria.

Arabic is the official language of the country. Many professionals and businesspersons speak English. French is still widely spoken by educated Syrians, particularly the older generation. Some Syrians, especially the Druze, speak Spanish. Kurdish, Armenian, Syriac, and Circassian are other minority languages in use in Syria.

Public Institutions

Syria has a presidential form of government with dominant executive power held by the President. The daily operation of government is directed by a Prime Minister and a Council of Ministers. Legislation is vested in a unicameral body, the Syrian People's Council, composed of 250 members elected from lists prepared in various governorates but constitutionally representing the population at large. Syria has a judicial system based originally on the French Napoleonic Code. The highest court of appeal is the Court of Cassation (equivalent to the Supreme Court of the United States).

The most important political party in Syria is the Ba'th Party (est. March 1963). Its political slogan proclaims the principles of Arab unity, freedom, and socialism. Various factions of the Ba'th Party have ruled the country since 1963. The Constitution guarantees the Ba'th party a majority in the People's Council. Several smaller political parties, including the Communist Party, have joined with factions of the Ba'th to create a majority in the People's Council and provide most of the ministerial-level officials in the government. Syria's armed forces

and security services are an important factor in the political scene.

Two of the most important economic organizations are the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industry, reflecting Syria's business and agriculture-based economy. Many governmental and religious social organizations operate orphanages and hospitals in addition to private (for profit) health care providers.

Arts, Science and Education

Damascus maintains one of the best museums in the Middle East, housing samples of its immense history from Neolithic times to the arts and crafts of today. Entering through the Qasr alHair al-Gharbi facade that has been rebuilt from an Omayyad desert palace in Palmyra, one finds Hittite, Assyrian, Phoenician, Greek, Roman, and Islamic antiquities. There is a reconstructed underground tomb (hypogea), a synagogue (Dura Europos) and an elaborately detailed old Damascene house from the last century. Next door to the museum are the Suleimaniye Mosque, madrasa (school), and hospice. This classic Ottoman complex was designed and built around 1560 in Syrian fashion with black and white striped masonry and contains one of the loveliest gardens in Damascus. The complex houses the Army Museum and a handicraft market that displays all the traditional crafts of Syria. The Azm Palace, near the Omayyad Mosque (Islam's first great house of prayer) is located in the old city. Also built in Turkish design in the 18th century, it houses displays of everyday Damascene life, now long gone. Museums throughout the country capture the enormous diversity of the cultures and ages of Syria. Archeological sites from the Bronze Age (Ebla) through Graeco-Roman (Palmyra and Bosra) and Islamic/Crusader (Sulaiman's Fort, Krak de Chevaliers) are not only sites to see but also venues for cultural events that occur throughout the year.

Contemporary and modern art galleries are found around Damascus with frequently scheduled exhibitions. Other exhibits take place at the Arab Cultural Center, the Asad Library, the People's Gallery, and the exhibition hall of the National Museum. There are more than thirty Arab Cultural Centers throughout the country. Several embassies also operate cultural centers in Damascus, including the British, French, German, Russian, and Spanish.

The American Cultural Center, which was first established in the 1950's, houses a library with approximately 5,500 books, 120 magazines, video tapes, cassette tapes, and microfilms. The USIS library collection features sections on art, literature, history, Arabic translations, and reference works. Magazines include the major journals (*Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*); a variety of general interest publications; plus some highly specialized periodicals. Activities include film presentations, U.S. performing groups, art exhibits, and lectures.

A major opera house and conservatory are presently under construction in Damascus which will house the Damascus Music Conservatory (est. 1960), as well as one of the few symphonies and opera troupes of the Middle East. Scheduled for completion in 1996, it will offer a broad range of programs in the performing arts, including Arabic and Western music and dance. There is a music conservatory in Aleppo (est. 1964) as well. Music instructors of voice and instruments are available in Damascus, and instruments are available for purchase or rent.

Cultural activity in Damascus increases during the annual Damascus International Fair. Major cultural programs are sponsored by Bulgaria, France, Great Britain, Russia, Spain, and Yugoslavia. The Bosra Festival of the Performing Arts is held annually in September in the restored Roman amphitheater of Bosra, two hours drive south of Damascus.

Since independence, Syria's educational facilities have grown in quality and quantity. The literacy rate has increased to 70% (86% male, 56% female). Elementary education is theoretically compulsory; however, this is not enforced in cities and towns, and is not yet possible in all the smaller villages due to shortages of teachers and buildings. Bright Syrian students, nevertheless, are entitled to free education from elementary through university levels. The government has emphasized education as a major goal by establishing a system of teacher-training colleges. Vocational schools are available throughout the country. The Ministry of Education controls the curricula and teaching methods of primary and secondary schools, excluding those with exclusively foreign student populations or operating under a licensed foreign charter.

Damascus University and Syrian higher education date back to 1903 when Turkish rulers founded a school of medicine and pharmacy in Damascus. During the French Mandate, authorities added several more faculties to form the Syrian University, now known as Damascus University. This institution now encompasses nine separate locations in the city and enrolls 95,000 students, about 20% women.

Aleppo University, founded in 1961, was a joint effort by the Syrian Government and UNESCO, supplemented by the Ford Foundation. It is a modern university with faculties in engineering, agriculture, medicine, law, and letters. Enrollment exceeds 60,000. Tishrin University in Latakia, founded in 1977, includes the Maritime Institute and enrolls around 20,000. The Ba'th University of Homs, founded in 1979, is the newest in the Syrian university system. It features an agricultural facility in Hama and has a 10,000-member student body.

All universities are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education. Arabic is the language of instruction for all undergraduate work, although some French and

English literature courses are also taught in Arabic. Postgraduate work requires a functional knowledge of a foreign language. The system of education reflects French influence in organization, nomenclature of degrees, and method of teaching. Special Arabic classes for foreigners are offered at the Arabic Institute.

Commerce and Industry

Syria is a middle-income developing country, with a diversified economic base in agriculture and industry. Per capita gross domestic product is about \$3,100 (2000 est.).

Watered in the northeast by the Euphrates River and its tributaries, in the west by the Orontes and other mountain streams, and in the southwest by headwaters of the Yarmuk, Syria produces large quantities of wheat, barley, cotton, and other crops.

Situated astride the traditional trade routes linking Europe with the Arabian Peninsula and Asia, Syria has always had a large and dynamic merchant class. In the past decade, Syria has also become an important producer of crude oil. From the 1960s until recently, the government pursued nationalization policies to enlarge the industrial base. These included building cement factories, a steel mill, two oil refineries, a fertilizer plant, sugar refineries, grain silos, and flour mills that now supply most of the country's basic needs. Nationalization also affected Syria's financial, banking, and insurance sectors. Under government management, the competitiveness and efficiency of these enterprises have atrophied mainly due to monopolistic practices, overemployment, inadequate compensation of employees, and low rates of capital replenishment.

Syria's participation in the Gulf War coalition briefly gave the government access once again to substantial financial aid resources. These are being used to develop a

wide range of projects to rehabilitate the country's deteriorating infrastructure and public sector enterprises. That assistance, mostly from Arab countries and Japan, has allowed Syria to modernize its telecommunications systems, expand its electricity generation capacity to overcome serious power shortages, and recapitalize some public sector enterprises. However, nonpayment of debts to foreign creditors, including the U.S., has jeopardized the volume of future assistance.

Unlike other socialist governments, Syria never destroyed its merchant class, leaving agricultural production and trade in its hands. Thus, when the government passed a new investment incentive law in 1991 (Law #10), domestic private sector investment rose dramatically. Additional ad hoc economic liberalization measures have fostered this regeneration of private sector industry, such that private businesses now produce over half of Syria's GDP. However, Syria's inefficient and anachronistic government-run financial sector has severely inhibited Syrians, repatriation of capital invested abroad, as well as foreign investment. As the Syrian Government carries out the next steps of its incremental reform program, the private sector should respond with increased investment and it will take its rightful place at center state of the Syrian economy.

Today Syria exports crude petroleum, cotton, textiles, phosphates, sugar, and food products to Europe and to other Arab countries. Meanwhile, its main imports are raw materials essential for industry and agriculture, advanced oil field equipment, and heavy machinery used in the construction of infrastructure projects.

Transportation

Local

There is an extensive public transportation system within Damascus that includes buses and taxis, and "service" vans. City bus service is inexpensive, but generally crowded



Syrian man driving a three-wheel vehicle

Cory Langley. Reproduced by permission.

and hard to learn. The “service” system (shared vans that travel specific routes) is both cheap and efficient (vans are available practically every minute or two). It, too, however, requires knowledge of the established routes. Taxis, the most popular form of public transport for foreigners, are readily available and very inexpensive. Cabs are generally painted yellow and have a taxi emblem or light. They are also distinguishable by their red-lettered license plates. There are even radio-dispatched taxi services in the cities. Fares, usually on a meter, run from about 25SL to 50SL for most in-city travel. The fare to the airport is around 500SL and may be a fixed amount without the use of the meter. If the taxicab does not have a meter, fares should be agreed upon before entering the vehicle.

Although there are street names, most Syrians orient themselves by landmarks and well-known sites. If you know the street address of your destination, it is still useful to know a restaurant, hotel, government building, or embassy nearby that the locals use as reference.

Regional

It is relatively simple to travel throughout Syria using the public transportation systems. Climatized

buses with waiters offering on-board food and drink service, en route video presentations, and express destinations are available between major cities. Sample fares from Damascus to Aleppo average 100SL (\$2.38). Taxis are also available between most cities. One may either rent the whole vehicle or buy a seat. A Damascus to Aleppo taxi ride costs about 500SL (\$11.90); rental of the vehicle for the same trip is around 3,000SL (\$71.43).

Rental cars with drivers are available and moderately priced. One way trips to Aleppo and Latakia cost 4,500 to 6,500SL (\$108 to \$155) and round trips are prorated costing about 35% more than the one way fare. Trains operate on limited schedules to several cities around the country, but service and conditions are poor. Schedules of times and prices are available from the Ministry of Transportation.

All-weather roads exist between most Syrian cities and to many touristic sites throughout the country. The roads are of reasonable quality though most are traveled by heavy truck traffic and may be in varying states of repair. Driving is most dangerous at night when unlit parked cars or unlit moving cars are

traveling along the poorly lit highways.

International

International European carriers serve Damascus from Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Paris, Rome, and Vienna. Middle East carriers fly from Bahrain, Cairo, Dubai, Jeddah, Kuwait, Riyadh, Sanaa, Tunis, and other points. Syrian Air serves an expanded list of stops and has reciprocal agreements with smaller regional airlines that include flights to Larnaca and Beirut. These lists change every six months subject to economic and political considerations.

Communications

Telephones, Modems, and Fax

Syria’s telephone system is currently being revamped and updated. Generally, international service is good and local service is improving, though still subject to occasional interruption, throughout the country. Calls to the United States cost 125SL (approximately \$3.00) per minute from 8 am to 2 am local time. From 2 am to 8 am, the cost is 63SL per minute. PTT, the national telecommunications utility, generates phone bills almost one year late, and discrepancies are difficult to contest and resolve. Access to ATT, MCI, and Sprint is available from some numbers in Damascus and is recommended. Membership cards to any of these long distance companies should be obtained prior to arrival.

PTT requires that modem and fax users pay a 600SL fee for a data line

Radio and TV

Electronic media, i.e., radio and television, is government owned and operated in Syria. Radio Damascus, across several AM and FM bands, broadcasts primarily in Arabic, though there are several English and French language programs including short news presentations. Syrian TV has two channels. One channel broadcasts primarily in Arabic. Programming

includes Egyptian and Jordanian soap operas and features. The other channel has an eclectic mix of European and American serials and movies in either English or French. The European PAL and Middle East SECAM TV systems are used in Syria. Local specifications include 625 line screens, 220v, 50 cycle power units. U.S. standard (NTSC) television sets will not work and are not readily convertible. multi-system set that operates in SECAM and PAL is necessary. Local signals from adjacent countries can be picked up with a sufficiently large roof antenna

There are a few local cinemas that feature primarily Arabic movies and older American and French films that have been subtitled. They are not widely frequented by Westerners.

Printed Media

There is a limited selection of English, French, and Arab language newspapers and magazines available in Syria. Publications include the dailies: *International Herald Tribune*, *Middle East News*, *Syria Times*, and several from Cairo, Riyadh, and Amman. Weeklies include *The Economist*, *Newsweek*, *Paris Match*, and *Time*. There is some government censorship and papers arrive at the newsstands several days late. Technical journals (i.e., *Scientific American* et. al.) and special interest magazines (such as *Architectural Digest*, *Southern Living*, et. al.) are not generally available. Single copy prices can be considerably higher than you are accustomed to in the United States. Any subscriptions sent through international mail are subject to the same censorship regulations that are applied to newsstand sales and delivery may be additionally delayed.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Private medical care in Damascus is adequate for routine problems and very inexpensive. U.S. prescription

drugs and medicines (or their European equivalents) are generally available across the counter in Syria. Though you may not find a specific drug, and there can be shortages, most drugs and medicines can be ordered by the local pharmacists and the prices are generally lower than they are in the United States.

Several Damascus hospitals are equipped and competent for emergency cases and routine care. Nursing care, however, is substandard. The regional medical authority recommends medical evacuation for major surgery, pregnancy confinement and delivery, long-term hospitalization, and high risk care

Community Health

The city services include potable water at the tap, trash removal, street sweeping, and periodic spraying for flying insects.

The water provided by the city main has been tested periodically (several times per year over the past three years) and found acceptably free of impurities and drinkable. Nevertheless, there is always a risk in any urban community that purification processes may fail. Water in Damascus need not be boiled, but anywhere else in Syria it is recommended that boiled and filtered or bottled water be consumed.

Trash dumpsters (large green receptacles) are available on most streets in the city. Collections are scheduled daily and city regulations require that all trash be disposed of in plastic bags. There is no rigid observation of these rules, though the population seems to make considerable effort to keep Damascus a clean city. Street sweepers dressed in orange overalls are apparent in most neighborhoods.

Seasonally, the city management sprays a concentrated mix to control the mosquito population that breeds on and around the Barada River. Flies can also be a problem in the warmer months. Spraying is done by large tank trucks that pass through the neighborhoods in the

evening and morning hours. Larger insects (ants, silverfish and cockroaches) can be problematic on the lower floors of apartment buildings.

Preventive measures to safeguard personal health in Syria include verifying that all persons have necessary inoculations before arriving and completing any inoculation programs that may require boosters. Though Syria has a program of childhood immunizations, many childhood diseases exist in country, including chicken pox, measles, and mumps. There are cases of tuberculosis and cholera reported.

Though Damascus is clean by most urban standards, normal precautions against diseases including amoebic dysentery, typhoid, various errant parasites and hepatitis should be taken. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be washed and soaked in Clorox or Miltons before use and consumption. Dining out requires some conscious decisions about what may or may not be eaten.

Seasonal weather changes that raise dry, dusty air can cause sinus and other upper-respiratory infections. These can be aggravated by the smog and strong desert winds. Humidifiers often relieve some of this discomfort and are recommended.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

The best way to reach Damascus is by air. Transfer points through Europe include Amsterdam, Athens, Frankfurt, London, Paris, and Rome. Alternatively one can arrive from Amman or Cairo, though these are neither as efficient nor as simple. Be sure to book your travel early and clearly as there are two peak travel seasons in Syria corresponding to the spring and fall, and peak travel season through Europe is in the summer. Travel to and through the Middle East is not as simple or efficient as in Europe or

the U.S. Make sure that you have all your necessary travel documents.

A passport and a visa are required. Visas must be obtained prior to arrival in Syria. The government of Syria does not allow persons with passports bearing an Israeli visa or entry/exit stamps to enter the country. Similar restrictions apply to persons born in the Gaza region or who are of Gaza descent. Entry into Syria via the land border with Israel is not possible. Foreigners who wish to stay 15 days or more in Syria must register with Syrian immigration authorities by their 15th day there. American men between the ages of 18 and 45 who are of Syrian birth or recent descent are subject to the Syrian compulsory military service requirement unless they receive a temporary or permanent exemption from the Syrian Embassy in the United States prior to their entry into Syria.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available.

An AIDS test is not required for foreigners prior to arrival in Syria; however, tests are mandatory for foreigners age 15 to 60 who wish to reside in Syria. The AIDS test must be conducted in Syria at a facility approved by the Syrian Ministry of Health. A residence permit will not be issued until the absence of the HIV virus has been determined. Foreigners wishing to marry Syrian nationals in Syria must also be tested for HIV. For further entry information, travelers may contact the Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic, 2215 Wyoming Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 232-6313 or check the Syrian Embassy's home page on the Internet at <http://www.syrianembassy.org>.

American citizens are cautioned that the Syrian government rigidly enforces restrictions on prior travel to Israel. Travelers with Israeli stamps in their passports, Jordanian

entry cachets, or cachets from other countries that suggest prior travel to Israel will cause Syrian immigration authorities to refuse the traveler admission to Syria. Likewise, the absence of entry stamps from a country adjacent to Israel, which the traveler has just visited, will cause the Syrian immigration officials to refuse admittance. American citizen travelers suspected of having traveled to Israel have been detained for questioning.

Syrian security officials are also sensitive about travel to Iraq. There have been instances in which Iraqi-Americans or Americans believed to have traveled to Iraq were detained for questioning at ports of entry/exit.

Syrian customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Syria of items such as weapons, narcotics, alcohol, tobacco, cheese, fruits, pharmaceuticals, modems, cosmetics, and some electrical appliances. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Syria in Washington, D.C. for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Syria are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Damascus and obtain updated information on travel and security within Syria. The U.S. Embassy is located in Abu Roumaneh, al-Mansur Street No. 2, P.O. Box 29, Damascus. The telephone numbers are [963] (11) 333-2814, 332-0783, 333-0788, and 333-3232. The fax number is [963] (11) 331-9678. The Embassy is open Sunday through Thursday.

Pets

Pets should arrive with all of the proper inoculations, including rabies. A certificate not older than 60 days from a licensed veterinarian showing current and valid inoculations is a requirement for animals entering the country. No quarantine is required. Non-diplomatic personnel should be prepared to pay duty

on imported pets as they are not considered personal property. The duty is calculated on the shipping charges, not on a declared value. There are veterinarians, though services may not meet U.S. standards. Animal medicines are not readily available and are more expensive than in the United States.

Dogs must always be walked on leashes since there is an official government dog-removal program. All housing in Damascus is apartment style. Very few are garden apartments with enclosed outdoor areas. Large animals may be uncomfortable in small, enclosed homes.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Syrian Lira or Pound (SL) is a controlled currency. It cannot be exchanged for any other currency except at government-approved exchange centers within Syria, and it cannot be changed back into foreign currency. Travelers must declare all foreign currency when they enter Syria. There are no foreign banks and few ATMs in Syria, and it is impossible to wire or otherwise transfer money from the United States to Syria. Credit cards are not generally accepted in Syria.

The current exchange rate is 46.00SL to US\$1.00 (May 2002).

Syria uses the metric system of weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb. 22	Unity Day
Mar. 8	Revolution Day
Apr. 17	Independence Day
May 6	Martyrs' Day
Apr./May	Easter (Orthodox)*
May 1	Labor Day
May 6	Martyrs' Day
July 23	Egyptian Revolution Day
Sept. 1	United Arab Republic Day

Nov. 16. National Day
 Dec. 25. Christmas
 Hijra New Year*
 Ramadan*
 Id al-Fitr*
 Id al-Adha*
 Lailat al Meiraj*
 Mawlid an
 Nabi*

*Variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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TAIWAN

Republic of China

Major Cities:

T'aipei, Kaohsiung, T'aichung, T'ainan

Other Cities:

Chiai, Chungli, Hsinchu, Hualien, Keelung, T'aitung

INTRODUCTION

The island nation of **TAIWAN** is a dynamic, vibrant country. Since its creation in 1949, Taiwan has transformed itself from an underdeveloped, agricultural island to an economic power that is a leading producer of high-technology goods. Taiwan has moved from being a recipient of U.S. aid in the 1950s and early 1960s to an aid donor and major foreign investor, especially in Asia. Today, Taiwan has one of the largest capitalist economies in the world. Taiwan is the world's 13th largest trading power and its population enjoys the highest standard of living in Asia after Japan and Singapore.

Taiwan is a popular tourist destination. Visitors from all over the world come to Taiwan to experience the country's well-preserved Chinese art, culture, beautiful natural scenery, and pleasant subtropical climate.

In recent years, Taiwan has cultivated better cultural and political relations with its giant neighbor, the People's Republic of China. The Taiwanese hope to ease years of hostility between the two countries and bring economic reform and development to the Chinese mainland.

MAJOR CITIES

T'aipei

With a metropolitan population of nearly 2.9 million, T'aipei is Taiwan's capital and largest city. T'aipei is located in extreme northern Taiwan in a basin crossed by the Hsintien, Keelung, and Tamsui rivers. The city's climate is characterized by a short, mild winter and a long warm-to-hot summer. Temperatures in T'aipei reach an average high of 96°F (36°C) in July and an average low of 52°F (10°C) in February.

T'aipei was first settled in the 17th century and had developed into a prosperous trading center by the mid-19th century. A wall was erected around the city in 1882. Taiwan was occupied by the Japanese in 1895 and T'aipei was chosen as the colonial capital. The city grew rapidly in size and population. By 1932, T'aipei had over 300,000 residents. The Japanese were forced from Taiwan in 1945. Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Army fled to Taiwan from China in 1949 after being defeated by Mao Tse-tung's Communist forces during mainland China's civil war. T'aipei was designated as the capital of the new Republic of China.

Today, T'aipei is Taiwan's political, commercial, and cultural center. The city has also developed many thriving industries. T'aipei's industries produce a wide array of products including canned goods, handicrafts, machinery and household appliances, and electronic equipment. T'aipei is the transportation center for northern Taiwan. Excellent roads, railways, and air links connect T'aipei with other cities throughout the island. Most of Taiwan's institutions of higher learning are also located in T'aipei. These include the National Chengchi University, the National Taiwan Normal University, and the National Taiwan University.

Recreation

T'aipei is a bustling city that offers wonderful recreational activities. The city has many beautiful museums and temples that are of interest to visitors. The most popular museum in T'aipei is the National Palace Museum, which houses the largest collection of priceless Chinese art treasures in the world. Paintings, calligraphy, and beautiful artifacts of porcelain, jade, and bronze spanning several centuries are located in the museum. Another museum, the T'aipei Fine Arts Museum, contains many wonderful examples of contemporary Chinese art. The T'aipei Fine Arts Museum sponsors cultural exchanges

between Chinese artists and artists from all over the world. Other interesting museums in T'aipei include the Taiwan Provincial Museum, which offers exhibits chronicling the history of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes, and the National Museum of History.

Most Taiwanese are adherents of the Buddhist and Taoist religions. As a result, there are thousands of temples located throughout Taiwan. In T'aipei, there are three major temples. The Lungshan (Dragon Mountain) Temple is a Buddhist temple dedicated to Kuan Yin, the goddess of mercy. Many visitors will enjoy viewing this impressive structure, which is considered one of the most striking examples of Chinese temple architecture in Taiwan. The Confucian Temple, located in the heart of T'aipei, is an oasis of calm in the midst of hectic urban life. This temple, with its gorgeous formal gardens, offers T'aipei residents a quiet place to pray and reflect. Another beautiful structure, the Hsingtien (Soar to Heaven) Temple, is the largest Taoist temple in T'aipei.

T'aipei offers many sight-seeing opportunities. The Grand Hotel, one of T'aipei's largest hotels, is a favorite stop for tourists. The lobby of the hotel, with its fourteen-yard wide marble staircase, forty-two red pillars, and huge gold-loom carpet, is the largest in the world. Sightseers can walk through downtown T'aipei and view the gates of a wall that once encircled the city.

Also in downtown T'aipei is the impressive Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. Constructed in 1980, this building exhibits classical Chinese architecture. The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall is part of a large park and cultural complex that includes the National Concert Hall and National Theater.

The Presidential Office, a red-brick structure with tall spires, is also an impressive structure. In the plaza in front of the Presidential Office, the Taiwanese flag is raised in the morning and lowered at nightfall

during daily ceremonies. Visitors may enjoy viewing this event.

Another important tourist destination is the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall. This hall contains a fine art gallery of modern art, an auditorium, and a large library containing over 140,000 volumes. Animal lovers will enjoy visiting the T'aipei City Zoo, which is among the largest in Asia. The zoo has over 3,000 animals from 300 different species, in addition to a butterfly aviary.

On the outskirts of T'aipei, the Yangmingshan National Park attracts many residents and tourists alike. Situated on Yangming Mountain, the park has beautiful azalea and cherry trees which, when blooming, draw thousands of visitors.

Entertainment

Entertainment opportunities, such as concerts, shopping, and fine dining, are plentiful in T'aipei. Classical music performances by international artists and T'aipei's own City Symphony Orchestra are offered nightly at the National Concert Hall. Several dance troupes perform traditional Chinese folk dances frequently at the National Theater. The National Theater also hosts Chinese operas and dramatic plays which are of interest to visitors.

Shopping opportunities for gifts and souvenirs are plentiful throughout T'aipei and prices are generally reasonable. Shops along Can Ya Tsai and Chungshan North Road offer excellent coral, coral jewelry, curios, rare coins, jewels, and porcelain items. Jade can also be purchased in T'aipei, but it is very expensive. For the adventurous, a large flea market opens every Saturday and Sunday, under the city's Kuanghua Bridge. Jade and gems, among many other items, are available for sale. Trading at the flea market is done at a hectic pace and tourists should have some knowledge of appropriate prices before attempting to make a purchase. Tourists can find wonderful gift and souvenir items at the National Palace

Museum store. This store offers excellent reproductions of calligraphy and paintings found inside the museum and sells them at reasonable prices.

Opportunities for dining, from luxurious to simple cuisine, are readily available in T'aipei. Taiwan is noted for its fine Chinese dishes and over 1,000 excellent restaurants are available throughout the city.

Kaohsiung

Kaohsiung is Taiwan's principal international port and a major industrial city. Located in southwestern Taiwan, Kaohsiung has a population of approximately 1.5 million people and covers an area of 59 square miles making it the country's second largest city. Kaohsiung has a pleasant climate, with warm, mild winters and long summers. Yearly temperatures in the city average between 75°F (24°C) and 90°F (32°C).

Kaohsiung is the world's third largest container port after Hong Kong and Rotterdam (the Netherlands). The city is a major export center for the rice, sugar, groundnuts, bananas, and citrus fruits grown in southern Taiwan's fertile agricultural regions. Kaohsiung is home to several thriving industries. These industries produce aluminum, textiles, petrochemicals, refined sugar, paper, bricks and tile, fertilizers, and cement. A large industrial complex, the 5,500-acre Linhai Industrial Park, is located near Kaohsiung's excellent port facilities. This thriving industrial park contains many industries, including a steel mill and a large petrochemical facility. The city has several large fisheries and a thriving fish canning industry. Kaohsiung is also an educational center, with three universities, and four junior colleges.

Recreation

Kaohsiung offers ample sight-seeing opportunities. Shou Shan (Long Life Mountain) is located in the city and offers visitors excellent views of Kaohsiung. One of the most popular

tourist destinations in Kaohsiung is Lotus Lake. This resort area contains several beautiful, distinctive structures such as the Dragon and Tiger Pagodas, the Spring and Autumn Pavilions, and a large Confucian temple. For those who enjoy sun and surf, Kaohsiung's Hsi Tzu Bay beach offers visitors beautiful sand and clear waters.

Many tourist attractions are located outside of Kaohsiung proper. South of the city is a large mountain known as Fo Kuang Shan (Buddha Torch Mountain). This mountain contains a massive Buddha statue measuring 82 feet tall and is surrounded by nearly 500 other Buddhist figurines. Fo Kuang Shan is not only a noted tourist site, but an important pilgrimage destination for Buddhists from Taiwan and all of Southeast Asia.

Perhaps the largest and most popular tourist resort south of Kaohsiung is the Cheng Ching Lake Resort. Located only a few minutes from the city, Cheng Ching offers wonderful sight-seeing opportunities. The resort, which is spread out over several miles, contains several beautiful pavilions, a distinctive zig-zag-shaped bridge, a large aquarium, a recreational center, and an avenue filled with orchids that is perfect for a relaxing late-afternoon stroll. The Chung Hsing Pagoda, which is one of Taiwan's most famous monuments, is also located at the resort. Below the Chung Hsing Pagoda, an 18-hole golf course, owned by the Kaohsiung Golf and Country Club, allows visitors to play a game amid beautiful rolling hills.

T'aichung

Taiwan's third largest city, T'aichung, has a population of approximately 800,000. Located in west-central Taiwan, T'aichung was founded by a group of Chinese settlers in 1721 and given the name Tatan. The city received its current name in 1895 when the Japanese took control of Taiwan. The Japanese embarked on major construction projects in T'aichung and, by

1945, had transformed it into a modern city. From 1948 until 1977, T'aichung's population nearly tripled and today the city occupies an area of over 60 square miles. T'aichung is located in a rich agricultural region and is central Taiwan's principal trading center for bananas, sugar, and rice. T'aichung is linked by rail and roadway with T'aipei and other Taiwanese cities.

Recreation and Entertainment

T'aichung's major tourist attraction is the Happy Buddha of T'aichung, which, at 88 feet, is Taiwan's largest statue. Most recreational activities are located outside of the city, however. Souvenir shoppers will thoroughly enjoy visiting the Taiwan Provincial Government's Handicraft Exhibition Hall. Situated 12 miles south of T'aichung in the town of Tsaotun, this hall offers opportunities to buy lanterns, tableware, jewelry, jewel boxes, toys, and other handicrafts created by Taiwanese artisans.

For those who enjoy outdoor recreation, the Chitou Forest Recreation Area and Sun Moon Lake are two important destinations. The Chitou Forest Recreation Area, located 50 miles south of T'aichung, covers over 6,000 acres of land and is the site of Taiwan's largest bamboo forest. One notable attraction is a cypress tree that is nearly 3,000 years old and 151 feet tall. The interior of the tree is hollow and visitors are allowed to peer upward from an observation platform at the base of the tree. Approximately 50 miles southeast of T'aichung, the Sun Moon Lake is a popular resort area that offers ample sight-seeing opportunities. Among the notable structures at Sun Moon Lake are the Hsuan Chuang Temple, the Wen-Wu Temple, and the Tzu En Pagoda which, at 150 feet, is the tallest pagoda in Taiwan.

T'ainan

Situated in southwestern Taiwan, T'ainan is the country's oldest city. From 1684 to 1887, T'ainan served

as the capital of Taiwan. Today, with a population of approximately 695,000, T'ainan is Taiwan's fourth largest city. The city is nestled in a highly productive agricultural region and serves as southwestern Taiwan's trading center for peanuts, sugarcane, rice, and fruits. Several major industries are located in T'ainan. These industries produce a wide variety of products, including rubber goods, chemicals, textiles, refined sugar, plastics, processed foods, and electrical appliances. T'ainan's location near the Formosa Strait, the body of water separating Taiwan from the Chinese mainland, has led to the development of several large fisheries. The city has many artisans known for their gold and silver handicrafts.

Recreation and Entertainment

T'ainan is known as a city of temples, with over 200 temples in and around the city. Many tourists enjoy visiting these beautiful temples. T'ainan is the home of one of the country's oldest Buddhist temples, the Kaiyuan Temple. Another temple worth seeing is the Confucian Temple. Constructed in 1665, it is the oldest Confucian temple in Taiwan and is viewed by many experts as Taiwan's most beautiful example of Confucian temple architecture.

Two other tourist attractions are located a short drive from T'ainan. Located approximately 20 miles from T'ainan is Coral Lake. This lake is part of a 23.2 square mile resort complex that is popular among both tourists and native Taiwanese. This lake, which contains over one hundred islets, is a favorite boating spot for tourists, while the forested areas around Coral Lake are ideal for camping and hiking. Coral Lake is fed by the Tsengwen Reservoir, which is located 37 miles northeast of T'ainan and is also considered an interesting place to visit.

The Tsengwen Reservoir was created when a large hydroelectric dam was constructed on the Tsengwen River in 1973. With an area of nearly seven miles, the Tsengwen Reservoir is Taiwan's largest lake.

Cruising the Tsengwen Reservoir in rented motorboats is a popular tourist activity.

OTHER CITIES

The western city of **CHIAI** is located in a fertile agricultural region. Chiai has developed over the years into a trading center for rice and sugar grown near the city. The hills surrounding Chiai are heavily forested, which has led to the development of a thriving lumbering industry. Several industries are located in Chiai. These industries produce paper, plywood, cement, and tires. Chiai is linked by rail and roadway with T'aipei and Kaohsiung. In 1987, Chiai had a population of approximately 265,000.

CHUNGLI is situated on the Hsin-Chien River in northwestern Taiwan. It is one of northwestern Taiwan's principal industrial cities. Factories in Chungli produce textiles and milled rice. Sweet potatoes, rice, and tea are grown near the city. A major freeway and railway connects Chungli with T'aipei, which is located approximately 20 miles northeast of Chungli. Chungli had a population of 314,000 in 1998. Current population figures are unavailable.

HSINCHU is an industrial city in northwestern Taiwan. Industries within the city produce textiles, glass, cement, and fertilizers. Hsinchu is the site of Taiwan's largest oil field and, since 1980, has developed into a center for technology and research. The land surrounding Hsinchu is extremely fertile and supports the growth of citrus fruits, tea, and rice. The city had a population of just over 356,000 in 1998.

A major international port, **HUALIEN** is eastern Taiwan's largest city. Situated on the Pacific Coast, the city is connected to the western town of T'aichung by the East-West Cross-Island Highway. Hualien is the primary eastern departure point for tours to T'aichung via this scenic highway. Economic activity

around Hualien is centered around agriculture, particularly the growth of camphor, sugarcane, jute, and rice. Hualien is located in an area that is prone to severe earthquakes. The city was heavily damaged by an earthquake in 1951, but has been completely rebuilt. Hualien has an estimated population of over 360,000.

The northern city of **KEELUNG**, located approximately 16 miles northeast of T'aipei, is one of the country's major ports. Many imported products destined for T'aipei enter the country through Keelung's port facilities. The city's location near the East China Sea has led to the development of large shipbuilding and fishing industries. Other industries in the city produce cement and fertilizers. Keelung is connected with T'aipei and other Taiwanese cities via railway and several modern highways. The city receives a heavy amount of rainfall throughout the year, particularly from March through October. Keelung's primary tourist attraction is a 74 foot tall marble statue of the Buddhist goddess of mercy, Kuan Yin, which is situated on a hill above the city. Keelung has a population of approximately 385,000.

T'AITUNG is situated on the Peinan River in southeastern Taiwan. The city, which is located in a fertile agricultural region, has developed into a trading center for rice, peanuts, and sugarcane. T'aitung is home to several industries which produced milled sugar, and processed timber and jute. The city has excellent road, rail, and air links with Kaohsiung and T'aipei. T'aitung had an estimated population of over 109,000.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The island nation of Taiwan, formerly Formosa, lies approximately

100 miles southeast of the Chinese mainland. It is situated between the East and South China Seas. Taiwan also controls the Pescadores Islands on the western coast of Taiwan as well as twenty small islands off the coast of mainland China. Taiwan, the Pescadores and other island territories comprise a total area of 13,885 square miles, roughly the size of Connecticut and New Hampshire combined.

A mountain chain runs the entire length of Taiwan from north to south. The eastern sections of Taiwan are also very mountainous and covered with forests. However, the western side of the island contains numerous rivers, gentle slopes and fertile soil. Most of Taiwan's cities and agricultural production are located on the western side of the island.

Taiwan has a tropical climate. Summers are hot and humid with very heavy rainfall. The period between November and March is somewhat cooler and drier. The island periodically experiences damaging earthquakes and typhoons.

Population

In 2000, Taiwan had an estimated population of 22.3 million people. More than 84% of the population are native Taiwanese descendants of Chinese immigrants from crowded coastal regions of mainland China. Refugees who fled after the Communist takeover of the mainland comprise 14% of the population. A small minority of aborigines, mostly of Malayo-Polynesian descent, reside in mountainous regions of the island.

A vast majority of Taiwanese speak Mandarin Chinese. However, other Chinese dialects are spoken also. As a result of Japan's fifty-year control of Taiwan, many elderly Taiwanese speak Japanese.

Taoism and Buddhism are the predominant religions of Taiwan. Confucianism is widely practiced. A handful of Chinese Muslims also inhabit the island. Christian mis-



Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

Parade in commercial district of Keelung

sionaries have been active in Taiwan for many years. As a result, a Christian minority of 600,000 live in Taiwan. Most of these Christians are Protestant. Estimated life expectancy in 2001 was 74 years for males, 80 years for females.

History

The Chinese are believed to have traveled to Taiwan as early as 500 A.D. However, the island was sparsely populated until 1624. In that year, the Dutch began to use Taiwan as a trading post for their burgeoning commercial markets in Japan and China. Dutch colonists administered the island until 1661. During the years of Dutch administration, many Chinese began to emigrate to Taiwan to escape political turmoil on the mainland. Manchu China ruled Taiwan until it was declared a Chinese province in 1886. In 1895, after a disastrous war with Japan, China was forced to relinquish control of Taiwan to the Japanese.

Under Japanese administration, Taiwan developed efficient transportation networks and farming techniques. The Japanese created an advanced educational system and a thriving market economy. Following the defeat of Japan in World

War II, Taiwan was administered by General Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Chinese forces.

When the Communist government of Mao Tse-tung seized control of the Chinese mainland in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and nearly 500,000 Nationalist troops were forced to flee to Taiwan. They were soon followed by two million other refugees. In 1950, Chiang Kai-shek announced the creation of the Republic of China with Taipei as the capital. The United States established diplomatic relations and provided massive amounts of military and financial aid to the new nation. The Republic of China lost its United Nations membership in 1971 when the General Assembly voted to recognize the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of China. Taiwan suffered a severe blow when the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979 and established diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China. However, commercial ties between Taiwan and the United States remain strong.

Government

For many years, Taiwan's government was a one-party system dominated by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist (Kuomintang) party.

Chiang established the office of president in 1950 and served in that capacity until his death in 1975. He was succeeded by his son Chiang Ching-kuo, who governed Taiwan until his death in 1988. In March 1989, opposition political parties were legalized and Taiwan became a multi-party democracy. Lee Teng-hui was elected president in 1988 and re-elected to a six-year term in 1990. In 1996 he was reelected to a four-year term by popular vote in Taiwan's first direct election for president. In March 2000, Democratic Progressive Party candidate Chen Shui-bian became the first opposition party candidate to win the presidency. His victory resulted in the first-ever transition of the presidential office from one political party to another.

According to the 1947 constitution, the president and vice-president are elected by the National Assembly. The National Assembly is an elected body that had 334 delegates in 1997. It has the power to amend the constitution and the powers of initiative and referendum.

Taiwan's government consists of five administrative branches, or yuan. The Executive Yuan is responsible for policy and administration. It is elected by the president, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan. The 164-member Legislative Yuan is Taiwan's primary lawmaking body and the highest legislative organ in the state. In 1997, the Nationalist (Kuomintang) Party held 83 seats. The Nationalist Party's closest rival, the Democratic Progressive Party, has 54 seats.

The Control Yuan is an elected body which investigates political corruption and the efficiency of public service. The Judicial Yuan is the highest judicial body in Taiwan and is responsible for judging all criminal, civil and administrative cases. It includes a 17-member Council of Grand Justices who interpret the constitution. Also, the Judicial Yuan controls cases concerning disciplinary measures against public officials. The Examination Yuan supervises examinations for entry

into public offices and deals with personal questions of the civil service.

Martial law, which had been in effect for 38 years, was lifted in July 1987. The Taiwan government also ended its formal state of war with the People's Republic of China in May 1991. In December 1991, the terms of any remaining original "indefinite" deputies expired (Taiwan's original delegates of 1947 held their seats in perpetuity).

The flag of Taiwan consists of a red field with a blue rectangle in the upper-left corner. The blue rectangle contains Taiwan's national emblem, a twelve-point white sun.

Arts, Science, Education

Since 1968, a nine-year compulsory education system has been provided at government expense. In that year, the curriculum was revised to put more emphasis on science while maintaining Chinese cultural tradition. Six years of elementary school and three of junior high school are required of all students. In order to attend high school, junior high schoolers must pass examinations. Vocational schools offer three-year programs that stress industrial and commercial training, agriculture and fishing.

Taiwan has a highly developed system for college study. As of 1997, there are over 100 institutions of higher learning in Taiwan. Opportunities for graduate education are also increasing. An extensive series of examinations are conducted in order to select students for higher education.

In the 1980s, the Taiwanese government relaxed many restrictions that prevented students from studying abroad. Increasing numbers of students attend college in Japan, Europe and the United States. Taiwanese college and graduate students are particularly interested in engineering, computer science, nat-

ural science and business management programs.

There is also a system of education for adults. This is designed to improve the general knowledge of adults and increase the literacy rate. Courses in language, arithmetic, music and vocational skills are offered.

Taiwan has one of the world's highest literacy rates (91%).

Commerce and Industry

Since the 1960s, Taiwan's economy has experienced tremendous changes. Large amounts of foreign investment from Japan, Western Europe and the United States has transformed Taiwan from an agricultural to an industrial country. Taiwan is also intensively striving to develop its high-technology industries.

Foreign trade has been the backbone of Taiwan's economy for three decades. Taiwan's largest trading partner is the United States. Taiwan imports American farm products, raw materials and capital equipment while exporting textiles, clothing, electronic goods and light industrial products to the United States. The United States and Japan account for more than half of Taiwan's foreign trade. Other trading partners include Hong Kong, Germany, Great Britain, Kuwait, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Australia.

Taiwan's agricultural sector is highly productive. Although Taiwan is a small island, her arable land is extensively developed. Taiwan is self-sufficient in rice production, but imports other grains from the United States. Primary agricultural exports include rice, bananas, pineapples, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, peanuts, tea and asparagus. Also, Taiwan has a well-equipped fishing fleet and is one of the world's largest exporters of fresh fish.

Taiwan has few mineral deposits. Small reserves of coal, limestone, natural gas and marble are available. To fuel continued industrial growth, Taiwan imports large amounts of oil, chemicals and machinery.

In 2000, Taiwan had a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$386 billion dollars. Exports amounted to \$148.4 billion that year. Because of this heavy reliance on exports, Taiwan's economy is vulnerable to economic downturns in its principal markets.

The currency of Taiwan is the New Taiwan dollar.

Transportation

In 1995, Taiwan had an estimated 12,450 miles of roadway, of which 85% were paved. There are two modern expressways on the island. The North-South Freeway was completed in 1978 and links Taiwan's major cities. In July 1987, construction began on the Northern Taiwan Second Freeway. It opened to traffic in late 1992. There were approximately 4.1 million passenger cars and 850,000 commercial vehicles in use in 1995.

Domestic and international flights to Taiwan are readily available. Taiwan's largest airline is China Airlines (CAL). In addition to domestic flights, China Airlines supplies international service to the United States, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands. Taiwan has two modern international airports. Chiang Kai-shek Airport, opened in 1979, is located at Taoyuan near T'aipei. Kaohsiung Airport is located on the southwestern corner of the island and offers daily flights to Hong Kong.

Taiwan has a well-developed shipping industry with four international ports at Kaohsiung, Hualien, Keelung and T'aichung.

Communications

Taiwan had an estimated 8.6 million radios and 6.7 million televisions in 1993. There were approximately 186 broadcasting stations in 1993. The main radio broadcasting service is the Broadcasting Corporation of China (BCC). BCC operates nine domestic stations and offers foreign services on shortwave frequencies. English transmissions can be heard on the Voice of Free China.

English newspapers and periodicals are available in T'aipei. These include: *China News*, *China Post*, *Free China Review*, *Free China Journal*, *Issues and Studies*, *National Palace Museum Bulletin*, and *Sinorama*.

Taiwan has excellent telephone and telegraph services. However, international calls made from Taiwan can be expensive.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	Founding of the Republic of China
Jan. 1& 2	New Year's Day
Feb.	Chinese New Year*
Feb.	Lantern Festival*
Mar. 12	Arbor Day
Mar. 29	Youth and Martyrs' Day
Apr.	Ching Ming Festival*
Apr/May	Matsu Festival*
May 1	Labor Day
June	Dragon Boat Festival*
July 1	Bank Holiday
Aug/Sept.	Chung Yuan Festival*
Sept. 28	Teacher's Day (Birthday of Confucius)
Sept/Oct.	Mid-autumn Moon festival*
October 10	National Day (Double Tenth Day)

October 25	Taiwan Restoration Day (Retrocession Day)
October 31	Birthday of President Chiang Kai-shek
November 12	Birthday of Dr. Sun Yat-sen
December 25	Constitution Day

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport is required. Travelers can obtain a visa prior to arrival in Taiwan at a Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in the U.S. (maximum 60 day stay), apply for a landing visa upon arrival (maximum 30 day stay), or apply for entry under the Visa Waiver Program (14 day stay). Taiwan previously required that U.S. visitors to Taiwan hold passports valid for at least six months from the date of expected departure. In some instances, this is no longer the case: Taiwan now considers U.S. passports valid for return to the United States for six months beyond the expiration date of the passport. If the passport contains a Taiwan visa issued abroad, the traveler may be admitted for up to sixty days even if the passport will expire during the period of stay. If the traveler applies for a landing visa upon arrival, he or she will be admitted for 30 days or up to the day the passport expires, whichever comes first. A traveler who applies for entry under the Visa Waiver Program must have a passport valid for six months after the planned departure date.

No extension of stay or change of status is allowed if the traveler enters on the Visa Waiver Program.

Unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan are conducted through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), whose offices are authorized

by law to perform American citizen services. U.S. citizens are encouraged to register at AIT Taipei or AIT Kaohsiung, and to obtain updated information on travel and security. Registration can be done on-line by visiting the AIT web-site at <http://www.ait.org.tw>. The American Institute in Taiwan does not issue U.S. passports, but it accepts passport applications and forwards them to the Passport Agency in Honolulu for processing. Processing time takes three to four weeks. In an emergency, the American Institute in Taiwan can issue a travel letter to permit a U.S. citizen who has lost a passport to return to the United States or to travel to Hong Kong where he or she may apply for a passport at the U.S. Consulate General.

For assistance, U.S. citizen travelers may contact the American Institute in Taiwan at No.7 Lane 134, Hsin Yi Road Section 3, Taipei, Taiwan, telephone (886-2) 2709-2000; fax (886-2) 2709-0908; or the American Institute in Taiwan branch office at No. 2 Chung Cheng 3rd Road, 5th Floor, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, telephone (886-7) 238-7744; fax (886-7) 238-5237. AIT's citizens services section can also be contacted by e-mail at aitamcit@mail.ait.org.tw. In case of emergencies after working hours, the duty officer at the American Institute in Taiwan at Taipei may be contacted at telephone (886-2) 2709-2013.

Currency

The New Taiwan dollar (TWD) has an exchange rate of about 33.08TWD=US\$1 (2000).

Disaster Preparedness

Taiwan is subject to strong earthquakes that can occur anywhere on the island. Taiwan is also hit by typhoons, usually from July to October. Travelers planning a trip to Taiwan can obtain general information about natural disaster preparedness on the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>. Additional information about currently active typhoons can be obtained on the University of

Hawaii tropical storm page at <http://www.solar.ifa.hawaii.edu/Tropical/tropical.html>. The Central Weather Bureau of Taiwan also maintains a web site that provides information about typhoons and earthquakes. Its Internet address is <http://www.cwb.gov.tw>

The International Community Radio Taipei (ICRT) provides all of Taiwan with English-language programming 24 hours a day. In the event of an emergency or an approaching typhoon, travelers should tune their radios to FM 100.7.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country:

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- . *Taiwan in Pictures*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1989.

TAJIKISTAN

Republic of Tajikistan

Major City:

Dushanbe

Other Cities:

Khudzhand, Kurgan-Tyube

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated June 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of **TAJIKISTAN** declared its independence from the Soviet Union on September 9, 1991. Formerly known as the Tajikistan Soviet Socialist Republic, its independence was recognized by the United States on December 25, 1991 and an embassy was opened in the capital city, Dushanbe, in March 1992. Tajikistan became a member of the United Nations on March 2, 1992. Political unrest and armed conflict between Communist Party members and opposition forces have caused serious problems within the country. Many deaths have occurred. As a result, the U.S. Embassy was closed in October 1992.

MAJOR CITY

Dushanbe

Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, is located in the extreme west of the country about an hour's drive from the border with its western neighbor, Uzbekistan. Dushanbe was formed in 1922 when three small settlements of 5,000 people were united into one and became the capital of Tajikistan when it was formed as an autonomous republic in 1924. The city lies in a sheltered river valley at 2,300 feet above sea level, below the Hissar Mountains. The Varzob and Kofarnihon Rivers both flow through Dushanbe. Because of its sheltered location, Dushanbe is often spared the more extreme weather conditions prevalent elsewhere in the region. The cold winter, similar to Washington's, becomes a rainy spring which in turn becomes a hot, dry summer, with temperatures in some areas well over 100°F, followed by a pleasant, dry autumn. Warm, dry weather may suddenly become rainy and cool, and early frosts may be followed by warm, sunny weather.

With a 2000 estimated population of over 660,000, Dushanbe in its center retains the atmosphere of its

original planners in the 1920s—wide, tree-lined streets with mostly low-rise apartment houses and office buildings painted white or pastel colors. Although traffic has begun to pick up with increased availability of gasoline, it is still comparatively light. Because of the trees, walking or bicycle riding is pleasant much of the year. Outside the center part of the city, where the Chancery and Embassy homes are located, neighborhoods usually consist either of rundown high-rise apartments built in the Soviet area or poor-quality, single-family houses.

Food

The food supply in Tajikistan has been improving. Abundant, high-quality fruits and vegetables are in the markets during the summer and autumn, but greenhouses were destroyed in the civil war, and the economy is not strong enough to support the usual nonseasonal imports seen in other former Soviet countries. In season, you can purchase at very reasonable prices: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, mulberries, rhubarb; many varieties (some you may not have seen previously) of cherries, apricots, peaches, pears, figs, apples, pomegranates, melons, persimmons, grapes, and glorious lemons.

All of the above are preserved by canning, drying, etc., and sold in shops and bazaars. There are walnuts, peanuts, almonds, and pistachios. There are grains and dried beans of many kinds available, but not enough to feed the whole population and not necessarily fine quality. There are beautiful tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, beets, cauliflower, turnips, potatoes, onions, garlic, cabbage, leaf lettuce, and many radishes and radish-like vegetables we have not yet properly identified. There are green and red sweet peppers and red chili peppers. Fresh herbs such as basil, mint, dill, chives, and coriander are abundant, but many herbs and vegetables popular in America (thyme and broccoli, for example) are unknown here.

Fresh lamb, beef, and chicken are in the markets, but the animals sometimes led a hard life, a fact which is reflected in the meat. Local bread is whole-wheat "nan" similar to pita, which some find delicious. Regular loaves are sometimes obtainable, but homemade bread, with or without a machine, is better.

Local stores carry soft drinks, alcoholic drinks (vodka of all kinds and champagnes and cognacs are most popular) and some imported delicacies, such as chocolate, cheese, butter, and sausage. Tajikistan makes and bottles wines, but Tajiks prefer to drink dessert wines.

If there is a baby, bring baby food and equipment to make baby food from fresh foods.

Clothing

Women in Dushanbe love to dress up. Daily wear for villager and office worker alike will include plenty of sparkle from fabric and jewelry. High-heeled shoes are worn for all occasions. Men are less apt to dress up, but business suits are worn as appropriate. Many expatriates are in development work outside the city, so one is just as likely to find camouflage and field boots at an evening function as to find people in silk and embroidery harvesting crops.

Although most people in Tajikistan are Moslem, they are used to living with Europeans and tolerant of Western dress. Shorts on either men or women elicit stares, however.

The climate is extreme and not controlled in most buildings, so whatever style of dress you prefer, layers are essential. In winter, warm feet make a big difference. Wool socks—locals wear the colorful wool knitted "Pamiri" socks. In summer, light cottons are comfortable.

Tailoring is available, but materials found in the local markets are not always suitable to American taste. Local outfits, quilted coats, and silk trouser suits, are very attractive and wearable.

Dry-cleaners have not been able to remain in business, and shoe repair is of poor quality.

Supplies and Services

Although intensive shopping or borrowing sometimes results in finding the piece of equipment you lost or forgot to bring, it equally often does not. It is best to assume there are no supplies and services and pack everything you might need.

Religious Activities

Tajiks are mostly Moslem, but there are Baptist, Adventist, Korean Pentecostal, Catholic, German-speaking Catholic, and Russian orthodox churches here. The synagogue is closed. As far as post can tell, Buddhists and Hindus do not yet have places of worship in Dushanbe.

Education

The educational system in Tajikistan is in transition. Since funding is minimal and educational materials are unavailable, no expatriate children attend local schools at this time. There is a small group of English-speaking children from ages 5–10 who are educated by parents using the Calvert system and field trips to resources available in the community.

Older children might wish to consider the Woodstock school in India. It was created 140 years ago for the

children of American missionaries and is now a highly respected international residential school whose graduates attend the best universities in the world.

Recreation and Social Life

Dushanbe has endless opportunities to play outdoors. Hiking, camping, swimming in the many local lakes, cycling, running, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, skiing, or just visiting areas outside the capital to watch local activities such as wrestling, buzkashi (a game played on horseback with a dead goat) and picnics are all enjoyed by expatriates here. Tajiks welcome the involvement of foreigners in everything they do and are very proud of their hospitality.

Entertainment

There are concerts operas, plays, and films in Dushanbe, but at this time it is difficult to find out where and when they are. Since theaters are unheated, it is only the bravest who attend in the winter. In the summer, the most pleasant activities are in the gardens, especially music and dance programs organized by some of the small museums around town. Poetry readings are common but a high level of Tajik is needed to fully appreciate them.

Social Activities

It is easy to meet host country nationals, and there is a good understanding of the concept of "contact," including exchanges of visits to offices, followed by invitations to homes if the relationship is developing. Americans can be a little overwhelmed by Tajik hospitality.

Informal social life for young expatriates is active, and there is a nice mix of nationalities, including Tajik citizens at their parties. Dancing is required for almost every event, and the expatriate community has adapted well to the Tajik habit of "hitting the floor" as soon as the music starts.

The early days of too much vodka and too much fat seem to have given way to a new understanding that

these items are not highly valued by us, but customarily long, heavy meals are offered, and the guest is expected to toast and be toasted and to eat until the “plov” (rice with meat and vegetables) is served, after which he may go home without offending anyone.

Family occasions such as weddings, circumcisions, funerals, etc., are social occasions; anyone staying in Tajikistan will have a hard time not making Tajik friends, so he or she will be included. Again, a speech is expected, and a gift of some sort is appreciated.

Practical gifts for the household may be given, but fine objects from the U.S. are also appreciated. Urban Tajiks prize intellectual achievement, so a beautiful book—with pictures, since reading English is not everyone’s favorite pastime—is always welcome.

OTHER CITIES

KHUDZHAND (formerly Lenina-bad) is located on the Syr Darya River in the northwestern section of the country, 90 miles south of Tashkent, Uzbekistan. One of Central Asia’s oldest cities, it is now the second largest city in Tajikistan, with over 163,000 residents. The major industries consist of silk and cotton production and food canning and meat packing plants.

KURGAN-TYUBE, with a 1998 population of 59,000, is located in the southwestern part of the country, 40 miles south of Dushanbe. The agricultural sector of the economy is dependent on cotton and sheep. There are several industries in Kurgan-Tyube, most dealing with food processing or clothing manufacture.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Tajikistan gained its independence during the breakup of the USSR and is part of former Soviet Central Asia. Tajikistan can be found at 36° 40’ northern latitude and 41° 14’ eastern longitude. Take an atlas or globe and locate Greece or southern Italy or Spain, trace a line eastward toward Eurasia, and there you will find Tajikistan nestled between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to the north and west, Afghanistan to the south, and China to the east.

Tajikistan is home to some of the highest mountains in the world, including parts of the Kunlun, Himalayan, Tien-shan, and Pamir Ranges. Ninety-three percent of Tajikistan is mountainous with altitudes ranging from 1,000 feet to 27,000 feet, with fully 50% of Tajikistan’s territory at elevations above 10,000 feet. Earthquakes of varying degrees are frequent. The massive mountain ranges are cut by hundreds of canyons and gorges at the bottom of which run streams which flow into the larger river valleys where the majority of the country’s population lives and works.

The principal rivers of central Asia, the Amu-Darya and the Syr-Darya, both flow through Tajikistan, fed by the melting snow in the mountains of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Flooding sometimes occurs during the annual spring thaw.

Although located at the same latitude as Washington, D.C., Tajikistan’s climate is drier and varies with altitude. Most rain occurs between November and May. Therefore, the summer, while hot, is dry. The winters at the lower elevations are similar to Washington’s but snowfall rapidly increases with altitude. The climate of the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous oblast (GBO), which

occupies the eastern half of Tajikistan is more extreme. The mountainous east receives 90% of Tajikistan’s yearly precipitation, and its average annual temperature is 49°F, whereas in Dushanbe it is 65°F.

Population

The population of Tajikistan was estimated at 6,194,00 in 2000. Although about 1.5 million people live in Tajikistan’s urban centers, nearly three-quarters of the population continues to live and work in rural areas. In 2000, Dushanbe had a population of 664,000, nearly 300,000 less than its population prior to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. As Dushanbe has returned to calm, former refugees have returned, swelling the ranks of the city’s inhabitants. However, some Russians and Uzbeks have probably left the city forever. The rest of Tajikistan’s population is spread fairly evenly throughout the western half of the country; approximately 1.7 million people live in the northern or Leninabad region, 1.7 million in the Khatlon region in the south, and 1.4 million in the districts of republican subordination (Nurek, Rogun, Kofarnihon, Varzob, Hissar, Gharm, Lenin, Tursunzade, and Tavildara). According to the official census, the population in the mountainous eastern half of Tajikistan is very sparse, with a reported population of only 220,000 in Gorno-Badakhshan, a territory that makes up almost half the area of the country.

The population is split almost evenly between men and women. With the highest birth rate in the former Soviet Union, 41% of the population is under the age of 14.

Perhaps the greatest population change in Tajikistan since the end of the Soviet era and civil war is found in the Republic’s ethnic composition. From 1989 to 1994, the percentage of Russians living in Tajikistan dropped from 7.6% of the population to 3.3% or less. Many with sufficient financial resources have already left the Republic, and

many of the remaining Russians are simply accumulating enough money to finance their own migration. The numbers of other, smaller, minority groups such as Tatars, Jews, and what the government refers to as “others,” which includes ethnic Germans, Koreans, Ukrainians, Armenians, etc., have also been dramatically reduced in the wake of the breakup of the Soviet Union and Tajikistan’s civil discord. Some minority groups have continued to thrive. The small Kyrgyz minority living in Tajikistan has not been uprooted, and the large Uzbek minority population has remained constant at 25% of the population. Even today, ethnic Tajiks make up only 65% of Tajikistan’s population; the situation is reversed in Uzbekistan, where the populations of two of that Republic’s most important cities, Samarkand and Bukhara, remain largely Tajik. Within the Tajik population, important social divisions exist according to an individual’s place of origin. Tajiks separate themselves into Kulyabis, Gharmis/Karategins, Khojandis, Pamiris, Bukharans, and Samarkandis, as well as a host of other names based on location of origin. The Kulyabis, who were not a powerful group during the Soviet era, provided the muscle to win the civil war. Since 1993, they have dominated the government, and there was a steady migration of Kulyabis from the underdeveloped south to the capital. Conversely, the traditionally powerful Khojand (formerly Leninobod) group experienced a decline in its power in the central government based in Dushanbe.

During the Soviet period, the term “industrial workers” included the agricultural workers, i.e., those working on state or collective farms. Tajikistan thus claimed that 55% of employees were industrial workers, 21.7% were “white-collar” workers, 22.9% worked in rural areas, and 0.2% were engaged in “individual working activity.” Most recent estimates indicate that the labor force is divided at 30% in services, 20% in industry and 50% in agriculture.

The collapse of Tajikistan’s economy and the closure or reduction in work at many of the country’s large factories, and the inability of the government to pay salaries and pensions have all contributed to large numbers of people moving into the private sector in small shops or in one of the various street markets in order to survive.

Tajikistan has also changed linguistically since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Under the Soviet Union, Russian was the language of the government. Tajik was declared the state language of Tajikistan only in 1989, and became the sole official language under the new constitution adopted in 1994. Russian, “the language of interethnic communication,” continues to be used widely in the government and in Tajikistan’s urban centers. Tajik belongs to the southwestern group of the Iranian family of the Indo-European language group. It has four groups of dialects; northern, spoken in Khojand, Samarkand, and Bukhara; central, spoken in the upper Zarafshan; southern, spoken in Karategin and Kulob; and southeastern, spoken in Darvaz and Vanj. Uzbek, the language of almost one-fourth of the population, belongs to the Turkish group of languages and is most prevalent in Naw, Jabar-asulov, and Tursunzade. Several languages are spoken in the Pamir mountains of Gorno-Badakhshan from the eastern Iranian language group, including Shugnan, Yazgulum, and Vakhani. Kyrgyz is also spoken in the Eastern Pamirs. Yagnobi, the Eastern Iranian language of the Yagnob Valley, is a very ancient dialect whose preservation has provided the clue to understanding ancient Sogdian dialect.

Although each regional, social, ethnic, and language group has its own traditions and beliefs, the principal religion in Tajikistan is Islam; Sunni Moslems predominate in western Tajikistan, while the population of Gorno-Badakhshan is largely Ismaili. The two Islamic holidays officially celebrated in Tajikistan, *Idi Kurbon*, and *Id-al-Fitr*, have become more popular with the

collapse of communism. However, many traditional holidays, such as Navruz (new year) actually date from pre-Islamic times. The urban population is, in general, not particularly religious, but Tajik society as a whole is becoming more conservative.

Public Institutions

Having emerged from the Soviet era and a crippling civil war, Tajikistan now calls itself a newly formed constitutional, democratic, and secular republic with presidential rule. Executive power is vested in the President, Prime Minister, and the Council of Ministers in Dushanbe, and executive committees in every region, city, and district. The Republic’s legislative branch is the *Majlisi Oli* or Parliament. Provinces, districts, and cities also have legislative bodies. Similarly, there are courts at the national, district, and city levels.

Tajikistan has seven officially registered political parties:

- Communist Party of Tajikistan
- Popular Party of Tajikistan
- Party of Political and Economic Renovation of Tajikistan
- Democratic Party of Tajikistan (one branch)
- Party of the Popular Unity of Tajikistan
- Union Party of Tajikistan
- Justice Party of Tajikistan

Tajikistan also has one political movement, the Congress of the Popular Unity of Tajikistan.

Three parties—the Islamic Revival Party, the Democratic Party of Tajikistan (one branch), and the “Rastokhez” (awakening) Party—were banned during the civil war and remain illegal.

The trade unions created under communism, the Unions of Artists,

Architects, etc., and the Societies for the Blind, Deaf, etc., continue to exist but are weak, and offices housing them are frequently deserted.

Tajikistan is a member of the UN, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and many other international organizations. The International Red Cross is represented here, and Tajikistan also has a Red Crescent Society.

Arts, Science, and Education

The arts and sciences, as well as the education system in Tajikistan have suffered greatly in the wake of the breakup of the Soviet Union as government funding has disappeared. The Tajik Academy of Sciences and the education system were part of a centralized Soviet bureaucracy guided and controlled by Moscow. The end of the Soviet era and the subsequent political unrest left the arts, sciences, and education without direction or money.

There are, however, two live theaters, an opera house which houses a Western-style orchestra and ballet company in addition to the opera company, a film industry which produced a Cannes silver medal-winner in 1993, and numerous children's programs.

Poets are perhaps the most beloved of the artists, but lacking government patronage, they find it very difficult to support themselves. Still, occasional new works of poetry are published. Statues of poets replaced those of Lenin in Dushanbe.

Traditional music and dance are still alive, and professional musicians and dancers are paid to perform at weddings, receptions for visiting dignitaries, and other celebrations. Painters and craftspeople are trying to find supplies and markets. Only the best and most highly motivated will survive.



View of Dushanbe, Tajikistan

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The education system in Tajikistan is suffering from lack of funds from the central government for maintenance and salaries; lack of basic supplies such as books, pencils, and paper; and a lack of training among management staff who had previously received directives from Moscow. Although the education system continues to function, its resources have been severely reduced.

Commerce and Industry

Over six years of conflict and civil war have had a serious effect on the Tajikistan's economy. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in Tajikistan is about \$1,140 (2000 est), the lowest among the 15 other former Soviet republics. Nearly 80% of the population is living below the poverty line.

This country received substantial humanitarian assistance from the U.S., the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, the World Food Program, the European Union, and several nongovernmental organizations operating in various regions of Tajikistan. As the worst effects of the civil war are being ameliorated, these organizations are beginning to focus on develop-

mental aid. USAID established an office in Dushanbe with a permanent USAID representative in March 1995. The IMF and World Bank also have a presence in Dushanbe. But the country still struggles to revive some of its own industries.

Part of the old Silk Route, Tajikistan's Ferghana Valley has the oldest silk factory in the world. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, it found itself unable to get its usual raw materials or to sell its production outside the immediate area. With foreign partnership, the quality of goods has increased.

Cotton production, which was forced during the Soviet period, continues to be Tajikistan's major cash crop. Wheat production, though growing, is still insufficient to feed the country. Vegetables, fruits, and nuts, both fresh and preserved, are grown for consumption and export.

One of the country's major nonagricultural industries is aluminum production based around a gigantic aluminum plant built during the Soviet era. Tajikistan provides most of the electricity but must import raw materials such as alumina, petroleum coke, and cryolite. Although production at the plant

has declined, Tajikistan continues to export aluminum.

The country does have a very small oil and natural gas industry; however, the entire yield is needed for use within the country. Additional oil and gas are imported from Uzbekistan.

Major export partners include Liechtenstein, Uzbekistan and Russia (1998). At least 32% of imports come from Europe, followed by Uzbekistan and Russia.

Tajikistan does have a limited number of joint ventures established between the Government of Tajikistan and/or local firms on the one hand, and foreign firms. The largest of these is the British Commonwealth Minerals gold mining project in Penjikent. South Korean and Italian firms have joint ventures in textiles. The USAID-financed Central Asian American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF) found its first Tajik partner in a Pepsi bottling plant in Khojand; it is expected to make additional loans/investments to private Tajik enterprises. Foreign investment is hindered by poor communications and a lack of international banking facilities.

Most workers belong to member unions of the Federation of Trade Unions, a holdover from the Soviet era. They enjoy the right to strike, but before a union may legally call a strike, arbitration must take place. If arbitration fails, unions have the right to strike, but labor unions have generally disavowed the utility of strikes in a period of deepening economic crisis and high unemployment. They have espoused compromise between management and workers. Nevertheless, several unofficial wildcat strikes have occurred.

Attitudes on property ownership and investment are changing. Some state enterprises (by 1995, 8%) have privatized. Others are planning to privatize, primarily to be in a better position to attract outside investors. A few private companies have started up. Most large towns have a

thriving bazaar or two, where small entrepreneurs hawk cheap consumer goods imported from the Gulf, Iran, the subcontinent, China, or Russia. By 1996, almost all apartments and houses have been privatized. Although the constitution prohibits private land, some land has been given on long lease to private farmers whose heirs may inherit it but cannot sell it. Even farmers remaining on state farms and collective farms usually have a small garden plot. These private plots collectively produce most of the country's fruit and vegetables and a sizable amount of grain.

Transportation

Local

Rental vehicles can be obtained in Dushanbe, as car-owners are often willing to rent their vehicles and themselves as drivers to supplement their incomes. To the best of post's knowledge, however, cars that you drive yourself or four-wheel-drive vehicles suitable for long trips are not available for rent. Taxis are available in cities such as Dushanbe and Khojand, though fares depend on the price of fuel, time of day, and appearance of the passenger. Most city-dwellers get around in buses or trolleybuses that run during the day.

Local official vehicles are red, for fire trucks; white and red or sometimes deep yellow for ambulances; and white and blue for police. UN vehicles, ubiquitous here, are white Nissan Patrols, Toyota Land Cruisers, or Land Rovers.

Some people, including Americans, ride bicycles in Dushanbe and environs. The light traffic, broad streets, pleasant weather, and friendly people make Dushanbe a delightful city for bicycling. However, since conditions include poor roads and hilly terrain, a good quality mountain bike with air pump, extra tires and tire repair kits, warning lights, etc., is advised.

Regional

Vehicles in Tajikistan are driven on the right side of the road. Roads in Tajikistan have deteriorated badly since the civil war; much of the terrain is mountainous and rugged. Intercity ground transportation may be by bus, truck, or rail. Buses run from Dushanbe to Samarkand, Termez, and Penjikent on a fairly regular schedule. You can get to almost all population centers by bus if you have no fixed timetable and are willing to be uncomfortable. Bus drivers do not go into areas of central Asia where there is unrest, and make these decisions based on up-to-the-minute (usually accurate) rumors.

Trains leave Dushanbe on even-numbered days for Moscow (87 hours) via Samarkand (18+ hours), Tashkent (25 hours), and Oktyobinsk, Kazakstan. Passports and visas are required. Tickets are available from 20 days to 5 minutes before departure. Restaurants and bedding are available on the train. Railway officials suggest that travelers carefully watch their belongings at all times. Other trains go from Dushanbe to other destinations in central Asia, and there are still small narrow-gauge lines that are very local. Like everything else here, ground transportation is struggling to meet growing needs and maintain minimal standards with no new resources in the midst of radical change.

Air transportation is available from two airlines that are operated by former Aeroflot personnel: Tajikair and Khojand Airlines. The latter operates two (some days three) daily flights between Khojand and Dushanbe. Tashkent is less than a 3-hour drive from Khojand. Tajikair theoretically operates flights to and from Penjikent, Aini, Isfara, Jirghital, Gharm, Kulyab, and Khovaling at least weekly; Khorog daily (although the weather frequently prevents service), and to the neighboring capitals of Bishkek, Almaty, and Ashgabat. It also flies four times a week to and from Moscow and operates charter flights for local merchants to Karachi, New Delhi,

and the Middle East. Tajikistan International Airlines had operated New Delhi-Dushanbe-London flights briefly during 1994, but these are currently suspended, and it is not known if or when they will resume.

It is extremely important to check on schedules before formulating an itinerary.

Do not expect international standards of safety or adherence to procedures familiar to us, such as transporting your baggage to the aircraft for you, using seatbelts or even (sometimes) sitting down.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local telephone service varies with the exchange.

Radio and TV

Russian and Tajik TV stations broadcast intermittently. You need rabbit ears or an antenna to pick them up—there is no cable TV.

Russian radio stations can be picked up in Tajikistan, and VOA, BBC, Radio China, and numerous Christian broadcasting services are available on shortwave.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Local bookstores sell books in Tajik, Uzbek, Persian, and Russian, but the selection is extremely poor. The books, which are printed in Tajikistan, are not the best quality. Imports from Russia, Iran, and Uzbekistan are better. There are several printing houses in Dushanbe and one each in Khojand and Kulyab. They specialize in local authors.

Theoretically, there are more than 30 local magazines and newspapers printed in Dushanbe. But because of the price of newsprint and the difficulty of finding advertisers or affluent readers for most of these publications, they are dormant. Journalists also run the risk of going to jail for expressing contrary

views. The central government subsidizes several newspapers, others specializing in sensational material from the Russian press survive on sales, and some regional newspapers in Tajik and Uzbek continue to find enough readers to continue printing.

There is no English-language press, nor are any Western newspapers and magazines sold locally.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

There is no acceptable local hospital, lab, dentist, or pharmacy in Tajikistan, although the clinic for microsurgery maintains a high standard.

The local health delivery system suffers from deficits of trained specialists, lack of medicines, broken equipment, and short work-hours.

The UN maintains a small clinic staffed by one doctor and two nurses for ambulatory care patients, serving the nondiplomatic expatriate community, as well as UN personnel.

Community Health

The Tajikistan Ministry of Health has advised all citizens to boil tap-water for drinking due to organic contaminants and the inability to adequately chlorinate the city water supply. Local water is deficient in iodine, and iodized salt is not available. Many local residents have enlarged thyroids due to chronic iodine deficiency. In Dushanbe, ground water contamination by heavy metals and chemicals is not a reported problem, although in outlying agricultural areas pesticides and fertilizers may be present. Use of these has been greatly curtailed since 1992, however. Locally bottled soft drinks and alcoholic beverages are also potential sources of contamination.

Fruits and vegetables should be soaked in chlorine water and washed with distilled water.

Untreated food and water are at risk for contamination by amoebas, Giardia, and other harmful bacteria.

The most frequent medical problems requiring treatment outside of Tajikistan have been for dental problems. There are good quality dental treatment centers in Moscow, dentists in New Delhi, one in Tashkent, and a clinic in Almaty of dentists trained by visiting Americans.

Some medicines are available for purchase in local pharmacies, but supply and quality are erratic. Individuals should bring all prescription and over-the-counter medicines they require on a regular basis.

Preventive Measures

Tajikistan had the highest prevalence of diphtheria in the world, but an intensive antidiphtheria campaign in 1995–96 brought the incidence down considerably. Other communicable diseases to be aware of in Tajikistan are cholera, malaria, rabies, polio, tuberculosis, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and typhoid. Booster immunizations should be up to date before arrival for diphtheria, polio, hepatitis A (havrix 1440 vaccine), hepatitis B, typhoid, and rabies. The latter should be completed before arriving. The vaccine for cholera is not recommended by WHO. There is no vaccine for malaria, but those persons traveling in south Tajikistan in the summer, including Dushanbe, should take a dose of chloroquine each week, wear insect repellent, and sleep under a mosquito net. Tuberculosis testing should be performed after departure.

Americans in Tajikistan are most likely to encounter episodes of diarrhea and respiratory infections. These are more likely to occur in conjunction with fatigue, hence rest is recommended, especially after arrival in Dushanbe. Despite all efforts to avoid diarrhea, it is a frequent problem among Americans.

Before coming to Tajikistan any specialists routinely visited should be consulted, including dentists and

eye doctors. A spare set of glasses should be brought. Those wearing contact lenses should have a supply of cleaner and soaking solution, as these are not available locally. Those taking prescription medications should bring an ample supply.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Travel to, from, and within Tajikistan is difficult and unreliable. Flights may be canceled or substantially delayed. Commercial charter flights are frequently overloaded with merchandise. International train connections are dangerous because of criminals operating onboard.

The most common route to Dushanbe is via Tashkent (which has reliable connections several times a week to Istanbul, Frankfurt, London, and other locations). From Tashkent, one can take the traveler overland to Khojand, which is near Tashkent but inside of Tajikistan. From Khojand, there are generally two (and sometimes more) flights daily to Dushanbe.

From Khojand, all baggage (including hand baggage) is weighed and subject to overweight charges for excess above 25 kilos. The excess usually costs \$1 U.S. per kilo to Dushanbe. There will be a \$3 fee for use of the "Deputatski Zal," which essentially confirms your reservation. The ticket from Khojand to Dushanbe must be paid for in cash, with U.S. currency preferred. Bills dated 1990 or later, with no tears or markings should be accepted; others may not be.

It is also possible to reach Dushanbe via Tajik Air from Moscow (usually three flights a week), Almaty (generally twice a week), and Ashgabat (usually one flight a week). Traveling through Moscow requires the use of Domadedova Airport, an extremely difficult location to deal with. Some Russian is virtually a

prerequisite to successfully finding your flight at Domadedova. The Almaty flights are often tightly booked.

A passport and visa are required. Entry into Tajikistan at points along the Gorno-Badakhshan border requires special authorization in advance. Without a visa, travelers cannot register at hotels and may be required to leave the country immediately. In the U.S., visas for Tajikistan are issued by the Russian Embassy, Consular Division, 1825 Phelps Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 939-8907, or the Russian consulates in New York, San Francisco or Seattle. Tajik visas granted by these offices are valid for a stay of three days in Tajikistan. If travelers plan a longer stay, they may apply for a longer visa at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after arriving in the country.

Travelers who intend to visit Tajikistan should obtain double-entry Russian, Kazakh or Uzbek visas prior to departure, depending on intended transit points.

The government of Tajikistan requires visitors who remain in country for more than 90 days to present a medical certificate showing that they are HIV-free, or to submit to an HIV test in Tajikistan. This testing requirement has not been implemented, but could be at any time. Because of the lack of medical supplies, submitting to an HIV test in Tajikistan could be risky.

Travelers to Tajikistan are subject to frequent document inspections. Therefore, U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports and Tajik visa with them at all times so that they may more readily prove that they are U.S. citizens. In accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and certain bilateral agreements, local authorities must grant a United States consular officer access to any U.S. citizen who is arrested. U.S. citizens who are arrested or detained should ask for

the U.S. Embassy to be contacted immediately.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy Almaty, Kazakhstan and obtain updated information on travel and security within Tajikistan. The U.S. Embassy in Almaty is located at 99/97A Furmanov Street, telephone 7(3272) 63-39-05. U.S. citizens may also register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan by telephone or fax, but emergency consular services for U.S. citizens may be limited or unavailable. U.S. citizens are reminded that personnel for the U.S. Embassy to Tajikistan are resident in Almaty. Consequently, the U.S. presence in Tajikistan is not continuous. The U.S. Embassy is temporarily located at 10 Pavola Street, Dushanbe, telephone 011 (992)(372) 21-03-48/50/52 fax 011 (992)(372) 21-03-62.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

As of October 2000, the new currency is the Tajik *somoni* (SM), which can be divided into 100 *dirams*. The somoni is issued in notes of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100. The diram is also issued in notes with denominations of 1, 5, 20 and 50. Exchange in January 2001 was 2.2SM=US\$1.

Currency can be changed at authorized exchange houses. Do not change currency on the street, as this is illegal, and Americans have been picked up in sting operations.

No Tajik bank has a particularly strong record for banking. Tajikistan is a cash economy; neither travelers checks nor credit cards are accepted. Electronic funds transfers are sometimes lost, and some banks do not permit the recipient of an EFT to withdraw the full amount of the EFT.

Tajikistan uses the metric system for weights and measures.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar. 21 & 22	Noruz (Persian New Year)
May 1	Working People's Day
May 9	Victory Day
June 27	Day of National Unity
Sept. 9	Independence Day
Nov. 6	Constitution Day
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*

*variable

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These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Bangkok, Thailand

THAILAND

Kingdom of Thailand

Major Cities:

Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Songkhla, Udorn

Other Cities:

Khon Kaen, Lampang, Nakhon Pathom, Nakhon Ratchasima, Phet Buri, Phuket, Yala

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1994. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

THAILAND is an exotic kingdom where the past and present mingle in harmony. The country once known as Siam came into being more than 1,000 years ago, when the Thai people descended from the hilly hinterlands of Burma (now Myanmar) and southern China. Here, in the fertile central plain and basin of the Chayo Phraya River, they created a number of independent kingdoms that were continually besieged by their Burmese and Khmer neighbors. Although the Thai were never colonized, they were forced to fight through the centuries to maintain their freedom.

In 1238, the Thai inflicted a devastating defeat on the Khmers and

created the kingdom of Sukhothai. At that time, Bangkok (the present capital) lay entirely beneath the waters of the Gulf of Thailand. In 1350, when the capital was moved to Ayutthaya, Bangkok was only a series of mud banks raised by alluvial deposits from the Chao Phraya.

Just 200 years ago, Siamese warriors, mounted on elephants, drove out the Burmese who had killed their king and sacked and destroyed Ayutthaya. The new king established a capital in Thonburi. Fifteen years later, Rama I, founder of the present Chakri dynasty, moved the seat of government across the river to Bangkok.

MAJOR CITIES

Bangkok

Bangkok, capital of Thailand, is the largest city in the kingdom and one of the largest in Southeast Asia. About seven and a half million people live in Bangkok and the surrounding metropolitan area. The city lies within a great bend of the Chao Phraya River (River of Kings), which empties into the Gulf of Thailand 35 miles to the south. Thonburi, on the west bank, is considered part of the metropolitan area.

Bangkok became the Thai capital in 1782. Called by the Thai "the city of angels," it is a national treasure house, containing most of the country's historic temples and major landmarks.

Bangkok is an exotic, energetic city of contrasts: high-rise apartment buildings and ancient temples; air-conditioned, modern department stores and crowded, narrow stalls of local markets; wide avenues teeming with traffic and crooked lanes bordered by canals, where small children bathe and fish; the blare of pop music and the tinkle of temple bells; spacious homes and primitive, thatched huts; the scents of jasmine and of fish drying in the sun; international restaurants, and food vendors squatting over small charcoal cooking pots on the sidewalk. A lifetime could be spent exploring Bangkok and its delightful mixture of cultures, customs, and peoples.

Bangkok (in Thai, Krung Thep) suffered heavy damage during World War II. It was seized by the Japanese in December 1941, only a few days after Pearl Harbor and, in 1944 and 1945, it became the target of frequent bombing raids by Allied planes.

Clothing

In Thailand's tropical climate, cotton and other lightweight washable clothing is comfortable and practical. Most types of summer fabrics, including lightweight knits, are worn for business, since all offices are air-conditioned.

Men find that shirts and ties, without jackets, are acceptable, as are wash-and-wear or safari suits. A dark business suit is usually worn for evening functions. Thai-style men's shirt-jackets, tailored in silk or cotton, can be worn to some evening events. Sports clothes are popular for casual wear, and can be bought locally. Shoes are available at reasonable prices, although larger sizes may have to be custom made.

Women need more clothing for Thailand than for a more temperate climate. Here, clothes need to be changed more frequently. Dresses in current styles are sold in boutiques and department stores, but usually only in sizes to fit petite Thai figures. Dressmakers can make equally comfortable and fashionable clothing. Prices range from reasonable to expensive, and results vary according to the design and the skill of the dressmaker. A wide variety of fabrics is sold in local shops. Thai cotton and silk are of high quality, and are popular for both daytime and evening wear.

Casual dresses, skirts, blouses, and slacks are suitable for almost all daytime occasions outside the office. Businesswomen will be appropriately dressed if they wear the same style of clothing that is acceptable in city offices in the U.S. Sleeveless and short-sleeved dresses with jackets are convenient for moving from the hot, humid outside air into air-conditioned buildings. Shoes purchased on the local market are reasonably priced, stylish, and comfortable, but are not always available in narrow widths or in larger sizes.

For informal social events, floor-length skirts, trousers, or dresses are popular. Occasionally,

more formal attire is needed, and can be easily made by dressmakers. Thais wear black only at funerals and when in mourning, and often show discomfort when a foreigner (not in mourning) wears this color. It is sometimes worn as part of fashion, but never as the dominant color.

Children need the same kind of clothing they would wear during hot summer months in the U.S. With few exceptions, most items can be purchased or made locally. Many parents order items through mail order catalogs.

Supplies & Services

Tailors and dressmakers are numerous; seamstresses will work in the home. Shoe repair services are available, but materials used are not of the quality found in the U.S. Dry cleaning and laundry services are adequate, as is repair service for small appliances.

Beauty salons and barbershops charge reasonable prices, and their personnel generally are well-trained.

Most personal and household items are found in Bangkok. Cosmetics, some toiletries, and bed and bath linens are costly. Attractive, locally made table linens, however, are moderately priced.

Religious Activities

Although Thailand is predominantly Buddhist, religious tolerance is practiced. The constitution requires the king to be a Buddhist, but also makes him the protector of all religions. Government offices and many businesses close on Sunday, not as a religious holiday, but as a day of rest.

Christian churches in Bangkok include many denominations, many of which hold regular services and Sunday school in English. Catholic, Protestant, Interdenominational, Seventh Day Adventist, Christian Science, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints religious groups are represented in Thailand. A Jewish Center and a Baha'i Center are located in Bangkok. Many

up-country areas also have Christian churches, which are often operated by missionaries.

Domestic Help

Most foreigners resident in Thailand employ at least one maid or cook. Single people usually can manage with one domestic who cooks, cleans, and does the laundry, but families often need more help. Drivers are not necessary, although they offer great relief from the strain and stress of driving in city traffic.

Domestics work six days a week, with the free day determined by the employer; most household help live in their own quarters in the employer's house or apartment. Knowledge of English varies. Salary depends on skills and previous experience, and ranges from the equivalent of \$115 to \$200 monthly. Most are also paid one month's salary bonus, or a fraction if they have worked less than a year, at Christmas.

Before employment, and every year thereafter, each employee should have a complete medical examination (available at local hospitals). The American Women's Club in Bangkok operates a registry to assist Americans in finding household employees. Employee liability insurance is recommended.

Education

The International School of Bangkok (ISB) is the major English-language school in Thailand. It is private, based on the American educational system, and supervised by a board of directors elected by parents. The school's constitution requires that at least three nationalities be represented on the board.

About 50% of the staff are hired locally, but some of the teachers are spouses of U.S. Government personnel stationed in Thailand. ISB's teachers and administrative staff have strong academic and teaching credentials.

The school offers kindergarten through grade 12, is accredited by



Grand Palace in Bangkok

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

the Western Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and is an academically excellent institution.

There is no longer a formal dress code, but all students are expected to be appropriately dressed and groomed while on campus or attending school-sponsored off-campus activities. Students are permitted to wear the national dress of their native countries. Uniforms are required only for physical education classes.

International School offers primarily a college preparatory program, although a limited number of vocational courses are available. Extracurricular sports and other activities are provided.

ISB participates in, and is a testing center for, the following national testing programs: Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National

Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMQT), College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Strong Vocational Interest Inventory (SVII), College Board Achievement Test (ACH), American College Test (ACT), College Board Advanced Placement Test, Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT), and Test of Academic Progress (TAP).

Six psychologist/counselors work with students and parents in academic and personal counseling. ISB's facilities for learning-disabled students are limited. If a child needs a self-contained classroom, a small (10–12 students) classroom, extensive occupational therapy, or psychiatric counseling, these services are not available at ISB or anywhere in Bangkok.

Ruamrudee International School is another institution offering an English-language curriculum. The

school, founded in 1963, is affiliated with the Catholic Church. A wide variety of elective and extracurricular activities are offered, as well as various sports.

Other schools in Bangkok include Holy Redeemer (Catholic), the Bangkok Pattana (British system), and La Petite École Française (French system).

Special Opportunities

Schools with instruction in English for handicapped children are not available, but a number of physical therapy clinics and wide range of Thai specialists can provide continuing care.

Several clubs in Bangkok offer English-language classes in the arts, sports, cooking, and crafts. The National Museum Volunteers group sponsors lectures on the ancient and modern history of Thailand, aspects



Courtesy of Ellen Bowden.

Floating market in Bangkok

of the country's culture and Buddhism, and Thai art. Qualified music teachers for many instruments are available, and a small music academy in Bangkok teaches theory and composition, and offers instruction in piano, voice, and stringed instruments.

Almost all Thai universities require a special entrance examination (which is in the Thai language) for undergraduate study. Most courses are taught in Thai. For these reasons, it is extremely difficult for an American student to enroll in a college degree program here.

Recreation

Facilities for many sports are available in Bangkok. Several commercial tennis and racquetball courts are located in the Sukhumvit area and in other parts of the city. Most golf courses are open to the public, and charge reasonable fees.

Privately owned health and exercise clubs are scattered throughout the city, some in the Sukhumvit district. Joggers use the paths at Lumpini Park, near the U.S. Embassy. Others jog on city streets in the early morning before traffic becomes heavy, or use the playing field at the International School of Bangkok. The Royal Bangkok Sports Club offers jogging tracks, horseback riding, an 18-hole golf course, and a swimming pool. However, there is a long waiting list (up to five years) for memberships, unless you pay a special, expensive fee.

There are bowling alleys and swimming pools in the residential areas. Ice skating and roller skating are available. Sporting goods can be bought locally, but prices are high.

Ballet, jazz, and aerobic classes for children and adults are offered at various Bangkok locations.

Spectator sports include Thai boxing, as well as other events ranging from tennis matches to gymnastic exhibitions.

Bangkok has a wealth of historic and scenic sites for the tourist to visit and enjoy. Local travel services have daily tours in modern air-conditioned buses. This is the best way, at first, to see the following sights: the *Wat Benchamabophit*, an ornate marble temple; *Wat Po*, which holds the large reclining Buddha image; *Wat Trai Mit*, temple of the Golden Buddha; *Wat Phra Keo*, in the Grand Palace where the emerald Buddha is housed; and many other picturesque and exotic temples.

Boat trips and *klong* (canal) tours can be arranged. These include taxi rides on the Chao Phraya River, and "long tail" boat trips through the *klongs* (where the visitor can see Thai houses built on stilts, and

observe a style of life based on water transportation networks). Cruises on converted rice barges also are possible.

A few examples of old Thai architecture have been preserved and now serve as museums. Among these are the Suan Pakkard Palace, which contains an antique collection of lacquer, pottery, and manuscripts; the Jim Thompson House, with its superb collection of objets d'art; and the Siam Society's Khamthieng House, an example of northern-style teak architecture. At the weekend market one can buy almost any conceivable article, from roasted beetles to antiques.

The following popular tourist attractions are within a day's drive of Bangkok:

The Ancient City and its outdoor museum, with replicas of nearly 100 ancient and modern monuments of Thailand erected on a scale of 1:1 up to 1:3.

The Rose Garden, featuring beautiful flower beds, a selection of hotels and restaurants, and a daily show recreating country life (Thai dancing, boxing, and cock-fighting).

Ayutthaya, the former capital of Thailand, only a two-hour drive from Bangkok. It has numerous ruins, some of which have been restored.

Bang Pa In, a former royal summer retreat with a collection of palaces and pavilions in various Thai, Chinese, Italian, and Victorian architectural styles.

Trips up-country and to the various beach resorts are a relaxing way to spend weekends and holidays. The following are some of the more frequently visited places:

Pattaya, a seaside resort with many excellent hotels and restaurants. Because of the rapid growth, however, the beaches are polluted and, unless one is willing to risk disease, water sports are limited to hotel pools. Scuba diving is popular, but



View of Bangkok, Thailand

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requires long boat rides to the outer islands to avoid the worst of the pollution. Nearby, at Bang Saroy, is the local affiliate of the International Game Fish Association, a point of contact for the serious angler.

Hua Hin, which can be reached by train, car, or bus. This resort, the oldest in Thailand, has beautiful white beaches, and mountain scenery. Golf, swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, and boating are available.

Phuket, a large offshore island about 560 miles south of Bangkok. It has unspoiled sandy beaches and is a favorite spot for scuba diving and snorkeling. Large tin mines are found here.

Khao Yai, a forest and wildlife preserve, about 125 miles northeast of Bangkok. Accommodations include a hotel, bungalows, and camping facilities.

Pimai, called the Angkor Wat of Thailand. It has ruins dating back to the 11th century.

Chiang Mai, a 50-minute flight or a 13-hour overnight train trip from Bangkok. It can also be reached by car in eight hours. Here, one can visit the northern hill peoples and

the villages where artisans make umbrellas, silver bowls and jewelry, pottery, handwoven Thai silk and cotton, and carved teak furniture and other wooden objects. Located nearby is a young elephant training camp.

Tours organized by various groups are frequently offered to places outside the country, including Hong Kong, India, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. Health and visa requirements change constantly, and must be checked before each trip.

Colorful festivals celebrating traditional Thai holidays include the following:

Songkran (mid-April), Thai New Year's Day. Young girls dressed in Thai national costumes go to the banks of the rivers in colorful processions. Water is sprinkled on Buddha images, monks, parents, and elders as a gesture of veneration. Sometimes the participants become too enthusiastic and throw buckets of water on passersby.

The Ploughing Ceremony which takes place during the sixth lunar month (May). It is an important festival, with historical roots embedded deeply in Thailand's traditional

dependence on the fertility of the land, and in Buddhist and Hindu rituals of kingship. After the king touches the sacred red and gold plough for good luck, the plough is drawn by garlanded bulls in a circular furrow on the Phra Mane Grounds, site of the weekend market. Brahmin priests chant as the animals are offered seven varieties of crops. The yield of the next year's harvest supposedly depends on which crops the bulls choose.

Loy Kratong, celebrated on the night of the full moon of the 12th lunar month (November). This festival marks the end of the rainy season and the end of hard work in the fields. People float their bad fortune away from them in tiny banana leaf or paper floats (*kratongs*), decorated with lit candles, flowers, and incense stick. The *kratongs* are sailed on rivers, canals, and ponds.

Ok Pansa (late October and early November), the end of the Buddhist Lent, during which monks must stay at a *wat* (temple) and not travel. At the end of Lent, Thai Buddhists can earn merit by presenting *kathin*, or offerings of food and other items for the *wat*, and new saffron robes for the monks. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, or another member of the royal family, presents *kathin* to several of Bangkok's large temples. Thai usually join together to purchase such offerings, often presenting them to a *wat* in another part of the country, and traveling there in festive procession.

Entertainment

Many activities and varied types of entertainment exist for children of all ages in Bangkok. Such attractions include Khao Din Zoo, one of the best in Southeast Asia; Magic Land, a Thai version of Disneyland; Siam Park, a combined amusement and water park; the Science Museum and Planetarium, with "hands on" exhibits; the Pasteur Institute's large collection of living poisonous snakes; and the monthly activities for children at the Nelson Hays Library.

Bangkok offers museums, art galleries, and occasional theater, dance, and music performances. The city also has discotheques and nightclubs.

Regular performances are sponsored at the Bangkok Community Theater, Music Society, Combined Choir, Alliance Française, and Bangkok Symphony. Americans interested in performing can join these groups.

The active American University Alumni Association regularly presents films, lectures, and displays, and holds classes in both Thai and English. Often, AUA sponsors performances of chamber music, jazz and popular music, and recitals by visiting American musicians. Various embassies and organizations offer Thai cultural programs throughout the year.

The Bangkok branch of the Interdenominational Christian Women's Club holds regular monthly luncheon programs. All are welcome; no dues are charged.

The Bhirasi Institute presents frequent art exhibits from Thailand and other countries. Local galleries show extensive work produced by Thailand's active artist community.

The Siam Society, organized to promote knowledge of the country's art, history, culture, and archaeology, provides activities toward these ends. The National Museum Volunteers plan trips and special programs.

At the International Club on Soi 21, Sukhumvit, there are tennis courts, a large swimming pool, a library, and a snack bar, open to all nationalities.

The American Women's Club welcomes any American woman or wife of a U.S. citizen residing in Thailand. The club has programs of local interest, operates a thrift shop, and maintains a servants' registry.

Americans participate in the activities of the Foreign Correspondents'

Club and the Hilltribe sale. An American who speaks serviceable Thai will have access to an even wider range of activities and local organizations.

Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai, with a population exceeding 160,000 is an important regional center for commerce and tourism. It is about 500 miles north of Bangkok, on a river plain surrounded by mountain ranges. Buddhist temples are found on almost every block, and city streets are crowded with bicycles, motorbikes, and converted pickup trucks used as taxis. Although Chiang Mai is undergoing a modernization process, with high-rise condominiums being constructed throughout the city, it still retains a measure of its traditional charm which makes it a popular tourist stop.

Chiang Mai, founded nearly seven centuries ago, was a major religious, cultural, and commercial center until 1556 when Burmese invasion reduced it to a vassal state. The Burmese were driven out in 1775, and Chiang Mai and the surrounding Lan Na Thai kingdom once again became part of northern Thailand.

The city is noted for its scenic splendor, ancient temples, the lilting dialect of its people and, especially, for its beautiful women. The Thai call it Shangri-La.

January is Chiang Mai's coolest month, and warm clothing is needed at that time. Temperatures start to rise in February, reaching their hottest in April with highs of 107°F. The rainy season, May through October, brings relief and heavy rainstorms. November and December are the best months with bright, sunny days and cool nights.

The northern provinces, where Chiang Mai is located, are mountainous, with transportation lines running primarily on a north-south axis along the wide river valleys. The region produces rice, tobacco, corn, sugarcane, and seasonal deli-



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Wat Kukam Temple in Chiang Mai

cacies such as strawberries. Opium and jade are major illicit products. Lumber, textiles, mining, cottage industry, and tourism are also important elements in the region's economy. About 500 Americans, many of them missionaries, reside in northern Thailand.

Education

The Chiang Mai International School (CMIS), licensed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and operated by the Church of Christ in Thailand, provides instruction from kindergarten through tenth grade. Instruction, using U.S. textbooks, is in English. Uniforms are not required, and jeans are acceptable attire.

The school, founded in 1954, offers classes in Thai language and culture. Currently no programs for either gifted or learning disabled students are available, nor does the

school have guidance/vocational counselors.

Depending on the number and ages of preschoolers and the availability of teachers, informal nursery schools and play groups are often organized. Tutors can be found to teach Thai in the home, and the Alliance Française offers classes in French. Special educational opportunities may be available at Chiang Mai or Payap universities, but no organized activities or classes in English are currently offered.

Recreation and Entertainment

Chiang Mai offers the sports enthusiast golf, tennis, windsurfing, swimming, squash, bowling, fishing, horseback riding, and horse racing. Club memberships are available at reasonable rates. Sports equipment and attire are expensive, and both brand and choice of size are limited.

Chiang Mai is a popular tourist and trekking center. The city has many important and interesting Buddhist temples. On the mountain above Chiang Mai is the royal family's winter palace, Phuping, and a well-known Buddhist temple, Suthep. Nearby are villages that specialize in lacquer-ware, silver-smithing, silk and cotton weaving, wood carving, and umbrella making.

Regional touring opportunities include visits to elephant training camps, unusual hill-tribe villages, scenic waterfalls and picnic spots, historic sites along the Mekong River, and the towns of Chiang Rai, Lampang, Mae Hong Son, Lamphun, and Sukhothai. Interesting treks and river trips also can be enjoyed, although security regulations may limit the possibilities.

Several local movie theaters have special sound rooms where original

English-language soundtracks are played. The U.S. Air Force detachment here receives films each week from the armed forces film circuit; these are screened for the official U.S. community Friday and Saturday evenings.

Three Thai TV stations are received in Chiang Mai, but unlike Bangkok, no simultaneous English-language FM soundtracks are broadcast. American sets must be converted to the European (PAL) system.

Radio Thailand Chiang Mai has English broadcasts both mornings and evenings. With a shortwave receiver, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Voice of America (VOA) can be picked up. No English-language newspapers are available, but two Bangkok English-language papers arrive daily.

Social activities among Americans are informal, and depend on individual inclination and initiative. There is an International Women's Group, which holds luncheon meetings, sponsors arts and crafts and cooking classes, and organizes other special activities. Chiang Mai has several Rotary Club and Lion's International chapters with active and multi-national memberships. Many club and sports activities bring together Thai and foreign nationals.

Songkhla

Songkhla lies at the tip of the Thailand peninsula, about 815 miles south of Bangkok. It is served by Thai Airways and has train connections to Bangkok and Malaysia from the rail junction at Hat Yai, a half-hour drive from the city. This port town has regular freight service to Bangkok. The main highway to Bangkok is paved and the main roads leading to other provinces in the south are generally good.

Sea breezes (from an inland sea to the north and the Gulf of Thailand to the east) give Songkhla a pleasant climate. The temperature stays in the 80s year round, with an occasional hot day. Rainfall is heavy

from October through December. January through March is dry, with scattered rains.

In this city of about 250,000, the foreign community is small, but it continues to grow as a result of oil exploration efforts in the Gulf of Thailand. Housing is limited, but usually good. There is a first-class hotel on the beach. Electric current (220v, 50 cycles) is basically reliable, but subject to interruptions. City water is undependable, and the better homes have wells.

Songkhla has a provincial hospital. A Seventh-Day Adventist hospital and a new, modern university medical facility are located in nearby Hat Yai. Local markets are well stocked with seafood and fresh foodstuffs. Pork and chicken are readily available, but quality beef is hard to find. Shopping for items not found in Songkhla markets can be done in Hat Yai or Penang, a large northern Malaysian city, only four hours away by car.

The area around Songkhla includes many fine beaches. There are tennis courts and a golf course in the city.

Udon

Udon, a city over 100,000, is one of the regional hubs of northeastern Thailand. It is 350 miles northeast of Bangkok and 30 miles south of the Mekong River border with Laos. Udon (Udonrdhani) is connected to Bangkok with daily air, rail, and bus service. The drive from Bangkok takes eight hours on the Friendship Highway.

This part of Thailand, where life moves at a leisurely pace, has three distinct seasons. The cool interval, with clear warm days and cool nights, is from November to February. The hot dry season is like "burning sand under glass," to quote Kipling; it extends from March through May. The rainy season normally begins in June and tapers off in October.

From 1965 to 1976, the Royal Thai Air Force Base in Udon housed a

large contingent of U.S. Air Force personnel. With the withdrawal of this contingent in 1976, the American population dropped drastically; about 50 Americans now live in the Udon area. These include retired military, missionaries, and Peace Corp volunteers, as well as diplomatic personnel.

Considerable economic growth in Udon has resulted in the construction of new retail establishments, restaurants, hotels, and housing, although the city is still relatively small in area and does not yet boast any high-rises. Udon has two Western-style supermarkets, as well as a number of smaller grocery shops selling a variety of Western-style products. In addition, traditional open markets offer a wide variety of fresh vegetables, meats, and other products. Bakeries carry local breads and cakes, but they differ somewhat from American versions.

Udon's one department store and local shops meet most household needs. Ready-made clothing is difficult to find, but many tailor and seamstress shops offer decent service at inexpensive prices. Auto repair shops perform excellent maintenance on American and foreign-made cars at a reasonable cost. Film may be developed locally, but slides must be sent to Bangkok.

One of Udon's four cinemas has a sound booth available where one can listen to the English soundtrack when an English-language film is shown. Local TV is in Thai, except for English subtitles during the evening news on one channel. English-language radio broadcasts can be heard on shortwave radio. Bangkok based English-language newspapers are available the evening of the date published. English-language video cassettes can be rented from stores in Bangkok; local shops carry a limited supply.

Udon has many very good Thai and Chinese restaurants, as well as several acceptable Western ones. Recreational facilities are limited, but numerous tennis courts and a short

nine-hole golf course are located just outside of town. Also available are four swimming pools, fishing parks, and a jogging path along the city reservoir. Nearby archaeological digs at Ban Chiang, and mountain campsites at Phu Kadueng National Park in Loei Province offer interesting weekend trips for the adventurous.

General Information

Most of Thailand lies north of Bangkok and is referred to as "up-country." In general, life outside of Bangkok is restful. Those bothered by the noise, smoke, heavy traffic, and crowded conditions of the capital will enjoy the tranquility and spaciousness of the up-country.

North of Bangkok are jade green rice fields that stretch for miles in all directions, crisscrossed by *klongs*. Beside the *klongs*, farmers build their houses on stilts, out of reach of the water, and plant a few fruit trees and vegetable gardens. Many plow their fields with the aid of huge, slow-moving water buffalo with long, curving horns, although an increasing number are using small machine plows. After the day's work, the farmers wash the mud of the paddy from their bodies in waters of the *klong*.

Beyond the rice lands, the teak-covered mountains reach to the northernmost part of Thailand. To the northeast, a high plateau rises abruptly from the plains and slopes eastward to the Mekong River, which separates Thailand from Laos. This plateau is dotted with scrubby trees. In many areas, water is scarce and the soil poor. The dry season makes unpaved roads dusty, and the monsoon turns them to mud.

The climate in the north and northeast varies more than in Bangkok. Lightweight blankets and sweaters are needed for the cool season, and summer clothing for the hot season.

Western-style housing varies up-country but, on the whole, it is good and steadily improving. Some new houses are being built, and ingenu-

ity can make older homes comfortable and attractive. Houses are usually two-story, with airy rooms and at least one air-conditioned bedroom. Most electrical systems are 200v, 50 cycle, but voltage fluctuates sharply. Power failures in some areas are frequent, and water shortages occur during the dry season. Most homes have telephones.

Hotels vary widely. Some are new and modern; others have only cold water and furnish no sheets. For trips around the provinces, one must pack sheets, towels, soap, and plenty of extra changes of clothing.

Provincial hospitals have facilities adequate only for emergency treatment, although Chiang Mai has excellent medical institutions. Routine medical care is available at four hospitals in Udorn. Most expatriates with serious medical problems, or those requiring surgery or extended treatment, seek medical care in Bangkok. Also, most foreigners go to Bangkok for inoculations and dental care.

Since only Bangkok and Chiang Mai have English-language schools, American parents up-country either send their children to boarding school, or teach them at home, using the Calvert system. In some communities with several children, arrangements are made for one parent to act as teacher for all children.

Even the larger up-country towns may have only small Western communities, and may offer limited social activities and recreational facilities. Many people develop hobbies such as painting, writing, and gardening. Others teach English, cooking, or handicrafts to children or adults. Families now living up-country suggest that newcomers bring musical instruments, games, books, and sports equipment. A shortwave radio is useful. Most of these items can be bought in Bangkok.

A few up-country places have only one or two American families, but this isolation seems to draw them closer together. Friendships seem

warmer and a spirit of neighborliness prevails, much as in pioneer days in America. English is not widely understood or spoken in the up-country.

A great advantage of living up-country is the chance to become well acquainted with Thai people, to learn their language, customs, and culture. Many Americans who have accepted the challenge of working in rural Thailand feel that the experience gives a satisfaction that far outweighs the occasional inconvenience.

OTHER CITIES

KHON KAEN is the capital of Khon Kaen Province in east-central Thailand. The city lies on a railroad, 100 miles north of Nakhon Ratchasima. A university opened here in 1964. Khon Kaen's population is estimated over 210,000.

The capital of its province, **LAMPANG** is on the left bank of the Wang River and near a railroad, 45 miles southeast of Chiang Mai. Located in northwestern Thailand, the city is linked by a highway with Chiang Rai. Lampang is a commercial center with sugar-refining facilities.

Situated in southwestern Thailand, **NAKHON PATHOM** (also spelled Nagara Pathom) is the capital of Nakhon Pathom Province. The city is about 38 miles northwest of Bangkok and has, among its landmarks, a large temple.

Formerly ruled by Cambodia (officially called Democratic Kampuchea), the ancient walled city of **NAKHON RATCHASIMA** (also called Khorat or Korat) is the capital of its province, and lies on the Mum River, 100 miles east of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya. Nakhon Ratchasima's population exceeds 280,000. A railroad junction point, the city is a trading and distributing center for the eastern region of the country.

PHET BURI (also spelled Petch-aburi or Bejraburi) is a seaport and provincial capital on the northwestern shore of the Gulf of Thailand. A railroad connects it with Bangkok, 60 miles southwest.

The seaport town of **PHUKET** is the capital of Phuket Province in southwestern Thailand. As one of the major Thai ports on the Indian Ocean, Phuket exports fish, rubber, charcoal, and tin.

Situated in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border and 22 miles south of Pattani, **YALA** is a provincial capital. It is on the Pattani River and on the railway that runs from Songkhla to northeastern Malaysia. The residents of Yala are Malay in their language and culture and Islamic in religion. The city's exports include rubber and tin.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Kingdom of Thailand, formerly Siam, is located at a strategic crossroads in Southeast Asia. With an area of about 200,000 square miles, it is the region's second largest nation. Its boundaries adjoin Myanmar on the north and west, Laos on the east and northeast, Cambodia on the southeast, and Malaysia and the Gulf of Thailand on the south.

Topographically, Thailand presents a varied landscape of forested mountains, dry plateaus, fertile river plains, and sandy beaches. Mountain ranges run along the border with Myanmar and down to Malaysia. Another range splits the country in half from north to south. Major deforestation has occurred throughout Thailand. However, the government has attempted to save the forests by imposing a ban on commercial logging.

The Chao Phraya River originates in the north and flows southward. It

irrigates the fertile rice lands of the central plains through a network of *klongs*. This long waterway also serves as the main water transportation route through the central part of the country. It empties into the Gulf of Thailand near the international port of Bangkok. Day and night, the river teems with traffic: ships of many lands; round-bottom barges loaded with rice, sugar, rubber, teak, and coconut; brightly painted river taxis; and tiny *sampans* piled high with fruits and vegetables for the city market.

Because it is located between the equator and about 20°N latitude, Thailand is warm and humid and classified as tropical monsoon. A pronounced rainy season lasts from July through October. From November through February, the northeast monsoon brings a cooler, drier period, when humidity drops from an average high of 95.2% to an average low of 58.5%. During this season, temperatures range from the mid-60s in the morning to the mid-80s during the day. March through June is usually hot and humid, and temperatures often reach 100°F.

Thailand's warm, humid climate, particularly during the rainy season, can cause mildew. However, air-conditioning generally prevents serious problems. The usual tropical insects and small lizards live on ceilings and walls; the lizards eat mosquitoes and other insects and do no damage or harm. Ants of all varieties abound. Ticks are a problem for pet owners.

Population

In 2000, Thailand's population was estimated at 61.2 million. Most people are native-born Thai whose ancestors migrated from southern China in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Over the centuries, they have developed an independent culture and identity that is uniquely national in character. The most significant minority are the Chinese, who comprise 14% of the population and live throughout Thailand. Small minorities include the

Malays, Mon, Khmer, Indians, Vietnamese, and various hill tribe peoples. About 20% of the population live in cities, with a disproportionately large number—six million—concentrated in metropolitan Bangkok. Villages and small towns dot the greater part of the landscape. The annual population growth rate has declined dramatically from over 3% a year in 1960 to less than 1% in 2001.

The Thai, historically governed by strong central rule tempered by Buddhist precepts of reciprocity between the king and his people, retain a traditional reverence for their monarch. Throughout their history, the Thai have encountered and borrowed selectively from regional and, later, Western civilizations, producing a rich cultural synthesis that is uniquely Thai. That their country maintained its independence despite pressures from colonial powers is a matter of great pride. A strong sense of cultural and national identity has helped to protect this society from massive disruption as it shifts from an agrarian economy to a developing, urbanizing, industrial state.

Social interactions are governed by formal expressions of courtesy, and deference to age and social status. Thais greet one another with a *wai*, performed by placing the palms of the hands together in front of the face and bowing slightly. The younger, or the one of lower station in life, customarily initiates the greeting. The word used is *sa-wat-dee kha*, spoken by women, and *sa-wat-dee krap*, by men. When taking leave, the same words and *wai* are repeated. It is good manners to remove shoes on entering a Thai home, and this custom is obligatory before entering a temple or shrine.

It is impolite to touch a Thai, even a child, on the head or shoulders, to point or shake a finger at another person, or to talk loudly or shout. To point one's feet at, or step over, another person is considered an insult. A woman should never touch a Buddhist monk, hand anything

directly to him, or allow her clothing to brush against his robe. Sitting or standing on Buddha images is considered a sacrilegious act, punishable by a fine or jail sentence. Pointing fingers at, or touching, any image of the Buddha is viewed as an expression of bad manners.

The royal family is of particular importance to all Thais. It is not acceptable to speak out against the King. Such behavior is punishable under *lese majeste* laws. Talking about any member of the royal family in derogatory terms, even in casual conversation, is also not acceptable. Everyone at a gathering stands when the King's anthem is played.

Thai is a tonal language, with a root monosyllabic vocabulary enriched by the addition of Sanskrit and other loan words. It is not inflected, and the absence of tenses and cases makes it relatively easy for Americans to pick up a rudimentary command of Thai, despite the difficulties introduced by the tone system. The regional dialects, as well as the closely related Lao language, can be hard to understand but, in this age of radio and television, almost all Thai people now understand some Bangkok or Central Thai. English, the second language of most educated Thais, is taught in schools and universities.

Thailand is a religious nation; 95% of its people are Buddhist. A mixture of Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism, and animism permeates all levels and aspects of society. It is a stabilizing force both at national and at local levels, where it provides a focus for community life, particularly in rural areas.

The *wat* (temple) is used not only for spiritual purposes, but for ceremonies of birth, marriage, and death. It also is used for recreation and welfare activities and, in remote areas, still serves as a school. Thai Buddhist men gain merit by spending from three months to several years in the saffron robes of the monk, adhering to Buddhist moral

and religious precepts, or *Dhamma*, and performing meritorious acts.

Most Chinese and Vietnamese in Thailand are adherents of Mahayana Buddhism. Less than 0.5% of the population are Christian. Thai Muslims, about 4% of the total population, are concentrated in the four southern provinces along the Malaysian border.

Most scholars believe that the Thai (also known as the Siamese) people migrated from the hilly hinterlands of southern China into what is now Thailand over 1,000 years ago. Settling first in the fertile central plain and basin of the Chao Phraya River, they created a series of independent kingdoms that competed with their Burmese and Khmer neighbors.

In the 13th century, the Thai defeated the Khmer and created a kingdom with its capital at Sukhothai. A second kingdom, founded in 1351 at Ayudhaya, later eclipsed Sukhothai in importance. The Burmese, in April 1767, sacked and captured Ayudhaya, killing the Thai king. Six months later the Siamese drove out the Burmese and General Phraya Taksin established a new capital in Thonburi, across the river from what is now Bangkok. In 1782, Rama I, who replaced Taksin and founded the current Chakri dynasty, moved the capital across the river to its present location. Although Westerners have long called the city Bangkok after a small fishing village once nearby, the Thai name of the capital is Krung Thep, or City of Angels. The Grand Palace lies in an area called Rattanakosin, or the Jewel of Indra, the name also used to designate the Chakri era's history and culture.

Government

In Thailand's pre-modern Buddhist state, the king was a living Buddha, or *Bodhisatta*, for his subjects, and a living embodiment of Buddhist law (*Dhamma*). He was protector of the monastic orders, and performed regular ceremonies to assure the progression of the seasons and fertility

of the land. Considered to be between human and divine, he was the apex of an earthly hierarchy below which the Thai social and political order was formed. Kings of the Chakri dynasty (late 19th and early 20th centuries) were a powerful modernizing force, introducing important reforms and innovations while protecting the country from encroachment by imperialistic forces in the region.

The modern period began in 1932 with the advent of constitutional monarchy and experiments with the parliamentary system. Since 1946, American-born King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX), as chief of state, has ruled in conformity with provisions of the constitution. The king has little direct power, but he plays an important symbolic, unifying role, and he continues to be the protector of Buddhism, performing regular ceremonial roles and is the patron of all religions. Legislative power lies with a democratically elected government led by a prime minister.

Since 1932, Thailand has lived under a succession of unstable governments in which the military has played a dominant role. Changes of government frequently came through coups and the groups seizing power rewrote the constitution to suit their own purposes. A relatively stable time occurred in the 1980s when Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanonda presided over eight years of coalition governments. The military last seized power in 1991, but with citizen protests and royal intervention, civilian rule was restored in 1992.

The most significant development since then was the ratification of the current constitution in 1997. Thailand has revised their Constitution 16 times since 1932. The recent reforms involve the political process as well as expanded the rights and civil liberties of Thai citizens. They include the establishment of a National Counter Corruption Commission, a Constitutional Court, a national Human Rights Commis-

sion, and a new national Election Commission.

The Ratha Sapha (National Assembly) has two chambers: the Saphaputhan Ratsadon (House of Representatives), with 438 members, and the Wuthisapha (Senate) with 200 members.

House terms last for four years. However, the prime minister may choose to dissolve the House and call elections before that date. Elections for the country's first elected Senate were held in March 2000. All members of the Senate are elected concurrently for a set term of six years, and members are not eligible for reelection.

With the exception of the Democrat Party, Thailand's oldest organized political party, Thai political parties have tended to be centered on individual personalities rather than ideologies.

Thailand's legal system blends principles of traditional Thai and Western laws; Koranic law is applied in the far south, where Muslims constitute the majority of the population. The Supreme Court is the highest court of appeals, and its judges are appointed by the king.

The flag of Thailand is comprised of five horizontal bands—red, white, dark blue, white, and red, in that order. The central blue band is twice the width of the others.

Arts, Science, Education

The literacy rate for Thais aged 15 and over is 90%. Ninety-seven percent of those eligible for first grade enter school and 65% of these complete the primary grades. 60%, however, enroll in secondary and higher education. Bangkok is the home of 10 state-run universities and numerous private colleges and universities. Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, and Songkhla each have an important regional university. The language of instruction is Thai, except for selected graduate economics and

business programs that offer courses in English.

The predominant sources of modern Thai culture are Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism, as transmitted through contact with ancient Mon, Ceylonese, and Khmer civilizations centered in what are now Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. A perceptible Chinese influence also exerts itself in many aspects of Thai culture. In southern Thailand, long traversed by Muslim traders, elements of the classical Islamic tradition have been incorporated into the culture.

Art objects in Thailand traditionally were created and used for religious purposes—decoration of temples, sacred manuscripts, and religious statues—and for the use of royalty and nobility. As a result of the sacking of Ayutthaya in 1767 and the destruction of many cultural artifacts, Thai art for this period is scarce, but later periods are well represented in museum and other collections. After the late 1940s, schools of modern Thai art began to show marked Western influences. Although many artists paint in styles derived from Western models, others are experimenting with expressing traditional Buddhist themes in contemporary forms. Traditional techniques are preserved and taught at Silpakorn University and the Department of Fine Arts in Bangkok.

The National Museum in Bangkok contains an extensive collection of Thai art, including prehistoric objects, sculpture, pottery, and paintings representing various periods and objects (furnishings, carriages, etc.) from previous royal families. The Jim Thompson House (dedicated to the man who popularized Thai silk throughout the world) and Suan Pakkard Palace exhibit private collections which contain some of the finest examples of Thai antiques.

The Museum Volunteer Group and the Siam Society give lectures and arrange study work groups on Thai culture. A number of cultural societ-

ies, including the Alliance Française, British Council, Goethe Institute, Japan Foundation, and American University Alumni Association show movies from their respective countries, usually in their native languages, and sponsor The Bangkok Community Theater, an amateur group, which presents a number of plays each year. The Bangkok Combined Choir presents an annual performance of Handel's *Messiah*. The Bangkok Music Society schedules recitals all year and the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra's yearly season includes at least four concerts.

Many private galleries show the works of contemporary artists and artisans. Air-conditioned theaters show American, Thai, Indian, and Japanese movies daily. In recent years, the more traditional forms of Thai art, music, and dance have been revived. The Royal Siamese classical dances, now in great demand, are performed frequently by troupes of the Department of Fine Arts, dance schools, and private groups. The more traditional forms of painting and handicrafts, including work with silver, silk, bronze, lacquer, and ceramics, also are enjoying a resurgence.

Commerce and Industry

In the earlier part of the 1990s, the Thailand economy was one of Southeast Asia's strongest. But financial crisis hit, beginning in 1997. By the end of 1998, the economy had collapsed by 10.8%, local currency lost half its value, and about 70% of Thailand's domestic financial institutions were either shut down, taken over by the government, or merged with other institutions. Per capita income dropped from \$3,000 in 1996 to \$1,800 in 1998.

With over \$17 billion dollars of aid from the International Monetary Fund, the economy has stabilized and has begun to move forward at a slow, but relatively steady rate.

About 54% of the labor force is involved in agriculture. The most important crop is rice, which is both the staple food and the principal export. Other agricultural commodities produced in significant amounts include: fish and fishery products, cassava (tapioca), rubber, maize (corn), and sugar. Exports of processed foods such as canned tuna, pineapples, and frozen shrimp are on the rise.

Thailand's manufacturing sector has revived with rapid increases in production of such goods as computers and electronics, garments and footwear, furniture, wood products, canned food, toys, plastic products, gems, and jewelry. High-technology products such as integrated circuits and parts, electrical appliances, and vehicles are now leading Thailand's strong growth in exports.

Tourism is still one of Thailand's single largest earners of foreign exchange. Many new luxury hotels and other tourist facilities have opened in order to serve the growing number of tourists from Japan, Europe, the U.S., and Taiwan.

The U.S. is Thailand's leading export market, followed by Japan and Singapore. Leading Thai exports are fishery products (especially canned tuna), textiles, integrated circuits, jewelry/precious stones, and footwear. Japan supplies most of Thailand's imports, followed by the U.S. Leading Thai imports are machinery and parts, aircraft, chemicals, textile fibers (especially cotton), and fish.

American investment has played a significant role in the Thai economy. Two American companies, ESSO (Exxon) and Caltex (a joint venture of Chevron and Texaco), are among the four largest gasoline retailers in Thailand. Seagate Technology has made Thailand its worldwide base for production of computer disk drives, and AT&T has constructed the world's largest corded telephone manufacturing plant outside Bangkok. American consumer brands such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Gillette, Johnson and Johnson, and

Colgate-Palmolive are well established in Thailand, selling products that are either imported or manufactured by local subsidiaries. American investment has not increased as rapidly as that of Japan or Taiwan, although the U.S. is still considered the largest or second largest foreign investor in Thailand.

Transportation

Bangkok is served by several international air carriers, and there are domestic airlines providing service between Thai cities. Comfortable, air-conditioned buses also are available, traveling to major cities and resort areas. Daily first-class train service to major cities is also available.

Canals, or *klongs*, have traditionally provided an important mode of transportation in parts of central and southern Thailand. Although most canals in Bangkok have been filled in, or are no longer navigable, water-taxi routes starting from points along the banks of the Chao Phraya River link the capital city to the large number of *klongs* in the countryside. Water taxis and small motorboats provide a low-cost and efficient means of transporting passenger and light-cargo traffic, and are a pleasant way to explore a style of Thai life not visible from the roads. These boats do not carry life jackets.

Roads in Bangkok are generally good. However, because the city is below sea level, major drainage problems arise during the rainy season, when certain streets become, or revert to, canals; when others flood; and when large potholes and drain openings go unrepaired for many weeks. Roads vary from the Friendship Highway and the main north-south roads, all in good condition, to unpaved, ungraded surfaces, often impassable by flooding during the rainy season.

Bangkok traffic is heavy and, when not halted at intersections in the city's infamous and interminable traffic jams, moves at a reasonable

pace. The billows of black smoke emitted by public buses, exhaust fumes from other vehicles, and the mixture of large passenger cars, motorcycles, bikes, *samlors*, public buses, and pedestrians make driving one of the least attractive and most fatiguing aspects of life in Bangkok. The perpetual, severe congestion forces people to arrange the day's activities around traffic problems, and often exceeds the limits of time, tolerance, frustration, and fatigue.

Public transportation in Bangkok includes buses (always crowded and driven aggressively); *samlors* (two-passenger, three-wheel vehicles used in emergencies for short trips); and taxis.

Taxis are usually air-conditioned to some degree. The state of repair of the taxi, the driver's knowledge of the local major destinations, English competence, and basic driving ability (including possession of a driver's license) can vary widely from taxi to taxi. The traveler should negotiate the fare before entering the vehicle and, upon completion of the trip, remain seated in the taxi until change is received. Meters are not required by law.

Taxis dispatched from hotels are air-conditioned and more comfortable, but the rates are two or three times the fare for a regular taxi. Hotel taxis are, however, particularly useful for late night trips or journeys to the airport because they can be booked in advance. You can rent air-conditioned cars and minibuses, with or without drivers, for trips in and out of Bangkok.

Local police cars vary in color; fire trucks are red. Traffic, when directed, is controlled by traffic lights or police officers.

Personally owned vehicles should be air-conditioned for comfort. The extremely hot, humid, and polluted air makes driving with open windows difficult.

Traffic moves on the left. Right-hand-drive cars are safer,

especially on the open highways, but left-hand-drive cars can be used. Station wagons and larger vehicles are not recommended, since they are difficult to maneuver or park in certain areas of Bangkok. They also cost more to operate and are difficult to sell.

Japanese and European cars can be purchased locally, although often with a wait of three to four months for delivery. If an American car is shipped, it should have a tropical radiator. Unleaded gas is not available. Adequate repairs are done on the local market. Labor costs are low, but most replacement parts for non-Japanese cars are expensive. Tires are available locally at reasonable prices.

Cars must carry adequate property damage and liability insurance. Several Bangkok firms are licensed to issue policies in Thailand, but many Americans order from well-known firms in the U.S. Third-party liability insurance is required; full comprehensive coverage is recommended.

Automobiles brought into the country must be registered promptly upon arrival, and cannot be driven without Thai license tags. Since it takes up to three months to obtain a Thai driver's license, an international or U.S. permit can be used in the interim.

Communications

Telephone service to the U.S. is good. Sometimes you can be put right through and at other times there is a one- to two-hour delay while the call is routed through the international operator. Calls may be placed from home, hotel, or the Central Radio Telephone Service of the General Post Office on New Road in Bangkok. Telegrams and cables can be sent from any post office and from most hotels; messages must be submitted in written form. Airmail service to the U.S. takes three to 10 days, and transit time for surface mail is from 10 to 20 days.

Thai television operates on the PAL system; American-made color sets must be adjusted before use. Modification to PAL can be done locally, but it is expensive and the results are not always satisfactory. Reception is fair when an outside antenna is used. Sets purchased locally are expensive.

Bangkok has five television stations. The stations carry some American and British programs, and English translations of the news, which the viewer receives by tuning in the appropriate channel and listening to the English soundtrack on FM radio.

A number of Thai-language and a few English-language radio stations operate on FM stereo and regular AM frequencies. Shortwave carries Voice of America (VOA) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Bangkok has two English-language dailies: the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation Review*. Both offer home delivery and use Western wire services to supplement domestic news. *Time* and *Newsweek* (international editions), the *International Herald Tribune*, and *USA Today* are available by subscription or direct purchase at newsstands.

Health and Medicine

Bangkok has a full range of trained, English-speaking medical and dental specialists. Hospitals used by the American community are modern and well-equipped. In Bangkok, only a limited number of medical specialists are qualified to offer care to the physically handicapped or mentally disabled. In other cities, there are hospitals which are adequate for routine treatment; more complicated cases are often treated in Bangkok.

Most diseases in Thailand are also common in the U.S., but some occur with greater frequency because of climatic and sanitary conditions. Heat rashes, fungus infections,

colds and other respiratory infections, and intestinal disorders are common. Careful attention to sanitation and hand cleanliness is the best preventive against intestinal disorders.

Lack of vehicle pollution control plus severe industrial pollution have created a serious air pollution problem in Bangkok. Persons with chronic respiratory problems should seek medical advice before arriving for an extended stay, since these conditions usually become much worse here.

In large cities, household water comes from purification plants, but the possibility of contamination in the distribution system always exists. Boiled or bottled water must be used for drinking, making ice cubes, and brushing teeth. During times of flooding, drinking water becomes contaminated by seepage into the delivery pipes and diarrheal diseases invariably increase in frequency. Since the water here contains no fluoride, pregnant women and all children under 18 should use a fluoride supplement.

Fresh milk and ice cream are sources of many infectious diseases. Canned and powdered milk are safe to use, as are the products of Foremost Dairy, sold in most local supermarkets. Meat, especially pork, should be cooked thoroughly, and raw fruits and vegetables must be washed with soap and water and then soaked in chlorine or an iodine solution prior to cooking or peeling.

Mosquitoes are profuse throughout the country, but malaria is not a problem in the major cities or resort areas. Suppressants are available when traveling to border regions. Hepatitis is transmitted by contaminated food and water, but gamma globulin shots reduce its incidence and severity dramatically.

Rabies shots for pets are not compulsory, but rabid dogs are common here. All foreign residents, especially children, should (in advance of arrival) receive pre-exposure rabies immunizations. Any person

bitten or scratched by a fur-bearing animal or bat should seek medical care immediately. Cats, dogs, and other animals susceptible to rabies should have rabies shots before they are brought to Thailand as pets.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Feb.	Chinese New Year*
Apr. 6	Chakri Day
Apr.	Songkran Day*
May 1	Labor Day
May	Royal Ploughing Ceremony*
May	Visakha Bucha Day*
July	Khao Phansa (Buddhist Lent)*
Aug. 12	Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday & Mother's Day
Oct. 23	Chulalongkorn Day
Dec. 5	His Majesty the King's Birthday & Father's Day
Dec. 10	Constitution Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve*

*variable

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Several international air carriers serve Bangkok. The most commonly traveled route for Americans is via Tokyo and Hong Kong.

U.S. citizen tourists staying for less than 30 days do not require a visa, but must possess a passport and onward/return ticket. A Passenger Service Charge, currently 500 baht (USD equivalent as of September 2001: \$11.50), must be paid in Thai baht when departing the country from any of Thailand's international airports. Thailand's Entry/Exit information is subject to change

without notice. For further information on Thailand's entry/exit requirements, please contact the Royal Thai Embassy, 1024 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, telephone (202) 944-3600, or the Internet web site <http://www.thaiembdc.org>, or the Thai consulates in Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York City.

Thai customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Thailand of items such as firearms, explosives, narcotics and drugs, radio equipment, books or other printed material and video or audio recordings which might be considered subversive to national security, obscene, or in any way harmful to the public interest and cultural property. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Thailand in Washington, D.C. or one of the Thai consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Thailand are encouraged to register either online or in person at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok or the U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai. At both locations updated information on travel and security in Thailand is available. The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy is located at 95 Wireless Road in Bangkok; the U.S. mailing address is APO AP 96546-0001. The central switchboard number is (66-2) 205-4000; the American Citizen Services Unit number is (66-2) 205-4049; and the fax number is (66-2) 205-4103. The web site for the U.S. Embassy is <<http://usa.or.th>>. American citizens can register online via the web site. Questions regarding American Citizens Services can be submitted by E-mail to <acsbkk@state.gov>. The U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai is located at 387 Wichayanond Road; the U.S. mailing address is Box, C, APO AP 96546. The telephone number is (66-53) 252-629 and the fax number is (66-53) 252-633.

Pets

Thailand has no quarantine restrictions on entering pets, but does require a rabies inoculation certificate and a certificate of good health issued not more than one week prior to arrival. Bangkok's tropical climate poses numerous health hazards for pets. Dogs especially are susceptible to such afflictions as heartworm, roundworm, and other parasites. Fleas and ticks also abound. Local veterinary clinics are not always up to U.S. standards. Bangkok has a high incidence of rabies, and local pet purchases are discouraged. Pet goods are available at local pet shops.

Firearms & Ammunition

Any weapon that can be fired must be registered with authorities. Foreigners should not import antique weapons. Firearms imported into Thailand must be exported upon the owners departure, and cannot be disposed of by sale or gift within the country. Weapons are restricted to pistols and revolvers with minimum four-inch barrel length and maximum .45 caliber bore (one of each caliber); target rifles, not larger than .22 caliber (one of each type); hunting rifles neither operable in full automatic mode, larger than .375 caliber, nor configured as a military weapon (one of each caliber); shotguns, one of each designed for skeet or trap shooting, and one of each designed for hunting; and a total of 1,000 rounds of ammunition.

Social Customs & Laws

Thailand's traditional greeting is the *wai*, made by placing the palms together and raising them to a level determined by the relative status of those being greeted. The handshake is becoming more popular among cosmopolitan Thais.

It is a criminal offense to make negative comments about the King or other members of the royal family. Thais hold the King in the highest regard, and it is a serious crime to make critical or defamatory comments about him. This particular crime -- dubbed "lese majeste" -- is punishable by a prison sentence of

three to fifteen years. Purposely tearing or destroying Thai bank notes, which carry an image of the King, may be considered such an offense.

Currency, Banking & Weights and Measures

The time in Thailand is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus seven.

The basic unit of Thai currency is the *baht*, divided into 100 *satangs*. All normal banking services are provided by several foreign and Thai banks; many have sidewalk currency exchange windows.

Thailand uses the metric system for most weights and measures, but some local units remain in force, particularly in the provinces. Some of the more important local measures are the *rai* (.4 acres), the square *wah* (four square meters), and the *picul* (60 kilograms).

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TONGA

Kingdom of Tonga

Major City:

Nuku'alofa

Other Cities:

Tofua

INTRODUCTION

TONGA is located south of Western Samoa, and less than a quarter of the nation's 169 islands are populated today. Some of the Tongan islands may have been settled since at least 500 BC. The Tongan realm reached its zenith in the 13th century, when its control extended over part of the Lau group in Fiji, Rotuma, Futuna, 'Uvea, Tokelau, Samoa, and Niue. The Dutch first encountered Tonga in 1616, and Captain James Cook visited the islands in 1773 and 1777. Between the 1790s and the 1820s, civil war broke out among rival dynasties for control of the monarchy; it finally ended in 1845. Tonga entered into a treaty of friendship and protection with Great Britain in 1900. During World War II, New Zealand and US troops were stationed on Tongatapu, which became a hub for shipping. Coconuts, bananas, and vanilla became the main economic resources. Two more treaties of friendship between the United Kingdom and Tonga were signed in 1958 and 1960. On June 4, 1970, Tonga became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Tourism has become an important source of earnings, but Tonga still relies on foreign aid.

MAJOR CITY

Nuku'alofa

Tonga's only urban and commercial center is Nuku'alofa, located on the island of Tongatapu. Nuku'alofa is 430 miles from Suva, Fiji, and about 1,100 miles from Auckland, New Zealand. Tongatapu covers about 100 square miles and is the traditional residence of the king and high chiefs. The other islands traditionally supplied Tongatapu with agricultural produce throughout the year. Tongatapu became known as the "land of chiefs" while the outer islands were referred to as the "land of servants." Nuku'alofa was originally a fortress for the western part of the island. Raiders from the nearby Ha'apai island group periodically attacked the fort in the late 18th century and entirely destroyed it around 1807. Almost two-thirds of the country's population now lives on Tongatapu, and the Nuku'alofa area has about 40,000 inhabitants. The town has the majority of Tonga's hotels, restaurants, shops, bars, and other urban features, but its sprawl now covers nearby agricultural land and wetlands, and shacks line the edge of town. Nuku'alofa and Neiafu are Tonga's only ports of entry for foreign vessels. Nuku'alofa has a deepwater

harbor that is protected by reefs. The Pacific Forum Line and the Warner Pacific Line maintain scheduled service from Australia and New Zealand to Tonga via the Samoas or other islands. Tonga's main air field is Fuaamotu International Airport, 13 miles by road from Nuku'alofa. The government-owned Friendly Island Airways conducts flights between Tongatapu, Ha'apai, 'Eua, Vava'u, and Niuatoputapu. The town's economy is based on exports of copra, bananas, and vanilla and the sale of local handicrafts at the Malae (Park) Market.

Recreation and Entertainment

Basketball, boxing, cricket, rugby, soccer, and volleyball are all popular in Tonga. Fishing and sailing are popular recreations. Rugby matches are played at the Teufaiva Outdoor Stadium on Friday and Saturday afternoons from mid-spring until mid-summer. There are several dive sites to the north of Tongatapu along the many islands, reefs, and shoals. Four of Tonga's five national marine reserves are located in the reefs north of Tongatapu.

The Royal Palace is a white wooden Victorian building landscaped with expansive lawns and Norfolk Island pines. The palace was manufactured in New Zealand in 1867 and



Local market in Nuku'alofa

Susan Rock. Reproduced by permission.

transported to Nuku'alofa. The Royal Chapel was built behind the palace in 1882, and it has served as the site of Tonga's coronations since then. The palatial estate is not open to visitors but is visible from the waterfront. The royal tombs are located less than a mile south of the palace. The site has contained the graves of the monarchs (and their immediate families) since 1893. The graveyard lies in a large park adjacent to the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua but is not open to the public. The basilica was constructed by volunteers in the late 1970s. The Tongan War Memorial at the Town Common is dedicated to the memory of Tongans who perished in World War II. The Nuku'alofa Talamahu Market is the country's main produce market.

The Tongan National Center in nearby Vaiola displays Tongan history, artifacts, and portraits of the monarchs. There are also demonstrations of traditional basket weaving, tapa making, wood, bone, and coral carving, painting, and kava preparation. Kava is a popular Tongan beverage, a mild tranquilizer made from the ground root of the pepper plant. Visitors to Tonga often enjoy a traditional evening of suckling pig, crayfish, chicken, and assorted accompaniments.

The famous 1789 mutiny on the British ship *Bounty* took place in the waters between the Ha'apai and Nokuma island groups. The former site of the Nuku'alofa fortress is on the slopes of Mt. Zion near the palace, but a radio tower now stands in its place.

The Tongans' ancient tombs consisted of great rectangular platforms of recessed coral limestone blocks erected in tiers. A traditional stone-lined burial vault would be dug into the sand on top of the platform. The Paepae'o Tele'a site on Tongatapu is the grandest of these ancient burial grounds, with its terraced platforms. This particular tomb, however, was probably erected as a memorial since it contains no burial vaults.

European and indigenous culture and living patterns have blended in Nuku'alofa, but in the rest of Tonga village life and kinship ties continue to be important. Heilala is a week-long series of celebrations, parades, sports competitions, and cultural events that take place during the time around the king's birthday (July 4). The Pangai public waterfront area is used for royal ceremonies, festivals, and local soccer and cricket matches. Singing and music are popular forms of entertainment.

The annual National Music Festival in June is a two-week competition with over ten different categories of performance. Tonga, along with some other South Pacific nations close to the International Dateline, is preparing an elaborate celebration to greet the new millennium. Since 1971, the Ministry of Education has operated a joint library service with the University of the South Pacific. The library is in Nuku'alofa and contains approximately 7,000 volumes. The Tonga College Museum's collection includes artifacts of Tonga's history. There are libraries at the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua, and at the New Zealand and Australian high commissions. Nuku'alofa also has one small cinema.

OTHER CITIES

Largely uninhabited, **TOFUA**'s claim to fame is mutiny. It is believed that the famous Mutiny on the *Bounty* happened here in 1789, when quartermaster John Norton was clubbed to death (on Mutiny of the Bounty Beach) and Captain William Bligh and his men began their 4063 mile trip to Timor. Tofua is the largest island in the group and is fairly well covered with rainforest. Hikers can enjoy a large variety of plant and birdlife. Tofua is also the site of Tonga's most active volcano, which features a steaming lake in its crater.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Tonga archipelago lies scattered east of Fiji in the South Pacific Ocean. The islands run roughly north-south in two parallel chains. There are 172 islands, of which 45 are inhabited. The total area of the islands is 289 square miles, or more than four times the size of Washington, D.C. The western islands are

volcanic, and the eastern islands are coralline and encircled by reefs. The volcanic islands reach a height of 3,389 feet on Kao. Fonuafo'ou, about 40 miles northwest of Nuku'alofa, is famous for its periodic submergences and reappearances, as a result of earthquakes and volcanic action. The climate is subtropical, with the cooler season lasting from May to November. The average daily temperature ranges from 50°F in winter to 90°F in summer. Most rainfall occurs between December and March. The annual average rainfall on Tongatapu is 70 inches; on Niuaotupapu, 74 inches; and on Vava'u, 110 inches.

Population

There are an estimated 110,000 people living in Tonga, for a density of 385 people per square mile. There has been considerable migration to urban areas, and many Tongans emigrate to work abroad. About 99% of the population is Tongan, a homogeneous Polynesian people. The remainder of the population is European, part-European, Chinese, or non-Tongan Pacific islander. Christianity is the dominant religion in Tonga. The largest denomination is the Free Wesley Church of Tonga, which is headed by the Tongan monarch and claims one-third of the population as members. There are also smaller numbers of Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons, and Polynesian Christian denominations. Tongan and English are the national languages. Tongan is similar to Samoan and was unwritten until the 19th century. English is taught as a second language in elementary and secondary schools, so most Tongans have some understanding of spoken and written English.

Government

Hereditary absolute kings (known as Tu'i Tonga) have ruled in Tonga since the 10th century. Over the centuries the dynasty was split up so that by the early 19th century, three lines of kings all sought domi-

nance. In 1831 Taufa'ahu Tupou united the islands by conquest and took the name George. As George Tupou I, he became ruler in 1845 and was made constitutional monarch in 1875. In 1900, during the reign of George II, the first treaty of friendship was concluded between the United Kingdom and Tonga. Tonga was made a British protectorate but had full freedom over internal affairs. In 1970, Tonga ceased being a protectorate and became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The 1875 constitution divided the government into three main branches: the sovereign, Privy Council, and cabinet; the Legislative Assembly; and the judiciary. The King-in-Council is the chief executive body, and the cabinet, presided over by the prime minister, makes executive decisions of lesser importance. King Taufa'ahu Tupou IV has ruled since December 1965. The prime minister is appointed by the king. Only nine of the 30 Legislative Assembly seats are determined by popular election (12 are reserved for cabinet ministers and nine are for nobles). A pro-democracy movement has gained support since 1993. The Supreme Court exercises jurisdiction in major civil and criminal cases. Other cases are heard in the Magistrate's Court or in Land Court.

Tonga's flag is crimson with a cross of the same color mounted in a white canton.

Arts, Science, Education

Primary education is compulsory for all Tongans, and there are over 100 public primary schools. Elementary education is conducted in Tongan, and English is also taught. Adult literacy is over 90%. There is a teacher training college. Hango Agricultural College is part of the Free Wesleyan Church Education System. Tonga Maritime Polytechnical Institute is located in Nuku'alofa.

Commerce and Industry

Tonga's main exports are copra (dried coconut meat) and other coconut products, bananas, and vanilla beans. Gourds (squash and pumpkins) have also become a major export crop (especially to the Japanese market), accounting for nearly half of all exports in 1995. Fishing is relatively undeveloped and has become more important in recent years. Tourism is a major source of foreign earnings, but the economy still relies on foreign aid.

The Tonga Chamber of Commerce can be reached at P.O. Box 838, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, South Pacific.

Transportation

About 75% of Tonga's surfaced roads are on Tongatapu. There are no bridges, but causeways connect three islands in the Vava'u group.

Traffic moves on the left in Tonga. While roads in Nuku'alofa are paved, most other roads are not. Animals and unwary pedestrians walking in the road make night driving on unlit secondary roads hazardous.

Communications

Tonga Telecom has offices in Nuku'alofa, Pangai (Ha'apai), Neiafu (Vava'u), 'Ohonua ('Eua), and Hihifo (Niuaotupapu) where international telecommunications services are available. An internal radiotelephone system connects Nuku'alofa, 'Eua, Nokuma, Ha'afeva, and Vava'u. Radio Tonga broadcasts in Tongan, English, Fijian, and Samoan. Television reception is available only by satellite. The government's *Tonga Chronicle* is the main weekly newspaper. There are also church newspapers and a few private publications.

Health

Vaiola Hospital is located in Nuku'alofa. There is one govern-

ment medical department hospital each in Tongatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai, and 'Eua. Tongans receive medical and most dental treatment free of charge. Tuberculosis, filariasis, typhoid fever, dysentery, and various eye and skin diseases remain common health problems.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and onward/return ticket are required. Visas are not required for stays up to 30 days. Tonga collects a departure tax. For further information about entry requirements, travelers, particularly those planning to enter by sea, may wish to contact the Consulate General of Tonga at 360 Post Street, Suite 604, San Francisco, California 94108; telephone 415-781-0365.

Tonga's customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Tonga of items such as firearms, explosives, motor vehicles,

eggs, and certain types of alcohol. It is advisable to contact the Consulate General of Tonga in San Francisco for specific information regarding customs requirements.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passports with them at all times, so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available. U.S. citizens who are detained are encouraged to request that a consular officer from the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji be notified

There is no U.S. Embassy or other U.S. diplomatic or consular post in Tonga. Assistance for U.S. citizens in Tonga is provided by the U.S. Embassy in Fiji, which is located at 31 Loftus Street in Fiji's capital city of Suva. The telephone number is (679) 314-466; the fax number is (679) 314-466. Americans may register with the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji and obtain up-to-date information on travel and security in Tonga from the Embassy. Information may also be obtained by visiting the Embassy's home page at <http://www.amembassy-fiji.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
Apr. 25.	ANZAC Day
May 4	Crown Prince's Birthday
June 4	Independence Day
July 4	King's Birthday
Nov. 4	Constitution Day
Dec. 4	Tupou I Day
Dec. 25 & 26	Christmas

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Swaney, Deanna. *Tonga—a Travel Survival Kit*. Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1994.

TURKMENISTAN

Republic of Turkmenistan

Major City:

Ashgabat

Other Cities:

Chardzhou, Mary, Nebit-Dag, Tashauz

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated April 1997. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Bordered by Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Iran and the Caspian Sea, Turkmenistan is in the heart of Central Asia. Long on history—Alexander the Great passed through (and, according to local legend, his horse Bucephalus was from here); the Parthian Kingdom, a nemesis of the Romans, was located here; and later the Silk Road passed through the area—Turkmenistan is one of the newest countries in the world. It is now struggling to transform its political and economic systems to meet the challenges of the future.

The most significant geographic feature is the Kara Kum Desert, which covers 80% of the country's total

land area. During the summer, temperatures consistently exceed 40 degrees centigrade. Turkmenistan possesses significant natural resources. It has the fourth largest reserves of natural gas in the world, significant oil reserves, and a variety of mineral resources. It is also located in one of the world's high seismic regions and has suffered serious earthquakes.

MAJOR CITIES

Ashgabat

Ashgabat is located on the border between Turkmenistan and Iran, at 58° 20' E and 37° 58' N. Immediately south is the Kopet Dag Mountain range. To the north, on the other side of the Kara Kum Canal, lies the Kara Kum Desert. The city is in the foothills at an altitude of 775 feet. Ashgabat is the country's largest city with a population of over 460,000.

There are surprising numbers of trees and parks in the city, considering the inhospitable climate. From Friday through Sunday, wedding parties pose in front of the Magtymguly Statue (in honor of a famous 18th century Turkmen poet) near the Museum of Fine Arts.

The city boasts three small museums: the Turkmen History and Ethnography Museum, the Fine Art Museum, and the Carpet Museum. There is also an Exhibition Hall featuring works by contemporary Turkmen artists.

The Hippodrome on the eastern edge of town offers Ahal Teke horse racing in the early fall and late spring. A soccer club, Kopet Dag, plays in the stadium in the center of town.

Because of its history of catastrophic earthquakes, Ashgabat architecture tends toward low-level buildings; huge high-rise apartment blocks, such as those seen in many parts of the former Soviet Union, are a recent development.

Fifteen kilometers west of Ashgabat are the ruins of Nisa. This Parthian city was founded in the 3rd century BC. The palace fortifications are punctuated by the remains of a series of towers. Among the buildings that can be identified at the site are a palace, two Zoroastrian temples, kitchens, and a treasury.

Twelve kilometers east of Ashgabat on the south side of the road to Mary lies Anau. There are 3 mounds at this site. The easiest to spot is the site of a 15 century AD mosque which was destroyed in the

1948 earthquake. On and off, Anau is excavated by an American team from the University of Pennsylvania.

Food

Fresh meat, fish, poultry and produce are limited and often of poor quality. During the winter months, fresh vegetables consist of beets, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, turnips, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions. Fruit is limited to lemons, oranges, grapes and apples. During the summer, there is a slight improvement in selection, including eggplant, sweet peppers, melons, cherries, apricots and peaches.

The quality of the fruits and vegetables in the markets is low by U.S. standards, much of it being bruised or broken. Produce with broken skins not be consumed due to hazardous levels of nitrates, as well as parasites and worm eggs, on the surface of the fruits and vegetables.

Beef, lamb and pork are available in the local markets, though not always in familiar cuts. Because it is displayed in the open air, all meat should be cooked thoroughly before eating. Chicken and other poultry is of very inferior quality. Fish is rarely seen in the markets.

Milk, butter and cheese are locally produced but are unpasteurized, so are considered unsafe. Eggs are available, though they should be thoroughly cooked before eating.

There are a number of small Turkish-run stores which stock bread, juices and other canned goods, but the selection is limited and inconsistent.

Turkish beer is usually available locally, and Turkish wine can occasionally be obtained from local Turkish firms. Imported soft drinks are also usually available, although in limited flavors (cola, orange and lemon/lime).

Clothing

For the summer, bring lightweight, washable clothing. Cotton is the most comfortable fabric. For winter,

bring sweaters, a coat, and waterproof shoes or boots. The streets are very uneven, so comfortable walking shoes are important for all seasons. Purchasing clothing and shoes locally is not an option.

Dress for work and social occasions is relaxed in Turkmenistan. Turkmen rarely wear suits in the summer, although most office workers do wear ties. Slacks and skirts are acceptable attire for women. Tank tops and shorts worn in public will inevitably draw unwanted attention and are discouraged.

Supplies and Services

There are dry-cleaning establishments, though they are expensive and the results are inconsistent. Shoe repairs are available, but materials are not up to U.S. standards. Repairs take a long time, are not guaranteed, and often require extensive paperwork.

Some household products are sold in the Turkish stores, but they are of inconsistent quality and are not always available.

Religious Activities

There are two Russian Orthodox Churches in Ashgabat which have regular Sunday services. Several large mosques are under construction. There are Bahai, Jewish and Christian communities, but none has permanent facilities for meeting.

Education

The Ashgabat International School, run by Quality Schools International, opened in September 1994. It offers English language education for students from five to thirteen years of age.

The curriculum includes English (reading, grammar, composition, keyboarding, and spelling), mathematics, cultural studies (history, geography, economics, etc.), science, computer literacy, art, music, and physical education.

For additional information contact Quality Schools International in care of the U.S. Embassy in Ash-

gabat, or by phoning them at 7-3632-445580. They can also be contacted by writing to Box 2002, Sanaa, Yemen (phone: 967-1-234 437).

Turkmenistan's public schools welcome foreign pupils. However, the language of instruction is either Russian or Turkmen. The schools are short of textbooks and all supplies. From an American point of view, the curriculum is rigid. The foreign families that have tried the local schools have not been satisfied.

Recreation and Social Life

During the racing season (in the spring and fall), you can watch the famous Ahal-Teke horses in action. While horses are for rent at the race track and at rental stables, they are not pleasure riding horses.

Just north of the city is a reservoir lake which is used for recreation, swimming, boating, sailing, and sunning. However, as summer progresses the water is increasingly polluted and it reaches the point where it is no longer usable for recreation.

Jogging is popular among foreigners, though not among the Turkmen. Joggers—especially women—should expect to draw much attention and occasional harassment. The Ashgabat Hash House Harriers meet every other Sunday for a family-style run through the countryside.

Bicycle riding is an increasingly popular sport and means of transportation, though in the winter the cold weather and slick streets could present problems. The city is very flat, so multiple gears are not necessary.

Entertainment

There are two drama theaters, one Russian and one Turkmen, and an opera/ballet theater in Ashgabat. Tickets are not expensive. The season runs from October to April.

There are three concert venues and classical music concerts are held frequently. There are movie the-

aters which show foreign films dubbed into the local languages, but they are uncomfortable and are rarely if ever frequented by Americans.

Some of the larger hotels have good-quality restaurants, ranging in price from \$10-\$30/person. (Dollars only can be used in the major hotels; none accepts credit cards and only a few accept local currency.)

There are other, smaller restaurants popular among the Western community. Most serve a variation of Turkish cuisine at very low prices.

Because of the lack of structured entertainment facilities, socializing with family and friends is the most popular form of entertaining.

Social Activities

There are few Americans in Turkmenistan, and no organizations which provide social activities geared specifically for them. A newly-organized International Women’s Club welcomes women’s participation.

OTHER CITIES

CHARDZHOU, with a population of 164,000, is Turkmenistan’s second largest city. Situated in the eastern part of the country, on the border with Uzbekistan, the city is an important rail and cotton trading center. The industrial sector consists mainly of cotton, silk, and chemical factories.

MARY, located 180 miles east of Ashkhabad, had a population of 94,000 in 2000. Until 1937, the city was known as Merv. Mary is the administrative center of an extensive cotton growing region. Its location on the Kara-Kum Canal and on a rail line have made the city an important transport center.

NEBIT-DAG, which means “oil mountain”, has been the center of the country’s oil industry since the 1930s. The city is located in western

Turkmenistan, at the foot of the Great Balkan mountain range. The 2000 population of Nebit-Dag was 89,000.

TASHAUZ is in the northern section of the country, on the border with Uzbekistan. As the only city in the region, it is a transport and administrative center. Tashauz has 114,000 residents.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Situated in Central Asia, Turkmenistan lies north of the Kopet Dag mountain range between the Caspian Sea and the Amu Darya River. The country has borders with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan on the north and northeast; Iran and Afghanistan on the south and southeast. Turkmenistan has an area of 488,100 square kilometers or 188,417 square miles (slightly larger than the state of California).

The most significant geographic feature is the Kara Kum Desert. One of the world’s largest deserts, it covers 350,000 square kilometers or 80% of the country’s total land area. The temperatures in the desert stay in the upper 40s centigrade from June through August. The Repetek Sandy Desert Biosphere Reserve near Charjew, which was set up in 1928, monitors the unique desert flora and fauna found in the Kara Kum.

The Kopet Dag mountain range to the south forms a 2,000 meter high natural border between Iran and Turkmenistan. The stark slopes are home to a number of endangered species, including leopards and mountain sheep. Most of the mountains are inaccessible, as they fall within restricted border areas.

Cities, towns, and farms are confined to the Amu Darya (historic Oxus) river valley and to the narrow

strip of arable land along the Iranian and Afghan borders.

The “silk roads” ran from the central regions of China through Turkmenistan to the Mediterranean coast during the ancient and middle ages. The caravans carried silk, tea, china and lacquerware to the European markets. Significant ruins related to these trade routes are located outside the present day cities of Mary (Merv) and Dashhowuz.

Precipitation in the inhabited regions averages 19 centimeters per year. Most of this falls between December and April. As you would expect in a desert climate, it does get very hot. In June, July, and August it is often uncomfortable to be outside during the day as the temperatures consistently exceed 40°C. At times in August, the “Afghan Winds” come from the east and the temperature can soar into the high 40’s. However, by late September the temperatures cool and pleasant “autumn-like” weather prevails.

The winter, which begins in late November, can be chilly, wet, and muddy with temperatures between 0°C and 15°C in the daytime, with occasional light snow. Because the snow doesn’t stay on the ground for long, the terrain on and near the Embassy housing compound can be quite muddy.

In Turkmenistan, there are the usual insects and snakes associated with a desert climate: scorpions, spiders, sandflies, cobras and other poisonous snakes. There are also mosquitoes and flies. All of the houses on the compound are screened and there have been no unusual problems with insects or vermin in homes. Care should be taken, though, if exploring the desert or countryside because poisonous snakes have often been seen there.

Turkmenistan is in one of the world’s high seismic regions. During the past 100 years there have been four disastrous earthquakes with intensities of 6+ on the Richter

Scale, each one resulting in great loss of life and property. In 1948, Ashgabat suffered a quake of tremendous strength. All but six buildings were destroyed and the entire city shifted two meters to the north. More than 30,000 of the 130,000 residents died and an additional 85,000 were injured.

Population

In 2000, Turkmenistan had an estimated population of approximately 4,436,000. The Turkmen trace their ancestry back to the Oguz tribe, one of the early Turkic tribes to move west from north Asia. The Oguz came to present-day Turkmenistan in the 9th or 10th Century A.D. That same tribe founded the Seljuk Empire and was the first Turkic group to colonize Anatolia. With the fall of the Seljuk Empire to the Mongols in the 13th Century, the Turkmen entered a period of tribal fragmentation and foreign domination which did not end until independence in 1991.

From the 14th to the 19th Centuries, the area was dominated by Persians (in the south) and the Khanae of Khiva and Emirate of Bokhara (in the north and east, respectively). Through it all the nomadic Turkmen tribes lived a largely isolated existence on the margins of the Kara Kum Desert.

The Turkmen were the last of the Central Asians to fall under Russian domination in the 19th century. The battle of Goektepe (some 40 miles west of Ashgabat) in 1880, ended Ahal Teke resistance and allowed the Russians to consolidate their Central Asian dominions. The nomadic life of the Turkmen did not change markedly under the Russians until the Bolshevik Revolution. Forced collectivization in the 1930s resulted in tens of thousands of deaths.

The Soviets were ambivalent about ethnic identification. At first, they did not recognize a Turkmen nationality and identified people by their tribe. Later, they created the "national" republics, largely as an

effort to prevent the development of a pan-Turkic nationality in Central Asia. Since creation of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic in the thirties, the Turkmen nationality has been recognized in the USSR.

Today of the five or six Turkmen tribes which flourished 500 years ago, basically two tribes remain, each of them divided into two distinct groups: the Ahal and Mary Teke; and the Western and Northern omud. The Teke is the largest of the modern Turkmen tribes. Its two subgroups, however, share little in common and are political and economic rivals. The Ahal Teke occupy most of the Ahal Region, a populous area in the south center of the country which includes the capital, Ashgabat. The Mary Teke occupy much of the Mary region, located to the east of Ahal and bordering on both Iran and Afghanistan.

The western Yomud occupy much of the Balkan Region, which borders on the Caspian Sea. Their territory extends southward into Iran. The northern Yomud live in Dashhowuz Region in the north. The Yomud were separated in the 19th century during the wars against Russia.

Remnants of the other Turkmen tribes still live in the country: The Ersari in Lebap Region, bordering on Uzbekistan and occupying much of the Amu Darya River Valley, the Salor and Saryk in Mary and Lebap regions; the Choudour in the north and east; and smaller groups like the Alili and Ata. The emblems of the five major historical tribes (Teke, Yomud, Ersari, Salor and Saryk), best known from being the focal point of carpet designs, are preserved in the national flag of Turkmenistan.

The value that modern Turkmen place on tribal identity varies considerably according to age, location and social status. Not surprisingly, the young, urban and well-educated are less likely to consider tribal origins important than the old, rural and less-educated. Still, it is the rare Turkmen who completely discards tribal identity. Fully one quar-

ter of Turkmen marriages in Ashgabat are between relatives, a clear reflection of tribal loyalty.

Accents, intonation, vocabulary, and grammatical style are strong tribal/regional identifiers. Dress, particularly among women, can be another giveaway: color choices, embroidery patterns, and jewelry styles vary from tribe to tribe. Names can also give a hint of tribal identity. Preferences for given and surnames and the use of name endings (-geldy, -murad) vary from region to region.

There exists a small, but important, group—the russified Turkmen elite—which has genuinely lost most of its tribal identity. These Turkmen, many of whom occupy key government positions, speak Russian in the home and are barely conversant in Turkmen.

Turkmen social events revolve around the family. Memorials, weddings, and birthdays are celebrated with large parties called "toi." The menu for such occasions consists of traditional nomadic food. A favorite party specialty is dograma, a thick soup made from dry bread, raw onions, and mutton fat. A "must" at any Turkmen meal for foreigners is the local version of the ubiquitous Central Asian lamb and rice dish "plov."

Public Institutions

Turkmenistan formally declared its independence from the USSR on October 27, 1991. It became an independent state when the Soviet Union disbanded on December 25, 1991. President Niyazov, who was elected (uncontested) on October 27, 1990, was previously Chairman of Turkmenistan's Supreme Soviet and First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Republic's Communist Party. He won reelection for a 5-year term in June 1992. In January 1994, a referendum was held which ensured that President Niyazov will remain in office until June 2002.

Democratization in Turkmenistan has proceeded at a very slow pace. It

remains as single party state, with the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (formerly the Communist Party), chaired by the president, as the only registered party. Criticism of government policy is not tolerated and the press is completely government-controlled and tightly censored.

Most government power is vested in the presidency. There is no vice president or prime minister. The president is advised by a cabinet of ministers and a number of offices within the presidential apparatus. According to the Constitution, the Chairman of the Parliament (Mejlis) assumes the presidency upon the death or permanent incapacitation of the president and then calls an election to replace him/her.

The Mejlis consists of 50 members, half of whom work permanently and half of whom are called for short sessions two or three times a year. The Mejlis was chosen in December 1994 elections with only one candidate per constituency. While largely a rubber stamp for presidential decisions and decrees, the Mejlis is slowly developing into a professional parliament. Mejlis members serve for five years.

The Turkmen constitution adopted two traditional advisory/legislative organs. One is the Council of Elders (Aksakal Maslahaty) which is used as a sounding board by the president to validate policies. The other is the People's Council (Halk Maslahaty) which is identified in the constitution as the supreme representative body of popular rule. Chaired by the president and composed of ministers, Mejlis members, Supreme Court judges and some 60 directly elected members, the Halk Maslahaty approves policy directions and constitutional amendments. It meets twice a year.

The court system in Turkmenistan has not been reformed since Soviet days. It consists of a supreme court, regional courts (including one solely for the capital city of Ashgabat), and at the lowest level, 61 district and city courts. There are also military

courts to handle crimes involving military discipline, criminal cases concerning military personnel and crimes by civilians against military personnel; and a supreme economic court, which hears cases involving disputes between state economic enterprises and ministries. The president appoints all judges for a term of five years without legislative review, except for the chairman (chief justice) of the supreme court, and he has the sole authority to remove them from the bench before the completion of their terms.

Arts, Science, and Education

Turkmen maintain the traditional arts of their nomadic and "silk road" ancestors.

Poets, both traditional and contemporary, have the status of national heroes. The work of Magtymguly, an 18th century poet, is especially honored. Turkmen love to recite poetry and use it often in their speech.

Folk dancing is highly regarded, and dancing groups make frequent appearances during local holidays and at important social events. Turkmen folk music features the "dutar," a two string wooden instrument shaped like a mandolin.

Silversmiths, weavers, and carpet makers are the most highly appreciated artisans. There are very few traditional jewelers left. Traditional Turkmen jewelry-making include fire-gilding, painting an amalgam of gold and mercury on the silver and then heating the piece over charcoal fire.

Carpets from Turkmenistan are known in the West as "Bokhara" rugs. They are made of wool or silk and usually come in various shades of red with white and black making up the tribal symbols and design. Their geometric patterns have been copied by virtually every major rug-producing country in the world. It is accepted that the carpets on the market now are of modern vintage,

with genuine antiques only rarely found outside the museums.

There are schools of classical music (including opera) and dance in Ashgabat, and a regular music season in the winter. Unfortunately, none of the performing arts receives state funding so performances are often notable for their lack of proper costumes, instruments or stage props. There is a privately financed chamber music group which has concerts throughout the year.

There are two universities in Turkmenistan, the principal one being the Magtymguly State University in Ashgabat. There are a number of scientific and technical institutions, as well as training institutes for teachers.

The education system is undergoing changes, the most significant being a reduction of the number of years students spend in formal education. Students leave secondary school at age 16, and they complete university or institute training by the age of 20.

While Turkmen is the official language, there is a dual primary and secondary school system: some teach in Turkmen, and some in Russian. As of January 1996, education in the Turkmen language school system is compulsory through grade nine; in the Russian language system, through grade 10 (both equivalent, in theory at least, to a secondary education in the U.S.). The Turkmen Government has made the study of English a high priority, resulting in an increase in schools teaching English. There is one "magnet" high school where the entire curriculum is in English.

Commerce and Industry

Turkmenistan is rich in natural resources including natural gas, oil, iodine-bromine, sodium sulfate, salts, sulphur, potassium, gold, platinum, molybdenum, and coal.



Mosque in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.

Turkmenistan's major exports are cotton, gas, oil products, food products, chemical raw materials, and small manufactured products such as carpets, textiles, leathers, and furs. Major imports are machinery, agricultural and industrial equipment and vehicles, metals, chemicals, synthetic rubber, raw materials and processed products (nonfood), timber, paper, small manufactured goods and food products, raw material for food flavoring, and sugar. The country's major trading partners are Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Turkey, and Iran.

Natural gas was first discovered here in the 1960s. Turkmenistan has the world's fifth largest proven gas reserves and enormous unexploited oil reserves. These extensive and largely untapped hydrocarbon reserves promise to provide hard currency earnings in the future, and mining for precious metals and other minerals also hold potential.

Cotton production was increased during Soviet rule through extensive irrigation, albeit at the cost of environmental degradation. The government is now seeking ways to diversify agriculture and reduce the number of acres under cotton cultivation while maintaining current levels of production through increased efficiency and introduction of new technology. Other key economic sectors include textiles, Caspian Sea fisheries, and the production of karakul lamb pelts. Agriculture accounts for 25% of GDP and about 44% of total employment.

Turkmenistan is among the top ten cotton producers in the world and cotton provides 17% of GDP. Other important products include grains, vegetables, fruit, and livestock. Livestock accounted for nearly one-fourth of total gross agricultural production in 1992. Inefficiencies exist in processing agricultural goods: only 8% of fruit and vegetables, and 4% of cotton are processed, and much produce spoils because

processing plants are located too far from the farms. The government is strongly promoting investment in cotton processing, with a goal of raising the percentage of the cotton processed locally to 15% of GDP. Agricultural yields are comparatively low, due to years of inefficient water use, salinization, inappropriate land irrigation, and overdevelopment of cotton cultivation.

The large degree of specialization of the agricultural sector has rendered the economy heavily dependent on food imports. Efforts are underway to make the country self-sufficient in grains and to introduce sugar beets to reduce dependence on imported sugar.

Industry is dominated by the extraction of fuel and minerals. Other industrial activities include textiles and chemicals. Industry accounts for only 19% of total employment.

Turkmenistan hopes to create a market economy with a strong private sector, with the state retaining control of strategic sectors (e.g., hydrocarbons). However, given the low level of industrialization prior to independence, and shortage of resources for investment, the privatization process will be a long one. Land privatization began in February 1993 and in December 1993 the government announced gradual privatization of the trade and services sector. In early 1996 the government announced an aggressive program of privatization in agriculture to begin after the 1996 harvest season. The transportation industry has been designated as the next industrial/commercial sector to be privatized.

Turkmenistan's major trading partners remain Ukraine and Russia, although trade with Turkey and Iran has increased significantly since independence. Turkmenistan's 2000 exports were valued at \$2.4 billion and its imports at \$1.6 billion, yielding a positive balance of trade. It must be noted that most of the gas exports were to Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia which pay over time in a mixture of cash and commodities. The U.S. granted Turkmenistan Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status in October 1993, but bilateral trade remains quite low although there are no significant trade barriers. In 1995 Turkmenistan exported goods valued at \$23 million to the U.S. and imported \$14 million of goods from the U.S.

Turkmenistan has agreements with the World Bank, the IMF, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank. Among U.S. institutions Turkmenistan has agreements with the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Trade and Development Agency.

Transportation

Local

Taxis are available in Ashgabat, but they are not recommended. There have been numerous reported incidents of both men and women passengers being molested or mugged by local taxi drivers.

Ashgabat has a shortage of public transportation, due to the poor condition of the buses. Bus service is available to cities outside of Ashgabat, but the buses are overcrowded and uncomfortable. There is no bus service from the city center to the housing compound.

Regional

Traffic in Turkmenistan may not be as bad as you have experienced in other developing countries. Generally, drivers adhere to traffic signals and speed limits, though they don't always stay in the proper lanes! The main city streets are very well maintained. Side streets can be dangerously ill-kept, however, with open man holes, huge potholes, no lighting and other obstacles. Pedestrian traffic can also present a hazard, as individuals stand well into the roadway hitching rides or hailing taxis.

Major intercity highways are in reasonable shape, but can be very dangerous, particularly at night when there is no lighting whatsoever. No driving be done outside the city after dark. Long vehicle trips should not be undertaken alone.

There are four land routes out of Ashgabat. For Americans, the road to the south stops at the Iranian border. The road to the west leads to the Caspian Sea, an eight-hour drive through the desert. The northern road goes directly across the Kara-Kum, ending six hours later in Dashhowuz. The road to the east leads to Mary, Turkmenistan's second largest city, near the site of ancient Merv (5 hours by car).

It is possible to take trains across the country, but they are in bad condition. They are not air-conditioned,

there is no food or drink available, and the toilets are unusable.

Flights within the country and the CIS region are possible via Turkmen Airlines. Many of their planes are former Soviet aircraft and can be quite uncomfortable, although new Boeing 737 and 757 aircraft service major international routes (Istanbul, New Delhi, London, Abu Dhabi). Their safety record is good, though they can be quite unreliable, with last-minute cancellations leaving travelers stranded until the next available flight. However, the flights within the country, and even on the limited routes to neighboring countries, are frequent and inexpensive.

Turkish Air flies four times a week to Istanbul; Lufthansa has a twice weekly flight to Frankfurt; and PIA flies to several cities in Pakistan

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Direct dialing and operator assisted calls can be made from Turkmenistan though both methods are very expensive (\$4.00-7.00/minute). Fax is also available.

Radio and TV

Local television programs are in either Turkmen or Russian, as are the local radio broadcasts. A multi-system or PAL/Secam television set is necessary to receive these broadcasts.

BBC and VOA can be heard, but the reception is very poor.

Newspapers, Magazines and Technical Journals

There are no locally published English-language newspapers or magazines, and only rarely is English reading material sold in bookstores. Some hotels carry limited English-language newspapers (e.g., USA Today), but generally, such material is unavailable.

The local press does not subscribe to international news wire services,

and carries scant international news.

The National Library has a collection of several thousand books and a number of dated magazines in English in its foreign language collection. The University also has English-language books in its library, primarily for the use of its foreign language students.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Local medical care and facilities are extremely poor, due to lack of equipment, staff and sanitary conditions. The VIP Hospital, considered the best in Ashgabat, is considered one of the poorest in the former Soviet Union.

Local dentistry lacks modern techniques, equipment, medication, and basic sanitation.

Community Health

Community sanitation levels are low. Tap water is not potable, and restaurant food is often of questionable safety. There have been cases of Typhoid, as well as numerous incidents of E. coli contamination and other gastrointestinal ailments. Care should be taken in eating in restaurants, and all produce should be soaked in iodine or bleach tablets before consumption at home.

Western standards of public cleanliness are not observed in Turkmenistan. Public toilets are in poor condition and those on planes and trains are often virtually unusable. Though the main streets are swept each day, on the side streets garbage is often placed unwrapped in open containers outside residential buildings for collection once a week.

Turkmenistan's health indicators are among the worst in the former Soviet Republics. Infant mortality is reported to be 50 per 1,000 and anemia is common. There is a high rate of Hepatitis A and B. Amoebas and gastroenteric disease is common. Cutaneous Leishmaniasis, a para-

site quite common throughout Central Asia spread by sandfly bites, is prevalent. Typhus, spread by body lice, and crub Typhus, spread by mites, are both considered endemic in Turkmenistan. Rabies is present in Ashgabat.

At a minimum this includes Hepatitis A and B, Typhus, Typhoid, Diphtheria/Tetanus and Rabies.

Leishmania is a parasite found throughout Central Asia. It is quite common and is spread by sandfly bites. Typhus, a disease spread by body lice, and Scrub Typhus, spread by mites, are both considered endemic in Turkmenistan. Hepatitis A and other water borne diseases are common. In general, the immunization status is lower than in the U.S., and everyone coming to Ashgabat should have all routine vaccinations before arrival.

Preventative Measures

The water is considered dangerously contaminated. Foodstuffs can be exposed to a variety of contaminating agents, such as flies and rodents. Due to unregulated pesticide and fertilizer use there is a hazardous nitrate level on fruits and vegetables. Therefore, personnel are advised to buy only undamaged fruit and vegetables and clean them carefully with a mild detergent, followed by soaking in a chlorine solution for 15 minutes, then rinsing with potable water before consuming or storing in the refrigerator. Raw meat should be purchased as early in the day as possible to avoid contamination, and should be cooked thoroughly before consuming.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Turkish Air, Lufthansa and Pakistan Air fly from various locations to Ashgabat. The most common route from the U.S. is through a European transit point (usually

Frankfurt) to Istanbul, then to Ashgabat on Turkish Air.

American citizens must have a valid passport and visa to enter and exit Turkmenistan. To apply for a visa, all U.S. citizens must complete an application and have a letter of invitation approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Ashgabat. A letter of invitation must be submitted to the MFA on behalf of an American citizen by an individual or organization in Turkmenistan. The MFA requires at least ten working days for approval. The U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat does not issue letters of invitation to citizens interested in private travel to Turkmenistan. Applications for a Turkmen visa can be submitted to the Turkmen Embassy in Washington, D.C. or directly to the MFA in Ashgabat. Recent travelers to Turkmenistan have found it difficult to secure visa issuance from the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Washington, D.C. A traveler with a stamped and approved invitation letter from the MFA may also obtain a visa at the Ashgabat Airport upon arrival in Turkmenistan.

The price for the visa will vary according to the intended length of stay. The visa can be extended from its initial validity for any period of time up to one year at the MFA in Ashgabat for an additional charge. Any traveler arriving without a visa or without the needed documents to obtain a visa will be denied entry and may be held at the airport or border until the traveler has secured transportation out of Turkmenistan. Travelers departing Turkmenistan must have a valid visa or they will be denied exit while they extend the validity of the visa. In addition, U.S. citizens traveling in Turkmenistan should be aware that they may require special permission from the MFA to travel to some areas of the country that have been restricted by the Government of Turkmenistan.

For complete information concerning entry and exit requirements, as well as internal travel restrictions, U.S. citizens should contact the

Embassy of Turkmenistan at 2207 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 588-1500. The Embassy may also be reached at its homepage on the Internet: <http://www.turkmenistanembassy.org>.

There are local Turkmen registration requirements. Americans who plan to stay more than five days in Turkmenistan must register with the Office of Visas and Registration (OVIR). OVIR offices are located in all of Turkmenistan's five major cities: Ashgabat, Dashoguz, Mary, Turkmenabat and Turkmenbashi. Visitors who do not register may have to pay fines upon departure. According to the MFA, all foreigners staying in Turkmenistan more than 3 months must be tested for HIV. Testing should be performed upon arrival in Turkmenistan. Before extending a visa, the MFA requires a certificate from the Blood Transfusion Center located on 53 Gerogly Street, Ashgabat. U.S. test results are not accepted. Previous travelers have reported sporadic enforcement of this regulation.

Turkmenistan customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Turkmenistan of items such as carpets, jewelry, musical instruments, pieces of art, archaeological artifacts, antiques, etc. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Washington, D.C. for specific information regarding customs requirements. Travelers who want to take carpets out of Turkmenistan must obtain a certificate from the Carpet Museum in central Ashgabat indicating that the carpet is not of historical value. In addition, buyers may have to pay a tax calculated on the size of the carpet.

Americans living in or visiting Turkmenistan are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat to obtain updated information on travel and security within Turkmenistan. Registration with the Embassy can assure quick communication during an emergency and

help replacement of a lost and/or stolen passport. The U.S. Embassy is located at 9 Pushkin Street, off Magtymguly Street, tel. (993-12) 35-00-45; fax (993-12) 51-13-05. The Consular Section can also be contacted by e-mail at: consularashgab@state.gov. The Embassy's Internet address is <http://www.usemb-ashgabat.usia.co.at/>

Pets

There is no quarantine requirement in Turkmenistan. All dogs and cats must be accompanied by a certificate of good health, bearing the seal of the local board of health and signed by a veterinarian. The certificate must be issued not more than 10 days prior to the animal's arrival in country. A valid rabies certificate is also necessary. Pets are not allowed in the local hotels.

The national currency is the Manat, which circulates in 20, 50, 100, 500, 100 and 5000 denomination notes (a 10,000 note may be introduced shortly). Exchange is about 5,200M=US\$1 (January 2001).

The government exercises strict controls over import and export of Manat and foreign currencies.

Dollar transactions are permitted at the banks, hotels, airlines, phone company and some restaurants. All other merchants are required to accept payment in Manat.

Credit cards are not accepted at most local hotels or restaurants. Turkish Airlines will accept an American Express Card or Visa Gold Card as payment for a Turkish Airlines ticket to Istanbul.

The metric system is used in Turkmenistan for all forms of measurement.

Disaster Preparedness

Turkmenistan is an earthquake-prone country. Building practices within Turkmenistan do not generally meet U.S. seismic standards. In addition, local authorities do not have sufficient resources to respond to a large-scale disaster. American citizens traveling to Turkmenistan

are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy Consular Section. Registration can assist the Embassy in quickly contacting American citizens during an emergency. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1New Year's Day
- Jan. 12Memorial Day
- Feb. 19National Flag Day
- Mar. 8Women's Day
- Mar. 21Novruz Bairam
- Apr. 6Drop of Water is a Grain of Gold Holiday
- Apr. 27Horse Day
- May 8-9Victory Days
- May 18Revival and Unity Day
- Oct 6Remembrance Day
- Oct. 27Independence Day
- Nov. 17Youth Day
- Nov. 30Harvest Holiday
- Dec. 12Neutrality Day
-Ramadan*
-Id al-Fitr*
-Id al-Adha*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

- Akchurin, Marat. *Red Odyssey: A Journey through the Soviet Republics*. HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1992
- Akiner, Shirin, ed. *Cultural Change and Continuity in Central Asia*. New York: Keegan Paul, 1991.
- Alladatov, D.A. *Turkmenistan: A Land of White Gold*. Ashkhabad: Turkmenistan Pub. House, 1972.
- Blunt, Wilfrid. *The Golden Road to Samarkand*. Viking Press: New York, 1973
- Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. Kodansha International: New York, 1992
- Kalter, Johannes. *The Arts and Crafts of Turkestan*. Thames and Hudson, Inc.: New York, 1984
- Katz, Zev, ed. *Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities*. New York: Free Press, 1975.
- Mackie/Thompson. *Turkmen Tribal Carpets and Traditions*. Textile Museum: Washington, DC, 1980
- Maslow, Johnathan. *Sacred Horses: The Memoirs of a Turkmen Cowboy*. Random House: New York, 1993

TUVALU

Tuvalu

Major City:
Funafuti

INTRODUCTION

Formerly known as the Ellice Islands, **TUVALU** is a group of nine scattered atolls whose only export product is copra (dried coconut meat). The islands were probably first settled by Polynesians between the 14th and 17th centuries. After determining the inhabitants' wishes, the Ellice Islands (together with the Gilberts, now known as Kiribati) came under British protection in 1892. After the Japanese occupied the Gilbert Islands in 1942, US forces occupied the Ellice group in 1943 and drove the Japanese out of the Gilberts. After the war, the ethnic differences between the Micronesians of the Gilberts and the Polynesians of the Ellice Islands led the Ellice Islanders to demand separation, which won approval in 1974. Tuvalu later became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations on October 1, 1979.

MAJOR CITY

Funafuti

Funafuti, the capital of Tuvalu, is the largest and most populated island, with about 4,000 inhabit-

ants. The village of Fongafale is the main settlement, with a hotel, hospital, and an airstrip (recently upgraded with Commonwealth assistance). About 40% of the island of Funafuti is uninhabitable because the United Kingdom authorized the United States to dig an airstrip out of the coral bed during World War II. There is a deepwater port at Funafuti which accepts vessels with a draft of up to 30 feet. A passenger and cargo vessel based there occasionally sails to Suva, Fiji. Tuvalu's only airfield is located on Funafuti, and the airstrip occupies about one-third of the island's land area. In 1992, a new runway replaced the grass strip. There are flights to the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Fiji, and Nauru, but no internal air service is available. There are only a dozen cars on the island. The residents of Funafuti have a higher income level than those of the other islands, who mainly live at a subsistence level. Although the soil is sandy and not very fertile, the island still manages to produce copra for export.

Recreation and Entertainment

Soccer, rugby, and cricket are played along Funafuti's airstrip. A siren warns players to clear the area when an airplane is approaching.

Tuvalu is too small and remote for the development of a tourist industry. Only about 1,000–1,200 tourists per year visit the country, which has just one hotel with 17 rooms.

Funafuti's *maneava* (meeting house) is the site where the council of the island's elders gets together to discuss important issues and to socialize. The country's only library is in Funafuti and it also houses national archives. Young men's clubs and women's committees are standard features of social life, concerning themselves with sailing, fishing, and crafts.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Tuvalu is a cluster of nine islands, plus islets, located in the southwestern Pacific Ocean just south of the Equator. The country is located about halfway between Australia and Hawaii. Tuvalu is one of the world's smallest nations in terms of land area (about 10 square miles), but its territory covers some 500,000 square miles of ocean.

The entire country is low-lying atolls, none of which is more than 16 feet above sea level. Some scientists predict that within 50 years, Tuvalu will be one of the first island nations to vanish as a result of erosion and global warming.

Few of the atolls are more than a half mile wide. On five atolls, the reefs enclose sizable lagoons. There are no rivers. Since copra (dried coconut meat) is the country's primary export, coconut palm trees cover much of the land. The climate is tropical, with little seasonal variation. The annual average temperature is 86°F, and rainfall averages 140 inches per year. The wet season is from November to February. Severe cyclones struck in 1894, 1972, and 1990.

Population

There are about 10,750 inhabitants, with a population density of 1,011 per square mile. About half the population lives on Funafuti. Only about 15% of the population lives on Vaitupu, followed by Niutao (11%), Nanunea (11%), Nukufetau, Nanumanga, Nui, Nukulaelae, and Niulakita. Some 1,000 Tuvaluans work abroad. Unemployment is expected to rise as the phosphate mining on Nauru declines and Tuvaluans employed there return home. New Zealand permits Tuvaluans to live and work there for up to three years. The islanders are almost entirely Polynesian, with strong cultural ties to the Samoans and Tokelauans. Nearly all Tuvaluans are Protestant, members of the Church of Tuvalu, a Congregationalist group. There are small numbers of Roman Catholics, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Baha'is. The Tuvaluan language, closely related to Samoan, and English are the principal languages.

Government

In 1892, the United Kingdom proclaimed the Ellice Islands (as Tuvalu was then known), together with the Gilberts, as a British protectorate. The proclamation was

made after ascertaining the inhabitants' wishes. After World War II, US forces occupied the islands. Political differences between the Gilbert Islanders and the Ellice Islanders led the Ellice Islanders to demand a separation, which they declared by a vote in 1974. In 1975, the Ellice Islands were established as the separate British colony of Tuvalu. After a constitutional conference in 1978, Tuvalu became an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1979. The head of government is the British monarch, who is represented by a governor-general. The unicameral House of Assembly has twelve members elected to four-year terms. A prime minister and deputy prime minister are elected from the members of parliament. A simple code of law, based on mission legislation and traditional councils, is observed by native courts. There are island courts that deal with land disputes. The High Court of Justice hears appeals from district courts.

Tuvalu's flag is a light blue field with the British Union Jack in the upper quarter near the hoist. Nine yellow stars are arranged on the field in the same pattern as Tuvalu's nine islands.

Arts, Science, Education

Education begins at age seven and is compulsory for nine years. Secondary education is provided at Motofoua, a former church school on Vaitupu now jointly administered by the government. The Tuvalu Maritime School was opened in 1979 with Australian aid. The school trains young Tuvaluans with the skills needed to serve overseas on a merchant ship. Fiji's University of the South Pacific also has an extension center at Funafuti.

Commerce and Industry

The United Nations ranks Tuvalu among the least developed nations

of the world. Many Tuvaluans in the smaller villages and islands are self-sufficient and live without a money-based economy. Tuvaluans intensively utilize their limited natural resources, namely coconuts and fish. Nearly every part of the coconut palm is utilized to make a useful object. Taro is also grown in pits.

Money sent home from Tuvaluans working abroad can account for up to 30% of the country's annual foreign exchange earnings. The sale of collectible postage stamps contributes up to 40% of foreign revenue, and the remainder comes mainly as foreign aid.

In 1998, Tuvalu began licensing foreign use of its area code for "900" lines. In 2000, leasing of its ".tv" Internet domain name began. Royalties from these new technology sources could raise GDP three or more times over the next decade.

Transportation

Traffic moves on the left in Tuvalu. The few roads on these tiny islands are generally unpaved. Most roads are little more than tracks, although Funafuti has about five miles of coral-impacted roads for the island's few cars and trucks. Animals and unwary pedestrians walking in the road make night driving on unlit secondary roads hazardous.

Funafuti and Nukufetau are the only seaports, used mainly by freighters in the copra industry. All the islands are served by Tuvalu's interisland ferry.

Communications

There is an interisland telephone service. The government-owned Tuvalu Broadcasting Service on Funafuti transmits in Tuvaluan and English. There is no television service. The government publishes a biweekly called *Tuvalu Echoes*.

Health

There are no serious tropical diseases on the islands except for a dwindling number of leprosy and dysentery cases.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

A passport, onward/return ticket, and proof of sufficient funds for the trip are required. Visitor permits are issued upon arrival. For further information about entry requirements, travelers may wish to contact the British Embassy in

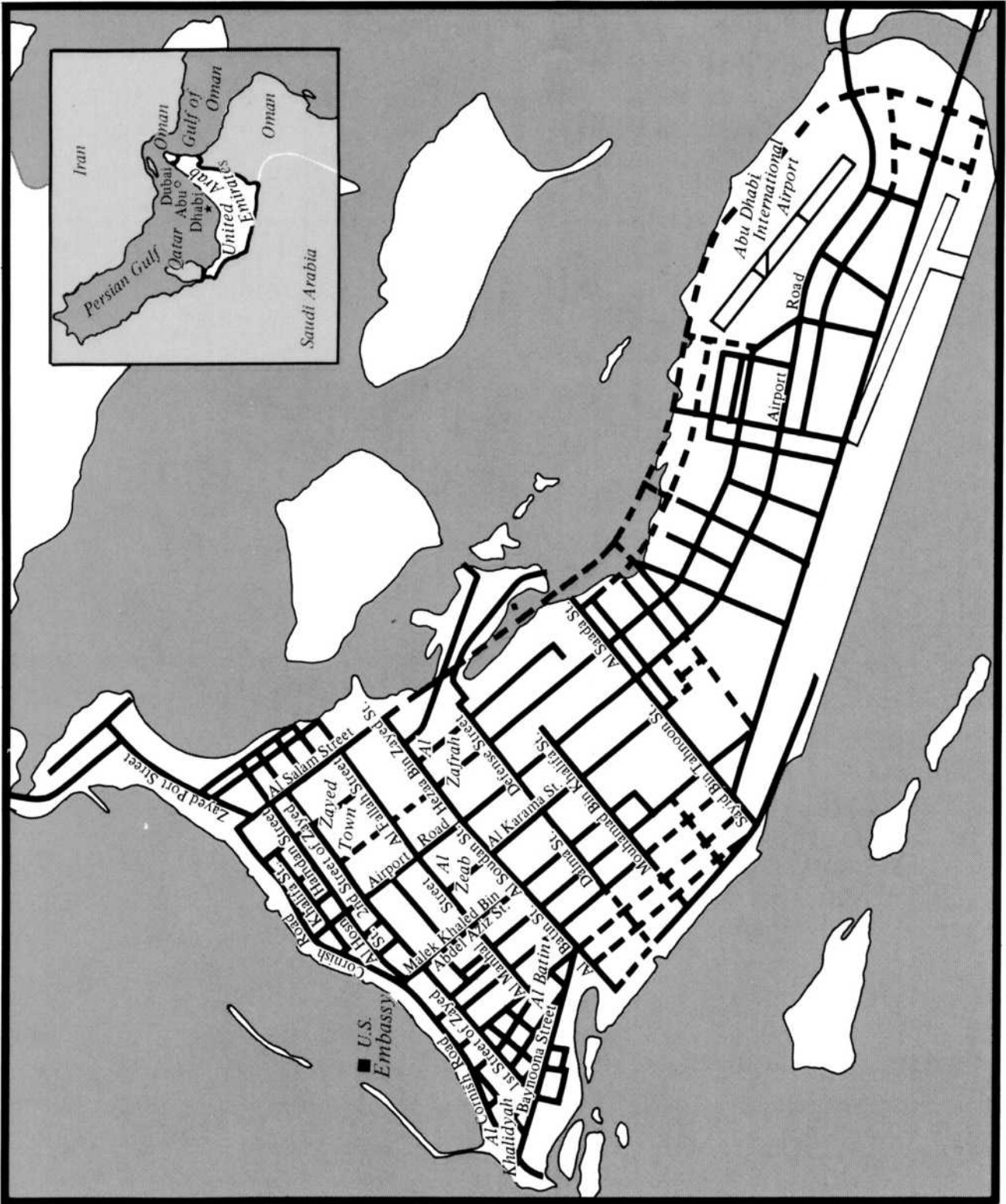
Washington, D.C. at 202-588-7800. This is particularly true for those persons planning to enter by sea.

There is no U.S. Embassy or diplomatic post in Tuvalu. Assistance for U.S. citizens in Tuvalu is provided by the U.S. Embassy in Fiji, which is located at 31 Loftus Street in Fiji's capital city of Suva. The telephone number is (679) 314-466; the fax number is (679)300-081. Americans may register with the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji and obtain up-to-date information on travel and security in Tuvalu from the Embassy. Information may also be obtained by visiting the Embassy's home page at <http://www.amembassy-fiji.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Mar. Commonwealth Day*
- Mar/Apr. Good Friday*
- Mar/Apr. Easter*
- Mar/Apr. Easter Monday*
- June Queen's Birthday Celebrated*
- Aug. (1st Mon) Children's Day
- Oct. 1 Tuvalu Day
- Nov. Prince of Wales Birthday Celebrated*

*Variable



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE)

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Major Cities:

Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah

Other City:

Al-Ain, Ras al-Khaimah

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated January 1996. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

The **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)** lies between Qatar and Oman on the southeastern shore of the Persian Gulf. Until the exploitation of large oil reserves, the small population engaged in pearling, trading, nomadic herding and oasis agriculture. Britain held a degree of political control over the sheikhdoms of the region from early in the nineteenth century until the emirates joined to form an independent federation in 1971. Before independence the British called the region the Trucial Coast or Trucial Oman, and Arabs called it the Oman Coast.

The seven emirates which comprise the U.A.E. differ markedly in size, population, and natural resources.

Their rulers, though united under one national flag, maintain a large degree of autonomy and have imprinted their individual characters on the development of their emirates. This diversity gives the social and political scene in the country a unique and dynamic flavor. The UAE's efforts to reach an effective balance between Federal and Emirate authorities is reminiscent of the political development of the United States, where to this day individual states and the Federal government continue to find new ways to make "one out of many."

Because Abu Dhabi is the largest emirate in size and population, and possesses the most oil resources, it plays a dominant role in the federation's political and economic affairs. A small fishing and pearling settlement before the discovery of oil, Abu Dhabi city has grown since independence into a modern capital with broad, tree-lined streets amid rows of skyscrapers lining the Corniche. The sedate character of the city is shaped by the dominant presence of central government institutions, financial institutions, and oil companies. In contrast, the mood in Dubai is more socially vibrant, economically open and cosmopolitan. Bustling markets, an active shipping trade, and a lively sporting and entertainment calendar put Dubai in the region's economic and social

fast lane. In both cities, a walk downtown reveals the large proportion of foreigners working in the country.

Americans coming to the UAE will find a small country in the midst of rapid social and economic transformation. The seven emirates are each distinct in resources and character, ranging from the poorer, smaller emirates of the north to the dynamic commercial center of Dubai and the staid, oil-rich Abu Dhabi. These last two cities are pockets of wealth where five-star hotels feature cuisine from around the world and shops sell expensive fashions from Europe and electronics from Japan. Despite outward appearances like this, however, the UAE is still a developing country in important respects. For example, while the telephone system has the latest technologies, public hospitals are for the most part far below standard in many areas. And while UAE citizens control the country, it is foreign nationals from places like New Delhi, Dhaka, Manila, and Cairo who actually sit behind cash registers, build skyscrapers, and repair plumbing. In this sense, since the majority of the country's residents are foreigners, it is easy for foreigners to feel at home.

MAJOR CITIES

Abu Dhabi

In 2000, Abu Dhabi, the U.A.E. capital, and its surrounding metropolitan area had a population of 928,000. It is located on a small, flat island connected to the mainland by two bridges. The island is about 30 square miles in area, much of it reclaimed land, crisscrossed by an expanding road network. First a fishing village, then a small oil company town, Abu Dhabi is now a medium-sized city, which is still expanding. Most buildings are high-rise apartments, offices, and residential areas with single- and three-unit dwellings (townhouses).

Food

Several American and European-style supermarkets stock most basic items. Spinneys, Prisunic, Abela, Choitram's, and Al-Kamal are modern supermarkets that sell American, French, Mexican, Japanese, and Arab foods. Fresh foods include meat, seafood, produce, and dairy products, which are available year round. A wide and varied array of packaged and canned foods is available as in any comparable supermarket in the U.S. Fresh meat is flown in from Australia and Europe. Frozen meats and vegetables are also available. Except for occasional shortages of certain items, you will find almost any food item in Abu Dhabi stores, including an increasing amount of American brands. Pork products are available in special "non-Muslim" sections of some stores.

Clothing

Local shops and boutiques carry various types of clothing, usually European brands and styles, but they are expensive, and quality varies. Cotton or cotton-blend clothes are strongly recommended for summer; synthetics are too hot to wear. A sweater or shawl is useful for overly air-conditioned receptions. It is cool during winter (December–February), and houses hold dampness. Light woolens and synthetics



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View of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

are comfortable, and sweaters are useful.

Shoes, including sandals, to suit American tastes are difficult to find, and the sand makes them wear fast. A good supply is needed throughout your tour. Locally made sandals and shoes are inexpensive, but not durable.

Dry-cleaning facilities are adequate, but bring as few items that need dry-cleaning as possible. White and light-colored fabrics are subject to stains from rusty water, but filter attachments help prevent this problem.

Men: "Gulf or Red Sea rig," sometimes specified for dressy summer occasions, consists of an open-necked dress shirt and dress trousers with cummerbund. A business suit with tie is normally worn during working hours and is suitable for most evening functions.

Women: Use discretion when choosing clothes for the U.A.E., which is a Moslem country with conservative dress customs. Low-cut, short hemlines, sleeveless tops, or revealing/see-through clothes are not worn in public. Slacks are worn in public, but shorts are not advised, except for recreation. Typical

evening dresses (bare shoulders, low-cut, etc.) may be worn at private functions, depending on the guest list and location. Tailored dresses are always appropriate.

Children: Teenage girls in the American school are expected to wear knee-length clothes. Bring the same type of clothes as children would wear in Washington, D.C., but light, winter clothes—sweaters, jackets, and long pants, etc. Children's shoes are expensive.

Supplies and Services

Unless you have strong brand preferences, most items needed can be purchased in either Abu Dhabi or Dubai, but are expensive.

Tailoring and dressmaking can be reasonable. Shoe repair is available, but quality is fair. Beauty and barbershops are available and reasonably hygienic.

Religious Activities

Catholic, Anglican, and Syrian Orthodox services are held in Abu Dhabi in English, French, Arabic, and various Indian dialects. The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), a nondenominational American missionary group, also holds regular services.

Education

School-aged American children may attend the American Community School (ACS), which offers pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Of the about 500 pupils enrolled, nearly 40% are American. The remainder of the student body is multinational. All instruction is in English, and the American curriculum is followed. French is taught in the high school only, and the Arabic language and culture is taught from the lower school.

The typical school year is from September to June. Classes are held Saturday through Wednesday, from 7:25 am to 2:25 pm. As a college preparatory high school, ACS does not have programs for students with special needs. The school has two large and well-equipped science labs, a large art room, a photogra-

phy lab, a music room with two adjacent practice rooms, and a cafeteria/all-purpose room, two computer labs, a gymnasium with stage, an athletic field, tennis courts, and a swimming pool.

Both the lower school (pre-kindergarten through grade 6) and the upper school (grades 7 through 11) are accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The school went through re-accreditation that was completed in the fall of 1993 (which will include grade 12). The curriculum reflects that of a small American School in the U.S. The courses offered in the high school are college preparatory, and the academic load is demanding.

Several other schools exist in Abu Dhabi, some of which are listed below:

National College of Choueifat
P.O. Box 7212
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.

Al-Worood School
P.O. Box 46673
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
(Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary schools)

International School of Abu Dhabi
P.O. Box 25898
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
(Opened in September 1992; U.S. curriculum; no U.S. accreditation as yet.)

Al Manhal Canadian School
P.O. Box 3110
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
(Accreditation by the Minister of Education—Ontario)

Special Educational Opportunities

No special programs are available for students with learning disabilities.

Sports

Water-skiing, scuba diving, sailing, bowling, tennis, squash, handball, etc., are offered by various recre-

ation clubs around town. Sports activities (with the exception of water sports) diminish during the long, hot summers when outdoor activities are kept to a minimum. Swimming pools in major recreation clubs are temperature controlled. Good fishing is available in local waters. Both Dubai and Abu Dhabi have ice-skating rinks. To save money, bring your own sports equipment and clothing, although most items can be purchased locally.

Recreation clubs include The Club, Hiltonia, Meridien, Intercontinental Hotel, Palm Beach, Sheraton Hotel, the Marina, Dhahi Health (Al Ain Palace Hotel) and the Khalidiya Palace Hotel.

An organized slow-pitch softball league is sponsored by some of the major American oil companies. Games are played during the cool season.

The Abu Dhabi Golf Club is an 18-hole sand course with Astroturf for fairway shots. An entrance fee of is required; as is an annual membership fee, which is higher for men than for women. There is a 12-month waiting period for men and 4 months for women. Golf enthusiasts with handicaps stand a better chance of admission. A new golf course is being planned.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Except for a small area on the east coast, scattered oases, and the northern tip of the country, the U.A.E. is desert. The mainland across from Abu Dhabi island is especially desolate. Nevertheless, driving trips to the oasis of Al-Ain, about 100 miles inland, to the beaches of Fujairah and Khor-Fakkan on the east coast, and northward to the greener areas of Ras-Al-Khaimah all provide interesting changes of scenery. Camping on the east coast is popular. A Hilton Hotel at Fujairah and the Oceanic Hotel at Khor-Fakkan are modern, attractive lodges that help to ensure overnighting for noncampers as well. At these sites, one can find boating,

fishing, picnicking, swimming, and tennis.

Dubai, Al-Ain, and Ras-Al-Khaimah all have small but interesting museums, and Sharjah has an archeology museum. Al-Ain has an extensive, well-run zoo, which is worth a visit during cool weather, as well as "Fun City," an amusement park popular with families. Dubai also has a small zoo, and with its picturesque creek filled with dhows and with its historic wind towers, offers weekend diversions. Several archeological sites have been discovered and can be reached easily. The Heritage Village in the Bateen airport area and the Abu Dhabi Women's Handicrafts Center are worthwhile visiting. Visitors can stay overnight in Al-Ain at either the Hilton Hotel or the Intercontinental Hotel and in Dubai at one of the several large, modern hotels there. A shopping trip to the souks in any Arab country is a must. The U.A.E. is no exception. The gold souk in Dubai has a large selection of 18 and 21/22 carat gold. Sharjah has a new souk, an impressive building in its use of mosaic tiles and traditional designs. There you will find a varied selection of Persian handmade carpets and tribal rugs, plus hundreds of other items, mostly imported.

A visit to Oman is worth the effort. An agricultural and trading center for centuries, Oman's more settled population has had time to develop interesting architecture and crafts, which are lacking among the Bedouin population of the U.A.E. The old souks and towns retain an unspoiled atmosphere. The Musandam peninsula, which juts out into the Strait of Hormuz, can be reached by four-wheel-drive vehicles and is rightly considered the "Norway" of the Middle East with its spectacular "fjord-like" sea inlets.

Entertainment

The Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation offers various cultural activities throughout the year. Most hotels have good restaurants and disco nightclubs. Performing artists are sponsored by the hotels, USIS,

the British Council, the French Cultural Center, and private businesses. Performances usually take place in the hotels.

Local groups include the Abu Dhabi Choral Group, Emirates Natural History Group, the Thespians of Abu Dhabi Society or TOADS (drama), and various sporting societies.

Social Activities

The diplomatic and foreign community is large. The American community, although not formally organized, participates with the U.S. Embassy staff in such events as U.S. Navy ship visits and Fourth of July activities. The ACS is also a focus of American activity. Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops and a PTA are active.

International contacts can be made at any cultural activity, but more specifically, at the Emirates Natural History Group and the Women in Abu Dhabi monthly meetings. Both organizations present guest speakers, activities, slide shows, and exhibits. They also sponsor excursions for members to places of interest.

Dubai

Dubai is actually just one of the U.A.E.'s largest metropolitan areas. It is a tri-city region of over one million people, that includes not only Dubai, but the contiguous cities of Sharjah and Ajman as well. This metropolitan area is the commercial center of the U.A.E. For decades, the Dubai-Sharjah-Ajman area has been an important stop on the Eastern trade routes.

Food

Several large Western-style grocery stores operate in Dubai. Safeway, Spinneys, and Choitram's carry American and international brands of food and fresh meat, produce, and dairy products. There are also large, open-air markets that sell fresh produce, meat, and fish.

Religious Activities

Services are held in English at the Protestant and Catholic churches.

Education

The American School of Dubai has about 650 (about 55% are American) students from kindergarten to grade 11. Send records in advance to:

The Headmaster
Jumairah International School
P.O. Box 2222
Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The school follows the U.S. curriculum and calendar. It is owned by a group of companies and accredited by both the Middle States and Southern States School Associations. Classes are held Sunday through Thursday from 7:50 am to 2:45 pm, September to June.

The National College of Choueifat at Sharjah, some 10 miles from Dubai, has classes for students ages 4-18. An offshoot of the parent school in Beirut, which was founded in 1886, the school prepares students for the International Baccalaureate Degree, O and A levels. The medium of instruction is English, French, and Arabic. The academic year is from September to June. The school week is Saturday through Wednesday from 8 am to 4 pm. For more information, write to:

The Director
National College of Choueifat
P.O. Box 2077
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Sports

Water sports are popular, and, for most people, they are the only outdoor activities during the hottest part of the year. Most sports activities center around five social clubs.

The Hilton Beach Club is popular among the foreign community at large. In addition to beach facilities, it has two swimming pools, lighted tennis courts, squash courts, exercising and fitness center, and a restaurant/bar. Family membership is over \$1,100 plus an entrance fee of over \$500.

The Metropolitan Beach Club offers tennis, squash, billiards, gymnasium, sauna, windsurfing, and a swimming pool. Annual membership fee is About \$900 plus \$200 joining fee, and over \$600 plus \$130 joining fee for singles.

The Emirates Golf Club Dubai offers a 27-hole golf course, tennis courts, squash courts, gymnasium, and a swimming pool. Annual subscription for a family with two children is about \$4,100; single man \$3,000; single lady \$2,100.

The Dubai Country Club has a 36-hole sand golf course, tennis and squash courts, and a swimming pool. The club has a restaurant/bar, which is open daily. Membership is limited to 1,500 people, and waiting periods of several months occur. Family memberships is \$1,096 annually; \$712 for a single man and \$438 for a single woman.

The Dubai Offshore Sailing Club has limited facilities for those who like sailing. Owning a boat is a prerequisite for membership. The Club has three boats for rent by members only. It has a bar, restaurant, moorings, and a small beach with showers and changing rooms. Annual dues are about \$410 to join and \$136 annually.

Several hotels offer swimming, sports, and health club services at individual rates of about \$500 a year.

Entertainment

Dubai has many good restaurants offering Chinese, Japanese, Continental, Indian, Pakistani, and Arab cuisine. Several hotels, including the Hilton, Hyatt Regency, Intercontinental, and Sheraton, offer extensive luncheon buffets, which feature Arab-style "mezzas" (smorgasbord). Several nightclubs have bands and dancing nightly. Most hotels offer live entertainment in the evenings.

A new cinema, Al-Nask, now shows current English-language movies.

Three lending libraries are available: the Dubai Municipal Library,

the British Council Library, and the Dubai Lending Library.

Social Activities

Most of the estimated 4,500 Americans in the U.A.E. live in the Dubai-Sharjah area, and many important U.S. firms have offices in Dubai. This American community, coupled with a Consular Corps representing 20 countries, insures an active social life for Americans in Dubai.

Sharjah

Sharjah, chief city in the emirate of the same name, is the third largest city in the U.A.E., with a population of 314,000 (2000 est.). A former British protectorate, the city was the site of a British base until 1971. Once the principal town in the area, Sharjah declined until oil was discovered offshore in 1974. Connected by roads to the northern emirates, Sharjah experienced a construction boom in the mid-1970s. Tourism is also important in Sharjah. In recent years, a deep water port has been constructed at Khor-Fakkan and light industries expanded. The U.A.E.'s fisheries research station is located here.

Education

Two English-language schools are located in Sharjah. The International School of Choueifat at Sharjah, some 10 miles from Dubai, has classes for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 13. An offshoot of the parent school in Beirut which was founded in 1886, the school offers a British curriculum and prepares students for the International Baccalaureate degree. The medium of instruction is English, French, and Arabic. The academic year is from September to June. School days run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., five days per week, Saturday through Wednesday. Enrollment is 1,300; there are 77 full-time instructors. Facilities include 16 buildings, science and computer laboratories, a covered play area, and a 5,000-volume library. The school's address is: P.O. Box 2077, Sharjah, U.A.E.

OTHER CITY

AL-AIN, (population 226,000, 1995 est.) is the largest city in the Buraimi Oasis, an area which spans the border between Abu Dhabi and Oman. Surrounded by red sand dunes and a breathtaking mountain range, it has earned the nickname "The Garden City Of The Gulf." As the birthplace of Shaikh Zayed, the current ruler of Abu Dhabi, funding for a variety of cultural, educational, and social attractions has been quite substantial and travelers can enjoy all the modern accommodations of a larger city while still experiencing the uniqueness of the Arab culture.

The Al-Ain Zoo and Aquarium is a favorite attraction which showcases such animals as Arabian antelope and deer; oryx, eland, gazelle and lechwe; and big cats, such as lion, tigers, pumas, black and spotted leopards and jaguars. A large Camel Souk (market) can be found in Al-Ain. It's open every Friday, since that is the same day as the famous camel races during the winter months. Tour guides are usually around to arrange camel safaris that range from a short trek of an hour or two to an overnight journey with a stay in a Bedouin tent.

The Al-Ain Museum is a great touring site for those interested in Bedouin history and culture. The museum contains exhibits on life in pre-oil days, as well as jewelry, weaponry, and musical instruments of the Bedouins. The museum also holds the collection of rare and unusual gifts received by the Shaikh, including the Order of Isabel the Catholic and a bullet from a Palestinian commando leader who hijacked three aircraft to Jordan in 1970.

Al-Hili Fun City, the largest theme park in the Gulf area, has been called the Disneyland of the Middle East. Located just northeast of city center, the park has a nice variety of thrill rides ranging from roller coasters to large slides. A Dynamic Motion Theater is also part of the

parks attractions. Admission is just about US\$3.

There are several small public parks within the city, including, Al-Slmi Park, Al-Jahli Park (for ladies and children only), Al-Basra Park (ladies), and Al-Maqam Park (ladies).

The mountain range above Al-Ain is Jabal Hafit. It is the highest point in the country and tourists can reach the peak along an excellent mountain road. Several picnic and parking areas are located along the road. The slopes around the mountain contain caves that can be explored through group tours. Visitors can also enjoy the hot springs at the bottom of the mountain. The Ain Al-Fayadah Resort, located on the west of the mountain, offers typical tourist accommodations. There are two swimming pools in the resort, one for men and one for women. Other facilities include a bowling center and Western and Eastern style restaurants.

If you have a chance, Buraimi, the Omani sister city to Al-Ain, can be visited without a separate visa. The Buraimi Souk offers a provincial open air market of fruits and vegetables and a small-town atmosphere that is quite different from Al-Ain.

Al-Ain is a two hour drive east from Abu Dhabi. There are plenty of buses and taxis within the city.

RAS AL-KHAIMAH city is an ancient seaport near which archaeological remains have been discovered. The city and the emirate are the most agricultural in the U.A.E., producing vegetables, dates, fruit, and tobacco. The city's industries include cement factories, a lime factory, and an explosives plant. In 1982, oil and gas were discovered offshore. The city's population is about 130,000 (2000 est.). The Ras al-Khaimah English Speaking School, founded in 1976, offers a U.K. curriculum for nursery school through grade six. The school's mailing address is: P.O. Box 975, Ras al-Khaimah, U.A.E.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) became a sovereign, independent country on December 2, 1971, after being a British protectorate. It comprises a federation of seven small Arabian emirates formerly known as the Trucial States: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah, and Fujairah.

The U.A.E. (about the size of Maine) has an area of about 34,000 square miles, with a 386-mile coastline on the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. All the main towns, with the exception of the oasis of Al-Ain, are on the coast. Apart from a mountain range in the north and scattered oases, much of the U.A.E.'s territory is sandy desert, and salt marshes. A few offshore islands belong to or are claimed by the U.A.E.

Rainfall is low, but coastal humidity is uncomfortably high. May to October is extremely hot, with shade temperatures of 29°C (85°F) to 50°C (122°F) and frequent 100% humidity. During the cool season (December–February) the weather is damp and seems colder than the 10°C (50°F) the thermometer sometimes indicates. During the rest of the year, the climate is pleasant, except for occasional sandstorms and hot, dry winds, which blow off the Empty Quarter of Arabia.

Population

Figures published in 2000 put the population of the country at more than 2.4 million, with about 60% males and 40% females. Recent population figures show a total of more than 2 million. U.A.E. citizens constituted about 20% of the total. The other 80% represent different nationalities who live here, which include foreign Pakistanis, Indians, and Iranians, Filipinos, and various Arab and European nationalities.

Many men from India, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Oman have left their families to seek their fortunes in the U.A.E., working at unskilled and semiskilled jobs, and earning wages higher than any they could hope to earn in their own countries. This influx, coupled with the Arab tradition of secluding women, creates the overwhelmingly male crowds seen on streets in the souk (market place), in restaurants, and in other public places.

Islam is the predominant religion throughout the country, but with such a large foreign population, Hinduism and Christianity are also evident. Churches (which include the Roman Catholic, Anglican/Episcopalian, and other denominations) conduct their services in English and several other languages. Arabic is the official language, but English, Persian, Hindi, Tagalog, and Urdu are widely spoken.

Public Institutions

The U.A.E. is governed by a Supreme Council composed of the rulers of the seven emirates. There is an executive Council of Ministers and a consultative Federal National Council consisting of 40 nominated members. The Constitution guarantees basic personal, legal, and social rights. It also defines the role of the Federal Government and its relationship to individual emirate governments.

The Federal Government has responsibility for foreign affairs; armed forces and defense; internal security; law and government affairs in the capital; affairs of Federal employees and the judiciary; Federal finance, taxes, fees, and royalties; postal and telegraphic services; road construction and maintenance of main highways; air traffic control and licensing; education; public health and medical services; currency, information; and passport, immigration, and nationality matters.

The U.A.E., whose armed forces consists of 60,000 troops, contributes a few hundred troops to the Gulf

Cooperation Council's "Peninsula Shield" force, headquartered in Saudi Arabia. These forces participated in the Gulf War.

In the past, many of these services were performed by the individual emirates. Now, however, the Federal Government, headquartered in Abu Dhabi and organized into functional ministries, is active throughout the country. Ministers are drawn from ruling families and leading citizens of the seven emirates. The individual emirates, however, retain a remarkable measure of control over their own internal and economic affairs, including petroleum concessions, industrial development, public works and utilities, security, customs, and town planning.

Civil and criminal legal systems have been codified. There is a dual system of Sharia (religious) and secular courts, each of which deals with criminal and civil law. Secular Courts fuse Sharia law with legal principles found in Jordanian, Egyptian, Sudanese, and English legal systems. No political parties or organizations exist.

Rapid modernization, enormous strides in education, and the influx of a large foreign population have changed the face of the society but have not fundamentally altered this traditional political system.

Arts, Science, and Education

The rapid introduction of large amounts of wealth, technology, and foreign workers into the UAE has resulted in the wholesale transformation of social and cultural life. Before this transformation, the Oman Coast's urban culture was influenced by Oman and Iran. What local traditions that existed were often oral, employing poetry, singing, and story-telling. Material culture, from architecture to handicrafts, was at a basic level. Since most settlements were on the coast and relied on the products of the local waters for a livelihood, much of what can be considered tra-

ditional UAE culture revolves around pearling, fishing, and seafaring. In addition, Bedouin influences are also strong, and the ruling family's Bedouin origins ensure that the culture and sports of the desert (camel racing, falconry, and Bedouin song and dance, for example) are closely intertwined with the national image and an integral part of national celebrations.

The government supports a number of organizations dedicated to preserving U.A.E. traditional handicrafts and folklore practices. The U.A.E. Women's Association operates a handicraft center in Abu Dhabi where basketry and weaving are carried out. Sharjah, which was the region's most important city in the 19th century, has made a special effort to rebuild its traditional urban quarters. Visitors can get an idea of the way of life before the coming of oil by walking through the city's renovated Old Souq and the Ethnographic Museum, the former house of a wealthy pearling family. Archeologists continue to find evidence of early habitation of the region, and museums in Al Ain and Sharjah, for example, have displays of many artifacts. An as evidence to how far they have come since the coming of oil, the UAE has produced artists in the fields of painting, theater, music, and literature who contribute to the cultural development of their country and the enrichment of Arab culture in general.

The few Western-style cultural outlets include English-language movie theaters, and touring singers and theater troupes whose performances are sponsored by major hotels in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

As in other parts of the Islamic world, for many years mosques served as a center for teaching in Coastal Oman—principally reading, writing, and recitation of the Quran, Islam's Holy Book. In the early part of the 20th century, leading pearl merchants established schools staffed by foreign teachers in the main coastal towns. The first school offering a comprehensive curricu-

lum was built by the British in 1953. For a period during the 1950s and 1960s, Kuwait and other Arab States contributed to the educational system. (Only recently have UAE nationals begun replacing Arabs as school teachers at all levels.) The founding of the UAE saw a tremendous expansion of education, with spending for this area second only to defense in the first national budgets.

Education through the secondary level is compulsory and free through college for UAE nationals. United Arab Emirates University opened in 1977 in Al Ain and has faculties in arts, science, education, political science, business administration, Islamic jurisprudence, agriculture, medicine, and engineering. Enrollment in 1991-92 was around 10,000, with more than twice as many women as men. Many UAE nationals pursue higher degrees overseas, most going to the U.S. Technical and agricultural training is provided at the Higher Colleges of Technology, which have branches in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Al Ain. There are many private schools (including American Schools in Abu Dhabi and Dubai), which cater to the various foreign communities. The literacy rate in 1995 was estimated at 79%.

Commerce and Industry

The U.A.E.'s economy depends on its oil income, estimated at \$20.6 billion in 2000, giving its citizens one of the world's highest per capita GDP income figures at about \$22,800.

The major centers of economic activity are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah. Abu Dhabi produces about 85% of the country's oil and imports building materials, machinery, food, electrical appliances, cars, medicines, and almost everything else. Dubai, which produces most of the rest of the U.A.E.'s oil, also engages in a sizable reexport trade. It reexports textiles, consumer electronics, cameras, watches, gold, motorscooters, and perfumes to Iran, India,

Pakistan, and other Gulf states. Most reexport trade is carried by motorized dhows (locally built triangular-rigged sailing vessels). Dubai has been called the Hong Kong of the Gulf because of its mercantile and entrepot activity and the atmosphere of free enterprise that prevails there. Dubai also has the Jebel Ali Free Zone, the largest and most successful in the Middle East. Sharjah has become a big gas producer and is the manufacturing center of the U.A.E.

The Abu Dhabi port, Mina Zayid, is being expanded and will have 29 berths. However, it remains underused. Sharjah and Fujairah have developed ports on the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, respectively, which feature facilities for containerized cargo. In addition to Dubai's large central port of Mina Rashid, the Dubai government built a huge 180-berth port in the Jebel Ali Free Zone.

The demand for goods, most of which must be imported, resulted in rapid inflation during the 1970s and early 1980s. With the later fall in oil prices; however, the economy went into recession, and local prices have now stabilized, although at a level high, by U.S. standards.

The typical Abu Dhabi investor shuns long-term industrial investments in favor of commerce or housing construction projects, which offer more immediate returns. Although houses with Western-style floor plans are still in short supply, apartments in high-rise buildings are readily available. Rents in Abu Dhabi are kept at artificially high levels by a government-run scheme designed to benefit U.A.E. nationals who own rental property.

Industrial development in the U.A.E. is still in its early stages and is concentrated in hydrocarbon-related projects. Dubai has constructed an aluminum plant and a drydock capable of handling the largest supertankers.

In recent years, the U.A.E. has expanded its agricultural produc-

tion significantly through the extensive application of large, government subsidies, and seasonal surpluses of some vegetables are even exported. A project established by the Arid Lands Research Center of the University of Arizona has produced good results with hydroponic cultivation of vegetables; another team from the same university has a prototype commercial farm based on saltwater irrigation near Fujairah. Other horticultural projects are flourishing in Al-Ain and Digdaga. An import tax on vegetables now exists to protect the market for locally grown vegetables. The government is encouraging livestock and poultry production and expanded commercial fishing. It is unlikely, however, that the U.A.E. will become self-sufficient in foodstuffs.

Transportation

Local

Although getting around by taxi is relatively easy, most travelers prefer the convenience of a personally owned vehicle. Taxis are plentiful and fares reasonable but costly for intercity travel. Meters are used for trips within Abu Dhabi. Taxis are scarce during peak hours, late at night, and in the early hours of the morning, particularly off the main streets. Not all drivers understand English. Al-Ghazal taxis offer round-the-clock service and are similar to a limousine service. They may be booked by telephone or found outside major hotels. Some areas in the cities are served by public buses, but most travelers prefer to use personally owned vehicles.

Regional

Abu Dhabi emirate covers 30,000 square miles, or almost 90% of the U.A.E. land area, with the remaining emirates making up only 4,000 square miles. The bulk of the population is concentrated in eight main towns—the seven emirate capitals and the oasis of Al-Ain in Abu Dhabi emirate. A network of good, hard-surfaced roads connects these cities.

Abu Dhabi proper is linked with Al-Ain and the other emirates by four-lane divided highways. Other highways link the U.A.E. with neighboring Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. The U.A.E. has six international airports. The two largest airports are located in the cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

The UAE has an excellent telecommunications infrastructure, with direct-dial international links and services such as pagers, mobile phones, faxes, and connection to the Internet. There are locally based operators for AT&T, MCI, and Sprint.

Radio and TV

Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras Al-Khaimah, and Umm Al-Kuwait all have radio stations. Abu Dhabi's AM band broadcasts in Arabic, French, Urdu, Bengali, and Tagalog and 2 hours in English. English is also broadcast on the FM band for 17 hours and on SW for 2 hours. Dubai broadcasts in English on FM and Arabic on AM band. Ras Al-Khaimah and Umm Al-Kuwait broadcast Arabic on the AM band. Many Americans also listen to the BBC and VOA on shortwave radios; however, reception is sometimes poor.

The emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah have TV stations. Abu Dhabi and Dubai have two channels each, one in Arabic, and the other mostly in English. U.A.E. viewers with good antennas can also receive transmissions from neighboring countries.

The U.A.E. now abides by intellectual property agreements. Pirated audio and video cassettes, once prevalent in the market, have largely disappeared from store shelves. Selections of legitimately licensed product are only fair, but are improving. Prices for CD's and cassette tapes are roughly equivalent to U.S. prices. Prerecorded video tapes are more expensive, and

selection is sparse, though improving. All music and video programs sold in the UAE are subject to Government censorship.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

The country has five Arabic daily papers, three in Abu Dhabi, one in Dubai, and one in Sharjah. Abu Dhabi has one English-language daily paper and Dubai has two, all of which are available throughout the U.A.E. All papers feature stories from the Western wire services, such as Reuters, AP, and UPI. News is fairly current, but some may be censored. *The International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, and *Wall Street Journal* can be purchased locally 1–3 days after publication. The major British dailies can also be purchased.

Distribution of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *Economist* is timely, although articles offending local moral or political sensitivities are censored. Some bookstores carry a wide selection of English-language magazines, but at high prices (i.e., five or more times U.S. prices).

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Abu Dhabi and Dubai have several government hospitals, including OB/GYN hospitals, capable of handling emergencies and routine medical care. However, they are not up to Western standards. Personnel at the hospitals are usually recruited from Egypt, Lebanon, India, and the Philippines.

There are several private clinics and laboratories available. Dental clinics staffed by dentists from the U.S., Sweden, U.K., and France are satisfactory.

Local pharmacies are well stocked with medications from Europe. However, bring your own supply of prescription medication.

Community Health

The government is working to improve the water and sewage systems, and residential areas are fumigated regularly.

Preventive Measures

Tap water in Abu Dhabi and Dubai is generally safe to drink; however, tanks and pipes may be rusty or contaminated. Most people prefer to drink bottled water, which is available for inexpensive home delivery. Malaria is a risk only in the mountainous area near the Omani border.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Most major airlines have daily flights from Europe to Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

A passport and visa are required. In addition, an AIDS test is required for work or residence permits; testing must be performed after arrival. A U.S. AIDS test is not accepted. For further information, travelers can contact the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Suite 700, 1255 22nd Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 243-2400.

UAE customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from UAE of items such as firearms, including fireworks, pornographic materials, medications, religious materials and communication equipment. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of UAE in Washington for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting the UAE are encouraged to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi or the Consulate General in Dubai, where they can obtain updated information on travel and security within the UAE. The U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi is located on 11th St., also known as Al-Sudan St., P.O. Box 4009. The telephone number is

(971) (2) 443-6691, and the Consular Section fax number is (971) (2) 443-5786. The after hours telephone number is (971) (2) 443-4457. The Embassy internet web site is <http://www.usembabu.gov.ae>. The U.S. Consulate General in Dubai is located on the 21st floor of the Dubai World Trade Center, P.O. Box 9343. The telephone number is (971) (4) 331-3115, and the Consular Section fax number is (971) (4) 331-6935. The workweek for both the Embassy in Abu Dhabi and Consulate in Dubai is Saturday through Wednesday.

Social Customs & Laws

Taking photographs of anything that could be perceived as being of military or security interest may result in problems with authorities.

The penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal substances are strict in the UAE, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines. Legislation enacted in January 1996 imposes the death sentence for convicted drug traffickers. A variety of drugs normally taken under a doctor's supervision in the United States are classified as narcotics in the UAE. A doctor's prescription should be carried along with any medication that is brought into the country.

In addition, the UAE's tough anti-narcotics program also includes poppy seeds on its list of controlled substances. The importation and possession of poppy seeds in any and all forms is strictly prohibited. Persons found to possess even very small quantities of any controlled substances listed by the UAE are subject to prosecution by the authorities and may be given lengthy prison terms of up to 15 years. Travelers with questions regarding the items on the list of controlled substances should contact the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi or the U.S. Consulate General in Dubai.

If suspected of being under the influence of drugs, individuals may be required to submit to blood and/or urine tests so that local authori-

ties may make a determination as to usage. UAE authorities have been known to arrest travelers upon their arrival into the UAE and, based on recent prior drug use, to prosecute these travelers.

Crimes of fraud, including passing bad checks and non-payment of bills (including hotel bills), are regarded seriously in the UAE and can result in imprisonment, as well as fines. Penalties are generally assessed according to religious law. If imprisoned, bail is generally not available to non-residents of the UAE.

Drinking or possession of alcohol without a Ministry of Interior liquor permit is illegal and could result in arrest and/or fines and imprisonment. Alcohol is served at bars in most major hotels. However, this alcoholic beverage service is for those persons who are staying at the hotel. Persons not staying at the hotel who come in to use the facility's bar technically are required to have their own personal liquor license. Liquor licenses are obtainable only by non-Muslim persons who possess UAE residency permits. Drinking and driving is considered a serious offense.

While individuals are free to worship as they choose, and facilities are available for that purpose, religious proselytizing is not permitted. Persons violating this law, even unknowingly, may be arrested and imprisoned.

Pets

UAE customs authorities also impose additional requirements for the importation of pets into the country. Prior permission in the form of a permit from the UAE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries must be secured before the pet's travel. To obtain the permit, the following items will need to be submitted to the UAE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries at the following address: P.O. Box 213, Abu Dhabi, UAE, telephone number 971-2-662-781 or 971-2-485-438. a). the pet's travel itinerary; b). copies of veterinary health certificates, showing that the animal is free of

disease and indicating all shots which have been given to the pet; c). the sex and color of the pet; and d). a completed import permit application form (available from the ministry).

Some American and British brands of pet food and cat litter are stocked in all supermarkets.

Firearms & Ammunition

No weapons or ammunition may be imported or acquired in the country.

Currency, Banking and Weights and Measures

Basic currency is the U.A.E. dirham (DH), which is divided into 100 fils. The dirhams come in 500, 200, 100, 10, and 5-bill denominations, and coins in 1 Dirham, 50, 25, 10, and 5 fils. Exchange generally averages about DH 3.67 = US\$1 (1998). Many banks provide full banking services. Dollar and sterling travelers checks are readily available.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Aug. 6.	Sheikh Zayed Accession Day
Dec. 2 & 3	U.A.E. National Day
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Waqfa*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Muharram*

*variable

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UZBEKISTAN

Republic of Uzbekistan

Major City:

Tashkent

Other Cities:

Andizhan, Bukhara, Samarkand, Karakalpakstan

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated November 1995. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

Many of the cities of the fabled Silk Road—Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva—are located in **UZBEKISTAN**, and many famous conquerors passed through the land. Alexander the Great stopped near Samarkand on his way to India in the 4th Century B.C. and married Roxanna, the daughter of a local chieftain. Genghis Khan and his Mongols arrived in 1220 and leveled everything in their path, leaving only one tower in Bukhara standing from earlier ages. Timur, known in the west as Tamerlane, was born in Shahrisabz, turned Samarkand into the cultural capital of the world, and established the greatest empire of the time (14th century), becoming the most feared warrior since Geng-

his Khan. His grandson, Ulug Beg, helped found the modern science of astronomy, and his grandson Bobur went to India to establish the Moghul Empire. Alisher Navoi, the greatest Uzbek writer, wrote not only in Persian but in Uzbek; as the first to do so, he did what Luther did for German and is venerated as Shakespeare is in Britain.

Russian incursions into Central Asia began in the mid-1800s, when the demand for cotton led Slavic settlers and Imperial troops into the region. The power of traditional entities such as the Khanates of Kokand and Khiva and the Emirate of Bukhara waned as Imperial Russia strengthened its grip. In the wake of the October Revolution, the Red Army enforced Bolshevik control. The Basmachi movement offered fierce resistance. Total Soviet control came in the 1930s with the imposition of collectivization and a culture of repression; many perished in the purges, and others fled abroad. In Stalinist times, Soviet authorities resettled displaced and deported peoples from other parts of the USSR in Uzbekistan, including Ukrainian Kulaks, Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans, Koreans, Meskhetian Turks, Armenians, and others. Moscow used Uzbekistan as a resource base, promoting a cotton monoculture and shipping natural resources to

Russia for processing. During these years, it had one of the lowest levels of per capita income among Soviet republics. In the wake of the failed Moscow coup attempt in August 1991, Uzbekistan declared its independence.

MAJOR CITY

Tashkent

Tashkent is the capital of Uzbekistan and its largest city, with a population of approximately 2,495,000, making it the fourth largest city in the former Soviet Union, behind Moscow, St. Petersburg, and approximately the same size as Kiev. Tashkent sits in the Chirchik River Valley (the River feeds into the Syr Darya), and two main canals, the Ankhore and the Bozsou, run through the city. Though the climate is semi-arid, the extensive system of canals, parks, gardens, and tree-lined avenues gave Tashkent the reputation of being one of the greenest cities in the USSR. The spring rains usually subside by mid-May; the greatest heat, often over 104°F (40°C), comes in July and early August, but nighttime temperatures are much lower. Fall can extend into November and early December, with a short January-February winter occasioned by

scattered snow falls but few sustained freezing spells.

While located on a historical site along the Silk Road, Tashkent can be considered a relatively modern city. It was a small community before the Russians conquered it and made it their administrative center in 1865, a time when Samarkand and Bukhara were the main cities in Central Asia. The Russians then developed the city in a primarily Imperial Russian architectural style. After the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, a core of radicals established a Soviet which controlled Tashkent, the first foothold of Bolshevism in a region generally hostile to the revolutionary ideas. During World War II, when much of the European part of the Soviet Union crumbled and starved under the Nazi onslaught, Tashkent became known as the “City of Bread.” In 1966, a devastating earthquake leveled much of the old city. The 14 other republics of the USSR were each given a section of Tashkent to rebuild; the resulting lack of coordination contributed to Tashkent’s current dispersed layout. Remnants of the old city can be found in the neighborhoods northwest of the center of town. The architecture elsewhere, however, is decidedly contemporary Soviet. In addition to the central city administration (“hokimiat”), there are 13 district hokimiats which provide many of the services normally associated with city administration. Long-term residents of Tashkent will often identify more with their makhallah (neighborhood/district) and the chaikhana (tea-house) there than with any city-wide institution or identity.

Tashkent boasts the only underground metro system in Central Asia; ongoing construction aims to add a third line to the two presently in place. The Supreme Soviet recently voted to spend \$500 million to construct a new airport complex in an effort to bolster Tashkent’s potential as an air gateway between Europe and Asia.

Many of the Russians, Ukrainians and other nationalities who came to rebuild the city in the aftermath of the earthquake preferred the warmer climate and decided to settle here, further diluting the Central Asian character of the City. As a result of the lengthy Russian presence and the use of Tashkent as a regional center for Central Asia, Tashkent is home for over 100 nationalities and retains the flavor of an international city. It is here that you will find the largest concentration of Russians (17% vs. 8% countrywide). The smaller Korean community makes its presence known in the marketplaces and in restaurants around town.

Despite its size and status as a capital, Tashkent can seem surprisingly provincial—there is little night life and few restaurants. Ample parks and other recreational facilities, however, help to offset this reality and make life interesting in this city.

Food

Fresh vegetables and fruits are available in season in Tashkent year ‘round. Available fruits include pomegranates, grapes, pears, cherries (bing and sour), apples, oranges, lemons, limes, nectarines, melons, peaches, plums, apricots, raspberries and strawberries. Canned fruits are available but most residents prefer to can their own. Vegetables in the market include eggplant, pumpkin, squash, green beans, potatoes, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, radishes, onions, garlic, green and red peppers, cauliflower and leaf lettuce. Potatoes, cabbage, carrots and tomatoes are available year ‘round.

Beef, lamb, pork and chickens are generally available in the markets; the quality ranges from average to poor. Ham, bacon and sausage are also available at Tashkent’s main market. Smoked fish is available throughout the year, but may involve health risks; fresh fish, of varying quality, is seasonally available. There is no other seafood. Eggs are available and good, usually fresh. Locally produced butter, milk

and other dairy products are scarce; and due to improper hygienic conditions in handling and packaging, their use is not recommended (except for hard cheese). Occasionally, Turkish butter, long life milk and imported cheeses are available. Flour and sugar are rationed items and not always available. Bread is plentiful through state-controlled bread stores, and is heavier than American-type bread, is preservative-free, tasty and freezes well. About five or six different kinds, including a French-type loaf and an Uzbekistan-style pita, are baked fresh and shelved several times during the day.

Hard currency shops stock limited supplies of hard liquor and wines, and beer is usually available from those shops or from street vendors. Prices are somewhat high. Coca-Cola has recently opened a bottling plant in Tashkent and a limited variety of other Western products, including Pepsi-Cola, is available. Locally produced soft drinks are plentiful and good.

Clothing

Tashkent is not a particularly fashion-conscious city; good quality clothing is not available, and many residents who are well dressed make their own.

Men: Social life is informal; black-tie affairs are rare. Men wear coats and ties and dark suits for more formal occasions. A lined raincoat is useful; heavy winter coats are occasionally necessary. In summer, lightweight suits are useful for the office, and short-sleeved shirts are acceptable. In winter, light- to medium-weight wool or wool-synthetic blend suits are useful.

As in Southern Europe, men do not wear shorts outside of their own house. Use discretion while playing sports or hiking in the mountains, and change to trousers.

Women: There are two dress codes, one for most parts of Tashkent and one for everywhere else. In Tashkent: It is acceptable in many places to wear short skirts, tops with bared

shoulders, and pants. Outside Tashkent: The dress is much more closed. A dress or skirt should be below the knee; short sleeves are fine, but the shoulder and front should be fully covered. Pants are acceptable if covered by a long top, as is done in Uzbek or Pakistani national dress. Women do not need to cover their heads, as is the case in more Muslim countries.

In Tashkent, there are few occasions for cocktail dresses, but dressy evening outfits will be used. In summer, cotton, linen, blends and knits in casual styles are most comfortable for office and home wear. Revealing dresses or shorts are not suitable for street wear, particularly in bazaar (market) areas. Younger Uzbek women wear slacks, and they are acceptable in restaurants, modern shopping areas, etc., in Tashkent only. For winter, medium- to heavyweight woolens will be comfortable, as will be a warm coat. Dresses, skirts, blouses, sweaters, jackets, suits, slacks, etc., are all worn. Although houses have central heat, winter dampness makes it feel much colder than it actually is. Wool stoles and sweaters are also useful on many winter evenings. Tashkent has no storage facilities for furs.

Walking shoes with low heels are good for shopping and sight-seeing. Shoes are not worn inside homes and are removed at the entrance. Rubbers or wet-weather-type shoe/boots are essential. Lingerie, pantyhose and the like are not available locally.

Supplies and Services

Toilet articles and cosmetics are few and far between, as are drugs and medications, and cleaning products.

Dressmaking and tailoring are available; work can be good and is reasonable. Shoe repair in Tashkent can be satisfactory. Dry-cleaning is available, but of poor quality.

Adequate beauty shops abound. Some Americans take their own shampoo, or shampoo at home and go to the shop for a cut and/or set only. Most hairdressers don't speak

enough English to understand instructions. Barbershops are also available; prices are much lower than in the U.S.

Much of Tashkent commerce is conducted in "bazaars," open-air markets around town. Tashkent has five main bazaars, with many smaller ones scattered through the city. There are also stores that have essential and local mass-produced goods. There are places to buy handicrafts and souvenirs, but they are limited and not necessarily oriented to the needs and desires of tourists.

With the freeing of most food prices, bazaars have the widest selection of foods and offer the best quality. Buyers should be aware of the sanitary conditions of the food.

For goods, bazaar sales are catch as catch can; what may appear new could well be broken, and what may appear antique probably is an imitation. Prices are never fixed, and first demands should never be paid; intuition and desire are the best guides.

Tashkent does not have hard-currency stores that offer the range of goods found in a U.S. convenience store. There are small stores scattered around the city which sell Western alcohol (beer, some wine and spirits), soft drinks, cigarettes, sweets and some dairy products. Some carry consumer electronics and a variety of other luxuries. Selection is limited and prices are very high by U.S. standards.

Despite its storied Silk Road heritage and legendary cities, Uzbekistan has surprisingly little to offer to the casual buyer or tourist; even finding post cards can be demanding and unsuccessful. The best quality goods—from rugs and tapestries to silk and pottery—can be obtained directly from factories, mostly located outside Tashkent.

Religious Activities

Uzbekistan is a Muslim country. There are, however, communities of Christians—Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant—and Jews, all of

which maintain places of worship and conduct services.

Education

A small international school opened its doors in September 1994 to approximately 50 students. It will be somewhat larger in 1995-96, with kindergarten through grade ten, using correspondence courses. The school is not accredited.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Samarkand. Timur's capital city is a four-hour drive or an hour's flight from Tashkent, either of which could facilitate a day trip. The five main sites are: Gur Emir, Tamerlane's tomb; the Registan, the most magnificent Square in Central Asia; Shah-i-Zinda, Tomb of the Living King; Bibi-Kanim Mosque; and Ulug Beg's Observatory. The best way to travel by car is to hire a driver with vehicle for the day; they are quite available, and reasonable. It's more convenient to travel to Samarkand by plane; but once there, a car will be needed. Guides are available for hire at the Intourist Hotel or the Business Center.

Bukhara. Bukhara is another 2-3 hours by car beyond Samarkand; the flight from Tashkent is 1.5 hours one way. It is possible to visit many of the sites of Bukhara on foot, but one might wish to arrange a vehicle for airport pickup and transfer to outlying sites. Guides are available. Sites include the Pool in the City Square, the Tower before which Genghis Khan bowed, the unique 11th century Mausoleum, various madrassas, and the Summer Palace located a few kilometers outside of town.

Khiva. Khiva is less accessible than either Samarkand or Bukhara. One must fly about two hours to Urgench, and travel the last 25 kilometers by bus, minibus or taxi. Old Khiva is a museum city, in which the many madrassas, palace and other ancient buildings have been restored. The Museum of Applied Arts, well worth a visit, is near the palace tower, which provides a good view of the city. One of the city's

mosques boasts 200 carved wooden pillars.

Shahrisabz. The birthplace of Tamerlane has several monuments of note, including the remains of Timur's massive gate. Shahrisabz is 80 kilometers from Samarkand over a steep mountain pass which is closed in winter, but offers a great view from spring through early fall.

While most people have heard of the Silk Road cities, few know of the beauty and serenity of the mountains and nature preserves within an hour or two of Tashkent. In all cases, it is best to drive, by either personal or hired vehicle. Popular destinations include:

Chirvak. A reservoir which offers swimming, sail boating, wind surfing and hang gliding.

Chimgan. An area for skiing in the winter and hiking in the summer. The Beldeersai chairlift is 2 km long and offers intermediate and advanced ski slopes. Helicopter skiing can be arranged.

Chatkal Nature Reserve. This reserve facilitates hiking and has a beautiful ranger station/caravanse-rai with river swimming.

For travel outside Uzbekistan, there are frequent direct flights to such places as London, Moscow, Frankfurt, Tel Aviv, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, New Delhi, Islamabad/Peshawar and Sharja (providing access to Abu Dhabi and Dubai).

Entertainment

Aside from the ballet, concerts and theater described in the section on Arts and Education, Tashkent offers dinner shows at many restaurants around the city. The food served at these establishments is adequate, although the variety is quite limited and the quality average to poor, as are the sanitary standards. Oftentimes, music is provided—either live or recorded—for dancing after the floor show. The larger hotels have “night bars” where people can gather until the early morning hours. There are also theaters

which screen movies in the local languages; some even boast an occasional screening in English

Social Activities

A sports center is located about five minutes from the U.S. Embassy. For a nominal monthly fee, one may use its outdoor Olympic-sized swimming pool and gyms catering to weightlifters, boxers and gymnasts. Tennis courts, and lessons, are available. The Hippodrome has facilities for boarding horses, but horses available locally for riding are definitely not for the amateur.

Since outside social activities are limited, many people entertain at home with dinners, cocktail parties, card parties, and the like. Currently, there is a Hash House Harriers event on Sundays, with the group gathering—on a rotating basis—at a participant's home after the run/walk.

An international women's group meets monthly; the group can offer programs relating to archeological, cultural and social aspects of life in Uzbekistan, as well as various special activities such as gourmet cooking, handicrafts, exercise, bridge lessons, etc., depending on the interest of the group.

oldest cities in Central Asia. Many of its ancient monuments and buildings, dating from the 13th century, represent some of the best of Central Asian architecture. With a population of 370,000, Samarkand is the second largest Uzbek city. Now a rail and industrial center, much of the city's industry is dependent on the area's agricultural crops. Major industries include cotton and silk processing, canning, and the production of fertilizers, textiles, and wine. The city has a university and is known as a center for karakul sheep breeding research.

Spanning the delta of the Amu Darya and comprising nearly one-third of the territory of Uzbekistan, **KARAKALPAKSTAN** is an autonomous republic within the Republic of Uzbekistan. Karakalpakstan has its own legislature and executive branches, as well as its own constitution, but its autonomy does not apply in areas such as foreign affairs, defense or security. About 1.2 million people live in Karakalpakstan, a third of them Karakalpaks, who are closer ethnically and linguistically to Kazaks than to Uzbeks. Karakalpakstan has borne the brunt of the ecological damage associated with the Aral Sea disaster.

OTHER CITIES

ANDIZHAN is a cotton growing and transport (road and rail) center. Located in the Fergana Valley, the city is 155 miles southeast of Tashkent. The region is subject to earthquakes and the city was rebuilt after a severe 1902 quake caused massive destruction. Andizhan has over 300,000 residents.

BUKHARA, 140 miles west of Samarkand, is a historic city. Once known as an Islamic intellectual center and holy place, the city has many magnificent ancient monuments. The population of Bukhara is more than 230,000.

SAMARKAND, located 180 miles southwest of Tashkent, is one of the

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Located between the Amu Darya (OXUS) and Syr-Darya Rivers, Uzbekistan lies at the heart of Central Asia. Along its borders are Afghanistan to the south, Turkmenistan to the west and south, Kazakhstan to the north and Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to the east. Covering an area of 500,000 sq. km, Uzbekistan is roughly the size of California. Most of the country is desert (the Kyzylkum and the Karakum) or irrigated steppe, but it has rugged mountains in the east (a branch of the Tien Shan range). The

area has a severe continental climate that is dry and hot in the summer months and cool and wet in the winter. In the long summer, daytime temperatures often reach 40°C (104°F); during the short winter, daytime temperatures generally stay above freezing, but on occasion can dip well below, and snow is not unusual. Spring and fall are the most comfortable seasons. In all seasons, the differences between daytime and nighttime temperature and humidity is much greater than most parts of the U.S.

Population

Uzbekistan has an estimated population of 24.4 million people. Of these, approximately 16 million are ethnic Uzbeks and between one and two million are Russian. The rest of the population is made up of Tajiks, Tatars, Kazaks, and Karakalpaks, along with over 100 other ethnic groups. Most of the population lives in the eastern part of the country, particularly the Fergana Valley, and in the parts of the desert made habitable by heavy irrigation.

The Uzbeks (as well as the Karakalpaks, Kazaks, Turkmen and Tatars) are a Turkic people and speak a Turkic language. The language and culture in Uzbekistan has also been strongly influenced by the Mongols and Persians (Iranians, Tajiks). The Uzbek language employed Arabic script until 1929 and the Latin alphabet for a decade, but since 1940 it has been written in Cyrillic; the Supreme Soviet recently decreed that the transition back to the Latin script should occur by the year 2000. Although Uzbek is the official language of the country, Russian is also widely spoken in the cities, particularly among the educated elite and government officials. The historical towns of Bukhara and Samarkand are primarily Tajik speaking; and in the countryside, Russian is hardly spoken at all.

Aral Sea Crisis

The Aral Sea lies between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in a vast geological depression, fed by the Amu

Darya and Syr Darya Rivers, with no outlet. Before its drastic decline, the Aral Sea was the fourth largest inland water lake in the world. In the past 30 years, the Aral Sea has lost nearly two-thirds of its volume and half of its previous surface area; its level has dropped nearly 50 feet, splitting it in two. Its salinity has increased nearly threefold. The almost total use of water from the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers for irrigation purposes has been exacerbated by excessive use of chemicals for growing cotton and rice, much of which returns to the Rivers upstream. The desiccation of the Aral Sea has wiped out its fishing industry and destroyed nearby ecosystems. Toxic blowing salts from the exposed seabed and the pollution of surface and groundwater have caused serious health problems and damaged agricultural production. The United Nations Environment Program has stated that, in terms of its ecological, economic, and social consequences, the Aral Sea is one of the most staggering disasters of the twentieth century. Restoring the Aral Sea to its pre-disaster (1960) conditions is generally considered impossible, given expanding populations and pressures for increased agricultural production.

All five republics of Central Asia depend on the two river systems, but Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are heavily dependent upon existing allocations of water. International and regional efforts to stabilize the ecological situation on the basis of available river flows and more efficient irrigation techniques will take years to achieve, so international assistance also focuses on the health problems among those living near the Aral Sea.

Public Institutions

Uzbekistan's political institutions, inherited from the Soviet Union when Uzbekistan declared independence on September 1, 1991, are gradually evolving away from their Soviet models. A new constitution was adopted in December 1992, and

a new parliamentary election law passed a year later provided the basis for electing a new parliament, the Oliy Majlis, which met for the first time in February 1995. The Constitution provides for a strong President; in addition, opposition parties and public criticism of the President have been suppressed. President Islam Karimov was elected for five years in December 1991, and his term was extended until 2000 by referendum in March 1995. While many Soviet laws are still valid, they are steadily being replaced by new ones, and even some of the new laws (especially those affecting business) have been revised. Radical changes are rare, but the changes in public life are continuous and cumulative.

Social Customs

There is no question that Uzbekistan is a male-dominated society. Much of the local social life revolves around the chaikhanas (tea-houses). While foreign women are allowed in, the chaikhanas basically serve as a men's club where they congregate and talk; local women do not frequent the establishments. When there are large social gatherings of mixed company, the women and men usually sit in separate groupings (again, exceptions are made for "honored foreign guests"). Mosques are segregated during regular prayers, and head coverings for women may be required. Women should take the lead in greetings and in offering a handshake; Uzbek women normally do not shake hands, and well-behaved men do not take the lead in greeting unknown women. Women should avoid walking alone in the evening or in crowded public places such as the bazaar, and should dress more conservatively there.

Uzbeks are a very friendly people, especially when foreigners take the trouble to learn a few introductory greetings in Uzbek. Most people will be happy to help with directions, and Uzbeks often invite people to their homes. On such occasions, small gifts, especially for children would be appreciated but not

expected; your hosts are more likely to offer you small gifts/souvenirs.

The standard Uzbek celebratory meal is lengthy and expansive; be careful not to eat too much during the first several rounds. The end of the meal is near when the plov (national dish of rice with some vegetables and sheep meat) is served, followed by tea. Plov is traditionally eaten from a communal plate using the right hand as a scoop, with a garnish of sliced tomatoes and onions. Uzbeks fill their tea bowls only halfway, so the guest knows that he or she is not expected to leave immediately upon finishing.

Arts and Education

In the last decades of the Soviet Union, Tashkent had become one of its most vibrant and progressive artistic and intellectual centers, because of the rich mix of Asian and European cultures here, especially, because intellectuals and artists who did not end up in the Gulag but who were exiled from Moscow frequently moved to Tashkent. Since independence in September 1991, state subsidies for the arts and for education have fallen precipitously; and a good number of European-nationality artists, intellectuals, and journalists have emigrated. Furthermore, independent Uzbekistan is experiencing the cultural dislocation common to post-colonial situations. The dominant Soviet/Russian culture is beginning to wane, and Uzbek culture is moving to the fore. Tashkent, as well as Samarkand and Bokhara, as they have long been, are the artistic and intellectual centers of Uzbekistan.

Uzbek culture, long repressed under the Soviet Empire, strongly emphasizes tradition and ceremony, especially on the life-cycle occasions of weddings, circumcisions, and funerals. For the first two, the celebration features traditional Uzbek music, poetry, and dance. Professional artists who perform at these events are highly regarded in the Uzbek community—and highly paid. A wedding celebration, with its procession



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Museum and mosque in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

of musicians, is an event not to be missed.

Tashkent is the most Europeanized city in the country. The National Museum of Art has a representative selection of Russian, Soviet, European, and Uzbek paintings and other objects from the 17th century to the present. The museum occasionally hosts temporary exhibits from other countries. The Museum of Applied Arts, housed partly in a restored 19th-century trader's mansion, has a permanent exhibit of the traditional arts and contemporary glass and ceramic products of Uzbekistan. Both of these museums have small but interesting consignment shops which sell Central Asian and Russian antiques, carpets, jewelry, and contemporary arts and crafts. Handwritten signs in these shops note that it is illegal to take anything out of the country which was made before 1947.

Uzbekistan's rich collection of Central Asian antiquities and jewelry has been put into storage awaiting the opening of the Uzbekistan Historical Museum, which will be housed in the former Lenin Museum, a lattice-covered modernist cube located across the street from Independence Square. Tash-

kent also has a Museum of Natural History, a Museum of Military History, the Museum of Ancient Oriental Manuscripts, as well as other small, specialized museums. Several small, private art galleries also exist and are gathering spots for the artistic and bohemian communities of the capital. The Archduke Romanov's home as Governor of Turkestan in the 1890s has been fully restored and is now used as a reception hall by the Foreign Ministry. The Samarkand Museum, abutting the world-famous Registan ensemble of medieval buildings, has one of the best displayed and richest exhibits of the arts of daily life in all of Central Asia.

The Navoi State Opera and Ballet Theater is the most prestigious in the country and has a full season of Western opera, ballet and symphony productions, which sometimes star visiting artists from Russia. Tashkent also has ten theaters with regular repertoires. The most popular are Ilkhom Theater, Young Spectator's Theater, Khidoyatov Uzbek Drama Theater, and Gorky Russian Drama Theater, and Russian Operetta Theater. The Conservatory of Music, one of the best of the former Soviet Union, sponsors numerous concerts and recitals dur-

ing the year. All performances in Tashkent begin at 5 or 6 p.m., and audiences are home before 10 p.m.

Uzbekistan may become a major tourist destination because of its world-class monuments of medieval Islamic architecture. Samarkand is the richest city with its Registan ensemble, the ruins of Bibi Khanum Mosque, the tomb of Amir Timur (Tamerlane), and the haunting Street of Mausoleums. Bokhara and Khiva, great cities of the Silk Route, also merit visits. UNESCO has begun a 20-year project to restore properly these World Heritage sites and to develop a responsible tourism industry.

As elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, education had high priority in Uzbekistan. With independence, the language of instruction is shifting from Russian to Uzbek, and a number of non-Uzbek nationality educators and scholars have emigrated. Some students and educators complain that the quality of education and the integrity of academic administration have fallen. All education is under the Ministry of Higher Education or the Ministry of Public Education. No private schools are accredited, although a few private academies exist, especially to teach business subjects. Tashkent has an extensive system of specialized high schools for students gifted in the sciences, the arts, and languages.

There are four important universities in Tashkent: The University of World Economy and Diplomacy (the elite school for government service), Tashkent State Economics University, Tashkent State University, and the University of World Languages. There are also many institutes and think tanks in Tashkent, including the prestigious Oriental Studies Institute. Tashkent State University has recently decentralized and upgraded provincial training centers to the status of state universities.

Commerce and Industry

Since its independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has been engaged in the process of converting from a planned to a market economy. The government regularly states its determination to complete this process, but that it must be done carefully, in keeping with Uzbekistan's unique conditions, to maintain social stability. The result has been slower and more centrally-managed reform than in some other former Soviet republics. Following introduction of Uzbekistan's own currency, the som, in summer 1994, macroeconomic stabilization measures met with IMF approval and led to an agreement in early 1995.

Uzbekistan's economy is primarily based on agriculture and agro-processing, accounting for about one-half of the GNP. Uzbekistan is the world's third largest producer of cotton (second largest exporter after the U.S.), and cotton accounts for over 40% of the agricultural production. Much of the industrial production is linked to agriculture, including the production of cotton harvesting equipment, textiles, and chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Uzbekistan also has promising mineral reserves, including significant amounts of gold, uranium, silver, copper, lead, zinc, wolfram and tungsten. Uzbekistan is a net exporter of natural gas and hopes to achieve oil self-sufficiency.

Although Uzbekistan is a large net exporter of fruits and vegetables, mostly to the former Soviet Union, it must import four million tons of wheat each year, much of it from the United States. Uzbekistan hopes to reach wheat self-sufficiency in the near future by increasing yields and shifting land from cotton to wheat cultivation. However, it is likely that the country will remain a net importer in the near term.

Uzbekistan has a very liberal investment code which, in theory, allows for, among other things, free and full repatriation of profits and tax holidays of 2-5 years, depending

upon the type of investment. However, in practice, even negotiating and registering joint ventures is a cumbersome process (taking anywhere from three to six months). This requires the approval of numerous government agencies and usually at the highest levels of government. Repatriation of funds, the system for which is still unclear, is complicated by the limited amount of foreign exchange in the country. Uzbekistan signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty with the U.S. in late 1994.

The government has targeted oil and gas, mining, processing of agricultural commodities, textiles and tourism as priority areas for foreign investment. However, foreign ownership is limited in "strategic" industries, such as in the mining, energy, cotton processing and oil and gas sectors.

American firms currently operating in Uzbekistan include Newmont Mining, Bateman Engineering, M.W. Kellogg/Dresser, Coca-Cola, Pepsico, Price Waterhouse, Deloitte Touche, KPMG Peat Marwick, and others. Prospects for long-term opportunities in this market are excellent and we expect to see the number of American firms in this market increase dramatically over the next several years.

Transportation

Local

The public transportation system within Tashkent consists of buses, trolleybuses, trams, taxis and a metro system. City bus service is one class and inexpensive; however, it is not recommended for use because of crowding and petty crime. The underground "metro" system, the only one in Central Asia, currently has two lines; a third is under construction. It, too, is inexpensive, and the crowds can be intense at rush hour, but it is reliable. Taxis, used frequently by Americans, are readily available during daylight hours. They are marked with the checkerboard stamp on the side. Accepting rides

from “private” taxis late at night can be dangerous and is discouraged. If the taxi is not equipped with a meter, the fare should be determined prior to the journey.

Regional

All-weather roads exist between the larger cities and points of interest. But most of these roads are in poor repair and can wreak havoc on your auto. Highway driving at night is dangerous due to pedestrians, and unlit parked and moving vehicles.

The use of personal vehicles for overnight trips outside the city is discouraged unless someone will be with the car at all times; vandalism is prolific. Cars and drivers are available for hire on an hourly, daily, or several-day basis for a reasonable fee.

Communications

Telephones

The quality of the phone lines in Uzbekistan is abysmal, and for local calls, you will frequently need to try many times before making contact. Making long-distance calls can be a frustrating experience if you are not a Russian speaker. The operator often demands that the calls be paid for beforehand and places a 10-minute limit on calls. Direct-dial capability is available, but can be an extremely frustrating experience due to the low number and quality of lines.

Radio and TV

Both radio and TV in Uzbekistan are government-operated in Uzbek and Russian. Shortwave reception of STAR TV, BBC-TV, BBC-Radio and VOA are, at best, sporadic. However, in August 1993, an Uzbek-American joint venture, Kamalak-TV, began offering cable service with eight channels in addition to the five available on local TV, and have promised to add CNN.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Subscriptions to the *International Herald Tribune*, *Newsweek* and *The Economist* through a private expe-

diter arrive a few days late and are very expensive. There are currently no English-language periodicals available in Tashkent. Avoid having magazines or newspapers sent through international mail.

Health and Medicine

A subscription international clinic has recently been established, under the operation of a nurse practitioner. There are no doctors, medical or dental facilities of western standards, or adequately stocked pharmacies in Uzbekistan.

Residents of Tashkent should take appropriate precautions against the health conditions existing in Tashkent. Following are recommended vaccines for Uzbekistan:

Diphtheria, Tetanus: boosters every 10 years.

Hepatitis A: a series of three shots over a 6-month period.

Hepatitis B: a series of three shots over a 6-month span.

Meningococcal: every three years.

Rabies: three injections over a one-month period; booster recommended every 2 years.

Tuberculin skin test: if initial test comes up positive, further investigation required.

Typhoid: oral every 5 years; not completely effective; water still needs to be treated.

Food Preparation and Storage

Tap water, restaurant water, and ice throughout Uzbekistan are unsafe, particularly during the warmer months. All water should be filtered and treated. A distiller, which boils the water and produces sediment-free water, is recommended. Another option is to boil the water and use a basic charcoal filter, such as the Brita system, which removes sediment and improves taste. Make

sure plates, glasses and flatware in restaurants are dry.

Produce which will be peeled should be washed. Other vegetables and fruit should be soaked in a chlorine (three drops Clorox per liter) for 15 minutes. (State Department no longer recommends iodine.)

Meat in local markets has been exposed to dust and flies; it should be rinsed well, allowed to dry, and cooked very thoroughly. Eggs should be washed well just before use.

Dairy products in state stores or hard currency shops should be safe, having been pasteurized, but are poorly handled; those in the market normally have not been pasteurized. Fresh milk should be brought to a boil before being used. Soft cheese should be avoided; hard cheese is okay.

Remember to wash hands before preparing food and before eating.

Brush teeth with “safe” water (boiled, distilled, or chlorine-filtered).

Be aware of problematic snacks at receptions (cream-filled pastries; chicken, etc.).

Community Health

Garbage is usually dumped on the street and is collected infrequently. Flies, rodents and mosquitoes can be a problem, as can cockroaches, ants, and other household pests. Stray cats and dogs might be infested with parasites; if you want to take one of them into your home, have it checked by the veterinarian.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The best way to reach Tashkent is by air from Frankfurt or Istanbul, but London, Moscow and other points can also be convenient. Make reservations as far in advance as possible.

A passport and visa are required; official invitations from a sponsoring organization or individual are no longer required for American citizens. Visas are issued by Uzbek embassies and consulates abroad. Visitors coming from countries where Uzbekistan does not have diplomatic or consular representation should obtain visas in a third country. Visas are not available upon arrival at any Uzbek airport.

Importantly, Uzbek visas indicate not only the validity of the visa, but also the period of time a person is allowed to stay in Uzbekistan on a given trip. Although Uzbek visas given to private American citizens are generally valid for four years with multiple entries, a visitor will have to leave the country after the number of days indicated as the duration of stay on the visa. Therefore, it is important to indicate your intended period of stay when applying for your Uzbek visa.

Further visa information is available at the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, located at 1746 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; telephone (202) 887-5300; <http://www.uzbekistan.org>; or the Uzbek Consulate in New York, located at 866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 327A, New York, N.Y. 10017; telephone (212) 754-6178 or (212) 754-7403; <http://www.uzbek-consul.org>.

All travelers, even those simply transiting Uzbekistan for less than 72 hours, must obtain an Uzbek visa before traveling to Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has suspended the 72-hour transit rule that allowed travelers with visas from other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States to transit Uzbekistan without an Uzbek visa.

On December 1, 2001, the Uzbek Government imposed travel restrictions on large parts of the Surkhandarya Oblast region bordering Afghanistan, including the border city of Termez. Foreign citizens intending to travel to this region must obtain a special permission card from the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs or Uzbek embassies and consulates abroad.

All travelers present in Uzbekistan for more than three days must register with the Office of Entry, Exit, and Citizenship. Hotel guests are registered automatically, but all other travelers are responsible for registering themselves. Visitors without proper registration are subject to fines and possible harassment by local authorities. Uzbek law mandates that visitors carry a medical certificate attesting that they are not infected with HIV. However, this requirement is only sporadically enforced.

Travelers to Uzbekistan are subject to frequent document inspections. Therefore, U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to carry a copy of their U.S. passport and their Uzbek visa with them at all times so that they may more readily prove that they are U.S. citizens.

Uzbek customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary import or export from Uzbekistan of items such as armaments and ammunition, space technology, encryption devices, X-ray and isotope equipment, nuclear materials, poisons, drugs, precious and semi-precious metals, nullified securities, pieces of art and antiques of historical value. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Washington, D.C. or the Consulate of Uzbekistan in New York for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Foreigners must complete a customs declaration upon entering Uzbekistan and may face fines upon departure if unable to produce certificates verifying legal conversion of foreign currency. Old U.S. dollar bills (prior to 1990) and/or those in poor condition (with tears, writing or stamps) are not acceptable forms of currency in Uzbekistan. Although payment in U.S. dollars is required for certain hotel charges, plane tickets, and visa fees, other dollar transactions, as well as black market currency exchanges, are prohibited.

Americans are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy and obtain updated information on travel and security in Uzbekistan. The U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, is located at Ulitsa Chilanzarskaya, 82. The main Embassy telephone number is (998 71) 120-5450, fax (998 71) 120-6335; the Consular Section's direct line is (998 71) 120-5444, e-mail address: consular@usembassy.us. Current information may also be obtained from the Embassy web site at <http://www.usembassy.uz>.

Pets

Pets should arrive with all inoculations, including rabies, up to date. Vaccines are not available locally. A health certificate from a veterinarian and certificate showing a current and valid rabies inoculation are required for dogs and cats entering the country. No quarantine is required.

There is no dog food of American quality and standards available in Uzbekistan. Appropriate food for your pets should be shipped with consumables.

Veterinarian services in Tashkent are below U.S. standards, and have been used by Americans with varying degrees of success.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

In general, Uzbekistan is a cash-only economy, with the majority of transactions in the local currency, the Sum. Many vendors and merchants, however, will request payment in cash dollars once they discover you are American. Prices for goods that are available for sums are usually quite reasonable by Western standards; because of low prices and constantly changing exchange rates, it is recommended to exchange only small amounts of cash per accommodation transaction.

Travelers checks are generally not accepted in Uzbekistan. Credit cards are not widely accepted in Tashkent; the few shops which do accept credit cards add a service

charge to the price of the merchandise to cover costs.

Uzbekistan uses the metric system of weights and measures. A metric tape measure is useful.

Disaster Preparedness

Uzbekistan is an earthquake-prone country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov/>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 7	Christmas (Orthodox)
Mar. 8	Women's Day
Mar. 21	Novruz
Apr/May	Good Friday*
Apr/May	Easter*
May 1	Labor Day
May 9	Victory Day
Sept. 1	Independence Day
Oct. 1	Teacher's Day
Nov. 18	Flag Day
Dec. 8	Constitution Day
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Hijra New Year*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*

*variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Akchurian, Morat. *Red Odyssey*. An entertaining account by a Tashkent native of a car trip through Central Asia at the time of the breakup of the USSR.

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———. *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central Asia*. New York: Praeger, 1973.

———. *Uzbek Literary Politics*. The Hague: Mouton, 1964.

Bacon, Elizabeth. *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Culture Change*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Bailey, F.M. *Mission to Tashkent*. Memoires of a British agent who was trapped in Tashkent during the Bolshevik Revolution. Solid political and social history as well as an exciting read.

Critchlow, James. *Nationalism in Uzbekistan*. Westview Press. One of the best modern political histories of Uzbekistan.

Fierman, William, Ed. *Soviet Central Asia: The Failed Transformation*. Westview Press. 1991. An excellent collection by outstanding Western commentators on Soviet Central Asia.

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Grousett, Rene. *Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*. A classic account of the peoples of the Steppe, from the 13th-18th centuries.

Hopkirk, Kathleen. *Central Asia: A Traveler's Companion*. John Murray (Publishers) Inc. 1993. An alphabetical handbook to the region and an epic tale of violence and treachery, courage, faith and vision.

Hopkirk, Peter. *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road*, Kodansha Int'l. Set on the Silk Road, especially the Chinese Central Asian

region. Describes the great explorers who found artistic artifacts in Chinese Central Asia and took them home.

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Khodjayeve, E., and V. Mizhiritsky. *Uzbekistan: Questions and Answers*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1987.

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McClean, Fitzroy. *Eastern Approaches*. British Diplomat in Moscow travels in Central Asia.

Medlin, William K., William M. Cave, and Finley Carpenter. *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study of Social Change in Uzbekistan*. Leiden: Brill, 1971.

Nahaylo, Bohdan and Victor Swoboda. *Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR*. The Free Press, New York. 1990. An important and timely book about the many nations of the Soviet Union which are not Russian and which are currently campaigning for the restoration of their national rights and the transformation of the USSR from a Soviet Russian empire into a confederation of "free and equal" peoples.

Uzbekistan. Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Pub. House, 1987.

Whittell, Giles. *Central Asia: The Practical Handbook*. Cadogan Guide.

VANUATU

Republic of Vanuatu

Major City:
Port-Vila

INTRODUCTION

VANUATU is probably best known to Americans as the setting for James Michener's 1947 novel *Tales of the South Pacific* that was later made into a musical, but the islands have a long history and a diverse population. Human habitation of the Vanuatu island group may have begun as far back as 4,000 years ago. In 1606, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to discover the island group. Europeans did not return until 1768, and in 1774 the British Captain James Cook named the islands the New Hebrides. During the 1860s, planters in Australia, Fiji, New Caledonia, and the Samoa Islands encouraged long-term indentured labor of the islanders, a term called "black-birding." Missionaries and settlers then came. A mixture of French and British interests in the islands brought a unique form of government where France and the United Kingdom jointly administered the islands from 1906 until the arrival of Americans in World War II. Indigenous political activity developed in the post-war years. In early 1980, several northern islands seceded before the upcoming fixed date for independence that year. On July 30, 1980, New Hebrides became the independent Republic of Vanuatu. The new government restored order and

arrested the secessionists, who had been secretly supported by France.

MAJOR CITY

Port-Vila

Port-Vila, the capital of Vanuatu, is located on the island of Efate, the most populous island. The capital is perched on the sides of steep hills along the shores of a horseshoe bay. The town was little more than a row of warehouses along a dirt path until the 1890s, when drought and malaria caused the island's population to relocate its business district from Havannah Harbour. Port-Vila was made the seat of government in 1906. During the 1920s, Port-Vila had a reputation of being a wild frontier town, complete with drunken brawls, gambling, and sporadic gunfights and public executions. During the 1930s, the town was an enclave for the resident Europeans, and Ni-Vanuatu residents were only permitted to live there if they had employment in the town.

Port-Vila has a population of 23,000. In February 1987, a cyclone damaged 95% of the buildings in Port-Vila. Bauerfeld, on Efate, and Pekoa, on Espiritu Santo, are the

main airfields. Port-Vila and Luganville are the principal seaports. Agriculture and services account for most of the domestic economy. There is high-grade manganese ore on Efaté, but it is not currently mined. Tourism is regarded as a secondary part of the economy, and has developed since the 1980s. The country's Financial Centre, a tax haven created by the British in 1971, is the third-largest source of the national government's revenue. Its creation was the catalyst for an increase in construction in Port-Vila area during the 1970s—a new wharf significantly increased cruise ship traffic.

Clothing

Though most Ni-Vanuatu wear Western style clothing, there may be special circumstances within small communities of natives.

For instance, the chief of the small Paama Island community (about 600 people) in the capital of Port Vila has recently banned women from wearing pants, saying that such clothing is an unwelcome Western influence. The all male, honorary police force of the community will uphold the ban. However, there has been no indication, as of yet, that non-Paama women will be cited for wearing pants.

Recreation and Entertainment

Tennis and golf are sports that are popular around Port-Vila. Tennis matches on the international circuit are occasionally held in Vanuatu. Korman Stadium was built for the 4th South Pacific Mini Games that were held in Port-Vila in December 1993. Basketball, boxing, volleyball, and soccer are played there. Netball, handball, squash, and rugby are also played in town. Scuba diving and snorkeling are popular tourist activities, and there are several shipwreck dive sites near Port-Vila.

Port-Vila's panorama, tropical flora, and historic French persuasion make it one of the South Pacific's most picturesque cities. The central business district is concentrated in a half-mile strip along Kumel Highway that follows the waterfront's contour. An area known as Chinatown in central Port-Vila is the commercial center of the islands' Chinese merchant community. The waterfront market is the country's largest, and offers a wide variety of produce, as well as flowers, handicrafts, and artifacts. Independence Park is lined with English-style buildings and is the site of weekend cricket matches. Port-Vila's Quartier Français (French Quarter) contains several houses and the city's town hall, all built in the French colonial style.

Port-Vila has several fine restaurants encompassing Continental French, Vietnamese, and Chinese cuisine. The city also has many nakamals, or kava bars (kava is a popular beverage in the South Pacific, a mild tranquilizer made from ground pepper roots). Movie theaters and other places for nighttime entertainment are available. A new tourist attraction at Vatusala on Efate provides demonstrations of traditional village activities. Several islands of Vanuatu have caves decorated with ancient paintings.

A cultural center in Port-Vila has a library of both French and English books. The library's reading room

contains French and English periodicals and articles on Vanuatu's history. The center also houses a collection of fine Melanesian art and artifacts. There is also a display of preserved native flora and fauna, photographs, and a collection of valuable stamps. The Michoutouckine and Pilioko Foundation Art Gallery has a display of Pacific art, carvings, masks, prints, and embroideries.

Dancing is an important part of the traditional culture of the Ni-Vanuatu people.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

Vanuatu is an irregular Y-shaped chain of 84 islands in the South Pacific Ocean, about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to Australia. The island chain extends for about 500 miles and lies 600 miles west of Fiji and 250 miles northeast of New Caledonia. The total land area of the islands is 5,699 square miles (about the size of Connecticut), with a total coastline of 1,571 miles. The largest island is Espiritu Santo (sometimes just called Santo), with an area of 1,524 square miles. The islands are of coral and volcanic origin. There are active volcanos on Ambrym, Lopevi, and Tanna. Earthquakes are common, with the most recent severe one happening in 1994. Earthquakes in 1875 and 1948 created tsunamis that wiped out entire villages. The tropical climate is moderated by southeastern trade winds, which blow from May to October. Average temperatures in Port-Vila range from 77°F in winter to 84°F in summer. Cyclones strike the islands an average of 2.5 times each year. In 1987, Cyclone Uma hit Port-Vila and caused widespread damage and many fatalities.

Population

There are approximately 193,000 inhabitants. Only 70 of the islands are inhabited. Two-thirds of Vanuatu's population live on Efate, Espiritu Santo, Malekula, and Tanna. The Ni-Vanuatu are the Melanesian inhabitants of the country, and make up about 95% of the population. Europeans (mostly French) and other Pacific Islanders account for the remainder. About 80% of the population is Christian; the largest sects are Presbyterian, Anglican, and Roman Catholic. In the 1940s, an indigenous cult became popular, especially on Tanna. There was a belief in a mythical messianic figure named John Frum, who could obtain industrial goods through magic. There are 105 languages spoken among Vanuatu's small population, some of which have never been classified. The three official languages are English, French, and Bislama (also known as pidgin English or Bichelama). A child may speak as many as four different languages, and public life is often complicated by language problems.

Government

The Anglo-French Convention of 1887 established a joint naval commission over New Hebrides (as Vanuatu was then known) to protect the lives and interests of islanders. In 1906, the Anglo-French Condominium was established. Indigenous political activity developed after World War II, with increasing concern over land alienation and European dominance. In 1975, a representative assembly replaced the nominated advisory council under which New Hebrides had been governed. Self-government was agreed upon in 1978, and independence was attained in 1980. Under the 1980 constitution, the head of state is the president; the head of government is the prime minister. The unicameral legislature consists of 50 members, elected to four-year terms by popular vote. The judicial system is based on British criminal procedure and the French penal code. The Supreme



Village scene in Vanuatu

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Court has a chief justice and three other judges; there is also an appeals court.

Vanuatu's flag has a red upper section and a green lower section divided horizontally by a gold stripe running within a black border and widening at the hoist into a black triangle. A pig's tusk and two crossed yellow mele leaves are depicted on the black triangle.

Arts, Science, Education

Children are instructed in either English or French during elementary school, then switch to the other language for secondary school. About 90% of Ni-Vanuatu children attend elementary school, but less than 10% go to secondary schools. Cooperative units have organized a training center at Port-Vila for such skills as accounting, management, law, and marketing. The University of the South Pacific has an annex in Port-Vila with a Pacific languages curriculum that attracts students from all over Oceania. For higher education, especially medical or technical training, selected students go to Fiji, Australia, and New Zealand.

Commerce and Industry

Subsistence farming provides a living for most of the population. Fishing and tourism are the other mainstays of the economy. Mineral deposits are negligible; the country has no known petroleum deposits, but the government is encouraging gold and copper mining. A small light industry sector caters to the local market. Offshore banking, insurance, and trusts generate a significant amount of the country's income, due to the lack of taxes, duties, and controls. The government attracts international investors through tax exemptions and the ability to repatriate funds.

Transportation

Only Port Vila and the town of Luganville, located on Espiritu Santo Island, have surfaced roads on which a speed limit of 50 kilometers an hour is enforced. Surfaced roads are two lane and can be narrow in spots; care should be taken especially when driving at night or along unfamiliar routes. The roads found in all other areas are unsurfaced and dirt tracks. Drivers on all roads should give way to traffic coming from the right. Travelers must

take care when driving off main roads to avoid trespassing on communal land.

Travel between the islands is mainly done by light plane and boat. There are 31 small airfields that serve all the main islands. The chief airports are on Efate and Espiritu Santo, but these are still too small to accommodate jumbo jets, limiting the number of flights to and from the islands. Port-Vila and Luganville are the main seaports. Small ships provide interisland service. Vanuatu maintains a policy of open registry for merchant ships, allowing foreign shipowners to avoid the higher costs and regulations of registration under their own flags.

Communications

Vanuatu has an Intelsat satellite earth station that links the country to the rest of the world. Radio Vanuatu broadcasts daily in English, French, and Bislama through AM, FM, and shortwave transmissions. A single television station is also available. The weekly government newspaper is *Vanuatu Weekly Hebdomadaire*. The only private newspaper is the English-language *Trading Post*.

Health

Port-Vila and Luganville have the country's main medical facilities. There are five hospitals (with approximately 370 beds) and about 90 clinics, health centers, and dispensaries scattered throughout the islands. Vanuatu has only about 15 physicians.

Medical conditions resulting from diving accidents may require medical evacuation to Australia or New Zealand. A hyperbaric recompression chamber is located in Luganville on Espiritu Santo Island.

Malaria is a significant danger in most areas. Leprosy, tuberculosis, filariasis, and venereal diseases are also medical problems in Vanuatu.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

A passport and onward/return ticket are required. Visas are not required for stays up to 30 days. Travelers who anticipate the possibility of transiting or visiting Australia are advised to obtain an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) or visa for Australia before leaving the United States. The ETA is available to eligible U.S. citizens at time of ticket purchase through travel agents and airlines. For more information about entry requirements, travelers, particularly those planning to enter by sailing vessel, may consult the Vanuatu Mission to the United Nations at 42 Broadway, Room No. 1200-18, New York, NY 10004; tel (212) 425-9652, fax (212) 422-3427.

.Vanuatu customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Vanuatu of items such as firearms and ammunition, sexually explicit material and certain prescription medications. Other goods may be subject to quarantine or import duty. The government of Vanuatu prohibits the export of artifacts from the Second World War without prior permission. It is advisable to contact the Vanuatu Mission to the United Nations for specific information regarding customs requirements.

There is no U.S. Embassy or diplomatic post in Vanuatu. Assistance for U.S. citizens is provided by the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, which is located on Douglas Street, adjacent to the Bank of Papua New Guinea. This address should be used for courier service deliveries. The mailing address is P.O. Box 1492, Port Moresby, N.C.D. 121, Papua New Guinea; Tel: (675) 321-1455; fax (675) 321-1593. There is a voluntary American Warden located in Port Vila who has general information and forms (such as passport application forms). The U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby can provide information on how to get in touch with the warden in Vanuatu.

Americans are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and to obtain updated information on travel and security in Vanuatu from the Embassy. Information can also be obtained from the homepage of the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby at <http://www.altnews.com.au/usembassy>.

Disaster Preparedness

Vanuatu lies in the South Pacific cyclonic trajectory, and is vulnerable to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and sudden tidal movements. The Pacific Cyclone season extends from November through March. General information regarding disaster preparedness is available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov/crisismg.html>, and

from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) home page at <http://www.fema.gov>.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan.1	New Year's Day
Mar.	
(2nd Mon)	Commonwealth Day*
Mar/Apr.	Good Friday*
Mar/Apr.	Easter*
Mar/Apr.	Easter Monday*
May 1	May Day
May/June	Ascension Day*
July 24	Children's Day
July 30	Independence Day
Aug.15.	Feast of the Assumption
Oct. 5.	Constitution Day
Nov. 29	National Unity Day
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec.	Family Day

*Variable

RECOMMENDED READING

Harcombe, David. *Vanuatu: a Travel Survival Kit*. Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1995.

VIETNAM

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Major Cities:

Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Haiphong, Da Nang, Huế

Other Cities:

Dalat, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report 1999 for Vietnam. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

VIETNAM is a land of beautiful plains, mountains, and coastline and the site of a once-powerful and rich civilization. Throughout history, Vietnam has been invaded and occupied by various foreign powers. Many Americans were unfamiliar with Vietnam until the mid-1960s, when the United States became embroiled in a conflict between Communist North Vietnam and non-Communist South Vietnam. The United States, an ally of South Vietnam, launched a series of air strikes against North Vietnam in 1965 and sent the first group of combat troops to South Vietnam during that same year. Over the next several years, the United States became increasingly involved in the

conflict. By 1969, 543,000 American combat troops were serving in Vietnam. From 1965–1973, the United States and its South Vietnamese allies fought many bitter and bloody battles against the powerful North Vietnamese Army. On January 27, 1973, the United States and North Vietnam signed a peace agreement which allowed the United States to withdraw its troops from Vietnam. The last American troops left Vietnam on March 29, 1973. The United States involvement in the Vietnam War claimed the lives of 58,000 Americans. The war between North Vietnam and South Vietnam resumed in early 1974, with the North Vietnamese quickly gaining the upper hand. The South Vietnamese army, suffering from high casualties and a lack of ammunition and spare parts, was soon defeated. On April 30, 1975, North Vietnamese Army troops entered Saigon, South Vietnam's capital, to accept the surrender of the South Vietnamese government. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam, created from the former Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam), was established as a new nation in July 1976.

Relations between the United States and Vietnam have been deeply strained since the war. Following the fall of South Vietnam in

1975, the United States imposed an economic embargo against Vietnam which prevented trade between the two countries or American business investment in Vietnam. The demise of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 deprived Vietnam of vital export markets and economic aid and prompted the Vietnamese to seek new economic ties with the United States. Throughout 1992 and early 1993, the United States and Vietnam have begun negotiations to relax or lift the American embargo and establish diplomatic relations. The United States has stated that it will not lift the embargo until the fate of American servicemen missing since the Vietnam War is known. The Vietnamese government has agreed to cooperate in this endeavor.

MAJOR CITIES

Hanoi

Hanoi is the capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and has a rapidly increasing population of approximately 3,000,000. It is located in the north of the country along the Red River. It is in an alluvial plain approximately 150 kilometers from the coast and is



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Street scene in Hanoi

surrounded by rural countryside consisting largely of rice paddies.

Utilities

Electricity in Hanoi is 220v/50-cycle AC (with two round pin electrical plugs). Voltage regulators are recommended for most appliances, especially computers, as electrical power in Hanoi is unstable and prone to voltage fluctuations, which could damage sensitive electronic equipment. Small UPS (uninterrupted power supply) units and a full range of transformers are available on the local market.

Food

Fresh meat and dairy products are not considered safe, as the Vietnamese have no adequate inspection system and processing facilities are often crude. However, a number of employees do consume meat and seafood purchased from the local open-air markets without any health problems. Imported seafood and meat, primarily from Australia and New Zealand, are always available fresh or frozen at, of course, a much higher price. Long life UHT milk (whole, low fat and skim) from New Zealand, powdered milk, and butter are readily available.

Most other basic foodstuffs are available in the supermarkets and

delicatessens. The limited selection of Western fruits and vegetables varies from season to season. Principal items which must be imported are traditional holiday foods, ethnic foods, dietary products, baby foods, cereals (those locally available are often stale), snack foods, sports drinks, and treats for children and pets. Personal care and cleaning products are generally available, but U.S. products or equivalents are sometimes scarce and sell at twice the average U.S. price. Seldom will you find a wide selection of products available at one location. Thus, from time to time, you will need to shop around before you find a certain item on your grocery list.

There is also a duty free shop operated by the Vietnamese Government for foreign officials, amply stocked with a variety of canned sodas, liquor, a limited variety of food items, and small appliances.

Clothing

By and large, dress in Hanoi is very similar to that in the U.S. for both business and recreational activities. A word of warning - even though the temperature may not indicate it, winters in Hanoi can be very chilly. Include some warm jackets, sweaters, scarves and hats in your luggage. Also, bring an adequate

supply of dress and sports shoes for everyone.

Women: There are a number of reputable women's clothing shops, which sell off the rack or made to order clothes in a variety of material.

Supplies and Services

Stock up on toiletries, particularly sunscreen lotion and mosquito repellent, paper and plastic products, vitamins, makeup, prescription medicines, and cooking and baking spices and seasoning.

Dry cleaning is good and relatively inexpensive. Shoe repairs are fair. You can get a replacement battery for your watch, but it won't last more than 6 months. Men can get their hair cut on the streets with a head and shoulder massage thrown in for less than \$2. Women's hair cuts range from \$3 to \$20. There are several good unisex beauty shops in town with both Vietnamese and "international" hair stylists offering a complete range of services. Automobile servicing is good, especially for Japanese cars. Picture framing is good and inexpensive.

Domestic Help

Below are examples of staff responsibilities and average salaries (as of January 1999). Salaries are stated in U.S. dollar equivalents and usually are paid in U.S. dollars. Domestic employees usually put in a 6-day workweek. At the higher end of the salary range are staff who speak good English, demonstrate initiative, and have several years experience working for Westerners. Giving your staff a "TET bonus"-equivalent to one month's salary is standard practice in Vietnam. Locally employed domestics do not live in.

Cook/Housekeeper: \$120-220 per month. Plans the meals with you; shops for food; supervises any work done in your house; supervises other household staff; keeps a kitchen account book; does the laundry; and cleans the house.

Maid: \$100-120 per month. Cleans the house; washes dishes; irons clothes; may prepare meals on the cook's day off; may do some marketing. It is possible to have part-time domestic help for one-two days per week for well under \$100/month.

Nanny: \$100-120 per month. Takes care of the children. May help with some light cooking and general housecleaning if the family is small.

Driver: \$100-130 per month. Acts as chauffeur. Purchases the gas and oil. Keeps your car in good operating condition. May also tend the garden and help out during social functions.

Day/Night Watchmen: \$75-80 per month. Screens visitors and guards your house.

Religious Activities

Hanoi has a large Catholic cathedral, but the regular services are only in Vietnamese and French. However, a nondenominational Christian service in English is held every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on the Van Phuc Diplomatic Compound. Protestant services in English are conducted every Sunday in the Dae-woo Hotel. Islamic services are held every Friday. Jewish services are not available.

Education

United Nations International School (UNIS). Children from kindergarten (prep-1) through grade 12 attend the United Nations International School. Student enrollment for the 19992000 school year is 346. The curriculum does not follow any specific national system, but is similar to American elementary and middle school programs. The school has based its curriculum on that used by the United Nations School in New York, as a lead-in to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. Currently more than half of the 49 full-time teachers are American or Canadian. The high school is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the European Council of International Schools. All instruction is in English. Students are not required to wear uniforms.

Address: Lower School 2C Van Phuc Kim Ma Road, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 823-0820 Fax: (84-4) 846-1285. Upper School, Hanoi Amsterdam Giang Vo, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 823-4910 or 823-5782 Fax: (84-4) 846-3635. E-mail: UNIS@netnam.org.vn

Hanoi International School (HIS): In its third year of operation, HIS offers an academic program to meet the individual needs of students from pre-school through high school. The Pre-School program for 3 and 4-year-olds offers a balanced day of free and structured play, storytime, and directed group time. The school's International Baccalaureate (IB) program is divided into IB Early-Years (kindergarten to fifth grade), IB Middle-Years (grades six to ten), and the two-year pre-university IB diploma curriculum (grades eleven to twelve). The school year begins in October and ends in June. All students speak and study in English. The newly-renovated campus includes a library, computer center, science laboratory, music room, sports facilities and playing fields. HIS has an international staff of 13 full-time and 7 part-time teachers from the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia.

Address: (Local) Lieu Giai Street Hanoi, Vietnam Tel: (84-4) 832-7379 Fax: (84-4) 832-7535. In the U.S., PO. Box 2876, Reston, Virginia 20195 No E-mail.

Morning Star International Kindergarten (MSIK): Opened in 1995, MSIK is a bilingual/multicultural education center for children ages 15 months to 5 years old. The teaching staff encourages the kids to develop basic skills in learning through playing and to develop confidence in themselves and their heritage. The regular year begins in early September and ends in mid June. The summer program begins in June and ends in late August. Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. Snacks are available both in the morning and in the afternoon.

Located in the Thanh Cong area, the campus facility includes a number of large sunlit air-conditioned

rooms and a spacious outdoor area. A variety of playground equipment and indoor activity materials are provided for recreation and learning.

Schedule Options: 2-1/2 to 5 years old. Full Time, Full Day, Monday to Friday 8:00a.m. to 4:00p.m.; Full Time, Half Day, Monday to Friday 8:00a.m. to 12:30p.m.

15 months to 2-1/2 years old. Full Time, Monday to Friday 9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m; Part Time, Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m.

Address: G 6 Thanh Cong Ba Dinh District Hanoi, Vietnam Tel: (84-4) 831-0879 Fax: (84-4) 835-0955. E-mail: mornings@netnam.org.vn Home page: <http://www.destination-vietnam.com/morningstar.htm>

Lycee Francais Alexandre Yersin: Recognized by the French Ministry of National Education and operated in collaboration with the French Embassy in Hanoi, the French International School of Hanoi (FISH) provides an academic curriculum in French for pre-school to high school aged children. FISH has a teaching staff of 35. Enrollment for the 1998-99 school year was approximately 300 (which includes 31 nationalities with the majority being French). Classrooms are large and fully air-conditioned. The cafeteria offers a choice of Vietnamese or Western food. The kindergarten has a well-equipped playground with flowers and trees. The new school building houses a gymnasium, two state-of-the-art laboratories, a well equipped library, and a research and information center with multimedia computer equipment.

Classes begin in September and finish around June 20.

Address: Truong Phap Quoc Te Ptth Hanoi Amsterdam Giang Vo, Hanoi Vietnam. Tel: (84-4) 843-6779 Fax: (84-4) 823-2023 E-mail: yersin@netnam.org.vn or lfay@hn.vnn.vn.

Special Educational Opportunities

Language training is available through a number of local resources.

The Hanoi Fine Arts Institute offers instructions in a variety of art mediums, including Vietnamese lacquer ware and the application of watercolor on silk.

UNIS offers a number of evening courses. You can study art, learn a foreign language, play tennis, do aerobics, surf the Internet, and lots more.

Sports

Tennis: There are plenty of tennis courts in Hanoi, but the demand still exceeds the supply, unless you are able to play during the week in the daytime. Most courts are in good condition and adequately-maintained. Court surfaces are either hard or carpeted. There are, unfortunately, no indoor tennis facilities. Bring a supply of shoes and socks, tennis balls, strings, grips, etc. Tennis equipment and clothes are locally available, but there isn't much of a selection and what is acceptable is more expensive than in the U.S. Court fees vary between \$3 and \$5 during the day, with evening hours (5:00-10:00 p.m.) at double rates. If you provide the string, you can get your racquet restrung in Hanoi for \$1.00. Most Vietnamese tennis coaches will charge \$10/hour. All service apartments, major hotels, and some of the diplomatic missions have tennis courts.

Golf: About 35km west of Hanoi is Kings Island - a scenic 18-hole golf course. The golf club is situated at the base of Ba Vi National Park and is surrounded by historic temples and pagodas, natural caves, waterfalls, hiking trails, hot springs, and ethnic minority villages. A new highway to the course is almost finished, making it about an hour's drive from Hanoi on Highway #11. Facilities include a swimming pool, tennis courts, a fully-stocked pro shop with golf club and shoe rentals, and a clubhouse which serves both Asian and Western food. Member-

ship fee is US \$15,000. Special package day tours allow non-members to play for \$55 during the week and \$80 on the weekend.

Swimming: Most of the larger hotels and service apartments have swimming pools. The schools do not. Avid swimmers usually join a health club with swimming privileges included in the package. One of the larger hotels in the city has the only indoor swimming pool with a retractable roof.

Bowling: There are three large bowling centers. One is located in a hotel just across from the U.S. Embassy (24 lanes) and another is within walking distance. A game costs \$3.00 and bowling shoes rent for \$1.00.

Health Clubs: Virtually every hotel and apartment complex has an exercise room with state-of-the-art equipment, showers, saunas, and whirlpools. Annual fees range from \$550-1200.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Several scenic and historic sights, including national parks and pagodas, can be done via a day trip from Hanoi. Although road conditions and traffic flow are steadily improving, travel can be a bit uncomfortable and stressful, due to poor road conditions. There are also several craft villages within a one-hour drive from Hanoi to view paper making, snake farming, noodle-making, and silk weaving. Also a popular attraction are the nearby factories for making costume jewelry, ceramics, lacquer ware and crystal.

Halong Bay: A five hour drive from Hanoi, Halong Bay is considered by many to be one of the most scenic areas in Asia. The bay consists of hundreds of small islands filled with caves and grottoes full of stalactites and stalagmites. Cat Ba, one of the largest islands in Halong Bay, is home to one of Vietnam's national parks and includes a large seven acre freshwater lake in the center of the island.

Sapa: Built originally as a hill station, Sapa now is one of Vietnam's major tourist attractions in the northernmost part of the country. By road (and some of it very bumpy), Sapa is a 12-14 hour scenic drive from Hanoi. For those travelers who prefer a more comfortable, faster ride up north, the overnight train from Hanoi to Sapa and back is perfectly safe and hassle free. During the weekend, you can mingle with the colorfully dressed hill tribe people (mostly women) who come into Sapa to peddle their home-made garments and textiles. Using Sapa as a base, you can also hike to several minority tribe villages, while taking in the panoramic view of Vietnam's Hoang Lien Mountains.

Vietnam is a photographer's paradise. Camera shops are everywhere. Film can be developed inexpensively in a couple of hours.

Entertainment

There are enough Western restaurants in town to titillate the gourmet's taste buds, ranging from traditional French cuisine to nouveau California fare. There are also some very good Asian restaurants for Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese food. For fast-food lovers, Hanoi offers several restaurants/delis for pizzas, hamburgers and hotdogs, and sub-sandwiches. Hanoi even has a Baskin-Robbins ice cream store.

American Club: The American Community Association (ACA) supervises the operations of the American Club and the Video Club. Patrons and their guests can enjoy an informal meal in the air-conditioned restaurant/bar area or outdoors in the bamboo pavilion. Also on the premises are areas set up for a variety of sports, including darts, billiards, badminton, basketball, and sandlot volleyball. Next to the pavilion is a newly-constructed playground for the younger children. Membership is open to all Embassy employees (American and Vietnamese) and to the expatriate business and diplomatic community (\$60 for singles/\$100 for families).

An additional \$50 fee is charged to join the Video Club, which offers a good selection of movies for both adults and children at a rental fee of \$1.00 per tape.

Social Activities

American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham): The largest business group in Vietnam, AmCham offers opportunities to help international corporations operate and thrive here. There are 230 members in the Hanoi Chapter and 300 in HCMC. Through its committees, AmCham adopts positions on a variety of general business issues in Vietnam. These committees work on such issues as reducing tax burdens for U.S. companies, individuals and their staff. Efforts have also been made to improve access to foreign exchange and to reduce bureaucracy and red tape in business dealings with the Vietnamese Government. Both the chapters in Hanoi and HCMC host a number of working luncheons with keynote speakers throughout the year. AmCham also organizes social activities, including an annual formal dinner/dance.

The Hanoi International Women's Club (HIWC): Open to all foreign women, the Club has approximately 325 members. The IWC promotes goodwill between the host country and the expatriate community through its annual Christmas Charity Bazaar and work throughout the year with local orphanages and rural support systems. The IWC also organizes monthly luncheons, coffee mornings, and orientation programs for newcomers. A non-profit organization, the annual membership fee is \$10 (which basically covers the cost of sending out the IWC monthly newsletters).

International Business Women's Club: A fledgling group of Hanoi's working women - expatriate and Vietnamese - exchange thoughts and network during an informal luncheon meeting once a month.

Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is Vietnam's largest city and river port, covering an area of 761 square miles on the Right Bank of the Saigon River, stretching from the shores of the South China Sea to within a couple miles of the Cambodian border. With a teeming population of 6 million, it is also the economic capital and cultural trendsetter of Vietnam. There are 22 districts (15 urban and 7 rural) with 75% of the population in the urban districts. Only a few degrees above the Equator, the city has a tropical, monsoon climate with an average annual temperature of 83°F.

April is the hottest month with an average temperature of 86°F. There are two seasons-rainy (from June to November) and dry (from December to April). Average number of rainy days annually is 159, with 90% of the rainfall occurring in the rainy season.

Food

The information on food in Hanoi generally applies also to HCMC. There is, however, a wider selection of fruits and vegetables available in HCMC, due to the proximity of HCMC to Dalat, where most of the fruits and vegetables are cultivated.

Clothing

See Hanoi for general information on clothing, but note that HCMC does not have a cold season.

Religious Activities

Houses of worship are available for Buddhists, Catholics, Muslims, and Protestants, but services for most are conducted in Vietnamese. Protestant worshipers can attend services in English on Sunday conducted for foreigners only. There is also a small international Jewish community that observes Jewish holidays. Our Lady Cathedral has a bilingual Vietnamese-English Mass on Sunday mornings.

Education

Fundino Kids Club (FKC): FKC provides high quality, innovative childcare and recreation for chil-

dren 1 to 5 years old. The eye-pleasing, up-beat Clubhouse and grounds are all on one level and colorfully and cleverly decorated with lots of primary colors using a dinosaur theme. There are currently 52 kids enrolled, including one physically handicapped and one developmentally-disabled child. All students are required to wear the Club uniform-T-shirt with a Fundino dinosaur emblem and denim shorts. Fundino's staff consists of 3 full-time expatriate teachers (one with special education training) and 8 Vietnamese assistants. Indoor facilities include a large floor and wall-padded playroom for the tots, a small kitchen for lunch and snacks, a library, and individual rooms for art, music, reading, computer and dance instruction. The spacious outdoor area includes an elaborate playground and wading pool for the older kids. FKC is open after hours to their kids as well as non-registered children, e.g. older siblings who attend other schools. Parents can sign up a child as a "Club Member" and pay a \$5.00 fee (which covers cost of general program, food and drink). Fundino's also caters birthday parties and special events.

Class Schedule: Play & Learn and Mums & Bubs (younger kids attended by a parent or nanny pay a reduced fee) operate Monday through Friday, except for Vietnamese Public Holidays.

Play & Learn 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Age 2-3yrs and 3-5yrs) Mums & Bubs 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (Age 1-2yrs) 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Address: 11B Nguyen Gia Thieu, Ward 6 District 3, HCMC. Tel: 930-0514 Fax: 930-0513 E-mail: none.

Saigon South International School (SSIS): This is a pre-kindergarten through 6th grade, coeducational school located in District 7 (the industrial zone). SSIS is the only school in HCMC which provides an American-based curriculum, with modifications made to accommodate the school's non-American population. In its first year of operation, the school currently shares a building and spa-

cious school grounds with two other schools (Vietnamese and Japanese). Even though the three schools occupy the same campus, they do operate autonomously. Shared facilities include a library media center, a swimming pool, two playgrounds, and a grass soccer field. Students are required to wear uniforms. Potable water is available on campus. However, students must bring their lunches, snacks and beverages to school. At the moment, SSIS does not have any programs for children with special needs.

Address: Phu My Hung Corp. Saigon South Parkway Tan Phu Ward, District 7, HCMC Tel: (84-8) 872-8410 Fax: (84-8) 872-5580 E-mail: none.

Class Schedule: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. -3:00 p.m.

International School Ho Chi Minh City (IS): Operating in two locations, the Senior Campus for grades 2 through 11 (grade 12 was added for the 1999-2000 term) is located in An Phu. The Junior Campus for pre-school to grade 1 is in District 3. The combined teaching staff totals 59 expatriate and 3 Vietnamese teachers for approximately 350 students. IS is a privately-owned co-educational, non-denominational institution. It operates an international curriculum with the International Baccalaureate diploma program offered in grades 11 and 12. All students (except for grade 11) are required to wear uniforms. Lunch can be purchased from the School's canteen. For recess the School provides its students with nutritional snacks. Potable drinking water is available on both campuses.

Senior Campus Address: 649A Vo Truong Toan St., An Phu, Thu Duc, HCMC Tel: (84-8) 898-9100 Fax: (84-8) 887-4022 E-mail: none.

Junior Campus Address: 236 bis Nam Ky Khoi Nghia St., District 3, HCMC. Tel: (84-8) 822-5858 Fax: (84-8) 823-0000 E-mail: none.

Sports

Tennis: All major hotels and service apartments have either hard or carpeted tennis courts. However, the current supply does not meet the demand, unless you can play during the daytime. Sports center and service apartment court fees range from \$3.00 (before 5:00 p.m.) to \$5.00 (after 5:00 p.m.). Hotels charge \$6.00 and \$12.00, respectively. Tennis pro fees range between \$5-\$8/hour.

Golf: There are three excellent golf clubs in the area. Dong Nai (18-hole) is approximately 1-1/2 hour drive from the city. The other two-Song Bei (18-hole) and Thu Duc (36-hole) are approximately a 45-minute drive. All three golf facilities have a clubhouse with a restaurant. Weekend greens fees are \$85, with weekday specials starting at \$45. Caddies are available at all three clubs. A fourth golf club-Saigon South (9-hole) opened for business in 1999.

Bowling: There are several bowling centers scattered around the city. Fees are the same as in Hanoi.

Swimming: With year-round temperatures in the mid-80s, swimming and/or lounging around the pool can be a great stress reliever. Having said that, you will still, however, need earplugs or a Walkman to deafen the cacophony of round-the-clock street and construction noise.

Jogging and biking: Unfortunately, the city's hazardous traffic conditions preclude all but the foolhardy from jogging and biking safely anywhere in town. Joggers and bikers are relegated to the safe interior facilities of health centers or travelling some distance outside the city.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Hoi An: A 45-minute ride outside of Danang, Hoi An was once a prosperous trading town frequented by the Japanese, Portuguese, Dutch, French and Chinese, Hoi An is now a quaint, artistic tourist attraction. For architecture buffs, there are a

number of well-preserved historic sites in Hoi An over 200 years old, including private homes, chapels, temples, pagodas, bridges and tombs. For the shoppers, Hoi An has lots of art and craft shops, streetside cafes, a large outdoor market, and quality garment tailors who can produce quality dresses, trousers and shirts quickly at very reasonable prices.

Dalat: Approximately 6 hours by road or one hour by plane from HCMC, Dalat enjoys year round spring weather. Dalat offers something for everyone. There is an 18-hole golf course, botanical gardens, ancient palaces and pagodas, and a large central market full of fresh vegetables, fruits and flowers. After a hearty meal, you can walk along small paths behind waterfalls or in the streets of the French Quarter up on the hill.

Hue: The former capital of Vietnam prior to WWII, Hue is surrounded by a large number of historic Imperial landmarks. Hue is a 2-hour plane ride from HCMC and is probably the largest city in Vietnam with the least amount of street traffic. Visitors to Hue can safely explore the inner city on foot. Cyclos can be used to tour the Forbidden Purple City and the Citadel. Bicycles or motor scooters can be rented from hotels for the short trips to the numerous Imperial tombs and pagodas.

Nha Trang: This sleepy little resort town has beautiful sandy white beaches with turquoise water, small outer-lying islands and coral reefs to explore, and the best fresh fruit milkshakes and ice cream in Vietnam. You can navigate around town by foot, cyclo, bicycle or motor scooter without a hassle. Nha Trang is a one-hour plane ride from HCMC.

Entertainment

HCMC has a larger variety of restaurants than Hanoi, including fast food chains (KFC and Jollibee), Tex-Mex, European, Indian, and Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai) cuisine. There are also numerous

nightclubs (some with live jazz ensembles), discos, and, of course, karaokes. A couple of the numerous video rental stores in the city stock movies in English. HCMC also has three large water parks and an 18-hole miniature golf course near the airport.

Social Activities

American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham): See Hanoi section.

Saigon International Women's Club (SIWC): The Saigon Chapter has approximately 600 members. (See Hanoi International Women's Club for activities.)

Haiphong

Vietnam's third largest city, Haiphong, is located in northern Vietnam approximately 10 miles from the Gulf of Tonkin. The city is one of Vietnam's major ports and a principal industrial city. Industries in Haiphong produce a number of products, including glass, cement, cotton, and chemicals. The city's location near the Gulf of Tonkin has led to the development of a large fishing industry. Haiphong was heavily bombed from 1965 to 1972 by American warplanes, but much of the damage has been repaired. In 1992, Haiphong had a population of approximately 783,000.

Recreation and Entertainment

Recreational activities in and around Haiphong are somewhat limited. The city offers many opportunities for souvenir shopping. Markets and stores in Haiphong sell pearl jewelry, brass figurines, carpets, and products made of buffalo horns and tortoise shells. The prices for many of these souvenirs is very reasonable. Other souvenirs can be purchased in the nearby village of Bao Ha. Villagers in Bao Ha are noted for their exquisite wood carvings of religious figures, lions, dragons, and buffalo. These carvings are very well-made and reasonably priced.



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Tomb of Tu Duc in Hué

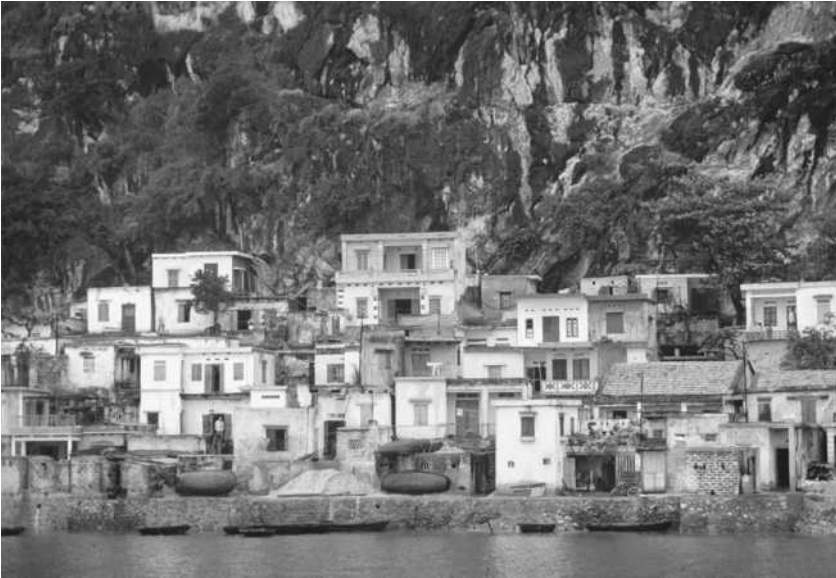
Haiphong has two primary tourist attractions. The Hang Kenh Communal House is one of the city's most interesting architectural structures. It is composed of over 500 intricate wood sculptures. Also, the 300-year-old Du Hang Pagoda is open to visitors. It is considered Haiphong's finest example of Vietnamese temple architecture. The Du Hang Pagoda contains a beautifully carved altar and several interesting statues of Buddha. A stone stela (tablet) in the pagoda lists the names of those who have served as caretakers for the pagoda over the centuries.

For tourists who enjoy sand and surf, the Do Son Beach is a pleasant

place to visit. Located approximately 13 miles southeast of Haiphong, Do Son Beach is a popular resort for Vietnamese and foreigners alike. It has miles of beautiful sandy beaches and several nice hotels.

Da Nang

Da Nang is located in central Vietnam and is the country's fourth largest city. The city became the site of a major American military base during the Vietnam War. Today, Da Nang is one of Vietnam's largest ports. Several industries are located in Da Nang. These industries produce beverages, machinery, and textiles. The city is a transportation



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Village nearby Haiphong

hub for central Vietnam. Roads and railways link Da Nang with Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In 1993, Da Nang had a population of approximately 383,000.

Recreation

Da Nang has many attractions that are of interest to visitors. Among the most interesting sites are the Marble Mountains. The Marble Mountains consist of five hills composed of marble. According to local traditions, these five hills represent the five elements of the universe (water, fire, metal, wood, and earth). Several caves containing Buddhist Shrines are located on the largest of the Marble Mountains, Thuy Son. These shrines, each of them unique, are open to visitors. Tours of the caves are conducted daily. Located near the Marble Mountains is China Beach (Non Nuoc Beach). This beach was a favorite relaxation and picnic spot for American soldiers during the Vietnam War.

Da Nang's Cham Museum is well worth a visit. This museum contains sculpture from the fourth through fourteenth centuries. Each room of the museum is dedicated to sculpture and artifacts from a particular period in Vietnamese history. An English-language booklet explaining the origin and history of

the museum's artifacts is available from tour guides.

Entertainment

Opportunities for entertainment in Da Nang are rather sparse. Several restaurants in the city serve good traditional Vietnamese or French cuisine. Vegetarian dishes can be found at food stalls in the city. Da Nang has many shops and handicraft markets that fulfill the needs of most souvenir shoppers. Many tourists enjoy visiting Cho Con, Da Nang's central market. Among the products available to customers include flowers, household items, fruit, stationary, and ceramics. Bamboo handicrafts, rugs, and wood carvings, sold in Da Nang, make excellent souvenirs. Nightclubs are available in downtown Da Nang. On occasion, the city's Municipal Theatre offers performances of classical Vietnamese drama.

Huế

The city of Huế is situated on the Huong River in central Vietnam. Huế served as the capital of Vietnam from 1802 to 1945. Today, it is one of Vietnam's educational, religious, and cultural centers. The city was heavily damaged during the Vietnam War when it was a major focus of the North Vietnamese Tet

offensive in 1968. Although many priceless treasures, buildings, museums, and shrines were destroyed, some of the damage has been repaired. Huế experiences a very hot and dry climate, particularly during the summer. From September to April, the city receives heavy rainfall. Huế had a population of approximately 220,000 in 1992.

Recreation

Huế offers extensive opportunities for sight-seeing. Tourists may visit the Forbidden Purple City. This palace was used exclusively by emperors and their families. The entire complex was practically leveled during the Tet Offensive of 1968, but parts of the building's library have been reconstructed. Located near the Forbidden Purple City, the Thai Hoa Palace is a beautiful structure which escaped damage during the war and is open to visitors. Constructed in 1805, the Thai Hoa Palace has an ornate red lacquer ceiling with gold inlays.

The Imperial Museum is well worth a visit. Although many priceless artifacts were destroyed during the Vietnam War, some of the museum's treasures survived without damage. Among the items on display are furniture, clothing, and a sedan chair used by Vietnamese emperors.

Huế was the final resting place of seven Vietnamese emperors. As a result, many tombs are located in the city. Most of the tombs contain not only the remains of the emperor, but also an altar containing some of the personal treasures possessed by the emperor and a temple for personal devotions. One of the most impressive of all tombs is the Tomb of Minh Mang. This tomb has beautiful architecture and magnificent stone carvings. Another tomb, the Tomb of Khai Dinh, is frequently visited by tourists. Although the exterior of the tomb is unimpressive, the interior contains magnificent frescoes made of colorful glass and ceramic fragments. The Tomb of Khai Dinh also contains a bronze statue of the emperor adorned in royal clothing.

Entertainment

Western-style entertainment in Hué is very limited. Most entertainment activity centers around shopping in the city's huge Dong Ba Market. A wide variety of products are available at this market, including the large conical hats that are worn by many Vietnamese. Hué's Gold and Silver Trade Department sells beautiful gold and silver handicrafts.

Several restaurants serving traditional Vietnamese, French, and vegetarian cuisine are located in Hué. Good food is also available at food stalls throughout the city. The prices of food in Hué is very reasonable.

OTHER CITIES

The city of **DALAT** is located in the central highland region of southern Vietnam. Dalat is situated in a forested region amid beautiful lakes and waterfalls. It enjoys a pleasant, cool climate, with a rainy season between July and October. The city is noted for its fresh vegetables, strawberry jam, candied plums, wine, artichokes, tea, and tropical flowers and is a popular tourist destination. Coffee, rubber, and tea plantations near the city are an important contributor to the local economy. Dalat is the home of a major university. Road and air connections link Dalat with Ho Chi Minh City. Dalat has an estimated population of 125,000.

NHA TRANG is situated at the mouth of the Cai River in southeastern Vietnam. The city's location near the South China Sea has led to its development as a major port city. Fishing is the primary industry in Nha Trang and the city is noted for its excellent seafood. The region near Nha Trang is very fertile and supports the growth of coffee, coconuts, sesame seeds, and cashew nuts. These agricultural products are exported through the city's port. Tourists are attracted to Nha Trang's beautiful, sandy beaches and the coastal waters are condu-

cive to snorkeling, fishing, and scuba diving. The city is connected by road, air, and rail with Ho Chi Minh City. Nha Trang had a population of roughly 221,000 in 1992.

The city of **QUI NHON** is located in central Vietnam and is an important port city. Qui Nhon has very few industries, the largest of which are salt evaporation and fishing. The city offers weekly flights to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In 1992, Qui Nhon had a population of 163,400.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Area and Geography

Like a dragon floating in the sea, Vietnam winds its way some 1,030 miles up from the South China Sea to the Gulf of Tonkin, with its head caressing the border of China to the north and its back resting snugly against her Southeast Asian neighbors Laos and Cambodia-to the west. The total land area of Vietnam covers about 128,000 square miles (larger than Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina combined). Vietnam's main cities, for population and importance, are Hanoi, Haiphong, Hue, and Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon).

Vietnam's northern terrain is mostly mountainous or hilly, with some highland areas covered by a thick green blanket of jungle (about half the total land area). The Red River Delta and coastal plains in the lowland part of the North are heavily populated and intensively cultivated (almost entirely by rice fields). Although much of this Delta Region is seasonally flooded, a complex network of dikes and levees help to prevent serious flood damage.

The southern part of Vietnam is dominated by the estuary of the Mekong River system and is low, flat, and frequently marshy. The

rich soil in the Mekong Delta is the most fertile in the country. Areas immediately north and east of Ho Chi Minh City in the Mekong Delta are much more varied-with low-lying tropical rain forest, upland forest, and the rugged Annamite Mountain chain.

Vietnam is largely a tropical monsoon country. In the north, a hot rainy season prevails from May to September. The average temperature in Hanoi is about 86°F during this period, with very high humidity. Due to the lack of proper drainage, flooding caused by heavy rainfall and/or typhoons can create hazardous conditions to one's health and property. Flooded streets slow down traffic and provoke accidents. Houses and furnishings can suffer as a result of leaky roofs and other sources of water damage. Food supplies are also affected. During the cooler, dry season in the north from December to March, the average temperature is 68°F, with overnight minimums sometimes around 40°-42°F. Due to the lack of heating in most shops and offices during the dry season, it will feel considerably colder.

In the south, Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta experience a year-round tropical climate with daily temperatures normally exceeding 88°F. The rainy season in Danang and Hue in the center of the country lasts from October to March.

Population

In 2000 Vietnam's rapidly growing population was estimated at nearly 80 million, making it the twelfth most populous country in the world. The population makeup is roughly 85% ethnic Vietnamese, 3% ethnic Chinese, and the remaining 12% a mixture of over 50 ethno-linguistic groups, including Khmer, Cham and Muong. The largest single minority group - the Chinese - live mostly in the Cho Lon District of Ho Chi Minh City and other large cities. Vietnam's infant mortality rate is 36/1000. Life expectancy for males is 63 years and 67 years for females.

Vietnam has one of the most complex ethno-linguistic mixes in all of Asia. Aside from the Kinh or Vietnamese, the rest of the country's 54 nationalities inhabit the Central Highlands and the mountainous regions in the north. The official language is Vietnamese—a hybrid of Mon-Khmer, Tai and Chinese. English is increasingly favored as a second language. In addition to English, many Vietnamese officials and businessmen speak some French, Russian or Chinese.

The predominant religion practiced by 90% of the Vietnamese is Mahayana Buddhism, which is often referred to as a way of life or a philosophy rather than a religion. It advocates moderation in all facets of life and sees material objects as standing in the way of greater happiness. Buddhists believe in reincarnation, with the actions of your current life determining the role of your next life.

By living simply and selflessly, a person will be reincarnated many times over. This continues over many lifetimes until the soul reaches a stage of eternal happiness - nirvana. Other religions practiced in Vietnam are Confucianism, Taoism, Catholicism, Animism, Cao Daim, and Islam.

Culture

The Vietnamese family unit (particularly in the rural areas) is patriarchal in nature with strong familial ties. It is not unusual to find three or four generations living in the same household. Personal names are written with the family name first, middle name second, and the first name last. It is common practice to address people by their first names, e.g. a woman by the name of Nguyen Anh Tuyet would be addressed as “Miss Tuyet.”

Observing the following local customs will help keep you from embarrassing yourself with the Vietnamese. Crossing your index and middle finger (our way of wishing it were so) is considered to be a lewd gesture. Direct eye contact is

seen as a sign of disrespect. Touching someone, especially on the head, is not welcomed. Motioning for someone to come with your palm up is considered rude. Handing a pair of chopsticks or a toothpick to someone is considered bad luck. And, last but not least, the Vietnamese (like most other Asians) do not like to “lose face.” When they don't understand a request or question, they will still respond affirmatively so as not to lose face. Although they might disagree, they will nod affirmatively just to avoid confrontation. The Vietnamese are not prone to show their emotions in public.

Public Institutions

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) is a one-party state controlled by the Vietnamese Communist Party, with the Political Bureau (Politburo) as the central organ of the Party. Its national flag is red with a large yellow star in the center. The Party's constitutionally mandated leading role and the occupancy of nearly all the senior Government positions by Party officials ensures the primacy of Politburo guidelines. The National Assembly (chosen in quadrennial elections) elected non-Party members for the first time in 1997. But, despite some increased activism, it remains largely controlled by the Party. Party intrusion into Government operations has diminished somewhat, allowing Government officials to have more latitude in implementing policy. The Party and State have also diminished their intrusion into the daily lives of the people.

Vietnam's administrative bodies are divided into the following four levels: 1) central; 2) provincial and municipal (Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Danang, and Haiphong); 3) quarters (urban) and districts (rural); and 4) precincts (urban) and communes (rural). Vietnam has 61 provinces, 3 municipalities under central government control, one special zone, urban quarters and rural districts, and urban precincts and rural communes. All these different levels have a fair degree of independence in implementation of

policy and administration of local resources.

There are a number of “mass organizations.” The Women's Union (approximately half of the total labor force), the Farmer's Union, and the Youth Union are called on to represent the interests of various sectors of the Vietnamese public and serve as a political link between the people and the Communist Party on the one hand, and the Party and Vietnamese Government on the other. The Vietnam Fatherland Front, an umbrella organization under the Communist Party, coordinates and oversees the activities of these mass organizations. The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) represents the commercial interests of both state-owned industries and the private sector and informally advises the Vietnamese Government on economic policy.

Vietnam obtained membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July 1995 and in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in November 1998. The SRV also belongs to the following international organizations: The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN Development Program (UNDP), UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WHO (World Health Organization), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), ADB (Asian Development Bank), INTELSAT, Mekong Committee, Nonaligned Movement, and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. Vietnam also has observer status in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Arts, Science and Education

The art scene in Vietnam reflects the perception of a people surrounded by a rich cultural heritage

who at the same time are striving to stake their place in the modern world. There are dozens of art galleries in Hanoi-many with high-quality paintings available, but just as many with trendy commercialized "souvenir" artwork churned out for the tourist trade. Other popular art forms include ceramics, religious wood carving sculptures and lacquer ware. Hanoi's Art Museum contains a smattering of work from different eras but probably does not have as good a collection as some of the private galleries. Also of interest are Hanoi's History Museum which contains artifacts from 1,000 years ago and the recently opened Ethnological Museum.

The capital city of Hanoi is sometimes referred to as "Asia's architectural pearl," with its mixture of traditional Southeast Asian/Chinese Art Deco and French Colonial styles. Juxtaposed among these quaint and pastel-colored turn of the century houses and office buildings are the recently constructed hotels and high-rise buildings of shiny steel and glass. There is an international movement - Friends of Vietnam's Heritage - actively engaged in preserving the architecture of the past in the face of the temptation to tear it down to build more commercial enterprises.

The Opera House is one center of culture in Hanoi. It is the home of the Hanoi Symphony Orchestra. International cultural groups also perform at the Opera House or at Hanoi's Music Conservatory. There are several smaller theaters for traditional Vietnamese opera ("cheo") and water puppet performances.

Although the quality of education has improved significantly here, Vietnam's reputation as a highly educated country exceeds the reality. Vietnam's population is probably better educated than other countries enduring similar levels of economic development. But, for the most part, the academic curriculum in this country still focuses on rote memory and "the one right answer." Since economic reforms officially began in 1986, literacy levels have

fallen due to families, particularly in the rural areas, pulling their children out of the classroom to earn money. Schools operate on double and sometimes triple shifts, meaning very little actual classroom time for many students. Educational facilities are frequently inadequate. Oftentimes families cannot afford the fees for attending school beyond the very basic levels.

The National University has many branches, the most prestigious of which is located in Hanoi. The SRV is striving to improve its comparatively low level of technological knowledge, particularly in the field of computer science.

Initiated in Vietnam in 1992, the Fulbright Program enrolls some 30 Vietnamese officials, scholars and professionals annually in graduate programs at leading American universities. Last year the program began funding American graduate student research in Vietnam. This year's Fulbright agenda included placing American lecturers at seven Vietnamese universities to teach and consult in various disciplines. In addition, there is a Fulbright run program in HCMC, which trains mostly provincial level officials in economic decision-making.

Commerce and Industry

After a decade of political isolation brought on by its invasion of Cambodia, Vietnam began to open its doors in 1986, seeking both to enter the marketplace and participate in the international community. As in China, reforms started with the agricultural sector and an opportunity for farmers to hold land for extended periods of time and decide on what crops to plant and how to sell much of what they produced. The "doi moi" (renovation) reforms also tried to create an atmosphere to attract foreign investment.

Agriculture, especially wet-rice cultivation, accounts for nearly 30% of overall production and employs the great majority of the population.

Important cash crops include coffee, rubber, tea, and mulberry (for silk production). Vietnam has significant deposits of crude oil and natural gas lying mainly off the southern coast, as well as coal and limestone. Other minerals are present, but not in marketable quantities, using locally available technology. Sixty per cent of the industrial sector is still in the hands of state-owned companies. The country's main exports are garments, textiles, crude oil, rice, seafood products, coffee, footwear, and other agricultural products. Export of light manufactured goods, especially textiles, footwear, and processed foods, is growing in importance. Major imports include petroleum products, industrial machinery, vehicles, consumer electronics, telecommunications equipment, fertilizers, and pharmaceuticals.

European and Asian investors came first, and remain among Vietnam's top ten investors even today. The U.S. trade embargo was not lifted until February 1994, after a long period in which the U.S. sought to strengthen Vietnamese commitments to cooperate on the humanitarian MIA issue. Vietnam also focused on re-establishing both regional and international ties, establishing diplomatic relations with over 100 countries. As a member of ASEAN, Vietnam committed itself to the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) as a part of the requirements for further economic reforms and tariff reductions.

Vietnam's reform process had already slowed by 1997, due to a two-year process in which Vietnam moved from a generation of 80-year-old leaders to a government and party led by men in their sixties. The new leadership pledged to continue the reform process and has not rolled back any of the earlier reform policies. But they have yet to move past the earlier stages of reform to attack the inefficiencies of a State-run system, preferring instead to sustain a lower level of growth while maintaining basic social stability and control by the Communist party.

The initial boom in foreign investment began to create the trappings of modernity in larger cities like Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). Hanoi, Haiphong, Hue and Danang got new hotels, taxi cabs and the start of a tourism industry. The hotel boom, most notably in Hanoi and HCMC, became a bust in 1997-98 when the over supply of three, four, and five-star facilities tumbled room rates. Unfortunately, this did not fill Hanoi's 3,000 new, higher-end hotel rooms because tourist levels had already begun to fall as a result of the Asian financial crisis. This crisis has also taken a deep bite out of foreign investment levels, which have been declining since 1996. By the end of 1997, U.S. investment in Vietnam reached \$1.4 billion, putting us seventh behind the French and a host of regional countries with significantly more money invested than the U.S. Two-way trade at about \$700-800 million is a fraction of its potential because of the absence of normal trade relations (formerly called MFN or most favored nation status).

Negotiation of a bilateral trade agreement has been a priority for the U.S. and Vietnam since the opening of our respective embassies in August 1995 and the commitments of then Secretary of State Christopher and Foreign Minister Cam to concentrate next on economic normalization. Movement has been slow, following the U.S. presentation of a draft agreement in April 1997. However, both sides remain committed to moving forward.

Another area of mutual interest, which has yet to be realized, is the negotiation of a Civil Aviation Agreement. Thus far, U.S. proposals have not been viewed favorably by the SRV in civil aviation negotiations. On the positive side, however, we have concluded a copyright agreement, providing reciprocal protection to published works, and are hoping to conclude a counter-narcotics agreement and a framework for science and technology cooperation.

Transportation

Automobiles

Having your own car or recreational van will add a great deal of convenience and independence to your life. Retaining a full-time driver is highly recommended, particularly if you have school-aged children with extracurricular activities and active social lives. A valid U.S. driver's license is required to obtain a local driver's permit. (International driver's licenses are not valid in Vietnam.) Please note that you may not import a vehicle over four years old.

Driving in Vietnam is stressful and requires a great deal of care and vigilance to avoid accidents. Most people do not obey standard rules of the road. Traffic moves on the right, but operators sometimes do not stay on their own side of the road. There are very few traffic lights or stop signs. In principle, the bigger you are, the more right of way you have. Another basic rule of thumb for driving in Vietnam: Those behind need to watch out for those in front or alongside. If you plan on operating a motorcycle or riding a bicycle, bring a sturdy helmet. Department of Transportation approved helmets provide excellent protection; however, some people find that the limitation of peripheral vision from a full face helmet is not always a good trade off in Vietnam given the need to watch for lane intrusion from all directions. An open-faced helmet or even a bicycle helmet may be appropriate, but riding bareheaded is not.

Virtually everyone in HCMC owns a motor scooter and operates it like there's no tomorrow. With this seemingly endless stream of motor vehicles, HCMC is, without a doubt, one of the noisiest cities in the world. At first glance, one might think HCMC's mostly straight and perpendicular roads would be safer to navigate than Hanoi's winding streets, but one quickly realizes that havoc reigns supreme down south. People make U-turns wherever they please. Motor scooters dodge in and out pushing your nerves to the limit. If that weren't enough, the

motor scooter operators drive significantly faster and are terrifyingly more reckless than in Hanoi. And, if the speed doesn't get to you, the abundant exhaust fumes will.

Local

Taxis are plentiful and the taxi drivers usually understand enough English to take you where you want to go. Cities still have many cyclos or pedicabs you can use for short distances and/or more scenic rides. There are also "hugging" motor scooter rides available for the more adventuresome traveler (riding behind a Vietnamese on a 100cc Honda Dream).

Regional

Using local buses is not recommended. They are not only crowded and uncomfortable, but are also considered unsafe for most foreigners. Trains in Vietnam only service coastal cities. Not only are they limited in service, but they run slowly on a narrow gauge track and, except for a special group of cars used from Hanoi to Sapa in the northwest highlands, are uncomfortable, unsafe, and noisy. Vietnam Airlines and its sister company, Pacific Airlines, monopolize the domestic air service, and enforce a double-tier price structure, which subsidizes Vietnamese travelers' fares. Suffering financial difficulties, Vietnam Airlines sometimes cancels flights without notice, often leaving passengers stranded.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Local and international telephone service is available and reliable. International direct dial service is excellent. A 3-minute call to the U.S., however, costs approximately \$15 (one of the highest rates in the world). Direct calls from the U.S. can be received in Hanoi and cost approximately \$1.50 per minute.

Radio and TV

The Vietnamese Government operates two radio stations, which broadcast classical music, traditional Vietnamese music, the news

in Vietnamese, and American pop music a couple of hours per day.

There are four Vietnamese television channels. With the significant increase in the expatriate population during the past couple of years, installation of satellite dishes on detached houses and service apartments has brought a myriad of international television channels to Vietnam, including but not limited to-CNN, CNBC, MTV, and Hong Kong's Star World and Star Sports (which show selected British, Australian and American programs). Other channels available come from China, France, Australia, Indonesia, India and Malaysia. In Hanoi, one can obtain cable service from Vietnam TV for an initial fee of \$250.00 and a monthly fee of about \$30.00.

In HCMC, the following cable channels can be viewed in all major hotels and service apartments: CNN, CNBC, DIS, HBO, MTV, TNT, National Geographic and the Cartoon Network. Other channels come from Australia, France, Japan, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the UK. Radio stations play both Vietnamese and Western music.

Locally purchased televisions and VCRs use the NTSC PAL system. Both PAL-system and multi-system televisions and VCRs are available here at reasonable prices.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Personnel are advised to bring reading material from home because English language books and magazines are scarce. Moreover, what little supply of English language material is available in Vietnam costs two to three times what we would pay in the U.S.

The local print and broadcast media are run by the Communist Party and Government of Vietnam. Reporting of local developments is therefore heavily controlled and coverage of international events is limited.

E-mail and Internet services have recently become available but can also be censored. Because of power outages, service is often unreliable and subject to interruptions.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The medical care available in Vietnam does not meet U.S. standards. Anything involving broken bones or other surgical procedures will entail a medevac. Medevac patients are flown either to Bangkok, Hong Kong or Singapore.

There are three medical facilities in Hanoi approved by the U.S for minor medical treatment: Dr. Kot's Clinic, AEA International, and the Hanoi International Hospital. In HCMC the three approved medical facilities are: AEA International, Columbia - Gia Dinh Clinic, and Dr.Vannort's Clinic. All of the above medical facilities have a number of qualified foreign doctors on staff who speak English. While each can treat routine illnesses and stabilize trauma, they are not full service medical facilities. Dentists are also available in Hanoi and HCMC and the caliber of general dental care is considered good.

Community Health

Tap water is not considered safe to drink. Bottled water can always be purchased in most restaurants and grocery stores. Consuming ice made from unfiltered water poses a risk when having refreshments outside the home.

All fruits and vegetables eaten raw should be thoroughly cleaned using an acceptable washing/soaking procedure. Reports by several Western doctors have noted that Vietnamese farmers rely heavily on DDT and night soil.

The sewage system is inadequate and in many places within the cities totally nonexistent. And, since the majority of Vietnamese homes in the city do not have indoor plumbing, it is not uncommon to see the

Vietnamese using trees and walls as urinals, or to see the children use runoff channels in the street next to the sidewalks as toilets. Spitting, nose picking and nose blowing on the sidewalk are also common. During the rainy season, the aforementioned practices are even more of a health hazard due to flooding on the streets and sidewalks.

Shopkeepers and residents place garbage in small piles outside in anticipation of the evening garbage collector, who then hauls away the debris in an open cart. Oftentimes, people can be seen sitting along the streets sifting through a day's collection of garbage to recover recyclable material. A neighborhood site serves as the pickup point for the city's garbage trucks.

Preventive Measures

Be aware of both the medical and physical health hazards in country. Try to avoid exposure to mosquitoes and/or use mosquito repellent. Mosquitoes are the most common transmitter for dengue fever, malaria and Japanese encephalitis. Recurring parasitic infestations (e.g. worms) are a problem. Individuals usually suffer some form of intestinal disorder (from mild to severe) within a few weeks after arrival in Vietnam. Diseases prevalent in Vietnam include tuberculosis, dengue fever, Japanese encephalitis, hepatitis, STDs, and malaria. Inoculation against cholera and taking malaria suppressants are not necessary. Children should have the normal variety of immunizations, including the three-shot rabies preventive series and a tetanus booster. Local pharmacies are known to carry contraband or counterfeit medication. Bring at least a 3-month supply of medicine for chronic conditions and arrange for regular renewal of supplies to be sent through mail.

Contact lenses and solutions are available in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, though they may be difficult to find. With increasing pollution levels, those using extended wear lenses may find them inappropriate. If you wear eyeglasses, however, it is advisable to bring an extra pair.

Larger (men's) size frames are not available and frame styles are quite limited. Acceptable eye care services are available in Bangkok, Hong Kong or Singapore.

Pickpocketing and handbag/camera snatching are common occurrences (much more so in HCMC than in Hanoi), particularly before the Lunar New Year - late January/early February. Fortunately, most of these petty crimes are economic and non-violent in nature. Should you be the unfortunate victim of such petty crimes, it is wise not to resist. Stolen cameras, wallets and handbags can be replaced; they are not worth risking life and limb.

While most people are more concerned with threats of infectious disease, traumatic injuries resulting from automobile or motorcycle accidents are the greatest hazard. Be sure to bring a sturdy helmet if you intend to ride either a bicycle or motor scooter in Vietnam.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

The most direct route to Vietnam from the U.S. is by air over the Pacific. Getting to Hanoi usually requires an overnight in Bangkok or Hong Kong to connect planes.

U.S. passports are valid for travel in Vietnam. Visas are required and should be obtained from a Vietnamese Embassy or Consulate before traveling to Vietnam. Visas may be issued for one or multiple entries but are usually valid for only one entry. Visas are generally valid for one month, but increasing numbers of travelers have been successful in having their visas renewed after their arrival in Vietnam for up to three months. Entry into and exit from Vietnam is sometimes restricted to a specific port of entry.

U.S. citizens are cautioned that the Vietnamese immigration regulations require foreigners entering

Vietnam to carry out only the activity for which the visas were issued. Change of purpose requires permission from the appropriate Vietnamese authority in advance. U.S. citizens whose stated purpose of travel is tourism but who engage in religious proselytizing have had religious materials confiscated and have been expelled from Vietnam.

No shots are required for entering Vietnam unless you are coming from a country that has had an outbreak of cholera, smallpox, or yellow fever.

Current entry requirements as well as other information may be obtained from the Vietnamese Embassy, 1233 20th Street, Suite 400, NW, Washington, DC 20036, telephone 202-861-0694 or 2293, Fax 202-861-1297, Internet home page: <http://www.vietnamembassy-usa.org>; the Vietnamese Consulate General, 1700 California Street - 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109, telephone 415-922-1577, or from a travel agent who organizes travel to Vietnam. Overseas inquiries may be made at the nearest Vietnamese Embassy

U.S. citizens have been detained after traveling in areas close to the borders with Vietnam's neighbors. These areas and other restricted areas are not always marked, and there are no warnings about prohibited travel. Travelers should avoid such areas unless written permission is obtained in advance from local authorities

U.S. citizens living in or visiting Vietnam are encouraged to register in person or via telephone with the consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi or the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Vietnam.

The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi is located at 6 Ngoc Khanh, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, telephone: (84-4) 831-4590; after hours emergency telephone

number: (84-4) 772-1500; fax: (84-4) 831-4578, Internet home page: <http://usembassy.state.gov/vietnam/>. The consular section's business hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Embassy's Consular Section provides the full range of services for U.S. citizens (passport services, consular reports of birth abroad, notarial services) and non-immigrant visa services (except K-1 fiancee visas).

The U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City is located at 4 Le Duan, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, telephone: (84-8) 822-9433, fax: (84-8) 822-9434, Internet home page <http://www.uscongenhcmc.org>. The Consulate General's business hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Consulate General provides the full range of consular services for U.S. citizens and the full range of immigrant and non-immigrant visa services. All immigrant visa processing in Vietnam, including visas for adopted children and fiance/e visas, is conducted solely at the Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City.

Callers from the U.S. should note that Vietnam is 12 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and 11 hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Time.

Pets

Pets can be brought into Vietnam. All animals must have a certificate of health issued by a veterinarian, including certification of inoculation against rabies dated between one to six months before the pet's arrival at post. Currently, no quarantine is required. Pets are usually brought in as excess baggage at the traveler's expense, rather than as cargo, to avoid long airport delays and expensive handling charges. You should notify post via telegram or fax prior to arrival to obtain an import permit. Competent veterinary services are available in Hanoi and HCMC. A limited variety of dogs, cats and birds are available in the local marketplace at very reasonable prices. Hanoi even has a bona fide pet store.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The monetary unit is the Vietnamese Dong (VND). There are no coins. Paper notes bear the portrait of Ho Chi Minh with the smallest note at VND 100 and the largest at VND 50,000. The rate of exchange fluctuates. In November 1999 it was VND 14,040 to US\$1. The Vietnamese use the international metric system of weights and measures. Gasoline and other liquids are sold by the liter, cloth by the meter, and food and other weighted items by the kilogram. Distance and speed are measured in kilometers.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

There is a 10% VAT on all locally purchased items.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

- Jan.1 New Year's Day
 - Feb. 3 Communist Party Foundation Day
 - Jan/Feb Tet Nguyen Dan*
 - Mar. 8 Women's Day
 - Mar. 26 Youth Day
 - Apr. 30 Victory Day
 - May 1 Labor Day
 - May 19 Ho Chi Minh's Birthday
 - June 1 Children's Day
 - July 27 Memorial Day (war martyrs)
 - Sept 2 Vietnamese National Day
 - Sept. 28 Confucious Birthday
 - Nov 20 Teacher's Da
 - Dec. 22 Army Day
- *variable

RECOMMENDED READING

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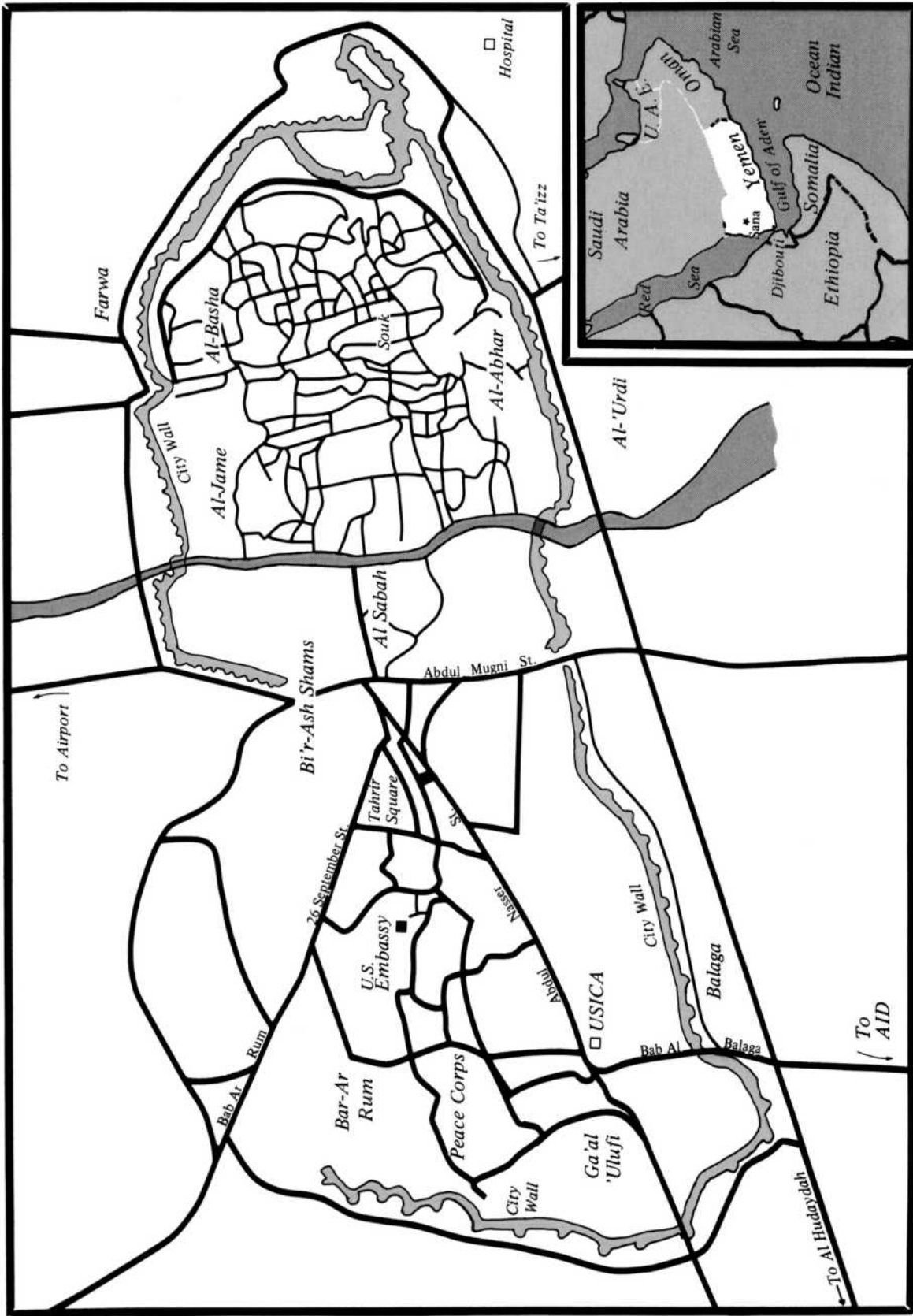
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Sanaa, Yemen

YEMEN

Republic of Yemen

Major Cities:

Sanaa, Aden, Taiz, Hodeida

Other Cities:

Dhamār, Ibb, Al-Mukallā, Sa'dah

EDITOR'S NOTE

This chapter was adapted from the Department of State Post Report dated July 1993. Supplemental material has been added to increase coverage of minor cities, facts have been updated, and some material has been condensed. Readers are encouraged to visit the Department of State's web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> for the most recent information available on travel to this country.

INTRODUCTION

YEMEN, once part of the ancient Kingdom of Sheba, is one of the oldest centers of civilization in the Near East. Although much of its early history is obscure, it is known that from about 1000 B.C. to A.D. 600, it was the center of an advanced culture based on intensive agriculture and a prosperous link in trade between Africa and India. A biblical reference speaks of its gold, spices, and precious stones as gifts given by the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon.

Halfway across the world and shielded from Western civilization for centuries, this lush, mountainous country has long remained politically and economically back-

ward. Within Yemen, there is a variety of scenery, architecture, people, and customs, ranging across the hot and sandy coast land with bananas, palms and African-style thatched-roofed houses to the cool, coffee-growing central highlands dotted with stone fortresses.

After years of conflict, pro-Western Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen), and the only Marxist Arab country, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), merged into one country—the Republic of Yemen—on May 22, 1990. Today, Yemen is making rapid advances in modernizing political, economic, and public institutions, while seeking to retain the traditions of its culture and history.

MAJOR CITY

Sanaa

Sanaa, the capital of the Republic of Yemen, is a growing city of about 630,000 people located in the middle of a broad valley between mountains that rise to 12,000 feet. Sanaa's altitudes of 7,226 feet above sea level and its position on the Arabian Peninsula provide an almost ideal climate. Although dust can be a problem, the winters are warm

and the summers relatively cool. With the exception of two short rainy periods in spring and late summer, the air is very dry.

The geology of the Sanaa basin mixes volcanic with sedimentary rocks and the brown and black mountains create striking patterns in the morning and evening light. Many people are reminded of the stark beauty of Arizona and Utah, although the generally barren terrain is relieved by verdant channels of vegetation along the valley water courses. These water courses, or wadis, permit an extraordinary system of terraced farming along the slopes of the escarpment that turn the hills green during the two growing seasons of the year.

Sanaa has a unique architectural tradition dating from medieval times, which is preserved within the walls of the old city. Stone houses, often six or seven stories high, are highlighted by clusters of stained glass windows. Intricate designs traced in plaster decorate the exterior walls, while within the house guests climb stairs past the family quarters to a "mufraj" reception room. The mufraj—the word comes from the Arabic root "to view"—is chosen if possible for its view of the city and mountains, and guests recline on colorful cushions and carpets.



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Overview of Sanaa

A wall still surrounds most of the old city, and life within has changed little over the years. Narrow streets twist through the suq, or market area, offering a glimpse of blacksmiths working over their forges, meat, and vegetable vendors with their wares, gold and silver merchants and moneychangers doing brisk business, donkeys plodding beside their masters, colorful and pungent baskets of spices and children running everywhere. There is an atmosphere of continual festivity, with tribesmen from mountain villages examining the wares of the city alongside veiled housewives striking hard bargains with the merchants.

Westerners visiting the suq are treated with genuine friendliness by shopkeepers and their customers—and with little of the harassing pressure to buy found in some other countries. The old city is a favorite destination of many Mission mem-

bers, who enjoy bargaining for such treasures as elaborate silver jewelry, antique rifles, Maria Theresa coins from the Africa and India trade, as well as traditional jambias and embroidered cloth.

Outside the walled city, land prices have risen rapidly as emigrant workers invest their savings in new houses and shops. Construction projects continue in every area of Sanaa, but city services have lagged behind the population increase. Electricity outages in some areas are frequent, and voltage fluctuations can cause serious damage to electronic equipment not protected by voltage regulators. Houses in several districts are connected to municipal water and sewer systems, but many houses still rely on water wells or water delivered by tank truck, and their own septic tanks or cesspools. The municipal system provides water only for a limited time each week

requiring that water be stored in roof-top tanks.

Traffic is increasingly congested, both from cars imported with emigrant capital as well as from construction and utility projects which can close roads for extended periods. Most new houses retain traditional features such as stained glass windows and mufraj rooms, but rarely exceed three stories.

Stores carry a variety of consumer goods but supplies are inconsistent and prices high. A well-tuned system of information among the western community announces when scarce items are again in stock. Dedicated shoppers can generally find most items they need and many people enjoy their frequent contacts with local shopkeepers.

Contrary to the situation a few years ago, Sanaa's grocery stores are well-stocked with a wide range

of foodstuffs, albeit many are expensive by U.S. standards. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are widely available and inexpensive. Many food products familiar to American consumers, including snack foods, diet drinks and other packaged foods, are not available and should be included in consumable shipments.

U.S.—Yemeni Relations

The U.S. first established diplomatic relations with Yemen in 1946, but it was not until 1959 that a resident legation was opened in Taiz. The Agency for International Development program began soon after, and the legation was upgraded to Embassy status.

The U.S. recognized the post-revolutionary Yemen Arab Republic on December 19, 1962. On June 7, 1967, during the Arab-Israeli conflict, the government of Abdullah al-Sallal severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. and all Americans were withdrawn.

In 1970, the Yemen Arab Republic requested the resumption of diplomatic relations, and on April 29, 1970, a U.S. Interests Section was established in the Italian Embassy in Sanaa. On July 1, 1972, full diplomatic relations were resumed during a visit by then Secretary of State William P. Rogers. A new USAID program was started in the spring of 1973 and the Peace Corps began several projects in the same year. A military sales agreement was signed in 1976, followed in 1979 by the establishment of the Office of Military Cooperation.

In 1984, the Hunt Oil Company discovered oil in Marib. The pipeline work began in 1986 and commercial production began in 1988. Then-Vice President Bush attended the inaugural ceremonies of the central processing unit in 1986. Mr. Bush also inaugurated the beginning construction of the present embassy compound. President Ali Abdullah Saleh visited the U.S. on an official state visit in January 1990.

The former People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen severed its diplomatic relations with the U.S. in 1969. Before the resumption of diplomatic relations, contacts between the U.S. and the PDRY was exceedingly rare. However, in 1980, after the fall of former President Abd al-Fattah Ismail, the PDRY began realigning its foreign policy toward the conservative Gulf Shaykhdoms and dropped its sponsorship of Dhofar separatists attempting to secede from Oman. In the late eighties, PDRY began exploring the possibility of reestablishing diplomatic relations with the U.S. which were resumed in April 1990.

In May 1990, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen merged into the Republic of Yemen. A provisional constitution was overwhelmingly approved in a referendum held in May 1991. The unification agreement, according to which the ruling parties of the former North and South Yemen share power equally, stipulated a 30 month transitional period, due to end in November 1992. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held before the end of the period.

U.S.-Yemen relations took a turn for the worse as a result of the Gulf Crisis. The U.S. withdrew its Office of Military Cooperation, the Peace Corps, and slashed its AID program. As of mid-1992, bilateral relations continued to be strained by Yemen’s political support for the regime of Saddam Hussein. However, Peace Corps volunteers returned in midsummer, 1991 and the program continues to expand. U.S. companies are playing a growing role in the development of Yemen.

Food

A variety of food items is available in Sanaa, though prices are high, choice of brands is limited and quality varies, especially with fresh meat. Western-brand packaged foods are often found in grocery stores but their availability is sporadic and their price very high. The

following is a partial list of foodstuffs available.

- Fresh Meat: Beef, veal, lamb, chicken, rarely turkey.
- Frozen Meat: Beef, lamb, chicken, duck, steak, beef sausages (all are imported).
- Fresh Seafood: Shrimp (periodically), several varieties of fish (generally all of high quality, though lack of refrigeration requires care in choosing items).
- Fresh Vegetables: Cabbage (no red), carrots, okra, potatoes, tomatoes, green peppers, hot peppers, leaf lettuce, egg plant, squash (in season), onions (red and yellow), garlic, spinach, green beans (in season), cauliflower (in season).
- Fresh Fruit: Bananas, papaya, mango, pomegranates, figs, melon, grapes, limes, apples, oranges, peaches, pears and plums. Most fruits are highly seasonal.
- Dairy Products: Eggs, “long life” milk, butter (imported), yogurt, ice cream. Fresh cheese is now generally available, as are canned cheeses.
- Canned goods: Fair variety of canned fruits and vegetables, (all expensive). Locally produced fruit juices are reasonable in cost, but no sugar-free brands are available.
- Toiletries: Limited variety of basic items such as toothpaste, soap, body lotion and shampoo (expensive and sometimes of poor quality).
- Paper Products: Limited selection and expensive.
- Soft Drinks: Limited variety but ample supply of brand-name soft drinks are available.
- Miscellaneous: Most spices, ketchup and mustard (limited selection), pickles (limited selection), tea, coffee beans; vendors will grind the beans but result is usually too fine for American tastes. Instant

coffee is available but expensive. Flour and sugar (coarsely ground of uneven quality).

Clothing

Dress is relatively informal in Sanaa. Most Americans wear comfortable business attire to work. Formal wear for men is not required. Women wear both long and short dresses at receptions and cocktail parties. Women should also bring a "suq dress," an oversized, long sleeved garment with a high neck and hemline below the calf, and/or loose slacks with long overblouse. While Yemenis are generally tolerant of Western behavior and dress, most Americans feel more comfortable wearing conservative clothing in public. For street wear, in addition to the "suq dress," women often wear slacks with a loose-fitting shirt or blouse which reaches the thigh. Shorts are worn only for sports.

Because of the constant dust in Sanaa, clothing may wear out quickly with frequent washing in hard water. Durable fabrics are recommended. With Sanaa's moderate climate, all but the heaviest and lightest materials will be comfortable most times of the year. Sweaters and light jackets are necessary for at least part of the day during the winter months and often evenings in summer. As most streets in Sanaa are unpaved, sturdy shoes with crepe or rubber soles are a necessity. Ladies' leather heels can quickly be ruined on gravel, which is used instead of concrete or asphalt in many parking areas and paths.

There are several stores in Sanaa offering western clothing. Prices are high, selection is limited especially for larger sizes, and quality only fair. A good selection of imported fabrics is available. Imported shoes are available, but, again, prices are high and selection only fair. There are a few dependable seamstresses in town who can make simple garments.

Supplies and Services

Cosmetics and toilet articles are appearing in increasing variety, though quality may not be up to American standards. Favorite brands should be brought.

High altitude and clear skies make for a harsh, bright sun. A good supply of sunblocks or suntan lotions should be brought. Sunglasses are also advisable. Reasonable quality non-prescription types can be found in town; prescription sunglasses should be brought. Hats are recommended for outdoor activities especially for children. Skin creams are important in Yemen's extremely dry air, and liquid soap may be more tolerable than regular bar soap. Lip balm is also useful.

Non-prescription drugs familiar to Americans may not be available; a supply of medicines such as aspirin, cough syrup, and digestive remedies should be brought. Prescription drugs may be available locally, but you should bring a supply.

Local, American, and English brands of cigarettes are readily available at reasonable prices. Menthol brands are harder to find. Some pipe tobacco and cigars are available, but not in great variety.

Three hotels provide clean, fair to good quality barber and hairdressing services at reasonable prices. There are a large number of cheaper barbers, though quality and cleanliness can be a question. Dry cleaning services are offered by hotels and many shops, and quality is satisfactory. Car rentals are available but prices are high and a Yemeni driver's license is required (drivers can be hired for an additional charge). Shoe repair is very primitive.

Religious Activities

Islam is the national religion and Yemeni law prohibits religious proselytizing. However, Yemen is tolerant of the private practice of religion by foreigners. Both Catholic and nondenominational Protestant services are held weekly at the Hadda Community Center. Catholic Mass

is also held weekly and on holidays at the Sisters of Mercy home in Sanaa. A Protestant youth group holds regular meetings and sponsors various activities throughout the year. There are no functioning synagogues in Yemen, but Yemeni Jews hold religious services in their homes. There is an active Catholic church and Hindu temple in Aden.

Education

The Sanaa International School (SIS) is an English-language day school with students representing about thirty nationalities. The Department of State considers SIS as "adequate" through the sixth grade, although many American dependents attend SIS through ninth grade.

English (reading, grammar, composition, keyboarding, and spelling), mathematics, cultural studies (history, geography, economics, etc.), science, art, music and physical education are offered as a part of the standard curriculum.

A 4-year American secondary program is offered, which includes the basic subjects and a limited selection of electives. Various enrichment activities are scheduled some afternoons each week.

The school year runs from late August through early June, and the children attend school Saturday through Wednesday with Thursday and Friday off. The school hours are: 8 am to noon for kindergarten; 8 am to 1:30 pm for children ages 6 through 11 (although some days students will stay for various activities or special subjects); and 8 am to 3 pm for students ages 12 years and up. Bus service is available for a yearly fee. Children are expected to bring a snack on the shorter days and lunch on activity days. All textbooks are loaned to the students, who are responsible for their own pencils, erasers and notebooks.

The school is located about 20 minutes outside Sanaa, and consists of a number of comfortable, spacious buildings around a center courtyard. The 35-acre campus has large

play areas with outdoor play equipment.

A few English-language preschools are available for younger children. These preschools operate in private homes and have between 10 and 30 students. Qualifications of teachers vary, and other parents should be consulted before choosing a preschool.

Special Educational Opportunities

The Sanaa International School offers night classes in various subjects from time to time, including computer programming. In addition, Sanaa University offers a few English-language courses, though admission requirements and quality have not been tested. The British *Council* offers basic Arabic classes at regular intervals for a moderate charge. The Peace Corps offers a 2-month intensive courses in Arabic, but charges must be paid personally by the student. The American Institute for Yemeni Studies (AIYS) hosts lectures on a variety of topics relating to Yemeni and Arab culture, and shows by local artists and entertainers. It also maintains an excellent library of books relating to Yemen. Visiting scholars supported by AIYS and USIA provide opportunities for discussing a myriad of topics.

Sports

The Sheraton and Taj Sheba hotels offer memberships for use of their heated swimming pools, exercise rooms, and tennis courts (Sheraton only).

The Sanaa chapter of the Hash House Harriers sponsors weekly runs through the scenic countryside. Yemeni soccer teams play weekly throughout the season, and visiting teams bring international-level competition several times a year. Many individuals jog through residential streets without difficulty, as long as they are vigilant for ubiquitous potholes, curious dogs, and vehicles that often drive on the wrong side of the streets.



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Old town, Bab Al-Yemen (southern gate) in Sanaa

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Much of the Yemen's natural beauty is increasingly accessible. Paved roads lead to the coast, to the southern areas of the country, to the city of Sa'ada in the north, and to Marib in the eastern desert. Four-wheel drive allows one to explore more remote areas of the country. However, visitors should use caution when traveling to these areas, as hijackings of vehicles (mostly large, four-wheel-drive Toyota land cruisers) are not uncommon.

The warm, coral-fringed Red Sea coast is a favorite spot for swimmers, fishermen, and snorkelers, especially during the moderate winter months. (There are no facilities for servicing scuba gear.) Scenic but primitive camping sites are available in several areas along the coast. No acceptable hotels are available outside of Hodeidah, and camping gear is necessary. Basic Arabic is quite helpful in communicating with local residents.

The ancient sites of the Marib Dam and Temple of the moon at Marib are an easy day trip from Sanaa. The "triangle" from Sanaa, west to Hodeidah on the coast, southeast to Taiz and back to Sanaa, is a popular weekend trip. It allows one to see

the Tihama and the Red Sea coast, the medieval university city of Zabid, the famous port at Mocha, the fertile green farmlands of the southern highlands, spectacular mountain scenery and ancient walled cities at Taiz, Jibla and Ibb. Adequate hotels are available both in Hodeidah and Taiz. Other interesting places to visit are "Job's Tomb," an excellent spot for experienced and novice rock climbers, the extinct volcano of Hamt Dam, and the fossil fields just outside Sanaa.

Since unification in 1990, travel to Aden (formerly the capital of South Yemen and currently the "economic and commercial capital" of united Yemen) has become increasingly popular. There are two paved roads from Sanaa to Aden, where visitors will find stark contrasts with the North—British and Soviet influences on architecture, and cultures are readily apparent. Visitors will find, among other things, one of the world's best natural harbors, scenic beaches, a popular brewery and an international-class hotel. Aden also boasts Yemen's finest (and only) Chinese restaurant.

Yemen is a photographer's paradise. The exotic scenery and children in native dress clamoring to be photographed provide delightful and

exciting opportunities. Women, however, should not be photographed without their permission, nor any site that could be considered military. When in doubt, asking a local shopkeeper or traffic policeman for permission to photograph is both good manners and good sense. Yemeni authorities are sometimes suspicious of video cameras, especially in urban areas. In general, these cameras should only be used for recording family or American community events. Film is available, though in limited variety. Local processing is adequate for prints, although slide and movie film must be sent out of the country.

Entertainment

The Sanaa Amateur Minitheater Society, boasting members of several nationalities, provides several opportunities each year for budding performers as well as those who only wish to attend. In recent years the Society has presented several plays and play readings, musicals, dinner theaters, cabarets and pantomimes.

Social Activities

Approximately 350 Americans live in Sanaa, with much smaller communities in Taiz, Jibla, Aden and Sa'ada. Informal parties are frequent and provide excellent opportunities for meeting people. Most social activities take place in the home, but community picnics, athletic events, and amateur theatricals provide occasions throughout the year to meet the entire American community.

Yemenis are accessible people, and interesting friendships are possible, especially for Americans who speak Arabic. A few words of Arabic, even simple greetings, will go a long way toward making Yemeni acquaintances. An ever-increasing number of Yemenis speak English.

There are many diplomatic missions in Sanaa, as well as several expatriate business firms whose employees participate in social activities with Americans. Many nationalities are represented among the Hash House harriers running group, while the Christmas



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View of Aden

pantomime is an Anglo-American tradition in Sanaa.

Aden

When the two Yemens merged, Aden was chosen to be the economic capital of the country. Aden became a British crown colony in 1937 and in 1968 it became the capital of South Yemen.

The Old Testament book of *Ezekiel* mentions Aden as a trading partner with the Phoenician port of Tyre on the Mediterranean Sea. Aden maintained its position as a trading center in the following years under its rule by Yemenis, Ethiopians, Arabs, Turks, and the British. Situated between Africa and India, Aden became a strategic and convenient port in the years following its capture by the British in 1839. Aden became even more important as a trading center after the 1869 opening of the Suez Canal. However, Aden's economy and importance declined after 1967 when South Yemen became independent. The British withdrew from the country, resulting in a loss of tourist trade and the income generated by the British military base. The closure of the Suez Canal from 1967 to 1975, during the Arab-Israeli crisis, further eroded Aden's position.

The city has a population of more than 562,000 (2000 est.). Small industries include some light manufacturing, seawater evaporation plants (to obtain marine salt), and boat building. The international airport at Khormaksar, a northern suburb of Aden, is the former British Royal Air Force base.

Aden consists of three sections or quarters: the Crater, Ma'llah, and Tawahi. The Crater, so named because it is located in the crater of a dead volcano, is the old commercial quarter. Despite Aden's long history, very few very historic constructions still exist. The oldest surviving construction is the Aden Tanks, located at the southern edge of the crater. The Tanks are huge water cisterns partially carved out of rocks. On the edge of the crater still stand remnants of the old city walls and bastions, some dating back as far as the 12th century. The Mosque of Sayyid Abdullah al-Aidrus, built in the 14th century and largely renovated, is Aden's Islamic religious center. Ma'llah, a small port area, is known for its traditional Arab *dhows* (boats). The business quarter of Tawahi is where most of the tourist hotels and shops are located. Also in Tawahi is the National Museum of Antiquities, which has an interesting collection of pre-Islamic statues.

Taiz

Taiz (sometimes spelled Taizz and Ta'iz), with a population over 180,000 is located in Yemen's southern highlands, about 125 miles south of both Sanaa and Hodeida. The three cities form a triangle and are connected by a road system. Bait al Faqih, Abid, and Yarim are other cities situated on these roads. Taiz, called "Aruzat al Yaman" in Arabic, meaning "bride of Yemen," is located in a narrow valley at the base of the rolling Saber Mountains, at an altitude of about 1,400 feet. It is an agricultural marketing center and was the country's administrative capital from 1948 to 1962.

The history of Taiz dates to the early seventh century, when the site first consisted of just a fortress on top of a steep cliff at the foot of Mount Saber. At this time, the town of al-Janad, four miles north of Taiz, was more prominent and because of the famous al-Janad Mosque, it was the religious and administrative center of the area. The shift in importance to Taiz began in 1174 when Turan Shah al-Ayyubi made the city the seat of his government. The city grew into a trade center, a position it still maintains today. Taiz expanded greatly during the time it served as Yemen's capital. The old city became an enclave in a fast-growing, modern urban center; the remains of the city walls near Mount Saber form an imaginary circle in which all the beautiful mosques and old houses can be found.

Many tourist sites may be found in Taiz, including two of the most beautiful mosques in Yemen. Al-Ashrafiya, with its two minarets, still serves as an important Koran school. Al-Mudhaffar has many small domes; its minaret collapsed after centuries and has never been rebuilt. The former Palace of Imam Ahmed and the Salah Palace both are museums now.

The Taiz *souk* offers a colorful variety of goods, including baskets, pottery, textiles, and carpets. Native

women take an active part in the *souk*; they wear colorful dresses and do not wear the traditional veils.

Education

Mohammed Ali Othman School, for kindergarten through grade 12, is located in Taiz. The coeducational school, founded in 1972, has an enrollment of over 1,000, and over 60 teachers, including Americans.

The school employs a combined U.S., U.K., and Yemeni curriculum, with instruction in English and Arabic. Extracurricular activities include newspaper, music club, volleyball, and football. The school has seven buildings, 53 classrooms, playing fields, science laboratories, and a 6,000-volume library. The school's mailing address is: P.O. Box 5713, Taiz, Yemen.

Hodeida

Yemen's chief port is Hodeida (sometimes spelled Hodeidah and Al Hudaydah), located on the Red Sea about 90 miles west of Sanaa. Developed by the Turks in the mid-19th century as a seaport, Hodeida exports dates, coffee, and hides. A fire in 1961 destroyed most of the city, but it was rebuilt with aid from the former Soviet Union. Hodeida's modern harbor has a port that can accommodate medium-sized ships and tankers. The port facilities have been the impetus behind the city's expansion. Hodeida is linked to Sanaa by a highway; taxis and airlines also travel between the seaport and the capital. Hodeida has modern health and communications facilities. The population of Hodeida is over 300,000.

Historic sites are nonexistent in Hodeida. There is, however, a fish market on the city's southern shore, where wooden fishing boats are still built in the traditional way. Hodeida's clean, sandy beaches offer excellent swimming.

Southeast of Hodeida is the village of Bait al-Faqih, known as the handicraft center of the Tihama. Craftsmen from the surrounding area

come to the village on market day (Friday) to sell pottery, leather goods, textiles, baskets, and other woven goods. Farther south is Zabid, which used to be the site of a prestigious Islamic learning institution. Zabid has a Great Mosque and a colorful market known for its local sweets.

OTHER CITIES

DHAMĀR, with a population of over 40,000, is situated about 50 miles south of Sanaa. It is a provincial capital and market center for the nearby grain-growing region. Local tradition notwithstanding, first mention of the town is by the Arab geographer Yāqūt (1179–1229). He noted the city's handsome buildings and fecund countryside. Market gardens divide Dhamār in two; there are numerous mosques.

IBB is one of Yemen's most picturesque cities. Located about 100 miles south of the capital, its surrounding wall contains several homes. An aqueduct from the mountains supplies the city with a rare luxury in this country—running water. The Muzaffariyah Mosque, among the dozens here, is considered especially beautiful. Ibb is a farming center, situated in the province that receives the highest rainfall, and remains green all year long. It has a *souk*, or marketplace, that serves as the regional hub for agricultural products. The city may date to biblical times. Its estimated population is roughly over 34,000.

AL-MUKALLĀ, the only important port in eastern Yemen, is 320 miles northeast of Aden. With a population of more than 50,000, al-Mukallā is the largest city east of Aden and is a market center for the mostly undeveloped interior regions. The fishing industry is of prime importance here. Industries include a fish canning plant and a fish meal factory; fish products, along with tobacco, are the major exports. Boat building is also important here.

SA'DAH, situated 120 miles northwest of Sanaa, is the capital of Sa'dah Province. The city of roughly 12,000 residents (1986 est.) is a major administrative center in the north. Industries here include leather goods manufacture and stoneware production. Sa'dah was the first headquarters for the Zaydī *imams* (leaders), who ruled the country from 860 to 1962. It lost its stature when the capital was moved to Sanaa in the 17th century. A recently built road connects Sa'dah with Sanaa and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Geography and Climate

The Republic of Yemen is located in the southern corner of the Arabian peninsula bordered by Saudi Arabia to the north and east, Oman to the east, and by the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea to the South and by the Red Sea to the west. In area, it is about 204,000 square miles—the size of France.

Sanaa, the capital, is located at an altitude of 7,200 feet above sea level. Nearby is the highest mountain between East Africa and Iran, Djebel al-Nabi Shu'ayb, at 12,300 feet. The interior highlands have two rainy seasons a year: the first, in March and April; and a second, heavier, rainfall in July and August. For the rest of the year, sunny clear weather is the rule, with occasional dust storms. In winter, nighttime temperatures in Sanaa can drop to 30°F, with sunshine and day time highs of 70°F. Summer temperatures are very moderate, with highs of 85°F, dropping to the low 60s at night. The climate is very pleasant.

To the east of the highland interior, the terrain slopes down to the sandy wastes of the deserts of inner Arabia, the famous "Empty Quarter." These desert areas are extremely dry, with summer temperatures

exceeding 110°F, but they can be quite cold on winter nights.

To the west, in the Tihama (the lowlands adjoining the Red Sea) where there is a mixture of African and Arabian cultures, the temperatures are very hot and humid for much of the year. Even in winter, daytime highs can be in the 90s. During the summer, torrential monsoons occur. Aden is similarly hot and humid, with summer temperatures frequently in the 100s. However, winter temperatures are far milder and more pleasant. The Hadhramaut and the desert regions extending east from Aden to the Omani border are hot and dry.

Population

In 2000, Yemen's population was estimated at 17,521,000. Before the Gulf Crisis, about 1.4 million Yemenis were working overseas, with perhaps over 1 million in Saudi Arabia alone. One consequence of Iraqi aggression is that 800,000 to 850,000 Yemeni workers returned home. Over half the population of the Arabian peninsula lives in the Republic of Yemen.

In contrast to the nomadic traditions of other peninsula inhabitants, most Yemenis have long been settled in small agricultural communities, and the population is still mostly rural. Because of poverty and the shortage of arable land, there has been a long tradition of Yemeni men working as expatriate workers and small traders. Many Yemenis have close family relations in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti, and there are Yemeni-origin communities as far-flung as the U.S. and Korea.

Yemenis belong to two principal Islamic religious groups: The Zaydi community of the Shi'a sect, which predominates in the northern, central, and eastern areas of the country; and the Shafi community of the Sunni sect in the southwest. The Zaydi Shi'a have a distinct religious tradition that differs little from the Sunni mainstream. Yemen also has the vestiges of a once thriving Jew-

ish community, believed by some scholars to be one of the oldest diaspora communities in the world.

Arabic is the official language of Yemen, although English is gradually becoming more common as a second language.

Yemenis are proud of their culture and history and regard their distinctive civilization as a unifying force among the many tribes that make up the population. This distinctiveness has been recognized in several fields. For example, the architecture of the old city of Sanaa has been accorded protective status by UNESCO. Another characteristic feature of Yemeni society is the chewing of qat leaves at social sessions. Yemeni men, especially tribesmen, prominently carry the "jambia," a curved knife, at the waist as a sign of their personal dignity and independence.

Although Western dress is becoming more common, especially in the cities, most Yemeni men still wear the traditional "futtah" skirt, or full length "thobe," and an open jacket with their jambias. In the tribal areas of the north and east, most adult men also carry a rifle.

Yemeni women living in urban areas usually veil completely. In public, they generally wear black overskirts, loose-fitting capes and veils, or colorfully printed draperies over embroidered dresses and loose trousers. However, customs differ. In Taiz, women generally cover their hair with bright gold or saffron colored scarves but do not otherwise veil. Veiling is less common in rural areas, although many women will draw scarves across their faces if strangers approach. Some younger Yemeni women, especially university students, cover their hair with scarves. In Aden after unification, women have begun to cover their hair more frequently than before.

Yemenis are, for the most part, very friendly to Americans. Many have family and tribal ties to the thousands of Yemenis who have emigrated to the U.S. Since most

Yemenis do not speak English, even a few phrases in Arabic will be warmly appreciated.

History

From about 1000 B.C. to 600 A.D., Yemen was the center of an advanced civilization based on intensive agriculture and a lucrative trade in aromatics, such as frankincense, with Mediterranean countries. The Biblical Queen of Sheba, Queen Bilquis, presided over a flourishing kingdom centered in Marib. Ruins of temples and walls, as well as of the famous Marib dam whose final rupture in A.D. 570 (recorded in the "Elephant" sura of the Koran) spelled the end of this civilization, can still be seen near Marib. According to popular tradition, the city of Sanaa was founded by Shem, a son of Noah.

The country converted to Islam about A.D. 628 during the prophet Mohammed's lifetime. Previously, it had undergone periods as both a Jewish and Christian kingdom. Yemen provided many warriors to Islamic armies, and its artisans worked in constructing buildings that have given Islamic architecture its renown. Since early medieval times, Yemen has enjoyed varying political and economic fortunes that have been tied closely to the relative importance of its caravan routes. The Zaidi Imamate was founded by Yahya bin Husain bin Qasim al-Rassi, in A.D. 897 and lasted until the Republican Revolution in 1962. Other important dynasties that ruled in northern Yemen included Sulayhids, who produced the second great female leader in Yemeni history, Queen Arwa bint Ahmad. She established her capital in Jibla and ruled between A.D. 1067 and 1138. A second dynasty, important for its mosque-building activities and for the establishment of the famous medieval university in Zabid, was the Rasulids. Areas of the country were twice ruled by the Ottoman Turks—the first period lasted from 1513 to 1636—and the second from 1849 to 1918.

After the departure of the Turks in 1918, Imam Yahya assumed political control of the north. Succeeding Imams kept the country in almost complete isolation until the regime was overthrown on September 26, 1962 by elements intent on modernizing the country's medieval economic, political, and social structures. The new republic was opposed by forces loyal to the Imam's family for several years. The Republicans were supported by Egyptian troops and the Royalists by Saudi Arabia, and periodic heavy fighting continued for almost 8 years between the Republican and Royalist forces and their supporters.

The Egyptians departed in November 1967, and a settlement was mediated by Saudi Arabia and Egypt in March 1970, which guaranteed a republican form of government in the former Yemen Arab Republic. Subsequent presidents of the republic established a written constitution and parliament. The new state faced both external and internal threats. It fought two border wars with the Communist-ruled People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1972 and 1979 and suffered from a Communist-inspired insurgency until the mid-eighties. Two Presidents were assassinated within a year in 1978. President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the current President of the unified Republic of Yemen, took office in that year.

South Yemen was a focus of European attentions from the beginning of the 15th Century. Attracted by the superb natural harbor of Aden, the British came to Aden in 1839 and quickly established relations with sultans in the hinterlands of Hadhramaut to protect their position in Aden. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the British reinforced their position in Aden in order to ensure their line to India and their dominance in the region. Following the departure of the British in 1967 and independence, the militant Marxist National Liberation Front (NLF) took power. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was proclaimed

under Communist Aegis in 1970 and immediately began to support an unsuccessful guerilla war in the Dhofar province in neighboring Oman. In January 1986, Aden was rocked by a bloody 10-day coup between rival leftist factions. Estimates of those killed during the coup range up to 10,000.

Yemeni unification took place on May 22, 1990, following the decline of Soviet support for the PDRY and the collapse of the economy. The new state, the Republic of Yemen, was accorded immediate recognition by most of the world community, including the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

Public Institutions

Yemen essentially has two political systems: an developing democracy and an ancient tribal system. Yemen's government is divided into three branches: the executive, with the President appointing a cabinet headed by a Prime Minister; the legislative, with a 301-member unicameral Parliament; and the judiciary, consisting of three levels of courts (magistrate, appellate, and supreme).

The president is elected by popular vote from at least two candidates selected by the legislature. Yemen held its first direct presidential elections in September 1999, electing President Ali Abdallah Salih to a five-year term in what were generally considered free and fair elections. However, a Constitutional amendment adopted in 2000 extended the presidential term by two years, moving the next presidential election to 2006.

A 2001 amendment created the bicameral legislature consisting of a Shura Council (111 seats; members appointed by the president) and a House of Representatives (301 seats; members elected by popular vote). Parliamentary terms of office are 6-years.

Yemeni law is a mixture of tribal customs (known as *urf*), Muslim religious statutes (*sharia*), execu-

tive decree, and parliamentary legislation. New laws do not yet cover the full range of civil issues, but they have codified some traditional procedures, while introducing new concepts regulating commerce, labor, nationality, taxes, and civil rights. Outside urban areas, justice and law are still largely administered by traditional figures such as religious judges and tribal leaders

Arts, Science, and Education

In medieval Yemen, disciplines of law, religion, history and poetry were sophisticated and widely spread among the population. Yemen made many important contributions to Islamic civilization: a famous example is the development of algebra in the University of Zabid in the Tihama. Yemeni teachers taught in the Al-Azhar University of Cairo in the 10th and 11th centuries and students came to Zabid from all over Arabia, Ethiopia and Somalia. Yemeni isolation in recent centuries, however, led to a development gap which has had lasting consequences.

A low level of education (literacy is about 53% for males and 26% for females) has hampered development projects initiated by the government, but the number of students has greatly increased in recent years. Primary school enrollment in 1997 was about 2.7 million students. However, in the same year, secondary school enrollments only reached to about 354,000 students.

Yemen's principal universities are the University of Sanaa's arts colleges (including the Faculty of Education, which has branches in several other locations in Yemen) and Aden University. Total university enrollment in 1997 was about 65,675 students, with about 2,000 additional students studying abroad.

Commerce and Industry

Although once noted for its exports of coffee from the port of Mocha, today Yemen now exports little other than oil. The discovery of oil in both North and South Yemen has been regarded as the most significant economic development in many years. Oil was discovered July 4, 1984, by the American-owned Yemen Hunt Oil Company (YHOC) in the Marib region east of Sanaa. The Soviets also found oil about 80 miles to the south of the Marib area in the mid-80's. Yemen is believed to have modest reserves by Arabian peninsula standards. Export pipelines were constructed from both fields to oil terminals. Oil from the YHOC fields began to be exported in 1988, while no oil from former Soviet field (block 4) has been exported as of July 1992.

Outside of the petroleum sector, Yemen's economic prospects are limited. Yemen continues to import much of its food and, with a population growing at over three percent a year, chances for it becoming self-sufficient in food are slim. Agriculture cannot be expanded significantly due to the limited supply of water. Yemen is able to produce modest quantities of fruits and vegetables for export to its neighbors which should increase once relations with them improve. A small food processing industry has developed in the last decade mainly using imported raw materials. While primarily for the domestic market, some of this production is exported; including to Europe. Fishing holds some brighter prospects although over-fishing in the former South has severely depleted stocks. The government is committed to economic liberalization and improving the climate for investment although so far this commitment has yielded few tangible results. A new investment law has been passed but implementing regulations and the investment authority are not yet functioning.

The government has eased restrictions aimed at controlling imports. Formerly, it had sought with little

success to limit outflow of foreign exchange by restricting imports through licensing and providing foreign exchange only for authorized imports. After unification, the government relaxed import restrictions and has generally not acted to halt smuggling of consumer goods. The government is allowing high levels of consumption and has not yet completed legal and political steps to create a more favorable environment for capital investment.

Transportation

Local

Within Sanaa, taxis are common, but hardly luxurious, and often operate on a group basis. Fares are generally reasonable and should be negotiated in advance. Tipping is not necessary. Women are generally advised not to take taxis alone.

Regional

Taxis between cities have a poor safety record and are not recommended. Buses are generally considered safer, since journeys are scheduled and drivers have no incentive to make the trip faster than safety permits.

The network of paved roads which now links Yemen's major cities is being steadily extended, but many parts of the country are accessible only by rough and narrow tracks with no roadside services available. Yemen is now connected to Saudi Arabia by an excellent road running from Jeddah to Hodeidah.

Major airlines serve Sanaa International Airport, including Air France, Lufthansa, Egyptair, Royal Jordanian, KLM (starting October 1992) and the national carrier, Yemenia Airlines. No U.S. carriers operate in Yemen.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Domestic telephone service is fairly reliable. Service to countries, such as the U.S., with international direct-dial facilities is excellent but very expensive. A call to the U.S.

costs about twice as much as the cost of the same call initiated from the U.S. Operator-assisted calls can take up to 3 hours. It is more economical to have families and friends in the U.S. do most of the calling. Telegrams may be sent from the downtown office of Cable and Wireless. A written text is necessary to ensure accuracy.

Health and Medicine

Sanaa is located at an altitude of 7,200 feet and is dusty. Individuals with respiratory or heart problems are suggested to contact Med before assignment.

Medical Facilities

Sanaa hospitals are used only in emergency situations. Hospitals are also located in Sa'ada and Jibla (both about 4 hours by car from Sanaa).

You and your family should ensure that all required dental treatment is completed before arriving in Sanaa. Local dentists are not trained or equipped to U.S. standards. They generally are used only for simple fillings and similar dental procedures.

Community Health

Public health conditions in Sanaa and other cities remain poor. Municipal garbage collection is irregular, and many areas suffer from overflowing dumpsters. Given the dryness and altitude, household pests are not a big problem and all homes are screened against flies. Happily, few rats exist in Sanaa, since a thriving population of wild cats and dogs keeps them under control. The cats and dogs pose some threat of rabies. Early morning joggers sometimes carry small stones to scare off the easily cowed dogs, who are rarely seen during day and evening hours.

Most water supplies, either from city services or private water companies, come from deep wells but are often contaminated. A city-wide sewer system is under construction

but not yet completed, and wells can be contaminated by ubiquitous shallow cesspools. Proper treatment of water by boiling and filtration protects against water-borne diseases.

Preventive Measures

Dusty days can prove an inconvenience to sinus and allergy sufferers. Plant allergies, in contrast, are not a problem with the sparse vegetation around Sanaa.

Commercially bottled water and carbonated soft drinks manufactured in Yemen are safe and are widely available throughout the country. Some local hotels and restaurants offer food that is safe and sanitary.

Typhoid has occurred in Yemen in recent years, as well as polio, tuberculosis and scattered incidents of hepatitis A. Some malaria cases have been reported from exposure in the lowlands. However, malaria is not present at the altitude of Sanaa. Cholera has been reported in scattered locations in Yemen.

Gastro-intestinal parasites are common, but can be diagnosed and treated routinely. Firm discipline in water and food preparation greatly reduces the likelihood of such illnesses.

Schistosomiasis or bilharzia is endemic in Yemen but can be easily avoided by not wading or swimming in streams or fresh water pools. Fresh vegetables must be washed in a chlorine or iodine solution. You can buy imported meats, but they must be well cooked. Local meat from selected stores is also safe after thorough cooking.

Qat

Qat is a leaf which many Yemenis like to chew in the afternoon hours after lunch. It is on the official U.S. list of controlled substances and may not be imported into the U.S. It produces a mild amphetamine-like reaction. Much of the social activity of Yemen is centered around the "Qat chew." Important business agreements as well as community and national matters are usually

discussed, and often decided during these sessions.

While qat does not appear to be physically addicting, withdrawal reaction has been known to occur after many years of regular chewing. The dangers include: blood pressure elevation; infectious diseases transferred via its leaves and/or the water with which it is washed; and ingestion of pesticides or other chemicals sprayed on the leaves.

NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

Passage, Customs & Duties

Connections are usually made from Frankfurt, Paris, London, Bahrain or Jeddah, with flights in or out of Sanaa most days of the week. Reservations should be made and confirmed as far ahead of time as possible.

Passports and visas are required. As of November 17, 2001, the Yemeni government stopped issuing visas to American passport holders at airports and other points of entry. All U.S. travelers to Yemen must obtain visas prior to travel at Yemeni embassies or consulates overseas. Upon arrival in Yemen, travelers should register within the first month at the Immigration Authority in Sanaa or at any police station in the district where they are residing. Long term residents should re-register when they change their residence. Yellow fever vaccination is recommended. For further information on entry requirements, please contact the Embassy of the Republic of Yemen, Suite 705, 2600 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 965-4760; or the Yemen Mission to the U.N., 866 United Nations Plaza, Room 435, New York, N.Y. 10017, telephone (212) 355-1730. The Embassy in Washington, D.C. maintains a home page at <http://www.yemenembassy.org>.

Americans who are considering studying in Yemen should make this fact clear to a Yemeni consular official in the United States and apply for the appropriate visa. Some American Muslims who come to Yemen for tourism or Islamic studies at Yemeni schools and have appropriate visas nevertheless have been detained by Yemeni security officials who seized their passports. In such instances, the American citizens were told their passports would be returned when they departed the country. Some Americans studying in Yemen without official permission have been deported.

Yemeni government security organizations have arrested and expelled foreign Muslims, including Americans, who have associated with local Muslim organizations considered extremist by security organs of the Yemeni government. The events mentioned in the WARNING section of this Consular Information Sheet have served to make Yemeni authorities, if anything, more suspicious of some foreign Muslims. Any American in Yemen who is considering associating with any political or fundamentalist Islamist group should discuss those intentions with a Yemeni consular official in the United States before traveling to Yemen. Americans risk arrest if they engage in either political or other activities that violate the terms of their admission to Yemen.

Yemeni law prohibits the removal of antiquities from the country. Yemeni authorities define antiquities loosely as anything man-made that is more than 50 years old. Persons attempting to depart with antiquities are subject to arrest, imprisonment or fines.

Yemeni customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Yemen of items such as firearms, pornography, and antiquities. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Yemen in Washington, D.C. for specific information regarding customs requirements.

Americans living in or visiting Yemen are encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Sanaa and obtain updated information on travel and security conditions within Yemen. The U.S. Embassy is open for American citizen services between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m., Saturday through Tuesday. The Embassy is located at Dhahr Himyar Zone, Sheraton Hotel District, P.O. Box 22347. The telephone number of the Consular Section is (967) (1) 303-155, extension 118, 265 or 266. The fax number is (967) (1) 303-175.

Laws

Photography of military installations, including airports, equipment, or troops is forbidden. In the past, such photography has led to the arrest of U.S. citizens. Military sites are not always obvious. If in doubt, it is wise to ask specific permission from Yemeni authorities.

Pets

Dogs and cats require current rabies and distemper vaccinations as well as a general certificate of good health dated within 2 weeks of arrival. Pets are generally cleared immediately upon their arrival. Shipment through Air France or Lufthansa is recommended. Some birds, including African parrots, and animals such as turtles and reptiles are not permitted entry. There are several Western-trained veterinarians in Sanaa.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The Yemeni Riyal (YR) is broken down into 100 fils. Notes are available in denominations of YR1000, 500, 100, 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1. Coins are in denominations of 50, 25, 10, 5 and 1 fils. The exchange is around 164.59YR=US\$1.

Travelers should be aware that automatic teller machines (ATM) are not available in Yemen. Credit cards are not widely accepted.

The metric system is understood within Yemen's main cities, but sev-

eral traditional measures continue in use.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Jan. 1	New Year's Day
May 1	Labor Day
May 22	Yemeni Unity Day
.	Muharram*
.	Mawlid an Nabi*
.	Ramadan*
.	Id al-Fitr*
.	Id al-Adha*
.	Lailat al Kadr*

*variable, based on the Islamic calendar

RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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